

Unloading the Mirrors

They're unloading looking-glasses
From the back of a truck down the street.
The foreman's been multiplied by mirrors
Into a pressgang, a handful
Of workers into a herd,
The single truck into a fleet.

The street's gone cubist.
Every glass-carrier is a Siamese twin,
Himself hefted lightly on his shoulder
Along with a duplicate street
And a slice of sky. The laborers
Are shifting the sheets of a maze
That they themselves are moving in.

A wilderness of angles unfolds,
Collecting and reflecting
The excellences of the street
And the dumpster and the trashbags, too.
Two men, four men, collide on the stairs.
Others pass, empty-handed,
Going back for replacements.
One guy sets his glass down on the pavement,
Contemplates himself, and combs his hair.

Abruptly, a hole gapes in the asphalt
Opening out onto dizzy blue sky.
This placid mercury pool
Attracts flocks of thirsty birds that fright
At their own image. Clouds,
At an unearthly pace, are floating by,
Crossing the street against the light.

The street accepts all this confusion without
Resistance. A woman's legs,
A bicycle, an open door, instances
Of objectivity and landscape
All get democratically reflected,
Plus one small personal detail:
Myself, tiny, in a window in the distance.