



ROOTS IN THE FUTURE

Italy Guest of Honour 2024
Frankfurter Buchmesse

PRESS RELEASE

Guest of Honour Italy bids farewell and hands over to the Philippines

Handover Ceremony at Frankfurter Buchmesse 2024

For five days, Italy, Guest of Honour at Frankfurter Buchmesse 2024, presented its culture and literature on the fairgrounds and in the city of Frankfurt. On the afternoon of the last day of the fair, this year's Guest of Honour bid farewell with the traditional handover of the GuestScroll to the Philippines. The festive Handover Ceremony was attended by Mauro Mazza, the Italian government's extraordinary Commissioner for the coordination of Italy's Guest of Honour activities at the fair, as well as by Philippine Ambassador Irene Susan B. Natividad and Juergen Boos, Director of Frankfurter Buchmesse. A talk with the Italian and Philippine illustrators Alessandro Sanna and Isabel Roxas was also part of the ceremony. Singer Datu Waway Saway and The Philippine Madrigal Singers provided musical accompaniment for the event.

Guest of Honour Italy: "We are confident that what has been sown in Frankfurt will bear fruit for the Italian publishing world"

More than 90 Italian authors travelled to Frankfurt. Numerous readings, talks and discussions with Italian authors, as well as concerts, exhibitions and further cultural events took place over the five days of the fair: on two stages in the Italian Guest of Honour Pavilion and at many other locations on the fairgrounds and in the city of Frankfurt. A comprehensive trade programme about the Italian book market also took place at the Italian collective stand.



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As part of the Guest of Honour programme, around 220 new publications from and about Italy have appeared on the German-language market since autumn 2023, published by some 100 publishers.

Mauro Mazza, the Italian government's extraordinary Commissioner for the coordination of Italy's Guest of Honour activities at the fair, said: "We are positive that this second time for Italy as Guest of Honour will make history just like it did in 1988. During these five days and the long months leading up to this 76th edition of the book fair, we have offered a non-stereotypical image of our literature and our culture, strengthening the international reach of our authors and their works. We are confident that what we have sown in Frankfurt will bear fruit for the Italian publishing world."

With the handover of the GuestScroll, the focus now shifts to the literature and culture of the Philippines. Mazza said: "Twelve months ago we received the GuestScroll from our neighbour country Slovenia, and now we will be leaving it into the hands of a land that is over 10,000 km away. This is the beauty of the Frankfurter Buchmesse, it's capable of shortening distances."

Guest of Honour 2025, the Philippines: "The imagination peoples the air"

Inspired by a line from Philippines national hero Jose Rizal's book "Noli Me Tangere", the theme "The Imagination peoples the air" evokes the profound intersection of Philippine literature, vibrant culture, and rich history.

Philippine Senator Loren Legarda, the initiator and driving force behind the Philippine Guest of Honour presentation, emphasised in her welcoming address, which Philippine Ambassador Irene Susan B. Natividad delivered on behalf of Legarda at the Handover Ceremony in Frankfurt: "The Philippines is a nation of storytellers, where the oral traditions of our ancestors seamlessly blend with the written works of our contemporary authors. Our writers, artists, and publishers have long carried the torch of creativity, and at Frankfurter Buchmesse 2025, we will shine the light on our diverse literary heritage. This includes our indigenous peoples' voices, as well as the stories of our 7641 islands and our global diaspora. Let us all continue to be advocates, supporters, and enthusiastic participants in the vibrant world of literature and its capacity to build bridges across cultures."



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The Philippine Guest of Honour presentation at Frankfurter Buchmesse 2025 is a joint project of the Philippine National Commission for Culture and the Arts, the National Book Development Board, the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines and the Office of Senator Loren Legarda.

Press material about the Guest of Honour presentations 2024 and 2025 can be found here:

Italy: <https://italiafrancoforte2024.com>

Philippines: <https://philippinesfrankfurt2025.com/media-center/>

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