

Seattle City Council

Public Safety, Government Relations, and Arts Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 2:00 PM, December 5, 2006

Words' Worth

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Jeannette Allée**

Today's poet is **Carol Maki**

Carol Maki is a recipient of the "Organizer of the Year Award" from the Bent Writing Institute, which promotes the written and spoken word among LGBTIQ people in the greater Seattle community. She is the producer of the reading series, "Tuesdays at the Cabaret" at the Richard Hugo House and is currently studying acting at the Freehold Studio/Theatre Lab. She will be attending the Summer Literary Seminars for poetry writing in Kenya and St. Petersburg, Russia in June. She is a native of Michigan.

For Frida Kahlo

by Carol Maki

I. Mother

Envy grew in my hair
green jungle monkey green

I painted myself so I could remember
what I look like.
Childless woman painting her own portrait
in her own home cold
death wrapped itself
around my neck
broken pelvis bone necklace.

Death was the only one who brought me jewelry.

I was my baby's tomb. My baby died in me.
Cells without a womb bloodied the sheets.
I'm sorry.

This is what I look like.

II. Woman

Why is it that the closer I got to me,
the further you moved?

White flowers
mauve silk
organic headdress

Marry me in traditional garb as I tattoo you
to the grey matter of my brain.

One eyebrow
my head framed
in lavish lace

I thought you set me free.

How could I think of anyone else
when there was your
presence your ego your physical mass.
Diego to my Frida.

Your will was overweight as your spirit.
Your voice was breath to me.
You could have destroyed me
pistol to canvas
pole to pelvis.

You made me because you made
me crave.

III. Girl

In the House

Every wall was another eyeball
of Mama's.

Outside the House

Women and girls have no feet nor
hands to strangle or pray with.

Knowing

Ever since I can remember I've known
every day I'm going to die.

Self-Portrait

My fingers reach out like
snakes of creation.
I'm gorgeous and dark as night.

Portrait of My Sister

More like day, even her dress is naïve.

IV. Wife

Fly away and when you come home,
I will be younger. I promise.
Or have you already flown?

Jewels around my neck I'm given to pacify
my need to fly.
I'm your wife now. Now I'm your wife.

The clock is going the plane has gone
and my earrings are heavier than dread.
Have you ever worn earrings.

Of course not. But from now on you get
to wear me, persistent and manipulative as
a rhetorical question.

You could tuck me away in your locket.
Have you ever had a locket?
How do you like rhetorical questions?

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