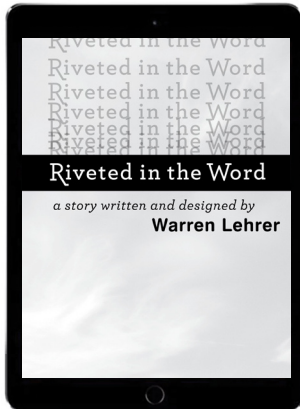


## New Electronic Book Depicts Regaining Language After Devastating Stroke



### *Riveted in the Word*

written & designed by  
**Warren Lehrer**

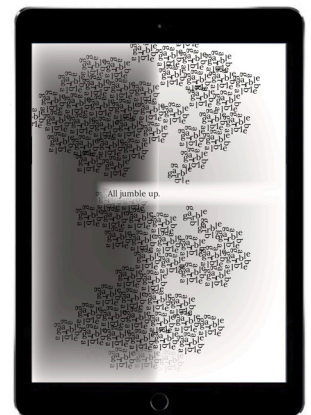
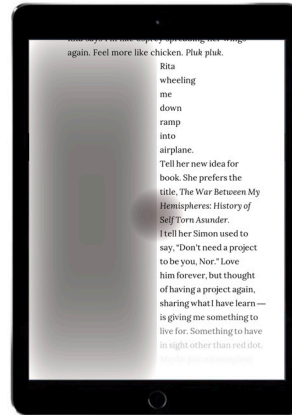
programmed by  
**Artemio Morales**

soundtrack by  
**Andrew Griffin**

EarSay electronic book, \$4.99

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A new kind of ebook, *Riveted in the Word* is inspired by the true story of a writer's hard-fought battle to regain language after a devastating stroke. Written and designed by author/designer/visual literature pioneer **Warren Lehrer**, this multimedia book app places the reader inside the mind of a retired history professor as she recalls her journey with Broca Aphasia. The custom interface toggles between columns of text that readers navigate at their own pace, and animated sections that evoke gaps between perceptions (thoughts, memories, desires) and the words needed to communicate. This deeply moving story about overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles is told in a dynamic new way, with kinetic typography and an original soundtrack by composer, violist **Andrew Griffin**. Programmed by electronic literature developer **Artemio Morales** at AltSalt, this e-edition of *Riveted in the Word*, made for iPad, iPhone, and Mac computers is available now [through the Apple Store](#).

In 1998, Lehrer conducted a series of interviews as research for short stories about people who have taken great leaps in their lives. One of the people he interviewed was Willie Lee Rose, an author and professor of American History, who 20 years earlier suffered a massive stroke. *Riveted in the Word* is published in her memory. The fictionalized protagonist in *Riveted in the Word*, Norah Hanson, PhD, wakes to the sound of birds singing outside her window, hopeful for the day ahead. The reader witnesses her sense of humor, determined spirit, and seemingly fragmented-but-intelligible thoughts as they shift from present to past, and toward a breakthrough event scheduled for later that day. She meditates on: the daily struggle to find the right words; the grace of her late husband who never gave up hope; the generosity of friends who take her out on jaunts; miracles like VELCRO®, rehab, life-saving doctors and therapists; and her disdain for the doctors who told her she'd never speak again. She sees the chicken consommé she was eating the night the stroke ruptured the hemispheres of her universe; the red dot between her eyes that still comes and goes throughout the day; a new book she's envisioning.

EarSay is proud to publish *Riveted in the Word* simultaneously with *Jericho's Daughter*, Lehrer's anti-war reimagining of the biblical tale of Rahab, a stunning physical book, printed in four colors, with images by Sharon Horvath, bound in a *dos-à-dos* binding. Both publications are based on short stories written by Lehrer, create haptic and empathic reading experiences, and use bifurcated structures that reflect lives ripped apart and begun anew. **Double Book Launches** [May 31, Center for Book Arts, NYC](#); [June 1st, Topaz Arts, Queens](#); [Aug 3, Blue Hill Library, Maine](#), include reading/performances with actor/author Najla Said and actor/author Judith Sloan. Other upcoming events at Pratt Institute, [Electronic Literature Conference, July 19](#), University of Wisconsin/Madison, and more.

## Early Praise for *Riveted in the Word*

“Lehrer’s breakthrough electronic book plunges us in the cinematic and poetic drama of the nightmarish loss of the ability to process words to the outside world. Why has this happened? Because a small blood clot got stuck in the brain at a crucial place. In *Riveted in the Word*, words become operatic characters: they pop out of shadows, revolve inside; the smallest needs of daily life turn into a dream, a struggle to communicate. But the author/designer, who immersed himself in the knowledge of stroke, Broca Aphasia, and rehabilitation, turns this dreadful event into an inspiring message of hope. Experience *Riveted* in a quiet place so you can savor the form and the content of this innovative, ‘hyper-graphic’ work at your own pace.” **Jean Paul Curtay, MD**, member New York Academy of Sciences

“There are very few books that have changed the way I think about books. One is Chris Ware’s *Building Stories*. Another is Edel Rodriguez’ *Worm*. And now Warren Lehrer’s *Riveted in the Word* is added to that list. For me, it really changes the experience of what it means to be engaged with a book... *Riveted* is an electronic book, an app—inspired by the true story of a history professor’s fight to regain language after a devastating stroke. The completely custom interface places the reader, literally, inside the mind of the protagonist, Norah Hanson. Part memory, part struggle, part today, part yesterday, she even recalls that moment when she has the stroke... This stunning new kind of ebook is an experience to be had, an enthralling engagement of your senses... Once again, Warren Lehrer is pioneering a new kind of reading experience.” **Debbie Millman**, *Print Magazine Book Club*

“*Riveted in the Word* is a beautiful, moving, and useful tool for communicating aphasia. With Broca’s aphasia, the person is able to understand what’s being said, yet not able to express themselves. This is a puzzle—how can a person think if they have a problem expressing language? *Riveted* really brings home that discrepancy between the internal life and the external life. Reading Norah’s interior narrative, you can see how she substitutes the word “soup” when she means to say ‘soap’, or how gestural language between people who are close, is often preserved. When the nurse holds up a comb and a brush, saying the words loudly, saying ‘bOwl’ with its very large O, we see that Norah understands. I think *Riveted in the Word* will be particularly useful communicating aphasia to the non-aphasic, and will help make readers become more aware of the need for patience, and of the relationships between what somebody wants to say and what they are saying.” **Laura Boylan, MD**, neurologist, NYU Langone Medical School, responding to *Riveted in the Word* on New York Public Radio, WNYC.

“An accomplished work of sincere mediated fiction that offers the reader a journey inside the mind of a person rehabilitating from a stroke. The text animations, which explore a wide array of kinetic text and concrete poetry, effectively emulate psychological conditions/dilemmas in the healing process. Congratulations Warren Lehrer and collaborators Artemio Morales and Andrew Griffin on having produced a work that is poignant and very readable. *Riveted in the Word* is an insightful, audacious exploration—I hope it receives the wide readership it deserves.”

**David Jhave Johnson**, digital poet, media artist, theorist & critic, author *Aesthetic Animism*

“*Can compassion be learned?* Medical education has struggled to find answers to this question and *Riveted in the Word* offers a solution: provide an opportunity to experience loss through the safe, accessible medium of an immersive e-book. The story and format draws the reader in and compels them to face the private thoughts and feelings and, powerfully, the mind and body of a patient who has suffered a life-altering medical event. This book succeeds in capturing loss with sensitivity and authenticity, and impacts the reader in the visceral way required to not only spark the flame of compassion and understanding of the patient experience. but also to connect back to the humanity that can so easily be lost in the rigors of medical training. *Riveted in the Word* should be required reading for all medical students and residents.” **Anna Huh, MD**, Montefiore Medical Center, Dept of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences

“Lehrer’s *Riveted in the Word*, goes beyond the conventional limits of the e-book to plunge us into a veritable typographic cinema. The text—an interior narrative of a writer regaining language after a massive stroke—comes to life to the rhythm of a spellbinding soundtrack, creating a delicate, unforgettable, original, and emotionally-charged reading experience.” **Frédéric Chauvreau**, *Revue Poésies Plastiques*

**EarSay** is a Queens, NY 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.

The *Riveted in the Word* book app currently supports the following Apple devices: iPads, iPhones, Macs laptops and desktops, system 12 and up. Available now through the Mac App Store at: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/riveted-in-the-word/id1588132518>. For review copies of *Riveted* or *Jericho's Daughter*, or more information, contact [dale@earsay.org](mailto:dale@earsay.org), (208) 515.4032. To arrange an interview or public presentation contact [warren@earsay.org](mailto:warren@earsay.org). (718) 607.3849. EPK: <https://warrenlehrer.com/riveted-in-the-word-press-kit/> includes images & video clips. Also visit [the project web page](#). A portion of proceeds from *Riveted in the Word* go to the American Stroke Association.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR/DESIGNER, PROGRAMMER, COMPOSER/MUSICIAN

**Warren Lehrer** [www.warrenlehrer.com](http://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); *GRRRHFFF: 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 Ladislav Sutnar Lifetime Achievement Prize, 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, animation and video. *Riveted in the Word* is his first book app. Lehrer is a frequent lecturer, keynote speaker, performer and presenter at universities, art and literary centers, and bookstores. He is the co-founder of EarSay, 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.

**Andrew Griffin** [www.andrewgriffinmusic.com/music](http://www.andrewgriffinmusic.com/music) is an award-winning violist, composer, and orchestrator. He has performed in such diverse settings as Saturday Night Live, Radio City Music Hall, the viola section of the New York Philharmonic, the Houston Symphony Orchestra, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's. Since 2019, he has held chairs for multiple Broadway shows. His original compositions, arrangements, and orchestrations have also been commissioned by notable ensembles such as the Seattle Symphony Orchestra Chamber Series, Simply Three, Sphinx Virtuosi, the Queens College Orchestra, and Traverse City Dance Company. Prior to *Riveted in the Word*, Griffin collaborated with Lehrer on the soundtracks for the *Five Oceans in a Teaspoon* animations.

**Artemio Morales** [www.artemiomorales.com](http://www.artemiomorales.com) is a creative technologist whose interests lie at the intersection of storytelling, art, and technology. A programmer by trade, he is founder of AltSalt, a publisher and promoter of innovative, creative work by alternative voices, as well as Artmayu Studios, a studio dedicated to exploring electronic literature and its capabilities around interdisciplinary, collaborative forms of expression.

## 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*

“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 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*

“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**

“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*

“*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*, 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*

“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

“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**

“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

“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*

“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

“In *Five Oceans in a Teaspoon*, the page and the screen become theaters of poetry in action where letters and words take on autonomous life, trace paths and map psychic space. The animation of *Living with Alzheimer’s* constitutes a *tour de force* where multiple plastic effects portray a confusion of senses and emotional upheaval. Nevertheless, the poem remains curiously readable... In Lehrer’s typographic visualizations of Bernstein’s poems—writing becomes drawing becomes movement.” **Revue Poésies Plastiques** Frédéric Chauvreau

“*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

“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

“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

“One of the most imaginative and ambitious book artists of our time.”  
**American Book Review** Richard Kostelanetz