

STEVE EMERY

Phrasing, 2018
Acrylic on hot-press watercolor paper, 20 x 20 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST

JEFF EWING

Meteor Shower over Gualala

The sudden lights flared and fled,
flung careless as cigarette butts;
you traced their dying arcs and
proclaimed our inconsequence:
how dull our paths in comparison!
laying a finger beside your eye

to attest its reliability, unaware
that the retina retains its ghosts,
resurrects them on occasion to project
across the same night sky. I step
to one side to see if you follow;
then back, alone, as seems right.

Someone's worn a spot, trampled
and littered it with pint bottles;
they've cut away the upper limbs
as one does at a certain age
to make room for the crowding
constellations. What relief

the clouds are, rolling in from
the west. I attributed a purpose once
to habit and a permanence to
accustomed desires, until the hunger
that carried me forward lost
its fascination. I remember

the night and the place: a similar
hill above the ocean, sometime late
in August. My eyes heavy lidded,
the once-staggering explosions
of Perseus a few smeared stars
dragged across the summer sky.