

New Book of Poetry and Poetics Re-envision the Airplane as Erotic Theater Transporting Language to New Destinations

ÆROTOMANIA: THE BOOK OF LUMENATIONS

Robert K. Logan

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**New Book of Poetry and Poetics Re-envisions the Airplane as Erotic Theater
Transporting Language to New Destinations**

ÆROTOMANIA:
THE BOOK OF LUMENATIONS Poems by **Adeena Karasick**

Lavender Ink

Paperback, 4-Color. \$25.95 USD, ISBN: 978-1-956921-12-0 Pub Date: October 5, 2023

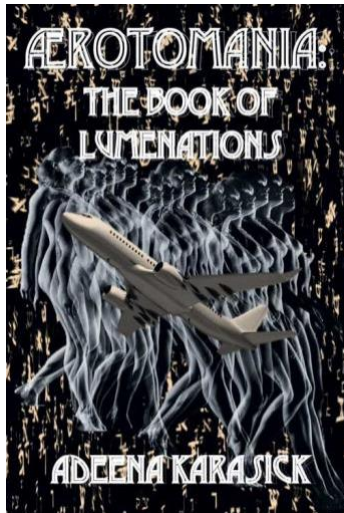
CONTACT: Adeena Karasick adeenakarasick@cs.com (917) 690-7912

Marked by a playful “cognitive dissidence” and a lyrically explosive mix of pathos, philosophy, comedy, and wit, *Ærotomania: The Book of Lumenations* marks Karasick’s 14th volume of poetry. Through a poetics of politically engaged aesthetic resistance, negotiates turbulence, loss, nostalgia and hope inscribing a jubilant “present” which is ever-arriving.

“The Book of Lumenations” section, takes as its jumping off point, the Biblical *Eicha The Book of Lamentations*, and through reflection, deflection, refraction and the fracturing of language, homophonically re-situates the original text to the present epoch, exploring how darkness is a form of light, and in *rupture*, there is *rapture*.

In exquisite full color, the “Ærotomania” section explores how the airplane as an erotic theater, a social text of secret motives, is structured like a language. As both a love letter and a lament to the airplane, it speaks to ways both individuals and meaning get transported to multiple and sometimes unexpected destinations; and how, like language itself, the airplane becomes a symbol of hope.

As a border-blurring text incorporating elements of visual poetry/concrete work, asemic/sound poetry, theoretical discourse, and poetic, philosophical, and Kabbalistic aphorisms, “Ærotomania” highlights how language—an ever-swirling palimpsest of spectral voices, textures, whispers, and codes—transports us through passion, politics, pleasure, and promise as we negotiate loss and light towards new ways of seeing and being; and, like the airplane, flies through a variety of zones and registers, soaring to higher and higher levels, carrying its passengers through radically transformative possibilities.



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ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *ÆROTOMANIA: THE BOOK OF LUMENATIONS*

Book your flight now. The amazing Adeena Karasick – poet, theorist, performance artist extraordinaire – has built a new kabbalistic aircraft that takes readers to newly discovered other worldly and other wordy domains. Text takes flight. Hop on board. The passengers already onboard include Jacques Derrida, Elliot Wolfson, Lauren Bacall, Georges Bataille, Marquis de Sade, Ingeborg Bachmann, Michael Wex, and many more. Seats are still available. “hiding in plane site/sometimes it’s crying out under the weight of its reference/renavigating/from one destination to another/performing its own genealogy,” this is a flight not to be missed. After all, “we are the letters traveling through space and time.”

—Hank Lazer, author of *Thinking in Jewish* and *P I E C E S*.

In an Adeena Karasick book, one expects the unexpected—along with delight, amusement, and flashing, piercing insights into the workings of language, society, and desire. On Karasick’s quicksilver tongue, Jeremiah’s Lamentations become the *Book of Lumenations*, where songs of mourning are shot through and transfigured with corruscating and hopeful light. In the bravura title poem *Ærotomania*, we are swept up on a round-the-world jet flight where air travel becomes the emblem and fulfillment of all the wordplay and word-work of Jewish mysticism and post-structuralist theory. “The airplane is structured like a language,” and the overbrimming, unstoppable glossalalia

of *Ærotomania* initiates us into a mile-high club of linguistic and philosophical promiscuity—novel, striking, and ever-shifting aerial panoramas of our lives within words.

—Mark Scroggins, author of *Damage: Poems 1988-2022* and *Zion Offramp 1-50*

Punning with conceptual condensations until pleasures become fireworks, joyously singing the language dynamic, displaying heartfelt learning, sexy switch-ups and flights of insight, this work by Adeena Karasick is a gasp-worthy balance of poetic eros, theoretical intelligence, and luminous suspicion. An all-round original book, here the sacred, the playful, the Kabbalah and the female are flying high in polymorphous boldness. A hell of a book. Karasick blasts on all her cylinders!

—Rachel Blau DuPlessis, poet-critic

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Adeena Karasick, Ph.D, 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 *Massaging the Medium: 7 Pechakuchas*, (The Institute of General Semantics Press: 2022), shortlisted for Outstanding Book of the Year Award (ICA, 2023) and winner of the 2023 Susanne K. Langer Award for Outstanding Scholarship in the Ecology of Symbolic Form. (MEA), *Checking In* (Talonbooks, 2018) and *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). Karasick teaches Literature and Critical Theory for the Humanities and Media Studies Dept. at Pratt Institute, is Poetry Editor for *Explorations in Media Ecology*, Associate International Editor of *New Explorations: Studies in Culture and Communication*, 2021 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Award recipient and winner of the Voce Donna Italia award for

her contributions to feminist thinking, and has just been appointed Poet Laureate of the Institute of General Semantics. The “Adeena Karasick Archive” is established at Special Collections, Simon Fraser University. Hot off the press is *Ærotomania: The Book of Lumenations*, and *Ouvert: Oeuvre: Openings*, (Lavender Ink Press, 2023).

Poems from the book have also been made into a series of films and videopoems:

- *Ærotomania*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0ANxhF6jTc>
- *Checking In 2*: <https://youtu.be/42pv3-tDIQc> Full description of “Checking In” portion of the book here:

https://vispo.com/aleph4/images/adeena_karasick/entrance

- *Eicha: The Book of Lumenations*:
<https://filmfreeway.com/EichaTheBookofLumenations#:~:text=Calling%20attention%20to%20the%20ecology,the%20destruction%20of%20both%20Temples>

“An extraordinary achievement in experimental and Jewish film, paving the way poetry can express the inexpressible in new and innovative ways. And as such, has won 3 prestigious Awards of Recognition from the 2023 IndieFEST Film Awards: Experimental Film Award, Jewish Film Award, and Award for Women Filmmakers as well as 2 Awards of Recognition from the Accolade Global Film Competition: Best Experimental Film and Best Jewish Film; and also “Officially Selected” for the 2023 ARFF Berlin International Awards, 2023 Indie Short Fest, 2023 Depth of Field International Festival and the 2024 WPRN Women’s International Film Festival”.

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<https://www.lavenderink.org/site/shop/aerotomania/?v=76cb0a18730b>

For review copies, contact Lavender Ink, Bill Lavender bill.lavender@gmail.com (504) 813-9891. To arrange an author interview or book an appearance, contact Adeena Karasick, adeenakarasick@cs.com (917) 690-7912

Print and web quality jpegs of *Ærotomania: The Book of Lumenations* page spreads, the book’s cover, author headshots and performance photos will soon be available for download. Link TBA.

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... the incarnation of desire; female desire [where] each line; rising to a kind of orgasmic frenzy... attains a red hot intensity... Signs are stripped bare of their traditional meanings, re-clothed in language more elaborate, baroque, abstract and vivid... physical, pulsing; the word dancing in the flesh...weaving linguistic, lyrical, and mystical realities into an elaborate mosaic... and undulates as an erotic specter.”

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 one long 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 and outrageous sound-work.”

Intricate Thicket: Reading Late Modernist Poetries *Mark Scroggins*

“Karasick’s *Checking In* is “proto-ecstatic jet-propulsive word torsion... a ride in the star car.”

George Quasha

“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 that we do. It must meditate on the sacredness of language or revel in puns, linguistic invention. It might have to detour to the bathroom, Facebook statuses, or on to existential loneliness. Karasick’s *Checking In* jolts us from zoning out in our comfort zones, and to challenge 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, popular 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 cloned with a generation of super-whiz critical-wise-cracking kids to produce super-hip trend-smart media brand collage-critique they might have approached the extra-orbital velocity of Adeena Karasick’s high-powered cultural insights... We, not the medium, are what is being massaged, manipulated, and mangled—and Karasick artfully exposes these many machinations 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, the dense fields of text-image resonate with current associations and indexical trails of the familiar frames according to which we mediate the culturally produced encounters with our daily lives. Accurate and terrifying, lively and vivid, Adeena Karasick’s format manages its hybrid para-pechakucha parametrics with dizzying and dazzling energy and skill. In other words—WOW.

Johanna Drucker, back cover of *Massaging the Medium: Seven Pechakuchas*.

