

pearl press



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Will Baldwin

Colleen Fox Breen

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Nic Anselmo

Jude Armstrong

Julie Fowells

Grace McGory

Elizabeth Hopkins

Ava Mack

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Cover image: Amanda BernSohn

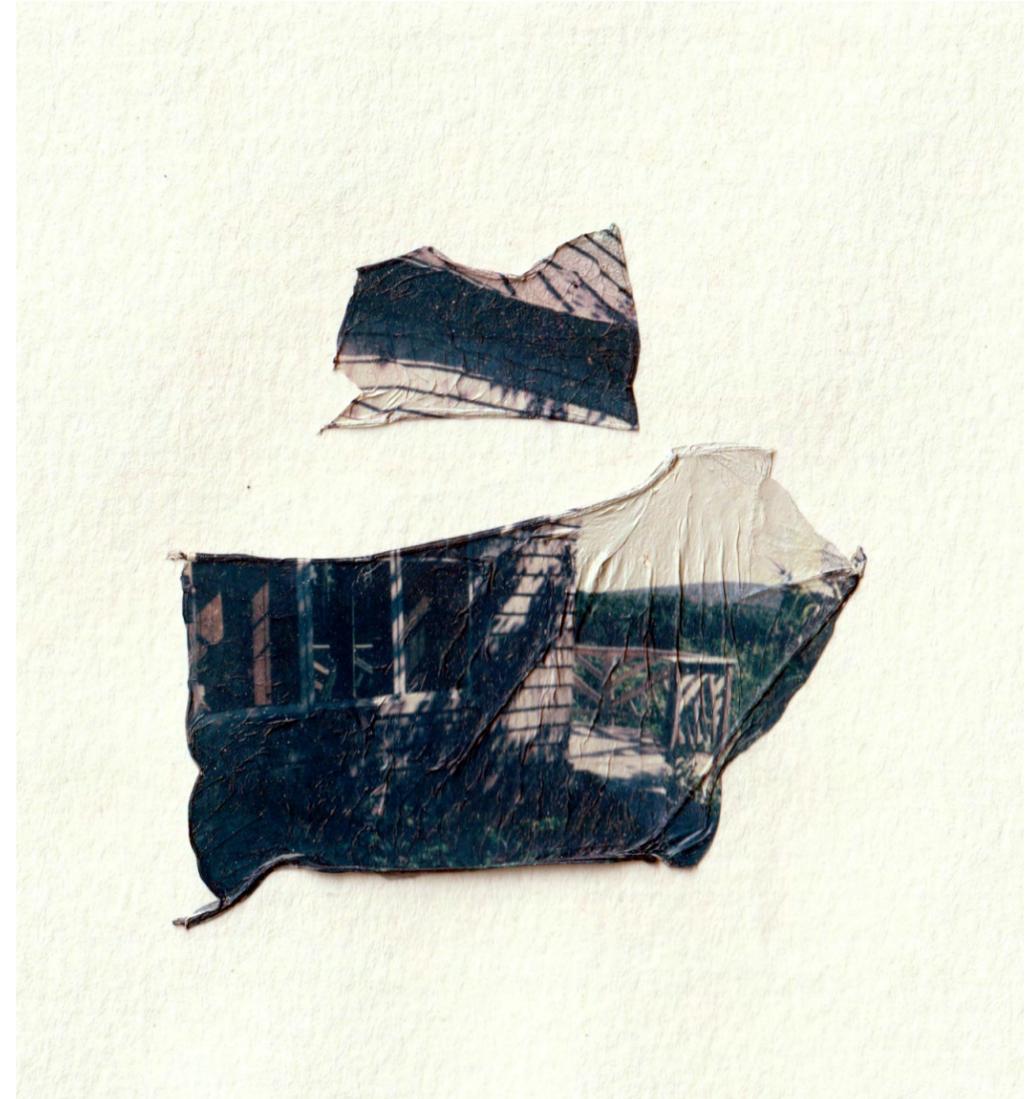
Curated by: Delilah Twersky



Mel Driving: Amanda BernSohn



PLACES I'VE BEEN WITH MY FATHER: Kaitlyn Yates



PLACES I'VE BEEN WITH MY FATHER: Kaitlyn Yates



The Lodge: Will Baldwin



Preserved Presence: Colleen Fox Breen

CLOCKS

How was I to know that the living
room of clocks told different times?

I learned how to fold a fortune teller
at my grandparents' coffee table.

I sat cross-legged on the shag carpet,
my sister on the recliner, the couch empty.

The grandfather clock sang its song
down the hall, dinner, but I could not

Read its hands, only folded scratch
paper with promises I prayed to.

Grandmother collected clocks, antique
and analog; four on every wall.

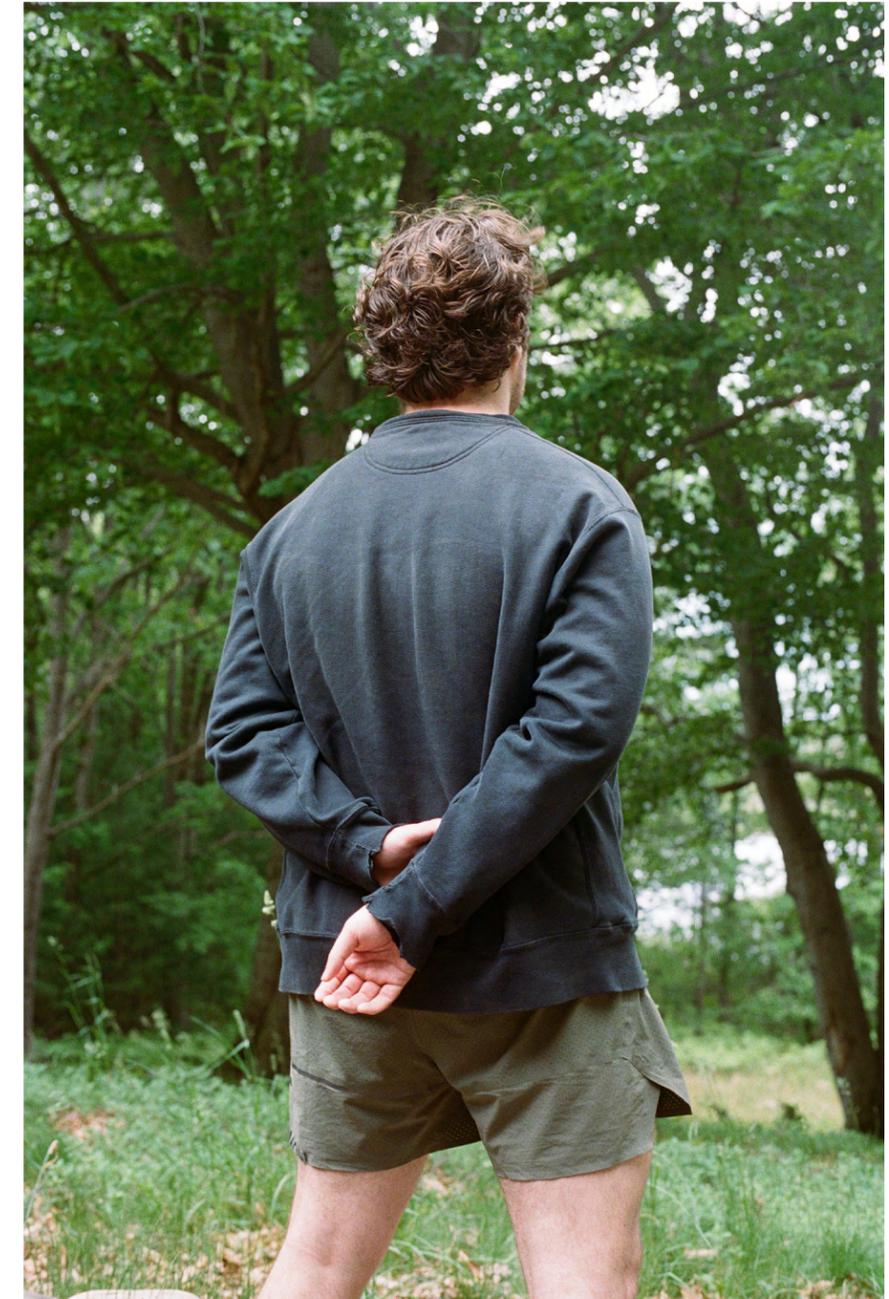
My grandfather died on the empty
couch next to the coffee table.

I saw him in his last days, unable
to turn his head towards mine.

My grandmother told me he asked
god for more time in his sleep.

The grandfather clock still sings,
and I still do not know the time.

Courtney Heidorn



Thomas: Naomi Liechty



Pursed: Nanci Miltron Fitterman



Untitled: Nic Anselmo

DO GRAPEFRUITS GROW ABOVE GROUND?

I remember the earth
being tart and pink,

with the wind shuddering
around my shoulders

like a shot dog; run over
with so many rememberings

that the memory begins to bruise.
So many empty breaths I didn't want

to take. So many hands looking for God
inside of me. Digging into the rotten tree

with cut up fingers. *Where have you been,
my Lord?* Where does god go when

I'm sleeping and my mother is in the next room,
being killed? Her blood down the drain

like sun into grass. I remember
the man who killed my mother

trying to wrestle a seed into the ground
and how I begged for God to swallow him

whole. Take his salted eyes, take his sagging shoulders,
take his woes and his troubles; grow a tree

I can remember. So that, one day, I can memorize
the curves and the color of the bark and

the sap on my jeans can be a memory
that is not a memory because it never dies.

Not here, not in the Louisiana heat, not

in the country that taught my mother

the way of burying her body above ground.

Jude Armstrong



Cyclamen #17: Julie Fowells



Water: Naomi Liechty

A DISAPPEARING ACT

175 pounds even (on a good day)
does not look like it should when
measured in cellophane candies

in carnations *lip gloss* rose quartz in a pocket
in earrings *sunshine* lazy susans in the yard
in ivy *street signs* empty bottles of wine

technicolor time-killers meant to be
only two things: briefly enjoyed and
entirely gone

slumped against the wall with the legs
sticking out, slouched like a gangly child
there is the ghost of a person in that hot
white corner, and he's the brightest thing
in the room

encouraged to take, unsure if you should
the becoming is born from the loss, a
honeyed paradox ever-adjusting— a
bit to the left. then fall out of sight. 175
even (healthy weight for an adult man)

the pile is a portrait and
the pile is dwindling and
the pile is whole again and
the pile is called ross. a

memoir by a man who had to watch
as people stole pieces heedless of the
disappearing act they created, the only
art in the gallery they want you to steal,
a grieving man's tiny agony,

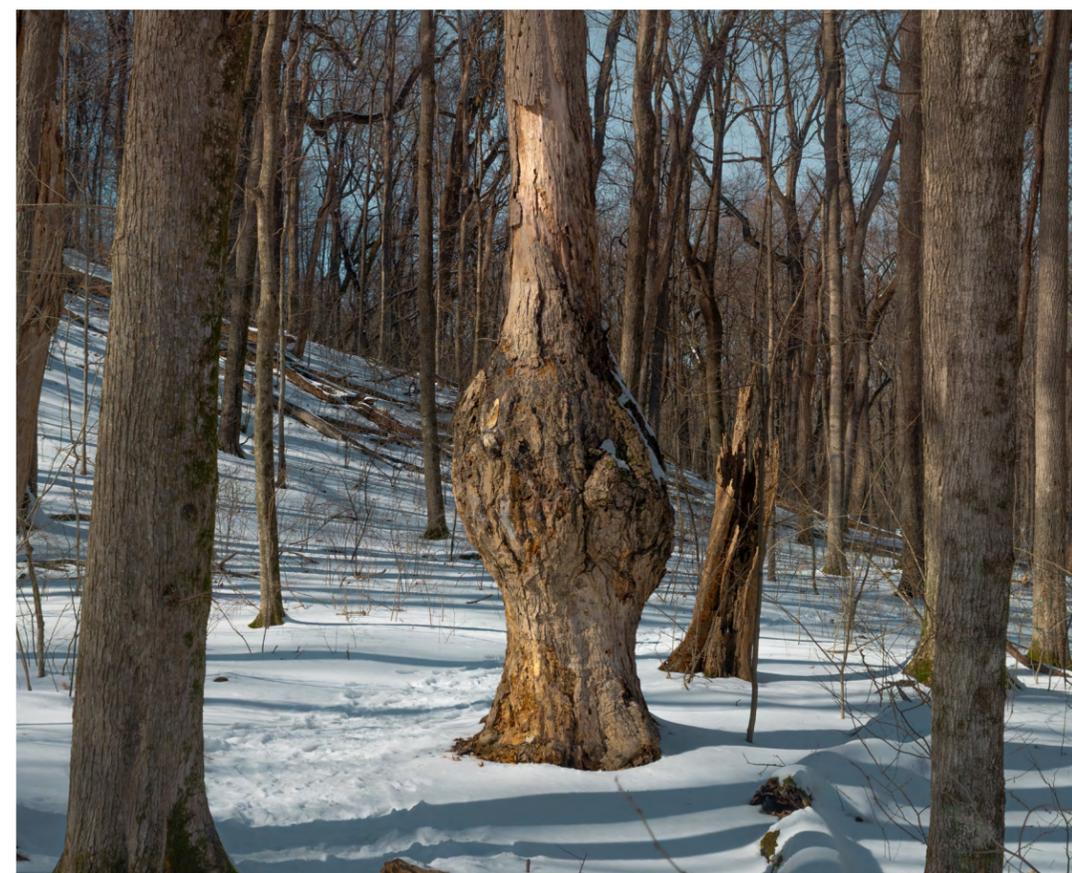
and if a perfect likeness takes
your place did anything really change
at all? count out the people who would
be able to tell the difference. wonder
if you are one of them.

taste pink gold green (a beating heart)
know you are taking and becoming
(all at once).

Grace McGory



Five Decades on the Coast: Elizabeth Hopkins



First and Final Winter: Will Baldwin



1976: Elizabeth Hopkins



Preserved Presence: Colleen Fox Breen



Moonrise, Brooklyn: Amanda BernSohn

COONAMESSETT

In memory of my grandmother on the third anniversary of her passing.

You left some notes I stumbled across
I don't know if they were meant for me.
A few iterations each they said,
When you see a sunset, think of me.

So westward I have tacked my gaze, but
alas, how mystified I have been -
nothing reminds me of you so well
as the way the moldering foyer smells at The Coonamessett Inn.

A foyer no bigger than a phone booth, but
big enough to be the musty waiting room
for the next life. I thought for a moment I
found you here in eternity's anteroom.

For a moment - dead in my tracks - I thought,
let this be the next life I've stumbled into
and let me see your burnished red head bobbing
up from the parking lot and into view.

Come, come into the vestibule beside me
and tell me it smells like home did even in
a puritanical Podunk town like this
where you never would have been caught dead in –

but caught you were and dead you are, and I don't
get to choose what reminds me of you. I wish
it was more to phone home to you about than
some lacquered wood, but then I realize this:

You're not a sunset distant.
You're alive here in this room.
The smell does more than remind
me, it resurrects you in

this place you've never seen, never been to
our wedding rehearsal dinner venue.
Here I was, thinking you would miss it.
Here you are, waiting for me

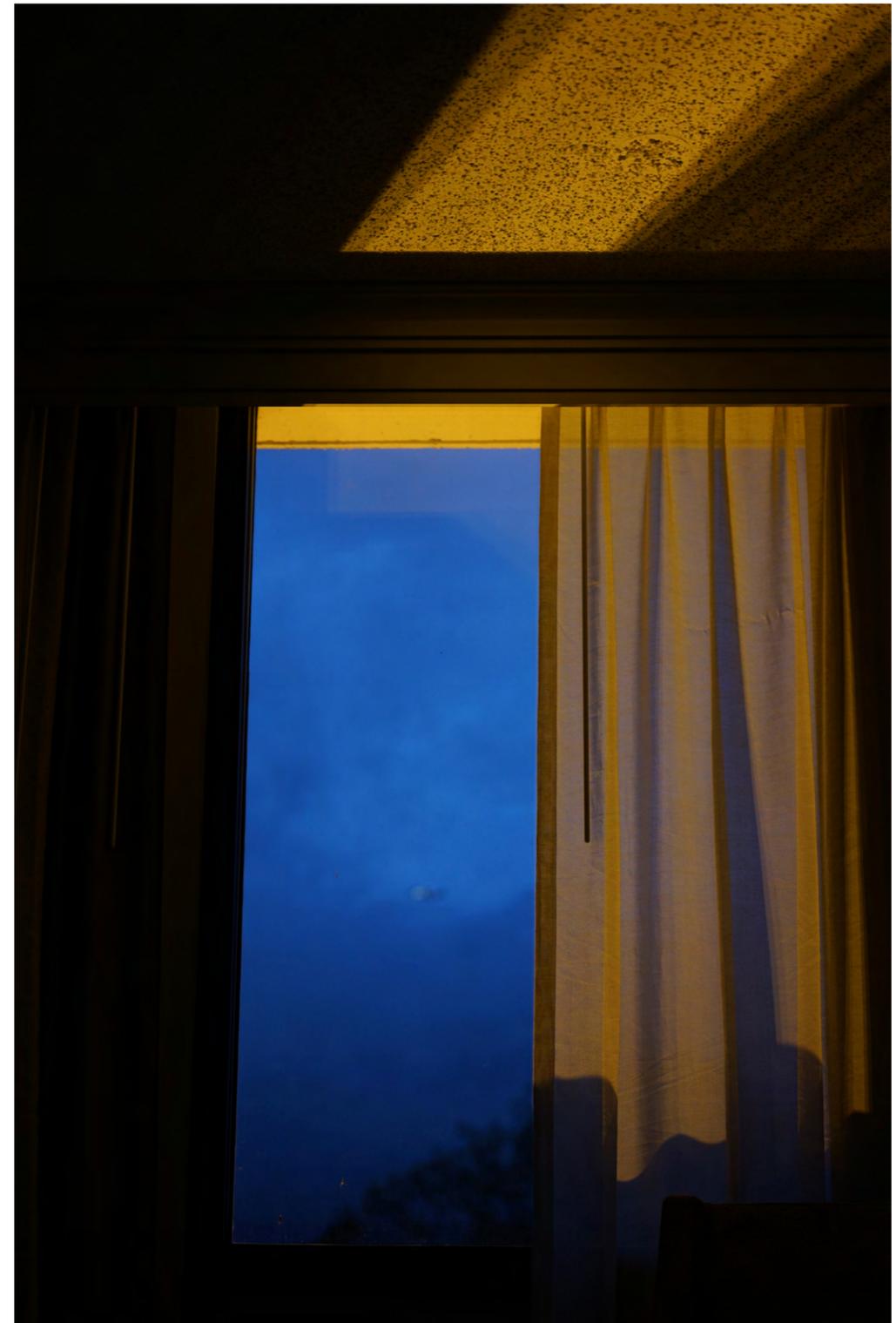
Ava Mack



Suz 2: Naomi Liechty



Moon: Naomi Liechty



Untitled, Hotel: Amanda BernSohn

ELEGY FOR EINSTEIN'S BRAIN

My founding father / Albert Einstein / ground zero for me
For him that was Ulm / Final Destination New Jersey / where his brain was stolen by
the pathologist despite the stipulation that it should not be studied / for Einstein was
not fond of fanboys / whose fervent adoration might find reason to keep his body parts
as souvenirs / a relic for the Church of Science

The pathologist's wife was grossed out / by the human remains in the pantry / she said
she'd deep-six the brain / if he didn't move it by a given deadline / careful what you
wish for, the pathologist's ex-wife / if you think you can compare / to Nobel Prize Lau-
reate Albert Einstein

For thirty years the thief kept the brain / segmented into two-hundred-and-forty parts /
rehomed into two jars / pickled in cellulose / in a cinder box / under a beer cooler / in a
basement / in the American mid-west

His neighbour & friend William S. Burroughs / in gross misconduct of his professional
duties / never wrote a single poem about it / and wasted words in poetic malpractice /
bragging to his buddies about it / Einstein's brain / in the pathologist's ex-wife's ex-hus-
band's basement / just next door from him

The thief took the brain to California / where all celebrities end up dead or alive / there
was a study / most findings were discredited / for lack of academic rigour / but the
fascinating conclusion that stands was that / Einstein's brain was in fact / abnormally
large.

Beatriz Seelaender

Thank you for reading.
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