

BEVERLY SKY

Environmental Degradation: Rising Tides, 2014
Fabric collage on canvas, 36 x 36 in



COURTESY: STEVE DUNWELL

ALEIDA RODRÍGUEZ

Poems from the News

*It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men [and women] die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.*

—William Carlos Williams

Marilu Henner can remember

every detail of every day of her life.
Scientists are studying this rare
ability identified so far in only twelve people.
Everyone is amazed and envious
but I wouldn't want to remember
any more than I already do.
Oh, if it were only the head
those memories screened on the walls of.
But *remember* in Spanish is *recordar*,
which means *to pass again through the heart*
the exact inflection of hurtful words,
the violent act, the loss
of innocence.
In fact, I wouldn't mind
vacating half of what's been hoarded,
sweeping out some crowded cells
to make cavernous rooms for memorizing poetry
or for recalling every pore and blemish
on my mother's animated face
for hours, like a favorite film
playing again in my heart.

Aleida Rodríguez, a Cuban-born poet, essayist, and artist, was airlifted to the U.S. without her parents during Operation Peter Pan. Acted upon by world events, she developed a metaphorical take on the news. Following her mother's passing, the nightly news yielded messages between the lines—and the series "Poems from the News" began. Her work has received many awards, including an NEA grant, and in 2014 appeared in *Poetry Los Angeles: Reading the Essential Poems of the City* and *Short: An International Anthology of Five Centuries of Short-Short Stories, Prose Poems, Brief Essays, and Other Short Prose Forms*. She lives on historic Red Hill, where she writes, edits, and translates.