



# Avant-Garde to New Wave: Czechoslovak Cinema, Surrealism and the Sixties

*Jonathan L. Owen*

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"[T]he book's considerable lasting value lies in the quality and depth of the contextual material, accompanied by a lengthy bibliography. Owen's potted history of Czech Surrealism ... is a particularly valuable primer, as is his exploration of the peculiar historical, cultural and political conditions that allowed a surprisingly coherent film movement to spring into existence." · Sight & Sound

"This book can fill a significant lacuna in the scarce international research on and publications about the [Czechoslovak] New Wave ... it presents a vital contribution to the study of the period." · Petra Hanáková, Charles University

"I think this is an excellent text. It deals with a very under-researched subject in an original yet comprehensive manner. It is well-written and well-structured." · Elisabetta Girelli, University of St Andrews

The cultural liberalization of communist Czechoslovakia in the 1960s produced many artistic accomplishments, not least the celebrated films of the Czech New Wave. This movement saw filmmakers use their new freedom to engage with traditions of the avant-garde, especially Surrealism. This book explores the avant-garde's influence over the New Wave and considers the political implications of that influence. The close analysis of selected films, ranging from the Oscar-winning *Closely Observed Trains* to the aesthetically challenging *Daisies*, is contextualized by an account of the Czech avant-garde and a discussion of the films' immediate cultural and political background.

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