

## BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR PRESENTS

### A UNIVERSE OF STORIES

#### Starring: The Book

**The virtual exhibition 'opens' as of April 23, announcing the Fair's online business program as of May 4**

**From the by now traditional exhibitions to international awards as well as webinars, conferences and the launch of the Fairtales blog**

April 22, 2020, Milan – Seizing the perfect occasion of the World Book and Copyright Day on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Bologna Children's Book Fair - the world's leading children's publishing fair organized by BolognaFiere - announces an exciting program of digital events which will be at the centre of the special online edition of the fair, starting May 4<sup>th</sup> with a series of activities lasting until the end of the year.

The fair – celebrating its 57th anniversary this year – inaugurates a special edition, embodying its desire and ability to renew itself: as of April 23<sup>rd</sup> the new BCBF platform will be featuring a unique online exhibition curated by Academy Drosselmeier in collaboration with ALIR, the Italian Association of Independent Children Bookstores and designed around the 'meta-subject' of books and reading: a **UNIVERSE OF STORIES - Starring: the Book**. Many publishers have also decided to offer visitors the opportunity to see and read the titles on display; the links to the complete works are available on the exhibition pages.

In recent years, in fact, children's publishing at an international level has increasingly seen a large production of picture books focusing on the book as an object: an even more significant choice if one considers illustrated books the first step of the ladder that young readers must climb in order to one day become so-called 'strong readers'. In addition to books and reading, the exhibition's selected titles also pay a tribute to the makers behind the book universe, featuring them as main characters: great writers and illustrators, as well as memorable editors and publishers, booksellers, library founders, champions who have put their efforts into promoting books and reading are the heroes of the stories. 120 titles will be exhibited in five 'virtual rooms' subdivided by subject areas (bookshops, libraries, writers, books and reading, artists who have explored the subject). All the selected books aim at making reading a familiar act, a natural one – not educational publications, therefore: rather a true narrative playing on different levels to inform, entertain and arouse surprise and wonder in young readers.

But what is also announced is an exciting program of events and initiatives to be found online as of May 4<sup>th</sup>, as part of a previously anticipated new 'Digital format' of the **Bologna Children's Book Fair (BCBF)**. Despite the health emergency we are facing, the fair has not given up on the idea of bringing its business, its atmosphere, its contents and opportunities to all professionals in the industry, embracing a major effort to 'move' online. A necessary transformation which the Bologna Children's Book Fair took as a precious opportunity to reach a broader audience, by making the most of its new virtual expression and allowing access to much of the contents to the many passionate who in the past were excluded from the fair because of its essentially professional nature.

Bologna Children's Book Fair therefore continues its mission of offering the international community the best of its features, those very same that, combining practical services, international creativity and innovative drive in a consistent and homogeneous proposal have made it over the years the main worldwide event in children's publishing industry. The collaboration between **BolognaFiere** and **PubMatch**, a US-based online network, has made the creation of the **Bologna Children's Book Fair Global Rights Exchange** possible – a hub for online rights trading, open until the end of the year. All the most important editorial issues released every year on the occasion of the Bologna fair – setting the upcoming global trends in children's publishing – will therefore move to the online platform, allowing the almost 1500 exhibitors who already registered for BCBF 2020 to present their titles, make and receive offers and schedule video meetings with other participants. The platform will also be made accessible to publishers and literary agents who participated as visitors in 2019 and who had already pre-registered for the 2020 edition. The BCBF Global Rights Exchange initiative is organised in the framework of Aldus, the European Book Fairs network co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme.

Furthermore, the fair does not give up on its essential cultural role of always attracting the industry's attention and anticipating trends in the global publishing market. The inauguration of the online platform will be introduced by an **opening conference, scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup> at 11 am**, focusing on children's publishing during the worldwide lockdown and on the perspectives of the industry in a world redesigned by the experience we are making. The online program includes book trailers, interviews, webinars, exhibitions, debates, conferences and live streaming announcements. And, next to the website, another initiative will be created: **Fairtales** – a new blog offering continuously updated information about the fair, including key appointments, interviews, specific focuses, guests' features, exclusive insights, links to relevant articles and much more: a dynamic communication in pure BCBF style, always online from May 4th onwards.

## THE EXHIBITIONS

BCBF also inaugurates its own digital space for exhibitions: BCBF Galleries, with open access from the official Bologna Children's Book Fair website, presents a unique program of exhibitions making the Fair as exciting as ever and allowing users to appreciate the illustrations in the most effective and intuitive way. All of the following will therefore be available online:

A digital version of the **Illustrators Exhibition**, available for everyone worldwide for the first time from **May 4 – 7, 2020** : the best of international illustration to be seen on the works of **76 artists from 24 countries** selected by a prestigious international jury, who last January discussed the work of 2,574 candidate illustrators from 66 countries, for a total of 12,870 viewed plates.

Along with the Illustrators Exhibition, the other initiatives traditionally accompanying and complementing the presentation of new trends in world illustration will also be featured: starting with the solo exhibition of the artist who designed the cover of the **Illustrator's Annual**, the Iranian artist **Hassan Mousavi** - winner of the Grand Prix 2019 of the BIB - Biennial of Illustration Bratislava – followed by this year's special celebration by the fair of the **International Illustration Award in Bologna Children's Book Fair - Fundación SM**, celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary: a series of works by the ten winning artists who have shaped the history of this important award will be displayed. Every year the prize awards an illustrator of the under35 category selected for the Illustrators Exhibition with a scholarship (\$ 15,000) for the publication of a picture book.

As part of the celebrations for the centenary of Gianni Rodari, Bologna Children's Book Fair, the Emilia-Romagna Region and the Italian Cultural Institute of San Francisco have created **Figures for Gianni Rodari: Italian Excellencies**. Curated by Cooperativa Giannino Stoppioni/Accademia

Drosselmeier , the exhibition gathers the original works of twenty-one Italian artists that have, over the years, given their personal reinterpretation of Rodari's work. Artists including giants of Italian design and illustration such as Bruno Munari and Emanuele Luzzati, as well as great contemporary artists such as Beatrice Alemagna and Olimpia Zagnoli. The full list: Bruno Munari, Emanuele Luzzati, Altan, Beatrice Alemagna, Gaia Stella, Olimpia Zagnoli, Manuele Fior, Alessandro Sanna, Valerio Vitali, Simona Mulazzani, Chiara Armellini, Anna Laura Cantone, Fulvio Testa, Maria Chiara Di Giorgio, Giulia Orecchia, Nicoletta Costa, Federico Maggioni, Francesca Ghermandi, Pia Valentinis, Elenia Beretta and Vittoria Facchini.

And more yet: **The Child Spectator**, second edition of the exhibition resulting from the illustration competition organized by BCBF as part of the European project "Mapping - a map for the aesthetics of the performing arts for early childhood" - a four-year project focused on the relationship between early childhood and the performing arts - and the exhibition of the covers of the United Nations **SDG Book Club project** : a selection of children's publications inspired by the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the program, from gender equality to guaranteed access to education, from sustainable energy to innovation.

Last, the exhibition of the 12 shortlisted works of the **Silent Book Contest - Gianni De Conno Award** - its digital edition will be launched on **May 4<sup>th</sup>** on a platform powered by Carthusia Edizioni and accessible via a link from the Bologna Children's Book Fair website. The Silent Book Contest is an international competition for books "without words", works overcoming the limits set by language, gender and age through stories solely told with images. The 7<sup>th</sup> edition attracted the submission of 200 unpublished works from 38 countries - an increase of over 30% compared to 2019. The contest is promoted by **Carthusia Edizioni**, organizer and leader of the project, with the help of Bologna Children's Book Fair, Turin International Book Fair, City of Mulazzo, the association of Montereleggio Paese dei Librai, IOB International Organization of Book Towns, the Italian Centro del libro e della Lettura, with the patronage of IBBY Italia and the contribution of BPER Bank.

## **ILLUSTRATORS**

Always engaged in supporting emerging talents in the world of illustration, Bologna Children's Book Fair has put great effort in living up to this mission, seizing the digital opportunity to open its doors and reach out to an even larger community of young artists. The famous and highly appreciated **Wall of Illustrators** returns **From May 4 - 7**, in a new virtual guise. It has become one of Bologna Children's Book Fair's favourite places, welcoming visitors with thousands of posters, drawings, photographs, pictures and contacts. This year the digital walls of the new Illustrators Wall will offer illustrators from around the world the possibility of virtually posting their business cards, to be seen by publishers and professionals and lead to potential new partnerships. At the same time, the new digital version of the wall will allow visitors to take a closer, more attentive look. The available space will have no limits: in order to contribute, illustrators need only **register** in the visitors' area, fill out the "Illustrators Wall" form and upload their material, along with a brief presentation in English, **by April 29<sup>th</sup>**.

Next to the Wall of Illustrators, the new **Illustrators Survival Corner** is also a must. Created by BCBF and MiMaster illustration, over the years the Illustrators Survival Corner has become one of the most successful events of the fair, hosting workshops, master classes and portfolio reviews; it has also been reproduced in "sister" fairs, organized in collaboration with BCBF, China Shanghai International Children's Book Fair and Moscow International Book Fair. The online variation of the Illustrators Survival Corner will be the 24H Marathon - The Worldwide Illustrators Survival Portfolio Review, a live 24 hour-marathon of portfolio reviewing will involve, on the one hand, 24 international experts in illustration (including illustrators, art directors, editors and agents ) from all over the world, from New Zealand to Mexico, connecting themselves according to their time zone; on the other, young

illustrators (10 for each time slot, implying 240 viewed portfolios) who will be able to book a meeting with an expert for an assessment of their portfolio and increase their professional awareness. The marathon will start at 00.00 on May 5<sup>th</sup> (Italian time) in New Zealand, then move West to Australia, Japan, China, India and then Iran and Russia, finally reaching Europe at dawn on May 5<sup>th</sup> and finish at 00.00 hours that evening. The following are the twenty-four reviewers passing on the baton hour after hour:

Martin Bailey (Nuova Zelanda), Miriam Rosenbloom (Australia), Jiwone Lee (Corea), Kyoko Matsuoka (Giappone), Huang Xiaoyan (Cina), Page Tsou (Taiwan), Sayoni Basu (India), Sahar Tarhandeh (Iran), Iris Samartzi (Grecia), Polina Plavinskaya (Russia), Debbie Bibò (Italia), Cathy Olmedillas (UK), Arianna Squilloni (Spagna), Sam Arthur (Regno Unito), Birthe Steinbeck (Germania), Florie Briand (Francia), Marian Warth (Brasile), Lucie Luddington (Regno Unito), Maria Russo (Stati Uniti), Dolore Prades (Brasile), Peggy Espinosa (Messico), Monica Bergna (Messico), Maria Osorio (Colombia), Naomi Kirsten (Stati Uniti).

### THE PRIZES

The on-line edition of Bologna Children's Book Fair confirms its central role in assigning the more prestigious and influential international awards in children's publishing, setting trends and influencing the global market in acquisitions and rights trading: the winners of the **Bologna Prize for the Best Children's Publishers of the Year (BOP)**, promoted and organized by BCBF in collaboration with AIE - Italian Publishers Association and IPA - International Publishers Association and addressed to publishing houses who stand out for the creativity and quality of their editorial choices, will be announced online on **May 4<sup>th</sup> at 18 hours**, while the video-interviews to the winners of the 2020 edition of the **BolognaRagazzi Award (BRAW)** will be released on a daily basis between May 4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>.

Two other important announcements are scheduled for **May 6<sup>th</sup>**: the winner of the second edition of the **Carla Poesio Award**, acknowledging the best degree thesis in Literature for Children, and the winner of the **Ars in Fabula - Grant Award**, a scholarship launched in 2012 by Ars in Fabula School of Illustration in collaboration with Bologna Children's Book Fair, to support an emerging illustrator selected among the under 30 Illustrators Exhibition.

**Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon** will be the turn of the winner of **In altre parole**, a recognition aiming to support young translators and introduce them to the publishing houses of the industry, promoted by the Translators Centre of the Bologna Children's Book Fair focusing this year on translations from the Arabic language to tribute Sharjah, whose role as the Guest of Honour of this 57<sup>th</sup> edition had to be postponed to next year.

**On Wednesday May 6<sup>th</sup> at 18:10** the fifth edition of the **Premio Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi** will be broadcasted live. The award is promoted by Fondazione Maria e Goffredo Bellonci and Strega Alberti Benevento - the organizers of the Premio Strega - with the Centro per il libro e la lettura and BolognaFiere-Bologna Children's Book Fair, in collaboration with BPER Bank, and IBS.it as a technical sponsor. The ceremony will be hosted by Loredana Lipperini, who will announce the winners of the two categories, +6 (readers aged 6 - 10) and + 11 (readers aged 11-15), voted by an approximate 2,000 girls and boys from over 140 schools, reading circles and libraries in Italy and abroad. BPER Bank will also assign a plaque and a prize in cash to one of the schools making up the jury of category +6 for the most creative classroom reading activity inspired by the shortlisted books, and to a member of the +11 jury for the best review to a shortlisted book of the category.

Last, as part of Bologna Licensing Trade Fair, the much-awaited **Bologna Licensing Awards**, devoted to the best licensing and promotion projects, will be announced on **May 5<sup>th</sup> at 18 hrs**. BLTF caters for

licensors, licensees and distributors from Italy and the rest of Europe, providing a showcase of the latest products as well as an extended overview of the hot topics of the digital, media, editorial and entertainment contents for children and teenagers.

## THE CONFERENCES

The calendar of webinars, materials, insights and activities will be as exciting as ever, and addressing, thanks to the web, an even greater audience. To name a few of the events: on **Monday May 4<sup>th</sup>**, after the opening conference, the program starts at **12** with **"The fast growing children's comics and graphic novels market"** with **Ivanka Hahnengerger** (VIP Licensing) and **Calvin Reid** (Publishers Weekly). To follow, at **14.30**, the live streaming of **IBBY** and at **15.30**, the webinar part of the Bologna Licensing Trade Fair: **"Illustration and Animation. Interactions and job opportunities for illustrators"**. On **Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>** at **14 hours** a **focus on the Chinese market** is scheduled, promoted by China Shanghai International Children's Book Fair, while **Wednesday May 6<sup>th</sup>**, at **11.00**, at the event **"The reason of the choice"**, the five members of the International Jury of the Illustrators Exhibition (Lorenzo Mattotti, Enrico Fornaroli, Cathy Olmedillas, Machiko Wakatsuki, Valérie Cussagnet) will illustrate the reasons behind the choice of the selected artists. Later that same day at **16:30** the webinar **"Dust or Magic"** organised in the framework of Aldus network, will take place on the Zoom platform; this year's edition will be entirely devoted to the winner applications of the Bologna Ragazzi Digital Award. Last, on **Thursday May 7<sup>th</sup>**, two appointments addressing teachers, educators, librarians, booksellers as well as parents: at **11**, **IBBY Italia** will provide insights on the best winning books of the **Hans Christian Andersen** international award (announced online on the first day of the digital fair); at **14.00 hours** **"The great escape: libraries, bookstores and the fastest way out of quarantine"** will be hosted by **Giovanni Nucci** and co-hosted by the magazines **Andersen, Liber** and **Pepeverde**.

## BOLOGNA LICENSING TRADE FAIR

The parallel **Bologna Licensing Trade Fair (BLTF)** will also have an exciting online version, with the publication of the must-have **Property Guide**, featuring over 600 IPs, webinars and other digital events. The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the only licensing fair in Italy – and one of the most important at European level – will thus enable networking among the main players of the industry, promoting the latest trends and comparing the new demands of the market, and confirming itself as a platform where licensing, publishing, digital and entertainment industries converge.

The promoted operation by Bologna Children's Book Fair is an ambitious one, driven by the determination not to surrender to the difficulties and settle for a 'palliative' alternative. The fair did not want to give up on any of the traditional components of the event, and the conceived schedule fully reproduces content and value. Looking forward, as already announced by BolognaFiere, to meeting the international community of children's publishing in Bologna **from 12 to 15 April 2021** and create a new, memorable edition of the international book fair for children and teenagers.

## BolognaFiere SpA

BolognaFiere SpA is one of the main exhibition companies in Europe, with over 85 events organized worldwide. As a leader in commercial events covering a large number of areas - including art, children's publishing, cosmetics, agri-food, construction and design, automotive - Bologna Fiere has developed a unique and cutting-edge portfolio of international events, including Russia, North America and Asia, and 8 well-established fairs in China.

## Bologna Children's Book Fair

Bologna Children's Book Fair is the world's leading event of the children's publishing industry. Created in 1964, it attracts around 1,500 exhibitors and 30,000 visitors to Bologna every year from over 80 countries: a unique

and diverse audience of publishers, agents, developers, illustrators, authors, booksellers and players involved in contents for children including publishing as well as multimedia and licensing.

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