I. Topic of the Croatian presentation

As „living water“, a motif from Slavic mythology, is the water whose properties soothe the weary and restore sight, so is children's literature a form of transformative artistic experience, in which the breath that narrates the story and the breath that listens to it share a unique closeness. The story quenches our thirst for profoundest social contact. This selection also insists on closeness in the encounter of the story and its “adopters”. From Ivana Brlić Mažuranić to Svjetlan Junaković, children’s stories have been able to move and gather generation after generation of travellers through time, melting and crushing the rocks of alienation, and opening up numerous passages into alternative worlds. Children’s stories are as essential as water. Without experiencing them in childhood, we would not be able to learn any of the social languages in adulthood. This is why story-telling is simultaneously pedagogy, art, ethics and political practice. It has been proven time and time again by education psychologists, that the future of our civil liberties, utopias and finding new systems of evaluation depends indeed on telling children stories.

Our selection of stories brings respect towards the closest possible contact of the story with the child, towards the richest possible activation of the language artefact, and with it, all the connected interactive objects, participatory surroundings and installations. We offer books as guideposts for joint readings, drawings, play sessions, workshops, plays, making of animated films, and the discovery of children’s new creative practices.

Sip by sip, we offer a time of togetherness with the living water of literature.
II. Exhibitions

As a Guest of Honour, Croatia has got a unique opportunity to curate the **Croatian Illustrators Exhibition** selected according to relevant artistic criteria. Having in mind that the focus of the Children’s Books Fair is on the artistic achievements in the field of contemporary illustration, this is an occasion for Croatia to take the central position at the fair and organize the exhibition of illustrators.

The Croatian exhibition is titled **Aquamarine Selection** and participating artists shall be selected by the **Jury composed of Neven Antičević (The Association of Publishers and Booksellers of the Croatian Chamber of Economy), Nada Beroš (The Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb), Svjetlan Junaković (The Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb), Maša Štrbac (The Croatian Association of Artists of Applied Arts) and Vanja Žanko (one of the curators).**

Along with this exhibition, the team of curators will also prepare the exhibition titled **Harbours and Deep Waters of Childhood** following the narrative as a medium of transformation of ‘living water’ in the Croatian contemporary children’s literature placing underlying the role of Ivana Brlić Mažuranić and the affirmation of children’s literature and accompanying illustrations. The accent is not put on a retrospective bibliography of Croatian children’s literature but on the key artworks which enable us to pursue different ways that the authors of children’s literature used over the past century to diverge from marginalization or narrow didactical dimensioning of literary works and illustrations to subsequently grow into a separate and very influential field of artistic publishing. Similarly, childhood as a topic became a distinguishable discipline under the scrutiny of anthropology, cultural studies and literary theory, opening doors for children’s art to also have professional critics and interpreters as well as consultants and collaborators in the team of curators.

**Svjetlan Junaković**, a contemporary visual artist involved with a complex field of various activities that also comprise illustrations for children’s books, will have a solo exhibition. His work has been continuously linked to numerous collaborations with international galleries, museums and publishing houses. In his career development Italy holds a very special place: Junaković graduated from **Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera** in Milan, he teaches illustration at the International School in Sarmede, he exhibited his works at the Children’s Book Fair in Bologna and many prestigious institutions such as **Galleria d’arte Moderna** in Genoa, **Museo del Bambino** in Sienna, **Biblioteca Civica** in Milan, **Sala Borsa** in Bologna and many other.
Junaković was awarded many professional awards in Croatia (Ivana Brlić Mažuranić, Gigor Vitez, Kiklop, the Croatian Illustration Biennale Grand Prix...), Italy (Premio Andersen, Bologna Ragazzi Award...) and worldwide.

III. International Meeting Points: Zagreb - Bologna

Traditional part of the Fair's programme comprises venues like Translators Café, Authors Café, Digital Café and Illustrators Café which host round tables on various current topics from the field of translation and authorship as well as digital media with the participation of a host of international writers, illustrators, publishers, journalists, artists, authors, agents and producers.

This lively programme is organized by the Fair and the Croatian Commission has been actively involved in its creation and development through the participation of Croatian authors in the framework of the programme named Living Waters, Inviting Dialogues: Cafés.

In order to make the Croatian public more sensitive to various issues related to creating art for children and to present different dimensions of children’s literature and visual arts on the eve of the Children’s Books Fair in Bologna, there will be a series of round tables and workshops for children and organized from October 2014 to March 2015 in collaboration with the Italian Institute in Zagreb.

The programme will be organized on monthly basis in two intertwined chains of workshops You'll never miss water till the well runs dry: workshops for children – meetings with the author or illustrator and Making Waves: discussions and round tables intended for the expert audience.

YOU’LL NEVER MISS WATER TILL THE WELL RUNS DRY – topics selected for children’s workshops:

- Affirmation of illustrations in Croatian children’s books
- Reality of colour – painter’s approach to illustration
- Combined technique – relationship between text and image
- Digital fairy-tale / book – a concept for a puppet show
- Use of collage technique in illustration – one step to the stop frame animation
- Illustration as ambience / atmosphere in a book
The focus of workshops for children is put on visual arts and Croatian illustrators; texts written by Croatian writers for children are used to find motifs for visual art expression; interaction between authors and children (discussion, creative process).

Workshops in Zagreb will be organized in collaboration with primary schools. Workshops for children taking place in Bologna will be organized in collaboration with the department for children’s literature at the Salaborsa City Library.

MAKING WAVES – topics for round tables:

- **Colonialism in publishing or “it always pays out more to publish a translation rather than a domestic author”**. This topic deals with a very conservative standing inherent to many Croatian publishers that it is important to monitor international bestsellers and popular children’s books at the same time investing minimal interest or publishing and promotion engagement in Croatian authors. The result: a kind of colonial status of the Croatian children’s literature. The aim of the workshop is to stimulate a more responsible attitude of the social stakeholder in respect of Croatian authors.

- **‘Reading gadgets’ or what is the difference between deep reading and swiping images on a screen**. The International Psychologists and Neurologists Association has been systematically warning about the risks linked to ‘digitalized childhoods’, in other words, the Association tries to indicate different levels of remembering information that passed through some kind of live interaction between interlocutors through reading, returning to the text and commenting it as opposed to solitary activity such as following messages in media that children read on their phones, tablets and computers. Much is said about emotional dysfunctions of children e-users. The conference will focus on various experiences with working with children in the digital age and possible challenges related to professing deep reading.

- **Ivana Brlić Mažuranić or “The Moustrap” of a fairy-tale**. The intention of this round table is to analyse the work of Ivana Brlić Mažuranić focusing on the theme of water and to treat her as a socially-aware author whose work always raises radical political and controversial intimate issues without which it is hard to discuss the artistic value of children’s literature. In that sense, we will try to treat fairy-tale as a kind of ‘mousetrap’ for all those themes which are hard to grasp both to children and adults outside of the framework of ancient storytelling or ‘deep psychology’ of the structure of a fairy tale.

- **Fantasy and humour for children and their political potential**. No matter whether fantasy constructs a new utopian or dystopian context, its social power relies on the creation of alternative ways of thinking. Humour operates very similarly, i.e. by turning
around the existing logics to interpret the world. In that sense, we will talk to authors who intentionally nourish fantasy and humour in their literary works for children (Luko Paljetak, Zvonimir Balog, Norma Šerment, Vladimira Becić, Zdenko Bašić, etc.) with the intention to involve reform-oriented editors, publishers and readers and discuss this form of creative engagement tackling possible worlds.

- **A campaign for reading books to children and books as a leverage to school curriculum.** What does it mean to ‘read’? Does that imply cognitive and interactive processes that surpass the factual reception of the text? Have we finally abandoned the position that one should read to children a bit before bedtime or do we understand that a book is the partner is every aspect of children’s learning and discovering the world, especially in school? What does it mean to use a book as the partner in the classroom? These questions will be answered by teachers, editors, writers, pedagogues, educators and pedagogic reformers.

- **Responsibility of adults concerning children as authors.** Children’s books *Pio i Pepe* by Mauricio Ferlin and *Mali Puran na planetu Uran* by Petra Lukačić are rare examples of Croatian children’s literature that transcends the principle of ‘on occasion’ publishing of hastily collected materials (very often lacking any editorial competence in the preparation of the text and illustrations before publishing). Instead, we have the example of two children’s books written by children that have attracted the interest of various generations of readers. Does that imply that children as authors need a special kind of professional support? The discussion will focus on promoting a more responsible approach to children’s ability to write and illustrate and to recognize the role children play as authors in a wider community to which we belong.

Guests of the discussions organized in Zagreb will be Croatian authors, illustrators, publishers and experts for children’s literature and in Bologna the invited contributors will be joined by their international colleagues invited to participate according to the selected topic of discussion.
V. The Programme in the city centre of Bologna

At the time of the Children’s Books Fair all parts of the City of Bologna play an important role as meeting points and venues for various events linked to children’s literature. On that occasion the presence of Croatian professionals has an exceptional importance with the organization of multimedia programme including the exhibition of Svjetlan Junaković, workshops for children and film screenings on attractive locations at the old city centre. The programmes aim to activate the local community and enthusiasts who arrived to the city on this occasion, with a special focus on children who cannot visit the Fair.

You'll Never Miss Water Till The Well Runs Dry is a series of workshops for children where the youngest will have the opportunity to meet Croatian illustrators and their works but also to get creatively involved under their expert guidance. Since Zagreb and Bologna are twin cities and since all the topics and guest authors for the workshops in Bologna will be selected according to the workshops previously held in Zagreb with the participation of children from Zagreb, the selection of the best children’s works resulted from workshops from both cities will be showcased jointly at the Exhibition of Children’s Works: Bologna and Zagreb – twin cities meeting in children's artwork.

In collaboration with Animafest, the world famous international festival of animated film held annually in Zagreb the selection of Croatian animated films for children focusing on contemporary authors will be screened in Bologna as well. In order to present one of the most popular Croatian animated series ever made to Italian children, a selection of animated films from the Professor Balthazar series will be screened also at the Salaborse movie theatre.
IMPRESSUM

**Curators:** Nataša Govedić, Ana Šilović, Vanja Žanko

**Coordinator of educational programme for children:** Hana Lukas Midžić

**Coordinator of expert discussions and round tables in Zagreb and Bologna:** Nataša Govedić

**Visual identity:** Rafaela Dražić (graphic design), Tomislav Tomić (illustration), Nina Bačun, Roberta Bratović (spatial display/product design)

**Organized by:** The Ministry of Culture of The Republic of Croatia