

sickness and death, a record of archaic shamanistic practices, and an awareness of the Ojibway people's common ancestry. The shamans of the *Mide* Society and their ceremony helped the Ojibway people to deal with the awesome mysteries and often terrifying urgencies of life.

The shamanism that was an accepted mode of spiritual existence among the Ojibway people of the Great Lakes region before European contact has survived into the present. What distinguishes the Ojibway shaman as a religious type from the prophet, priest, yogi, or sage, according to Grim, is "the shaman's particular capacity to evoke resonance with the natural world," which he claims, "appears again as a need for our own time" (207).

*The Shaman* is a well-documented and written study of an important aspect of the North American Indian experience. Numerous illustrations help the reader gain a better understanding of shamanic practices. Grim's bibliography will be of interest to both the specialist and the general reader, but his index is rather meager. Perhaps the major weakness of the study is the author's failure to explore the legacy of shamanism among the contemporary Ojibway people.

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**Alex Harris and Margaret Sartor, eds. *Gertrude Blom—Bearing Witness*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984) ix, 150 pp., \$14.95 paper.**

"This jungle filled me with a sense of wonder that has never left me. It has cast a spell over me, and I always return to it . . . I have seen all this perish. It started almost imperceptibly." Gertrude Blom, a political activist and refugee from Europe, arrived in Mexico in the 1940s. In 1943 while working as a journalist she joined an expedition sent to observe the Lacandon Maya in the dense rainforests of Chiapas bordering Guatemala. She encountered these people at the pivotal point when they were still self-sufficient and worshipping Mayan gods but beginning to feel the impact of the "comesinos" settlements on the edge of their jungle. In the 1960s, government logging companies forged roads deep into the rainforests followed by thousands of homesteaders and "la milpa que camina" (slash-and-burn agriculture practiced on a vast scale). From 1943 to 1963 she worked with her husband, the late Frans Blom, an archeologist and cartographer. In the last forty years, Gertrude Blom has been attempting to save and document, a major portion through photo-documentation, the culture and land of the Lacandon Maya and neighboring groups. *Gertrude Blom—Bearing Witness* speaks to her

effort through four essays and over a hundred of her finely printed black and white photographs. The book coincided with an exhibit of her work at the International Center of Photography in New York.

The book opens with Alex Harris's essay introducing the remarkable story of Gertrude Blom's work in Chiapas. He describes her as "journalist, photographer, social activist, and explorer, part anthropologist, and ecologist, and, it would not be an exaggeration to state, part legend." He assigns her to the ranks of the other great social photographic observers: Laura Gilpin, Dorothea Lange, and Eugene Smith. He and Margaret Sartor, co-editor, had the difficult task of sorting through 40,000 negatives at the Blom home and site of cultural study in San Cristobal de las Casa. Seeing her photography as documentation, Blom stated, "But I am not a photographer!" and gave them free rein in the selection process. Reducing the photographs from 40,000 to around 100, Harris explains that they chose to step away from the traditional use of her work to illustrate specific anthropological or historical themes "to communicate in a more universal and perhaps richer way, without being bound by the concerns of one or another discipline." The essay by anthropologist Robert M. Laughlin explores life in the villages of Highland Chiapas. He quotes a Highland prayer that is spoken in couplets at high speed to create a code.

The fiery heart,	
The crimson heart	a witch
Your lordly sunbeams,	
Your lordly shadows	corn
Our flower,	
Our leaf	cane liquor
A sliver of Your passion	
A splinter of Your Cross	money.

And goes on to say that "things are not what they seem." This matches Harris's defense of their photographic editing approach. Next, James D. Nations expands on Gertrude Blom's role as cultural and environmental conservationist, giving a thorough history of the land exploitation in Chiapas and aspects of cultural impingements.

The bulk of the book (100 pages) is dedicated to the exquisite black and white photographs that are arranged, as Harris promised, out of chronological order. They portray aspects of daily life and ritual events and are mingled with scenes before "la milpa que camina" and after in the jungle or what was jungle. As time and space in their ordering has been jumbled, the images, people, and details are forced to stand on their own or take on new relationships with the photograph on the opposite page, providing a different insight like the prayer poem. The book concludes with an essay by Gertrude Blom that reads as an historical lament to the destruction in Chiapas, adding that the jungles are burning as she writes.

This book is a carefully executed look at Gertrude Blom's photography and life in southern Mexico and at the culture and land she is attempting

to save through the work of four decades. The wealth of detail in the photography and essays makes it a worthwhile book to examine closely.

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**Gerri Hirshey. *Nowhere to Run: The Story of Soul Music.* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985) xvi, 384 pp., \$6.95 paper.**

Gerri Hirshey's book was conceived, according to her preface, as a series of literary spotlights, illuminating the world of "Soul Music" and the musicians whose performances and recordings created it. In its final form, the book became a collection of semi-biographical sketches combining loosely connected narrative with quotations from the stars themselves, transcribed from Hirshey's many interviews. Her expressed intent was to create "a book of voices" speaking of their music, their lives, their hopes, fears and expectations. The title is taken from the song made famous by Martha Reeves and the Vandellas (1965) and reflects emotions expressed by many of the singers interviewed: impatience with the fickleness of the public and record companies, frustration with the relentless pace forced upon them by their careers, and, often, despair at their inability to control the careers that both enthrall and entrap them. "Soul music," Hirshey suggests, ". . . for a few years . . . gave many of us somewhere to run—to get out of ourselves, to *feel* free, if only for 2½ minutes a side."

The anecdotes and dialogue transcriptions have been well-chosen and provide unique perspectives of the musicians behind the "voices," revealing them as fully dimensional people as well as entertainers. The dominant figure throughout is James Brown who provided the original inspiration for Hirshey's book. Other notables discussed (and quoted) are Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross, Isaac Hayes, Ben E. King, Wilson Pickett, Solomon Burke, and Sam King, to name only a few.

Hirshey's style is casual, her prose a light patter of slang and colorful descriptions. While this informal "chatty" style may have been appropriate to the interviews, her indifference to context and syntax poses creates unnecessary difficulties for the reader. The continual flashbacks, for example, which serve as touchstones throughout the book, are disorganized, disjointed and create an illogical chronology.

The book is represented to be history of "Soul Music," yet one looks in vain for a clear definition of the performance style and musical characteristics Hirshey refers to or considers "Soul Music" to be. Also lacking are coherent descriptions of the other musical styles referred to throughout the book: Gospel Rhythm and Blues, the sources of Soul, or