



**Lina Ramona Vitkauskas** (Lithuanian-Canadian-American, b.1973) is an evaporating language photographer = award-winning cinepoet / poet.

Lina Ramona recently received a 2020 PEN America Relief Grant (\$1,000 USD) due to COVID-19 related income loss. She is working on a poetry manuscript about the pandemic and kleptocracy. Also in 2020, she placed as a finalist in the Midwest Video Poetry Festival for her cinepoem about the commodification of poetic pursuits.

Her 2019 collection of cinepoems, based upon her chapbook, *White Stockings*, was a collaboration with visual artist, Tess Cortes, and placed as a finalist at Festival Fotogenia in Mexico City; the Newlyn Film Festival (UK); and the Cadence Video Poetry Film Festival (Seattle). The cinepoems were also screened at the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS) conference at Stanford University as well as at the Ready Freddy Film Festival in Chicago.

Lina Ramona is the author of the poetry books *Ministry of Foreign Affairs – MOFA* (Secret Airplanes Press, 2018); *White Stockings* (White Hole Press, 2016); *SPINY RETINAS* (Mutable Sound, 2014); *Professional Poetry* (White Hole Press, 2013); *A Neon Tryst* (Shearsman Books, 2013); *HONEY IS A SHE* (Plastique Press, 2012); *THE RANGE OF YOUR AMAZING NOTHING* (Ravenna Press, 2010); *Failed Star Spawns Planet/Star* (dancing girl press, 2006); and *Shooting Dead Films with Poets* (Fractal Edge Press, 2004).

In 2019, she was nominated by Spoon River Poetry Review for an Illinois Arts Council Award; published an essay in an anthology dedicated to the poetry of Lithuanian filmmaker and Anthology Film Archives founder, Jonas Mekas, titled *Message Ahead: Poets Respond to the Poems of Jonas Mekas* (Rail Editions – Brooklyn Rail); and performed voice-over narration in the independent documentary film, *George: The Story of George Mačiunas & Fluxus*, which was directed by Fluxus taxi driver and artist, Jeffrey Perkins, and features Yoko Ono. The documentary has been screened at MoMA as well as in Amsterdam, London, and Vilnius.

Lina Ramona is past winner of the Henry Miller Memorial Library Ping Pong Journal Award (selected by Eleni Sikelianos) and of The Poetry Center of Chicago's Juried Reading Award (selected by Brenda Hillman). In 2000, she earned an M.A. in Creative Writing from Wright State University, where she participated in a summer workshop with Nikky Finney, the 2012 National Book Award Winner in Poetry.

In 2018, she was a participant in the first-ever World Lithuanian Writers' Forum (presented by the Lithuanian World Community Organization, the Lithuanian Writers' Union, and the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore), as well as an anthology contributor for the forum's master publication, and in 2009, she was nominated by *Another Chicago Magazine* for an Illinois Arts Council Award for her short fiction.

Lina has served as the Chicago Poetry Correspondent of *OmniVerse*; as faculty member and marketing manager at the Chicago School of Poetics; as well as the co-editor/designer—with poet Larry Sawyer—of the 20-year-running online literary magazine, *milk magazine* (featuring Robert Creeley, Wanda Coleman, Ron Padgett, Michael McClure, and Japanese surrealist, Yamamoto Kansuke, among others).

For 15 years, she was a part of Chicago's poetry community in many capacities—as reader, co-curator, collaborator, co-founder, organizer/facilitator, contest judge, and instructor—and has been featured in the following reading series and projects: Woman Made Gallery, Myopic Books, Danny's, Chicago Public Radio's "Chicago Amplified," Red Rover (@OUTER SPACE), Series A, Quimby's, Balzekas Lithuanian Museum, Wit Rabbit, Dollhouse Reading Series, 100K Poets for Change, HUMAN MICROPOEM at Occupy Chicago, Discrete, Around the Coyote, Chicago Public Radio's "Future Perfect + New Media", Evanston Public Library, and many more.

## Publications

*Vilnius Review*

*Berfrois*

*Resist Much / Obey Little* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2017)

*Rain Taxi*

*VIDA*

*Human Repair Kit*

*Atticus Review*

*Cosmonauts Avenue*

*Tarpaulin Sky*

*Dusie* (Canada)

*The Prague Literary Review*

*The Conversant*

*New City*

*Big Bridge*

*Ping Pong*

*The Chicago Review*

*The Toronto Quarterly*

*VLAK* (Ed. Louis Armand, Edmund Berrigan)

*Echolocation* (University of Toronto)

*Yalla* (Montreal)

*Another Chicago Magazine* (#48)

*Rampike* (Volume 14:1; University of Windsor)

*Aufgabe*

*The Awl*

*White Fungus* (Taiwan)

*Emergency Index* (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2012 • Photo/poem, featured performer in HUMAN MICROPOEM,

*Occupy Chicago*)

*The City Visible: Chicago Poetry for the New Century* (Cracked Slab Books, 2007)

*Matter* • *POETBOOK* • *Spork* • *Coconut* • *TriQuarterly* • *Requited* • *DIAGRAM* • *Van Gogh's Ear* (Paris) • *Paper Tiger* (Australia) • *Delirious Hem* (Chick Flix Series, Ed. Jennifer L. Knox) • *Sharkforum* (2006, 2010) • *RHINO* • *Delirious Hem* (2011 Audio Advent Calendar, Ed. Susanna Gardner, dusie) • *MiPoesias* • *Moria* • *In Posse* • *Review Multi-Ethnic Anthology* (Ed. Ilya Kaminsky) • *Bridges – The Lithuanian-American Journal* • *after hours* • *Ariel* • *Balloon* • *Blossombones* • *Jet Fuel Review* • *Fifth Wednesday Journal* • *ink & ashes* • *ambulant* • *Anemone Sidecar* • *Drunken Boat* • *Aught* • *LocusPoint* • *5-Trope* • *canwehaveourballback?* • *Cokefish* • *3 A.M.* • *Hubris* • *JACK* • *La Petite Zine* • *Melancholia's Tremulous Dreadlocks* • *Mudlark* • *Newtopia* • *No Tell Motel*, (1, 2, 3, 4) • *The Onion Union* • *The Outlet* • *Shampoo* • *PFS Post* • *Seven Corners* • *Sidereality* • *Snow Monkey* • *Starfish* • *Unpleasant Event Schedule* (Ed. Daniel Nester) • *Tin Lustre Mobile* • *ZuZu's Petals* • *UniVerse: A United Nations of Poetry* (Translator)

## Blurbs

“...the world of Vitkauskas’ poems is one where beef takes nebulous forms, Jacques Derrida and Batman speculatively coincide, where cumin forms into fists, where Auden sets things on fire, and Sartre cowboys ride into a present tense that combines *The Handmaid’s Tale* with mad science with the meaningful meaningless dialogue of politics and propaganda. While her poems are filled with wild images, they are also subtle in their devious shifts and proclamations. The dream capsules of ‘amazing nothings’ of this book are, to paraphrase Wallace Stevens, both there and not there. These poems are fun, soothingly frantic, and optimistically generous.” —**Daniel Borzutzky, Griffin Poetry Prize (2019, International Shortlist) & US National Book Award Winner (2016, Poetry)**

“Splendid, grotesque, violent, but always loving, Vitkauskas writes like a contemporary Marina Tsvetaeva through a landscape of the uncertain and surreal; the language is made from the nervousness and energy of every bee in the hive. Part ‘rotten aorta’ and part ‘snapdragon wine’, the poems in *HONEY IS A SHE* form a buzzing network of inventive beauty.” —**Sandra Simonds, *Atopia* (Wesleyan University Press, 2019), *Orlando* (Wave Books, 2018) & Winner, Akron Poetry Prize (2015)**

“You’ve discovered/invented a unique new kind of mode in the cinepoem genre — bravo...your method in writing the ‘film ekphrastics’ is unique, innovative, and I’ve never read of anyone else doing it before you...” —**Bill Knott, *Outremer*, Winner, Iowa Poetry Prize (1988), *The Naomi Poems* (1968)**

“If film is linear, the ultimate time-based medium, during which we are supposed to listen and watch attentively, passively, Vitkauskas’ poems talk back. These poems create simultaneity, layers, and distillations toward new narrative logics...Vitkauskas is watching for the poem in the film, writing her own, deliciously peculiar subtitles and in their irreverence, they are expansive, wise, and sometimes very funny. Her playful gestures in the face of the tightly choreographed imprint of film create incidental and embodied new texts, and this may very well be a feminist enterprise in its daring, toppling film’s male gaze with ‘I have to half you.’ “ —**Jill Magi, author of *LABOR* (Nightboat Books)**

“The ‘trysts’ of Vitkauskas’ book are shot through with ‘neon’...saturated with chemicals, textures, atmosphere, and media. According to this synthetic cosmology, ‘In an affair/ arms laugh, /they become sheer.’...arms, bodies, weapons, trysts—become both medium and adjective, both see-through and material. As in Antonioni’s great films, the body is clothes and the clothes are part of the visual atmosphere. A dress moves through a toxic landscape, and the ‘trysts’ are movies, fantasies, art. Vitkauskas is ‘surreal, primitive, impressionist, whatever.’ ” —**Johannes Göransson, *The Sugar Book* (Tarpaulin Sky, 2015) & Co-editor, *Action Books / Action, Yes***

“...her poems possess the intricate peculiarity of honeycombs and Schiaparelli dresses...she exquisitely fashions verse out of scientific particulars, cinematic references, and metaphors’ associative logic. Vitkauskas is fearless as she navigates, interrogates, and ultimately, dislocates conventional gender dynamics: ‘I rip the itch from gender.’ The dynamism, humor, and marvel of her poems recall the surrealist Joyce Mansour, conveying a similar tenor as they negotiate desire and disease, ardor and animosity...” —**Simone Muench, *Suture* (Black Lawrence Press, 2017) & Illinois Arts Council Finalist (2019)**

“...richly textured and layered, a palimpsest pleasure...Ashbery and Superman, Lorca and Jacqueline Bisset, Nancy (the comic strip character) and Forrest Gander all coexist and inform her amazing verse. While the bright surface of her poetry employs humor and kitsch, the dazzling underside confronts intolerance and terrorism with a wise brilliance.” —**Denise Duhamel, Guest Editor, *Best American Poetry* (2013)**

“...a Cyrillic voyeur penning captions for a movie that knows its own democracy...a run of great poems made by great lines, a sequence of gracious acts in which Vitkauskas drops names like Galileo dropped the orange...” —**Chuck Stebelton, Winner, Tougher Disguises Jack Spicer Award (2005)**