

# ARPAD SZENES

## PLÉNITUDE AUX CONFINS DE L'EXISTANT

December 12, 2017 - January 20, 2018

Opening Tuesday, December 12e, 6-9 pm



In 2017, on the occasion of the 120th anniversary of Árpád Szenes' birth, the gallery Jeanne Bucher Jaeger is proud to present the exhibition *Plénitude aux confins de l'existant*.

It is a new tribute to the artist, whom the gallery has represented for almost 80 years, since 1939, in innumerable solo and group shows both inside and outside the gallery.

The painter of many acclaimed series, such as the series of the *Banquets* or the *Portraits*, which include portraits of his spouse Vieira da Silva, Árpád Szenes stands out in particular for his magnificent series of *Landscapes*. They are poetic spaces, memories of a happy world on the verge of being born: beaches, hills, skies with no human presence and yet throbbing with humanity. To unite the invisible and the visible, to make them merge together through an exterior light interiorized in the act of creation: such were the aspirations of the artist, who however voluntarily stayed in the shadow of his wife, Vieira da Silva.

Árpád Szenes grew up in a privileged intellectual milieu and entered the Académie Libre of Budapest in 1918. After a first exhibition in 1922 at the Marx Ernst Museum, Szenes travelled through Europe and settled in Paris. There he frequented «l'Atelier 17,» directed by Stanley W. Hayter, where he befriended such artists as Giacometti, Delaunay, Miró, Tanguy, Hajdu, Nicolas de Staël, and Maria Helena Vieira da Silva, whom he married in 1930. A few years later, in 1932, the couple met Jeanne Bucher, an encounter that marked the beginning of a long and intimate collaboration. The political situation in Hungary on the eve of World War

Arpad Szenes  
*Midi*, 1963  
Oil on canvas  
73 x 116 cm

It forced the couple to leave; they settled in Portugal, and then in Brazil, between 1940 and 1947. Szenes opened a workshop there and taught painting. Upon returning to Europe, he pursued his work on landscape and space, drawing his inspiration from his numerous travels and a contemplative observation of nature.

Szenes's works gradually entered into the collections of the State of France and, in 1970, the Inspection des Musées de province du Louvre organized the first retrospective of his work. It was followed, in 1974, by a retrospective at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris organized by Jacques Lassaing. In conjunction with that important retrospective, the gallery dedicated a major exhibition to the artist that same year. In 1977 he was recognized in his home country at the Magyar Nemzeti Galéria in Budapest and at the Varisi Tanacs Kiallítóterme Museum in Pécs. A few years after the artist's death in 1985, a new retrospective was held in 2000 at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris.



A double tribute to Szenes was also organized in 2006. The gallery dedicated the exhibition *Eloge de l'Etendue* to him on the occasion of the publication, by Skira, of the catalogue raisonné of his drawings and paintings by Chiara Calzetta Jaeger. His large horizontal canvases, and those which display vertical horizons, like oriental rolls, are more than landscapes: they evoke «a country that would be that of vastness.» They stir up metaphysical thoughts in us. We go from below to beyond, from the feeling of an underlying life to the idea of the infinite. These canvases also have a destination: that of welcoming light. It is what Szenes called «transparency,» and it is indeed to this dawn that the works of the artist invite us.

Arpad Szenes  
*Sahel*, 1975  
Oil on canvas  
84 x 48 cm