



# Black Hawk Songs

*Michael Borich*

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Black Hawk Songs is a 30 poem sequence about the famous chief of the Sauk and Fox tribe. They examine Black Hawk's transformation from boy to warrior to chief to defeated, embittered old man. They probe the conflicts he faced along the way: man against man, man against nature, man against himself. The poems are about the battles he waged, his relationship with the white man and with members of his tribe, his vision of himself. In a larger sense the poems are about the Indian experience in America-- they tell a story of lost lands, of men broken, of tribes decimated. As critic and poet Laurence Lieberman has commented, "it is a very painful book to read, since so much of it is a severe indictment of the white American culture."

"Passionately unafraid renderings of a collective past in that energized language Borich manages to control so well as a spiritualizer of the word." -- Michael S. Harper, poet "In this themes which range from violence to intense feelings for humanity, Michael Borich evokes brilliant images of a past America. His obvious kinship with the world of Nature allies him with the spirit of the American Indian." -- Dee Brown, author of Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee "The constructions are striking, active, engrossing." -- Library Journal "Borich's poetry is powerful and effective in portraying a certain vision of the past." -- Poet & Critic "The poetry's great drive, their inner coherence, above all their urgent restoration of an almost-lost past make this one of the most impressive first books I've read in a long time." -- John Unterecker, poet and critic "He had forced into words anguish in loss, courage in the face of defeat, honesty in the face of deceit and an abounding affirmation of origins." -- Books Abroad "When Borich is writing of the Indian experience he is capable of a weird clarity and freshness of perception." -- Parnassus, Poetry in Review "Profoundly uplifting, for the rage and indignation is balanced by a gentleness of spirit and a profound reverence for life. There is much radiant spirit in these poems. Borich has achieved a totally effective poetic style and a distinctive voice. The consistent high level of craft and technical discipline is simply amazing in a first volume of poetry." --Laurence Lieberman, poet and critic "The poems are brilliant! Marvelous!" -- Susan Wooldridge, author of poemcrazy: freeing your life with words

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