

● The National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation collector coins of the “Polish Painters of the Turn of the 20th Century” series commemorating Artur Grottger, with the following face values:

2 zł – struck in standard finish in Nordic Gold,
on 27 October 2010;

20 zł – struck in proof finish in silver (pad printing)
on 28 October 2010.

The National Bank of Poland

holds the exclusive right to issue the currency
of the Republic of Poland.

In addition to **coins and notes for general circulation**,
the NBP issues **collector coins and notes**.

Issuing collector items is an occasion to commemorate
important historic figures and anniversaries, as well
as to develop the interest of the public in Polish culture,
science and tradition.

Since 1996, the NBP has also been issuing **occasional 2 zloty**
coins, struck in **Nordic Gold**, for general circulation.

All coins and notes issued
by the NBP are legal tender in Poland.

COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010

Since 2002, the NBP has been releasing
the “Polish Painters of the Turn of the 20th Century”
series. The coin on Artur Grottger is the eighth
one in the series

Information on the issue schedule
can be found at the
www.nbp.pl/money
website.

Collector coins issued by the National Bank of Poland
are sold exclusively at the Internet auctions held
in the Kolekcjoner service at the following website:

www.kolekcjoner.nbp.pl

 | KOLEKCJONER

The coins were struck at the Mint of Poland in Warsaw.
Edited and printed: NBP Printing Office

NBP

National Bank of Poland

coins



POLISH PAINTERS OF THE TURN OF 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

Artur Grottger

1837-1867



Polish Painters of the Turn of 19th and 20th Centuries: Artur Grottger

● Painter Artur Grottger was considered an heir and successor to the Polish Romantic Bards (much like another famous painter who made his debut at around the same time, Jan Matejko). He owed this position primarily to several series of drawings, which, circulated in numerous prints, gained more popularity than his oil paintings and watercolours. This was notwithstanding the fact that the young artist had set out to become specifically a painter.

● Grottger was born on 11 November 1837 at Ottyniowice, an estate leased by his father, himself a painter, from whom young Artur received his first tutelage. After a period of artistic apprenticeship under two painting masters in Lwów (now Lviv, Ukraine), Grottger studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow and in Vienna. In Vienna he contributed to several magazines as an illustrator. On returning to Lwów in 1865, he met and soon got engaged to Wanda Monné, not yet sixteen years old. The artist was completely transformed by this affection, which had a great impact on his work. After a year spent in Lwów, Cracow and the surrounding country estates, Grottger moved to Paris. A period of intensive work followed, in spite of mounting symptoms of tuberculosis, which he had suffered from for years. In an attempt to rescue himself, he travelled to the south of France – to Pau, and later to Amélie les Bains, where he died on 13 December 1867. Wanda Monné arranged for his body to be brought to Lwów and buried at the famous Lyczakowski (Lychakiv) Cemetery; she also footed the bill.

● Grottger's early work depicted historical scenes, mostly battle ones, often with horsemen as a central theme. During the Vienna period, the artist made press illustrations and his work frequently involved theatre or literary themes; he also revisited historical events. During summer holidays, he would often go to the countryside and paint horses. Grottger's work also comprises symbolic paintings and numerous portraits, including pictures of his fiancée and himself. Many of the paintings created after 1863 refer to the January Uprising of that year and its tragic epilogue of the Siberian exile.

● The first in the five series of drawings which today are most widely associated with Grottger was created in Vienna within a matter of days, as an instant response to the events in Warsaw in 1861 [involving patriotic demonstrations suppressed by the Russians – translator's note]. The artist, whose knowledge of the events came from press reports, called the series *Warsaw I*. Another seven drawings on cardboard were to follow a year later under a collective name *Warsaw II*. Two subsequent series, *Polonia* (1863) and *Lithuania* (1864–1865) were dedicated to the January Uprising, while the last and longest series, entitled *War*, was completed in Paris in 1867. It is a work of universal significance as it shows the calamities and corruption entailed in any major armed conflict.

● The drawings of all the series, made in black crayon with an occasional touch of white to bring out lights, were made with a view

to their reproduction. Published both in albums and loose sheets, they were widely circulated and enjoyed great popularity. Grottger's imagery, where a realistic rendition of details met idealised characters, the whole scene being deeply symbolic and emotional, spoke with great power to his contemporaries, who found it exceptionally evocative. Owing to their unique visual idiom, the drawings inspired other artists, including writers such as Maria Konopnicka or Stefan Żeromski.

● With time, both the man and his work became the stuff of legend, particularly after the publication of his biography and letters. Having died at a young age, talented and inspired but underestimated, his life marred by constant financial worries and disease – Grottger was a perfect embodiment of the myth of a Romantic artist.

● A powerful ingredient of this myth was love – reciprocated, but doomed to remain unfulfilled; a love capable of transfiguring a bohemian and reveller into a responsible and restrained but tender fiancé. Equally, Grottger's work had a great myth-generating potential – through its unequivocal approval of the 1863 uprising, the heroic vision of the nation and, ultimately, its contribution to the "brave Pole" model. And, perhaps more importantly – that of a beautiful and noble Polishwoman. After all, the term "Grottgerian type of beauty" is alive and well to this day...

Dr Urszula Makowska
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Polish Academy of Sciences

COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010



FACE VALUE 20 ZŁ

metal Ag 925/1000 and red, yellow, green and blue paints
finish proof ■ length 40.0 mm ■ width 28.0 mm
weight 28.28 g ■ mintage (volume) 60,000 pcs

OBVERSE: In the centre, a stylised fragment of Artur Grottger's drawing entitled "The Battle" from the series "Polonia". At the bottom on the right, an image of the Eagle established as the State emblem of the Republic of Poland. Surrounding the Eagle, an inscription: 20 ZŁ and, after a separating interpunct, an inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (Republic of Poland) and notation of the year of issue: 2010. The Mint's mark: M/W, under the Eagle's left leg.

REVERSE: In the centre, a stylised image of Artur Grottger's bust. On the right-hand side, against an easel in the background, a perpendicular inscription: ARTUR/GROTTGER. At the bottom, an inscription: 1837-1867. On the right, a stylised image of a palette and three paintbrushes. On the palette, red, yellow, green and blue paints.

Coin designer: ROUSSANKA NOWAKOWSKA



FACE VALUE 2 ZŁ

metal CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy ■ finish standard ■ diameter 27.0 mm
weight 8.15 g ■ mintage (volume) 1,300,000 pcs

OBVERSE: An image of the Eagle established as the State emblem of the Republic of Poland; on the left-hand side, a stylised image of a palette and two paintbrushes. At the bottom, an inscription: 2 ZŁ; at the top, a semicircular inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (Republic of Poland) and notation of the year of issue: 2010. The Mint's mark: M/W, under the Eagle's left leg.

REVERSE: In the centre, a stylised image of the bust of Artur Grottger wearing the historical square-topped "konfederatka" cap, against an easel in the background. On the right, a fragment of an image of a palette and paintbrushes. At the bottom, a semicircular inscription: ARTUR GROTTGER 1837-1867.

ON THE EDGE: An inscription, NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted by 180 degrees, separated by stars.

Obverse designer: EWA TYC-KARPIŃSKA
Reverse designer: ROUSSANKA NOWAKOWSKA

