All About Friedensreich Hundertwasser

15th December 1928 – 19th February 2000
Friedensreich Hundertwasser was a famous artist and architect, born in Austria in 1928. He was born as Friedrich Stowasser, but liked to be known by his pseudonym, Friedensreich Hundertwasser.
Early Life

Hundertwasser became interested in art from an early age. As a young man he left Austria to travel and carried a small set of paints in his pocket to record anything that interested him.

He also began experimenting with other techniques such as lithography, screen printing and woodcuts.
Early Career

Hundertwasser studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, after the war. He held his first successful art exhibition in 1952.

His style of painting was very unique. He preferred using lots of bold colours, uneven lines and often made his own paints. He was influenced by the artists Antoni Gaudi and Gustav Klimt.

As well as painting, he created designs for flags, posters, stamps and coins.
Architecture

By the mid 1960s, Hundertwasser had become well known for his art and was branching out into architecture.

He designed many buildings with curved features rather than straight lines, like this one in the Hot Springs Village in Austria.
Hundertwasser was influenced very much by nature. He believed that humans and nature should live in harmony and incorporated grass, trees and plants into many of his designs. The Waldespirale in Germany has a grass roof and trees growing out of windows. Its name means ‘forest spiral.’
Hundertwasser was keen to protect nature. He once planted 150,000 trees in the valley on his estate. Many of his artworks had a theme of protecting the environment, such as ‘Save the Whales’ and ‘Save the Seas’.
Interesting Facts

Hundertwasser believed clothing should be unique to an individual and often wore mismatched socks.

The name he gave himself, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, means “full-of-peace hundred-water”.

He even designed a toilet, the Hundertwasser in New Zealand!

He didn’t paint at an easel; he spread paper or canvas on the floor to work on.

Many people say his work is like that of a child, but he believed children’s creativity was the ‘truest’ form because it was not influenced by experience.