

# Would you mind talking some about poetry and language and shamans?

Words, our language or any language humans speak, are imbued with the emotional energy of their speakers, shamans have always been known as speakers of dreams.

Through their stories, poetry, and language they have tried to communicate things to others that were perceptually difficult for most. They have seen in ways that others have not and their words are laced with the power of their vision. The words, the inflections, the variations of rhythm and syntax in human communication, are and have always been shamanic tools. The shamanic voice, as perhaps you've heard and used at times, is powerful and capable of reaching people just as intensely as pure movements of energy. They have always stood that way I think, as soothsayers, poets, bards, people who had within their vision something others did not and sought to communicate in ways that affected people into understanding through words. Language is powerful and the need to communicate here is woven into the fabric of our being on genetic and energetic levels. Babies, when you talk to them at birth, have been shown to respond in the speech centers of the brain, even though they don't yet know speech or the world for that matter, so the need is deeply ingrained in us and shamans have, through time, sought to use that direct connection into our energy as well as all the other means.

*Would you say all great poets are/were shamans at heart?*

In many ways yes, they held that aspect of life within their art form. Some more than others, but definitely when you read great poetry the power of the words comes through and the images created are just as real as though a shaman around a campfire had drawn a picture in the sand. I think it is a telling aspect of our times that poetry has become unpopular with people - no desire to be touched, fear of being touched - fear of seeing anything in any way that might challenge their preconceptions.

I think they have lost contact with it because they have lost contact within their own experience with the joy of life itself, just because it is. I think expressions of the shamanic come through various places and forms, although they may not all be how we strictly define it, they are still valid as ways of seeing. As a person who has written a lot of bad poetry I always appreciate the power in the work of people who write good poetry :). It's tough to distill things down and get just the right mix in the power of the words.

Artists are all trying to communicate their vision and I think that shows very often in their work. Shamans are trying to communicate their vision, so in a sense they are very much alike in some

ways. And I think at times, with some artists and some shamans, they have crossed over between the two.