

Spotlight on Books



Beginning Jordan Abel's *Injun*, I was immediately struck by his inventiveness with the English language. Fans of poets like E.E. Cummings, Christian Bok, and bpNichol, will be especially happy. If you think all modern poetry sounds the same (i.e., gloomy and pretentious), take faith that some poets, like Jordan Abel, are not content to let the English language stagnate. As texting and social media have taught us, language is ever evolving 😊

Bonus points for those poets whose works are better on the page than aloud. Nothing against oral or slam poetry, but some of us are textual learners!

It is not until the end of *Injun* (and I wonder about this placement) that Abel described his process of writing the book. It is not, as it turns out, just inventive use of language, it is also found poetry; that is, poetry “found” in pre-existing text, text that was previously not considered poetry, and manipulated into poetic form. This makes the book even cooler; rare are entire collections of found poetry. More importantly, subverting the source material (in this case, old western novels where cowboys were good and Injuns were bad) gives the poems a strong sense of empowerment, often, for instance, using racist words against their original writers. Deconstructing, then reconstructing, often to make a brand new point. Brilliant.

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