

## Zoya Lerman And Her Mother Maria Lerman And Her Neighbor



My mother, Maria Lerman (maiden name - Gilik), with me, Zoya Lerman, on her lap. Standing behind us is our neighbor (I don't know anything about her). I am three years old in this photo, which was taken in Kiev in 1937. My mother completed three years at the cinematography institute and also took a course in shorthand writing. She became one of the best and fastest stenographers in Kiev. I don't know how or where my parents met. They married in 1932 in a civil registration ceremony. They settled in the apartment at Mikhailovskaya Street. Soon after their wedding, my father was summoned to serve in the army. I believe he served in Petersburg. My mother went there on the weekends because she missed him so much. This is what my mother told me. My father wrote poems and dedicated them to my mother. He also painted very well when he was

young. My mother became an administrator with the Philharmonic. I don't know where my father worked before the war. I was born in 1934. In 1944 I went to school. I was admitted to the 3rd grade. It was a Russian school for boys and girls. We had a wonderful teacher, a very intelligent person. I studied only two years at this school, where there were only a few Jewish children. There was no anti-Semitism. We didn't have a bell at school. There was a rail and they banged on it when the lesson was over. Our teacher, Anna Romanovna, always let me go some time before the end of the class, and I went and banged on this rail. Later Anna Romanovna paid attention to my drawings. I was in the 4th grade when she asked me to help senior students to make a wall newspaper. I was to help them draw Lenin. The senior children brought me a book with a portrait of Lenin and I made a rather big portrait of him for their newspaper. I also painted pictures for Anna Romanovna for her classes. She told me that I had to go to Kiev Art School. My mother and I went to this school. Its deputy Director looked through my pictures and I was admitted.