

HANNAH FRANK: A GLASGOW ARTIST

**From: Judith Coyle - PR,
81 Grasmere Road, Lancaster, Lancs, LA1 3HB
Tel: 01524 60383 and 0778 661 3193
judith@judithcoyle.co.uk
www.judithcoyle.co.uk**

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate use

HUNT IS ON FOR ICONIC ARTIST'S WORK

A NATIONWIDE hunt is under way for original artworks by Glasgow artist, Hannah Frank, who was particularly popular during the mid-twentieth century. It's been said that every 60's Scottish student bedsit featured a Hannah Frank print on its walls and her work has been exhibited at the Royal Academy, the Royal Scottish Academy and The Hunterian among others.

Now, through the determination of her niece, Fiona Frank, Hannah, now 95, is enjoying a revival and reaching a new audience.

Fiona grew up surrounded by Hannah's works because her GP father, Dr S L Frank, Hannah's brother, displayed them in his home surgery's waiting room in Preston, Lancashire. She explained the urgency of the search.

"I organised two small retrospective Hannah Frank exhibitions last year in Lancaster. People told me they loved these exhibitions and bought many of the signed prints so I knew this was the right time to plan a whole series of exhibitions all over Britain which will lead up to Hannah's centenary in 2008. We begin next Spring with a larger exhibition at Lancaster City Museum and Art Gallery and some works will be on show at Falmouth Art Gallery. We're also reissuing a previously sold-out book about my aunt – *Hannah Frank – A Glasgow Artist: Drawings and Sculptures*.

Because we need to correctly attribute these works and their present owners in the exhibition catalogues and the book we need to trace as many original works as possible now.”

She continued: “We do possess many of these works as my aunt lives in Westacres, a Jewish care home in Glasgow, where, most unusually for a living British artist, her work is on permanent exhibition and is enjoyed by staff, residents and visitors. However, other works have migrated across the country.”

This was highlighted when a previously unknown original picture, *Fairies in a Wood*, surfaced recently. Hannah did this drawing in 1925 when she was 17 and it has been bought from a London gallery by Ivor and Jenny Kallin, cousins of Hannah’s late husband Lionel Levy.

Fairies in a Wood, which will soon be available as a new print hints at what was to become Hannah’s distinctive drawing style - black and white, haunting images, many featuring stars and moons, wraith-like figures and elongated shapes. She has been compared to the Macdonald sisters, Margaret and Frances, who with Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Herbert MacNair were known as ‘The Four’ at Glasgow School of Art. Hannah herself graduated in Arts from Glasgow University and her drawings, under the name ‘AL ARAAF’, taken from an Edgar Allan Poe poem, figured in the university’s magazine throughout the 1930s. Hannah also illustrated programmes and leaflets for Glasgow Jewish organisations during this time. She attended evening classes at Glasgow School of Art, studying drawing through the 1930s with Hugh Crawford, and taking up sculpture in the early 1950s under Paul Zunterstein and Benno Schotz.

Although some of Hannah’s drawings, such as *Spring Frieze* and *Dance*, are exuberant and romantic her work is not whimsical. Drawings such as *Wrap thy Form*

in a Mantle Grey, Flight and Night Forms are imbued with melancholy or fraught with fear and the prospect of death, perhaps echoing the persecution that Jewish families like Hannah's fled from at the end of the nineteenth century as well as the worsening situation of the Jews in Germany at the time she was working.

Fiona's close ties with her aunt have led to her own PhD studies at Manchester University's Centre for Jewish Studies. She is examining Jewish immigration to Glasgow 100 years ago, focusing on education and integration with British society in the second and subsequent generations. She's also on the committee of the Scottish Jewish Archives. This is a Glasgow-based national heritage, information and research centre on the history of the Jews in Scotland since the seventeenth century. Interestingly, The Archives used Hannah Frank drawings on the front covers of its newsletters during the 1980s; and they will be providing some panels on Jewish immigration to Scotland, to accompany the touring exhibition of Hannah's work.

Fiona said: "My own studies are informed by the exhibitions and the energy that the exhibitions are generating. Through working with museums and galleries and setting up the website (www.hannahfrank.org.uk) I have met long-lost relatives such as Ivor and Jenny Kallin as well as Hannah Frank enthusiasts who have sought information on her for many years."

She continued: "I'm very keen to make contact with people who have Glasgow Jewish ancestry who might like to help me to set up a Hannah Frank exhibition in their own towns or cities."

Fiona urges anyone who thinks they might own an original Hannah Frank drawing or sculpture – or anyone who wants to pre-order a copy of the new book, out in May - to contact her through the website.

“I believe my aunt’s art is of great importance as part of this story of immigration and integration and I’m proud that the work I’m doing to bring the art to a wider audience will help to fulfil Hannah’s wish, which is, in the words of Longfellow, to ‘leave footprints on the sands of time’”.

Contact Fiona Frank through the website www.hannahfrank.org.uk or by email on fionafrank@hannahfrank.org.uk or by telephone on 07778 737681.

(Text Ends)

Press details:

FIRST RATE PICS are available:

- Photographs of Hannah Frank, with her niece, Fiona, surrounded by her work in the Jewish care home .
- Photographs of Hannah’s drawings and sculptures.

Interviews:

- **Fiona Frank** is available for interview. Tel: 07778 737681; email fionafrank@soundboard.f9.co.uk. Lancaster and Glasgow.
- **Ivor and Jenny Kallin** are available for interview with the recently discovered work, *Fairies in a Wood* from 1925. Contact tel 0208 806 7374, email ikallin@hotmail.com. Stoke Newington, London.
- **Hannah Frank (Mrs Hannah Levy)** is available for interview and photographs at Newton Mearns, Glasgow (by arrangement with Fiona Frank, contact details above).

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