

Innovative New Book Reconsiders the Biblical Tale of Rahab

Jericho's Daughter

written & designed by
Warren Lehrer

images & objects by
Sharon Horvath

EarSay

Dos-à-dos, softbound, \$42

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“The power of biblical tales resides not only in their longevity and history, but in their capacity to be retold with profound relevance to contemporary circumstances. Lehrer’s text and Horvath’s images revive the story of Rahab with resonance for unfolding events in the 21st century, but also emphasizing a feminist revision to the stigmatization of her self-determination and independence. Rahab’s entreaty to end the cycles of violence that have been part of the long history of Israel and Gaza could not be more relevant. This book will provide its own enduring legacy as a document of this moment in time.”
Johanna Drucker, leading visual literature scholar, author of countless books including *Testament of Women*.

EarSay is proud to launch a fascinating new book written and designed by author/designer/visual literature pioneer **Warren Lehrer**, with images by acclaimed painter/mixed-media artist **Sharon Horvath**. This is their first collaboration.

Jericho's Daughter is Lehrer’s anti-war, feminist reimagining of the biblical tale of Rahab, the Canaanite “harlot” who lived in a mud hut inside the outer brick wall of Jericho. One of only a few characters who appear in the Old and New Testaments, Rahab is lauded by both Jews and Christians as a reformed sinner and a symbol of faith in a singular, all-powerful God. That was the version Lehrer learned in Hebrew school. In this reconsideration, he places Rahab center stage, revealing a very different perspective of the enigmatic character and the meaning of her story.

The beautifully produced, full-color book is illuminated with original images and objects created by Sharon Horvath. Her paintings and collages are made from many materials including pigment, polymer, ink, paper, canvas, wood, plastic packaging, adhesives, and magazine photos from the 1950s through 2023. The book is bound in a bifurcated, *dos-à-dos* binding, once used to bind Old and New Testaments together. Part 1 of *Jericho's Daughter* takes a closer look at Rahab’s interaction with the two Jewish soldiers sent to scout out the military readiness of Jericho, and the deal she struck with them. Part 2 consists of a *Catalogue of Artifacts* (and facsimiles), including translated excerpts of Rahab’s secret diaries written during her decades as an Israelite wife and mother.

The writing, design, imagemaking, and collaboration (which included Horvath making images in reaction to Lehrer’s text and Lehrer writing in response to Horvath’s images) were completed prior to October 2023 and the newest horrific war in Israel and Gaza. The gruesome killings from both sides

makes us all the more determined to tell this story—and make a plea (as Rahab does within the book) for an end to the cycle of blood and death. A percentage of the proceeds from *Jericho's Daughter* will go to **Women Wage Peace**, the largest grassroots peace movement in Israel.

EarSay is publishing *Jericho's Daughter* simultaneously with Lehrer's first fully electronic book, *Riveted in the Word*, inspired by the true story of a writer's hard-fought battle to regain language after a devastating stroke. Both books are based on short stories written by Lehrer and employ haptic, bifurcated structures that reveal lives that have been ripped apart and begun anew.

Two Double Book Launches - May 31, 6:30pm, Center for Book Arts, NYC, and June 1st, 4pm Topaz Arts, Woodside, Queens. Launches will include reading/performances of excerpts of both books, featuring Lehrer along with Palestinian-American actor/author **Najla Said** and Jewish-American actor/author **Judith Sloan**, followed by Q&A and signings with collaborators.

EarSay is a Queens, New York based non-profit arts organization dedicated to nurturing and portraying stories of uncelebrated individuals and communities. Projects bridge the divide between documentary and expressive forms in books, exhibitions, on stage, in sound and electronic media.

Copies of *Jericho's Daughter* will be available June 1 at select bookstores and outlets, and is available for presales now at <https://earsay.org/shop/>

The *Riveted in the Word* book app, currently supports the following Apple devices: iPhones, iPads, Macs (Apple laptops and desktops, system 12 and above). Copies of *Riveted in the Word* will be available for sale June 1 through the Apple App Store.

For more information, **contact Dale Eisinger** at dale@earsay.org, (208) 515.4032.

Also, let Dale know if you're interest in a review copy of *Riveted in the Word*.

To arrange an interview or public presentation with Warren Lehrer, contact him directly at warren@earsay.org. (718) 607.3849. In May, there will be an **electronic press kit** with images and video of *Jericho's Daughter* and *Riveted in the Word*. We'll let you know when those are available.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/DESIGNER & ARTIST

Warren Lehrer www.warrenlehrer.com is a writer and designer known internationally as a pioneer in the fields of visual literature and design authorship. His solo and collaborative projects explore the vagaries and luminescence of character, the relationships between social structures and the individual, and the pathos and absurdity of life. His books, acclaimed for capturing the shape of thought and reuniting the oral and pictorial traditions of storytelling with the printed page, include: *A Life in Books: The Rise and Fall of Bleu Mobley* (Goff Books); *Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings*, with Adeena Karasick (Lavender Ink); *Five Oceans in a Teaspoon*, with Dennis Bernstein (Paper Crown Press); *Crossing the BLVD: strangers, neighbors, aliens in a new America*, with Judith Sloan (W.W. Norton); *The Portrait Series* (four-book suite, Bay Press); *GRRRHHHH: a study of social patterns*, with Bernstein and Sandra Brownlee (Center for Editions); *French Fries*, with Bernstein (VSW Press); *i mean you know* (VSW); and *versations*. Lehrer has received many honors for his books and multimedia projects, including: The 2019 Ladislav Sutnar Lifetime Achievement Prize, 2016 Center for Book Arts Honoree, the Brendan Gill Prize, the Innovative Use of Archives Award, the International Book Award for Best New Fiction, the Independent Publisher Outstanding Book of the Year Award, a Special Recognition Award from the Society of Typographic Arts, three AIGA Book Awards, two Type Directors Club Awards, two Design Incubation Awards, a Media That Matters Award; Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and New York Foundation for the Arts; and grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, and the Rockefeller, Ford, Greenwall, and Furthermore

Foundations. His work has been exhibited widely and is in many collections including MoMA, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, L.A. County Art Museum, The Getty Museum, The Walker Art Center, Georges Pompidou Centre, and Tate Gallery. Lehrer is also a performer and has co-written four plays and one opera. His books often sit at the center of multibranching projects that include performance, exhibition, animations and video. *Riveted in the Word* is his first book app. A frequent lecturer, keynote speaker, performer and presenter at universities, art and literary centers, and bookstores, Lehrer is a founding faculty member of the *Designer As Author/Entrepreneur* MFA program at the School of Visual Arts, and Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Purchase College, SUNY.

Sharon Horvath www.sharonhorvath.com creates paintings on canvas and paper that depict invented, animated, composite forms, combine bodily structures with urban, rural, extraterrestrial spaces, explosions, cars, plumbing, and kitchenware. About her most recent solo exhibit “Small Myriad” (2024) at Lori Bookstein Projects, NYC, Benjamin Degen writes, “Horvath’s paintings contain the stuff of everyday life. Her common materials connect with the uncommonness that exists in all things.” In *The New York Times*, Roberta Smith describes another Horvath exhibit “Owls Stare at Paintings’ Busted Eyeballs” (Pierogi Gallery, 2019) as “a dense novelistic show that lays before us the important ways memories can figure in art-making.” Horvath has been the subject of numerous exhibitions in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Provincetown, and internationally, and is represented in many public and private collections, including the Cleveland Museum of Art and The National Academy of Design. Her countless awards and grants include the Fulbright-Nehru U.S. Scholar Grant, John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Grant for Painting, the Jacob H. Lazarus-Metropolitan Museum of Art Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome, the Anonymous was a Woman Award, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Richard and Hilda Rosenthal Award for Painting, the Edwin Palmer Prize in Painting from the National Academy Museum, and two Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grants. Horvath earned her BFA from Cooper Union, New York, and her MFA from Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia. Horvath is Professor of Art and Chair of the Painting and Drawing Department at Purchase College, SUNY. She lives and works in New York City and upstate in Andes, New York.

SELECTED PRAISE FOR WARREN LEHRER

“In Lehrer’s books... words take on thought’s very form, bringing sensory experience to the reader as directly as ink on paper can allow. Once considered too far ahead of his time... now the times are beginning to catch up to him.” **The New York Times Book Review** *Julie Lasky*

“In Lehrer’s extraordinary books, full of typographic innovation, he seeks to trap thought, sound and speech in time and space on the printed page. The result is theater. The reader (viewer/listener) experiences the pathos within the mundane aspects of everyday life. Reality, fantasy, along with art and literature, travel parallel but inseparable roads.” **Print Magazine** *Philip Meggs*

“We honor Warren Lehrer, innovator and boundary breaker, for his unique marriage of writing and typography... for extending the often-rarified field of book arts to the broader worlds of contemporary literature, design and art...” **The Center for Book Arts** 2016 Honoree

“In Warren Lehrer’s ingenious, one-of-a-kind novel, *A Life in Books: The Rise and Fall of Bleu Mobley*, we see all the covers of all 101 books supposedly written by the narrator over the last several decades... A tour-de-force!” **Studio 360** *Kurt Andersen*

“*Five Oceans in a Teaspoon* is an engaging masterwork that has only a handful of precedents in literary and design history. Lehrer’s graphic scoring turns each line, word, and breath into an opportunity for transformation... The effect is remarkable and the range of graphic innovation impressive.” **Los Angeles Review of Books** *Johanna Drucker*

“Warren Lehrer’s books and multimedia works have influenced two generations of designers and changed the way books can be seen and experienced for all times.” **Design Matters** *Debbie Millman*

“A stunningly unique take on the novel. With *A Life in Books*, Lehrer has upended the modern novel form and its narrative limitations, creating a rich and engaging story through visual literature. Mindblowing... reality bending... a laugh riot and visual feast.” **Independent Publisher**

“*Five Oceans in a Teaspoon* re-envision a poetry memoir via a textual kaleidoscope. Bernstein and Lehrer are the Rodgers and Hart of Visual Poetry.” **Bob Holman**, poet, poetry activist

“*A Life in Books* is a book-lover’s fictional treat of books that never were... Ultimately, it is about how the sadness of life is transformed into art, and how life requires constant adjustment, compromise, and the will to find the funny line at which you won’t compromise.

Bleu Mobley contains multiples. Wonderful!” **Bookworm**, KCRW, *Michael Silverblatt*

“In *A Life in Books*, author and graphic design visionary Warren Lehrer crafts a vivid kaleidoscopic odyssey that frames one man’s life through not one, but one hundred different books—and book jackets.” *Jessica Helfand*, founding editor **Design Observer**

“In *A Life In Books*, Lehrer has devised an ingenious novel that is compelling and beautiful in all sorts of ways... More than simply a fictional memoir, it is a kind of literary history of contemporary literature... Earlier examples of novelized literary compendiums (*Tristram Shandy*, *Ulysses*, *Gravity’s Rainbow*) do not employ an archival or documentary poetics, but Danielewski’s *House of Leaves* and Lehrer’s *A Life in Books*, certainly do, for they deliberately transform the book object into a site for archiving textual media for expressive purposes.”

Books As Archives in Post-1980 Experimental Writing *Brian niels Davis*

“Lehrer creates a rich soundscape in the reader’s imagination, correlating the rhythm of language to the way the mind works. His books explore the rich dissonance of sound and life surrounding each of us, challenging the line between life and art.” **Afterimage** *Nancy Soloman*

“Lehrer’s books challenge readers to explore the act of reading, break with the usual linear pattern, vary the pace, look back or skip ahead. They evoke the subjective experience of their subjects with great particularity and vividness, suggesting the possibility of a new literary genre that makes full use of design’s rhetorical dimension.” **Frieze Magazine** *Rick Poynor*

“Warren Lehrer has built a career collapsing the boundaries that most of us take for granted. Blazing a new path, *A Life In Books* proves that motion design and literature need not be strangers.... Creating an “illuminated novel” today could be interpreted as nostalgic, but the hardcover book, enhanced by animations and a multimedia performance is decidedly high-tech, a hyperlink mosaic of multimedia.” **Motionographer** *Justin Cone*

“A celebratory chronicle of the immigrant experience in New York, *Crossing the BLVD* is a Whitmanesque book that reveals a staggering array of humanity... [It] chronicles life in Gotham in both its despair and boundless promise.” **Brendan Gill Prize** *Municipal Art Society of NY*

“Immigrant life in Queens, as told in the intimate, rich, comic, ironic and sad stories so often seen but not heard in America’s big cities.” **The Washington Post** *Lynne Duke*

“Lehrer pioneered what might be best termed “typographic performance” in his 1984 book/play *French Fries*, considered by historians one of the linchpins of the deconstructionist era... While *Crossing the BLVD* can be viewed as an astute urban sociological study, more importantly it highlights the richness (as well as a little darkness) of a poly-cultural critical mass representing the sights and sounds, customs and mores of the ‘new’ New York. It is eloquent, poignant, and an entirely satisfying piece of design and authorship.” **Eye Magazine** *Steven Heller*

“Lehrer’s acclaimed and influential 1984 book *French Fries* broke the grid—and possibly the crystal goblet—creating a work in which the design was not mere accessory to story but an integral mode of its performance. In *A Life In Books*, he continues to make design a constitutive element, challenging readers to rethink the relations of the novel to the image, and of the whole book to our contemporary world.” **Eye Magazine** *David Banash*

“*Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings* is an arresting attempt to put collective pain and healing on the page... Karasick and Lehrer’s collaboration keenly embodies a collective trauma that eludes a singular definition.” **Kirkus Reviews** *Starred Review*

“*Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings* is like nothing I’ve seen in recent memory. It’s 21st-century realism. A joyful meditation connection to our post-everything world, laid out in a perfect expression of what the language is doing. Gritty... beautiful!” **Heavy Feather Review** *Bill Lessard*

“In *A Life in Books*, Lehrer has designed a sort of Chinese puzzle whose myriad ideas, stories and characters from all parts of the globe intersect, overlap, and dovetail. Like Art Spiegelman, Chris Ware and Ben Katchor, Lehrer participates in the search for fresh and innovative ways to show, as well as tell, his many stories. Astonishing.” **The Brooklyn Rail** *Robert Berlind*

“Lehrer’s books defy conventional notions of writing and bookmaking. Collectively, the subjects of *The Portrait Series* make up a riveting group of eccentrics... Their stories echo in your mind long after the sound of them has ceased.” **The Chronicle of Higher Education** *Zoe Ingalls*

SELECTED PRAISE FOR SHARON HORVATH

“Absorbed in the waves of retinal wonder and psychic delight coming from Horvath’s superb ‘Cosmicomics’ paintings, I had one overriding thought: *She nailed it*. Her canvases picture a pathwork of abstract cosmic space, imaginary maps, tantric details, wispy brushwork, and color like Creamsicles and peach cobbles.” **New York Magazine** *Jerry Saltz*

“Some shows aren’t so much about youth as youthfulness, an ageless state. This seems to be the condition of Sharon Horvath’s show at Pierogi, ‘Where Owls Stare at Painting’s Busted Eyeballs.’ Whatever the title means the artist is showing a substantial number of beautiful new paintings, which often conjure vistas in outer space, including ‘Out There Or In Here,’ her largest canvas to date, whose green and black forms seem to show the enormous wraparound control board of a cockpit. In addition, she has transported virtually her entire studio to the gallery, laying out in vitrines everything she uses to make or inspire her art. It is a great deal of material, much of which is from her parents, who were artists, and her sister. This is a dense novelistic show that lays before us the important ways memories and especially family memories can figure in art-making.” **The New York Times** *Roberta Smith*

“The show’s title ‘Owls Stare at Painting’s Busted Eyeballs’ personifies inanimate paintings, endowing them, just like us, with the ability to see—were it not for the fact that their eyes are ‘busted.’ Which leads this critic to ask: how did they get this way? With hyper-hallucinatory night trips to other galaxies, Horvath leaves us wondering, guided by dreamy intuition and menacing charm... I am drawn in by the painting’s silky and matte surfaces, puddles and pools of light, echoing bubbles of curiosity, stardust domes, and biomorphic abstractions filled with innuendo and earthy figuration. Horvath has certainly brought Pierogi to life through painting and collage, with the frenetic whimsy of an insomniac in a moon-lit room. There is also a haunted quality, as if Horvath is playing a slightly morbid game, like the childhood classic hide-and-go-seek—the game that can lead a child who fears dark claustrophobic spaces to crouch down for hours behind some hanging winter coats in the very back corner of a pitch black muffled bedroom closet.” **The Brooklyn Rail** *Jeremy Sigler*

“Sharon Horvath is, in fact, a literary painter. While there is often a hint of the glorious preciousness of medieval manuscript illumination or the dreamlike intensity of Maurice Sendak in her style, there is no text that guides the making of the paintings. And yet there is a kind of ensuing text, one that coalesces in the mind of the viewer who notices that he or she is not only a viewer but also a sort of reader, since Horvath paints both images and signs, and the difference between them can become very elusive... So when I noticed that Horvath titled her recent show ‘Parts of a World’ after Wallace Steven’s wartime collection, the book immediately opened... Steven’s book furnished no direct clues to Horvath’s new paintings, unless it be the sobering observation that, ‘the dump is full / Of images,’ which puts me in the mind of the darkly glimmering surfaces of some of the paintings, surfaces worked up by some process known best to herself—dispersed pigment, ink, and polymer on canvas (or on paper mounted on canvas) —as if some smudges and soot had been wiped clean on a scavenger’s sleeve to reveal the gleaming jewels underneath... The paintings in this show have a racy immediacy. Their subjects seem to be not so much those of Stevens as the ones that Walt Whitman once proclaimed to be the Soul’s favorites: night, sleep, death, and the stars—only baseball, sex, and rearview mirrors seem to have worked their way in, too.”

ArtForum *Barry Schwabsky*

“Inaugurating the gallery’s new space in Chelsea, ‘Parts of a World,’ an exhibition of Sharon Horvath’s most recent work, included 20 paintings on canvas, or on paper mounted to canvas, in dispersed pigment, ink and polymer. Their formal boldness and buoyancy link them to a strain of gregarious abstraction typified in work by Thomas Nozkowski and Chris Martin, but Horvath’s cartooniness is a red herring. Deeply poignant, these works slowly unfurl a rich iconography resonating with the idea of site... Her mark-making is arresting even when excessive. It is not the obsessional handwork so hip a decade ago, but a lavishing of attention, a marshaling of energies proper to the depiction of psychically charged spaces.” **Art in America** *Stephen Maine*

“Suffused with brilliant, often startling hues, Sharon Horvath’s paintings are labyrinths of lines and layers that unfold slowly to reveal bits and pieces both recognizable and mysterious. A baseball diamond floats above an antique black bed—or is it a roller coaster? A pale, peaceful landscape runs like a movie inside the shape of a rearview mirror. An electric night sky, glittering with stars, is anchored by a network of hatching—linear lanes of infrastructure that recall the rusted-out buildings and new scaffolding that stand shoulder to shoulder beyond her studio window. The overall effect, whether painted on a canvas 10 inches square or one seven feet wide, is as intimate as an embrace.”

Elle Décor *Vicky Lowry*

“In rare cases cynicism is upset by proof that art isn’t a luxury, a commodity or a cheat, but a necessity affording sustenance, bedazzlement and pleasure. Sharon Horvath’s paintings are cases in point: Here, we feel, is art that justifies its reason for being, largely because Horvath’s kaleidoscopic abstractions seem to encompass every reason for being. Within densely layered surfaces, sparkling tonalities and Byzantine networks of line and pattern, Horvath weaves a bewildering range of artistic influences, historical tangents and philosophical frameworks. Her meticulous touch is, in its infinite patience, reminiscent of Himalayan iconography and, in its rhythmic insistence, not far removed from the obsessive character of outsider art... Whimsical minutiae don’t distract from artistic sweep; if anything, they help to clarify it. The small paintings promise more than they deliver, but the bigger pieces open up and morph right before our eyes—they never stop delivering.”

City Arts *Mario Naves*

“I never imagined what paradise might look like—I never thought of it looking like anything at all—until I looked at these paintings. Richly optical, full of enticing complexity, intense color, and fascinating characters, Horvath paints the world as it looks to me when I am at my best. These paintings are devoid of cynicism. They are poetic and soothing—pleasurable in the most challenging sense. She leads us carefully up over the top of the precipitous incline to which we cling in disbelief and invites us to contemplate the rolling vastness and safety of an Elysian field.”

The Brooklyn Rail *Ben La Rocco*