

ZAZU DREAMS

Between the Scarab and the Dung Beetle

A Cautionary Fable for the Anthropocene Era

by Cara Judea Alhadeff

paintings by Micaela Amateau Amato



Zazu Dreams is a fable for adults, written as a children's narrative. A tale of environmental justice, a Sephardic Arab Jewish boy and his imaginary malamute husky traverse the globe on a humpback whale. Their adventures unfold as they witness contradictory human ecologies—experiencing symbiotic and contentious relationships between humans and the environment. Crossing temporal dimensions and international borders, past, present, and future overlap through phantasmagorical encounters with historical heroes like Jacques Cousteau, Spinoza, Rachel Carson, and ibn Sina, and 21st century villains like Nestlé, Merck, Exxon, and Monsanto—Big Pharma, Big Oil, and Agribusiness giants that stalk the planet.

For cross-generational audiences, *Zazu Dreams* includes lush illustrations and detailed endnotes (“The 21st Century Arcades Project”). Together, the narrative, images, and Arcades unravel the intersections between the sciences and humanities—global ecological extinction and cultural extinction of ethnic minorities. *Zazu Dreams* explores migration and transformation from waste to useful by-product—including oxic sludge to critical compost, desertification to oasis, cusp of extinction to restoration, body-phobia to biophilia. Interdependent relationships from the natural world coincide with the histories of diasporic peoples from Iberia, North Africa, and the Middle East. The mother-daughter artist-author team integrates two seemingly unrelated topics: Jewish and Arabic philosophies with consumer-convenience petro-culture. This cautionary fable incites audiences to question the vast implications of the vital yet precarious concept of “sustainability.”

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Acclaim for *Zazu Dreams* and Alhadeff's oeuvre:

“Impressive.” **Dr. NOAM CHOMSKY**, author of *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*

“Compelling.” **EVE ENSLER**, author of *The Vagina Monologues*

“Astonishing.” **PAUL HAWKEN**, author of *The Ecology of Commerce*

A “fascinating book. ... This is a real cosmic adventure—through space, time, and the human heart.”

BILL McKIBBEN, author of *The Comforting Whirlwind*

“*Zazu Dreams* is a fascinating story that launches a new genre of book called edutainment. Amazing Research!” **ARUN GANDHI**, Founder/President, M. K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence

Zazu Dreams...opens with the query, “Who needs imaginary monsters or giants or evil empires when corporations like Nestle and PepsiCo, Merck and Monsanto destroy everything in their path? ... *Zazu Dreams* challenges us with the notion that knowledge of evil, even for the very young, is the clearest path to good. From climate change to Big Oil, war to slavery, Zazu faces the worst of humanity, while simultaneously basking in the beauty that constantly amazes and surrounds, teaching that we must live in harmony with and as caretakers of this earth and all upon it.”

ANTONIA JUHASZ, author of *The Tyranny of Oil*.

“Every thought, word and action we put forth, no matter how tiny or huge, whether in the streets or in offices, underground or above, either hurts or helps the wave of prosperity to ensure a bright future for humanity, and for all life on this planet & beyond. *Zazu Dreams* is a beautiful example of keeping our work and our play focused on our most crucial mission, securing our survival and our freedom. Let every breath we take help that wave.” **GREGORY “SHKG / HUMPTY-HUMP” JACOBS**, *Digital Underground*



Dr. Cara Judea Alhadeff engages embodied feminist theory, publishing essays in philosophy, art, gender, ethnic, and cultural studies' journals and anthologies. Alhadeff has exhibited her photographs and performance videos internationally, and her work is in numerous public and private collections including MoMA Salzburg and SFMoMA. Her transdisciplinary book *Viscous Expectations: Justice, Vulnerability, The Ob-scene* (PSU Press, 2014) explores the intersections of eroticism, global corporatocracy, petroleum-parenting, and the pharma-addictive health industry. She is professor of Critical Philosophy at The Global Center for Advanced Studies (GCAS), and lives with her son, Zazu, in EcoVillage, Ithaca, New York. (www.carajudea.com)