

VICENTE HUIDOBRO

Translated from French by Tim Keane

Eiffel Tower

Eiffel Tower!
The sky's guitar!

Your "wee-fee" telegraphy
Draws words around itself
Like the rose-bush draws bees

During the night
The Seine stops flowing

Telescope or bugle
EIFFEL TOWER

A hive of words,
An inkwell of honey

At the edge of dawn
A spider with thin metal legs
Made a gossamer web

Little boy,
To climb the tower
You climb the song

Do

Re

Mi

Fa

So

La

Ti

Do

We're on high

A singing bird is the wind
In the cell towers of Europe
On the air in the electric wind

Down below

Hats with wings fly off on their own,
But still can't sing
Jacqueline,
Daughter of *la belle patrie*
What is it you see up there?

The slumber of the Seine
Under the bridge-shadows

I see the turning of the Earth
And with my bugle I call reveille
Toward all the seas

All the words, all the bees
Head up the path of your perfume

Who hasn't heard this song
On the four corners of the world

I AM QUEEN OF DAWN'S POLES
I AM THE WEST-WIND'S ROSE, FADING EVERY AUTUMN
AND FILLING WITH SNOW
I DIE THE DEATH OF THE ROSE
WHILE IN MY HEAD A BIRD SINGS ALL THE LONG YEAR

This is how one day the tower spoke to me

Eiffel Tower

The world's aviary

Sing sing

Parisian jubilation

The giant raised in the middle of nowhere

Is a broadside for France

When the victory-day arrives

You'll tell its story to the stars.