Books

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Eight new books for your fall reading list

By MICHAEL GILTZ

publishers can find a dozen different roads to the best-seller list — and fall is the season when they each make

a mad dash for success. But which titles are the likely front-runners?

Everything is falling into place for debut novelist Daniel Mason, author of this season's first breakout title, "The Piano Tuner."

His first book arrived in bookstores

Delacorte

(October)

416 pages, \$24.95

with a first printing of 150,000 — far more copies than most books ever see. So it's easy to believe Mason is poised to hit the best-seller list.

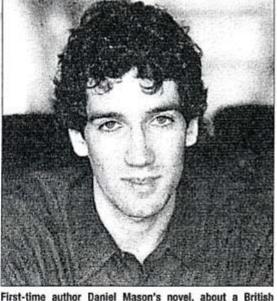
Of course, it helps that

his story — set in 1886, about a British piano tuner sent to Burma on a "Heart of Darkness"-like journey to service a rare Erard grand piano — is worthy of such publicity muscle.

Getting a movie made is a surefire way to spur sales — at least for the paperback. Case in point: "Cloud of Sparrows" (Oct. 1), a rousing tale of Shogun Japan by Takashi Matsuoka. The novel has already been sold to Universal — and Matsuoka is already working on the sequel.

lov Hakim is the bestselling author of ten acclaimed history books for younger readers. Her most ambitious book "Freedom: A History of US" (October) -written for adults as well as older kids - will have a 16-part PBS series, beginning in January, hosted by Katie Couric. Look for appearances by Paul Newman, Robin Williams, Glenn Close, the President and the First Lady.

If you don't have a TV series or movie to promote



First-time author Daniel Mason's novel, about a British plano tuner sent to Burma, is destined to be a best seller.

your work, it helps to come with a good pedigree — and Thomas Steinbeck (son of John) has that in spades. His first collection, "Down to a Soundless Sea" (October), follows pioneers forging into the Monterey Peninsula in the early 1900s.

But if mom or dad wasn't a legendary, Pulitzer Prizewinning author, how about comparing the new book to a best-seller everyone knows.

Expect to

read that Allison Pearson's "I Don't Know How She Does It"

October) is firmly in the Bridget Jones tradition—
except this one covers the territory after a formerly lovelorn gal has married and had a couple of kids. Funny, sharp and poignant, the novel was a hit in the U.K.

Linking your book to a best-seller certainly isn't limited to fiction titles. Les Standiford's "Last Train to Paradise" (Sept. 24), has a compelling but littleknown story, good packaging — and strong blurbs from best-selling authors Carl Hiaasen and Susan Orlean.

Children's books can be similarly marketed. Philip Ardagh is an acclaimed

British author of dozens of bestsellers — in the U.K. at least. Here, he's a virtual unknown. But that may change with the release of "A House Called Awful End" (out now).

A cult following can be useful when marketing a book, too. Rick Altergott has





Fantagraphics 112 pages, \$16.95