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**Book World Prague to Focus on Italy’s Literature and Atmosphere. Donatella Di Pietrantonio, Viola Ardone, Luigi Zoja or Donato Carrisi Are Among the Invited Authors**

**27th Book World Prague, international book fair and literary festival, is set to convey – at least in part – the atmosphere of Italy. The country with a deep-rooted cultural tradition features as the festival’s guest of honour. Prague Exhibition Grounds will buzz with the vibrant and welcoming atmosphere of an Italian piazza, also reflected in the colourful multi-genre programme. Czech readers will not only get to meet writers whose books they already know from Czech translations, but also the authors of some brand-new translated titles. Renowned storytellers, such as Donatella Di Pietrantonio and Viola Ardone, will introduce their gripping – and critically acclaimed – narratives in person. The list of outstanding contemporary novelists also includes Claudia Durastanti, Stefania Auci, Gianfranco Calligarich and Francesca Melandri. Non-fiction literature will be represented by the famed psychoanalyst Luigi Zoja. Fans of literary thrillers will no doubt enjoy a personal encounter with Donato Carrisi. Spotlight will also be on poetry and literature for children and young people. The heart of this year’s Book World Prague, held on June 9-12 and boasting a motto from the classic Italian author Umberto Eco, will beat in Italian rhythm.**

Book World Prague 2022 organisers are excited to introduce the brilliant storyteller **Donatella Di Pietrantonio**. Her bleak but poetic story *A Girl Returned*, in which a coming-of-age girl is looking for her place in a backwards rural countryside in the seventies, has received numerous accolades, including Italy’s most prestigious literary award, the Campiello Prize. Di Pietrantonio’s emotion-packed novel *Borgo Sud* was featured in the shortlist of the coveted Strega Award. Both books can already be enjoyed by Czech readers in translation.

Outstanding literary success also characterises another widely known contemporary Italian writer, **Viola Ardone**, whose fame reaches beyond her homeland. *The Children’s Train* has commanded both the hearts of the readers and the respect of literary critics – the powerful and touching story from post-war Italy has been translated into over thirty languages including Czech. Another of Ardone’s novels, *Oliva Denaro*, is currently being translated and due to be published in Czech on June 1. It describes the role played by women in Italy in the sixties.

Not just enthusiastic readers of crime thrillers will be familiar with the name **Donato Carrisi**, whose several books have been adapted for the screen. His masterfully tense stories include the bestselling *The Whisperer, Into the Labyrinth* or *The Hypothesis of Evil*. Now Czech fans can discuss the books with the author himself, while also joining in a debate with **Luigi Zoja**. The books *The Father* or *The History of Arrogance* have won the renowned psychologist and author of books and essays countless readers around the world. At Book World Prague 2022, Zoja will be discussing his ideas with the economist Tomáš Sedláček, who has penned the introduction to one of his works.

Another Italian fiction writer to be hosted by the 27th Book World is the renowned novelist, journalist and screenwriter **Gianfranco Calligarich**. His book *Last Summer in the City* is also available in Czech and his existentialist prose is often likened to the films of Fellini or Sorrentino. Prose-writer **Stefania Auci** has won many, especially female, readers with her breathtaking novel series *The Florios of Sicily*, describing the rise of the famous Italian Florio dynasty. The story will be continued in a new instalment due to be published in May, shortly before the popular author’s visit to Book World Prague. **Claudia Durastanti** will also present a brand-new translation at the book fair. Czech readers will get to know the talented writer through her dramatic novel *Strangers I Know* about the daughter of deaf parents.

The offer of translations from Italian extends even further. Book World Prague is proud to introduce two new translations of works by **Italo Calvino.** One of Italy’s foremost 20th century authors will be presented through his prosaic experiment *Mr. Palomar* and an unabridged version of *Cosmicomics*. Works by **Elsa Morante**, wife of writer Alberto Moravia, are also considered part of the body of classic Italian literature. First Czech translation of a work of hers, namely the book *Arturo’s Island*, establishes a writer who had for long been overseen here, staying in the shadow of her internationally renowned husband.

*“27th Book World programme focuses on authors representative of the contemporary Italian literary scene, whose works have been translated into Czech in the past two years. Some are already familiar to Czech readers, others need a little introduction. While we have emphasised contemporary authors, many of whom are much acclaimed and oft-translated, we also remembered some classic names. We are aiming for a balanced representation of female and male authors,*” says Guillaume Basset, Book World’s dramaturg.

Book fair visitors will also have a chance to immerse themselves in the verses of Italian poets, read by the authors themselves. Interactive exhibition entitled *Listen with Your Eyes*. *The Voices of Italian Poetry* will offer what are known as spectrograms, or voice portraits of seventeen poets of the 20th century, including **Pier Paolo Pasolini, Sandro Penna, Alda Merini** or **Chandra Livia Candiani**.

Book World Prague also traditionally focuses on children and young people. The extensive programme offer will include, among other, the excellent author of stories for younger readers **Guido Sgardoli**. Young and adult audiences alike will be treated to a show performed by **Teatro dei Piedi** (Theatre of the Feet) or a micro lesson of the Italian language. Typically, Book World’s rich and varied programme also ventures outside the “merely” literary world.

The selection of Italy as this year’s Book World guest of honour marks the incredible 100th jubilee of the **Italian Cultural Institute’s** activities in Prague. The centenary of co-operation testifies to the deep-rooted and still vibrant cultural relations between the two countries. This year’s book fair also celebrates the ninety years that have passed since the birth of **Umberto Eco**, world-renowned Italian novelist, essayist, philosopher and semiotician with a connection to Prague. This year’s motto of Book World Prague – *“We live for books. A sweet mission in this world dominated by disorder and decay.”* – is a quotation from Eco’s work. Its relevance is testified to by the events of recent weeks, as well as by the pandemic years.

In June 2022, Book World Prague will be able to live up to its motto also thanks to its guest of honour. The fair’s organisers hope that the space reserved for encounters with Italy will extend beyond meeting Italy’s culture and authors. *“We imagined our display as an open space where people can meet, similar in atmosphere and warmth to an Italian piazza,*” Alberta Lai, director of the Italian Cultural Institute, describes.

*“This year’s* *programme is filled to the brim – besides the freshly announced names in Italy’s delegation we still have some more big names up our sleeve. Readers can expect a real treat, which is why the online ticket sale has already started on April 6, even though the complete programme will only be published in a month’s time*,” Radovan Auer, Book World director, extends his invitation.

27th Book World Prague - international book fair and literary festival – will take place at the Prague Exhibition Grounds on June 9-12.

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