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Two poems by J. Kirk Brown

Freedom shining on
dew at first light
its opening rose
on whispered admiration
misting crystal sheets
as time
soaring white to blue
and yellow famed it
lay I down
field-bound in daisies
dying as they grew
my dreams
leaped up
glancing slightly
sunlight joined
chance daliance
done—desending
diverse senses
crying out
its you

Old eyes

silently charting
the waves
as they rise
from the concrete
each dawn.

quietly watching
the child
as she plays
here each noon
at the swings

solemnly falling
past hands
as they lay
wrinkled up
in the dark.

i grope, but cannot reach
a bastard self that begs
for communal life with
me.
if i could focus
inward eyes,
i could live dreams that
only owlsh nights
can see,
and only singing selves
can feel.
when we fly together on
ferris wheels,
we will be our certain
sky;
and sail with skylarks
to dreams beyond
our earthly grasp.

by Howard Rosenberg

*My words freeze time,
ink frozen lines
eternal as the day
will end and sure
as the moon
in a thunderhead sky
solid as the sun
in a streetlight pond;
I know tomorrow
only by its name.*

by Scott McLaughlin

Do you believe in magic?

Book review by Lucy Kerchberger

Enter *The Magic World* by William Brandon. This collection of American Indian songs and poems beats with beautiful naturalism. All too frequently native lyrics and poetry have been ritually tucked away in dusty ethnological journals, their literary value being entirely ignored. Fortunately William Brandon, also author of *The American Heritage Book of Indians*, has brought this assemblage to light.

Besides being a great addition to the world's literature, it provides a measurable insight into the ethos of the American Indian. What better way can one begin to understand the soul of a people than through their songs, myths, and poems.

Just as there is significant variation among the American Indian peoples, both racially and culturally, stylistically this is also the case. *The Magic World* ranges from the light, melodic legend by the Cochiti, "Bird and Toad Play Hide and Seek," to the melancholy supposition of the Tlingit, "Mourning Song for a Brother Drowned at Sea."

Whether it is straight-forward or symbolic, *The Magic World* is permeated with an essential

truth which makes the works believable. Maybe it is the way in which the truth is reached and the form in which it is revealed that makes this literature differ from, for example, Western literature. Anyway, the pure clarity of the basic messages is refreshing.

Nature serves as the primary thread of continuity through the book. Graceful metaphors and imagery of earth and sky and living beings flower the pages. Whether the reader is in the confines of a steel, concrete, and glass edifice or a city transit line, he cannot help but experience the heady breath of all creation.

As so often is true, the poems and myths sing of music and the songs dance as poems. Perhaps the fact that these aesthetic elements were so vitally parts of most American Indian cultures makes this happen. One good example of the product of this natural fusion is found in the statement of Dan Yazzie, a Navajo medicine man, "Concerning Wisdom, A Fragment."

*I perform the Beauty Way.
I am over eighty years old.*

What more can be said except *The Magic World* flows. . .

