

BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR



IMMERSE
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CONTENT

8-11 APRIL
2024
BOLOGNA
ITALY



THE 61ST BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR

At the BolognaFiere Exhibition Centre from 8 to 11 April, together with BolognaBookPlus and Bologna Licensing Trade Fair/Kids: the fair begins a new decade with initiatives to further expand the involvement of industry professionals and to support emerging and minority markets

The new TV/Film Rights Centre, collaborations with the United Nations and the Society of Illustrators in New York, Slovenia Guest of Honour Country and a focus on Africa

BOOM! Crescere nei libri - the programme of initiatives in Bologna - featuring the first exhibition in Italy of the great Belgian illustrator and author Anne Brouillard

2024 is the year of the 61st edition of the **Bologna Children's Book Fair (BCBF)**, the Fair that is meeting place for the worldwide children's book community to trade in copyrights, an active hub promoting debate on the present and future of publishing and stimulating the birth of new ideas.

BCBF is due to take place at BolognaFiere from **8 to 11 April 2024** together with its "sister" events **BolognaBookPlus (BBPlus)**, the extension dedicated to generalist publishing produced in collaboration with the Italian Publishers Association (AIE), and **Bologna Licensing Trade Fair/Kids (BLTF/K)**, specifically for brands and the licensing of content for children and young people.

After the festive edition of 2023 celebrating 60 years of BCBF, the halls of the BolognaFiere Exhibition Centre hosts a new edition this year featuring an expected **1,500 exhibitors from approximately 100 countries and regions of the world** (new entries include: Angola, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Cameroon, Colombia, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Principality of Monaco, Moldova, Paraguay, Philippines, Togo and Uganda) together with new initiatives providing in-depth analysis and support for the global publishing industry made possible thanks to the support of ITA-the Italian Trade Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI).

Also marking an edition filled with new stimuli and looking keenly to the future is the **admission of Bologna Children's Book Fair as a Patron Member of the International Publishers Association (IPA)**, the largest worldwide federation of national, regional, and specialist publishers' associations, based in Geneva and founded in 1896 in Paris to promote and defend copyright and publishing freedom. BCBF's admission to the IPA marks a further step forward for the Fair, bringing it even closer to publishers from all over the world and more capable of picking up on, and responding to, their needs.



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IN CHILDREN'S
CONTENT

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Elena Pasoli, Director of Bologna Children's Book Fair, states: *Becoming a patron member of the IPA - International Publishers Association - represents for us an important recognition of the work we have been doing for over sixty years in the service of the international children's publishing community and, for the past four years, with BolognaBookPlus, of general publishing. A service that is first and foremost valuable dialogue and debate, alongside the sharing of those fundamental principles related to copyright protection and freedom of publication. As a book fair - across the trade publishing spectrum - being part of the IPA will be an additional stimulus for us to collaborate and participate actively and constructively in the debate around the great challenges facing the publishing industry at such a complex historical moment as this.*

GUEST OF HONOUR COUNTRY

For the 2024 edition **Slovenia** is **Guest of Honour Country**, an opportunity for publishers from all over the world to experience the country's rich publishing scene, promoted at the fair through the exhibition ***And then what happens?*** that showcases the works of 59 contemporary Slovenian illustrators, plus numerous discussion panels, as well as various activities in the city for the general public.

THEMES AND GUESTS

Eagerly awaited authors and illustrators featuring in Bologna include: **Ximo Abadia, Emma Adbåge, Beatrice Alemagna, Mac Barnett, Anne Brouillard, Nadine Brun-Cosme, Davide Calì, Nat Cardozo, Kitty Crowther, Max de Radiguès, Julia Donaldson, Linde Faas, GUD, Ulrich Hub, Jenny Jägerfeld, Oliver Jeffers, Aviaq Johnston, Joëlle Jolivet, Benjamin Lacombe, Philippe Lechermeier, Leonard Marcus, Lorenzo Mattotti, Bart Moeyaert, Jérémie Moreau, Roger Olmos, Neil Packer, Lincoln Peirce, Victor D.O. Santos, Lola Shoneyin, Axel Scheffler, Olivier Tallec, Øyvind Torseter, Hervé Tullet, Paloma Valdivia and Edward van De Vendel, Cao WenXuan.**

Among the themes taking centre stage at the Fair's focus sessions and debates, **sustainability** plays a prominent role as a key issue for the global publishing industry. On this topic, books are also shaping the worldview of the citizens of tomorrow. In collaboration with the United Nations and the International Publishers Association (IPA), a programme of panel discussions explores the topic in depth. Space is also given to **foreign markets**: from the aforementioned **Slovenia** to **China**, a country with which BCBF has built a solid relationship based on collaboration over a number of years, also as co-organiser of the China Shanghai International Children's Book Fair (CCBF). The focus on **Africa** also continues in parallel with appointments that aim to bring together the expertise of the publishers exhibiting at BCBF with the emerging and multi-faceted publishing of this rich continent. Due attention is also paid to the **cultures of indigenous minorities** and the representation in "mainstream" publishing of authors and themes linked to **African-American and Afro-Latin-American stories**.

The challenges **Artificial Intelligence** poses to publishing is discussed at a programme of panels with international guests from various professional backgrounds, who debate approaches, visions and possible scenarios.



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The focus on one of the most interesting sectors of the contemporary publishing industry, and the one that is expanding the most, also continues: **Comics** once again play a leading role at BCBF this year, with international publishers gathered at the Comics Corner and numerous panel discussions examining the experiences of individual countries with more, and less, consolidated traditions, as well as the new trend of comics for very young children. Space is also made for one of the central themes of BCBF since the fair's inception: two meetings explore the story and the background of **picture books**, books that transmit knowledge that is at the service of the human capacity to interpret and acquire consciousness, foreshadowing answers to the questions of the present.

THE COLLABORATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

A new feature for 2024 is the important collaboration with the United Nations, which has led to the creation (also in collaboration with the International Publishers Association - IPA) of shared initiatives on sustainability, the seas and children's rights: the panel discussion "**Reading for a Healthy Planet: Inspiring Children's Books to Help Achieve a Sustainable Future**" and the round table "**Sea of Stories: The Science, History, and Cultural Importance of the Sea in Children's Literature**", the exhibition *Reading for a Healthy Planet: Inspiring Children's Books to Help Achieve a Sustainable Future*, showcasing the best titles concerning sustainability issues, and "**Reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**" (9 April, Illustrators Café, 4.00-4.40 pm), a collective reading of the UDHR with the participation of authors and illustrators from all over the world, each reading in their own language.

SPOTLIGHT

ON

AFRICA

BCBF's focus on emerging publishing markets is a journey that began some time ago. Returning in 2024 for its third edition is Spotlight on Africa, the programme developed with the support of ITA-the Italian Trade Agency and the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, offering a prominent space to around 30 excellent African publishers from 15 countries of the continent at a dedicated exhibition area within BCBF. A matchmaking programme involving African, Italian and international publishers has been scheduled, together with networking opportunities and seminars on key publishing industry issues held by international publishing professionals.

In addition to the packed line-up of events, and thanks to the collaboration between **BCBF, Aké Arts and Book Festival** and **Mimaster Illustrazione**, an **online illustration course** for African illustrators is due to be launched. An integral part of the course programme will be a **Contest for African illustrators** that will form the basis for an **exhibition of African illustration at BCBF 2025**.

THE NEW TV/FILM RIGHTS CENTRE AND THE SPACES AT THE BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR



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IN CHILDREN'S
CONTENT

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For at least twenty years, visitors to BCBF have regularly included producers and professionals from the world of TV and film “on the hunt” for new stories and characters to turn into TV and film productions and animations. Starting with this edition, BCBF offers professionals from these sectors the new **TV/Film Rights Centre**, a business area created as part of BLTF/K with the collaboration of Book on a Tree, to welcome film and TV producers by fostering networking opportunities with the publishing world to encourage more book-to-screen projects. This space complements the **Rights Centre**, which this year has a completely renovated layout. As of last year’s edition the Rights Centre is not only open to publishing rights professionals involved in the children’s sector, but also to those active in the adult sector as well as publishers exhibiting at BCBF and BBPlus, thereby serving as a priority venue for the trade in copyrights for children’s content.

With the broadening scope of publishing trends, combined with the BCBF’s growing international dimension – each year sees the arrival of publishers from more and more countries around the world – the fair proposes numerous specialist areas that bring together professionals from the same specific sector or geographical area, or those interested in deepening their knowledge of the same topics: the **Comics Corner**, the exhibition area dedicated to publishers of comics and graphic novels, one of the fastest growing segments of the publishing sector; the **Translators Centre**, a space specifically for translators or those who intend to specialise in the translation of children’s literature, and a venue for meetings, seminars and important collaborations; the **Audio HQ**, a space dedicated to audio as part of BBPlus; **PublisHer**, an initiative created in 2019 by **Bodour Al Qasimi** (founder and CEO of Kalimat Group, United Arab Emirates) to empower women in publishing and address the continuing gender imbalance in the industry, which at BCBF 2024 holds a series of meetings as well as special awards and networking opportunities. But also the **International Bookshop** and the **Book Lovers’ Café**, an area specifically for meetings about the latest developments in publishing, which this year has been expanded and located in the scenic elevated gallery between Hall 25 and Hall 26.

THE AWARDS AT BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR

A showcase for the best of the world’s publishing, BCBF influences and guides trends in the sector through its now well-established awards: the **BOP - Bologna Prize for the Best Children’s Publishers of the Year** acknowledges the best publishers in each area of the world; the **BolognaRagazzi Awards** for books is divided into several categories, including the special 2024 category The Sea, as well as the new permanent Toddler category; the **BolognaRagazzi CrossMedia Award** recognises publishing projects that have been successfully transposed onto other media. This year, the awards also feature the special prize **The Extraordinary Award to an Extraordinary Book**, awarded to *Bambini nascosti* by Franco Matticchio, published by Vànvere Edizioni. The book wins for its ability to render a lucid and masterful portrait of the invisibility of childhood, a poetic and disenchanting tribute to all the disappeared, hidden and lost children of all times. And many Italian books have earned special mentions.

Featuring again at the Fair is the announcement of the **Strega Prize Ragazze e Ragazzi for Best Picture Book**. There are also opportunities for those selected for the *Illustrators Exhibition* with the **ARS IN FABULA - Grant Award** and the **Bologna**



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Children's Book Fair - Fundación SM International Award for Illustration. The BolognaBookPlus awards: **Talking Pictures**, for the best visual books from Ukraine; the **Indie Authors Book Jacket Award**, with the aim of giving visibility to the best covers by self-published authors; and the **Bologna Licensing Awards**, prizes for licensors/agencies, licensees and retailers related to the development of intellectual property and brands during 2023. The 2024 edition of BCBF sees the introduction of the new **Best Licensed Sustainable Project** category.

Finally, PublisHer is launching the new **PublisHer Excellence Awards** to acknowledge female publishing professionals who have made a difference in the industry. But BCBF also offers its world stage for the presentation of important industry prizes: the **Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award**, the **Hans Christian Andersen Award** and the **IBBY Reading Promotions Awards** are announced during the fair.

THE EXHIBITIONS AT THE BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR 2024

Alongside the customary **Illustrators Exhibition** are solo exhibitions for **Paloma Valdivia**, **Inês Oliveira** and **Andrea Antinori** (respectively, the illustrators of the cover of the Illustrators Annual 2024, the Fair's 2024 Visual Identity, and winner of the Bologna Children's Book Fair - Fundación SM International Award for Illustration) and **Mauro Evangelista. Visions. Illustrations 1991 | 2024**, dedicated to the recently deceased artist and founder of the School of Illustration.

A new feature is the first edition of the exhibition **Chinese Excellence in Children's Illustration**, which brings the best of Chinese illustration to the attention of the publishing world gathered at BCBF; for the first time The Original Art award, presented by the Society of Illustrators of New York is featured with the exhibition **The Original Art. Celebrating The Fine Art Of Children's Book Illustration**; the collection of the best publishing projects nominated for the BRAW, **The BRAW Amazing Bookshelf**, plus **And then what happens?**, an exhibition of the best of contemporary Slovenian illustration, organised by the 2024 Guest of Honour Country; **Reading for a Healthy Planet: Inspiring Children's Books to Help Achieve a Sustainable Future**, a selection of books on the theme of sustainability, to draw attention to this crucial issue in collaboration with the United Nations and the International Publishers Association; **When Everything Matters**, a tribute to Ukrainian illustration, in collaboration with Pictoric and International Book Arsenal Festival; the established **Silent Book Contest - Gianni De Conno Award**, ending with the BolognaBookPlus exhibition **Jackets Off**, dedicated to the different interpretations of the cover of *War and Peace* that have been published around the world.

BOLOGNABOOKPLUS

BBPlus, the area dedicated to generalist publishing, is back for its 4th consecutive year with **more than 50 exhibitors from 19 countries and regions**, book design exhibitions, awards and a wide range of training courses for professionals, ranging from self-publishing to the sale of rights, from representation to scouting for authors. Also returning are the Author Ambassador initiatives - whose guest this year is author **Neil Packer** - as well as a special focus on **India: "India in the Limelight"** is an initiative showcasing the rich publishing scene in this large and fast-growing market, with Indian National



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IN CHILDREN'S
CONTENT

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Book Trust as a key strategic partner. The Indian stand is at the centre of BolognaBookPlus, and their presence is complemented by a series of seminars, discussions and networking. Added to the seminar programme is the **Audio Forum**, a line-up of big names from the world of audio publishing analysing different markets, podcasts, audio for children and more. In addition to the Forum, BBPlus is also hosting a space at the fair dedicated to audio, entitled **Audio HQ**.

BOLOGNA LICENSING TRADE FAIR/KIDS

The new edition of BLTF/K is packed with content and services. In addition to the **exhibition area**, where more than **1,000 brands and items of intellectual property** are represented, and the **events room** for brand presentations, the **Licensing Business Lounge** hosts the new TV/Film Rights Centre section, with more than 300 meetings organised between registered audiovisual producers and publishers exhibiting at BCBF. Then **the 4th edition of the International Kids Licensing Days (IKLD)**: the three-day panel on the latest trends in licensing and publishing takes place from 8 to 10 April, with important focuses on **gaming, Artificial Intelligence and adaptations from books to audio-visual formats**. Eventually, the fair also features the awards ceremony of the **7th edition of the Bologna Licensing Awards** - the only industry accolade in Italy for international licensors/agencies, licensees and retailers, concerning the development of intellectual property and brands - that attracted this year a total of **182 entries from all over Europe**

BCBF IN THE CITY

Like every year, the energy, creativity, ideas, and content that gather at the Bologna Children's Book Fair are set to overflow from the exhibition halls, filling cultural venues, libraries, schools, and buildings around the city of Bologna in a dispersed festival with a rich and varied line-up of events specifically for the general public of adults and children.

BOOM! - Crescere nei libri is the title of the **programme of initiatives in the city (from 4 April to 9 June)**, organised by the Municipality of Bologna and BolognaFiere, curated by the Libraries and Cultural Welfare Sector together with Hamelin as part of the Bologna Reading Pact, and enjoying the patronage of IBBY - International Board on Books for Young people, Italy. The schedule includes the **first exhibition in Italy** of the great Belgian illustrator and author **Anne Brouillard**, as well as more than 40 exhibition events, 74 workshops and 50 meetings with authors.

Finally, the new **Off FAIR*24**, curated by Accademia Drosselmeier is a programme that starts in Bologna and transports the wealth of books that feature at the Fair to various Italian and foreign cities throughout the year, thus making them a shared heritage.

Press Office Bologna Children's Book Fair

Lisa Oldani +39 349 4788358 – annalisaoldani@gmail.com
Claudia Tanzi +39 340 1098885 – ct.claudiatanzi@gmail.com

Press Office Bologna Children's Book Fair/BolognaFiere SpA

Gregory Picco, tel. +39 051 282862 – cell. +39 3346012743 – gregory.picco@bolognafiere.it



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CONTENT

**8-11 APRIL
2024
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#BCBF24
#BolognaBookPlus
#BBPlus24
#BLTFK
#BLTFK24

HASHTAGS

#IllustratorsExhibition
#BRAW24
#BRAWCrossMedia
#PremioStregaRagazzeERagazzi
#TheIllustratorsSurvivalCorner
#OpenUp
#boppist
#BOP24
#IllustratorsWall



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