

EDITORIAL

Inauguration of the Pop-App Museum and Introduction to the New Issue

At the opening of this rich 2026 issue, I would first like to share with and celebrate alongside the “JIB” community the **inauguration of the Pop-App Museum**, which took place in Turin in December 2025, as announced in the previous issue of the journal.

The launch of the Pop-App Museum represents a pivotal milestone for our Fondazione. In these initial months, the new museum has experienced a significant increase in visitor attendance, also thanks to the numerous initiatives organized in the form of workshops and public events. Among these, I would particularly highlight the “Pop-Appuntamenti”, dedicated to movable books of the past and present and to their transmedial developments (recordings of the individual events are available on the website of the Centro Studi, <https://tinyurl.com/5f8ktf9s>).

Following the renovation and expansion works carried out between July and November 2025 in the new premises made available for this purpose by Opera Barolo, the first phase of the project was completed with the opening of three new exhibition rooms and a new educational space. Together with the pre-existing exhibition areas, these have given rise to a unique and integrated exhibition pathway. The Pop-App Museum opened with the exhibition *Sempre allegri, Bambini! Lothar Meggendorfer e il libro animato in Italia tra Otto e Novecento* (*Always Cheerful, Children! Lothar Meggendorfer and the Movable Book in Italy between the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*), dedicated to the German artist whose centenary of death was commemorated in 2025. The second phase of the project will continue in 2026–2027 with the opening of four additional exhibition rooms, a comprehensive revision of the exhibition path in light of the new permanent spaces, the implementation of further multimedia stations, and the development of a database dedicated to the collection of movable books. This represents a major undertaking, which we hope to accomplish also thanks to the anticipated continued support of the institutions that have supported us thus far.

pop-app museum
Libri animati e multimedialità

Palazzo Barolo, MUSLI
Via Corte d'Appello 20/F, Torino

Inaugurazione
11 dicembre 2025

Apertura al pubblico
dal 12 dicembre 2025

Sempre allegri, BAMBINI!
LOTHAR MEGGENDORFER
e il libro animato in Italia
tra Otto e Novecento
dal 12 dicembre 2025
al 28 giugno 2026

Con il sostegno di: Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, Fondazione CRT, CONSULTA, REALE FOUNDATION, DGBIC, REGIONE PIEMONTE, CITTÀ DI TORINO

Partner: CENTRO CONSERVAZIONE RESTAURO, CSC - Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia

Alongside the consolidation and completion of the exhibition activities, the Fondazione and the Centro Studi will work toward structuring a comprehensive and diversified educational program. The aim is for the museum to increasingly establish itself as a tool for fostering creativity and facilitating engagement with reading, while also serving as a laboratory for experimentation aimed at developing specific and professional skills, both in the creation of movable books and in the fields of conservation and animation cinema. This effort will build on the already well-established collaborations with partner institutions (CSC – sede Piemonte; Centro Conservazione Restauro “La Venaria Reale”; Liceo Artistico Statale “Aldo Passoni” of Turin), as well as on newly initiated partnerships with the Politecnico di Torino, the Conservatorio “Gioachino Rossini” of Pesaro, and the Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti.

In this same direction, a prize dedicated to young practitioners is envisaged for the 2027–2028 biennium, with the aim of promoting the creation of movable books that combine paper engineering and multimedia elements. The prize will be named after Luisella Terzi, among the first women active in this field in the early twentieth century.

The museum’s inaugural event took place on **11 December 2025** in the Sala delle Colonne of the Turin City Hall, thanks to the hospitality of the Assessorato alla Cultura, represented by assessora Rosanna Purchia. The morning session was attended by representatives of public and private institutions that, in various capacities, supported and contributed to the realization of the initiative: Paola Passarelli (Ministero della Cultura – Direzione Biblioteche e Istituti culturali); Andrea De Pasquale (Ministero della Cultura – Direzione Digitalizzazione e Comunicazione), whose greeting was delivered by Dimitri Brunetti; Gabriella Serratrice (Regione Piemonte – Settore promozione dei beni librari e archivistici, editoria e istituti culturali); Ezio Raviola (Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo); Patrizia Polliotto (Fondazione CRT); Licia Mattioli (Consulta Valorizzazione Beni Artistici e Culturali di Torino); and Luca Rossin (Reale Foundation).

Following the presentation of the Pop-App Museum delivered by the author, several scholars and specialists contributed to the discussion, many of whom are affiliated with the Scientific Committee of the Centro Studi and of the journal “JIB”. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of them for their presence and their active support.

The morning session also featured a round table with representatives of international institutions working in the field of movable books, coordinated by Jacqueline Reid-Walsh. Participants included the Movable Book Society, represented by Board Director Suzanne Karr-Schmidt; the French collective Livres Animés, represented by Patrick Lecoq and Thierry Desnoues; and Carola Pohlmann, former Director of the Department of Children’s Literature at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin.





The participants then moved to Palazzo Barolo for the inauguration of the Pop-App Museum and the opening of the exhibition dedicated to Lothar Meggendorfer, set up within the new premises. The first room presents some of his most renowned and spectacular masterpieces, accompanied by multimedia stations, while a second room offers a detailed historical overview of the editions of Meggendorfer's works published in Italy between 1884 and 1912. Particular attention is devoted to the rare volume *Pierino Porcospino vivente*, which is brought to life through an interactive table.

The exhibition also includes a focus on music in Meggendorfer's books, featuring a selection of animated shorts produced by the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia. In the third room, alongside a video documenting the restoration of a Meggendorfer movable book and an experimental mechatronic installation, works by two Italian artists (Chiara Meneghetti and Caterina Cappelli) shortlisted for the Movable Book Society's "Meggendorfer Prize 2025" are on display.

The exhibition continues in the *Biblioteca Fantastica* area, with a section dedicated to movable and illustrated books published by Hoepli, together with unique handmade animated albums created by Luisa Terzi between 1913 and 1917, recently restored by the Centro Conservazione Restauro "La Venaria Reale". The final gallery is devoted to movable versions of *Pinocchio* with illustrations by Attilio Mussino.





In the afternoon, once again in the Sala delle Colonne of the City Hall, the volume *Lothar Meggendorfer e il contesto editoriale italiano tra Otto e Novecento* (*Lothar Meggendorfer and the Italian Publishing Context between the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*), published by the Fondazione and edited by the author, was presented. The volume brings together six scholarly contributions, along with an appendix devoted to projects and initiatives developed by the Fondazione in collaboration with partner institutions and organizations. The presentation was chaired by Lodovica Braida (Dipartimento di Studi Storici, Università di Torino), with contributions from the authors Pompeo Vagliani, Eliana

Angela Pollone, Christian Bachmann, Elisa Marazzi, Martino Negri, Ambra d'Aleo, and Arianna Re.

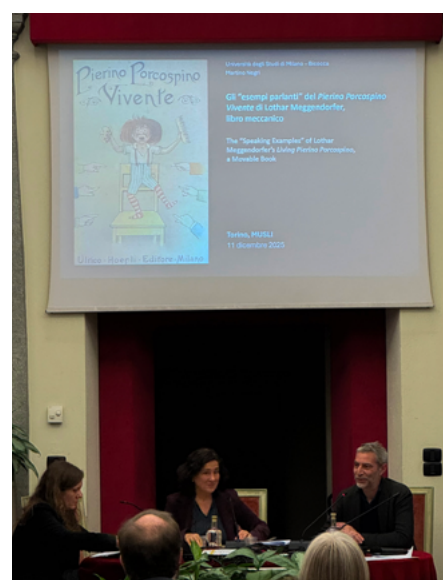
This was followed by two insightful contributions by members of the Movable Book Society, Ellen G. K. Rubin (*The Popuplady*) and Larry Seidman, each offering reflections on their respective collections. On this occasion, Larry Seidman also generously shared with the audience his intention to establish a 'Centre of Movable Arts' in the United States.

The afternoon session continued with a series of presentations devoted to enhancement initiatives developed for the new museum, delivered by Laura Fiori and Gabriele Angelo Barrocu (CSC – sede Piemonte), Roberta De Piccoli (Conservatorio "G. Rossini" of Pesaro), and Giovanni Greco (FTB). The session concluded with a round table involving members of the Board of Directors of the Fondazione Tancredi di Barolo, who outlined their commitments to future developments. Both sessions were recorded and are available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/mr2xfw2v>.

The day concluded with a private evening reception for international guests and representatives of local institutions, held in the splendid setting of the Salone d'Onore of Palazzo Barolo. On this occasion, a piano transcription of a polka by Meggendorfer was performed with variations by the pianist Diego Mingolla.



The inauguration of the new museum received extensive and significant coverage in the press, on local television networks, and across social media, both in Italy and internationally. In particular, visibility was amplified through the networks of Livres Animés and the Movable Book Society, as well as through features by *Il Sole 24 Ore*, RAI, GRP TV, and RSI – Radiotelevisione Svizzera (<https://tinyurl.com/zsrpu3ez>).



Turning now to the **presentation of this issue**, before addressing the individual contributions in detail, it is a pleasure to note both the increased number of articles and the breadth and diversity of the topics covered.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Jacqueline Reid-Walsh for her valuable collaboration, and especially to Eliana Angela Pollone and Marta Peiretti for their dedicated commitment and editorial care in preparing this issue as journal's Managing Editors, as well as to the many reviewers for their careful and highly qualified peer-review work.

I would also like to highlight the introduction of a new section, *L'angolo del collezionista / The Collector's Corner*, which we intend to develop systematically in the coming years. The section is inaugurated with a first contribution by the Chinese collector and scholar **Guan Zhongping**, with whom the Fondazione has previously collaborated. This contribution offers a glimpse into a largely unexplored and little-known field – that of Chinese pop-up books – which will undoubtedly yield many insights through future investigations.

Turning to the *Articles* section, a growing number of contributions focus on early printed books. I would like to begin with the study by **Fabio Uliana**, which presents and carefully analyses – also from a codicological perspective – the manuscript D.II.6 of the Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria di Torino, a rare example of a sixteenth-century astronomical codex featuring movable elements. The manuscript emerges as a significant and early 'movable' testimony, in which scientific knowledge, materiality, and pedagogical practice are closely intertwined. Far from being a marginal anomaly, it reveals a conception of the book as a cognitive machine, anticipating forms of interactivity that challenge the modern separation between text, image, and use.

Fabienne Henryot, on her part, examines the case of the *Tablature spirituelle* (1619), a rare devotional game-book. Her study analyses a device that combines prayer, meditation, and role-playing during the Christmas vigil. Composed of small slips distributed at random among participants, the work enables a collective and performative engagement with the mystery of the Nativity, mobilizing imagination, the body, and the senses.

The study highlights the work's nature as a 'non-book', its editorial plasticity, and its variable uses across monastic and domestic contexts. Finally, by reconstructing its circulation and reception up to the nineteenth century, it traces the transition from a living practice to a bibliographical and collectible object, shedding light on the dynamics underlying the transformation of devotional devices.

Roberta De Piccoli's contribution, in continuity with the first part published in the previous issue, presents the second part of a largely unpublished study devoted to movable devices in the field of early nineteenth-century French music pedagogy. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the article explores specific references to the history and key figures of music education of the period, while offering scholars of movable books a detailed and complex account of the functioning of various movable devices developed in this context. The study will be completed in 2027 with a further installment dedicated to the theme of musical educational games incorporating movable elements.

Closely related to the exhibition and to the research on Meggendorfer is the contribution by **Arianna Re**, which, starting from the movable book she restored, *Monsieur Séraphin de Chiképatan Natif de Gratin-les-Gommeux (Seine et Garonne)*, examines how Meggendorfer constructs a sharp satire of the masher, portrayed as a failed Don Juan, incapable of conforming to prevailing socio-economic, behavioral, and masculine norms. The character thus becomes a vehicle for a critique of social emulation, emerging consumerism, and gender ambiguities within the *fin de siècle* context.

Monica Gjelsten analyses interactive books for early childhood as material and participatory artefacts that organize the reading experience through embodied action. Integrating reception theory and ethnographic methods, the study examines how different mechanisms (tactile, mechanical, performative) structure children's participation and the distribution of interactions among child, adult, and book. The findings show that early reading is predominantly embodied, grounded in gesture, repetition, and affectivity, and that interactivity is not merely an attribute but an aesthetic principle that shapes the reading event. The article also highlights the constitutive role of adult mediation and the diversity of forms of interaction.

Jessica Paolillo interprets the artist's book and the interactive book as aesthetic and cognitive devices capable of reconfiguring the experience of the fairy tale beyond its textual dimension. Through the cases of *Little Red Riding Hood* books by Lavater and Lagrula, it emerges how paper engineering, structure, and iconographic language transform the book into a performative space in which reading, orality, and visual literacy intertwine. Interactivity is not a merely playful element, but a principle that redistributes narrative authority, positioning the reader as co-author of the experience. From this perspective, the contemporary book emerges as a hybrid and 'inhabitable' object that challenges the boundaries between text, image, and materiality, while reactivating the collective and transformative dimension of storytelling.

Milan Mašat's substantial article addresses a topic of epistemological significance already explored in "JIB", engaging with issues related to terminology and the glossary (see *Before the glossary / Prima del glossario. Linguistic and methodological reflections on interactive books*, published in issue 4, 2024). The author considers interactive books as epistemic objects that foster active discovery; the body of the book is thus conceived as a material interface that constructs meaning through mechanisms (flaps, pull-tabs, etc.) following a pattern: cue → action → reveal → re-framing. The reader's gestures make cognitive processes visible and guide interpretation. The article develops a typology that connects mechanisms, informational operations, and cognitive functions, highlighting the role of sequential interactions in cognitive development, with potential implications also for issues of definition and cataloguing of interactive books.

Finally, the contribution by **Eliana Angela Pollone** and the **author** revisits and partially reworks – integrating further insights – the section devoted to the "Hoepli case" from the essay developed following research conducted for the exhibition on Lothar Meggendorfer, published in the aforementioned volume. It was considered useful to present these research findings also in this venue, in order to reach a broader international audience, and to offer a tool for a renewed – more systematic and comprehensive – perspective on the movable (and not only) production of this major Italian publisher.

Turning to the *Reports and Reviews* section, **Jacquelyn Sundberg**'s contribution presents the theatrical movable books held in McGill's Rare Books and Special Collections, highlighting the close relationship between these works and nineteenth-century toy theatres. The study shows how these hybrid devices dissolve the boundaries between book and theatre, transforming the reader into an interactor and positioning themselves as intermediate forms between reading and performance, thus offering valuable insight into the interplay between material culture and narrative practices.

Gaia Tagliapietra presents *Dioramami*, a project of artists' books that rework personal memory through three-dimensional paper-engineered devices, combining photography, craftsmanship, and digital design. The book thus becomes a sensory and performative space, revealing a tension between the digital and the handmade: it emerges as a device of resistance to the dematerialization of contemporary images.

The project *Oltre le pagine*, described by **Amalia Carrano**, represents a case of digital curation applied to pop-up books and addresses the challenge posed by their three-dimensional and performative nature, which is difficult to capture through traditional tools. The project integrates a digital library and a virtual exhibition, combining cataloguing practices, multimedia content, and immersive environments.

This section is followed by two contributions developed within the framework of the “Pop-Appuntamenti”. **Donatella Curletto** and **Maria Simonella** present the outcomes of the exhibition dedicated to the movable books of Vojtěch Kubašta, held at the Società Economica di Chiavari and announced in preparation in the previous issue of “JIB”. The initiative confirms the communicative potential of the pop-up book and points to the need for cataloguing and design tools suited to their preservation and valorization. **Gabriella Piccato** retraces her artistic trajectory, highlighting how the pop-up book, through a strongly craft-based practice, becomes an expressive device capable of translating personal memories and the identity of the Langhe region into three-dimensional form.

The section concludes with a contribution by **Irene Speziale**, who describes her experience of disseminating knowledge on movable books within the *Pescara Comix & Games 2025* festival, outlining the strategies adopted to make a complex topic such as paper engineering accessible to a broad, non-specialist audience.

See you next year!

Pompeo Vagliani
Editor in Chief JIB

