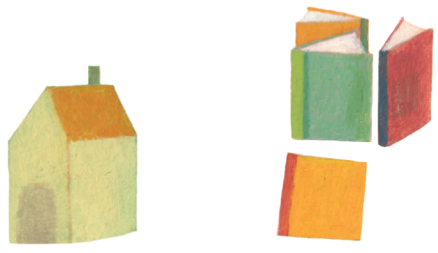
INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

IBBY-Netherlands is the Dutch section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). This international organisation was founded in 1953 by the German journalist Jella Lepman and aims to introduce children all over the world to high-quality books, based on the idea that books can build bridges between people and cultures.

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BOOK DAY

Since 1967, International Children's Book Day (ICBD) has been celebrated worldwide on or around 2 April, the date of Hans Christian Andersen's birthday. This special day was established by IBBY to promote the love of reading and to inspire people around the world to celebrate children's books.

Each year, a different national section of IBBY is given the opportunity to be the sponsor of ICBD. The section chooses a theme and invites a prominent author from the host country to write a message to the children of the world and a well-known illustrator to design a poster



ICBD 2025

In 2025, the day is sponsored by IBBY-Netherlands and the poster is made by two Dutch creators of children's books. The theme of the day is: The freedom of imagination, and the motto is the last sentence of the poem 'The Language of Pictures': 'Make pictures for my poem, and please feel free:
these words belong to you even though they came from me.'

The poem comes from the illustrated poetry collection Alle wensen van de wereld (2021) by Rian Visser and illustrator Janneke Ipenburg. This book was awarded a Zilveren Griffel in the Netherlands and the Gouden Poëziemedaille (Gold Poetry Medal) in Belgium.

Rian Visser (b. 1966) is a Dutch children's book writer and poet. She writes funny and exciting books that are a perfect match for children's interests. Together with the illustrator Janneke Ipenburg, she has created the poetry collections *Alle wensen van de wereld* (2021) and *Het is een zachte dag vandaag* (2024). In 2022, Rian Visser won a Zilveren Griffel and the Gouden Poëziemedaille (Gold Poetry Medal).

Rian Visser is very active in education. She designs digital lessons about creative writing and reading promotion, which teachers can use for free. From 2024 to 2026, she has officially been appointed Dutch Children's Laureate.

www.rianvisser.nl



Janneke Ipenburg (b. 1979) is a Dutch illustrator of children's books. She has made two poetry collections with Rian Visser, including *Het is een zachte dag vandaag* (2024). As an author/illustrator, she created the picture book *Voor altijd bij jou* (2023), a story about being connected in spite of an immeasurable distance.

In addition to her work as an illustrator, Janneke has worked on a number of animation films, and she is currently working as a character designer on a large Chinese stop-motion animation. In 2023, Janneke was on the longlist of the World Illustration Awards.

www.jannekeipenburg.com



iBbY INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BOOK DAY 2025



THE FREEDOM OF IMAGINATION

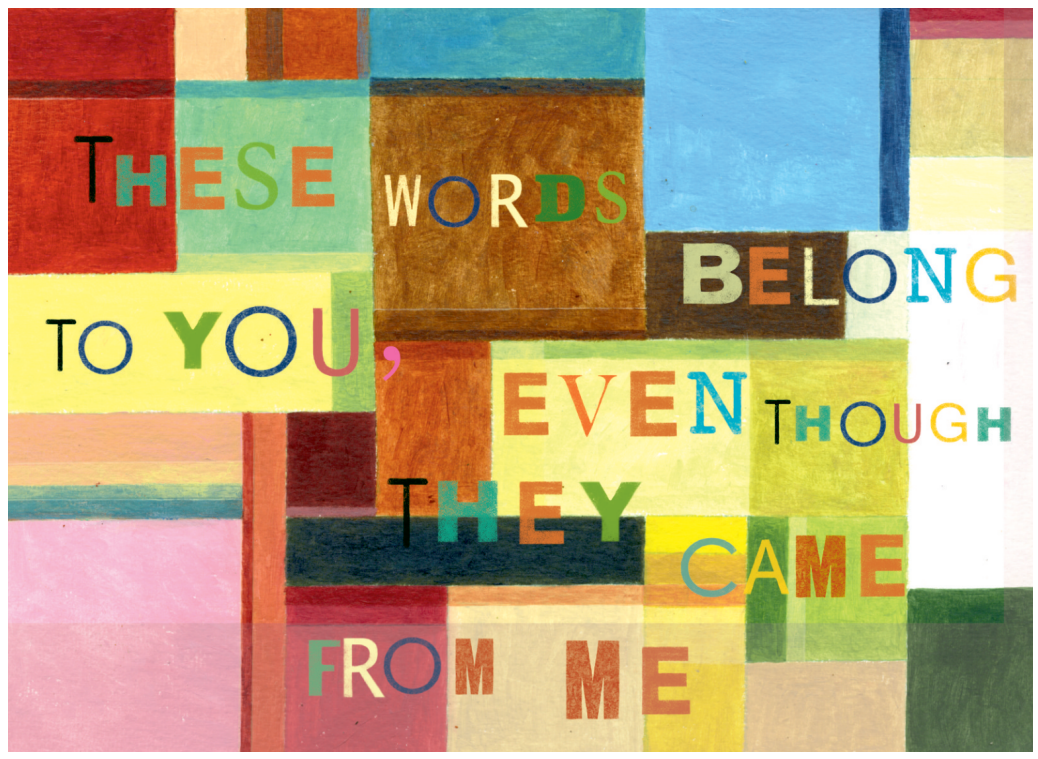
In high-quality children's books, the reader's imagination is kindled and developed. These books help children to explore their imagination, to develop their creativity and to see the world in a new way. Good books invite readers to interpret the words for themselves, making the story their own.

You can download lesson suggestions (in English) based on the theme for three different age groups (ages 4–6, 6–9, and 9–14) here: www.ibby-nederland.nl/icbd2025.

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

Make a drawing, painting or some other kind of art based on the poem 'The Language of Pictures'. Then take a photograph of your art and (optionally) a photograph of yourself with your artwork and email it to your national IBBY section or directly to IBBY-Netherlands: ibby.secretariaat@gmail.com.

All the children around the world who are taking part in International Children's Book Day are invited to join in! We will put all the entries on our website and select the winners, who will be rewarded with a package of books for their school. This virtual exhibition is our way of celebrating the freedom of imagination.



English translation Laura Watkinson

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Beeldtaal

Kun je iets tekenen
bij woorden,
bij de dingen die ik zeg?

Teken dan
een gat in de dag,
kou,
wind,
een brok in de keel
of dikke pech,

teken een kuch,
een zucht,
de geur van vers brood,
de tijd,
een ogenblik,
het begin of het eind
van een plan,

teken de plek waar ooit,
de plek waar nooit,
de plek waar straks
iets zal gebeuren,

teken de pijn van een duw,
de smaak van zee.

Er is zoveel
wat ik wil zien,
zoals liefde,
later,
ooit en misschien.

Maak beelden
bij mijn gedicht,
maar voel je vrij:
deze woorden
zijn van jou
ook al kwamen ze uit mij.

Rian Visser

Byldtaal

Kinsto wat tekenje
by wurden,
by de dingen dy't ik sis?

Tekenje dan
in gat yn 'e dei,
kjeld,
wyn,
in brok yn 'e kiel
of dikke pech,

tekenje in kuch,
in sucht,
de rook fan farske bôle,
de tiid,
in momint,
it begjin of de ein
fan in plan,

tekenje it plak dêr't ea,
it plak dêr't nea,
it plak dêr't aanst,
wat barre sil,

tekenje de pine fan in triuw,
de smaak fan see.

Der is safolle
wat ik sjen wol,
lykas leafde,
letter,
ea en miskien.

Meitsje bylden
by myn gedicht,
mar fiel dy frij:
dizze wurden
binne fan dy
ek al kamen se út my.

Rian Visser
translation Tialda Hoogeveen



The Language of Pictures

Can you draw pictures
for the words,
for the things I say?

Then draw
part of the picture,
cold,
wind,
a lump in your throat
or tough luck,

draw a cough,
a sigh,
the scent of fresh bread,
time,
a moment,
the beginning or the end
of a plan,

draw the place wherever,
the place where never,
the place where soon
something is going to happen,

draw the pain of a push,
the taste of the sea.

There is so much
that I want to see,
like love,
one day,
and maybe for me.

Make pictures
for my poem,
and please feel free:
these words
belong to you
even though they came from me.

Rian Visser
translation Laura Watkinson

Langue dessinée

Pourrais-tu dessiner
les mots,
les choses que je te dis ?

Alors dessine
un courant d'air,
le froid,
le vent,
une gorge nouée
ou la faute à pas de chance,

dessine un souffle court,
un soupir,
l'odeur du pain frais,
le temps,
un bref instant,
le début ou la fin
d'une idée,

dessine l'endroit où sans doute,
l'endroit où jamais,
l'endroit où bientôt
se passera quelque chose,

dessine la douleur
d'un croche-pied,
le goût de la mer.

Je voudrais voir tant de choses,
telles que l'amour,
plus tard,
un jour et peut-être.

Mets des images
sur mon poème,
vas-y, ne te gêne pas :
même s'ils viennent de moi,
tous ces mots
sont à toi.

Rian Visser
translation Emmanuelle Tardif

Lenguaje visual

¿Puedes dibujar algo
para las palabras,
para las cosas que digo?

Dibújale entonces
un agujero al día
dibuja un frío,
un viento,
un nudo en la garganta
o la mala suerte,

dibuja un carraspeo,
un suspiro,
el aroma a pan recién horneado,
el tiempo,
el instante,
el principio o el final
de un plan,

dibuja ese lugar en que algún día,
ese lugar en que nunca,
ese lugar en que luego
ocurrirá algo,

dibuja la punzada de un empujón,
el sabor del mar.

Hay tantas cosas
que quisiera ver,
el amor,
por ejemplo,
luego,
algún día y quizás.

Haz dibujos
para mi poema,
pero siéntete libre:
son tuyas
estas palabras
que han salido de mi boca.

Rian Visser
translation Micaela van Muylem

Bildsprache

Kannst du etwas malen
zu Worten,
den Dingen, die ich sage?

Dann male
ein Loch in den Tag,
Kälte,
Wind,
einen Kloß im Hals
oder fettes Pech,

male ein Hüsteln,
einen Seufzer,
den Duft von frischem Brot,
die Zeit,
einen Augenblick,
den Anfang oder das Ende
eines Plans,

male den Ort, an dem einst,
den Ort, an dem nie,
den Ort, an dem gleich
etwas stattfinden wird,

male den Schmerz eines Remplers,
den Meeresgeschmack.

So vieles ist,
wird sein,
kann geschehn,
wie später
die Liebe,
das möchte ich sehn.

Schaffe Bilder
zu meinem Gedicht,
und frei sollst du sein:
Diese Worte
kamen zwar aus mir,
doch jetzt sie sind dein.

Rian Visser
translation Rolf Erdorf

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