Connecticut

Weir Farm by Marilyn Nelson

Not vistas, but a home-sized landscape,
beloved rooms storied, painted, lived.
A farm bought with a painting
and a ten dollar personal check.
And almost from the beginning,
the intention to pass on
what an artist sees, what artists make.
A parcel of land, a vast legacy.

Admire the houses, barns, outbuildings,
and studios, uniformly Venetian red.
Respect the visible sweat work of stones
laid in walls and foundations, terraces and walks.
Admire the sunken garden, the wildflower meadows,
the path through thick woods to the fishing pond.
Walk through the farm envisioned by artists.
Admire the home artists made.

Or you can step from a museum's polished floor
across a carven, gilded threshold
into the farm reimagined in brushstrokes.
From that wooden bridge over there,
hear those three women's tinkling laughter?
Over there the other way, see
the black dog panting near the youngish man
lifting stones into a half-built wall?

Step out of the frame again, and be
enveloped in birdsong and dapple.
Feel the welcome of small particulars:
the grove beside that boulder,
the white horse tied in front of that barn.
With eyes made tender, see
those elms, from shadows on the grass
to the highest leaves' shimmer.

With your friends, lovers, family, stride
across this chromatic broken brushwork.
Sit a minute at the granite picnic table
with the artist's daughters, dressed in summer white.
You can daub this earth, so lyric, so gentle,
from the limited palette of your own love right now.
Any place you care for can hold an easel.
Everything around you is beautiful plein air.

Try This:

→ Go to a painting that is around the room. Write about it. What can you see? What can you not see? Can you imagine what's there? Be sure to use imagery (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste).

Now with style:

→ Note how Nelson uses second person pronouns. Can you inject second person for a similar effect?

OR

→ Nelson transposes us to two different (or more) locations. Can you add a secondary location to your poem without disrupting the flow / focus?