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# Newsletter Ostrava 2015

Dear friends,

We are pleased to send you the tenth issue of the Ostrava 2015 Newsletter, which regularly brings you news relating to Ostrava's candidacy for the title of European Capital of Culture 2015.

## Ostrava 2015

### The Old Arena bade adieu to the Month of Authors' Readings

This year, Ostrava can congratulate itself on successfully co-hosting for the first time the Czech Republic's biggest literary festival – the Month of Authors' Readings. The festival ran for the entire month of July at the Old Arena, and on every day visitors had the opportunity to listen readings by French and Czech authors, take part in debates and discussions, and have books signed by authors at daily autograph events. You can read periodic reflections about the festival's progress – from the [second](#), [third](#) and [fourth](#) weeks – on our website.

### Inspiration 2015

Ostrava came alive in July not only through literature. Music lovers, in particular, had a good time of it at Colours of Ostrava, one of the country's biggest music festivals, which ran in the city from 15 to 18 July. The Ostrava 2015 project did not just stand on the sidelines, setting up the [Inspiration 2015](#) festival stage at the Old Arena. For four days, the stage was the site of meetings, discussions, "acoustic seances", and much more, all led by the music journalist Pavel Klusák. He was very satisfied with his participation in the festival and with the Ostrava 2015 club. As he said himself: *"It is always about people and how they get involved. I was very pleasantly surprised."*

### Wheels of Ostrava

Festival-goers may also have been surprised to find that, thanks to Ostrava 2015, they could use bicycle transport to get themselves between individual stages and also set off on excursions in Ostrava and the surrounding area. The Ostrava 2015 project set up two [Cyclotents](#), where people could rent one of eighty bikes during the entire four days of the festival. The number of bikes rented is an indication of the positive response to the service. When returning the bicycles, visitors could also express their impressions of Ostrava in a questionnaire. Their responses contained such adjectives as "surprisingly pretty", "magical", "lovely", "excellent", "colourful", "iron", "picturesque", "particularly beautiful" as well as "bizarre". For some people, Ostrava was "an experience", while for others it was "a city with character"; still others noted that they were surprised by how much more they liked Ostrava than they had expected.

### Café Ostrava exhibiton in Prague's Mánes gallery

On 13 July the [opening](#) of the "Café Ostrava" exhibition took place at Prague's Mánes exhibition hall as part of the "Ostrava in Prague" cultural survey. Through three themes – art collecting in Ostrava, architecture in Ostrava, and comely Ostrava – the exhibition presents a kind of cross-section of Ostrava's cultural past and also looks a bit into its future. Visitors to Mánes can view paintings from the collection of the Gallery of Fine Art in Ostrava, and when they want to take a break from the art they can enjoy an expansive view of the National Theatre while relaxing at an actual café that is an inseparable part of the exhibition. "Café Ostrava" continues through 10 September.

### Young Ostrava artists along the banks of the Vltava River

Along with "Café Ostrava", another exhibition is running in Prague that features the youngest generation of artists, who are primarily students or graduates of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Ostrava. Their installation opened on 20 July and can be viewed until 7 August in the spaces operated by the (A)Void Gallery in arches number 6 and 9 of the riverside terrace below the Rašín Embankment. The [opening](#) of the exhibition on 19 July was accompanied by an entertaining performance by the group Record and an appearance by the eccentric 8-bit project Marius Konvoj. The curator of the project is Lenka Lindaurová, who, among other things, is the author of the unrealized winning concept for the Czech Pavilion at Expo 2010 in China.

### Black Star at Fiducii

While Ostrava is presenting itself in Prague, an [exhibition](#) opened in Ostrava that is dedicated to the book *Black Star*. The publication focuses on industrial Ostrava and was recently published in Germany. Its authors are the photographers Kim Bouvy, Kai-Olaf Hesse, Bernd Langmack, Andreas Mader, Arwed Messmer and Christian Steffelin. In addition to photographs, the book contains essays by the writer Jan Balabán and the architectural historian Martin Strakoš in both Czech and German. The opening took place on 14 July at the Fiducia Gallery, whose photographers work closely with the Ostrava 2015 team.

### Ostrava 2015 participated in a conference in Brussels

Ostrava 2015 team member Blanka Marková took part in a [conference](#) in Brussels on 13 July titled "What culture does for us: researching and evaluating European Capitals of Culture". The conference was organized by the European Capitals of Culture Policy Group, which was established by the European Commission and whose main purpose is to research and evaluate the impact of hosting the European Capitals of Culture title using a comparative approach.

## Theme: The Old Arena ´ Summer Theatre Stage (LDS)

While the majority of cultural institutions are rather inactive in the period of vacation and holidays, the Old Arena is continuing its activities throughout the summer months. It actively took part in this year's Colours of Ostrava festival, and after successfully concluding the Month of Authors' Readings in its spaces it is now conducting the Summer Theatre Stage. This can be found near the ruins of the small bridge between the Sykora Bridge and the Castle Footbridge and also at the green footbridge at Komenský Park, where on 20 and 21 August at 8 pm there will be the première and the first reprise of Klicpera's farce *Comedy on the Bridge*.

From the programme of the [Summer Theatre Stage](#), visitors can also look forward to its official opening, which takes place on 8 August at 7 pm. At the same time, the countdown begins of the final month of Ostrava's candidacy for the title of European Capital of Culture 2015. A week later, on Sunday 15 August at 4 pm, Ostravans can participate in a stone-skipping tournament on the banks of the Ostravice River. This traditional water event will be followed at 8 pm by a theatre performance of *A Zen Buddhist Fairy Tale About Two Princes Who Did Not Find a Princess and Were Still Satisfied, or We Have No Dough*.

As one of the dramaturges of the Old Arena, Petr Sedláček, said about the Summer Theatre Stage with only slight exaggeration: *"As part of Ostrava's candidacy project, by the year 2015 a cultural-recreational area should be established along the Ostravice River. The end of the world is generally predicted for 2012, however. Therefore the Old Arena has decided not to wait for the results of the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture 2015 and is already heading out to the river this summer."* Join us at the Ostravice River!

## Events at the Old Arena – club for culture and information 2015

On Thursday 26 August at 6 pm, there will be a presentation at the Old Arena by the Schůdky (Small Steps) civic association, which works to break down barriers between the majority population and the Romani community. There will be a talk about the history and current situation, the traditions, and successful projects by the Romani community in Ostrava. Part of the evening will also be a tasting of traditional Romani foods.

Two days later at the Old Arena, on Saturday 28 August at 7 pm, expert mycologists will advise you on the best mushrooms to collect in order to prepare a tasty *smaženice* (mushrooms fried with eggs), for example, and which ones to pass by.

Following Saturday's talk, a mushroom hunting expedition will take place the very next morning, on Sunday 29 August at 7 am, when we will set off for the woods to see how well everyone paid attention at the mycology lecture. Mushrooms will be gathered collectively, but consuming them will be left up to each individual.

## Ostrava 2015 recommends

### The Šlapeta villa opens to the Ostrava public for the first time

One of the jewels of Functionalism in Ostrava – a villa built in Silesian Ostrava in 1935–36 according to the design of the brothers Lubomír and Čestmír Šlapeta – will be accessible to the public for the first time. Guided tours by architectural historian Martin Strakoš and architecture professor Vladimír Šlapeta will be held on 21 and 28 August. Due to limited capacity, it is necessary to sign up for the tours via [e-mail](#) or by calling +420 596 110 523.

### Creative workshop at the Silesian Ostrava Castle

As is becoming a tradition, the Ostrava Theatre is organizing a Summer Theatre Workshop for the fifth year. Part of it, on 22–25 August, is a Summer Creative Workshop, which will take place at the Silesian Ostrava Castle in cooperation with the Old Arena. Visitors and seminar participants can look forward to theatre, poetry, chansons, drums, pantomime performances, commedia dell'arte, and much more.

### PechaKucha Night Ostrava

This legendary style of presentations with a bent toward architecture, design, photography and other art forms is being held for the first time in Ostrava. It will take place on 21 August at 8:20 pm in the Hlubina Mine. [PechaKucha](#), whose characteristic format is so-called "20x20", or 20 seconds per image and 20 images per presentation, came to us from Japan. An official license is necessary to realize an evening in the PechaKucha style, and Ostrava is only the third Czech city after Prague and Brno to claim such a license.

### Glowing pyramid over Ostrava

On Friday 27 August at 8 pm, an exact replica of the Pyramid of Cheops will shine over Ostrava. It will appear above the city centre and its immediate surroundings, and it can be seen every evening for an entire month. Come to see what it looks like when a piece of Egypt hovers over a north Moravian metropolis.

## Get involved

### Comely cities

The Wichterle High School has announced its third annual [history contest](#), which has the aim of familiarizing pupils and students with the political, economic and cultural history of Ostrava and its surroundings. If you or your children are interested in answering questions about memorial plaques, the events of 1989, famous personalities connected with Ostrava, or the Ostrava 2015 project, don't delay in becoming involved in the competition. Its deadline is 30 September.

### Win a relaxing hotel weekend!

If you know Ostrava like the back of your hand, test your knowledge in a contest prepared for you by Ostrava 2015 in cooperation with the server [turistika.cz](#). [Have a look](#) at the prizes you could win and the conditions of the contest. The grand prize is a package consisting of a weekend stay for two at the Park Inn Ostrava hotel, including breakfast, parking, and admission to the hotel's wellness & fitness centre, a T-shirt and cap, plus free entry to a cultural event in Ostrava.

## Mentions in the media

This year's Colours of Ostrava festival was amply written about, not only in the Czech media but also in the international media. Articles about the festival appeared on 19 July on the Polish news servers [Gazeta Katowice](#) and [Gazetacodzienna.pl](#), among others. (in Polish only)

There has also been a big response in the media to the "Café Ostrava" exhibition, which is currently running at Prague's Mánes exhibition hall. For example, on 14 July there was a segment about it on Czech Television's show [Studio 6](#), and also on that same day on Czech Radio 3 Vltava's programme [Mozaic](#), on the news server [lidovky.cz](#), and even on the server of the women's magazine [Elle](#) (in Czech only); [The Prague Post](#) mentioned the exhibition on 28 July.

The exhibition "Ostrava Kiss", running at Prague's (A)Void Gallery, has garnered no less notice. "Ostrava Kiss" was discussed on 21 July on Czech Radio 3 Vltava's [Mozaic](#) programme and on 23 July on the station [Radio Wave](#), among others. On 19 July, it was written about on the [České noviny.cz](#) news server of ČTK, the Czech Press Agency. (in Czech only)

Jiří Dědeček, the chairman of the Czech Centre of the International PEN Club, shared his experiences from the Month of Authors' Readings literary festival, which ran all July, on his blog. You can read his reflections [here](#). (in Czech only)

On 26 July, the server of the daily newspaper [Hospodářské noviny](#), [ihned.cz](#), took a look at the candidacies of Ostrava and Pilsen for the title of European Capital of Culture from an economic perspective, and from the standpoint of private investors standing behind these two cities – the Vítkovice Machinery Group in Ostrava and the Plzeňský Prazdroj brewery in Pilsen. (in Czech only)

## Join us!

Choose a way to find out the latest news about Ostrava's candidacy for the title of European Capital of Culture 2015.

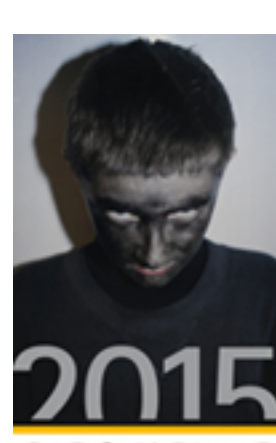
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