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Untitled Photograph

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-Wan Dee Xiong
CSB '16

Conjured Bass

At pond's edge, the soft-bodied pollywogs
loll along shallows, soaking up the sun.
A bronze-blue dragonfly zigzags then hangs
immobilized, as if folded into a posture
of zazen. I am standing at the center
of a great stillness, where memory is focused
and pure, not thinking about death (the stealth
of time that scars the heart) but feeling the impress
of his arm wrapped over my arm, guiding me
through the motion of casting a line, prelude
to the conjuration of that leaping bass,
like a bent bow sprung by a cord of pain
whose twang is the ache of a steely string
that, in the aftermath of breaking, sings.

-Derek Otsuji
Honolulu, HI