

## Viewing Kershisnik's *Nativity*

*Doug Talley*

A child, a little girl of four,  
a balled string of curiosity,  
had to touch the canvas

where an angel in white,  
turning from the Nazarene,  
looked out to jubilate.

Who could blame her?  
The angel flowed in a choir  
of angels, a river of white robe

that swam around the Holy Child,  
as stunning as the melting snow cap  
of Timpanogos under sunlight.

*Oils of the hand soil the paint,*  
the mother explained, *dull the color.*  
But what if the hand turned luminous

instead, absorbed that seraphic dazzle  
until it glowed like the moon?  
What if the milky light coursed ahead

to the girl's heart, flooded the body,  
until finally it lifted and swirled her,  
heel to crown, into the painting

to join the anthem? What then?  
Isn't that how art will touch back?  
Swallow the spirit whole forever?