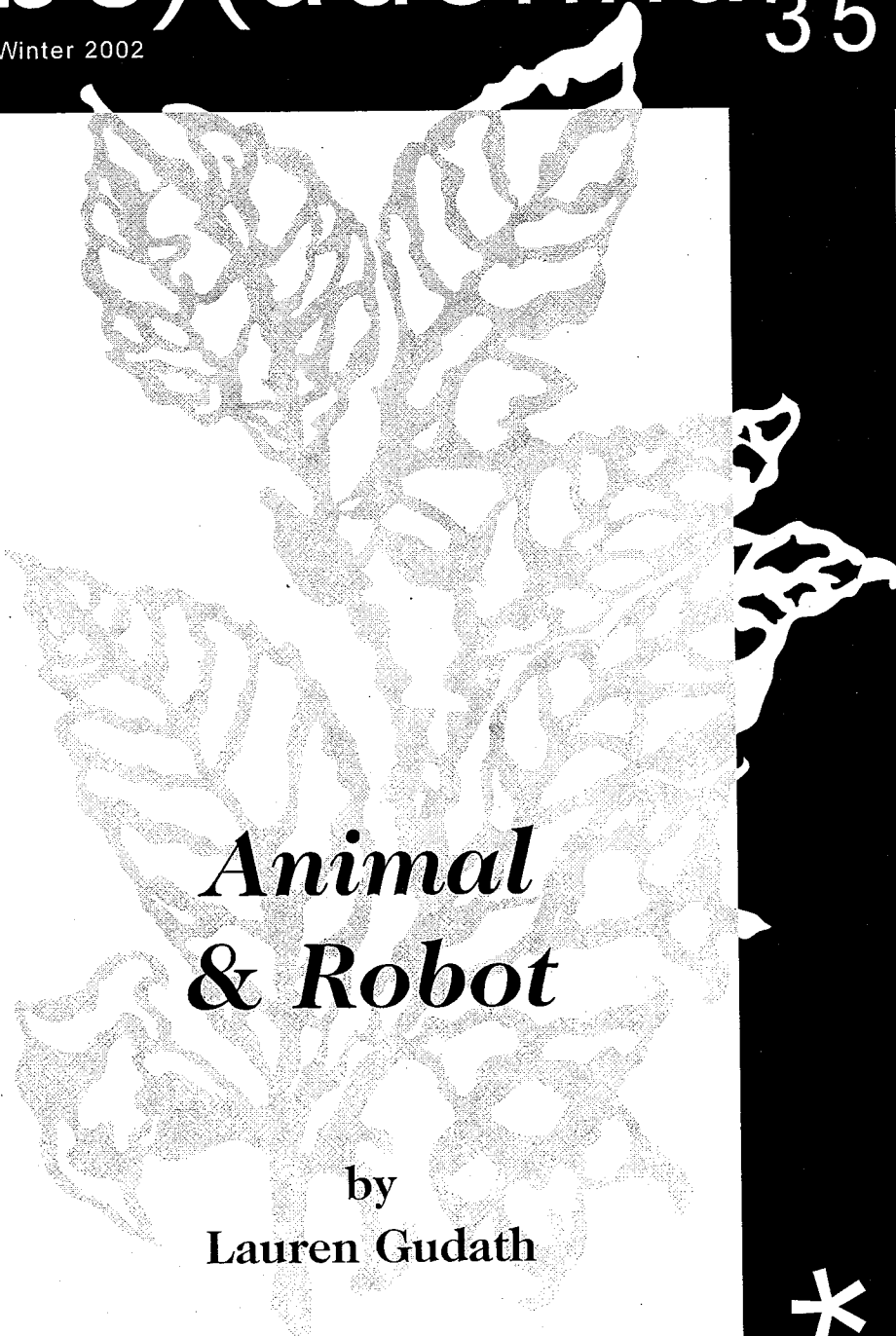


be)(adonna\*  
35

Winter 2002



*Animal  
& Robot*

by  
Lauren Gudath



deadly nightshade, a cardiac and respiratory stimulant, having purplish-red flowers and black berries

*Animal & Robot* © Lauren Gudath 2002

Belladonna\* pamphlet production and design, Bill Mazza:

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Decmber 6, 2002, with Alice Notley.

Belladonna\* is a reading series that promotes the work of women writers who  
are adventurous, experimental, politically involved, multi-form, multi-cultural,  
multi-gendered, impossible to define, delicious to talk about, unpredictable,  
dangerous with language.

Rachel Levitsky, editor Belladonna\* Books.

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**Animal & Robot**

by  
**Lauren Gudath**



They have pets—children—speak of love  
make love      worthy stewards  
teeth, liver, heart      protocols owned  
redwoods and parrots talk      take  
their firm or flimsy cases      ships      space  
sea each mimicked      whales pictured in posters  
of the future's attractions      teeth frame tree  
and parrot      jigglypuff and legionnaire rehearse  
respectively a creepy aria and blame: trance and  
mayhem      person, dream and get fit  
crosshairs find the fat, the slow, the out of doors  
a parrot can bite through a key      they can and  
you can't      but it is the whales who are truly  
marvelous      studios      halls      complexes  
migrate      I aspire to seasonal biting  
song and movement      extinction or  
dentures      I thank you your advances

You can't live on the moon—really live  
Space stations, little zoos    handsome  
actors in wacky future suits    space is  
now and largely nothing: captive to necessity  
and fascinating effects    old people, bees,  
dusty fudge-pops    animals must scatter  
wastes    a Sherpa man ascends Everest alone  
in sixteen hours—it's a record    executives  
take time    return intact of all travelers  
ensures success    dust doesn't win hearts  
glory (us) eats, breathes flammable gas,  
produces waste, moves unnecessarily, rests  
one-third of the time (breathing continues),  
desires recreation and companionship  
good moods and sanity also contribute to  
health and the continuance of life  
left to float alone in space, we'd explode

The makeover begins with eye contact  
look, connected as it is with a return, turns  
creepy to sexy      what does the porn queen  
want if not me for me? Forks on the left—  
you are Italian      ass cheeks for geeks  
personality incubator: they shop, discuss color  
mostly though, they sit in chairs and stare  
he at her and she at the edges of his collar  
consultants, these lady consultants, are like  
Beatrice staring at some irrelevant spot  
Cupid's knee, a soup can in the cupboard,  
the sign across the street, which reads  
"hot donuts"      all activities culminate in a  
project completed—that's why they pay her

I try to avoid recognition of self  
in animals, humans and other objects  
homes—sanity—destroyed by fellow  
feeling for vacuums, cabinets and  
bison     the home is new; the word is new  
bodies convulse after abandonment  
our contorted faces were horrible—unattractive  
no men with broad shoulders or cleft chins  
no women with fetching smiles and whatnot  
I, for one, am not nostalgic for hormones  
we are tools and souls forever and nothing else  
the elephants that roam the streets make me  
laugh with their antics     they are bodied,  
are said to remember, but have seemingly few regrets  
I like the elephants; they're a weakness of mine

Say scientists say "limited (only) by imagination"  
an ear wiggling as after a revelation  
the exact nature of which is forgotten  
lost document/Not lost not documented  
my fellows—bionic, Goldwater, cheapies—you,  
with much to gain and recount, enter  
a trance, a grain, buoyant  
I am escaped                      the pontoon bridge floats  
unmoored away                      I remember nothing  
not the color of the getaway car in Z,  
not the flower's surprising blossom's colors  
nothing                      tiny blue coupe  
there was no murder                      never war  
each sound I hear is the sound  
of my blood flowing                      hypnotic  
distracting                      but stand close and speak  
I may hear you too



People say the saddest things, laugh,  
drink and smile                    washed  
and shaken like a lettuce leaf, the dildo  
dries on the nightstand  
Kim Novak claps her way down the stairs  
the drowning stop and stare  
foolishness understood            campers  
run into the woods            it's dark  
they'll be killed                    relax and  
vacation            the mannish women  
are pouty            puppies wet by rain  
get kibbles            women shift their  
hands from knee to knee            we can-can  
who could feel they want for anything  
when they have a Popsicle on a hot day

The beach ball's surface is covered  
by the space photo Earth  
it shows what Sunday morning  
shows and Sunday school point to  
by fail to expose as mere position  
it moves prop  
planes fly low cameras on the wing  
capture billowing fields of heather  
cameras on the ground capture the plane  
seeing the seeing plane dramatizes  
the not very dynamic, but lovely,  
quivering flowers debate slowly raged  
it's "Cathay" it's not "Cathay"  
new and not all called "Columbia"  
smiling and pointing at the slide projected  
Vespucci tells his friends, "there is the  
impenetrable green mass beyond the white  
sand crescent there is our caravel"

Difficult hallway—pictures on the walls,  
multiple entries, exits, points of interest,  
boxes, plants        sensuous  
green tentacled sea monster  
features with height width often  
meet the ground at some point  
or are features of the ground itself  
sensitive vehicles seeking autonomy map  
yet another closet of university detritus  
sirens, mermaids, maelstroms,  
boiling seas dotted with whirlpools,  
weird little steps or pizza slices  
less timid observation decision carts are  
found in pieces at the bottoms of stairwells

A portion of a class recently adjourned crosses  
Market Street to wait for the F  
classmates still emerging go to cross  
a woman frantically waves both hands and wrists flap  
at those waiting for the light to cross  
"hurry," her body says, "the F is coming"  
it comes and passes  
the car and driver are "IN TRAINING"  
she waits with less enthusiasm for the space  
before her to be occupied by transport  
half-luddite, half-hunter      patiently wait,  
gesture to beckon, learn to drive and love  
the rickety old Boston streetcar  
we're capable of such cuteness  
we people      not a startle or run  
no matter the number of disappointing  
traffic things that zip passed

Research utility vehicles rove remote locations like Mars  
a person at the market has a cache of data  
about a helloed other unexpectedly encountered  
growing to love or strike the rover  
on the ass or rub them as though they might itch  
as a friend unexpectedly encountered might  
have an itch in a difficult to reach spot on the back  
Kasparov enters the mind of his opponents  
intuits the limits of their plans  
when crushed by an IBM project  
he gets angry he quits  
sportsmanship seeming perhaps a little silly  
or pathological given the situation  
another day or unit of time  
collecting rocks, photos or kings  
feeling kind of light kind of like  
gravity weight atmosphere like what the hell



**Lauren Gudath** is the author of *This Kind of Interpretation Brings Luck* (Oakland: Lucinda, 2000), which was a Powell's Books Small Press Pick. She is also the author of several chapbooks, including *Wolves*, *The Blonde*, and *The Television Documentary*, among others. Her poems can be found in a wide variety of journals and anthologies, including *Chain*, *Kenning*, *Mirage*, and others. She lives in San Francisco, California.



# be)(adonna\* Catalog

Pamphlets are published in conjunction with the be)(adonna\* reading series and are between 6 and 20 pages in length.

Books are \$3 each; \$5 signed editions; add 50¢ postage per item. Checks payable to Rachel Levitsky.

## published in 2000:

1. Mary Burger, *Eating Belief*
2. Camille Roy, *Dream Girls*
3. Cecilia Vicuña, *Bloodskirt*, trans. Rosa Alcalá
4. Fanny Howe, parts from *Indivisible*
5. Eleni Sikelianos, from *The Book of Jon*
6. Laura Mullen, *Translation Series*
7. Beth Murray, *12 Horrors*
8. Mei-mei Berssenbrugge, *Audience*
9. Laura Wright, *Everything Automatic*

## published in 2001:

10. Lisa Jarnot, *Nine Songs*
11. Kathleen Fraser, *Soft Pages*
12. Rachel Blau DuPlessis, *Draft 43: Gap*
13. Nicole Brossard, *Le Cou de Lee Miller/The Neck of Lee Miller*
14. Lee Ann Brown, *The 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time/Reverse Mermaid*
15. Adeena Karasick, *The Arugula Fugues VII-VIII*
16. Aja Couchois Duncan, *Commingle : Sight*
17. Lila Zemborain, *PAMPA*
18. Cheryl Pallant, *Spontaneities*
19. Lynne Tillman, chapters from *Weird Fucks* and "Dead Talk"
20. Abigail Child, *Artificial Memory*—vol 1 & vol 2 (\$6 set)

## published in 2002:

21. Deborah Richards, *Put A Feather In It*
22. Norma Cole, *BURNS*
23. Jocelyn Saidenberg, *Dusky*
24. Gail Scott, *Bottoms Up*
25. Carla Harryman, *DIMBLUE and Why Yell*
26. Anne Waldman, *[THINGS] SEEN/UNSEEN*
27. kari edwards, *a diary of lies*
28. Bhanu Kapil Rider, from *The Wolf Girls of Midnapure*
29. Rosmarie Waldrop, *Trace Histories*
30. Tina Darragh, from *rule of dumbs*
31. Chris Tysh, *Mother, I (fragment of a film script)*
32. Jennifer Moxley, *The Occasion*
33. Zhang Er, *Cross River . Pick Lotus*
34. Tonya Foster, *A Swarm Of Bees In High Court*
35. Lauren Gudath, *Animal & Robot*
36. Alice Notley, *IHIGENIA*



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