

# Agent Stephanie Barrouillet: Nonfiction Leads the Global Children's Book Scene

Publishers in many countries are finding success with nonfiction children's books that tackle everything from environmental stewardship to illustrated explanations of complex concepts.



By Porter Anderson

With all their travel and meetings, literary agents are often among the first to observe emerging book industry trends. When *Publishing Perspectives* asked literary agent Stephanie Barrouillet where she sees trends in children's books pointing this year, she told us, "During recent business trips in Europe, the States, and Asia, I noticed what a strong interest there is in illustrated nonfiction.

"Publishers around the world are actively looking and originating children's books that convey information in a different and innovative way. While there's still interest in the traditional educational books that we grew up with, nonfiction books today are informative but also entertaining, packed with fun facts and highly illustrated and designed."

A good example of this, she says, is *Das Liebesleben der Tiere* (*The Love*

*Life of Animals*) by Katharina von der Gathen and Anke Kuhl, published by Klett Kinderbuch Verlag, about animals' love lives and families.

Another favorite is on architecture, *How Does a Bridge Work?* by Roman Belyaev from Moscow-based publishing house Samokat.

Barrouillet also mentions space and the universe as a trend, represented by books like *Impossible* (*Impossible*) by Catarina Sobral from Portuguese publisher Orfeu Negro, and *Where Does the Moon Rise?* by Jung Chang-hoon and illustrator Jang Ho, from Woongjin Thinkbig in South Korea—in the latter title, the moon cycle becomes part of the bedtime story ritual.

"Across most markets," Barrouillet says, "publishers are looking for books that offer some sort of tool or useful information for children's development.

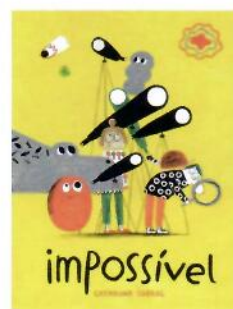
"The picture book becomes a vector to explain complex concepts such as economics, biology, politics, and to instill key values in a simple and accessible way at an earlier age. Cases in point are *Save It!* and *Spend It!* by Cinders McLeod (Penguin Random House) that introduce money concepts.

"There's also *Eleição dos bichos* (*Animals' Elections*) by André Rodrigues, Larissa Ribeiro, Paula Desgualdo, and Pedro Markun (Companhias das Letras, Brazil) that introduces children to the election process."

Barrouillet says that books about the environment and recycling are

especially popular internationally, and on Wednesday, she joins our Publishing Perspectives Talk on "Publishing and the Climate" (10:30 a.m., Hall 5.1, A128), where she'll talk about *Plastics, Past, Present, and Future*, a Korean book by Eu-ju Kim and Ji-won Lee from Woongjin Thinkbig.

"Another title we have on recycling," Barrouillet says, "is *Zero Waste* by Sima Özkan and Zeynep Özataly



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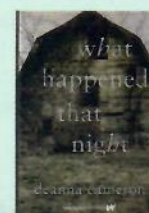
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Stephanie Barrouillet

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