

**JOHN BRISCOE**  
Land's End

Near Cape Mendocino,  
near sunset cows low, somewhere—  
there, the far pasture near  
where oaks, madrones, and pines appear  
to graze the ridge and browse down its slope  
this way, fifteen in all perhaps,  
five adults, brown spotted white, with small dun horns.  
Lowing again, in  
no discernible chorus,  
they shamble off with some of the young  
to some place, perhaps to sleep.

The low salmon sun  
slips beneath the sea.  
Indigo washes  
all the sea's phosphorescence  
and all but the most western sky.

Five calves stay back, playing late  
this day's end, with the purposeless energy  
of bounding fawns, gamboling and butting heads  
right in the paths of three oncoming, heedless steers  
and a cow returning, black spotted now,  
equally with no reason.

**John Briscoe** is a lawyer, restaurateur, and distinguished fellow at the University of California, Berkeley. His poetry has appeared in publications including the *Antioch Review*, *California Quarterly*, *Berkeley Poetry Review*, and previous issues of *Catamaran Literary Reader*. His most recent book, *Crush: The Triumph of California Wine* (University of Nevada Press, 2018), was nominated for a Northern California Book Award. His poetry collection, *The Lost Poems of Cangjie*, was published by Risk Press in 2018.

**BARRY NEMETT**

*Cloud Watching*, 2008  
Gouache on paper, 48 x 75 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST