

The Wing-Maker

for Matthew Sweeney

When I finally
decide it's time
to settle up
my life's work
as a wing-maker

I shall leave
the harbour
and walk
the shoreline

that stretches
like a beaten mat
to the headland

whose patchwork
of wheat fields
is the groomed pelt
of a sleeping dog

whose snout sups loam
from the sea

and who,
when the new
moon rises,

shall raise
his rocky head

to rouse
my night-birds out

from their cages,
the many cages –

in the morning
they'll find

a divot of howling,
a broken creel
of fluttering,

my unlaced shoes.