

LUIS CERNUDA

Ancient Garden

Enter that bounded garden again,
Where through the arches of its walls
Among magnolias and lemon trees
The spell of running water waits.

Hear in that quiet place again,
Alive with birdsong and with leaves,
The gentle rustling of the air
Where old souls hover silently.

See that deep blue sky again,
The slender tower just beyond,
A flower of light above the palms:
All those always lovely things.

Feel again, the same as then,
The sharp pain of desire's thorn,
While your vanished youth returns.
Dream of a god outside time.

—Translated from the Spanish by Stephen Kessler

Luis Cernuda (1902–1963) is one of Spain's preeminent modern poets. He left Spain during the civil war in 1938 and spent the rest of his life in exile in the United Kingdom, New England, and Mexico. He taught in 1962 and 1963 at San Francisco State and UCLA. His books in English include *Written in Water* and *Desolation of the Chimera*, both translated by Stephen Kessler. "Ancient Garden" is from *Forbidden Pleasures: New Selected Poems [1924–1949]*, to be published this spring by Black Widow Press.

Stephen Kessler has received an NEA Fellowship, a Lambda Literary Award, and the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award from the Academy of American Poets for his earlier translations of Luis Cernuda. His most recent books of original writing are *Where Was I?* (prose poems/memoirs, Greenhouse Review Press) and *Need I Say More?* (essays, El León Literary Arts). He lives in Santa Cruz.

MOLLY CLIFF HILTS

Paradoxical, 2008

Oil, powdered pigment, wax, graphite, lithographic ink over traditional gesso ground on panel, 30 x 30 in



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