

GLOBAL STUDIES SPEAKER SERIES

Anne Bobroff-Hajal

May 25, 2022

12:30-1:50pm



UC Riverside | Dundee | Room A1003

Global Studies Goes Graphic: Picturing Russian/Ukrainian History

Anne Bobroff-Hajal's comical but deadly serious mixed-media polyptychs about Russian autocracy portray hundreds of 3-inch-high individuals of all classes, striving and struggling with each other, within hierarchies and governments shaped by the riches and dangers in their particular environments - the same dynamics from which the current war in Ukraine arose. Her talk will describe new dimensions her art brings to academic history by conveying the compelling human motivations - joy, greed, grief, and fury among rivals and allies - together with power dynamics and geography, so viewers can better understand the cumulative choices made by countless individuals within their own historical and social contexts. Bobroff-Hajal will also describe her complex practice of layering painting over digital images of her own paintings and of historical pictures, and her artistic process, influenced by animation storyboards, icons, graphic novels, and political cartoons, all powerful ways of telling stories in pictures.

Anne Bobroff-Hajal has been an artist since childhood, and also earned a PhD in Russian History. She lived in the USSR for a year researching what became her scholarly book, *Working Women in Russia Under the Hunger Tsars*. Her art has been widely exhibited, most recently in solo shows at the Museum of Russian Icons ("Playground of the Autocrats") and at Columbia University's Harriman Institute for Russian Studies Atrium ("Peasants, Clans, and Effervescent Absolutists!"). Her presentation about her art for Harvard University's Davis Center for Russian Studies is *Painting Playground of the Autocrats*.



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