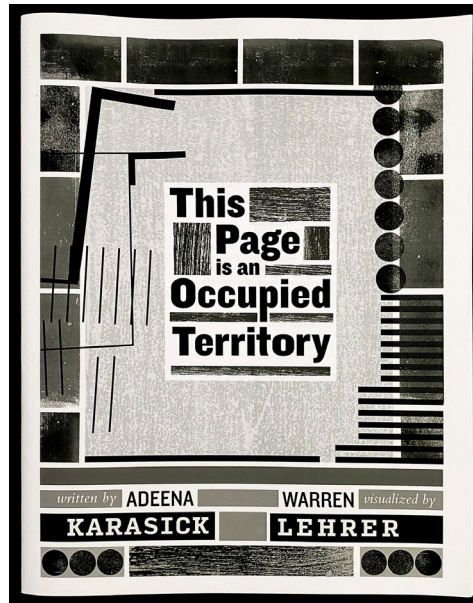


## Collaborative Newspaper Poem Interrogates Occupation and War



### *This Page is an Occupied Territory*

written by  
**Adeena Karasick**

visualized by  
**Warren Lehrer**

**EarSay & NuJu Books**

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EarSay and NuJu Books are proud to launch *This Page is an Occupied Territory*, a limited-edition, tabloid-size newspaper-poem written by acclaimed poet, performer, cultural critic **Adeena Karasick**, visualized by author, designer, vis lit pioneer **Warren Lehrer**. Composed in reaction to the ongoing occupation, war, slaughter in Gaza/Israel, Karasick's text and Lehrer's visuals approach language and the page itself as an occupied territory. *This Page* investigates: possession of a region by force, and control of a location through blockades, barricades and barriers. In much the same light, translation can be seen as a form of occupation, whereby one language layered onto the body of another is an act of war. For the word "war," as both an English noun and a verb meaning "conflict," and a German adjective [wàhr] meaning what's "true, real, genuine," literally places "war" at war with itself. To wit, "wà[h]r" not only "occupies" the homography between the ear and the eye; the babelism at play between speech and writing—but born in "differance," madness and effacement, the notion of "occupation" points to how what's "true" is always in conflict.

Karasick presented a live performance of *This Page is an Occupied Territory* in February, 2024 at the Museum of Jewish Heritage: A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. Afterwards, she sent the text to Lehrer, whom she had collaborated with on the post-pandemic book *Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings* (Lavender Ink, 2023). Almost immediately, the title and text of Karasick's *Occupation* poem suggested a visual setting that involved letterpress printing elements that could be used as blockades, barricades, and border crossings. Lehrer worked with artist/printer **Roni Gross** who made prints of various wood and metal characters, blocks, dingbats, and borders on letterpress proofing presses at the Center for Books in NYC and the Center for Editions at SUNY Purchase. Lehrer then made digital scans of the prints and visualized the poem as a tabloid-sized publication because the ever-expanding war and daily bombardment of devastating news felt so outsized and all-encompassing. As the poem progresses, the occupied pages within this newspaper poem become more and more boxed in, askew, and rubbled to pieces. This first edition of 700 copies was printed HP Indigo (digital offset) at the Newspaper Club in Glasgow, Scotland.

**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. **NuJu** is a New York based independent producer—of films, music, and books—dedicated to radical Jewish poetics and the play of language as a powerful tool for transformation and change.

Copies of *This Page is an Occupied Territory* are available at select bookstores and outlets, and directly from <https://earsay.org/shop/>

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR / ARTISTS

**Adeena Karasick**, PhD, [www.adeenakarasick.com](http://www.adeenakarasick.com) is a New York based Canadian poet, performer, cultural theorist and media artist and the author of 14 books of poetry and poetics. Her Kabbalistically inflected, urban, Jewish feminist mashups have been described as “electricity in language” (Nicole Brossard), “proto-ecstatic jet-propulsive word torsion” (George Quasha), noted for their “cross-fertilization of punning and knowing, theatre and theory” (Charles Bernstein), “a twined virtuosity of mind and ear which leaves the reader deliciously lost in Karasick’s signature ‘syllabic labyrinth’” (Craig Dworkin), “demonstrating how desire flows through language, an unstoppable flood of allusion (both literary and pop-cultural), word-play, and extravagant and outrageous sound-work” (Mark Scroggins). Most recently is *Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings* with Warren Lehrer (Lavender Ink, 2023); *Ærotomania: The Book of Lumenations* (Lavender Ink, 2023); *Massaging the Medium: 7 Pechakuchas* (The Institute of General Semantics Press, 2022); *Checking In* (Talonbooks, 2018); *SALOMÉ: Woman of Valor* (University of Padova Press, Italy, 2017), the libretto for her Spoken Word opera; *SALOMÉ: Woman of Valor* CD, (NuJu Records, 2020); and *SALOMÉ* Birangona, translation into Bengali (Boibhashik Prokashoni Press, Kolkata, 2020). Honors include: 2023 Susanne K. Langer Award for Outstanding Scholarship in the Ecology of Symbolic Form (MEA), 2023 Inaugural League of Canadian Poets Spoken Word Award, 3-time recipient of Andrew Mellon Foundation Award, and Voce Donna Italia Award for contributions to feminist thinking. Karasick teaches Literature and Critical Theory at Pratt Institute, is Poetry Editor for *Explorations in Media Ecology*, and Associate International Editor of *New Explorations: Studies in Culture and Communication*. The “Adeena Karasick Archive” is established at Special Collections, Simon Fraser University.

**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 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*; *Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings*, with Adeena Karasick; *Jericho’s Daughter*; *Riveted in the Word*; *Five Oceans in a Teaspoon*, with Dennis Bernstein; *Crossing the BLVD: strangers, neighbors, aliens in a new America*, with Judith Sloan; *The Portrait Series* (four-book suite); *GRRRHHHH: a study of social patterns*, with Bernstein and Sandra Brownlee; *French Fries*, with Bernstein; and *i mean you know*. Lehrer has received many honors for his books and multimedia projects, including: The Ladislav Sutnar Lifetime Achievement Prize, Center for Book Arts Honoree, Brendan Gill Prize, Innovative Use of Archives Award, International Book Award for Best New Fiction, Independent Publisher Outstanding Book of the Year Award, Special Recognition Award from the Society of Typographic Arts, three AIGA Book Awards, two TDC Awards, two Design Incubation Awards, a Media That Matters Award; fellowships from the NEA and NYFA; and grants from NYSCA, 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, LA County Art Museum, The Getty Museum, The Walker Art Center, Georges Pompidou Centre, and Tate Gallery. His books often sit at the center of multibranching projects that include performance, exhibition, animations and video. A sought after speaker, Lehrer is a founding faculty member of the *Designer As Author/Entrepreneur* MFA program at SVA, Distinguished Professor Emeritus at SUNY Purchase, and Co-Founder/Artistic Director of EarSay, a non-profit arts organization in Queens, NY.

## SELECTED PRAISE FOR ADEENA KARASICK

“A powerful work of fierce music, poetry and feminist critique that creates a space for the embodiment of female desire... Fluid, dynamic, textually complex, dense, and multivocal, Karasick’s, *Salomé; Woman of Valor* is a strange and wonderful elixir, wild, fierce, erotic... Signs are stripped bare of their traditional meanings, re-clothed in language more elaborate, baroque, abstract and vivid, pulsing; the word dancing in the flesh... weaving linguistic, lyrical, and mystical realities into an elaborate mosaic.” **Talisman: A Journal of Contemporary Poetry and Poetics** *Peter Valente*

“A twined virtuosity of mind and ear which leaves the reader deliciously lost in Karasick’s signature ‘syllabic labyrinth.” *Craig Dworkin*

“Karasick’s rolling, sing-chanting delivery, influenced by cabalism and Midrashic philosophy, with hints of Hebrew and Yiddish, ...is a brain-teasing mix of semiotic play, pop-culture references, and erudite historic-religious touchstones.” **The Georgia Straight** *Janet Smith*

“Karasick’s is the ‘dance of the intellect among words.’ Her *Salomé: Woman of Valor* is a dithyramb of desire, a seven-veiled dance of seduction that celebrates the tangles, convolutions, and ecstasies of unbridled sexuality... Not so much by talking about desire as by demonstrating how desire flows through language, an unstoppable flood of allusion (both literary and pop-cultural), word-play and extravagant sound-work.” **Intricate Thicket: Reading Late Modernist Poetries** *Mark Scroggins*

“Adeena Karasick ascends to new heights of poetic genius with *This Poem*. A challenging and witty exploration of our contemporary, networked world; all twitters and updates - sardonic, subversive and sensual - by a mistress of language, a trickster of textuality, a maestro of wordplay. In short, *This Poem* fully achieves that rarest of accolades - brilliance.” *Paul Seesequasis*

“If poetry is to be functional, relevant, irreverent and alive, it has to do everything we do. It must meditate on the sacredness of language, revel in linguistic invention. It might have to detour to the bathroom, Facebook statuses, or onto existential loneliness. Karasick’s *Checking In* jolts us from zoning out in our comfort zones and challenges our notion of what poetry is, or could be.”

**Tablet** *Jake Marmer*

“Groundbreaking in [her] interplay of poetry, music, video and dance.”

**Broadway World** *Chloe Rabinowitz*

“Karasick’s spoken-word performance sizzles your ears with the breathy heat of her voice... [her] delivery is hypnotic and erotic as waves of text roll and break, sometimes starting as whispers before sliding into chant-like passages that culminate in a libidinous frenzy.” **Opera Wire** *Chris Rule*

“Like Patti Smith before her, Karasick draws upon history, literature, religious iconography, and pop culture for her dense, heavily dusted sound poetry. Her libretto explores, exalts, and reclaims the figure of *Salomé* in a feminist light—using references to Hebrew texts and Kabbalistic practices, pop-music, sound poetry, and neo-Fluxus performance styles—to reveal an apocryphal figure who refuses to be locked into a world of subjugation and misrepresentation.” **The Rogovoy Report** *Seth Rogovoy*

“In the alternate universe where Roland Barthes was a TikTok star and Marshall McLuhan an Instagram Influencer... We, not the medium, are what is being massaged, manipulated, and mangled—Karasick artfully exposes these many machi-nations while keeping her cool voice and ludic edge. Mordantly clever these compressed works are full of edge and insight... Up-to-date and totally timely... accurate and terrifying, lively and vivid, Karasick’s format manages its hybrid pata-pa-para-pechakucha parametrics with dizzying and dazzling energy and skill. In other words—WOW.” *Johanna Drucker*, back cover, **Massaging the Medium: Seven Pechakuchas**

## 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*

“*Five Oceans in a Teaspoon*, the new collaboration between poet Dennis Bernstein and artist Warren Lehrer is an engaging masterwork that has only a handful of precedents in literary and design history... Each piece in this funny, poignant work is scored—almost in the musical sense—with graphic organization for performance on the page... 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*

“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*

“In Warren 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*

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

“*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 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 Outstanding Book of the Year Award**

“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*

“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*

“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.” **Design Observer** *Jessica Helfand*, founding editor

“*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, constant compromise, and the will to find the funny line at which you won’t compromise. Wonderful!”

**Bookworm, KCRW** *Michael Silverblatt*

“Lehrer’s books challenge readers to explore the act of reading; to break with the usual linear pattern, vary the pace, look back on earlier passages, or skip ahead. His books 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*

## JOINT PRAISE FOR KARASICK & LEHRER'S *OUVERT OEUVRE: OPENINGS*

“An arresting attempt to put collective pain and healing on the page... Karasick’s poems and Lehrer’s images of textual choreography deal with what emerging from a long, isolating quarantine feels like ‘in the today of wild touching; / the today of withholding, the today of / passionate rations.’ This collaboration keenly embodies a collective trauma that eludes a singular definition.”

**Kirkus Reviews** (*Starred Review*)

“A vivid new graphic-text collaboration... marking our distance from lockdown. Return and reawakening register in subtle observations... We are back in the world, sort-of, through milestones and marked moments in which the concept of “open” carries a variety of meanings... Polyglot resonances reflect the global reach of the virus... air bubbles and exclamations effervesce... erotic play and sexual associations culminate in the corona virus floating through and across the space. Vectors of force and torque instantiate a text full of edges and conflicts, interruptions and disruptions, careening towards its final statement... Distinctly shaped, strikingly formed, *Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings* is a vibrant and attractive book, handled with suppleness.”

**JD: ABCs Newsletter** *Johanna Drucker*

“A striking publication that gives voice (and form) to the challenges, triumphs, interactions and realizations of our post-pandemic world... *Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings* demonstrates the crafting of a sensory experience and will interest anyone with an appetite for linguistic and typographic experimentation...”

**Eye Magazine** *Amy Henry*

“Like nothing I’ve seen in recent memory... It’s not ‘experimental’ — it’s 21st-century realism. It’s how information flows... A joyful meditation connection to our post-everything world.”

**Heavy Feather Review** *Bill Lessard*

“*Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings* is a swirling palimpsest of spectral voices, textures, whispers and type that will appeal to anyone trying to find humanity in the wake of pandemics.”

**Print Magazine, The Daily Heller** *Steven Heller*

“*Ouvert, Oeuvre: Openings* is a work of art, with Adeena Karasick’s poetry beautifully choreographed by Warren Lehrer, with music by Frank London. The resulting multimedia engagement is a thoroughly provocative social commentary, offering new vectors of experience guiding the reader’s gaze across the orchestrated page, beyond conventional silent reading... granting us a glimpse of our unmediated selves.”

**Fence** *Steven Hicks*

“A total work of art, *Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings* combines poetry, typographic design, and music as a single unit... The soundtrack of Karasick’s reading of the poems to sound design by composer/performer Frank London allows one to read/view Lehrer’s typography along with the aural presentation. The two poems express a re-awakening of body and mind after two years of seclusion... It is a reward for those who have survived and endured—so open the book, touch its surfaces, and enjoy.”

**Book Beat, I Arrogantly Recommend**, *Tom Bowden*

“Recommended for all poetry lovers... Transformative and deeply rewarding.”

**Ruchi Agarwal Pegasus Literary**

“*Ouvert Oeuvre: Openings* is an innovative book that explores our post-pandemic world...”

**Fine Books and Collections**

“A gasp-worthy balance of poetic eros, theoretical intelligence, and luminous suspicion. An all-round original book! *Rachel Blau DuPlessis*, poet-critic

“A true masterpiece of linguistic play and exploration!” *Paolo Granata*, University of Toronto

For a presskit with images and more information, go to:  
<https://warrenlehrer.com/this-page-is-an-occupied-territory-2024/>  
*The Press Kit* is on the upper left column.

For additional info or press copies contact: [judith@earsay.org](mailto:judith@earsay.org)

To arrange interviews or book performance/readings/talks, contact:  
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*Thank You!*