

ALEXANDRA TEAGUE

**In the Case of Mlle. Zina Brozia of the Paris Grand Opera Versus
M. Jean Metzinger, Cubist, 1916**

Because a woman posing for a portrait expects

her face, not a radio sputtering

disassembled circuits, a madman tating

her collar like a hedge on the asylum lawn

loop after loop of lace and so many throats

the notes would never find their way

it's dangerous

calling this a body, art, what aria

ever sang out of the ear of the beloved

triangle line line circle

what portrait painter worth his easel

could believe as this one claims

this is the sum of what will be remembered

when she passes out of vision's range

as if the sum of 1 plus 3 were muskrat

just subtract a plum, then add a dirigible,

a spoon, Your Honor, this not

as you say, *a delicate controversy,*

not that model who sued over Aphrodite's

shell: in question, should she have to supply it

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was it essential to the pose like Eve's leaf

I understand delicacy: woman naked on nothing

in the painted ocean but I am not a ship

radioing SOS, dits and dahs all run together, an abacus

in a windstorm what Salome

no matter how wild with love, desperate—

cursing at her mother, could lift her hand to die

if she couldn't first distinguish

the dagger's fatal line from her own body?