

Argo Publishers

Rights List

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Argo Publishers

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Foreign Rights (sales)

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Argo is a major Czech publisher, renowned for its vast list of literary fiction, non-fiction 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 Czechia, combining literary excellence with commercial success.

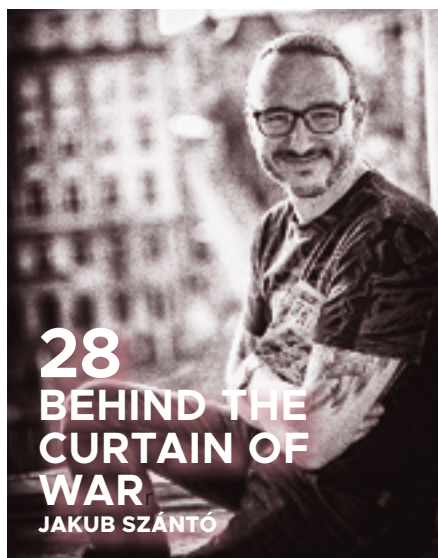
Specializing in translated literature (translations make up approximately 70 per cent of our titles), Argo authors include such present-day literary stars as **Orhan Pamuk**, **Kazuo Ishiguro**, **Leïla Slimani**, **Margaret Atwood**, **Peter Høeg**, **Roberto Bolaño**, as well as timeless classics, 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**).





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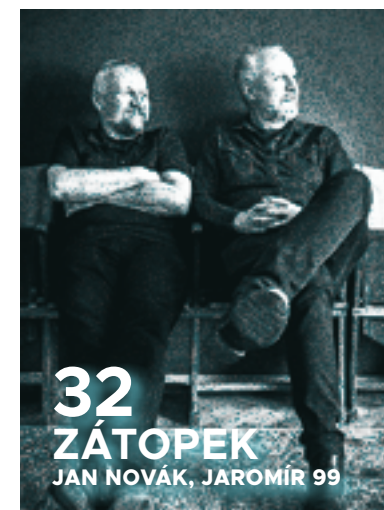
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The brilliantly depicted young urban intellectual's search for the deeper meaning of life

Press voices

"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*

"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."

— *Nový deník*

Pavla Horáková A Theory of Strangeness

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.



Pavla Horáková (b. 1974) is a Prague-based author, Czech radio presenter and literary translator. She has translated over 20 books from English and Serbian (including novels by Kurt Vonnegut, Saul Bellow and Iain Banks) and received two translation awards. *A Theory of Strangeness* (Argo, 2018) is her second work for adults after bestselling novel *Johana* (2018) (along with Alena Scheinostová and Zuzana Dostálová). Rights to her most recent winning novel have been sold to 9 countries so far.

CZECHIA'S HIGHEST LITERARY HONOUR – BOOK OF THE YEAR (2019)

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."



Remarkably dense and disturbing text from one of the most distinctive voices of contemporary Czech literature

Press voices

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

— novinky.cz

Josef Pánek

Love in the Time of Global Climate Change

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. 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. The novel is characterized by 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.



Josef Pánek (b. 1966) received his masters and PhD in Prague, then worked in Norway and Australia, before finally returning to Czechia. He debuted with a collection of short stories *The Opal Digger* (2013). His second book *Love in the Time of Global Climate Change* (Argo, 2017) won the Magnesia Litera, Czechia's highest literary honour in 2018 and the rights have been sold to 9 countries so far.

CZECHIA'S HIGHEST LITERARY HONOUR – BOOK OF THE YEAR (2018)

Press voices

"In *Love in the Time of Global Climate Change* 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 and Jáchym Topol. 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."

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

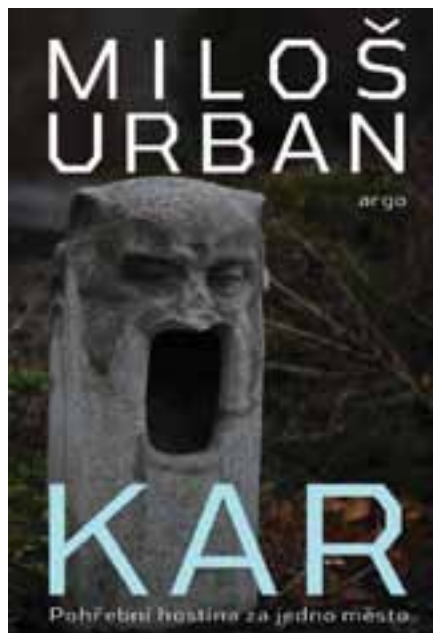
— Visegrad Insight

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 defence 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 the sari, you see an Indian girl wearing an ordinary T-shirt with jeans, she 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."

www.argo.cz/foreign-rights



A gripping, suspenseful and terrifying murder mystery

Press voices

“Carlsbad – a story of love, revenge, and hatred towards a city, as well as its inhabitants, with an added flavour of spurring blood. A hallucinogenic, mysterious journey through a gradually dying city. Miloš Urban is returning to the bloody genre and he is taking it to Karlovy Vary, where he grew up.”

Miloš Urban Carlsbad

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...

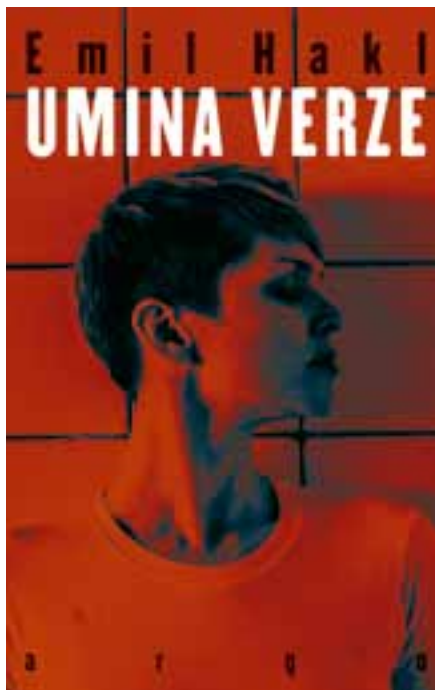


CZECHIA'S HIGHEST LITERARY HONOUR – BOOK OF THE YEAR (2012)

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 in-different. 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 Plzeň or Stříbro or Cheb.”



Hot topic in science and technology written in the author's typically efficient and fast-paced style

Press voices

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

— MF Dnes

Emil Haki Uma's Version

The creation of an artificial human 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 titular Uma. Haki 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.



Emil Haki (b. 1958), writer, recipient of several literary awards. One of our most appreciated and widely translated contemporary authors, his books have been published in more than 20 languages. Haki was awarded the prestigious Magnesia Litera Award – Book of the Year two times. For the novella *Of Kids and Parents* (Argo, 2002) and *A True Story* (Argo, 2013). *Rules of Ridiculous Behaviour* (Argo, 2010) won the Josef Škvorecký Award, was nominated for the Magnesia Litera and came second in the Lidové noviny newspaper's Book of the Year.

**CZECHIA'S HIGHEST
LITERARY HONOUR – BOOK
OF THE YEAR (2008, 2013)**

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."



The current world, reflected in a gleam of imagination, comes out strangely twisted

Press voices

“In his descriptions of an alternative reality, Pavel Bušta’s playfulness falls somewhere between Lewis Carroll and Tolkien, and his imagination and LSD-infused humor betrays some Irvine Welsh influence, too.”

“How far in his imagination will an author go in the pursuit of the most unexpected world possible? He will only succeed under one condition: he must be more insane than any particular reader.”

Host



Pavel Bušta (b. 1991) is a Czech poet, fiction writer and journalist. He has published two books of poetry and his dramatization of a collection of short stories earned him a shortlist nomination for the Evald Schorm Award, an important prize in the world of Czech theater. His second short story collection was nominated for the most prestigious book award in Czechia, the Magnesia Litera, in the prose category. He contributes to iLiteratura.cz, a major Czech literature portal, and serves as vice-chair of the Česká kniha (Czech Book) project, which promotes Czech literature abroad.

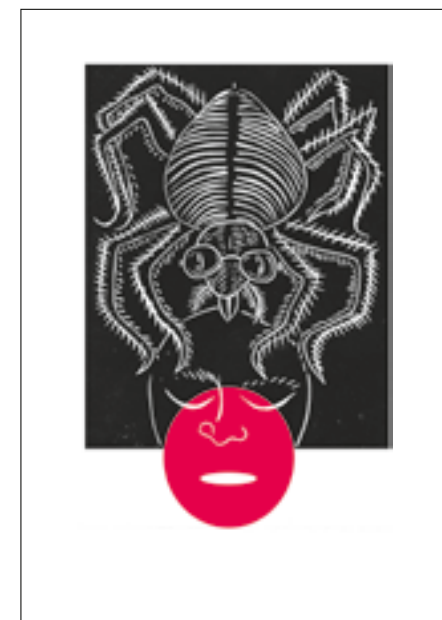
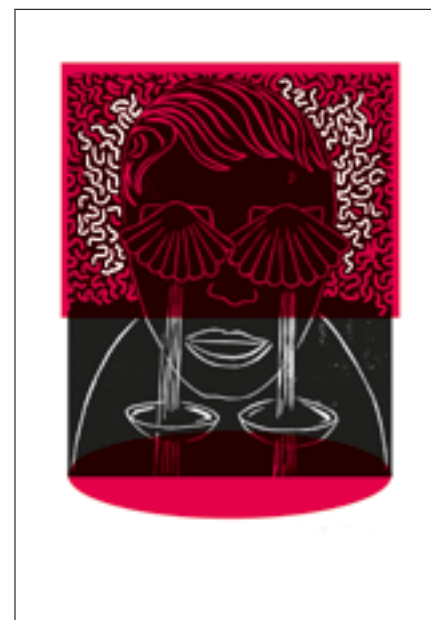
David Cajthaml (b. 1959) is a famous Czech musician, stage designer, costume designer, architect and painter. He studied architecture and scenography with the famous professor Josef Svoboda at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague. He is truly a renaissance personality *par excellence* as his activities practically do not recognize any borders.

Pavel Bušta, David Cajthaml (ill.) LoboTommy



What might be going on in a human’s brain after something as invasive as a lobotomy? The young Prague-based author’s new prose balances on the line between a modern psychedelic fairy-tale and a dystopian novella. The young narrator, LoboTommy, is a mental asylum resident with a long scar from surgery on

his head. His only friends are a peculiar red spider in dark sunglasses, and Darja, a strange girl with a tear duct malfunction that causes her to cry maple syrup, precious pearls and other things. The three friends set out on a short but fantastic journey to freedom and recognition of what is and isn’t real.





Quirky, witty short stories with touches of magical realism

Press voices

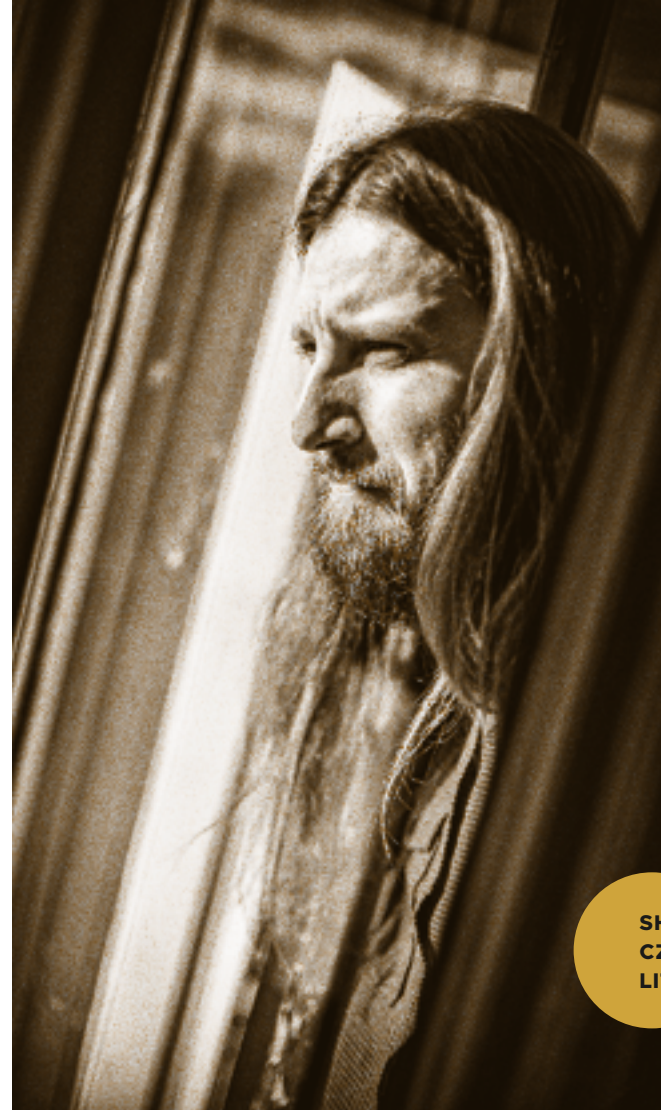
"Supernatural events disrupt the protagonists' everyday existence in a way that brings to mind another Czech writer Karel Michal or Argentine author Jorge Luis Borges."

ČT Art

Vratislav Kadlec The Boundary of the Woods

The author uses his short stories to explore different kinds of borders, blurry internal and external thresholds, and milestones in our lives from which there is no going back. A man whose name was stolen by a magpie; faces disappearing in the fog; a mysterious body behind the bathroom wall; a maritime disaster; all result from a fissure in the everyday routine – but also an inability to communicate one's feelings to their closest loved ones; childhood injustices burnt deep under the

skin, breakups hanging low and heavy like dark clouds over a summer day, attempts to scramble for authenticity, which is running off like water between our fingers. While the protagonists' predicaments are far from joyful, the narration does not lack in humor; here and there, the author's sly grin peeks out between the words. Humor happens when we realize a fault which does not hurt us. But the threshold of pain itself is in its nature indistinct and ever-shifting.

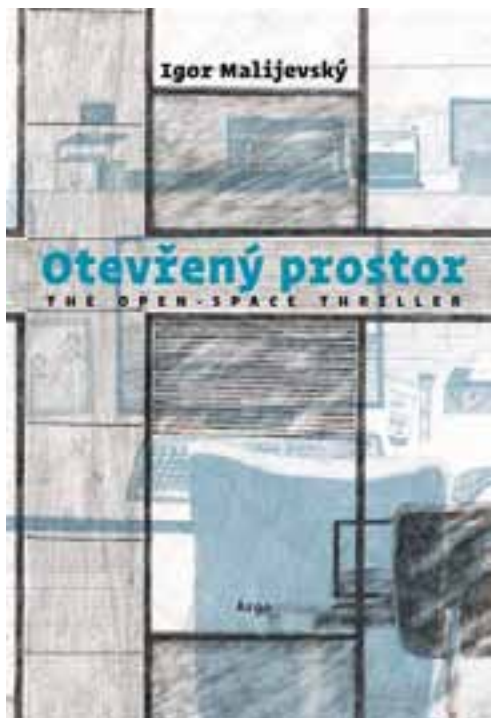


**SHORTLISTED FOR THE
CZECHIA'S HIGHEST
LITERARY HONOUR (2020)**

From the sample translation

"Fucking plum!" swore Michal and smashed his crutch into the tree trunk. A plum fell off a branch and right into the coffee cup. The coffee splashed on an open Bible. "It's not the tree's fault," Maruška objected from her green plastic

garden chair. "My ass," snapped Michal and dried the Gospel of Luke with the sleeve of his washed-out sailor tee. "Jesus made a fig tree dry just because it didn't give any figs."



A detailed account of a human existence in the corporate world. A novel situated between horror and the grotesque, Kafka and Švejk, reality and dream

Igor Malijevský **Open-Plan** (A Thriller)

Open-Plan is a darkly grotesque tale, and at the same time an authentic exploration of the peculiarities of the corporate environment. Short, absorbing chapters lay the basis for a paradigmatic and contemporary Faustian narrative. Why is nice

weather nicknamed “bombardment”? What is “French roulette”? And when was the deadline again? The book comes with a Corporatese phrasebook.



Igor Malijevský (b. 1970) is a poet, fiction writer and photographer; he studied theoretical physics and philosophy and has tried his hand at a number of different jobs. Together with author Jaroslav Rudiš he creates and organizes literary cabaret evenings in various Prague theaters. Malijevský's photography is represented in many public and private art collections in Czechia and abroad. He is the author of two books of poetry and two short story collections, as well as an unconventional cookbook.

From the sample translation

“We on the other hand, we laugh a lot, in our open-plan office, but mostly it's our own laugh, which is quite like Vítà's giggling, just not as irresistible. We basically produce sonic emojis, which are emitted, in archetypal form, already by infants. We add them wherever we sense

a potential conflict. A sonic emoji signals to the other party that we are willing to work together and that nothing in us prevents cooperation from occurring. Someone who frowns, or laughs without restraint, is much less compatible than one who giggles.”



**A world where
embarrassment is certain,
and catharsis is only
a vague possibility**

Author's previous book



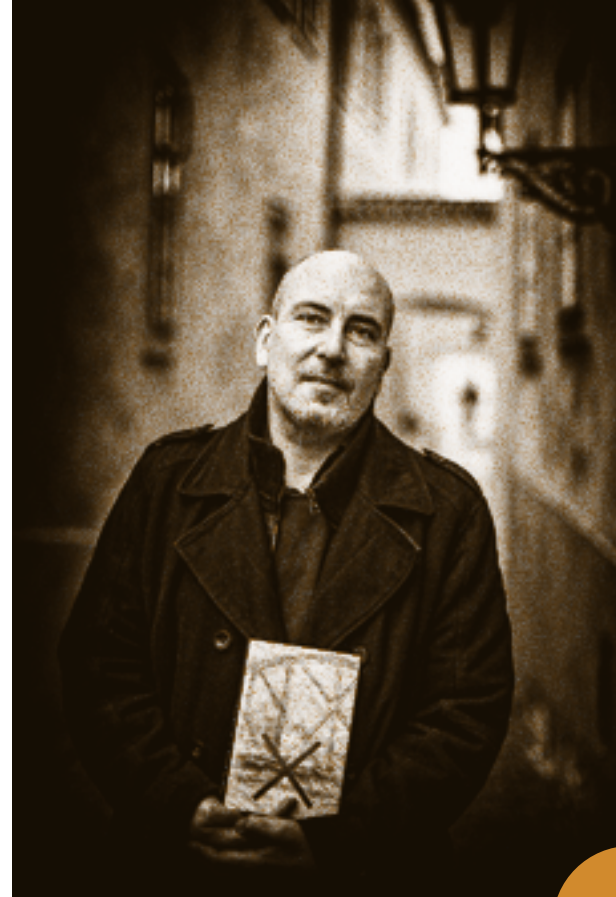
To the Frontier

Gripping, inspiring and enthralling story that skips from historical (and psychological) prose to apocalyptic sci-fi with magical elements. *To the Frontier* explores what it meant to take action during periods when it was simpler to be passive rather than fight against injustices.

Ondřej Štindl Until You Get Dizzy

Czechia, January 2018. President Miloš Zeman has just been elected for his second term in office, it is freezing outside, the public is pouring its hearts out on social media, and burnt-out commentator Jan “Johan” Souček is being forced out of the newsroom of an unnamed daily newspaper. The antihero of Ondřej Štindl's third novel is boiling with helpless frustration, anger and fear – and reading

a mocking comment under one of his online articles prompts him to make a non-sensical, desperate decision. This is the beginning of a darkly grotesque story: two men from the opposite sides of the political spectrum clash and things start to unfold. Johan's way is paved by narcissism and bitterness, disgust at his surroundings and at himself.



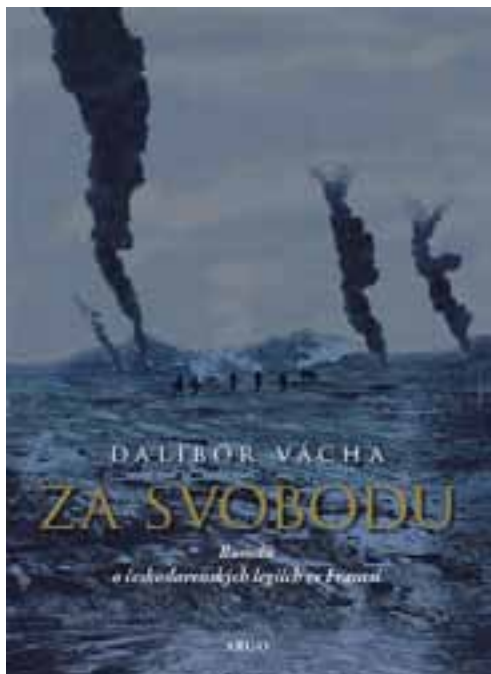
Ondřej Štindl (b. 1966) is a renowned journalist who currently works as a columnist for the news site and weekly Echo 24. In his texts, like those of other members of the revolutionary generation, the starting points and legacy of the Velvet Revolution are an ever-present given. Reconciliation with the Czech post-war history, above all the period of normalisation, is reflected also in his artistic work. Štindl has written two novels – *Mondschein* (Argo, 2012), *To the Frontier* (Argo, 2016) and several screenplays, two of which received the Czechia's most prestigious film awards, the Czech Lions. In February he was awarded the prestigious Ferdinand Peroutka Award for the journalist of the year.

**THE FERDINAND PEROUTKA
AWARD (2020)**

From the sample translation

“Somewhere in the darkness ahead of him there was a door, all he had to do was reach for it. Johan didn't see a reason to do so; he sat motionless, as if sealed in jet-black jelly. Like a king on a porcelain throne, holed up in a cubicle deep in the belly of the publishing house headquarters. Quiet and forgotten. Only this old house still noticed him. Showed

him that he's used up the appropriate shit-taking time. It sent a command to the timed switch: Lights off. Because Johan's not supposed to be there anymore. Not supposed to keep sitting around on the toilet, to empty his head instead of his bowels. We will not support this. This behavior will not be tolerated. Hence, click. Darkness. Get up and fuck off.”



**The horrors of trenches
full of mud, blood and
corpse-eating rats**

Dalibor Vácha For Freedom

Vácha's new novel turns to the stories of Czechoslovak legionaries who fought for freedom in France and longed to live through the war. And see the loves of their lives. The book tells the horrifying journey of young sculptor Petr Michalec through the first world war, knee-deep in blood, waist-deep in the mud of trench warfare in France, with an obsessive,

haunting memory of one fateful encounter constantly on his mind. Rats, death, and a million different kinds of suffering. Combat, chemical weapons, and knife fights in mud-filled trenches. And that one real love relationship, where the beginning is the end and the end is the beginning. Is freedom worth dying for? And killing for?

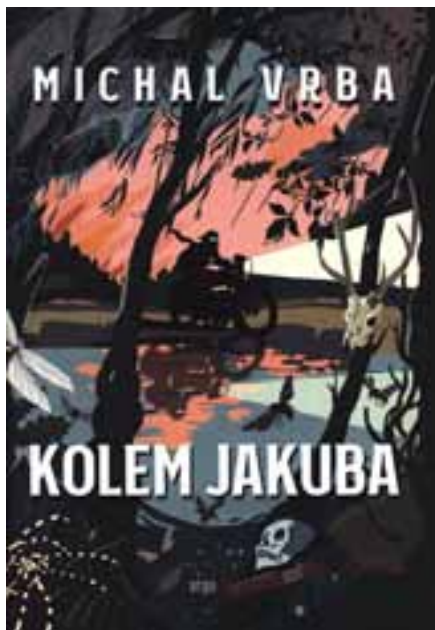


Dalibor Vácha (b. 1980) is a Czech historian. His prose is mostly dedicated to the great wars of the 20th century and individual human destinies in those wars. He is the author of 14 best-selling novels. He writes about World Wars I and II, focusing primarily on the histories of the everyday in the Czechoslovak Legions, as well as the history of the interwar period. He does not forget the fantastic, however – he has written a post-apocalyptic novel.

From the sample translation

"Michalec staggers on through the trench. His senses are OK, his mind is OK; but his body refuses to obey him. His legs gave up on him at an especially miserable spot, forcing him to crawl for several minutes, since he was dead from the waist down.

Even now, he's still limping on both sides, can't feel his legs, they're full of pins and needles, all the joints from the hips down through his knees and all the way to his toes are in excruciating pain. The rain is stopping."



**A quiet spot in the forest,
where cruel history
sometimes passes**

Author's previous book



The Slingshot is breathtaking reading, full of reversals and unexpected revelations, whilst at the same time a disturbing testimony on how the age we live in warps human characters, and of how complicated it is to reconcile oneself with one's own conscience and remain morally pure.

Michal Vrba Around Jakub

Stories of little men in the maelstrom of great historical events, individual stories set against the backdrop of history's turning points and societal transformations, from the Thirty Years' War to the 1990s. History disrupts the protagonists' lives in fundamental, sometimes fatal ways, whether they want it to – and act consciously – or are being dragged along by circumstance. They are all connected through a specific place in the country-

side, a pond named "Jakub", which directly or indirectly touches every one of them. Once it is the war with the Swedes and the children caught in it, then a small village farmer threatened by the Red Army, another time it is a politically prominent figure hunted down by revolutionary justice, and so on. When an individual's very existence is at risk, the specific form and intentions of those who set the wheels of history in motion are not important.



Michal Vrba (b. 1976) comes from a small village in East Bohemia. He has been writing since his childhood, mostly short stories. *The Slingshot* (Argo, 2016) was the most accomplished Czech debut of the year, combining the compelling theme of the occupation, literary talent and an ability to narrate a gripping tale.

**SHORTLISTED FOR THE CZECHIA'S
HIGHEST LITERARY HONOUR AND FOR
THE CZECH BOOK OF THE YEAR (2020)**

From the sample translation

"He listened to the sounds outside. He hadn't gotten used to all those new murmurs, the wind searching the ruin for floppy unstuck bits and making them speak, he wasn't accustomed to the splashes of water hitting the collapsed torso of the mill wheel. Even the stream itself had a different speed now, as it was run-

ning into new obstacles, its sound had changed, too. He wasn't used to the stifling smells filling his nose – the sharp reek of the burnt-out area, the stench of mud and dead, rotting fish over there by the wrecked sluice gate, at the deepest spot of the drained pond."



Biography written in a readable literary form with humour and subtlety

Press voices

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

— *Lidovky.cz*

Ladislav Čumba Wittgenstein's Book of Facts

The 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 philoso-

pher 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.



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.

THE MILOSLAV ŠVANDRLÍK AWARD FOR THE BEST HUMORISTIC BOOK OF THE YEAR (2017)

Press voices

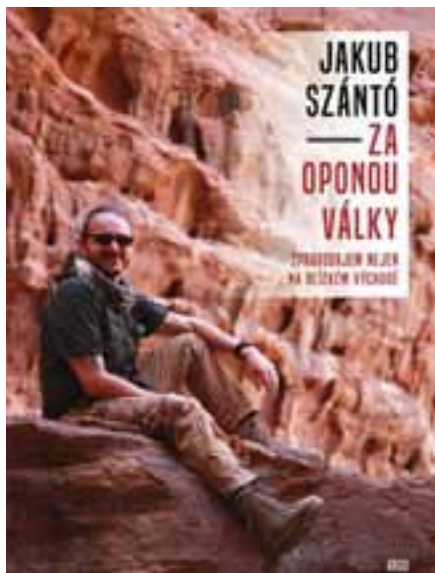
"This is not a philosophical work, an attack on Wittgenstein's ideological world, a discussion or a polemic. Čumba is concerned with an investigation into the background, both real and hypothetical, in which Wittgenstein grew up. He is following in the footsteps of all kinds of experiments and postmodern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

— *Týdeník Rozhlas*

From the sample translation

"0.1 It's well-known that in the beginning was the word. The word occupied a philosopher and his name was Ludwig. His parents, whose name he bore, were named Wittgenstein. His father was Karl and his mother Leopoldine, known at

home as Poldi. It's also well-known that not far from Prague airport lies an industrial town by the name of Kladno where stainless steel named Poldi was produced, and may still be."



Eyewitness experience from the front lines, terroristic attack spots, revolutions and coups d'état

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

Jakub Szántó Behind the Curtain of War

A Reporter in the Middle East and Elsewhere

An insider's detailed account of the experiences of a war correspondent in various corners of the Earth and different types of military conflicts and revolutions. Szántó 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 their historical context. The tragedy of the events is softened by humour and irony. The book includes an extensive section of the author's photographs from the field.



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. Szántó is the holder of the 2014 Open Society Fund Prague's Journalism Award and the 2017 Ferdinand Peroutka Award for journalism.

**CZECHIA'S HIGHEST LITERARY
HONOUR – READERS' CHOICE (2019)**

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."



The visually arresting graphic novel in a unique and specific style of noir

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

"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

Jan Novák, Jaromír 99 So Far So Good

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

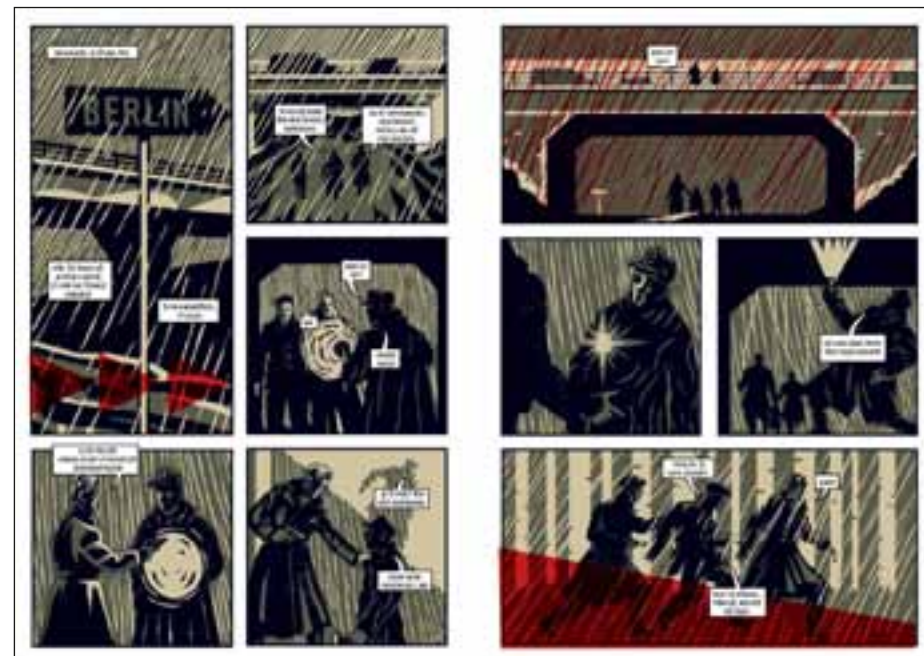
the story like a thrilling Czech Western and won the Magnesia Litera prize for Best Book of the Year. Now he and the artist Jaromír 99 have created a dramatic and visually arresting graphic novel in Jaromír 99's unique and specific style of noir. After the runaway success in Czechia of their previous collaboration, *Zátopek*, the authors return with an even more explosive comic book.



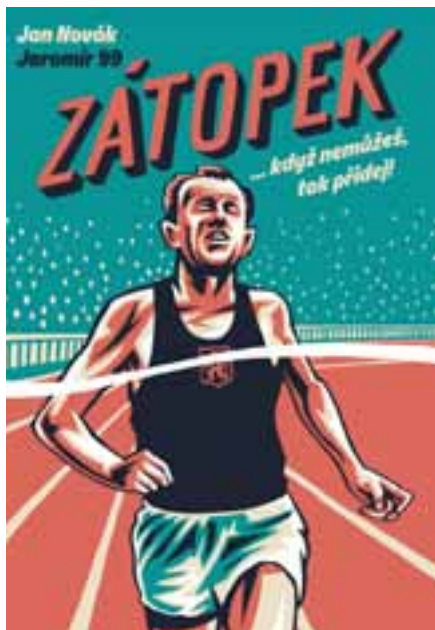
Foto: Richard Klíčník

Jan Novák (b. 1953) is a Czech-American writer, screenwriter, and playwright. He has won the Chicago Maroon's short story contest, as well as the Carl Sandburg Literary Award from the Chicago Public Library Foundation.

Jaromír 99 (b. 1963) is a Czech singer, song writer, and artist who is best known for his work with Jaroslav Rudiš on the comics trilogy *Alois Nebel*. He is also the author (with David Zane Mairowitz) of *The Castle*, an adaptation of Franz Kafka's novel.



www.argo.cz/foreign-rights



An intoxicating, visually intense portrait of legendary runner Emil Zátopek

Press voices

"The graphic novel 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*

"Zátopek is one of the year's best comics."

— *H7O*

Jan Novák, Jaromír 99 Zátopek

Emil Zátopek is arguably the greatest Olympic champion of all time. The Czech runner's three gold medals at the 1952 Helsinki Summer Olympics, for the 5,000 meter, 10,000 meter, and marathon, is an achievement that has never been matched. His success as a runner made him a national hero, but as a public figure, outspoken and unafraid to take a stand, he was equally impressive. Even before the Helsinki Games, Zátopek

had scored a remarkable victory, successfully pressuring the communist regime to allow his colleague Stanislav Jungwirth, who until then had been excluded on political grounds, to compete. In *Zátopek*, Jan Novák and Jaromír 99 trace the extraordinary life and times of the great Olympian, from his first meeting with Dana, the love of his life, to the victories that would ensure his lasting legacy.



Jan Novák (b. 1953) is a Czech-American writer, screenwriter, and playwright. He has won the Chicago Maroon's short story contest, as well as the Carl Sandburg Literary Award from the Chicago Public Library Foundation.

Jaromír 99 (b. 1963) is a Czech singer, songwriter, and artist who is best known for his work with Jaroslav Rudiš on the comics trilogy *Alois Nebel*. He is also the author (with David Zane Mairowitz) of *The Castle*, an adaptation of Kafka's novel.



www.argo.cz/foreign-rights



An interplanetary and inter-civilisational thriller also accessible to those who are not sci-fi enthusiasts

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.”

Reflex

Vilma Kadlečková Mycelium series

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.



Vilma Kadlečková (b. 1971) has written the comprehensive pentalogy *Mycelium*, which is a distinct highpoint of contemporary science fiction. The author, known primarily from the 1990s, has returned after a hiatus of several years with a complex work in which humanity is merely a less advanced species within the universe. 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 ours, but which contains “argenite”: a fictional mineral serving as a source of energy with psychotronic powers.

BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDED BY THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY AND HORROR

BEST ORIGINAL CZECH AND SLOVAK BOOK OF THE YEAR (2013)



From the sample translation

“You don’t know how to kill,” said Össe-an. “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.”



Can an ordinary girl save a whole fantasy world?



Kateřina Blažková, Nanako Ishida (ill.) Thyme from Oxara

Everything is possible – as Justine will soon find out for herself. One evening, a boy whose name smells of thyme appears in her room to ask for her help. What happens next is a real roller-coaster. They dive straight into a submarine world created by an author named Nutcracker; the writer died before finishing his book, however, and the literary world was overcome by chaos, and evil started

to spread through it. And Justine is the one to fix it. She must finish the story and give it structure. Before that can happen, she and Thyme are in for difficult challenges. They will walk enchanted paths, meet a talking map and other fantastic creatures, they'll climb the Hill of Hours, join a battle and find themselves in the fields of the Timekeepers.



In her new book, **Kateřina Blažková** (b. 1973) has found an original way of blending fantasy with a real story about the need for friendship, human connection, and motherly love. The author's other published works include a remarkable sci-fi trilogy for children. *Thyme from Oxara* is a gorgeous book, beautifully illustrated by the Japanese artist **Nanako Ishida** (b. 1979, Tokyo), who depicted successfully the personalities of characters and the atmosphere of the world dominated by darkness but cutting off its anxiety by love and friendship. Ishida has worked with many excellent modern children's literature writers, in Czechia and other countries (Jiří Wolker, Dylan Thomas, Guus Kuijer, Jostein Gaarder etc.).





SHORTLISTED FOR
THE GOLDEN RIBBON
AWARD (2018)

A trip into the filmmaking process for curious early and advanced readers

Tereza Cz Dvořáková, Nikkarin, Ondřej Beránek How a Film is Made

Everybody knows what a film is. But few can actually imagine how many people and how much time it takes to make a feature film and present it to the audience. Who or what is a Foley, why do screenplays always come in so many different versions and what exactly does a continuity supervisor do? Which tricks are nowadays done on camera and which ones on the computer? Why do films need their own archi-

fects? Who hides under the mysterious term *cameo*? What do location scouts and Boy Scouts have in common? And what exactly does a film festival do for filmmakers and their films? The publication is a loose sequel to the bestselling *How Cinema Was Born* (Argo, 2017). It is richly illustrated by Nikkarin and contains an experimental section that shows young readers how to make and distribute a real film at home.



Tereza Cz Dvořáková

(b. 1977) graduated from the Film Academy in Prague, she is also a film educator. Argo has published her successful book *How Cinema Was Born* (2017).

Ondřej Beránek (b. 1979) is a Czech film producer, co-founder of the Memory of Nations Award and co-author of the interactive Karel Zeman Museum exposition.

Nikkarin (b. 1987) is one of the most renowned contemporary Czech comic artists and illustrators.



Author's previous book



How Cinema Was Born is a trip into the archaeology of film for early and advanced readers. The perfect book for all curious children, that combines the latest knowledge of film history and epic language with practical yet also playful instruction manuals. The toy manuals are based on the do-it-yourself concept and can be created at home or in school.

SELECTED BACKLIST

Dvořáková, Cz, Tereza: *How Cinema Was Born / Jak vznikl film*, children's book, 2017

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; Czechia's highest Literary honour – book of the year, 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; Czechia's highest Literary honour – book of the year, 2002

Horáčková, Alice: *Unopened Letters / Neotevřené dopisy*, novel, 2018

Hruška, Petr: *Not My Own / Nevlastní*, poetry, 2017

Kamen, Jiří: *Elvis of the Elbe / Elvis ze Záluží*, collection of short stories, 2018

Novák, Jan: *So far so good. The Mašins and the Greatest Story of the Cold War / Zatím dobrý. Mašínovi a největší příběh studené války*, Czechia's highest Literary honour – book of the year, 2013

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

Novotný, František: *The Convoy Destiny / Osudový konvoj*, sci-fi novel, 2018

Pech, Miroslav: *Father from Birth / Otec u porodu*, novel, 2018

Pech, Miroslav: *Cobain's Disciples / Cobainovi žáci*, novel, 2017

Renčín Pavel: *The Murderer's Club / Klub vrahů*, urban fantasy, 2018

Renčín, Pavel: *Trapped / Vězněná*, thriller, 2015

Renčín, Pavel: *Urban wars (trilogy) / Městské války (trilogie)*, fantasy, 2008, 2009, 2001

Szántó Jakub: *Behind the Curtain of War / Za oponou války*, reportage story, 2018

Štindl, Ondřej: *To the Frontier / K hranici*, historical fiction, 2016

Štindl, Ondřej, Bolf Josef (ill.): *Mondschein / Mondschein*, dystopian fiction, 2012

Typl, 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 novel, 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 / Mrtvý 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, Czechia's highest Literary honour – book of the year, 2002

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

Vokolek Václav: *The Domino Effect / Dominový efekt*, novel, 2018

Vrba, Michal: *The Slingshot / Prak*, psychological novel, 2016

Wagnerová, Alena: *How Martha Tamed The Dragon / Jak Marta zkrotila draka*, children's book, 2017

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

