Before the Bridge

My hair
Whips in the wind
As we float
In the harbor
While the fleet
Slices through
The hypothermically
Frigid water

Looking into
The utterly simple
binoculars
Which enlarge
The world around me
I see a ship
Carrying cargo
The grain, iron
Or coals
Being loaded
Ready to face
The unpredictable
Rage of the waves
I hear the rush of water
As a ship
Empties the ballast
The excess
Crashing against
The surface
If I looked
Close enough
I might find
Clumps of
Zebra mussels
Spilling out
Known for
Being aquatic
Hitchhikers

A sea lamprey
May be under
The glasslike
Surface
Lurking in the
Shadows
Waiting to
Suck the life
Out of its
next prey

A rip current
Sweeps away
At the sand
Pulling whatever
Comes in its path
Far from the shore
And out to the
Depths of the lake

Today
The clouds seem
To encompass
Everything
With their
Heavy
Sadness
Still
The lift bridge
Glimmers like stars
Making a
Passageway for
Ships every day
An estuary of
The Saint Louis river