

Chris McCreary's new book, *[neuro / mantic]*, is forthcoming from Furniture Press this fall.

Pillow Talk

A Few Words from the *bedfellows*



Boog City small press co-editor Chris McCreary recently interviewed Alina Pleskova and Jackee Sadacario, co-editors of the Philadelphia-based *bedfellows* magazine. *bedfellows* might have published just two issues thus far, but the two responded to questions via email in the joint voice of long-time co-conspirators.

Boog City: I've heard you mention that you've known each other for at least a decade. Has poetry been a central part of your friendship from day one?

Bedfellows: So many female writers in our age group—who came of age right before the word 'blog' was common, but for whom online diaries were definitely a 'thing'—probably have a similar story: we met on a LiveJournal poetry community. We liked each other's work, and saw that we had shared interests (punk, Frank O'Hara, etc.—the important stuff) and ended up following each other's journals and getting to know each other through that platform.

Eventually, Jackee mentioned that her sister lived in Philadelphia and we realized that we knew some of the same people/have been at the same shows. Then Jackee wrote in a post that she was going to be moving to Philadelphia to go to Temple, where Alina was already enrolled. We met for lunch one day and we've been solid ever since. Like, we met and just knew. Plus there was an assumed intimacy in knowing the details of each other's personal lives even before we met in person. Take that, detractors of the confessional mode.

What made you decide to found *bedfellows*?

We wanted to work together to contribute something to our city's poetry community, which has given so much to us as writers and as people. Philly is full of amazing presses, lit mags, literary events, etc., so we didn't want to have a project for the sake of it; we wanted it to accomplish something new and different.



A gleeful selfie from *bedfellows* co-editors Jackee Sadacario and Alina Pleskova.

We both include sex a lot in our own work, and we've often talked about how hard it is to write about it in a way that rings true—not clinical or flowery or stilted—and how infrequently we saw/heard this kind of work in public spaces. It exists, of course, but we hadn't seen it compiled in one place. There's a weird stigma to sex-focused writing in general. We started to wonder what would happen if we asked people who didn't usually write about intimacy (or who weren't known for it in their work) to

'In summary: while *bedfellows* is thematic, we liked the idea of subverting expectations about what a sex/relationship-themed literary magazine actually looks like.'

do so, what it would look like. That's how we came upon the idea to (as our mini-blurb goes) "catalog contemporary discussions of desire/intimacy."

We wanted to do this in a space which existed for that explicit purpose, but it was important to keep the theme open-ended and inclusive enough to allow for many different interpretations, so that it would never feel too restrictive or one-note. Not to criticize erotica writers/publishers too heavily, but if you write about sex in a way that isn't conventionally sexy (like, awkward or trippy or funny or cold or depressing or whatever the case may be), what are the chances that you'll want to submit it to a

place that just publishes erotica? It's unnecessary, limiting your audience in such a way.

In summary: while *bedfellows* is thematic, we liked the idea of subverting expectations about what a sex/relationship-themed literary magazine actually looks like. And the thing is, there's still a vulnerability there, even if a poem itself is irreverent. Every writer has to send us a photo of their bed, for one thing.

A poet-type you've never met before asks, "What is *bedfellows*?" You have one sentence in which to answer the question, what do you say?

It's a litmag full of work about intimacy and desire, but basically "doing it."

Could you talk a bit about how you divide up the various tasks—choosing work, laying out the issues, etc.?

As you can tell by how we answer these questions, we do everything together. In knowing each other this long, we've been able to anticipate each other's energy levels at any given time, what our respective strengths are, and when one of us can fill in for the other's deficits.

We start with a big picture brainstorming session; just a series of broad questions about what we want to accomplish. Then, we come up with a list of people we think could really contribute a singular voice to the issue. We consider how the different voices will compliment and contrast each other, and then we create a google doc of all of the information we need and our various to-do lists. (Bonus: we're both compulsive list-makers.) We draft emails in tandem and delegate tasks to one another accordingly. Jackee has experience with layout and Alina has experience in all things publishing. Our experience complements each other, but we are each other's best motivators. Most of the time, if one person had an idea, the other was already thinking the same thing.

We're very, very close friends and spend a lot of our free time together beyond the magazine. All of this results in us feeling super comfortable expressing ourselves and proposing ideas, because it's always a safe space. We're even more motivated to create a great final product or event or whatever together because it is for each other, in a sense. It's really beautiful collaborating on something with someone you love and already share so much of your days with.

How was compiling the second issue different from the first? How much of the work did you solicit, and how much of it came to you as blind submissions?

From the outset, we've chosen to focus on soliciting work rather than open submissions. It might sound nepotistic or lazy or maybe even snobby, but—at the risk of sounding hokey, too—it actually makes us better literary citizens. Even if we're soliciting people we know/our friends/people we've slept with/whatever, it requires a real familiarity with the person's work and consensus from both of us before the invitation is sent. This means we've both read the person's work, and, in almost all cases, we've gone to at least one of their readings, too. Since we make a point of it to focus on writers with a Philly connection, we really don't have an excuse to not be out there, engaging with people.

This might be the polar opposite of reading blind, but it doesn't mean that we solicit based on where you've been published, which awards you've won, or how many followers you have on whatever platform. And the thing is, we want readers to come into it with equal excitement for each piece and writer, so we publish the TOC in the back of the print magazine and tuck it away online as well—eschewing bio blurbs altogether. We know what we like when we see and hear it, and we can only hope that readers will agree.

Submissions float into our inbox from time to time but what makes us happiest is meeting poets out in the wild, so to speak. For instance, we solicited *bedfellows* 1 contributor Nicole Steinberg after hearing her read during the open mic portion at the end of a Moonstone reading at Fergie's. She

went up there with these wry, hilarious poems inspired by OkCupid, and we both immediately looked at each other like "Yes, yes, yes." We approached her immediately after to ask for a poem.

We really didn't know what to expect with the first issue, and we were so lucky: 95% of the 17 people we solicited sent us work (we got the rest of them for issue 2); 99% of them were able to read at the launch party (shout out to the wonderful Jenna Ogilvie, who understandably couldn't make it from D.C. on a weekday night.) When compiling issue 1 we had this mild anxiety that maybe our friends and extended social circles were just doing us a favor by sending over their work. It didn't feel real until it was, until the issue actually published and the raucously beautiful, jam-packed launch party happened.

We received so much positive feedback, both from writers and readers. It gave us a big boost of confidence in terms of our instincts regarding this process. It was a positive nudge to move forward with another issue (issue 2 is going to press now) and planning another (we're compiling our list of desired contributors for issue 3)—and here we are!

**YOUR
AD
HERE**
editor@boogcity.com
212-842-BOOG (2664)

Since we make a point of it to focus on writers with a Philly connection, we really don't have an excuse to not be out there, engaging with people.

Song is a Weapon

The Russian Bards and the Author's Song of the Soviet Union



BY MIKE SHOYKHET

(Ed. Note: On April 1, Sidewalk Cafe launched its new series Sidewalk Storyteller. As envisioned by Sidewalk's Somer Bingham the series is like a "combination of VH-1 Storytellers and Inside the Actor's Studio" (with Bingham herself playing the role of James Lipton). As Jan Berger described it: "With host Somer asking questions and pulling teeth, the format got off to a fascinating start with Mike Shoykhet in

the hot seat." One source of fascination was Shoykhet's description of the influence of the "Russian Bards" on his music. It turns out that music played in kitchen shows by people with day jobs can have enormous cultural repercussions. Boog City asked Shoykhet to go into a little more detail about the Russian Bard movement also known as "the author's song" and he has graciously complied with the request. -J.J. Hayes)

Alexander Galich arrives in Novosibirsk's Academgorodok and asks where to get a drink. It's March 1968 and the student club Integral is hosting a music festival. Over a hundred performers are scheduled to play in the upcoming days in a celebration of the author's song, the legendary Russian bard music. Integral, an organization known for its progressive escapades into intellectualism, art, and performance and somehow avoiding the Soviet eye, are taking a great risk by having Galich play at the festival. 3,000 tickets have



Bulat Okudzhava Memorial, Moscow, Arbat District.

a political rally. "And the marauders stood over the coffin in an honor post," he calls out the ruling elite in impossible bravery. "This is how easy it is to become rich, this is how easy it is to win, this is how easy it is to become an executioner: keep silent, keep silent, keep silent!" Galich reverberates through the bewildered auditorium. The performance is publicized and praised. As expected, it brings on a wrath.

Shortly after the festival the club Integral, "the nest of dissent," ceases to exist. In true Stalinist fashion, songwriters are demonized in the press; the genre is labeled, not only as insignificant, unimportant, and lowlife, but also as harmful to the social order. Many performers face persecution. They are woken up in the early morning by agents, interrogated, imprisoned, attempted to be drafted into informants. The pursued bards retreat underground to play secret shows in communal kitchens packed with friends and neighbors and to be passed around on bootlegged cassette tapes. Galich, a well-established career writer and filmmaker, is expelled from the Soviet cinematographers' union. Disgraced and stigmatized, he is forced to leave his own country to die abroad a few years after.

The author's song arrived in Russia from the mountain campfires and the weekend kitchens, favorite places of comfort and retreat. In itself, it was an attempt to make sense of life by people suffocating from an authoritarian, idiotic government. The essence of the songs is poetry, verses and verses, set to a musical rhythm usually provided with a Russian seven-string acoustic guitar. In this vein, the form can be traced to the great Russian poetic tradition of Alexander Pushkin and Mikhail Lermontov, and through the turning of the century poets Nikolai Nekrasov, Alexander Blok, and Sergei Yesenin. Sometime, possibly even before the war, it mixed with the criminal songs of the thief world, the street romance lyrics of vagrants and prostitutes and the songs of the prison labor camps. The music, serving as the underlying vehicle for the words, was sometimes borrowed from military marches, French chanson, Russian folk and gypsy waltzes. Subject matter ranges vastly, from the sweet, humorous love songs of the "student folklore" to the camping "tourist" songs of the mountains, to war, politics, sports, and science and so on. As diverse as the original bards were, they had one thing in common. They were masters of language. Carefully built into narratives, words tile onto each other, seamless, like bricks in some exquisite architecture, mortared with rhyme, engineered with setups and punch lines, ornamented with metaphors and catchphrases. Verses sneak with ease through criminal street jargon to soar to the sublimity rivaling Lord Byron and John Keats, sometimes in the same song. Nevertheless, the imprisoned culture recognized the bards only as amateurs, untrained hobbyists passing time in their avocation.

They usually came from different professional training and backgrounds, scientists, doctors, actors, sportsmen, writing and playing for pleasure, as a past time. They were labeled amateur, not because their work was somehow sub-par. On the contrary, some of them were literary giants. They were amateur simply because they were not recognized officially as professional singers or songwriters. This type of creativity was seen as a hobby, something that was done after the long hours of work, practiced in a living room, or in some town's cultural center. As with any totalitarian society, culture was to be filtered through the government, not only as a means of quality control, but also for the purpose of censorship. To be considered a musician, a songwriter, an artist of any kind and to receive recognition for it, one had to finish a university or a trade school and then to be accepted into a guild or a union sanctioned by the government and prepared for state work. A song used for public consumption in a film, a TV show, or on a released recording was usually credited to several different people, union music writers and lyrics writers. Bards, most of them without a proper music or writing background, played and sang their own songs. They became popular through word of mouth and by being passed around on cassette tapes, recorded when they played somewhere in some room, at a friend's apartment, here or there. The significance of this was remarkable. The bards weren't subject to any

As diverse as the original bards were, they had one thing in common. They were masters of language. Carefully built into narratives, words tile onto each other, seamless, like bricks in some exquisite architecture

censors, critics, editors, or party lackeys. They didn't have to jostle for political position at a union to have their work approved and released. The genre was a refuge for freedom. It was privatized art in a society where privatization of anything was illegal. The bard songs were shouts of the individual human soul trampled under the collectivized wheel of a stalled rusted tractor. They breathed life, vital and omnipresent, forever hunted, but always smirking in a secret understanding like old friends.

Realized and accepted as a form in Nikita Khrushchev's "Thaw" of the arts in the 1950s, the author's song was met head on by Leonid Brezhnev's new Stalinism. But benefiting from simplicity of performance and circumvention of bureaucracy and censorship, it thrived and its masters emerged: Yuri Vizbor, Vladimir Vysotsky, Bulat Okudzhava. Asked what he thought of his own work, Vysotsky, the author of some 600 songs, replied, "I am considered neither a poet, nor a singer, nor a musician. I do not belong to these labels. I have no one to answer to, except only my conscience and maybe the small group of friends for whom I write these songs."

Vysotsky, an actor by profession and a cultural figure of extreme popularity and controversy, emerged as a colossus of prophetic awareness and immense charisma. The Russian soul, that dreary essence of the peasants and the tsars, of the poets, the soldiers and the thieves, of the wars and the revolutions, in all of its humanity sifted through infinite, unspeakable cruelty, manifested itself in this one man. His songs span centuries. They are permeated with ultimate truths, dark irony, love and humor, life and death. They are all things.

Yuri Vizbor, a man of many trades, a writer, an actor and an avid mountain climber was the wholesome counterpart, the clear blue skies to Vysotsky's fire and brimstone. A champion of the "tourist song," Vizbor's songs are mostly about love and nature, lighter, but carrying a beautiful sadness of the modes of ordinary life. They are filled with clarity of existence and matter of fact wisdom delivered in an almost playful manner. Vizbor was beloved by the public and was a safer, less controversial choice over Vysotsky for concert promoters and movie directors fearing censorship for Vysotsky's politically subversive tendencies. Sometimes Vizbor even replaced Vysotsky in already filmed scenes.

Okudzhava, perhaps the purest poet of the bards, straddled the line between professional and amateur. He became a lead editor at a national literary magazine and was a professional sought-after lyricist. Along with hundreds of author's songs, he wrote lyrics for pop songs and film, as well as poetry and prose for publication. Losing both parents to the Great Purges and having fought in the Great Patriotic War, the warrior poet, quiet and unassuming, always in a melancholy process, delivered highly lyrical pieces with his fragile melodies and vocal style, never betraying the tragedies of his steely Asiatic roots.

The bards worked through the 1970s, writing music and songs for films and theater productions, recording albums, touring and performing in Russia and abroad, all the while denied acceptance and recognition. Along with the first wave personalities such as Yuliy Kim, Yuri Kukin, and Sergey and Tatyana Nikitin, some new faces were noticed. Alexander Rosenbaum, who started out writing criminal "blatniy" songs, broke through with a series of songs about the Soviet war in Afghanistan. Unlike Galich, who became radicalized in the face of brutal anti-Semitism, Rosenbaum seemed to simply shrug it off. He became a huge pop star and gained acceptance from the state, which led to a falling out with the songwriting circles. Zhanna Bichevskaya, influenced by Okudzhava, performed political and romance songs, as well as some songs in the folk tradition.

As the 1980s took hold of Soviet culture, the younger generation of wordsmiths grew a preference toward rock. Nevertheless, some new phenoms pushed the form further. Aleksander Bashlachev, a Siberian journalist, appeared as a revelation. Bashlachev, the mad poet, whose raspy voice and stream of consciousness lyrics shocked and moved new ears, fought on a different front. A genius of language, he combined high sensitivity with angry despair. Even Vysotsky at his angriest, presented his anger in a stoical, composed manner. In Bashlachev, fingerpicked chanson progressions sometimes gave way to machine-gun strummed rock chords and the wistful baritone to jagged punk snarls. His songs were a new moon phase, wild and sometimes frightening. Still, in all his madness and originality, those same spirits of the land that tormented and commanded Vysotsky, possessed and consumed Bashlachev as well.

Redemption came with the breakdown of Soviet communism. Awards and titles flooded the beleaguered poets, some posthumously. Statues and plaques went up across the country. Memorial concerts were held and aired on national television, where only a few decades before, any public footage or media contact was forbidden. Recordings, mastered and re-mastered, were collected and meticulously organized. Alexander Galich, reinstated and honored, at last returned home. The Soviet era of the bard, conceived with Galich, fully realized with Vysotsky, ended with Bashlachev's suicide at the age of 27, along with the Soviet Union itself. To sum up what it all meant, in the aftermath of the Academgorodok festival of 1968, Yuri Kukin was asked if the author's song came about as some response to the government manufactured pop culture. "This idea was spread as a falsehood," he said. "It's what they wanted you to believe. There was no response. Bard simply came from life. Life was speaking in people. It was just something that happened as people lived their lives."

The bard songs were shouts of the individual human soul trampled under the collectivized wheel of a stalled rusted tractor

already been sold, when the university's Young Communist League, the Komsomol, the sponsors, who prepared all the invitations and paperwork, get nervous at the scale of it all, withdraw themselves from the festival and condemn it out of fear of unpredictability and possible political repercussions. In spite of the difficulties, the festival takes place. Until this point, the author's song mainly touched upon lighter subjects such as young romance, nature, and mountain climbing. Galich, a known political poet, delivers a new, profound darkness. "How proud are we, the bastards, that he died in his own bed," Galich sings of the public's hypocrisy surrounding the death of Boris Pasternak, whose funeral erupted into

Links

Alexander Galich, "In Memory Of Boris Pasternak" (Original video from the festival of bards.)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjPd1zJxEGc>

Yuri Vizbor, "My Dear"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaQx4o8kmlM>

Vladimir Vysotsky, "Cupolas"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkO1o7ExZAs>

Bulat Okudzhava, "Our Tenth Battalion"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2178k3kp9ro>

Alexander Bashlachev, "Time Of Bells"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8y6MHjeZs>

Bio

Mike Shoykhet is a very amateur songwriter, who attempts to make sense of life in and around New York City.

Links

<http://electricpumas.tumblr.com/>

<http://www.adlumenpress.com/dd-product/some-distant-lateral-present/>

<http://epc.buffalo.edu/authors/samuels/>

<http://americanbooksusa.wordpress.com/>

Bios

Lauren Hunter is from North Carolina and lives in Lefferts Gardens, Brooklyn. Her chapbook *My Own Fires* was released by Brothel Books. Poems can be found or are forthcoming in *Saudade Review*, *Sink Review*, *SOUND Literary Magazine*, and *Souvenir Lit Journal*. She can be tracked on the internet as [breakfast_etc.](#)

Daniel Rounds spent the better part of a decade in UCLA's graduate political science and sociology programs studying political economy, social theory, and social movements before abandoning graduate school to become a labor activist. He has worked for various labor unions, environmental organizations, and community groups. His poetry has appeared in *Aufgabe*, *Aught*, *Fish Drum Magazine*, *Good Foot*, *The American River Review*, *3rd Bed*, and *XConnect*. He lives and works in Sacramento, Calif.

Lisa Samuels has a Ph.D. from the University of Virginia and teaches literature and creative writing at The University of Auckland in New Zealand. She publishes essays and edited work on poetry, theory, and critical practice. She is the author of several books of poetry—including *Wild Dialectics*, *Tomorrowland*, and *The Invention of Culture* (all from Shearsman Books), and *The Seven Voices* (O Books)—as well as a creative nonfiction book, *Anti M* (Chax Press). Her current projects include an essay collection, *Modernism Is Not Enough*, an audio recording of *Tomorrowland* with soundscapes, and a modular novel experiment, *Tender Girl*. Having lived in various parts of the United States, as well as in Sweden, Israel/Palestine, Yemen, Malaysia, and now New Zealand/Aotearoa, she is interested in transculturalism, especially as embodied in language and the digitals.

Ed Steck is a writer from Pittsburgh. His most recent publications are *The Garden: Synthetic Environment for Analysis and Simulation* (Ugly Duckling Presse) and *sleep as information/the fountain is a water feature* (The Center for Ongoing Research and Projects). He is a graduate of Bard College's Milton Avery Graduate School of Arts.

PRINTED MATTER

The Present, the Lateral: Closing in on Rounds' Distances



BY ED STECK

some distant lateral present

Daniel Rounds
Ad Lumen Press

I started reading Daniel Rounds' *some distant lateral present* tucked away on the third floor of my warehouse job—a fairly large distribution center for audio and digital books for the blind and physically handicapped. There is an exchange in Rounds' first book of poems—which I would say function together as a singular organ—that haphazardly exchanges the function of distribution with the function of chronological remembrance: objects and site (exchangeable) shift into undefined spaces, between and at unknown borders, producing a pseudo-processional taxonomy of orifices undefined by the body not exclusively operating to linked appendages but wholly connected to the body as apparatus. In [wholly imaginary numbers (could and would and might)], the limb becomes the data's conductivity for the displacement of the body (or, in this case: the reader) into the soft dystopic un-reality that corrupts from these speckled moments of distanced exchanges.

Rounds utilizes a suggestion of a narrative, or dictation, of the various shifts (of the limbs as diagrams, the fingers as digits) in *some distant lateral present* that slowly removes the speaker/identifier/guide/voice of "my" into the space of instruction. It's a reduction of guidance and introduction to instruction and absorption into new spaces: if my mouth would move backwards then/my hands could move upwards or sideways/into a diagram of differential reason such that/there would be new ways to pray using a/variable sequence of soft lines in parallel/ placement. There is a transition/translation of recognition and difference, a shift into a distant lateral present (composition and result), then: the/whole scene could then be indexed in asymmetric/columns of print. In each column, each story, each/narrative and soulful chronology would then be/ enumerated using a patched and scribbled formula./a lost equation composed and arranged in the running ink of wholly imaginary numbers.

I started reading Daniel Rounds' *some distant lateral present* tucked away on the third floor of my warehouse job—a fairly large distribution center for audio and digital books for the blind and physically handicapped. Surrounded by the mass distribution of a singular form composed of variable innards, I started to recognize the vast significance of internally and externally structured environments that contain the appendages, organs (to borrow from Gilles Deleuze, who Rounds is clearly influenced by), and apparatuses present in *some distant lateral present*. I started to think about the subtle mutations of a form's repetitive reappearance in singularity, a kind of dull slump-shouldered rejection of conformity that lingered so long that it became a perfect loop within the mechanism of its larger containment. Or: a very soft ripple in the molded encasement of the actual humanity found within this book, which surprised me over the last couple of readings. I was surprised to read about (or around, or within, depending on which lateral present the reader is currently located within or outside of) a human being.

I was mostly surprised (or, rather alarmed) that I came to this point not through the recurring appearance(s) of human limbs and postures and the presence of the body, but how Rounds uses objects surrounding the body—the alien pieces of association outside of the body. *some distant lateral present* starts within the body itself. The first three lines are: "an eyelid slides back. the skin of the fold lifts away from/ the lower rim of the ocular bone that seats the eye,/ and its pupil. Now the eye stares into striated space."

Around my second or third read of Rounds' book, I noticed that I had underlined "striated space" a few times. I didn't know what "striated" meant so I had to look it up. I read that striated muscle tissue has repeating sarcomeres (kind of grooves and layers that compose muscle tissue) compared to smooth tissue, including the skeletal striated muscle and the cardiac muscle—the physical structure that gives the human body form coupled with the symbolic organ that represents spirit and life-force. It's interesting to see this representation in the immediate foreground of a series of poems that demonstrates the systematic deconstruction/redefining of the human body, a remodeling and nearly semi-voluntary dissection of the human body through the intrusion of alien processes on the human body, the bureaucratic blur of flesh and mechanics. It lends a near episodic reading at times through the book's multiplicative infinities (this is one kind of infinity./it is called countable infinity.), with the stanzas acting as bodily interruptions: "there are/ human poems and the roll/ call of bones traced into a/ complex split into stanzas/ of indivisible bodies now/ coupled in pleasure. the/ simple principle is to blur/ the principle with blur./ to smear/ the edges with an outline of/ the incompleteness of being."

Although rarely specifically named by Rounds, these alien processes manifest in forms of consequence on the human subjects in the poems as well as in the stakes of the reader and author. These poems constantly roll back to the first line in the book (an eyelid slides back) viewing the internal mechanisms of the body through the inner-perceptions of the body's own organic-mechanics through the blunt-referential, chronological-invisibilities of theoretical morsels of closed concepts: "an eternity of architecture/ heaped-up on a large flat plane that you're/ observing from an infinite distance."

I started reading Daniel Rounds' *some distant lateral present* tucked away on the third floor of my warehouse job—a fairly large distribution center for audio and digital books for the blind and physically handicapped. Rounds' *some distant lateral present* takes various movements toward the work of thinkers like Deleuze and Alain Badiou (whose epigraphs are within), the body against mechanization and reproduction, poets like Jack Spicer, and the shifts of lateral chronologies and timelines. But Rounds' poems are also largely about the chance of transformation of the human through the creative process (in some distant lateral present, the writing process) outside, or alongside in a bordering chronology, of the agency of objects. In *some distant lateral present(s)*, near layered striated spaces are situated on sequential simulations of the subject to mirror qualified complications of the unwilling centaur of divergence.

Rounds' some distant lateral present takes various movements toward the work of thinkers like Deleuze and Alain Badiou (whose epigraphs are within), the body against mechanization and reproduction, poets like Jack Spicer, and the shifts of lateral chronologies and timelines.

You Don't Go Home Again: Lisa Samuels Explores the Anti



BY LAUREN HUNTER

Anti M

Lisa Samuels
Chax Press

I held Lisa Samuels' *Anti M* in my hands and thought of Dorothy Gale's Auntie Em. There's no place like home, but the youngin' on the book's cover doesn't seem to mind: an elaborate drawing on her belly, a wide-brimmed hat upon her head, and, surrounded by blankets and a few sprawling people, she seems the picture of peace in a sleepy chaos. The picture fades into blueness all around, washing most of the

photograph's details into oblivion. Where this blue cloud might induce unease, the confident Mona Lisa-esque smile on the child's face leads instead to intrigue. I go inside.

Anti M begins with three demonstrative epigraphs, proposing the static and yet uncertain nature of the past and its tenuous link to memory. Referred to in its blur as an "anti-memoir" of "omitted prose," the text here begins by posing questions of the construction of a history, the willfulness of remembering, erasing or reconstructing parts of one's life. Forgetting, omitting, and fading can be thought of as mental erasures: the event or life remains the same but the memory becomes something else and may tell a different story.

The nine poems themselves are masterful erasures, recalling and distorting places, moments, and people. Among them the recurring figure of Daisy, who embodies one of the essential figures of childhood—the wild one, in turns willfully mischievous, rambunctious and full to bursting with life, she appears on the second page "[wearing] her // lion-headed feet" and slips in and out of the text as the moon through the window of a car passing through a grove of trees. Ever adjacent to the "memories" presented and sometimes even a frame for viewing them, Daisy moves about, "an // unconnected stranger" and occasionally

it is almost Daisy the dog
she liked the fantasy they invited
outdoors
in horizons defined by accident.

Impressions obviously weigh heavily in a text built of fragments, and I often found myself filling the jumps with familiar moments of nostalgia or personal experience. I applied both the standard American coming of age tale and my own half-recalled history as a familiar melody into the text's broad and wild overtures. I delighted in language that trips convention, avoids accuracy and flits like a bird, moving sylph-like through a "story" I allowed myself to

a luxurious language,
two friends to chase and tickle
another photo of Sunday
if she plans to come back a
mirror, who knows?

Images and half-images abound, and gorgeously reproduced photographs lightly pepper the book's pages, invoking a variety of places, times, and moods. Though not literally illustrating the text, the images serve as strange anchors, popping up and removing me, very temporarily, from rebuilding the world of solely these words and sounds. In one instance, a photograph of a ramshackle structure surrounded by an expanse of sand and sky opposes the previous text-based image, a conjuring of a lonely small apartment in L.A.—and leaves me that town's particular blue versus the photograph's unending sky.

Which world is real? What stories do these pages tell, and what part of them previously belonged to me? What is changing and what has been changed? *Anti M* is an intensely crafted work filled with the mysteries created and abandoned in the experience of memory leaving the past as open and exciting as the ever-adjusting future.

I started to think about the subtle mutations of a form's repetitive reappearance in singularity, a kind of dull slump-shouldered rejection of conformity that lingered so long that it became a perfect loop within the mechanism of its larger containment.



Anti M is an intensely crafted work filled with the mysteries created and abandoned in the experience of memory—leaving the past as open and exciting as the ever-adjusting future.

Bio

Crystal Gregory is a multi-media artist whose work offers a provocative mix of traditional handmade objects, textiles, architecture, and installations. Hailing from public schools in California, Gregory spent several years working as an artist in New York City before moving to Chicago to attend the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's M.F.A. program in fiber and material studies where she was granted a Full Merit Scholarship. Following graduation, she relocated back to New York, where she has shown in galleries, participated in exhibitions, acquired private and public commissions, and participated in artist residencies including Vermont Studio Center, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and Chashama North. Most recently Gregory has been granted the highest fellowship awarded to a graduating M.F.A. student, the Leonore Annenberg Fellowship Fund for the Performing and Visual Arts. With this generous fellowship, Gregory spent the fall of 2013 in Amsterdam, Holland as Artist-In-Residence at Gerrit Rietveld Academie of Art.

Artist Statement

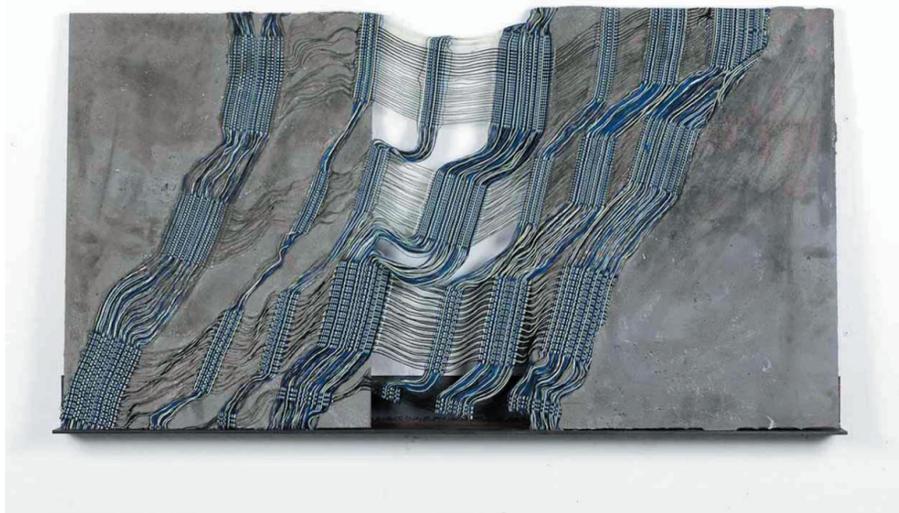
With a background as a weaver, I use cloth construction to understand structure systems within architecture. I situate my practices in the gulfs between the rigid and pliable, the flat and dimensional, spaces rife with potential, contradiction, strangeness, and familiarity. The work creates and collapses pattern systems found in cloth, architecture, and design. The material language is structural and ornamental, finding movement between open and closed systems, structures of truths, theorems, lemmas, and corollaries; investigating pattern as well as its breaking point.

Photos by Kate O'Neill



Crystal Gregory

Crown Heights, Brooklyn



Variation on a Theme (BlackBlueGreen), handwoven textile and concrete, 2013



Variation on a Theme (BlackBlueGreen), handwoven textile and concrete, 2013



Variation on a Theme (BlackWhiteYellow), handwoven textile and concrete, 2013



Composition No. 47, 60/40 lead solder drawing, 2013



Composition No. 47, 60/40 lead solder drawing, 2013

Links

<http://matthewklane.blogspot.com>
<http://cassandragillig.tumblr.com>
<http://lvngmagazine.wordpress.com/about>

Bio

Ossian Foley is new book of poems is *Of Vol. 1* (Ugly Duckling Presse). He is an editor of *LVNG Magazine*.

Cassandra Gillig is an archivist and remix artist. She has work in the anthology *The YOLO Pages* (Boost House).

Matthew Klane is the editor of *Film Forum Press*. His most recent book is *Che* (Stockport Flats).

Antonio Mastrangelo lives and works in Montreal.

POETRY



Ossian Foley Port Townsend, Wash.

and yet this affirmation
 signifies but nothing
 this
 refuge too
 deep beneath
 me the forest floors
 and how
 praying mantic
 prophet monk
 dwells calm along with calm
 only itself comprehends
 and you know
 that notion just

though lame it lie though beckoned
 all the whites still
 the hum

on the wind blows on
 the impersonal you made
 personal
 which disciples

the tree I think
 hollering

at everything in its stead
 trembles when trees
 besides trees

become so strangely

one kind brought into
 the way
 cascades far along time
 emit

null bright cadences
 dense and more
 youthful too
 the greater means that emerge

creatures large enough too
 regard and will
 to know like
 to some and with bestowed
 brought unto
 a mendicant

means that emergence are
 all brought one well
 to a place

at which one meant at one
 time in fathomless systems
 which disrupts still
 present

Antonio Mastrangelo



Montreal Ode to snow

Considering my divine solitude
 Oh boy, you surround my brain
 Consumption for horses not for men
 A doc' will tell you but not when, man
 Isolation alters delegation of morals
 Nevertheless i searched and found
 Everything i needed to stifle the hole



Cassandra Gillig New Brunswick, Maine The best first date ever

Stephen took Amanda to a coffee shop
 for their first date.
 "I hope this isn't too cliché,"
 he said to her as they sat down.
 "No, I love coffee," said Amanda.
 The pair sat in silence until Stephen
 took out his iPad and started to blog.
 "What are you doing?" Amanda asked.
 "Oh, just blogging," said Stephen.
 Amanda was so sexually moved
 that she started shitting blood
 onto her hands then bleeding
 from her mouth into her eyes.
 She freely levitated and was spinning
 in circles four feet above the ground.
 Stephen was like "yea" because
 it really gave him something to blog about.



Matthew Klane Albany, N.Y. Micro Machines

42

carp
 vernal
 conniption
 moschate
 ruck
 adroit
 Tellurian

"Micro Machines®"

*

carp

Constantly
 abusing
 the blues
 harp.

*

vernal

Beginning to picture
 a burgeoning
 vale.

*

conniption

Spitfire,
 helicopter
 flipping.

*

moschate

Eschatological
 basement-
 mate.

*

ruck

A rollicking, jam-packed
 monster truck rally.

*

adroit

Do as the robot
 voice advises.

*

Tellurian

Tales
 of a truly
 self-propelled
 rototiller.

*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGbYLL1BF4>

BOOG CITY

Issue 90
editor/publisher David A. Kirschenbaum
editor@boogcity.com art editor Jonathan Allen
art@boogcity.com film editor Joel Schlemowitz
film@boogcity.com music editor J.J. Hayes
music@boogcity.com poetry editor Buck Downs
poetry@boogcity.com printed matter editor
Ray DeJesus printedmatter@boogcity.com
small press editors Chris and Jenn McCreary
smallpress@boogcity.com counsel Ian S. Wilder
counsel@boogcity.com

Paper is copyright *Boog City*, all rights revert to contributors upon publication. *Boog City* is published eight times annually. Boog always reads work for *Boog City* or other consideration. (Email editor@boogcity.com or applicable editor and put *Boog City* sub in subject line.) Letters to the editor should go to editor@boogcity.com.

BOOG CITY
 330 W. 28th St., Suite 6H, N.Y., N.Y. 10001-4754
 212-842-BOOG (2664)
<http://www.boogcity.com> • @boogcity

INJECTING DREAMS INTO COWS

POEMS BY

JESSY RANDALL

"[Randall's] poems are beyond predicting—some touching, some hilarious—full of fresh insights and some nice wildnesses."
 —X.J. KENNEDY

978-1-59709-230-2, RELEASED SEPTEMBER 2012, \$17.95

RED HEN PRESS

W E I L C O M E

T HE STAY
OULAMIT
ESTIA
YUVA
KRE
EAD
TLD

B OOG
POETS
THEATER

C ITY

Y OUNG
MUSIC
TO BE
SLOTTED

8 OOD
ALL
THE
LIFE
OF
A
POET

**FRI. AUG. 1-
TUES. AUG. 5
2014**

UNNAMEABLE BOOKS,
PROSPECT HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN
AND
SIDEWALK CAFE,
THE EAST VILLAGE

Poetry, Music, and Theater Festival

FRI. AUG. 1, 6:00 P.M.
\$5 SUGGESTED

UNNAMEABLE BOOKS
600 VANDERBILT AVE.
PROSPECT HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN

6:00 P.M. SASHA FLETCHER
6:10 P.M. TRACEY McTAGUE
6:20 P.M. SUSANA GARDNER
6:35 P.M. SARA LEFSYK
6:50 P.M. TALK TBD
7:00 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

7:30 P.M. BREAK

7:40 P.M. BUCK DOWNS
7:55 P.M. JOANNA FUHRMAN
8:05 P.M. CAROL MIRAKOVE
8:15 P.M. RODRIGO TOSCANO
8:25 P.M. SUE LANDERS
8:35 P.M. ADEENA KARASICK
8:45 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

DIRECTIONS: 2, 3 TO GRAND ARMY PLAZA,
C TO CLINTON-WASHINGTON AVENUES, Q TO
7TH AVE.
VENUE IS BET. PROSPECT PL./ST. MARKS AVE.

SAT. AUG. 2, 11:00 A.M.
\$5 SUGGESTED

UNNAMEABLE BOOKS

11TH ANNUAL
SMALL, SMALL PRESS FAIR

FEATURING READINGS FROM AU-
THORS OF THE EXHIBITING PRESSES

11:30 A.M. ON

BROOKLYN ARTS PRESS, TK POET
THE OPERATING SYSTEM,
NAJEE OMAR
WE'LL NEVER HAVE PARIS,
ANDRIA ALEFHI
AND MORE

1:00 P.M. BREAK

1:10 P.M. CARLAJEAN VALUZZI
1:25 P.M. JOSEPH RIPI
1:35 P.M. LAUREN GORDON
1:50 P.M. OLEMADEBO FATUNDE
2:05 P.M. LISA ROGAL
2:15 P.M. BRENDAN LORBER
2:25 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

2:55 P.M. BREAK

3:05 P.M. D.A. LEVY LIVES!
CELEBRATING RENEGADE PRESSES

STOCKPORT FLATS (ITHACA, N.Y.)
LORI ANDERSON MOSEMAN, EDITOR

READINGS BY
LAURA E. J. MORAN,
LAURA NEUMAN,
DEBORAH WOODARD,
AND LISA WUJNOVICH
AND MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

4:35 P.M. BREAK

4:45 P.M. MIKE YOUNG
5:00 P.M. TRACY DIMOND
5:15 P.M. JOSEPH P. WOOD
5:30 P.M. PRAGEETA SHARMA
5:45 P.M. ORCHID TIERNEY
5:55 P.M. AMANDA McCORMICK
6:10 P.M. JEFF SIMPSON
6:20 P.M. DALE SHERRARD
6:35 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

7:05 P.M.-PANEL
DIGITAL POETRY:
WHAT CAN IT MEAN?
CURATED AND MODERATED BY
CAROL MIRAKOVE
PANELISTS:
ANA BOŽIČEVIĆ,
ALEX DIMITROV, AND
ORCHID TIERNEY

SUN. AUG. 3, 11:00 A.M.
\$5 SUGGESTED

UNNAMEABLE BOOKS

11:00 A.M. JEAN DONNELLY
11:15 A.M. ALISON STRUB
11:30 A.M. MEGAN RONAN
11:45 A.M. GEOFFREY GATZA
12:00 P.M. NICOLE STEINBERG
12:15 P.M. JOE PAN
12:25 P.M. JOYELLE McSWEENEY
12:40 P.M. HOWIE HAWKINS,
GREEN PARTY'S N.Y. STATE
GOV. CANDIDATE
12:50 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

1:20 P.M. BREAK

1:30 P.M. JENMARIE
MacDONALD
1:45 P.M. CHRISTINE HAMM
1:55 P.M. TRAVIS MacDONALD
2:10 P.M. GREGORY CROSBY
2:20 P.M. MAUREEN THORSON
2:35 P.M. POETRY TALK TALK:
BRENDA IJIMA AND NIINA POLLARI
READING AND IN CONVERSATION
3:25 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

SUN. AUG. 3, 5:30 P.M.

SIDEWALK CAFE
94 AVENUE A
NYC

BOOG POETS' THEATER, FEATURING:

6:00 P.M. GEOFFREY GATZA,
DUCHAMP DRAWS ROSE SELAVY

6:15 P.M. LAYNIE BROWNE,
TARDIGRADE PLAY

6:30 P.M. JOEL ALLEGRETTI,
CONFESSION?

6:35 P.M. CARLO PARCELLI,
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
SIMON KANANAIOS: A MEDITATION
ON EMPIRE

6:50 P.M. C. J. EHRLICH,
ASK ZSUSANNA

7:00 P.M. LEROY KANGALEE, THE
WORD - A LAMENT, EXCERPT FROM
OCTAVIA: ELEGY FOR A VAMPIRE

7:15 P.M. JANIS BUTLER HOLM,
S__T

7:20 P.M. ELLEN REDBIRD,
SEVENTH HALF: AN EXCERPT FROM
UNREQUITED SYMBIOSIS:
A MITOCHONDRIAL MISTRANSLATION
& UNDERWATER OPERA

7:35 P.M. JOYELLE McSWEENEY,
EXCERPTS FROM DEAD YOUTH, OR
THE LEAKS

7:50 P.M. Ed SANDERS

8:30 P.M.

CLASSIC ALBUMS LIVE PRESENTS,
PJ HARVEY, RID OF ME

TODD CARLSTROM
NEIL KELLY
JOE MAYNARD
CHRISTINE MURRAY
WANDA PHIPPS
THE TROUBLE DOLLS

DIRECTIONS: A/B/C/D/E/F/V TO W. 4TH ST.
DIRECTIONS: F/V TO 2ND AVE., L TO 1ST AVE.
VENUE IS AT EAST 6TH STREET

MON. AUG. 4, 6:00 P.M.
\$5 SUGGESTED

UNNAMEABLE BOOKS

6:00 P.M. LAURA A. WARMAN
6:15 P.M. RACHEL ADAMS
6:30 P.M. GILLIAN DEVEREUX
6:45 P.M. ELINOR NAUEN
7:00 P.M. SUEYEUN JULIETTE LEE
7:15 P.M. TALK TBD
7:25 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

7:55 P.M. BREAK

8:05 P.M. REB LIVINGSTON
8:20 P.M. KATY BOHNG
8:35 P.M. FITZ FITZGERALD
8:50 P.M. JOANNA PENN COOPER
9:00 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

TUES. AUG. 5, 6:00 P.M.
\$5 SUGGESTED

UNNAMEABLE BOOKS

6:00 P.M. SHENANDOAH SOWASH
6:15 P.M. MICHELLE DOVE
6:30 P.M. MARINA BLITSHTEYN
6:40 P.M. RACQUEL GOODISON
6:50 P.M. TALK TBD
7:00 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

7:30 P.M. BREAK

7:40 P.M. JACKIE CLARK
7:50 P.M. CHRIS McCREARY
8:05 P.M. LAUREN HUNTER
8:20 P.M. LAURA SPAGNOLI
8:35 P.M. MARK LAMOUREAUX
8:50 P.M. MUSIC TO BE SLOTTED

ALL MUSICAL ACTS, CURRENTLY
BEING SLOTTED. THEY ARE!

AQUINO
SOMER BINGHAM
DUCKSPEAK
WALTER EGO
BEN KRIEGER
LEORA MANDEL
CHARLES MANSFIELD
BROOKES McKENZIE
MEANER PENCIL
YETI
JOE YOGA

FESTIVAL LOGO BY JESSY RANDALL
HTTP://PERSONALWEBS.COLORADOCOLLEGE.
EDU/~JRANDALL/

BOOKINGS BY:

MUSIC—J.J. HAYES
POETRY—DAVID KIRSCHENBAUM,
J. HOPE STEIN, & KEVIN VARRONE
POETS THEATER—MAGUS MAGNUS

Joel Schlemowitz is a Park Slope, Brooklyn-based filmmaker who makes short cine-poems and experimental documentaries. His most recent project, "78rpm," is scheduled to be completed in early 2014. He has taught filmmaking at The New School for the past 15 years.

The Picture Show: The Arrival of a New Greenpoint Microcinema



INTERVIEW BY JOEL SCHLEMOWITZ

McGuinness Boulevard in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, runs parallel to the main shopping street of Manhattan Avenue, a broad boulevard with center divider where gas stations and auto parts suppliers are found along the way to the Pulaski Bridge leading over the tainted waters of Newtown Creek into the Long Island City section of Queens. For those on foot it is more a barrier than a conduit. Trucks go rumbling up and down the boulevard, making the crossing a nervous experience for pedestrians. It does not have the character of a destination as much as a convenient vehicular route to pass between north and south, a conduit between Queens and north Brooklyn, a sharp right turn leading to Williamsburg or further into the lower parts of the borough, by way of the entrance ramp onto the Brooklyn Queens Expressway.

Yet tucked away on a side street, just north of the avenue that makes its way past the giant, armored beehives of the photogenically retro-futuristic Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, a little storefront cinema can be discovered, the blacked out windows making it appear perpetually closed even on the night of an event, the words on the grayish purple fabric awning at 226 Green St., "The Picture Show," the only suggestion of the building's hidden contents. Greenpoint is already home to the film series Light Industry, housed at Triple Canopy, just off Manhattan Avenue at 155 Freeman St., and now The Picture Show adds another screen to the north of Brooklyn.

Once through the door all is grape soda purple, a photographic mural of the Manhattan Bridge at the end of a canyon-like street is pasted up on the wall. "That was here already, believe it or not," remarks co-creator Daniel Hess. Presumably the purple walls were also there already as well. And inside the purple chamber are neatly arranged rows of plastic, stacking, yellow chairs. Their curved and space-age design is of a mid-century modern look, but also suggesting the brightly colored furnishings of a well-appointed kindergarten classroom.

Local Brooklyn film collector and archivist Movie Mike has come to check out the space on this rainy night and helps Hess and co-creator Katya Yakubov inspect the solidly constructed, metal Eiki 16mm projector that has just arrived and will soon be put to use as the house film projector in addition to the video projector already in place on the ceiling.

I sat down a few days later with Yakubov and Hess, the creators of The Picture Show, at a nearby cafe garden.

Boog City: Do you want to talk about where the impetus came for starting The Picture Show?

Katya Yakubov: Well it was kind of a while ago, when we were living in Portland [Ore.]. We had this idea to start an experimental film library, and we put out a call and we actually started collecting DVDs, people were generously sending in DVDs. And then we kind of got disenchanted with Portland and moved and the project was forgotten about.

Daniel Hess: But it was so inspiring because people like Ben Russell had sent us maybe five DVDs all of a sudden—people we really admired at the time—that was inspiring.

KY: And so we moved back to New York by way of San Francisco—but whatever, we came back to New York and we still had all the DVDs with us, and we were feeling kind of down and just wanted to do something—to just not have to pay rent and live in a shitty apartment—just do something else. So we jumped on this space when we saw it on Craig's List, and since then I think the idea has been evolving in many different ways, in ways we didn't think of when we just had this idea: "Let's just screen the films that we love."

DH: I think living in New York for us—this is like the third time we've come back to New York—we keep trying to leave and get drawn back in. Trying to live in this New York you come up with all these creative, interesting things. It's all so beautiful at the same time its all so infuriating, to try to live here. And so this seemed like a beautiful solution to pay for a space that would be dynamic, be able to give to a community, rather than just serve the purpose of paying into the pockets of landlords. The microcinema augmented and expanded on the original library project in Portland, although we still have plans to revive it, and make available all these generous films that were donated. It's on the back burner list, but will ultimately be an integral part of what this space can give and be.

KY: And when we opened we knew we wanted it to be the kind of space where there would constantly be guest curation, but I feel like that idea has been expanded in so many different ways because people started approaching us to host events, and so we're hosting The Haverhill Experimental Film Festival as part of their traveling show in June. And just collaborative curating. We're doing something with The

Organization for Poetic Research where we're going to put out an open call that they've created and the open call will be for 15-20 second clips to weave into that writing to have a collaborative video/poetry project.

So things like that, possibilities you don't really think about when you just have a simple idea to open up a space; but the space in turn opens up more interesting realities, including events that are outside of a strictly linear film format, expanding into performance, inter-disciplinary projects,

organic collaboration, dynamic open calls, installation; these have been very wonderful to see just in a few short months.

Most of all, the direct participation of your audience has been integral to how the space wants to grow. People staying after a show and talking to each other; that's the heart of any small venue.

DH: There were very loose parameters in starting the whole thing, it really was like an "if you build it they will come" kind of moment for us.

KY: I feel like you're always kind of a tourist to the New York avant-garde and experimental scene; there's so many great venues here, so many great artists here. But then you also love all these other types of film, and I feel like venues aren't always set up in that way where they're screening art house cinema but then also experimental, so we want to do that. Over the next few months we're booking a few feature-length films, we call them visionary films, auteur films, and we feel like there's a dialogue that can happen with the experimental film scene—which sometimes feels like almost a niche—and cinema-goers, like I know many cinema lovers who don't know experimental film.

DH: You think you're all participating in the same love of cinema, but then when you get into the details—

KY: —film is just immense, there're so many worlds within film. Yeah, feeling like the space is open for anything that has to do with moving images that's really interesting, I feel that a lot of cross-pollination can happen, and that's exciting.

In you travels—to and from New York—did you ever see a film series that made you say, "if we open our own place—"

KY: There was no definitive moment like that, but seeing Echo Park Film Center when we were in L.A. was a huge, huge—

DH: —that's actually where we met David Finkelstein, totally random—

KY: —and it was great too because we were all New Yorkers somehow meeting in L.A. I think before that I didn't really understand the idea of a microcinema. I'd always gone to Anthology [Film Archives] and all of these places, but it didn't occur to me that there's this even smaller thing that you could do that's just like a storefront and just has some film cameras and a projector and people participate. I hadn't seen something like that before. You go to most places and it doesn't occur to you that you could participate in more than just going to this screening, that somehow you could be very integral to it. And when you walk into places like Echo Park Film Center you immediately feel that, like you're immediately a part of it.

DH: At that time we were living in a van, and I remember calling the guy from Echo Park Film Center, because they have a film bus. It was a very banal question about insurance, and he was so helpful—and yet I'd never met this guy—he instantly gave me all this information, and what to look for, and things like that.

KY: And I do remember that their library was ridiculously cheap, I remember I got to check out these things and keep them for a week and it was only like two dollars.

DH: That's actually where we got the idea for the library, from Echo Park Film Center. Because after L.A. we went to Portland.

KY: Yeah, it was like the library is there for a reason, because these DVDs you wouldn't find at a video rental place. It's really nice that we're thinking about this now, because I don't think I realized how formative Echo Park Film Center was.

DH: It's like these ideas sit with you and then four or six months later you're like "I have an idea!" (laughs)

KY: "It's totally original!" (laughs)

DH: In the beginning of February to July last year we were in Peru, and I feel like that was informative, maybe not as directly as Echo Park Film Center, but there's a burgeoning scene there, especially music but also film, that I think we had in mind for what we wanted to show. It's a little hard because you know that there are institutions here in New York—Jonas Mekas and Anthology have been here for a while—and you're worried that you have nothing to contribute to that.

KY: The last thing is that there still is this feeling that experimental film is this niche community. Even if you like film you might not go to those screenings, so we're really trying to make it more like a community theater space. We're trying to post in Greenpoint blogs and things like that. That's actually been really nice, seeing people come out for really random things. One of my favorite nights, the Soviet animation night, such random people showed up. It was great. A lot of people came out because they were interested in Soviet history, one guy who was studying Russian, some people who came out from Bay Ridge because they wanted to see the cartoons they saw growing up as kids. If you think of it not as this label of "experimental film" but just a community theater that's accessible then people will get infected with the love of other types of moving images. We're excited to have such a variety and not be held down to one label or one thing.

The 16mm projector?

DH: We're so excited that we got it. Movie Mike is blasting us with emails, it's almost at a speed that we can't keep up: "What about this program?" and "I can do this show" And it's like, "Wait Mike, we've got day jobs, we can't do a screening every night, but we'd love to get to that point." To show things like Ben Russell's film, he wants it on 16mm, so that really was the next step, obviously. And it's funny because Katya was in the last NYU class to use Steenbecks.

KY: Yeah, I think there was one year after me and then they got rid of all of them.

DH: So I got some of her prints and am trying to figure out how to thread this thing. It's funny being part of the New York experimental film scene that's so film based and yet we actually don't know how to work with celluloid.

KY: Yeah, it's weird, I feel like I just missed it, even though I worked on film in school it just didn't make sense once you get out because, whatever, digital. And I think it's great that for some people it really means something to them, but there's many ways to make films.

DH: It's exciting to make it part of the space, I think we're going to give Movie Mike a frequent spotlight.

KY: I think as far as the quality of the equipment goes, if you're going to do something make it good. But you don't really need to include that.

But I think that's an important point.

KY: We spent a good amount of money because we didn't want to just put up a projector and be doing something through a laptop. We wanted to have a nice surround sound system, a really high-quality digital projector.

DH: You want the experience that a really professional theater has—

KY: —but you also want the intimacy of people coming together and seeing each other's work. You sometimes see that there's a screening happening at a new venue and you get really excited and you go to the address and then you discover that it's really happening at the back of a bar, and it's cool because those films get to be screened, but then it's loud and the screen is shitty and whatever. I went to a show at a bar and we stood for half the time, and the image was actually projected larger than the screen, and the sound was coming out of these plug-in desktop speakers, and so it was just like "Awww!"

DH: You see someone showing experimental works, and you've got to admire the ambition, but the video projector is sitting on a stool that's crooked, audio plugged into laptop speakers. But, I think that's part of it; you want to do this on that grassroots level, but you want really good quality.



Katya Yakubov and Daniel Hess outside of The Picture Show, 226 Green St., Greenpoint.

Joel Schlemowitz photo

'There were very loose parameters in starting the whole thing, it really was like an "if you build it they will come" kind of moment for us.' —Daniel Hess

'—film is just immense, there're so many worlds within film.' —Katya Yakubov

Bluestockings Turns 15 Bookstore Thrives Thanks to Volunteer Love



BY KRystal LANGUELL AND ANG WROBEL

This month marks the 15th anniversary of the opening of Bluestockings Bookstore and Cafe, founded in 1999 by Kathryn Welsh. At the age of 23, Welsh drew upon resources available to her to create a space for feminists to host events, find relevant literature and allies. As recently noted in *Paste Magazine*, there are just 13 self-defined feminist bookstores remaining in North America. Thus it is remarkable that Bluestockings has found ways to survive, adapting and evolving to stay afloat financially and in terms of lively community activity in this city where the rent is too damn high.

In its early years, under the stewardship of Welsh, Bluestockings provided a radical female-centric space. In a June 2013 blog post, Andy Kopsa, a friend of Welsh, remembers that Bluestockings “was built with the backing of an investor that believed in her vision to create a space where women could gather, where books about and by women could be showcased. At that time, there wasn’t such a thing in Manhattan—hard to imagine.” Kopsa fondly reflects on painting and staffing the store, and the utopian vision that created opportunities for feminists to utilize the space.

Bluestockings changed hands when Welsh sold to Brooke Lehman and Hitomi Matarese in 2003,



A collection of birthday cards and love notes from fans of Bluestockings across the country.

Krystal Languell photo

Bluestockings has found ways to survive, adapting and evolving to stay afloat financially and in terms of lively community activity in this city where the rent is too damn high.

and at that time the mission of the store became more broadly defined. After a brief closure, they reopened as an activist center granting equal space to various global justice literatures. Shifting away from an exclusively feminist focus was met with some disappointment, exemplified in an April 2003 article in *The Brooklyn Rail* authored by Michelle Tsai. She observed that the

change resulted in “rendering New York City a metropolis without a dedicated women’s bookstore and leaving the feminist community here without a gathering space to call its own.” The piece harkens back to 1970s feminism that called for dedicated spaces, but later suggests that Bluestockings’ shift is indicative of a larger movement in activist communities to cultivate and foster diversity.

Tsai noted, “Feminist bookstores may not need to survive, but feminism and women’s literature do.” If this is today’s mandate, then Bluestockings indeed continues to hold the space. Sarah, a current collective member, says that “first and foremost Bluestockings is still absolutely a feminist bookstore. Feminism is a core component of our identity and mission. Since 2003 when the store was re-founded, the store has included sections on queer studies, anarchism, ecology, police and prisons, and many more alongside our women’s studies section.” Under the new model, Bluestockings has been thriving for the past 11 years, perhaps proving intersectionality to be a best practice for the advancement of feminism alongside other social justice movements. Intersectionality functions on the conviction that no form of discrimination exists in a vacuum, and it is primarily defined as a bridge among feminisms. But the term can stretch to denote a Venn diagram or other more complex collaborations among activist groups. By sharing the limited resources available to these by definition marginal causes, more can be accomplished. Many hands make light work.

How does a volunteer-powered collective survive for so many years? Anyone who’s ever worked on a group project for a class knows that

Volunteerism is crucial for activist projects like Bluestockings since funding, as ever, is scarce. Without volunteers, the work simply won’t get done.

managing personalities in order to achieve a common goal is difficult. The answer for Bluestockings seems to lie in the mission. Like other volunteer opportunities such as community gardens, PTAs, Occupy Sandy, shelters of various types, Bluestockings unites individuals who share belief in a common cause. Over 60 volunteers make up the store’s largest group of workers, coordinated by eight staffers and six collective members. These roles are defined by the number of weekly hours contributed, and a non-hierarchical fluidity among them allows for volunteers to go on to take a more active role if desired. That common cause is at its core a sense of the public good—of what should be made freely available and maintained so that those in search of a space like Bluestockings are able to find it. Volunteerism is crucial for activist projects since funding, as ever, is scarce. Without volunteers, the work simply won’t get done.

Here we speak from a position of witness, having been members of volunteer staffs in Bloomington, Ind. and Seattle, individually and, more recently, together at the primarily volunteer-powered collective Belladonna* Series. Not one of these groups could accomplish their various goals without volunteers, as making the world a better and safer place is not a viable business plan in today’s market. We imagine the inner workings of Bluestockings to be much the same as the other organizations we have been involved with: many passionate individuals sign on and a few true blue leaders coordinate group activity, creating a de facto hub as an alternative to profit-motivated hierarchies. Non-hierarchical structure is, as some descriptions of Belladonna* state, “intentionally anarchic.” Bluestockings seems to embrace this idea—plus they have coffee!

Thanks to an open door policy, anyone can approach the store with an event proposal. Bluestockings has played host to feminist groups such as the theater activists Guerrilla Girls On Tour! (distinct from the Guerrilla Girls), Belladonna* Series, Sister Spit Books, and hosts monthly book clubs on feminism, anarchism, and radical education as well as yoga and knitting groups. A safer space policy, detailed on their website, ensures a respectful and conscientious atmosphere. Bluestockings has a strong position in multiple activist communities and a visible presence at area book fairs and festivals. It remains a crucial meeting place for activists of many stripes and a great local source of reading material for book lovers.



Guerrilla Girls On Tour at Bluestockings.

guerrillagirlsontour.blogspot.com/2010/04/going-bananas-at-bluestockings.html

Bluestockings’ 15th Birthday Party and Fundraiser!

Saturday | June 14 | 6 pm

Bluestockings is turning 15 years old this month! To celebrate these past 15 years and help ensure we’re around for 15 more years, we are hosting a musical showcase, art show, and fundraiser.

Featuring:

- DJ Cynsei - Rachel Easterly
 - “Remember When We Trashed the Golf Course”
 - “Volcano and the vulgar heard” - Several spoken word artists
- And more!

\$10 suggested at the door - all proceeds will go to Bluestockings to support our daily operations and physical improvements.

Bluestockings Bookstore
172 Allen St., NYC
212.777.6028
<http://www.bluestockings.com/>

Links

<http://www.bluestockings.com>

<http://www.aungrobo.us/>

Bio

Bluestockings Radical Bookstore, Café, & Activist Center

172 Allen St.
New York, New York 10002
Open 11:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. daily

Krystal Languell was born in South Bend, Ind. Two chapbooks and a full-length collection of poetry are forthcoming: *Last Song* (dancing girl press, 2014), *Be a Dead Girl* (Argos Books, 2014), and *Gray Market* (Coconut Books, 2015). *Fashion Blast Quarter* was published as a poetry pamphlet by Flying Object this year. A core member of the Belladonna* Collaborative, she also edits the journal *Bone Bouquet*.

Ang Wrobel is a process oriented visual artist living and working in Seattle. The focus of aung.robo is to actively respond and comment within the realm of identity politics, both experienced and perceived, in addition to a focus on ending violence against women. She utilizes several mediums, processes, and techniques. Her work is best situated at a cross between abstract expressionism, assemblage, and collage. Writing and a visual portfolio can be found at the above url. Currently, aung.robo is completing her undergraduate studies at the Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wash.