Schedule with Abstracts and Biographical Statements

KN: Keynote

RT: Roundtable (configured by delegates in response to the call for papers)

PD: Delegate-configured panel

PP: Panel Session (configured by organizers from oral-presentation responses to the call for papers)

WS: Workshop

Thursday, 6 August
11:00-12:00

KN 01 Keynote Speaker
Sydney Smith, Sharing Stories: The Power of Picture Books to Transcend
Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200
IBBY Moderator: Fred Horler (IBBY Canada)

Author and illustrator, Sydney Smith discusses the power and potential of books to connect readers, engage empathy, and explore complicated emotions. The seemingly simple medium involving the aggregation of text and image is greater than its parts. It has the ability to address the human experience, peer into the sublime and, through awe, inspire generosity and an empathetic perspective on the world we share. Picture books, at their core, speak both to a wide audience and to the individual. It is an intrinsic element of the parent/child bond and reflects the human experience that connects all readers from young to old regardless of potential demographic and cultural divides.

Sydney Smith's picture books have received wide critical acclaim in Canada and abroad, having been translated into more than 20 languages and garnered many honours. He has twice won the Governor General's Literary Award for Young People's Literature—Illustrated Books: *Sidewalk Flowers* in 2015 and *Small in the City* in 2019. Four thousand copies of the former title were distributed to Syrian refugee families in Canada through a special project with IBBY Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage. In 2024, Sydney won the Hans Christian Andersen Award for Illustration—the first time a Canadian has won the prestigious prize in its nearly 70-year history. He lives in Halifax**.**

Thursday, 6 August
2:00-3:30 PM

PP 01 Panel: Disability Imagination and Inclusive Communities
Nicol Building 3020
IBBY Moderator: Leigh Turina (IBBY Congress Scientific Committee)

Kelly Fritsch (Carleton University, Canada) and Anne McGuire (University of Toronto, Canada), Moving Together: Fostering Disability Cultures of Access and Justice in Children's Literature

This presentation draws on a critical content analysis (CCA) of over 100 English-language children's picture books published between 2000 and 2025 that portray disabled characters, lives, cultures, and experiences. CCA is a qualitative method that situates text interpretation within its social, cultural, and political context (Short 2017), locating "power in social practices in order to challenge conditions of inequity" (Short 2017, 1). Grounded in critical disability studies (Goodley et al. 2019), our study examines the persistence of ableist tropes that frame disability as tragedy, inspiration, or individual defect—narrative patterns that restrict how children and adults imagine disabled life (Aho and Grit 2018). Alongside these, we identify a growing body of books that resist and rework such conventions, offering vibrant representations of disability as a site of creativity, collective access, interdependence, and joy. These works do more than tell different stories—they invite readers into disability cultures of access and justice that reimagine belonging itself (McGuire, Fritsch, and Trejos 2024). By tracing how these books unsettle dominant storylines and generate new ones, we argue that contemporary children's literature is emerging as a crucial space for cultivating disability imagination and for envisioning worlds where disabled people and communities can flourish.

Kelly Fritsch is Canada Research Chair in Disability, Health, and Social Justice and associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University. She is co-author, with Anne McGuire, of *Broken Worlds, Disabled Kin: Strategies for Collective Survival,* as well as *We Move Together,* an award-winning children's book about ableism, accessibility, and disability culture. Fritsch is also co-editor of *Disability Injustice: Confronting Criminalization in Canada* and *Keywords for Radicals: The Contested Vocabulary of Late-Capitalist Struggle*. Fritsch serves as co-editor of the UBC Press Disability Culture and Politics Series and sits on the editorial board of Disability Studies Quarterly.

Anne McGuire is associate professor in critical disability studies and director of the program for Critical Studies in Equity and Solidarity at the University of Toronto. Her research interests include disability studies, queer/crip theory, child studies, politics of

health, social justice education, feminist science and technology studies and theories of anti-racism, colonialism and governmentality. She is co-author, with Kelly Fritsch, of *We Move Together* and *Broken Worlds, Disabled Kin: Strategies for Collective Survival,* and author of *War on Autism: On the Cultural Logic of Normative Violence,* which was awarded the Tobin Siebers prize for Disability Studies in the Humanities.

Amanda Niland (University of Sydney, Australia), Imaginatively Inclusive: Issues in Representations of Disability and Literary Quality in Picture Books

This paper shares ongoing research exploring portrayals of disability in picturebooks for young children. The project is informed by a view of literacy as a social and cultural process of meaning-making. Young children are seen as active meaning-makers who have a right to quality children's literature that values all forms of human diversity, including disability. The paper presents phase one – a content analysis of the inclusivity and literary qualities of relevant picturebooks from Australia and the UK.

The project's aim, building on existing research, is to present new possibilities for evaluating both inclusivity and literary qualities in picturebooks that portray disability, so that they honour the rights of all young children as readers. Its findings can inform educators, librarians, publishers, authors, illustrators and literacy and disability advocates. The research explores the question: *Which picturebooks, recommended as inclusive, reflect both inclusive values and literary quality and are likely to imaginatively engage young children of all abilities and ways of being?*

Phase one began with identifying picturebooks portraying disability published in Australia and the United Kingdom in the past decade that are recommended as inclusive by literacy, book or disability advocacy organisations. The analytical framework used for content analysis combines an adaptation of the Strong Stories Framework (Hayden & Prince, 2024) with added criteria related specifically to elements of literary quality. Findings indicate that many picturebooks recommended as inclusive actually do not meet all criteria for inclusivity or literary quality.

Amanda Niland is a Senior Lecturer in early childhood at the University of Sydney and Program Director of the Master of Teaching Early Childhood. She has extensive experience as an early childhood and early intervention teacher and music specialist. She is passionate about children's literature and the arts, and the value of stories, books and music for supporting a sense of belonging for all children. Her research focuses on creativity, the arts and inclusion, and children's literature. She has published peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, monographs and books for educators as well as two picture books for young children.

Shiqin Chen (Shenzhen University, China), Learning Disability, Representation, and Culture in Henry Winkler's *Hank Zipzer* **and Hongying Yang's Mo's** *Mischief*

Recently, stories featuring child protagonists with learning disabilities have become a global phenomenon. Adopting a cross-cultural comparative approach, this essay examines how children with learning disabilities are represented in Henry Winkler's *Hank Zipzer: The World's Greatest Underachiever* series and Hongying Yang's Mo's *Mischief* series. It argues that, despite both featuring a mischievous boy's adventures in a humorous manner, the semi-biographical Hank Zipzer series presents Hank as a boy with dyslexia who struggles to overcome his difficulties with reading and writing at school in a realistic way, asserting his learning difference from others, whereas Mo's Mischief attempts to portray Mo as an ideal child, rebelling against the overemphasis on obedience in children in Chinese culture. While the Hank Zipzer series depicts Hank's parents with flaws, Mo's Mischief tends to idealize his father and mother who are unconditionally supportive of their mischievous son. Differences in educational philosophies and cultural values play a significant role in the construction of the children with learning disabilities and their families in the two works. But they share a questioning of standardized, rigid criteria for assessing a child's school performance and determining their potential, and they champion more diverse and inclusive assessment standards. When school environments and their criteria change, children with learning differences will no longer be labeled "underachievers."

Shiqin Chen is an associate professor at the English department of Shenzhen University. Her research interest includes children's and young adult literature and women's writing. She has published research articles in both English and Chinese journals, including *Philosophy and Literature*, *Neohelicon*, *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, and *Foreign Literature*.

Teresa Antony (Chetana Trust, India), Co-Designing Inclusive and Tactile Storybooks for Children in India

Access to engaging storybooks remains limited for many children in India, particularly those with print disabilities. Existing formats such as audiobooks or braille-only texts offer a passive, one-dimensional reading experience, restricting opportunities for multisensory engagement that are essential to early literacy, imagination, and emotional development.

At Chetana Trust, through the ARM (Accessible Reading Materials) Library, we have spent nearly a decade handcrafting tactile books for children with visual impairments. While these books are effective learning tools, they are resource-intensive and cannot meet the scale of demand. Through a recent project, we explored whether inclusive, tactile picture books could be aesthetically appealing, affordable, and suitable for wider production. The process involved multiple rounds of co-designing and testing with children and adults with and without visual impairment, accessibility experts, educators, and print specialists. Their feedback informed improvements in tactile design, braille readability, visual contrast, and layout coherence. Evaluation with children with blindness, low vision, and their sighted peers demonstrated high engagement, comprehension, and mutual enjoyment,

underscoring the potential of inclusive books to foster shared reading experiences and the development of empathy.

This work is rooted in the belief that reading is a matter of social justice and a fundamental right of every child. By co-creating imagery with children with disabilities and reimagining early literacy and library environments, the project demonstrates how listening to diverse readers' voices can transform books and libraries into inclusive, shared spaces of empathy and participation—embodying the IBBY 2026 Congress theme "Listening to Each Other's Voices."

Teresa Antony is the Lead: Inclusive Design at Chetana Trust. Her work ranges from developing and organising awareness workshops for adults and children, training programs for professionals, accessible play and reading events, activities for children and managing the complex elements of running accessible library services for the children of Chennai. Her great passion is creating accessible children's story books. Her background in Visual Arts and Design, combined with her training on designing access solutions using technology and learning scripts such as Braille, pushed her to innovate and create internationally awarded inclusive storybooks. For the past five years, she has worked alongside children and adults with and without disabilities to spread awareness about the importance of accessible imagery in children's stories. She mentors individuals wanting to explore, create or use accessible story books. A recipient of both National and International awards, she continues to develop innovative new solutions so that learning and creation are available to all.

Ariana Ferrone (Toronto Public Library, Canada), Disability and Change: A Retrospective Examination of Toronto Public Library's IBBY Collection
Housed at Toronto Public Library, the IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities is an international repository of children's and young adult books that highlights the lived experiences of young people with disabilities. Since 1985, IBBY has documented, collected, and celebrated books for and about young people with disabilities, capturing snapshots of society's shifting views of disabled people over the years. Examining the IBBY collection's growth provides insight into when and where important advances were made in the global disability justice sphere and how those shifts are represented in children's literature. Although more disabled authors have contributed to the collection over time, older items depict disabled people in a way that, once considered progressive, is now considered ableist. Throughout the years, we can see how new perspectives were introduced in the collection as disability activism paved new paths for disabled people. The IBBY collection currently includes representation for physical, intellectual, developmental and sensory disabilities, neurodivergence, mental and chronic illnesses, invisible disabilities, and d/Deaf culture. This session showcases the varied materials of the IBBY collection, tracks collection developments over forty years, and explores how key items align with important moments for disability justice around the globe. After attending this panel, participants will understand how the evolution of the IBBY collection

exemplifies the ways advancements in disability justice have been reflected in children's literature. They will learn how disability-related language has shifted and how the definition of disability has expanded to include a wider range of lived experiences, and why it matters.

Ariana Ferrone (she/her) has over twelve years of experience in public and school libraries, as well as lived experience as a person with a disability. She has a Master of Library and Information Science from Western University. She is a Senior Services Specialist, Children's Services, at Toronto Public Library with a portfolio centered on enhancing Accessibility Services and EDI Initiatives for children and families. She also leads work to support the IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities. Her career has focused on exploring disability and accessibility in libraries, specifically through the lens of children's services.

RT 01 Roundtable: Reading the Trends and Development of 21st-Century Children's Literature through Global Voices in *Bookbird*
Nicol Building 3030
IBBY Moderator: Mary Beth Leatherdale (IBBY Congress Picnic & Parade Committee)

Chair: Valerie Coghlan (Bookbird, Inc.)
Panelists: Evelyn B. Freeman (The Ohio State University, USA), Chrysogonus Malilang (Malmö University, Sweden), and Björn Sundmark (Malmö University, Sweden)

Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature has been published continuously since 1963. Since its establishment by Jella Lepman, the founder of IBBY, it has provided an international stage for scholars and activists to present and discuss theories and trends in literature for children and young adults.

At the conclusion of the first quarter of the 21st century, the Board of Bookbird, Inc. offers a view of many aspects of developments in the world of books for young readers during the past 25 years. These are years which have seen many changes in the world, politically, technologically, socially, and more. Much of this is reflected in what is written, illustrated and published for young people and has the potential to inform how books shape the way in which they view the world.

This roundtable presentation features three previous editors and the current editor of *Bookbird*, Evelyn Freeman (2001–2004), Björn Sundmark (2015–2018), and Chrysogonus Malilang (2023–2026), and will be moderated by a previous editor, Valerie Coghlan (2005–2009). The editors will discuss the challenges and opportunities they encountered while editing the journal as well as the trends and changes which shaped past and current discourses in international children's and young adult literature.

Valerie Coghlan is a former editor of *Bookbird* and is currently President of the Board of Bookbird, Inc. She is an independent researcher with a particular interest in visual narratives, Irish children's literature, and the history of children's books. A founder member of IBBY Ireland and Children's Books Ireland, she has also served on the board of the International Research Society for Children's Literature.

Evelyn B. Freeman is professor emerita at The Ohio State University where she taught courses in children's literature and language arts, prepared elementary teachers, and worked with graduate students. She has served as co-editor of the *Journal of Children's Literature* and *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature*. She has co-authored six books on topics related to children's literature, numerous book chapters and journal articles. She served as Vice-President of the International Board on Books for Young People and President of the United States Board on Books for Young People. She currently is secretary of the Bookbird, Inc. Board.

Chrysogonus Malilang is an associate professor of English and education at Linnaeus University and Malmö University, where he teaches children's literature and creative writing, His current research interests lie in play and children's literature.

Björn Sundmark is Professor of English literature at Malmö University (Sweden). He has published extensively on children's literature and is the author of the study *Alice in the Oral-Literary Continuum*. He is, moreover, the editor and co-editor of several essay collections, including *Translating and Transmediating Children's Literature*, *The Nation in Children's Literature*, *Child Autonomy and Child Governance in Children's Literature: Where Children Rule*, and *Silence and Silencing in Children's Literature*. Sundmark was the editor of *Bookbird* 2014-2018 and is a member of the ALMA-jury.

RT 02 Roundtable: Hear the Future: Listening to Young Voices to Reimagine Children's Media for a Sustainable World

Richcraft Hall 2228
IBBY Moderator: Basarat Kazim (IBBY International)

Chair: Arlene Perly Rae (Library and Archives Canada Foundation., Canada)
Panelists: Jan Beaver (Anishinaabe Elder, Canada), Lisa M. Lyons Johnston (Global Publishing Consultant, Canada), and Annabel Slaight (ClearWater Futures Foundation, Canada)

Children today face immense and rapidly evolving challenges, making meaningful media more vital than ever. From books to augmented reality, storytelling helps young people shape identity, imagine hopeful futures, and build confidence. Yet the children's media ecosystem is under pressure—from restrictions on educational content to the unraveling of traditional TV and climate-related disruptions to schooling. This roundtable calls for moving beyond crisis narratives toward recognizing the urgent need for authentic storytelling, diverse voices, and innovative projects that empower the next generation.

Our roundtable will explore why children's media is uniquely positioned to inspire agency and resilience, highlighting examples such as *Future Chicken*, a climate-literacy animated series, and grassroots media and book initiatives spanning Pakistan to Canada and beyond. Together, we will consider how humour, creativity, and global distribution channels can ease eco-anxiety and promote a broader worldview through championing cross-cultural storytelling, helping children feel less alone as they navigate an uncertain world.

This session invites participants into active discussion about collaboration across sectors—including educators, publishers, producers, policymakers, and philanthropy—to advance literacy, sustainability, and children's well-being.

Drawing on decades of Canadian children's media experience and innovative grassroots work in Pakistan and globally, this roundtable underscores the importance of global cooperation and aligns with initiatives such as the United Nations SDG Book Clubs. Rooted in a perspective inspired by water, it calls IBBY members to work boldly and creatively to amplify and accelerate efforts on behalf of children everywhere.

Bringing together decades of leadership in children's media, literacy, education, and global storytelling, this distinguished panel embodies the spirit of *Hear the Future: Listening to Young Voices to Reimagine Children's Media for a Sustainable World*. Moderator Arlene Perly Rae's lifelong advocacy for literacy anchors a conversation enriched by Jan Beaver's Indigenous storytelling expertise, Lisa Lyons Johnston's innovative media and publishing work, and Annabel Slaight's pioneering environmental children's media. Together, they champion creative, cross-cultural media that empowers young people worldwide.

Arlene Perly Rae holds an Honorary BA in English and Philosophy and a Master's in Drama from the University of Toronto. A long-time United Way Board member, she founded its Success by Six program. She has served on numerous arts and literacy boards, co-chaired housing projects for women, and helped raise $15 million for the YWCA Elm Centre. A former *Toronto Star* children's book reviewer, she wrote *Everybody's Favourites* and adapted operas for the Royal Conservatory. She has been active in literacy, mental health, and human rights advocacy and enjoys theatre, sports, and grand-mothering.

Jan Beaver is a member of the Alderville First Nation (Anishinaabe) and has dedicated much of her life sharing the history, traditions and cultures of First Nation peoples. She is a storyteller, educational consultant and author of several children's graphic novels and history books for secondary students focussed on Indigenous themes. Over the years, she has been a Water Scientist with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, a classroom teacher then an outdoor education teacher with the Toronto District School Board. Finally, she took on the role of Senior Education Advisor for Ogemawahj Tribal Council in Rama.

Lisa M. Lyons Johnston is an accomplished senior executive with three decades of global experience in the creative industries, spanning traditional and digital media, music,

publishing, and television content distribution. As President and Publisher of Kids Can Press for 15 years, Lisa guided the award-winning Canadian publisher into new markets and formats, including ebooks and audiobooks. Her digital media expertise includes launching Canada's first kids' video-on-demand subscription service, overseeing Max Trax Digital Music, and leading groundbreaking content initiatives across emerging platforms. She is an acclaimed leader recognized for major awards, global industry representation, board service, and influential roles in women's leadership.

Annabel Slaight is a Canadian media pioneer and Order of Canada recipient who co-founded *OWL*, *Chickadee*, Chirp, OWLTV and books devoted to helping children love and care for the planet, reaching over 60 million families. As founder of ClearWater Futures Foundation, she created the Future Chicken concept with children at the ClearWater Farm learning lab and established a research partnership with Trent University on children's climate-action media. She was founding Chair of the Shaw Rocket Fund, investing over $220 million in children's screen-based media.

PP 02 Panel: Inclusive Classrooms and Libraries: Best Practices

Nicol Building 4030

IBBY Moderator: Colette Poitras (IBBY Canada)

Linda Lou Classens (Walpole Island First Nation, Canada), How Does She Do It? The Indigenous Librarian: Understanding and Utilizing the Power of Storytelling

Many researchers and Indigenous storytellers have aided my journey as a First Nation Librarian storyteller, among whom I first honour my Father and Mother. They grew my love of stories, books, writing and speaking. In a time of scarcity, they bought the books through which I travelled the world seeking knowledge of people and places. I refined my skills of sharing stories, and I strove to ignite an appreciation of other cultures and the places where stories originate. Additionally, my lived experience growing up on a First Nation reservation has given me a certain wisdom and love of the land.

Sharing picture books and storytelling engages young audiences. Children unconsciously assume the rhythm of stories and see, feel, hear, taste and touch the worlds that stories carry them. Engaging with characters and sharing their emotions creates a path to understanding new things or that path is widened as knowledge grows.

Storytelling involves deeply sharing with students where age and class dynamics may vary; what doesn't vary is the power of the connection between storyteller and audience. Our voice must captivate; the cadence of words and sounds, the dramatically loud to the soft whisper, the pause, speed, tone accompanied by facial expression and body language are the natural amplifiers of our shared stories. Storytelling must fill a need, a gap. What is it? What will I share? How will this support the curriculum and be an engaging interaction? Will students see themselves in the story? Therefore, my

storytelling bag holds numerous books, artifacts – the props that students can touch, wonder about. Curiosity and imagination must be piqued. Extension activities, perhaps a painting, a puppet, any prop whereby students can retell the story or legend are provided. Listeners' rapt attention tells me that authentic communication and learning is happening.

I co-host the weekly Library Hour on our local radio station. I mentor a young man in the art of storytelling and, while sharing a book live, we discovered that he has a 'radio voice'. I collaborate with our local school with literacy and writing initiatives. However, our Library reaches across the age divide with programs for Seniors and Elders, youth, and very young children. Programs include Coffee Houses, Genealogy nights, Tea Party & Bingos, seasonal crafts, family movie nights, scrapbooking, with new ideas constantly blooming. An exciting new program: Anishinaabe Garden and Fruit Tree/berry bush initiative soon to be planted here at Bkejwanong Library. Community partners joined in with hopes of expanding the program across the First Nation. We are resurrecting the Old Ways. Way back, everyone had a large garden and everyone shared. Soon a newly-created food forest will have benches where our stories will be shared. Just like the Old Days.

Linda Lou Classens (B.Ed, M.Ed), First Nation Librarian, loves children's literature, especially, Indigenous children's literature which she shares in schools and libraries. Her joy is transporting children to other worlds through storytelling. Her parents, residential school survivors, nourished a love of books and stories from the land. A mother and grandmother, she, in turn, passes on this legacy. She taught on First Nations in Manitoba, British Columbia, and Ontario; she is a member of National Creative Committee which plans the TD Summer Reading Program. Family, writing, gardening, and planning mini-orchards create her happy place.

Elena Perikleous (Commissioner for the Protection of Children's Rights, IBBY Cyprus), Reading Routes – Discovering Lifesaving Books

The Project's Aim: The "Lifesaving Books" initiative aims to support the emotional well-being of children and young people through literature. By treating books as "lifesaving devices," the project encourages participants to explore difficult emotions, build resilience, and discover comfort, hope, and strength in stories.
Its goals include:
• Enhancing emotional intelligence
• Recognizing literature as a form of refuge
• Cultivating a love for books and reading
• Creating positive experiences within library spaces

The Participants: The project is coordinated by the Deputy Ministry of Culture and involves a strong collaborative network: IBBY-Cyprus, the Cyprus Association of Librarians, seven municipal/community libraries, the libraries of the University of Cyprus, Cyprus University of Technology, and the Open University of Cyprus, school units, and children's authors. Psychologists and mental health experts also contribute, enhancing the

therapeutic aspect of the program.

Its Development: The program was designed in stages:
• Selecting books with positive, empowering messages (with guidance from literary and psychology experts)
• Designing interactive, creative activities tailored to each book
• Establishing welcoming, participatory spaces within libraries and schools
Implementation:

Workshops include guided reading, experiential activities (such as discussions, drama, and visual arts), and the action “Notes from Lifesaving Books,” where participants write down phrases or reflections that empowered them. These are compiled into the “Literary Empowerment Diary.”

Results: The program has offered children meaningful, library experiences and strengthened their emotional literacy. Its final output—the publication of the Empowerment Diary—is shared digitally and in print. A concluding conference disseminates results and good practices, ensuring sustainability and inspiring future expansion.

Elena Perikleous is a Cypriot author, educator, and leading advocate for children’s rights and children’s literature. She currently serves as the Commissioner for the Protection of Children’s Rights in Cyprus and has served as President of the Cyprus Section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY Cyprus) for the past six years, actively contributing to the advancement of children’s literature at both national and international levels. Her work is grounded in the belief that access to literature is a fundamental right of every child. Through her writing, she addresses themes of resilience, inclusion, emotional intelligence, and social justice, bridging literary creativity with educational and human-centered approaches. Her voice is recognized for its ability to connect emotional depth with meaningful storytelling that empowers young readers.

Tess Prendergast (University of British Columbia, Canada), Developing a Critical Analysis Framework for Picture Books About Children on the Move

Within the complexities of global displacement, children within these movements are referred to as “children on the move.” (International Data Alliance for Children on the Move, 2023, p.6). Examining the growing corpus of English-language picture books about children on the move reveals an array of enduring and disrupting discourses about such children’s lives. Educators and others might reasonably want to use these kinds of picture books to encourage discussions through an “ethics of care” framework as suggested by Dudek (2018) who examined of picture books about young refugees and asylum-seekers. However, Ward and Warren’s research on the depictions of refugee stories in children’s books concluded that most of these texts focus on “perilous” journeys and suggested that an over-reliance on the hardship of the journey perpetuates the notion that refugee

flights define entire lives (2020, p. 407). Additionally, Darragh and Kelley state that "Refugees are more than the trauma they have experienced." (2022, p. 21). Drawing on Bishop's well-known "mirrors and windows" metaphor (1990), and what Adichie points out as "the danger of the single story" (2009), in this paper, I map the prevalence of picture books that portray children's refugee flights and settlement narratives against less frequently told stories of other child-focused asylum-seeking and migration experiences. I also discuss the relative absence of age-appropriate explanations for impelled human displacement to child readers in the endnotes of picture books about children on the move

Tess Prendergast is a lecturer at the School of Information, University of British Columbia where she teaches courses children's literature and librarianship. As an active member of the Association for Library Service to Children, she has served on the Randolph Caldecott Medal Committee and the Theodor Seuss Geisel Award Committee. She is currently serving on the Children's Literature Association Phoenix Picture Book Award Committee.

Cheeno Marlo D. Sayuno (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the University of the Philippines Los Baños, Philippines), An Expansion to the APALA Rubric to Evaluate AAPI Youth Literature: Filipino Diasporic Texts in Focus

The Asian Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA) Rubric to Evaluate Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Youth Literature by Amy Breslin, Sarah Park Dahlen, Kristen Kwisnek, and Becky Leathersich (2021) is a landmark piece that proposes a guide for librarians, teachers, and other workers surrounding children's literature to critically curate and make children and youth literature accessible to the young readers. Focusing on criteria that apply specifically to texts on/by/for Asian diaspora, the rubric includes specific indicators for text and illustrations on the areas of stereotypes; tokenism; humanity; power, agency, and heroes; setting; storyline; racism; author and illustrator backgrounds; and copyright dates. Meanwhile, picture books are a way for Filipino and Filipino American youth to process a search of identity as they navigate the liminality of growing up in the US while tethered to the motherland. This paper focuses on a retooling of the APALA Rubric and how it can be more appropriately applied to Filipino and Filipino American texts for young people. Combining the APALA rubric with the Filipino concept of *kapwa* (you, me, and we together as one), the propositions of a Filipino Critical Race Theory in the dissertation of Jacqueline Mamola (2020), and the framework of Filipino humanity from Prospero Covar (1998), this paper proposes an expansion of the APALA Rubric that applies specifically to Filipino diaspora texts to further guide teachers, parents, and scholars on analyzing Filipino children and youth literature that embodies what it truly means to be Filipino.

Cheeno Marlo M. Sayuno, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Communication, Research, and Children's Literature from the University of the Philippines Los Baños. From 2024 to 2026, he served as a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the School of Information Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has received many recognitions

and awards for his work He has published storybooks, textbooks, and research in communication, media, and related fields with various publishers. His book on children's agentic transmedia engagement is forthcoming with Palgrave Macmillan. He also serves as editor of *Jeunesse: Young People, Text, Cultures* and is an active member of the International Research Society for Children's Literature.

Nasser Yousefi (Independent, Canada), An Exploration of Classic Children's Literature through the Lens of Humanistic Education

Pippi Longstocking, Pinocchio, Alice in Wonderland, Peter Pan, and The Little Prince are among the most iconic figures in children's literature. Despite different authors, countries, and eras, they share a common theme: resistance to rigid, behaviourist schooling. Importantly, this is not opposition to learning itself but to lifeless, controlling systems. Each character illustrates a humanistic vision of education. Pippi learns history, science, and music through direct adventures. Pinocchio develops holistically through emotional and social experiences. Alice replaces memorization with reasoning, critical thinking, and imagination, reflecting the process of science itself. Peter Pan values curiosity and joy above control and conformity. The Little Prince, without naming school, critiques conventional education by showing that love for life and humanity must be the foundation of true learning. Together, these stories reveal that genuine education happens in life, not confined to classrooms. Their message resonates with the core of humanistic education: integrated growth, respect for individual experience, project-based learning, emotional and social development, and a deep connection with human values. Far more than any academic theory, children's literature offers some of the clearest expressions of a humanistic philosophy of education.

Nasser Yousefi is a child psychologist and children's author with over 30 years of experience. His stories have accompanied generations of children in Persian-speaking countries. He has worked closely with children in schools and communities, shaping his humanistic approach to education. As a former board member of IBBY Iran and a UNICEF consultant in Iran and Afghanistan, he supported early childhood development through community-based programs. Now in Canada, he promotes humanistic and democratic education. In 2025, he co-initiated a global call to advance child-centered, peace-oriented schools grounded in dignity and empathy.

Friday, 7 August
8:00-9:25 AM

PP 03 Panel: Honing Listening Skills: Language Acquisition and Preservation
Nicol Building 3020
IBBY Moderator: Jane O'Hanlon (IBBY International)

Mette Laustsen (Dansk Centralbibliotek for Sydslesvig, Germany), Learning a Language Together as a Family-Bookbags for the Whole Family

A look at how Dansk Centralbibliotek for Sydslesvig (DCBIB) support language development for families with the "book bag" -project and language activities. DCBIB serves the Danish minority in Germany. Focus for the library is to provide access to Danish culture and language. One way the library has done that, is the project "Dansk for familien poser" (Danish for the family bags). The project consists of three different bookbags, totaling 15 bookbags. The bags contain books and activities on how the families can use the books, in a playful manner, to learn Danish and Danish culture together. All information is bilingual Danish and German. The bags can be used both by families where everybody is new to Danish and by families where there is a difference in Danish abilities between the family members. The library have two annually "Danish for the family"-Saturdays. There the families are introduced to more playful language learning. Several times a year the library have "Learn Danish with your baby" where parents learn how they can support baby´s early language development while also learning Danish themselves. The "book bag"-project and language learning activities aim to be as practical as possible. Making them ready for easy use. The project and the activities is easy to translate and/or adapt to different languages and cultures thereby making it interesting for other people working in libraries. The project and activities have been and are still very popular. By giving families playful ways to practice and learn a new language, language learning can become a fun family activity.

Mette Laustsen, a children's librarian for 18 years. A Dane working for almost 7 years at Dansk Centralbibliotek for Sydslesvig, which is the library for the Danish minority in Germany. She mainly works with children ages 0-6 years old. Her day-to-day work is with bilingual or trilingual children. Before working in Germany, she had almost 11 years working in Greenland also with bilingual children.

Swati Raje (Bhaashaa Foundation, India), Exploring the Inclusion Problem of Multilingual Literature in India: The Story of Bhaashaa Foundation

While globalisation is bringing the world closer every day, multilingual and multicultural societies often tell a different story. To preserve the multilingual and multicultural fabric of any society, the inclusion of various language groups or linguistically diverse and marginalised groups is very important: whether in conversations about content, or as

readership. This is especially true at this juncture in children's literature where an increasingly globalised focus is turning children away from indigenous language, culture and literature in India. This presentation will speak about my efforts to address this problem of inclusivity and my journey of searching for solutions as an author of regional language children's books and a practitioner running an organisation for the preservation of regional languages, "Bhaashaa," for the last two decades. BIPOC, Migrants, Sustainability; India, Indigenous languages/globalization, inclusivity.

Bhaashaa: The Centre for Preservation and Enhancement of Regional Languages is an NGO which has been working to bring children to books and reading for the past twenty years, thereby working towards holistic language preservation for regional languages of India. Its focus on children and children's literature is at the core of its various innovative initiatives like libraries, interactive centres, language exams, reading corners, quiz competitions and national level story festivals as well as international conferences. Its presence cuts across rural, semi-urban and urban areas in India as well as economically weaker and relatively more privileged areas. This presentation will look at Bhaashaa's work over the past two decades and examine its efforts at increasing inclusivity and reaching the maximum number of children for language preservation.

Swati Raje is a writer, editor, and language advocate with degrees in Journalism, Literature, and an M.Phil. in Children's Literature. An award-winning author of bestselling books for both children and adults, and founder and President of the Bhaashaa Foundation, she has spent two decades promoting language preservation across India. An active IBBY member, she also advises on language policy at district and state levels for the Indian government. She is a jury member of IBBY- UNESCO project of collection of remarkable books for young readers in indigenous and rare languages.

Siri Larsen (IBBY Norway, Norway), The Voice of Indigenous Peoples—Sami Language, Literature, and Culture in Contemporary Norway

North Sami, South Sami, and Lule Sami are officially recognized minority languages in Norway, protected under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Despite this recognition, all three languages remain endangered, and revitalization is essential to ensure their survival. Sami literature has deep roots in oral traditions, with the joik—a unique lyrical form—central to cultural expression. Written literature is relatively recent, and children's books have become vital tools for preserving language and heritage.

Historical assimilation policies from the 18th century onward severely impacted Sami identity, language, and lifestyle. Many lost their native tongue and experienced shame about their background. Since the 1970s, efforts have been made to strengthen Sami culture, and many authors continue to write in their mother tongue—uncommon among Indigenous peoples globally.

Contemporary Sami literature often explores identity and belonging, with language serving as a key bearer of tradition and knowledge. The majority population has a responsibility to include Sami perspectives in literature and cultural dissemination. Promoting diversity in literature enhances children's emotional development and fosters respectful intercultural understanding.

Schools, kindergartens, and libraries play a crucial role in sharing Indigenous knowledge and enabling all children to engage with Sami perspectives. Key questions remain: What is the current position of Sami children's literature in Norway, and how can we ensure a diverse range of publications in different Sami languages, while also reaching and engaging the intended audience?

Siri Larsen is a trained librarian and serves as the specialist responsible for early childhood library services at Deichman, the public library in Oslo. She works to strengthen and develop high-quality library offerings for young children, families, and early childhood institutions, with a focus on inclusion and reading promotion. Larsen is the Deputy Chair of IBBY Norway and editor of the members' magazine *Barnebokforum*. Her professional experience in public librarianship and children's literature informs her commitment to ensuring that all children have access to diverse and high-quality books from an early age.

Karla Fernández-de-Gamboa-Vázquez (University of the Basque Country, EHU, Spain), Racialized Characters in Basque Children's Literature (2000–2025): Representations and Challenges

In recent decades, Basque children's literature has increasingly reflected the multicultural realities of contemporary Basque society. This paper examines how racialized characters are represented in children's books published between 2000 and 2025, with special attention to the construction of identity, difference, and belonging.

Building on the trajectory outlined by Etxaniz and López (2017), who describe the evolution of Basque children's literature from nationalist didacticism to a more universal poetics, this study situates the emergence of racialized characters within that broader shift. Drawing on a corpus of picturebooks and narratives that feature racialized protagonists or secondary characters, it explores how these figures are depicted in relation to whiteness as the implicit norm. Through textual and visual analysis, the paper considers whether racialized characters are framed within stereotypical or marginal roles, or whether they are given narrative agency and complexity. The role of illustrations in shaping racial representation will also be examined, particularly how visual codes of skin color, hair, and clothing contribute to—or resist—discourses of othering

Preliminary findings suggest that while earlier works often reinforced cultural homogeneity, contemporary titles increasingly attempt to normalize plural identities and incorporate migration as part of Basque collective experience. Nevertheless, tensions remain between the pedagogical intentions and the literary ambitions to portray racialized characters as fully-fledged individuals beyond their difference. By situating Basque children's literature within international debates on race, diversity, and children's imaginaries, this paper argues that minority literatures provide both challenges and opportunities for fostering inclusive and equitable representations in children's books

Karla Fernández-de-Gamboa-Vázquez is a Senior Lecturer at the University of the Basque Country (EHU). She holds a PhD in Education, and her research focuses on children's literature, literary education, and contemporary picturebooks. She is a member of the LAIDA (Literature & Identity) Research Group, the 'Iberian and Latin American Children's and Young Adult Literature' (LIJMI) Thematic Network, and Galtzagorri Elkartea, the Basque branch of Spanish IBBY, and serves on the editorial boards of *Ikastorratza* and *Behinola*. Alongside her academic work, she regularly contributes to children's literature outreach in Basque and Spanish media. Her participation is supported by Etxepare Basque Institute.

PP 04 Panel: Listening to Voices in Nonfiction

Nicol Building 3030

IBBY Moderator: Stephanie Wells (IBBY Canada)

Sabine Fuchs (Independent Researcher, Austria), Listening to the Sea: Exploring the Fascinating World of Ocean Wildlife with Non-Fiction Picture Books

The fact that the oceans are among the least explored parts of the world clearly shows how much there is still to discover and how much we still don't know about the interplay of all aspects of life on Earth. Especially given the massive pollution of all seas, it is more urgent than ever to make the marine habitat understandable for children and young people. A particularly successful small series has been published by Leykam Verlag since 2021: Michael Stavarič, a writer born in Brno/Czechia in 1972 and living in Vienna/Austria, explains the lives of sea creatures that do not necessarily have positive connotations. Books about the fascination of octopuses, jellyfish, sharks and whales have been published so far.

What makes these non-fiction books special is their style of writing: Stavarič chooses a conversational tone for his explanations. As in conversations, reflections lead away from the 'actual' topic—from explanations of terms to questions about the universe, environmental pollution and science, to puzzles and tasks—until all the reflections come together to form a comprehensive view. The black and white drawings from the artist Michèle Ganser provide an additional source of inspiration. Using these examples, the presentation shows how (non-fiction) literature can spark interest in nature and the

threats it faces, while also highlighting ways to access information and what each of us can do to preserve the diversity of life on Earth.

Sabine Fuchs worked as a research assistant at the University of Graz, as a teacher at secondary schools, and taught children's and youth literature at universities. From 2013 until her retirement in 2022, she taught and researched as a professor of children's and young adult literature and didactics at the University of Teacher Education Styria in Graz. In 2017, she founded and directed the KiJuLit Center for Research and Didactics of Children's and Youth Literature till 2022. She is still active as researcher, as President and Liaison Officer from IBBY Austria.

Ana Margarida Ramos (Portugal), Books Without Borders: Representing Migration in Non-Fiction for Young Readers

This paper presents a close reading of the volume *Obrigados a partir. Seis testemunhos de jovens migrantes* (*Forced to Leave: Six Testimonies from Young Migrants*) (2024), from a dual perspective: the treatment of the theme of migration and the centrality of the voices of young migrant and refugee protagonists; and the editorial choices concerning genre and format, with a focus on biographical non-fiction.

The volume stands out for its careful graphic design, including illustrations that contribute both to the transmission of information and to the metaphorical and symbolic dimensions that enhance the aesthetic quality of the book. Paratextual and epitextual elements—particularly digital content—guide and expand the reading experience, making it immersive and empathetic. By giving names and concrete experiences to the often faceless numbers, the book humanizes and individualizes each of the protagonists—heroes in their own epic journeys of resilience.

Coming from different countries and continents, the stories and voices collected in this book offer readers diverse perspectives on a topic that continues to divide societies and remains deeply relevant in today's world. This study draws on recent scholarship in children's and young adult non-fiction (Livingston et al., 2004; Von Merveldt, 2017), with particular attention to its visual and graphic dimensions (Ramos & Navas, 2022). It also engages with biographical literature (Tomsic & Zbaracki, 2022; Chung, 2024), focusing on the hybridity of genres and editorial formats. Additionally, it considers contemporary research on migration narratives in children's literature (Nel, 2018, Arizpe, 2021; Brownlie & Abouddahab, 2021; García-González, 2025)

Aura E. Gonzalez Robles (Universidad de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico), Ruth J. Saez Vega (Universidad de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico), and Adriana N. Sotomayor Pérez (The Ohio State University, USA), The Power of Voice: Analyzing Puerto Rican Representation in Children's Biographies

Grounded in Decolonial (Mignolo, 2002) and LatCrit (Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001) lenses, this project aimed to examine how Puerto Rican voices are represented in children's biographies about distinguished Puerto Ricans. This study examined a corpus of picturebook biographies that collectively construct narratives of Puerto Rican identity, culture, and belonging.

This project stems from a concern with how coloniality of power (Quijano, 1992) shapes whose stories are told and how. Drawing on multicultural analysis (Botelho & Rudman, 2009) and critical content analysis (Johnson, Mathis, & Short, 2016), both texts and illustrations were analyzed to uncover how ideologies of race, class, gender, and language operate in these portrayals. The study examined how language, visual representations, and paratextual elements convey or challenge dominant discourses about Puerto Ricans. The results reveal recurring colonial narratives that frame Puerto Ricans through deficit, while counterstories begin to reclaim agency by centering collective and culturally rooted perspectives. Furthermore, the study reflects on what it means to truly listen to diverse voices in children's literature, examining how power and representation shape both the stories that are told and those that remain unheard.

Aura E. González Robles is a Professor at the University of Puerto Rico, College of Education. She holds a Ph.D. in Language, Reading, and Culture. With over 30 years in education, she has taught at the elementary, undergraduate, and graduate levels. Her research focuses on children's literature, literacy development, writing pedagogy, and inquiry-based curriculum. A recipient of multiple academic honours (Erasmus Circle Scholar Award, AERA's Minority Fellowship in Educational Research), she has presented internationally and contributes to the Puerto Rico–Guatemala Reading Alliances Project. Currently, she teaches in the Department of Graduate Studies.

Ruth J. Sáez Vega is a Puerto Rican academic, educator and researcher specializing in early literacy, reading and writing, and children's literature. She is full professor at the Universidad de Puerto Rico (UPR-RP) Department of Graduate Studies within the Faculty of Education. She is the founder and director of the Centro para el Estudio de la Lectura, la Escritura y la Literatura Infantil (CELELI), a centre focused on promoting reading, writing and children's literature through research, education, and community engagement. She is frequently invited to speak on literacy, early childhood education, and children's literature in Puerto Rico and Latin America.

Adriana N. Sotomayor Pérez is pursuing a PhD in Innovative Arts, Literacies, and Languaging at The Ohio State University. She holds a bachelor's degree in education with a focus on Drama and a master's degree in Reading, Writing, and Children's Literature from the University of Puerto Rico. Her research interests include using drama as a tool for meaning-making and critical analysis of children's literature. Her work at the Centro para el Estudio de la Lectura, la Escritura y la Literatura Infantil (CELELI) during her master's program was pivotal in her development as a Children's Literature Specialist.

PD 01 Panel: Listening to Indigenous Voices in Picturebook Publishing

Richcraft Hall 2228

IBBY Moderator: Rick Wilks (*IBBY Congress Scientific Committee*)

Children's literature can create a safe space for children to listen to each other's voices and see themselves, represented, but explorations of who is represented in these spaces shows that Indigenous voices are often minoritised, sometimes completely silent (Sengupta, 2023). Central to ensuring that Indigenous voices are present and available in children's literature is the publisher. Recent work exploring Indigenous publishers of children's literature in Australia, Canada and the USA has identified key themes associated with the authentic publication of children's literature including a commitment to storytelling, collaboration and education (Scaletti et al., 2025). In this panel we will share four further perspectives on amplifying Indigenous voices in children's literature publishing from a three-year research programme in Aotearoa New Zealand with multi-award-winning publisher, Huia Publishers (Daly, et al. 2025). We explore what happens when Indigenous peoples reclaim authorship and editorial control over our own narratives for children; we examine how picturebooks are illustrated and designed to reflect and speak to an Indigenous audience; we examine the process of translating picturebooks from English to te reo Māori; and we explore the layering evident in the publishing process of an award-winning Indigenous publishing house.

Pania Tahau-Hodges (Huia Publishers, New Zealand), Exercising Indigenous Story Sovereignty in Children's Picturebooks

Indigenous peoples have long recognised storytelling as a vital mechanism for transmitting knowledge, culture, and identity (Rani & Raj, 2023). Yet across colonised nations, the power to shape and share Indigenous stories – particularly in children's literature – has often rested in the hands of non-Indigenous creators and institutions (Barnwell, 2021). Drawing on doctoral research that includes data from research conversations with Indigenous publishing practitioners and creative practice-based inquiry, the presentation centres on story sovereignty as both a conceptual and practical framework for reclaiming control over Indigenous narratives (Whiteduck, 2013). It critically examines the power dynamics embedded in the publishing industry, where Indigenous voices and ways of knowing continue to be marginalised (Sengupta, 2023). At the same time, it highlights the transformative potential of story sovereignty – where Māori exercise tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) over our stories, determining which stories we want to tell, how we tell them, and who we tell them to (Whiteduck, 2013). Findings suggest that Indigenous-led creation of picturebooks can be a powerful act of resistance and resurgence – cultivating cultural memory, promoting wellbeing, and contributing to

the realisation of mana motuhake (control over one's destiny) and tino rangatiratanga. Through an Indigenous lens, the presentation explores the significance of story sovereignty in children's publishing and argues that reclaiming narrative power is not only a political act, but also a vital expression of cultural survival and self-determination.

Pania Tahau-Hodges (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāi Tūhoe) is a director of Huia Publishers, an award-winning Māori-owned publishing house in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Her work as both publisher and author centres on amplifying Indigenous voices in children's literature and supporting diverse, culturally grounded narratives. Her publications ensure that Māori children and whānau see their language, culture, and world reflected in stories, while her publishing leadership advances Indigenous storytelling within national and international contexts. She is particularly interested in the role of children's literature in cultural revitalization, representation, and education.

Te Kani Price (Huia Publishers, New Zealand) and Nic Vanderschantz (University of Waikato, New Zealand), By Design: The Visibility and Inclusion of Indigenous Places and People in Picturebooks

Links to place and whenua are central to many Indigenous societies, and to the identities of Indigenous peoples (Lindsay-Latimer et al., 2024). In picturebooks these elements are often clearly evident in illustration and design (Kelly-Ware & Daly, 2019). In this presentation, we explore findings from a three-year kaupapa-Māori driven research programme exploring how these links to Indigenous identities are visualised in text and images presented in children's picturebooks published by award-winning Aotearoa Indigenous publisher, Huia. Using an approach that combines research conversations, visual analysis, grounded theory, and multimodal comparative analysis (Rose, 2016; Serafini & Reid, 2022) we have worked to understand the design decision making processes when developing books which ensure visibility and inclusion of Indigenous places and people. Visual analysis of illustrations, typography and layout reveals the presence of several key elements of Māori identity linked to the whānau (family) and whenua (land). This work highlights how picturebooks become spaces for authentic listening, where readers engage with multiple voices, languages, and perspectives from an early age. Findings indicate the importance of deep listening between editors, translators, and designers together with authors and illustrators to create a safe space for children to listen to each other's voices and see themselves represented within the published picturebook.

Te Kani Price (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Te Whakatōhea*)* is an award-winning graphic designer and Creative Director. His practice covers the broad spectrum of genres and media that HUIA produces, with particular interest in the pairing of text and image to tell a nuanced story. He has worked across branding, editorial, digital, event and UX design in Aotearoa and Australia. He works alongside clients directly to generate solutions that engage audiences in both general and culturally specific contexts.

Nicholas (Nic) Vanderschantz is a Senior Lecturer at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato investigating the design of human-centred solutions to information-seeking and information-use problems. He has investigated individual and collaborative use of pBooks, eBooks, picturebooks, libraries, mobile and desktop apps, and the Internet. His research focuses on the presentation and visualisation of information using typography in single language and bilingual contexts.

Darryn Joseph (Independent Researcher, New Zealand) and Kawata Teepa (Huia Publishers, New Zealand), Sustaining Community Voices in Māori Language Picturebooks

The translation of children's literature from a colonial language to an indigenous target language is a complex form of translation that shifts the language and culture of the readership. Oittinen (2000) notes that translation is never an "innocent act"; the ideologies and views of the translator influence the multiple points of decision-making in a translation. In this presentation we will consider the judgments an award winning Māori native speaker and translator makes as they transform English into an Indigenous Polynesian language for modern urban readers. Using in-depth interviews with author and translator Kawata Teepa (Tūhoe, Ibby Honour List Translation winner NZ: 2014, 2016, 2018), we share translation insights from a successful Indigenous publisher in Aotearoa to increase and enhance the publication of Indigenous voices in picturebooks for children. Teepa's rich literary heritage and upbringing in a Māori-speaking community enrich the voices of his characters he translates. He has what Hollindale (1997 as cited in Lathey 2016) describes as "an understanding of the freshness of language to the child's eye and ear…". As a native speaker and song writer, his dialect, his rhythms, his musicality and his knowledge of Indigenous oral genres are sustained in his reversioning of Māori language picturebooks with his reader in mind. Indigenous translators play a vital role in keeping their languages alive- creating, inspiring, and entertaining their communities. A translator who is a native speaker brings deep cultural insight and creative instinct to the work, thus leading the way to inspire the next generation of speakers.

Darryn Joseph (Ngāti Maniapoto) has a mild obsession for sequential art combined with text to form an immersive narrative, or comics. He has collected and read thousands of comics over four decades and watched this genre grow from fringe lit to popular fiction. His day job includes teaching te reo Māori at Massey University's Palmerston North campus to beginners and advanced learners and anyone in between, and marking PhDs written in te reo Māori. He has won three literary awards: two short story competitions (Huia 2003, Pikihuia 2015) and the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) Kura Pounamu Award for Children's Book Awards (2010) for his fantasy chapter book Hewa. His 2019 picturebook, illustrated by Munro Te Whata, Whakarongo ki ō Tūpuna has been shortlisted this year for the New Zealand Heritage Literary Awards.

Kawata Teepa (Ngāi Tūhoe, Te Whakatōhea) is an award-winning author, translator, and content developer and is the Pou Tikanga (Lead Cultural Advisor) at Huia Publishers.

He works on conceptualizing projects, translating picture books, providing cultural guidance on print and digital projects, developing educational resources, and more. He brings to his work a passion for imparting his knowledge to the younger generations of tamariki (children).

Nicola Daly (University of Waikato, New Zealand), Layering Mātauranga Māori in Picturebooks

The importance of Indigenous children's literature for supporting the identity of Indigenous children and knowledge of non-Indigenous readers about their Indigenous friends and neighbours is without question (Hanson et al., 2020). However, there is a paucity of empirical research exploring Indigenous publishing processes that ensure the representation of Indigenous language, culture and identities in children's literature (Bradford, 2007; Stagg Peterson & Robinson, 2009; Sheahan-Bright, 2011). A recent exception is the work of Scaletti and colleagues (Scaletti et al, 2025) who examined four Indigenous publishing houses, concluding that education, language and art are important values in the work of publishing authentic Indigenous voices. In this presentation we share findings from a 3-year kaupapa-Māori driven research programme documenting and analysing how mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) is incorporated into the creation of two recent picturebooks published by Wellington-based publishers, Huia. Based on transcribed conversations between university and publishing-based research colleagues, our findings show the many layers of the publishing process within Huia publishers which we share in this presentation. Based on the knowledge that that all storytelling is about sharing knowledge embedded in story which aims to advance the knowledge and growth of our tamariki-mokopuna (children/grandchildren), we explore how the many strands of decision-making in the larger process of creating a picturebook can be seen as multiple layers built on each other. From conception through to the production of a picturebook, these layers deeply and cohesively embed mātauranga Māori, language, culture and identity.

Nicola Daly is a sociolinguist and Professor in the Division of Education, University of Waikato, where she teaches children's literature. Her research focus is multilingual picturebooks, and their role in perpetuating and challenging language attitudes. She was a Fulbright New Zealand Scholar at the University of Arizona, USA in 2019/2020. Her most recent book is entitled 'Language Identity and Diversity in Picturebooks: An Aotearoa perspective (Routledge, 2025). She is a two-term member of the Board of the International Research Society for Children's Literature (IRSCL), and the co-president of the Australasian Children's Literature Association for Research (ACLAR).

PP 05 Panel: Listening to Voices from Queer Romance, Fantasy, and Fairytales
Nicol Building 4030
IBBY Moderator: Lesley D. Clement (IBBY Congress Scientific Committee)

Samuel Hinds (University of British Columbia, Canada), Under the Sea: Exploring Mermaids' Queer Voices and Subtext in Middle-Grade Literature

With the queer origins and subtext of Hans Christian Andersen's "The Little Mermaid" (1837), mermaids have become a site for queer and transgender identification and storytelling. This paper employs queer and trans criticism, including Mason et al.'s queer critique of Bishop's "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors," to understand that while not all texts feature queer and trans characters, a text's themes and storylines can invite queer and trans readings. I closely read two understudied middle-grade texts that invite such readings of the Western mermaid—Trung Le Nguyen's *The Magic Fish* (2020) and Disney-Pixar's *Luca* (2021). Looking at mermaid scholarship and other texts, I recognize how mermaids perform queerness and transness through experiences of desire, movement, and the process of using, losing, and (re)discovering their voices. Examining these texts, interviews, and public response, I propose that the queer dimensions of these stories offer a useful narrative tool to explain queer and trans experiences to audiences unfamiliar with queerness, ultimately helping develop empathy for queer, trans, and othered individuals.

Samuel Hinds (he/him) is a graduate student at the University of British Columbia, pursuing an M.A. in Children's Literature. He is originally from Rhode Island, U.S.A. and completed his undergraduate studies in English/Creative Writing at the University of Miami in Florida. His research interests include queerness in children's and young adult literature, pop culture and celebrity studies, and any piece of media that sparks joy.

Monika Wozniak (Sapienza University of Rome, Italy), Listening through Love: Fanfiction Aesthetics and the Reimagining of Gender in Contemporary YA Romance

Fanfiction has become one of the most central spaces where young people learn to listen to themselves, to one another, and also to identities that have long struggled to be heard. Emerging from participatory online cultures, it increasingly shapes the emotional grammar of bestselling YA novels, encouraging them to imagine love and belonging beyond normative scripts.

This presentation explores how two bestsellers, Casey McQuiston's *Red, White & Royal Blue* (2019) and Ali Hazelwood's *The Love Hypothesis* (2021), both rooted in fanfiction conventions such as Enemies to Lovers, Hurt/Comfort, and Wish-Fulfilment, adapt fanfiction's inclusive poetics to reimagine gender, sexuality, and intimacy for today's readers. McQuiston's queer romance celebrates mutual recognition and self-acceptance, turning romantic comedy into a space of political and emotional visibility. Hazelwood's (pseudo-)feminist retelling—initially inspired by the *Star Wars* trilogy—reframes heterosexual desire through empathy and intellectual equality, yet still unfolds within a predominantly white and heteronormative emotional economy.

By contrasting these modes of representation, the paper argues that fanfiction-inflected YA literature serves as a testing ground for inclusivity, revealing both breakthroughs and blind spots. These narratives encourage young readers to listen to marginalised affective experiences and to question whose voices are amplified and which remain unheard in contemporary love stories. By absorbing fanfiction's dialogic and inclusive poetics, they transform YA fiction into a collaborative arena of storytelling and self-understanding—one where young people learn not only to speak, but to hear each other's versions of love.

Monika Woźniak is Associate Professor of Polish Language and Literature at Sapienza University of Rome. Her research focuses on literary translation, comparative literature, and Polish and Italian literature, with particular attention to children's literature, fairy tales, and their adaptations and translations. She has authored numerous scholarly articles on these topics. She is also an active literary translator, having translated several classics of Polish children's literature into Italian. She collaborates with several research centres dedicated to children's and young adult literature. She currently directs the research project *Fairy Tales in Slavic Countries*.

Kit Forrester (Independent, Canada). "Diversity Assures Resilience": Cultivating Queer Arts of Noticing—and Listening—with Picturebooks

Picturebooks—laden as they are with more-than-human species and fantastical encounters—tend to lend themselves to processes of becoming attuned to the unexpected and strange. Anna Tsing calls this work the "arts of noticing," calling us to "notice the divergent, layered, and conjoined projects that make up worlds" (*The Mushroom* 22). Cultivating queer arts of noticing means building a capacity within ourselves and each other to look differently at the world as we learn to seek out stories of strange entanglements and diverse kin arrangements. This also means learning to listen for alternate stories that exist peripherally to dominant (and loud) narratives about human progress, individualism, and exceptionalism reliant upon nature/culture dualisms.

In this presentation, I share my research on the ways that everyday picturebooks (not just environmental texts) play an important role in building ecological awareness in readers by admitting our imaginations to realities and relationalities that might otherwise pass us by. Considering a small selection of picturebooks, I argue that the readerly cultivation of queer arts of noticing is intrinsically linked to broader acts of worldmaking that position the reader as actor. As we learn to orient ourselves to see and listen for the strange, the odd, and the queer in the pages of texts, so to do we orient ourselves toward an expansive recognition of the multitudes of entangled worlds that are connected to our own. Cultivating queer arts of noticing and listening with picturebooks invites an affective understanding of how very necessary diversity is to ecological resilience and our own earthly survival.

Kit (Kathleen) Forrester holds a PhD in Education from Simon Fraser University and a MA in children's literature from the University of British Columbia. Her interdisciplinary research and teaching focuses on children's literature, more-than-human kinship, queer worlding and ecologies, multimodal storytelling, and environmental humanities. She has published peer-reviewed papers on topics related to children's literature in various edited collections and international journals including *Jeunesse*, *Barnboken*, and *Bookbird*.

Friday, 7 August
9:00 AM-12:00 noon
Posters

PS 01
Richcraft Hall

Nátali de Mello (Author/Illustrator, IBBY Canada), Anthropomorphic Animals as Gateways to Sustainability in Picture Books

This presentation explores how anthropomorphic animal characters in picture books can foster ecological awareness and sustainability. The project aims to examine how visual storytelling and anthropomorphism enable young readers to engage empathetically with environmental issues. Animals have historically played a key role in children's stories, providing familiarity, curiosity, and emotional bonds. By giving animals human qualities, authors and illustrators foster empathy, helping children focus on environmental and social issues without being distracted by identity markers.

The study uses visual analysis and narrative theory to explore how these strategies function in practice. Two well-known works—*Happy Feet* (Miller, 2006) and *Seagull* (Snell, 2016)—are examined alongside my upcoming picture book, *Curious Capybara* (Roaring Brook Press/Macmillan, 2026). This book follows a capybara as it explores biodiversity in São Paulo's dense urban riparian zones, demonstrating how local environmental stories can highlight broader sustainability issues. Through the capybara's journey, children can "listen" to voices from ecosystems and communities different from their own, highlighting how anthropomorphic animals facilitate understanding and promote environmental literacy.

Nátali de Mello is a Brazilian-Canadian author and illustrator based in Ottawa. She is the author and illustrator of *Curious Capybara*, to be published by Roaring Brook Press (Macmillan) in October 2026, and has illustrated several picture books published in Canada and internationally. She holds a master's degree in illustration from Falmouth University (UK), a certificate in visual arts from Université de Sherbrooke, and a bachelor's degree in architecture and urbanism from UNESP (Brazil). Her creative and research

interests focus on identity, belonging, and nature, explored through contemporary picture books, visual narratives, and mixed-media approaches. She is an active member of IBBY Canada and currently serves on its board, and previously presented her master's research at the IBBY Congress in Trieste.

Joan Marie Galat (Independent Author, Canada), Stories, Science, and Dark Skies: Partnering Narrative and Advocacy

Stories are powerful tools that can launch meaningful conversations on how our decisions impact the larger world. Canadian author Joan Marie Galat demonstrates methods for linking narrative with information to build scientific interest, particularly relating to preserving dark skies and reducing the unwanted effects of light pollution. She reveals how creating opportunities to share and acknowledge one another's voices contributes to environmental stewardship, as demonstrated in her books including *Dark Matters—Nature's Reaction to Light Pollution* (Red Deer Press)—the first children's title devoted to showing the impact of artificial light on wildlife and astronomy. *Dark Matters* innovatively partners childhood memoir with scotobiology (the study of the biological need for periods of darkness), and demonstrates ties between personal experience and environmental sustainability. Discover how incorporating strategies that unite narrative and information can be used to strengthen advocacy and build connections that inspire transformative listening and sharing. Galat further draws on her published works: the *Dot to Dot in the Sky* series (Whitecap Books); *Absolute Expert: Space* (National Geographic Kids); *Make Your Mark, Make a Difference: A Kid's Guide to Standing Up for People, Animals, and the Planet* (Aladdin/Beyond Words), and *Wildlife Crossing: Giving Animals the Right of Way* (Orca Book Publishers) to reveal the advantages of partnering facts and story to promote sustainability, scientific understanding, and a pristine starry night sky.

Joan Marie Galat was first published at age 12, when she became a paid weekly newspaper columnist. Now an award-winning author of more than 30 books, her works include *Make Your Mark, Make a Difference* (Aladdin/Beyond Words); *Solve This!* (National Geographic Kids), *Mortimer: Rat Race to Space (DCB),* and *Wildlife Crossing (Orca Book Publishers). An advocate for* literacy and science, Joan spoke at a UN event in Seoul, accepted a NASA invitation to observe a crewed rocket launch, and has been featured at the New Zealand Starlight Conference, and numerous other events where she uses stories to promote science. www.joangalat.com

Petra Potočnik (Slovenian Reading Badge Society/Slovenian Section of IBBY, Slovenia), The Reading Badge movement – Why not try it globally?

The Reading Badge is both the name and the "trademark" of a cultural and educational movement, developing reading habits and reading culture among Slovenian youth (65th anniversary next year!). Its mission is to promote lifelong development of reading culture and reading literacy. Reading for the Reading Badge is supported by numerous mentors – librarians, teachers and other experts, as well as authors and publishers; children are also encouraged to read by their families. More than 65% of school children (in Slovenia

and Slovenian communities abroad) take part in reading for the Reading Badge.

The poster presentation will present the implementation of the Reading Badge concept as a motivational approach that can work, with appropriate adaptations, in different (pre)schools, and in very different countries around the world. It will try to explore how its principles could be adapted for other countries or contexts while respecting local cultural and educational systems, describe how the concept works, discuss the criteria for earning a "badge," the role of motivational tools, how reading can support school activities and identify potential challenges. We want to highlight the Reading Badge as a successful model that could inspire similar reading initiatives that aim to create lifelong readers, globally.

Petra Potočnik holds a BA in Comparative Literature and works as a Professional Associate at the Slovenian Reading Badge Society, an NGO dedicated to promoting lifelong development of reading culture and reading literacy. She edits the Reading Badge website and social media. She is a member of the editorial board of the Manual for Reading Quality Youth Books (led by Ljubljana City Library). She is a board member of the Slovenian Section of IBBY and represents the organization in Federation of European Literacy Associations (FELA). She is a member of the organizing committee of the 24th European Conference on Literacy.

Jennifer Yan (Toronto Public Library, Canada), The Osborne Collection—Its Rich History and Curatorial Journey

Established in 1949, the Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books at Toronto Public Library is a world-leading research collection that includes rare and notable children's books, art, archives, games & ephemera, and spans from the 14th century to the present. The collection has grown substantially in breadth and scope since inception, and offers a unique perspective into the evolution of children's literature. While the core commitment to preserving the history of literature for children remains, it is balanced with the goal of building a collection that also captures the developments in children's literature over time, and how these have shaped the genre. As publishing becomes increasingly diverse and ventures outside of the scope of the Western tradition, the Osborne Collection seeks to listen to each other's voices by amplifying and including previously unheard voices through its collection and exhibition development practices. Selection and showcasing of materials related to diversity and inclusion provide an opportunity to contrast contemporary items with historic materials, providing visitors with a broad range of ideas and perspectives. While not based on a research project or publication, this session offers a glimpse into a world-leading research collection of children's literature. After attending this poster presentation, participants will have a greater understanding of the evolution of the Osborne Collection and its collection and exhibition development practices, and how it has responded to publishing trends and demographic shifts in the city it which it resides.

Jennifer Yan (she/her) is the Services Specialist, Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books, at Toronto Public Library. She began her Toronto Public Library career in 2005, and

started working in the Osborne Collection in 2018. Her portfolio includes curating its holdings with antiquarian children's materials and archives, curating exhibits, and providing access to the collection. As a former children's librarian and an avid moveable books collector, she ran out of personal bookshelf space and found shelf space in a position that fosters her interests at the Osborne Collection.

Miriam Rosenbloom (Scribble Kids' Books, Australia), The Mirror Project: Nurturing Bilingual Voices

Diverse stories begin with diverse storytellers. The Mirror Project is an Australian mentorship program co-founded by Scribble Kids' Books and the Think+DO Tank Foundation to address the persistent under-representation of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) voices in the industry. Launched in 2020 and now in its second cycle, the program identifies and develops emerging illustrators from bilingual backgrounds, nurturing artists who want to create work where bilingualism lives in the text, the images, or the interplay between them. Each iteration supports three mentees through a 18-month program that includes a A$4,000 artist stipend, paid one-on-one mentorship with established creators, and targeted development across creative practice and market access. A signature component is a shared publishing project: mentees produce a riso-printed mini-book with Helio Press and Scribble, gaining hands-on, end-to-end experience in bookmaking. The annual Industry Development Day brings mentees into direct conversation with experts across publishing, agenting, art direction, and bookselling. The Mirror Project prepares artists for international careers, deliberately structuring insights to open global pathways. Mirror offers a model for fostering linguistic diversity and building the capacity of emerging bilingual creators to find their place in a global industry.

Miriam Rosenbloom is the founder and publisher of Scribble Kids' Books, an independent children's imprint within Scribe Publishing, which she established in Melbourne in 2016. With over two decades of experience in publishing across Australia and the UK — including roles at Faber & Faber — she has built Scribble into an internationally recognised imprint, publishing 8–12 titles annually and selling to more than 20 territories worldwide. Scribble was named Publisher of the Year for Oceania at the Bologna Book Fair in 2019. She co-founded The Mirror Project in 2020 to support emerging illustrators from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the Australian publishing industry.

Neil Wilson (Ottawa International Writers Festival, Canada), Step Into Stories

As Canada's Festival of Ideas since 1997 the Ottawa International Writers Festival has had the privilege of hosting many hundreds of storytellers from across Canada and from around the world. And over these almost 30 years we have witnessed first hand the power of story to transform lives and strengthen community.

In 1999 we introduced our writers-in-schools program which has connected Canadian and international writers in all genres with more than 5000 young learners in the National Capital Region.

The Republic of Childhood was launched on November 20th, 2017, Universal Children's Day, and the anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Republic of Childhood is designed to centre the voices and experiences of young people. It is a direct response to teachers, parents, librarians and, of course, kids themselves who desire a more intensive writing and literacy experience where they are front and centre in the delivery of books, stories and the writing life.

Public libraries, community houses, and classrooms have provided safe spaces for published writers to offer free writing workshops that are not judged, or marked or evaluated. Instead we have fun with words and stories over the course of a workshop. Our successful model is two hours once a week for five weeks followed by editing time and printing a chapbook of their writing. After which the kids showcase their writing for family, friends and the community.

Most recently we began working with Christie Lake Kids offering writing workshops to Ottawa's most vulnerable children and youth ages 6-18 years. This includes new Canadians, refugees, indigenous children and youth, individuals with learning and other disabilities, individuals who are LGBTQIA+, and people from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds.

Neil Wilson is the co-founder of the Ottawa International Writers Festival which was launched in 1997. He is also the founder of the Republic of Childhood which is the branch of the Writers Festival that focuses on the creativity of young people. The Republic of Childhood is inspired by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and creates safe spaces for children and youth to express themselves and discover their own voices. The Republic of Childhood has witnessed first-hand the power of story to build community and foster a love of reading and writing by offering workshops and author visits to schools, libraries and community houses.

L.E. Carmichael (Independent, Canada), Listening to the Lost: How to Recover the Stories of Women Erased from History

In 1909, Hertha Ayrton wrote that "An error that ascribes to a man what was actually the work of a woman has more lives than a cat." Misattributed (or stolen) credit is just one form of erasure that women have experienced, throughout history and around the world. To hear their lost voices, researchers much be critical, creative, and too stubborn to quit.

My Fall 2026 children's book, *The Matilda Effect: How 25 Women Were Erased from History* (Kids Can Press), draws on more than 470 academic books, peer-reviewed articles, historical newspapers, archives, letters and diaries, patent records, and court transcripts.

In researching the project, I encountered historians who deciphered 3000-year-old languages, dissected 12th-century "Wikipedia entries," and dismantled archival silences surrounding 19th-century Black women inventors. My presentation describes how I teased fact from folklore to recover a truer history of Qutulun (ca. 1260-1306), warrior princess of the Mongol Empire.

Attendees will receive a checklist for identifying red flags in published accounts of erased women and other people on the fringes of mainstream history.

L.E. Carmichael, PhD is a multi-award-winning author of more than 20 books for young readers. She uses facts to reveal truths about nature, the environment, and the human condition. Whether educational nonfiction or whimsical flights of fancy, her books encourage critical thinking and cultivate a sense of wonder. Her work empowers young readers to dig deep, to dream and discover, to seek social justice, and to protect our planet. She loves beaches, platypuses, and reading fairy tales by firelight. She lives in Ontario with her husband and the ghost of a six-toed cat.

Kelly Zhang (Independent, Canada), Translating Voice in Children's Literature

Effective literary translation aims to transmit not only the words and informational content of a book, but also its emotional resonance and stylistic spirit, ensuring that readers in the target language/culture can experience the work as vividly as those encountering it in the source language. In children's literature, where engaging and believable character voices are central to a book's appeal, translators must faithfully capture such voices, while adapting for cultural context and readership age.

In this presentation, Chinese/English bilingual author and translator Kelly Zhang explores how to deconstruct and recreate voice through the literary translation process, using examples from recently published children's book translations ranging from picture books to chapter books, to middle grade/YA novels. Zhang's translation practices are strongly influenced and informed by her lived experiences as a first-generation immigrant and BIPOC creator.

Attendees will learn to identify some literary elements that help establish voice, and discover how a translator's artistic choices in diction, syntax, rhythm/pacing, and dialogue, informed by deep cultural understanding, can be leveraged to authentically replicate voice in children's books across languages. The presentation also highlights the translator's important, active role in facilitating access to diverse global literature and enriching cross-cultural exchange.

Kelly Zhang is a first-generation Chinese-Canadian immigrant, child's book author, and literary translator working bidirectionally between Chinese and English. She is also the co-editor of the WorldKidLit Blog and translator coordinator for SCBWI Canada East. Her writing and translations have previously appeared in the *New York Times for Kids*, *Words Without Borders*, *Sine Theta Magazine*, *Read Paper Republic*, *Journey Planet*, and *Paddler*

Press. She has authored two English-language picture books, including *Take Me to Laolao* (HarperCollins 2024), and *I Dream of Shadow Puppets* (forthcoming from HarperCollins). Her book-length translations include the picture book《阿婆的空中菜园》/ Grandma's Roof Garden by TANG Wei (Levine Querido 2024) and the young adult novel《倾斜的天空》/ Tilted Sky by YAO Emei (Levine Querido 2024).

Friday, 7 August
9:35-10:30 AM

PP 06 Panel: Immigrant Experiences: Belonging and Identity
Nicol Building 3020
IBBY Moderator: Irma Guarneros (IBBY Canada)

Fengxia Tan (Nanjing Normal University, China), Transnational Narrative and Poetic Justice in Children's Novels by Asian Diaspora Authors in the West

In Chinese Australian author Shirley Marr's *All Four Quarters of the Moon* (2022), the younger sister fervently reweaving transnational stories said, "In a way, we all belong to more than one story." This insight from a five-year-old girl in an immigrant family poignantly highlights the complexity of character identities in cross-cultural environments. The convergence, collision, intrusion, embedding, and reconstruction of heterogeneous cultural elements form a prominent cultural landscape in Asian diaspora authors' children's literature, which is increasingly flourishing in the West. This article examines some transnational narratives from this category by writers (disproportionately American) of Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Filipino heritage. Most of the selected works have received significant awards in their home countries. This study employs theories of narratology and rhetoric to explore stories about ethnic Asian children in the West, investigating related historical issues, cultural identities, and ideologies. Particularly significant here is the work of Martha C. Nussbaum's *Poetic Justice: Literary Imagination and Public Life* (1995) that I emphasizes the close connection between social justice and aesthetics. I argue that Asian diaspora authors of children's literature carry the collective historical memory of their ancestors and individual life experiences within the Western context. Their transnational narratives often involve social, cultural and political issues, conveying reflections on individual dignity, social equity, and moral values through sophisticated expression and emotional resonance. They serve as bridges for advocating racial equality, community harmony, and cultural inclusion.

Fengxia Tan (Ph.D.) is a Professor in the School of Chinese Language and Literature at Nanjing Normal University, China. Her research focuses on children's and young adult literature. She has published extensively and led multiple projects funded by the National Social Science Fund of China. She has authored academic works, as well as novels and

picture books. She also translates English children's literature. She serves as the Vice President of the Chinese Children's Literature Research Association and has been a jury member for the Hans Christian Andersen Award (2024, 2026).

Maryam Mohammadkhani (Independent Researcher/Writer, Canada), Shaping Identity through Memory in Iranian Diaspora Children's Picturebooks

Children's picturebooks act as cultural memory sites where identity is shaped, translated, and reimagined. As Koss emphasizes, picturebooks transmit collective values and cultural experience (Koss, 32). Bishop's metaphor of "mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors" (1990) underscores how they let children both see themselves and encounter others. Beyond their aesthetic dimension, picturebooks function as social documents that sustain, negotiate, or challenge dominant cultural narratives (Khosronejad, 72).

This paper explores how Iranian diaspora authors and illustrators transform memories of homeland into hybrid identities within English-language picturebooks published between 2015 and 2025. Drawing on creators such as Rashin Kheiriyeh (*Saffron Ice Cream*, 2018; *The Shape of Home*, 2021), Nahid Kazemi (*The Sour Cherry Tree*, 2021), and Adib Khoram (*Seven Special Somethings: A Nowruz Story*, 2021), it investigates how memories, rituals, and imagery of "home" are rearticulated across languages and borders. By juxtaposing diaspora works with Iranian-produced migration picturebooks, this study illuminates how concepts of belonging, displacement, and cultural continuity are reframed through text and image. It argues that memory in diaspora literature operates not as nostalgia but as creative resistance—preserving cultural roots while expanding identity's expressive boundaries. Through this analysis, the paper contributes to international conversations on migration and children's literature, revealing how Iranian diaspora picturebooks transform memory into a transnational language of empathy, hybridity, and intercultural connection.

Maryam Mohammadkhani is an educator and researcher specializing in Persian children's and young adult literature. She holds an M.A. in Persian Language and Literature from the University of Tehran and an M.A. in Children's Literature from the University of British Columbia. Her work spans creative writing, literary criticism, podcasting, and pedagogy, with a consistent focus in recent years on children's and YA texts in Persian and diaspora contexts. She currently serves as Educational Manager at Darwag Organization in Vancouver. Her research interests include diaspora picturebooks, heritage language literacy, and Iranian children's and YA literary culture.

Aleksandra Strelcova (IBBY Lithuania), From Looked-At to Heard: Voice, Power, and Immigration Narratives in YA Fiction

This presentation argues that young adult (YA) immigration narratives in YA fiction stage double othering at the intersection of adolescence as panoptical time (Lesko) and

immigration, producing a state of being looked at but rarely heard. The problem is that while youth are continuously looked at – assessed, guided, scrutinized – they lack reliable models to look to and are constantly othered (Nikolajeva). Even when adult figures are removed, young adults remain in a position of lack (power and/or voice). Building on Trites's work on power, I trace how movement out of this position becomes a crucial part of becoming an adult and finding one's place within power structures – as an individual and as an immigrant.

Through a close reading of Sabaa Tahir's *All My Rage* (2022) – focusing on shifts in Salahudin's voice and power – I show how the novel transforms double othering into mutual listening and, ultimately, audible self-authorship. By finding his own voice, Salahudin reclaims power and locates a place in a society that has marked him as Other. By showing this shift, novel guides readers toward the importance of listening to each other's voices.

The presentation offers a compact framework for analysing YA immigration narratives via power (Trites), panoptical time (Lesko), and aetonormativity (Nikolajeva), specifying how double othering can shift into authorized voice and a position of power. It contributes to scholarship on power, youth subjectivity, and migration in children's/YA literature, while offering educators and librarians new lenses for discussion.

Aleksandra Strelcova is a Lithuanian scholar with more than eight years of research experience in children's and young adult literature. Her work examines narratives of young adult identity formation, focusing on power relations, social norms, and cultural mechanisms shaping becoming in YA texts. In her PhD research, she developed a typologizing *Model of Change* as a framework for examining power dynamics, normativity, and mechanisms of control in YA literature. She has presented her research internationally: at the IRSCL Congress *Silence and Silencing in Children's Literature* (2019) and at Umeå University (2024). She regularly delivers public lectures in Lithuania.

PP 07 Panel: Bibliotherapy, Emotional Literacy and Empathy

Nichol Building 3030
IBBY Moderator: Sharon Jennings (CANSCAIP, Canada)

Katie O'Donoghue (Independent Author/Illustrator, Ireland), Books Empowering Wellbeing

As a therapist, author, and illustrator, I explore how children's literature can act as a bridge between emotional experience and understanding. Stories facilitate a space where young readers can listen to their own voices and to the voices of others. My early reader books, *The Little Squirrel Who Worried* (2021), *The Little Otter Who Tried* (2023), and *The Little Lamb Who Led* (2024), published by Gill Books, are designed to support children and families in navigating worry, resilience, and belonging. Each story invites children on a journey to listen and understand perspectives of others and to feel understood through

their adventures

This presentation reflects on how therapeutic insight and creative storytelling can combine to nurture empathy, emotional literacy, and inclusion. Drawing from both clinical practice and authorial experience, I will explore how books can hold space for complex emotions, model emotional expression, and foster compassionate dialogue between children and the adults who care for them. In the context of the IBBY 2026 theme, “Listening to Each Other’s Voices,” this paper argues that authentic listening begins in childhood, through connection with others and when story and illustration provide a safe, imaginative space for reflection and understanding. By integrating art, and literature, we can help children not only recognise their own feelings but also listen deeply to the stories and emotions of others, building bridges of empathy

Katie O'Donoghue is an Irish author, illustrator, and therapist whose work integrates storytelling, visual art, and therapeutic practice to support children's emotional literacy and wellbeing. Her experience as a therapist centres on ensuring the voice of the child is heard, valued, and understood — an ethos that informs and shapes her creative practice. Her early reader series, published by Gill Books, explores themes of worry, resilience, belonging, and compassion through an integrated approach to narrative and illustration, creating spaces where children can recognise their own voices and listen to the voices of others.

Maria Natalia Marin Suarez (Universidad de los Andes, Colombia), Finding Words to Name the Changing Colours of Our Souls: Children's Literature and SEL

This paper presents the results of an index developed by the Education, Development and Coexistence research group at the University of the Andes in Bogota, Colombia, on the potential of books selected from Fundalectura's Catalogue of Highly Recommended Books for work on social and emotional literacy issues.

This work has been developed following the parameters proposed by Aulas en Paz and CASEL, and seeks to offer teachers in the country and the region a reliable tool that allows them to develop topics related to the social and emotional learning of their students within a framework of excellent children's literature, whether for preschoolers or teenagers finishing high school.

The index was constructed by studying the books selected by Fundalectura's Children's Book Committees, cross-referencing them with SEL criteria, and seeking to offer a tool that allows the different works to be approached from a variety of perspectives, taking into account the richness contained both in the books themselves and in the diverse classrooms where they will be read.

Great care has been taken to offer readings rich in explanations about the emotional landscape of the characters, seeking at all costs to avoid situations where an

unambiguous interpretation and a didactic approach, focused on the adult reader, leaves young readers with no room for interpretation or questions. In addition, a database of possible activities has been created to enable teachers and students to develop their own guides, following the Social and Emotional Thinking Routines proposed by Project Zero at Harvard University.

Maria Natalia Marin Suarez is a PhD candidate in Education at Universidad de los Andes (Colombia) and a member of the Research Group in Education, Development and Coexistence. Her research focuses on social and emotional learning (SEL), particularly in teacher education and literacy. She currently studies how SEL is integrated into teacher training in Colombia and collaborates with Fundalectura to develop a children's literature index for teaching social and emotional skills. Her doctoral work examines gratitude in teachers' professional lives. She holds degrees from Universidad de los Andes and the University of Cambridge and has over twenty years of teaching experience.

Gloria Ann Cozier (Independent, Canada), Listening to Our Voices: Black Representation, Healing, and Mental Health in Culturally Safe Storytelling

Persistent disparities in children's mental health outcomes are compounded by limited culturally meaningful representation in educational and literary spaces. While diversity in children's publishing has increased, scholarship continues to demonstrate that the emotional worlds of Black and racialized children particularly experiences of anxiety, trauma, and resilience remain insufficiently explored through culturally grounded frameworks. This presentation examines culturally safe storytelling as a site of pedagogical, clinical, and community intervention aligned with the congress theme of listening to one another's voices.

Drawing on interdisciplinary literature in Critical Race Theory, trauma-informed educational practice, culturally responsive pedagogy, and community-based participatory research, this paper explores how narrative spaces can function as mechanisms of epistemic recognition and relational repair. Rather than positioning storytelling as symbolic representation alone, the analysis conceptualizes it as a dialogic process that centres lived experience, intergenerational knowledge, and collective voice.

The presentation further considers how developmentally appropriate emotional literacy strategies, including cognitive-behavioral approaches, can be integrated within culturally grounded narratives without reproducing deficit frameworks. Through reflective analysis of participatory workshops with youth, families, and educators, the paper highlights how structured listening practices contribute to stigma reduction, empathy development, and culturally responsive mental health literacy.

By situating storytelling within broader discourses of equity and healing, this work argues that authentic engagement with Black children's voices is not an additive diversity measure but a foundational practice for inclusive education and mental health promotion.

Gloria Ann Cozier, a senior leader in health and social services, licensed Psychotherapist and Registered Social Worker (RSW), has served for many years as Assistant Executive Director, Senior Management Advisor, and Delegate of Youth Protection. Her work bridges clinical practice, scholarship, and community advocacy. A graduate of McGill University with three degrees, she is an author, contributing to significant research on Indigenous land-based addiction wellness, Overrepresentation of Black youths in special education, and absence of culturally responsive pedagogy. An international presenter, she advances trauma-informed, anti-racist practice. Her humanitarian leadership amplifying marginalized voices has earned distinguished accolades recognizing her transformative impact.

PP 08 Panel: Listening to Voices from the Past
Richcraft Hall 2228
IBBY Moderator: Nicola Daly (IBBY Congress Extended Scientific Committee)

Qi Li (Nanjing Xiaozhuang University, China), A Study on Picture Book Adaptations of Fairy Wife Folktales from a Gender Perspective

As two major subtypes of fairy wife tales, the “Hundred-Birds Dress” (ATU 465A) and the “Swan Maiden” (ATU 400D) implicitly reflect traditional gender discipline imposed on female power in society—either instrumentalized or suppressed—while demonstrating two distinct narrative logics: “external resistance” and “internal separation.” In response to gender concepts in these tales that conflict with modern values, contemporary picture book adaptations have undertaken multi-faceted creative transformations. This study employs methodologies from narrative morphology, comparative folklore, and feminist criticism to explore the adaptation approaches and narrative mechanisms involved. First, it analyzes how the two subtypes subvert traditional gender power structures through narrative strategies. Using picture books such as *The Feather Robe of a Hundred Birds* and *The Hundred-Bird Garment* as examples, the study examines how female characters are transformed from “helpers” into active agents. Works like *When I Grow Up, I Want to Be a Seal* are analyzed to illustrate how the introduction of a modern child’s perspective and the softening of specific plot elements help construct egalitarian gender relations. Second, the study investigates how visual elements—such as composition, colour, and perspective—contribute to constructing more nuanced and contemporary expressions of gender. Finally, from a cross-cultural viewpoint, the research explores how localized characterizations, cultural contexts, and aesthetic styles in adaptations enable modern gender consciousness to gain adaptive vitality within specific cultural frameworks.

Qi Li, PhD, is a Lecturer at Nanjing Xiaozhuang University and a Visiting Scholar at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. She also serves as Deputy Secretary-General of the Center for Contemporary Children’s Literature and Creative Writing Studies. Her research focuses on the history of Chinese children’s literature and contemporary children’s

literature criticism. She has published over ten articles in CSSCI-indexed and other academic journals, and has led two research projects.

Mare Müürsepp (IBBY Estonia), The Structure of Folk Tales as a Support for Speech Development in a Multilingual Classroom

Estonian school system is becoming increasingly international every year. This creates a need to update the learning materials. As a lecturer in children's literature, a member of the Estonian national curriculum development team, and an author of educational materials, I conducted an action research project with 7–8-year-old students in a multilingual classroom (six different home languages). I searched for folk tales suitable for drama activities, speech model acquisition, and active creative self-expression for children with various home languages. In my presentation, I analyze the selected folk tales in terms of their type classification in the ATU catalogue, speech patterns, and the possibilities for involving all students in the learning group.

The folktales "The Tarred Ox" (ATU 159), "The Good Deeds of the Sacred Grove" (ATU 555), "The Fox as a Guest" (ATU 170), "Old Man's Mitten" (ATU 68A), and "The Wind and the Sun" (ATU 298) are cited as examples of stories that allow children to apply their language skills as they are in the moment, to feel the joy of playing together and improvising. Although folk tales are connected to the local natural environment and language use, they contain a structure that allows children from different language backgrounds to recognize, follow, and engage with the story and its events.

Mare Müürsepp is a lecturer in children's literature, a literary critic, and a primary school teacher. Her PhD focused on 20th-century children's literature and the history of education. She is a board member of the Estonian section of IBBY and belongs to several other organizations dedicated to the study of children's literature and reading, including IRSCL, International Society for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media, and Estonian Reading Association. She participates in the children's literature research working group at the Estonian Children's Literature Centre. Mare Müürsepp is a member of the IBBY Hans Christian Andersen Award jury for 2024–2026.

Julie Barbour (University of Waikato, New Zealand) and Jacqui Brouwer (University of Waikato, New Zealand), He rau aroha—Reclaiming Indigenous Māori Language and Culture through Picturebooks

In Aotearoa New Zealand, Indigenous leaders and communities have long fought to sustain the Māori language, a taonga (treasure) of the Māori people. Materials for language education are considered essential for maintaining and improving the vitality of a language. When developed from within a language community, such resources have benefits far beyond the acquisition of written literacy, supporting readers to learn about themselves and their identities within their cultural context.

Recent research in the context of Aotearoa has demonstrated the potential for children's picturebooks to contribute to language reclamation and revitalization projects (Brouwer & Daly, 2023; Barbour et al. 2025). In this presentation, we explore the contribution of Indigenous picturebooks to the sustainability of the Māori language. Julie Barbour examines the role of Indigenous picturebooks to nurture linguistic and cultural understandings for both Māori and non-Māori readers. Jacqui Brouwer returns to the homelands of her ancestors, learning about the mātauranga (knowledge systems) that were imparted to children through stories, songs and symbolic representations in weaving and carving. She considers how these might be reconceptualised for future generations in literature for children.

Julie Barbour is a Senior Lecturer in Linguistics at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, the University of Waikato in Aotearoa New Zealand, specialising in the documentation and analysis of Indigenous Pacific languages. Her interest in Indigenous children's literature lies in its potential to support language reclamation and revitalisation.

Jacqui Brouwer (Ngāti Porou ki Harataunga ki Mataora) is an early childhood educator and doctoral student at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. Building on her previous research into bilingual education using picturebooks, she is exploring how Indigenous knowledge, traditionally embedded within stories for children, can be shaped for modern readers.

PP 09 Panel: Queer Representation
Nicol Building 4030
IBBY Moderator: Lesley D. Clement (IBBY Congress Scientific Committee)

Edd Tello (Rosen Publishing, West 44 Books, Canada), Voice Beyond the Borders: How Writing and Translating Queer Stories Helped Me Reconnect with My Identity

This presentation explores how queer Latinx representation in novels in verse, written in the hi-lo format to reach reluctant readers, can create safe spaces, especially for those from underrepresented communities to listen to and recognize their own voices.

As a Mexican author now based in Canada, and a former Spanish literature teacher in Mexico where reading habits remain a challenge, I write hi-lo novels to reach readers often excluded from literary spaces. My three published works, *Only Pieces*, *No Place for Fairy Tales*, and *Daylan and the River of Secrets*, amplify themes of Mexicanidad, migration, family, mental health, and LGBTQ+ belonging.

I will also discuss my experience of self-translating *Daylan and the River of Secrets* into Spanish; a process that revealed what can be lost (or perhaps found), what heals, and what transforms when we move between languages and cultures. This viewpoint opens a conversation about what it means to listen across languages, borders, and identities.

Ultimately, this session argues that inclusive and accessible literature is essential today

more than ever for creating spaces where children and young people can listen to each other's voices, and to their own

Edson "Edd" Tello is the author of the young adult novels *Only Pieces* and *No Place for Fairy Tales* and the middle-grade novel *Daylan and the River of Secrets*, a 2025 Américas Award Commended Title. A graduate of the Master of Publishing program at Simon Fraser University, he also holds a master's degree in creative writing from the University of Seville. Edd previously worked as an English teacher in elementary schools in Mexico. His work explores identity, migration, mental health, and LGBTQ+ belonging. He lives in Toronto.

Seung-eun Sung (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea), Translating Queer Voices: Reception of LGBT-themed Children's Literature in South Korea

This study examines the interplay between translation and LGBT-themed children's literature in South Korea, focusing on how translation shapes the publication and circulation of such books and is in turn shaped by their social acceptance and resistance. Two complementary approaches are employed: a diachronic sociological analysis of the circulation of LGBT-themed literature, and a close reading of texts and paratexts to trace the mediation of LGBT themes.

The study first tracks publication trends of LGBT-themed children's books in South Korea — both translated and originally authored — to assess how their presence has evolved over time. It then examines the representation of LGBT themes in authoritative recommended book lists, which strongly influence reading choices and educational legitimacy in South Korea. Finally, textual and paratextual analysis of translated LGBT-themed picturebooks reveals how LGBT content is mediated in translation. The findings show that while the number of LGBT-themed books has gradually increased, translations sometimes avoid direct expressions of LGBT identities. Paratexts — such as covers and blurbs — at times reframe narratives by foregrounding themes of gender equality and diversity rather than explicitly expressing LGBT themes. This study demonstrates that translation functions as both a mechanism of dissemination and a reflection of sociocultural negotiation, highlighting its role in introducing LGBT-themed children's literature to Korean readers while revealing the ongoing tensions between acceptance and resistance.

Seung-eun Sung, PhD, is Professor of Translation Studies at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS), South Korea. Her research and teaching explore the intersections of language, culture, and mediation, with interests in translating for children, K-content translation, and indirect translation. Her publications on children's literature translation include "Translating Wordplay for Children," "Why Not Japanese Names? Reader Response to Character Name Translation," and "Textual and Paratextual Transformations

in Translated LGBT Picturebooks in South Korea." She serves on the Executive Committee of KBBY and as Editor of *The Journal of Translation Studies*.

Katarzyna Mikke (University of Warsaw, Poland), Neuroqueer Transformations: Rethinking Young Adult Fantasy and Horror through Neurodivergent Narratives

This paper examines how young adult fantasy and horror narratives written by neurodivergent authors articulate neuroqueer subjectivities—identities emerging at the intersection of neurodivergence and queerness—through experimental storytelling and altered sensory worlds. Grounded in Nick Walker's conception of neuroqueerness as both identity and resistance, and in Melanie Yergeau's theorization of autistic rhetoricity and expressivity, the study analyzes how these authors reimagine perception, emotion, and embodiment within speculative settings. Works such as A.J. White's *Hell Followed with Us*, A.M. McLemore's *Lakelore*, and Akwaeke Emezi's *Pet* demonstrate how fantasy and horror genres become fertile spaces for representing divergent cognitive realities. These narratives destabilize normative representations of mind and body, transforming overstimulation into heightened magical awareness, miscommunication into alternative epistemologies, and isolation into radical interiority. By employing fragmented perspectives, sensory immersion, and nonlinear temporality, neurodivergent authors challenge ableist conventions while crafting inclusive narrative forms that echo the rhythms of neurodivergent experience. The paper argues that neuroqueer YA speculative fiction does not simply seek representation but performs it structurally: it rewires genre expectations to mirror the fluidity, dissonance, and creativity inherent to neurodivergent selfhood. Yet even as these narratives are formally and conceptually innovative, they often revisit recurring tropes - the gifted outsider, the cursed body, the haunted threshold - that reveal the persistent cultural frameworks through which difference becomes narratively legible.

Katarzyna Mikke is a PhD candidate in literary studies at the University of Warsaw. Her research focuses on neurodiversity and literature for children and young adults, with particular interest in contemporary narratives and inclusive perspectives.

Friday, 7 August
11:00-12:00

KN 02 Keynote Speaker
Hasmig Chahinian, Children's Literature as a Welcoming Space for World Languages
Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200
IBBY Moderator: Josiane Polidori (IBBY Canada)

Whether as windows onto the world or reflections of intimate experiences, children's books help shape readers' identities and structure their vision of the world. Children's literature can offer a space for interaction with the various languages and cultures of the world, where children would also find their own languages and cultures. But is this vision of a unifying, respectful, and egalitarian children's literature realistic? And how can we offer alternative perspectives to today's readers, the future citizens of tomorrow's world?

Hasmig Chahinian is responsible for IBBY France at the National Centre for Children's Literature at the French National Library. She has been a member of IBBY's executive committee for many years, taking on various roles, and is currently serving as treasurer. With her Armenian, Lebanese, and French heritage, Hasmig has a strong interest in multicultural identity and languages; she runs training courses and publishes articles on the subject. Her doctoral thesis focused on the relationship between Armenian children's reading and the formation of their identity. Hasmig founded the Kotot publishing house to offer quality books in Armenian for children.

Friday, 7 August
1:00-4:00 PM
Posters

PS 02
Richcraft Hall

Linda Stjernholm (Lund University, Sweden), No One Left Behind: Disability and Disaster in Nordic Children's Books

From postwar optimism to contemporary climate anxiety, Nordic children's literature has long reflected changing ideas of safety, vulnerability, and preparedness. This poster presents some preliminary insights on how stories for children respond to an insecure world by tracing representations of crisis and care across time. It asks how notions of safety are narrated, who is imagined as responsible for preparedness, and what happens when disability enters these story worlds. Focusing on examples from Swedish and to some extent Nordic children's books, the analysis identifies a shift from collective postwar

narratives of rebuilding and protection toward more fragmented, individualized depictions of risk and uncertainty. When disabled characters appear, they often challenge the boundaries of who belongs within the “safe” community, exposing the tensions between independence, interdependence, and exclusion. By reading these stories through the lens of disability and disaster, the results suggests that preparedness in children’s literature is not only about surviving disruption but also about imagining inclusion. These narratives reveal how ideas of care, dependency, and shared vulnerability shape children’s cultural understanding of safety in times of crisis, and how literature can reimagine what it means to be prepared together

Linda Stjernholm is a PhD student at Lund University in Sweden, as well as an author and former librarian. Her work sits at the intersection of literature, disability studies, and disaster preparedness. She explores how stories can support understanding, agency, and safety for children and young adults, particularly those with intellectual disabilities. She writes across formats, including easy-to-read books and middle-grade fiction, and draws on her library background to examine how stories are shared in everyday settings. Her research focuses on inclusive storytelling and making complex topics accessible to all readers.

Antra Singh (Presidency University, India), Challenging Stereotypes: Disability and Girlhood in Dusti Bowling’s *Life of a Cactus* **Series**

Disability refers to a condition that impacts an individual's ability to carry out certain daily life activities and social interactions due to physical, mental, cognitive or developmental conditions. Gender significantly influences how disability is perceived and experienced within society. Including disability narratives in children’s and young adult literature fosters empathy and understanding toward this marginalised community. This poster presentation examines the intersection of gender and disability in Dusti Bowling’s *Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus* (2017) and *Momentous Events in the Life of a Cactus* (2019) through the lens of Rosemarie Garland-Thomson’s feminist disability theory. This two-part series, written for children and young adults respectively, depicts the journey of Aven, a young girl born without arms. The first novel explores her efforts to navigate school life, assert independence and challenge gendered and ableist stereotypes. Her adoptive parents’ belief in equal opportunities for children regardless of gender or disability reinforces the theme of inclusivity. Through Conner, a boy with Tourette’s Syndrome, Bowling represents the diverse experiences of disabled individuals. The sequel follows Aven’s adolescent journey toward self-discovery and belonging as she redefines what it means to be “normal”. This poster argues that Bowling’s novels reimagine disability not as a limitation but as a source of agency, empowerment, and resilience. Both novels conclude with reflective questions that encourage readers to critically think and engage with the text. By doing so, Bowling invites readers to examine their attitudes toward disability and normalcy.

Antra Singh is a Doctoral Researcher in English at the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Presidency University, Bangalore, India. Her research focuses on climate fiction, ecocriticism, and contemporary children's and young adult literature. She is currently working on Indian climate fiction for young readers, examining how narratives engage with environmental crises and ecological grief. Her broader research interests include graphic narratives for younger audiences addressing themes of mental health and intergenerational trauma, as well as gender and disability studies. She has presented her work at numerous national and international conferences and actively contributes to academic discussions in children's literary studies.

Lina Krnic (Ibis grafika, Croatia), Festivals for all: Private and Public Sector Partnership in the Context of Children's Literature Festivals

In 2022, Ibis grafika, an independent publishing house started up a partnership with two separate public bodies to bring a free event for children of all ages to the local community. Organised in two completely different environments – one in the country's capital, and one in a small island community – each event presented their own challenges and opportunities. Through the years, the events have grown into recognised festivals in their regions, and one of the main goals of these events – accessibility to literary events and the opportunity to meet domestic and international authors of contemporary children's literature – has been the main guide in developing new activities. Now, approaching the fifth edition of both festivals, we are proud to include accessible events such as book presentations and workshops with translation into sign language, audio book programme and signposting in braille, and storytelling experts specialising in work with children, youth and adults with disabilities. Another initiative which we have practiced since 2024 is organising transport for groups of children from distant, and often socially or economically disadvantaged, areas.

The effects of these festivals on local community will be presented through experiences of festival guests (authors and illustrators), visitors (children, parents, teachers), experts (storytellers, workshop leaders) and organisers, and special attention will be given to how the practices introduced with these events have spread to new areas and became sustainable community events. Best practices of including marginalised groups, such as children with developmental disabilities and vision and hearing impaired children will be presented.

Lina Krnic is an international project manager in the independent Croatian publishing house Ibis grafika. She acquired her BA in English Literature and Sociology from the University of Zagreb, and an MA in Applied Linguistics from the University of Essex in the UK. Her professional focus is on bringing high quality, quirky and artistic youth literature from various languages to the Croatian readers and implementing reading encouragement activities. She was the initiator of the first Croatian publishing fellowship programme organised in 2024. She also works as a translator between English and Croatian.

Janis Nostbakken (Canadian Children's Book Centre, Canada) and Trish Osuch (Canadian Children's Book Centre, Canada), Discovering the World of Reading: Accessible Books for Young Readers

All kids have the right to read. Children and youth with no/low vision, with mobility issues that prevent them from holding a book or turning a page, with learning challenges such as dyslexia, all need books in accessible formats (braille, ebooks, audiobooks, decodables) to allow them equal access to information, shared experiences, and the opportunity to explore topics of their choosing. These readers must be considered and included in how we publish.

The Canadian Children's Book Centre's Accessible Books for Young Readers Project offers an innovative approach to raising awareness of the need for equity and inclusion of all young readers, addressing accessibility barriers, enhancing discoverability of Canadian titles in accessible formats, and expanding audiences. Working with accessibility experts and collaborating with libraries and schools, we have developed a multi-platform strategy that includes:
* a searchable online catalogue of accessible books for children and teens
* webinars and videos
* book reviews/columns by writers with the lived experience of a print disability
* public engagement to share lessons we learn through our work.
The overall effect is greater than the sum of its parts creating synergy among the various components. By incorporating several entry points for engagement, we expand our reach for the benefit of all audiences. This approach ensures a lasting impact contributing to a more inclusive and informed society where children of all abilities can discover diverse voices in the books they read.

The **Canadian Children's Book Centre** is committed to promoting the use of accessible Canadian books for young people.

Janis Nostbakken leads our Accessible Books for Young Readers project. She is a children's media specialist with over 40 years of experience in creating programs and materials for young people. She has served as a jurist for several grants and prizes and on charitable organization boards.

Trish Osuch is a marketing consultant and digital media producer who has been working with arts organizations, book publishers, and companies for over 15 years. She sits on the board of directors of IBBY Canada.

Laura Bonora (University of Bologna, Italy), A Drawings and Poems Book (1942-1944): Artistic Experience to Face the Trauma of the Holocaust

The children's book *I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Children's Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp, 1942-1944* by Hana Volavkova (1904-1985), curator of the Jewish Museum in Prague, contains drawings and poems by children interned by Nazi troops in the Terezin ghetto (Czechoslovakia). The drawings, in particular, were created by the children under the guidance of the Viennese Jewish artist Friedl Dicker (1898-1944) who was imprisoned in the same ghetto-fortress in 1942. There, Dicker worked alongside the educators of Children's House L 410, organising art workshops for the children. Through drawing and artistic expression, Dicker wanted to convey her energy to the sad and traumatised children to comfort them and help them mentally survive at the imprisonment and ghettoisation. In 1944, Dicker and many of her children were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Many of these drawings are now preserved in the Jewish Museum in Prague. My poster aims to present this important experience of children's drawing in the 20th century in the chapter on Mental Health; A reflection on the drawings of children exposed to the trauma of suffering and deprivation, starting from Hana Volavkova's text, along with a reconstruction of Friedl Dicker's artistic, pedagogical, and educational experience and a study and analysis of the work of collecting and preserving drawings. This story is part of my doctoral research, conducted at the Department of Education Studies at the University of Bologna.

Laura Bonora is a third-year Italian PhD student in the field of History of Education at the Department of Education Studies "G.M. Bertin" at the University of Bologna. In 2007 she graduated from the Department of Architecture at the University of Ferrara and in 2020 she graduated from the Department of Communication and Art Education at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna. From 2016 she works as Art and Image teacher at lower secondary school. Her interest lies in teaching art and architecture in schools, particularly through art books for children and young adults, such as illustrated ones.

Lola Rubio (ALIJA-IBBY, Argentina), GIRAPALABRAS: Literature and Otherness. Enhancing Literary Mediation and Artistic Expression in Health Settings

GIRAPALABRAS: Literature and Otherness is an initiative by ALIJA Recognized with the Yamada-IBBY Foundation Award for 2025. “TERRITORY OF ENCOUNTERS” is the name for 2025 program aimed at enhancing literary mediation and artistic expression in health settings, always emphasizing the importance of literature and art in nurturing emotional and playful development.

Through engaging with health teams, ALIJA seeks to unlock the potential of books and artistic practices, enhancing the symbolic and emotional capabilities of patients and their families. The program also values language and cultural transmission, fostering activities that celebrate various linguistic forms and promote oral and written cultural traditions linked to emotions and shared enjoyment.

Additionally, GIRAPALABRAS focuses on creating sustainable networks among institutions and social actors, empowering professionals in the health sector to feel valued, skilled, and capable of implementing replicable and participatory work practices. The

overarching goal is to facilitate the expression of individuals' inner worlds and make the external environment more livable.

GIRAPALABRAS operates in five key locations, including the Mental Health Centers No. 1 and No. 3, the Dr. Ricardo Gutiérrez Children's Hospital, the Houssay Hospital, and the National Congress Library, all situated in Buenos Aires. Participants encompass a diverse range of health professionals, including psycho-pedagogues, psychologists, speech therapists, residents, and volunteers, as well as patients such as infants, children, young people, and their families.

Lola Rubio is former president of ALIJA-IBBY, Argentinian section, from 2019 to 2021. Juror for the H C Andersen Award (IBBY) in 2016 and 2018, and juror at Bologna Ragazzi Awards 2026. Editor of children's and youth Books at Fondo de Cultura Económica de Argentina. School librarian for 30 years and university lecturer in Publishing (UBA). She received the *Pregonero Award* for Specialist granted by the El Libro Foundation of Buenos Aires (2025). Diploma in Childhood and Youth Narratives, FLACSO. Advanced Specialist in Children's and Youth Literature, CePA-GCBA. Degree in Publishing from Universidad de Buenos Aires. National Painting Professor from the National School of Fine Arts Prilidiano Pueyrredón.

Chang Li (University of Padova, Italy), Fostering Inclusive Childhood Imaginaries: A Digital Platform for Female Biographies in Gender Education

Stories shape childhood imagination and cultural identity. Offering children narratives beyond traditional stereotypes expands their sense of possibility and challenges limiting beliefs. Biographies play a crucial role in this process, presenting real lives through which children can explore diverse roles and perspectives (Douglas, 2022). By including different female figures through time and spaces, such narratives create connections between past lives and young readers' futures, fostering their imaginaries (Beauvais, 2020). Currently, various platforms target different themes in children's literature: diversity, migration, disability, etc. Examples include Diverse BookFinder and the Cooperative Children's Book Center. They demonstrate how narratives serve as vital forms of dissemination and support educators in daily practice. However, research proves that critical gaps remain in portraying female biographies for children (Malpezzi, 2023; Couceiro, 2022). This is the reason why, based on the BIBI project, we will discuss a platform functioning as accessible repository and educational toolkit. Beyond well-known figures like Frida Kahlo and Marie Curie, our platform will introduce a broader spectrum of women's stories. The database will organise 100 biographical works across cultures, historical periods and 7 thematic categories (Politics-Activism, Science, Literature-Philosophy, Arts, Sports, Adventure, History-Memory). From Brazilian judoka Rafaela Silva to China's emperor Wu Zetian, the platform gathers contents through an interactive cloud visualisation system. Therefore, educators can navigate it, modify archives, and utilise flexible filtering structures: featuring 300 female figures, resulting around 3100 possible intersections across contexts, continents and periods. This platform represents a strategic

visual, literary and educational tool, which combines interconnected biographic nodes with multiple pedagogical possibilities

Chang Li is a PhD candidate at the University of Padova. His doctoral research critically examines how picturebooks from Eastern European borderlands have conceptualised hope over the last decade. He situates this inquiry at the intersection of uncertainty and ideology within literature. He is an Erasmus Mundus CLMCE Scholar (2022-2024) and an International Youth Library Fellow (2026).

Friday, 7 August
1:30-2:30

KN 03 Keynote Speaker
Khodi Dill, Black Ink: Exploring the Power and Potential of Lit-Hop
Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200
IBBY Moderator: Rick Wilks (IBBY Congress Scientific Committee)

Canadian author, educator, emcee, and spoken-word artist Khodi Dill will focus this presentation on the immense potential that lies within spoken word and hip-hop as underrepresented and untapped literary forms for young people. These powerful and historically Black genres have the power to change lives, inspire movements, and overcome injustice, for the benefit of people of all identities. The late great Nikki Giovanni spoke about the "Black ink" of rap music and other genres as a part of the canon of world literature. In her words, "Black Lives Matter. Black Ink reminds us of why."

Khodi Dill is an author, anti-racism educator, spoken-word artist, and emcee from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. His work focuses on themes of social justice, Black identity, hip-hop, and joy. Well known for his picture books *Welcome to the Cypher* and *Little Black Lives Matter,* his latest publication is a non-fiction book for young adults titled *stay up: racism, resistance, and reclaiming Black freedom* (Annick Press). For more on Khodi, visit thegreygriot.com or follow @KhodiDill on social media.

Friday, 7 August
2:35-3:30 PM

PP 10 Panel: Migrants: Wordless Picturebooks and the Lampedusa Project
Nicol Building 3030
IBBY Moderator: Mingzhou Zhang (IBBY International)

Deborah Soria (Silent Books—Final Destination Lampedusa IBBY Project, Italy), A Very Powerful Silence

After fourteen years, the "Silent Books final destination Lampedusa" IBBY project has grown from a simple idea into a global movement, planting seeds of knowledge, empathy, and research across continents. This talk aims to connect the dots between the many experiences, reading activities, and cultural exchanges that wordless books have inspired within the IBBY community and beyond.

Through examples drawn from libraries, classrooms, and refugee centers, the presentation will explore how silent books transcend linguistic barriers, enabling communication and understanding where words might fail. From promoting inclusion to supporting literacy and intercultural dialogue, the project has shown how images can become a universal language that unites readers of all ages and backgrounds.

This paper will celebrate the collective achievements of those who have contributed to the project—authors, illustrators, educators, librarians, and volunteers—demonstrating how their sustained efforts have opened new pathways for creativity, collaboration, and research. By reflecting on fourteen years of practice and growth, this presentation will offer a deeper understanding of the many possibilities that have emerged from this shared endeavor. The Silent Books Project reminds us that even without words, books can speak powerfully—building bridges where borders once stood

Deborah Soria has been a children's bookseller since 1999, specializing in children's literature and illustrated books. In addition to managing her bookshop Ottimomassimo, located in Rome, since 2006 she has also been running a travelling bookshop set up in a van. Involved in numerous projects dedicated to the promotion of children's literature in all its forms, she firmly believes that books play an essential role in the education of new generations and that the power of stories remains a fundamental pillar for the growth of communities. Since 2012 she has collaborated with IBBY, coordinating the Silent Books - Final Destination Lampedusa project, and since 2017 she has been responsible for the IBBY Lampedusa library on the island itself. She also manages the IBBY Camps, volunteer initiatives dedicated to promoting reading on the Mediterranean border. In her commitment to spreading the best literature among the youngest, she collaborates with the magazine *Internazionale Kids*, selecting titles for the reading recommendations column. She also dedicates herself to projects that address issues related to gender differences and prejudice in children's literature, within the initiative called Fammi Capire.

Jared S. Crossley (The Ohio State University, USA) and Lisa Pinkerton (The Ohio State University, USA), Listening to Silence: Building Bridges to Understanding with the IBBY Silent Books Collection

In a world increasingly characterized by nationalism, building intercultural bridges for understanding is essential, especially for children. Wordless picturebooks, which rely solely on visual storytelling, offer a unique opportunity to transcend language barriers and engage readers across cultures. Building on the work of Napoli and Colabucci (2025), who analyzed 15 wordless picturebooks from USBBY's Outstanding International Books list, our

study seeks to expand the conversation by examining the IBBY Silent Books Collection, a larger curated set of international wordless picturebooks (McGillicuddy, 2018). This collection was created in 2013 by IBBY Italia in response to refugee migration, with the "understanding that the inherent narrative power of the images could bridge cultural and linguistic barriers" (Hjortan & Corneliuson, 2016). Grounded in Reader-response theory and visual semiotics, this thematic content analysis explores recurring themes, visual motifs, and narrative structures across the Silent Books Collection. Initial coding and cross-case comparisons reveal patterns that reflect shared human experiences, including migration, resilience, and a sense of belonging. These findings are especially timely in light of current global political efforts to tear bridges down through increasing nationalism. The wordless picturebook form enables children to listen to stories and voices around the world, regardless of linguistic backgrounds. The international nature of IBBY's Silent Books Collection encourages children to rebuild bridges across cultures and languages (Short, 2009; Yokota & Teale, 2017). We hope that this collection might fortify the bridges that Jella Lepman built nearly 80 years ago and continue her legacy of promoting international understanding through children's books.

Jared S. Crossley is an Assistant Professor of Literacy and Literature for Children and Adolescents at The Ohio State University at Marion. A former elementary school teacher of students in grades 4-5, he is highly interested in the use of books in the classroom, particularly to increase reading motivation. His research interests include international wordless picturebooks, middle-grade literature, and the history of children's literature in the United States. He has been a proud member of USBBY since 2017 and is currently an elected director of the USBBY board.

Lisa Pinkerton is a Clinical Associate Professor at The Ohio State University at Columbus. A longtime member of USBBY (since 2011), she served on the USBBY Asahi Reading Promotion Award Nominating Committee (2022-2023) and the United States Hans Christian Andersen Award Jury (2018). Her research interests include wordless picturebooks, arts-based research methodologies, and the role of children's literature in education. A former Chair of the USBBY Publicity Committee, she is passionate about spreading book joy and loves introducing students and teachers to global stories that inspire wonder.

Qingzhi Zhu (Nanjing Normal University, China), The Narrative Aesthetics and Cross-Cultural Characteristics of Wordless Picture Books

Wordless picturebooks represent a distinctive literary form that departs from traditional text-image integration, relying exclusively on visual imagery for narrative construction. These texts establish a reading space wherein readers must engage their visual narrative competence and actively participate in meaning-making through sensory interpretation. The absence of verbal text eliminates linguistic barriers, rendering wordless picturebooks directly accessible and comprehensible to readers across diverse cultural contexts,

thereby conferring inherent advantages for cross-cultural dissemination. The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), through its “Silent Books, from the world to Lampedusa and back” initiative launched in 2012, specifically curated exceptional wordless picturebooks from around the world for refugee children, strategically leveraging the "linguistically barrier-free" characteristic of this medium. This study adopts an interdisciplinary perspective encompassing the literary connotations and visual narratology of wordless picturebooks, examining three fundamental dimensions: the historical development and conceptual framework of wordless picturebooks, the construction of visual language systems within these texts, and their capacity to transcend cultural and linguistic boundaries. Through this tripartite analytical framework, the research investigates how wordless picturebooks, as a unique visual narrative art form integrating literature and visual arts, maintain cultural specificity and educational rigor within contexts that transcend linguistic limitations.

Qingzhi Zhu is affiliated with the School of Literature, Nanjing Normal University, China.

Roundtable 03: Public Lending Right (PLR) Onstage Discussion

Richcraft Hall 2228

IBBY Moderator: Hadley Dyer (IBBY Congress Fundraising & Sponsorship)

Chair: Peter Schneider (Public Lending Right Commission, Canada)
Panelists: Pilar Martinez (Edmonton Public Library, Canada) and Patricia (Patsy) Aldana (Independent, Canada)

Under the auspices of the 2026 IBBY World Congress in Ottawa, we will present a 60-minute onstage discussion related to the Canadian Public Lending Right Program, which operates under the Canada Council for the Arts. Established in 1986, the Public Lending Right Program in Canada is guided by the Public Lending Right Commission, a bilingual advisory board that assembles perspectives and expertise from creators, publishers, librarians, and government agencies.

Children’s literature represents the largest genre category (exceeding one-third of all registered titles) in terms of the distribution of payments, which currently amounts tp$14.6M overall in annual compensation to a vast community of Canadian authors, translators, illustrators, photographers, and audiobook narrators for the presence of their work in public library collections and the value that this creativity adds to the daily lives of the reading and listening public.

During our onstage presentation, the Executive Secretary to the Public Lending Right Commission, Peter Schneider, will engage in conversation with two exemplary leaders with deep connection to the cause of PLR in Canada and to the larger mission of IBBY: Patricia Aldana, and Pilar Martinez. The panelists will draw from their own professional experience to describe the ongoing success and importance of books created for

children and for young readers and the work that is taking place inside Canadian public libraries to foster access, inclusion, and literacy for new generations. Time will be allotted at the conclusion of the onstage discussion to allow for audience Q&A.

Patricia (Patsy) Aldana is Founder and Former Publisher of Groundwood Books, past president of IBBY, former president of the IBBY Trust, and current publisher of Aldana Libros, an imprint on Greystone Kids.

Pilar Martinez is the Chief Executive Officer of the award-winning Edmonton Public Library, where she has championed innovative, community-led, and digital services that support access and learning at all stages of life. With extensive executive leadership experience, Pilar is a strong advocate for libraries' role in fostering reading and supporting early literacy and young readers. She is actively engaged in sector leadership, serving on boards in Canada and the United States, including her role with the Public Lending Right (PLR) Commission.

Peter Schneider is Manager, Public Lending Right Program/Executive Secretary, Public Lending Right Commission.

PD 02 Panel: Listening, Echoes, and Dialogues: Gendered Biographical Practices in Childhood Education

Nicol Building 3020

IBBY Moderator: Elisabetta Lippolis (IBBY International)

This panel introduces BIBI – Biografie e Biofiction d'infanzia, a national educational research programme funded by the Presidency of the Italian Council of Ministers (Department for Equal Opportunities). The project promotes gender awareness and inclusive education through biographical and biofictional picturebooks for children aged 3–14. Its goal is to broaden young readers' understanding of women's lives and achievements across history and diverse cultural–geographical contexts, offering models of respect, equality, and social participation.

Implemented by the interdisciplinary LETIN research team at the University of Padova, BIBI involves over 200 municipalities and schools in seven Italian regions, supported by a national network of libraries, publishers (Settenove), and the critical journal LiBeR. The initiative has developed and tested educational kits, digital archives, and monitoring tools in collaboration with teachers, educators, and cultural practitioners.

The project unfolded in four phases—planning, experimentation, validation, and dissemination—combining teacher training, classroom pilots, and qualitative–quantitative evaluation. Preliminary findings show that positioning biography as a dialogic and participatory space nurtures authentic listening between adults and children and translates gender equality into daily practice.

The three papers explore how listening as an epistemic and methodological stance operates across the BIBI research: in texts, in children's interpretive voices, and in the tools used to record and analyse those voices. Chiara Malpezzi examines the polyphony of contemporary childhood biographies; Marnie Campagnaro presents the participatory process involving teachers and students; and Lea Ferrari discusses the assessment system and reflective tools capturing the transformative power of listening in education.

Chiara Malpezzi (University of Padova, Italy), Weaving Multiple Voices in Childhood Biography

In childhood biography, a dialogue unfolds among multiple voices: the biographical subject, the biographer, and the young reader. The protagonists may belong to distant historical or cultural contexts; nevertheless, their lives embody forms of alterity (Dosse, 2005) that invite empathetic engagement and critical reflection (Michael, 2023). Through narrative and visual strategies, the author shapes knowledge about the subject, articulating specific conceptions of human life (Goga, 2020).

This study investigates how contemporary picturebooks and illustrated biographies negotiate these layered perspectives through hybrid narrative forms (Douglas, 2022)—fictional first person, alternating narrators, and choral interludes—that open dialogic spaces for the reader. Visual storytelling and paratexts such as epilogues and nonfictional notes further sustain this polyphony, mediating boundaries between fiction and reality without interrupting the child's engagement. With particular attention to female figures, the paper analyses biographies in which this polyphony of voices becomes especially meaningful: where the meeting between reader, biographer, and biographee generates powerful acts of listening and recognition. These include works dedicated to poets such as Sappho and Emily Dickinson, scientists such as Rachel Carson and Maria Montessori, and political or activist figures such as Simone de Beauvoir or Franca Rame.

Drawing on close readings of award-winning European and Anglo-American picturebooks and illustrated biographies, the paper argues that this polyphonic mode allows young readers to encounter difference, develop ethical imagination, and recognize their own agency as interpreters. Ultimately, contemporary childhood biography becomes a shared listening space where cultural memory and personal identity converge.

Marnie Campagnaro (University of Padova, Italy), Listening to Children's Voices: Participatory Biographical Practices in the BIBI Project

Grounded in recent scholarship that positions biography as a dialogic and identity-shaping form in children's literature (Beauvais, 2020; Couceiro, 2022), this paper presents the participatory research process developed within BIBI programme. The study investigates how teachers and children engage with women's life stories (Couceiro, 2025) to question gender stereotypes (Banet-Weiser, 2018) and to cultivate ethical listening in

educational contexts.

Twenty-four teachers from seven Italian regions were invited to participate in the project and attended a 15-hour training programme focused on radical children's literature, gender representation, biographical narration, and participatory research methodology. Between October and December, this training phase also introduced participants to a curated corpus of individual and collective biographical picturebooks for children, featuring women from diverse times and cultural contexts (Nellie Bly, Rosalind Franklin, Wangari Maathai, Maria Sibylla Merian, Rafaela Silva, and Alfonsina Strada) whose portrayals articulate women's individual and collective voices across history and culture.

Building on this shared foundation, the research was implemented in classrooms between January and March through eight structured activities following a 70/30 model: 70 percent shared tasks and 30 percent teacher-designed extensions. Teachers and pupils documented their work in reflective diaries and completed pre/post assessment tools, with continuous feedback meetings linking classroom practice and analysis.

Preliminary results show that dialogic reading and collaborative meaning-making deepened teachers' awareness of gender representation and strengthened children's capacity for critical empathy. The BIBI model demonstrates how participatory literary practice transforms biography into a shared space of listening, where educational, narrative, and social voices converge.

Lea Ferrari (University of Padova, Italy), Listening through Research Tools: Insights from Mapping Voices in Participatory Gender Education

Understanding teachers' attitudes toward gender stereotypes and their knowledge of women's biographies is crucial for designing training programs that can meaningfully influence professional development and, consequently, classroom practices.

This paper focuses on the research tools developed within the project to capture teachers' and children's evolving perspectives on gender, role identity, and women's biographies. Created collaboratively by an interdisciplinary team of psychologists, children's literature scholars, and pedagogists, the tools include pre/post assessments (Gender Role Stereotypes Scale, Picture Classification Task, Puzzle Cards) and qualitative diaries documenting classroom interactions.

Following a literature review, two validated instruments were selected and adapted to the Italian context: the Gender Role Stereotypes Scale (GRSS; Mills et al., 2012) and the Picture Classification Task (Chung & Huang, 2021). A new tool, Do You Know These Women?, was designed to assess participants' knowledge of women's biographies. Respondents indicated whether they recognized 30 women's names varying in public recognition (low,

medium, high) and field of activity (e.g., literature, science).

The tools were preliminarily tested with 85 Italian teachers in training. The GRSS showed good psychometric properties (α = .74) and revealed that 83.3% of participants fully identified with feminine gender role stereotypes. In the PIC, 499 of 680 paired choices (73%) were gender stereotypical. Regarding knowledge of women's biographies, 26.2% recognized fewer than 10 names, 60.7% between 11 and 15, and 13.1% between 16 and 18. These findings highlight the persistence of gender stereotypes and limited awareness of women's achievements, confirming the project's potential to foster gender equality in education.

PP 11 Panel: War and Trauma
Nicol Building 4030
IBBY Moderator: Tobechukwu Anyachebelu (IBBY International)

Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch (Independent Author, Canada), Listening to the Whispers: Giving Voice to Young People in the Midst of War

When the war in Ukraine began in 2022, Marsha Skrypuch's publisher urgently asked her to write a trilogy set during the current war. Marsha initially balked, but in time realized it was a moral responsibility to give voice to young people who are still in the midst of that war. Marsha discusses the challenge of giving accurate and compassionate voice to varied young people in the midst of war while not increasing their personal risk by doing so. Her books read like thrillers and those who struggle with novels are often hooked by hers. She chalks this up to her own dyslexic filter, which makes her see the world in images.

Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch is the author of 28 books for young people, yet she didn't read until age 9. She now considers dyslexia to be a gift. Her scrupulously researched historical fiction and narrative non-fiction focuses on refugees and war from a young person's perspective. Her books read like thrillers and those who struggle with novels are often hooked by hers. She chalks this up to her own dyslexic filter, which makes her see the world in images. Marsha has a Master of Library Science degree and worked as a librarian for the federal government before she began writing books. She considers herself a librarian-detective.

Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch is a Canadian author of Ukrainian heritage acclaimed for her nonfiction and historical fiction for young people, including *Making Bombs for Hitler*, *Winterkill,* and *Adrift at Sea*. Her newest work is the *Kidnapped from Ukraine* trilogy. She was awarded the Order of Princess Olha in 2010 by the President of Ukraine for writing books that broke through Russian disinformation. In 2022, Russia banned her for life for the same. She lives in Brantford, Ontario, and you can visit her online at calla.com

Marwa Al Aqroubi (UAEBBY, UAE), Kan Yama Kan: Building Libraries, Bridging Voices, and Healing Through Books

Kan Yama Kan, which means “Once Upon a Time” in Arabic, is an initiative launched by the
UAE Board on Books for Young People (UAEBBY) in 2015. It was inspired by the Big Heart Library in the Emirati–Jordanian Camp for Syrian refugees, inaugurated in 2014 by H.H. Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi, Founder and Patron of the UAEBBY. The library became a sanctuary where children discovered knowledge, comfort, and resilience through
books.

What began as a single library in a refugee camp has since grown into a global mission. Kan
Yama Kan has provided high-quality books to children in more than ten countries affected by
conflict, displacement, and natural disasters, including Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, India, Morocco, Egypt, and many more. To date, the initiative has distributed over 15,000 books and
received donations exceeding 50,000 titles. These efforts have established both permanent
and mobile libraries, transforming access to reading in underserved communities.

Beyond book distribution, Kan Yama Kan organizes bibliotherapy sessions that use storytelling
to nurture children’s emotional well-being and sense of identity. The use of silent books in various forms of activities further expands access by transcending language barriers, creating
spaces where empathy and imagination thrive among children of diverse backgrounds. With the recent closure of the Emirati–Jordanian Camp and relocation of the Big Heart Library collection, Kan Yama Kan reflects on a decade of impact while looking to the future. Its story is one of continuity, of books as bridges, and of stories as tools of healing and hope for children navigating uncertainty worldwide.

Marwa Al Aqroubi President of the UAE Board on Books for Young People (UAEBBY), and Supervisor of the International Award for Arabic Children’s Literature since its inception in 2009; Executive Director of Sharjah’s House of Wisdom; Member of the Board of Directors of the Sharjah Book Authority; and a prominent figure in the UAE’s cultural landscape. A champion of children’s literature, she has made significant strides in publishing and writing, earning her a
spot on the Bologna Children’s Book Fair Award panel in 2017. As a Board Member of the Sharjah Book Authority and BoT member of IBBY since 2017, she tirelessly promotes

reading as a daily habit for children, bringing innovative cultural initiatives into everyday life.

Hooria Rezaei (Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany), Stories of Hope: Literature Workshops for War-Witnessing Children amid Ongoing Instability in Tehran

This qualitative project explores children's literature as an informal learning space to foster resilience and post-traumatic growth among children aged 10–12 in Tehran who witnessed the 12-day Iran–Israel war of 2025 and subsequent domestic unrest in January 2026. Beyond these acute events, participants continue to live amid persistent social, political, and economic instability, shaping their emotional worlds and sense of safety. Grounded in cognitive literary theory (Nikolajeva, 2014), the study examines how fiction supports empathy, emotional regulation, and reflective thinking. It also draws on narrative-based trauma research (Jirek, 2017), emphasizing storytelling as a process of meaning-making and recovery, and recent findings (Ruppar, Barger, & Coyle, 2023) demonstrating the role of reading interventions in strengthening children's resilience.

The empirical phase, conducted between February and April 2026, consists of literature workshops using selected picturebooks and narrative texts addressing fear, loss, uncertainty, and hope. Through shared reading, dialogue, and creative storytelling, children are encouraged to express emotions, witness others' experiences, and re-author personal meanings under conditions of ongoing instability. Thematic and narrative analyses identify mechanisms through which literary engagement enables emotional expression, relational understanding, and hope-oriented growth. The project positions children's literature as a responsive listening space, where young witnesses negotiate trauma and agency. Findings, presented in August 2026, aim to inform trauma-sensitive literary pedagogy and contribute to international discussions on the restorative potential of stories in contexts of prolonged instability.

Hooria Rezaei is an MA student in Educational Science at Ruhr University Bochum, Germany. Her research focuses on empowering children through children's literature and non-formal educational settings. Her master's thesis explores literature workshops for war-witnessing children in Tehran. She is an independent researcher with practical experience as a children's workshop facilitator in Iran and Germany. Her academic and professional interests include child empowerment, reading promotion, and educational work outside formal school contexts.

Saturday, 8 August
8:00-9:25 AM

PP 12 Panel: Listening to Migrant and Refugee Voices
Nicol Building 3020
IBBY Moderator: Maral Maclagan (IBBY Canada)

Jaana Pesonen (University of Helsinki, Finland), Lonesome Child Refugees – Too Uncomfortable Narratives?

A decade ago, the images of overcrowded rubber boats became the new norm when describing the refugee situation in Europe. In media discourses refugees and asylum seekers have been represented also as elements of nature; wild, even destructive. (Pesonen 2020). While divisions of 'us and them' are recreated, such discourses might also foster generalized geopolitical imaginary about "others from far away" (Ahmed 2000). Refugee narratives - most commonly stories about people seeking sanctuary - have been offered as one solution to provide information, as well as increasing awareness of the ongoing humanitarian crisis (e.g. Hope 2008). Yet, social topics, such as immigration, are at times considered 'too difficult' and avoided by teachers due to their own fears and feelings of discomfort (Hawkman et al. 2022). Thus, while literature can - and should - create a safe space for all children to listen and share, social factors, and especially intersecting ones related to race, gender, social class, are at times seen as challenging. This paper is a close reading of two Finnish picturebooks: Frank Furu's and Linda Bondestam's Ni är inte min mamma (You are not my mother, 2021) and Eppu Nuotio's and Sanna Pelliccioni's Lappukaulatyttö (Sent across the Sea, 2022). The paper focuses on these child refugees' experiences and feelings of loneliness and exclusion, as both are lonesome in a strange country. In addition to looking at how injustice is projected without painting a picture of these children as victims, I also ask: How do narratives of refugee children enable so called difficult and uncomfortable knowledge?

Jaana Pesonen (PhD) works as a University Lecturer at the University of Helsinki in Finland. Her research and teaching focuses on culture studies, norm critical pedagogies, and anti-racist education. In her research on children's literature, she has examined, e.g. the production of gender through normative ideas of emotions, embodiment, and spaces, as well as queer literacy as a means of promoting a more equal future. She is an active member of IBBY Finland.

Yoo Kyung Sung (University of New Mexico, USA), Forgotten Border Crossings: Rethinking Childhood, Belonging, and Unbelonging for North Korean Defectors

Discourses surrounding global immigration have gained increasing prominence, with much focus on border control and refugee resettlement in Western contexts. In the U.S., these debates are particularly heightened in border towns and states (Rodriguez Vega,

2023). However, the plight of North Korean defectors remains largely overlooked, often overshadowed by political narratives centered on Kim Jong Un. This presentation examines the portrayal of North Korean defectors in 23 contemporary realistic fiction books for children and adolescents published in South Korea. These texts fall within the category of multicultural children's literature and reflect South Korea's evolving attitudes toward national identity and belonging (Sung, 2015).

Guided by the research question; How are North Korean defectors represented in South Korean children's and adolescent literature?—this study employs critical content analysis grounded in postcolonial theory. It adapts Clare Bradford's (2007) concept of "white imagining" to the Korean peninsula, where dominant portrayals of North Koreans borrow from this framework to construct geopolitical Otherness. In this context, South Koreans imagine North Korea not in terms of racial difference, but through national, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic divergence positioning defectors as ideologically and socially alien.

Early portrayals of defectors in literature reflected suspicion and marginalization (Sung, 2015). More recent narratives depict resilience, adjustment, and belonging. The analysis identifies four themes: (1) disrupting normalcy in North Korean childhood, (2) navigating transnational borders and family separation, (3) facing uneasy adjustment in a new land, and (4) reshaping belonging through self-affirmation—revealing how literature redefines identity and expands the boundaries of imagined community.

Seyedali Kashefikhonsari (Iranian Association of Writers for Children and Youth, Iran), Children's Literature for Comfort, Adaptation, and Acceptance: The Case of Iranian Migrants in Canada

Between four and seven million Iranians and Iranian-descended people live outside Iran, many of whom are highly educated and active readers. While the effects of migration on children and the role of children's and young adult literature have been studied broadly, the specific experiences of Iranian migrant children remain underexplored. Key issues include their perception of the global Iranian diaspora, access to Persian-language books abroad, the role of literature in fostering empathy among host-country children, and the impact of Iranian publishers, authors, translators, and illustrators working in diaspora. This paper draws on qualitative data from interviews with Iranian publishers, migrants in Canada and other countries—especially parents—and members of the Iranian Association of Children's and Young Adult Writers who have engaged with Canadian institutions. Based on these insights, it offers recommendations for publishers, writers, promoters, and cultural policymakers. The recommendations aim to strengthen the role of literature in enhancing resilience, supporting adaptation to host societies, advancing racial equity, promoting inclusive education, and negotiating cultural and national identity. The strategic directions are emphasized: engaging migrant children with the history, society, and culture of host countries; preserving and redefining their connections to the literature

and culture of their homeland; and fostering recognition and acceptance of migrants among host-country children. Suggested measures include establishing an association of Iranian children's literature in Canada, organizing storytelling programs, increasing access to Iranian works in libraries, translating folklore and classics for host audiences, supporting cultural media initiatives, and building institutions that connect Iranian and host communities.

Roundtable 04: Listening to Each Other's Voices: Fighting Injustices through Children's Literature

Nicol Building 3030
IBBY Moderator: Dale Sutherland (IBBY Canada)

Chair: Char Moffit (California State University Chico, USA)
Panelists: Judith Dunkerly-Boulanger (Old Dominion University, USA), Kyle Lukoff (Independent Author, USA), and Patricia O'Connell Pearson (Simon and Schuster, USA)

In our age of divisive political rhetoric, systemic racial inequities, and the attempted erasure of LGBTQIA+ identities within and outside of schools, there is an urgent need for children's literature with a social justice lens to be included in our classrooms and curriculum (Authors, 2023). Picture books, graphic novels, and other youth-focused texts are "artifacts that convey cultural messages and values about society and help children learn about their world" (Koss,2015, p. 32). They also provide examples of youth speaking truth to power. In this World Cafe Roundtable (Brown & Issacs, 2005), the Co-Chairs of the International Literacy Association's Social Justice Literature Award (SJLA) and two winners of the SJLA book award, authors Patty O'Connell Pearson *(We are Children, Too: Black Students, White Supremacists, and the Battle for America's Schools in Prince Edward County Virginia)* and Kyle Lukoff (*If You're a Kid Like Gavin:The True Story of a Young Trans Activist)* discuss their books that demonstrate the ways youth have historically, and in current times, been powerful forces against racial and LGBTQIA+ systemic social injustice.

A world cafe, "focuses on the intimate exchange, disciplined inquiry, cross-pollination of ideas, and possibility thinking" (Löhr, Weinhardt, & Sieber, 2020, p.2). Given the immediacy and interrelatedness of the books' topics, this approach enables us to collectively engage with the ideas presented, construct understandings, encourage reflective learning, and develop new ideas with attendees. We will engage participants to provide opportunities for discussing how these topics can be approached in the K-12 classroom.

Char Moffit is an Associate Professor of Literacy Education at California State University, Chico. Her research interests include: the integration of literacy and science in elementary school using inquiry to teach students to be thinkers and doers; Children's literature that focuses on ecological and social justice issues; and supporting new rural educators. She teaches the following courses: Multicultural Children's Literature, Elementary Science

Methods, Elementary Literacy Methods, and Rural and Small School Education. Her work has been published in *The Reading Teacher* and *The Early Childhood Education Journal*.

Judith Dunkerly, Ph.D., is a professor of Literacy, Language, and Culture in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Darden College of Education and Professional Studies at Old Dominion University. Her research employs critical theories to explore the intersection of critical literacy, social justice, and human rights, with a focus on systemic injustice and oppression. Her work has been published in the *Journal of Literacy Research*, the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *The Reading Teacher*, *The Qualitative Research Journal*, and several edited volumes and handbooks. She can be reached at jdunkerl@odu.edu

Kyle Lukoff is the author of many books for young readers. His debut middle-grade novel, *Too Bright To See*, received a Newbery honor, the Stonewall award, and was a National Book Award finalist. His picture book *When Aidan Became A Brother* also won the Stonewall, and his book *Call Me Max* has been banned in schools across the country. He has forthcoming books about language, unicycles, breakups, and lots of other topics. While becoming a writer he worked as a bookseller for ten years, and then nine more years as a school librarian.

Award-winning author **P. O'Connell Pearson**—Patty—is a former high school history teacher and history content specialist from the Washington, DC, area. In addition to a B.A in history, she holds an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction from George Mason University and an MFA in writing for young people from Lesley University. She is the author of five narrative nonfiction history books for ages ten and up—all from Simon and Schuster and recognized by "best of" lists and awards. She is always on the lookout for stories of ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

PP 13 Panel: Combatting Silencing and Erasure: Gender, Sex, and Sexuality

Richcraft Hall 2228

IBBY Moderator: Kirsten Brassard (IBBY Congress Communications & Marketing Committee)

Marie D. Martel (Université de Montréal, Canada), Listening to Tensions: Inclusion and Gendered Voices in Canadian Children's Literature and School/Public Libraries

Listening to the other's voice in youth librarianship requires acknowledging the value conflicts that surface around works and collections. This presentation analyzes ten years of challenges in Canadian school and public libraries using the Canadian Library Challenges Database. Focusing on entries tied to gender and sexuality (pro-LGBTQIA2S+ titles, allegations of sexism, transphobia, homophobia, or "explicit content"), the study

maps: (1) motives for objection; (2) response mechanisms (review committees, selection policies, mediation); and (3) outcomes (retention, reclassification, withdrawal).

The analysis combines content examination of challenge records, a discursive typology (child protection, morality, pluralism, rights), and an inclusive reading of effects on young publics, asking whether marginalized voices—LGBTQIA2S+ youth, same-sex families, allies—are heard or muted in public debate.

Findings propose a tension grid (representation/erasure; safety/access; neutrality/social justice) and outline a practical toolkit for inclusion: transparent policies, explicit selection criteria, dialogic mediation with families, staff training, and clear public communication. Aligned with the theme "Listening to the Voice of the Other," the presentation argues that challenges are not merely conflicts but listening laboratories, revealing both expressed and silenced voices and the conditions under which young people feel represented in collections, spaces, and programs.

Marie D. Martel is Associate Professor at the École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information, Université de Montréal. Her research examines public and school libraries as social infrastructures, with a focus on intellectual freedom, inclusion, and youth services. She works at the intersection of critical librarianship, equity studies, and youth literacy and cultural representation. Her recent projects analyze book challenges, gendered controversies, and the socio-political dynamics surrounding collections in Canadian libraries. She is actively involved in collaborative research with professional associations and library institutions in Canada and internationally.

Sareh Arzpeima (Independent, Canada) and Ramineh Rezazadeh (Independent, Iran), The Quiet that Hurts: Censorship, Love, and the Lost Language of Childhood

In Iranian children's and young adult literature, love itself has been censored, its presence erased, its expression treated as a crime. For over four decades, post-revolutionary ideology has sought to protect childhood by purifying it, turning emotion into danger and affection into silence. Drawing on Michel Foucault's theory of disciplinary power, this paper reads censorship as more than prohibition: as a structure that shapes thought, feeling, and the literary imagination itself.

Within this moral framework, both boys and girls are allowed obedience but not tenderness; they may dream of duty, never of desire. Romance, intimacy, and even friendship are constrained by the state's vision of virtue. Literature thus becomes an instrument of surveillance—training readers to equate repression with care.

Yet, even under such pressure, some writers have quietly resisted. Authors like Farhad Hassanzadeh and Jamshid Khanian have written between the lines, crafting symbolic, emotionally charged narratives that allow love, grief, and longing to survive beneath allegory. Their works suggest that censorship cannot fully extinguish feeling; it merely teaches writers new ways to speak. By reading these implicit voices alongside diasporic

texts such as *Persepolis* and *If You Could Be Mine*, this paper explores how the forbidden language of love becomes a form of resistance—restoring to childhood its most human right: the right to feel.

Sareh Arzpeima has studied cinema and theatre and long walked through and worked within the world of children. To her, the cosmos lies open, a space we can imagine, question, and reshape. Her work centres on translating written realities, stories, and dreams into Farsi, opening windows onto children's lives and inner worlds. As both a teacher and researcher in children's literature, she seeks to uncover the hidden layers within the books children read and the societies they inhabit. Based in Canada, she brings a transnational, multilingual perspective connecting Iranian literary history with global conversations on childhood, voice, and freedom.

Ramineh Rezazadeh holds an M.A in English Literature and specializes in children's and young adult literature, with a focus on literary criticism, poetry, and the psychological dimensions of texts for young readers. She is a member of the Children's Book Council of Iran and the Association of Children and Young Adults Authors, where she previously served on the Board of Directors. Her professional activities include research, book evaluation, and critical analysis in children's literature, teaching in literature faculties and specialized critical departments, and serving as a judge for national and international fiction and poetry awards. She has translated and published works for young audiences and regularly presents lectures and scholarly contributions in the field including the 2024 IBBY World Congress in Italy

Mel Solórzano (Leo Leo Libros Bookshop, Puerto Rico), Reading Without Drama: Collective Care and the Invisible Labour of Reading Mediation

This presentation invites a conversation on the gendered, often invisible labour behind children's reading experiences. From book selection to storytime, it is mostly women—mothers, teachers, librarians—who sustain the everyday acts that make reading possible, meaningful, and lasting. Yet these women are often left out of the conversations that shape literary policy, curriculum, or publishing decisions. At Leo Leo Libros, a Puerto Rican bookstore and reading formation project, we've spent years working side-by-side with women who accompany children in reading—often quietly, creatively, and without recognition. We aim to build bridges between lived experience and literary discourse, and to centre the voices of those who carry reading in their bodies and their calendars, every day. In doing so, we echo the Congress theme—Listening to Each Other's Voices—by inviting visibility, connection, and collective recognition for the labour that sustains childhood reading across homes, classrooms, and libraries

Mel Solórzano is the founder of Leo Leo Libros Bookshop in Puerto Rico, an independent children's bookstore and reading formation project. Through curated book selections, workshops, and her podcast *Leer sin drama*, she creates spaces for thoughtful listening and dialogue around children's literature and literary mediation. Her work centres the

lived experiences of mothers, teachers, and librarians, recognizing the often-unseen labor that sustains childhood reading. With over fifteen years of experience in education and children's literature, advocates for slow reading, relational care, and community-rooted approaches to nurturing readers.

Cathy Fowler (SD#72 Campbell River BC, Canada) and Diana Maliszewski (Toronto District School Board, Canada), What Does "Sexually Explicit" Mean for School Library Materials in Canada—and Who Decides

In this session, we will examine the 2025 Alberta provincial government directive requiring the removal of "sexually explicit" materials from school libraries—an initiative that quickly sparked widespread concern among educators, parents, and society. The original policy, which targeted both written and visual material, resulted in a proposed list of more than 200 titles for removal, including well-established literary works. After intense public backlash and significant media scrutiny, the directive was narrowed to focus solely on visual depictions of sexual acts.

This policy evolution reflects the influence of conservative advocacy groups and a political framing centered on "protecting children." Yet critics—including library organizations, authors, and commentators—warned that the directive threatened intellectual freedom, disproportionately affected marginalized communities, and risked turning school libraries into sites of political contestation. Public engagement was profound, with more than 170,000 responses to a government survey, revealing the depth of societal division on censorship, representation, and educational governance.

Our presentation will situate this Alberta case within broader national conversations led by Canadian School Libraries (CSL), an organization committed to supporting school library learning commons across the country. CSL has worked to clarify best practices for curating and sustaining inclusive, pedagogically sound collections, while also listening closely to voices often under-represented.

We will highlight the strategies CSL used to foster constructive dialogue during this period of heightened tension and will consider how these approaches can help us "build capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect" as referenced in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Cathy Fowler has served as a librarian for nearly twenty-five years, leading transformative work in reimagining traditional libraries as dynamic learning commons. As a District Librarian Coordinator, she champions the ongoing relevance of libraries and librarians, advocating fiercely to keep these essential spaces open, current, and accessible to all students and educators. Her leadership extends provincially through her role on the executive of the British Columbia Teacher-Librarians' Association, where she supports and mentors emerging professionals. She is committed to fostering a new generation of librarians dedicated to ensuring that libraries remain safe, inclusive, and vibrant centers of learning for everyone.

Diana Maliszewski is a teacher-librarian in the Toronto District School Board. From 2006 - 2018, she was the editor-in-chief of *The Teaching Librarian*. Currently, she is the co-Vice President of the Association for Media Literacy and Canada's representative with the North American and European chapter of UNESCO's Media and Information Literacy Alliance. She also sits on the Canadian School Libraries Board of Directors and is co-editor of Canadian School Libraries Journal. She leads Teacher Librarianship Additional Qualification courses for York University and Queen's University and has been honoured with several awards for her work in school librarianship.

Elena Montalvo Hernández (César Vallejo University, Peru), Bridging Word and Image: Ethical Sensibilities in the *Historias para todos* Picturebooks

This research seeks to contribute to the consolidation of a contemporary critique of Peruvian Children's and Young Adult Literature (CYAL) through the analysis of the *Historias para todos* collection published by the editorial fund of Universidad César Vallejo. In this proposal, the picturebook is conceived as an aesthetic and fictional object that functions as a bridge between young readers and topics related to gender diversity, identity, otherness, the body, and multiple forms of affection. Its potential lies in opening pathways toward sensitivity, empathy, and ethical recognition by promoting new ways of reading the world and human relationships. From a critical and gender perspective, the study examines the interaction between word and image as an aesthetic-discursive device capable of generating diverse subjectivities and fostering inclusive ethical sensibilities.

The Peruvian literary tradition, historically marked by a heterocentrist and androcentric approach, has sustained a cultural imaginary in which female subordination and the absence of references that make sexual and affective diversity visible prevail. Within the field of CYAL, these limitations are reflected in the persistence of traditional discourses, the scarcity of female protagonists, and the normalization of family models.

In response to this context, *Historias para todos* proposes a break with stereotypes through narratives that reconfigure representations of the body, identity, and affection without falling into apologetic discourse. The main objective is to analyze how its picturebooks challenge heteronormativity and promote an ethics of diversity, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 4, 5, and 10), through a qualitative hermeneutic-interpretative approach based on critical discourse analysis and verbo-visual semiotic reading.

Elena Montalvo Hernández (Peru) is the Academic and Cultural Coordinator of the Editorial Fund at Universidad César Vallejo, where she leads projects in research, training, and reading mediation. She holds a Master's degree in Reading Promotion and Children's Literature from the University of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain) and has specialized in children's and young adult literature at Universidad La Salle Oaxaca and the University of Zaragoza (Spain), as well as in reading mediation at the Chair of Reading, Writing, and

Libraries of Peru. She holds a degree in Education and a Bachelor's in Literature and works as a lecturer, researcher, and trainer in children's and young adult literature, reading mediation, and literary studies.

PP 14 Panel: Listening to Children's Voices
Nicol Building 4030
IBBY Moderator: Kirsten Anderson (IBBY Congress Registration & Delegate Support Committee)

Samina Mishra (Independent Filmmaker, Writer, Teacher, India), Lighthouses in the Everyday: Listening to Children's Voice through Art & Literature

This presentation examines how art practice fosters meaning-making among children and how children's creative expressions of the everyday open up possibilities of adult-child solidarities. Drawing upon 2 collaborative art projects, the presentation highlights the importance of including children's voices to build an understanding of both the ordinary and the exceptional, and to cultivate belonging, play, and beauty as we shape the world.

The Incredible Child, a monthly art programme ran from 2022-2024, for 9-15 year-old children, at Simurgh Centre, a project of Goethe Institut to support Afghan refugees in Delhi. A variety of resources and practices - film-viewing, storytelling, collage and doll-making - were used in the programme, encouraging children to reflect on the self and the world. The engagement with the children led to the creation of a picturebook, Lines (Ektara 2025).

Hum Hindustani, a multi-media project on children and citizenship examined children's experiences of liberty, equality and fraternity. The project includes a website, a poetry podcast using children's poetry, an art book for children, workshops with educators in India and USA, and outreach workshops with children that emphasise the idea of listening across differences.

The two projects offer possibilities of collaborative practices that demonstrate how children's voices can be radical openings to re-envision our social reality. By sharing the learnings from these projects, this presentation explores practices of listening to children that can be transformative for both children and adults, enabling cross-cultural dialogue and an understanding of childhood cultures with the active presence of the child.

Samina Mishra is a filmmaker, writer, and teacher whose work uses the lens of childhood, identity and education to reflect the experiences of growing up in India. She founded The Magic Key Centre for the Arts and Childhood that works on intersections between childhood, the arts and education. She hopes that her work makes children think about the world they want to live in, and encourages adults to support children in realising that world.

Linda Ludke (London Public Library, Canada), Expanding the Storytime Circle: Listening to the Voices of Children Who Use Augmentative Communication

This presentation will discuss a Canadian public library storytime program developed to provide opportunities for children who use augmentative and alternative communication systems to actively participate in storytelling and share their reader responses, as well as interact socially. By using picture symbols, voice output devices, and choice-making strategies, children with disabilities are included in the rich storytime experience. This program was developed in partnership with people who use augmentative or alternative communication methods who act as peer mentors as the storytime participants read, listen to stories, and engage with each other. Parents/caregivers learn how to foster literacy skills. Librarians learn about the needs of children with disabilities and the barriers they face in accessing library services. Some of the immediate and long-term goals of the program are to encourage communication, give voice to children not often heard, and build community through the power of sharing stories.

Linda Ludke is a Collections Management Librarian at London Public Library, Ontario, Canada. In her 35 years at LPL, her focus has been on Children's Services, and she received the Ontario Library Association's Children's Librarian of the Year award in 2009. Linda is also a children's book reviewer for *Quill & Quire*, The Canadian Children's Book Centre, and American Library Association's *Booklist Magazine*.

Xi Zuq (Aklat Alamid, Philippines), Community-Based Publishing of Children's Books in Indigenous and Regional Languages: The Case of Aklat Alamid, the Philippines

In this presentation, the core team of Aklat Alamid, an independent publishing house of children's books in the Philippines' indigenous and regional languages, will discuss how they adopt a community-based publishing approach. This method basically means that while creating books for children, the main factors are the children, their language, and their sociocultural background. Because of this, the writers, visual artists, retellers, translators, and other creators who work on the stories and with the children usually come from the same community. The various phases of book development also involve other community members, including parents, teachers, librarians, government representatives, traditional leaders, culture carriers, and others. Crucially, unlike the conventional perception of children as only passive consumers of books created for them, children are actively involved through co-creation and kid-testing. Note that Aklat Alamid also works with people, groups, and agencies outside of the community. For example, certain aspects of book development are consulted with anthropologists and linguists who work with the target groups. Although community-based publishing has its drawbacks (such as the two to three years it takes to produce a single book and the amount of coordination work required), Aklat Alamid has observed how it creates a sense of ownership for the books because community members actively participate in the creation, distribution, and promotion of books about them and in their native tongues.

Xi Zuq is a book worker, social science practitioner, and educator from southern Mindanao. He is currently the administrative head of Aklat Alamid, an independent publishing house of children's books written in the various languages of the Philippines.

Margriet Ruurs (Independent Writer, Canada), Listening to Children's Voices

Based on the *Around The World* series (Families, Schooldays, Birthdays, Celebrations and Playing Around the Word and Where We Live), the author shares the process of researching and writing nonfiction picturebooks for and about real children in more than 50 countries around the world. She will touch on about the challenges to locate and contact children in remote areas, to interview them using WhatsApp and Google Translate and to convey the voices of real children as they share information about their neighbourhoods, schools, cultures, customs and beliefs as well as their daily circumstances and experiences. Peace is built on mutual respect and understanding. Books about children in other cultures are a valuable tool in bringing together countries and generations. Focusing on the concepts of belonging and place, the author will share her sources of research and the challenge to represent children from such diverse backgrounds.
Through both text and illustrations, children learn about different religions and customs in these nonfiction picturebooks, featuring children from Afghanistan to Zambia, from Nunavut to Antarctica and every continent, talking about their daily lives. The author's distillation of these voices brings cultural and geographic contexts to life for young readers in North America and beyond.

Margriet Ruurs is a Canadian author, born in The Netherlands. Her (over 40) books have won many awards. She speaks at international schools and literacy conferences around the world. Margriet writes book reviews for The International Educator and interviews with Canadian book creators for Canadian Teacher Magazine. Her book *My Librarian is a Camel* (Astra) has sold nearly half a million copies. *Stepping Stones, A Refugee Family's Journey* (Orca) was translated into many languages and raised significant funds and awareness of refugees. Her next title is *More Than Books, Why The World Needs Libraries* - a time-line history of libraries and books.

Ashwini Rajpoot (Parag, Tata Trusts, India), Listening to Girls' Voices: Agency and Authorship in *Chakmak Magazine*

Chakmak is a beloved Hindi children's magazine that has been in circulation for over forty years, reaching primarily underserved communities across India's Hindi-speaking regions. One of its most cherished sections, 'मेरा पन्ना' (Mera Panna or My Page), features writing sent by young readers. Beyond being a popular section, it stands as a rare and enduring archive of children's voices published consistently since the magazine's inception.

Through their writings, young girls construct intimate narratives of their everyday worlds—of joy, pain, and longing—using local Hindis that echo the textures of their lived

realities. These voices create counter-spaces of language that challenge the pedagogic dominance of standardized Hindi, revealing the perpetual state of play through which girls construct and deconstruct words to make meaning of their lives.

Writing for both child and adult readership, the girls are conscious of their roles as authors, agents, and interlocutors. Writing, in this context, emerges as a tactic of creative resistance—what Certeau (1984) describes as an act operating from positions without direct access to power. The paper takes its theoretical cue from Marah Gubar's assertion that writing by children is worth studying because, among other reasons such as their critical neglect and the need to make children's literature more inclusive, it helps us "theorise in more nuanced ways about what it means to be a child, to have a voice, and to exercise agency" (2013).

The paper draws attention to the intimate, everyday, coming-of-age experiences of girls in rural pockets of India's Hindi-speaking regions. It highlights tactical ways of exercising agency, of being seen and heard, and supplements an analysis of ten such writings with reader responses from community libraries. Looking at these deeply local expressions of agency offers lenses to examine other such global articulations, celebrating the varied ways in which young girls live, perceive, and speak their lives—and their demands to be heard

Ashwini Rajpoot leads partnerships and anchors philanthropic support at the Tata Trusts, under the Parag Initiative, with a focus on children's literature and libraries. She is a passionate advocate for children's literature and has spent over a decade working in the sector in diverse capacities. Her work has ranged from managing library programmes to advocating for children's voices in international literary awards. She holds an International Master's in Children's Literature, Media and Culture from the University of Glasgow as an Erasmus Mundus Scholar. She has conducted and presented research on Indian popular cinema, Madhubani folklore, children's juries in literary prizes, and library services for children with disabilities. Her current interests centre on children's writing and articulations of agency.

PD 03 Panel: Voix d'exil et d'enfance: regards littéraires sur les parcours des jeunes réfugiés

Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200

Modératrice IBBY: Elaine Turgeon (Comité scientifique Congrès IBBY)

Un enfant réfugié est une personne mineure ayant dû fuir son pays d'origine pour échapper à des conflits, des persécutions ou des violations de droits fondamentaux, en quête de protection et de sécurité ailleurs. Cette réalité souvent silencieuse est au cœur d'un panel composé de trois présentations qui explorent, chacune à leur manière, le rôle de la littérature jeunesse dans la mise en lumière de ces parcours.

La première présentation porte sur un réseau littéraire bilingue, conçu pour inviter les

élèves à découvrir des récits empreints de courage et d'humanité, tout en favorisant l'ouverture à la diversité linguistique et culturelle. La deuxième présentation s'intéresse à l'album *C'est quoi un réfugié*? d'Élise Gravel, qui propose une approche accessible et sensible pour aborder la question des réfugiés en classe. Enfin, la troisième présentation examine le livre *Seuls de Paul Tom*, illustré par Mélanie Baillairgé, une œuvre poignante qui offre un puissant levier pour encourager le dialogue et la réflexion sur les expériences migratoires.

Dans une optique d'éducation inclusive (UNESCO, 2009), ces trois propositions permettent de soutenir la mobilisation des ressources des élèves plurilingues et de nourrir, chez l'ensemble des élèves, une compréhension plus profonde des réalités migratoires et de la diversité culturelle.

Geneviève Brisson (Université de Sherbrooke, Canada), Voix croisées: dialogues littéraires bilingues autour des réfugiés

Cette présentation porte sur un réseau littéraire thématique (Montésinos-Gelet, 2015) bilingue qui invite les élèves de 8 à 10 ans à plonger dans des récits forts sur les personnes réfugiées, révélant des voix porteuses d'espoir, de courage et d'humanité. À travers ces histoires en français et en anglais, les enfants découvrent la richesse de la diversité et l'importance d'écouter l'autre, favorisant ainsi une compréhension interculturelle. Plus qu'une simple collection de livres, ce réseau est une occasion unique pour les enseignant·es d'anglais langue seconde et de français langue d'enseignement de collaborer de manière interlangagière et interdisciplinaire, créant des expériences d'apprentissage stimulantes et inclusives. Cette présentation dévoile comment ce réseau favorise non seulement la sensibilisation aux réalités des réfugiés, mais aussi le développement d'un dialogue enrichissant en classe, où chaque voix trouve sa place et nourrit l'empathie collective.

Geneviève Brisson est professeure à la Faculté d'éducation de l'Université de Sherbrooke. Ses recherches portent sur les liens entre le plurilinguisme, les littératies, les identités et l'enseignement/apprentissage des langues, avec un intérêt particulier pour la littérature jeunesse et ses usages pédagogiques. Elle s'intéresse notamment à la manière dont les albums jeunesse peuvent soutenir l'apprentissage linguistique et ouvrir des espaces de réflexion sur des enjeux sociaux et écologiques. Ses projets récents portent sur les pratiques de littératie d'élèves plurilingues lors de la création d'histoires numériques bilingues et sur l'intégration de la littérature jeunesse en classe pour favoriser l'inclusion et l'engagement.

Catherine Gosselin-Lavoie (Université de Montréal, Canada), Un album documentaire comme levier d'éducation inclusive: mettre en œuvre des approches plurilingues de la littérature jeunesse à partir de l'œuvre *C'est quoi un réfugié***?**

Cette présentation porte sur un réseau littéraire thématique (Montésinos-Gelet, 2015) bilingue qui invite les élèves de 8 à 10 ans à plonger dans des récits forts sur les personnes réfugiées, révélant des voix porteuses d'espoir, de courage et d'humanité. À travers ces histoires en français et en anglais, les enfants découvrent la richesse de la diversité et l'importance d'écouter l'autre, favorisant ainsi une compréhension interculturelle. Plus qu'une simple collection de livres, ce réseau est une occasion unique pour les enseignant·es d'anglais langue seconde et de français langue d'enseignement de collaborer de manière interlangagière et interdisciplinaire, créant des expériences d'apprentissage stimulantes et inclusives. Cette présentation dévoile comment ce réseau favorise non seulement la sensibilisation aux réalités des réfugiés, mais aussi le développement d'un dialogue enrichissant en classe, où chaque voix trouve sa place et nourrit l'empathie collective.

Catherine Gosselin-Lavoie est professeure à la Faculté des sciences de l'éducation de l'Université de Montréal. Ses intérêts de recherche concernent la didactique du français en milieu pluriethnique et plurilingue, les approches plurilingues de la littérature jeunesse et les relations école-famille autour de la littératie. Elle s'intéresse également à la sélection et l'utilisation de la littérature de jeunesse dans une perspective d'inclusion et d'équité avec, au centre de ces réflexions, un questionnement sur sa positionnalité. Elle est coresponsable du projet *Éveil au Langage et Ouverture à la diversité linguistique* (ÉLODiL) (www.elodil.umontreal.ca) et cochercheuse au sein de l'équipe *Inclusion et diversité Ethnoculturelle en Éducation* (IDÉE) (https://equipe-idee.ca/).

Heather Phipps (Université de Regina, Canada), Écouter les voix des jeunes réfugiés dans le documentaire *Seuls de Paul Tom*

Cette présentation porte sur un réseau littéraire thématique (Montésinos-Gelet, 2015) bilingue qui invite les élèves de 8 à 10 ans à plonger dans des récits forts sur les personnes réfugiées, révélant des voix porteuses d'espoir, de courage et d'humanité. À travers ces histoires en français et en anglais, les enfants découvrent la richesse de la diversité et l'importance d'écouter l'autre, favorisant ainsi une compréhension interculturelle. Plus qu'une simple collection de livres, ce réseau est une occasion unique pour les enseignant·es d'anglais langue seconde et de français langue d'enseignement de collaborer de manière interlangagière et interdisciplinaire, créant des expériences d'apprentissage stimulantes et inclusives. Cette présentation dévoile comment ce réseau favorise non seulement la sensibilisation aux réalités des réfugiés, mais aussi le développement d'un dialogue enrichissant en classe, où chaque voix trouve sa place et nourrit l'empathie collective.

Heather Phipps est professeure agrégée à la Faculté d'Éducation de l'Université de Regina. Titulaire d'une maîtrise en enseignement des langues secondes et d'un doctorat en éducation de l'Université McGill, elle a également enseigné dans diverses communautés en immersion française, en anglais langue seconde et dans des

communautés autochtones. Passionnée par les langues, les arts et la justice sociale, elle se spécialise dans les champs de la littératie multimodale et de la littérature jeunesse. Dans son enseignement et ses recherches, Heather adore collaborer avec des artistes, des créateurs et des créatrices de livres jeunesse plurilingues afin de mettre en valeur la pluralité des identités.

Saturday, 8 August
9:00 AM-12:00 noon
Posters

PS 03
Richcraft Hall

Samantha Beynon (University of Victoria, Canada), What Happens When Indigenous Children Create Stories with Elders?

My research explores what happens when children are included in the full process of creating a children's book rather than being treated only as readers. Adults often assume they know what children want to read, but this project asks whether children value stories differently when they help shape them. The work takes place across all four Nisg̱a'a communities, Gitlaxt'aamiks, Laxg̱alts'ap, Gitwinksihlkw, and Gingolx, and includes children from the G̱anada, Gispwudwada, Laxsgiik, and Laxgibuu clans. Each child works closely with an Elder from their own community, learning through listening, being on the land, and spending time together during the summer when families are already harvesting and sharing knowledge. Stories grow from Ayuuk̲hl Nisg̱a'a, oral histories, seasonal learning, and Sim'algax, rather than being planned in advance. Children reflect on what they learn and help turn those experiences into books. Ethically, this matters because Indigenous communities retain ownership of their stories, knowledge is passed orally from Elders to children, and learning happens through relationship and responsibility. The research also looks closely at the physical book itself and what happens during the publishing process. This includes how font choices, layout, and visual emphasis, especially around Indigenous words, affect how stories feel and how often they are returned to. As writers, many of us reread our own work again and again. This project asks whether children do the same when they see their language, their land, and their relationships reflected on the page.

Samantha Beynon is a Nisg̱a'a and Ts'msyen writer, educator, and researcher. She was born and raised in Lg̱ax Kxeen (Prince Rupert, BC) on her ancestral Ts'msyen lands and is now a visitor on the unceded territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples in Victoria. Following matrilineal teachings, she belongs to Wilps Axdii Wil Luug̱ooda (The House that is Always Full) of the G̱anada (Frog/Raven) Clan. Samantha holds a Master's in Education

and is a PhD student at the University of Victoria, where her work centers on Indigenous storytelling, relationships, and responsibility.

Mahesh Pathirathna (Room to Read, Sri Lanka), Inclusive Children's Literature: Beyond a Nonprofit Agenda?

In many developing markets, inclusiveness in children's literature remains largely a nonprofit-driven agenda rather than a mainstream publishing priority. Organizations like Room to Read have emphasized inclusive storytelling for years, embedding it into book development modules, editorial guidelines, and review checklists to ensure diversity is reflected naturally rather than through tokenistic approaches. Despite these efforts, most children's publishing industries in these contexts have yet to adopt inclusivity as a central practice.

First, there is no systematic data collection or framework to define, measure, or evaluate inclusivity in publishing. Unlike multicultural markets in developed countries, most developing industries lack the evidence base to guide decisions. Second, awareness and professional development opportunities remain scarce. Teachers, librarians, writers, illustrators, and publishers are often unprepared to recognize or address inclusivity in content. Third, system-level interventions are absent—governments rarely provide policies, guidelines, or evaluation tools to integrate inclusivity into curricula, approval processes, or book procurement. As a result, many children's books continue to exclude or misrepresent groups based on gender, ethnicity, religion, caste, or class.

Room to Read has addressed these gaps through global workshops for book creators, integrating inclusivity into editorial training, and applying inclusive checklists to detect unconscious bias. Its advocacy extends to encouraging mainstream publishers to adopt similar tools and promoting inclusive titles in school and library catalogues. While nonprofits have led the way, long-term impact requires systemic support and industry-wide recognition that inclusive children's literature is essential, not optional

Mahesh Pathirathna was born in tropical island of Sri Lanka. He is a Global Book Publishing Advisor at Room to Read, an international nonprofit promoting reading and children's literature. He works as a teacher, mentor, and strategic advisor to children's book writers, illustrators, publishers, and educational institutions across more than 15 countries. He is an award-winning author whose work was selected for the 2021 IBBY Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities. His most recent picture book further highlights diversity and inclusion, reflecting his commitment to creating meaningful and accessible literature for children around the world.

Del Costello (Coactive Education, New Zealand) and Kate Costello (Coactive Education, New Zealand), Telling Your Stories—The New Zealand Project: Revitalising Language and Identity through Narrative-Based Learning

Telling Your Stories—The New Zealand Project is a narrative-based literacy initiative developed by Coactive Education and supported by the New Zealand Ministry of Education. The project centres Indigenous language, local histories, and community voice within everyday classroom learning to strengthen identity, belonging, and literacy outcomes.

Born from a commitment to ensure that learners see their own land, ancestry, and cultural narratives reflected in text, the project partners with families, Indigenous communities, schools, teachers, and students to co-construct authentic, place-based stories. Through collaborative meetings and workshops, intergenerational knowledge is gathered and shaped into curriculum-aligned resources that position learners not simply as readers, but as storytellers, knowledge holders and history makers.

A distinctive feature of the project is the integration of culturally grounded illustration. Working relationally with communities, the illustrator interprets local landscapes, symbolism, and identity markers to ensure visual storytelling strengthens comprehension, oral language development, and cultural authenticity. Illustration becomes a bridge between text, language acquisition, and lived experience. Evidence from participating schools demonstrates measurable literacy growth, increased language confidence, and strengthened family engagement. Students show deeper connection to learning when their stories are centred, while communities experience renewed pride in the visibility of their narratives.

This presentation shares the project's development, collaborative methodology, and impact, offering a transferable model for educators and leaders seeking to embed Indigenous storytelling within mainstream literacy contexts in ways that are authentic, relational, and transformative.

Del Costello is an education strategist, author, and founder of Coactive Education. With extensive experience across literacy, curriculum design, and system-level reform, she specialises in narrative-based learning and culturally sustaining pedagogy. She partners with schools, Indigenous communities, and education leaders to co-construct place-based curriculum that strengthens identity and accelerates literacy outcomes. Her work is grounded in relational practice and a belief that storytelling is a powerful driver of engagement, belonging, and academic success. Through national and international collaborations, she advocates for education models that elevate community voice and sustain living cultural knowledge.

Kate Costello is an illustrator, artist, and creative collaborator whose work centres culturally authentic visual storytelling. Through Telling Your Stories—The New Zealand Project, she works alongside families, tribal communities, teachers, and students to translate local narratives into imagery that honours cultural values, landscape, and identity. Her illustrations are more than visual accompaniment; they function as interpretive bridges that deepen comprehension, support language development, and

strengthen learner connection to story. Her relational approach ensures that the artistic process reflects community voice and cultural integrity. She is passionate about using illustration to amplify narratives and sustain intergenerational knowledge through accessible, engaging design.

Dolores Miralles-Alberola (University of Alicante, Spain), CEQR Cartographies: Deep-reading Indigenous-authored Picturebooks in Teacher Education

The CEQR pedagogical framework—Connect, Experience, Question, Respond (Miralles-Alberola, 2025)—offers a structured pathway for engaging deeply with Indigenous-authored and illustrated picturebooks. Integrating Indigenous in the classroom is essential for decolonizing curricula, yet it carries the risk of unintentional extractivism or cultural appropriation. Non-Indigenous Student teachers, when lacking critical tools, may approach these works superficially, perpetuating the very epistemicide they seek to counter.

This ongoing study presents a concrete pedagogical solution to this challenge. The framework structures a complete process guiding students toward ethical, non-extractivist reading. Grounded in the principle that best practices are taught through best practices, the CEQR transforms well-intentioned inclusion into genuine pedagogy, ensuring students develop critical competencies to engage with cultural representations respectfully and reflexively deep-reading the works of Julie Flett, David A. Robertson, Nicola I. Campbell, Joy Harjo, Kevin Maillard, Cynthia Leitich Smith, and Roselynn Akulukjuk, among others.

Through Connect and Experience, students explore visual languages and intergenerational themes that reflect Indigenous pedagogies, such as keen land observation and storytelling across generations (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Antoine et al., 2018). In Question, they interrogate colonial narratives of land and community, contrasting them with the relationality that defines these texts' characters and settings (Justice, 2018), guided by principles of critical Indigenous literacies (Reese, 2018). Finally, in Respond, students translate analysis into ethical practice for their future classrooms. By weaving multimodal narratives with CEQR, children's literature becomes a tool for equity by activating a pedagogical process that honors Indigenous literatures as guides for learning to be good human beings.

Dolores Miralles-Alberola is an Assistant Professor in Education at the University of Alicante, Spain. She has a PhD in Latin American Literature with a Designated Emphasis in Native American Studies from the University of California, Davis, USA, and has specialized in resistance cultural creation from the Global South and Indigenous literatures. Her publications in the last years have established critical foundations in the field of Indigenous children's multimodal literature in ELT.

Irina Julissa Burgos Chorres (Independent, Peru) and Martha Lucia Chavez Carrasco (Independent, Peru), ***Tomorrow When I Was a Grown-up*****: Hermeneutics of the Child's Voice**

"Tomorrow, when I was a grown-up" is a proposal for a hermeneutic analysis of the responses produced by children in contexts of subalternity when they engage with literary aesthetics. Thus, their words, actions and gestures are categorized into three interpretive levels: superficial, intermediate and deep. The project seeks to inform public policy by rethinking current approaches to literature in early childhood and primary education. To this end, interventions consisted of two stages. The first one involved reading sessions and literary conversations in which children were introduced to selected texts through the DIME approach. The aim was to create a safe space that encouraged attentive listening, dialogue, and collective reflection. The criteria for book selection were based on literary and visual quality, as well as cultural diversity. The second one consisted of dialogue roundtables with community caregivers and teachers. These sessions emphasized careful listening in order to analyze children's responses and reflect on the observations gathered. The objective was to help adults reframe their perspectives, enabling them to read more deeply and to better understand children's responses—often characterized by expressiveness, analytical insight, and an implicit grasp of literary structures and processes. The project has been implemented in several underserved districts of Lima, Peru, within Non-School-Based Early Education Programs and Local Educational Management Units.

Irina Julissa Burgos Chorres: Educator, specialist, and critic of children's literature, holding postgraduate studies in Children's Literature and Reading Promotion from the Catholic University Sedes Sapientiae, with additional academic training in literature and its relationship to other aesthetic languages. She has served as a consultant and advisor on projects related to reading promotion, mediator training, and cultural management for children in both the public and private sectors. In collaboration with the National Library of Peru, she developed educational initiatives in literary and aesthetic education, curated literary and informational collections for children, and led interinstitutional partnership initiatives.

Martha Lucia Chavez Carrasco: Reading mediator and specialist in children's and young adult literature, Master's candidate in University Teaching and holder of a Bachelor's degree in Literature from the National University of San Marcos. Her professional work focuses on the design and implementation of reading promotion programs and the training of reading mediators, as well as on the creation of literary discussion spaces for diverse audiences. In collaboration with the National Library of Peru, she contributed to the development of educational initiatives, the curation of collections, and the design of reading sessions. She currently serves as a reading mediator at the House of Peruvian Literature (La Casa de la Literatura Peruana).

Bita Ebrahimi (Iran), Translating the Architectures of Displacement: Deep Listening and Activist Agency in Farsi Young Adult Literature

This poster analyzes the activist translation of two pivotal young adult novels into Farsi: *The Running Dream* and *A Time of Miracles*. The strategic selection of these challenging narratives is viewed as a performative act designed to cultivate "Deep Listening" (DL) in the target culture (Iran). Responding directly to the IBBY 2026 theme, "Listening to Each Other's Voices," the research addresses the intersectional nature of displacement—covering disability (Axis 1) and forced migration (Axis 3).

Bita Ebrahimi is an Iranian literary translator with over 20 years of experience, specializing in fiction for children, young adults, and adults. She has translated more than 50 books and collaborated with major Iranian publishers, including Cheshme and Hermes. Her work has received several awards, including the Flying Turtle Award and the Mehr Book Festival Award. Alongside her professional career, she has contributed to cultural initiatives such as the Children's Book Council of Iran. She holds an M.A. in Art Studies and a B.A. in English Translation and is passionate about promoting literature for younger generations

Morea Banićević (Rikard Katalinić Jeretov Elementary School, Croatia), One Woman Transforming the World for Many

In an era when adolescents increasingly communicate through digitally rather than face-to-face, literature offers them both language and structure for articulating inner experiences. This study explores how young adult fiction can enhance students' emotional vocabulary and discourse competence, focusing on Ivana Šojat's novels for young readers *Dragons That Don't Fly*, *I Draw Trees on the Walls*, *A Cloud of Starlings* and *That World Out There*. Through these texts, literature is conceptualized as a platform for shared experience and understanding, a "safe proxy" for self-expression akin to the idiom "asking for a friend."

The study employs a qualitative design, combining discourse analysis of reflective writing and group discussions with self-report scales on empathy and help-seeking attitudes. Thematic analysis will trace shifts in linguistic precision, metaphorical framing, and affective awareness before and after structured literary engagement. Ethical safeguards, including parental consent and opt-out options, ensure participant well-being.

By linking narrative empathy with vocabulary growth, the project demonstrates that contemporary Croatian young adult literature can function as both an aesthetic and psychosocial resource. It provides students with linguistic tools to articulate complex emotional experiences and to challenge stigma surrounding mental health. Preliminary findings suggest that reading practices embedded in dialogic and reflective pedagogy may strengthen not only empathy but also the capacity to name, share, and normalize emotional states. We aim to inform teacher education and reading pedagogy by illustrating how guided literary reflection can support the development of emotional literacy and mental-health awareness in the classroom.

Morea Banićević was born in Rijeka and graduated from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka, majoring in Croatian and English language. Over the years, she has written a number of novels for children and young adults, which are being published in Croatia and abroad. She works as a teacher at the elementary school in Opatija, Croatia. She has been included in the IBBY Honour List 2026 for *The Lost Mr. Kovač*. She is presenting on behalf of Anita Peti-Stantić (University of Zagreb, Croatia).

Saturday, 8 August
9:35-10:30 AM

PP 15 Panel: Digital and AI Storytelling, Creating, and Sharing: Pros and Cons
Nicol Building 4030
IBBY Moderator: Joanne Larocque-Poirier (IBBY Congress Volunteer Program)

Jenny Edvardsson (Independent, Sweden), A Digital Book Club to Promote Reading of YA literature – Listen to Each Other's Voices

Year 2016 Jenny Edvardsson created a digital book club in Sweden, *Den digitala bokcirkeln*, for pre-service teachers, teachers, student librarians and librarians to promote reading of Young Adult (YA) literature. *Den digitala bokcirkeln* is a private group on Facebook, and this is where all book discussions take place (approximately 8 discussions per year).

The aims of the cook club are to enable participants to 1) discover new authors, 2) experience literature that can serve as both mirror and window, 3) provide an opportunity for discussion and exchange of experiences about YA literature and how it can be used in teaching contexts or in library activities to stimulate reading interest, and 4) provide ideas on how reading in Swedish schools can be increased.

Over the past year, book discussions have focused on Swedish YA literature with themes of sustainability, sexuality, and mental health (e.g. *Nudes* by Joanna Górecka, *Lillebror* by Alex Khourie and *Festen* by Maria Karlsson Thörnqvist).

A survey among participants shows that *Den digitala bokcirkeln* fulfils its aims. Participants say: 'I have read books that I would not have read spontaneously', the discussions provide 'new perspectives that broaden one's own view', 'I am inspired to start my own digital book club with students', and 'I get ideas on how to discuss sustainability issues with my students through YA'. The book discussions also give participants the opportunity to share their experiences of working with YA and how YA can be used to stimulate students' interest in reading.

Jenny Edvardsson is a reading promoter who manages several reading-promoting activities in Sweden, as the book club *Den digitala bokcirkeln*. She works as a lecturer in

educational sciences and is a PhD student in Pedagogical work at Kristianstad University, Sweden. Her research is about reading in school and academics and how fiction can be used in different school subjects. Her most recent published article is “Reading log and book talk: The EBT model to facilitate reading, reflection and discussion” in *Journal of Literary Education* (Edvardsson et al., 2025). She writes literature for university courses and children's books. https://researchportal.hkr.se/sv/persons/jenny-edvardsson/ https://jennyedvardsson.se/

Ghadah Al Murshidi (UAE University, UAE), AI-Assisted Picture Digital Storytelling for Mental Health Literacy Among Primary and Secondary Students in UAE

This study explores the potential of AI-assisted picture digital storytelling to foster listening, empathy, and mental-health literacy among primary and secondary students in the United Arab Emirates. Drawing on the cultural and educational context of UAE schools, the project engaged students in co-authoring short, illustrated digital stories that reflected personal and peer experiences with stress, anxiety, and coping strategies. The process combined story-circle protocols emphasizing respectful listening with the affordances of large-language models for drafting and revising narratives, alongside text-to-image tools for creating or ethically adapting illustrations. Final stories were shared in a moderated, closed digital gallery to encourage safe peer dialogue.

A mixed-methods design was implemented to evaluate outcomes. Quantitative measures included pre- and post-intervention assessments of mental-health literacy and well-being using validated adolescent scales, while qualitative data were drawn from story content analyses and student focus-group reflections. Preliminary findings suggest that the intervention supported openness to discussing mental health, enhanced peer empathy, and strengthened intentions to seek support when needed. Safeguards—such as parental consent, opt-out pathways, content filters, and escalation protocols through school counselors—ensured ethical practice and participant safety.

The study demonstrates that when AI is integrated into thoughtfully designed pedagogy, it can amplify the voices of young people rather than replace them. It presents a replicable classroom model that fosters meaningful dialogue on mental health and highlights both benefits and challenges, including over-reliance on AI, questions of authorship, and the need for strong safeguarding measures within the UAE context.

Ghadah Al Murshidi is an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Learning at UAE University and an award-winning scholar. She received the Young Emirati Researcher Prize, Best Young Researcher Award, Emirati Women’s Award, and was recognized as the Best Academic Woman Achiever. She also earned a prestigious honor for her book *The Guide of Creativity and Innovation in the UAE* from His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Mohammed Al Sharqi, Ruler of Fujairah. Her research addresses language, literacy, and AI in education, with a growing focus on AI-assisted picture digital storytelling to strengthen students’ empathy, engagement, and mental health literacy.

Delia Maria D'Onofrio (University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy), Voice, Body, Community: Picture Books Shared Reading as a Tool for Inclusion in the Artificial Era

In an era increasingly defined by dematerialization and deterritorialization—processes driven by technological hyperconnection and the delegation of human functions to digital devices—this study explores how the picture book can serve as a catalyst for authentic human connection and social inclusion. It presents the outcomes of an educational laboratory designed to bring people together in a dedicated space where stereotypes can be deconstructed and a sense of community can emerge through shared creative practices.

The research forms part of a doctoral study in qualitative intercultural pedagogy with an ethnographic approach, conducted at the University of Rome Tor Vergata. It is based on a series of workshops held at Casa di Pia 2.0 in Frascati (Rome, Italy), involving a group of volunteer women and several guests from the extraordinary reception center (CAS). The guests were all migrant women from various African countries. Structured around three phases—inclusive reading, collective artifact creation, and shared storytelling—the workshops fostered the dismantling of linguistic and social barriers, enabling participants to engage in a transformative, intercultural encounter.

By highlighting the power of the picture book as a medium for dialogue and mutual recognition, this doctoral research underscores the potential of literature to promote empathy, empowerment, and inclusive community building—values at the heart of IBBY's mission.

Delia Maria D'Onofrio is a PhD candidate in Intercultural Pedagogy at the University of Rome Tor Vergata (Italy). Her research focuses on the use of picturebooks as pedagogical tools for social inclusion and identity reconstruction in contexts of adult marginality, including reception centers for migrants and shelters for the homeless. She collaborates with various social organizations in Rome to promote shared reading practices as a means of intercultural dialogue and community building.

RT 05 Roundtable: Keeping It Real: Featuring Books with Lived Experiences by Black Authors of Children's and Young Adult Literature
Richcraft Hall 2228
IBBY Moderator: Shamaila Siddique (IBBY Canada)

Chair: Wanda Taylor (Centennial College and University of King's College, Canada)
Panelists: Khodi Dill (Independent Author, Canada), Kevin heronJones (Independent Author, Canada), Nadia L. Hohn (Sankofa's Pen Founder, Canada), and Sadé Smith (Independent Author, Canada)

In September 2015, “own voices” came into the publishing lexicon by author Corinne Duyvis to refer to books by “authors who openly share the diverse identity of their main characters.” However, in June 2021, We Need Diverse Books (WNDB) stopped using the term as it placed “diverse creators in uncomfortable and potentially unsafe situations” as a too vague “catchall term.” Instead, WNDB committed to “use specific descriptions that authors use for themselves and their characters whenever possible.”

In Canada, there are no official race or ethnicity stats about who writes our books. According to authors Nadia Hohn and Zetta Elliott, in 2019, four traditionally published books were written by Black Canadian authors that were published in Canada, with an increase after 2020's racial justice movement but a decline by 2026. If not “own voices,” what term do Black Canadian authors use to distinguish themselves as authors of stories featuring Black characters? What unique insights about lived experiences do Black Canadian authors bring to their work? Why is it important to centre their stories throughout the year, not just in February (Black History Month in Canada)? Join us for a conversation with members of Sankofa's Pen–Black Canadian authors for young people–as they discuss their work and explore issues of authenticity, identity, and appropriation. Sankofa's Pen ignites creativity and champions the voices of Black, African and Caribbean writers and illustrators in Canada. We open doors to collaboration, foster a thriving network, and advocate for diverse stories in children's and young adult literature.

Khodi Dill is an author, anti-racism educator, spoken-word artist, and emcee from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. His work focuses on themes of social justice, Black identity, hip-hop, and joy. Well known for his picture books *Welcome to the Cypher* and *Little Black Lives Matter,* his latest publication is a non-fiction book for young adults titled *stay up: racism, resistance, and reclaiming Black freedom* (Annick Press). For more on Khodi, visit thegreygriot.com or follow @KhodiDill on social media.

Kevin heronJones is a novelist, poet, journalist, editor, narrator, and lecturer. Best known for his profound and powerful poetic delivery, he has served as the city of Brampton's 2025 Writer-in-Residence. He studied journalism at Sheridan College and creative writing with University of Toronto. He is the founder of PoeticSoul, an organization dedicated to promoting the poetic arts scene and providing lovers of poetry with quality entertainment. He's held numerous workshops for students throughout the Greater Toronto Area. He has authored three published novels. His youth novel *Half-Court Trap* is a 2023 Hackmatack Award nominee. His young adult novel *Hacking Heartbreak* is a starred selection with the Canadian Children’s Book Centre’s Best Books for Kids & Teens 2025. Kevin has also published three books of poetry, recorded three spoken word poetry albums and two audiobooks, and narrates literature through his Listen Fiction platform.

Nadia L. Hohn, B.A. (Hon.), B.Ed., M.Ed., M.F.A. is an educator, artivist, playwright, and award-winning author of several books for children including *A Likkle Miss Lou* and the *Malaika* series. *Malaika's Costume* (2016) was the 2021 TD Grade One Book Giveaway. Her books *Malaika, Carnival Queen* (Groundwood Books) and *The Antiracist Kitchen: 21 Stories (and Recipes)* (Orca) were released in 2023. Her latest books are *Getting Us to Grandma's*

(Groundwood Books, 2024) and *Patty Dreams* (Owlkids, 2025) which was nominated for a 2026 Blue Spruce Award (Forest of Reading). Her twelfth book, *STOP ANTIBLACK RACISM: 8 Ways to Act Now*, will be released on October 13, 2026. She was one of six Black Canadian Writers to Watch in 2018 by CBC Books. She was a touring presenter in Alberta for the 2019 TD Canada Children's Book Week. In summer 2019, she was the writer in residence at Joy Kogawa House in Vancouver, British Columbia. She is a music teacher and librarian at an elementary school and creative writing instructor at post-secondary institutions in Toronto where she lives.

Born in Toronto, Ontario, **Sadé Smith** is the Canadian children's book author of *Julie and the Mango Tree* and *Granny's Kitchen* which was nominated for the Blue Spruce Award for the Forest of Reading 2023 and shortlisted for the 2023 Crystal Kite Award. She is of Jamaican descent, and her books often involve food and recipes with colourful illustrations to capture the vibrancy and beauty of the Caribbean islands. She holds a Bachelor of Interior Design (Hons.) degree and an Advance Diploma in Architectural Technology. She also holds certificates in Creative Writing, Creative Book Publishing, and a diploma in Business Marketing.

Wanda Taylor is an award-winning author, producer, journalist, and professor. She has written 13 books of fiction and nonfiction across children's and adult markets. Her MG nonfiction book, *Birchtown and the Black Loyalist*, continues to be listed as one of the top Black History Month books for children. Among other awards, her MG novel *The Grover School Pledge* was the 2024 recipient of the Northern Lights Book Award that honours children's literature with exceptional merit. She actively serves as a mentor to emerging BIPOC writers and has won numerous awards for her body of work.

PP 16 Panel: Listening to the Voices of Nature: Imagination and Memory
Nicol Building 3030
IBBY Moderator: Natali de Mello (IBBY Congress Exhibition & Site Planning Committee)

Dinara Mirtalipova (Cleveland Institute of Art, USA), Listening to the Vanishing Sea: Indigenous Voices, Memory, and Environmental Loss in Picture Books

The Aral Sea was once home for the Qaraqalpaq people of Central Asia, whose culture and identity were closely tied to water. Today that sea has nearly disappeared! *The Vanishing Sea* is a picture book based on this real environmental and human tragedy, and it invites readers to listen to a land that has lost its voice. This paper looks at how picture books can become vessels for Indigenous storytelling, memory, and environmental awareness through words and images.

Focusing on *The Vanishing Sea*, I explore how illustration and narrative reveal Soviet colonial policies, migration, and resource exploitation. The Soviet plan to redirect rivers for cotton farming dried the Aral Sea, destroyed local fisheries and forced Qaraqalpaq families from their homes. This presentation combines visual analysis, including looking at color, symbolism, and composition in the illustrations, with research on Soviet

environmental policies. It focuses on postcolonial perspectives of children's literature, as a space for ethical listening, giving voice to both Indigenous communities and the natural world. The results suggest that stories grounded in local truth can help children understand global issues and inspire empathy. *The Vanishing Sea* shows how picture books can uncover the hidden cost of cotton, environmental loss, and cultural loss, and offer a model for literature that listens to the past while imagining a more sustainable future.

Dinara Mirtalipova is an author and illustrator and Assistant Professor of Illustration at the Cleveland Institute of Art (USA). Her work explores cultural memory, folklore, and environmental narratives through visual storytelling. She is the author and illustrator of *The Vanishing Sea*, a picture book inspired by the ecological and human history of the Aral Sea. Her practice focuses on Indigenous perspectives, material culture, and place-based storytelling in children's literature, and her work has been exhibited internationally.

Albert D. Marshall (Mi'kmaw Elder, Canada) and Louise Zimanyi (Humber College, Canada), Walking Together with Robin, Frog, and Maple: (Re)Connecting with Nature through Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing

When we walk together in a good way, we learn to see and know the world through two eyes. This interactive, playful, and collective reading of *Walking Together / Menaqaj Pemwije'tulti'k* (Annick Press, 2023, 2025), a dual language book co-authored by Elder Albert Marshall and Louise Zimanyi, illustrated by Emily Kewageshig, and translated into Mi'kmaw by Barbara Sylliboy and Arlene Stevens, introduces participants to the concept of *Etuaptmumk* (Eh-doo-aph-duh-mumk), the gift of multiple perspectives in the Mi'kmaw language, also known as Two-Eyed Seeing.

Braiding the strengths of Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives and voices for the benefit of all, including our eco-kin, the story follows a group of young children connecting to and with nature as teacher, nurturing respectful, reciprocal and responsible relationships. Stories and illustrations tied to seasonal rhythms—robin's return, frog croaking, the harvesting of maple sap—*Walking Together/Menaqaj Pemwije'tulti'k* (Men-ahk-hah-j Bemu-gee-ay dool-deeg) show how Indigenous languages grow meaningfully from lived relationships with Land, are shared and sustained. Elder Albert and Louise will weave in examples of how they have been exchanging and sharing stories to promote Land-based play and co-learning through Two-Eyed Seeing. These approaches have national and global relevance for protecting biodiversity, climate action, and resilience—mawikwayk (ma-wee-gwyg) together we are strong.

Elder **Albert Marshall**, Mi'kmaw Spiritual Leader (O.C., LLD) from the Moose Clan, is a fluent Mi'kmaw speaker residing in Eskasoni, Unama'ki (Cape Breton Island), in Mi'kma'ki. A spokesperson for the Mi'kmaw Nation on environmental issues, he advocates cultural revitalization, sustainability, and cross-cultural understandings of healing. He

coined *Etuaptmumk*, a guiding principle braiding the strengths of Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives for the benefit of all, including our eco-kin.

Louise Zimanyi, of French-Canadian and Hungarian descent, is a professor and researcher in Tkaronto (Toronto), Treaty 13 territory. Her work explores Earth-centered pedagogies in early childhood that cultivate sustainability through respectful relationships with land. Together they work through *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing to promote land-based play, storytelling, and co-learning as pathways to biodiversity protection, care for the Earth, and thriving communities.

Kavita Singh Kale (Vidyashilp University, India), Santosh D. Kale (Concordia University, Canada), and Ashwini Tadpatrikar (Vidyashilp University, India), Creating a Nature-Based Children's Book as a Pathway for Digital Detoxing: An Exploratory Study

Background: Increased urbanization and digital lifestyles have reduced children's spontaneous interactions with natural environments, where trees once played a central role in unstructured, sensorial play, contributing to positive developmental outcomes. Childhood interactions are encoded through sensory and autobiographical memories that support long-term psychological well-being.
Aim: This research explores the need for tree-based children's books as pathways for digital detoxing. The study also examines how illustrated narratives can mediate the development of children's intuitive understandings of the natural world formed through early experiences and imagination. It aims to create a sensorial experience of reimagining trees through a picture book that challenges stereotypical representations.

Methods: Participants were interviewed through narrative inquiry to recall a childhood memory associated with a tree. The thematic analysis provided the themes of memories (biographical, sensory, episodic), play patterns (free versus directed), and emotional tone (e.g., nostalgia, happiness). A visual ethnographic approach was used to translate selected narratives into visual poetry, forming the foundation of the children's picture book.

Results: Participants shared multisensory childhood memories with trees, highlighting themes of creativity, bonding, and a sense of belonging. In contrast, current urban experiences of children display reduced emotional connection with the trees.

Conclusion: The findings support previous literature of a generational amnesia to tree-related experiences and their emotional benefits. The resulting children's book serves as a tool to reconnect with nature, encourage outdoor play, promote digital detox, and cultivate ecological awareness through storytelling grounded in memory and imagination.

Kavita Singh Kale, alumna of National Institute of Design Ahmedabad and Delhi University, is Associate Professor, Vidyashilp University, and a children's content creator and transmedia artist researching wordless picture books and childhood memories of trees.

Ashwini Tadpatrikar (PhD NIMHANS) is Assistant Professor at the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Vidyashilp University, specializing in digital detox, screen addiction, child & family therapy, promoting mental wellness and healthy tech habits.

Santosh D. Kale (PhD candidate Concordia University) is a design researcher focused on serious games and medical information design. He leverages game mechanics to create engaging learning experiences. His work focuses on making complex medical data clear and accessible.

PD 04 Panel: Listening to Queer Voices in Young Adult Literature: Finding Joy in Alternative Spaces

Nicol Building 3020

IBBY Moderator: Petros Panaou (IBBY Congress Extended Scientific Committee)

In *The Reparative Impulse of Queer Young Adult Literature* (2025), Angel Daniel Matos connects YA culture to the broader histories of hurt and oppression that have haunted narrativizations and representations of queer life. In tracing out these trajectories, he urges readers, writers, and critics of queer YA literature to think carefully about the emotions and affects used to frame teen queer life and to identify alternative ways to use literature as a force that can *move* people to witness and reckon with our queer past, concluding that "queer YA culture can offer an alternative to happiness scripts, to what is considered good, right, or correct. It's a powerful site for representing the unspeakable, for giving shape to feelings and outcomes excluded from the record, and for making the unbearable seem endurable. … It weaves our minds and spirits into the broader quilts of queer history, memory, defeat, and refusal—revealing ever more *artful* and *moving* ways to delight us, frighten us, harm us, excite us, sustain us, inspire us, destroy us, teach us, and rebuild us." The three papers on this panel explore how queer YA literature from the past fifty years has reframed emotions and affects by adapting and discovering alternative immersive strategies to acknowledge and represent queer voices: recognizing and portraying turbulent sapphic desire and love as conducive to happy endings when ideas of happiness are reevaluated (Katharine Slater), privileging silence as a space to forge new art forms in which queer joy can be fostered and find a voice (Lesley D. Clement), and exploiting the negativity of queer horror tropes and narratives to suggest alternative kinds of happiness and joy (Angel Daniel Matos).The queer voices that emerge in the representative works examined by these three papers reveal the joy that can be discovered in creative alternative spaces.

Katharine Slater (Rowan University, USA), Happy Endings Aren't All Alike: Reclaiming 1970s Sapphic YA

In their overview of the history of queer young adult literature, Michael Cart and Joan F. Kaywell contend that Rosa Guy's *Ruby* (1976), the first sapphic YA novel, introduces an "unfortunate theme that would haunt the literature for another decade—the notion that homosexuality is nothing to be concerned about because 'it's just a phase.'" Cart and

Kaywell's pessimistic reading extends to other 1970s sapphic books for teenagers, including Sandra Scoppetone's *Happy Endings are All Alike* (1978) and Deborah Hautzig's *Hey, Dollface* (1978); the former depicts violence against a lesbian, while the latter is "the same old story: Are they gay or is this just a passing phase?—probably the latter."

It is undeniable that 1970s sapphic YA depicts queer existence as painful, fraught, and unsettled. Yet the murky and muddy routes of its depictions are, in some respects, far queerer and more compelling than Cart and Kaywell acknowledge. In this paper, I argue for the restoration of *Ruby*, *Happy Endings,* and *Hey, Dollface* to the critical conversation around queer YA literature, establishing that these texts refuse to erase sapphic desire and love despite the cultural hegemony of homonormativity and homophobia. As Angel Daniel Matos persuasively argues, "queer YA literature and criticism … shouldn't be limited to elevating happy, normalizing, and utopic narratives regardless of how turbulent the history of queer representation has been." *Ruby, Happy Endings,* and *Hey, Dollface* demonstrate that queer joy and possibility can, in fact, be found within unhappiness: a complex nesting of affect that refuses easy disentanglement.

Katharine Slater is an associate professor of English at Rowan University, where she teaches courses on children's and young adult literature, queer literature, and romance. Her most recent scholarly publication is "A network of small, interwoven cracks": Queer Friction in The Necessary Hunger," published in *The Lion and the Unicorn*; with Derritt Mason and Angel Daniel Matos, she has also the co-author of an adapted keynote, "Curtains, Blinds, and Closet Doors," published in the *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*. Kate's current book project, *The Queer Mobilities of Girlhood in Young Adult Literature*, argues that sapphic girls in YA texts grow and move in ways that disturb linear narratives around female adolescent development. In addition to her academic work, Kate writes adult sapphic romance under a pen name; her debut novel was a finalist for the Lambda Literary Awards.

Lesley D. Clement (Independent Writer/Researcher, Canada), "I Hope Somebody Is Listening": Silence, Indie Art, and Queer Joy in Recent YA Novels

Alice Oseman's *Radio Silence* (2017) begins with a transcript of a fictional podcast created by Aled Last, "Universe City," and the plea, "Hello. I hope somebody is listening." The motif of listening recurs throughout the novel until the podcast goes silent as Aled seeks and discovers "A New Voice" (final chapter title) through re-establishing his relationship with his twin sister and with his friend Frances Janvier, the novel's narrator and illustrator of "Universe City." In *The Reparative Impulse of Queer Young Adult Literature*, Angel Daniel Matos discusses silences within YA texts that are "moments of queer potentiality and moments of identification and filiation that elude words and the control of language" and the "dynamics of silence to identify alternative structures of belonging and imagining." This paper examines three recent Canadian YA novels – Markus Harwood-Jones' *Just Julian* (2018), Benjamin Lefebvre's *In the Key of Dale* (2022), and Cale Plett's *Wavelength* (2025) – in the context of Oseman's themes to explore how silences allow the queer

protagonists to resist heteronormative expectations regarding kinship and aspirations, hone their craft, and build a community in both their private and public lives. Silences foster the joy the characters can no longer find in sanctioned art forms and give them the space to articulate their "new" voices through visual and aural forms that gesture beyond the written or spoken word. These silences are the kind of "heartstopping moments" expressive of "queer joy," "pivotal moments of radical transformation," that Lesley Clement describes as "form[s] of resistance, inspiring repair, reclamation, and/or transformation of what currently exists."

Lesley D. Clement (External Adjunct Professor, Department of English, Lakehead University) has held teaching and administrative positions at various Canadian universities, most recently Lakehead-Orillia (Canada). She is past visiting scholar at the L.M. Montgomery Institute (2019–21) and a consulting editor of the *Journal of L.M. Montgomery Studies*, for which she has (co-)edited a number of collections. She has published on visual literacy, visual culture, empathy, death, mental health, and queer joy in children's picturebooks, YA literature, and Montgomery's writings. She has co-edited a collection of essays on death in children's literature (Routledge) and two essay collections on Montgomery (McGill-Queen's University Press). She was co-chair of IBBY Canada's Hans Christian Andersen Awards selection committee and of the 2026 IBBY World Congress Scientific Committee.

Angel Daniel Matos (Bowdoin College, USA), Unburying Our Gays

Current discourses on safety, visibility, representation, and joy in queer YA often eclipse the potential of this literature to tap into a wide range of emotions that do not fit into normative understandings of living, loving, and belonging in the world. While the movement for a happy and joyful oeuvre of queer YA stories was important in disrupting the tired tropes and patterns used to represent queer life—to what extent has this utopic purview become a dominant and normative demand that comes at the cost of those whose lives or experiences are not deemed safe or appropriate for teen readers?

In an effort to highlight the value of exploring genres and emotions that fit outside of the normative scope of YA, this presentation examines the tropes and narratives present in the genre of queer horror to show how they can be just as sustaining and formative as joyful and so-called "happy" queer literature. More specifically, it explores how Chuck Tingle's novels *Camp Damascus* (2023) and *Bury Your Gays* (2024) exploit the negativity imbued in horror to identify alternative forms of happiness, joy, and futurism. Through the exploration of topics such as gay conversion therapy and the omission of queer life in mainstream representation, these novels compel us to dwell in the uncomfortable, the dangerous, and the precarious to resist the normalization of queer stories, and even more so, the alignment of YA literature and culture with neoliberal understandings of happiness, success, comfort, and joy. These novels collapse the divide that exists between queer literatures for teen and adult audiences, and in turn, highlight the risks and consequences of detaching queer YA literature and culture from the broader legacies of hurt and violence that have and will continue to threaten all queer and trans folk.

Angel Daniel Matos is an associate professor of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at Bowdoin College interested in queer fiction, critical theory, and teen culture. His recent open access book, *The Reparative Impulse of Queer Young Adult Literature* (Routledge 2025), draws from queer, temporal, and affect theories to examine and critique the relationship between young adult culture and the historical traumas of pain, negativity, and violence that permeate our contemporary society. More of his work has appeared in various academic journals, including *Children's Literature*, *The ALAN Review*, *The International Journal of Young Adult Literature*, *Queer Studies in Media and Popular Culture*, and *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking*.

PP 17 Panel: Défis et accessibilité dans l'édition francophone au Québec
Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200
Modérateur IBBY: Nicholas Aumais (IBBY Canada)

Véronique Fontaine (Ėditions Fonfon, Canada), Fonfon: Quand la durabilité est au cœur des pratiques éditoriales

Fonfon est un éditeur jeunesse aux pratiques inspirées du développement durable. Notre vision consiste à valoriser nos collections non pas par la publication d'une quantité importante de titres, mais plutôt par la publication de titres judicieusement choisis et entièrement conçus et imprimés au Québec. Cette production réduite d'environ six nouveautés par année nous permet d'accorder un grand soutien à chaque projet afin de maximiser leur potentiel et leur qualité. Notre réflexion écologique se veut transversale et s'applique à la création, à la production et à la promotion. Plus que tout, Fonfon est soucieux de placer les démarches des talentueux artistes québécois au cœur des projets, tout en les épaulant de la meilleure façon possible.

Véronique Fontaine a cofondé les Éditions Fonfon en 2010. De nombreuses fois primés, les titres de sa maison d'édition se démarquent dans le paysage littéraire canadien. Véronique possède une expérience unique en déploiement de projets innovants tels que *l'Atelier de création Fonfon*. Ce dernier est d'ailleurs lauréat BolognaRagazzi Crossmedia Award 2023. Musicienne de formation, Véronique est passionnée de livres audio et assure la direction musicale de toutes les adaptations Fonfon. Son dévouement pour l'industrie du livre est reconnu et ses implications sont multiples ; elle est notamment membre du conseil d'administration de l'Association nationale des éditeurs de livres depuis 2017.

Marieve Talbot (Éditions la courte échelle, Canada), La collection Micro: Susciter des questions sur le monde actuel par le biais d'émotions fortes

La courte échelle a récemment lancé Micro, une collection qui propose aux adolescent·es de courtes fictions, à mi-chemin entre le monologue théâtral et la nouvelle. La collection privilégie les textes qui abordent des enjeux éthiques ou des dilemmes moraux. L'objectif n'est pas d'offrir des réponses ou de dicter des lignes de conduite, mais plutôt de

provoquer des questionnements — voire de susciter des débats — sur des thématiques actuelles. Une demi-douzaine de titres sont déjà parus. Au-delà des questions suscitées par les sujets, la collection Micro souhaite offrir des fictions vibrantes, porteuses d'émotions fortes, dans lesquelles les jeunes peuvent se reconnaître, des histoires susceptibles à la fois de les faire réfléchir et de leur procurer un réel plaisir de lecture.

Après des études en communication et en administration, **Marième Talbot** fait ses armes en tant que directrice générale de l'OBNL Lis avec moi. Elle entre dans le monde de l'édition en 2014 en faisant l'acquisition du Groupe d'édition la courte échelle. Convaincue qu'une littérature jeunesse de qualité est essentielle au développement des enfants et entourée d'une équipe dynamique, elle donne un nouveau souffle à la prestigieuse maison. En parallèle, Marième s'implique dans son milieu en prenant part à différents comités et en siégeant aux conseils d'administration de plusieurs organisations.

Nicolas Trost (Éditions Les 400 coups, Canada), Découvrez les initiatives des éditions Les 400 coups en accessibilité

À travers des exemples concrets découvrez comment Les 400 coups ont décidé d'adapter leurs ouvrages auprès de différents publics afin que chaque enfant puisse avoir accès à un album jeunesse. De la version en LSQ, en braille en passant par des versions numériques et audio. Nous vous raconterons notre parcours, nos questionnements, et les partenariats que nous avons développer pour répondre aux besoins de tous les lecteurs. En gardant le livre papier au centre de notre mission, nous avons créé des versions avec nos partenaires.

Nicolas Trost est responsable de la commercialisation aux Éditions Les 400 coups, une maison d'édition jeunesse indépendante basée à Montréal qui célèbre ses 30 ans. Depuis plus de quinze ans, il œuvre dans le milieu du livre jeunesse, où il développe des projets de diffusion, de partenariats et de rayonnement des œuvres et de leurs créateurs, au Québec comme à l'international. Sensible au travail des artistes, il a également collaboré avec Association des illustrateurs et illustratrices du Québec. Il s'intéresse particulièrement aux initiatives qui rendent les livres plus accessibles et inclusifs, et à la manière dont l'édition jeunesse peut rejoindre des publics toujours plus diversifiés.»

Saturday, 8 August
11:00-12:00

KN 04 Keynote Speaker
Evelyn Arizpe, 'Las voces de les otres': Listening through Words and Pictures in Latin American Critical Contexts of Displacement
Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200
IBBY Moderator: Lesley D. Clement (IBBY Congress Scientific Committee)

With Latin America facing the challenges of the large, forced mobilisations, in 2024, The Centre for the Promotion of Books in Latin America and Caribbean (CERLALC), an intergovernmental organization sponsored by UNESCO, launched a strategy called *Rutas de la palabra y la vida* with the aim of supporting migrant populations through public library systems in the region. This keynote talk will present some of the findings and resulting projects from librarians in Mexico, Peru, Chile, and Colombia that involved children's literature and arts-based methods, and especially the potential of picturebooks for relationality, inclusion, and listening to each other's voices.

Evelyn Arizpe is Professor of Children's Literature at the School of Education, University of Glasgow and the Programme Lead for the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's programme, "Children's Literature, Media and Cultural Entrepreneurship." She has taught and published widely on topics related to children's literature, especially picturebooks and young readers, and has co-authored, among other publications, *Children Reading Picturebooks: Interpreting Visual Texts* (2003/2016/2023). Her research examines the role of books for children alongside themes of displacement, conflict, and peacebuilding. She was President of the International Research Society on Children's Literature (IRSCL) (2019-2023) and was on the jury for the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 2022 and 2024.

Saturday, 8 August
1:00-4:00 PM
Posters

PS 04
Richcraft Hall

Mario Pennacchio (Translator/Writer, Italy), What Do You Put in Your Suitcase?

How can we explain the phenomenon of migration to children? We could engage them in a game that allows them to empathize and understand this tragedy. How does it work? In elementary school, I ask the children to think about a travel destination. Then using a blackboard, I ask them to indicate an important object to pack in their suitcase. A ball, dolls, a cell phone, a book... Each child proudly presents their suggestion and I show the list. I explain that their suitcase can only weigh half a kilo and they have to eliminate the superfluous. A fun discussion ensues, with almost all the objects being erased from the blackboard, with laughter and small arguments. So, I invite the children to tell me their destination: Paris, Rome... I explain that often some people must travel at night, through the waves, to reach a beach and have a new life. Their luggage must be light, so they must leave important items at home. Then I read my nursery rhyme (L'approdo in IBBY Italian Honour List 2025) and the classroom falls silent. Everyone now understands, at least in part, what it means to leave their homeland and try to start a new life. Metrics of

the nursery rhyme allows it to touch the listener's heart and musicality of the verse conveys important themes. Teachers often call me a few weeks after the meeting because they have started reading articles and books on migration at the students' request.

Mario Pennacchio was born in Potenza, a small town in Southern Italy. After studying Law and Economics in Rome, he began working as a file manager for General Motors. After a few years in the automotive, he decided to change his life and began working with words. He discovered that they have a price and a value. For over twenty years, he has been translating children's books from English into Italian, striving to listen to each other's voices and speak to the hearts of young readers. He also writes nursery rhymes and uses the musicality of verse to explain important topics to children, such as family, immigration, and the beauty of diversity.

Danilo Madayag Baylen (University of West Georgia, USA), Anne Katz (University of Houston, USA), and Sandip LeeAnne Wilson (Husson University, USA), Voices of Migration Journeys: Shared Stories of Hope and Belonging

This poster presentation explores migration as process and content in educational settings. It examines diverse portrayals of immigrants and their families in children's literature, showing how different genres and formats make stories accessible for young readers. Presenters reviewed the books for themes, characters, places, and perspectives that illuminate the migration experience. They address the characteristics, challenges, and shared transformational journeys of migrants, immigrants, and refugees across generations, highlighting the push-pull factors of migration and their social-emotional impacts. Presenters demonstrate how picture books and novels serve as learning tools that build understanding of hope, belonging, identity, empathy, and resilience in young readers.

The poster session provides strategies for using children's literature to teach through migration lenses in K-12 classrooms, such as successful community literacy partnerships, a model for "listening to each other's voices" through shared reading. Attendees receive handouts featuring annotated book lists and implementation strategies. The presenters invite questions, encourage discussion, and engage attendees in sharing experiences using children's books to explore migration themes with diverse learners.

Danilo Madayag Baylen is a professor at the University of West Georgia (USA). Teaches and researches about technology integration practices, visual literacy, and learning experience design. 2022-2023 Fulbright Scholar to the Philippines.

Anne Katz is a professor at the University of Houston (USA). Mentors future educators and facilitates community literacy partnerships with local schools. Recipient of 2025 University Teaching Excellence Award and USBBY's Bridge to Understanding Award.

Sandip LeeAnne Wilson is a professor at Husson University, Maine (USA) in the School of Education and English Department, co-director of the Maine Writing Project, and USBBY Board member. 2012-2013 Fulbright Scholar to India.

Tina Bilban (IBBY Slovenia), Elisabetta Lippolis (IBBY Italy), and Isabella Mauro (IBBY Croatia), Listening to Each Other's Voices: Building up Good Practices Across Borders

The choice of Trieste as seat of the 39th IBBY Congress was emblematic of the larger Adriatic region extending beyond current political borders, home to people, languages and stories that flow across Italy, Slovenia and Croatia, like the waters of the Adriatic Sea. An area that witnessed over times all the tragedy that Jella Lepman wanted to spare future generations when she founded IBBY, but also the benefits that dialogue can bring when voices are listened to and stories shared.

In line with the 2024 Congress' call to "Join the revolution!" and promote international understanding through children's books, IBBY individual members of the Italian, Slovenian and Croatian sections, who at different levels were already pursuing different initiatives to foster collaboration in the region, joined together to conceive common actions before and after the Congress to involve different actors in bringing children and good books together.

Several actions took place, focusing on the specific territory where Italian, Slovenian and Croatian are recognised as national languages, or officially recognised minority languages at different levels, and where a dialect often acts as a lingua franca across communities and generations. The authors intend to present some of these cases.

Listening to each other's voices allowed children and adults to hear the richness of diversity resonating in stories. Sharing books fostered curiosity, eagerness to meet and get to know each other: initiatives carried out so far are being further elaborated into good practices that could be consolidated in the area and disseminated across all borders

Tina Bilban holds a Degree in Comparative Literature and Philosophy and a PhD in Literary Studies. She works as a research assistant at the Institute Nova Revija (INR, Slovenia). Her research and publications encompass the crossroads between literature, philosophy, and science. Alongside her academic career, she is an active freelancer, working as a literary critic, editor, and author of fiction and non-fiction for children, youth, and adults. She currently serves as Vice-President of IBBY International and President of the Slovenian section of IBBY. She was a member of the *Hans Christian Andersen Award* jury 2020 and 2022 and of the 2024 BRAW jury

Elisabetta Lippolis holds a Degree in Translation, and a Postgraduate Degree in Reading and Literature for Children and Adolescents. She worked in the field of international cooperation as manager of training programmes and events, combining her professional

activity with volunteer work, and is a consultant specialising in reading projects and training in benefit of different collectives, including restricted persons, hospitalised children and medical staff. She chaired the 39th IBBY World Congress and currently serves as president of IBBY Italy and member of the IBBY Executive Committee, Projects Subcommittee and co-chair of the 2026 IBBY Reading Promotion Awards Jury.

Isabella Mauro, Library Advisor, MA in Croatian Language and Literature and Library Science. She is the Head of the Croatian Centre for Children's Books, The Croatian section of IBBY at the Zagreb City Libraries. She is also a member of the Zagreb Library Association andthe Croatian Association of Researchers in Children's Literature. She is a member of the program and organising committees of various projects to encourage reading, as well as juries and committees for the selection of Croatian books for children and young adults and their authors.

Parnian Farokhnejad (Translator/Researcher/Educator, Iran), Listening to the Voices of Migrant and Refugee Children in Contemporary Literature: The Role of Literature as a Bridge

Children's literature has become a crucial site for amplifying the often-silenced voices of migrant and refugee children. This research employs a comparative narrative analysis to explore how contemporary picture books from different cultural contexts—including Western works like *The Journey* (Sanna, 2016) and *Lubna and Pebble* (Meddour, 2019), alongside the Iranian story *My Bird* (Persian: *Parande-ye Man* Kalhor, 2016)—translate the abstract realities of displacement, loss, and resilience into tangible human experiences for young readers. Moving beyond textual analysis, the study argues that true "listening" in this context requires an ethics of representation, where illustration, metaphorical language, and child-centric perspectives create immersive spaces for empathy without exploitation. These narratives function as cultural bridges, performing a dual role: for displaced children, they act as a mirror validating their realities; for global peers, they serve as a window fostering cross-cultural understanding and a sense of shared responsibility.

The conclusion posits that such literature is instrumental in nurturing critical social consciousness. By engaging with these stories, children and their adult mediators are invited to participate in an intercultural dialogue, moving from passive sympathy toward informed empathy and potential advocacy. Thus, the analysis highlights the transformative power of children's literature as both an artistic and a socially engaged practice.

Parnian Farokhnejad is a translator, independent researcher, and children's literature educator, as well as a member of the Iranian Children's Book Council. Her specialization lies in studying the representation of marginalized voices, particularly those of migrant and refugee children, in literature. She holds an MA in English Literature, and her research focuses on analyzing contemporary stories and their role in fostering empathy and social awareness among young readers. Among her recent contributions is presenting a paper

titled "Childhood and Children's Literature in the Age of Digital Technologies" at the 5th Biennial Conference on Children's Literature and Childhood Studies. She is committed to utilizing literature as a bridge for intercultural understanding and dialogue.

Romana Tankovic (Zagreb City Libraries, Croatia), All of Us: Libraries as Bridges for Integration and Belonging

The Zagreb City Libraries (ZCL) have designated 2026 as the thematic year of migration, during which numerous programs across its network of 42 library branches will address the needs, experiences, and inclusion of migrants as a vulnerable social group in the capital city of Croatia. As a broad and well-established public library network, ZCL possesses the infrastructure, expertise, and community trust required to develop programs that respond effectively to contemporary social challenges.

Within this framework, the project “All of Us” explores migration as a defining process of modern society, highlighting the interrelations of identity, belonging, integration, and intercultural communication. The project’s primary objective is to empower individuals with migration experience as equal and active participants in community life by providing inclusive spaces, support mechanisms, and opportunities for cultural exchange and self-expression.

Implemented activities include storytelling sessions, art and poetry workshops, cooking and dance gatherings, digital literacy and language courses, tutoring for children from migrant families, and assistance in navigating digital public services.

The project builds upon over a decade of continuous engagement with migrant communities in several ZCL branches—particularly Dugave, Vladimir Nazor, and Marina Držić Library—encompassing more than 200 events and over 2,300 participants. ZCL’s work in this field has been recognized at both local and international levels. The initiative received support from the Europe Challenge Foundation, and one of its coordinators has been appointed to the City of Zagreb Coordination for the Integration of Foreigners, further underscoring the institution’s leadership in promoting inclusion and intercultural understanding

Romana Tanković is a librarian at the Marin Držić Children’s Library and has been working within the Zagreb City Libraries network since 2016. She designs and delivers programs for vulnerable groups of children, with a particular focus on children with developmental difficulties and children from migrant families. In 2019, she presented in Brussels, at the invitation of the Croatian Red Cross, on workshops with asylum seekers conducted at the library. In 2023, she initiated the program *Multikulti – Learning Together*, focused on the integration of Ukrainian refugees, in cooperation with the Jesuit Refugee Service. She currently works as one of the coordinators of the *All of Us* project dedicated to migrant communities in Zagreb.

Yawen Zhou (NSCAD University, Canada), Food, Picture Books, and Cultural Identity: Creative and Family Reading Practices on the Immigration Journey

Food plays a fundamental role in shaping cultural memory, emotional attachment, and identity, particularly in childhood. As one of the earliest sensory experiences through which children encounter culture, food carries meanings that extend beyond nourishment to encompass family relationships, traditions, and belonging. For children growing up in immigrant contexts, food often becomes a vital link to heritage, offering continuity amid linguistic, cultural, and geographic displacement. This study explores how food-centered picture books can function simultaneously as creative practice and pedagogical tools for supporting children's cultural identity development in diasporic settings.

Drawing on my multi-layered positionality as a picture-book author–illustrator, a mother of three young children, and a master's candidate in Art Education in Canada, this research examines the intersections of creative practice, family reading practices, and children's meaning-making. The study is grounded in my lived experience of immigration—from China to Northern Thailand and later to Canada—and in the sustained practice of creating, reading, and reflecting on food-themed picture books with my children over several years.

The study focuses on two picture books I authored and illustrated, *Bean Pod, Boom!* and *Tuanzi's Festival and Food*. Data include reflective documentation of the book-making process, family reading observations, and children's creative responses such as drawings, poems, and imaginative reinterpretations. The findings suggest that food-centred picture books can become meaningful sites of recognition and belonging for children in immigrant families, enabling them to connect everyday experiences with cultural memory through shared reading and creative engagement.

Yawen Zhou is a painter, children's picturebook author-illustrator, and Master's candidate in Art Education at NSCAD University in Halifax, Canada. Originally from China, she has over a decade of experience creating and publishing picturebooks for young readers. Her works have received several awards and have appeared in literary columns, children's magazines, and international exhibitions, including *Children's Books from China*, which toured countries such as Germany, Italy, and the United States. Her books are also held in public library collections internationally, including in Canada. Her research explores picture books, family reading practices, cultural identity in cross-cultural contexts, and autobiographical inquiry.

Proma Basu Roy (Parag, Tata Trusts, IBBY India), Listening through Images: Voices of Girlhood in Indian Wordless Books

Across borders and the multi-lingual landscape, the world reads through a common visual language that needs no translation. Wordless books render itself to a shared interpretation of experience, confirming, modifying and elaborating the story of each other (Gordon Wells, 2009). Since the first Indian wordless book in 1985, the genre evolved

in range and style, and through the nature of characters. With the turning point of the Indian economic reforms in the 1990s, globalisation had a profound influence on women's representation in books. It reshaped 'who' and 'how' women were represented through changing ideas of modernity; it led to the emergence of the 'global girl.'

In this context, the presentation aims to highlight how depiction of the Indian girlchild provides a critical site for tracing the reimagination of gender identities over time. In *A Visit to the City Market* (1986), the sharp, observant girl moves beside her mother and her brother in the local market. In *Flitter-Flutter* (2013), the girl unravels the mystery of quest and longing on her own. About a decade later, in *When the Sun Sets* (2024), the young woman is an embodiment of the sun, a seminal metaphor of empowerment, and outstanding for a country where the sun is worshiped as a male god. The poster will highlight girlhood representations in some of Indian published wordless books from a pool of around seventy, ultimately revealing how visual storytelling of girlhood contributed to a shared act of seeing and listening in the global context.

Proma Basu Roy leads the Parag IBBY India efforts, Parag Awards and Parag's masterclass for illustrators, "More than Words," for creating wordless stories. The Parag Initiative of Tata Trusts holds the Indian Chapter of IBBY. Parag works towards reading promotion and access to good books for children as a sector builder for children's literature in India, across states and Indian languages. Proma's heart lies in picture books and wordless books; she has been committed to working towards reading for pleasure and takes keen interest in children's libraries, reading enhancement, and research in children's literature.

Judith Dunkerly-Boulanger (Old Dominion University, USA), (Re)Making Our Own Monsters: Critical Posthumanism and Youth Activism in *The Wild Ones*

We make our own monsters, then fear them for what they show us about ourselves."
— Mike Carey & Peter Gross, *The Unwritten, Vol. 1: Tommy Taylor and the Bogus Identity*

In the current socio-political environment of the United States, Mike Carey and Peter Gross' observation is both timely and apt. As this proposal is being written, the United States is faced with the appalling reality of state-sanctioned violence, the kidnapping of both citizens and immigrants by Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) paramilitary members, and the National Guard being mobilized by the President against the expressed wishes of state governors and federal court orders. Pertinent to this story of monsters in the night, an apartment building in Chicago was raided in the early morning hours, with ICE zip-tying the hands of terrified children whom they had separated from their families without cause or warrant.

This study analyzes the picture book *The Wild Ones* (Lacera & Lacera, 2024) using a critical posthumanist theoretical framework (McCormack, 2022) in tandem with multimodal content analysis (MMCA) (Serafini & Reid, 2023) to explore how youth activism

is portrayed in a book that addresses housing vulnerability and capitalist greed. I explore how the young protagonists, who are treated as outsiders by their peers and discounted as mere children by capitalist land developers, invoke monsters and beasts from their cultures' folklore to ward off the human "monsters" seeking to evict them and tear down their apartment building for high-end development. It focuses on how these conjured mythological monsters challenge human-centered ideas and break down established humanist beliefs about property and who has access to it. The reimagining of identity and the merging of human and non-human, especially through the experiences of marginalized or "othered" groups, lends a voice to those who are oftentimes silenced in dominant narratives. The story blurs the lines between human and non-human entities, expanding concepts of belonging and collaboration to include posthuman forms.

Judith Dunkerly, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Literacy, Language, and Culture in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Darden College of Education and Professional Studies at Old Dominion University. Her research employs critical theories to explore the intersection of critical literacy, social justice, and human rights, with a focus on systemic injustice and oppression. Her work has been published in the *Journal of Literacy Research*, *the Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *The Reading Teacher*, *The Qualitative Research Journal*, and several edited volumes and handbooks. She can be reached at jdunkerl@odu.edu

Saturday, 8 August
1:30-2:30

KN 05 Keynote Speaker
Fikile Nxumalo, (Re)storying Intergenerational Encounters with Climate Action
Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200
IBBY Moderator: Patti McIntosh (IBBY Canada)

This presentation engages with narrative and visual stories that emerged from climate justice research with lands, children, families, elders, and teachers in a rural Eswatini community. The stories brought forward emerged from children's land-based and classroom encounters with the effects of climate change in their community, from intergenerational dialogues on revitalizing Indigenous foods, and as children, families, and community members worked with the land to build an Indigenous food garden. This storytelling is anchored in situated understandings of relationality that interconnect the stories I share whilst thinking carefully about how stories can be shared, inviting opacity as a generative way to research with Indigenous and traditional communities, knowledges, and lands.

Fikile Nxumalo is an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching & Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, where she directs the Childhood Place Pedagogy Lab and is also affiliated faculty in the School of the Environment and the School of Cities. She is the author of over sixty scholarly publications, including her book *Decolonizing Place in Early Childhood Education* (Routledge, 2019). Her work seeks to make conceptual, methodological, curricular, and pedagogical contributions in disrupting colonial erasures, anti-Blackness, and anthropocentrism in education, particularly within current conditions of socio-ecological precarity.

Saturday, 8 August
2:35-4:00 PM

PP 18 Panel: Combatting Silencing and Erasure: From Publishing and Curricular Perspectives
Nicol Building 3020
IBBY Moderator: Charalambos Demetriou (IBBY International)

Gabriela Dreyer (IBBY Uruguay) and Nora Lía Sormani (Jacarandá Editoras, Argentina), Bridges Between Regions: Specialized Journals and the Field of Children's Literature in Latin America

Specialized journals devoted to children's and young adult literature are spaces of thought, memory, and collective creation. They turn reading into dialogue, critique, and discovery. Each issue brings together multiple voices—authors, illustrators, teachers, researchers, and editors—and blends diverse forms of discourse: essays, interviews, reviews, chronicles, editorials, and news. Within their pages coexist reflection and enjoyment, specialization and initiation, rigorous analysis and the pleasure of reading.

Since the mid-twentieth century, *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature*, founded by Jella Lepman, has embodied the belief that books can serve as "ambassadors of peace" and as bridges between cultures. Its legacy inspired a network of publications that sustain dialogue across regions and languages. In 2023, *Bookbird en español* (Jacarandá Editoras / ALIJA–IBBY Argentina) extended this tradition to the Spanish-speaking world, fostering cultural exchange and professional development in the field of children's literature.

In Latin America, *Voces & Tintas* (IBBY LAC) offers a regional, intergenerational, and multilingual perspective on literature and reading. With the initiative of Hazel Hernández (IBBY LAC coordinator), the three of us have taken charge of editing this journal. In contrast to the fleeting pace of social media, these journals invite sustained, attentive reading. They are living archives that preserve the intangible heritage of reading

and the cultural memory of childhood. To read them is to pause, to listen to the voices of the literary field, and to keep open the bridge between generations and geographies.

Gabriela Dreyer: Montevideo, Uruguay. Education Teacher. Specialized in Early Childhood Education. She completed a Specialization in Children's and Young Adult Literature at the University of San Martín in Buenos Aires. From her earliest steps as a teacher, she has dedicated herself to sharing reading with children from early childhood to young adults. Literature is experienced as the art of the written word. Workshop facilitator and reading mediator, participating in conferences and workshops both in her country and abroad. Active member of IBBY Uruguay since its inception. Co-editor of the journal *Voces & Tintas* (*Voices & Inks*).

Nora Lía Sormani: Buenos Aires, Argentina. Holds a degree in Literature from Buenos Aires University. She specializes in studies on theatre, literature, and culture for children and young people. She was juror for the Hans Christian Andersen International Award in 2012. She is part of the International Chair of Reading and Writing based in Cuba. She was an active member of the Executive Committee of IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People), where she served as a juror for IBBY ASAHI and IRead. She is co-director of Jacarandá Editoras. She is also co-director of the journals *Bookbird en Español* and *Voces & Tintas*.

Susan Pi (Rebel Goose Books, Canada), Books as Movements: Rethinking the Publisher's Role in Children's Literature

This presentation introduces an emerging, practice-based approach to children's publishing that connects story development, community partnership, and advocacy from the earliest stages of acquisition. Susan Pi, founder of Rebel Goose Books, begins each acquisition by asking what stories are missing and what children from marginalized communities need to feel seen and valued. Developed through partnerships with authors, educators, and advocates, each project grows from this question into a collaborative act of care and representation. Implementation includes campaigns, outreach, and creative partnerships that extend the story's impact beyond the book. This approach offers a flexible framework that small publishers worldwide can adapt and shows how locally-developed publishing practices can spark collaboration across borders. Early community responses suggest strong potential for this approach to support dialogue, belonging, and engagement. The presentation offers practical ways to connect story development, community partnership, and advocacy across publishing and literacy work.

Susan Pi is the founder and publisher of Rebel Goose Books, a children's publishing house on Vancouver Island. She holds a Master of Publishing from Simon Fraser University and brings 15 years of experience in publishing, digital media, and community engagement. Her career includes Ten Speed Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House, and Heyday Books, where she served as marketing director at one of California's oldest nonprofit

publishers. Her work frames each book as a collective act of care and representation, with stories designed to live on in communities and conversation.

Despina Heracleous (Cyprus), Challenging Stereotypes and Silences: Women in Sports through Children's Picturebooks in a Divided Cyprus

This paper explores how contemporary children's picturebooks depict, reinforce, or challenge gender stereotypes related to sports, while also examining the silences in a divided Cyprus. Through content analysis of selected picturebooks from international and Greek-Cypriot editions, the study investigates how girls are portrayed in athletic contexts and whose stories remain untold. A particular focus is placed on the absence of Turkish-Cypriot female representation in children's literature—an omission that reflects the broader divisions of a still-partitioned island.

A key example is the Cypriot award-winning picturebook *The Teacher's Shoes*, recipient of the Cyprus State Literature Award 2024, which tells the story of a woman who is both a schoolteacher and an international football referee. This powerful narrative offers a rare and empowering portrayal of a woman breaking gender barriers in sports.

Sharing diverse literature is a moral and political act (Zapata, Fugit, Moss). Picture books have a profound impact on gender role development (Chick, Slekar, Charles). Social ideologies of gender roles and behavioural norms shape children's perceptions of their own and their peers (Coletti, Allan, Martin). They have the potential not only to challenge gender stereotypes in sports but also to bridge divided communities by offering shared narratives of childhood, identity, and play.

Finally, the presentation proposes pedagogical strategies for educators and librarians in Cyprus and beyond, aiming to foster critical literacy, gender equality, and intercultural understanding through stories and images that celebrate all girls and build bridges of understanding and peace in a divided island

Despina Heracleous works at the Deputy Ministry of Culture. She is an award-winning author of children's and young adult literature. She holds a degree in Education Sciences from the University of Cyprus and a Master's in Communication, Education and Technology from the University of Manchester. She is a two-time recipient of the Cyprus State Prize for Children's Literature (2023, 2024), winner of the First Prize from the Cyprus Board on Books for Young People (IBBY CYPRUS) in 2019, and was included in the prestigious IBBY Honour List in 2024. She is a nominee for the 2026 IBBY-iRead Outstanding Reading Promoter Award. despina_eracleous@yahoo.com

PP 19 Panel: Awards: Inclusivity and Diversity
Nicol Building 3030
IBBY Moderator: Shereen Kreidieh (IBBY International)

Katie Day (Tanglin Trust School, Singapore) and Annette Y. Goldsmith (Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel, USA), Global Literature in Libraries Initiative (GLLI) – Next Steps

Books from other countries, and especially books in translation, make it possible for us to engage
with many more voices from different parts of the world. The Global Literature in Libraries Initiative (GLLI) is a nonprofit that "strives to raise the visibility of world literature for adults and children at the local, national and international levels." We are a bridge between creators and
publishers and librarians. During the past decade we have focused on materials for children and
teenagers. And now we look ahead for ways to enhance and make more visible our work to date, and to envision new ways, and find new partnerships, to better enable us to bring us all together through world literature. Attend this 15-minute oral presentation (part of a larger panel) to find out about and offer your input on GLLI's three signature projects: the Translated YA Book Prize; the ALA Carnegie-Whitney funded website, "Building a Global Youth Literature Collection 101", and the Blog, which features contributions from guest curators each month on national literatures and related topics, as well as #IntlYALit and #WorldKidLit months each year and weekly #WorldKidLit Wednesday posts. We look forward to your feedback, in person or via email at GlobalLitinLib@gmail.com, as we plan for the next decade of helping people promote and use children's and young adult translations in libraries.

Katie Day is an international school teacher-librarian in Singapore. An American expatriate for over 40 years, she has an undergraduate degree in Russian civilization, a UK master's degree in children's literature and degrees in teaching and library & information science via Australia. She has been heavily involved with the Red Dot Book Awards in Singapore and the Siam Book Awards in Thailand, as well as the Neev Children's Book Award in India. She has also served as the chair of the GLLI Translated YA Book Prize and is now on the board of the Global Literature in Libraries Initiative (GLLI).

Annette Y. Goldsmith is the librarian at Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel in Los Angeles. Canadian-born, her PhD in Library & Information Studies is from Florida State University. She guest lectures for online graduate classes, notably Marc Aronson's International Children's Books course at Rutgers. Annette is a board member of GLLI. She has served on numerous book award committees, including the Batchelder, but was particularly thrilled to be on the 2019 (inaugural) committee of the GLLI Translated YA Book Prize, an award she helped create, and to chair the 2020 committee. She most recently served on the 2025 Kirkus Prize jury.

Margaretha Ullström (IBBY Sweden), Presentation of the Anthology *Flying over the World*

A cornerstone of IBBY's work is to let literature build bridges between older and younger people and cultures. That is why translations of children's and young adult literature with good quality are a central concern in IBBY Sweden's work. A quarter of a century ago, the Peter Pan Prize was established through a collaboration between the Gothenburg Book and Library Fair and IBBY Sweden as part of this bridge-building effort. IBBY Sweden decided to celebrate the prize 25th anniversary with an anthology that both provides documentation and inspiration. We wanted to somehow manifest the voluntary work that has been going on for 25 years. Through the encounter with the diversity of the stories presented here, the oblivion of good texts is counteracted. The reader receives an introduction to the Peter Pan Prize and its development. The introduction is followed by twenty-five articles about twenty-five children's and young adult titles written by twenty-five writers. The article authors are or have been actors in the children's and young adult literature field – as mediators, that is, librarians and educators, as publishers, researchers, authors, text and image makers. Something that reinforces the third meaning of perspective – each with their own point of view, angle of approach or aspect and lighting. As editor for the anthology, I want to deepen some of these perspectives and tie it to work to promote reading with literature as a bridge builder between people.

Margaretha Ullström has been a member of IBBY Sweden since the late 1990s. During the years 2018 to 2024, she was the President of IBBY Sweden. She has a PhD in literary studies. Her thesis investigates various manifestations of the Swedish concept of the welfare state *Folkhemmet* in Swedish 20th century youth literature. She is a literary scholar with a long professional life behind her as a children's librarian, high school librarian, and university lecturer

Dora Batalim SottoMayor (IBBY Portugal | Pombal Reading Observatory, Portugal), Listening with the Fingertips: Inclusive Voices from IBBY Portugal and the Reading Observatory Children's Books Awards

This paper presents the newly established IBBY Portugal, hosted by the Pombal Reading Observatory, as a platform for listening to the diverse voices emerging from contemporary Portuguese children's literature. Through its annual Awards programme, the Observatory recognises books that exemplify inclusion, diversity, and aesthetic innovation, creating a dialogue between literary excellence and social relevance.

The 2024 selection—the most recent to date—reflects the Congress's central theme, Listening to Each Other's Voices, across several intersectional clusters. The highest distinction was awarded to "Uma Casa é uma Montanha é um Chapéu" ("A House Is a Mountain Is a Hat"), an inclusive tactile picturebook designed for blind and sighted children alike, which demonstrates how architecture, design, and literature can converge to foster sensory literacy and empathy. Alongside it, the remaining distinguished titles collectively give voice to ecological awareness, gender identity, emotional wellbeing, and

belonging—offering a snapshot of contemporary Portuguese children's literature as a practice of multilayered listening, as this presentation will demonstrate.

The paper will also outline the aims and methodology of the Observatory's award programme, the collaborative processes behind book selection, and the foundational goals of IBBY Portugal. It argues that such initiatives embody institutional listening, where criticism, mediation, and publishing intersect to amplify diverse voices and promote a culture of reading through high-quality picturebooks and other genres for children and young adults. Ultimately, the Portuguese case suggests that attentive reading and inclusive literary curation can serve as cultural infrastructures for democratic listening from childhood onwards.

Dora Batalim SottoMayor is a specialist in literature and children's books and in arts pedagogy in childhood. A university lecturer, she has extensive experience mediating books and reading with diverse audiences—from young children to senior adults—across different cultural contexts. Her work includes developing educational and editorial projects and materials, as well as training professionals in the fields of education and culture. She also serves as an editorial consultant and jury member for national competitions, including the National Illustration Award and Literary Creation Grants, and contributes as a specialist at the Pombal Reading Observatory and as a member of the central coordination group of IBBY Portugal.

Sybil Durand (University of Arizona, USA) and Kathy G. Short (University of Arizona, USA), Who's Silent? Who Speaks? International Youth Literature in the U.S.

The annual Outstanding International Books awards, an initiative of USBBY, identify a list of 35-40 books each year, highlighting books first published in another country before being published and/or distributed in the U.S. This award list was established in 2006 as a mechanism of change to encourage purchases of international literature and increase publication in the U.S. But, what is actually happening? Whose voices are silent and whose voices are easily available for readers? As a collaborative team, we are analyzing the larger body of international books published in 2024 and 2025 in the U.S., not just the award winners. We have collected and analyzed data on genre and format, themes, country of origin, geographic setting, cultural identities of main characters, locations and identities of authors, illustrators and translators, original language, age level, and more. We are documenting what countries and cultures are over- and under-represented, how many translated books are published versus books from English-speaking countries, whose voices are dominating or silent, the diversity of main characters, and the genres and themes available for readers of different age levels. In our presentation, we will share the most interesting data through graphs, charts, and world maps and raise issues on the trends that most excite and concern us, particularly in relation to global and cultural diversity as reflected in the international voices available to readers in the U.S. This data

also affects publishers around the world who are looking to expand their audiences and markets.

E. Sybil Durand is an associate professor in the Department of Teaching, Learning & Sociocultural Studies at the University of Arizona, where she teaches courses on young adult (YA) literature, sociocultural studies, and research methods. Her research examines YA literature by authors of color situated in the U.S. and globally and how teachers and students engage such texts. Her scholarship draws on feminist anti-colonial theories and culturally sustaining pedagogies and employs content analysis, ethnographic, and participatory action research methodologies. Her current study examines trends across YA books submitted for consideration for USBBY's Outstanding International Books from 2005 to 2025.

Kathy G. Short is a Regents professor and endowed chair of global children's literature in the College of Education at the University of Arizona, where she is the Director of Worlds of Words Center of Global Literacies and Literatures (wowlit.org). She has co-authored and co-edited many books and articles, including *Critical Content Analysis of Visual Images in Literature for Young People* and *Teaching Globally: Reading the World through Literature.* She served as President of the National Council of Teachers of English and the US Board of Books for Young People.

PP 20 Panel: Listening to the Diverse Voices of Nature
Richcraft Hall 2228
IBBY Moderator: Tucker Stone (IBBY International)

Nilay Yılmaz (IBBY Turkey), A Yamada Project, Water's Natural Symphony: Flowing, Moving, Healing Stories After the Earthquake

In 2023 with the support of IBBY Children in Crisis Fund we established the "IBBY Turkey Children's Library" for children traumatised by earthquake in Kahramanmaraş, the epicenter of the earthquake occurred in 2023, was known as the city of culture, literature and water before the earthquake. Our project supported by Yamada in 2025 is inspired by the feature of water as a healing, carrying and life-giving source. We aim to commemorate the memories lost by the earthquake, to recall the value of iconic but damaged places, and to make the city's unique cultural values and natural places visible again through stories. In the first phase our primary target group -50 children living in a village (aged 8-15)- were given trainings on how to use a camera and how two concepts -water and culture- can be related to each other in terms of divergent, convergent and analogical thinking. Then the children took photographs to tell their own stories through photovoice technique. These stories were used to establish therapeutic connections through movement, dance, drama, expressive play and creative thinking/writing practices. Then 40 writers/illustrators and local people also used these photographs taken by children to create their own stories in different types of literary texts/genres such as short stories, poems, aphorism, sayings, essay, memoirs. In the third phase of the

project, all literary and visual products produced by kids and authors were exhibited in Municipality Children's Right Festival and Istanbul Book Fair. A photovoice book and a documentary video are in the process of production.

Hiroe Suzuki (Kanagawa University, Japan), Bridging the In-Between: Listening to More-than-Human Voices in Nahoko Uehashi's Fantasies

Amid escalating concerns over climate change and biodiversity loss, it has become increasingly essential to recognize humanity as part of an interconnected web of life. As a genre that often transcends the real world, fantasy offers fertile ground for reimagining the relationship between humans and non-humans.

The Japanese fantasy author Nahoko Uehashi, who has an anthropological background and received the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 2014, offers a compelling literary perspective on these themes. Her works envision multispecies coexistence and portray humans as mediators that connect diverse forms of life, fostering interdependence. In *The Beast Player* series (2006–2010), a young girl learns to communicate with magical beasts, supporting harmony across species during conflicts and natural disasters. *The Deer King* series (2014–2019), set against the outbreak of a virus-mediated disease, depicts a middle-aged man who rejects alliance with the disease-carrying wild dogs and embraces coexistence with deer, seeing them as companions rather than livestock. Her ongoing the *Kokun* series (2022–) centers on a girl who perceives the "aromatic voices" of plants and insects, exploring ecosystem balance and multispecies communication.

Collectively, Uehashi's works illuminate the reciprocal relationships among diverse forms of life, portraying humans as active bridges that connect multiple species. Through this vision, her narratives offer imaginative insights into resilient and interdependent ways of living within a shared world. They exemplify how children's and young adult literature can articulate complex ethical, ecological, and socio-political ideas in forms that remain both accessible to young readers and intellectually profound.

Hiroe Suzuki is a Professor in the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Kanagawa University, where she teaches literature in English, including fantasy and picturebooks. Interested in how children's books foster empathy and social awareness, her research focuses on representations of marginalized groups in children's literature, particularly ethnic minorities, Indigenous peoples, and other oppressed communities. In addition to co-authoring more than twenty books, her first monograph, *Reading African-American Children's Literature: Children's Books as Encouragement* (2022), based on her doctoral dissertation, has been recognized by major academic societies and reviewers in Japan. Further information is available: https://researchmap.jp/hiroesuzuki.

Petros Panaou (University of Georgia, USA), Listening to the Wildness: Reconnecting with Nature through Posthumanist Picturebooks

Parents, educators, and experts from diverse fields are sounding the alarm about an urgent need to reconnect children to nature. But, as the IBBY Congress call for papers states, “before any substantial progress can be made, there must be the ability and willingness to listen.” It is imperative that we enable children to listen to the voices of nature. The proposed presentation explores international Posthumanist picturebooks that encourage children to listen to other-than-human voices in order to reconnect with nature. The proposed presentation builds on Harju and Rouse’s (2018) work on fostering a feeling of “necessary wilderness” (Almond, 2011) through literary engagement and play. It explores picturebooks and reading interactions that espouse a Posthumanist philosophy, decentring human animals, critiquing the Anthropocene, and amplifying other-than-human voices, silences, and perspectives. Using Critical Content Analysis (Johnson, Mathis, and Short, 2019), the author analyzes works created or co-created by three internationally acclaimed artists (Sydney Smith, Oliver Jeffers, and Beatrice Alemagna) and the Greek author Thodoris Papaioannou, whose picturebooks are explicitly Posthumanist. The titles explored include, but are not limited to, *Island Storm* and *Sidewalk Flowers*; *The Fate of Fausto* and *This Moose Belongs to Me*; *We Go to the Park* and *On a Magical Do-Nothing Day*; as well as *Upside-down* and *When You Are Away*.

Petros Panaou is an author and professor of Children's Literature at the University of Georgia, where he chairs an annual conference. His novel *Operation LOGOS* received the Cyprus National Book Award for Literature Addressed to Children and Adolescents. It was also included in the *White Ravens*. His academic work focuses on international literature for children and young people, the social imagination, and creative reading and writing. He is a board member of Cyprus IBBY and served on the executive board of USBBY. He has served on various literary award committees, including the Newbery Award, and as *Bookbird* editor.

Adolfo Córdova Ortiz (CEPE, Centro de Enseñanza para Extranjeros - UNAM, Mexico) and Ana Elsa Pérez Martínez (CEPE, Centro de Enseñanza para Extranjeros - UNAM, Mexico), The New Call of the Wild: Liternature in Latin American Children's Literature

In recent years, children's literature in Latin America has shown a renewed fascination with the natural world—not as a passive setting but as an active, sentient force that speaks, resists, and remembers. This paper explores the emergence of liternature, a critical, decolonial and creative current that intertwines literary expression and ecological consciousness. The term, first popularized in Spanish-language literary criticism, refers to narratives where nature is not merely represented but becomes a participant in meaning-making.

Through a selection of picture books and poetic works from Latin America, this presentation analyzes how contemporary authors and illustrators portray human–nonhuman relationships in ways that challenge anthropocentrism and colonial hierarchies of knowledge. Works such as *Raíz del nido* (FCE, 2022), *Me llamo Millaray* (Ekaré Sur,

2022), and *Me fui en un caballo* (El Naranjo, 2022) reveal a "return to nature" that is both aesthetic and political: a call to reimagine our coexistence with other forms of life.

By tracing this movement alongside the global reawakening of environmental narratives, the paper argues that Latin American children's literature contributes a distinct voice—poetic, decolonial, and deeply rooted in local ecologies—to what might be called a new call of the wild.

Adolfo Córdova Ortiz is a Mexico City–based writer, journalist, and researcher. He holds an MA in Children's and YA Literature from the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona and has served as visiting professor at UNAM and other universities in Mexico and Spain. He is an award-winning author and literary scholar.

Ana Elsa Pérez holds a BA in History and an MA in Mexican History from UNAM. A specialist in reading history and children's literature, she is a researcher at UNAM's Institute of Aesthetic Research and currently Director of the Center for Teaching for Foreigners (CEPE), promoting Spanish language education and Mexican culture.

PP 21 Panel: Public and School Libraries: Best Practices for Reading and Listening from a Disability Perspective

Nicol Building 4030

IBBY Moderator: Stephanie Wells (IBBY Canada)

Naomi Hamer (Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada), Curating Diversity: Exhibits of the Osborne Collection and IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities

Over the past decade, special exhibits at the Toronto Public Library have offered unique venues to showcase diverse representations and the inclusive design of young people's texts in the TPL's children's literature collections. These exhibits provide distinctive curated spaces within the library setting that may be viewed as Third Spaces (Pahl and Rowsell 2005) for "deep listening to the voices and stories" of these diverse texts. While some exhibits follow conventional curatorial practices to showcase rare and antique books, recent exhibits draw upon a range of collection items as invitations for material, physical, and virtual play with children's literature, particularly picture books. This presentation will specifically focus on key exhibits at the Toronto Reference Library and the Osborne Collection with a focus on three exhibits: "I am Canada: Celebrating Canadian Picture Book Art" (2017-2018) displaying original picture book art of Canadian life and identity including diverse immigrant narratives; "You, Me, Us: Outstanding Books For and About Young People with Disabilities" (2019) featuring texts from the IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities; and most recently "Child Friendly Cities" at the Osborne Collection (2025) that shared texts around the theme of urban childhoods with a selection of representations by BIPOC authors and illustrators. Framed by critical children's museology (Patterson 2016; Hamer 2019) and participatory approaches to curation

across the public spaces of museums, libraries and art galleries (Simon 2010), this presentation will explore how these TPL exhibits offer spaces to engage with diverse and inclusive representations in children's book collections

Naomi Hamer is an Associate Professor and Chair of English at Toronto Metropolitan University. Her publications examine the cross-media adaptation of children's literature with a focus on mobile apps and children's museums. She is the co-editor of *More Words About Pictures: Current Research on Picture Books and Visual/Verbal Texts for Young People* (with Nodelman and Reimer 2017) and *The Routledge Companion to Media and Fairy-tale Cultures* (with Greenhill, Rudy, and Bosc 2018). This presentation extends from a SSHRC funded project "Curating the Story Museum: Transmedia practices, participatory exhibits, and youth citizenship" with Dr. Ann Marie Murnaghan (York University).

Margarida Castellano-Sanz (University of Valencia, Spain), Rethinking Reading Spaces for Inclusion: Teachers' Perspectives on a Neuroarchitecture-inspired Booktruck Project

Creating inclusive and emotionally supportive reading environments can play a vital role in promoting educational justice and student engagement with books (Petit, 2019). This presentation explores how a neuroarchitecture-informed approach to redesigning school reading spaces can foster inclusion and multiliteracy development (Mombiedro, 2022). The Booktruck Project, implemented at a state school in València (Spain) within the framework of the ACORD Programme for Educational Innovation —a publicly funded research initiative supported by the Valencian Department of Education— transformed a repurposed van into a calm and aesthetically engaging reading space located in the schoolyard. Developed through a service-learning collaboration between university researchers, vocational students, primary students and teachers, the initiative applies Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to create accessible environments that welcome all readers (Spina, 2021). Data for this study were collected through a focus group with four teachers (Litosseliti, 2003) working across different educational stages (ages 3–12). Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, findings reveal that teachers perceive the Booktruck as a refuge-like space that encourages autonomy, emotional regulation, and inclusive participation. Beyond offering a quiet place to read, it promotes multimodal exploration and strengthens students' reading identities. The presentation argues for the integration of spatial design, aesthetic experience, and pedagogical reflection in inclusive literacy education. By co-designing reading spaces with their communities, schools can expand the transformative potential of reading as both a democratic and affective act.

Margarida Castellano-Sanz, Associate Professor in the Department of Language and Literature Teaching, University of Valencia (Spain). Her research focuses on additional language learning in plurilingual and pluriethnic contexts, multimodal texts in literary and critical education, and reading promotion to enhance cultural rights. She has published in indexed journals such as *L1-Educational Studies in Language and Literature*, *Tejuelo*, or *Multimodalité(s)*, and in books by Routledge, Peter Lang, or Tirant lo Blanch. She has

coordinated R+D+i projects on additional language teaching, inclusion through reading, and participatory designs for equal access to cultural rights. She has completed research stays at the UNAM (Mexico), Queen Mary University of London and University of Reading (UK), and Université de Montréal (Canada).

Iris González Afonso (Gabriel García Márquez Public Library, Spain), Reading with All the Senses: The Public Library as a Gateway to Inclusive Reading through Sensory Spaces

Libraries are welcoming and community spaces where people make connections and enjoy culture. However, certain characteristics of public and private spaces make it difficult for neurodivergent or differently abled people to enjoy all the socialization, learning and leisure opportunities that libraries are offering, because they do not meet their communicative, cognitive or sensory needs. With the will to put people at the center of the Gabriel García Márquez library, we have developed an inclusion project that stems from the Barcelona Libraries 2030 Master Plan, with the installation of a sensory room that guarantees participation for neurodivergent or differently abled citizens. Sensory rooms are pleasant, safe and accessible spaces, equipped with devices and materials that combine interaction with sound, light and vibration. Designed for sensory stimulation and regulation, they promote attention, exploration, learning, enjoyment and emotional well-being.

The project's lines of action are:
therapeutic accessibility, offering individual and community sensory regulation sessions
literary accessibility, adapting reading promotion dynamics to an inclusive version taking into account sensory disorders that hinder reading access and comprehension, turning them into experiential and integral experiences.

The project has grown year after year working together families, community agents, schools and librarians. It has had great acceptance by groups of neurodivergent people and with diverse abilities, since with this initiative we are not only converting the library into an adapted and accessible space, but we are also playing a fundamental role in promoting well-being and access to cultural and learning leisure for people who are usually excluded.

Iris Gonzalez holds a degree in Library Science and Documentation from the University of Barcelona. She has worked at the Libraries of Barcelona since 2009 and for the past two years has been responsible for the children's and youth area of the Gabriel García Márquez Library, Barcelona.

Angela Lebedeva (IBBY Russia), Fostering Trust through Reading: Inclusive Russian Library Practices

Research indicates that disabled children face communication barriers and insufficient developmental stimuli. Libraries, such as the Russian State Children's Library (RSCL), serve as vital inclusive environments, reducing social exclusion and facilitating social integration. Our professional objective is to help structure a society where all individuals can live dignified and fulfilling lives. At the 2024 IBBY Congress in Trieste, IBBY Russia presented a comprehensive analysis of large-scale inclusive library projects for disabled children. Over the past two years, RSCL has implemented several targeted programs. 1) We are filmmakers Program for young people aged 6–16 with MSDs models a real film crew in miniature, with each child performing specific creative roles (actor, screenwriter, props master, etc.). 2) The Books ALOUD program is for children with cochlear implants and their parents. A deaf education specialist reads stories to children, guiding parents practically on how to foster a love for reading in their child and to enjoy the process themselves. Session recordings posted online function as a methodological resource for parents and specialists. 3) The nationwide literary educational project "Little Bilinguals" offers literary and play-based sessions (in-person and online) for deaf and hearing parents, alongside their young deaf, hard-of-hearing, or CODA children aged 2–4. These sessions foster early cognitive and vocabulary development. For parents, this is a chance to enhance their interaction with children, employing both sign language and Russian. 4) Literary workshops tailored for 7–8 year olds with autism combine an exploration of a brief literary piece with a related hands-on creative task

Angela Lebedeva, PhD in Pedagogy, has been an active force in IBBY since 1999. She has served two terms on the IBBY Executive Committee and was President of the IBBY-ASAHI Prize Jury. A former member of the Hans Christian Andersen Award Jury, she was also a key organizer of the 37th IBBY World Congress in Moscow and has been a long-standing correspondent for *Bookbird*. Currently First Deputy Director of the Russian State Children's Library, she is also Executive Director of the "Raising Readers" Association hosting the Russian section of IBBY.

Chiara Ramero (Université Grenoble Alpes, France), These Young Adult Novels that Open Our Eyes to the Other

In Italian and French novels for young adults featuring at least one character with a disability, written from the 1980s to the present day, we observe a recurring narrative structure built around a development that corresponds to the characters' transformation and their perception of the disability at the heart of the story: from initial rejection to final acceptance, promoting the idea of integration and inclusion. This development concerns the perspective of the character directly affected by the disability, those in their immediate circle, and the society in which they live, when acceptance has not already been established from the outset of the narrative.

Despite this fairly common narrative structure, disability takes on a role and significance that varies from text to text, as we shall see through the study of certain novels such as

Simple by Marie-Aude Murail, *Au cinéma Lux* by Janine Teisson or the novels written by Kochka, Loredana Frescura, Guido Quarzo and many others.

Young adult literature neither denies disability nor the stereotypes associated with it, but presents them in such a way as to encourage readers to reflect on them, to question them and to question themselves, and, as far as stereotypes are concerned, to move beyond them. It promotes an openness towards others, fostering a better understanding of disability, raising awareness and encouraging constructive moral reflection, as we shall demonstrate through the analysis of a number of representative novels.

Chiara Ramero is a senior lecturer at the University of Grenoble Alpes, a member of the UMR Litt&Arts, the EA LIS 'Lettres, Idées, Savoirs' and the Chair in Disability, Employment and Occupational Health at the University of Paris-Est, and a 'cultrice della materia' in the Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Modern Cultures at the University of Turin. Her research focuses on children's and young adult literature, particularly the contemporary novel for teenagers, its dissemination and the teaching of literature. Her book *Le roman pour adolescents et le handicap* (The Teenage Novel and Disability) was published in April 2026.

PP 22 Panel: Médiation de la lecture: Pistes pour l'inclusion, l'altérité et l'appartenance

Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200
Modératrice IBBY: Sungyup Lee (Comité scientifique élargi Congrès IBBY)

Ahlam Nouiouar (Université Abdelamlek Essaâdi, Maroc), Altérité, citoyenneté et pluralisme culturel au miroir de la littérature jeunesse au Maroc

Au fur et à mesure qu'ils grandissent, les enfants empruntent des voies différentes en fonction de leur vécu affectif, de leur éducation et de leurs expériences quotidiennes. Dans ce parcours existentiel et culturel, la littérature de jeunesse comme support de socialisation constitue également un objet culturel qui favorise, par la pluralité des voix et des histoires contenues dans les livres, la compréhension de soi et l'écoute attentive de l'Autre. Dans la conjoncture mondiale actuelle marquée par la mondialisation, la littérature de jeunesse apporte plusieurs éléments de réponses diversifiés autour du questionnement sur l'identité et l'altérité. Les livres de jeunesse au Maroc développent deux approches de la diversité culturelle : la diversité interne des cultures en présence dans la société marocaine et le multiculturalisme dans sa dimension mondiale. La diversité est mise en valeur à travers les images, les noms, et le symbolisme des couleurs ainsi que d'autres éléments qui interviennent indirectement dans la narration iconotextuelle. La littérature de jeunesse au troisième millénaire développe une approche affective de la conscience citoyenne par l'émotion qu'elle suscite et les expériences sociales qu'elle met en fiction. En effet, l'affectif est indissociable de l'interprétation de l'écrit et de la dimension psychologique et sociale de la lecture. Il permet de créer une

certaine intimité avec le lecteur qui prend conscience de son appartenance identitaire tout en remettant en question ses représentations de l'Autre. L'enjeu majeur reste de ne pas tomber dans un discours didactique encombrant au détriment de la dimension ludique du livre.

Ahlam Nouiouar est chercheuse et auteure jeunesse. Docteure en Lettres Modernes de l'université de Bourgogne (France) et professeur universitaire à l'École Supérieure Roi Fahd de Traduction, Ahlam Nouiouar est membre fondateur du Conseil marocain IBBY MOROCCO et membre du jury de plusieurs prix destinés à encourager la lecture et l'expression des jeunes au Maroc. Elle a participé à de nombreux colloques et tables rondes en France, au Portugal, en Tunisie, au Koweït, aux Émirats arabes unis et aux différentes universités marocaines et salons du livre sur la littérature de jeunesse et contribué à des revues et ouvrages internationaux.

Christiane Duchesne (autrice et traductrice, Canada), Traduire pour la jeunesse
La traduction d'ouvrages pour un jeune lectorat — particulièrement celle d'albums illustrés — présente des défis hors de l'ordinaire, ce qui rend ce métier passionnant. Le thème du congrès *Écouter la voix de l'autre* : une occasion plus que pertinente de parler de ce métier de « passage vers l'autre » qu'est la traduction. Traduire un album n'est pas un travail simple, cela signifie souvent devoir adapter, inventer, se soumettre aux exigences de la pagination, de la typographie, de la mise en page aussi. Ce que ce métier exige, c'est de savoir chausser les souliers de quelqu'un d'autre, de marcher à son pas et avec son souffle, mais sur des chemins d'une autre couleur, et cela sans laisser de traces. La plus belle récompense en traduction : que quelqu'un lise un livre traduit sans se rendre compte que ce texte a été… traduit!

Christiane Duchesne a publié plus de cent ouvrages, des textes pour le théâtre, la télévision, la radio et le cinéma, traduit plus de sept cents titres d'albums illustrés pour la jeunesse et écrit les paroles d'une centaine de chansons. Elle a remporté à trois reprises le prix du Gouverneur général, trois fois le prix Christie, le prix Québec/Wallonie-Bruxelles, le prix « Coup de cœur des enfants » de la ville de Bruxelles et trois fois encore le prix Alvine-Bélisle. Elle a été finaliste au prix Hans Christian Andersen 1996 (IBBY international) pour l'ensemble de son œuvre.
En 2000, *L'Homme des silences* remporte le prix France-Québec et le prix Ringuet de l'Académie des lettres du Québec. Plus récemment, Le Secret des fleurs a été sélectionné sur la liste des White Ravens 2025. Elle s'implique dans plusieurs milieux connexes à son métier et donne régulièrement l'atelier de création *Musclez votre imaginaire*.

Hazel Hernandez Astorga (IBBY Costa Rica), Les livres violets

Les Livres Violets est une initiative costaricienne qui envisage la littérature de jeunesse comme un territoire de rencontre, un espace où les voix de l'enfance peuvent être entendues, reconnues et accompagnées. Depuis 2021, le projet a tissé un réseau de plus de cent écoles et plus de cinq cent cinquante mille élèves, engagés dans des expériences

de lecture partagée, des ateliers créatifs et des espaces de dialogue autour de l'égalité, de la diversité et de la liberté d'expression.

À travers des œuvres latino-américaines contemporaines — telles que Raúl peint en bleu, Le Tapir sur le podium ou Papa est un champion —, le programme invite les enfants à lire le monde à partir de leurs propres réalités, à questionner les stéréotypes et à imaginer de nouvelles manières d'être et de cohabiter. Chaque lecture devient un acte d'écoute active : une occasion d'ouvrir la parole, de partager des émotions et de construire des significations collectives autour de l'équité et du respect.

Cette communication analysera comment ce processus de médiation de la lecture a transformé les pratiques pédagogiques et affectives dans les écoles publiques, en renforçant le lien entre lecture, identité et citoyenneté. Dans une perspective fondée sur les droits humains, Les Livres Violets propose que l'écoute des voix de l'enfance élargisse non seulement l'horizon de la littérature, mais contribue aussi à réparer les inégalités symboliques qui traversent nos communautés.

Hazel Hernández Astorga est bibliothécaire, autrice et chercheuse avec une expérience solide dans des projets de développement culturel reliés á la lecture, l'enfance et les droits culturels. Elle est éditrice de *Voces y Tintas*, un magazine consacré à la médiation de la lecture ainsi que la coordonnatrice régionale pour IBBY en Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes et est membre du comité exécutif d'IBBY international. Son travail se concentre sur les politiques culturelles et les pratiques communautaires autour des livres pour enfants et la lecture. [**Hazel Hernández Astorga** is a librarian, author, and researcher with solid experience in developing cultural projects related to reading, childhood, and cultural rights. She is the editor of *Voces y Tintas*, a magazine dedicated to reading mediation, as well as the regional coordinator for IBBY in Latin America and the Caribbean, and a member of the Executive Committee of IBBY International. Her work focuses on cultural policies and community-based practices around books for children and reading.]

Luciana Ferreira Leal (UNESPAR, Brésil), *Maqueira de Tucum* **(2025): mémoire, ancêtre et force féminine dans la littérature enfantine autochtone**

Maqueira de Tucum, de l'écrivaine et militante indigène Márcia Kambeba, transporte les lecteurs dans le village de Tuyuka, marqué par l'ancestralité et le lien avec la nature. Le récit suit Emoa, fille du chef et gardienne des histoires de la communauté. Sa mort prématurée devient un mythe fondateur : de la mémoire d'Emoa naît le palmier tucum, qui donne naissance au maqueira, objet symbolique qui relie le monde des vivants au monde spirituel, préservant l'oralité et les liens collectifs. Bien que classée dans la littérature jeunesse, l'œuvre dépasse les barrières d'âge en abordant des thèmes universels tels que l'ancestralité, la spiritualité, la mémoire, la durabilité et l'appartenance. Pour les enfants, elle offre enchantement et imagination ; pour les adultes, elle suscite des

réflexions sur la perte et la continuité des traditions. Le texte allie rythme poétique et cadence de l'oralité indigène, unissant tradition et contemporanéité, amplifiant ainsi sa puissance esthétique et littéraire. L'accueil réservé au livre par le « Club de lecture virtuel João Anzanello Carrascoza », qui compte environ 30 participants, a mis en avant la force d'Emoa, la place centrale de l'oralité, la richesse des illustrations et le symbolisme du palmier tucum. Les lecteurs ont reconnu l'importance du livre dans la valorisation de la culture indigène, la déconstruction des stéréotypes et le renforcement du dialogue interculturel. Maqueira de Tucum inspire les lecteurs à rêver, à raconter et à préserver leurs souvenirs, s'imposant comme une œuvre essentielle pour comprendre le rôle des voix indigènes dans la littérature enfantine contemporaine

Luciana Ferreira Leal, diplômée en lettres (UNESP), elle est titulaire d'une maîtrise en lettres (UEL) et d'un doctorat en littérature et vie sociale (UNESP). Elle est professeure et chercheuse à l'UNESPAR. Elle possède une expérience dans le domaine de la littérature, avec des recherches sur les thèmes suivants : littérature enfantine et jeunesse, enseignement de la littérature, formation du lecteur littéraire, littérature classique et contemporaine. Elle est titulaire d'un post-doctorat en lettres de l'UNESP et a effectué un stage de doctorat sandwich, avec une bourse CAPES, à l'Université de Trás-os-Montes et Alto Douro à Vila Real, au Portugal. Elle fait partie des groupes de recherche GELLE (Groupe de recherche en langue, littérature et enseignement) et NIPELL (Noyau interdisciplinaire de recherche sur l'enseignement de la langue et de la littérature). Elle est l'auteure de livres, de chapitres de livres et d'articles publiés dans des revues académiques et scientifiques nationales et internationales.

Sunday, 9 August
9:00-10:30 AM

PP 23 Panel: Reimagining Citizenship
Nicol Building 3020
IBBY Moderator: Tina Bilban (IBBY International)

Justyna Deszcz-Tryhubczak (University of Wrocław. Poland), Voicing Citizenship: Children's Civic Agency in Schools, Museums, and Literature

Theories of children's citizenship emphasize it as an active, lived condition rather than a postponed status contingent on reaching adulthood (Liebel 2020). Traditional, adult-oriented policies often restrict young people's opportunities to participate in civic life. Yet in today's world—shaped by conflict, migration, the Anthropocene, and (post-) digital transformation that affect children's lifeworlds—recognizing and supporting children's civic agency is both a conceptual necessity and a practical challenge. Promoting participation needs reimagining civic spaces and practices to accommodate diverse forms of engagement reflecting children's experiences and perspectives. We also need

interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral and intergenerational collaborations developing educational and cultural frameworks affirming children's status as social actors (Devine and Cockburn 2018, Wall 2019). I report on Seen and Heard: Young People's Voices and Freedom of Expression (2023-2026, Malta, Germany, Poland) and COREM: Collective Remembrance: Engaging Youth Through Curatorial Practices (2025-2027, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hong Kong, Poland, Spain), two ongoing participatory EU-funded research projects. Their goal is to facilitate a relational, situated, and evolving practice in which children's voices emerge alongside those of adults (scholars, artists, activists, museum curators, educators). As a researcher involved in both initiatives, I discuss literature workshops, creative protest, co-curation of pedagogical resources we co-organized to promote children's and adults' civic expression. These engagements foregrounded solidarity; care, and active listening as crucial in reclaiming public spaces (schools, museums) for marginalized voices. Discussing our findings and recommendations, I focus on how our work relied on children's literature for enacting active and lived citizenship across generations (Deszcz-Tryhubczak 2023, García González et al. 2024).

Justyna Deszcz-Tryhubczak is Associate Professor of Literature at the Institute of English Studies, University of Wrocław, Poland. She is the co-editor (with Zoe Jaques) of *Intergenerational Solidarity in Children's Literature and Film* (2021), which was awarded the 2023 Edited Book Award from the IRSCL. From 2017 to 2021, she served on the board of the IRSCL. Since 2023 she has been the University of Wrocław academic lead in Seen and Heard: Young People's Voices and Freedom of Expression and since 2024 has also been involved in the project COREM: Collective Remembrance: Engaging Youth Through Curatorial Practices.

Daniela Sauer (ICCROM Library, Italy), Listening to Heritage Voices: A Digital Library Connecting Children with the World's Cultural Diversity

The Heritage Education Library project at the ICCROM Library seeks to create an open-access digital platform where children everywhere can explore and connect with the world's cultural heritage through stories, books, and educational materials. Conceived within ICCROM's mission to promote the conservation and transmission of cultural heritage, the initiative responds to the urgent need for inclusive learning resources that help young readers listen to—and learn from—diverse cultural voices. Developed as part of the Heritage Education Library Project, first presented at the 2024 VEKAM Conference in Ankara, this ongoing initiative gathers children's publications and heritage education resources from multiple regions and languages, aiming to make them freely available through a dedicated online library. By linking sustainability, cultural identity, and citizenship, the project helps children and educators engage with themes of belonging, diversity, and shared responsibility for the world's heritage. Through examples from the pilot phase, the presentation will explore how digital tools can amplify children's access to cultural narratives, foster intercultural empathy, and empower young audiences to become active listeners and stewards of their heritage. The project embodies IBBY's

values of dialogue and inclusion—building bridges between generations and across borders, and ensuring that the many voices of the world's heritage are heard, shared, and celebrated by all children.

Daniela Sauer is lead librarian and conservation specialist at the ICCROM Library in Rome, Italy. She leads collection development and preservation, and oversees reference services, cataloguing, and a broad range of library operations, including project planning. She holds a bachelor's degree in conservation of cultural heritage and a master's degree in mosaic conservation from the Istituto Centrale per il Restauro (Rome, Italy), and later pursued advanced studies in library and information science at the University of Technology in Cologne, Germany. In 2023, she led the ICCROM Library's successful application to the Europe Challenge, enabling the creation of the Heritage Education Library—a growing physical and digital resource designed for young audiences.

Maria Carolina Nunes Gobbo (University of São Paulo, Brazil), The Plural Identity of Brazilian Children's Literature

This presentation examines the interplay between Brazilian children's literature and the nation's multiethnic identity. It highlights how the development of Brazilian identity, shaped by Portuguese colonial power, African slavery, and Indigenous cultures, has influenced the country's literary production for children. The presentation traces a historical background of Brazilian children's literature and critiques the utopic notion of cultural integration, which overlooks the systemic oppression of marginalized groups. The study emphasizes the recent shift towards a more inclusive representation, with growing contributions from Indigenous and Black authors, but argues that while contemporary Brazilian children's literature shows progress in acknowledging diverse voices, challenges remain in fully addressing an authentic representation of otherness. The presentation concludes by underscoring that critical reevaluation of past works and continued efforts towards authorship of underrepresented groups are essential for a more diverse representation of Brazilian multiculturalism.

Maria Carolina Nunes Gobbo is a researcher in Children's Literature in Brazil. She is a PhD student at the University of São Paulo and a Master's Graduate in Children's Literature and Literature at the University of Glasgow, UK. Her research interests include Brazilian picturebooks, postmodernity, and postcolonialism in Latin America, as well as the Brazilian multiethnic diversity and its influences on children's fiction. She also works as a teacher and reading mediator in schools, with ten years of experience in primary education.

Chang Li (University of Padova, Italy), Between Critical Hope and Moral Ambiguity: Picturebooks Mediating Cross-Conflict Youth Dialogue

Research rightfully prioritises youth affected by geopolitical conflicts (Świetlicki & Ulanowicz, 2025). However, voices from another side also need to be heard, as youth

from states involved in conflict initiation experience distinct but equally complex processes of identity formation. Based on Arizpe et al.'s (2025) theory of picturebooks as cultural mediators and safe space creation, research confirms that picturebooks can provide safe frameworks for migrant youth's political expression. This paper further develops the approach and examines whether picturebooks can also facilitate cross-group dialogue between youth from opposing sides of conflicts.

The dialogue space involves 5 politically ambiguous war-themed picturebooks (such as Sõda on nagu... [War is like...], 2024; Невидливата куќа [Invisible house], 2021). Using St. Pierre's (2018) post-qualitative methodology, this qualitative interview study examines 11 second-generation migrant adolescents living in Europe from Russia, Belarus, China, Ukraine, and Taiwan. The study investigates various approaches including individual reading, anonymous intra-group sharing, cross-group text exchange, and guided reflection.

Key findings reveal transformations across three levels: (1) linguistically, participants shift from absolute to hedged statements, adopting perspective-taking language like "perhaps they think..."; (2) attitudinally, they develop McAdam et al.'s (2020) "critical hope," moving from binary conflict thinking toward coexistence possibilities despite acknowledging divisions; (3) regarding textual effectiveness, certain narrative strategies like emotional conflicts and moral ambiguity prove most conducive to cross-group understanding. However, the study reveals challenging outcomes such as position reinforcement and new stereotype formation. It also provides insights into global citizenship and future intercultural dialogues, testing conventional mediation boundaries (Véliz and García-González, 2022).

Chang Li is a PhD candidate at the University of Padova. His doctoral research critically examines how picturebooks from Eastern European borderlands have conceptualised hope over the last decade. He situates this inquiry at the intersection of uncertainty and ideology within literature. He is an Erasmus Mundus CLMCE Scholar (2022-2024) and an International Youth Library Fellow (2026).

RT 06 Roundtable: The Importance of Belonging and the Key Role Children's Books Can Have

Richcraft Hall 2228

IBBY Moderator: Virginia Phiri (IBBY International)

Chair: Ellenore Angelidis (OHBD/IBBY Ethiopia)
Panelists: Jane Kurtz (Independent, Ethiopia), Adweijira Omod (IBBY Ethiopia), Leyla Angelidis (OHBD/IBBY Ethiopia), and Lulit Bezuayehu (Ethiopia Reads, Ethiopia)

OHBD publishing program creates bilingual children's books with input from voices across generations, cultures and countries. The roundtable will share the power that has come

from a global group coming together--students, artists, writers, translators and others--to create quality children's books. Harnessing this power has enabled progress on complex problems including a low rate of literacy and a lack of children's books available for first-language reading. The books are supporting a number of African communities just beginning to see how children's books can provide a sense of belonging for children within a country and those who have the opportunity (or are forced) to travel outside of their country of origin. OHBD publishing program was designed to help local and international reading promoters make progress toward literacy goals and assist them in spreading ideas such as gender equality, conservation, inclusion of those with disabilities, conflict resolution, and kindness toward those who are different from us. Through listening to voices across the globe, OHBD is achieving much in expected and unexpected ways in a short amount of time.

Jane Kurtz is a children's book author of more than 40 books—including nonfiction, fiction, and a verse memoir--who spent most of her childhood in Ethiopia. She volunteers her time as creative director of Ready Set Go Books for Open Hearts Big Dreams. In 2022, she won an IBBY iRead Outstanding Reading Promoter Award for her long-time literacy efforts and ties to Ethiopia, including her Ethiopian-American grandchildren. She is also a speaker and an emeritus faculty member of the Vermont College of Fine Arts MFA in Children's and YA Literature. She currently resides in Portland, OR.

Ellenore Angelidis J.D. is a public speaker, Rotarian, volunteer, lawyer, and writer. Equalizing educational opportunities for children is a passion that comes from her two teacher immigrant parents and her Ethiopian daughter. She founded Open Hearts Big Dreams, an award-winning Not-for-Profit and largest publisher of bilingual children's books featuring African stories and languages collaborating with writers, artists and translators across the globe. Previously, she held global executive roles at Amazon including General Counsel for Amazon France and Global Director for Kindle Direct Publishing. She is using these experiences to bring quality children's books to kids in Ethiopia and globally.

Lulit Bezuayehu grew up in Ethiopia and moved to the U.S. as a teenager. She believes understanding and embracing one's roots is key to building confidence and a strong sense of identity. For over 15 years, she has taught Amharic to children with Ethiopian heritage. She has created flashcards, posters, and teaching materials to help kids connect with their culture. She dreams of making Ethiopian books and learning materials accessible to everyone who wants to explore Ethiopia and learn Amharic. She is a Board member for Ethiopia Reads, a leader in building youth and children's literacy across Ethiopia since 1998.

Adweijira Omod was born and raised in Gambella, Ethiopia. She is an Anuak also known as Anywaa or Anyuak, a minority ethnic group living at the border of Ethiopia and South Sudan. She never experienced what it is like to have access to children's books. When she

was nine, she and her family moved to the United States. She is a psychology undergraduate at the University of Minnesota. She believes representation in literacy would boost and enhance the willingness to read. She also believes children should have access to books that represent them to support a sense of belonging.

Leyla Angelidis is a high-school student, writer, literacy advocate, and a public speaker focused on fundraising and community engagement. She was born in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia and now resides in Seattle. She finds it unimaginable many children in her birth country don't get to learn to read. She travels back to Ethiopia with her mom to promote literacy and quality children's books. She launched a "Learning with Leyla" series on Instagram and TikTok to increase interest in children's books and in her birth country. She believes a love of reading and a sense of belonging are important for all kids.

PD 05 Panel: Listening for Crip Voices in YA Fiction

Nicol Building 3030

IBBY Moderator: Redza Khairuddin (IBBY Trust, IBBY International)

A young person in your life wants book recommendations for works that have both disabled protagonists and dragons. Do you know where to look? Are you used to seeing autistic sleuths in your crime fiction, but feel surprised when a detective-protagonist has dyslexia? Is a sex scene more startling in a young adult novel when both protagonists have physical disabilities? Cultural narratives about disability abound in popular discourse, but these are often constrained by abled expectations of what disabled bodies and minds are 'allowed' to do—or even imagine (Kafer, 2013).

Abled expectations of disability can manifest in unexpected hierarchies, as seen in Elizabeth Leach-Leung's use of Lexism (Collinson, 2014) to reconsider representations of dyslexia and autism in children's detective fiction. V Millen explores representations of disabled LGBTQ+ relationships and sex in young adult literature. These texts fill in gaps left by contemporary sex education programs (Pattee, 2006; Bittner, 2012) and may provide new, inclusive, sexual scripts to disabled LGBTQ+ readers. Kit Kavanagh-Ryan turns to disability representation in young adult book awards, exploring the impact of genre on book awards in Australia and the United States and the overlooked potential of disabled bodies and minds in speculative worlds.

Extending Rudine Sims Bishop's metaphor (1990), this panel seeks out the windows, mirrors and glass doors that reach beyond the hospital or the high school hallway. Join us as we listen to crip voices that may be overlooked when heard through narratives and genres that readers, librarians, and scholars may not expect.

Elizabeth Leach-Leung (Queen's University, Canada), The Curious Case of the Dyslexic Detective in Children's and Young Adult Mysteries

Young neurodivergent sleuths remain popular subjects of scholarly debate (McGee, 2024; Mintz, 2020; Resene, 2016). While neurodivergence encompasses a variety of neurominorities – including autism, ADHD, and dyslexia – autistic detectives remain one of the most popular neurominorities discussed. Despite estimates up to 15-20% of the global population exhibiting signs of dyslexia and growing scholarly attention of dyslexic representations in children's and young adult (YA) literature (Leung, 2024), the dyslexic detective has yet to be explored with the same academic rigor as its autistic counterpart. As dyslexia is a learning disability typified by poor literacy skills (reading, writing, and spelling), this places dyslexics at a disadvantage in the detective role considering how written clues are a staple to many investigations. Using Lexism (Collinson, 2014), a theory which questions the assumptions that literacy is a marker of intelligence, this study explores how dyslexic detectives are uniquely portrayed. Analyzing eight children's and YA texts with dyslexic sleuths, a distinct dyslexic detective trope emerges. While the dyslexic detective shares some similarities with autistic sleuths including their creative thinking and criminal potential, dyslexics avoid the trope of the 'savant' as the dyslexic's intelligence is constantly questioned. I argue that dyslexic detectives cannot reach this same prestige as the 'autistic savant' (for better or for worse) as they continue to struggle with 'stupid/lazy' stereotypes associated with their learning disability.

Elizabeth Leach-Leung (she/her) received her Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge where her thesis, *Representations of Dyslexia Across Genres in Children's and Young Adult Literature*, received the Faculty of Education Doctoral Student Excellence Prize and the St. Edmund's College Toby Jackman Prize for Ph.D. research. She is the co-founder and editor-at-large of *Young Adulting: Serious Reviews of Books for Kids and Teens* and an associate editor for the *International Journal of Young Adult Literature* (*IJYAL*). She is currently an academic assistant for the Academic Writing Program at Queen's University in Canada.

V Millen (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, USA), Cripping Sexual Scripts: YA Literature with Disabled LGBTQ+ Protagonists as Inclusive Sex Education

Crip theory has long been interested in the logics that render sex and disability incompatible terms that "potentially disable[] recognition of the other" and imagine disabled people as either asexual or incapable of engaging in sexual activity (Mallow and McRuer, 2012). Research into sex education programs (aka sex and relationship education in Europe) has sought ways to provide information to young people beyond abstinence only programs, or programs that leave able-bodied heterosexuality unquestioned as the sexual normative orientation. In the U.S., scholars of children's literature have argued that Young Adult or YA literature with depictions of sex can make up the gap left by discrepancies in sex education (Pattee, 2006) or sex education that leaves out queer readers (Bittner, 2012), while European scholars have studied the impact of excluding disabled LGBTQ+ teens in sex education and suggest ways to include teen voices when reimagining curricula (Bahner, Toft and Franklin, 2020).

Bringing these conversations together, this paper argues that YA literature that includes depictions of disabled LGBTQ+ teen relationships and sex scenes can offer sexual scripts to their readers that go beyond the abstinence only or exclusionary scripts offered in contemporary sex education curriculum. I argue that stories with explicit scenes that center disabled teens and their romantic relationships (Unbroken: 13 Stories Starring Disabled Teens) and sexual script depicts protagonists navigating dysphoria and physical disabilities (Venom & Vow), is a necessary tool in closing representational gaps in sex education that is enjoyable while still providing empowering and affective sex education to the readers who encounter them.

V Millen (they/them) is a PhD Candidate in Literary Studies at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. They received their MA in Literary Studies from UIUC and a BA in English with a minor in Women's and Gender Studies from Texas A&M. Throughout their education, their minor in WGST from A&M was the most influential in shaping their research, an education they are immensely grateful for in light of Texas A&M's recent closure of both the WGST program and department. Their research interests include fantasy, young adult, and queer literature, and disability studies, and their dissertation focuses on the impact of queer, young adult, fantasy literature on queer youth.

Kit Kavanagh-Ryan (Charles Sturt University, Australia), Too Sick for Magic? Genre and Disability Hierarchies and Young Adult Book Awards

All fiction creates worlds, and disabled people live in them. While a growing body of scholarship explores the ways in which young adult literature can subvert stereotypical abled expectations of disability and impairment (Meyer, 2022), the protagonists of these works often appear relegated to hospital walls and high school hallways. Realist representations, whether subversive or stereotypical, are also more frequently prized in book awards such as the Schneider Family Book Award or the Newbery than speculative or other genre titles (Paciga & Koss, 2022). When disability representation is explored through fantastical or speculative texts, the focus remains on adult works (Cheyne, 2019). Studies exploring the representation of disability in award winning titles, already a critical gap in the field, are similarly focused on realist texts and picturebooks (Adam et al, 2025) My paper draws on critical disability studies and the concept of disability metanarratives to explore crip possibilities in award-winning speculative fiction, drawing upon recent shortlists (2020-2025) for the American Library Association's Schneider Family Book Award and the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year. I argue that while disability has always demanded a story (Bérubé, 2016), abled and generic stereotypes often combine to determine what is prized and promoted, reinforcing both hierarchies of disability and impairment and a strictly 'real world' view of crip life that does not reflect the potential found in speculative works that explore disability.

Kit Kavanagh-Ryan (she/they) is a lecturer of Information Studies at Charles Sturt University. A librarian and early career researcher with a background in disability and literary studies, their research interests relate to disability in young adult speculative

fiction, historical representations of disability in youth literature, and intersections of disability studies and librarianship. Recent research explores the use of worldbuilding as a tool of universal design, examining recent shifts in library and publishing spaces around access and inclusion such as the #OwnVoices and #WeNeedDiverseBooks movements, and literary analysis of common disability tropes such as miracle cures and disability as a narrative prosthesis.

RT 07 Table ronde: Écouter la voix de l'autre: diversité et dialogue en littérature jeunesse

Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200
Modératrice IBBY: Hazel Hernandez Astorga (IBBY Costa Rica)

Animatrice: Piedad Sáenz (REFC- Regroupement des éditeurs franco-canadiens, Canada
Panelistes: David A. Robertson (autrice, Canada), Guédeline Desrosiers (autrice, Canada), Julie Gagnon (autrice, Canada), et Sanita Fejzic (autrice, Canada)

La littérature jeunesse peut être un miroir pour chaque enfant : un reflet de soi et un pont vers l'autre. Cette table ronde met en lumière la richesse des voix francophones au Canada, en explorant la diversité des expériences, identités et cultures. Nos panelistes partageront leurs pratiques et réflexions sur : • La représentation authentique et inclusive des identités multiples dans les histoires jeunesse. • La médiation culturelle et la traduction comme outils pour donner accès à des expériences et langues différentes. • Les stratégies narratives et éditoriales qui permettent d'écrire l'autre avec respect et sensibilité, sans appropriation. Cette discussion invite à écouter, apprendre et dialoguer, en valorisant l'ouverture aux différences et la pluralité des voix. Objectifs • Montrer comment les autrices peuvent intégrer diversité et pluralité culturelle dans leurs œuvres jeunesse. • Réfléchir à l'écoute et à la représentation : comment raconter l'autre de manière respectueuse. • Mettre en avant la traduction et la médiation culturelle comme passerelles entre langues et cultures. • Favoriser un échange avec le public sur la richesse des identités multiples et la diversité des expériences vécues. .

Professionnelle chevronnée du secteur du livre, **Piedad Sáenz** cumule plus de quinze ans d'expérience en gestion, commercialisation, exportation et développement de marchés. Elle a travaillé au sein de divers organismes liés à la vente de droits internationaux, comme agente littéraire spécialisée en littérature jeunesse, ainsi qu'en édition et en librairie. Depuis 2022, elle occupe le poste de directrice générale du Regroupement des éditeurs franco-canadiens. Titulaire d'une maîtrise en management des entreprises culturelles de HEC Montréal, elle se consacre avec passion à la promotion du milieu artistique, du livre et de la lecture. Elle met aujourd'hui son expertise au service des éditeurs membres du REFC ainsi que des auteurs et autrices franco-canadiens.

David A. Robertson a remporté le Prix littéraire du Gouverneur général à deux reprises et a gagné le Prix TD de littérature canadienne pour la jeunesse ainsi que le Prix Freedom to Read de l'Union des écrivains canadiens. Il a été nommé conteur pour enfants de l'année par le journal Globe and Mail et a eu l'honneur de recevoir un Doctorat en Lettres honorifique de l'Université du Manitoba en 2023 pour une contribution exceptionnelle aux arts et des réussites remarquables. Il a reçu plusieurs autres récompenses pour son travail d'écrivain pour enfants et pour adultes, pour ses textes en baladodiffusion, comme conférencier et comme activiste social. Il est membre de la Nation Norway House et réside à Winnipeg au Canada.

Guédeline Desrosiers est née en Haïti et immigrée au Québec à l'âge de 4 ans, Guédeline Desrosiers a toujours été passionnée par les mots et l'écriture. Détentrice d'une maîtrise en éducation, Guédeline œuvre depuis plus de 15 ans dans les milieux éducatifs et communautaires. Enseignante, consultante pédagogique et conférencière, elle accompagne les parents et les intervenants pour mieux comprendre le système scolaire québécois. Guédeline est l'auteure de la trilogie jeunesse Lili Rose, des histoires célébrant la diversité culturelle, l'amitié et le vivre-ensemble.

Julie Gagnon a grandi à Baie-Comeau, sur la Côte-Nord. Depuis les 27 dernières années, elle habite à l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard. Enseignante de formation, elle a travaillé au sein de diverses institutions éducatives, dont l'école Saint-Augustin, où elle a trouvé une source d'inspiration unique. La pédagogie sociale et la pédagogie par la nature sont au cœur de son approche éducative, influençant non seulement son enseignement, mais aussi son écriture. *La petite robe rouge* marque ses débuts dans le monde de la littérature jeunesse.

Sanita Fejzić est une auteure canado-bosniaque primée. Son premier livre, *Psychomachia*, en latin « combat de l'âme », a été finaliste pour le concours de nouvelles de Ken Klonsky ainsi que pour le prix Canada ReLit 2018. Fejzić a publié ses poèmes et ses nouvelles dans diverses revues littéraires canadiennes. En 2018, son poème « (M)other » a été finaliste du prix de poésie Radio-Canada. Fejzić est en train d'achever son doctorat à l'université de Queen en études culturelles.

WS 01 Tactile Book Making Workshop: Putting Theory into Practice: Hands-on Tactile Bookmaking Workshop

Nicol Building 4030
IBBY Moderator: Josiane Polidori (IBBY Canada)

Workshop Coordinators: Leigh Turina (IBBY Canada) and Denise Scott (Toronto Public Library, Canada)

Why make books from textiles, small objects, and other tactile materials? Who are they designed for? Come learn the theory behind why we use tactile books and how to make them. Examine some award-winning books from the IBBY Collection for Young People with

Disabilities to discover their techniques. Then put this theory into practice by trying to make your own book using our fabrics, textured papers, and other craft materials.

Whether you work with braille books, support readers with learning disabilities, or are just curious about the creative potential of tactile books, this workshop is for you. You'll take away practical knowledge and hands-on experience for making, purchasing, and using tactile books in classrooms, libraries, art studios, and more. No prior art, crafting, or book making experience is necessary and all material will be provided.

Leigh Turina. Retired Children's Librarian from Toronto Public Library. She served as Lead Librarian for the IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities from 2013-2025. She also worked on the Scientific Committee for this Congress.

Denise Scott. Librarian for Toronto Public Library and Program Assistant for the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA). Her work involves promoting accessible reading formats and library programs, including children's summer reading clubs.

Sunday, 9 August
11:00-12:00

KN 06 Keynote Speaker
David A. Robertson, Representation Matters
Richcraft Hall Theatre 2200
IBBY Moderator: Colette Poitras (IBBY Canada)

Representation is an element of reconciliation – the path Indigenous and non-Indigenous are walking towards to heal a broken relationship caused by the impacts of colonialism. Representation in young people's literature, art, and popular culture is about how we see ourselves and how we see each other. It is about how, in the ways we have been conditioned to perceive, the impacts can be positive or negative, with profound impacts in either outcome. But representation does not stop at how people of colour and marginalized groups are depicted and the ramifications of those depictions; it extends to other areas, including the life-saving normalization of mental health rather than mental illness for youth and the presence of diverse voices in real life that shatters stereotypes and writes a new story of empowerment, hope, healing, and stronger communities.

David A. Robertson is a two-time winner of Canada's Governor General's Literary Award and has won the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award and the Writer's Union of Canada Freedom to Read award. He has been named the *Globe and Mail* Children's Storyteller of the Year and was honoured with a Doctor of Letters by the University of Manitoba in 2023 for outstanding contributions to the arts and distinguished achievements. He is IBBY Canada's nominee for the 2026 Hans Christian Andersen Award for Writer. He has received several other accolades for his work as a writer for children

and adults, podcaster, public speaker, and social advocate. He is a member of Norway House Cree Nation and lives in Winnipeg.