



INSTITUT
FRANÇAIS

LES PETITS KIWIS: ACCLAIMED FRENCH AUTHORS TO TOUR AOTEAROA

Award-winning French picture book author-illustrators Clotilde Perrin and Eric Veillé are touring New Zealand in May for the Embassy of France's **Les Petits Kiwis (Reading Kiwis) Festival** in partnership with Gecko Press, Alliance Française and Institut Français.

The authors will give talks and **workshops** in six centres: Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Palmerston North and Hamilton in the first two weeks of May.

Their free public events will include live drawings and readings for children alongside workshops where participants will write, draw and create their own picture book characters.

The pair have also scheduled **talks for adults** about the creative process and work as a professional illustrator. They will discuss the craft of picture-book making and the technicalities of the lift-the flap format, and give insight into the work of a professional illustrator in France.

Julia Marshall of **Gecko Press** says: “Children’s books are valued so highly in European culture - this tour gives our own book community the chance to see world-class author-illustrators at work and to hear them talk about their process. Children will be able to get their hands inky, with drawing live on stage, listening to stories and practical workshops.”

Stéphane Ré, from the **Cultural and Cooperation Office of the French Embassy to New Zealand**, is delighted to launch *Les Petits Kiwis* in partnership with Gecko Press:

“This book fair is representative of the willingness of the Embassy to work and interact with a young audience. All year round, we organise events in the schools, bilingual units and Alliances Françaises of New Zealand to promote French language through entertaining and attractive formats.

Young readers are the readers of the future, let us offer them the best of Kiwi and French literature!”

KEY DETAILS

Tour dates: full details at <https://geckopress.com/les-petits-kiwis-festival/>

Christchurch: 2 - 3 May (with Scorpio Books and Tūranga)

Auckland: 4 - 6 May (with Central City Library and Dorothy Butler Children's Bookshop)

Palmerston North: 7 May (with Palmerston North City Library, Clotilde Perrin only)

Hamilton: 7 May (with WINTEC and Chartwell Library, Eric Veille only)

Dunedin: 9 May (with Dunedin Writers Festival)

Wellington: 11 - 12 May (with Capital E, Unity Books and The Children's Bookshop)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Clotilde Perrin is the award-winning author and illustrator of over thirty books for children including *Inside the Villains*, a lift-the-flaps book that literally takes the reader inside the most famous fairytale villains: the wolf, the witch and the giant. The book was a sensation on its release in Europe – selling over tens of thousands in only a few months – and the English edition was released by Gecko Press in October 2018.

Perrin says the idea for her book came from a film about a couple who had their memories erased, giving her the idea of going right inside a character's head and heart:

“To make this book, I read and re-read an astronomical number of tales: Grimm, Perrault, Andersen, the Russian tales. I wanted my characters to be accurate and to know them better. I hulled the characters, I sought their neuroses, their anxieties, their fears, as if they were patients to be treated.”

Eric Veillé has written and illustrated over twenty books, characterised by their wit and subversive comedy. His 2015 release *My Pictures after the Storm* received three coveted starred reviews in the US media. The influential *School Library Journal* said of it: “This may be the funniest book of the year”

Veillé's new book is *Encyclopedia of Grannies*, an offbeat book full of word play and humour, answering all your questions about grandmas—especially the ones you never thought to ask. Veillé says he wanted to move beyond the clichés of how grandparents are often shown in children's books:

“The grannies idea came while I was watching an elderly woman in the street. I was thinking that most people would see her only as an old lady, even though both the girl and the woman that she once was were still there inside her. I thought this topic would be ideal to talk about transition, time, tenderness... life and death.”