

Encountering Winter in Summer

Andrew Bracey

PROLOGUE

Pathos
The mountain peak
Maintaining the sole
Supremacy of
Cosmic law
In the freezing
Denial
Of winter,
Remains the inevitable fate of existence

Wilfried Seipel (ed), Pieter Bruegel the Elder: at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, (Milan, Skira, 2007), p41

does Winter begin or end the seasons?
is this the first?
or the last?
of five?
of six?
or twelve?

The physiognomy of a melancholic enigma

Wilfried Seipel (ed), Pieter Bruegel the Elder: at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, (Milan, Skira, 2007), p49

Truly cosmic in scope

Walter Gibson, Bruegel, (London, Thames & Hudson, 1977), p156

Presents a Synthesis
Between the infinity of the world the eye
Embraces - as winter embraces nature - and
The scale of people in their
Everyday Surroundings.
On the other hand,
Snowy expanses on several planes stretch

Bruegel's are actually more amazing than your highest expectations dares to imagine them to be

Peter Jones, Twitter message, <https://twitter.com/knotifications> accessed 23/08/2016

Pieter the Droll The Peasant Bruegel

Philippe and Françoise Roberts-Jones, Bruegel, (Paris, Flammarion, 2012), p156

DAY ONE

I feel Cold
The painting Makes Us Inhabit
Its temperature

The tree
Down in the bottom
In the middle
Is a
Sea urchin
Frozen

I Spend Time With It

It Is Great Because It does not

Shout

It has not One Focus

DAY TWO

68 people
13 dogs
13 crows

I lost count of the buildings
And trees,
Or maybe
My eyes are just

Dit is in den Hert

deathly blackness
of tree trunks speared
into the ground

Miniscule, insignificant
Folk
Like bugs
Like us

Domineering,
Overbearing,
All-pervading,
Harsh, bleakness

The white snow is not the cold,
It is the Sky
That chills

The colour of that sky,
Particular
In its harshness

A dog's tail
Curls
Like a pigs
Creating elegant patterns

In The Snow

Doleful dogs

the roofs mirror the mountains

what does the flying crow see ?

I Wish I Had It Alone, Would My Temperature Drop? Fall, Or Rise ?

Summer To Winters Is Different
Other's seek to explain

The Procession To Calvary

Explains all
We need To Know
Everything is contained
Within it
Humanity
Wrapped up, waiting for us to unravel the threads
It is incredible

Hunters In the Snow

Tells us all we need to know
It does not
Explain
It requires us to
Attend
To listen
To pay attention
Because it does

Do the skaters feel joy?

No
Explaining At all,
it tells
it reveals
All we need to know
If we want it to
If we listen, to what it tells

Do the crow's caw?
Do the skaters squeal?
and shout?
Does the fire crackle and spit?
Does the ice crack?
Do the trees whisper?
Surely the hunters
Though
Are silent,
sullen

what does the flying crow see?
And the ones that turn to us
And those that look away
From Us
To enter the crowd,
Now that is a thought

How white
Was
That white
When it was painted?

DAY 3

The snow, the Snow
I can feel the crunch of the footsteps
In snow
Turning or turned to ice
The snow has been there for a long time
the snow has
A Landscape
Full of Anxiety
Mixed with Wonder
Mixed with
Awe
The eyes
Look for comfort in the
Softening delicate, filigree of branches

The hunters, The dogs
Have heads down
Disheartened,
Fed up,
Tired,
Their trip has been
Harsh
And
Has not brought
Rewards
They are returning
To the town
From the hills,
(The wilderness)
With no,
No food for the winter
They know this will be a tough,
A tough season

Faraway
Trees

shadowy stains
of crows
puncture the
astonishing
silence

Those four trees
Have
Been
Stamped
Into
The
Snow
They have not grown, but
Violently stamped by him,
The painter

DAY 4

Today
The copyist painters
Have Gone
I miss the smell
Of oil
Paint
And turpentine
It made the paintings go back
to the Studio, perhaps, perhaps
Perhaps
I do not
Miss the people, the painters
Though
They
Blocked
And
Distracted
And drew
Crowds that
Lingered and looked at the wrong
Paintings
And No
Longer
Do

I can concentrate,
Give over
myself

The trees are not black
How did I not see this before?
They are realistic
They are
Of bark
Full of mark
And colour
And fantastical emptiness
The,
Crows,
Are,
Blacker,
Than,
The,
Blackest
Night
Though
As
I Knew
They
Would
Be

The snow luminates
Especially
When
You cast your eye to the right
To
Gloomy Day (early Spring)
and
quickly back again to the bottom
left
of
Hunters
Of Winter
it silhouettes
and glows
like
a
star
viewed
up close
the sky is
still cold

Today,
My final day
With Bruegel
I arrive,
Enter
The gallery
First
For time alone
With him, with it
With
Them
I am not sure what I gain from these minutes of being alone,
In here
But I needed to do it
The spell of doing this
Is
Broken
Soon,
But not now
Not yet
The approach
To walk into through the threshold
To this rooms of all rooms
Of art, Of Bruegel, Of time,
Spent,
Spent up
In silence
Alone,
Away from the
Crowds
The paintings wants
you to turn your back,
Though you cannot
It wants you to be like the hunters,
Can you know it,
ever?
Perhaps it knows you, it has seen you before
To be alone is to be close
Close is to knowing the power of this painting
And the Museum knows
it,
And a radio crackles into life,
A group of guards in an adjoining room chat,
Or perhaps they talk art,
And life
And how one is the other, and folds into the other and so on and on
I am drawn to them to retrace my steps
and then
switch
them
off,
their quiet buzz is dampened
not silent
but close
To silence, in my muffled ears
Your approach is a walk from one room to another
and all you see is another doorway, no clue of what is beyond, till
you approach
Into his room
Bruegel abounded
But with skewed
perspective to
the
left
Of you
To the right,
The Bruegel's are
dimmed, dulled to you,
till you get closer
and them jump out at you,
But not now, not yet
Because, as, for
Hunters,
In the Snow,
Pings at you,
Grabs you
Around crowds, they distract, those crowds
From looking
Properly
Alone with myself and half his work
Winter truly staggers,
It tells me truth
In a way I cannot explain
With the limits of
What
Language
Can only be
Only fail to be
I feel this
I believe this
I know this
Whatever that is
Truth

Yesterday I travelled
To the countryside,
To the mountains
To stay
With friends
The artist has painted
Her version
Of Hunters
I plan to,
One day,
Soon,
Perhaps
Not sure how
Only one hunter remains in her
The others obliterated
She spoke of how she has
Rescued a crow, that fell from the sky in a storm
And was pecked by its kin
She is nurturing it
Back to health
A huge undertaking
She aims,
They aim
To release it
When it is strong,
Enough
When it's wing has healed
He spoke,

(As we looked at stars
The Milky Way
The cosmos
so crystal clear with no human population near
At all
So still, so silent
So far away
From all we know
we pick out constellations
known
and unknown
not preconceived
by others
by us alone)

The writer spoke,
Of how he has read
Of how the crows
Have
Lived with us
For all time,
Have moved with us,
Have adapted
To
And
With us,
Have always watched us,
Like they know us
Bruegel knew this,
Innately or not,
The crows watch us humans,
If we could unlock the experience of crows, then we could understand
More of humanity
Have said
Before
Now
The writer says
A crow can recognise
Individual people
And remember them,
Over years
and years
They Remember us
Furthermore
The group
The collective
Also recognise the individuals
The ones that do harm
And they are cawed at by the group
Warning
Of danger
Frightening
The danger
Disturbing
To
Us
And
Them
Bruegel does this
Too
You know?
Back to Winter,

(From Summer)

One
Crow
flies away,
from us,
Or to
Us,
Them, crows
They know us
Them, crows
Bruegel
Knows us
Too,
As well
Dit is in den Hert