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My Year of Painting

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MY YEAR OF PAINTING

by

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A thesis submitted to the

Faculty of the Graduate School of the

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of the requirement for the degree of

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Department of English

2015
This thesis entitled:

My Year of Painting

written by Connor Fisher

has been approved for the Department of English

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Julie Carr

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Ruth Ellen Kocher

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Patrick Greaney

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The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we
Find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards
Of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.
Abstract

Fisher, Connor (MFA, English)

My Year of Painting

Thesis Directed by Associate Professor Julie Carr

This creative work comprises four long poems: *A Series of Tones and Lines, Family, Parade*, and *Being Near.*
Contents

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A Series of Tones and Lines
A line’s shape, vector, and motion interpolates perception and meter

—Myung Mi Kim
Wyoming drains.

Every green state empties.

A woman watches across my room, among lines, a curved division, a split in the state.

Which part represents my sister. I forgot color last year.

Again a layer peels back; another painting flayed.
The blurred painting unburdens its edges.

In successively empty rooms my fingers frame violet, wash and color, border themselves.
A man’s sense of line, sewn into his jacket.

Entering the room of narrow walls, I believed in immanent shapes.

The man’s knee touched someone else’s year of painting.

The lowest layer darkens his hand.

Someone else’s eye, a line already bursting, although surface holds in a field.

Which color is it.

I generate a word for one, exhausted.

The wrong image for the needs of others.

In the year of painting, color and color and color align.
Draw the canvas forward: light observed passing through water.

Two lines.

Wyoming: I discuss hotel art.

My sister works here.

Any line bundles my eyes.

Excellent gray art.

The first painting, the first synthetic color: each a dot accumulating layers. Sideways, a level plane.
My trip was delayed. I read about sadness.

South toward the boundary between plane and plane.

Our green southeast.

The state indistinguishable without others: line, angle, color all elementary.

Sadness reflects from the wall of any room.

I remember the wall structured by angles, a chamber to reflect from and into and within and from and from.
Green slips its moment in the eastern state.

Ten hours by highway.

Thirteen hours by land.

Three hours by plane.

And another point anchors the gap while blue floats up, looks away.

Wherever I turn my mind.
Red draws my second friend’s guilt.

Then sketch a more beautiful weight, lined to drown, pad the surface—hair, a face, the blue shore.

Your gravity in the field.

My mother was here to hoist a ray of sadness and sink into the light.

Some plants burn to reproduce.

Painting and color only concern me.
Guide the state south toward the shape of a field.

The knee, a point, divides two men.

I take the stairs to keep you asleep.

I walk, pass the border, the sea; articulate this, my painting with a road.

Roads are western space.

Ten hours to Jackson, switching shirts after the point.
I was alone and dipped into the shallow green sea.

Green washes the living side.

Some lines seem small and my own.

An image turns to me.

He paints my mother and sister by lines which mend and intersect.

I watch who borders and who adds red, though color’s expression mingles in the field.

Color an eye passed through by lines.
Red drowns in the south, in southern light, a finger blocking the eye.

The state is green, not red not burnt.

I shifted rays of connection in each painting and picture: the table, TV, new imagined animals.

I find my mother and father painting in neutral rooms, open space for sounds we speak into.
How do I pace without this shape of sisters? would the line bend, does it stray?

The next day I paint half the space blue.

Not the color of touch that slips deep in surfaces to linger on and tinge skin.

But a sad state to turn and turn.
I am without areas to point into.

The sister below turns to shade as I trace my leg for the year of painting and fade to a strange object.

Light twists here and here into a separate sadness.

A third man paints the other in blues.
Painting invites a painting, hand by hand, beat with color.

You abandon the state, pull red through red to the border—red reflected over and across.

Would you straddle the imagined divide.

Would you pull again from green.

How the color of sadness slides through us until it becomes a border.

State to state, we grow and curl alike.
My sister favors red.

Her eye paints space across a year.

We spend time in silence. What sifts between nothing and the texture of paint.
Time and the scenic highway frame the feelings you wade into.

Always forgiven when my brothers judge each curve and trespass against the painting.

Or anything—the man’s leg from knee to ground, tile table, my brother asleep with wealth passes through walls.

The flat plane, a generous comfort, the wall and layers, blanket-like and wrapped around.
How to quantify unbordered color?

Any direction I move, there grows the west spreading in greens.

Another sister parts the frame and enters lateral to my habit.

Each new sister a symmetry of blue legs and knees.
Family
Real objects at hand. You and I and our field, a space brothers inhabit while drawing down water. Only brothers charge through fingers with objects, an apple, the bread.
Imagine a chain of fastened hands. Filling hands from a bucket. The hands are flat, pressed beneath and pillowed with feelings. Could one open to hold a ball of color. Could one simper and wave away.
The family collapses a cup, a bowl, a ring. Do we explain our limits through emotion? An object finds form in my hand. I depend on the wall to display gratitude. What is personal held in slips of glass between chests.
Two wet feet drip in a bucket. Two hands clutch bone where a dozen sisters drown the riflemen. Blood for blood in the hollow. Concern grows among sisters: who oversees the family.
One of us imagines fantasy, imagines reflection past the floor’s floor to brothers like a sequence of fruit. One of us cannot stand aright the doorway. Eat through the fruit feel. Gnaw an arm.
Layers of water adjust the apartment floor. Our father invents new fruit, the onion, it effects my senses. It shudders my frame. I take small objects to hand. Leaves condone the violence.
Any angry brothers play men. They perform in real time, hands and arms. I imagined hands to let them rotate about your waist. I admit we only float when held or made useful. How true one shimmers.
Parade
James has found his freedom

and passes by eyes—

the city!

A line of terrible trains!

*

He employs Europe

in Europe

like a round road

*

He hides hats in my bag

along with Carol

*

I feel a cold mood spread by water
Old Florentine gunners with
my blessing parade the streets
  *
they lost the scent—
ladies and men
alone in the park
  *
Colin the doppelganger
abruptly beside
each of us at the party
  *
a sound from another room
through the wall
while the parade proceeds
dimly
We assign random numbers
turn out coats and pockets
and sort ourselves
on our way to work
*
through Italy the streets house cats
*
ashamed, I turn in an alley
ready to face forgiveness
by whichever means it comes
Old Florentine gunners with
my blessing parade the streets
fat with plain glory like birds
*
They charge a business out of town
*
They open their doors to children
*
another neighborhood considers
animal installations as protection
against immoral thieves
*
James and Carol look down
and imagine crowds
performing their happiness
Gunners wave to disinterested women
through some street
where thieves find new ways to dissolve
currency among Italian undergrounds

* 

Carol knows the soldiers, moves
abrupt in her arms and elbows

* 

she moves her body of
thoughts, body of sensations

* 

I spent time in the water
Two blasts signal:
time for brunch or to crawl
homeward. James already asleep
like a full cat beside me

The era fills its own basket
with shapes and the season’s fruit

Listen to a gun; listen to the corner;
listen to my voice above
another wall above the sidewalk
Old Florentine gunners with
my blessing parade the streets
as gentlemen want a cure
to lean on in their future
a cure to lean on in their future
for Carol another empty, poor word

think of me in an empty mall
or bland without a telephone
unemployed beside a convention
of men and holding hats for
anyone without a look of shame
Parade with pigs, candles and flame,
donkeys, garbage, luggage, mixed
buckets of water and gasoline,
pure water for dogs; dogs,
a small bicycle, children and
a flag sewn into triangles
resisting the gravity
and round languor of earth
*
I wait street-side to catch her eye
*
James fills the basket with useless food
*
Another man wants to pay up
front and cuts the line
Pay the boy for food and beer

* other restless children upset Carol’s European car
in the boring summer

* without fire hose or hydrant between the streets
Old Florentine gunners with
my blessing parade the streets
in parties of five to evade
the thieves that murder
for money then flee to America

* 

James fled to London

* 

Carol fled to the islands

* 

I hold for the return of peace
with my useless muffler
piled on a bicycle and, boyish, wait
Being Near
imagine feeling
some
leftover alphabet—
tiny echoes in
the sap'

the room’s chair
she breathes

---

\textsuperscript{1} the glamorous grammar of time

Bin Ramke, 2014
minimal
necessity

minimal affect²

my borrowed poem

a borrowed book
feeling
no weight
for the word

² ... everything is the same except composition and time ...  
   Gertrude Stein, 1925
my borrowed book

I look to receive her' hands

embrace (desire without rational ambition)

another reason to clean the carpet arrange the chair

---

3I am certain I have not a right feeling towards Women.

John Keats, 1818
imagine

a collection of

feelings

each paired to

a

second

anger shown

as boredom

contentment as

jealousy\(^1\)

\(^1\) possession

or inadequacy

Boris Pasternak, 1957
pressed by color

I worked

for

the modern

being modern

---

\[5\] For which framing

suits,

situates.

James Wagner, 2014
the page
narrow by
constraint
hemmed with real
material—a sequence of
tiles
and wood
flush (any objects aligned without binding)
the first body

poem

lovely genuinely

lovely

we all

organized

predictably

by body
with glasses
and gloves
I
think of a world

embrace (a real world, not reflected)

with her
other
world

to touch
edges

blue and warm—
abruptly
close

"The imagination

craves a ghost.

Joseph Massey, 2014
cars at night
against my idea
of peace

she says
open the door

and any invitation
is
enough

listen—
the planes of
the wall
surface
of the
floor

are some comfort
like
midnight
the weird
symmetry
of hands

I hope
calls her
like a color
burst

into the field
saturated
with a feeling

not
a feeling
but the
space
it fits
I find
real
words

pin them
to her

out of words
lying
on the
real
surface

find
time for
perception

7 The eye is the first circle.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1841
I am
already
doing what I want

paintings
walk
the walls

embrace  (like the texture of canvas)

and gather
someone’s
words
like brushing
across
an
open mouth

---

^ we’re making sounds of sincerity

Lisa Robertson, 2001
I care for painting like a brother like a line as she pulls for more desire (a steady ramp) more for the wall for color for the skin I want
the body’s largest organ pulled from the fire

I skin an animal

eat the skin
I wait
and
she does
across
the table

have hands
in
a painting

why waste
time

with whatever
exists
without
us
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