Course name | Contemporary Czech Literature – Themes and Traditions
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Teacher | Dr Jana van der Ziel Fischerova

Who the course is intended for …
This course is intended for everyone interested in literature and contemporary writing. It caters for those who already have a specific interest in Czech literature and culture, as well as those who simply like to explore new contexts and themes.

Course outline

Lecture topics/ name of films/ books in book club
This course addresses some of the most significant works of contemporary Czech literature. In the minds of many readers worldwide, Czech literature is synonymous with the writings of authors such as Milan Kundera, Bohumil Hrabal or Václav Havel, who became famous internationally in the 1960s and 1970s. As it is a long time, however, since these writers published their most significant works, the Czech literary scene has for some time now been occupied by new names. This course considers the thematic, stylistic and other links, as well as differences, between the two generations of Czech writers. We shall discuss the ways in which the Communist/post-Communist cultural-historical environment may have influenced their craft. Topics such as censorship versus freedom of speech, state-controlled versus free-market publishing, and the role of translation will be explored. Certain iconic texts of the earlier generation shall be invoked, in order to then focus on the most intriguing and critically acclaimed works of their successors. Petra Hůlová, Miloš Urban, Patrik Ouředník and Jan Němec will be among the writers discussed in detail. It is our aim to bring one of these exciting authors in to talk to the students.

Recommended background reading

Course details

The course is subsidised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

Term dates
Autumn 2016-17

Day
Monday

Times
7:00-8:30pm ??
| Cost | ?? |