

BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR



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THE 61ST BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR

THE BOLOGNARAGAZZI AWARDS: THE WINNERS AND SPECIAL MENTIONS OF THE 2024 EDITION

The awards showcasing the very best of global publishing

Record numbers: more than 3300 titles from 65 countries and regions of the world

The Extraordinary Award for an Extraordinary Book goes to *Bambini nascosti* published by Vànvere Edizioni

3,355 titles submitted from 65 countries and regions of the world: these are the numbers of the 2024 BolognaRagazzi Awards – BRAW. **Record-breaking** interest in the annual Bologna Children's Book Fair awards aimed at highlighting the most beautiful and innovative illustrated books published all over the world in the recent period. This success points to a thriving publishing market and confirms the importance, acknowledged by publishers all over the world, of BCBF's scouting activities that are capable of intercepting new publishing trends, which go on to star at the Fair, and developing relationships with new countries and regions.

Armenia, Benin, Costa Rica, Haiti, Macau, Puerto Rico and Thailand are just some of the countries to have submitted titles for BRAW for the very first time this year.

One of the most prestigious children's publishing awards worldwide, the BRAW represent a significant business opportunity for the award-winning publishers. Winning one of the prizes or a earning a special mention enables them to bring their work to the attention of the global publishing industry gathered at BCBF and potentially sell the publishing rights of the award-winning book, also thanks to BCBF's substantial promotional work both at the fair and online. Opportunities to boost visibility are not reserved solely for the winning titles but are also available for a wide selection of the best books submitted (over 100 titles) that are showcased at the Fair in ***The BRAW Amazing Bookshelf*** exhibition.

The award has five main categories: **Fiction**, **Non-Fiction**, **Opera Prima** (for debut authors and illustrators), **Comics** (for comics and graphic novels) and **Toddler** (the new permanent category). The jury can also award the special prize **New Horizons** to a work considered to be particularly innovative. Alongside the main categories, other special categories can also be proposed each year. For the 2024 edition, these are: the special category **The Sea** and, for the first time, **The Extraordinary Award for an Extraordinary Book**, a special prize created to acknowledge a title that has touched the jury in an exceptional way. This year the prize goes to the Italian book *Bambini nascosti* (Hidden Children) by Franco Matticchio, published by Vànvere Edizioni. The jury explain:



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Matticchio's cultured, refined, elegantly ironic and subtly grotesque illustration style presents an essential text consisting of a Dantean incipit and a long list of names, interrupted by a short poem (donated to the author by Vincenzo Mollica). Within the illustrations, the attentive gaze of the reader can discover figures of children cleverly hidden in the drawings. This game of hide-and-seek, combined with quotations and references to names of cultural and historical personalities, also suggests to the reader a temptation or a doubt as to whether it is right to reveal where the hidden children are, because perhaps once seen, out there, they might be in danger. Extraordinarily powerful in its apparent simplicity, effective and touching on many levels, the book paints a lucid and masterly portrait of the invisibility of childhood, unseen and ignored in the space of day-to-day life and history, a poetic and disenchanting homage to all the invisible, missing, hidden and lost children of all times.

The year 2024 has seen **numerous Italian successes**: the winner of the special category **The Sea** is **Giù nel blu - Dalla superficie agli abissi: viaggio sottomarino sfogliabile** by Gianumberto Accinelli, illustrated by Giulia Zaffaroni, published by Nomos, while the winner in the **Young Adult Comics** category is **Il racconto della roccia (The Tale of the Stone)** di BeneDi (Benedetta D'Incau) published by Coconino Press. Many Italian books have also earned special mentions.

THE TRENDS OF 2024

In 2024 **sustainability** has burst into children's books as never before with a change of perspective that places humankind and nature in a new equal relationship, driven by the resounding alarms issued in these present times. Following their calls to save the world during the past few years, books are now inviting us to **save the world together**. A new collective dimension precludes any further procrastination. This dimension is also well represented by the significant and innovative presence of **mushrooms**: organisms at the heart of life on our planet, emblems of connections and indispensable resources for the future of the Earth, mushrooms are no longer just extras in fairy tales and stories with outdoor settings but are becoming genuine protagonists of anthologies and in-depth studies, in fiction and non-fiction. Children's books do not hesitate to tackle the most pressing themes and problems of the adult world.

Animals are also taking positive action to save the environment by becoming active agents of change as the central characters of stories in which they join forces, free themselves from zoos and save nature.

And yet, environmental disaster is not always tackled with a such a proactive approach: **death, dystopia and negative predictions** about the future feature in releases that see books become the medium of sustainability education for the new generations, recounting the world without filters. This approach therefore does not ignore the continuing wars, which feature as modern and past tragedies but, above all, issue a **call for peace**.

A new permanent category adopted for the first time at this edition, the **Toddler** category finds confirmation as a genuine worldwide trend. Production of children's books for the 0-2 age bracket has exploded globally, testifying to the importance of starting to read from a very young age, and underlining the value of the BolognaRagazzi Awards as a tool for intercepting industry developments worldwide. Reading with the hands, nose, feet and mouth, hardback books are teaching reading



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through all the senses, fully expressing and playing with the potential of their format, which allows a degree of experimentation like no other in publishing.

Fairy tales also make their important presence felt once again: the fairy tale structure – a genuine narrative archetype – has continued over the centuries to underline its role as the most effective vehicle for providing answers to today's big questions. Laden with symbols and metaphors, fairy tales are always useful tools in times of crisis.

And between the present and the future, children's books are shaping and representing reality: from the lengthening of life expectancy to motherhood at a later age, **grandparents** are today the pillars of families. **Contact with old age** is becoming a pivotal element of many narratives in a circular relationship involving those at opposite ends of life, linked by insights and approaches to the world that are often closer than one might think. While grandparents bring with them the appeal of themes such as memory and identity, reflections on roots, belonging and the **mother tongue** are also central in books dealing with the issues of multiculturalism and second generations.

Cultural exchanges between countries also affect publishing rights: Italian children's publishing has welcomed the significant increase in books from **northern European countries**, with their freedom and ironic, taboo-free view of childhood. Finally, **romance** is also confirmed as a prevalent theme in children's books.

Graphic-editorial quality, innovation and the ability to dialogue with young readers are the main parameters in the selection of the BRAW winners, chosen each year by international juries composed of publishing experts who meet in Bologna for two days of intense deliberations. This year's jurors are: for the Fiction, Toddler and Opera Prima categories:

Tina Bilban (research assistant at the Nova Revija Institute, Ljubljana, President of the Slovenian section of IBBY and member of the executive committee of IBBY, Slovenia), **Claudette S. McLinn** (founder and executive director of the Centre for the Study of Multicultural Children's Literature - CSMCL.org, USA), **Alice Nussbaum** (graphic designer and art director of Grasset-Jeunesse, France) and **Beatriz Sanjuán** (reading mediator, lecturer and researcher, one of the founders of TresBrujas Cultural Management and their website Rutas de Lectura, Spain).

For Non-Fiction and for the special category The Sea: **Giorgia Grilli** (Associate Professor of Children's Literature at the University of Bologna and author, Italy), **Alessio Scaboro** (Creative and Scientific Director of Pleiades, Italy) and **Henning Wiesner** (Veterinarian, zoologist and author, Germany).

For the Comics category: **Mohammad AlShaibani** (comic book artist and Head of the Artistic Production Unit of Sandstorm, a comics studio in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates), **Enrico Fornaroli** (Lecturer in Art Pedagogy and Didactics and History of Comics, at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna, Italy) and **Joonas Sildre** (graphic designer, co-founder of the Estonian Comics Society, Estonia).

The complete bios of the jury members can be found at:

<https://www.bolognachildrensbookfair.com/en/awards/bolognaragazzi-awards/8382.html>



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THE BRAW AMAZING BOOKSHELF EXHIBITION

Following the success of the previous editions, and in addition to the traditional showcases for the winning books and special mentions, Bologna Children's Book Fair is again dedicating an exhibition to the best books submitted for the BolognaRagazzi Awards, with the aim of boosting the visibility of the many deserving proposals from all over the world. 100 plus titles selected from the finalists in the various categories (Fiction, Non-Fiction, Opera Prima, Toddler, Comics and The Sea) will be on display at the Fair, where they can be browsed, read and discovered by the public of industry professionals, thus offering an exclusive and unprecedented glimpse into the prestigious award and the best world publishing releases of the recent period.

The winners and special mentions are:

FICTION

Winner

Title: **Kintsugi**

Written and illustrated by: Issa Watanabe

Publisher: Libros del Zorro Rojo

Country: Spain

Special Mentions

Title: **¡Gracias, Madre Tierra! (Thank You, Mother Earth!)**

Written by: Iroquois Oral Tradition

Illustrated by: Vanina Starkoff

Publisher: Akiara Books

Country: Spain

Title: **Já, chobotnice (Me, Octopus)**

Written and illustrated by: Magdalena Rutová

Publisher: Baobab

Country: Czech Republic

THE EXTRAORDINARY AWARD FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY BOOK



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Title: **Bambini nascosti (Hidden Children)**
Written and illustrated by: Franco Matticchio
Publisher: Vànvere edizioni
Country: Italy

NON-FICTION

Winner

Title: **Myko (Myco)**
Written by: Jiří Dvořák
Illustrated by: Daniela Olejníková
Publisher: Baobab
Country: Czech Republic

Special Mentions

Title: **A Jungle in Your Living Room: A Guide to Creating Your Own Houseplant Collection**
Written by: Michael Holland
Illustrated by: Philip Giordano
Publisher: Flying Eye Books
Country: United Kingdom

Title: **Caduto. La seconda vita degli alberi (Fallen. The Second Life of Trees)**
Written by: Valentina Gottardi, Danio Miserocchi, Maciej Michno
Illustrated by: Valentina Gottardi
Publisher: Cocai Books
Country: Italy

Title: **Vertical. Historia ilustrada de la escalada (Vertical. An Illustrated History of Climbing)**
Written and illustrated by: Ximo Abadía
Publisher: Litera Libros
Country: Spain



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THE SEA – SPECIAL CATEGORY 2024

Winner

Title: **Giù nel blu - Dalla superficie agli abissi: viaggio sottomarino sfogliabile (Down in the Blue - From the Surface to the Abyss: a Browseable Underwater Journey)**

Written by: Gianumberto Accinelli

Illustrated by: Giulia Zaffaroni

Publisher: Nomos Edizioni

Country: Italy

Special Mentions

Title: **Pleine Mer (Into the Sea)**

Written and illustrated by: Antoine Guilloppé

Publisher: Gautier-Languereau

Country: France

Title: **死んだかいぞく – Shinda Kaizoku (The Dead Pirate)**

Written and illustrated by: Masakatsu Shimoda

Publisher: Poplar Publishing

Country: Japan

OPERA PRIMA

Winner

Title: **Ko darīt, ja esi kails pilsētā (What to Do If You Are Naked in a City?)**

Written and Illustrated by: Aleksandra Runde

Publisher: Janis Roze Publishers

Country: Latvia

Special Mentions

Title: **Petits riens (Small Nothings)**



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Written and illustrated by: Marion Pedebernade (Waii-Waii)
Publisher: CotCotCot éditions
Country: Belgium

Title: **모 이야기 (Mo Story)**

Written and Illustrated by: Yeonju Choi
Publisher: Atnoonbooks
Country: South Korea

NEW HORIZONS

Title: **回憶見 (See You In Memories)**

Written and illustrated by: Pen So
Publisher: Pen So Artlab
Country: Hong Kong

TODDLER

Winner

Title: **Dia de Lua (Moon Day)**

Written and illustrated by: Renato Moriconi
Publisher: Jujuba Editora
Country: Brazil

Special Mentions

Title: **Desenha tudo o que quiseses (Draw whatever you want)**

Written and illustrated by: Madalena Matoso
Publisher: Planeta Tangerina
Country: Portugal

Title: **Joséphine**

Written and Illustrated by: Chloé Alméras



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Publisher: Éditions du Seuil
Country: France

Title: Złapię cię! Tutu i pojazdy (I Will Catch You! Tutu and Vehicles)

Written and illustrated by: Piotr Karski

Publisher: Wydawnictwo Dwie Siostry

Country: Poland

COMICS

Winner Early Reader

Title: Comment Naissent les Arbres (How Trees Are Born...)

Written and illustrated by: Charles Berbérian

Publisher: La Martinière Jeunesse

Country: France

Special Mentions Early Reader

Title: 달리다 보면 (As you drive)

Written and illustrated by: Ji-An Kim

Publisher: Woongjin ThinkBig Co. Ltd.

Country: South Korea

Title: 호랑떡집 (Rice Cake House of a Tiger)

Written and illustrated by: Seo Hyun

Publisher: Sakyajul Publishing Ltd.

Country: South Korea

Winner Middle Grade

Title: Les Pissenlits (Dandelions)

Written and illustrated by: Nina Six

Publisher: Éditions Sarbacane



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Special Mentions Middle Grade

Title: **Mergaitė su šautuvu. Istorija apie mergaitę partizanę (A Girl With a Gun. A Story About a Girl Partisan)**

Written by: Marius Marcinkevičius

Illustrated by: Lina Itagaki

Publisher: Misteris Pinkmanas

Country: Lithuania

Title: **Dronefangeren (The Drone Catcher)**

Written and illustrated by: Øyvind Torseter

Publisher: Cappelen Damm

Country: Norway

Winner Young Adult

Title: **Il racconto della roccia (The Tale of the Stone)**

Written and illustrated by: Benedì (Benedetta D'Incau)

Publisher: Coconino Press

Country: Italy

Special Mentions Young Adult

Title: **Le Visage de Pavil (Pavil's Face)**

Written and illustrated by: Jeremy Perrodeau

Publisher: Éditions 2024

Country: France

Title: **Clocki**

Written and illustrated by: Mathias Martinez

Publisher: Misma

Country: France



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Title: **Loops**
Written by: Luca Pozzi
Illustrated by: Elisa Macellari
Publisher: BAO Publishing
Country: Italy



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