

## Art from Yoko Oji Kikuchi

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### **MUSIC**

On Disappointing Your Heroes:  
The Resurgence of Casey Scott; Top 10 Casey Scott Tracks  
Old Dog; New Tricks:  
Recent Work from Cannonball Statman

### **POETRY**

David S. Hooker, Renee LeBeau, Mitch Manning, Ros Zimmermann

### **PRINTED MATTER**

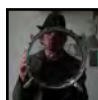
Beyond Complation:  
Anselm Berrigan Has Something for Everybody

### **SMALL PRESS**

On DIY Chapbook Publishing:  
A Conversation with Alice Ladrick  
and Jonny Lohr of Adjunct Press

# Beyond Complation

## Anselm Berrigan Has Something for Everybody



BY CHRIS STROFFOLINO

Anselm Berrigan

**Something for Everybody**

Wave Books, 2018

Anselm Berrigan's eighth book, *Something for Everybody*, is his best one yet, in its bringing "deregulated/ words like snuff films for sound" together with an appealing ethos of "a family and community member looking at the seams of public life." (Publisher's Weekly). As Berrigan puts the sense of magic spell back into the word charm, I sense somewhat of a post-punk ethos, as well as the Shakespearean Foole at his most linguistically complex: "it's not/ enough to know what things mean/ beaten off to the side, fool. Sometimes/ you gotta know what things don't mean," and sometimes you have to let yourself write "gotta."



This book is "framed" by the poem "What The Streets Look Like" (which starts the book, but also reappears in the final piece)—to place itself firmly in the tradition of the New York School's epistolary peripatetic poems, in which the speaker wrestles with the temptations of nostalgia that gentrification and other paradigm shifts have brought, but can still warmly celebrate the natural in the city: "I have/ a great empathy for pigeons after two months/ at work in the unnatural country...."

Just as Brenda Hillman has her lichen and Lorri Jackson had her regenerative rats, Berrigan's pigeons become an avatar for the how-nature-comes-to-us-in-the-city undersong in this book, and I feel great solidarity and sympathy when he speaks of the shit he gets for "attempting to separate nature from naming" for I, too, have resisted looking up the names of birds and trees on the web in the belief that somehow naming them would corrupt the experience. And, in the city, nature may assert itself in ways no less mysterious than it does for the non-urban nature poet:

"the signs  
for the washing of hands instill  
a thickening resentment towards  
dirt's absence as we navigate  
the gaps between moments of  
silence" ("Lengthening Arches")

Similarly, in "Compatibility Modes," he addresses the accusation of forgetting "I have a body" that some body-nature-discourse referential essentialists may hurl, to suggest that true embodiment—in language—is more likely to be achieved by imagining "an/ utterly alien/ eros by listening/ for possible methods/ of extraterrestrial sex." Embodiment, and/or "self-care," is also a foregrounded theme weaving in and out of "Chases Dirt" (which I first read as "Chassis Dirt"), to comic effect, "All dem leettle pressurs make you give yourself too many corrosive gifts." And against these toxic pressures, Berrigan's poetry can be a medicine, and his ethos has earned the right to give advice: "When the pressure's on, fuck—read the space/ To add room to a weakness."

Many of these poems propose relational ethical binaries. "To A Copy" is the first of many poems addressed to an unspecified "you" (demi-othering), who is probably also a writer, and one accused of being an "emblem/ of ideas with/ a capital I, you/ nowhere in sight, ceaselessly/ referred to as missing...." As such, this poem is both a defense of the so-called "impersonal, abstract" modes, as well as a respectful acknowledgement of the speaker's difference, or divergence, from it, like the feeling one gets after losing oneself in someone's book that shook you out of a habitual comfort zone, and a feeling of "but it's not me" begins to flow back in.

The title can raise the question of influence and borrowing and stealing, but only if we understand a world in which "everyone who dies/ before I'm born/ keeps being influenced by me." ("New Note")

Although Berrigan—with "3 and a half jobs"—could easily qualify as what Alissa Quart refers to as the "precariat," and there are certainly moments of what she'd term "hysterical surrealism" in this book, and it would be a mistake to call it "apolitical," this book does not generally go after the more visible socio-economic-political atrocities (in "Lengthening Arches" he writes, "but I can't help think these/ times infected by a deeper/ meanness than savagery") as Berrigan lashes out more against what makes him want to lash out at his oppressors (and in the process sink to their level): "This negativity has to stop shopping itself/ around I only only hold cruelty against the vast/ Nonbody grinding bodies into numbers...."—not to reduce his poetic investigations to anything as rigid as a position or stance.... In the process, a strong sense of conscience and personal responsibility emerges as he does his best to avoid any accusation of special pleading:

"Afternoon come over & sit down forever tell  
me all the ways in silence we don't exploit  
our traumas together I'm a father not a leak"

I admire this book for its audacity to heroically aspire to the old New York school dictum about doing one's best to "refuse the right to exist" of contemporary zeitgeist global news atrocities (as well as exploitation in the workplace), just as Kenneth Koch made it a point to publish a book called *The Pleasures of Peace* during the height of the Vietnam War and anti-war movement, or, if you must, you could invoke that overused Brecht quote (his biggest American hit, aside from "Mack The Knife" and "Whiskey Bar") about dancing in the dark times:

Loitering is a primary talent reframed  
as needed between coming tensions: I don't want  
the references, I want to be irritated & freaked out  
uneven in the fur, away from live wave domains, pushed  
up hard against this or that delicately figured  
boulder, a sprained delicacy absorbing biogenetic  
prepositions masked as populated frequency  
the illusion of daily non-acknowledgement"— ("The Parliament of Reality")

This is music to my ears, and eyes....Call it escapist if you must, but it can be a pledge of allegiance to the powers of poetry to save us from the occupational hazard of the adjunct critical thinking mind, and/or the reactive/reactionary mind strongly encouraged by Facebook, et al:

"timing's ability to withhold  
statements designed to  
provoke reinforcement  
I neither trust nor need"

"Tilebreaker" is another poem in which the speaker's persona-self unfolds in relation to one who prefers to "bring fist down/ to table" (hard not to think of Khrushchev's shoe here) more than "the absolute mystery/of composition" Berrigan prefers. In terms of the "culture wars," you could say it navigates the space between "low-culture" (or is it "youth-culture") like Polvo's "Tilebreaker" or Superchunk's *On the Mouth* and "high" culture like John Ashbery's "The New Spirit" to create "something tran-/sistant," beyond "Complation" (a portmanteau of complaint and explaNation?). I especially love the phrase, "joyfully conjures/ embarrassment," which could describe a (dominant) feeling I get reading this book.

By contrast, "Precision Auto" phrases the dualistic conflict in terms of art vs. money, and how easily the corruptions of professionalism can be Trojan-Horsed into even the most resolute artistic purist, a stance Berrigan beautifully mocks in "Life Without Rondo" ("I'm implying/ for jobs by writing you"). "Creative Response" also takes on the theme of professionalism and flattery getting in the way of the creative life, especially if your job requires you to write recommendation letters—why not write a recommendation poem for the pigeon?

His theatrical willingness to let his speaker be as mean as he can be (like the "safety valve" theory of catharsis) is evident in quite a few of these poems ("and make my evil labors clear"; "Expect to be killed by otherwise/ docile poets when they get inside/ the etcetera zone"), and, just as Frank O'Hara preferred the poem to the phone call, for Berrigan poems often come best when one refuses a social engagement so as better to engage: "O Pierre! We should have come over for the midnight omelette, but do you know how hard it is to be alive and not steal the state mace with a mutating bag." In a lighter vein, "I felt like an amputated leg" is a fascinating eight-paged short-lined fast moving lyric character description/ portrait of a dandy or fanfaron.

Reading many of these poems, it makes me feel that, yes, I, too, often come to poetry to be irritated and freaked out, and for the meanness that used to be called "poetic license" or at least "tough love" and, like the conscience scouring poems of John Yau, whose name is coincidentally mentioned in this book, Berrigan's mastery of the accusatory mode can charm a social justice warrior out of talking themselves too seriously, as he recuses himself from feeling "like a/ condescendant's/ objectivity" or "unsleeping/ Munchkins demanding adult brooding...." to embrace the difficult work of so-called "frivolity."

While this may, on rare occasion, lead him to seem to cynically portray anti-Trump protesters like Wallace Stevens' "The Revolutionists stop for orangeade"—"Eventually the climate overpowers/ Inaugural sentiment, breaking/ All comers into lists of pursed O's/ Melting down over candy....," it also could explain why Berrigan loves writing poems with elementary school children, in which political sentiment is shown to be compatible with play (as in "Poem For Los Angeles" written with Sylvie Berrigan): "....Pigeon going around the garbage/ Thinking about flags in the sky/ Moving and thinking about being flags/ And eating the pigeons all up!"

And, as I dig through for lines that the prose-hybrid review mind says, "single out," I'd be remiss if I didn't quote some of the quieter (less irritated, if not necessarily freaked out) moments in this book, like: "I like to be entered/by worry" and "phrasings, crosswalk-like/ pauses, so we don't get hit."

I like the strategic way Berrigan brings the pauses into the book's most ambitious poem (depending on how you define ambitious, I suppose) "Asheville," which begins as a long-lined maximalist tight dense unpunctuated knot flow seeming to struggle with the pressures of decommodifying, self-loathing, or at least performance anxiety. I feel almost like I've entered into a terrain where Beckett's "I can't go on; I'll go on." and "Fail Better!" (which it turns out he mentions in the book's final poem) would not be unwelcome guest-hosts, and I can't deny a "perverse" pleasure I get from being dragged through the agitated onslaught for three stanzas, before space enters:

**Something For Everybody is a pledge of allegiance to the powers of poetry to save us from the occupational hazard of the adjunct critical thinking mind, and/or the reactive/reactionary mind strongly encouraged by Facebook, et al.**

Again is always something  
I respond to arrangements

And one can picture a dualistic back and forth between the lyric voice that must enact silences and blank spaces, and the discursive, more skeptical, voice that shows how even the word "Silence" can just end up adding to the noise. This leads to one of the most poignant characterizations of the sublime mode for skeptics such as I: "all the endlessly fucking slow layering of every minute micro-jolt accreting...."

And though this poem seems framed in highly personalized questions of ethics and aesthetics, it also may reveal the kind of twisted emotional "logic" that underlies various manifestations of undemocratic, and unkind, loveless cynicisms in a police (social media) state and its various "inner cops" analogs:

"the projection of luck onto others a ghastly utopia so says a bold divergence nudge/  
an American reveal a cop decked out in a complaint to avoid this fate we must..."

A relentless wakefulness asks some tough ethical questions, like "What are your reigning rules for yourself...," or, if it makes you feel safer, you could just call it a "mid-life crisis" poem: "You're 41. You've dunked your children in the grease holding them by their faces." Then he returns to the more lyrical statement-gestures, in which the "I" asserts its loneliness, its need, against the accusatory maximalist/discursive mode—to come to a point:

Which renders demotive  
Me a non-unified  
Significance ahead  
Of sanctioned backing"

And by page 88, the differences between the more maximal discursive and minimal lyric become less extreme, in a kind of mesh as Berrigan defends the individualist (or at least the individual), against the faux-collectivist and the "Micro-cottage industries of we," but also the hypocritical moralist....and beneath all the dreck of political posturing he savages in this poem (in tones of hurt, yet hopeful, disgust) to keep himself from reducing his vision to zeitgeist eyes, ("With laconic emphasis a turning point witnessed avoiding masses in my habits") remains "the bottomless beading secret lover of pigeons..." to put the corruptions of the mercantile into perspective....and earn the clarity to return to basic needs: "all I ever wanted will be ceaseless vibrations warding off resentment behind the plain layers view" to go beyond thinking of poetry as "an arming of character into arenalight" to unleash elegiac sentiment...beyond, or at least between, complation, and definition.....digging "to un-survive"....in the etcetera zone....where it all comes "down to" need and care, privacy and listening (and a craving to work with eight year olds, as if it could help decenter the 18-year-old ur-interlocutor....)

Chris Stroffolino's (<http://chrisstroffolino.blogspot.com>) most recent collections of poetry include *Drinking From What I Once Wore* (Crisis Chronicles) and *'Slumming it' In White Culture* (Iniquity). He's also the author of a memoir, *Death of a Selfish Altruist*, and a collection of essays *Notes to an M(F)A In Non-poetry*. He currently is being priced out of Oakland, Calif.

# On Disappointing Your Heroes The Resurgence of Casey Scott



BY JONATHAN BERGER

I am so sorry, Casey, I failed you. You deserved better, so much better, and I'm glad that it eventually worked out. I just wish it hadn't taken so long—and I wish I had been in some way involved.

I first met Casey Scott around 1996, but heard her a year or three before in that post-grunge feeding frenzy when Capitol Records released her eclectic Creep City to a resounding national thud.

I was a fan.

"You're probably my biggest fan," she said at a point when she'd stopped playing shows, and had deeded me all her recordings to listen through, to decide what could be used, what could be released, what could be B-sides. I was assigned the task of curator for one of my favorite artists, an amazing responsibility and a greater honor, or vice versa.

The crate had perhaps 60 cassettes tapes in it, and I was excited to get started—too excited to actually start, for months, as the box that had collected dust in Casey's care collected even more in mine.

I just didn't know where to begin. I couldn't figure out how to go about it. I couldn't handle the honor or the responsibility, or vice versa.

"No, it's instructive," she said, as I returned the box, maybe a year later, "if even my biggest fan couldn't take this one, I don't have to kick myself for not creating a compilation of all this stuff, right?"

That was over 20 years ago, and no compilation of that lost music exists. But in that time, finally, Creep City is back in print, as well as her independently released debut tape, Alone Alive Alone, and the subsequent CD releases, as well. The entire Casey Scott catalog—and then some—has been put up on her website, a treasure trove of the artist's ephemera, with pictures and data from her days as an East Village antifolkie to her career as a Northwest actor as well as her bandleading later groups Diva Machina and Red Venus Love Army.

A more dedicated fan and friend, drummer Memphis Mike Federline, who'd played with Scott in multiple incarnations, included a recorded live set with Diva Machina, up on the site, did the difficult work of making a digital presence for this long-lost artist. "I felt there was a need to get her music out to the world and have it accessible all in one place," said Federline.

For Federline, this project was a labor of love, but still, the work was taxing, coding and tagging each individual song for these multitude of albums. "I had to convert all the songs to the proper format," he said. "One by one. It was an extreme amount of work. Took a couple months, at least."

There's a visual element that has only been scratched, so far, as well.

"Casey has eight million photographs," says Federline. "We really went minimal on that stuff compared to what's in the vault."

Of course, there's more to come. Federline mentions an eventual EP that might soon become available.

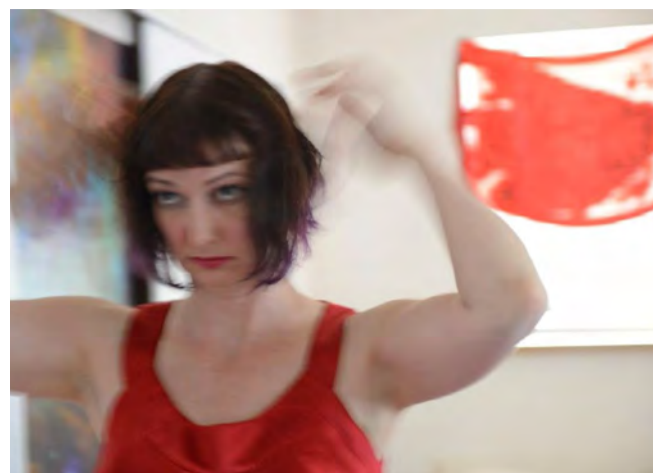
"There is another studio recording that we made that I have on reel-to-reel that I need to have transferred and digitized. I think it's three songs with me, Dina, Casey, and Jeff Lang [all players from the late '90s Diva Machina]," he said.

There's another Diva Machina album that may also, eventually, see the light of day—or hear the sound of ears—or whatever metaphor actually befits the release. "I hope to get it up and available as soon as I can," said Federline.

Clearly, the Casey Scott website is a living document, which will continue to be updated; the artist of the moment is just releasing a new album: Glorie Incogniti.

It's long past time for everyone to get more familiar with her. I can't wait to hear all the things I should have been listening to for all these years, Casey. I hope someday, we can hear a compilation of those other tracks, if someone can do what I never could.

<https://caseyscott.com/>



**Drummer Memphis Mike Federline did the difficult work of making a digital presence for this long-lost artist. 'I felt there was a need to get her music out to the world and have it accessible all in one place,' says Federline.**

## Top 10 Casey Scott Tracks

Clearly I'm not objective about this artist. She's been one of my favorite for generations, too. She should be your favorite for generations, too. Get on the Scott bandwagon, damnit, right away! These should get you started:

Alone Alive Alone (1988)

Self-produced, seemingly self-recorded, this indie tape represents Scott at her AntiFolkiest.

"Men From Maine" paints a picture of a solitary dame who cannot bear the attentions of a series of "10,000 Mainiacs" who provide undivided attentions over a driving melodic electric guitar.

"Ratty Boys" is juggernaut of rhymes that would shame any folksinger of every generation.

Creep City (1993)

The major label debut that sank almost immediately. Trouser Press called her schizophrenic among parallels to Patti Smith and Maggie Estep.

"Sharp Metal Objects" probably is the cause of any bipolar description, telling the tale of an institutionalization and all the pills involved.

"Ryan" goes a capella among an army of Caseys bopping about, offering her titular brother better love advice than she ever got.

The Final Girl (1999)

The first band album with Diva Machina, featuring the talents of Australian blues phenom Jeff Lang on guitar. It's great. They're all great. You get that, right?

"Must Be Spring" is an ode to the change of seasons with a foreboding bass groove that leads into a mighty guitar release that truly provides the majesty of the season. So wonderful.

LIVE at Arlene's Grocery NYC (1997)

Unreleased until now, this Diva Machina show (featuring website curator Memphis Mike Federline) was sparsely attended, and you can hear that sometimes in the underwhelming audience reaction and the flagging banter, but the energy in the performances are astonishing.

"7th of November," one of Scott's sweetest songs, effectively a gender reversed "Freebird," sans solos, originally off of "Creep City," is performed dually with Lang on guitar, and it's... it's something else.

"Regular Riot," from The Final Girl, has such an insanely powerful chorus.

The Whole Sky (2008)

Scott led Red Venus Love Army, a 12-member horn-ridden veritable legion of musicians, through this gorgeous suite of songs. (You know it's a suite, because the last song repeats elements of the first. That's classy!).

"Love is the Medicine" features either multiple singers or some amazing voicework from our Ms. Scott. The term "schizophrenic" seems like it could apply here, again, but so could "glorious," or, for that matter "bouillabaisse."

Glorie Incogniti (2019)

Her latest, recently crowd-funded album, recorded in Brussels, and inspired by notorious 17th century venetian painter Artemisia Gentileschi and the art made around and about her.

"My Lancelot" is a sexy, funky number. "I haven't got a chance," she sings at the end of the verse, and neither does the listener.

"Cry If You Want To" (2018)

A single for Holly Cole back in the '90s but never recorded by Scott, a version's now available. It's pretty cool.

*Jonathan Berger has been listening to Casey Scott's music even longer than he's been writing for Boog City, which is, like, a really long time. He also writes for <http://www.jonberger.com>.*

## Old Dog; New Tricks

## Recent Work from Cannonball Statman



BY JJ HAYES

Cannonball Statman

Playing Dead

Former Boog City music editor Cannonball Statman has notably employed the persona of an actual dog, so that he's on a label called German Shepherd Records seemed a bit suspicious. Unfortunately, the label doesn't appear to be for the canine within each of us, but rather, as one Ged Babey at [louderthanwar.com](http://louderthanwar.com) puts it, is "different somehow in that its artists are not willfully uncommercial, it's just that they have eccentricities and idiosyncrasies which make them outside the norm (or the mainstream) somehow."

One could always classify Statman in that category, and the first track or so seems to confirm that what we have here is a slightly off-kilter, on the edge of frivolous, concept album about a cow named Clara attempting an escape to Mumbai. But that easy categorization shortly disappears. Suddenly there is this piece, "Courier Says II - Dance of the Soldier," which hits like a lament for the dying America; I think it reveals the lie we have all been buying into for decades if not centuries. A song of loss? "The sun sets over her eyes/ and her figure animates in accordance with/ the walls of her own cave closing in on her."

I am not quite sure what goes down in the next track, "Courier Says III - Alcohol." Whether it's an individual class of individuals, or all of humanity, somewhere there's a personified self-deified rich man. And then perhaps it is we who stand accused, forced to look at our own individual and collective falsehood before such a figure: "But he's God/ he's out of his head. Mortals pay millions/ for a night in his bed."

After crossing "Henry Hudson," we eventually end up in Berlin where an army of a million cyborgs is being secretly amassed "for use as powerful enforcer-soldiers of new unforeseen global regime" which is all very well and good, and I will not tell you how it turns out, for after a most poignant request to cross the English Channel we find ourselves in a pizzeria where we learn the secret to the album's title, and begin to get the feeling that if we start to look at the world through our own only-animal part we start a slow decline (leaving me with disconcerting images straight out of Thomas Harris). I cannot even begin to describe the last two pieces, clocking in at 8:25 and 10:06, which insist on overwhelming you with their length alone; you might as well sit back and "enjoy" the ride.

What is the meaning of this piece of evidence called Playing Dead? Songwriting serves many purposes; songwriters have many aims. One subset of songwriting, the one that keeps me coming back, is the rendition by the songwriter of what they see in the world. Now all of our perception is received through the filters of our own hidden preconceptions, accepted ingrained authorities whispering in the background. Sometimes songwriters just take an arbitrary stance and see how it plays out; some just state the facts and let the selection speak for itself; and some get close to a vision like the later Van Gogh, leaving one wondering whether it is just something really pretty, produced by madness, or if something else is being communicated. A project like Playing Dead could easily devolve into some arch-vegan apologetic, or it could have been just playing around with a silly plot that occurred to someone while drinking absinthe in some dive in the home of moral relativism. I don't think this is the product of madness or make-believe madness. Despite the anger of the characters at the humans, only a human could have produced this. Only a human can communicate the particular vision that confronts the particular human. Only, I think, a human can work through deciphering another human's communication with the hope of finding something new about the world.

Anyway, listen to Playing Dead if you have the time (and if you don't, at least listen to "Courier Says II - Dance of the Soldier." It's nifty!)



**Suddenly there is this piece, 'Courier Says II—Dance of the Soldier,' which hits like a lament for the dying America; I think it reveals the lie we have all been buying into for decades.**

*Cannonball and Clare photo by Paul Gubernachuk, JJ Hayes by Mike Shoheit*

<https://germanshepherdrecords.bandcamp.com/album/playing-dead>

*JJ Hayes is a former music editor of Boog City and the current bandleader of JJ Hayes. You can hear him at <https://jjhayes.bandcamp.com/>.*



**Renee LeBeau**  
Cape Cod, Mass.

**Perfectionist**

She peeled oranges like a surgeon.  
One deft incision of a sharp nail and  
with deliberate ease she would peel  
the entire orange in one satisfying coil  
which curled around her hands like a promise.  
As she worked, conversation would pause,  
a moment of fascinated silence amid cafeteria static.  
We waited for the skin to break.  
Somehow, she held us suspended  
as she manipulated skin from flesh,  
placed the peel neatly beside her,  
began to pick every shred  
of white rind from every wedge  
of fruit until the translucent membrane  
was as pristine as an operating table.  
Somehow, chatter would resume  
as though released from a spell.  
In a blink we were back to ourselves,  
talking and laughing around her  
like nurses on a smoke break.  
Never mind that she never left  
enough time to actually eat.  
So absorbed in the process  
of perfectly peeling the fruit  
with her deft bird-boned fingers  
that she didn't allocate time for  
the vulgar ritual of consumption,  
before the final lunch bell rang and we  
shuffled off to class and her  
sweet clean orange became trash.  
Never mind that we too only saw  
the glamour of her hands,  
the guise of her smile.  
Never mind her bird-bones,  
Her thin hair, her broken fingernails,  
her sunken eyes, her stopped period.  
Never mind the intervention,  
her hospital gown,  
her empty seat in a cafeteria  
buzzing with adolescent carelessness.  
Just think about  
that perfect orange peel.



**Mitch Manning**  
Chelsea, Mass.

**Venus in Kyoto**

The heavenly body awakens  
Dressed in a kimono of sweat  
I sit in temple gardens  
Until I'm no longer there  
Mid-summer lotus bloom  
The pond gurgles knowing itself  
A garden is as beautiful as its caretaker  
Taizo, continuously practicing hidden virtue  
Without expecting anything in return  
At Wonder Cafe  
I saw the line of men crossing the street  
Four apostles of Liverpool  
What if Yoko was right?  
I count backward the seasons  
Croaking toad in the pond  
Echoes against temple walls  
I see the incumbent moon  
Golden Venus in relief  
I solve two koans in sleep  
Dream of friends singing  
Until their voices are hoarse  
Alpha Station FM Kyoto  
You're loud and clear buddy  
Practicing meditation at the urinal  
The ants climb the tiles  
Cicadas hiss all day long  
Gardens of yin, gardens of yang  
Catch a slippery fish in a small gourd  
A hand brushing still water  
Water falling over rocks  
After the floods, the heat  
After the bomb, the fall  
Look down for a moment  
And everything has passed  
The tsunami wasn't like the Great Wave of Hokusai  
But swell of tide rise all at once  
Swallowing the hills, the schools  
If only they didn't gather there on the playground  
If only the earth didn't shift itself  
If everything was just fine, fine, fine  
Heat haze, late July  
Bound toward some unknowing  
I'm tongue tied at the thought of it  
The language of evaporation  
When can I sit next to you by the river  
With your two gourds of joy and grief  
The river slips past us  
Covers the rocks of our own discovery  
Carp swim by oblivious to our dance  
Looking out at the long darkness of night  
Light trails, Venus ignited  
I leave myself clues of things to discover in the future  
Sonic maps of measure and harmony  
A silhouette against the sky  
The moon an eclipse  
The sun a shadow  
My reflection in the street  
The long arm of summer  
The dial straight up and down  
A neck towel to catch my overflowing sweat  
Desire on the tatami mat  
I missed the meditation class to dream  
What's a house and what's a temple  
Do good things come out of the earth?  
I demolish the self-made mythology  
Turn hate back to soil  
Grow lotus from a muddy pot  
This is the season of pond bloom  
Twitching before sleep  
Luxurious bamboo floors  
A bullet shot through the mountains  
The tunnel of thinking  
Which direction to dig in  
Towards dark earth  
Or some new light

**Ros Zimmerman**



Lexington, Mass.

**The Person I am Being**

The person i am being...

*for Christina for whom kinbeing extends*

1.  
all kinds  
in kind of  
kin kindling

2.  
i am being  
ambient

slapdash  
balderdash  
end-dashed

3.  
unfoling in - swerve  
migratory mantri

4.  
what kind of person are you being  
if you won't do anything of the kind  
what kind of a question is that?

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**David S. Hooker**

Fall River, Mass.

**They Had Names**

Unnamed	Rocio Guillen Rocha	Miguel Angel Honorato	Kim Saltmarsh Dietz
Benson Louie	Tara Roe	Unnamed	Lucas Eibel
Wayne Chan	Unnamed	Javier Jorge-Reyes	Jason Johnson
Unnamed	Lisa Romero	Jason Benjamin Josaphat	Unnamed
Michael Lefiti	Unnamed	Cory James Connell	Sarena Dawn Moore
Hannah Ahlers	Christopher Roybal	Unnamed	Rebecca Ann Carnes
Unnamed	Brett Schwabeck	Juan P. Rivera Velazquez	Treven Taylor Anspach
Heather Alvarado	Bailey Schweitzer	Luis Daniel Conde	Unnamed
Unnamed	Laura Shipp	Unnamed	Nav. Officer Randall Smith
Stefanie Anderson	Erick Silva	Jonathan Antonio Caimy	Sgt. Carson A. Holmquist
Carrie Barnette	Susan Smith	Vega	Unnamed
Jack Beaton	Brennan Stewart	Christopher Andrew	Staff Sgt. David A. Wyatt
Steve Berger	Unnamed	Leinonen	Lance Cpl. Squire K. Wells
Unnamed	Neysa Tonks	Frank Hernandez	Sgt. Thomas J. Sullivan
Candace Bowers	Michelle Vo	Unnamed	Cynthia Hurd
Denise Burditus	Kurt von Tilow	Shane Evan Tomlinson	Unnamed
Unnamed	Bill Wolfe Jr.	Brenda Lee Marquez	Susie Jackson
Sandy Casey	Sarai Lara	McCool	Ethel Lance
Andrea Castilla	Unnamed	Unnamed	Unnamed
Unnamed	Belinda Ste Galde	Angel L. Candelario-Padro	DePayne Middleton-Doctor
Denise Conner	Wilton "Chuck" Eagan	Geraldo A. Ortiz Jimenez	Clementa C. Pinckney
Derrick Taylor	Beatrice Dotson	Akyra Monet Murray	Unnamed
Unnamed	Unnamed	Unnamed	Tywanza Sanders
Austin Davis	Shayla Kathleen Martin	Paul Terren Henry	Daniel L. Simmons Sr.
Unnamed	Edward Sotomayor Jr.	Captain Antonio Davon	Sharonda Singleton
Thomas Day Jr.	Unnamed	Brown	Unnamed
Christiana Duarte	Stanley Amador III	Unnamed	Myra Thompson
Stacey Etcheber	Juan Ramon Guerrero	Christopher Joseph Sanfeliz	Unnamed
Brian Fraser	Unnamed	Alejandro Barrios Martinez	Charlotte Bacon
Keri Galvan	Eric Ivan Ortiz-Rivera	Rodolfo Ayala Ayala	Daniel Barden
Dana Gardner	Luis S. Vielma	Unnamed	Unnamed
Angela Gomez	Peter O. Gonzalez-Cruz	Tevin Eugene Crosby	Rachel D'Avino
Officer Charleston	Unnamed	Yilmury Rodriguez Solivan	Olivia Engel
Hartfield	Luis Omar Ocasio-Capo	Joel Rayon Panagac	Josephine Gay
Chris Hazencomb	Kimberly Morris	Unnamed	Unnamed
Jennifer Topaz Irvine	Unnamed	Juan Chevez-Martinez	Dylan Hockley
Teresa Nicol Kimura	Eddie Jamoldroy Justice	Jerald Arthur Wright	Dawn Lafferty Hochsprung
Jessica Klymchuk	Darryl Roman Burt II	Leroy Valentin Fernandez	Madeleine Hsu
Unnamed	Deonka Deidra Drayton	Jean C. Nieves Rodriguez	Catherine Hubbard
Carly Krebaum	Anthony Luis	Robert Adams	Chase Kowalski
Rhonda LeRocque	Laureanodisla	Isaac Amanios	Jesse Lewis
Victor Link	Unnamed	Bennetta Betbadal	Ana Marquez-Greene
Jordan McIldeon	Jean Carlos Mendez Perez	Harry Bowman	Unnamed
Kelsey Breanne Meadows	Franky Jimmy Dejesus	Sierra Clayborn	James Mattioli
Calla Medig	Velazquez	Unnamed	Grace McDonnell
Sonny Melton	Unnamed	Juan Espinoza	Anne Marie Murphy
Pati Mestas	Amanda Alvear	Aurora Godoy	Unnamed
Unnamed	Martin Benitez Torres	Unnamed	Unnamed
Unnamed	Unnamed	Shannon Johnson	Emilie Parker
Austin Meyer	Luis Daniel Wilson-Leon	Larry Daniel Kaufman	Jack Pinto
Adrian Murfitt	Mercedez Marisol Flores	Damian Meins	Noah Pozner
Unnamed	Unnamed	Unnamed	Caroline Previdi
Rachael Parker	Xavier Emmanuel Serrano	Tin Nguyen	Jessica Rekos
Jennifer Parks	Rosado	Nicholas Thalasinis	Avielle Richman
Unnamed	Unnamed	Yvette Velasco	Lauren Rousseau
Carrie Parsons	Gilberto Ramon Silva	Unnamed	Unnamed
Lisa Patterson	Menendez	Michael Raymond Wetzel	Mary Sherlach
John Phippen	Oscar A. Aracena-Montero	Officer Garrett Swasey	Unnamed
Melissa Ramirez	Simon Adrian Carrillo	Larry Levine	Victoria Soto
Jordyn Rivera	Fernandez	Unnamed	Benjamin Wheeler
Quinton Robbins	Unnamed	Lucero Alcaraz	Allison Wyatt
Cameron Robinson	Enrique L. Rios Jr.	Quinn Glen Cooper	Unnamed

**Poetry Bios**

**David S. Hooker** is a cursive writer, poet, baker, cinephile, and critic from Fall River, Mass. His work has appeared in various online and print publications, including the Prevailing Wind, the Observer, Steal Company Paper Write Poems, Swansea Public Library Annual Poetry Slam, and in the Bridge: Journal for Fine Arts Volumes 14 and 15, where his poems Grandpa Jim and Over the Sink were awarded "Best Overall Piece." **Renee LeBeau** is a senior at Bridgewater State University where she is majoring in English and minoring in Middle East Studies. She enjoys reading, cooking, dancing, traveling, and writing poetry. She lives on Cape Cod with her boyfriend Craig and a fat cat named Milly. **Mitch Manning** (<https://mitchmanning.info/ABOUT>) is the author of City of Water forthcoming from Arrowsmith Press in 2019. He has taught poetry in central China; his poems have been read in Basra, southern Iraq as part of the Boston to Basra Project; he teaches and is associate director at the Joiner Institute for the Study of War and Social Consequences at UMass Boston. He's a poetry editor for CONSEQUENCE magazine and founder of NO INFINITE a journal of poetry, art, and protest. **Ros Zimmermann** (<http://www.roszimmermann.com/>), writer and artist, has published poems in the U.S. and in Britain. Recent poems appear online in Solstice: Literary Review and terrain.org and Field Guide, and in print in Let The Bucket Down: Issue Four. Her work has been included the Sojourner Anthology (University of Illinois) and Poems About Sculpture (Random House). She has poems forthcoming in Wesleyan Press' Best American Experimental Writing (BAX) 2019's Digital Edition.

# Yoko Oji Kikuchi

## Oakland, Calif.

<http://www.instagram.com/yokokokokokokoko>

<http://yoko-ok.bandcamp.com>

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yoko\\_Kikuchi](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yoko_Kikuchi)

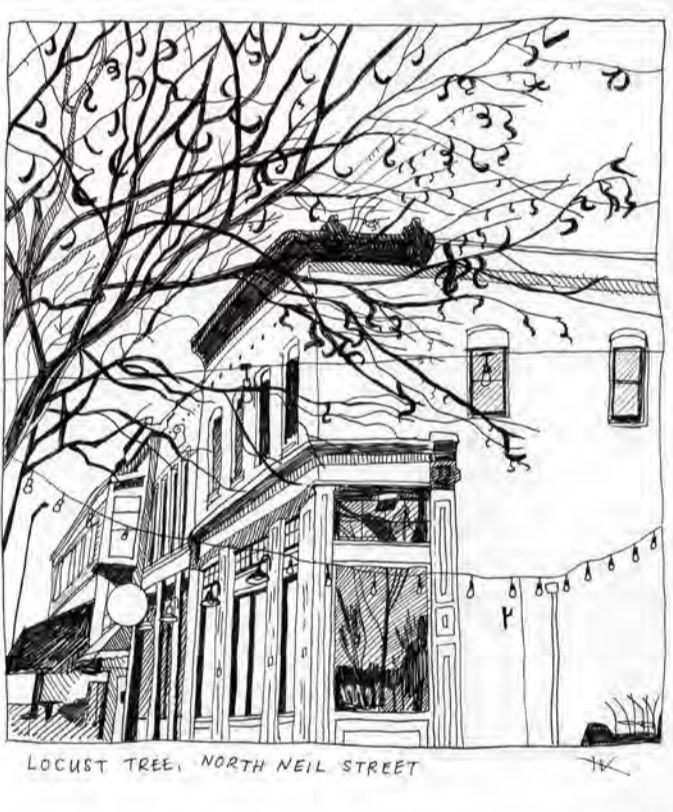
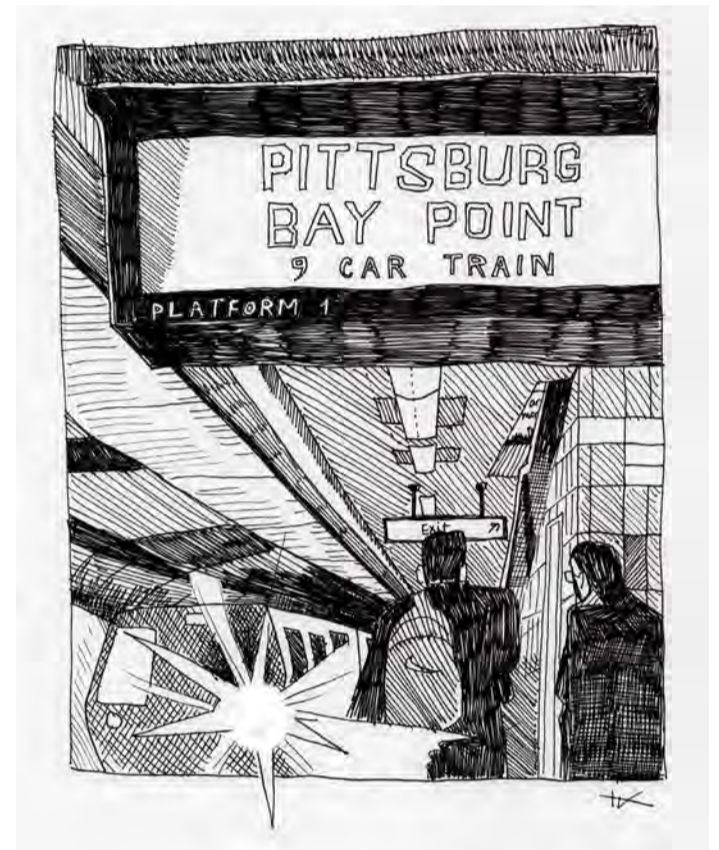
<http://www.soundcloud.com/yoko-ok>



### Bio

Yoko Oji Kikuchi is a fourth-generation American artist, singer/songwriter and video-maker of Japanese and Filipino descent. Born and raised in NYC to parents involved in the visual arts, she grew up drawing and making art. Never one to follow a direct path, she went to a math and science high school... where she cut class and drew all over her homework. Then at art school in New England she quit drawing and framed pieces of gum, found objects, and artifacts from her childhood, writing stories about them and displaying them on the gallery walls. Soon after graduation, she quit art altogether and focused on music, moving back to New York and becoming very involved in show-organizing and forming a bunch of bands, the most notable of which was Dream Bitches.

In 2011 she moved to Oakland, Calif. where she continued to play in bands and found work in coffeehouses and nightclubs. She drew sporadically, mostly for show flyers and the like. In November of 2018 she designed a t-shirt for a cafe she was working at and got obsessed with printing shirts. At the same time she got a fancy new notebook and started doing a drawing every day. Since then she has managed to churn out more than 30 drawings and a handful of shirt designs, and plans to continue throughout 2019.



# On DIY Chapbook Publishing: A Conversation with Alice Ladrick and Jonny Lohr of Adjunct Press



INTERVIEW BY MICHAEL WENDT

*Adjunct Press is an independent chapbook press based in Milwaukee. I spoke with Alice Ladrick and Jonny Lohr of Adjunct about DIY publication and poetry communities, among other things.*

## How did you first become interested in poetry? And in small press publishing?

Jonny Lohr: I came to poetry like most people: through a childhood obsession with Leonardo DiCaprio, which led to The Basketball Diaries, which led to Jim Carroll, which led to New York School poets. I became interested in small press publishing through Milwaukee. There's a great history of small press publishers like Karl Young and Tom Montag, as well as the resource of Woodland Pattern.

Alice Ladrick: I guess you could say it started with Mother Goose and that sort of thing as a kid. I grew up reading constantly and writing a lot, and really got interested in poetry more seriously at the encouragement of my professors in undergrad. I got sort of swept up into it and just kept going. Some favorite poets of mine are Bernadette Mayer, Mina Loy, and Lisa Robertson. I got into small press publishing from work I was doing during my M.F.A. at Notre Dame—I took a class on bookmaking and really enjoyed it, so doing small press work just sort of followed. I also love the history Jonny mentioned of people who are part of poetry communities producing work at a more informal level and kind of passing it around to their friends. That's the sort of thing I like about poetry communities.

## How did Adjunct Press get started?

AL & JL: Alice studied bookmaking at Notre Dame. Jonny had been making occasional chapbooks for a few years, including as the short-lived Scharmél Iris Vanity Press. We'd moved to Milwaukee, gotten jobs, and were feeling generally disconnected from the "poetry world." We figured this would be a fun way to remain connected, but on our own terms. Our first book was printed surreptitiously at work on some company letterhead. Now we can do everything in-house, having built up our own simple means of production over the years, like acquiring our own printer and the pen-plotter that has become our signature cover style.

## According to your website, Adjunct is "an independent chapbook press." What draws you to the chapbook specifically?

JL: I love the chapbook as a fetish object. I like to see the choices made in small-scale bookmaking. I prefer things that are more handmade and less perfect. I love when a book has a small mistake or the cover ink isn't quite right. Also, because chapbooks are often relegated as less important than a "full book" in a careerist-sense, a chapbook feels more personal and immediate to the writer. You can explore a writer through their chapbooks and often can find a better reflection of their work in relation to their closer community.

AL: I generally prefer chapbooks to book-length work. Chapbooks often have more direction and intent than larger collections and tend to have more of an arc or theme that carries throughout. I like the sense of completeness a chapbook can offer, but also the possibility to do something unusual and to experiment with form (both poetically and as a book object).

## How do you choose works to be published?

AL & JL: So far our publications have been friends from our poetry communities, either here in Milwaukee or our time in school. We do want to work to bring more diversity to our publications—we want to find a way that we can bring in more voices and maintain our laid-back process. We're limited by the amount of free time we have since we both work full time and have other obligations, so doing an open reading period or something like that hasn't been possible, but it's something we're keeping an open mind about doing in the future.

## Your chapbooks are each so uniquely designed and handmade with such care, I wonder: how does the design process work? And production? In what ways does content drive both design and production? How much input do the authors generally have?

AL & JL: We want to create a balance where the book is a particular object that enhances the text without being a book-art piece that places the text as secondary. We usually come up with an outlandish idea and then try to make it happen. We wanted to make Jayme Russell's PINKpoems a sensory overload so we used a pink stock, glittery pink cover, and a heart-shaped stab-binding. Great things have come up through practical necessities. The design for Beth Towle's Rhabdomantics changed drastically when the shipment of our first choice of cover stock was stolen from our porch and was subsequently out of stock when we tried to reorder. The new cover stock was textured and wouldn't hold the lino print we made, so we hand-painted each cover. Holly Raymond's Mall Is Lost needed 68 pages, so we designed it as a buttonhole stitch with four signatures. Our authors have been very generous with us in our design process—we often begin by asking if they have any ideas and work from there.

## On the "About" page of the Adjunct website, I so appreciate the ways in which you describe the "expendable" labor of DIY publishing and artistic practice, as well as the ways in which DIY practice stands apart from art making and publishing within institutional settings. Even the name, Adjunct Press, speaks directly to exploitative labor practices endemic to higher education. Can you speak to the role such economic and political questions play in the work that Adjunct does?

AL & JL: The name Adjunct Press began as a pithy joke on the job prospects offered to our generation of poets. But as we both grew more removed from academia, it has become a way to define our relationship to the work behind the press. We do all our own labor and do it without compensation. If we are lucky we break even on material expenses, but any extra profit is put toward the next project. Adjunct Press is a hobby by design. Any attempts to scale-up production or achieve some kind of professionalization would have to involve some sort of external unpaid labor or internship, and that's not something we're comfortable with. We have had friends help with stitching though.

## How does your work as a publisher inform your own writing?

JL: I've started a personal writing goal to write and make one chapbook every year. I enjoy using the structural form as a constraint to write within and against.

AL: I've actually stopped writing almost entirely. I became more interested in the books themselves and the design and layout and the whole process of it and was really burned out on writing after doing my M.A. and M.F.A. back to back. I'm hoping to start reading more poetry again and to get back into writing in 2019. New year, new goals, right?

## What are your thoughts and hopes for the future of Adjunct? What's on the horizon, and what works are forthcoming?

AL & JL: Honestly, we hope to remain generally the same. We were very ambitious in 2018, putting out four books and planning them all in advance. Four books a year is probably our upper limit. There're a few projects we've discussed tentatively for next year, but haven't yet worked out any specifics. We recently procured an old Risograph machine and will hopefully be able to do some cool things with that. We always seem to find ways to make bookmaking as difficult as possible, but it usually leads to fun results, so hopefully we keep setting up challenges for ourselves and work through the puzzles.

<https://adjunctpress.com/>

*Jonny Lohr is a poet and bookmaker. He is the author of Peak 2018 Poems, The Apocalypse of the Power Team, Spheres, and Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror Projected on my Wall. He lives in Milwaukee, where he co-edits Adjunct Press and is a dues-paying member of IBEW.*

*Alice Ladrick is the author of Don't Read This If You Already Want To Die. Her poems have been published in various journals, including Radioactive Moat, Word Riot, Vector, and Verse Wisconsin. Her essay on translating Gertrude Stein into Old English was published in Post-Medieval. She lives in Milwaukee, where she co-edits Adjunct Press.*

*Michael Wendt is literary program director and bookstore manager at Woodland Pattern Book Center in Milwaukee (<http://www.woodlandpattern.org>). With WPBC co-founder, Karl Gartung, he co-edits and published Woodland Pattern's occasional tender | tender chapbook series.*



**'Chapbooks often have more direction and intent than larger collections and tend to have more of an arc or theme that carries throughout. I like the sense of completeness a chapbook can offer, but also the possibility to do something unusual and to experiment with form (both poetically and as a book object).'**

**—Alice Ladrick**

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