

Amalia Blank



This is me in the play ?Stempenyu.? The photo was taken in Lvov in 1940. In 1939 Hitler attacked Poland. I was horrified. In contrast to Soviet people, who had no idea what fascism was, I saw what it was and ran away from it. And again there was another danger. I calmed down, thinking that the war would not last long. Hitler's troops were defeated by Soviet troops, commissioned in Poland. After that the governments of both countries signed a non-aggression treaty, and part of Poland

was annexed to the Soviet Union. Lvov was also annexed. There was a wonderful Jewish theater there. It was decided to merge the Dnepropetrovsk and Lvov Jewish theater and our theater moved to Lvov. My husband and I happened to be in that splendid old city. Probably not all local dwellers were happy to be Soviet citizens and had hostile views of the USSR. Our theater was like an isle and all waves passed by us. There was a very large audience at that theater and we did not lose it after the merger of the two theaters. There was a great audience in Lvov, people were demanding, but very grateful. First I was perturbed by the jealousy of the leading actress there. There was a wonderful actress there, Ida Kamilskaya. She was jealous of my success for some reason. She was a great actress and she could take pride in her own success instead of envying somebody else's. It was hard for me to understand what her motive was. I never had a feeling like that as I was in constant quest. There was the end of the performance and the spectators were applauding me, standing up and crying out my name. It was great. It is hard for me to put in words those happy moments I felt. I was so glad to get such a feedback from the audience. Apart from joy there was another feeling. I bowed to them and had another thought in mind: what will I bring them tomorrow.