**1685 Days and Nights**

12 December 2017 – 10 March 2018

Galerie Zdeněk Sklenář

Mikulandská 7, Prague 1, CZ

Tuesday to Saturday, 1 pm to 6 pm

[www.zdeneksklenar.com](http://www.zdeneksklenar.com)

**PRESS RELEASE**

7 December 2017

**Galerie Zdeněk Sklenář is opening a new exhibition venue in the Baroque Schönkirch Palace in Prague’s Mikulandská Street. In this way, the gallery, which has been active in the art business, education, and publishing since the 1990s will continue to expand.**

Artists such as Kupka, Sýkora, Preisler, Kubišta, Piesen, Sklenář, Lhoták, Trampota, Kolář, Váchal, Kintera, Filla, Reynek, Kolíbal, Wang Guangyi, Zhang Xiaogang, Kratina, Fulla, Pištěk, Lada, Boštík, Malich, Cigler, Prucha, Kovanda, Wu Yi, Pleskot, Slavíček, Kubišta, Kolář, Váchal, Achrer, Číhal, Predka, Jasanský/Polák, Panuška, Muzika, Medek, Bielicky & B. Richter are just a few of those whom gallerist Zdeněk Sklenář loves and admires.

The Baroque Schönkirch Palace, dating back to the mid-eighteenth century, is coming to life with art following an extensive renovation. Zdeněk Sklenář chose this historical building at Mikulandská No. 7 as the home for his new gallery, which is officially opening this week with the exhibition *1685 Days and Nights*. Iconic names of Czech art, including Zrzavý, Kupka, Čapek, Šíma, Boštík, Reynek, Lada, Malich, and Sýkora, will appear at this new **Galerie Zdeněk Sklenář** venue alongsideworks by contemporary artists, including Jiří Kovanda, Josef Achrer, Krištof Kintera, and Marek Číhal. All will stand out in their full glory in an original installation designed by Josef Pleskot and Jan Merta. The gallery’s visitors will have the opportunity to see such works as Jan Zrzavy’s rarely exhibited 1931 painting *Preaching in a Small Town*, Emil Filla’s *Still Life*, several works by Kupka (including his *Andrée* from 1908), and the art of leading Chinese painters, such as Wang Guangyi and Zhang Xiaogang, both of whose works will be extensively covered in an exhibition planned by the Prague City Gallery for next year.

Gallerist Zdeněk Sklenář asked the leading Czech architect Josef Pleskot to design the future art centre, which measures 428 square metres in area. Pleskot worked very

sensitively with the original interior paintings in the palace and was also inspired by period plasterwork. During the renovation of the space, within which Baroque elements exist side by side with elements of minimalist architecture and design, not only were new exhibition halls created, but also space for the gallery’s business offices, and special security depositories to provide protection against fire and explosions.

The installation design for the exhibition bears the signature of the painter Jan Merta as well as that of Pleskot. Together, they created a common dialogue: *“The dramaturgy behind the selection of the exhibited works reflects our artistic discussion, during which we decided we wanted to achieve an effect where old art spontaneously comes face to face with that of the present day, and where both co-exist in this beautiful space.”*

Sklenář is opening this new gallery with the goal and vision that visitors will see it as place to go not only for art but also for education. All of the more than hundred publications from Galerie Zdeněk Sklenář Editions will be displayed, as well as numerous prints and bibliophile editions – all from the gallery’s own publishing activities. “*I very much wish for art lovers to come to our new gallery not only to see the exhibitions, but also to find inspiration, and to learn. Over a hundred publications will be available to them in addition to numerous prints and rare bibliophile editions*,” says Zdeněk Sklenář.

*“How can one instil silence – and that special atmosphere of a temple or a chapel to which Zdeněk Sklenář likes to compare his gallery – into a palace that stood devastated for years and has undergone a qualitative transformation according to the architectural designs of Stanislav Fiala? How is it possible to do this within the context of a now commercially segmented former palace? A difficult task, placing one at a threshold: try and find a solution, or give up. I decided to try, but I do not remember any other time during my career when I had to counterbalance so many contradictions, the most critical of which was the commercial nature of the building versus its charm for art. I think that, ultimately, peace and quiet was installed in Zdeněk’s venue in that specific way that a gallery requires. All that remains is to wait in anticipation to see if visitors will sense that temple-like loftiness… thus would the task be fulfilled.”*

**- Josef Pleskot**, Prague, 2017

[A print-quality photograph is available for download](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3tgblnbzv5vhk19/AAAJhA-h8w0BrJK3Y9z2FA3ha?dl=0)