

ARTIST SON OF POLISH CATHOLIC WHO SHELTERED JEWS, WILL EXHIBIT PAINTINGS

NEW YORK -- An artist is often shaped by events in his life. And so it was with Andre Kielczynski, the artistic son of a Polish Catholic who sheltered Jews in his cellar in Warsaw during the Nazi holocaust.

Andre, now one of the outstanding artists in Israel, has just brought his collection of paintings to the United States for exhibition, and it will go on tour under the aegis of the National Jewish Welfare Board's Lecture Bureau.

The story of how Andre came to Israel is one of the happier stories of the era which followed the Nazi holocaust. The days when the elder Kielczynski had hidden as many Jews as he could in his cellar were all but a memory in 1958 -- but a memory which Israel and those who had been saved from Nazi gas chambers would never forget.

That year the Kielczynski family along with others were brought to Israel by the Israeli government for the planting of the trees along the road to the Yad Vashem memorial. At the foot of the trees were nameplates -- among them one bearing the name of the elder Kielczynski -- commemorating the K'Doshei Ha'Oloim (the Holy of the World)--a gesture of thanks from a grateful people. Today, the elder Kielczynski works at his old profession as an agronomist--but in the service of the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture.

However, his son, Andre, coming to Israel as a young man in his twenties and already a painter, was so inspired by the light and color of Israel that it changed his whole life as an artist and a man. Andre's face becomes alive with enthusiasm when he describes the reaction to the bright sunshine of Israel and its wonderful panoramas.

"In Poland", he says, "I painted in the traditional style. But when I came to Israel, I could never think of painting that way. I wanted to catch that wonderful light and warmth,

to put it on canvas. Somehow I felt freer and I wanted to express that freedom."

He began studying art anew and a new style evolved--a style in which he devoted himself chiefly to landscapes, catching the golden shades of the hills of Jerusalem and the mysticism and eternal quality he sees in it.

His personal life has also changed dramatically. Because he wanted to become a true Israeli, he converted to Judaism, became a citizen, and fought as a tank commander in the Six-Day War.

He is married to an Iraqi girl and has two young daughters, six and eight years old, one of whom is named Sharon, after the Israeli General Ariq Sharon. And he is repaying his debt to Israel by giving generously of his time to encourage young artists, teaching them and guiding them.

Andre Kielczynski is today among Israel's best-known artists. His paintings are in many Israeli galleries, and he has a permanent place in the annual "Young Israeli Chosen" exhibition in the Tel Aviv Museum.

He calls the collection he brought to the United States, "Jerusalem", because that is the center of many of his landscapes.

Speaking of the exhibit, Dr. Samuel D. Freeman, director of the JWB Lecture Bureau, said, "We do not usually book art exhibits, but this one somehow seemed appropriate as an expression of Israeli art and symbolic of the country."

Andre's current collection consists of about

100 paintings and water colors, ranging from 8 to 24 inches to 24 by 36 inches.

Jewish Community Centers and other organizations that wish to book the exhibit should write to or call the JWB Lecture Bureau, 15 East 26th Street, New York, N. Y., 10010, phone 212-532-4949.

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