

In the Bowery

Mixmasters sprawled onto the sidewalk
in front of the restaurant supply store,
metal beater blades turned upward

like supplicants, banded ropes of electrical
wire, La Signora stovetop espresso pots,
one could be in Italy—Prato—down the street

from the Madonna of the Sacred Girdle,
but we pushed on to the Photography Center
where video artists had left us endless loops,

washing machines caught in the crazed frenzy
of unbridled spin, their belts whipping, a dance
my brother couldn't have known

but invented just the same, at age seven,
with four glass milk bottles placed reverently
in our washer, not even bothering to select a cycle,

producing a racket so pervasive the neighbors
heard it two blocks away, and my mother had to pay
Henry Hata, the only one brave enough to pull the plug.

As children strange visions came to us, like those
of the holy relics, our mother seen once
struggling to throw her girdle to the floor.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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