Japanese, German, Dutch, Norwegian, and Italian. Her work has earned several awards, including the Boston Book Review Award, the Lambda Literary Award, a Pacific Northwest Booksellers Award, two Washington State Book Awards, and a Stranger Genius Award. She has also earned grants or fellowships to MacDowell, Yaddo, the Millay Colony, Hawthornden Castle, and the Breneman-Jaech Foundation. Her altered texts and installations have been exhibited in the Frye Art Museum, Hedreen Gallery, Arizona Center for Poetry, Simon Fraser Gallery, and Shoreline Art Gallery. Her work has appeared in magazines and journals in the USA, UK, and Japan.

We met with Rebecca Brown in her cozy Seattle writing studio, surrounded by books, windows, and endearing mementos, like her Edgar Allan Poe statuette, on a sunny Saturday morning. She showed us photos, gave us books to hold, and invited us into a little slice of her life while we talked about queer literature, collaboration, invisible illness, faith and rituals, violence, and Julian of Norwich.

LEONA VANDER MOLEN

You often write about experiences in fiction that are very close to home. I was wondering how you decide what genre you bring memories into and how that works when you're writing it.

REBECCA BROWN

I think it's mostly not a decision. Figuring out what something is in terms of genre or even in terms of theme for me comes pretty late in the process or retrospectively. But certainly in my earlier books there's this urge to write something, wondering, what is this, and sort of figuring out the shape it's going to take. My book of essays, *American Romance*—most all of those pieces someone asked me to write about something. There's a piece in there called "My Western" about western movies and my father. Someone said, "Write some-thing about movies or write something about the way movies see us." So I started writing about westerns, and it was like, oh wait a minute, I'm not just writing about westerns, I'm writing about my dad. So that came in gradually. I did a talk about E. M. Forster somewhere