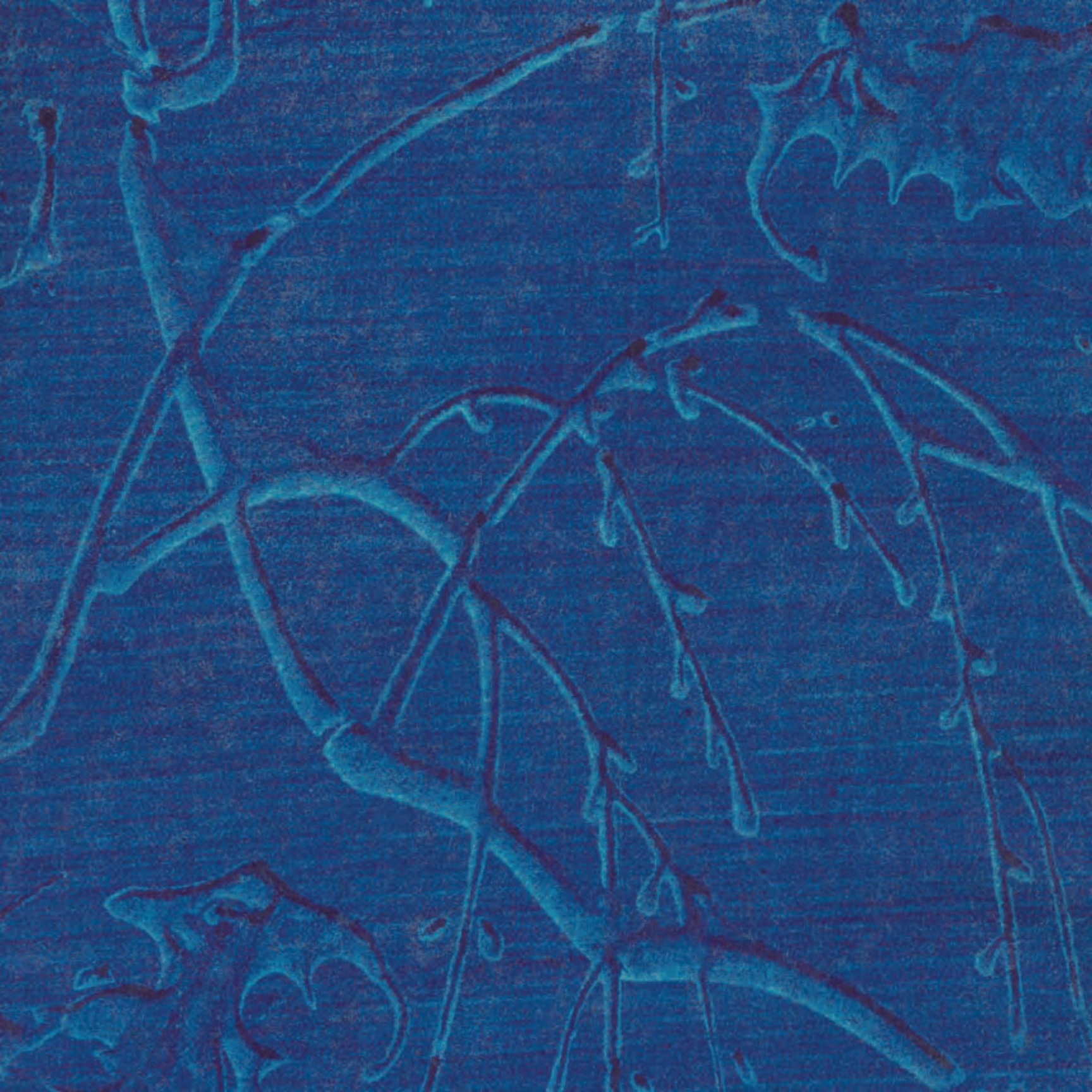




Eyeball Kick

Michael Dylan Welch



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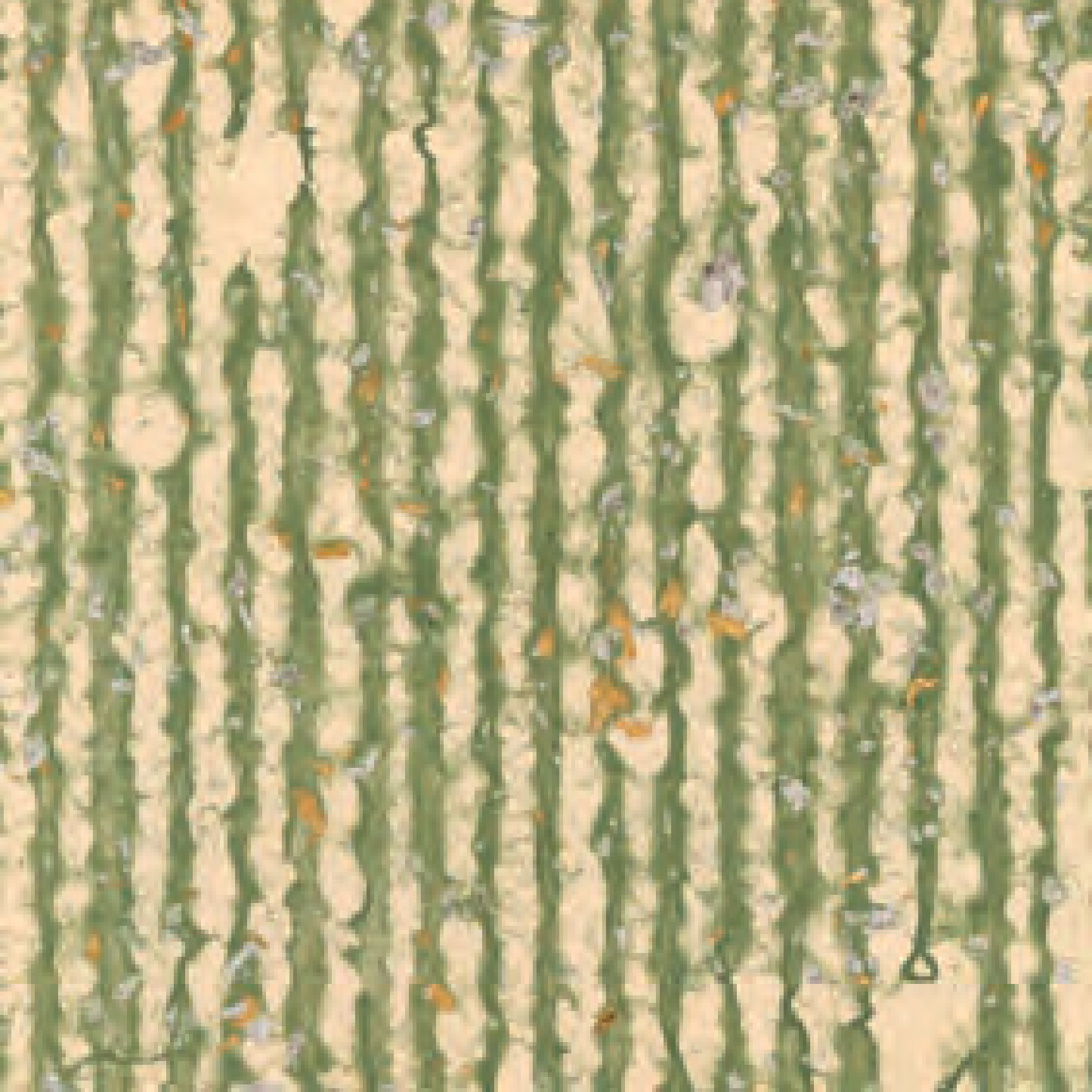


Wherever They Will

*"The advantage of the incomprehensible is that
it never loses its freshness." —Paul Valéry*

Each short poem in this collection presents a disjunction in the manner of what Allen Ginsberg conceptualized in the phrase "hydrogen jukebox"—originally from *Howl*, and later an opera by Ginsberg and Philip Glass. It's a deliberate compression of two disparate and unexpected elements—low and high, common and uncommon—in this case to the point of surrealism, designed to produce what Ginsberg called an "eyeball kick," or a double-take. It may well relate to Bashō's aesthetic ideal of *kōgo kizoku*, or "awakening to the high, returning to the low." I extend this idea into a sequence of poems (although the order may not matter) where the repeated phrase begins to act like a mantra. My poems written on the "seven suns" and "neon buddha" themes, and other sequences, spring from a similar impulse. Perhaps the present poems are more surreal, and less of a personal mythology. You are welcome to let them take you wherever they will.

*Michael Dylan Welch
Sammamish, Washington*



hydrogen jukebox
duende again
for breakfast

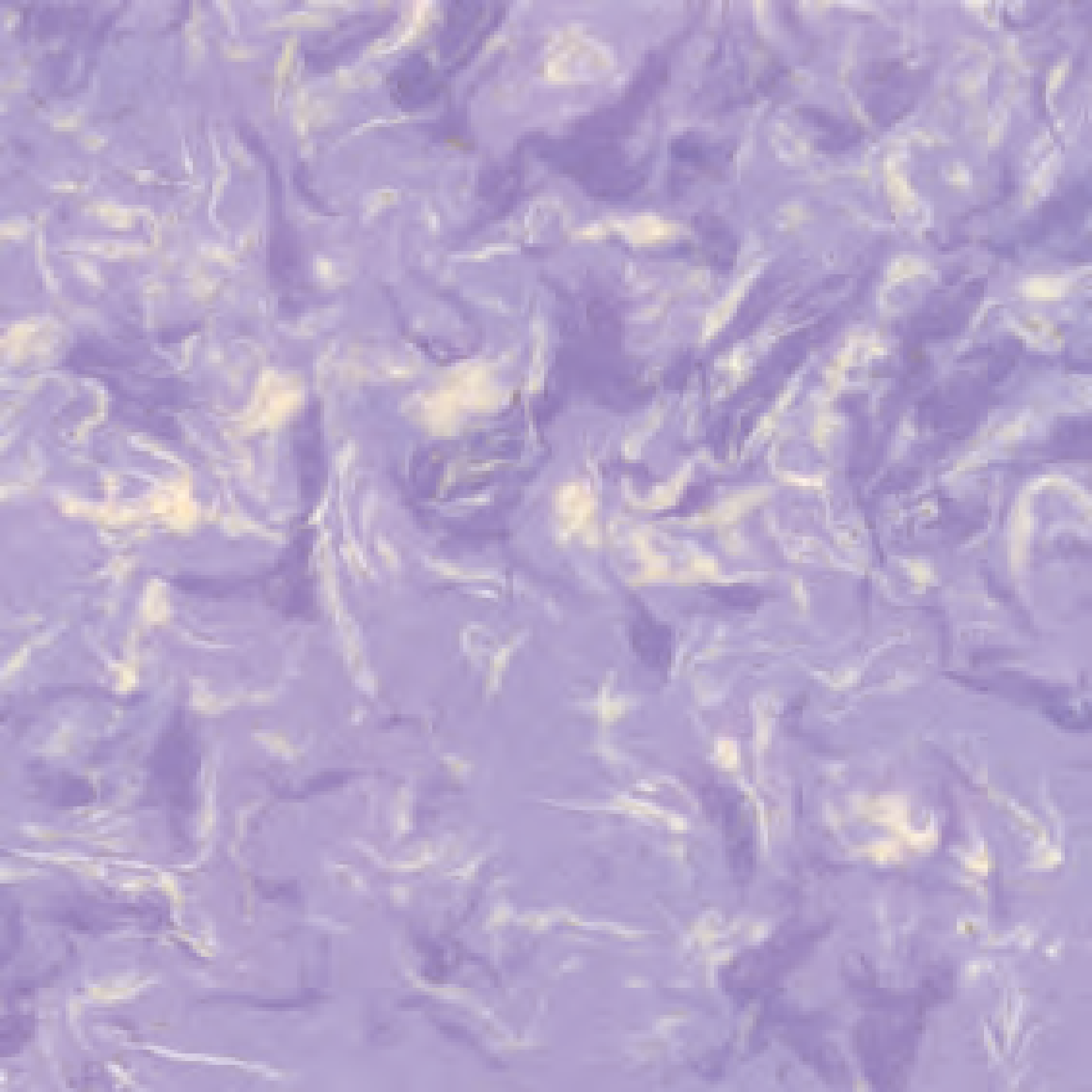
hydrogen jukebox
the wine glass broken
underfoot

hydrogen jukebox
the interior decorator
hands me a carpet sample

hydrogen jukebox
we both reach
for the dinner bill

hydrogen jukebox
blown to smithereens,
wherever that is

hydrogen jukebox
the dharma lion
crosses his chopsticks



hydrogen jukebox

the blip on the radar screen

disappears

hydrogen jukebox
plum blossoms
on the king's salad

hydrogen jukebox
the marching band
refuses to yield

hydrogen jukebox
the compass rose
is blooming

hydrogen jukebox
Hello Kitty
burned at the stake

hydrogen jukebox
the pizza place
on speed dial



hydrogen jukebox
a noodle escapes
from each of our spoons

hydrogen jukebox
I have misfiled something
in my mental file

hydrogen jukebox
I lose track
of the countdown

hydrogen jukebox
the cottage cheese
of memory

hydrogen jukebox
the meaning of existence
explained by Starbucks

hydrogen jukebox
a giraffe asleep
in the tuba



hydrogen jukebox

the aardvark

asks to go last

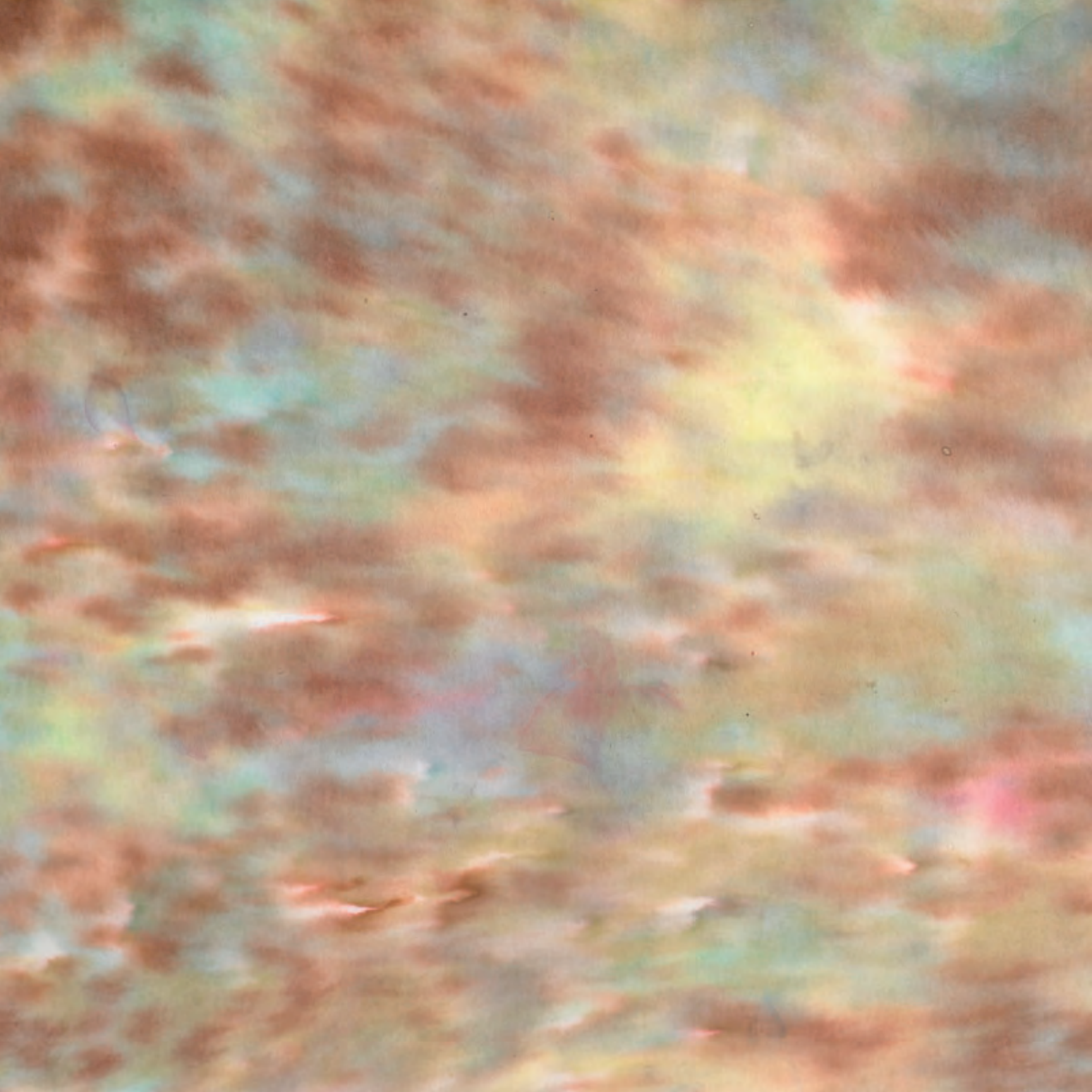
hydrogen jukebox
I slowly walk
my invisible dog

hydrogen jukebox
the solipsist
asks me the time

hydrogen jukebox
anarchy
in the OK corral

hydrogen jukebox
no shirt, no shoes,
no service

hydrogen jukebox
objects in mirror are closer
than they disappear



hydrogen jukebox

at exit 39

I think of you

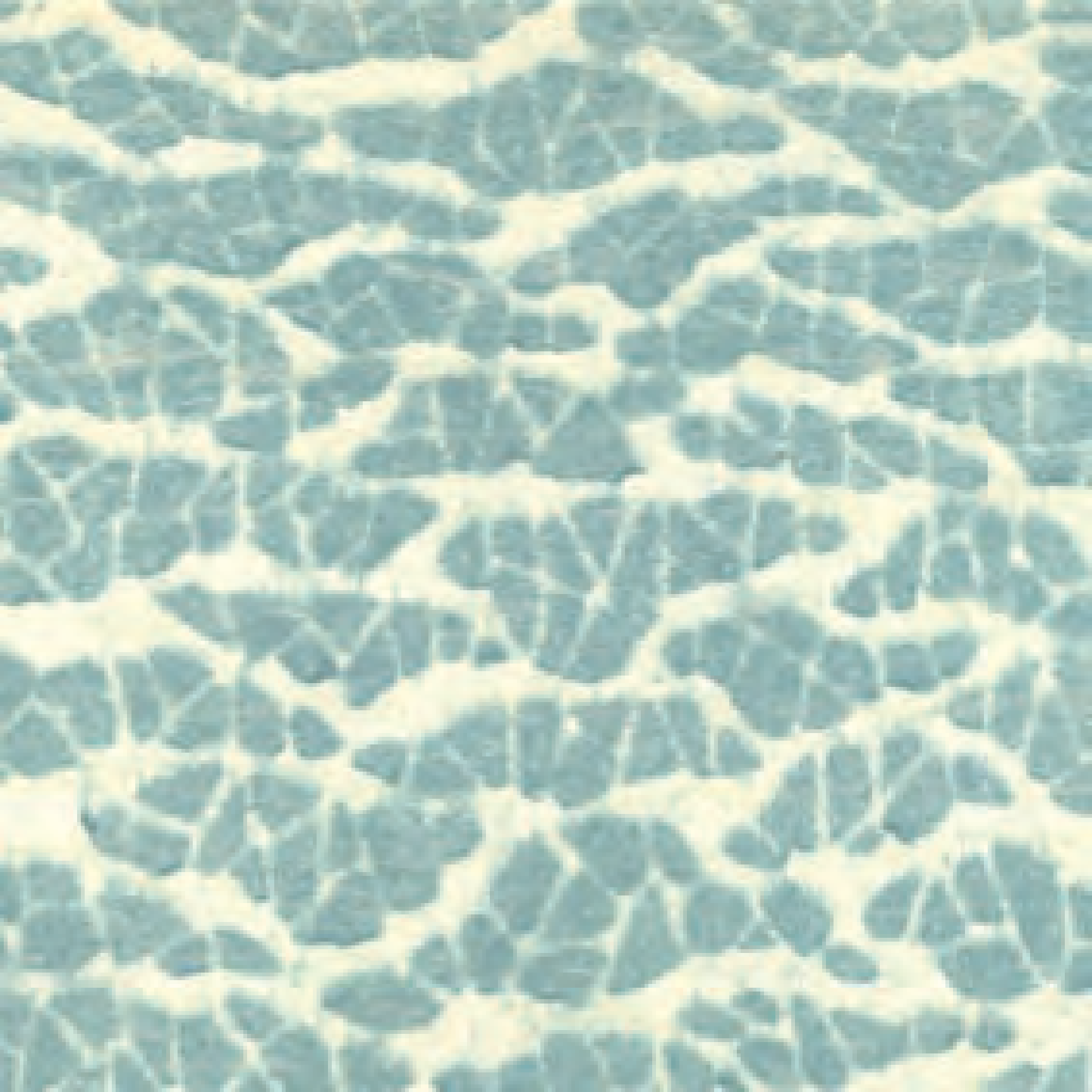
hydrogen jukebox
the library card
from where I used to live

hydrogen jukebox
the spoon's antiquity
melts in the fire

hydrogen jukebox
the scythe of lies
you tell me in moonlight

hydrogen jukebox
stepping in the same stream
twice

hydrogen jukebox
soldiers of misfortune
on the news again



hydrogen jukebox
latter-day rain
dashing the steeple

hydrogen jukebox
my canker sore comes back
where you kissed me

hydrogen jukebox
you promise the stars
not to smoke

hydrogen jukebox
the violin hero
kicking ass

hydrogen jukebox
gift certificates in the mail
from the podiatrist

hydrogen jukebox
pink elephants
show me home



hydrogen jukebox
the eruption
of her sad eyes

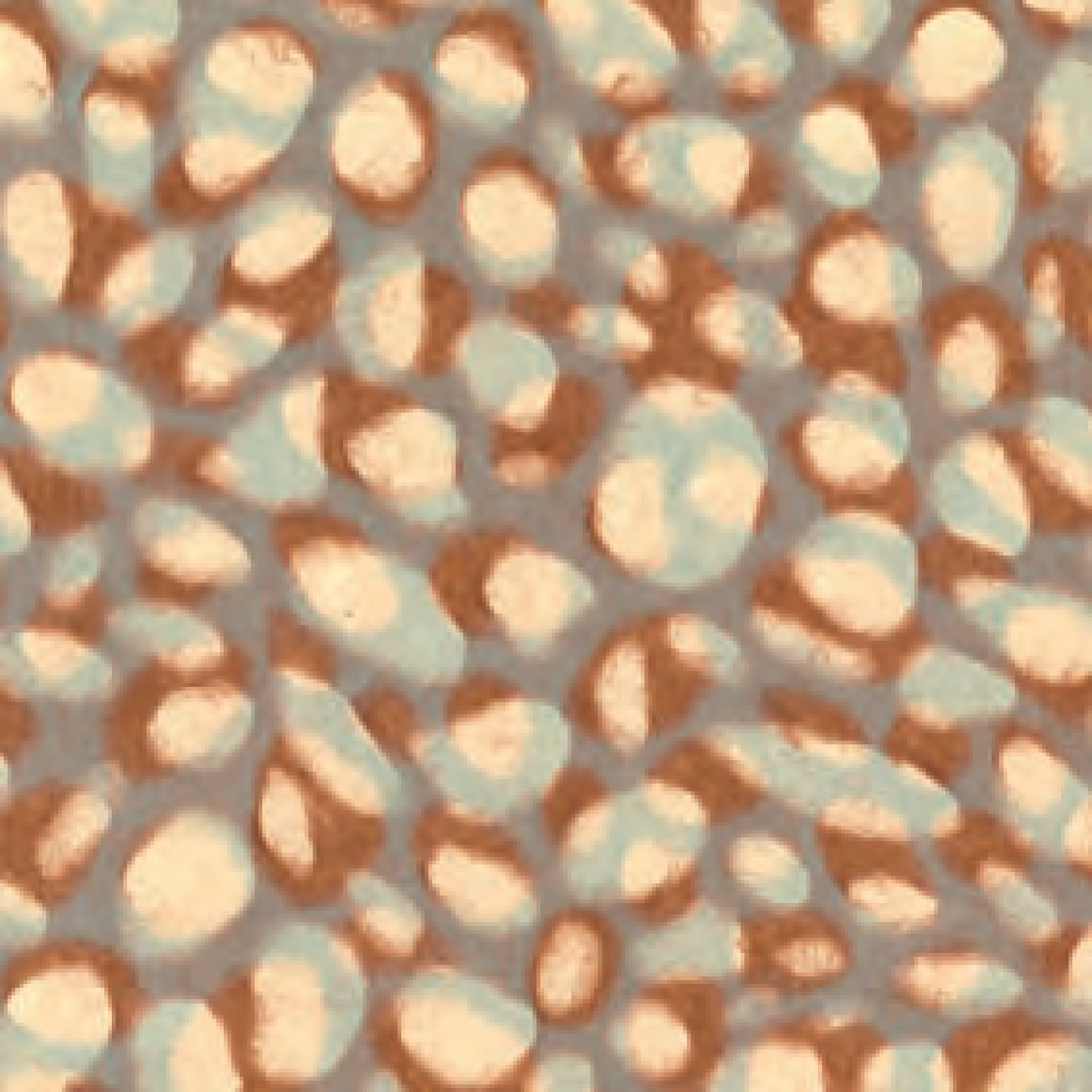
hydrogen jukebox
she interrupts
my knock-knock joke

hydrogen jukebox
the industry
of kites

hydrogen jukebox
parental rights
are all she has left

hydrogen jukebox
what if God
had a website?

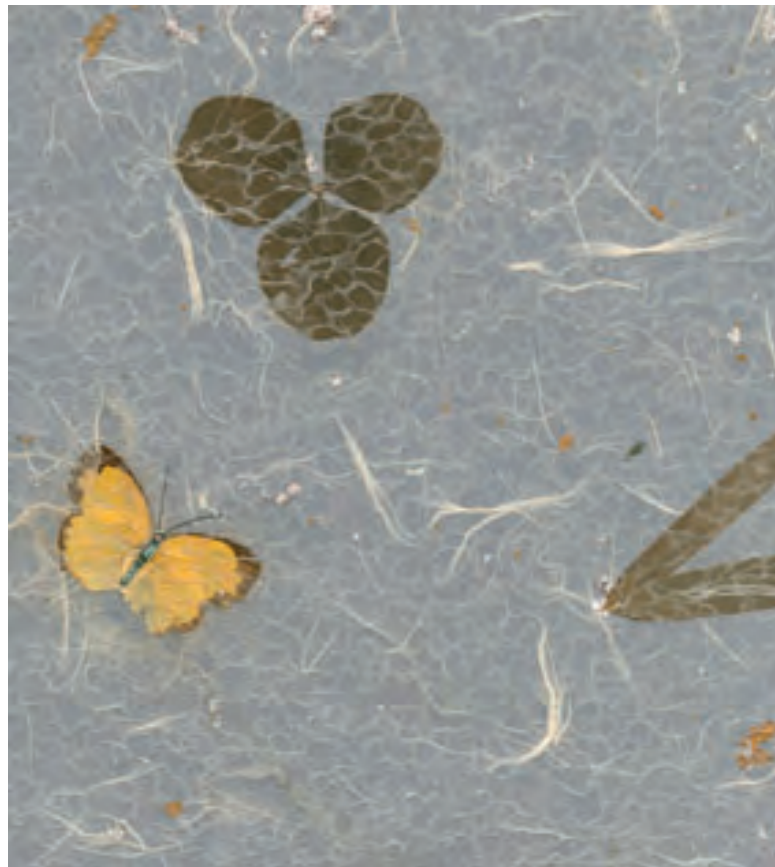
hydrogen jukebox
he beats her
with a rainstick



Michael Dylan Welch lives with his wife and two children in Sammamish, Washington, near Seattle. He perpetuates National Haiku Writing Month (www.nahaiwrimo.com) and his personal website is Graceguts (www.graceguts.com). Michael writes most of his short poems in small pocket-sized notebooks. He usually doesn't publish any poems from a given notebook until it's finished, which usually takes at least a year (about 600 haiku or tanka). He's several notebooks behind. These poems were written in 2009.



The author wishes to acknowledge the pothole on 228th Street.





hydrogen jukebox
it's the end of the word
as we know it



