

## Siima Shkop



This is one of my most recent pictures. I am in the kitchen with my favorite cat. The picture was taken in Tallinn in 2006. The Jewish community was founded in Tallinn in 1988. Now it seems to me that it has always been there. It is hard to imagine our lives without it. We really need it. There are such wonderful people there. It is hard to work there! But everybody does his/her job very well and with pleasure. There are even non-Jews who are working there, but they are so dedicated and caring! Now I do not leave the house and use walkers if I have to go somewhere. The cleaning lady

from the community comes to me. She is not a Jew, but still we are friends. The community is wonderful! I wish I could go there more often, which I could do earlier. I used to go there on all Jewish holidays. Once a month the former students of the Jewish lyceum, who studied there before war, get together. Those meetings mean a lot to us. There is not always a chance to meet with your pals for a talk. Everybody goes there, if he physically can. My exhibitions were held in the community building as well. When I turned 80, my jubilee was celebrated there and an art exhibition was arranged. I invited all my fellow students, who were still in Estonia. Even some of the teachers came from the institute: Olpert, who taught black pencil drawing and Olkaf, who taught painting. I gave one of my pictures to the community. I am happy that it is there and can be seen by many people. My husband died two years ago, in 2004, after a long disease. He was buried in the Tallinn cemetery, where famous people - writers, actors and politicians - are buried. I have been on my own since then.