

ELVYRA MARKEVIČIŪTĖ

Archive of the Lithuanian Drama Festival “Atgaiva”

I would like to present an exclusive archive of the Lithuanian Drama Festival “Atgaiva” (“Refreshment”), which was held in Šiauliai in 1988 and can be boldly identified as a participant of Lithuania’s Independence process. It’s incredible that more than twenty years later, memories of this unforgettable festival took a new breath – were supplemented by a unique oral archive. Amazingly, that oral archive project had been initiated by Mr. Patrick Chura, an American professor from the University of Akron, Ohio. As Mr. Chura took interest in the history of Lithuanian theatre and was researching documents in the archive of the Šiauliai Drama Theatre and in the Lithuanian Central State Archive, he arrived at the conclusion that the launching of the “Atgaiva” festival had been a cultural declaration of Lithuanian independence which had pre-dated the actual declaration of our country's independence by almost 15 months. The professor wrote an article named “Ten Days that Shook Lithuania”, and published it in the *Lituanus* magazine in 2013. Assisted by the staff of the Šiauliai Public Library he began recording the impressions of those who had witnessed and participated in the festival, and so started forming a public oral archive of “Atgaiva” – the Atgaiva Oral History Archive. The said archive became a significant addition to previous festival documents, which stage director Gytis Padegimas, one of the principal organizers of the festival and the head of the Šiauliai Drama Theatre at the time, has handed to the Art Publications Department of the Kaunas County Public Library.



Bio: Elvyra Markevičiūtė studied Theatre History at the Leningrad State Institute of Theatre, Music and Cinematography (now St-Petersburg State Theatre Arts Academy). She worked as a literary assistant for the Chief Director at the Šiauliai State Drama Theatre and as the Head of the Literature Department at the Kaunas State Academic Drama Theatre. Currently she is the Curator of the Theatre and Cinema Information Section of the Arts Department at the Kaunas County Public Library, organizes theatre exhibitions and events. She has published over 400 articles and interviews on Lithuanian theatre, and is the author of the books „The Šiauliai Drama Theatre 1931-1991“, „The Kaunas State Academic Drama Theatre 1920-1995“, „The Kaunas State Drama Theatre 90“, and of the monographs „Algimantas Masiulis 70“, „Gytis Padegimas 55“ and „Algimantas Masiulis: the Soul in Teutonic Knight’s Armour“