

**58<sup>th</sup> BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR  
14 – 17 June 2021**

***THE SYMBIOTIC NETWORK OF CHILDREN'S CONTENT***

**OPEN UP – THE BCBF SKILL BOX**

**New online events for professionals at Bologna Children's Book Fair**

***The Illustrators Exhibition, The Children-Spectators Exhibition  
and Discovering Dante Through Pictures***

**The new BolognaRagazzi CrossMedia Award  
and the special Poetry category of the BolognaRagazzi Award**

Although 2020 put a stop to traditional “live” in-person events, it brought a challenge that fuelled rethinking of the world's most important children's publishing event, producing a broad range of new projects and events.

Bologna Children's Book Fair is sending a message of confidence in the future to the international community of children's publishing with the new activities in the run-up to the 58<sup>th</sup> edition scheduled for 14 – 17 June 2021 at BolognaFiere, as well as new developments that will become permanent fixtures of the trade show.

The **BCBF Global Rights Exchange**, the international copyright trading and content licensing platform has got underway in partnership with PubMatch within the framework of ALDUS – European Book Fairs Network, a project co-funded by the European Union as part of the Creative Europe programme.

**Open Up – The BCBF Skill Box** is a completely new year-round digital environment reaching out to the Children's Book Fair community throughout the year with skilling and learning opportunities in the many sectors involved in children's publishing.

Partnered by AIE – the Italian Publishers' Association, in the framework of the project Aldus Up, BolognaFiere now embraces the wider publishing world with an exciting new series of events aimed at broadening BCBF's reach to the publishing industry in general with the programme **BolognaBookPlus**. As was seen last year, the sector is very resilient, able to adjust to ongoing changes and the rise of new priorities. With BolognaBookPlus, BCBF takes an in-depth look at the new challenges facing a global industry as production, distribution and the reader attitudes change and new business models and technology pose issues of accessibility, sustainability and inclusivity.

Then there are the exhibitions. Selection of the artworks for the **Illustrators Exhibition** has just been concluded by the prestigious international jury. The third edition of **The Children-Spectators** will get underway, and the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dante's death will be marked by the Exhibition of illustrated children's books of the poet's work entitled **Discovering Dante Through Pictures**, organized by the Ravenna City Cultural Department – Biblioteca Classense and BCBF – BolognaFiere, and curated by the Accademia Drosselmeier.

In addition, the **BolognaRagazzi Award** has a new crossmedia digital prize and a Special 2021 Poetry Category.

**OPEN UP – THE BCBF SKILL BOX**

**Open Up – The BCBF Skill Box** is the first of the new projects, picking up on the wide-ranging 2020 edition that for the first time opened its “digital” doors to the full spectrum of enthusiasts and children's book lovers as well as sector professionals.

Bologna Children's Book Fair has opened up a whole new virtual space where professions, skills and cultures meet, sparking exchange and growth. The calendar of events extends the trade show's activities to cover the whole year with live and on-demand international conferences, masterclasses, portfolio reviews,

workshops and special projects: unique opportunities to meet with experts and frontrunners in the world of books and content for children.

Upcoming events include: 23 March – the jurors selecting the Illustrators Exhibition will meet to answer questions from the 226 finalists; 9 April: a deep dive into the world of kids magazines with guest speakers from Anorak, Internazionale Kids, and Zeit Leo; from 26 April to 31 August - now in its second year – the digital Illustrators Wall will invite illustrators, graphic artists, and artists, whether affirmed names or at the outset of their careers to post their work and contact details.

More information on these and other schedules can be had at: <http://www.bookfair.bolognafiere.it/open-up/10613.html>

## **ILLUSTRATORS EXHIBITION**

The traditional Illustrators Exhibition returns for its 55<sup>th</sup> edition. A unique showcase closely followed by sector professionals throughout the world, the exhibition is a gateway to recognition for emerging talents and a privileged stage for affirmed artists.

The **76 sets of illustrations** selected this year are artworks by **77 illustrators** hailing from **23 countries**. Digital technology streamlined the selection process by the International Jury, as usual chosen ad hoc for each edition of the Book Fair. Juror smet several times to view and assess the work of some **3235 candidates** from **68 different nationalities**, accessing virtual space instead of being confronted with infinite array of tables – usually more than 450! – displaying all the entries. This new digital dimension will also broaden the Exhibition's public, allowing illustration lovers or simply the curious all over the world to 'visit' the **BCBF Galleries** portal as was the case at last year's Book Fair, which, you will remember, was entirely online.

The Jury, made up of **Beatrice Alemagna** (author and illustrator, Italy/France), **Atak** - Georg Barber (artist, graphic designer and illustrator lecturer, Germany), **Suzanne Carnell** (Publisher Two Hoots, UK), **Kiyoko Matsuoka** (Associate Director and Curator, Itabashi Art Museum, Japan) and **Maria Russo** (Editorial Director, Minedition US, USA) were faced with a particularly important task this year that bore witness to a unique phenomenon experienced by all candidates wherever in the world. The Jury chose to highlight the different artistic responses to the desire for freedom and release from a situation beyond their control.

Prior to choosing the 76 winning projects for the Exhibition, the International Jury shortlisted 300 finalists. The 226 who did not make the final cut will, however, be offered broad visibility. For the first time in the history of the Exhibition, their work will be posted on the Bologna Children's Book Fair website, and they will be offered an opportunity to attend the online portfolio review "Ask the juror!" and speak with the jurors who evaluated their work. Their work will also be centre stage in the project **Around the World in 226 Illustrations, a live meeting on the BCBF Facebook page on 24 March when author, illustrator and blogger Anna Castagnoli** will take her audience on a journey across the world to discover the styles and subjects trending in other countries at other competitions and on the publishing scene.

Following the June trade show, the 76 sets of winning illustrations will begin a two-year multi-venue exhibition to important art museums around the world, starting with Japan and China. All the works will be published in the **Illustrators Annual**, the traditional catalogue curated by **Corraini**, whose cover illustration on alternate years is by the winner of the H. C. Andersen Award and the Grand Prix BIB - Biennial of Illustration Bratislava. This year's author is **Albertine** (Switzerland), winner of the H.C. Andersen 2020 Prize, who will also have a solo exhibition that can be visited free-of-charge on the BCBF Galleries platform.

There are visibility and professional opportunities also for the youngest illustrators. All participants under 35 are automatically candidates for the **International Award for Illustration Bologna Children's Book Fair - Fundación SM** offering a year-long scholarship (15,000 Euros) during which the winner creates and publishes a picturebook whose illustrations are then shown in a personal exhibition at the next Book Fair. In addition, a young artist selected for the Illustrators Exhibition will be chosen to create **BCBF 2022's**

**Visual Identity** in collaboration with the design studio Chialab. The young artist chosen in 2020 to design the 2021 visual identity was 24-year-old Parisian **Jean Mallard**, already winner in 2018 of the ARS IN FABULA - Grant Award.

Since 2012, the Ars in Fabula School of Illustration has partnered Bologna Children's Book Fair to make available the **ARS IN FABULA - Grant Award**, a scholarship that each year gives an unpublished artist under 30 from the Illustrators Exhibition the opportunity to attend the ARS IN FABULA - Masters in Illustration for Publishing, working on a book project assigned by one of the school's partner publishers.

### **CHILDREN SPECTATORS**

Bologna Children's Book Fair is a partner in the 4-year research project **Mapping - A map on the aesthetics of performing arts for early years** investigating how very young children (0 – 6 years) relate to the performing arts. Funded by the European Union, the project involves 18 partners from 17 countries, including Bologna's **La Baracca - Testoni Ragazzi**, Teatro per la Gioventù e l'Infanzia, and consists of an annual illustration competition on the theme "children spectators" and an exhibition of the selected artworks held during the book fair. The project will conclude in 2023 with an itinerant exhibition of the best illustrations from the four editions of the competition together with the works of four great international artists: Katsumi Komagata (Japan), Manuel Marso (Spain), Fabian Negrin (Italy), and Klaas Verplancke (Belgium).

**584 illustrators from 61 countries and regions** of the world entered their work for this third edition. **36 winners from 20 countries and regions** were chosen by the Jury of professionals, this year made up of **Roberto Frabetti** (La Baracca - Testoni Ragazzi, president of the jury), **Giorgia Grilli** (University of Bologna), **Giulia Orecchia** (illustrator) and **Maurizio Quarello** (illustrator, Macerata Academy of Fine Arts). Their works and those of the winners of the two previous editions can be viewed on the BCBF Galleries online portal and on Visioni Online, La Baracca -Testoni Ragazzi's site of its "Visioni di futuro, visioni di teatro" Festival.

### **DISCOVERING DANTE THROUGH PICTURES**

In a year commemorating Dante, the **Ravenna City Culture Department - Biblioteca Classense** and **BCBF - BolognaFiere** have organized the exhibition **Discovering Dante Through Pictures, designed and curated by Accademia Drossemeier - Cooperativa Stoppani**. The show will be presented digitally on the **BCBF Galleries** platform at the start of the 58<sup>th</sup> Children's Book Fair on **14 June** and then shown physically at the Biblioteca Classense after the summer, after which it will travel to other venues in Italy and then abroad.

The world's premier children's publishing trade show will therefore be a key player in the Dante celebrations, considering the poet's work from its own sector viewpoint, i.e., in terms of the long tradition of visual art depicting his works. The vast array of illustrated works ranges from ancient illuminated and printed volumes, and paintings continues today in cinema and comics. Many authoritative professionals confirm they first approached Dante's *Divine Comedy* through illustrated books. The joint effort by three important cultural institutions around this exhibition on children's books dedicated to Dante is further confirmation of the sector's awareness of its important role in preserving memory and passing down our cultural roots to younger generations.

For even if today we have innumerable illustrations of Dante's Inferno, its sinners, strange animals, darkness and fear but also of the peaceful images of Paradise that encourage young readers to look up into the heavens, this was not always the case. The first abridged versions of *The Divine Comedy* appeared in Italy only in 1921 to mark the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the poet's death. It was only at the turn of the new millennium that the shelves of children's books began to be filled with works inspired by Dante, as key children's authors like Roberto Piumini, Angela Nanetti, Beatrice Masini and Luigi Garlando decided to give the world their own personal interpretation of his work. The exhibition will include a gallery of past and contemporary authors and great illustrators of works on Dante ranging from children's books to cartoons, including the famous Disney school of artists.

Together they offer a wealth of techniques and atmospheres in a colourful kaleidoscope of one of the most important journeys in the history of literature.

**Illustrators include:** William Blake, Gustave Doré, Walter Crane, Carlo Salodini, Roberto Innocenti, Altan, Satoshi Kitamura, Desideria Guicciardini, Beatrice Tinarelli, Luca Novelli, Michael Bardeggia, Giuseppe Palumbo, Marco Somà, Matteo Berton, Marino Neri, Manuela Trimboli, Seymour Chwast, Lorenzo Mattotti, Milton Glaser, Moebius, Tommaso Levente Tani, Marcello [Toninelli], Angelo Bioletto, Giulio Chierchini, Giada Perissinotto – Andrea Cagol, and Alessandro Sanna.

### **BOLOGNARAGAZZI CROSSMEDIA AWARD AND THE SPECIAL POETRY CATEGORY**

BCBF has closely following developments of digital products for children since the 1990s. After exploring the first software programmes, ebooks, the world of Apps and all the other new ventures producing by the creative use of new technology, the Bologna Book Fair has this year completely overhauled its traditional BolognaRagazzi Digital Award, focusing on publishers' efforts to develop cross-media projects. The aim of this entirely new **BolognaRagazzi CrossMedia Award** – project also organized in the framework of Aldus Up - is to pick up the best editorial projects that successfully expand their narrative universe into other media or give narrative extension to projects developed for other media. The International BolognaRagazzi CrossMedia Award Jury - made up of experts in interactive and graphic design, new media, video games, film and television production - has the task of identifying books coming from multimedia projects and narrative that has successfully and convincingly crossed over from the traditional publishing genre and been migrated, intersected or extended to other platforms such as tv, films, videogames, mobile devices or smart speakers. Not only completing the array of BolognaRagazziAwards, this new prize writes a decisive new chapter in the landscape of children's publishing awards.

Another new **BolognaRagazzi Award – BRAW** feature is the Bologna Children's Book Fair prize for the best, most innovative picturebooks in the 2021 Special **Poetry** Category. With this prize, BCBF pays tribute to the wealth of poetry for children and young adults released in recent years, an art form and literary genre that resonates with curious young minds as they discover the world and especially, seek significance. This special award category is of course flanked by the 4 traditional prizes: Bologna Children's Book Fair's Fiction, Non-Fiction, Opera Prima (debut work by author and illustrators) e-Comics, for the comics and graphic novel genre – and the special New Horizons Award.

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