**Pištěk at Sklenář’s**

**THEODOR PIŠTĚK 85 PAINTINGS**

8 November – 9 December 2017

Galerie Zdeněk Sklenář

Salvátorská 6, Prague 1, CZ

Tuesday to Saturday / 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm

PRESS RELEASE

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*“I already have an Oscar, but I’ve never had a show at the Sklenář Gallery!”*

– Theodor Pištěk, Mukařov, 2017

**Galerie Zdeněk Sklenář, located at Salvátorská 6, is pleased to announce an exhibition of the works of Theodor Pištěk – a leading Czech painter and costume designer, who received an Oscar for the costumes he designed for director Miloš Forman’s film *Amadeus*. This solo show, presenting a lesser known side of Pištěk’s oeuvre, as embodied in paintings and reliefs, is a symbolic tribute in honour of the artist’s eighty-fifth birthday. The exhibition presents a condensed retrospective of the artist’s works from the start of the 1960s to the present-day.**

In addition to its celebratory nature, this exhibition at Galerie Zdeněk Sklenář of works by Theodor Pištěk (born in 1932) – one of the most important figures of the Czech post-war art scene – is also interesting thanks to its concept: the leading representative of Czech hyperrealistic and veristic painting is shown in the light of the lesser known periods of his artistic creation, associated primarily with geometrism during the first half of the 1960s. “*Pištěk, together with Zdeňek Sýkora, were amongst the first geometrists who worked with geometry at a time when this genre was not yet greatly known in our country,*” explains curator and director Martin Dostál, who has been involved with Theodor Pištěk’s works for a number of years.

Dostál goes on to add that at the beginning of the 1970s Pištěk started to admire the flat planes of American hyperrealism, and that the previously mentioned geometry started to play a permanent role in his works, and it has remained so to this day. The exhibition at Galerie Zdeněk Sklenář will specifically present lesser known paintings specifically from this period in thematic groups. However, since the 1980s Pištěk has returned to geometry in his large paintings, which have taken on an impressive form over the last ten or fifteen years.

“*In my opinion, Theodor Pištěk has long been wrongly and unilaterally interpreted. This exhibition in an intimate space, presented in the form of a current-day abridgment, represents the basic characteristic of his art – metaphysicality. Pištěk is not a hyperrealist! He is a romantic realist with a metaphysical foundation in which mystery is the key element. This ranks him amongst the most important personalities of his generation,*” says gallerist Zdeněk Sklenář. He adds that the greatest surprise of this exhibition are Pištěk’s geometric paintings executed using ink on nitrocellulose lacquer, which are otherwise very rarely exhibited.

Another lesser known work by Theodor Pištěk is his painting *Interview with Hawking*, which the artist completed earlier this year and portrays the artist’s visual conception about the well-known scientist he admires. Pištěk transforms Hawking’s figure – or rather the artist’s conception of it – into geometric structures that help him to paraphrase Hawking himself. The result consists of spatially and deeply rendered large-format paintings.

In addition to being famous for his art, Pištěk was also a representative of Czechoslovak car racing, and the world of cars, engines, and racing circuits undoubtedly serve as an inspiration for his artistic works. The exhibition includes a veristic painting that the artist painted over a period of twenty-five years and completed this year. Pištěk gave it the title *Adieu Guy Moll* and it is a tribute to the French race-car driver who died tragically during a race.

“*In his painting, Pištěk is also interested in the atmosphere, the mystery, the story, and the space of the painting. An extraordinary level of sensitivity to colour also pays an important role in his works,*”, says Martin Dostál.

Theodor Pištěk is one of the leading figures of post-war art, along with artists such as Zdeněk Sýkora and Václav Boštík. After completing studies at the Academy of Fine Arts, Pištěk was not only an active artist but also a film costume designer. He collaborated with director František Vláčil (*The Valley of the Bees* and *Markéta Lazarová*), and later with Miloš Forman. Pištěk received an Oscar for the costumes he designed for *Amadeus*.

Galerie Zdeněk Sklenář

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Salvátorská 6, Praha 1

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