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Award-winning Czech novel *Rustic Baroque* debuts in English

Acclaimed work by author Jiří Hájíček now available to UK readers

Real World Press is pleased to announce release of the new and original English translation of Jiří Hájíček's *Rustic Baroque*, one of the most important works of Czech literature in recent years.

Included in the European Society of Authors' Finnegan's List 2013 as an author whose recent work is particularly deserving of translation, Hájíček is accessible to English-language readers for the first time through this English version of *Rustic Baroque*. In the original Czech (*Selský baroko*), the novel had been awarded the Czech Republic's Magnesia Litera prize as the Best Czech Novel for 2005.

Set in South Bohemia about a decade after the Velvet Revolution, *Rustic Baroque* recalls the tumult in the countryside during the 1950s collectivization of agriculture, sheds light upon the torn social fabric in the decades to follow, and characterizes how Czech people of all generations struggle to come to grips with the unresolved remnants of their past since totalitarian communists were driven from power in 1989. The story combines drama and mystery with history, architecture and a little romance against a background that is the natural beauty of South Bohemia. Through his simple yet powerful prose, Hájíček presents characters grappling to resolve their feelings of guilt, thirst for revenge and desire to forgive.

In this unique volume, Hájíček's novel is complemented by four stories from his collection *The Wooden Knife*. Moreover, the translator, who has lived in the Czech Republic for nearly 20 years has provided a brief introduction and carefully annotated the novel to enhance English-language readers' appreciation for Czech life and culture.

Writing about the original Czech version, critic Petr Zídek (*Lidové noviny*) called this, Hájíček's fifth work of prose, "a literary event of the highest order", adding that, "The author has succeeded in writing a tale which is at once spellbinding and undemonstrative, and which addresses some of today's bigger questions...He has managed to capture the major yet little reflected-upon turning points of our time. We confront the recent past in juxtaposition with the present; town meets country; we witness success and its opposite. We come to the conclusion that this most gripping of tales is a treatment of guilt, punishment and truth, and we learn to anticipate a surprising finale."

***Rustic Baroque* is distributed by Amazon.co.uk in paperback and Kindle formats. It will be available soon in UK bookshops. Excerpts are available at Amazon and www.realworldpress.cz**

For more information about the author, the unique story behind the translation and publishing of this work, or to obtain a review copy, please contact

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