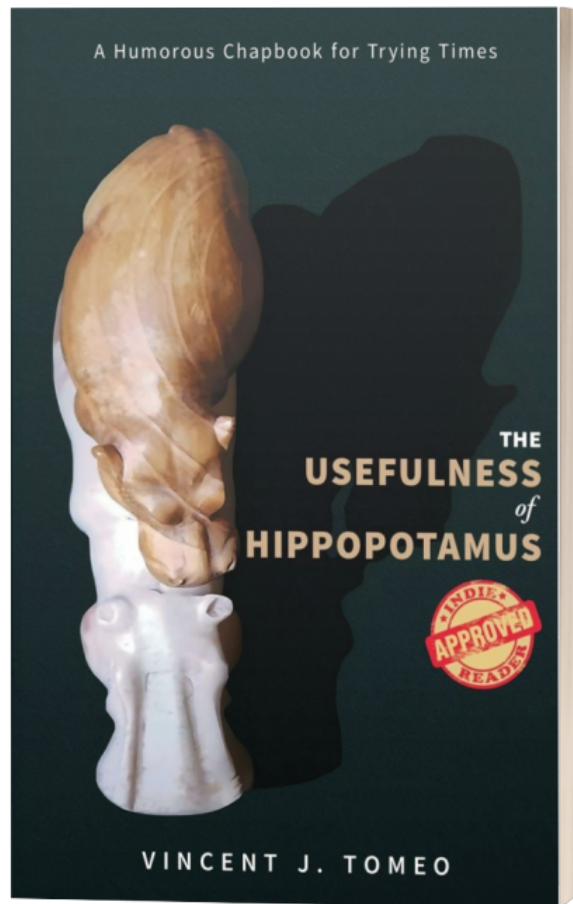


The Usefulness of Hippopotamus Brings Humor and Hope During Life's Most Difficult Moments

Vincent J. Tomeo's chapbook highlights the healing power of laughter and resilience



Los Angeles, California Apr 23, 2026 (Issuewire.com) - [The Usefulness of Hippopotamus: A Humorous Chapbook for Trying Times](#) by Vincent J. Tomeo offers readers a refreshing reminder that humor can be a powerful source of comfort and strength during challenging moments. Through playful reflections and lighthearted poetry, Tomeo celebrates laughter as a vital force that helps ease anxiety, brighten difficult days, and restore a sense of balance in life.

The chapbook was born from a simple moment of imagination when the author recalled the whimsical dancing hippopotamus from Disney's *Fantasia*. That humorous image sparked a poem, which eventually grew into a collection exploring the joy that can be found even in the most unexpected places. Tomeo's work reflects the belief that humor is more than entertainment; it can be a form of emotional medicine.

The project also emerged during a particularly difficult time in the author's life. While the world faced the

uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, Tomeo was simultaneously battling bladder cancer. Instead of allowing fear or despair to take hold, he turned toward humor, beauty, and creativity. The result is a chapbook that captures moments of wit, reflection, and optimism while demonstrating how laughter can provide relief during periods of personal and global uncertainty.

Through its engaging tone and imaginative spirit, *The Usefulness of Hippopotamus* encourages readers to rediscover joy in everyday life. Tomeo's playful perspective reveals that humor can transform ordinary experiences into moments of inspiration and healing.

[Vincent J. Tomeo](#) is an accomplished poet, archivist, historian, and community activist who taught American history in New York City public schools for 36 years. With more than 1,100 published works and over 100 literary awards, his writing continues to reach readers around the world.

Featured as part of the Olympus Story House display during the LA Times Festival of Books 2026, held on April 18–19, 2026, at the University of Southern California, *The Usefulness of Hippopotamus: A Humorous Chapbook for Trying Times* remains a meaningful example of how poetry can offer both laughter and strength in difficult times.

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