

ANDREW SCHELLING

Navaho Grammar

for Kristina Loften

The tawny parched landscapes of
San Jose
the glaring jet wings

stucco white dry grasses
one more year of worrisome drought
from San Jacinto to Mt. Shasta

In my pocket my former wife's driver's license
our daughter carries the ashes

We live in a contentious era
wars, they don't seem to end, or cruelty—
so she spent years fighting injustice to animals

on my lap
Gladys Reichard's
Navaho Grammar
the old syllables hard to read, what a tough language
does it carry the speech of faraway gods?

Corn maidens, blue corn-pollen girls
hers was a mind oddly precise at times
even through alcohol
those hard last years

Well, the airlines have their rules, package of cinders—
has to go under the seat.
you who were
a barelegged mother once
on grassy slopes of the East Bay

Andrew Schelling's recent books include *From the Arapaho Songbook* (poetry) and *The Real People of Wind & Rain* (essays). In 2017 Counterpoint Press will release *Tracks Along the Left Coast*—a folkloric account of West Coast ethnography, California Indian lore, linguistics, and poetry. He lives in the Southern Rocky Mountains of Colorado and teaches at Naropa University.

STEVEN CARRELLI

Letter From The Storm (#10), 2008
Egg tempera on panel, 3 3/4 x 5 1/8 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST