

iBbY IRELAND

No. 8 Welcome to iBbY iNfO! July 2008

iBbY iNfO is the electronic newsletter of iBbY Ireland, the Ireland section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). We hope you enjoy this bimonthly newsletter about upcoming events of interest to children's literature. All suggestions of events and information relevant to the world of children's literature are welcome for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter.

IBBY news

'IBBY Dances the Samba'. Siobhán Parkinson reports on an IBBY celebration in Rio de Janeiro! FNLIJ, Brazil's equivalent of CBI and also its IBBY section, celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, and to mark the occasion, a motley crew of IBBY folks, including Patsy Aldana (president) and Liz Page (director of projects), were invited to Rio to join in the fun and see how it's done in Samba! Somehow, I managed to get invited too. Well, it has to be admitted that there was a party, and there were a **WHOLE** lot of caparinhas (look it up!), but there was also a three-day conference and the most amazing book fair -- the kind of book fair that is open to the public, and in this case the public was mostly children. Thousands of children attended the fair every day for **TEN** days on the trot, and the noise level was almost unbearable, with kids being genuinely excited by being exposed to so many books. FNLIJ has a strict policy of allowing the publishers who have stands at the book fair to show only their quality books -- no trash, no textbooks and no Disney (I'm quoting). Children's publishing in Brazil is a very mixed bag, but Brazil has two Hans Christian Andersen medallists (the author Lygia Bolunga, also winner of the ALMA, and Ana Maria Machado, a writer and illustrator who is widely admired -- both of whom I got to meet, oh wow!), and there is some really excellent publishing going on there.

Every child gets to choose one book to take home from the fair. This is of course a huge draw -- most of the kids visiting the fair during the week come from the public schools, which are attended by the poorest section of the population, and for them to get a book to take home is a big deal. At the weekends, children come with their parents, and the fair is just as busy then as during the week. Brazil is still considered a developing country, though it looks very developed, at least in Rio, with a thriving economy. Life in the favelas is tough, but even in these crime-gang-dominated unofficial housing areas, there is a tremendous buzz of life and of trade, as a whole black economy, some of it benevolent (it's not all drugs) bustles and seethes away, out of sight (most of the time) of the authorities.

Social provision is almost non-existent in oil-rich, diamond-rich, money-rich Brazil, and the poor have to make out as best they can on their wits. The public education system is, by all accounts, appalling, with overcrowding, virtually no standards, and unqualified, underpaid teachers. Good free meals at school is the one bright spot, and means that at least the children are coming to school, but what they get when they get there, apart from a good meal, is very dubious. So an event like the annual FNLIJ book fair is really a remarkable thing for these children. Italy was the special guest country at the fair this year, and Roberto Innocenti (yes, wow again!), who has just won the Hans Christian Andersen medal for illustration was there, enchanting the children by doing real-time, as-you-watch illustrations, while talking to them in his gravelly Italian, which was simultaneously interpreted for the children over a microphone system.

Noisy, chaotic, but great fun. Which just about sums up the whole Brazilian experience!

Upcoming conferences and call for papers relating to children's literature:

The international conference, 'Children's Books from 0 to 3: Where Literacy Begins' will take place at the Picture Book Museum Burg Wissem, Troisdorf, from 19-21 March 2009. The purpose of this conference is to bring together scholars of different countries and different fields, i.e. children's literature research, picture book theory, art history, cognitive psychology, linguistics, book history, and pedagogy, who pursue different areas of investigation in this field. Critics are invited to submit proposals for papers addressing the following topics: the connection between visual literacy, language acquisition and literary literacy; introduction into the book rules; the historical development of books published for young children since the end of the 19th century in different countries; the influence of child psychology and reform pedagogy; the influence of artistic styles such as Liberty, New Realism, or Modernism. Please send 300-word proposals and a short biography as an attached word document by 31st July to Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer at: bettina.kuemmerling@t-online.de.

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There will be a special issue of *oscholars*, an electronic journal dedicated to the exchange of information on current research, publications and productions concerning Oscar Wilde and his worlds, entitled 'Oscar Wilde's Fairy Tales: A Garden of Delight'. Wilde's fairy tales, like the rest of his work, offer curious juxtapositions between art and nature, purity and corruption, asceticism and sexuality, child and adult, human and nonhuman. The "literariness" of Wilde's tales--his ornate style and ironic plots--provoked some contemporaries to declare that they were not for children, and yet they remain in print to this day. 3,000 to 5,000 word essays on any aspect of Wilde's fairy tales will be considered. Please send 500-word proposals by 1 March 2009 to Naomi Wood, Associate Professor, Kansas State University, and associate editor of *oscholars*, njwood@ksu.edu.

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The Astrid Lindgren Foundation, 'Solkatten', will be offering a research grant intended to international scholars the opportunity to pursue research on Swedish or Nordic literature for children and young adults. Amounting to SEK 25,000, this grant should cover costs for a research period at the Swedish Institute for Children's Books (SBI) in Stockholm. An additional contribution of up to SEK 15,000 will be given to cover travel costs. Please submit your research proposal by 1st October to Jan.hansson@sbi.kb.se The recipient will be expected to make use of the grant during this coming winter (2008) or spring (2009). More information may be found at www.sbi.kb.se.

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The 31st IBBY World Congress will take place from 7th to 10th September in Copenhagen. The conference will be a mixture of plenary sessions, seminars, story-telling, professional meetings and social events. IBBY's General Assembly will take place on the 10th September. For more information about the Congress programme, see www.ibby2008.dk.

Recent award-winning books:

Derek Landy's debut novel, *Skulduggery Pleasant*, has won the Red House Children's Book Award (RHCBA) - the only national children's book award to be chosen exclusively by children.

As winner of the Red House Children's Book Award Derek Landy joins a group of illustrious past winners including Quentin Blake in 1981 with *Mister Magnolia*, Roald Dahl in 1983 with *The BFG*, Jacqueline Wilson in 1996 with *Double Act*, J.K. Rowling in 1998 with *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and Michael Morpurgo with *Private Peaceful* in 2004.

Upcoming events relating to children's literature:

The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children will be holding the exhibition, Masks!, where families can see a selection of masks from different countries and cultures on display over four floors of The Ark., with daily workshops for children and young people. You can also see the masks of the Mummers tradition come to life in The Ark theatre through dance, music, song and storytelling, when The Armagh Rhymers visit on Sunday 27th July in two free events for the whole family.

For more information and booking, please call 01.6707788, see www.ark.ie or call in to The Ark, 11a Eustace Street, Temple Bar, Dublin 2.

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From Sunday 6th July to Saturday 12th July, the West Cork Literary Festival will have a Children's Programme with five-day workshops for children aged 4-14 years old. For the first time there will be a Reading every afternoon by different children's authors. Booking is essential. Call 027 61157 for more information.

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On Monday 14th July from 11am to 2.30pm, Children's Books Ireland and Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray, present 'Page to Screen', a special workshop and screening of *Bridge to Terabithia*. There have been many books for children, which subsequently make it to the screen and a few books which have travelled the other way. The film adaptation of Katherine Paterson's multi award winning novel *Bridge to Terabithia* is a great opportunity to explore how a book becomes a film. CBI will present this special workshop to introduce the basics of adaptation and help participants to understand the process of page to screen. *Bridge to Terabithia* tells the story of Jess and Leslie, who keen to escape from school and home create a new magical land to rule over. Their land, Terabithia, offers them an escape from busy households and school bullies and their friendship deepens as raw emotion and tragedy are overcome.

This event is suitable for children 8-12-years-old. The price is €12. See www.mermaidartscentre.ie for more information.

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Cork City Libraries Summer Programme (Tuesday 14th to Saturday 19th July and Monday 11th to Saturday 16th August) is running free workshops for children at their Central Library, Douglas, Bishoptown, Holyhill, Mayfield and St Mary's Road branches. Workshops include book illustrating, cartoon drawing, 3d design, puppet shows, storytelling and creative writing. You can download the complete event guide at www.corkcitylibraries.ie/yourlibraries

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On Sunday 20th July, Children's Books Ireland presents a fun-packed celebration of tall tales, potty poetry and ingenious illustration for all the family to enjoy! Brianóg Brady Dawson will be reading from her wonderful *Danny* books, Joe O'Brien will be talking to fans of *Alfie Green* and those who fancy a giggle will be able to hear Gabriel Fitzmaurice perform his *Really Rotten Rhymes*. Ronke Arogundade will introduce her audience the magic of African folklore, whilst storytellers Jack Lynch and Eddie Lenihan will be spinning yarns from closer to home. Niamh Sharkey (*I'm a Happy Hugglewug*) and Adrienne Geoghegan

(*Fancy That*) will also on hand to pass on some tips to aspiring illustrators. Staged in locations in and around Farmleigh House, events are suitable for a range of ages from 3-12 years. There will also be a Children's Bookshop in the Conservatory with a vast array of wonderful titles available to choose from. Every event is free but places are limited so please arrive early to avoid disappointment. Tickets are available on the day only and will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis from a kiosk in front of the house.

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Action for Children's Arts invites you to a conference on 21st July to launch the UK's first Manifesto for Children's Arts at their annual conference at the Unicorn Theatre in London. Children's literature speakers include author Michelle Magorian, Terry Jones, Malorie Blackman, Jamila Gavin and Lynne Reid Banks. Full conference details are on the ACA website: www.childrensarts.org.uk. Further information from Judith Cheston Publicity 01608 661198 jcheston@tiscali.co.uk

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Help Celebrate International Literacy Day on September 8th! International Literacy Day, observed annually on September 8, focuses attention on worldwide literacy needs. More than 780 million of the world's adults (nearly two-thirds of whom are women) do not know how to read or write, and between 94 and 115 million children lack access to education. For more information on how you might promote literacy issues on this international day, see the International Reading Association website at http://www.reading.org/association/meetings/literacy_day.html

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On September 26th, children's writer Malachy Doyle will give a reading in Dingle Bookshop, Dingle, County Kerry at 1pm. He will also be tutoring a weekend Children's Fiction Course with Dingle Writing Courses from September 26th to 28th. The course is aimed at writers interested in writing fiction for children of 8 years upwards and takes place in West Kerry. For further information see www.dinglewritingcourses.ie, email info@dinglewritingcourses.ie or phone 066 9159815.

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The next issue of the newsletter will be in early September.

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