

Laurie Anderson "The Ouija Board"

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In 1978, I spent some time in California in the fall, looking for a quiet place to live. I finally found what seemed to be the perfect apartment. But the night after I moved in I heard a tremendous pounding sound. As it turned out, I had moved in right above a Hawaiian hallow log drum school. Every other night, it was converted into a hula school with a live band of six Hawaiian guitars.

I decided to soundproof my place but I didn't hang the door very well and all the sounds kept drifting in. About this time, like a lot of New Yorkers who find themselves on the West Coast, I got interested in various aspects of California's versions of the occult. We would sit around at night when the Santa Anna winds howled outside, and ask questions to the ouija board. I found out a lot of information on my past 9,361 human lives on this planet. My first life was as a raccoon.

And then you were a cow. And then you were a bird. And then you were a hat, spelled the ouija.

"a hat?" We couldn't figure it out. Finally we guessed that the feathers from the bird had been made into a hat. Is this true?

Yes, spelled the ouija. Hat counts as half life.

And then?

Hundreds and hundreds of rave eyes.

Now this is apparently my first life as a woman, which should explain quite a few things. Eventually though, the ouija's written words seemed to take a kind of personality, a kind of a voice. Finally we began to ask the board if the ouija would be willing to appear to us in some other form.

Forget it, forget it, forget it, forget it, forget it, forget it.

The ouija seemed like it was about to crash. Please, please, what can we do ###060318 now so you will show yourself to us in some other manifestation?

ÃfÂçâ, -ÃçÂ€Â[] You should lurk. You should L, U, R, K. Lurk.

No, I never really figured out how to lurk in my own place, even though it was only a rented place, but I did find myself looking over my shoulder a lot. And every sound that drifted in seemed to be a version of this phantom voice whispering in a code that I could never crack.

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