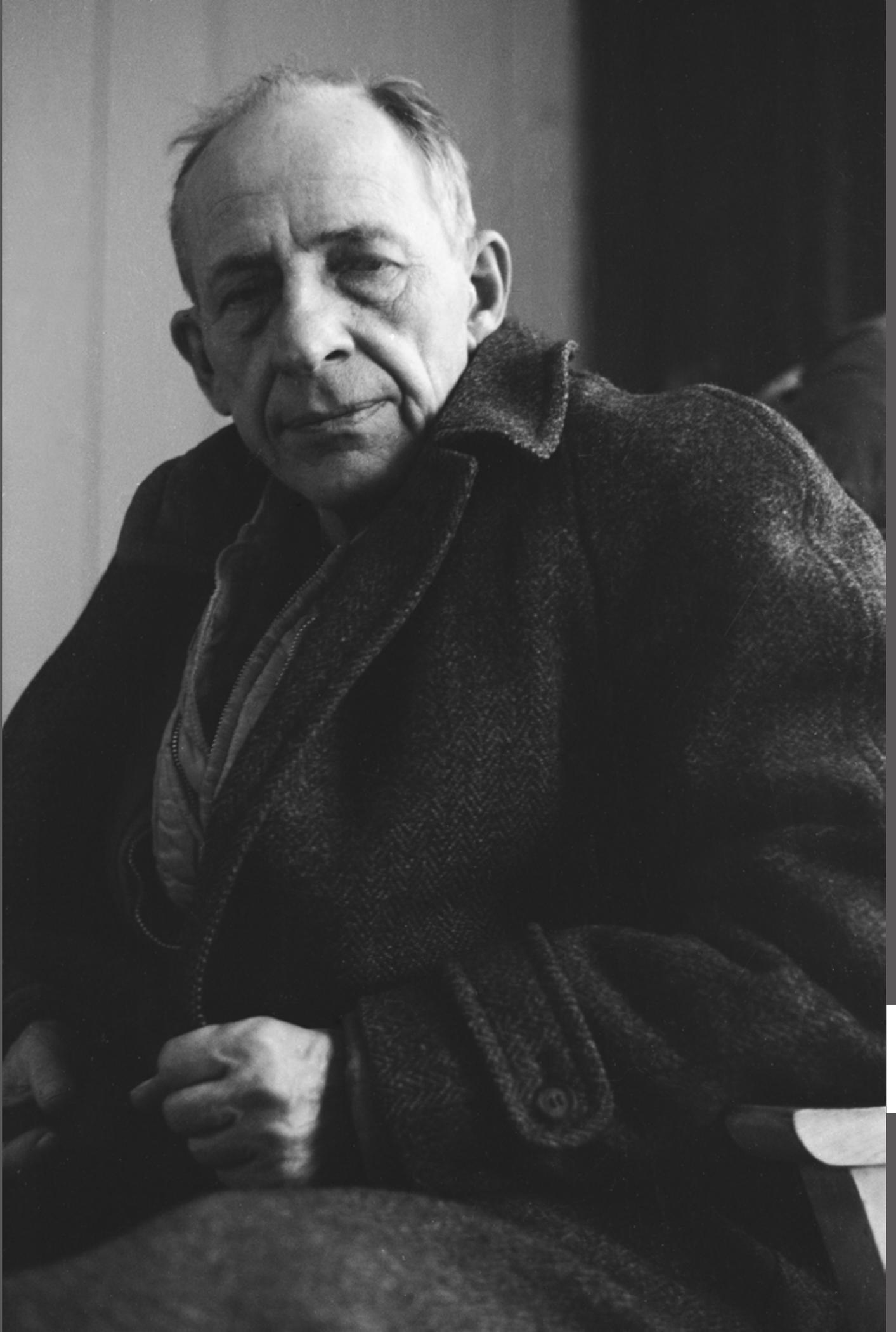




# PA

Issue 82 | THE MALE MUSE | FEB 17



# THE MALE MUSE

Front Cover by Elizabeth Claire Ospina | The Male Muse | Photography and Digital Manipulation | 14 x 11 | 2016

Sara Nordmark

Daggi Wallace

Heidi Elbers

Kitty Forbes

Coonor Walton

Sam Rasnake

Marko Tubic

Rose Freymuth-Frazier

Marco Gallotta

Pauline Aubey

Denise Duhamel

Judy Takács

Jan Nelson

James Needham

John Zedolik

Thomas Wharton

Robert Standish

Grace Cavalieri

Barbara Hack

Sylvia Maier

Candice Chovanec

Lance Richlin

Ron Androla

Terry Strickland

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Devon Rodriguez

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Irvin Rodriguez

Donna Bates

Kim Christopher

Nicole Alger

Erin Anderson

Yvonne Melchers

Larry Aarons

Pris Campbell

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## PoetsArtists

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CHAOS



# THE MALE MUSE THE MALE MUSE THE MALE MUSE THE MALE MUSE

DANIEL MAIDMAN

The male muse is the curatorial concept for this latest *PoetsArtists* project, and it is an especially good topic for the community it addresses, of artists loosely or strongly aligned with highly-rendered figurative work. Sometime in the modern period, the core focus of figurative art shifted from the male to the female figure. I would date the transition to the generational shift from David to Ingres, and in a broader sense, from the Apollonian principles of Enlightenment thought to the Dionysian principles of Romantic thought. This is an unsubstantiated hunch on my part. Be it as it may, the human figure in art has been identified with the woman for a century or two now.

Because depiction of the figure is inevitably tangled up with the sex drive of the artist doing the depiction, the subject is distorted by the sexual cognition of the artist. In the age of female-centric depiction, a well-known series of biases entered into art: not only overbearing tastes for certain body types, which varied from period to period, but a more general elevation of the body as aesthetic object over the body as vessel of the person. At its farthest verge, the body became a purely mechanical decoration, the elegant machine, as we see in Art Deco sculpture.

All of these art historical trends have been inherited by the current generation of figurative painters. While there is something approaching gender parity among the significant artists in this

field, the overwhelming majority of their human subjects, especially the nudes, remain female. The depiction of women is broader in its celebration of physical differences than it used to be, but there remains a strong strain of aestheticization and depersonalization. This is not necessarily a fault in any one piece, but it is a weakness of the field overall when it crowds out other approaches.

Given these conditions, organizing a group of work around the concept of the male muse offers a welcome opportunity to step back and evaluate how we see people. In alienating us from our subject, it helps on the one hand to unmask our assumptions, and on the other hand to introduce new possibilities into our outlook.

"The Male Muse" includes work that very much applies the assumptions for depicting women to the male figure. The novelty of the subject, and the different set of problems it forces the artist to solve, produces such excellent results as Heidi Elbers's *Feathered*, in which the erotic link between flesh and filligreed clothing is turned on the sensual male figure - or Connor Walton's *The Great Amphibian*, in which the age-old trick of composing to nearly, but not quite, reveal the genitalia is applied to a sleek, wet youth - or Irvin Rodriguez's *A Clean Slate, An Ode to Private Gordon*, which builds on its historical source to produce a beautiful man in a beautiful pose: the precise mirror of so many contemporary female nudes.

# THE MALE MUSE

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Along slightly different lines, other artists produce work in which the male figure is lusted over, in the domineering and physical way that men tend to lust - consider the dewy, passive youth in Rose Freymuth-Frazier's *Wallflower* or Thomas Wharton's sumptuously muscled, slightly open-mouthed lad in *Night Vision* or Elizabeth Claire Ospina's women laying hands on the weakly-resisting, furrowed-browed adonis in *The Male Muse*.

Most extreme in this avenue, of applying the "rules for women" to depicting men, is Marko Tubic, whose complex and gorgeous *Composition 2* reconfigures the male nude as a purely formal system, a near abstraction somewhere between decoration and futurism.

A different set of artists in this group tackles the topic from a perspective more closely associated with how women look at men - simply as people, with interest and attraction prioritizing interiority over form. Consider Jan Nelson's chronicle of his aging in his solemn and simple *Self Portrait 1974* and *Self Portrait 2016*, or Didi Menendez's painfully saturated depiction of a shy young man in *Vincent 2*, or Devon Rodriguez's deft evocation of character through posture in *Brooklyn's insecurely macho hipster*.

For me, Erin Anderson is a master of synthesizing psychological interiority and the charms of the flesh; her work is represented here

with *Mark Weathers the Storm*, an unexpectedly sexy depiction of a bulky middle-aged man who is utterly confident in his masculinity.

Thus we have two main strains of response to the challenge of the topic: the application of the typically masculine biases and tropes of contemporary figurative work to the subject of men instead of women, and the deployment of a more typically feminine set of perceptual tools in the depiction of men-as-people.

Is there work in this group which transcends these two poles of perception? I would submit two candidates, two artists whose deconstruction of the image is so intense that the categorical boundaries of its maker and its subject become blurred. On the one hand is the dreamy, magical-realist spiritualism of Sergio Gomez in *New Beginning 3*: his man is submerged in the image, subsiding into the role of Human, in a story of hope and transformation which is little identified with gender. On the other hand, there is the jarringly analytic Lego collage of Pauline Aubey in *Replicant?*, in which the image is subjected to such a rigorous decomposition that its foot touches the bottom of the ocean, kicking the bedrock questions: how little can be provided, to result in perception? what minimum of intervention produces art? For both these artists, the male is a springboard to a set of themes which transcends the subject. This, one might argue, is the job of the muse.

Heidi Elbers



*Feathered* | oil on paper | 14 x 11 | 2016

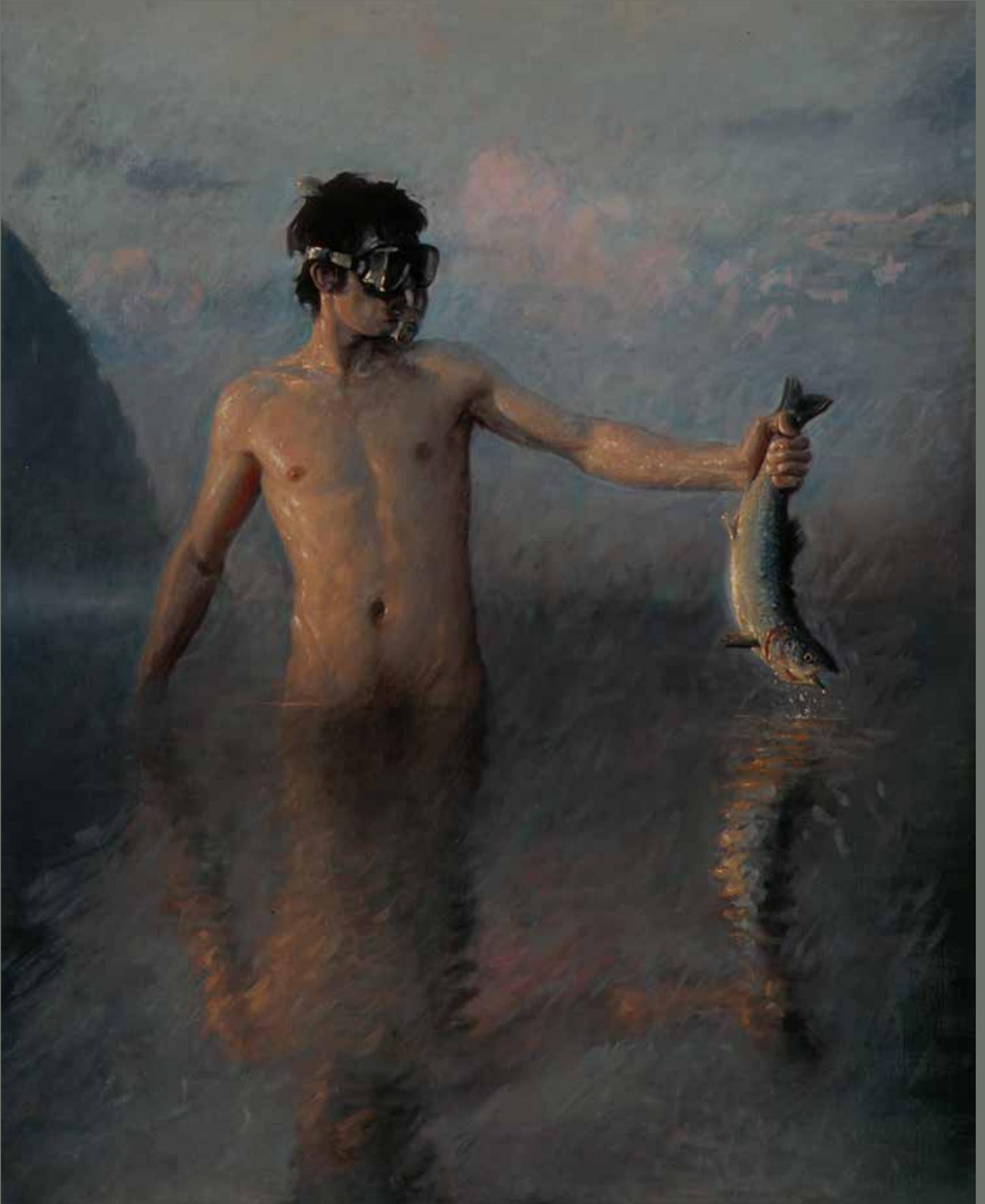
# Diving Lesson

He was my beach friend's big brother, and he took me from the shallow into the deep to learn to dive from his shoulders. First I stood on his knees, facing him, and he held me by the waist, turned and lifted me. I straddled the back of his neck. He walked out to sea—until the water came halfway up his chest, and I could not touch the bottom. My legs dangled down, his hands held my thighs. Then he helped me stand and balance on his shoulders.

I dove in. The water fizzed salty and warm around me, the undertow tugging my suit sideways. His fingers were light little fishes nibbling my flesh. I swam away, and he caught me—it was a game. I hooked my legs around his waist and lay back on the water, my arms out, my hair turning in slow motion, like seaweed. The sky was white, the ocean the color of an empty coke bottle. We laughed like swimmers on a Florida postcard. I imagined the mothers on the beach, in hats and sunglasses, smiling at us, admiring us. But when I looked, my mother was standing, beckoning. Her little chair had toppled over in the sand.

That night I was afraid that he would come for me. I thought I heard his footsteps in the crowded creaking beach house. My sunburned skin had shrunk, exposing me like a beach at low tide. A sister shared my bed. A cousin on a cot beside us. Salt water still stung between my legs.

That night I was afraid that he would not come for me. I belonged to him. He was the undertow tugging me from my mother's arms. The hallway past her room was long and dark. If he came for me, I would have to leave here, I thought, not yet knowing I had already gone.



# Some Kind of Compass

"The one thing I know is that I don't know"

– Dekalog 2, Krzysztof Kieslowski, dir.

The gods are broken. A tear for us all.

When the mind figures what the heart  
believes – all the reason in the world  
can't unspill ink from a blank page.

*This frozen solitude:*

\*

*smoke from a winter's fire  
with wet eyes searching*

In the glass of fruit, a bee climbs the length  
of spoon out of syrup, then shakes her wings.  
Drunk with not knowing, she edges along  
the rim as if moving were the only absolution.

\*

What remains unsaid is not the gift we dreamed –  
as if other worlds were possibility. Betrayal is  
a bitter cold of dull razors, empty drawers, and  
lies with midnight calls. The streets are deserted.

\*

In the shadow of candles as they go out,  
letters from the dead can never give us truth  
to hold – no matter what the body wants or  
the fingers need or the eyes cannot unsee.

\*

What's the measure of grit and belief – How is the love  
of trees ever strong enough – When do these bits of life  
happen – when was, is & will are one – so guilt is not the only  
thing to feel – Why is the crease of an old photograph always  
a map for hidden grace or loss – Where's the gaze, the last  
hard look into my eye – Whose face sees mine

*The river is cold – and*

\*

*uncertainty, a throb*

*so the rains will come*

Every window a story, every voice a telling.  
Beauty never hides from the sharpest edge.  
Only the bandaged pain of fools would think  
otherwise, and if we stare into the dark long  
enough, we see ourselves at some end or  
beginning – moving, aching, spilling milk.

\*

All life is stolen, ripped away. No face, no name, no place  
to stand. And the catalogue of innocence? – an empty  
merry-go-round, a thrown twig floating downriver,  
the train headed for brittle fields of a restless doubt.

\*

There's a life we all grow into – long stands of birches  
with bird calls, talks of what is and is not, then cups  
of tea while an orchestra plays, all the years dragging  
at our borders. If the only thing left is nothing – what then?

*The eyes appear, disappear, –*

\*

*as if this flash*

*could mine a truth*

Every moment is liquid, and the physics tells us  
the body will lose its weight, will submerge into mirrors  
& notebooks & closets. What's broken opens its fissures  
so light and shadow can whisper to the troubled silence.

\*

When the world screams, I scream back  
in a frenzy, in a rage, a mosh – “Everything  
is yours” – the growled anthem to dead fish,  
lost kidneys, to the undiscovered child.

– Warsaw, 1989



Marko Tubic



Composition 2 | acrylic on cardboard | 50 x 50 cm | 2016



Untitled | acrylic on canvas | 30 x 24 cm | 2016

Marko Tubic



*High Sense* | oil and acrylic on canvas | 195 x 130 cm | 2014

# Soft Like a Chainsaw

Your voice sounds like blue-tail flies  
trapped against a pane  
like someone saving sinners  
like a breeze blowing in a gourd  
like banjos from hell, like someone's long fingernails  
scratching over an emery board  
knuckles cracking  
a runner-up in a hog-calling contest  
five pounds of bacon being fried.

Like a stage full of local talent  
like a fiddle playing sharp  
like someone stepping on a bullfrog  
an egg-sucking dog  
chewing on a chicken  
grits hitting the fan.

Like the bus pulling out of Pulaski  
like static on WSM, like a hundred boots  
scraping the mud off  
like someone flicking a Bic in the back seat  
a waitress reciting the specials to a table of drunks  
the sound of three men snoring on a deer-stand  
the whine of a mosquito under the bill of your baseball cap  
tobacco juice hitting a fly ball in mid-air  
a squad of cheerleaders jumping up and down  
in cowboy boots on cars in a parking-lot.

Like a couple yelling in the next motel room  
horns honking  
four-alarm chili  
like 8 hounds howling in the back of a pick-up—  
like the sound I heard while napping in the hammock  
and someone walked across the porch jingling the keys to the Bronco.

Rose Freymuth-Frazier



Wallflower | oil on linen | 20 x 16 | 2017

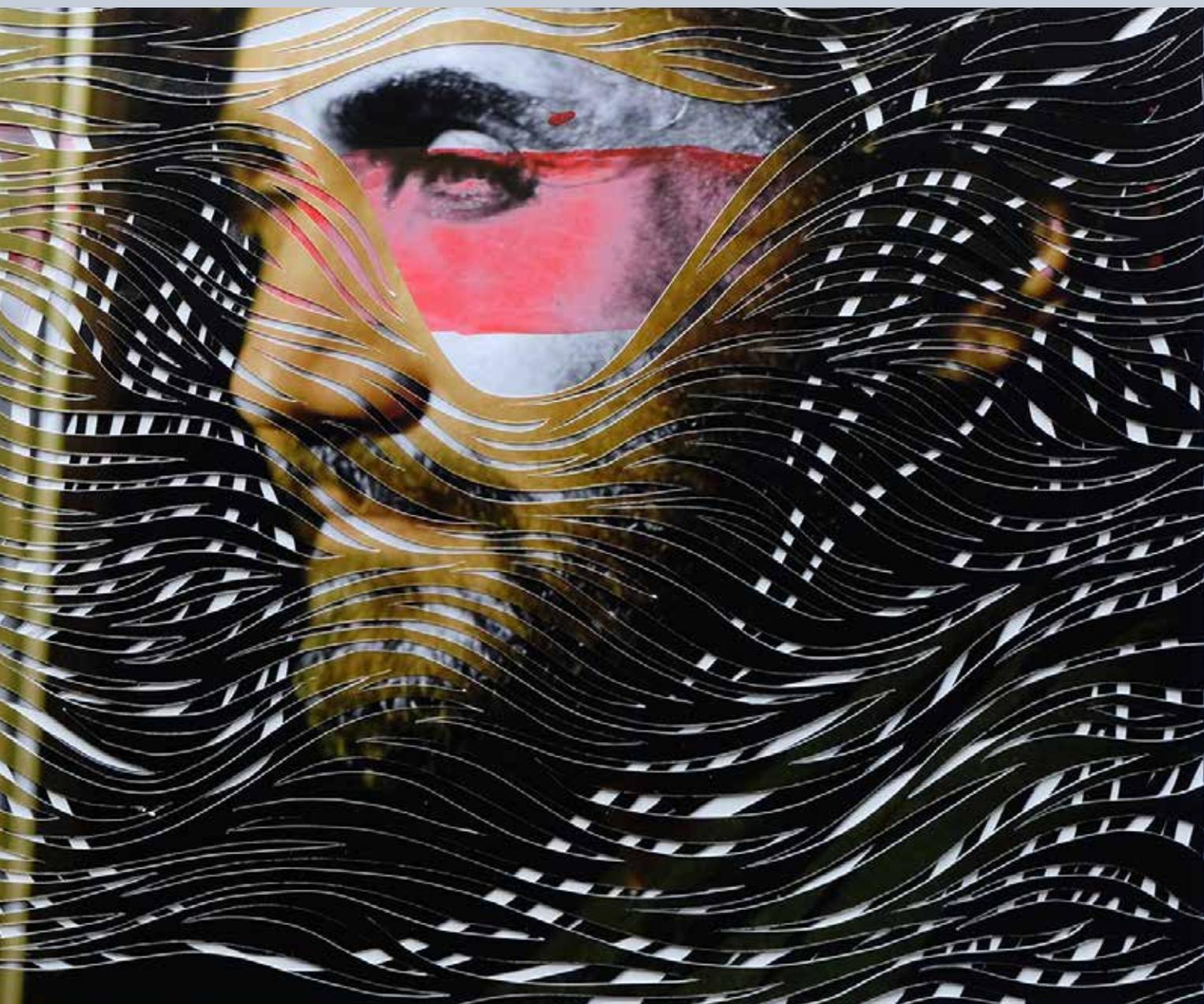


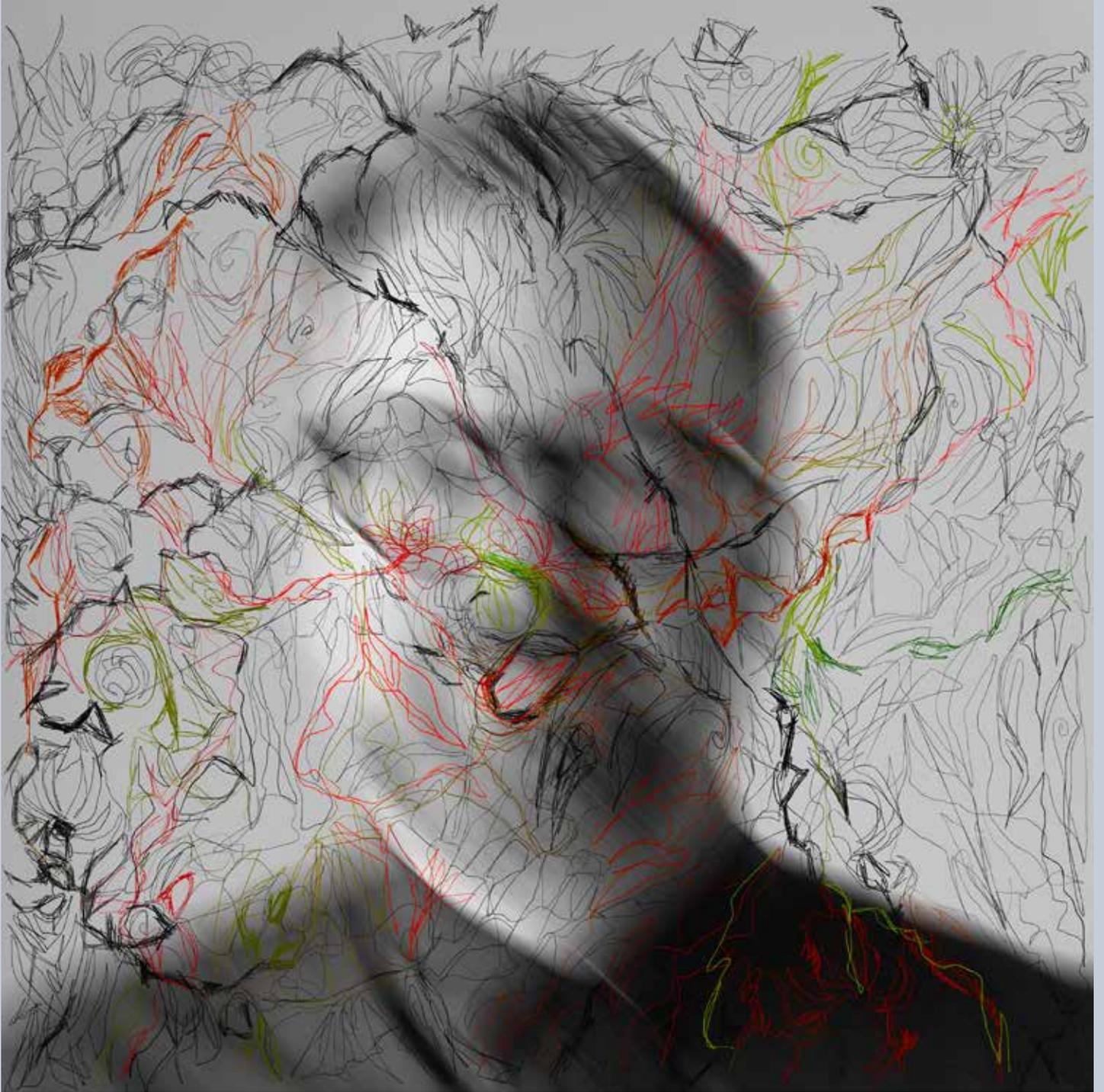
Golden Boy | oil on linen | 22 x 23 | 2013

Marco Gallotta



Nicola Acunzo | Cut out photographs and acrylics | 19 x 8.5 | 2016





# On Explaining the Unexplainable

This was the winter that refused to let go of spring's throat, determined to keep my lungs and chest filled with an endless and incomprehensible stagnant flow – one that made breathing almost a luxury – and had done so for nearly eight weeks. I was working my way through Samuel Beckett's world page by page. Losing myself along the way, which was, of course, both purpose and beauty. I'd grown tired of my own words, the sound of my voice. Nothing was as I said it was, and could never be so.

From *Texts for Nothing*, 4: "Yes, there are moments, like this moment, when I seem almost restored to the feasible. Then it goes, all goes, and I'm far again, with a far story again, I wait for me afar for my story to begin, to end, and again this voice cannot be mine." – SB

The grand dilemma was my seemingly necessary attempts – forays into the absurd – on a near daily basis – of walking the wheel, of hunting words to explain an irrational universe in which I moved. I'd spent decades perched on a still-point of clarity that always refused to remain clear long enough to take hold of any real understanding. In other words: now you see it, now you don't. This goes on for years.

There is little in life more bleak than an almost-epiphany. Almost one can explain the self. Almost one can discover a truth. Almost the

hand can detail what the mind sees. Or the brain, for that matter. But, in the end, it's all delusion. There is no self, no final truth, no reality to the detail, and nothing seen. That is the addiction. The journey with no destination.

And then I write a blog post: "*Amazon buying Goodreads is – for better, for worse – a logical port on the river on which we – all technological participants (e.g. purveyors, perpetrators [maybe 'traffickers' would be the best term] in Facebook, Twitter, Fictionaut, Google+, Tumblr, Pinterest, and on and on) – maneuver our rafts. There's a delta somewhere.*"

The computer is, of course, the printing press, monks painfully inking the world, shadows scratching into clay tablets, hands painting on cavern walls, the first story ever told, poetry made from trees – according to Robert Graves – and the birth of language. I've no real concept of the copulation that created language, but there must have been one.

We are what we type. You'll have to overlook me. I'm reading Beckett these days."

If we stand in the same spot long enough, we might explain anything.





# 23 POSITIONS IN A ONE-NIGHT STAND

1.

It was 1983, but for Prince it was 1999, then 1999 came and went, and in 2016 Prince was dead. That's 17 years forward and back on each side of Y2K. That is 34 years in a purple flash, bad sex and good sex and, for long stretches, no sex at all.

2.

My position—of course—is, as a woman, you should be able to have one-night stands at your whim. Just put on something tight and go to a bar. Chat up potential possibilities, close your eyes, and go in for a kiss. If the kiss is satisfying and strong, go for more.

3.

In the dream I'm running late, separated from luggage (my personal baggage?) and really need to pee. I walk into the men's by mistake, which is really a locker room where a rugged naked man emerges from a shower with an erection. He's clean, he's beautiful, he's there just for me.

4.

Respect yourself or no one else will respect you. Interpret as you will.

5.

The word "stand" implies that you might be in for movie sex, one of you pushed face first against a wall. Humans have evolved to face each other during coitus, but many positions reflect the animal still in us.

6.

It makes sense to be afraid. You could be drugged, tortured, raped.

7.

There was one time you had to choose between two people and you chose the one who lived closer to you even though he was the less cute of the two. The hunk lived in Brooklyn and you were afraid to be stranded in Brooklyn, which wasn't as hip as it is now.

8.

I could fall in love and then I'd have to change the course of my life.

9.

My position used to be one of judgment, but my worthy opponent has brought me to the left and I now see the issue with more of an open mind.

10.

I was surprised he remembered me. He put his hands over his heart and said *thank you* some twenty-five years later.

11.

If the person you choose is married, a jealous spouse might knife you.

12.

You have to go with your gut. *You can't reschedule a one-night stand*, my friend Jim liked to say.

13.

He helped himself to her last strawberry Pop-Tart the next morning. This angered her because she hadn't even come.

14.

I swore I just fell asleep on his couch, which was true.

15.

His real girlfriend, your friend, was in the ICU because of a bicycle accident. He said *I can't* but then he could.

16.

*It didn't mean anything* is a popular phrase used to describe such an encounter.

When you are finished you may well be disappointed and wish you'd stayed home with a vibrator. *It didn't mean anything* is a popular phrase also applied to poems. In Bernard Welt's "I stopped writing poetry..." he confesses that no poem is as meaningful to him as Prince's "Little Red Corvette."

17.

The windows of the car steamed with their breath. She traced a heart. Then he said *where should I drop you off?* She gave him her address wanting him to know where she lived.

18.

He was so excited he came on my sheets before we'd done much of anything. Then he fell asleep.

19.

He told her his wife knew he was a dog and they had an open marriage. He called her once some months later and barked into her answering machine *ruff ruff* and laughed. Then he said *don't call me back, I'll try you again* which made her think his marriage wasn't so open after all.

20.

One night my friend left me there right on the street in London, the cars zooming in the opposite direction of what I was used to. She said, *I'm going home with him*, which she did. I was shocked, angry, betrayed as I descended into the Underground on my own.

21.

In the dream you need to pee but you hesitate. There are no doors on the stalls, dozens of women milling about, gossiping and putting on lipstick. Your *Dream Book* says you are lacking a sense of personal space. You are afraid everyone is criticizing you. Or, alternately, all these women are you, criticizing your natural urges.

22.

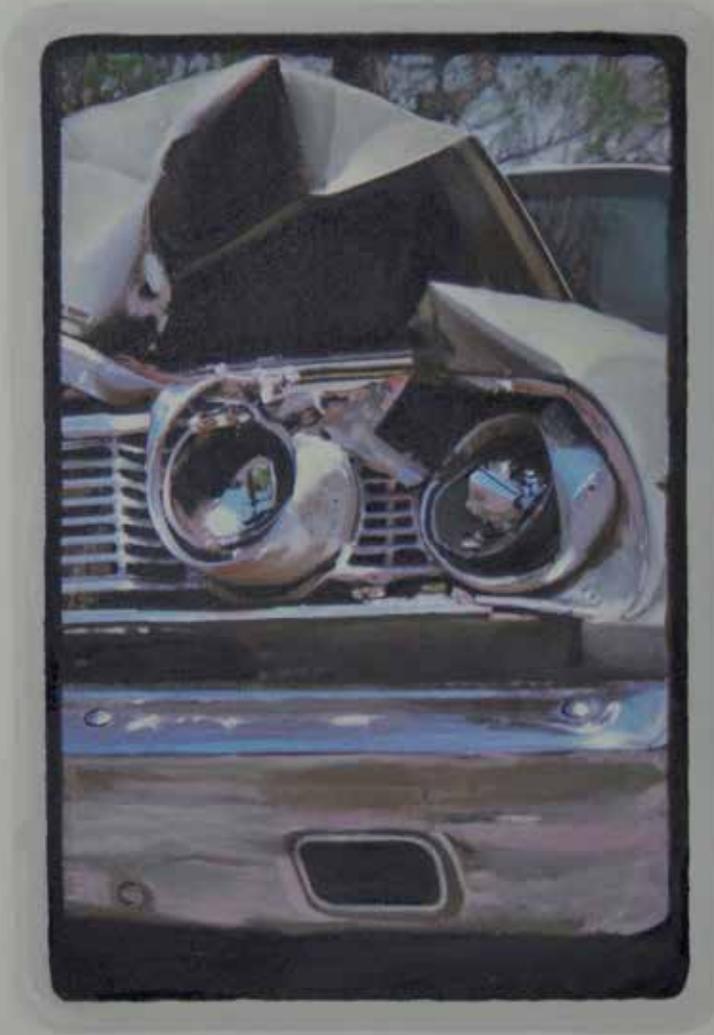
Better to stay home alone and rent *Looking for Mr. Goodbar* or *Fatal Attraction*. Or re-watch your DVR-ed episodes of *The Affair*.

23.

It was a long time ago when people still had record players and boom boxes in their apartments, years before "Gett Off." At a party in the East Village we danced to "Little Red Corvette," a song that usually makes the top ten for strippers, a song that Sandra Bernhard grooved to, close to naked, to end *Without You I'm Nothing*. I'm talking about her one-woman show at the Orpheum, before the movie version. Maybe I even mentioned it to this new guy. You can't help but feel sexy when you sway with someone in that fast/slow way. I blame Prince. I also thank him.



**Kodachrome**  
**SLIDE**



**PROCESSED BY KODAK**



Jan Nelson



*Self Portrait 1974 | photography | 12 x 12 | 1974*



*Self Portrait 2016* | photography | 12 x 12 | 2016



Luke | oil on canvas | diptych 80 x 20 | 2017

# Metaphor(ce)

I hate to use this metaphor  
but now at 11 p.m.  
the house is cocked and loaded  
for the next day's assault  
coffee maker filled  
lunch made, chilling in the fridge  
alarm set, toilets flushed  
outdoor lights ablaze  
bookbag, gymbag packed

before I retire into soft sleep's shell

to dream, to lie inert, let it all go

knowing before nodding  
the house is ready—to go off—

in seven-plus hours

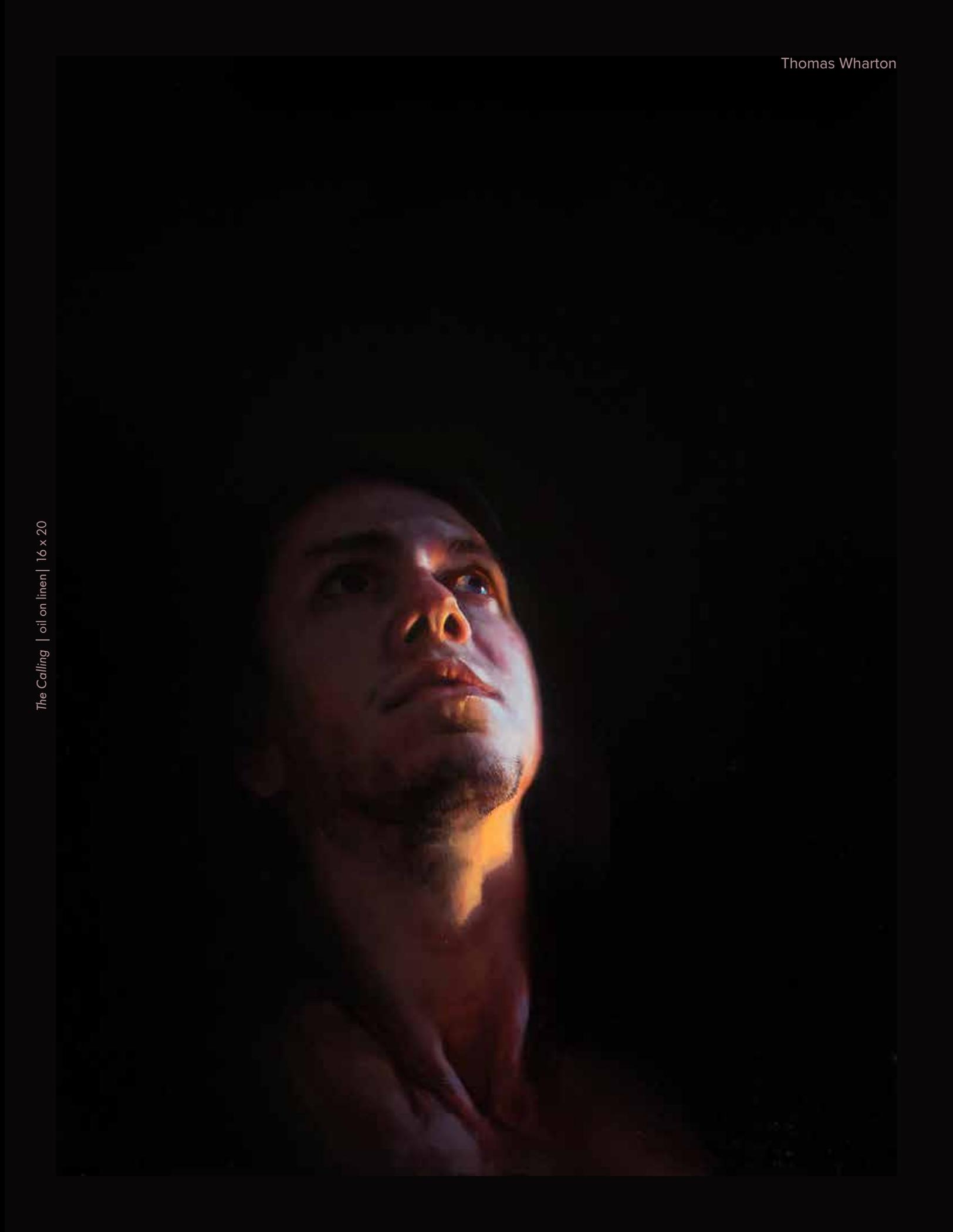
and launch us—fueled, rested, provisioned—headlong

into the eventually yielding day



Night Vision (cropped) | oil on linen | 36 x 44

The Calling | oil on linen | 16 x 20





*Buy, Sell, Loan (Mr. Ward)* | oil on panel | 42 x 22 | 2010

# The Hunk

From under the truck  
With a slight kiss of grease  
Slides out her dream man  
Blue eyes, black hair  
Standing up sweet and tall  
He's grabbing a smoke now  
Lifting tan arms  
Stretching his pecs  
He pulls off his shirt  
Lets it fall to the ground

*This could be, she thinks*  
*The end of oceans of sadness—*  
But no, too quickly  
His hand prints are on her

"I'm sick. Let me go"

The god of power and strength  
Taut and lean could have  
In another time, be seen  
As typical, desirable  
Now no virtue can be won  
What is done is done

He says, "Hey wait. No.  
This is not who I am."

But he is what he is  
Unless she wishes it, by mouth  
Or breast or hand  
How can she not  
blame the penis for the man.



*Inception of Point* | oil on canvas diptych | 36 x 62



Kuya | oil on canvas | 20 x 20

# Party Favor

I don't think the creek out  
back of this tavern is deep  
enough to drown the one you  
just tied on while the sun still  
melted over your sweating and

swollen yet mound of medium-  
height flesh, so you might as well  
just sit under this tree while  
shadows suffuse the grass  
as if someone spilled a bottle

of ink onto thirsty paper but  
couldn't find the tipped source,  
and your channels drain the liquor  
and replace it with straight cranberry  
juice in a safe plastic cup whose ice,

you hope, will cool you through  
the evening and rub off on your wife  
waiting right now steaming and strained  
among hot, dark walls





Front Man | oil on panel | 24 x 30



Bob | oil on canvas | 16 x 12

# Charles Plymell

1952. White suit. Black shirt, no tie, black loafers.

Walking on a city street at night, his head turns, half-

faced, looking left. He appears neat & respectable. I focus,

as each of his hands drop out of white sleeves

from a white suit: rocks as round as fists.

Charles Plymell is a possible teenager

in the black & white postcard

photograph he sent,

signed, thousands

of lives ago. Fuck.

I forget the title

of his book of

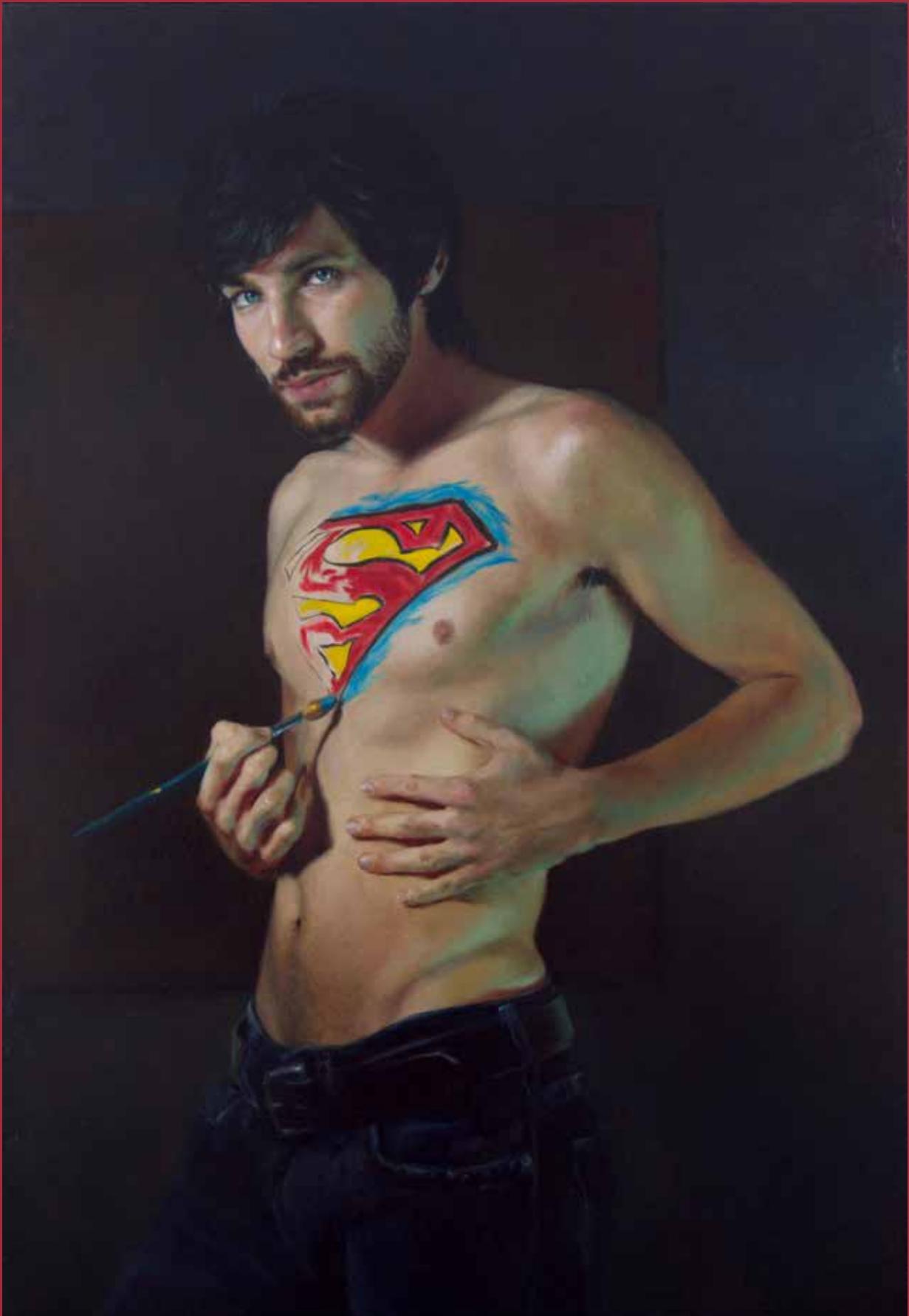
poems that

pushed me

to write

life, for-

ever.



*Origin Story* | oil on canvas over panel | 36 x 25 | 2014

Janice Bond

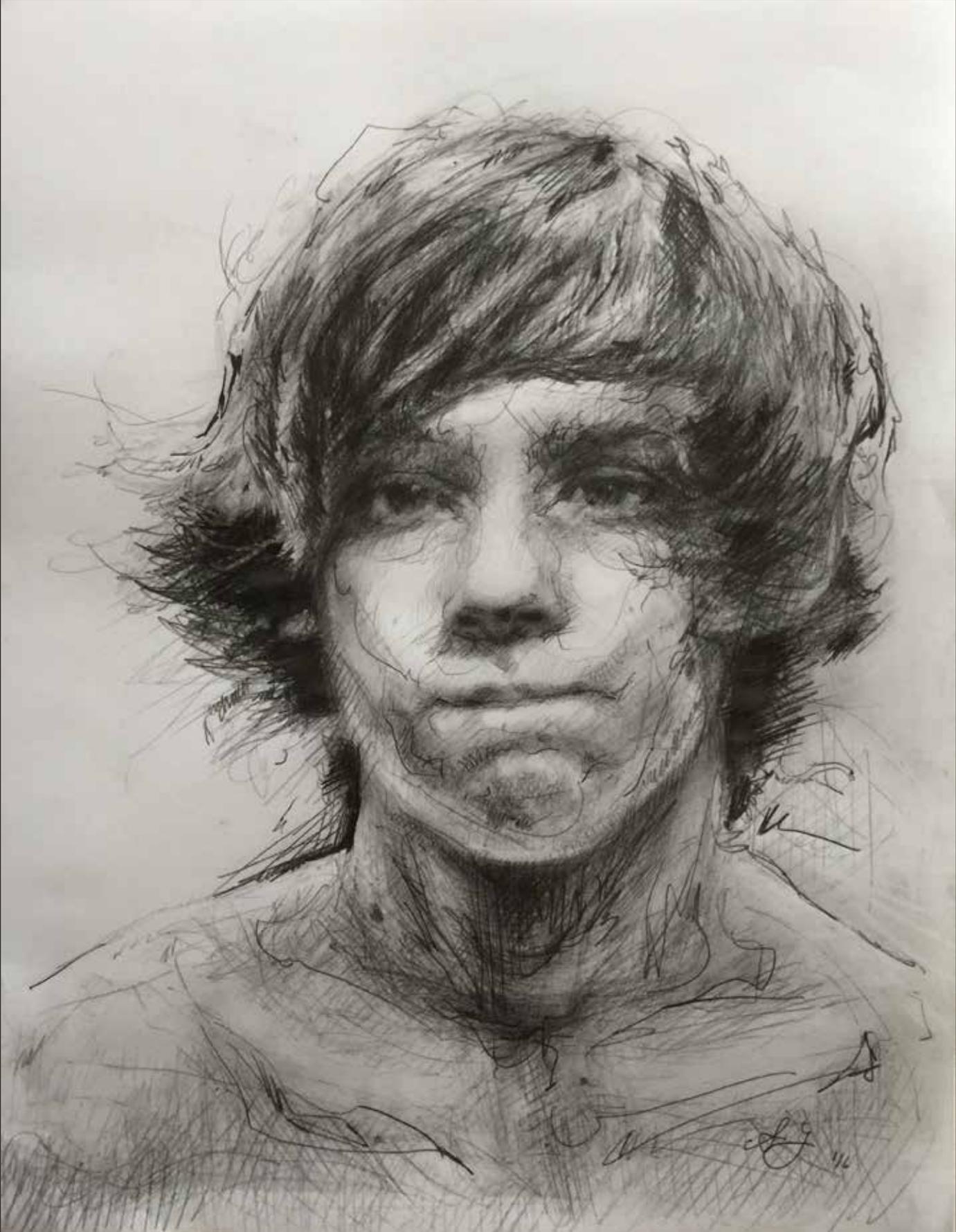


*the gift.* | photograph on brushed aluminum | 7 x 5 | 2016



*in retrospect.* | photograph on brushed aluminum | 7 x 5 | 2016





Portrait#18 | Graphite | 11 x 9 | 2016

# What Comes Out of the Sky at a Horizontal Trajectory

There in the sky through the transparency  
of glass that keeps out the heat and cold  
but lets light in,  
the boy and the father lay together, faces  
nestled, each partly in shadow  
partly in the shine of the half moon,  
its own darkness still its own for days to come.

Their faces. The heat of them. The letting down,  
the reaching, the pulling up their legs,  
knees bending, the boy's over his father's,  
not rooting, not  
trying, just being  
like

the duo of silent herons I see beyond them  
now passing overhead,  
swimming through the air on their way  
from where they were  
to where they must go.



*Being a Father* | oil on linen | 90x120 cm

# Resurrection

I think, *caro*, there is no manner in which you could ever understand  
My crimson tides: and why I find repellent  
Your scorpion pride: you caress organ-encrusted armor  
But there is no knowledge of the fight,  
And I've drawn maps of my own veins in cathedral heights  
And I'm tired, *caro*, and I want fresh flowers by my bed.

I've unleashed arsenals of battering rams formed by men  
With no allegiance to any side.  
But those men were born to drill and die,  
Crane's little souls who thirst for fight—  
But I'm a mercenary absent in those verses,  
Woven of regiment yet music moving as sight,  
And I'm weary, *caro*, and I want white around my head.

I'm impatient, *caro*, with your obsession with the dead

Because during the war, you marched out of sight,  
And never experienced such bowel-origin fright  
Of napalm and radios and eyelashes dyed red—  
From the mines I watched rip and the skeletons shed—  
And I'm patched up now, *caro*, but I want some wine.

I'm amused, *caro*, by your boyish hands

Which belie your youth. I commanded  
Trumpets tolling opulent formation  
In the field—and martyred, screeching men.

It's why I came back to him, waiting with wreaths lily-white.  
It's why I wielded chaos, because as his wife  
I was the shield between him and Santa Croce gates  
And I fought with crazed adoration to blind him safe.  
He never knew how close to Dante he got.

He swaddles me in blankets, and braids amaryllis in my hair  
And his hands are crocuses hewn with sueded palms.  
He cradles his tiny warrior with arms lily-bare  
And I lock my sobs to his earthy chest, the opposite of Death,  
His petals my Easter, his leaves its psalms:

I cannot court Death as I married the Resurrection.



A Knight | oil on aluminum | 50 x 560 cm | 2016

# Edgeways

Struck a stone,  
again, for hours, days.  
Quick jabs, parallel hammers,  
ears stay ringing near deaf,

a daily occurrence.  
Each stroke of the tool  
makes a cloud,  
the cliff on a far off

mountain, the grass  
flexing under feet,  
blades that never cut.  
Sweat is blindness.

While back breaking  
these upheaved giants, each  
has its own rites, a song.  
A single soul cannot sing

the darkness back to light.  
Through fire or flood,  
the radiant tight energy  
from the sun endures.

Shadows will dance  
until after moondown  
when darker than stone  
becomes the night set in.

The solstice is near.  
Once the moon  
has passed the circle,  
what you like is what you do.



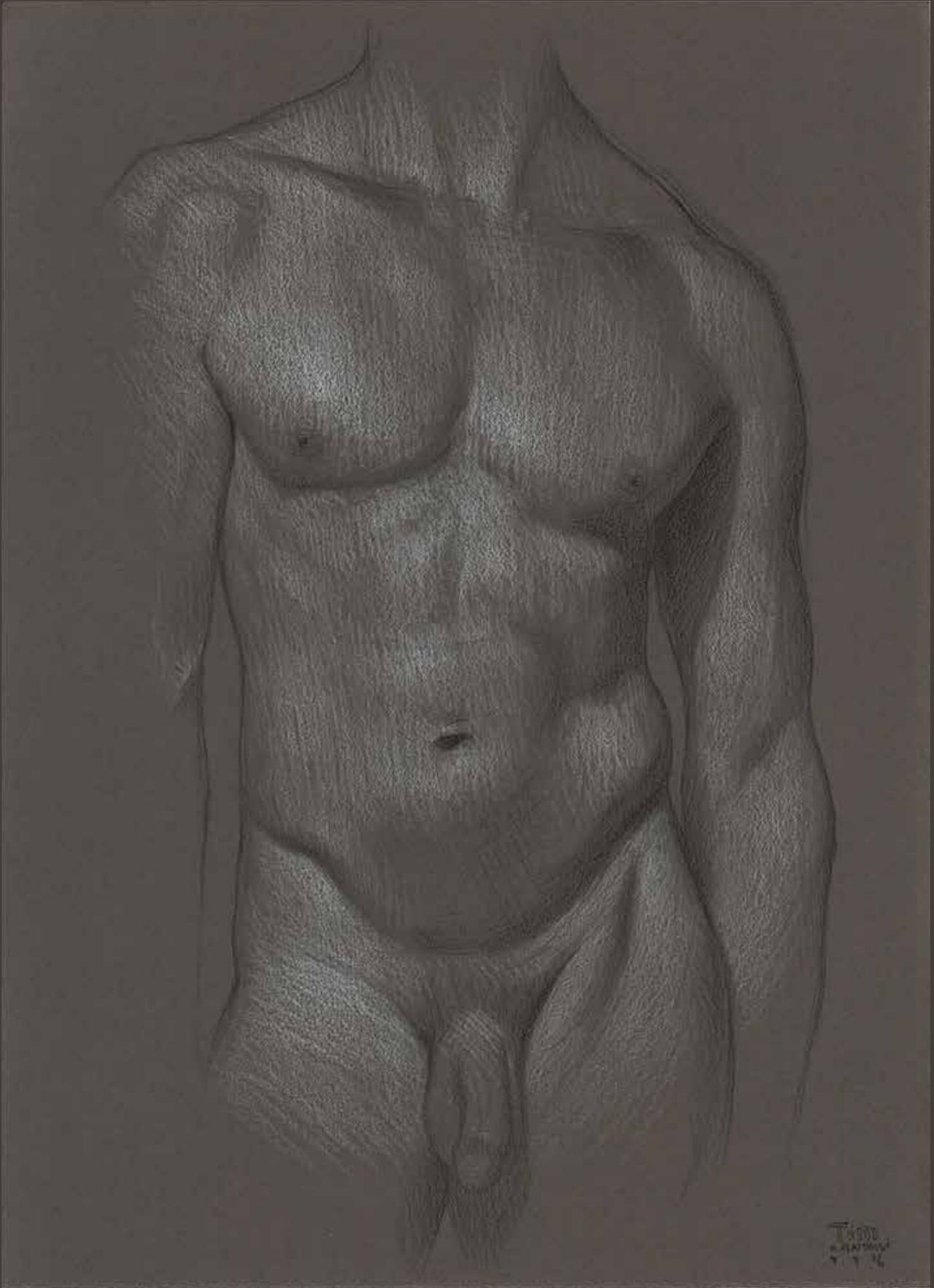
Saluga | oil on canvas over panel | 48 x 62 | 2016



*The Forging* | charcoal and silver leaf mixed media | 24 x 18 | 2016

# Existential Mafia

If I could've been more directly  
manipulated. If I could've been taken  
to my uncle's manufacturing facility  
off the remote parkway. I would've  
had a hard time sucking a dick.  
It just seems intense. I respect it.  
I would've had a hard time cutting a throat.  
Looking out the back window  
I could talk about irrigation.  
I could inform everyone the I-90 exits  
of the strip joints, waterparks,  
clown museum, king of Saudi Arabia.  
Take me to Deadwood and I'll say  
anything across a card table—  
I'd have a hard time fucking people over  
on the rez—my cousin's from there  
and he stole cars 'til he died in one.  
You could use me to tell true stories.  
The couch is a little broken but it's the perfect  
height for sex. You'll survive the decade  
but not the entropic void. I could  
look at a cop, sip coffee and tell him I never  
stole that pile of ivory. We had a party.  
In the morning, there were tusks.



*Tim's Torso* | white and black pencil on Daler Rowney gunmetal grey paper | 15 x 11

# Marriage (Water)

His wedding ring slipped off one day in the rain.

He'd become as beautiful on the outside

as I always knew he was, so fit, skinny really—

running miles, rowing, eating better. He said

it was an accident, and kneel-walked along the road,

hands like baleen skimming the gutters. The storm

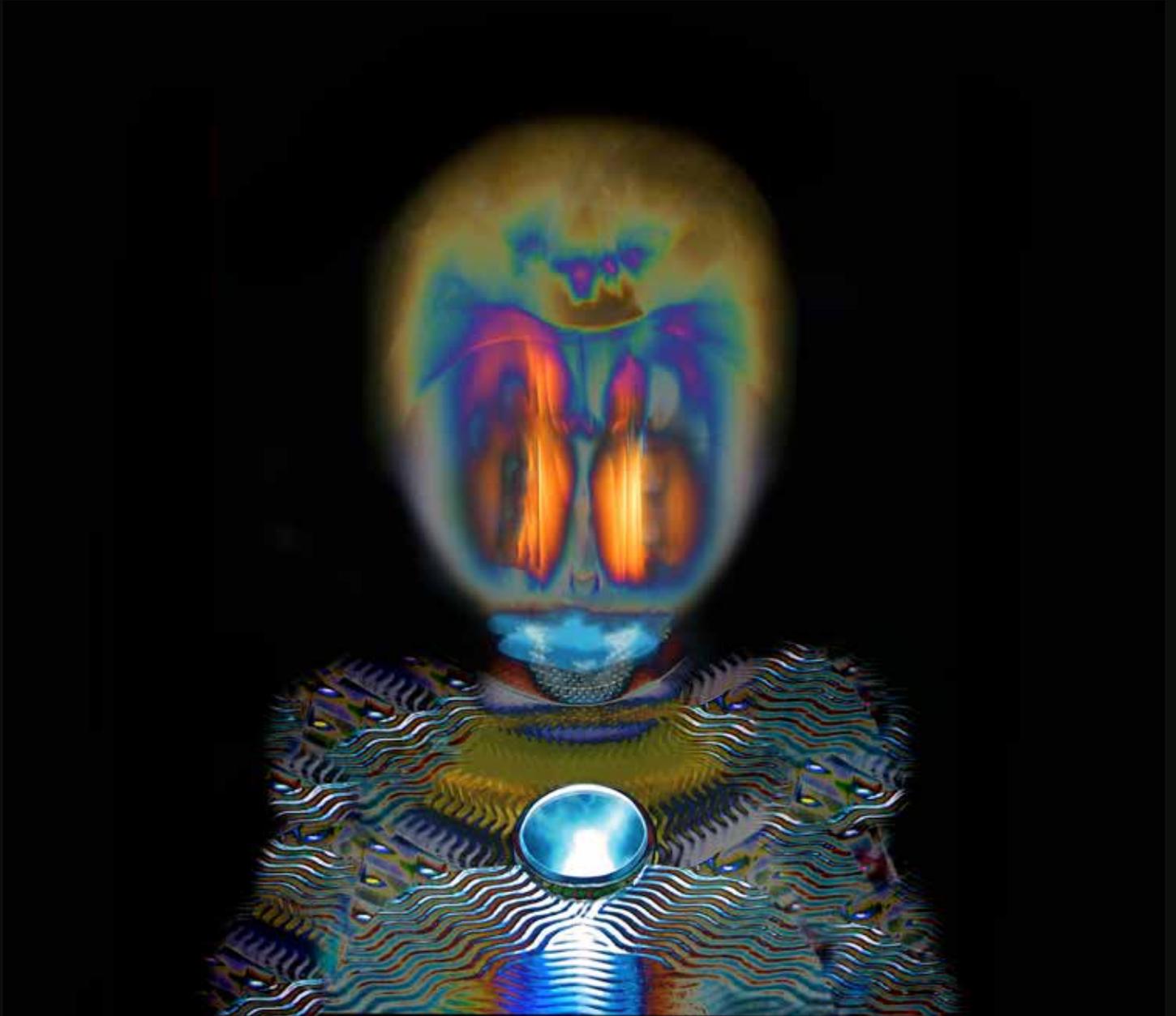
drains are labeled to deter us from dumping

oil and paint, for all water goes back to water.

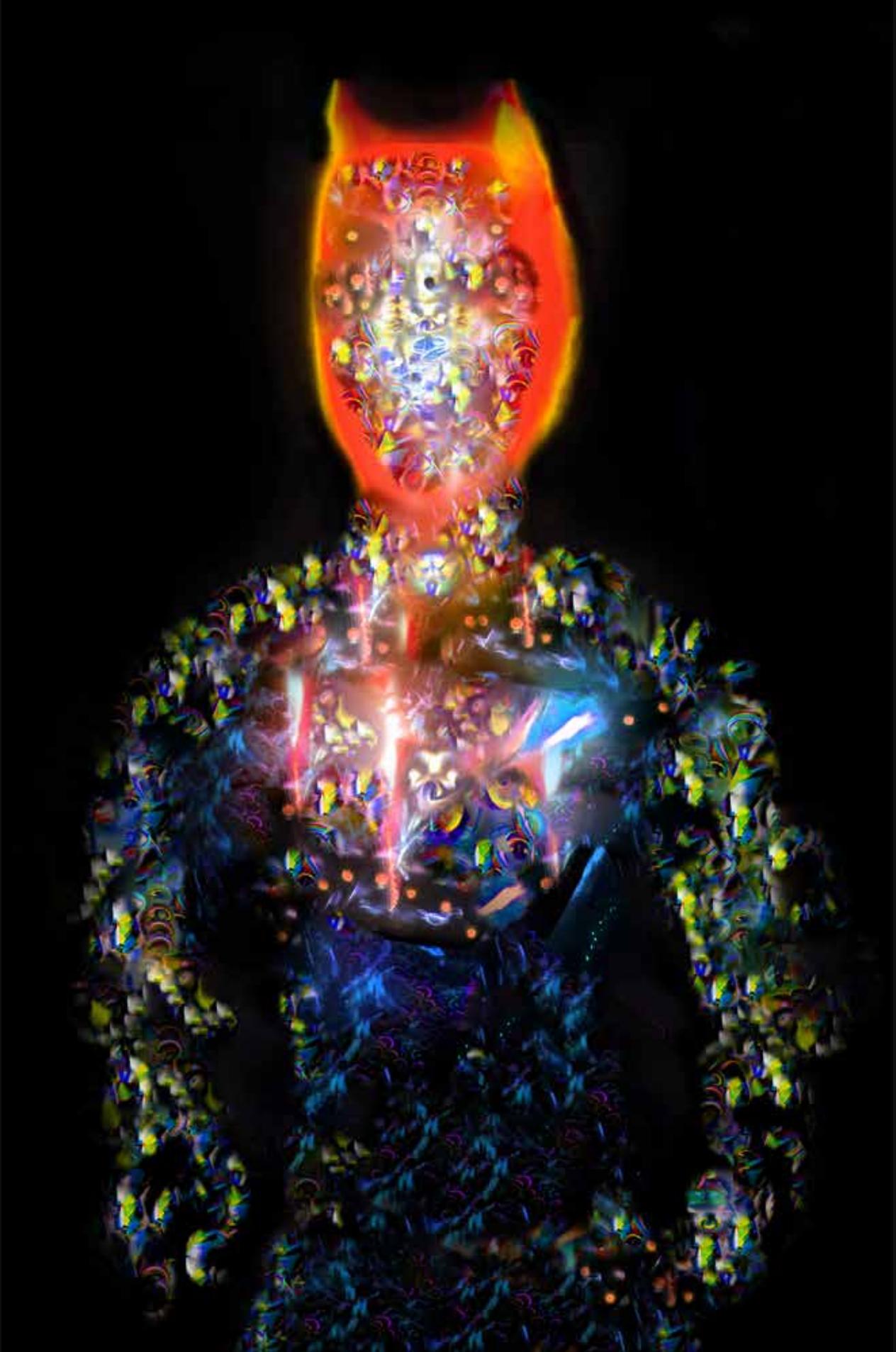
There are whales who swim from one end

of the earth to the other yet never meet. For weeks,

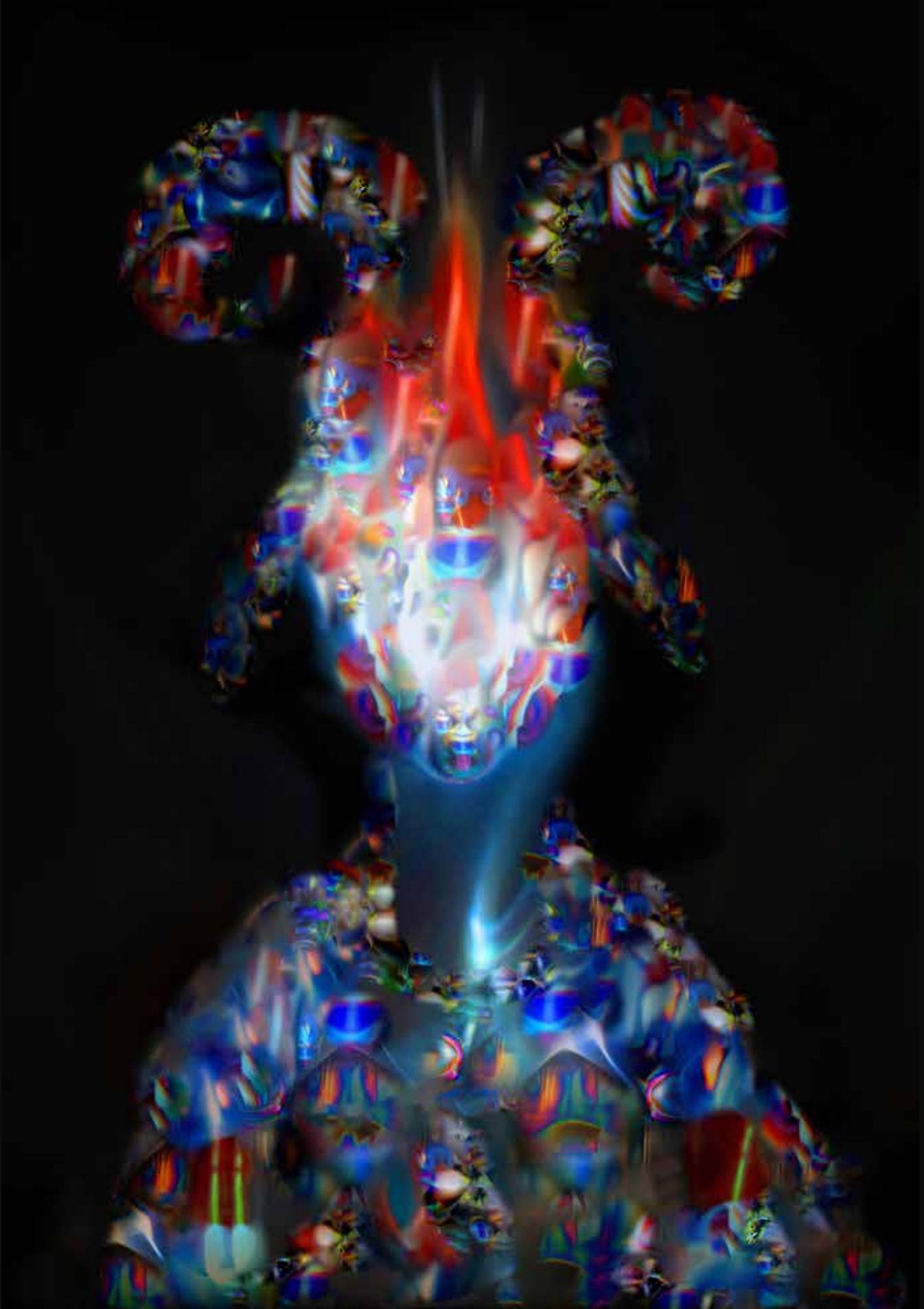
he told me not to worry, he'd find what he'd lost.



Portrait of Armored Trendle in Anger | Modified photograph of projected light | 38 x 25 | 2016



The Ram (ClyGoat) | Modified photograph of projected light | 16 x 12 | 2016



# Of Atelier & Evergreen

I have seen your hands before:

Velvet and moss, moving amongst

Sages in forest hollows,

Architects in repose,

Strewing petals in the laps of the mourning,

Petals you weave as

You walk with firm locked knees,

Ellipses, both you and their Augustine

I have seen your feet before:

Burgundy and burlap cover your sole,

Couriers of clay giants,

Aquinas in repose,

Your sculptor's tread in verdant glen,

Your pale ornamented forehead,

You king of craft and wrist,

Of atelier and evergreen.





*Winter is Here* | colored pencil on paper | 18 x 24 | 2016



# The Separations

The first separation opened in the fall of ninth grade  
playing tackle-football without pads  
south of the end zone, in an invisible grass dip  
while the high school game raged on and above

I tackled bravely with naked shoulder forward  
into churning thigh.

Though successful in my effort,  
my arm hung limp, numb awhile

I was scared—wondering if I had gone too far  
but nerves returned

until three years later

I thrust over the goal line  
and five hundred pounds of linemen collapsed  
on me

That was the second

even though my shoulder had gone numb  
for short spans, some times previously  
and finally made me ginger—a bit—  
in tackling, though I wondered why

Now I'm fine

Just a bone bump on my left clavicle end  
mismatched with the perfect right

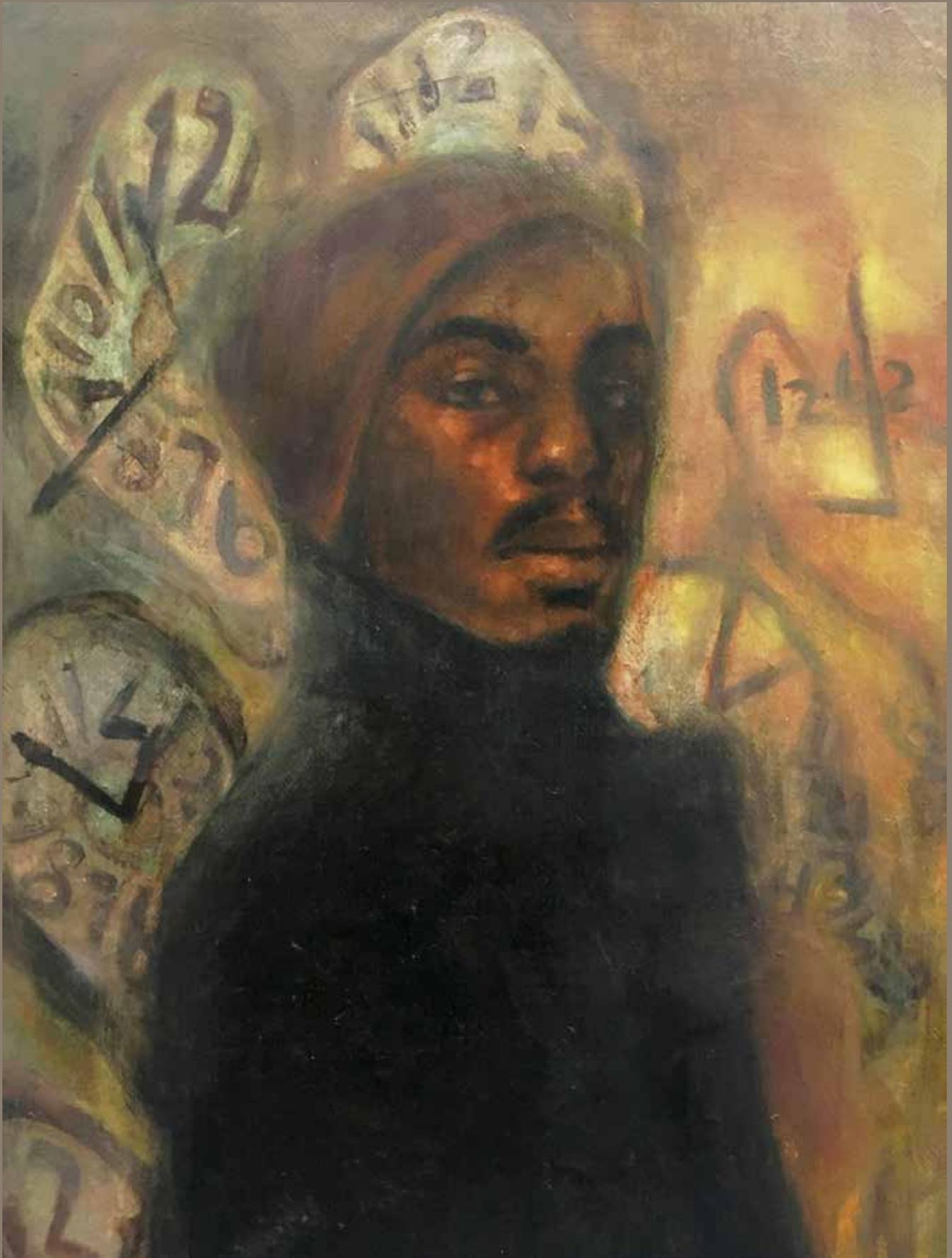
I've no more reason to drive my shoulder  
—myself—

into an on-coming force

I'll approach it with my sturdy head  
instead



*Syria* | oil on canvas | 51 x 32 | 2016



*The Time Thief* | oil on canvas | 24 x 18



*Young Washington* | oil on panel | 24 x 20 | 2016

# We The Places Have All Been

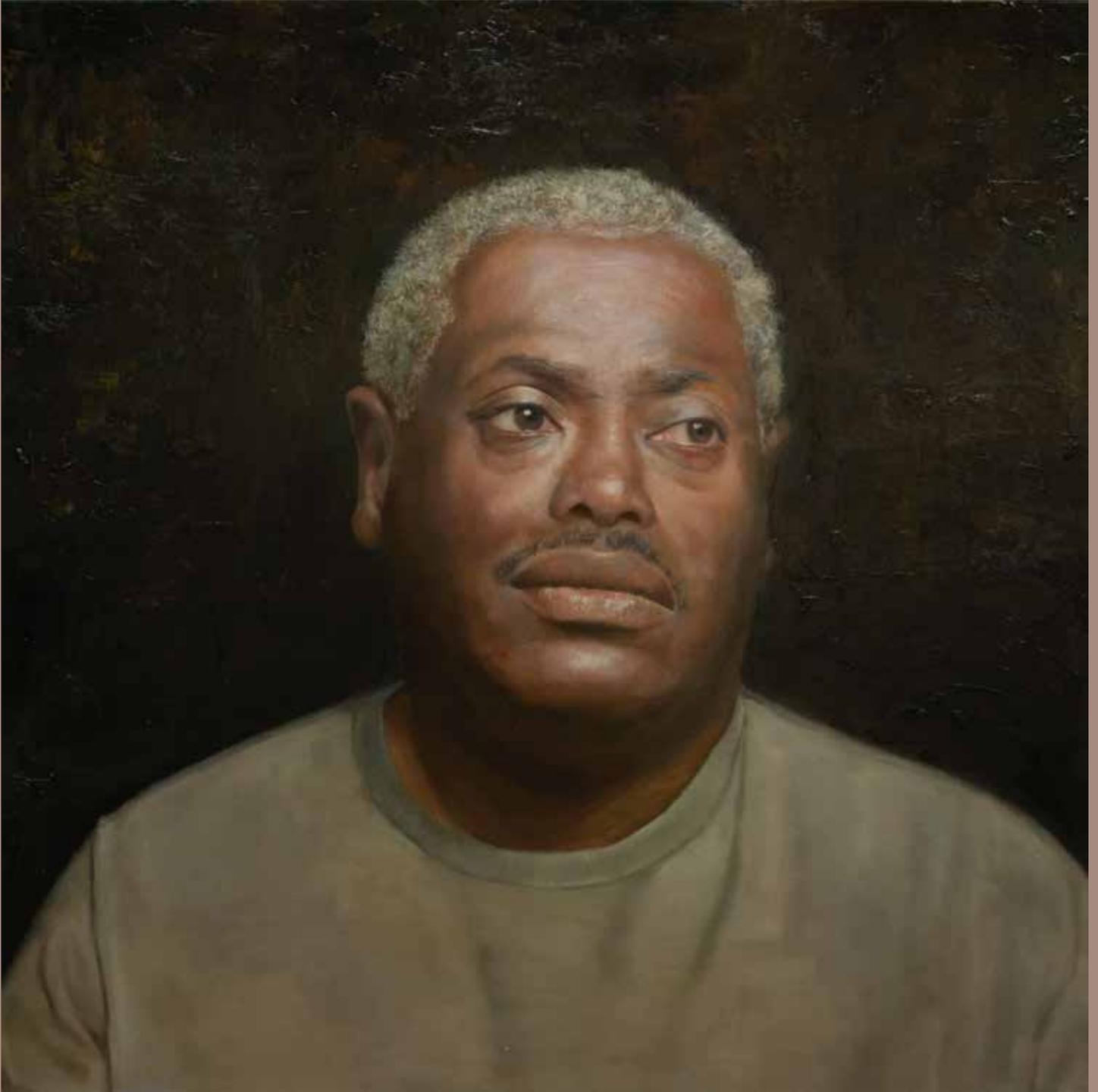
My neighbor is selecting paints  
from the sale rack at Home Depot,  
small rejected containers,  
finger prints of the colors inside  
that weren't quite right—indigo instead  
of cerulean, blush instead of carmine.  
After two tours in Iraq, he has a companion  
dog who goes with him everywhere.  
Lately, he's been painting birdhouses  
he sells on Etsy for \$19.99.  
I think about the choices we all make  
and about made and salvaged things.  
As I watch, he lays down on the floor  
of the aisle and embraces his dog.  
I've never seen him touch another human  
and never saw him do this with his dog before.

Once I would have looked away  
or taken my cart to another aisle,  
but instead watch, and what ripples in my body  
isn't fear or loneliness but makes me want  
to get down on my knees and beg  
for something.





Shana Levenson



Wendell | oil on dibond | 20 x 20 | 2016



Brooklyn | oil on canvas | 40 x 30 | 2016



*Stephen And The Extraterrestrial* | acrylic on canvas | 40 x 30 | 2016

# The Fourth of July in the Early 1960s

in shadow & dew on the side of my dad's first garage, black dirt, talcum dust, hubcap rust, bone nails, & broken wood; oily, fingerprinted cans, plus a new olds 98 hold summer heat warmer than afternoon inside; I have a pack of matches & a mangled firecracker lattice in my back pocket.

I'm not allowed to do this. Never set off firecrackers alone. It isn't safe. I push, like planting plants, gunpowder-rolled paper sticks, blue star ones, red star ones, deep into raw soil along the shadowy edge of the garage. Fuses show like gray hairs of grass, but bent like thick tiny branches. They cheer as

fires touch & spark them. I'm fascinated by a whirl of smoke like a thinning ghost in exploded dirt. My mother yells my name from the back door, then she adds volume & my middle name & emphasizes our same last. She's serious. I step from shadows into sunlight, & a mean, loving, concerned face asks,

"What do you think you're doing? Don't you know that yr father is sleeping?" He works 7-day swing-shifts in the east end steel-mill, he's young, chews Italian dog-turd cigars. I grumble, & kick up the backyard sidewalk. Mom widens the door. I scowl. I sulk stairs to my hollow sun-soaked bedroom & fall across a boyhood bed.

I want to blow up everything.

# IRVIN RODRIGUEZ'S CONTEMPORARY BAROQUE FIGURES

by Lorena Kloosterboer

Irvin Rodriguez paints and draws the human figure, successfully combining a traditional realist approach akin to Spanish Baroque on his figures with a more contemporary looseness towards abstraction on the background settings. His method and process serve as a vehicle to explore the figure, nature, art history, race, and identity.

Born and raised in the Bronx, New York, Rodriguez is a first-generation bilingual American from Dominican descent. Growing up in the inner city—a cement jungle of concrete buildings, stone facades, and fire escapes—Rodriguez recalls a bleak and oppressive sense of low expectations. Art became his escape; it gave him a sense of purpose, carried him through life and drove him to study fine art.

During his formative years, he focused on academic drawing techniques which continue to be highly palpable in his current body of work. Working live as well as from photographs, he finds models among friends and family, people he meets at the Art Students League or via Instagram. His subjects hail from diverse cultures and backgrounds, portraying those who catch his eye and inspire him.

Lately Rodriguez feels especially drawn to paint those that haven't before been represented as main subjects in the genre of figure painting. Now more than ever he embraces being a man of color, expressing this through

his work. Painting people of color is his way of identifying with his culture, especially important to him now because of the current sociopolitical state of the US. According to Rodriguez, "It's the perfect place and time to focus on this. The genre needs more people of color."

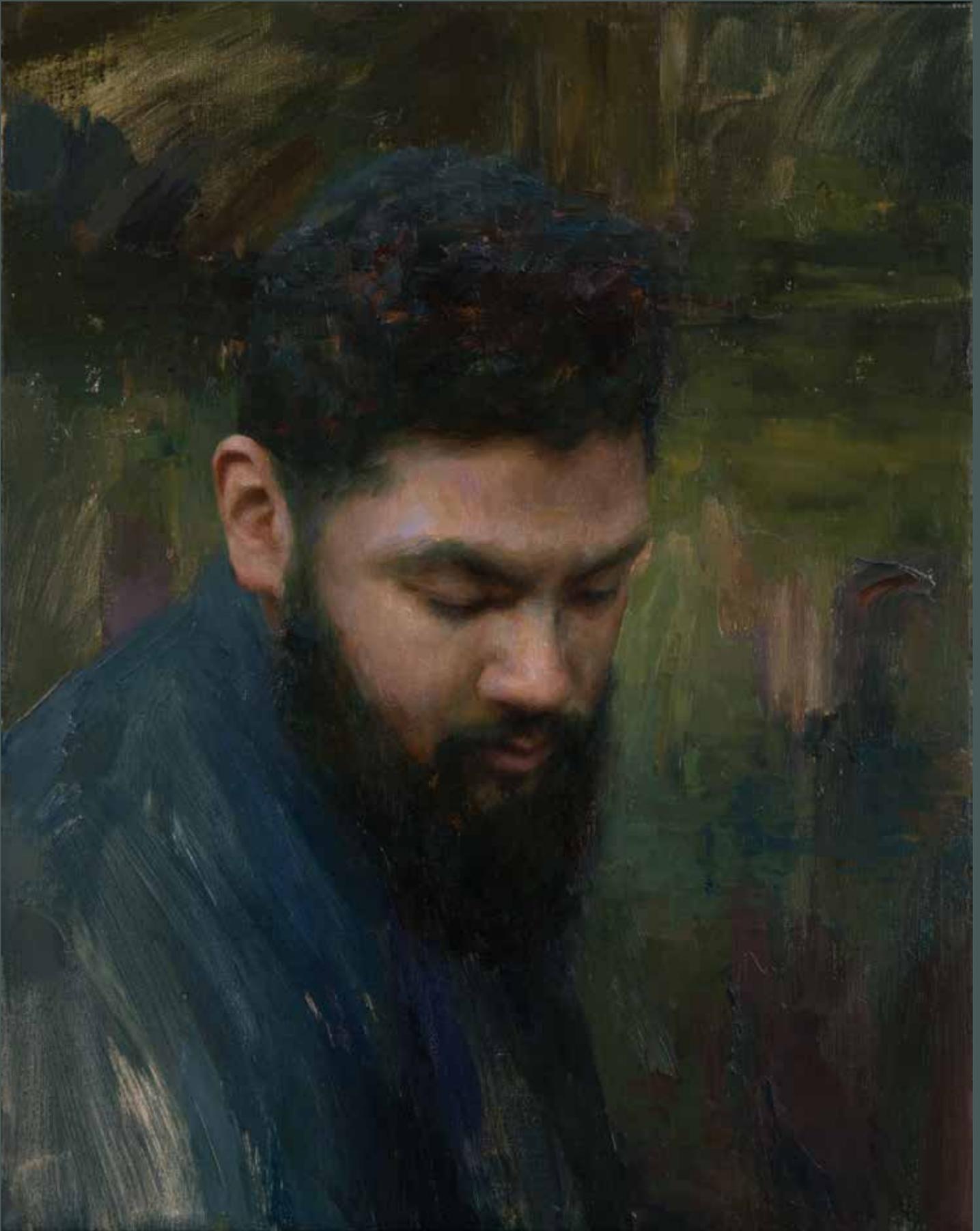
*A Clean Slate* is, as the title indicates, an ode to Private Gordon. Describing it as much darker in content than his other work, Rodriguez based this painting on a photograph of Gordon, also known as 'Whipped Peter,' an enslaved African American who escaped from a Louisiana plantation in March 1863, reaching freedom after crossing state lines. The original photograph that inspired this painting was taken after Gordon enlisted in the army in Baton Rouge. While he was being fitted for his uniform the photographers recorded the myriad of keloid scars on Gordon's back, stark evidence of brutal whippings. This widely published picture became pivotal in exposing the brutality of slavery.

To symbolize new beginnings, Rodriguez chose to paint Gordon's strong back pristine, the skin healthy, restored, flawless. This metaphorical healing through art is such a beautiful gesture, it feels like a brotherly embrace, an offering of redemption and liberation. Rodriguez defines this piece as not only a homage to this heroic man but a gesture of support and solace to all suppressed and enslaved peoples—then and now.



*A Clean Slate, An Ode to Private Gordon, 1863* | oil on linen | 32 x 24 | 2016

Irvin Rodriguez



*A Letter To My Brother* | oil on canvas | 14 x 11 | 2016



American Madness | oil on linen | 48 x 36 | 2016

Kim Christopher



E | oil on canvas paper | 14 x 11 | 2016

# January Second

You didn't catch me staring at you today:  
Yet for as we are buried in the  
Chastisement and ashes of our assailants,  
You grab a bottle, with your teeth remove the cork  
And I see your profile,  
Set against the pallid light of January second.

That such beauty pushes aside the rubble  
And swings toward me such opulent eyes—  
Aquamarine in morning, ultramarine at night—  
Makes me take the bottle from your hand,  
And think of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's grave.  
In Florence, I paid homage and thought of her saints:  
Their chorus under cypress, her love for Robert  
Lisbon's lullaby, and it followed me to Queens.

And yet for all our Capricorn dreams  
We refuse the East River and drink the Arno,  
Sailing in the ships of our glass bottles,  
To bottle your color for the Tyrrhenian Sea.

# Long View

Who takes the time  
to ask those Questions?

How do you really want to BE  
around your children?

Think: you are being interviewed  
regarding thoughts  
from your deepest place.

You are being  
listened to  
with complete attention.

And in that climate  
it's easy to locate  
what you endeavor to be:

transparent.

I share something quietly,  
with simple openness.

And the boy listens.

And why is that so important  
a thing to do  
with the child?'

Because, why, why  
and here is why  
the interview is important:

Because

He feels respected by the pace of it.

He feels loved.

So by the time he is ready to go

It will be easy.

And of course  
you hope

As easy

For him to return.

But you can't  
orchestrate that.

You want him to come back  
with pleasure

pounding playfully  
on the front door  
you forgot to unlock.



*Mark Weathers the Storm* | oil on copper | 48 x 36





Sienna Palio V (Comune /Municipality) | oil on linen | 40 x 50 cm | image is cropped to fit the page

Larry Aarons



*Defense of the Species – Man's Ram* | archival photography combo sculpture | 20 x 30 | 2016

# A Beast with his Horn

November 2016

With no idea how I got here – but thanks to  
L Cohen – I can hear the rattle in my throat

and know the time is closer than when my days  
were handed to me by period and *get up now* –

or the easy ache of summer – and what have I done  
in the meantime? “Nothing,” you say. “You’re right,”

I say, then let both lips touch, knowing my mask is  
on the table where I left it, my soul in a jar by the bed.

There must be a bird somewhere – somewhere a line  
that follows the morning to its stillness, to its heat,

its turn to yawning and beautiful darks that never let go.  
There is more than one. There must be a hole somewhere,

and a shoulder digging for the sake of digging only –

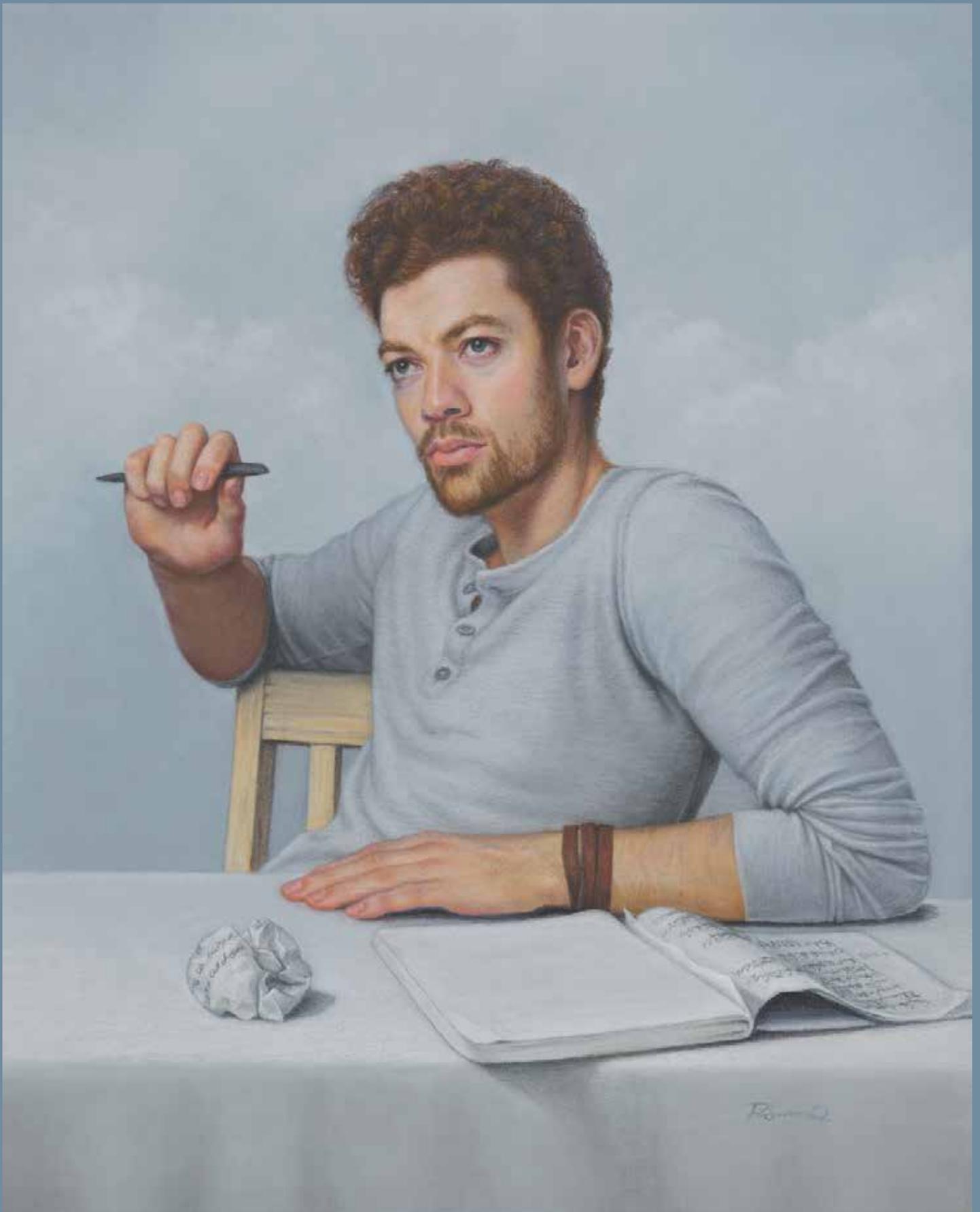
# Unfinished

He was the road left before  
the journey was done, the unfinished  
kiss, the last photo, words  
left unsaid

but I still talk to him  
in my head

rearranging and changing  
old scenarios until my book  
of poems is filled with the life  
we never had.

Untraveled roads can be dangerous  
my friends tell me, filled with  
runaway vans and wild  
baying wolves, lost in this night  
created from new endings,  
just waiting to take me down.



*The Writer* | pastel on paper | 20 x 16 | 2016





Everything Happens For a Reason | oil on canvas | 30 x 24 | 2016

# Purple Haze

*Purple haze, all around*

*Don't know if I'm comin' up or down*

*Am I happy or in misery?*

Jimi Hendrix

California is calling.

I have lost some dialogue between Bruce Lee's martial kicks. *Hiya* is all that comes out. *Hiya!!* with an exclamation even! I pose my hands in karate chop ready for a fight, ready for some action baby.

*Let's groove, Bruce says.*

*What's your style? He asks.*

*My style is black, I say.*

*I wear black. I look good in black don't you agree? I just got these new black stiletto heels.*

(Swish—Swish)

*My legs are my best feature don't you see? I move my French manicured nails up my thighs. I highlight them with garter belts, the sound of a slap against the elastic on my thigh is magnified by the sound room technician, and black lacy pantyhose, I continue.*

A leg goes up in the air á la French can can.

(Swish—Swish).

*You see, my style is black. My hands go up again in karate chop.*

Bruce looks at me up and down, smirks for he does not have a style. *My style is no style*, he says. He wears yellow tight jumpsuit

and white Nikes with blue stripes. It is 1973 inside my *Netflix* app.

I am really wearing a *The Doors* t-shirt, sneakers and old jeans.

I wear black and get killed by Bruce Lee with his no style of fighting as California is calling me from the distant mountains behind a 33 foot Buddha made of bronze.

Surreal baby. Surreal as Bruce Lee and me.

\*

We arrived in Los Angeles in 1967 as the smog from the window of the plane looked like a purple haze covering the city.

Mami had left my Papi and this time it looked like it was going to stay because we were moving in with my mother's sister, Tia Macuca and her husband and our maternal grandfather.

Finally things had turned around and Mami was surrounded by her family who were looking out for her best interest instead of the other way around when we lived with my father's side of the family who were looking out for the best interest of Pablito instead of Salome.

We immediately felt at home. Our cousin Luisito and Carlitos were there too since my uncle Lucio and his wife Erundina had moved to

California too. We all lived within a block from each other.

My sister Ivonne, Carlitos and I attended Santa Monica Elementary. The children in Mrs. Elliot's class could tell I was different but weren't able to really figure out what it was. I wasn't Mexican. I wasn't American. I think they could tell I was an alien but I looked like them and something was up with me because I also spoke a foreign language which they really weren't sure what it was except that I could talk to the Mexican kids without any barriers unlike them. Three of the boys in class started following me around. They were Johnny, Saul, and Paolo.

Johnny especially would go out of his way to poke fun at me during recess. Saul was kinder but was Johnny's side kick and hackler. Whatever Johnny said to me, Saul would laugh like a hyena. Like if it was funnier than a skit on *Laugh In* or the *Smother's Brothers*.

I related to Paolo and never forget him because his name was similar to my father's whom I was missing very much.

Papi would show up unexpected on us whenever we would leave him. He showed up for my 8th birthday in Los Angeles. He stayed in a hotel where the little people, the actors from *The Wizard of Oz* lived. One of them was in the the Oscar Meyer wiener commercial. Papi introduced him to me and he was exactly my size. My father was 6 feet tall and once picked one of the little people up so they could reach the water fountain because for some reason the step for them to reach was missing that day.

The hotel faced Santa Monica Boulevard. Across from the hotel was Sears and in the corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Western there was a diner where the legendary Lana Turner was discovered drinking a Coke while wearing a cashmere sweater.

For my birthday Papi wanted to know what I wanted for my gift. He asked if I wanted a Parakeet or a Kodak Instamatic camera. I opted for the parakeet and that is when Lily came into our life later followed by Blue Boy. Somehow, someway being Daddy's girl I paid off for me because I ended up with the camera also.

Papi later disappeared as easily as he had appeared and we would not see him again until January 1st, 1969 when we moved back to Miami with Lily and Blue Boy inside little wicker purses.

\*

My daughter is now living in California. I visited her recently and I asked her to drive me through the old neighborhood off Wilton and Western. As we drove by there was a deal being made from a parked car in the street. There was a gate around the little house on the corner of Wilton and Barton Ave.

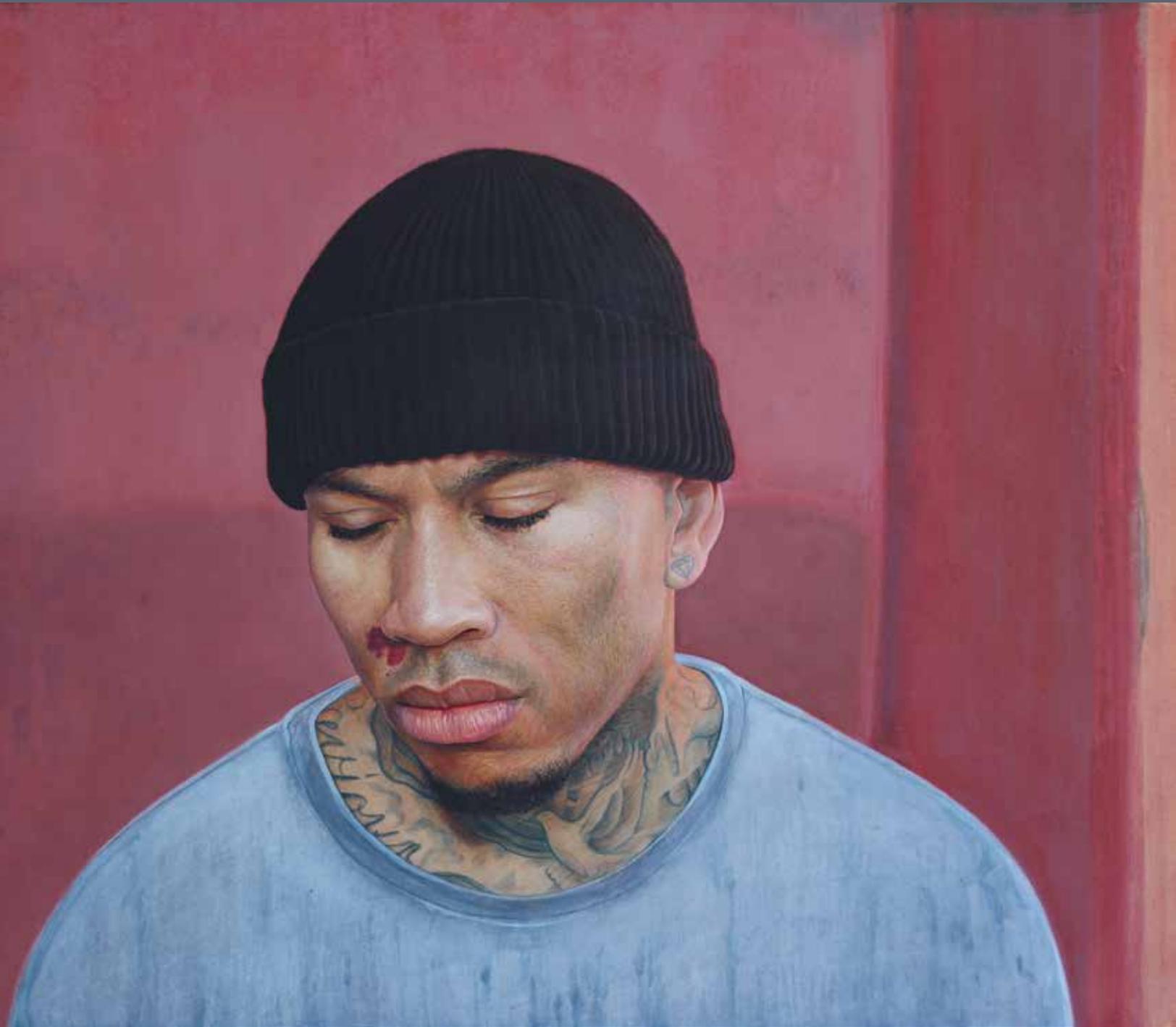
My daughter Jack is an actress and she is a daddy's girl too yet her mother is who dropped everything and ran off to California to see her. It was surreal baby.

I have been hiding behind sunflowers and a broken front screen porch door for 10 years while living in the Midwest.

I have been in a purple haze. This last year things changed. I stopped to look at butterflies and booked a flight at the last minute because California was calling me.

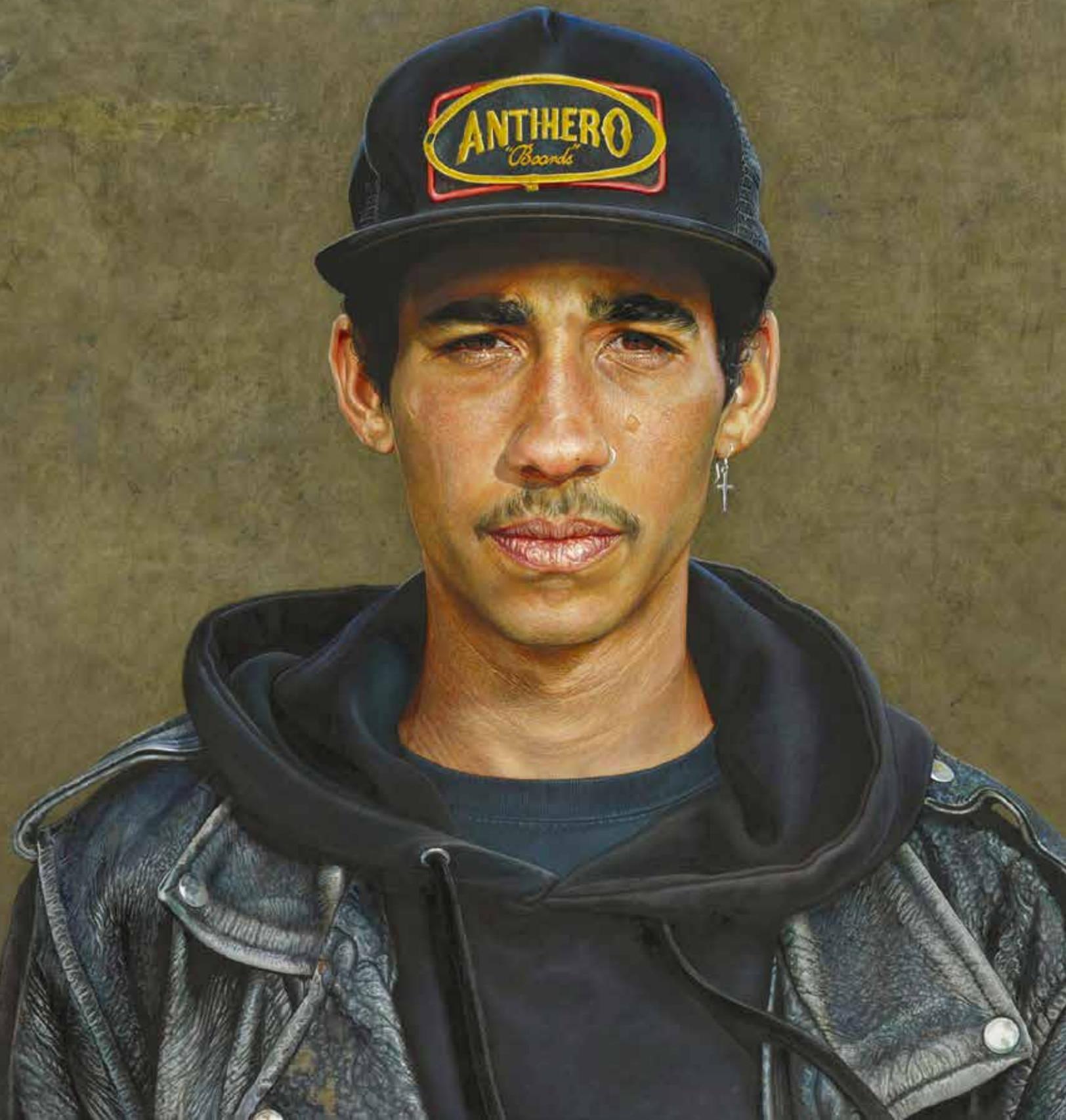
Somehow I have come out of the smog and at the age of 56, I feel as if the plane has finally landed and the gigantic bronze Buddha is finally just that, something I had to move around just to get to the other side.

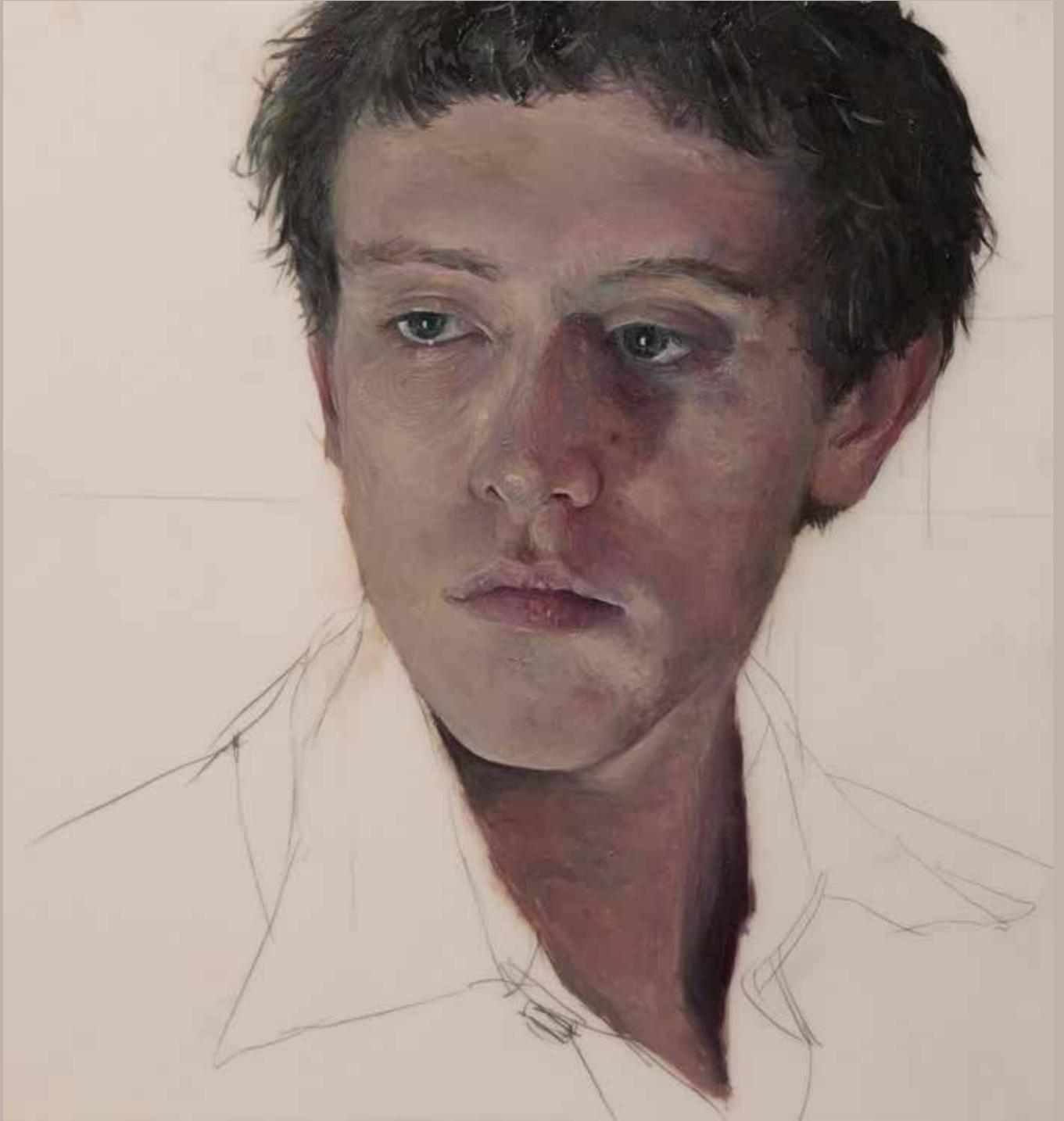




*Age Has Faith* | oil on panel | 100 x 70 cm

Alan Coulson  
*Jordan (cropped)*  
oil on panel  
100 x 79 cm





Charlie | oil on mylar | 8 x 8 | 2016

# notas and other antidotes

A true native New Yorker from the Bronx NY, **Larry Aarons** graduated from School of Visual Arts in NYC. His mantra has always been "To Reach The Head You Must Touch The Heart." That mantra is so true with the Defense of the Species sculptures Man's Ram. The DOTS was created as a way to renounce the cruelty to which humans subject other species. As one who could not even kill a fly he hopes to raise consciousness about the beauty and the right of all creatures to exist on the planet. He's won numerous awards and has had many shows. He's been written up in many publications and has been named One Of The Top Artists To Watch and is the recipient of the prestigious President's Award Salmagundi Gallery / AAPL and recently was awarded the Gold Medal of Honor Winner American Artist Professional League

**Nicole Alger** is primarily a realist painter, but she has been writing poetry for ten years. Nicole Alger's latest self portrait is part of the current juried show of self portraits at 33 Contemporary in Chicago. More recently, her work was accepted into the American Women Artists' Spring Juried show and she was asked to write an article on her work for *Artists Newtworks*. Previously, she was invited to include work in the drawing show at Dacia Gallery in New York City last Dec. 2015. Nicole Alger is a member of The Copley Society of Art in Boston where she is a part of their Portrait registry. Her work will be in their next juried show of landscapes this October, at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod. Her solo show of still lifes and landscapes in November of 2016 will be held at the Norfolk Library in Connecticut. [www.nicolealger.com](http://www.nicolealger.com)

Born in 1987 in the small town of Waterville, Ohio, **Erin Anderson** was immersed in art from a young age. Enrolling in her first art lessons at seven years old, she spent her early years learning to paint and draw copying works of the old masters and spending summers drawing from life at the Toledo Museum of Art. In 2009 she earned a B.A. in Psychology and Entrepreneurship from Miami University. Upon graduation she decided to enroll in an independent program called The Waichulis Studio and later moved to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania where she lives and works today. Her work has been featured in national publications as well as exhibitions throughout the U.S. She is represented by Dacia Gallery in New York.

**Ron Androla** is the author of CONFLUENCE (2015), and FACTORY FABLES (2016), plus many more books available at Amazon.com. He lives with his wife, Ann, in Erie, PA.

**Pauline Aubey** aka Poupée de Chair is a French portrait artist with a degree in Fine Arts and Letters.

Obsessed with everything pop she decided substance and form had to come together and started a series of lego pieces based on pop and disco icons which came to be the first series of her Think Square Project.

Her artwork has been exhibited in Versailles, Orleans and Bordeaux (France) and in Chicago. She will disclose her new series Just Like In The Movies in Paris in February. She is regularly published in *PoetsArtists* magazine and featured by the team of *DeviantART*. It is under license with Artistic Dreams Imaging.

**Alla Bartoshchuk's** development was paved and fueled by the simple passion for creating. The artistic expression in her nascent years found its place not only on the walls of her bedroom, but also on the neighbor's fences. This early passion for art led her to enter Youth Art Academy in her home-town Rivne, Ukraine, and later propelled her to move across the Atlantic Ocean to study fine arts in Memphis College of Art. Alla graduated magna cum laude with Bachelor of Fine Art in painting in 2010. In June 2013 she received a Master of Fine Art degree from Laguna College of Art and Design. Alla has been honored to be the recipient of numerous scholarships and awards, among which is Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant (2012 and 2013) and Kalos Foundation Visual Art Prize (First Place). Alla is a storyteller at heart and she uses symbolic imagery to tell those stories. The symbols in her work are usually implied and are not always used in a literal sense. Rather they are private, imaginative images that arise from the depth of the psyche and embrace the surreal quality of dreams, fantasies and premonitions.

Native Southern Californian, **Donna Bates** lives and paints in Los Angeles CA. Her years of experience as a commercial illustrator and 3D Artist for over 20 years has evolved into a career in painting. She has taken so many classes and workshops always hungry to learn but is a self-taught artist and admits to being influenced by many contemporary and classical artists, fashion, pop and street culture.

Donna, who is also known for her urban realism, has recently expanded on her edgy realistic style to include several paintings exploring not only the subject's outward appearance but the vast world going on inside their head. Reminding us that there is a lot more going on in there than what is reflected on the surface. Although many of her paintings make political statements the visual always dominates and invites.

Art and being a creative have dominated Donna Bates' life who started drawing as soon as she

could pick up a pencil. As with so many creative people, Donna wanted to do it all. Although she was an art major in school, she started playing drums when she was 16 and played in numerous bands. Touring Viet Nam in a USO Show during the war with an all-girl band to playing with bands in the early LA Punk scene in the late 70's and early 80's. From music, she transitioned into computers in the early '90s, being one of very few women who entered the male-dominated 3d Animation/VFX field. She went on to be one of the only women to teach CG Modeling at Gnomon School of VFX. She says, "I see or feel something I want to do and I just go for it. It's the only way I know, I just seem to have no other choice." Bates further states, "My paintings all have a little bit of me in them and a lot of my struggles, loves and life experience."

Donna has participated in at least 12 group shows during 2016 including the prestigious "Women Painting Women" Show at RJD Gallery. She was also included in *PoetsArtists* "Figurative Painters 2016" edition.

**Ivonne Bess** is a successful graphic designer and artist who focuses on portraiture. Mostly creating works in colored pencil, she has also produced collage portraits using her own handmade paper.

Her latest group show participation entitled "American Evolution" was at Jan Brandt Gallery in Bloomington, Illinois. (October 2016)

Born in Macomb, Illinois in 1958. Primarily an acrylic painter, **Jeffrey Bess'** artistic background includes 25 years of graphic design, acrylic on canvas and found object art. Jeff began his fine art studies at Miami Dade Community College and majored in fine art at Illinois State University.

While mostly focusing on surreal landscapes and isolated objects, Simple compositions depict his work as he skillfully and sometimes humorously questions our sense of gravity and place in the universe.

**Janice Bond** is a curator, interdisciplinary artist, and cultural producer specializing in arts and culture development and programming. Her forward thinking and high energy approach has been utilized over the past decade in a range of initiatives and productions across the globe.

Bond opened Gallery ONI in 2014, a contemporary art gallery and cultural space located in Chicago, Illinois. Gallery ONI is scheduled to reopen in Detroit, Michigan, dedicated to promoting the work of women artists of color. In 2015, The Art Allies was launched, an initiative created to educate and develop more

visual art collectors and arts entrepreneurs in major cities all over the world. In 2016, Janice was selected to participate in the first International Photography Symposium in Daugavpils, Latvia hosted by the Mark Rothko Art Center. Four of her original works from the series "Beyond the Binary" were added to their permanent collection.

Janice Bond is currently the Director of Music and Social Programming at The Kimpton Gray Hotel in Chicago, Illinois.

The poems of **Pris Campbell** have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies, including *PoetsArtists*, *Rusty Truck*, *Bicycle Review*, *Chiron Review*, and *Outlaw Poetry Network*. She has been nominated three times for a Pushcart Prize. The Small Press has published six collections of her poetry and Clemson University Press a seventh one, a collaboration. A former Clinical Psychologist, sailor and bicyclist until sidelined by ME/CFS in 1990, she makes her home in the Greater West Palm Beach, Florida.

**Grace Cavalieri** is founder and producer of "The Poet and the Poem" on public radio, now from the Library of Congress. She celebrates 40 years on-air in 2017. She's has 18 books and chapbooks published, the latest is *WITH* (Somondoco Press, 2016.) Cavalieri has had 26 plays produced on American stages. Her newest play is "ANNA NICOLE: BLONDE GLORY." The play is inspired by Anna Nicole: Poems, published by GOSS183. Her poetry has been featured on Garrison Keillor's "Verse Daily" and Ted Kooser's "American Life in Poetry."

**Candice Chovanec** was born in 1984, and currently lives and works in Orange County, California. From an early age Candice showed an interest in representational art. In 2008 she completed her BFA in Drawing and Painting from Laguna College of Art and Design. From there, she traveled through Europe and the United States gaining inspiration and life experience that would be a continual inspiration to her work. Candice has won numerous awards and exhibited in group shows throughout the United States. Her work has been included in the Art Renewal Center's International Salon and the National Oil and Acrylic Painter Societies Online International Exhibition. She has also been publicized in *American Art Collector* as well as *PoetsArtists*. She is currently working on her MFA in drawing and painting from Cal State University Fullerton.

**Kim Christopher** is a Canadian visual artist who works in oils. Kim finds inspiration everywhere and is driven to paint many subjects from representational abstractions, to figurative works but most often, the portrait. Faces especially fascinate her and her portraits reflect a quiet soulfulness. Kim's paintings are exhibited Nationally.

A contemporary artist **Alan Coulson** born Leeds 1977 works predominantly in portraiture. Alan

exhibits regularly in the UK and US, notably at the annual exhibitions of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters and the prestigious BP Portrait Award at the National Portrait Gallery London, where in 2012 he was awarded third prize for his portrait of Richie Culver.

Alan has produced commissioned work for clients including The New York Times Magazine, The Sunday Times Magazine, Bloomberg Markets Magazine, Carlton Books, The Chronicle Review and Club Wembley. He has works in private collections worldwide and is represented by Anthony Brunelli Fine Arts NY. Currently living and working in West Yorkshire.

**Jean-Noël Delettre** was born in 1971, he has a dual nationality (French and Canadian). He grew up in Lyon, France. When he was 15, Delettre understood that his life's passion was to be an artist. He studied graphic design in Paris and Painting at the school of fine arts Beaux-Arts in Lyon. He worked as a painting restorer of old posters for one year and for five years as a graphic designer for an advertising agency. In 1997, he had a serious road accident and ended up spending one month in a coma from which he was not expected to recover.

Since then, he has been driven to constantly evolve in his practice and he has been painting full time since 2006. In 2007 mountains began to play an important role in a series of paintings which ended up in a very successful show in the "PONS Gallery" in Lyon in 2009.

Delettre has just finished a very successful solo show in Germany with his work *Bord de l'eau* and he has showed a new work recently at Tony Tollet Art Fair in France. Numerous collectors and art dealers are waiting for his next exhibition which he is now preparing with other International painters to raise funds for charity with the Rotary International.

His new work is based on threatened freedom, the injustice and the revolt for some and the indifference for others, and leads Jean-Noël Delettre to a path where reality overwhelms the dream. *Syria* is the first painting of a new series.

**Denise Duhamel's** most recent book of poetry is *Scald* (Pittsburgh, 2017). *Blowout* (Pittsburgh, 2013) was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. Her other titles include *Ka-Ching!* (Pittsburgh, 2009); *Two and Two* (Pittsburgh, 2005); *Queen for a Day: Selected and New Poems* (Pittsburgh, 2001); *The Star-Spangled Banner* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1999); and *Kinky* (Orhis, 1997). She and Maureen Seaton co-authored *CAPRICE* (Collaborations: Collected, Uncollected, and New) (Sibling Rivalry Press, 2015). Duhamel is a recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. She is a professor at Florida International University in Miami.

Born in 1985 right outside of New Orleans, Louisiana, **Heidi Elbers** knew she wanted to be an artist in her early years. She earned her B.A. from Southeastern Louisiana University in 2008 and graduated at the top of her class. While at SELU, she had music and art scholarships and played flute professionally throughout the New Orleans area. She also studied at the New Orleans Academy of Fine Arts. In 2008, she moved to New York City to attend graduate school at the New York Academy of Art. After completing her MFA in 2010, she moved to Bushwick where she is an active member of the art community. Aside from her studio practice, she currently works as the Director of Exhibitions and Alumni Affairs at the New York Academy of Art.

**Kitty Forbes** lives and writes on Lookout Mountain, Georgia, near Chattanooga. She received her MFA in writing from Vermont College. Her chapbook *Wrong Bus* was published by Finishing Line Press. Other work appears in several literary journals—such as *Atlanta Review*, *California Quarterly*, *Main Street Rag*, *The MacGuffin*, *Lullwater Review*, *Cape Rock*, and *Oxford American*. Recently she participated in a poetry reading in conjunction with artist Meg Aiken's art show.

**Rose Freymuth-Frazier's** work has been exhibited internationally with galleries in Barcelona, Sydney, Amsterdam and across the United States from New York City and Chicago to Seattle and Los Angeles. Her work can be found in private collections internationally, including The Seven Bridges Foundation in Connecticut and the John and Diane Marek Collection in Tennessee. She has received attention and reviews from numerous publications including *Playboy Magazine*, *Ms. Magazine*, *ArtNews*, *Hi-Fructose Magazine*, *Beautiful Bizarre Magazine*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Art Papers*, *American Artist Magazine*, and *The Huffington Post*.

In October 2015 her work was included in Cavalier Galleries extraordinary survey of American realist works, "American Realism: Past to Present", in New York City. Freymuth-Frazier is represented by Cavalier Galleries in New York City, Connecticut and Nantucket and Ann Nathan Gallery in Chicago. She lives and paints in New York City.

**Marco Gallotta** is an Italian-born, New York City-based artist. He received his associate's degree in fashion illustration and a bachelor's degree in general illustration from the Fashion Institute of Technology. He grew up in Battipaglia, a town in the Campania region of southwestern Italy, before moving to New York City in 1998. His artistic craft consists mostly of paper-cutting techniques, drawing, painting, and digital art.

Today, Marco resides with his wife and daughter in New York City, where he finds inspiration in its urban landscape, distinct artistic facets, and diverse population. He currently practices his craft in

an intimate studio workshop in West Harlem. His vast expertise in mixed media techniques add to his work a unique combination of artisan craftsmanship and graphic sensibility. Watercolors, inks, and graphite are applied to photographs that are then cut out. Layers of cut-out photographs, paper and other materials are strategically overlapped to create ingenious compositions.

His clients include Nike, Vogue, the United Nations, Radio City Music Hall, Academy Award winner Ennio Morricone, actor Will Smith, NBA player Gigi Datome, fashion entrepreneur Renzo Rosso, television celebrity Samantha Bee and the renowned fashion house Chanel.

**Sergio Gomez** is a Chicago based visual artist and creative entrepreneur. He received a Master of Fine Arts degree from Northern Illinois University. Sergio's work has been subject of solo exhibitions in the United States, Italy, Mexico and Vienna. He has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Spain, Sweden, Cairo, London, Korea, Mexico and the US. His work can be found in private and public collections of the National Museum of Mexican Art, Brauer Art Museum, and the MIIT Museo Internazionale Italia Arte among other public and private collections.

Currently, Sergio Gomez is the owner and director of 33 Contemporary Gallery, Curator/Director of Exhibitions at the Zhou B. Art Center, contributor for Italia Arte Magazine, Art/Design faculty at South Suburban College, Creative Consultant for Idea Seat Marketing and Advertising, co-founder of the Art NXT Level Strategic Community and founder of Amplified Art Network. His weekly Artist Next Level podcast inspires and educates contemporary artists. Sergio has curated special projects for the Chicago Park District, ArtSpot Miami International Art Fair during Art Basel Miami (2013, 2014), National Museum of Mexican Art, and ExpoChicago (2014) among others. web: [sergiogomezonline.com](http://sergiogomezonline.com)

**Kristy Gordon** exhibits her work internationally and has earned numerous awards including the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant (2010, 2013, 2015), Best Portrait Award from the Portrait Society of Canada (2016) and an Exceptional Merit Award from the Portrait Society of America (2014). She has been widely featured in magazines, art publications, radio and television shows, including *International Artist*, *Fine Art Connoisseur*, *The Artist's Magazine*, *Southwest Art* and *Bravo!'s Star Portraits*. Her paintings hang in over 500 public and private collections worldwide including the Government of Ontario Art Collection.

**Agnes Grochulska** is a contemporary realist painter working mainly in oils. She also enjoys creating drawings in graphite and charcoal. Agnes studied design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Poland and worked as a freelance graphic designer until 2013, when she decided to

focus full-time on fine arts. She currently resides in Richmond, Virginia. Her work has been shown at Eric Schindler Gallery in the historic Church Hill neighborhood of Richmond and can be also found at her website [www.agnesgrochulska.com](http://www.agnesgrochulska.com) and a regularly updated Instagram account where she curates for over 10,000 followers.

Agnes is interested in a broad spectrum of themes and subjects in her art. She is drawn to the landscape around her and tries to capture the essence of the place, the moment, the feeling. Another idea that she is following is the human subject with all the emotion, meaning and importance that only the human form can carry.

**Barbara Hack's** work is an ongoing reflection on people and their emotions. Working predominantly in painting mediums, Barbara relishes the challenge of realistic portraiture, and her subject matter reflects her love for figurative work. But she pushes beyond realism, as well, in her desire to capture resonant moments in time. Her work pursues figures from the past with their moods and their contexts. These ephemeral figures are momentary presences that are nonetheless powerful enough to make lasting, even shaping, impressions. Barbara attempts to understand these figures and their ephemerality and to share that understanding with others.

Barbara received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in drawing and painting after intensive study in Europe and additional training in New York. Since then, she has continued to harness her artistic talents to drive her professional career. Work in portraiture, fashion illustration, and as a courtroom artist have all allowed Barbara to challenge herself with alternative contexts for figurative artistry, and in a variety of mediums, including graphite, pastels, prisma color and oils. Barbara teaches studio artist's classes to tweens, teens and adults where her love of art and her desire to create quality art for herself is a wonderful influence on her students.

**Natalie Holland** is a contemporary realist artist, best known for her highly skillful ability to portraiture humanity in her work. She received her education in St. Petersburg Academy of Arts, started her career as artist in Norway and, after attending the studio of Odd Nerdrum in Oslo, proceeded to exhibit internationally, with gallery shows in Norway, Italy, USA and UK.

In 2007 she moved to London, where she currently works. Here, she exhibited at BP Portrait Award 2009 and several times with the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, Royal Institute of Oil Painters and Federation of British Artists at Mall Galleries. Her series of portraits of Oscar Pistorius has drawn attention of the international media.

Recently she exhibited in US with Gallery 1261 as a member of International Guild of Realism.

**Gary Justis** earned His Master of Fine Arts degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1979. He has developed his work professionally in the area of sculpture, printmaking and photography for the last 37 years. He lived and worked in Chicago from 1977 to 1999. He currently resides in Bloomington Illinois where he continues his work in sculpture, printmaking, experimental photography and writing. He holds an Associate Professorship at Illinois State University. He has exhibited work at the Whitney Museum of American Art at Phillip Morris, NY, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, NY, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and the Los Angeles Center for Digital Art. He has also exhibited work in numerous exhibitions at private galleries in Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York. Gary Justis' work is included in various collections throughout the country; most notably: The Museum of Modern Art Library, The New York City Library (special collections), The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago Artist's Books Collection, The National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC and JP Morgan Chase, New York, NY.

**Francien Krieg** exhibits in the Netherlands and abroad. Her work is presented in different collections, like the ING art collection, Museum More, the Howard Tullman collection, Museum van Lien, Scheringa collection and several private collections.

**Shana Levenson** is a representational painter from Albuquerque, NM. Her passion for the arts led her to pursue a BA in Fashion Design from The University of Texas, in Austin, and after the birth of her children in 2009 and 2010, an MFA in Fine Art Painting from the Academy of Art University, in San Francisco.

Shana's work focuses on portraiture and the figure. Her inspiration comes from painting people that are important in her life, and her goal is to capture each person's story in an honest and meaningful way. Shana draws inspiration from her own experiences and uses specific series as a way to illustrate chapters in her life.

Along with a busy painting and exhibition schedule, Shana runs a private art school out of her studio and is on the faculty at the New Mexico Art League. She and her fiancé, artist David Kassin, also started Art Crit Academy online, which an ongoing online Live Mentorship program and community that is organic, catering to the needs of an individual's goals and skill level. She currently lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico with her kids and her cat, Paul. Shana's works can be seen in regular exhibitions across the United States and abroad.

Born in Tasmania, Australia, **Debra Livingston** graduated with a Doctorate of Creative Arts, Photography, from the University of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia. Debra is a photo and mixed media artist and works as an arts

educator. She incorporates her skills as an artist utilizing both traditional mediums and technology to express both narrative and biographical concepts presenting the viewer with a visual response that engages the intellect. Debra exhibits in solo and collaborative art exhibitions both local and international, including being published in *iArtists*, *PoetsArtists* and *Exposure*. Debra has achieved awards and represented in many collections. Her portrait work centers on creating a narrative where she explores a personal relationship between sitter and artist, which to ensure that the viewer has grasped an indelible insight of the subject, either from a fantasy or realistic point of view.

**Nathan Loda** is a Vienna, VA native. He received his MFA from George Mason University in Fairfax, VA in 2015 and a BFA in painting from Shepherd University in Shepherdstown, WV in 2011. He is an adjunct painting and drawing professor at George Mason University and is represented by the Adah Rose Gallery in Kensington, Maryland. His studio work reflects his passion for history, story telling, and the outdoors and his commissioned paintings vary from pet portraits to grand landscape paintings. Loda enjoys spending time with his family and cousins at their farm in central New York

**Daniel Maidman** is best known for his vivid depiction of the figure. His drawings and oil paintings apply a mastery of classical technique to catching the living personalities of his subjects. Maidman's drawings and paintings are included in the permanent collections of the Library of Congress, the New Britain Museum of American Art, and the Long Beach Museum of Art. His art and writing on art have been featured in *PoetsArtists*, *ARTnews*, *Forbes*, *W*, *Juxtapoz*, *Hyperallergic*, *American Art Collector*, *International Artist*, and *Manifest*. He blogs for *The Huffington Post*. He lives and paints in Brooklyn, New York.

**Sylvia Maier** has participated in a number of group and solo exhibitions, including the Parish Museum (South Hampton), Rush Arts Gallery (New York), The Corridor Gallery (Brooklyn), Lincoln Center for Performing Arts (New York), Forum Gallery (Frankfurt), and Yeelen Gallery.

Painting figurative and social justice paintings for over 25 years. Her work reflects a NYC urban point of view which deals with her Afro Latin heritage and cultural melting pot environment. Maier's work has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Huffington Post*, and her paintings have been commissioned by Mars Inc., M&M, Jeep, the TV shows *Empire*, *White Collar*, and the *Dan Zanes and Friends Show*. Maier has worked with the US State Departments' Art in Embassies Program and Spike Lee and Lee Daniels. She lives with her family in Brooklyn, New York.

**Victorious Faith McLeod** is a contemporary figurative artist. Born in Miami, Florida in 1993, He is dominantly an autodidact, with the

exception of artist residency opportunities and apprenticeships. His work focuses on the idea of memory, time, and the degradation of sanity by focusing on visual motifs such as clocks, numbers and repetitive imagery.

**Yvonne Melchers** (born in Haarlem, The Netherlands) studied at the Rietveld Art Academy in Amsterdam in 1968/1969, but had to leave after only one year on account of too many other obligations. Next to her work in the Academic Hospital and being a mother she tried to paint as much as possible, but the possibilities were scarce. From 2009 she can finally paint full-time and does so with great passion, trying to catch up on all the years lost. Apart from the one year at the Art Academy and some short courses and workshops she is self-taught. Her work is representational, with a strong preference for oil paint, using mostly bristle brushes and paint straight from the tube in a permanently limited palette of five colors next to white. Yvonne's work is represented by a number of galleries and a museum throughout The Netherlands.

**Didi Menendez'** first love was a Kodak Camera her father gave her for her eighth birthday. She became a professional photographer taking portraits of brides and High School graduates and the occasional Moose in Alaska. Since then she has acquired other loves including publishing.

**James Needham** is an English Artist based in Sydney, Australia. Having studied at The Oxfordshire College of Art in the UK, James moved to Australia permanently in 2010. After moving to Sydney in 2013 James began studying his BFA at Sydney's National Art School. James' work is held in public and private collection's around the world including Australia, Germany, Spain, Britain and the USA.

**Jan Anders Nelson** examines thoughts and realities of the past, reflecting on them from a present viewpoint drawing on the wisdom and experience brought by time. His contemplative oil paintings and dramatic drawings and photographs portray yesteryear's industrial endeavors upon which nature and the passage of time have left their visible mark. The earth tones and granular textures of eroded metals contrast sharply against unexpected areas of fresh color, suggesting human efforts to counteract the effects of time, nature, and neglect. While his subjects refer to photographs he's taken over the years, Nelson's brushwork and hand are evident in his painting and drawings.

Earning a Master of Arts from the University of Wisconsin in 1977, Jan also spent time living in New York City attending New York University, working on a series of drawings under the mentorship of fellow artist and friend Don Eddy.

Jan's work has been exhibited at the Minnesota Museum of Art, Joslyn Museum of Art, Appleton Museum of Art, Knoxville Museum of Art and the

New Hampshire Institute of Art as well as several invitational and juried shows internationally.

**Sara Nordmark** grew up in Lawrence, Kansas and studied illustration at Parsons School of Design. She is now based in Oakland, California. Her work has appeared in a number of venues including: *Poets and Artists Magazine*, #56, June 2014, "Freak Out!" group show at Zhou B Art Center, Chicago, Illinois, *PoetsArtists* #73, April 2016, "Reinventing Ourselves From Another POV," group show at the Zhou B Art Center, Chicago, Illinois, artNXTlevel projects and *PoetsArtists* #75, June 2016.

**Omalix** is a figurative painter and photographer born in Valencia, Venezuela and based in Orlando, FL. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Central Florida where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a concentration in Painting. Her work has been shown in various group exhibitions in galleries around the country including RJD Gallery, Bernarducci Meisel Gallery and the Zhou B Art Center, as well as in a solo show at Sirona Fine Art Gallery, and it has been featured in *The Huffington Post*, *American Art Collector Magazine* and *PoetsArtists Magazine*. Omalix was a finalist in two different categories in the 12th Annual international ARC Salon Competition hosted by the Art Renewal Center.

**Elizabeth Claire Ospina** (b. 1983, Toronto, ON, CA) is a Hispanic-American artist living and working in Chicago, IL. She earned the Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 2011 from Midwestern University, and in early 2014 began studying traditional oil painting under an atelier based in Chicago. As she continues to improve upon her technique and develop her own style of painting, Elizabeth seeks to express the complexity of the human condition through her work, striving to evoke an emotional response.

**Sam Rasnake's** works have appeared in *The Southern Poetry Anthology*, *Best of the Web 2009*, *Wigleaf*, *OCHO*, *MiPOesias Companion 2012*, *Big Muddy*, *Literal Latté*, *Spillway*, *LUMMOX 2012*, *BOXCAR Poetry Review Anthology 2*, and *Dogzplot Flash Fiction 2011*. His latest poetry collection is *Cinéma Vérité* (A-Minor Press 2013). He also edits *Blue Fifth Review*, an online journal of poetry, short fiction, and art.

**Lauren Amalia Redding** (b. 1987, Naples, Florida) is an artist and writer living and working in Astoria, Queens, New York. She received her B.A. from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and her M.F.A. from the New York Academy of Art in New York, New York. She primarily creates silverpoint drawings paying homage to her mother's Cuban family.

Her exhibition history began with a solo show at Chicago's renowned Palette and Chisel Academy of Fine Arts in 2008. Since then, she has exhibited extensively, with work in private collections in the United States and Australia. Redding has also

been featured as one of "Today's Masters: Artists Making Their Mark" by Fine Art Connoisseur magazine. In October 2015, she was an artist in residence at the Florence School of Fine Arts in Florence, Italy, housed in Giorgio Vasari's old home, and some of her poems were published through the Pen + Brush in Manhattan.

Her poems have most recently been published in *PoetsArtists* and she anticipates a solo show at Menduina Schneider Gallery in San Pedro, California. Please feel free to visit her website at [laurenredding.com](http://laurenredding.com).

Born in 1996 in the Bronx, New York, **Devon Rodriguez** is best known for his highly detailed paintings that present his fascination with contemporary urban life. He paints people, studying the gestures, facial expressions, and mannerisms that reveal their psyches. He observes his surroundings and paints what impresses him most. His goal is not to replicate photography, but rather, to instill in the viewer a sense of empathy for the subject.

Rodriguez studied painting with James Harrington in the AP studio class established at the high school of Art & Design. While there, he absorbed prodigious attention from working artists, collectors, and has even gotten his work displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art by the age of 17. During an exhibition he arranged with 4 friends of his, the sculptor John Ahearn surprisingly stopped by. Ahearn was struck by a painting of his and recalled it as being "really deep and beautifully painted". Since then, Ahearn has been mentoring Rodriguez and showing him the ropes of the art world.

Rodriguez's work can be found in myriad of public and private art collections around the United States. His work has been included in various publications such as *The New Yorker*, *The Artist's Magazine*, *PoetsArtists* and *Southwest Art Magazine*. He currently lives and works in the South Bronx, New York City.

**Irvin Rodriguez** was born and raised in the Bronx, New York in 1988. He graduated from the Fashion Institute of Technology with a BFA in Illustration in 2010. While attending FIT, he studied simultaneously at the Grand Central Academy of Art, focused on academic drawing techniques.

Irvin was a recipient of the 2016 Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant. In 2011, Irvin was the Golden Brush Award winner for the 27th L. Ron Hubbard's Illustrators of the Future Contest. He has also been featured in various books and publications such as *Lessons in Classical Drawing: Essential Techniques from Inside the Atelier* by Juliette Aristides, *Spectrum 17*, *Creative Quarterly*, *3x3* and *CMYK Magazine*. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn.

His practice is centered on painting, primarily figurative work that is grounded in reality.

Painterly brushwork and moments of abstraction are utilized to explore these narratives and ideas. The work serves as a vehicle to examine the figure, nature, art history, race and identity.

**Lance Richlin** recreated his technique by diligent study of the baroque masters. He has spent most of his career painting portraits and teaching at many important art colleges. His narrative work deals with spiritual matters inspired by Taoism which he has spent many years practicing. He has also painted a few morose works on the subject of romantic love and has carved in stone. He's the author of the best selling book in the world on head drawing, *How to Draw Lifelike Heads*. He has won several international awards and shown in major museums. Lance lives and teaches in Los Angeles, USA.

**Rita Romero** is a contemporary realist artist working in oil and soft pastel to create fine art paintings and commissioned portraits. Born in Tucson, Arizona, Rita began drawing and painting at an early age, winning her first award in a high school art competition. Her artistic journey has been heavily influenced by the work of master artists of classical realism. Rita's art expresses the dramatic power of representational art to capture a human experience or create an emotional dialogue with the viewer. Her work has been exhibited in national juried art shows, galleries and museums, including the Triton Museum, Haggin Museum, the Edith Lambert Gallery and M.K. Sloan Gallery in Santa Fe, NM, and the Salmagundi Art Club in New York

Whether **R Jay Slais** is writing poetry or doing art, shooting photos or making a living as an engineer/inventor, he always feels the need to create. He has sold some of his art, misplaced true love, been struck by lightning, ran the circumference of the earth, been trapped beneath winter lake ice, and he fell in love with poetry and himself on the same day in 2002. R Jay lives in Washington, Michigan with his wife Susy.

**Robert Standish** is an American painter living and working in Los Angeles. An accomplished hyperrealist painter, he has since focused primarily on painting abstraction. His work has been exhibited in numerous museums and galleries and is held in multiple permanent collections, including Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Frederick R. Weisman Foundation, and Larry and Marilyn Fields.

In 2011, Standish conceived and curated the highly successful group show titled, *Ward of the State: Tony Ward Artists' Muse*, which focused solely on a male muse. The show served as inspiration for the current issue of *PoetsArtists*, *The Male Muse*.

**William Stobb's** recent publications testify to necklaces made of ancient gerbil teeth, grief among mallards, and alternative usages of the word "doom." His most recent published recipe is for mushroom cakes.

**Terry Strickland** knows she is doing what she was meant to do. Her work is a combination of technical mastery and depth of content, in which skill and concept are held in equal regard. Her paintings begin as personal narratives, but once translated through the paint become universal stories. She explores the idea that change is turbulent and painful and is the one constant in life.

A book about her award-winning portrait series, *The Incognito Project*, was published in 2012. The ongoing series is at the heart of much of her work. Through it, she plays with the concept that a choice of costume at times may reveal and at times conceal truths about the model.

Her work has won numerous awards, been widely exhibited, collected, and published throughout the US. Terry's highly realistic and refined figurative paintings may be found in *The Huffington Post*, *The Artist's Magazine*, *Drawing Magazine*, *American Art Collector*, *The Art Renewal Center*, *The Portrait Society of America*, *International Artist Magazine*, *Huntsville Museum of Art*, the *Mobile Museum of Art*, *PoetsArtists*, and others.

Figurative artist, **Judy Takács** is best known for her ongoing portrait project, "Chicks with Balls" where she paints unsung female heroes...topless and holding balls to symbolize their strengths and struggles. The winner of eight Best-in-Show awards nationally, Judy has exhibited at colleges, art centers, galleries and museums throughout the United States. As a life-long painter of people, Judy has found that fascinating individuals find their way into her paintings. Her goal is to depict a living, breathing soul whose presence invites viewers to linger, connect and think.

**Marko Tubic** born in Zrenjanin, Serbia, in 1981 graduated from the University of Arts in Belgrade, Faculty of Fine Arts, Painting department, in 2009. He exhibited his work numerous times in Serbia and abroad, and has won awards such as Grand Prix at "12th International biennial of miniature art" in Gornji Milanovac, 3rd prize at "Youth", Nis Art Foundation, and many more. He is currently studying PhD at the same university. He lives and works in Belgrade.

Born and raised in Berlin, Germany, and now living near Los Angeles, CA, Daggi Wallace specializes in contemporary realism. She is an Eminent Pastelist of the International Association of Pastel Societies, Master Pastelist of the Pastel Society of America and Signature Member and Juried Member of several other art organizations.

Her work has been shown at the National Arts Club and the Salmagundi Club in NYC, the Butler Institute of American Art, OH, and is in the permanent collection of the Wichita Center for the Arts, KS. Daggi has won numerous awards in national and international juried exhibitions. Her work is in many American and European collections. Her long list of portrait commission

clients includes Grammy award winning blues musician Buddy Guy. Her paintings have been published in several magazines and books, including Professional Artist Magazine, American Art Collector, International Artist Magazine, Southwest Art Magazine, The Pastel Journal and Pratique Des Arts in France.

In 2012 she was selected as Artist-in-Residence at Studio Channel Islands Art Center in Camarillo, CA, where she maintains her studio and served on its board of directors from 2012-2014.

**Conor Walton** is a leading Irish figurative painter. He was born in Ireland in 1970 and trained at NCAD in Dublin and Charles Cecil Studios in Florence, Italy. He has had seven Irish and six international solo exhibitions, most recently at CK Contemporary in San Francisco. He lives and works in Wicklow, Ireland.

**Rob J Wilson** grew up painting and drawing in the landscape of Southern Utah. From an early age he honed his art skills and at fourteen received an apprenticeship with a gallery painter, confirming his dream of being an artist. At eighteen he graduated *summa cum laude* with his BFA in

Studio Art from Southern Utah University and went on to achieve his MFA in Figurative Painting from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. Rob's award winning work is exhibited nationally and collected internationally. His work deals strongly with themes of identity and perception as he pushes boundaries to draw attention to themes of social justice. He currently teaches art and design at Utah State University and is creating a new body of work which is a culmination of his talents, dedication, and artistic vision.

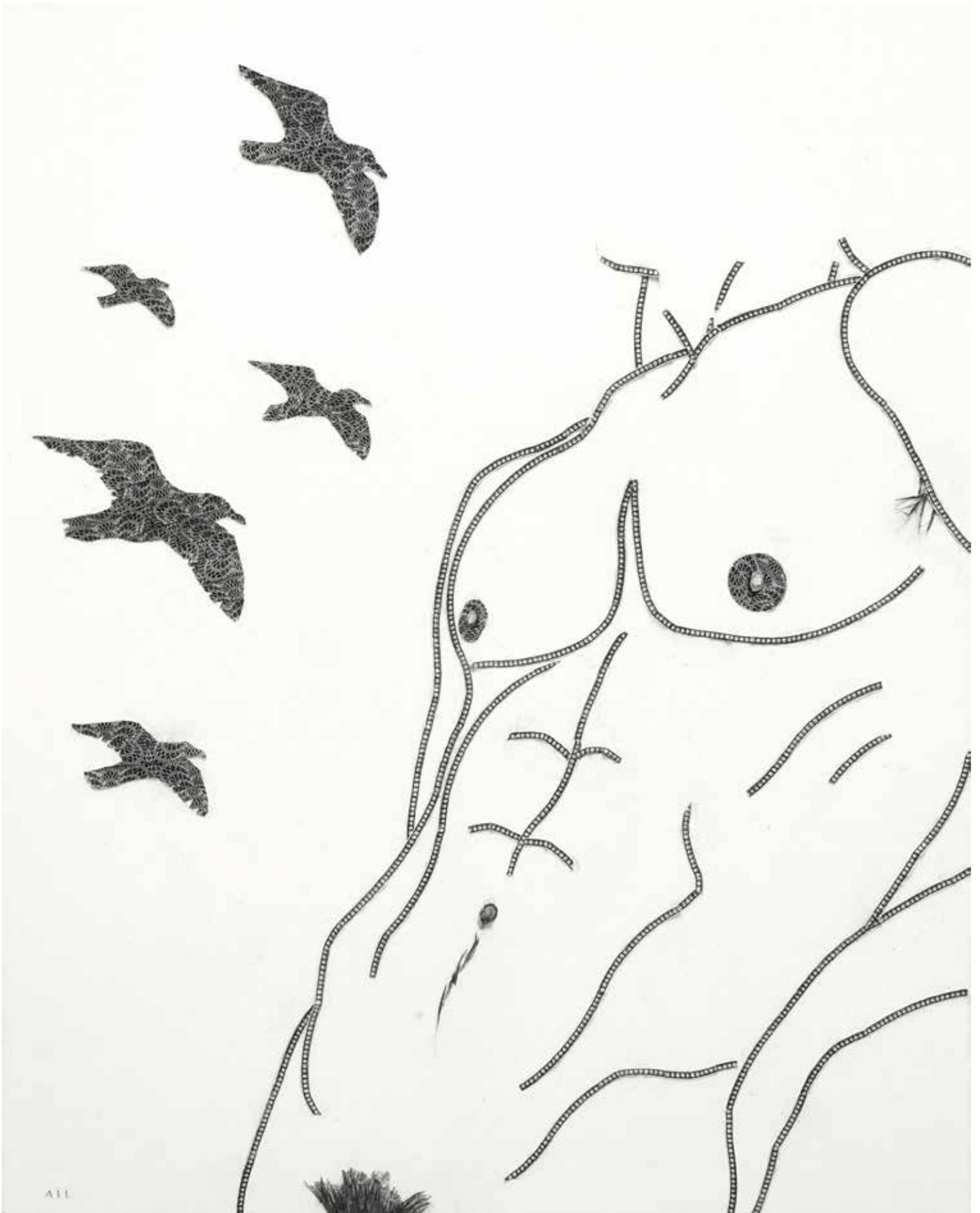
For thirteen years John Zedolik taught English and Latin in a private school. Eventually, he wrote a dissertation that focused on the pragmatic comedy of the *Canterbury Tales*, thereby completing his Ph.D. in English. He is current an adjunct instructor and tutor. However, he has had many jobs in his life including archaeological field assistant, obituary writer, and television-screen-factory worker, which—he hopes—have helped him notice the unusual and neglected in seemingly mundane settings and activities. His iPhone is now his primary poetry notebook, as it can conveniently capture inspiration, and he hopes his negotiation with technology in regard to this ancient art form continues to be fruitful.

**Thomas Wharton** studied painting at The Art Student's League of New York, The New York Studio School, The New York Academy of Art, and The National Academy of Design. His work has won many awards, including The Georgie Read Barton Award, The Katlin Seascapes Award, the Windsor Newton Award, and the Richard C. Pionk Memorial Prize for Painting. He has been included in the Art Renewal Center's Annual Salon, and his portrait work has been awarded the Certificate of Excellence by The Portrait Society of America, where he is a member. He is also a published children's book author and illustrator, and his children's book art is included in the permanent collection the Mazza Museum of International Children's Book Art. He has shown at the National Arts Club in New York, The Salmagundi Club, the Dacia Gallery, and Richard Demato Fine Arts, which represents his work.

Wharton's paintings have been included in *American Art Collector* and *PoetsArtists* magazines, as well as the book, *21st Century Figurative art: The Resurrection of Art*. His work can be found in private collections throughout the United States.



Photo by Didi Menendez of a Polaroid found pinned to a door on Barry Blinderman's office which he took in the early 80's.



Robert Standish | ABW 2600 | \$100 bills on panel | 10 x 8 | 2010



Didi Menendez  
*Neighborhood Kids*  
iPhone 5  
8 x 7 (cropped)  
2016

Front Cover by Elizabeth Claire Ospina | The Male Muse | Photography and Digital Manipulation | 14 x 11 | 2016

Sara Nordmark	Sylvia Maier	Sergio Gomez
Daggi Wallace	Candice Chovanec	Jean-Noël Delettre
Heidi Elbers	Lance Richlin	Victorious Faith McLeod
Kitty Forbes	Ron Androla	Nathan Loda
Coonor Walton	Terry Strickland	Shana Levenson
Sam Rasnake	Janice Bond	Devon Rodriguez
Marko Tubic	Debra Livingston	Jeff Bess
Rose Freymuth-Frazier	Agnes Grochulska	Irvin Rodriguez
Marco Gallotta	Laura McCullough	Donna Bates
Pauline Aubey	Francien Krieg	Kim Christopher
Denise Duhamel	Lauren Amalia Redding	Nicole Alger
Judy Takács	Natalie Holland	Erin Anderson
Jan Nelson	R. Jay Slais	Yvonne Melchers
James Needham	Alla Bartoshchuk	Larry Aarons
John Zedolik	Rob J Wilson	Pris Campbell
Thomas Wharton	William Stobb	Rita Romero
Robert Standish	Daniel Maidman	Kristy Gordon
Grace Cavalieri	Gary Justis	Alan Coulson
Barbara Hack	Ivonne Bess	Omalix