Frankfurt Book Fair 2004: Part 2
Theo Gielen
The Netherlands

Pop-up books that just unfold and stand….

After his Great American Houses and Gardens the new Chuck Fischer book highlights the in and outs of America’s most important house in The White House Pop-up Book (Universe, 0-7893-1064-3). Featuring a movable diorama of the Washington Mall with all of the monuments, an exact paper pop-up replica of the White House, the Oval Office in three-dimensions, a carousel that reveals five other of its famous rooms, and more. A must-have indeed.

Nick Dentchfield designed and engineered Extreme Animals: A Pop-up Book Bursting with Danger! (1-405-02170-5) published by Macmillan and illustrated, as most of his works are, by Anne Sharp. A feast of extraordinary paper creatures includes a white shark, an eagle, polar bear, cobra and a tiger. It is impossible for me to say which of them is the most impressive pop-up since they all are gorgeous.

Templar Books brings further parts of Derek Matthews Happy Snappy Pop-up Books that now number 18 volumes, and exploit the formula with a further pop-up series of four Snappy Noisy Pop-Ups (sound books), all published in the United States by Silver Dolphin Books, San Diego. At Templar’s was also seen a nice Every Page a Stage: Nursery Tales (1-84011-857-1) designed by Dugald Steer and illustrated by Steve Lavis, in which every page features a different nursery story that can be acted out by children and parents on its own pop-up stage on the opposite page, using the accompanying moving characters and props.

How Peter Apian Can Change Your Life
Margaret Towner
London, England

Visualize a sunny morning in London’s Portobello Road antique market, and a collector of pop-up books, mainly modern, is trawling along the outside stalls, a mixture of mostly tat and occasional treasure, looking for toys and other trifles. A young man has a display, spread on a car and trestle, of pictures and unappealing books, but out of curiosity she picks up one bound in thin vellum, with no visible title, expecting an old prayer book. It opens on a volvelle, a woodcut of discs and pointers, and turning to the front, the title appears Cosmographia and the date, 1545.

To cut the story short, I bought the book, surprisingly affordable because of a page missing and the lack of a highly desirable map, but having the volvelles in good condition. They are secured on the pages by thread, and one of the knots at the back in my copy is neatly covered by a tiny printed lion’s head sticker. Being aware in general terms of the book’s status as one of the earliest moveables, I naturally tried to find out the background. The title is Libro de la Cosmographia de Padro Apiano…Augmentado por el Doctissimo Varon Gemma Frisio..Agora Nueuamete Traduziodos en Romace Castellano, and it is the 15th century edition, the first in Spanish. This fortunately makes it easier for me to read than a Latin version, but also demonstrates two features, first, that the book became one of the run-away best sellers of the early publishing industry, and second, that it was expected to appeal to citizens of this great exploring and colonizing nation of the 16th century. Why was this, and who were the two authors?