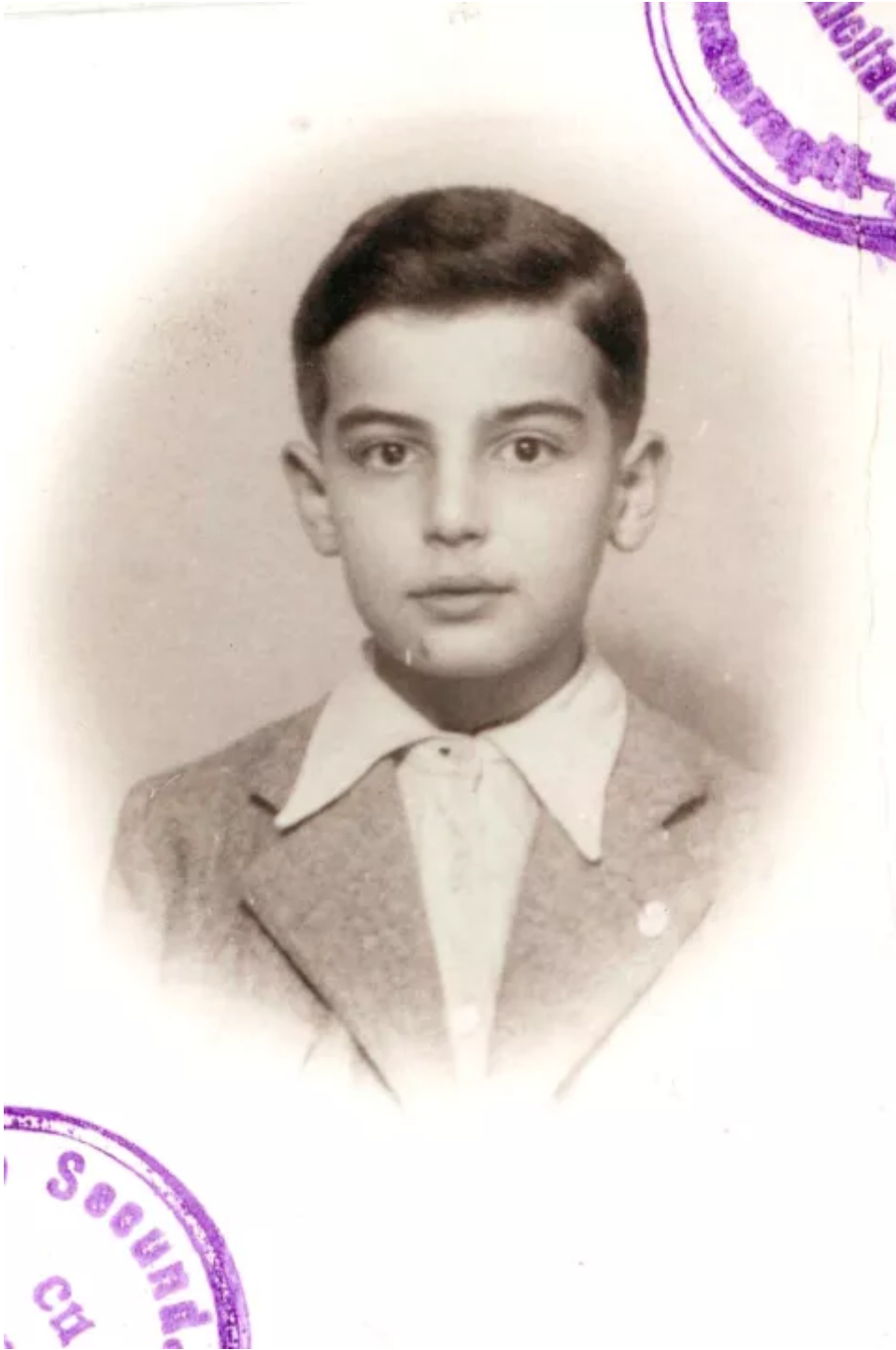


Dan Mizrahy



This is me, Dan Mizrahy, in a school photograph taken in 1935 in Bucharest.

When I got to the 4th elementary grade I was admitted to the 1st year at the Royal Academy of Music and Drama. I was nine years and a half... During that academic year, 1935-1936, they opened the Scala Cinema. To advertise it, they offered discount tickets to students. If my memory serves me well, they ran 'Robin Hood' with Errol Flynn. I put on a jacket and a tie, with shorts, of course, placed the lyre on my lapel, the pin of the Conservatoire students, and went to Scala, where I asked for a discount ticket. The window of the box-office was very high, or at least this is how it seemed to me. A hand came out from there and stopped on my head, while a sweet female

voice addressing me as 'kid' explained that the discount tickets were not for children and that I would have to wait to become a student before I could take advantage of that favor. With perfect calm, I stretched my arm and laid down my student card in front of her. This was followed by an, 'Oh, please forgive me!' and by the release of the requested ticket. I felt very proud!

So I started the 1935-1936 academic year as a pupil in the 4th elementary grade at School no.31 and as a student in the 1st year at the Royal Academy of Music and Drama. At that time, the academy was still based on Stirbei Voda Street, in an old and totally inadequate building. A year later it moved to Brezoianu Street, a splendid aristocratic house, with large, bright rooms, and with a superb hall where exams were held. I had classes with Mrs. Aurelia Cionca on Wednesday afternoon. Of course, I was by far the youngest student. There were two pianos in the classroom placed one next to the other. The teacher sat at the one on the left, and the student at the one on the right. The keyboards were oriented so as to form a right angle with the chairs placed next to the wall, where the ones who listened sat. Mrs. Cionca's method was to let the student go through the entire piece without interrupting him unless he made serious mistakes. Then she commented on the performance and supported her arguments by playing the piano herself. It was a true delight!