

CHARLES BURWELL

Trapped, 2019
Acrylic on panel, 12 x 12 in



COURTESY BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY

GARY SOTO

After His Election, I Make a Zen Garden

A pic tin, five cups of sand,
A thimble with water,
A dry branch, a cotton ball's worth of moss,
River pebbles and polished stone,
Maybe a small shell, maybe glass roughed up by the sea . . .
These items, plus a toy rake,
And by noon I have a garden.
Let me go inside a tree for the next few years.

I offer a spring blossom to my creation.
I hum a three-syllable chant.
I rake the sand and dip my pinkie into the thimble—
So this is the taste of Buddha mind.

This is my garden after the election.
This is my sanctuary on a windowsill,
A monk-like ant trekking the ledge.
A stick of incense is lit, the dead remembered.

I feel a terrible force at work—
A hundred days in office,
Not enough sand to bury his deeds.

Gary Soto has published more than forty books for children, young adults, and adults, including *Baseball in April and Other Stories* (Harcourt Children's Books, 1990), *Living Up the Street* (Strawberry Hill Press, 1985), *A Summer Life* (University Press of New England, 1990), *Buried Onions* (Harcourt, 1997), and *The Afterlife* (Harcourt, 2003). He has been awarded fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts (twice). His *New and Selected Poems* (Chronicle Books, 1995) was a 1995 finalist for both the National Book Award and the Los Angeles Times Book Award. He lives in Berkeley, California.