

## Gustav Parker Hibbett

### *Thumbprint*

Written in response to **Ella Bertilsson, Kathy Tynan, Emily Waszak, Faigh Amach**

**Gustav Parker Hibbett**, TBG+S Commissioned Writer 2025, 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 2025, 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](http://www.templebargallery.com) and printed copies are available in the gallery.

Temple Bar Gallery + Studios is supported by



## Thumbprint

In the bottom corner of the photograph is a thumbprint so clear I know it won't smudge off: a record of inspection, a ghost of someone's looking. Pinched hard enough to bend. Loose in the box of family photos, it's dusty now. I picture my father at the photo counter around thirty years ago, flipping through a printed roll of 4x6es one by one, pausing here—thinking *why'd I take this?*—then tidying it back into the envelope. Or my mother since, almost throwing it away, then stopping.

It's slightly off-angle: a kitchen window and baby blue countertop; mid-morning spilling through the curtains. A sink. A radio on the counter. Wallpaper yellowing and peeling slightly. Sparse domestic scene, unpeopled. Out the window, leaves. We live here, in Incline Village, when I'm born, and when Corinne is; move before she's one. I know this house only through photographs or fragments. When I ask, neither parent remembers why they would have saved it, but I see their younger thumbprint in the corner of my vision: a seed, maybe, or the heat that lingers when a body leaves a room.