

Lubov Vainer's Children Arnold And Lyonia



My children: Alik (Arnold) standing, Lyonia, sitting. Alik is 4, Lena is 1.

In 1938 our son Arnold was born. My mother came from Zhytomir and told me that it was a Jewish tradition to name babies in honor of close deceased relatives. She wanted it to be Avraam, but this wasn't a popular name at our time and we decided to have one letter "A" left in the name. I called my son Alek. Well, there was no anti-Semitism and nobody persecuted or teased us, but we tried to keep quiet about our being Jews. We were inspired by the idea of internationalism and equality. All nations were equal in the Soviet Union.

My second son Lyonia was born in Cheliabinsk in December 1941.

Lyonia went to the kindergarten. My younger son Lyonia was a very nice and obedient child, very different from Arnold.

There was a barber's in the House of Officers. I took my boys to have their hair cut. While they were at the barber's I found out that there was a music school there. I took my boys for audition. It lasted about half an hour. The teachers said to me 'Well, your older son shall be an engineer and your younger one has a perfect ear - he will play the violin'. He was granted free attendance at the music school. He played at the smallest violin and he even participated in a concert at the Palace of pioneers. He was such a great boy! He was very assiduous boy: a Russian secondary school (they also studied Ukrainian, but Yiddish wasn't taught in the Soviet Union at that time) and music school. We led a modest life, but we managed all right. Papa was working at the silk factory and was well-respected. We lived at the communal apartment. There were two other families in this apartment, but we never had any conflicts with them.