

**THE WINNER OF THE INTERNATIONAL BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOKFAIR ILLUSTRATION AWARD -
FUNDACION SM 2018 HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED.
THE YOUNG CROATIAN ILLUSTRATOR VENDI VERNIĆ WINS THE NINTH EDITION OF THE AWARD**

Croatian illustrator Vendi Vernić wins the ninth edition of the International Bologna Children's Bookfair Illustration Award - Fundacion SM 2018. She was selected among illustrators under 35 years of age: this year's edition counter 3053 candidates coming from 72 countries and regions. A total of 15.265 plates were examined by the international jury.

The award was established to encourage and support young emerging talents, introducing them to professionals of the industry. Founded in 2009, the initiative involves all young illustrators under 35 years of age who are selected for the Illustrator's Exhibition.

It is an important prize, awarding the winner with a 15000 dollar check to allow the artist to spend one year illustrating a book which will then be published and launched worldwide by the spanish publishing house SM and which will be presented at next year's edition of the Fair, along with a personal exhibition of the artist.

The judging panel of the award comprises Steven Guarnaccia (illustrator, designer and Professor of Illustration at the Parsons New School for Design in New York), Katsumi Komagata (author and curator of catalogues and exhibitions), Maria-Fernanda Paz Castillo (editorial director of SM Colombia editions and director of Cataplum Editorial) saw the potential in this young artist to speak up and express a voice of her own in contemporary illustration through her works of art so full of poetry, charm, humour and, at the same time, a sense of sterness.

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The jury decided to recognize this artist's conceptual and technical skills and her ability:

- to combine many techniques into a coherent whole without it being fragmented
- to communicate character and atmosphere in a very evocative way with a minimum of detail
- to work in a tradition, while not being confined by that tradition, and to do so with a contemporary and very personal voice
- to convey the evocative atmosphere of the 19th-20th centuries, while giving each image its own atmosphere, all illustrations fitting together into one narrative
- to deploy a great wealth of ideas into a single narrative.

This young artist has a strong potential to develop a unique voice in contemporary illustration. Her work is poetic, and has charm, humour and gravity.

For these reasons the jury decided to award the 2018 Bologna Children's Book Fair - Fundación SM International Award for Illustration to Vendi Vernić.

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