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## Yemassee Interview: 5 Questions with Kimberly Reyes

Kimberly Reyes' "The Blueprint" appeared in Issue 23.2. 1. How would you describe your journey as a poet? Meandering. As a first-gener...

### Yemassee 2017 Interview

1. How would you describe your journey as a poet?

Meandering. As a first-generation college student my parents and my teachers always pointed me towards journalism—the *pragmatic* way to make money as a writer. But I hated that world and it hated me and it wasn't until returning to grad school in my 30's, to figure out why I was so off path, that the path lit up.

2. What kind of poems/poets are you most drawn to?

Ones that tell a visceral story without being intentionally abstruse. Say it, say it in a way we maybe haven't heard before, but say it clearly.

3. Has there been a particular something (idea/image/phrase/quote/obsession) knocking around in your head lately?

Ha, always. Now it's surviving emotionally, in the skin that I'm in, in the present dystopia.

4. Can you talk about your poem "The Blueprint" and how it came to be?

Gwendolyn Brooks is my favorite poet and when I'm at my best as a writer/person I like to think of us being in a conversation. I imagine a long lineage of people that came before me, some related by blood, others language, and I think of us as serving one purpose.

5. If you could share one piece of advice with your fellow poets, what would it be?

Find your poet people and protect them fiercely. We are all we have.