

- a. I will not exclude pain
- b. I will not exalt pain
- c. I painted moving hands; scissors; a runner; a suicide bomber; a glance. “Everything only connected by ‘and’ and ‘and’” as Elizabeth Bishop wrote
- d. In 1909, The Futurists wrote a mean and flowery manifesto about the demolition of the past. Against them, I sing the love of calm, the habit of patience. But I looked at Balla when diagrammatic marks and the illustration of movement appeared in my studio last summer. In *Dynamism of a Dog on its Leash*, Balla painted the wagging dachshund tail in its full arc, and beside it its owner’s shoes fixed in a hallucination of speed
- e. The Futurists believed in velocity as a corrective to the art of their time. Disaster their trajectory, as ours is
- f. I remember the soot snow of an alien New York in 2001 and every improper response to disaster
- g. In “*Musee de Beaux Arts*,” Auden wrote of suffering, “it takes place/ While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along...” and later in the poem, “In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away/ Quite leisurely from the disaster”
- h. My painting happens on a ground. The painting ground expresses its ability to be excavated. Against it occur cuts, abrasions, stipples, sputters, wheezes and rasps
- i. I followed the curve of a line cut into the painting ground. It led me to a body that was already a vapor. Those painted figures form as a stain, a beaded mark, a mist, or a print
- j. The paintings appear in past tense
- k. Painting is an imperfect séance
- l. “Painting is an outrage to time,” TJ Clark wrote in *The Sight of Death*, his reading of the Poussin painting, *Landscape with a Man Killed by a Snake*. This because the witness running to share the tragic news is about to speak—and never will
- m. I painted with an idea of language being just outside the door
- n. In October 2001, a flyer for interfaith services titled “Our Grief is Not a Cry For War” distributed near Union Square. It read: “We are a city in mourning. We honor the lost lives and our own humanity with a call for peace. We mourn with the mission of preventing further horrors / War is not the answer. / In the aftermath of this horror, we reject the acts of violence directed against our Arab and Muslim neighbors. We reject all expressions of racial, religious, and ethnic bigotry and violence. / We come together in our commitment to a free and peaceful world, a peace built on social and economic justice
- o. I waited on the chair under the opulent light of my studio window, which cut a broad streak down the wall and across the still wet painting on the floor. I had mixed feelings about it. The painting showed a diagram of the movement of the eye and a solitary writer. Above that a lunar alphabet. I called the painting *Writing*
- p. The word “ground” positions me between poles of under and above. It feeds my celestial superstitions. It poses its correlative groundlessness
- q. In my painting of the runner, two legs x two legs swooped below the figure from left to right. Like TJ Clark’s description of *Man Killed by a Snake*, he was almost a sign but not quite. He appeared as a Vitruvian Man turned to show his profile. He had two faces. He showed no sweat or panic
- r. In December, I made a dozen drawings from what I’d read of the released CIA report on torture, trying to write accurately the gesture of a body in pain. This I did delicately
- s. In the year of Balla’s *Dynamism*, Hilma af Klint met with a group called The Five. Their positions at séance instructed the forms of her precise abstraction. When I started to pull the nervous body out of my abstraction, I looked for images of her paintings. In one, I saw what could have been a figure, mechanical and balletic like one of El Lissitzky’s geometric ascensions
- t. The Five believed in pinching past and present together
- u. The architecture of my studio: floor, palette, table, window, laptop, door, ceiling
- v. My first few steps forward I breathed through my nose, avoiding trees, lampposts, people, and cars. Not long after I sweat and began to hear the wheeze and gasp of my breathing. I tried to push all thoughts away from my body except the logistics of succeeding foot after foot. But even that I tried to ignore, nervous that with too much attention I might forget how. Salt sweat in my eyes signaled my progression
- w. At the last stretch, on the last block, I shut my eyes and aimed my body toward the stopping point singing hard breaths
- x. I visited Margaret in China during a super moon. I made a first round of drawings on what felt like stringent deadline, recalling Elizabeth Bishop’s travel paintings: a graveyard; a friend sleeping in bed on her back; a chandelier and chandelier shadow. I sketched a driver whose body coincided with his odometer; a seated man snipping the head of a chicken; a man reading a see-through newspaper. On that trip, Margaret wrote of our time passing, “the ruffled edge/of a glacier as we speak is slowly rendered/ smoother under sun”
- y. I will not exclude pleasure