

Sketches for Three Voices

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RECLINING WOMAN

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More in myself than in the room.
More wooden boat than heart,
more grassfield at dawn, and what wind
might blow towards me, and how shall I be,
what shall I have.
And some days how hard it is to rest
in what you have, in smooth lines of thought
or worry, having felt sweeps of rain
on the rushing river or the slow
fold of cars around a curve.
And the streets I stepped onto, wrapped
in clothes, caring more, then, what others thought.
Some days I do nothing but rest in myself,
and some days I touch the wooden door
as if it were one of my limbs
and push it gently forward, that I might
open into another way—
and when I dream I see snow falling
in waves, the cracked flakes
forming a few feet above ground.
It's enough to make of myself
a ledge, a mantel, to place white scraps
of cloud on the mantel, or to close my eyes
and listen for the dawn that lifted hours ago,
a veil of gray barely lighting the sky.
More fragile shadow than ground,
more willow than sorrow,
and the inaudible preparation for some change
I can't see—like a body raising itself
to see—more barely-swaying
poplar than dark shore.

And even if I'm not anything yet,
I will be some day.
I would stretch the rich planks of my legs
then rest my head against my hand,
looking in towards the years
that brought me here, each of the lesser
minutes, raw mulch in the blanched garden
and the days I spent there,
trying to make sense of what was gone.
Some days it's enough to be fed by repose,
as if stone bread would suffice,
and stone music poured into my head,
the deep silence of slow matters,
and the wars I was born into.
As if the terror forming at the line of horizon,
in the shape of faces, could not encroach
on my life, which is not drawn in plots
but etched like lines on wood—in orchards
and children, failed loves, stray deeds,
and that flock of crows slanting overhead
with shining eyes, like the wet black rocks on the shore,
floating between layers of cloud and seafoam,
more refined, now, than the lilting tideline,
mine alone to mend or fathom, the quiet
work, the wholeness of staying
with the losses, folding my breath
into myself, turning
into myself, my own arms.

Joanna Klink
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Reimagining imaginings

*Reimagining imaginings—the active verb sheltering
the gerund—a gesture that registers deep within.*

Indeterminate spaces and vivid landscapes—like still shots from a dream—hold a sisterhood of images of images of shapes of ideas. Distanced but nestled in safety, a place to rest before resuming. Who knew the roads would crumble? Who knew sheltering would become a thing?

It's a puzzle, reimagining what we thought was done, resolved, good enough. Quirky bodies, companions and alter-egos—modest efforts to model female forms who will live in their own histories, star in their own stories. Pliable responsive earth, we hold, mold, admire and doubt our skill.

The analogy of clay is its dual strength and vulnerability—innate to us, we aspire, too. Now, figures refresh in two dimensions, unleashed to fiction through translation to the wall. Self-contained yet yearning outward, she's monumental, no matter the scale. Energies swirling, freckles on her forearms alert to life, that brave disregard for lack of feet.

Craving sensing, she transforms, reforms to the contours of every woman who ever positioned herself a certain way. Revealing her best side, relaxing into posed hospitality, receptive without thought to cracking. Aligned, revitalized by iteration and the sheltering body of domestic space, such reimaginings might sense that step before anticipation, might know that preparations for change lie just beyond.

Stutters and echoes imagining in-between and on-the-way moments. White noise is filtered, teacups refilled. New works mid-jump, instinct's self-possession sketches dreams of a life within the frame. Here, deep horizons tempt and beckon, vacation rentals of mental space.

There's enormous distance between self-help and consequences. But a short step in evolution, still malleable as clay. Tentative, causative, earnest yet transgressive, at best incomplete advice, a guide of sorts, but risky. To Make A Change gestures toward Urgently Wanted Terrorists and she in turn waves back, wishing she could start again.

Are you thinking of the stories you'll never share? Coiled secrets, our bravest and most foolish selves. We cheer for those who drift, then launch, yet ache for women with personalities being hunted, being punished, despite their pep squad pasts. Young women, earlier than paradox, revealing their best sides, receptive without thought to cracking.

Sturdy brown loaf, crumbled and buttered, the comfort, the rootedness, wooden table below. Standing Woman's not a kitchen-person. Stretching, balanced but with capacity, in memory of reserves for flight. Aware of her dimensions, she holds her ground.

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Descriptions

Dringend gesuchte Terroristen

Dringend gesuchte Terroristen shows twelve painted black-and-white headshots of women on an off-white ground. The headshots are arranged in a grid of 4 x 3 that takes up the lower two thirds of the canvas. The upper third is covered in dark gray text painted on the gray-white ground. 'Dringend gesuchte Terroristen' is written in larger letters at the top. There is a line under it. There are three dark round bullet points in a vertical line on the left with seven lines of smaller horizontal text on the right.

'Dringend gesuchte Terroristen' is German and could translate as Urgently Wanted Terrorists and Urgently Sought Terrorists. 'Terroristen' is male dominant. 'Terroristinnen' would be the female dominant version. The painted women all look like they are in their late teens or twenties. They are different types of women with different haircuts and expressions. I feel I know each one individually. This is a painting of a poster that was taped to the window of the German Post Office when I was a child. I studied these women.

Coil Vase

Coil Vase is a coil vase. It is made of fired clay and painted with oil paint. The coils are rolled and laid one on the other. They are not smeared together. There is a section of thicker coils at the base. It is followed by a section of concentric coils around circular forms widening until they touch in V's and turn. On these are laid more coils that widen slightly in circumference. They dip and rise following each other's contours and even out toward the top. The rim is slightly thicker.

Coil Vase is painted with light gray oil paint. The color was mixed to some dry gray clay, but it looks as if the clay is wet. The coils are painted lighter and darker. They look malleable. As if they are being made.

Reclining Woman with a Broken Arm

Reclining Woman with a Broken Arm shows a sculpture of a female figure with a ballerina bun and an oval as a face in the center of the canvas. The sculpture is dark brown to light yellowish brown through desaturated violet mid-browns. The face is a flat oval with no features. It is looking down at its body. The figure is half raised on an elbow. The arm is broken just above the elbow with the lower section positioned as if it were attached. The woman is naked with round breasts. The left leg and foot are stretched to a ballerina point, the right leg is folded under as if the figure were about to get up. She looks contemplative even though she has no face.

There is an acute triangle of dark brown created by the angle of the legs. The light gray ground is divided horizontally just below the figure's breasts at a slight angle. The upper area is a warm light gray. The lower area feels just off-white. There is a blue-gray shadow to the right of the torso. It looks like a blurry mountain on the horizon line.

I made this brown clay sculpture of a woman as a teenager. It sat on a ledge in my parents' living room. I was afraid of making the face so I left it blank.

Hausbrot

Hausbrot is made of fired clay and painted all over with dark gray oil paint. The oil is a warm gray and the color of the clay when it is wet. It has no painted highlights or shadows. 'Hausbrot' is German for house bread. It shows a quarter loaf cut from what would have been a huge loaf. It is shaped like a low rounded rock with a flattened bottom and two cut sides. The top and rounded sides have giant cracks in them, as if the earth had dried in drought. The two flat sides have pock marks, and holes, and lines of different sizes and lengths, some shallow, some deep. There is a little rim of crust along the top and back of the cut faces like a cross section of the earth. *Hausbrot* is to scale. It is painted with visible brushstrokes but the color is dead flat.

Seated Woman

Seated Woman shows a sculpture of a seated figure in the center of the canvas. The entire painting is a light yellowish blue-gray. The seated figure is darker gray than the ground. The grays shift from pinkish to bluish. There are shimmers of yellow gray. The figure feels heavy and contained in itself. There are no protrusions except for the slightly square head. The shoulders lead to the undulating breasts, full belly, and large arm that rests on the leg like a coil. The figure is shown in three-quarter profile, turned to the right. The ground is divided in the middle of the canvas sloping to the left at a slight angle. There is a mountain quality to the figure. The left leg is pulled up at the knee to a second peak. The sculpture has small white, dark gray, and light gray speckles and flecks all over it. The face is a rounded square. There are no features.

Seated Woman was carved from a breeze block which is an aerated man-made stone. I gave it to my granny who kept it until she died. Then it came back to me.

(I have freckles)

Standing Woman

Standing Woman shows a female figure on a neutral gray-white ground. The figure is dark gray. It looks like it is shiny. It has light violet-gray highlights. The figure's arms are large rectangular areas with diagonal and linear structures in them. They are stretched out wide to the sides of the body as if in flight. Or crucifixion. The small head is tilted back. It has barely visible features indicated with darker lines for eyes and mouth.

The body flows forward from the shoulders to the sideways pointed breasts, then vase-like down to the ellipse of the stomach and very wide hips. The wide hips funnel into the legs, which become one. The leg is attached to the center of a long rectangular base. The base has the same orientation and width as the stretched wings. The figure is turned slightly to the right with the ground divided at an angle that is almost parallel to the base. There is a faint shadow behind and to the right of the figure. Shana made the sculpture. The sculpture feels futuristic and like a futuristic figure from a 1920s film. A retro future.

Maybe time does not exist.

Reclining Woman

Reclining Woman shows a sculpture of a woman in the center of the canvas. The sculpture is painted cream-gray to ochre-yellow. The figure's legs are stretched forward horizontally and the torso is curled on itself. The arms are cradled and the head rests downward on the upper left arm with the figure's right hand making a ledge just below the head. The figure is nude, we see the breast shapes and dark lines describing the pubic triangle. There are no nipples or hair. The stretched legs are semi-crossed below the knee. There are no feet. The legs end in small, flattened areas. The head is a smooth horizontal oval. There is one large almond shaped eye described with two incised lines and a similar set of lines for the mouth. There is no nose and no second eye.

The head is dropped at an almost impossible angle onto the shoulder. The figure's hair makes a second circumference around the oval face. You can see the marks of the tool that worked the light fired clay of this sculpture in linear movements along the thighs, calves, and arms. They are shown with brownish and whitish lines of paint. The figure is on a light gray ground that looks neutral, but shifts from cream to purplish-gray. The ground is divided horizontally. The upper area is slightly darker than the lower area. This division intersects the figure at the upper torso. There is a faint shadow on the ground and wall behind the figure. A darker shadow underneath the front hugs the figure's bottom, thigh, and calf.

The sculpture was probably made by a friend of my father's in the 1950s or '60s. There are no initials or marks on the underside. My mother thought I made it.

To Make A Change You Have To

To Make A Change You Have To shows a white wood board with the words 'To Make A Change You Have To' written on it in dark gray paint. There are subtle gray vertical lines on the light-gray colored ground, painted to look like the small cracks in a painted wood board. There are three very faintly painted horizontal lines in a lighter gray that look like the pencil guide lines for the letters. The words in each row are more or less centered. All the letters are capitalized and they slant slightly to the right. They touch the guide line at the bottom, but have different heights at the top. 'To Make A' are the letters on the first line. The A makes a little curlicue on the lower left. The K projects upwards the most, with the o the smallest letter. 'Change You Have' is shown on the second line. There is a small mark that could be a full stop after the word change, but I think it is a hole. 'To' is on the third line by itself. This third guide line is exactly halfway on the painted board. The word 'To' is in the center of the line. It is in the center of the canvas and there is a full stop after it.

The space under the word 'To' and the full stop is empty.

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Reclining Woman

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Reimagining imaginings

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© 2023 Annette DiMeo Carlozzi

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Sketches for Three Voices

A collaboration among painter Francesca Fuchs, poet Joanna Klink, and curator Annette Carlozzi, whereby each responds with creative texts to Fuchs' luminous exhibition of new and recent paintings and objects.

