

Varna will host the 41st Congress of the International Federation of Exlibris Societies FISAE in 2026

Organizer of the forum will be the Jordan Petkov Art Foundation

At the beginning of October 2024, the 40th edition of the Congress of the International Federation of Exlibris Societies FISAE was held in Palma de Mallorca, the capital of the Spanish autonomous region of the Balearic Islands. Exlibris societies, associations and institutions from all over the world are members of the organization. Traditionally, congress delegates - artists, collectors, representatives of institutions or libraries - gather to discuss the future of the community, exchange exlibris artworks with each other or commission artists to create new ones, strengthen ties between different generations and nationalities. At the delegate meeting, new members are admitted, and the location of the next congress is decided, which is different for each edition.

The Jordan Petkov Art Foundation team, organizer of the prestigious International Exlibris Competition Varna, attended the congress in Palma, where they submitted their application for membership. With the unanimous support of the FISAE delegates, the foundation was officially accepted as a member of the International Federation of Exlibris Societies.

The activity of the Jordan Petkov Art Foundation is dedicated to the mission of spreading and popularizing the beauty of small graphics and exlibris, organizing not only the prestigious Varna competition, but also its exhibition traveling throughout Bulgaria. As a next step in the development and upgrading of these activities, at the congress in Mallorca we aired the candidacy of Varna to host the next edition of FISAE in 2026. The Bulgarian maritime capital is a wonderful and inspiring city, the summer cultural capital of Bulgaria, and the hosting is an opportunity for the representatives of the world exlibris society to touch the beauty of the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast. In a contested competition with the candidacy of the Greek Exlibris Association, which proposed the capital Athens as host, the pearl of the Black Sea Varna won without appeal. Through a secret vote among the representatives of 23 countries, with 13 to 10 votes, Varna was chosen and for the first time the prestigious international forum will set foot on Bulgarian soil. The host and organizer of the event will be the Jordan Petkov Art Foundation, supported by Largo Gallery.

According to the federation's statutes and rules, the head of the chosen for the host organization becomes the president of FISAE for the next two years. Thus, until

the FISAE congress takes place in 2026 in Varna, the president will be Nelly Valcheva - director of the Jordan Petkov Art Foundation and of the International Exlibris Competition Varna.

The first International Exlibris Congress was held back in 1953 in Austria. Over the years, he visited the biggest cultural centers of the world, taking place in cities such as Lugano, Antwerp, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Vienna, Leipzig, Paris, Krakow, Hamburg, Como, Budapest, Helsingör, Lisboa, Linz, Weimar, Utrecht, Frederikshavn, Sapporo, Milan, St. Petersburg, Boston, Beijing, Istanbul, Prague, San Francisco, and the last host was Palma de Mallorca in 2024.

We are especially happy that Varna will represent Bulgaria in this prestigious series of host cities. Each FISAE forum is attended by many participants – collectors, artists, academic representatives. Congresses become not only a place of presentation and exchange of exlibris, but also an environment for exchange of ideas, a source of friendship, an opportunity to present the host city and the local culture and above all – to consolidate its place in the cultural map of the world.

Bulgaria, as a country that hosts two prestigious international exlibris competitions (in Ruse and Varna), has deserved to host such a serious forum. The event will be an opportunity to consolidate the glory of the Bulgarian graphic arts school as one of the best and beloved in the world. Bulgarian exlibris artists, such as Dimo Kolibarov, Julian Jordanov, Petar Lazarov, Hristo Naydenov, Veselin Damyanov-Ves, Kalina Krалеva, Hristo Kerin and dozens of others, are among the most sought after among the world's collecting community. For the Jordan Petkov Art Foundation team, the organization of the congress will be a challenge, but also an incredible opportunity to strengthen the image of Varna as a city for cultural and festival tourism. We will work hard to be an active and worthy member of the International Federation of Bookplate Societies FISAE.

Nelly Valcheva

President of FISAE

Director of Jordan Petkov Art Foundation



Milena Dimitrova, Konstantin Antioukhin and Nelly Valcheva, FISAE Mallorca 2024



Milena Dimitrova, Benoit Junod and Nelly Valcheva, FISAE Mallorca 2024



Milena Dimitrova, Marzia Zhaksygarina and Nelly Valcheva, FISAE Mallorca 2024



Milena Dimitrova, Maria Maddalena Tuccelli and Nelly Valcheva, FISAE Mallorca 2024



Milena Dimitrova, Yulia Protsyshyn and Nelly Valcheva FISAE Mallorca 2024



Milena Dimitrova, Silvana Martignoni and Nelly Valcheva, FISAE Mallorca 2024



Milena Dimitrova, Katarina Vasickova and Nelly Valcheva
FISAE Mallorca 2024



Delegates hard at work at the 40th edition of the FISAE congress in Palma de Mallorca, 2024