



Switzerland, Guest of Honour at the Bologna Children's Book Fair 2019

A Swiss ABC, Events at the Fair and in the City

Switzerland is the Guest of Honour at the 56th Bologna Children's Book Fair. Among the initiatives celebrating its presence are the important exhibition **A Swiss ABC**, dedicated to illustration in Switzerland – a small but vibrant crossroads of cultures – as well as a rich programme of events at BolognaFiere and downtown and a cultural exchange project between Bologna and Bern.

«By taking part as Guest of Honour, we wish to show that Switzerland, in addition to worldwide famous works such as 'Heidi' or 'The rainbow fish', has a great amount of interesting titles to offer», says Angelika Salvisberg, responsible for the Swiss Culture Foundation pro Helvetia.

«Our participation as a Guest of Honour offers us the possibility to gather the attention of an international audience on the innovative and lively Swiss literary production both for children and young adults, on its tradition and its numerous emerging talents», says Dani Landolf, responsible for the Swiss Association of Booksellers and Publishers (SBVV).

AN ABC OF SWITZERLAND AND A RICH PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Children's books combine illustrations and written texts in a unique manner, and the exhibition of illustrators that Switzerland presents in Bologna aims to exemplify this union. The leitmotiv that connects the exhibited works is the ABC – the alphabet. A panel of experts has chosen a group of **26 Swiss illustrators** including both emerging talents and established old hands, in order to showcase a production of the highest quality in all four of the Swiss national languages in even balance and proportion. Twenty-six letters in the alphabet: a word is associated to each illustration, one each for all letters from A to Z. These words hint at the most distinctive Swiss characteristics – sometimes in a traditional sense, and sometimes with a touch of jest.

But the 26 letters of the alphabet can also be understood as a reference to the 26 Swiss cantons, which represent the individuality but also the variety making Switzerland a unique multicultural aggregate, both vivid and colourful. To do justice to this Swiss complexity, the selected words come from all four of the national languages – Romansch, Italian, French and German. They have been translated into English for the international audience of the book fair.

THE SWITZERLAND OF CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S BOOKS

The presence of Swiss literature for children and young people at the fair was coordinated by the Swiss Association of Booksellers and Publishers (SBVV) in collaboration with various institutions and representatives of the Swiss children's book scene. The principal partner is the Swiss cultural foundation Pro Helvetia. **Twenty-two Swiss publishing houses** are represented: Aracari; Atlantis; Baeschlin; Baobab Books; Boox-verlag; Casa Editura Rumantscha; Diogenes; La Joie de lire; Editions Notari; Globi Verlag; Helveticq; JuLa Verlag; Luethi electronic publishing; Marameo Edizioni; Midas; Nieves; Nord-Süd Verlag; Orell Füssli Verlag; Piep Verlag; Schweizerisches Institut für Kinder- und Jugendmedien / SIKJM; Schweizerisches Jugendschriftenwerk / (or Edizioni Svizzere per la Gioventù / ESG); Stämpfli Verlag.

THE FAIR'S PROGRAMME

On Monday, April 1st at noon, **Pointe de Presse**: a meeting with the Swiss delegation at the Centro Servizi of the Bologna Children's Book Fair.

From 5 pm to 6.30 pm, Switzerland Guest of Honour is pleased to offer an “**Aperitivo Volante**” to all attendees of the Fair queuing either for a taxi or a bus back to the city centre.

THE PROGRAM IN THE CITY

On Saturday, March 30th: “**Storytelling Night**” in over thirteen libraries.

On Sunday, March 31st Switzerland has organised an entire day for families, “**Switzerland in the city**”: readings, gatherings and workshops for children animate Bologna at the Salaborsa Library (Palazzo d'Accursio).

11:00 – Piazza Nettuno, in front of the Palazzo d'Accursio: Illustrators Irene Penazzi and Johanna Schaible, protagonists of the “Bologna e Berna a testa in su” project connecting Bologna and Bern create a street painting.

11:00 – Biblioteca Bambini: Franz Hohler with *Creation Stories*, a reading for children (7–10 years old)

12:00 – Biblioteca Ragazzi: Germano Zullo and Albertine, noted author/illustrator pair, speak to older children about how they create a dialogue between text and image

15:00 – Biblioteca Ragazzi: Claudia de Weck, author and illustrator reads from *Jacob the Crocodile* and *Money for Sale* (5–8 years old)

15:00 – Biblioteca Adolescenti: Workshop with illustrator Hannes Binder (11–14 years old)

17:00 – Biblioteca Ragazzi: Illustrator Francesca Sanna reads from *Me and My Fear* (4–7 years old)

17:00 – Biblioteca Bambini: Alberto Nessi and Albertine with *Easy Rhymes for Large and Small* (6–8 years old)

17:00 and 17:30 – Spazio Bébé: Paloma Canonica with her Bohemini-mini: *Let's Eat! – Let's Wash Up! – Good Morning, Sun – Goodnight, Moon*, a series of very first books that present the world that young children know best as seen through their eyes. The small and reassuring rituals that articulate a young child's day are wrapped up in “microstories” full of discovery and surprise. The first two titles, *Good Morning, Sun* and *Good Night, Moon* form part of the project “Born to Read, Italy”.

From Monday 1st until Thursday 4th April, La Scuderia (piazza Verdi 2, Bologna) hosts an open-space collective exhibition featuring illustrations by 40 Swiss young artists as part of the **BOLO KLUB** project, a platform set up to sustain young artists in the making and publication of picture books. Moreover, every night from 1st to 3rd April, La Scuderia features DJs and drinks, becoming the ideal meeting place for a nightcap after a demanding day at the Fair.

Wednesday, April 3rd at La Scuderia, from 9 pm: BOLO KLUB, a sort of **illustrators' slam** for the all illustration passionates.

Tuesday, April 2nd at La Scuderia (piazza Verdi 2, Bologna) from 8 pm onwards, **Pop-Up Swiss Evening**: a real party dedicated to illustrators, publishers and visitors. Publishers set up small stands with pizza and beer for all guests.

Link to the official Switzerland Guest of Honour website: www.bologna2019.ch