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World in a Skirt

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Heather McHugh

WORLD IN A SKIRT

The French horn has us
where she wants us—

hem of gold flown off
the turner's stone—

360 fed into the one
head-turner—does she sharpen us,

and get the lead out?—spin us outward, get
some endlessness involved?—the 7 shaven sunshines, 4 red

top-hats, scraps of a leftover everything?
We can't tell. She whirls herself

into us, us into her eyeshot's veer, her
earwear's metal—she's the fluent

liquefactory, turns round from noun
to adjective and back—and echo into

dream-drink, fixer into flower, until one
and two and more and less are

wound inside her gown . . . Can we be
known—my Double-ex, or your Ex-wise—

once we're a part
of all that artifice?

Hearer mirabile, sounder of seas!
What becomes of our likes in the likes of

unsettlement, we who are gluttons for
grabbable glow, little bits of

rebuttoning? Centrist
disinstrument! she'll reconcile

lovelorn semblables:
the fugal, the petal . . .