

Elvira Kohn With Josip Broz Tito



This photo was taken in Zagreb, after the World War II.

I'm not sure about the year, but I think it was in the 1950s or perhaps late 1940s. It was some kind of celebration, unfortunately I don't remember which one.

Maybe it was the celebration of the Republic Day, November 29, when the SFR Yugoslavia was established. I don't know for sure, but it is likely.

Josip Broz Tito is sitting in the middle, next to him is his wife Jovanka. I am shaking hands with Tito, that was a very important occasion for me. I was excited and thrilled to be in his proximity.

I had seen him before in person, this wasn't the first time, but it's the only photo of me and him I have. And this was the first time I was introduced to him.

I valued and honored this man highly. He was an extraordinary personality. I didn't speak much to him, I never had the opportunity to have long conversations with him, but just by being close to him I could feel the strength of his character.

In this picture, I was introduced to Tito as a young photographer and photo-reporter. He had been told that I had been on the Island of Rab during the war, and that I later joined the partisans.

He was also told about the accomplishment I had made during the war, in terms of taking photographs and fighting and running with the partisans. I was, of course, very proud and honoured to have met Tito, and this photo still means very much to me.

The other people on the photo, apart from Tito and Jovanka, I cannot identify. Some of them were politicians and some security men. In the background there are many people who came to this celebration, just to see Tito and to be close to him. That was the spirit of the time.