



## **Salone Internazionale del Libro di Torino** **Turin International Book Fair**

The appointment with the **Salone Internazionale del Libro** (*Turin International Book Fair*) returns every year in May at Lingotto, the famous Fiat plant with the spiral ramp and roof-top test track, a masterpiece of industrial archaeology. Designed between 1915 and 1922 and admired by Le Corbusier, since 1985 it has been transformed by Renzo Piano into an exhibition, conference and commercial centre.

In **2009** the Salone celebrated its **22th anniversary**. With six pavilions, an area of 51,000 square metres, 27 conference rooms, over 1,400 publishers and 307,000 visitors in the five days it is open, it is today the largest fair in Italy dedicated to publishing, reading and culture, and one of the leaders in Europe.

The history of the Salone has been one of growing success. The record-breaking of **307.675 visitors** during 2009 edition, dozens of new exhibitors every year, more and more international publishers who come to Torino. Figures that buck the trend of the widespread crisis for events for the general public.

The secret is a formula that blends harmoniously **different components**, and which makes it unique both in the panorama professional fairs, and in the galaxy of cultural and literary festivals that have sprung up all over the place in recent years.

The Salone is first and foremost Italy's largest **bookshop**. An endless series of bookshelves where the general public can make surprising discoveries, come across the most enticing and curious books, unfindable volumes and the latest publications.

At the same time, the Salone is also a lively **international festival of culture**, a can't-be-missed appointment that draws enthusiasts from all over Italy. Over one thousand conferences, meetings debates and shows with more than 2,000 speakers and guests: Nobel prize winners, writers, scientists, philosophers, historians, journalists and artists. The brightest minds of the contemporary world, tackling the big questions of how to understand the challenges of the society that we live in. A debate always conducted in a spirit of respect and of dialogue with the culture and ideas of others.

The Salone is also the main point of reference for **book professionals** in Italy: publishers, booksellers, librarians, agents, illustrators and translators. A section of the Salone is dedicated entirely to the trade: the **International Book Forum** for the exchange of publishing and translation rights, and for the audiovisual adaptation of literary works. During 2009 edition more than **6.000** meetings took place among nearly **700** partakers - publishers, literary agents, Tv and multimedia producers and filmmakers - coming from about 30 Countries, among



which Albania, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Israel, Italy, Russia, Serbia, Sweden, Usa.

Since 2007 there has also been the **Incubator**, to help young publishers make themselves known, and the Italian Fellowship Program, which has offered numerous international publishers the opportunity to visit and get to know the main Italian publishers with a 15 day tour.

The Fair inaugurated the tradition of hosting a different **guest country** every year, present with its own stand, authors and publishers, exhibitions, shows, artists, special insights and in-depth presentations. Catalonia, Holland, Switzerland, Canada, Greece, Brazil, Portugal, Lithuania, Israel and Egypt have followed one after the other since 2001.

The role of the Salone was further consecrated by **Unesco**, which in 2004 proclaimed **Torino World Book Capital** for 2006-2007, assigning a title already awarded to Madrid, Alexandria, New Delhi, Antwerp and Montréal, and later taken up by Bogotá and Amsterdam. The year of Torino World Book Capital with its 848 events for the promotion of books and reading, and the boost from the 20th Olympic Winter Games, saw the number of visitors in 2006 shoot up to 304,000.

Today, the Salone is confirmed as a vital window on the state of health of books and reading in Italy, and more in general as the natural crossroads for understanding the role of Italian culture and creativity in the new scenarios of a world going through profound change.

Among the challenges that await it is that of getting closer to weak readers and non-readers, also experimenting with educational applications of the **new media** and **new technologies**. These are not necessarily «enemies» of reading, but potential allies in the integration between cultures and the civic education of the new generations.