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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WINNERS OF THE 2024 HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARD

President of the 2024 IBBY Hans Christian Andersen Award Jury, Liz Page is very pleased to announce the winners of the 2024 Hans Christian Andersen Award. The Andersen Award is sponsored by Nami Island Arts & Education Inc. IBBY expresses its deep appreciation for Nami's generous support of this prestigious award.

The IBBY Hans Christian Andersen Award is the highest international distinction given to authors and illustrators of children's books. Given every other year by IBBY, the Hans Christian Andersen Awards recognize lifelong achievement and are given to an author and an illustrator whose works have made an important and lasting contribution to children's literature.

The criteria used to assess the nominations include the aesthetic and literary quality as well as the freshness and innovation of each candidate's work; the ability to see the child's point of view and to stretch their curiosity; the authentic diversity of expression; and, the continuing relevance of the works to children and young people. The Jury's assessment is based on each nominee's entire body of work.

Fifty-nine candidates from 33 countries were nominated for the 2024 IBBY Hans Christian Andersen Award by the IBBY Sections. After in-depth discussions related to the criteria, the international jury carefully and thoroughly assessed each one of these highly qualified candidates. The shortlist of six authors and six illustrators was announced in January this year.

The 2024 winners are:

Heinz Janisch from Austria for Writing and **Sydney Smith** from Canada for Illustration.

2024 Author Winner Heinz Janisch

Heinz Janisch maintains that "nothing is too small for literature". He was born in 1960 in Burgenland not far from the Hungarian border and now lives in Vienna. According to the Jury, Janisch is a master of the short-form story that leaves room for the readers' imagination. Although many of his works are humorous, even sometimes absurd, he has a philosophical element to his writing that often makes his books profound. His simple texts are meaningful, and the saying "less is more" can be applied to the 2024 author winner. His writing is universal, and it appeals to children and young people everywhere. Additionally, his contribution to literature is enormous, not only through his writing, but also by his many readings, workshops on literary and creative writing for children and adults, including creative workshops for disabled young artists. Janisch's writing is nuanced with many layers, which makes it universal, as well as uplifting.

2024 Illustrator Winner Sydney Smith

In an interview with Prof. Deirdre Baker in April 2022, Sydney Smith said “listening ... is more in line with how I approach stories” when he is illustrating the texts of others and as well as illustrating his own stories. Smith was born in 1980 in rural Nova Scotia and has now returned to the province with his family after living for several years in Toronto. The jury noted that Smith’s work is like a visual narrative or a short musical memory, which echoes his statement that listening is how he approaches stories. He uses seemingly simple techniques to tell the story—really a result of intense practice. His modest but authentic characters are sympathetic as well as gentle. He uses colour to introduce nature, smells and drama to each book. The saying “less is more” can also be applied to every one of his works as he strips away the superfluous to express emotions. Smith is a truly universal artist.

We also celebrate the 2024 Finalists:

Authors:

Marina Colasanti from Brazil

Lee Geum-yi from the Republic of Korea

Bart Moeyaert from Belgium

Timo Parvela from Finland

Edward van de Vendel
from the Netherlands.

Illustrators:

Cai Gao from China

Iwona Chmielewska from Poland

Nelson Cruz from Brazil

Elena Odriozola from Spain

Paloma Valdivia from Chile.

The ten-member 2024 Hans Christian Andersen Award Jury comprised the following experts: Evelyn Arizpe (Mexico/UK), Brenda Dales (USA), Sabine Fuchs (Austria), Diana Laura Kovach (Argentina), Shereen Kreidieh (Lebanon), Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer (Germany), Jaana Pesonen (Finland), Tan Fengxia (China), Pavle Učakar (Slovenia) and Morgane Vasta (France). The Jury President Liz Page led the Jury and Carolina Ballester was the Jury Secretary.

Profiles of all the 2024 Hans Christian Andersen Award nominees can be found in the special Andersen Award issue of IBBY’s quarterly journal *Bookbird. A Journal of International Children’s Literature* (issue #61/4). In addition, profiles of the shortlisted candidates can be found on the [IBBY website](#).

About the International Board on Books for Young People – IBBY

The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), established in 1953, is a non-profit organization that represents an international network of people from all over the world who are committed to bringing books and children together.

Contact:

For more information, full biographies of the winners and information about IBBY go to www.ibby.org or write to Executive Director Carolina Ballester at carolina.ballester@ibby.org