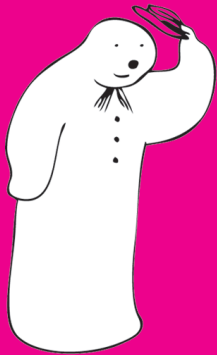


A library  
for the island's children,  
so that they can learn to tell the difference between the horizon and the border,  
for children just passing through,  
so that Lampedusa can be more than just a staging post on their journey.  
Because through books we can build  
an ethos of welcome, respect and participation.

Giusi Nicolini  
MAYOR OF LAMPEDUSA AND LINOSA





07 May / 21 July 2013  
Libri senza parole.  
Destinazione Lampedusa  
Silent books.  
Final Destination Lampedusa  
Forum Palazzo delle Esposizioni  
via Milano, 13-Roma

the exhibition and the travelogue  
are curated by  
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Palazzo delle Esposizioni di Roma

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INTERNATIONAL JURY

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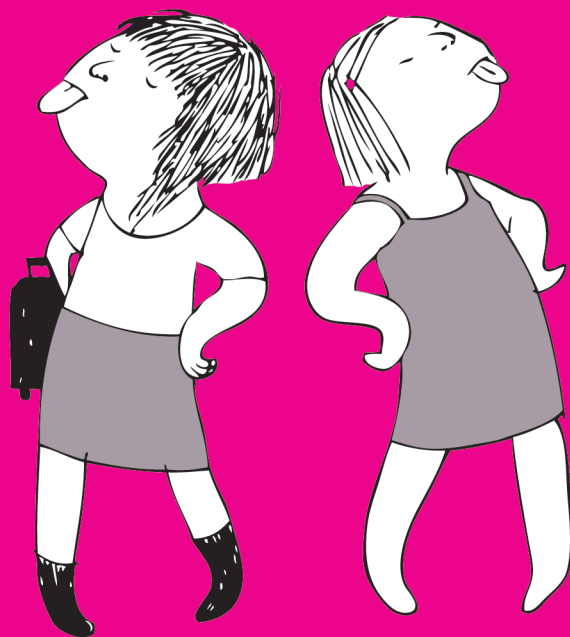


INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Comune di  
Lampedusa e Linosa





A library full of the best-illustrated wordless picture books from around the world: what could be better for a child on the way to starting a new life in a strange country away from the hardships and difficulties that forced this radical move. Books with beautiful pictures instead of words – pictures that everyone can read without understanding the language of where the books come from; pictures that can invite new stories to be told, perhaps making sense of life. Ibbly is proud to be involved with this project because it encompasses what we believe in: that every child has the right to become a reader. The enjoyment of reading pictures is the first step to becoming a reader for life. To discover books and being a confident reader leads to being more able to think critically, engage actively in society, build a resistance to demagoguery, foster an understanding of the world, and above all gain knowledge of oneself and others. They are called *Silent Books*, but we hope that the children will not remain 'silent' – we hope that they will become loud and excited, thoughtful and comforting, happy and sad, that they will sing and bring laughter. Above all we hope that they will build a bridge between children holding them and their neighbours, giving them a common understanding of the world. This is Ibbly's mission.

**Ahmad Redza Khairuddin**  
PRESIDENT OF IBBY INTERNATIONAL





First of all, these books are no more silent than others...  
It's just that they don't use text to develop their story.  
But in my view, the construction of the story bears a striking  
resemblance to the kind of construction I love,  
with a varying pace and close-ups alternating with  
sweeping camera pans just like in a good film.  
I don't think "silent" books are more personal or intimate  
than some of the more traditional books; after all,  
a picture can be good or bad, just like a story.  
The examples chosen show the importance of illustrated  
books because they prompt young people to ask questions  
about worlds that aren't theirs; they prompt these kids to go  
on asking questions, and, who knows,  
that particular question on the way things work  
may just sharpen their creativity.  
Besides, everyone knows that each country, in the grip  
of a suffocating globalisation process, is really going  
to need future generations' creativity to survive  
and to reaffirm its individuality.

**Etienne Delessert**  
AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

"How big does my island's cemetery have to be?"

Lampedusa Mayor Giusy Nicolini asked disconsolately in an *Open Letter to Europe* written shortly before Christmas.

It was a razor-sharp question designed to cut through the Old World's aloof indifference to the unacceptable number of lives being lost at sea in the Mediterranean.

"How wonderful it would be if we could rub out the word *cemetery* and replace it with the word *library*", I thought as I read that letter, at the very moment that our small Ibbly group in Rome was eagerly setting its project in motion. But it is even more wonderful today for us to be able to provide this initial reply to a question that was reformulated only in my head at the time: "Big enough to contain all the *silent books* in the world!"

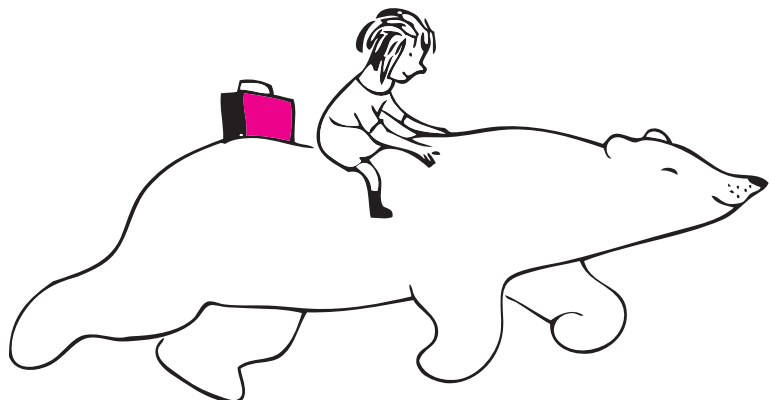
Sure enough, thanks to the Ibbly branches and to publishers all over the world, we are getting set to donate to Lampedusa a selection of the best stories without words published to date.

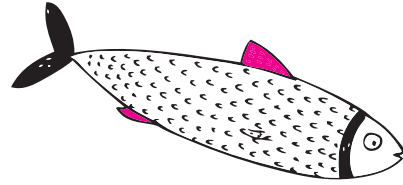
And that is no mean achievement, as you can see from the preview of the exhibition in Rome's Palazzo delle Esposizioni.

But that library is going to have a great deal more, in fact everything that the chain of solidarity forged with this project can manage to pack and ship to Lampedusa. And that is a lot, if this initial experiment is anything to go by. Not to mention the fact that our project provides for a "top-up" every other year.

The aim is to give both the young children who live there and the many who pass through Lampedusa, an opportunity to fill their eyes with images that can speak, their hearts with the hope of a world that may not need to be totally rebuilt after all, and their minds with overpowering inquisitiveness.

When all is said and done, it is this aim that prompts us every day to work on books, with or without words, however young or old our readers may be and in whatever corner of the world they may find themselves.





**Della Passarelli**  
SINNOS EDITRICE

When Deborah Soria spoke to me about the Ibby plan to set up a library on the island of Lampedusa, I leapt at the opportunity to take part. I have been a member of Ibby for several years now and I am convinced that the association's mission is crucial in this country, in which there are still areas where children and teenagers do not have access to books or reading, where there are children who are denied the right to grow up with knowledge and imagination. It is excellent that associations such as Ibby should shoulder the burden of promoting reading while waiting for politics to remedy a serious shortcoming, namely its failure to concern itself seriously with books, with school or public libraries, indifferent to the fact that culture contributes to a country's economic growth and to its citizens' active and responsible participation in society. By the same token, it is excellent to have found a valuable interlocutor in the Palazzo delle Esposizioni, which has built an ideal bridge between Rome and Lampedusa, a bridge of books, books without words yet books that are extraordinarily rich in stories, images and content. These books will be freely available to the children of Lampedusa and of Rome, and to all the children who pass through Lampedusa or Rome, unfortunately for different reasons. But those children will be bound to one another by a common way of thinking, which we hope will allow them to grow into adults capable of welcoming their fellow man, of building bridges rather than barriers. It was inevitable that the books in Sinnos' *Antonio's Library project* should reach Lampedusa this year to enrich the Library in Via Roma, bearing witness to the plurality of the many fabulous voices in children's publishing in Italy.





The European Library where I work is a privileged observatory for me to see what is going on in the field of contemporary publishing. Over the past few years I have noticed publishers showing a growing interest in the kind of book that seems to travel rapidly from one country to the next. These are mostly books which, while having no words, are capable of effectively telling complex and original stories that can surprise and enthrall readers of all ages. And there is another aspect that makes them so special: they seem to be the perfect tool for helping to overcome the language and culture barriers that divide people and countries.

The island of Lampedusa, which has always been a land of arrival and departure for a multitude of races, seemed to us to be the perfect place for these books to encounter a special kind of readership.

No sooner said than done: launching an appeal to the international network of Ibby sections to collect the best *silent books* and send them to the island of Lampedusa was the natural extension of a project that has primarily brought "human" skills and resources together.

Apart from being a symbolic gesture of welcome, the project is an invitation to collect contributions to foster the foundation on the island of a library for children, a library for everyone, islanders and immigrants alike: a place where people both feel welcome and are open to the world at large. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who have responded to our appeal with such generosity and competence.

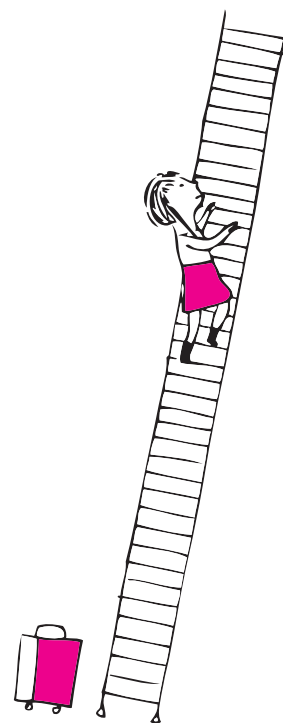
**Cristina Paterlini**  
EUROPEAN LIBRARY IN ROME



If you run pictures of exotic and distant lands on your computer screen, you may get the feeling that the world is now our oyster and that distances no longer count. It seems difficult to believe that there are still real islands, in the true sense of the word, where time and thoughts continue to slip by at an ancestral rhythm, and where a seemingly simple gesture still has all the significance, strength and difficulty of a remote era. Ibbly Italia, with the support of Ibbly International, has chosen to land on a very special island in order to implement a project which, while simple, is nevertheless burdened down with the weight and fraught with the dangers that hang over the complex world in which we live. The project is a library in Lampedusa for children, for all children, Italian and immigrant alike. The project already has an area set aside for it because all it took was for us to explain our plan to a very special mayor such as Giusy Nicolini, to attract all the support we needed. And it already contains the books collected thanks to the generous work of all the Italian sections of Ibbly and to such Italian projects as *Antonio's Libraries*. But we know that a room and a handful of books do not make a real library, just as food and a home are not sufficient to allow a child to grow. A library in Lampedusa needs to be able to communicate the tough and silent lesson that has become embedded in the history of this island, in its geography, in its rocks and boulders, in its atypical role as a bridge thrown into the Mediterranean from which we can all learn the art of civilised hospitality and exchange. These children have a right to be apprised of this experience built up down the ages; in fact, possibly more so than anyone else because otherwise, whether Italian or immigrant, they are at greater risk than anyone else of living in a world without stories and without a common language because they have no books. Building a space capable of using books to forge sensations and exchanges, shared words and memories, is the challenge which we intend to pick up, and for which we would like everyone's support, because today we can see Lampedusa in whichever direction we turn our gaze.

**Deborah Soria**

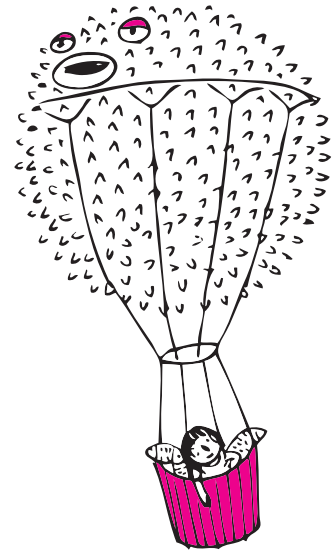
OTTIMOMASSIMO LIBRERIA ITINERANTE  
VICE PRESIDENT OF IBBY ITALIA



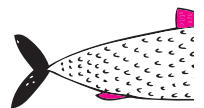
Illustrated books with no text are certainly not an obvious kind of book. First of all, parents may find them off-putting, and then they sometimes disappoint children because they require them to leave behind the comfort of what they usually read in order to literally construct a meaning! Yet these books aren't that difficult. Taking on board the nature of the book you're about to get to grips with, truly reading the pictures and constructing a meaning based on them, and endeavouring to understand what happens in the transition from one to the next: simply put, that is the key to reading this kind of book! Given the hammering of the ceaseless flow of images today, it seems vitally important to get children to read books with no text so that they can learn to adopt an active posture as readers who love pictures. No form of reading is more universal and at the same time more personal than a picture story.

You have to have seen kids pick up these books over and over again and comment on them with their friends, taking pride in pointing out hidden details and the way things logically follow on from one another; and above all, you have to have experienced the fabulous silence that surrounds them when they read this kind of book, to really believe it.

Ibby Italia has proven capable of combining Ibby's first, historic mission in this connection with a stringent exploration of the most modern books in contemporary literature for children, knowing full well the promise they contain. That's why I feel particularly honoured by the invitation I have received to join the jury in this project: it may not be easy, but it's absolutely crucial!



**Sophie Van der Linden**  
EXPERT IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE



**Paola Vassalli**  
PALAZZO DELLE ESPOSIZIONI

Suzy Lee says: "When you leaf through the pages of a book, you open and close a tiny world enclosed in a cut rectangle. You turn over the last page. The story is over. The book is closed. And the world is closed too. Then you replace it quickly on a corner of the bookshelf. Art can be put on a bookshelf. Bookshelf-size art. Isn't that wonderful?" (from *The Border Trilogy*, Corraini edizioni)

The *Scaffale d'arte* in Rome, a library specialising in international art publications for children, was set up as a venue for discovering books, artists, and issues in an art history that leaps out of the text books and straight into daily life, becoming stories of marks, shapes and colours providing opportunities for special projects. Projects like this exhibition, the result of cooperation between Ibbby's Italian sections and devoted to the best books without words published all over the world; a project which aims to put together a collection of works for documentation and research into the silent book, an ancient genre which has also become one of the latest trends in international publishing.

But it is much more than just that.

It is a project of special value with a final destination that, in our view, is... truly special, expressing a wish to get out of the museum, to open up to different situations in the country, sharing dreams and desires to reach out to the world at large, out to the remote island of Lampedusa, a port of call and shelter *par excellence*.

The language of images is a universal tongue that brings children of all nationalities and ages closer together because children, like artists, think in images. It is a language that rediscovers silence to foster an encounter with stories, with those who are different from us, but also with our own selves. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our travelling companions, to the committee that has promoted the project, to the Ibbby sections all over the world, to the publishers and to the international jury that have selected the best books for the honour list and to all of those who have responded to our appeal with eagerness and professionalism, and we would also like to voice the hope that all the children of Lampedusa, whether Italian or immigrant, truly enjoy reading the books.





## Robinson Crusoe

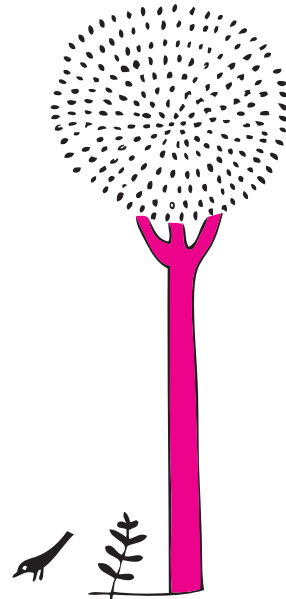
BY Ajubel (AFTER Daniel Defoe)

Media Vaca, Valencia, Spain, 2008

A black line opens the story as it trails over white pages: a boy pulling his small sailing boat along the beach, his hopes of adventure setting light to the colours that guide the reader to a discovery of the extraordinary journey of the most famous castaway of all time.

This is a story in pictures based on the work of the same name by Daniel Defoe. Is it possible to retell a classic tale of literature through pictures alone, while keeping faith with the text? Reading this book, the answer is a resounding "yes"! The blaze of colour, the incisive line, the use of the two-page spread: everything comes together to narrate the beauty of luxuriant nature and the complexity of the characters in a gripping and enthralling retelling of this famous story.





## The rocket boy

BY Ara Jo

Hansol soo book, Seoul, Korea, 2011

The natural beige pages in environmentally-friendly paper bear the delicate yet incisive mark of graphite. A child, immersed in a grown-up world of conflict and flight, escapes to a different dimension, flying in a boundless, star-spangled night sky.

Using stark, tight strokes at once both dramatic and evocative, intimate and universal, the artist tells a story of war and of forced flight from home through the eyes of child who never ceases to raise his gaze to the sky in a soft cry of hope.



## The Snowman

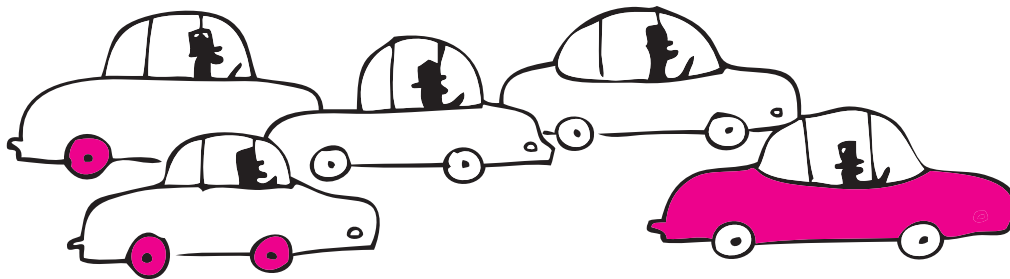
BY Raymond Briggs

Puffin, London, England, 2011 [first edition 1978]

In this reprint of Raymond Briggs' *The Snowman*, which was published for the first time in 1978, we follow the dream of a boy who builds a snowman, breathes life into him and becomes his friend. We track his imaginary adventures one small step at a time, a bit the way Max meets up with his Wild Things in Sendak's book.

The dream in this story takes them over a city, then the boy wakes up and finds that in reality his friend has almost completely melted...

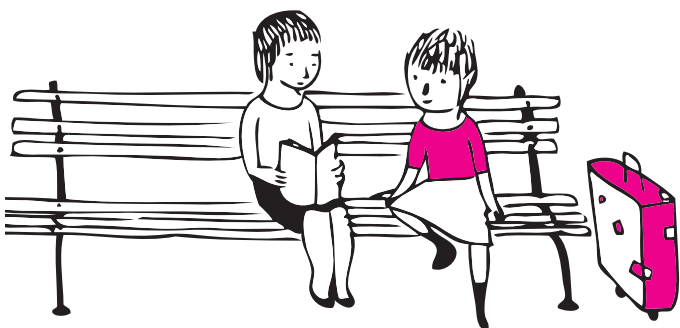
This book is not silent at all! It is an explosion of feelings, sounds and colours that comes very close to the traditional book in its construction.



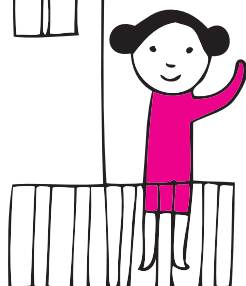
## Tout un monde

BY Katy Couprie AND Antonine Louchard  
Thierry Magnier, Paris, France, 1999

This is an artist's book, or rather an artists' book. Katy Couprie and Antonine Louchard, from France, alternate and mix photographs with drawings and paintings in this album with its highly original, square shape. An atmospheric and free interpretation of the *imagier*, *Tout un monde* is the forerunner of a whole new book genre, and not just for children either. On the face of it, this is a rich catalogue of modern images displaying different techniques, but on a second reading we note that each picture is linked to the next in a different way. And finally, after reading and rereading it countless times over without ever getting bored, we realise that we are in the presence of a crucial book that is talking to us about growing up, about growing old, about the passage of time and the cycle of life and nature.







## Wave

BY Suzy Lee

BIR Publishing Co. 2009 (first edition Cronicle Books, San Francisco, 2008)

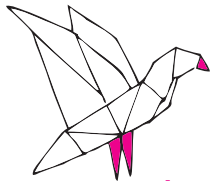
*Onda*, Corraini, Mantova, 2008 (Italian edition)

A little girl with her mother on an empty beach on a summer's day runs happily towards the sea, curious to observe it as it cunningly invites her to play. She would like to be daring, to cross the border between the world of dry land and the waterworld on the other side, but she is so afraid...

This is the story of a meeting between two worlds, two diversities, a metaphor of the transformation that discovering difference brings about in people.

It is an example of a story in which the book itself, as an object, plays its part in telling the tale, from the choice of format to the pointers on the jackets, and from the use of two-page spreads to the choice of colours and techniques that it adopts.





## Todos Fazemos Tudo

ORIGINAL TITLE *Et pourquoi pas toi?*

BY Madalena Matoso

Planeta Tangerina, Carcavelos, Portugal, 2011

(first edition Éditions Notari, Geneva, Switzerland, 2011)

A young black girl analyses test tubes in a lab. A lady plays football with her grandson. And a boy carefully brushes the girl's hair. But all you have to do is to turn over the page for the roles to invert. This game-book with its bright colours was devised by the city of Geneva to alert children of pre-school age to the issue of equality between men and women, and others besides.

This is a ring-bound album cut in half using the *mêli-mêlo* technique which, without yielding to the temptation of adopting an "educational" tone, helps girls, boys and educators to deconstruct stereotypes. The clean images, primary colours, geometric shapes and clear compositions ensure that this text has a strong impact even on its youngest readers.





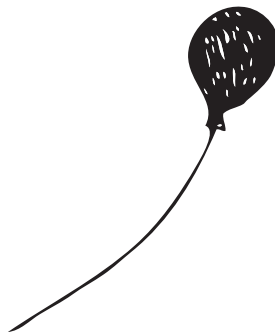
## El arenque rojo

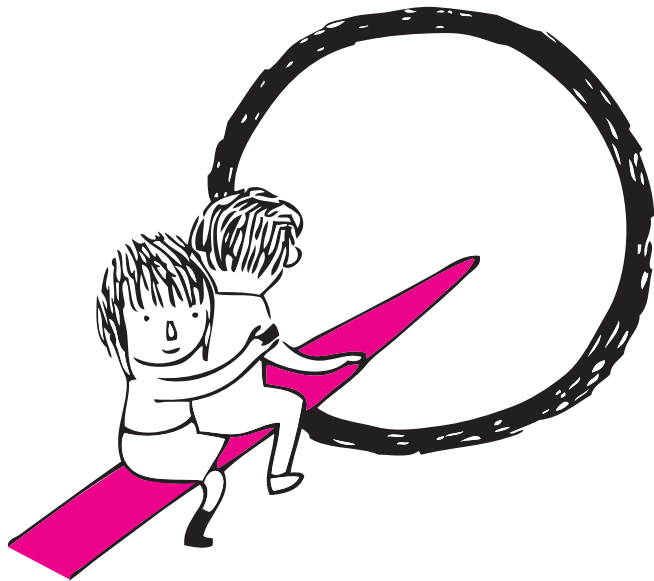
BY Gonzalo Moure Trenor AND Alicia Varela  
SM, Madrid, Spain, 2012

The two-page spread shows the unchanging picture of a park on an afternoon just like any other. The trees, the slide, the benches and the city in the background are always the same, but the slender figures in pastel shades that people the park walk about, meet, and generally live their lives.

The red herring that appears in every scene is a narrative expedient, a decoy designed to distract the reader from the "real" stories.

This is an album without words that urges the reader to invent and to recount stories in a playful and festive atmosphere. The pictures, at once both rich and complex yet dainty and light, direct our gaze to search for hidden details, urging us to look at the huge lawn over and over again to discover minor yet fascinating episodes and to track the lives of the many characters in the story... without allowing the red herring to catch us!





## The Arrival

BY Shaun Tan

Lothian Children's Books, Sydney, Australia, 2006

*L'approdo*, Elliot, Rome, 2008 (Italian edition)

*The Arrival* conjures up the distress, the questions and the small moments of happiness of an immigrant. His host country is constantly changing, its cities varying in accordance with their visitors' actions, in a flow of dreamlike images with numerous changes of pace.

We move from realistic details of daily life to sweeping scenes that invite the reader to become an immigrant in his or her own right and to delve into the book. Shaun Tan's draughtsman's technique is dazzling. He uses photographic documents of his characters to place them in a frequently renewed theatrical setting buzzing with sounds, alive with smells and highlighted by a deeply human sense of humour.

This is a masterpiece that took years to complete.



## De boomhut

BY Marije AND Ronald Tolman

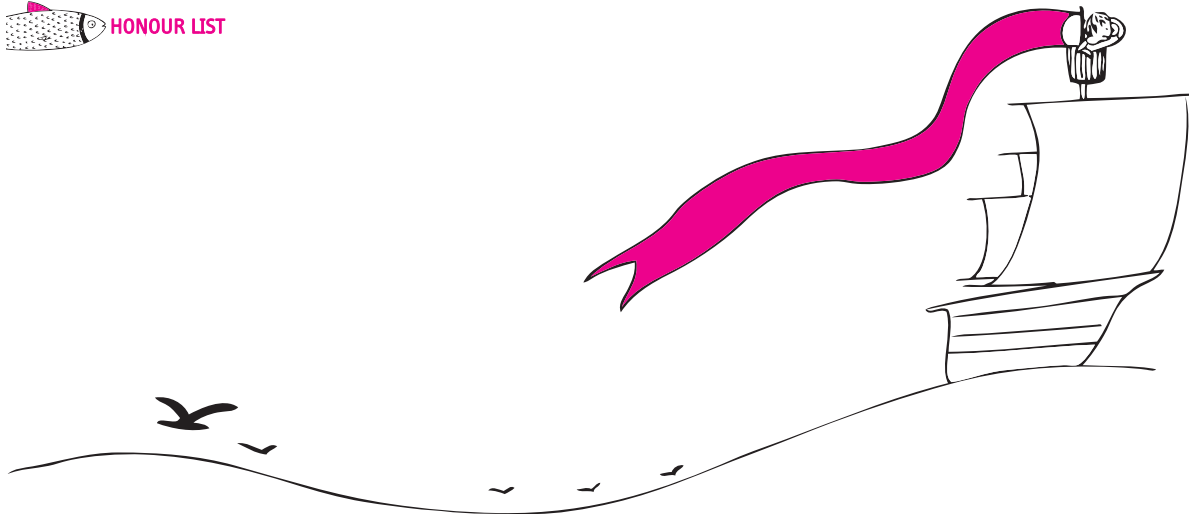
Uitgeverij Lemniscat, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 2009

*La casa sull'albero*, Lemniscat, Milano, 2010 (Italian edition)

The result of a unique combined effort on the part of illustrator Marije Tolman and of her father Ronald, a successful painter and sculptor, this album shows a large tree immersed in water with a house on top on each one of its right-hand pages. The house is lived in by a polar bear and a brown bear who are joined by numerous travelling companions as we turn its brilliantly coloured and exhilarating pages.

This is a poetic story of travel, encounter, coexistence and friendship told with freshness and harmony, a rich and happy book both in its choice of colours and characters and in its composition which shuns all conflict, depicting a world where serenity is possible, or at any rate something we can certainly dream of.





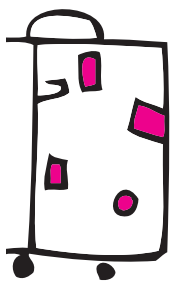
## Flotsam

BY David Wiesner

Clarion Books, New York, USA, 2006

The discovery of an old camera on the beach prompts a curious child to discover a fantastic underwater world. In the lively watercolour illustrations, time and space dilate in a constant oscillation between the microscopic and the macroscopic, between past, present and future.

David Wiesner is without question one of the greatest authors of books without words. His mastery of the story told in pictures is outstanding. Here the author guides his readers through an exhilarating imaginary tale teetering on the very brink of sci-fi and fantasy. We emerge from the book with the feeling that we have just lived through a wonderful adventure.



**Amnesty International** SPECIAL AWARD

## Aan de overkant

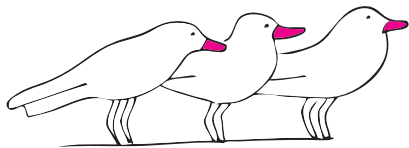
BY Nicole de Cock

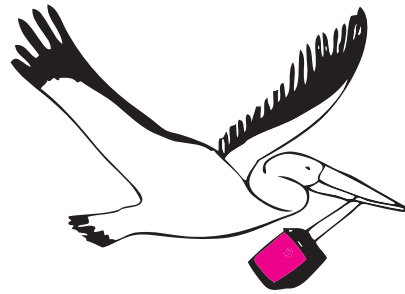
Gottmer Publishing Group, Haarlem, The Netherlands, 2006

The main characters in this story live on opposite banks of the river, a metaphor of the kind of differences that are frequently a synonym for interpersonal separation and clash, but also for the real separation that exists between countries overlooking the same sea, like our own Mediterranean. However, the leading characters' determination to meet up overcomes even the toughest of obstacles.

We hope that this poetic tale will inspire readers of all ages to "act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood"

(ARTICLE 1 IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS).





**Ibby Italia** SPECIAL AWARD

## La mela e la farfalla

BY Iela AND Enzo Mari

Babalibri, Milan, Italy, 2004 [first edition 1969]

An apple and a small red egg that turns into a caterpillar: with scientific accuracy we watch him move around inside the apple, feeding and growing, before he emerges to transform first into a cocoon and then into a butterfly.

The colour of the leaves marks the passage of time and of the seasons, as the butterfly spreads its wings and flies back to the apple tree, now covered in white blossom. And the book starts over again, in a never ending cycle.

In a square format with linear pictures and both flat and bright colours, the basic, iconic vocabulary of this book, first published in 1969, gives it a feel that is at once both poetic and educational. A forerunner of its kind, the book set a definite trend in explaining the cycle of nature to younger readers.





**Palazzo delle Esposizioni** SPECIAL AWARD

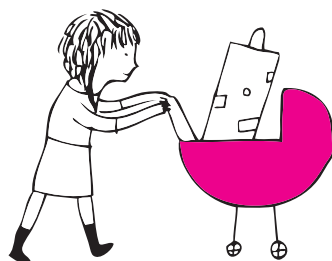
## Hr. Alting

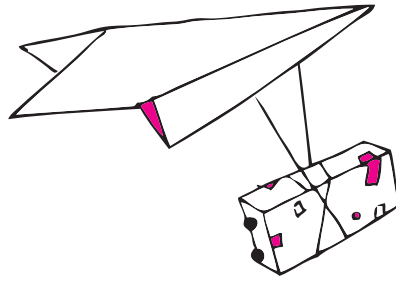
BY Bente Olesen Nyström

Gyldendal, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2006

Mr. Everything is a bizarre character who wears a long black overcoat and a headdress with a satellite spinning around it. He undertakes a fantastic journey through astonishing worlds that combine familiar characters and objects with surreal elements such as the tiger train, stone clouds and a volcanic fireplace.

In this book for readers of all age groups, the dreamlike dimension unfolds in a powerful way. The many citations merge a variety of different registers and inventions echoing art history, the whole dominated by the spectre of Max Ernst's surrealism, although there is no lack of references to popular culture and to different media with an immensely strong and rich appeal.





## Silent books from the world to Lampedusa

### AUSTRALIA

Jeannie Baker, *Mirror*, Walker Books, 2010  
 Shaun Tan, *The Arrival*, Lothian Children's Books, 2006

### AUSTRIA

Michael Roher, *Fridolin Franse frisiert* (Fridolin Franse the hairstylist), Picus Verlag, 2010

### BELGIUM

Kathleen Amant, *Een dagje bij de vriendjes* (A day among our friends), Clavis Uitgeverij, 2010  
 Kathleen Amant, *Samen kijken met Wannas* (Watching together with Wannas), Abimo Uitgeverij, 2012  
 Ann De Bode, *Mijn straat: een wereld van verschil* (My street: a world of difference), Uitgeverij De Eenhoorn bvba, 2012  
 Mattias De Leeuw, *De steltenloper* (The stiltwalker), Uitgeverij Lannoo nv, 2012  
 Pieter Gaudesaboos, *Pistache*, Uitgeverij Lannoo nv, 2006  
 Marjolein Pottie, *Tram BXL* (Streetcar Brussels), Uitgeverij Lannoo nv, 2010  
 Leo Timmers, *Boem* (Bang), Querido, 2011  
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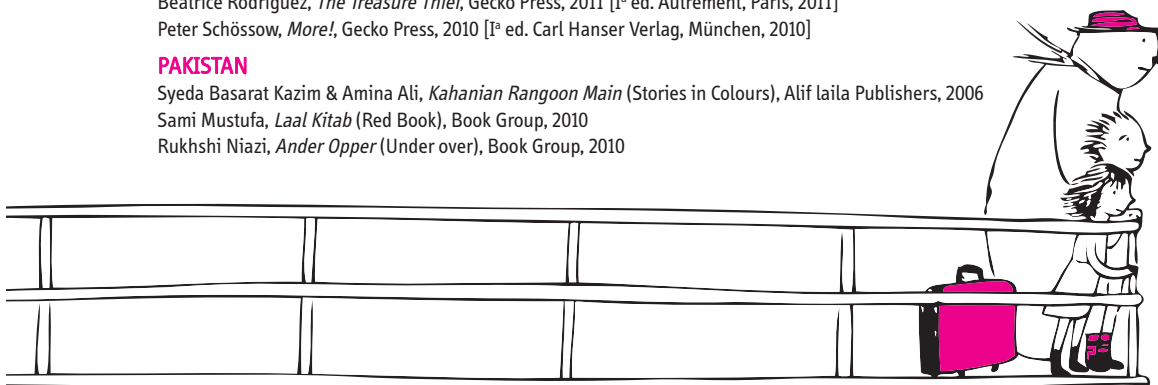
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