

Dinnerview: Kayleb Rae Candrilli

written by Danielle Susi | February 3, 2021



Kayleb Rae Candrilli is a 2019 Whiting Award Winner in Poetry and the author of *Water I Won't Touch*, Copper Canyon Press 2021, *All the Gay Saints*, Saturnalia 2020, and *What Runs Over*, YesYes Books 2017. You can read more of Candrilli's work [here](#).

Here, they talk about eating grapes and nuts like cereal, test-day waffles, and Hot Fries as memory of a friend.

On their all-time favorite meal:

Until sophomore year of high school, I was homeschooled up in the mountains. My mom taught me and my sibling using the Calvert Curriculum, which (at the time) administered their tests on this hideous green paper (green paper still makes me anxious!). But I remember the tests being difficult, and they would be sent off to be graded by the Calvert staff. Every test day, my mom would make heart shaped waffles, and some center cut bacon. Bacon was expensive for us, so it was a big deal. And sometimes we'd get this amazing boysenberry syrup. I don't know if it's my favorite meal, but it is certainly the nearest and dearest to my heart. The most sentimental meal.

On what the light looks like during their favorite meal of the day:

My partner recently convinced me to put up this window film that turns the light coming through into rainbows. Mid-day the whole apartment dances with literal rainbows. I thought it was corny at first! But now, during this dark year, it is such a true joy.

On snacking while writing:

I never snack while writing. But I do burn a ridiculous amount of incense, drink way too much coffee, and listen to this one particular EDM mix on repeat. Gosh [I love it](#). I love that mix so much I had a screenshot of the

YouTube page turned into a hoodie lol. It's the soundtrack to most I've written.

On their go-to late-night snack:

My family recently lost a close family friend. His name was Rick, and he worked for my father's construction company. I knew him since I was a kid, and I always asked to borrow his tools, sat on the bumper of his van and listened to his oldies rock station as he worked, and I even stole his lunch a few times. He loved Andy Cap Hot Fries. To this day that is my late-night snack. I will miss him a ton and think about him every time I go for some Hot Fries or hear some oldies.

On their food quirks:

One of my favorite morning meals is a bowl of pine nuts and green grapes with a cup of café du monde. I eat the grapes and nuts with a spoon! It's perhaps an odd combo, but it reminds me of mornings on my grandmother's veranda, listening to a radio station from a new country every morning.

On their final meal request:

I think the phrase "final meal" is a complicated one in this country, so, I'll steer away from it. But I will tell you, if I eat an extraordinary amount of street tacos, and I eat an extraordinary amount of street tacos with my partner, I am ever increasing my odds that street tacos might be the thing! Maybe that macabre, maybe it's just cold hard mathematics!