

THE ANTS

SAWAKO NAKAYASU

LES FIGURES
PRESS

“I KNOW HOW THESE ANTS FEEL...”

The Ants is a study not of, but through, ants. In a dashing sequence of prose pieces, Sawako Nakayasu takes the human to the level of the ant, and the ant to the level of the human. Prima facie, *The Ants* is a catalogue of insect observations and observations of insects. But the exposé of insect life humbles and disrupts the myopia that is human life, where experience is seen in its most raw and animal form, and human “nouveau-ambitious” and “free-thinking” lifestyles become estranged, uncovered, and humbled. Found in the soups of dumplings and remembered in childhood vignettes, these ants trail through what Nakayasu writes as the “industry of survival,” exploring interfaces of love, ambition, and strategy. The danger is not in sentiment, but rather, in a gash, a wall, an argument, an intention. Is it more lonely to be crushed into the core of a non-mechanical pencil, to be isolated in the safety of home, or to “find” “it” “all” at the very very last moment? *The Ants* is the distance, the break, the tenuous wilderness between exoskeleton and endoskeleton, and Nakayasu puts her finger on it, and it, and it.

The Ants
Sawako Nakayasu
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ABOUT SAWAKO NAKAYASU

SAWAKO NAKAYASU writes and translates poetry, and also occasionally creates performances and short films. Her most recent books are *The Ants* (Les Figs) and a translation of *The Collected Poems of Sagawa Chika* (Canarium Books, forthcoming 2014). Other books include *Texture Notes* (Letter Machine Editions, 2010), *Hurry Home Honey* (Burning Deck, 2009), and *Mouth: Eats Color—Sagawa Chika Translations, Anti-translations, & Originals*, which is a multilingual work of both original and translated poetry. She has received fellowships from the NEA and PEN, and her own work has been translated into Japanese, Norwegian, Swedish, Arabic, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

Les Figs is a nonprofit literary press dedicated to creating aesthetic conversations between readers, writers, and artists.

