

# When Sonia Met Boris: Stories of Love and Family in Stalin's Soviet Union: A Symposium, Lecture, and Concert



**Featuring Anna Shternshis, Doris Bergen, Ato Quayson, and Psoy Korolenko**

**Monday, September 11 at 4:00pm**  
**University of Toronto, Jackman Humanities Building**  
**Room 100, 170 St. George Street**



The Soviet Union went through war, destruction, and chaos in the 1940s and the early 1950s. But for many of its citizens, this time was the prime of their lives, when they raised families, built careers, and made friends. These simple actions often required courage and forced people to make impossible choices, negotiate absurd rules, or laugh in the face of discrimination.

Doris Bergen, Chancellor Rose and Ray Wolfe Professor of Holocaust Studies, and Ato Quayson, University Professor of English, will discuss the new book by Professor Anna Shternshis, *When Sonia Met Boris: an Oral History of Jewish Life under Stalin* (Oxford University Press, 2017). They are followed by singer-songwriter Psoy Korolenko and Anna Shternshis, who will present a lecture/concert program featuring Soviet Jewish stories, anecdotes, songs, and jokes in Russian and Yiddish. Sometimes sad, more often hilarious, always unforgettable, these narratives and artefacts transport us to the world of dilemmas, self-deprecating humour and controversies of the Soviet Jewish experience.



Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies  
**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

מרכז למדעי היהדות

This event is free and open to the public. No registration is required. Limited seating. If you require an accommodation, please contact the Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies at [cjs.events@utoronto.ca](mailto:cjs.events@utoronto.ca) or 416-978-1624

Presented with the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies, Department of Germanic Languages and Literature, AI and Malka Green Program in Yiddish Studies, and the Social Science and Humanities Research Council Insight Grant