



# Ben Uri collection

---

## Work by **Jankel Adler**

### Biography

Jankel Adler was born into a large orthodox Jewish family on 26 July 1895 in Tuszyn, near Łódź in the Congress Kingdom of Poland (now Poland). He studied engraving in Belgrade in 1912, then art in Barmen and Düsseldorf until 1914. Adler returned to Poland in 1918, becoming a founder-member of Young Yiddish, a Łódź-based group of painters and writers dedicated to the expression of their Jewish identity. During the First World War, he was conscripted into the Russian army, but resettled in Germany in 1920, notably meeting Marc Chagall in Berlin, before returning to Barmen. In 1922 Adler moved to Düsseldorf, joined the Young Rhineland circle, became friends with Otto Dix and helped found 'Die Kommune' and the International Exhibition of revolutionary artists in Berlin. His Planetarium frescos in 1925 were highly successful and he exhibited widely. In 1931, at the Düsseldorf Academy, he formed an important friendship with Paul Klee, who had a profound influence on his style.

In 1933 Adler was forced to flee Nazi Germany at the height of his success after his work was declared 'degenerate' – he was later included in the infamous 'Entartete Kunst' (Degenerate Art) exhibition in 1937. His arrival in Paris can be seen as part of a 'second wave' of artists from Russia, who were drawn west to Germany, then to France, though Adler continued to travel widely until 1937 when he worked with the printmaker Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17 in Paris. He also met Picasso, who became the second major influence on his style. Later, in 1937, Adler moved to Cagnes-sur-Mer in the South of France, from where he joined the Polish Army upon the outbreak of the Second World War and was evacuated to Scotland in 1940, where he was demobilized owing to poor health. In Glasgow, he and Josef Herman – whom he had known previously in Poland – became members of the influential Glasgow New Art Club founded by J. D. Fergusson and contributed to a revival of the arts scene in the city. Adler stayed briefly in Kirkcudbright before moving to London in 1943, sharing a house with 'the two Roberts', the painters Colquhoun and MacBryde, whose style he greatly influenced. He was a member of the AIA (Artists' International Association).

Jankel Adler died on 25 April 1949 in Aldbourne, Wiltshire, England. A memorial exhibition was organised by the Arts Council in 1951 and a posthumous exhibition on Jankel Adler, Mark Gertler and Bernard Meninsky was held at Ben Uri Gallery in 1957. A posthumous major survey exhibition was held in Wuppertal (2018), and a survey of his British years at Ben Uri Gallery (2019). Adler's work is held in UK collections including Aberdeen Art Gallery, Glasgow Museums Resource Centre, Pallant House Gallery, Swindon Museum and Art Gallery and Tate Britain, as well as in international collections in Australia, Germany, Israel and the USA.

[Search Ben Uri archive for more information about Jankel Adler](#)

### Artist keywords

[AIA \(Artists' International Association\)](#) | [Atelier 17](#) | [Degenerate Artist](#) | [Hitler émigré](#) | [New Burlington Galleries](#) | [New Scottish Group](#) | [painter](#) | [Paris](#) | [Poland](#) | [Scotland](#) | [Stanley William Hayter](#) | [Łódź](#)

5 work/s by this artist from the collection are shown below. For a more detailed record and image please click on the link.



[Still Life](#)

**Object type** painting

**Accession number** 1987-2





[Wounded](#)

**Object type** painting

**Accession number** 1994-14





[Ein Jude](#)

**Object type** print

**Accession number** 2008-14





[Ein Jude \(plate\).](#)

**Object type** plate

**Accession number** 2008-14a





[Mother and Child II](#)

**Object type** painting

**Accession number** 2019-21

---

Ben Uri Gallery and Museum Art, Identity & Migration

108A Boundary Road, London NW8 0RH Tel: +44 (0)207 604 3991 [www.benuri.org.uk](http://www.benuri.org.uk)

Registered Charity 280389



# Jankel Adler

1895–1949



[Orphans](#) 1941

[License this image](#)

## BIOGRAPHY

**Jankel Adler** (born **Jankiel Jakub Adler**; 26 July 1895 – 25 April 1949) was a Polish-Jewish avant-garde painter and printmaker active primarily in Germany, France and England. He began his career as an engraver in Belgrade before studying arts in Germany. Co-founding the Yung-yidish group in Łódź, he later became involved with the Cologne Progressives and the Union of

Progressive International Artists in Germany. He began teaching at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf and was a student of the Swiss abstract painter Paul Klee who had an important influence on Adler's work.

Facing Nazi persecution, Adler fled to Paris in 1933, where he actively opposed fascism. His works were targeted by the Nazis, with several displayed in the Degenerate Art Exhibition. Adler volunteered for the Polish army during World War II but was later discharged for health reasons, eventually settling in Scotland and then Aldbourne, England. He later discovered that none of his siblings survived the Holocaust. Adler died in Aldbourne in 1949.

This biography is from Wikipedia under an [Attribution-ShareAlike Creative Commons License](#). Spotted a problem? [Let us know](#).

[Read full Wikipedia entry](#) 

## ARTWORKS



**No Man's Land**

Jankel Adler  
1943



**Woman with Hat**

Jankel Adler  
1940





## The Mutilated

Jankel Adler  
1942-3



## Orphans

Jankel Adler  
1941

# ARTIST AS SUBJECT



## Orphans

Jankel Adler  
1941

# FILM AND AUDIO



INTERVIEW

Jankel Adler's Sketchbooks –  
'His life was one long  
journey'