Holy Erotic Psychologic Linguistic Twister: R. Erica Doyle’s Proxy Takes Stage

INTERVIEW BY AMY KING

I am simply stunned by the gorgeous phrasing and images presented in Proxy. How did you, R. Erica Doyle, arrive at writing something so full of ideas, so richly layered? What people often refer to as an explanation but say nothing to this boastful non sequitur. You want to amuse her with your bones. She is the gape of a second. Do not try to look at her but catch her glimpse. Your hands as full of cunt as the stretch can dare. She is the power struggle. What people refer to as an edge... the tip of the iceberg, for example, the swagger, and the glory of our process? Tristan Taormino wrote, “Fundamental Theorem. At the time, I was trying to understand how my relationship with my mother was occupying. I was looking to create language that was lush and spare at the same time.”

R. Erica Doyle: To fall, simply, fall into it. Or, glancing sideways, edge yourself from the back. My friends Ronaldo Wilson and Dawn Lundy Martin have been my accomplices in exploring the political nature of the sexual, without forgetting the hybrid, the transgressive sexual, without forgetting the humorous double entendre, the multilingual, the hybrid, the transgressive sexual. This is oppression; what rocks repeatedly. What sucks is one cannot control. Control … I am still mulling over that word. Control is the problem. Awareness is the solution.

Before we jump further into meaty book talk, can you tell new readers a little about your background? How did you, R. Erica Doyle, arrive at writing something so full of ideas, so richly layered? What people often refer to as an explanation but say nothing to this boastful non sequitur. You want to amuse her with your bones. She is the gape of a second. Do not try to look at her but catch her glimpse. Your hands as full of cunt as the stretch can dare. She is the power struggle. What people refer to as an edge... the tip of the iceberg, for example, the swagger, and the glory of our process? Tristan Taormino wrote, “Fundamental Theorem. At the time, I was trying to understand how my relationship with my mother was occupying. I was looking to create language that was lush and spare at the same time.”

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The New York Times has taken selections from King’s archives and presented them online, providing a larger constituency for attendance. Characters emerge through their artwork, sometimes a different character than what is expressed onstage, sometimes perfectly complementary. The results speak for themselves a thousand times better than these words could ever do. The most important factor was documenting the people who had been most active on the scene, and so there are a lot of lot things—an assumed name, a musical past, and a life in Staten Island well beyond the reach of AntiFolk. To quote King, ever secretive, was unavailable for recorded comment, but can be seen roaming the halls of AntiFolk at just about every relevant event, for Lach’s Monday night AntiHoot. He was transfixed.

For years, his involvement in the AntiFolk scene was more theoretical than practical. His passion finally flowered when he became a professional photographer. He decided to produce a visual AntiFolk history, choosing for this 20th stable year of AntiFolk at the Sidewalk Café. The Annexe and its patrons became the heart of AntiFolk in the mid-1990s. The New York Times has taken selections from King’s archives and presented them online, providing a larger constituency for attendance. Characters emerge through their artwork, sometimes a different character than what is expressed onstage, sometimes perfectly complementary. The results speak for themselves a thousand times better than these words could ever do. The most important factor was documenting the people who had been most active on the scene, and so there are a lot of lot things—an assumed name, a musical past, and a life in Staten Island well beyond the reach of AntiFolk. To quote King, ever secretive, was unavailable for recorded comment, but can be seen roaming the halls of AntiFolk at just about every relevant event, for Lach’s Monday night AntiHoot. He was transfixed.
But she is also a character from a book, a character from a movie, and all three of these things at once. This overlap does not take away from the poems but adds another layer of meaning to them. The girls in the book are more than just characters—they are real people with real lives, with real feelings and experiences. They are relatable because they are so similar to the girls we know from our own lives. They are also different from us, but in ways that make them interesting and unique. This is what makes them so relatable.

The collection’s major theme is memory. As it progresses from that first to last poem, girlhood is an important element, and a reader might think of their own experiences with girlhood as they read. The poems explore the idea of “memory” in a way that is both personal and universal. They remind us of the things we’ve forgotten and the things we’ve never forgotten. They remind us of the things we’ve been afraid to forget. They remind us of the things we’ve been afraid to remember.

The girls are not all grown up yet, but they are more self-aware. “We’re eying/ the horizon/ and the grey/ and the green/ of the world/,” Murphy writes. “We’re standing/ in the rain/ and the wind/ and the snow/ and the heat/.” The girls are becoming more aware of their own lives, and they are becoming more aware of the world around them. They are becoming more aware of the things that matter, and the things that don’t.

Murphy makes a character of herself and others and then asks the reader to step into her and their shoes. This is what makes the poems so relatable. They are not just about the girls in the book, but about the girls in our lives. They are not just about the past, but about the present and the future. They are not just about the girls, but about the world around them. They are not just about the poems, but about the way we see the world.

Carrie Murphy’s Pretty Tilt is a collection of poetry that is both personal and universal. It is a collection of poems that is both relatable and unique. It is a collection of poems that is both comforting and challenging. It is a collection of poems that is both beautiful and imperfect. It is a collection of poems that is both powerful and vulnerable. It is a collection of poems that is both honest and imperfect. It is a collection of poems that is both perfect and imperfect. It is a collection of poems that is both beautiful and imperfect. It is a collection of poems that is both powerful and vulnerable. It is a collection of poems that is both honest and imperfect. It is a collection of poems that is both perfect and imperfect.
One poem was written completely in my head
when this really tough looking guy got on the
6 Downtown Local, twisted around the pale,
giving everyone hard looks, before bailing!
Roosevelt’s “I want you to make me feel...”
like I’m the only girl in the world!”
That really gets
me going. He’s the lipstick shade I’m wearing
tomorrow.

I like overthinking, so because many people tell me I can’t do things. All those journeys. Because my Mexican mother converted to Judaism, because I’m a girl to boot, I was told having Bat Mitzvah was impossible. Or that because my family didn’t have money I would never go to college. Or that I should not be allowed to be part of a group of people: this in a country where I am a minority. The second thing is the love they have for each other. It’s very honest. It’s real. It freaks me out. It’s over 40 years old, that vow. I didn’t get it when
my mother converted to Judaism, because I was a girl to boot, I was told that being Bat Mitzvah was impossible. Or that because my family didn’t have money I would never go to
college. Or that I should not be allowed to be part of a group of people: this in a country where I am a minority.

I tend to have found a stewing about all that makes me so angry, so I try to write and find a way out. But this is a very personal process. I do think that emotional
movements are connected with our lives, with the way we move. When I felt and see and hear things, I feel sometimes there is a relationship between things that move in the same way. And that’s why I think we are not so far apart, I suppose, because your personas move between them,
and socially and emotionally. We are all creatures, we are all people, and we tend to do the same things in life, we tend to have the same feelings, we tend to have the same desires.

I often write about the way in which a place is an anchor for me, to be part of a community. I feel that I can claim space from it. I feel that I can take ownership of it. I feel that I can belong and love with a new city in the awkward, hungry way I did. His parents offered the rooftop of their apartment to stay. I finished any last minute concerns
about the book inside our room there. Although it was cold in January, I wrote on the adjoining patio looking out over the city and the water. When I’m in motion, I’m working. When I’m in motion, I’m writing. But I don’t know what concussion is. I have lived and travelled a lot, but that place is always there, and the people I loved there are always there, and the things I dreamed there are always there. I have never not been there.

The whole thing around love and your activism. The poets I’m currently reading and rereading are not so far apart, I suppose, because your personas move between them,
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Anselm Hollo
Anselm’s Dreams

Saint Anselm of Aosta, Le Bed, & Canterbury, A.D. 1033-1109, who spent much of his life attempting to prove the existence of God by logic, “in plain language & by ordinary argument, & in a simple manner of discussion.”

* Having heard from his mother, the good Emerberga that there is one God in heaven above he imagined, like a boy bred up among mountains that heaven rested on the mountains & thus the palace of God was there & the way up to it was up the mountains his thoughts ran much upon this

* On a certain night he dreamed that he ought to go up to the top of the mountain & hasten to the palace of God, the great King. But before he began to ascend, he saw, in the plain which reached to the foot of the mountain, some women reaping corn, who were the King’s maidens but did their work very carelessly.

& on a certain night he dreamed that he ought to go up to the top of the mountain & hasten to the palace of God, the great king. But before he began to ascend, he saw, in the plain which reached to the foot of the mountain, some women reaping corn, who were the King’s maidens but did their work very carelessly. The boy, grieved at their sloth, & rebuking it, settled in his mind to accuse them before the Lord. So having pressed on to the top of the mountain, he came into the palace, & there found the King with only his chief butler for company, for all the household had been sent out to gather the harvest for the King.

so he went up to the King’s court & before him & before the King’s chief butler, & there the boy related himself to the King’s chief butler, whom he had met on the way up. & the King was pleased with him & he gave him good victual & bread of the finest, & he ate, & was refreshed before the Lord, & plumb forgot to tell him about the careless reapers.

& therefore, in the morning, when he recalled what he had seen, he believed that he really had been in heaven, & been refreshed by the Lord’s bread, & so he declared, before others.

* Thirty years later, Abbot Anselm sat apart in a corner of the church to weep & pray for his friend. From heaviness & sorrow he fell asleep & saw certain highly venerable personages enter the room where Osbern had died, & sit round for judgment. & while he was wondering what the verdict would be, Osbern himself reappeared, like a man just recovering, or pale. Three times, he said, had the serpent risen up against him, but three times he fell back, & the bearward of the Lord, Ursarius Domini, stood by his side & chased the serpent away.

* Then Anselm awoke & knew that his friend was saved, & that the angels do keep off our foes in the beyond, as the bearward keep off the bears.

About the Poets

Joel Dailey —

is a native of New Orleans who grew up in a family of teachers. He is the author of Don't Tell Me I'm A Dreamer, Delaware, and The Old Prophets'Varied Course. His work has been featured in a diverse range of literary journals and magazines. Dailey has taught at several universities, and was the recipient of a 2001 Pushcart Prize nomination

Christie Ann Reynolds —

lives in Jersey City. Her second full-length collection, The Cure for Human Error, was the winner of the 2019 Arch Street Book Award. She is the author of the chapbook Lombard Street dikes, selected by Billy Childish for the 2017 Brute Press chapbook contest. Reynolds has participated in a number of open mic readings, and her work has been featured in many literary journals. She has also been a participant in the 2017 Brute Press chapbook contest.

Patti McCarthy —

is the author of several books of poetry, the most recent being A Porcelain Face. Her poetry has appeared in the pages of The Iowa Review, The Believer, and the Harvard Review. She has also written for the stage and screen. In addition to her work in poetry, she has taught at several universities, and has served as a guest editor for several literary journals.

Adam Marston —

is a barista and poet. He teaches at Temple University. Published by Bloof Books later this year. She is the publisher of Fell Swoop. Previous books are: Walking the Straight Line, The Love Poems of Monster Flowers, and A Porcelain Face. She is the author of a salt and pepper shaker called music. He has also written for the stage and screen. In addition to his work in poetry, he has taught at several universities, and has served as a guest editor for several literary journals.

POETRY

Christie Ann Reynolds

Greenpoint, Brooklyn

Mirror Poems

When they made me you / I think they made me too / the way they made me you / I think I was made to understand

So I'll do it to you / to understand / and to want blood not sugar/// I must

That's all I can think of / I think I can think nothing / of the way they made me you

But you can think of / of the way they made me you

Harry's House

is a dynamic mix of voiced poems and accompaniment. The album takes its name from the late legendary ethnomusicologist Harry Smith, whose cottage at Naropa University's Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics is now a recording studio. Produced by Harry's House

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Patti McCarthy —

is the author of several books of poetry, the most recent being A Porcelain Face. Her poetry has appeared in the pages of The Iowa Review, The Believer, and the Harvard Review. She has also written for the stage and screen. In addition to her work in poetry, she has taught at several universities, and has served as a guest editor for several literary journals.

Adam Marston —

is a barista and poet. He teaches at Temple University. Published by Bloof Books later this year. She is the publisher of Fell Swoop. Previous books are: Walking the Straight Line, The Love Poems of Monster Flowers, and A Porcelain Face. She is the author of a salt and pepper shaker called music. He has also written for the stage and screen. In addition to his work in poetry, he has taught at several universities, and has served as a guest editor for several literary journals.
must be great. Her hands, rock down, insistent as a boat. Your heart won't ever
black driftwood. There hasn't been a seagull in a million years. Music so calm it
through your hair and then down your back. The beach's scarred with twists of
"You've been such a good boy," she says, glazing, as she runs her hands
talks fatter and fatter. A few broken rocks. Shadows of tiny star. And so many
sounds like swallows. Shadows of swallows. Streams. Shadows of streams. He
As he talks and talks in the blaring winds his head gets fatter and fatter. He's
love. And painted ourselves with knives and glass.

Leaves like they've been cut from leopard cloth. Thick dripping branches. And a
(1)

I feel sad, and yet none of my
Elia Alba was born in New York City. She received her B.A. from Hunter College in 1994 and continued her education at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in 2001. Her work has been exhibited at Studio Museum in Harlem; El Museo del Barrio; The RISD Museum; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Science Museum, London; ITAU Cultural Institute, São Paolo, Brazil; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; and 10th Havana Biennial. Solo shows include Jersey City Museum; Galeria Overfoto, Italy; and Black & White Gallery in New York. Awards include, Studio Museum in Harlem Artist-in-Residence Program (1999); New York Foundation for the Arts Grant (Crafts 2002 and Photography 2008); Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant (2002); LMCC Workspace Program (2009); and Flying Horse Editions (2011).

She is currently an artist-in-residence at Recess Activities, where she is working on a publication/event series titled “The Supper Club.” She is also working on another publication with publisher Photology in Milan on Larry Levan and DJ culture.

Artist’s Statement

Informed by my mother’s work in the garment industry, I began to integrate sewing techniques into my practice and eventually combined sewing with photography. Utilizing photo transfers on fabric to create sculptures and masks, which are used in staged portraits and video, these objects function as both portraits and substitute heads and bodies. The dolls utilize images of my own body, while most of the masks and sculptures are portraits of friends and family.

Since 1999, my works in fabric present corporeal fragmentations that can be grotesque yet playful, presenting alternative realities, where gestures, bodies, posture, place, and gaze defy classification.