

PRESS RELEASE: NARRATIVE NON-FICTION

microbursts

Elizabeth Reeder & Amanda Thomson

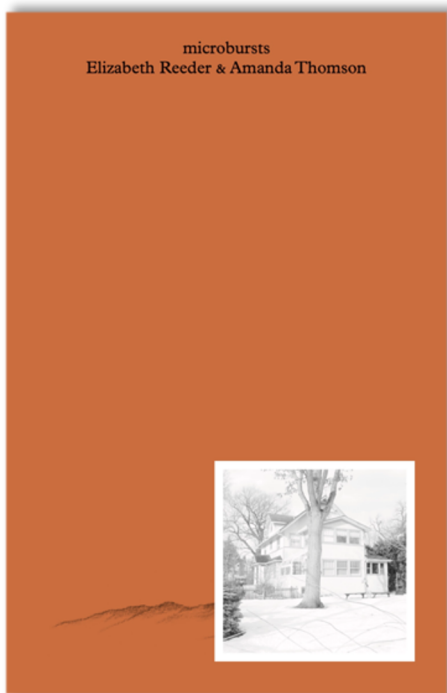
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120pp.; black-and-white photographs and illustrations throughout

Text by Elizabeth Reeder / Images, artwork and original format by Amanda Thomson

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“Here in these places between lost and found I witness in silence and in deafening chaos and I make up stories that will be memories. Walking upon terra incognita love becomes grief and essay, poem. Each memory forges a new path and this writing acts like a magnet pressed to the face of my compass.”



microbursts is a collection of hybrid, lyric essays about the places between life and death; memoir and poetry; making and letting go. Originally written by Reeder as an intense text-based collection of lyric and experimental essays responding to the illnesses and deaths of her parents, it confronts the raw emotions of crisis, grief and creativity. Through collaboration with Thomson, the project expanded to consider how design and visual intervention might alter the nature and impact of the text.

The outcome is a book which explores the subjects of illness, crisis, creativity, caring, death and grief, alongside the aesthetic and formal concerns of cross-genre writing, including how image, formatting and text work together to create tension, understanding and pace, expanding the possibilities of the essay and the artist's book.

Formally audacious, linguistically fluid, sensitive and intricate in its visual presentation, *microbursts* uses the potential and elasticity of the essay form to explore intensely personal, yet universal, experiences and considers the ways in which we can express and communicate these through spatial and linguistic form. Crucially, it achieves these things effortlessly, with its accessible, poetic language and engaging narrative of family, love, care, grief, dying, death and creativity.

Elizabeth Reeder, originally from Chicago, now lives in Scotland. She writes fiction, narrative non-fiction and hybrid work that creates spaces between forms, subjects and disciplines. Her work explores identity, family, illness and grief, creativity and landscapes. She has published two previous novels, *Ramshackle* and *Fremont*, and her latest novel, *An Archive of Happiness*, was published by Pinned in the Margins in September 2020. She is a MacDowell Fellow and a senior lecturer in Creative Writing at University of Glasgow. Her website is: elizabethkreeder.com

Amanda Thomson is a visual artist and writer who is also a lecturer at the Glasgow School of Art. Her interdisciplinary practice is often about notions of home, movements, migrations, landscapes and the natural world and how places come to be made, and she has exhibited nationally and internationally. She earned her doctorate in interdisciplinary arts practice, based around the landscapes and the forests of the North of Scotland, in 2013. She lives and works in Glasgow and in Strathspey. Her first book, *A Scots Dictionary of Nature*, is published by Saraband Books. Her website is: www.passingplace.com

Praise for *microbursts*

'*microbursts* shows that grief is communal, that love is experimental, that forms are yet to be decided. This book is a generous lesson in living and dying.' – **Maria Fusco**

'Reeder writes of grief and its siblings, anger and not knowing, with the surety of an initiate. The in-between time of illness shatters and scatters language. Thomson creates a cohesive reading space to contain these fragments. Shadows of past and future texts ghost expanses of white paper. Punctuation hangs in the balance. In these soft absences. Language has time. To regroup. To recover.' – **J. R. Carpenter**

'*microbursts* is a sparkingly original, tender book that remakes language with delicacy and verve – finding new ways to speak loss, change and the many layered movements of the self.' – **Rebecca Tamás**

'*microbursts* is... a map of loss and wonder that charts the tectonic plates of life and death at the places where they rub together.' – **Sophie Ward**

'*microbursts* is a master-class in the necessary constructedness of fine elegy that renders the heart-wrenching buoyant... Under the fierce beams of its fateful subject, the willingness of language to move freely, poetically, in bird-like hoverings and escapes, produces a rare haunting resonance.' – **Jeffrey Robinson**

'It's a magical act to make something from the fragments of two lives crumbling. It might be called a work of art. To make a piece of paper out of fragments of a tree, it is necessary first to break them down into microbursts. Reconstructed it is never a tree, but it might be a map. Reeder and Thomson have made a map of grief from the fragments of two lives crumbling, a map we might be able to find our way by.' – **Joanna Walsh**

'*microbursts* is as elegant as it is daring, a "needlesharp" interdisciplinary primer on how to communicate the quiet discoveries and sublime pains of the lived experience. The project presents stirring testimony to the crucial roles of inquiry, Queer collaboration, and experimentation in 21st-century artmaking.' – **Margot Douaihy**

'Haunting, beautiful, honest. This is an incredibly relatable and carefully curated collection of writing and imagery about love, grief and creativity. It is a wholly original, truthful and sensitive portrayal of life and loss.'
– **Annie Lyons**

About Prototype

Prototype was founded in 2019 by Jess Chandler, co-founder of the independent publishing houses Test Centre and House Sparrow Press. Established to continue and develop the work begun by Test Centre, Prototype is committed to creating new possibilities in the publishing of fiction and poetry through a flexible, interdisciplinary approach. Through the discovery of high-quality work across genres, Prototype strives to increase audiences for experimental writing.

Recent titles include Caleb Klaces' acclaimed debut novel *Fatherhood* (longlisted for the Republic of Consciousness Prize), Jen Calleja's *I'm Afraid That's All We've Got Time For*, Otis Mensah's *Safe Metamorphosis* and Turner Prize-winning artist Helen Marten's *The Boiled in Between*.

Test Centre's back catalogue includes works by Derek Jarman, Max Porter, Sam Riviere, Sophie Collins, Jack Underwood, Rachael Allen, Wayne Holloway-Smith and Jonathan Meades.

For more information contact Jess Chandler:
jess@prototypepublishing.co.uk | +44 (0)7870646488