

PERSIS KARIM

Accidental Architecture

The curve of a rock
at the apex of an arch
reminds me of this life—
its strange and accidental
architecture

of determination,
of absolute fragility—

that it could be toppled
by a wave or the weight
of gravity as it decides
to let go one day
or hold on— on another.

The carved-out hole
made by persistent
green tides, eager
invitation to touch
or pull back anything
not
anchored.

This hole, this absence
of certain stone,
its measured frame
of outlook, an outcrop
on the horizon of this
testament
shore.

Persis Karim is deeply honored to have been selected as a finalist for the 2019 Catamaran Poetry Prize for her manuscript, *Accidental Architecture*. As the child of immigrants from Iran and France, she's stitched together an understanding of herself, in large part, through poetry. Her poems have appeared in *Callaloo*, *Cassara*, *Reed Magazine*, the *New York Times*, *Poets and Dreamers*, and other publications. She is the Neda Nobari Chair and director of the Center for Iranian Diaspora Studies and a professor of comparative and world literature at San Francisco State University.

JULIE BROOKMAN

Porthole 51, 2019
Encaustic, Oil on plywood, 8 x 8 in



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