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Feltrinelli's 60 years at Turin Fair

Exhibition celebrates 28th international literary event



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(ANSA) - Turin, May 14 - Italian publishing house Feltrinelli hosts a special 60th anniversary celebration Thursday to coincide with the opening of the 28th edition of the international Turin Book Fair.

Feltrinelli is focusing on 12 themes, each marked with the letter F for the publisher's name, ranging from Fever, to its Formidable books, to very strong women, Fortissime in Italian.

As well, turn-of-the-century (Finesecolo) stories on the history of the publishing house is documented with photos and book covers.

The exhibit is called 'Feltrinelli 60 - Idee, scelte, storie che fanno futuro', or the ideas, choices and stories that make the future.

Meanwhile, Thursday's inauguration of the Turin Book Fair included the participation of Italian President Sergio Mattarella at the city's Lingotto trade show halls.

"We thought about an exhibit for the 60 years of the publishing house," explained Carlo Feltrinelli at the presentation of the event.

"We thought about showing through 12 chapters, actually 12 giant 'F' letters, the wealth of ideas, the

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stories, occasions, beauty, turning points, challenges, battles, passions, the ability to anticipate, the intelligence and intelligences that have emerged across six decades of activity", he added.

"For the show, we have thought of key words as a synthesis, each opening a door on the past, present and what lays ahead", concluded Feltrinelli.

This celebration focuses on a symbolic consonant - 'F' - to travel through a story that has become a common heritage of the whole country.

The 'Fever & Phosphorus' section showcases the adventure of late editor and left-wing activist Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, who died in 1972.

'Forma', or shape, located inside the Feltrinelli stand where everyone will be toasting on Thursday, celebrates the invention of paperback.

'Fiesta' goes through key events for the publishing house like a 1996 presentation at the Lyric Temple of Milan with French author Daniel Pennac, which was entirely sold out, with 200 people left outside.

Almost marked was a presentation with Chilean-American novelist Isabel Allende at the Upim store in the financial capital's Porta San Babila, which was such a hit that it completely blocked traffic in the area.

The two-meter-high 'F' letters in beechwood are located across pavilions and outside the Lingotto.

They form an itinerary across the history of Italian publishing, which is especially significant now, with the proposed acquisition by Italy's largest publishing group Mondadori of a number of book publishers owned by the second-largest group RCS (Rizzoli-Corriere della Sera).

Carlo Feltrinelli spoke about the future in an interview published Thursday by Corriere della Sera's Sette magazine.

The golden age of publishing - at the end of the 1950s with the French Gallimard house, Germany's Rowholt Verlag and New York's leading publisher Knopf - "is probably over for good", he acknowledged.

"However, I see an interesting future: we have an endless and unexplored horizon with digital publishing", Feltrinelli noted.

"The two perspectives don't obliterate one another but rather add up.

"I am optimistic, even though books are apparently losing ground and the crisis is noticeable".

Amid pavilions at the Lingotto is the 'Freedom' section with photos of late South African author Nadine Gordimer, Israeli writer Amos Oz and publisher Inge Feltrinelli, widow of Giangiacomo Feltrinelli.

The exhibit, which was organized by Sonia Folin and Roberto Rollo, will be showcased at a number of events following the book fair, which closes on Monday.

The events include Dialoghi sull'uomo (dialogues on mankind) in the Tuscan city of Pistoia; the Cortona Mix Festival, also in Tuscany; the Festival della Mente, or festival of the mind, a European event dedicated to creativity in Sarzana, in the Liguria region; the Festival della Letteratura in the northern city of Mantua.