

THE 56TH EDITION OF THE BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR

**THIS YEAR'S EDITION CONFIRMED THE SUCCESS
OF THE LEADING INTERNATIONAL EVENT FOR THE SECTOR
WITH AROUND 29 THOUSAND VISITORS AT THE PAVILIONS OF BOLOGNAFIERE**

EVER MORE FOREIGN VISITORS, +20%

**SHARJAH ANNOUNCED AS THE GUEST OF HONOUR FOR 2020
IN BOLOGNA FROM 30 MARCH TO 2 APRIL**

Today, 4 April, saw the conclusion of the 56th edition of the Bologna Children's Book Fair (BCBF). This year's event opened on 1 April at BolognaFiere. The official statistics once again confirm the success of the Fair that **continues to grow each year: total visitor numbers reached 28,946**, an increase of 5% on 2018. There was also **an increase of 20% in the number of foreign operators: these now make up almost 50% of visitors to the Fair**, which this year saw a renewed and expanded version compared with 2018. **1,442 exhibitors** were in attendance, coming from **more than 80 different countries** and regions of the world, a fact that further underlines the role of the Bologna Children's Book Fair as the most important event for the sector; a Fair that is in continuous expansion, crossing new frontiers and tackling new themes. Next year, for example, the Fair **will host an area dedicated entirely to cartoons and graphic novels for children**.

The **Guest of Honour for next year's edition was also announced: Sharjah** will bring to Bologna the best children's illustrators and authors that the United Arab Emirates has to offer, Sharjah's participation is set to be packed with events both at the Fair and in the city. The programme will be launched during the Sharjah International Book Fair (30 October-9 November 2019).

BOLOGNA FIERE FOR PUBLISHING AROUND THE WORLD

BolognaFiere's international dimension in world publishing is growing constantly: this year's edition also saw the presentation of the **new collaboration between the Bologna Children's Book Fair and Moscow International Book Fair (MIBF) for the organisation of the new International Children's Book Fair in Russia**, the first edition of which will be held in **2021** and in light of which the two fairs are organising two events as part of the next MIBF – Moscow International Book Fair: in fact, the 2019 edition (4-8 September) will host the International Fellowship Program and the first edition of "Children's Books on Stage", a packed programme of conferences, workshops and exhibitions that will return in 2020, from 6 to 2 September, alongside the IBBY International Congress that is also taking place in Moscow.

Other partnerships established with the Bologna Children's Book Fair in recent years are also being consolidated: the **New York Rights Fair** will be taking place this year not only on the same days (29-31 May 2019), but also in the same place (Jacob Javits Center) at BookExpo, constituting the professional sphere at the historic American fair event, and representing for international publishing, the largest and most important event in the United States. Also experiencing continuous growth is the **China Shanghai International Children's Book Fair**, scheduled for the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention centre from 15 to 17 November 2019 with a programme of appointments attended by an increasing number of international publishers.

THE NEW MALL

A crossroads for the thousands of international visitors and a significant new feature at this edition, the Mall, the area between new pavilions 29 and 30, is a fully-fledged hotspot at the Fair, a showcase for numerous initiatives ranging from exhibitions, to the bookshop, to spaces for events and professional meetings. One such event is the **Booksellers Lounge**, managed in collaboration with the Association of Italian Independent Children's Bookshops (ALIR) and a place where children's bookshop owners and managers can meet and share experiences. The initiative was established at the 2018 edition of the Fair and this year it was extended to include also the exhibition "Books about books and bookshops", in addition to a packed programme of events.

THE EXHIBITIONS

There was also significant acknowledgement of the high quality of the 12 exhibitions held at this edition of BolognaFiere and in the city, from the eagerly awaited jewel in the crown the **Illustrators' Exhibition**, and the personal exhibitions for the winners of prizes and acknowledgements from the last edition (**Igor Oleynikov**, winner of the H.C. Andersen Prize 2018; **Vendi Vernić**, who won the 9th edition of the Bologna Children's Book Fair – Fundación SM International Illustration Award; **Masha Titova**, creator of the visual identity of this year's edition of the Fair in collaboration with Chialab), to the new features this year: the exhibition commemorating the 50th anniversary of the **Coretta Scott King Award** and curated by the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature (Abilene, Texas), the finalists of the **Silent Book Contest**, the exhibition **Shanghai Impressions** and the Illustrators Survival Corner and, developing the theme of the many professional uses of illustrations, **I&D – Illustrators & Design**, an exhibition of illustrated products curated by the Bologna Licensing Trade Fair in pavilion 32.

THE AWARDS

The **BOP – Bologna Prize for the Best Children's Publisher of the Year**, the **BolognaRagazzi Award** (BRAW), also in the **Digital and Licensing** version, the **Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi Award**, the **Bologna Children's Book Fair – Fundación SM International Illustration Award**, the **ARS IN FABULA – Grant Award**; the translation competition **In Altre Parole**; the **Silent Book Contest – Gianni De Conno Award**; the first edition of the **Carla Poesio Award**, and last but not least the **Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award**, in a live link up with Sweden. The 56th edition of the Fair was the stage for plenty of lengthy applause for the winners of the world's most important accolades for the sector.

THE CONVENTIONS

The **Fair's 250 appointments** were also received with great enthusiasm: the meeting **WELCOME TO CHINESE MARKET. A GREAT HOME FOR CHILDREN'S CONTENT**, with the presentation of a detailed examination of the children's publishing market in China, one of the world's most flourishing markets; the Afro-American culture at the heart of **BLACK BOOKS MATTER. African American Words and Colors**; **HANDWRITING IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS AN ESSENTIAL AND EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL TOOL**, a convention organised in collaboration with SMED (the Italian association promoting handwriting in the digital age); the meeting **TIME IS ON THEIR SIDE. WOMEN IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS** on the now unavoidable theme of "great women"; **TODDLERS. THE VERY FIRST BOOKS FOR ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS**, an international convention on books for children aged 0 to 3 years; the analysis of statistics and data on the market for audiobooks with **LISTEN UP!** and the appointment organised in collaboration with Bookrepublic. Another great success was **CHILDREN'S BOOKSELLERS ON STAGE. INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BOOKSELLERS CONFERENCE**, organised in collaboration with the Association for Independent Children's Bookshops (ALIR), on their role in publishing and the promotion of literature for children and young people.

For the first time the Fair was also the venue for **TheKidsWantMobile**, the world's leading event for app

developers, an appointment that sold out within a week of being announced.

The digital platform for the Bologna Children's Book Fair underlined its role this year as an integrated hub of tools and online services to extend and optimise the BCBF experience: **more than 1 million views of the event website, 145,000 unique users (60% of whom from abroad), 34,000 users** registered for the online services. The **App was downloaded more than 2,500 times (+25% on 2018)** and the event reached **50,000 fans** on Facebook, **36,300** on Instagram and **11,000** on Twitter.

Over the four days of the event more than **820 journalists were accredited (+14% on 2018)**, of whom **235 came from abroad (+18%) from 42 countries**. **More than 1000 articles** about the Fair have been published so far in the national and foreign press that have been filling the press room at the BCBF and there have also been numerous radio and TV broadcasts all over the world.

BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR

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