Wooden Teeth is an annual publication and is open to all members of The George Washington University community. Undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, alumni, and staff are encouraged to submit their poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and art. For more information or to submit, please contact:

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You may submit five literary works and five pieces of artwork each semester.
table of contents

poetry

joshua mays 2  Library
michael ratcliffe 3  Still Life With Daffodils
emily venezky 5  God’s Country
michael ratcliffe 7  Haircuts and Hipsters
avi nerenberg 8  Grind
tanya thomas 12  All Welfare Statements That Are Mostly True

nicole rojo 14  Utensils
ariana macmartin 17  Crème
lauren sutherland 20  6 Sea Gull Drive
toni horns sullivan 23  When the Smoke Clears
muzhda sabira 24  Peonies and Butterflies at the Renwick
ghafoori 25  Softly (For Dr. V)

lauren danielowski 28  Flashframe
tara kosowski 32  David
emily venezky 33  Tax Season
muzhda sabira 36  Copies
ghafoori 37  Bicycling Poem #7
toni horns sullivan 38  One-on-One
michael ratcliffe 42  Dad and the Devil
ellara chumashkaeva 45  These Days
lauren sutherland 46  sonnet xvii
zoe dorau
stephanie gemmel
prose poetry

franco caputo 10  Lourdes
  cali ragland 18  A Postcard From the Waldorf Astoria Hotel
franco caputo 30  Odocoileus virginianus leviticus
  tara kosowski 40  As My Boyfriend Asks for My Opinion on the MeToo Movement
  julia weiss 43  he checked boxes I didn’t know I had drawn

fiction

rachel walsh 6  The Cut
  elliot swain 15  Fist Bump
  elliot swain 34  The Working Week

art

  morgan richmeier 4  Liminality
  morgan richmeier 9  Bargaining
  michaelangelo rodriguez 13 Untitled
  morgan richmeier 16  Cotton Candy
  morgan richmeier 21  Curtain
  areej itayum 22  Untitled
  sophie rickless 26  Zulu 1
  sophie rickless 27  Zulu 2
  sophie rickless 31  Zulu 3
  michaelangelo rodriguez 35  Untitled
  morgan richmeier 39  Something Out West
  areej itayum 44  Untitled

cover art: areej itayum Laundry Day
joshua mays *Library*

Standing

In shelves of printed light
Crammed with beauty
Nostrils thick with shaven forest
Knowledge overwhelming
Curiosity ever-burrowing

It's going to be
alright.
I move about the kitchen in rote patterns. Fix a sandwich, select an apple for lunch. For breakfast, the usual: a glass of juice, oatmeal and dried cranberries.

Though I’ve put food in his bowl, the cat cries from room to room. In the distance, the drone of traffic on the interstate. The daily commute.

On the table, my satchel with work I brought home, a book I won’t read at lunch, and notes about a dream in which my ancestors review the story of my life, each comparing it to their own.

And, in a vase, daffodils, rising like the morning sun.
emily venezky *God's Country*

Our four-wheeler almost slips over the canyon’s edge, racing down Baja’s dusty roads.

The horizon becomes flat, only the cirio’s long limbs reaching out to greet us.

His eyes are on the road ahead, guiding us to Bahía de los Ángeles as he promises me over and over,

“This is god’s country.”

We speed past old adobe and roadside shrines for old wrecked semis.

We finally reach the gulf and both exhale slowly as we speed into tropical water.
In this catch-all memory of mine, I can see the hair salon perfectly, the mirror reflecting my portrait dulled with dry streaks of cleaning spray, the comb cluttered countertop, the beaming bulb lights, harsh and foreboding, piling on top of each other along the square frame of the mirror, the chemically sanitized shears, the stacked blue pots of hair gel, casting a shadow against the wall as they face the artificial interior light. I can even step away and see tiny Rachel on her towering booster seat, her shoulders biting her earlobes, breathing in familiar scents—hairspray, keratin oil, coconut shampoo, her own sweat—and tuning into the clicking harmony of the place, the snipping, shaving, clipping of hair, brooms shuffling, hair dye mixing, the rushes and surges of sink water, tinfoil crinkling, the charming chatter of old ladies and their stylists’ from neighboring chairs, the labored breathing and aggressive humming of hairdryers that fly in suspension over each station and pour onto scalps and necks inflaming, electric heat.
Haircuts and Hipsters

The photo of Jimmie Foxx and The Babe has kept its place next to the register for at least the 40 years I’ve gone to Bart’s. And the green-tinted portrait of an Italian-looking woman with just a hint of cleavage plunging toward the bottom of the frame still hangs on the wall next to the barbers’ chairs, where she has drawn my eye since junior high.

So, it was a surprise when I dreamed that Bart had paneled the walls in shiplap and took up half the shop with a bar where hipsters drank Manhattans. Jimmie and The Babe and the olive-toned woman were gone. So was the Unbreakable Combs display, replaced by beard grooming kits. There was nothing I could do but order a micro-distillery rye, which I sipped while I grew a beard, then slipped on a flannel shirt and said to my barber, Joe, give me a high and tight.
avi nerenberg *Grind*

My father tells me
the flesh of his mouth
has long capitulated
ivories for implants

> Perhaps it was the parakeet
> whom I let pick at my teeth
> it died young

Even so
he asks I sleep
with rubber between my teeth.
morgan richmeier Bargaining
Are you sure?

I come out to my mother two days after Christmas, while we are organizing some of our decorations. It isn’t news to her; I am flamboyant enough for it to already be abundantly clear. Actually, she asks—not for the first time—because I mention that I own a pink pillow.

Oh boy, do I have to worry about you?

no you don’t

What, are you ? You can tell me.

you know what

What?

yes

Yes? Yes you’re ?

yes i am

I cry on her shoulder for some time while she rubs my back and tells me you know we don’t care. But it still feels like a bit deal to me. Standing there, surrounded by nutcrackers and garland, I feel God in my spine.

It takes my mother some time to get used to all of the practical aspects.

I guess you won’t give me grandchildren then.

we’ve been over this

What?

I still can and I still want to

Yeah, but—

no, mom i can

I wonder how I can explain it to her in a framework she’d understand. Maybe I should read the Bible and find an allegory to present her with or find/make up some superstition that says something positive about gay men having children. She’s not against it; she just doesn’t understand it. I’ve tried to relate to her before, when I first attempted to come out. It wound up becoming a conversation in which I explained to her that yes adoption is a valid way to have children. A week later, both of us drunk on martinis, she said no, I don’t think you get it. I want grandchildren. I want the penis to go into the vagina.
Later that day,
  
  Don’t get mad at me,
  but I just want you to keep an open mind.
  
  You’ll never know who you’ll find and fall in love with; it could be a man or a woman.

mom trust me
  
  Well, lots of people change their minds.
  Don’t get mad at me.

i will if you say things like that
  
  I can’t speak my mind sometimes?

not if you say things like that

no you cant

no you cant

I think of my mother’s coworker and close friend. About year ago, a few months after they’d met, Bernadette came to my mother crying, I need to tell you something. My mother assumed breast cancer. No, she said, I have to tell you. I’m .

Oh, my mother laughed, you’re a lesbo?

I wonder if it bothered her. Sometime later, when Bernadette came over with her girlfriend, I tried not to make eye contact with her. I figured that we’d establish some sort of mental dialogue, and that we’d list out our secret grievances against my well-meaning but ill-advised mother.

A few months later, Bernadette cheated on her girlfriend with a man.

yes i’m sure
60% of people receiving food stamps are employed.
Your mother grew a family in a desert
knowing some of her seeds wouldn’t sprout.
27% of Americans think poor people are lazy.
She rode the moon, never sleeping,
but kissed your dreams before bed.
The American Dream can be reached with $23,050 per year.
She took night classes, but getting better at math
didn’t help the nightmares she had about numbers.
Rent costs 1/3 of income.
She cried over your prom dress,
could never dry off your flooded home.
60% of people receiving food stamps are employed.
She never spent them on lobster.
She put cup of noodles in your lunchbox
and they tasted like unpaid bills.
Tasted like your childhood,
like dead seeds.
Spoon me
like how you make your pasta dance
between your fingers when the spoon and fork meet.
Cradle me into a cocoon so that,
when you wake up the next morning and see the hues of my wings,
you'll know you had me dancing too.

Just know that I don't need a spoon to eat my pasta.
I'll still wake up with the same tattoo I've had since I was two.
You fist-bump your friend Chris and your fists stick together and slowly pull apart in strands like hot pizza. Inside one of the strands is a tiny city, a vibrant musical city like Santiago or New Orleans. In this city, children gather every evening, antsy rooster in lap, to hear tell of the latest Theory of Moon Air expounded by the Night Guru. Mama Ratcabinet, manning the Foot-Operated Hand Loom, thumps out boundless spans of lasagna that twist and spiral like DNA. Bloodless coups coordinated by one of the color-coded Vanguard Parties are negotiated in unlit staircases behind the curiosity shop. They always result in the sitting prince’s voluntary retirement to the countryside and the instatement of an identical new prince. All the shops in the city are shuttered when a baby is born, and each business frantically solicits the new mother to christen her kin in its name. This is a city where all human affairs are subordinated to whimsy and ceremony. A city where the most vigorous laborer is the taxidermist. A city where lawyers swoop over rolling hills in bejeweled shopping carts, giving oral arguments over horns. A stack of calligraphed petitions for new holidays sits in the town square, pierced together with an oversized novelty toothpick. Nicodermus Pouch sticks his petition on the tip and shimmies it down the staff gingerly, still rusty on his new suede stilts. His petition calls for a weekly tribute to the six mysterious men who, amid a thorny runoff election, first brought the city its now-bustling frog and toad population. He dismounts successfully. Recognizing his feat, his friend Chris extends a fist, which is bumped. Around here, it is a method for good hygiene. After all, the water in this city is plum poisoned through!
morgan richmeier Cotton Candy
Our infatuation was like crème
Plopped on a prepackaged pastry
Ephemeral and fleeting
Dripping and messy
Fresh out the tin
Spread with care and painfully thin

Our lust was like claws
Draped on a dinner dish
Unfettered and wild
Ornery and scarlet
Previously frozen, now thawed
Cracked open from a fragile façade

Our love was like clover honey
Layered on a lemon loaf
Saccharine and pure
Radiant and good
Consumed with capricious brevity
Its faint taste, a feigned reverie
“We arrived to the beautiful lobby and were assigned a room miles away through corridors and multiple elevators. When we finally got to our room the grandeur of the lobby was a distant memory. Tacky, cracked fittings in the bathroom, broken power points and a dusty, tired looking room miles from the lobby were a massive disappointment.” - Katie M, Perth, Australia

“Glad to have stayed here. Found the lobby a bit dark and overbearing for my taste tho.” - wkdsdenn, Chicago, Illinois

“Huge place, great bartenders. The bed wasn’t as good as it should have been. Room was a little cold, lovely grand place tho. A bit too “old America” perhaps for me. Lots of OAP’s on dates here, no action for a younger man.” - kadirvader, Dublin, Ireland

Our revered guests,

Have you ever seen a decent fucking piece of art in your life?
Ahem.

It pains me to hear that your stay in my gilded innards was not perfect.

We are glad to hear that you found some appreciation (despite its dark and overbearing nature) of perhaps one of my most famous fixtures, my golden belly: the grand, art-deco style lobby with its ornate ceilings, silver and gold trim, marble columns, and carved clock. I am ashamed that this feat of engineering and glamour that has been attracting society’s elite and appreciators of fine art and architecture (two categories you clearly fall within) for nearly a century is too old-fashioned for your taste. We are surprised and sorry to hear that the palacial dream of my magnificent center is not the ideal romantic location for a younger man to receive action.
As your stay with us was not ideal, we would like to invite you to return. Upon your arrival, we would like to encourage you to look closely and marvel at the miles of corridors to your room. Take your time walking through my lavishly carpeted veins. If you survive this perilous trek (and god forbid have to carry your coat on the way), please take your time in enjoying the amenities and comforts your room provides.

Please inspect your dusty, tired looking room closely: look at the slight cracks in the trim, let your eyes traverse across the patterns of water marked ripples in the bathroom behind the door, and allow your to fingers fall upon the edges of peeled wallpaper behind the bed. Among the shimmering folds of curtains and the spacious floors of the bathroom, you may need your reading glasses to appreciate this archive of history.

As you make your way down to dinner, I encourage you to bump into the ghosts haunting my throat.

If you can, please stay until Sunday for brunch. I hope the world class dining of a global lunch and countless arrays of historic confections is not too blasé for your tastes.

What the hell more do you want?
Excuse me.

Sincerely,
The Waldorf Astoria Hotel,
New York City, NY
Your mother found her crucifix, dull from a layer
    of black ash, at the foot of the stairs. She took it

as a blessing and, two days after I got the call
    that the house was going down, I was inclined to believe her.

The fire ate all its hot fingers touched.
    Melted siding, black spires of wood, and heat-shattered

windows frame the front door still hanging on singed
    hinges. It is the same door that I had shuddered in front of,

fingers curling against sweaty palms, when
    our faces were still round with sixteen-year-old innocence.

Where your family’s piano had stood, smoldering
    pillars stack like pick-up sticks. Where our friends played

Kings in the kitchen, drunk on a few mouthfuls
    of wine, metal warps into gruesome shapes.

Where the lagoon licked its tongue against the dock,
    sunlight streams unimpeded in absence of the home.

We had stood there along the water, that same sixteen-year-old
    day, and hid our lanky bodies—innocuous longings—under the salt.

I don’t think of the water red with heat, or of your sister
    clutching the baby to her chest, or the singed hairs of your necks.

After the fire, the cops asked if you had smoked a cigarette
    by the trashcans, or the dry winter grass, as if you had lit up

with the hopes of it being your last. As if the sound
    of our letters becoming kindling had not been a death already.
morgan richmeier Curtain
It came in a surprise in the quiet room.
   A song in the midst of catatonic souls.

I looked to see who could produce such a phenomenon.
Her face was hidden but the melody alone told me her beauty.

I could see his face enraptured by such a sweet sound- a siren’s call.

I too aimed for his heart- kamikaze.
But when the smoke cleared it was obvious who had won.
muzhda sabira ghafoori

Peonies and Butterflies at the Renwick

After Steven Young Lee

It had been the cracking
of mother’s forehead
against the hotel wall,
that affixed it once
and forever against the stillness:
she would no longer be my father’s graveyard.

But now she says she loves rainy days,
because the cloak of its darkness
hides her perfectly.

It is not damage
that makes a vase hopeless,
but the collapsing into itself
in the making
that forges its kismet
against the heat.
If I had learned of this many years ago,
that a shell of a vase
is a vase all the same,
I would tell her:
do not think
or pray over the damage,
pay attention to how things burn.
I see you in cactus flowers
they soften the sharpness of needles, and
you were always creating pockets
of tenderness among us

To be the stone under your gentle hand
reverent, like you could feel the full weight
of history under your skin
but still light, because
you trusted the power of that which you could not see
(and of women)

Love is unspoken
you said once,
but I didn’t believe you
until you put your hand on a terracotta horse
and something like the sun rose up in your face.

I finally believed,
Love
was an act more than a word.

In your absence,
I dance with no shoes on,
and my failures melt into experiences that are
sweet like frosted cakes with pink icing (your favorite)

Today,
I carry my heart in my belly
(it is warm there)
and it trembles with the weight of the universe
that you have built for me.
Note: These photographs were taken at the Mardi Gras parade of the Zulu Social Aid & Pleasure Club, a krewe that up until recently admitted only African-Americans as members. One of their long-standing traditions is to paint on “black-face” as part of their costumes, which is often regarded controversially. These pictures, rather than making a political statement or offering criticism, were captured with the intention of displaying the candid beauty and intensity shown by these participants.
sophie rickless Zulu 1 & 2
Between explaining how her last bake never rose and instructing me to add more butter, she brushes a drop of honey off the slope of my cheek and sucks it off the pink of her thumb.

I try to memorize the movement of her hands as they flicker across our frame

[the way she cracks an egg so gently, like she were cutting film]

because she doesn’t like to use recipes, prefers an alchemy of lavender and flour.

[or like earlier, when I caught her half moon face watching me from across the mezzanine, before she smiled and looked away]

I try to imagine the composition of my face, turning from hers to hide the flush of cheap wine that I swish through the gaps in my teeth and wonder what it’d look like to smile right now: my mouth purpled and ready.

[each night of the festival, underneath pearlescent movie screens, I pinch the baby hairs that prickle in the space above my skirt while the violins moan and the French actress reads her lines well; my heartbeat in my throat, I gasp for fire in a crowded theater]
Close up of my curling upper lip -
when I show that one top tooth, the one my brother broke -
of the pattern in every parquet floor.
   [walking along the Vltava River
    our contours are imperceptible,
    fragile, like I could breathe
    her negative space.
    I am tumbling
    over her feet again,
    falling into a dollop
    of corduroy and wool;
    the streets, the dancing houses,
    they eat me]
Long pause on the looping cartilage of her right ear
as opening credits roll
and our bake begins to burn,
the smoke rising like jellyfish
in their viscous dance.
   [scarves, socks, flour, sugar,
    hairpins, kitchen table
    and all she said was:
    you were my favorite film]
Flash forward to the next morning
when she will wrap the leftovers
in a paper napkin and call a taxi,
her German pouring over me like honey.
I will find it, two days later at the airport,
walnuts falling out of my purse.
I
You look good in a baseball cap. Dark, curly hair, pressed flat by sweaty canvas. But it doesn’t bother you at all. It shouldn’t. Because you’re not like that; you’re precise and conforming and
right. Don’t say otherwise. No fanfare or ceremony or pride—don’t ask, don’t tell. Wear flannels, and acid-wash jeans. Walk with your shoulders slumped and your wrists taught. With a quiet swagger. A large man intentionally bumps into you on the street; don’t ignore it. Flash your teeth. Make yourself large. Show him you’re also a man. That he mistook you. What’s your problem, say. You got beef? He doesn’t, he will realize. He mistook you. Recognize why he did. Was it your hips? Were they out of line? I told you not to wear a pink t-shirt. It’s conspicuous. Put it away.

Hide it deep, deep behind the ill-fitting suits, graphic tees and boat shoes. They shouldn’t come out. You shouldn’t either. You’re not like that. We can put this away, tucked in an unnatural past.

II
Late fall prancing along. Dry leaves crunch under your cloven hooves. Mating season has been unmisted by love and dislike, and dusted with early snow, you’ve grown weary. ______________

__________________Your head is getting heavy. You are thirsty. You spot a little brook. You put your lips down to the cool, clear water. ________________________________

Drink. Look up and see him, squatted against a snowy oak. Through layers of orange and camo, he holds a loaded, pointed rifle. His unplucked brows furrow and he frowns. ______________

You see him count your points. Four. ________________________________A bullet slips between your ribs, ripping through hair & skin, lung, bone and marrow. You fall, heavy.

____________________________________________________Laying on the wet ground, I ask you: do you give a fuck what kind of pants the son of a bitch who shot you was wearing?
I was a needy three year old. Always asking him questions, waiting five seconds, and then asking what was taking him so long. “I’m thinking” That big bald head, it never stopped thinking. He loved Hemingway.

But at thirteen, I told him “The Old Man and the Sea,” was the most boring book I’d ever read. He found the drama in those simple phrases, and fell asleep when we went to see Cirque de Soleil.

I sat silently in his studio at ten, watching him trace shadows and fill empty space. “Dad, you’re more of a… visual learner, I think”
It is, perhaps, justified in mother’s mind that I should be burdened with it, as the bells of urgency begin to chime in February. The timing, which like an illness or an unwanted aunt, comes at the least opportune season, when every block on the calendar is filled with birthdays, funerals, and the things in between. Still, she carried me beneath her chest, and stumbled along pages in storybooks; words dredged in a foreign tongue so that we may find a language together. If it is an annual hardship it’s quietly borne, as first-generations through years of filling out field-trip forms, or weightier papers, those of hospitalization and divorce, are both humbled and swallowed by the deed. This year the beast will be tackled on the Spring Equinox, our New Year, as unseasonable snow blankets the ground and turns to slush. My house, devoid of cultural celebration like grandmother’s sweet seven-fruit dessert or the wheatgrass that graces the table, echoes quietly the remembered phrase about death and taxes, as the laptop chimes on and the papers are unfurled.
The plastic flap flung open and a man squeezed through. “Heirloom Bail Bonds and General Services. How may I begin to assist you moving forward?” His head looked like a walnut with googly-eyes. On the ledge below a shivering lady emptied a manila folder of seven or eight little tongues. “This is all that is left of my orphanage,” she whispered. She was as thin as burnt asparagus. The man dipped back into the office and the flap swung shut. Then he got down on all fours and pulled a lever and the ledge propelled the tongues into the office and snapped back into place. Tongues were strewn all over.

Tongues were beginning to develop. Tongues were acquiring new faculties. Tongues were achieving self-actualization. Tongues could see the molecular structure of things. “These little guys are a piece of work,” the man wrote on a Costco receipt. Then he shredded the receipt. Then he got a text from his wife. “How much did you spend at Costco on eggs and mustard?” The frail woman in the lobby was asleep on the security guard’s lap. He was taking little palmfulls of water from his water cooler cup and gently washing her hair. Teenagers were hanging out outside giving the middle finger to the prison across the expressway. “Fuck you, jail.” Tongues were projecting hologram footage of Socrates’ execution. Tongues were downloading maps of other universes. The man inside the office got his ankle caught in his phone charger. “How much did you spend on K-cups?”
michaelangelo rodriguez Untitled
toni hornes sullivan *Copies*

Title me the least known word known to man.
Then when people study me they’ll have to consult you first-
the sole owner of the dictionary.

I’ve given you too much control; in one stroke you could strike me from existence so that no one will wonder if I meant anything at all.

Give me the pen and ink.
I’ll scribble myself into the books- a duplicate
It’s dangerous to let you be the sole holder of me.
Pedals turning, harmony of motion.
Mind blanks, knows only road

and the sacrament of all that is around me.
Movement bring stillness as the way unwinds.

I can no longer say what God is,
but I feel the presence of something holy.
She said “I haven’t danced
since he boogied
out of my life,”
and smiled wearily
like an old cow
impatient for execution.
Her tilted face
and angular mouth
paralleled her locked
ebows that pointed
at a near exit –
just in case.
He danced like
the world was
his for fucking –
arching her
against walls,
painting rooms
for his offspring.

He spoke gently
like swaying pendulums,
hypnotizing her tides
of self-destruction.
She spoke his name
like a bedtime prayer –
on her knees, bent over,
whispered her youth
away, picking
hair from carpets,
rolling skin
into marble,
grinding teeth
on the wall,
burning hands
on the stove.
She loved him
she said.
“I know,”
I answered.
morgan richmeier  Something Out West
I sit across from him
in a campus coffee shop,
and I ask him if he had forgotten
that I too had not said a word,
in fact had not said anything for a year,
in fact had strep throat the night when a frat brother
two years the junior to my freshman
carved his name inside me. I reminded him

that my rapist played the acoustic guitar,
and he serenaded me with Death Cab for Cutie
as I followed him into the dark.

I absolutely get that, he said. But don’t you think there’s a duty to distinguish
the monsters from the missteps? I wouldn’t want to live in a world
where I’d have to worry about every girl I ever took home,
worry about if I ever missed my step getting her through the door.

You ask me so casually
like it’s a reasonable enough question,
but also
what the fuck?

Do you understand how certain I am
that I’ve never had a sexual encounter
where I didn’t ask myself if I missed a step
or two, or three, or four, the next morning?
Because I honestly cannot imagine what it would feel like
to wake up in a stranger’s sheets
and not cross-examine my own hands
for blood underneath nails,
not double-check for consent with a black light.

I keep going back to that morning at the hospital
when the nurses ask me
why I didn’t say something sooner.

I pocket the trauma support pamphlets inside
my mini fridge, behind the leftover curry,
tell myself to go back before the Best By date expires.

I do not say I did not say NO.

And after three years together,
you thought this was the best moment
to ask me my opinion on rape culture in America?

Let me just sip my cold brew
and softly explain how,
if Aziz Ansari is only guilty of not being a mind reader,
there are a dozen ways of distinguishing him
from the types of men who can read
the consent line across a girl’s palm,
right beneath the life line,
*reading: selfish when it comes to love,*
*reading: emotional trauma.*

And still
I’ve spent the past few years not knowing
the difference between wanting to heal and wanting to tongue
the word rape between my teeth, like a barb,
so that when, every time you kiss me,
you taste the same blood I do.
In August, we took the canoe down the creek
to Great Egg Harbor, where the pine needles were thick
and the air musky. Our hull cut a temporary wound
through the water, tore ripples that swallowed us
and cauterized behind the stern. Dad sat in the back
and pointed out the turtles warming their cold blood
in the sun, named the painted ones, the stinkpots,
said there’s even snappers down here. Their wrinkly
necks furrowed as they shrunk into themselves, recoiling
from our measuring eyes. My palms clenched
the smooth wood of my paddle and I felt the shiver
of being watched. With each sighting Dad grinned
a naturalist’s smile, like we were aboard the HMS Beagle
in sight of some Galapagos atoll and not mosquito-bitten
in the backwaters of New Jersey. His eye fell on a diamondback.
That shell, he said, would make a fine bowl
for the Devil in these woods. He had told the story before,
the same way he heard it from Granddad. I took fearful
pleasure in the telling, the ritual of Dad’s voice stirring
me when he said the Jersey Devil ate turtle soup
and wicked kids, too. The curse of Mother Leeds’ thirteenth
child—this one will be the Devil—reverberated three centuries
later against the sides of our vessel. From the canoe, the sandy bank
looked dotted with cloven prints. A whisper of leathery
wings unfurling was masked by the breeze, but the turtles
heard it and dropped like stones. Dad flicked his paddle
in the water and showered me in tepid drops, as if
to tell me it wasn’t true. You couldn’t be wicked if you tried,
he said. I knew better than to take innocence
as safety, or to mistake the curl of horns
for shadows in the woods.
You touch that part of my back that means something, and I electrify.

You kiss me, and though it’s night and we’re young, it’s like the universe resets into the warmth of an early morning. Like the windows are open to let the breeze in and we’ve split the newspaper in two without either of us having to ask.

You laugh, and the sound is the song that’s stuck in my head but I can’t remember the words and can’t find them because you can’t google na na na na ba dahhhhh and expect results. I do anyway, of course. Over and over, again and again.

You frown, and the wine I poured for us spoils. It rises in my throat as bile and my stomach turns and my pulse quickens and I can’t breathe until you kiss me, like a shh finger to my lips but worse because then, for the next few hours/days/weeks, neither of us can talk.

You leave in such a hurry that it’s like you tucked my glasses into your pocket instead of yours, because all of a sudden I can’t see. I try to breathe and realize you took the air with you, too. The food in the cabinets, the light from my lamps. And even the clothes from my closet, but not at all because you thought they would smell like me.
areej itayum Untitled
zoe dorau *These Days*

I’ve fallen on hard times.

The drop was quick.
The clock, sharp
beneath my ribs.
is the object of art longevity
so frequently fueled by desperation
continuous yearning for legacy
united with creative fixation
does any artist truly feel fulfilled
or do we all pursue an illusion
despite intricate fortresses we build
scrutinize our souls without solution
what is the origin of poignant depth
which suddenly engulfs us from inside
the ornate dreams into which we are swept
camouflage of normalcy we hide behind
vulnerability writers reveal
faint hope our reveries will become real
Franco Caputo is a junior born and raised in Brooklyn, NY. He is probably wearing denim.

Ellara Chumashkaeva is a junior from Almaty, Kazakhstan. She likes wearing denim on denim and Tom Waits.

Lauren Danielowski is a senior from Woodbury, CT. Her three greatest loves are lemon bars, waterfowls, and a good pun.

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Stephanie Gemmell is a freshman from Greencastle, Pennsylvania. Her interests include politics, music, journalism, and inaccurate historical memes.

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Areej Itayum is from Memphis, TN. She loves tats, tea, and Tara very dearly!

Tara Kosowski is a senior from Philadelphia and designated magazine-mom. Her skills include writing papers about bad movies, pontificating shark facts, and making a damn good pierogi.

Born and raised in South Korea, Jihae Kwon is a 2014 graduate in the Art and the Book Program with an M.A. from the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design. She is a graphic designer, a book artist and an assistant professor of graphic design at Brigham Young University-Hawaii.

Ariana MacMartin is a freshman studying International Affairs and Sustainability. She is passionate about social justice and the ukulele. #DivestThisTime

Josh Mays is a sophomore studying International Affairs. His greatest passions are for Christianity, philosophy, social justice, and frozen chicken.

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Michael Ratcliffe is an adjunct professor in GWU’s Geography Department. When he is not teaching or writing poetry, he can be found bicycling throughout central Maryland or managing census geographic programs.
Morgan Richmeier is a freshman majoring in International Affairs and Sociology. She enjoys debating capitalists and fighting for justice in Palestine. (Her artistic capabilities are basically a secret)

Sophie Rickless is a sophomore from sunny San Diego! Aside from seeing Arsenal play at home, her biggest dream is to live out the plot of Austenland.

MichaelAngelo Rodriguez is a senior from Norfolk, VA. His dream growing up was to become a professional baseball player and now he studies fine art photography.

Nicole Rojo, sophomore from Miami Fl. Poetry is my way of silently communicating with the world around me!

Toni Hornes Sullivan is a first year Masters Student pursuing a M.S. in Geography. She is interested in learning about cultural integration in urban settings, with a particular interest in Sino-African relations.

Lauren Sutherland is a senior from Ocean City, New Jersey. She can recite the movie Troll 2 by heart.

Elliot Swain is a cellar-dwelling malt liquor miscreant from Baltimore, Maryland impersonating a Washington, D.C. political parasite as an extended piece of performance art.

Tanya Thomas is a Junior from South Berwick, ME. She is inspired by nature and enjoys the beach, forests, friends, and eating.

Emily Venezky is an undergrad from Los Angeles, CA. She'd like to thank her dad for being her best friend and supplying unlimited inspiration.

Rachel Walsh is a freshman from Annapolis, MD. She's excited to move out of Thurston next semester, but is even more excited to be published in Wooden Teeth.

Julia Weiss is a senior and English major from Philadelphia, PA. Ask her about her Harry Potter thesis - it's all she wants to talk about.