

## Exhibition in Brazil

### *As Meninas do Quarto 28*

#### Late Echo from Brazil

#### The story of Erika Stránsky

Little was known about some of the girls who lived in Room 28 and did not survive the Holocaust. That is how it was with Erika Stransky, who lived in Room 28 for one and a half years until, on May 1944, she was deported to Auschwitz. Some of the survivors remember her as a fine girl with a quite nature. Some entries in the diary of Helga Pollak illuminate a girl who, many years ago, was very dear to her. A series of paintings made in the art lessons with Friedl Dicker-Brandeis testify to Erika's artistic talents. As we know today she was a descendant of the Czech painter Alexander Brandeis.

On 26 April 2012 an Email to the authoress of the book *The Girls of Room 28* brought a little light into the darkness around this girl. *Hello, I write to you because my grandmother was the younger sister of a girl who lived in Room 28, Erika Stránsky. My grandmother Monika hid during the war and came to Brazil when it ended and here we are until today. I am Adriana, and I live in Brazil, São Paulo.*

The message from Adriana, daughter of Karen Zolko, was the beginning of a friendship which led to a new exhibition in the Portuguese language in Brazil: *As Meninas do Quarto 28*. The exhibition opened on 22 Mai 2014 in São Paulo, Mube Museum – exactly 84 years after the birthday of Erika Stransky (1930–1944). It was Karen Zolko who has initiated it, and has realized it together with her friend and partner Dodi Chansky. The opening was spectacular. Until today this exceptional exhibition enjoys great success and media interest in Brazil. Further exhibitions followed in Brasilia (Museu Nacional), Porto Alegre (Museu da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul – Porto Alegre), Rio de Janeiro (Museu Histórico Nacional) and in Recife, Galeria Janete Costa.

#### From the diary of Helga Pollak

*Thursday, 28 October 1943*

*Yesterday evening I spoke with Erika in confidence. I think that we could get on really well. She gave me a little wooden heart. We see the world in much the same way. Erika doesn't have a best friend here, and neither do I. But we are both friends with Rita.*



*Top: Adriana with her grandparents Monika and Gregorio and her mother Karen Zolko.*

*Above: Erika with her younger sister Monika, her father Georg Stransky and his wife Valerie.*

*Left: Spindlermühle/ Špindlerův Mlýn. Erika with her father and Valerie, her grandfather Sigmund Stransky and his daughter-in-law Marian. Around 1937*