



Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets)

By Alexander Vvedensky

Download now

Read Online ➔

Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky

“Pussy Riot are Vvedensky’s disciples and his heirs.

Katya, Masha, and I are in jail but I don’t consider that we’ve been defeated.... According to the official report, Alexander Vvedensky died on December 20, 1941. We don’t know the cause, whether it was dysentery in the train after his arrest or a bullet from a guard. It was somewhere on the railway line between Voronezh and Kazan. His principle of ‘bad rhythm’ is our own. He wrote: ‘It happens that two rhythms will come into your head, a good one and a bad one and I choose the bad one. It will be the right one.’ ... It is believed that the OBERIU dissidents are dead, but they live on. They are persecuted but they do not die.”

— Pussy Riot [Nadezhda Tolokonnikova’s closing statement at their trial in August 2012]

“I raise[d] my hand against concepts,” wrote Alexander Vvedensky, “I enacted a poetic critique of reason.” This weirdly and wonderfully philosophical poet was born in 1904, grew up in the midst of war and revolution, and reached his artistic maturity as Stalin was twisting the meaning of words in grotesque and lethal ways. Vvedensky—with Daniil Kharms the major figure in the short-lived underground avant-garde group OBERIU (a neologism for “the union for real art”)—responded with a poetry that explodes stable meaning into shimmering streams of provocation and invention. A Vvedensky poem is like a crazy party full of theater, film, magic tricks, jugglery, and feasting. Curious characters appear and disappear, euphoria keeps company with despair, outrageous assertions lead to epic shouting matches, and perhaps it all breaks off with one lonely person singing a song.

A Vvedensky poem doesn’t make a statement. It is an event. Vvedensky’s poetry was unpublishable during his lifetime—he made a living as a writer for children before dying under arrest in 1942—and he remains the least known of the great twentieth-century Russian poets. This is his first book to appear in English. The translations by Eugene Ostashevsky and Matvei Yankelevich, outstanding poets in their own right, are as astonishingly alert and alive as the originals.

 [**Download** Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think ...pdf](#)

 [**Read Online** Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Thi ...pdf](#)

Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets)

By Alexander Vvedensky

Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky

“Pussy Riot are Vvedensky’s disciples and his heirs.

Katya, Masha, and I are in jail but I don’t consider that we’ve been defeated.... According to the official report, Alexander Vvedensky died on December 20, 1941. We don’t know the cause, whether it was dysentery in the train after his arrest or a bullet from a guard. It was somewhere on the railway line between Voronezh and Kazan. His principle of ‘bad rhythm’ is our own. He wrote: ‘It happens that two rhythms will come into your head, a good one and a bad one and I choose the bad one. It will be the right one.’ ... It is believed that the OBERIU dissidents are dead, but they live on. They are persecuted but they do not die.”

— Pussy Riot [Nadezhda Tolokonnikova’s closing statement at their trial in August 2012]

“I raise[d] my hand against concepts,” wrote Alexander Vvedensky, “I enacted a poetic critique of reason.” This weirdly and wonderfully philosophical poet was born in 1904, grew up in the midst of war and revolution, and reached his artistic maturity as Stalin was twisting the meaning of words in grotesque and lethal ways. Vvedensky—with Daniil Kharmis the major figure in the short-lived underground avant-garde group OBERIU (a neologism for “the union for real art”)—responded with a poetry that explodes stable meaning into shimmering streams of provocation and invention. A Vvedensky poem is like a crazy party full of theater, film, magic tricks, jugglery, and feasting. Curious characters appear and disappear, euphoria keeps company with despair, outrageous assertions lead to epic shouting matches, and perhaps it all breaks off with one lonely person singing a song.

A Vvedensky poem doesn’t make a statement. It is an event. Vvedensky’s poetry was unpublishable during his lifetime—he made a living as a writer for children before dying under arrest in 1942—and he remains the least known of the great twentieth-century Russian poets. This is his first book to appear in English. The translations by Eugene Ostashevsky and Matvei Yankelevich, outstanding poets in their own right, are as astonishingly alert and alive as the originals.

Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky
Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #594134 in Books
- Published on: 2013-04-02
- Released on: 2013-04-02
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.01" h x .37" w x 4.51" l, .20 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 168 pages

 **[Download](#)** [Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think ...pdf](#)

 **[Read Online](#)** [Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Thi ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets)
By Alexander Vvedensky**

Editorial Review

Review

"...it's high time that more readers pick up on [Vvedensky's] work to break language, to crush understanding so that what is beneath and beyond it can smuggle its miracle into our event-hemorrhaging lives."

—*Asymptote Journal*

"Unlike the Symbolists, his aim is neither to create an aesthetic paradise nor to suggest or build a bridge to another world—Vvedensky's is an aesthetics of martyred aesthetics, of not knowing, of the defeat of 'poetry' in the service of truth.... His poetic sensibility combines the Russian Symbolist concern for transcendence, God, and 'other worlds,' with the Futurist orientation toward syntactical and semantic deformations that draw attention to the artifices of language." — Thomas Epstein, *The New Arcadia Review*

Praise for *OBERIU: An Anthology of Russian Absurdism*, edited by Eugene Ostashevsky:

"Vvedensky's poems sear.... Ruminations on faith and loss abound, but there are few more churning, lacerating and willfully beautiful works in Eastern literature than the prose poem "Frother," in which three sons hover and cavort around their dying father, trying to ascertain the meaning of a mysterious word and a mysterious truth."—*The Nation*

"[OBERIU] mounted a challenge in the late 1920s and 30s to 'worldly logic' by questioning and confusing the most basic categories through which the world may be rendered coherent and transformed into narrative. They did so by writing subversive poems and stories, while 'trusting in neither thoughts nor words' (Alexander Vvedensky). They practised a kind of silence through words, wearing various comic masks while pointing to inexpressible realities." —*The Times Literary Supplement*

"The work of Oberiu is as relevant to our moment as when it was written." —*The Believer*

"It's about time . . . the Oberiu . . . became a household name like the Surrealists, Dadaists and all the rest." —*The Brooklyn Rail*

"Oberiu is as relevant today as ever." —*Bookforum*

"For anyone intersted in Soviet literature, this book fills an enormous gap. It also presents some beautiful, heartbreaking poetry." —*PW Annex*

"Highly recommended. All readers, all levels." —*CHOICE*

Praise for Vvedensky's *The Gray Notebook*, published by Ugly Duckling Presse:

"These poems do what solid poems should. They stand against time." — Peter Moysaenko, *bomblog*

General praise regarding the movement Vvedensky started (OBERIU):

"The OBERIU writers are a revelation, an aspect of Russian modernism in the early Soviet period that has been largely invisible to readers in English." —Robert Hass

“OBERIU, sometimes called Russia's last avant-garde, is one of the most intriguing--and little known--movements of the years before World War II. The absurdist poets at its center—Alexander Vvedensky, Daniil Kharmis, and Nikolai Zabolotsky—belonged to the first generation of writers to come of age after the October Revolution . . . Less interested in coining neologisms than in destroying the protocols of semantic coherence and linguistic realism, these poets have produced a series of inventive, free-wheeling, and often hilarious poetic texts in a variety of forms and genres.” —Marjorie Perloff

About the Author

Alexander Vvedensky (1904–1941) was born into the liberal intelligentsia of St. Petersburg and grew up in the midst of war and revolution, reaching artistic maturity just as Stalin consolidated control over Russia. After attending a progressive high school, Vvedensky spent a year working at the State Institute of Artistic Culture (GINKhUK) as a researcher in a lab devoted to Futurist abstract poetry. Along with Daniil Kharmis, he then became a major figure in the short-lived underground avant-garde group OBERIU (a neologism for “the union for real art”). Unable to publish his poetry—by the 1930s there was no tolerance in the USSR for work of such shimmering invention and provocation—Vvedensky made a living as a writer of children’s literature. In 1931 he was arrested for his so-called counterrevolutionary literary activities, interrogated, and sentenced to three years of internal exile. He was detained again in 1941, and on February 2 he died of pleurisy on a prison train, leaving behind his wife and four-year-old son. Though much of Vvedensky’s work has been lost, what remains has established him as one of the most influential Russian poets of the twentieth century.

Eugene Ostashevsky is the author of the poetry collections *The Life and Opinions of DJ Spinoza* and *Iterature*, both published by Ugly Duckling Presse. He is the editor of *OBERIU: An Anthology of Russian Absurdism*, the first collection of writings by Vvedensky and friends in English translation. Ostashevsky teaches in the liberal studies program at New York University.

Matvei Yankelevich is the author of the poetry collection *Alpha Donut* (United Artists Books) and a novella in fragments, *Boris by the Sea* (Octopus Books). His translations of Daniil Kharmis were collected in *Today I Wrote Nothing: The Selected Writings of Daniil Kharmis* (Overlook/Ardis). He edits the Eastern European Poets Series at Ugly Duckling Presse.

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

The Joyful Man Franz

the joyful man Franz
maintained protuberance
from start to finish
he never came down the porch
measured stars named flowers
believed I am you
affixing number to time
humming in rhyme
he died and was deceased
like the shotgun and the cyst
frightened, he would see a skirt
as he fantasized asleep
and would sail at the helm
to a melancholy elm
where squads of beetles
performed about-faces

showed their mustaches to gods
pronounced themselves to be clocks
gods howled out of tune
and tumbled down from the moon
there in luxurious grass
an ant was being stamped
and the glowworm, unkind king
lit up a large lamp
silently the lightnings flashed
languid animals snorted
unhurriedly growled
the waves that lay on the sand
where? where did all this happen
where did this location roam
I forgot, the sun will say
sinking into the unknown
all we see is the exit
from the schoolbag of Franz
of the contemporary of man
the psychologist of the divine
this wizard announces
the party begins
idle stars crowd in
boring people smoke
lonely thoughts run around
everything is sad and pointless
God what kind of party is this
it's the christmas of death or something
hens step around gulfs
the hall hops with cupids
and the iron steam-engine
meditates upon cow-patties
Franz awoke from his nightmare
why are all these things here?
the valet stood here like a palm
before the meadows of eternity
short as a reed
the collar sleeps upon a chair
a branch of kerosene
overlooks the twilight
answer me wizard
is this a dream? I'm a fool
but where is that wizard
where is the psychologist of the divine
he counts songs in his sleep
growing bald as a tree
he can't come here
where the real world stands
he calmly multiplies the shades

he does not shimmer in the sky
Turks give me my carriage
the joyful Franz called
give me the rocket of Oberth
give me horsepower
I will ride around the world
in this fascinating cab
I will orchestrate a race
of the star with the prisoner earth
touch the ceiling with my head
I'm a bluebird I'm [...]
meanwhile out of the acute night
out of the abyss of the bad dream
appears a crown
and the ramified scythe
you're an irate serpent
my childless death
hello Franz will sadly say
each of your hairs holds
more thoughts than a pot
more sleep than a powder
take out your saber
and slice open my shirt
then slice open my skin
glue me to the bed
all the same shall learning triumph
I'll announce as I gurgle
and create a grandson
my substitute in the form of a lamp
he will stand and glow
write essays for school
death said you are a flower
and fled to the east
Franz remained alone
to contemplate protuberance
measure stars name flowers
compose I and you
lying in absolute silence
in the empty heights

1929-1930

[Trans. Ostashevsky]

Snow Lies

snow lies
earth flies
lights flip

in pigments night has come
on a rug of stars it lies
is it night or a demon?
like an inane lever
sleeps the insane river
it is not aware
of the moon everywhere
animals gnash their canines
in black gold cages
animals bang their heads
animals are the ospreys of saints
the world flies around the universe
in the vicinity of stars
dashes deathless like a swallow
seeks a home a nest
there's no nest a hole
the universe is alone
maybe rarely in flight
time will pass as poor as night
or a daughter in a bed
will grow sleepy and then dead
then a crowd of relations
will rush in and cry alas
in steel houses
will howl loudly
she's gone and buried
hopped to paradise big-bellied
God God have pity
good God on the precipice
but God said Go play
and she entered paradise
there spun any which way
numbers houses and seas
the inessential exists
in vain, they perceived
there God languished behind bars
with no eyes no legs no arms
so that maiden in tears
sees all this in the heavens
sees various eagles
appear out of night
and fly inane
and flash insane
this is so depressing
the dead maiden will say
serenely surprised
God will say
what's depressing what's
depressing, God, life

what are you talking about
what O noon do you know
you press pleasure and Paris
to your breast like two pears
you swell like music
you're swell like a statue
then the wood howled
in final despair
it spies through the tares
a meandering ribbon
little ribbon a crate
curvy Lena of fate
Mercury was in the air
spinning like a top
and the bear
sunned his coat
people also walked around
bearing fish on a platter
bearing on their hands
ten fingers on a ladder
while all this went on
that maiden rested
rose from the dead and forgot
yawned and said
you guys, I had a dream
what can it mean
dreams are worse than macaroni
they make crows double over
I was not at all dying
I was gaping and lying
undulating and crying
I was so terrifying
a fit of lethargy
was had by me among the effigies
let's enjoy ourselves really
let's gallop to the cinema
and she sped off like an ass
to satisfy her innermost
lights glint in the heaven
is it night or a demon

January 1930

[Trans. Ostashevsky]

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Luisa Johnson:

As people who live in the actual modest era should be revise about what going on or information even

knowledge to make these individuals keep up with the era which is always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe will probably update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know what kind you should start with. This Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, since this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

Jessie Taylor:

Do you certainly one of people who can't read pleasant if the sentence chained in the straightway, hold on guys this kind of aren't like that. This Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) book is readable by simply you who hate the straight word style. You will find the details here are arrange for enjoyable reading experience without leaving perhaps decrease the knowledge that want to deliver to you. The writer connected with Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) content conveys objective easily to understand by many individuals. The printed and e-book are not different in the articles but it just different available as it. So , do you nonetheless thinking Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) is not loveable to be your top list reading book?

Jesus Loveless:

Typically the book Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) has a lot of information on it. So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of gain. The book was authored by the very famous author. The author makes some research before write this book. This particular book very easy to read you can get the point easily after perusing this book.

Donald Worsley:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray you, why because this Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) book written by well-known writer who really knows well how to make book which can be understand by anyone who read the book. Written in good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and writing skill only for eliminate your personal hunger then you still question Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) as good book but not only by the cover but also with the content. This is one reserve that can break don't assess book by its include, so do you still needing a different sixth sense to pick this particular!? Oh come on your looking at sixth sense already told you so why you have to listening to yet another sixth sense.

**Download and Read Online Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky
#SF0ITEYXDN9**

Read Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky for online ebook

Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky books to read online.

Online Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky ebook PDF download

Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky Doc

Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky Mobipocket

Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky EPub

SF0ITEYXDN9: Alexander Vvedensky: An Invitation for Me to Think (NYRB/Poets) By Alexander Vvedensky