Literature once again brought thousands of people together!

2026-10-27

More than 1,000 authors from Poland and abroad, over 500 exhibitors, 1,200 events, and 58,150 readers. For four days, Kraków once again lived and breathed literature. The 29th International Book Fair in Kraków®, the largest event of its kind in Poland, brought together book lovers, authors, and publishing professionals at EXPO Kraków from 22 to 25 October. This year's edition was inspired by Agnieszka Osiecka's words, "Attention: Another Human Being", which set the tone for the entire event.

Meetings with world-renowned literary stars, book premieres, workshops, industry discussions, and the new Adaptation Zone once again demonstrated the important place the Kraków Book Fair holds in Poland's cultural calendar.

"Attention: Another Human Being" – more than a motto

This year's slogan, drawn from the work of Agnieszka Osiecka, whose 90th birth anniversary is being celebrated in 2026, carried a particularly relevant message. At a time when more and more interactions are moving into the digital world, the fair reminded visitors of the value of face-to-face conversations and the opportunity to meet the people behind the stories they have read.

"Direct meetings with readers are incredibly valuable. They give us, both as publishers and authors, the opportunity to answer readers' questions and learn their opinions about the books we publish and write," said Radosław Młynarczyk, publisher and co-author of Hłasko/Osiecka. Byle nie o miłości.

For publishers and writers, the four days at EXPO Kraków provided a chance to hear readers' opinions, discuss future publications, and experience firsthand the interest generated by their work.

"When we come to Kraków and see the crowds moving through these corridors and weaving between the stands, we realise that what we do truly matters," added Radosław Młynarczyk.

A special opening, a 30th anniversary, and recognition for Agata Passent

This year's edition was especially significant for its organiser. In 2026, Targi w Krakowie celebrates its 30th anniversary, and the official opening became an opportunity to reflect on three decades of the company's development.

During the ceremony, Ewa Woch, President of Targi w Krakowie, recalled the organisation's beginnings:

"When we started in 1996, we had countless ideas, enormous enthusiasm, and a strong belief in creating places that bring people together. Not everyone believed in our success at the time. That is why, 30 years later, I look with even greater pride at the journey we have made and what we have achieved together."

As she noted, the International Book Fair in Kraków® is one of the best examples of the company's

growth. Over nearly three decades, the event has evolved alongside the publishing market and the changing needs of successive generations of readers, becoming one of the most important literary events in Poland.

One of the most symbolic moments of the opening ceremony was the appointment of Agata Passent as Ambassador of the International Book Fair in Kraków®. The journalist, columnist, author, and daughter of Agnieszka Osiecka received the distinction in a year when her mother's words served as the event's guiding theme.

"When it comes to being an ambassador, the real expert in our family was my father, Daniel Passent, who served as Poland's ambassador to Chile. I see this role primarily as supporting reading, something I have encouraged from an early age. I was fortunate to grow up in a home where both parents read extensively and books were a natural part of everyday life. I believe Agnieszka Osiecka can be a wonderful spirit watching over the fair. She was not only an exceptional writer and poet, but also an extraordinarily passionate reader," said Agata Passent.

Great names, thousands of stories, and a shared passion

Guests at the 29th edition included John Irving, André Aciman, Yann Martel, Marissa Meyer, Joe Hill, Juan Gómez-Jurado, and Maxime Chattam. They were joined by leading figures of Polish literature, including Olga Tokarczuk, Szczepan Twardoch, Jakub Żulczyk, Jakub Małecki, Jacek Dukaj, Katarzyna Bonda, and Wojciech Chmielarz.

The programme featured events devoted to literary fiction, crime fiction, fantasy, reportage, popular science, travel writing, and Young Adult literature. This diversity ensured that readers of all ages and interests could find something to enjoy.

Yann Martel, author of the bestselling Life of Pi, spoke about the importance of direct contact with readers.

"Art is something social. Art is a gift. Someone gives it, and someone else must receive it. A book has to be read, a painting seen, a piece of music heard. Art truly comes alive through that community and that connection."

Martel was also impressed by the scale of the event:

"Even from a distance I could see crowds of people heading here. It is wonderful to see so many people coming together to celebrate books."

Among those eagerly awaiting each new edition is Adam Mirek, author of Bebechy and Glutologia.

"I love meeting readers in person and come back to the fair every year with great excitement because every edition is different. As soon as one fair ends, I check the dates of the next one and reserve the time in my calendar to make sure I can be here again."

Children's author Waldemar Cichoń also emphasised the event's significance:

Magiczny Kraków

“If you write books, live through books, or simply love books, you have to be in Kraków.”

A new generation of readers: from passion to creating their own stories

According to the National Library’s 2025 report, 56% of people aged 15–18 read at least one book during the year. Young readers’ enthusiasm was clearly visible during the Book Fair.

Long queues for autographs, meetings with favourite authors, and conversations about beloved literary characters showed that reading can be not only a personal passion but also a way of building communities.

For many young visitors, the fair offered a chance to meet their literary idols. For some, it became the place where dreams came true. One example is Sylwia Przybysz, who attended last year’s fair as a reader and returned this year as an author signing her own book.

“If someone had told me last year that I would be standing here today as an author, signing my own book alongside writers who mean so much to me and who made me fall in love with reading, I’m not sure I would have believed them.”

She was particularly moved by meeting the first readers of her book, which premiered at the fair before its official release.

Similarly, Joanna Balicka, who first attended a book fair as an author in Kraków, reflected on the special significance of the event.

“There’s a sense of nostalgia. These were my first book fairs. Whenever I come here, I receive so much love. The moment when a reader approaches you fully engaged and gives all that affection back is extraordinary.”

A place where a love of books begins

A first autograph from a favourite writer, a meeting with a beloved storybook character, or a workshop that sparks a new passion. For younger visitors, the 29th International Book Fair in Kraków® was full of discoveries, inspiration, and unforgettable experiences.

The Children’s and Young Adults’ Literary Zone offered creative workshops, science experiments, literary activities, and meetings with authors whose books have accompanied generations of readers. Guests included Grzegorz Kasdepke, Dorota Gellner, Michał Rusinek, Eliza Piotrowska, Adam Mirek, Zofia Stanecka, and Urszula Młodnicka. Celebrations of Winnie-the-Pooh’s 100th birthday were a particular highlight.

Children’s literature, however, is about much more than entertainment. Discussions also focused on emotions, empathy, and relationships. Urszula Młodnicka, author of the Pink series, discussed how books can help children and parents better understand one another.

“I write books with the intention that reading becomes a starting point for conversations between children and parents. Stories about Pink often act as the trigger for discussing important topics.”

Adaptation Zone: from book to screen

One of the most significant innovations of this year's edition was the Adaptation Zone, dedicated to the journey from literary bestseller to film or television production.

For the first time in the history of the International Book Fair in Kraków®, publishers and audiovisual professionals were brought together in a dedicated space to exchange ideas, present projects, and establish partnerships.

The programme included discussions on adaptation rights, project presentations, and business meetings, including the Filmmakers × Publishers networking event.

Visitors also had the opportunity to explore adaptation projects based on works such as:

- The Doll by Bolesław Prus
- Bebechy by Adam Mirek
- Colours of Evil by Małgorzata Oliwia Sobczak
- Zmora by Robert Małecki
- Gołoborze by Maciej Siembieda

Film producer Bogumił Lipski, known for projects with HBO and HBO Max, praised the initiative:

"I think the Adaptation Zone is an excellent platform for collaboration. We are constantly looking for original stories, and many of the most original stories can be found in books. Cooperation between publishers and producers creates exactly the opportunities we need."

The Adaptation Zone opened a new chapter in the fair's history and may lead to future films, TV series, and audiovisual projects.

Important discussions about the future of publishing

How will artificial intelligence