

# Lyon's share of literary world grows

## Publishers from several countries have picked up rights to her book *The Golden Mean*

BY MARY FRANCES HILL, VANCOUVER SUN  
NOVEMBER 6, 2009



For B.C. writer Annabel Lyon, good fortune comes in multiples.

She made CanLit history last month after being nominated for the Governor-General's Award for Fiction, Scotiabank Giller Prize and the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize for her novel *The Golden Mean*.

This week, she added four more reasons to celebrate, after New York publisher Knopf Doubleday, under the influential Sonny Mehta, bought U.S. rights to the book. That same day, Lyon's agent, Denise Bukowski, learned the book's rights were sold to major publishers in three more countries: Spain's Roca publishers, Brazil's Leya, and France's Le Table Ronde.

Bukowski said Lyon's trifecta of Canadian nominations -- notably, the Giller -- had a lot to do with the deals.

"The nominations helped a great deal to focus attention on the book. Usually the Giller alone will do it," Bukowski said in a telephone interview from her Toronto office.

Lyon said she was surprised by the international attention. "It's wonderful news and unexpected simply because because I didn't realize that people outside of the country paid such attention to prizes inside Canada.

"So it's definitely unexpected, but fantastic."

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The *Golden Mean* takes place in the court of Philip of Macedon, circa 342 BC, and the Athens of Plato 20 years earlier.

Lyon uses the philosopher Aristotle, the developer of the idea of logic and the scientific method as a narrator, setting the story during Aristotle's years as a tutor to Philip of Macedon's son.

Bukowski said she wasn't surprised when many publishers who expressed interest in purchasing the book's rights stalled at first. The global publishing industry has been hit in the recession.

"A lot of them had read it but they were sitting on the fence."

With three nominations, there was much talk about *The Golden Mean* when it appeared at the Frankfurt Book Fair. Bukowski, who also featured it at the London Book Fair, said she expects the deals may inspire a British rights deal.

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