

BARBARA VAUGHN

Plotos, 2014
Archival pigment print, 59 x 82 in



COURTESY: DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

EMILY KURN

Hens

The hens emerge from their coop.
In a tumult of mottled feathers and ruddy combs,
they dig into the dirt, determined
to find some prize there.

This is all they know,
sleek beaks pecking for worms
and slug eggs in the soil. Nothing rests,
warm bodies rise with the sun every day

in hopes of making some small discovery
to carry home. Desire is written
into us. Night comes. The hens return
to their roost. Wings are folded,

the temporary surrender
of liftoff. It's the same thing over and over.
The bright tumble into morning,
the world within beak's reach pecked at and torn,

slim red heads darting. But look,
when you reach one hand into the rubble:
two tan eggs, flawless and warm
and waiting to be cracked open.

Emily Kurn received the Jason Wenger Award for Excellence in Creative Writing from the University of Alaska Anchorage, where she graduated in 2014 with an MFA in poetry. She holds a BA from Brandeis University and has served as associate poetry editor for *Cirque* journal. Her work most recently appeared in the anthology *The Burden of Light: Poems on Illness and Loss*.