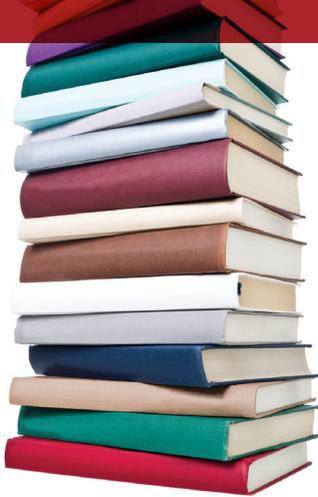# REVIEWS

HARDY ANIMAL

by Laura Dannequin
Dance performance

Limited edition fine-print bookwork • 57 pages
165x245mm • Designed with Jono Lewarne of City Edition Studio
www.lauradannequin.co.uk

£18.00

'A goodbye letter to a former self...'

In this beautifully-designed book complementing her dance performance, Laura Dannequin utilises her experiences as a dancer with chronic pain to highlight the effects the condition can have on one's life. Laura recalls what it was like to be passed from doctor to doctor and the unnecessary stress this adds for the person experiencing chronic pain. She also explains all the barriers she has overcome whilst living with pain.

Hardy Animal is a very innovative way of raising the profile of chronic pain. I would recommend this book to others dealing with chronic pain and will explore the techniques it describes to help manage my own pain. Chronic pain is a sensitive subject, however, Laura strikes a great balance by keeping the book light hearted but making sure she emphasises what it is really like living with chronic pain.

Erin McGuigan

Editor's note: I came across *Hardy Animal* completely by chance this August at Edinburgh Festival's Forest Fringe. In near darkness a woman stood on stage, shoulders hunched and head bowed, as a voice played over the speaker system drew us into the mind of the performer. At first the words expressed nervousness before an opening night, but gradually stage fright turned to the confusion and grief caused by developing chronic pain – pain which she slowly revealed in the cramped movements of an outwardly powerful dancer's physique. As music built up to a crescendo and her arms opened wide, we watched transfixed as she danced out the physical and emotional torment of chronic pain.

TG

Performance photograph: Paul Blakemore.

Laura Dannequin is set to perform Hardy Animal next year at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre and the Royal Hospital of Rheumatic Diseases. We will announce the performance dates on social media.