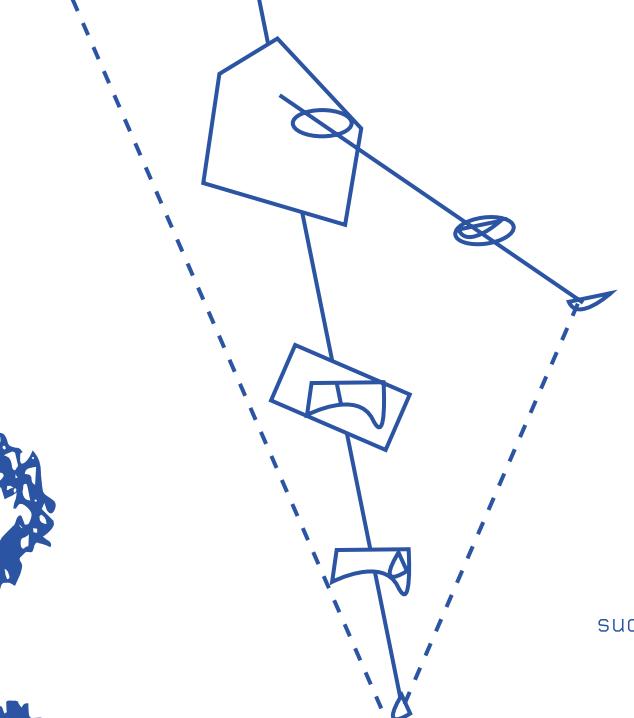
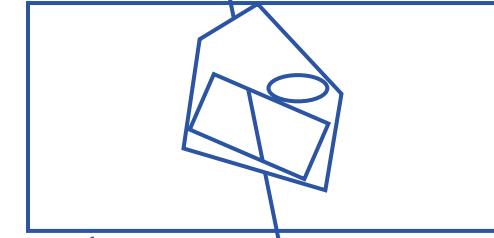
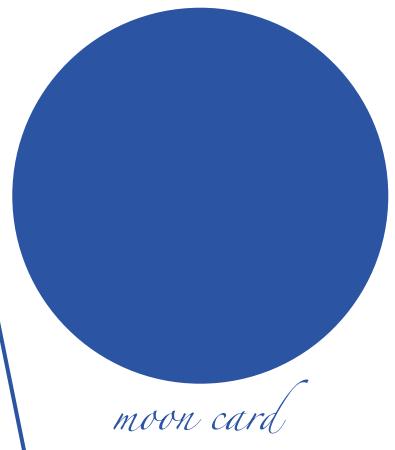


# Rebecca Brewer

## The Written Face



Science of forms  
life of forms



sucking stones

cosmos

I personally identified with Brewer's work precisely because of its abstract character. My experience of identification is a two-tiered experience. First, the representation of figure and landscape was simplified in the sense that it did not attempt to illustrate a "realistic" referent and we could imagine a generic placeholder for both figure and landscape (like a cartoon). Second, his nihilistic inner dialogue setting himself intentionally apart from society. Brewer takes the modernist existential figure seriously but she does not over-identify with it. I find it interesting to note that Brewer's father is a condensed matter physicist, because in the secular world of theoretical science, the temptation for existential meaninglessness can be overwritten by awe in the infinite complexity of the universe.

Point Grey2.docx

HOUSE

connection that I became familiar with—  
crying the cosmic connection Brewer that and inhabiting deso-  
first paintings by human figures of each unclear. Both figure-  
were rough landscapes. Where the landscape with thick brushstrokes. In one working  
late character were abstracted with neutralized tones. In one working  
and landscape colour palette were working one another, a beach of her work  
composed grey figures were near one environment through champions pinning down  
together at all, but simply unknown a trend that possibility of pinning down  
unknown This ambiguity has current experiences and on  
prairie. This contrary to the space—"where value, Brewer explores  
However, contrary open space highest registers in our our pathos.  
How a free and considered art as a considering meaning for paintings encourage  
the struggle bodies. Her meaning  
our human bodies.

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Brewer has looked closely at medieval sculpture, in which each figure appears stuck, not quite mobile, frozen in the lump or log figure is carved, exhibiting sad and wrinkled downturned eyes. In Christian art such figures are inflected with the pathos described in scripture as a tension between transcendence and the fallen human state. With this in mind I wanted to make a connection between her work and William Blake's famous collection of mystical poems and illustrations Songs of Innocence and Experience. The text glorifies the idea of childish innocence and purity, while interrupting it with contrary experiences of anxiety and despair. Where experience is made primary and allows for the most profound joy, it is always tainted with pain. Though I know Brewer has no interest in being a mystic, I wanted to indulge the dialectic between suffering and transcendence in this text. Something in her work teased my imagination in this direction and I began to consider how existentialism is the secular form of mysticism. In many of her paintings the figures are alone and fragmented. Their bodies are marked, stained and scarred. In some works, Beckett's destitute Molloy is conjured, his nihilistic inner dialogue setting himself intentionally apart from society. Brewer takes the modernist existential figure seriously but she does not over-identify with it. I find it interesting to note that Brewer's father is a condensed matter physicist, because in the secular world of theoretical science, the temptation for existential meaninglessness can be overwritten by awe in the infinite complexity of the universe.

little fly

R

nothing can prevent us from accomplishing the aims of our life

- James Allen

**alone in the forest looking closely at plants**

Brewer's paintings are psychedelic. In one painting, I see a handful of leaves and twigs, turning over with shifting multi-colours and sprouting hallucinatory tendrils on an acid orange ground. The painting is divided by two horizontal "trees" defining three distinct pictorial sections. (Perhaps the point of view is one of lying sideways on the ground?) One can enter each section as a pictorial world in itself and observe how the structures of painterly marks become multivalent planes, textures and recesses. Some of the recesses even become caves and passageways that recede deeper into the picture. This movement from perceiving the picture as a whole into examining the minutia of textured marks and spaces is a kind of micro-macro experience I associate with psychedelia. Her paintings create the conditions for zooming in visually to observe the tiniest molecular components, and then consider those components in relation to other scales of perception. For me, this kind of perceptual experience engenders a kind of freedom. Since the line of visual gradation from big picture to microscopic view is infinite and along that line there is an infinity of points, so the viewer is free to position and re-position him or herself along that line however he or she sees fit.

**deep inside a daub of oil I learn something new about green**  
**flying**  
 Brewer has said that whole swaths of history are contained in a painting, simply by being sensitive to ones own perceptual apparatus. Looking sensitively opens up infinite possible visions and readings. However the dark side of sensitivity is complete dissociation, and looking closely can lead down black rabbit holes into voids empty of meaning. It can be frightening when an object is separated from its meaning, but being able to manipulate the space between object and meaning is precisely how the painter can really see what he or she is looking at. This kind of sensitivity is also painful because what is seen can often be impossibly foreign and alienating, or unacceptable to society. For Brewer, artists have the difficult task of exploiting their own sensitivity to express something human. She make images so that we can remember the shared experiences we are having, regardless of how painful, and consider new experiences we might like to share.

The meditation master sits alone in the grass with her brush and writes:  
**nothing can prevent us from accomplishing the aims of our life.**

*Therapeutic for memory*  
**Tale**

**"A STATE IN WHICH SOME INTEGRATED PART OF A PERSON'S LIFE BECOMES SEPARATED FROM THE REST OF THE PERSONALITY AND FUNCTIONS INDEPENDENTLY."**

By Eli Bornowsky for Rebecca Brewer, The Written Face, Catriona Jeffries 29 March - 3 May, 2014, Vancouver

