

LIBRI PER RAGAZZI RIZZOLI: A SELECTION

For the 150th anniversary of the Unification of Italy, the Italian book industry has produced numerous patriotic works. The 24th edition of the Salone del Libro held in Turin from May 12–16, 2011 celebrates the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy, the ultimate achievement of that extraordinary historical period known as the Risorgimento. Turin is celebrating the books that encouraged the spirit of unification as well as those later books that strengthened the idea of belonging to one country. Our selection of books is limited to Italian children's literature; we know that in this field there are many important books that are praised and loved by readers from all over the world.



OF DOGS AND SHEEP

Such famous authors as [Alberto Moravia](#) and [Dacia Maraini](#) do not need to be introduced, since their works for adults have won critical acclaim worldwide. Their books for children and young adults, however, may not be so well-known to the public at large.

ADVENTURE FROM THE SCHOOL TO THE JUNGLE

De Amicis, Vamba and Salgari owe their popularity almost exclusively to the novels and stories they wrote for children or the ones that in time became books for young people.

[De Amici's Heart](#), *An Italian Schoolboy's Diary* was translated for American readers by Isabel Florence Hapgood and published by the New York-based Thomas Y. Crowell Co. in 1887, just one year after the first Italian edition was released. It is surprising how this wonderful Italian book, which is still waiting to receive the critical recognition that it deserves, was discovered by one of the most outstanding intellectuals of the American and European cultural community of that time. Isabel Florence Hapgood was in fact not only the compiler and translator of the *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic (Greco-Russian) Church*, but also a sophisticated pioneer who introduced Russian, French and Italian literature to English-language readers.

In 1885, [Vamba's Ciondolino](#) was published in Italy with illustrations by Carlo Chiostrì. Twenty-five years later it arrived on U.S. bookstore shelves with the title *The Prince and His Ants*. Sarah Frances Woodruff's wonderful translation, the introduction, sixteen coloured illustrations and ninety scientifically accurate engravings by Vernon Lyman Kellogg, the famous zoologist and professor of entomology at Stanford University, made the Henry Holt and Company edition of *Ciondolino* one of the most precious versions ever published abroad. The BurRagazzi collection offers another title by the same author, *Gian Burrasca*, which is also the most popular one nowadays.

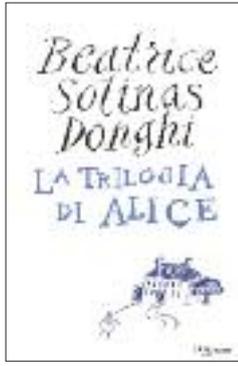
[Emilio Salgari](#) is the author of Italian swashbuckling literature *par excellence*. For over a century, his novels were must-read books for generations of youth eager for exotic adventures. In Italy his extensive body of work (80 novels and 150 short stories) was more widely read than Dante's *Divina Commedia*, and even today Salgari is still one of the most translated Italian authors. He is virtually unknown in the English-speaking world, since only a few titles of his have been translated into English so far. ROH Press, an independent publishing house specializing in the adventure novels of Salgari, has recently published *The Mystery of The Black Jungle*, *Sandokan: The Tigers of Mompracem*, *Sandokan: The Pirates of Malaysia*, *Sandokan: The Two Tigers* and *Sandokan: The King of the Sea*. These books were translated by Nico Lorenzutti, while Michael and Paolina Amadio translated and edited the very first publication of *The Son of the Red Corsair*.

In 2007, Sandokan was listed as one of the 20th century's greatest characters in Lucy Daniel's *Defining Moments in Books: The Greatest Books, Writers, Characters, Passages and Events that Shook the Literary World*. In May 2008, *Sandokan: The Tigers of Mompracem* was included in Peter Boxall's newly revised *1001 Books You Must Read Before You Die*.



MANZI, A TEACHER AND A STORYTELLER

As one of the most brilliant intellectuals of post-war Italy, [Alberto Manzi](#) viewed the eradication of illiteracy as an integral part of social thought as well as the main support for national cohesion. An academic, pedagogue, teacher, writer and author of one of the most important TV programmes of the early 1960s that educated generations of Italians, Manzi played a significant role in the transformation of Italian culture. In 1956, he became the first Italian writer short-listed for the H.C. Andersen Prize for his celebrated novel *Orzowei*. The book was later translated into 32 languages; in 1963, *White Boy*, the English version of the book, was published in the United States by Macmillan with superb illustrations by Charles Molina and a wonderful translation by Serge Hughes.



CLASSICS OF OUR TIME

Beatrice Solinas Donghi was born to an ancient family of Genoa in 1923. In the early 1950s, her talent as a writer was discovered by Anna Banti and Giorgio Bassani, two of the most remarkable Italian writers of the 20th century. She is the celebrated author of many works for both children and adults in the genres of novels, short stories and essays. In 2010, after the publications of *Rosina, poi Annetta, Quattro tempi per quattro ragazzi* and *Una scatola di latta celeste*, BurRagazzi issued *La trilogia di Alice* which received several literary prizes.

Mino Milani introduces himself in his literary autobiography published in 2009 with these words:

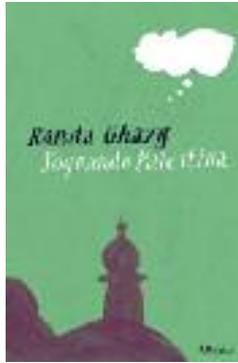
“I started writing for children in 1953 when I was twenty-five, and I believed in what I was doing at that time exactly like the way I do today. Maybe it’s because everything went well in the end, or maybe because I’ve always been a pessimist, but I do not like people who long for their lost youth, who have regrets and call their lost hopes ‘illusions’. I think I never had illusions. Moreover, the years of my youth were not at all my best years. I do not feel like either regretting or feeling sad for those many days I threw away in an attempt not to throw them away. Everything worked out in the end, and since we are in 2009 and my last story, *Udilla*, was published four years ago, I have been writing for kids for more than half a century.”

(Translated books by Mino Milani: *Man emerges* / Written by Mino Milani; illustrated by Cesare Colombi; translated by Mary Hope, Sydney: Bay Books, 1971.)

BOOKS ARE OUR BEST FRIENDS

Antonio Faeti is the best-known Italian expert of children’s literature. Born in Bologna in 1939, he studied art and was later an elementary school teacher. He was the first professor to teach a course on the history of children’s literature at an Italian university and became a prominent professor for the Department of Education at the University of Bologna. He is the author of novels and critical essays focusing on children’s literature, illustration and comics, as well as the president of the jury for the Bologna Ragazzi Award, the annual prize of the Bologna International Children’s Book Fair. For over ten years he directed the series *I delfini* which was published by Fabbri; his precious contribution to the series came in the form of critical essays in the afterword of each volume. These brief and enlightening essays have recently been compiled into a single book entitled *Gli amici ritrovati*; a book that perfectly represents Italo Calvino’s sentence “a classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say”.

He has recently received the Golden Archiginnasio, the most important award of the city of Bologna.



TRUE STORIES

The Rizzoli publishing group pays particular attention to stories inspired by specific real life issues such as politics, the Mafia, and immigration.

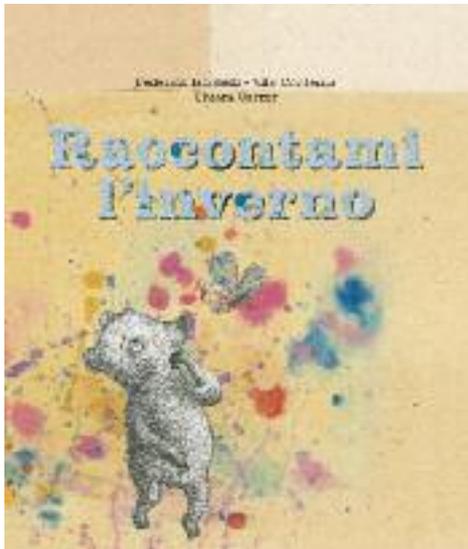
Luigi Garlando is a journalist and a writer for both children and adults. In 2004, he wrote *Per questo mi chiamo Giovanni*, which was published by Fabbri. The book pays homage to Giovanni Falcone, the Sicilian judge killed by the Mafia in May 1992, a few months before the murder of his colleague Paolo Borsellino.

Marguerite Shore translates prestigious art books and novels from Italian into English. She translated Randa Ghazy’s first novel *Dreaming of Palestine*.

Randa Ghazy is a young Italian writer of Egyptian origin. In 2002, when she was 15, her debut novel was published by Fabbri. The book was later translated into 14 languages.

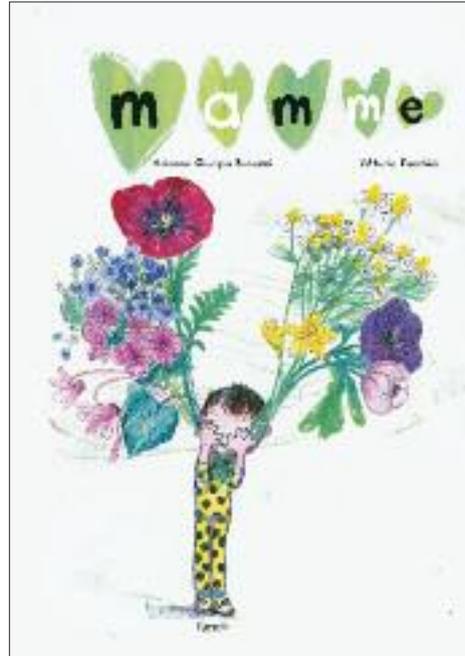
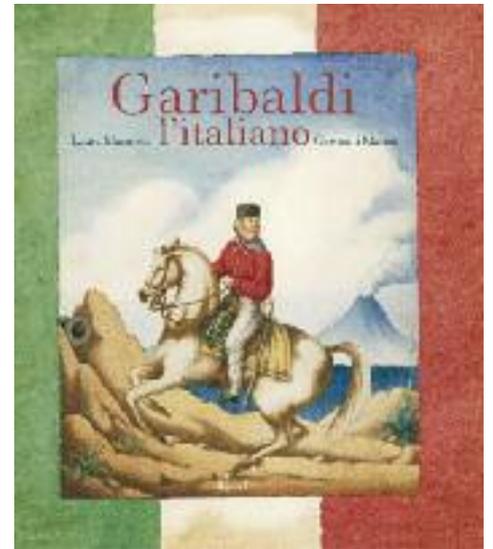
Writing in a passionate blend of poetry and prose, Randa Ghazy creates a convincing portrait of a group of friends who have grown up surrounded by war and fighting. With eloquence and sensitivity, Ghazy creates a portrait of life in the Middle East that alternates the horrors of living amidst war with the experiences of life-altering friendships, growing-up, falling in love, and dreaming of the future.

Elisabetta Lodoli, director and scriptwriter, has a degree in philosophy from the University of Bologna, where she was born and where she created and directed the Cinema Bureau. She then moved to the United States where she received a Masters in Direction at CALARTS (California Institute of the Arts). For her first short film, *Off Season*, she was chosen to participate in the Turin and Rotterdam International Festivals and in 1989 she won the Gabbiano d’Argento at the Bellaria Independent Cinema Festival. In 2007, Fabbri published her novel *Questo mare non è il mio mare*, the story of a girl from Sri Lanka who faces a hard time integrating in Rome.



PICTURE BOOKS

In its attention to illustration, Rizzoli moves between traditional and innovative styles. The elegant, classic, light yet intense water-colours of the Florentine artist Giovanni Manna, the graphic style of Chiara Carrer, and the research on colours, patterns and texture carried out by Vittoria Facchini all represent the creativity encouraged by Rizzoli.



PAPERBACK EXCELLENCE

The paperback publisher BUR in co-operation with Mucca Design, the Manhattan-based, award-winning design company founded by Matteo Bologna more than a decade ago, present two new series of children's books: BUR ragazzi classici and Bur ragazzi best. While the first series contains childhood favourites, the latter is a selection of classics-to-be. Artist Jeffrey Fisher repackages, restyles, illustrates and designs the covers of both series. The minimal elegance of his style enhanced by the embossed print on uncoated paper make these series unique works.

The BUR ragazzi series was selected for the prestigious AIGA 50 books/50 covers competition 2011.

