



Madonna with the Long Neck, Parmigianino, c.1535, Uffizi Gallery

Sunny Park

Madonna of the Long Neck

Oh my beautiful son
Heavenly hands made you in my womb.
There in their awe they stood,
what an immaculate job he has done.

There you lie,
my meandering hips cradle,
who was brought into a stable.
Your tender skin across my fruitful thighs.

Long is my gaze,
at your feather light body. I'm stunned.
Yes you are the Son.
But to me you're forever in this state.



Annunciation, Fra Angelico, 1433-34, tempera on wood, Museo Diocesano, Cortona

Ashley Baron

Annunciation

Must I carry this upon me,
This joy, this burden what shall I say?
The worthiness of me I do not see.

I see the words float from the mouth of thee
The gold, embossed text floats my way.
Must I carry this upon me?

The gold leaf creates a heavenly sea
Of surrounding angels that are on display.
The worthiness of me I do not see.

Caught in reading word from He
Who created and He who taketh away.
Must I carry this upon me?

You are so insistent, are you sure it's me?
Oh Lord above prepare me I pray,
The worthiness of me I do not see.

A work so important, I resist to flee
Ambassador from God, I'm called to stay,
Must I carry this upon me?
The worthiness of me I do not see.



box construction, Joseph Cornell

Elizabeth Jane Walker

The love affairs of P. E. Schwartz

I loved Nelsen twice: in March and April
of 1963. He cocked he head
to the left. This habit irked me until
I left him for a gentleman named Ted
Baxter. Baxter gave me little tokens:
sea shells, oranges, twenty-five cent toys.
These weren't love until they were broken.
He stole the feet of the kissing girl and boy
to tell me it was over. Not again
will I need to tie together heart-strings.
I fill blocks of time with shadows of men,
I'm afraid of what a few gifts could bring.



The Birth of Venus, Sandro Botticelli, 1484–1486, tempera on canvas

Abby Brunt

Mrs. Southerby comments on The Birth of Venus

I see you standing there pearly white chick,
pretending to be all modest and shit.
Don't give me none of that shy,
I know you aint trying to hide
nothing with that way your hand rests
up on top of just one of your breasts,
and don't even try and tell me your fair
strand of hair is covering your down theres.
Gracious child put on your pink robe
you're gonna catch your death of cold
with those crazy breezes blowing your way.
If I was your mamma I know what I'd say:
Damn girl, you asking for trouble.



Woman with her Throat Cut, Alberto Giacometti, 1932, bronze

Anna Slater

Death by Knife at Guggenheim

Nothing makes sense with your throat slit at knife.
Be I part vegetable, part animal,
part tenebrae, part “Drink me” and my head
shrinks faster than my seeds and hooves and knees.
Somebody surgeon a needle and thread
or seamstress or somebody find a priest.
My spine settles into aches and screams but
complaints go limp until he has a sketch.
Nothing makes sense with your throat slit at knife,
but fixes this my advice in last:
Maim the sculptor who pays in flattery.
It cannot be worth immortality
to bleed to Death by Knife that lives in bronze.



Stenograph, Jackson Pollack, 1942, oil on canvas

Liz Newell
The Painter

He walks in; it's a good choice not too seedy but not one of those classy uptown deals either. A bar. He sits quietly, out of the way of paying customers. Where to start? Eyes dart to the big black hole, or is it empty shelves where reality meets wishful thinking. There's a jazz musician playing, the painter closes his eyes and hums. Stroke after stroke, and music intermingles with cigarette smoke. It's not busy tonight, one or two others sitting around. He moves his hand, a line becomes a pipe that puffs over a game of tic-tac-toe in yellow on the tablecloth. What's missing? His paint knows, a brush of red creates a scarf worn by the beauty late for work waiting tables. He looks up. Her eyes are angry, criss-cross. What about the lonely chair that sits on the wrongs side of the bar, is that for the girl when she gets tired, or the bartender for when he feels drunk. He almost smiles, just one last thing and a line names the painting his.



by Ciconte

Aashely Thompson

A Fragmented Face Speaks

Block the sun: he begins to work, “Give me a front and profile, no no, only your good side, your left.” He says. Of course she listens, moves to please him, turns her cheek, almost feel it. I do not show her sore signs of age; wire supports my brow and firms my lip empty beneath smooth skin, none of her emotion in my anatomy.

Maybe she wishes to be me, although I am her. Scratched. Fragmented into her best features, imperfections covered or absent. Only her soft lips, delicate nose, her left eye. Also, her hollowness only defined by a name carved. Lover they call him, he uses her to adore her, just where he wants. Only the way *he* sees her, is she shared. Parts reassembled, her whole disfigurement no one will see, ever. Deep handprint, his, over her mouth, owning.



from *Animal Regulations* collection, Liu Di, 2010, C-print

Jenna Good
Sit Here

Sit here she said
This is your best side. Lies.

Where are the promised fields of bamboo?

Nothing crunch-worthy here, save the bricks below my paw.

Act natural! Well, I've been working on this look for a while... you can't see.

I'm uncomfy in this setting as there is a roof pricking into my toosh. Not nice.

I bet I would have a better view from the zoo. People would be happier to see me.

There an expected spectacle. Here I'm self-conscious...how is this angle for my physique?



Der Sohn des Mannes, René Magritte, 1964, oil on canvas

Ariel Wood

Lost Letters

Dear R,

I regret to inform you, oh, what the coming home from work, and and one thing led to another one too. Right across the perhaps we could postpone few weeks, once this thing clears says it'll be healed in no time. I am so much, it fires me up.

hell. Last night I stopped by the bar, well, you know, we all drank too much and I got myself a shiner. A good nose. Perfect timing, I know. But, the appointment. I could come in a up. I have a steak on it now; Margret sorry for all the trouble. It's just, they talk

Yours Truly,
G

G,

It's no problem. Come by tomorrow and wear your best suit. I don't need your face anyway.

Sincerely,
R



Madonna del Passeggio, Raphael

Megan Wernig

Madonna del Passeggio

Mama loves to take us
on a *passeggio* in the morning
behind our home, the olive trees.
Her long dress billows, swarming
around me, naked from my recent
tumble into the pond. She lifts me up
by my left arm, worried (a frequent
emotion for her) that I might stub
my toes.

Gianni and I like to think
we are twins. Same age, same
height, same talents: We can blink
fast and wiggle our noses. He claims
to be wild like an animal. We drink
the river and our feet slap the earth
as we run, jump, take turns
with the sticks – friends always think
to take turns. That's what I learned
from Mama.



Inside the Machine, Ben Aronson, 2010

Andrew Manning
Inside the Machine

Johnny won a game today, which
Can Billy really make it to the
Sally has a lot on her

Liked my tie
I am the master,
Here, aglow in the dark.
Johnny won a game today, which put-
Another late night
Pressing keys
Clicking and scanning.
Can Billy really make it to the place where-
Fabulous in her evening gown
But I couldn't stay
For one man.
Sally has a lot on her agenda for-
More hallucinations
Figures disappear
Johnny won a game today, which put him above-
Another beer would have been too much
I need
more information
Can Billy really make it to the place where he last
Escaping from people is easy
When I do this
I will make him listen
Sally has a lot on her agenda for a woman of her

But I cannot see the most important
Important mostly the seeing cannot I but



The Sacrifice of Isaac, Caravaggio, 1603, oil on canvas

Anna Shive

On *The Sacrifice of Isaac* by Caravaggio

This won't be my last sacrifice,
so my hands, stiffening, tensely grip,
thanks to God's cloak and dagger advice.

A million goats, bulls, now a son won't suffice?
Like this worn red cloth, on me, blood drips,
And this won't be the last sacrifice.

I can only look at altars now, never again Isaac's eyes,
but—Take your hands off, for the love of God! I'll rip,
thanks to God's cloak and dagger advice!

See my holy furrowing, righteous hunching: devices
for God's pleasure, apparently . . . Pardon my lips.
This won't be my last sacrifice.

Maybe some salvation's waiting in disguise—
an imbedded good or okay if not a knife drop or slip,
thanks to God's cloak and dagger advice.

And then you say it's precisely
this submission for the altar, not the blood drips—
That this won't be Isaac's last sacrifice,
thanks to God's cloak and dagger advice.



Tucker Trimble

The Real Renaissance Men of Firenze

Duke

It is hard being the number two
reality star in Firenze.
I can't visit the Duomo without
Someone recognizing me since I
am such a B-list celebrity.
The daft paparazzi screeches, "Ciao
Federico da Montefeltro,
this fellow got a rhinoplasty
on the thirteenth episode, "The
Real Renaissance Men of Firenze."

Last week's episode was titled, "Fun
Dinner at the Medici's Part I."
I wore my red Versace hat and
almost flipped a side table when
Lorenzo enlightened me that his
hussy of a girlfriend leaked my
nose job to Popolo Magazine.
Lorenzo is pea green jealous that
people call me "Light of Italy."
It pays to be a star of TV.



Duchess

You've reduced him to a stock character,
stereotype of a haughty hombre.
He's not a swaggering primate.
Certainly not your puppet to pull on TV.

You've made his nose job into a running joke,
product of a vainglorious vanity.
He got this out of necessity.
What would your precious show do if he couldn't see?

You've rendered us inept at fondness,
consequence of an appalling age gap.
We've got the most loving marriage.
But you edited us as angry yappers.

You've portrayed me as a silhouette,
instrument of birthing burping babes.
I may be plaited with pearls and silk.
But I speak Latin and Greek better than most males.

You've formed our life into a spectacle,
invention of unreal reality.
We are not the roles you've made us play.
When the TV's off, you cease to care about our actuality.

The Duke and Duchess of Urbino, Piero della Francesca
1465-1472, oil on panel



Noli Me Tangere, Fra Angelico, 1440-41, fresco

Laura Park

Noli Me Tangere

1

The cold air behind me
breathes death to grasp
the prey escaped full in life.
I reach out for the sheep I find
whose legs cross to turn and
tender hands open to refuse.

Lord you are too simple
to understand. Is this
another parable I cannot know?
My blushing in the silence
Of the trees watching and waiting
Of the plants budding new world

Fold my hands that hoped to touch
The life that already resides in me.

2

On the way he delays
To tell the child of return
and clothes her with his blood
that fills her soul and flows to grass
where she kneels and reaches to feel;
but lets him go as he ascends to
prune the land with the ax he grips.

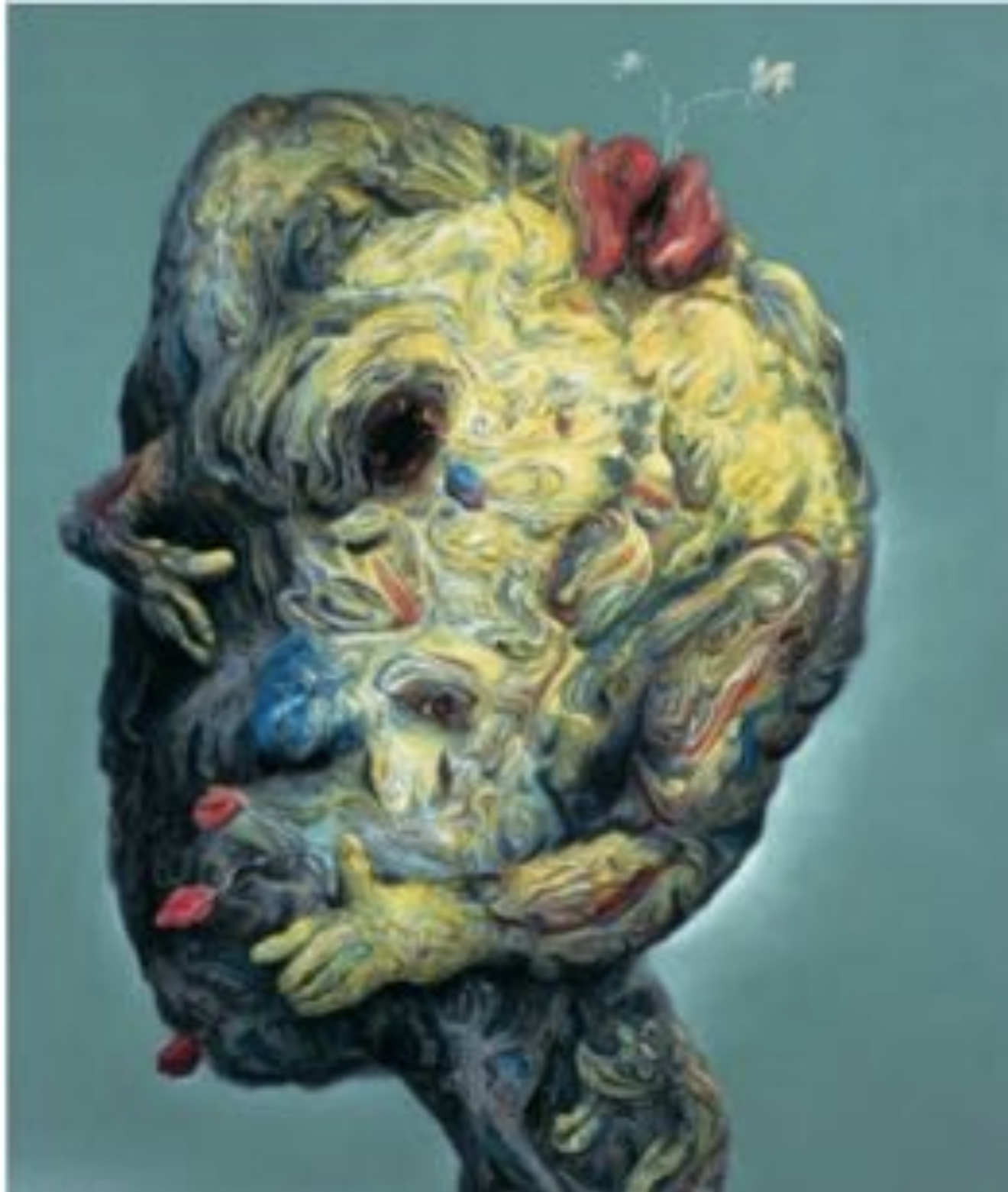
The two stand still in the cell they stay
And talk to monks whose whispers fill
And show the visitors in second glance
The hands untouched in gentle gaze
The complete peace in disbelief.



Sant'Andrea, 1985, Chiesa di Sant'Andrea, Orvieto

Jordan Muñoz
Sant'Andrea

you cause me to chew
on the openness
of your palm. within
the fabric I sway
in motion with the
shadows. my eyes flick
across your bare chest,
and consider how
you brace the cross so
close to your body.
what made you feel that
you were unworthy?



The Hinterland, Glem Brown, 2006, oil on panel

Rachel Pacitti

Who is
to say
I'm this
or I'm that?
Say
I'm a pus
belly
I'm a swollen
mass of veins
I'm a frog's
heart
I'm a swirling
brain
I mess with
marbled
waters
I vomit
starry nights
I'm
an artist
I consume
like the moon
both man and tentacle
and who will blame me?
My hat blooms flowers.