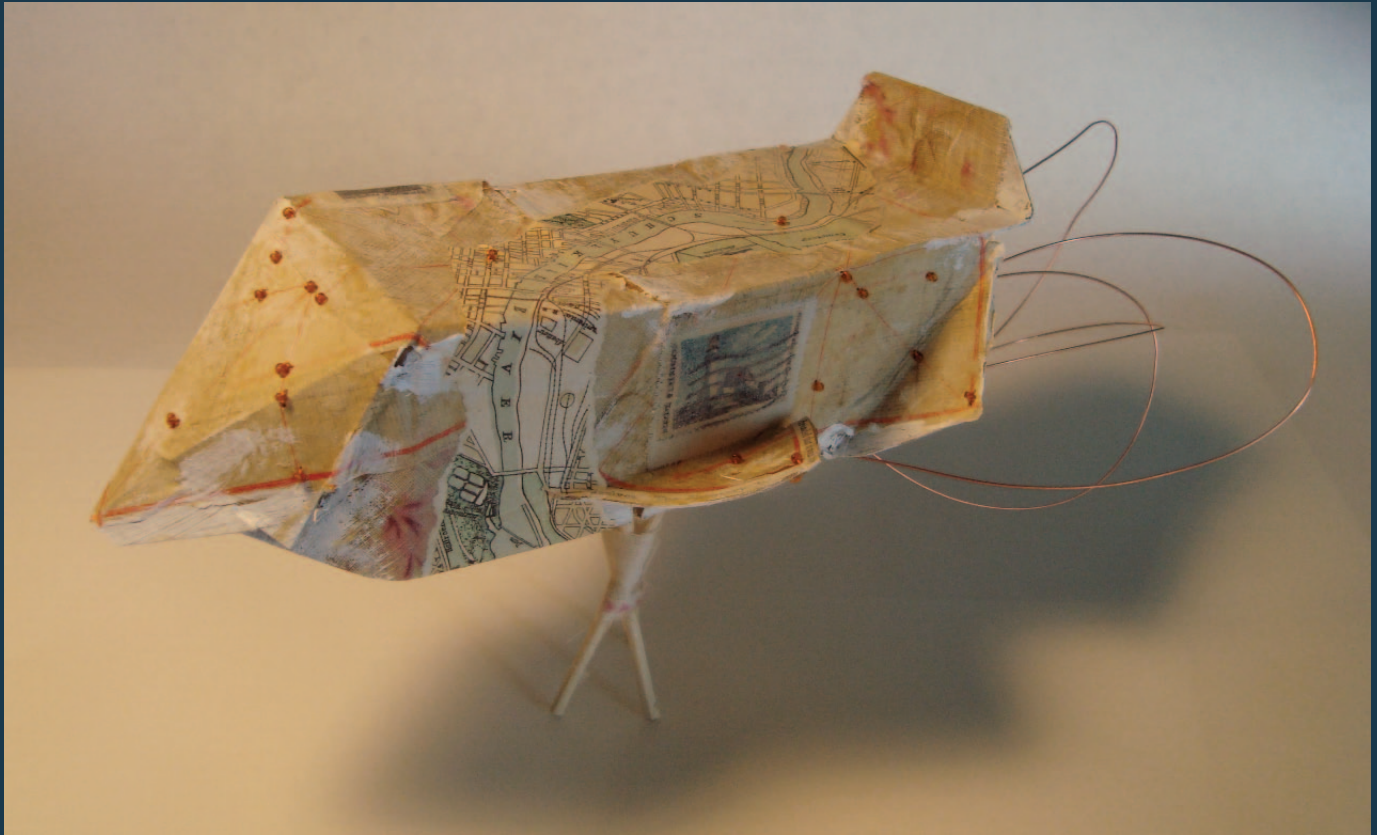


# THE SPACE TRAVELER AND WANDERING



I DIDN'T ALWAYS WANDER. ONCE  
I HAD A SMALL HOME WITH A GARDEN.  
ANOTHER SPACE TRAVELER LIVED THERE,  
AND WE HAD THE LOCAL EQUIVALENT  
OF A DOG. IT'S HARD TO SAY  
WHAT HAPPENED, BUT AT SOME POINT  
I FOUND MYSELF CONVERTING PARTS  
OF OUR BUNGALOW INTO A SHIP.  
FIRST APPLIANCES: FRIDGE, STOVE,  
ELECTRIC TOOTH BRUSH AND WATER PICK.  
THEN LARGER PIECES. SIDING  
FOR THE ROCKET BODY; CHIMNEY  
FOR PART OF THE NOSE CONE.  
RIGHT NOW I'M ENTERING COORDINATES  
INTO A COMBINATION OF WATER HEATER  
AND WET BAR. BOTH OF US KNEW  
THINGS WERE FINISHED WHEN I  
SAVAGED THE BED FOR SPRINGS.

(LANDING APPARATUS.)

IT WAS JUST THE TWO OF US  
IN A DENUDED FRAME, SITTING  
ON THE FLOOR NOT TALKING ABOUT  
LEAKS, DRAFTS. IN THE GARDEN  
MY SHIP FLATTENED THE WINTER  
SQUASH; IT TOWERED ABOVE  
WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE ROOF.  
THERE WASN'T MUCH OF A GOODBYE.  
HE SHRUGGED AND I SCANNED  
THE ROOM FOR WIRE NUTS. (I FORGET  
NOW WHY I NEEDED WIRE NUTS.)  
WHEN MY AFTERBURN IGNITED  
WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE PLACE, I  
ALLOWED MYSELF A SMALL SMILE—  
THEN SET THE TOASTER FOR DEEP  
SPACE. IT DIDN'T DING FOR YEARS.