



## **Press release: The 29th Biennial of Illustration Bratislava (BIB) opens its gates**

***Here are some numbers of this year's international celebration of illustration: 275 illustrators and illustrators from 36 countries with 2072 illustrations from 355 books. Bratislava comes alive with them every other year, attracting fans children's books not only from Slovakia, but from all over the world. This autumn is no different.***

Today, the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB), an international competitive exhibition of original illustrations of books for children and youth — opens its 29th year and presents the best that has been created in the world of children's illustration over last two years.

Galleries, institutions, city squares, streets, the INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF ART FOR CHILDREN BIBIANA. World illustrations will fill the capital's downtown for two months.

This year's BIB brings a number of novelties and also the return of illustration to the city centre and right to the people. All exhibitions and accompanying programmes are within walking distance of Bratislava's historic centre, allowing you to combine the celebration of illustration with sightseeing and exploring the city centre.

### **Competitive exhibition in BIBIANA**

The competition part of BIB 2023 will be held at BIBIANA, the International House of Art for Children, accompanying activities and other exhibitions will take place at several different places in Bratislava in galleries and institutions downtown - in the Hall of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, the Bratislava City Gallery, the University Library in Bratislava, on the West-Terrace of Bratislava Castle or Hviezdoslav Square.

This approach preserves the entire scope of the international exhibition of illustrations, which in the past also consisted of several smaller exhibitions, but this time they will be on display in several places in the centre of Bratislava.

BIBIANA has also adjusted the opening hours for the convenience of individual visitors and school-groups interested in the BIB-exhibition. During the BIB 2023, the International House of Art for Children on Panská Street will stay open from Tuesday to Sunday from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm, presenting this competitive international illustration exhibition every 30 minutes – starting at 10:00 am.

“BIB 23 also opened itself to new partnerships. Everyone approached the preparation with respect for the history of BIB, respecting the original idea and the principle of solidarity,” says Zuzana Liptáková, director of BIBIANA. “Thanks to the patronage and support of various institutions providing us with their premises, we have jointly created the BIB 23 map. This map will guide visitors through the best that the world of illustration has to offer and at the same time, offering some kind of guided tour through the Bratislava's city centre. Each stop on the BIB map has its own specific content and character, so everyone can find his or her very own “thing”.

The opening ceremony of the 29th Biennial of Illustration Bratislava will take place tonight, on October 4, 2023, at the Pavol Orságh Hviezdoslav Theatre. During that gala evening with programme, the public will

learn the names of the new winners of the prestigious awards, which will be presented by an international jury of experts in the field of book culture.

### **International history of the BIB**

“The entire world of picture books for children and youth considers the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava an extraordinary success story,” added Zuzana Jarošová, the BIB Commissioner General, and Chairwoman of the BIB International Committee. “The key to its success is that since its inception in 1967, it is based on the cooperation with the most important international organisations IBBY and UNESCO.”

The first year of the BIB International Festival of Illustration dates back as late as 1967. The current 29th BIB will be held under the auspices of the President of the Slovak Republic Zuzana Čaputová, the Minister of Culture Silvia Hroncová and the Mayor of Bratislava Matúš Vallo. The event is organised in cooperation with UNESCO and the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. The main organiser is BIBIANA, the International House of Art for Children.

The general partner of the festival of illustrations is “365 banka”, the main media partner is Radio and Television of Slovakia.

### **Slovak illustrators**

Each country was given the opportunity to register ten illustrators to represent it at the BIB 2023. This year, a record number of illustrators were interested in representing Slovakia, as much as 43 illustrators with 61 books.

The individual illustrations were evaluated by an expert jury, chaired by the pedagogue, graphic designer and visual artist Tomáš Klepoch. The main criteria for their evaluation were innovation, creativity, artistic design and suitability for a juvenile audience. The jury selected ten illustrators to represent Slovakia at the BIB 2023: Barbara Idesová, Dušan Kállay, Barbora Kmecová/Bessa, Marta Matus, Matúš Matátka, Eva Ondová, Martin Smatana, Simona Smatana, Dávid Soboň and Lucia Žatkuliaková.

The public can see the works of the participating Slovak illustrators at the Slovak Nomination Exhibition at BIBIANA until September 3.

### **Homage to Miroslav Cipár**

The current 29th Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava is dedicated to the prominent Slovak illustrator, painter, graphic artist and sculptor Miroslav Cipár, the founding father of Biennial, who also created its timeless and iconic logo.

He himself participated in the BIB several times as a competitor and his works have been repeatedly awarded by the international jury. As a personality, he played an important role during the “Velvet Revolution” turning former communist Czechoslovakia into a democracy in 1989.

During this year's BIB, a selection of his children's book illustration work is presented in a solo exhibition at the University Library in Bratislava, Michalská Street – titled Miroslav Cipár to the Children. The public can admire it until November 3, 2023.

On the West-Terrace of Bratislava Castle, there is an exhibition of works by the winners of 3 non-statutory awards of BIB 2021 called TRI (Jana Kiselová-Sitekova – Postal Bank Prize, Zuzana Bočková Bruncková – Mayor's Prize, Fabienne Delacroix, France – Children's Jury Prize). The Hall and Exhibition Hall of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic will present Elena Odriozola, the winner of the Grand Prix BIB 2021, and

winner of the H. Ch. Andersen Award for 2022 - Suzy Lee for illustration and Marie-Aude Murail for literature.

The winners of the Children's Jury Prize will be exhibited at the City Gallery, and the exhibition will be accompanied by Sunday workshops for children.

BIB 2023 will also include the BIB-UNESCO Albín Brunovský Workshop for young illustrators in cooperation with the Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava, which will be led by Ľuboslav Paľo, Head of the Illustration and Graphic Design Studio, and an international symposium with international participants on the topic of Fairy Tale Books (the national identity of illustration and its communication in an international context).

### **What connects us**

“What do Sweden and Japan, Slovakia and Brazil or Bulgaria and Israel have in common? Thousands of illustrations from 36 countries from all over the world have come to the Biennial of Illustration Bratislava and despite being separated by so many kilometres, we are exceptionally connected in the world of stories. In what we feel, what we dream about, or what hurts us,” Hana Križanová, Head of the Secretariat of Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava at BIBIANA, draws attention to the illustrations. “It is important to remind ourselves that we are also in many aspects close to each other in all our differentness uniqueness.”

This is the very message and idea behind this outdoor exhibition at Hviezdoslav Square called “What connects us”, which started a month ago, being also some kind of first taste of this year's BIB and also a reminder of what is really essential.

By “essential” I mean only for BIB and the world of illustration.

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