

POETRY

Mylar

after an exhibition by artist Betty Goodwin

What manner of images
you keep adding, layer by layer,
to a backdrop with the hardness
of acrylic or gesso
that beams forth the rich browns,
blue grays and deep greens of the Earth

even as photographer Cindy Sherman,
your artistic opposite,
snaps at the lineaments of the human form
and finds them sorely
in need of alteration.

See how Cindy stretches her own face,
much the way Diane Arbus
displayed the stretched faces of others;
how she uses costumes to traverse centuries
in an effort to centre each era in a body,
her particular body

even as you, Ms. Goodwin, post afterthoughts
on the see-through evanescence
of unrolled Mylar; the surface
is never enough, is it? Even
for photographers.

Art works this way, and I can't help it.
In my own mind now, I see the
imaging machines and biopsies
that display the pinks, browns and reds
beneath our own curvaceous and fragile surfaces,

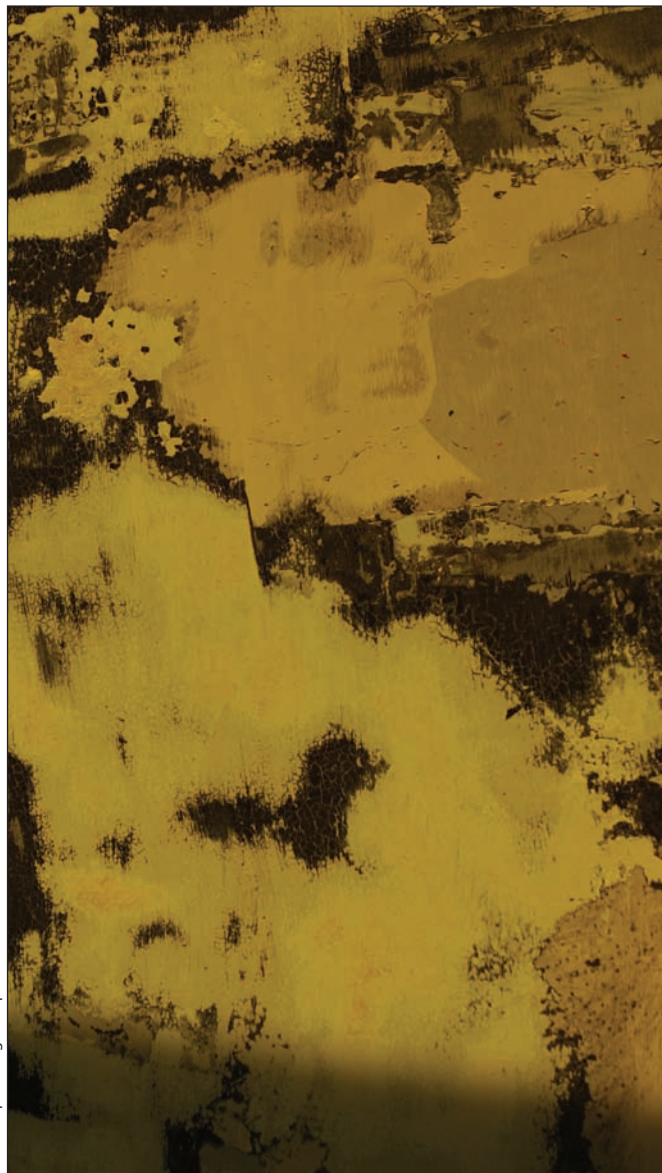
pictures at the exhibitions
I've been seeing all my life
of what, in the soft light of reflection,
we dared to call good health
and tried to live with.

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This poem is included in Ron Charach's new book,
Forgetting the Holocaust (Frontenac House; 2011).
Hear Dr. Charach read this poem online at: www.authorsaloud.com

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