

Ladislav Porjes



This photo of Ladislav Porjes was taken during the Centropa interview in Prague in 2006. During Chanukkah in 2005 Chanukkah I received an honor - I was invited to light the Chanukkah candles, I was the seventh in line. It made me very happy, it was a real honor. At the gathering I also read a text, which I had written at home beforehand. I'm not a poet, I've always been a journalist and solely a writer of prose, but I found one quotation from the composer Ludwig van Beethoven, and I got an idea. So at the Chanukkah gathering I presented the following: Within the scope of pre-holiday contemplation, I happened upon a noteworthy quote by the almighty Ludwig van Beethoven on the theme 'what is love.' Here is the genius's somewhat prosaic opinion. 'Love means to decide unconditionally for a certain type of imperfection.' Somewhat immodestly I've taken the liberty to confront this quote with my own experiences. In rhyme, even, here: Often and long I've groped my way in life's history, from defeat to victory, and from victory to defeat. Until I got married. After all it's over a half century that I'm with the same girl. And we've got, if you please, two daughters and five grandchildren as well, I the eternal wanderer, am not certain, in which of both extremes, whether in victory or defeat, have I actually till life's end moored. Once upon a time I had tried to write poems for my wife, but back then she slandered me horribly, that she didn't like them, that they were horrible. And so the whole sixty years that my wife and I have been together I've never written any poem for fear of her. This is actually the first after sixty years. But I've got to say, that everyone liked it very much. When I think about my life, full of dramatic reversals of fortune, full of escapes and tragedies, in the end I have to admit that I've managed a lot of good things after all. My wife and I have managed to raise two decent daughters. The older, Maja is a translator and the younger, Eva, is a chemical engineer, teacher of IT and Judaism lecturer. We have five grandchildren. I think that my sense of humor has been inherited by at least one granddaughter - a beautiful young blonde. She wears a t-shirt with a slogan written across her breasts: 'I'm a natural blonde. Speak slowly, please.' I think that she's inherited my life's philosophy from me - the most important thing is to not take life, nor oneself, too seriously!