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Memory and Reminiscence, Latin America and Nobel-prize Winners Mario Vargas Llosa and Herta Müller. Book World Prague Celebrates a Jubilee

From 9 to 12 May 2019, the Prague Exhibition Grounds in Holešovice are set to host the 25th annual international book fair and literary festival Book World Prague. It will introduce Czech readers to works by dozens of writers from the Czech Republic and abroad, who will be attending the Prague event in person. One highly exceptional opportunity will no doubt be the meeting with two outstanding writers, recipients of the Nobel Prize in Literature, Herta Müller and Mario Vargas Llosa. Originally from Peru, the latter author also represents the annual book event's main guest – Latin America. The programme will chiefly focus on the topics of Memory and Reminiscence.

The participation of **Herta Müller** and **Mario Vargas Llosa** in Prague's Book World is the result of several years of negotiations and their visit to the event's 25th edition will undoubtedly count among literary events of the year. The organisers' invitation to Llosa even marks the author's first ever visit to the Czech Republic. Both writers fully merit the label of literary stars, whose works have transgressed the boundaries of their respective countries, as the Nobel Prize in Literature confirms. The German novelist and poet received the award in 2009, the Latin American author a year later. Czech readers will be able to meet these authors not only during debates, but also in new translations of their works, published to mark the 25th Book World Prague. Argo publishing house has prepared Llosa's novels *Chvála macechy* (*Elogio de la madrastra / In Praise of the Stepmother*) and *Pětináročí* (*Cinco esquinas / The Neighbourhood*), first one translated by Jan Hloušek, the second by Anežka Charvátová. Bourdon publishers are bringing out the autobiographical title *Volání kmene* (*The Call of the Tribe*) in the translation of Iveta Gonzáles. The list of translated works by Herta Müller will be expanded by the book *Liška lovec* (*Der Fuchs war damals schon der Jäger / The Fox Was Ever the Hunter*). Published by Mladá fronta, it was translated by Radka Denemarková.

Mario Vargas Llosa and Herta Müller will meet at a joint evening event to be held at the Lucerna Cinema on 11 May. Hosted by Jakub Železný, the debate will focus on the significance of literature as the voice of freedom and a means of political struggle. *"What connects both these personalities is their notable political and social engagement. I expect a debate that will significantly transcend the literary framework. This is exactly the direction*



we want to be taking – just like all the other literary book fairs around the world, we too want to become, above all, a festival of thought,” the book fair’s director Radovan Auer has said. In a further contribution to this effort, this year’s main topic of the event will focus on **Memory and Reminiscence**. In Book World Prague’s programming, the theme is approached in the broadest possible sense, which includes oral history, memoirs and our relationship to history in general.

Memory and reminiscences frequently feature in the works of authors representing the 25th annual book fair’s main guest, Latin America. Alongside Mario Vargas Llosa, Peruvian author based in Spain, literature of this overseas region will also be represented by the Argentinian-born novelist **Rodrigo Fresán** or the writer of what is often called ‘new Argentinian prose’ **Mariana Enríquez**. **Álvaro Enrigue** comes from Mexico, but will arrive to Prague from his home in New York, just like **David Unger**, who is nonetheless hailed as one of the foremost living authors from Guatemala. The May literary event will also be attended by **Luis Fayad** from Colombia and **Francisca Cárcamo** from Chile. The book fair’s programme will supplement literature from Latin America with events designed to introduce the continent’s culture, be it exhibitions, film screenings, concerts or tastings of exotic delicacies. Latin America’s colourful nature is also reflected in the visual presentation of the 25th Book World Prague, which has incorporated the national colours of all its individual states.

At the same time, this year’s book fair will treat its visitors to a comprehensive array of contemporary European literature. The main topic of Memory and Reminiscence is reflected in the works of, among other, the Spanish author **Javier Cercas** and Irish novelist **John Banville**, winner of the Man Booker Prize. The list of guests includes the French writer **Bernard Minier**, a celebrated author of crime novels. Book World Prague will thus present no less than three acclaimed authors of literary thrillers – **Robert Bryndza**, **Tim Weaver** and the aforementioned Bernard Minier. Works by the French writer **Alain Finkielkraut** and Austria’s **Robert Menasse** testify to these authors’ interest in the wider European context. It is precisely this field that the 25th international book fair and literary festival Book World Prague will explore for its visitors in its new pavilion called **Café Evropa**. This venue will be dedicated to debates on European literature and thinking. By incorporating this project, Book World Prague wishes to place further emphasis on the contribution Czech literature and culture is making to the European cultural and intellectual space.



BOOK WORLD PRAGUE 2019 in numbers

Book fair:

Number of exhibitors: 461

Number of stands: 214

Total area: 3 790 m²

Number of countries and regions – exhibitors: 31

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, India, Israel, Mexico, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Ukraine, U.S.A.

Literary festival:

Number of participants: 769

Number of programmes: 685

Number of exhibitions: 17

Number of countries and regions participating in programmes: 32

Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, U.S.A.

Guests from a total of 38 countries and regions of the world will be attending the book fair.

25th Annual INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR AND LITERARY FESTIVAL

Venue: Palace of Industry, Prague Exhibition Grounds

9 – 12 May 2019

Organised by: Svět knihy, s.r.o., company of the Association of Czech Booksellers and Publishers

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BOOK WORLD PRAGUE
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