

THE PAINTER SHIMON AVNY

translated from the Yiddish by Shoulamit Auvé-Szlajfer

Shimon Avny is the son of Mordechai Sztajn and Ryvka Buksztajn, both from Kutno. He was born in Paris in 1932. His father was one of the survivors of the Auschwitz hell. His mother and brother went¹ with the smoke of the crematoria. Shimon was rescued by miracle: when they came to arrest his mother, he was in bed. She

¹ TN: They were arrested by French police in the Vel d'Hiv' roundup. The father was arrested one year before, also by French police in the "Billet Vert" roundup.

managed to cover him up so that the hijackers would not notice him. An uncle later took him to an orphanage, who entrusted him to a farmer.

After the war, the family found him and brought him to Paris, later he found himself in Jewish orphanage named "Nachum Aronson" in Les Andelys (Normandy), where he, for the first time, received a Jewish education. He arrived in Israel with the organization *Aliyat HaNoar*², took part in the Independence War and fought bravely for the establishment of the State of Israel.

Already as a young child he had an inclination for drawing: for the peasants in the village he drew their houses and animals, the peasant's faces and silhouettes.

In Paris, the desire to paint continuously increased. In Israel, he is well-known as a talented artist. He studied painting at the Academy of Arts in Rome and at the "Ecole des Beaux-Arts" in Paris. His only aspiration in life is art and painting.

Shimon Avny has exhibited many times in Paris and in Israel, and the critics responded warmly to his paintings.

Some excerpts from the press about Shimon Avny:

"Returning from Israel, Shimon Avny begins to exhibit in various galleries and becomes known in the country as one of the most talented young artists, no longer looking in the dark; he found his way and his poetic soul found salvation in the painting."

"Shimon's painting is abstract, but with all his being he remains attached to nature. He paints the crumbling raw earth in a kibbutz, the sunset where light and shadow play."

"Such is Shimon Avny – young, full of enthusiasm and belief in the mission of artists."

Arbeter Vort, Paris

² TN: Hebrew, organization for the emigration of Jewish youths to Israel