

Austrian Artists and their Exile



YOUNG AUSTRIA



Film *Künstlerinnen und Künstler und ihr Exil* **Austrian Artists and their Exile**

by Sonja & Martin Frank

Austrian Cultural Forum, London

24 June 2024, 4:30 p.m

Sonja and Martin Frank (KunstPlatzl, Vienna) are delighted to show their film partly with English subtitles. Sonja Frank's grandparents Fanni and Ludwig Grossmann were members and officials of the former Anti-fascist youth group Young Austria in Great Britain and maintained contact with former members in the post-war years.

The film showcases works of art by 12 Austrian refugees who were active in the Free Austria Movement (FAM). The film centres around **Franz Pixner** (1912-1998), a co-founder of the FAM. Having fought with the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War, he arrived in London in 1939. Primarily a sculptor he also worked as a graphic artist for the Austrian Centre and the exile theatre company Das Laterndl. He returned to Vienna in 1946. Pixner and his artist friends **Ernst Eisenmayer**, **Georg Eisler**, **Klara Hautmann-Kiss**, **Franzi Heidenreich**, **Rudi Kauders** and **Edith Propst** returned to Austria after WWII and remained politically active anti-fascists. All of the mentioned had campaigned for the liberation of the Nazi-occupied countries, as well as Pixner's artist friends **Helga Michie**, **Wolf Suschitzky** and **Eric Doitch** (who remained in England) and **Ruth Rimon** and **Wolfgang Schlosser**, who moved to other countries. They were all part of the Free Austrian Movement and Young Austria, the youth group for Austrian refugees under 25 years of age.

In exile and after the war they created, among other things: architecture and pottery works, watercolours, oil paintings, ink drawings, sculptures, photographs, graphics, cartoons and poems.

Following on, at 7pm, the **Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies** is pleased to announce the launch of an online exhibition about the **Laterndl Theatre at the Austrian Centre**.

Founded in 1939 in London, The Austrian Centre provided a vital social, cultural and political hub during the dark war years for the many thousands of mainly Jewish Austrian Jews fleeing persecution.

Das Laterndl (The Lantern) had clear aims: it wanted to give the wider refugee community hope and belief in the future, contribute to the fight for a free and independent Austria, and enable them to reach out and share stories with the wider British society. Just as important perhaps, was an unspoken hope that theatre would bring a sense of agency and purpose to life in exile.

Inevitably, for a small wartime refugee theatre, only a few precious documents from Das Laterndl remain. The Martin Miller and Hannah Norbert-Miller Archive, from which most of the material for the exhibition is taken, contains perhaps the most complete set of records of the Laterndl's history in existence. The exhibition pieces together fragments of the records and supplements the story with other sources to weave together the unique story of a remarkable theatre.

There will be a break for drinks and snacks between the two events.

Seat booking for both events: Austrian Cultural Forum
28 Rutland Gate, London. www.acflondon.org

The Ambassadors for Austria and GB are invited to take part in both events.

An A3 poster book and A4 catalogues of Sonja Frank's exhibition about 12 FAM artists will be displayed at the Austrian Cultural Forum Library before the film screening at 4:45 p.m.



Cooperation:
Austrian Cultural Forum, London
Research Centre of German and Austrian Exile Studies, London
KunstPlatzl, Vienna - www.kunstplatzl.info