

Addison Bale

The Decline in Reading

79 Leonard St, SBE, New York, NY 10013

Opening reception September 10th, 6-8pm

September 5th, 2025 – October 11th, 2025

Press Release

“Where does the writing begin? / Where does the painting begin?”

Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, 1983

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Progress splintered along the mortar : I stalled mid-way, mid-vision : mid-words
without air : after rouge, is it blue exposing errors : and decorative metals lay low :
Midnight Love isn't distraction : it's graphic : like linen leopards stretched thin : the
glue works to trap texture if the glue works : to hold fuel : to perform speed and
snap a voice : like skeins of pixels : are magnets for language : to find form and
formulate : in the in-betweens : where paper doesn't suffice : manhattanism is
footnoted : Call the bulldozer of pink glass : tiling nightscapes : like tossed love notes
: fall slowly : *To paint is to shrine* :

Blueprints of discards : oh I found the new dictionary : in half-poems marked
hemlocks : in language locked shut : paper thresholds : Is Acropolis not a door to
Manhattan? : Historically 2nd Ave, maybe : At least a portal to Queens : and though
locks be legible : our apartment broke open : I revised the deadbolt : Why is there
no natural relationship to landscapes? : gaze is a cheap shot : when painting from
history : when writing back to amber : When the fuck I ever see a landscape
anyway? : Never : And if I did, where? : What? : It's nothing to write : It's a prison of
trees or its tourism or both : It's a poem on the Metro North at best : And : don't get
me started on : the figure :

I read city-grass : the light turns pepper : it is the color V : the color vague : power
is yellow : and looking is reading : there is no difference : *so with which color do you
quit painting?*^{1 2}

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¹ Rosselli, Amelia. *Document*. Translated by Roberta Antognini and Deborah Woodard, World Poetry Books, 2025, p. 31.

² Partly composed with words and feedback from Izzy Boutiette and Max Vélez, so much love.

Artist Biography

Addison Bale (b. 1994, NYC) lives in Brooklyn and is currently pursuing a PhD in comparative literature at the CUNY Graduate Center. Bale's paintings have featured in group shows around NYC and Mexico City. His poetry chapbooks, *GALIMATIAS* (MX) and *Snakeskins* (NY) were published in 2022 and 2018 respectively. Read his essay, "On Translation, Codification, and Something in Between: Language in the Paintings of Martin Wong," on hopscotchtranslation.com. Recipient of the Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant in 2024, this is Bale's first solo exhibition.