Antonín Slavíček

Antonín Slavíček (1870–1910) is one of the most prominent Czech representatives of Impressionist painting. Already as a pupil in the lower years of the *Realschule* in Spálená Street in Prague, he loved to draw and paint (his first teacher was the painter Emil Jan Lauffer). Slavíček's uncle – a dean in Stará Boleslav – enabled him to make a study trip to Munich in 1886–1887, where the young artist painted privately under the supervision of Paul Nauen, while also keeping in touch with compatriots through the Škréta association in Munich. In 1887, he enrolled at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague in the landscape studio of Julius Mařák. He interrupted his studies several times, probably due to disagreements with Mařák (something that he shared with J. Vochoč). Nevertheless, from 1894 to 1899 he travelled with Mařák's studio to paint en plein air around Prague – at Okoř, in Hvězda and Liboc, or in Bechyně. Between 1903 and 1905, Slavíček lived with his family in Kameničky near Hlinsko, where he created his emblematic painting *At Home in Kameničky* (1904). On 10 August 1909, while bathing in the cold mountain river Zdobnice, Slavíček suffered a stroke and became paralysed on the right side of his body. He tried painting with his left hand and later attempted to produce small still lifes, but, disappointed with the results, he chose to end his own life on 1 February 1910. As an artist, Slavíček emerged from the legacy of mood-driven realism, but by 1898 he had begun to paint with rapid, trembling patches of colour that evoked a sense of dynamic whirling and restless swirling. He is celebrated as a master of the dichotomous rendering of light and shadow.