

Amalia Blank



This is me in the folklore theatre in Samara. The photo was taken in 1958. In 1952 I went to some artel, where they had their own amateur group. The head of the artel took pity on me and made me lead an amateur art group. We got ready for a big concert devoted to some Soviet holiday. There was a scene with pigeons that were released by the choir during the song about peace. In the USSR the dove was considered as symbol of peace. There was a lady who was the chairman of the artel for the blind. She wanted me to work for her. I couldn't image how performances with blind actors could be staged. The lady was positive that I could do that. One of the benefits was that they gave me a room in the hostel, and I didn't have a place to live at the time. These blind people made knitted fabric of different color and variegated and patterned fabric. When I came to the workshop and saw how those blind people felt the beauty, I accepted the offer. I enjoyed it. Those people, who could hardly tell darkness from light, turned out to be so sophisticated and capable. It was very interesting to work with them. There was a club and a stage in the artel. I was given lodging, a poky room of the hotel type. I wanted to leave Kuybyshev by all means. Finally I managed to exchange my poky room for a room in Kostroma. Kostroma is such a wonderful town! I have warm recollections about it. I love it. I lived there for seven years. When I moved to Kostroma, I found a job almost right away. Then I wrote a review and took it to the newspaper. To my surprise, it was accepted right away and I was hired by the paper as a reviewer. I did my job in good faith and it took me long to prepare my reviews. I praised and criticized, dwelled on the roles created by actors. The actors feared me. They told each other: she is the one, who is writing such reviews? In reality, I was objective. If someone deserved praise I did praise him or her, but I was never flattering. I was objective. I was single and I had suitors of course. They remained at a distance, which I created myself. I could not play love games. I could not be with a person who was my soul mate. There were good people among my suitors. They were very interesting. They were my friends. I do not think I was bereft of anything. I received a lot. Any communication enriches you. I do not only mean communication with people, but communication with art, nature. If you love life, you will always find something for yourself. If you don't love it, nothing will help. I love life,

people, nature. I have not remained empty-handed.