The MIT Press Acquires World English Rights to Six Titles from Stanislaw Lem, the Master of Science Fiction

Cambridge, MA, March 20th, 2020 — The MIT Press announces it has acquired world English rights to six titles by Stanislaw Lem, the master of science fiction. Lem (1921–2006), the prolific Polish author of science fiction, philosophy, and satire, has been compared to such writers as Philip K. Dick, Octavia Butler, and Samuel Delany. These titles arrive in time to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Lem’s birth (September 2021).

To be released in February, The MIT Press editions will feature the distinctive art by Przemek Dębowski, created for Lem’s collected works by his Polish publisher Wydawnictwo Literackie. Four of the six titles will feature newly commissioned introductions.

• **The Invincible** (translated by Bill Johnston, with a new foreword by N. Katherine Hayles, Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Program in Literature at Duke University); ISBN: 978-0-262-53847-3.
• **His Master’s Voice** (translated by Michael Kandel, with a new foreword by Seth Shostak, Senior Astronomer at the SETI Institute); ISBN: 978-0-262-53845-9.
• **The Hospital of the Transfiguration** (translated by William Brand); ISBN: 978-0-262-53849-7.

Licensing these titles from the Lem Estate was a dream come true for Associate Acquisitions Editor Susan Buckley: “I have been reading Lem forever! Encountering Lem’s work, along with that of Delany and Dick, was formative for me, pointing to the expansive possibilities for science fiction. Publishing Lem feels like perfect opportunity for the MIT Press to engage with this literary world.” Buckley is optimistic these new editions will bring Lem to a completely new audience.

For Amy Brand, Director of the Press, the acquisition furthers The MIT Press’s commitment to reimagining what a university press can be: “I could not be more excited about the acquisition of these six innovative works from the late Stanislaw Lem. The MIT Press is diving further into the world of science fiction and once
again demonstrating that it remains at the top of its game in university press publishing. We are thrilled to be working with the Lem Estate and hope this partnership continues.”

Wojciech Zemek at the Lem Estate, says, “MIT’s motto ‘mens et manus’ signifies the fusion of academic knowledge with practical purpose. Stanislaw Lem took the phrase ‘science fiction’ literally: it is fiction about science. Since there seems to be a natural affinity between the publisher and the writer, the Lem Estate is thrilled by the prospect of the publication of thought-provoking books by a thought-provoking intuition.”

Michael Duncan, Director of Marketing and Sales, says, “Stanislaw Lem has long been a favorite author of mine, and one that uniquely sits at the juncture of science and literary fiction. His direct writing style combined with the depth of his ideas make him a perfect fit for MIT. I couldn’t be happier to be a part of the press representing his legacy in the Anglophone world.”

And for Sales Manager David Goldberg, the acquisition comes at the perfect time: “We’re thrilled to be launching Stanislaw Lem back into bookstores with new translations in beautiful and collectable trade paperbacks. Between Scholastic’s fall publication of Lem’s Seventh Voyage (featuring recurring astronaut character Ijon Tichy) and the upcoming 100th anniversary of Lem’s birth, this is the perfect moment to introduce the groundbreaking and accessible work of Stanislaw Lem to new generations.”

While further acquisitions from the Lem Estate are under discussion, The MIT Press remains hopeful and committed to furthering Lem’s legacy with these new editions.

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