

Erzsebet And Margit Illes



My mother and aunt. Margit, my aunt, was born in Budapest in 1897 and died in 1993. She studied at the Budapest Academy of Music and became a pianist; she gave concerts abroad. And she was beautiful. Her husband was Geza Laczko, the writer from the Nyugat group [Nyugat, 'West', was the leading literary and social review of the first three decades of the 20th century in Hungary],

who also was a professor of French literature. He later became the editor-in-chief of the daily newspaper Pesti Naplo. He was a Christian, and his wife lived through the Arrow Cross upheaval unharmed as the wife of an Aryan. They hid me in 1944. From time to time, when the fascists would come by, I'd be standing at the balcony on the fourth floor, drenched in sunlight from the courtyard. My mother, Erzsebet Illes, was born in Budapest in 1899. She had passed her Matura and drew beautifully, so she was accepted into the Academy of Applied Arts. Let me just mention that all three girls had their Matura. She learned how to paint porcelain china and the like, but then she met my father while still very young, was married, and gave up everything, and left the Academy, as well.