

Teresa Żarnower

(1897 - 1949)

Born in 1897, Teresa Żarnower was a Polish-Jewish painter, sculptor, graphic, typographic and set designer as well as co-author of architectural designs. Active during the interwar years, she belonged to the radical left-wing avant-garde milieu and was one of the pioneers of constructivist art in Poland. She was among the founders of the artistic group "Blok" and the editor of the magazine under the same title. From 1927, Żarnower also collaborated with *Dźwignia* (The Lever) magazine and became directly engaged in politics – taking part in the electoral campaign for parliament and supporting Workers and Peasants Unity, for which she designed posters and leaflets.

At the end of 1937, Żarnower moved to France. In 1940, fleeing from the war, she went from France through Spain to Portugal, where she spent over a year trying to secure a US visa. She found herself in Montreal, Canada, where she another year and a half. She eventually reached New York City in mid-1943 after having her visa sponsored by a New York-based family. In New York, she found opportunities for pursuing her artistic career. Most famously, her solo show was staged by the Art of This Century gallery of Peggy Guggenheim. She also participated in the Jewish Museum's inaugurating show.

Aside from her interwar constructivist work, she is also known for her series of photomontages *The Defense of Warsaw* (1942) and her work on the monumental sculpture devoted to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising (1948). For many years knowledge of her post-war creative output was limited due to lack of thorough academic research. In 2014, Museum of Art in Łódź (PL) bridged this gap by staging a large monographic exhibition of the artist. Concluding five years of research by Milada Ślizińska and Prof. Andrzej Turowski, the exhibition focused on the final ten years of Żarnower's life and work. In 2023, Import Export gallery began work with and representation of the artist's estate.

EDUCATION

1915 - 1920 Sculpture, Academy of Fine Arts, Warsaw, Edward Wittig's Studio

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2014 Teresa Żarnowerówna. An Artist of the End of Utopia, Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, ms1
- 1948 Teresa Żarnower, Saint Paul Gallery and School of Art, St. Paul, Minnesota
(Minnesota Museum of American Art)
- 1948 Paintings by Teresa Zarnower, San Francisco Museum of Art
- 1946 Teresa Zarnower 16 Gouaches, Peggy Guggenheim Gallery,
Art of This Century, New York

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 "I saw the other side of the sun with you: Female Surrealists from Eastern Europe"
curated by Anke Kempkes for European ArtEast Foundation at Cromwell Place, London
- 1950 Jewish Artists, The Jewish Museum, New York
- 1947 Inaugural Exhibition: The Giving of the Law and the Ten Commandments,
The Jewish Museum, New York
- 1942 Exhibition at Montreal Art Gallery, Montreal
- 1939 Salon des Indépendants, Grand Palais, Paris
- 1932 Modern Printing Exhibition, Institute of Art Propaganda, Łódź
- 1931 International Book Art Exhibition, Petit Palais, Paris
- 1927 Modern Architecture Exhibition, Moscow
- 1926 First International Exhibition of Modern Architecture, TPSP Zachęta, Warsaw
International theatre exhibition, Palais Charpentier, Paris
- 1925 Maldoror Group Exhibition, Cabinet Maldoror, Bruksela
- 1924 Exhibition of Works by Members of the Polish Artistic Club
Hotel Polonia-Palace, Warsaw
First International Exhibition Contimporanul, Hall of the Association of Fine Arts,
Bucharest
Blok Group Exhibition, Warsaw

IMPORT ↘ EXPORT ↗

- 1923 International Exhibition of Young Art, Łódź
Der Sturm Gallery, Berlin, exhibition with Mieczysław Szczuka and Henryk
Stażewski
New Art Exhibition in the Corso theatre in Vilnius, recognised as the first collective
exhibition of Polish Constructivists
- 1921 Annual Salon of the Zachęta Society of Fine Arts, Warsaw
- 1918 Exhibition at the School of Fine Arts, Warsaw

IMPORT ↘ EXPORT ↗

PRESS

Jewish Woman's Archive:

<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/zarnower-teresa>

<https://www.mdpi.com/2076-0752/9/3/84>

<https://culture.pl/en/artist/teresa-zarnower-zarnowerowna>

The article about pre-war avangarde in MoMA collection:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/17/arts/design/engineer-agitator-constructor-moma.html>

Eastern European surrealists' exhibition at ArtEast Foundation in London (2023) with Teresa Żarnower participation:

<https://contemporarylynx.co.uk/the-worlds-first-exhibition-of-female-surrealists-from-eastern-europe>

<http://miejsce.asp.waw.pl/en/polskie-surrealizmy-i-ideoza-historii-sztuki-2/>

review of Teresa Żarnower's exhibition at Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź (in Polish):

<https://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/5564-konstruktywistka-na-emigracji.html>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3g2fWp2ROZU&list=UUehGOJUzUaCLgkIaM65soBQ)

[v=3g2fWp2ROZU&list=UUehGOJUzUaCLgkIaM65soBQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3g2fWp2ROZU&list=UUehGOJUzUaCLgkIaM65soBQ)

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26430782>

<https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/5072>

<https://awarewomenartists.com/en/artiste/teresa-zarnowerowna-teresa-zarnower/>