

Barcelona Exhibition Highlighted at Children's Reading Activity

The Barcelona International Exhibition of Illustrated Children's Books made its fourth visit to Taiwan for the ROC "Children's Reading Year" activities. The event was held by the Council for Cultural Affairs (CCA) from December 24, 1999 to January 23, 2000 at the Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Center.

During the exhibition run, local bookstore chains, including Kingstone, Eslite, and Hess, as well as libraries in remote areas of Taiwan issued "reading passports" to children to encourage interest in reading. Passport stamps were given for each children's book purchased and a passport with four stamps could be redeemed with accompanying book essays by the children for a VIP card from participating stores. Kids also had a chance to take part in the "Little Reader" activity.

Mr. Ho Kuang-ts'ai (郝廣才), a former juror of the 1996 Barcelona exhibition and current editor-in-chief of Grimm Press (格林文化), noted that illustrations by 99 artists were selected from more than 1,600 entries at the 1999 exhibition, making it the biggest turnout in the event's history. Over 500 of the submitted illustrations were shown in Taiwan, which was the last stop on the tour itinerary.

To celebrate the Year of Children's Reading, illustrators of children's books from more than 10 nations were invited to depict in illustrations the beautiful world of reading based on their own childhood reading experiences. Other attractions included an area where kids could print out e-Christmas and New Years cards; a short video entitled the "Birth of Illustrated Books," describing the publishing process from the creation of original artwork to final printing; and online painting exhibitions.

Renowned illustrators from the Czech Republic and Germany held workshops and special displays of their work at the exhibition.

CCA Chairman Cheng-chih Lin (林澄枝) said that the Year of Children's Reading hopes to foster in the next generation an interest in reading.