

TINA NEWBERRY

Rock Paper Scissors, 2008
oil on masonite, 12 x 15 in.



COURTESY SCHMIDT DEAN GALLERY

JOSEPH STROUD

Standing Before Dylan's Grave in Laugharne with John Logan, Summer, 1976

We were both drunk having staggered out of the pub after drinking with some old local who said he knew Dylan and was using this to cadge drinks from us and told story after story of high jinks and low jinks each one more outrageous than the last but they were good stories and we were happy to keep them coming and keep the ale flowing caught up in the Welsh gift for gab and then there we were standing before Dylan's little white cross made of wood a shameful thing the villagers said of Caitlin too broke or drunk to penny up for marble both of us standing there lost in our thoughts my own of my mother reading aloud from his poems Dylan was my first love as a poet and you never get over that one but I don't want to wallow in nostalgia I want a poem that brims with anger and rage like the rage Dylan raised against the death of his father against his own death for we all know all elegies are self elegies so a rage against cheap poems and easy sentiments an anger to burn away the frivolous posing and posturing of poems my own among them and most of all a rage against the Great Leveler the Butcher Boy an anger against the inescapable inexorable train-wreck day when the Lord of the Dead took Dylan away then took John away and one day will open my door and all my five and country senses will finally see if Dylan's vision was a true vision and whether or not Death shall have no dominion

Joseph Stroud is the author of five books of poetry: *Of This World: New and Selected Poems* (Copper Canyon Press, 2008), recipient of the Poetry Center Book Award; *Country of Light* (Copper Canyon Press, 2004); *Below Cold Mountain* (Copper Canyon Press, 1998); *Signatures* (BOA Editions, 1982); and *In the Sleep of Rivers* (Capra Press, 1974). His honors include a Pushcart Prize and a Witter Bynner Fellowship for Poetry from the Library of Congress. He received the 2014 Lannan Literary Award for Lifetime Achievement and, in 2011, an American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Literature. Stroud taught writing and literature at Cabrillo College in Aptos, California, for thirty-five years. He is currently retired and divides his time between Santa Cruz, California, and Shay Creek in the Sierra Nevada.