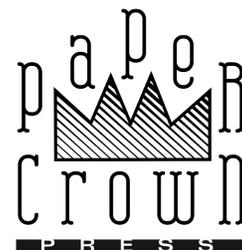


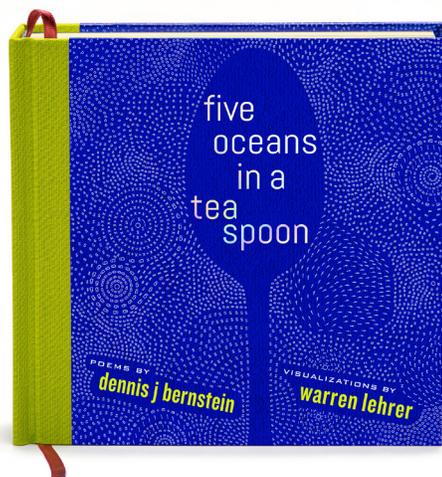
For Immediate Release

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independent publisher
of art and literature

*New Book and Multimedia Project Visualizes Dyslexia, Alzheimer's,
Patterns of War and Relationships—Through Visual Poetry*



Five Oceans in a Teaspoon

Written by **Dennis J Bernstein**
Visualization by **Warren Lehrer**

Introduction by Steven Heller.
Paper Crown Press, hardcover; \$35
ISBN: 978-0-9969506-3-3

EARLY PRAISE for FIVE OCEANS IN A TEASPOON:

“Brilliant and beautiful. Thank you for bringing in the new.”

Alice Walker, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and author of *The Color Purple*

“*Five Oceans in a Teaspoon* is an engaging masterwork of poetic visualization that has only a handful of precedents in literary and design history... Each piece in this funny, poignant work is scored—almost in the musical sense—with graphic organization for performance on the page... Funny, poignant, remarkable!

Johanna Drucker, *Los Angeles Review of Books*

“Bernstein and Lehrer—the Lennon and McCartney of viz-lit—have reunited at the height of their creative powers. The gutsiness and raw emotion of the writing, revelatory appeal of the visual compositions, and brevity of the form creates an intensely moving experiential journey.”

Steven Heller, design and visual culture historian, columnist, author of over 180 books on design

“From a kidnap note for a world held hostage by an A-bomb, to a Holocaust survivor’s tattooed arms where the numbers just don’t add up, *Five Oceans in a Teaspoon* re-envision a poetry memoir via a textual kaleidoscope... Bernstein and Lehrer are the Rodgers and Hart of Visual Poetry.”

Bob Holman, poet, poetry activist and chronicler, and founder of the Bowery Poetry Club

“Bernstein and Lehrer’s new book, *Five Oceans in a Teaspoon*, is a masterful contribution to the genre they’ve helped shape... Turning the page is like listening to a perfect jazz solo...”

Levi Sherman, *Artists’ Book Reviews*

“A truly moving reading experience.” **Meg Miller** *AIGA Eye on Design*

FIVE OCEANS IN A TEASPOON (Paper Crown Press; September 19, 2019; \$35. hardcover), written by muckraking journalist/poet Dennis J Bernstein and visualized by pioneer designer/author Warren Lehrer—is a seven inch square, 300 page collection of 225 short visual poems that reads like a memoir in poems.

In 1979, Bernstein and Lehrer began working on a book of poems, originally titled *Stretch Marks*. Instead of completing that book, they leapt into writing their first play together, and over the intervening years they collaborated on three books, including *French Fries*, considered a classic in visual literature and expressive typography. A few years ago, they began collaborating again with a renewed focus on visual poetry, bringing together Bernstein’s words and Lehrer’s visualizations.

Now, on the 40th anniversary of their original effort and at the height of their creative powers, the two have completed **FIVE OCEANS IN A TEASPOON**.

Bernstein’s poetry, like his investigative journalism, reflects the struggle of everyday people trying to survive in the face of adversity. **Divided into eight chapters, the book spans a lifetime:** growing up confused by dyslexia and a parental gambling addiction; graced by pogo sticks, boxing lessons and a mother’s compassion; becoming a frontline witness to war and its aftermaths, to prison, street life, love and loss, open heart surgery, caring for aging parents and visitations from them after they’re gone. Lehrer selected the poems (out of thousands) and arranged them into the book. His typographic compositions give form to the interior, emotional and metaphorical underpinnings of the poems—visualizing a wide range of experiences including Dyslexia, Alzheimer’s, and patterns war and relationships. Together, the writing and visuals create a new whole that engages the reader to become an active participant in the navigation, discovery, and experience of each poem.

FIVE OCEANS IN A TEASPOON bridges art, literature, memoir, old and new media. In addition to the book, Lehrer is making animations of select poems, visualizing them in short videos via kinetic typography and sound. The animations augment the book, can be seen and shared online, are featured in Lehrer/Bernstein’s live performance/readings and in the **FIVE OCEANS IN A TEASPOON** exhibition opening at City Lore Gallery in New York City on September 19 and running to November 23. Some animations are available for viewing at www.fiveoceansinateaspoon.com.

As Steven Heller writes in his introduction, **FIVE OCEANS IN A TEASPOON** “speaks to the madness, vulnerability, aspiration and language of our time.” It builds on historical traditions of visual literature with an innovative, revelatory, pared down approach—well suited for a contemporary audience with varying degrees of time on their hands, more visually attuned than ever, hungry for depth, humor, and meaningful reflections of a complex world.

Already winner of **2019 STA 100 Award** and **Design Incubation Scholarship: Creative Work Award**

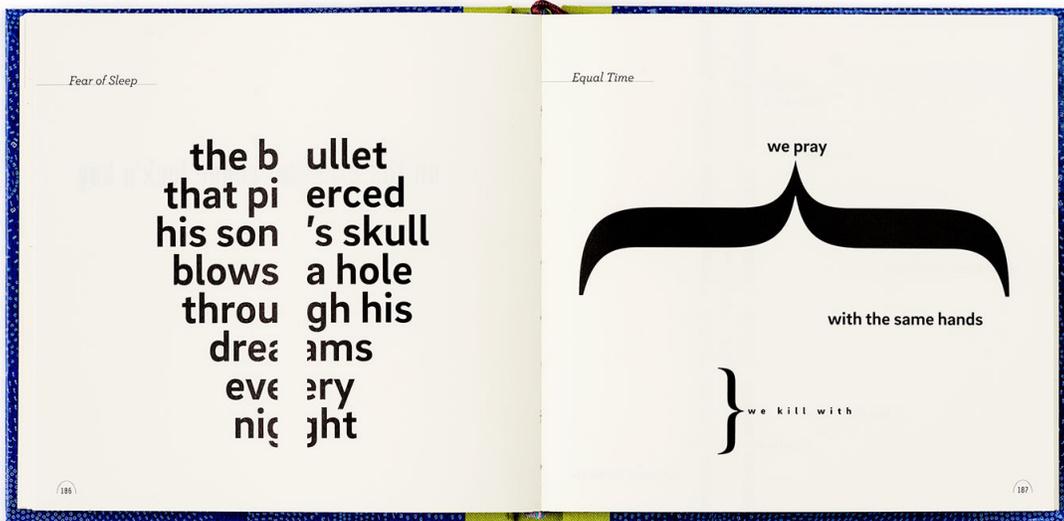
ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Dennis J Bernstein is a poet and investigative journalist based in San Francisco. He is the award-winning host/producer of *Flashpoints*, syndicated on public and community radio stations across the United States. Bernstein is the recipient of many awards for his work, including the 2015 Pillar Award in Broadcast Journalism. In 2009, Pulse Media named him one of the “20 Top Global Media Figures.” His articles and essays have appeared in numerous newspapers and magazines. Bernstein is the author of *Henry Hyde’s Moral Universe* and the co-author of two decks of political trading cards, *Friendly Dictators* and *The S&L Scandal Trading Cards*. He founded the Muriel Rukeyser Reading Series in Brooklyn, New York, named after his friend and mentor the late poet and biographer Muriel Rukeyser. He is the author of the poetry collection *Special Ed: Voices from a Hidden Classroom*, which won the 2012 Artists Embassy International Literary Cultural Award. Alice Walker, Pulitzer Prize winning author of *The Color Purple*, writes that *Special Ed* “is art turned to us through the eyes of love.” Bernstein’s poetry has appeared in *The New York Quarterly*, *The Chimæra*, *The Progressive*, the *Texas Observer*, *ZYZZYVA*, and elsewhere. His earliest poems appeared as a chapbook, *Particles of Light*, with woodcuts by Stan Kaplan. His artists’ books/plays *French Fries* and *GRRRHHHH: a study of social patterns*, co-authored with Warren Lehrer, are considered seminal works in the genre, and are in the collections of many museums throughout the world.

Warren Lehrer is a writer, designer and multimedia artist known internationally as a pioneer in the fields of visual literature and design authorship. His work explores the vagaries and luminescence of character, the relationships between social structures and the individual, and the pathos and absurdity of life. Awards for his books and multimedia projects include: The Brendan Gill Prize, the IPPY Outstanding Book of the Year Award, the Innovative Use of Archives Award, the International Book Award for Best New Fiction, three AIGA Book Awards, a Media That Matters Award, and grants and fellowships from the NEA, NYSCA, NYFA, Rockefeller, Ford, and Greenwall Foundations. He is a 2019 laureate of the Ladislav Sutner Prize “for lifetime achievement in Visual Literature and Design and a 2016 Honoree of the Center for Book Arts “for extending the field of book arts to the broader worlds of contemporary design, art and literature.” His books are in the collections of MoMA, Getty Museum, Georges Pompidou Centre, Tate Gallery, etc. Over the last eight years, Lehrer has been setting stories and text into animation, video, and interactive media. A frequent lecturer, performer and keynote speaker, Lehrer is the Leff Distinguished Professor at SUNY Purchase, and a founding faculty member of the *Designer As Author* MFA program at the School of Visual Arts (SVA). With his wife Judith Sloan, he co-founded EarSay, a non-profit arts organization in Queens, NY, dedicated to uncovering and portraying the lives of the uncelebrated in print, on stage, in exhibitions, concert halls, electronic media, and through educational programs in public schools, community centers, and prisons.

Since 2010, **Paper Crown Press** has been publishing *Carrier Pigeon*, a quarterly magazine of illustrated fiction and fine art. More recently it began publishing outstanding books dedicated to art and literature and the collision of both. Our mission is to honor the age-old tradition of book arts by carrying the torch into the 21st century.

Print and/or web quality JPEGs of FIVE OCEANS IN A TEASPOON pages and page spreads, the book’s jacket, author photos, and animations are available for download at: <http://www.fiveoceansinateaspoon.com/presskit>. For a review copy or to arrange an interview, please contact **Alexandria Fanning** at 347.468-0735, alex@alexandrafanning.com



The book sits at the center of a multiplatform project and is organized into eight chapters/movements.

THE MOVEMENTS:

- *Lake Childhood* encompasses growing up poems that inhabit the terrain of home, school (as a dyslexic kid), gym, car, street, skating rink, hospital, and fantasy-land.
- *Tracings* is a potpourri of poems tracing the activities, movements and yearnings of ants, flies, fish, birds, spirit wrestlers, marble losers, moon worshipers, flooded cities, lovers, musicians, and the wind.
- *Subtractions and Addictions* contains poems on drinking, drugging, gambling, binge eating, sparring with shadows and significant others, and addiction to work.
- *Front Lines* bear witness to invasion, war, occupation, and their aftermaths.
- *Dream Central* contains daydreams, night dreams and nightmares.
- *On the Streets, Under Lock'n' Key* is populated by people who are homeless, imprisoned, shot at, shooting at, earthquaked, on the bus, in pizza and dairy joints, in a strait jacket, and jogging down the center of the highway (crazy for peace).
- *He and She* reflects on a man with ten smiles, an interior designer who judges every book by its cover, an anti-gravity activist, and (among others) a journalist who died for a story she believed in.
- *River Returns the Sky* is about aging, looking after ailing parents, having open heart surgery, loss of memory and loved ones, rising out of wheelchairs to dance.

Sampling of What Critics, Peers, Historians Say About **Warren Lehrer**

“In Warren Lehrer’s books, words take on thought’s very form, bringing sensory experience to the reader as directly as ink on paper can allow... Once considered too far ahead of his time... Now the times are beginning to catch up to him.”
The New York Times Book Review *Julie Lasky*

“In Warren Lehrer’s ingenious, one-of-a-kind novel, *A Life In Books*, we see all the covers of all 101 books supposedly written by the narrator over the last several decades... A tour-de-force!” **Studio 360** *Kurt Andersen*

“In Warren Lehrer’s extraordinary books, full of typographic innovation, he seeks to trap thought, sound and speech in time and space on the printed page. The result is theater... The reader (viewer/listener) experiences the pathos within the mundane aspects of everyday life... reality, fantasy, along with art and literature travel parallel but inseparable roads..”
Print Magazine *Philip Meggs*

“We honor Warren Lehrer, innovator and boundary breaker, for his unique marriage of writing and typography, for extending the field of book arts to the broader worlds of contemporary design, art and literature.” **Center for Book Arts 2016 Honoree**

“*A Life In Books* is a book-lover’s fictional treat of books that never were... As Whitman said, ‘I contain multitudes,’ and Bleu Mobley contains 101 books. Wonderful!” **Bookworm, KCRW** *Michael Silverblatt*

“Lehrer’s books challenge readers to explore the act of reading; to break with the usual linear pattern, vary the pace, look back on earlier passages, or skip ahead. His typographic experiments anticipated new directions in graphic design and showed how ‘visual literature’ could be used to engage broader audiences, suggesting the possibility of a new literary genre that makes full use of design’s rhetorical dimension.” **No More Rules: Postmodern Design** *Rick Poynor*, Yale University Press

“In *A Life In Books*, author/graphic design visionary Warren Lehrer crafts a vivid kaleidoscopic odyssey that frames one man’s life through one hundred different books—and book jackets.” *Jessica Helfand* founding editor **Design Observer**

“A stunningly unique take on the novel that unabashedly explores the relationship between narrator and reader. With *A Life in Books*, Lehrer has upended the modern novel form and its narrative limitations, creating a rich and engaging story through visual literature. Mindblowing... reality bending... a laugh riot and visual feast.”
2014 IPPY Outstanding Book of the Year Award “MOST ORIGINAL” *Independent Publisher*

“Lehrer pioneered what might be best termed “typographic performance” in the 1984 book/play *French Fries*, a hot type cacophony of word and image that is today considered by historians one of the lynchpins of the deconstructionist era... *Crossing the BLVD* highlights the richness (as well as a little darkness) of a poly-cultural critical mass representing the sights and sounds, customs and mores of ‘the new’ New York. It is eloquent, poignant, and smartly designed... an entirely satisfying piece of design and authorship.” **Eye Magazine** *Steven Heller*

“One of the most imaginative and ambitious book artists of our time.” **American Book Review** *Richard Kostelantetz*

“A celebratory chronicle of the immigrant experience in New York, *Crossing the BLVD* is a Whitmanesque book that reveals a staggering array of humanity... [It] chronicles life in Gotham in both its despair and boundless promise.”
Winner 2004 Brendan Gill Prize

“Immigrant life in Queens, as told in the intimate, rich, comic, ironic and sad stories so often seen but not heard in America’s big cities.” **The Washington Post** *Lynne Duke*

“In *A Life in Books*, Lehrer has designed a sort of Chinese puzzle whose myriad ideas, stories and characters from all parts of the globe intersect, overlap, and dovetail. Like Art Spiegelman, Chris Ware and Ben Katchor, Lehrer participates in the search for fresh and innovative ways to show, as well as tell, his many stories. Astonishing.” **The Brooklyn Rail** *Robert Berling*

“New York’s undersung borough of Queens, home to the new Ellis Island (the airports), is the most diverse county in the country today, and documentarians Lehrer and Sloan have innovatively brought it to life... A poetic, arresting, vividly printed mosaic.” **Publisher’s Weekly - Best Books of 2003**

Sampling of What Critics, Peers, Historians Say About **Dennis J Bernstein**

“Dennis J Bernstein is a hero to me because of his dedicated, unflinching reporting of real news on *Flashpoints*, at KPFA in Berkeley, California. But his fearless pursuit of the truth about what is happening in our rapidly transforming world did not prepare me for the beauty, depth, not-one-word-misplaced perception of this amazing book. Each word, each line, each thought has a weight, a texture, a surprise all its own. With its moving preface, in which Dennis shares his own struggles as a young child with special needs, *Special Ed: Voices from a Hidden Classroom* is that unusual gift literature can be: We are connected to humanity in ways we might never have even considered or imagined before. Above all it is art turned to us through the eyes of love.” **Alice Walker**, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, author of *The Color Purple*

“Here is all the pain and grace of parents, of prisons, and of perception. And it is all done in such an artful plain style that one wonders how so much meaning can be embodied in so small a place. Dennis Bernstein’s work is intuitive and keen and deep, in the wonderful and loving and fearless tradition of Langston Hughes, Kenneth Patchen and Muriel Rukeyser.” **William Packard**, the late poet, editor, publisher of *NY Quarterly*

“Dennis J Bernstein’s short poems are polished jewels.”

Nina Serrano, Josephine Miles/PEN Oakland Awardee, *Open Book*, *Poet to Poet* radio host

“Be warned: this is not the pretty poetry that makes you smile knowingly at the talent of even the most impoverished lives made quaint. It’s rather the gift to the reader of sad, tragic, even brutal information. It’s the jolt to the body as some of the words land viscerally in the gut. And at other moments, it’s the dreamy reverie of a child, a teacher, or the reader that cradles a torn to bits but still beating human life — a possibility in rhythms that will no doubt want to be reread and become remembered... Their humanity brings us to the door of the harshest and saddest emotions, and the awareness that there was then as there is now, poverty and crime and lack of caring in the too often divisive United States of America. The poems are small, and they are small but packed stories... This is the stuff that could haunt those of us ready to hear...”

Carol Smaldino *The Huffington Post*

Dennis J Bernstein, for me, carries out the best of Elsa Knight Thompson’s Tradition at Pacifica Radio. He positions himself on the unsafe side. He honors his listeners by exposing them to viewpoints that will make them uncomfortable... Dennis collaborated with me in breaking a series of investigative reports during the Gulf War, exposing the Pentagon’s plans to occupy Kuwait—plans formulated even before Congress had approved sending troops to the region in the first place. Dennis did more to get the information out to the public than anything PNS, with all of its outlets to the newspaper world, could do.”

Sandy Close, MacArthur Genius Award Winner, founder of *Pacific News Service* and *The New American Media*

“Come into the Special Ed classroom, where the kids who don’t fit in anywhere else spend their day. For these kids—real kids Dennis J Bernstein taught in the NYC public schools before he became an internationally known investigative journalist—pistols, switchblades, police cars and hunger are more instructive than textbooks... Bernstein loves these kids fiercely, and we come to love them too as the collection unfolds. In these stunning, understated poems unafraid to name the darkest facts of our world and yet continually informed with compassion, we find ourselves in Rilke’s world of beauty and terror. To depict with love, as Bernstein does, is indeed to transform, the way a shattered guitar and broken glass are transformed by the kids in the special ed classroom into art and jewels.” **Anita Barrows**, PhD, poet, translator of Rainer Maria Rilke

“Dennis J Bernstein’s ongoing commitment to investigative reporting and fearless approach to broadcasting crucial information about some of the most controversial issues of our time is an example to be modeled.”

2015 Pillar Award in Broadcast Journalism 9th Whistle Blowers Summit, Washington D.C.

“Unquestionably, one of the most important programs reporting on covert operations engaged in by the United States. . . an indispensable source of information.” **Michael Ratner**, noted civil rights attorney, co-founder, former President, Center for Constitutional Rights

“Bernstein is (among other things) a sound poet, and previous books by these two men [Bernstein and Lehrer] have had double or triple identities as book, performance, and audio recording. A full set of reading resources for their books might include an eye for visual sequence, an ear for poetry, a voice for reading aloud, and a sense of adventure... *GRRRRHHHH* is a magnum opus that invents a new mythology, from the beginning, and sets out to replace Eden. I celebrate this wonderfully audacious and fundamentally human project.” **Fine Print** Betsy Davids