

By now, however, sculpture in Israel has come of age, and the country can boast of a half-dozen artists, all around fifty, whose works would be appreciated by European and American connoisseurs for their aesthetic qualities. Among them is Batia Lishansky who was born in Kiev of a renowned orthodox family, and was brought to Palestine long before the first World War when she was a mere child. Although she studied at the Bezalel School, it was during her lengthy stays in Rome, Berlin, and Paris that she got her fundamental impressions. Returned to Palestine, she executed there several large monuments, but she is at her best in small heads, often lyrical and dreamy. The influence of Rodin is clearly noticeable, particularly in a work like *Sleeping Woman* where the head only partly cut out of the stone, seems to grow out of it organically. Visitors to the Brenner House at Tel Aviv may recall Lishansky's head of the martyred poet.

*Mother and Child—terracotta
by Trude Chaim*



*Ahranowitz—plaster
by A. M. Sternschuss*

THE tranquil sensuousness of Maillol rather than the dramatic dynamism of Rodin is echoed in the work of Moshe Ziffer. As a teen-ager he left Galicia for Palestine where he worked for years as a road labourer when one day, using his knife on a piece of olive wood, he discovered his talent. Many years of study in Europe followed, and one of his sponsors was Professor Albert Einstein who helped the young man to continue his instruction. Ziffer has worked in clay and stone, but his best works are perhaps his delightfully simple, full nudes superbly carved out of wood.

Trude Chaim, a native of Berlin, came to Palestine rather late—when Nazism cut short her career in Germany. She had been a friend and admirer of the great Kaethe Kollwitz whose warmth and humanity the younger woman emulated. Mothers and children, tender and expressive, but devoid of glib sentimentality, are her favourite subjects.

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In addition to being an artist, Miss Chaim is also very active as a trainer of kibbutz instructors.

The career of Aaron Priver is very interesting. After he came to Palestine from Poland in 1922, it took him a long time to give up his violin in order to concentrate on sculpture. For a while he studied sculpture under Melnikoff, but he is mainly self-taught. His sturdy figures in sandstone, marble, or artificial stone, compact and solid like the works of Epstein, have nothing of the charm and sweetness of Chaim's or Ziffer's creations. Instead, they are full of force and vigour. Visitors to the Palestine Pavilion at the New York World's Fair of 1939/40 may recall his statue of Lot's wife.

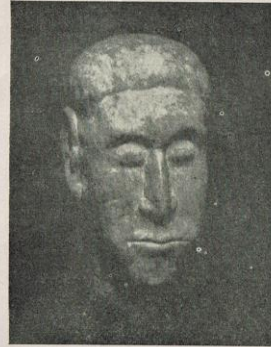
ZEEV BEN-ZVI is, perhaps, the best known of all Israeli sculptors. He came to Palestine from Poland as a young man in 1923. About a decade later, he achieved fame through his colossal figure of a sower at the entrance of the Levant Fair in Tel Aviv. Unfortunately, the statue had to be dismantled. After the second World War he created for the Mishmar Ha-Emek settlement a memorial to the slaughtered children of Europe. This is a semi-circular wall fitted into the slopes of a hill. Its central figure, *Mother and Child*, is described by the critic Haim Ginzbu as follows:

"The cry of the child clinging to his mother, the poor mother protecting her infant with large hand that spreads out like a shield over his little body; yet the head turned away to one side, showing indeed there is no hope of helping him at all. This work has all the spirituality and simplicity of Gothic art. It has pent-up tragedy and force of expression."

In this work, Ben-Zvi is semi-abstract, cutting out all but the most essential details, and thus achieving a high pitch of emotion. In his famous portrait busts of such individuals as the late Hebrew University rector, J. L. Magnes, the writer Shmaryahu Levin,

the statesman Menahem Ussishkin, and the Habima actor Messkin, the sitters' likeness is retained, yet through stylisation, and a somewhat cubist geometrisation of the forms, the spiritual message of each person is strongly enhanced.

Moshe Sternschuss is even further removed from realistic sculpture than Ben-Zvi, though he received his training from the academician Boris Schatz. One is reminded, here and there, of the bold creations of Henry Moore, and there is a pleasant lyricism and musicality in his near-abstract achievements. *Biblical Figure* and *The Wounded Bird* are more than interesting experiments, and the country needs more artists of his talent and audacity to be able to compete with Europe and America in the creation of works befitting our age.



*Head of a Man—marble
by Ruth Jonas Bardin*

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