

## JAN JEDLIČKA

20 May – 8 August 2021

Prague City Gallery

Municipal Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

Mariánské náměstí 1, Prague 1

Open daily except Monday from 1 pm to 6 pm

Exhibition curator: Jitka Hlaváčková

**This, the first comprehensive exhibition of the work of Jan Jedlička, a quintessentially European artist, maps all the facets of the extensive oeuvre that he has created since the 1970s in his Swiss, Italian and Prague homes. Jan Jedlička records landscapes, their visual aspects, but also what he experiences when moving through a landscape, and how the landscape changes. His observations reflect the seemingly indiscernible changes that shape a landscape from the perspective of different times of day, the changing seasons, the decades of the artist's physical presence, the centuries of human civilisation and the millennia over which land masses have formed.**

Jan Jedlička's oeuvre seems at first sight very diverse, but closer examination reveals it to be surprisingly coherent. His combining of different techniques and media creates multi-layered images of places in a landscape, which he usually observes over a longer period of time. Here a photograph is supplemented with a film, or printed as a photogravure or screen print, or transposed into a mezzotint or drawing, or into a painting executed in Jedlička's handmade pigments.

The current exhibition at Prague City Gallery in the Municipal Library is the first to present the full breadth of Jan Jedlička's art. It is not structured chronologically but instead maps how he moves through a landscape along the paths of his various creative strategies. Each work is always connected to a particular place and time, and for this reason the selection is arranged according to the three most significant geographical regions he has worked in – Italian Maremma, several locations in Great Britain and Prague.

The most important and most extensive section covers Jedlička's project from the Maremma in Italy, where he has been working for more than four decades. To record the character of this landscape, Jedlička has developed a technique of painting using local pigments, which he makes from the minerals, clay, sand and dust he collects. He systematically places the pigments next to one another in the order in which he found them, and this creates a specific representation of the landscape that documents its colour and structure. *The Cartographic Drawings* (1993–1996) add the dimension of time to Jedlička's work, showing his successive recordings of larger sections of a landscape as he walked along a predetermined route and drew what he saw at various points in time.

To capture time, however, Jedlička primarily uses photography and video. For his extensive time-lapse photography series *Echo* (1980–1989), *Il Cerchio* (2005–2006) and *200 m* (2016) he documented different times of day, changes in the water levels, the

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weather and other natural phenomena, and human activity on the beaches over the course of a year. And then the radical changes to the landscape caused by human intervention come into focus more or less automatically.

In contrast with the visual precision of Jedlička's photographs, his films *Echo – Vocis Imago* (1994) and *Interno* (2001) approach the same themes with an indistinct, abstract fluidity that reflects the principles at work in our perception of reality. *Città dei vivi, città dei morti* (2004), a photography series from Grosseto in Italy, goes to the other extreme, capturing a moment of timelessness in the city's seemingly deserted cemetery and residential quarters.

At the start of the new millennium he turned his attention to his birthplace, Prague, and its environs, as well as rural and urban landscapes in Wales and Ireland. These activities have given rise to a number of new cycles in which Jedlička works with similar techniques to those he used earlier in the Maremma, above all pigment paintings, watercolours and photographs. Prague is featured in pigment paintings and a film and photographs from St George's Basilica at Prague Castle (*Basilica*, 1997), and from Britain there is the *Hills and Trees* cycle (2002). There are then two projects that are quite different in kind from the others: a photo essay about a train journey from Basel to The Hague, and a commission for stained glass windows for the Church of SS Cosmas and Damian in Sicily.

Jitka Hlaváčková

**Jan Jedlička** was born in 1944 in Prague, where from 1962 to 1968 he attended the Academy of Fine Arts. In 1969 he emigrated to Switzerland. Since then he has lived in Zurich, and since the 1990s in Prague too. In the late 1970s he began regularly staying and working in the Maremma in southern Tuscany. In 1993 and 1997 he was awarded grants to travel and work in Britain, and in 2001 he worked at the Centre for Global Dialogue in Rüsclikon, near Zurich.

**The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue** featuring essays by Bruno Corá, Jitka Hlaváčková, Friedemann Malsch, Marie Rakušanová and Kateřina Svatoňová.

**Curator:** Jitka Hlaváčková

**Graphic Design:** Marek Jodas

**Acknowledgements:** Národní filmový archiv

**Media partners:** Art&Antiques, ArtMap, Artalk, Flash Art, A2, Artikl, Revolver Revue, Artyčok.tv, protisedi.cz, Radio 1, Český rozhlas Radio Wave

**Admission:** 150 CZK full (adults) / 60 CZK reduced (students) / 20 CZK seniors



**Prague City Gallery** is one of the most important galleries in the Czech Republic, which in its exhibition activity focuses in particular on modern and contemporary art. It collects, protects and professionally processes art collections of the City of Prague. Currently, the Prague City Gallery exhibits at seven venues: The Stone Bell House, Municipal Library – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace, The House of Photography, Villa Bilek, Troja Château and František Bilek's House in Chýnov.

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## ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME

Please check our website [www.ghmp.cz](http://www.ghmp.cz) for updated information about accompanying program: [www.ghmp.cz](http://www.ghmp.cz)

**Note: The scheduled accompanying events may be affected by the development of the coronavirus situation. The program may be subject to change.**

### Guided tours

There will be guided tours with Jan Jedlička and the exhibition's curator, Jitka Hlaváčková, as well as thematic tours led by Marie Rakušanová and Kateřina Svatoňová.

### Screenings of Jan Jedlička's films

The exhibition will also be accompanied by Jan Jedlička's short and longer films, with commentaries by Sylva Poláková, Kateřina Svatoňová and Jan Jedlička. Screenings will be held at the Ponrepo cinema in collaboration with National Film Archive.

### Screenings of the documentary film *Jan Jedlička: Traces of a Landscape*

*"Stop, stay quietly in the landscape and learn how to watch. If at first sight there's nothing interesting, look deeper, under the surface."*

The painter, photographer and experimental filmmaker Jan Jedlička lost the landscape of his youth when the political situation after 1968 compelled him to emigrate. He settled in Switzerland and he then spent the best part of a decade looking for new inspiration, until a holiday in Tuscany resulted in him falling in love with the flat landscape of the Maremma region. Here he found his new home as an artist, where he started from scratch.

## EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR THE JAN JEDLIČKA EXHIBITION

### Saturday Art Workshops

**Exploring and Mapping a Landscape**, Municipal Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

**Experiments with Pigments**, Education Centre, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace

In Saturday's workshops we will explore a landscape from many different perspectives, using a variety of techniques and methods. We will use both new and classic media (assorted techniques for drawing, painting, printmaking, three-dimensional work, etc.), and we will also connect and mix them. A number of specialised workshops will focus on working with pigments, testing the character of ready-made pigments and how we can combine them in our work, but we will also create our own pigments in modest alchemical experiments with materials – dust, clay, stones – that we have collected ourselves.

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## Art Studio for Adults and Seniors

**Drawing Experiments with Red Ochre**, Education Centre, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace  
**Pigments and Making Paints**, Education Centre, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace

Interactive workshops for Adults and Seniors will focus on classic techniques (drawing and painting), traditional technologies and craftsmanship. In the painting workshop people can try out traditional ways of making paints by combining powdered pigments with a binder. The process of creating different shades of colour will be interesting creative work that recalls artisan workshops.

**Contact:** Lucie Haškovcová, [lucie.haskovcova@ghmp.cz](mailto:lucie.haskovcova@ghmp.cz), 606 612 987, 608 216 418

Besides the above events, there will also be other educational activities for specific target groups such as disadvantaged visitors and people on parental leave with small children.



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