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How to Write

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How to Write is a perverse Coles Notes: a paradigm of prosody where writing as sampling, borrowing, cutting-and-pasting and mash-up meets literature. This collection of conceptual short ?ction takes inspiration from Lautréamont's decree that "plagiarism is necessary. It is implied in the idea of progress. It clasps the author's sentence tight, uses his expressions, eliminates a false idea, replaces it with the right idea."

Already early in the twentieth century, the modernist Ezra Pound asserted that poets should "make it new," and of course by "it" he meant "the tradition": the materiality of pre-existent writing. The assertion is by no means original, much less post-modern: John Donne, for example, argued centuries ago that "all mankind is of one author, and is one volume."

How to Write is an instruction manual for the demise of ownership. A multitudinous dialogue of writers and subjects, words and contexts, it unleashes a cacophony of voices where authors don't own their words, they merely rent them from other authors. Containing ten pieces of conceptual prose ranging from the purely appropriated through the entirely recomposed, and covering a range of texts from the anonymous to the famous, it includes samplings from, among many others: Lawrence Sterne; Agatha Christie; Bob Kane; Roy Lichtenstein; and every piece of text within one block of the author's home. Its title story is an exhaustive record of every incidence of the words "write" or "writes" in forty different English-language texts picked aesthetically to represent a disparate number of genres.

With *How to Write*, beaulieu suggests writers and artists would be better served to "make it reframed, make it borrowed, make it re-contextualized." By recasting the canon with cut-up directions for successful writing, catalogues of events, and lists of vocabulary, he gleefully illustrates Picasso's dictum that "Good artists copy. Great artists steal."

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From reader reviews:

Kim Armstrong:

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yep, you can choose the suitable activity with regard to spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to often the Mall. How about open as well as read a book titled How to Write? Maybe it is to get best activity for you. You know beside you can spend your time together with your favorite's book, you can better than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have various other opinion?

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