

## PHYLLIS WEBB / Selected Poem

"SELECTED POEM" from Confabulations: Poems for Malcolm Lowry  
by Sharon Thesen

The writing body can't hold a pen or pencil anymore--the  
shakes so bad

that last night at the cantina the glasses of mescal appear  
and disappear as if drunk by a ghost

they are looking for me yet where they threw  
the Consul's body.

Where I am it is dark.

The only books in the house my immense imagination.

Now it takes me up to a whole afternoon to find the  
word I need--

la mordida

correspondences

(the butterfly caught in the jaws of the cat)

Dear Albert forgive the tone of injured innocence but  
I was locked in this world:

the distant tequilla the key to the day, sweet short-  
cut to quote unquote hell, The Voyage That Never Ends.

YOU NO WRIDER YOU AN ESPIDER

MEA CULPA

Bix Beiderbecke, the five attractive gartersnakes  
assembled for the concert. Malcolm, Margerie

considered having the lobotomy to increase  
the horror effect, the final cure--

sheep in the pastures grazing, Wordsworth's daffodils.

Where am I? It is dark, alone  
in the garden, sucking mother night.

Phyllis Webb via ST  
October, 2007

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Dear Sharon:

If I could have I would have written one of my own poems, but you know that gift eludes me now. Can I even ask you to forgive the appropriation, the dressing-down, the theft? I filched some of George's Kerrisdale Elegies for a similar occasion of celebration. And since you did my Selected Poems perhaps I can do just one "Selected Poem" of yours?

Putting my paws into your marvellous poem is not a critique or an attempt to be an editor but a last resort out of my own poetic failure. You create miracles of shifts and shades and glides. And how you glide with your narrative and other procedures. In music "a glide is a succession of sounds made in passing from one note to another without silencing voice or instrument". I just happened on that word, glide, and knocked on the dictionary.

Forgive me if you can this de- and re-construction which brought me so close to your beautiful work.

Love,



Phyllis

Salt Spring Island, October 21, 2007