

30th Jubilee Edition of the Bratislava Biennial of Illustrations — a Competition of Global Calibre Returns to Bratislava

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STATEMENT OF BIBIANA

This year's Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB) attracted **291 illustrators from 42 countries**, who submitted **2,191 illustrations** and **383 books**. On 3 October 2025, in the presence of the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic, Martina Šimkovičová, the international jury convened at the Slovak National Gallery and awarded prizes to the best illustrators of children's books: **1 Grand Prix, 5 Golden Apples, 5 Plaques, and Honorable Mentions for the Publishers BIB 2025**. The Children's Jury Prize was also awarded, along with the **5 nominees for the Poljablko Prize** (honorary ambassadors of BIB) who have contributed to the development of the Bratislava Biennial of Illustrations both internationally and at home. The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) **Ľudmila Podjavorinská Prize** was also bestowed. The ceremonial awards event is the prelude to a rich program of accompanying events. The organizer, BIBIANA, aims to inspire its visitors of BIB 2025 and to bring joy to all lovers of illustration from **3 October 2025 until 11 January 2026**.

Even after sixty years of its existence, the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava continues to maintain its international and cultural importance, emphasizing the development of illustration as an artistic and communicative form. "It is symbolic that exactly for the jubilee 30th edition we return to the Slovak National Gallery, where the biennial was professionally and organizationally founded in the International Cabinet of Illustration of the SNG in 1967. The BIB exhibition was installed in the exhibition halls of the House of Art," says Zuzana Jarošová, General Commissioner of BIB and Chair of the International Committee of BIB. Petra Flach, Director of BIBIANA, highlights: "The event has long functioned as a place of intercultural dialogue and exchange of experience between generations of illustrators. At the same time, it contributes to the promotion of the illustrated book as a cultural and educational medium, addressing both child and adult readers" she concludes. Over the decades, BIB has sought and showcased original illustrations from around the world, displaying and awarding them directly in Bratislava. Thanks to this, it has contributed to raising the artistic level of children's and youth books in more than a hundred countries across all continents. It connects cultures and personalities from different parts of the world who share a single goal — to bring the very best to children.

From its inception, BIB has operated under the auspices of the most significant international organizations. Organized by BIBIANA — the International House of Art for Children — with the support of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), this edition of the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava 2025 is held under the patronage of the President of the Slovak Republic, Peter Pellegrini, the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic, Martina Šimkovičová, and the Slovak Commission for UNESCO. "The organization of the 2025 edition is based on an approved statute and cooperation with foreign institutions that nominate their illustrators through national sections or cultural partnerships," notes Director Flach.

Ceremonial Awards, 3 October 2025

Part of the event is the awarding of works by a professional jury, which evaluates visual originality,

the quality of the artistic expression, and the contribution to the development of the illustrated book. This year, the international jury, consisting of 10 members, conferred the following awards listed below.

The jury members are:

Josep Antoni Tàssies Penella (**Spain**) — selected as President of The International Jury, Amanda Ariawan (**Indonesia**), Ellis Vance (**USA**), Felipe Cavalcante (**Brazil**), Hans ten Doornkaat (**Switzerland**), Paloma Catalina Valdivia Barría (**Chile**), Peter Pollág (**Slovakia**), Sahar Tarhandeh (**Iran**), Shi Yan (**China**), Steffen Larsen (**Denmark**).

The awards of the Bratislava Biennial of Illustrations 2025 are as follows:

Grand Prix BIB 2025

NOUSHIN SADEGHIAN

IRAN, for illustrations in a book: *Da'al's Daughter*

Golden Apple BIB 2025

ARMANDO FONSECA GARCÍA

MEXICO, for illustrations in a book: *The Animal in The Stone*

DALE BLANKENAAR

SOUTH AFRICA, for illustrations in a book: *Marvels*

FANNY DREYER

SWITZERLAND, for illustrations in a book: *Collections*

KUN-WOONG PARK

SOUTH KOREA, for illustrations in a book: *Sewol 1994-2014*

PEILONG LIANG

CHINA, for illustrations in a book: *Water and Ink, the Secret of Colours*

BIB 2025 Plaque

ANNA CUNHA

BRAZIL, for illustrations in a book: *Maybe You Might*

ISABEL MARGARITA HOJAS LORET

CHILE, for illustrations in a book: *Weaving the Round*

NANDO VON ARB

SWITZERLAND, for illustrations in a book: *Learning to Be Afraid*

PETER UCHNÁR

SLOVAKIA, for illustrations in a book: *Gulliver's Travel*

XINYU DONG

CHINA, for illustrations in a book: *Little Lion Dance*

Honorable Mention for the Publisher BIB 2025

Honorable Mention for the publishing house in excellence

JENSEN DALGAARD, Denmark

Signe Parkins: Per

Honorable Mentions as encouragement for publishers

HUMI PUBLISHER, INDONESIA

NAIDI ATIKA ZUNDARO: *MY DAD IS A FISHERMAN*

OSU CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION, GHANA

EDMUND OPARE: *THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE*

CIRANDA NA ESCOLA, BRAZIL

RODRIGO TRIDAPALLI MAFRA: *THE CASHEW TREE*

This year, as is tradition, non-statutory prizes were also awarded. The **Children's Jury Prize** was won by CHIAKI OKADA from Japan, for illustration in *Two Little Red Mittens*. The **Poljablko Prize** was awarded to BASARAT KAZIM (Pakistan), ELLIS VANCE (USA), FRED MINN (South Korea), MINGZHOU ZHANG (China), and ZUZANA JAROŠOVÁ (Slovakia). The IBBY Ľudmila Podjavorinská Plaque was awarded to BASARAT KAZIM, President of IBBY, in recognition of collaboration, openness, and support in developing a safe cultural environment for children and youth in SK IBBY and BIB activities. The plaque was also given to Professor Marta Žilková for her lifelong contribution to children's media and radio production, for systematic and constructive critique of current works and important themes.

Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava 2025 offers visitors an exceptionally rich program of exhibitions and accompanying events in the heart of the capital. In the Slovak National Gallery, there will be a competition exhibition with works by 291 illustrators from 42 countries, as well as a "RETRO BIB" exhibition charting the history of BIB since 1967. A highlight is also the "Hall of Fame" — a companion exhibition of prominent domestic and international laureates — and the exhibition "LABYRINTH OF ART AND MIRROR OF SOUL – VINCENT HLOŽNÍK, ALBÍN BRUNOVSKÝ, DUŠAN KÁLLAY," which pays tribute to the international stature of the Slovak graphic and illustration school.

BIBIANA has prepared interactive tours and creative activities for children; Bratislava Castle, the Slovak National Museum, and several foreign cultural institutes will host thematic exhibitions of awarded illustrators from France, Austria, Hungary, Poland, and Bulgaria. The program is complemented by an Albín Brunovský workshop in Svätý Jur, an international symposium on 4–5 October, and a ballet performance of *The Wizard of Oz* at the Slovak National Theatre in a production by the National Theatre Košice. This year's BIB fuses original gems of global illustration with the vibrant life of Bratislava, offering experiences for all age groups.

SLOVAK NATIONAL GALLERY WITH A RICH ACCOMPANYING PROGRAM DURING BIB 2025

The Director General of the Slovak National Gallery, Mgr. Art. Juraj Králik, states: "It is a great honour that the international exhibition of the Bratislava Biennial of Illustrations has returned after almost sixty years to the premises of the Slovak National Gallery, where this world-renowned competition originally began. I consider BIB to be a national treasure — an exceptional and unique event that

presents children's illustrations from around the globe. I am also pleased that BIB 2025 is located in dignified exhibition spaces befitting the largest world exhibition of children's illustration."

Opening Weekend of BIB in the Sign of 'Illustration Stars'

The opening weekend of BIB 2025 in early October will feature two Slovak illustration stars. Awarded illustrator and painter **Peter Uchnár** will, on Saturday 4 October from 12:00, paint on the body of a real car in a "happening" on the gallery's courtyard. The theme will be fairy-tale and fantasy figures. On the same day, 4 October, the first **workshop for children** will be led by another prominent illustrator, **Martin Kellenberger**, starting at 14:00 in the children's studio of the gallery. Another well-known Slovak illustrator and painter, **Milina Zimková**, will host some workshops for the public on subsequent weekends.

Accompanying Program for the Public from October to Mid-January

Throughout the duration of BIB 2025, the SNG has prepared a special accompanying program for families, children and adults. Workshops for the public will take place on weekends in the SNG atelier. An extensive educational program is in place for nursery, primary and secondary schools, offering students unique activities that introduce them to the world of illustration and book art. Selected workshops will be led by internationally known Slovak illustrators Martin Kellenberger and Milina Zimková. More information about the accompanying program of BIB 2025 can be found at <https://sng.sk/sk/sng-bratislava/vzdelavanie> .