HOA NGUYEN

MY IDEA OF THE CIRCUS IS MY IDEA OF THE CIRCUS OTHERWISE KNOWN AS: MY MOTHER WAS A CELEBRATED STUNT MOTORCYCLIST, VIETNAM, 1958 TO 1962

Very loud a mad frenzy The wooden
barrel she rode would have roared
(I first wrote “road”)
Left home to join the circus: 15 years old
You enter at the bottom and wind upwards
in spirals the bike climbing the sides
You enter the barrel on a Peugeot
with automatic tied down handles
I mean the kind that you can peg
so you can ride hands-free
arms out like wings on either side
Sometimes she fell
tremendously (50 feet, more?)
This is insane no helmet
or other gear like it
Ripped pedal pusher pants
Maybe the watchers above
(all men in the picture)
pulled their lips sent and leapt
or wanted to to throw themselves
and stop your flying hair
The howling and the howling
Your smiling riding your falling
and rising