

# Larissa Shmailo

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Larissa Shmailo's new novel is *Sly Bang* (Spuyten Duyvil); her first novel is *Patient Women* (BlazeVOX). Her poetry collections are *Medusa's Country* (MadHat), *#specialcharacters* (Unlikely Books), *In Paran* (BlazeVOX), the chapbook *A Cure for Suicide* (Červená Barva Press), and the e-book *Fib Sequence* (Argotist EBooks). Shmailo's work has appeared in *Plume*, *the Brooklyn Rail*, *Fulcrum*, *the Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, *the Journal of Poetics Research*, *Drunken Boat*, *Barrow Street*, *Gargoyle*, and the anthologies *Measure for Measure: An Anthology of Poetic Meters* (Penguin Random House), *Words for the Wedding* (Penguin), *Contemporary Russian Poetry* (Dalkey), *Resist Much/Obey Little: Poems for the Inaugural* (Spuyten Duyvil), and many others. Shmailo is the original English-language translator of the world's first performance piece, the Russian Futurist opera *Victory over the Sun* by Alexei Kruchenykh, performed at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Garage Museum of Moscow, the Brooklyn Academy of Art, and theaters and universities worldwide. Shmailo also edited the anthology *Twenty-first Century Russian Poetry* (Big Bridge Press) and has been a translator on the Russian Bible for the Eugene A. Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship of the American Bible Society. Shmailo's work is in the libraries of Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Stanford and New York universities, the Museum of Modern Art, the Hirshhorn, and other universities and museums.



Larissa Shmailo is available for speaking engagements, readings, and radio and TV appearances. Her literary services include manuscript review, Russian literary translation, and private writing coaching.

**Learn more about Larissa at:**

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larissa\\_Shmailo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larissa_Shmailo)

[larissashmailo.blogspot.com](http://larissashmailo.blogspot.com)

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*Click the image to watch Larissa Shmailo at the Carol Novack Tribute Reading in A Gathering of the Tribes, New York, December 2012*

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## LITERARY RESUME

### **LARISSA SHMAILLO, INC. (dba PROFESSOR'S HELPER™)**

#### **Owner (2014–present)**

Ghostwriter, writing coach, Russian translator, terminologist, academic consultant

### **PUBLISHING EXPERIENCE**

Chief Scribe, Scribes (2007–2013)

Translator and Writer, American Bible Society (2008–2012)

Senior Editor, McGraw Hill (2005–2006)

Senior Editor, Kaplan, Inc. (1999–2005)

### **BOOKS**

#### **Poetry**

- *Medusa's Country*, (MadHat Press, 2016)
- *#specialcharacters* (Unlikely Books, 2014)
- *In Paran* (BlazeVOX [books], 2009)
- *Fib Sequence* (chapbook) (Argotist Ebooks, 2011)
- *A Cure for Suicide* (chapbook) (Červená Barva Press, 2006)

#### **Novels**

- *Sly Bang* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2019)
- *Patient Women* (BlazeVOX [books], 2015)

#### **Translations**

- *Victory over the Sun* by Alexei Kruchenykh (Červená Barva Press, 2014)
- *Twenty-first Century Russian Poetry* (anthology; editor-in-chief; Big Bridge Press, 2013)
- *Bibliography of Bible Translations in the Languages of the Russian Federation, Other Countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the Baltic States* (American Bible Society, 2011)

### **POETRY RECORDINGS (Digital and CDs)**

- *Exorcism* (SongCrew 2009) – 18 downloadable tracks
- *The No-Net World* (SongCrew 2006) – 20 downloadable tracks

### **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

#### **Selected Publications in Journals (poetry unless otherwise specified)**

- *Atlanta Review*: Translation of Alexander Skidan's "The Temptation of St. Marcuse" (with Alexander Cigale)
- *Barrow Street 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue*: "How to Meet and Dance with Your Death (*Como encontrar y bailar con su muerte*): A Cure for Suicide"; "New Life 2"

- *Big City Lit, the rivers of it, abridged*: “Aerial View of the Rockies”; “New Life 2: Variations on a Theme by Joseph Brodsky et. al.”; “How to Meet and Dance with Your Death (*Como encontrar y bailar con su muerte*): A Cure for Suicide”; “Abortion Hallucination”; “Skin”
- *Connotation Press*: Excerpt from my novel, *Patient Women*
- *Cryopoetry*: “Live, Not Die; Live Not, Die (Sestina)”
- *Dispatches from the Poetry Wars*: “American Life”; “Parts of a Flower”; “Schooling”; “Set of Examples and Nonexamples”; “Spectacle Is the Fundamental Principle of Fascist Art”
- *Drunken Boat* “Magpie Translations of Joseph Brodsky’s *New Life*” (four mistranslations)
- *Eleven Eleven*: Translation of Alexander Blok’s “Night, avenue . . .”
- *Enchanting Verses Literary Review*: “In Paran”; “Love’s Comely Behind”
- *Eoagh*: “Clad, Clawed, Clandestine Eagly Pig”; “Anna Karenina”; “Razor”
- *FULCRUM*: “Between Eclipses”; “Erasure, The Lotus Eaters, *Ulysses*”; “He Called Me Fat”; “Letter to Lermontov”; “*Vacana* of Mahadevi-Akka to Lord Siva”; “In Paran”; “Personal”
- *Gargoyle*: “The Girl from the *Paris Review* Says ‘Uncool.’”
- *JMWW*: “Rapes”
- *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*: “Apple Bhagan of Mahadevi-Akka”
- *Journal of Poetics Research*: “Gaia’s Lunacy”; “This is the rupture of heart . . .”; “Frog Prayer”; “Spectrum Sells Out”; “Catrain”; “An old red tree . . .”; “Cis Boom Trans”
- *Levure littéraire*: “War”; “To the Thanatos within Me”; “Thanatos in Love”
- *Lungfull*: “Hunts Point Counterpoint”
- *MiPoesias*: “How to Meet and Dance with Your Death (*Como encontrar y bailar con su muerte*): A Cure for Suicide”
- *New Mirage Journal*: “Copy Cat”; “Memento Mama”; “Sunken Virgin”; “Daddy’s Elusive Love”
- *Plume*: “Your Probability Amplitude”; “Fragment from *The Ilatease* of Homey, from a Recently Discovered Mycenaean Text”
- *Rattapallax*: “Madwoman”
- *Sensitive Skin*: “Erasure, The Lotus Eaters, *Ulysses*”:
- *St. Petersburg Review*: “My Vronsky”; “The Searchers”
- *The Common*: “*Schweinerei*”; “Phylum”
- *Thrice Fiction*: “The Mudd Club” (excerpt from my novel, *Patient Women*)
- *Truck*: “Chimera”; translation of Arseny Tarkovsky’s “June 25, 1939”
- *Unlikely Stories Mark V*: “Bhakti”; excerpt from my novel, *Sly Bang*; “Blow by Blow” (creative nonfiction)

#### **Selected Publications in Anthologies (poetry unless otherwise specified)**

- *About: Poetry* (About.com *Spring Poems Anthology*): “Vow”
- *Contemporary Russian Poetry* (Dalkey Archive Press): Translations of Yuri Arabov and Anya Logvinova.
- *Ginosko 2*: “Shore”; “Mapping”
- *Half-Naked Muse* (Hungarian bilingual anthology): “How My Family Survived the Camps”; “My First Hurricane”; “Jamás Volveré”
- *Measure for Measure: An Anthology of Meter* (Everyman’s Library/Penguin Random House): “In Paran” as example of dipodic meter.
- *Occupy Wall Street*: “The No-Net World”
- *Pirene’s Fountain* (Anthology for Japan): “Winedark Sea”
- *Poetry in Performance 35* – City University of New York: “Vow”
- *Red Wheelbarrow*: Erasure poems, *Ulysses*.

- *Resist Much / Obey Little: Poems for the Inaugural* (Spuyten Duyvil Press): "Whorl's Eyelet Captured"; "Lager NYC"
- *Slavfile Pushkin 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*: Translation of "I loved you once . . ." by Alexander Pushkin
- *The Unbearables Big Book of Sex* (Autonomedia): "The Other Woman's Cunt"
- *The Unbearables: From Somewhere to Nowhere*: Excerpt from my novel, *Patient Women*
- *Verde que te quiero verde: Poems after Garcia Lorca* (Peeterse): "To the Thanatos within Me"
- *Words for the Wedding* (Perigee Books /Penguin Putnam): "Vow"; "Personal"

### Selected Critical Writing

- *Big City Lit, the rivers of it, abridged*:  
"When Pop Gets Culture: Elaine Equi's *Ripple Effect: New and Selected Poems*";  
"Poetry in the Shadow of the Towers: C.K. Williams and Galway Kinnell at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y "
- *Brooklyn Rail*: "A Spider's Mirror": Elaine Equi's *Click and Clone*
- *Drunken Boat*: "Experimental Poetry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century—A Foray"
- *Jacket*:  
"On Rambling: A Review of Philip Nikolayev's *Letters from Aldenderry*";  
On the Constancy of Dirt and Joy: Review of *Today I Wrote Nothing: The Selected Writings of Daniil Kharmis* translated by Matvei Yankelevich"
- *Jacket2*:  
"Vagabond Imagination: Review of Leonard Schwartz's *If*";  
"The Author and Authority: Daniil Kharmis and the *Russian Absurd* translated by Alexander Cigale
- *The Battersea Review*: "The Combinatorics of Context: The Embedded Sonnets of Philip Nikolayev" (translated into Italian for *Graffia*)
- *Journal of Poetics Research*: "Metrical Action in the Free Verse of Bob Holman"
- *Sensitive Skin*:  
"I Blame Louise Hay for Trump"- essay;  
"Dr. B. Said" – creative nonfiction / exposé

### SELECTED AWARDS AND PRESS

- Listed in Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larissa\\_Shmailo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larissa_Shmailo)
- *Victory over the Sun* translated by Shmailo performed internationally and reviewed in *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/1983/11/20/arts/russia-s-cubo-futurists-created-a-startling-opera.html> and <http://www.nytimes.com/1981/01/27/arts/theater-victory-over-the-sun.html>) and *Russia Beyond the Headlines* ([http://rbth.com/literature/2015/01/21/the\\_enduring\\_appeal\\_of\\_russias\\_avant-garde\\_43039.html](http://rbth.com/literature/2015/01/21/the_enduring_appeal_of_russias_avant-garde_43039.html))
- *Twenty-first Century Russian Poetry* featured on Poetry Foundation *Harriet* blog, *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, and Voice of Russia ([http://rbth.com/literature/2013/07/23/fifty\\_russian\\_poets\\_unveiled\\_in\\_online\\_anthology\\_28317.html](http://rbth.com/literature/2013/07/23/fifty_russian_poets_unveiled_in_online_anthology_28317.html))
- Honorable Mention, Compass Award in Russian Translation, sponsored by Princeton, Georgetown, and Montclair State Universities, 2011
- Honorable Mention, Elizabeth P. Braddock Poetry Prize, 2012
- Honorable Mention, Goodreads May 2012 Poetry Contest
- Finalist, Glass Woman Prose Prize, 2012
- Semifinalist, Subito Press/University of Boulder Prose Competition, 2014.
- New Century Music awards for best spoken word with rock, jazz, and electronica as well as best album award for *Exorcism*, 2009
- Critic's Pick, *Time Out Magazine*, for reading series *Sliding Scale Poetry*, 1996

- Radio Highlight, *New York Times*, for New York Board of Education radio poetry series, 1996
- Frequent appearances on New York City Board of Education radio WNYE and public radio WBAI

## SELECTED READINGS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Panelist, *The Semi-formal: Hybrid Free and Formal Verse*. Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference, Tampa, March 2018.
- Moderator, *Endangered Music: Formal Poetry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference, Los Angeles, April, 2016.
- Performer and panelist, *Victory over the Sun* restaging at Boston University, April, 2015.
- Moderator, *Daughters of Baba Yaga: The Eastern European Woman Poet in the United States*. Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference, Minneapolis, April, 2015.
- Panelist, *Translation from Pushkin to Pussy Riot*. Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference, Minneapolis, April, 2015.
- Guest, *Cross-Cultural Communications*, PennSound Radio, April, 2015
- Poetry reading, *Art and Psyche* conference, New York University, July 2012
- Performance poetry with SoundCrew band, The Knitting Factory, 2009

## SELECTED TRANSLATIONS OF SHMAILO'S WORK

Iranian poet Mohammad Mostaghimi has translated a number of Shmailo's poems into Persian. Most of them are published on his weblog 'dishe sepid'.

## SELECTED REVIEWS OF SHMAILO'S WORK

Reviews of Shmailo's work by Chris Campanioni, Michael T. Young, Dean Kostos, Meredith Sue Willis, Jeff Hansen, and others have appeared in the *Brooklyn Rail*; *Books for Readers*; *The Lit Pub*; *Unlikely Stories*; *Altered Scale* and other publications.

## LITERARY EDITORSHIPS

Contributing Editor, *Dispatches from the Poetry Wars*, 2018–present

Editor, *MadHat Annual*, 2014–2015

Contributing Editor, *Big City Lit*, 2008–2014

## LITERARY CURATION

Founder and curator, The Feminist Poets in Low-Cut Blouses, 1996–present

Director and curator, TWiN Poetry Collective (online collective of 8,000 audio poets), 2006–2009

## TEACHING

- Guest lecturer, Queens College/CUNY, May 2016
- Guest lecturer, Lesley University, March 2014

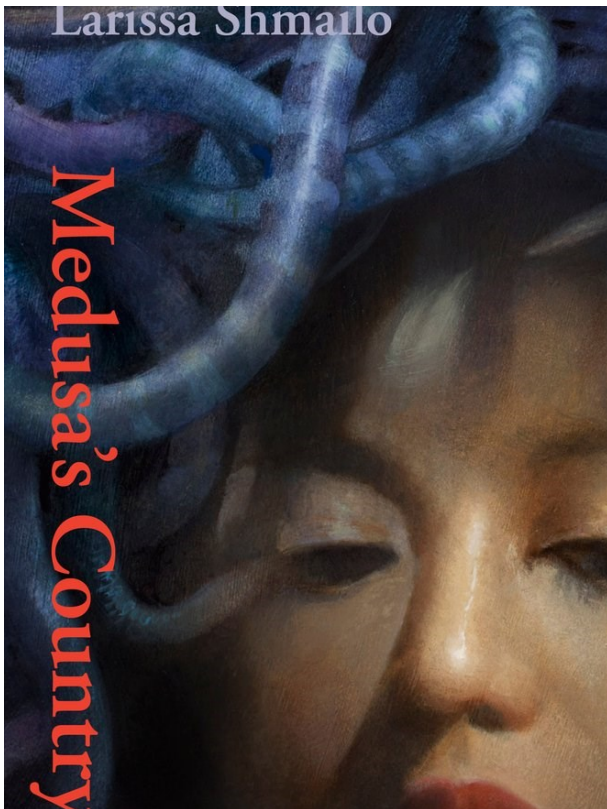
## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Member, PEN
- Member, the Academy of American Poets

## EDUCATION

- Barnard College, BA in Russian. Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude, Honors in Major, 1985
- New York City Teaching Fellow, 2009
- Columbia University, graduate work in the linguistics of translation, 1985
- Mentored by Annie Finch (metric poetry), 2015

# Medusa's Country



*Medusa's Country*  
by Larissa Shmailo  
MadHat Press, 2017, \$14.95  
ISBN: 978-1941196380  
[www.MadHat-Press.com](http://www.MadHat-Press.com)

What a gift: a new book of searingly intelligent poems from a uniquely eloquent poet. Gut-wrenching honesty, spiritual courage, and unflinching vision are what it takes to visit *Medusa's Country*. It's not easy to find a guide to take you there, but Larissa Shmailo is ready for the job. She spares herself—and her reader—no pains in the search for home, drawing on the experience of her immense challenges—prostitution, alcoholism, drugs and insanity—and her immense advantages—a gift for poetic form, a razor-sharp mind, the spirit of a mystic, and a deep intimacy with world literature and culture—to share with us precious and hard-learned lessons: the necessity not only to survive but to triumph, and the crucial place of art and culture in that achievement. Brace yourself. *Medusa's Country* is a book to

savor, and Larissa Shmailo, novelist, translator, and poet of urgent maturity and resonant depth, is a writer to watch.

—Annie Finch, author of *A Poet's Craft*

Medusa peels herself from the pages of mythology to become a denizen of New York City's margins. There, she waltzes with Thanatos: "The dance with death? / Ah, *this*: as I flirt, you draw near." When Eros shows up, he lures Medusa on a peregrination toward self. She packs her poet's suitcase of prosody and nuanced rhymes. Along the way, the gorgon assumes other personae, including a whore named Nora. These poems lead the reader through histories of misogyny and sexual abuse. Convinced of her prowess, this Medusa stares into the mirror, where she confronts distorted notions of normalcy. Despite landing on a psychiatric ward, she frees herself with sardonic wit and blade-sharp language. With verve, withchutzpah, with urgency, Larissa Shmailo's poems are spells, transforming stone into flesh and death into an affirmation of life.

—Dean Kostos, author of *This Is Not a Skyscraper*

There are days I am bored with poetry and days I think it is a waste of human effort. Reading Larissa Shmailo's collection reminds me why I love the genre and proves what kinds of beauty and intelligence can exist in language. There is a lyric lift to every line and a direct honesty in every message that heartens me and renews me. The poems in this book deserve to be read and read again. I thank the poet for the renewal of faith.

—Okla Elliott, author of *The Cartographer's Ink* and *From the Crooked Timber*





Larissa Shmailo