

The Halo-Halo Review

Critical reviews, Introductions, and other engagements with the English-language works of Filipino authors in all genres

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

POST-BOOK: KIMBERLY ALIDIO

The Halo-Halo Review is pleased to interview authors in the aftermath of their recent books' releases. This issue's featured writers include [Kimberly Alidio](#).



What is your most recent book?

I've had two books released this year — *once teeth bones coral* , from Belladonna* ([SPD Books](#), [Bookshop](#), [IndieBound](#), [BookFinder](#)), and *why letter ellipses*, from selva oscura press (available for pre-order from [SPD Books](#), [Bookshop](#), [Indiebound](#), [BookFinder](#)).

Halo-Halo: Mixed-Genre Filipino Dessert of Reviews & Other Critical Engagements



Editor

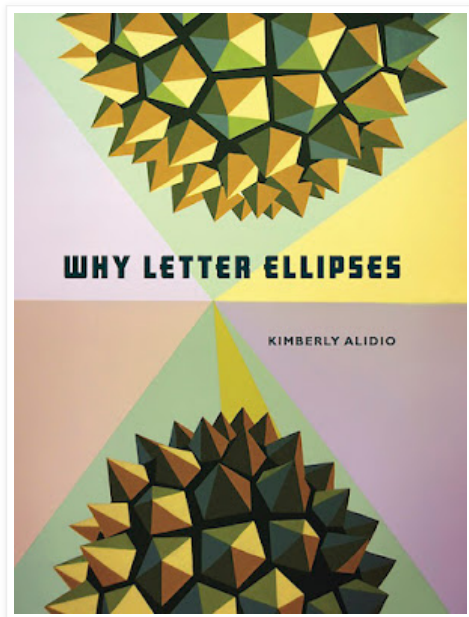
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When were they released?

: *once teeth bones coral* : came out in August and *why letter ellipses* will be out in December.

What has surprised you about the response?

I'm honored to be a Belladonna* and a selva oscura author. I believe in their missions and the people who make those presses so vital. I loved working collaboratively on production, design, and publicity. It's all gone pretty smoothly, especially considering that I was involved in producing two books in a short amount of time. I didn't plan to put out two full-length books in one year but everyone involved just jumped in and went for it. I didn't expect to learn so much about making small press experimental poetry books, or to become so interested in that part of the poetry world.

There's so little anyone can expect during a pandemic, amidst uprisings for Black liberation, and in an election year. Plans I'd sketched before March for a book tour turned into six readings, which I would have been unable to do without Zoom. I loved being able to read with all the poets who blurbled : *once teeth bones coral* : , poets tuning in from LA, Boulder, Chicago, and Northampton. It's been exciting to read for Small Press Distribution/

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Moe's, Small Press Traffic, Segue, and The Poetry Project. The curatorial programming has been so thoughtful, and I've met so many new poets and readers.

One of my favorite kinds of responses to my work takes the form of book swaps. I'm so excited for all the poetry that's come out in the last several years, and filling my shelves.

I do love sending people my books even without getting one in return, though. I live two blocks from an [Old-Fashioned Post Office](#). My partner, Stacy Szymaszek, wrote a poem that quotes Leila, our postal clerk, in her forthcoming book, *Famous Hermits*.

Please share something not obvious or known about the books.

There's nothing secret or hidden about either book. : *once teeth bones coral* : allowed me to write a [short essay](#) for Harriet on the Poetry Foundation website, and *why letter ellipses* led me to contribute a Woodland Pattern [Prompt Against Anxiety](#).

What are you working on now?

I'm writing translingual poems with Pangasinan words and phrases that involve creative homophonic/ homographonic translations and sound poetry. I write a little about it [here](#).

I also write what I consider to be more narrative poems whenever I get on a mountain. I'd like to write a book called *Hospitality*, in sincere tribute to the work and spirit of New York School poet, Barbara Guest. I'm thinking a lot about what scholar-activist [Joy James](#) has said about the mysterious forces at work for Black and working people "doing it anyway" — hustling to feed their children and seeing their loved ones in prison — amidst the multiple crises of pandemic, police brutality, unemployment, and homelessness. James says, "There's some beauty and there's something divine and that can't register in an algorithm."

Kimberly Alidio is the author of *why letter ellipses* (selva oscura), : *once teeth bones coral* : (Belladonna*), *a cell of falls* (Portable Press at Yo-Yo Labs), and *after projects the resound* (Black Radish). Recent poems are (or soon to be) in *Baest*, *The Tiny*, and *Pleiades*. Her prose on poetics and history appears in *Harriet*, *Woodland Pattern*, *Poetry Northwest*, *American Quarterly*, *Social Text*, and the essay collection, *Filipino Studies: Palimpsests of Nation and Diaspora*. Her website is [kimberlyalidio.com](#).

Posted by EILEEN at 3:33 PM

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