wooden teeth

—Jeff Wandersman
Fall 2000

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With Special Thanks to

The Student Publications Committee, The University Honors Program, The Student Association, The English Department, By George!, Steve Kim, Carolyn Betensky, Triple Play, One of A Kind Grind, The GW Dining Services Commission, and The GW Review.

Wooden Teeth is published twice each year and is open to all members of The George Washington University community. Undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, alumni and staff are urged to submit their work. For additional information, contact a staff member at the Wooden Teeth office, Marvin Center, room 431, or call us at (202) 994-7288, or email us at woodie@gwu.edu. Submissions can be left at the office or sent to:

Wooden Teeth
Box Number 24, The Marvin Center
800 21st Street, NW
Washington, DC 20052

All submissions should be typed with name or pseudonym, phone number and email address. SS#. Limit 3 submissions per person per semester. No literary work is returned, but all visual art is returned at the request of the artist. If visual art submissions are not claimed after four semesters, they become the property of Wooden Teeth.

Visit us at http://www.gwu.edu/~woodie

Wooden Teeth is funded by The George Washington University and publishes only the works of the University community.

Context and Evolution

Moshing, the Pennsylvanian
forgot his nine years of Scranton
and told people he was born
in The City.

He used to make forts
out of pillows

Brachiopod
Brontosaurus
Moa

An amalgamation
of a librett piercing,
frosted tips,
and necklaces:
the metal strings
juggled to illuminate
basements across
America.

Some would say
angiosperm.
He would say
cool.
I would say
a new species entirely.

—Michael Andrews
Dear Mother,

Last night I took up with a lathe turner.
He was vulgar and wounded.
After he partially rinsed the oil from his hands,
he rolled me in a section of carpet repeatedly.
I left only after he split his smile down the middle.
I have been called a caboos by my fellow workers
and have lain down when pure sense required me to stand.
These and other things you should know about me.

I have taken in one street soiled blanket
after another, and can not imagine a cessation to this trend.
If you have any pictures of my old one, please send them immediately.
If not, a sweater string with some fruit will suffice.

I recently found myself in the most terrestrial of positions:
when enacting an incantation, I found myself with my face to the floor,
while driving in a traffic circle, a bird sat on my windshield,
 once while walking, the sidewalk just became dirt, with no explanations.

I have been looking for work in garbage cans and puddles.
I have taken the gravelly voiced obelisk and I wont give it back.
A burp has placed a misnomer in my mouth
and it has been absorbed through my skin.
This is the manner through which I have learned:
content inside and method without.

Please relay this to any friends who have been digging for me:
my health is an oddity that was never paid for,
and will remain so, I believe, a curio.

Well constructed and well met,
Your Son

—Matthew Zivot
Ondas

Lapping
lapping
breaking,
giving
taking,
liquid
body
waxing
waning,
ever
cycling
killing
creating,
sweet
earth
blood
trickling
rushing
raining,
rolling
pulse,
life
sustaining,
her
sapphire
reflection
pulsating
pulsating.

—Amanda Fisher

Ripples

Late
latiendo;
rompe.
Da
y coje,
cuerpo
mojado
mengu
y cree
eternal...
nace
y muere.
Dulce
sangre
terrenal
gota,
inund,
llueve.
El pulso
palpita
su imagen
verde...
Mece;
mece,
sostiene.

—Leah Prout
Without Fences

Downstairs, I hear the dog crying in her sleep,
sounds of animal dreams
next to the din of crickets, cicadas
thick in the humidity but succinct enough
to keep me awake.

I imagine you’re still awake.
I haven’t heard your footsteps on the porch
or the sound of the truck pulling into the drive.
I try to blame the heat
for my sleeplessness.
The sheets are wet, my hair—stuck to my neck,
but I don’t move.

Last night I waited, too.
I could picture your mint eyes,
glassy half-slits like sharp petals,
the smell of grass and oil in your jeans.
I didn’t have the energy to sleep—
When closing my eyes signified strength.

I wish for a divide,
A fence.
With one side to pick,
some direction at least.
The fence wouldn’t be too tall,
and I could look through the cracks,
to see the other side.

—Laura Blandy
Random Acts of Kindness

"We're never fuckin doing that again...."
—Petez

I.

we play Mah Jong
and drink margaritas
with a desperate gravity

clutching straws of other's cultures
afloat the wreckage of our own

the skeet-shooters run out of targets,
begins using seagulls that herd
and how astern—

fumbling recall gives way
to the tremulous lull of snickering ivory;
they announce the wet T-shirt
shuffleboard contest—

worries about public drunkenness yield
to the embrace of the lost weekend

only when the vulcanized man three deck-chairs down
turns to his weatherbeaten companion and says:

honey, I been on hundreds of these,
they almost never sink,
it's terrifies you gotta watch out for,
I could be a prime target

do we look at each other

another game, we say
and two more of the same
we've been told
epiphanies are scarce,
settle for the calculated kind,
the sun discreetly withdrawn
into umbral silence,
the moment where murmur,
coronial dilation,
totality measured in seconds
of arc, still

bird song drowses down,
air itself loses momentum,
poets have—for once—nothing to say

pictures are for those who forget to look;
though even memories grow
stronger, more precise, erasing
the tenuous sense of the not-quite light

so we hunt
thin lines
of shadowfall
that score
the globe,
precise incisions
of an occult surgeon
puckering,
yielding

—Susanna Nova Wilson
we sign on for totality in San Diego
volitional, but impressed all the same,
standing high on the metallic guano cliff,
immense pallets of fresh food
hoisted confidently aboard

somehow
when the best California produce
emerges at the other end
it looks and tastes
like an aluminum TV miracle

we are not on the Titanic,
but the Flying Dutchman

and the bronzed and medicated
samba and sker and shuffle on

we thirst for shadow,
any kind of dark

IV.

the narcoleptic diver, dizzy,
in breathless suspense,
pushes, eagerly, toward
a Nightingale lantern
at the end of a morphine dark

hiking through the pasteboard mask
of the carefully crafted
native, the standing pressure wave
where grinding need meets

—Amanda Fisher
the greedy Western ocean

into the jungle, breasting
the wobbling throng
of stretch-a-lux polyester
with a triathlete indifference to pain

attaining the last resort,
the jungle momentarily stymied
by an air-conditioned blast,
the sagebrush shuffle of traveller’s cheques
coming home to roost,
the Coppertone smell of vacation—

pilgrimage whimper to a halt
the trail continues,
our outlines grow
hazy against the cubist stink of
growth, until we reach
the waterfall,
a second fall,
the pool

swimming naked across the postcard,
unable to shake faint suspicions of the real
lurking beneath the unreality of it all,
dripping, with a new glossy brochure
sense of ourselves
pooling into a multi-dimensional
Heraclitean question

we do not ask it
but recover our clothes
and take a different route back
V.
lurid camouflage diesels
into the small clearing,
disgorge two men in suits

in precise
English they,
respectfully request
we, stand close
and cover

the squat turret grows
a soft, silent infiltration
circling the clearing,
burning our eyes
like a good day in the Valleys

we are left to deal with the steady patter
of a million insect deaths,
the body pressure of their chant pushed
back one hundred circular metres

a bus shudders pneumatically to a halt,
emitting a swarm of mid-Western
European Australian Taiwanese
cameras snapping at leftover images,
the rumored authentic location
of a Hollywood blockbuster

a prolonged digestive
nautical moan,
reassuringly distant,
tells us our time is limited

—Karen Carruth
we cannot escape
this free-falling
thing, the us-ness of ourselves,
a concentric certainty
that we are at home everywhere

for PKKT.

—Mark Mullen

—Janna Therese Schoenberger
How to Tell a Sea Story

Start with, "This is no shit...." Or, better yet, put yourself right in the shit with, "No shit there we were...." There should be alcohol present. You don't have to tell sea stories in a bar but that does seem to work best. Throw in some military acronyms. Like, "1st CIVDIV" and "WESPAC." Assume your audience actually gets the meaning. A little mystery couldn't hurt. Spice it up with foul language. This is for the real salty feel. Be creative; turn verbs into nouns and vice versa. Mention the cool hardware with the cool names. Not the common stuff you get to see on CNN. Work in the "Phalanx Gun" whenever possible. Oh yeah. Don't kill anyone off. People in sea stories certainly can get hurt. (In keeping with the genre, say they were A.E.U.) Dying isn't part of this. If you want to talk about dying, see "How to Tell War Stories."

—William Rzukowski

—Jessica Greco
20 somethings

So in love with himself
he photocopied his face
to give it away

The first to move in
she picked the worst
bedroom out of guilt

Ashamed of his
wonder woman fetish
he hid behind his
musicals

He fell into hedonism
an outcrop of
passionless dry humping
in this world of AIDS

She doesn’t talk
she is scared of being dull

Deaf, she assumes
the “hearing”
pay attention
when someone
speaks

His jew-fro
was a sign he
was ready to
stop shaving and
leave the city

She used to be in love
but decided
mountains
were dependable

Worried about
the ramifications of
becoming “New Agey”
his vegetarianism
became pescatarianism

Crabs are not preventable
with condoms
so he ditched his moustache

Pulling up his pants
he explains
“You don’t know me”

—Michael Andrews

—Reem Bassous
Contributors' Notes

Michael Andrews (Emerson's great great great grandson), colloquially Mike, pleads his case to the jury: it wasn't me who put my hand in the metaphorical cookie jar.

Reem Bassous is a painter who always manages to get her stuff stolen...yet she still smiles about it!

Laura Blandy: I'm from Philadelphia. I am a senior with a major in journalism and a minor in creative writing.

Karen Carruth is an aspiring painter and redneck from Arkansas.

Amanda Fisher is an aspiring armature adventurer who desires to go through the looking glass, down the rabbit hole and fly 3rd star to the right, straight on to morning in search of a little known place called Neverland. In this quest, going boldly, where few have gone before, she will continue to photograph, in hopes of sharing a little slice of happiness with National Geographic and the rest of the known world.

Jessica Greco is very grateful that her work was included in this issue of Wooden Teeth and has had a wonderful time working with everyone on the magazine this semester.

Frederick N. Markham is a MFA painting student. He does paintings, drawings, and some sculpture. He is from the South and he talks very slowly.

Alice McDonald.

Mark Mullen was recently exiled from California for being "too way out." He now teaches writing at GW and waxes nostalgic about high-speed police chases.

C.J. Pizarro: He used to be an electronic media major, then he switched to English. He is nervous about the switch because all throughout his schooling career he has gotten by on Cliff's Notes. Jeff says I am golden with this bio. What?

Leah Prout: I am a junior majoring in linguistic anthropology and minoring in Spanish and French language and literature. I write as a hobby and also do other fine arts. Thanks to Ms. P. and Blue Girl.

William Rutkowski is the staff Instrument Maker for Physics, Chemistry and Engineering. When not constructing scientific apparatus he builds "really cool things" at home with his four-year old son. Their current media is wood and plastic but they will consider all serious requests.

Janna Therese Schoenberger: Schoenberger means pretty little mountain.

Jeff Wandersman is making efforts to break himself of his addictions to food and music.

Susanna Nova Wilson is a senior from Santa Barbara, California, and is the quintessential shutter bug, much to her bank account's utter despair. After graduation she will move to WhereTheSidewalkEnds and begin her successful career in momentary whim.

Matthew Zivot: Poetry on a limited vocabulary.

--- Alice McDonald