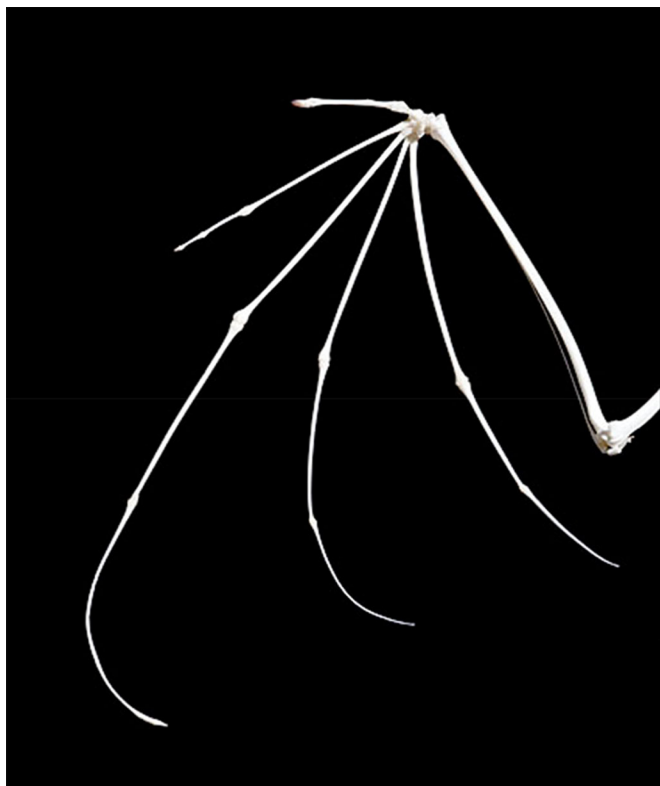


*Cover Essay*



## Manumission

Unclasp your claws to dance the rustling night.  
Extend your tendons to their fullest splay.  
Unfurl your fingered webs, their muscled rite.

For falling calls us to the tussled might  
by ceasing comfort from the tangled fray,  
unclasp your claws to dance the rustling night.

Allow your bones to bend, a bustling sleight,  
in synchronized, asymmetrical play.  
Unfurl your fingered webs, their muscled rite.

Engage alone to seek the justled sight  
that others miss as dusk undoes the day.  
Unclasp your claws to dance the rustling night.

To those who damn you as a hustling sprite,  
the fatal beast of the vampiric fey,  
unfurl your fingered webs, their muscled rite.

Unpenned as poets free opuscled flight  
with moving hands that lift aloft the lay,  
unclasp your claws to dance the rustling night.  
Unfurl your fingered webs, their muscled rite.

*Mark Olival-Bartley*

## ABOUT THE POEM AND THE POET

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Composed of five enclosed tercets and a quatrain of iambic pentameter, this poem is a villanelle—a centuries-old form of verse whose incantatory spell is borne by its rhymed refrains.

Mark Olival-Bartley is the poet-in-residence at Eco-Health Alliance. He lives in Munich, where he teaches and is presently reappraising the sonnets of E. A. Robinson for his dissertation at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.

## ON THE COVER

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*Flying Fox (Pteropus)*, 2006 by Jim Gilbert. Digital photograph, 16 × 21 in.

## ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST

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Jim Gilbert is a photographer and naturalist in the fields and woods of New Jersey.