Because I love you, I become war

EILEEN R. TABIOS
Praise for Eileen R. Tabios’ Work

Since her first works, Eileen Tabios’ performances—in prose, poetic artifices, and mixed constructions or inventions—have always sharpened the cutting-edge of contemporary global cultural events. Art has morphed into a dazzling multiverse of sensuous happenings. Undoing the conceptual habit of reframing and parodic mimicry, she has created a new form of montage in texts such as “Because I Love you, I Become War” and “President Duterte Socializes Media,” etc.—witty humor jostling with sharp critique and graceful Spieltrieb. Enjoy in this volume the exercise of a rare intelligence that weaves the semiotic subtleties of icon, index, and symbol into epiphanies and discoveries that are, indeed, new additions to our world as we know it so far.

—E. SAN JUAN, JR.
Author of Sisát’s Vengeance and Maelstrom over the Killing Fields

Raw[ness] exudes from this collection of poems and poetics prose about love and war, both corporal and terrestrial. Whether speaking of “rose petals yawning like little girls, like the daughters I never bore;” or a California wildfire’s “yellowed skies” and “smoke taint,” even color is narrative in Eileen Tabios’ dexterous hands. Prose serves as the underpainting, outlining recurring themes that emerge in Tabios’ writings of women and women’s bodies as loci of war and of creation, and of poetry and teaching as social and political activism. In the section “Political Science,” Tabios’ Motherland, the Philippines, is a battlefield where the personas of journalist Maria Ressa and presidential contender Leni [Robredo] are pitted in a balagtasan against the persona of macho-fascist [Rodrigo Roa] Duterte. “The Great Grief” section rises from the battlefield of Mother Earth with elegies on a world on fire; a cactus’ “Interior as dry / As the cracked sod surrounding / You, for whom no one sheds tears”; songbirds’ “corpses hitting ground.” Eileen Tabios is a poet with a finger on the pulse of humanity, and her poems are proof of its resilience even in these grave times.

—VINA ORDEN
Writer, Editor, co-host of The Lift Up podcast, and Immigrants’ and Human Rights Advocate
Near the beginning of “Water as Poetics as Identity”, one of the prose pieces in this book, are the assertions “The best poems, for me, are not about something. They become/are that something.” This book does something better; it transcends the dichotomy implied by those sentences. Each piece in it is definitely about something, and each definitely is something. The same can be said about prose in the second half of the book. This is when Eileen-the-maker-of language-things is at her best. Because you know where she’s at, and she is down to the bone (tip of the cap for that phraseology to the great East Bay Grease band, Cold Blood. Before your time, Eileen …). Just like the world. When it’s down to the bone the only art that matters is art that can look it all in the face and say, “I measure up.” And be dead on about that. Art that matters can be found on nearly every page of BECAUSE I LOVE YOU, I BECOME WAR. This book is by a mature artist at the height of her power—a book that is a gift.

—JOHN BLOOMBERG-RISSMAN

Author/curator of the Zeitgeist Spam series, associate editor of Poetry of the Americas: A Transnational Anthology (eds. Jerome Rothenberg and Javier Taboada), and editor of Collected Poems of Anselm Hollo with Yasamin Ghiasi and Barbaric Vast & Wild: A Gathering of Outside & Subterranean Poetry from Origins to Present from the “Poems for the Millenium” series with Jerome Rothenberg

The title poem, “Because I Love You, I Become War,” is a poem of feminist genius, deserving to be in the pantheon of all-time brilliant poems!

—SASCHA A. AKHTAR

Poetry Lecturer at Greenwich University and author of #LoveLikeBlood, Of Necessity and Wanting, and 199 Japanese Names for Japanese Trees
Because I love you, I become war

Poems & Uncollected Poetics Prose

EILEEN R. TABIOS

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PREVIOUSLY BY EILEEN R. TABIOS

POETRY

After The Egyptians Determined The Shape of the World Is A Circle, 1996
Beyond Life Sentence, 1998
The Empty Flagpole (CD with guest artist Mei-mei Berssenbrugge), 2000
Ecstatic Mutations (with short stories and essays), 2001
Reproductions of The Empty Flagpole, 2002
Enheduanna in the 21st Century, 2002
There, Where the Pages Would End, 2003
Menage a Trois With the 21st Century, 2004
Crucial Bliss Epilogues, 2004
The Estrus Gaze(s), 2005
Songs of the Colon, 2005
Post Bling Bling, 2005
I Take Thee, English, For My Beloved, 2005
Dredging for Atlantis, 2006
It’s Curtains, 2006
The Singer and Others: Flamenco Hay(na)ku, 2007
The Light Sang As It Left Your Eyes: Our Autobiography, 2007
Nota Bene Eiswein, 2009
On A Pyre: An Ars Poetica, 2010
Roman Holiday, 2010
Hay(na)ku for Haiti, 2010
the relational elations of ORPHANED ALGEBRA (with j/j hastain), 2012
5 Shades of Gray, 2012
147 Million Orphans (MMXI-MML), 2014
44 RESURRECTIONS, 2014
SUN STIGMATA (Sculpture Poems), 2014
I Forgot Light Burns, 2015
Duende in the Alleys, 2015
The Connoisseur of Alleys, 2016
The Gilded Age of Kickstarters, 2016
Excavating the Filipino in Me, 2016
I Forgot Ars Poetica, 2016
AMNESIA: Somebody’s Memoir, 2016
THE OPPOSITE OF CLAUSTROPHOBIA: Prime’s Anti-Autobiography, 2017
Post-Ecstasy Mutations, 2017
On Green Lawn, The Scent of White, 2017
To Be An Empire Is To Burn, 2017
If They Hadn’t Worn White Hoods … (with John Bloomberg-Rissman), 2017
What Shivering Monks Comprehend, 2017
YOUR FATHER IS BALD: Selected Hay(na)ku Poems, 2017
IMMIGRANT: Hay(na)ku & Other Poems In A New Land, 2017
Comprehending Mortality (with John Bloomberg-Rissman), 2017
Big City Cante Intermedio, 2017
WINTER ON WALL STREET: A Novella-in-Verse, 2017
Making National Poetry Month Great Again, 2017
MANHATTAN: An Archaeology, 2017
Love In A Time of Belligerence, 2017
MURDER DEATH RESURRECTION: A Poetry Generator, 2018
TANKA, Vol. I, 2018
HIRAETH: Tercets From The Last Archipelago, 2018
One, Two, Three: Selected Hay(na)ku Poems (Trans. Rebeka Lembo), 2018
The In(ter)vention of the Hay(na)ku: Selected Tercets 1996-2019, 2019 & 2021
Witness in the Convex Mirror, 2019
Evocare: Selected Tanka (with Ayo Gutierrez and Brian Cain Aene), 2019
We Are It, 2020
Political Love, 2021
La Vie érotique de l’art, une séance avec William Carlos Williams (Trad. de l’anglais (États-Unis) par Samuel Rochery), 2021
PRISES (Trad. de l’anglais (États-Unis) par Fanny Garin), 2022

Fiction

Behind The Blue Canvas, 2004
Novel Chatelaine, 2009
What Counts, 2020
PAGPAG: The Dictator’s Aftermath in the Diaspora, 2020
DOVELION: A Fairy Tale for Our Times, 2021
Simmering: a novella-in-prose-poems, 2022

Prose Collections

Black Lightning: Poetry-In-Progress (poetry essays/interviews), 1998
My Romance (art essays with poems), 2002
The Blind Chatelaine’s Keys (biography with haybun), 2008
#EileenWritesNovel, 2017
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“ALA ALA: A Balikbayan Box for Malacanang Palace” was featured in the Malaya National Summit for Human Rights and Democracy in the Philippines, 2021.
“ALA ALA: A Balikbayan Box for Malacanang Palace” and “When I Was” were published in *PAGPAG: The Dictator's Aftermath in the Diaspora* by Eileen R. Tabios (Paloma Press, San Mateo, 2020).


“Blue Meta Pain” was written for PEN Norway’s support of jailed Turkish poet Ilhan Sami Comak (for more information: https://scottishpen.org/poetry-as-solidarity-of-the-soul-notes-on-the-campaign-of-pen-norway-to-free-the-poet-ilhan-comak/).

“Blue Meta Pain,” “Melt Up!” and “Queenie” were previously published in *POLITICAL LOVE* by Eileen R. Tabios (Booksby Press, Ohio, 2021).

“Duterte Socializes Social Media” and “Queenie” were featured in *I Can't Breathe: A Poetic Anthology of Social Justice*, Editor Christopher Okemwa (Kistrech Theatre International, Kenya, 2021).

“Leni’s Pinking Shears: A Verb’s Etymology” was featured in *100 Pink Poems para kay Leni Robredo*, Editor Alfred A. Yuson (San Anselmo Press, Philippines, 2022)

“Mama Betty” (as “Mom Betty”) was the subject of an interview and reading, Podcast Producer Katie Klocksin (Poetry Foundation / PoetryNow, Aug. 28, 2017).

“My Adobo” was written for an Arts at Filoli program curated by poet Aileen Cassinetto, Commissioner on San Mateo County’s Commission on the Status of Women and former Poet Laureate of San Mateo, CA.
“My 9-11, According to Star Trek,” was written for the City of Yountville’s Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of 9-1-1, and included in 20 Years: A Collection of Poems by Napa County Writers about September 11, 2001 curated by Napa Valley Poet Laureate Marianne Lyons.

“Poet’s Autobiography” was featured in Prof. Thomas Fink’s “Introduction to Poetry,” Spring 2022, City University New York.

“Smoke Taint” was accepted for the anthology Wine Poems: Bottled Poetry, Editor Marilyn Robitaille (Romar Press, Texas, forthcoming).

“Sunflowers Became Gray, But” was published as a miniature book by Poems-for-all (San Diego, 2022) in its Poems for Ukraine series, Editor/Publisher Robert Hansen.

“The Poet Markets a Novel” was featured in Marsh Hawk Press’ “Chapter One” series online (2022).


UNCOLLECTED POETICS PROSE

Zocalo Public Square, Contributing Editor Minal Hajratwala (Oct. 8, 2020): “A Letter From Napa Valley, Where Love Burns Hotter Than Fire”

Jacket2, Editor Divya Victor (June 20, 2019): “MURDER DEATH RESURRECTION: Another way for poetry”

Read Water: An Anthology, Editors Hari Alluri, Garrett Bryant and Amanda Fuller (Lockhorn Press, 2020): “Water as Poetics as Identity”

Presented at PEN OAKLAND Award Ceremonies and first published by README (2000): “Notes for Remarks Accepting the PEN OAKLAND-Josephine Miles Literary National Award for THE ANCHORED ANGEL: Selected Writings by Jose Garcia Villa (Kaya Press, 1999)”


Presented at Rotary Club Napa (December 2021): “Introducing the Flooid Poetry Form”


Marsh Hawk Press’ “Chapter One” Series Online (September 2020): “On Angela Manalang Gloria”


with (the Content of) 2ND NOTICE OF MODIFICATIONS TO TEXT OF PROPOSED REGULATIONS by John Bloomberg-Rissman

*Otoliths*, Editor Mark Young (Southern Winter 2016): “When Poetry, Aided by Chickens, Took Revenge Against the Termites”

*Our Own Voice*, Editor Rene Grefalda (September 2005): “Homage to Gloria Rodriguez, Publisher: A Big Smoooooch for Mommy Glo”


*Brooklyn Rail’s New Social Environment* YouTube Series #289 (May 2021): “Ekphrasis Should Not Exist”

*Ottawa Poetry Newsletter: On Writing* #75, Editor rob mclennan (Oct. 27, 2015): “No Longer Casual”
Because I love you,
I become war
Dedicated to those who are fighting against the planet's current great ailments: environmental damage & economic/political oligarchism
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KERIMA LORENA TARIMAN

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