

BIDA Helen Chaja (1893-?), actor, the daughter of Abram Bida/Bieda and Jenta née Szafrański. She was born in Działoszyn in 1893, although she herself gave the improbable date as 21st May 1898 and Częstochowa as her place of birth.

She spent her childhood in Częstochowa, where she also encountered Jewish theatre. Due to her interest in professional acting, in 1912, she left the city and went to London. There, she met Róża Szklarz, the wife of actor Maks Brina, who hired her as a chorister in the Jewish Pavilion Theatre. She played her first role with Jakub Zylbert in *Tzine'le di Blinde* [Tzinde'le the Blind] and in *Der Yeshiva Bocher* [The Yeshiva Student].

In 1913, in Paris, she played in various melodramas with Jakub Liber (in the Akselrod troupe). She also performed in Antwerp. During World War I, she played with a troupe of travelling actors in Denmark and Sweden. In 1916, she came to America. She spent her first season at the Lyric Theatre in Toronto (under directors Szor and Lipman). Later, she performed in Chicago, St. Louis, Cleveland, Detroit and Winnipeg. She performed her last seasons in Brooklyn and the Hopkinson Theatre. She performed with great actors of the Jewish stage - Rudolf Szyldkraut (in *Got fun nekome* and *Sz. Asz* as Rywkele), Josef Szajngold, Borys Tomaszewski, Leon Blank, Berta Kalisz, Ludwik Zac and Cyla Adler.

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Wiesław Paszkowski