



COMUNE DI BOLOGNA



Bologna: the City for Children's Books

The first edition of the Children's Book Fair opened on 4 April 1964 in Palazzo Re Enzo in Bologna's historical centre. Since then, this unique event has been renewed every year by the constant presence of publishers, the enthusiastic participation of illustrators and the international children's book community, and the commitment of educators.

Thanks to the intuition and organisational efforts of **BolognaFiere**, this traditional springtime exhibition has become an irreplaceable occasion for children's book publishers, creating a world where words and images combine and fulfil each other, speaking to the mind – and especially to the heart – of the young and very young, nourishing their imagery and their need for stories.

Today the Children's Book Fair reaches its 50th edition: fifty years of books, exhibits, meetings, plans, and exchanges that represent an enormous legacy of satisfaction for everyone involved, as well as priceless cultural growth for humanity.

Thanks to cooperation between BolognaFiere and the **City of Bologna**, the Children's Book Fair is an occasion for the city to host cultural initiatives devoted to books and literature for children and teenagers. The local territory has many public organizations and private companies that promote reading and children's literature, with numerous opportunities to participate and get acquainted: exhibits, workshops, guided readings, meetings with authors, etc. The city hosts a wealth of initiatives during the Fair, offering discussions, meetings, learning, and fun to children, parents, families, and the general public. All of this makes **Bologna the city for children's books**.

To celebrate the 50th edition of the Fair, "Bologna Città del Libro per Ragazzi" hosts a variety of special events that will animate Bologna on the weekend prior to and, of course, during the Fair, including initiatives produced by BolognaFiere, by the Italian Association of Publishers, and by Sweden (Guest of Honour for the 50th edition), with the cooperation of Bologna's museums and cultural institutions, plus events organised by domestic and foreign publishers and specialists in the field of culture.

In addition, on 25 March the City Council will meet in solemn session to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Children's Book Fair in the presence of Lena Adelsohn Liljeroth, Sweden's Minister of Culture.

Of course, **Bologna University** is participating as well. It is no coincidence that Bologna University offered Italy's first course in children's literature studies, attracting many students and contributing new energy to the world of children's books and publishing. For professors and students alike, the Fair is a unique way to study and receive the very latest information, and this year, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Children's Book Fair, Bologna University will honour **Daniel Pennac**, one of the most important and influential authors on the international scene, with an **honorary degree in Education**.

Every year, the Children's Book Fair invites a foreign country to present a selection of its most important contemporary writers and illustrators, as well as a panorama of its literary and illustrative tradition. The Guest of Honour for the 2013 edition is Sweden, and **YES! Children's Right to Culture: Sweden in Bologna 2013** is an extensive and multifaceted programme of events organised by the Swedish Arts Council and the Swedish Institut. The programme, produced in cooperation with the City of Bologna and BolognaFiere, is hosted in the halls of the Fair as well as in many public places. It is the ideal way to learn about Swedish writers and artists who are already famous in their native land and who may now take advantage of the international showcase offered by Bologna and its Exhibition Centre.