

PRESS AND MEDIA KIT



**DAY AFTER THE  
WASTE LAND**

A reimagining of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*.

**Words by Will Averill  
Artwork by Kent Smith**

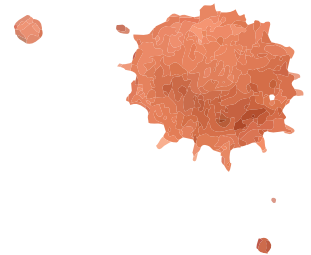
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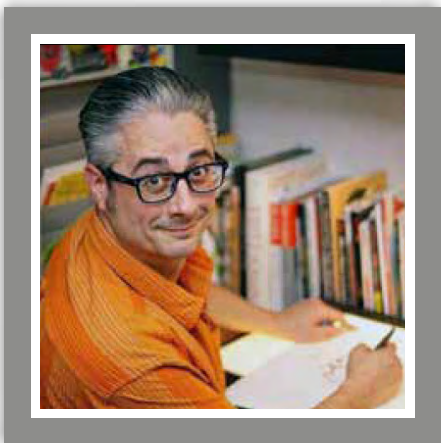
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# About the Author and Illustrator



**WILL AVERILL** is a writer, director, and nonprofit professional based in Lawrence, Kansas, with a background bridging the arts and community work. A graduate of the University of Kansas with a degree in Theatre, Will creates original works for state, radio, and screen—often with a healthy dose of humor, heart, and the occasional foul-mouthed puppet. You can find examples of Will’s work at [Playscripts.com](http://Playscripts.com) and [lfkwasteland.com](http://lfkwasteland.com).



**KENT SMITH (SMITTY)** is a dimension-jumping illustrator, designer, sculptor, teacher, problem-maker, problem-solver, and magic-man sharing grand visions from afar. His work can be found on Star Wars toys, Free State beer labels, custom masks, huge woodblocks and a menagerie of media to solve problems. Examples of Smitty’s work can be found his on at [Smittytown.com](http://Smittytown.com) or on his [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.



# About the Book

Equal parts poem and pop-art collage, *Day After the Waste Land* explores loss, identity, and belonging through the rhythms of Midwest life, capturing the strange beauty of a city that is at once ordinary and mythical. This is a striking remix of a timeless masterpiece—inviting readers to discover their own fragments in its pages.

In *Day After the Waste Land*, Will Averill transforms T.S. Eliot's modernist epic into a Midwestern fever dream. Lawrence, Kansas becomes the new "Unreal City"—where basketball courts replace chessboards, dive bars hum with verse, and local legends collide with pop culture.

Not parody but echo, this is Eliot refracted through the cracked mirror of small-town America: part homage, part reinvention. With annotations, wit, and razor-sharp imagery, Averill stitches fragments of history, culture, and memory into something both intimate and universal.



## Publishing Details

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# Praise For *Day After the Waste Land*

“Will Averill’s beloved hometown of Lawrence, Kansas sets the stage for his reimagining of T.S. Eliot’s poem, riffing on the poet’s themes of disillusionment and cultural fragmentation with acerbic wit, obscure histories, and unflinching reflections on the city’s past and present. Paired with Kent Smith’s lively, color and black-and-white on-location sketches, the book is a tonal paradox—part love letter, part fever dream—infused with the sour-sweet stink of a barroom hangover. A must-have for any pop culture connoisseur of this iconic college town.”

— **STJ. Stephen T. Johnson**, artist and author of original award-winning children’s books such as “Alphabet City,” a Caldecott Honor Book and New York Times Best Illustrated book of the year

“Will Averill’s *The Day After the Waste Land* combines a comic’s use of satire to highlight hypocrisy with an insider’s love and knowledge about his beloved hometown of Lawrence, Kansas. With an excellent introduction, embedded footnotes and marginal asides, illustrated by Kent Smith’s brilliant artwork, this graphic epic is a gem.”

— **Jeffery Ann Goudie**, award-winning freelance writer and book critic

Lawrence, Kansas, worthy of the final days of Williams S. Burroughs, is a strange, singular, and wonderful place—haunted by history and hoops. In *Day After the Waste Land*, Will Averill delivers on the impossible: an ode to Lawrence that is so masterfully observed, hilariously sharp, profanely loving, and devastatingly lyrical, you will come to know it to its complicated and contradictory soul within the space of its pages.

— **Jeff Zentner**, award-winning author of *The Serpent King*

...a pitch-perfect tribute to Andy Morton, and a skeleton key to Lawrence townie references overheard at the Jet Lag. Profane, but undeniably good-hearted...and full of love (and fond exasperation) for both Eliot and Lawrence (censored) Kansas.”

— **Laura Lorson**, radio broadcaster and T.S. Eliot stan

Nothing haunts a townie like bars and restaurants gone and remembered, friends loved and lost, old history turned to ceremony—and Averill’s poem is beautifully haunted, even as it’s laugh-out-loud funny. It is also incisive about Lawrence’s contradictions and looks at the many different layers of time and history shading our city, examining—with love—the good and bad that make this such a singular place to live. Kent Smith’s drawings elevate the whole operation greatly, adding so much texture and detail to a work already vivid.”

— **Chance Dibben**, writer, photographer, music-maker, co-presenter of *VOLTA: A Replay Reading Series*

At once a haunting pilgrimage through capricious memory and detached nostalgia, and a meticulous lens on the stark beauty of quotidian life.”

— **Andy Bennett**, poet

Will Averill, inspired by T.S. Eliot’s “The Waste Land,” goes well beyond parody and reworking to create a masterfully-written poem, a completely imagined world, from London to Lawrence, from 1922 to 2025. Wonderfully illustrated and playfully annotated, *Day After the Waste Land* is reverent and irreverent, entertaining and unsavory (at times), and always enlightening. Here’s a “LAST CALL”: buy this book, drink it in, find your way home!

— **Tom Averill**, Writer-in-residence/Professor of English Emeritus at Washburn University of Topeka, and author of *What Kansas Means to Me: Twentieth Century Writers on the Sunflower State*

