

Ryan Johnson

DA VINCI LUMBERS THROUGH THE SISTINE CHAPEL

The abbess lets her sisters test
the secret flying instrument
And one by one they pedal through
the lofty air of the high room
The abbess calls instructions out
soft hands cupped around her mouth
Beneath the arching painted sky
the machine is flapping up and down
Suspended in the atmosphere
by cranks and belts and spinning wheels
As God with his fingers reaches
out to touch the vellum wings.