Flower, Song, Dance: Aztec And Mayan Poetry

a new translation
by
David Bowles

Flower, Song, Dance
Aztec and Mayan Poetry

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Synopsis
Winner of the 2014 Soeurette Diehl Fraser Award for Best Translation from the Texas Institute of Letters. In pre-Colombian Mexico, song and dance were vital components of daily life. However, all that is left of this vast tradition of lyrical verse are fewer than 200 poems, most contained in three codices written just after the Spanish conquest. In this new translation, David Bowles employs the tools of English verse to craft accessible, powerful versions of selected songs from the Aztec and Mayan civilizations, striking a balance between the features of the original performance and the expectations of modern readers of poetry. With full-color illustrations, a thorough glossary and insightful introduction, Flower, Song, Dance brings a neglected literary tradition to life for the 21st-century.

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Customer Reviews
Flower, Song, Dance is an important book, so much so that I hope it becomes a fundamental text that inspires the imaginations of a wider audience to explore this vastly under appreciated part of our culture, the roots of who we are. These poems are a testament to what it means to be a human in this vastly changing world. But most of all, these poems are a genuine joy to read; while the subject matter may be a little foreign to some readers, the raw emotion, the crafted images, and the spirit they evoke are absolutely timeless -- "leaving me numb with delicious bliss," (13).

This book of poetry, translated by a poet, offers a rare opportunity to understand the Aztec and
Mayan civilizations by way of their literature. I read it as part of my research for a piece of short fiction I'm writing, but I'm glad my research led me in this direction. I might add that the illustrations throughout are beautiful, and there are discussion questions in the back of the book for educators seeking to add it to student reading lists.

The sensibilities of the native peoples come to life on the pages!

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