

Ayşe İnan

Hans Christian Andersen Award 2026
Illustrator Nominee
(Türkiye)



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"Although my pictorial memory is a beautiful and long journey giving wings to my soul, today I am constantly shuttling between the past and the future. When I draw, I make connections full of tides in this confusion of emotions. It frees me to think that I have created living solutions for today. I feel as if I have found a cure for despair."

Ayşe İnan

Biography of Ayşe İnan

She was born in Ankara in 1972. From her childhood to the present day, books, insatiable games, gardens as habitats for different creatures, unique plants and animals, encounters seem like miracles to her, beautiful pursuits that extend her time are, like the stopover sites of migratory journeys in her soul and paintings, creating a path out of the known.

Her works remind us of that energetic feeling of childlike enthusiasm in its freshness. They remind us of the hidden features and natural beauties in the details that she wants children to see and adults to remember.

In 1994, when she graduated from Hacettepe University, Department of Fine Arts and Graphics, she thought that discovering the children's bookshelves in the library with her curiosity about character form and typography was like meeting a good friend again.

Her first picture book was her undergraduate thesis "The Apple Butterfly (Elma Kelebeği)", which was awarded with a success prize at Hacettepe University. (1991-1994) Design and advertising illustrations in graphic design agencies, (1995-1997) Cartoonist for newspapers, children's page, (1997-2007) Her textbook illustrations and designs, scientific journal illustrations, the number of which she cannot remember, have been a journey for an unbreakable friendship with the world of children's picture books. She illustrated books by authors from various publishing houses.

"Who is Afraid of the Little Red Riding Hood?" Kırççeği Publ., 2009 Best Illustrated Storybook of the Year by IBBY - Türkiye (ÇGYD), İstanbul/Türkiye. (The Beyoğlu Adventure), IBBY Türkiye Honour List, the Children's Book of the Year in the Design Section of IBBY Türkiye (2022 2023 Nomination for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, ALMA. Since 2011 she has been illustrating many stories as a freelancer for Yapı Kredi Publications. Her books have received many national awards. One of the original paintings from the books she illustrated, 'Three Cats',

One Wish' is on display at the "Istanbul Cat Museum" in Istanbul and "Jasmine's Dream" is on display at the "Ege University Museum of Paper and Book Arts" in Izmir. "Three Cats', One Wish" is being performed in different cities in Türkiye with the cast of the Adana State Theatres. Her work is published in many different languages, from Armenian, English, Macedonian, Korean, Persian, Russian, Ukrainian, Romanian, Marathi, Galician, Qatar, Urdu, Hungarian.

Since 2010, she has been trying to explain to children the connection between the geography we live in, and nature and cultural richness like through art in many cities of Türkiye.

As the children experience the empowering feeling of 'I can do it', they learn to see with a bird's eye view, to be brave, daring and adventurous like them, along with children's out-of-the-box worlds, and enjoy the happy eyes.

Kale-M Illustrators Group, formed with her illustrator friends in Ankara, makes different productions every year with the aim of equal opportunities for children on the topics of cultural heritage, book and library, play with interactive exhibitions, speeches and workshops.

In 2023, as a guest of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Directorate of Libraries and Publications, she organised a workshop on 'Migratory Birds and Memory' at the Bologna Children's Book Fair (Italy).

She continues to support social work by creating independent paintings on universal themes and participating in national and international exhibitions. Having just finished her silent book, she is currently working on her new book and her third solo exhibition.





Ten Most Important Titles

Who is Afraid of the Little Red Riding Hood? (Kim Korkar Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız'dan?)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Kırçiceği Publ., 2009, İstanbul
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2014, İstanbul

The Beyoğlu Adventure (Beyoğlu Macerası)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2011, İstanbul

Three Cats', One Wish (3 Kedi 1 Dilek)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2012, İstanbul

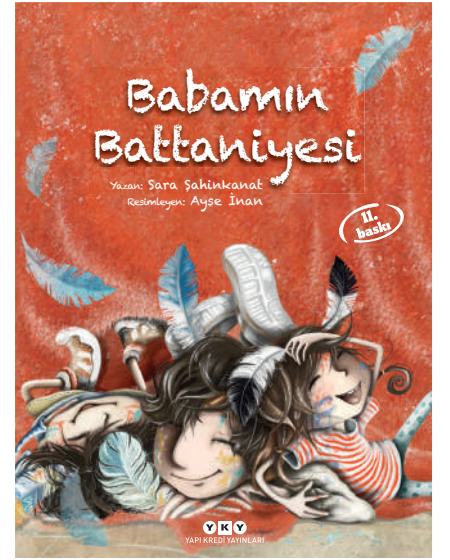
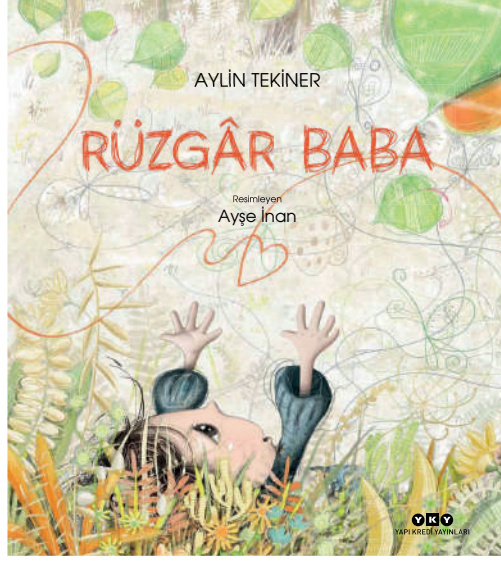
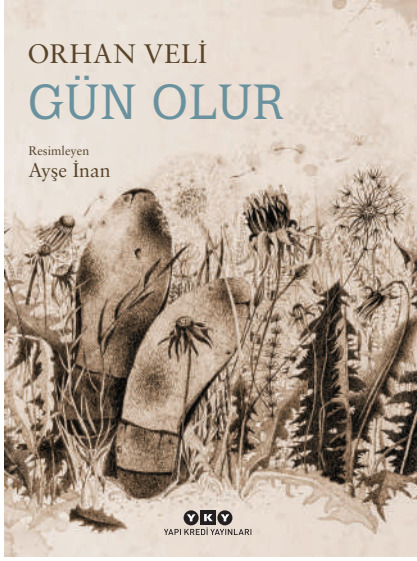
My Mother's Bag (Annemin Çantası)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2013, İstanbul

In The Palace, The Adventure of the Jungle Dwarves (Sarayda)

Written by Nazım Hikmet
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2017, İstanbul





My Father's Blanket
(*Babamın Battaniyesi*)
Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2019, İstanbul

The Wind Daddy
(*Rüzgar Baba*)
Written by Aylin Tekiner
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2023, İstanbul

There Will Be A Day, illustrated / poetry book
(*Orhan Veli 'Gün Olur'*)
Written by Orhan Veli
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2022, İstanbul

Three Cats', One Monster
(*3 Kedi 1 Canavar*)
Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2015, İstanbul

Jasmine's Dream
(*Yağmur'un Rüyası*)
Written by Filiz Özdem
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2014, İstanbul





Most Significant Titles

Three Cats', One Wish (3 Kedi 1 Dilek)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2012, İstanbul

My Mother's Bag (Annemin Çantası)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2013, İstanbul

Who is Afraid of the Little Red Riding Hood? (Kim Korkar Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız'dan?)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Kırçığı Publ., 2009, İstanbul
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2014, İstanbul

In The Palace, The Adventure of the Jungle Dwarves (Sarayda)

Written by Nazım Hikmet
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2017, İstanbul

The Beyoğlu Adventure (Beyoğlu Macerası)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat
Yapı Kredi Publ., 2011, İstanbul





Three Cats', One Wish (3 Kedi 1 Dilek) 2012

Reviews

This story was inspired by another artist's illustration. Selçuk Demirel had drawn a cat's silhouette with only its round yellow eyes glowing in the navy blue night, resembling the round yellow stars in the background (from Paper Cats by YKY). I remember being amazed by this idea and feeling that I had to write a story based on it.

That same week, my only son, who was almost eight years old, had his two best friends over. They had been friends since they were three. As I listened to their joyful giggles coming from my son's room, I felt immensely grateful for their friendship and made a wish—that their bond would last a lifetime.

Then, a spark of inspiration struck me. Instead of wishing upon a star, why not have cats making a wish upon a cat's starlike eye? Feeling grateful for my own friendships as well as my son's, emotions flowed like a river, and this story was born.

But the story truly came to life when Ayşe illustrated the characters—Piti, Pati, and Pus. Through her heartfelt illustrations, she captured the distinct personalities of the three cats and their evolving emotions so vividly that they became deeply beloved by hundreds of thousands of children and their families since 2012. Not only did her illustrations bring the cats to life, but the breathtaking navy blue night, the moon, and the stars also created an enchanting, fairy-tale-like atmosphere, perfectly harmonizing with the story's mood.

Sara Şahinkanat
Adnan Ötügen Library, 2023



Waiting for a shooting star/ Three Cats One Wish

... "Sara Şahinkanat casts a spell around me as if she wrote this book for me to hold it in my hand right now, to pick up little crumbs of happiness from it, to form a big circle and sit in it. In Ayşe İnan's sweet drawings, I gain enough strength to climb on and off that round."..

Radikal Newspaper Book Supplement, Kabarüko, 2012
by, Gökem Yeltan

Books that don't grow up early...

"Sara Şahinkanat and Ayşe İnan Alican's third book Three Cats One Wish is on the shelves. Three lovelies the poetic language of the author in the book about the friendship of the kitty the illustrator's awe-inspiring paintings come to life"...

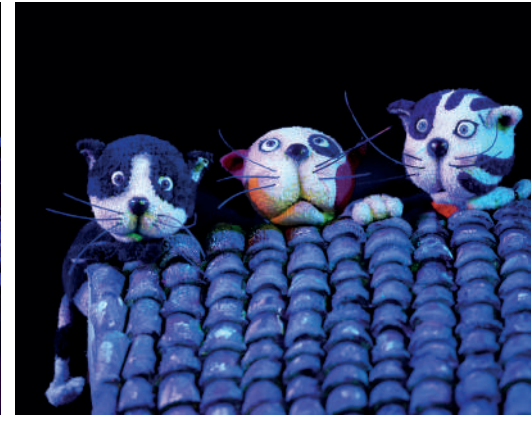
All three of your books exude a unique spirit and an exquisite vision of the universe. When you put them together, the resulting books are really eye-catching and evoke a land of fairy tales. What do you think is the secret to this?

A.İ.A.: The fact that Sara always fascinates me with her texts written with an exciting creativity, universal, genuine, not prematurely raising the child, and thinking that the child is born a genius. This is how we become two good friends who want to play more and more. While trying to reflect Sara's emotions and the colors and games in her language, the sense of painting and story that I experienced in my childhood, the feedback we receive from the children and the direct expressions in their eyes... These tell us to produce better things with a childlike enthusiasm.

A.İ.A.: When I read the story, my first feelings and the pictures that form in my mind are always active, but I draw the sketches with the worry, moreover with the stomach ache, of not being able to reflect what I imagine. Even though I try to draw with a spirit that wants to remain a child, I work until I am sure of my scribbles, which I start as clumsily as my 5-year-old daughter Yağmur, with the concern that I may be as far away from a child-eyed consciousness. I finish some of the work by getting involved with objects, paper, paint, preferring hand painting as I did in my childhood. When the originals are ready, we go over all the details again with the author and editor. Whatever the end result, the publisher's attention to detail and the quality of the printing make the work visible. We were very lucky in this regard...

İyi Kitap Children and Youth Books Magazine 1 May 2012
Written by Zariye Biliz





Exhibition in Museum

2023 İstanbul Cat Museum (İstanbul Kedi Müzesi) By Sunay Akın, 'Three Cats', One Wish' Books and one original picture, İstanbul/Türkiye
4 October 2023

Theatre

Three Cats', One Wish
(3 Kedi 1 Dilek) 2012

State Theaters are bringing pre-school children together with theater by combining the "From Novel to Stage" and "Philosopher Children" project special to the 75th anniversary of its foundation.

On stage for children for the first time with the wonderful team of @adanadevlettیاتrosu...



Awards & Accolades

2020 3 Kedi 1 Dilek (Three Cats', One Wish),
Macedonia Reader's Book Awards nominee,
Macedonia

Foreign Rights & Translations

Armenia : Antares

English : Yapi Kredi Publs.

Macedonia : Prozart

Korea : Bomi- Art Books

Russian : Foliant

Ukraine : Folio

Hungary : Joshua Könyvek

Marathi : Popular Prakashan

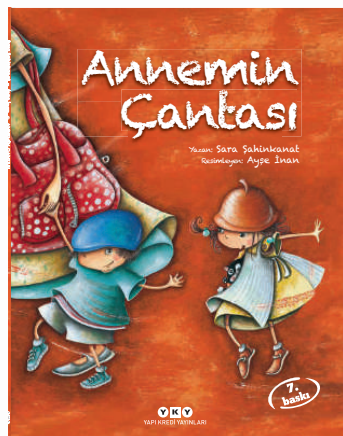
Kazakhstan : Foliant

India : Popular Prakashan

Iran : SarAmad

Persian : SarAmad





My Mother's Bag (Annemin Çantası) 2013

Reviews

When my son was a baby—and even a toddler—living in a vast metropolitan city, every trip outside the house felt like an adventurous journey. I had to be prepared for everything: extra clothes, extra diapers, food and drinks, medical creams for injuries, wet wipes, toys, books, and more. As a result, the bag I carried was always big and heavy.

Years later, I had nearly forgotten about those days—until I saw a friend carrying an enormous bag for her adopted toddler. When I noticed that she had packed a screwdriver, three different kinds of medical creams, and bandages, I couldn't help but burst into laughter. It reminded me of my own bags and the ridiculous amount of detailed planning mothers go through. It's an experience so many parents share.

That moment sparked an idea: how could I make this story interesting for children as well? I decided to tell it from the child's perspective. In the story, the child sees the bag as a superhero—because no matter what they need, it magically appears from inside the bag. However, after the events in the climax, the child realizes that the true hero is their mother—the one who prepared the bag in the first place.

Ayşe illustrated the book so beautifully that it was selected as one of the best picture books of 2013 by the members of IBBY Türkiye. Since it was chosen by our peers, we felt incredibly honored.

Sara Şahinkanat
Math out of the bag, eTwinning, 2025



... "Complete with colorful illustrations by Ayşe İnan. The result is a delightful book to read and look at."

İyi Kitap Children and Youth Books Magazine November 2017
Written by Banu Aksoy

Awards & Accolades

2013 Annemin Çantası (My Mother's Bag), 1st place in the Most Popular Children's Books of the Year list selected by IBBY - Türkiye (ÇGYD) members, İstanbul/ Türkiye

Foreign Rights & Translations

Ukraine : Folio

Persian : SarAmad

Armenia : Antares

Macedonia : Prozar

Qatar: Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press

Iran : SarAmad





Who is Afraid of the Little Red Riding Hood?

(*Kim Korkar Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız'dan?*) 2009

Reviews

In 2007, my son and I watched Hoodwinked by Pixar, having already enjoyed Shrek 1 and Shrek 2 together. I realized that a new era of storytelling was emerging—one that encouraged children to see things from different perspectives. This approach resonated deeply with me.

When I wrote this story, the idea of telling the tale from the perspective of a wolf trying to be good was a highly original concept for a picture book. The cultural references to classic fairy tales, subtly woven into both the text and Ayşe's mesmerizing illustrations, were widely appreciated. In fact, the book won the Best Picture Book Award from IBBY Türkiye in 2009.

Ayşe not only perfectly captured the little wolf's cleverness and charm, as well as the mother wolf's understandable anxiety and love for her son, but she also filled the backgrounds with carefully crafted details. These hidden gems draw the reader's attention to something new with every reading, making the book a delightful adventure each time. This richness in detail makes repeated readings an engaging and joyful experience for both young readers and the adults reading along with them.

Sara Şahinkanat
The Richness of Our Language, 2024

... "Ayşe İnan is one of the outstanding illustrators of recent years. The figures and the use of color in this book are very successful. Warm, vivid... And the animal places that live as if they were human are very convincing."

İyi Kitap Children and Youth Books Magazine 1 January 2010
Written by Simla Sunay





Awards & Accolades

2021 Who is Afraid of the Little Red Riding Hood?
(Kim Korkar Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız'dan?)
Macedonia Reader's Book Awards 3rd place, Macedonia

2009 Who is Afraid of the Little Red Riding Hood?
(Kim Korkar Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız'dan?)

Best Illustrated Story Book of the Year by IBBY
Türkiye (ÇGYD), İstanbul/Türkiye

Foreign Rights & Translations

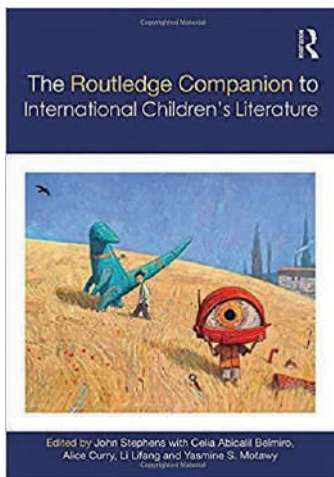
Armenia: Antares

Macedonia: Prozar

İran: SarAmad

Galicia: Linteo Infantil E Xuvenil (Spanish)





Who would be Afraid of Red Riding Hood?

Given that Turkish children's literature has in recent times been dominated by translated books from Europe, it is not a surprise that local production of picturebooks has found success in building on bonds with the widely distributed story of Red Riding Hood. The national award winner *Who would be Afraid of Red Riding Hood?* (see Figure 38.3) is a metafictional retelling of the Riding Hood story with a focus on the wolf, who in this case wears the red hood. This picturebook is initially the result of an extensive collaboration between the writer Sara Şahinkanat, illustrator Ayşe İnan Alican and the editor of Kirçiçeği Publications, Ashi Motchane. There is a textual and a pictorial play in the book (Beckett 2002) where details, including toys, books, and a family portrait, familiarize the reader with the wolf's secluded life in the forest.

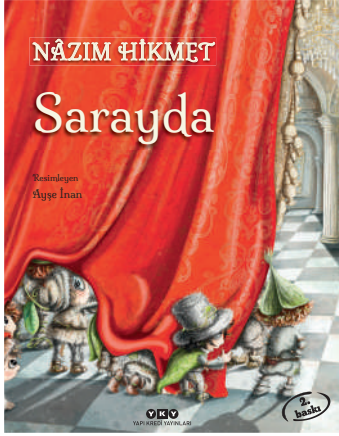
The theme of the picturebook develops as the mother wolf directs questions to the little wolf who wants to go out to play in the forest. On each opening page they go over the potential dangers to make sure the young wolf can take precautions and avoid a close encounter with the real Red Riding Hood, the grandmother and ultimately the hunter, to elude the presumed ending. In Figure 38.3, the third-person text translates, "The mother looked at her child with love, and took the child on her lap, hiding away her worries she whispered..." They decide to make a poster that the young wolf can hang in case he needs to take a nap saying that he only eats pasta with broccoli and that wolves no longer like being demeaned as negative figures in fairy tales.

Further intertextuality is introduced by the collection of books that belong to the little wolf and his mother: the mother's books are *My Name is Red* by Orhan Pamuk, *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, as well as a book entitled *Development of a Child Wolf*. For the child, two children's books have been re-titled as *Today's Wolves are Wonderful* and *The Booted Wolf* (original titles, *Today's Children are Wonderful* by Aziz Nesin, and *The Puss in Boots*). The arching depiction of the walls of the room supported with the use of curves and curvilinear objects give the space a cosy feeling. While aspects of the characters and setting are European, Turkish aesthetics nonetheless predominate in the book. The romanticized placidity of the house as central to life features strongly, with the corollary that public space is not necessarily a favoured haven. The segregation of an idealized interior space from the outside world just like the snow globe in the background hints at a metanarrative intersecting the western one (Stephens and McCallum 2013) in Turkish literature evident in texts such as Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu's *The Rented Mansion* (Bertram 2008) or Orhan Pamuk's *The Museum of Innocence* (which has a spatial counterpart in the form of a museum housed in an old wooden Turkish house, also called the Museum of Innocence).

Folk tales, riddles and rhymes

A major source of adaptations in Türkiye is the cycle of tales concerning Nasreddin Hodja, a satirical Sufi figure who both dispenses wisdom and is a figure of fun. He is perhaps best known internationally by Demi's picturebook *A Tale from Türkiye: The Hungry Coat* (2004), but there have been numerous adaptations within Türkiye. Of particular interest is a compilation of stories printed in 1961, accompanied by the remarkable line drawings of Abidin Dino, although with its few illustrations and dense text the book targets adults rather than children. Another notable example is by Serap Deliorman, illustrator of *Learning How to Reason with Nasreddin Hodja*, a collection of stories accompanied by questions that enhance critical thinking skills. The illustrations of Deliorman are especially significant for composing scenes in which today's children appear with Nasreddin, whereas most books do not represent present-day scenes.





In The Palace, The Adventure of the Jungle Dwarves (*Sarayda*) 2017

Reviews

Nâzim Hikmet's Jungle Dwarfs' Adventures was first published in 1932, under the pseudonym Naime Hassan, while Nâzim was in Bursa Prison. In the Palace, published by Yapı Kredi Publications' Doğan Kardeş Library, is one of the adventures in this work of Nâzim. Thanks to the successful visualization of the narrative by Ayşe İnan Alican, who illustrated the story, this abundantly illustrated special edition for readers aged 4-7 is a lovely gift for book lovers on the 115th anniversary of Nâzim's birth... There are many reasons to read this tale, in which little forest gnomes burst into a palace and turn everything upside down, with your child and look at the illustrations, and few excuses not to do so..."

İyi Kitap Children and Youth Books Magazine 1 November 2017
Written by Nuray Gönülşen







The Beyoğlu Adventure (Beyoğlu Macerası) 2011

Reviews

In the paintings in Beyoğlu Adventure, all the places are drawn in exquisite detail, yet each is imbued with a fairytale-like spirit? But I guess you were mainly concerned with reality.

While looking at the book, I wondered, what was the drawing process like? Did you sit in front of a building for example?

A.İ.A.: Thank you. My concern was not to do injustice to another detail, history, while drawing the most prominent features that would remind us of an architectural structure. I also thought about the many details hidden under the signs and advertisements. We did two photo shoots, Sara and I became information hunters. The fascination I felt for what I saw every time I visited Beyoğlu multiplied as I drew, and I drew a place over and over again. I sat in front of countless photographs, imagining how I would see the street if I were a small child. With a passion that made me forget that I was even making a book, I tried to draw scenes and details that would draw children in.

İyi Kitap Children's and Youth Books Magazine November 2012

A member of the International Board of Children's Books (IBBY), Children and The Association of Youth Publications (ÇGYD) has selected the "Best Children's Books" were announced.

"Best Children's Book Design of the Year" was awarded to Beyoğlu Adventure - Information Hunters on a Secret Mission (written by Sara Şahinkanat, illustrated by Ayşe İnan Alican), published by Yapı Kredi Publishing and designed by Özgür Alican;

İyi Kitap Children and Youth Books Magazine May 2012
Written by Zarife Biliz

An Adventure in Beyoğlu

..." Ayşe İnan should be congratulated for her courage and success in designing all these historical places for children."...

Radikal Newspaper Book Supplement, Kabarüko, 2011
by Aslı Tohumcu





Awards & Accolades

2011 The Beyoğlu Adventure (Beyoğlu Macerası), IBBY Türkiye Honour List, the Children's Book of the Year in the IBBY Türkiye Design Section, Switzerland

Foreign Rights & Translations

English : Yapı Kredi Publs.

Macedonia : Prozart

Iran : SarAmad



Interview with Ayşe İnan

LINES WE WANT CHILDREN TO NOTICE AND ADULTS TO REMEMBER...

Let's go back to the beginning, where were you born, your education... How did you first meet art? Were there any illustrators you were influenced by?

Solfasol Magazine by Filiz Köse, 2022

I was born in Ankara, in 1972. Even though it is far away now, childhood is a period that I remember more with some special moments and that makes it easier for me to feel my present. Although my interests changed, my main passion was to tell stories through drawing. To this day, I remember the miraculous encounters that remain in my visual memory: pre-school games, gardens and nature...

I am more interested in the sculptural characters I molded with clay rather than drawings. A childhood I remember like a dream with my grandmother's poems, a big garden, fruit trees and many plants and creatures. Outside the garden, the horses running in a vast field... Even today, with the influence of the horses, I have the feeling that there is no horizon line outside the garden in my memory. Some memories expand my time, I feel like now. Today, the first lines I remember with happiness, even my first exhibition in kindergarten.

Primary school, after my father passed away, Doğan Kardeş magazines brought by my uncle, great stories, then the character of 'Little Black Fish' that stuck in my memory, and when I started making tiny little picture books. Aziz Nesin and 'Nowadays Children are Wonderful' in middle school; these are unforgettable encounters for me. Grandmother, grandfather, Istanbul gardens and me who couldn't get enough of playing.

Architectural drawings I designed by myself during this period. In high school, I must have been influenced by my mother's and aunt's model drawings with threads, balls and fabrics, so I studied stylistics for a year after high school.

Trying to draw allows us to grasp, feel and perceive details that we cannot see when we look at them. The hidden features and natural beauties of beings in details create a new perspective.

Still, when I thought I couldn't choose exactly what I was going to do, I found myself studying at Hacettepe Fine Arts Graphic Arts Department in '94. These were the cool years when I thought I was an illustrator.

During this period, when I discovered the shelves of children's books during visits to embassy



libraries and the Bilkent library with a curiosity for typography, my mood as an illustrator started to fade and I started to be influenced by the masters, and a new path opened up for me. As I discovered children's books of various contents and formats, I realized how wide and rich the world was. I had a special passion for the masters in our country: Abidin Dino, Can Göknil, Mustafa Delioğlu, Ferudun Oral, Selçuk Demirel, Behiç Ak, Ferit Avcı, Nazan Erkmén, Haslet Soyöz, Gürbüz Doğan Ekşioğlu...

We did not have an illustration class, but my teacher İsmail Kaya, who illustrated children's books, introduced me to good examples and techniques in this field, and I cannot forget his support and encouragement. I illustrated my first children's book for my school thesis. The story was Handan Derya's "Apple Butterfly", which I chose from Doğan Kardeş Publications. They were paintings I made with the technique of scanning with a divit tip. I may have been influenced by Maurice Sendak's technique and Albert Dürer's engravings. MY SENSE OF INFLUENCE IS LIMITLESS, BUT I HAVE NEVER FORGOTTEN THE NECESSITY OF NOT GETTING LOST IN THIS FEELING AND FINDING MYSELF IN IT.



In those years, I wondered why there was no education in illustration; moreover, I thought there should be a separate department. Illustration is used in many fields, but learning this job through experience is a long process. I have had experience in almost all areas of scientific and technical illustration in the field of publishing. If there was a department at school, you might have had a chance to discover your field and yourself earlier.

I worked as a cartoonist for two years during the first vacation after graduation, followed by seven years of textbook design and illustration. Although I decided to freelance thinking that illustrated children's books should be a freer field, I gained experience in other areas of illustration due to life necessities. After a long time, I returned to illustrated children's books. Meral Akar Temizyürek's 'Which Voice is Mine' and Sara Şahinkanat's 'Who's Afraid of Little Red Riding Hood' were the first exciting experiments.

You have illustrated numerous children's books and won awards. Why children's books...

Being about children is a reason in itself. People are shaped at that age. I try to live in the child's

world of perception while thinking about the pictures in my mind of the texts that fascinate me when I read them and make me ask questions. This has become a reflex of my profession. The energetic feeling in the freshness of childish enthusiasm surrounds the whole soul. The reason is that I think drawing is one of the most beautiful, direct and authentic ways of conveying this. As much as I love my work, its difficulty encourages me to continue. While giving color to all the emotions I have accumulated, I can reach those sweet children and their magical, out-of-the-box worlds by getting involved with paints and paper as I did in my childhood.

The feeling of meeting in the same spirit with my friends whose stories I work on, our chemistry and the feedback I get from what we produce with magical unity... It provokes my impatience to produce better things...

Orhan Veli Poetry book has just been published. People in Ankara first saw the book drawings in the exhibition at the Orhan Veli meeting at KA Atölye. I also saw it here and was very impressed. Could you tell us a little about your creative process?

Orhan Veli is the childhood and youth of all of us... When the suggestion came from Filiz Özdem, who prepared the book for publication, I started to read all the books, new editions and researches at home with excitement. I read the poems over and over again. But no matter how much I thought I understood, learned, remembered, I doubted that I knew. I went through a long period of thinking and scribbling. I took a break, I came to the point of forgetting. My first work was to visualize the poem with almost all its images; then I gave up on this. I turned to reshaping it in my own imagination. Orhan Veli began to form with its traces in me. The fact that it would be published by Doğan Kardeş Publications was of particular importance; it was like a beautiful continuation of my childhood... The fact that my first solo exhibition was accompanied by a wonderful talk, short film and concert at KaAtölye was a rare Orhan Veli meeting for me, 'A Strange' Evening.



When I share my book illustrations with my author and editor, I hear words that share my excitement, this feeling is pleasant, of course, but my transformation and discussions continue with myself. In this book, I thought Orhan Veli was looking over my shoulder. I also thought that he was guiding me by saying "Ayşe, this is not right". I will continue to scribble pictures of Orhan Veli with such imaginary feelings.

Can you tell us about the process of creating the characters in your independent paintings or illustrated children's books such as Diot Girl "Dii"?

I try to portray what I want children to notice and adults to remember. When the scenes begin to form in the stories, my intuitive physical and psychological design process starts with the personality traits the author adds to the character. If it is a character I need to research, preliminary reading and preliminary drawings help me understand the state of the thing I am drawing and see it more and more concretely.

Writers mostly describe behaviors, which gives me a lot of freedom; as I turn the pages, other characteristics of the character emerge, and over time, like getting to know a new friend, the words start to move. It becomes a visual voiceover, as if my imagination has come out of me and started to come alive. AS I DRAW, THE LINE TELLS ME WHAT IT WANTS TO BECOME, PATIENTLY AND



PERSISTENTLY WAITING FOR ITS DESTINY, FOR THE LIFE THAT WILL BE GIVEN TO IT, MY CHARACTER WAITS FOR ME AT MY BEDSIDE. I CONTINUE TO DRAW WITH THE SAME IMPATIENCE. FINALLY WE MEET HIM IN ALL HIS FACETS, HE IS HERE NOW.

It's a unique sense of relief that feels like a miracle...

'Diî' 'Diode', who is in his youth, has emerged and is growing up with my daughter at this very moment. Today's life, which integrates human beings with technology, creates a new type of human being. My troubles and worries are slowly turning into a character. What protects me is to be good by producing. Like this, I try to find solutions to all my troubles, especially those related to children, natural life and living creatures, by thinking and drawing.

What is the process of producing illustrated children's books like? What triggers you in your independent productions? What are the effects of this process on your soul?

What would life be like without drawing?

Usually, if the story I read excites me at the first reading, I make my decision while drawing the first squares that form in my mind with scribbles that can be called hieroglyphics. I prefer stories that are universal, that don't make me forget how deep and rich the child is, that are not didactic, that don't make me grow up too early, that dazzle my imagination, that are timeless, unpretentious, authentic.

Until I am sure of the pictures that form in my mind, sketches and page plans continue like the setting of a theater stage. When the stage, light, décor and my character begin to form, they take the stage. I draw until I am sure of the story and the sense of painting that I recognize from my childhood, and the scribbles that I started clumsily in order to have visuals that should satisfy me now and in my childhood.

The story does not build a clear wall for me, I have areas of freedom that I can pass through like fences, but I try to use the secret in the words as a metaphor without breaking away from the story, I try to reflect the emotion, games, colors that the author wants to give.

In fact, my excitement continues with a painful stomach ache as I set out from the known and think to create something new with my imagination.

If I have captured the intensity of emotion, I check the technical details with my digitalized gaze.

Beautiful or ugly emotions, textures and patterns in nature, children's faces, especially their eyes are some of the things that trigger me. Although the process of painting is a never-ending process, your aesthetic perception that stops you at that moment changes over time.

Whatever work we do, if we offer solutions and productions by trying to do it well and share it, I think we can at least produce solutions to unhappiness with the work we do.

That's why I am lucky and I don't see my profession as a job.



Do you plan to make different types of productions in our digitalized world that will be shaped more intensely by technology after the pandemic, has it affected your view of your art?

Undoubtedly, my fears shaped by the changing world, my worries for children and my child have increased; but I try to turn this into good things. What I am worried about is the normalization of a perception that forgets to care about the outside world as we retreat to our homes. In '97 I started making digital paintings with textbooks, and all three books I have made recently are digital. I don't believe that hand painting will never go out of fashion, I can't give it up.

Do you have dreams for the future? What are they?

A life where freelancers are freer and labor is not discriminated against, a creativity that can produce better solutions and contributions to pessimism.

We read the same books when we were children, and just as we have our troubles or many things in common that make us who we are, we have the same thoughts for today's children.

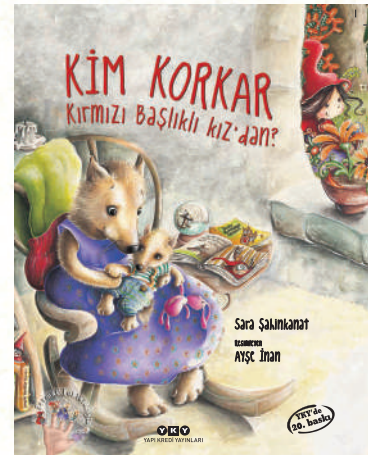
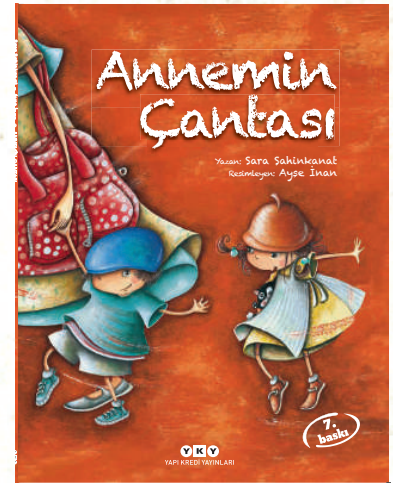
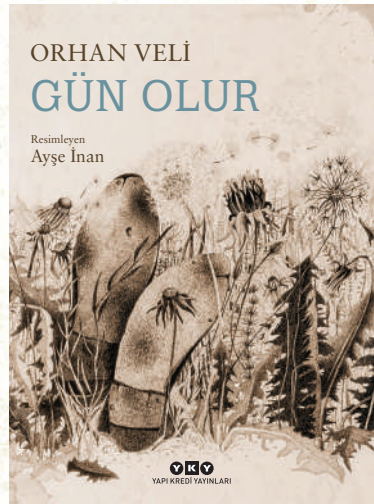
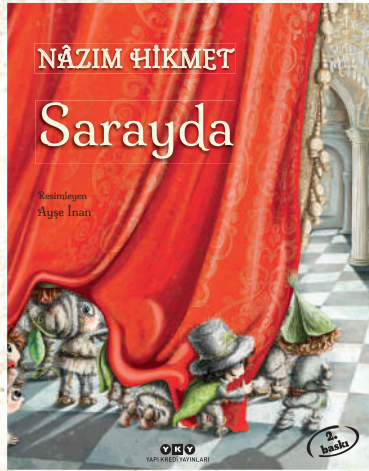
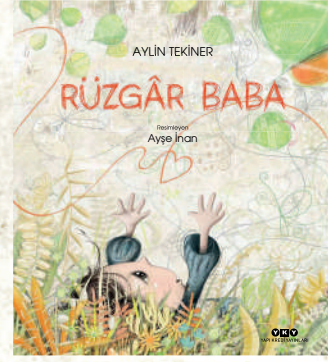
What would you like to say to young people who are interested in or studying illustration?

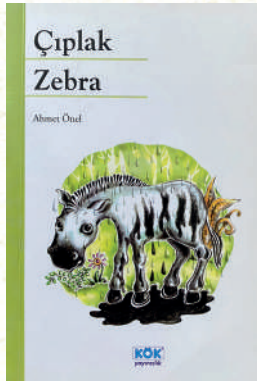
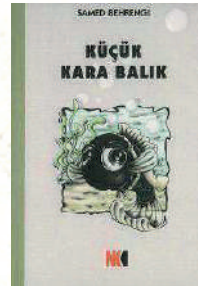
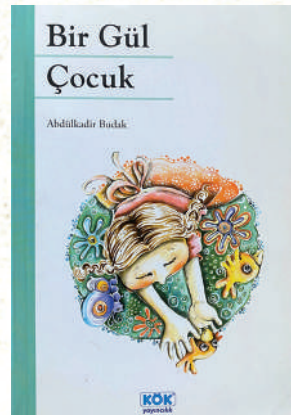
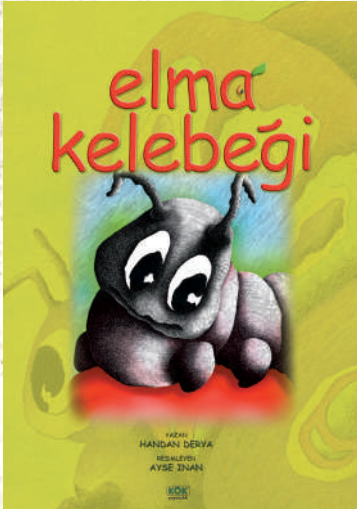
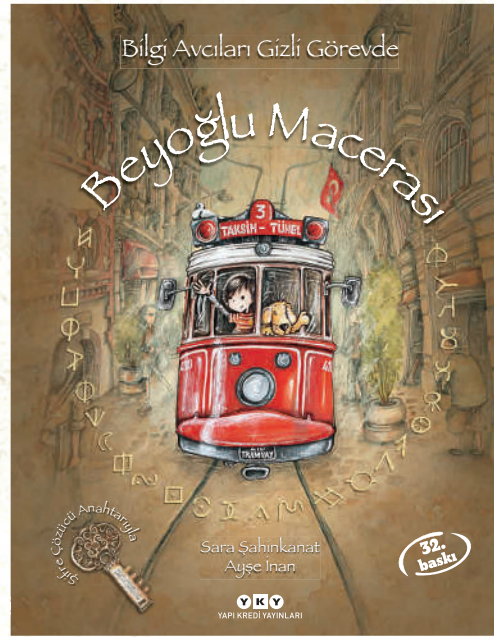
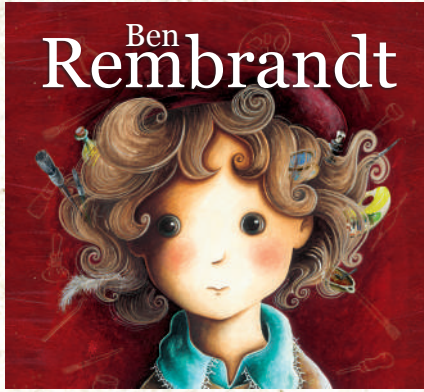
It would be a better choice especially for those who are oriented towards the graphic arts. The main thing is to make an effort with patience and perseverance in the field you love and choose, to follow innovations, to try different materials for technical skills, to master other units that serve their chosen field and to keep their childhood observation skills alive. Your last production is just your effort to make it better than the last one, there is no mastering, you are always a beginner.

Everything you do with love, combined with the effort you put into it, are miracles that come as a coincidence...

I wish to meet Orhan Veli and you again, thank you.







Complete Bibliography

2023

Three Cats', One Tiny

(3 Kedi 1 Minik)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications., İstanbul, Türkiye

2023

The Wind Daddy

(Rüzgar Baba)

Written by Aylin Tekiner, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications, İstanbul, Türkiye

2022

There Will Be A Day, illustrated / poetry book

(Orhan Veli 'Gün Olur')

Written by Orhan Veli, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications, İstanbul, Türkiye

2022

FAO; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Nature Conservation Centre, Türkiye

I'm Learning The Steppes

Teacher's Guide
Student's Activity Book
Animal of the Steppes
Plants of the steppe
Life in the Steppes
Steppes Ecosystem

2021

I Watch the World

(Seyrederim Dünyayı)

Written by Filiz Özdem, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications, İstanbul

2020

The Adventure of the Jungle Dwarves

(Orman Cücelerinin Sergüzeşti)

Written by Nazım Hikmet, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publ., İstanbul

2019

My Father's Blanket

(Babamın Battaniyesi)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications, İstanbul

(Translated to Ukrainian, Persian, Armenian, Macedonian, Qatar, Iran)



2017

At The Palace (The Adventure of the Jungle Dwarves)
(Sarayda)

Written by Nazım Hikmet, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publ., Istanbul

2015

Three Cats', One Monster
(3 Kedi 1 Canavar)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications, Istanbul
(Translated to Macedonian, English, Armenian, Hungarian, Korean, Persian, Russian, Kazakhtan)

2014

Jasmin's Dream
(Yağmur'un Rüyası)

Written by Filiz Özdem, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications, Istanbul
(Translated to English, Macedonian)

2013

My Mother's Bag
(Annemin Çantası)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications, Istanbul
(Translated to Ukrainian, Persian, Armenian, Macedonian, Qatar)

2013

Starting School
(Okula Başlarken)

AÇEV (Mother Child Education Foundation)
Written by Gülçin Alpöge, illustrations by Ayşe İnan, Istanbul

2012

I'm Rembrandt
(Ben Rembrandt)

Written by Sibel Sönmez, Sibel, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Sakıp Sabancı Museum., Istanbul

2012

Three Cats', One Wish
(3 Kedi 1 Dilek)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications, Istanbul
(Translated to Armenian, English, Macedonian, Korean, Persian, Russian, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Marathi, Kazakhtan)





2011

Beyoğlu Adventure
(*Beyoğlu Macerası*)

Written by Sara Şahinkanat, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yapı Kredi Publications, İstanbul
(Translated to English, Persian, Macedonian)

2010

Tales from the Sky to the Earth
(*Yeryüzünden Gökyüzüne Masallar*)

Written by Şule Tankut Jobert, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Kelime Publ., İstanbul

2019-2014

Who is Afraid of the Little Red Riding Hood?
(*Kim Korkar Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız'dan*)

1st print in 2009 Kırçiceği Publications / 1st print in 2014 Yapı Kredi Publ., İstanbul

Written by Sara Şahinkanat, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
(Translated to English, Galician, Macedonian, Persian, Armenian)

2009

Which Voice is Mine?
(*Hangi Ses Benimki?*)

Written by Meral Akay Temizyürek, Meral, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Kök Publications, Ankara/Türkiye

2008

Zebra With No Stripes
(*Çıplak Zebra*)

Written by Ahmet Önel, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Kök Publications, Ankara

2007

A Rose Child
(*Bir Gül Çocuk*)

Written by Abdülkadir Budak, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Kök Publications, Ankara

2006

The Little Black Fish
(*Küçük Kara Balık*)

One Peach and One Thousand Peaches
(*Bir Şeftali Bin Şeftali*)

The Tale of Love Story
(*Sevgi Masalı*)

Tasseled Camel
(*Püsküllü Deve*)

Written by Samed Behrengi, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Nokta Publications, İstanbul



2005

Children's Games Book
(Çocuk Oyunları)

illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality, Eskişehir/Türkiye

2005

My Baby's First Years
(Bebeğimin İlk Yılları)

illustrations by Ayşe İnan
On Agency, Ankara

2004

Read and Grow, Classical Fables
(Okusun da Büyüsün)

illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Yeni Çizgi Publ., Ankara

2002

Apple Butterfly
(Elma Kelebeği)

Written by Handan Derya, illustrations by Ayşe İnan
Kök Publications, Ankara
(Translated to Urdu)

Other Awards & Accolades

ALMA

Astrid Lindren Memorial Award nomination, 2023

Apple Butterfly

Hacettepe University Achievement Award, Ankara/Türkiye, 1995



Other Reviews

There Will Be A Day, illustrated / poetry book
“... Here is an Orhan Veli book that is perfect for introducing children to the poetry of Orhan Veli - and of course, a beautiful visual feast for adults as well. In ‘Gün Olur’ (YKY), edited by Filiz Özdem and accompanied by Ayşe İnan’s paintings that flow like the waters of the Bosphorus, ...

Oksijen Newspaper
Written by Hülya Çelik, İyi ki doğdun ‘pırpırlı’ Şair 15 April 2022

Which Voice is Mine?

“In Which Voice Is Mine, Meral A. Temizyürek depicts meowing humans and roaring cats; in Monsters Are Afraid of Cats, Marjan Satrapi depicts the childhood nightmare of miscommunication through a little girl who steals Grandpa Moon with an entertaining style and attractive visuals.”

İyi Kitap Children and Youth Books Magazine April 2010
Written by İrmak Zileli

“Ege University is bringing the illustrators of the children’s world to a museum.

One of the Bornova Levantine mansions, recently restored as an annex to Ege University’s Museum of Paper and Book Arts, will host the original works of 27 artists who illustrate children’s books.”...

Milliyet Newspaper 13.04.2016

“We protect child innocence. We construct our paintings according to children’s ages and perceptions. Our imagination is vast, our lines sensitive and naive. Our aim is to color children’s lives by introducing them to the aesthetics of visual arts and literature. We thank Ege University for valuing our principles,” he said.”...

Sabit Fikir Periodical 25.04.2016

“The Museum of Illustrated Children’s Books, of which there are many examples internationally, is establishing a similar museum in Izmir. Acknowledging the role of museums in children’s education, Ege University brings together artists who illustrate books for children under the roof of the Museum of Paper and Book Arts, serving children’s culture and elevating the art of illustration.

During the 6th EgeArt Art Days, Ege University Rector Prof. Dr. Candeğer Yılmaz, Nedim Sönmez, founder and director of the Museum of Paper and Book Arts, and Can Göknil, the invited artist of EgeArt Art Days, designed “Painters of the Children’s World” as a section of the museum. EgeArt Art Days paves the way for a valuable project.”...

Edebiyathaber.net 12.04.2016

“The names whose works will take part in the project supporting the art of illustration and children’s literature: Vaghar Aghaei, Ilgım Veryeri Alaca, Ayşe İnan,”...

artfulliving.com 14.04.2016

A feast of stories and legends from the Sky to the Earth...

“I would like to draw attention to the successful illustrations and designs of the book. ‘Stories from the Sky to the Earth’ is a journey for children to discover the fertile soil of legends.”...

Cumhuriyet Newspaper, Book Supplement, 2010
by Mavisel Yener

“I am as optimistic as I can be and I try to reflect this with happy, colorful paintings.” ... Ayşe İnan

Cumhuriyet Newspaper, Book Supplement, 2009
by Aytül Akal-Color Wizard, interview

“There is no mastering, you are always a beginner.” ... Ayşe İnan

Sur Magazine, Our Publishing World, 2012
Interview

Jasmin’s Dream

... “Ayşe İnan, who has already received my ‘Picture Book of the Year’ award, seems to be a candidate for another award with this work.”

Cumhuriyet Newspaper, Book Supplement, 2014
by Mavisel Yener

Interview

[Our Little One, presented by Mustafa Ödkem 1 January 2020](#)





Events

I'm Learning The Steppes

FAO; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Nature Conservation Centre, Türkiye

Ms Ayşe İnan supported the educational activities of the Nature Conservation Centre Foundation in Türkiye. The works were carried out in Şanlıurfa province under a Global Environment Facility (GEF) project entitled as "Conservation and Sustainable Management of Türkiye's Steppe Ecosystems Project" and implemented by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks, General Directorate of Plant Production, and General Directorate of Forestry.

Ms İnan organized drawing and painting sessions with the local school children in 10 different schools. She also supervised the painting of the outside walls of these schools with the participation of students, teachers and volunteers.

She also supported us by illustrating 5 books in the education kits entitled as "I am learning the steppes": FAO; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Nature Conservation Centre, Türkiye

Teacher's Guide
Student's Activity Book
Animal of the Steppes
Plants of the steppe
Life in the Steppes
Steppes Ecosystem

With her support, these educational activities have reached to 2,500 students in Şanlıurfa Province.

Her enthusiasm, expertise and dedication have been valuable assets for our NGO and we are glad to have her unique support in our NGO's work.

Yıldırım Lise, Deputy Director General, Nature Conservation Centre Foundation
<https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/e2ba3107-e1a1-4b2c-b025-e75d15c6a211>







Figure 40: The new *The Road to Gordion* children's game, by Kale-M Illustrators Group, features an overview of Phrygia with mythological narratives and archaeological monuments. Photo courtesy of Ayşe İnan.

<https://www.classics.upenn.edu/news/2024/10/08/october-2024-friends-gordion-newsletter-published>

"It was designed by the Kale-M Illustrators Group, led by Ayşe İnan, and supported by the General Directorate of Libraries and Publications of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, to whom we extend our thanks."...

Prof. Dr. C. Brian Rose





Republic of Türkiye's Ministry of Culture and Tourism The Culture Route Festival

The Culture Route Festival, launched by the Republic of Türkiye's Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 2021, has grown into a major cultural event, expanding to 16 cities in 2024. The General Directorate of Libraries and Publications has played a key role by organizing literary and library-related events, bringing together authors, illustrators, publishers, and academics.

Renowned illustrator Ayşe İnan led a special drawing workshop at Göbeklitepe during the Şanlıurfa Culture Route Festival on May 29, 2024. Children created zigzag books and crane drawings under her guidance, receiving signed copies of her illustrated book *Beyoğlu Adventure: Knowledge Hunters on a Secret Mission*.

At the Ankara Culture Route Festival, Ayşe İnan curated the Gordion Route Exhibition with the Kale-M Illustrators Group, celebrating the ancient city of Gordion, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The exhibition featured works from 11 illustrators, and on September 23, 2024, children participated in the Gordion Route Game and a drawing workshop, receiving illustrated books as gifts.

Additionally, on September 25, 2024, an Illustrator Portfolio Meeting was held at Adnan Ötüken Provincial Public Library, where young illustrators received expert feedback.

Through these events, Ayşe İnan bridges history, nature, and culture, leaving a lasting impact on children's imagination and artistic growth.

Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism
Directorate-General for Libraries and Publications





"MIGRATORY BIRDS & MEMORY"

@bolognachildrensbookfair
#bcbf23

Our journey to our memory of birds takes me back to my childhood, like all of us. It's as the clues to explain what I've been able to do until today are hidden there... a bird's eye view about our childhood memories, which constantly shuttles between the past and the future, its continuity is similar to the cycle of migratory birds, and it is exciting with its aspects giving us a sense of discovery...

Everything that we felt as miraculous in our childhood, beautiful pursuits that expand our time in our souls, are like accommodation areas of migration journeys...

Although every work I do is based on the present and the past, they carry my worries about future...

While drawing, I will try to explain the tides of this emotional turmoil with my illustrations, I will make an original drawing with the sketch phase and acrylic paint, I think I will be a bird in those moments.

I wish to follow the preferences of the birds for the journey to the good, to look with a bird-eyed consciousness, to be brave, free, reckless and adventurous like them...

With the support of Directorate-General for Libraries and Publications



