

Zafar Anjum / March 26, 2015 / Authors, Poetry

The Lounge Chair Interview: 10 Questions with Jerrold Yam

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By Desmond Kon Zhicheng-Mingde



Jerrold Yam, poet, Singapore

Let's get down to brass tacks. Why do you write?

It's my attempt to unknot distractions and find intrinsic value.

Tell us about your most recent book or writing project. What were you trying to say or achieve with it?

For *Intruder* (Ethos Books, 2014) to intrude into bookshelves and have readers conclude for themselves.

Describe your writing aesthetic.

A one-night stand that unexpectedly leads to a serious relationship: brevity, tactility, emotion, surprise, continuity.

Who are your favorite authors?

Brevity: Louise Gluck. Tactility: Sharon Olds. Emotion: Philip Levine. Surprise and continuity: J.K. Rowling (for her boundlessly imaginative Harry Potter series).

What's the most challenging piece of writing you've attempted? Tell us why.

The one that is closest to autobiography. I'm not sure which it is; neither do I want to find out!

What's your idea of bliss?

Not merely doing what I love, but reconceptualising and abandoning the obsession for needing to do anything at all.

What makes you angry, and I mean all-out-smash-the-china raving mad?

Illogical thought, which is usually a symptom of unconscious bias-hugging.

What book/s would you take with you on a three-month retreat in the boondocks?

The Bible.

Your house is burning down. What's the most important thing you'd want to take with you?

My video camera – to document footage for a potential insurance claim.

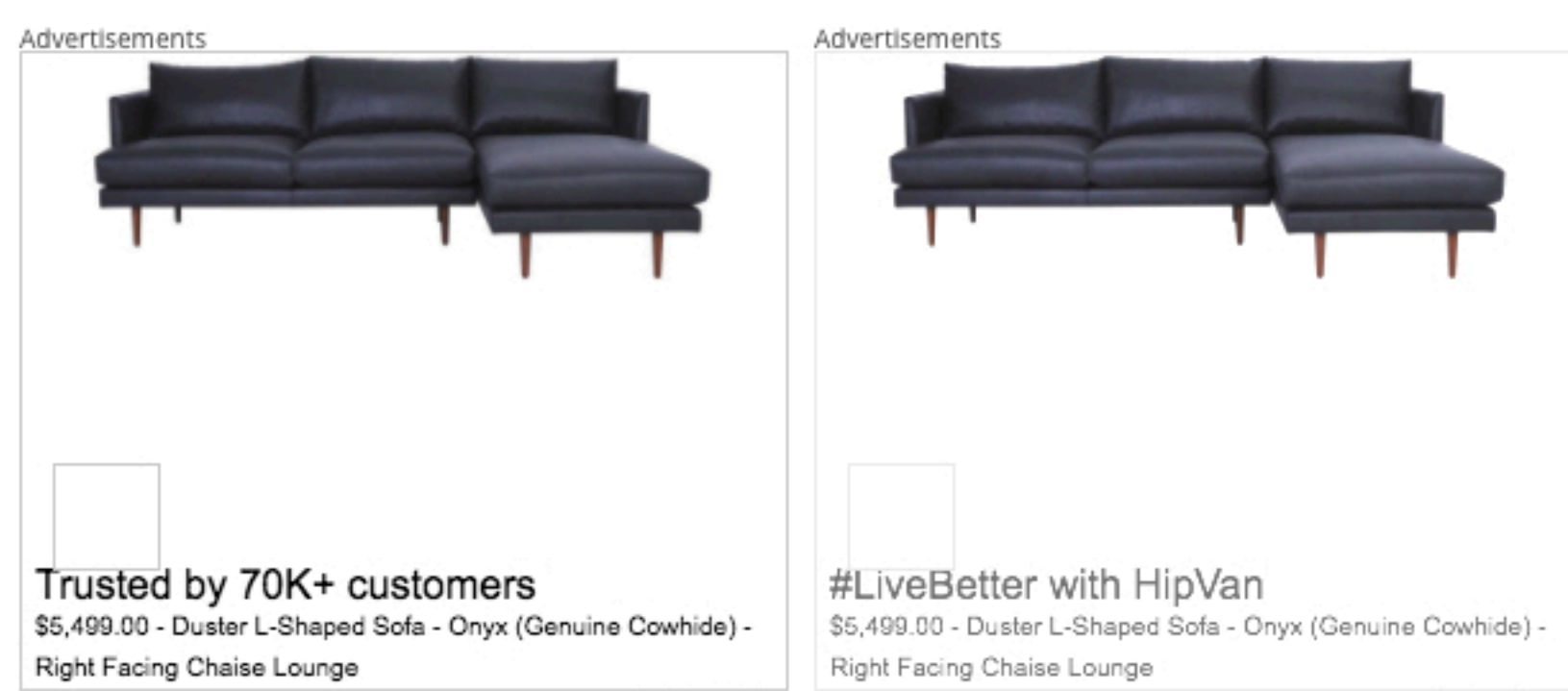
Describe your life philosophy. In a sentence.

The truths we know are not, and can never be, the only truths.

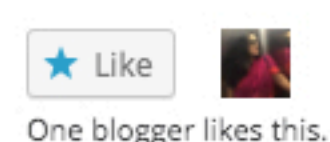
Read poems by Jerrold Yam

Author Bio:

Jerrold Yam (b. 1991) is the author of three poetry collections, *Intruder* (Ethos Books, 2014), *Scattered Vertebrae* (Math Paper Press, 2013) and *Chasing Curtained Suns* (Math Paper Press, 2012). He has received poetry awards from the British Council, National University of Singapore and Poetry Book Society, and has been nominated for the Forward and Pushcart Prizes. He was featured at the Ledbury Poetry Festival (2013), London Book Fair (2013) and Singapore Writers Festival (2013, 2014), and is named by the National Arts Council as one of the "New Voices of Singapore 2014".



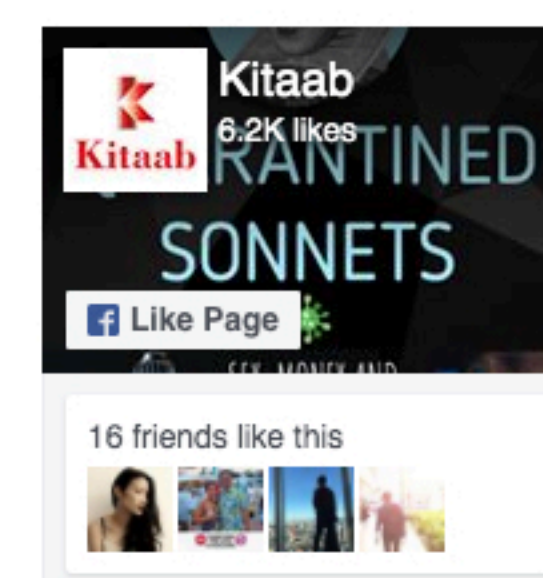
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