

## Irina Soboleva-Ginsburg's Self-Portrait



A self-portrait from my book entitled *Returning to Myself*. I was good at painting and my aunt took me to an art school. I was ten years old, and I was admitted to this school. I made good progress there and I went to the Art College from there. In 1992 I was admitted to the Jewish Culture Association. I took a breath of Jewish life. I got very interested in everything concerning Jews. It must be the voice of my heart. When asked, 'What does it mean to be a Jew?' I reply that I find it helps me to feel this way. It's a different experience for me to identify myself as a Jew. I attend the

events at the Jewish community, which also supports me. I feel great in the Jewish community in Lvov. The charity organization of Bnai Brith helped me to publish a volume of my most recent pictures. The subject of all of them is Jewish life. The first picture in the book is Jewish Still Life: with a Torah scroll and Chanukkah lights. I dedicate many pictures to the work of Jewish people, everyday life, the culture of a small town and Biblical subjects. I also painted ancient Lvov, its streets and lanes, synagogues, fashion stores, violinists and organ grinders. I'm not much interested in contemporary life. I have some new ideas and spend much time working. I will have another series of paintings called The People of the Book. It's about our people that always turned to books to receive education. I have about two dozen portraits of remarkable Jews of all centuries. I create their portraits and not just copies of their appearances. I see these talented people and I try to get information about every person, and depict their manners and characters.