**A Colombian artist in the islands**

Iguanas came late in life

to Enrique Grau, sprawled

across each other and the pages

of his Galapagos sketchbooks,

He drew the marine “imps

of darkness”; *Amblyrhynchus*

*crustatis*, raising its snub snout

out of water, soon to dive,

El Niño-willing, for algae, then

back to the porous rocks for warmth

He drew the land iguanas,

basking and saurian, on lavishingly

rendered rocks, in the makeshift

shade of a gnarled bush.

Grau returned to his Cartagena,

there in charcoal and pastel,

on meter and a half square paper,

worked out his obsession with

the spiky crests, shadows, the

squat threat of these cactus-

chomping, torpid lizards. They

have also not left my mind

ever since I saw Grau’s iguanas.

I went to the islands, out for wasps.

hoping the lizards cross my path.

But it wasn’t to be. Grau died.

And now I imagine: Enrique

and I are sitting on a hot rock,

watching the iguanas forage.

A swatch of pink -- that’s *rosada*,

Enrique says, in heavily

accented English, and looking

much like his selfportrait.

Have some water, Enrique, I say.

And do you think they need some?

They’re still, and just then one

changes into a dragon. And back.

I blink, touch Enrique’s hand.

Did you see that? I did, he says –

*Allosaurus fragilis,* I should think.

What does an iguana dream about?