

## Leontina Arditi With Her Daughter And Granddaughters



This is me with my girls. I was very happy during this visit to my daughter Tatyana Dilova Dikova and my granddaughters Leontina and Maria, in Bat Yam, Israel. This photo was taken in 2003. My daughter Tanya [short for Tatyana] had hard childhood years. She was a well cared for but very unhealthy child. She grew up in sanatoria. At the age of nine she had a serious cardiac malfunction. She had to study at the sanatoria, we often called her tutors home, because she wasn't allowed to go to school. Tanya wanted to become a painter. But she completed her education at HTI [Higher Institute of Chemical Technology] in 1975 or 1976. First she was a professor at HTI, but she worked as a painter, too. She had cardiac surgery when she was 27. The annual exhibition of the Union of Painters in Bulgaria was opened on the day of her operation and she received an award for the original puppets she had made. Then she became a member of this union and was sent as its representative to an international competition and puppet exhibition in Poland, wherefrom she returned with a gold medal. 59 countries took part. After that she received the award of the children audience at this competition. She and her two daughters, Leontina and Maria, immigrated to Israel in February 1996, where she is a well-known puppet designer and teacher, and a member of UNIMA - the international union of puppet makers [Union Internationale de la Marionette]. My granddaughters, the twins Leontina and Maria, were born on 13th October 1982. Maria is the elder - by four or five minutes. I helped with their bringing up until they turned 14. They had just finished the Jewish elementary school in Sofia and were accepted to elite schools: Leontina to NGDEK [National Lyceum for Ancient Languages and Cultures] and Maria to the Spanish High School. Several months after their acceptance they immigrated to Israel. In Tel Aviv Leontina graduated from the most prestigious local high school, in which Yitzhak Rabin had studied. Maria graduated from an art school. She is now professionally in coiffures and maquillage. Leontina graduated concurrently from a music school, directed by Russian teachers in Israel. When she graduated she was offered a chance to give a Mozart violin concert. But she didn't want to continue studying music, because in Israel the situation is like this: you can find a good violinist at every corner. She is of such nature that she chose a male profession to establish herself. She went to the hardest

army in Israel - 'Kravi'. She became an officer there and 30 boys were entrusted to her care. Even now, Leontina continues serving at the hottest spots in Jerusalem.