

Why I Cannot Love Picasso

DEVON MILLER-DUGGAN

Sure, he gets that everything is broken
And still charged with lusts.
He breaks guitars apart and bulls,
Tables and women,
Mostly women
Flop and twist,
And shows us
How fragile and duplicitous
Their flesh becomes once he has
Looked at them.
Their eyes have become animal—the eyes of horses
Or of cows, separated from each other by wide bony brows,
Prone to roll
Away in fear, or toward
Both their current lovers
And the ones they plan to take.
Their unmuscled and unjointed hands balloon
And flop. Their hands are unlike
The hands the painter uses to make any line
Go where he lets his eye and his unconscious
Send it. Their hands can neither break nor mend.
He gets that everything is torn by sight
And mended, when it's mended,

By the will of
One who looks. He apprehends
And translates for us all
The clamoring of everything that must be
Seen and figured out. And only once, in Guernica,
Does all this gift
Come howling from the canvas in the service of
A thing beyond his own eye's lust.