



The Department of Russian and Slavic Studies (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) invites you to the guest lecture

“Reviving” Modernism in Late Leningrad Fiction: Viktor Sosnora and Andrei Belyi

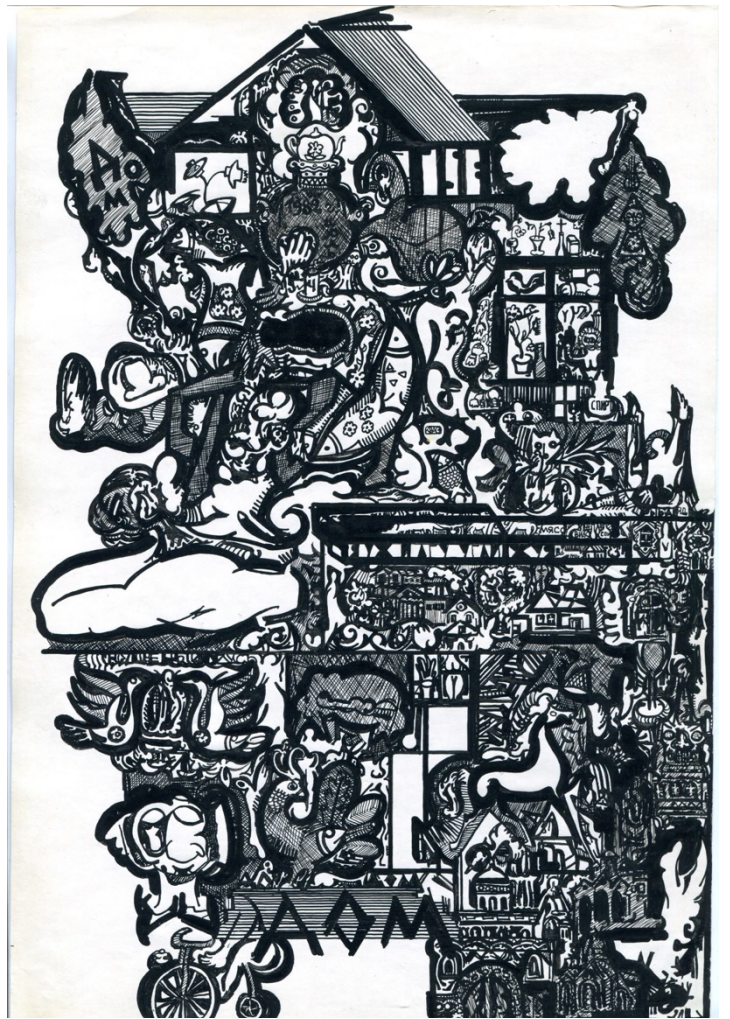
by Ivan Sokolov (U.C. Berkeley)

(the talk will be given in Russian)

Tuesday, December 13, 18:00 Jerusalem (11:00 EST, 8:00 PST)

<https://huji.zoom.us/j/84969518703?pwd=SDdXL3pvdmJGTFQ1RnhYb3dleDc3QT09>

Whether seen as a salvific source of inspiration or as a noxious remnant of the imperial bourgeoisie, Russian modernism kept haunting Soviet literature long after its key members were exiled, silenced or executed. For the late-socialist “unofficial” milieu, the suppressed culture of “the Silver Age” presented a model alternative to the Soviet experience as dictated by the Party. In Leningrad, a city known for its cultivation of traditional aesthetics, the “loss” of modernism was felt especially acutely, producing in the post-war decades a series of poetics from Joseph Brodsky to Oleg Iur’ev defined by their reparative nostalgia. In his talk, Ivan Sokolov will address this history of an “uninterrupted” or at least constantly “reanimated” modernism at a later iteration of the cycle, in Leningrad during perestroika. As Soviet strictures were melting into thin air, Leningrad writers came up with new, more ironic ways of negotiating a greater distance from modernist precursors. One such writer was Viktor Sosnora (1936–2019), whose search for a new way of relating self, history and language suggested a creative revision of the very foundations of Russian modernist fiction as exemplified by the work of Andrei Belyi (1880–1934). The talk will present a reading of *The Den of Days* [1985–1986]—Sosnora’s genre-defying novel comprised of loose quasi-autobiographic fragments—as an ironic recollection of the critique of the autobiography in Belyi’s *Kotik Letaev* [1915–1916].



Ivan Sokolov is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of California, Berkeley and, at present, a Visiting Research Fellow in the Department of Russian and Slavic Studies at the Hebrew University.