December 2017

Dear IBBY Friends,

This is a very special year for *Bookbird* as we celebrate our 60th birthday. This makes us one of the longest running international children’s literature journals–perhaps even the longest. Our journal serves a very wide children’s book community around the world, bringing together discussions about current trends and developments in children’s literature, along with information about literacy development projects in many regions and news of activities in national sections–all furthering the aims of IBBY. The board of Bookbird, Inc. as well as editors, past and present, are proud of our record, and even if we can’t meet all of you in person, we hope you will join us in spirit as we celebrate this auspicious year.

You can read all about the history and growth of *Bookbird* in the next issue, 55.4, which carries articles about *Bookbird*’s progress from a fledgling newsletter to the substantial entity it is today. This is the final issue for 2017. It appears somewhat later than usual as we changed the Hans Christian Andersen Award issue to the final one for the year preceding the HCA Award announcement. However, you will be able to read about the authors and illustrators nominated by IBBY sections much earlier than usual, and make your own predictions about who will be the winners in 2018. As always, we are very grateful to our sponsor, Nami Island, Inc. for support with the HCAA issue of *Bookbird*.

We expect to be back on schedule in 2018, and the congress regional issue will appear earlier than usual, so you can acquaint yourselves with the fascinating development of literature for young readers in Greece, Cyprus and Turkey.

As part of our 60th birthday celebrations, we have launched a *Bookbird* Facebook page. We hope that this will be a way for readers to interact with the board and editors, as well as keeping up with *Bookbird* news. We hope you will find our page both lively and interesting. One of our themes for the page is pictures of readers enjoying *Bookbird*, so please do send one of you, and of other members of your national section too.

Dr Björn Sundmark has been the editor of *Bookbird* for the past three years and has one more year of his term to serve. He has produced inviting issues of *Bookbird*, representing the interests of IBBY members, and focusing closely on some particular themes, including writing by young people and nonsense in children’s literature. We are currently looking forward to his first issue for 2018, which will focus on ‘Translation and Transmediation in Children’s Literature’.

While we are not yet saying ‘goodbye’ to Björn, we are pleased to announce the appointment of the incoming editors for the 2019-2022 term. Because of the length of time it takes to prepare an issue of *Bookbird*, it is always necessary to start the search for new editors early, and to make the appointment well in advance of the new editors’ first issue. Earlier this year, we had an excellent response to our advertisement for a new editor or editors. After close scrutiny of the applications and ensuing deliberations by the board, we are delighted to announce the appointment of Dr Janelle Mathis and Dr Petros Panaou as the editors of *Bookbird*, 2019-2022.

Dr Mathis is a Professor of Literacy and Children’s Literature at the University of North Texas where she teaches both graduate and undergraduate courses centred on international children’s literature and its applications. She presents regularly at international children’s literature conferences, including IBBY, IRSCL and ILA congresses, and has served on award committees, including the Notable Books for a Global Society committee of ILA. Dr Mathis has published widely on children’s literature studies, and her recent publications include a co-edited volume, *Critical Content Analysis of Children’s and Young Adult Literature* (2016).

Dr Panaou is Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Georgia, Department of Language and Literacy Education, where he teaches children’s literature and literacy courses. He has published widely on international children’s literature, on translation studies, and on comparative children’s literature. A special comparative children’s literature issue of the Greek journal *Keimena* was edited by Dr Panaou. He has led multiple internationally funded projects, such as the European Picture Book Collection II, European Mobility Folktales, and Lifelong Readers.

As well as their strong academic experience in the field of international children’s literature, both Dr Mathis and Dr Panaou are active members of IBBY. Dr Mathis has served as president of the US section of IBBY and currently serves on the USBBY Board of Directors. Dr Panaou also serves on the USBBY Board and is a USBBY State Ambassador. Formerly, he was secretary to the Cyprus section of IBBY, and is currently chairing the scientific committee for the 36th IBBY Congress in Athens, and is guest editor for the upcoming congress issue of *Bookbird*.

Liz Page and I recently wrote to all national sections asking if the complimentary copies of *Bookbird* sent to sections were being received. We are relieved that overall, copies are received in reasonable time, and any problems reported are being investigated. We would also ask those who are subscribers to let us know if they are not receiving their *Bookbird* on a regular basis. In some regions, delivery is slower than in others, and we cannot do much about this. Our main concern is that readers receive *Bookbird* on a regular basis.

Thanks are extended to the IBBY Secretariat for all assistance with *Bookbird*, and my personal thanks are due to the members of the Bookbird, Inc. Board for all their work in so many ways in ensuring *Bookbird* is a great point-of-contact for IBBY.

On behalf of the Board, I wish a very happy holiday season to all who celebrate at this time of year, and to those whose traditional celebrations will come a little later in 2018. And, of course, we all join together in wishing for greater international cooperation and peace throughout the world in 2018.

Happy *Bookbird* reading to all of you!

Valerie

**Board of Bookbird, Inc.:** Valerie Coghlan, President; Junko Yokota, Secretary; Ellis Vance, Treasurer; Hasmig Chahinian and Evelyn Freeman, IBBY EC Representatives.

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