

Book Fairs of Italy

Since their inception in 1922, there have been 23 International Book Fairs (Fiera Internazionale del Libro = FIL) in Italy. The first 4 were held in Florence in 1922, 1925, 1929 and 1932.

Promotional labels were issued for each and should be of interest to collectors of book-related material. Important graphic designers created the images. All but one incorporates an image of a book. The first and second poster stamps come in a number of languages. The third and fourth may have but I have not seen them. I have two designs each for the first and third fairs.



The large stamp for the first Fair (1922) is by Ezio Anichini (left). Its elaborate design features an allegorical woman holding open the pages of a book showing the initials of the fair and the famous Aldine publishing logo, the city at its feet.



A smaller embossed & die cut letter seal has words only.

SECOND FOR 1922

The second (1925) and third (1928) Fair stamps are the work of Sorgiani and show a striking Art Deco style. A man carries a book up a ladder in 1925. In 1928, the ladder itself is made of books, leading to a star. The message is that it is worth the effort to climb the ladder of books to achieve knowledge.



A second issue for the third Fair, by D. Tofani, has an unusual image of a man using a slingshot to propel a book somewhere. Could this imply that knowledge overcomes adversity?

The fourth Fair stamp (1932), by Piero Bernardini, depicts an open book with a bookmark.



No doubt there were promotional labels for later Book Fairs, if anyone has seen them, please let us know.