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READING GUIDE: *Zane Koss's Harbour Grids*

Dear Reader,

Thank you so much for taking the time to read *Harbour Grids*. Though I hope there are countless ways to approach this book, in writing it I was most interested in asking questions about how we experience our connections with the world: not only in terms of how we relate to each other as neighbours and city-dwellers but how sensory perception grounds our bodies in the material world and, in doing so, structures our consciousness and understandings of how we relate to the world. This reading guide offers a few signposts I hope enable readers to develop their own understanding of the book.

On a literal level, this book is about two things: how the surface of New York Harbor looks when glimpsed from the hilltop public park Sunset Park in southwest Brooklyn, and an attempt to wrestle with the ethics and politics of living in the gentrifying, immigrant neighbourhood named after Sunset Park, where I lived from 2015 to 2020, a particularly fraught time in the history of the US and the neighbourhood.

I wrote the poem by taking notes—first about the appearance of the harbour, later about the neighbourhood more generally—on my phone as I walked. Later, I arranged these notes into the grid forms that constitute the primary structure of the text. Each of the book's four sections bears a slightly different focus and its own rhythm, but the whole fits together into a long argumentative arc.

In a pessimistic interpretation, the grids represent the abstracting modes of seeing the world that have enabled people, for example, to partition (and re-partition) the land surrounding New York Harbor into a grid for sale, speculation, and profit. Or that can reduce a neighbourhood to a statistical aggregation of individuals in abstract space, rather than a living, breathing, interconnected community that necessarily takes its shape from the underlying landscape on which it stands.

In a more optimistic reading, the grids could represent our necessary and irrevocable enmeshment with the world around us: both how consciousness exists through its entanglement with the material world and how I inhabit a shared, relational network with everyone else in my neighbourhood or community.

In writing this book, I drew on ideas from Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* and "The Intertwining—The Chiasm," Sarah Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology* and *Strange Encounters*, Carrie Noland's *Agency and Embodiment*, and poetry by Larry Eigner, Stephen Ratcliffe, Lisa Robertson, Leslie Scalapino, Lyn Hejinain, Daphne Marlatt, Bernadette Mayer, Ed Roberson, Fred Wah, and Stephen Collis, among others.

I hope these brief notes will give you a means of connecting with the book. They are in no way the horizon of understanding or interpretation.

Best wishes,
Zane Koss