

Guest Lecture

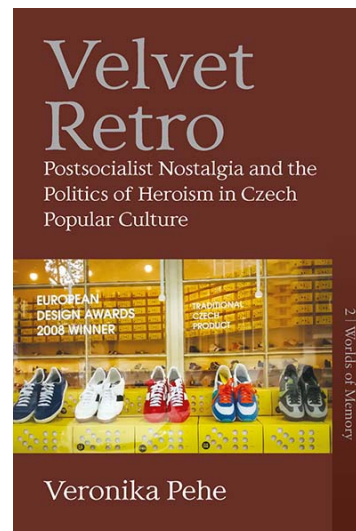
Wednesday, March 4, 2020, 14-16

Nobelparken, Aarhus University, Building 1481, Room 264

Veronika Pehe:

Velvet Retro: Popular Culture and the Czech Memory of Communism after 1989

After the collapse of the former communist regimes in the Eastern Bloc, popular films, television series and novels became one of the significant ways of making sense of the past. In this talk, Veronika Pehe will introduce her new book *Velvet Retro* (Berghahn 2020), which offers an alternative take on the much-discussed phenomenon of 'post-communist nostalgia', instead presenting 'retro' as a dominant mode of remembering that combines an aesthetic fascination with the past with its political condemnation. By asking what constituted acts of heroism under dictatorship, who should be celebrated and who condemned, cultural producers not only helped shape the memory of the past, but also revealed many shared assumptions about the values associated with the present political order. From early comedies to tragic narratives that cast the past as trauma, the talk will tell a concise story of the Czechs' coming to terms with the communist past through popular culture.



Veronika Pehe is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the Institute of Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences