

JOHN OLIVER SIMON

What Age?

What age would you be, Isabella asks me
from the booster as we turn on 45th,
if you could be any age? She thinks of fifteen
as representing height of teenage freedom.

I shudder, remembering fifteen. Diving
under the underpass where an elderly
homeless gentleman resides
sleeping directly under traffic's thunder,

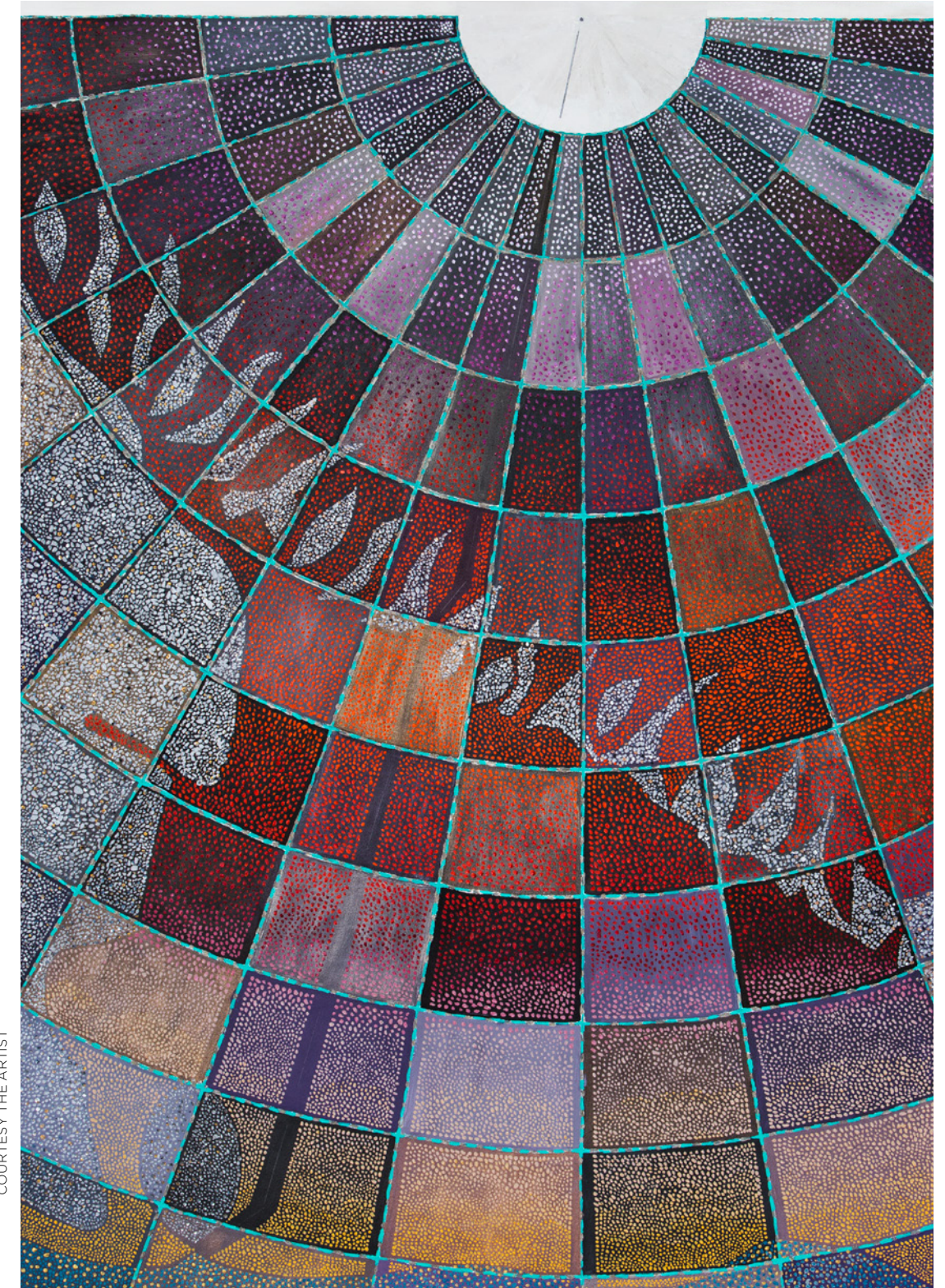
I say maybe my sixties, when I still had
vigor to travel and had learned something or
other, not what I'm learning now. I tell her

actually these last nine years have been the best
since she happened along. She makes no comment.
Comfortable silence, rolling toward the red light.

John Oliver Simon is a widely published poet, translator, and poet-teacher. He was the 2013 River of Words Teacher of the Year and is Sage on the Stage on the Board of Directors of California Poets in the Schools. He picks up his granddaughter from third grade twice a week.

ROBERT BLITZER

Amundsen's Route, 2017
Acrylic and oil on canvas, 72 x 53 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST