

Dan Mizrahy And Mira Cotin



This photograph was taken in 1927, at the photo studio of a relative, Jean Feldman, in Bucharest. The two quiet children are me, Dan Mizrahy, and my sister, Mira Cotin [nee Mizrahy].

My sister Mira was born in 1923 in Bucharest. She was a quiet child and a pupil loved and respected by her schoolmates. She had the misfortune of being 'forced' to take piano lessons at the same time with me; the main reason why my parents did that was not because they wanted to secure her musical education, but because they didn't want to give her an inferiority complex. It took seven years of nightmare until our dear parents could be persuaded that Mira and music had nothing in common!

I was born in 1926 in Bucharest. I don't think I had turned four yet when I went to the cinema for the first time. My sister was with me and we were accompanied by Fraulein Mitzy, a Swiss woman who helped our parents raise us appropriately and spoke to us in German. The name of the cinema was Trianon and we saw a silent film starring Charlie Chaplin. It was silent in the sense that there was no talking, but it did have a musical background. They played a very light tune. It stuck with me and, to the general surprise, when I got back home, I sat at the piano, a cottage piano, actually, and I... reproduced that tune. I remember my sister called Fraulein, Fraulein called my mother, and my mother called my father, while I, the 'star,' was sitting on the revolving stool and was playing imperviously! Touched to tears, my father drew a second stool and started to accompany me as well as he could.

One of the reasons why I was a normal child was the fact that my parents never made me feel like a wunderkind. Thus, to the extent of their material possibilities and trying to avoid spoiling me, they made sure I had all the toys a boy could want; these included the balls and the circle, the tricycle, the sleigh, the mechanic train, the sling, the bow, mechanic games and children's games, like 'Mensch argere dich nicht' ['Don't get upset, man' in German], which I played with my grandmother on Thursday, when she came to visit us at noon...