

THIS IS NOT ABOUT PEARS

Cézanne was wrong, or rather correct
in his error, error an hourglass crack
through which motion escapes, divides
page center. Do I make his abstract
crevice too concrete? Formed by two

bulbous pear ends, proximity anchors
composition, at least here's where
he draws my eye, intersects pencil line
with pencil line until one edge opens
one edge. This is not a still life; still

lives are rarely still. If motion escapes
motion must exist, if not in the pears
(for this is not about pears) then perhaps
outside the plate where the contours
of gathered drapery, organic fronds

blasts of black and blue highlight
stillness, or rather, its erasure. If not
cloth, then mark the fronds' energy
Cézanne's eye caught : object vibrations
rendered in hues at once complimentary

and contradictory to pear hues. Motion
radiates, spirals off, escapes in chaos.
A curious form expands like calipers;
river entering ocean, it is both exit
and entrance, the convergence of pure

violet line and periwinkle wash a road
that disappears beneath plate, a bent
wishbone unbroken in the commotion.
The pears – centered, harnessed – say *no*,
this is not about us, about how we

*are represented. We could very well
be apples, peaches, oranges, a flower,
guitar or vase. We are merely a study
of groupings, the unstable motion
when objects approach touch. We are*

*watercolor, not oil; pencil and paper,
not canvas. Perhaps they do not know
of their contemporary, *Pot of Flowers
and Pears*, where our three-quarter
view Anjou shares its pose with Bosc.*

Which brings me to color. The pears
reflect themselves onto a plate made
of semi-circular lines, brush takes
tans, yellows, browns, muddies
them, makes squiggles to indicate

shade and shadow, plate rimmed
with color, object reflecting objects.
Sienna, ocher pigments stroke pear
bulge, hint of green where shadow
gathers thickest, muted, earthy

color bound by gray pencil marks,
whole sections left white, not blank,
but the white where light lifts form
into pears (even though this is not
about pears). As a document of the way

Cézanne saw, this work marks evolution :
pears still bound by line, color still
within the line, yet the drapery looks
forward, folds toward floating color,
its identity independent from the object.

Dissolved outlines form a scumbled
crevice through which light escapes,
dissipates, reminding us of error's
beauty, that this is not about pears,
most certainly not about pears.

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