

KARL ELDER

Conversion

What has sound got to do with music?

—Charles Ives

Like a song he heard wrong all his life
thought he knew what it took to be moved,
wolves, loons plying from the spirit life,
no glimpse of it soon to be improved
upon, yet there arose from the mouth
of his being by way of being
where he dreamed—call it North via south—
if not prayer, no craven brazen thing
less holy than in its refusal
to beseech, seek, even, the divine—
some syncopation, an interval
like a lake mirroring stars, tree line,
but outside of time, the mind at home
with the mute music of the poem.

for Beth Ann Fennelly