Press Information:

***Quotes about Dick Bruna:***

British children’s author, Michael Bond, said “For millions of children, Dick Bruna’s books are the first they will encounter. They don’t know how lucky they are, for his stories are a wonderful window on the world; a world of colour and shapes and words, put together in a form that will stay with them for the rest of their lives”.

Lucy Cousins, award-winning illustrator and creator of Maisy wrote: “Miffy is one of the most enduring, influential and best-loved children’s book characters of the twentieth century. She is simple, beautiful and timeless.”

Kasia Rust, Director of Burst Design comments “I think Dick Bruna has taught us, as designers, not to be afraid that less is more. He showed us how you can make a statement with a very small mark, so long as that mark says something and says something very quickly”.

Lara Hancroft, Editorial Director of Children's Publishing at Simon and Schuster UK, comments: “Dick Bruna was a master story-teller. His most famous creation, the much-loved bunny, Miffy, is drawn with extraordinary simplicity of line and colour and yet each story conveys such warmth, such heart and is so true to a young child's experience. Bruna was also, of course, a master designer, creating a coherent, consistent look for Miffy that has made her instantly recognisable all around the world. We are immensely proud to publish Miffy in the UK and to be the guardians of Dick Bruna's wonderful legacy for the generations of children to come”.

Daisuke Kusakari, exhibition curator said “People of all ages, and even men, buy Miffy products. Japanese people traditionally like simple things, which you can see in old Japanese paintings, architecture and Zen gardens. There are many famous Japanese artists and graphic designers who are influenced by Bruna’s work.”

***Quotes by Dick Bruna***:

“A child can own a book. More than a film, more than a show,” he says. “They write their name in it. You read it once to them. You read it twice. They learn everything about that book. Then they can read it to you. To give a child something like that, that is the point.”

“I never have the idea that I am making books for children. I always think that I am making a nice picture book that I would like to have myself.”

“I always search around for a long time, throwing lots away, before I reach the moment of recognition. What matters is reducing everything to its essence. No line is redundant. Every shape captures the imagination, and I leave plenty of space for the reader’s imagination. That is the strength of simplicity: the art of omission”.

“I always have a picture story in my head first and the text follows,” he says. “I prefer to work on several books at a time, so that if one is not working I can go on with another.”

“For me, less is more. I work very hard on tears, making two or three of them, and then finding that one tear is more effective”.

“It’s all about being as direct and clear as possible. I often imagine there is an invisible child sitting opposite me in my studio watching me and checking that my work is just right for *them*…not their parents or anyone else”.

“With two dots and a little cross I have to make Miffy happy, or just a little bit happy, a little bit cross or a little bit sad – and I do it over and over again. There is a moment when I think yes, now she is really sad. I must keep her like that. At the end I have one big tear, and that is the saddest tear you can have.”

“I don’t look at things as I see them now, but as how I saw them in the past. For Miffy’s grandfather I think of my own grandfather, how I used to go to the playground with him and how he held me by the wrist.”

“I’m not an illustrator, more of a graphic artist. I’m always thinking in shapes and trying to pare elements down. If I have to draw an elephant, I go to the zoo and sketch an elephant, then I begin to strip away all the unnecessary stuff, to be left with the essence of elephant. It’s like an alphabet or graphic language, an international symbol of the subject…. Maybe that’s why my work is so popular in Japan”.

“Everything I’ve ever done has been to try and make people a little happier, whether it be a poster on a station platform, a book jacket, or a Miffy story”

“Miffy is very close to me – like a little child now. Like my little daughter. And I *still* find it so difficult to make her!”