

## MADELINE VON FOERSTER

*The Promise II*, 2012

Oil and egg tempera on panel, 16 x 20 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST

## CLARENCE MAJOR

### The Cycle

Grandpa in the casket in the living room.  
For me, that early experience made death natural.  
Snow and ice melting, sliding into the river.  
The flames were naked tree limbs.  
Pasture fences falling down, rotting from age.  
Then spring, and yellow tulips and splotches of red.  
Spring and a lone man in a green jacket  
on the squeaking planks  
looking down across the water  
as if longing for the impossible.  
The train going through the middle of town,  
in the middle of the night,  
shaking the old buildings,  
its whistle louder than the loudest dog howling.

**Clarence Major** is a prizewinning poet, painter, and fiction writer. As a finalist for the National Book Award, he won a Bronze Medal for his book *Configurations: New and Selected Poems 1958-1998*. He is the recipient of the Western States Book Award, the National Council on the Arts Award, a New York Cultural Foundation Award, the Stephen Henderson Poetry Award for Outstanding Achievement, and the 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award in the Fine Arts presented by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. He is Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Davis.