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## Conjured Bass

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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  
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