

CZECHIA AS GUEST OF HONOUR AT THE FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR  
2026

Press newsletter February 2026

Between Memory, Dystopia, and Intimacy:  
New Czech Prose

In the run-up to Czechia's appearance as Guest of Honour at the 2026 Frankfurt Book Fair, a growing number of contemporary Czech books are being published in German translation. These new titles demonstrate the diversity of the contemporary literary scene: historical subjects stand alongside personal narratives, and contemporary social novels alongside experimental prose. One example of this new perspective on history is Radka Denemarková's novel *Schokoladenblut* (*Čokoládová krev*), which will be published in 2026 by Hoffmann & Campe (translated from Czech by Eva Profusová). The novel links historical figures such as Božena Němcová and George Sand with a critical examination of power, capitalism, and gender roles—and is among the most internationally discussed Czech novels of recent years.

At the same time, works are also being published that focus more on contemporary urban life and observations of everyday life. Petra Soukupová's children's and young adult novel *Der Klub der seltsamen Kinder* was published in 2025 by Junfermann Verlag (translated from Czech by Johanna Posset) and exemplifies Soukupová's precise depiction of interpersonal relationships and the experiences of outsiders. Czech literature is also gaining visibility in the comic book genre: In *William & Meriwether auf wundersamer Expedition* (2025, Avant Verlag, translation: Katharina Hinderer), Tatána Rubášová and Jindřich Janíček tell the story of two robots on a deserted Earth. Together, these new releases demonstrate the breadth of Czech literature—ranging from socio-political novels and autobiographical texts to experimental and graphic narrative forms—and how prominent these voices have become in the German-language book market.

Essayistic and literary-journalistic forms are gaining prominence in Czech literature. One example is the essay collection *Mit Wittgenstein in der Schwulensaua* by Vratislav Maňák, now published by Karl Rauch Verlag (translated from Czech by Lena Dorn). In seven literary reportages, Maňák explores sites of gay culture in Central Europe—from Berlin to Vienna to Prague—and raises questions about identity, physicality, and the boundaries of masculinity in the 21st century. The volume combines philosophical reflection with personal observation and stands out as one of the more unusual literary voices on the current scene.

Learn more about contemporary Czech literature in [this article](#).

A total of fourteen Czech authors are represented at this year's Leipzig Book Fair. Visitors can meet, among others, Marek Torčík, Michal Ajvaz, Petra Dvořáková, Jiří Hájíček, Zuzana Rihová, Miroslav Hlaučo, Markéta Pilátová, and Vratislav Maňák, whose works have recently been published in German. At the Czech National Pavilion (Hall 4, Booth E301) and at readings throughout the city—such as at the Literaturhaus Leipzig or the Schaubühne Lindenfels—they will offer insights into their books and discuss current topics in Czech literature with translators.

Your Guest of Honour Czechia press team  
Annika Grützner, Nathalie Weber and Mathias Voigt

Please contact us if you would like further information, review copies, or if we can arrange interviews for you!

## Events outside the Leipzig Book Fair

21.03.2026, 7 pm  
**Reading & Discussion with Miřenka Čechová: Tote Schwäne tanzen nicht**  
Tanzstudio der LUISE, München

27.03.2026, 6 pm  
**New Voices from Czechia**  
Jenaer Universitätsbuchhandlung Thalia

01.04.2026, 6.30 pm  
**Film screening: Nebelkind by Tereza Kotyk**  
Arena-Kino, München

## Book tips

Iva Procházková: „Mentha“  
(Woow Books, published on 11.02.2026)

Mentha is a pretty ordinary girl—and yet, in many ways, she is anything but ordinary. She grows up with Florentin, a ferryman who discovers her one June morning in a mint bush in his garden. Mentha can do all sorts of extraordinary things. She hears the moles scurrying underground, the bats snoring on the ground, and the stars ginging at night. And she can—if she really concentrates—make herself invisible. One summer day, she encounters a fish in the river near her house that has an important message for her. Soon after, Mentha rides on the back of a bat to an unknown island inhabited only by animals. There she meets the Saddest of the Sad, a raven who reveals to her that the world is facing its end because people have forgotten to remember the good things in life. Mentha's task is to help jog people's memories. Will she manage to remind humanity of the good things?

You can find further information on the book [here](#).

Tereza Drahoňovská & Štěpánka Jislová: „Ohne Haare“  
(Kommode Verlag, translated by Kristin Altmann, published on 12.03.26)

Overnight, Tereza loses her hair. At first, it's just small, round patches; then her hair starts falling out in large clumps. Her appearance changes rapidly; she barely recognizes herself in the mirror and only dares to go out in public wearing a headscarf. A visit to the doctor quickly provides clarity: she is suffering from alopecia, a condition characterized by excessive hair loss. Tereza faces a long journey to come to terms with her illness and her new appearance.

Author Tereza Drahoňovská, who herself lives with alopecia (a condition that affects 1.5 million men and 500,000 women in Germany alone), has teamed up with illustrator Štěpánka Jislová to tell her story. The result is an informative, entertaining, and accessible graphic novel that complements the main character's honest descriptions with imaginative and expressive illustrations.

You can find further information on the book [here](#).

Štěpánka Sekaninová:  
„Wie Schmetterlinge leben. Amanda erzählt.“  
(TOPP Verlag, translated by Verena Thiard-Laforet, published on 12.03.26)

Discover the colorful world of butterflies with Amanda

Join little caterpillar Amanda on her exciting journey through the fascinating world of butterflies! From hatching from an egg, through tireless eating and growing, to the mysterious transformation into a magnificent butterfly—children ages 6 and up will learn about the complete life cycle of butterflies step by step. Clearly explained, lovingly illustrated, and presented in a child-friendly way, the book playfully conveys knowledge and fascinating facts about the anatomy of caterpillars and butterflies, their habitats, and their behavior. Amanda the caterpillar also reveals which butterfly species exist, the clever tricks caterpillars use to defend themselves against predators, and which plants they love most of all.

You can find further information on the book [here](#).

Michal Ajvaz: „Passagen unter Glas“  
(Allee Verlag, translated by Veronika Siska, published on 09.03.26)

The narrator witnesses a strange, almost symmetrical encounter: two men walk toward each other in a Leipzig arcade and exchange bags that look identical. When he later sees them sitting in a café, his curiosity piqued, he joins them.

Anyone who picks up this philosophical artist's novel—this structure that is as rigorously formal as it is lavishly ornamented—will find, in the form of skillfully interwoven subplots, side wings with thousands of chambers and niches, each overwhelming in its effect and yet carried by a quiet sovereignty.

You can find further information on the book [here](#).

Marita Kelbi: „Weder Junge noch Mädchen“  
(Anthea Verlag, translated by Barbra Schnelle, published on 19.03.26)

Lukas senses that the familiar order of the schoolyard has begun to crumble: the girls are putting on makeup, the boys are talking about sports—but there seems to be no place for him. In a quiet moment at home, he types the words "I am neither boy nor girl" into his phone and stumbles upon stories that are bigger than anything he has known before. He discovers cultures where people have been living beyond the binary gender system for centuries: the hijras in India, the muxes in Mexico, the burnesa in Albania, or queer communities in New York.

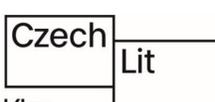
With a blend of personal narrative and vivid factual information, "Neither Boy Nor Girl: On the Search for Oneself" offers a child-friendly introduction to a complex topic. The book explains queer identity without preaching, sparks curiosity, and shows how much strength lies in exploring one's own self and finding words to express one's own feelings.

You can find further information on the book [here](#).

## About the Guest of Honour

Czechia is the Guest of Honour of the Frankfurt Book Fair 2026. The Guest of Honour appearance is being organised by the Moravian Library in Brno and its Czech Literature Centre section. It is being financed by public funds from the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and is implemented with the support of PPF Foundation. Partner of the Year of Czech Culture and Guest of Honour is Deutsch-Tschechischer Zukunftsfonds / Česko-německý fond budoucnosti. The Frankfurt Book Fair, which will take place from October 7 to 11, 2026, is the world's largest trade fair for publishing. The Guest of Honour presents its literature and culture at the fair, in the city of Frankfurt, and at many other locations in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Czechia's Guest of Honour appearance is themed "Czechia – A Country on the Coast."

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