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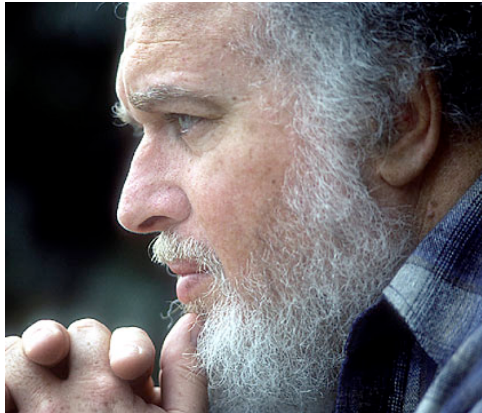
In association with **SantaCruzWeekly**

Santa Cruz Poets, Santa Cruz Inspiration: Morton Marcus

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By **Guest Writers** Wed, Mar 09, 2011

A A A



Morton Marcus. Photograph by Dan Coyro.

Two poems from the late Santa Cruz poet and Cabrillo writing and film instructor.

DAWN

Dawn. The stones
lean toward the sun.
They rise from their haunches.
From everywhere in the meadow
they drag themselves
out of their weights,
lifting in unison
like an exhaled breath.

From: *The Santa Cruz Mountain Poems* (Capra Press, 1972)

WHALES

Our future plunges with the whale:
chilled water weighs against our skulls,
flat forehead forces a passage
to that slow darkness miles below
where it swaggers into whale-shape –
that round unrolling from the end of darkness
to the beginning of light.

We slide up through fathoms of his shadow,
butting the underside of water
until we break through the surface
and bask in the sun.

And when we roll in the swells
and release an easy breath,
his spout is a halo above our heads.

From: *Big Winds, Glass Mornings, Shadows Cast By Stars*
Poems: 1972-1980 (Jazz Press, 1981)

Morton Marcus (1936–2009)

Born in New York, Mort attended the Iowa Writer's Workshop and completed his M.A. at Stanford University. He taught English and film at Cabrillo College for 30 years. His published work includes 11 poetry books, a

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novel, a memoir, more than 500 poems in literary journals, and over 90 poems in anthologies. His last books were *Striking Through the Masks: A Literary Memoir*; *The Star Wizard's Legacy* (translations of Vasko Popa); and *The Dark Figure in the Doorway: Last Poems*. Mort conducted readings and workshops in dozens of universities. He was poet-in-residence at several SUNY campuses, The University of Arkansas' Graduate Writing Program, Providence College, and The Prague Summer Program. The Morton Marcus Poetry Archive is housed at UC Santa Cruz. <http://www.mortonmarcus.com>

Local Poets, Local Inspiration, edited by Robert Sward, appears weekly online and monthly in *Santa Cruz Weekly*. Selections are by invitation.

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