

PROJECT OF PROFESSIONAL RESIDENCES 2021

MILAN UNESCO CREATIVE CITY OF LITERATURE

The residency project in Milan, the UNESCO Creative City of Literature, was held from 21 September to 1 October.

The three selected guests were: Clara Jubete Baseira, bookseller from Barcelona, Sebastian Nowak, professional working in the publishing sector, Elena Traina, librarian, writer and translator

The program of visits was designed to raise awareness of the Milanese reality linked to the world of books in its various professional and creative facets.

The sites subject to cultural and professional visits and in-depth study were:

- **Sormani Library:** the central library of Milan has an important history for the city and a collection of great prestige.
- **Kasa dei Libri**, a unique cultural institution in the city, born from a private collection open to the public as an exhibition space; it is a place of meeting and culture, where activities involving books are carried out, aimed at both adults and children.
- **Popular bookshop in via Tadino:** a meeting with the bookseller Guido Duiella who took over the bookshop from the previous management, revitalizing it, and who helped found the IWB, Association of independent bookshops in Milan, with the aim of making known the many and diversified realities of independent Milanese bookstores, offer services and implement common initiatives.
- **Boschi Di Stefano House Museum:** represents an extraordinary testimony of the history of Italian art of the twentieth century and hosts the collection of the "Pulcinoelefante" editions, a unique editorial and art experience in Italy, which includes in its catalog first-rate writers and artists floor. -Ulrico Hoepli International Bookshop: one of the largest independent Italian bookstores which is also a publishing house and online sales service. During the visit, all the activities of the group were illustrated, with a particular focus on production, distribution and communication issues in the various aspects: selection of books, editing and copyediting, translation, marketing, online commerce and the management of a large bookshop international with a very various collection.

- **Fratelli Bonvini Typography:** a project for the recovery and enhancement of an artisan reality that led to the creation of new services, linked to creativity and experimentation, and to the creation of an exhibition space dedicated to art and various cultural initiatives.
The Typography also houses a small bookshop with rare and particular independent publications. During the visit, the various projects involving the Printing House were presented, some of which were carried out in collaboration with other realities in the neighborhood and aimed at environmental redevelopment and social aggregation.
- **“Dergano-Bovisa” local library:** one of Milan's local libraries, located in a former industrial district, which is undergoing a profound urban transformation. The library has two special collections, one dedicated to the fiction of migrant authors and the other dedicated to immigration which includes volumes in various foreign languages.
- **“Falcone e Borsellino” condominium library:** one of the most recently established condominium libraries in Milan. An example of civic redemption and aggregation in a difficult social context and with problems related to legality. The guests met with the tenants committee that initiated the project and is committed to making this reality work with the aim of improving the living conditions of all condominiums.
- **"Book Object" exhibition at the ADI-Design museum:** an international initiative dedicated to the artist's book and the design book.
- **Formentini laboratory for publishing:** a city space dedicated to the enhancement of editorial work, as well as a place for dissemination open to the public, for meetings and discussions between publishing and professional training professionals. A round table was held at the Laboratory which was attended by Giacomo Papi, president of the Formentini Laboratory, three representatives of AITI (Italian Association of Translators and Interpreters), Deborah Messina, bookseller of the independent bookshop "The time regained", Amos Mattio, president of “Casa della Poesia”, and Oliviero Ponte di Pino, head of the BookCity program, the most important event dedicated to books and reading in the city. During the round table the participants exchanged information, experiences and projects. Hence a comparison between the different national realities (Italian, Spanish, Polish and English) and on the problems related to the professions of the book.

- **Feltrinelli Foundation:** one of the major European centers of documentation and research in the field of historical disciplines and political, economic and social sciences. Born from the commitment of the founder of one of the most important Italian publishing groups, today it is based in a recently built building, designed to give life to a new, large urban cultural center.
- **Messaggerie Libri SpA:** Italian publishing holding which includes the most important national distributor, various publishing groups, retail companies (including online), logistics and promotion services. During the meeting, an overview was provided on editorial production and distribution in Italy, with particular reference to the evolution of the market that led to a discussion with guests on the various national realities.
- **Marcos Y Marcos:** independent Milanese publishing house specializing in the proposal and revival of Italian and foreign fiction and poetry. It also organizes courses in publishing, editing, writing and communication. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss the activities of reading aloud and shared in schools and in non-institutional contexts, the relationship between reading and mental health, new forms of use of literature, and a reflection on the meaning of independent publishing. , in a comparison with the different national realities.
- **National convention of Stelline:** the annual convention of librarians hosts national and international experiences dedicated to books and the promotion of reading. Our residents took part, as speakers, in the session of the conference centered on reading among adolescents. The guests highlighted the trends in the countries of origin and dedicated an in-depth study to the best practices found during their individual experience. The session was also attended by Giovanni Solimine, full professor of "Librarianship" and "Book, Publishing, Reading" at the University of Rome La Sapienza, and Silje Tretvoll of the Norwegian association "! Les", a non-purpose organization of profit founded in 1997 which is committed to promoting reading in all walks of life and to spreading literature to children, young people and adults.

Our three guests expressed interest in all the meetings held, and in particular at the round table at the Formentini Laboratory, the visit to the Hoepli International Bookshop and the participation in the Convention of the Stars.

In fact, it emerged that the starting expectation with respect to our project was mainly that of bringing the contribution of one's professionalism into new contexts; therefore, the most appreciated experiences were the occasions in which a reciprocity of professional exchange was achieved. At the same time, the knowledge of particular realities, such as the Kasa dei Libri

or the Fratelli Bonvini Printing House, were very welcome and helped to restore an image of the city out of stereotypes. Our three guests had the opportunity to understand the functioning of the publishing industry in Milan, and its relationship with public bodies and libraries. They were also able to share their experiences and skills, discuss with the Milanese actors on the different perspectives relating to the social diffusion of reading, the involvement of young people and best practices in the book and library sector. To put it in the words of Elena Traina “The Milan residence, UNESCO City of Literature 2021, was a residence like no other. Inviting book industry professionals from other countries was a winning bet for both sides”.