

THE PAINTERS OF NUDES

Like girls not yet aware
of what a woman's body
means, they offered Renoir
the texture of skin.

On canvas
they became an old man's dream
of women playfully nude
for him alone...

Picasso's
early nudes look almost
like cartoons.

His fans
anointed them "Picassos."
Compared to what he mastered
in his "Blue Period," they seem
at best a phase...

Pearlstein's
nudes appear exhausted.
The only feeling they arouse
is sympathy...

Egon Shiele
and Gustav Klimt painted
like "Peeping Toms."

The yawning
thighs of their nudes expose
the hidden orifice of queens.
Drawn to perfection, they qualify
as art.

Photographed, they'd be
pornography...

Compulsive over
cleanliness, Bonnard's wife
spent hours in a bath tub.
Her husband painted her there
time after time...

Rembrandt
painted Saskia in costume
or naked in bed.

Her expression
stayed the same in both.
Theories are a waste of time.
A woman attracts; a man
reacts.

Art as reaction
says less about the woman,
more about the man.
 $E=mc^2$

I think of Luther, Rosa
Parks, St. Joan of Arc
and Albert Einstein.

Could
Luther have assumed that saying
"I can do no more" would launch
the Reformation?

Did Rosa
Parks foresee that keeping
her seat in the front of the bus
would change the South forever?
Who could predict that Joan
of Arc would rise as the soul

of France after being cursed
and burned alive?

And Albert
Einstein?

His perfect equation
of energy, mass and light
has nuclearized the world.
The formula is small enough
to cover with a postage stamp.