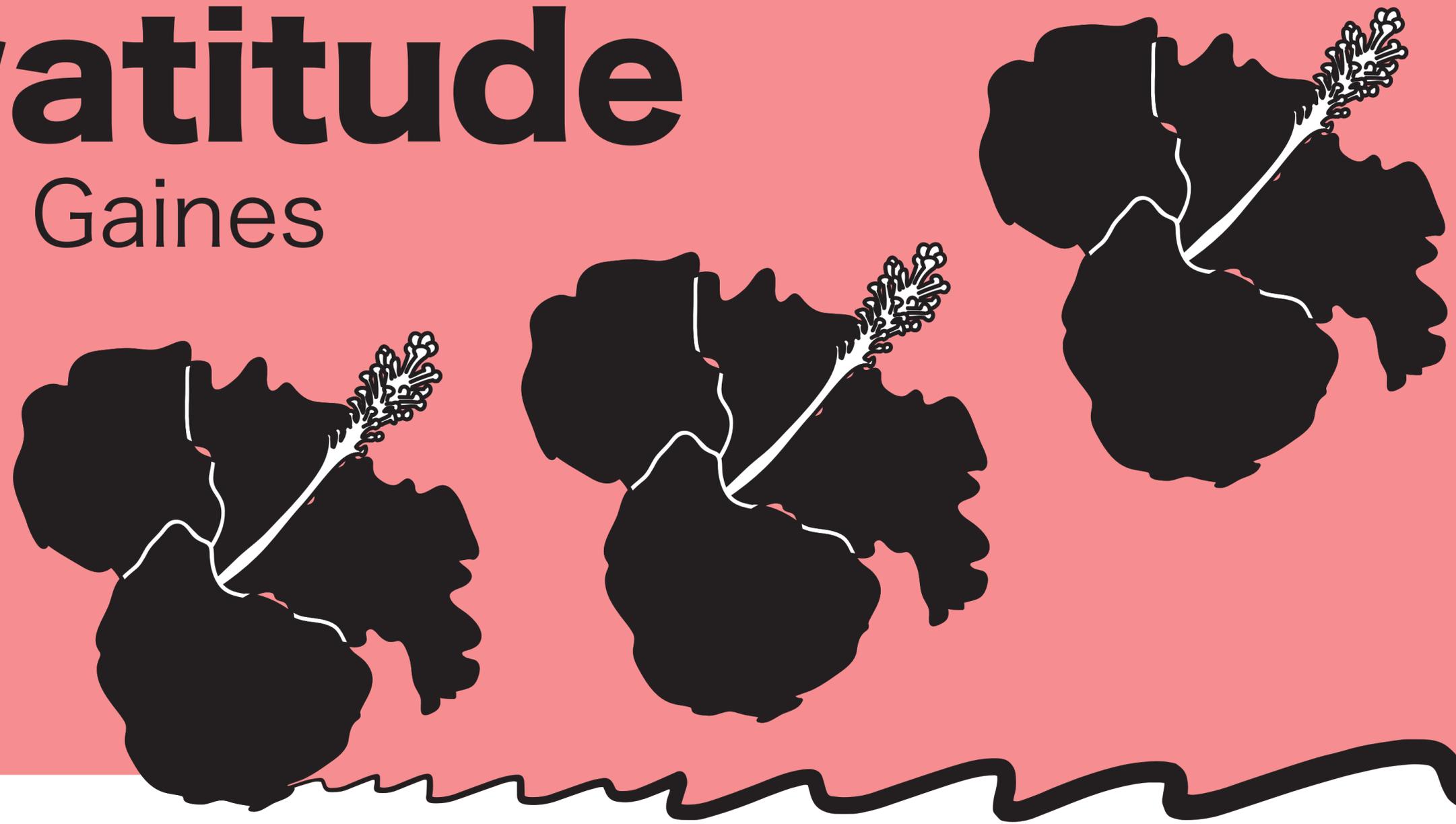


Gratitude

Kana Gaines



*Some nights after twelve it rains
for less than three minutes.
Red hibiscus blooms
say, "Thank you, anyways."*

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Imitating Flatters

Christine
Hall



*Beautiful mockingbird
Thank you for making fun of insomniac me
and the city bus, and the cat
and the sirens, and the horns
and the radio, and the car alarm.
You really are hilarious.
Everything as loud as you is devastating
in some way.*

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Geography

Katie
Lewis



*"Si tu hablas más lento, te entiendo," I told him,
but he called my bluff.*

*We two, we many, cafe con leche,
Indian coins in the playground dirt.*

*I tasted his language on my tongue,
doubling letters and removing others.*

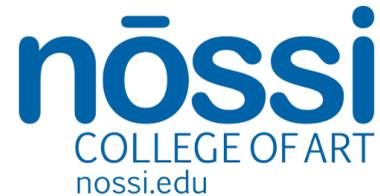
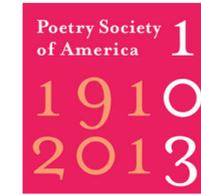
*His grandmother wiped her hands on the red dotted apron
and said she was an abuela in every language.*

There it is.

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Modern Warfare

Alissa
Lindemann



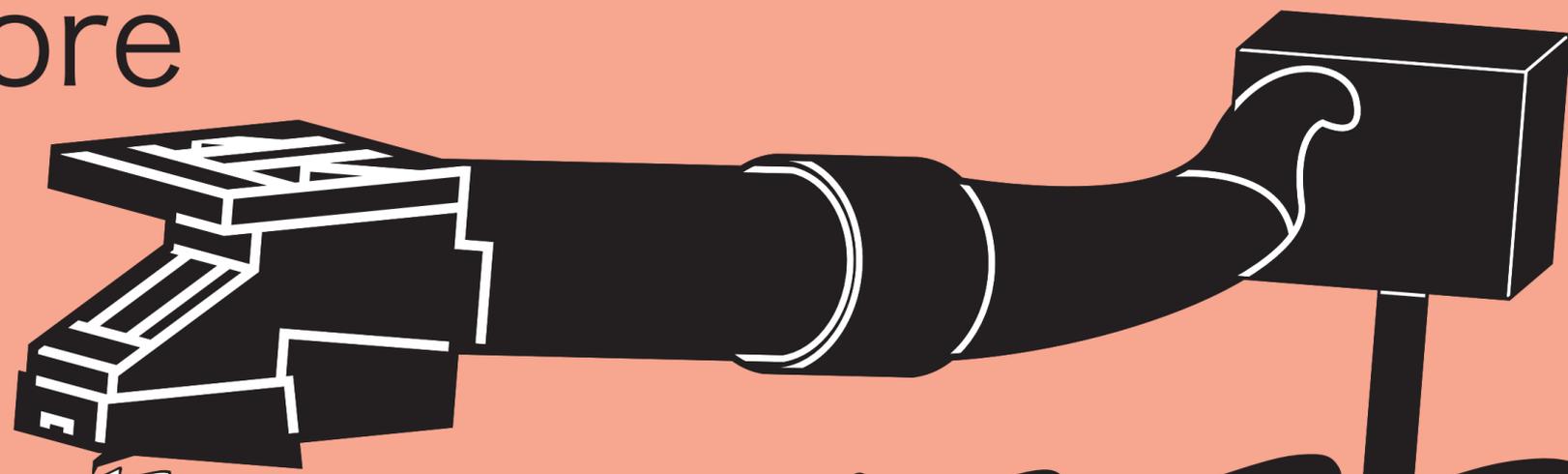
*My dreams of apocalypse are not nightmares.
I see doomsday hat tricks,
lovers kissing through their gas masks,
fireworks while the bombs blast—
and people pointing guns toward justice,
then throwing them to the ground instead.*

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Eye of the Beholder

Austin
Paramore



*If heaven had a voice, you would be its echo
Angels would envy the sound
Your voice gets raspy with anger
And I can hear the needle scratch the surface of your vinyl skin
Though you can't see me, soak in every word
Because even though you can't see it
You sound like the love of my life*

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Black Pepper, 1858

Stephanie
Pruitt



*Mama stows it away
in apron pockets as she prepares
a meal she will not sit down to eat.
Knowing, one day sons, brothers, lovers -- may run.
Teaspoons of possible salvation
rubbed on the heel
of boots, sprinkled into the toe
of socks with hope
that it will defeat the hounds.
Let those well seasoned feet run.*

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Perennial Intimacy

Lj
Ratliff



*There is a mossy companionship in old friends.
Pungent earthiness of ease in this
togetherness that has weathered years
through injuries,
storms,
high winds,
and even fire.
The mottled hickory bends with age
and the moss, adoringly green,
simple and present.*

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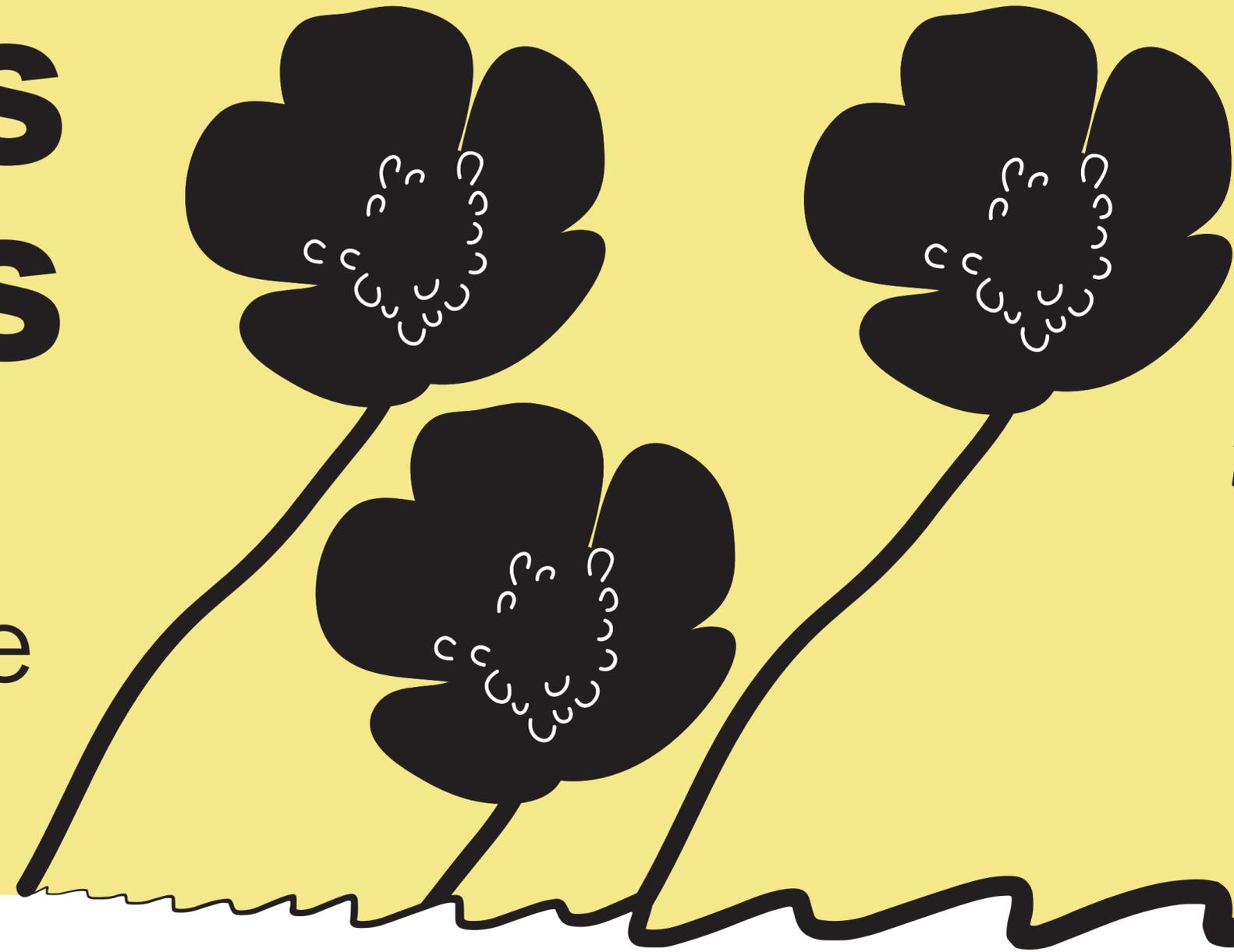


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This Was It

Suzanne
Richter



*I haven't seen a buttercup in ages.
This morning three
near the sidewalk, pert and oily
as if prepared to sun-tan.*

*Soon to melt
into the fullness of the afternoon, the greediness
of green lawns.*

*This was childhood—a small flower
held up under the chin, the big yellow glow,
a clear pronouncement.*

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Untitled

Sara
Zavaleta



*el olvido es pero una mentira...
en sueños tu ser habla francamente,
lento, y en golpes para que entiendas
que las huellas de momentos
permanecen así como huellas
en el alma.*

*dolor, dolor, dolor,
quédate en la profundidad de mis aguas lodosas,
lame de vez en cuando
yo*

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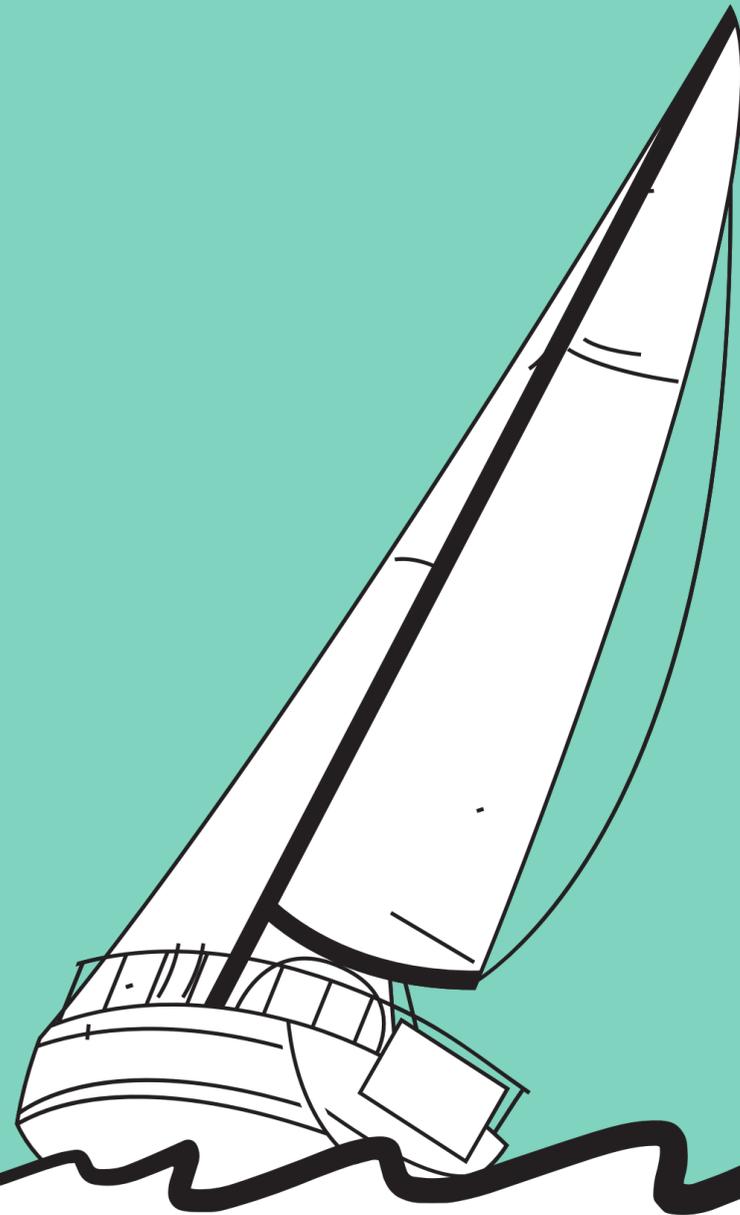


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Liminal

Kat
Zhang



*she wanders along the edge of the world
taking refuge in unbelievable things
one day, she might catch the sail of a dream
and ride it over the brink of this world
dressed in the tatters of a bedtime prayer
she'd float in the wish-filled air
until she drifted down
down to a world
where dreams come true
now.*

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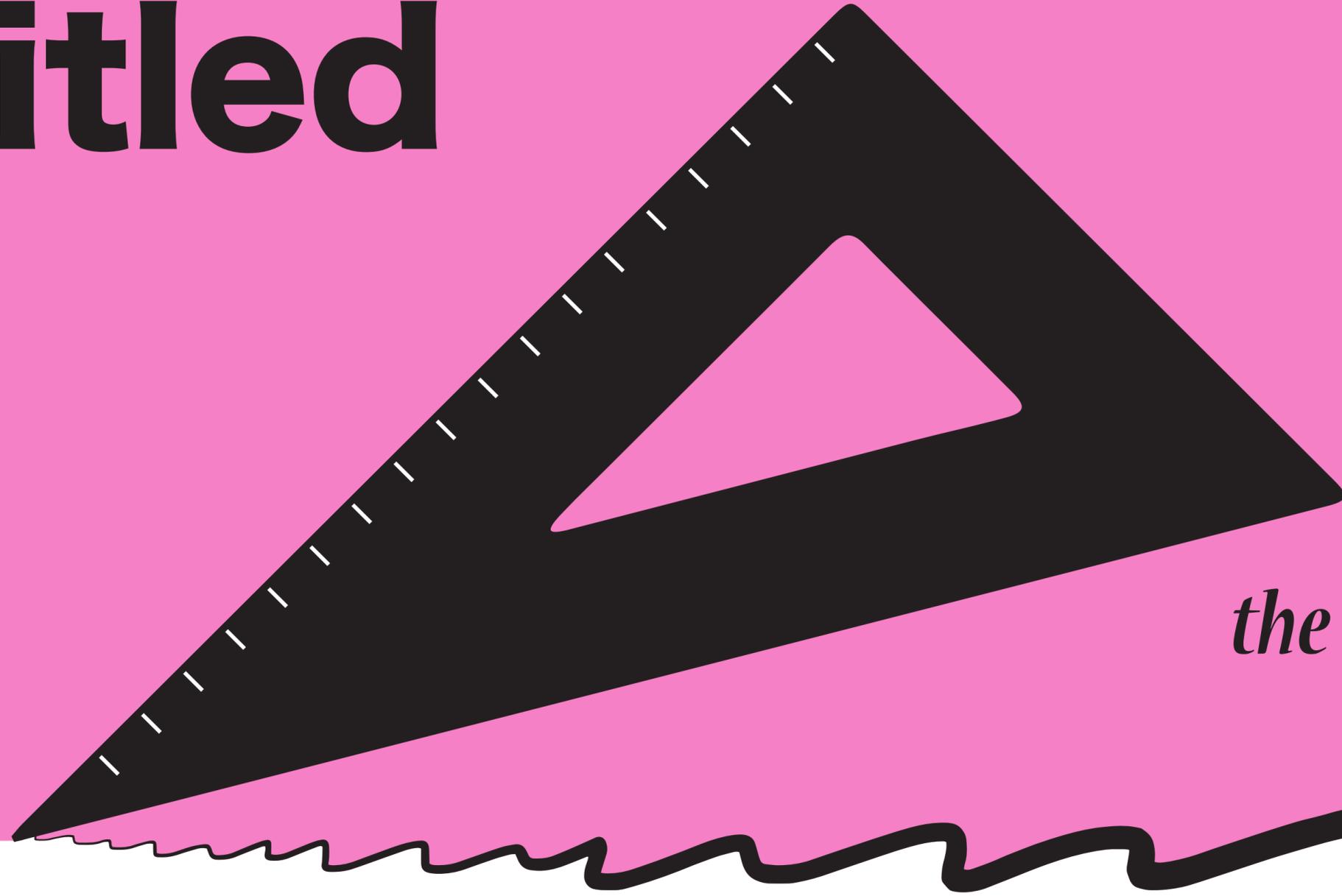


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Untitled

Randy
Foster



*the geometry
of gentle curves
the addition here
the subtraction there
the calculus of triangles
carefully concealing and revealing
the mathematics of summertime bikinis*

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