

IBBY EUROPEAN NEWSLETTER 2009/1

January 2009

1. FOREWORD

Dear IBBY colleagues from the European National Sections,

We would like to present the first European Newsletter with all good wishes for 2009 and we would like to thank all authors of this first issue for their interesting contributions.

The newsletter is an information exchange about ongoing projects and a vehicle to improve communication and collaboration at a regional level. So, please do not hesitate to give detailed information about the work and ongoing projects in your national sections and to announce in advance any event that could be interesting for others.

Our next informal regional meeting will take place during the Bologna Children's Book Fair on Wednesday March 25th, 4 p.m. Detailed information will follow, just reserve the date, if you will be in Bologna and are interested in attending.

With all best wishes,

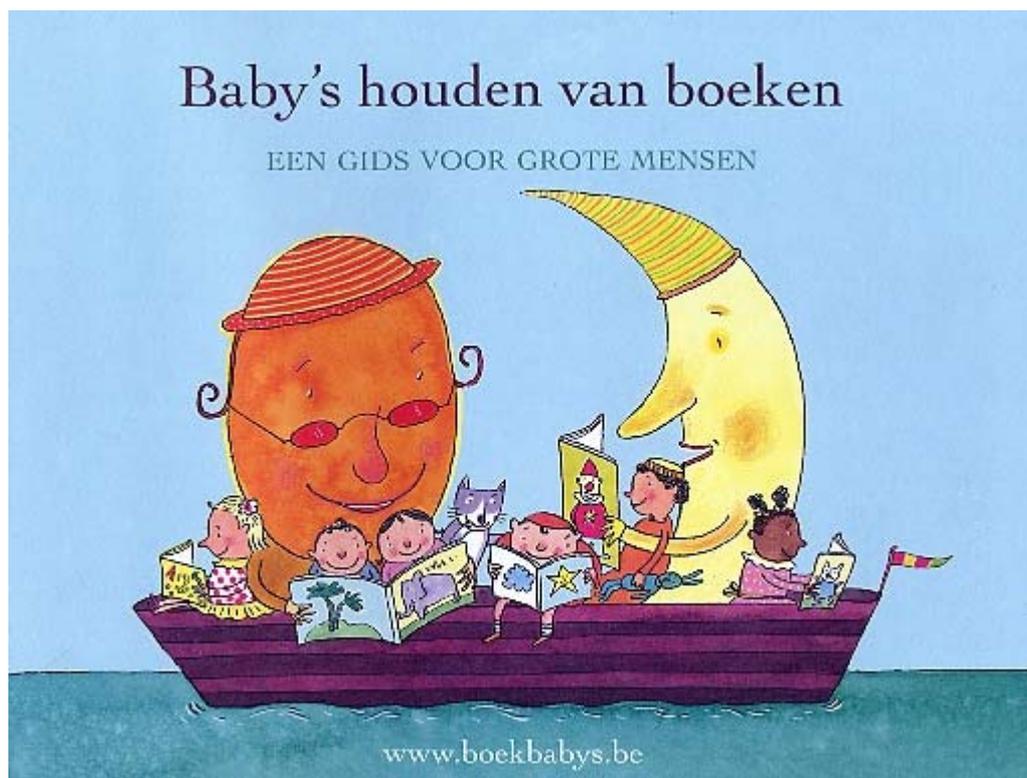
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2. THE START OF A LIFELONG LOVE OF BOOKS

Stichting Lezen (the Reading Foundation) is a non profit organisation, operating in Flanders, Belgium. Stichting Lezen's budget is provided by the Ministry of Culture and its mission is to improve the reading climate in Flanders. To this purpose, the organisation stimulates research on reading and reading promotion, collaborates with national and international partners in cultural, social and educational networks. Best known are Stichting Lezen's reading promotion campaigns for all ages. An important part of Stichting Lezen is the National Centre for Children's Literature, including the Flemish branch of the Belgian IBBY section.



Inspired by Bookstart, a project initiated by Booktrust (England), Stichting Lezen like many other European reading promoters, launched a project for very young children. In Flanders the program is called Boekbaby's (no, this is no miss-spelling). The findings of the British project concerning the influence of early familiarisation with books on the intellectual, social and emotional development of children were so convincing that we did not want to duplicate the British research. So Stichting Lezen decided to map the influence of a book scheme for very young children on the practice of reading aloud in Flemish families.

Quote: 'The importance of 'Boekbaby's' is that it lies at the start of an ongoing line of reading promotion for all ages.'

Therefore, Stichting Lezen set up a two year pilot. The families involved received three free book packs for their babies at age six months, fifteen months and two years. The pack contained a linen bag with two books, a poster, a postcard, a booklist, information on the public library, a 10 Euro book token and a brochure stressing the

importance of an early familiarity with stories, songs and books. The universities of Antwerp and Ghent conducted the research.

Important findings were that the scheme is a strong stimulus to develop a reading culture in families. The families appreciate support concerning books and reading and they even welcome an unusual choice of books. The most important criteria for choosing books proved to be learning and pleasure. And, no surprise, fathers and mothers show a different experience and appreciation of the practice of reading aloud. Fathers tend to be more reluctant at first, but once they become familiar, they 'play' the book, act voices, invent their own stories, and animate the story following freely their own talents and inspiration. As the children grow older and the interaction with the child heightens, the pleasure of all parties involved increases. Finally, we were very pleased to find that librarians just love Boekbaby's. Even if they have to make adjustments to the library floor and develop new means of cataloguing (and cleaning!) unusual types of books, they warmed to the project and to this new 'reading public'.

By now, three years after initiating the pilot, we are happy to work in close collaboration with the national health care centres (Kind en Gezin). With over 350 local offices, they cover the whole of Flanders and reach over 80% of children of all socio-economic groups. At the 6 months health check, all babies receive a full colour brochure, inspired by the Booktrust (England) model, but adapted to the Flemish public and illustrated by the Flemish artist Kristien Aertssen. In a number of health care centres a book corner has been installed with a collection of books provided by Stichting Lezen and renewed at regular intervals by the public library. Thus the families will not be unfamiliar with the service of the public library when the invitation comes to join, when their baby is fifteen months old.

Even if we did not get the financial support to implement the programme in the whole of Flanders, we are happy to see that numerous communities entered the programme drawing the finances from their own budget. Seven communities in the province of East-Flanders decided to join hands and invest together in the Boekbaby's scheme. The province of Brabant added Boekbaby's to a local project providing educational support for parents and professionals. And Antwerp, the biggest city in Flanders, recently decided to offer the Boekbaby's pack to all of the 2000 children that are cared for each year by the city's day care centres.

As for Stichting Lezen, we continue to provide inspiration and materials for all the communities that join in and we continue the research and the full support of the Boekbaby's scheme in the original 9 communities of the pilot.

The importance of Boekbaby's is that it lies at the start of an ongoing line of reading promotion for all ages. For the 3+ years Stichting Lezen organises each year in the third week of November the Reading Aloud Week. All materials, posters, brochures for this program are distributed free of cost in kindergartens, child care centres, in libraries and bookstores. Flanders offers a wide range of books for young readers. Not only books published by Flemish and Dutch publishers are available, but also a vast and interesting selection of the international children's literature. Hence we plan in the scope of the Reading Aloud Week a European collaboration with partners in France and Portugal.



Even though Boekbaby's is still a humble project, we have great ambitions and confidence in the growth of the programme. The Booktrust (England) colleagues had to work for 12 years to convince the government to implement the program nationwide. The generosity of Booktrust at letting us benefit from their experience, translate and adapt their materials and their active and continuing support is wonderful. One idea unites us all, without need of translation: our shared concern to offer all children, whatever their ethnic or social background, maximum chances for development, confidence, love and happiness.

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President of the Flemish branch of IBBY Belgium.

3. BOOKS TO MY NEIGHBOURS

A Project to enhance friendship between Turkish & Greek children through picture books

Last year the Turkish National Section of IBBY extended an invitation to the Greek National Section suggesting cooperation in a project called “**Books to My Neighbour**”. The aim of the project was to enhance the friendship between Turkish and Greek children through children’s books, in line with IBBY’s mission. The target group was 7-8 year old children.

The Greek IBBY responded positively and the project “**Books to My Neighbour**” started in March 2007.



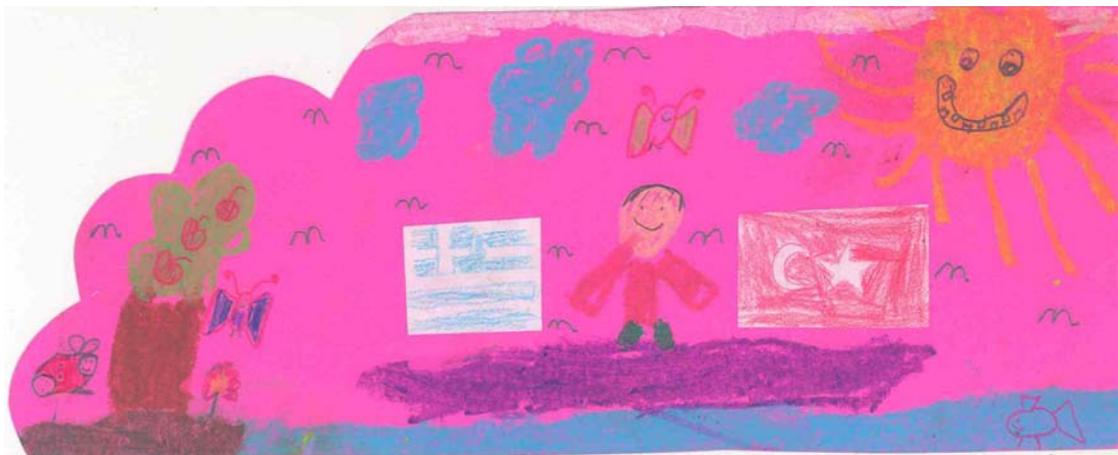
Three IBBY national section members from each country (Lia Karavia, M. Tsiakta, E. Kaliskani from Greece; Ayfer Gürdal Ünal, Serpil Ural, Tülin Sadıkoğlu from Turkey) formed the project teams.

Two picture books from each country (“Watching TV Again, Themis? / Vangelis Iliopoulos” and “Always”/ Maria Papayanni from Greece; “The Magic Kiss / Zeynep Bassa” and “Lazy Keloglan / Gülçin Alpöge from Turkey) were selected and it was decided to have the trilingual picture book “A Bridge of Sea” by Lia Karavia-Serpil Ural as a mutual book in the project (with text in Turkish, Greek, English).

Three schools were picked from three different cities in each country. Each school had a correspondent school in the neighbouring country.

Quote: 'We proved that children's books can be used as a tool for better understanding of the other, thus easing the way for peace in the area.'

Before exchanging them, the selected Turkish picture books were translated into Greek and the Greek books into Turkish so that the children could read them in their own language. A teacher from each school was chosen to implement the project. When the school year began in September 2007 a questionnaire was prepared in order to find out what prejudices, if any, the children had about foreigners and the people of the neighbouring country. Also, to find out what basic knowledge they had about the neighbouring country.



Then the books were read.

The teachers and the children talked about the stories and used them in various activities such as dramatization (they played the parts of the main characters), art work (they did new cover designs for the books), literature (they wrote letters to the characters of the stories) etc. Through all these the children became aware that there were children in the neighbouring country who were both like and unlike themselves. At this point they wanted to find out more about those children and wanted to communicate with them. Letters were exchanged between correspondent schools. Children made gifts for the other children –bookmarks, drawings etc. Each had a message on it. They exchanged photos.



Communication between the children led to the development of knowledge and understanding about the other. They were becoming friends and now the question was whether their ideas about each other had changed. A second questionnaire was prepared by the project team and answered by the children. All questionnaires were evaluated by a professional agency in Istanbul. A significant amount of positive change was evident in the opinions of participants about the children of the neighbouring country.

The Project was completed in June 2008, at the end of the school year. Finally, evaluations by the teachers and the Project Team members of each country were conducted.

We, the members of Turkish National Section of IBBY are happy that we implemented this project in cooperation with the Greek IBBY and proved that children's books can be used as a tool for better understanding of the other, thus easing the way for peace in the area.

One very important point is that this project was done on a voluntary basis, with no financial support. We managed mainly by goodwill among those who put their efforts into it. However, we believe that with financial support the project could be more effective. For example, with support, student exchange could be possible and a book with children's letters and art-work could be published. Furthermore, professional translators could be employed, which is very important since children write letters in their own language and teachers of two different countries communicate with each other. Funds would make it possible for books to be bought from the other country and distributed to each child s participating in the Project, etc.

We now hope that “**Books to My Neighbour**” will be a model for other national sections and they will use picture books to enhance understanding and tolerance. We are ready to share more of our experience with whoever is willing to do a similar

project. In this way a bridge of books can be built among neighbouring countries. Such bridges can go all around the world creating passages to friendship and peace.

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4. ALPHAPRIZE 2008

Alpha Prize 2008 for “Share a Story – Family Literacy”

The Swiss Institute for Children’s and Youth Media SIKJM received the Alpha Prize 2008 awarded by the Swiss Committee Against Illiteracy for the reading promotion programme “Share a Story – Family Literacy”. The Committee Against Illiteracy was established in 1990 by the Swiss UNESCO Commission.

“Share a Story” – the project

Early language promotion and early experiences with stories, books and writing are the essential bases for successful early literacy. The support of the parents is of vital importance. Such experiences are missing from the socio-culture of the families of many foreign-language children, which handicaps them when they start school. A difficult literacy start and a lack of literacy competence is frequently the result.

In the Family Literacy Project, parents with immigrant backgrounds are encouraged to tell stories and read picture books to their children at home. Parents are encouraged to express themselves and tell stories in their family’s language. When children are able to express themselves in their first language, it is easier to acquire the second language of German. The reading promotion is taught by cultural mediators and teachers “Heimatliche Sprache und Kultur” (Native Language and Culture) and is developed by SIKJM.

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5. IBBY NORWAY

We are interested in reading about any type of projects that concerns children's literature, such as promotion of children's literature and reading. These projects can be national projects as well as projects that cross borders. Furthermore, we are interested in reading about children's literature reviews – books, talented new authors as well as new publications from established authors. Finally, we would like to be involved in forthcoming IBBY conferences.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Seminars

Each autumn, IBBY Norway arranges seminars on literature for children and young people in more than 25 cities all over the country. The seminars deal with this year's new titles and give a well presented summary of new books. The seminar structure is divided into three parts: picture books, children's books and finally, books for young adults. The lecturers have different backgrounds: they can be illustrators, librarians, literary critics, etc. These seminars are open for the public and everyone is welcome. In conjunction with the seminars, there are book exhibitions and occasionally speeches by local authors. These seminars are regarded as our main activity and are popular among teachers, librarians, publishers and other people interested in children's literature.

2. «Norsk Barnebokforum»

IBBY Norway publishes a quarterly membership magazine with information about our seminars, reviews of current books and other news. The magazine is called «Norsk Barnebokforum». Everyone is welcome to contribute to the magazine, and we appreciate different kind of articles about forthcoming projects, books that present different kind of topics, etc.



(Illustration: Jan-Kåre Øien)

3. **Askeladden**

IBBY NORWAY has its own prize, called Askeladden, instituted in 1981 on the occasion of our 25th anniversary. This prize can be awarded to authors, illustrators, critics, scholars or institutions, for efforts in promoting literature for children. The prize is an original drawing by a Norwegian illustrator.

4. **IBBY Documentation Centre with books about and for children with disability**

The Documentation Centre was established in 1985 and is located at the library at Haug Municipal Resource Centre for Young People with Disabilities. Librarian Heidi Cortner Boiesen is now the leader of the Documentation Centre.

The aim is to promote production, research, promotion and use of books suited to people with disabilities. Main users are children and youth, parents, organisations, scientists, teachers, librarians, publishers, authors, illustrators, politicians and media. The Documentation Centre can offer different kinds of books, such as ordinary picture books especially fit for children and young people with a language handicap, or simple easy-to-read books in different languages, rhymes and jingles, and books produced especially for specific groups of children with disabilities. Every second year, the Documentation Centre publishes a catalogue called “Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities”, which is presented in Bologna.

This year, IBBY Norway arranged a post congress seminar in Norway at The



Documentation Centre.

(From the post congress: author Anette Diesen and Editor Else Krogh-Hansen at Solum Publishers)

5. **Picture Books from Norway**

Finally, IBBY Norway would like to promote Norwegian picture books. In recent years, we have had several unique releases which combine brilliant illustrations with meaningful texts. We would like to see more of these books being translated into different languages. There are many examples of



innovative books from both authors and illustrators, and these books are in every respect competitive to other picture books from Scandinavia as well as Europe.

(illustration: from the picture book “Garmanns sommer” by Stian Hole – winner of the Bologna Ragazzi Award, 2007)

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6. TWO EUROPEANS RECEIVE THE HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARDS 2008

At the first evening of the World Congress of IBBY in Copenhagen in the presence of H.M. Queen Margrethe of Denmark the Andersen Awards 2008 were presented to two Europeans: the Swiss author Jürg Schubiger and the Italian illustrator Roberto Innocenti. We are very proud to publish exclusively the laudatio speech of jury president Zohreh Ghaeni in our first European IBBY-Newsletter.

‘As the president of the 2008 Hans Christian Andersen Award Jury and as someone who comes from the ancient country of Iran, the country of old stories and fables, today I am very proud to be here in Denmark, the birthplace of one of the world’s greatest storytellers, H. C. Andersen. It is wonderful that this year’s winners, Jürg Schubiger and Roberto Innocenti, are here today to receive their prizes in person. Introducing two of the most distinguished artists in children’s literature with just a few words is difficult. But, I will try to convey the jury’s passion and feelings about the merits and advantages of these two artists’ achievements. The 2008 winners’ works are responses to modern children’s and adolescents’ needs, not only for developing aesthetic knowledge, but for developing the insight to cope with their problems and the difficulties of our world. Schubiger’s stories are stories for thinking. His stories are very simple and about very ordinary things and happenings. Sometimes they seem too simple. But children can find answers to their questions about life in these deceptively simple stories. Schubiger says: "I retell the stories of adults’ childhoods."



Quote: ‘Schubiger’s stories are stories for thinking.’

The blend of fantasy and philosophy is something that Schubiger employs to push children to look at life around them carefully and think. He conveys that there is a purpose behind the creation of everything, and everything in the world will be useful one day. He believes that we could have a relationship with everything around us in our world – one that is not necessarily a verbal connection. In spite of their differences, all creatures on earth need each other and this need for one another gives life its meaning. (...)

Schubiger's stories come from the world of children, the things that most of us experienced when we were children.

Schubiger is a weaver, the weaver of story carpets. He says:

“I mostly do not conceive my ideas through the content only, but also from the ‘weaving pattern’. What I am interested in is the structure, the repetition, intensification, inversions: forms frequently found in fairytales.”

This year's illustration winner also weaves stories for our children, but he tells his tales in visual language. Roberto Innocenti's works reveal his poetic genius.



For him the structure of a story is something beyond the ordinary main characters, events and actions. His stories include the entire world in which the events occur. All creatures and things, landscapes and buildings, children and adults, women and men, even dogs passing by or birds flying over yards or streets, play a role in the world of Innocenti's stories. His point of view always tends to be panoramic, like a long film shot. Like a filmmaker, he changes the angle of his camera continuously. Swinging from up to down and down to up, left to right and right to left in detailed scenes, he makes a path to the heart of the story. He encourages children to discover new perspectives in the visual world of stories. And because of this, the readers of his stories can feel every feeling in every scene; they can touch the fabric in the clothes people wear, the trunks, branches and leaves of trees and the feathers of birds. They can hear all the voices in every scene: the barking of dogs, the whistle of the wind and the silence of a snowy day in a village. In his stories Innocenti shares all human feelings with children.

Quote: 'Like a filmmaker, he changes the angle of his camera continuously.'

Innocenti encourages his readers to see how far they have come and make sense of this journey. In "*Rosa Bianca*" and "*The Story of Erika*", he relates the stories of World War II, in which millions of innocent people lost their lives. With just a few illustrations, in "*The Story of Erika*" Innocenti forces his reader to be a witness to the tragedy of history. He shows a train loaded with women, men and children being transferred to the concentration camps. He doesn't try to speak in length or in detail. He's illustrated an empty cradle left behind a train, a baby wrapped in cloth thrown out of a train's window and a little girl who is standing in a colourful garden watching a train pass by. The contrast between the black and white illustrations and those in colour illuminates the importance of preserving peace as a valuable treasure in human being's life.

Jürg Schubiger and Roberto Innocenti have made a lasting contribution to literature for children and young people by using their art to compel them to fantasize, think and question.

The stories of this writer and artist inspire young people to respect peace, tolerance and humanity and to be proud of having empathy with people of all cultures and all ages.

Mr. Shubiger, Mr Innocenti, children and young adults today and tomorrow owe a debt of gratitude to you and your vision. Please accept our deepest respect and admiration for all you have done for the children of the world.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to this year's jury, the 10 distinguished experts who are the representatives of the children's literature of the world. They spent more than 8 months studying the books and dossiers of 30 authors and 30 illustrators who were nominated from 35 countries. Alicia Salvi, Annemie Leysen, Francine Sarrasin, Nadia El Kholy, Isabelle Nières Chevrel, Bill Nagelkerke, Nataliya Avgustinovich, María Jesús Gil, Helene Schär and Junko Yokota, on behalf of IBBY I thank you for your devotion to your duties and your dedication to taking on this enormous job accurately and without any prejudice.

Now, it is an honour to invite the patron of the Hans Christian Andersen award, her majesty the Queen of Denmark, to present the 2008 medals to this year's winners.'

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Watch the Youtube Acceptance speeches of the HC Andersen Award 2008 winners:

Acceptance speech of Hans Christian Andersen Award, illustrator Roberto Innocenti, September 7, 2008 The Glass hall, Tivoli Garden, Copenhagen, Opening IBBY World Congress: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rep3e2_nGoM

Acceptance Hans Christian Andersen Award, author Jürg Schubiger, September 7, 2008 The Glass hall, Tivoli Garden, Copenhagen, Opening IBBY World Congress : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdPTWxzPDn4>

7. OUR FIVE EUROPEAN EC-MEMBERS

REINA DUARTE

Reina Duarte (Barcelona, Spain) was elected to the EC at the 31st IBBY General Assembly in Copenhagen, Denmark and serves as Vice President 2008-2010, after serving as a member of the EC from 2006-2008.

After finishing her studies in Hispanic Languages and Literature at the Central University in Barcelona, Reina Duarte (1964) began working for various publishing houses and the Carmen Balcells Literary Agency. For the past fifteen years she has worked at Edebe, a publishing house with branches throughout Spain as well as in Latin America. (...)

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ANASTASIA ARKHIPOVA

Anastasia Arkhipova (Moscow, Russia) was elected at the 31st IBBY General Assembly to serve as an EC member 2008-2010. She previously served as a member of the 2006-2008 EC.

Born in 1955, she graduated from the Moscow Surikov Academy of Fine Arts in 1978. She began working for the publishing house Detskaya Literatura, illustrating many classical and modern children's books. She has had her works exhibited in several countries, and contributed to a UNICEF project, where various artists illustrated a book about children's rights, published in 1989. (...)

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HANNELORE DAUBERT

Hannelore Daubert (Frankfurt, Germany) was elected at the 31st IBBY General Assembly to serve as an EC member 2008-2010. She previously served as a member of the 2006-2008 EC.

She is currently a lecturer of children's literature and didactics at the Institute of Research in Youth Literature at Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt, with emphasis on contemporary children's and adolescent literature, reading promotion projects and research into young reader's interests. (...)

Between 2000 and 2006 Hannelore Daubert served as President of the Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur, which is the German Section of IBBY.

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WALLY DE DONCKER

Wally de Doncker (Hamme, Belgium) was elected at the 31st IBBY General Assembly to serve as an EC member 2008-2010.

Children's literature is deeply tied to his professional and personal life. He began his career as a teacher in 1979, and for the last six years he has served as a special teacher of children's literature. As a writer he tries to react to the behaviour of people around him. Several of his books have been adapted for stage, musical, animation and dance movies; several have been translated into different languages. (...)

Since 2004 he is a member of the editorial board of the American critical journal of children's literature *The Lion and the Unicorn*.

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NIKKI GAMBLE

Nikki Gamble (Braintree, UK) was elected at the 31st IBBY General Assembly to serve as an EC member 2008-2010.

Nikki Gamble has worked in education and reading promotion for over 25 years. Formerly a teacher (secondary and primary) and teacher educator, she is lecturer, writer and education consultant. Following the completion of an MA in Language and Literature in Education at the University of London, Nikki taught literacy and children's literature courses to undergraduate and postgraduate students. She is currently Associate Consultant at the University of London, Institute of Education, Director of Write Away UK and runs the Write Away website www.writeaway.org.uk

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INFO:

More information about the Executive Committee:

http://www.ibby.org/index.php?id=executive_comitee&L=2%5C%5C%27andchar%28124%29userchar%28124%29%3D0and%5C%5C%27%5C%5C%27%3D

More information about the president:

<http://www.ibby.org/index.php?id=thepresident&L=2%2F%27andchar%28124%29userchar%28124%29%3D0and%2F%27%2F%27%3D>

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**EUROPEAN REGIONAL MEETING
BOLOGNA BOOK FAIR:
Wednesday March 25th, 4 p.m.**

Compilers of this issue: Hannelore Daubert and Wally De Doncker

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Final Editing: Nikki Gamble

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