

AFCC Wraps up 16th Edition with over 13,000 Attendees and Travels to South Korea and the Philippines!



Group Photo at Country of Focus (COF) Korea Night

SINGAPORE, 5 JUNE 2025 — The 16th Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC), organised by the Singapore Book Council (SBC), concluded on Sunday 25 May. It drew 13,097 attendees to discover more than 100 programmes across four days from 22 – 25 May. The programmes included conference sessions, free public events, and school programmes. AFCC Circle Philippines will take place from 14 – 16 August, and the Book Illustrators Gallery (BIG) exhibition will travel to Nami Island in October.

Across panel discussions, pitches, workshops, presentations, book launches, performances, a masterclass and a lecture, attendees found AFCC to be a “large, expansive festival” that was “insightful, intellectually stimulating, and practical”, featuring a “good balance of panels and workshops that were perfect for creatives, educators, parents, and kids.”

10 Children's Book Titles From Singapore and South Korea to Be Translated

As part of the Country of Focus (COF) Korea celebrations, 10 children's book titles – five from South Korea and five from Singapore – have been selected for the COF Co-Translation Book Project. They were announced on COF Korea Night on 23 May, and will be translated from Korean into English, and from English into Korean respectively. The books will be distributed free to children in each country.

The five selected Korean picture book titles include:

- *A Granny Diver*
by Oh Mikyeong, illustrated by Lee Myungae
- *Insect Hotel*
by Han Rakyoung, illustrated by Mouun
- *The Tiger Brothers' Birthday Feast*
by Kang Hyesook
- *Can I borrow a Dad?*
by Huh Jungyoon, illustrated by Jo Wonhee
- *What is happening?*
by Cha Eunsil

The five selected Singaporean picture book titles include:

- *Grandma's Tiger*
by Alan John, illustrated by Quek Hong Shin
- *Madam Jar Finds Kindness*
by Sophia Huang, illustrated by Evelyn Ghozalli
- *The Red String*
by Ah Guo (Lee Kow Fong) & Perry Ho, illustrated by Ah Guo
- *Curly*
by Rachelyn Gordon, illustrated by Cecillia Hidayat
- *The Uncle Downstairs*
by Lianne Ong, illustrated by Nicholas Liem

Refer to Annex B for more about the translated titles and the Co-Translation Book Project.

Book Illustrators Gallery (BIG) travels to Nami Island

The Book Illustrators Gallery (BIG) showcases the best picture book illustrations by illustrators and artists from Southeast Asia, those based in Asia and in the global Asian diaspora. For this edition, the Open Submissions category received more than 730 illustration submissions - the most number AFCC has received to date.

More than 340 illustrations by 84 artists from 24 countries have been selected to become part of the Open Submissions gallery. 43 illustrations by close to 20 Korean illustrators comprise the COF Korea gallery. This year's galleries revolve around themes such as family, emotions, imagination, courage, community, self-discovery, friendship, and nature.

During the COF Korea Night celebrations, the Singapore Book Council (SBC) held a ceremonial signing with Nami Island Arts & Education (NAE). This collaboration will see the showcase of BIG at the Nami Island International Children's Book Festival in October 2025, as well as the presentation of a Nami Concours exhibition at the 17th AFCC in May 2026.

AFCC Circle Philippines (14 – 16 August)

The 2nd edition of AFCC Circle Philippines, organised by SBC in collaboration with the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) Philippines and the Vibal Foundation, will take place in Baguio City. In line with the National Reading Program, it will offer a series of talks, workshops and public programmes by experts and practitioners in the field of early childhood education to provide insights on nurturing a lifelong love of reading in children.

Curious Cats, a co-creation book project between SBC and Vibal Foundation which was launched in Singapore during the AFCC 2025 Opening Night on 22 May, will also be launched in Baguio City during AFCC Circle Philippines. Written by Filipino author

Christine S. Bellen-Ang and illustrated by Singaporean illustrator Quek Hong Shin, *Curious Cats* will be distributed to children in the Philippines, Singapore, and other countries across Asia, promoting a love for literature.

William Phuan (Executive Director, Singapore Book Council) says: “The COF Korea showcase is indeed a celebration of both countries’ literary and cultural ties. Through the AFCC Circle initiative, we hope to further strengthen this special partnership with Korea – as well as previous COF Philippines – so that we would have more cross-cultural collaborations among our communities of writers, illustrators and translators.”

AFCC 2026 will take place from 21 – 24 May 2026.

Annex A: About Singapore Book Council and AFCC

Annex B: AFCC Co-Translation Book Project

Click [here](#) for photos.

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Annex A: About Singapore Book Council and AFCC

Established in 1968, the Singapore Book Council (SBC) has for over 50 years remained committed to developing and promoting a multicultural literary arts sector in Singapore. Our programmes focus on creative writing, translation, storytelling, reading and illustration. Our festivals, awards, workshops and school programmes have reached out to the various language and ethnic communities, boosting creativity, imagination, and empathy. SBC is a nonprofit and charity with IPC status.

Vision: The power of words, connecting peoples and cultures.

Mission: To champion Singapore's role in enhancing multicultural literary arts.

Our programmes run year-round, reaching out to many audiences. They include the annual Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC), a premier festival for children's books; the prestigious biennial Singapore Literature Prize, the top literary prize in the country; the Singapore Translation Symposium, which promotes literary translation; SBC Campus and Little Campus, our school outreach programmes; as well as our training and mentorship programmes that support and nurture new talents.

SBC is chaired by Ms Claire Chiang, Co-founder and Senior Vice-President, Banyan Group.

We are a recipient of the National Arts Council of Singapore's Major Company Grant for the period from 2022 to 2025. For more information, please visit <https://www.bookcouncil.sg/>



The Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC), organised by the Singapore Book Council, is the leading festival in Asia focusing on children's books and stories and young adult (YA) fiction. Targeted at writers, illustrators, translators, publishers, parents, educators and media producers, AFCC offers a series of exciting panel discussions, workshops, lectures, masterclasses, pitching sessions, networking events and public activities promoting the creation and appreciation of quality children's literature and YA with a focus on Asian themes.

Since its establishment in 2010, AFCC has grown to become a key literary event in the region, attracting many local and international speakers, as well as thousands of delegates and participants.

The 16th AFCC ran from 22-25 May, celebrating the theme "Discovery". For more information, please visit www.afcc.com.sg.



Annex B: AFCC Co-Translation Book Project

About AFCC Co-Translation Book Project

The Co-Translation Book project is a charitable purpose that started in 2021 as part of the AFCC Country of Focus (COF) partnership with Thailand (the Country of Focus for 2021). For the inaugural edition of the project, the Singapore Book Council (SBC) partnered with the Publishers and Booksellers Association of Thailand (PUBAT) to translate and print two Thai children's books into English, Likewise, two Singapore children's books were translated and published in Thai.

The translated books were launched at AFCC and subsequently distributed for free to non-profit and social organisations that run reading and literacy programmes for children in both Singapore and Thailand.

The project has since gone on to run with each new participating Country of Focus partner. With South Korea as AFCC's Country of Focus (COF) this year, SBC is collaborating with the Publication Industry Promotion Agency of Korea (KPIPA) to translate five picture books from each country. The books that are produced through this initiative will be distributed for free through reading initiatives, allowing children and parents in both countries to explore stories and characters from diverse cultures.

Full List of Titles for Co-Translation Book Project

Korean Titles

Title	Author	Book Introduction	About the Author/Illustrator
A Granny Diver (2020)	by Oh Mikyeong, illustrated by Lee Myungae	Writer Oh Mikyeong connects the story of Jeju Haenyeo (female divers) with the Irish seal folktale, creating a new narrative. To highlight the regional characteristics of Jeju, the character of the grandmother speaks in the Jeju dialect. Illustrator Lee Myungae depicts the Haenyeo in a realistic yet symbolic way, convincingly capturing the ever-changing Jeju sea with vibrant images. This brings to life the strong and loving lives of the grandmothers of Jeju, who have lived with the waves and winds throughout their lives.	<p>Oh Mikyeong</p> <p>Her works include the picture books "A Granny Diver", "I Am a Snail", the children's stories "Family In Adolescence", "Goodbye, My Grandpa", "The Dreaming Little Pig, Yole", "The Little Pig Yol in Love", "Poo War", "The Jikji Expedition", "Exchange Diary", and more, as well as the young adult novel "The Blue Breath".</p> <p>Lee Myungae</p> <p>Picture book author and illustrator. She has received the BIB Golden Plaque (2015), BIB Golden Apple Award (2021), Nami Concours Silver Award (2017), and the Special Prize at the Korea Picture Book Awards (2023).</p>
Insect Hotel (2024)	by Han Rakyong, illustrated by Mouun	Insect Hotel is a Korean picture book about insects spending the winter in an insect hotel, each in their own way. The insect hotel is a real space created by people to provide a safe habitat for insects and	<p>Han Rakyong</p> <p>Her books include 'Today Shop', 'I'm a Bread Points', 'After Christmas', etc.</p>

		educate citizens about ecology, which inspired the story. Starting from the hope that insects, cared for in a safe haven, would be reborn as shining beings, 'Insect Hotel' will bring hope into your daily life, just like the welcome arrival of spring.	Mouun An illustrator who depicts everyday moments through the lively rabbit brothers Isaac and Bori, the pet dog Mangdu, and adorable little forgs. Writtend and illustrated 'Collecting Heart Drops'.
The Tiger Brothers' Birthday Feast (2022)	by Kang Hyesook	This creative picture book reimagines the tigers from Korea's traditional folk paintings and tales as nine tiger brothers, weaving a new narrative from classic stories. What story unfolds when the tiger brothers gather on their birthday? With the witty concept by author Kang Hyesook, captivating illustrations, and a playful reinterpretation of tradition, this book won the Special Prize at the 2023 Korea Picture Book Award, becoming one of the representative picture books introducing Korean culture to the world.	Kang Hyesook A picture book author who creates her own kingdom through storytelling and illustration. She studied Digital Content Design in graduate school and received the Prix P'tits Momes, awarded by children in Geneva, Switzerland, for her debut book "Tail? Tail!" in 2010, as well as the Le Prix Nord Isere from libraries in northern France in 2011. Books she has written and illustrated include "The Sports Day of the Seven Colored Fairies", "Star World", and "The Sun on the Cart".
Can I borrow a Dad? (2021)	by Huh Jungyoon, illustrated	This picture book gently soothes the heart of longing after losing someone. It tells the story of siblings who overcome the grief and emptiness of losing their beloved father. The beautiful moments	Huh Jungyoon A picture book author, creativity education planner, and university professor. Her picture book 'The Transparent Tree' was selected for the White



	by Jo Wonhee	of "supportive solidarity" that uplift and nurture the children through their sadness resonate deeply, conveying an emotional journey of healing and growth.	<p>Ravens international children's and youth literature catalog. Other books she has written include "I Eat Rice Every Day", "We Are Here, Zoo", "63 Days", "Siblings", and "Booger Koji".</p> <p>Jo Wonhee</p> <p>An illustrator who enjoys telling stories through pictures about nature, animals, and small, precious things. Books she has both written and illustrated include "Ice Boy", "Tooth Hunter", "Kwang!", and "Hatred". She received the 2017 Bologna Ragazzi Award for "Tooth Hunter".</p>
What is happening? (2019)	by Cha Eunsil	Animals rush to see what has happened, only to find a turtle struggling to climb out of a sandpit. Each animal tries to use its own strengths to help the turtle, but the young turtle refuses and eventually escapes the pit on its own. This picture book moves at a thrilling pace from the start. The animals' quirky, humorous remarks add fun and laughter, while the moment the turtle escapes fills	<p>Cha Eunsil</p> <p>Author Cha Eunsil studies picture books. Every day, she tries to think a little differently during the time she has and strive to find more of the wonders around her. This book was created with her small desire to move forward on her own</p>

		the reader with emotion. It's a heartwarming, energetic, and confident story that leaves you with a tearful smile.	
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Singaporean Titles

Title	Author	Book Introduction	About the Author/Illustrator
Grandma's Tiger (2022)	by Alan John, Illustrated by Quek Hong Shin	<p>"Help! TIGER!!"</p> <p>Was it really a tiger that Grandma saw on Pulau Ubin while gathering clams one warm, sunny morning?</p> <p>And what will animal expert Dr Sunny Banuna and his team find when they embark on their big tiger hunt across the island?</p> <p>From the award-winning duo of Alan John and Quek Hong Shin comes another charming and lively children's story, Grandma's Tiger.</p>	<p>Alan John</p> <p>Alan John is a journalist, writer and editorial trainer. He is the director of the Asia Journalism Fellowship and a consulting editor of the South China Morning Post. In 2023, Alan joined the SPH Media Academy as a trainer for its journalism programmes. His children's book, Grandma's Tiger, illustrated by Quek Hong Shin, won the Best Picture Book award at the Singapore Book Awards 2023. Grandma's Tiger was also included in The White Ravens 2023 recommendation list by the International Youth Library. Alan remembers the excitement in Singapore the year residents of Pulau Ubin said they saw a tiger.</p>

		<p>The tale was inspired by a slice of Singapore history – a few frenzied days in 1997 when a tiger was “spotted” on Ubin.</p> <p>Children will turn the pages eagerly as they, too, go on a tiger search and try to spot the tiger along the way.</p> <p>The book is also filled with many beautifully-rendered illustrations of other creatures found in the region, such as the tiger beetle, the giant Asian mantis and the knobby sea star.</p>	<p>Quek Hong Shin</p> <p>Quek Hong Shin is a children’s book author and illustrator. His picture books were twice nominated for the Hedwig Anuar Children’s Book Award and two have won Best Picture Book at the Singapore Book Awards - The Incredible Basket, which he wrote and illustrated, in 2019, and Grandma’s Tiger, written by Alan John and illustrated by Hong Shin, in 2023. Grandma’s Tiger is in the International Youth Library’s White Ravens 2023 recommendation list. Hong Shin visited Pulau Ubin with Alan and they did not see a tiger, but they met a man who insisted it had walked past his house.</p>
<p>Madam Jar Finds Kindness (2024)</p>	<p>by Sophia Huang Illustrated by Evelyn Ghozalli</p>	<p>Ms Jug is a tattered milk jug who is afraid of being alone. Things take a turn when she is whisked away to a new home. There, she meets a friend who fills their days with fun and laughter, but then their</p>	<p>Sophia Huang</p> <p>Sophia Huang is a Singapore-based children’s author and environmental advocate. She is passionate about upcycling and frequently engages in creative projects with her three</p>

		<p>contents start to run out. Will Ms Jug lose her home and friend forever?</p> <p>Come along with Ms Jug as she discovers the magic of second chances.</p>	<p>children, transforming everyday items into toys and art. Her work is featured on her Facebook page, Craftcycle for Kids, and she has collaborated with Singapore's National Environment Agency to promote sustainability.</p> <p>Huang is the author of the award-winning picture books <i>Mr Roll Finds New Life</i> (2021) and <i>Ms Jug Finds a Home</i> (2023), both published by Marshall Cavendish. These stories, inspired by her upcycling projects, aim to teach children about resourcefulness and environmental consciousness. She has also written articles on parenting and faith for platforms like Focus on the Family Singapore and Salt&Light.</p> <p>Evelyn Ghozalli</p> <p>Evelyn Ghozalli has illustrated more than 80 children's stories and written several under the pseudonym EorG, and has won several awards,</p>
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			including the Samsung KidTime Award 2016, Best Illustrator Award at the Islamic Book Fair 2018 and the Indonesia Art Award 2018. She is also the founder of the Indonesian Children's Book Illustrators Circle (KELIR).
The Red String (2024)	by Ah Guo (Lee Kow Fong) & Perry Ho, illustrated by Ah Guo	<p>Unravel the beauty of choices with "The Red String", a captivating picture book presented by The National Kidney Foundation, featuring the inimitable illustrations of Ah Guo 阿果, along with writer Perry Ho. The story narrates the delightful adventure of a boy as he navigates life's choices, symbolised by the red string that represents our interconnected existence.</p> <p>Through this heartwarming tale of love, hope, and self-discovery, young readers are encouraged to recognise the impact of the choices today that may shape their tomorrows. This initiative subtly aims to heighten awareness of kidney health,</p>	<p>Ah Guo</p> <p>Ah Guo, or Lee Kow Fong, is a renowned Singaporean illustrator, children's book author, and columnist, known for his delicate and whimsical watercolour illustrations. He graduated in Chinese literature from the National University of Singapore and earned a Master's in Children's Book Illustration from Anglia Ruskin University in the UK.</p> <p>Ah Guo has published nearly 20 picture books, with his work Searching winning the Best Children's Book Award at the Singapore Book Awards in 2016. His illustrations are featured in public spaces, including a large mural at Orchard Central. He is a columnist for Lianhe Zaobao and teaches at Ngee Ann Polytechnic and the National Institute of</p>

	<p>weaving a tale that explores diverse perspectives and fosters new connections.</p> <p>"Planting the seeds of kidney disease prevention in the minds of the young is the key to cultivating a healthier future. By instilling awareness and healthy habits early on, we empower the next generation to make informed choices, fostering a foundation of well-being that reaches far beyond themselves. Investing in the health education of our youth is an investment in a future where kidney disease is not just treated but prevented, paving the way for a generation that values and prioritizes lifelong well-being." Said Tim Oei, Chief Executive Officer, NKF.</p> <p>There is a pressing need for our next generations to be aware of the choices they make. With its simple yet profound messaging, "The Red String" hopes to captivate and capture the imagination of young</p>	<p>Education. Ah Guo has held multiple solo exhibitions, showcasing his watercolour and digital art. His works often explore themes of childhood, innocence, and the beauty of everyday life. He actively promotes children's book illustration through teaching and public engagements.</p>
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		readers, and spur them on their own journeys of well-being and discovery.	
Curly (2024)	by Rachelyn Gordon, illustrated by Cecillia Hidayat	<p>Growing up I constantly had to explain why i kept my hair short. —or worse, defend my choice. I certainly felt the weight of narrow beauty standards that dictate women should have long hair.</p> <p>Now, as an adult, I cherish my short, curly pixie cut and wouldn't change it for anything. However, I wish I had grown up with books featuring female characters with short hair because our perceptions of the world are shaped during our formative years. So, instead of just wishing, I decided to write a picture book about a protagonist with short hair—one who navigates the emotional journey of questioning whether she should conform and ultimately emerges with confidence, strength, and fearlessness!</p>	<p>Rachelyn Gordon is a Singaporean children's picture book author and educator, celebrated for her heartfelt storytelling that reflects local culture and personal experiences. Her debut book, <i>Rosie and the Mamak Shop (2020)</i>, draws inspiration from her childhood memories of visiting a local mamak shop and enjoying curry puffs with her grandmother. The story captures the warmth of everyday routines and the joy of simple pleasures.</p> <p>Before becoming an author, Rachelyn worked in the media industry and later contributed to securing UNESCO World Heritage status for the Singapore Botanic Gardens. She holds teaching qualifications from James Cook University and now focuses on writing and conducting private creative writing workshops.</p>

<p>The Uncle Downstairs (2024)</p>	<p>by Lianne Ong, illustrated by Nicholas Liem</p>	<p>Amos befriends an old man who lives at the bottom of his block of flats and learns many things from him. But one day, the old man vanishes without saying goodbye. Amos is left wondering where he has gone. Will Amos ever see Uncle again?</p>	<p>Lianne Ong is a Singaporean author known for her engaging children's picture books that often reflect local culture and promote inclusivity. She has written 18 titles, with four winning awards. Her popular "Stacey & the Museums" series introduces young readers to Singapore's museums, while the "A Place for Us" series raises awareness about people with disabilities. Ong's book Maxilla tells a touching story about a boy and a caterpillar, encouraging respect for nature. She also co-authored Sing A Song of Hawker Food, blending nursery rhymes with Singapore's hawker culture. Beyond writing, she actively participates in storytelling sessions and author visits to schools, libraries, and museums. With a background in International Relations and Southeast Asian Studies, Ong uses her platform to educate and inspire young minds. She lives in Singapore with her family and continues to contribute meaningfully to</p>
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			children's literature and the promotion of social values through her stories.
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