**„The Triumph of Colour.**

**Masterpieces of French graphics from the turn of the 20th century**

**from the collection of the National Museum in Krakow”**

The Polish, as well as international, audience very rarely has a chance to admire outstanding graphic works, mainly due to preservation challenges. The magnificent display co-organized by long-standing collaborators the National Museum in Krakow and ZAMEK Culture Centre in Poznan intends to change that.

Not only will our exhibition consist of highly valued works (100), created in France in the 19th and 20th centuries, displayed first and foremost at the finest museums around the world; it will also allow us to retrace the rapid development of French modern colour graphics from the end of the 19th century which heavily influenced other graphic arts in the world and suppressed the preeminence of black-and-white works. It will also introduce the audience to the aesthetics of the time, as exemplified by the Nabis, representatives of Art Nouveau and proto-expressionists.

In this particular period of the expansion of colour in the graphic disciplines, particularly distinctive was the activity of the famous *peintres graveurs* (painter-graphic artists) who were often encouraged by excellent publishers and critics to create artwork for them. Among the authors of those fine works, characterised by the highest artistic standards, you will find names such as Pierre Bonnard, Jules Chéret, Maurice Denis, Eugène Grasset, Henri Gabriel Ibels, Auguste Lepère, Lucien Pissarro, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Paul-Élie Ranson, Henri Rivière, Auguste Renoir, Paul Signac, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Édouard Vuillard, Jacques Villon or others with a long French connection: Georges de Feure, Alfons Mucha, Félicien Rops and Alfred Sisley.

The exhibition will simultaneously promote the biggest and most interesting set of modern French graphics in Poland, stored at the National Museum in Kraków, coming mostly from the collection of Feliks Jasieński, a superb collector, benefactor and patron of art. These works will accompanied by posters from the now-defunct Museum of Science and Industry in Kraków.

In addition to bringing focus to works by the great masters, an important aspect of the display will be the presentation of various ways in which colour was used in works from different stylistic trends which existed at the turn of the century, printed using lithography, woodcut and etching. Yet another objective of the exhibition will be to argue that the large-scale adoption of colour in graphic art has helped to popularize the discipline to a considerable extent. Complementing the exhibition will be a set of captivating posters and other examples of applied graphics – it will allow us to expand our knowledge of the discipline as well as its relation to artistic graphics.

The exhibition will be addressed to both younger and older generations, experts and art lovers who do not too often get a chance to appreciate such outstanding pieces of art by world-famous artists in Poland.

Exhibition curator
Krystyna Kulig-Janarek