Writer-in-Residence at the Bowdoin Scientific Station on Kent Island

Emily Weyrauch, Class of 2017

I spent my time on Kent Island as an artist-in-residence working on two writing projects. One project was writing articles about the various Bowdoin students doing work at the Bowdoin Scientific Station. The articles (seven in total) were each published on the Bowdoin News website every week. My other project was writing poetry inspired by my location. I wrote three haiku poems per day, one full-length poem per week, and one longer shore ode poem that I worked on continually through the summer. Writing every day is habit-forming, and throughout the summer I felt more and more comfortable being in my own head and writing observations, associations, thoughts and sensations.

In writing the feature articles on the Bowdoin student scientists and artists, I was able to familiarize myself better with the ins and outs of their projects, spending time in the field with each subject so that I could accurately represent them in my writing. I interviewed all of my subjects and took photos to accompany the articles. Not only did I become a stronger journalist, but I also learned about conducting scientific fieldwork and the methods and procedures that it involves.

I have grown artistically and personally in many ways this summer. In addition to finally having time to devote to writing poetry, I also had time to read poetry—really read it. Thanks to Professor Anthony Walton’s suggestions, I read Robert Hass’ translated haikus of Bashō, Buson, and Issa—three Japanese masters of the form. I also read a book of A. R. Ammons’ selected poems. Sitting outside in nature to read poems aloud and let the words resonate in your mouth and in the air and echo on the rocks around you allows you to embody the poem in a more committed and personal way than simply reading on a page or skimming allows. I found that taking the time to slow down and read poetry has allowed me to create poetry of my own that is more subtly influenced by the masters and more true to what I want to convey. The quiet beauty of Kent Island allowed for just that.

Faculty Mentor: Anthony Walton
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Graphs/images/figures (if applicable)

**Faculty Mentor:** Insert professor’s name here in bold

**Funded by the** (insert fellowship name, e.g., Rusack Coastal Studies Fellowship, Kibbe Science Fellowship here in bold)

References (if applicable)