

EDWIGE FOUVRY

Maison et Branchages, 2015
Oil on Canvas, 59 x 75 in



COURTESY DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

PATRICIA ZYLIUS

Soil

In my garden the soil hums,
its many throats open and full of breath.
Sweet rot smell, moist clumping
of something rich. Source of bone
and nerve, blood and sinew.
I could be a beet, a collard plant,
I could eat the soil myself.

Breakdown, rock crush, slush
washed down mountains
fanned out onto plains. Alluvium.
Pebbles, sand grains, bits of stick,
leaf mold, and manure. Bacteria and mineral.

Earth works into the cracks
of my calloused heels, under my nails,
perfume my fingers carry into sleep.
Someday I'll give my naked body
back to it, uncoffined, unembalmed,
a sacrament, plain, whole.

Patricia Zylus is the author of the chapbook *Once a Vibrant Field*. Her poems have appeared in *Catamaran Literary Review*, *Ellipsis*, *Natural Bridge*, *Red Wheelbarrow*, and other journals, and on the *Women's Voices for Change* website. Her poems have also been included in *Women Artists Datebook* and *The Yes Book*. An editor by profession, she edited and wrote sidebar stories for *Dear Sweeties: Tom Cuthbertson on His Dance with Cancer*. She has lived in Santa Cruz for over fifty years, the last forty-five in the same house.