

I am Carmen Lidia Vidu and I grew up in Arad. I come back to Arad for my parents and to relive my youth.

My friends have one foot in reality and one in fantasy. In the park on the seafront of the Mures river, skaters, rollerbladers, the puppet theater and the only time in my life that I almost drowned were all unreeling in front of me as in a Western movie. In Arad, I learned to swim, to play tennis, and handball although I was a fan of the female basketball team. The city lives lazily, it gives you time to learn everything and this saves you from getting old. Since I was a child I felt I rediscovered myself in the restlessness of the flea market. In Arad I always eat Lángos and I buy clothes from the flea market. That used to be my window to the West because I would find clothes from Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Spain. The booths are filled with all sorts of things from nails and screws, mobile phones, clothing and shoes, audio cassettes, books and collection magazines. While the loud music played in the background after we had finished shopping my mother and I would always eat grilled mititei. No other place in town throbs with such vigor and atmosphere.

For many people it is common to own a bicycle, I didn't have one. I bought my first bike when I was 34. I'm still learning how to ride it. I'm not good with direction. Probably because I am scared of wrongly working the handle bar. I have issues with avoiding people and cars, keeping my balance, taking curves, turning and braking. I feel the best in the Celea forest of Arad. The forrest spreads itself on a plain towards the Mures river meadow. I pass on bike by the cypress bush tree, the Mures river, the Turkish citadel, and by the thickest tree in the forrest.

My first home is the church. More and more youngsters pass the church threshold from the Faculty of Theology courtyard, where father Stefan Negreanu officiates. The church courtyard is full of kids every Sunday, this made believers establish father Stefan as the "father of the children". The wooden church is built in the style of Maramures churches. The patrons of this dwelling are Saint Maxim the Confessor and Martyr Saint Mina. Among the elderly and children I've always felt good. I get along less with adults. This park is the same age as Arad. In the pensioners' park, people debate the most important news of the day. They gather around the tables at the shade of the trees behind the Town Hall. They play chess, checkers, playing card games or rummy for money or just for pleasure.

Beauty pageants are childish. Maybe that's why I like them. The girls' faces are innocent, young, and naive. Only once did I want to take part in a beauty pageant and that exact year they cancelled it. It was replaced by a traditional folk music show. Beauty pageants are some factories that make traditional fairies.

In highschool I found out that a class mate's mom was practising boxing. After that I would look at her as if she were an American actress. When I get old I will take up boxing. This is Cristi, my friend and neighbour. He tried to teach me to play chess. He didn't manage. In the courtyard of our house he is teaching me the basics of boxing.

Arad has the most modern car market in the West of the country. There are thousands of second hand cars brought over mostly from Germany. My father's greatest love: his auto repair shop. I am 35 years old and I don't have a driver's license. I am scared of the story behind car accidents. I will only learn how to drive from a rally driver.

The tram railway is the second one in length in Romania after the one in the capital city. The first trams in Arad were each pulled by a horse. Tram rides seem to be stories from long ago. In Arad, people still take the tram. My childhood is stored in tram rides.

I got my first nickname during kindergarten: Linda Karateka. Linda was a karateka girl from a Hungarian series that we used to watch at the beginning of the 90s in Romania. She was a high school student who wanted to become a police officer. When she had to beat up evil doers she would take her shoes off as to not hurt them too bad when she would kick them in the head.

Arad is home to the oldest permanent theater building in the country. It is called the Old Theater or Hirschl Theater. The building was scanty so they built an even bigger theater. King Franz Joseph I of Austria himself was present at the inauguration of the Arad Theater. This is where I fell in love with theater performances. Now I am a theater director. I have yet to put on a show in Arad.

Swimming, sunbathing, Italian music from the 70s and 80s are calming and pleasant at the Arad Beach Facilities. Whenever I have an issue I go into the water and I calm down. When I was younger I saw the most beautiful theater show of my life. The story was about a mermaid that was sitting on a giant shell on the water. The song of whales is the most beautiful music in the world. The Mures river goes through Arad. Surrounding it stands a true paradise with lush greens and fairytale landscapes.

In order to get the highest mark in music class I would go by force to the Philharmonic. Without noticing I started enjoying it. Along the time the gorgeous concert hall has hosted great people: Richard Strauss, Bela Strauss, Bela Bartok, George Enescu.

My family. My benchmark in life.

In clubs I danced and discovered show lighting, video projections and the state of abandonment in games. I became the first multimedia director in Romania and the music I use in my shows is highly different than that of other shows. Everything started in a club.

I always fall asleep with the light on. Mom comes in and turns it off. In the morning she scolds me because I forgot to turn off the light. I fall asleep with poems in my mind. Ms Aneta is my dear neighbour and a friend of my mother's. She had cancer and got cured. Now she writes love poems for Jesus Christ.