THE CHAMBER OF WINGS

'But is it not the case that when one
loses one's way one gains a wider view
of the world?'
 – Anselm Kiefer, *Art Will Survive Its Ruins*
In the chamber of wings
hang empty white dresses.

Where there should be heads
are only twigs and sticks,

a pile of bricks, nothing
to help with ascension

or escape up Jacob's ladder
to our ideas of elsewhere.

Those who didn't make it
were tarred and feathered,

steamrollered into painted
memories of hurt and love.

Despite the lines and circles
you conjure up and draw

to map out life and death,
we will always get lost,

distracted by recollections
of ancestors and relatives

who dreamt of the future
but are now only ash.

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(from *The Frame of Understanding. for Anselm Kiefer*)