

THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR MOUTH

DIVYA VICTOR

Attempts to control the mouths of "speaking women" – 17th century witches, 19th century hysterics—have taken many forms, both physical and metaphorical. In *Things To Do With Your Mouth*, Divya Victor repeats, recants, and relentlessly echoes a textual meeting place for the psychic and corporeal implications of this "fear of women with excessive powers of speech and discourse," creating a cacophonous movement towards the feminist purpose of poetics. Culling language from texts as diverse as nursery rhymes and contemporary pediatric health websites, the biblical Song of Solomon and Freud's "Analysis of a Case of Hysteria," Victor confronts this long history of the "silenced mouth." Section by section, appropriated word by appropriated word, Victor relishes in the buccal opening, its capacity for words and discourse, addressing Nietzsche's claim that the world "lives on itself: its excrements are its nourishment." These words will "eat you alive, digest you, leave you scattered." Or, as CA Conrad states in his afterword, these reutterances will ultimately "liberate" us "one cough at a time. The mouth in, the mouth out, mouths training mouths around the always-imperfect O."

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ABOUT DIVYA VICTOR

Divya Victor is an American poet who has lived in India and Singapore. She is author of *Partial Derivative of the Unnamable* (Troll Thread), *PUNCH and Goodbye John! On John Baldessari* (Gauss PDF), *Hellocasts by Charles Reznikoff by Divya Victor by Vanessa Place* (Ood press), *SUTURES* (Little Red Leaves) and *UNSUB* (Insert/Blanc).

PRAISE FOR THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR MOUTH

“*Things To Do with Your Mouth* is not where monsters live but all possible friends in motion, at rest, in the middle of, and even between the middle parts. There is something always ready in here, reactivating the previous line with new understanding, and this is where the useful poem has nothing to do with virtue, but a kind of surviving.”

—CA Conrad

“[*Things To Do With Your Mouth*] is conspired, carefully weighted, so delicately that you won’t feel a thing, seamlessly, and you will be had in the web of ‘as if nothing happened.’ This text has the poetical quality of slowing you down, and in doing so enlarges space in your head; then, it can accelerate, intensify its density and make you swing and twist in its breathing.”

—Vincent Dachy

PRAISE FOR DIVYA VICTOR

“In writing that excites its forms with cultural complexity, Divya Victor challenges what otherwise goes unremarked in the regenerate exceptionalism of US American poetics. In work that pulses with playfulness and sober restraint, the hard facts of immigration and the skills required for global citizenship are ensnared in a global economy of production and consumption in whose underworld the sound of music engenders latent fantasies and fear.”

—Roberto Tejada

