



# *Symposium for festival programmers a Transbook event*

04/03-05  
2017

ITALY  
Bologna Children's Book Fair



---

## 3 talks about digital stories for children

Artists Julie Stephen Chheng and Lucas Zanotto presented their respective projects; the final conference aimed at defining criteria to determine the quality of an app through several examples.

---

**Julie Stephen Chheng** author illustrator **FRANCE**  
**Lucas Zanotto** animator and founder of YATATOY **ITALY**  
**Ilaria Tontardini** member of Hamelin associazione culturale **ITALY**



## AUGMENTED REALITY

Julie Stephen Chheng looks beyond traditional book formats to push back limits using the singular aspects offered by paper and digital formats. A graduate of the École nationale supérieure des arts décoratifs in Paris, she began trying out new formats while working with designer Étienne Mineur, a master in the subject and the founder of Éditions Volumiques. Both discussed their projects at a master class hosted in Paris in June 2015.

Some of Julie Stephen Chheng's projects are exclusively developed on paper, like *Les Aventures d'un petit village* – the story develops as the reader unfolds the page, following eight different narrative threads and transforming the main initial image.

Julie Stephen Chheng quickly became an expert in the use of augmented reality, as her latest project, *Uramado*, shows: developed during an artist's residency programme at the Institut français in Japan with animator Thomas Pons, it uses pop-up, Japanese paper 'windows' which are animated using a special smartphone app.

## YATATOY APPLICATIONS

Lucas Zanotto, an animated advertising designer, didn't expect to develop apps for children one day. But playing with his daughter inspired him to create a tablet-based interactive alphabet around which children could draw to complete the animations and learn the letters of the alphabet.

Drawnimal is the first in a series of apps developed by the Yatato Studio, created by Lucas Zanotto together with a developer and sound designer. Together they created Miximal and Loopimal, and the studio is already at work developing their next apps, all of which have carefully crafted, minimalist graphics and sound: the music and animations are designed using 'analogue' equipment for a peaceful experience and a game with no winner or loser which cultivates creativity in kids.

Aware of the growing presence of digital media in children's lives, Lucas Zanotto believes that high-quality content should be developed to make time spent in front of a screen worthwhile, rather than fight against its ubiquity.

## HOW SHOULD CRITERIA FOR THE QUALITY OF AN INTERACTIVE STORY BE DEFINED?

Ilaria Tortadini, from the Hamelin association culturale, took a stab at this ambitious question by drawing a parallel with the birth of cinema: this medium attracted a lot of interest and experimentation, such as the work of the Lumière brothers, before it took shape. A similar process is under way with applications. First, a definition must be found for this new medium, and criteria established to determine quality, analyse its language, and identify what distinguishes it from other media.

To do so, Ilaria Tontardini presented a remarkable series of children's apps, including *Oh* by Anouck Boisrobert and Louis Rigaud, which invites the reader to create landscapes using basic shapes. The position of the tablet changes the composition of the landscape and the story that emerges. The app won the Bologna Digitale Ragazzi Award this year.

David Wiesner's app, *Spot*, uses a zoom effect based on graphic and narrative innovation which takes us from one microscopic world to another, without the win or lose aspect of a game. For more information, read the briefing paper of the master class he gave in Paris in October 2016 on [transbook.org](http://transbook.org)

Certain apps require temporal and spatial unity – the scene is sized to the screen, the overall work is minimalist, and narration is short and well-paced. One example are the applications developed by Italian publisher Mini Bombo. *Petting Zoo* by Christoph Niemann is another example of this type of narrative.

Interaction, which is involved in reading a traditional book, becomes the central theme of the application and takes increasingly original forms. Based on animation and sound design, this new media continues to combine pictures and stories, like traditional children's books. But the quality of an application, which is much more than a book in a different format, comes from using the unique features offered by tablets to create surprises and discoveries.



TRANSBOOK IS A EUROPEAN PROJECT  
FOR THE DIGITAL TRANSITION OF THE CHILDREN'S PUBLISHING SECTOR

[www.transbook.org](http://www.transbook.org)  
[contact@transbook.org](mailto:contact@transbook.org)

 [@TransbookEU](https://twitter.com/TransbookEU)

