

THE LOOM



Poetry in Harrisville

Katie Farris & Ilya Kaminsky

Katie Farris “is brilliant in her imagining of survival and depends on the music of language as proof, ‘a language I can read/this scene has a door/I cannot close I stand/within its wedge/I stand within its shield.’ *Standing In the Forest of Being Alive* is an enchanting book of poems that question and praise the body even as it deteriorates. You are holding in your hands words that come across as chants, as spells, as prayer.”

— Jericho Brown, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Tradition*

“Farris’s language is delicious, maddening and mythic, dreamlike, sarcastic, witty...tales come alive as myths, as dreams.”

— *American Book Review*

Ilya Kaminsky “*Deaf Republic* is structured as a two act play in which an occupying army kills a deaf boy and villagers respond by marshaling a wall of silence as a source of resistance...These poems bestow the power of sacred drama on a secular martyrology...a superb and vigorous imagination, a poetic talent of rare and beautiful proportions...A visit to this republic will not leave the reader unchanged.”

— *The New York Times*

“Ilya Kaminsky’s ability to create such a rich landscape in only 60 lyric poems of a timely and beautiful jeremiad: a devastatingly powerful indictment of complacency”

— Henry Louis Gates, *PBS Special*

“*Deaf Republic* is conscience, terror, silence, rage, made to coexist moments of tenderness, piercing beauty, empathic lyricism.”

— Tracy K. Smith

The Loom poetry series, celebrating some of the best of contemporary poetry, is located in the historic mill town, Harrisville, New Hampshire.

Sunday April 30, 2023, 4:30 pm

The Brick Church, Harrisville
13 Canal Street, Harrisville, NH
For more information contact:

Rebecca K. Gibson, founder, The Loom

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www.theloompoetry.com

Katie Farris is the author of *Standing in the Forest of Being Alive*, Alice James Books, 2023 and *A Net to Catch My Body in its Weaving*, winner of the 2021 Chad Walsh Poetry Award. She is also the author of the hybrid-form text *boysgirls*, (Marick Press, 2011; Tupelo Press 2019), and the chapbooks *Thirteen Intimacies* (Fivehundred Places, 2017), and *Mother Superior in Hell* (Dancing Girl, 2019). She is winner of poetry awards from *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Fairy Tale Review*, *Massachusetts Review*, and the Orison Anthology Prize in Fiction. Her work has appeared *American Poetry Review*, *Granta*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Nation*, and *Poetry*, and has been commissioned by MoMA. She is the co-translator of several books of poetry from the French, Chinese, and Russian, including *Gossip and Metaphysics: Russian Modernist Poems and Prose*. She graduated with an MFA from Brown University, and is currently Associate Professor at Princeton University.



In the Event of My Death

What used to be
a rope descending
my vertebrae to the basement
of my spine
grows thin.

In solidarity with my chemotherapy,
our cat leaves her whiskers on
the hardwood floor,
and I gather them, each pure white parenthesis
and plant them
in the throat of the earth.

In quarantine,
I learned to trim your barbarian
hair. Now it stands always on end:
a salute to my superior barbary skills. In the event
of my death, promise you will find my heavy braid
and bury it—

I will need a rope
to let me down into the earth.
I've hidden others
strategically around the globe, a net
to catch my body
in its weaving.

From *Standing in the Forest of Being Alive*

Ilya Kaminsky was born in Odessa, former Soviet Union in 1977, and arrived to the United States in 1993, when his family was granted asylum by the American government. He is the author of *Deaf Republic* (Graywolf Press) and *Dancing In Odessa* (Tupelo Press) and co-editor and co-translated many other books. His poems have been translated into over twenty languages, and his books are published in many countries, including Turkey, Netherlands, Germany, Russia, France, Mexico, Macedonia, Romania, Spain and China, where his poetry was awarded the Yinchuan International Poetry Prize. In 2019, Kaminsky was selected by BBC as “one of the 12 artists that changed the world.” *Deaf Republic* was named Best Book of the Year by NPR, *Washington Post*, *New York Times Book Review*, *Times Literary Supplement*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *Irish Times*, *Library Journal*, *The Telegraph*, *New Statesman*, *Slate*, *Vanity Fair*, *Lithub*, *Huffington Post*, *The New York Public Library*, *The American Library Association*. He is the winner of the *LA Times* Book Prize, Anisfield-Wolf Book Award in Poetry, National Jewish Book Award and Finalist for the National Book Award, National Book Critics Circle Book Award, PEN/Jean Stein Award, Kingsley Tufts Award, Forward Prize (UK), and the T.S. Eliot Prize (UK).



Ilya Kaminsky has worked as a law clerk for San Francisco Legal Aid and the National Immigration Law Center. More recently, he worked pro-bono as the Court Appointed Special Advocate for Orphaned Children in Southern California. He has held the Bourne Chair in Poetry at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Now he is a professor at Princeton University.

We Lived Happily during the War

And when they bombed other people's houses, we
protested
but not enough, we opposed them but not
enough. I was
in my bed, around my bed America
was falling: invisible house by invisible house by invisible house—
I took a chair outside and watched the sun.
In the sixth month
of a disastrous reign in the house of money
in the street of money in the city of money in the country of money,
our great country of money, we (forgive us)
lived happily during the war.

From *Deaf Republic*

Acknowledgements

We are grateful for Toadstool Books' on-going engagement with *The Loom, Poetry in Harrisville*.

As always, books by our poets are available for purchase through Toadstool Books at www.toadbooks.com, and at the event.

Without our energetic volunteers, Jeannie Eastman, Chris and Neil Falcone, Kathy and Tom Hamon, Linda Lindgren, photographers Michelle Aldredge, Phil Gargan, Julia Pakrodooni and others, book purveyors Willard and Holly Williams of the Toadstool Bookstore, Peterborough, the generous hosting by the "Brick Church" in Harrisville, and the sweet encouragement of Rev. Traceymay Kalvaitis, and finally and most essentially, Eleanor Drury and Chick Colony, this series would not have happened.

We are eager to include people who want to help make the events delightful occasions.

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Profile of Ilya Kaminsky

"...the advice which I extracted from him after a great deal of coaxing: 'Wake up! Life is a miracle! We are here for the last time. We must allow the possibilities for magic in our life. The ordinary is beautiful, and frankly, it's all we've got.' It is a hot day when I interview Ilya. Katie, who was delayed in joining us, comes home a bit wilted from her journey and offers us some ice cream. I assure her Ilya has been an excellent host. 'Yes, he practices aggressive hospitality,' she agrees happily, which describes well his persistent and exuberant foisting of Pepperidge Farm cookies at me. Beautiful, young, lithe, Katie goes to fetch the ice cream, and I hear a crash and an exclamation. 'There are books in the freezer!' she shouts in disbelief, and then lets go with a hearty belly laugh. 'Kaminsky, it's gone too far!' I find this hilarious. He goes to her, eagerly, to see what can be done with the mess. It is easy, amid talk of magic and daily miracles, to imagine them being forever newlyweds."

— Brenna Silberstein, *Hastings Independent*

Of course we seek funding. The Loom, Poetry in Harrisville is a sponsored project of Fractured Atlas, a non-profit arts service organization. Contributions for the charitable purpose of The Loom, Poetry in Harrisville must be made payable to "Fractured Atlas" only and are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.



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