

OCEAN HIEROGLYPHICS

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SCOTT EZELL

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Selections from *Ocean Hieroglyphics* were published in Chinese translation
in *Modern Chinese Poetics*, Tainan, Taiwan, Republic of China, 2004.

Library of Congress Control Number:

ISBN:

First printing.

Thanks to Mike Morical, Douglas Newton, Karen Swenson, Brian Curran,
Shuen-shing Lee, Bill Porter, Mike O'Connor, Dana Standridge,
and to my parents, Dean and Danine Ezell.

All poems, paintings, photos and music by Scott Ezell.
Scott Ezell's paintings were photographed by Eran Haimburg.
Graphic design by Nina Noble Design

*to the elders of the Amis tribe,
Etolan Village, the Pacific coast of Taiwan.*

So, through me, freedom and the sea
will call in answer to the darkened heart.

—Pablo Neruda

i.

the ocean is the blue of wine,
a broken bottle spilling into everything,
the blue of a matador's cape,
blue defenestrations, silent highway skies,
the blue of beating hearts,
blue homesick sailors and harbor girls,
blue calderas of falling rain,
blue seaweed strands of dream,
blue net of breath and waves—



ii.

a rolling mass of greenblue waves
folds in across the shore
as gray rain falls

ocean to ocean,
brief breaths of sky between,

with shards of blue far out
beyond the silver sea—

small birds sit

the swinging curves
of black line wires,
singing perhaps,

I cannot hear
above the engine's groan
or through the window pane.

silent on the running loping line
backdropped by shining scales,
eyelashes of sun
fallen with the rain, grayblue
across the autumn sea—



fishermen squat

on boulders worn
by waves of salt,

squinting
to the seam

of sea and sky,

and grasp their slender poles

with cracked and calloused hands.

