

EKPHRASIS Art from a Different Perspective

by Lucy Avery Brooke 2019

EKPHRASIS INTRO

L ENTERS USR The first time I did this, I shared the stage with a “serious” poet. She talked in very hushed and sober tones, we had to teach her how to use the microphone. She came on first and said, “Please, hold your applause til the end. We will be playing Schubert in-the intervals.” Don’t get me wrong I’m very fond of Schubert but not tonight. Tonight we will be a bit less “poetic”, a bit more fun.

Yes, the performance is in verse, Yes, the Title is “ Ekphrasis” a word that I didn’t know and couldn’t pronounce until a passing poet gave it to me. It’s one of those greek words that people use when they can’t find anything else. It means “ Poetry about Specific pieces of Art”. And that’s exactly what this is... sort of.

There will be no hushed tones. no Schubert. Just us exploring art from a Slightly different perspective. Feel free to applaud at the slightest provocation.

This first piece is the first one I wrote. And the reason I did was my friend. She is a composer and lyricist who teaches at NYU. Every year she goes to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and picks out works of art that her students can write music and lyrics for. She asked me to come. I said yes! I was very excited about the idea of poetry about art. I couldn’t stop thinking about it and talking about it. So finally to shut me up. She said. Do one on that-

George Washington by Gilbert Stuart. We were in the stacks of the Metropolitan at the time. And there was an almost identical portrait of George Washington right next to this one.



Now there were rules for this assignment. I wasn’t supposed to look up anything about the painting or George or Gilbert Stuart. I did. I’m very bad with rules.. Apparently Gilbert Stuart did lots of painting of George Washington, and then he copied them. Then his daughters copied them. Who

know who did this one. No matter (X to chair, bring chair to DSC) this is about George's View. (sit)

GEORGE'S VIEW

What am I doing here.

I liked the other portrait better. Less green.

More red.

I said "No."

too many times.

And too many times he said,

"I have a commission.

Pardon the repetition of the task But I must ask again".

I refused and then

He asks again.

Like a magpie pecking at my door

"What is this one for?" ,I ask

and well I should.

Is this really for the greater good?

How many has it been?

it must be some sort of sin

To hang my face on every door.

With Gilbert in the background

Smiling, " Just one more."

I sit here still

Legs numb

face fallen to a weary grimace.

He flatters and cajoles

Secretly erasing jowls and moles

Making experience a decoration

Not a deed.

Why do they need

One more picture?

One more icon of the past

When can I be left alone at last

To contemplate my fate?
these portraits grate
Against the memories of hard days
roughly won
leaving a hollow behind my eyes.
He talks of horses, battles, men
As if he remembers when-
Question-
“Where were you when they all lay dying?”
Sharp cries dwindling in the snow
Breathing small ghosts of air and sighing, at the last.
Where did you go again?
 “England.”
As he paints I remember
Ideals that dwindled into compromise
Profiteers dress like patriots
And patriots dressed like farmers forgotten in the field.
Will all this trouble ever yield
a fertile soil?
As he paints I memorize my past
Finding at the last
That I am not as wise
As my painted image might appear.
What am I still doing here?
(I liked the other one better.)

HORSE'S ASS (move chair SR ,x back to Center with lines)

That might have been all she wrote, but I went back to the Metropolitan searching for art to write about. I couldn't stop myself. I was addicted. CUE 7 HORSE'S ASS (

This one I knew and every time I walked passed it I asked myself, Why did Sir Henry Raeburn paint the horse backwards? Then I realized. (x to USC facing slight stage left)

You Sir are a horse's ass

How fine to tell the truth at last

Unvarnished

How grand to give a tarnished man his due.

Oh, I will brush away your bloat

and turn your gloat

into something resembling innocence.

No matter.

I think I got the point across

That you Sir, are a horse's Ass.

A contradiction of the class that so often remain so crass, so class-less.

The world is filled with gin soaked gentlemen

who would sell their soul for a high hand

or a low desire

I have painted so many.

But you sir, play with fire

You wear your idiotic conceit and condescension

with such arrogant, oblivious contention

How could I not be tempted?

How easy to see

that you could stare your own portrait in the face

and never know your own disgrace.

Perhaps I have no license for the ridicule of such a selfish and determined fool

I am no judge

I am no Puritan



I have painted a thousand little lies.

And told a few as well.

I cannot promise I will escape your hell.

Every painter knows the sting

of making lies a pretty thing.

Still today my honesty has achieved a certain grace. When I can stare my subject in the face

“Yes, Oh yes,” I will smile,

“I think I have painted you true. Exactly how the world sees you.” (x DSR as if to go turn back to audience)

RICHARD SERRA

This next one is not from the Metropolitan. It's not a painting. It's a sculpture or a series of sculptures. I saw them first at MOMA and then again at the DIA in Beacon, NY. Sculpture by its very nature is a whole different animal from painting and here especially so.

In this place

The world changes

In this place

the air expands or contracts according to the fact of walls

curved in or out,

of light which falls

this way or that.

In this place I am changed

One step into a new world

CUE 10 OPENING

and I am changed

Others peek in

look,

shrug,

pass by.

I want to cry " NO!"

" Don't go!"

" Step in."

BE HERE

Know the world can change the spirit lift or fall

with the curve of a wall

with the swerve of a path

leading in or out,

to this surprising reality of feeling.

What a wonder.

What a place to be

this small cathedral of enlightenment.

There are great works of art that translate well

to a perfectly printed photo in an elegant coffee table book



you would look and say, " Ah yes, how lovely, or " brutal" or "strange"
But here now I cannot exchange
that spot for a copy
A picture will certainly not suffice.
you would look and think,
'how interesting
How nice.'
But you would not know
in your gut
in your heart
No brain would be smart enough to see what that is
without the willingness to step forward through an opening,
around the narrow path
Curious enough to move forward
Wise enough to go there,
to be there,
to know the difference between observation
and participation.
To realize , to recognize, that this space
reminds me
brings me back to a place
where I know
that each place,
each step
Has it's own
Poetry
and all I need to do
is
Be
Here

DREAMTIME

This is Papunya Tula aboriginal art. It comes from a collective of native artists in the Western Desert of Australia. There are always ways of seeing that are beyond our understanding and still fascinate us. How do we comprehend what lives outside of the limits of our Universe?

How do you see?

I live in a world of common senses

I would like to know

Where do you go

to give such shapes their meaning?

“My history, my people, my place
living beyond the limits of time and space
Beyond words and simple knowing
This is a map of Dreamtime.”

I nod my head
but I am caught in a Flatland
of one sided surfaces.

“My maps say there be dragons here,
But yours has made extensions to the edges of the world,
How do you get there from here?
What does this multitude of dots define?”

“ Ah well, I gotta tell you. It’s not the dots that are important. It’s what’s behind them.”
‘What’s behind them is hidden,’
I think, I’m more lost than before.
Others will be content to admire
rhythm, pattern, hue.
Keeping their feet on dry land.
But I want to understand
“How do I see what’s hidden?
How can I be here and know there?
Have you reversed the polarity of your being?
Seeing dreams as waking
and here as sleep?”



I am fairly mesmerized by such imagining as these
Is there a way
to translate night to day?

“Inside,” said a voice mine and not mine.
“Inside, where so much of being will hide
from such a button downed logic mind
inside I think you will find
a whole universe of being.”

I had a dream the other night.
about a poem
mine and not mine
ownership was shared with a history of others
all living inside this moment
all living outside of time
old women of long relation kissed each other fondly,
in love with each other and the history of their being
I belonged here too, I thought
I was a child on the stairs
looking down through the bannisters
at the party below.
I felt like a child
still shy of the crowd
Then someone told me
my words were there
somewhere
among the others on the page
But all I saw was a path
of white dots
Round, plump markers like water worn stones
or carefully molded clay.
What was behind them was invisible
Here now I think I was living in Dreamtime.

Here now I only remember white dots
like dragons guarding the edges of the world.

Here now I feel like a wishful child.

I have no proof beyond my dream.

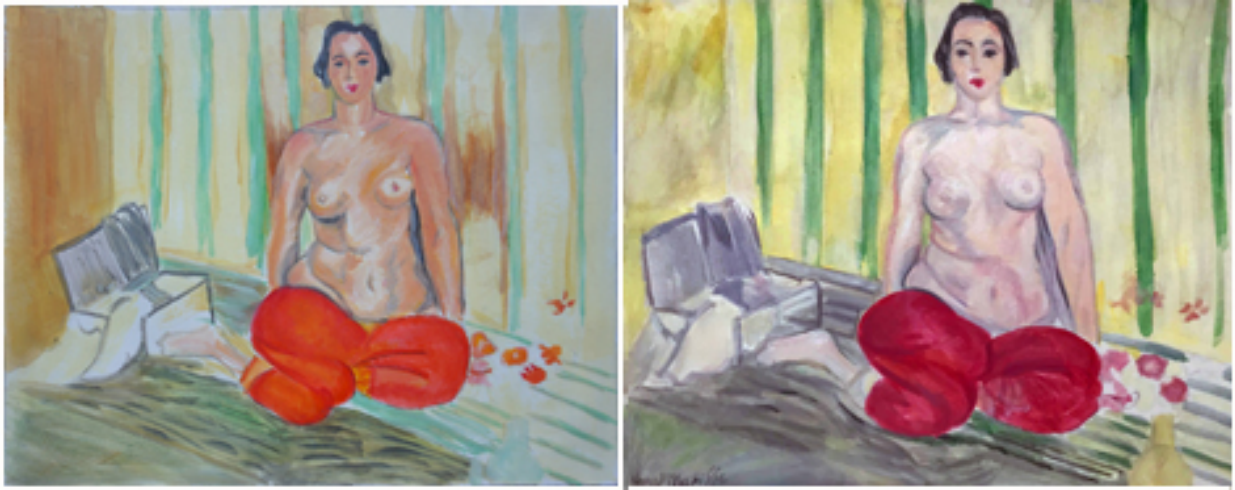
But to those who say the world is flat.

I have to admit

I think it might be rounder than we know.

MATISSE OR NOT MATISSE

(x towards Slide) Two paintings hung in the same space at different times in a Museum in Caracas,



Venezuela. One Matisse. One not Matisse. They finally found the right one.

(x to audience) What is it about a forgery that peeks our interest so?

But not until we know.

It hung on the wall for about a year and no one noticed a thing.

You'd think they would

You'd think they might

stop and stare and say

"Ummmm... This painting isn't right

Was it it faded or bright?

Shadow or no?

You might allow Caracas

was never very fine for fine art

they certainly aren't as smart as we we who can clearly see

the right one must be the

....

Wait a minute.

It just might be

the other way around.
What does this say about me?
that I can't quite see
the difference.
Can't quite know with my clearly sophisticated eye
the truth of the brush.
I shudder
I blush.
How often have we fallen in love
with the idea of genius
feeling too foolish to know the word ART
unless someone SMART names it?
how quickly do we accept the lie. And why?
How quickly do we price a painting by the fancy frame,
the right name,
the history,
the pedigree?
The place.
and then caught in our confusion, how quickly do we bluster
for not seeing enough to see?
Would Matisse agree?
Rising from his grave
would he think every one of us a knave.
For not knowing which one he wrought
or would he simply pass by the counterfeit with a smile
knowing all the while
that we
will always see
what we want to see.
Is it only us who make a fuss?
Yes, Art Forgery,
no matter how well it might succeed,
is envy disguised as greed.

So don't get tangled in the fuss of which one is right

Don't come up to me tonight and say

It was the left one right?

Yes.

No.

Maybe.

Does it matter in the end?

Does it prove you smarter than the rest?

Is that was art is for?

Just to prove that you know more?

Or is art for simply seeing?

Which one do you like?

I'll give you a hint.

My judgement

on first seeing

was not based on what I saw

but what I thought I should see.

I have lectured you on my own stupidity

Well, she grins Stupidity

is the commonest of sins.

By the way, they're both fakes

FRAGMENT OF A BOWL

I saw this ancient bowl in a display case in the Near East section of the metropolitan, so simple and elegant. It made me think of art that is discovered after years of existing_unseen. So this is from the bowls point of view. There is no real provenance for this poem. It is sheer speculation.



I was a gift
for the second wife
guaranteed to ignite the flames of passion
and war.

Just through the door with his prize.

The first wife usurped me

"My gift!" she cried-

(knowing full well she lied)-

She had an eye too quick for competition
and a hand too greedy for love.

and a careless elbow

calculating the loss with a smile

Before the second wife

all curves and cunning could see

or he could say-

Nothing.

I was a brief trophy

the possession was the prize

I would have preferred,

If I was to be broken at all,

I would have preferred
to be violently dead.
tossed at her head
In such a house hold
Life and breaking were
Nothing spectacular
No one in that house
ever had an eye for beauty
without it being some sort of prize.
to be won or stolen.
in such a house hold
beauty grows old too quickly
In such a house hold
Beauty is lost.
In such a household no one ever stopped to see
what beauty could be found in me.
What beauty could be found in anything.
No one thought me pretty.
No one thought me otherwise.

No.
One thought.
A thousand years away.
on a rain filled day.
So rare there.
when I was buried too deep to think of resurrection.
And I thought all people had been and gone.
but I remained.
Then
brushed from the mud
piece by piece

friends gathered to help
"Such a find", they said.
they showed me off
like gold.
I am a Goddess now.
Protected.
On display.
I laugh.
I was broken yet repaired
forgotten yet spared
What gave me grace
and beauty after all these years?

VINCENT(x to slide)

There is a very intense focus to Self portraits and Van Gogh being a passionate man is even more intense. (x to audience) I've often wondered what it would be like to paint so passionately all your life and only sell one painting. (look at exhibition customers)

No one says yes.

They look

they smile an obliging lie and they pass by

but no one says, "yes".

sometimes my distress eclipses passion

I go on painting still

Is it passion now?

or stubborn will?

Will I go mad with painting

or blind with staring at the sun?

too bright for white

more light

than I could ever fit on canvas.

Better to paint the night

so right in it's illuminations so many more shades

of God and dreams

it seems

These eyes will drag me deep

In to some heaven

and I will float in to the night becoming nothing but stars and light.

Or some Hell

That draws me too.

Who can ever really tell

in the end

Each man makes their own

In the end

we are alone.

who could tell me yes or no



and make a difference?
Is that my madness?
a man who tries
when no one else will ever realize why he is trying.
Theo is kind
Does he mind?
My strange affliction?
My visual addiction?
I am not blind.
I am heady with the smell of paint and wine
it feeds me and keeps me hungry.
I will be fine
Just let me paint
I will be fine.
Just
let
me
paint.
it is food and drink how I think how I breath
how I feel
and heal my soul.
it is the only way
to see God.
to bury my spirit
in canvas and colors
brushes and turpentine
the only way to define
my being
seeing, and seeing, and seeing til I can see no more.
No one says yes
In the end I can't care.
There is so much more
to see out there.

I was visiting my sister, a while back, a long while back. My niece, Maddy was about 5 at the time. She came into the room . Her whole body was vibrating. She turned to me and said, “ Let’s play”

LET’S PLAY

(taking pencil and pad and drawing quickly as she talks)

Let’s play.

no rules for the game

No should’s No shouldn’t’s

no dull technique

we do not seek approval Not today

Let’s just play.

Let’s

grab glue and paper and paint and string

Anything that comes to hand and eye

letting the imagination fly

high as a kite

Daring as trapeze artist’s in flight

colorful as a clown

wild as the lions roar at the tamer’s whip

let’s trip the light fantastic

Today I will say lets’ play

We have grown old on “how to” manuals

genres and styles.

Not today.

we have become so earnest in our attempts to be right. Not today.

not tonight.

Let’s just play

Let’s daydream our way through doing.

bringing our minds back to a calm delight

of what might be imagined

if the rules were not so tight

the fashions so binding
the Ego so minding of what should be done.
Let's do it for the fun!
doodling, stumbling our way into fantasies fantastical,
and that simple subtle delight
that makes everything we see, everything we do
Enjoyable again.

INTERMISSION

LIGHTS UP

(Enter SR walks around up stage and turns to look at imaginary piece DSC. she looks at plaque. She tilts her head, then)-

I DON'T GET IT

I thought maybe.... if I stood back a little

But no.

I really don't get it.

And I don't want anyone to explain it to me.

Okay?

If it was good enough.

If this weren't the product of some ivory tower
brooklyn loft conceptual arrogance I would know.

Right?

And it's frustrating.

It's not like a night at the movies

where you can go out and yell a curse or laugh at the screen.

I did pay for what I've seen.

I've got a perfect right to grumble.

To walk out with a pout.

But Art can be a very intimidating medium.

I look at all the others passing by

Do they know why

Do they know something I don't?

*It's so very hard to tell with art.

There is a sort of hushed reverence

Nothing can be touched

without a cautionary whisper

from the guards

and emotions

Oh no.

That' would never do.

Nobody cries out



I DON'T GET IT

“ THIS IS CRAP”

at an art Museum.

If you know someone who does,

Please introduce me.

I will bring them next time.

I will stand them in front of this monstrosity and let them do their thing

The only problem might be

is if they see what I cannot.

That is the intimidation of Museums

that silence voice that says

I am not clever enough to see

what’s clearly genius to everyone (turns with back to audience arms raised)

but me.

CUE 23 FADE TO BLACK SLIDE

LOST IN 10,000 THINGS

This next piece was from MOMA the Museum of Modern Art. It's not a painting. It's not a sculpture. It's conceptual. I have never been a huge fan of conceptual art, but this was different. (Circle USSR around to

I was bored
with whimsy and hubris
and underwear shaped to look like art.
I was ready to depart. (turn left to face front)
When
looking down from a lofty height I saw this sight.



A house,
a Home, deconstructed
Exploded into piles of
*bottle caps, plastic jugs, bowls, chop sticks, boxes, utensils, papers, dead television sets, Memories and regrets
littering the floor.
up the walls and out the door.
Object upon object upon object
drawing me down the escalator to be

lost in 10,000 things.
Who's home was this?
I felt her sadness
sheltered in the folds
of old newspapers and magazines
laid out in piles of ordinariness
making them necessary again.
There was will here and a quiet, sullen madness
I felt it in the bones of bamboo that held the house together
Fragile and strong
Each trait married to the other.

There was aloneness here
in the midst of this crowd of things.
I have seen women who talk constantly for fear of disappearing in the silences,
Was this something similar?
Were they conversation pieces?
Some one to talk to when everyone else was gone.
Did each object hold her tethered to the ground?
Did she grab at things like the edges of a hole?
*There was purpose here.
invested in thimbles and tea cups
Loss and denial
were laid neatly on a pile
forgotten among the rest.
What was she hiding so blatantly
invisible to the ordinary eye?
Was she ever counseled not to try?
or did close friends and family hold their peace
hoping she would find her own release?
*What was Here?
Was Here a way to stay alive,
to thrive even on plastic pots, and strings?

I didn't know
I only knew that in this place
was gathered all that might be lost
In this place was spirit
made tangible
In this house was art.
Giving things a soul.

TURNING A BLIND EYE

This next piece is a photograph by Paul Strand.

(x to SR turn chair sideways towards photo)

It's from the MET. And for some reason. It made me see things differently

LIGHTS FADE

"I'm Blind.

But you knew that.

My sign is such an obvious clue

Still-

Did you ask?

Did you say, 'May I?'

Did it matter to a woman with no eyes at all
no way to see how she might be.

Did I hear the click and know why?

Did I feel a little sick inside wanting to hide
from the imposing eye?

Or am I a woman so marked by the label on her chest,
so used to being narrowly defined

that I am too far past caring?

Did it matter at all?

Was it a big thing?

Or a small?

Was that click of the shutter
the same as all the people who would mutter mouth to ear?

'Look she's blind.

How could she mind our pointed stares?'

(She doesn't care if no one cares
to see her side of things.)

And I say, Mouth to ear

" It's a pity you will never hear,
What I see".



Behind my eyes, Am I a beauty beyond compare?
a memory of what I once saw there?
Or am I someone altogether different from what the label might impose?
maybe eyes
dont define a being
Maybe I possess an altogether different kind of seeing.
Perhaps my colors flash with emotion,
wrap me in texture.
Can I taste them on my tongue? Is sunlight a scent?
How many metaphors can I reinvent?
Perhaps I knows secrets of imagining
your eyes could never focus on,
could not comprehend."
Yes, I agree, I thought.
In the end
beauty is as much a disciple of the mind as the eye.

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

Don't I know this?
I think I do.
Something familiar
that I can't define
in the simplicity of the line
the curve of the shadows
Bone white
but not quite
familiar enough.
The shape the same.
I lean surreptitiously toward the plaque
No, I decide
Don't peek.
Let's make this a game.
Long pause.....
Why don't I remember?
Why don't I see?
Like a face in a crowd
the image catches my eye
I stand here staring
not knowing why.
Waiting for a memory
to catch up and whisper in my ear the truth
of what exactly I'm seeing here.
Beautiful yes.
truly so.
I focus,
I search,
I still don't know.
You are an exotic article



without a name.

No genus, no species,

no preordained prejudices

to influence my judgement this way or that.

I am left to simply admire.

Yet my brain is on fire with the question

Oh, I could read the plaque I suppose.

But not yet.

I think I would regret

looking too early.

you may know already.

But

Is it clear

what I'm seeing here?

This is not about cleverness.

This is about the fresh invention of the eye.

as if this vision and I had never met,

as if this was the first of this

in the whole universe

I saw a child play the other day.

He had a plastic bottle cap turned upside down

floating in a puddle.

He watched it

floating back and forth with such delight,

Such delight, such intensity of being.

I couldn't help but share his seeing

*his exuberance and passion.

I told a friend.

Something was lost in the translation of the tale.

I suppose it's easy enough to fail to make a bottle cap sound beautiful.

But that again was much the same as here.

It was the new,

It was the child's eye view,

that made me stop and stare
the same as here.

Undressed of assumptions
no *definitions beyond what my eye
can see.

Finally I read the plaque. thank you Georgia
for reminding me
to not forget
the beauty of a clam shell. (Clam Shell by Georgia O'Keefe)

CUE 27 MARGAURITE

This is Margaurite Therese Berard. She was the daughter of Auguste Renoir's good friend and patron Paul Berard. I love this painting because I love the story behind it and because Renoir let the story show.

Once stuck in sadness
 He promised me a portrait
 They promised everything that day
 to make the wailing go away
 When My tutor wacked me with his cane
 and I would wail again, and again and again
 loud enough to call the cows in from the field.
 That's what Mammon always said.
 But she was away
 for the entire day.
 No hugs, no kisses
 no promises that all would be well again.
 Once stuck in sadness
 only a hug will do.
 or a kiss or two.
 Papa will only frown
 He will not kneel down
 for hugs or kisses
 where I can smell the cigarette ash
 and feel the bristle of his mustache.
 Papa will only stare from his eternal height and say, in that usual way, as if it might DO something
 "Please Margot, behave
 Please Marguerite be good
 Please Marguerite-Therese
 Will you please Wipe your face
 you should know better."
 I do know better,



I do, I do, I do!

Any child will tell you.

Once stuck in sadness

admonishment is not enough

You cannot be logical or gruff

You might as well admonish

a roaring lion at your door.

Once stuck in sadness

nothing more than Hugs and kisses and love will do.

but then someone promised something new.

Kind Monsieur Auguste knelt down

a smile,

Not a frown

he looked me in the eye making me as tall as he

told me firmly not to cry that he would try

to brush away everything that was that day

Once stuck in Sadness

One sometimes needs to see.

How beautiful you can be. (LUCY turns to look at painting-)

THREE SISTERS

(x to slide)

I used to paint portraits for a living until I got an ulcer.

It's a very hard thing to paint the truth and please the subject at the same time.

This is the Wyndham Sisters by John Singer Sargeant.

(x to DSC)

Three sisters

silently agreed

If we succeed

in our elegance-

Well, we must.

We are fit for viewing, Bred for viewing

For doing little else

Nothing but to please the eye, the ear.

And yet there is a fading here.

Purpose fulfilled

life stilled

Mother is but a ghost behind us.

A memory of before

when we were young

and she was more.

**CUE 29 YOUNGEST**

The youngest is still so direct

So sure that adoration

Is respect

she drinks it in

like sunlight on a lazy day

Will it always be this way?

She is too young to even contemplate the notion

of ever losing such devotion.

CUE 30 MIDDLE

The middle gazes far afield
 To private places
 That public faces shouldn't yield The painter's eye
 Will spy such things
 When weary poses
 Decompose
 We can almost see her beauty give a sigh Do we detect
 a quiet neglect? or do we see?
 a bit of ennui?
 A weary longing
 That knows too soon
 That life is never what it's supposed to be.
 A dwindling hope that what was innocence
 Can be again.

CUE 31 ELDEST

The eldest, true to form,
 Holds firm
 Sharp eyed
 I'll wager rarely satisfied
 With things as they're supposed to be If they are not
 She will certainly see it done The fun of life
 Is in the re arranging.

CUE 32 SISTERS

Three sisters
 silently agreed
 "If we succeed
 in our public pose
 all grace, and elegance, stature and station
 let someone see more.
 let someone see me."

**(look up at audience then
sensing slide turns)**

PAINTING WATER

This next one came from my
bedroom wall. (x to get chair to
DSC) I wanted to write about
what it's like to paint, for me at
least, and why I do it. (Sit)



I am working on water.
It refuses to stand still
Even in a photo
It weaves and bobs before my eyes like a drunken boxer
That is it's nature I suppose
Maybe I'm the drunk
Trying so hard to be sober
is an exacting task
trying so hard to grasp
what I am seeing.
I'm caught in a tide of details
and everything fails
my hand
my eye
my reason.
The vision I see taunts me
flows in and out of my hand like-
water.
Anyone who has cupped a hand in a stream knows water flows away as quickly as a dream.
Water was never meant to stay still for long. and I am painting water.
Or trying too. But it will not do.
Fool's no one.
It looks terrible

admit defeat.

Crush the paper and retreat

To other answers.

Then on a whim

I let precision go.

Sacrificing decisions of the mind

for the impulse of the eye

I don't even try to guess where

it will lead,

to memorize each glimpse before the hand has made it.

I am trusting my hand to know.

I begin to flow.

Where?

Anywhere the water leads

is my guess.

I float on the moment.

"This color."

" Now this."

Maybe this way, maybe that.

No more exactitudes

No more precision.

Just whimsy and desire

Mingled in oblivious decision.

I am lost in love.

I am painting water

And being the same

Trusting the flow of me.

And finally I see

the forest for the trees

The water for the waves.(rise Move chair back turn to see slide)

(turns R arcs round Facing USL)

YOUNG WOMAN DRAWING This is a portrait of MARIE JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE DU VAL D'OGNES Who painted it? WELL there's some debate about that. This painting used to be attributed to Jacque Louis David. Then they changed their minds and said School of Jacque Louis David. Then they changed their minds again, each time I would look at the paint and go." No it's not. It's so obvious who did this. So this is a piece from the painter's viewpoint.

How long have I stare as the viewers
viewed?
How many viewers simply miscon-
strued
led astray by scholarly assumptions?
How obvious could I be?
Oh I'll admit
it's a common trick
give it a name with some fame and it
will stick
sharp eyes with a little knowledge
are too quick
to assume, presume
to see
and not see.
Still.
Someone I know too well
has lied
I am already dead
and buried twice
All to get a better price
All because the world assumes
that people without wombs



have a corner on creativity.

How many smug faces have looked
and nodded with a supercilious air.

as if David were really there
floating above their head

“ Oh yes,” he would said,” this is mine.

Don't you see the style, the skill, the line?

How could anyone ascribe this masterpiece to some forgotten child?”

And I say,

Look closely at what you see.

Behind there a broken pane

framing an old refrain

man and woman

husband and wife

stepping into

their accustomed life

I have been told it is my duty to not speak too loudly.

I have been taught to be seen and unseen.

As I painted

I mused.

“ What do I lose of me in the bargain of being?

There will certainly be more important duties

to replace my childhood passions

but none more precious.

The color of life is so often sacrificed in compromise.

So let me whisper in your ear-,

“When you see a painting. Do not read it.

In the end it will not be words on plaques

nor judgements hidden in the stacks

of dusty libraries

It will simply be

what you see.

I was simply painting

me.

Sincerely signed, Marie Josephine Charlotte Du Val D'Onges

CUE 36 CROSS FADE TO TWILIGHT

This is "Twilight on the Sound, Darien Connecticut

"by John Kensett . 1872. Almost 150 years ago. I know this view well. I grew up nearby.



You can see my house from here. Well, almost, Contentment island is a little farther down the road

But the sunsets are the same.

A hundred years or more

the sunsets still remain

the same and different.

Different every day

As a child I waited for the sunset to appear

and it was much the same as here

Divine.

such piercing light

layered on the cusp of night

So perfect, so sure, so right.

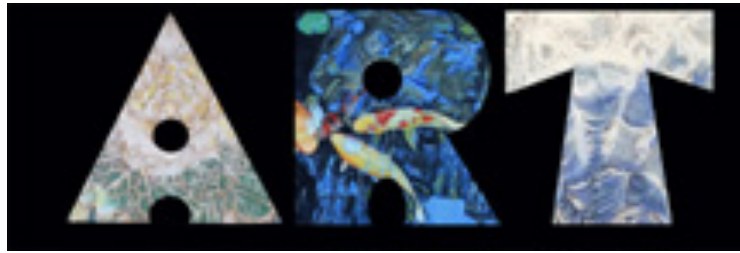
WE try to measure beauty

calculating the attributes of it's perfection, it's zenith

analyzing it's entropy.

mourning it's demise

And all those beauties are a whiff time
compared to this.
this changeable constancy.
Maybe change
is the only way for beauty to sustain itself
Thriving on it's own perpetual creation.
never holding to what it was
But always being what it is without apologies.
Adjusting itself
to the temperaments of the day
It lives
past crumbling mortar
and age and death
past caring what the world might think
of such arrogant red, such flagrant pink
This beauty will endure
far past times and seasons
and all the reasons
man might think a death is due.
A skeptic might say,
" Well someday the sun will die"
And I sigh,
and try to explain.
Only in the limits of your eye
your imagination.
If you look for death and decay they will be there
But If you look for sunsets
They will be there too
and sun rise as well
past all the youth and beauty we struggle to maintain
true beauty changes
yet it will remain.

ART

At the beginning when I first started to write this, I didn't stop to think, "why? Why am I doing this?" I was in the throws of creative passion. And when I'm in the throws of creative passion, I don't necessarily stop to answer the most obvious question. But at the end I usually stop and look back and see the full picture.

And the full picture is another question-

How do We define the difference between Art

And everyday,

Genius and Fake?

Talent and hasn't got a clue?

I think that depends on who's answering.

Me or you?

We pretend there are rules to this

but everyone has a different view.

I admit

There are pieces I walk by without regret.

Pieces I don't relate to.

I don't get

I admit

I delight in the light of Vermeer

While you might be mesmerized

by some anonymous grafetti of the head of Neffratti

When judging Art

What is the truth?

Maybe for everyone it's the child's eye view
that bring us closest to what is true.

It is about that moment

When something catches our eyes.

When the invisible becomes visible

When ugly becomes beautiful.

When the lost is found.

What if there are no mistakes?

from Masterpieces to Muddy Sunsets

painted by muddled Amateurs

Who can say what the cosmic truth prefers

if we can allow that art is everywhere

in hoarder's homes laid out for public viewing

and bowls broken and forgotten.

In floating bottle caps

in the shape of space

If we can see what was foreign as familiar

what was old as new

then all the limits of the universe

realign their borders

Expand their dimensions.

What was flat becomes round

How do we astound ourselves

with what the universe can be

if we will only stop and look and see?

Art.