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BolognaBookPlus 2025 Zooms in on the Pivotal Role of Illustration and Design in Publishing: Celebrating the Past, Present and Future, and Offering a Unique Visual Depiction of the City

London, Bologna, Wednesday 12 February 2025: BolognaBookPlus, the general trade adult publishing extension of BCBF (31 March to 3 April), continues its expansion and evolution with an enhanced focus on design and illustration. The city has long hosted *the* book fair famous across the globe for its focus on the visual, and this year's BolognaBookPlus programme also promises an exciting line-up of exhibits, seminars, training and awards celebrating the power and artistry of the visual, from the book jacket to the page, through to marketing and promotion.

Guest Director BolognaBookPlus Jacks Thomas comments, *"Bologna is the book industry's destination for illustration and design. As digital and print worlds collide, visual excellence is more important than ever. It is an honour and a joy to be able to play a part in showcasing the talent, creativity and commercial success of artists, authors and publishers alike. The world of general publishing is certainly on show at BolognaBookPlus this year and we can't wait to see it!"*

Introducing the First BolognaBookPlus Illustration Ambassador

New for 2025, BolognaBookPlus proudly announces the launch of the Illustration Ambassador initiative, building on the success of its Author Ambassador programme. The inaugural Illustration Ambassador, acclaimed Polish artist **Joanna Karpowicz**, will play a key role in the fair. In partnership with the Polish Book Institute, BolognaBookPlus has devised a programme for Joanna threaded through the three days and across the spectrum of illustration throughout the fair. She will participate in several panels and juries, highlights of which include a special **In Conversation** session on **Tuesday 1 April**. Karpowicz will also present the sought after **Indie Authors Book Jacket Award**, showcasing excellence in self-published book cover design, after which illustrators will have the opportunity to meet her.

Joanna Karpowicz says, *"We painters are loners, meeting people during art exhibitions openings leaves little chance for real connection. Being a published author provides new opportunities and connections. My artbooks become the bridge towards the new friendships - and that's priceless."*

The Folio Society's Preview Exhibition and Panels

Anna and Elena Balbusso, the internationally recognized award-winning Italian artist duo based in Milan, will unveil The Folio Society's exhibition, **The Art of Folio** on Monday **31 March at midday**. This celebration of Folio's work with book illustrators will be a tantalising taste of a major exhibition taking place at the Society of Illustrators in New York from 1 May to 12 July 2025.

The acclaimed and award-winning illustrated book publishers, the Folio Society, will also host a series of engaging events, including:

- **The Art of Publishing: The Beauty of Creating a List for the Perfect Bookshelf** – A publisher panel exploring the art of curating a timeless collection.
- **The Art of Illustration: Learning with Folio** – An illustrators' panel discussing creative techniques and industry insights.
- **The Folio Book Illustration Awards 2025 Announcement** – A special discussion revealing details of this prestigious competition.

Tom Walker, the Folio Society commented, *"We are thrilled to join forces with BolognaBookPlus once again. We have a jam-packed programme for 2025 with a new illustration award, some exciting panel discussions, and the opening of a major new exhibition of Folio's artists. We can't wait!"*

Bologna the City: a literary and gastronomic visual snapshot by Neil Packer

The illustrator **Neil Packer** has created a map of Bologna, depicting the many bars and restaurants found in the acclaimed *Daniel Leicester* crime series written by Author Ambassador **Tom Benjamin**. This limited run is sure to be coveted and together they have created a unique canter around the historic city so famed for its 'Buon Appetito'.



Talking Pictures 2025: Estonia in Focus

The popular **Talking Pictures** event returns, examining the cultural significance and evolving impact of contemporary international visual books. This year, the spotlight is on **Estonia**, the **Bologna Market of Honour**. The programme includes a curated showcase, a jury discussion, and a seminar that will bring together industry experts to explore Estonia's unique contributions to visual storytelling.

Jackets Off! 2025: A Celebration of "The Great Gatsby"

This year's **Jackets Off!** iconic title is **The Great Gatsby** by **F. Scott Fitzgerald** the centenary of which is marked in 2025. An exhibition and discussion will delve into the many cultural and geographic interpretations of this literary classic through its diverse cover designs over the years.

BolognaBookPlus 2025 promises to be a vibrant hub for publishers, illustrators, and designers, offering unparalleled opportunities to explore the intersection of text and image in modern publishing.

For all media enquiries contact jane@janeactonpr.co.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS



About Bologna

Three global book events for international rights and licensing trading take place annually in the eponymous Italian city where culture meets style and commercial relationships are created. BolognaBookPlus, Bologna Children's Book Fair, Bologna licensing Trade Fair.



About BolognaBookPlus (BBPlus)

BolognaBookPlus was launched in 2020 by BCBF/BolognaFiere, in collaboration with the Italian Publishers Association (AIE), to reach a general trade publishing audience via a three-day exhibit, training and conferences - among other opportunities - taking place alongside the acclaimed Bologna Children's Book Fair 31 March – 3 April 2025. Working closely with the Bologna team, BolognaBookPlus is led by Jacks Thomas as Guest Director, supported by a UK team.



About Bologna Children's Book Fair (BCBF)

The Bologna Children's Book Fair is the world's leading trade show dedicated to the children's publishing and content industry, attracting 1,500 exhibitors and over 30,000 professional visitors from over 100 countries. BCBF brings a unique and diverse global audience to Bologna (Italy) annually, comprising publishers, agents, developers, illustrators, authors, booksellers, librarians and all professionals involved in the multimedia and licensing businesses for children's content.



About Bologna Licensing Trade Fair Kids (BLTF/Kids)

The BLTF/Kids is an integral part of the Bologna Children's Book Fair. Located at the heart of the fair, 18th edition will be held from 31st March to 3 April 2025, bringing together the major international licensing and entertainment players, BLTF/Kids features more than 600 brands, the Licensing Retail Lounge, the Fashion Product Showcase, and an area dedicated to Licencees looking for new retail ideas.



About BolognaFiere

Bologna Fiere S.p.A is a leading European exhibition organizer with over 85 events annually. As a world leader in trade shows across a number of different sectors – including art, publishing cosmetics, agribusiness, construction and design. BolognaFiere has developed a cutting-edge portfolio of international exhibitions in key North American and Asian markets, including China, with eight exhibitions established to date.

About The Folio Society

Folio is an employee-owned, independent publisher that has thrilled and delighted a band of dedicated readers across the globe since 1947. Today, from our workspace in the heart of London's vibrant Shad Thames, Folio continues that tradition by crafting exquisite, illustrated books.

Folio publishes many of the greatest names in publishing, in editions which reflect an extraordinary commitment to the craft of book-making and design. Folio's award-winning

books include George R. R. Martin's *A Game of Thrones*, Madeline Miller's *A Song of Achilles*, Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, and Diana Wynne Jones's *Howl's Moving Castle*.

Proudly independent for over 75 years, in 2021 The Folio Society became an Employee Ownership Trust. Folio's team of editors, designers and artisans will do whatever it takes to give each title everything it deserves, from outstanding intellectual firepower to extraordinary craftsmanship.

Available exclusively from Folio through our website (foliosociety.com) for our community of book-lovers around the world, every book we make is a miniature work of art and we take pride in every single one.