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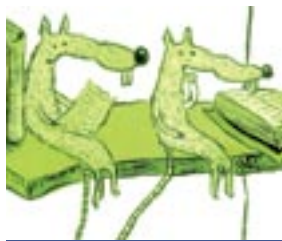
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## Galicianbooks

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The Ministry of Culture and Sports would like to thank to all persons and organizations involved in the promotion of Galician books in overseas market, particularly to publishers and illustrators, who give us the rights of reproduction for this publication.



The Galician publishing house OQO published *Gran libro dos retratos de animais* by Svietlan Junakovic in 2006. This book received the Special Mention at the Bologna Book Fair 2007 and also the First Prize for The Best Published Work from the Ministry of Culture of Spain. We used some pictures from this book for the open pages of each article in this publication.



**XUNTA DE GALICIA**  
CONSELLERÍA DE CULTURA E DEPORTE  
Dirección Xeral de Creación e Difusión Cultural

# An IBBY Centre on Cultural Diversity in Santiago

Work is underway on completing the construction of the 'City of Culture' in Galicia, an ambitious project that will offer new possibilities and strategies for the diffusion of Galician language and culture. Designed by the American architect Peter Eisenmann, the monumental complex will include the IBBY Centre for Children's and Young People's Literature for Cultural Diversity.

The Department of Culture of Galicia's regional government, the Xunta, and the IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People) have reached an agreement to establish the IBBY Centre for Children's and Young People's Literature for Cultural Diversity in Galicia's City of Culture. The Centre will form part of the services offered by the National Library of Galicia, focusing on the study, diffusion and promotion of books for children from the world's minority cultures and languages. This will be the second international centre established in the world by the IBBY, after the centre opened in Oslo in 1985, dedicated to books for disabled children and young people. The decision to choose Galicia and Santiago de Compostela as the location for this new centre was determined by the high profile and prestige achieved by Galician children's and young people's literature in recent decades, and the fact that this vigorous and competitive

literature at international level represents a linguistic and cultural minority.

The objectives of the IBBY Centre for Children's and Young People's Literature for Cultural Diversity include the following:

- To create in Galicia the first international library in the world specialising in the collection, study and diffusion of literature written for children and young people in the languages of minority cultures.
- To position this Centre as an international reference in the study and promotion of children's and young people's literature.
- To make the IBBY Centre for Children's and Young People's Literature for Cultural Diversity a body that promotes culture in its immediate surroundings and helps to create cultural initiatives for children, young people

# Centre for Cultural Diversities of Santiago de Compostela

Bottom: *Música mariña*,  
by Kiko Dasilva

and adults, activities to encourage reading, proposals focusing on books and reading, research projects in the field of literature and illustration for children and young people, and the international projection –through the study and translation of works into minority languages– of literature written in other minority languages.

In order to achieve these major and ambitious goals, the IBBY Centre for Children's and Young People's Literature for Cultural Diversity will create a powerful on-line database providing access to its contents from anywhere in the world. Researchers and specialists in the field will not need to travel to Santiago de Compostela in order to obtain information produced by the centre, which will also feature installations allowing its contents to be consulted, together with promotional activities allowing the institution to become a driving force for the promotion and diffusion of books and reading.

Similarly, thanks to the collaboration and support of the IBBY, the centre will create a network of collaborators at international level to provide Galicia with books for children and young people published throughout the world in minority languages, allowing Galicia to be present in all of these countries and cultures.

This dual approach will make it possible to achieve the goal of making available literature for the youngest readers written in languages that are less widespread at international level, ensuring that they are disseminated in equal conditions to other works that are not affected by this condition, thereby demonstrating that literary quality stands out above the languages in which it is written. The work of the centre will also focus on highlighting the presence of numerous literary and cultural minorities throughout the world, showing that living and creating as part of a minority is nothing out of the ordinary, but instead a way of perceiving a way of being that is shared by millions of people all over the planet.

The IBBY Centre for Children's and Young People's Literature for Cultural Diversity will commence its activity in 2009, one year before the thirty-second International Congress of the IBBY is held in Santiago de Compostela in September 2010, bringing together writers, illustrators, critics, professors, librarians and experts from all over the world under the title "The Strength of the Minorities".





# Picture books

Books for readers of all ages

Noela Muíños

CHRON  
OLOGY

1898

Publication of the *Fábulas galaico-castellanas*, by Amador Saavedra Montenegro, the first book in Galician for young people.

1921

Vicente Risco writes the first three fairy tales of Galician literature.



**Left:** Covers of *O coelliño branco* (Kalandraka, 2000) by Xosé Ballesteros and Oscar Villán, National Prize of Illustration from the Ministry of Culture in Spain; and *Voces na Lagoa do Espantallo*, by Xan López Domínguez (Galaxia, new edition 2008) one of the first picture books in Galician language.

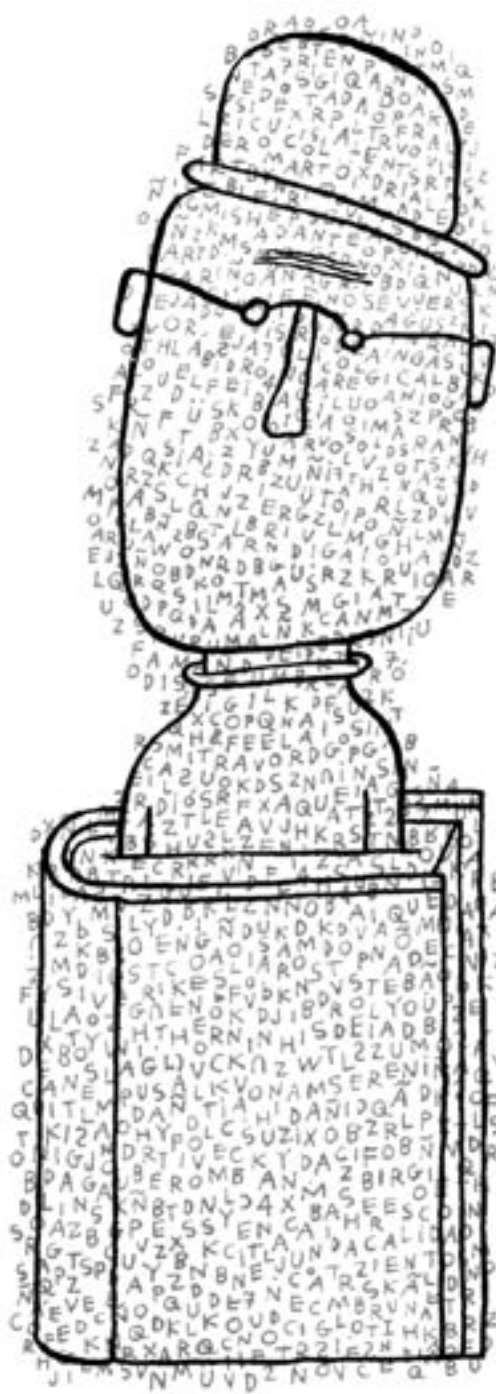
**Bottom:** *Publisher*, by Oscar Villán.

One of the newest and most exiting sectors in Galician children's literature is the picture book. In the last ten years, Galicia has become a leading figure in this sector thanks to the solid support of publishing houses and the presence of a group of up and coming new illustrators and authors, who have found the ideal medium for expressing their creativity.

**T**he most classic sector in children's literature in the eyes of experts and enthusiasts alike, the picture book represents much more than it may appear at first glance. Concentrating all of the intensity of a full story into a reduced text, and telling it through illustrations that form a fundamental part of the work, is by no means an easy task. Furthermore, books of this kind place the highest demands on publishers; producing a picture book is not cheap. Apart from the fees paid to the illustrator and writer, and translators in many cases, there are also the technical demands of producing a work which, in order to meet the demands and expectations of its readers, must be published in full colour, on high-quality paper, and preferably in hardcover.

All of these factors increase the production price of the book within a culture, and therefore within a publishing market, that will not guarantee high sales. This situation meant that for many years, publishing picture books in Galician was considered as an impossible task without making it a joint project,

combining the efforts of several publishing houses. Thanks to these efforts, made with the collaboration of Catalan, Basque and Galician publishers, the first picture books were produced in the minority languages of Spain. The first steps in this direction were taken by Editorial Galaxia, and later on Edicións Xerais de Galicia and Sotelo Blanco Edicións, with the publication of excellent quality works, but which were always affected by a limited continuity and diffusion. Illustrated albums in Galician only had a symbolic presence throughout the 1980s and 90s, against the backdrop of a type of children's literature that was in the process of normalisation and consolidation. Even so, these years saw the publication of truly exemplary work in the sector, including the pioneering work of the highly skilled illustrator Xan López Domínguez, also one of the first to illustrate his own texts. An example of his work is the popular *Voces na lagoa do espantallo*, published by Galaxia as part of a collection, *A Chalupa*, the result of a joint



initiative between this Galician publishing house and La Galera from Catalonia, and Elkar from the Basque Country.

The late 1990s marked a period of major renovation and revitalisation for illustrated albums in Galician. This inflection point was marked by the appearance of the publishers Kalandraka in 1999, created with the specific aim of publishing picture books. Despite the difficulties facing this sector, Kalandraka was capable of overcoming them with a project full of imagination, fresh, novel and competitive, which quickly aroused the interest of readers from all over Spain, leading the publishing house from Pontevedra to open new markets in other languages, translating its picture books from Galician into Castilian, Catalan, Basque and Portuguese, as well as English. Prizes and awards for the marvellous work produced by Kalandraka soon appeared: the only two National Illustration Prizes from the Ministry of Culture awarded to Galician authors are for works published by Kalandraka; *O coelliño branco*, illustrated by Óscar Villán, and *Onde perdeu Lúa a risa*, illustrated by Federico Fernández, which represented an explosion of quality and innovation in this sector, which in Galicia has a large number of artists who are particularly skilled in the production of pic-



**Left:** From *Voces na lagoa do espantallo*, by Xan López Domínguez

**Bottom:** From *O coelliño branco*, by Oscar Villán

ture books. The combination of the proposals made by Kalandraka and these new creators led to a prolific increase in the quality and notoriety of publications in this sector in Galicia that were unheard of until that moment in its literature. This period also marked the appearance of the first recordings of books in Galician, as part of Kalandraka's *Son de Conto* collection, including a picture book of truly exceptional quality, *A memoria das árbores*, combining the magnificent written texts of Xosé A. Neira Cruz, with the highly original illustrations of Kiko Dasilva, set against the background of a specially composed piano piece by Marcial del Adalid, performed by the Symphony Orchestra of A Coruña. Because this is what a picture book should truly be: a joint effort, with all of those involved concentrating all their skills on ensuring the successful completion of the project.

The work of Kalandraka, apart from allowing Galician readers to

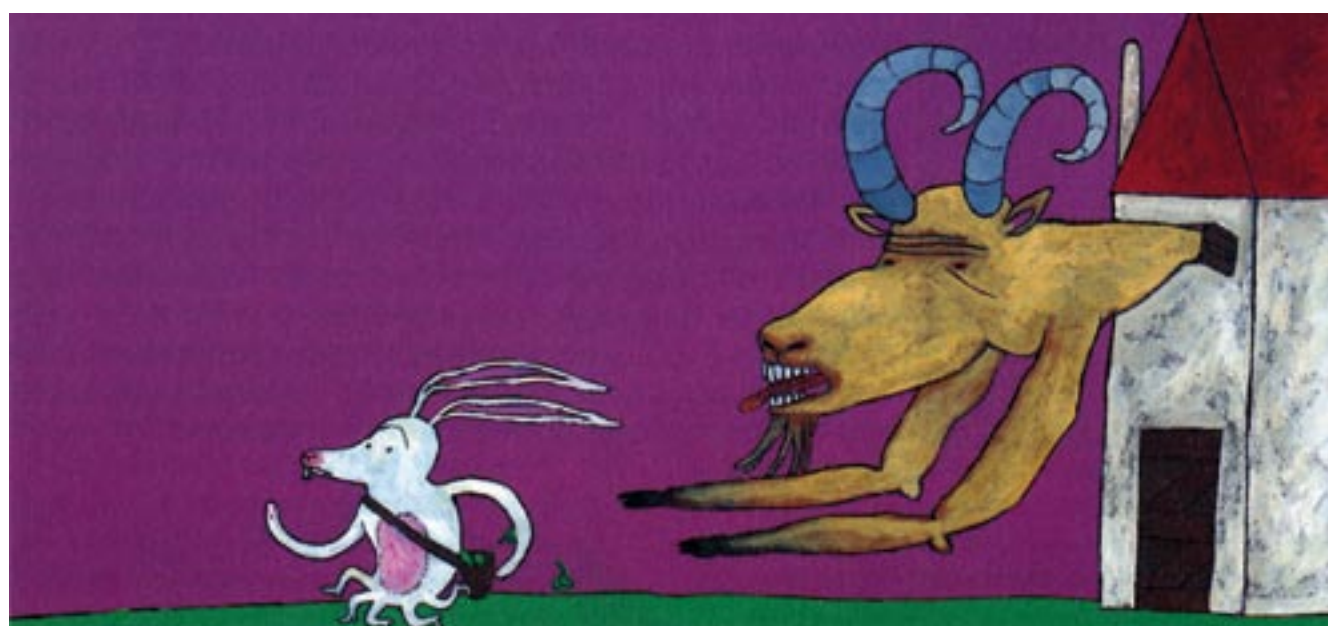
enjoy beautiful books that make you dream – according to the company's slogan – was a clear example that it was possible to publish picture books in Galician and survive the process. In this way other publishers began to open inroads into the picture book sector, until creating stable collections representing the level and quality the sector has achieved today. Apart from the works already mentioned, there are the series published by Everest-Galicia (including the exceptional *Bolboretas*, by Xabier P. Docampo and Xosé Cobas, included in the White Ravens list of the International Youth Library in Munich), Bahía Edicións or A Nosa Terra, the publishers responsible for one of the most success-

ful works in Galician children's literature, a series of picture books featuring the characters known as *Os Bolechas*, hugely popular and loved by Galician children, created by the writer and illustrator Pepe Carreiro.

In recent years, the Galician picture book sector has been strengthened by the appearance of OQO, a new publisher specialising in this area, which in its two years of existence has already offered the Galician and international market a number of outstanding works, including the *Gran libro dos retratos de animais*, which received awards from the Spanish Ministry of Culture and at the Bologna Book Fair, and is an example of another interesting

trend that has been developed in recent years in Galician picture books, combining children's literature and works of art.

2007 ended in Galicia with the presentation of an outstanding new series that filled the region's homes with picture books. A joint project between the newspaper *El País* and the publishing house Editorial Galicia resulted in a weekly series of picture books exclusively by Galician writers and illustrators, further proof that this sector is a force to be reckoned with, on the rise, and capable of producing truly beautiful work. A reality full of promise for the future, a perfect reflection of the current dimension of Galician children's literature.





# Books for first readers

María Jesús Fernández

**1966**

Editorial Galaxia begins a policy of co-publishing illustrated children's books with Basque and Catalan publishers. A result of this policy is the publication of *Polo mar van as sardiñas*, by Xohana Torres.

**1968**

Carlos Casares publishes *A galiña azul*, one of the most innovative children's books of the period in Spain.



Next page: From *Minimaladas* (Xerais, 2007), by David Pintor

A wide variety of styles, formats and themes are found in books aimed at young readers, as would be expected considering that children between the ages of 7 and 12 form a truly diverse group, with different tastes and important differences in terms reading ability, including beginners and expert readers.

Today we see a sector in which there is a predominance of narrative and fantasy works, in every imaginable shape and form. Occasionally this fantasy is inspired by folklore, as is the case of *Ovos duros*, in which Marisa Núñez adapts a classic tale featuring a wise, prudent woman. Other authors base their work on characters and references seen in traditional tales, such as Antonio Reigosa, an expert in folklore who recently published *A escola de Briador*, a tale featuring a sly, sardonic elf, containing a series of stories about these mythical creatures. Antonio Yáñez Casal uses house elves as characters in his book *Crisóstomo o Alifáfar*, telling how they came to be established in our land. Another region with a rich oral tradition, the Sahara, inspired Paula Carballera for her book *Smara*, whose narrator, an old woman, tells a series of stories that give us an insight into the culture of its inhabitants.

A combination of fantasy and humour, with a liberal smattering of nonsense, always appeals to children. Combining them in a perfect balance and seeking the involvement of his readers, Daniel Ameixeiro

has written books such as *Xan e Pericán* and *O Capitán da baía*. Humour is also the key in the book by Antonio Yáñez Casal, *Natasha e Dimitri*, which pokes fun at romantic novels through its main characters, two children and some “highly qualified” storks.

The creation of parallel worlds, one of the typical features of fantasy literature, allows the narrator and poet Pepe Cáccamo to create a magic land in *O segredo do pan*, a world full of surprises discovered by a baker at the bottom of her oven.

At times, fantasy is gently introduced into daily life, affected by extraordinary events without suffering major alterations. The author Agustín Fernández Paz frequently uses this technique when writing for this age group. His recent works include *A escola dos piratas*, a tale featuring the children and teachers of a school that is suddenly washed away in a storm and begins to float downstream towards the sea; or *A noite dos animais*, in which we accompany a little girl on the night she discovers she is the owner of a magic notebook with the ability to bring to life anything she draws in it.

We find short stories full of fantasy and with all the strength of poetic language, written to surprise and involve their readers, in two recently-published books with animals as their protagonists: *Minimaladas*, by Carlos López, presents a gallery of animals who, in the same way as classic fables, have much in common with humans, although in this case there are no morals, but instead plenty of humour. The other, *Imaxina animais*, brings together photographic compositions by Juan Vidaurre with the texts of Xosé Ballesteros, to create a new and highly original bestiary, transforming everyday items into surprising creatures.

Another theme frequently found in this group reflects daily life, offering us a portrait of modern society in all of the different areas that affect children, such as the family, school and friends. One of the main attractions frequently found in stories of this kind is the use of a child as a narrator, offering their particular view of the world in first person, especially on the behaviour of adults. A number of authors have chosen to use this style, such as Fina Casalderrey, who in her latest books explores modern-day issues such as the complicated integration of emigrants, in *A lagoa das nenas mudas*; or the drama of domestic violence in *Ola, estúpido monstro peludo*. For younger readers, she explores the situation of the elderly with humour and compassion, not

without a hint of social criticism, in *¿Quen me quere adoptar?*

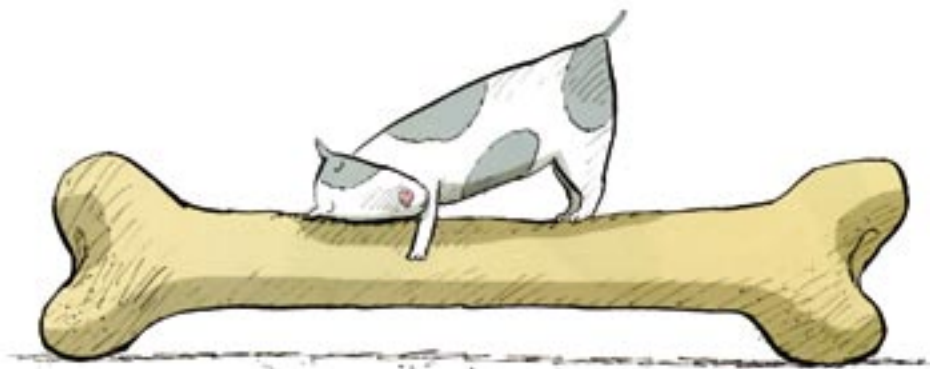
The family also serves as the backdrop for the story by Breogán Riveiro, *Tonecho de Rebordecho*, a touching yet humorous tale of a child who as a result of a series of circumstances has to leave the city and live at his grandparents' house, situated in a tiny village in the mountains, inhabited entirely by old people.

The voices of boys and girls who tell the story of their life in first person, giving us an insight into their thoughts, are found in other books such as *O dromedario nadador* by Xavier López Rodríguez; *Tita*, by Concha Blanco; or *Ese unicornio rosa* by Carlos Mosteiro. Ana María Fernández and Xoán Babarro also focus on the problems and concerns of children in their book, *O fillo do rei desaparecido*.

Childhood is once again the protagonist of the book by Xabier P. Docampo, *Bolboretas*, narrating the discovery of love when we still lack words to express the feelings and emotions we experience for the first time.

A family tale, this time transferred to a distant, conflictive setting, is offered by Marcos S. Calveiro in *O carteiro de Bagdad*, the story of a family living in the city of Bagdad and whose normal existence is changed dramatically by the war.





Although published in lesser number, there are still numerous collections of poetry for readers in this age group. For early readers, there are poems inspired by nature and mythical creatures in the book by Helena Villar Janeiro, *O souto do anano*. Nature and childhood are also the poetic themes of the work by Marica Campos, *Abracadabras*, and *Poemas que me cantou o grilo*, written by Ana María Fernández.

Other poets prefer to give their work a less formal, irreverent tone, suffused with humour and exploring the possibilities of word play. This is the case of Gloria Sánchez in her book *Adiviñas monstruosas*, combining poems and guessing games based on the classic figures of horror stories, or using a countdown to whittle away the protagonists of her book *Dez piratas*. A similar style is used by Antón Cortizas in his book of poems entitled *Era unha vez na Quimbamba*. In addition to the work of these two veteran authors is *Piratas, bruxas e outros amigos*, a collection of fun-filled poetry by Daniel Ameixeiro.

Plays written for the stage have been fewer in number, although several recent works have been of great interest for young readers. This is the case with *A noite da raíña Berenguela*, written by Xosé A. Neira Cruz, recreating the both historical and legendary figure of Queen Berenguela, bringing a

new perspective on the legend of how this mythical figure walks the streets of Compostela once a year, on the magical night of 24 July, the eve of the city's main festival. Another theatrical work by Paula Carballeira, entitled *Boas Noites*, is also based on folklore; it features Pedro Chosco, a figure responsible for the dreams of Galician children, and offering an irreverent, critical vision of modern-day children who do not have any free time to play, as their parents believe they should spend all their time learning new things and improving their education.

Finally we turn to the world of comics, with the recent appearance of three new albums in this highly popular format for children, all from the same publisher and suffused with humour. The characters in these comics are well known by Galician children, as they first appeared in the highly successful magazine *Golfiño*, unfortunately no longer in circulation. These albums are *Fiz*, written by Kilo Da Silva, *Tito Longueirón*, a character created by Pinto & Chinto (David Pintor and Carlos López), and *Vilaverzas* by Miguel Robledo.

As we have seen, an extensive and highly diverse range of publications are available to this age group, shown to be excellent readers by studies on the cultural habits of the population. All of the publish-

# Some questions

Xabier P. DoCampo

It is at the very least repetitive to insist on a series of analyses of Galician children's literature which, by force and due to their urgency, are superficial and nothing short of self-promotion. At this point in time no-one could question the apparently healthy condition of children's literature in the region, work that has received numerous awards at local level and from further afield, even at international level in some cases; the list of authors and authoresses of undeniable importance who cultivate it today; the sales figures and readers, who support its commercial success, and the proliferation of publishers and collections who welcome it with business in mind... Basically, once again we have to agree that Galician children's literature is enjoying a health that is truly enviable at home and abroad.

Yet we will avoid blowing our own trumpet too loudly, as the first chickens who fall victim to the fox are those who sleep tucked away in their coops. And so we should ask a series of questions which, going beyond the figures, help to complete this diagnosis.

- We should start by reading through the text in search of the term that gives it its name: literature, the art of enjoying the written word, its very


essence. Do we find the linguistic 'weight' in modern-day Galician children's writing that makes it 'literature'?

- Do the works we offer truly accredit the intelligence of the reader and their ability to dialogue with the text, or, on the contrary, are they a narrative of a series of insignificant events that are always left fully resolved, of characters who wander through the plot, without this resulting in any changes to their body or spirit, and which both have to be thoroughly explained and justified?
- Are these works that speak the same language as their readers, or do they instead offer a discourse that makes them difficult to identify with?
- Is this truly Galician literature, writing we identify with as Galicians, in which we see ourselves reflected as such?

Fortunately, in many cases our children's literature meets all of these conditions with flying colours and offers a very optimistic outlook, although we must stay alert: the last thing we need is to be caught resting on our laurels.

ers have their own specific collections aimed at these readers, the most veteran of which is Galicia's LIJ. Well-established authors and authoresses also write for this age

group, and together with them we salute the constant arrival of new writers on the scene who help to enrich and diversify the world of children's literature.



# A Thousand Springtimes More

Young People's Literature

Ánxela Gracián

CHRON  
OLOGY

1986

National Children's and Young People's Literature Prize for *Das cousas de Ramón Lamote*, by Paco Martín. The book is included in the Honour List of the IBBY in the same year.

1988

National Translation Prize for the Galician version of *Pinocho*, translated by Antón Santamarina from the original by Carlo Collodi.



From left to right: Francisco Castro and Xabier P. Docampo



# Literature with capital letters

An Alfaya

"Grown-ups have forgotten about when they were children. If they saw through our eyes, they would go back in time. But they worry about other problems, and don't pay any attention to us".

X. Neira Vilas, *Memorias dun neno labrego*.

Three decades of children's literature: from *Memorias dun neno labrego* to *Das cousas de Ramón Lamote*.

The true 'renaissance' of children's and young people's literature came about in the 1980's, as the Civil War brought an abrupt end to the timid awakening of Galician literature in the first decades of the twentieth century. During the long, dark night of the dictatorship, *Memorias dun neno labrego* by **Xosé Neira Vilas** was the most widely read book. It was not intended for young readers, but it was so well received by them that they eventually made it their own. In that difficult period of the 1960's, the need was felt for social literature that referred to the oppression of the most disadvantaged classes, at the same time as glorifying the rural world, in which the true idiosyncrasy of the Galician people was forged.

The 1970's were marked by a search for new horizons in terms of identity, which took shape in the following decade, with the appearance of a series of legal frame-

works that were fundamental for Galicia's historic nationality: the Statute of Autonomy, the Decree of Bilingualism and the Law on Linguistic Standardisation, together with the creation of Gáliz, the Galician Children's and Young Peoples Book Association. During the 1980's a series of regional collections gradually appeared, a result of the consolidation of new, solid editorial policies, with the presence of foreign publishers and the firm establishment of publishing companies in the region; the appearance of translations in Galician of international classics and works by famous Spanish writers; and the importance of the teenage market, as the protagonists and audience for literature that referred to their world and their interests. A number of authors began to be published during this period. Their pioneer was **María Victoria Moreno**, the authoress of novels as important as *Anagnórise*, which represented the first appearance of a type of narrative based on memory. The writers turned their attention to beyond our frontiers, importing trends seen in other types of children's literature, without losing sight of

our own oral tradition. An example of this is much of the writing of **Xabier P. Docampo**, winner of the National Literature Prize, characterised by a dominance of well-defined oral forms, combined with a brilliant writing style. Or **Xosé L. Méndez Ferrín**, author of the hard to classify novel *Arnoia*, *Arnoia* whose plot is based on exploring our epic past. **Darío Xohán Cabana** continued the tradition of the Arthurian legend, while **Miguel Vázquez Freire** focused on school life. However, the most important novel from this period was *Das cousas de Ramón Lamote*, by **Paco Martín**, (also a National Literature Prize winner), a fundamental novel that introduced Galician children's writing into the world of magical realism inherited from the author Álvaro Cunqueiro.

The 1990's: the opening of new narrative horizons.

The literature published in the 1990's displays the maturity seen in all writing that becomes less self-conscious and focuses on specifically literary aspects, such as language, imagination and creativity. While the 1980's were a moment of awareness of the importance of the region's literature, the 1990's saw the inauguration of new narrative genres: detective stories, mystery novels, science fiction, epic or legendary tales, and a long

Galicia is a paradise of literary contrasts. Its writing is redolent of grass growing in rich soil between pines and oaks, and also of the salty air of its harbours. If we close our eyes we may feel the drama of its ancient, rolling mountains, their wisdom, their tales and poetry, echoes that ring out from the past to reveal the secrets of the dead, or stir the spirits of the living.

Galicia enjoys a magic literature, as its writing is born from the breath of witches and goblins. Its creations arise from the souls of fishermen, country folk and craftsmen, who delight in playing with their language. It is a land of alchemists, who open the doors of the imagination and rescue tales from the oral tradition, of fantasy or reality, cultivating universal themes and genres, as they have their own universe, respecting the smaller universes of their creators.

Galician literature is a living entity that aspires to have a place in the hearts of all of the boys and girls who are our future, who grow with it and through it, who discover the world by loving it and defending it, feeling the pride of having an identity, of being whole, of being the protagonists of a future filled with words. They are full of melodies that strive to go beyond natural and imaginary frontiers, to offer themselves up with the aim of sharing emotions, wonderment, beauty and a sense of restlessness with other cultures.

The words and images of Galician books contain all of the grandeur of literature with capital letters. Before us are eyes that are attentive, awakening.

From left to right: Ana María Fernández, Antonio García Teijeiro, Paula Carballeira and Fran Alonso



Photo: Manuel G. Vicente



list of suggestive and diverse sub-genres, together with the incorporation of women's voices. The most significant authors in this period were **Agustín Fernández Paz**, who explored new genres and demon-

strated his perfect control of classic literary styles such as rhythm, tone and realism. His style may be best appreciated in his mystery novels. **Xosé A. Neira Cruz** was the author of a number of novels in which fe-

male characters rebel against the traditional education of women inherited from society that suffocated liberty, seeking out their own identity, to modify the social conventions affecting thought and reflection. **Fina Casalderrey**, (winner of the National Literature Prize) is a writer characterised by her comprehension of the world of children, with a vision suffused by tenderness and a profound understanding of trivial, daily life, in which it is difficult to be a hero. The writer from Madrid, **Marilar Aleixandre**, adopted Galician as her chosen language, with a style that reveals the desire to denounce the inequality of women and the struggle to forge a space of one's own; her novels have a firmly ethical content and contribute towards the creation of a status of equality. The work of **An Alfaya** is characterised by a use of language that plays with suggestion and the senses, focusing on themes such as love, identity, loss and marginality. The writer **Xosé Miranda** has his literary roots firmly in folklore, a novelist with a perfect control of the style. Other important authors who published works of great interest during this period are **Manuel Lourenzo González**, **Pepe Carballude**, **Xosé A. Perozo** and more recently **Carlos Mosteiro**, **Paula Carballeira**, **Xesús M. Marcos**, and **Francisco Castro**. It is also interesting to note the appearance of children's writing by authors with a consolidated career in the world

of adult literature, such as **Suso de Touro**, **Manuel Rivas**, **Manuel Darriba**, **Santiago Jaureguizar**, **Ramón Caride Ogando**, **Francisco Fernández Naval** or **Fran Alonso**, the writer of *Cidades*, one of the small number of volumes of poetry for young people in our field of children's literature. As would be expected, narrative is the most frequent genre seen in the field, with poetry and plays appearing in lesser number. With regard to children's poetry, mention should be made of much of the work of **Antonio García Teijeiro** (winner of the Pier Paolo Vergerio Prize) and **Ana María Fernández**. Very few plays for children were written at this time.

### Conclusions

We are aware of the brevity of this overview of our children's literature, in which we have not explored other areas of literary production such as translation, prizes, magazines, studies and publishing activity, which undoubtedly contribute towards the consolidation of the sector. Instead, our aim was to offer some basic information and show how, in these early years of the twenty-first century, the sector is in a very healthy state, producing works of great quality that have been awarded numerous national and international prizes, with the desire of enjoying a thousand springtimes more.

Photo: Xurxo Lobato



Marilar Aleixandre



An Alfaya



# Illustration from Galicia

Miguel Vázquez Freire

1990

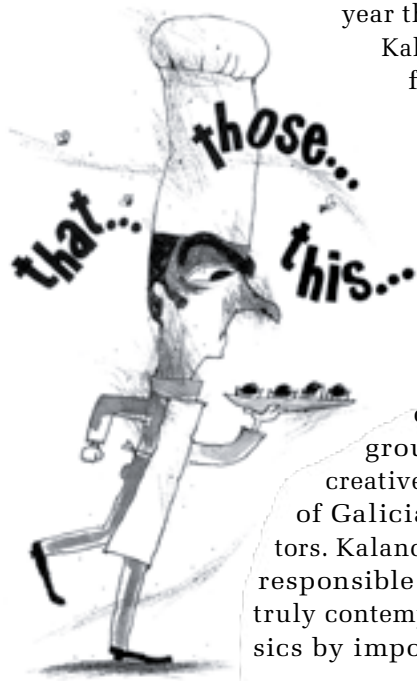
The work of the illustrator Xan López Domínguez is selected for the *Fiera dei Libri per Ragazzi* exhibition in Bologna.

1990

The books in Galician *Lembranza nova de vellos mesteres*, by Paco Martín, and *Ero e o capitán Creonte*, by Helena Villar Janeiro, are included in the White Ravens list of the International Youth Library in Munich.

One of the greatest contributions made by Galician children's books is the capacity for renewing illustrators, an endless source of talent which over the last decade has found the ideal backdrop for its development in the new proposals by Galician publishers.

**I**do not consider it as an exaggeration to refer to 1998 as an inflection point for the publishing of children's books in Galicia (and indeed for all of Spain), a moment that was especially significant in the world of illustration. In this year the publisher Kalandraka was founded in Pontevedra and which, focusing on the production of large-format illustrated albums, opened new ground for the creative expression of Galician illustrators. Kalandraka is also responsible for editing truly contemporary classics by important illus-



trators, frequently the authors of the accompanying texts, such as Maurice Sendak, Tomi Ungerer, Reiner Zimnick or Janosch, contributing towards positioning the work of local illustrators –far removed from any temptation towards complacent self-affirmation– in the context of the main trends in international illustration.

Of course, before this moment there were already major names in the world of illustration, although few will deny that the appearance of illustrated albums provided an ideal canvas for the expression of all their creative genius as part of the difficult process of communicating with young readers. The success of Kalandraka made it possible to break down the re-

sistance (mainly for commercial reasons) offered by most Spanish publishing houses (not only in Galicia) to the development of this genre, essential in children's literature. Today we have not only seen the appearance of new publishers, such as OQO, who have practically specialised in this area, but also the majority of publishers presenting their own collections of picture books.

Thanks to this boom, nearly all of Galicia's illustrators have had the opportunity to express themselves through this medium. This is the case, for example, of Xaquín Marín, the authentic patriarch of Galician illustration, who recently demonstrated in *A oca de Leonardo* how, without renounc-

ing his personal and undeniably graphic style, made popular as the cartoonist of the newspaper *La Voz de Galicia*, that he was able to exploit all of the possibilities offered by large format picture books. Or Xosé Cobas, who through his collaborations with the writer Xabier P. Docampo, has developed a process of stylistic purification which in his most recent work, comes close to an almost abstract asceticism.

Many Galician illustrators have their roots in the world of comics, such as two of the best-known names in the field – Miguelanxo Prado and Xan López Domínguez. The first continues to have his base in comics, recently becoming involved in a highly successful

**This page, top:** *Os dous corcovados* (Kalandraka, 2000), by Oscar Villán.

**This page, bottom-left:** *Contos por palabras* (Xerais, 2001), by Enjamio.

**Next page, top:** Covers of *Vilaberzas* by Miguel Robledo, new comic from Galicia; and *Pucho, o habitador dos tellados*, third publishing Prize from the Ministry of Culture in 2007.

**Next page, bottom:** *Marta ten a solución* (Galaxia, 2008), by Patricia Castelao.





movie project (the exceptional *De profundis*), although his frequent forays into the world of illustration reveal his precise awareness of all of the resources required by each different medium. His illustrations, generally realistic and based on the precision of his style, gain in depth and pace, compared to the breakneck speed of the comic.

In turn, Xan López Domínguez has completely abandoned the world of comics to focus exclusively on illustration. His *Voces na lagoa da espantallo*, for which he also wrote the text, was a fully-fledged picture book that perhaps deserved publication in a larger format. From his earliest works, his figures, drawn in a manneristic, caricature-like style, clearly defined a recognisable style. However, without changing this style, he has continued to evolve, from an early, almost Baroque approach, filling in every available space with figures and colour, to an essentialist style which in some of his most recent work may be almost classified as minimalist.

This process of focusing on the very essence of the expressive mediums used (also seen with Cobas) seems to be one of the dominant features of some of the most representative figures of the youngest generation of illustrators: Óscar Villán and Federico



Fernández, both winners of the National Illustration Prize, despite their youth. However, it would be a mistake to consider this as a

typically Galician stylistic trend, as what really predominates is a diversity of options and paths. For example, Kiko da Silva (also one of the main figures in the dynamic world of Galician comics), in one of the numerous picture books he has published, prefers to use exuberant forms and an experimental interplay of collage or photography, using three dimensional figures. Or Pablo Otero, known as *Peixe*, who has perhaps gone the furthest in experimenting with different styles,

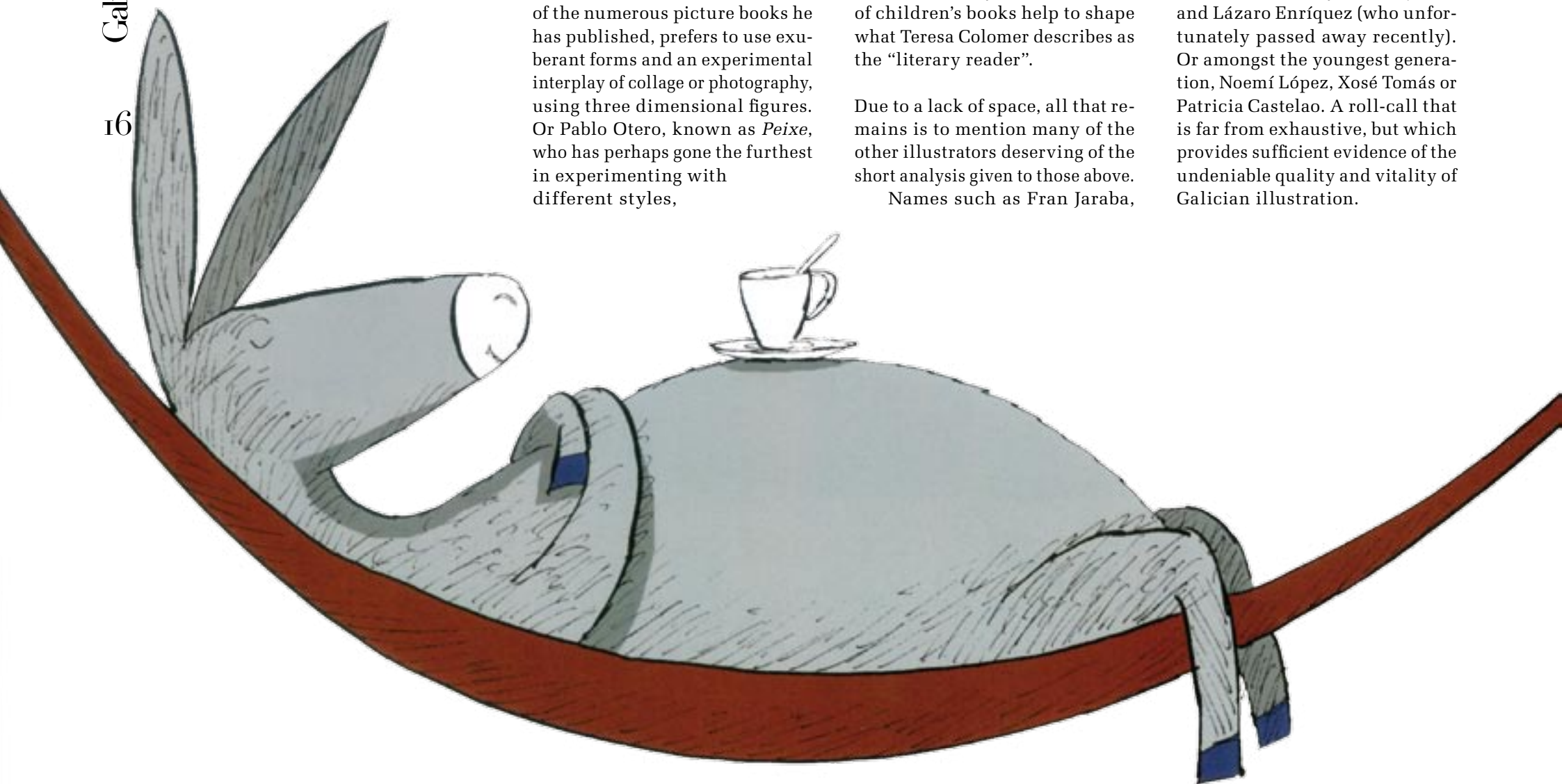
clearly inspired by the avant-garde movements of the early 20th century, such as Surrealism. In doing so, illustrators help to shape the aesthetic tastes of young readers, in the same way that the writers of children's books help to shape what Teresa Colomer describes as the "literary reader".

Due to a lack of space, all that remains is to mention many of the other illustrators deserving of the short analysis given to those above.

Names such as Fran Jaraba,

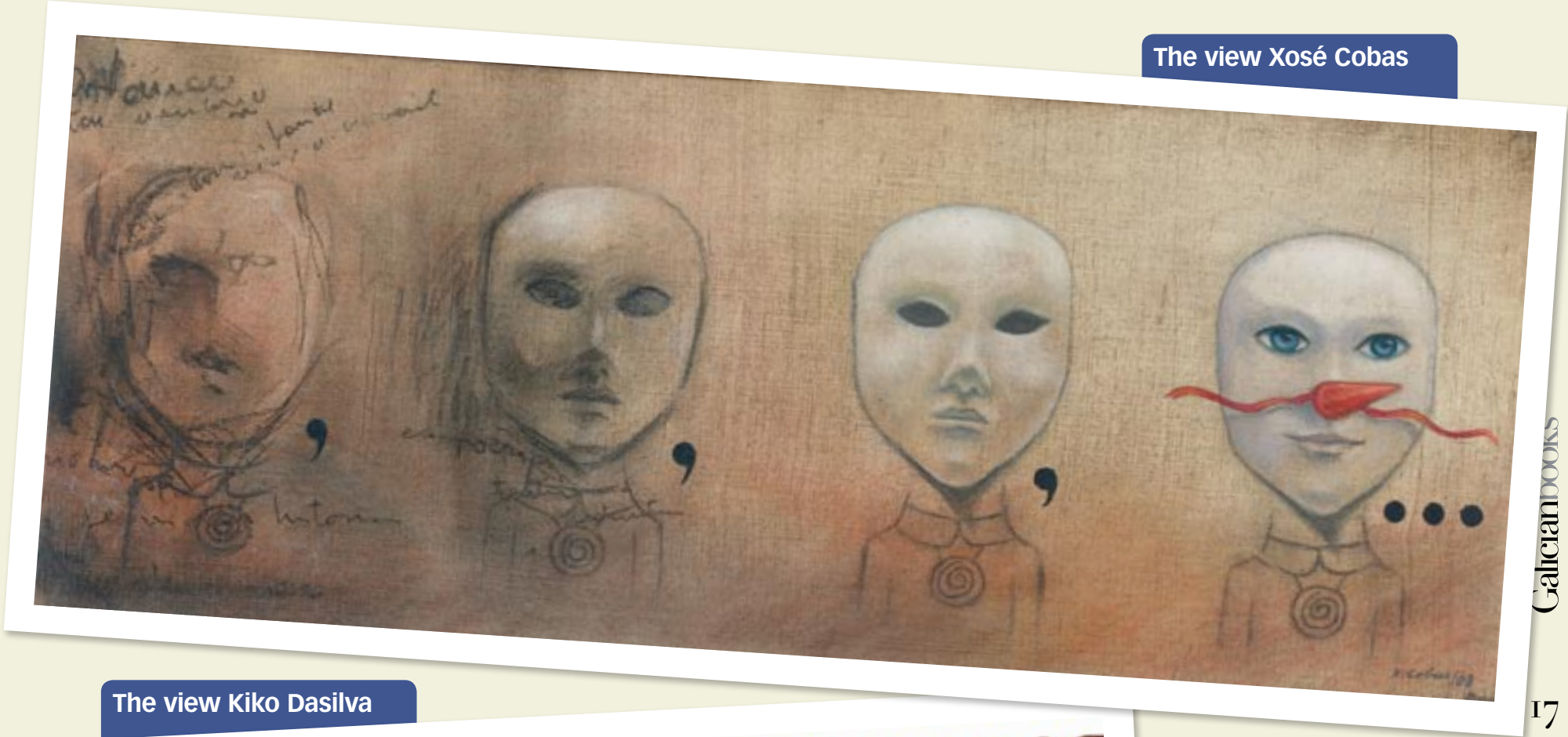
Pepe Carreiro, Manolo Uhía, Maife Quesada, Ánxeles Ferrer, Andrés Meixide or Fino Lorenzo, with a lengthy trajectory in the field. Or the Cuban *maestros*, resident in Galicia for some years, Enjamio and Lázaro Enríquez (who unfortunately passed away recently). Or amongst the youngest generation, Noemí López, Xosé Tomás or Patricia Castelao. A roll-call that is far from exhaustive, but which provides sufficient evidence of the undeniable quality and vitality of Galician illustration.

**Bottom:** From *Minimaladas* (Xerais, 2007), by David Pintor





The view Xosé Cobas



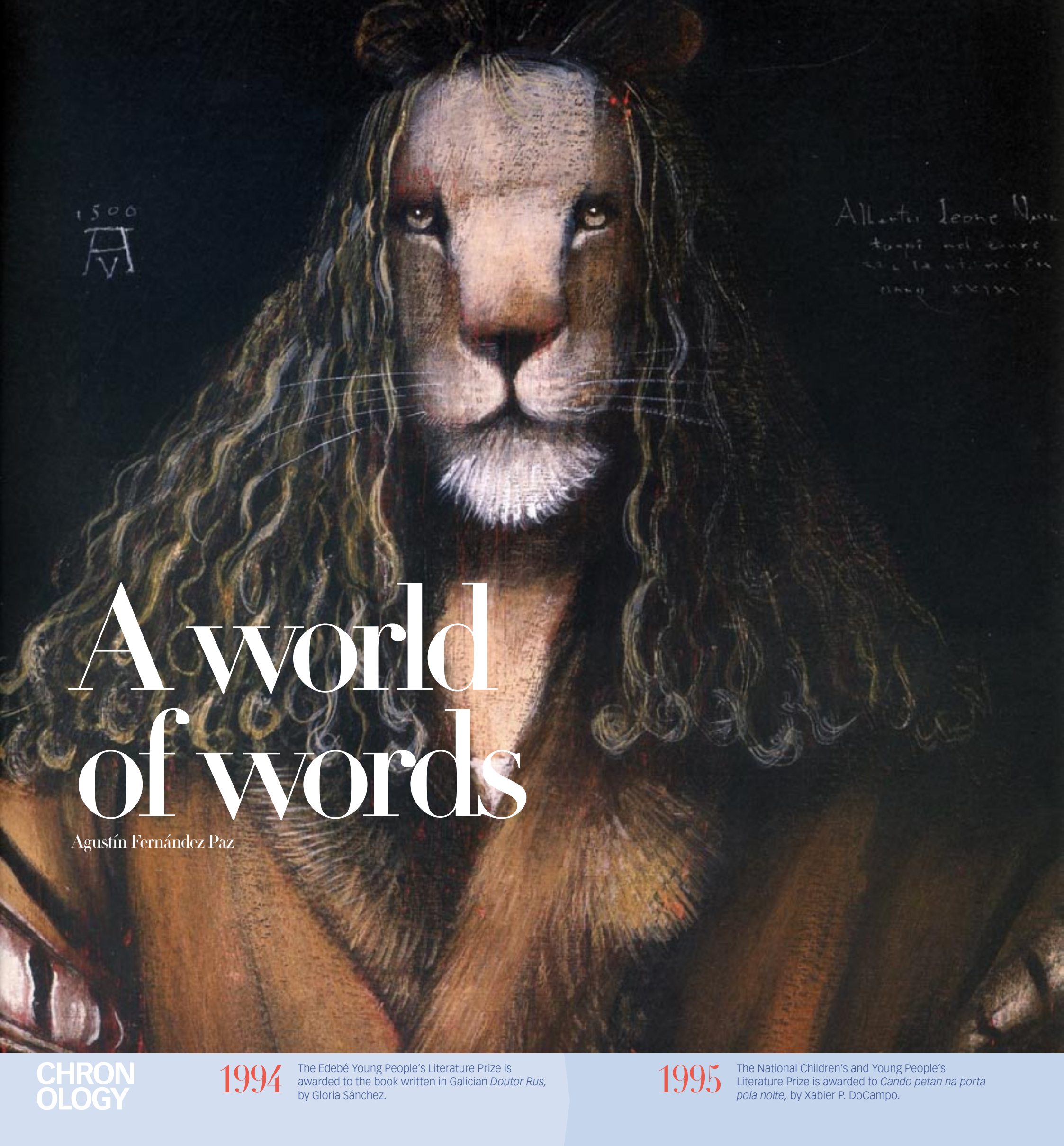
The view Kiko Dasilva



Galiciabooks 17

**1994** Celebration of the first International Children's and Young People's Book Fair in Chantada (Lugo).

**1994** The book of poems *Fafaraios*, by Gloria Sánchez, and the Galician translation of *A bolsa amarela*, by Lygia Bojunga, translated by Xosé M. García Álvarez, form part of the Honour List of the IBBY.



1500  
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All'arte Leone Nino  
Anni nel cuore  
e la notte in  
DADO XXIX

# A world of words

Agustín Fernández Paz

**CHRON  
OLOGY**

**1994** The Edebé Young People's Literature Prize is awarded to the book written in Galician *Doutor Rus*, by Gloria Sánchez.

**1995** The National Children's and Young People's Literature Prize is awarded to *Cando petan na porta pola noite*, by Xabier P. DoCampo.

The desire for the Galician language, the language of the Galicians, to exist within the context of the world's different cultures is constructed out of diversity, of different ways of comprehending the world, words and stories, and respect for others. With children's literature serving to channel awareness.

When she was a child, my daughter had a globe of the world in her bedroom with a lamp inside it, which lit up as if some inner sun made it shine in the darkness. We both used to enjoy making imaginary journeys and having the most fascinating adventures in that vast jigsaw of countries and cultures, where all of the different parts, both great and small, were essential in conforming the beauty of the whole.

Today, when I think back to the games we played before bedtime, I also remember that globe and its mosaic of different colours, and think that its variety would have been far greater if instead of showing the political frontiers of the countries, it had shown the far greater cultural diversity the world offers us. Because diversity is the facet that best serves to characterise the different manifestations of mankind: a mosaic of ethnic groups, of cultures, religions, languages and points of view. A plurality that is our greatest wealth and which, together with biological diversity, is a guarantee of a world that is fairer and more compassionate.

It is perhaps for this reason that when I think about the fascinating variety of languages, the different words that people use to name the world around them, that I once again feel the amazement I felt as a child, when I read the pages of any book I could lay my hands upon, in the conviction that through its pages I would be able to discover the whole wide world. Because words are the everyday miracles that make us human. Through them we learn the names of things, express our feelings, recognise ourselves as citizens of the world, and breathe life into our imagination without frontiers. Words, marvelous words: through them we may overcome time and space, enter into a dialogue with people from other periods, or who live in far-distant lands. For this reason we know that books contain a powerful magic in their pages, allowing us to discover the lives and dreams of people who express themselves in so many different languages.

Galicia, my homeland, has always aimed to form a part of the rich tapestry of cultural diversity that characterises the modern world. Ours is an ancient language, full of vitality

and with a universal vocation; ours is an Atlantic culture, one that has remained firmly in contact with its roots, and which opens its arms with expectation towards all points of the compass. Galicia, a land of a thousand rivers and deep forests inhabited by mythical creatures, a land that contributed towards the union of Europe through the Way of St. James and whose emigrants were the founding fathers of many Latin American countries, has a children's and young people's literature that strives on a daily basis to achieve the miracle of being both local and universal. A literature that without any shadow of a doubt is the best gateway to discovering Galician culture and all the riches it holds.

There was a time when it made sense to refer to 'central' and 'peripheral' cultures. But today, with the presence of the Internet and an increasingly global planet, we know that this is no longer the case. A creator always works from the centre of the world, if they decide that should be the case. Culture is never peripheral; it always has a universal vocation. From Galicia, our wish is that our creations – the best thing we can offer, as they are a reflection of our presence in the world – reach out to all other cultures, in an enriching exchange that

may be the seed of a world of greater solidarity and justice that so many of us strive for, a world we dream of for the future of children from all over our planet, a world we attempt to make a reality in the children's and young people's books we create. Because utopias must first be dreamed, if one day we wish to see them become reality.

On summer nights I love to lie in the grass and gaze up at the sky above me. I know that the stars twinkling in the heavens are the same the ancients saw, the same stars that will cause the generations of the coming centuries to also gaze up in wonder. A friendly sky, one that leads me to think about the galaxy of words and books shared by all mankind, and to feel all of the diversity and similarities we share as the inhabitants of this planet. An old planet that is our home, huddled beneath the great eiderdown that fills with stars at night, enveloping one and all.



Bottom: *Nos xardíns* (Xunta de Galicia, 1994), by Manuel Ullá



# Four classics and a novelty

Montse Pena Presas

CHRON  
OLOGY

1996

*Cando petan na porta pola noite* by Xabier P. DoCampo is included in the Honour List of the IBBY, and one year later is included in the White Ravens at the International Youth Library in Munich.

1998

The international "Pier Paolo Vergerio" Prize from the University of Padova is awarded to the book of poems *Na fogueira dos versos*, by Antonio García Teijeiro, which is also included in the Honour List of the IBBY.



**Left:** Covers of *Das cousas de Ramón Lamote* (SM, 1986), and *Das novas cousas de Ramón Lamote* (Galaxia, 2008) by Paco Martín, author of the adventures of Ramón Lamote, one of the most popular characters in the Galician children's literature.

**Bottom:** From *Das novas cousas de Ramón Lamote* (Galaxia, 2008), by Xoán Balboa.

The history of children's literature in Galicia is based on a series of landmarks: books, authors and moments that have marked the evolution of this leading sector of Galician culture. A sector which in recent years is reaching out to readers in other countries, thanks to its ability to galvanize young and not-so-young readers alike. Because children's literature is open to one and all.

The history of Galician children's literature began to take shape in last quarter of the twentieth century, a moment in time that bore witness to a diversification of themes, the accumulation of expressive resources, the rise of new authors and the consolidation of a series of symbols that would represent it in the future. Children born in Galicia in the early 1980's were rewarded with writing that until that time had only appeared sporadically, without the presence of a truly consolidated group of writers. The first surprise for us as readers surfaced in 1985: in that year, Paco Martín presented us with a figure who is still with us to this day, a figure immediately capable of making us smile. Ramón Lamote, a teacher of *Chairego* (a peculiar dialect of the Galician language), and an illustrator of dreams on request, brought us all of the wonders of a potion combining reality and imagination, seasoned with absurdity and irony, features that are essential in offering a tongue in cheek vision of any society, especially one's own. This flight of fancy, suffused with a rib-

ald humour, taught us that any day, if we really wished hard enough, we would be able to watch a race between clouds. And yet, the book *Das cousas de Ramón Lamote* signified even more: it represented one

of the first books specifically written for teenagers, leading to our literature not only winning the *Barco de Vapor* Award in 1984, but also the National Children's and Young People's Literature Prize in 1986. Martín continued to write, but we, his readers, waited for Lamote to appear once more. In 2008 our wishes have been answered. Equally imaginative, but more critical with those who hold positions of power and turn culture into a commodity, *Das novas cousas de Ramón Lamote* returns to remind us of the simple

pleasures of being loveable rogues, with Lamote (revealed as a truly alter ego of his creator) teaching the children of the twenty-first century to believe in simplicity, poetry and wonder, against the backdrop of the high-tech, impersonal society in which they live.

The collective memory of these young readers from the 1980's was further enriched with other influential books from the period, such as *O misterio das badaladas* (1986) by Xabier P. Docampo or *Contos*



**1998** The illustrator Lázaro Enríquez is selected for the *Fiera Internazionale dei Libri per Ragazzi* exhibition in Bologna.

**1998** The novel *¡Prohibido casar, papá!*, by Fina Casalderrey is selected for the White Ravens of the National Youth Library in Munich.



Agustín Fernández Paz

*por palabras* (1991) by Agustín Fernández Paz. The first, featuring a group of children who become entangled in a mystery, gave its readers the opportunity to help in solving its riddles, presenting us for the first time with the passion for reading brought about by adventure and intrigue expressed in words. Some time later, the use and misuse of popular tradition in the book *Cando petan na porta pola noite*, in the style of other Galician authors such as Fole and Cunqueiro, led to its author receiving the National Children's and Young People's Literature Prize in 1995. Docampo, a self-declared activist in the world of literature, continues to teach us to this day that "the most sublime act of love is to tell a story", or indeed helping a story to be told, through other

activities that go beyond his work as a writer.

In the case of *Contos por palabras*, we learned to use our imagination to dream of new possibilities. A series of surprising and amusing tales emerge from the classified advertisements in a newspaper, in a book serving as an introduction for one of the most widely read Galician writers, outstanding for its originality. At this time Fernández Paz was confirmed as a prolific and highly talented writer, capable of focusing on the importance of the different stories contained in his work, with great intensity and significance. A perfect example of his style is *Corredores de sombra* (2006), a novel on the importance of discovering our family history, of overcoming pacts of silence and



Paco Martín



Fina Casalderrey

the need for self-discovery, against the backdrop of the Spanish Civil War. Told with a restrained intensity, replete with a love for books and reading, the novel is a battle

cry for tolerance and comprehension, for which Fernández Paz was on the verge of receiving the well-deserved National Prize that has so far avoided him.

Next page: From *Piratas, bruxas e outros amigos* (Galaxia, 2007), by Federico Fernández

Another character who won the hearts and minds of young readers in the 1980's was *Máquina*, a puppy dreamt up by Fina Casallerrey. Through him, the authoress offered us the first important display of the two main features of her writing: a tenderness and incisive sensitivity, in this case exploring the importance that pets have in the life of a child. *Dúas bágoas por Máquina* (1992) was a work immediately recognised by all of us who have enjoyed watching a pet grow up together with us. If Ramón Lamote represented a breath of fresh air, irreverence in some cases, and always the power of fantasy, then *Máquina* represented nostalgia and sincere emotion, brought about through daily life full of different sensations. The writings of Casallerrey, of a simplicity suffused with feelings, would receive their just reward with the National Children's and Young People's Literature Prize for *O misterio dos fillos de Lúa* (1995), once again a tale of puppies who disappear. Her delicate, humorous style returned in another excellent work, *A lagoa das nenas mudas* (2007). Amina Nwapa, a Nigerian girl recently arrived in Galicia, may well represent a new symbol for the future: an example of the different races who sit side by side in the classroom, through whom the reader enters a world of decoding non-verbal language, the importance of our external appearance, and the feelings of someone

who is only able to guide herself through gestures. At no stage does the tale become watery-eyed, and shows that at times reality may be cruel.

Something we missed as the first readers of children's literature in Galician was the illustrated album. Our books were humble editions, the result of a sector that was starting out with a lack of professional illustrators. However, the gradual development of literature in the region (and as a result, its publishing sector) would lead to the rise of this format, midway between art and literature, in the 1990's. Its presence was consolidated after a Galician album was awarded the National Illustration Prize for the first time in 1999: *O coelliño branco* by Xosé Ballesteros, with illustrations by Óscar Villán. The prize would return to Galicia in subsequent years, for books by Federico Fernández (in 2002) or Antón Santos (in 2004). It seems that the illustrated album is the key to the future for our children's and young people's literature, seen in the constant growth of production and a number of authors specialising in this format (such as Marisa Núñez or Eva Mejuto).

Children's and young people's literature in Galicia, more than twenty years after its consolidation and after three generations of readers, is living a particularly sweet mo-



ment: with well-established, classic writers who continue to create without ceasing to update their work, with recognisable symbols to help face all the future holds, and with genres that are being

developed to their fullest extent, it has laid the firm foundations of a collective 'imaginarium' that is very much its own. Now the main challenge is to expand beyond our own frontiers.

1999

Lazarillo Prize for the novel *A banda sen futuro*, by Marilar Aleixandre.

2000

Lazarillo Prize for the novel *Chinto e Tom*, by Gloria Sánchez.



# An international literature

Manuel Rodríguez

CHRON  
OLOGY

**2001** Lazarillo Prize for the book of poems *Amar e outros verbos*, by Ana María Fernández.

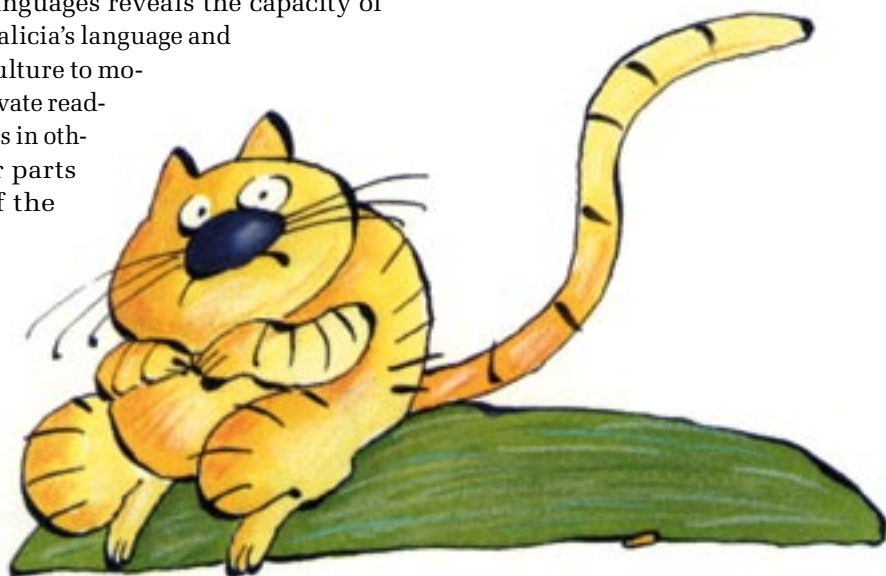
**2001** National Illustration Prize for Federico Fernández for his illustrations for the book *Onde perdeu Lúa a risa?*



Left-bottom: *O gato marelo* (Fadamorgana #5, 2000), by Xan López Domínguez

Children's and young people's literature in Galicia has stabilized its situation in little more than twenty-five years. Over this short period of time, books for children written in Galician have managed to forge a path within the region's culture that has made it a model to be followed, and a true spearhead of creativity in our language.

Authors, illustrators, publishers, academics and institutions have all combined their efforts to ensure that books created for children can provide an interesting and enriching offer for readers in Galicia. Furthermore, one of the most outstanding achievements has been the increasingly international dimension of children's and young people's literature written in Galician, demonstrating that these books are not only of interest within our frontiers. The process of translating books into other languages reveals the capacity of Galicia's language and culture to motivate readers in other parts of the



world. Quality and the ability to surprise seem to be the key factors in allowing our literature to expand beyond our frontiers and open up new publishing markets. However, this has not been an easy process. The prevalent cultural processes at international level and the difficulty of gaining access to certain markets, such as the English-speaking world, not only for works in Galician but in other languages, turn these initiatives into titanic struggles that may only be overcome by tenacity and excellence.

### Prizes as a 'visiting card'

One of the ways that has ensured the international presence of children's and young people's literature in Galician has been the number of prizes and awards received at international competitions over the years by books and authors from our region. Apart from major prizes awarded in Spain, making it possible to translate Galician books into Castilian, Catalan and Basque, books written in Galician have met with repeated success in selections as prestigious as the Honour List of the IBBY – which now includes books by authors such as Paco Martín, María Victoria Moreno, Xabier P. Docampo, Fina Casalderrey, Agustín Fernández Paz, Gloria Sánchez,

Antonio García Teijeiro and Miguel Vázquez Freire – or the 'White Ravens' awarded by the International Youth Library in Munich. Galicia's regional



Gloria Sánchez



Miguel Vázquez Freire

government, the *Xunta de Galicia*, has worked to ensure the presence of Galician books in this major international library, which even before the arrival of this institutional

2004 Lazarillo Prize for the play *A noite da raíña Berenguela*, by Neira Cruz.

2004 The illustrated album *Avós*, by Chema Heras and Rosa Asuna, published by Kalandraka, forms part of "The Best" list at the Book Bank in Venezuela.



Helena Villar Janeiro



María Victoria Moreno

support included important works by Helena Villar Janeiro, Ánxela Gracián, Marilar Aleixandre, Ana María Fernández, and the authors already mentioned above.

Another equally important step, has been the recognition of Galician children's and young people's literature from other countries. This is the case with the Pier Paolo Vergerio International Prize from the University of Padua, awarded to the book of poems *Na fogueira dos versos*, by Antonio García Teijeiro, or the inclusion in "The Best" list of Venezuela's Book Bank of the picture book *Avós*, by Chema Heras, and the novel *O armiño dorme*, considered by the Venezuelan institution as one of the ten best children's books in the world in 2006.

Special mention is also due to the awards received by Galician illustrators at the Bologna Book Fair or in the Bratislava Biennial. Xan López Domínguez, Lázaro Enríquez and David Pintor have all had work selected for these prestigious awards.

Turning to the world of publishing, in their short lifespan both Kalandraka and OQO Editora have drawn the attention of the trade fairs in Leipzig and Bologna, receiving special mentions and prizes for the best quality of publishing in recent editions.

### Publishers without frontiers

From the outset, both Kalandraka and OQO have focused firmly on having an international presence as publishers. Even before starting work as a publisher, Kalandraka was present at the trade fair in Bologna in 1999, announcing its creation at the stand of the *Xunta de Galicia*. Since then, the publishing house from Pontevedra has been a regular visitor to the fair in Italy, as well as others in Frankfurt, Guadalajara, Spain or Japan. The same path has been followed in recent years by the OQO Editora, which saw its efforts in promoting Galician literature abroad rewarded by a special mention at the Bologna fair in 2007 for its excellent *Gran libro dos retratos de animais*. Other Galician publishers have taken the step of including visits to international events as an obligatory date in their agendas.

Naturally, Galician publishers have not limited their work to visiting international events: a result of this policy has been to publish books in numerous languages, in collaboration with other publishers or by opening branches in other countries. This is the case of Kalandraka, which publishes its books in all of the languages spoken in Spain, Portuguese and English, mainly aimed at readers in the USA. OQO Editora has taken similar steps, working in collaboration with an Italian publisher to edit

**Right:** Some Galician books with international prizes: Covers of *Contos por palabras* (Xerais, 1991) by Agustín Fernández Paz, Lazarillo Prize and IBBY Honour List; *O armiño dorme* (Galaxia, 2002) by Neira Cruz, White Ravens List and "The Best in 2006" of Banco del Libro from Venezuela; *Cando petan na porta pola noite* (Xerais, 1994) by Xabier P. Docampo, National Prize of Children's Literature and White Ravens List; and *Na fogueira dos versos* (Xerais, 1996) by A. García Teijeiro, IBBY Honour List and Pier Paolo Vergerio Prize.



most of its picture books. In turn, Editorial Galaxia has made similar efforts through its collaboration with Editores Asociados, a consortium of publishing houses producing books in Catalan, Asturian, Basque, Aragonese and Galician.

In recent years, Asia has also shown a great enthusiasm for books by Galician authors such as Agustín Fernández Paz, Gloria Sánchez, Kiko Dasilva and Neira Cruz, who have had their work published in Japanese, Chinese and Korean.

### Galicia in the international institutions of children's and young people's literature

Finally, special mention should be made of the growing presence of Galicia and Galicians in international institutions connected with the promotion and development of children's and young people's literature. From 2000 to 2004, the executive committee of the IBBY, the International Board on Books for Young People, had a Galician representative, Xosé A. Neira Cruz, who was also the chairman of the international jury for the IBBY Asahi Reading Promotion Prize for the period 2002-2004.

The crowning moment of this process will arrive in 2010, when the capital city of Galicia, Santiago de Compostela, will become the inter-

national capital of children's and young people's literature with the organisation of the thirty-second International Congress of the IBBY. This will be an excellent opportunity for Galician children's and young people's literature to definitively consolidate its international presence and vocation.

### One of the best children's book's Saloons

From nine years ago, Pontevedra opens its *Salón do Libro Infantil e Xuvenil* to writers, illustrators, librarians, book-sellers, publishers, teachers and, of course, children from Galicia but also arriving from other parts. For a month, the Palace of Culture in Pontevedra shows its magnificence as a special place for fantasy and literacy. Tales, music, theatre, cinema, conferences and workshops permit to connect the Galician children's literature with others. In 2008 the Sea was the general topic of the Saloon of Pontevedra, and a real sea of words builds a bridge between Galicia and other cultures, for example, Cuba, the guest country in this year, in correspondence with the presence of Galicia as guest culture in the Book Fair of Havana in last February. A net of enthusiasm, ideas and projects around children's books is growing up from Pontevedra each year for sowing the seeds of future international exchanges for Galicia, its culture and specially its children's literature.



IX Children's Books Saloon of Pontevedra's poster, with an illustration by Marta Álvarez

**2007** Special mention at the Young People's Book Fair in Bologna for OQO Editora for *Gran Libro dos Retratos de Animais* by Svejtlund Junakovic, which also receives First Prize for the Best Published Work from the Ministry of Culture.

**2008** The novel *A sombra descalza* by An Alfaya is included in the Honour List of the IBBY.

# Federico Fernández

## Books that stick to your retina

Domingos Ambroi



Federico Fernández forms a part of the latest generation of illustrators reaching out to the world from Galicia. In a short space of time, his personal way of interpreting the world has come to fill several books, achieving recognition as important as the National Illustration Prize from the Spanish Ministry of Culture, and above all, enchanting his readers. Readers of all ages, who thanks to his illustrations, are able to enter a world painted in the colour of dreams.

**You're a part of the new wave of Galician illustrators. What do you think of the level of illustration in Galicia today?**

I think we can consider ourselves a region with a great deal of potential for the future, considering the results we've obtained, although support for illustrators through publishers and public bodies is essential.

**What do you aim to offer through your illustrations?**

A pleasant, optimistic view of things. There are already too many horrible things going on in the world. Someone has to add a splash of colour and optimism; I hope that



these books end up stuck to the retinas of our new generations, so that some of them think that the world should be more like what we see in these books.

**In the last decades, picture books from Galicia have experienced an undeniable boom. How do you see the situation with publishing in this sector?**

I think it's essential for publishers and illustrators to work towards a common goal, to offer a high-quality product for exportation, something that can only be achieved by taking risks and having confidence in our work.

**What do you think Galician illustration can offer to the world?**

As much as the illustration that reaches us from the rest of the world, all we have to do is make ourselves visible, and then for the world to make up its mind.

**Illustrating an album is a special challenge for an illustrator. What does it mean for you?**

It's an introspective process, where you pull out images you thought you'd forgotten, like when you see your parents' village, or all of the smells that take you back to when you were a child.

**What does young people's literature offer you as an artist, in terms of choosing it as a support for your work?**

It's a type of medium that accepts the images I think have always accompanied me. I consider illustration as being something freer, without the confines that affect painting.

### His work

#### Latest joint exhibitions

50 Spanish Illustrators. Organised by the "Teatro Cultural Association". Held in several Italian cities: Rome, Florence, Bolzano, between 2005-2006. • *Miradas en torno al Quijote*. Organised by the Ministry of Culture. Bologna (Italy). 2005. • *Plantando libros*. Illustrators' Association. Pazo da cultura. Pontevedra. 2006. • *Dialogo dende o invisible*. Painters' Group in the Galician Parliament. Santiago de Compostela. 2006. • Sargadelos Gallery. Illustrators from Kalandraka publishers. Santiago.

2006. • *Recien pintado*. Four Galician painters in Madrid. Sala del Distrito del Retiro. Madrid. 2006. • Autumn Sala Prize. Coruña. 2006/07. • Lalín Biennial 2007. • Il "El Corte Inglés" Young Galician Art Awards 2007. • Bachelos Gallery. Work on Paper. 2007.

#### Individual exhibitions

*Dualidades*. Hispano 20 Gallery. Santiago. 1995. • *Monotipos*. Cuarta Pared Gallery. Madrid. 1995. • *La edad del armario*. Bachelos Gallery. Vigo. 1997. • *Estampados*

*Imposibles*. Visual Labora Gallery. Vigo. 2001. • *Máscaras e monstruo*. Lembranza Sargadelos Gallery. O Grove. 2002. • *Tecnología arcaica*. Lembranza Sargadelos Gallery. 2006. • *Tecnología arcaica*. La Iberoamericana. Madrid. 2007.

#### Prizes

2nd "Comarcas do Sar" Painting Prize. 1999. • VII Isaac Díaz Pardo Awards. A Coruña. 2001. • 3rd Painting Prize. Galician Awards from the Xunta. 2001. • 1st National Illustration Prize awarded

by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport. 2002. • Award for Excellence given by the Society for News Design (SND) for collaborations with the "La Voz de Galicia" newspaper (cover of the edition dedicated to police novels). 2004.

#### Books published

• *¿Onde perdeu Lúa a risa?* Ed. Kalandraka. 2001. 1st National Illustration Prize. • *As aventuras de Pinocchio*. Ed. Xerais. 2002. • *Alicia no país das maravillas*. Ed. Xerais. 2002. • *A pantofole de canter-*

*ville*. Ed. Xerais. 2002. • *Chivos Chivóns*. Ed. Kalandraka. 2003. • *A illa do tesouro*. Ed. Xerais. 2003. • *A chamada da selva*. Ed. Xerais. 2003. • *El mundo de papá*. Ed. Edelvives. 2004. • *Polo mar van as sardiñas*. Ed. Galaxia. 2004. • *Contos de charlatans, grumetes, botas e fendas*. Lagarto Pintado. 2005. • *Bonifacio foi a palacio*. Ed. Edelvives. 2005. • *Chivos chivones*. Ed. Kalandraka-Bata. Version for autistic children. 2005. • *Camión solitario*. Ed. Galaxia. 2006. • *Piratas, bruxas e outros amigos*. Ed. Galaxia. 2007.



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