

TABITHA SOREN

Panic Beach (03589-9), 2010
Archival Print, 30 x 30 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST

LAWRENCE
FERLINGHETTI

At Sea

(for Pablo Neruda)

In 1953 **Lawrence Ferlinghetti** cofounded City Lights, the first paperback bookstore in the United States, a Mecca for millions. His *Coney Island of the Mind* is one of the best-selling volumes of poetry by any living American poet. Born in Yonkers, New York, in 1919, Ferlinghetti has received the Robert Frost Memorial Medal and the first Literarian Award of the National Book Foundation.

“At Sea” was first published by City Lights Books, November 2017. Used with permission from the poet.

The sea through the trees
distant
shining
The dark foreground
a stone wall
with lichen
An old salt
sits staring out
at the sea
A wind sways the palms
infrequently
Another day prepares
for heat and silence
A small plane
buzzing like a fly
disturbs the sky
The air eats it
Far out on the slumbering sea
a trawler creeps along
The wind from the south
blows the bait in the fish’s mouth
The yawning sea
swallows the trawler
The lichen lives on
in its volcanic stone
taciturn
eternal
awaiting its turn
in the turn of the sun
Never will I return here
never again
breathe this wind
on this far run
in the reaches of morning
where the sea whispers
patience and salt
The sun
scorches the sky
and drops like a burnt-out match
into night