



'And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire...'

They are busy now before the glory hole,
the furnace's thousand degrees, its tonnes
of heat.

And we who watch are mesmerised by molten glass,
as they sleepwalk like the hypnotised

on some shabby seaside stage: entranced
yet unmoved by the near miraculous,

folded acres of fire, of changing form:
honey dripping from a coiled wooden spoon;

a flash of kingfisher rising
from a slow moving river.

They stand poles in hand like lost children
fishing at the shady edge of a fabled pond.

Cremetorial, the long lulling purr
might pull you in, burn your bones,

char your skin like yesterday's newsprint
they use to shape a vase, shape a paperweight.

How gently and with what restraint
they blow on these their instruments:
a flautist practicing a slow air,
a dreamer breathing in the arms of someone lost

unsure if the form they've drawn to them
will hold or simply melt away again.

Adam O'Riordan, 2011

The Crafts Council commissioned poet Adam O'Riordan to create a new work inspired by the glassblowing process.