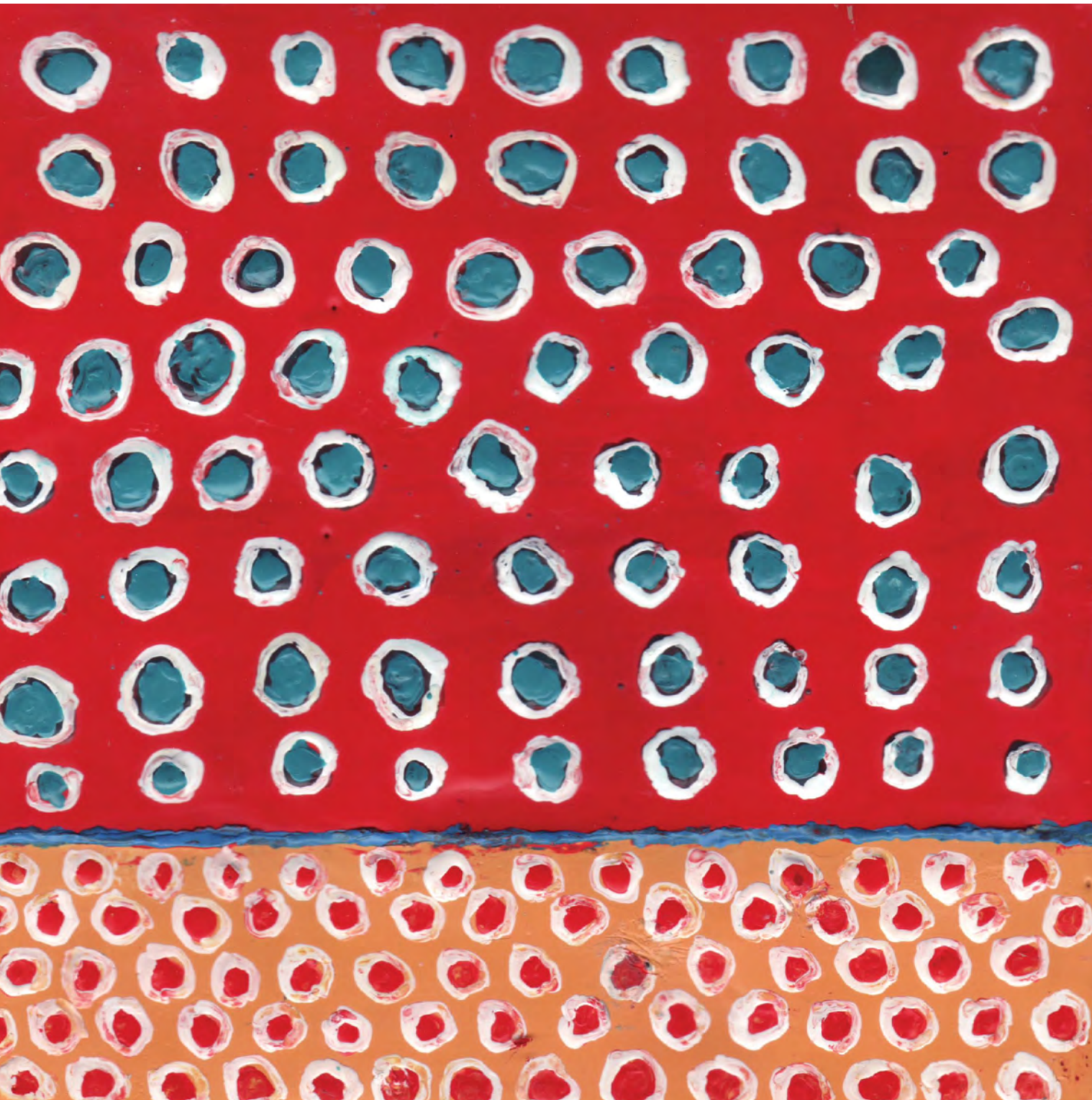


## FANNE FERNOW

*The Litany of Saints: Nimbus Five*, 2012  
encaustic on panel, 8 x 8 in



credit: Conrad Wide Gallery

## ROBERT BLY

### A Question to Abraham

The lions of hunger are satisfying themselves with saints.  
But the saints' bones are so thin, the lions are complaining!

The shining notes dip whenever the sitar pauses,  
And the professor turns aside to weep.

Please remember the things we have celebrated.  
Don't imagine we've forgotten when you were born.

There's no use trying to keep dry during the rain.  
Solomon and all his generals have gone indoors.

There is some madness in the violin's closed case,  
And the bending notes keep bowing to each other.

Tell me, Abraham, why the desert goes on so long  
And why so many of the saints are still in prison.

W. W. Norton recently published **Robert Bly's** new selected poems, *Stealing Sugar from the Castle*. His correspondence with Tomas Tranströmer, *Airmail*, appeared this year from Graywolf Press. He lives in Minneapolis.