

CZECHIA AS GUEST OF HONOUR AT THE FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR 2026
Press newsletter June 2026

Summer Reading Tips from Czechia: Discoveries for Warm Days



Summer is the perfect time to discover new things—whether through travel, walks in nature, or the pages of a good book. As the days grow longer and the vacation season begins, it's worth taking a look at the Czech Republic: The Guest of Honour at the 2026 Frankfurt Book Fair captivates readers with a diverse literary scene ranging from poetic picture books to graphic novels and socially critical novels. We're highlighting four recent titles that couldn't be more different, yet have one thing in common: they offer fascinating insights into contemporary Czech life and culture.

With the non-fiction picture book **"So schlafen die Tiere"** (to be published on August 27 by **Moritz Verlag**), Czech author **Jiří Dvořák** invites young readers on a fascinating journey of discovery through the animal kingdom. Translated by **Andreas Tretner** and illustrated by **Marie Stumpfová**, this lovingly crafted book answers questions that intrigue children and adults alike: How do bats, otters, or horses sleep? With a wealth of expertise, humor, and striking illustrations, Dvořák shares fascinating facts about the diverse sleeping habits found throughout the animal kingdom. It's the perfect summer read for families looking to deepen their observations of nature in the garden, the forest, or at the lake.

In her novel **"Die Kugel"**, author **Klára Vlasáková** paints a disturbing vision of a society thrown off balance by a mysterious phenomenon. The book will be published by **Nagel & Kimche** on August 25 in a German translation by **Sophia Marzloff**. With great narrative power, Vlasáková combines elements of science fiction with current social issues and explores how people react to uncertainty, fear, and profound changes. The result is a multi-layered novel that reflects current debates about crises, responsibility, and social cohesion through literature.

Great news: This year's European Union Prize for Literature goes to Dora Kaprálová! Her book "Die Mariborhypnose" will be published by mikrotex in September. It was translated by Nataša von Kopp.

In her graphic novel **"Heartcore"**, published by **Voland & Quist** and translated by **Julia Miesenböck**, award-winning comic artist **Štěpánka Jislová** speaks with great candor about relationships, self-doubt, and the search for one's place in life. This largely autobiographical story combines humorous observations with emotional depth and offers a very personal insight into the outlook on life of a young generation. The expressive illustrations lend the themes of love, friendship, and self-discovery a special immediacy, making "Heartcore" one of the most remarkable Czech graphic novels of recent years.

With **"Handlungsstörung"**, the young Prague-based author **Emma Kausc** presents her first work of prose, which has already been honored with the prestigious Literary Critics Award. The novel, translated by **Martina Lisa** and published by **Zeitkind Verlag**, tells the story of 33-year-old Emma, who lives in London and is trying to understand her Czech heritage, come to terms with her mother's death, and find answers to the mysterious disappearance of her partner. The narrative deliberately avoids a linear path: memories, encouters, and stories repeatedly break off, branch out, and force the protagonist to reorient herself. At the same time, Kausc paints a picture of a world in crisis—sea levels are rising, wildfires are on the rise, and personal and global catastrophes overlap. In this way, "Handlungsstörung" intertwines questions of identity, loss, and love with elements of climate fiction, creating a multi-layered portrait of a generation searching for its place amid personal history and global upheaval.

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

Please do get in touch if you would like further information, would like to receive review copies, or would like to arrange an interview!

Events

18.06.2026, 7.30 pm
Reading and Discussion with translator Sophia Marzloff: „Ein Sommer in Prag“
Buchhandlung Lehmkühl, München

18.06.2026, 7.30 pm
Book presentation with Vratislav Maňák: „Mit Wittgenstein in der Schwulensauna!“
Buchhandlung Löwenherz, Wien

23.06.2026, 7 pm
Reading with Beate Franck „Bitte ein Pilsen!“
Buchhandlung Seitenweise, Rehau

14.07.2026, 6.30 pm
Reading with Beate Franck „Bitte ein Pilsen!“
Buchhandlung Budow, Marktrechwitz

16.-19.07.2026
Texttage Nürnberg with Czechia as Guest of Honour

24.07.2026, 6.30 pm
Reading & Discussion with Vratislav Maňák and Marlon Brand
Waldmüllerpark, Wien

Book tips

Radka Denemarková: "Schokoladenblut"
(Hoffmann und Campe, translated by Eva Profousová, published on 3.6.26)



In the mid-19th century, the writer Božena Němcová sits in her small study, laboriously penning a patriotic fairy tale whose message she herself does not believe in. George Sand, her French contemporary, was able to defy the constraints of convention and writes novels with a light touch. On the other side of the Atlantic, J.D. Rockefeller, the first billionaire in world history, was building his empire on a thick, brown commodity. In her new masterpiece, Radka Denemarková brilliantly recounts the history of the 19th century and its protagonists: global in scope, highly topical, and brilliant.

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

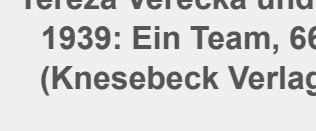
Markéta Pilátová: "Ernst und Lustig. Arnošt Lustigs Lebensreise"
(Karl Rauch Verlag, translated by Lea Krutzberger, Blanka Libera, Monika Peraus, Theresa Ramer, Milena Schedlbauer, Anna Schwandt and Kateřina Šichová, published on 16.6.26)



Arnošt, known in German as Ernst, Lustig (1926–2011), is one of the internationally renowned writers who address the Holocaust in their work. He lived in the Czech Republic, Israel, and the United States. His books have been translated into numerous languages and have won many prestigious awards. Drawing on the author's two names—Ernst and Lustig—this novel traces, through vivid imagery, the defining moments of his life and survival, which are also significant to his daughter Eva and his son Josef. They bombard their father with questions and, through conversation, follow him on a journey through his eventful life—a journey that was also a journey through a century that was dangerous for many. They learn about their family's history and discover how their father, a resourceful and courageous daredevil, survived life-threatening situations. Markéta Pilátová's text is accompanied by striking photo collages by Eliška Soffer Podzimek.

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

Alena Mornštajnová: "Zeit der Wespen"
(Wieser Verlag, translated by Hana Hadas, published on 8.6.26)



In "Zeit der Wespen", Alena Mornštajnová—one of the most successful voices in contemporary Czech literature—tells a quiet, haunting story about the power of the past. The story centers on Bára and the enigmatic "Ptáčník," a loner who has dedicated his life to birds. While he has learned to live with the past, Bára is convinced that a single event once threw her life off course—and she is searching for a way to rewrite that memory. What connects them has long remained hidden: a shared past that has shaped the course of their lives. Mornštajnová unfolds this relationship with psychological subtlety and great narrative calm. An atmospheric novel about guilt, loss, and the quiet hope for change—and about the small things that provide stability and make new life possible.

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

Tereza Verecká und Mikuláš Podprocký: "Wintons Kinder. Prag 1939: Ein Team, 669 Leben und ein Wettlauf gegen die Zeit"
(Knesebeck Verlag, translated by Katharina Hinderer, will be published on 25.6.26)



The images from the BBC studio were seen around the world: Nicholas Winton sits in the audience and beams life on air that the "children" he saved from the Nazis in 1939 are sitting next to him today. He becomes famous as the "British Schindler." But the real story begins earlier, in the shadow of the looming Second World War. With documentary precision and clear visual storytelling, this graphic novel recounts the Czech children's transports of 1938–1939. Told in a visually striking way, it shines a light on those women and men whose names are hardly known today, yet who did what mattered most: They took action when it would have been easier to look the other way. A graphic novel about courage, responsibility, and moral courage.

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

Petr Hruška: "Und ich sah mein Gesicht"
(Voland & Quist, translated by Martina Lisa, published on 11.5.26)



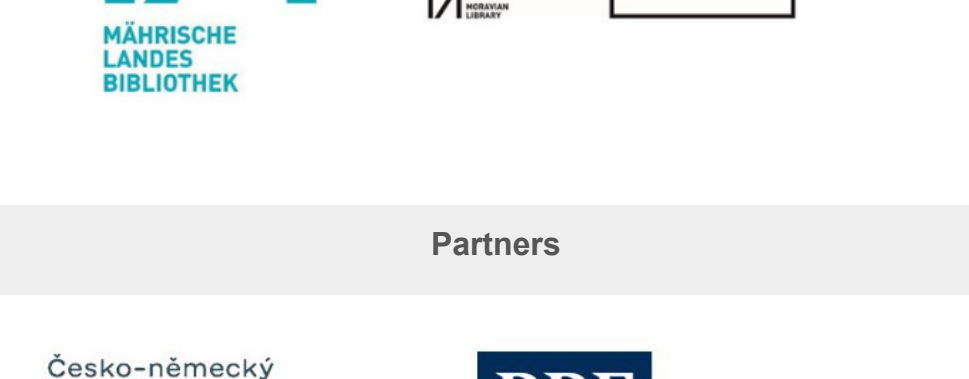
On September 8, 1522, after three years of grueling sailing on the high seas, the last battered ship of Magellan's great fleet reached Seville. Exactly 500 years later to the day, the poetry collection "Spatřil jsem svou tvář" ("Und ich sah mein Gesicht") was published in the Czech Republic, in which Petr Hruška describes a fictional sea voyage.

Inspired by Antonio Pigafetta's travelogue of the first circumnavigation of the globe, the poet takes us on a poetic journey, detached from time and space. The ship—an image we already know from earlier poems—carries and determines the journey, metaphorically as well. Is the boat in which we all sit stable enough to carry us further? What does the nave of a church have to do with our faith? Is humanity at the beginning? At the end? Or are we, trapped on a ship of fools, simply going around in circles? Petr Hruška has written a book of wonders that restores our joy in wonder.

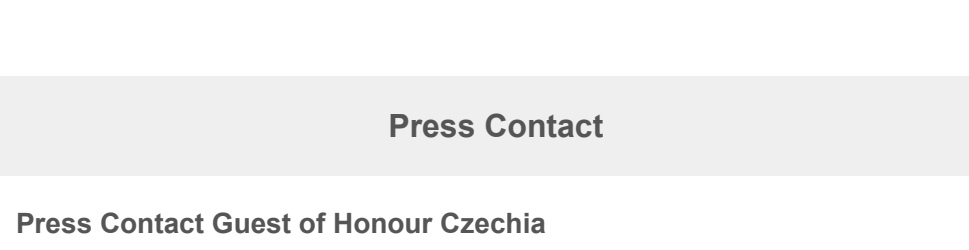
You can find further information about the book [here](#).

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." <https://czechia2026.com/>



Partners



Press Contact

Press Contact Guest of Honour Czechia
Annika Grütznier, Nathalie Weber and Mathias Voigt

Literaturtest
c/o The Base Berlin ONE
Pestalozzistraße 5-9
13187 Berlin

Tel. +49 (0)30-531 40 70-27
Fax +49 (0)30-531 40 70-99
tschechien@literaturtest.de
<http://literaturtest.de>

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