

OK, PAN TO THE HEROINE



#56-35

A lover once referred to her as *investment*.
She thought—*mutual bonds*? but he was all liquid
assets, soon divested, no chance of return.
So cut to the crop of hands caught in the scrim
light between billable hours— an overexposed
black & white—glimpse of the animal mid-skin—
the deed done—blood rinsed—opposable thumbs
buttoning up his linkless cuffs before back
to work, the boss, the wife & kids, pressed & starched
where life is good and good, *Love*, is dull.
Is Hollywood to blame for this tragedy? Maybe
it's not power but plot that defines what's sexy.
We flirt with what we fear. No accident then
we call it *heroine*—that most addictive drug.

**JENNIFER SPERRY STEINORTH
& JENNY WALTON**

O.K. CUPID: LITTLE SONGS & LOOK BOOK

ARTIST STATEMENT

Jenny Walton's series *Match/Enemy* consists of over two hundred watercolor "portraits" of men matched to the artist's profile by the online dating app OkCupid in the mid 2010s. The numeric titles come from algorithmic calculations based on user response to questions in the app, the first number indicating percentage of compatibility (Match) and the second incompatibility (Enemy). The Enemy algorithm was published to encourage oppositional attraction but has since been discontinued. In addition, *Match/Enemy* looks at a subset of men who have chosen to obscure, alter, or hide their physical facial features, a liberty no longer allowed on many such apps. By choosing these portraits the artist explores the ideas of altered and adopted personas within social media and contemporary portraiture.

The works on paper are 9x12", approximately four times the size of the images as displayed on the artist's iPhone screen where most "shopping" took place. On each painting the artist spent two to three hours, about the time one might take on a first date.

AUTHOR NOTE

In this series, a close third-person narrator penetrates the mind of a single woman surveying potential suitors. While the 200+ paintings of *Match/Enemy* form a composite portrait of the artist, this scant representation, chosen by me, distorts that reflection. The woman whose eyes we look through is not intended to represent the artist. If anything, these poems reflect my own obsessions with gaze, performance, intimacy, and aversion.