

Francisc Illes And Olga Jakobovics



This photo was taken in Timisoara, in 1955, after we returned from Russia. On the left there is my son, Francisc Illes, who was five years old back then, and next to him is my aunt, Olga Jakobovics, who had come to see us from Cluj Napoca, where she lived at the time. She had been deported to Auschwitz, but she was lucky enough to come back. I gave birth to our son, Francisc, in 1950. At home, we spoke Hungarian with our boy. I didn't give him a Jewish education, but he considered himself a Jew nonetheless, since Jewishness is established according to the mother's origin. We didn't celebrate his bar mitzvah, as we hadn't had him circumcised either. My aunt and my cousin, Joshua Teszler, left for Israel between 1958 and 1960. She gave massages there too and she had a clientele. While she was in Israel, we would write to each other all the time. She had a beautiful handwriting and a refined style. She was an intelligent woman. Even when she got old, she used to

dress elegantly. She couldn't hear too well though. I loved the violin, but never had the opportunity to take violin lessons. So I wanted my son to have a musical education. I never expected him to become an artist, but he did go to the Ion Vidu Music High School for eight years. We also hired a tutor and my son proved to be a very good student. Whenever I came back home and found him playing the violin, I knew something was wrong at school, as playing the violin was an escape for him. As I had become fed up with politics, I would have wanted him to do something that had no connection with politics, and this is why I fancied the idea of him entering the Polytechnic. So I moved him to a high school where Mathematics was taught. He did enter the Polytechnic, he went there for three years, but he didn't like it. He felt more drawn to the artistic field. But I didn't have the possibility to send him to Bucharest, to the Art Academy. He wanted to go out in the world. Israel gave him his only chance to leave. Because I was Jewish, he could go there legally. He didn't specifically choose Israel - but that was his only legal way out of the country. Otherwise, he would have had to leave clandestinely. He went to Israel in 1981.