



Laurie Anderson: All the Things I Lost in the Flood

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An icon of performance art and the indie-music world, this is the first book on the artist's full career to date, as curated by the artist herself. Laurie Anderson is one of the most revered artists working today, and she is as prolific as she is inventive. She is a musician, performance artist, composer, fiction writer, and filmmaker (her most recent foray, *Heart of a Dog*, was lauded as an "experimental marvel" by the Los Angeles Times). Anderson moves seamlessly between the music world and the fine-art world while maintaining her stronghold in both. A true polymath, her interest in new media made her an early pioneer of harnessing technology for artistic purposes long before the technology boom of the last ten years. Regardless of the medium, however, it is exploration of language (and how it seeps into the image) and storytelling that is her metier.

A few years ago, Anderson began poring through her extensive archive of nearly forty years of work, which includes scores of documentation, notebooks, and sketchbooks. In the process, she rediscovered important work and looked at well-known projects with a new lens. In this landmark volume, the artist brings together the most comprehensive collection of her artwork to date, some of which has never before been seen or published. Spanning drawing, multimedia installations, performance, and new projects using augmented reality, the extensive volume traverses four decades of her groundbreaking art. Each chapter includes commentary written by Anderson herself, offering an intimate understanding of her work through the artist's own words.

Laurie Anderson: All the Things I Lost in the Flood Details

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From Reader Review Laurie Anderson: All the Things I Lost in the Flood for online ebook

Bettina says

Wonderful book by Laurie Anderson, about her own art. It's filed with photo's many new to me. But I love the most are Laurie's writing about her work. How she approaches things.

The book is a work of art in itself, and I love how it makes you wonder about things from page one. What a treasure it is!

Simon Sweetman says

An unsentimental memoir - a look at the work of Anderson, just the work. So much great work. Essentially it's a "critical autobiography". But of course it's an artwork in and of itself, a photo book, an essay book, so much in her. Huge depth and insight. Wonderful.

Kathleen says

My review for the Chicago Tribune:
<http://www.chicagotribune.com/lifesty...>

A truism about live performance of any kind is that it is ephemeral. Laurie Anderson's hybrid, high-spirited and highly engaging "All the Things I Lost in the Flood: Essays on Pictures, Language, and Code" commences with a calm reminder that really, all art is ephemeral; in fact, everything is ephemeral, subject to being swept away by impersonal forces over which humans have little to no control.

Anderson opens the collection with the 2012 landfall of Hurricane Sandy, when "the black water rose up over the banks, crossed the highway, and turned our street into a dark silky river." Two days later, she goes down to the basement she shares with her husband, Lou Reed, "to have a look at the equipment and materials I had assumed were soaked but still salvageable" only to find that "Nothing was left."

Yet in spite — or perhaps because — of this sober opening, Anderson presents here a lively, lucid and life-affirming look at her own dizzying career, an honest and seemingly exhaustive excavation of her philosophies and motivations. "And I looked at them floating there/ all the things I had carefully/ saved all my life," she writes in the opening piece, "And I thought how beautiful/ how magic and how catastrophic."

As this book essentially floats the reader back over these transitory things, one begins to realize: In a world that increasingly encourages artists to hyperspecialize and stick to a personal brand, Anderson remains one of our most fascinating and exuberant polymaths. Having released seven albums and counting, as well as having exhibited around the world at such venues as the Park Avenue Armory in New York and the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin, Anderson joyfully refuses, as the saying goes, to stay in her lane, ranging instead all over the place, across fields and projects with uninhibited abandon and intense thoughtfulness.

As a performance artist, composer, musician, installation artist, software designer, writer and filmmaker,

Anderson's brilliant and motley oeuvre spans 40-plus years. Lavish yet intimate, "All the Things I Lost in the Flood" arrives as the first book assessing her prolific output as a whole. "I've tried to make a personal as well as a somewhat casual book," she says, and she has succeeded.

Curated by Anderson herself, the book has the person-to-person feel of going on a private tour of the artist's archive as she herself makes real time discoveries, like when she notes: "In looking at the way I've told the story of the United States, I realize I've been describing the shift from aspirational democracy to privatization and corporate culture." Or when she writes, "My difficulties in designing endings is also the reason I never have intermissions in my concert which require you to have two beginnings and two endings."

Composed of eight chapters, the book affords a non-chronological retrospective of her major projects, ranging in scale, scope and tone from 2015's critical, serious and heartbreaking "Habeas Corpus" — inspired in part by Mohammed el Gharani, one of the youngest detainees at Guantanamo — to the lighthearted and moving "Concert for Dogs," which is exactly what it sounds like, and which she began touring in Sydney, Australia, in 2010.

As fans might expect, the book — as gorgeous an object as it is, crowded with photographs, film stills, virtual reality renderings, diagrams and scripts — has a pleasingly improvisatory and handmade feel. Paging through, one senses that the term that encompasses the multifarious work that Anderson has done over the decades is "story" — and how even when she's at her strangest and most conceptual, language and narrative serve as her indispensable anchors.

In each section, she grants the reader a behind-the-scenes examination of how all these luminescent threads of story occur to her, and how time after time, she weaves them into art that is inquisitive, human, funny, sad and fun. Fun can seem like a trivializing word, but a trait that appears to unify all her undertakings is an extremely serious approach to play, one that is as utterly crucial as it might at first seem paradoxical.

Her obvious love and admiration for her influencers and collaborators — Gertrude Stein, Sol LeWitt, William S. Burroughs, Brian Eno, Susan Sontag, Laura Poitras, and Herman Melville to name a few — feels joyful to behold. And her work ethic takes one's breath away, even as she admits, disarmingly, that "I usually feel I am running out of time and haven't accomplished enough."

In her dedication, Anderson expresses profound gratitude to her many teachers, in particular her late husband and frequent artistic partner, Reed. "I want to thank them," she writes, "for their deep generosity and for the ways they showed me how to persist, focus, love and work every day." This book makes the reader grateful to Anderson for doing the same.

Heather Mulligan says

I'm excited to start this book!
...and she is at UBC Chan Centre this Saturday night
