

# *The Always and Never Seen*

By  
Linnea Ryshke

A thesis presented to the  
Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts  
Washington University in St. Louis

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts

Director of the Graduate School of Art  
Patricia Olynyk

Thesis Advisor  
Monika Weiss

Primary Advisors  
Arnold Nadler | Richard Krueger

Graduate Committee  
Ila Sheren | Heather Bennett

## Table of Contents

Introduction // Painting and the Animal Question .....	5-7
Chapter 1: Empathy // Seeing and Not Seeing .....	9-15
Chapter 2: Empathy // Material Echoes .....	18-23
Chapter 3: Empathy // Embodiment .....	26-33
Chapter 4: Empathy // Unburials .....	36-40
Conclusion // One Lesson .....	43
Notes .....	44
Bibliography .....	45-46
Figures .....	47-65

please excuse the interruptions i mean no real harm

## **Introduction // Painting and the Animal Question**

*Fork our tongues,  
elongate our tailbones,  
slit our cheeks for gills,  
knit the thumbs back into the palms,  
pull fins from our side skins  
where is our  
courage to change  
to become part  
of this world  
again?<sup>1</sup>*

Connection, the kind that nourishes the marrow, does not know the bounds of species. I do not risk hyperbole to say that all humans know this truth. My dog led me to the field of simple joys, and when she died, I was not prepared for the torrent of grief. The hen who harbored distrust of humans, slowly warmed to my daily presence. The turkey who, in the instant I entered her pen, ran up and inspected me with attentive curiosity. I relish the moments, from the prolonged to the acute, when I come body to body, being to being, with an animal Other.

In the last several decades, the “animal question” has spread across disciplines. Writers, theorists, anthropologists, lawyers, scientists and contemporary artists have all begun to dismantle culturally embedded notions of what separates “human” from “animal,” and thus challenging the denigration of nonhuman animals as a subservient class of beings. With this comes the creation of different ethical frameworks that account for the entanglements and intimacies across species. I locate myself within this collective effort, as an artist who is both deeply invested in material expression and sincerely sensitive to the nonhuman world around me. *The Always and Never Seen*, a body of work made up of mixed-media paintings, both intimate and large in scale, call those nonhuman animals who have been ostracized to the margins of consideration, into central spaces of material gravity, expressive force and stilled presence. Through the act of making, I re-animate those nonhuman animals who pervade our spaces as fragmented flesh, yet remain invisible as animal beings.

The body of work emerges from a desire to recover the genesis of the word “animal,” as meaning one with breath, one with soul. When colloquially used, “animal” instead functions as a derogatory term for humans, or is synonymous with savagery, unintelligence, base existence and pure instinct. In an essay that has been foundational to my work, “Why Look at Animals?” John Berger points out the gradual cultural depreciation of nonhuman animals that has caused them to

become “emptied of experience and secrets.”<sup>2</sup> My body of work intends to do a small part in recovering this sensibility that looks towards other animals as beings with agency and ways of knowing, and acknowledges them as vital to the numen of the world.

The following four chapters are organized and woven together with the thread of empathy. I begin with the chapter “Empathy // Seeing and Not Seeing,” in which I introduce the empathy I employ in my work as a “feeling with.” I describe the act of seeing as a durational practice of looking that can facilitate this kind of empathy. In the following chapter, “Empathy // Material Echoes,” I focus more specifically on how the sensory act of making creates intimacy between myself as the maker and the animal as subject. The third chapter “Empathy // Embodiment” identifies the felt experience of the body as a shared node of connection with non-human animals. As the animals whom I paint are those enduring the extreme conditions of industrial farming, I concentrate on trauma and vulnerability as they manifest in bodily response. Finally, the last chapter, “Empathy // Unburials,” focuses on the linkage between my material process and the act of mourning those lives that are considered dispensable.

Empathy, as a word whose small back bears the weight of what it means to engage deeply with an Other, suggests both the potentials and limitations of understanding, especially across species. What do nonhuman animals perceive, remember, anticipate? Can we know what they feel and think? *Can* they feel and think? Philosophers and scientists have worked to answer these questions for centuries. Rather than spending time arguing for or against, I will state my perspective here as a preface: my relationships with animal Others, as well as reading endless accounts from humans who have bonded with members of another species, embolden my belief that all animals hold unique life-worlds and harbor mysteries of being that lie far beyond our presumptions. We continue to be stunned by instances of animal grief, compassion, altruism, and

all the behaviors we have no name for. Instead of looking for them to *prove* a complexity of being, can we not grant them that, as beings who belong to the world just as we do? I return often to a phrase from Henry Beston, who writes, “They are not brethren, they are not underlings; they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendor and travail of the earth.”<sup>3</sup> For me, empathy becomes an practice manifested in artistic making and an act of longing towards these animal Others whom I can never know fully, but hold in their lungs, just as I do, the breath of the world.

## **Empathy // Seeing and Not Seeing**

*Your underland  
does not appear  
on our maps*



She all but disappears. Her\* body flickers from behind a film that fogs up like condensation of moist exhales on glass. I can almost feel her breath. In my painting *Karst River* (2020) Figure 1, a cow is obscured from behind a veil of translucent paint, which is ruptured on one corner by a dark flowing mass. Initially beginning as a charcoal drawing of the cow, I applied of thin coats of paint over the surface to make visible the space between the cow and the viewer. I see this sliver of distance in the painting as a site of relation between empathy and vision. Emerging out of ideas on the perception of art objects and images, the term “empathy” was initially used to understand how the aesthetic experience of viewing a work of art is, in its most profound and poignant form, also a felt experience. Etymologically translating to the act of “feeling into,”<sup>4</sup> empathy was initially defined as “the power of projecting one’s personality into (and so fully comprehending) the object of contemplation.”<sup>5</sup> While I affirm this sensory connection between vision and empathy, what Jill Bennet refers to as “seeing feeling,”<sup>6</sup> my work invites a mode of empathy that rises out of partial rather than full comprehension.

With my work, I identify empathy as a “feeling with” rather than “feeling into.” I find “feeling into” to be a one-directional and intrusive action, related to the more idle kind of empathy as self-projection onto another. Influenced by eco-feminism and feminist care ethics, I understand “feeling with” as in-line with Lori Gruen’s writings on “entangled empathy.” She understands empathy not as a merging into the same perspective but a sensitivity to the relation between self and Other.<sup>7</sup> This becomes the challenge for the viewers of my work, to be present in the presence of an animal Other, and attentive to her gestures and expressions. My work asks the

---

\* For the rest of the document, I will use “her” rather than “it” as the pronoun for nonhuman animals. I find that “it” contributes to the attitude that objectifies and strips personhood away from animals. I would prefer to use “ki/kin,” which Robin Wall Kimmerer, a botanist and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, coined as a pronoun for the English language to signify a being of the living Earth. However, for legibility sake, I will keep to “her,” which is not completely false as most of the animal subjects are female (i.e., dairy cows and hens).

viewer to meet her, not as consumable flesh, but as a being expressing an inner experience. The challenge of empathy, as Gruen argues, is to be more perceptive and responsive to the relations we are *already residing in*.<sup>8</sup> *your muscle and bone* That, I believe is the difficulty my work invites.

Viewers are asked to “feel with” an experience of the animal Other whose implicates them.

In an encounter with an Other, whether a nonhuman animal or an artwork, the simultaneous draw and discomfort arises from the palpability of undivulged truth. Gruen writes of an inevitably imperfect communication with an Other, describing empathy as a “connection with and understanding of the circumstances of the other, however an understanding that is often incomplete.”<sup>9</sup> My work offers empathy as a practice of attentiveness towards an animal Other, despite the fact that she will always remain on the opposite side of an uncrossable river of skin. This is manifested in *Karst River*, where the amassment of paint creates a skin-like membrane that separates the viewer from the cow, and in many ways acts as a skin—protective, as the charcoal drawing becomes preserved by the coverage of the paint, and pervious, as the translucency allows the cow’s form to still be discernible.

While distance and incomplete *are* knowing may seem like they would impede an empathetic response, as empathy is often *we really so* conceived as easier with those of close affinity or similarity, I find that a different kind of *other?* empathy is germinated, one that can be just as strong but founded on humility more than certainty. To surrender to the inability to know an animal Other entirely is not to secede the chance of connection. As Terry Tempest Williams asks, “Can intimacy exist between two species? Or only longing?”<sup>10</sup> And I would answer, that the first *always already* includes the later, even when the species are the same. Intimacy braids a chord of connection between two beings but cannot completely close the irreconcilable gap. Longing is an ardent movement towards, but never to. And even if “to” was reached, would we

be satisfied? In my life, I am pulled towards nonhumans *because* of this endless un-arrival. The wonder I feel for how the rhythms of life course through them, satiate me.

This incompleteness of knowing manifests in *Karst River* as an oscillation between seeing and not seeing.<sup>11</sup> The membrane of paint both reveals and conceals the cow, making her figure appear to be flickering in and out of focus. Upon first encountering the work, viewers might not even recognize her figure. But through careful looking, they would begin to discern the points of expression in her body: her head tilted up and her muzzle grazing the frame's edge, her mouth parted with teeth clenching something taut. While the exact feeling of the cow cannot be discerned, her embodied gesture becomes clearly identifiable as communicating desperation and tension. My painting encourages looking as a durational act that crystalizes in *a moment of seeing*, suggesting how empathy manifests as an attentiveness towards an Other and leads to glimmers in understanding. In *Karst River*, that moment of seeing is an instance of recognition of an animal who has been rendered invisible by systems of exploitation.

Though particular to *Karst River*, I find the uniqueness of painting to lie in its complex relationship to vision. Solely relying on this sense for engagement, painting involves an oscillation between looking *into* the image and *onto* the surface. In my work, the paint and other materials I use, while giving shape to the image, also retain an identity as mass, unlike say photo-realistic work in which the material is completely disguised as image. In this way, my paintings both invite and impede entry by offering an image to be looked at while also obstructing complete access through the barrier of paint and other material I use. In this way, I see paintings as visual “contact zones,”<sup>12</sup> to use a phrase from Donna Haraway's book *When Species Meet*. In *Karst River*, the thin sliver of space between the cow and the viewer cannot be crossed, but

rather can be negotiated and approached. In this way, the painting offers an encounter between, rather than a conflation of, self and Other.

In *Host* (2020) Figure 2, a much smaller piece with dimensions 12” x 11”, the process of looking as a search for understanding manifests slightly differently. From a distance, the small piece appears as a hazy field with two flat yellow shapes, whose form could indicate either bottles or ornaments. Only when moving closer <sup>move</sup> to <sup>close</sup> the painting, do the yellow shapes reveal themselves as ear tags in the context of the cows’ heads. In this way, I fragment the image of a farmed cow, making it at first unrecognizable. Paul Valéry wrote that “to see is to forget the name of the thing one sees.”<sup>13</sup> This, I find to be where the potency of art lies, in its ability to decontextualize something familiar and present it anew. To see the nonhuman animals in my work is to initially forget prior conceptions of them and witness them bare and bleating as mere color, mark and texture. In *Host*, the cows first appear as thin, quivering lines that evanesce on a waxy, translucent surface. In wrapping the stretcher with translucent fabric and painting on both sides of it, I created a surface that mimics a skin, appearing bruised with purples blooming from the backside of the fabric. This haptic quality of surface, as well as the bareness of line and shape, confront the eye before the image itself. For a moment, the cows do not belong to their names.

The formal separation I employ between the ear tags and the cows suggests a disjunction between the animals and their identification as commodity. In my drawing entitled, *#6139* (2020) Figure 3, made with colored pencil on toned paper, the cow is barely legible, as with *Karst River*, only vaguely appearing as a golden green trace of a figure. Seeing again becomes an act of searching, and then of partial seeing. The title, *#6139*, is an ear tag identification number, reflecting the devices of commodification. But the drawing of the cow rejects standardization. I

repeat the contour lines of her body like in *Host*, here to accentuate the slippage of her body, ungraspable by the eye. She feels made of air rather than mass. The lines of her are so delicate that they are almost impossible to see in the image of the drawing. This work of mine is in company with Jayne Hinds Bidaut's photographic series of animals in pet stores, titled *Animalerie* (2004), which has demonstrated for me the power of a deceptively simple image. In the photographs, the tintype technique she utilizes creates monochrome images whose delicate beauty makes the animals and the environment feel otherworldly. Her titles however locate the animals in the commercial spaces they inhabit; each are labeled with the name of the animal and their price, such as *Rats \$3,99* (2004) Figure 4. This dissonance between title and image suggests the perversity of the commodity value system. In juxtaposition to the cold clarity of the titles, her photos are as intimate as portraits, but render the animal as a subject who inhabits her own sublime space. I find this artistic choice compelling: creating works that do not allow the animal to be read as object. In #6139 the logic of commodification slips off the cow's specter of a body. Again, she refuses her name.

Another node of intersection between empathy and vision is located in the Gaze. While weighty with racist and sexist displays of power, the Gaze can also be understood as a path towards empathy, when it is mutually recognized. In the field of animal behavior, researchers address vision as an important, primary sense that facilitates empathetic engagement for both humans and nonhuman animals. I continue to be startled at the directness of the Gaze of dogs who walk past me, the birds from between metal bars, or the owl perched in a nearby tree. Whether of scale, skin, fur or feather, their eyes will always find mine. Michael Argyle and Mark Cook coined the term "the mutual gaze" to describe this reciprocity of vision.<sup>14</sup> The *return* of the Gaze becomes a powerful act by those who have been subjugated. This manifests in my piece,

*White Meet* (2020) Figure 5, an oil painting with dimensions of 36 ¾” x 23 ¼,” in which a chicken leans out over the dead body of another, and both are shrouded in a deep blue-black shadow punctuated by a cool, brilliant light. I chose the size of the painting to make the chicken larger than life, but still in intimate proportion to the viewer. The downward bend of her neck suggests she had been looking down at her companion, then noticed our presence, and glanced up. Her single, glassy eye meets ours. The poignancy of the mutual Gaze registers in the moment of seeing and being seen simultaneously. She chooses this moment with a single pivot of the pupil. As one who is never seen and whose gaze is forcibly shuttered from view, the chicken in my painting asks the viewer to hold still in this moment of mutual seeing. The painting allows her to return the Gaze. She will not be the one to break it.

Implicit here is the distinction between subject (someone who Gazes) and object (something that receives the Gaze). However, I find paintings in general to muddy this dualism. The meeting of the Gaze in a painting is not always dependent on eye contact between a painting’s subject and the viewer. I understand paintings as subject-objects, in their ability to not only absorb the Gaze, but to Gaze back. This I feel is related to their materiality, which I will discuss in depth in a later chapter. But I want to emphasize here that it is not only the Gaze of the chicken in *White Meet* that meets the viewer, but the material and formal qualities themselves that confront the viewer’s eye. With this work, I used a subtractive painting technique in which I pulled the lights of the figures out from under a thick covering of paint that I had applied to the entire surface of the canvas. Not only did this technique feel significant for me <sup>we</sup> as a slow process of exposing their forms that had been hidden, it also created both an alluring and disturbing affect. The close proximity of <sup>belong to</sup> deep darks with flickers of bright whites

creates an intensity of contrast that draws the viewer's eyes from far away. <sup>no where places</sup> With this pull created by the value structure, the painting stares back, wide-eyed.

Keri Weil writes of the power of the returned animal Gaze: "As we see an animal who sees us, we confront a view of ourselves we may not have seen and may not wish to see."<sup>15</sup> This relates closely, to the mutualism of the Gaze between a painting and the viewer. Paintings can allow us to see *the way* we see, just as the wet eyes of another make visible one's own reflection. The viewers of my work are not only confronted by the animal subject but with their own conceptions of these animals. Can we finally meet their Gaze? What stirs in us when we do?





## **Empathy // Material Echoes**

*she claims*

*her feral vigor*

*through my mark*

My actions and labors of making manifest as a search to “feel with”: how my hands sputter in quick contractions moving paint to become the cow’s pulsing body; how my skin prickles as I persuade tendon away from bone of the chicken carcasses I salvaged; how my palms glide fine sandpaper along the smooth coat of paint; how my fingers tear paint skins apart and suture them together with thread; and how, through the brush, my hand grazes their cheeks, sharpens their teeth, shapes their pupils. My process of making becomes a visceral search towards compassion, which etymologically translates “to suffer with,” however when suffering was understood not only as pain or misfortune, but an experience.<sup>16</sup> Compassion then is “to experience with.” But how can I when so much distance cleaves us and them, when their existence depends on our ignorance? In discussing her art practice, Doris Salcedo explains that her work comes from a place of feeling in parallel to those who live at “the borders of life, on the edges of life.”<sup>17</sup> This is the task of my body of work: to make visible my felt response towards those who have been swept to the corners of existence and consideration, and in doing so, draw them closer towards the viewer. But in this age of identity politics, making artwork from a place of empathy for another can risk naïveté and negligence. However, I am of the belief that the *practice* of empathy—attentive and acutely aware of one’s own position in relation to the Other—is essential to what it means to be an embodied soul in this world. It is also, now more than ever, what the world *it froths* hungers for. *on my tongue*

Therefore, the subject matter of my work is both nonhuman animals and also my own subjective empathetic leanings. For most of my life, a tender trough within me has always filled with sensitivity towards woundedness and resilience. And from this place, my call towards them resounds. I understand the empathy I employ in my work as an echo. Echoing is allowing the sound of the animal Other to reverberate in the cavity of my own body. It is the return of sound

as a call and a response. In my work, I feel I am re-beating (reverberate: *verberare* means to beat) the intonations of those nonhuman animals whose voices <sup>what of</sup> register as silence.

<sup>language?</sup> The taut fabric of my paintings vibrate with my echoes.

This reverberation is felt acutely in *Hunger* (2020) Figure 7, one of the larger paintings in the body of work with dimensions 6.5' x 4.5'. In the painting, a cow's head covers almost the entirety of the picture plane, heaving forward and up to contest the frame's limits. She is made up of a dense layering of marks from charcoal, pastel, oil stick, ink and eraser, which are contained in the shape of her head and neck. The marks vibrate in her body as she presses against the frame. As with several other paintings in the body of work, I repeat the cow's figure in *Hunger*, however within the containment of her body, <sup>my cage</sup> so it almost seems as if she is stuttering or spawning from inside. The quality of my mark and the yearning gesture of her head and neck create the sensation of restlessness. In *Animals Strike Curious Poses*, Elena Passarello, writes of the entwinement between artist and subject, in her chapter on prehistoric cave wall drawings of animals. She writes:

He puts a hand to that soft wall, and there she is, running for eight thousand years. And he becomes the mammoth so he can envision the mammoth, running toward his hand so fast that her feet are rounded blurs at the ends of her triangle legs. His palm on the rock and her red fur, the thrum of his heart and the roll of her feet. Their feet.<sup>18</sup>

I shiver every time I read this passage, as it evokes the power in the seemingly simple act of drawing another being. And given that “the first subject matter for painting was animal,”<sup>19</sup> this cross-species connection through representation lies deep within the marrow of mark-making. Drawing and painting enact, through line, value, shape and color, the desire to better see and understand the world. For me, the representation of animals in my work is an echoing of the profoundness of their being, rather than a mastering of them through the paintbrush, as in 17<sup>th</sup>

and 18<sup>th</sup> century romantic still life paintings (Figure 6). The animals in my work are plainly and vulnerably themselves, rather than stand-ins for a human personality trait or cultural trope, which continues to pervade contemporary art. Representation, a re-presenting of nonhuman animals outside of artistic practices of objectification, is for me a radical act.

My painting, *Hunger*, does not make tame the cow, but rather re-wilds her. Given that domestication has been a practice of subduing and controlling nonhuman animal power, works like *Hunger* and *Black Breath* (2020) Figure 8—a work I will discuss in the next chapter—activate this power that has been repressed through the language of expressionist mark. Expressionism in painting has, from its beginnings in the early 20th century, situated itself as able to communicate an emotive intensity of being. Whether the rubbed-raw skin and allusive hand gestures of Oskar Kokoshka (Figure 9), or the enmeshed bodies and hunched backs of Käthe Kollwitz (Figure 10), expressionist sensibility moves me in its ability to let marks bear the burden of emotions that cannot be portrayed otherwise. In *Hunger*, I found an agitated quality of mark rise up in me, as the large size of the canvas induced a more intense “feeling with.” Together with the vibration of her figure, my marks create a turbulent affect. Just as Passarello describes with her line, “the thrum of his [the artist’s] heart and the roll of her [the animal subject’s] feet,” I realized, when I came out of the stupor of painting, my heart was racing. It was as if in synch with the beating vibration of the cow’s body. My energy was becoming hers and hers mine, an entwining of unlike waters in an estuary of lines. She became more and more vibrant with life and warm to the touch. Her maw <sup>clawed</sup> pulled up <sup>and</sup> farther away <sup>cratered</sup> from her teeth. Our voice became feral-throated.

At many points in my process of painting, the material itself becomes feral too. At times unpredictable and unruly, the material leads and I follow its footprints on the canvas. The

materials I use and am familiar with—acrylic and oil paint, ink, charcoal, paper, tissue paper, pastel—continue to surprise me in the alchemy of their combinations. Ink might seep in or fasten as my initial mark. Acrylic paint will always dry differently than it appears when wet. Water beckons and leads paint without or in spite of the direction of my brush. This is the part of making that draws me to the studio every day: the element of chance, of improbable outcomes. The feral body of the material and mark become that of the animal. An artist whose work I admire, Marlene Dumas, writes of her paintings as not intending to “catch the spirit, possess the being or capture the essence,”<sup>20</sup> of her subject. Instead, her works animates the paint through expressionist mark, and in turn lets the paint animate her subject. Gilles Deleuze writes, “sensation is generated through the artist’s engagement with the medium—it is not the residue of self-expression but rather emerges in the present, as it attaches to the figures in the image.”<sup>21</sup> Dumas’s paintings feel very present in this way that Deleuze describes. For instance in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (2008) Figure 11, the paint still feels fluid and alive as it dissolves on the woman’s cheeks. It feels perpetually animated, not static or still. Dumas writes:

The aim of my work, I have come to believe, has always been to arouse in my audience (as well as myself) an experience of empathy with my subject matter (be it a scribble, a sentence, or a face) more so than sympathy. Sympathy suggests an agreement of temperament, and an emotional identification with a person. Empathy doesn’t necessarily demand that. The contemplation of the work (when it ‘works’) gives a physical sensation similar to that suggested by the work. I’m not a stylist, I’m a sensualist.<sup>22</sup>

Though the painted quality of my work differs from the work of Dumas, I connect to her statement here about empathy and sensuality. The sensuality of painting—as both noun and verb—manifests in expressive engagement with the material. Because I mix my own paints, I become very attentive to the texture, viscosity and hue of the paint. Combining water-based binders with pigment concentrates and additives like pumice, soil and other found materials, I am constantly manipulating and discovering the different dispositions of paint. For me, paint is a

metamorphic substance, changing and becoming as I add water or a thickening agent or rubbing alcohol. My engagement with those nonhuman animals whom I cannot actually ever touch, becomes enacted through my very real and visceral responsiveness to the paint I make.

The physicality of the paint I mix and use in my work varies from thick and dimensional to thin and lean. In Figure 12, I pair two small works of different material qualities to create a dialog between them. In the left piece, titled *Per* (2020), the dimensionality of the paint makes the piece feel more like an object than image. I created the rough-textured, dark grey area from mixing acrylic binder with clay slurry, and the center form from translucent paper and layers of watery paint. From its oval shape, glossy sheen, and pink-flesh color, the center area reads as part of an internal body, possibly an organ or fetal sac. For right piece, titled *Pound/Son* (2020), I applied thin layers of paint, ink and conté to create the cow's shivering specter of a body. She is merely an illusion of a figure compared to the tangibility of the right piece. The diffusing of ink and soft lines that make up the cow's body create the sense that she is receding away, while the fleshy sac protrudes towards us. However the figures mimic each other in their curved form and containment within a boundary. Together the titles create *Per Pound/Son*—per pound or person? Value as commodity or value as being? With the conflation of the two in the title, the pairing of creates a poetic relation between the weightless and the heavy, the ephemeral and the corporeal, manifested through the sensuality of the paint.

Along with those that are more materially complex, this body of work includes several pieces that at first seemed incomplete to me because of their simplicity. However, I grew to acknowledge their success because of this fact. In *Calved* (2020) Figure 13, I drew a cow's head with ink on frosted mylar, whose form repeats like several paintings I have discussed. However, with this one, it looks less like she is in motion, but more as if her head is rippling away <sup>some</sup>

days from her or dissolving across the frame. The parted mouth and the slackened black eye <sup>my</sup>  
eyes create an unsettling affect without any overt indications of suffering or violence. As I drew  
her head, the ink slipped across the slicked surface. It would not stay still when I guided it with  
my brush to form her nostrils and the ridge of her forehead. I left it to dry, <sup>dry to stones</sup>  
surrendering to how it solidify. I loved that I didn't know.





# **Empathy // Embodiment**

*Wounds are birthings*

Say the word turkey, and I conjure grey-pink shavings of cold deli meat, not the individual who followed me as I raked her pen. Say *say it* the word chicken, and a rounded veiny slab appears behind my eyes, not the one who I sat with *with your mouth* each day in her favorite spot in the barn. Say the word fish, and sandy-tan flesh with bones *full* of needles come to mind, unidentifiable as a mound of dirt. With mammals, we do not collapse the dead and the living in a word, but separate them out. The abstraction of nouns like steak, beef, chop, pork, and veal are easier to chew. All these words are haunted by an erasure of the beingness of the animal. Where in our imagination did we lose them?

The term embodiment is extremely important to my work, as a focus with which to counter the violent flattening of the animals whom we consume. Originally meaning “a soul or spirit invested with a physical form,”<sup>23</sup> embodiment recognizes an indistinction between the body and soul. As I mentioned in the introduction, the word “animal” connotes the sacredness of this indistinction, as meaning “one with breath.” Breath: the somatic exchange with the intangible substance that surrounds the world, and whose departure from a body, signifies the absence of the soul. In this way, embodiment becomes a cord of cross-species connection that can cultivate empathy. While I discussed in the first chapter the importance of respecting an Otherness in nonhuman animals and recognizing an inability to know them fully, I do not mean to label them as alien. For me, empathy for a nonhuman animal holds two seemingly opposite facts, that of an irreconcilable difference between us and an animal Other, *as well as* an irrefutable shared identity as embodied beings, experiencing the world and the body with a complexity of feeling.

In *Effluence* (2019) Figure 14, a mixed media painting with dimensions 30” x 22”, the bird’s body feels of both matter and air. Similar to *Karst River*, my layering of material on the

top half of the piece creates a hazy surface quality behind which the figure of a bird is only barely discernible. The luminosity of this area makes the bird feel ethereal. From her figure, an opaque black matter rushes out and off the frame. This painting, as with most in the body of work, emerge from my asking unanswerable questions: what are the animals' experiences of their bodies? What do they know of being and enduring? The obtrusiveness of this painting's image, which appears almost hyperbolic, comes from my answering of these questions within the context of intensive farming. The behavior of confined animals in factory farms haunts me: pigs in gestation crates *it* biting on metal cage bars or *tastes of* chewing with empty *nothing* mouths; chickens pecking at their own or other's wounds and eating their own feces; turkeys *my lungs* dying of heart attacks *filled with* after witnessing a heart attack of *our blackened song* another; cows ramming their bodies against their stall walls. In these gestures, they are communicating with their bodies a feeling, a state of being. My works normally do not include the mechanisms of confinement, rather show the animal in a state of corporeal becoming that invokes the violence they are enmeshed in.

Embodiment—a noun tense indicating the result of an action or means of action—holds in it the sense of the body as matter that changes. This element of becoming as it relates to the body serves as a motif in my work. In *Effluence*, the dark matter on the bottom half of the painting contains sets of clasped teeth and lurching tongues, which are disguised as rough marks of oil pastel. Because of the foreshortened angle, the dark matter seems to be either effusing out of the concealed bird or funneling into her. I found incorporating parts of a mouth which clearly do not belong to a bird, to imply an internal agitation and also a perverse interchange between human and animal. This grotesque combination emerges as well in another work titled *Erosion* (2019) Figure 15. In the painting, a chicken lifts her head upwards, exposing an opening in her

throat. With dimensions of 42” x 38” x 5”, the piece has a significant depth so that the cavity is set back from the surface of the image. Inside, I placed sets of human and animal teeth that I sculpted from clay, which clasp pieces of discarded chicken bones that I salvaged. In this way, the chicken is very literally gnawing on her own body, a self-consumption from the inside. Slickened and built up with wads of paper, gravel and burnt wood, the cavity of her body looks as if it has been regurgitated. With no sign of pink flesh and fatty muscle, the painting counters conceptions of a chicken’s body. Rather, her body is the site of a gruesome mutation.

In *Erosion*, the chicken’s grotesque becoming suggests her experience of the body as one of trauma. In contemporary theory, trauma has been conceived as “an identified event or series of events that is experienced by the individual as physically or emotionally harmful, threatening, or overwhelming, and has lasting and holistic effects on the individual’s functioning.”<sup>24</sup> This definition implies subjectivity, emotional responsiveness and susceptibility—attributes not often associated with nonhuman animals. However, *why* studies keep coming out *do you* about nonhuman animal grief, *need* language, social bonding, *translators?* resilience and trauma, defying anthropocentric logic. For me and my practice, I am less interested in clarifying the exact kind of trauma nonhuman animals experience, as a behaviorist might do, but more akin to a mystic. As Keri Weil writes, conceptualizing the inner life of animals lies outside human language, “perhaps like arguing the existence of the soul or God.”<sup>25</sup> The complexity of being outside of the human, is something I choose to believe and trust in because of how enigmatic the world is. Just because we cannot map the exact inner topography of every being should not deter us from acknowledging its existence. The ambiguity inherent in bodily being relates closely with trauma, which can seem to belong “to another world, beyond the limits of our understanding,”<sup>26</sup> writes Linda Belau. Trauma manifests internally in ways that cannot rationally be understood and

challenge our presumptions about the plasticity of the body. My work tries to hold open the ambiguities of trauma, nonhuman life, and embodiment, and invite viewers to move closer towards these lacunas in understanding.

In *Afterbirth* ~~if i feel your ghost~~ (2020), Figure 16, I pair two paintings to invoke a corporeal trauma in the experience of a dairy cow. The right piece in the diptych, with dimensions 20” x 13.5,” shows the backside of a female cow, with her udder visible and the two calf legs emerging from her vaginal opening. In the left piece, a smaller painting with dimensions 12” x 9 ¼”, an undulating mass emerges from a swirling blackness. It pulls and twists up and out of the frame, paralleling the cow who, though contained by fencing on either side, fills the claustrophobic space of the painting. I created the fleshy quality of the piece on the left by making paint skins with found flower petals and suturing them together with thread. The bodily pink and purple hues with the dark browns of decay, make the flesh form feel neither fully alive nor dead. The material affect is both unsettling and alluring, reflecting the abjectness of her body, which I crudely draw in a very exposed position. For the title, I create the term “afterbirth”—the membrane that contains the fetus during pregnancy and is expelled after labor—from the crossing out of “i feel your ghost.” In pairing the two under this title, I create a link between the decaying fleshy mass, fetal membranes, and a cow giving birth. I ask the viewer, how are they related? In my writing and reading on female cows in the dairy industry, whose bodies never recover from the labor of pregnancy and birth before they are impregnated again, and who are sometimes slaughtered while still pregnant, this relationship is not just metaphoric, but connotes a lived reality.

Trauma for a dairy cow as a state of preserved decay manifests as well in *Compost* (2019) Figure 17, a larger painting with the dimensions 6’ X 4.5.’ Different from

*Afterbirth* ~~feels your ghost~~, the cow's head and eye have striking visual presence, with a greenish white color that contrasts the large dark form on the right, which at first appears not as her body at all but a heavy brown mass. This visual distinction between head and body evokes the sensation of internal alienation, accentuated by her glazed, unfocused eye. She seems to be witnessing her body <sup>my muscle</sup> as separate <sup>milks my bone</sup> from her, and witnessing our <sup>dry</sup> gaze upon her body. The warm brown mass of her body registers as the closest thing to the viewer, both in its size and material dimensionality. Twists of thick paint congregate around partially digested holes in which worm-like forms squirm and dark soil appears from underneath. It is as if she is being eroded from the inside. In this way, as with the other works, her body presents more as a *bodiment*—a noun in a process of change or movement.

What happens to life energy harbored in the body when it is compressed and repressed? If energy is neither created or destroyed, how does it change or mutate? Langston Hughes asks a similar question in, *Harlem*, a poem that confronts us with every question mark:

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up  
like a raisin in the sun?  
Or fester like a sore—  
And then run?  
Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over—  
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags  
like a heavy load.

*Or does it explode?*<sup>27</sup>

Inseparable from embodiment is the notion of vulnerability, which I position in my work as not a stagnant state, but rather professing a vital truth. Judith Butler, whose essay “Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance” has been pivotal for my thinking on this subject, repositions

vulnerability, as neither passive <sup>it passes</sup> nor active, <sup>through</sup> but a condition <sup>a tide</sup> “of being exposed and agentic at the same time.”<sup>28</sup> Her notion of vulnerability <sup>drawn out</sup> emphasizes that “receptivity and responsiveness are not clearly separable from one another.”<sup>29</sup> Both my paintings and Hughes’ poem offer, through imagery of grotesque becoming, what this simultaneous acting and being acted upon looks like. In my works, the woundedness of the animal expresses itself in verbs like discharge, as with *Effluence*, writhe, as with *Compost*, or gnaw, as with *Erosion*, just as Hughes offers verbs like dry up, fester, stink and explode. The bodies of the animals in my paintings become states and sites of energetic experience and response. Their victimhood refuses inertness.

The entwinement of vitality and vulnerability came acutely into focus for me while working at an organic meat farm before beginning this body of work. I observed the slaughtering of animals and was moved by the small moments of power and resistance the animals exhibited. All would beat <sup>your tags</sup> against the man’s firm grip <sup>my ear, my ankle</sup> that held their bodies. Many took longer than he expected to die. Some <sup>who is</sup> surprised him <sup>really</sup> with moments <sup>possessed?</sup> of aggression. Most bodies would tremble long after being skinned and eviscerated. In my collection of poems from the experience, I write about the killing of quails in this excerpt from a longer poem titled *The Last Day*:

they fell to the bucket’s bottom  
thrashing their wings,  
the tings on the metal sides  
turned it into a drum

that thrummed with a young life  
hammered out in red fits,  
one would not die, even after  
three more swift hits

her body’s layer indemnified  
her soul, hair by hair

she gasped for air  
tightly grasped each breath

Their display of a vigorous yearning to live deeply affected me. Later reading *The Absent Body* by Drew Leder and coming across his term “dys-appearance,” I began to understand the seeming juxtaposition between assertive power and the weakening body. He coins this term to describe how in moments of pain and injury, the body appears and “seizes our attention,”<sup>30</sup> as opposed to its tendency to disappear during times of stability. Using strong verbs, he describes how the body advances and emerges as a “sharp presence.”<sup>31</sup> However, I would reorient his term to my own experience as it was not the “body” as separate from the “mind” and “soul” that I felt emanate power, but the complete beingness of the animal that advanced toward me. In the slaughter room, as the quails fluttered fervently in their crate watching others die, squeezed their eyes shut and spread open their beaks as the knife twisted through their skull, beat their wings harder than any metronome, I was both disturbed and in awe of the eruption of energy from such small birds who I could have dismissed as easily breakable.

In *Black Breath* (2020) Figure 8, a painting with the dimensions 6.5' x 4.5', a cow's mouth emerges forward into, and out of the frame. I painted triangular flat shapes in the corners to emphasize the containment of the cow, who, despite the fact, fills and engorges the space. Her mouth <sup>my voice</sup> gapes open <sup>spews</sup> with an insistency in its wide stretch, and, because of the repetition of form, almost seems to be engulfing its own movement. The larger size of the piece emphasizes the gesture, as the mouth becomes significantly <sup>from</sup> larger than life. Her mouth, like in *Hunger*, becomes monstrous. My thrusts of mark add to this overwhelming sense of <sup>guttural</sup> urgency and <sup>pipes</sup>, desperation. As she dys-appears, advancing in a state of pain and yearning, the cow acutely asserts herself as force and “demands action,”<sup>32</sup> and the attention of the viewer. As



with several other pieces I have discussed, the specificity of her feeling is unknown, but because of the expressiveness of her gesture, the viewer can sense her urgency and desperation.

While painting <sup>seeking</sup> this work, the phrase “black breath” came to me as the sensation of being thirsty <sup>the clarity</sup> for oneself. As I rubbed the dusty black charcoal across her mouth, I could feel a sense of being <sup>of the first</sup> parched for <sup>drop of</sup> the waters <sup>water</sup> of freedom and connection. The prefix -dys comes from the Greek root meaning to lack, to be wanting. What does she lack, what does she want?



## **Empathy // Unburials**

*From underneath,  
she extends her  
feathers  
one by one  
pushing off the rubble,  
resurfacing*

80 billion. <sup>if we lined</sup> 80,000,000,000. And that's only the ones who live on land. In reality it is more in the trillions. But that's still a modest guess. It becomes a number <sup>end to end</sup> that ceases to be a number, but a monstrous metric that dwarfs us <sup>end to end</sup> in size. And it does not span decades but a single year. It <sup>could we</sup> is the amount—an approximation because industry does not measure by individuals but by weight—of nonhuman animals killed each year for the consumption of the current human population <sup>reach you</sup> of 7.8 billion.<sup>33</sup> The scale at which the earth and sea are carelessly upturned to rob so many of their lives presses against my chest like a wind of lead. In *Feeling Animal Death: Being Hosts to Ghosts*, Brianne Donaldson writes how, “feeling animal death is an overlooked phenomenon in societies characterized by the ubiquitous deaths of animals.”<sup>34</sup> <sup>how heavy</sup> The systematic killing of animals is mere background noise, barely detectible. <sup>heavy</sup>

In my piece titled, *Remains* (2020—) Figure 18. with dimensions 35 ¼” x 28 ½”, I seek to acknowledge one single life in the insurmountable mound. <sup>are we all?</sup> I chose to draw a chicken raised for meat, who in industry terms is called a “broiler.” An estimated 69 billion chickens were killed for meat <sup>the heat</sup> production in 2018, making up the <sup>of our</sup> largest group of land animals killed.<sup>35</sup> <sup>bodies could</sup> The vast majority <sup>singe your skin</sup> of these birds <sup>to feathers</sup> are raised on factory farms and are bred to gain weight as quickly as possible in order to maximize profit. They have quadrupled <sup>our bones</sup> in size <sup>capsize</sup> since the 1950s,<sup>36</sup> and are killed much earlier—a mere 47 days into their potential 10-12 year life span.<sup>37</sup> For my work, I wanted to acknowledge each of the 47 days <sup>1+</sup> in one bird's life through a piece based on <sup>1+</sup> ritual. I created a sequence of actions to <sup>1+</sup> do each day in order to create the work: drawing the chicken's <sup>1+</sup> form on the

panel, <sup>1+</sup> noting the day with a tick mark, <sup>1+</sup> covering over the drawing <sup>1+</sup> with a thin coat of paint, and <sup>1+</sup> then, when it dried, sanding <sup>1+</sup> the surface down. What <sup>1+</sup> manifested was a sedimentation of <sup>1+</sup> drawings of the same chicken, <sup>1+</sup> over and over again, one on top <sup>1+</sup> of the other. I <sup>1+</sup> was interested both in <sup>1+</sup> what this visual <sup>1+</sup> amassment would <sup>1+</sup> look like, and also <sup>1+</sup> how the repetitive process <sup>1+</sup> would feel for me. <sup>1+</sup> As the piece evolved, I came <sup>1+</sup> to understand it as <sup>1+</sup> an embodied gesture of sustained witness. As I <sup>1+</sup> gripped the panel tightly and pulled and pressed the coarsest <sup>1+</sup> sandpaper across the surface to dull the drawing, I felt the <sup>1+</sup> violence of erasure. <sup>1+</sup> As I scratched <sup>1+</sup> each tick mark, I was <sup>1+</sup> surprised at how few days had gone by <sup>1+</sup> and <sup>1+</sup> how many more to go. <sup>many more to go</sup> As I painted over the surface of the panel <sup>1+</sup> after each drawing, I obscured and preserved her body. As I brushed <sup>1+</sup> the dust from sanding into a container, I found I was collecting her ash. <sup>1+</sup>

The title, *Remains*, <sup>1+</sup> suggests for me multiple meanings. <sup>1+</sup> As a verb, it refers to a persistence and continuity <sup>1+</sup> in a state of being. <sup>1+</sup> Each of my drawings of the chicken, though obscured with <sup>1+</sup> each successive coat of paint and charcoal, never fully <sup>1+</sup> disappears. The dark ghosts of the marks from the previous day tremor <sup>1+</sup>from underneath the next day's drawing. As the drawings accumulated, they formed a dark, cloudy mass, <sup>1+</sup> slowly growing towards the right side of the frame. With each layer, her body persisted <sup>1+</sup> on the panel's surface, like a dried stain that could not be rubbed out. <sup>1+</sup> As a noun, "remains" is also defined as <sup>1+</sup> the body or ashes of a deceased loved one. It turns a singular person into an indistinct multiple, <sup>1+</sup> just as the image of single chicken becomes a multiple through the build-up of drawings. <sup>1+</sup> Remains are infused

with value by the rituals surrounding them. To care for someone's remains <sup>1+</sup> indicates and affirms the profound importance of one single, small life. As Jane Desmond, an animal studies scholar writes, "mourning is a measure of relationship."<sup>38</sup> While the chicken whose image I drew from was not an individual <sup>an individual</sup> whom I knew, the piece <sup>divisible</sup> became more of a symbolic gesture <sup>by thousands</sup> to an imagined <sup>thousands of</sup> individual. The intimacy <sup>knife strokes</sup> between her and me was forged through the act of making, through my continued engagement with her through mark. <sup>the arc curves towards</sup>

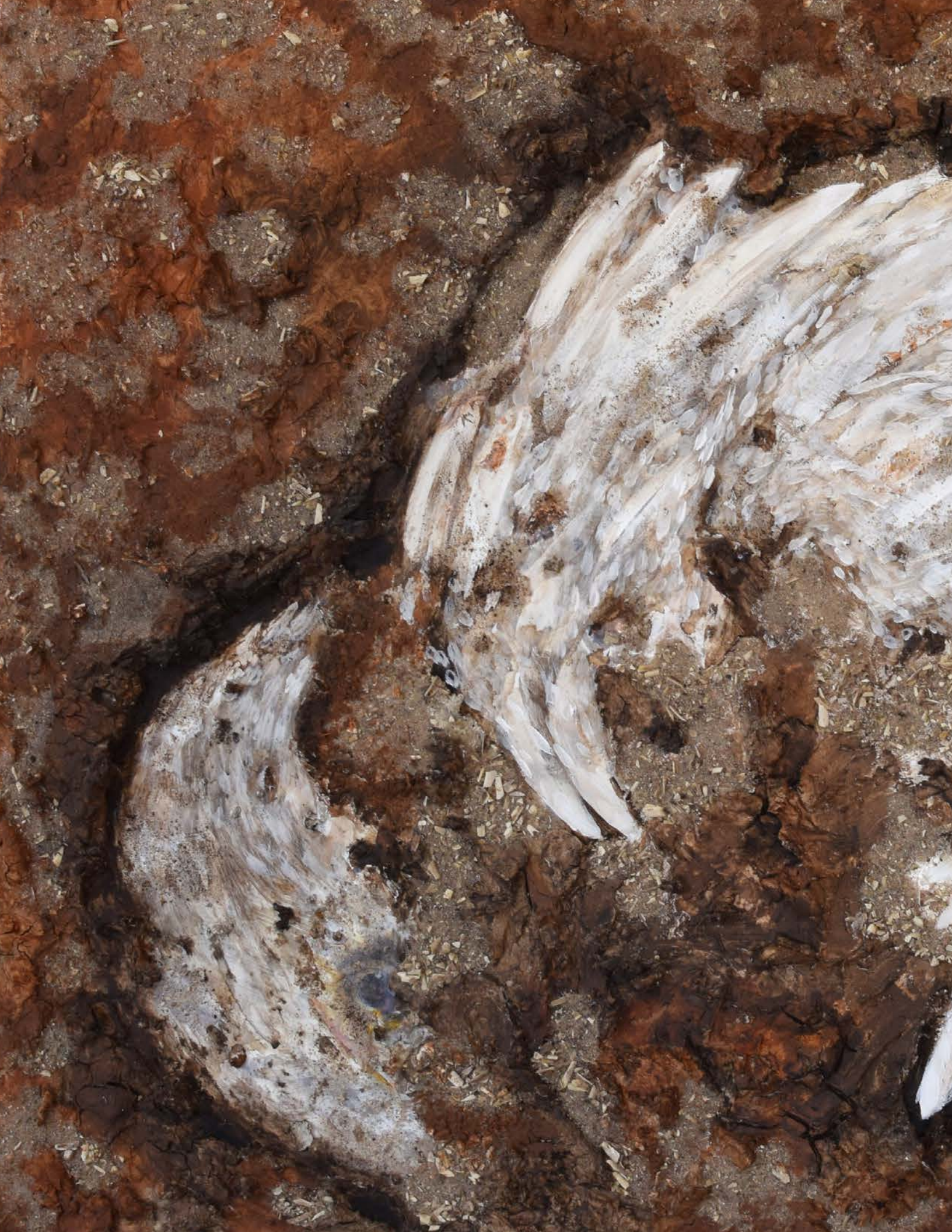
*Remains* honors the life and death of a being who is rarely recognized as a being. As a dismembered body whose value is measured by pounds and dollars, I re-member her—bringing her as a member into a space <sup>towards a</sup> of concern and attention. I can see the piece possibly provoking confusion. Why value her life? A chicken? Small-brained, scared, dumb. But those who have relationships with them know otherwise. The ungrievability of their lives does not come from a conviction of their depreciated status as beings, but from our ideologies that make their deaths comfortable. In *Frames of War*, Judith Butler describes the notion of an ungrievable life, <sup>shared fate</sup> writing: "Without grievability, there is no life, or rather there is something living that is other than life. Instead 'there is a life that will never have been lived,' sustained by no regard, no testimony, and ungrieved when lost."<sup>39</sup> By entombing her body through preserving each drawing and keeping the dust <sup>our dust</sup> from sanding as symbolic ashes, for which I intend to make an urn when the piece is finished, I give testimony <sup>our dust</sup> to a life that is otherwise unacknowledged. But no gesture could fully rectify this "life that will never have been lived." Despite the accumulation of dark marks, <sup>lines the corners</sup> her body maintained a ghostly weightlessness, as if she would persist on the panel always in an in-between state, which felt too

true to her experience—born as never fully able to live, and living as a quickened process towards death. *of your mouth*

While the practice of mourning evolved with the work, it also proved imperfect. On one day, I wrote, “Each drawing has started to become less precious. I am more and more willing each day to paint over my drawings of her, to let them become dust. Is it becoming routine *the routine* rather than ritual?” *Is it becoming routine rather than ritual?* How easy it is for one to become the other. How hard it is for habits to become acts of intentionality and awareness. How easy it is for what should be valued to become dulled of meaning. *of swallowing* In *Remains*, as in my life, I felt the struggle to maintain awareness of those whose lives and deaths are absent from our immediate reality. I *you falter* felt the difficulty of staying present to a presence that was none. With, and despite these difficulties, I hope the work to “counteract a silence,”<sup>40</sup> *when they a* phrase used by Keri Weil, a silence that is not the animals’ but our own. Our tongues *flood the gates* have been numbed by the ordinariness of a violence that grasps the whole animal world by the throat. I hear our silence everywhere, in conversations and phrases, in *as if* newspaper articles and advertisements, in how we eat *as if the boundaries* and what we buy. Through my work, I offer this silence *between us* a space to hear itself. In painting objectified *are real*, animals as subjects of value, the works remind the viewer of the soundless biases that have such a resounding *viruses* *that come from* impact on our relations with nonhuman animals. With *move from* their murmurs and clamors, my paintings *our sweltering* can be heard as one long *sweltering bodies* sentence that speaks my *to yours* desire for Other animals to be valued in their lives and deaths.

My painting yours, process i feel it as a ritual of feel it reckoning with the ungrievability of  
 certain lives impregnate emerged in each of my another piece my cells titled *Unburial* (2020) whose  
 walls Figure 19. In the have been thinned work, a bird thinned by crushing spreads her wings against  
 from under warm one another earth or rock, another as as if slowly they multiply emerging from it.  
 beyond To look closer beyond my reveals control, that the it passed earth is covered with passed from  
 pulverized bone. cell to I recovered cell to cell discarded chicken carcasses to cell to from a restaurant  
 cell like and boiled them for five hours. My a small apartment smelled like burnt flesh. a small fire  
 purring I dried them fire purring as it in the oven runs for three more hours. runs from tree I poured  
 to tree to the shriveled bones tree to tree into a plastic bag to tree, and used the head each nucleus of  
 a hammer alights to crush them alights one by down to dust. one by one, I thought of the urn I made  
 my whole for my dog's ashes whole and how I threw handfuls whole body of my grandparents becoming  
 into the sea. becoming a galaxy, I flocked the bone i feel it sand onto it feeds the panel off of a pinch the  
 heat of at a time. the heat of my I let it muscle and skin fall from and the other my fingertips to the other  
 bodies the milky white bodies who acrylic who press next When next to mine, I we are fed had fed vitamin  
 D applied to make up all make up for but the sun a but something palm- in me burns full bright of and  
 gives life bone life to this to this thing, the when will painting, touch not I harm poured but the heal? rest  
 when will you in know me my me as kin hand, kin and not kindling? rub i feel it bed still growing and my  
 growing pa and lms growing and to growing gether, as if in my body a my body g was its e its shell st to be  
 ur shattered, e it pulls to of the edges c of me o like a tide m a tide searching p for some moon l it breaks e  
 breaks t against i the walls o the walls of my skin n. over and over and over and over again.





## **Conclusion // One Lesson**

*I am listening,  
teach me*

Throughout my text, I describe how empathy for an animal Other arises from my paintings, both as they are made and viewed. Empathy as “feeling with” emerges in the work in several ways: through the mutualism of Gaze and looking as a durational practice of seeing; through the sliver of distance kept between the viewer and animal subject by the membrane of paint; through my sensory engagement with material; through expression of embodiment and vulnerability; and through ritualistic processes in making. While increasing the capacity for empathy with animal Others necessarily requires building relationships with them and all the advocacy work that is being done on their behalf, I find painting to have a critical role in providing space in which to see *how we see* animal Others. It offers practice in negotiating Otherhood, as manifested in material expression. Because my work comes from a deeply tender place, my paintings emerge in a bareness that seeks the bareness of another.

Moving forward in my practice, I intend to stay invested in this subject matter of recovering value in our relations with animal Others and the sacredness of our shared embodiment. The urgency I feel towards this issue follows me as does my incessant drive to make art. The two have become integral to my identity. And considering the current state of the globe, animal exploitation can no longer be dismissed. The world is currently in mid-spin, as if we have been hurling ourselves in one direction, and suddenly the breaks engaged. The brutal trade and commodification of animals for consumption has again given rise to a virus that has spread like one hot exhale over the Earth’s skin. To re-claim kinship with other animals is not a side project. It is a fate that enwraps us all. As Alice Walker writes, “People like me who have forgotten, and daily forget, all that animals try to tell us. ‘Everything you do to us will happen to you; we are your teachers, as you are ours. We are one lesson.’”<sup>41</sup> When will we begin to learn?

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Included in the chapter headings are poetic fragments that I have written specifically for this text.
- <sup>2</sup> Berger, *About Looking*, 7.
- <sup>3</sup> Beston, *The Outermost House*, 25.
- <sup>4</sup> Maddaloni, “The Meaning of Empathy,” 22.
- <sup>5</sup> Lanzoni, “The Roots of Einfühlung or Empathy in the Arts,” 21.
- <sup>6</sup> Bennett, *Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art*, 43.
- <sup>7</sup> Gruen, *Entangled Empathy*, 66.
- <sup>8</sup> Gruen, 64.
- <sup>9</sup> Gruen, 45.
- <sup>10</sup> Tempest Williams, *Erosion: Essays of Undoing*, 76.
- <sup>11</sup> Baker, *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity and Representation*, 221.
- <sup>12</sup> Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 3:216.
- <sup>13</sup> Levin, *The Opening of Vision: Nihilism and the Postmodern Situation*, 65.
- <sup>14</sup> Argyle and Cook, “Gaze and Mutual Gaze,” 170.
- <sup>15</sup> Weil, *Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now?*, 49.
- <sup>16</sup> Leder, *The Absent Body*, 161.
- <sup>17</sup> Salcedo, Variations on Brutality, 7.
- <sup>18</sup> Passarello, *Animal Strikes Curious Poses*, 19.
- <sup>19</sup> Berger, *About Looking*, 7.
- <sup>20</sup> Boogerd, Bloom and Casadio, *Marlene Dumas*, 27.
- <sup>21</sup> Bennett, *Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art*, 37.
- <sup>22</sup> *Marlene Dumas: The Eyes of the Night Creatures*, 12.
- <sup>23</sup> “Embody (v).”
- <sup>24</sup> Goodman, “Contemporary Trauma Theory and Trauma-Informed Care in Substance Use Disorders: A Conceptual Model for Integrating Coping and Resilience,” 187.
- <sup>25</sup> Weil, *Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now?*, 28.
- <sup>26</sup> Belau, “Trauma and the Material Signifier,” 1.
- <sup>27</sup> Hughes, “Harlem,” 1.
- <sup>28</sup> Butler, Gambetti, and Sabsay, *Vulnerability in Resistance*, 24.
- <sup>29</sup> Butler, Gambetti, and Sabsay, 25.
- <sup>30</sup> Leder, *The Absent Body*, 84.
- <sup>31</sup> Leder, 91.
- <sup>32</sup> Leder, 92.
- <sup>33</sup> Zampa, “How Many Animals Are Killed for Food Every Day?,” 1.
- <sup>34</sup> Donaldson and King, *Feeling Animal Death: Being Hosts to Ghosts*. xvi
- <sup>35</sup> Ritchie and Roser, “Meat and Dairy Production,” 1.
- <sup>36</sup> “Chickens Are 4 Times Bigger Today than in the 1950s,” 1.
- <sup>37</sup> Leshko, *Allowed to Grow Old: Portraits of Elderly Animals from Farm Sanctuaries*, 6.
- <sup>38</sup> Donaldson and King, *Feeling Animal Death: Being Hosts to Ghosts*, 121.
- <sup>39</sup> Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?*, 15.
- <sup>40</sup> Weil, *Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now?*, 112.
- <sup>41</sup> Regan and Linzey, “Am I Blue,” 186.

## Bibliography

- Argyle, Michael, and Mark Cook. "Gaze and Mutual Gaze." *Cambridge University Press* 130, no. 3 (1976).
- Baker, Steve. *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity and Representation*. Champaign: The University of Illinois Press, 2001.
- Belau, Linda. "Trauma and the Material Signifier." *Postmodern Culture* 11, no. 2 (January 2001).
- Bennett, Jill. *Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005.
- Berger, John. *About Looking*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980.
- Beston, Henry. *The Outermost House*. New York: Penguin Books, 1928.
- Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* New York and London: Verso, 2009.
- Butler, Judith, Zeynep Gambetti, and Leticia Sabsay, eds. *Vulnerability in Resistance*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.
- CBC News. "Chickens Are 4 Times Bigger Today than in the 1950s," October 8, 2014. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/chickens-are-4-times-bigger-today-than-in-1950s-1.2792628>.
- Donaldson, Brianna, and Ashley King, eds. *Feeling Animal Death: Being Hosts to Ghosts*. London & New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.
- Dumas, Marlene. *The Eyes of Night Creatures*. Amsterdam: Galerie Paul Andriessse, 1985.
- Goodman, Revital. "Contemporary Trauma Theory and Trauma-Informed Care in Substance Use Disorders: A Conceptual Model for Integrating Coping and Resilience." *Advances in Social Work* 18, no. 1 (2017).
- Gruen, Lori. *Entangled Empathy*. New York: Lantern Books, 2015.
- Haraway, Donna. *When Species Meet*. Vol. 3. Posthumanities. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.
- Hughes, Langston. "Harlem." Poetry Foundation, originally published 1951, 2002. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46548/harlem>.
- Lanzoni, Susan. "The Roots of Einfühlung or Empathy in the Arts." In *Empathy: A History*, 21–45. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018.
- Leder, Drew. *The Absent Body*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990.
- Leshko, Isa. *Allowed to Grow Old: Portraits of Elderly Animals from Farm Sanctuaries*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2019.
- Levin, D.M. *The Opening of Vision: Nihilism and the Postmodern Situation*. New York: Routledge, 1988.
- Maddaloni, Arnold. "The Meaning of Empathy." *American Imago* 18, no. 1 (n.d.).
- Online Etymology Dictionary. "Embody (v.)," n.d. <https://www.etymonline.com/word/embody>.
- Passarello, Elena. *Animal Strikes Curious Poses*. London: Vintage, 2017.
- Regan, Tom, and Andrew Linzey, eds. "Am I Blue." In *Other Nations: Animals in Modern Literature*, 182–87. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2010.
- Ritchie, Hannah, and Max Roser. "Meat and Dairy Production." Our World In Data, November 2019. <https://ourworldindata.org/meat-production#citation>.
- Salcedo, Doris. Variations on Brutality. Interview by Susan Sollins, 2013. <https://art21.org/read/doris-salcedo-variations-on-brutality/>.
- Tempest Williams, Terry. *Erosion: Essays of Undoing*. New York: Sarah Crichton Books, 2019.
- Van Den Boogerd, Dominic, Barbara Bloom, and Mariuccia Casadio. *Marlene Dumas*. New York: Phaidon Press, 1999.
- Weil, Kari. *Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now?* New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.

Zampa, Matthew. "How Many Animals Are Killed for Food Every Day?" Sentient Media. Accessed March 30, 2020. <https://sentientmedia.org/how-many-animals-are-killed-for-food-every-day/>.



Figure 1

*Karst River*, 2019  
Charcoal and acrylic paint on canvas  
48" x 48"



Figure 2

*Host, 2020*

Acrylic paint, pastel and paper on fabric

12" x 11" x 1 ½"





Figure 3

*#6139, 2020*

Colored pencil on toned paper

32" x 20"



Figure 5

*White Meet, 2020*  
Oil on canvas  
36 ½" x 23 ¼"



Figure 4

Jayne Hinds Bidaut  
*Rats* \$3.99, 2004  
Tintype



Figure 6

Melchior d'Hondecoeter  
*Still Life with Birds and Hunting Gear in a Niche*, 1633  
Oil on canvas  
56 cm x 46 cm

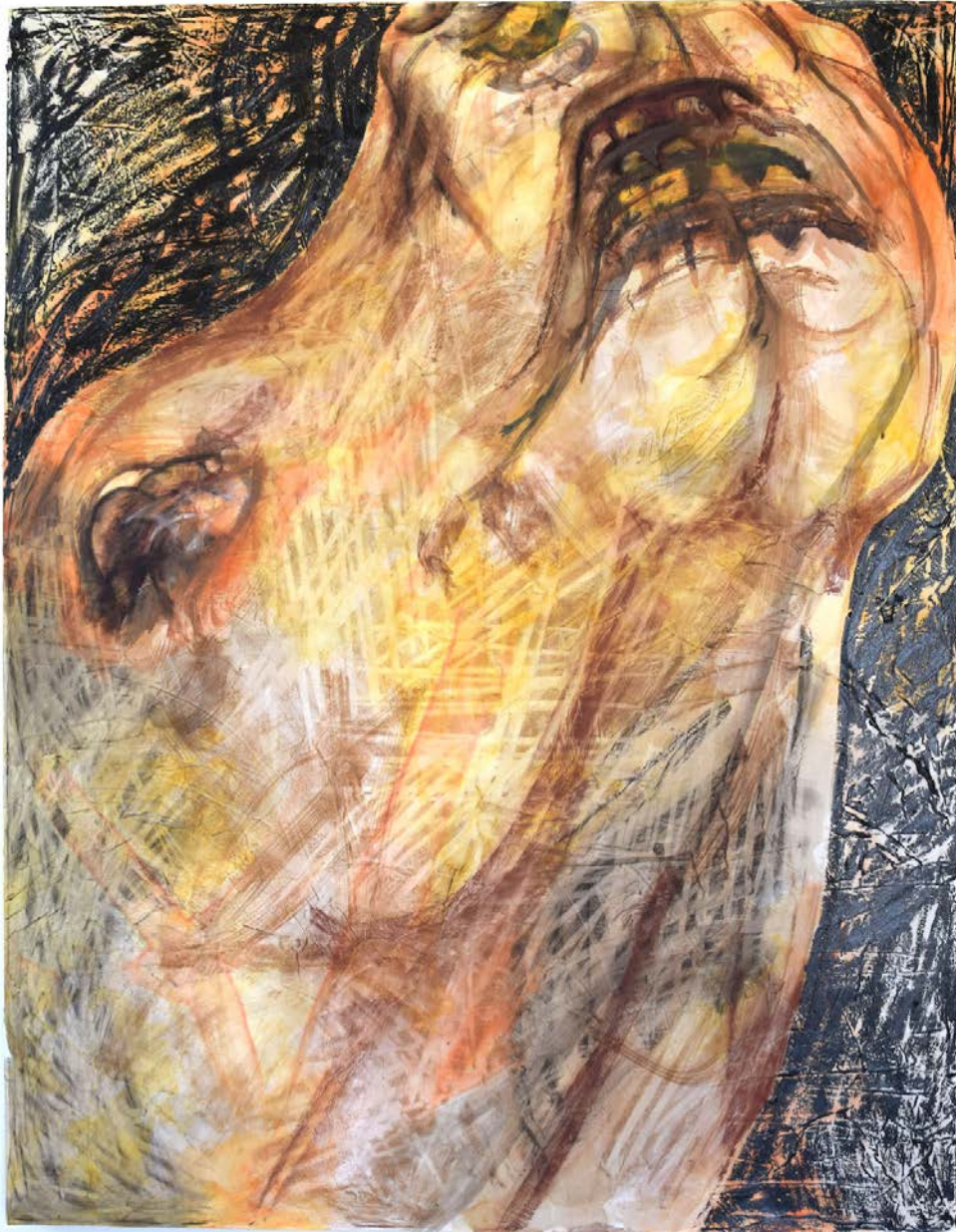


Figure 7

*Hunger, 2020*

Acrylic paint, ink, oil stick, pastel and paper on fabric

6 ½' X 4 ½'



Figure 8

*Black Breath*, 2020  
Charcoal and acrylic paint on fabric  
6 ½' X 4 ½'



Figure 9

Oskar Kokoschka  
*Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat*, 1909  
Oil on canvas  
30 1/8" x 53 5/8"



Figure 10

Käthe Kollwitz

*Woman with Dead Child (Frau mit totem Kind)*, 1903

Etching with chine collé

composition: 16 ¼" × 18 9/16"; sheet: 21 7/16" × 27 11/16"



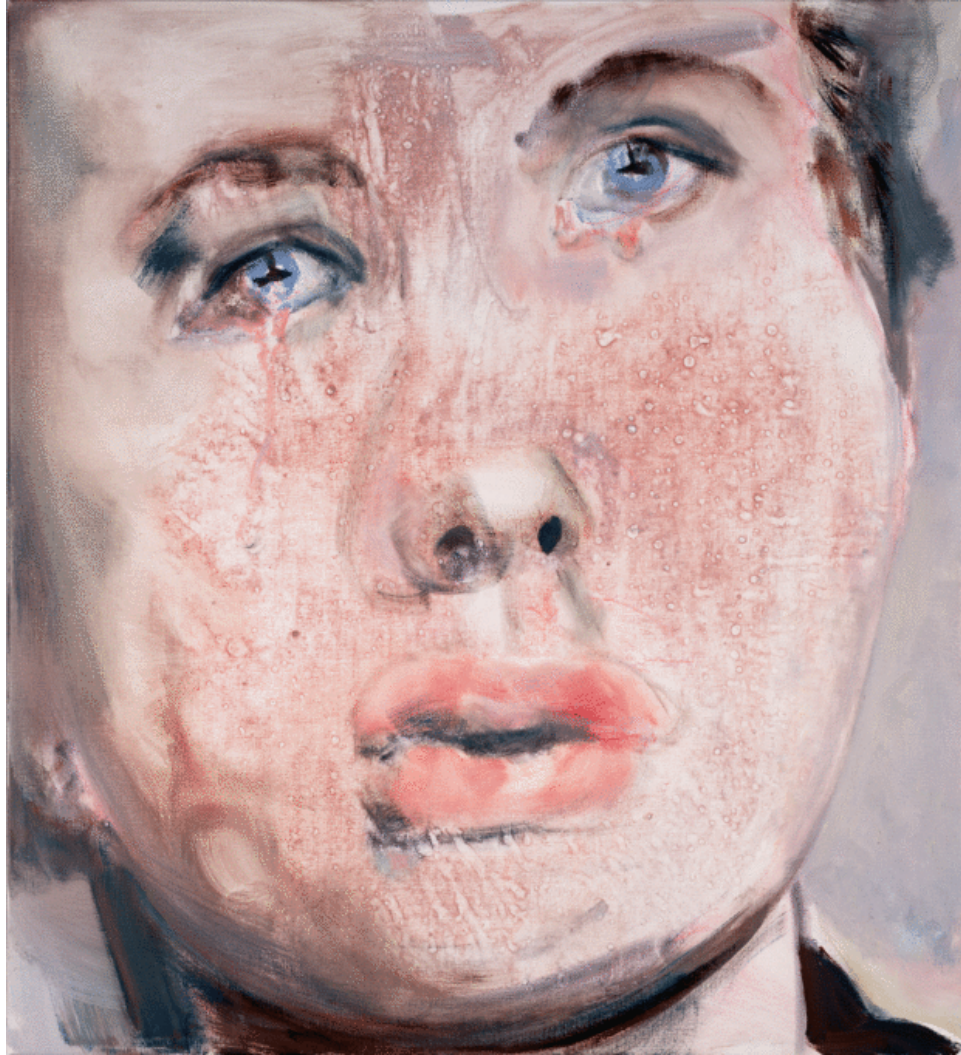


Figure 11

Marlene Dumas  
*For Whom the Bell Tolls*, 2008  
Oil on canvas  
39" x 35"



Figure 12

left: *Per*, 2020; right: *Pound/Son*, 2020  
acrylic paint, charcoal, fabric, paper and clay on canvas  
8 ½" x 8" x 1 ½" & 12 5/8" x 11 ½" x 1 ½"



Figure 13

*Calved*, 2020  
Ink and pastel on mylar  
18" x 24"



Figure 14

*Effluence*, 2019

Charcoal, acrylic paint and oil pastel on paper  
30" x 22"



Figure 15

*Erosion, 2019*

Charcoal, acrylic paint, clay, fabric, paper, found charred wood, gravel,  
salvaged chicken bones on canvas

42" x 38" x 5"



Figure 16

*Afterbirthfeelyourghost*, 2020

Acrylic paint, tissue paper, found flower petals, paper, oil stick, graphite, and thread  
left: 12'' x 9 1/4''; right: 20'' x 13.5''



Figure 17

*Compost, 2019*

Acrylic and urethane paint, soil, and clay on canvas  
61" x 44" x 3 ½"



Figure 18

*Remains*, (in process photo) 2020—  
Charcoal, conté, acrylic paint and pumice on panel  
35 ¼" x 28 ½" x 2 ¾"





Figure 19

*Unburial*, 2020

Acrylic paint, salvaged chicken bones and clay on panel  
24" x 36" x 1 1/2"