

# LIST OF PRESENTATIONS

## LEORA TEC

My goal as a speaker is to spark open and inclusive conversations about story, identity and remembrance in the Holocaust context and beyond. I strive to cast a fresh light on these issues and to create an atmosphere where audiences feel welcomed to engage with this challenging history. My wish is that my talks can serve as a jumping off point for respectful dialogue and that audiences will feel empowered to make honest personal connections with these topics and perhaps discover unexpected moments of light in the stories I share. I hope you leave my talks feeling that you've been offered a new perspective and new questions to ask!

### 1. THE PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ALL THE SURVIVORS ARE GONE?

How will we remember the Holocaust when those who lived through it are gone?... How will we hold on to a multiplicity of stories and avoid the stereotypes that can erase the nuances of individual lives? ... Who is tasked with remembrance and what does it look like?

Through the lens of her experience as the daughter of a Holocaust survivor and scholar, and through her own experiences and connections with Polish scholars and artists who are grappling with this history, Leora

teases out the many ways of answering these questions. Through the stories she tells, and a sense of the poetry of fleeting moments, she addresses both the challenges and the unexpected clarity that can come from embracing the details of a human life, and finds ways to uncover hope, even in the fragments of this shattered history.



## 2. SONGS I DIDN'T KNOW I KNEW: FINDING IDENTITY, HOPE AND UNEXPECTED FRIENDSHIP IN POLAND

What makes up our identity? What happens when we try to embody seemingly incompatible selves? How do others unexpectedly reveal us to ourselves?

Through this candid, personal and heartfelt talk, Leora takes the audience along on her journey “back” to Lublin, Poland - a city which she didn’t visit until ten years ago, even though generations of her family had lived and died there. By encountering the scenes of her family’s past, and through unexpected friendships, she comes to terms with what it means to be both Polish and Jewish, and discovers ways comprehend her identity and embrace both the pain and the possibilities of her history.



## 3. FRAGMENTS OF A LOST WORLD: THE POWER OF STANDING IN THE PLACE

When Leora Tec first went to Poland with her mother, Holocaust survivor and scholar Nechama Tec, in 2005, she was astonished by the warm welcome they received and by the remembrance work being done there by non-Jews. As she returned again and again, Leora felt a strong desire to bring others to Poland to see how lovingly the fragments of Jewish people’s lives were being preserved and remembered. Listen as Leora shares the story of her journeys to Poland, a land many think of only as a cemetery, but where she has discovered light, and hope for humanity.



## 4. ARE WE MISSED? WHAT IS THERE FOR JEWS IN MODERN DAY POLAND?

In this talk Leora explores the impact of what Poland lost in losing most of its Jewish Population during the Holocaust. Through stories of her own experiences and her complex relationship to Poland as the daughter of a Polish-Jewish Holocaust survivor, she asks what Jews of Polish descent can hope to find in Poland. Her choice to return to Poland brought unexpected connections and discoveries not only about her own family's past, but also about the non-Jewish Poles dedicating their lives to the remembrance of those who were lost. In returning to a country echoing with loss, she asks, what can we discover from those who are still there.



## LEORA HOPES THAT ALL TALKS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A LIVELY Q&A

As the founder and director of Bridge To Poland (BTP), Leora Tec creates immersive intellectual and cultural travel experiences in Poland that examine the history of the Jews in Poland and how Christian Poles today are commemorating that history. Leora is the daughter of Holocaust survivor and Holocaust scholar Nechama Tec. She views her work as the second generation of her mother's work on rescue and resistance during the Holocaust. (Nechama Tec is the author of the book *Defiance*, which was made into the 2007 film starring Daniel Craig).

Leora is currently working on a book about her Polish identity entitled, *I'm Not Polish: My Discovery of Identity*. She holds a B.A. from Wellesley College and a J.D./LL.M. from Duke University School of Law.

## TESTIMONIALS

I would compare [Leora's] eloquence and deep, deep insights into human nature (at both ends of the spectrum) to someone no less amazing than Elie Wiesel.

*Dr. Marc E., Seattle, WA*

Listening to Leora Tec talk of honoring the memories of the lives lost and lived through the Holocaust is like opening a scene to the past. Her personal reflections and richly detailed primary research provide authenticity that brings one directly into individual lives. We imagine the sounds, the sights, and the fullness of life. This is important because every aspect of Ms. Tec's presentation entices the listener to lean forward, to connect with a voice, to hear a melody, or imagine the sights and sounds of a bustling neighborhood. Her passionate stories layered with the insights of contemporary Poles, invite us to reflect deeply as we honor the victims and survivors we would all have wanted to know.

*Sabine C., Lexington, MA*

**Recent talks:**

Boston College Symposium Memory and the Shoah, November, 2014

Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston, December, 2014

Newton Public Library, Newton, MA, January, 2015

Lexington Community Education, Lexington, MA, February, 2015

Holocaust and the Contemporary World, Kraków, April, 2015

Interpret Europe: Sensitive Heritage, Sensitive Interpretation, Kraków, June, 2015

Conference in Memory of Sugihara, Warsaw, June, 2015

Memory-Place-Presence, Brama Grodzka, Lublin, June, 2015

Jewish Arts Collaborative—Hebrew College, Newton, MA, May 2016



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**Leora also offers the following workshops:**

1. **A Kaleidoscope of Jewish Poland**
2. **Claiming Our Family Stories**
3. **The Language of the Holocaust:** Taking a Second Look
4. **Jewish Poland:** Difficult Questions and Ripple Effects

For more information contact her at: [info@bridgetopoland.com](mailto:info@bridgetopoland.com)