

# study of abundance

By Emmanuel Oppong-Yeboah

ATH  
EN  
AE  
UM

“I’ve only done one piece of work in my whole life and I am still at it. I wanted to paint people of color as normal humans. I tell the story of man through the black figure.”

—Allan Rohan Crite (1910–2007)

angels of our nature  
dot the block  
gracefully traverse  
our sidewalks

arms pocketed  
beneath the scowl  
of Boston’s winter  
hands settled  
momentarily in repose

If I am to be  
in a body bound by weight  
let me be, at last  
held in the gaze of one  
who sees me

let me be, black fist  
nestled around the frame  
of a celebratory baton

be, black fist,  
pushing breath  
through a trombone’s  
golden aperture

let me be  
five fingers  
tenderly woven  
around a loved one’s hand  
be as loved  
as the ones who sung me

see me, and know in the seeing  
I too am a song  
birthed in flesh

see me and know  
my little glories  
shimmering  
from out above my head

there too  
alongside you  
on the city train  
is a saint

there too  
on the park’s lone bench  
are women  
blessed to be  
among women

spilling  
loosely from sidewalks  
are children  
practiced  
in the mimicry of flight

is the trunk  
of a fire hydrant  
watering  
our expectant flowers

a tire's  
looping black neck  
held in a boy's  
gentle caress

one lone finger  
pointed out  
towards possibility

see crowds gather  
to witness  
the miracle of motion  
unfolding  
from a child's  
clever hand

to witness  
the miracle of love  
unfolding from an elder's  
open palm

all seeing  
must happen  
first through  
the lens  
of the self

what loving eyes then  
must hold us

to see us, here  
alongside streets  
churches, homes  
lives  
built by love

sacrosanct, holy  
worthy  
to be serenaded  
with each brushstroke  
of our neighbors hands