

After Peter Doig’s “Music of the Future”

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ABSTRACT

The poem is loosely inspired by Peter Doig’s painting “Music of the Future” and reimagines the night scene that is depicted in the painting. The poetic voice is rooted in a deep sense of place while simultaneously speaking from the outer edges of that place, creating a liminal space through poetic images and narrative.



Keywords: *Poetry, Poems about Painting, Contemporary Painting, Peter Doig*

BIO

Joseph Mulholland is a poet and visual artist from Albuquerque, New Mexico. He holds a BA and MA from the University of Puerto in comparative literature and is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto’s Centre for Comparative Literature. He is the author of the poetry chapbook *Phantom Ride* (Baseline Press, 2017).

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The town's only survivor has taken to painting nightscapes.
A body of water that aches ungrammatically,
or a man holding a candle under a bridge,
waiting for hard edges to feather out, swelling,
the stars learn to count backwards,
attempting to recreate an un-narratable origin story.
Is every instance of déjà vu a doorway to the infinite?
Or is the infinite what holds the sky from falling
in the most quotidian of ways? This is the music
of the future—colors only recognizable as sound.
Sound on the threshold between worlds,
deteriorating at the slightest disturbance,
a fallen palm branch or a hummingbird's death.
The curtains of this house move with the sea's breath.
In future iterations, this beach will be a desert valley
and this night will not turn from the hurricane's arrival.

By Joseph Mulholland