

ARGO PUBLISHERS

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ARGO PUBLISHERS

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ARGO PUBLISHERS is a major Czech publisher, renowned for its vast list of literary fiction, nonfiction and poetry, as well as trade and mass market fiction. Argo books have won extraordinary acclaim over the years, including numerous literary awards, both Czech and international. Due to our books' success and quality, Argo has become the trend-setter and the market leader in the Czech Republic, combining literary excellence with commercial success.

We are specializing in translated literature (translations make up approximately 70 per cent of our titles), Argo authors include such present-day literary stars as Orhan Pamuk, Kazuo Ishiguro, Leïla Slimani, Margaret Atwood, Peter Høeg, Roberto Bolaño, as well as timeless classics, such as James Joyce, Flannery O'Connor, George Orwell, Jorge Luis Borges, Herman Hesse, Franz Kafka, Jack Kerouac etc.

We pay special attention to contemporary fiction in English, continually introducing such British and American authors as Cormac McCarthy, Don DeLillo, Thomas Pynchon, Hilary Mantel, Donna Tartt, Michael Chabon, Edward St Aubyn, Sarah Waters, David Sedaris etc.

We publish several series of non-fiction books, ranging from history to humanities to astronomy and physics, with authors including Madeleine Albright, Michelle Obama, Niall Ferguson, E. H. Gombrich, Jacques Le Goff, Naomi Klein or Stephen Hawking.

A substantial part of our catalogue is created by bestselling authors, such as Dan Brown, Khaled Hosseini, Paulo Coelho, G. R. R. Martin, Philip Pullman and Umberto Eco.

Among our fastest-growing segments are science fiction and fantasy, with authors such as J. R. R. Tolkien, Philip K. Dick, Douglas Adams, Neil Gaiman or Jeff VanderMeer, comics (Alan Moore, Alejandro Jodorowsky and Moebius) as well as children's and young adults' books (David Walliams, Markus Zusak).



FICTION – HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

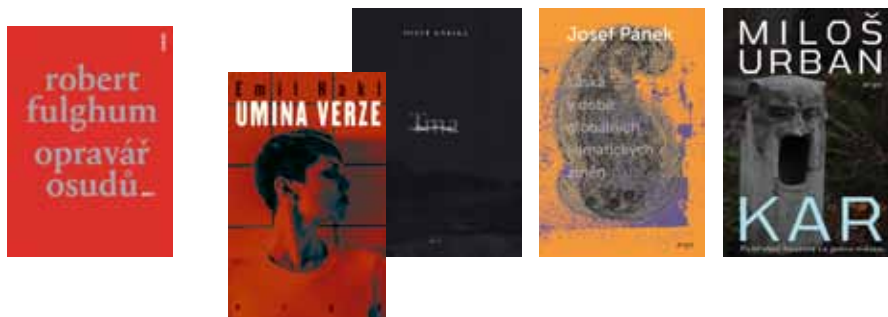
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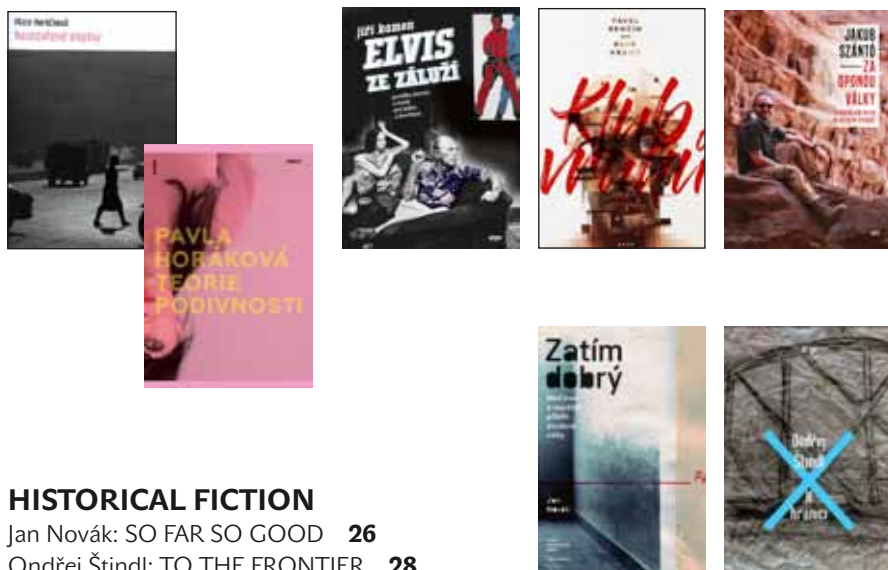
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Robert Fulghum

MENDER OF DESTINIES

DESPITE THE HUNDREDS OF STORIES HE'S WRITTEN IN HIS LIFE, THE AUTHOR DOESN'T LOSE HIS SENSE OF HUMOUR AND HIS POSITIVE OUTLOOK ON THE WORLD.

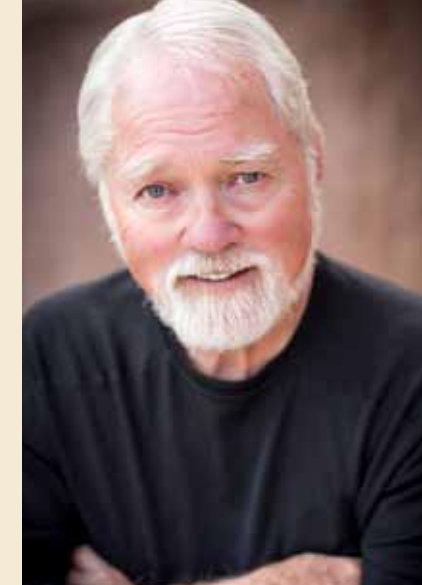
Chief protagonist George Novak comes to Prague to seek out his Czech roots, but eventually finds out that he is actually looking for a meaning to his own life. Looking for yourself and a mission in life is the key motif of this book. George's efforts are helped along most of all by fresh meetings with the rather mysterious young Luci Milena, who presents him with a totally unexpected offer. Again the

MORE THAN
17 MILLION
COPIES
IN 31 LANGUAGES
IN 103
COUNTRIES



author proves that he really does know the Czech temperament very well. He describes the atmosphere of Prague family pubs, a place made especially for conversations, questions and answers, where no few intrigues are resolved. *Mender of Destinies* is a literary work on the interface of the novel, the short story, philosophical meditations and ideas that we can read in particular between the lines. It deals with transformation and rebirth, a man's reconciliation with himself and how our actions, or indeed our small gestures, can influence and perhaps even mend the fates of others.

Robert Fulghum (b. 1937) grew up in Waco, Texas. For 22 years he served as a Unitarian parish minister in the Pacific Northwest. During the same period, he taught drawing, painting, art history, and philosophy at the Lakeside School in Seattle. More than 17 million copies of his books are in print, in 31 languages, in 103 countries. All rose to the top of the New York Times best-seller list. Robert Fulghum has published numerous books: *All I Really Need To Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, *It Was On Fire When I Lay Down On It*, *Uh-Oh, Maybe (Maybe Not)*, *From Beginning To End – The Rituals of Our Lives*, *True Love*, *Words I Wish I Wrote*, *What On Earth Have I Done*, *Hold Me Fast*, *Love Me Slow*, *A Memoir of an Adventure*, *Crisis in the Cheese Aisle*, *The Mender of Destinies*.



PRESS VOICES

"The author has succeeded in linking up several motifs that hold together as the story entices the reader into eagerly turning each new page. This novel challenges you to get to know yourself and to become aware of the appeal of the people among whom we live."

— Právo

"I don't think I am a great writer, but I do write about great things. I have ventured to speak about things that happen routinely but that nobody boasts about. That is where my strength lies. I am first to speak out loud about some things."

— Robert Fulghum

PREVIOUS BOOK FROM THE AUTHOR



Crisis in the Cheese Aisle is a sweet, lightly humorous and touching assortment of aphorisms about life and observations about the workings of the world. One will entertain you, the next will give you pause for thought, and perhaps all will caress the reader's soul.

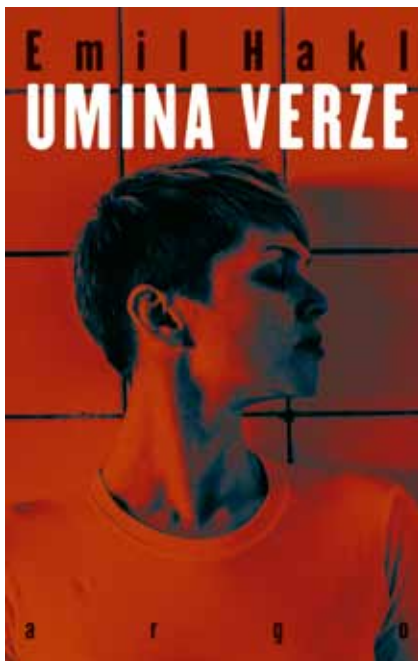
Emil Hakl

UMA'S VERSION

HAKL IS A REAL LITERARY TALENT, "THE HRABAL OF THIS TIME". HE NEEDS LITTLE TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE AND CHARACTERS.

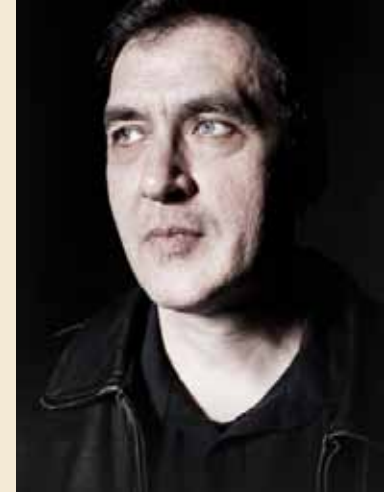
Emil Hakl's novel addresses a hot topic in science and technology – the creation of an artificial human – which has been central to sci-fi since Karel Čapek wrote R.U.R almost 100 years ago. Here humanity's Frankenstein-like desire is to create a beautiful female android, the tit-

TWO TIMES
WINNER OF THE TOP
LITERARY CZECH AWARD
MAGNESIA LITERA
JOSEF ŠKVORECKÝ AWARD –
BEST PROSE WORK



ular Uma. Hakl has achieved a remarkable melding of two genres, as the central point of the book is a classic tale of love. Two main characters are experiencing an intense relationship based on mutual affection, which eventually turns into an addiction of conspiratorial friendship and sex. The mixture of foreignness and intimacy is what makes Uma alluring. Uma is not a submissive partner. On the contrary, she is viewed as the more sophisticated personality, who has the situation in hand and ultimately has the final word on how the relationship will develop. The inscrutable robot becomes the embodiment of the essence of the female soul. This novel is written in the author's typically efficient and fast-paced style.

Emil Hakl (b. 1958) is one of the Czech most appreciated and widely translated contemporary authors, his books have been published in many languages. Hakl was awarded the Magnesia Litera – Best Prose for the novella *O rodičích a dětech* (Of Kids and Parents, 2002). In 2010, a collection of stories *Pravidla směšného chování* (Rules of Ridiculous Behaviour), won the Josef Škvorecký Award, was nominated for the Magnesia Litera in the prose category and came second in the Lidové noviny newspaper's Book of the Year. Three years later he received his second Magnesia Litera Award for the novel *Skutečná událost* (A True Story).



PRESS VOICES

"Hakl chose a brilliant topic for this book. Questions about how we will co-exist with robots, androids and other technological creations are appealing for everyone."

– MF Dnes

"Hakl has given the novel an appealing story, a clear structure, and functional relationships between the central characters and one dog. He switches naturally from writing in the first-person to the second-person and back again."

– Hospodářské noviny

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

"Uma goes to sleep. That's what the two of you call it. She lies down and adjusts her settings (you don't know how, exactly, you prefer to stare at the ceiling), you talk for fifteen or thirty minutes before she shuts down. But she isn't silent – she hums like an electric toy. Her toes twitch gently. She emits various smells. When she's half asleep, she often busies herself by synchronizing her files, or at least that's what she says she's doing. You suspect that she's just actively loafing. She learned it from you, and she's learned that she

enjoys it. Sometimes she lies and pretends to be sleeping, but she's awake. It's as though she's waiting for something. She draws breath and she exhales. It's a question of oxygen delivery, the same as for you. When you wake up in the middle of the night, she always startles you – a half meter away lies an immobile, artificial corpse. You go to the toilet, you drink some water. When you return, her eyes follow you – she's responding to your motion and is already beginning to warm up."

Jozef Karika

DARK

A THRILLER, A HORROR STORY – KARIKA TAKES AN OPPORTUNITY TO PORTRAY THE DARKNESS WITHIN US AND OUR SOCIETY.

A screenwriter comes to an isolated cabin in the Slovak mountains, hoping to escape the pressures of work and the stress of his marriage – but his peaceful get-away turns into a nightmare with the arrival of an uninvited and unknown guest. Is it a wild animal? A local ghost? A sadistic criminal? Without its doors ever being locked, the cabin becomes a prison, and our protagonist must fight for his very survival. From the experimental Slovak novelist comes a gripping thriller that will keep you awake at night.

MORE THEN 350 000
COPIES SOLD
–
TOP SLOVAK NOVELIST
–
SIX GOLDEN BOOKS FOR HIS
BESTSELLING WORKS



PRESS VOICES

“*The Dark* by the Slovak writer Jozef Karika is a book you’ll need to wrap yourself in a blanket and put the kettle on to read. The iciness that seeps from every sentence will chill your bones.” – *Kultura*

“Jozef Karika’s books rank among the very best psychological horrors out there – and I don’t mean just in Central Europe.” – *Pardubický deník*

Jozef Karika (b. 1978) is a bestselling Slovak novelist and journalist; more than 350,000 hardcover copies of his works have been sold in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Karika was the top Slovak novelist of 2014 in the prestigious Martinus Book of the Year competition. Karika is the winner of the Golden Pen (awarded by Slovak literary critics), six Golden Books and two Platinum books for his bestselling works, and several other literary and journalism prizes. His two novels *Fear* and *Black Game* have been published in the Czech Republic by our publishing house. *Black Game* ranked among the best-selling books of 2015 and earned him the Golden Pen award. *Fear* was classified as the horror of the year 2017 in Poland. *The Rift* was chosen by readers to win the Anasoft Litera Prize. The Slovak company DNA Production has filmed an epic miniseries based on this novel directed by Peter Bebjak (the owner of the Czech Lion award). The series recorded the most popular premiere with the viewers in the history of Slovak cinematography.



PREVIOUS BOOK FROM THE AUTHOR



“*The Rift* is redolent of the madness-induced questions that give you goose bumbs as you read. In the forests of the Tribeč Mountains, you can experience something that defies human understanding. The initially innocent quest ends in tragedy.”

Tma

November 2018

208 pages

RIGHTS

Argo

Poland (Stara szkola); Macedonia (Antolog)

English sample

Josef Pánek

LOVE IN THE TIME OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

REMARKABLY DENSE AND DISTURBING TEXT FROM ONE OF THE MOST DISTINCTIVE VOICES OF CONTEMPORARY CZECH LITERATURE.

Love in the Time of Global Climate Change tells a tale of the global village we call Earth, the illogicality of racism and the unpredictable paths of the heart, and how we all fear change, while the greatest of all is taking place around us. The plot is straightforward: the protagonist, Tomáš, travels to attend a conference that takes place in Bangalore. He is a man struggling to pull himself together after a divorce, a scientist forced by our hectic, globalised world to learn to work with others and suppress his individuality for the sake of his research.



TOP CZECH LITERARY
AWARD MAGNESIA LITERA
(2018)

A more or less chance encounter with an attractive Indian participant at the conference leads to a night of intense passion, both in terms of sex and conversation. The author's playful ending leaves it to the reader's imagination to decide what has really happened. But one ought not to dwell on the plot too much, since what is more important in *Love in the Time of Global Climate Change* is that Pánek's writing continues a tradition of Czech literature that started with Bohumil Hrabal and can be traced to more recent writers such as Emil Hakl. This pedigree is apparent in the author's relentless narration, story-telling for the sheer pleasure of story-telling, a verbal deluge sustained for pages on end, alternating between outright bragging and masochistic self-denigration. At the same time, Pánek's writing shows a kinship with writers such as Josef Škvorecký, particularly in the portrayal of life "elsewhere," i.e. outside the Czech environment.

Josef Pánek (b. 1966) received his masters and PhD in Prague, Czech Rep., then worked in Norway and Australia, before finally returning to the Czech Republic. He debuted with a collection of short stories *The Opal Digger* (2013). His second book *Love in the Time of Global Climate Change* (2017) was awarded the Magnesia Litera prize in 2018.



PRESS VOICES

"Pánek's novel disconcerts the reader with its linguistic abrasiveness and the self-destructive, self-centered approach of its main protagonist, it is as agitated and intoxicating as the exotic city in which it takes place." — *novinky.cz*

"Readers should take note of this novel, which takes Czech literature into the European league." — *Visegrad Insight*

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

"You've never been to India – imagine that. Now you find yourself in Bangalore, in the middle of the noise, the stink, the traffic chaos and an endless crowd of people that you've no defense against, you're frightened, disgusted and overwhelmed. You get out of the street into the safety of your hotel, but you still hear the noise, smell the stink, you are disgusted and excited at the same time, you want to understand, you've never experienced anything like this in your life.

OK, you summon the courage to walk out of the hotel and walk straight

into something you think is a slum, having no idea what the slum is and how far you are from it. Anyway, in a clumsy and dense crowd of men in traditional clothing and women in sari you see an Indian girl wearing an ordinary T-shirt with jeans, she's represents the only normal, familiar object to you in the surrounding turmoil, so you take her picture. She notices and tells you in fluent, perfect English to delete her picture. You shrug and do what she wants, and immediately forget the whole episode."

Láska v době globálních klimatických změn

February 2017

160 pages

RIGHTS

Argo

Poland (Stara szkola), Bulgaria (Iskry), Italy (Keller editore), Croatia (Umjetnička organizacija Artikulacije), Egypt (Al Arabi)

English sample,
German sample

Miloš Urban

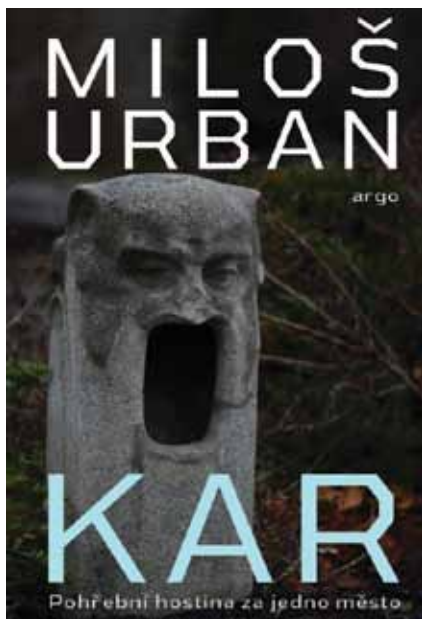
CARLSBAD

A GRIPPING, SUSPENSEFUL AND TERRIFYING MURDER MYSTERY.

Karlovy Vary, better known abroad as Carlsbad, is a beautiful and somewhat sleepy real spa in western Bohemia, located on a river flowing through a picturesque valley. Something nasty, however, happened a couple of months ago and now it has occurred again: a visitor to the town has been viciously bitten by another tourist who committed suicide shortly afterwards. Both cases are similar, but neither the perpetrators nor the victims had anything to do with each other, they were complete strangers. A sense of terror looms over the cool colonnades and hot springs as guests begin to cancel their reservations, threatening to bankrupt the whole town. The deputy commander of the city police writes to Julian Uridil, his former friend from school, now a famous mystery writer living in Prague, and begs him to come back to his hometown and help solve the crimes that are so similar to those in his books. Julian arrives in Karlovy Vary and discovers a detail the police overlooked: at each crime scene somebody has left a photograph of a seemingly dead girl covered with false tattoos...

WINNER OF THE MAGNESIA LITERA
AWARD – BEST PROSE (2012)

FILM ADAPTATION OF
THE WATER-GOBLIN
IN CZECH THEATRES



Miloš Urban (b. 1967), one of the most translated Czech writers has published a total of 15 books: novels, novellas and short stories. The novels *Santiniho jazyk* (Santini's Language) and *Hastrman* (Water-Goblin) have been made into films, and Water-Goblin won the top Czech literary award Magnesia Litera (2012). The feature film Water-Goblin directed by Ondřej Havelka is the modern utopia, which confronts the problem of ecology with the phenomenon of the victim, and entered cinemas in the spring of 2018. The novel *Sedmikostelí* (The Seven Churches, 1998), written in the spirit of Gothic novels and tales of terror, full of melancholy and murder in the middle of old Prague, has sold tens of thousands of copies and was translated into 20 languages. Almost every year he publishes a new novel on a variety of themes, which underlines his wide scope of interest. He combines suspense with literary quality. His latest work *The Shutter* (2017) is an erotic novel about the curse of our age when anyone can become a photographer and take at least one good shot.



FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

"After all these years Julian had finally returned. Even if just for a bit. All because of a letter. When he stepped off the bus he realized his hatred for his hometown had disappeared. Off in the distance, he could smell the hot springs, the minerals, that salty subterranean scent. No, he didn't. What bullshit. Who knows what he smelled. He just didn't want

to feel indifferent. That's not why he'd come. Immediately he began doubting his decision. Where was the swell of emotions? Nowhere. Even negatives ones would be fine. But... nothing. It was just some town in western Bohemia. He may as well have arrived in Plzen or Stříbro or Cheb."

Alice Horáčková

UNOPENED LETTERS

THIS UNUSUAL MEMOIR IS NOT THE STANDARD TESTIMONY ABOUT LIFE UNDER TOTALITARIAN RULE.



Alena is a pretty girl with a quick wit and a painter's eye. After the Russian tanks roll into Prague in 1968, having printed anti-Soviet fliers on an underground press, she flees to Paris. Her jeweller father, who had been "re-educated" in the uranium mines of Jáchymov, inserts a diamond into the heel of her shoe. Alena refuses to sell it there, breaks off a love affair with a Frenchman and returns to Prague. Firmly resolved never to marry, she finds

herself seven-month pregnant and ends up tying the knot with Jára, a renowned painter who can't even warm up a cup of soup. After the child is born, Alena has to bring home the bacon while helping her husband through his bouts of manic depression. After his death, she finds a stack of unopened letters in his desk. The handwriting is feminine and aggressive, but why hadn't Jára ever opened them? Does she feel like reading them? The letters are not the sole enigma of her life – Alena has a secret of her own.

Alice Horáčková (b. 1980) has a master's degree in social sciences from Prague's Charles University and, for a number of years, was a literary editor for MF DNES, a major Czech daily. In 2008, she was awarded the European Journalistic Fellowship and spent a year in Berlin, studying at the Free University. Her first book was an unconventional biography of Czech Beat poetess Vladimíra Čerepková (2014), which was nominated for Magnesia Litera Prize as well as the Josef Škvorecký prize. Her next book *Zx ve vedlejší úloze* (7x in a Supporting Role, 2016) features interviews with siblings of famous Czech personalities, such as Václav Havel and Martina Navrátilová. *Neotevřené dopisy* (Unopened Letters, 2018) is her first work of fiction.



PRESS VOICES

"Alice Horáčková has really nailed this metamorphosis: Mrs Alena is taking stock of her life with the generous wisdom of age and with an unexpectedly rough, yet always loving, sense of humour."

– Radio 3 – Vltava

"The third book of the renowned journalist is, in contrast to her previous books, a work of fiction. Alena, the widow of a painter, wonderfully sums up the socialist past of Czechoslovakia."

– Reflex

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

"What were we talking about? That's right, the diploma. Well, I didn't much enjoy school. What good is a matriculation diploma if you don't get taken in at least once in your life? Although I graduated with distinction, I was far more interested in my placement. I don't suppose you know how that worked. Well, at the National Committee office, they looked at

your 'materials' and who you knew before choosing a job for you. And as old Doležalová was still the concierge of our building and I was still the daughter of an enemy of the people, I was summoned to the Municipal House, where they sent me to the second floor. I knocked on the door and a voice shouted from inside: 'What do you want?'"

Pavla Horáková

A THEORY OF STRANGENESS

THE BRILLIANTLY DEPICTED JOURNEY OF A YOUNG URBAN INTELLECTUAL'S SEARCH FOR THE DEEPER MEANING OF LIFE.



At first glance, Ada Sabova may seem like the stereotypical, young urban intellectual. Disillusioned with relationships, the predictable pattern her life has taken, and most of all her work at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Human Studies, she finds amusement in noticing minor, apparently coincidental and unusual details around her, before realizing they actually follow

certain patterns, resulting in something she privately dubs “a theory of strangeness”. Ada’s growing obsession with the search for a coworker’s missing son pushes her on a new path – and her neat, predictable life suddenly takes quite an unexpected turn.

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

“How often had I heard those words lately? How often had I said them myself? Is there a specific point in life when friends start parting with a “hang in there” rather than a simple “bye” or “take care”? Or was I simply so overwhelmed by my current misery that I saw trouble wherever I looked? Perhaps the notorious midlife crisis had decided to show up way before I’d actually managed to acquire all that wisdom and wealth that was supposed to come with middle age. You can act young and dress young, you can try to put off adulthood and all its obligations and commitments as hard as you can, but you can’t really trick time. My list of losses was constantly growing.”

Pavla Horáková (b. 1974) is a Prague-based author, radio journalist and literary translator. Her published works of fiction include a detective trilogy for young adults *Tajemství Hrobaříků* (The Secret of the Sexton Beetles, 2010, 2016), *Hrobaříci v podzámčí* (The Sexton Beetles under the Castle, 2011, 2016) and *Hrobaříci a Hrobaři* (The Sexton Beetles and the Gravediggers, 2012, 2018). In 2018 she co-authored the novella *Johana* (along with Alena Scheinostová and Zuzana Dostálová) and published her first novel for adults, *Teorie podivnosti* (A Theory of Strangeness). She has a regular show on Czech Radio’s arts & culture station Vltava for which she co-wrote and co-presented a 27-part series titled *Polní pošta* (Field Post), marking the centenary of WWI, featuring the memoirs, journals and correspondence of Czech soldiers. Along with her radio co-host Jiří Kamen, she has co-edited two books on the subject, titled *Přišel befel od císaře pána* (An Order Came Through from the Emperor, 2015) and *Zum Befehl, pane lajtnant* (Zum Befehl, Lieutenant, Sir, 2018).



THE TOP CZECH LITERARY AWARD
- BEST PROSE
(2019)

PRESS VOICES

“Someone once said that a great work of fiction astonishes the reader by the ability to express something, they’ve until now believed to be inexpressible – something at which Pavla Horáková excels.”
– *Aktualne.cz*

“*A Theory of Strangeness* is the product of great literary talent combined with a brilliant intellect and something we could perhaps call the feminine mystique. Pavla Horáková is a rare bird among contemporary Czech writers: educated, witty, sophisticated... and a little mysterious. Just like her new novel, *A Theory of Strangeness*, which Echo magazine has called the decade’s smartest piece of Czech fiction.”
– *Echo Weekly*

Jiří Kamen, Jan Macúch (ill.)

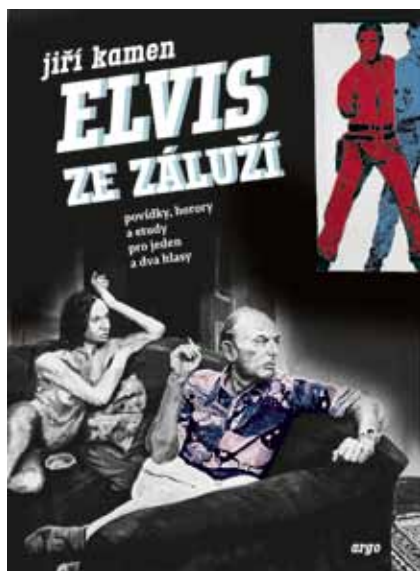
ELVIS OF THE ELBE

SHORT STORIES, HORROR TALES, AND ÉTUDES FOR SOLOS AND DUETS.

NOMINATION FOR THE TOP
CZECH LITERARY AWARD –
BEST PROSE (2019)

In this collection of twenty-four stories, the author focuses on breaking-points – both of individuals and society, which often run parallel, intersect, or reflect each other – exploring the beginnings of love and its end, investigating the mechanics of human relationships against the backdrop of various social situations. Kamen is an expert storyteller; his tales veer off into grotesque directions as characters

in normal encounters find themselves in shocking situations: a man pressures his lover to dress up like his wife; another tells his former classmate that he's decided to kidnap him; the widow and the mistress of a famous historian send the professor's star student back and forth to each other's bed. The author maintains a delicate distance from his subjects, walking the tightrope between irony, parody, satire, and black comedy; stories that begin hyperrealistically suddenly cross into surreal and clownish escapades; horror and mystery pastiches gain surprising elements in the author's translation. Jan Macúch, one of the Czech Republic's most exciting post-Velvet Revolution painters, illustrates the collection with his own fascinating and startling work.



Jiří Kamen (b. 1951) is a writer, cultural affairs commentator, and the author of radio dramas and documentaries. Graduating from Palacký University in Olomouc with an M.A. in Fine Arts, he joined Czechoslovak Radio in 1975. In 1989 he became Czechoslovak Radio's director of programming for literature and drama; from 1991 to 1993 he was the director-general of Radio Vltava. With Blanka Stárková, he created the Vltava Weekend Supplement, which won the Quails Prize for journalism and which he directs and hosts to this day. Jiří is also the author of several books: *A Less than Full Measure of Happiness* (poetry), *Wandering Horse* (a biographical novel), *The Other One is Me* (a novella in the form of a novel), and *It's All the Cat's Fault* (a humorous novel on "pre-revolutionary" radio that also touches on the present day).



PRESS VOICES

"Kamen is a remarkable storyteller – within such a short space he manages to narrate a family saga, incorporating a range of interesting and unusual motifs that never come off as implausible or clumsy."

– Host

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

"Your husband died this afternoon. His body's on the bed, room 8, Hotel Koruna on the main strip... No, I'm not kidding. I'm serious, unfortunately. I tried to revive him, but it didn't work. Yeah, I'm pretty sure I can tell when someone's dead or not. Mirror under the nose, nothing, no pulse. I didn't call a doctor, your husband didn't want me to. He absolutely forbade it. He didn't want to cause a scene. He was paranoid that some-

thing like this would happen. At least he was with me. He jumped out of bed naked a bunch of times to take his temperature. He brought a thermometer with him on our dates... Yes, I'm his lover. No, I'm not going to tell you my name – I'm married. Not that it's important, I wouldn't tell you even if I were single. I was in love with him. If he'd have gotten a divorce, I would have too. He was old, sure, but he was in good shape."

Pavel Renčín

THE MURDERER'S CLUB

A BIG LITERARY GAME. IF YOU DECIDE TO TAKE PART IN IT YOU MUST ACCEPT THE FACT THAT YOU WILL BECOME A VICTIM.

Masking itself as a detective story, *The Murderers' Club* is a disquieting thriller that gradually veers off into horror territory. The protagonist tends to prefer books to people; but with a single meeting, the story of his ordinary life suddenly becomes nightmarish and as gripping as a thriller. How does a quiet, agreeable man find himself smashing up some-

AERONAUTILUS PRIZE -
BEST CZECH BOOK
(2011)
—
ACADEMY OF SFFH -
BEST BOOK
(2016)



one's car or beating another man to a pulp? Shattering your whole life is surprisingly easy – and sometimes it can turn out to be the best thing that can happen to you. Pavel Renčín tells his story in almost cinematic language, combining genres with an ease that will keep you guessing till the end.

Pavel Renčín (b. 1977) appeared on the Czech literary scene as a disruptive wave within the mainstream. His debut was the short story *The Creator* in 1999, which won him a number of awards in literary competitions. Since then his name has regularly appeared in prestigious anthologies of the fantasy genre. His works, *No Fairy tale* (2004) *The Name of the Ship* (2007), *Labyrinth* (2008), primarily cover urban fantasy and magic realism. His fantasy trilogy *Urban Wars* was nominated for the Academy of SFFH (Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror) award, and was awarded the Aeronautilus prize in the category of best Czech book. In 2009 a selection of Renčín's best short stories was published in the compendium *Concrete, Bones and Dreams*. *Trapped* was awarded by the Academy of SFFH the best book in 2016. His newest book *The Murderers' Club* was the top Super Thursday pick in autumn 2018.



PRESS VOICES

"A detective story, a thriller, a psychological sketch, a nerd's reading journal. It is whatever you want it to be. You will doubtlessly devour the letters as long as there are some left."

– sarden.cz

"*The Murderers' Club* is a successful continuation of the new era of this writer who has decided to bid farewell to fantasy and turn his attention to thrillers. It has apparently been the right decision. This book is exciting and extraordinary and it will affect you deeply long time after you finish it."

– cdbd

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

"The girl doesn't notice the gloom that has already begun clotting into clumps of dense darkness. Her white, stick-thin legs pump rapidly, and sharp pain pierces her still-childlike chest. She is running through the woods, oblivious to the cold sweat covering her body, to the goose bumps chafing

against the fabric of her pants. It's not the joy of running but the sheer terror that propels her to move even faster, like a crazed horse galloping across the night sky. The woods, which are in fact a small park just outside the neighbourhood, have become a dark, terrifying place."

Klub vrahů

October 2018

304 pages

RIGHTS

Argo

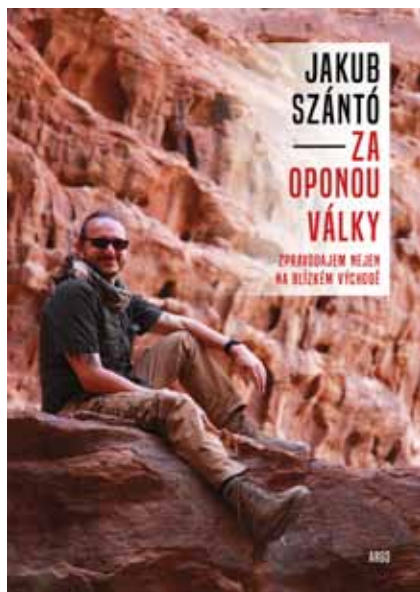
English sample

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.



THE BIGGEST-SELLING
TITLE OF THE SUPER
THURSDAY (2019)

THE TOP CZECH LITERARY
AWARD – READERS' CHOICE
(2019)

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 their 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.

Jakub Szántó offers an insider's detailed 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

Jakub Szántó (b. 1977) is a journalist and television reporter. He graduated 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 a PhD in Modern History. 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. He has focused primarily on 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.



PRESS VOICES

"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."

— *iLiteratura*

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

— *Právo*

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

"Fuck, drive smoothly! I don't want them to think they've got a reason to shoot at us!" I yell from the passenger seat at the technician, Michal Rydval. "If you want to get out, I'll stop for you! I mean, they're shooting at us." Smack, smack, vzoom. It's coming from

the right, from my side. The bullets hit the asphalt and whirr past the car. Individual shots. Most likely a sniper, so probably an Israeli soldier. Ratata, tatata. That's coming from the left, from Michal's side. It must be a Kalashnikov, so that'll be a Palestinian."

Za oponou války

October 2018

260 pages

RIGHTS

Argo

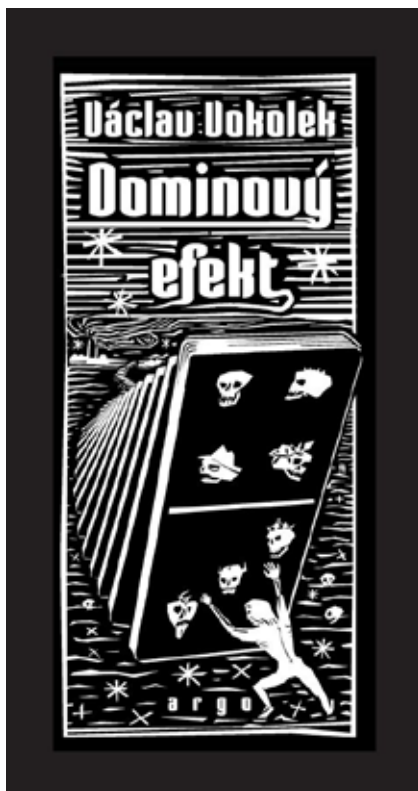
English sample

Václav Vokolek

THE DOMINO EFFECT

A NOVELIST FRESCO OF A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY.

A large-scale, opulent and sweeping novelistic sketch; a work rich in a genre, subject matter, style and language. The author's latest novel loosely continues his 20-year-old prose work *Cesta do pekla* (Journey to Hell). Both works blend together timelines, fiction and dreams, 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, forming a unified whole.



Václav Vokolek (b. 1947) is a novelist, journalist and artist. After leaving his university studies unfinished, he worked as the caretaker of a state-ly home, a museum worker and later a restorer. Until 1989 he refused to publish. After November 1989, he sat on various literary boards. He is the author of more than fifty books; he writes prose, poetry, children's books and scholarship. *Zříceninový mramor* (Wrecked Marble, 1996) is a collection of poetry works from 1971-1994; the novels *Cesta do pekla* (Journey to Hell, 1999) and *Dominový efekt* (The Domino Effect, 2018) are part of the planned triptych called *Krajiny vzpomínek* (A Landscape of Memories, 2000). His scholarship includes seven volumes focused on the sacred sites of his homeland, *Neznámé Čechy* (Unknown Bohemia, 2009); the essays *Exily a úkryty v české krajině* (Exile and Shelters in the Czech Landscape, 2006); and collection of Czech oral legends and folklore, *Český rok* (The Czech Year 2011).



PRESS VOICES

"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 elevates the form of the novel to a higher level."

– Databáze knih

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

"Your existence is falling away, you are disappearing, your name will be forgotten, it will vanish like the morning mist, perhaps like a dying breath. There will be nothing left of you. Nothing will be left of your victims. Noth-

ing. I know you don't understand what I am telling you, but it must be said. For a thousandth of an eon we had to meet, just for these few words. In a moment you will know the reason for all of this."

Dominový efekt

October 2018

598 pages

RIGHTS

Argo

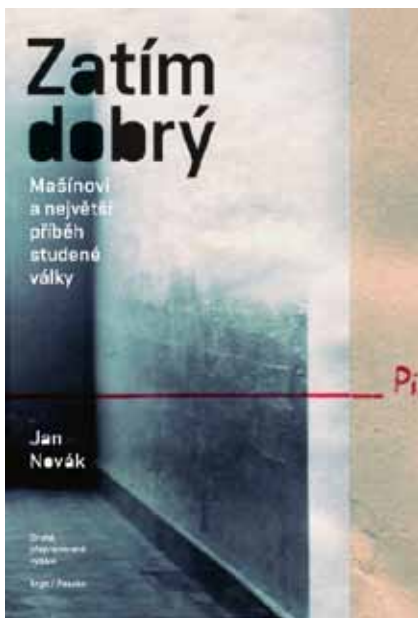
English sample

Jan Novák

SO FAR SO GOOD

A MASTERPIECE. NOVÁK HAS SEIZED THE MOST POWERFUL MATERIAL SINCE 1945 THAT CZECH HISTORY OFFERS.

The true story of three young Czech men whose daring exploits of anti-Communist resistance and 1953 flight to West Berlin set off the largest manhunt in the history of the Eastern Bloc. To this day, whether the Mašín brothers were heroes or murderers is a point of contention that continues to divide the country. A touchy,



MAGNESIA LITERA –
BOOK OF THE YEAR
(2004)

–
JOSEF ŠKVORECKÝ
AWARD (2007)

CARL SANDBURG
AWARD FOR CHICAGO
AUTHORS

–
FRIENDS OF
LITERATURE AWARD

sophisticated portrait of several extraordinary personalities – including father Mašín: soldier, legionnaire and one of the “Three Kings” of the Protectorate period, his wife Zdena, mother-in-law Emma, daughter Nenda, sons Josef and Ctirad Mašín as well as their friends and collaborators. The captivating and dramatic story of five youngsters armed with pistols facing a 20-thousand-strong army of East German Volkspolizei unfolds like a western. *So Far So Good* was awarded the Magnesia Litera as the Czech Book of the year 2004, became a best-seller and has been in print ever since.

Jan Novák (b. 1953), novelist, dramatist, scriptwriter, translator. He emigrated in 1969 and lived in Chicago from 1970 to 2008; he now lives in Prague, though he often returns to America. His books include *On the Far Side of the Pond*, *Grandpa*, *So Far, So Good*, *Commies*, *Crooks*, *Gypsies*, *Spooks & Poets*, *The Grand Life*, *Willy's Dream Kit*, *Striptease Chicago* and have been translated into several languages. Jan Novák has also co-authored the autobiography of Miloš Forman, *The Turnaround*, which was translated into 21 languages, and a graphic novel *Zátopek* with the illustrator Jaromír 99, which was published in German, French, Spanish and Portuguese. He is the recipient of major literary prizes including the Magnesia Litera 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.



PRESS VOICES

“This is a contemporary thriller and the hard-to-believe actions of these people bring to mind the Northern sagas or Homer, which feature similar heroes. But in contrast to legends and myths, these were all actual people.”

– Josef Škvorecký

“A novel of action, full of strong, uncommon emotion and logical, natural pathos. Everything races quickly toward the end. The means of presentation are so expressive that we get the feeling we may be overhearing the words of the characters themselves.”

– MF Dnes

RIGHTS

Argo

USA (Slavica Publishers, Indiana University), Poland (Ksiązkowe Klimaty), Hungary (Kalligram), Serbia (Akademska knjiga)

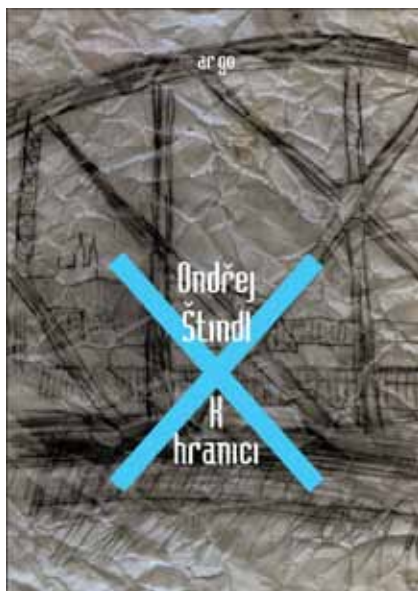
English translation

Ondřej Štindl

TO THE FRONTIER

THIS NOVEL SKIPS FROM HISTORICAL (AND PSYCHOLOGICAL) PROSE TO APOCALYPTIC SCI-FI WITH MAGICAL ELEMENTS; IT DEMANDS THE VORACIOUS READING OF ITS REPLETE HISTORY.

Ondřej Štindl's second novel probes liminal experience in three loosely interconnected stories, or novellas, that span the period from the end of WWII to the 1970s, taking us from the wild plains of Siberia to the subdued greyness of the communist Prague. The triptych of stories makes up an ambitious novel that is based on clashes of individuals with power that transcends them. Inevitably, all of them lose but in their loss, they find what frontier stands for — the liminal experience, the possibility to make a step beyond and to enjoy, albeit for a short moment, the moment of freedom. Štindl blends the personal with the public, and poignantly portrays individual destinies upon a background of historical events, in which he combines a love story with a bildungsroman, myth and a gunslinging tale. *To the Frontier* explores what it meant to take action during periods when it was simpler to be passive rather than fight against injustices. This marvellous novel demands the voracious reading.



Ondřej Štindl (b. 1966) is a film and music critic, renowned journalist and Radio 1 DJ. He made his debut in 2012 with the title *Mondschein*, a sinister post-apocalyptic vision accompanied with illustrations by Josef Bolf. In his texts, like those of other members of the revolutionary generation, the starting points and legacy of the Velvet Revolution are an ever-present given. Reconciliation with the Czech post-war history, above all the period of normalisation, is reflected also in his artistic work, most pronouncedly in the film *Walking Too Fast* for which Štindl wrote the screenplay and won a Czech Lion award. Popular crime series *Shadow of the Ferns* has earned him the second one.



PRESS VOICES

“Štindl is a superb narrator with an unmistakable style, which is perfectly suited to the story being told. His writing is on the first impression detached, in places laconic, and free of moralising or an attempt to explain. His novel *To the Frontier* is an excellent and powerful book.”

— *Reflex*

“Štindl's writing is like a cleaver held by a butcher in a bloody apron. Its chops are sharp and exact.”

— *Hospodářské noviny*

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

“They were approaching the town from the west. Through the fabric of his uniform and the armour plating he was aware of the engine's vibration; its exhaust fumes smelled good - sweetish and comforting. He settled back comfortably and half-closed his eyes against the intense sunlight, his ears filled with the pounding of all that horse power. They knew how to make engines, the Germans did. Now they were pressing after them. To finish them off. Through the screen of smoke

Stěpan was assailed by other smells of that spring, blossom and decay, the chaos of a world in which the girdle of war had started to give. That world was rising to its feet, feeble and slightly giddy, slowly gathering its strength to hare off after some new dream or chimaera. But Stěpan stays put, not stirring, he's where he belongs, nodding off on the tank's front plate. The end of a branch of lilac in bloom brushed across his face. There are so many lilacs at this spot. Odd, that.”

Ladislav Čumba

WITTGENSTEIN'S BOOK OF FACTS

BIOGRAPHY WRITTEN IN A READABLE LITERARY FORM WITH HUMOUR AND SUBTLETY. AWARDED THE MILOSLAV ŠVANDRLÍK AWARD FOR THE BEST HUMORISTIC BOOK OF THE YEAR.

Ladislav Čumba's literary text explores the story of Ludwig Wittgenstein, one of the most influential philosophers of the 20th century. The son of a Kladno steelmaker, one of the richest people in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, whose mother Poldi is still remembered by residents of Kladno, he turned his back on that enormous wealth. He became a gardener and, after a colourful journey, a philosophy teacher at Cambridge. This story of the Czech traces in the family and life of the philosopher Wittgenstein is a testimony to the tenacity of both capitalists and writers, to intransigence and tolerance, to arts patronage and the power of the spoken and written word. It also takes in eminent artists of the period, in many cases family friends, like Rilke, Trakl, Klimt, Brahms, Hindemith and Ravel. The book is underscored with top-quality graphic design (Jan Čumlivski) that is attractive to users and naturally complements the textual collage with a pictorial collage.

MILOSLAV ŠVANDRLÍK
AWARD FOR THE BEST
HUMORISTIC BOOK OF
THE YEAR



Ladislav Čumba (b. 1976) is a teacher of Czech for foreigners. He is a member of the editorial board of the magazine Babylon, a founder of the civic association Skutečnost, a moderator at musical festivals, an author of song text, a mini-opera librettist, an occasional playwright, amateur actor and scriptwriter and the author of a mini-opera trilogy. Biography was awarded the Miloslav Švandrlík Award for the best humoristic book of the year and short-listed for the F. X. Šalda Award as the most serious one at the same time.



PRESS VOICES

"A member of a family and a distinguished personality who left an indelible imprint on the march of history."

— Lidovky.cz



"This is not a philosophical work, an attack on Wittgenstein's ideological world, a discussion or a polemic. Čumba is concerned with an investigation into the background, both real and hypothetical, in which Wittgenstein grew up. He is following in the footsteps of all kinds of experiments and postmodern actors, from Jarry, through Queneau and Perec to Ouředník and Brikcius. And to a certain extent also Wittgenstein himself."

— Týdeník Rozhlas

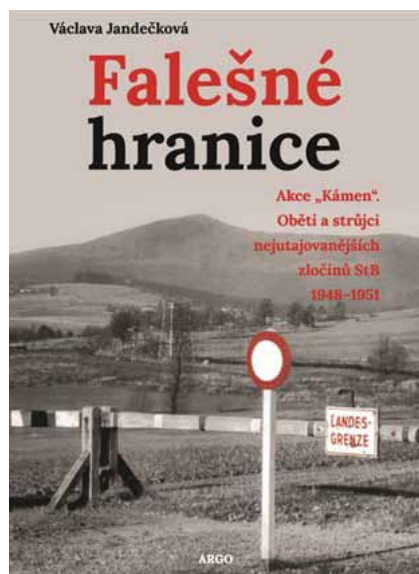
Václava Janděčková

FALSE FRONTIERS

OPERATION KÁMEN. VICTIMS AND INSTIGATORS OF THE MOST
CONFIDENTIAL CRIMES OF THE STATE SECURITY 1948–1951

The author's profound interest and personal involvement in the fate of those involved and their individual stories makes this historical study a literary gem. *False Frontiers: Stories from Operation Kámen, (1948–1951)* unmasks illegal State Security activities of the late 1940s and early 1950s, which were hitherto practically unknown. Using ten distinctive examples, she tells the stories of the participants, describing the background to the malicious crimes that involved laying traps for previously selected victims who had been goaded into escaping from Czechoslovakia. State Security thought up Operation

Kámen in order to interrogate sought-after individuals at bogus German customs posts in fictitious American military counter-espionage offices. With this incriminating material, those who thought they had actually crossed the Czechoslovak state frontier were then arrested for "illegally crossing the frontier". There were not a chance occurrences, but were part of a systematic procedure practised by the state security apparatus, which was covertly breaking its own laws. State Security agents did not hesitate to make use of criminal methods to consolidate totalitarian power and to identify the various forms of dissent against the new regime. The author aims to present the sophistication that came to be standard procedure in the planning behind state security work. Although this was the most secret repressive campaign of the Communist regime, Janděčková reveals new victims and perpetrators, outlines the development of Operation Kámen in time and space, and presents a range of reasons for its use. The extensive illustrations indicate the broad source base of an official and private nature. Previously unpublished archive material is compared to later direct testimony from witnesses, enabling the author to present in an entirely new light the secret police's reasoning and procedures during the opaque post-1948 period of turbulent change.



Václava Janděčková (b. 1974) is a member of the International PEN Club (Czech Centre) and a graduate in international relations. Her research interests focus on the unexplored subjects of the history of post-1948 Czechoslovakia, on which she has already written several monographs: *KÁMEN. The Evidence of the Main Player in the False Borders Operation near Všeruby in Domažlice district* (2013); *Three men against totality. Resistance fighter Ota Tulačka, RAF pilot Josef Hýbler and American diplomat Walter Birge in combatting the StB* (2014). For her latest book *JAN MASARYK CASE (a new view). Confession to murder and the secret reinvestigation process by the StB in 1950–1951* (2015) she received the Egon Erwin Kisch Special International Award. The real-life events described in *Kámen and Falešné hranice* were adapted as a theatre performance entitled *Operation KAMEN* and staged by Staatsschauspiel Dresden.



PRESS VOICES

"Václava Janděčková has filled in almost all the blanks in OPERATION KÁMEN that had not previously been explored, which makes her monograph an excellent probe into StB mysteries and methods, while presenting a very topical challenge to the present-day younger generation, which is unaware of its activities and "working" methods."

— klubknihomolu.cz

Falešné hranice

March 2018

398 pages

RIGHTS

Argo

English sample

Jan Novák, Jaromír 99

ZÁTOPEK

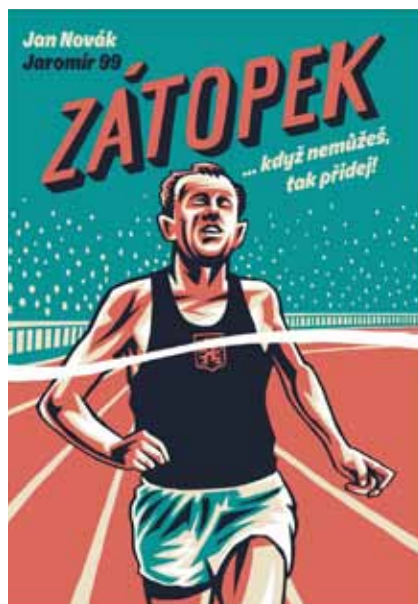
THE EXPRESSIVENESS OF THE SHARPLY CHISELLED FACES AND TENSE MUSCLES CAPTURES THE PAIN AND EFFORT WHICH SPORT AND LIFE REQUIRE.

A graphic novel about the life of one of the most famous Czech athletes, Emil Zátopek – considered by many to be the greatest runner of all time. Zátopek used to say that the threshold of pain and suffering is what separates the boys from the men. Pushing the limits of the body is what made him a phenomenal runner and one of the most famous athletes. When he won the 10km race at the 1948 Olympic Games in London and finished second on the 5km track, he didn't consider it a great achievement. At the next Olympics in Helsinki he won three gold medals and became a legend, but he also achieved a more important victory – he stood up to the Communist regime by insisting that his colleague, Stanislav Jungwirth, who was originally banned from travelling to Helsinki for political reasons, be allowed to compete. This graphic novel written by Jan Novák and illustrated by Jaromír 99 looks at Zátopek's greatest achievements as well as his relationship with the love of his life, Dana Zátopková. The three-colour concept reflects the printing technique used for posters and matches labels at the time.

PRESS VOICES

"The comic portrays Zátopek as a hero and a role-model and also hints at his weaknesses. A man who is successful due to his will but is simultaneously walking a tightrope above an abyss; his Czech cunning helps him keep his balance."

— *Respekt*



Jan Novák (b. 1953), novelist, dramatist, scriptwriter, 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 for a 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.



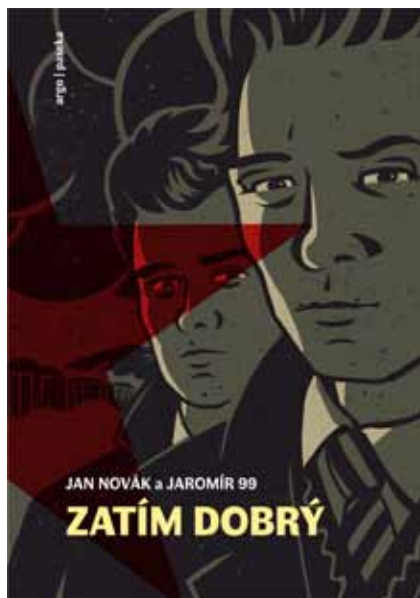
Jaromír 99 (b. 1963), singer, songwriter, visual artist. Along with the writer Jaroslav Rudiš, Jaromír 99 is the author of the comic book trilogy *Alois Nebel* which was made into a successful movie in 2011 and received the award for the best-animated feature film from the European Film Academy in 2012. His comic book adaptation of Franz Kafka's novel *The Castle* was nominated for the Will Eisner Award 2014 at San Diego's Comic-Con International.



Jan Novák, Jaromír 99

SO FAR SO GOOD

THE VISUALLY ARRESTING GRAPHIC NOVEL IN A UNIQUE AND SPECIFIC STYLE OF NOIR.



The story of the Mašín brothers and their band waging a guerilla war against the Communist regime in the early 1950s could be the most dramatic Czech tale of the 20th 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 prize for Best 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 in Czechia of their previous collaboration, *Zátopek*, the authors return with an even more explosive comic book.



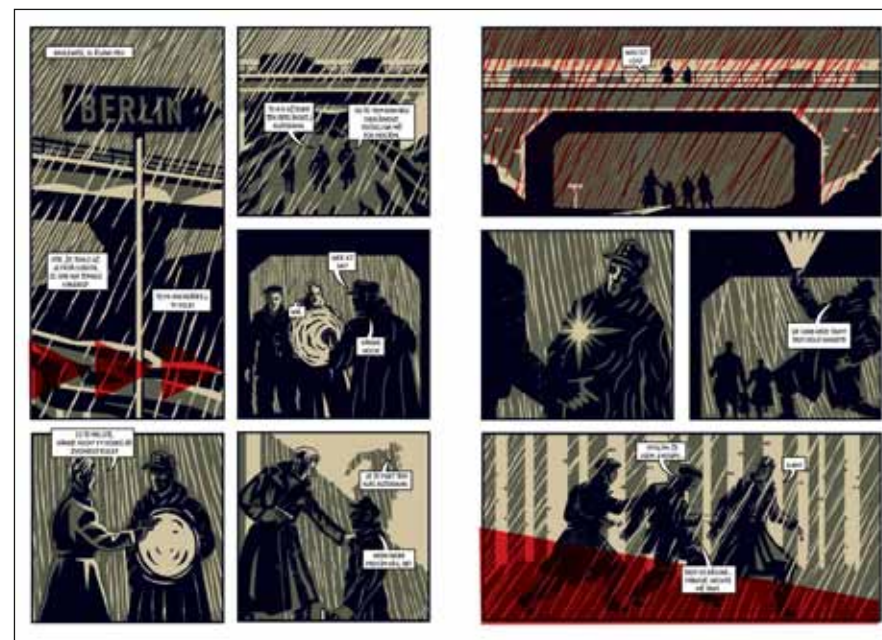
PRESS VOICES

"I didn't want this to be just another action comic about heroism in a time of darkness, but instead a thriller about two boys who stood up to evil and were lucky as hell."

– *Jaromír 99 (Jaromír Švejdlík)*

"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*



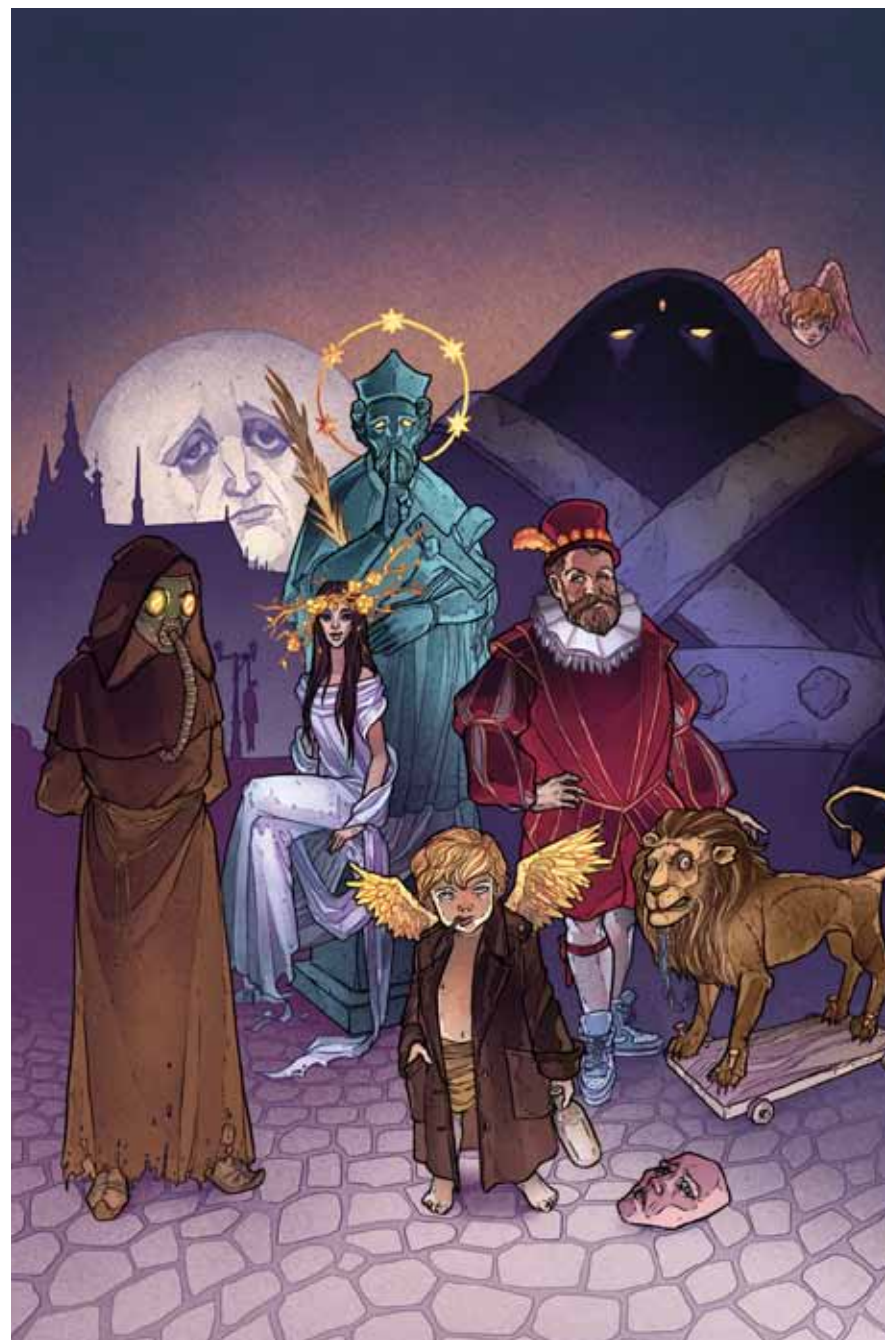
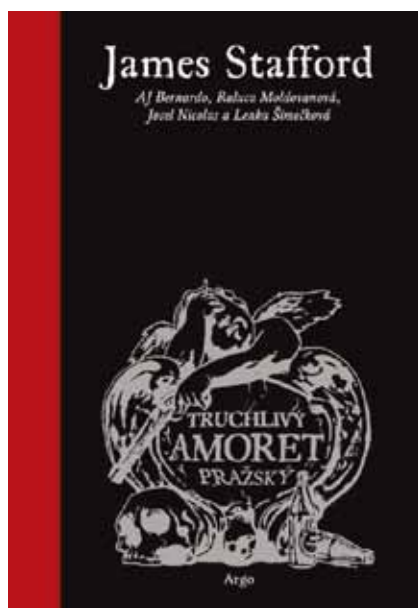
James Stafford, AJ Bernardo, Raluca Moldovan, Lenka Šimečková, Josel Nicolas

THE SORROWFUL PUTTO OF PRAGUE

A BEGUILING, DARK AND CHARMING SET OF SHORT TALES THAT BLEND BLACK HUMOUR, TRAGEDY, MELANCHOLY, HOPE AND BEAUTY TOGETHER WHILST HITTING EVERY NOTE PERFECTLY.

This collection of stories about 'Xavier of the Sorrowful Snows' has won acclaim from such diverse sources as Hollywood and comic legend Samuel L. Jackson, to the Guardian newspaper and the cream of the Czech print and broadcast press. Xavier is a contradictory hero: a baroque angel born into the Renaissance; a being with the face of a child and the bitter wisdom of an old man; a tender lover, a fierce fighter and a hopeless drunk. Above all, he's a devoted, if reluctant, defender of Prague. The individual chapters of his adventure take us back to the times of emperor Rudolf or the Baroque era, as well as to the present day; featuring tales of the political purges of the 1950s and the secret police of the "normalisation" period. Characters include the famous Golem (as you've never seen him before), a zombie version of a Czech patron saint, corrupt Prague taxi drivers and miraculous visions of the talking head of St. Adalbert in the middle of the working class Žižkov district of Prague. In short, *The Sorrowful Putto of Prague* offers such a bizarre mix of historical realia, fantastic tales, the genius loci of Prague, black humour (both typically British and

typically Czech) and pop-culture references that after reading it you'll will never quite see the City of a Hundred Spires the same way again.



PRESS VOICES

“Just read the DOPE ASS ‘The Sorrowful Putto of Prague’... check it out... you’re in for a treat!”
– Samuel L. Jackson, *twitter.com*

“...[an] atmospheric webcomic steeped in Czech history and folklore...”
– *The Guardian (UK)*

“The author’s fantasy knows no bounds and he has a very fertile imagination.”
– *MF Dnes*

“... the mix of stories exude both charm, great characters and have a beguiling and haunting charm and it’s well worth your time to have a read...”
– John Freeman, *downthetubes.net*



James Stafford is a Welsh writer and journalist currently living in the Czech Republic (via London, Cardiff and Dublin). James’ first foray into comics, *The Sorrowful Putto of Prague*, has won a cult following online and its fans include Hollywood legend and comic fanatic Samuel L. Jackson. James writes on a variety of topics as a ghostwriter and regularly dabbles in sports journalism – with experience in major UK and Irish national and local newspapers. He is currently working on a full-length graphic novel as well as a follow-up to *The Sorrowful Putto of Prague*.

AJ Bernardo from the Pacific archipelago has been working as a comic book artist for close to a decade now, but still, struggles to apply shadows on the face of infants. He’s never held a cigarette, enjoys the occasional drunken night or two, and his given name means ‘Angel’.

Raluca Moldovan loves art and synthpop and claims that drawing is her only real qualification. Raluca’s early involvement with *The Sorrowful Putto of Prague* came after she responded to a request for an artist for the comic on a fansite of British rock band The Cure. She lives in the seaside town of Constanta, Romania.

Lenka Šimečková is one of the Czech Republic’s rising young comic stars. A much-in-demand artist already boasting an impressive portfolio of work - her picturesque gothic artwork has won her a cult following. Hailing from Vimperk, Lenka studied at The University of West Bohemia.

Josel Nicolas is from Batangas City, a small port town south of Manila in the Philippines. A full-time artist, Josel’s early comic inspiration came from Batman and Judge Dredd. Away from The Putto he produces ‘Windmills’ - an ongoing autobiographical comic and edits various comic anthologies in the Philippines aimed at children and adults.



ONDŘEJ NEZBEDA, TOMÁŠ HODAN &
PETRA SOUKUPOVÁ, KAREL OSOHA,
TOMÁŠ KUČEROVSKÝ & PETRA
JOSEFINA STIBITZOVÁ

TOTAL DEPLOYMENT

THE TRUE STORIES OF THREE WOMEN, OF DIFFERENT AGES AND NATIONALITIES, WHOSE LIVES WERE AFFECTED BY WORK CAMPS DURING WORLD WAR II.

'*Totální nasazení*' (total deployment) or 'Totaleinsatz' in German, was a term for forced labour during the World War II German occupation of Czechoslovakia. This comics, by three pairs of authors and illustrators, presents distinct stories about three women. Helena, Jarmila and Franciska's lives are connected by forced labour. Helena, who was born into a Czech Jewish family in Ukraine, escapes from a labour camp and is constantly on the run. Jarmila signs up to work for the Nazis voluntarily – as she was cooperating with the resistance movement, she hopes that she can hide there from the Gestapo. Franciska was born shortly before the end of the war to a Polish mother and Czech father who fell in love in a labour camp in Germany. After the war ends, she spends most of her childhood in Communist orphanages. The different styles of the three artists complement the stories. Karel Osoha's illustrations shift abruptly between cold muted browns and purples when Helena is on the run, and brighter colours as she recalls her life before the war. Tomáš Kučerovský's dynamic use of close-ups and text-less panels add a new dimension to Jarmila's story, which

readers can find familiar. Petra Josefina Stibitzová's fragile, almost child-like pencil and crayon drawings reflect Franciska's parentless childhood. This comic book is produced in cooperation with Post Bellum, an organisation which aims to increase public knowledge of Czech 20th Century history.



Ondřej Nezbeda (b. 1979) is a journalist and author. From 2007–2014, he was an editor of the weekly magazine *Respekt*. Nezbeda has also worked as a meteorological observer, hospice carer and television dramaturge. In 2016, he published his first book, *Průvodce smrtelníka* (A Mortal's Guide), about hospice care, which won the Magnesia Litera Award for Discovery of the Year.

Tomáš Hodan (b. 1980) is a screenwriter and director. In 2002 he graduated from the Zlín Film School and since then has written and directed a number of award-winning short and feature-length films. As a documentary filmmaker, he has filmed in Angola, Afghanistan, Syria, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Cyprus. Since 2014, he has been writing scripts for the popular satirical series, *Kancelář Blaník* (Blaník Office), loosely inspired by the British comedy series *The Thick of It*.

Petra Soukupová (b. 1982) is a prose writer, screenwriter and dramaturge. Soukupová's bestselling books have received a number of awards and have been translated into seven languages. Preparations are underway for a film based on her short story, *Na krátko* (Cut Short), with a planned release date in 2018. As a screenwriter, Soukupová worked on the successful sitcom, *Comeback* (2008–2010), and the satirical series, *Kosmo* (2016). Her books have sold close to 90,000 copies.



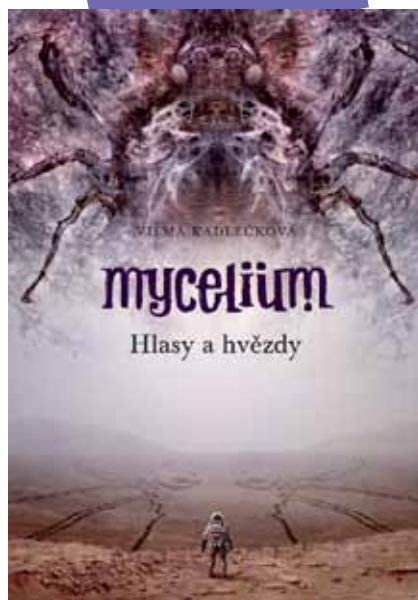
Vilma Kadlečková

MYCELIUM SERIES

MYCELIUM PRESENTS READERS WITH AN “INTERPLANETARY AND INTER-CIVILISATIONAL THRILLER” ALSO ACCESSIBLE TO THOSE WHO ARE NOT SCI-FI ENTHUSIASTS.

The plot takes place on our planet a few centuries from now, where humans have survived only due to the technological achievements of the Össeans, an ancient theocratic alien civilisation. The two groups co-exist on Earth; however, the Össeans have brought more than just new technologies – a fundamental part of their culture is an ideology based on fanatical devotion, mysticism and sacred drugs, which is slowly spreading throughout the human population. This sets the stage for a deeply allegorical story about the current state of the western world, clashes of cultures, xenophobia and power. Because of Mycelium’s profound and often unsettling insights, and the psychological complexity of the narrative, critics have compared it to Orson Scott Card’s classic *Ender’s Game*. While never short on action, like all great science fiction, the saga’s most significant conflicts are battles of ideas.

ACADEMY OF SFFH -
BOOK OF THE YEAR
—
BEST ORIGINAL CZECH
AND SLOVAK BOOK



Vilma Kadlečková (b. 1971) has written the comprehensive pentalogy *Mycelium*, which is a distinct highpoint of contemporary science fiction. The majority of her works belong to the “*Legends of Argenite*” cycle. These are tales on the boundary of science fiction and fantasy (‘science fantasy’, ‘psychotronic science fiction’), mapping the future history of the universe, which is similar to to to ours, but which contains “argenite”: a fictional mineral serving as a source of energy with psychotronic powers. For the first part of her Mycelium saga, Vilma Kadlečková received the Book of the Year award from the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror, and the Best Original Czech and Slovak Book of the Year 2013.



PRESS VOICES

“Kadlečková enthusiastically enters into the minds of her heroes; at key moments she literally grills them before the eyes of the reader. As if you were watching a scene from a Quentin Tarantino film. When reading you will struggle to catch your breath and experience an intensive feeling of empathy with the book’s heroes. And all this despite the fact that you will not encounter an unequivocally positive character.”

— Reflex

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

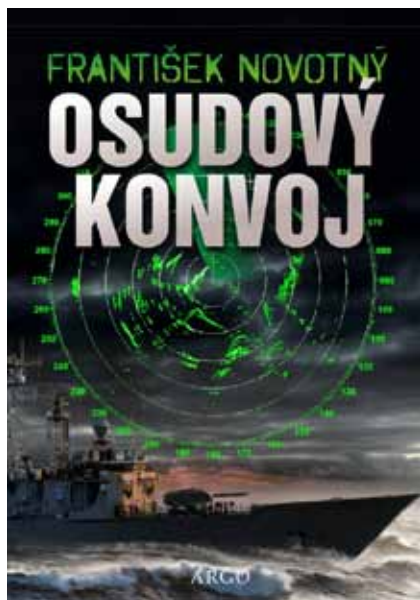
“You don’t know how to kill,” said Össean. ‘You would be glad to avoid it. You are agreeing to it now because you think that when my back is turned you can ask those two for help. You think that if you confide in them, that will rid you of your responsibility. But be aware of the fact that if you warn them, you will lose the chance to discreetly carry out what you have to. You will not be rid of your responsibility as you hope, only the opportunity to choose. And then you will die with them.’ He

fell silent. ‘So don’t be rash,’ he added. ‘I’ll send you the code which allows you to bypass the ship’s safety systems. When you enter it onto the plasmodial keypad, the transfer chamber will open on both sides regardless of whether there is air in the cabin. The vacuum will pull both passengers into space. It’s a clean way of doing it. There is no dirty work afterwards – no removal of bodies or washing away blood. All we ask of you is a few minutes of inconvenience.”

František Novotný

THE CONVOY OF DESTINY

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 yacht Onega. While waiting for his companions he spends his free time visiting tourist 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 only 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 commander 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? The two interlinking plots in *The Convoy of Destiny* are divided by the perspective of the narrator.

František Novotný (b. 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 that was set up in the mid-1980s around the Karel Čapek Award, 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.



PRESS VOICES

"We find ourselves at sea amongst warships, and instead of the skipper David Marek, we suddenly find naval officer 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."

—XB1

FROM THE SAMPLE TRANSLATION

"Suddenly there was a monstrous roar above their heads and the noise of battle was drowned out the screeching and scraping of broken metal. The yard of the rear mast crashed onto the starboard side and pierced the deck on the right under the auxiliary bridge like a lance. One of the broken steel mainstays swept across

the platform of the auxiliary bridge and smoothly, quicker than a guillotine, cut off the head of a signalman standing at the right-hand barrier. The wind immediately scattered the geyser of blood from his neck, spraying the white uniform of Lieutenant Doubrava, who was standing three steps behind him..."

Tereza Cz Dvořáková, Nikkarin,
František Týmal

HOW CINEMA WAS BORN. A TRIP INTO THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF FILM FOR EARLY AND ADVANCED READERS

THE PERFECT BOOK FOR ALL CURIOUS CHILDREN, IT COMBINES THE LATEST KNOWLEDGE OF FILM HISTORY AND EPIC LANGUAGE WITH PRACTICAL YET ALSO PLAYFUL INSTRUCTION MANUALS.

This beautiful book tells you what all had to happen before the first feature-length animated film was shot. The story from Leonardo Da Vinci to Lotte Reiniger, journeys into the archaeology of film as an homage to the epoch of the 18th and 19th century – the time of inventions and social change, without which we could hardly imagine what it is to have fun in the cinema, in front of the television, computer or with our tablets today. The book also contains an interactive section, prepared by experimental filmmaker František Týmal, with several manuals for the making of optical toys, which will show moving images that were watched by people more than a hundred years ago. The toy manuals are based on the do-it-yourself concept and can be created at home or in school. Humorous illustrations

made by leading Czech children comics author Nikkarin open the book to other pop-cultural contexts. The book is designed for inquisitive readers from 6 years of age, but also for much older ones.

TWO NOMINATIONS FOR THE
GOLDEN RIBBON AWARD –
BEST CHILDREN'S BOOK (2018)



Tereza Cz Dvořáková (b. 1977) studied Film & TV Production and earned a PhD in Film Studies. She is a founder and developer of the Film Educational Department at the National Film Archive Prague and has various practical experiences in film education.

Nikkarin (b. 1987), real name Michal Menšík, is a self-taught artist. He draws and writes his original comic books and has recently emerged as a much sought-after illustrator of books and magazines for young people.

František Týmal (b. 1987) graduated from Audiovisual Studies at FAMU in 2013, specialising in creating and reflection of intermedia arts. He currently focuses on experimental filmmaking, new media and the use of moving images in visual arts and the theatre.



Alena Wagnerová, Jitka Němečková

HOW MARTHA TAMED THE DRAGON

NOT A FANTASY GAME, BUT A BOOK FOR CHILDREN, THAT IN WORDS AND PICTURES BRINGS TO LIFE A UNIQUE TALE OF OVERCOMING OF EVIL WITHOUT VIOLENCE.

The renowned writer Alena Wagnerová has adapted the inspiring Provençal legend of Saint Martha. In fairy tales and legends, battling with dragons has as a rule been a matter for men, but this legend presents an exception. As recorded in the manuscript *Legenda aurea* (Golden Legend), which preserved this Provençal parable for the centuries to come, Saint Martha of Bethany overpowered the dragon Tarasque, which devoured cattle, horses and people, and destroyed fields and crops, without any weapons, using only twigs held in the shape of a cross and sweet singing, after which she tied him to her girdle and set off towards the town walls with it. The annual procession in honour of this saint has become part of UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage. However, in the story people's anger got the better of them, and they began

to throw stones at the dragon and killed him. This economical yet eloquent adaptation of the material penned by Alena Wagnerová is elevated by the drawings, whose orange light above the brown figures stimulates the goodness of the heart. After all, tolerance doesn't require a miracle.



Alena Wagnerová (b. 1936) is a Czech-German writer and columnist. Since 1969 she has lived in Saarbrücken and Prague and works as a writer, translator and publisher. She won particular acclaim for her essay about the resistance group *Předvoj*, *Neohlížej se, zkameníš* (Don't Look Back or You'll Turn to Stone, 1968), and then for the novel *Dvojitá kaple* (The Double Chapel; German 1982, Czech 1991) and biographies of Sidonie Nádherná, Milena Jesenská and Jiří Weil. In the books *Odsunuté vzpomínky* (Expelled Memories), *Neodsunuté vzpomínky* (Unexpelled Memories) and *A zapomenuti vejdemo do dějin* (And the Forgotten Will Go Down in History) she records the oral history of Sudeten Germans. She is a winner of the Pelikán 2005 and Gratias Agit 2017 awards; this is her first book for child readers.

Jitka Němečková (b. 1963) graduated from the Technical College of Graphic Arts in Prague and worked at the Pressfoto publishing company and as an advertising graphic artist at DTP studios. One of her outstanding smaller works is a cycle of illustrations for the exhibition at the Visitor Centre of the Podyjí National Park. She created a set of 30 fine press works for the Spanish publishing house Pandora, each of which contains 25 scenes summarizing the history of Andalusia (in the pipeline). She contributed illustrations to the collection of fairy tales *Vánoční kniha* (The Christmas Book, 2012) and also makes jewellery.

PRESS VOICES

"This book with illustrations by Jitka Němečková poses difficult questions. Is violence ever justified? Where does justice end and revenge begin? And how are we influenced by fear? The positive aspect of the book is that it does not obscure the complex ethical issue with easy answers."
— ego!



SELECTED BACKLIST

- Fulghum, Robert: *Crisis in the Cheese Aisle / Poprask v sýrové ulčce*, 2016
- Fulghum, Robert: *A Memoir of an Adventure / Vzpomínky na jedno dobrodružství*, 2013
- Fulghum, Robert: *Words I Wish I Wrote / Slova, kter jsme si přál napsat sám*, 2012
- Fulghum, Robert: *Hold Me Fast, Love Me Slow / Drž mě pevně, miluj mě zlehka*, 2011
- Fulghum, Robert: *Uh-Oh / Ach jo*, 1996
- Fulghum, Robert: *Third Wish* (three-volume set) / *Třetí přání* (komplet), 2008
- Hakl, Emil: *The end of the world / Konec světa*, collection of short stories, 2014
- Hakl, Emil: *Beef cubes / Hovězí kostky*, collection of short stories, 2014
- Hakl, Emil: *A true story / Skutečná událost*, novel, translated into Dutch, Bulgarian, German; Magnesia Litera award – best prose, 2013
- Hakl, Emil: *Rules of ridiculous behaviour / Pravidla směšného chování*, collection of three stories, translated into Swedish, Polish, Dutch, German; Josef Škvorecký award, 2010
- Hakl, Emil: *Flight of the witch / Let čarodějnice*, novel, 2008
- Hakl, Emil: *On flying objects / O létajících objektech*, collection of short stories, 2004
- Hakl, Emil: *Of kids and parents / O rodičích a dětech*, novel, translated into Italian, Norwegian, Swedish, German, Dutch, Spanish, English, Polish, Bulgarian, Hungarian; Magnesia litera – best prose, 2002
- Hruška, Petr: *Not My Own / Nevlastní*, poetry, 2017
- Karika, Jozef: *The Crack / Trhlina*, 2018, Anasoft Litera Award 2017
- Karika, Jozef: *Fear / Strach*, thriller, 2016,
- Karika, Jozef: *Black game / Černá hra*, thriller, 2016, Golden Pen award 2015
- Mašinová, Milada, Stibitzová, Petra Josefína (ill.): *Cats and Other Tales of Fear / Kočky a jiné příběhy o strachu*, children's book, 2016
- Morice, Marta: *Secret Agent / Tajný agent*, graphic novel, 2017
- Nodl Martin: *The Medieval World in Us / Středověk v nás*, history, non-fiction, 2015
- Novák, Jan: *So far so good. The Mašins and the Greatest Story of the Cold War / Zatím dobrý. Mašinoři a největší příběh studené války*, 2013, Magnesia Litera – Book of the year
- Novák, Jan: *Turnaround, a co-authored autobiography of Milos Forman / Co já vím? Biografie Miloše Formana*, translated into Czech, German, French, Japanese, Russian, Polish, Bulgarian, Dutch, Swedish, Finnish and Hungarian, 2013 (third completed issue)
- Novák, Jan: *A Life Beyond Category. An interview with John Bok / Život mimo kategorie. Rozhovor s Johnem Bokem*, 2015
- Nováková, Luisa, Trávníček, Pavel(ill.): *White Ravens / Bílí havrani*, children's book, 2017
- Pech, Miroslav: *Father from Birth / Otec u porodu*, 2018
- Pech, Miroslav: *Cobain's Disciples / Cobainovi žáci*, 2017
- Renčín, Pavel: *Trapped / Vězněná*, thriller, 2015
- Renčín, Pavel: *Urban wars (trilogy) / Městské války (trilogie)*, fantasy, 2008, 2009, 2001
- Štindl, Ondřej, Bolf Josef (ill.): *Mondschein / Mondschein*, dystopian fiction, 2012
- Typlt, Jaromír: *In a Long While / Za dlouho*, poetry, 2016
- Urban, Miloš: *The Shutter / Závěrka*, erotic novel, 2017
- Urban, Miloš: *Urbo Kune / Urbo Kune*, sci-fi, 2015
- Urban, Miloš: *She came from the sea / Přišla z moře*, noir, 2014
- Urban, Miloš: *Praga piccola / Praga piccola*, historical tale, 2012
- Urban, Miloš: *Boletus arcanus / Boletus arcanus*, novel, 2011
- Urban, Miloš: *Lord Mord / Lord Mord*, gothic horror, translated into Spanish, German, English, Croatian, Polish, 2008
- Urban, Miloš: *Dead girls / Mrtvé holky*, collection of stories, translated into Dutch, 2007
- Urban, Miloš: *Santini's language / Santiniho jazyk*, historical crime novel, 2005
- Urban, Miloš: *The shadow of the cathedral / Stín katedrály*, crime comedy, translated into Spanish, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Polish, German, Dutch, 2003
- Urban, Miloš: *The Water-Goblin / Hastrman*, green novel, translated into Spanish, 2002, Magnesia Litera award – best prose
- Urban, Miloš: *Seven churches / Sedmikostelí*, gothic horror, translated into German, Dutch, Hungarian, Spanish, Bulgarian, Russian, Polish, Slovenian, Croatian, Italian, English, French, Korean, Romanian, Serbian, Macedonian, Turkish, Egyptian, 1999
- Vrba, Michal: *The Slingshot / Prak*, psychological novel, 2016

MINISTRY OF CULTURE 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.

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)

PUBLISHERS, AGENTS AND TRANSLATORS CAN APPLY FOR FUNDING FOR

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

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

DEADLINES

15th May, 15th November

