

THE HOPPER SUITE

An Index of Painterly Images and Their Texts



One hundred and one paintings in the manner of Edward Hopper on
authorjamesmulhern.com, with the page each one opens and the note that
explains why it stands there

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Introduction

Every essay, study, and principal hub page of authorjamesmulhern.com opens with, or carries within it, a painting in the manner of Edward Hopper: an ordinary room charged with light, a window, a doorway, a figure at the edge of something unspoken. The paintings are not decoration. Each is a visual gloss on the page it accompanies, and the public gallery, *A Painter's Pages*, gathers them with a short note on why each stands where it does.

This index is the companion to that gallery. It documents one hundred and one paintings, arranged in the gallery's six chapters: *Light, Water, Thresholds, Rooms & Solitude, Objects & Devotion, and Fire & Ritual*. Within each chapter the paintings follow the order in which they hang in the gallery.

How to Read an Entry

Number and title. Paintings are numbered 1 to 101 in gallery order. Titles are the captions printed beneath each painting on the site. Where a painting carries different captions on different pages, the others are listed beneath the title. Where a painting's caption on the site is a sentence rather than a title, or it has no caption, the bracketed titles here are descriptive labels for reference only.

Gallery note. The heading of the painting's card in *A Painter's Pages*, naming the text it glosses.

On the site. Every live page where the painting hangs, apart from the gallery itself, with a link to the section where it appears.

Painting and Connection. The description of the image and the note linking it to its text, as published in the gallery.

Light

The ordinary room charged with light.

19 paintings · nos. 1–19



1. The Single Lamp

Gallery note: *The Remembering Voice*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/remembering-voice#viii

Painting. A solitary figure reading beneath a single hanging lamp in an otherwise dim, spare room.

Connection. A figure beneath a single hanging lamp is the essay's subject made visible — attention as an architecture, everything outside the pool of light falling away so the one illuminated thing can be read.



2. The Ordinary, Kept

Gallery note: *Altogether Beautiful (Conversion Without Erasure)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/altogether-beautiful#conversion

Painting. A strong shaft of pale light falling across ordinary things in a modest room, making them luminous but unchanged.

Connection. Ordinary objects caught in a strong shaft of light — luminous but unchanged — picture the essay's central claim: conversion that keeps the mundane rather than retiring it to make room for the sacred.



3. Morning Window Light

Gallery note: *Crossings (read)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-read

Painting. Bright morning light streaming through a tall window across a bare wooden floor.

Connection. Morning light moving across a bare floor is the reading experience itself — the poems entering an empty room.



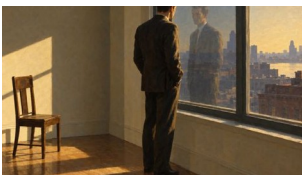
4. Study in Light

Gallery note: *Essays*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/essays

Painting. A sunlit writing desk beside a tall window overlooking a coastal house.

Connection. A sunlit desk beside a tall window over the coast is the essayist's station — the place where each of the readings is written.



5. The Doubled Figure

Gallery note: *Give Them Unquiet Dreams: A Comprehensive Study (Second Sight as Narrative Technology)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/unquiet-dreams-comprehensive-study#ii

Painting. A man at a window whose reflection shows a second, subtly different figure gazing back.

Connection. The man whose reflection gives back a second, different figure is the novel's doubled narrator — the protagonist who recognizes himself as the ghost he has been hunting.



6. The Recurring Images

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (The Method Named)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#i

Painting. A warm slant of late-afternoon light across a modest kitchen, a hand resting on a basin of water near an open doorway.

Connection. The threshold, the hand, the basin of water, and the slant of light gathered in one kitchen make the essay's claim visible — recurrence not as signature but as a compositional system that holds what would be lost.



7. Sunlit Classroom

Gallery note: *The Sacred in the Shabby (The Creed Behind the Method)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/sacred#transcendentalism

Painting. An empty sunlit classroom with morning light streaming through tall windows.

Connection. Morning light filling an empty classroom makes the essay's central claim visible — the “Oversoul” entering an ordinary Irish-Catholic schoolroom.



8. Two Lights, One Desk

Gallery note: *Comparative Studies (One Habit, Two Theologies)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/comparative-studies#oconnor

Painting. A writing desk between two windows pouring two different qualities of light, one pale and one golden, over the same manuscript.

Connection. One desk beneath two windows, a different light falling from each, holds the essay's argument — Mulhern and O'Connor sharing a single habit of art that leads them to opposite conclusions.



9. Kitchen Light, Six A.M.

Gallery note: *Credo (The Ordinary as Sanctuary)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/credo

Painting. An ordinary kitchen filled with warm early morning light.

Connection. An ordinary kitchen in warm morning light makes the credo's first claim — the sacred found in the everyday rather than the elevated.



10. White House in a Meadow

Gallery note: *A Prayer for Home*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/a-prayer-for-home-comprehensive-study

Painting. A white clapboard house and a lone tree in a sunlit meadow.

Connection. A white house alone in a wide field visualizes the novella's title — home as an object of longing, isolated and luminous. The storefront faith healer, the widow's timed death, and the beach standing in for the Assumption all gather around this single domestic beacon.



11. The Morning Room

Gallery note: *The Voices That Would Not Be Tidied (Profanity as Intimacy)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/voices-that-would-not-be-tidied#profanity

Painting. Two figures seated apart in a bright sunlit sitting room, morning light flooding through a large window.

Connection. Two figures seated apart in morning light make the essay's claim visible — profanity not as sacrilege but as the intimate register of people who trust one another with the unpolished tongue.



12. Figure at a Morning Window

Gallery note: *The Quiet Cartographer of Irish-American Memory*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/cartographer

Painting. A solitary figure standing at a bright window looking out at morning light.

Connection. A lone figure at a window in morning light is the essay itself — the “quiet cartographer” of memory, alone at Hopper’s signature window and looking out toward the tradition that made him. The window is both the Irish-American immigrant’s vantage on a new country and the quiet observer’s station from which the map of remembered life is drawn.



13. The Slant of Kitchen Sun

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (Light, the Unasked Question, and the Withheld Gloss)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#motifs-lenses

Painting. An empty kitchen with a strong diagonal slant of afternoon light falling through a window across the floor and wall.

Connection. The “slant” of light across a kitchen carries both halves of the essay in one image — Dickinson’s “tell it slant” leaning across Whitman’s common, inhabited world.



14. Empty Classroom, Late Light

Gallery note: *Teaching at Fifty-Six*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/teaching-at-fifty-six

Painting. An empty classroom with rows of wooden desks lit by late afternoon sun.

Connection. The empty, sun-filled classroom is the essay’s subject — the sacred hidden in an ordinary room, seen fully only when the students have gone.



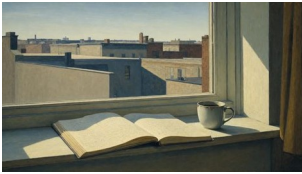
15. The Desk at Dawn

Gallery note: *Credo (The Discipline of Attention)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/credo

Painting. A solitary writing desk with a lit lamp beside a window at dawn.

Connection. A lit lamp on a writing desk before daylight is attention — the working philosophy practiced as a discipline of early light.



16. Notebook, Morning Light

Gallery note: *The Writing*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/writing

Painting. An open handwritten notebook on a windowsill with morning light over city rooftops.

Connection. An open notebook on a windowsill over the city is the writing itself — the manuscript as a window between the author and the world.



17. Café in Morning Light

Gallery note: *Credo (Writing as Communion)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/credo

Painting. A bright empty café with morning light pouring through a storefront window.

Connection. A bright empty café in morning light is communion without a congregation — the writer and the page, and the reader who will never arrive, held in the same light.



18. The Annotated Page, Late Light

Gallery note: *The Allusive Method (Literally True First)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/allusive-method#literally-true-first

Painting. An aisle between old wooden library shelves in late afternoon, a tall window at the far end laying a long bar of sunlight down the floor, and a small reading table in the foreground with one open, pencil-annotated book and a pencil.

Connection. One annotated book left open at the end of the stacks, the pencil still beside it, can be read as the essay's subject — a text carrying its notes beside the printed line rather than in place of it. The shelves of other books run back toward the light, near enough to be heard and far enough to leave the open page whole.



19. [Linen Lifted into Light]

Gallery note: *The Allusive Mulhern (Frontispiece)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/allusive-mulhern

Painting. A length of white linen, freshly washed, lifted by a breath of air in a shaft of morning light and dissolving upward into golden dust.

Connection. The ordinary thing that is literally itself and, in the same glance, its own sacred echo — the concordance's thesis rendered as a single form: a sheet on a line, and a shroud lifted into light.

Water

What the sea carries, and keeps.

8 paintings · nos. 20–27



20. Frontispiece: Crossing

Gallery note: *Crossings — The Complete Collection*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-collection

Painting. A wooden rowboat resting on a still riverbank at dawn.

Connection. The rowboat at dawn is the frontispiece image of departure — a vessel at rest at the water’s edge, about to cross.



21. A Light on the Headland

Gallery note: *Give Them Unquiet Dreams*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/unquiet-dreams-comprehensive-study

Painting. A lone whitewashed cottage glowing on a dark Irish coastal headland at dusk.

Connection. A lone cottage lit against a dark headland is the Glencar family against the sea — isolated, lit from within, and haunted by the waters where Martin drowns and the púca moves. The coast is the novel’s other geography, the Achill and Sligo shore of its inherited past.



22. Bright Coast, Small Sailboat

Gallery note: *The Unspoken Elegy (The Published Twenty-Poem Sequence)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/holding-the-artifact#sequence

Painting. A small white sailboat on calm sunlit water under a clear sky.

Connection. A single white sail on calm water is the essay’s “water” made image — the poems’ quiet voyages, and the freedom and motion the sea means throughout the work.



23. Reaching for Water

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (Water)*; Molly Bonamici: *A Comprehensive Study (Home at Last)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/molly-bonamici-comprehensive-study#x; authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#motifs-v

Painting. An elderly man bending at the end of a wooden dock in the late afternoon, reaching toward still lake water.

Connection. The poem “Water” draws the old man on the dock as a body in drought, and the painting holds the moment the essay waits for: his reach toward a lake that will not rise. In the Molly Bonamici study the same still water receives Molly at the novel’s close, when she swims out and walks back to shore, “grateful to be home at last.”



24. Lighthouse in Daylight

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (One Book)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#one-book

Painting. A white lighthouse on a sunny headland under a clear blue sky.

Connection. The lighthouse is the fixed beam the essay argues runs through the whole catalog — the “silver current” of recurring families, settings, and symbols. A lighthouse returns to the same station and shows the same light; so does the body of work.



25. The Holy Well

Gallery note: *Thin Places*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/thin-places

Painting. A small stone ruin and a holy well on a grassy coastal bluff above a bright blue sea in clear morning light.

Connection. The holy well on the coastal bluff is the “thin place” itself — the point where the essay argues the membrane between this world and the next grows porous.



26. The Lighthouse

Gallery note: *The Unspoken Elegy (The Reader as Confessor)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/holding-the-artifact#address

Painting. A white lighthouse on a headland at dusk.

Connection. The lighthouse is the watching eye of the coast — the essay's water seen as a place that keeps watch, a fixed light over the sea that carries the dead.



27. [Nantasket, Hand in Hand]

Gallery note: *Unquenchable Fire*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/unquenchable-fire-feature

Painting. Two older women walk hand in hand into the surf at Nantasket Beach while the sea beyond them glitters with points of sunlight and a single bird glides low over the water.

Connection. The essay's reversal made visible: the unquenchable fire of Gehenna becomes the shimmer of sun on water, and two women wading into the sea are healed rather than judged.

Thresholds

Alone at the threshold of something unspoken.

21 paintings · nos. 28–48



28. A Boston Street, Evening

Gallery note: *About the Author*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/about

Painting. Boston triple-decker houses on a quiet tree-lined street at dusk.

Connection. The triple-decker is the author’s originating world — the Irish-American working-class tenement that recurs throughout the fiction (there is a full essay on class, ethnicity, and the Boston triple-decker). At dusk the houses are lit from within: the biography rendered as a street he knows.



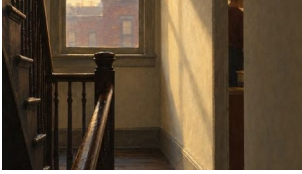
29. A Street of Lit Windows

Gallery note: *All My Sites & Books*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/sites

Painting. A row of houses at dusk with several windows glowing warmly.

Connection. A row of houses with several windows lit is the “map” — the many doorways into the Silver Current ecosystem, each a lit home in the same street.



30. The Triple-Decker, Within

Gallery note: *The Quiet Cartographer of Irish-American Memory (A Map Built From Kitchens)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/cartographer#geography

Painting. The stairwell landing inside a Boston triple-decker, with a neighbor half-seen through a thin partition wall.

Connection. The stairwell landing, a neighbor half-seen through a thin wall, pictures the triple-decker's "stacked, overheard intimacy" — the architecture that makes the confessions and cruelties of these plots possible.



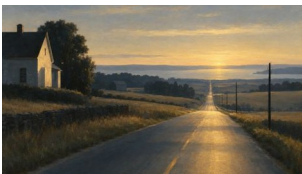
31. "The Crosswalk"

Gallery note: *Crossings (analysis)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-analysis

Painting. An empty city street corner with a painted crosswalk and long raking shadows.

Connection. The collection's organizing metaphor, "crossing," is made literal as a painted crosswalk at an empty corner — a threshold between states, with long raking shadows carrying the elegy.



32. The Road, in Order

Gallery note: *The Unspoken Elegy (The Published Twenty-Poem Sequence)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/holding-the-artifact#sequence

Painting. An empty country road receding toward a distant horizon at dawn, pale gold light low across the lane.

Connection. The road receding toward dawn pictures the essay's different question — not what the poems mean but what order they fall in, a sequence the reader travels from "A Prayer" to "Leaves."



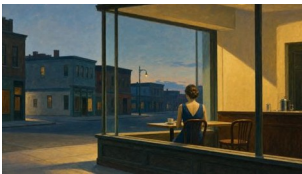
33. The Stairwell

Gallery note: *Crossings — The Complete Collection*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-collection

Painting. A narrow stairwell with a bright window of light on the landing.

Connection. The stairwell's landing window is the ascent the poems stage between the ordinary and the luminous — the “crossing” rendered as vertical passage.



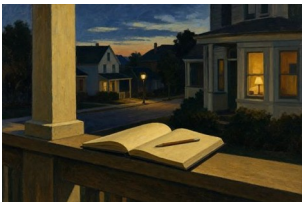
34. The Storefront at Night

Gallery note: *Molly Bonamici*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/molly-bonamici-comprehensive-study

Painting. A lone woman seated by the window of a dim cafe at night, warm light spilling onto an empty sidewalk.

Connection. A lone woman at a night-window is Molly's deadpan isolation and the storefront faith-healer world that gives her her name — Hopper's lonely window as the novel's keynote.



35. Notebook, Porch Light

Gallery note: *Musings: Notebook to Essay*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/musings

Painting. An open notebook and pencil resting on a porch railing at dusk.

Connection. An open notebook on a porch railing at day's end is the commonplace book — fragments left at a threshold, the first form of the essays they will later become.



36. The Crossing

Gallery note: *The Poetics of Crossings*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-complete-study

Painting. A narrow wooden footbridge with a handrail crossing a still stream in pale morning mist.

Connection. The footbridge over a still stream is the collection's governing metaphor as a single image — the crossing that is both literal and figural, the threshold the book works its grief across.



37. The Phantom at the Well

Gallery note: *Give Them Unquiet Dreams: A Comprehensive Study (The Pooka and the Poem)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/unquiet-dreams-comprehensive-study#pooka

Painting. A shadowy phantom horse standing beside a stone well on a quiet Irish country lane at late dusk.

Connection. The phantom horse at the well is the púca at its origin — a shapeshifter tied to water, its revenge provoked by the disturbance of its dwelling, the engine of the novel's plot.



38. The Chosen Porch

Gallery note: *The Quiet Cartographer of Irish-American Memory (A Second Household, Built on Choice)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/cartographer#chosen-family

Painting. Two working people seated close together on the small concrete stoop of a weathered Florida bungalow in bright daylight.

Connection. Two people seated close on a small stoop is the essay's argument in a single image — kinship chosen rather than given, family made on a threshold rather than inherited within walls.



39. The Lit Doorway

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (The Chalice Told Twice)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#revision-chalice

Painting. A man walking toward a single lit open door at the end of a dim hallway at dusk.

Connection. The figure walking toward a single lit door is recurrence as resurrection — the return the essay reads in *The Weight of Small Mercies*, the dead and the living entering the same light again.



40. Twilight Lane

Gallery note: *Give Them Unquiet Dreams: A Comprehensive Study (The Pooka and the Poem)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/unquiet-dreams-comprehensive-study#pooka

Painting. A solitary figure walking a tree-lined lane in pale luminous evening light, a distant farmhouse ahead.

Connection. The solitary figure on the luminous evening lane is the Celtic twilight itself — the Yeatsian dusk from which the novel draws its title, its family name, and its closing poem.



41. The Foreseen Lane

Gallery note: *Give Them Unquiet Dreams: A Comprehensive Study (Second Sight)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/unquiet-dreams-comprehensive-study#ii

Painting. A pale-blue twilight window framing a country lane that appears faintly doubled, seen and foreseen at once.

Connection. The twilight lane, faintly doubled, is second sight rendered as craft — the essay's argument that the device can foreshadow and compress, seen and foreseen held in one frame.



42. Shopfront, First Lamplight

Gallery note: *Store*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/store

Painting. A small independent bookshop storefront glowing with light at dusk.

Connection. A small shop glowing against the dusk is the direct-to-reader model — the independent bookshop as a place of warmth against the platform dark.



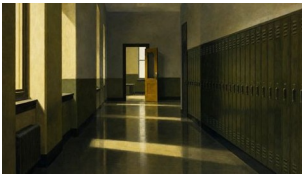
43. Closed for the Evening

Gallery note: *Submissions & Contests*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/submissions

Painting. A small-town post office with its lights off at dusk.

Connection. A small-town post office with its lights off is the word “closed” made image — the reading window shut until the next period is announced.



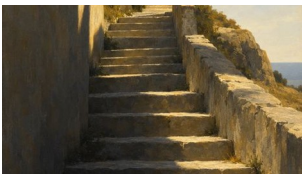
44. The Hallway, After the Bell

Gallery note: *Teaching as Vocation and Trap*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/teaching-as-vocation

Painting. An empty school hallway with long afternoon light and rows of lockers.

Connection. An empty corridor with long light holds both terms of the essay’s title — the school as calling and as confinement, the “trap” in the emptiness.



45. The Uneven Stairs

Gallery note: *The Uneven Ascent*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/the-uneven-ascent

Painting. An outdoor staircase of worn stone climbing a hill, its steps unevenly lit by morning sun.

Connection. The staircase lit unevenly, bright step and shadow, is the essay’s reception history as a shape — a rise that is real but irregular, earned step by uneven step.



46. The Small Figure

Gallery note: *Molly Bonamici: A Comprehensive Study (Seeing Without Feeling)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/molly-bonamici-comprehensive-study#ii

Painting. A small child seen from behind standing in an oversized doorway looking into a dim room.

Connection. The small child framed by an oversized doorway is the essay's narrator — small before the room's truth, the limits of innocence the essay reads across the stories.



47. "I Got You"

Gallery note: *Give Them Unquiet Dreams: A Comprehensive Study (The Brother Who Came Back)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/unquiet-dreams-comprehensive-study#martin

Painting. A young man in a black leather jacket and flat cap lifting a gray-haired man fallen at a snowy curb at night, a lamppost's shadow falling across the snow in the shape of a cross.

Connection. The figure lifting a fallen man at the curb is the essay's first return — "I got you" — Martin keeping his promise in the snow. The lamppost lays the shape of a cross across the scene without a word, as the novel gives the Gospel pattern and declines to name it.



48. The Visitor at Dawn

Gallery note: *Give Them Unquiet Dreams: A Comprehensive Study (The Brother Who Came Back)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/unquiet-dreams-comprehensive-study#martin

Painting. A young man in a flat cap and leather jacket sitting at a hospital bedside at dawn, his hand resting on the blanket of a sleeping gray-haired man, the sea in the window and the window's light falling in a cross on the wall.

Connection. The young man keeping watch at the bedside is Martin's return as healing — the brother who comes back to sit with the sick, the touch that answers a fever. The window's light lays a cross on the wall without a word, as the novel gives the Gospel pattern and declines to name it.

Rooms & Solitude

People at the quiet edge of a room.

28 paintings · nos. 49–76



49. The Morning Table

Gallery note: *All We Ever Needed*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/all-we-ever-needed-essay

Painting. A modest kitchen table set with bread and milk in early morning light.

Connection. Bread and milk on an unpeopled table literalize the essay's title claim — that mercy is “all we ever needed” and is found in sustenance, not spectacle. Hopper's still, ordinary table is the architecture of mercy made visible.



50. The Last Bus

Gallery note: *The Comic-Grotesque Tradition (Sacred Meets Scatological)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/comic-grotesque-tradition#iv

Painting. A nearly empty city bus in bright morning light, with two elderly women seated apart and sunlight filling the interior.

Connection. The nearly empty bus in morning light is the working-class transit of the essay's title — the moving room where its scenes of bingo, indignity, and small solidarity are carried.



51. The Circle, Before They Arrive

Gallery note: *Book Club Companions; The Room Kept Ready*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/book-club;
authorjamesmulhern.com/the-room-kept-ready

Painting. A circle of empty chairs in a warm lamplight living room at dusk.

Connection. An empty circle of chairs under lamplight is a company not yet arrived — the exact invitation of a discussion guide. The warmth is in the waiting. In “The Room Kept Ready” the same circle opens the essay: a room set for whoever comes in.



52. The Study Table

Also captioned: *The Reading Room*

Gallery note: *Books & Collections; Downloadable Studies*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/downloadable-studies;
authorjamesmulhern.com/books

Painting. A quiet reading room lined with wooden bookshelves in warm afternoon light.

Connection. The catalogue pictured as a quiet library — floor-to-ceiling shelves in afternoon light — making the case that these books belong on a shelf rather than in a browser tab.



53. The Social Club

Gallery note: *The Comic-Grotesque Tradition (The Comic Underworld)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/comic-grotesque-tradition#underworld

Painting. A social club back room with a genial older man at a card table, warm lamplight against shadow.

Connection. A genial older man at a card table renders Mr. Scarfone's avuncular menace — the underworld stripped of dread and given a warm lamp, comedy holding the threatening in its light.



54. The Backstage Clown

Gallery note: *The Comic-Grotesque Tradition*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/comic-grotesque-tradition

Painting. A forlorn clown seated on a painted trunk in a bare backstage room.

Connection. The forlorn clown on a trunk is the comic-grotesque reduced to one figure — humor that wears its own melancholy, the laughter of the tradition the essay traces.



55. Reader in a Sunlit Room

Also captioned: *The Reading Room*

Gallery note: *Comparative Studies; From the Work*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/comparative-studies;
authorjamesmulhern.com/from-the-work

Painting. A woman reading alone in a bright sunlit room with a large window.

Connection. The comparative method is an act of solitary reading beside greater writers; the lone figure in bright light is the reader doing the work the four essays describe.



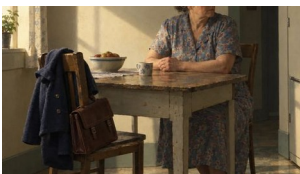
56. The Listener

Gallery note: *The Confessor Archetype*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/confessor-archetype

Painting. A weathered Irish grandmother in a cardigan leaning to listen to a small child in a modest working-class kitchen.

Connection. The grandmother leaning to hear a small child is the confessor figure the essay isolates — the listener before whom whatever cannot be told to a parent can at last be said.



57. The Confessor's Table

Gallery note: *The Confessor Archetype (The Grandmother Who Hears)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/confessor-archetype#v

Painting. An elderly woman at a kitchen table, a child's coat and school satchel on the chair beside her.

Connection. The grandmother's table, a child's coat left on the empty chair, is the matriarch as final court of appeal — moral authority and hazard held in the one room where the secret is brought.



58. Admissions on the Slope

Gallery note: *Give Them Unquiet Dreams: A Comprehensive Study (Diagnosed and Believed)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/unquiet-dreams-comprehensive-study#v

Painting. A pale sandstone institutional building on a sloping green lawn under a clear blue morning sky, with a winding path.

Connection. The institutional building on the sloping lawn is the essay's two worlds side by side — psychiatric diagnosis meeting Irish second sight, the American and inherited geographies held at one boundary.



59. The Bath Drawn

Gallery note: *The Confessor Archetype ("A Bath": The Confession That Is Earned)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/confessor-archetype#ii

Painting. A woman in a housecoat drawing water into a worn enamel bathtub in a modest working-class bathroom.

Connection. The woman drawing water into a worn tub is the essay's domestic space — the bath where care and violation occupy the same room, and silence is the shape the testimony takes.



60. The Interrupted Meal

Gallery note: *The Remembering Voice (Dialogue, Beats, and the Em Dash)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/remembering-voice#vi

Painting. A diner booth with two coffee cups and one chair pulled sharply back in morning light.

Connection. A diner booth with one chair pulled sharply back, the meal abandoned, is the essay's subject — dialogue interrupted, the mechanics of withheld speech visible in a room someone has just left.



61. The Reader, at Evening

Also captioned: *Reading Room, Afternoon*

Gallery note: *The Greatest Short Stories; Start Here*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/start-here;
authorjamesmulhern.com/greatest-short-stories

Painting. A quiet library reading room with books stacked on a sunlit table.

Connection. The twelve stories pictured as a canonical room — a library of craft models, sunlit and ordered, each one a solved problem of the form.



62. After the Bell, Papers to Grade

Gallery note: *Guides for Student Writers*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/guides

Painting. A teacher's desk with a stack of graded papers in late-afternoon classroom light.

Connection. Graded papers on a teacher's desk in late light are three decades in the classroom — the accumulated authority behind every handout and workbook.



63. The Robe, Folded

Gallery note: *The Unspoken Elegy (Objects That Hold the Feeling)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/holding-the-artifact#ii

Painting. A man in a robe standing at a hospital window at dusk, with a folded robe on a table nearby.

Connection. The first of the essay's three objective correlatives made visible: the folded robe. It stands in for the unmourned body, the care a son gives a father, grief carried in cloth rather than named.



64. Rooftops, Late Morning

Gallery note: *Press Kit*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/press-kit

Painting. A writer's study with a typewriter beside a window overlooking city rooftops.

Connection. A typewriter beside a window over city rooftops is the professional author's study — the public, journalistic identity the press kit assembles for reviewers and booksellers.



65. The Steinway

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (One Instrument, Two Grammars)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#steinway

Painting. A grand piano in a modest parlor with pale afternoon light through lace curtains.

Connection. The Steinway in a modest parlor is the same instrument the essay reads twice — broken in the poem and merely played in the story, refracted through two grammars.



66. The Other Chair

Gallery note: *The Unspoken Elegy (The Reader as Confessor)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/holding-the-artifact#address

Painting. A worn armchair facing a window in a modest tenement parlor, a doily and rosary on the side table.

Connection. The worn armchair facing the window is the reader's seat in the essay's economy — an empty chair waiting to receive the confession, the reader cast as the one who listens.



67. The Common Table

Gallery note: *The Sacred in the Shabby (The Kitchen Table)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/sacred#food

Painting. A dining table with a white cloth set with cookies, bright wrapped candies, and a bottle in soft morning light.

Connection. The table set with cookies and candies makes the essay's claim visible — food as sacrament, the meal carrying the sacred by being exactly what it is.



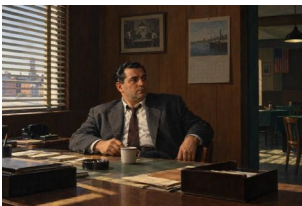
68. Two Chairs, Late Afternoon

Gallery note: *Services*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/services

Painting. Two armchairs facing each other beside a tall window in a quiet study.

Connection. Two facing armchairs beside a window picture the manuscript-coaching dialogue itself — the one-on-one conversation every service on the page offers.



69. The Back Office

Gallery note: *The Comic-Grotesque Tradition (The Comic Underworld)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/comic-grotesque-tradition#underworld

Painting. A stocky Italian-American man in a rumpled suit at a cluttered desk in the back room of a neighborhood social club.

Connection. The rumpled man at the cluttered desk is the syndicate stripped of its menace — crime in the unglamorous back room, the essay's argument that Mulhern subverts the genre's dread.



70. The Untidied Kitchen

Gallery note: *The Voices That Would Not Be Tidied*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/voices-that-would-not-be-tidied

Painting. A working-class kitchen in lively disarray with several people mid-conversation in warm evening light.

Connection. The kitchen alive with conversation is the essay's claim made visible — dialect and voice as they actually are, refusing the tidy grammar that would correct them into silence.



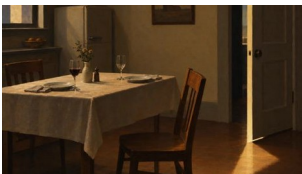
71. The Healer's Parlor

Gallery note: *The Comic-Grotesque Tradition (The Faith Healer's Parlor)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/comic-grotesque-tradition#ii

Painting. A woman in a light sunlit parlor leaning over a round table laid with playing cards, soft daylight through tall windows.

Connection. The woman leaning over the cards in the sunlit parlor is belief performed — the essay's subject, faith enacted as a role the women of the stories take up and set down.



72. Left Unsaid

Gallery note: *Altogether Beautiful (The Words It Never Says)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/altogether-beautiful#words

Painting. A kitchen table set for two with one glass half-empty and a chair askew, a door ajar.

Connection. The table set for two, one glass half-empty, a chair askew, is the story's absent vocabulary — the altar, the amen, the rosary the essay argues the text refuses to say.



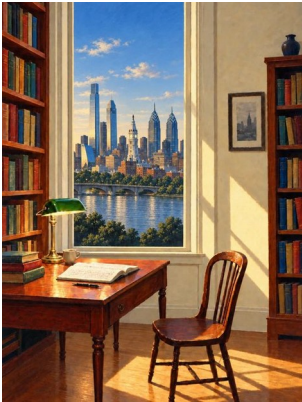
73. The Pigeonholes, Late Afternoon

Gallery note: *Commonplace Shelf*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/resources

Painting. A wall of wooden pigeonholes holding stacked papers and booklets in late-afternoon light, a bundle of handouts tied with string on the counter below.

Connection. Pigeonholes stocked with papers and a bundle of handouts left on the counter picture the shelf's purpose — materials sorted and set out to be taken, a teacher's mailroom open to anyone who comes for them.



74. [The Empty Study, Philadelphia Skyline]

Gallery note: *Home*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/

Painting. An empty writer's study in late-afternoon light, an open manuscript and green-shaded lamp on the desk, the window framing the Philadelphia skyline with City Hall's tower at its center.

Connection. The front door of the site: the desk is waiting and the chair is empty, so the room belongs to whoever reads. The city in the window is the one the work keeps returning to — near, bright, and seen from inside.



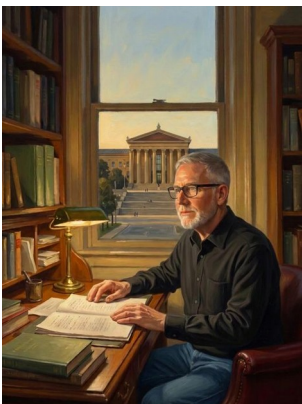
75. The Writer at His Desk, Evening

Gallery note: *About*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/about

Painting. A writer at his desk, gazing out over the Philadelphia skyline at dusk, a green-shaded lamp lit beside an open notebook.

Connection. The same city from the same kind of room, with the writer at the window — attention as a daily practice, the work done at a desk facing the place it is about.



76. The Author at His Desk

Gallery note: *Press Kit (Author Biographies)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/press-kit

Painting. The author at his writing desk in late light, bookshelves behind him and the Philadelphia Museum of Art framed in the tall window.

Connection. At his own desk, the Philadelphia Museum of Art in the window behind him: the writer placed inside the city his books keep returning to, the working room offered to the press as the place the work is made.

Objects & Devotion

Matter made a vessel for grace.

22 paintings · nos. 77–98



77. A Shaft of Light

Gallery note: *Altogether Beautiful*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/altogether-beautiful

Painting. A shaft of late-afternoon sunlight falling on a statue of the Virgin Mary in a small chapel.

Connection. The title is a Marian acclamation, and the painting rests a shaft of light on the Virgin's statue — the feast-day liturgy of the Assumption that the essay reads against the story's images of stain, care, and mortality.



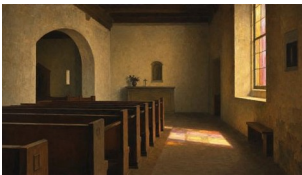
78. The Pelican Wounds Its Breast

Gallery note: *The Sacred in the Shabby (Communion Without an Altar)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/sacred#communion

Painting. A weathered stone pelican emblem above the door of a modest working-class Catholic parish church.

Connection. The stone pelican over a parish door is the medieval emblem of self-giving — the pelican wounding its own breast to feed its young — the essay's communion made visible in weathered stone.



79. Empty Chapel, Afternoon Light

Gallery note: *Credo*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/credo

Painting. An empty chapel with a shaft of colored light falling across the floor.

Connection. An empty chapel where only stained light performs the liturgy matches the credo's insistence on the sacred in ordinary life — belief without apparatus, grace as light.



80. The Metronome

Gallery note: *Crossings — On Prosody*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-companion

Painting. An antique wooden metronome on a windowsill, its pendulum caught mid-swing in pale morning light.

Connection. The metronome caught mid-swing is the essay's subject — the accentual-syllabic expectation beneath the free verse, the measured ground the poems substitute against and abandon.



81. One Moment, Framed

Gallery note: *The Unspoken Elegy (Objects That Hold the Feeling)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/holding-the-artifact#ii

Painting. A framed photograph on a small table beside a casket in a quiet room.

Connection. The photograph by the casket is the second artifact — the dead kept near through an image, the loss that the poems refuse to say but that the object states.



82. The Shattered Print

Gallery note: *The Unspoken Elegy (Objects That Hold the Feeling)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/holding-the-artifact#ii

Painting. A devotional print fallen on the floor of a dim living room.

Connection. The shattered print of The Last Supper is the third — a sacred image broken, its fall carrying the grief the essay traces through the poems.



83. The Visitation

Gallery note: *Molly Bonamici: A Comprehensive Study (The Marys)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/molly-bonamici-comprehensive-study#marys

Painting. Two elderly Italian-American women in housecoats meeting at the doorway of a modest tenement apartment.

Connection. Two women meeting at a tenement doorway is the essay's Marian visitation translated into working-class Italian-American terms — the meeting at the threshold the novel sets at its heart.



84. Nanna's Ledger

Gallery note: *The Comic-Grotesque Tradition (The Matriarchs of Larceny)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/comic-grotesque-tradition#matriarchs

Painting. An elderly woman writing in a ledger at a kitchen table in bright midday light, sunlight flooding through a large window.

Connection. Nanna's ledger in bright midday light is the essay's subject — larceny kept in the family, the matriarch's account-book where crime and care are entered on the same page.



85. The Registry

Gallery note: *The Allusive Method (Names as Citations)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/allusive-method#names

Painting. An elderly hand inscribing names in careful script into a worn leather registry on a sunlit desk.

Connection. The hand inscribing names in a registry is “the act of naming as devotion” made literal — each name a citation, a promise the narrative will keep.



86. The Spade

Gallery note: *The Unspoken Elegy (With Heaney in Mind)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/holding-the-artifact#heaney

Painting. A weathered working man in worn clothes resting his hands on a spade in a modest potato patch.

Connection. The working man resting on his spade is the essay's verb made image — grief worked into the earth, mourning as labor, the sense of “redress” as digging.



87. The Architecture

Gallery note: *The Religious Architecture of the Work*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/religious-architecture

Painting. The interior of a spare church seen down the nave toward a plain altar, a shaft of light across empty pews.

Connection. The nave seen toward a plain altar is the essay's “architecture” — belief as structure, the recurring shape of chapel, font, and altar that runs beneath the fiction and poems.



88. The Drawer of Letters

Gallery note: *The Remembering Voice*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/remembering-voice

Painting. A worn wooden drawer open, full of old letters and a folded photograph.

Connection. The drawer of letters and a folded photograph is memory held in objects — the essay's narrator as keeper, the voice that recalls because the things are kept close.



89. The Revised Page

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (Revision in Public)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#revision

Painting. A manuscript page covered in pencil cross-outs with a pen laid across it in lamplight.

Connection. The manuscript page of pencil cross-outs is the essay's argument as an image — revision as a spiritual discipline, the same scene redrafted until the truth rises again.



90. Wash Day

Gallery note: *The Sacred in the Shabby*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/sacred

Painting. A housedress and apron hanging on a clothesline in a backyard at midday.

Connection. A housedress and apron on a clothesline is the title's whole argument in a single image — the sacred disclosed in the shabby, grace hung out to dry.



91. The Letterpress

Gallery note: *Silver Current Press and the Independent Press Movement*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/silver-current-press-and-independent-publishing

Painting. A hand-operated letterpress beside a stack of printed sheets in a small print shop in morning light.

Connection. The hand-operated letterpress is the imprint made image — author-controlled publishing as craft and labor, the press the essay reads against the wider small-press movement.



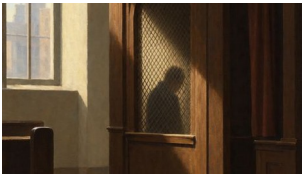
92. Three Editions

Gallery note: *A Textual History of “Assumptions”*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/textual-history-of-assumptions

Painting. Three printed pages of the same story laid side by side beneath a warm reading lamp, each faintly different.

Connection. Three editions of the same story side by side make the essay’s method visible — the text read not as a fixed object but as a history, each public form making different choices.



93. The Confessional

Gallery note: *The Confessor Archetype (Confession Without Contrition)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/confessor-archetype#criminal-confession

Painting. The interior of a wooden church confessional in dim light, a grille screen and a faint kneeling silhouette.

Connection. The confessional in dim light holds the essay’s type — the first-person narrator whose prose stays reasonable and unbroken even at the moment of confession.



94. Damp Leaves, a Graveside

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (The Threshold)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#motifs

Painting. A lone figure standing at a grave in a late autumn cemetery, damp leaves on the ground.

Connection. The figure at the grave is recurrence as mourning — the dead revisited across stories, the same loss taken up again.



95. The Tenderness at the Bottom of the Sole

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (The Hand and the Tended Body)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#iv

Painting. A kneeling caregiver gently tending the foot of an elderly person in a dim domestic interior.

Connection. The anointing of the foot is recurrence as mercy — the washing-and-tending scene that returns throughout the work as its most tender sign of care.



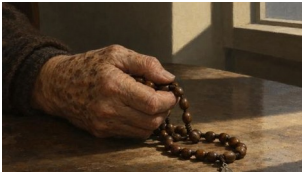
96. The Cross in Dashboard Light

Gallery note: *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up (The Hand and the Tended Body)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations#iv

Painting. Two men seated in a car at dusk, one making the sign of the cross in warm evening light.

Connection. The sign of the cross in a car is recurrence as belief — the small bodily rite that survives every other change, the gesture “taken up” wherever the work goes.



97. The Worn Rosary

Gallery note: *The Sacred in the Shabby (What Makes a Thing Useless)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/sacred#useless

Painting. An elderly hand holding a wooden rosary with beads worn smooth at the decades.

Connection. The rosary worn smooth at the decades in an aged hand is the essay’s rule in a single image — the object made holy not by itself but by the person on the other end of it.



98. Open Books, Dusk

Gallery note: *The Allusive Method*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/allusive-method

Painting. A long plain table in a bare room at early evening, five open books on it, each held down by a small ordinary object, a sharp bar of low light across the wall and floor.

Connection. Five books open at once on one table, each kept at its page by something ordinary — a stone, a teacup, a key — can be read as the essay's argument in a single image: inherited texts held open by everyday things, the borrowed and the ordinary sharing one surface in the same low light.

Fire & Ritual

The small rite that returns.

3 paintings · nos. 99–101



99. The Hearth at Morning

Gallery note: *Credo (The Fire Under the Bridge)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/credo

Painting. A quiet room in morning light, a stone fireplace holding a low fire of glowing embers beneath a tall bright window.

Connection. Low embers in the stone hearth beneath a bright window hold the essay's image in one frame — the fire that never goes out, the ever-living flame banked in an ordinary room.



100. The Shimmer Over a Baptism

Gallery note: *Altogether Beautiful (A Fire That Does Not Consume)*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/altogether-beautiful#fire

Painting. A single candle burning on a stone baptismal font, its light shimmering across still water.

Connection. A single flame over still water holds the essay's argument in one stroke — “unquenchable fire” set beside baptismal water, judgment beside care and glory.



101. Fire Beneath the Bridge

Gallery note: *Credo (The Fire Under the Bridge); What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up*

On the site: authorjamesmulhern.com/credo;
authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations

Painting. Two boys kneeling beside a small fire burning beneath a stone bridge on a winter night.

Connection. The bridge fire is the originating scene — the fire Mulhern and his brother Mark built on the way to a dance, the one *Credo* begins with when it turns to permanence. In *What Is Laid Down Is Taken Up* it is a secret boyhood rite that will “re-incarnate” across the fiction; in *Credo* it is the fire that went out behind them and returns, decades later, in a dark room.

Appendix A. Paintings by Page

The 49 live pages that carry at least one painting, with the paintings each one holds. Use it to check a page after an edit. Some paintings hang on more than one page.

Page	Paintings (number and title)
authorjamesmulhern.com/	74. [The Empty Study, Philadelphia Skyline]
authorjamesmulhern.com/a-prayer-for-home-comprehensive-study	10. White House in a Meadow
authorjamesmulhern.com/about	28. A Boston Street, Evening 75. The Writer at His Desk, Evening
authorjamesmulhern.com/all-we-ever-needed-essay	49. The Morning Table
authorjamesmulhern.com/allusive-method	18. The Annotated Page, Late Light 85. The Registry 98. Open Books, Dusk
authorjamesmulhern.com/allusive-mulhern	19. [Linen Lifted into Light]
authorjamesmulhern.com/altogether-beautiful	2. The Ordinary, Kept 72. Left Unsaid 77. A Shaft of Light 100. The Shimmer Over a Baptism
authorjamesmulhern.com/book-club	51. The Circle, Before They Arrive
authorjamesmulhern.com/books	52. The Study Table
authorjamesmulhern.com/cartographer	12. Figure at a Morning Window 30. The Triple-Decker, Within 38. The Chosen Porch
authorjamesmulhern.com/comic-grotesque-tradition	50. The Last Bus 53. The Social Club 54. The Backstage Clown 69. The Back Office 71. The Healer's Parlor 84. Nanna's Ledger
authorjamesmulhern.com/comparative-studies	8. Two Lights, One Desk 55. Reader in a Sunlit Room

Page	Paintings (number and title)
authorjamesmulhern.com/confessor-archetype	56. The Listener 57. The Confessor's Table 59. The Bath Drawn 93. The Confessional
authorjamesmulhern.com/credo	9. Kitchen Light, Six A.M. 15. The Desk at Dawn 17. Café in Morning Light 79. Empty Chapel, Afternoon Light 99. The Hearth at Morning 101. Fire Beneath the Bridge
authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-analysis	31. "The Crosswalk"
authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-collection	20. Frontispiece: Crossing 33. The Stairwell
authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-companion	80. The Metronome
authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-complete-study	36. The Crossing
authorjamesmulhern.com/crossings-read	3. Morning Window Light
authorjamesmulhern.com/downloadable-studies	52. The Study Table
authorjamesmulhern.com/essays	4. Study in Light
authorjamesmulhern.com/from-the-work	55. Reader in a Sunlit Room
authorjamesmulhern.com/greatest-short-stories	61. The Reader, at Evening
authorjamesmulhern.com/guides	62. After the Bell, Papers to Grade
authorjamesmulhern.com/holding-the-artifact	22. Bright Coast, Small Sailboat 26. The Lighthouse 32. The Road, in Order 63. The Robe, Folded 66. The Other Chair 81. One Moment, Framed 82. The Shattered Print 86. The Spade

Page	Paintings (number and title)
authorjamesmulhern.com/molly-bonamici-comprehensive-study	23. Reaching for Water 34. The Storefront at Night 46. The Small Figure 83. The Visitation
authorjamesmulhern.com/musings	35. Notebook, Porch Light
authorjamesmulhern.com/press-kit	64. Rooftops, Late Morning 76. The Author at His Desk
authorjamesmulhern.com/religious-architecture	87. The Architecture
authorjamesmulhern.com/remembering-voice	1. The Single Lamp 60. The Interrupted Meal 88. The Drawer of Letters
authorjamesmulhern.com/repeated-incarnations	6. The Recurring Images 13. The Slant of Kitchen Sun 23. Reaching for Water 24. Lighthouse in Daylight 39. The Lit Doorway 65. The Steinway 89. The Revised Page 94. Damp Leaves, a Graveside 95. The Tenderness at the Bottom of the Sole 96. The Cross in Dashboard Light 101. Fire Beneath the Bridge
authorjamesmulhern.com/resources	73. The Pigeonholes, Late Afternoon
authorjamesmulhern.com/sacred	7. Sunlit Classroom 67. The Common Table 78. The Pelican Wounds Its Breast 90. Wash Day 97. The Worn Rosary
authorjamesmulhern.com/services	68. Two Chairs, Late Afternoon
authorjamesmulhern.com/silver-current-press-and-independent-publishing	91. The Letterpress
authorjamesmulhern.com/sites	29. A Street of Lit Windows
authorjamesmulhern.com/start-here	61. The Reader, at Evening
authorjamesmulhern.com/store	42. Shopfront, First Lamplight
authorjamesmulhern.com/submissions	43. Closed for the Evening

Page	Paintings (number and title)
authorjamesmulhern.com/teaching-as-vocation	44. The Hallway, After the Bell
authorjamesmulhern.com/teaching-at-fifty-six	14. Empty Classroom, Late Light
authorjamesmulhern.com/textual-history-of-assumptions	92. Three Editions
authorjamesmulhern.com/the-room-kept-ready	51. The Circle, Before They Arrive
authorjamesmulhern.com/the-uneven-ascent	45. The Uneven Stairs
authorjamesmulhern.com/thin-places	25. The Holy Well
authorjamesmulhern.com/unquenchable-fire-feature	27. [Nantasket, Hand in Hand]
authorjamesmulhern.com/unquiet-dreams-comprehensive-study	5. The Doubled Figure 21. A Light on the Headland 37. The Phantom at the Well 40. Twilight Lane 41. The Foreseen Lane 47. "I Got You" 48. The Visitor at Dawn 58. Admissions on the Slope
authorjamesmulhern.com/voices-that-would-not-be-tidied	11. The Morning Room 70. The Untidied Kitchen
authorjamesmulhern.com/writing	16. Notebook, Morning Light

Appendix B. About This Edition

This edition is drawn from the live site and the published gallery as of October 12, 2026. It follows the gallery's six chapters and order, and each entry links to every page where its painting hangs.

Count by Chapter

Light, 19; Water, 8; Thresholds, 21; Rooms & Solitude, 28; Objects & Devotion, 22; Fire & Ritual, 3. Total, 101.

Outside the Suite

The book covers and the Art Deco candle image that opens “Unquenchable Fire” appear on the site but are not paintings in the manner of Hopper, so they are not indexed here.