

## Amalia Blank



This is me. The photo was taken in Samara 1956. In 1953 the Doctors' Plot began. Doctors were called 'murderers in white robes' and another wave of anti-Semitism began. It was non-punishable and impudent. I was not quite acclimatized in Kuybyshev. Frankly speaking people were rude there. During the Doctors' Plot that rudeness was boundless. People were so anti-Semitic that school children cried out in the streets: 'beat kikes, and save Russia!' Strange, but I wasn't scared at that time. I had a strange feeling that I had come here from another world by chance. I was jobless and broke. I didn't have any people that were close to me. I was divorced. At least I wanted to know that he was OK. He was still the producer of the children's theater. I was looking for a job. First all seemed OK, then they looked at my passport, the line 'nationality,' and politely said that they had to clarify certain things and would call me back. Of course they never did. They just turned me down politely. Finally 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.