

## 58TH BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR 14 – 17 June 2021 – online *THE SYMBIOTIC NETWORK OF CHILDREN'S CONTENT*

### The first edition of BolognaBookPlus

*Comprehensive virtual offering will feature the biggest online exhibition of children's book illustrators, a free rights trading platform and the first global debate on a post-pandemic future*

Bologna Children's Book Fair, its sister event, BolognaBookPlus and the Bologna Licensing Trade Fair have announced a suite of digital programming for this year's event running 14-17 June. Underpinned by a world-class rights trading platform, this year's line-up will be the first in official partnership with AIE, the Italian Publishers' Association.

Across publishing eco systems and spanning the globe, the line-up will feature over 250 events, organized directly by the Fair and by exhibitors, among conferences, presentations, training courses and workshops celebrating illustration & design, Dante 700, and creativity in global literature and poetry. Sessions will tackle education and accessibility, as well as sustainability, diversity, and digital developments in the industry.

Highlights **from the Bologna Children's Book Fair** include:

- **24 Hour Portfolio Review Marathon (starting 11:59, 11 June)** -capturing the essence of BCBF's 60 year history, and the spirit of co-operation and community across the children's publishing, this round-the-world tour will see 24 publishers & agents from different countries each giving a 1 hour showcase of 10 illustrators.
- **The BCBF Galleries platform** - the virtual art gallery will feature 10 exhibitions including the famous Bologna Illustrators' Exhibition, now in its 55th edition, a solo exhibition of the great Swiss illustrator Albertine, and to mark Dante 700, an exhibition of work by international illustrators whose work connects young readers with the life and art of the great poet.
- **The Exhibitor Events Programme**- hosted on the BCBF website, this new online section will be dedicated to initiatives, presentations, interviews and workshops created and curated by the BCBF exhibitors.
- **Author's cafe**- the beloved BCBF landmark returns with a mix of book presentations and in-conversations.
- **The Translator's Cafe**- a staple of the BCBF programme, the Translator's Cafe continues in virtual form with events exploring the translation of children's books, including a special focus on Russian literature.
- **Events on Illustration** - a virtual extension of one of BCBF's most popular programmes will include the announcement of the 11th International Award for illustration BCBF – Fundaciòn SM, 'Ask Me Anything' sessions with experts, and masterclasses with star illustrators.

BCBF activities will be supported by the opportunity to participate in the business of books fairs – the trading of copyright. **The Global Rights Exchange** returns in a new, refined and refreshed format following extensive customer feedback and is open to all BCBF exhibitors and visitors from 2019 to 2021 inclusive. It remains free to all eligible users until the end of 2021 and includes a BLTF section for exhibitors and visitors of the Bologna Licensing Trade Fair.

Buying and selling rights across comic books and graphic novels will be the linchpin of cross media programming, complemented by the new BolognaRagazzi CrossMedia Award, celebrating the best publishing projects that expand their narrative universe across different media or that are a narrative extension of a project originated in other media.

A special webinar will also see the Italian Publishers Association announce the first results of their survey on culture consumption by children aged 0-14yrs at BCBF.

The BCBF annual Guest of Honour programme will, once again, be deferred to next year when Sharjah will feature, having originally been selected as the guest of honour for 2020.

**BCBF Director Elena Pasoli says,** *‘The magic of BCBF is its versatility, the incredible variety of content it offers, the relentless quest for the new, the different voices and cultures that meet on the Bologna stage. Our commitment in preparing the second online edition was precisely this: to reflect as much as possible the true essence of BCBF, offering at the same time an effective marketplace and a comprehensive programme of events, awards and meetings. As, over the past pandemic year, we have organised many successful online events through our new Open-Up: The BCBF Skill Box, we felt equal to the task of moving BCBF 2021 online once again. We have learned that the right digital activity, combined with the trade fair in person, can have not only a brilliant present but an incredible future in terms of continuous dialogue with the children’s book and content community which is so important to us.’*

Forging Forward: The Pandemic – An Interruption or an Opportunity to Rethink? is the flagship one day conference for **BolognaBookPlus**, run in collaboration and partnership with the AIE – Italian Publishers Association and the IPA – International Publishers Association. With drop-in live meet-ups, five major Inspire and Inform Sessions, plus additional programming available on demand, the international debate will offer an A to Z of vision and wisdom from industry leaders spanning Australia to Zambia. Each session will pay homage to the book fair from which this initiative springs, with a children’s publishing voice in every session. Co-Chairs Richard Charkin and Bodour Al-Qasimi will navigate the geographies and ecosystem of an unprecedented pandemic year across the world with all its challenges, triumphs and key learnings.

Introducing the Author Ambassador programme, celebrating those authors that bridge or cross over the worlds of adult and children’s publishing, BolognaBookPlus is delighted to announce **Victoria Hislop** as the BBPlus Author Ambassador 2021. Released in June from Walker Books, Victoria is publishing her first children’s novel - *Maria’s Island* - through the voice of one of the children in the original version of the internationally bestselling *The Island*. During an In Conversation session with author and journalist, Alexandra Shulman, Victoria will be exploring the inspiration for her first children’s book as well as the experience of seeing previous work translated into 40 languages across the globe.

**Commenting on the announcement, Victoria Hislop said:** *‘I am thrilled to be the BolognaBookPlus Author Ambassador this year. Crossing publishing worlds is an exciting step; I have always been overwhelmed by the generosity of my readers of The Island and beyond. Maria’s*

*Island tackles some difficult themes, but I believe young readers are both curious and open-hearted and I hope they enjoy my first endeavour for them”*

The wider BBPlus programme also includes a rights training course (**How to Sell Rights and Understand Children’s Licensing**, 15<sup>th</sup> June), a translation forum in partnership with Words without Borders (16<sup>th</sup> June), and a half-day conference on **self-publishing in Italy** (16<sup>th</sup> June). An exhibition of cover artwork - **Jackets Off** - will showcase work by general trade publishing designers, giving a virtual stage to the best visuals the international industry has to offer. There will also be a webinar on accessibility hosted by Fondazione Lia.

Forging Forward, the Annual Literary Translation Forum, 24 Hour Portfolio Marathon, BolognaRagazzi CrossMedia Award, Jackets Off Masterclass's "Covers Go Digital" and other selected events are produced with support from Aldus Up, the European Book Fairs Network, and co-funded by Creative Europe, as part of their programme to promote the internationalisation of the book sector.

**Commenting on the programme Jacks Thomas, Guest Director BBPlus says, ‘The online programme for the inaugural BolognaBookPlus is designed to give voice to the wonderfully resilient, creative and innovative book industry across the globe. One day – which we all fervently hope will be soon – we can reflect upon this time as a game-changing reset for our industry, which, as ever, so pertinently reflects the wider world. As countries from A-Z and the broad industry eco-system are all represented, we hope to take away important lessons learned and optimism for the next act, and I am delighted that so many fantastic people are contributing their experience and wisdom to the ongoing debate.’**

#### **2022 Dates:**

**The Bologna Book Fair will return in 2022** from March 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> and Elena Pasoli says, *“After the tumultuous past two years it is wonderful to return to our Spring dateline and Jacks and I look forward to welcoming everyone to Bologna in 2022”.*

#### NOTES TO EDITORS:

##### **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 around 30,000 professional visitors from around 100 countries. Created in 1964, BCBF brings every year to Bologna (Italy) a unique and diverse global audience, made of publishers, agents, developers, illustrators, authors, booksellers, librarians and all the other professionals involved not only in the book but also in the multimedia and licensing businesses for children’s content.

##### **About BolognaFiere**

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

##### **About BolognaBookPlus**

BolognaBookPlus is a new initiative launched by BCBF/BolognaFiere in collaboration with the Italian Publishers Association (AIE) to reach a general publishing audience via a 3 day exhibit and four conferences - among other opportunities - taking place alongside the acclaimed Bologna Children’s Book Fair June 14 – 17 2021. Working closely with the Bologna team, BolognaBookPlus is led by Jacks Thomas as Guest Director, supported by a UK team.

##### **About Associazione Italiana Editori**

AIE (Associazione Italiana Editori) is the trade association of Italian publishers – and foreign ones operating in Italy – of books, journals, and digital publishing products and contents.

AIE is a member of FEP (Federation of European Publishers), IPA (International Publishers Association) and Confindustria.

AIE represents, on a national and international level companies producing editorial content and it also constitutes an attentive and updated observatory of the reading habits, as well as of cultural and educational consumption necessary for the growth of Italy.

AIE aims at representing and safeguarding publishers, promoting professional growth, removing obstacles to the development of a modern publishing market, and fighting against illegal phenomena and lack of respect for copyrights. It also supports all concrete initiatives that contribute to the spread of the reading habit and books, to the expansion of the domestic market, and to the internationalization process of Italian businesses and culture worldwide

#### **About the International Publishers Association**

The IPA is the world's largest federation of publishers associations with 86 members in 71 countries. Established in 1896, the IPA is an industry body with a human rights mandate. The IPA's mission is to promote and protect publishing and to raise awareness of publishing as a force for economic, cultural and social development. Working in cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and numerous international NGOs, the IPA champions the interests of book and journal publishing at national and supranational level. Internationally, the IPA actively opposes censorship and promotes copyright, freedom to publish (including through the *IPA Prix Voltaire*), and literacy.

[www.internationalpublishers.org](http://www.internationalpublishers.org)

#### **Aldus Up**

Aldus Up is the European Book Fairs network that aims to innovate and boost book fairs from a European perspective, promoting the exchange of translation rights between countries and the internationalisation of the publishing sector. Co-funded by the European Union's Europe Creative programme, the network, launched in 2016, today involves 20 European fairs and national and international stakeholders in the book sector and research and innovation field.

[www.aldusnet.eu](http://www.aldusnet.eu)