ForeWord Reviews

BODY, MIND & SPIRIT

Violet Forest: The Shamanic Journeys in the Amazon
Foster Perry
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Enter the forest, the metaphor by which seeker/traveler/workshop leader Foster Perry draws readers into his mythopoetic spiritual journey. These are medicine journeys to sacred sites and shamanic teachers and life. Four sections define his focus: Death of the Fathers; The Violet Forest and the Violet Bardo; Purification and Self Deception; and Facing the Lesser and Greater Guardians. Death of his father serves as a "Gateway of Understanding" to richly described encounters with indigenous tribes, exotic settings in Brazil, Peru and Bolivia and shamanic adventures that include psychoactive plant substances to enhance spiritual development.

The richness of the South American environment comes alive as the backdrop for Perry as he courageously reveals his personal sexual foibles with his workshop participants. His shamanic teachers may be trees, plants, centaurs, hummingbirds, healers, seducers, parents, partners, students and strangers. It would seem that he and the implied "we" move through a perfectly designed landscape revealing ourselves to ourselves, and to Earth. Very significantly, one of Perry's visions recalls and reveals the Eleusinian mysteries. The revealing of these mysteries would have meant a loss of life during the time of Plato, and they have stubbornly remained inaccessible into the 20th century. Here they are credibly described in detail as the hierophant successfully faces initiations. Tests reveal if we are ready to let go of the past and accept responsibility for our humanity. Perry claims that "it is true for all of us to participate consciously again in these mysteries in our present bodies while alive." The subtitle misleads as the shamanic journeys take us inward and are not necessarily in the Amazon. Though unique, Perry's journey is every one's. Myths emerge alive and applicable. Author of When Lightning Strikes a Hummingbird, Perry is also the director of The Hummingbird Foundation in Santa Fe, N.M. He is a spiritual healer, teacher of experiential workshops and leader of medicine journeys in more than twenty countries. This honestly written book nudges appreciation of Perry's awareness that rides through a rough terrain of realities. Moving with ease between inner and outer worlds is no small task. And then there's the celebration of his courage to undertake the inward journey to self mastery that awaits us, one and all.

Sophia Tarila