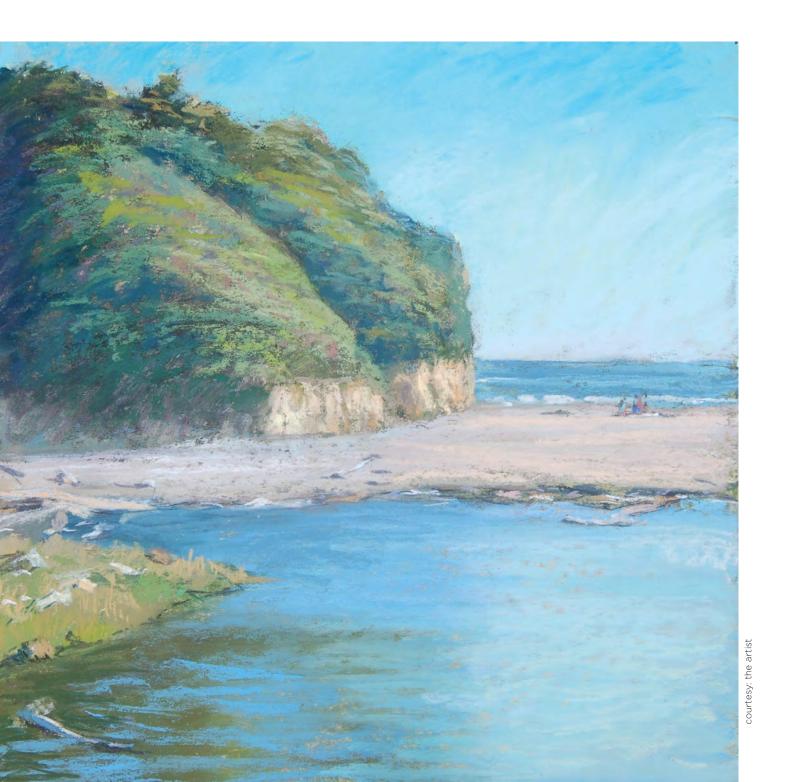
ERIKA PERLOFF

Pomponio Picnic, 2012 Pastel on sanded paper, 12 x 12 in



JUDITH SERIN

Talking to the Spirits

hey tell me the heart is a star; they tell me the heart is an apricot, warm, storing heat from the sun. We talk in the heart. I say my hands are trees, holding leaves for them. I see them in their bodies, though I know they are planted, rotting; no, I remind myself, feeding the trees. I tell them, look, all around me are trees, weeds, creatures of fur and blood and bones, clouds/day, night/stars, and they all are reaching for you. And I stand in the sun because they are there, because I want them to fall, tumbling down ladders of light, turning head over heels, somersaulting to me. And they answer: all I have to do is stay, not climb, not fly, not even pray, but stand with my feet—flat arches, high insteps, dirty toenails—firm on the ground, as though I am planted, and here they come, falling, falling, nothing but light.

Judith Serin's poetry collection Hiding in the World was published by Diane di Prima's Eidolon Editions. She has also published poems, short stories, and prose poem memoirs in magazines and anthologies; a chapbook of prose poems, Family Stories (Deconstructed Artichoke Press); and a collaboration with book artist Nikki Thompson, Days Without (Sky): A Poem Tarot (Deconstructed Artichoke Press). She teaches writing and literature at California College of the Arts.