



JORGE LUJÁN

Argentina's Author Candidate
for Hans Christian Award 2024



LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION *

Argentina, November 2022

To the **Honorable** Jury of the
2023 Hans Christian Andersen Award

Dear Members of the Jury,

I am writing to you in order to recommend Argentine writer Jorge Luján, now living in Mexico, as a candidate for this prestigious award. I know his work and I have followed his career for years.

Lujan's development in the relationship between literature and childhood embraces diverse aspects but all of them focus on the importance of poetry in the life of children and the development of this aesthetic sensitivity in the education of young readers. He has written an initiation novel and a book of Mexican myths re-enactment, has created creative workshops in different settings and he has left testimony of them in a methodological book about how to write from images whose title is *La X mágica de México* (The Magical X of Mexico) as well as in collective publications.

His profound and delicate poetry reflects a universe which is real and magical at the same time, and humorously, tenderly or ironically includes dreams, riddles, alphabets, anagrams, haikus and other short forms in a successful re-creation of the explorations of the avant-garde in children's literature. Those poems and linguistic games –in which both the **candor** of the illustrations and the accuracy of the words stand out-, accompanied by the work of splendid illustrators from different cultures and countries, are at the heart of his work, his thinking and his feeling. Trained as a musician, stage designer and architect, Jorge Luján has also developed a career as a singer-songwriter since, as he claims, "Poetry is a possibility to enter into mystery, an invitation to venture beyond appearances to discover what each of us really is."

For all the above reasons, I strongly recommend Jorge Luján for the Hans Christian Andersen Award, along with the candidacy presented by ALIJA [Association of Children's and Young People's Literature of Argentina].

Most respectful regards,

(NO ME DEJÓ COPIAR LA FIRMA)



Córdoba, Argentina, October 2022.

Dear Members of the Jury of the
Hans Christian Andersen Award,

CEDILIJ [Centre for the Spread and Research for Children's and Young People's Literature] is **honored** to endorse Jorge Luján's nomination for the Hans Christian Andersen Award for the reasons set out below:

1. The imprint of his artistic proposal, forged from the depth of the themes treatment and the literary quality of his works, which opened a particular universe especially in the field of album books, from the explosion of the poetic word.

In our view, he is one of the least complacent creators and therefore one of the most interesting ones these days. His intense production includes more than **fifty** books, ten records and theatre, music and dance shows. He has always shied away from the predictable without departing from a childlike spirit. His aesthetic commitment is shown by an effective way of making and proposing editions, outside of the facile demands of the market.

The whole of his work is an invitation to be enraptured; it is nourishing to browse through titles full of creative resources that have been used to great effect. His rigorous, unconventional structure work produces a sense of spontaneity when reading it, although in fact every syllable was decided after a meditated poetic architecture. With his fingers as a writer, musician, actor architect and teacher, Luján specializes in showing us impossible doors to possible worlds: album books, performances and songs, where the traditional boundaries of the child/adult destination are blurred and the lack of prejudice becomes home. A revolutionary act that, with quality, warmth and delicacy, shows confidence in the reading ability of his interlocutors and motivates shared enjoyment.

2. His specialization in interdisciplinary work with illustrators and editors from different regions of the world, which implies a patient and sustained intercultural dialogue which is, in itself, a philosophical and humanist



position. In doing so, he has had the virtue of seducing publishers by encouraging them to leap over their structures and embark on new adventures with unclassified titles that should be included in the field of philosophy for children.

Among the many illustrators he has worked with, French-Iranian Mandana Sadat, South African **Piet** Grobler, Italian Chiara Carrer, Mexican Manuel Monroy, Argentine Isol, German Julia Friese and Chilean Paloma **Valdivia** stand out.

Some of the publishers of his books are: Patsy Aldana (Canada), Ester Rubio (Spain), Karina Fraccarolli (Argentina), Dolores Prades (Brazil) and Miriam Martínez (Mexico).

3. The impact of his work outside his countries of origin and residence. His books travel to homes, schools, universities and libraries all over the world, beyond the Spanish-speaking circuits. They have been translated into **18** languages and his texts have been included in many anthologies.

His literary work for children is being studied in different national and international publications and has received important awards from The New York Times, the French Ministry of Education, the *Banco del Libro* [Book Bank] of Venezuela, White Ravens, the Junior Library Guild, *Luchs des Monats* (*Die Zeit*, Berlin), *Lista de honor de ALIJA* [ALIJA List of **Honor**], IBBY-Mexico, IBBY-Brazil and the Italian Andersen Award, among others. It has also been nominated for the ALMA Award (Sweden).

4. The evolution of his production according to the historical and political context in which he was living.

His work for children started in the late 1960's in community theatre, after discovering the poetic power of children's own writing. He also set to music poems written by children during a period of successive military dictatorships, the last one of which forced him into exile.

From 1976 to 1978 he travelled through South America as an itinerant artist; he recorded discs and gave concerts and talks as social work in universities and needy populations, in peasant and indigenous communities. Part of this journey is reflected in his book *Seven Pablos* (**and the recent *Siete niñas* which has been published** in Korea, Mexico and the United States. Once settled in Mexico, he has continued this work up to the present, all over the Mexican territory. His lush literary work is based on this long experience with a wide range of children. He started to show it around 1995 and has continued enlarging it up to these days.

5. Appreciation of children's abilities.

Jorge Luján has stated on several occasions that children are great teachers and that their voices guided him towards the path of creation. As we mentioned above, this started to happen within a particular political context in South America.

In 1978, when he settled in Mexico, he decided to continue his studies and, at the same time, he began to work in creative writing workshops to support groups of children whose parents were exiled for political reasons. He founded the *Nacimiento* [Birth] Children's Creative Workshop, which is a reference in its field because of its important achievements. Then that work was continued in a number of institutions for a variety of children's groups such as Chicano children in California, USA. Also, under his editorial supervision and artistic work, a number of publications of children's productions came out, such as:

- *La X Mágica de México* [The Magical X of Mexico], a book emerged from the Children's Creative Writing Workshop coordinated by Jorge Luján in the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City from 1985 to 1987. As it was said before, this is also a methodological work about writing from images.

- Song albums *Dando voz a los niños* [Giving Children a Voice], *Los músicos ambulantes* [The **Wandering** Musicians] and *Jorge, el músico ambulante* [Jorge, the **Wandering** Musician], made up of songs with lyrics by children.

- The illustrated books *Animales de compañía* [Pets] and *Pantuflas de perrito* [Puppy Slippers], which were the outcome of an experience proposed by the UNAM [National University of Mexico, by its Spanish acronym] and FCE publishers. Within this frame, Jorge Luján, together with Latin American children, who took part through a website created by psychologist and **educational psychologist** Emilia Ferreiro, wrote a set of poems.

6. The theoretical solidity of his thinking, which sustained his writing and reflections not only in his studies but also in his teaching and stage experiences, part of which have been embodied in countless interviews given to specialized publications and media in the field of Children's and Young People's Literature. This feature is also present in his methodological book *Educating the Imagination* (Teachers & Writers Collaborative, New York, USA) and especially in *The Magical X of Mexico* (SEP/Ed. Libros del Rincón, Mexico). Luján has also given classes, workshops and conferences in academic events related to Children's and Young People's Literature in several countries. His courses and workshops on creation in this field took place at the *Universidad Iberoamericana* [Ibero

American University], *Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia* [National Museum of Anthropology and History], *Colegio Williams* [Williams School], *Maestría Literaria Casa Lamm* [Casa Lamm Literary Mastery], *Museo Rufino Tamayo* [Rufino Tamayo Museum] and *Palacio de Bellas Artes* [Fine Arts Palace] in Mexico; Columbia University, Witter Binner Foundation and George Washington University in the United States; the *CEDILIJ* [Centre for the Dissemination and Research of Children's and Young People's Literature, by its Spanish acronym] [Province of Córdoba], the *MALBA* [Latin American Art Museum, by its Spanish acronym] and the *FILBA* [International

Foundation of Literature of Buenos Aires, by its Spanish acronym] in Argentina.

Among other proposals, Luján has created a new type of events called Concert Workshops, which make up a meeting point between art and pedagogy. They start as a musical-poetic show which gradually becomes interdisciplinary plastic and literary creative workshops and finish as a short songs concert in which the audience participates actively. These Concert Workshops are interactive events that imply a new way of encouraging children, adolescents and general audience's interest in art, books and writing. We can mention "*Un juguete en el espejo*" [A Toy in the Mirror], "*El misterioso mundo de los signos*" [The Mysterious World of Signs], "*Un ave durmiendo en el viento*" [A Bird Sleeping in the Wind], "*La ola roja*" [The Red Wave], "*La más animal de las ideas*" [The Most Animal of Ideas] and "*El hombre de la pared azul*" [The Man on the Blue Wall], as some of the titles of these events.

The author's biography has been included in the *Enciclopedia de la Literatura de México* [Mexican Literature Encyclopaedia], *FML* [Mexican Literature Foundation, by its Spanish acronym] [<http://www.elem.mx/autor/datos/110632>], and in the *Catálogo Bibliográfico del Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes de México* [Bibliographic Catalogue of the National Institute of Fine Arts of Mexico]

[https://literatura.inba.gob.mx/argentina/5169-lujanjorge.html#.X6H_G0MWEkg.facebook], among other websites officially recognised.

To conclude and for the reasons above exposed, we believe that Jorge Luján meets the professional and personal requirements to deserve the Hans Christian Andersen Award. The knowledge of his work and of himself have encouraged us to support his nomination, which **honors** us as members of *CEDILIJ*.

Kindest regards,

Natalia González, BA
Chairwoman

Susana **Allori**, BA
Carolina Rossi, MA
Mariano Medina
Soledad Rebelles
María Masera
Cecilia Leonardo
Carolina Giménez
Lorena Borredá
Malaika Burnichón

Executive Committee



Buenos Aires, November 22, 2022.

To the Jury of the
2023 Hans Christian Andersen Award,

I have known Jorge Luján for more than twenty years because we have worked together on several books and we have had the pleasure of sharing creative processes. His work as a poet has always been stimulating for me as an artist. Since the comic "*Equis y Zeta*" [Ex and Zed], I have created images for six other books he wrote. Each time it was a big challenge, since Jorge's poetry is not literal or light, although it looks simple. The themes resonated with me because of their strength, their truth, their tenderness and their original perspective.

In "*Mi cuerpo y yo*" [My Body and Me], for instance, a trendy topic nowadays, we already worked on the issue of body perception, the difference between what we are objectively as a body and who we are, apart from that quality. And in "*Ser y parecer*" [Being and Seeming], we also worked on the others' gaze versus our own self, a difference that takes a lifetime to be actually known. How could those depths be drawn? How could those inner discussions be brought closer to children? With freshness, without solemnity, with an inquisitive and humble gaze, Jorge turns these themes into close and sensitive poetry. His respect for his readers, no matter how old they may be, comes from his personal view of what a good work implies; that is why he analyses his writings rigorously but without losing that little seed of wonder that remains in the text.

We can see those games when he worked with numbers in "*Numeralia*", as if it was the first time he saw them, or when he made, together with children from all over Latin America, "*Pantuflas de Perrito*" [Doggy Slippers], two of the books on which we worked together.

Jorge constantly seeks openness in his work, which prevents him from repeating himself and makes his writing liberating for the reader, since his work has a playful quality and contagious originality.

His work with children has resulted in books such as "*La X mágica de México*" [The Magical X of Mexico], which is a reference for any literary creation teacher about what can emerge from a true poetic encounter between children and images (pre-Columbian pieces in this case), opening doors to unexpected images without trying to control the outcome towards what "it should be". His attitude to children's production is one of respect and wonder. Jorge Luján does not seem to have prejudice about themes or shapes; from his curiosity and **rigor** about poetry and words, he plays with verses in different styles, looking for a certain rhythm and the exact word.

His career as a musician is perceived in his search for the sonority of words in the relationship between phrases. His particular way of reading and conveying his work is enjoyed in his encounters with children and adults. He does so by intoning with his warm, slow voice to take us with him somewhere else to inhabit that "continent on the run", as he has poetically named childhood, which has so much to do with art.

There is something of the child and the old man in Jorge and his work, some sense of wonder as if he were a newcomer and, at the same time, a breadth of vision that comes from experience and the humility of someone who knows that the journey of learning never ends. This author constantly tries new formats, and novel has been his last incursion with great results (see "*Salando el río con una cucharita*" [Salting the River with a Teaspoon]).

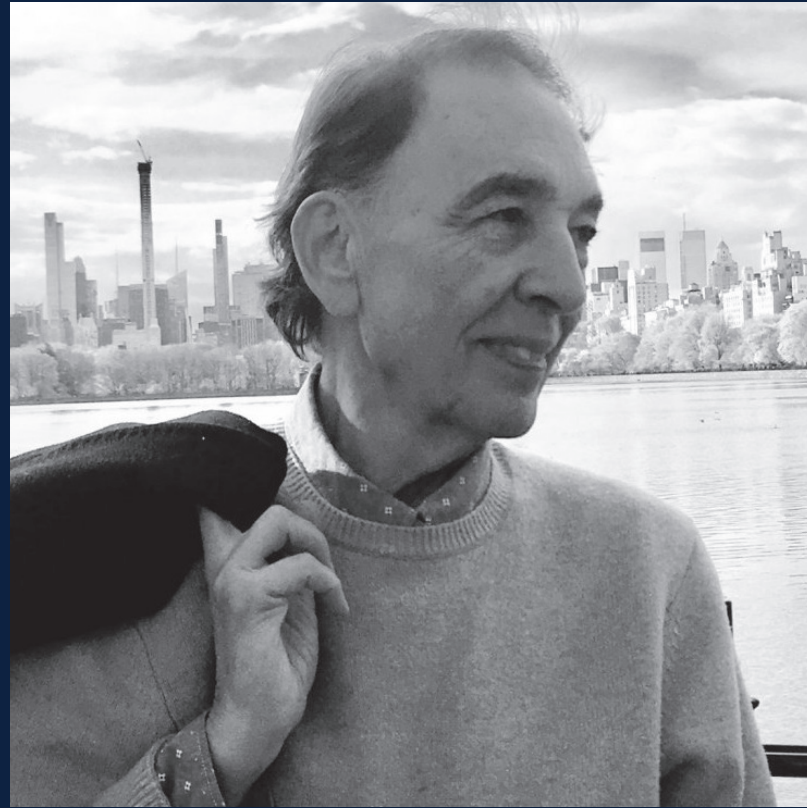
For an illustrator like me, working with him has been a gift for all that I learned and had fun with his work and also for the creative relationship that empowered us while we were working together. Some of the most important illustrators in the world have worked with Luján (Piet Gobler, Chiara Carrer, Mandana Sadat, Morteza Sahedi, Pablo Bernasconi, Linda Wolfsgruber, Javier Zavala, Pablo Auladell, Julia Friese, Manuel Monroy and others) because Jorge seeks personal, poetic and artistic gazes in a co-working relationship, which is a great opportunity to fly and do research for an illustrator. As an architect, Jorge knows about structure, pictorial arts and the conjunction of different arts to build an artifact as complex as a book.

He wants to get amazed and find what he does not know yet. After working with him, I can tell that Jorge has greatness, generosity, enthusiasm and humility, features that are rare. I think that this happens with true artists, who enrich our possibilities, open us up to our inner selves from new windows and encourage us to have a different gaze, guided by him. His approach to literature for children is personal and sensitive; it implies profound research in terms of shape, topics and grammar without losing its inspiring and playful power. I hope it can be acknowledged and reach more readers to go on sprouting and generating free thinking and feeling, which is food for our soul and joy to be shared.

Yours sincerely,



BIOGRAPHY



JORGE LUJÁN





Jorge Luján was born in Córdoba, Argentina on June 17, 1943. He is a poet, novelist and musician. He has lived in Mexico since 1978. He graduated as an architect from the University of Córdoba (Argentina) and as a Bachelor of Arts with **Honors** in Literature from the National University of Mexico [UNAM, by its Spanish acronym]. He also studied cinematography and musical composition at the already mentioned University of Córdoba.

In 1976, after the military coup in Argentina, due to his cultural work in needy neighbourhoods along with his group, *Los Saltimbanquis* [The Showjumpers], and his participation in the cultural movement called *Canto Popular de Córdoba* [Cordoba Popular Singing], he had to flee from his country. After a long journey through South and Central America with the musical group *Nacimiento* [Birth], he set up in Mexico in 1978. Then he acquired Mexican nationality.

In 1986 -within the framework of a competition **organized** by the Witter Bynner Foundation and the National Museum of Anthropology and History of Mexico- he was invited to work with Chicano children in San Francisco, California, and to participate in education and poetry congresses **organized** by the California Poets in Schools Association.

During the 1990s, he was a guest lecturer in creative writing **programs** at Columbia University, New York, and he currently teaches in master's **programs** in creative writing at *Casa Lamm* and he also lectures in children's poetry at the *Universidad Latinoamericana* (Mexico).

About 50 of his books have been published. Poetry, short stories, novels, comics, translations and, above all, album books for children, have been illustrated by Isol, Mandana Sadat, Piet Grobler, Chiara Carrer, Linda Wolfgruber, Morteza Sahedi, Julia Friese and other talented artists.

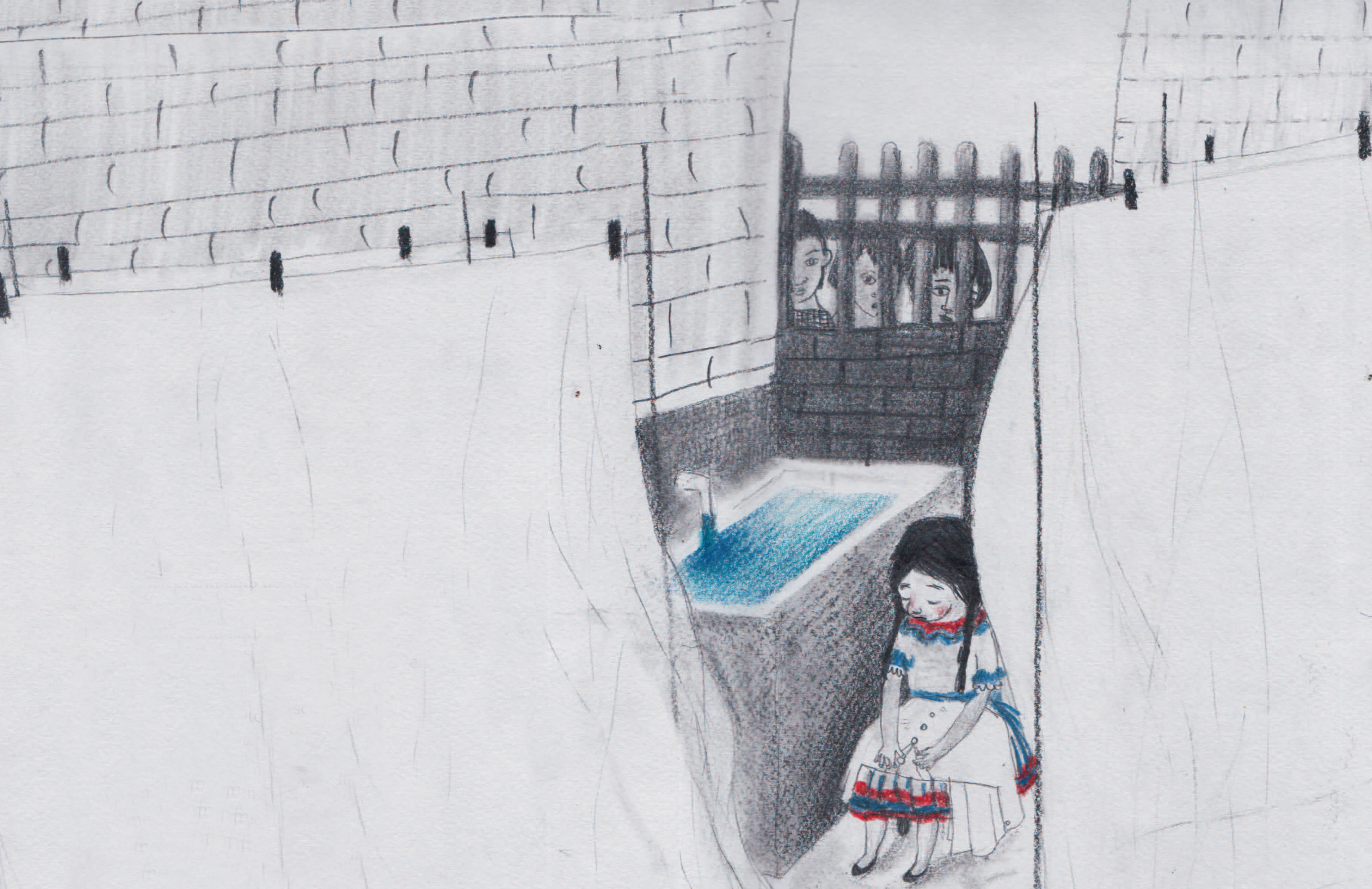
His literary work has received prizes from The New York Times, the French Ministry of Education, the *Banco del Libro* [Book Bank] of Venezuela, White Ravens, the Junior Library Guild, *Luchs des Monats* [*Die Zeit*, Berlin], *Lista de honor de ALIJA* [Association of Children and Youth Literature of Argentina, by its Spanish acronym, List of **Honour**], IBBY-Mexico, IBBY-Brazil and the Italian Andersen Award, among others.



His books have been translated into 17 languages and as a singer-songwriter he has recorded 7 discs, two of them along with the *Baúl de luna* [Moon **Trunk**] group, two others with the *Nacimiento* group and three ones as a soloist.

He has developed a method about writing from images in *La X mágica de México* [The Magical X of Mexico] [SEP, *Libros del Rincón*, 1999] and his poems have been included in a number of anthologies.

Among other acknowledgments, he has received the 2005 Editorial Art Prize; the 1995 Poetry for Children Award, granted by *ALIJA* and two awards for the 1984 Best Children Show of the Year (UCCTM, Union of Critics and Chroniclers of Mexico, by its Spanish acronym) and the 1992 Virginia Fábregas Award.



INTERVIEWS AND ARTICLES

1. Metropolitan Online Conference on School Libraries. *Interview with Jorge Luján*. **Organized** by the Buenos Aires City Libraries Monitoring. November 4, 20121.

Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wpTp5n_lRwI

2. Ana Camus. *Interview with Jorge Luján*. Charlottenburg Park, Berlin. July 2017. (Summary).

Available at <https://jorgelujan.net/sobre-jorge-lujan/>

3. Adrian Ferrero. *Jorge Luján: Latin American writer and minstrel*. September 16, 2020.

Available at: <https://hormiguerolector.blogspot.com/2020/09/jorge-lujan-escritor-y-juglar-de.html>

I knew Jorge Luján's literary work thanks to some books that one of my colleagues, who had invited him to participate in a conference on that field of studies, lent me. She is an expert on children's literature and lives in La Plata, like me. In the end, Jorge Luján could not attend the conference but I was able to read his books, some of them illustrated by Isol, who is also a writer. I was also impressed by the poetics of Luján that I immediately started to research about his career and his poetics. More than 40 of his books have been published and translated into 12 languages. He has recorded several albums and has given concerts all over the world. His books have been awarded by the New York Times, the French Ministry of Education, the *Banco del Libro* [Book Bank] of Venezuela, *ALIJA* [Association of Children's and Youth Literature of Argentina, by its Spanish acronym], IBBY Brazil, the White Ravens List and A Junior Library Guild Selections, among others.

Once in contact with his books, I read his poetry and short stories and I spread his poems on social media. I



thought they showed subtlety, care and respectful and selective attention to the word addressed to little readers in a time when, on the contrary, it has been continuously desecrated. Jorge Luján's work is really laudable for he has restored to the word its stolen dignity. There was work of craftsmanship, of pondering each word, each verse, each silence, its relationship with the image, the counterpoint between both of them in the form of a stave. A creative and maturing process could be guessed behind each poem. Two collections of poems such as *Palabras manzana* [Apple Words] (2003) and *Un angel todavía* [Still an Angel] (2011) explore areas that make them engage in a dialogue as well as they connect us with his poetics from different angles. They also show the evolution of his poetry throughout this period. As a narrator, his short stories, richly illustrated, show an equally varied landscape from new perspectives on childhood creative research. On the other hand, poetic initiatives give rise to parallel searches in the field of illustration, which are equally rich since one triggers the other.

Jorge Luján is also a composer, a singer and he combines all these arts in a seamless creative process. At present he teaches in the Creative Writing Master's **Program** at *Casa Lamm* and at the *Colegio Williams* [Williams School] and presents shows for children in different venues together with his musical group *Baúl de Luna*.

To complete a description of his studies and profession, we could add that he graduated as an architect at the *Universidad Nacional de Córdoba*, Argentina. He got the Fulbright grant for advanced study at the Antioch College, Ohio, and he did an internship with the architect firm Harrison & Abramovitz, New York. He also studied Musical Composition and Cinematography for two years at the *Universidad Nacional de Córdoba* but he had to interrupt his studies because of the military coup in 1976. He emigrated



to Mexico where he graduated as a Bachelor of Arts in Hispanic Language and Literature with **Honors** at the UNAM [National Autonomous University of Mexico, by its Spanish acronym]. All this solid training, together with his talent, give him the tools to provide him with unquestionable ductility in the field of artistic creation.

He has a Spotify channel where we can have access to his musical production; through a varied strategies (books, albums, concerts and teaching in specific spaces) he builds bridges among different areas in Latin America, especially Argentina and Mexico, from a continental perspective, although his poetics is universalist. His refined production for children is the result of a slow creative process, as he told me. In accordance with this quality level, the illustrators of his texts are highly qualified professionals, as words require a certain kind of illustration to ratify their excellence.

I sent him a friend request on Facebook, which he kindly accepted, and I dared to send him one of my short stories for children, *Dicho y hecho* [Said and Done]. At that precise moment he was surrounded by children, he read it to them and he immediately wrote to me to tell me about the effect it had caused. This generous gesture on the part of an established colleague

shows humility and the disposition to make himself available to others rather than working only for his own benefit or fame. Jorge Luján gives more importance to literature than to his seniority in the field of writing. He also shows coherence between the contents of his poetics and his concrete actions, not only regarding his colleagues but also other people in general.

If children are properly stimulated and informed, they will find in this writer an inexhaustible source of creative richness and human warmth, which I have also found in his videos and recordings. His accessibility, tenderness and truthfulness make him a reliable and trustworthy man. I **emphasize** these personality features, which I do not usually do in my critical approaches, because it is not frequent to find them both in a colleague that offers an art of excellence as well as he makes himself available through it with the same generosity and sincerity. We are before someone who is coherent between what he says and what he does.

How can Jorge Luján be defined? As a writer? As a musician? As an artist? I would like to resort to the word "minstrel", which refers us to ancient times of kings and queens, typical of medieval times, when the word reigned both at the people's carnival in the public square and in the Court. Theorist



Mikhail Bakhtin studied the carnival phenomenon in that period, and his work is outstanding to understand the pioneers in those cultural roles in the western world. The minstrels' job was always to entertain and there was not patron to be accountable for what was done or said. Jorge Luján works with the greatest freedom in accordance with the outcome of his productions.

He is a poet and a narrator for whom words carry a specific weight, a volume, an aesthetic order that comes to disorder this world by means of a carefully aesthetic strategy. On the other hand, he subverts the use of instrumental language that tends to become aggressive or overly simplistic. He rather manages to create verbal, musical and visual universes free of morals that oppose another that has gained hegemony: the univocal. His poetics underlines how desirable it is that the word is ambiguous, **polysemic** in the sense of semantic connotation.

His poetic is not organized according to rigid structures; on the contrary, he explores and plays investigating the lyrical dimension of the language. He makes the visual dimension of the text, the iconic one (in addition to the illustrations themselves) dialogue

with the blank paper, meanings with signifiers, which gives rise to all kinds of associative chains. He also fits a forgotten public (let's not **analyse** why writers tend to forget about it) by poetry: the children. Children's poetry has received the contributions of popular culture but not so much by authorial poetics, compared to the large



number of writers who have dedicated themselves to adult readers.

Once Jorge Luján told me that he devotes a lot of time collecting and correcting his poems before "blowing them away", using a **metaphor** in which birds, words and air **organize** a perfect equation. His poems give rise to multiple resonances, echoes, reminiscences and reverberations. They are so rigorously built that they close their structure perfectly but they are open to many meanings. They create the miracle

of capturing beauty and they let the reader continue an unstoppable journey through its verses without losing the possibility of contemplation. These poems are more for re-reading than just reading: they are endless. When closing a book by Jorge Luján, the reader is deeply convinced that he has not closed a door behind him, but he has left it half-open, to be able to return -sooner or later- to that infinite place where re-reading is so essential, as Jorge Luján himself has said. Let's think about this: what does re-reading mean? In its more superficial sense it means go over the signs of a poetic work. But in a deeper sense it means to retrace the paths of its forms and meanings, its deepest veins, having known its nature but also having the possibility to explore all the paths that a living work allows, as an aesthetic proposal.

María Elena Walsh might be another reference that became known by means of manifestations as diverse as Jorge Luján did: popular songs for children and for adults, children's narrative, popular poetry for children, essays, poetry for adults, novels for adults. Although their personalities are not identical or literally parallel, I would like to pose a hypothesis: there is a partial likeness between both creative projects. Whereas María Elena Walsh added to his writing other works about musicology

and on television and films, Luján also teaches in specific institutions, which Walsh did not do. He has devoted his life to childhood with a totalizing aim, with a complex vocation that has articulated varied disciplines, arts and social practice to obtain an outcome that outlines a specific identity that is, however, open to new possibilities. Going back to the previous example, we can say that teaching is a framework within which he continues experimenting, together with his concerts, which allow him to capture immediately the impact of his creations both on children and adults in the audience.

His premises are clear: there is a universe of values, but his project consists of investigating the infinite possibilities of the poetic word and of language in its aesthetic dimension, always approaching it from subtlety. I have been reading his poems and short stories for three years and every time I go inside them I have the feeling that I am in front of a new book, the same freshness, as if I had not read it before. The idea of re-reading as a premise when writing a book or a poem implies, on the one hand, a demanding approach to creation and particularly to poetic language; on the other hand, it intends that the reader comes in contact with the book according to a series of processes in which nothing is linked to spontaneity

but to rigorous craftsmanship, which, in turn, is never ingenuous since that work must be effective enough so as to be new when the reader returns to its pages. Jorge Luján's work gives the impression that his poetics rejects any kind of naïve use of the language; there is awareness of the use of effective poetic procedures and forms. In his poetry, each component occupies a specific place in order to produce an unrepeatable effect. He always chooses the most difficult path, not because he is fussy but because he aspires to achieve the best aesthetic outcome.

In Mexico he devotes himself to his various trades but I have the impression that he is fulfilling the same objective in different domains of cultural production: from a short story to a poem, from popular music for children to workshops, from encouragement to his peers (in different contexts) to the outcome of that creation, which also accepts improvisation, free associations, games.

Jorge Luján already has a long career in which his crafts in art are articulated with creation: in space (on the page, like the outline of a plan, with the architect's pen as a precursor); in time (the evolution of his poetic language); in music (scores).



For children from Latin America and from all over the world, Jorge Luján is someone that summons them to playfulness, to the challenge of encountering elaborated forms of unpredictable content. He gives his readers and his audience an active role in the reception of his poetics and his performances. He respectfully takes into account the people his work is addressed to; that is why he pays particular attention to its preparation. His literature and his shows are also synonymous with intelligent gratification of an inclusive nature. I was immediately drawn in by his highly personal and at the same time blissful poetry, with a delightful humor that invites complicity. By working on brief forms, Luján achieves the perfect counterpoint between condensation and expansive creative expansion.

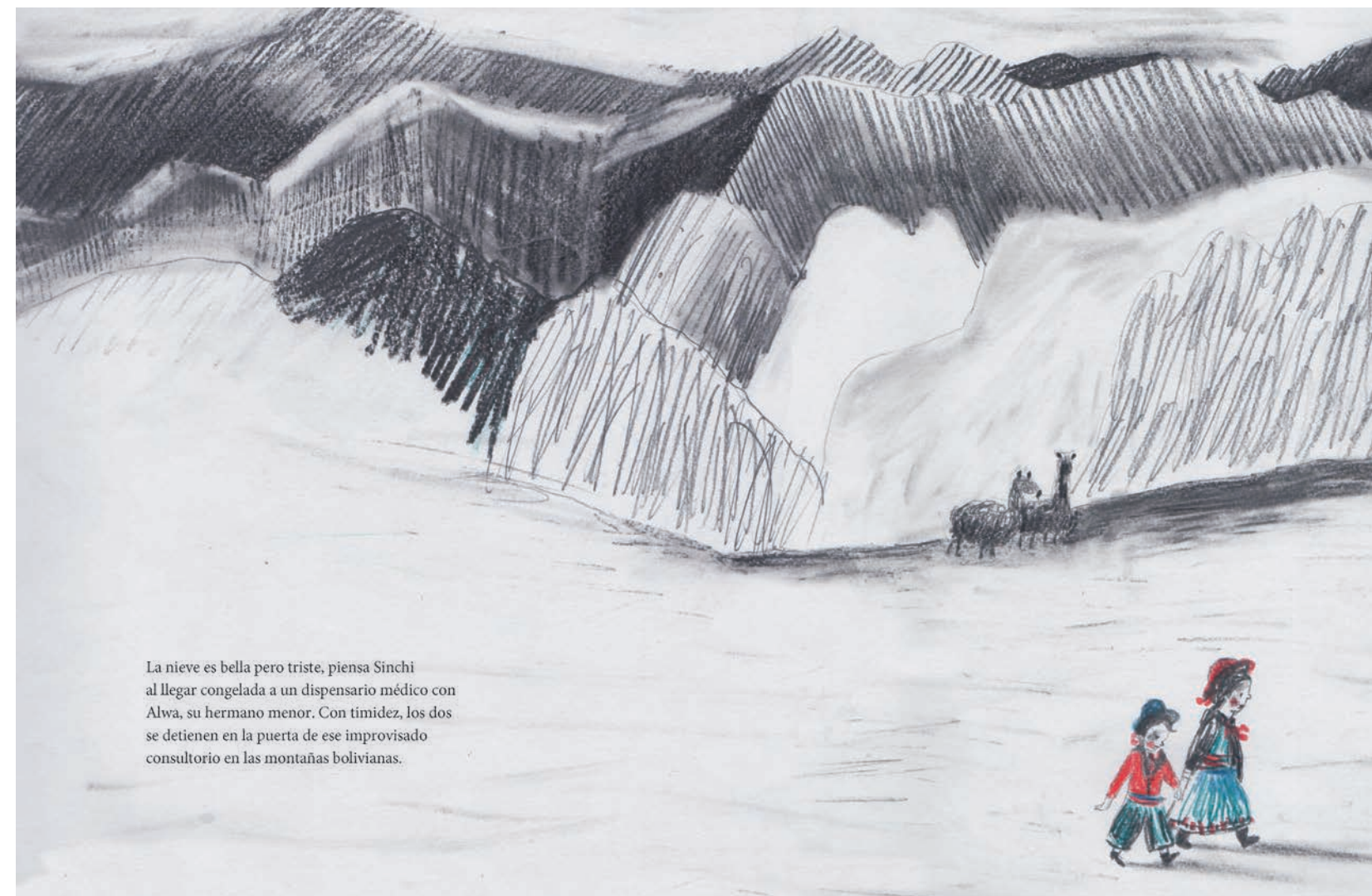
He opens up an exceptional space specifically for lyric poetry, narrative and

popular songs, which allows us to think of ourselves from the point of view of cultural belonging with a continental perspective. His birth and first training in Argentina, his subsequent settlement in Mexico and his work all over the world project him to the whole planet, since it has been translated into many languages and presented on a number of tours.

With this overview I would define (always partially), Jorge Luján's poetics and incomparable art in broad brushstrokes, although they would merit a critical warp attentive to their smallest inflections, the critic's attentive gaze so as not to neglect

the way in which this poetics has been conceived, with very fine strokes but also with a humanistic view in which people-to-people links are essential. There is a forceful existential perspective here, ready to find meaning to revitalize avid lives through a stimulating imagination.

Let me finish with these verses from *Como si fuera un juguete* [As if it Was a Toy] (2013): "If what we write does not touch anybody's heart, it has not been written yet. If what we draw does not turn on a gaze, it has not been drawn yet."



La nieve es bella pero triste, piensa Sinchi al llegar congelada a un dispensario médico con Alwa, su hermano menor. Con timidez, los dos se detienen en la puerta de ese improvisado consultorio en las montañas bolivianas.

4. Interview by Florencia Vicente. *Mundos sutiles, universos profundos: algunos rasgos de la poesía de Jorge Luján*. [Subtle worlds, deep universes: some features of Jorge Luján's poetry]. 2016.

Available at: <http://jornadaslpne.fahce.unlp.edu.ar>

This paper will attempt to address some of the features of Jorge Luján's poetics. At first, as a poetry that seeks a rupture through which the senses expand and multiply. After that break, the poem may return to the starting point but with some modification, or it may expand to the point of overflowing into itself and, in some cases, even reaching a metafictional level.

Then, a route will be traced through the elements that function as raw material in the author's poetic: words, music and images. Then we will observe how these instances are intertwined in the work **and and** enhance one another, and we will focus in particular on the album book.

Lastly, we will examine a feature that runs through this poetics: the questioning of what is known. His poems are more an invitation to question than to answer: in this constant expansion of meaning, the search is **priorized** more than the finding. It is interesting to observe that this search is not limited to the external world of the subject but, on the contrary, it **favors** the internal search, the exploration of our own depths. In this respect, particular emphasis will be placed on the **thematization** of identity in the author's poetics.

To sum up, this paper **attempts** to highlight that Jorge Luján succeeds in creating a poetic universe in which everything has been arranged in such a way that just a subtle and precise word is enough to open the portal to enigma, to rupture, to take a leap to other levels of meaning. This is how he manages to enable new perspectives to look at the world we already know and, above all, to look at ourselves with new eyes.

PALABRAS MANZANA [APPLE WORDS] (2010)

En el cristal de una burbuja
la tierra entera se refleja.

¡Plop!

Otro planeta cesa.

In the crystal of one bubble
the whole earth
reflects itself.
Pop!
Another planet gone.



(Trans. by John Oliver Simon & Rebecca Parfitt)

Jorge Luján's poetics can be condensed in the image of a bubble that he gives to us: in his poems we find delicate and subtle verses that reflect an immense world whose boundaries are blurred and whose **colors** multiply. When the reader thinks that he has **recognized** the silhouettes and identified the **known** shapes, the small reflect unexpectedly bursts out and plop!: the glow it leaves in its wake reveals that what we had perceived was not a mere reflection of the known, but that another planet had managed to emerge, briefly, fleetingly but with sufficient impact to have a knock-on effect on us, the readers. There is something in Jorge Luján's poetry that resonates when the word ceases, and that is where the poetic happens. As María Teresa Andruetto says: (2014)

"Poetry is a language loaded with possibilities, but what does this load consist of? (...) in its ability to stay with us, its triumph over **chaos**, over the banality of the world and of things, its resistance to the passing of time, its small victory over the ephemeral and the fleeting. (p. 63)" **¿de qué obra?**

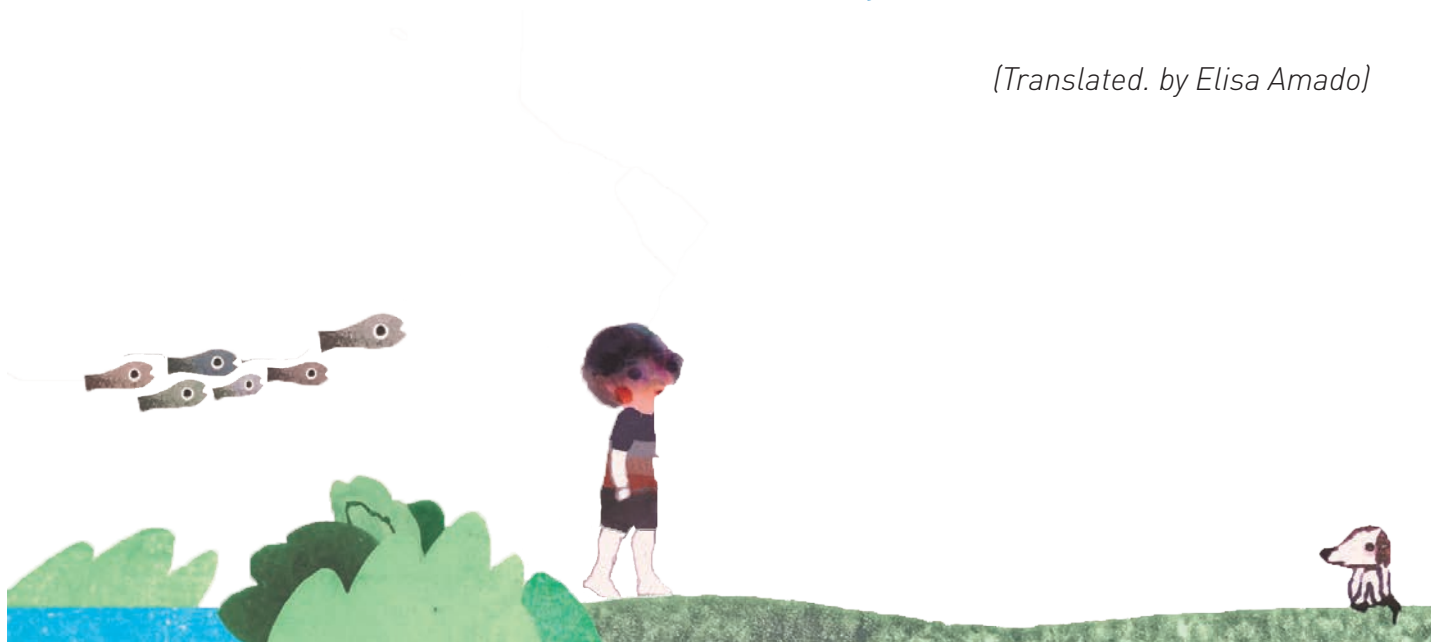
NO LO SÉ. Lo siento.

In Jorge Luján's poems, words draw a landscape that expands its boundaries and possibilities as the verse progresses. In that going further, two things may happen: either it unexpectedly returns to the starting point or it expands to overflowing. In the first case, the return is never to be the same again: in the journey of the poem there was some transformation, a change, a cycle that closes in order to start a new one. This is reflected in this poem from *Palabras manzana* [Apple Words] (2010):

El gallo abre su pico y sale el sol
El sol abre su mano y nace el día
El día se asombra cuando la noche
tiende su capa y la colma de estrellas
para que coma el gallo
y vuelva transparente
el nuevo día

The rooster opens its beak and up comes the sun
The sun opens its hand and the day is born
The day is surprised when night
spreads its cloak and fills it with stars
that the rooster can eat
and so clear the sky
for a new day

(Translated. by Elisa Amado)



In the second case, expansion implies a break, a rupture, a leap that makes it possible to reach a new plane in which the senses multiply, as happens in this other poem from the same work:

I lifted a dry stalk
and in the air
it became a flower

I inhaled her scent
and I saw her rise
butterfly

(Translated. by the author)

In Jorge Luján's words (2013): "I am drawn like vertigo to the poems and albums in which there is a rupture moment, a schism, a crack that makes room for revelation, for the thrill, the spell, the break or the threshold to enigma. Entering this crack is like venturing into one of the so-called "wormholes", it is like taking a shortcut to the other side of space-time, condensing or expanding ourselves into a minibang of words and images (p.22).

NO SÉ. Lo siento. ¿de qué obra? Por la fecha podría ser Como si fuera un Juguete. NO, debe ser de alguna entrevista.

COMO SI FUERA UN JUGUETE [AS IF IT WAS A TOY]

Words, images and music are the raw materials that Jorge Luján uses to brush his work. As he says (2013), "the beginning of poems are children of the muses and the developments are the product of effort." (p. 23) **¿de qué obra? NO SÉ. Lo siento.**

In an interview by K. Micheletto (2014), the author talks about his creative process and his projects: "Every now and then I visit them, and when I see the little poems what literally happens is this: the poem looks at me and there is a little word that twinkles like a star and tells me: *I don't belong here*. Or the other way round, there is one that lurks and says: *I should be in there but you haven't been able to take me yet*." (p.4).

The poetic word not only manifests itself in the result but also, before the eyes of the author, it seems to intervene in the process. It is always dynamic, it is always in movement. So much so that it also rebels against conventional rules. In Jorge Luján's writing it is

capable of putting itself in the skin of that which it represents, as in the following poem that appears in *Palabras manzana* (2010):

elgaló pedé
 elcaballí todé
 madé radá
 dequé...hablar
 alosár boles

thega llopof
 theli ttlehorse
 thewoo denhorse
 gives thetrees
 some thingto
 talkabout talkabout¹



(Free translation by the author)

(Stress the syllabus

in bold)

In this poem, these words not only *say*, they also *are* the gallop of the little wooden horse. They *are* even though they have to go beyond grammatical correctness. In the world created by Jorge Luján what rules is the grammar of fantasy (Rodari, 2011). In a recent interview by Blanc (2016), he says: "I really like to relate to poetry through music, give it wings (...) to complete the work, for the love of books, to circulate them through other channels." (p. 2). Again, the word in movement soars and flies as it becomes music.

1 T.N. In the original text in Spanish, these verses appear as follows: *elgaló pedé/ elcaballí todé/ madé radá dequé hablar/ alosár bolés*. The words are not divided into syllables as in **grammar** but according to a rhythm marked by the stress of the underlined syllables. This rhythm cannot be reproduced in English.

The presence of the image in Luján's poetry found its way of expression in calligrams in *Palabras manzana* (2010):

se van
 como las aves
 Los días
 Como la luna que cruza el lago
 la noche
 también
 se va²

go away
 like the birds
 The days
 Like the moon that crosses the lake
 also
 the nights
 go away



(Translated by the author)

These verses are arranged in such a way as to graph the semicircular path that the sun (or the moon) takes in the sky. They also enable multiple ways of being read and **emphasize** the opposites: day/night to find a synthesis in the fact that, although antagonistic, they coincide in going away. Words also go away.

Likewise, the link between image and poetry reaches its climax in the album book. Two specialists in children's and young people's literature, Cecilia Bajour and Marcela Carranza (2003) refer to it: "Counterpoint of image and words, in which the image tells what words do not say or the other way round."

Jorge Luján's verses (2013) have found in the album book new possibilities of expression

2 The days go by/like birds/ Like the moon that crosses the lake/The night /also goes away.

since they dialogue with the illustrations by artists from all over the world. The author says: "When I finish a poem or a set of poems and I think that it could become an illustrated album, a journey from words to images begins, which in a certain way will limit its universe but at the same time will illuminate unsuspected depths". It is a journey that has led me to meet image artists from all over the world with whom we have built joyful, unique, unrepeatable creative relationships. Weaving words and images is a passion, an adventurous destination."

Subtle worlds, deep universes³

Diverse views and languages converge in Jorge Luján's work, not only as resources that increase the possibilities of expression but also as the theme that is part of his poetic work. In *Como si fuera un juguete* [As if it Was a Toy] (2014), an album book illustrated by Morteza Zahedi, we can read:

I'd like to be a painter to see
with my hands
what my eyes can't touch.
What a drawing says
is written in our mind
without words.

These verses make use of synaesthesia as a way of thematising the different channels through which we perceive and feel the artistic event. The poem suggests, says and falls silent. It will be the reader who intervenes to recover the meaning, especially by matching these words with Zahedi's illustrations. The instances of artist and spectator are intertwined: the album book and its poems require an active reader; for Luján (2013): "Writers sow but it is the readers who harvest the texts and expand their meaning." In *Tres poemas mágicos* [Three Magical Poems] (2007), the thematisation of the artistic event reaches another level by presenting us with a poem in which the lyric "I" draws a scribble that escapes from the page:

The scribble doesn't hesitate:
It shakes its long hair,

³ Jorge Luján's dedication to Mandana Sadat: "For Mandana, / for her subtle worlds, /her deep universes" in *Three Magical Poems* (2007).

Quickly smoothes its fringes,
Skates out of the notebook,
Hangs over the table leg,
Scribbles on the walls of the room
And returns just in time
At the end of my yawn
To lie down on the page
As befits a scribble.⁴

The poem is enhanced by the images created by Mandana Sadat. It is interesting to note how the planes of fictionalisation multiply, since the poem itself is the subject of a double instance of artistic creation: the lyrical subject draws a scribble on the paper, the scribble scribbles on the wall. This resource in which the plane of the artist/writer and that of the spectator/reader intertwine and multiply inaugurates a key to metafictional reading in Luján's poetry, as Blake states (2014) "metafiction understood as a type of fiction characterised by its own narrative or linguistic construction (...) they are fictions that refer to the fictionalisation itself." In other words, the metafictional leap takes place when the boundaries between what is inside the artistic work and what is outside are blurred. Another poem that shows this crossing of planes is the following (from *Animales Animados* [Animated Animals], 2015)

The
elephant
doesn't fit
in my
wardrobe
it doesn't fit
in a
leafless
world
it doesn't fit
in the hunter's
heart



⁴ Excerpt from the poem "Garabato" [Scribble].

it doesn't
even
fit
in
this
poem.
m.

Para la editora:

¿es esta la distribución de los versos en la hoja?

The elephant doesn't fit in the wardrobe as well as it doesn't fit in the poem that shapes it. The leap in these verses takes place gradually: that an elephant does not fit in a wardrobe is something that belongs to the world of the known; the shift towards the poetic world takes place in the following verses: "it doesn't fit/ in a leafless world/" or "in the hunter's heart". At the moment when the elephant ceases to fit the poem, the overflow takes place, the expansion of meaning crosses the fictional world and reaches the metafictional plane.

The poetic world that Jorge Luján shapes in his verses also thematises overflow, expansion, going beyond. But although the universe of the poem expands its boundaries, it seems to be insufficient to contain those beings that inhabit it. In *Como si fuera un juguete* [As if it Was a Toy] (2014) we find the following verses:

I like valleys because
they contain me
I can't fit in the sea.

We may think that the subject's depth is represented in his overflow. This is another feature of Luján's poetics: the individual ceases to contain himself, overflows, he no longer recognises himself or even disappears. In *Palabras manzana* [Apple Words] (2010) a poem begins with the following verses:

One morning
when I washed my face
I looked in the mirror

and found it empty.⁵

The lyric subject searches for himself in the reflections of the world around him but he is unable to find himself, so he ends up turning to a lyrical you, who can identify with the reader, to ask him to help him reconstruct himself and to start from a drawing and a new name. The poem is not solved, it expands, the enigma prevails but only after having stretched a link towards another person, after having taken a leap.

Something similar happens to the protagonists of the album books created together with Isol, *Mi cuerpo y yo* [My Body and Me] (2012) and *Ser y parecer* [Being and Seeming] (2013). In the first case, after stating "I am very different from my body", the protagonist starts a counterpoint between the characteristics that make him different from it:

I am very different
from my body
it is long and thin
but I am anyhow
it walks straight ahead
I walk everywhere
it bathes with water
I bathe with laughter
it sleeps at night
I escape into dreams
It gets old
I don't get anything.⁶



This poem does not seek to resolve itself either; it is content to achieve a synthesis between the two positions, a conciliation but not a unification. The first line is repeated towards the end:

I am very different from my body

⁵ Excerpt from the poem "El encargo" [The Assignment].

⁶ Excerpt from My Body and Me.

But I choose it among all of them
Because it lets me see with its eyes⁷

In Jorge Luján's poetics there is a problematisation of identity and, in all cases, he does not seek an answer but incites to questions, to questioning, to introspection.

In the case of *Ser y parecer* [Being and Seeming] (2013), the main dichotomy is posed in the title itself and the problematisation of identity, of appearances, about how much we know ourselves and –why not?– how much the others know us can be supposed. There is an invitation to rediscover the “I”. In this album book we do not find an answer to these questions but the words are optimistic and leave open the possibility of finding it:

But a long journey
From my appearance to my being
Would await you.⁸

Isol's powerful images accompany the personal explorations of both protagonists and resonate into the form of illustrations once the words have fallen silent. In this case, the stroke of the drawing outlines a map, a route and a destination. There is one last leap, one last go beyond: a universe is discovered in introspection. In the poetic world created by Jorge Luján images and words illuminate unsuspected depths.

5.- Jorge Luján. *The risk of living the imaginable. Essays, articles, notes, short poems, prologues, interviews, reviews*. Chapter II. “From words to images” (Excerpt)
Not published.

*It was me and the sea. And the sea
was alone. And just me. One of the
two was missing.*

Antonio Porchia.

A set of illustrators from planet Earth. A magnificent group. It would have been so easy not to meet with each other... By a generous invitation from our dear forums *Peonza* and *Emilia* magazine I will find out about my work with some of them and about books that we publish together.

The genesis.

Some illustrated albums are born with an image, an intuition, a lucky stroke; others are more work, they resemble the slope of Sisyphus. When the first sketches manage to clarify the path, it is possible to continue. The summit is not yet near, but the next stretch is there, and we face with joy what follows. I remember the voices: Do you think these drawings bring another dimension to the text or are they repetitive? Do they seem pertinent to you, or rather distracting, or confusing?

On the other hand, some poems are reluctant to allow the image to fly. In the illustrations of children's books, I find especially difficult the representation of moods, something essential in poetry where the inner world usually precedes actions. The ability to express the psychology of the characters was fundamental in my attraction to the work of Isol: the instant I saw *Things That Happen* I felt like I had found the ideal illustrator for the comic strip *Equis and Zeta* in which the emotions and moods of its protagonists are central.

A text in search of its draftsman, its imagery.

When I finish a poem, or a set of poems, and I think it could become an illustrated album, a journey from words to images begins; in a way images will limit their universe, but at the same time illuminate unsuspected depths. A journey that has led me to meet artists of the image from all over the world with whom we have built joyful, unique, unrepeatably creative relationships. Weaving words and images is a passion, an adventurous destination. It's not a hobby, it's a hobbit thing.

The creative process: I.

When are you going to write me a poem about a girl? Isol asked me when she finished illustrating *My body and I*. Somewhere I got the verse “I am most different from me than you can imagine”, and so, almost naturally, the poem *Being and seeming* began to materialise. We were already on our way to the creative process when Isol lamented that one of the verses did not rhyme. Yes it rhymes, I said, but it is an assonance. Not enough, she said. And we went on with this pendient. In short, the verse was indefensible. As always, when one of us points out something that is not convincing, the other takes it into account and tries to solve it. When we were about to send the finished album to our editors, Isol invites me to have a beer in a bar in Palermo and, at the moment of the toast, I looked at her smiling and found the sought rhyme. Oh, no, she joked, I have been drawing for months

7 Excerpt from My Body and Me.

8 Excerpt from Being and Seeming.

and now, in a second, you solve your problem. Between laughter and drinks, we celebrate the happy moment. But it was during the creative process of the comic strip *Equis and Zeta*, that Isol and I learned to know each other and how to work together. One by one we discussed points of view and enjoyed the 60 comic strips, sharing reflecting on the texts, the drawings, and even the titles of the strips that are often winks to adults. In the attempt to find an appropriate aesthetic for these dialogues, Isol discovered the thin line that she would later use many times. And we went through a moment of doubt: Should we leave the comic in black and white or add color to it? A painting by Paul Klee, in which the sketch of a building was seen and, separated from it, a stain of color of the same shape and size, motivated the use of the 'off-register', or stains of color that do not match the limits of the drawings.

Poetry and illustrated album.

Poetry resonates, reverberates, like a cathedral or an adobe house in the middle of the savannah that do not end in their tangible limits, but extend, conquer the neighboring space, illuminating it. The same happens in some illustrated albums that are extended in images without text when the text has already reached the final point. They add their silent discourse to that of the previous images, interweave with them and inaugurate a more encompassing dimension. That is what we tried in *My body and I* that ends with two images without text: one presents what the eyes see, another an inner vision. Or in *Being and seeming* where, after the end of the verses, we see the character to whom the poem is addressed starting to walk towards the heart of the girl who speaks to him, and in the last image, we discover a cosmic echo of that small human encounter. An echo that was foreshadowed in the waves of a pebble falling into the water at the beginning of the album.

The revelation.

I am attracted like vertigo to poems and albums in which there is a moment of rupture, a schism, a bridge, a fissure that accommodates the revelation, the shudder, the spell, the threshold to the enigma. Crossing the bridge is like venturing into one of those so-called cosmic "holes of worm", is like taking a shortcut to the other side of space-time, condensed into a black hole of language or expanding into a *minibang* of words and images. I have given shelter to those bridges in many of my poems, as in *Paper Boat* where a hard journey towards love ends up blurring the boat and its captain, but the reception of the beloved one reinvents them.

The creative process: II.

How did you know the story of my young son? was Mandana Sadat's response to my letter containing the poem *Winter Afternoon*. Countless messages were weaving our friendship

and our first book together that explores the separation and encounter of a mother and her child. Among the first images emerged that of the child's face behind the moon drawn on a fogged glass that defined the aesthetics and affective atmosphere of the album. The most difficult thing was to represent the crack, that jump from one plane of action to another that occurs almost at the end of the poem and expands its meaning. After several rehearsals, Mandana proposed a dynamic image that represents the leap to another dimension: mother and son, in swimsuits, captured in full dive falling into a magical and dark space. An ending in which some readers have seen a consolation for the departure of a loved one –a not too subjective interpretation since the penultimate verse contains clues that sustains it. Accompanying the emotions of farewell and reunion inserted in the course of a sunset, the picture book begins with a shady city under a still luminous sky, and concludes with a city lit with love under the darkness of the night.

The creative process. III.

I turn on the computer: a new message from Piet Grobler about *Oh, the colors!* accompanied by a pdf and the words I've got it..., I've got it, my pal. I take a breath, I stand up, I'm going to make myself a white tea that Mandana gave me. I return, click on the pdf, and the exaltation begins... After working with tempera achieving beautiful images, although very heavy for such light verses, Piet hits the target with watercolor and, suddenly, in an approach to the brown an antelope appears who immediately becomes the binding character of the poems, an antelope that will have small adventures and will even become a toy with wheels, or a wheelie to swing, or a reflection on a lake at sunset. At the end of the illustrations -each color sharing a memorable experience-, Piet and I conceived a brief narration between the End pages, those attached to the covers, at the beginning and at the end of an album.

In the first one you see a nest with an egg. In the last one, the egg is broken and a bird pecks at a strawberry. Colors are born! A little child will exclaim afterwards. We also thought of another short narrative that linked the *portadilla* (or title page) with the colophon (the final page with print data). That's what Piet's 'I've got it' meant. After several somewhat baroque tents, Piet had sent me a seductive tittle page with some trees full of fruits: leaning on the first one on the left there is a staircase; below, an empty basket, and above, the sun. At the top, the staircase is supported by the last tree on the right. Next to it, the basket full of fruits indicates that the recollection has already been made, above already shines the moon... When publishing the book, we managed to get some editors to agree to place the black and white before the title page – like those films that begin with an introductory scene prior to the titles. After the black and white –really which not colors but values– emerges the title page and the title *Oh, the colors!*, which announces the beginning of the

party of verses and tonalities.

Editors' vocation.

Of the long series of people involved in the process of creating a book, the editors play an essential role. Among so many irreplaceable experiences I quote here three meetings from the initial years:

I.– Patsy Aldana, my *mentor* (Mexico, 2001): Let me see everything you have, she says. And to my amazement for the forcefulness of the subject, among many poems she chooses "The palest". In the U.S., they don't even want to hear about death, Patsy continues, so I'll love publishing it. Let's join it with "An apple in the apple tree". Eros and Thanatos, I think. And I was so moved.

II.– Antonio Ventura (Frankfurt, 2002): Have you shown anyone else this book? he asked when seeing a model of *Apple Words*. Look, here's what I'm reading, he adds. And he puts on the table an anthology of Juan Ramón Jiménez, perhaps the father of twentieth-century poetry in Spanish.

III.– Esther Rubio (Bologna, 2004): Why have you shocked me like this? was her amazed reaction of approval after reading the dialogues of *Things with feathers* that Mandana Sadat and I had just presented to her. Okay, she added, let's do it! Let's make a book for the future!

The land belongs to those who work it.

Writers sow, but the readers harvest the texts and images and expand their meanings. When Roberto Sotelo and other friends of the *Imaginaría magazine* invited me to visit Villa Soldati, a very poor slum in Buenos Aires, where they had worked for months with my book of poems *Palabras manzana* (Apple Words), I was surprised to discover an unpredictable scope of my laconic verses. During the meeting with the members of the workshop, in which I was an excited listener, a mother said she had sent one of the book poems to her relatives that a terrible economic crisis had dispersed in the Argentinian extreme cardinal points. The poem worked as a summons and managed to reunite his family in Villa Soldati for a Christmas after 20 years of separation. When I asked her which poem she was talking about, she slowly recited it: "There are days that pass/ without having arrived. / Others/ that come to stay." You wrote it for situations like this, am I right? she said. I silently nodded.

The creative process. IV.

After seeing *Alle seine Entlein / All his ducklings* by the young German illustrator Julia

Friese, I felt that her vitality and self-confidence could dialogue with some of my texts and I wrote to her proposing to illustrate seven short stories about a character of unpredictable behavior (a project that would finally illustrate Manuel Monroy), and she replied that she loved it, but found it very masculine. Can you send to me other writings of yours so that I can choose one?, she said. Don't worry, I speak Spanish. I still do not recover myself from the surprise I felt when, among all I sent to her she selected *Paper Boat*, a poem in prose I imagined too difficult to be illustrated: the perilous journey to love, and the aim that the encounter of the protagonists implied a rebirth, a new life expressed in emotions and deep affection for the other. Then I asked Julia if she'd preferred the poem to be starred by a girl, Yes! she answered with joy. The intense creative march of *Barco de papel* (*Papierschiff Ahoi!*, Bajazzo, Suiza, 2009, Beltz, Germany) consisted of focusing on the numerous images of sailboats, menacing waves and seafaring girls that sprouted from Julia's hand; little by little they were reflected in some forceful engravings that begin with the girl in the bathtub surrounded by toys and objects – such as those that Julia took to the tub in her childhood not too far away. In the picture book they function as links between reality and fiction. At that time, Julia had been lent a printing workshop in which she immersed herself at night after finishing her work in a design company so, while making the complex engravings that took days to dry, she went through strong emotions in that nocturnal solitude analogous to that of the girl who ventured into the seas with the only company of a stuffed rabbit. Traveling through the pages of this book and above all reaching the moving reveling end, meant giving ourselves to a double adventure of discovering and being discovered, of giving a name and being named...

Once the book was published, it reached the hands of Jimena, 25, Argentina, Oh, there still is hope! she exclaimed.

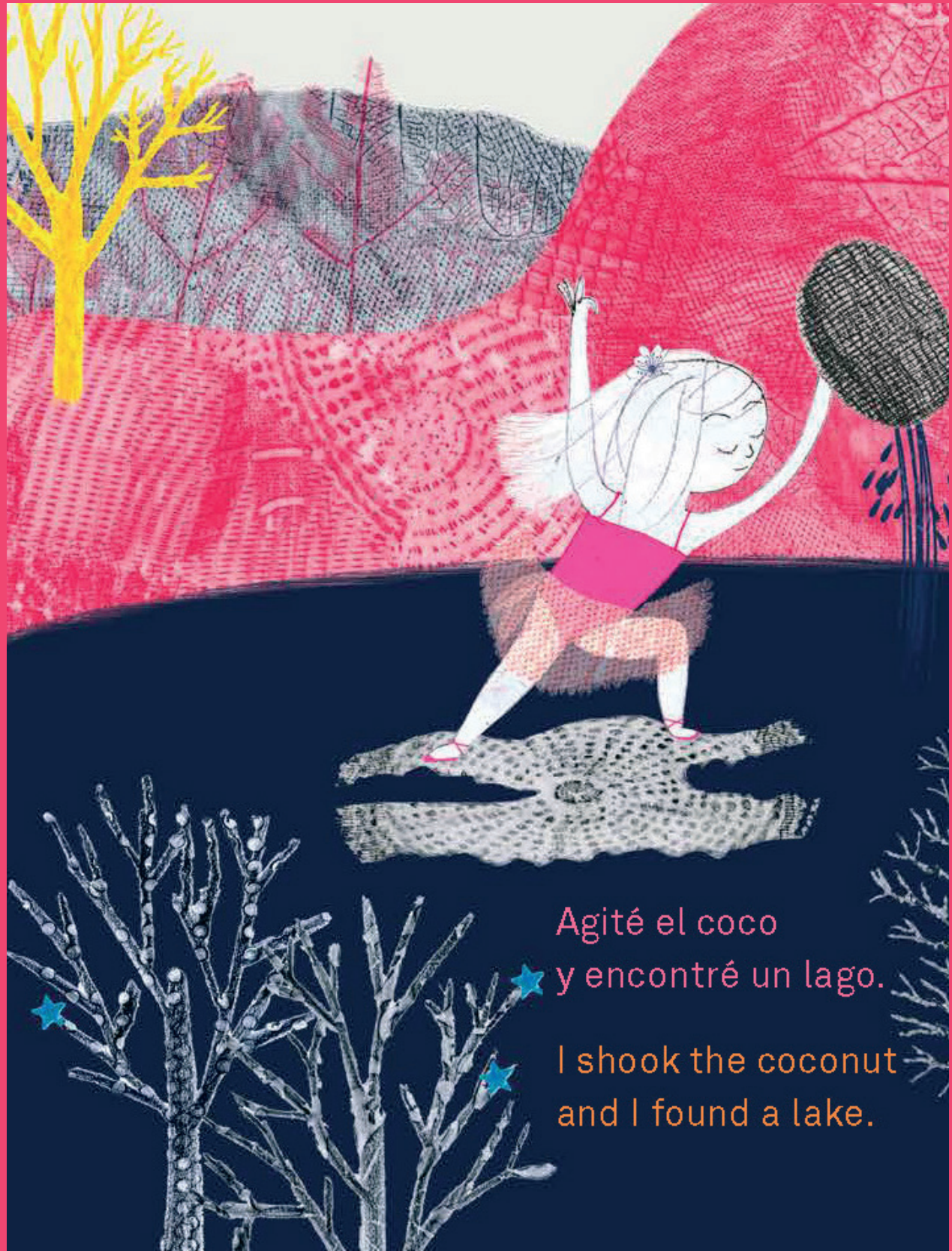
Rise to the height of children.

A goal: to get images and words to climb the Himalayas, and allow us to glimpse the vastness of meanings, perceive the sound of subtleties, enjoy the dance of light and shadow, and let the allusions and connotations grow like snowballs.

Could you take me outside?, my son asked me one midnight when he was 5 years old. It's a little late, don't you think so? Listen... he said. Outside the crickets happen...

Between the creation of one picture book and another, I sometimes feel a valuable emptiness, a void that throws me outside, at night, to hear the cosmos and to think: "Albums happen..."





Agité el coco
y encontré un lago.

I shook the coconut
and I found a lake.

COMPLETE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Salando el río con una cucharita [Salting the river with a teaspoon]

Illustrator: Pablo Auladell.

Loqueleo –Santillana Publishers, Mexico, 2021.

Youth narrative.

Recomended by the Banco del libro, (Venezuela).



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Illustrator: Jesús Cisneros.

Santillana Publishers- Loqueleo, Mexico, 2022.

Anaya Publishers, Madrid, Spain, 2003. (Six reissues).

Illustrator: Manuel Marin.

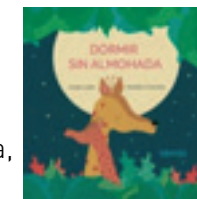
Aiqué Publishers, Buenos Aires, 2011.



17 pasos para andar descalzo [17 Steps to Barefoot Walking]

Illustrator: Paz Tamburini.

FCE Publishers, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2022.



Dormir sin almohada [Sleeping without a Pillow]

Illustrator: Natalia Colombo.

Ojoreja Publishers, Buenos Aires, 2019.



Volcancito nevado [Snowy Little Volcano]

Illustrator: Mandana Sadat.

Kókinos Publishers, Madrid, Spain, 2021.



Siete Pablos. [Seven Pablos]

Illustrator: Chiara Carrer.

Enchanted Lion Books, Nueva York, USA, 2018.

Ediciones Castillo, Mexico, 2020.

Corea, Jiyangsa, 2019.

Distinction:

Included in The Original Art 2018 Exhibit / Society of Illustrators.



El duende de la guitarra [The Guitar Elf]

Illustrator: Piet Grobler.

La Brujita de Papel Publishers, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2021.

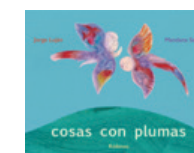


Vocales al vuelo [Vowels on the Fly]

Illustrator: Diego Bianki.

SM Publishers, Mexico, 2020.

Selected by the Ministry of Public Education of Mexico



Cosas con plumas [Things with Feathers]

Illustrator: Mandana Sadat

Kókinos Publishers, Madrid, Spain, 2006.



**Accidente Celeste
[Sky Blue Accident]**

Illustrator: Piet Grobler

FCE Publishers, Mexico, 2006.

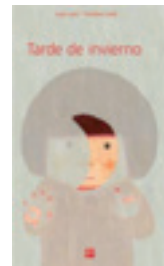
Bilingual Editions:

Sky Blue Accident/ Accidente celeste,
Groundwood, Canadá, 2007.

Accidente celeste, FCE Publishers, Brazil,
2011.

Distinction:

A Junior Library Guild Selection, Sky Blue
Accident / Accidente celeste, Groundwood
Books, Toronto, Canada, 2008.



**Tarde de Invierno
[Winter Afternoon]**

Illustrator: Mandana Sadat

SM Publishers, Mexico, 2005.

Kókinos Publishers, Madrid, Spain, 2007

Edelvives Publishers, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2011.

Bilingual editions/ translations:

English: Tarde de invierno/ Winter afternoon, Groundwood Books, Canadá, 2006.

Polish: Zimowe Popołudnie, Czerwony Konik Publishers, Poland, 2009.

Chinese: ..., CCPPG, China, 2014.

Japanese: ..., Kodansha Publishers, Japan, 2009.

Portuguese-Brazil: Tarde de inverno, SM Publishers, Brazilia, 2008.

Korean: ..., Korea Piaget, Korea, 2007. (Free rights)

Italian: Sera d'inverno. Roma, Bohem Press Publishers, 2006

French: Soleil d'hiver. Didier Publishers, París, France, 2005.

German: Sonne im winter, Bohem Press, Switzerland, 2006. (Free rights)

Distinctions:

2005, Premio Arte Editorial, CANAIEM [National Chamber of the Mexican Publishing
Industry, by its Spanish acronym], SM Publishers, Mexico.

2005 Nomination for the Best Children's Book of the Year, Banco del Libro, Venezuela, SM
Publishers-Mexico.

2009, Finalist in the CJ Picture Book Festival, Korea. Tarde de invierno/ Winter Afternoon.

Afternoon, Groundwood, Toronto.

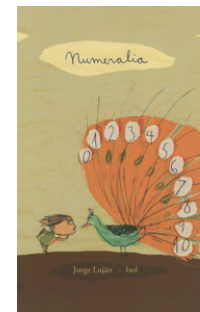
Toronto.



¡Adiviname!. [Guess Me!]

Illustrator: Pablo Bernasconi.

La Brujita de Papel Publishers, Buenos Aires, 2019.



Numeralia

Illustrator: Isol

FCE Publishers, Mexico, 2007.

Translations:

English: Numeralia, Groundwood Books, Canada, 2014.

Swedish: Numeralia, En liten dikt om siffror, Lilla Pirat Forlaget Publishers, Sweden,
2013.

French: Numeralia, Poème à compter, Syros Puiblishers, France, 2006.

Greek: ..., Martis Books, Greece, 2014.

Arabic: ..., DAR AL-MUNA, Djursholm, Sweden, 2014.

Portuguese: Numerália, Poema para contar, SM Publishers, Brasil, 2009.

Chinese: ..., Pace, Taiwan, 2019.

Distinctions:

Recommended by the Ministry of Education of France.

Selected for the Plan de Lectura [Reading Plan] in Argentina.



**¡Oh, los colores!
[Oh, the Colours!]**

Illustrator: Piet Grobler

SM Publishers, Mexico, 2007

Comunicarte Publishers, Córdoba, Argentina, 2008.

Kalandraka Publishers, Madrid, Spain, 2009.

Bilingual editions:

English-Spanish: Colors! / ¡Colores!.,

Canada, Groundwood Books, 2008.

Italian: Oh, i colori!. Lapis Edizioni, Rome, 2014.

Portuguese: Ah, as cores! SM Publishers, Brazil, 2011.

Galician: Oh, os colores! Kalandraka Publishers, Spain, 2011.

Portuguese: Oh, as cores!, Portugal, Kalandraka Publishers, 2010.

Chinese: Shandug Education Press, 2019.

Distinctions:

Alberto Bournichón Prize, Comunicarte Publishers, Córdoba, Argentina, 2008.

Nomination for the Best Children's Book of the Year, Banco del Libro, Venezuela, Kalandraka Publishers, Spain, 2008.

The White Ravens List, International Youth Library, Munich. Comunicarte Publishers, Argentina, 2009.

Finalist in the CJ Picture Book Festival -Korea, Greenwood Books, Toronto, Canada, 2009.

A Junior Library Guild Selection, Greenwood Books, Toronto, Canada, 2010.

Italian Andersen Award, Best Illustrated Album of the Year, 2015.



Con el sol en los ojos [With the Sun in My Eyes].

Illustrator: Morteza Zahedi

Comunicarte Publishers, Argentina, 2012.

Axial Publishers, Mexico, 2012.

Greenwood Books, Toronto, Canada, 2013.

Distinction:

A Junior Library Guild Selection, 2013.



Barco de papel [Paper Boat].

Illustrator: Julia Friesse

Mexico, FCE Publishers, 2008.

German: Papierschiff Ahoi!, Bajazzo Publishers, Zurich, Switzerland, 2009.



Moví la mano [I moved my hand]

Illustrator: Mandana Sadat

Translator: Elisa Amado

La Brujita de papel Publishers, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2014.

Bilingual edition: Moví la mano /I moved my hand, Greenwood Books, Canada, 2014.

French: Du bout de mes doigts, Syros Publishers, France, 2013.

Italian: Nelle mie mani, Bohem Press, Italy, 2013.



Mi cuerpo y yo [My Body and Me]

Illustrator: Isol

Artes de Mexico Publishers, Mexico, 2005.

Kókinos Publishers, Madrid, Spain, 2005.

Portuguese: Meu Corpo e Eu, Rovelle Publishers, Brazil, 2015.

French: Mon corps et moi, Rouergue Publishers, France, 2003. (Free rights)

Distinction:

Nominated for the Best Children's Book of the Year, Banco del Libro, Venezuela, Kókinos Publishers, Spain, 2005.

Portuguese-Brazil: Barco de papel, Cosac Naify, Brasil, 2014.)

Chinese: ..., Jiangsu Juvenile and Children's Publishing House/ — sold by Bajazzo—, Oriental Baby Magazine, Nanjing, Jiangsu, China, 2012.

Distinction:

2010 Luchs des Monats Prize, granted by Die Zeit, Berlin, Germany.



Esteban y el escarabajo [Stephen and the Beetle]

Illustrator: Chiara Carrer

FCE Publishers, Mexico, 2011.

English: Stephen and the Beetle, Greenwood Books, Canada, 2012.

Italiano: Stefano e lo scarafaggio. Primavera Publishers, Italy, 2017.

Korean: ..., The Book in My Life, (Agency: TheChoiceMaker), Korea, 2014.

Japanese: ..., BL —sold by FCE—, Japan, 2014.

Distinctions:

New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Books of the Year. 2012.

A Junior Library Guild Selection. 2012.

N.Y World Kid List. Book Witty Selection 10 Latin American Books. 2018.



Tic tac

Illustrator: Isol

Comunicarte Publishers, Argentina, 2011.

Altea Publishers, Mexico, 2002.

French: Tic Tac. Éditions du Rouergue, France, 2005.

Prize:

Golden Apple 2003 – BIB Bratislava.



El jardín de las formas [The Garden of Shapes]

Illustrator: Linda Wolfsgruber

Comunicarte Publishers, Córdoba, Argentina, 2017.

German: Der Garten der Formes.

Kunstanstifter Publishers, 2019.



Un ángel todavía [Still an Angel]

Jorge Luján and Paloma Valdivia

Loqueleo- Santillana Publishers, Argentina, 2018.

Tinta Fresca Publishers, Argentina, 2011.

Distinction:

“Destacados [Distinguished] by ALIJA” Poetry Award IBBY-Argentina, 2012.



Ser y parecer [Beeing and Seeming]

Illustrator: Isol

SM Publishers, Mexico, 2005

Kókinos Publishers, Spain, 2008.

French: Etre et paraître, La Joie de Lire Publishers, Geneva, Switzerland, 2008.

Portuguese: Ser e parecer, SM Publishers, Brazil, 2014.

Italian: Essere o Apparire, Terre di mezzo Publishers, Italy, 2015.

Distinctions:

The Best Children's Books, Banco del Libro, Venezuela, 2011.

The White Ravens List 2010 – Fiera del Libro per Ragazzi di Bologna [Bologna Children's Books Fair], Italy.



Trompa con trompita [Trunk to trunklet]

Illustrator: Mandana Sadat

Capital Intelectual Publishers, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2016.

Ediciones Castillo, Mexico, 2018.

Italian: Naso naso, Lapis Edizione, Italy, 2015.

English: Trunk to trunklet, Enchanted

Lion Publishers, New York, 2017.

Distinction:

Selected by the Society of Illustrators for the Original Art Exhibit in New York and other cities in the United States, 2016.

Brunilda y la Saga del anillo [Brunhilda and the Ring Saga]

Illustrator: Linda Wolfgruber
Axial Publishers, Mexico, 2012.

English: Brunhilda and the Ring,
Groundwood Books, Canada, 2010.

Portuguese: Brunhilde e a saga do Anel. SM Publishers, Brazil, 2011.

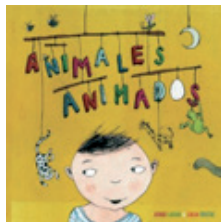


Animales animados [Animated Animals]

Illustrator: Julia Friese

La Brujita de papel Publishers, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2015.

Axial Publishers, Mexico, 2015.



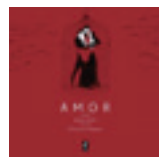
Amor [Love]

Illustrator: Alejandra Acosta

Claraboya Publishers, Chile, 2022.

Textofilia Publishers, Mexico, 2018.

Carthusia, Italy, 2015.



Pantuflas de perrito [Doggy Slippers]

Illustrator: Isol

Almadía Publishers, Mexico, 2009.

Pequeño Editor Publishers, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2010.

English: Doggy Slippers, Groundwood Books, Canada, 2010.

Portuguese -Brazil: Pantufa de cachorrinho, Autêntica Publishers, Brazil, 2012.



Chinese: ..., CCPPG, China, 2015.

Japanese: ..., The Library of the World, (Agency: TheChoiceMaker), Japan, 2015.

French: Mes chaussons toutous, Syros Publishers, France, 2009. (Free rights)

Distinctions:

Best Books of the Year. Granted by ñ, Cultural Magazine- Clarín newspaper, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2011.

Nominated for the Best Children's Book of the Year, Banco del Libro, Venezuela, 2011.

“Destacados” [Distinguished] Prize by ALIJA --IBBY Argentina, 2005.



La roca [The Rock]

Illustrator: Chiara Carrer

Kókinos Publishers, Madrid, 2013.

Portuguese: La roca, Rovellet Publishers, Brazil, 2015.

Coreano: ..., Pink Whale Publishing —a través de Icarías Agency— 2015.

2014 The White Ravens List.

Children's Books Fair, Bologna, Italy.



Como si fuera un juguete [As if it Was a Toy]

Illustrator: Morteza Zahedi

Sexto piso Publishers, Mexico, 2013.

Comunicarte Publishers, Córdoba, Argentina, 2014.

Distinction:

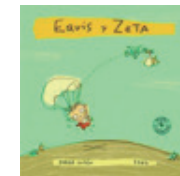
Finalist for the 2015 Fundación Cuatro Gatos Award.



Las ventanas más pequeñas del mundo [The Smallest Windows in the World]

Illustrator: Javier Zabala

Conaculta Publishers, Mexico, 2012.



Equis y Zeta [Ex and Zed]

Illustrator: Isol

Altea Publishers, Mexico, 2003.

Equis y Zeta, vol. 1: El pequeño

Equis [Small Ex], Altea, Mexico, 2003.

Equis y Zeta, vol. 2: Hermanándose, [Fraternising] Altea, Mexico, 2001.

Equis y Zeta (Vol. 1 and 2), Sudamericana-RHM Publishers, Argentina, 2008.

Francés: Ics et Zede, revista Pomme d'Api Magazine, Bayard, France, 2006.

Catalan: Ix i Zeta, Tretze Vents Magazine, L'Abadia de Montserrat Publishers, Barcelona, Spain, 2004-05.

Distinction:

“Destacado” [Distinguished] by ALIJA Commendation in the Comic Strip category.



Dos osos de paseo [Two Bears on a Ride]

Illustrator: Manon Gauthier

Castillo Publishers, Mexico, 2019.

Comunicarte Publishers, Córdoba, Argentina, 2016.



Los gemelos del Popol Vuh. [The Popol Vuh Twins] Buenos Aires,

Illustrator: Saúl Oscar Rojas.

Sudamericana Publishers, (Cuentamérica), 2008

Distinctions:

Altamente Recomendável [Highly Recommended]—FNLIJ (IBBY-Brazil) Award— 2008.

Destacados [Distinguished] by ALIJA [Association for Children's and Young People's Literature of Argentina, by its Spanish acronym] - (IBBY Argentina), 2005.



Animales de Compañía [Pets]

Illustrator: Linda Wolfsgruber

Capital Intelectual Publishers, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2013.



El hombrecito lx [Ix Little Man]

Illustrator: Manuel Monroy

Nostra Publishers, Mexico, 2009.



La X mágica de México [The Magical X of Mexico]

Altea Publishers, Mexico, 1999.

Selected by the Mexican Government for Public Libraries.

Literary Creativity -Children's Workshop coordinated by Jorge Luján at the Anthropology National Museum of Mexico between 1985 and 1987. (Methodology Book about writing from images.)



Rooster /Gallo

Illustrator: Manuel Monroy.

Groundwood Books, Toronto, Canada (many editions).

Distinction:

2004 Star in The Horn Book Magazine and cover of this magazine Autumn Catalogue



Animales a mano [Animals by Hand]

Teresa Porcella /Giulia Orechia
Kókinos Publishers, Madrid, Spain, 2015.
Italian: Animali a mano, 2015.
Chinese: Petrol Industrial Press, 2016.
Portuguese: Dedinhos Animais, Carochinha Publishers, Brazil, 2019.
Turkish: Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları 2020.
Taiwanese: Grimm Press, Taiwan, 2020.



En la colina [On the Hill]

Illustrator: Emiliano Ponzi
Artes de Mexico Publishers, Mexico, 2005



La vaca roja [The Red Cow]

Illustrator: Francisco Nava
Poetic Song available at: <https://soundcloud.com/jorgelujan/sets/la-vaca-roja>



Tres poemas mágicos [Three Magical Poems]

Illustrator: Mandana Sadat
Anaya Publishers, Spain, 2017.



La gitana de la flores [The Flower Gypsy]

Illustrator: Manuel Monroy
Alfaguara Infantil Publishers; Mexico, 2000.
Song available at:
<https://soundcloud.com/jorgelujan/sets/la-gitana-de-las-flores>





Moví la mano

I moved my hand

Award-winning books

Siete Pablos. [Seven Pablos]

Illustrator: Chiara Carrer.
Enchanted Lion Books, Nueva York, USA, 2018.
Ediciones Castillo, Mexico, 2020.
Corea, Jiyangsa, 2019.
Distinction:
Included in The Original Art 2018 Exhibit /
Society of Illustrators.

Tarde de Invierno [Winter Afternoon]

Illustrator: Mandana Sadat
Distinctions:
2005, Premio Arte Editorial, CANAIEM
[National Chamber of the Mexican Publishing
Industry, by its Spanish acronym], SM
Publishers, Mexico.
2005 Nomination for the Best Children's Book
of the Year, Banco del Libro, Venezuela, SM
Publishers-Mexico.
2009, Finalist in the CJ Picture Book Festival,
Korea. Tarde de invierno/ Winter Afternoon.
Afternoon, Groundwood, Toronto.
Toronto.

Numeralia

Illustrator: Isol
FCE Publishers, Mexico, 2007.
Distinctions:
Recommended by the Ministry of Education of
France.
Selected for the Plan de Lectura [Reading
Plan] in Argentina.

¡Oh, los colores ¡ [Oh, the Colours!]

Illustrator: Piet Grobler
SM Publishers, Mexico, 2007
Distinctions:
Alberto Bournichón Prize, Comunicarte
Publishers, Córdoba, Argentina, 2008.
Nomination for the Best Children's Book of the
Year, Banco del Libro, Venezuela, Kalandraka
Publishers, Spain, 2008.

The White Ravens List, International Youth
Library, Munich. Comunicarte Publishers,
Argentina, 2009.
Finalist in the CJ Picture Book Festival -Korea,
Groundwood Books, Toronto, Canada, 2009.
A Junior Library Guild Selection, Groundwood
Books, Toronto, Canada, 2010.
Italian Andersen Award, Best Illustrated
Album of the Year, 2015.

Con el sol en los ojos [With the Sun in My Eyes].

Illustrator: Morteza Zahedi
Comunicarte Publishers, Argentina, 2012.
Axial Publishers, Mexico, 2012.
Distinction:
A Junior Library Guild Selection, 2013.

Barco de papel [Paper Boat].

Illustrator: Julia Friesse
Mexico, FCE Publishers, 2008.
Distinction:
2010 Luchs des Monats Prize, granted by Die
Zeit, Berlin, Germany.

Mi cuerpo y yo [My Body and Me]

Illustrator: Isol
Artes de Mexico Publishers, Mexico, 2005.
Distinction:
Nominated for the Best Children's Book of
the Year, Banco del Libro, Venezuela, Kókinos
Publishers, Spain, 2005.
Esteban y el escarabajo [Stephen and the
Beetle]
Illustrator: Chiara Carrer
FCE Publishers, Mexico, 2011.
Distinctions:
New York Times Best Illustrated Children's
Books of the Year. 2012.
A Junior Library Guild Selection. 2012.
N.Y World Kid List. Book Witty Selection 10
Latin American Books. 2018.



Tic tac

Illustrator: Isol
Comunicarte Publishers, Argentina, 2011.
Prize:
Golden Apple 2003 – BIB Bratislava.

Un ángel todavía [Still an Angel]

Jorge Luján and Paloma Valdivia
Loqueleo- Santillana Publishers, Argentina,
2018.
Distinction:
“Destacados [Distinguished] by ALIJA” Poetry
Award IBBY-Argentina, 2012.

Ser y parecer [Beeing and Seeming]

Illustrator: Isol
SM Publishers, Mexico, 2005
Distinctions:
The Best Children's Books, Banco del Libro,
Venezuela, 2011.
The White Ravens List 2010 – Fiera del Libro
per Ragazzi di Bologna [Bologna Children's
Books Fair], Italy.

Trompa con trompita [Trunk to trunklet]

Illustrator: Mandana Sadat
Capital Intelectual Publishers, Buenos Aires,
Argentina, 2016.
Distinction:
Selected by the Society of Illustrators for the
Original Art Exhibit in New York and other cities
in the United States, 2016.

2Pantufas de perrito [Doggy Slippers]

Illustrator: Isol
Almadía Publishers, Mexico, 2009.
Distinctions:
Best Books of the Year. Granted by ñ, Cultural
Magazine- Clarín newspaper, Buenos Aires,
Argentina, 2011.

Nominated for the Best Children's Book of the Year, Banco del Libro, Venezuela, 2011.
"Destacados" [Distinguished] Prize by ALIJA --IBBY Argentina, 2005.

Como si fuera un juguete [As if it Was a Toy]

Illustrator: Morteza Zahedi
Sexto piso Publishers, Mexico, 2013.
Comunicarte Publishers, Córdoba, Argentina, 2014.

Distinction:
Finalist for the 2015 Fundación Cuatro Gatos Award.

Equis y Zeta [Ex and Zed]

Illustrator: Isol
Distinction:
"Destacado" [Distinguished] by ALIJA
Commendation in the Comic Strip category.

Los gemelos del Popol Vuh. [The Popol Vuh Twins] Buenos Aires,

Illustrator: Saúl Oscar Rojas.
Sudamericana Publishers, (Cuentamérica), 2008

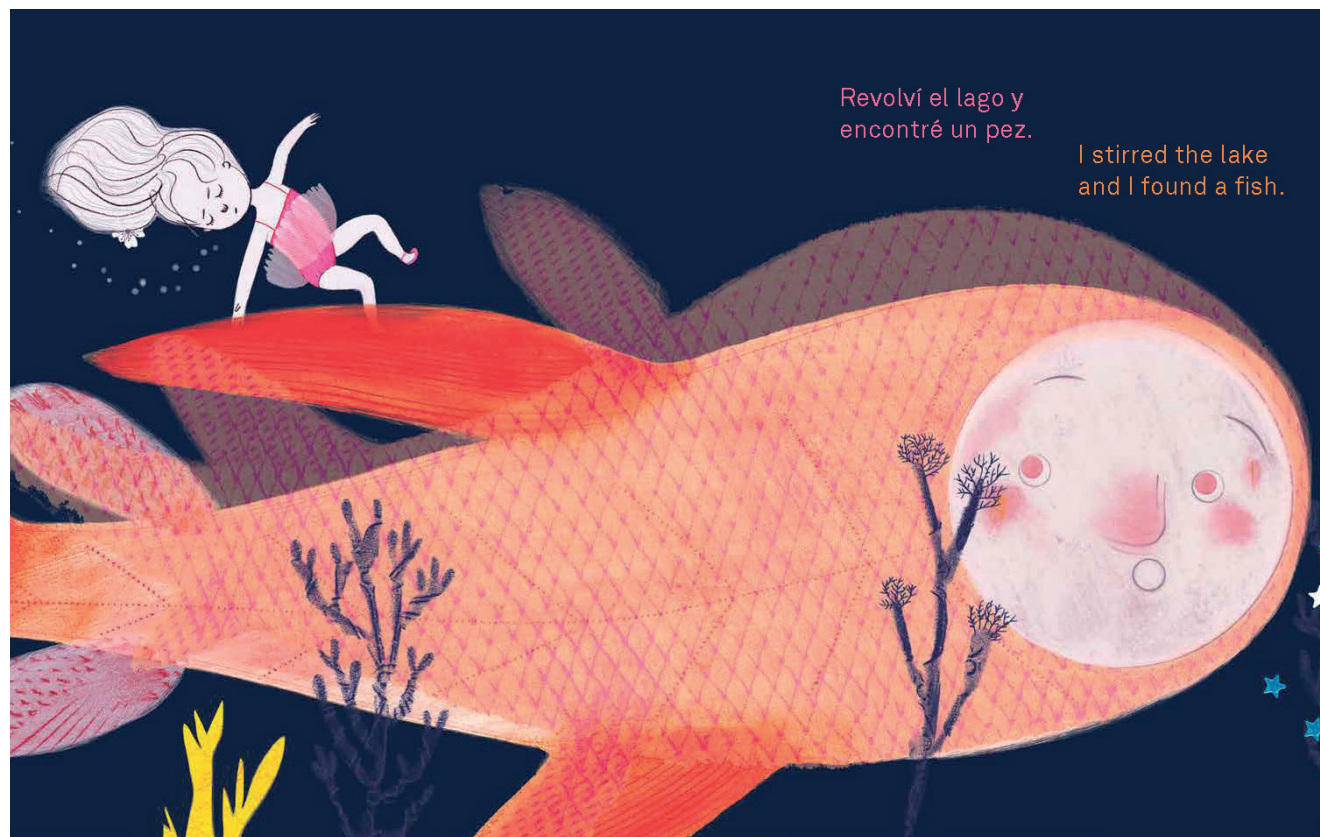
Distinctions:
Altamente Recomendável [Highly Recommended]—FNLIJ (IBBY-Brazil) Award— 2008.

Destacados [Distinguished] by ALIJA [Association for Children's and Young People's Literature of Argentina, by its Spanish acronym] - (IBBY Argentina), 2005.

Rooster /Gallo

Illustrator: Manuel Monroy.
Groundwood Books, Toronto, Canada (many editions).

Distinction:
2004 Star in The Horn Book Magazine and cover of this magazine Autumn Catalogue





BOOKS SENT TO THE JURY



1. **Palabra manzana**
(Apple words)



2. **Salando el mar con una cucharita**
(Salting the sea with a spoon)



3. **Con el sol en los ojos**
(With the sun in the eyes)



4. **Esteban y el escarabajo**
[Stephen and the Beetle]



5. **Siete niñas**
(seven girls)

REVIEWS

PALABRAS MANZANA [Apple Words]
Interview by Angelina Delgado in BABAR Magazine.

Available at: <http://revistababar.com/wp/palabras-manzana/>

Snacks of literature

In the quote that Jorge Luján has chosen to head the poems in Apple Words, José Lezama Lima says that he wanted to write poetry to repeat and make longer his own childhood. These thirty or so poems allow the readers of any age enter a world that can be seen only when we stop: the universe in a soap bubble, leaves that look like canoes on the water, our planet sustained by the leg of a heron, the turns of the sun, the winter afternoons. What is out there makes us look inside us and realize what we feel.

This book offers a varied repertoire of poems to be read aloud and listened to with all their sonority, almost sung; others that can be seen (calligrams); some others concise and short, like haikus; winks to the language used in mobile phones and games and ruptures of shapes and words.

Warning: although goblins, little girls, crocodiles and wolves will be found on its pages, this is a book with no concessions to what is usually considered “for children”. We can say that this is an “apple” that is suitable for everyone but will gain in flavour if shared with people of other ages since it invites to talk about what we have felt, to go on playing with words, to build, interpret and rebuild the suggested scenarios, both in the texts and in the disturbing illustrations by Manuel Marín. In this way, the reader will not be so lonely and literature will benefit all of us.

Interview by Raúl Tamargo in *Imaginaria* (children’s and young people’s literature magazine). November 24, 2009.

Available at: <https://imaginaria.com.ar/2009/11/palabras/manzana/>

Palabras manzana

Thirty five poems of various themes and nature make up this book. In spite of this diversity, we could say that in all (or in the majority) of them there is a tension progressing towards the limits of the language.

A poem becomes shape in calligrams. Its reading is incomplete or insufficient if its meaning is sought in the succession of signs. This succession no longer responds to the conventions of the written language (punctuation, paragraph, horizontality of writing) in order to submit to the needs of visual expression.



In the poem titled “*De noche*” [At Night], the shape suggests a flame; the reading of the text confirms our suspicion. The calligram is like an announcing bell in this case; it is addressed to the sense of sight (it stimulates this sense) as a warm-up to the reading. In fact, it would work as a riddle if we looked at the page from a distance, playing at predicting the content of the poem. It talks about a night fantasy: a bonfire with its colours and oscillations. Towards the end (at the bottom of the page, where the fire is born), we learn that we have passed through a night, a night’s sleep.

In “*El sol*” [The Sun] the visual work becomes more abstract. The figure presenting the layout of the text on the page is a right-angled triangle with the article “the” at the top vertex. At the base of the triangle appears the complete verse: “the sun goes round and round and doesn’t dare to knock on my door”. Between the vertex and the base, there are seven verses that add words if you read them from top to bottom or else they subtract words if you read them in reverse direction. The *meaning* of the poem we could say is in the final verse. However, the complete development, by accumulation, and the result of a figure going from smallest to largest seem to suggest the turning and receding of the sun: “the sun goes round and round and it does not dare [...]”

Apart from playing with words and their layout on the page, Luján also explores the possibilities of the letter, the molecule over which the language grows. On page 26 we can read:

“LAGO

Una O que se cayó del CIEL”¹

On page 22 the poem is an anagram of the alphabet: the first letter of the first line is “A”; the first letter of the last line is “Z”. Twenty-eight verses, one for each letter and a whole that talks about Noah’s ark, the genesis, the beginnings of man, as well as letters tell us about the origins of writing.

In “*El galó pedé*” [The gallop of...] it is writing that is put in crisis. The separation of words does not follow the rules of written language but those of a certain reading accentuation, imitating the rhythm of a gallop; the written accent is present on all stressed vowels, even where it should not be placed, according to the rules of grammar.

¹ T.N. Here the writer has removed the final “O” from the Spanish word “*CIELO*” [SKY]. These lines mean: LAKE/ An “O” that fell from the sky.

Through these exploration procedures we arrive at one of the most lyrically intense moments in the book. It is in the poem on page 64, where the writer uses the Spanish sound of letters to replace words ². For instance:

Para reBK

*C que T duL
S Bso D Fcto que no muR*

The illustrations (one for each poem, all of them on odd-numbered pages) also make their own suggestive and meaningful contributions. Taking two of the examples already cited, in “At Night” an abstraction built on geometric planes seems to suggest the figure of a body (human? The dreamer’s?) in a horizontal position, ablaze with flames. In “El sol” [The Sun], some geometric figures evoke the exploded drawings of some machinery (in this case the house whose door the sun does not dare to knock). The arrangement of these pieces on the sheet mimics that of the words of the text it accompanies.

It is interesting to note the resources that Manuel Marín uses to add image to poems that are already images. All his illustrations are based on a coloured geometric plane. He constructs figures and concepts with it.

We can find one of the highest degrees of abstraction in the illustration of the poem titled “*El viejo poeta*” [The Old Poet]. Here the poetic “I” is not represented by means of human figures but with two cones, one of them with its apex pointing upwards (“when shivering with cold/one pronounces the word sun”) and the other with its apex pointing downwards (“when trembling with poetry/one goes into the sunset”).

Some of Marín’s drawings can be disturbing because they *do not illustrate everything*; some of Luján’s poems are disturbing because of the resonances produced by reading them. In “*El encargo*” [The Assignment], the poetic “I” has lost his face and appeals to an interlocutor (who might well be the reader) to retrieve it; in “*Dios a cargo*” [God in Charge], a succession of mistakes has left him with “the world in his hands”.

Like the apple of Eden, these Apple Words are alluring and contain texts and images that seek to move at their extremes and harmonise deliciously. For everyone’s peace of mind, no reader will be punished.

² T:N: This resource can not be reproduced in English. These lines mean: For Rebecca/I know it hurts/that kiss of effect that won’t die/.



SALANDO EL RÍO CON UNA CUCHARITA [SALTING THE RIVER WITH A TEASPOON]

Review by Mónica Maristain.

Available at: <https://monicamaristain.com/salar-el-rio-con-una-cucharita-es-algo-imposible-pero-que-al-mismo-tiempo-nos-plantea-una-sonrisa-y-cierta-ilusion-jorge-lujan/>

“Salting the river with a teaspoon is something impossible but at the same time it brings a smile to our faces and some illusion. A new language has to be told, and this temptation to create a new way of naming reality appears in the books that fill my heart. Now as an adult writer, I always think that the way things are conveyed is essential to make the reading experience worthwhile”, Jorge Luján says.

Mexico City, August 8. (MaremotoM). Gravestones with enigmatic inscriptions, a child hugging the tolling of a bell, a blue vial of unheard-of powers, a whole village rushing down to a bridge and a mysterious young woman who throws cards and turns little unimportant men into gods form the framework for the adventures of Turi, Enrique, Nico and Ana Mar, which will leave a lasting impression on our souls. *Salando el río con una cucharita* [Salting the River with a Teaspoon] (Loqueleo- Santillana Publishers) by Jorge Luján, illustrated by Pablo Auladell, is a book that takes us to a poetic universe that we could say does not have adults or children, that occurs in parallel with our daily lives, casting magic over existence.

This book has a mysterious, ungraspable and unpronounceable atmosphere. “This search has to do with the fact that childhood is very close to the poetic field and to fantasy. It was an exploration into the child’s soul that is kind of at the mercy of what we have designed as adults. It survives because of passion for life but also for friendship and love, and they begin to live as if reinventing the language we speak and the relationship with reality”, Jorge Luján states. “Pablo Auladell’s drawings are sfumato, mysterious. This artist’s sensitivity for this book is exquisite. He transforms the mystery you find in the stories and the language into endearing images. He took a long time and asked me for a lot of photographic material. He took some interior time to get to know the characters. In a continent that is still being born, that is still young, the childhood of this group of children is that of a group of characters from a Latin America that is beginning to have a more defined, deeper profile. There is a parallel between the protagonists and their environment”, Luján adds.

Salando el río con una cucharita allows the author to glimpse signs of imagination and sensitivity much more important than those shown by adults. “Once, a boy told me that he had understood poetry and that for him it was a true lie. This way of embracing opposites is always easy for children” says this poet, musician and architect, who wrote 50 books and recorded 7 discs.

“Salting the river with a teaspoon is something impossible but at the same time it brings a smile to our faces and some illusion. The senses and sensations are present in the book. There is a QR that takes us to a video made by Alonso Benton. The sense of taste is also there. One of the most important characters, Thiago, is a poet and that is why he was locked up in a hospice for many years; he was saved by the donkey’s milk”, Luján claims.

Interview by Jesús Alejo Santiago. Milenio. 06/01/2022.

Available at: <https://www.milenio.com/cultura/literatura/reeditan-salando-rio-cucharita-libro-jorge-lujan>

“When I write for children it is my desire that adults can read it too”, Jorge Luján says. “The traces left by the knowledge of the complex and contradictory profile of life, when you see it in childhood, lead you to recover those characters and, without judging them, to put them into action in an event that becomes literature.” From this reflection comes the story of the latest novel by Jorge Luján, *Salando el río con una cucharita*, published by Santillana: myths, legends, oral stories that accompany the construction of identities of certain communities and, at the same time, the growth of the protagonist, from childhood to adulthood.

“We lived like gypsies and, suddenly, we arrived in a village where we stayed longer and I realised -it shocked me-, the way all the goodness and all the evil can be condensed into such a small place: stories that start with harassment, go through very beautiful things, like the awakening of sexuality and the arrival of first love, and end with tragic things like rape, kidnapping, murders.”

Jorge Luján, a writer, musician and singer, offers in his book stories about gravestones with enigmatic inscriptions, a child hugging the tolling of a bell, a blue vial of unheard-of powers, a whole village rushing down to a bridge and a mysterious young woman who throws cards and turns little unimportant men into gods.

“When I write for children, it is my desire that adults can read it too... I love authors that can have a speech in its highest level, with the best they can do, without excluding social sectors of genders, but presenting a vision of life with an inclusive perspective towards the reader.” The reason why Jorge Luján writes is to provoke a shudder, a change, a different way of looking and feeling our reality and our environment from the transition to adulthood. This book was published more than four years ago and it is mainly addressed to young people but without ignoring children, Luján claims, because in the end it is an experience that attempts to expand through images, illustration and even a video, the proposal of this new edition, published within the Loqueleo Collection.





CON EL SOL EN LOS OJOS [WITH THE SUN IN MY EYES]

CM Volume XVIII Number 32 April 20, 2012 // 3APR2017 Review by Meredith Cleversey

Available at: <https://www.cmreviews.ca/cm/vol18/no32/withthesuninmyeyes.html>

*Todo lo que tengo es mucho:
mi perro Oliverio,
el ¿viento? golpeándome en la cara
y tu risa que estalla por nada.
Todo lo que tengo es tuyo:
el escondite en la azotea,
el barrilete de dragón
y esta canción para que ¿dos? se quieran.*

*All that I have is a lot:
my dog Oliver,
wind hitting me in the face
and your laughter that explodes for no reason.*

*All that I have is yours:
hide-and-seek in the roof,
the dragon kite
and this song for ¿two to love each other.?*

With the Sun in My Eyes is a collection of short, bilingual poems that celebrate the day-to-day life of children. These abstract pieces of poetry highlight the experiences of a boy and a girl as they go about their day. Some of the verses include simple ideas like watching eggs hatch, or seeing an abandoned doll, while others tackle slightly more complex experiences, such as imagining what the sun does in the night.

The illustrations for this collection are very interesting. Done with mixed media, the illustrations reflect the poems perfectly. They are abstract pictures which are complex and full of varying colours, designs, and spatial uses. However, at the same time, the images have a very child-like quality to them. In some ways, they seem very advanced, and in others, it seems almost that a child actually drew them. The images are a good complement to the simultaneously advanced and yet simple formula for the poems themselves, which definitely makes the artwork a vital part of this collection.

The publisher recommends this collection for children aged 7-9. The subject matter of these poems is simple and fits with the experiences of children this age. However, younger children may find the abstract concepts of these poems too difficult to grasp. For the younger set, it might be best to read this work with someone who can help to explain the poems to those children who might not be able to understand exactly what is written. Certain stanzas, such as *I went for a walk alone / to hear silence inside me. / I returned surprised. / Silence was louder than noise*, for example, might be a little hard for some children to readily comprehend. This collection can, however, be good for introducing the concept of abstract poetry and art, in a simple and relatable way.

In addition, because this collection is abstract and bilingual, it could be a good teaching tool for older children and even teenagers and some adults, too. The poems are simple, but they give a unique introduction to the Spanish language and to the idea of abstract art. They are meant for children, so older readers should be cautious of the fact that the collection is very short, and the poems are fairly simple for an advanced reader to comprehend. However, there is still the potential for an interesting analysis of these poems by the mature audience.

With the Sun in My Eyes is a unique collection of poems and art which describe two children's day in both English and Spanish languages. These poems have the potential to be interesting teaching tools for both younger and older readers, and the poems and artwork together make for a very intriguing collection. However, readers

should be aware that this collection, with its combination of advanced abstract ideas and simple short refrains, is difficult to pinpoint for a specific audience and may give some potential readers problems

ESTEBAN Y EL ESCARABAJO [STEPHEN AND THE BEETLE]

CM Volume XVIII Number 2. . . . September 14, 2012 Review by Lara LeMoal.

Available at: <https://www.cmreviews.ca/cm/vol19/no2/stephenandthebeetle.html>

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*One afternoon
 Stephen saw a beetle.
 He took off his shoe and raised his arm*

Stephen and the Beetle is a story about the nature of perception and the ambiguity of experience. The first illustration in the book shows only the figure of a small boy and a glowing red dot. These two focal points are surrounded by a vague and indeterminate landscape. Void of text, this scene is akin to an attempt to recollect the scene; it is emotionally weighted, the use of colour and the design of the page ensures this but the image, itself, consists of only a few fully formed details.

The reader's curiosity is immediately engaged: He took off his shoe and raised his arm. Like the initial spread, all illustrations for this deceptively simple story are detailed, but each spread holds only a few (if any) lines of text. This has the effect of drawing out the

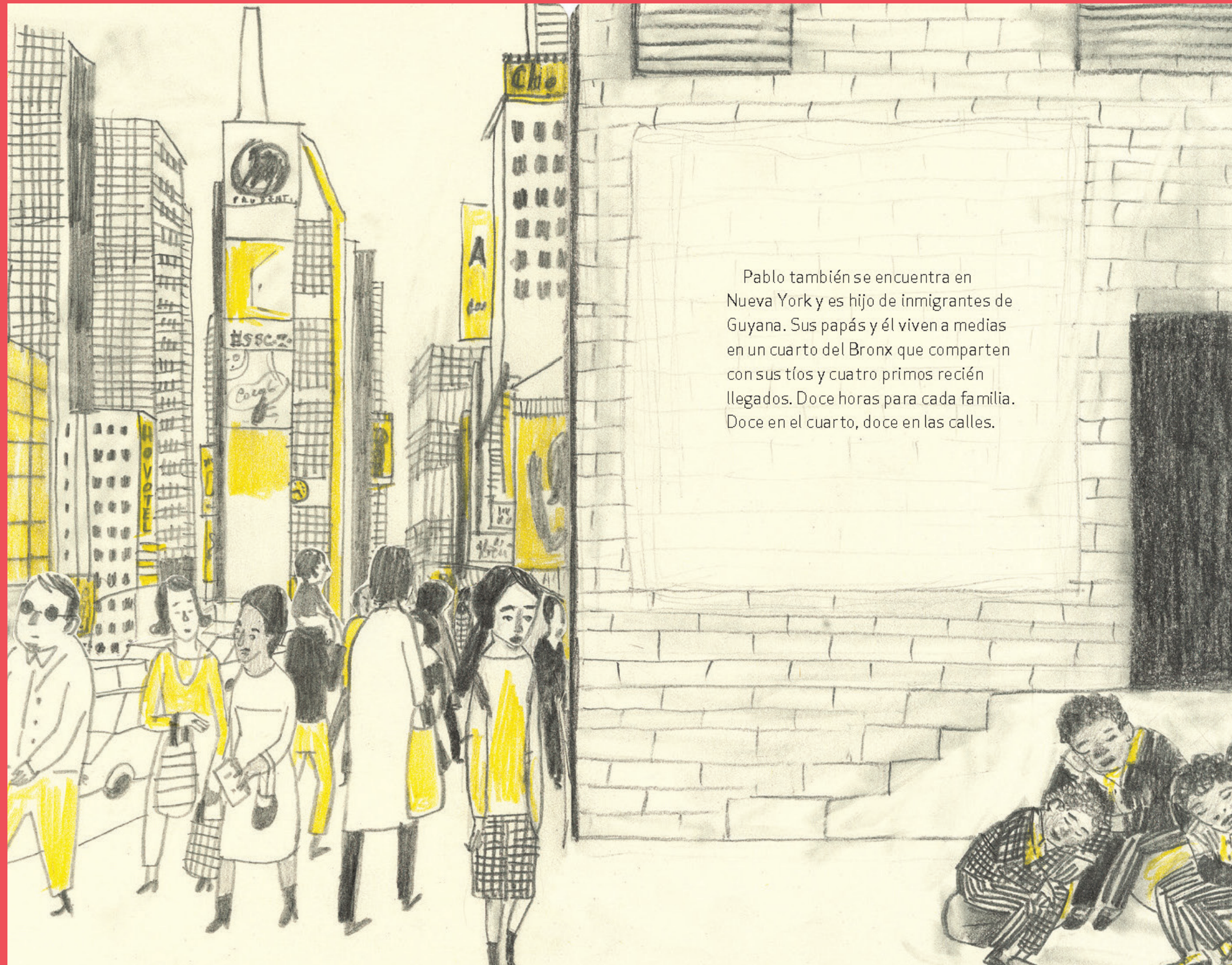


Pablo también es hijo de un maestro rural en Perú, a menudo, habla sobre Frejolito, su padrino, quien fue alcalde de Lima. Nadie lo olvida, porque cada día repartió un vaso de leche a los niños de familias pobres.

time spent looking at each spread, and the resulting tension is extended throughout the book. The eye focuses on the details shown on the page. The illustrations, which are a mix of acrylic, ink, pencil, oil pastel and collage, make use of varying degrees of closeness which give the book a film-like quality. Their simplicity is deceptive as an enormous amount of emotional ambiguity is present on every page, and each re-reading reveals a new perspective.

The acute nature of Chiara Carrer's illustrations should not, however, overshadow our appreciation of the perfectly executed simplicity of the story itself. Jorge Lujan's text gives just enough structure to the images and very precisely articulates an intricate story.

My main objection to the book is that it has been marketed as strongly moral. This designation provides a much too restrictive label for what is an expansive story. As with memory, or a dream, time is suspended as Stephen lowers himself to look more closely at this red beetle. His (and our) imagination does the rest. *Stephen and the Beetle* has many possible readings and interpretations, and strongly moral limits it unnecessarily and suggests a completely didactic intention. This is a serious disservice to this complex picture book. Groundwood's *Stephen and the Beetle* is a refined story, a poetic telling of a cogent moment, with a simplicity that invites the complex.



Pablo también se encuentra en Nueva York y es hijo de inmigrantes de Guyana. Sus papás y él viven a medias en un cuarto del Bronx que comparten con sus tíos y cuatro primos recién llegados. Doce horas para cada familia. Doce en el cuarto, doce en las calles.

Kirkus Reviews -Issue: July 15, 2012 "A memorable lesson in mindfulness".

Available at: <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/jorge-lujan/stephen-and-beetle>

A small boy's response to a beetle in the garden triggers profound moral questions in this arresting visual *tour de force*. When Stephen spies a wee beetle in his garden, he instinctively removes his shoe and raises his arm to crush it. Oblivious to its impending demise, the beetle goes "on about its business." Then Stephen pauses and wonders where the beetle is going and what it is doing. He muses, "If I drop my shoe...the day will go on just the same, except for one small thing." Instead of killing the beetle, Stephen lays his head on the ground and observes it. Up close, the beetle resembles a "terrible triceratops" poised for attack. Then the beetle seems to remember something and walks off. This simple yet powerful life-or-death drama between the boy and the beetle is vividly captured in Carrer's striking, highly original acrylic, ink pencil, oil pastel and collage illustrations. Using naive outlines, expressionistic color washes, open spaces and constantly changing perspectives, she creates tension between the aggressive boy and the passive beetle. Initially Stephen dominates the page, but following the existential moment of choice when he realizes the consequences of his intended action, the beetle becomes the visual focus, eventually assuming gargantuan proportions during their eye-to-eye standoff.

A memorable lesson in mindfulness. (Picture book. 2-5)

Siete niñas – Seven girls Reviews

Stories among stones, by Ana Emilia Silva, January 2023.

Available at www.alija.org.ar

Review of Siete niñas: text by Jorge Luján and illustrations by Chiara Carrer. Mexico, Castillo 2023 (in press).



Siete niñas, like its predecessor **Siete Pablos**, is an album book that brings the reader closer to the different faces of childhood through a journey through some Latin American countries.

Seven girls, seven stories with common patterns: poverty, abandonment and violence. The text, like the illustrations, has the gift of telling and showing in a poetic and forceful way, without evading or falling into the lurid. The thread of the episodes unravels through the voice and gaze of a third-person narrator, focused on each girl. He does this without stridency, he just shows, he pulls back the veils. This balance allows the album to be ap-

proached by readers of different ages. Each one will interpret according to their own reading encyclopaedia.

The number seven is present throughout the text and it is not just any number. It has history and prestige. According to Hippocrates it is the dispenser of life and the source of all changes. As the sum of three, the sacred number, and four, the image of the earthly, the bridge between heaven and earth, it represents the whole of the universe in movement: the days of the week, the changing phases of the moon, the colours of the rainbow... A number that speaks of life and change. When reading Seven Girls, one of the possibilities is that of hope. The album is open to various interpretations.

It is interesting to note that the first illustration shows a chain of mountains, the Andes Mountains, an almost desert-like landscape in which the hardness of the stone predominates. The landscape is the backdrop for the seven stories, which stretch from the south of the continent to Honduras. In contrast, the monumental landscape encloses the tiny presence of seven girls, who despite the harshness of their lives can sing, whistle, put together a poem or walk for miles.



The pencil illustrations, drawn in thick, unadorned strokes, form a whole in keeping with the complexity of the text. They are predominantly austere, in keeping with the stories, and achieve a synthesis by showing some aspects of the protagonists' lives. The expressions on the faces also respond to the criterion of sobriety. The book skillfully avoids low blows and gimmicks.

The first story takes place in the southern part of the continent, in a school. Kanin, a Mapuche girl belonging to a community that has survived since their valleys were taken from them, walks several kilometres every day to bring water to her home.

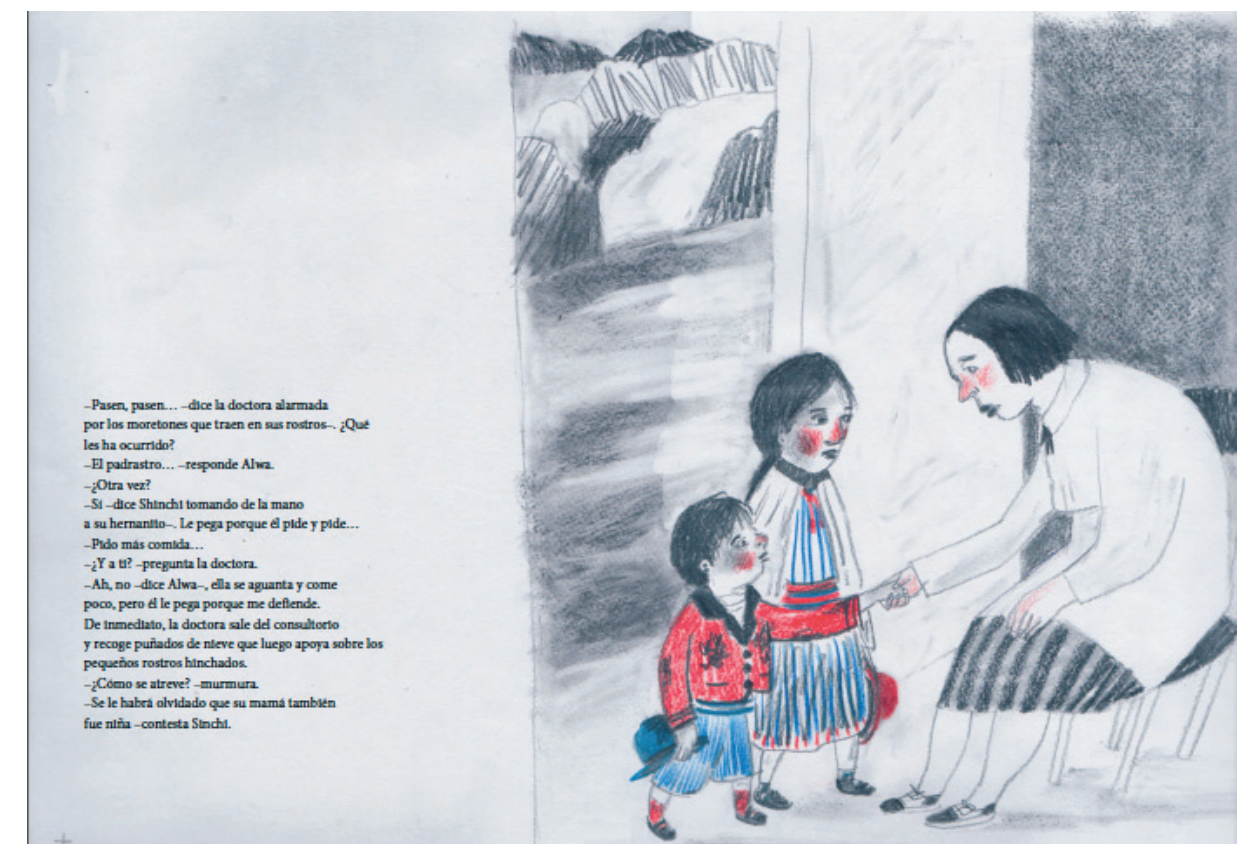
The poem Kanin recites to the traveller demands a better life. A life of respect. A life, which demands the restitution of rights from whomever it may concern: "I would like to be a fish... so that they don't send me to fetch water".



The Bolivian mountains are the setting for the second episode and the main characters are two Coya children: Sinchi, who takes his younger brother Alwa to the medical clinic. Sinchi's thought "The snow is beautiful but sad" sums up the reality of the two children, repeatedly beaten by their stepfather, just because they are hungry. The "Again?" that the

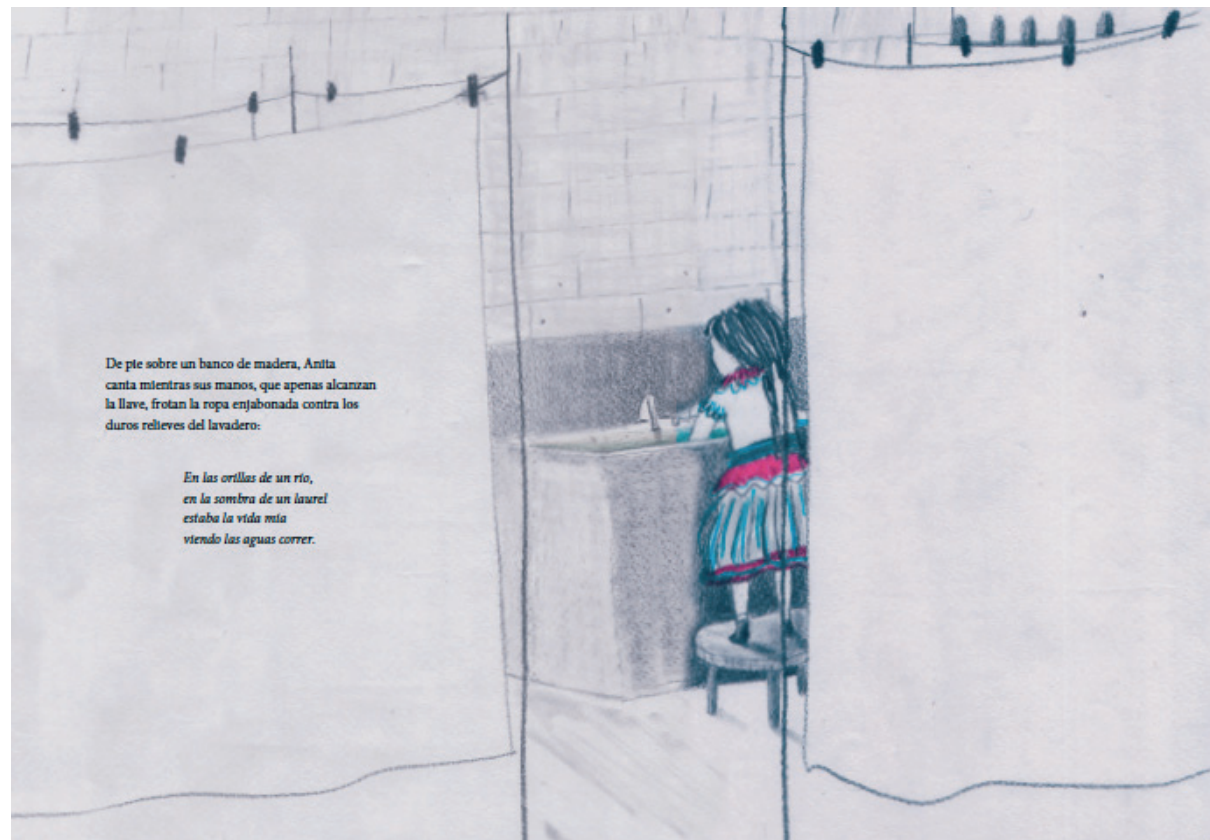
doctor says is an important piece of information. We know what these children go through, but the authorities' inaction does not solve the problem.

Sinchi's phrase is revealing, it speaks of violence against children, the forgetfulness of one's own childhood or that of the mother of the batterer: "He must have forgotten that his mother was also a child".



In the north, in a Colombian village, lives Anita, an orphan girl, adopted by a family "with the promise to raise her like a daughter".

Anita, with her lark-like voice, sings songs inherited from her mother, while she washes the clothes of the family that adopted her. Her song has the power of a waterfall even if, because of its size, it is difficult to reach the tap: "On the banks of a river, /in the shade of a laurel tree /was my life/ watching the waters flow". Much has been taken from him, but singing is his lifeline.



De pie sobre un banco de madera, Antia
canta mientras sus manos, que apenas alcanzan
la llave, frotan la ropa enjabonada contra los
duros relieves del lavadero:

*En las orillas de un río,
en la sombra de un laurel
estaba la vida mía
viendo las aguas correr.*

In Caracas, the motorway separates two worlds: at the top, those who travel and ignore whether anyone lives in the little houses in the ravines, so much so that "From time to time, motorists throw rubbish into the void", as if they were throwing it into absolute nothingness. However, "a glass bottle blown into the air landed on Valentina's foot". Her friends show solidarity and take her to school in a wheelbarrow.



*¡Agarrate fuerte, Valentina! –gritan los
chicos que la llevan a la escuela en una carretilla.
Una semana atrás, una botella de vidrio que
trajo el aire cayó sobre un pie de Valentina. Ahora
avanza como una princesa en su carruaje, mostrando
orgullosa su pierna enyesada.*

Camila dances and sings a poem in the streets of San Salvador. People pass by in their daily rush and don't seem to see her. Only a very small boy looks at the girl who turns and turns singing: "Neither in the family, nor at school,/ I only exist here in the street, me./ Not even here the street,/ for there is no one to look at/ in my eyes,/ no". Poem of solitude. Of the imperious need to be recognised through the gaze of the other. Camila sings and dances in the middle of a circle of absences.



The text moves to Mexico, to Tapachula, where Zazil lives, a girl of Mayan origin, granddaughter of migrants, who loves to whistle.
Zazil visits a shelter for Central American migrants every day. She is always welcome.
When her birthday arrives, she is welcomed with a cocoa cake with seven candles, which Zazil blows out by whistling.
Whistling is a cultural bridge and a welcome. Each song is not lost, it remains in Zazil's whistling companion, "a little bird who knows all the trills".



The last episode takes place in Honduras and tells of the flight of Maria and her mother, at the request of the father, who knows that he will be captured by men with machine guns. Forced migration. María and her mother walk for miles until they reach the Río Bravo, which they will try to cross because "The birds cross (...) So does the wind. So does the river".
The father's words: "Goodbye (...), although thousands of kilometres separate us, this embrace will always be with you" is an omen and a sign of immense affection (drawing of María, her mother and the lady who gives them tamales).
The book closes with hope. Despite the difficult circumstances, life goes on and the generous tamales give strength and support.
Seven girls, seven regions of Latin America, seven voices that never stop singing, asking and dreaming of a better life.
A complex book that enlightens and touches, that opens up questions and offers a range of stories.

Ana Emilia Silva
 Specialist in Children's and Young People's Literature
 Member of ALIJA

Siete Pablos and Siete niñas

By Sebastián Vargas

Vargas, Sebastián in his blog: Un plan chino, January 2023

Available at: <https://www.sebastianvargas.com.ar/post/siete-pablos-y-siete-ni%C3%B1as>

These books were made by the same authorial duo, the texts are by Jorge Luján (prestigious Argentinean author of LIJ) and the illustrations by the Italian artist Chiara Carrer (winner, among many others, of the Andersen prize in 1999). *Siete Pablos* was published in Mexico in 2020, by Ediciones Castillo; while *Siete niñas* is about to be published very soon (2023) in Rosario, by Libros Silvestres.



While reading these books, the poem “Los justos”, by another Jorge (Jorge Luis Borges) came to mind; in that poem, a list of people who seem to have nothing in common is detailed, defined only by an action or a moment (“A typographer who composes this page well, who perhaps does not like it. / A woman and a man who read the final tercets of a certain song / He who caresses a sleeping animal”) and this enumeration closes, in the final verse, with a surprising revelation: “These people, who ignore each other, are saving the world”.

Here, too, characters are introduced who seem to have nothing in common, except that they are children and live in different countries in America. In **Siete Pablos** they are united by something else, a name: they are all called Pablo.

In a way, these seven children with the same name function as representatives of all the children of the continent: one Pablo is the son of a miner in Chile, another lives in the Amazon jungle in Ecuador, another lives in a New York suburb, another is the son of Argentinean exiles in Mexico, another is migrating with his family illegally, another is the

son of a rural teacher in Peru, another survives in a favela in Rio de Janeiro. From each of them we are presented with a scene that (in Borges’ way) can define their whole life so far: one boy dreams of being a policeman to beat up the police, another would like to go to school but knows it is not possible, another misses his father, another faces dangers he should not face. Their names are the same, but they are beads in a necklace of difficult childhoods, in a difficult continent like ours, full of poverty and pride, of violence and affection, of uncertainties and also of hopes.

But it is true that it was not fair for seven boys to represent all childhoods, and that is why Jorge Luján and Chiara Carrer’s new book, **Siete niñas**, works as a complement to **Siete Pablos** and also as a second voice in a dialogue.

These seven girls don’t even have the same name: they don’t have to. They do not know each other, nor will they ever know each other. They are united, like all children, by the impulse to reach the future, to overcome pain and injustice, the dream of living in a world that is a little less arid, a little better. And they teach us that even in the most difficult circumstances it is possible (and necessary) to sing, dance and grow.

Las siete niñas no se conocen entre sí, pero comparten el mismo sueño: descubrir por qué pasa lo que pasa, soltar lo que les oprime la garganta, y habitar con valentía el lugar que las espera desde siempre.

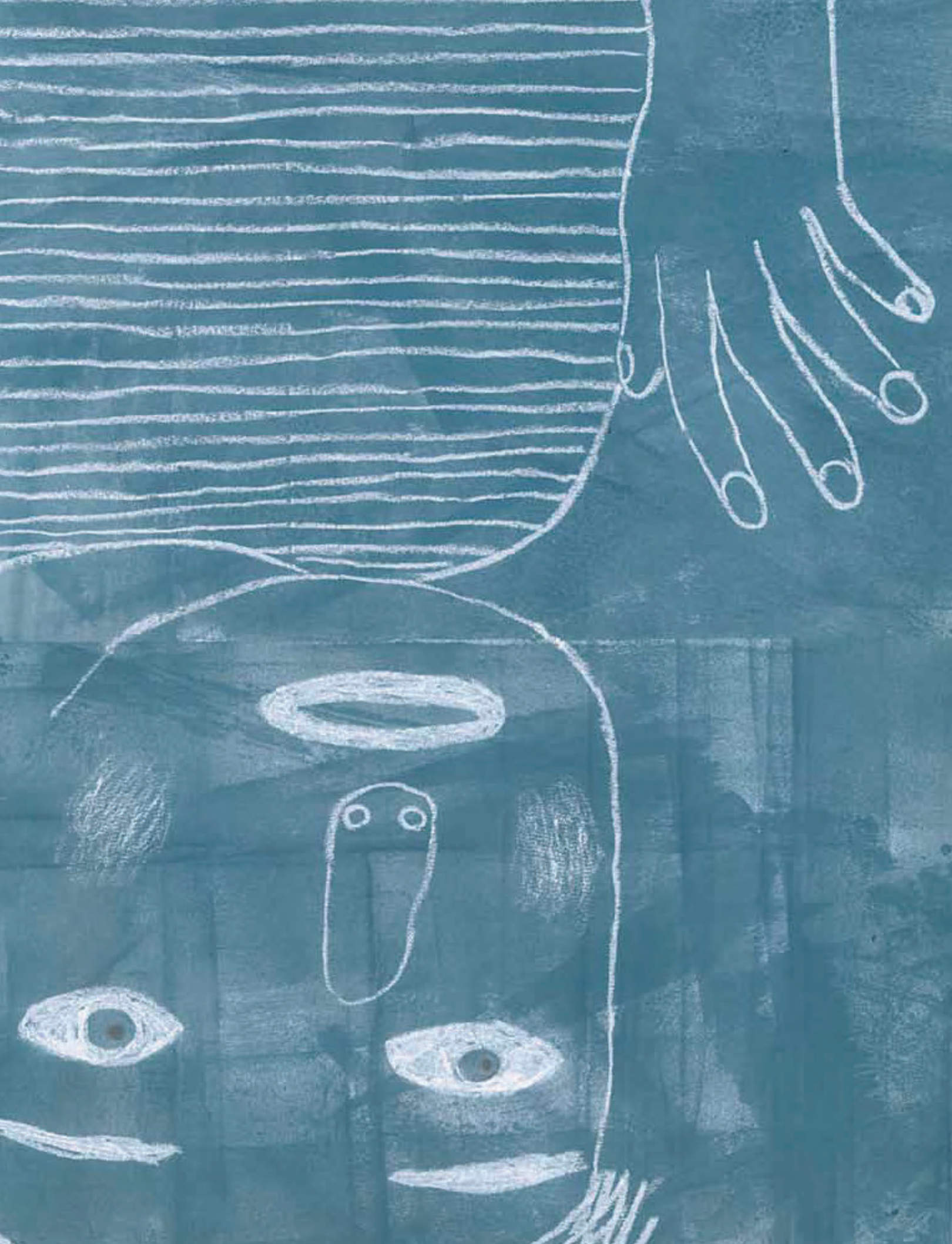


The seven girls do not know each other, but they share the same dream: to discover why what is happening is happening, to let go of what is constricting their throats, and to courageously inhabit the place that has always awaited them.

Chiara Carrer’s illustrations are beautiful and intense, in black pencil strokes with touches of a single colour in the characters’ clothes and in loose elements (yellow in *Siete Pablos*, blue in *Siete niñas*). I really like how this author manages to tell whole stories through the looks and expressions of the characters.

In short: two great books by Jorge Luján and Chiara Carrer, worth reading together or separately, to get to know these children and to believe, at least for a while, that their small but valuable lives are the fragile props that hold up our world.

Recommended.



Appendix

Peach skin, chapter XIV of the novel "Salting the river with a spoon" by Jorge Luján, illustrated by Pablo Auladell, published by Santillana - Loqueleo, in Mexico. (In Argentina by Editorial Comunicarte, without illustrations).

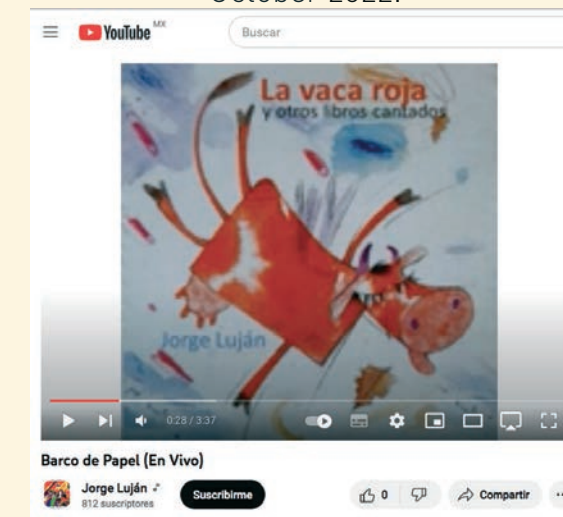
January 2023



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nyLD5m8vI4A&list=PLNqmS4eE3ll1SwnmN-nXq-vg4Rc4C-hKJ6&index=32>

Paper Boat (Live) by Jorge Luján: **The Red Cow and Other Singing Books**

October 2022.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2462etJBB2I>

FilbaOnline2020. Poetry workshop. Mutations, shocks and epiphanies. Jorge Luján.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vcyYMfhgEsc>

"Hugo and Josephine" (song and arrangements by Litto Nebbia). Performers: Carmen Leñero and Jorge Luján



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqOCSa1JtbU>

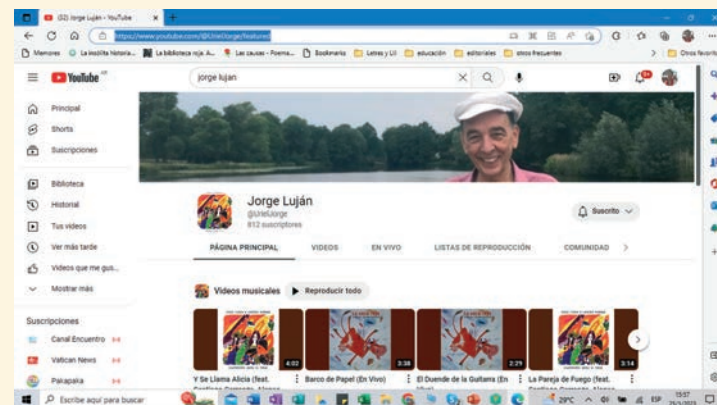
"Trompa con trompita": poem by Jorge Luján from the book of the same name, Illustrated by Mandana Sadat and published by Comunicarte (Argentina) and Castillo (Mexico) Presented on March 5, 2022 in the program "Clásicos desatados" Idea and driving: Jessica Fainsod from Radio Nacional Clásica 96.7 (Argentina) March 14, 2022





[\(32\) Podcast N.1: Los encuentros - YouTube](#)

Jorge Lujan's YouTube channel



Jorge Luján shares with us a bit of his talent that has inspired children of several generations. He tells how he makes poetry with the children in his workshops.

This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHLfQTpHq_



