

International Børnelitteraturfestival

HAY FESTIVAL

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AARHUS 2017

NEWS RELEASE: Wednesday 8 November 2017

International Children's Literature Hay Festival Aarhus 2017 closes

Thousands of school pupils and young people from all over Denmark enjoyed a four-day celebration of creativity as the inaugural International Children's Literature Hay Festival Aarhus 2017 took over DOKK1 public library in Aarhus, Denmark last week (26-29 November).

Spotlighting the importance of literature in developing young minds and the power of reading in translation to develop empathy and understanding of other cultures, the festival leapt boundaries of language and country to deliver a free programme of discovery.

On Thursday 26 October, H.R.H. Crown Princess Mary officially opened the festival, launching an inspiring line-up of talks, workshops and performances, featuring Europe's best writers and illustrators for young people.

Two packed school days kicked things off on Thursday and Friday, before an open weekend for the general public, drawing over 20,000 people in total.

With events in Danish, French, English, and Spanish, talks and performances offered a memorable look at the world of children's and young adult literature for young people, parents and teachers, with leading writers and illustrators from around the world: **Cressida Cowell, Meg Rosoff, Chris Riddell, Oliver Jeffers, Eoin Colfer, Anna Woltz, Arne Svingen, Kim Fupz Aakeson, Endre Lund Eriksen, Stian Hole, Jan Blake, and Janne Teller.**

The festival celebrated the [Aarhus 39](#) selection of the best emerging writers for young people from all over Europe, aged under 40, each of whom has been commissioned to write an original story to the theme of 'Journey', with two anthologies – *Quest* and *Odyssey* – published in English by Alma Books and in Danish by Gyldendal.

They include:

Ævar Þór Benediktsson, Iceland; **Alaine Agirre**, Spain; **Aline Sax**, Belgium; **Ana Pessoa**, Portugal; **Andri Antoniou**, Cyprus; **Anna Woltz**, Netherlands; **Annelise Heurtier**, France; **Annette Münch**, Norway; **B. R. Collins**, UK; **Cathy Clement**, Luxembourg; **Cornelia Travnicek**, Austria; **David Machado**, Portugal; **Dy Plambeck**, Denmark; **Elisabeth Steinkellner**, Austria; **Endre Lund Eriksen**, Norway; **Finn-Ole Heinrich**, Germany; **Frida Nilsson**, Sweden; **Gideon Samson**, Netherlands; **Inna Manakhova**, Russia; **Jana Šrámková**,

Czech Republic; **Katherine Rundell**, UK; **Katherine Woodfine**, UK; **Laura Dockrill**, UK; **Laura Gallego**, Spain; **Ludovic Flamant**, Belgium; **Maria Parr**, Norway; **Maria Turtschaninoff**, Finland; **Michaela Holzinger**, Austria; **Nataly Elisabeth Savina**, Germany; **Nina Elisabeth Grøntvedt**, Norway; **Peder Frederik Jensen**, Denmark; **Salla Simukka**, Finland; **Sandrine Kao**, France; **Sanne Munk Jensen**, Denmark; **Sarah Crossan**, Ireland; **Sarah Engell**, Denmark; **Stefan Bachmann**, Switzerland; **Stefanie de Velasco**, Germany; and **Victor Dixen**, France.

DOKK1 public library was transformed into a hub of creative action. Pop-up activities, from film screenings to readings, drew great audiences; while intimate workshops invited young people to explore their imaginative potential in illustration, writing, book art, origami, black out poetry, and grafitti.

Two exhibitions during the festival highlighted the importance and power of illustration in storytelling beyond language boundaries:

Bologna International Children's Illustrators Exhibition offered a uniquely global visual experience, displaying a wide selection of artists from across the world, selected by an international jury of experts from thousands of submissions from established and emerging artists. The exhibition also travels from Italy to Japan, China, Taiwan, Thailand and the USA.

A special **Aarhus 39 illustrators exhibition** showcased artwork from world-leading illustrators, commissioned for the Aarhus39 anthologies, including: Barroux, Britta Teckentrup, Dave McKean, Ella Okstad, Helen Stephens, Peter Bailey, Satoshi Kitamura, Anke Kuhl, Hanne Kvist, Isol, Joelle Jolivet, Jörg Mühle, Kitty Crowther, Mårdøn Smet, Ole Könnecke, Rotraut Susanne Berner, Sandrine Kao, Serge Bloch, Søren Jessen, Yvonne Kuschel, Adam Stower, Axel Scheffler, Benji Davies, Chris Riddell, Ian Beck, Joel Stewart, Neal Layton, Ross Collins, Tony Ross, Anna Höglund, Barbara Nascimbeni, Cato Thau-Jensen, Charlotte Pardi, Kamila Slocinska, Lilian Brögger, Moni Port, and Philip Waechter.

Creative Wales Hay Festival International Fellow 2017/18, the award-winning YA writer **Jenny Valentine** continued her project to build a global picture of adolescent experience, which will be documented digitally and in a final manifesto next year.

Over the weekend, winners were named for two major prizes:

On Saturday, the national **500 Words** competition culminated. Launched by Hay Festival, DR and Aarhus 2017 in the spring, *500 Words* invited young people across Denmark to submit stories on the theme of 'journeys' as part of a wide-reaching national engagement project. After 4,177 entries were received, 20 finalists were selected, with **Theresa Andersen** and **Isak Weiss Brink** named the winners. Their stories have each been illustrated by renowned Danish artists and published by Gyldendal.

On Sunday, the winners of the children's own literature prize, **Orlprisen** ('The Orla Prize') were revealed: best plot (*Ternet Ninja* by Anders Matthesen), best character (*K for Klara 11: Er vi venner?* by Line Kyed Knudsen), best illustration (*Gamerz, Gamer 4ever* by Kasper Hoff and Jan Solheim), best book from which you learn something new (*Sådan blev jeg Rasmus Brohave* by Rasmus Brohave), and a special prize for the most immersive book (*Ravnenes hvissen* by Malene Sølvsten).

Cristina Fuentes La Roche, International Director at Hay Festival, said:

“Hay Festival in Aarhus has been something truly special: a timely celebration of some of the world’s greatest writers, illustrators and performers for young people, in Denmark’s leading public library, DOKK1. It has been thrilling to see children so enraptured by stories. From reading to writing, from talking to making, our festival highlighted the importance of learning about lives lived in other cultures in promoting empathy. In a world in which it’s easy to feel isolated, our borderless programme engaged writers from across Europe in a fresh exchange of ideas and conversation with thousands of readers.”

Rebecca Matthews, CEO of European Capital of Culture Aarhus 2017, said:

“Children and young people have played an important part of our year as European Capital of Culture. All the way they have been active and inspiring participants, rethinking everything from the cities of the future and sustainability, to food, music, street and sports events. Hay Festival Aarhus 2017 was a wonderful event, inspiring children and young people to believe in their creativity, their stories and to use their language in so many ways. It was an amazing experience.”

The Aarhus 39 project builds on three similar festival campaigns Hay Festival has run with the UNESCO World Cities of Literature in Bogotá, Beirut and Port Harcourt, and the Mexico 20 project for The London Book Fair’s UK–Mexico Market Focus 2015. Each of these projects has generated new festivals, new publications and far-reaching campaigns that are still supporting a new generation of writers from Latin America (Bogotá 39), the Arab diaspora (Beirut 39) and Sub-Saharan Africa (Africa 39).

About Aarhus, Denmark

Denmark’s second largest city on the east coast of the Jutland peninsula boasts some of the country’s finest museums - the art museum ARoS, MoMu and the Michelin-awarded open air museum Den Gamle By - plus a vibrant music scene. In 2017, the city has marked its European Capital of Culture status with a year filled with events, culture, new experiences and collaborations across the arts, cities and people. For more information, visit www.aarhus2017.dk.

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Notes to editors

For IMAGES, INTERVIEWS or FURTHER INFORMATION, contact Hay Festival publicity director Christopher Bone at christopher@hayfestival.org or 00-44-7506 522540.

About Hay Festival

www.hayfestival.org

Hay Festival brings readers and writers together to share stories and ideas in sustainable events around the world. The festivals inspire, examine and entertain, inviting participants to imagine the world as it is and as it might be.

Nobel Prize-winners and novelists, scientists and politicians, historians and musicians talk with audiences in a dynamic exchange of ideas. The Festival's global conversation shares the latest thinking in the arts and sciences with curious audiences live, in print and online. Hay Festival also runs wide programmes of education work supporting coming generations of writers and culturally hungry audiences of all ages.

In 1987, the festival was dreamt up around a kitchen table in Hay. Thirty years later, the unique marriage of exacting conversations and entertainment for all ages has travelled to editions in 30 locations, from the historic town of Cartagena in Colombia to the heart of cities in Peru, Mexico, Spain and Denmark. The organisation now reaches a global audience of hundreds of thousands every year and continues to grow and innovate, building partnerships and initiatives alongside some of the leading bodies in arts and the media, including the BBC, Welsh Government Department of Education, Visit Wales, ACW, the British Council, Oxfam, TATA, Friends of Hay Festival, Baillie Gifford, Good Energy, the Woodland Trust and the National Trust.

Acclaimed author, actor and writer **Stephen Fry** is President of the organisation; **Peter Florence** is Director; and **Caroline Michel**, CEO of leading literary and talent agency Peters Fraser and Dunlop, is Chair of the Festival board.

Upcoming festival dates:

- [Hay Festival Queretaro](#), Mexico (7– 10 Sep 2017)
- [Hay Festival Segovia](#), Spain (16–24 Sep 2017)
- [International Children's Literature Hay Festival Aarhus](#), Denmark (26–29 Oct 2017)
- [Hay Festival Arequipa](#), Peru (9–12 Nov 2017)
- [Hay Festival Wales Winter Weekend](#), UK (23 – 26 Nov 2017)
- [Hay Festival Cartagena de Indias](#), Colombia (25–28 Jan 2018)
- Hay Festival Wales, UK (24 May – 3 June 2018)