

Henri Epstein was born into a Jewish family in Łódź, Poland in 1891. His father died when he was three and he was raised by his mother, who encouraged his interest in painting. He studied at Jakub Kacenbogen's drawing school at Łódź, then at the School of Fine Arts in Munich. Epstein visited Paris in 1912 before serving in the Polish army, then returned to Paris, where he settled at La Ruche (the beehive) artists' colony from 1913-38, studying at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière. Although Epstein's early artwork was influenced by fauvism, he then adopted an expressionist technique. He exhibited both at the Salon d'automne and the Salon des Tuileries. He illustrated Gustave Coquiot's *Vagabondages* (1921) and Pierre Bonardi's *Les Rois du Maquis* (1926), as well as contributing to the first textless Jewish art journal produced in Paris in 1912, *Machmadim* (Precious Ones). Epstein bought a farm near Epernon, which became his refuge during the Occupation, until on 23 February 1944 he was arrested by Gestapo agents. Despite appeals by his wife (the daughter of painter Georges Dorignac) and his friends, Epstein was sent to Drancy detention camp on 21 February 1944. He was deported on 7 March in convoy number 69 and killed in Auschwitz in German-occupied Poland in June. A retrospective exhibition of his work was held in Paris in 1946.