

Paua shell

(September 25, 1997)

[A cup for your necklace,
eyes draping the trapezius,
strokes your throat
with jewels of blue light.]

The rough coral-encrusted exterior
is cut and ground
to reveal
a well of frozen oils,
solidified wavelets,
a breast-cup for a Polenesian maiden.

What strange lifeform,
huddled in this spiral,
grew such salty resonance?