



THE SECOND EDITION OF THE STREGA RAGAZZE E RAGAZZI AWARD THE AWARD CEREMONY FOR THE WINNERS AT THE BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR

Tuesday 21st February. For the second consecutive year the youngest readers have been able to take centre stage thanks to the **Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi Award**, promoted by the **Maria and Goffredo Bellonci Foundation**, **Strega Alberti Benevento SpA**, **BolognaFiere**, the **Bologna Children's Book Fair**, the **Centre for Books and Reading** and **BPER Bank**. These are the **two sets of five finalists** chosen from **88 books entered** in this second edition of the competition (**43** in the category +6, for readers aged between 6 and 10, and **45** in the category +11, for readers aged between 11 and 15):

Category +6

- *Muschio* (Il Castoro) by **David Cirici**
- *Quella peste di Sophie* (Donzelli) by the **Countess of Segur**
- *Maionese, ketchup o latte di soia* (Camelozampa) by **Gaia Guasti**
- *Ulisse racconta* (Einaudi Ragazzi) by **Mino Milani**
- *Maciste in giardino* (Rizzoli) by **Guido Quarzo**

Category +11

- *Ultimo venne il verme* (Bompiani) by **Nicola Cinquetti**
- *L'estate che conobbi il Che* (Rizzoli) by **Luigi Garlando**
- *Nove braccia spalancate* (Edizioni San Paolo) by **Benny Lindelauf**
- *Il viaggio di Lea* (Einaudi Ragazzi) by **Guia Risari**
- *Smart* (Il Castoro) by **Kim Slater**

The selection was made on 28th October by the Scientific Committee, chaired by Tullio De Mauro and composed of **Emma Beseghi** (University of Bologna), **Pino Boero** (University of Genoa), **Ermanno Detti** ("Il pepe verde"), **Mena Ferrara** (teacher), **Milena Minelli** (bookseller), **Mara Mundi** (librarian) and **Riccardo Pontegobbi** ("Liber").

Giovanni Solimine, Tullio De Mauro's successor as the President of the Bellonci Foundation, explains, "*The Foundation in these years has done and continues to do much to divulge the excellence of Italian storytelling and the love for books, interesting readers of all ages. The Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi Award is precisely this: a direct call to action, which is accompanied by other initiatives to promote reading such as those that involve pupils of secondary schools in the selection of the Premio Strega Giovani. This year too the books entered and the two sets of five finalist selected reflect a wide breadth and variety of stories, themes and characters that enable young people to exercise their own critical spirit and their own imagination.*"

"*The Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi Award is an extremely important initiative,*" explains **Franco Boni**, President of **BolognaFiere**, "*to bring youngsters closer to reading. An objective to which we at the Children's Book Fair are highly committed because we hope that children of all of the world, in particular those less fortunate, through books can build the foundations for a better future. We should often remind ourselves how "good children's reading" is fundamental for shaping lives that are rich in values and for this reason we should work enthusiastically to encourage the meeting between the very young and the wonderful world of books.*"

"*The Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi Award is a precious tool to boost reading among the very young, thanks to the direct*



involvement that provides children with an important responsibility,” comments **Romano Montroni**, President of the Centre for Books and Reading, *“contributing to the construction of that approach to reading that is decisive for the pathway of growth and training. What children and young people read today, the themes that they examine on the pages of a book, will continue to accompany them in their lives as adults and citizens.”*

Awarded to narrative works published in Italy, including translations, between the 1st April of the previous year and the 30th June of the current year, the Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi Award was established with the goal of getting to the very **root of the passion for reading** in order to promote its formative and cultural value from infancy and from adolescence. This goal is put into practice by giving direct voice to numerous children and young people aged between 6 and 15 years, whose votes decide the winning stories.

The **prize of 5,000 euros** for each category of the competition, offered by Strega Alberti, will be awarded by a jury of **60 elementary and middle schools** spread all across Italy and beyond and will be presented to the winning authors in Bologna as part of the **Children’s Book Fair (Wednesday 5th April at 2:30pm)**. In the case in which the work to receive the most votes is a translation, a **prize of an equal amount** will be awarded to the translator, offered by BolognaFiere (in the first edition the prize was 2000 euros).

The winners will be announced on Wednesday 5th April at 2.30pm at the Illustrators Café. The event will be presented by journalist and writer Loredana Lipperini and will include speeches by the finalists; Antimo Cesaro, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism; Marilena Pillati, Deputy Mayor of the City of Bologna; Franco Boni, President of BolognaFiere; Giovanni Solimine, President of the Bellonci Foundation; Giuseppe D’Avino, President of Strega Alberti Benevento; Romano Montroni, President of the Centre for Books and Reading; Gian Enrico Venturini, Deputy Director of BPER Banca (the event sponsor). As of this year **BPER Banca** will be awarding a plaque and a cash prize to one of the schools belonging to the jury for the +6 category, while also selecting a winner from the members of the jury for the +11 category.

For the originality of its activities in promoting reading, beginning with the shortlisted books for the +6 category, the **Istituto comprensivo Tartini, Arcobaleno Primary School** in Padua has won 1000 euros to spend on school equipment.

For the best book review written about one of the shortlisted books in the +11 category, **Federico Giovannetti** of the **Istituto comprensivo Strocchi** in Faenza (class IIIE) has been chosen as the winner.

Following the award ceremony the winning authors will be interviewed at 4.30pm in the Illustrators’ Café by Giovanni Nucci and Stefano Petrocchi, director of the Bellonci Foundation.

“The Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi Award – Quali libri ai bambini” (Which books for children) is an event with Romano Montroni, Giovanni Solimine and Elena Pasoli, Exhibition Manager of the Fair, and will be co-ordinated by Giovanni Nucci. The event will take place on Wednesday 5th April at 10.30am in the Authors’ Café.

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