

pearl press



ISSUE NO. 17: NOTES

July 2023

This issue of Pearl Press features work from:

Lingxue Hao

Kyra ten Brink

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David Grunner

Karla Guerrero

Devin Fitchwell

Olivia Delgado

Molly Peters

Yani Clarke

Adam Thorman

Fiona Vigo Marshall

Cricket Miller

Diego Ray

Sam R. Watson

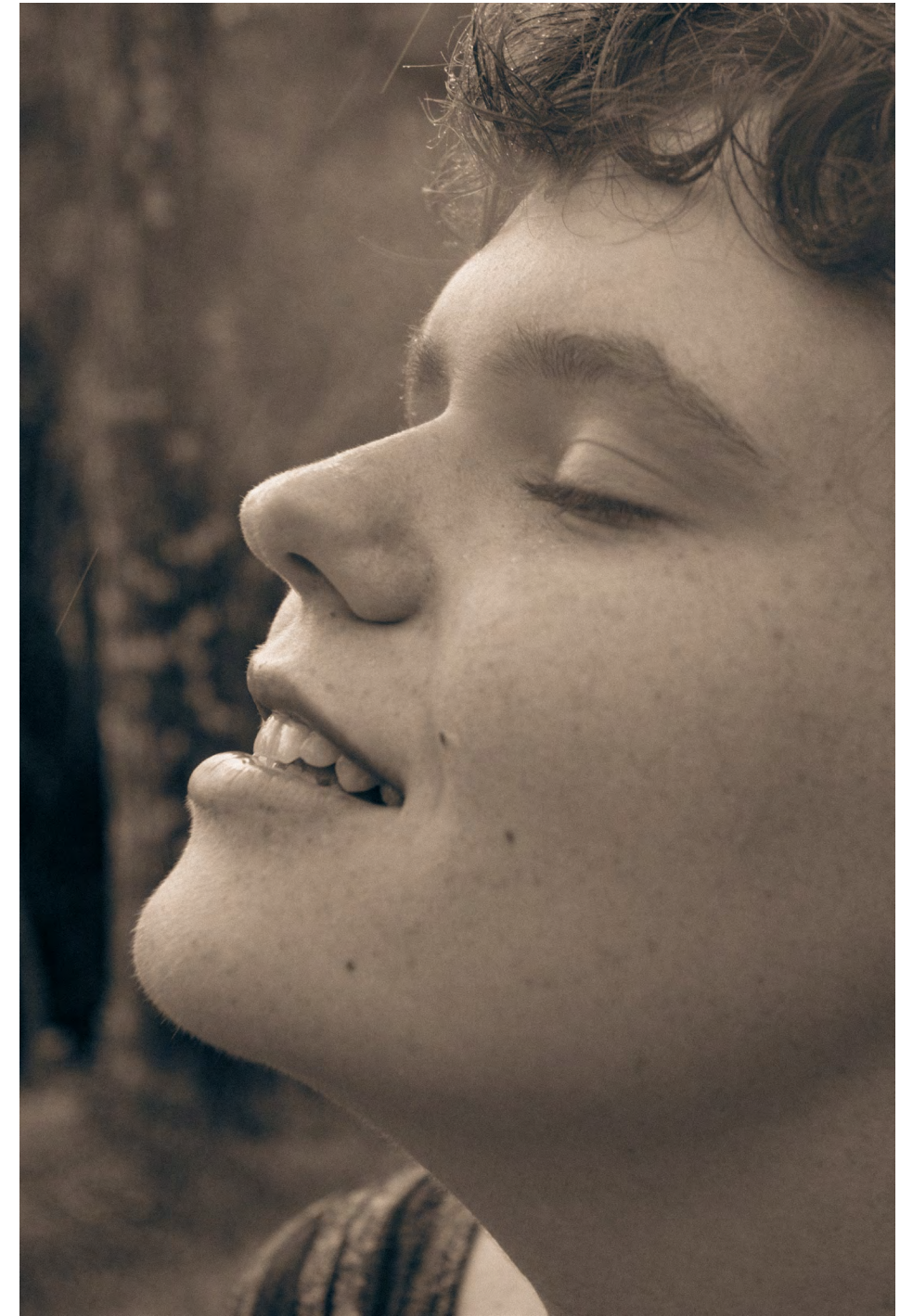
Kara Birnbaum

Cover image: Lingxue Hao

Curated by: Delilah Twersky



Dreaming: Lingxue Hao



Journeying Home: Kyra ten Brink

AT THE NOISE CANCELING HEADPHONE FACTORY

they're all out of foam at the noise canceling headphone factory
this batch is made of cardboard and mink oil
and no one will notice any difference!

the world is very quiet and very sad
not just today but in the overarching sense of an unwashed sweater
clogging the air with dusty warmth

at the noise canceling headphone factory you use your employee discount with
reckless abandon, you give everyone and their little sister and their gerbil a pair and
you hook them around your waist and your legs, cupping you like a coat that calms dogs in thun-
derstorms, or a
girl wrapped in a fishing net

when you get hired at the noise canceling headphone factory they pull your boyfriend aside and tell
him that you suck
they make you write love poems to ipods
and then read them to your boyfriend who is already resenting
your wannabe ee cummings inclinations

you lie in your room earlier than you're used to
trying to make the quiet feel purposeful
and not like a space you have to fill to fall asleep

behind your door you can hear your boyfriend walking down the hall
the sink turns on
the muffled shake of a towel around his hair
every sound a hum, every hum a lurch

a licorice twist of not wanting to see him, bitter and chewed up, putting your foot down
but hoping the next few seconds will bring the successive melody of stairs thudding
the rising tide knock of his fist on your door, louder with passing time
every buzz in your chest is a betrayal
sleep won't come and neither will he

luckily the noise canceling headphone factory prepared you for this exact scenario
in a simulation pod with crash dummy actors...ear by ear...
you know exactly what to do....

Keira DiGaetano



Fire: Lingxue Hao



AMIDOL: Sophie Schwartz



AMIDOL: Sophie Schwartz

CARE OR CONCERN: A NOTE TO SELF

I tend to my desires as a beekeeper

to her hives, blithely assuming the hives

are mine and so naming each bee, all

the while wondering if there's a difference

between care and concern—and would

the answer even matter that much at all.

David Grunner



Diario de ausencias: Karla Guerrero



Diario de ausencias: Karla Guerrero



Hair Style: Lingxue Hao



ON THE NEWS THE MORNING MEN MARRIED THEIR ANGER

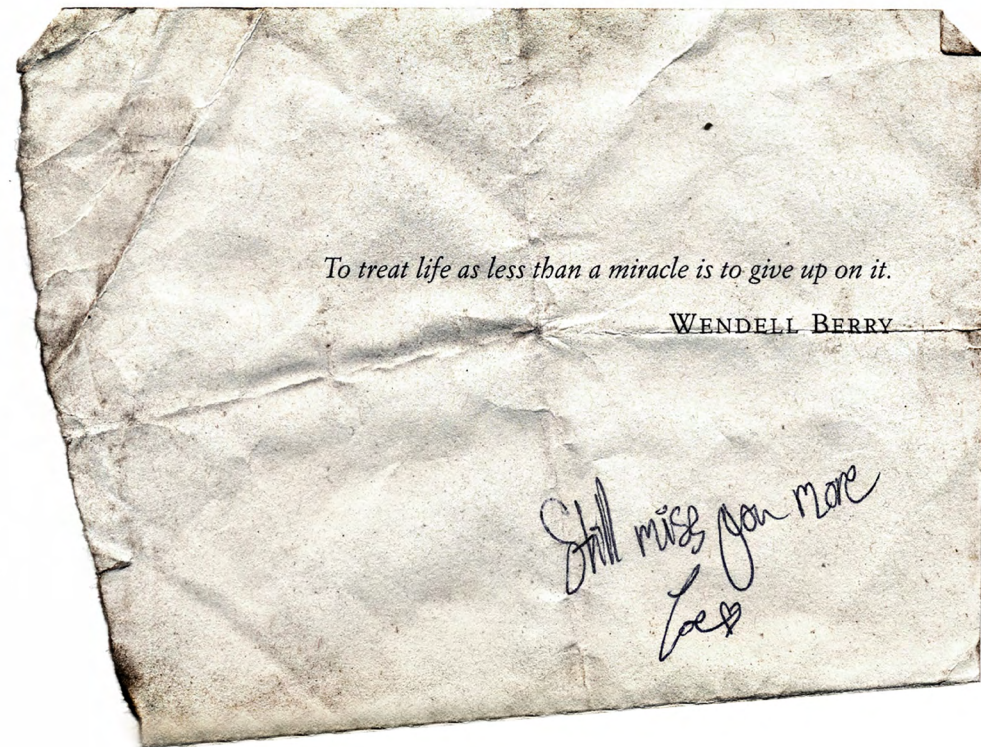
I check my phone and under notes it says one cheese pizza, no bubbles. A left-over from another year. I think about survival. The way it differs in each person's tone. How when I tell my great aunt I love you, she now searches for words, but I always know her answer. My nephew rolls his "love you" in hurried exclamation and I can't seem to find a balance between the two. It's dark now and I'm rounding the clock to California where women organize a celebrity's home on tv. The cat plays outside, and my sister and I laugh like children, dreaming of the Hollywood on screen. I check my notes again, deciphering it like a souvenir. There is no giant. We're grown, our appetites brutal.

I take this as sustenance.

Olivia Delgado



Into the Surf. Malibu, CA: Molly Peters



To treat life as less than a miracle is to give up on it.

WENDELL BERRY

*Still miss you more
Love*

SHAM, DRUDGERY, AND BROKEN DREAMS: Yani Clarke



Journeying Home: Kyra ten Brink



Alcatraz Quiote and Cormorants, March 15, 2022: Adam Thorman

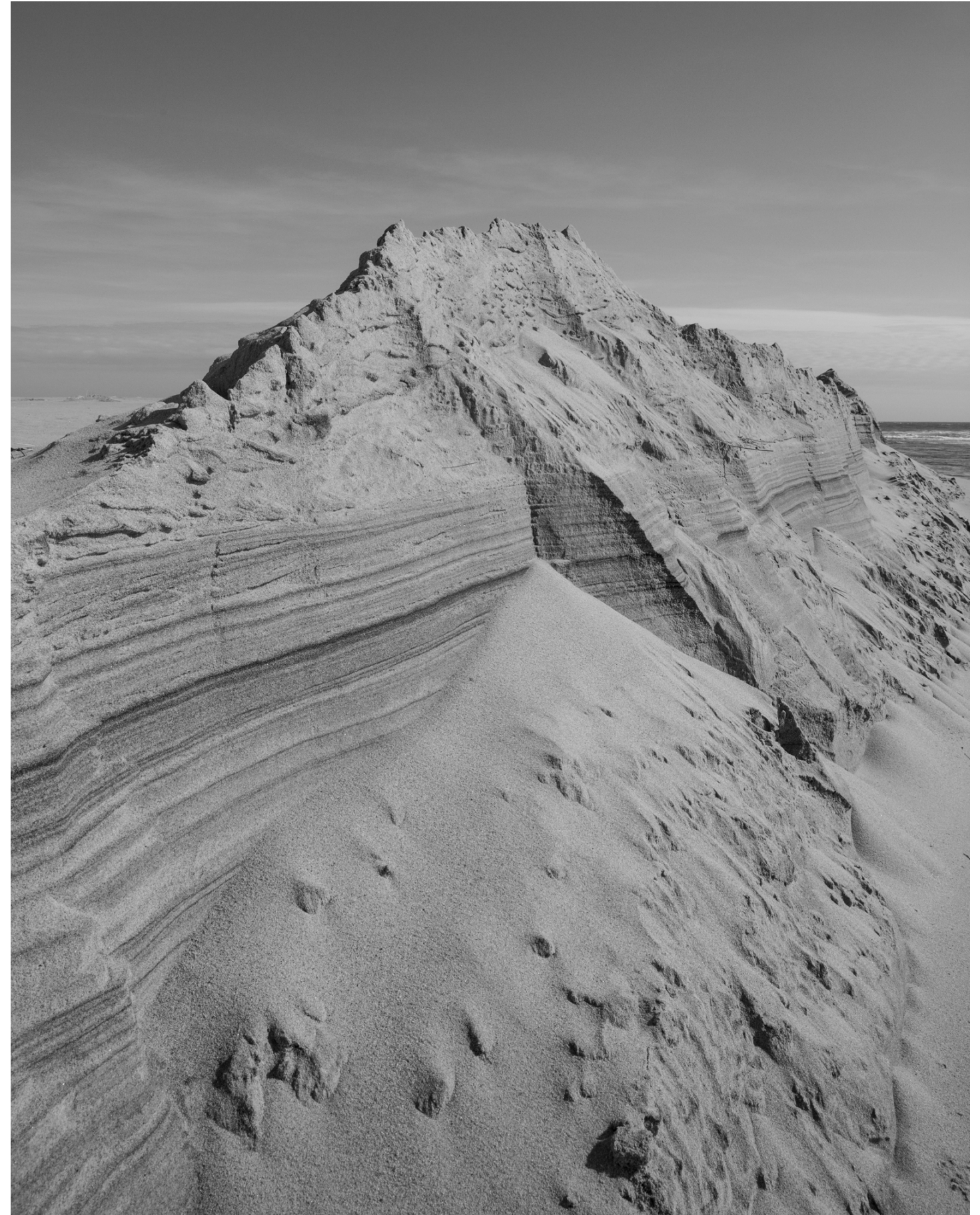


Alcatraz Quiote and Cormorants, March 14, 2023: Adam Thorman

TIBIDABO, BARCELONA

Tibi tibi dabo tibidabo, all this, all this will I give you, the funicular hauled up the mountain by death, *tibidabo* the rabid, mortal sense of holiday as we clutch and ascend, *tibi*, to you, you alone, the bowl of Barcelona the far-off sheen of the sea, *haec tibi omnia dabo si cadens adoraveris me*, if you fall down and adore me, haec haec yes all this the smashed dragon glued to smithereens in the Parc Güell, all the strong yellow blue glaze, all the old looped apartment blocks the green blinds and canaries, all the caged birds on the Ramblas, the indifference of the matrons in frocks, every thief in the *bari gotic*, every bare-chested sailor on Carrer d'Avinyó, the smell of sherry and fish, the docks tamed to leisure, flattened to the expensive sea, yes all this if you will forget the past and spend with me.

Fiona Vigo Marshall



Erosion: Molly Peters

HYPOTHESES

Black cats aren't unlucky:
A genetic mutation colors their fur.

Jack Frost doesn't paint
leaves red: cold nights kill chlorophyl.

The dead don't give a damn
who walks over their graves.

The living are haunted
by their own regrets.

And yet...

Perhaps darkling beetles philosophize
despite their ganglion brain. Perhaps

fish have feelings. Is truth subjective
if our perception of blue differs?

Can we accept death's inevitability



SHAM, DRUDGERY, AND BROKEN DREAMS: Yani Clarke



Dusk on the Road: Molly Peters

SKETCHES: NOTES FROM A POET'S PHONE

My friend referred to his privates as “Big Jim and the twins”
and I almost spit out my beer.

She turned around and asked “do you like it?”
Knowing very well my heart is howling for her.

Felt like someone grabbed me in the middle of my stomach.

She asked if I wanted to go make poetry in the back seat.

We hurt each other
While we're still young and learning
And rarely apologize.

I'm not getting old, it's my body that's getting old.
There are two types of fools:
One who doesn't know he's being the fool
And one who knows he's being a fool
And does it anyway.

I once had my mind like a clean slate but unfortunately, I spent most of my time either piling trash on it or trying to shovel it out.
Did this back and forth for a couple years. Took me a while to lay some good soil and grow something pretty.

Pay attention to the way you address yourself in your head
The manner and tone in which you hear that inner voice
The voice that interprets your emotions
Have it only talk with love and never lie

Learning how to break patterns and set patterns for yourself is very important.

Life is as deep and as warm as the connections you have.
Connections with nature, with others, with your work, with yourself.

This girl doesn't pay her taxes.

We fall apart, then come together
We fall together, then come apart.

There is a difference between accepting someone and not denying them.

I have the urge to make up years of discontent
With bright sudden flashes of lust.

Who could be as soft as her?
Who could play better music than the sounds she makes?

Feel like the art you want to make.

I don't need a reason to do what I do.

A hundred suspicions don't make a proof.

Don't forget to forget your knowledge at times and just perceive.
To feel and not try to figure out.

Don't be obvious, be direct.

I don't believe in God but he loves me regardless.

With all these notes in my phone you'd think I'd be a better person by now damn.

You will grow no matter what
So be intentional in your direction
Direction over speed

Learning how to break patterns and set patterns for yourself is very important.

Be aware of the glitchy parts of your perception.

A realization is not wisdom yet.

There are two things an artist must know how to do:

1. How to create
2. How to polish

Love is not an emotion
Love is a way of living

I get so caught up in being human I forget what I'm here for.

Taking on pain to show off your strength
Is easier than being brave.

I love the parts of you I can't have.

In order to do the things I want to do in life
I have to break the person I currently am
I have to learn to change.

Diego Ray



Family Meal: Lingxue Hao



Red Spot: Lingxue Hao



By The Time the Sky Turns Red: Devin Fitchwell

A TO-DO LIST BECOMES THE TO-DO ITSELF

I'd meant to mention all things euphoria,
the genus, the furry bumble flower
beetles stuck to the sunflowers
how they seemed careful, flying with ponderous weight
I'd meant to mention the whole hierarchy of the garden
that summer. yellow jackets, paper wasps
the cute carpenter bees the bald face hornets
in black and white prison garb
I'd wanted to speculate where their nest was
then the wildfire smoke cleared, the moon was no longer red
the water blue-green
algae, the prairie dogs had the plague the people had covid
a meteor-shower peaked, I found the nest
in the lilac bush already half destroyed and vacant
the aspen had to be cut down, the elm cracked
in the wind
when it landed
the finch was so light it barely moved the dead sunflower stalk.
it was already fall and everything had a softer intonation
a greater ambiguity. the pearly haze at the top of the hill—
the light had come, not as brilliance but obfuscation
that stung the eyes and throat
that said and revealed nothing

Sam R. Watson



In Transit: Molly Peters



Untitled: Kara Birnbaum

Thank you for reading.
For more updates check @pearl.press on Instagram.

www.pearl-press.com

Delilah Twersky
Pearl Press
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