**Self-Portrait as Blanket**

Gerhard Richter, *Hanged*

Though that woman was a suicide,

her feet seem not suspended but to stand

on a poorly rendered upper ledge

or stage. One wants the problem

to be *form* or *space.* One wants

those bonds removed until

what’s rawest yields or else

gets hidden so completely

the canvas turns

into a scrim or screen

that makes the moral compass

jam.

Her body’s still

untouched. Pristine, self-

touched. Not yet retouched,

turned into *art*. She seems

about to light a cigarette.

Her shoulders slightly

hunch, an elegance, the mortal

coil apparently

unshuffled as yet

and always since

in paintings. *Cheap theater*,

the artist called that work, hypocrisy

pressed hard into

the snapshot he remade. If *we’re*

*all terrorists,* the painting’s

a self-portrait, paint pressed

into the in-between

till the image grows

obscene, then

seems to vanish into

light . . .

I peer and peer but can’t

get in. The sequel, *Blanket*,

is worse, overpainted

with so much crosshatching

the inside can’t

be seen. The

underside. The scene.