

Fira Shwartz With Her Husband David Kargorodskiy And Her Daughter Margarita Kargorodskaya



My husband David Kargorodskiy, our daughter Margarita Kargorodskaya and I. The photo was taken in Kiev in 1964. I met my future husband, a Jew by the name of David Kargorodskiy when I returned to Kiev. David was born in Kiev in 1936. Aunt Rosa and David's mother were close friends. David finished the Communication Faculty of the Mining College and got a job assignment in the Ural where he stayed for three years. His mother wanted David to meet a Jewish girl. She met me during one of her visits to Rosa. She liked me and when her son came to Kiev on vacation she introduced us to one another. We began to see each other. We got married in 1959. We had a civil wedding and a wedding party afterwards. There were many guests at the wedding. My Uncle Samuel, who was my guardian, received my monthly allowances for my father. He had been putting the money into my bank account, and my wedding was arranged from that money. After our wedding David had to go back to the Ural where he was working. I quit my job and followed him. David was a communications supervisor. We got a room at the family hostel. I stayed there for a year after which I had to return to Kiev. I had to make sure that I kept my residence permit in Kiev. A few times a year militia authorities sent their representatives to check whether tenants were residing in the apartments they were assigned to. My uncle sent me a telegram notifying me that I had to come back to Kiev in order to keep my permit to live in the apartment. Every member of the family living in one apartment had a stamp in his passport - parents had stamps in their passports for their children - and those stamps served as a residential permit. The authorities strictly checked that people were registered and resided where they were assigned to. So I went back to Kiev and my husband joined me after about a year's time, in 1960. David's parents lived in one room in a communal apartment with many tenants. My husband and I moved in with my uncle. My cousin Bella was married by that time and lived with her husband. My husband and I were living in the room where my cousin and I had lived before. We got along well with my uncle and aunt. We

were a family. Although we were atheists we celebrated both Soviet and Jewish holidays with them because we respected my uncle's religiosity. My husband got a job at the Giprosviaz Communications Design Institute. More than half of the staff of the institute was Jewish. David had no problems getting this job. I worked at the library. My husband and I didn't feel Jewish. We spoke Russian. I didn't know Yiddish at all, and David could only remember a few words from his childhood. We were an ordinary Soviet family and we felt like Soviet people. We raised our children that way, too. Our daughter, Margarita, was born in 1961 and our son, Igor, followed in 1968. My mother-in-law was helping me to look after Margarita, but as soon as a kindergarten opened near our home I took her there.