

Dia Art Foundation
Readings in Contemporary Poetry
Michael Gottlieb

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Dia:Chelsea
535 West 22nd Street, 5th Floor
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Introduction by Vincent Katz

Michael Gottlieb is a poet and the author of nineteen books. He was born in New York City and graduated from Bennington College in Vermont, where he studied writing and painting. He is the author of numerous collections of poetry, including *Local Color / Eidetic Deniers*, *96 Tears*, *New York*, *Valu Pac*, *The River Road*, *More Than All* (with Ted Greenwald), *Gorgeous Plunge*, *Careering Obloquy*, *The Likes of Us*, *Letters to a Middle Aged Poet*, and most recently, *Dear All* (Roof Books, 2013) and *I Had Every Intention* (Faux Editions, 2014). His book of prose meditations, *What We Do: Essays for Poets* was published by Chax Press in 2016. A first-generation member of the Language School, he helped edit one of its foundational magazines: Roof. His work appears in numerous anthologies, including *Against Expression: An Anthology of Conceptual Writing* (Northwestern University Press, 2011) and an upcoming pre-Flarf anthology, edited by Drew Gardner.

A master of intransigent verbiage — in the best sense — since earliest days, Michael Gottlieb has allowed loosening, or opening, into his poetics at various times and for various reasons. But his stance has always been one of steadfast loyalty to intelligence, and that has kept him, that is his poetry, pure. I don't mean immune to extraneous influences; simply that he has reasons for writing, and though they change, they remain oppositional.

It should be noted that, Breton-like, the visual for Gottlieb functions, not as ancillary, or illustrational, but often as central to his poetic expression. "Sky — writing radiant units and / a letter code" is how his first book ends, making clear the symbiosis, for Gottlieb, between writing and image. And in fact, the image, one can say with confidence, is often the city of his birth, New York, whether via bridges connecting it to the outside world, or in the paintings and other pictures that are carefully selected for his publications.

His most recent work shows him riffing, not with his guard entirely down, but moving too fast for complete control, yet fast enough to enable even the most recalcitrant listener. A recent poem begins, "this is / the ground attack // go big go long go home / fail quickly." The mordant wit keeps us live, and lively: "if only the after-life / was more like the after-party". (Both quotes from "Go Big" in *Dear All*).

Please welcome Michael Gottlieb.