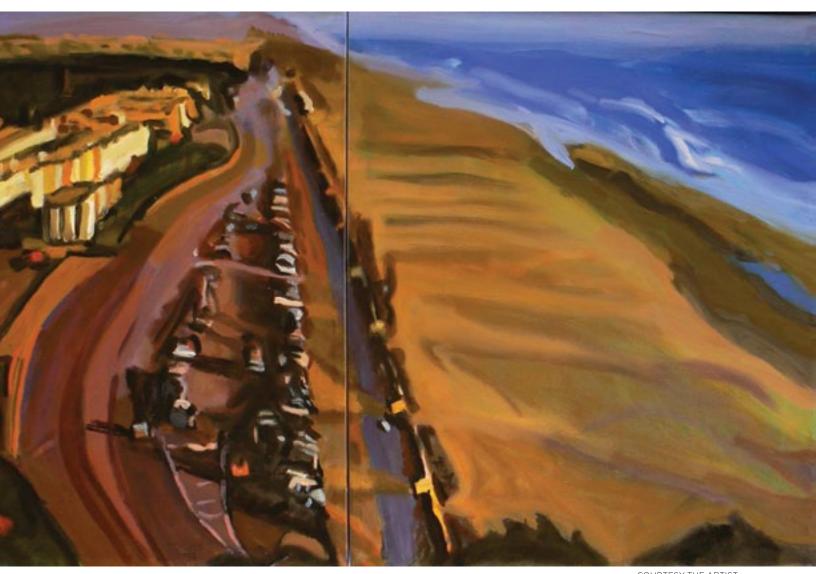
LARRY MORACE

Ocean Beach, 2014 Oil on canvas, 7 x 10 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST

WILLIAM TAYLOR JR.

Mission Street, December

The streetlamps, soft yellow dreams, bring a sadness that pushes the heart,

strange clouds gather and the air smells of coming rain.

I wander Mission Street sidewalks not wanting to be anywhere,

still haunted by the pretty dream of being something more than death,

even now determined to salvage some scraps of joy from the wreckage of things,

maintaining a belief in common miracles.

Bits of kindness scatter like sidewalk leaves not yet trampled,

and remnants of abandoned beauty line the streets in gilded flakes.

I collect them in my pockets to carry home,

walking quickly now as soon the rain will come

down upon it all like some god thing's useless tears.

William Taylor Jr. lives and writes in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco. An Age of Monsters, his first book of fiction, was published by Epic Rites Press in 2011. The Blood of a Tourist (sunnyoutside, 2014) is his latest collection of poetry. He is a Pushcart Prize nominee and was a recipient of the 2013 Acker Award.