



COMBEL

MONSTRUOUS NEWS

AGUS & MONSTERS

AGUS AND MONSTERS

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

A great Christmas adventure, with two songs and a new monster!

Over the last three years, Copons & Fortuny have created 10 books in the series **Agus and Monsters**, which have already been translated into a dozen languages. As we have come to expect from Combel, the publishing house now presents a new, very special adventure with twice the number of pages, two songs and a new monster.

Copons and Fortuny say that thanks to Agus and Monsters, they themselves have ended up living in a monstrous world, and they cannot stop thinking up and creating games, music and all sorts of new monstrous genres, ideas and formats. The book *Merry Christmas, Dear Monsters!* was the result of this creative energy, taking shape in an adventure for the monsters that is much longer than the usual offering. And this time the characters are facing an immense challenge: to save Christmas. To do this, the monsters will only have the help of a new monster, the It, and the Unreal Peep Band, a rock and roll band.

Real literature, real music. And if there is sound, there is also an image

■ Copons and Fortuny were very clear that if they wrote and illustrated Agus and Monsters freely and based on what they liked most, the music of the monsters could not be music for children produced by machines with few resources. So they got together with Pep Rius and went into Estudi Lluerna with a small group of monstrous musicians. And after finishing the songs, they chose Pol Fuentes to produce the video clips.



The It is a monster chosen from 12,000 children's drawings, and the Unreal Peep Band, a very real rock band

The It is a character from the imagination of Lluç Vila. It was chosen from 12,000 drawings by boys and girls who took part in the second "Draw your monster" competition. In contrast, the rock band is inspired by the real musicians who created and recorded the two songs from the books: Pep Rius, Iban Rodríguez, Joan and Lluís from Compañía Eléctrica Dharma, Valentí Nieto and Mercè Galí. And, if that were not enough, in *Merry Christmas, Dear Monsters!*, we find the Tió, the Three Kings, Father Christmas, the Befana and many characters who distribute gifts around the world at Christmastime.

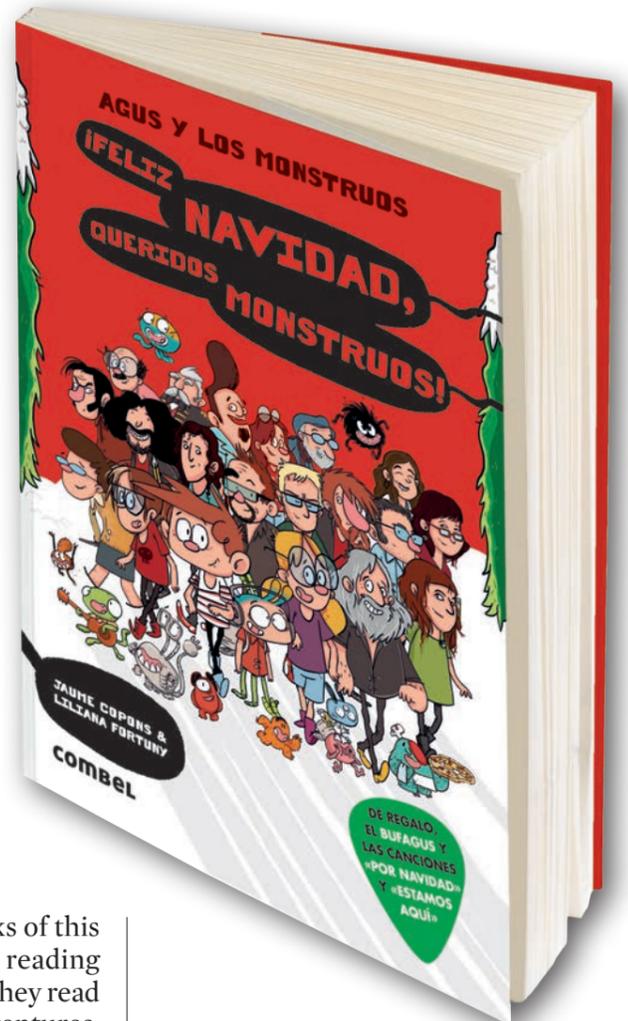


From Dickens to Dr. Seuss, through Auggie Wren's Christmas Story, by Paul Auster

■ As is typical in the books of this series, the characters are reading all the time and the books they read end up echoing their adventures. This time, they look at three Christmas stories: the story that Paul Auster published in the *New York Times* at Christmas 1997, Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and another American classic, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, by Dr. Seuss.

A crazy plot...

■ All the characters who distribute Christmas gifts have decided to stop doing so. Dr. Brot is behind a campaign that has made them believe that they are no longer needed and that nobody loves them. The It, a monster who makes the bags that these characters use to hand out gifts, asks the monsters to help him. And Octosol, the monster of music, is convinced that music will help them save Christmas.

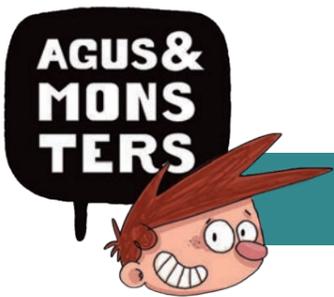


All the elements of the series, doubled

■ In this instalment, readers find all the ingredients that they recognise from the series: empathy, companionship, surrealism, rebellion, adventure and elements from art, literature, music and life. And they find all this in a book that is twice the normal length, along with new features like the songs.



3 years, 10 books, 12 languages, 150,000 copies sold, and now... **Merry Christmas, Dear Monsters!**



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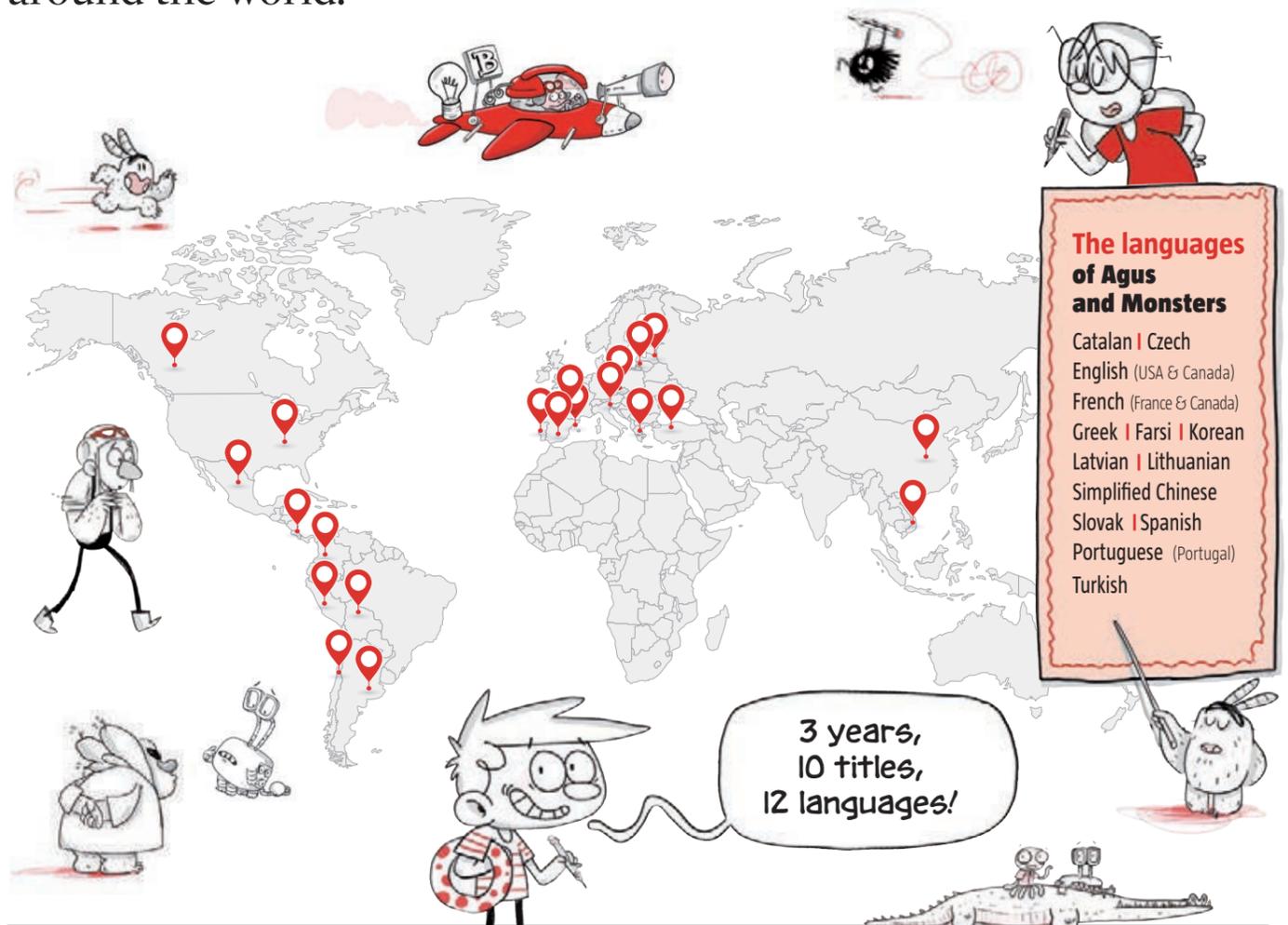
Agus and Monsters, book by book

Since September 2014, Combel has published ten titles in the series, including the extra publications *Saint George of the Galaxies*, a very special version of the legend of Saint George, and the activity book *Monstrous Activigames*.



Agus and Monsters around the world

Three years after they were created, the monsters have been scattered to the four winds and continue to form new alliances around the world.



Agus or Tiago?

■ Agus' arrival in Portugal has brought us a surprise. There, Agus is not called Agus, but Tiago! How would we say his name in France and the United States? And in China?



Agus and Monsters, the forthcoming animated series

■ More than just continuing with the series, Copons and Fortuny keep dreaming up monstrosities. They will certainly continue to make music with the travel companions they have found along the way, but this year they are also planning to take the first steps towards an animated series. They have already made contacts with some monsters in the audiovisual sector, a field they both know very well.

Who is behind Agus & Monsters?

“ We are not a couple, we are not father and daughter, we are not a tandem or any other type of bicycle.

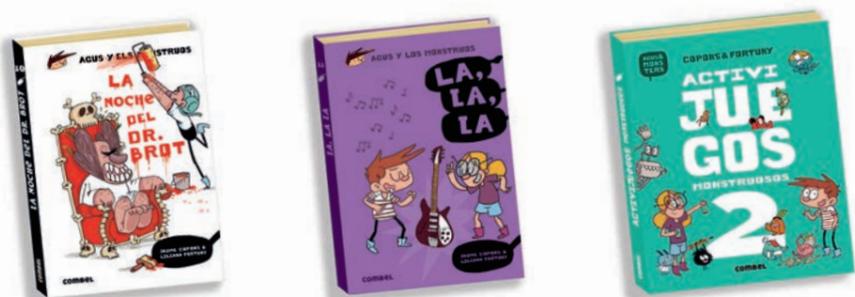
Rather, we are the two bikers from Easy Rider, *Thelma and Louise*, *Simon and Garfunkel*, *Athos and Porthos*, *Asterix and Obelix* and, at the very best, *Harpo and Chico Marx*”

COPONS & FORTUNY



And very soon... more monsters!

■ While *Merry Christmas, Dear Monsters!* has just been released, we are already working on new books in the series. *The Night of Dr. Brot* will be here in February 2018 and, after Saint George's Day, a double delivery: the novel *La, La, La* and *Monstrous Activigames 2*.





Reasons why publishers decide to join this monstrous adventure



CHOUETTE PUBLISHING

Language: French and English
(Canada and USA)



SIMON PAYETTE | VP SALES

■ Everyone at Chouette Publishing just fell in love with Agus & Monsters! Agus is a very appealing character; he is a typical kid – funny, curious, a little forgetful, always hungry—whose world turns upside down when he meets a monster in a library. The series grabs your attention with hilarious illustrations and entertaining stories that mix humour, fantasy, adventure and literature (yes, literature!).

KEDROS

Language: Greek

ARIADNI MOSCHONA | CHILDREN'S BOOKS EDITOR

■ What a fabulous idea! What a great way to make even the most reluctant reader dive into a book! With Agus and his monsters, it was love at first sight. We smiled tenderly and laughed out loud reading his stories. We feel confident that young readers will love them too. Proud to be the Greek publisher of this series, and particularly happy since this whole project was developed in Spain.

HACHETTE-PHOENIX CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (BEIJING) CO., LTD.

Language: Simplified Chinese
(Mainland China)

NIE WEIWEI | COMMISSIONING EDITOR

■ “If you don’t tidy your room, one of these days I’m going to throw out anything that’s in a mess!” my mother shouted. This is the opening sentence of the first title in Agus & Monsters series, and this is me—a 9-year-old boy’s (sometimes) hysterical mother. So I chose this series without hesitation. As an editor abroad, I decided to join this monstrous adventure because, speaking honestly, bringing up a boy is a real adventure for me.



Blue Wing (Korea)

HOST

Language: Czech



EVA SEDLACKOVA | CHILDREN'S BOOKS EDITOR

■ My heart belongs to Mr. Flat. I'd like to have a funny bro like him, who knows a lot of stories, loves adventure and isn't a spoilsport. Quite simply, I love this little monster who seems like an overgrown plush carrot!

EVA SEDLACKOVA & NIKOLA MARZYOVÁ

■ We choose the Agus & Monsters series because...
... it's funny
... it makes children love reading
... it combines great text with illustrations
... it has awesome and funny illustrations

APKABINK MĒNULI

Language: Lithuanian

RUTA IGNATE | EXECUTIVE EDITOR

■ If I don't read, I lose my energy. Mr. Flat – the good monster of books - represents all of us who love to read books and need them to live.

LAUKU AVIZE

Language: Latvian

RENĀTE NEIMANE | EDITOR

■ As an editor of the publishing house “Lauku Avīze” from Latvia, we decided to join Agus & Monsters because of its story, the style in which the story is told, and its attractive and colourful illustrations. What we like most about the series is the humour, the idea of promoting reading, references to classic stories and books, the southern character, the explosion of emotions... but at the same time the situations are so recognisable and common to the children of the world. My favourite characters are: Agus, Lidia, Mr. Flat and the father. I expect more breath-taking stories in the future which are revealed with good humour.

Licence to sing!

Last year Agus & monsters were invited to join the panel “Licence to Thrill: How to Make the Most of your IP in a Brand Savvy Digital World” at the Shanghai Children’s Book Fair.



From left to right: Zhou Jin, Vice Editor-In-Chief, Jieli Publishing House Co. Ltd, China | Pinelopi Pourpoutidou, Head of Foreign and Digital Sales, Michael O'Mara Books Ltd. | Moderator: Jeff Norton, Awesome Media & Entertainment UK | Julia Posen, EVP and Commercial Director, Group Rights and Development Division from Walker Books, UK | Esther Serra, Foreign Rights, Combel Editorial, Spain.

The music of the monsters



No tricks

■ One afternoon you go with Lilianna Fortuny to do a show in a bookshop and a mother says: “You are the rock and roll of children’s literature”; and you see that she is saying that because there is no shamming, because attitude is everything and we do not shout or patronise the children. And then everything changes and you realise that if you want to give the monsters a voice you can no longer cheat, or resort

to cheap tricks or machines and synthesisers or beat boxes. Suddenly you stop the puppet voices and the voices of forty-something ladies pretending to be children. You realise that the music should be real, like the written and plastic language you have created. And you continue to have a mental block until one day you find a left-handed guitarist, Pep Rius, with that slightly crazy genius of all good left-handed guitarists.



The Unreal Peep Band or the Real Pep Rius Band

■ As well as composing the music of the monsters and doing the production with Iban Rodríguez, Pep Rius has added his guitars, keyboards and bass lines. But not only that: he was the driving force behind putting together a band that is as unrealistic as it is practically impossible (that’s why in the book it’s called UNREAL PEEP BAND), in which Valen Nieto, Iban Rodríguez, Mercè Galí and the saxophonist and trumpeter Joan and Lluís from Companyia Elèctrica Dharma got together. It has to be said that after a lot of work, but before the recording, we did two studio sessions so that it was possible to do everything

we wanted. What were we trying to do? The same happens when we write and illustrate the novels: we do it all from the heart, because we like to keep our egos in our pockets, take risks, work freely and enjoy every moment. To sum it up: love, freedom, fun, respect. And we do it. That is why the Unreal Peep Band is now inseparable from Agus and Monsters.



Songs from Merry Christmas, Dear Monsters!

All Together Now!

■ From the intro (as if The Who had been born in the Bronx) to the refrain (arrangements in the style of Motown), and with a melody that worms its way into the brain as if it were the summer hit, this track is a total hit. The song exudes freshness and energy from all sides. The Unreal Peep Band totally lifts us up from the very first note. Seamless soul rock.



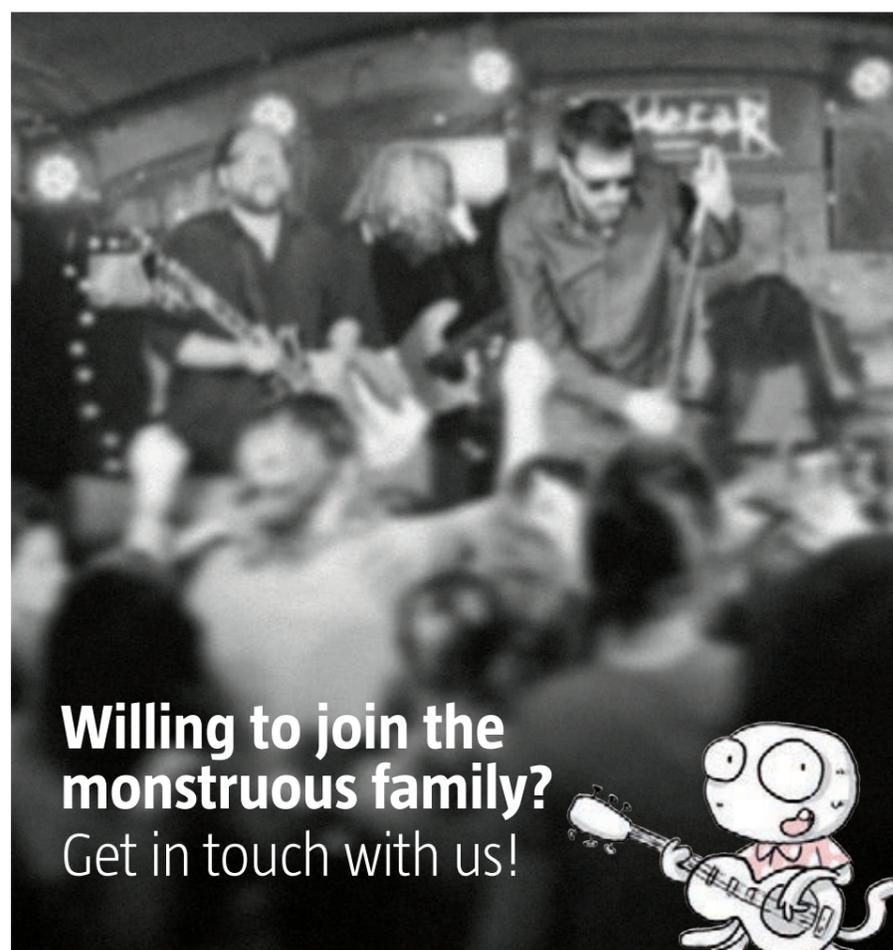
For Christmas

■ Take Elvis Costello from the Year of Our Lord 1977, add the Beatles of Revolver and a nu-metal guitarist, lock them in a studio in California in 1969 with the impossible mission of writing a Christmas carol for the 21st century. The result wouldn’t be much different to this track, which is more than a Christmas carol, more than a song. This is a celebration of music! The Unreal Peep Band nails it again. Rock in all senses of the word.

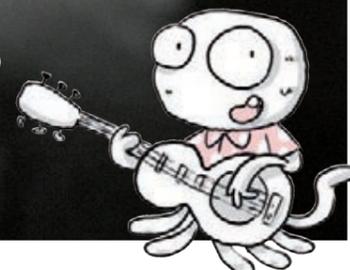


Listen to and watch the songs and download them!

agusandmonsters.com/en • combeleditorial.com/en



Willing to join the monstrous family?
Get in touch with us!



CONTACT

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