

## 3 Years of KOMENAR Publishing: Thank you for helping us make it this far!

**OAKLAND, California** — Crack open the tequila with lime: Oakland-based publisher KOMENAR is entering its fourth year of publishing this Cinco de Mayo.

Co-founded in 2005 by Charlotte Cook, a creative writing instructor and co-owner of an independent bookstore in Berkeley, KOMENAR focuses on first-time novelists whose work is powerful and often overlooked by major houses. As a writing teacher Cook recognized that a lot of extraordinary talent appears in classes but never makes it to their intended readers.

Now employing a staff of four, KOMENAR has persisted largely because of its fourfold publishing model: it first believes that a novel should be a good read. “Readers are entitled to stories with strong forward momentum, engaging and dynamic characters, and evocative settings,” Cook asserts.

Secondly, KOMENAR takes a very personal approach to booksellers. They attend the conferences of the regional independent bookseller associations, and have close friendships there. Fostering long-term relationships with individual booksellers has been important to KOMENAR as well. They send out “KOMENAR Starter Kits,” with a complimentary copy of each title — that’ll be six in all this fall — not for review, but to actually place on bookstore shelves and sell. When those books sell, the bookseller is expected to reorder. “It’s a great bargain,” says Cook. “We’ve had terrific results from this.”

The third element of KOMENAR’s success has been its design and packaging, which invests each title with an upmarket look that pops out on a shelf or in a catalog. Even their advance readers’ copies are catchy: pint-sized books that feature excerpts from two titles — one on each side. Booksellers find these “mini-editions” a welcome change of pace from the boxes of full-size books sent to them daily by other presses.

Also unusual about KOMENAR is its inclusion of authors: come to a staff meeting and you will likely find several of their authors present and contributing to discussion. Cook explains, “We’re a team, authors and staff alike. Staff sets goals and structure. Authors help brainstorm marketing and provide the social network for publicizing their titles. Each season’s authors benefit from the work of those before and after them.” But don’t expect the unwashed masses to storm the gates: Cook is a shrewd editor — her savvy acquisitions justify KOMENAR’s motto of “compelling fiction for the habitual reader.”

This year, KOMENAR, which distributes its own titles — with fulfillment by Ingram, Baker & Taylor, and Partners West — picked up an extra boost when Parson Weems and George Scheer signed on as sales reps, in New England and Southern regions, respectively. Also added to the roster were consultants George Young and Zak Nelson, contributing to their marketing and publicity efforts.

As the Book Expo in Los Angeles nears and industry professionals scurry to position their latest wares, one crucial element must not be overlooked: the need for a good book to read on the airplane. KOMENAR will continue to fill that modest niche quite nicely in the years to come.

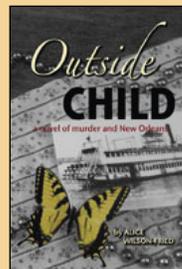
### KOMENAR titles in print



**Over the Edge,  
Marc Kaplan**



**My Half of the Sky,  
Jana McBurney-Lin**



**Outside Child,  
Alice Wilson-Fried**



**Heroes Arise,  
Laurel Anne Hill**

### Fall 2008 releases from KOMENAR Publishing



◀ **The Love We  
All Wait For  
Lee Doyle**

**A Plague of Scoundrels  
Jon Cory** ▶

