

**JOEL PECKHAM**

**The Well**

Once beyond the field behind my house I found  
an abandoned well covered in old planks,  
a blanket of moss and pine mulch. I could  
not see to water but inhaled the rot  
and wet and thought it might go down forever, curve  
into a belly like the long plumed throat of a loon. Stone  
after stone I dropped into the earth, and listened.  
No splash, no thud, no clack and clatter.  
Amid the pines and calls of birds, only the low  
long breathing of a boy, the swallowing of stones.