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# Pro Rege

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Volume 46  
Number 2 *Fine Arts Issue* 2017

Article 2

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December 2017

## Temple Playground

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### Recommended Citation

Dengler, Mary (2017) "Temple Playground," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 46: No. 2, 3.  
Available at: [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro\\_rege/vol46/iss2/2](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol46/iss2/2)

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# Temple Playground

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*Mary Dengler*

Seaweed tangled,  
Sand rock-spotted,  
Stark skies broken from their cloudy sleep—  
All summon us to holy play  
In temples breathing life.  
He watches listens through me  
Two sand-pipers dance near roiling foam  
Beneath a line of pelicans intent on fishers' bending poles  
Beneath the glide swoop of a gull to plunge a fish  
Above a pair of Infant toes a-squish in chilling sand  
And dogs pursuing sticks through rising waves  
Near surfers floating waiting,  
Near a family stuffing watermelon into mouths  
Lip-syncing music  
Pounding from cafes  
Where servers hose down tables,  
Swimmers drip salt water toward iced coffee,  
Readers chant Leviticus,  
And Muslims walk around them undisturbed  
Near mothers touching toes behind  
Their circled infants' carriages, amid the endless train  
Of surfers baring plump and slender flesh,  
Boys watching, breathing,  
Old men silent staring.  
None are bowing heads  
At love poured out in waves  
Of light, salt air, white foam, firm flesh on bones  
On palmed and sanded beaches  
Crowned by architecture fit for ancient Rome,  
Forms running, floating, swimming, breathing,  
Free of missiles interrupting  
Holy hours of play  
Before a God  
Who watches toddlers chasing gulls.