

People & Places

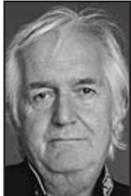
Obits

Abrams dead

Crime writer Mankell dies

STOCKHOLM, Oct 5, (AP): **Henning Mankell**, the internationally renowned Swedish crime writer whose books about the gloomy, soul-searching police inspector Kurt Wallander enticed readers around the world, died early Monday, his publisher said.

The hesitant figurehead of Scandinavian crime fiction, who last year revealed he had cancer, died in the southwestern city of



Mankell

Goteborg, his publisher, Leopard, said in a statement on its website.

His novels and plays sold more than 40 million copies worldwide.

Following in the footsteps of the popular 1960s

Swedish crime-writing duo of Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahloo, Mankell's Wallander series helped define the Scandinavian genre that became known as Nordic noir. Set in the bleak landscapes of southern Sweden, the series drew on the dark, morally complex moods of its main protagonist and was heavily infused with social commentary.

Mankell himself was deeply engaged in social and political issues. Since the mid-1980s he had divided his time between Sweden and Mozambique, where he helped build a village for orphaned children to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS. He was also among the activists who were attacked and arrested by Israeli forces as they tried to sail to the Gaza strip with humanitarian supplies in June 2010.

"You have to act, not just by writing, but by standing up and doing. For me, you cannot call yourself an intellectual if all you use your intellectual gifts for is to find excuses not to do anything. Which, sadly, is what I think a lot of intellectuals do," he told Britain's Guardian newspaper after the Gaza flotilla raid.

Adapted

The first Wallander novel, "Faceless killers," was published in 1991 and the series was made complete in 2009 with the 10th novel, "The Troubled Man." The books have been translated into more than 40 languages and have sold over 30 million copies worldwide. They have been adapted into films and TV series in Sweden and a popular BBC series, starring Kenneth Branagh.

Mankell's international success paved the way for other Scandinavian authors abroad, including "The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo" author Stieg Larsson and Norwegian writer Jo Nesbo. Yet he disliked talking about the Scandinavian crime fiction phenomenon and said he was mostly influenced by Sherlock Holmes and classical Greek drama.

"It was never my intention to write crime novels as such, but to use the crime as a sort of mirror of a society and of a time. That is my starting point and I know that very many of those who are called crime writers today, they don't do that," he said in a 2009 interview with The Associated Press.

Mankell was born in Stockholm in 1948, the son of judge Ivar Mankell and librarian Birgitta, but his mother abandoned the family when he was only a year old. Mankell has said it was a "terrible thing for a child to deal with" and that he couldn't get over disliking his mother, when he met her again at age 15, for what she had done. She later committed suicide.

Mankell, his father and older sister Helena lived in the court house in the town of Sveg in central Sweden, where his father was a judge, and the writer grew up listening to grown-ups' discussions on crime and punishment.

As a boy he read books about Africa, the most exotic place he could imagine, and decided to go there one day. He has said he started dreaming of becoming an author from the day his grandmother taught him how to write.

Al Abrams, the founding press officer and publicist for Motown Records, died Saturday following a battle with cancer, his wife said. He was 74.

Born in Detroit, Al Abrams was the first employee of Motown founder **Berry Gordy Jr.** — before the company officially existed. Abrams promoted records to Detroit disc jockeys and went on to direct media relations at the label that included **Stevie Wonder**, **Marvin Gaye**, the **Miracles** and the **Supremes**.

"His greatest accomplishment at Motown was actually starting at the age of 18," his wife, **Nancy Abrams**, told The Associated Press. "It kind of snowballed. He knew what he wanted to do with his life at that point."



Japanese actress Masami Nagasawa (right), talks with Japanese director Hirokazu Koreeda in the Gala Presentation 'Little Sister' during the Busan International Film Festival in Busan, South Korea, on Oct. 4. (AP)

Film

Filmmaker plans his first multimillion-dollar film

S. Korean director Kim looks to China

Chouaib invests in family intrigue

Woman battles with family secrets in 'Go Home'

BUSAN, South Korea, Oct 5, (AP): For the past two decades, South Korean maverick filmmaker Kim Ki-duk's low-budget movies have given him international acclaim, highly coveted awards and many controversies.

Now, one of the most accomplished and critically acclaimed Asian directors is turning to China to make his first multimillion-dollar film.

Kim recently signed a \$24 million deal with a Chinese production company to make an epic war movie with Buddhism as a central theme, with another \$6 million set aside for marketing.

"This movie is not just targeting the Chinese market. The subject will interest the US and Europe as well," Kim said in an interview at the Busan International Film Festival. "I want to talk about how politics manipulates religion."

Although religion inspired many of his previous works, the new project will be an outlier in Kim's career. The budget for the movie, written by Kim and tentatively titled "Who Is ..." in English, is nearly three times bigger than the sum of the budgets for all of his 21 other films. It will be his first time working with a full Chinese cast in a Chinese language movie.

Growth

The staggering growth of the Chinese movie industry has been irresistible to many South Korean movie directors. But Kim, who visited Busan with his latest work, "Stop," said it was not the commercial success that attracted him to China. It was the film set and the filmmaking system in China that appealed to him at a time when he felt worn out and alienated from the South Korean movie industry.

"I'm too exhausted. It was so hard to make 'Stop' alone," the veteran moviemaker said. "Now I just want to sit on a (director's) chair and look at the monitor."

When he saw the Chinese film set, with each director sitting before a modern 60-inch monitor, he thought: "This could perhaps let me make the most of my ability."

"Stop," the story of a young Japanese couple conflicted about a pregnancy after moving to Tokyo from an area near the disaster-struck Fukushima nuclear plant, was filmed entirely by Kim, with no cinematographer, no art director and no lighting technician. He made props in the morning and filmed in the afternoon, while the actors served as their own

LOS ANGELES, Oct 5, (RTS): "Go Home," reads the angry grease-paint message scrawled on the wall of the now-ransacked villa Nada (Golshifteh Farahani) finds upon her return to the Lebanese village where she grew up. Alas, Nada can't really go home, not now, not ever, in Jihane Chouaib's slow and overly obvious account of this now-Westernized young woman's attempts to put certain family secrets to rest. As three distractingly gorgeous actors mope about its otherwise-grubby Lebanon locations, this trilingual yet not especially talky debut (whose cast speaks French, English and Arabic) seeks profundity in introspective silences. For some it may well achieve that, though technically speaking, it's a shame everything hinges on a childhood memory that, once fully revealed, isn't nearly as shocking for us as it must be for Nada, ultimately eliciting respect but not much excitement as it travels fest and arthouse venues far from home.

The genuine cause for interest here arrives not onscreen but behind it, as another female filmmaker finds her voice in a Middle Eastern enclave — where, sadly, it still remains easier for women

directors to find work than Hollywood. In this case, it is the Beirut-born Chouaib who returns to her native soil, clearly grappling with some version of the sense of disconnect that Nada feels onscreen. Perhaps she considered a more autobiographical approach too banal, which would account for why she opted to invent a family intrigue — the unsolved disappearance and presumed murder of Nada's grandfather, Suleyman — which connects the scars that still linger today with the Lebanese civil war that forced both the helmer and her fictive protagonist to flee the country as children.

Presented as a mystery, albeit one in which Nada's investigation amounts to little more than conjecture plus false assumptions about a misleading flashback, the situation with the missing old man advances in extreme slow motion. As a French-speaking young woman who insists on dredging up memories of civil war, Nada manages to ruffle feathers by asking Suleyman's old friends and possible rivals (including a potentially dangerous militia leader) what may have happened to him.

Her suspicions are based mostly on a murky recurring memory that took place in the villa's garden

when she was a child, replayed in slightly greater detail each time we see it — the assumption being that she witnessed and subsequently suppressed whatever happened to him. Indeed, the scene, once it finally plays out, reveals several serious crimes, the most unforgivable being that it's boring.

Nada is operating here on two likely false assumptions, and it's no fun waiting for her to realize what Chouaib takes far too long to reveal: First, that Suleyman probably wasn't murdered at all, and second, that he might not have been the civil-war heroic martyr that she imagines. Like the uneasy townsfolk, we might prefer for her to leave the past buried, since the present offers more narrative potential, and certainly Chouaib intends to shift the focus to connections Nada could be making in Lebanon now — including the handsome Lebanese clerk who hits on her (this local lothario wears a distracting amount of makeup, presumably intended to be invisible in Tommaso Fiorilli's drab cinematography) or the young punk (Francois Nour) who throws firecrackers into the home's disorderly courtyard, where she comes to believe the body must be interred.

Although he became an internationally acclaimed director - his earlier works "Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter ... and Spring" and "Three Iron" still inspire young filmmakers around the world - at home he hasn't enjoyed the popularity or reverence reserved for peers such as Park Chan-wook and Bong Joon-ho.

Many Koreans, especially females, say Kim's works are too difficult to watch because of their brutality and grisly details of violence, rape and castration. Kim said that top Korean movie stars and K-pop stars are reluctant to join his projects.

Kim, the willful outsider, said he wants to stop telling stories as a Korean and wants to deal with issues concerning humanity.

"Removing prejudices between people and class," he said. "I think that's the cinema's goal."



In this Oct 3, photo, South Korean director Kim Ki-duk poses before an interview at the Busan International Film Festival in Busan, South Korea. (AP)

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Ava DuVernay, director of the Oscar and Golden Globe winning "Selma," will head the International Competition jury at the Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival. The competition is open to debut filmmakers worldwide who have made films within one calendar year of the festival.

DuVernay said, "I'm thrilled to have been invited to head the international jury for MAMI and look forward to celebrating the work of a diverse array of filmmakers with energetic, engaged audiences in the dynamic city of Mumbai."

Festival director **Anupama Chopra** said, "Ava DuVernay is one of the most exciting talents working in cinema today. Ava's presence will inspire our filmmakers and energize our festival." The Mumbai festival plays Oct 29-Nov 5. (RTS)

NEW YORK: Rapper **Fetty Wap**'s debut album opened Sunday at number one on the US chart, triumphing even as he recovers from being hit by a car the day after the release.

Fetty Wap's self-titled album sold 129,000 copies or the digital equivalent in the week ending Thursday to top the main Billboard chart, tracking service Nielsen Music said.

A day after his highly anticipated first album came out, Fetty Wap was hit by a car on Sept 26 as he drove his motorcycle in his hometown of Paterson, **New Jersey**.

He was rushed to a hospital, with "#PrayForFetty" becoming a trending topic on Twitter.

He released a video on Instagram saying he expected a full recovery but that he broke a leg in three places. He has canceled a number of concerts that were planned to promote the album. (AFP)

NEW YORK: Members of the Grateful Dead and **John Mayer** are giving away 10,000 free tickets to a concert next month.

The veteran band and Mayer, who joined forces for the supergroup Dead & Company this summer, announced Monday that 5,000 fans will have a chance to win two tickets each to their Nov 7 show in New York City.

The group has partnered with American Express for its music series, "American Express Unstaged," for the sweepstakes. Film director **Brett Ratner** will direct the concert's livestream from Madison Square Garden.

"People who want to hear the music get to hear it for free and we get to promote our music and share it with people," **Bob Weir** said in an interview with The Associated Press on Saturday.

Fans can enter to win tickets Monday through Thursday on Dead & Company's website. No tickets for the show will go on sale.

Grateful Dead's **Weir**, **Mickey Hart** and **Bill Kreutzmann** are part of Dead & Company with Mayer; **Phil Lesh** is not involved. (AP)

LONDON: Grammy Award winner **Sam**



DuVernay



Wap

Smith released the video for his theme song for the new James Bond film "Spectre" on Monday, days after the ballad became the first 007 title track to top the British pop charts.

The song "Writing's On The Wall" went straight to the top of the British charts last week.

The video shows snippets of the film featuring Bond actor **Daniel Craig**, Italian actress **Monica Bellucci** and French

actress **Lea Seydoux**.

Smith, 23, is the first British male solo artist to record a Bond song since Tom Jones' "Thunderball" track in 1965.

He co-wrote the single with fellow Grammy Award winner **Jimmy Napes**, with whom he worked on his best-selling 2014 debut album "In the Lonely Hour".

"Spectre" opens on Oct 26 in British cinemas and on Nov 6 in the United States. (RTS)