

## Texts/Worlds:

Poetry readings by Stephen Ratcliffe and Barrett Watten

“Demos: Gertrude Stein’s *Do Let Us Go Away*”

A performance by Carla Harryman and Jon Raskin

Gray Loft Gallery @ The Orchard / Galleries on 25  
489 25th Street, Oakland, CA

Sunday, March 15, 4:00–6:00 PM

Gray Loft Gallery presents “Texts/Worlds,” two readings and a performance by renowned experimental poets Stephen Ratcliffe, Barrett Watten, Carla Harryman, and composer/improvisor Jon Raskin.

The event celebrates the West Coast book launch of Barrett Watten’s *Zone: correlations* (1973 2021), published by Chax Press, a collection of textual hybrid works that “correlate” disparate modes of writing.

“*Zone: correlations* connects twelve poetic experiments that extract and recombine language from its limitless archives, generating new meanings for public and private life in our distressed present.”

Northern California poet Stephen Ratcliffe will read from his conceptually inflected poetry of time, space, and minute-by-minute cognition and perception from *b r e a t h i n g*, an on-going work, and his new chapbook *onward walking on* (Neo-Mimeo Press), accompanied by digital image projections.

“The wonderful momentum of Ratcliffe’s clipped language echoes the staccato footsteps of his week-long hikes. It’s walking art in the tradition of Richard Long and Hamish Fulton, yet kept in motion through a constantly shifting, ever-piercing attention that keeps the reader acutely present to the changing light, the passing crows, and the meteors streaking through the August night sky.” —Cole Swenson

“Demos: Gertrude Stein’s *Do Let Us Go Away*” is a performance continuing Carla Harryman and Jon Raskin’s collaborative work in word/sound compositions and improvisations.

“In the thick of pandemic sequestration Harryman and Raskin conducted a radical interpretive reading experiment in which they exchanged recordings of fragments of Gertrude Stein’s *Do Let Us Go Away*, a play written during World War I when Stein and Alice B. Toklas traveled to Majorca. Harryman’s score refashions Stein’s play as a series of ‘demonstrations’ that focus on different aspects of Stein’s text, from grammatical features such as imperatives and direct statements to expressive affects to references to time and sound and experiences of going away and remaining home, translated into this live performance.”

Bios:

**Barrett Watten** is a poet, critic, and editor with numerous publications from the 1970s to the present. He is author of *Frame* (1971–1990); *Bad History*; *Progress/Under Erasure*; *Not This: Selected Writings/He mo: Избранные тексты*; co-author of *Leningrad: American Writers in the Soviet Union* and *The Grand Piano: An Experiment in Collective Autobiography*; author of critical works such as *Total Syntax*; *The Constructivist Moment* (Rene Wellek Prize); and *Questions of Poetics*; subject of the edited volume *Barrett Watten: Contemporary Poetics as Critical Theory* (Aerial 8); and professor at Wayne State University.

**Stephen Ratcliffe**'s recent books are *Black and Yellow Notebook* (BlazeVOX); *Barbara Guest & Stephen Ratcliffe: Letters* (Chax Press); *Some Time and speaking of now* (Spuyten Duyvil); *Rocks and More Rocks* (Cuneiform); and *Sound of Wave in Channel* (BlazeVOX). His ongoing series of seven 1,000-page poems written in 1,000 consecutive days is available online (Editions Eclipse) and his daily poems and photographs are at [stephenratcliffe.blogspot.com](http://stephenratcliffe.blogspot.com). He is a Professor Emeritus at Mills College; author of three works of literary criticism (*Reading the Unseen: [Offstage Hamlet]*); and has lived in Bolinas since 1973.

**Carla Harryman** is an innovator in poetry, prose, and interdisciplinary performance. Recent publications include *Various Devices: Selected Writings*, in Russian and English (Polifem, Moscow); a collection of poem-dialogues written in “pandemic time,” *Cloud Cantata* (Pamenar Press, London); and a second edition of her long poem *Open Box* (Belladonna). She has created two recordings with Jon Raskin: *Open Box*, a CD of music and spoken text performance, and *Occupying Theodor W. Adorno's Music and New Music: A Reperformance*, first presented at dOCUMENTA 13 and reimaged for recording by Harryman and Raskin, featuring Gino Robair on piano and electronics. Her website is [www.carlaharryman.com](http://www.carlaharryman.com).

**Jon Raskin** is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, leader of the Jon Raskin Quartet and member of Rova Saxophone Quartet, which, since its inception in 1977 has been exploring the relationship of improvisation and composition, developing and honing the language of ensemble music, and researching linguistic possibilities of the saxophone. He has performed and/or recorded with Anthony Braxton, Fred Frith, Sam Rivers, Tim Berne, Phillip Johnston, Leo Smith, Frank Gratowski, Phillip Greenlief, Henry Kaiser, and many others. Recordings of the Jon Raskin Quartet and new collaborations can be found on Bandcamp.