



Fig. 1: Lynn Book, "Cloud Eye", still from *Escapes* (2012). Courtesy of the artist. Click on the image to watch the video.

*Escapes* is a video work conceived as a book of eight poems – in this case, poems that deliver meaning through the sound of the voice, as much as the text on the screen/page along with the interplay of restless images propelled by micro music-scapes. The audio is drawn from two live performances of *Escapes* (2012), a collaborative concert project with Chicago sound and media artist, Shawn Decker.

The content of *Escapes* centers on the Phaedra figure who is transmuted from an ancient myth-story into a contemporary sign of escape. Here, she becomes less a character and more a divining tool used to locate voluptuous frictions between release and containment, stasis and freedom. The story of Phaedra itself is one of exile. 'She' has migrated through Baroque and contemporary operas, from Racine's stage by way of Seneca and others, including conflicting fragments that Euripides wrote, lost, then wrote again in ancient Greece. Phaedra becomes the ideal escape body for our time, resonant with multiple histories and radiant with propositions for possible futures.

*Escapes* is Volume 1 of a larger video project comprised of 3 volumes entitled: *UnReading for Future Bodies*. In Volume 2, *Derangements* will bring focus to the Chimera figure with its fluid, frightening and ultimately freeing boundaries (in development and with support from of a Visiting Artist Residency at Sarah Lawrence College). *Fragmenta* is the title of the third volume which will weave together multiple voices of actual women and girls from across time and culture whose desire for knowledge transcends the risks in obtaining it. The moving text/sound/image arrangements of each book of poetry are important to the un-reading thrust, engaging viewers in a

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performative experience with various animated and interactive treatments that both highlight the construction of symbolic meaning and also explode conventional order by introducing new modes of organizing understanding and inspiring possibility.

*Escapes* officially launches with the online interdisciplinary journal *Anglistica AION* (University of Naples 'L'Orientale', Italy) in this issue on "Writing Exile: Women, the Arts and Technologies" edited by Wanda Balzano and Silvana Carotenuto. Currently the 23 min. video may be accessed [here](#). Each poem can also be watched in whatever order the viewer chooses by clicking on the *Escapes - Table of Contents* link at the bottom of the video, and then on the thumbnails across the top of the Vimeo page. The eight videos range from about 1:30 to 5:20 in length.

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