BRING ON GENE KELLY

We know that each one is different,

that the patenters have daydreamt

new ways to make us press here, slide

up there, trained us to doubt if

their creation will act out its internal

logic. This mechanism will work,

the metal tubes rise, ribs elbow

out radially, raising a dome

to the droopy sky, from which

it drips but doesn't pour yet -

but soon, soon - click.

The sail, which was not meant

to be a sail is in place.

Taut, quasi-waterproof fabric

to deflect the drippings from God's tail.

One umbrella, soft rain, riddle song:

Can two walk under and not touch,

the first brush of skin demanding more?

One umbrella, hard rain, ragged tune.

A couple, whose coat sleeves are

charged to repel with the recall of love

doused by this or that rain, by many rains.

Parasol, parapluie

Men swinging it up to

their shoulder, playing war

tip-tapping the ground. Macho...

but only if it's folded.

Parapluie, parasol

Your push button release

mechanism doesn't work

today, boy.

Focusing lens for the wind's

rush, which shoves this fabric

and metal contraption its way.

More than one hand can take,

and the other has a heavy

briefcase. Bends and creaks.

And always the risk of inversion,

mangled spokes calling up

the textbooks of the ski-town doctor.

It's easy to forget

that parachutes can't fly up.

At their worst in crowds

creating protocols of tilting

and stretching as our

apparent volume increases.

At the least we're supposed

to stay dry. But as if

the waters' cycle were changed

by man, as if rain rose from

rivers, sewers and gutters,

my pants legs still get wet.