

Rozalia Akselrod



I, Rozalia Akselrod, playing Knight Ratmir in our school play. The picture was taken in Kharkov in 1936.

After we moved to Kharkov, I went to the first grade of a Ukrainian school in 1927. At our school boys and girls studied together – a rare case at that time. When I was in the second grade, I went to a music school, which was not far from our house. I did not let my parents know I went there. I passed exams and began to study there. However, I did not study there for too long, only for three years, and then I quit music.

My favorite subject at school was mathematics. I was good at it. I did not have any bright talents, neither was I one of the best students. But I was a good one, and I was loved at school. We had a singing club at school, which later turned almost into an opera studio. We staged operas. I remember singing several roles in different operas.

I remember the ceremony of joining the pioneers. It took place at a printing house where we were taken from school. There we repeated the oath of a young pioneer, 'I, a pioneer of the USSR, in front of my comrades promise that I will firmly fulfill the commandments of Lenin...' I remember it as if it was yesterday. I was an active pioneer, the chairman of our pioneer unit. I was also an active Komsomol member. In those years Komsomol meetings were usually held at somebody's houses. As a rule, our Komsomol meetings took place at our house.