

And Then What Happens?

– Exhibition of Slovenian Illustration

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The title relates to a child's curiosity, the desire to turn the page and find out what happens next. More broadly, it asks us where we are directing our common future, how books and illustrations can contribute to optimism and motivation for change.

The expert committee of the Slovenian Book Agency, in cooperation with the Slovenian Center of Illustration, presents the imaginative and stylistic variety of contemporary Slovenian illustrators. The exhibition highlights the works of award-winning original Slovenian authors working in the field of children's and young adult book illustration.

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The whiteness of paper can
be taken into so many different
shades that the future cannot
be singular either.

— Samira Kentrić

An Abundance of Variety

When, during the project Slovenia: Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair, foreign journalists asked me what is specific to Slovenian literature, I often found myself at a loss for words because reflecting on the specifics of texts did not lead to any meaningful conclusions. A text is either good or not, to me, there is no national aspect in this as such. But when I started to think about books as a whole, it occurred to me that what stands out as specifically Slovenian is illustration.

Illustration has for decades had an important place in Slovenian fiction and non-fiction books. Whether with extraordinary picture books, small board books, narrative picture books without words, educational books for teenagers, or even complex series of novels for adults – the illustration stands out. There have been foreign agents who have commented that the illustrations in our books are too complex, too artistic, not commercial enough; however, my response was always that they are not so for us. In Slovenia, we have grown up with such illustrations. All of us, publishers, illustrators and readers have developed our tastes and demands together, and for us all a good book needs to also contain good illustrations. Why should we settle for anything less?!

Wherever we are in the world, we tell stories – wherever we are in the world, we listen to and watch stories, we all do the same, but the shapes of the stories, the ways of telling them, and the ways of rendering them, are varied. Everyone sees the world through their own eyes, imagining and understanding it their own way, because we all have different experiences in life and different imaginations. Slovenia is home to people with a vivid imagination, a lot of knowledge and persistence, which is why their illustrations can be so extraordinary and open doors to Slovenian stories abroad. Illustrations and images have a power that should not be overlooked, not bound by language, there is no need for a translation in order to understand them. In Slovenian books, illustrations are a kingdom of their own with many queens and kings, each enriching and conjuring up a world of images in their own way. At the exhibition in Bologna, we will open the door to our world for you to indulge in. And we'll see what happens then.

— Katja Stergar,
Director, Slovenian Book Agency

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You raise the anchor and look
towards the horizon...

— Damijan Stepančič

Illustration in Slovenia

But the question ‘what is quality illustration’ remains open.

The best works set the standard for quality during their own time, and new upcoming artists strive to reach and surpass them.

— Pavle Učakar

It is often said in Slovenia that we are a nation of poets. It is a bit of an exaggeration, but there is also some truth to it. The Slovenian cultural space has always been surrounded and ‘endangered’ by larger Romanic, Germanic, and Slavic cultures. Culture, and especially language, has been crucial for preserving our unique identity. It seems that this very situation made us cling to our art, literature, and, consequently, illustration. Especially after the Second World War, the state oversaw the establishment of publishing houses and also provided strong financial support for literary production. The largest publishing house was Mladinska Knjiga, and by lucky coincidence the first editor of its children’s programmes was Dr Kristina Brenkova, an outstanding expert and artist. Her motto ‘only the best is good for children and we pick it out for them with tweezers, not a shovel’ is still a leading guiding principle in children’s literature today. She collaborated with excellent writers and invited the best artists of the time to provide illustrations. These were always artistically mature and autonomous artists, constantly opening up the field of illustration to new styles.

This created a favourable setting for the development of a visual language in design and illustration, one that is still present today and produces excellent results. It firmly established the principle of high and self-evident quality, but the question 'what is quality illustration' remains open. The best works set the standard for quality during their own time, and new upcoming artists strive to reach and surpass them. A lot is happening in the field of illustration in Slovenia, certainly much more than is evident even from all the production channels of publishing houses and other media.

It is interesting that there is no feeling of envy or unfriendly competition between artists in this field. This artistic environment is unusually homogeneous, and I believe it is so because every author develops their own creative path without endangering others.

At international book fairs, we often hear praise about how many excellent and especially varied authors work in such a small literary market. This is the result of decades of conscious cultivation of an artistic field in which different aesthetics can coexist.

But we live in a time when not everything is so rosy. Like artistic and painting production globally, capital-driven pressures to

produce cheaper products for quicker financial success are also evident in Slovenia. These pressures would have us halt the inventiveness of the creators and bow to some imaginary trends or 'average customer', though no one can really define what or who that is. Above all, they underestimate readers, which is why these attempts have been quite unsuccessful. The creativity and autonomy of artistic styles prove that high quality and originality are first-class economic categories and that this precisely is the recipe for long-term financial success.

The Slovenian market of two million people is not exactly awash with potential buyers of picture books, but many titles are still being reprinted after more than sixty years. A few remarkable ones exceed circulations of 150,000 and more, which, considering the size of the market, is undoubtedly a publishing phenomenon.

It is not unusual for adult readers to also buy children's books for themselves, simply because they are fine works of art. Often these are adults who were exposed to reading exceptional picture books in their childhood. Those of us professionally involved in publishing and the phenomenon of children's literature know how powerful a good book can be during a child's upbringing. As parents, children who were exposed to quality books in their childhood will buy their children not

just new books, but also books that had left their mark on their own childhood. This principle is also evident when these parents become grandparents, reinforcing from generation to generation the awareness that really good children's books are a treasure worth cultivating.

What is decisive, however, is the awareness by buyers and readers that this is an important field of culture of a broader quality and significance. A field that has a positive effect on Slovenian self-confidence, enhancing the awareness that Slovenia is also home to top-quality creativity. That we participate confidently on the international literary scene and do not feel like a miniature cultural colony, where original Slovenian books would drown in a globalised *no name* flood.

The above could all be described as favourable conditions for the development of Slovenian illustration, but without strong personalities, excellent artists, creators, editors, this success would not have been possible. Without the energy, ambition, talent and perseverance of individuals, without mutual encouragement and inspiration, we would not be more than merely a small market. Instead, we are witnessing the successful sale of copyrights to other languages around the world.

We could say that people in Slovenia are spoilt by the quality of illustrated books, and we can be proud of it.

— Pavle Učakar,
former art editor at Mladinska Knjiga Publishing House

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You turn a page,
then another and another.
And so on until a new beginning.

— Igor Šinkovec

Is There Still Magic in the World?

Are we even still looking for it? In the hectic individualism of everyday life, geared towards productivity and projects, it seems that magic is just another means of selling dreams to the gullible. A promise that seduces us and makes us postpone facing the truth.

It is as if the rite of passage into adulthood requires us to accept the world as it is, with all its injustices, illnesses, and the inevitability of climate change. Socrates' wisdom 'know thyself' is increasingly turned into a demand to recognise individual identities, which once again leads us to put on blinkers so as not to worry too much about the bigger picture of the world. Concern for the community gives way to the right to develop and self-realise one's own personality, and individualism further facilitates the disintegration of the social fabric. Being together no longer represents a safety net for anyone – success apparently lies in self-discipline.

Artificial intelligence that guides and fulfills our desires has spread to our discipline and motivation. The algorithm surpasses the human capacity to remember. It plays with a universe of contents that we have carelessly added to the treasure trove of human existence, and it delivers shocking results. Soon there will be no reason to be motivated to do work that algorithms copy, reproduce, and combine better than we can.

Is the world we invent for children any different?

Is it magical? Is Hans Christian Andersen's *Little Match Girl*, as depicted in the modern world by the self-assured brushstrokes of illustrator Polona Lovšin, a happy child? The only moments of happiness she seems to experience are under the influence of her own hypothermic delusions, while the world remains just as relentless... Alenka Sottler's incredibly innovative illustrations based on the lesser-known version of *Bambi* (*The Original*

Bambi: The Story of a Life in the Forest by Felix Salten) are also a cruel reflection of a world in which the weaker, unequal members are prey. However, the story also presents hope, flirts with the self-organization among the endangered, offering the self-isolation of the weaker both from others and from their own kind as a last resort – isolation from all those who are gullible.

The fairy-tale world of Slovenian illustrators features a multitude of different experiences. The lively written word for children and young adults inspires a wealth of visually diverse, poetic styles that far exceed the expected narrative. The wonderful animal worlds of the globally renowned Lila Prap (who achieved international acclaim with the picture book *Why?*) and the surgically precise Maša P. Žmitek (in her two picture books *Giants of the Cenozoic* and *Giants of the Mesozoic*) bear witness to the astonishing qualities of mankind's predecessors and companions from other species.

In Anja Štefan's *Rabbit's House*, Hana Stupica's richly detailed drawing transforms into an abundance of animal heroes whose cooperation and cleverness assert their rights over those who are physically stronger. Gaja Kos' *Night Visit*, illustrated by Ana Zavadlav, an author who possesses an incredible range of styles, also contains no traces of helpless princesses. It prefers to celebrate the friendship between sloths and tapirs,

who spontaneously and effortlessly maintain their own ways of existence while admiring their friends'.

Such a world is also possible.

The unusual perspectives of Peter Škerl in Peter Svetina's book *Bread Town* are even more surprising. A young future architect makes bridges and castles out of dough and moves in among them, the harbingers of his future architectural ventures. With the help of Huiqin Wang's lyrical watercolours, Milan Dekleva's *Little Alma on a Great Journey* only gets a true image of herself when the great endeavour of her life, a trip around the world, is already behind her. Two inspiring figures from Slovenia's recent history, Jože Plečnik and Alma Karlin, have been brought to life for future generations through superb artistic expression.

The illustrator's son inspired Damijan Stepančič's silent book *The Story of an Anchor*. With his confident stroke, the artist intertwines a ship anchor monument in the heart of Ljubljana, which piques the curiosity of local children, with the magical world of imagination, blurring the line between the two. It is just as likely for a girl to find a companion in the Moon, as presented in Andreja Peklar's stylised collages depicting their shared adventures in the book *Moon and Me*, either while playing hide-and-seek or while travelling by boat. The same heavenly

body also occupies the childhood imagination of Svit and Erik, the boys on a mission to find out what it is made of through Igor Šinkovec's tonally rich mixed technique in the book by Boštjan Gorenc. Cheese or white chocolate? You will have to taste it to find out.

Among the twelve highlighted illustrated stories, a truly happy ending is offered by the book *Adam and His Tuba* by Žiga X Gombač and Maja P. Kastelic, a wonderful visual storyteller. It depicts Adam, a boy who prefers to play an instrument that is unfamiliar in his environment, which sets him apart from others. But in the inclusive community, they find the right place for them too.

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The colourful world of illustration encourages a child's innate curiosity and teaches them a positive attitude towards the diversity of the world, where we can always find a pattern within the randomness and discover a common language.

The literary heroes in the exhibition can step from their own story into the next one, into a different aesthetic and moral whole, into an as-yet-unknown series of adventures. New connections can also be found in the exhibition catalogue, where a part of the story resides on each page, and their sequence can be changed as desired. The format and aim of the catalogue do not allow us to see the entireties from which the illustrations are taken, but we can build this whole ourselves. A new, improvised, but no less convincing story emerges from the variety of original styles.

If we take this game seriously, if we follow the visions of the readers, listeners, and viewers of the illustrated worlds and do not wait for the future narrative to unfold in front of us, we can also learn to answer the question of what happens next. Alone and together – through intuition, imagination, and cooperation – we can find a suitable answer and steer our common story in the desired direction.

— Samira Kentrić,
illustrator and author



Marta Bartolj

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Marta Bartolj (1979) is an illustrator and author. She received her master's degree from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana (ALUO). Her master's thesis, also published as a book titled *Every Little Kindness*, received the ALUO Student Award, the Special Prize for Outstanding Wordless Picture Book at the Kristina Brenkova Awards, and the Golden Pear Rating. The book was also included in the White Ravens selection and the biennial IBBY Silent Books Collection, placed on the IBBY Honour List, and shortlisted for an Ananas Illustration Award at the Beijing International Book Fair. The American edition of *Every Little Kindness*, to which eight publishers around the world have already acquired the rights, was bestowed the 2022 Ezra Jack Keats Award Honor, was shortlisted for the illustration exhibition at the Bologna Children's Book Fair, and was displayed as part of the BRAW Amazing Bookshelf. In 2021 it ranked among the 20 best books of the year on Amazon, and among the ten best books of the year in *People Magazine*. In 2024 her illustrations for her silent book *Are We There Yet?* were shortlisted for an exhibition at the Bologna Children's Book Fair. She participates in exhibitions in Slovenia and abroad.

Marta Bartolj | mixed media | Marta Bartolj, *Kje si? (Every Little Kindness)* | Miš založba, 2018





Vesna Benedetič (1966) was born in Gorica, grew up in Trieste, and has been living and working for a number of years in Škrbina, a picturesque village in the heart of Slovenian Karst. In 2014 she founded the Ramatou Art Networking Institute (named after a Senegalese red sparrow said to bring good luck) to promote and spread art, as well as to facilitate the implementation of the various artistic activities she is involved in: illustration, graphic design, art workshops, and organising art events. She was a student of academically trained master painter Sava Sovre in Ljubljana, and she also attended the Psychology of Color course under the mentorship of professor and therapist Gianni Camattari in Milan, examining the use of color in therapeutic practices. She illustrates children's books and participates in various publishing projects. As an author and illustrator, she regularly collaborates with the children's magazines *Pastirček* and *Galeb*. She has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Italy and abroad, as well as more than thirty solo exhibitions. Her fairy-tale images, printed on large billboards, decorate the rooms of the Pediatric Department of the Burlo Garofolo Hospital in Trieste.

Vesna Benedetič

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Vesna Benedetič | mixed media | personal project, 2020





Suzi Bricelj

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Suzi Bricelj (1971) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana (ALUO), then enrolled at the Department of Visual Communication at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava. She attended postgraduate studies at the École Supérieure des Arts Graphiques and the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. To date, she has illustrated more than 40 picture books, books, and textbooks. As an assistant professor at the ALUO Department of Visual Communication Design, she chairs and lectures on illustration. She has received a number of awards and accolades for her work, including the Golden Bird Award, the University Prešeren Award, the Hinko Smrekar Distinction, the Best Book Design Award in the Children's and Young Adult category, the Levstik Award, and the Kristina Brenkova Award. Books with her illustrations have repeatedly received the Golden Pear Rating, and she has been included in the White Ravens selection. Her illustrations have been displayed at both solo shows and numerous curated illustration exhibitions in Slovenia and abroad, including at illustration biennials in Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Bratislava.

Suzi Bricelj | mixed media | Nina Mav Hrovat, *O kraljeviču, ki ni maral brati*
(About a Prince Who Didn't Like to Read) | Mladinska knjiga, 2021





Matej de Cecco (1979) is a comics artist, illustrator, translator, and editor. He studied translation and visual arts. For a while, he was the editor of the magazine *Stripburger*. As a translator, he mainly translated works related to drawing, and gradually began drawing more and more himself. From 2006 to 2008 he drew comic strips for the magazine *Pil Plus*. He illustrated the reissue of Desa Muck's *Deadly Seriously* collection, with the book *Deadly Seriously About School* receiving the IBBY Slovenian Section's My Favourite Book Award. The book *Charming Experiments With Plants* received the Golden Pear Rating. Since 2008 he has collaborated with Boštjan Gorenc on the comic strip *Šnofi's Gang*, which is published in the magazine *Pil*. The adventures of Šnofi's gang have also been published in three books. He has worked with several Slovenian publishers, agencies, and institutes, provided illustrations for museum exhibitions and publications, and participated in various advertising campaigns. His illustrations can also be found in textbooks, mobile apps, and games.

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Matej de Cecco | digital drawing | Boštjan Gorenc, Matej de Cecco, *Šnofijeva družčina 4*
(Šnofi's Gang 4) | Mladinska knjiga, 2021





Zvonko Čoh (1956) is an illustrator and animator. At the start of his career he focused mostly on animated films, his oeuvre including more than 20 TV spots and short films. He received the Best Animation Award at the International Animated Film Festival in Treviso for the short film *Kiss Me, Soft Eraser*. The feature-length animated film *Socialisation of a Bull?* on which he collaborated with Milan Erič won the Prešeren Fund Award. As an illustrator, he initially worked mostly on young adult books and children's periodicals, but now he focuses primarily on children's books. His illustrations in more than 100 books for children and young adult books have won him numerous awards, including the Golden Pen of Belgrade and the Levstik Award. His series of illustrated books about Kekec received the Hinko Smrekar Award, while his book *Puss in Boots* received the Best Book Design Award in the Children's and Young Adult category. In 2015 he received the Levstik Lifetime Achievement Award.

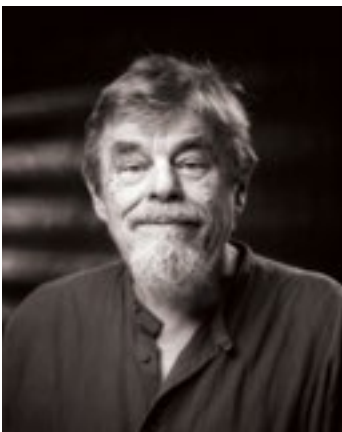
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Zvonko Čoh | tempera | Zvonko Čoh, *Čoharije* (The Chuffles) | Mladinska knjiga, 2016



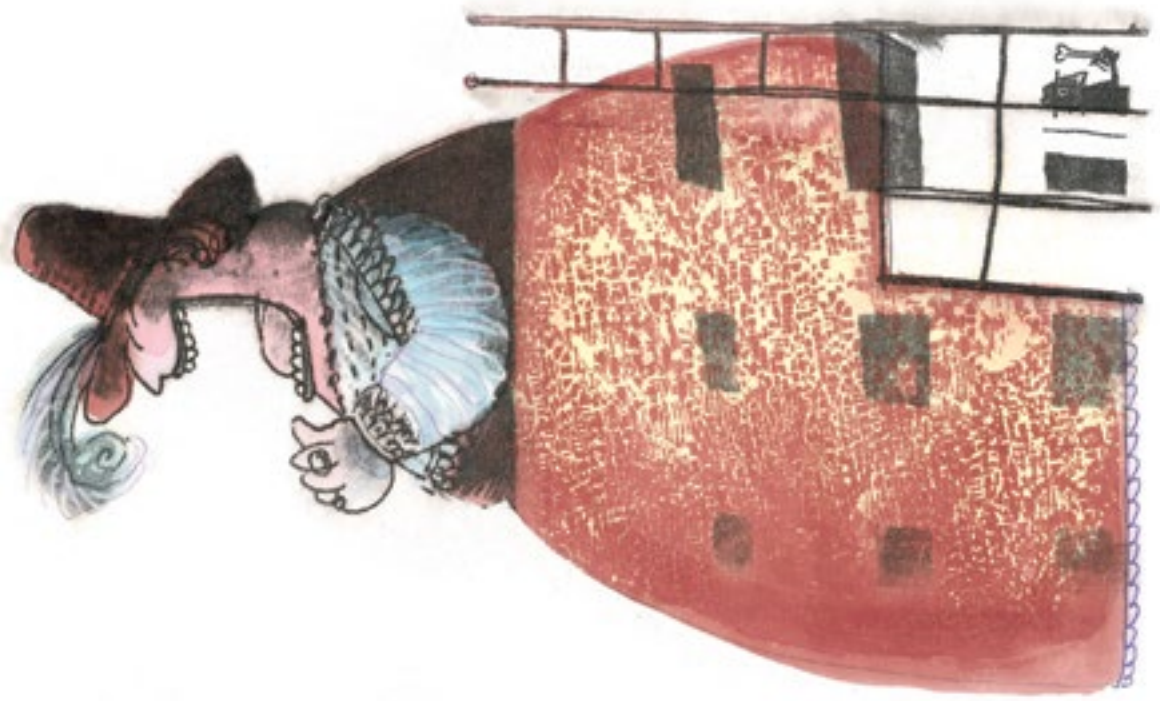


Danijel Demšar (1954) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. Initially an art teacher at a primary school, he abandoned the teaching profession after receiving the Levstik Award and devoted himself to illustrating books and designing puppets in various puppet theatres. He collaborated regularly with the magazine *Ciciban*. In 1992, he co-initiated the establishment of the Illustrators' Section of the Slovenian Association of Fine Arts Societies. For several years since 2004, he served as one of its two vice-presidents. In his work he focuses on painting, graphic art, book illustration, and puppet theatre (designing sets, costumes, and puppets). He has developed a special process for etching colours on paper and printing from paper to paper with the help of computer printing. His works have been featured in 44 solo and 65 group exhibitions in Slovenia and abroad. He has illustrated 51 books, created 12 puppet shows, and designed three theatre sets. He has received nine awards for his work, including the Hinko Smrekar Award, the Hinko Smrekar Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Levstik Lifetime Achievement Award, and was named on the 2012 IBBY Honour List.

Danijel Demšar

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Danijel Demšar | mixed media | Bina Štampe Žmavc, *Svilnate rime* (Rhymes of Silk) | Mladinska knjiga, 2011



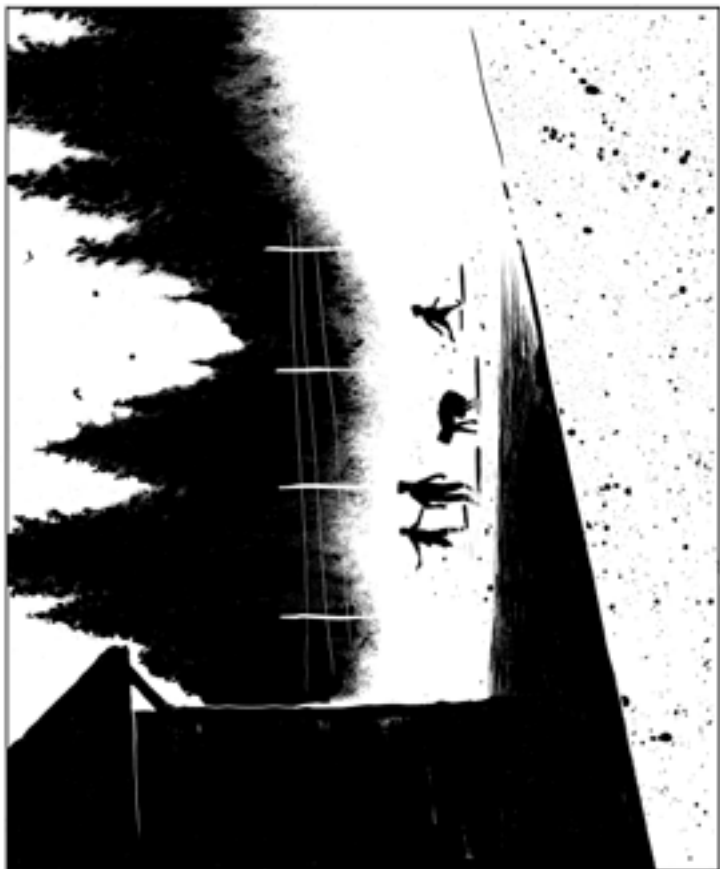


Jurij Devetak (1997) was born in Trieste. After finishing his studies, he enrolled at the Scuola Internazionale di Comics in Padua, where he studied comics for three years. Since 2018 he has been working with various Slovenian newspapers and magazines, including publications by the Slovenian minority in Italy. As an illustrator, he worked with the newspaper supplement *Dnevnikov Objektiv* for two years. His first graphic novel *Necropolis* (based on the famous autobiographical novel by Boris Pahor) was published in 2022, followed in 2023 by his children's comic *Deva From Devin*, co-authored with Slovenian writer and poet Marko Kravos. Both books have been translated into German and Italian.

Jurij Devetak

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Jurij Devetak | drawing ink and digital media | Boris Pahor, Jurij Devetak, *Necropola*
(*Necropolis*) | Madinska knjiga, 2022





Bojana Dimitrovski (1974) is an illustrator and painter who is inspired by the psychology of characters, the alien, and the unusual. She has illustrated more than 17 books, including the ballad fairy tale *A Moonlight String* by Svetlana Makarovič and the picture book *The Fire* by Neli Kodrič Filipič. The illustrations for *The Fire* were displayed at the Ljubljana Town Hall in 2016. Together with the Serbian writer Dana Todorović, she created a trilogy featuring a cat called Cecil. In 2019 she received the Hinko Smrekar Accolade for her illustrations in the book *Slovakian Folktales*. Since 2012 she has regularly illustrated young adult and children's magazines in Slovenia. In 2022 she illustrated the picture book *Greta the Cat* by Vinko Möderndorfer, which was nominated for the Levstik Award. In 2021 she moved to Sweden, where she is a member of Svenska Tecknare, the association of Swedish illustrators and graphic designers.

Bojana Dimitrovski

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Bojana Dimitrovski | watercolour and gouache | *Slovaške pravljice* (Slovakian Folktales) |
KUD Sodobnost International, 2019





Tina Dobrajc (1984) obtained her master's degree in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. Her paintings have featured in solo exhibitions and are regularly included in group exhibitions. As an illustrator, she is active in the field of children's and young adult illustration. She illustrated several children's picture books for various publishers in Slovenia, with the books also translated into a number of other languages. She received the Hinko Smrekar Distinction for Aleš Šteger's young adult novel *Kurent*, and the Special Prize for Outstanding Integration of Artistic Genres at the Kristina Brenkova Awards for the children's picture book *Sofia and the Ballet Slippers* by Helena Kraljič. Maša Ogrizek's book *Fox Moon*, with illustrations by Dobrajc, received the Večernica Award and was nominated for the Desetnica Award. Dobrajc is also the recipient of the Rihard Jakopič Honourable Mention for Achievements in Painting.

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Tina Dobrajc | mixed media | Maša Ogrizek, *Lisičja luna* (Fox Moon) | Miš založba, 2021





Jure Engelsberger

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Jure Engelsberger (1977) has been drawing and illustrating since childhood. In secondary school, he founded the punk band Racija, which recorded three albums between 1995 and 2000. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana (ALUO) and continued his education at the Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture in Helsinki. He worked with comics, classic animation, and newspaper illustration. He also designed corporate visual identities, CD covers, and concert posters, played guitar or drums in various bands, and wrote music and lyrics. Since 2011 he has focused exclusively on illustrating children's and young adult books. In his free time he is still passionate about music and kamishibai. He has received numerous honourable mentions, nominations and awards, including the Award of Typographic Excellence, the Golden Bird Award for Design and Illustration, an Honourable Mention for Excellence at the Brumen Biennial, the ALUO Student Award, the Golden Kamishibai Award, and the Hinko Smrekar Accolade. Books with his illustrations have received the Večernica Award, the Cankar Accolade, the Golden Pear Rating, and the Golden Pear Award.

Jure Engelsberger | digital media | Sebastijan Pregelj, *Zmaj nad mestom*
(Stories from the Duchy of Carniola: The Dragon Over the City) | Miš založba, 2023





Milan Erič (1956), an academically trained painter, works in painting, animated film, and illustration. In 1982, together with Zvonko Čoh, he made the animated film *Try to Move 2x*, which received the Golden Bird Award and the Župančič Award. Between 1988 and 1990 he drew illustrations for the magazine *Mladina*. He collaborated with Čoh on the animated film *Socialisation of a Bull?* which received an award at the Festival of Slovenian Film, the Prešeren Fund Award, and the Humour Award at the Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film. Erič has also received the Hinko Smrekar Distinction, the Hinko Smrekar Award, the Rihard Jakopič Lifetime Achievement Award, and, together with Čoh, the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Slovenian Animated Film Association.

Milan Erič

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Milan Erič | watercolour, gouache | Monika Krojej, Roberto Dapit, *Prek šibja, prek trnja, prek borov, prek dolov: slovenske pripovedi o čarovnicah, čarovnikih in vračih* (Through Thickets, Through Thorns, Through Pines, Through Ravines: Slovenian Stories About Witches, Sorcerers and Shamans) | Didakta, 2006





Jelka Godec Schmidt

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Jelka Godec Schmidt (1958) is a renowned illustrator, painter, comics artist, and writer. Over a period of almost fifty years, more than a hundred children's and young adult books with her illustrations have been published. She has illustrated numerous textbooks and educational non-fiction texts, as well as designed several calendars, posters, and puppets for the puppeteer Cveto Sever. Since 1995, her works have been regularly exhibited at the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration, and she has also held many solo exhibitions. She has also devoted herself to writing children's books, especially comic books (*The Happy Cow Kindergarten*, *Cicigang*) and original picture books. Her series *Losey the Elf and the Chameleon* has been translated into a number of languages. Her original stories are collected in the anthology *Hooray, Hurrah!* She has received numerous awards for her work, including the Levstik Award, the Hinko Smrekar Award, and the Levstik Lifetime Achievement Award.

Jelka Godec Schmidt | mixed media | Jelka Godec Schmidt, *Jumpajdija, jumpajda! V vrtec, v gozd, okrog sveta* (Hooray, Hurrah! To Kindergarten, to the Forest, Around the World) | Mladinska knjiga, 2023





Ančka Gošnik Godec

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Ančka Gošnik Godec (1927) is an academically trained painter and illustrator. She belongs to the generation of illustrators who were key to the development and establishment of this artistic discipline in Slovenia. At the very beginning of her creative career, her works were published in the *Ciciban*, *Pionir*, and *Pionirski list* magazines, followed by illustrations for many well-known books. Several volumes of folk tales with her illustrations have left their mark on many generations of Slovenians. Gošnik Godec is a painter with a strong sense of the Slovenian landscape and Slovenian material heritage, and, as a result of this, her illustrations often carry an ethnological value. She has illustrated around 130 books, and many of her images have been collected in the anthology *The Golden Bird* (2011). She has received numerous awards, including the Levstik Award multiple times, the Levstik Lifetime Achievement Award, the Hinko Smrekar Lifetime Achievement Award, and the IBBY International Accolade.

Ančka Gošnik Godec | tempera | *Zlata ptica: Zgodbe in pesmi s podobami Ančke Gošnik Godec*
(The Golden Bird: Stories and Poems With Illustrations by Ančka Gošnik Godec) | Mladinska knjiga, 2011





Miha Hančič

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Miha Hančič (1986), who signs his works as *miha ha*, is an illustrator and comics author. He graduated from the Faculty of Education at the University of Ljubljana with a thesis on original comics. He adapted the story *You Cannot Please Everyone All the Time* for *Stripburger* magazine's collection *Fairy Tale Comics* (2017). Together with Ram Cunta, he created the comic book *Tik Went to the Woods for Firewood* (2022), a comic book in which the order of reading is not important, as the story picks up and winds down on every spread, allowing the reader to continue reading the book from any point. In recent years, he has often worked in tandem with writer Maša Ogrizek. Together they created the world of Cluckkrishna and her aunt Cluckrissa in the books *Cluckrissa in the City* (2018), *Cluck-Cluck Town* (2021), and *Luke From the Block* (2022). Numerous books with his illustrations have received the Golden Pear Rating, including *Tik Went to the Woods for Firewood*, and *Urmal, the Mammoth's Friend* by Jože Urbanija with his illustrations received the Zlatirepec Award for Best Original Slovenian Children's Comic. His work has been exhibited twice in the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration. He also draws for the *Ciciban*, *Cicido*, and *Mavrica* magazines. Together with Ram Cunta, he runs comics workshops for children.

Miha Hančič | pencil and digital media | Maša Ogrizek, *Naokokoli* (Cluckabout) | Miš založba, 2023





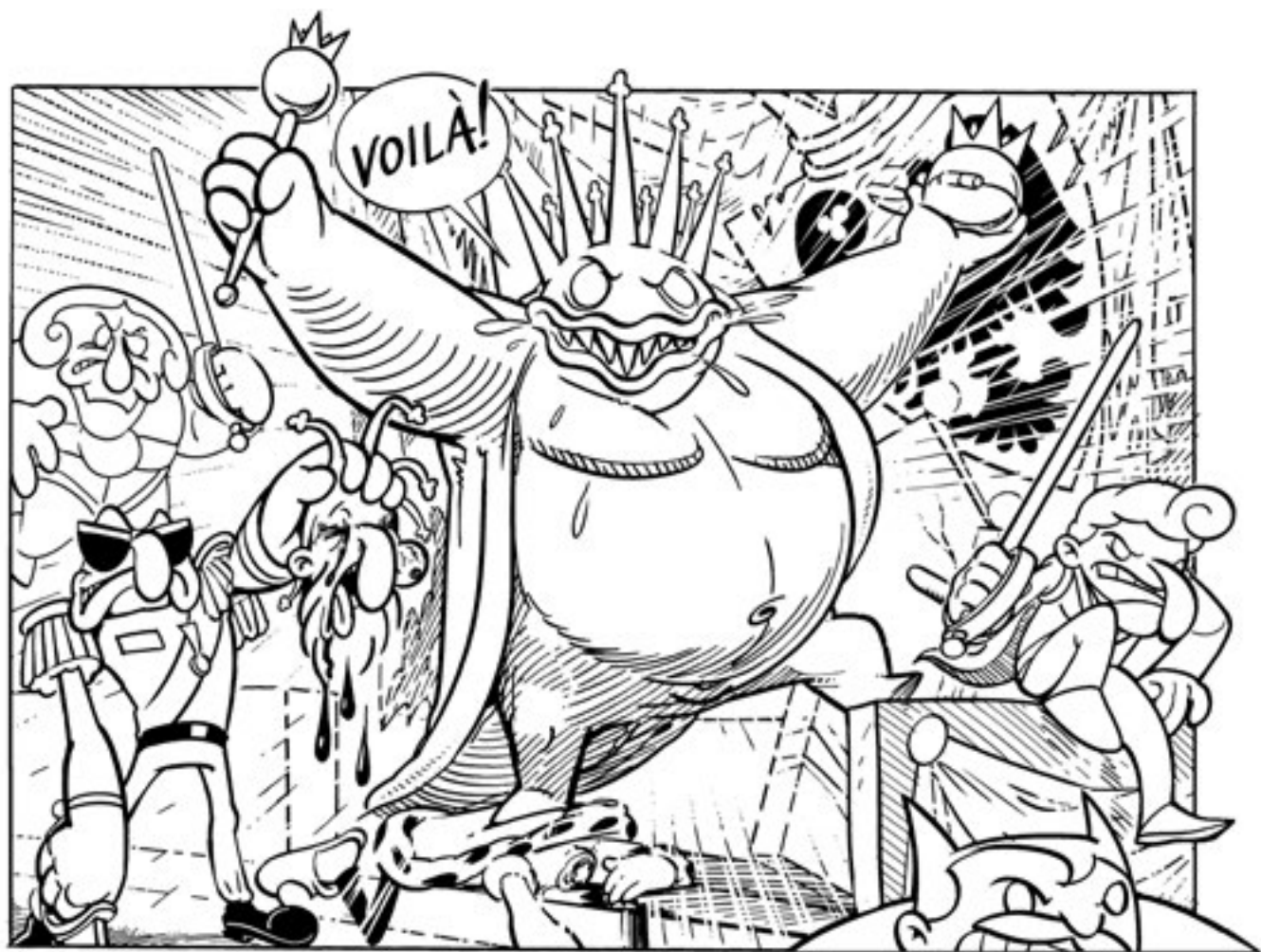
Ciril Horjak

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Ciril Horjak (1975) is a comics artist, illustrator, and lecturer. His first graphic novel *Ride* was published in 2003. He drew live on air in an interactive radio show for several years. He has published comics and illustrations in magazines, newspapers, and books, including *Večer* since 2006 (more than 1900 illustrations so far), *Delo*, the bulletin *Avtoceste*, *Den Politiken* (which selected his illustration among more than 400 drawings from all over the world in 2021), *The Guardian*, *Le Monde*, *Die Zeit*, *Chicago Tribune*, and others. In 2023 he finished the graphic novel *King Ubu*, based on the play by Alfred Jarry. In 2008 he received the Most Innovative HR Practice Award for the comics-based training he designed for the company Slorest. He is the author of the first informal Slovenian textbook on comics *The Smallest Biggest Encyclopaedia of Comics*. He regularly leads workshops for young adults, migrants, and others. As a guest lecturer, he lectures on comics at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, and teaches Art Theory at the High School of Design and Photography. He has received an award from the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education for his educational work, an award from the Slovenian Association of Journalists for his illustrations in *Večer*, and the Prešeren Fund Award for his work in comics.

Ciril Horjak | digital media | Alfred Jarry, *Kralj Ubu* (King Ubu) | SLOGI, 2022





Adriano Janežič (1972) works in illustration, comics and caricature. In the early 1990s he attended the Zmago Modic Private School of Painting, where he spent four years studying under the mentorship of former professors from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design. In 1995 he published his first book with Karantanija Publishing House and embarked on a career as an illustrator. Over the next 20 years he regularly provided caricatures, illustrations, and comic strips for the newspaper *Delo*. He furnished numerous books, picture books, children's and young adult magazines, textbooks with illustrations, as well as creating the characters for the puppet show *Tiny Tot Hedgehog and Fireman Hedgehog* and participating in various illustration projects. In 1995 he received the first prize at the *Nedelo* competition for the most original Slovenian comic, and in 2014, the first prize at the literary competition in Schwanenstadt for his illustrations for *About the Prince Whose Heart Broke* by Franjo Frančič.

Adriano Janežič

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Adriano Janežič | watercolour and gouache | Svetlana Makarovič, *Pesmi muce potovke*
(The Songs of the Travelling Kitty; several illustrators) | Sanje, 2019





Marjanca Jemec Božič

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Marjanca Jemec Božič (1928) is an academically trained painter and illustrator. Since 1955, her colourful tongue-in-cheek images have adorned magazines, textbooks, and more than 200 books. During her long creative journey, she has illustrated works by many key Slovenian writers and poets who write for children. Her images in picture books such as *Spot the Dinosaur* by Leopold Suhodolčan, *The Little Monkey Nana* by Josip Ribičič, *In the City* by Polonca Kovač, *Juri Muri in Africa* by Tone Pavček, and *The Little Mill* by Anja Štefan represent an essential part of the canon of Slovenian children's literature. A large part of her rich oeuvre is included in the *The Fairy Tale Flower* (2013) anthology. Her collaboration with the magazine *Ciciban* goes back to the very beginnings of the publication, more than seven decades ago. Her works have also been displayed in numerous group and solo exhibitions. She received an award for TV illustration in Japan, the first UNICEF Award for a greeting card illustration, multiple Levstik Awards, the Kajuh Award, the Levstik Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Hinko Smrekar Lifetime Achievement Award.

Marjanca Jemec Božič | mixed media | *Pravljični cvet: Zgodbe in pesmi s podobami Marjanca Jemec Božič*
(*The Fairy Tale Flower: Stories and Poems With Illustrations by Marjanca Jemec Božič*) | Mladinska knjiga, 2013





Maja P. Kastelic

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Maja P. Kastelic (1981) is an academically trained painter, illustrator, and author of children's picture books. In addition to art, she studied philosophy and theory of visual culture. She has been involved in illustration since 2015, having spent the previous decade focusing on the restoration of wall paintings. She has received numerous accolades and awards for her work, including the Biennial of Illustration Bratislava Plaque, the Etisalat Award for Arabic Children's Literature in UAE, and was included in the 2016 IBBY Honour List. In Slovenia, she has received the Levstik Award, the Kristina Brenkova Original Slovenian Picture Book Award, and the Hinko Smrekar Accolade and Distinction. Her works have featured in the Illustrators' Exhibition at the Bologna Children's Book Fair, the White Ravens selection, and the USSBY Outstanding International Books selection. She has participated in numerous selections, including The Original Art, the Biennial of Illustration Bratislava, Le Immagini della Fantasia, dPICTUS in Frankfurt, and the Nami Concours in South Korea. Her first original picture book *A Boy and a House* was also adapted into a puppet show. She works with the most reputable publishers in Slovenia and abroad, and her picture books have been published in 23 languages around the world.

Maja P. Kastelic | drawing ink and digital media | Žiga X Gombač, *Adam and His Tuba* | NordSüd, 2021, Miš založba, 2022





Dora Kaštrun (1994) is a comics artist and illustrator. She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana with a bachelor's and master's degree in illustration, writing her thesis on comics for the former and on animation for the latter. She has created three short animated films. She deals with different types of illustration, from large murals to designing book covers, runs comics and art workshops, occasionally provides illustrations for the newspaper *Ljubljana*, and currently illustrates the children's magazine *Galeb*. She has published two volumes of a series of short humorous comic strips entitled *Frogs* and *Frogs Vol. 2*. The first volume sold out in less than a year, received the Golden Pear Rating, and was nominated for the Zlatirepec Award for Best Original Adult Comic Book.

Dora Kaštrun

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Dora Kaštrun | digital media | Dora Kaštrun, *Žabci (Frogs)* | VigeVageKnjige, 2021





Samira Kentrić (1976) writes articles and original books, and creates book covers and illustrations in which she fuses public, political speech with the intimacy of everyday life. She is the author of three graphic novels: the autobiographical novel *Balkanalia* (2015) about growing up during the post-Yugoslav transition, *A Letter to Adna* (2016), a socially engaged story about the fate of refugees on their way to the EU, and *Adna* (2020), a novel about finding one's place in society following tragic events. She received the Special Book Award from the Motovun Group of International Publishers for *Balkanalia*. The Bulgarian translation of the novel was included in an annual selection of the 15 best books published in Bulgaria. The German translation was selected as the Young Adult Book of the Month by the German Academy for Children's and Young Adult Literature, as well as included in the *Börsenblatt* magazine's list of 14 recommended books translated from Slovenian. In 2022, her illustration for the cover of the street paper *Kralji ulice* received the Best Cover Award from the International Network of Street Papers, as determined by a public vote.

Samira Kentrić

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Samira Kentrić | watercolour | Samira Kentrić, *Balkanalije: odraščanje v času tranzicije*
(*Balkanalia: Growing Up in Times of Transition*) | Beletrina, 2015





Anka Kočevar (1982) graduated in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. She illustrates books and texts for the *Ciciban*, *Cicido*, and *Galeb* children's literary magazines. In her illustrations she explores different directions of artistic expression, which sometimes leads her to a dramatically realistic drawing, and at other times to flat collages with a humorous or lyrical nature. She received a Special Mention at the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration for her illustrations in the documentary film *A Thousand Hours of Bitterness for a Single Hour of Joy*. The book *All Sorts of Parents and Children*, which she illustrated, was nominated for the Book of the Year Award at the Slovenian Book Fair, as well as the Desetnica Award. In addition to illustrating literature, she also works in the fields of animated film and comics.

Anka Kočevar

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Anka Kočevar | mixed media | Slavko Pregl, *O fantu, ki je imel rad ptičke*
(The Boy Who Liked Birds) | Mladinska knjiga, 2022





Tanja Komadina (1976) is an illustrator, comics artist, graphic designer, and art editor at the Mladinska Knjiga Publishing House. She is interested in the intense interweaving of text and artistic images, which results in imaginatively illustrated literary works. She mainly illustrates children's fiction, collaborates with children's magazines, and creates comics and novel covers for adults. She provided the artwork for a Maribor Puppet Theatre puppet show with characters, adapted from a comic book. Her works in the fields of comics and illustration have received the Golden Pear Rating. Several of the books she illustrated have been included in the White Ravens selection (*A Fine Bicycle*, *Behind Nine Trees*, *The Secret KRVZ Society*, *The Magic Bone*). Her comic book *A Fine Bicycle* has been translated into Swedish. She has exhibited her works in Slovenia and abroad, receiving accolades, nominations, and awards for them, including a nomination for the Kristina Brenkova Original Slovenian Picture Book Award for *The Magic Bone*, as well as the Levstik Award for her illustrations in the book *The Lady With the Hat* by Maša Ogrizek.

Tanja Komadina

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Tanja Komadina | drawing ink | Maša Ogrizek, *Gospa s klobukom* (The Lady With the Hat) | Mladinska knjiga, 2017





Ana Košir (1970), a formally trained painter and illustrator, graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. She is the author of numerous illustrations for both adults and young readers, with most of her work aimed at children. She regularly collaborates with the *Ciciban* and *Cicido* magazines. She illustrated the book series *Annie* by Desa Muck, which received the IBBY Slovenian Section's My Favourite Book Award five times, Andrej Rozman Roza's collection *Mister Philodendron*, *Little Foxes* by Anita Leskovec, *My Feelings*, *Your Feelings* by Martina Peštaj, *The Magic Wardrobe* by Jana Bauer, and many other books. Currently, she is working on a new series, *Paulina*, with Desa Muck. She also wrote and illustrated an original picture book about astronomy, *Dora's Stargazer*.

Ana Košir

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Ana Košir | acrylic paint and coloured pencils | Desa Muck, *Paulina ga pihne*
(Paulina Brings the House Down) | Mladinska knjiga, 2023





Maša Kozjek (1974) is an illustrator whose work adorns more than 30 children's books. She also collaborates with a number of magazines. She received the Golden Bird Award for her illustrations in Miroslav Košuta's book *The Ladder and the Little Cheese* and Kajetan Kovič's *The Cat Fair*. Between 2012 and 2017 she illustrated and designed Desa Muck's successful ten-part children's series about pets, *Maggie the Magic Flea*. Miroslav Košuta's anthology *A Bear with a Tiny Mouse on His Shoulder* with her illustrations was nominated for the Levstik Award in addition to receiving the Golden Pear Rating. Her latest picture book, *The Enormous Turnip* by Alexei Tolstoy, also received the Golden Pear Rating.

Maša Kozjek

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Maša Kozjek | mixed media | Alexei Tolstoy, *Repa velikanka* (The Enormous Turnip) | Mladinska knjiga, 2022





David Krančan (1984) graduated in comics from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. In both theory and practice, he is an explorer of the dimensions of comics as an artistic expression. His stories are often wordless, with the narrative keys hidden within the imagery. He has been a member of the editorial board of the magazine *Stripburger* for 20 years. In 2008, he collaborated with Andraž Polič on the haiku comic album *On the First Track*. Since 2011 he has been illustrating the front page of the *Dnevnikov Objektiv* newspaper supplement, for which he received a Distinction at the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration. In 2014 he published the children's comic *Grdina*, followed a year later by the comic book *The Drunken Rabbit*, both of which are based on the *Beasties From Resia* tales. His works have been displayed in prominent Slovenian and European galleries. *The Drunken Rabbit* received the Best Book Design Award in the Comics category at the Slovenian Book Fair.

David Krančan

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David Krančan | digital media | Jurij Bobič, David Krančan, *Mala Mara* (Little Mara) | ZTT-EST, 2023





Kristina Krhin

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Kristina Krhin (1974) studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, graduating in 2000. She immediately devoted herself to book illustration, especially for children and young adults. She has illustrated a number of picture books, both for Slovenian and foreign publishing houses, and also regularly illustrates children's magazines and textbooks. She has already received many accolades, awards, and praise for her work, including the Hinko Smrekar Distinction, and has been nominated for the Kristina Brenkova Award several times. Many of the picture books she has illustrated bear the Golden Pear Rating. She regularly participates in solo exhibitions and notable selections, including the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration. In 2013 and 2019 she represented Slovenia at the BIBIANA International House of Art for Children exhibition in Bratislava, and her works have also been featured in the International Biennial of Illustration in Zagreb and the Golden Pen of Belgrade. In 2023 she was part of a group of illustrators from Slovenia selected for an exhibition in the Struwwelpeter Museum within the framework of Slovenia, Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair. Many of her books have been translated into various world languages.

Kristina Krhin | mixed media | Aksinja Kermauner, *O zares glasnem strahu*
(A Frightfully Noisy Fear) | Miš založba, 2024





Tomaž Lavrič (1964) works in illustration, political caricature, and comics. As a caricaturist, he has been a permanent contributor to the magazine *Mladina* since 1988, where his best-known work, the satirical comic strip *Diarrhoea*, has been published for three decades. So far, more than forty of his comic books have been published in Slovenia and around the world. In 1999 he received the Grand Prix at the Festival de BD à Sierre in Switzerland and the Lion d'Argent at the Lion Awards in Brussels for the graphic novel *Bosnian Fables*. *Decalogue* and *Red Alert* were nominated for an Angoulême Award, while *Slovenian Classics in Comics Form 2* received a Zlatirepec Award. He also illustrated the *Kuzma the Gremlin* books by Svetlana Makarovič and *Four Black Ants* by Anja Štefan, and, most recently, his own poetry collection *Otto the Little Worm*. He held solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art Ljubljana in 2010 and the Cankar Centre in 2015. He has received the Medal of Merit from the President of the Republic of Slovenia and the Prešeren Fund Award for his work.

Tomaž Lavrič

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Tomaž Lavrič | drawing ink | Lovro Matič, Tomaž Lavrič, *Mali črv Oto in druga golazen*
(Otto the Little Worm and Other Creepy Crawlies) | Mladinska knjiga, 2023





Polona Lovšin (1973) worked with Macmillan Publishers, Zondervan Kids, Templar Publishing, Penguin Books, and other publishing houses as an illustrator and designer of gift books from 2010 to 2015. Her picture books were translated and reviewed in Publishers Weekly multiple times. Later, she began focusing on projects that allow her greater artistic expression. For example, she illustrated *The Little Match Girl* by Hans Christian Andersen, depicting her in a contemporary setting. She received an Honourable Mention at the 3x3 International Illustration Show. She is interested in texts that enable her to depict emotions, especially how to bring life's painful moments, such as parental separation or death, closer to children. Her work has been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award and twice for the Levstik Award.

Polona Lovšin

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Polona Lovšin | acrylic paint | Hans Christian Andersen, *Deklica z vžigalicami (The Little Match Girl)* | Sanje, 2021



hunger
breeds
madness

HELP ENI



Izar Lunaček (1979) is a comics artist, illustrator, translator, publisher, and promoter of comics. He completed his studies in painting as well as in philosophy and comparative literature. He has been publishing comics in local newspapers and magazines (*Slovenske novice*, *Delo*, *Stripburger*, and *Mladina*) since 1999, he drew the first Slovenian webcomic *Paradise Misplaced* from 2009 to 2011, and he published his comics blog column online at *delo.si* and *ludliteratura.si* from 2014 to 2020. His comics have been collected and published in eleven books so far, including one in Spain (*Paraíso extraviado*, 2013) and two in the United States (*Animal Noir*, 2016, and *Holy Fools and Funny Gods*, 2023). In 2012 he began organising monthly comics-themed evenings, which eventually evolved into the first international comics festival in Slovenia, Stripolisfest. After two years and with the involvement of other protagonists of the Slovenian comics scene, Stripolisfest became the Tinta Festival, the main annual comics event in Slovenia today. He has had several solo exhibitions, and several of the books he collaborated on have received the Golden Pear Rating.

Izar Lunaček

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Izar Lunaček | drawing ink and digital media | Gaja Kos, *Skokica in smeh* (Jumpy and Laughter) | Ajda, 2016





Marjan Manček (1948) is a self-taught artist who made a living drawing caricatures for Slovenian and foreign newspapers and magazines during his studies in Ljubljana. He creates book illustrations, comics, and original picture books. He has illustrated more than 200 books, 33 of which were his own, designed the visual concept of five puppet shows, and created ten animated short films. He has received several accolades in Slovenia and abroad for his work. His caricatures have also been published in two European anthologies of illustrated humour and satire, *Opus International* (Paris, 1972) and *Satyricon* (Berlin, 1980). He has received the Levstik Award, the Levstik Lifetime Achievement Award, a nomination for the Hans Christian Andersen Award, and the Hinko Smrekar Lifetime Achievement Award for his illustrations.

Marjan Manček

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Marjan Manček | drawing ink and watercolour | *Mančkarada: zgodbice, pesmice in stripeki*

(Mančkarade: Stories, Poems and Comics) | Mladinska knjiga, 2018



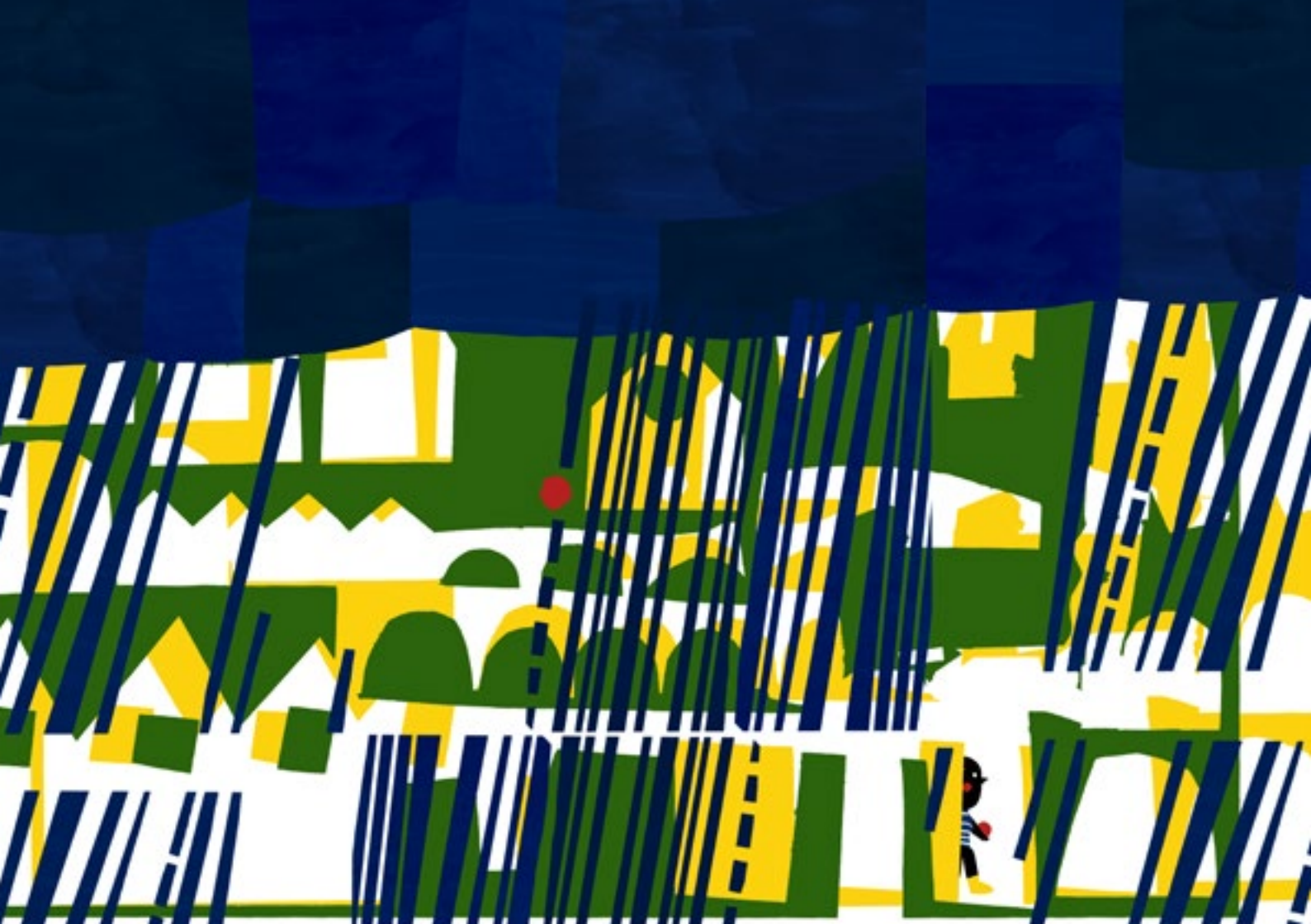


Ana Maraž (1985) creates highly stylised illustrations with a characteristically minimalist and flat style. She exhibits her works in Slovenia and abroad. Her illustrations have been published in the *Cicido*, *Ciciban*, and *Galeb* magazines, and can also be found in the books *How Long Is Time* by Mate Dolenc (2019), *Caress the Wind* by Miroslav Košuta (2011), and *Rainstop Soup* by Majda Koren (2023). Her illustrations in the book *Caress the Wind* received the Best Book Illustration Award at Ilustrofest in Belgrade and the Golden Pear Rating, while her illustrations for *How Long Is Time* were included in the Golden Pinwheel in Shanghai and received a Special Mention at the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration. The illustrations for *Rainstop Soup* were selected for the exhibition at the Bologna Children's Book Fair. She has also received the Hinko Smrekar Distinction.

Ana Maraž

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Ana Maraž | collage and digital media | Majda Koren, *Protideževna juha*
(Rainstop Soup) | KUD Sodobnost International, 2023





Matija Medved

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Matija Medved (1990) works in the fields of illustration, graphics, drawing, painting, animation, and design. He designs posters, illustrates books, newspapers, magazines, and provides illustrations for foreign media such as *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *The New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, *Forbes*, and *Medium*. He received the Hinko Smrekar Distinction and the TDC New York Award for Collective Work for his illustrations for a special edition of the student newspaper *Tribuna*. His illustrations for *Bloomberg Businessweek* and the visual identity of the Ljubljana Puppet Theatre were included in *American Illustration 37* and published in *3x3* magazine, receiving an award from the latter. His posters *I Am Frank* and *Thinging* each received a Brumen Award. His illustrations for *The New York Times* and *Time Magazine* have been included in the exhibition and catalogue of the Society of Illustrators in New York several times. The illustrations from the series *One Day at a Time*, published on Medium, received the Hinko Smrekar Accolade. In 2023 the Society of Illustrators awarded him a silver medal for a series of illustrations for a column in *The New York Times*, another silver medal for a series of illustrations for the Rog Centre, and a gold medal for a series of book covers for the literary festival Fabula. He is a member of the collective Ansambel.

Matija Medved | mixed media | Ambrož Kvartič, *Rimana kaša* (Rhymed Porridge) | Miš založba, 2023





Ivan Mitrevski (1979) is an illustrator, comics artist, and writer. He mostly creates works for children and young adults. As an illustrator, he has collaborated with numerous established Slovenian authors, and has in recent years written and illustrated several works of his own. His illustrations are a recognizable fixture of children's and young adult magazines, and can also be found in textbooks, tourist guides, advertisements, and posters. There is an abundance of humour in his illustrations, which sometimes leads him to the bizarre and the absurd. Although he is committed to art for children, he likes to tackle pressing social topics in his books, such as environmental degradation (*Bella the Wolf and the Magic Forest*, 2020), fear (*Who's Afraid of Dentists?*, 2020), or the contrast between private transport and public space (*Fleatown*, 2021). Many of his works have received the Golden Pear Rating. The comic book *Bella the Wolf and the Magic Forest* was nominated for a Zlatirepec Award in the Best Original Children's Comic category.

Ivan Mitrevski

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Ivan Mitrevski | mixed media | Ivan Mitrevski, *Bolhograd: Zgodba o prav posebnem mestu*
(Wooftown: A Story About a Very Special Town) | Miš založba, 2021





Eva Mlinar

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Eva Mlinar (1985) studied art history at the Faculty of Arts and visual communication at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. She works in various artistic fields, with an emphasis on illustration and theatre. She designed the visual identity for the Ljubljana Puppet Theatre shadow play *Gallop*, worked as art director on the animated TV series *Stories from the Draught*, and collaborates with the Anton Podbevšek Theatre in Novo Mesto and the Wellcome Collection in London as illustrator and designer. She regularly exhibits at biennials and illustration exhibitions in Slovenia and abroad (Croatia, Serbia, Slovakia, Poland, Lithuania, France, Germany, Turkey, China). Together with illustrator Hana Jesih, she published the artist's book *Impressions (Ljubljana/Istanbul)* in 2018, which received the Hiii Illustration Merit Award in China. In 2019, together with writer Eva Mahkovic, she published a literary and visual collection of grotesques, *The Bête Noire Vignettes*, which received the Book of the Year Grand Prix at the 2019 Slovenian Book Fair, as well as Special Mention by the President of the Jury at the 14th Slovenian Biennial of Illustration. She is also the recipient of the Brumen Award for her series of book covers for the Ljubljana City Theatre library, and her book covers for the festival Fabula were shortlisted for a Hiii Illustration Merit Award in 2022.

Eva Mlinar | mixed media | Nina Kokelj, *Čarovnija (Witchcraft)* | Mladinska knjiga, 2022





Manica K. Musil (1974) studied architecture. Her first project, co-authored with Mateja Kutrašnik, was nominated for the Plečnik Prize and received the Grand Prix for Best Realisation at the Leonardo International Biennial of Young Architects in Minsk. She co-authored eleven Slovenian postage stamps. Between 2011 and 2022, 15 of her children's books were published by different Slovenian publishing houses and translated into more than 15 languages. In 2016, her picture book *The Naughty Pigs* was adapted into a puppet show. She has received numerous awards, including the Best Book Design Award in the Children's and Young Adult category at the Slovenian Book Fair, several Merits, an Honourable Mention, and two Gold Medals in the 3x3 International Illustration Shows, multiple Special Prizes at BookILL Fest in Novi Sad, Best of the Best Awards at the Hiii Illustration competition in China for three of her picture books, an Honourable Mention at the Global Illustration Award competition, two Best Illustration Awards at the Moscow International Book Fair, several nominations at the Little Haka competition, a Special Merit at the Croatian Biennial of Illustration, and the Glazer Credential.

Manica K. Musil

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Manica K. Musil | textile collage | Manica Musil, *Slon Stane (Stan the Elephant)* | Pivec, 2017





Silvan Omerzu (1955) is a director, painter, illustrator, and puppet designer. After finishing his studies at the Pedagogical Academy, he started working at the Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, leaving for Prague in 1983 to advance his studies in puppet show scenography and puppet design. In the early 1990s, he co-founded the independent Konj Puppet Theatre and was a regular collaborator of the Minor Central Puppet Theatre in Prague. Later, he worked with various theatres in Slovenia and abroad as a freelance artist, creating numerous high-profile shows. His creative path is characterised by a distinct interdisciplinary nature, never committing himself to a single artistic discipline or medium as a creator, instead simultaneously operating as a visual artist, scenographer, puppeteer, and stage director. He has illustrated numerous books for children and adults, and regularly contributed to the *Ciciban* and *Cicido* magazines. He has received numerous awards in Slovenia and abroad for his all-round work, including the Prešeren Fund Award.

Silvan Omerzu

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Silvan Omerzu | drawing ink and tempera | 2018 | *Meta Brulec, Kroki in prijatelji*
(Kroki and Friends) | Mladinska knjiga, 2018





Andreja Peklar

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Andreja Peklar (1962) is an illustrator and author of children's picture books, in which she often uses images and small miracles from nature to talk about the fundamental revelations of our existence. She graduated in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. In addition to original picture books, which have been translated into more than ten languages, she has also illustrated numerous books by other authors, textbooks, as well as magazines. She has had a series of solo illustration exhibitions, and also participates in prominent illustration selections in Slovenia and abroad. She has received a number of awards and nominations, including the Kristina Brenkova Original Slovenian Picture Book Award three times, the Hinko Smrekar Accolade, first prize at the Sharjah Exhibition for Children's Book Illustrations, the Best of the Best Award at the Hiii Illustration competition in China, and the Purple Island Award at the Nami Concours in South Korea. She has also been named to the IBBY Honour List. In 2018, her illustrations were included in one of the most prominent illustration exhibitions at the Bologna Children's Book Fair. Her books have been translated into more than twelve languages.

Andreja Peklar | mixed media | Andreja Peklar, *Luna in jaz (Moon and Me)* | KUD Sodobnost International, 2019





Maja Poljanc (1989) is an illustrator with an original style, characterised by the frequent inclusion of elements of scientific illustration and the introduction of ornaments from Slovenian cultural heritage. In 2018, she received her master's degree in visual communication from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design. Her portfolio includes, among other things, the first encyclopaedia of Slovenian mythological creatures, *Encyclopedia Mythologica Slovenica*, for which she received the Faculty Prešeren Award and a Special Mention at the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration. Her illustrations can be found in the book *The Songs of the Travelling Cat* by Svetlana Makarovič, the fantasy novel *The World Is a Shadow (of Edgar Kaos)* by Julija Lukovnjak, *The White Horse* by Sebastijan Pregelj, the science textbook *Skin and Skin Diseases*, the magazine *Razpotje*, and others. Her works have been exhibited at the Center of Illustration, the Vodnik Homestead, the DobraVaga Gallery, Kino Šiška, the Jakopič Gallery, the Cankar Centre, the UGM Maribor Art Gallery, Ilustrofest in Belgrade, and elsewhere.

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Maja Poljanc | mixed media | Julija Lukovnjak, *Svet je senca (Edgarja Kaosa)*
(The World Is a Shadow (of Edgar Kaos)) | Goga, 2023





Lila Prap (1955) is a children's book author. An architect by training, after a few years of architectural work, design, and teaching construction subjects and art history, she devoted herself solely to creating content for children. She has written and drawn numerous original picture books, which have been translated into more than 30 languages. The most translated among them are *Why?*, *Dinosaurs?!*, *My Daddy*, *1001 Fairy Tales*, *Dog Questions*, *Cat Questions*, *Where Do Dreams Go*, and *Animals' International Dictionary*. One of her picture books (*Why?*) was adapted into a cartoon series in Japan. Her picture books have received several awards in Slovenia, both for illustration and design. She was included on the IBBY Honour List, and her works have been among the special mentions of the White Ravens selection. She was nominated for the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis, the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, and the Hans Christian Andersen Award. Her illustrations have been displayed in various galleries around the world.

Lila Prap

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Lila Prap | pastels | Lila Prap, *Zakaj? (Why?)* | Mladinska knjiga, 2002





Tereza Prepadnik (1995) works in the fields of illustration, graphics, and design. She studied visual communication design at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, advancing her training at the Academy of Design and Crafts in Gothenburg. In her work, she is mainly interested in the meeting of humans and nature. She strives for her drawing to be as relaxed as possible, even childlike. Her works have featured in group exhibitions at the Kresija Gallery, the Cankar Centre, the City Museum of Ljubljana, the DobraVaga Gallery, Kino Šiška, and Plečnik House, among others. It also regularly features at the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration and the December Illustration Fair. In 2022 her book illustration debut for the book *Bleščivka* by Špela Frlic placed her on the longlist for the World Illustration Awards. Among other accolades, she is a co-recipient of the Brumen Award for Celtra's corporate identity, and the Belgrade Architecture Salon Award for the project *The Battle for Architecture* (by Timotej Jevšenak).

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Tereza Prepadnik | digital media | Špela Frlic, *Bleščivka* (Bleščivka) | Mladinska knjiga, 2022





Petra Preželj (1975) is an illustrator, visual communication designer, and painter, with figurative art dominating in all three areas. She creates content for both children and adults, imaginatively intertwining these different worlds in her work. She has designed several covers and books for the Sanje Publishing House, as well as a CD for the Slovenian music band Torul. Together with animator Virpi Kettu, she created artwork for a number of music videos (such as Tara Baswani's Breakdown). She has provided the visual identity and illustrations for different projects by the publishing house KUD Sodobnost International. Her works include children's books and a mural at the Mavrca kindergarten in Pivka. She has received the Hinko Smrekar Accolade for her original artistic approach, the Hinko Smrekar Distinction, and an Honorary Diploma at the Golden Pen of Belgrade. Peter Svetina's book *Something in the Air* with her illustrations received the Golden Pear Rating.

Petra Preželj

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Petra Preželj | scratchboard | Peter Svetina, *Nekaj je v zraku* (Something in the Air) |
KUD Sodobnost International, 2022





Ana Razpotnik Donati (1978) is an illustrator who has focused mainly on children's and young adult illustration since 2005. Among others, she has illustrated works by Janja Vidmar, Peter Svetina, Tatjana Kokalj, Ida Mlakar, Sebastijan Pregelj, Mateja Gomboc, and Miroslav Košuta. She also regularly illustrates various children's magazines and participates in solo and group exhibitions. Her tongue-in-cheek style is characterised by humour, distinct colours, and an eye for detail. She received the Best Book Design Award in the Children's and Young Adult category for *The Lie and Her Groom*, which she illustrated as part of Fran Milčinski's *Bootale* series (2009–2013). Several of her works have received the Golden Pear Rating, and she has been nominated for the Kristina Brenkova Original Slovenian Picture Book Award.

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Ana Razpotnik Donati | mixed media | Peter Svetina, *Kako je gospod Feliks tekmoval s kolesom*
(How Mister Felix Entered a Bicycle Race) | Miš založba, 2016





Jelka Reichman (1939) is a painter and one of the most important book illustrators in Slovenia. Her oeuvre spans more than 200 literary projects. She has been working with the Mladinska Knjiga Publishing House since 1964. She illustrated now famous books by Kajetan Kovič (*My Friend Piki Jacob*, *Muri the Cat*, *The Doll and the Girl*, *Racket the Dragon*, *The Golden Ship*), Svetlana Makarovič (*The Fearsome Wolf*), Leopold Suhodolčan (*Stumpytumpy*), Srečko Kosovel (*Little Sweet-Tooth Bears*), Prežihov Voranc (*The Left Pocket*), Polonca Kovač (*Mousie*), the fairy tale series *The Golden Bird*, and others. Her artwork also adorns the *Cicido* and *Ciciban* magazines. Part of her extensive opus is collected in the anthologies *The Miracle Garden* and *A Fir Tree Has Grown*. She has received numerous awards for her work, including the Levstik Award, the Hinko Smrekar Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Levstik Lifetime Achievement Award. She is an Honorary Citizen of Ljubljana, and she has also been named Slovenian Woman of the Year.

Jelka Reichman

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Jelka Reichman | mixed media | *Rasla je Jelka: Najlepše pesmi s podobami Jelke Reichman*
(A Fir Tree Has Grown: Favourite Poems, Illustrated by Painter Jelka Reichman) | Mladinska knjiga, 2019





Liana Saje Wang

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Liana Saje Wang (1987) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana in 2016. She received an Excellence Award at the 2016 Youth Design Competition in China for her thesis. Her illustrations depicting the production of flax, wool, and cotton are part of the permanent exhibition at the Tržič Museum, which received the highest museum honour, the Valvasor Award. In 2018, her first picture book was published, a Chinese translation of *The Famous Goat Trial of Višnja Gora* by Josip Jurčič. From 2019 to 2022 she designed and illustrated the visual identity of events at the Vodnik Homestead in Ljubljana. She is currently working on illustrations for children's and young adult literature. She regularly publishes illustrations in the *Ciciban* and *Cicido* magazines, and also designed the covers for the novels *Bronze and Sunflower* by Cao Wenxuan (2017) and *A Single Rose* (2020) and *One Hour of Fervor* (2024) by Muriel Barbery. When she is not illustrating for clients, she enjoys working on her own originals, in which she touches on the human psyche, hardships, and pain, among other things, with the artistic process beginning to be integrated into therapeutic practice.

Liana Saje Wang | mixed media | *Kitajski miti in legende* (Chinese Myths and Legends; several authors and illustrators) | Miš založba, 2022





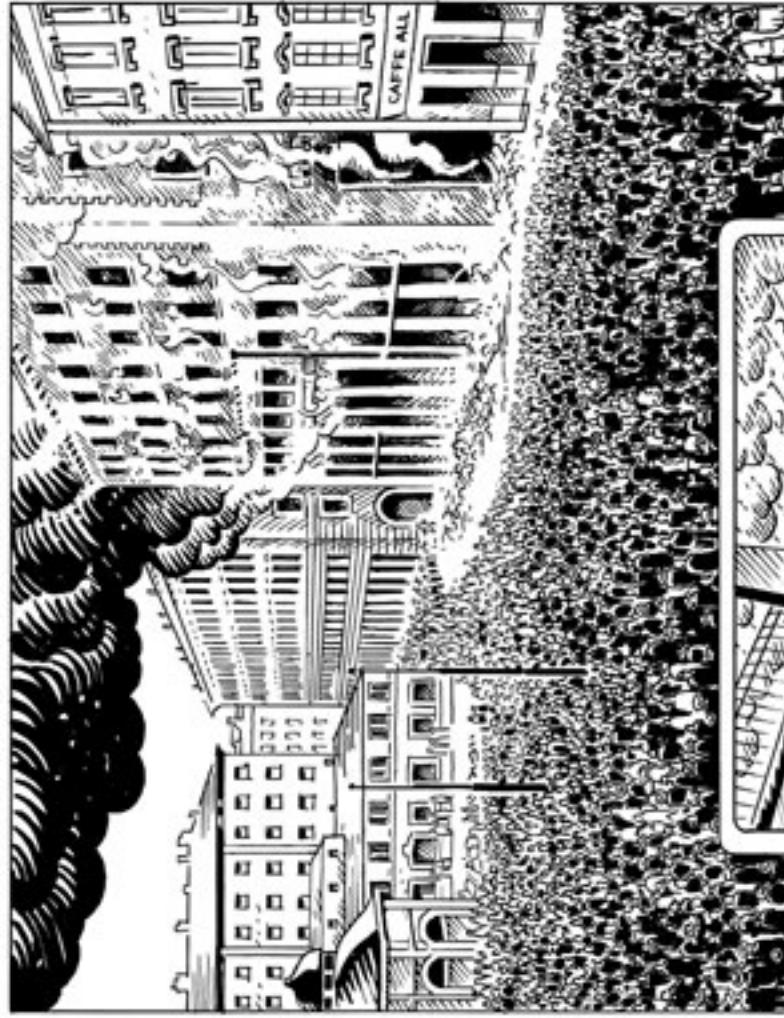
Zoran Smiljanić

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Zoran Smiljanić (1961) has drawn around 1700 comic book pages. His early comics were politically engaged, explicit, and provocative. In 1987, he published his first graphic novel *Hardfuckers*, provoking the socialist government of the time. He addressed Slovenia's past and present in the *War Stories* and *Family Stories* cycles. Since 2000 he has tackled historical and biographical topics. Together with co-scriptwriter Marijan Pušavec, he created the most extensive Slovenian graphic epic, *Mexikaners*, which contains 350 hand-coloured pages. In the graphic novel *The Final Flight of Toni Mrlak*, he discusses the dark aspects of the Slovenian War of Independence. This was followed by the biographies of Plečnik, Kajuh, and Cankar. The latter received the Book of the Year Award at the Slovenian Book Fair and the Zlatirepec Award. He also received the latter for his historical graphic novel *Black Flame: The Arson of the Slovenian National Centre in Trieste* (2020). He is the recipient of the Hudi Maček Award and the City of Kranj Award for his contributions to the recognition and unique landscape of Slovenian comics. His comics have been translated into German, Italian, English, and Czech.

Zoran Smiljanić | drawing ink | Ivan and Zoran Smiljanić, *Črni plamen: požig Narodnega doma v Trstu*
(Black Flame: The Arson of the Slovenian National Centre in Trieste) | ZRC, 2020



HOTEL BALKAN





Alenka Sottler (1958) has illustrated more than 50 books and been featured in numerous solo exhibitions and selections. She focuses mainly on interpreting classic and contemporary fairy tales. For her illustrator's interpretation of Grimms' *Cinderella*, she received the Golden Apple at the Biennial of Illustration Bratislava, a nomination for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, and the Grand Prix at the Croatian Biennial of Illustration. She was also shortlisted in the House of Illustration and The Folio Society's inaugural Book Illustration Competition in London. Her series of illustrations for adults *Good Morning*, which was displayed in two independent exhibitions at the Kibla and Alkatraz galleries, received the Prešeren Fund Award. She was nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Award and also received the Gold Medal for Book Illustration from the Society of Illustrators in New York, of which she is an invited member. In 2022 she illustrated the acclaimed book *The Original Bambi*, published by Princeton University Press.

Alenka Sottler

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Alenka Sottler | tempera on paper | Felix Salten, *The Original Bambi: The Story of a Life in the Forest*
(*Bambi: Življenjska pot v gozdu*) | Princeton University Press, 2022, Mladinska knjiga, 2023





Alenka Spacal (1975) is a writer, illustrator, and storyteller. She holds a bachelor's and master's degree in philosophy and a doctorate in sociology from the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana. As a freelancer, she works under the auspices of the Bajalka Institute for Publishing and the Art of Storytelling. She has authored five picture books: *The Plasticine Girl and the Newspaper* (2022), *The Little Bean Flees Before the Bean Soup* (2019), *Wise Bird Thoughts* (2018), *What Is Your Name?* (2018), and *The Rainbow Masquerade* (2013). In addition to illustration, she is also a storyteller. Her works have featured in solo and group exhibitions in Slovenia and abroad. She has received two Books Merits at the iJungle Illustration Awards (2022, 2023), a Merit and a Special Merit at the 3×3 International Illustration Show (2022, 2023), and two nominations at the Hiii Illustration competition in China (2021, 2022).

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Alenka Spacal | watercolours and acrylic paint | Alenka Spacal, *Plastelinčica in časopis*
(Plastelina and the Newspaper) | Bajalka, 2022





Damijan Stepančič

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Damijan Stepančič (1969) studied design at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana but, realising he is better suited to a classical approach when dealing with the fundamental problems of art, he transferred to painting. He devotes most of his time to children's and young adult illustration, and he has collaborated with newspapers and magazines for both young readers and adults. In addition to painting and illustration, he also works in comics, animation, and with puppets, as well as provides artwork for textbooks and manuals. He has illustrated or provided artwork for more than a hundred fiction books and over a hundred textbooks, co-authored numerous comic books, and held multiple solo exhibitions. Many of the books he has illustrated have received the Golden Pear Rating or Award. He has received numerous awards, including the Best Original Idea Award at the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration, the Hinko Smrekar Distinction, the Levstik Award, the Hinko Smrekar Award, and the Kristina Brenkova Award. He has been named to the IBBY Honour List, as well as nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Award and multiple Astrid Lindgren Memorial Awards.

Damijan Stepančič | mixed media | Damijan Stepančič, *Svetilnik* (The Lighthouse) | Miš založba, 2019





Hana Stupica

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Hana Stupica (1988) has displayed her works in several solo and group exhibitions and published them in the *Ciciban* and *Cicido* magazines. She has illustrated numerous books, including Anja Štefan's *The World Is Like a Merry-Go-Round* and *Rabbit's House*, *The Mitten*, *Schönwerth's Fairy Tales*, and Darja Marinšek's *The Forgetful Centipede*. She also designed the visual concept for a Ljubljana Puppet Theatre show based on Štefan's *Rabbit's House*. She has illustrated advertising campaigns and collaborated with the fashion brand Just a Corpse. She also creates her own collection of useful products, taking her masterful images from books, an intertwining of noble painting and illustration tradition with contemporary forms of visual art, incorporating them into everyday life. She is the youngest recipient of the Hinko Smrekar Award and was nominated for the Levstik Award and the Kristina Brenkova Award. She received the Best Book Illustration Award at Ilustrofest in Belgrade. At the Slovenian Advertising Festival, she received a Special Commendation for Best Illustration in Advertising twice, and her illustrations for Fedora Wines received the Hinko Smrekar Distinction and the Brumen Award.

Hana Stupica | mixed media | Anja Štefan, *Zajčkova hišica* (Rabbit's House) | Mladinska knjiga, 2021





Katarina Šeme (1993) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design. She primarily works in the field of 2D digital animation and illustration, but she is also interested in comics. Her comic vignette won first prize in a creative competition organised by the United Nations Environment Programme. The scholarship enabled her to study traditional arts and culture in Indonesia for a year, which served as inspiration for her first original graphic novel *Sumatra – A Year on a Tropical Island* (2022). She is currently working on her second graphic novel, which will be published in 2024. In addition to computer animation and graphic design, she works with digital and print media as an illustrator and comics artist.

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Katarina Šeme | digital media | Katarina Šeme, *Sumatra – Leto na tropskem otoku*
(*Sumatra – A Year on a Tropical Island*) | VigeVageKnjige, 2022





Igor Šinkovec

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Igor Šinkovec (1978) is an illustrator and animator. He works with publishers in Slovenia and abroad, illustrating books and textbooks, and also contributes monthly illustrations to the *Ciciban*, *Cicido*, and *Galeb* children's magazines. His works have been featured in group and solo exhibitions and illustration biennials. He also dabbles in animation. Among other things, he created the animated short film *Egon the Hat* and was in charge of the artwork and animation for the *Professor Florijan Umek* series of educational games at the Natural History Museum in Ljubljana. Sašo Dolenc's book *From Genes to Stars*, which features his illustrations, received the Golden Pear Award. His illustrations for Peter Svetina's picture book *Timbuktu Timbuktu* received the Kristina Brenkova Award. He also created the artwork for a puppet show based on the picture book. He was nominated for the Levstik Award and included on the IBBY Honour List for his illustrations for the picture book *Have You Ever Tried Moon?* by Boštjan Gorenc Pižama. He also received a nomination for the Levstik Award for the book *Have You Ever Ridden a Seahorse?* by the same author, as well as Special Recognition at the Kristina Brenkova Awards for the picture book *The Owl Chef* by Svetlana Makarovič (2023).

Igor Šinkovec | mixed media | Boštjan Gorenc, *Si že kdaj pokusil luno?*
(Have You Ever Tried Moon?) | Mladinska knjiga, 2019





Peter Škerl (1973) graduated in graphic design and illustration. At the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, he evolved his illustration into a creative, comprehensively designed, and imaginative whole. With an eye for illustrating literary content, he used various painting techniques and their combinations to develop a unique artistic expression. He has co-created plays and puppet shows, initially as an amateur actor, and later also as a visual concept designer. He has received numerous awards for his work, including the Hinko Smrekar Award for his illustrations for Barbara Simoniti's *Marshfolk*, which were also included in the international illustration exhibition at the Bologna Children's Book Fair. He has been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award three times and the Hans Christian Andersen Award twice.

Peter Škerl

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Peter Škerl | mixed media | Žiga Kosec, *Sonce in zmaj* (The Sun and the Dragon) | Mladinska knjiga, 2022





Andrej Štular (1967) is active in various artistic fields, intertwining illustration, comics, painting, sculpture, photography, and film, as well as puppet and scenography design to a relatively equal degree into his work. He has participated in solo and group exhibitions in Slovenia and in international festivals in Austria, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czechia, Finland, France, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Korea, Latvia, North Macedonia, Morocco, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Sweden, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, Tunisia, and elsewhere. He has published seven original books: *Chandeliers* (2000), *Compost* (2008), *I'm Alive!* (2011), *Run, the World Is Coming Down!* (2014), *Chronicles* (2015), *The Bear* (2019), and *Sharp Rhythms* (2021). He has received several awards for his works.

Andrej Štular

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Andrej Štular | assemblage | Andrej Štular, *Medved* (The Bear) | Stripburger/Forum Ljubljana, 2019





Gorazd Vahen (1969) primarily illustrates children's books. Since graduating from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, he has illustrated more than 30 books, seven textbooks, a number of poems and short stories, as well as historical manuals and guides. Among his iconic works are illustrations for several books by Svetlana Makarovič (such as *Oka the Owl*, *Mishmash Bakery*, and *Skipmouse*) and *Little Sleepy Star* by Frane Milčinski Ježek. He has received a Special Mention by the Jury at the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration and the Hinko Smrekar Distinction for his work.

Gorazd Vahen

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Gorazd Vahen | acrylic | Svetlana Makarovič, *Kam pa kam, kosovirja?*
(Where Are You Off to, Cosies?) | Mladinska knjiga, 2002





Tina Volarič

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Tina Volarič (1980) regularly provides illustrations for major Slovenian children's magazines, album artwork, and covers of fiction and humanities books, and also designs original picture books for children and adults. From time to time, she also works on independent conceptual series that often draw on gentle nostalgia, the intimate domestic space, and memories. She is the author of the award-winning wordless picture book *The Line* (2021), which received the Golden Pear Rating and was included in the IBBY Silent Books Collection, as well as the original picture book *Nono's Wall* (2021), the picture book *Carl and Stan* by Marko Klavora and David Kožuh (2023), and others. Her debut picture book *The Story of Little Bambule and the Dizzying Giraffe* by Fran Milčinski Ježek (2010) received the Best Book Design Award at the Slovenian Book Fair. She also illustrated her award-winning poetry debut, *The Circumference of Polyphonic Silences* (2014). Her works have featured in solo exhibitions and group selections in Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Italy, Poland, Portugal, and China, and she has participated in illustration biennials in Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade, and Bratislava.

Tina Volarič | gouache and coloured pencils | Marko Klavora, David Kožuh, *Karlo in Stan: zgodovinska domišljajska pripoved* (Carl and Stan: A Historical Fantasy Story) | Goriški muzej, 2023





Jaka Vukotič (1982) has been drawing since he was little. Having studied architecture, he eventually decided to focus on illustration. He co-authored the comic books *Znamenitni: Great Stories of Celebrities* (2020) and *Cukrarna. The Story of a Poetic Slovenian Soul* (2023) with Žiga X Gombač, as well as *The Reformers* with Boštjan Gorenc Pižama (2022). *Znamenitni* won the Zlatirepec Best Original Children's Comic Award, while *The Reformers* was selected for the project *Growing with a Book*. He also provided the illustrations for the books *Don't Forget the Title!* (2022) and *Mouse Party* (2023) by Gaja Kos, *Mouthy Men* by Kozma Ahačič (2015), *Recipe Songs* by Milan Dekleva (2023), *Super Vid* by Žiga Valetič (2022), and *Borrowed Grandma Štefi* by Mateja Gomboc (2022). The book *Mouthy Men* received the Best Slavic Children's Book Award in the Slavic History and Culture category in Minsk, while *Don't Forget the Title!* was included in the White Ravens selection. His illustrations can also be found in textbooks and children's and young adult magazines both in Slovenia (*Moj planet*, *Cicido*, *Ciciban*) and abroad (*Highlights Magazine*).

Jaka Vukotič

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Jaka Vukotič | digital media | Gaja Kos, *Mišja zabava* (Mouse Party) | Miš založba, 2023





Huiqin Wang (1955) is an academically trained Slovenian-Chinese painter who graduated from the Nanjing Academy of Fine Arts. She has lived in Ljubljana since 1983, obtaining specialisation from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design. Wang builds artistic bridges between languages, literatures, and cultures, just like fairytale motifs travelled along the Silk and Amber Roads. In addition to painting, she works in illustration and multimedia art. Her illustrations have won several major awards. She has published three original Slovenian-Chinese picture books, writing the texts herself as well: *Hallerstein: A Slovenian at the Chinese Court* (2014), *Castiglione: A Painter at the Chinese Court* (2015), and *I, Marco Polo* (2018). The text for her picture book *Little Alma on a Big Journey* (2020) was written by Milan Dekleva. These books have been translated into English, Italian, and Croatian. In 2022, Huiqin Wang and Andrej Kamnik adapted the picture book *Little Alma on a Big Journey* into an animated film, which has been screened at several festivals.

Huiqin Wang

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Huiqin Wang | drawing ink and mineral paint | Milan Dekleva, *Mala Alma na veliki poti*
(Little Alma on a Great Journey) | Mladinska knjiga, 2020





Ana Zavadlav (1970) is an academically trained painter and illustrator. She graduated in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, and went on to specialise in graphic arts. Following her studies, she spent some time working as a graphic artist, but has focused mainly on book illustration for children and young adults since 2002. She regularly contributes to the *Ciciban* and *Cicido* magazines. Her works have been displayed in several solo and group exhibitions. Her illustrations for Toon Tellegen's book *The Healing of the Cricket* were exhibited at the 2019 Bologna Children's Book Fair. In 2023 some of her works for Italo Calvino's *Italian Folktales* were featured in the Fair's Italian Excellence: Illustrations for the Italo Calvino competition, which featured unique and innovative interpretations of Calvino by 30 illustrators, selected from among 521 authors from 47 countries. Zavadlav has received several accolades and awards, including the Levstik Award, placement on the IBBY Honour List, and a nomination for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.

Ana Zavadlav

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Ana Zavadlav | charcoal and dry pastels | Italo Calvino, *Italijanske pravljice*
(Italian Folktales) | Mladinska knjiga, 2022





Maša P. Žmitek

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Maša P. Žmitek (1985), works as an illustrator, curator, and producer. She received her master's degree from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. In 2018 she took over the management of the Vodnik Homestead Gallery, later establishing and managing the Slovenian Center of Illustration within the framework of the Divja Misel Institute. She is interested in artistic illustration, but devotes most of her time to scientific illustration, with a recent focus on depicting prehistoric creatures. Her analogue interactive books *Giants of the Cenozoic*, (2021), and *Giants of the Mesozoic: Jurassic Dinosaurs*, (2023) use a special analogue animation technique to breathe life into the illustrations. She has illustrated several literary projects for Slovenian and foreign publishers, and her illustrations have been featured in the Slovenian Biennial of Illustration, Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava, The Golden Pen of Belgrade and at numerous Slovenian and foreign galleries. She received the University Prešeren Award for her master's thesis in the field of scientific illustration, the GRAPHIS Silver Award in New York, the Brumen Award for Excellence in Slovenian Design, the Golden Pear Award, and was named to the IBBY Honour List.

Maša P. Žmitek | mixed media | Maša P. Žmitek, *Po sledih velikanov: Sesalci kenozoika*
(Giants of the Cenozoic) | Miš založba, 2021



Client: Slovenian Book Agency, represented by Katja Stergar

Selection of authors and works: Expert committee of the Slovenian Book Agency (Suzi Bricelj, Marija Nabernik, Tina Bilban, Gaja Kos, Tanja Komadina, Ivan Mitrevski)

Exhibition design: Sara & Sara (Sara Badovinac and Sara Škarica)

Exhibition setup and infrastructure: GC DPI

Graphic design: Ajda Fortuna

Texts: Samira Kentrić

Editing: Andrej Hočevar

English translation: Daniel Sheppard

Proofreading: Gregor Timothy Čeh

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