Shlomo Liphitz-Sanzetti

Shlomo Liphitz-Sanzetti (Chinese name, Shen Shidi) was a Russian Jew born in 1902. He arrived with his family in Harbin in 1915 and came to Shanghai in 1921. It was there that he learned photography and started his career. Sanzetti thrived in his craft and rose to become one of the most celebrated photographers in the city.

In November 2009, Mr. Dekier Moshe - Sanzetti's step-son donated some of his photographic works to Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum.

In November 2011, some photos from the Sanzetti Studio were published on the website of the Consulate General of Israel in Shanghai, and were highly praised. Some of the people in the photographs have been located.

Sanzetti opened the first of his studios at 73 Nanking Road, where he employed thirty-one workers. While his business grew, Jewish refugees flooded into Shanghai to flee the surging anti-Semitism in Germany. In 1943, the Japanese authorities proclaimed a "designated area for stateless refugees" - an area that came to be known as the Shanghai Ghetto. Nearly all of the European Jewish refugees who immigrated to Shanghai after 1937 were forced into the Ghetto under severe restrictions. Because he had come to China much earlier, Sanzetti didn’t have to relocate and was allowed to move around freely in the city. As a result, he took many pictures of the hard times. In spite of all the hardship, the people in his photos seem serene and happy or at least hopeful. Among them may be some Jewish refugees.

In 1955, Sanzetti closed down his studio and taught photography for two years in an English School in Shanghai. In 1957, he immigrated to Tel Aviv, Israel, and took along some 20,000 images he had taken in Shanghai. In Israel, he worked in the advertising photography business and was also active in textile design. To his last day, Sanzetti reminisced with nostalgia and affection about his life in Shanghai. Shlomo Liphitz-Sanzetti passed away in 1987 in Tel Aviv.