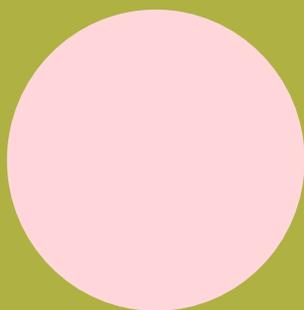


# New Czech Books Spring 2019



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# Introduction

2019 is a crucial year for Czech literature abroad. After a long gap, the Czech Republic is once again the main guest at the Leipzig Book Fair, where it will be represented by more than 50 writers. The fair will help this Central European country, with a great literary tradition and diverse contemporary output, to continue in its cultural collaboration with German-speaking areas, as well as with Europe and the rest of the world. In terms of ideas, it follows on from 1995, when it was the guest of honour for the first time. At that time – the era of the president, playwright and poet Václav Havel – the programme looked at the journey which has to be undertaken towards freedom.

The difficult journey from an authoritarian social order to democracy and a civic society is one of this year's great themes in Czech culture. In the autumn, it will be 30 years since the Velvet Revolution, and looking back over the past three decades raises a host of issues – pleasant as well as unpleasant. The main one is: where do we find ourselves in relationship to those ideals, ourselves and the world around us?

The choice of titles in this brochure offers different answers. The poetry is openly socially engaged – the criticism of corporate language in Pavel Zajíč's *Peníze* (Money) represents one critical position; the manifesto and rebellion in the language of Jan Škrob offers another possibility. Novelists have also been examining the state of society, either as a theme for the current generation Y in Michal Kašpárek's novel, in Pavla Horáková theory of today's strangeness, or through the male sorrow in Jaroslav Rudiš's new work.

The current selection of books for children and young adults represents, on the one hand, a celebration of the freedom of the imagination in the internationally successful *Panáček, pecka, švestka, poleno a zase panáček* (Puppet, Plum Pit, Plum, Plank and Back to Puppet), as well as the powerful story of what it means to be different in Ivona Březinová's *www.bez-bot.cz* ([www.short-of-shoes.cz](http://www.short-of-shoes.cz)). In the case of genre fiction, it is noticeable how Czech fantastic and crime literature have been developing.

I hope you enjoy reading about these and other books from contemporary Czech prose, poetry, literature for children and young adults, comics and non-fiction.

Ondřej Buddeus  
CzechLit Head Coordinator

# CzechLit – Czech Literary Centre

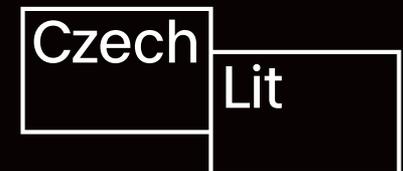
is a state-funded organisation supporting and promoting Czech literature abroad and in the Czech Republic. The centre is a section of the Moravian Library.

CzechLit:

- Promotes prose, literature for children and young adults, poetry, drama, comics, non-fiction and new forms of literature
- Acts as an information hub for foreign publishers, translators, Czech studies specialists, event organisers and others interested in Czech literature
- Provides grants for authors to attend cultural events abroad
- Cooperates on international literature and translation projects with partner institutions abroad and in the Czech Republic
- Organises residencies for foreign translators, Czech studies specialists and authors
- Runs the bilingual website [czechlit.cz](http://czechlit.cz) with information about books, authors, grants, residencies and Czech literature news
- Cooperates with the network of Czech Centres, which promote Czech culture abroad, as well as with other governmental and non-governmental cultural and non-profit organisations and individuals
- Is involved in the presentation of Czech literature at book fairs abroad in cooperation with its parent institution
- Holds the annual Susanna Roth Award for young translators of Czech literature

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# Literary Fiction

# Anna Cima

## I WAKE UP IN SHIBUYA

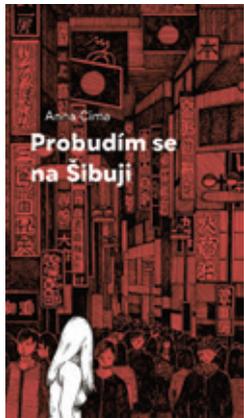
Japanologist Anna Cima's debut novel is a contender for Czech literary discovery of the year.

A teenager called Jana finds herself in the lively Tokyo district of Shibuya. Her slightly older alter ego is studying Japanese language and culture in Prague, attempting to translate and trying to get a scholarship in Japan. The life story of the author whose work Jana is translating with a friend – the forgotten prose writer Kawashita – works its way into the mind and fate of both versions of Jana.

This prose debut by the young Japanologist, with its readable and refreshingly colloquial yet in no way trivial language, looks at ways of absorbing and understanding different cultures as well as the contradiction inherent in a dream come true and presents Japan and its culture in an erudite but far from dull way.

“The combination of several genres and types of text keeps readers on their toes and draws them in. Cima has managed to write such a good book about her obsession that she passes it on to the reader: the general consensus on internet forums is that people couldn't put it down and read it in one sitting.”  
—*Respekt*

“This extraordinary debut by the young Czech author searches for a way of understanding the distant culture of Japan as well as making sense of today's world. The narrative is not only linguistically interesting, but above all authentic and true to life.”  
—*Literatura*



Probudím se na Šibuji  
Paseka, 2018, 320 pp

Photo: Jana Benešová



Anna Cima (1991) is a first-time novelist. She graduated in Japanese studies from the Arts Faculty of Charles University and currently lives in Japan, where she studies postwar Japanese literature. As well as writing, she also devotes herself to drawing and music. *Probudím se na Šibuji* (I Wake Up in Shibuya) is her literary debut and has captured the attention of critics and readers alike. An excerpt from the novel was also selected for the 2019 Susanna Roth Award for beginner translators of Czech.

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English sample translation available

# Jaroslav Rudiš

## CZECH PARADISE

Witty conversations in a sauna staking everything on undiluted dialogue.

A group of sixteen friends regularly meet in a sauna for some sweaty guy time filled with chat. But their refuge is about to close for good. This witty novel about men's woes is based on pure dialogue from speakers who are only referred to by their Indian nicknames. It was staged in Brno by Divadlo Feste as the play *Čekání na konec světa* (Waiting for the End of the World) before the literary version was created, and in February 2019 it will have its premiere in Germany.

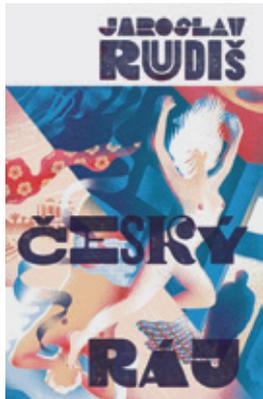
This essentially humorous novel doesn't have a central character or a dominant narrator, and yet it knows all there is to know about men's expulsion from paradise. The great male we in times when something significant is coming to an end is the unifying element of this prose work.

"Anyone who has ever been in a sauna knows that conversations under the spruce ceiling in dry 100-degree heat tend to be superficial, topics are endlessly repeated and you cannot convince the convinced. Rudiš has succeeded brilliantly in transferring all this triviality to paper for sauna-lovers."

—*Respekt*

"The author took to heart the golden rule of moderation and wrote a book which pays homage to Czechness – effortlessly and with a detached view."

—*MF Dnes*



Český ráj  
Labyrint, 2018, 184 pp

Photo: Milada Fišerová



Jaroslav Rudiš (1972) is a prose writer, author of plays and comic books. He graduated from the Faculty of Education at the Technical University of Liberec (German and history) and went on to study in Prague and Zurich. From 2001 to 2002 he lived in Berlin, where he was awarded a journalism scholarship at the Free University. He worked as a teacher, DJ, manager of a punk band, hotel porter and finally a journalist at the daily newspaper *Právo*. His debut work, *Nebe pod Berlínem* (The Sky Under Berlin, 2002), received a number of awards, has been translated into seven languages and was used as the basis for theatre and radio adaptations. The comic-book trilogy *Alois Nebel* (together with the artist Jaromír 99, 2003–2005) about a Czech/German train dispatcher working at a small station in the Sudetenland, was made into a film in 2011 and received the European Film Award for best animated film. He also writes in German and lives in Berlin.

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www.labyrint.net/stranka/21/english

English sample translation available

# Pavla Horáková

## THE THEORY OF STRANGENESS

The brilliantly described journey of a young academic-intellectual in search of freedom and the meaning of life.

The narrator, Ada Sabová, a young academic from the “Institute of Interdepartmental Human Studies”, is in many ways typical (though not stereotypical) of modern intellectuals trying to balance their personal life with their career. She has been through many things in both of them and so is guilty of a certain cynicism, or rather of an informed, sarcastic view of the world, the people around her, and herself. While searching for a colleague’s lost son, she notes the apparent coincidences around her, behind which, however, she senses a regularity and interdependence.

She looks for an overarching definition of all these phenomena in her “theory of strangeness” and discovers that she cannot grasp the infinite complexity of the world through reason alone. And while the society around her clings on increasingly tightly to vacuous rules, Ada abandons their structures one by one and sets out towards freedom.

“Pavla Horáková’s book is intriguing due to the number of heterogenous themes and the unexpected way she treats them as part of a furtive layering of motifs and hinted-at connections, though at the same time it remains an entertaining and readable book.”

—iLiteratura



Teorie podivnosti  
Argo, 2018, 360 pp



Photo: Richard Klíčník

Pavla Horáková (1974) is a writer, literary journalist, translator and radio journalist. She wrote the detective trilogy for young readers: *Tajemství Hrobaříků; Hrobaříci v podzámčí; Hrobaříci a Hrobaři* (The Secret of the Sextons, 2010; The Sextons under the Castle, 2011; The Sextons and the Gravediggers, 2012). She began translating in 2007 and has been awarded two prizes for her literary translations. In 2018, together with Alena Scheinostová and Zuzana Dostálová, she published the novella *Johana*, as well as her first book for adults *Teorie podivnosti* (The Theory of Strangeness). From 2014 to 2018 she worked on the series *Polní pošta* (The Field Post Office) with her radio colleague Jiří Kamen for the Vltava radio station. It draws on diaries, memoirs and correspondence from Czechs involved in the First World War, and was published in book form as *Přišel Befehl od císaře pána* (An Order Came Through from the Emperor, 2015) and *Zum Befehl, pane lajtmant* (Zum Befehl, Lieutenant, Sir, 2018).

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www.argo.cz

English sample translation available

# Jiří Padevět

## THORNS AND NOOSES

A mosaic of remarkable small stories behind watershed moments in history.

In this work of fiction, Jiří Padevět successfully demonstrates what a powerful influence little history has on the course of great history. Plausibly sketched-out situations from the lives of important historical figures – who were, above all, ordinary people – illustrate how crucial moments in history that formed chapters of later history books may have looked and in some cases did look. The book is divided into two parts: the larger one focuses on the author's favourite period, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the Second World War, while the other one is set after the war under communist totalitarianism. The dramatic stories are accompanied by authentic reports from the contemporary press; the juxtaposition of these

two styles helps to give rise to a certain tension. At the heart of the stories is the linking up of separate events and people whose paths may or may not have crossed, as well as impartiality: the baddies are not condemned or the heroes glorified. The scrupulous presentation of facts with essayistic and literary flair takes on the character of a parable with a moral. These economical aphoristic texts with philosophical overlap and humour have a visual power. This completely different and humanly compelling view of key events in European history has earned the author a number of awards.

“A book of stories that happened or could have happened. A book about people who entered or could have entered each other's lives. A mosaic of heroes and traitors. A raw account that you won't find in history textbooks.”

—*iLiteratura*

“The author's name has already become synonymous with an original literary genre that has no successors in this country as yet. You don't need a lot of imagination to picture some of the scenes playing out next to you.”

—*Lidové noviny*



Ostny a oprátky  
Host, 2018, 136 pp

Photo: Jiří Padevět's archive



Jiří Padevět (1966) is a writer dealing predominantly with the history of the Second World War resistance movement, the Holocaust and war events. After studying geodetics, working as a surveyor and teacher, he worked as a bookseller. Since 2006, he has been director of the publishing house Academia. He is the author of many books with historical themes, such as the award-winning *Průvodce protektorátní Prahou* (Guide to Protectorate Prague, 2013). In 2016, he published the book *Anthropoid* (with Pavel Šmejkal) and a year later, *Dotek Anthropoidu* (The Touch of Anthropoid). Also in these guidebooks about the Nazi occupation and its consequences, Jiří Padevět inventively describes the atmosphere in Prague in 1942 using a collage of documents of the time and fictional passages. Jiří Padevět was awarded an Operation Anthropoid commemorative medal.

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English sample translation available

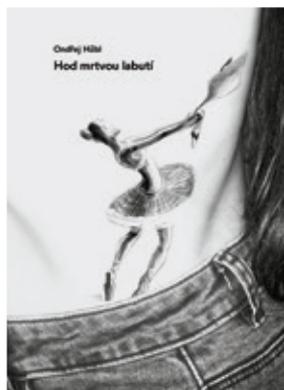
# Ondřej Hübl

## TOSS THE DEAD SWAN

A collection of politically incorrect stories by a screenwriter and advertising copywriter.

Ondřej Hübl has written a work of fiction, but one about real-life figures from the Czech theatre scene and ordinary Prague hipsters pursuing the attractions of a truly cool lifestyle. A well-known opera singer and director gets unhappily entangled in international business and politics because he “butchers” Wagner. The life of an African boy adopted at a distance by a childless couple is put at risk, and Brussels is to blame for it all. The famed Dejvice Theatre has not received funding, so the ensemble and its director

Miroslav Krobot begin selling pots and pans on the sly. The disconcerting dual nature of the characters, black humour, and the reader’s sense that all this could very well happen, make this debut work a promise of things to come. Hübl is a great observer with an ear for the dialogue of members of different social classes – above all, however, he is unafraid and has an excellent sense of humour.



Hod mrtvou labutí  
Druhé město, 2018, 268 pp

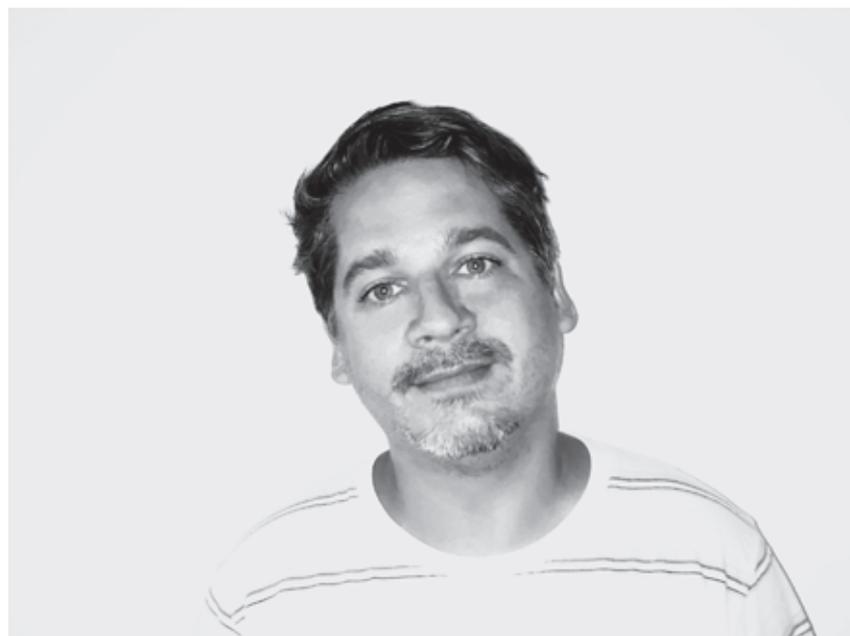
“The author has brought the best of the advertising business to his literature: a rich vocabulary, a lively and flexible style, bold fantasies and somewhat bizarre subject matter.”

—*MF Dnes*

“*Toss the Dead Swan* is exactly what a literary debut should be. Bold, charged with energy, occasionally a little shaky, but refreshingly honest.”

—*Právo*

Photo: Barbara Klimszová



Ondřej Hübl (1976) is a copywriter, prose writer, scriptwriter and creative director. He is the author and co-author of many successful advertising campaigns for major brands. Based on the short story “Divotvorné hrnce” (Miracle-working Pots), which is part of his debut short-story collection *Hod mrtvou labutí*, he also wrote the television series *Zkáza Dejvického divadla* (The Downfall of the Dejvice Theatre) along with the director Miroslav Krobot.

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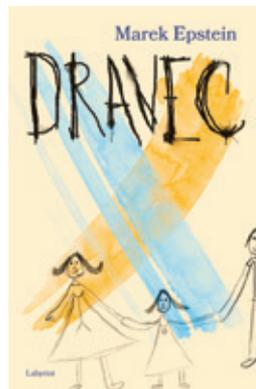
# Marek Epstein

## PREDATOR

Domestic violence through the eyes of three characters who are part of it.

This dramatic novella about a family destroyed by domestic violence is based on a detailed psychological portrait of the characters: father, mother and child. All three have contributed to creating a seemingly idyllic family. In reality, however, the cracks are already showing for the disillusioned woman, the violent psychopath and their young daughter, who has been forced to grow up early by this violence, in the escalating narrative of *Predator*. In this believable story from within a nuclear family, all three characters take turns in the

role of narrator. The classic triangle of domestic violence is supplemented by the humorous figure of a kindly neighbour – a former porn actor who is able to help selflessly. This novel about betrayal, revenge and forgiveness reveals the author's extensive experience of writing film scripts.



Dravec  
Labyrint, 2018, 250 pp

“*Predator* is not just a micro-drama full of violence so brutal that it hurts the reader as well – it is also a story about the strength of maternal love, the corrupt social system, mutual and selfless human help and about how we should never underestimate children.”

—*MF Dnes*

Photo: Matěj Stránský



Marek Epstein (1975) is a screenwriter, novelist, dramaturg, occasional actor and director, and former sprinter. In 2003 he graduated from the FAMU film school in screenwriting and dramaturgy. His scripts, which have won him prizes in many competitions, have been used as the basis for more than twenty films and television programmes, e.g. *Brainstorm* (Elsa award for best TV script), *Šejdrem* (Askew), *Iguo-Igua* and the first series of *Redakce* (The Newsroom). For the scripts *Rebarbora* (Rhubarb) and *Amen Sam* he was awarded the Sazka prize at the Czech Lion awards (2003 and 2004) and twice came first in the national heats of the international Hartley-Merrill Prize competition. He made his literary debut in 2007 with the novella *Ohybač křížů* (Flexor of Crosses). He followed this up with the short-story collection *Ocucanej konec* (The Sucked End). He has also contributed short stories to a number of anthologies. He lectures at the Film Academy in Písek.

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English sample translation available

# Lidmila Kábrtová

## PLACES IN THE DARK

A collection of loosely interconnected stories about women written in a pure style.

A set of twelve short stories loosely following on from one another about a number of heroines who share the same lack of grounding: Tereza staves off boredom with lovers, Karla with fun, Klára with wealth, Eva by sacrificing herself for her family, Alice by being brave... Events are supported by memories of a formative youth that leads to infidelity, promiscuity and abuse.

These women's stories collide with each other without any of them realizing it. Like the author's debut work *Koho vypijou lišky* (Whom Foxes Drink Up, 2013), *Places in the Dark* is truly dark reading thanks in part to the language used, which is raw and direct.

"Following her experimental debut work *Koho vypijou lišky* (Whom Foxes Drink Up), the author has come up with a book of short stories depicting women in seemingly ordinary but at the same time critical situations. Their stories are very different and yet they meet and enter each other's lives."

—*Respekt*

"An unusually cohesive short-story collection. The individual texts are not only linked by the way the characters keep meeting in them, but also by the way this interlinking gives new meanings to what might initially seem banal motifs."

—*iLiteratura*



Místa ve tmě  
Host, 2018, 180 pp

Photo: Lenka Faltejsková



Lidmila Kábrtová (1971) is a prose writer and journalist. She graduated in journalism from the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University in Prague and later in marketing communication from the Tomáš Baťa University in Zlín. She was involved in journalism for a long time before going on to focus on public relations. She is the author of several radio plays as part of the project ČRo 3 Vltava – Minutové hry (Czech Radio 3 – Minute-Long Plays). Her short stories have appeared in anthologies from the Listen publishing house. As a short-story writer and editor, she contributed to the book *Mé dětství v socialismu* (My Childhood under Communism, 2014). Her first book was the experimental prose work *Koho vypijou lišky* (Whom Foxes Drink Up, 2013). *Místa ve tmě* (Places in the Dark) is her second work of prose. She lives in Nymburk.

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English sample translation available

# Marek Toman

## NEPTUNE'S CAVE

### A Tale from Royal Vinohrady

Allegories of contemporary society from Prague's Havlíček Park.

A statue of the god Neptune adorns the fountain by the entrance to the famous artificial cave in one of Prague's parks. Marek Toman has the god come to life and uses him as a means and mouth-piece to observe major events in Czech society from the 1870s, when the industrialist Mořic Gröbe has the Havlíček Gardens beautified according to his artistic scheme, to the present day. Toman makes skilful use of the historical backdrop and the malleable narrator Neptune – that is to say, the stuccoer Josef Posedloň – for a thoughtful

depiction of entirely contemporary dramas. Over the course of more than a hundred years, his historical witness manages to experience a great deal: a synagogue, Czech, German and Jewish women, both World Wars and the postwar arrangements. A novel which could also serve as a history textbook for those who love stories.



Neptunova jeskyně  
Plus, 2018, 376 pp

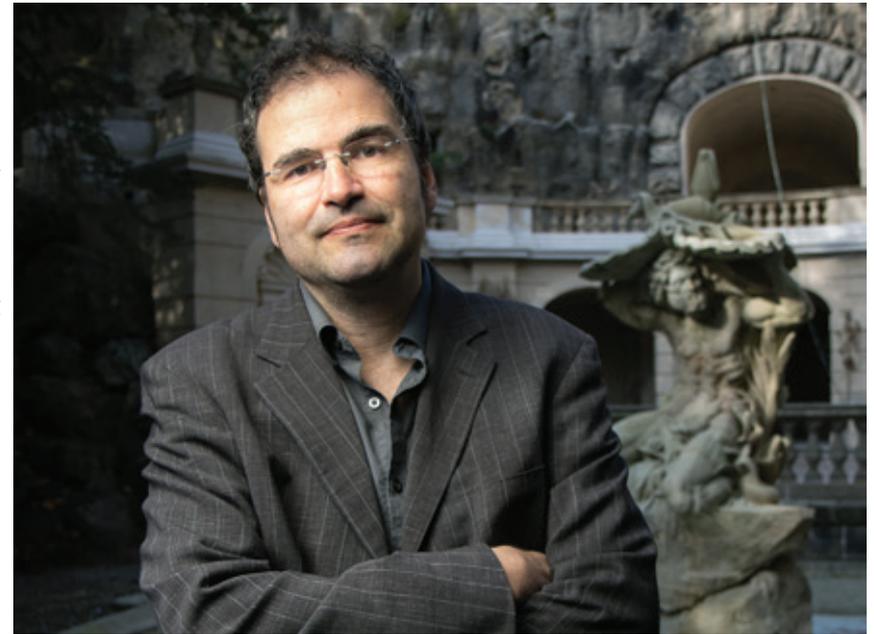
“Marek Toman has a feeling for inanimate objects. In his books they become living, almost elemental narrators who describe Czech history better than flesh-and-blood characters.”

—Aktuálně.cz

“The fortunes of the peculiar hero, the statue of Neptune from Havlíček Park come to life, against the background of social, political and architectural changes to Vinohrady in Prague from the late 19th century to the present.”

—Respekt

Photo: David Konečný (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)



Marek Toman (1967) is a writer, journalist and translator, author of several novels, poetry collections and children's books, such as *Dobytí ostrova Saaremaa* (The Conquest of Saaremaa Island, 2007) and *Cukrárna u Šilhavého Jima* (Cross-Eyed Jim's Confectionary, 2018, pp 50-51 in this catalogue). His books link history with the present and he often sets his novels in the streets of his native Prague. The children's book *Můj Golem* (My Golem, 2010), which earned a nomination for a Magnesia Litera Award and is listed among the White Ravens outstanding children's books, and the novel *Veliká novina o hrozném mordu Šimona Abelese* (The Shocking Story of the Terrible Murder of Šimon Abeles, 2014) draw on old Prague legends. The novel *Chvála oportunistu* (The Praise of Opportunism, 2016) and *Neptunova jeskyně* (Neptune's Cave) make use of moments in history and personified objects to depict social changes. Marek Toman's novels have been translated into a number of languages. The author lives in Prague.

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# Václav Vokolek

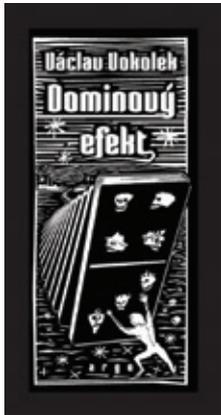
## THE DOMINO EFFECT

A novelist fresco as a journey through history.

A large-scale, opulent and sweeping novelistic sketch; a work rich in genre, subject matter, style and language. The author's latest novel loosely follows on from his 20-year-old prose work *Cesta do pekla* (Journey to Hell). Both works blend together timelines, fiction and dream, Satan in various guises, humour and tragedy.

*The Domino Effect* is a rich feast of thematic, linguistic and stylistic positions, time zones and fates that can intersect at any point in the past, present and future, which form a whole.

Photo: Zdeněk Helfert



Dominový efekt  
Argo, 2018, 598 pp

“An excellent and surprisingly thrilling novel set across time periods which together make up a tale of secret forces that shape history and the smallest human stories. One big plus is the beautiful language, which lifts the form of the novel to a higher level.”

—*Databáze knih*

Václav Vokolek (1947) is a novelist, journalist and artist. After his secondary-school and unfinished university studies, he worked as the caretaker of a stately home, a museum worker and later a restorer. He is the author of more than forty books; he writes prose, poetry and specialist literature. After November 1989, he sat on various literary boards, ran the review *Souvislosti* and was involved in founding the Triáda publishing house, and since 1995 he has taught at the College of Journalism in Prague. His work as an editor includes the literary estate of his father, Vladimír Vokolek, and the cultural history of the Czech lands from a spiritual point of view. He also devotes his time to artwork. Vokolek lives in Milovice.

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English sample translation available

# Michal Kašpárek

## GAMES WITHOUT BORDERS

Generation Y under the scrutiny of one of its members.

A dark novella about a cynical programmer who enjoys the typical lifestyle of a wealthy and secure professional from the younger generation: Filip is a games developer and data-miner who has plenty of money, so he travels and indulges in sex and drugs... The migrant crisis is coming to a head and Filip senses an opportunity to acquire even more than life has already dropped in his lap. But the reader is not quite sure which side Filip is really on: is he a rescuer or an exploiter?

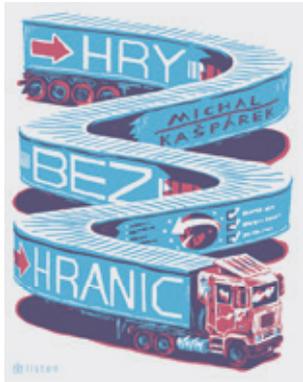
The central theme of this satire is the morality of the standpoints of performance, flexibility and efficiency, the cult of experiences and improvement classes, perpetual start-ups and procrastination, which the members of generation Y adhere to blindly and devotedly. One of Michal Kašpárek's inspirations for writing this novella about the conflict between idealism and pragmatism was a visit to a refugee camp.

"The political slogans and ideas that permeate the whole book, such as 'free people dream of nothing' or 'there is no us versus them, there is only me versus others,' come across as a sort of manifesto for late capitalist man."

—*Právo*

"Kašpárek writes about his peers and his environment – i.e. about successful young men and women, digital natives who order accommodation on Airbnb, sex on Tinder and drugs on the Darknet, making sure, of course, that the cocaine they buy is fair trade."

—*Deník N*



Hry bez hranic  
Listen, 2018, 160 pp

Photo: Ondřej Suty



Michal Kašpárek (1984) is a journalist covering politics, economy and new technologies. He has spent most of his career freelancing, publishing online since the late 1990s. From 2003 to 2007 he studied journalism and film studies at Masaryk University. In 2010, Kašpárek started collaborating with *Finnmag* magazine, and has had 400+ book reviews and 300+ columns published. In 2016, he became the copy editor of the magazine and editor-in-chief of the venture's website. Back in 2012, he published an off the beaten path guide to his home city of Brno. *Hry bez hranic* (Games without Borders) is his first work of prose fiction.

RIGHTS:  
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English sample translation available

Poetry

# Pavel Kolmačka

## THE LIFE OF PEOPLE, ANIMALS, PLANTS AND BEES

The forms of the living world in the stirring rhythm of lyrical and prose verse.

Pavel Kolmačka's poetry collection, divided into five parts (The Life of the Body, Life during the Day and at Night, Life above the Crater, Life on the Border, The Forest), focuses in zones and cycles on what is repeated in the titles of the individual parts: life. The collection tends towards prose narration and uses the absurd headlines from the media world which reflect the state of contemporary society in a tragicomic manner, the

professional debates of tradesmen, as well as diaries. Just as elegant are his lyrical poems which draw upon the parallel world of nature, plants, animals, ideas and desires, resulting in an uncontrollable rhythm of terrible and moving statements in the past, which rouse and carry the reader away.



Život lidí, zvířat, rostlin, včel  
Triáda, 2018, 156 pp

“How is it that he is not pricked by these media routines when they form wreaths on the graves of human dignity? And how is it he so skillfully borrows from the incontestable findings of science and adds to them the mockery of context, that the reader laughs aloud when he should be crying? But anyway, Kolmačka, my friend, it's your fragile poetry which I like best.”

—*Tvar*

Photo: Benjamin Kolmačka



Pavel Kolmačka (1962) is a poet, writer and translator. After graduating from the Technical University he worked as an assistant at the ČKD Polovodiče engineering company, and as a carer at an institute for the mentally handicapped and at a senior citizens' home. He worked as a journalist at the *Velehrad* magazine. Later, he also studied the religion of archaic cultures of natural nations at Masaryk University's Faculty of Arts in Brno. Since 1993 he has worked as a translator. He is the author of five poetry books. For Kolmačka, poetry is a characteristically straightforward, civilized expression of liberation and family intimacy, through whose gentle gauze sift social themes and internal anxiety. His poems have been translated into several languages.

RIGHTS:  
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English sample translation available

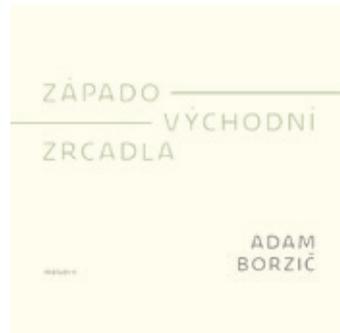
# Adam Borzič

## WEST-EASTERN MIRRORS

Poetry, history, tradition and mysticism as ways to counter prejudice about cultural differences.

In his fourth collection of poetry, Adam Borzič not only pays tribute to Goethe's *West-Eastern Divan*, but he also tries to remind us of traditional European values which are threatened more by their internal disintegration than by Islam. As an expert on Islamic mysticism in the shape of the Sufi movement, he attempts to assuage European fears about Muslims. He recalls and subtly contrasts figures from various ages, particularly from the Renaissance (including the Medici family, Michelangelo, Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Al Ghazali, Ibn

Arabi and Haji Bektash). By understanding a philosophy and a culture which are closer to us in Europe than we might imagine, and which even mirror our own culture, lies the understanding of the beauty of life and the world in its entirety. Unconventionally, these poems are accompanied by a wide-ranging essay.



Západo-východní zrcadla  
Malvern, 2018, 144 pp

“The poems from the two themes of this collection – those which hark back to the origins of the Italian and Florentine Renaissance, and those where Sufi mystics speak, look like simple narratives. But which narrative is supposedly simple and which is a precise reproduction of reality?”

—*Deník Referendum*



Photo: David Konečný (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)

Adam Borzič (1978) is a poet, journalist and editor-in-chief of the literary fortnightly journal *Tvar*. He is a co-founder of the poetry group *Fantasia* (together with Kamil Bouška and Petr Řehák), which published the book *Fantasia* (2008). He has also published poetry collections such as *Rozevírání* (Folding Back, 2011), *Počasi v Evropě* (The Weather in Europe, 2013), which was nominated for a Magnesia Litera Award in 2014, *Orfické linie* (The Orpheus Line, 2015) and *Západo-východní zrcadla* (West-Eastern Mirrors). Excerpts from his poetry have been translated into several European languages. In addition to literature he is also interested in psychotherapy and spirituality. Together with Olga Pavlová and Ondřej Slačálek, he wrote the monograph *Proroci post-utopického radikálního: Alexandr Dugin a Hakim Bey* (Prophets of a Post-utopian Radicalism: Alexandr Dugin and Hakim Bey, 2018).

Malvern publishers  
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www.malvern.cz

English sample translation available

# Jan Škrob

## REALITY

The generational testament of a young poet – manifesto and revolt.

In his second poetry collection, Jan Škrob looks at the tension between fact and fiction, and uses myth, visions and computer games to delve into some fundamental existential questions. *Reality* is a generational testament which has acquired young readers through translations into several languages, and at the same time it is a spiritual and political manifesto for human liberation.

Jan Škrob has already been awarded two international literary prizes for this multi-layered collection of poems and texts (the Czech-German Dresden Poetry Award, and third place in the Czecho-Slovak competition Poems), which manages to suggest an alternative poetic world based on a literary manifesto and poetic rebellion against dystopia and the system.



Reál  
Malvern, 2018, 72 pp

“*Reality* follows on from the (author’s) debut – naturally its dynamic, which merges social commitment with spiritual and intimate levels, has been honed by our poet. From this emerges a work of magical beauty and unpleasantly convincing truthfulness.”

—*Tvar*



Photo: Petr Zewlajkk Vrabec

Jan Škrob (1988) is a poet and translator. He made his debut with the collection *Pod dlažbou* (Under the Surface, 2016), for which he was nominated the DILIA Litera Award for discovery of the year. In 2018 he published his new collection of poetry entitled *Reál* (Reality). His poems were awarded 3rd place at the Czecho-Slovak competition Poems 2018. He won joint first prize together with Bastian Schneider at the Dresden Poetry Award. He lives in Prague.

Malvern publishers  
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English sample translation available

# Pavel Zajíc

## MONEY

A collection of the most up-to-date socially committed poetry exploiting business newspeak.

Money as a centre-point in history and the lives of individuals, the heart of capitalism supported by the everyday, omnipresent office planning with its measurable results. An efficiency model as the sole way to exist, how to survive? The common denominator of Pavel Zajíc's poems is their setting in the terrible reality of the everyday.

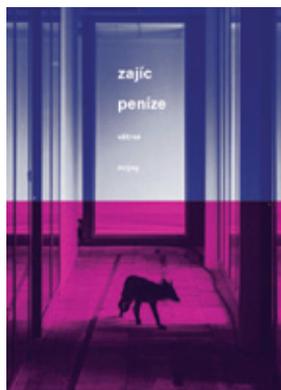
The author has a sense for precisely defining reality by examining the forms of its language: he shows how it has become deformed through the uncompromising nature of business and the office, which have become more of a life than home.

“Zajíc successfully suggests the short breath of anxiety of those whose lives run according to business plans, where a milestone is the first million earned and where the ego is realized by attacking others. The socially committed individual eventually becomes one with the angry verse.”

—*Literární noviny*

“The texts contain fragments of plots which remain either only hinted at or are squeezed into poetic short-cuts. The author is a good observer. He is able to grasp the subtle shades of things which seem to be simple and ordinary, but whose relationships are the centre-point of his life. These contrast sharply with the pseudo values of today's world.”

—Miroslav Chocholatý, Department of Czech Literature; College of Education MU in Brno



Peníze  
Větrné mlýny, 2018, 92 pp



Photo: Jan Prokopius

Pavel Zajíc (1988) is a poet. He graduated in art studies from Masaryk University. In October 2012, he was the recipient of the fourth František Halas Literary Prize and he was also awarded the Special Klement Bochořák Prize, thanks to which he could publish the collection */ona místa/* (*/those places/,* 2013). In 2018, Větrné mlýny publishers brought out his second collection *Peníze*. He is a member of the male chorus *Láska opravdivá* (True Love) and lives in Brno.

RIGHTS:  
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English sample translation available

Children's and  
Young Adult

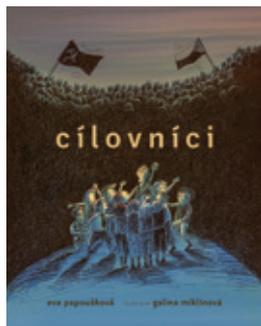
# Eva Papoušková & Galina Miklínová The COOKIECLICKERS

A Scouts' story from the 1940s about a school and its students who went on to form the Czech intellectual elite, including Miloš Forman and Václav Havel.

The adventure story of young Závíš, who has to move from Vinohrady in Prague to a boarding school in Poděbrady, a school which does not hesitate to instil on the children the moral values derived from the true stories of important figures from recent Czech cultural-political history. As a Scout, Závíš has to learn morality at this special school, as well as train and strengthen his body – put simply, he has to be tamed. Naturally, the dormitory is a mysterious place, the postwar 1940s are in full flow outside, during

the nascent period of communism your background determines whether you complete your studies, and the wall of the dormitory washroom is hollow... The former students of this dormitory – the characters of this book – include Miloš Forman, Ivan Passer, Mario Klemens and Václav Havel or Batík as he was known... This is a story narrated as a diary which draws upon real-life events, documents and letters.

Age: 10+



Cílovníci  
Illustrated by Galina Miklínová  
Paseka, 2018, 124 pp

“Pretty, striking, clear and suitably dark.”  
—*Jedu v knize*

“Despite drawing on documented events and the fact that it promises to be informative and expand one’s horizons, the book manages to captivate the reader who has no prior knowledge of the subject. It is adventurous, slightly mysterious thanks to the castle’s nooks and crannies, and is a very entertaining story due to the narrative voice of the main character.”

—*iLiteratura*

Eva Papoušková (front) and Galina Miklínová. Photo: Agáta Dolejší



Eva Papoušková (1969) is a writer and screenwriter. She studied Czech and English studies at Charles University’s Faculty of Arts and later film and television screenwriting and dramaturgy at the FAMU film school. Afterwards she began translating and writing. She has written several books for children including *Kosprd a Telecí* (Kosprd and Telecí) and *Cestování s velrybou* (Travels with a Whale) and the screenplays to the fairy stories *Řád saténových mašlí* (The Order of the Satin Bows), and the animated series *O Kanafáškovi* (About Kanafásek). She has also written screenplays for several television serials.

Galina Miklínová (1970) is a director and designer of animated films, illustrator, she created the short films *Biograf* (The Cinema), *Bajky ze zahrady* (Tall Stories from the Garden), *Hra* (The Game) and *neŠťastné narozeniny Pěti Fotky* (Pěta Fotka’s unHappy Birthday), and the animated series *O Kanafáškovi* (About Kanafásek). She has illustrated numerous books for children including *Veliký tůdle* (The Big “No Way!”, 2003), *Příšerky a přišerí* (Monsters and Nightmares, 2005), *Šišatý švec a myšut* (The Crooked Cobbler and Mousey, 2007) as well as the popular trilogy *Lichožrouti* (The Oddsockeaters), the full-length animated film adaptation of which she directed herself.

RIGHTS:  
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www.paseka.cz

English sample translation available



The Cookieclickers



The Cookieclickers

# Vojtěch Mašek & Chrudoš Valoušek PUPPET, PLUM PIT, PLUM, PLANK AND BACK TO PUPPET

The story of plum stones, filled with twists and turns, escapades, absurd humour and wonderful linocuts.

The full-page colour linocuts and cartoon input by Chrudoš Valoušek landed this large-scale project a Golden Ribbon Award for artistic achievement of the year as well as victory in the 2018 competition for the Most Beautiful Czech Book for children and young adults, followed shortly afterwards by publication in the Netherlands.

However, we should not overlook the gleeful contribution of Vojtěch Mašek's fairy-tale text: a boy called Peter converses with a talking log, which reveals its story to him, beginning with its origins as a plum fruit. Its stone turns into another fruit tree. In one episode

a professor takes this for an exotic tree and is so disappointed to realize his mistake that he angrily heads off to Australia; a Spanish family move into his house and have the plum tree cut down, so the puppet ends up travelling across the world as a log. The hero's journey as recounted to his friend constantly abounds with new ideas, developing the tradition of the tomfoolery of Carlo Collodi's Pinocchio through distinctive absurd humour.

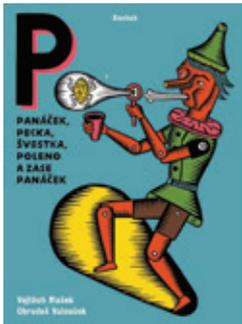
"The narration is theatrical in character, dialogue interweaves throughout the text, and the action is helped by layering one story on top of another. The garish linocuts work in a dynamic manner, which appears both comical as well as unsettling and horrific, precisely in the spirit of the absurd."

—*iLiteratura*

"A small miracle of somewhat greater dimensions. The apparent brutality in Valoušek's linocuts, together with the confidence of Horváth's typography, help to produce a book which can be understood by adult readers, children and non-readers."

—Golden Ribbon Award jury

Age: 5+



Panaček, pecka, švestka, poleno a zase panaček.  
Illustrated by Chrudoš Valoušek  
Baobab, 2017, 94 pp

Photo: David Konečný (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)



Vojtěch Mašek (1977) is a comics writer and artist, author of film screenplays and theatre plays. His comic books have received eleven Muriel Awards and two have been published abroad. Along with Džian Baban, he contributed to the staging of Monstrkabaret Freda Brunolda (Fred Brunold's Monster Cabaret), which gave rise to a comic-book trilogy. The film *Křížáček* (Little Crusader, 2017), which he co-wrote, received the main award at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. Along with Markéta Hajská and Máša Bořkovcová, he created the triptych *O příbězích* (2010), commenting on the fate of Czech and Slovak Roma. Mašek is also the author of the internet hit *Recykliteratura*, which builds on the avant-garde tradition of associative montages using photographs and texts found in books and magazines.

RIGHTS SOLD:  
Netherlands

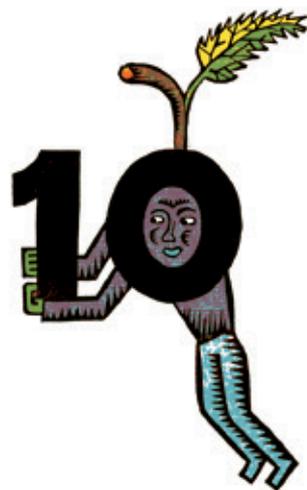
AWARDS:  
2019 BolognaRagazzi Award (Fiction)

2018 Golden Ribbon Award - Art Section:  
The best artistic work

2017 Most Beautiful Czech Books:  
1st place - Children and young adults literature  
3rd place - Excellent graphic design prize

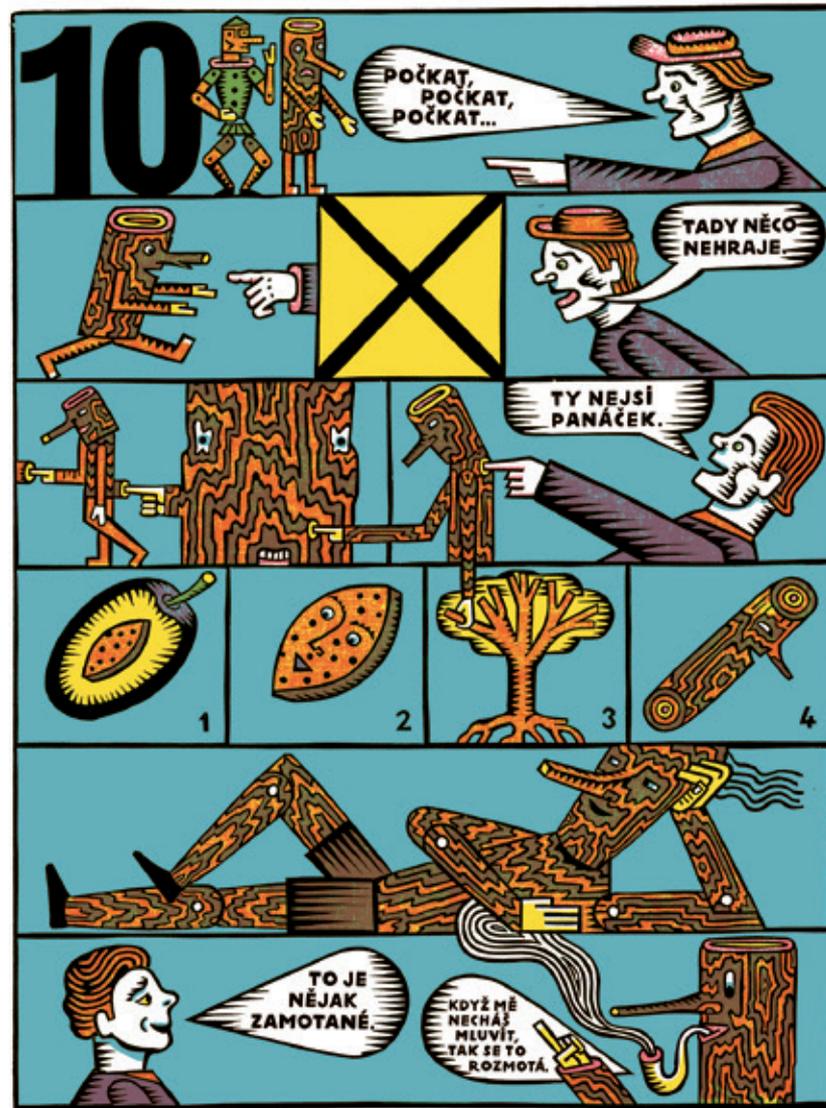
RIGHTS:  
Baobab Publishers  
gplusg@gplusg.cz

English sample translation available



## KAPITOLA DESÁTÁ, VE KTERÉ SE PĚTA NA POLENO TROCHU ZLOBÍ, PROTOŽE JEHO POVÍDÁNÍ JE PĚKNĚ ZAMOTANÉ

Počkat, počkat... řekl Pěťa.  
Tady něco nehraje.  
Co? zeptalo se Poleno.  
Ty přece nejsi panáček!  
Jak to můžeš říct? To od tebe není hezké,  
řeklo uraženě Poleno.  
Byl jsi švestka, potom pecka, potom strom  
a potom poleno, trval na svém Pěťa.  
A potom panáček! trvalo na svém Poleno.  
To je nějak zamotané, řekl Pěťa.  
Když mě necháš mluvit, tak se to rozmotá,  
řeklo Poleno.



# Ivona Březinová

## WWW.SHORT-OF-SHOES.CZ

The story of a teenager coming to terms with a serious handicap, from a series of books about children who are different.

What is it like for a fifteen-year-old boy when in one fateful moment the rug is pulled from under his feet? The analogy would make Benjamin, the hero of Ivona Březinová's novel, laugh bitterly, since an amputation has left him with phantom pains in place of legs. A schoolboy rivalry to win the favour of a girl ended in a serious ski injury, and so he faces a difficult journey from the initial resignation and fits of rage to an acceptance of reality. With the support of friends, family and health professionals, he discovers his potential in a painful process but with determination and even goes back to his beloved sport.

The book's title only becomes clear in the last chapter, which expands the educational dimension of this unsentimentally presented story. On the fictional level, the website it refers to contains reports about Ben's sporting successes, while in reality it presents the activities of the Emil Foundation, which supports young disabled athletes. The dynamic typography with illustrations by Jakub Troják indicates that despite the hero's handicap, reading this novel written in the natural language of today's teenagers will be a lively ride.

"*www.short-of-shoes.cz* was written in order to show people with handicaps and their loved ones the process of accepting new motivation in life. It tries to understand the inner thoughts and feelings of a person who has experienced some dramatic personal change. But it is principally a story about personal triumph, indomitable will and resolve."

—*kukatko.cz*

"About a boy after an accident and his friends. And in particular about the struggles, victories and defeats which are an inseparable part of it. And it is definitely about the fact that if you fight, then you can't lose. It's written in the first person, thanks to which you can get as close to Benjamin as is possible."

—*knizniklub.cz*

Age: 13+



www.bez-bot.cz  
Illustrated by Jakub Troják  
Cattacan, 2018, 144 pp

Photo: Vladimír Havelka Jnr.



Ivona Březinová (1964) studied Czech Studies at the J. E. Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem. Since the 1990s, she has had a broad range as an author, extending from fairy tales, through stories about the life of children and adolescents, to the fantasy genre. She has garnered numerous awards for her socially motivated works in which she observes the lives of disadvantaged people (*Začarovaná třída* – The Enchanted Classroom, 2002; *Držkou na rohožce* – Face on the Doormat, 2010), the theme of dangerous addictions (the trilogy *Holky na vodítku* – Girls on a Leash, 2002–2003), ageing and illness (*Lentilka pro dědu Edu* – Smarties for Grandad Ed, 2006) or physical and sensory handicap (*Útěk Kryšpína N.* – The Flight of Kryšpín N., 2014). The novel about living with an autistic sibling *Řvi potichu, brácho* (Yell Quietly, Bro, 2016) earned her a Golden Ribbon Award and a nomination for a Magnesia Litera Award. Březinová's texts have been translated into ten languages.

RIGHTS:  
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English sample translation available

# Marek Toman

## CROSS-EYED JIM'S CONFECTIONARY

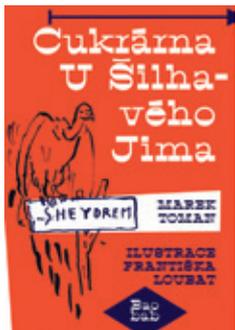
A parody about reforming a group of desperados through classic literature for children as well as adults.

At Cross-Eyed Jim's gunslingers' confectionary they don't just serve freshly ground coffee, cakes and eggnog, but also literary treats. Ever since the librarian Boženka Oprátková set up the prison library and made life more bearable for the most hardened death-row criminals, the hearts of the villains have been moved by group readings and interpretations of literary works, and even their tastes have begun to change. This harmony, however, is disrupted by Dante Skunk Shakespeare, the greatest literary gangster of all time, shamelessly purloining all kinds of texts, from classic novels to time-tables. The fight with the bookworm bandit ends in victory for the intrepid Czech librarian. Although she

fails to secure the support of the hard men of the Wild West for a revolt against the Habsburgs, the cultivated spirit of their literary meetings is reflected in the character of the town.

Marek Toman masterfully weaves together parody and paraphrases, paying homage to both low and high literature, as both of them have the power to set a crooked world straight: in the end the town of Sheydrem turns into Rowney.

Age: 12+

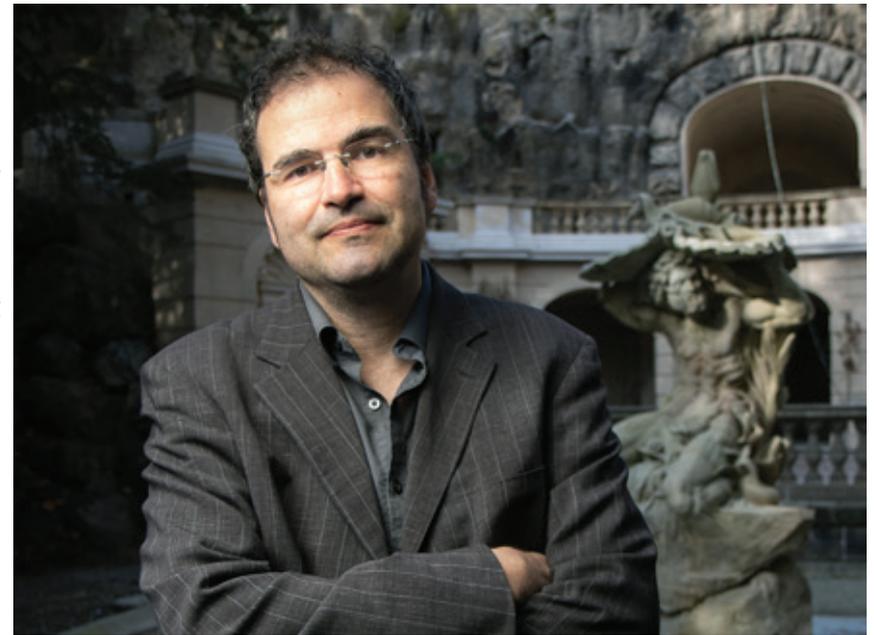


Cukrárna U Šilhavého Jima  
Illustrated by Františka Loubat  
Baobab, 2018, 176 pp

“It is apparent that the writer Marek Toman writes for both adult and child readers. Here he manages to make fun of the Czech weakness for hiking and at the same time is complimentary of the Czech passion for public libraries and librarians. In many respects they stand in for parents and teachers in the peaceful pursuit of reading in both the Wild West and in the Czech Republic. And it's nice that someone has paid tribute to them with such a book.”

—*Respekt*

Photo: David Konečný (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)



Marek Toman (1967) is a graduate of Charles University's Faculty of Arts, he has worked as a literary editor for Czech Radio and since 1997 at the Czech Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition to his own creative work, he is also a translator and editor. His first book for children was *O Ryzce a Vraníkovi* (Ryzka and Vraník, 2003). His subsequent novels turned to the past: *Dobytí ostrova Saaremaa* (The Conquest of Saaremaa Island, 2007) described the Crusaders' conquest of the Baltics, while *Můj Golem* (My Golem, 2009) was loosely based on the story of Rabbi Loew. His prose for adults also deals with historical material and how it influences the present; for example, in the books *Veliká novina o hrozném mordu Šimona Abelese* (The Shocking Story of the Murder of Shimon Abeles, 2014), *Chvála oportunistu* (In Praise of Opportunism, 2016) and *Neptunova jeskyně* (Neptune's Cave, 2018, pp 22-23 in the catalogue).

RIGHTS SOLD:  
Republic of Macedonia

RIGHTS:  
Prague Literary Agency  
Maria Sileny:  
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www.praglit.de

English sample translation available

# Comics

# Jan Novák & Jaromír 99

## SO FAR, SO GOOD

The incredible adventures of the Mašín brothers and their fight against the communist regime in thrilling comic-book form.

The story of the Mašín brothers and their band waging guerilla war against the Communist regime in the early 1950s could be the most dramatic Czech tale of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After their activities in Czechoslovakia, these five young men headed west – facing off against twenty thousand East German Volkspolizei and shooting their way to freedom. In the novel *So Far, So Good*, Jan Novák wrote the story like a thrilling Czech Western and won the Magnesia Litera Award for Book of the

Year. Now he and the artist Jaromír 99 have created a dramatic and visually arresting graphic novel in Jaromír 99's unique and specific style of noir. After the runaway success of their previous collaboration, *Zátopek*, the authors return with an even more explosive comic book.

“The adventures of the Mašín brothers and their team are portrayed with rawness and concision, without moralizing. The book deserves the attention of anyone interested in comics, as well as those who would rather not surf the web or read long books.”

—*Vašeliteratura.cz*

“On the one hand, Novák sketches the Mašíns as impetuous and impulsive boys who act like Wild West gunfighters; on the other, he recognizes the depths of their courage, their allegiance to their cause, and their absolute refusal to yield to totalitarianism – in either theory or practice.”

—*Lidové noviny*



Zatím dobrý  
Argo, 2018, 624 pp



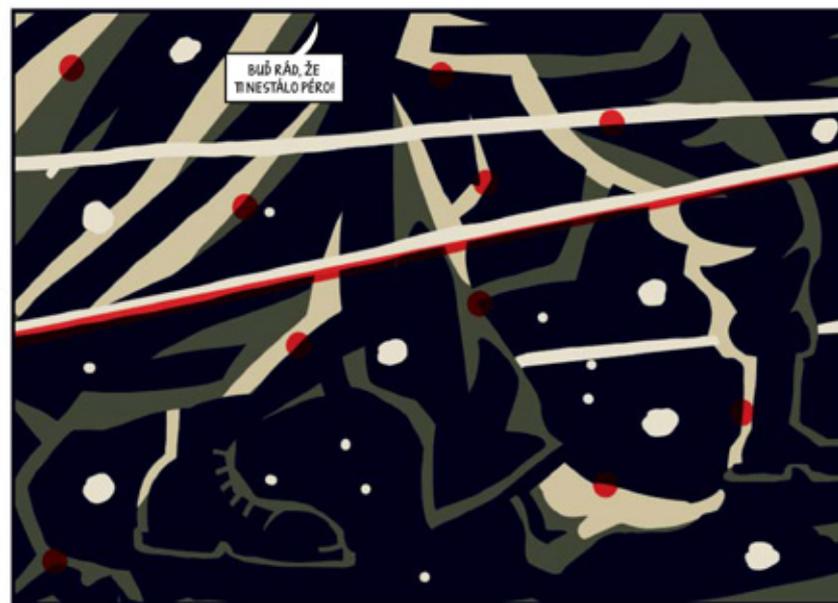
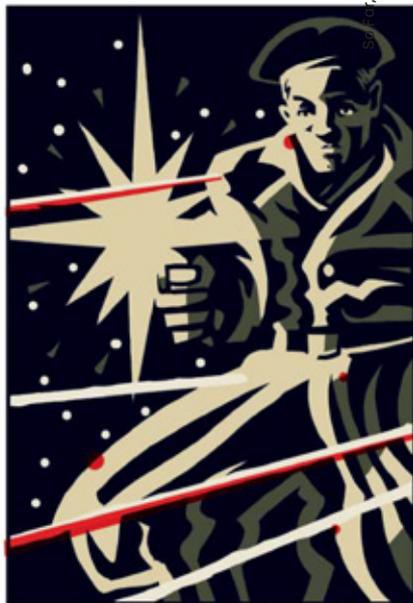
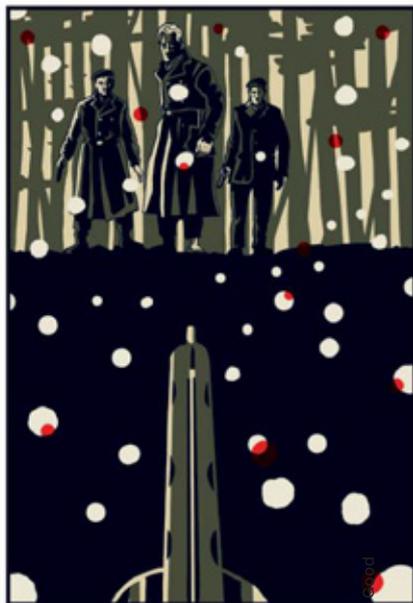
Jan Novák (left) and Jaromír 99. Photo: Richard Klíčník

Jan Novák (1953) is a novelist, dramatist, scriptwriter and translator. He emigrated in 1969 and now lives in Prague, though he often returns to America. His books have been translated into several languages. He is the recipient of major literary prizes including the Magnesia Litera Award for Book of the Year (2004) and the Josef Škvorecký Award (2007), as well as the Carl Sandburg Award for Chicago authors, and the Friends of Literature Award.

Jaromír 99 (1963) is a singer, songwriter, and visual artist. Along with the writer Jaroslav Rudiš, Jaromír 99 is the author of the comic book trilogy *Alois Nebel* which was made into a film in 2011 and received the award for the best animated feature film from the European Film Academy. His comic book adaptation of Franz Kafka's novel *The Castle* was nominated for the 2014 Will Eisner Award at San Diego's Comic-Con International.

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Veronika Chaloupková:  
veronika.chaloupkova@argo.cz  
www.argo.cz

English sample translation available



So Far, So Good

Genre fiction

# Michal Sýkora

## FIVE DEAD DOGS

Another case for Commissioner Výrová, a favourite of Czech readers and TV audiences.

In this fourth volume, Chief Commissioner Marie Výrová, “the Great Owl”, is investigating a night-time burglary in a zoo, which has resulted in the murder of a caretaker and the theft of three North American bears. However, the commissioner’s opponent is stronger than she has reckoned on. In 2016, Jan Hřebejk’s television adaptation came first in the iDNES.cz readers’ poll for best television film and mini-series. The subsequent novelized version, however, offers a different ending to the case.

Once again the author demonstrates his narrative qualities and ability to realistically portray his characters, as well as his knowledge of his native Olomouc and the town of Šternberk, where the plot takes place. *Five Dead Dogs* is also a detective novel which is socially aware: illegal dog fights, corrupt police officers...



Pět mrtvých psů  
Host, 2018, 384 pp

“In his latest novel, Michal Sýkora again shows his great feeling for detail and a gentle sense of humour, but each page also emits the author’s understanding of the characters’ suffering and joy – real people like you and me.”

—*Centrum detektivky*

Photo: Milena Valušková



Michal Sýkora (1971) is a novelist. He made his debut in 2012 with the detective novel *Případ pro exorcistu* (A Case for an Exorcist), where Chief Commissioner Marie Výrová first appears. This was followed by two further instalments, *Modré stíny* (Blue Shadows, 2013) and *Ještě není konec* (It’s Not Over Yet, 2016). Sýkora’s novels became the basis for a successful television series, which is being broadcast by Czech Television under the title *Detektivové od Nejsvětější Trojice* (Detectives from the Holy Trinity). He also wrote another Marie Výrová case solely for television called *Živé terče* (Live Targets).

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English sample translation available

# František Novotný

## THE FATEFUL CONVOY

A celebration of history, ships, naval battles, machines and love stories.

The story of yachtsman David Marek who has to sail from Boston to Europe on the Russian ship *Onega*. While waiting for his companions he spends his free time visiting the sites. At one of them, he discovers a secret, the uncovering of which takes some time... It is 1946, the war is far from over and Great Britain can be saved from capitulation by the HX 402 convoy which has been assembled in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

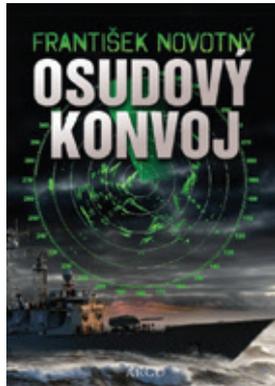
From Boston it is accompanied by the SMS *Jizera*, a frigate from the Czech Squadron of the Danube Federation, with lieutenant David Marek on board... The object of his attention, a certain lady-in-waiting, is to travel with him. Which of these David Mareks is the real one? There are two interlinking plots in *The Fateful Convoy* divided by the perspective of the narrator.

“We find ourselves at sea amongst warships, and instead of the skipper David Marek, we suddenly find here the naval sailor David Marek. Although the places remain the same, we are one hundred years back in time. And that is definitely not the only surprise which Novotný hides in the pages of his book. You would deserve a good thrashing, however, if you were to give anything else away.”

—*Sarden*

“František Novotný’s new novel is remarkable and quite unique in its own way due to the crucial role of motifs, which have been present in Novotný’s works ever since *Valhalla*: parallel worlds, the sea, Nazis, magic, secret societies, and the loneliness of human fate.”

—*XBI*



Osudový konvoj  
Argo, 2018, 374 pp



Photo: František Novotný's archive

František Novotný (1944) is a science-fiction writer, computer technician, model maker and yachtsman. In addition to sci-fi he also writes factual literature. The start of his literary career is connected to a group of sci-fi writers which was set up in the mid-1980s around the Karel Čapek Award, and which heralded a new era in the development of Czech sci-fi. As the first winner of the award, František Novotný’s debut work was published in 1988. He is also the author of the grand saga *Valhala*, one of the most important texts in Czech fantastic literature, where the author links the world of two ancient northern mythologies with the two world wars from the last century.

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English sample translation available

# Robert Fabian

## THE VALKYRIES

The bleak and uncompromising novel by a mysterious author who writes in secret.

*The Valkyries* is made up of two short stories – “Den skoro jako každý jiný” (A Day Almost Like Any Other) and “Černé slunce” (Black Sun) – which focus on the main character’s journey of revenge on his Valkyrie. Readers find themselves in a human world destined to perish, whose society is collapsing – in this case in the ruins of Prague.

A group of survivors gather there, though one of them is killed. The main character, who has a military background, sets out after the murderer. In this novel, as is characteristic of the author, he “does not mince his words” – it is bleak, full of action and uncompromising in the way readers enjoy.

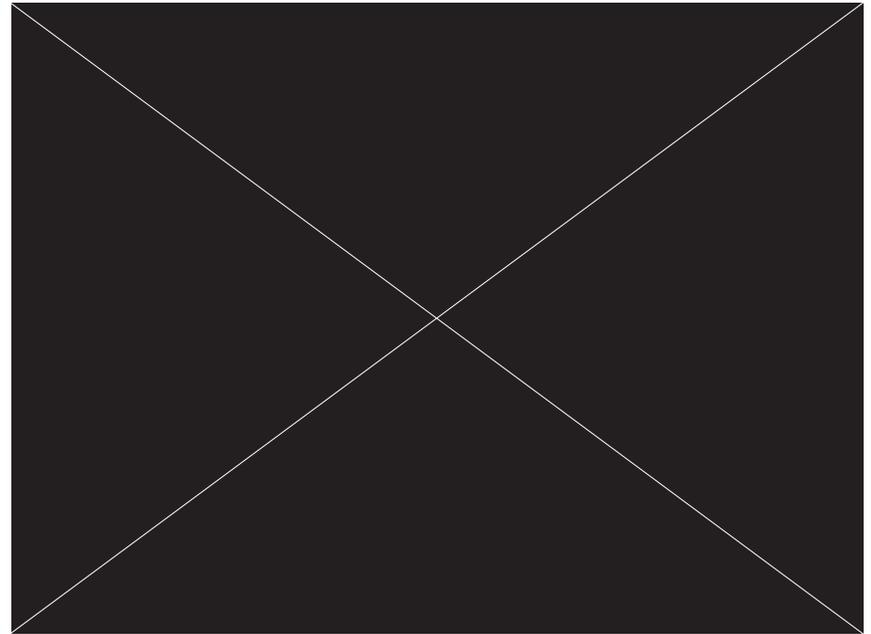


Valkýry  
Straky na vrbě, 2018, 568 pp

“The lengths which Fabian is prepared to go to in order to take readers out of their comfort zones and upset their ideas about acceptable anti-heroes means that *The Valkyries* is way ahead of the action stories of Fabian’s competitors.”

—*iLiteratura*

The author wishes to remain anonymous



Robert Fabian (1969) is an author of sci-fi, especially military. According to his publishing house, Straky na vrbě, the author wishes to preserve his anonymity. It is well known that the author has been involved in the Czech Republic’s armed forces for many years. He is the author of the action novel *Mariňáci* (Marines, 2000), the sci-fi story *Planeta mezi dvěma slunci* (The Planet between Two Suns, 2002), and the two-part novel *Carpe Diem* (2005) and *Semper fi* (2009). *Valkýry* (The Valkyries) is his latest work.

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English sample translation available

Non-fiction

# Jakub Szántó

## BEHIND THE CURTAIN OF WAR: A REPORTER IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ELSEWHERE

The debut work by a war correspondent and Czech Television reporter in the Middle East.

Jakub Szántó offers a detailed insider's account of his experiences as a war correspondent in various corners of the Earth and different types of military conflicts and revolutions. He is professionally dedicated to his work, but he recalls his experiences in a personal rather than objective way. The dramas of front lines, child and juvenile soldiers, famine, destitution and the pain of war or revolution are presented vividly by an eyewitness who spent 20 years of his life experiencing them. The book is valuable not only as

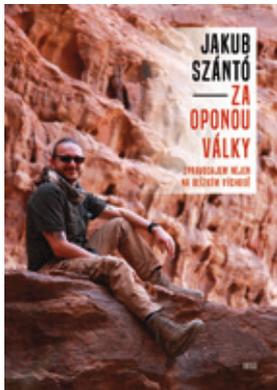
a personal testimony but also as a glimpse into the work of a war correspondent, a journalist in situations it is impossible to prepare for. As a history graduate Szántó is also able to set the events he has observed and experienced in the historical context. The tragedy of the events related is softened by humour and irony. The book includes an extensive section of the author's photographs from the field.

"An unusual insight into the life of a reporter who risks his life and deliberately heads into danger at a time when the work of a journalist is risky in itself. Szántó's effort to be in the thick of it and find out what is really going on is invaluable at a time when some politicians are proclaiming "alternative facts", and creating a fake picture or video is becoming easier."

—*iLiteratura*

"Szántó unveils and demythicizes the work of journalists in the midst of turbulent situations and unpredictable developments."

—*Právo*



Za oponou války:  
Zpravodajem nejen na Blízkém východě  
Argo, 2018, 260 pp

Photo: Richard Klíčník



Jakub Szántó (1977) is a journalist and television reporter. He graduated in modern history from the Institute of International Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University in Prague, and also studied at the Central European University in Budapest. Since 1999 he has worked as a television reporter. In 2005 he was awarded the title PhDr. in Modern History at Charles University. He reported on foreign news for TV Nova and since 2006 has worked for Czech Television. Since July 2013 he has been Czech Television's permanent Middle East correspondent. Over the long term he has focused on the region of the Middle East and Africa, where he has covered a large proportion of international crises; prior to that he also covered the Chechen War, the Georgian-Russian War, piracy in Somalia and the revolution in Ukraine. Between 2003 and 2016 he regularly contributed to the weekly magazine Reflex. Szántó is the holder of the 2014 Open Society Fund Prague's Journalism Award and the 2017 Ferdinand Peroutka Award for journalism.

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English sample translation available

# Petr Šámal et al. A LITERARY CHRONICLE OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC

A chronicle of the love of reading, writing and publishing in the First Czechoslovak Republic.

The *Literary Chronicle of the First Republic* describes the most important Czech literary events from 1918–1938. The events from each year are divided into three parts: literary events, literary works and historical context. Thirty-six authors, mainly from the Institute of Czech Literature, worked on the book for over two years. It is a precisely chronicled account of literary culture, the publishing business, a lost form of bibliophilia, and the approach towards literature in general. The publication presents the Czechoslovak Republic

as a multinational state, where literature was published and read in five languages. Not only did writers contribute towards the literary scene, but also translators, publishers and readers, while the word of the writer had weight... The illustrated section presents a selection of books which were published in that particular year. It consists of more than one thousand book covers, photographs, advertising material, caricatures, manuscript extracts and other documents.

“This information-packed book contains more than 1,000 book covers, photographs, advertising material, caricatures and manuscript extracts. It is epic in the best sense of the word. Beautiful and chock-full of detail. An adventure.”

—*Oko Kosmasu*

“In addition to the important literary events, famous books and debates which we know today from textbooks, the chronicle also mentions international bestsellers, local popular culture and numerous quirky reports. Its extensive illustrated accompaniment also helps to vividly present this multicultural First Republic literary community.”

—*iLiteratura*



Literární kronika první republiky  
Academia, 2018, 520 pp

Photo: Michael Wögerbauer



Petr Šámal (1972) is a researcher at the Institute of Czech Literature. He is mainly interested in postwar reflections on literature, the culture of Czech Stalinism and literary censorship. He is the co-author of *Dějiny české literatury 1945-1989* (A History of Czech Literature 1945-1989), and he published the book *Soustružníci lidských duší, Lidové knihovny a jejich cenzura na počátku padesátých let 20. století* (Engineers of Human Souls, Lidové noviny and censorship at the start of the 1950s) in 2009. He has been the editor-in-chief of the literary journal *Česká literatura* (Czech Literature) since 2003.

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English sample translation available

# Grants for publishing Czech literature abroad

Every year, the Czech Ministry of Culture awards grants to support the publication of Czech prose, poetry, drama, essays, comics and children's literature abroad. The grants cover books, excerpts and magazines.

## BOOKS

Publishers can apply for funding for:

- translation costs
- (up to 50% of the total cost of publishing)
- graphic design, typesetting and printing costs (up to 50% of the total cost of publishing)
- copyright costs (up to 15% of the total cost of publishing)
- promotion costs (up to 25% of the total cost of publishing)

In total, the grant can cover up to 70% of the total cost of publishing.

## EXCERPTS

Publishers, agents and translators can apply for funding for:

- the translation of an excerpt of between 10–25 standard pages (1800 characters with spaces)

## MAGAZINES

Magazines can apply for funding for:

- translation costs (up to 50% of the total cost of publishing) of an issue where at least 50% of the total content is dedicated to original Czech literature

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- completed application form
- contract with the copyright holder
- contract with the translator (applies only to publishers and literary agents)
- CV and translator's qualifications (education, translated titles)
- the publishing plan for this year and next year (applies only to publishers)

## PAYMENT CONDITIONS

- The grant is paid to the applicant after the book / magazine has been published or excerpt has been translated. Proof of this has to be sent to the Ministry of Culture (for details see the grant application form).

## APPLICATION DEADLINES

- 15<sup>th</sup> May for books and excerpts to be published in the same year as the application is submitted
- 15<sup>th</sup> November for books and excerpts to be published in the following year after the application is submitted

CONTACT PERSON:  
Radim Kopáč, Ministry of Culture Czech Republic  
radim.kopac@mkcr.cz  
+420 257 085 221

For more information visit:  
[www.mkcr.cz/literature-and-libraries-1123.html?lang=en](http://www.mkcr.cz/literature-and-libraries-1123.html?lang=en)



MINISTRY OF CULTURE  
CZECH REPUBLIC

# Travel grants

The Czech Literary Centre offers subsidies to support Czech authors travelling to literary events abroad (festivals, readings, book launches, lectures, debates etc.). The applicant can be an event organiser or an author.

Event organisers can request support for appearance fees, travel expenses, meal allowances, accommodation, promotion, interpreting and moderation costs. The subsidy can cover up to 70% of total costs for the event.

Authors can request support for appearance fees, travel expenses and meal allowances. The subsidy can cover up to 100% of the total costs. Accommodation is provided by the event organiser.

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- completed application form
- budget for the event (applies only to event organisers)

## PAYMENT CONDITIONS

- Event organisers: can receive 40% of the awarded amount before the event (based on an invoice and proof that the author will be taking part in the event) and 60% after the event on the basis of a final report, invoices and documentation. Alternatively, they can receive 100% of the awarded amount after the event on the basis of a final report, invoices and documentation.

- Authors: can receive 50% of the awarded amount within 15 days after the presentation of the planned event in the organisers materials (on the basis of documentation proving the author's travel expenses and proof of the author's presence at the event) and the remaining 50% on the basis of a final report, invoices and documentation. Alternatively, they can receive 100% of the awarded amount after the event on the basis of a final report, invoices and documentation.

## APPLICATION DEADLINES

- 31<sup>st</sup> March (for the period of 15<sup>th</sup> March to 15<sup>th</sup> October)
- 31<sup>st</sup> August (for the period of 15<sup>th</sup> October to 15<sup>th</sup> December)
- 31<sup>st</sup> October (for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> January to 15<sup>th</sup> March)

# Residencies for translators and Czech studies specialists

The Czech Literary Centre residency programme is intended for foreign translators of Czech literature, Czech studies specialists and literary scholars with an interest in Czech culture. The residents are accommodated in Prague or Brno for two to four weeks. Application deadlines are announced on the CzechLit.cz website twice a year – in the spring (for the autumn period) and in the autumn (for the spring of the following year).

## THE RESIDENT RECEIVES

- a 250 EUR per week contribution to living costs
- accommodation in a studio apartment
- support from the Czech Literary Centre in the form of information, contacts, meetings etc.

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- completed application form (including a cover letter and a description of the project)
- CV
- bibliography

## REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS

- ability to communicate in Czech or English
- at least one published translation or scholarly work (including in magazines)

# The Moravian Library

The presentation of Czech book culture at book fairs abroad has a long tradition. The Moravian Library, one of the leading Czech heritage institutions, has been in charge of coordinating the Ministry of Culture's national expositions since 2014. In cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, authorities of Czech literary culture and Czech Centres abroad, the Moravian Library focuses not only on presenting major publishing houses but also on small publishers and printers. Significant Czech literary awards and their winners, along with a selection of current fiction and non-fiction are presented within the framework of a thematic national exposition. The accompanying cultural programme aims at bringing Czech authors together in the form of discussions and readings, especially at the Leipzig Book Fair (focused primarily on translations) or at the most important venue, the Frankfurt Book Fair. Czech book culture is presented in a similar scope also at the book fair in Bologna, which focuses on books for children, and at the London Book Fair. The Moravian Library is also the parent organisation of the Czech Literary Centre, which supports and promotes Czech literature abroad and in the Czech Republic.

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