

Focus IBBY issue 60.1, 2022

by LIZ PAGE

International Children's Book Day 2022

The 2022 International Children's Book Day (ICBD) is sponsored by IBBY Canada. The theme is *Stories are wings that help you soar every day*. Julie Flett and Richard Van Camp have designed the poster to provide the message to the children of the world.

Julie Flett is a Cree-Métis author, illustrator, and artist who has been honored with the Governor General's Award, the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award, the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Literary Excellence, and the American Indian Library Association Award. Richard Van Camp is a Dogrib a Th̓çh̓ writer from Fort Smith, Northwest Territories, and the award-winning author of twenty-six books.



Stories are wings that help you soar every day.

Reading is Freedom. Reading is Breath.

Reading lets you see our world in a new way and it invites you into worlds you never want to leave.

Reading allows your spirit to dream

They say books are friends for life and I agree.

The perfect universe of you only grows when you read.

Stories are wings that help you soar every day so find the books that speak to your spirit, to your heart, to your mind.

Stories are medicine. They heal. They comfort. They inspire. They teach.

Bless the storytellers and the readers and the listeners. Bless books. They are the medicine for a better, brighter world.

Mahsi cho. Thank you very much.

Richard Van Camp

More information about ICBD 2022 and how to order copies of the poster can be found at www.ibby-canda.org.

Reflections from the 37th IBBY Congress

Moscow, Russia, September 10-12, 2021

The decision to hold the 37th IBBY World Congress in Moscow was made by the IBBY Executive Committee in Bologna in 2015. From the start, it was not plain sailing due to the worries about border conflicts and then later by the government's stance on LGBTQ+ rights in Russia. Nevertheless, the IBBY Executive Committee kept a close eye on the situation while supporting our IBBY Russia colleagues in their preparations. No one knew at that time what lay ahead!

Russian literature has had a strong influence on children's literature in the world, and IBBY wanted to emphasize the positive aspects of the country as well as follow our goal of promoting peace through children's

books. IBBY Russia/Raising Readers Association also wanted to share their very rich heritage as well as showcase the latest trends in children's literature in Russia.

When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in early 2020, travel became restricted, borders were closed, and in-person meetings were held online. It was with a heavy heart that the IBBY Executive Committee made the decision in April 2020 to postpone the 37th Congress to 2021. Our colleagues in Moscow had reached the same conclusion, and thus the Congress moved to September 2021. There was still a lot to accomplish, and a hybrid event was planned with in-person attendance as well as online participation. It was a huge challenge and we have learned much in the process.

The program was developed and speakers were approached. Several of the original keynote speakers agreed to the new plan and many oral sessions were organized. The Scientific Committee worked hard to prepare an inclusive, interesting, and wide-reaching program. The Congress organizers worked with an IT company to build an online platform that could be universally used around the world in the many different time zones and languages.

After all this hard work, the Congress opened in Moscow on Friday, September 10, at the State Museum of Alexander Pushkin. Finally, representatives from thirty countries could attend the Congress in person. The opening began with a very talented young pianist playing, followed by a short welcome by Vladimir Tolstoy, the cultural advisor to the president of the Russian Federation. IBBY President Mingzhou Zhang also welcomed the participants via a prerecorded message. He referred to the work being done by IBBY members across the world:

As IBBY members, we work towards bringing children and books together. Even though the current pandemic is testing our resources and imagination, there are many projects in the IBBY world that manage storytelling, workshops, seminars and more online or via mobile phones. Social media and websites can deliver many online resources!

During the pandemic we have learned to be resilient and adaptable. As we move forward to face new challenges with renewed optimism and confidence, we have to find new ways to bring the joy of reading as well as access to high-quality books to children everywhere.

The opening closed as it began, with a young musician, this time a trumpet player.

The first keynote speaker of the Congress was Bart Moeyaert from Belgium, who gave a wonderful speech about growing up and going on to become an award-winning writer. Zohreh Ghaeni from Iran followed by giving a very moving talk about how women from deprived communities are changing their destinies through books and reading. Mempo Giardinelli spoke about his work in Argentina aimed at making every child in the world a reader.

The afternoon plenary sessions were devoted to reading promotion projects. IBBY projects and their leaders were lauded: Casa Cuna Cuenteros from Argentina (2020 IBBY-Asahi winner); Leigh Turina, the lead librarian for the IBBY Collection of Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities; Mempo Giardinelli from Argentina (2012 IBBY-Asahi winner); Zohreh Ghaeni from Read With Me in Iran (2016 IBBY-Asahi winner); and Deborah Soria, founder and head of the IBBY Silent Books project. Denis Beznosov moderated this hybrid session, with the speakers

tuning in from Canada, Argentina, and Italy, as well as live from Moscow.

Cedric Christian Elongue from Cameroon gave a lively presentation about the accessibility and visibility of African children's books and how much more is needed to bring relevant books to children across the continent. Cao Wenxuan, the 2016 Hans Christian Andersen winner from China, presented a prerecorded speech about his work and the role of dialectics in writing, drawing on many references to the great Russian writers.

Later in the afternoon, the 2020 and 2022 Hans Christian Andersen Award Jury President Junko Yokota led a roundtable discussion by six past award winners: Jacqueline Woodson (USA,

2020), Albertine (Switzerland, 2020), Roger Mello (Brazil, 2014), David Almond (UK, 2010), Cao Wenxuan (China, 2016), and Igor Oleynikov (Russia, 2018). This session was again a hybrid discussion, with Oleynikov live in Moscow. The discussion was wide-reaching and very interesting. One surprise was that Roger Mello, who had been held up in Brazil on his way to Moscow, was able to participate directly from the São Paulo airport!

Another discussion was led by Ekaterina Asonova with the participation of Valentin Golovin, the director of Pushkin House, and Laure Thibonnier, who is working on Russian literature at the University of Grenoble in France. The afternoon ended with an enlightening session by David Almond talking about why he writes for young people.

The 2020 IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award ceremony took place in the evening at the Pushkin Museum, with a live connection with the leaders of the Casa Cuna Cuenteros project in Buenos Aires. Laura Ormando and Alejandra Alliende gave an energetic presentation of the project and showed that, despite the pandemic, they could take stories and books to the children in the Buenos Aires main children's hospital. A prerecorded laudation was given by Jury President Redza Khairuddin from Malaysia, and a message of support and congratulations was sent from the sponsor, Asahi Shimbun, in Tokyo. The evening ended with a fabulous buffet.

On day two, the Congress moved to the Russian State Children's Library, which is the home of IBBY Russia. The library was converted



Clockwise: Alejandra Alliende from Casa Cuna Cuenteros, Leigh Turina, Laura Ormando (Casa Cuna Cuenteros), Deborah Soria, and (seated) Denis Beznosov

into seminar rooms, exhibition spaces, and a theater. The main hallway was transformed by pictures by the Russian Andersen award illustration winners Tatjana Mawrina (1976) and Igor Oleynikov (2018). The other exhibitions included the 2020 IBBY Honour List, the 2020 HCA Awards, the 2019 IBBY Selection of Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities, the 2019 IBBY Silent Books selection, BIB'19, Nami Concours 2021, *Migrations: Open Hearts, Open Borders*, and BOLO (*Big Ones Little Ones*) 2020. A fascinating digital exhibition featured the history of IBBY national sections: *Then and Now*. This was a great way to catch up on how IBBY has grown and how it has really influenced the development of children's literature around the world. Along other walls participants could follow the stunning illustrations by Oleynikov for his recent book *Охота на Снарка (The Hunting of the Snark)*, by Lewis Carroll.

The 2020 IBBY Honour List was presented via a film showing the 179 nominations from sixty IBBY sections. This is always a popular event, and this year the film was accompanied by well-known Russian music. Eight nominees were in Moscow in person, and they collected their diplomas and a memento of Moscow from the stage. Representatives from the nominating national sections who were present also collected their nominees' diplomas. A special lunch was given to the representatives and their nominees at a local restaurant.

On Saturday evening, the 2020 Hans Christian Andersen gala evening took place in Dom Pashkov. This elegant neoclassical mansion that overlooks the Kremlin was formerly a private home and is now used for special events. It is also currently an art museum and houses the rare books of the Lenin Library. It was a perfect venue for the gala evening!

The evening was interspersed with music and speeches. The Jury President, Junko Yokota, joined from Evanston, Illinois; the author winner, Jacqueline Woodson, joined from New York; and the illustrator winner, Albertine, joined from near Geneva in Switzerland. Ms. Lee, representing the sponsor, Nami Island Arts & Education Inc., sent a prerecorded message with a film of events and activities that Nami Island conducts throughout the year. The evening event was streamed around the world to the online participants, and those participating in person enjoyed a wonderful dinner.

The final Congress day included another fourteen oral sessions as well as a final plenary session. Andersen Award winner Roger Mello from Brazil enthralled the audience by talking on the topic of "illustrator reader, reader illustrator." The second session was given by Maryta Berenguer, inspiring Argentinian writer, storyteller, and creator of the country's first children's



Jacqueline Woodson, HCA 2020 author winner

public library in Argentina, who spoke live from Buenos Aires.

The inaugural IBBY-iRead Outstanding Reading Promoter Award ceremony took place in the auditorium of the library. We were delighted that one of the winners of the 2020 award was in Moscow and participated in person—Marit Törnqvist, Swedish artist and reading promoter living in the Netherlands. The second winner, Zhu Yongxin, from China, sent a prerecorded presentation of his work that was shown on the main screen.



Marit Törnqvist presenting her work in Moscow

The next presentation was of the history and current activities of IBBY journal *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature*. Valerie Coghlan joined the Congress from Dublin, and Evelyn Freeman joined from her home in Ohio. Valerie and Evie, together with former Bookbird Inc. Board President Joan Glazer, presented the latest publication: *Bookbird: A Flight Through Time*. They gave a fasci-

nating insight into the history of *Bookbird* and its connections to IBBY and the International Youth Library in Munich.

During the three-day Congress, forty-two oral sessions took place among the books of the library; all were in the hybrid format, with speakers logging in from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Chile, China, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Palestine, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Turkey, the UAE, the UK, and the USA. Many more participated in person from Armenia, Belarus, Brazil, Chile, Estonia, Finland, Iran, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Norway, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan, and many from Russia.

The closing ceremony took place at the library on Sunday evening. Angela Lebedeva moderated the closing ceremony, which included speeches from the director of the library, Maria Vedenyapina, supported by her granddaughter Anna, and Vladimir Grigoriev, vice president of the Russian Book Union and the chair of the Congress organizing committee. Anastasia Arkhipova thanked all the members of the Scientific Committee for their excellent work. Liz Page warmly thanked IBBY Russia on behalf of the IBBY president, the IBBY Executive Committee, and IBBY members across the world, and the many organizing committees for their commitment, hard work, and resilience during these difficult times to prepare such a splendid IBBY Congress.

The closing ceremony also included “passing on the baton” to the 38th IBBY Congress, which will be held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, in September 2022. After a delightful film highlighting the regional dances of Malaysia and a welcome by the president of the Putrajaya Corporation, the Malaysian ambassador to the Russian Federation, Dato’ Bala Chandran, accepted a token “baton” to ensure the smooth transition to the next IBBY World Congress. The closing event was full of music and dancing. A children’s singing group representing many characters from well-known stories,

such as Peter Pan, Mary Poppins, the Mad Hatter, Alice, and many more, performed live onstage. Another group of young people also gave a musical performance. Then to close the Congress, the Moscow Cossack Choir took the stage and treated the participants to very energetic singing and dancing—complete with swords!

The whole Congress was a great and important achievement. A huge and heartfelt thank you goes to everyone at Russian IBBY/Raising Readers for preparing such an interesting, wide-reaching, and thought-provoking event.



The Moscow Cossack Choir

38th IBBY Congress: The Power of Stories

Putrajaya, Malaysia

September 5-9, 2022

The preparations for the 38th IBBY World Congress are moving ahead in Malaysia. The call for papers has been issued and the organizers are looking forward to receiving plenty of top-rate proposals.

Theme

The Power of Stories is a broad theme encompassing the many ways in which stories and storytelling are and have been powerful in our lives, especially in the lives of children and young people. With all the problems and challenges we are currently facing, stories help in making sense of our world. This IBBY Congress will allow participants an opportunity to share various perspectives and experiences based on the life-changing and eye-opening works of children's and young adult literature, both past and present, through books that truly have the power to enchant, enrich, and inspire.



Subthemes

Each of the subthemes is briefly expanded below, but the topic list is not exhaustive. Papers may address one or more of the listed topics, although authors should not feel limited by them. Unlisted but related topics on children's and young adult literature are also acceptable, provided they fit in one of the official subthemes.

1. Cognitive Power in Children's Development

- a. Roles of books and stories in cognitive development
- b. Language, learning, and literacy
- c. Story-based approaches to teaching and learning
- d. Learning disabilities
- e. Reading for pleasure

2. Stories for Healing for Children and Young Adults

- a. Bibliotherapy for children and young adults

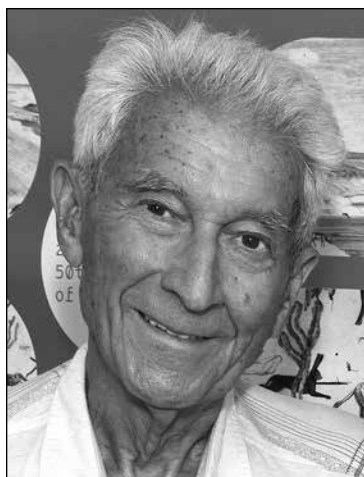
- b. Creative writing and reading
- c. Reading and books for children with disabilities
- 3. **Power of Visual and Aural Presentation in Children's and Young Adult Stories**
 - a. Topics related to picturebooks, illustration, video, graphics, animation, and multimedia
 - b. Storytelling as a performance art/art form
 - c. Power of spoken word, text, audio, or other artifacts (i.e., the original multimedia)
- 4. **Bridging Divides in Children's and Young Adult Literature**
 - a. Multicultural and multilingual themes in literature
 - b. National and transnational themes in literature
 - c. Translations and communication
 - d. Diversity and inclusivity in multicultural society, including Indigenous representation
 - e. Oral to written tradition
 - f. Multimedia for bridging traditional oral literature with modern technology
- 5. **Identity and Values in Children's and Young Adult Literature**
 - a. Individual, communal, and cultural identity in literature
 - b. Community and nation building in literature
 - c. National literature focusing on children's issues
 - d. Immigrant and emigrant experiences in children's and young adult literature
 - e. Universal values in children's and young adult literature
 - f. Sustainability of culture and family in children's and young adult literature
- 6. **Empathy and Memory in Stories and Storytelling**
 - a. Cognitive/emotional empathy, empathy for in-group and out-group members, and empathy with positive and negative consequences
 - b. Youth literature as social activism
 - c. Representation of memory in children's experiences
 - d. Virtues, moral values, humanistic values, and so on in children's and young adult literature

Go to <https://www.ibbycongress2022.org/> for full information.

Dušan Roll

1928 to 2021

Founder and long-standing general commissioner of the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava



Dušan Roll was one of the greatest visionaries. And he was able to make his dreams come true. Love for picturebooks and illustrations for children led him to an excellent idea. Together with some other admirers of beautiful books in the publishing house *Mladé letá*—Ján Švec, Miro Cipár, Albín Brunovským, and others—he founded the legendary Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB) in 1967 with the aim of getting Slovak picturebooks to the world in

the time of the Iron Curtain, and vice versa, bringing the world to us in Bratislava. The international competition is for originals of book illustrations for children. In cooperation with IBBY, they created an impressive event of the highest quality included in the calendar of UNESCO events; as one of its main cultural events, it is admired around the world. Thanks to its unique character, there has been no competition for the noncommercial BIB for more than fifty years, and it has been influencing the improvement of the quality of picturebooks in the whole world. Dušan Roll was a great cultural diplomat and a creative cultural manager. He worked as the chairman of IBBY, on the International Board on Books for Young People, and as the chairman of the Hans Christian Andersen Award; he was also a member of the UNICEF Committee in New York. In 2006, Dušan Roll spoke to me and in the end also persuaded me to take over from him as general commissioner of BIB. He was worried about the future of the biennial and that there could be some negative trends endangering the reputation of BIB at international organizations IBBY; he was afraid of the possible commercializing of the biennial, or even of its cessation. It was an honor to continue in his work, to develop BIB further, and not to let it rest on its laurels. Dušan was always the vigilant, clever, and well-disposed guard of BIB, his most loved “child.” He always used to say to me: “As long as you live, you can solve every problem, there is always a way. Only when we end lying on the batten, then we cannot do anything.”

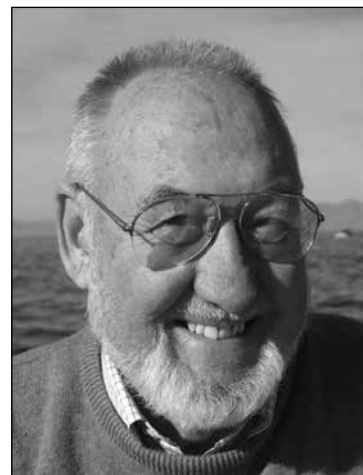
I was able to persuade Dušan to write a book of his memories. In the end he did it, and I believe that this book will be published soon. Dušan’s beautiful vision in the form of the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava still lives its successful life, flies around world, and thanks to beautiful picturebooks, makes it better and much nicer.

Dušan, thank you very much!

Zuzana Jarošová
General Commissioner of BIB

Jay Heale
1937 to 2021

Jay joined IBBY as an individual member in 1984 and was one of the founders of the nonracial and independent South African Children’s Book Forum (SACBF) in 1988. He was pivotal in establishing SACBF as the South African National Section of IBBY in 1992, immediately after the fall of apartheid in the country. He was a member of the Hans Christian Andersen Award Jury for the 1996 and 1998 awards and was elected to be the Jury President for the 2000 and 2002 awards. Through his enthusiasm and commitment to IBBY and children’s literature, he planned and organized the 29th IBBY Congress in Cape Town in 2004. Jay wrote and distributed the newsletter *Bookchat*, about children’s literature in South Africa, and by the time he retired, he had distributed around 230 issues in printed format as well as countless others digitally. Jay was a passionate advocate of children’s literature and its place



in promoting international understanding. His legacy in South Africa and around the world can be felt today. We have lost a good friend and colleague.

Lesley Beake remembers Jay in a moving article:

Jay was a friend of mine, a friend of my family; a friend of my friends. Perhaps most of all, for his entire life, he was a friend of books. Any books, but particularly the ones written and illustrated for children. As a teacher, a writer and a passionate reading advocate, he knew the importance of a book in the mind of a child. He understood the comfort books can bring to a young person in times of difficulty and he believed that books are a passport out of trouble of every kind. He not only knew these things to be true, he worked for his whole life to make these ideals a reality for South African children.

He wrote books too, of course, laboriously (and somewhat amazingly) typing his way with one finger, through millions of words, writing about and above all *for* children. In total, he published 63 books (12 for children and 13 non-fiction and the rest self-published on various aspects of travel and books). He was always constantly in pursuit of ‘The Great Biblical Novel’ of which there were many versions, meticulously researched, on the lives of people who interested him and places where they lived.

His involvement with IBBY was something he would most like to be remembered for. He travelled to many IBBY World Congresses, some while South Africa was excluded, and then later to places as diverse as Santiago de Compostela and New Delhi. But the definite life-highlight for Jay was the four year process that culminated in the impeccably organised IBBY Congress in Cape Town in 2004 that was largely due to Jay’s incredible involvement and level of commitment. He spoke of it in almost every conversation thereafter. In a time of great financial risk for South Africa, he managed to make the congress pay for itself and welcomed delegates from all over the world to show them what we could do. Jay had a life well-lived. We will miss him, miss him every day.

(Lesley’s full article can be found on the IBBY South Africa website.)



Liz Page was born in Britain and moved with her family to Heidelberg, Germany, in 1983. After nearly two years they left Germany and settled in Basel, Switzerland. Through her interest in children and books, Liz helped to establish the Intercultural Children’s Library in Basel—JUKIBU, which opened in 1990. She was a member of the managing board with responsibility for the day-to-day running of the library for the first years and was elected President of the Intercultural Children’s Libraries Association of Switzerland, now called INTERBIBLIO. She joined IBBY as Assistant to the Executive Director in 1997 and in 2009 was appointed Executive Director.