
Rich programme at CU to commemorate events of 1939/1989

Rich programme at CU to commemorate events of 1939/1989 Debates, concerts, new publications part of run-up to Nov. 17

Czechs, in a little over a week's time, will be marking the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, which began on November 17, 1989 following a brutal crackdown against students by the communist riot police.

The crackdown sparked a wave of protests that only grew in size and number and led to the eventual fall of the communist regime.

Fifty years earlier, November 17 had seen the execution of nine students and professors by the Nazis and the sending of more than 1,200 students to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

Both 1939 and '89 figure strongly in commemorative events and celebrations in the days ahead.



Others to take part in the press event on Friday included **Rector Tomáš Zima** who spoke first, and **Miroslav Bárta, the vice-rector for public affairs**, who was a student of 19 at the time of the Velvet Revolution. Prof. Bárta recalled that the peaceful outcome had by no means been a foregone conclusion. Any commemoration of November 17 he and other speakers suggested, is both a celebration but also a reminder that things could have gone very differently. Even today, 30 years on, freedom gained in the last weeks of 1989 and the return to democracy in the years that followed, should not be taken for granted many in attendance agreed.



Friday, November 15 will see a Conference on Economic Transformation in the Czech

Republic and Slovakia at the University of Economics and a premiere of Unknown Soldier an original musical at the Grand Hall of the Carolinum.

Saturday, November 16 will see a Conference on Europe and International Students' Day at the Patriotic Hall and The Night Before Velvet concert at Albertov.

Sunday, November 17 itself a celebration of Freedom and Democracy Day at Albertov, complete with a retracing of the route students followed in 1989 beginning at 14:00.

On the day, the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic will host a conference entitled From Barbed Wire Fences to the Schengen Area.



In addition to listed events, several new publications commemorate the events of 1989 including [The Velvet Revolution 30 Years After](#) , published by the Karolinum Press.

Matfyz Press has published its own fascinating book of personal interviews called Once Upon A Time in November.



And be sure to also pick up [Forum's special commemorative issue](#) in Czech and English available free at the entrance to the rectorate.