**Oldřich Škácha set of photos commemorates the anniversary of the 1968 occupation**

**The fiftieth anniversary of the invasion by Warsaw Pact troops of Czechoslovakia is a unique opportunity to hold an exhibition which commemorates one of the most tragic moments in our history. From 15 August, the Czech Photo Centre’s Large Exhibition Hall will be showcasing photographs of Oldřich Škácha which remained closed in his studio in the Old Town for twenty years. The Václav Havel Library has loaned these photographs of that fateful August day. Photographer Ondřej Němec has selected the pictures for this exhibition.**

These powerful photos of the first days of the conflict are complemented by a stylised darkroom with the original equipment and photographs taken of Škácha’s studio by photographer Petr Šálek. Another feature in the gallery which will reflect the acute atmosphere of 1968 will be Evald Schorm’s documentary film Zmatek (Confusion), provided by the National Film Archive. Škácha captured the very arrival of the army in Prague’s streets in journalistic style. He documented the dismay and the efforts of people to avert conflict. During the course of 21 August, he met many well-known figures such as Pavel Bobek, Jan Kaplický and Václav Táborský who had decided to protest against the soldiers’ aggression.

Leading Czech photographer Oldřich Škácha became publicly known as someone who documented the figures in Czechoslovak culture and dissent in the 1970s and 1980s, in particular those around Pavel Kohout and Václav Havel. As normalisation began, Škácha was excluded from public life and lost the opportunity to publish. After the Velvet Revolution, he returned to taking photographs for publications such as Lidové noviny, Salon Práva, the Mladá fronta Dnes magazine, Reflex and many others. He also became one of President Václav Havel’s photographers, whom he continued to document after his departure from the office of President.

Visitors will be able to see the winners of the Czechoslovakia – Photographs of ’68 contest for amateur and professional photographers in the Small Exhibition Hall. This contest has been run by Czech Photo together with Czech Radio. The exhibition showcases selected photos which come from the private archives of ordinary Czechs and Slovaks. Around a thousand photographs were entered into the contest in total.

The exhibition will be open from 15 August until 16 September every day except Monday: Tuesday to Friday always from 11.00 am until 6.00 pm, and at weekends from 10.00 am until 6.00 pm. Standard entry costs 80 crowns, and concessions come in at 40 crowns. The gallery is 100 metres from Nové Butovice metro station at the address Seydlerova 2835/4, Prague 5.

The exhibition is being held under the auspices of and with financial support from the Czech Ministry of Culture as part of the Czech and Slovak Century project in collaboration with the Václav Havel Library.

Main partners: Trigema, ProCeram, Olympus

Photo: Oldřich Škácha

Contact details and further information: Czech Photo Centre: Public relations – Radek Polák, +420 778 747 113, polak@czechpressphoto.cz, www.czechphoto.org