

ekphrasis catharsis  
clockwise from left to right

*for J.J.* presents a revisionist and appropriative take on Jasper Johns's iconic target motif prompting a reconsideration of the target's inherent symbolism and art historical significance. The adopted heart form embraces a cute aesthetic with a hint of irony. It re-contextualises Johns' painting within a framework of the anti-heroic, complicating and negotiating the critical and subversive with a layer of sentimentality. **is this how gay men reproduce?** *Vector Lines in Blue (Jordan Firstman)* presents the painted image of Firstman with his hand down his pants, bruised and wanting. The vectors, a.k.a. 'paths', linger in their texture, mimicking the perfect and the digital. Vector lines are the visual representation of connectivity and information held within a cyber-space, their form granting them universality. Otherwise infinitely scalable and in a state of perpetual potential, here the 'path' is reified into the canvas and into a sensual backdrop for a hunk. **are you a bawtum?** *Untitled (Johnny Rapid)* depicts the straight gay-porn-star Johnny Rapid, an ironic yet naturalised paragon of homo-normative beauty, against the stilted energy of a cascading waterfall. A technique of varnished and glazed impasto paint superimposes and visually complicates the boundaries between figure and background. There's a stunted, sort of campy charisma about it, winking back at the viewer. **you don't have to be gay, do you?** *Andrew (for Ed)* depicts the actor Andrew Scott in front of an idealist Irish background. The subject is fused to the background, cartographically taking on a romantic, somewhat sardonic poignancy. Painstakingly painted, the figure's likeness is just about out of reach. Something about these paintings feels a lot like one long melodramatic pathetic fallacy. **do you like to watch?** *Homie*, made of charcoal, is a democratic and devotional portrayal of Troye Sivan from his music video for *One of your Girls*. It looks like the type of thing one would make at the age of fourteen. For the music video, Sivan transforms into a woman and panders to the temptation and toxicity of a straight-acting man - we've all been there. **i don't think i can stop this.**

