

DAVID REITER

FERTILITY GODDESS

What myth directs those hands
that carve you from softwood
along forest paths between pyramids
at Chichen Itza? Even now, finger-
nails could furrow your skin.

How your neck must ache
from its headdress of plumed
serpents with eager fangs!
Oh, trendy Mayan maiden,
can your eyes still see the stone*
that crossed them for beauty?
What of the boards that pressed
your infant forehead steep
as a ski slope? Whose dream
of suck are those pert nipples?

No puckered Marilyn, though,
you squat in birth, spurting out
a baby between your folded hands
and bended knees. Of course it's you,
no less than diminished reflections
on a windless lake are you.

* Mayan infants wore a stone between their eyes to create this sign of beauty.