

SUPPLEMENT IN ENGLISH

GUEST OF HONOUR

HUNGARY

A WORD FROM PÁL HATOS

DIRECTOR OF THE BALASSI INSTITUTE



Hungary is guest of honour at Book World 2014, the 20th Prague international book fair.

In the past two years Hungary had its own stand at the Prague book fair, an opportunity provided by the Publishing Hungary programme. It is this continuous presence that we have to thank for our appearance at this important literary festival in 2014 as guest of honour, a status which gives us great pleasure. To be guest of honour at the Prague book fair is a proof of strong relations in the field of literature; what is more, it serves to strengthen our efforts at cultural diplomacy.

Hungarians and Czechs share a consciousness of our Central European identity which, owing to the penetration of the cultures and traditions of each by the other, has left very similar imprints on our literatures. Hence we have a better and deeper understanding of each other's writers and poets, classical and contemporary alike.

Our programme consists essentially of presentations of books published for this occasion, signings, round tables and discussion fora. Many of the vol-

umes presented here could not have been published without the contribution of the Hungarian programme for the support of translation and the dedicated work of Czech publishing houses.

This time the Hungarian presence at the fair devotes far more space to non-fiction. To reflect the dialogue between Hungarian studies in the Czech Republic and Czech Studies in Hungary, we present important results of their researches into history, cultural history and literary history. Books by Czech specialists address issues of Hungarian history and literature while Hungarians present their perspective on history and literature of the Czech lands. All this serves to place a centuries-old Central European dialogue into a modern framework.

Our programme at the fair aims to show its Czech visitors more than just our literature: it endeavours to present as large a segment of our culture as possible. In addition to traditional displays of books we have prepared a literary market and demonstrations of gastronomy and folk dance.

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A THOUSAND SHADES OF BLACK AND WHITE

Over half a century ago people were predicting the end of Gutenberg's galaxy; they were mistaken, it seems. Black letters winding a path across a white page are these days attracting readers old and young in hitherto unprecedented numbers. In recent decades changes in reading habits have shown that books and the information they convey live on in ever new forms. There are more than fifty shades of black and white: the combination of black and white has a unique ability to take on all shades of the colour fan, so making our world ever more interesting and varied.

The promotion of the written word in all its diversity is the mission of this book fair, whose guest of honour is not only Hungarian literature but also Hungary itself, in all its vividness. This diversity is on display in Hungary's pavilion and the programmes connected with it; it is also presented in just-published books that familiarize Czech readers with Hungarian literature and allow them to look at themselves in the mirror of Hungary and central Europe. Reflecting this diversity, the Hungarian pavilion reminds us of a roundabout at a fairground. There will be fairground-type attractions, barkers, music and demonstrations of gastronomy; visitors will have the chance to try the flavours of Hungary and to meet interesting authors whose readerships are among the largest in contemporary European literature. We have been involved in bringing to the fair works by authors such as Péter Esterházy, Lajos Grendel, Péter Nádas, Krisztina Tóth, György Spiró, László F. Földényi and János Háty. Extracts will be read by well-known Czech actors, while Hungarian authors who are guests of the fair will appear in discussion with well-known Czech journalists. Published to mark the 25th anniversary of the fall of communism in central Europe, an anthology of 20th-century Hungarian Catholic literature provides information in this area that hitherto has been missing. In this work devotees of Hungarian literature Jaroslav Durych and Jakub Deml fill in blank spaces in the history of Hungarian-Czech cultural relations and demonstrate the power of Christian humanism, which has done and continues to do so much in the struggle against totalitarian mindsets.

In academic publishing, too, emphasis is placed on diversity. Books by Richard Pražák and Simona Kolmanová offer insight into the history of Hungarian-Czech relations. Our programme will introduce visitors to the importance in Hungary of Bohumil Hrabal and what his narrative art means for his translators and readers. A monograph by Róbert Kiss Szemán on Ján Kollár, writer of the epic poem *The Daughter of Sláva*, addresses the circumstances of the birth of the modern Czech nation in the 19th century and discusses ways in which Pest and Buda contributed to the Czech National Revival. A publication containing the latest fruits of research by Hungarian experts in Czech studies presents Czech culture with another interesting mirror image. The wide variety of topics addressed in this work is proof of the multifaceted presence of Czech culture in Hungary. At a round table Hungarian experts in Czech studies will discuss what they consider important in Czech culture and why.

As in previous years there will be small gifts connected with the fair, such as paper hats and pin-wheels.

BALASSI INSTITUTE

The Balassi Institute is responsible for the promotion (in Hungary) of the Hungarian cultures of Hungarians living beyond Hungary's borders and (abroad) of Hungarian culture as whole. It disseminates and popularizes across the world a comprehensive view of Hungarian culture while promoting in Hungary the traditions and cultures of Hungarians living outside of Hungary.

The Institute is a non-profit organization that creates conditions for the development of international contacts in culture and education. Since 1 March 2007 it has operated as a professional centre of cultural affairs (comparable with the Goethe-Institut or the British Council) with unique areas of activities and methodology of work.

The **Hungarian Institute in Prague** (formerly the Hungarian Cultural Centre in Prague) last year celebrated 60 years of work in the Czech Republic.

GUEST OF HONOUR

daily programmes

Thursday 15 May

11.00 a.m.

S 201 - CENTRAL HALL



HUNGARY – official opening of the stand of the fair's guest of honour

With Hungary's Minister of National Resources Zoltán Balog and Pál Hatos, Director of the Balassi Institute.

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague]

2.00 p.m.–2.15 p.m.

LARGE THEATRE – CENTRAL HALL



Opening of exposition

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague]

4.00 p.m.–4.50 p.m.

LITERARY THEATRE – RIGHT WING



János Háý

An opportunity to meet a leading poet, novelist and dramatist of the middle generation whose work makes him undoubtedly one of the most interesting authors of contemporary Hungarian literature. At this event you will hear extracts from *Underground Garage*, his latest novel.

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague]

6.00 p.m.

HUNGARIAN CULTURAL CENTRE PRAGUE

RYTÍRSKÁ 25–27, PRAGUE 1

The Emigrant

Screening of the film *The Emigrant*, which is about Sándor Marai and his wife and their last years of voluntary exile. It is informed by Marai's diaries, which give an accurate depiction of the colourful mosaic of his thought processes.

Directed by Györgyi Szalai and István Dárday; starring Ferenc Bács and Katalin Gyöngyössi.

Friday 16 May

1.00 p.m.–1.50 p.m.

LITERARY THEATRE – RIGHT WING



László F. Földényi presents his book *Melancholia*

Literary historian, critic and philosopher László F. Földényi goes against the stereotype which puts melan-

cholics in dark, secluded corners and has them spend their days and nights sighing over the futility of the world. He is specific about the inherent contradictions and ambiguities of melancholia and supports his arguments with historical material. With translator Robert Svoboda and XY.

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague]

5.30 p.m.–6.20 p.m.

LITERARY THEATRE – RIGHT WING



An opportunity to meet Hungarian prose writer and dramatist György Spiró

A novelist, poet, dramatist, translator, journalist and teacher, György Spiró is undoubtedly one of the most prolific and widely respected figures of Hungarian literature today. He is the author of twenty (mostly very successful) theatre plays, which have been produced in countries including England, Germany, France, Russia, Poland, Estonia and Bulgaria. Czech audiences have had the opportunity to see the plays *The Swindler*, *Chickenhead* and *The Garden*. György Spiró will be in conversation with the dramatist and journalist Karel Steigerwald.

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague and Kalligram Publishers]

Saturday 17 May

11.00 a.m.–11.50 a.m.

LARGE THEATRE – CENTRAL HALL



An opportunity to meet the prose writer Péter Esterházy

One of the greats of contemporary Hungarian literature, Péter Esterházy follows up last year's presentation of his novel *Celestial Harmonies* with an introduction to a Czech translation of his *Revised Edition*, which follows on from *Celestial Harmonies* in unexpected ways. This meeting with the aristocrat of Hungarian literature will be moderated by Martin C. Putna.

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague and Kalligram Publishers]

1.00 p.m.–1.50 p.m.

LITERARY THEATRE – RIGHT WING



An opportunity to meet novelist and poet Krisztina Tóth; introducing her novel *Aquarium*

Acclaimed writer of poetry and prose Krisztina Tóth has a highly original style characterized by repetition

of motifs and phrases in various contexts and the revealing of a wide range of hidden connections in language and reality, an approach she applies largely thanks to her fine sense for detail and remarkable sensitivity. Tóth's collection of short stories *Barcode* was published in Czech in 2011. Her first novel *Aquarium* has just been published by Fra in a Czech translation by Jiří Zeman.

Moderated by Robert Svoboda

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[*Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague and Kalligram Publishers*]

4.30 p.m.–5.50 p.m.

LARGE THEATRE – CENTRAL HALL



Hrabal in Hungary

Discussion on the extraordinary popularity of Bohumil Hrabal in Hungary with translators Zsuzsa V. Detre and György Varga, author of *Knots in a Handkerchief* (a literary dialogue with Hrabal) László Szigeti, and Péter Esterházy, whose novel *The Book of Hrabal* appeared in Czech in 2002. Moderated by Zdenko Pavelka.

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[*Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague and Kalligram Publishers*]

6.00 p.m.–6.50 p.m.

LITERARY CAFÉ – RIGHT WING (BALCONY, LEFT)



Peoples and prejudices – an interview with literary historian Csaba Gy. Kiss

The author of academic studies, essays and articles on literary relations will talk to Bohumil Doležal about prejudices associated with our neighbour nations. Kiss's book *Peoples and Prejudices – Essays and Studies from the Adriatic to the Baltic* appeared in Hungarian and English in 2013.

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[*Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague*]

Sunday 18 May

11.00 a.m.–11.50 a.m.

LARGE THEATRE – CENTRAL HALL



Ignác Romsics: Introducing selected works from Kalligram Publishers

A conversation with Ignác Romsics, distinguished Hungarian historian and winner of the Széchenyi Prize, who is an expert on 20th-century history, especially the period between the two world wars. With Rudolf Chmel and Petr Pithart.

Interpreted: Czech, Hungarian

[*Hungarian Cultural Centre Prague and Kalligram Publishers*]

GLOSSARY



Guest of Honour Hungary



The Many Faces of the Book



History As Reflected in Literature



Fantasy & Sci-fi



Literature Online



Presenting of Awards



Literature for Children and Young People



Cooking with the Book



Interpreted



Organisers