

Cultural Daily

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What It Was: Thoughts on #90X90

Chiwan Choi · Wednesday, May 10th, 2017

Even as we are in the throes of organizing, scheduling and producing the #90X90LA that begins 7/5/17 and stretches all the way through to the very beginning of October, the fact is it's been difficult for us at Writ Large Press to say exactly what Summer 2014 was (it was so many things, yet so simple).

One thing we DO know that it had everything to do with each and every person that showed up and shared/held space together.

So in that spirit, we reached out to some of the writers, curators, publishers and other members of the LA literary community to share with us their thoughts, their take on this thing called #90X90. We heard in depth from both [Kate Maruyama](#) and [Loretta McCormick](#).

Here are more (quicker) takes from Janice Lee, Désirée Zamorano, Jade Chang, Michelle Franke, and MariNaomi.

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#90X90 was probably the most pure form of literary citizenship I've seen, an entirely insane and ridiculous undertaking, an absolutely generous melding of literary culture and community, a space where anyone was welcome and welcomed, a reminder of why we as writers keep doing what it is we do, a reminder to exist and to keep going.

— Janice Lee, author of *The Sky Isn't Blue*; editor/publisher of [Entropy](#)

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To this day, #90X90 is the most ambitious reading series I've seen attempted in Los Angeles, not to mention one of the most inclusive. In 2014, by presenting 90 events in 90 days, Writ Large Press created this kind of "whole picture" of the city, which is no easy task. They gave writers and readers a place to commune, a place to hear and share the stories that bind us. During this

huge undertaking, they survived on words, hugs, high-fives, and whisky. Read: unpaid, for the love of it. This kind of work—creating space for art, and a lot if it—is more necessary than ever in 2017, so of course the badass team at Writ Large Press heard the call and is answering with another #90×90. As a poet, reader, and citizen, I couldn't be more excited, and as an arts organization leader, I couldn't be more grateful.

— Michelle Franke, Executive Director of PEN Center USA

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#90×90 was a literary roller coaster ride—an explosion of talent, new and seasoned, a celebration of the best of LA literary community. I felt giddy to be a participant, and giddy to be an audience member, and appreciative of the unexpected connections that continue to today.

— Désirée Zamorano, author of *The Amado Women*

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#90X90 was an exhilarating adventure, both as a participant and as an audience member. I was blown away by the scope of it, how smoothly it ran, and that its organizers survived to tell the tale. I'm even more blown away that it's happening again. A literary maelstrom!

— MariNaomi, author/illustrator of *Turning Japanese*

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The first time I read any part of my novel in public was at a 2014 #90×90 event. Same for the second time. And the third. It was the fun, freewheeling, inclusive-but-ambitious atmosphere forged by Chiwan, Jessica, Judeth, and Peter that kept me coming back—it was also a real thrill to read at the bar in Union Station, where unsuspecting Amtrak and Greyhound passengers wandered in and became part of the event.

— Jade Change, author of *The Wangs vs. the World*

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