

**Lawrence Ferlinghetti**  
**"Constantly Risking Absurdity"**

Constantly risking absurdity  
                                    and death  
    whenever he performs  
                                    above the heads  
  of his audience  
the poet like an acrobat  
                                    climbs on rime  
  to a high wire of his own making  
and balancing on eyebeams  
                                    above a sea of faces  
    paces his way  
                                    to the other side of day  
performing entrechats  
                                    and sleight-of-foot tricks  
and other high theatrics  
                                    and all without mistaking  
    any thing  
                                    for what it may not be

For he's the super realist  
                                    who must perforce perceive  
    taut truth  
                                    before the taking of each stance or step  
in his supposed advance  
                                    toward that still higher perch  
where Beauty stands and waits  
                                    with gravity  
  to start her death-defying leap

And he  
    a little charleychaplin man  
                                    who may or may not catch  
    her fair eternal form  
                                    spreadeagled in the empty air  
    of existence