

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARD 2018
FOR AN ILLUSTRATOR

PRIX HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN 2018
DE L'ILLUSTRATION



ALBERTINE

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1. BIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS



Albertine was born in 1967 in a countryside village of the Geneva area. She studied at the École des arts décoratifs and the École supérieure d'art visuel of Geneva. She obtained her diploma in 1990 and opened a screen-printing workshop in the same year.

In 1991, she became a press illustrator and started to collaborate with many publications in Switzerland and in France such as *Le Nouveau Quotidien*, *L'Hebdo*, *Bilan*, *Femina*, *Le Temps* and *Les Carnets de Versailles*.

She met writer Germano Zullo in 1993. They married in 1996, and their relationship soon developed into one of great artistic affinity. Their first common works were published the same year and their many children's publications were soon receiving several awards. Among others Golden Apple of Bratislava, 1999; New York Times Book Review Best Illustrated Book, 2012; Crescer Prize from Sao Paulo, 2014; Bologna Ragazzi Award/Fiction, 2016.

Animated films were born out of her collaboration with film director Claude Barras. Especially: *Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis* (The genie of the tinned ravioli), adapted from the eponymous children's book in 2006. *Le chat sans queue* (The tailless cat) an original puppet show production, was added to Albertine's repertoire in 2010.

Albertine simultaneously pursued a prolific artistic career. She has exhibited her drawings, screen prints, lithographic works, wood engravings, objects and notebooks in Geneva, Paris, Bologna, Rome, Valencia, Toyko...

From 1996 to 2014 Albertine also taught screen-printing and illustration at the Haute École d'art et de design of Geneva.

2. ALBERTINE'S WORK IN YOUTH LITERATURE

2.1. Albertine, from childhood to childhood

Albertine openly admits that she never thinks of her young audience when working on a book. Her full attention is rather directed towards being creative. Her intention is to become one with an idea, a story or a narrative. Albertine draws instinctively. Her stroke, which she first developed in childhood as a departure from a point, has remained her signature ever since. She uses it as though it were part of an endless ball of yarn, which she is continually unwinding.

This stroke, often drawn with a Rotring, is part of her identity. When comparing her first book, *Le Petit Fantôme* (The little ghost), 1996, with one of her latest work, *Mon tout petit* (My little one), 2015, one notices that her stroke has evolved but there has been no rupture or revolution. Rather, it continues to run its course seamlessly and is part and parcel of Albertine's life journey.

On the other hand, Albertine is not someone who matures and freezes into a certain style. Whenever she appears to settle into one, off she goes into another. Her stroke is continually evolving, espousing her current subject or adapting itself to the exploration of her next theme. While each new drawing never resembles an old one, traces of all the works she has ever imagined are apparent in the new ones.

When asked about her work, Albertine immediately refers to the world of games; a serious game, she likes to add. She argues that we all too often forget the extreme importance that games play, namely, to understand the world. From the moment she met writer Germano Zullo, their fourhanded game, made up of endless creative exchanges, has sparked the publication of nearly thirty books aimed at young audiences.

Albertine and Germano take extreme care not to leave their respective marks on each other's artistic universes. This can be felt in the way texts and images engage in a dialogue throughout their creations. The illustrations don't just compliment the text, they are an integral part of the narrative and when the scenario allows, the superfluous text sometimes even disappears. Marrying poetry with philosophy, the themes present in the authors' works are very universal. Albertine and Germano prefer asking questions rather than to attempt to provide answers. This explains why many of their books end with open questions, allowing readers to continue their own reflective journey even after the last page has been turned. *La Rumeur de Venise* (The Venice rumour), *Les Oiseaux* (Little Bird), *Les Gratte-Ciel* (Sky high), *Ligne 135* (Line 135), *Mon tout petit* (My little one), all have this trait in common and are addressed to young and older audiences alike. They are a gentle reminder that childhood will always retain something essential.

Albertine's natural spontaneity appears throughout her works but with a sense of detail, an infinite precision, a relevance, as well as a sense of humour that also come to light in her illustrations. She gives every image different layers, which, in turn, offer the reader several levels of interpretation. She may be first an illustrator; she is also a full-fledged author.

2.2. The jury's arguments

For twenty years, Albertine has been developing her own personal style, which has gained recognition in Switzerland as well as abroad. Having reached her artistic maturity, the Geneva-based artist is undeniably a figurehead for the art of joyous and unrestrained illustration in French-speaking Switzerland. Her works have freed themselves from the constraints of traditional art and comic books –that were phases of her own evolution– in order to make place for her very own, instantly recognisable, universe.

«Joyous» and «unrestrained» doesn't mean, however, that Albertine's works are frivolous, but rather that she uses her drawings as a springboard to an imaginary world made up of dreams and constant questionings. Her audience has developed a fondness for her perfect mastery of the image which gives way to a certain audacity and irreverence. In fact, her readers aren't all young but they are all charmed by her imagined universe where the human being is undeniably the main protagonist.

In the stories created by the creative couple, the relationship between the text and the image is perfectly controlled and the articulation between the two crafts is seamless. The poetry present in one is echoed in the other and the humour which emerges out of Albertine's stroke springs up in Germano's texts. The reading rhythm makes room for moments of silence, a dreamlike and reflexive pause before turning the next page. The articulation between the text and the image is, in fact, so well executed and the symbiosis between the two artists so smooth that the reader sometimes forgets that a duo is behind the creation of the book they hold between their hands, which seems to be the fruit of a single creator. This mastery of the art of illustration takes the readers elsewhere; a place where they can indulge in a plethora of emotions and feelings that are exacerbated by inspired narration.

Albertine uses form, page compositions, strokes, colours and typographies to tell a story. In her works, everything takes on a new meaning. The polysemic potential of her art allows Albertine to deliver albums that are both coherent all the while being unexpected. Every book complies to her hand's movements, endlessly unravelling like the *Rumeur de Venise* (The Venice Rumour) leporello, rising along a vertiginous vertical line in *Les Gratte-Ciel*

(Sky high), marrying a horizontal perspective in Ligne 135 (Line 135), or unwinding into an endless embrace in the flipbook *Mon tout petit* (My little one).

For a long time, Albertine worked with vivid colours and one could think that it was her main area of expertise. Towns, houses, pastures and seas would be populated with timeless silhouettes of men, women and children whose elastic bodies would bend and bow in a feline manner. They would stretch and pose vibrantly and sensually at the mere thought of being alive.

At times however, a sense of freedom, a need to go elsewhere, to tell the story differently takes over, blending the characters into the background. For several years already, Albertine has mastered the ability to capture the present moment; her fine drawings, almost caricature-like, possess dimensions of poetry and of questioning, sometimes down to earth, at other times philosophical, even existential; whereas Germano Zullo chisels his texts down to their essence, making ellipses the motor of his narration.

Whether sober or eccentric, low key or outlandish, the worlds of Albertine are always elegant, as if out of deference to children and her readers; to give greater significance to the page, her images are orchestrated in a gentle choreography and she mingles reality and fantasy, the trivial and the sublime, dream and memory.

A gaze that is raised, a leg slightly turned, an outstretched arm; Albertine's images engage in lightness and yet invite attention, as if to tease the reader and yet inspire many questions:

«Details are not to be noticed,
they are to be discovered.
And when we go to the trouble to look for them.
Smaller details appear.
Here and there.
Tiny.
But suddenly so real
That they become enormous (...)» Germano Zullo in *Les Oiseaux* (Little Bird), *La Joie de lire*.

Albertine has illustrated more than forty children's books.
Large part of them have been translated in many languages.
Thus her poetic universe has been able to enchant an audience well beyond the European borders.

3. AWARDS

3.1. Awards for albums

1999

Prix de la Pomme d'or de la Biennale d'illustrations de Bratislava BIB, for Marta et la bicyclette (Marta and the bicycle)

2009

Prix suisse Jeunesse et Médias for La rumeur de Venise (The Venice rumour)

2011

Prix Sorcières for Les Oiseaux (Little Bird)

2012

New York Times Best Illustrated children's book Award 2012, for Les Oiseaux (Little Bird)

2013

Book design Award from the «design future in the Communication Arts Design Annual for 2013» for Les Gratte-Ciel (Sky high)

2014

Prix Enfantaisie for Dada (Jumping Jack)

2014

Prix Crescer de Sao Paulo for Les Oiseaux (Little Bird)

2016

Bologna Ragazzi Award / Fiction for Mon tout petit (My little one)

3.2. Awards for animated films

2003

Prix SACD, concours de projets, Festival international du film d'animation, Annecy, France, for Le Génie de la boîte de Raviolis (The genie of the tinned ravioli)

Prix Canal+, concours de projets, Festival international du film d'animation, Annecy, France, for Le Génie de la boîte de Raviolis (The genie of the tinned ravioli)

2006

Emerging talent award, Encounters International Short Film Festival Bristol, United Kingdom, for Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis (The genie of the tinned ravioli)

Award for best short film. Australian International Film Festival, Australia, for Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis (The genie of the tinned ravioli)

Kodak Award, Curtocircuito, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, for Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis (The genie of the tinned ravioli)

Prix du public (Public's award), Court 18, Paris, France, for Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis (The genie of the tinned ravioli)

Prix du public (Public's award) SSA-Suissimage animation, Solothurn Filmtage, Switzerland, for Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis (The genie of the tinned ravioli)

Prix du public enfant (Children public's award), Festival Cinéma tout enfant, Geneva, Switzerland, for Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis (The genie of the tinned ravioli)

Mention spéciale du jury (Special Distinction by the Jury), Festival du Film Romand FROG 2, Geneva, Switzerland, for Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis

2007

Prix du meilleur court métrage (Award for best short film), European Youth Film Festival of Flanders, Belgium, for Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis

4. BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS PUBLISHED IN FRENCH

Le Petit Fantôme (The little ghost), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions la Joie de Lire, collection petits cahiers d'ici et d'ailleurs, 1996.

Marta et la bicyclette (Marta and the bicycle), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions la Joie de Lire, 1999.

Adaptation: short animated film: Marta et la bicyclette, Guy Susplugas, La Cinquième, CNDP, Centre de documentation pédagogique, 2000.

Marta au pays des montgolfières (Marta in the land of the hot air balloons), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2001.

Marietta chez les clowns (Marietta visits the clowns), text by Corinna Bille, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2001.

Adaptation: Theatre: Marietta chez les Clowns, Sandro Santoro, Compagnie Naphtaline. First performance on 14 February 2010 at the Petit théâtre, Lausanne, Switzerland.

A l'étranger (Abroad), text by Jürg Schubiger, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2001.

Zinzouin le martien visite la galaxie (Zinzouin the alien visits the galaxy), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, collection les Versatiles, 2001.

Violette et Ficelle (Violette and Ficelle), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions la Joie de Lire, collection les Versatiles, 2002.

Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis (The genie of the tinned ravioli), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, Collection Somnambule, 2002.

Adaptation: Short animated film: Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis, production by Claude Barras, Cinémagination, Fribourg, Folimage, Valencia, 2005.

Hôtel Rimini (Rimini Hotel), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2002.

Marta et la pieuvre (Marta and the octopus), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2003.

La Java bleue (The blue java), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2003.

Le Fromage (The cheese), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2004.

Vacances sur Vénus (A holiday on Venus), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2005.

L'imagier d'Albertine (Albertine's picture book), Geneva, Éditions La joie de Lire, 2006.

Blanche et Marcel (Blanche and Marcel), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2007.

La Marelle (The hopscotch), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La joie de Lire, 2007.

La Rumeur de Venise (The Venice rumour), scénario by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2008.

A la mer (To the sea), scénario by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2008.

Le retour de Marta (Marta's return), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2008.

Paquita (Paquita), text by Germano Zullo, Zurich, Éditions OSL, 2008.

Le Chat botté (Puss in boots), tale by Charles Perrault, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2009.

En ville (In town), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2009.

Grand couturier Raphaël (Raphaël, the great fashion designer), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2009.

Les Oiseaux (Little Bird), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2010.

Les Gratte-Ciel (Sky high), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2011.

A la montagne (To the mountain), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2011.

Ligne 135 (Line 135), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2012.

Dada (Jumping Jack), text by Germano Zullo, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2013.

Bimbi, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2014.

Mademoiselle de trop (Miss too much), text by Bridget and Caroline Dommen, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2014.

Circus, Brussels, Éditions A pas de loups, 2014.

Les robes (Dresses), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2014.

A pas de loups, Collective publication, text by Germano Zullo, Brussels, Éditions A pas de loups, 2014.

A la campagne (In the countryside), Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2015.

Mon tout petit (My little one), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2015.

La mer est ronde (The sea is round), text by Sylvie Neeman, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2015.

Le grand roman de ma petite vie (The great novel of my little life), text by Susie Morgenstern, Paris, Éditions La Martinière, 2016.

Le président du monde (The president of the World), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2016.

Farces et Attrapes (Tricks and catches), album/CD, text author compositor by Jeanne Plante, Éditions Label/Little Village (Harmonia Mundi), 2016.

S'aimer (To love), collective publication, text by Cécile Roumiguère, Brussels, Éditions A pas de loups, 2016.

Le grand roman de ma petite vie, Tome 2, text by Susie Morgenstern, Paris, Éditions La Martinière, 2016.

Les doux Mots-songes (The sweet words and dreams), text by Annie Agopian, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2017.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH INTO OTHER LANGUAGES

Translations of *Marta et la bicyclette* (**Marta and the bicycle**)

German, 2001
American, 2002
Hebrew, 2003
Japanese, 2006
Korean, 2006
Spanish, 2007, 2016
Thai, 2009
Chinese, 2014
Portuguese, 2015

Translation of *Violette et Ficelle* (**Violette and Ficelle**)

Korean, 2003

Translations of *Marta au pays des montgolfières* (**Marta in the land of the hot air balloons**)

Dutch, 2001
Korean, 2003
Thai, 2009
Chinese, 2014
Portuguese, 2015
Spanish, 2016

Translation of *A l'étranger* (**Abroad**)

German, 2002

Translations of *Le Génie de la boîte de raviolis* (**The genie of the tinned ravioli**)

Korean, 2004
Iranian, 2013

Translations of *Marta et la pieuvre* (**Marta and the octopus**)

Korean, 2006
Thai, 2009
Chinese, 2014
Portuguese, 2015

Translations of *La Java bleue* (**The blue java**)

German, 2005
Chinese, 2006
Korean, 2013
Spanish, 2013

Translations of A la mer (To the sea)

Flemish, 2008

English, 2009

Spanish, 2009

Polish, 2016,

Chinese, 2016

Translation of Le retour de Marta (Marta's return)

Thai, 2009

Chinese, 2014

Portuguese, 2015

Translation of En ville (In town)

Flemish, 2009

Chinese, 2016

Translations of Paquita (Paquita)

German, 2008

Italian, 2008

Rhaeto-Romance, 2008

Translations of Les Oiseaux (Little Bird)

Italian, 2010

English, 2011

German, 2011

Spanish, 2013

Portuguese, 2013

Hebrew, 2013

Iranian, 2013

Chinese, 2013

Taiwanese, 2014

Estonian, 2014

Catalan, 2016

Translations of Les Gratte-Ciel (Sky high)

German, 2011

English, 2011

Greek, 2013

Korean, 2013

Taiwanese, 2013

Chinese, 2014

Translation of A la montagne (To the mountain)

Korean, 2012

Chinese, 2016

Translations of Ligne 135 (Line 135)

English, 2012

Chinese, 2013

German, 2013

Korean, 2013

Spanish, 2014

Polish, 2016

Translation of Dada (Jumping Jack)

English, 2013

German, 2013

Portuguese, 2014

Slovenian, 2014

Spanish (Argentina), 2014

Translation of Les Robes (Dresses)

Chinese, 2016

Translation of A la campagne (In the countryside)

Chinese, 2016

Translation of Mon tout petit (My little one)

Spanish (Argentina), 2015

Chinese, 2016

Korean, 2016

Translation of La mer est ronde (The sea is round)

Chinese, 2016

Spanish (Chile), 2016

6. ALBERTINE'S FIVE MOST NOTABLE CHILDREN'S BOOKS

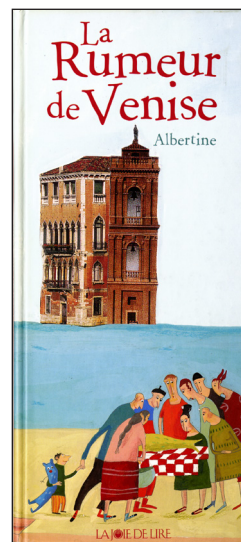
6.1. La Rumeur de Venise (The Venice Rumour)

La Rumeur de Venise was originally supposed to be entitled La Rumeur de Naples (The Naples Rumour) as a tribute to Germano Zullo's origins and to highlight the typically Neapolitan habit of embellishing any story. In the end, the Venetian canals and famous palaces became a better backdrop for this tale, told without words.

The story revolves around a man who brings his day's catches to the quays of Venice. His first clients are quick to notice a particularly big fish. The news quickly spreads from window to balcony and gets amplified as it makes its way through the grapevine. This two meters long leprello is an analogy for the way legends are born, for the process of creation and for the way in which certain fictions have come to write themselves into the world's reality.

Collage and gouache.

Prix suisse jeunesse et médias, 2009.



6.2. Les Oiseaux (Little Bird)

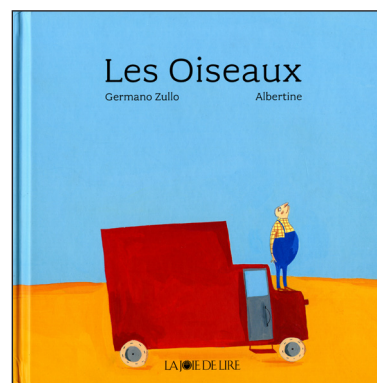
A truck is making its way through the desert. The truck suddenly stops on the side of a cliff and the driver gets out, opens the boot and frees its load of birds. A small black chick, however, doesn't seem to want to follow its companions. The empathetic and patient truck driver then tries to encourage the chick to take flight. Constructed in the manner of a storyboard with very few colours, this album conveys a message that is as simple as it is universal. The text and the images engage in a subtle dialogue and give the work a poetic realm, allowing for different interpretations of the underlying themes of freedom, encounters, sharing, all the while conveying an optimistic view on life.

Gouache illustrations.

Prix Sorcières, 2011.

New York Times Best Illustrated Children's book Award, 2012.

Prix Crescer de Sao Paulo, 2014.



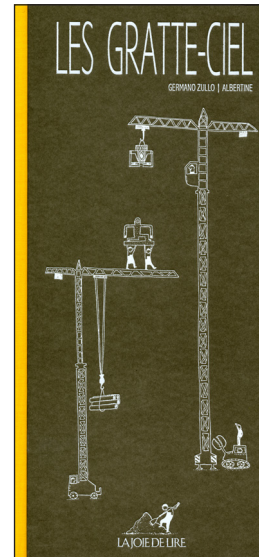
6.3. Les Gratte-Ciel (Sky high)

Two billionaires, Agenor Agobar Poirier des Chapelles and Willigis Kittycly Junior are engaged in a bitter war and sparing no expense to build the most beautiful, original, state of the art, expensive or highest house. The two belligerents ignore all laws of reason leading to a catastrophic outcome, split into two parts.

Albertine drew this particular book without any colour and exclusively with a Rotring. The final effect, teeming with details, gives the reader the impression to have to interpret an architect's plan. The book's message is undoubtedly a political one but is also about reinventing the future rather than announcing the end of the world.

Drawn with a Rotring.

Book design Award from «design future in the Communication Arts Design. Annual for 2013», 2013.



6.4. Ligne 135 (Line 135)

Waving goodbye to her mom on the town's train platform, a small girl settles down on a monorail to go visit her grandmother who lives in the countryside. The line 135 meanders through the commercial neighbourhoods of the city and continues its journey through suburbs, forests and pastures. Throughout this itinerary, the reader will be able to read the little girl's interior monologue, inspired by her travels. She starts imagining what it is like to grow up, but caught between the experience of adults and her own yearning to learn, she realises that the path will be arduous. Upon reaching her destination, the little girl is sure of one thing: the future must belong to her.

Along the way, Albertine manages to evoke the numerous questions that cross a child's mind when growing up. The mysterious outlined figures on the page suggest thoughts that are still under construction and the genesis of a new world. With the exception of the monorail, which stands for time, movement, and transmission, the book is entirely drawn in black and white.

Drawn with a Rotring and a digital pallet.



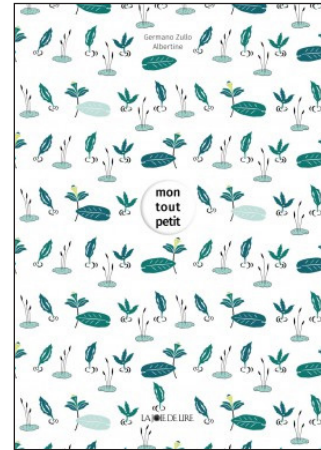
6.5. Mon tout petit (My little one)

A woman appears to be waiting. A child appears, tiny, in the palms of her hand. He grows up, lays his feet on the ground and eventually overtakes the shrinking woman until she stands in the hollow of the man's hand before disappearing.

This book, full of sweetness and poetry, is like a tandem dance. Each protagonist guides the steps of the other in turn. Since the design is only printed on the front cover pages, it can be brought to life as a flip book by scrolling the pages from left to right. Equally, it can be flipped from right to left if you want to start the story with the man holding his Little One in the hollow of his hand.

For this book, Albertine illustrates using only fine-leaded grey pencil. Germano Zullo's text is simple and understated. The storyline is beautiful, the book's casing refined. Albertine and Germano Zullo both excel, where the intelligence and sensitivity of their respective arts flourish.

Bologna Ragazzi Award, Fiction, 2016.



7. BOOK SENT TO THE JURORS

Marta et la pieuvre (Marta and the octopus), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2003.

Les Oiseaux (Little Bird), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2010.

Les Gratte-Ciel (Sky high), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2011.

Ligne 135 (Line 135), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2012.

Mon tout petit (My little one), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2015.

La mer est ronde (The sea is round), text by Sylvie Neeman, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2015.

Le président du monde (The president of the World), text by Germano Zullo, Geneva, Éditions La Joie de Lire, 2016.

8. ALBERTINE – REVIEW BY THE MEDIA

Albertine's works have been widely commented on by a number of specialised publications:

Citrouille, La Revue des livres pour enfants, Notes Bibliographiques, Parole, www.papier-de-soie.com, www.ricochet-jeunes.org, etc.

as well as by the general press:

Elle Suisse, Journal de la Corse, La Croix, L'Humanité, Le Nouvel Observateur, Le Temps, Le Matin Dimanche, Télérama, etc.

Praise for *La Rumeur de Venise* **d'Albertine, read at the Prix suisse Jeunesse et Médias 2009 (Extracts).** Sylvie Neeman, specialist in children's literature

It is a real pleasure to praise a book which, in my opinion, answers the most important criteria of what constitutes a «good» children's book. Despite the absence of words, this book is a real pleasure to read. This pleasure can be witnessed in the words uttered and the smiles exchanged by the children who hold it in their hands; gestures which are tell-tale signs of appreciation. If the readers so desire, this book also discreetly encourages them to ask questions and to think outside the box. (...)

It is a book about a rumour: a fisher has brought back a big fish. It is certainly larger and slightly more beautiful than usual, but nothing really worth writing home about. However, this is exactly what Germano Zullo sets out to do: to write home about it. For this story, he imagined a scenario worthy of a Roberto Benigni film. The news about his catch, which becomes more and more miraculous as it makes its way through the grapevine, along the Venetian canals, is amplified from window to balcony and from roof to roof.

This is exactly what constitutes a rumour. It swells just like the fish drawn by Albertine and successively turns into a swordfish, an octopus, a hammerhead, and even a whale. It transforms to such a point that it starts to escape reality to take on chimeric qualities, which only the author can put an end to. The fish finally takes on the appearance of a mermaid, who thumbs her nose at the rumour's propagators by diving back into the sea. Albertine has magnificently shed a light on the everyday, prosaic characteristics of the rumour: the story's characters are shown respectively eating, reading, hanging laundry or taking in the sun. Their mundane lives are suddenly shaken by an event into which they are drawn simply because they find it worthy of being told and shared. The obvious linearity used in this beautiful leporello is another essential aspect of the rumour: in order to exist it needs the space, time and distance to spread. It also needs people to relay it. Following Germano's very precise scenario, Albertine has recreated her very own Canal Grande which is both imaginary and real at the same time (...) (She)

then proceeds to give life to these venerable facades by offering them tenants (...). As the rumour spreads, the same character acts both as a receiver and a transmitter to his or her neighbour. It is a book about words where not one word is uttered. Instead, we are offered a view on how words work and how they come to exist. It is a wordless book that ignites conversation (...).

Ligne 135 www.papier-de-soie.com accessed 14/12/12

Inspired by a trip to Japan, this book allows readers to follow the course of a monorail from the heart of a city to the countryside... The main protagonist, a little girl, knows both places very well: the city is where she comes from and the countryside is where her grandmother lives. The trip between the two destinations is a beautiful one...

Germano Zullo encourages his young readers to experience the various emotions that a train ride might trigger. By giving the little girl a voice, he allows her to describe, simply and accurately, what this journey makes her feel. (...) Germano Zullo creates a strong bond between his readers and the child who lets her thoughts rise to new levels throughout her journey. In her eyes, the world knows no limits despite what her mother and grandmother tell her. Gradually, the little girl's dreams come to dominate the story; as she grows older, she doesn't want to forget the promises she made to herself as a child. The train can be seen as a metaphor for the evolution of the world which might be happening a little too fast.

In perfect keeping with the text, Albertine allows the landscapes to unfurl and transform with every turn of a page. She starts by drawing the big city with its business quarters and its buzzing streets. Then come the leafy landscapes made up of pastures and rivers, before arriving to the final destination: the grandmother's house. Albertine reaches a subtle harmony between dream and reality of which the Line 135 is the symbol. Her fine and delicate stroke, complimented by black contouring, brings an aerial and dream-like note to her plates. The only touch of colour consists in the bright green train climbing up and down the pages, bypassing all obstacles; a beautiful way of highlighting the fast-paced whirlwind which the world has become. Albertine's whimsical illustrations are both poetic and gentle. Just as *Les Gratte-Ciel's* format, tall and thin, is adapted to the skyscrapers that rise into the sky, so too the «Italian format» of Ligne 135, elongated in shape, allows the story of a trip to unfold in a practical and imaginary way.

This is a superb album which talks about travelling, dreams, and of a world that often doesn't take the time to pause and enjoy the present moment. Magnificent!

A sublime and universal «Pas de deux»

<http://www.svdl.fr/svdl/index.php?post/2015/02/23/Mon-tout-petit>, accessed 29/12/2016.
Sophie Van der Linden, specialist in children's literature.

An exquisite and sophisticated story in a notebook format. Articulately and sensually designed with a pattern of sprouting young plants, circumventing its Centre with the title «My Little one». The cover and its subsequent design is itself a gift illuminating the special moments accompanying childbirth.

Uniquely illustrated in fine grey crayon, a grand lady cradles an infant minutely in the palm of her hand and in the corner of her breast. She holds him in her hands as he grows, turning and twisting together until he touches the ground. All the while the lady shrinks, hanging on to her growing child's neck, becoming in turn a minute figure in the palm of his hand.

The text starts from the second image and ends at the penultimate scene. Advancing delicately, sentence by sentence, it alludes above all to the universal story of entwining relationships.

Printed only on the front, the pages are aligned in the manner of a flip-book. One can scroll through the pages quickly to animate them delicately to life. It is also possible to scroll cautiously through to replay a slow waltz of life.

The storyline works just as well starting the book from the end, with the portrait of a man that reminds us of a woman's opening scene. No doubt, it is also a couple's story in the broadest sense taking place in the drawings...