

**Adam Kossowski** - painter, sculptor and writer. Born in 1905 in Nowy Sącz. He studied architecture at the Warsaw University of Technology (1923-1925), and later painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow under Wojciech Weiss (1925-1928) and Felicjan Szczyński Kowarski (1928-1929). In 1929, he moved to Warsaw, where, after completing his studies, he became Kowarski's assistant in the department of mural painting at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts. He took part in the restoration of the Wawel Castle (1928-1929, 1931), the Royal Castle in Warsaw and in the reconstruction of the "Lord's Supper" in the Jasna Góra Monastery. Before 1939, he realised, among other things, a polychromy in the church in Wola Okrzejska near Garwolin and a design for a bar for first-class passengers in the building of the new Main Railway Station in Warsaw. He was a founding member of the "Pryzmat" group (1933) and participated in all its exhibitions. In November 1937, he received a nine-month state scholarship and travelled to Italy. In Rome, he studied mural painting - specifically fresco and the sgraffito technique. On his return, he married Stefania Szurlejówna, a journalist and writer, later editor of the London "News" (1938). In September 1939, he was detained by Soviet troops while trying to cross the Romanian border. Detained in prisons in Skolem (Eastern Carpathians) and Kharkov, then sent to a gulag on the Pechora River. Released following the Sikorski-Mayski Agreement, he followed the Polish Army through Persia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt to reach Scotland in 1942. In London, he worked for the Ministry of Information of the Polish Government in Exile doing a series of commissioned gouaches (published in Mosaic magazine, 1975) documenting Stalinist prisons and gulags. He began collaborating with émigré magazines (including Nowa Polska, Polska Walcząca and Wiadomości) and publishing houses (including Orbis and Veritas), illustrating and writing articles on art. A prize for his painting 'Saint Veronica' at an international religious art competition in London (1944) introduced him to the world of English Catholic art. He was the only artist to design and realise the decoration of the chapels, monastic buildings and courtyards in the rebuilt medieval Carmelite Abbey at Aylesford (1950-1972). He produced over 80 large-scale ceramic reliefs, more than 20 oil and tempera paintings, a reliquary of St Simon Stock, polychromes and stained glass windows. Religious works of art include: Stations of the Cross in Cardiff Cathedral and St Ambrose Church, Liverpool, the large 'Last Judgement' tympanum in Layland Church, the 'St Thomas Becket' tympanum in St Thomas' Church, Rainham, the 'Revelation of St John' sgraffito in the Queen Mary College Chapel of the University of London and numerous Stations of the Rosary. In addition, he is the author of many works of a secular nature including a ceramic relief depicting the history of Old Kent Road from Roman times to the present day on the wall of the public library in the London Borough of Camberwell. He exhibited infrequently: his first exhibition in London (1943) was a painterly memoir of the gulags; subsequent exhibitions (1945, 1947, 1949, 1950, 1955) were mainly devoted to religious art. Winner of the Alfred Jurzykowski Prize (1970); awarded the Polonia Restituta Officer's Cross (1980). The artist's works can be found in over 30 places in Great Britain, the United States and Poland, including the Victoria & Albert Museum (London), the Museum of the Archdiocese of Warsaw and the Archives of Emigration (Toruń). He died in 1986 in London.

The works on show are a gift from Stefania Kossowska