

**Leon Piesowocki** - painter, graphic artist, illustrator. He was born in Poznań in 1925. In 1943, as the son of a German man and a Polish woman, and holding German citizenship, he was called up for service in the Wehrmacht at the age of 18 and sent to Bourg-en-Bresse in France, and then to the Italian front. He deserted and joined the Allied Forces in 1945, initially in a Polish transit camp at the 2nd Polish Corps Base, in Mottola, near Taranto, and then, due to his very good knowledge of the German language, he was assigned to the 2nd Counterintelligence Branch of the 1st Battalion of the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Brigade, where deserters from the German Army were sent. He took part in the battles for Bologna. After the end of the war, he received a scholarship from the Accademia di belle arti di Roma and a pass from the army to study. He also took part in the work of the Section of Artists and Students of Fine Arts at the Polish Academic Centre of the 2nd Polish Corps in Rome at the Cecchignoli barracks on the outskirts of the city. The Section included painters who were already older, such as: Zygmunt Turkiewicz, Marian Kościalkowski, Józef Jarema and Stanisław Gliwa, in addition to their students: Aleksander Werner, Andrzej Bobrowski, Antoni Dobrowolski, Kazimierz Dźwig, Ryszard Demel, Janusz Eichler, Jan Głowacki (Laterański), Tadeusz Beutlich and Tadeusz Znicz-Muszyński. In Rome, the Association of Students of the Visual Arts - Circle of Visual Artists was also founded, of which Piesowocki became a member. In 1946, as a soldier of the 2nd Corps, he was evacuated to Great Britain and settled in a camp of the Polish Resettlement Corps, where he enrolled in a painting school and continued his studies in drawing and painting at the Polish Studio of easel painting and applied graphics in Waldingfield near Sudbury, where lecturers included Marian Bohusz-Szysko and Wojciech Jastrzębowski. In June 1947 he was demobilised and joined the Urban Design Office in Portsmouth. In 1948, with the help of the English Interim Treasury Committee for Polish Questions, he was awarded a scholarship to London's renowned art academy, Sir John Cass' College of Art and Craft. He specialised in artistic printmaking. He settled in London, as did the school's other scholarship holders, with whom he maintained a lively relationship. In 1949 he was granted British citizenship and, together with his fellow students from the School of Painting, initiated the 'Group'49', whose members held annual joint exhibitions at the Kingley Gallery, and elsewhere in London. In 1951, he left school and a year later, together with Zygmunt Kowalewski, set up a company to design and make shop windows; their clients were mainly travel agents and transport companies. In 1959, he took part in the exhibition Contemporary Drawings at the newly established Grabowski Gallery. In 1960 he and his family moved to Steyning, where he set up a studio and printmaking workshop. During this period he worked and exhibited extensively. He won several prizes at international biennials of posters and prints. In 1967 he was one of the 24 founders of the permanent collection of émigré art at the Polish Social and Cultural Centre POSK. In 1969, he exhibited in Poland for the first time, in Poznań. In 1973 he took part in a competition for a work dedicated to Nicolaus Copernicus, organised in Toruń. He took part in dozens of group exhibitions all over the world. After one trip to Provence in 1976, he decided to move to Pont-de-Barret. In 1981, he settled in Frankfurt, where he collaborated with the Figuren Theater, for which he designed sets and posters, with an additional occupation of illustrating children's books. In 1984, he returned to France and settled in Manas c. Montélimar, near Lyon, where he still lives today.

Leon Piesowocki's works can be found in the collections of, among others, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Museum and Art Gallery in Bradford, the City and Art Museum in Oldham, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam, the University of Pittsburg, the National Museums in Warsaw and Poznan and the University Museum in Toruń.

The works on show are a gift from the artist