



# estuary

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ACADIA'S CREATIVE ARTS MAGAZINE Spring 2024



*The poet's eye, in fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
And as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.*

~ **William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer's Night Dream***

Cover Art: The Road Ahead // Seth Gledhill  
Faculty Advisor // Wanda Campbell

## estuary

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## Contents

The Road Ahead // Seth Gledhill	Cover
Editor's Note // Angel Percentie	7
Night Sky Symphony // Jaimie Hamilton	8
Mu ni'n wisun na // Cara Burton	9
Creatures From Home // Laura Taggart	10
Fiddlehead // Nick Lundrigan	11
Endless Winter // Makenzie Tavares	12
Uneven Breaths // Julia Sylvester	13
The Solarium // Sophie Ashton	15
Lavandula // Emma Hamill	17
My Thoughts on the Newly Installed	
Wolfville Sign // Ewan MacLean	18
Whispers of the Tides // Maddy Nielsen	19
Acadia's Heart // Emma Benjamin	20
<i>Whimsy</i> // Velinka Savio Fernandes	21
Deserved // Cameron MacDonald	22
<i>Baxter's Fall</i> // Carson Harrison	24
Zircon Grain // Karen Brookman	25
A New Day // Seth Gledhill	26
My Father's Piano // Olivia Hooper	27

Becoming Memories // Mitch Nieuwenstein	28
Loving from Afar // Caraline Tompkins	29
When Rhythm Returns in the Hollow // Zach Strong	30
The Woman I Love // Samantha Dempsey	31
On the Right Track // Jazmyn Yalowica	32
I Read Somewhere That to Love Someone is to Let Them In // Max Rowell	33
Strange Fruit // Lauren Inglis	34
Mangoes // Angel Percentie	35
Hawaiian Pollinator // Hayley Newell	36
The Rocking Chair // Jenna Symonds	37
Little Red Vest // Abby-Jean Gertridge	38



## Editor's Note // Angel Percentie

A special thanks to Dr. Wanda Campbell for her guidance and support throughout the editorial process. I also thank the many contributors that made the Spring edition of *estuary* a success. Without you none of this would be possible.

The spring edition of the *estuary* is comprised of submissions received this semester and the best of the Fall edition. I found that the pieces in this collection reflected greatly on the space we as people occupy, and how we choose to live in that space. Whether it be love, the relation between material things and emotion, or nature, each of the pieces touched on a different aspect of the human experience. Several poems were inspired by works of art from the 30<sup>th</sup> Acadia Art Exhibition at the Acadia Art Gallery, celebrating creativity within our community. Art is a beautiful thing, but even more beautiful, I believe, is our ability to think outside of ourselves and ponder on what it means to be.



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*is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaw nation*

## **Night Sky Symphony // Jaimie Hamilton**

The old owl sits high in the dead of night  
Peering down on the city below him  
As the cool breeze shifts trees from left to right—  
Leaves sing a symphony, a solemn hymn

A tree, a forest, an old barn to roost  
Are all resting places for the night owl.  
Houses below remain unintroduced,  
Life below will always hear the howl

Though the houses below can hear his call  
That echoes through the air, shrill and knowing  
These two strange lives that never meet at all  
All that's in common, the moon is glowing

Oh how two lives can be so disparate  
Sharing the night sky is how they bear it



**Mu ni'n wisun na (That is not my name)**  
**// Cara Burton**

Are you waking up or going to sleep?  
How many claimed you to cherish or reap?

Do you command pride or mourning in your presence?  
Are you painfully old or in adolescence?

You gaze out, not down below  
but your reflection sinks to our ancestors' core

If I showed you, would you recognize the bow,  
And did they assault you in the war?

Crown land, but look at the difference in care  
See the caribou's fate, compassion and disregard laid bare

Do you lust for the east or west?  
Would you cut your roots to float somewhere with no  
crest?

Did Glooscap's pinky crumb you off?  
Did God forget to sew you on?  
Or were you meant to be a coin or arrowhead slotted in  
the pond?

Is your name *Maskusetik*, *High Island*, or *Isle Haute*?  
And are you going to sleep or waking up?

*Inspired by Bob Hainstock's High Island #3*

## **Creatures From Home // Laura Taggart**

I am hesitant to write the stories that spark in my mind when I am amongst the forest. My imagination could not concoct anything new about these old woodlands, whose sounds and dark corners have been subject to thousands of minds before mine. To fabricate a story or entity from my imagination in this old land is to conjure something that already exists. Something already born of another mind and circumstance. This I dare not do. My life on this land was built on a foundation of red brick and red blood. I know not of the rules of the forest, only the mock European structures that rudely interrupt it. The beings of local folklore had no say in the conditions of my being here and I had no learning of their ways.

If I may compare the forests to the bottom of the ocean or the farther corners of outer space. It is an expanse of such unadulterated vastness that the thought of imposing ownership or laws is ridiculous if not insulting. The forest is sovereign, our laws and in some cases our logic do not apply there.

This land is known only to my body but not my bloodline, I do not have the warnings and intuition of a soul whose family has been navigating these forces since time immemorial. The monsters I was told of as a child were not of this environment. I was raised on tales of dragons, unicorns, and the Loch Ness monster. The cells in my body feel memory of the rolling fields of Europe, the lapping waves and stone castles of the British Isles. But history has put me here and I feel I am imposing into a longstanding contract that I was not involved in. These creatures are not in the memory of my ancestors and my soul is naked to their forces. I should not draw the attention of the ineffable, so I often choose to write about

my ancestral places where I have never physically been. Places where the natural forces know my lineage. I was born here, lived here since, but to an eternal one I am an alien. So when I look into the dark tangle of trees, the curves and craters of the mountains, or the slinking salmon filled rivers, I do not see my home, but a cautious host. And as any good guest I would not dare impose upon my host's privacy, or I may discover what I was not meant to find.

### **Fiddlehead // Nick Lundrigan**

the sensitive fern bristles, sage green, bracing to recoil  
from the incoming frost

the marsh surrounding the fern is the town's only  
attraction worth seeing but is annually forgotten when the  
greenery fades

temperatures gradually lower – soon, the marsh will  
freeze and the fiddleheads will form

I wish that I would be there to cup the fern in my hands  
and tell her she will be okay – that the frost will alter her  
state, yes, but change can be a good thing

my friends await the ice eagerly, but I do not share their  
joy  
next year at this time, I will warn the fern once more, and  
praise her beauty both before and after the frost



**Endless Winter // Makenzie Tavares**



Mother Earth grieves herself while she's still alive –  
a front row seat to her own murder.  
Her trees deemed more valuable as paper money,  
she's depleting – collapsing.  
She looks around her frantically –  
wonders when she became so ugly.  
She mourns the version of herself she once knew,  
beautiful, giving, abundant.  
In need of life support,  
she breathes uneven breaths.

## The Solarium // Sophie Ashton

They didn't know that I was right outside the solarium, very meticulously caring for the little bean sprout I had been growing. My mother would have had a fit if she had seen me covered in dirt, soil sinking into my nails as I patted it down into the pot. But in that moment, she was on the other side of the glass panels with my aunt Hattie, sitting in the crimson Muskoka chairs. I couldn't see their faces behind the greenery, but I could hear them chatting about all the things I always heard grown-ups talk about.

"I swear this summer is going to be the death of me," my mother's voice floated out as she adjusted her purple tank top.

"You're telling me," Hattie scoffed. "The humidity has made my hair blow up. You'd think we were back in the 80's!"

"I wish we were," my mother moaned, forlornly. "Imagine being young again and not having to use wrinkle cream."

I wiped my dirty hands through the tangles of hair that fell over my face and carefully lifted the watering can. At seven-years-old, I was doing my best to make my plants grow as fast as possible. I dumped the contents over into the plot, drenching the soil as the cold water overflowed onto my bare feet.

"When I was at the beach earlier, I saw a lady there who looked like a disaster, the poor thing." Hattie's voice travelled outward. "Her hairline was way back and you could tell she hadn't touched up her grays in weeks. It looked so dishevelled in the wind, too. I almost wanted to

offer her a comb, but she was busy chasing about four children.”

“Some people just don’t care about how they present themselves,” my mother sighed, reaching out to adjust a pot of tulips that were next to her. “God, I’m starting to sweat. Let’s go in and make one of those fat-burning smoothies I was telling you about. Besides, I’ll be needing to get the kids inside for dinner soon.”

I stepped back to admire my work. I was very proud and completely oblivious to the fact that the beans would never grow. Looking back into the solarium, I saw that they had gone inside. Instead, all I saw was my own reflection in the windows. Soil was sticking to my legs, arms, and even my face. It stained my clothes and was laced throughout my matted hair. I did look a bit messy. Really messy. Maybe I did need to brush my hair and put on some clean clothes. And also some shoes, perhaps. God, my nails were disgusting, and I definitely needed to wash myself if I was about to join everyone else for dinner. I had never paid any attention to stuff like this before, but now I couldn’t ignore it. I tried to recall how I had let myself get so dirty as I left my gardening behind, rushing inside to get cleaned up.





**Emma Hamill // Lavandula**

**My Thoughts on the Newly Installed Wolfville Sign**  
**// Ewan MacLean**

Elaborate dog breeds fill the crammed streets  
guiding their masters to a plastic mass  
where once farming and study used to meet  
at last the window is touchscreen. Alas!

I stood in vain atop the pressboard cross  
and watched Blomidon while the day grew late.  
Left to rust where once lay track, train and moss  
crucifixion clad in denim, my fate.

Watching from your Victorian cottage  
the spread of flames claiming home after home.  
The shops one by one, victims to hostage  
I fight the young signs of Stockholm syndrome.

Please burn your condos to the ground for me  
so when I return no sign must I see.

## Whispers of the Tides // Maddy Nielsen

it was a fabulous day  
to see the outdoors  
to see something many have seen a hundred times,  
the beauty of blomidon cape

high on the tops of the beach  
watching the wind  
rustle,  
tickle,  
stir,  
the branches on the trees

the wind,  
gentle as a whisper  
much gentler than the cerulean tide  
that rages down below  
continually,  
relentlessly,  
churning  
like an unforgiving hourglass

up here,  
at the tops of the beach  
i hear the whispers of the tide  
- the wind!  
lapping over my ears like the water on the muddy sand  
rustling the branches  
and the great green blades of grass

and if you listen closely  
stories adorn the wind!  
stories of  
travellers,

lovers,  
weary men,  
dreamers.

voices in different languages,  
telling their stories in harmony  
years of history  
wrapped up into  
whispers of the tide.

*Inspired by Janice Best's Oil Painting Blomidon Beach*

## **Acadia's Heart // Emma Benjamin**



**Whimsy // Velinka Fernandes**

In the gallery, surrounded by others sharing this hue,  
a painting of snowmen, its background, blue.  
They do their laundry, they play and enjoy,  
a pair of them even appear to build a boy!  
The snowbabies, all gathered in a wheelbarrow,  
I wonder, what would they look like in a sombrero?  
Which brings me to the summer, what happens then?  
Will they make it through the season, or have to start  
again?

*Inspired by Rosalind House Cross's Paper Collage Whimsy*

## **Deserved // Cameron MacDonald**

I had been to that scrapyard before. It was one of those piles you find while wandering the backwoods of Nova Scotia. Most often they're made up of cars or trucks or buses, doors rusted and mossed, windows shattered in green crystals or cracked like an arid floor. Sometimes there's other garbage or temporary shelters, plastic bottles strewn empty or full of urine. The scrapyard was no mere garbage pile, however. Within was a collapsed chimney, a ruined trailer, sheets of desolate glass and mounds of tires. It was the sort of place that attracted our undeveloped frontal lobes.

I showed my two friends where it was. Not far from the trail, really in the middle of the woods. The air was thick. We were alone. We put our bikes on the ground and started looking around for little discarded items, funny pieces of writing. A disembodied leather steering wheel. A vulgar argument scrawled seemingly by separate individuals on the inside of the trailer. The real draw of the place was the atmosphere. Especially in the springtime. A real post-apocalypse. A modern ruin. When I had come to similar places before I had felt at peace, but this time was different. Maybe it was coming with a group, or some rouge gamma ray. I don't know. We got bored. Our actual intentions revealed themselves. Fire and sword. The sky opens up. We pick up rubble and throw it at shrieking glass, beat rusted metal with rusted metal. All this stuff is already broken and decaying. What difference does it make?

Noise is what it makes. Too much noise. We see a figure approach. My heart in my throat. The jig is up. It's either ditch the bikes or die right there. My friends don't run. "It'll be fine," Jack, the taller one says. Shit. I guess

I'll die with them. The figure reaches us. He looks like a hardworking guy. Flannel and tobacco. Unhappy. "Fuck you guys doin'," he says. It's not a question.

"We didn't mean any trouble," tries Robbie, the shorter friend.

"You're fuckin smashin and stealin shit, that's trouble. How'd you like it if I was smashin your bikes?" He points behind him.

"Not much."

At this point I'm too focused on not pissing myself to remember everything. I lie about where I'm from when asked. The man reaches and grabs a rusted crowbar out of Jack's hand and for a second it's all over. I see a vision of my friend crumpled and red in the dirt. My fault. I brought him here. Just let it be me. Let the hammer fall upon me.

"Get the fuck outta here," were the last words the hardworking guy spoke to us. No blood, no cops. We get the fuck outta there.

I think about this day now. Sometimes I can extend an olive branch to my younger, dumber, miscreant self. Sometimes I think if the world was fair he'd have gotten what he deserved.

***Baxter's Fall // Carson Harrison***

My friend has two sides,  
He separates them by putting up a large rushing wall.  
One is light and bright, clean, and shaped by the sun.  
He mirrors it with shadows where the sun does not shine,  
It becomes more covered with time when the passage  
breaks him down.

He changes with the seasons, and his patterns become  
more predictable over time.  
The melting of the ice reveals his secrets,  
The sun makes him weak and weary.  
He places his guard down and lets the light penetrate  
his core,  
From there I see sides of him I never thought I could see.

He separates himself from me, more than an arm's  
length away.  
I wish he could be closer, so I could let his cool breeze  
overcome me.  
It's not like I couldn't reach him if I tried,  
But it takes time to get into his heart.

Once I reach his core, I look again at his two sides.  
I can reach out and grab hold of the light.  
It can pull me up from the depths and build me up.  
But the darkness won't.  
I can't grab onto anything,  
He pushes me away.  
I slide deeper into the depths of his soul without  
discovering anything at all.

I take a step back, to where I was before.  
I see two sides.  
They are separated by a rushing powerful wall.



The darkness seeks to push me away.  
And so, I gravitate towards the light.  
The light supports me and guides me home,  
While the shadows of the darkness remain a mystery.

*Inspired by Suzanne Patry's Oil Painting Baxter's Fall*



**Zircon Grain // Karen Brookman**

**A New Day // Seth Gledhill**



## **My Father's Piano // Olivia Hooper**

Atop a portable black stand, my father's piano resides,  
now in my possession,  
Its sleek frame pressed up against the wall,  
Hosting a symphony of keys in an array of black and  
white.

A sea of buttons and switches adorns its surface,  
Each one a gateway to endless possibilities,  
Creating an infinite realm of soundscapes.

Upon the first press of a key, the tune of a grand piano is  
released,  
Its rich tone flows through the air,  
A familiar sound, recognized from Beethoven's sonatas to  
Billy Joel's soft rock.

Perusing the list of selections, each function awaits,  
An electric pulse for "Sweet Dreams",  
The swell of a pipe organ for "Hallelujah",  
Kits of snares and record scratches comparable to a DJ's  
groove,  
And vocal functions of jazz singers singing "doo-wop".

Ascending the keyboard from left to right,  
Notes transition from deep resonances to lofty pitches,  
The texture of the keys glisten beneath the soft light's  
embrace,  
As my father's piano stands before me.

## **Becoming Memories // Mitch Nieuwenstein**

Mother,  
Where is my mother?  
She is not found.  
Oh, Alah.  
One more martyr.  
Human,  
You see us less than human.  
Are We Cattle?  
Open air,  
there is nowhere to run away.  
With all my strength and will  
I pray to god,  
Please just let us be.  
Winners,  
There are no winners,  
Just victims.  
We will become memories in time.  
We will stand and rebuild.  
All is lost.  
Holocaust.  
Paid with our souls.  
Who will save me?

## **Loving from Afar // Caraline Tompkins**

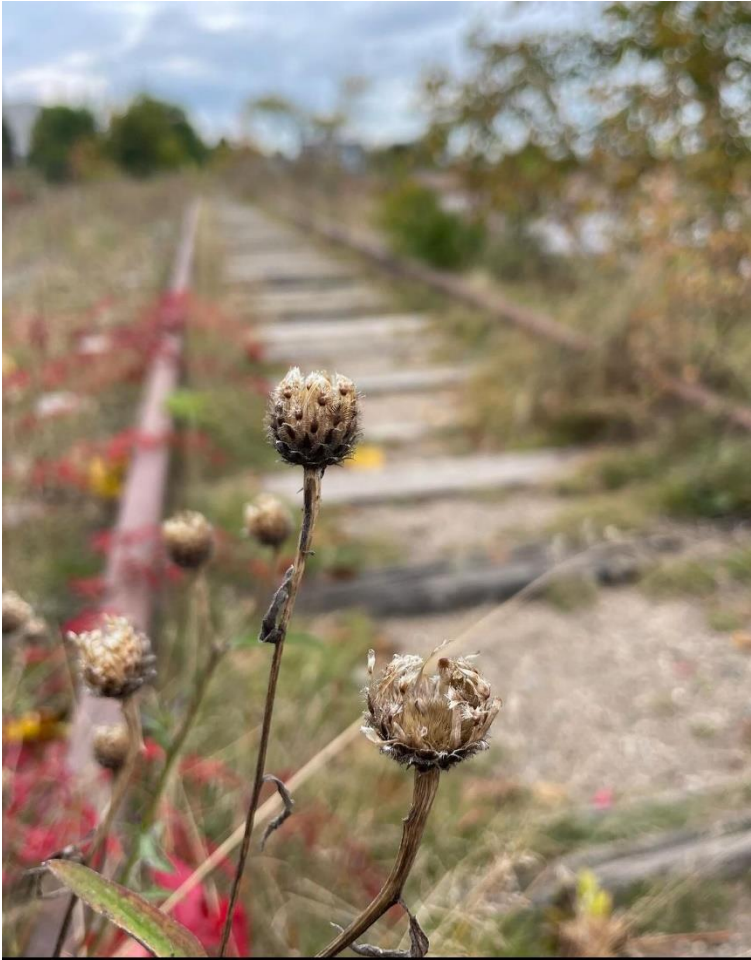
The old man watched from the back as they gathered around the stone. A whole family, all dressed in mourning black, huddled together. He could hear their sniffles, taste the coming rain, smell the chill in the air. He watched on in silence, unseen, uncomforted. There was no light in his eyes. The wrinkles on his face and hands spoke of the man he was, the life he led. Widow, children, grandchildren all standing together, out of reach, but still in view. The daughter told her husband how she couldn't believe he was gone, how she wished she could've seen him one last time. Her brother lamented how he just wished they could've said goodbye, could've been by his side when he died. The eldest grandchild tugged at his aunt's coat, cheeks rosy from sadness and cold, tears in the blue eyes he got from his grandfather. The youngest grandchild was cradled by her grandmother, gentle fingers caressing the hair on the infant's fragile little head.

## **When Rhythm Returns in the Hollow // Zach Strong**

i turned away from Father for the first time in a while.  
just didn't want to bother with the penultimate trial.  
many forms He takes, but never one as bright as this one.  
a drooling, panting li'l mutt, i see my chance, so off i run.  
Her name was Vee.  
possessed no V.  
She made me be  
Her fantasy:  
translucency  
no one could see.  
i was the sea:  
Her company.  
then Coralice destroyed Her after time and perseverance.  
the world was out of order until Nothing's interference.  
in time, i saw the danger-laden path i was to wander.  
it wasn't worth a wager so i left to sit and ponder...  
so clearly i see  
that my body is free  
but in lifting the price  
i have none to entice.  
envies and angers  
are pitiful anchors  
that Father has banished  
without feeling famished...  
would Father ever help me, or is Sin His sole intention?  
my mind recalls distinctly that He offered me protection.  
a life removed from Sire is a frightening life to follow,  
yet Coralice's choir offers rhythm in the hollow

## **The Woman I Love // Samantha Dempsey**

How does one fill their cup of all  
The waters of the world,  
Bear every fever of womanhood,  
Scale the mountain of paternal scrutiny,  
Simply to ratify one's love?  
Should that not be natural?  
Are the ties between us  
Simply transparent, unless history  
Had paired us together eons ago?  
For fiscal heartbeats must be  
Stronger than ours, naturally.  
How does one be known for  
Warm passion before hot,  
Dear before randy, lovers  
Before experiments?



**On the Right Track // Jazmyn Yalowica**



## **I Read Somewhere That to Love Someone is to Let Them In // Max Rowell**

i read somewhere that to love someone is to let them in  
so i imagine we're in a near-empty parking lot  
under a blazing summer sky, and you don't even know that  
you're holding the car keys. i think i have been standing  
for years by the locked passenger door, just waiting for the  
telltale click.

i picture next a soft blue flower on a shuttered window sill,  
and me, the afternoon sun stretching out to reach you,  
searching for the smallest gap in the blinds.

there is a book we both wish was written,  
so i know you know how it feels to wait. we've often seen  
that time can slide on puppet strings, though i've never quite  
mastered the pull of it myself. in any case, i've been careful  
to stay outside the walls until you're willing to lower the  
bridge.

know that i've been ringing the doorbell for hours, you just  
haven't really heard me yet.

in my mind, you ask me if i love you  
and i show you a thousand things i've written that  
were all supposed to be for other people—except there are  
no other people. there is only me, salt-stained pyramus,  
and this ocean between us, and the wood with which i am  
frantically  
building a boat. if you love me, i'm begging you to show it;  
please, i am here,  
let me in.

## **Strange Fruit // Lauren Inglis**

I said we could make a life together  
and now she's eating all my fruit.  
I spent all this time reminding her to think twice,  
that eventually the apples would become bruised,  
the oranges would become moldy,  
and we would be the same—  
either happy and dead  
or miserable and living.  
I brought up my family and how their core  
left me full of rot, and  
you'll rot, too,  
but for some reason  
she stayed.  
Maybe she likes the mess,  
the rotting,  
the decay.  
I should stop being ungrateful.  
We're still here,  
together,  
dancing in the kitchen,  
and I can thank whatever's up in the sky for  
keeping us alive.  
I know there's something,  
but I sure don't believe it's God.

## Mangoes // Angel Percentie

“Well, what do we have here.” Nomi crouched to her knees until they were face to face. It was a difficult thing to do given the way he swung, head to the earth and feet to the sky. Still the boy thrummed against the tree’s grasp, his limbs tangling further into the branches.

Nomi stretched out her wrinkled hand and poked around his frame, dragging her cane through the leaves until she stopped at his perfectly rounded pockets. “You a thief boy?” the old woman asked.

“N-n-no Ma’am.” He looked above her to where the tree swelled with fruit. Mangoes hung like amber. Pulp, ripe, and yellow as the sun. The boy had thought so when he first passed. Temptation sat on his shoulder, the heat scratched at his throat and tickled his stomach. Before he could think he hurdled over the barbed fence.

Through the window blinds, Nomi spotted him. She watched and waited. The gall of the boy to mount her tree, in her yard. She’d fix him straight. The boy with no sense of the matter continued to take in the mangoes. He plucked them down by the cluster and when he drank, it was the nectar of the gods. The juice leaked from his lips and pooled at his chin. Quickly he climbed higher, sticky palms and greedy fingers pilfering Nomi’s tree. He took from it until his hands were full and the poor tree could only take from him.

Nomi’s hard cane circled his pockets once more. Mangoes ruptured as they fell from his pocket. The sweet things browned before his eyes, yellow flesh bursting

from the skin. He felt each mango splash as they hit the ground. And when the bees swarmed, Nomi smiled.

**Hawaiian Pollinator // Hayley Newell**



## **The Rocking Chair // Jenna Symonds**

Oak wood creaking with every tilt  
Back and forth, back, and forth  
What was once her mother's, now hers  
My mother's. A half broken wooden arm  
from the wear and tear of memories  
Story after story, cradled in her arms  
A symbol of endurance and motherhood  
A reflection of a young mother  
A once constantly in motion object  
Now unmoving and soundless  
Unused and empty  
But still holding the weight of a mother's memorable  
souvenir

The echo of the past rocking  
Back and forth, back and forth

## **Little Red Vest // Abby-Jean Gertridge**

When I have convinced myself I am incapable of love  
I find a special comfort  
In my childhood bear  
Not for the nostalgia, nor a hope to revert to a simpler  
time,  
But as living evidence of my love  
Worn directly through the fabric,  
Into the matted fur,  
And tangled in the remains  
Of his little red vest



**estuary // Spring 2024**



