

The Life and Art of Alex Kolozsy

International Gold Medal Winner, Cleveland, Ohio, USA



I was born on 15 February 1938 in a place called Kolozsvár or Fort of Kolozs, which was built in 987AD by Chieftain Kolozs of the Kolos clan, the cousin of the Hungarian King Istvan. There are a number of other Kolozsy's, Kolosi, and Kolozsi, but I am the last descendant of the main branch of this family, born in Kolozsvár. Both my mother Incze-Incedy and my father Kolozsy de Kolozs were from ancient Hungarian noble families.

In 1920 Hungary lost two thirds of her territory, and Erdély now belongs to Rumania, with three million Hungarians still living there.

During the Second World War, my father was missing in the war. Half of Transylvania was returned to Hungary for four years. From Hungary, foundry and steel workers were shifted to teach the local workers foundry and casting. My mother met and married one of these workers, János Pauszni from Győr, in the western part of Hungary, and on 6 November 1944 during very heavy air strikes and warfare between the Germans and the Russians, we became refugees from Transylvania, to the western part of Hungary. By the end of the month we finally reached Ménfőcsanak.

Since the 1980s this village has been annexed to the city of Győr. I grew up in the village with higher education in Győr, studying to be an Engineer and Fitter, but besides being a wild child, there was one person who discovered some goodness in me. Mrs Satory (Aunty Éva), my school teacher in singing and art, recognised my natural talent and gift for art and drawing from my early childhood. She taught me drawing and portraits. Finally, in 1952, Mrs Satory took me into the Academy of Art in Győr where only adult students were accepted. When she showed my drawings and paintings and some



sculpture from terra cotta, I was accepted into the evening classes. It was unusual to be the only young person (aged 14) to be given the privilege to study and work with adult artists.

I learnt church painting and sculpturing, which interested me greatly. My teachers were all well-respected, leading artists and sculptors. For portraits and landscapes there was Leo Békésy, artist, and for sculpture, Kossuth prize winner László Alexovics, and the church painter was Shulzbach. >>



During the daytime and later up to 1956 I was in Engineering School, so I became a qualified Fitter and Engineer as well as attending my art schooling at the Academy of Art.

On 23 October 1956, the Hungarian people, including me, rose up against the Russian invasion and Communist dictatorship. As a young man of 18 years, I joined the uprising with a gun in my hand, first at Győr, then on trucks we travelled to Mosonmagyaróvár, and on to Budapest, where I was fighting. It is absolutely amazing that in recent years we have found four separate books with photographs of me, and in one English book written by David Jones Price, you can see me in front of the Hungarian Parliament on a captured Russian tank.

During the fighting I was wounded, and ended up in the hospital with the rest of the young, wounded, freedom fighters. One day, the young soldiers who sided with the people loaded several of us onto trucks and drove to the Hungarian-Austrian border, so I became a refugee in November 1956. I was taken to Helmond in Holland. In the Camp I continuously did drawings and portraits of people, which was noted by the Dutch authority, so I was admitted to the Rembrandt Academy of Art in Eindhoven, where I studied painting, drawing and sculpture up to the end of 1958, when I decided to



migrate to Australia. Altogether I finished six years at the Academy of Art.

I arrived on the Dutch ship Johan Van Oldevarneveld with 3,000 Dutch and seven Hungarian migrants. When I arrived in Melbourne, some Dutch people went to Lilydale in Tasmania and I went with them for some weeks. I travelled to Wollongong in NSW and worked in the steelworks. With a group of fellow Hungarians, I bought an old Ford and drove north to Ingham to the sugar cane fields, looking for work. This only lasted for a few weeks, as there was too much fighting among some of other men there, so we walked more than 100 kilometres to Townsville. I worked on the railway, building rail lines to the jetty where the sugar was loaded to ships. After 12 months we left and came to Sydney. There were many Hungarian speaking people around the eastern suburbs, and I had a panel beating job at British Motor Corporation.

But my dreams were always to find work in art and display. I worked with Eric Porter Films as a cartoonist and background artist until the project was completed. I worked at EJ Dwyer, Catholic Art and Sculptures, so I created religious sculptures, which was still limiting my creative ability. I worked with the Elizabethan Trust, making sets and props, and at Grace Bros and David



Alex Kolozsy

Jones I was building Christmas castles, animated Christmas windows and figures.

During the late 1960s I met my wife Marilyn from Broken Hill at Bondi Beach, and we married in late 1968. After a time, we decided to form Kolozsy Design Co, to create custom built architectural art work and sculpture for clubs and shopping centres, including projects such as Centrepont Tavern, Telford Trust and Cahills Restaurants. During this time I met many sculptors from the Sculptors Society, which I joined in 1964, such as the late Tom Bass.

From the 1970s I was sculpturing almost all the time, creating work for exhibition and commissions. I went to the USA to promote my work. I received an International Gold Medal from Arpad Academy Cleveland Ohio for my sculpture 'Spirit of Sydney'. In 1970 I worked with the Captain Cook Society, and Chairman Sir Asher Joel. I sculptured some life-size and smaller sculptures and a collection of gifts and souvenirs, with small sculptured heads of Captain Cook, for which I received a Medal for the 200 year Bicentennial. >>

Sculptures

This page: The Wild One, Johnny O'Keefe

Opposite page:
Bottom left: RM Williams
Bottom middle: John Saunders
Bottom right: Mindszenty Monument

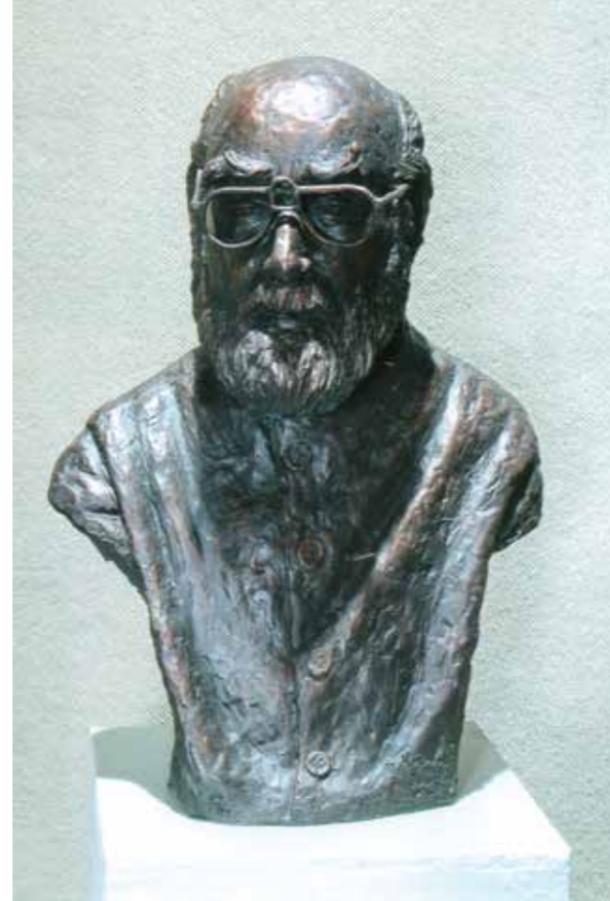


For the 1988 Bicentenary of Australia I won the Australia-wide competition and commission to sculpture the Pioneer Woman. Because of my early art training, I work like the old masters. I draw the design, make the sculpture at any size, prepare the rubber mould, and work in the foundry touching up wax. They caste and weld, and then I bring the sculpture back to my studio to chase the metal and do the patina, as all sculptors should do. My early training in engineering and the metal trade is very useful in this part of sculpture, because I am capable to do all of the work on my bronzes.

Although I have learnt a lot from my classical European Art education, and by observing work of other sculptors, I think Rodin is one of my favourites. I do not copy, but during the years have developed my own impressionistic figurative style. As a member of the Portrait Artists Australia and USA Portrait Sculpture Society of the Americas, I have made many portrait busts in Australia and the USA. My sculptures are not smooth. I have a certain texture on the surfaces, and I refine the highlights, and I aim to reflect the spirit and soul of the person in their portrait, which is the most important aspect of my work.

In 1991 I was awarded a Cultural Doctorate in Visual Arts from Benson Arizona for the quality of my sculptures, and my knowledge and method to create a bronze sculpture from design to completion. I have taught several students in classes, such as the UWS Hawkesbury Campus as Sculptor in Residence, Sculptors Society at The Rocks and as Sculptor in Residence of Blacktown Show Society, Kolozsy Sculpture School, over the last 25 years. At an invitation from the late Tom Bass, I taught his teachers European style portrait sculpture, as Portrait Sculptor Emeritus, while we sculptured Tom Bass Portraits. (I have a letter of gratitude from him.)

I have prepared a number of one-man sculpture exhibitions, such as T and G Gallery, Sydney Opera House, Casula Powerhouse, and in 1997 for the



Royal Easter Show I had a one man sculpture exhibition, presented by The Royal Agricultural Society, to encourage sculpture back to the Show, since it had not been included for some time. I had a free exhibition space to demonstrate sculpture to visitors.

My sculptures are included in many important collections, such as Buckingham Palace, The White House, the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, Australian Parliament Canberra, Hungarian National Gallery Budapest, Museum of Papua New Guinea, Stockman's Hall of Fame Queensland, and municipal public and corporate collections in the USA, UK and Europe.

One major lesson I have learnt in this life, is that it is not always the best artist or sculptor who wins. Unfortunately many judges are not technically qualified, and do not have enough education to judge impartially. Unfortunately, in many competitions, the selection committee picks out the work according to their own taste and remove excellent artwork from the judging. Judges such as the late Lloyd Rees requested to view the entire works entered before he would select winners. But he was one of a kind.

For the 100 year anniversary of WW1, I was encouraged by some RSL Clubs to sculpture the Digger. I have a WW1 Digger, 1 metre tall, and have just completed a 1 metre tall, WW2 Digger in bronze.



Dr. Alex Sándor Kolozsy, C.D.V.A.
Sculptor
Ph: 02 9831 3919
Email: askolozsy@kolozsy.com.au
Web: www.kolozsy.com.au

Sculptures

This page:
Top left: Tom Bass
Top right: Tom Bass, clay
Left: Kokoda Trail

Opposite page:
Left: Father of Blacktown, Nurragingy
Right: Desiderius Orban