

pearl press



# ISSUE NO. 22: GOLDEN HOUR

September 2024

**This issue of Pearl Press features work from:**

Adam Thorman, Larena Nellies-Ortiz, Benjamin Littler, Rowan Tate, Renee Paiement, Elisa Michelet, Jacq Roderick, Riley Goodman, Manuel A. Elías, C. Bay Milin, Holaday Mason, Rona Bar and Ofek Avshalom, Lillian Jenner, Ellen Henning, Cassie Jain, Ola Faleti

**Cover image:** Riley Goodman

**Curated by:** Delilah Twersky



Last light of the day, June 20, 2022: Adam Thorman



Chimera: Larena Nellies-Ortiz



## IT IS JUNE

you return to me  
in the simple skin of an italian summer, birds on  
sun-washed balconies,  
milky sleep and ocean poems, the endless desert  
of a nostalgic longing,  
childhood. i hold the shape of you  
as a tender skyline  
against the silhouette of time.

Rowan Tate



Days of Heaven: Renee Paierment



Last light of the day, January 12, 2024: Adam Thorman

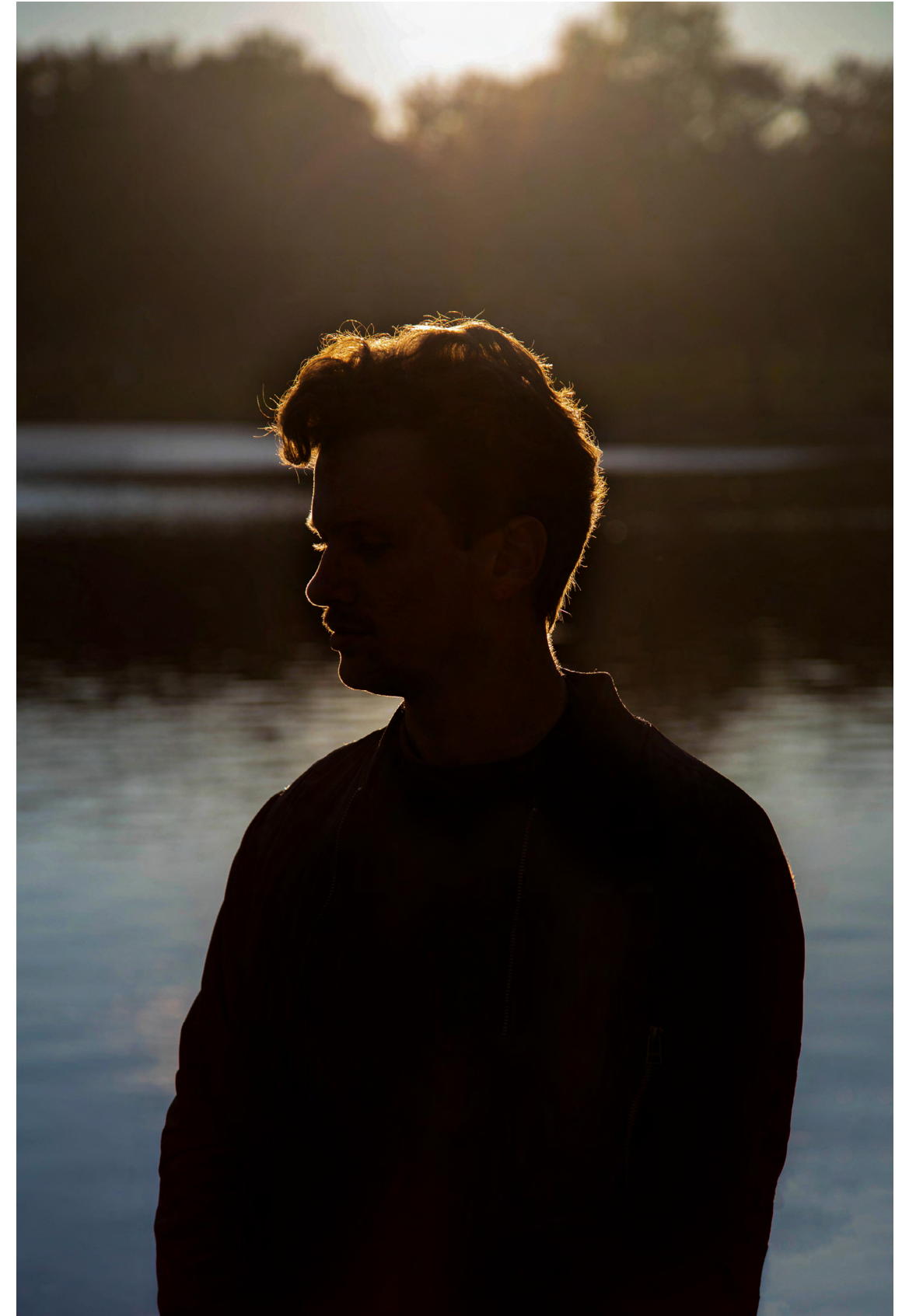
## THE BROKEN HOUR

the sun cracking in pieces as heat released  
on the summer morning. there's nothing good about  
4am, the door's stiff with resentment  
and its own shadow, there's countless  
altars being born before worship  
might begin. these trees and their kindness  
are mangled in the 60 minute shitshow,  
the window also godless. how to be touched  
without the mortal recoil. how to  
be everlasting without resisting.  
there's too much evil to make more of it  
when the world turns itself in on you.  
did you know a wrinkle is a gift? look  
how time folds for you.

Jacq Roderick



Kaki: Elisa Michelet



Sundown At Poplar Vale (2021): Riley Goodman

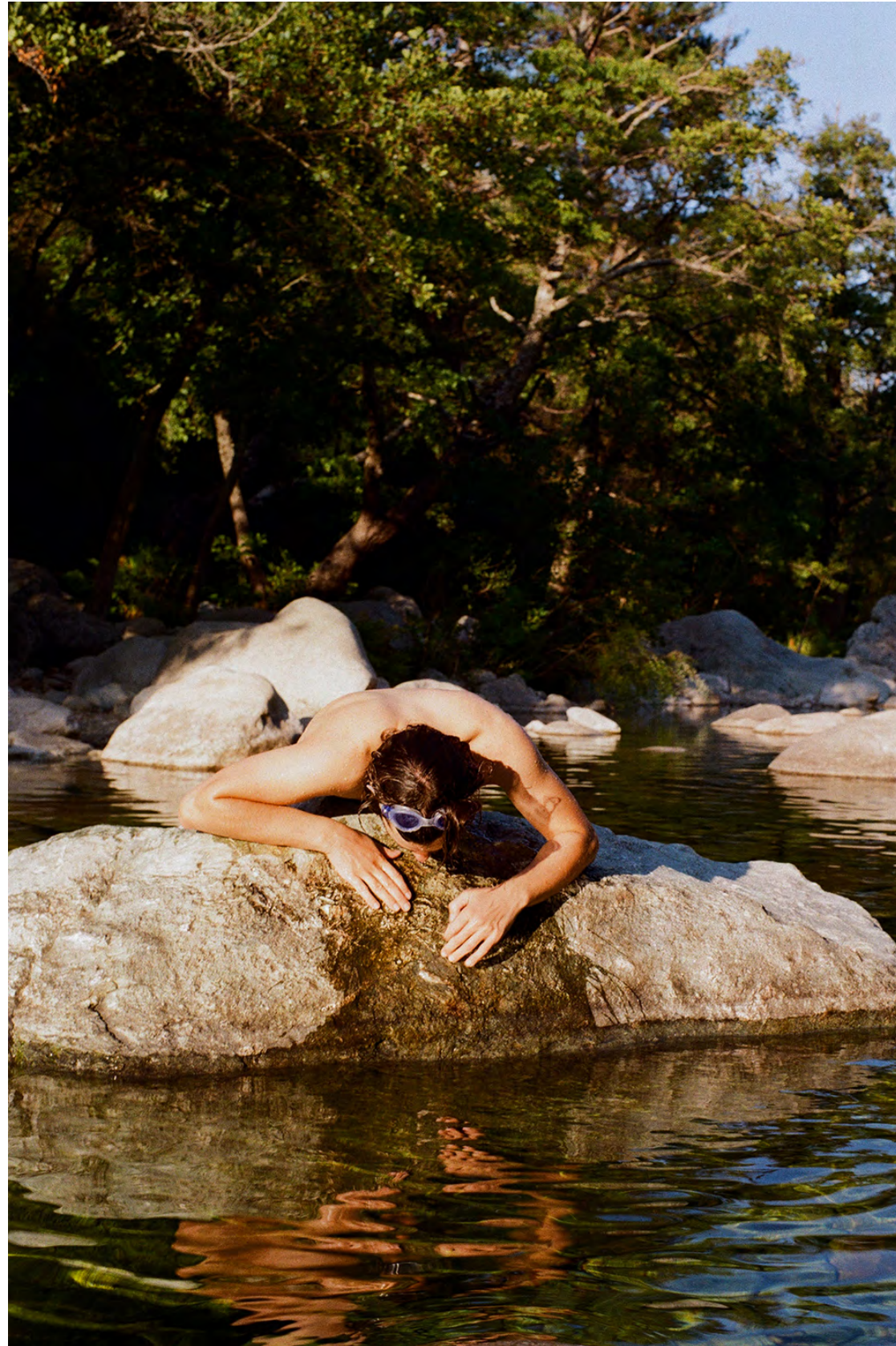




Malecón: Manuel A. Elías



Hither & Thither: C. Bay Milin



Lingering: Elisa Michelet



## LATE SUNLIGHT LIKE MONET

1.

Searching for gilded snowmelt ponds shrouded in the woods,  
we decipher our way  
over the decaying storm fall hidden in dense lodgepole pines.  
Sliced with sunset,  
there are so many hidden  
sides of things:  
fire on the oceans behind us,  
the cries of gulls spiraling updrafts,  
amber clouds too  
as if clouds could burn all regrets away.  
No, it's not selfish to push,  
to mount sundown, strip beside  
you & enter the opal water— cast in liquid gold—  
no remorse.

2.

It's not selfish  
to be  
sliced with sunset.  
We decipher our way cast in liquid gold.

Holiday Mason



Chimera: Larena Nellies-Ortiz



Ezekiel in the golden hour: Rona Bar and Ofek Avshalom



Ezekiel in the golden hour: Rona Bar and Ofek Avshalom

# THAT WAS OUR MANSION.

She's driving me through one of the neighborhoods I would wander barefoot – or wade the water, which pooled at low sea levels, in storms. I try to see the city I grew up in from her eyes, but as we turn onto Coffee Pot Blvd. – or, over the bridge – viscerally, darkness overcomes my memory.

Struggle to recall little joys: bait supply and fishing in the bay. We drank Mountain Dew on the walk back, my sisters and I were once secure in the riches of this street.

The sun is bellying orange, and Alex's eyes are twinkly with the weed shared beneath the canopy, trash-ridden banyan tree – somebody's home, occupied briefly, we.

She jokes that I've been captive in her car, her driving, when I feel so guiltily I have held her warm against my chest, as a life-raft, in boating 'cross my memory.

Then, right here, and right again, I guide us out, out, out. I haven't come here since I moved back, I explain. I think she gets it. Already, she's tuned into my running. I think it's why she doesn't ask, *What happened to the mansion? Why did you leave?*

Lillian Jenner



Diving sunset: Manuel A. Elías





Dashed Dreams: C. Bay Milin

## LUCKY IN WISCONSIN

My mother and I were lost. We needed to call. Although we read the name once ours on a mailbox, the house and Uncle Fritz were nowhere. He told us he would stand outside with a cigarette. His daughter Sena and six dogs waited in the house. He fed us roast, whole peeled potatoes, and gravy. The butter, the photographs, the suds in the sink— all of it felt shadowed in a familiar kind of ache. When we left, an ashtray in our hair & clothes, we drove fast for beer. Slap-happy stupid with escape, belly up to the bar, we couldn't stop laughing about the absolutely absurd size of my father's brother's earlobes. Just the kind of thing my dad would have found funny, too, I knew. I was pleasantly dizzied by a pure kind of presence— something slightly psychedelic. Signs spoke in a language largely indecipherable, scattered like stars across our trip. The music on the radio in the yellow Bronco and the red graffiti suspended on an overpass praising the land of the living! felt fated. The twenty dollars dumped in the pull tab machine wasn't wasted. Every mismatched cherry, clover, peach, and blue bell was exactly where it needed to be.

Ellen Henning



When All The World Was Green: Benjamin Littler



Unkai: Elisa Michelet



## LETTER TO S. ON A COLD, FEBRUARY NIGHT

What if happiness was a hummingbird? It would announce itself with song and flutters, knock every heart into a corner of nectar. You know

me and my hows, my whys. My mind in overdrive. When I was a kid I was always afraid that the CO2 would kill us quietly. I'd

check the burner knobs just to be sure. You know I like to be ready with my paper and lists. I should know better. It's 5 am somewhere

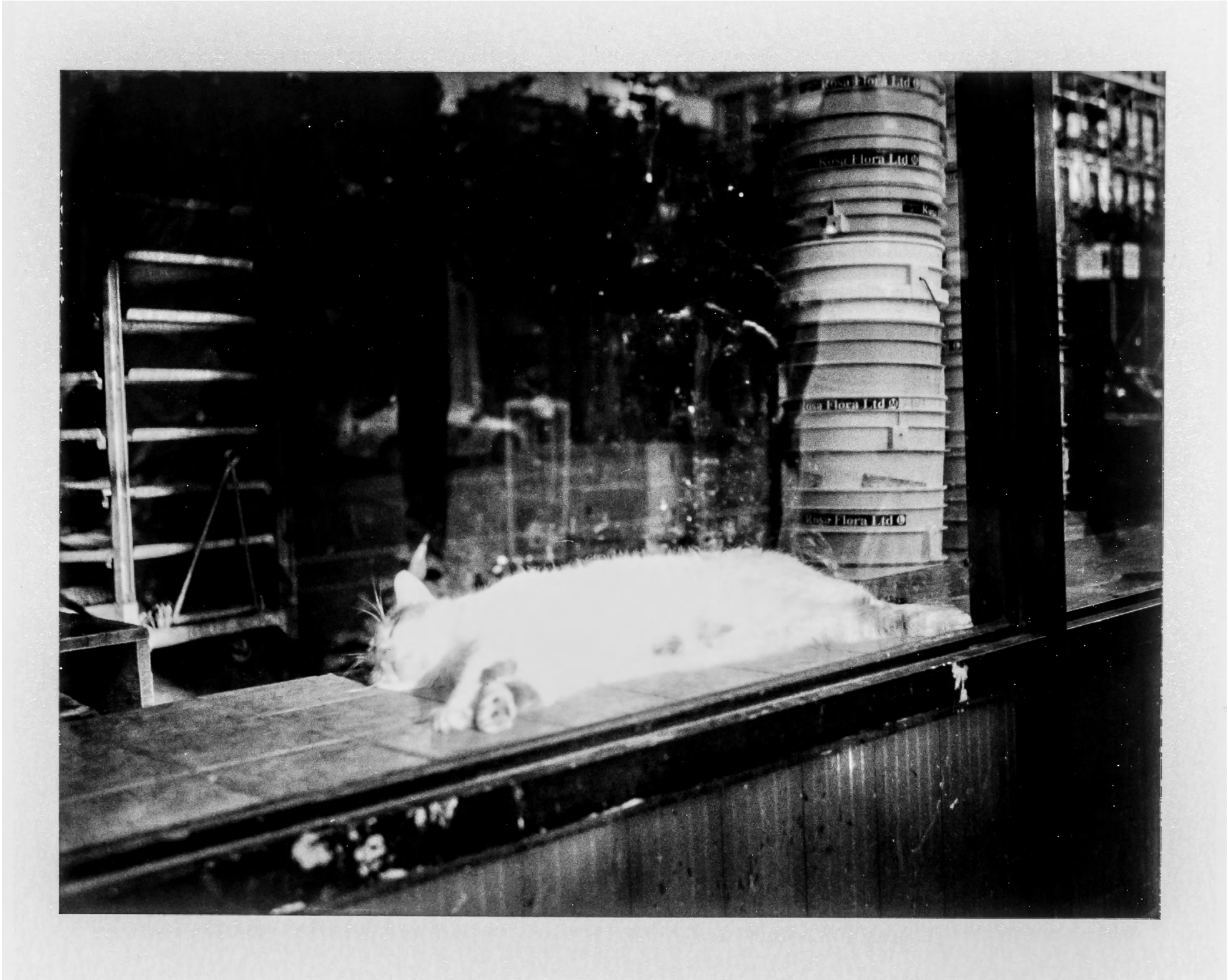
and someone is still, in sleep or meditation or death. I am a creature of comfort and sorrow. Of worry and "what if." What if I never find

my happiness. What if it's trapped in my sternum like a scared bird, bashing its body against a cage. I only know myself and my neural

pathways. How I connect dots: this happenstance led to this happen stance led to this crucifixion led to this holy, holy mess of guts, blood

and bone. You are a holy mess too, my friend. We will clean each other.

Ola Faleti



Bakery Catnap: C. Bay Milin



Mommy Hasn't Cut Her Hair Since the Pandemic: Cassie Jain

## POSTCARD FROM HOME

the world we were in is overgrown  
with the pit-pierced places in us we were afraid to give a name  
and sharper lines of sight.  
in it, we go foraging for selves  
across the sword-swish of time in the fall of its folds,  
unpeeling pasts from presents, the moth of a memory  
skewered  
with a toothpick  
to the yolk-yellow lamplight of this childhood bedroom  
where i am five years old and still cross-legged  
as if learning how to pray.

Rowan Tate







Meditative findings: Manuel A. Elías



Days of Heaven: Renee Paiement

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

[www.pearl-press.com](http://www.pearl-press.com)

Delilah Twersky  
Pearl Press  
©2024