

## *Call It A Draw: On Art and Love*

NEIL CARPATHIOS

— for my wife

We argue over the Rothko  
in the museum. I say it  
looks like the inside of  
God's head when He has  
an idea. You say a third grader  
could have painted it.  
I point out the depth  
of color, yellow more than  
yellow, blue deeper than  
blue. Like levels of feeling,  
I say. The way my love  
for Chester, our dog, is red  
but my love for you is something  
further than red, not carmine,  
not maroon or wine but  
unnamable. It is all about  
magnitude, I insist. The way  
words can try to do more  
than communicate:  
"I love you" on a greeting card  
versus the poem I'll write

about this moment, us standing  
in front of a painting debating  
what is good, I whisper.

You still don't buy it,  
you want to head over to Wyeth's  
Helga where every strand of  
her hair, every fiber of her green  
sweater is real, distinct, the way  
true love is, the way he must  
have felt for her, the way I  
feel for you, you say.

It is all about clarity  
and precision, you insist.

The way hands that really care  
aren't rushed and can hold,  
for example, a brush so still  
to trap the image without the slightest  
distortion, the slightest blur.