



## **Lisa Robertson's Magenta Soul Whip**

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**Lisa Robertson's Magenta Soul Whip** Lisa Robertson  
**A New York Times Notable Book of 2010**

Verses, essays, confessions, reports, translations, drafts, treatises, laments and utopias, 1995–2007. Collected by Elisa Sampedrin.

Lisa Robertson writes poems that mine the past — its ideas, its personages, its syntax — to construct a lexicon of the future. Her poems both court and cuckold subjectivity by unmasking its fundament of sex and hesitancy, the coil of doubt in its certitude. Reading her laments and utopias, we realize that language — whiplike — casts ahead of itself a fortuitous form. The form brims here pleasurably with dogs, movie stars, broths, painting's detritus, Latin and pillage. Erudite and startling, the poems in *Lisa Robertson's Magenta Soul Whip*, occasional works written over the past fifteen years, turn vestige into architecture, chagrin into resplendence. In them, we recognize our grand, saddened century.

## Lisa Robertson's Magenta Soul Whip Details

Date : Published April 14th 2005 by Coach House Books

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Author : Lisa Robertson

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# From Reader Review Lisa Robertson's Magenta Soul Whip for online ebook

## Alice says

This book is magical. Robertson's use of language and repetition [akin to the artful (what a stupid word to use here) work she does in *The Men*] is enchanting and creates some kind of spell on me as I read. "Lucite," the first poem in the book lashes us to the book with the spirit of near-incantation and manifesto and the rest does not disappoint the initial stirring. Here's linkage to a review from How2, which says better than I can: <http://www.asu.edu/pipercwcenter/how2...>

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## Karen Lepri says

This book is an amazing exercise in intellectual rhetoric via poetry--perhaps a nod to the Romans or a life-ring thrown to a drowning (morphing?) language at sea in today's media-laden, digi-textual, post-document (?)world. References to Romanticism, Ancient Greeks, and more abound amidst a cadence and diction determined to redirect your attention, save you from the depths of pretty lyricism, and maybe make you learn something (Google is useful for decoding certain references!)

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## Elisabeth says

"Equipped with such formidable mortality  
whatever style I choose operates in me like a sky--  
it passes and changes and persists and I possess nothing  
but the sum of naming, curious and  
frantic."

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## Ryan says

Within my own limited reading habits I can't think of anyone who writes like Lisa Robertson, and whose mind, in their writing, I love as much. Perpetually astonished.

And the object itself, (dear Coach House) is something everyone should want desperately.

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## Mary Kathryn says

Haters will call this book pretentious, but it's a deeply satisfying, sexy, workout for the mind book of feminist poetry. She nails it with her couplet "Utopia is so emotional./ Then we get used to it." How long does it take before paradise dulls? "Draft of a Voice-Over for Split-Screen Video Loop" is esp. seditious.

Brainy girls will cheer her on as she challenges us to resist the temptation of the feminine as decoration, mystery and emotion: "It is not our purpose to obscure the song of no-knowledge."

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### **Bill Brydon says**

Lisa writes with strength and confidence

"One animal says to another animal it is not safe you must not return I love you. Another says to her sister animal when you go you will never return then she dies in a camp. Another is a child and she stops living because of deceit. The animals in their velvety dressing gowns have thought bubbles. They break the incest taboo during a long cruel close-up and you can't help but watch."

Also the entire Essay on Lust is in my quotes

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### **Carrie says**

underlining like mad.

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### **Elizabeth Metzger says**

(Another version of the same beginning is simpler and more direct: in the long science of submission it is the mind that, quietly spectacular, unhooks the bodies and opens the face.)

my fidelity is my own disaster.

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### **Laura says**

it's hard to believe that there's enough room on any pages in the world for all this complicated sad fragmented sensual loveliness.

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### **Tiffany says**

holy sh\*t.

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### **Ben G says**

I loved "The Weather" and liked "R's Boat" a lot, but I found "Magenta Soul Whip" to be too layered in solipsistic and classical reference to have any impact. Though it did remind me I need to better ground my own poetry in reality.

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**Dusie Press says**

I haven't even finished it yet, but this is a definite writerly-changing experience! I now need to find every bk she has ever written and reexperience them all!

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**Christine says**

Magnificent! The way her writing incorporates feminism with the continual fragmentation of the gendered-self is rattling, revealing passages in the body that I never even knew existed. Robertson's strongest work yet.

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**Opal McCarthy says**

"A young girl slept under/ the opening fingers. But what can we/ keep. All night they sleep. We launch into rest/ and the flames burn through/ alone in its clearing. The brave thing would be/ to sleep in a hut again, dawn to nervy/ dark, studying/ the ground."

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**James Murphy says**

Phooey. I blame myself when I fail to connect to a book or author, poet. In this case Lisa Robertson has done her work, but I fail to get it. These poems are so obscure and difficult I have trouble finding allusion and experience enough to relate to them. I'm overwhelmed. At the end are 4 prose poems she calls essays; it's only there that I begin to find myself on solid ground. But then on the last page was something I thought lovely, a little untitled poem in which she likens poetry to a transcendant upward motion against all physical laws, so that it becomes not motion at all. Unfortunately, in the pages before this I was unable to overcome the resistance of atoms she writes about here and so couldn't achieve that motion. I'll try this book again next year, but for now it's my bad.

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