

## LUCCA COMICS & GAMES 2025 PRESENTS: *FRENCH KISS*

### *FESTIVAL ARTWORK REVEALED*

#### **RÉBECCA DAUTREMER DESIGNS THE POSTER FOR EUROPE'S MOST ANTICIPATED COMMUNITY EVENT: 'SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF A KISS'**

*From October 29th to November 2nd, in the temple of pop culture, Lucca, Italy*

**Lucca, June 25, 2025** – The countdown to **Lucca Comics & Games 2025** has begun. Set to take place from October 29 to November 2, the city of Lucca will once again transform into a global capital of pop culture, uniting communities through creativity, storytelling, and shared passions. With Netflix's **Stranger Things** finale, **Pokemon's** immersive mega-pavilion, **Death Stranding 2: On The Beach** making the final stop on its World Tour, and **France** as the honored country, this year's festival promises to be a record-breaking celebration of comics, games, animation, film, and music.

#### **CELEBRATING FRENCH CULTURE: FRENCH KISS AND BANDE DESSINÉE**

2025 pays tribute to France, a country with a profound influence on every art form celebrated at Lucca. **Liberté, Créativité, Diversité** are the three values of the Institut Français based on the great principles of the French Revolution, which perfectly match the five values of Lucca Comics & Games: **Community, Inclusion, Discovery, Respect, Gratitude**.

Under the theme "French Kiss", the festival explores the kiss as a narrative and emotional detonator—transforming stories, relationships, and even genres. French illustrator **Rébecca Dautremer** captures the theme in this year's poster, presenting six fantastical characters—a werewolf, a warrior, a vampire countess, a monster, a witch, and the "Lukawa," a Lucca-inspired manga creature—in suspended moments before transformative kisses.

Dautremer's work will be on display at the new exhibition space in **Palazzo Guinigi**. The show will also debut her new graphic novel **Ruby Rose**, scheduled for release in France in 2026. Her shift from fairytale aesthetics to theatrical tableaux reflects the evolving nature of French comics.

The Palais de France at Fondazione Banca del Monte di Lucca will host **HEXAGONES**, a curated exhibition of twelve trailblazing French comic artists including **Moebius, Claire Bretécher, Jacques Tardi**, and **Florence Cestac**. Special guests **Edmond Baudoin** and **Cestac** will discuss the evolution of the *bande dessinée* and its social relevance.

**Éric Fouassier**, author of the **Valentin Verne** series, will appear to talk about his historical-mystical thrillers, continuing a tradition of French fiction that blends mystery with the paranormal.

The director of the Institut français Italy Florence **Alibert** presented the many French guests and activities. Among the most exclusive names announced was **Julien Papelier**, general manager of **Média-Participations**, a multimedia group, active in publishing, printing, audiovisual production, video

games, board games and, more recently amusement parks. **The bond with Paris is also highlighted by the partnership with the French Embassy in Italy.**

## STREAMING SENSATIONS: NETFLIX HEADLINES WITH STRANGER THINGS

Lucca's Movie section will shine brighter than ever with Netflix returning to celebrate the fifth and final season of **Stranger Things**. Curated by QMI, the meeting point for cinema and TV series fans is celebrating its 15th anniversary offering with a series of unmissable events.

This year, **Netflix is returning to Lucca Comics & Games to celebrate the highly anticipated fifth and final season of Stranger Things**. On October 31, the festival will host a unique and unmissable event anticipating the final chapter of one of the most beloved series of all time. Stranger Things will arrive on Netflix in three parts: Volume 1 (episode 1-4) of the final season premieres on November 27, Volume 2 (episodes 5-7) on December 26, and the climactic final episode will debut on January 1, 2026.

Also returning is **Cartoon Network**, following last year's successful **Teen Titans Go!** activation. This year, fans will step into **The Wonderfully Weird World of Gumball** in an immersive pavilion designed to capture the chaotic charm of the Wattersons. **Crunchyroll** will also return with a custom anime pavilion featuring sneak peeks, screenings, and exclusive merchandise.

## POKÉMON TAKES OVER LUCCA: AN UNMISSABLE EXPERIENCE FOR FANS

**Pokémon will make a grand return to Lucca C&G 2025**, in a new totally dedicated space, even larger and richer in events! In the monographic pavilion located in Piazza Colonna Mozza, fans will be able to discover wonders from across the world of Pokémon.

## VIDEO GAMES TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT: KOJIMA, TOYAMA, AND VAMPIRE SURVIVORS

Gaming takes center stage at Lucca 2025. The final stop on Kojima Productions' Death Stranding World Strand Tour 2 will occur in Lucca, showcasing **Death Stranding 2: On the Beach**. **Hideo Kojima's** vision of narrative-rich, cinematic gaming continues to redefine the medium, and Lucca is honored to be the concluding destination of this global tour.

Joining him is **Keiichi Toyama**, the legendary developer behind **Silent Hill** and **Slitterhead**. Toyama's work has defined psychological horror, and fans will get the rare opportunity to hear him speak about his creative journey and new studio, Bokeh Game Studio.

Indie developer **Luca Galante**, creator of *Vampire Survivors*, will also be present. From a passion project to a global hit, Galante's journey resonates with Lucca's own community-first values. Expect demos, panels, and hands-on experiences across the expanded video game zones.

## THE ART OF COMICS: ICONS FROM EAST TO WEST

Lucca 2025 will welcome **Sensei Tetsuo Hara**, creator of **Fist of the North Star**, for his first appearance in Italy. A dedicated exhibition at the Chiesa dei Servi will showcase more than 100 original pieces, alongside limited-edition merchandise created just for this historic visit. Hara's mythological hero, Kenshiro, continues to resonate with fans for his humanity amid brutal action.

Also appearing are **Kei Urana** and **Hideyoshi Andou**, creators of **Gachiakuta**. Known for their dynamic blend of graffiti and manga, the duo will debut new content and participate in panels and signings. These announcements reflect Lucca's unique position at the intersection of Japanese and Western pop cultures.

On the Italian front, comics legends Zerocalcare, Milo Manara, Leo Ortolani, and Fumettibrutti return with new releases and exhibitions. Zuzu, co-winner of the 2019 Gran Guinigi award, will present new work in collaboration with Coconino Press. Guy Delisle, known for autobiographical graphic novels, will also attend with Rizzoli Lizard.

## FANTASY LITERATURE: KINGS AND QUEENS OF IMAGINATION

Lucca 2025 will be a gathering of literary royalty. **Rick Riordan**, author of the Percy Jackson series, will promote his latest book, ***From the World of Percy Jackson: The Court of the Dead***. **Cassandra Clare** and **Holly Black**, creators of ***Shadowhunters*** and ***The Spiderwick Chronicles*** respectively, will celebrate a decade of their Magisterium Series. **Glenn Cooper** will unveil ***The Cosmos Keys***, a new epic fantasy novel.

## INNOVATION IN GAMING: BOARD GAMES, ROLE-PLAYING, AND TCGs

The Games section expands with exclusive previews, tournaments, and special editions. **Asmodee Italia** will present ***Dixit*** with a new card by Marie Cardouat dedicated to Lucca. **The Gundam Card Game** launches in Europe, with interactive workshops and demo sessions at the Gametrade x Bandai Card Games stand.

**MS Edizioni** celebrates its 10th anniversary with titles inspired by Stranger Things and One Piece. ***Pessime Notizie***, the satirical Lercio party game, will debut with humorous, chaotic gameplay.

The 30th Ruolimpiadi, Lucca's legendary role-playing tournament, returns with new adventures including ***Wildsea*** and a ***Dungeons & Dragons crossover with Si, Oscuro Signore***.

## EXPERIENCES & MUSIC: LEGO, RED BULL, AND LIVE CONCERTS

**LEGO Italia** doubles its footprint with a 300m<sup>2</sup> space combining immersive play areas and a pop-up store. **Red Bull Unforeseen** transforms Ostello San Frediano into a surreal ***Tetris*** playground, with the national final of Red Bull Tetris taking place on November 1.

Musically, Lucca will become an open-air stage. **DJ Étienne de Crécy** headlines the French Choc party, supported by **Venin Carmin** and **MC Andrea Rock**. Symphonic metal from **Vision of Atlantis** and Nordic mythology-inspired music from **Eihwar** round out the lineup.

## FAMILY & YOUTH: LUCCA JUNIOR, GERONIMO STILTON, AND LIBROGAME®

Lucca Junior turns 20 with a program full of family-friendly exhibitions and workshops. **Geronimo Stilton** celebrates 25 years with creator **Elisabetta Dami** attending in person. Edizioni EL revives the Librogame® series with new sports-themed adventures by Luca Tebaldi.

## CINEMA AND DOCU-STORIES: LUCCA ON THE BIG SCREEN

There is great anticipation for ***"I Love Lucca Comics & Games"***, the first film about the community, culture and values of Lucca Comics & Games, to be launched in theatres on 10, 11 and 12 November and subsequently on IWONDERFULL, the digital platform available on Amazon Prime. The project is collaboration between **Lucca Crea** and **I Wonder Pictures**, an independent film distribution company, which will produce the docu-films together with production partner **All At Once** and handle distribution. Directed by Manlio Castagna and produced by Andrea Romeo, the series aims to capture the spirit of the festival through the stories of its community, artists, and creators.

The third issue of the graphic novel series *The Decisive Moment*, commissioned by Italy's Civil Protection Department, will also be unveiled, reinforcing Lucca's role in promoting social awareness through storytelling.

## AN EVENT UNLIKE ANY OTHER

Lucca Comics & Games 2025 is more than a festival—it's a manifestation of values: community, inclusion, discovery, respect, and gratitude. With France as its cultural compass and pop culture as its lingua franca, Lucca 2025 reaffirms itself as a global epicenter for all who create, imagine, and believe in the power of stories.

## EARLY BIRD TICKET OFFICE OPENS

Starting at 1:00 PM today, June 25, the sale of Early Bird tickets begins: anyone who wants to secure tickets and season tickets at a reduced price will be able to do so for a whole month, until midnight on July 25. With a price identical to that of the previous year, **the ordinary ticket office will reopen on September 2.**

## MEDIA PARTNERS

**RAI** is the **Main Media Partner** of the event. Among the media partners **QN group** and **Adnkronos**. **RDS 100% Grandi Successi** and **RDS NEXT** are, for the first year, **Entertainment Partners of the event**: a collaboration based on the sharing of values and respective audience targets, with the aim of generating significant synergies. Streaming media partners are **Cultura pop**, a digital magazine that tells the story of the world of geek and pop entertainment every day, an integral part of the 3labs publishing group; **Animeclick**, an Italian portal that for more than 20 years has been the point of reference for fans of anime, manga, gaming and Japanese culture, and **Multiplayer.it**, the only Italian site dedicated to all video game enthusiasts.

**We believe in #Community #Inclusion #Respect #Discovery #Gratitude**

**#LUCCACG25**

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**Rébecca Dautremer** - Born in Gap in 1971, Rébecca Dautremer invented, in the early 2000s, a style that has made history. Experimenting with everything - animation, theater, photography - she has seen her works translated all over the world. Since the beginning of her career, she has attracted a large audience, far beyond the confines of youth illustration. She develops her universe, closely touching that of short stories, revisiting classics of literature or taking up contemporary novels that she sublimates: *Silk* by Alessandro Baricco and *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck.

Since 2018, her work as a writer has also been celebrated with the publication of the first volume around the character of *The Book of Happy Hours* by *Jacominus Gainsborough*, followed the following year by *Midi Pile*, *Une toute petite seconde* and, in autumn 2023, *Something formidable*. The series has been

recognized with numerous awards, such as the Pétite du Livre illustré, the Grand Prix de l'Illustration and the Franco-German Jugendliteraturpreis. Since 2020, she has also been present in the theater with her show *La conférence ébouriffée*. For the time being, the illustrator devotes her time to a graphic novel project and continues to expand the frontiers of her virtuoso art.