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**How to Draw a Self-Portrait of Wallace Stevens: How Terrance Hayes Uses the Figure
to Confront Anxiety and *The Museum of Masculine Beauty*.**

A Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Creative Writing

In

Poetry

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New Zealand

Abstract

This thesis consists of my research into the poetry of Terrance Hayes and poetic manuscript based on my research. In my research “How to Draw a Self-Portrait of Wallace Stevens: How Terrance Hayes Uses the Figure to Confront Anxiety” I argue that Hayes uses the figure in his work as a means of representing, confronting and overcoming his speaker’s anxiety of identity. By analysing the Hayes poems “SHAFRO”, “FOR ROBERT HAYDEN” and “SNOW FOR WALLACE STEVENS” I will show the role of speaker possessor of African, broader American and poetic identities in depicting and confronting anxiety, the role of racial issues in inciting anxiety, and how the figure – a presence in the poem based on an historic, cultural or pop-cultural figure – has been developed from a representation of a particular type of identity to a confrontation of identity anxiety. In my poetic manuscript *At the Museum of Masculine Beauty* I use the conclusions drawn from my research into Hayes’ use of figure and anxiety and attempt to apply them to my own poetry concerning masculine identity.

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