

Gustav Parker Hibbett *For Hire*

Written in response to **Frank Sweeney**, *Go Ye Afar*

Gustav Parker Hibbett is a Black poet, essayist, and MFA dropout. They grew up in New Mexico and are currently pursuing a PhD in Literary Practice at Trinity College Dublin, where they are an Early Career Research Fellow at the Long Room Hub. They were a 2024 Djanikian Scholars Finalist and a 2023 Obsidian Foundation Fellow, and their debut poetry collection, *High Jump as Icarus Story* (Banshee Press), was shortlisted for the 2024 T.S. Eliot Prize.

The **Temple Bar Gallery + Studios Writing Commission** aims to expand ideas around writing about art by inviting Irish authors to create a series of pieces inspired by the exhibitions at Temple Bar Gallery + Studios. In 2024, TBG+S has commissioned Gustav Parker Hibbett to make a piece of writing inspired by each of the exhibitions in the gallery programme.

Over the last eleven years Temple Bar Gallery + Studios has commissioned ground-breaking Irish writers to write on the gallery programme. Previous writers include Sara Baume (2015), Claire-Louise Bennett (2016), Gavin Corbett (2017), Doireann Ní Ghríofa (2018), Annemarie Ní Churreáin (2019), and Ian Maleney (2020), Nicole Flattery (2021), Thomas Morris (2022), Pádraig Regan (2023), Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe (2024).

The texts are available to download from www.templebargallery.com and printed copies are available in the gallery.

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For Hire

Sometimes it's as though the cab is each of theirs
in turn, like you've clambered into their backseat

instead of the reverse. Rides pass in sequence,
like a train: one body moving carriage to carriage,

the air in each a different texture. On long nights,
it feels like there are systems, variables to this.

Axes. One measures consideration, you think—
how much you're invited into co-curating texture.

Another is involvement—you can be involved
without being considered, the conversation

riffing on your name or skin or history, whatever
thought the sight or sound of you stirs up in them.

I visited once. I remember tattered shoes
and desperation. We were there to liberate.

It's not always disagreeable. There are nights
the hood is a ship's prow, an airplane's nose,

a time machine—the journey held aloft
by both (or all) of you, something warm

and earnest in the currents of the filtered
air. There are nights you don't mind

the paradox: you can steer the taxi,
can't always control where it goes.