

CHARLES HOOD

The Paleo-Eskimos

Bones, homes, old threads
to tease our reason.
These were fossils who knew fossils:
yellow banister mammoth's tusk is Ko-guk-puk,
earth-gnawing beetle whale,
dead instantaneously on contact with air.
Other myths run through history clearly as a core sample
land bridge, war, strange animals gobbled and lost,
years jammed in ice floes.
Tundra's ghost,
I come to nuzzle tidbits, turn over
the lost lance,
a carved ivory needle.
clever spins of nephrite
that are fractions of a life that was art.
Glancing towards the cloud-shored coast
I feel my hair floated by invisible drafts of smoke,
as if I were standing on the exact site
of our mutual provenance.