

WORDS & PICTURES

Discover a fresh perspective on the Australian Collection with Words & Pictures, an ongoing project that invites local artists and writers to respond to artworks in the Australian Collection. Take inspiration, and use the pencils and paper provided at the stations to create your own response through drawing or writing.

In Each Dimmed Room

The bright world waits by the open door.
Linen wrinkled on the table
and the waxy flowers arranged like a still life.
Life, now static as colour is.
Turned in from the sea, the man considers what it means to live
as shadow might – wedded to light,
each detail monumental, lengthening
as the days lengthen, brilliant and impassive.
Limes ripen in a bowl.
The blossoms are gathered.
No movement but the sea in the distance,
that impasto that presides over everything.
Over the women, who are featureless
as the room that goes on darkening
where we understand the man will remain
eternally, thinking nothing,
not of shadow or light, nor the filament-lit
blue, perfect as Gauguin's, whose women
turn their backs on us, all else that lies
in wait. Each story they tell of paradise
ends with its undoing.

Mindy Gill (poet)

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