

Inaugurate

—for New Hampshire’s Governor Maggie Hassan, January 2015,
from Alice B. Fogel, New Hampshire State Poet Laureate

Let’s take the advice of birds,
and begin in flight.

Stirred with one slight flutter,
and another,
and another,
winds will spin
into the formation of one flock.

Let’s rise up from the surrounding mountains and move
from the margins to the heart
until we are all heart—

the grand or small, singular peak
where we each nest
woven into one
common geometry of range and reach.

Let’s praise the state
of a circle,
praise the color, the bloom and sheen,
of every plume on every wing—

praise the ring
of weather rough and sweet, of songs
aired from cities and fields, from the hills and trees.

Let’s spiral from border to core.
Let’s begin again as we are, and must be—
able and free,

solving the problems of gravity
by every imperceptible
pulse and prayer
lifting a feather in turn,

till finally, all together,
we take flight
with the force
of our collective wings, their span

filling the whole sky.