

## German refugee artists in 1930s Britain

*Martin Bloch was not the only artist to find refuge in Britain from the Nazis. Many other artists, critics, designers and architects moved to Britain in the 1930s. Some stayed for only a short while whilst others made this country their new home. The influence of these refugees can be seen all around us today.*

### **Jankel Adler**

Adler was an Expressionist artist of Polish-Jewish descent living in Germany. In 1934 he fled Germany and went to live in France. His work was displayed at the 'Degenerate Art' exhibition in 1937. At the start of the Second World War he joined the Polish army and was moved to Glasgow. Here he was a strong influence on the young painters Robert Colquhoun and Robert MacBryde. He moved to London in 1943 where he continued to paint.

### **Milein Cosman**

Cosman was an illustrator best known for her drawings of musicians. She was born in Germany in 1921 and came to England in 1939. During the Second World War she studied art at Oxford, worked on a milk float and taught art at a local convent. In 1946 she started to create illustrations for books and magazines. She married Hans Keller, an Austrian musician who had fled to England in 1938.

### **Walter Gropius**

Walter Gropius was an architect of the Bauhaus school. In 1934 he left Germany after the Bauhaus was attacked by the Nazis as a 'Cathedral of Marxism'. He arrived in England and set up in practice with E. Maxwell Fry. However, his style of architectural design did not take root in England. The only major building he completed was Impington Village College in Cambridgeshire. In 1937 he moved to the United States to teach at Harvard University.



Impington Village College

### **Hans Feibusch**

Feibusch was a German-Jewish mural painter. In 1933 he fled Germany after the Nazis came to power and came to England where he stayed for the rest of his life. His paintings were included in the 'Degenerate Art' exhibition in 1937. Between 1938 and 1970 he painted over 40 murals in British churches and cathedrals.



Hans Feibusch  
Mural at St. Michael's Church in Harrow

### **Bela Horovitch**

Horovitch was an Austrian publisher. He founded the publishing house Phaidon Verlag in 1923. When the Nazis took Austria in 1938 a British publisher called Sir Stanley Unwin took over Verlag and brought it and Horovitch over to England. Phaidon became one of the most important publishers of books on art in the English language.

### **Oskar Kokoschka**

Kokoshka was an Austrian painter and printmaker. Much of his work was influenced by the Expressionist movement. In 1934 he left Austria and moved to Czechoslovakia. His paintings were exhibited in the 'Degenerate Art' exhibition in 1937. When the Nazis seized Czechoslovakia in 1938 he moved to England. He became a British citizen in 1947.

### **Peter Moro**

Moro was a German architect who, although he was a Catholic, found it difficult to find work in Nazi Germany because he had a Jewish grandmother. He arrived in England in 1936 believing that he would get a job with Walter Gropius. Gropius denied any such offer of work. Instead he worked with Berthold Lubetkin, a Georgian architect who had made his home in England. Later he taught architecture at Regent Street Polytechnic (now the University of Westminster). Whilst he was here he and some of his students designed the Royal Festival Hall as part of the South Bank complex. He also designed theatres in Nottingham, Portsmouth and Hull.



Marie-Louise von Motesiczky  
'Self-Portrait with Red Hat'

### **Marie-Louise von Motesiczky**

Marie-Louise von Motesiczky was born into a wealthy Viennese family in 1906. She studied art in Vienna, Frankfurt, Paris and Berlin. In 1927 she began to work with Max Beckmann (whose work was included in the 'Degenerate Art' exhibition of 1937). In 1938 her family moved to England to escape the Nazi takeover of Austria. Her first solo exhibition took place in 1944 and became friends with Oskar Kokoschka. She went to have several successful solo exhibitions.

### **Walter Neurath**

Neurath was an Austrian publisher who moved to England in 1938 after the Nazis seized power in Austria. In 1949 he founded his own publishing company, Thames and Hudson (named after the rivers of London and New York). The books that he published helped to bring the world of art to a much bigger audience.

### **Nicholas Pevsner**

Pevsner was a German architectural historian. He became interested in British art in the early 1930s and moved to this country in 1935. He wrote several books on British art but is best known for editing the 'Pelican History of Art' and for writing and editing much of the 46 volume 'Buildings of England' series.

### **Lucie Rie**

Lucie Rie was a studio potter born in Austria. In the 1930s she began to produce her 'volcanic' cylindrical jars and she exhibited all over Europe. In 1938 she moved to England where her work was less well-known. She worked with Bernard Leach and Hans Coper. Several of her works are on display in the Sainsbury Centre.



Lucie Rie  
'Small Vase with  
Spiral'  
(SCVA)

**WORLD ART  
COLLECTIONS  
EXHIBITIONS**

SAINSBURY CENTRE  
for Visual Arts

**Kurt Schwitters**

A German painter and sculptor who was closely associated with the Dada movement and later with the Constructivists. In 1937 his work was included in the 'Degenerate Art' exhibition in Munich. Schwitters fled to Norway. In 1940 he arrived in Britain and was immediately interred on the Isle of Man. He continued to make collages and sculptures during his time there. After the Second World War he moved to the Lake District where he stayed for the rest of his life. He continued to create collages which used images from magazines which seem to anticipate Pop Art.

**Fred Uhlman**

Uhlman was a German-Jewish lawyer who came to England in 1936 penniless and unable to speak English. He had left Germany in 1933 and tried unsuccessfully to make a living as a painter. He had a solo exhibition at the Zwemmer Gallery in 1938 and had several exhibitions after that.

**Aby Warburg**

Warburg was a German-Jewish art historian. He began to build up a large library of books on the history of art in Hamburg. In 1933 he escaped Nazi Germany and brought his library to England. It is now housed at the Warburg Institute which is part of the University of London.