

BlazeVOX Interview with Deborah Meadows

Tell me about your book. What influenced this book?

Three Plays extends work I've had published as a poet by exploring argument, logic or absurdity, human frailty, and disintegrated categories. *Guide Dogs*: because I live close to city hall, I frequently walked over to Occupy LA, and that was tremendously attractive for its energy, original approaches to old injustices as well as current economic problems that press on us. *Some Cars* and *Speech Acts with Trees* both extend long time considerations of justice, violence, the role of art and knowledge.

Where does this book fit into your career as a writer?

This follows ten books of poetry and many years of teaching university courses with a progressive pedagogy, union work, and other social activism.

If you had to convince a friend or colleague to read this book, what might you tell them?

Convince? I might give a free copy, sit in a restaurant and read page 47-49 to my friend or colleague, might mention my own work as a cleaning lady as a younger person.

Tell me about the last literary reading you attended.

I am part of the Padua playwrights group, and for the past several weeks we had staged readings of our work (including my play published by BlazeVox *Some Cars*) in a nearby warehouse converted to living quarters where an



actor has a studio area. All actors who generously gave of their time and talent were great, plus it was a chance to think about the writing, about a possible future production.

When did you realize you we're a writer?

I began as a small child but not until later did I think it possible, due in part, to social shaping along lines of class and gender.

Tell us about your process: Pen and Paper, computer, notebooks ... how do you write?

Mostly pen and paper, then onto the computer.

How do you handle a bad review of your work?

You can send one because I haven't seen something utterly damning.

Which writer would you most like to have a drink with, and why?

Maybe a party of drinking ghosts could include Arkadii Dragomoschenko, César Vallejo, Samuel Beckett, Inger Christensen, and Italo Calvino. Their works are fascinating, their innovations in language, in the very definition of literature.

What's the biggest mistake you've made as a writer?

Maybe being too solitary even though I was very engaged politically outside of literary communities. Maybe that has changed, yet there is something ultimately solitary about writing for those who are condemned to take it very seriously.

What's the worst advice you hear authors give writers?

Maybe I don't listen to such, because advice does not stand out as something I've heard from writers. I focus on their written works, and learn (or not) from those.

What scares you the most?

Not having enough time to do all the works I hope to complete in this life.

Where do you buy your books?

In recent years, I order many books online late at night when stores are closed – mostly I aim to buy direct from small press publishers themselves avoiding the goliaths in the book business. I use the library on campus and Link+ all the time, too.

Who are you reading now?

Parallel Presents: The Art of Pierre Huyghe by Amelia Barikin and *The Radicant* by Nicolas Bourriaud. I was really taken with the recent Huyghe “retrospective” at LACMA that is more a site-responsive re-creation than the usual plan for bringing together works across time that can be mounted in any city identically. This was an idiosyncratic array.

What is your favorite TV show at the moment?

When not in downtown Los Angeles, my husband and I have a place in the mountains where we spend time. It is so remote there is no tv or cell service, so we bring dvd’s and are now midway through *Treme* having completed *The Wire*.