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TWO INCANTATIONS

KUMAN (Chimbu, New Guinea)

Apaline, jump, twist,
reflect beauty,
face the East,
from every direction
suits, suits searching.
Stretch, stretch arms, legs,
on the mountain.
Lie in the decorated bamboo
with open mouth,
cassowary bones so dry
black feathers, white feathers,
round stones rolling
from South, North, West.

Translated by Theodore Banda

SAPOSA (Solomon Islands)

Aeroplanes

You birds, big and white
you are strange and swift
stiff winged creatures
mocking us from above
Arrows cannot reach you
spears cannot reach you
o ancestors
release your powers
shatter them to pieces.

Translated by Larius Hulo