

About this time, he gave a row of performances in Bialystock, a well-to-do industrial town with a lively cultural elite. He was very well received there, so when the Forest Opera House offered him a lucrative fixed-term contract he accepted – after consulting with his family - and the Spoliansky's moved to Bialystock, where they made a new home and built up a circle of friends.

One year later and eight years after the birth of Lisa, a third child was born to Pavlov and Barbara – a boy. They named him Michael, otherwise known as Mischa – and he was I! It was 28 December 1898 and my mother was 43 years old. I still maintain that my earliest memory was as an infant lying in my wooden cradle watching the ceiling. In contrast to the other rooms I was to discover later on, this room was made of wood and had been added on as a kitchen. Opposite my cradle next to the door leading out to a courtyard was a wooden barrel filled with water, which also served the neighbouring houses. My memories also include a fall out of the cradle.

The house itself offered much to explore. Above the table in the dining room hung a large chandelier adorned with many refracting pieces. I found one on the floor and studied the room through it, wondering at the new and multi-coloured fantasy world it offered. Another door led from the dining room into the marble-floored hallway. If I shouted down the hallway and up the stairs, it would echo my sounds back. Sometimes I could not tear myself away from these experiments and would repeat them