

AXIS MUNDI

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AXIS MUNDI

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The beginning of a circle is also its end. Not I, but the world says it: all is one. And yet everything comes in season. - Heraklitos of Ephesos



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In addition to our regular Full Moon Circles we also run workshops and classes which are highly interactive and experiential, focusing on participation and engagement of participants. If you want to keep abreast of SOL's circles, gatherings, workshops and activities please click on the banner below to check out our Events Calendar.



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Cover – Harvest Goddess
www.hollysierra.com



FROM THE EDITOR



During 2012 I suspect we will see more and more people seeking answers to life's questions, and some will no doubt be going through a process of great transformation.

Interestingly, in numerology 2012 adds up to a Universal 5 number, (2+0+1+2=5), and 5 represents a restless intensity which seeks freedom to express its self through bold action and impulsive behaviour. So I guess we can expect the unexpected, especially as the number 5 also represents the hot planet Mercury, which forecasts at the very least an energetic and eventful year.

As we venture forth into this fantastic new landscape, it is important to know that there really is a higher plan and purpose at work. It just may be difficult at times to distinguish exactly what that higher plan is.

So now that we are being propelled forward at breakneck speed to live our truth, to embrace life with new vision and to live it to the max. The time is ripe, for each of us to rise above ourselves, and to be the change that we really want to see in the world.

So Happy New Year and blessings to everyone and let's make sure whatever happens during 2012 we set aside time for some fun and laughter.

Blessings,

Janine Donnellan

“Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens.”

Kahlil Gibran

Magical Workings for January & February

Each month I will be looking at the full and dark moons and other special events and I will be discussing the various types of magic that can be enacted for the appropriate moon sign.

Belief in magick and particularly the use of spells are universal and have been an integral part of religious practices since ancient times.

Methods vary according to culture but all spell work is based on ritual. A spell-casting ritual raises power and energy through a combination of visualization, meditation, identification, body movement and projection of will. The success of a spell rests on the energy and will power raised, together with the skill in which they are focused and projected. Words, chants, songs, and movements, objects such as ritual tools, effigies, poppets, cords, and candles, as well

as materials such as parchment, herbs, oils and others, all facilitate spell casting.

Of course before any magick is created, you must think of the spell's implications. There really are just two rules for spell crafting and they are to do no harm and to not remove someone's free will and choice.

Ask yourself these three questions before you decide to cast a spell:

- 1) Have I done everything I can to resolve the situation without magic?
- 2) Will this spell harm another, or bend someone's will to mine?
- 3) Am I prepared to accept the consequences of this spell, whatever they might be?

Remember making magic is a powerful and transformative experience. In the midst of the spell, you become the subject, and you become the result. Make sure that what

you're asking for is something you'd like to become.



9 January Full Moon in Cancer

This is the sign the Moon rules, and her power is very strong. Cancer rules security, myths and archetypes, nurturer, looking the past, traditions, home and hearth, helping others with problems, sentiment, keeping secrets, water in general, especially in lakes, oceans, rivers and streams.

This is a good time for enacting spells for home, Mother, family, children, food, psychic abilities, divination, past lives, real estate, weather workings, planting and raising food crops.



23 January Dark Moon in Aquarius

Aquarius rules peers, surprises, circumstances beyond your control, the future, causes, social awareness, astrology, anarchy, advise and advisors, bettering the human condition, energy and energy work,

meet new people, trustworthiness, aspirations, bigotry, peer group pressure.

Dark moon Spells Used for rejecting those things that influences us in a negative way. Negative emotions and bad habits can all be let go and special spells for clearing can be performed at this time. especially for eliminating things from your life or moderating or freezing certain behaviours which could include friends, jobs, debts.



Lughnasadh 4 February

Lughnasadh (Loo-nah-sah) takes its name from the Celtic God Lugh, who dedicated this festival to his foster mother, Tailtiu. Tailtiu was the last Queen of Fir Boly, who died of exhaustion after clearing out a great forest so that the land could be cultivated. On her death bed, she told them to hold games in her honour, and as long as they did, she promised that the harvest would be great and they would not be without song.

This is the first of the harvest festivals as well as being one of the four greater fire festivals. The Goddess slowly transforms from Mother into Crone. Traditionally celebrated on the Second day of February, we also see the Sun God also slowly once again disappearing.

As a fire festival we see bonfires lit in the hope they will add strength to the powers of the waning sun. Afterward, the fire brands can be kept in the home throughout Winter as

protection against storms, lightning and fires that are caused by lightning.

Lughnasadh marks the beginning of the long awaited harvest. A time when spring plants wither, and drop their fruit and seeds, seeds we collect for future crops. It is usually a tradition for the youngest child in the family to cut the last sheath and make a corn dolly from it. This figure, braided into a woman's represents the Harvest Spirit.

The doll would be saved until Spring, when it was ploughed into the field to consecrate the new planting to ensure a good harvest. In other traditions, the corn dolly was fed and watered throughout the Winter, then burned in the fires at Beltane to ensure the continuation of good growth.

Lughnasadh - Waxing Moon in Gemini

Gemini rules things of a dual nature, words, cars, telephones, transportation, short trips, relatives ,neighbours, gossip, and connections in genera.

Good opportunity for spells for memory, intelligence, ideas, travel, cars and transportation in general, buying and selling, commerce, siblings, writing, teaching and learning, adaptability, computers, communication, networking, tool consecration.

Harvest Spell

Set an orange candle on either side of the caldron. On a piece of small paper write the things you have harvested over the past year, light the paper from one of the candles and let it burn in the cauldron. After it is done put some corn or squash seeds in the cauldron. Stir the seeds with your wand visualizing white light coming from the tip of the wand, filling the cauldron and entering the seeds. When you feel the seeds have absorbed their fill stop, put the seeds into another container to be kept on the altar until next year's planting.



8 February Full Moon in Leo

Leo rules play, fine arts, being a host/ess, celebrations, hobbies, love and romance, gambling and speculation, loyalty from others both giving and getting and investing, stocks and bonds.

This is an excellent time for spells for creativity, fun, self-expression, play, vacation and leisure, investments and speculation, selling a home at a good profit, recognition, pride



22 February Dark Moon in Pisces

Pisces rules escapism, addiction, the past, drugs, potions and elixirs, humanitarian concerns, the water cycle, water in the oceans, salt water.-

This is an excellent time to tap into your psychic abilities, contacting other planes, merging with Deity, spirituality, confinement, hidden enemies, past lives and karma, reincarnation, magick, potions, brews, poisons, cleansings, secrets, finding lost items, banishment, exorcism, mediumship, examining hidden aspects of yourself, mental health and psychic healing.

Fruits, Vegetable & Nuts of the Season of Summer



We are all aware that the ancients were much more in tune with the Earth's natural seasons and cycles. What they ate was determined by what could be grown locally and what could be grown, stored and preserved through the cold winter months. In today's world, we've gotten used to having any kind of food we want, whenever we want it.

Gone are the days when growing our vegetables or even walking to the local

market was the only way to get fruits and vegetables that were available and in season. Today's consumer knows that the bounty of produce in their local supermarket is just as likely to include broccoli in July as it is in December.

Yet fruits and vegetables in season are much more supportive of not only your health, but also the health of the planet.

Did you know that when you buy fruits and vegetables that are NOT in season:

■They have to be brought to you across long distances, if not from across the globe. In fact, some statistics suggest that fruits and vegetables at your local supermarket travel between 1500 and 2500 miles before they get to you. Doesn't suggest "fresh," does it?

■They are picked while still immature, to ensure that they don't spoil along the way. Not only does this affect the fresh taste and aroma of your fruits and vegetables, it causes vitamin degradation and nutrient loss.

In fact, researchers have confirmed that vegetables picked and frozen while in season are actually higher in nutrients than the same ones that were transported off season, from abroad!

■Shipping fruits and vegetables over long distances has a huge impact on our planet: increased greenhouse gas emissions, atmosphere pollution, and depletion of the earth's limited energy resources!

The Body Ecology system recognizes that for us to have a healthy inner ecology (inner ecosystem), we must respect the Earth's ecology.

Pollution, pesticides and farming practices that strip the soil of minerals lead to foods that do not support our health. It is no surprise that people are experiencing mineral deficiencies and poor health.

For this reason, it's not just fruits and vegetables in season that is important, it's also choosing organic fruits and vegetables. Learn what fruit and vegetables are available each season and try to eat only those of the season you are in. Your body knows the difference.

January - midsummer - fruit

apricot, banana, berries - blackberry - blueberry - boysenberry - gooseberry - loganberry - mulberry - raspberry - strawberry, cherry - morello (sour), currants -

red currant - black currant, lemons, lychee, mango, mangosteen, melons - honeydew - rockmelon - watermelon, nectarine, passionfruit, peach, pineapple - smooth leaf, plum, prickly pear, rambutan, starfruit, tamarillo.

January - midsummer – vegetables

asparagus, avocado - reed, beans - butter - green - snake, capsicum, celery, choko, cucumber, eggplant, lettuce, okra, onions - salad - spring, peas - green - snow - sugar snap, radish, squash, sweetcorn, tomato, zucchini, zucchini flowers.

February - late summer - fruit

apple - aba, banana, berries - blackberry - blueberry - boysenberry - loganberry - raspberry - strawberry, fig, grapes - cardinal - muscat - sultana - waltham cross, guava, kiwifruit, lemon, lychee, mango, mangosteen, melons - honeydew - rockmelon - watermelon, nectarine, orange - valencia, passionfruit, peach, pears - howell - red sensation - williams, plums, prickly pear, rambutan, rhubarb, starfruit, tamarillo.

February - late summer - vegetables

avocado - reed, beans - borlotti - butter - green - snake, capsicum, celery, chilli, choko, cucumber, daikon, eggplant, leek, lettuce, okra, onions - brown - salad - spring, peas - green - snow - sugar snap, radish, squash, sweetcorn, tomato, zucchini, zucchini flowers.

Reference:

<http://www.victoriaorganicdelivery.com.au/seasonalchart.php>





February Workshops

Facilitated by Janine Donnellan

Feb 18th - What is Wicca

You will be introduced to basic Pagan philosophies and you will learn the mechanics of circle casting and creating sacred space. You will experience alternate realities through meditation and ritual.

Feb 25th - Aura Reading

At this workshop you will learn techniques to read and interpret the colours of the Aura and how to apply this knowledge in your everyday life.

Janine Donnellan from Spheres of Light and as seen on Psychic TV will be the facilitator of these workshops.

Where: Lotus Health & Wellbeing Centre

246 Crown St, Wollongong 2500

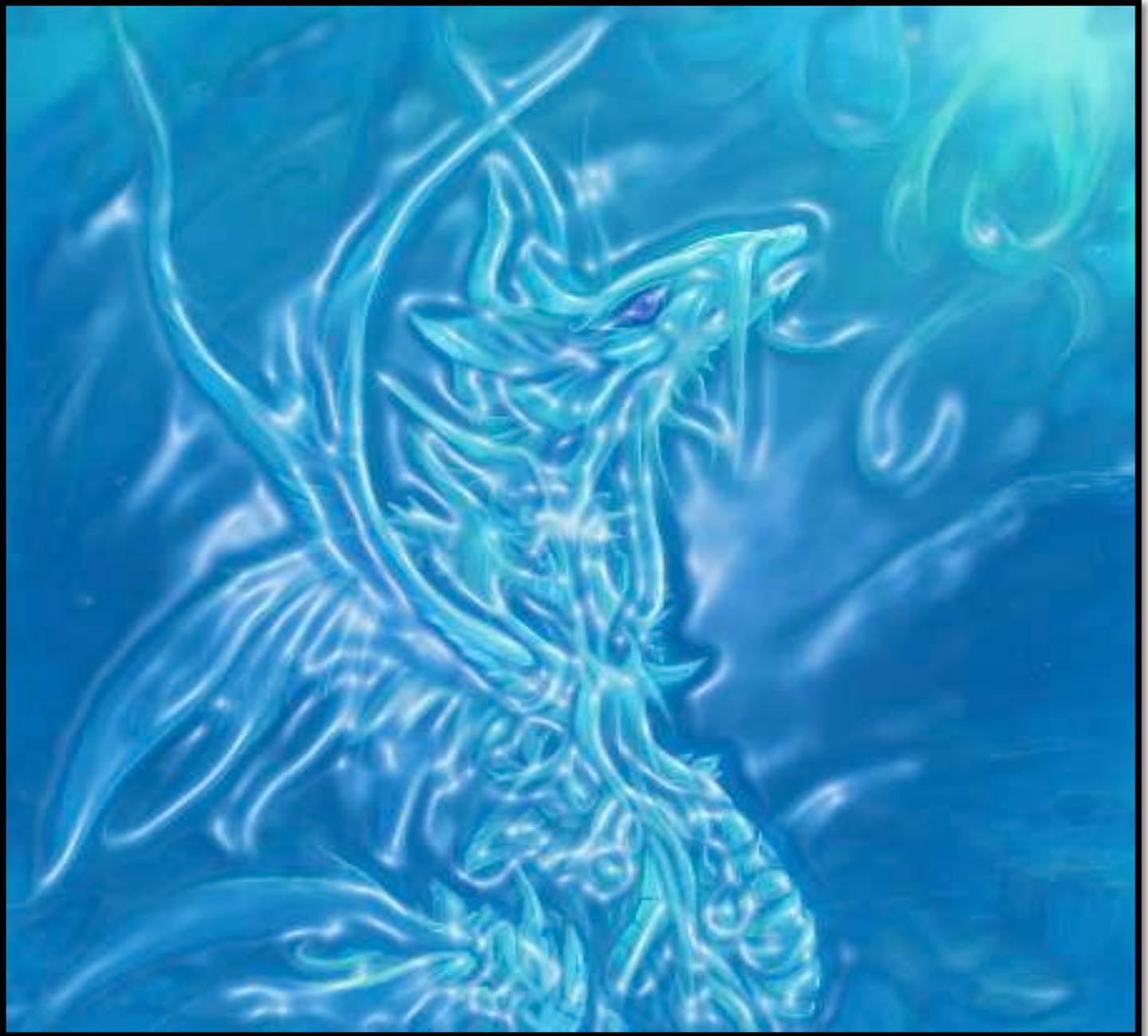
Cost: \$45 includes notes

Bookings: 02 4226 4740

or email info@lotuswellbeing.com.au

2012 Year of the Water Dragon

By Janine Donnellan



Strange as it may seem, well not so strange to some I guess, I have to say I am a Water Dragon, and yes saying it does give my age away, but what the heck it is only a number anyway.

Well from a 2012 perspective, we are all wondering what kind of events this year will bring? Many expect 2012 to bring about the end of the world, perhaps because they mistakenly think of Mayan or Hindu cosmologies as linear rather than cyclical.

The Dragon is a legendary animal and it is symbol of the emperor in China. Chinese believe that the dragon is unpredictable, untouchable and generally people cannot see its head and tail at the same time. Therefore, we can come to a conclusion that we might see something unexpected happening in 2012.

Most people know that water covers 2/3 of our planet & comprises 70% of our bodies; we simply cannot live without it. In Chinese element theory, water produces wood, which

signifies growth and is the natural element of the dragon. The dragon governs east/southeast, wealth accumulation.

Associated with thunder, lightning and arousal, the Water Dragon personifies creativity at its best. The colour of Water in Five Elements system is related to Black. Therefore we can say 2012 is a Black Dragon, Water Dragon or Black Water Dragon year. This is in itself another interesting synchronicity as my protection totem animal happens to be a rather large black dragon which I have named Jack, he does have another name which is a secret.



Water is known to calm the Dragon's fire. Water Dragons are able to see things from other points of view. They don't have the need to always be right. Their decisions, if well-researched, are usually better since they allow other's to become involved.

Occupying the 5th position in the Chinese Zodiac, the Dragon is the mightiest of the signs. Dragons symbolize such character traits as dominance and ambition. Dragons prefer to live by their own rules and if left on their own, are usually successful. They're driven, unafraid of challenges, and willing to take risks. They're passionate in all they do and they do things in grand fashion. Unfortunately, this passion and enthusiasm

can leave Dragons feeling exhausted and interestingly, unfulfilled.

The dragon is both feared and revered not only by the Chinese but also by almost every ancient civilisation. Fables tell of the wisdom and beauty, as well as the evil and tyranny, of the majestic mythical beast.

The Europeans – whether the Anglo-Saxons of middle Europe or the Vikings of the North – have their favourite tales of the dragon.

Those originating from Britain will remember the fable of St George, who rescued a fair maiden from being sacrificed to a mean and ferocious fire-breathing beast.

The Vikings believed that the dragons fought with their gods, and very often won such battles. The ancient Scandinavians hero-worshipped these creatures, and even named and designed famed war boats after them. The ancient Greeks and Egyptians shared the Vikings' belief that the dragons fought constantly with the gods, and their battles were responsible for earthquakes, floods and all sorts of disasters that we blame today on nature.

Basically, in the ancient west, dragons were always portrayed as baddies, if not evil itself. Even these days, Hollywood movies would, more often than not, portray the mythical flying and fire-breathing beast as a destructive force. However we that are in tune with the dragons see them as pure sources of energy and an ancient reservoir of incredible wisdom.

In the east, the dragons were the good guys – often seen as divine beings or blessings from the gods and a symbol of wisdom, wealth and power.

The 2012 warnings from the Mayan Calendar are believe it or not also linked to Dragons. The dragons will appear from the sun and from the galactic rift. According to the Mayans the end of the creation cycle happened in 2011 and the new cycle will begin in December of 2012. It is a time where we move into an area of the Zodiac that at one time was devoted to a character who was known as the "serpent bearer" or the "serpent

god". Many others call this area of the zodiac the "dark rift." The dark rift is in Serpentarius (Ophiuchus), the home of the serpent gods it has also been called "zero point" or the point of creation.

The ancient Gods of the Maya and similar cultures were flying serpents or "dragons." There are many who have speculated that these fiery serpents were not serpents at all but huge comets or meteors that hit the earth causing floods, climate changes, and extinction level events.

Is it also a coincidence that the dragon or serpent is wielded in the hands of Ophiuchus as the symbol of healing? Metaphorically, could the appearance of a dragon serpent wielding Ophiuchus in our sky be an auspicious omen, denoting an imminent and unfolding transitional time – cosmically are we destined for a resynchronization of our time? How can that apply to all of the prophecies that have been held by all of the great prophets? From John the beloved to Nostradamus the future has been written and it includes the metaphoric manifestation of the Dragon.

The snake or serpent has long been a symbol of knowledge, wisdom and healing in occult traditions of many cultures; and secret societies. The Dragon, Ouroboros, Asclepius and Caduceus iconography are the most prominent among them.

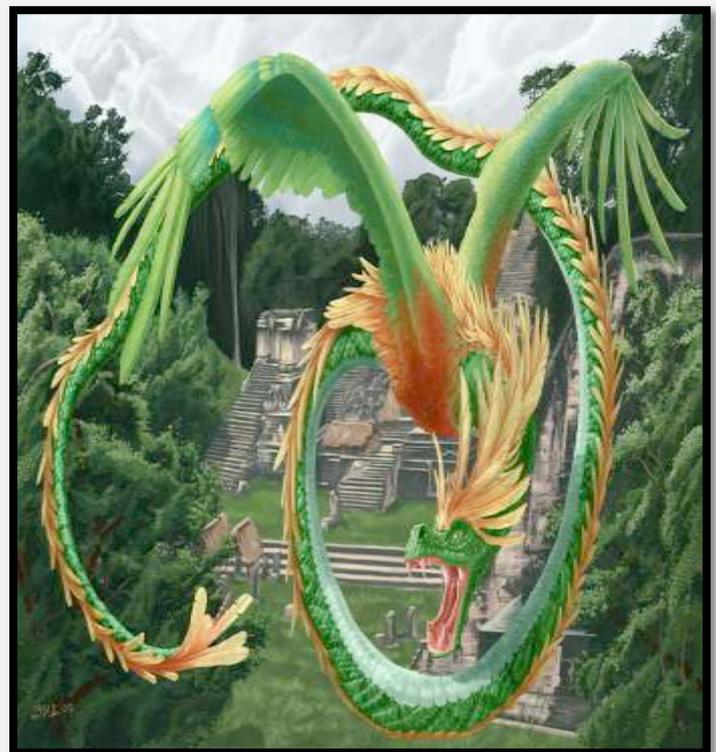


As we are aware the Dragon of the year 2012 is a water dragon and coincidentally the year is significant because of the Mayan traditions that speak of their feathered serpentine or dragon god Quetzalcoatl. Quetzalcoatl is often associated with Ehecatl, the God of the wind, that symbolizes the forces of the nature. For that reason the feathered serpent is related to the energy of the rain, the celestial water and its associated winds.

The winds are changing and the advent of fire, water and earth will possibly play a significant role in the New Year. It is the year of the Dragon and how we care for the metaphor for which it stands determines our safe passage into a new time that will synchronize and push us forward into a new evolutionary cycle. I definitely think this year will be a case of buckle up and prepare for a ride of your life.

References:

- <http://www.chinesezodiac.com/dragon.php>
- <http://www.chinesefortunecalendar.com/2012-ChineseHoroscope.htm>
- <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/1/20/focus/10281713&sec=focus>
- <http://www.groundzeromedia.org/2012-the-year-of-the-dragon/>
- <http://el-grimlock.deviantart.com/art/Quetzalcoatl-2-0-130714779?moodonly=1>





HOLLY SIERRA'S ART



Holly Sierra's paintings are vibrant and colourful and showcase the artist's fascination with multicultural themes, ancient folklore and spiritual wisdom.

Whether wandering through the forest or exploring an ancient crumbling castle, Holly

Sierra finds inspiration all around her. Holly has been drawn to painting things 'mystical and magical' for as long as she can remember. Her highly decorative style reflects years spent living and studying in Asia, as well as her many sojourns to Europe where she revelled in the glorious artistic reminders of the Medieval and Renaissance days. During travels in the British Isles she became fascinated too with the wealth of ancient Neolithic and Megalithic sites dotting the pastoral landscape.

Holly Sierra's family inspired and supported her love of all things Pagan. She began reading the Tarot cards as a teen when her parents presented her with a lovely antique Italian deck! In her youth she felt a very strong connection to her Irish grandmother Siobhan ~Born in County Kerry, Siobhan displayed

uncanny abilities as a Tarot card and Tea Leaf reader.

Above all else, Holly has a developed a particular fondness for The Green Man, in any and all of his guises! Her art features a myriad of such enchanted beings, who beckon the audience forth, to explore their decorative fantasy worlds. With her endless penchant for detail, Holly hopes to encourage others to see life as she does ~ a tapestry of colour, design, beauty and light.

Much of the fanciful bounty from her imagination was put to good practical use during her days as a children's book illustrator in New York. Holly's paintings have graced magazine and book covers as well as greeting cards. One of her South-western paintings, 'Navajo Weave' is featured with the Leanin' Tree Company as a popular greeting card. Her Harvest Goddess painting was on the cover of last year's 'Sage Woman Magazine'. And her highly imaginative and detailed 'Mystical Goddesses' series is featured in prints and as greeting cards and is available online.

Holly makes her home in Stowe, Vermont with her husband, children and pets. She loves the Earthy, rural beauty of the Green Mountain State. She participates regularly in local art shows and exhibits her paintings at 'The Earth Art Gallery' here in Stowe. She is busy, at present, creating more mystical art for soon to be published 'Chrysalis Tarot' Card Deck.

HOLLY SIERRA'S INFO

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FLUORITE by Maria



Crystals have a way of showing themselves to you, popping up to say, 'hello, look at me, my turn, utilize me for your needs'. Well that is what happened this month via my niece, who instinctively knew what crystal was needed.

A week before I was due to break for the year I lost my footing down a flight of stairs and rolled all the way to the end. Nothing was broken only inflamed, so very thankful for that.

My niece witnessed the fall and it was she that led me to this particular crystal.

I have a healing wand; it's a combination of selenite and fluorite. I had it sitting on the bedside table and of course curiosity got the better of her, she asked what it was. She picked it up and used it, rolling the fluorite end on her own arm and off she went.

Returning later with the wand, she informed me that it works. She'd felt a tingling sensation

on her arm, that was how she knew it worked, and I should use it on my leg, 'it will work, my arm feels better' she said. Mind you there was nothing wrong with her arm; she is a very healthy seven years old.

So to confirm her prediction, I checked and sure enough fluorite is a powerful healing tool. The property that stood out for me, and helped concrete my nieces prediction was the fact that it assists in alleviating arthritis, mobility problems, rheumatism and spinal injuries.

Due to having to walk slightly off balance, my back was aching. I was also informed by my doctor that I have arthritis, so much for getting older; being unable to do things can be a bit frustrating. My right side took the brunt of the fall therefore I chose to wear my fluorite on my right hand.

Fluorite benefits teeth, cells, DNA repair, and respiratory tract complaints such as colds and flues. I have a polished piece of fluorite in my water bottle. I must admit I haven't had a cold or the flu for a number of years even though those around me have.

Fluorite is a protective stone it places a protective shield around your aura. So if you feel at times while in the company of others, you are depleted of energy carry a piece with you.

Another protection property of this crystal is its ability to block against computer and electromagnetic stress. I do keep a piece of fluorite near the computer, they say cluster is best but I use what I have available.

Fluorite is available in variety of colours, clear or white, pink, purple (violet), green and blue. Often these colours are combined within a specimen. Its internal structure form is octahedron.

"The octahedron is created from 8 equilateral triangles, and thus has eight faces and 12 edges. Its element is Air. This shape is symbolic of intellect, inspiration, new beginnings, and mental activity. Astrologically, the octahedron is connected to the air signs, Libra, Aquarius and Gemini."

"The Number Eight: octagon, the supernatural creates cosmically committed energies, Magical Movement into the Astral Plane, Eternity."

<http://crystal-cure.com/sacred-geometry-set.html>

There are many other healing properties attributed to fluorite, above is what stood out for me, what I needed to utilise from the crystal.

Its other properties such as dissolving illusions, revealing the truth, looking at the bigger picture, and learning from it certainly become evident. I pondered on questions such as; why did I fall, what was the truth behind it, what is required of me to bring body back into balance.

From any crystal there may be questions that reveal themselves to you, employ them, and look at the overall picture your wellbeing is

most important. Fluorite has been referred to as the stone of insight.

Now, I must point out that by no means is a crystal meant to replace medications or other requirements specified by a health professional. I use it as an add-on, to help the process of recovery along - every little bit helps.

Sheril Berkovitch - Crystal Workbook

Cassandra Eason - Compete Book of Natural Magick.

Lansdowne - The book of crystals...

Judy Hall - The illustrated guide to crystals & The Crystal Bible

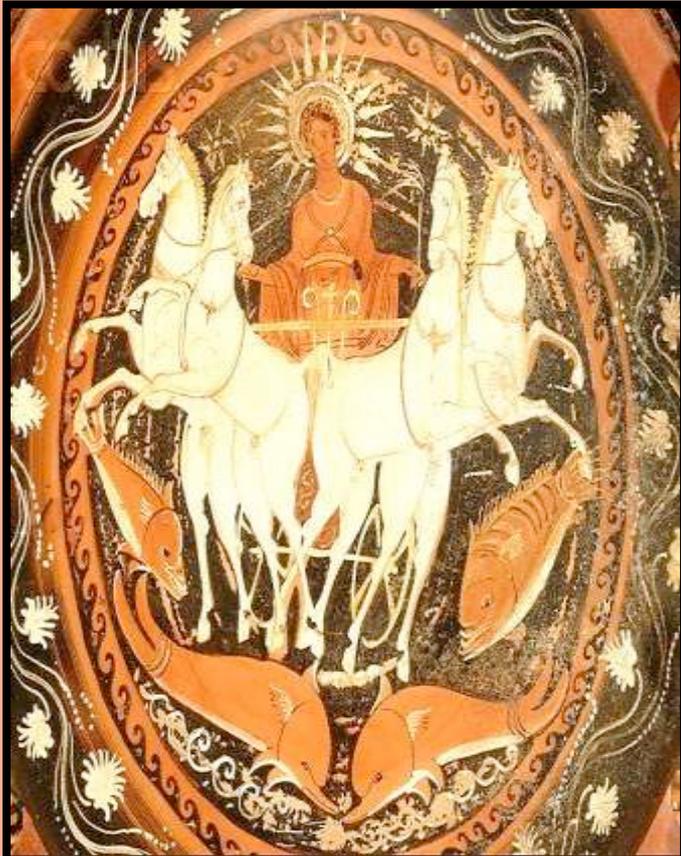
Simon Lily - Crystal healing

<http://crystal-cure.com/flourite.html> (picture)

<http://www.crystalvaults.com/>



HELIOS



Helios - The sun god rode his chariot of horses across the sky

The personification of the Sun in early Greek history was Helios, sometimes referred to as Helios Panoptes, the "all seeing." Because he he was called to witness oaths and promises. Helios was the son of Titans Hyperion and Theia, and the brother of Selene (moon) and Eos (dawn).

Helios was depicted as a handsome, and usually beardless, man clothed in purple robes and crowned with the shining aureole of the sun. Helios was identified with several gods including fiery Hephaistos and light-bringing Apollo. Roosters and eagles were associated with him.

Helios drives a fiery chariot across the heavens. By day he brought light to the world by driving his four-horse sun-chariot across the sky from east to west. By night, he sailed in a great golden bowl back to his home in the east, floating along the river of Ocean that encircled the earth. Helios dwelt in a golden palace located in the River Okeanos at the

eastern ends of the earth. From there he emerged each dawn driving a chariot drawn by four, fiery winged steeds and crowned with the aureole of the sun. When he reached the land of the Hesperides (Evenings) in the West he descended into a golden cup which carried him around the northern streams of Okeanos back to his rising place in the East.

Helios was worshipped throughout the Peloponnesus, especially on Rhodes (an island he pulled out of the sea), where annual gymnastic tournaments were held in his honour. The Colossus of Rhodes was dedicated to him.

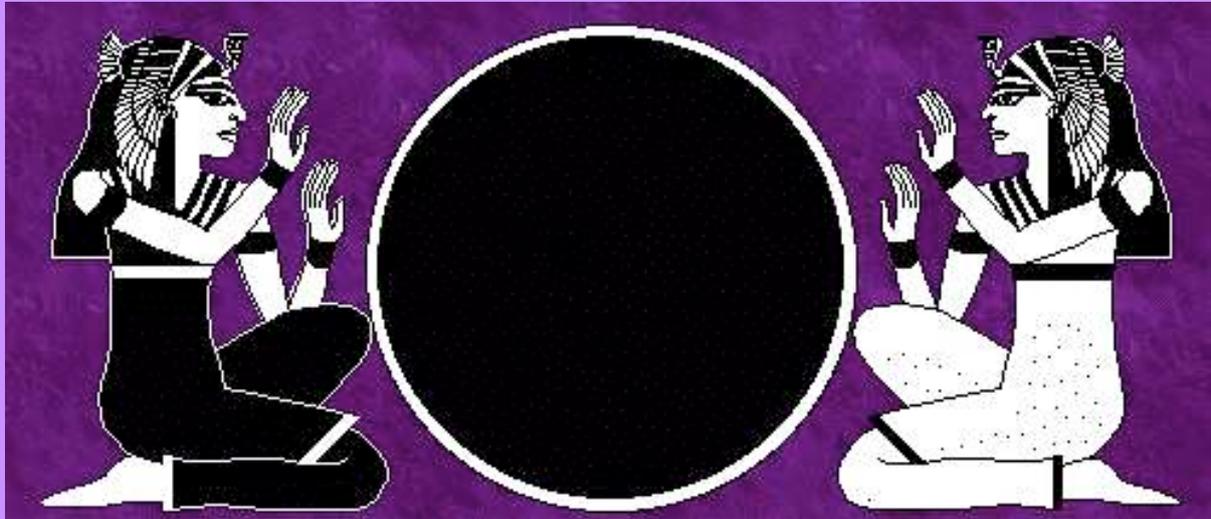
It was Helios the all-seeing to whom Demeter turned for information when she was seeking her kidnapped daughter, Persephone. She forced him to admit that indeed it was Hades, god of the Underworld, who had forcibly taken away Demeter's daughter, with the tacit approval of his brother Zeus. In anger she withdrew her services and the earth began to wither and die while Demeter wandered the earth in search of Persephone.

The most well-known story is about Helios's son, Phaëton (or Phaëthon), whose friends didn't believe him when he bragged that his father was the sun god. To prove it, Phaëton asked Helios to let him borrow the car (his chariot, the Sun) for a day. Because Helios had promised to give his son anything he asked for (talk about spoiled!), he eventually agreed. On the fateful day Phaëton panicked and lost control of the chariot. When it went too high the Earth began to freeze, and when it went too low the Earth was burned—supposedly how Africa got its deserts and the skin of its inhabitants became black. Finally Zeus had to intervene, striking the chariot with a lightning bolt, whereupon Phaëton was killed and fell into the River Po.

References:

<http://www.myastrologybook.com/Helios-Apollo-Hyperion-Sol-Sun.htm>

<http://www.theoi.com/Titan/Helios.html>



Understanding the Dark Goddess

By Frances Billingham

Who is the Dark Goddess and why is she important in our modern lives?

It is common these days for only one aspect of the Dark Goddess to be acknowledged – that of the Crone – but even then, She is often perceived as some kindly “grandmother” figure.

So when we call to Her – “Come Crone, come Dark Goddess”, it is little wonder that when Baba Yaga appears with Her gnashing teeth and dishevelled hair, we run shrieking for the hills. If anything, the Dark Goddess teaches us that life is not “sugar and spice”. She is our reality check.

The Crone, Hag, Wise woman – these terms are commonly associated with the Dark Goddess, the Keeper of the Cauldron of Knowledge and the Holder of the Keys to the Mysteries. However, She is also the one who forces us to not only acknowledge but to also embrace our demons. We call Her Baba Yaga, the Morrighan, Hekate, Cerridwen and the Cailleach.

When we try to pigeon-hole Her into the relatively modernised concept of the Goddess being triple in nature, this is often when the problems first start to arise. Many

of the Goddesses who are deemed as “dark” actually do not fit into the Crone/Wise Woman description.

The late Shekhinah Mountainwater identified with a “Dark Maiden”, the enchantress, the sorceress, and seductress. It

is here that we find Persephone, Sekhmet, Morgan le Faye, Pele, and Lilith amongst Her names.

Probably, the most terrifying aspect of the Dark Goddess, the one we try to ignore, is that of the “Dark Mother”, She who creates, destroys only to create again through Her power of transformation. Kali Ma, Macha, Oya and Scathach as just some of Her names.

Then there are those who cannot fit into any of these categories, and those whose classification as “dark” may come as somewhat of a surprise. For example, Demeter, the Greek Grain Mother, almost destroyed the world when She went into mourning for her beloved Kore could be termed as “dark”. Isis, the Great Egyptian Goddess (another “mother”), showed her “dark” side when she poisoned Ra in order to gain his magickal powers.

The truth is that there is really no such thing as a specifically “dark” or even a “light” aspect of Deity – Goddess or otherwise. What we refer to as “dark” or “light” are aspects to their nature that we are either comfortable with or not.

When talking about the Dark Goddess, Jungian psychology is never too far away. “Dark” represents the repressed shadow aspect of our consciousness and as Demeter George points out in her book *Mysteries of the Dark Moon*, it is often our conditioning that shapes our interpretation of the Dark Goddess and what She represents:

“Through cultural conditioning we have inherited negative and false images of the Dark Goddess, the dark aspect of the feminine. Distorted images of the Goddess include ‘bitch queen’, ‘outcast daughter’, ‘fallen woman’, ‘terrible mother’, ‘wicked witch’, ‘wicked queen or stepmother’, ‘domineering mother in law’, ‘bag lady’, ‘ugly hag’”

In *The First Book of the Dark Goddess*, Matomah Alesha offers an interpretation from a more historical perspective:

“She is a genetic, emotional, spiritual archetype that resides in all humanity. She is often pushed away or suppressed but she is never quite conquered or overcome. She is the black orb, the place where all of us collectively depend, emerge, and return to. This is symbolised as the cosmos, the dark earth, the unconscious body-mind, the world of the undead, the genetic mother Lucy, and Africa. She is all of these things and so much more.”

Alesha goes on to state that the word “dark”, when relating to the Goddess, should be considered as a form of energy that has the power, given the right circumstance, to change its shape into illuminating light. These colours change and alter to reflect the ever-aspiring consciousness and its ever-expanding reality as they are extensions of the darkness that give birth to it and are likened to rainbows, pastels in the sky, iridescent stars twinkling in the waters.

The Dark Goddess is also the story of humanity that intimidates the streamline mind of commerce and ego-identity. Within that story, however, is hidden a great spiritual mystery, a hidden truth which must be grasped for the whole story to be completely understood.

Working with the Dark Goddess calls for truth. She projects images of us that we often do not wish to acknowledge, let alone accept. She challenges us to break free of conformity, of our past, and to step beyond our comfort zone. She was with us at the beginning of time – even before time itself for She is its creator. It is She who greets us at the end of our days when we return to Her.

Vicki Noble, in an article for *Woman of Power* magazine, comments:

“The Dark Goddess is no light weight. She promises trouble, an end to form as we have known it, the death of the ego ... she is impersonal yet she erupts from deep within the human psyche with unexpected passion and rage. She is transformation in the extreme, and her power is regenerative and healing. Like a trickster, she frees us from the trappings that bind us to our tiny personal worlds; like the knife she cuts away all that is unessential and not truthful.”

Her faces and names represent the unknown change and even death – it is no wonder the Dark Goddess is shunned, ignored or even perceived through rose tinted glasses by our modern culture.

The objective of this presentation is to lay the foundation that will allow you, if you dare, to discover who the Dark Goddess really is for yourself. To come face to face with Her, to lift the veil and see what actually lies within – because the Goddess, in all Her guises, is reflected within each of us. When we work with, embrace, and acknowledge the Dark Goddess, we also work with, embrace and acknowledge those hidden or ignored aspects of our own selves.

Suggested Reading

- Dark Moon Mysteries: Wisdom, Power and Magic of the Shadow World by Timothy Roderick (Llewellyn, 1996)
- Descent of the Goddess: Studies on Jungian Psychology by Sylvia Brinton Perera (Inner City Books, 1981)
- Mysteries of the Dark Moon: The Healing Power of the Dark Goddess by Demeter George (Harper Collins, 1992)
- The Dark Goddess: Dancing with the Shadow by Marcia Starck and Gynne Stern (Crossing Press, 1993)
- The Moonlit Path: Reflections on the Dark Feminine edited by Fred Gustafson (Nicholas Hays, 2003)
- The Triple Goddess: An Exploration of the Archetypal Feminine by Adam McLean (Phanes Press, 1989)

Workshop Details:

Each year, following the Southern Samhain (the ancient Celtic festival of the Dead) and the May Dark Moon, a workshop is held where participants are invited to journey into the hidden depths of the Underworld where they will meet the Keeper of the Secrets and the Cauldron of Inner Knowledge, the Life Transformer, the Mover and Shaker, the Sorceress ... and all the other names by which the Dark Goddess has been referred to.

Facing our shadow, the inner aspects of ourselves that we hide from view and refuse to acknowledge, is often a very painful experience – but it is also necessary in order to liberate ourselves from the past and to embrace all what the future has install for us.

Through our own fear, we often ignore or misinterpret the Dark Goddess because it is She who reflects our own mortality – however, it is She who also guards the magickal Cauldron of Transformation.

Through ritual, myth and magick, we journey into these hidden depths together to face our shadows and open ourselves up to be transformed under the protective guidance of the Dark Goddess.

In 2012 participants will:

- Journey into the Underworld where Lilith, the most often misunderstood Goddess, will provide insights into accepting your own self worth from the core of your being;
- Be confronted by the ultimate Dark Mother, Kali-Ma, who will assist in clearing the stagnation from our lives;
- Be encouraged by the Egyptian lion headed Goddess, Sekhmet, to take control of our life and our own inner power,
- Dance the rhythm of life with the ancient Sumeria, the Death Goddess, Ereshkigal, as she holds up the mirror to your soul, and
- And finally, you will arrive before Baba Yaga, Slavic Crone, will offer you initiation into your own true self – if you are brave enough.

Date: Saturday, 26 May 2012 (10.30am to 4.00pm)

Investment: \$100.00 (includes detailed notes on each Goddess and refreshments)

Venue: Temple of the Dark Moon covenstead is located at the rear of a private residence in Parafield Gardens, Adelaide (within walking distance from Bus Stop 37 Salisbury Highway). Details provided upon registration.

About the Presenter:



Frances has been a student of metaphysics and the occult for most of her life, with her training occurring in England as well as Australia. She founded the Temple of the Dark Moon in

1999, and spent six years as secretary for the Pagan Alliance Inc (South Australia) before resigning to focus on her writing. A regular contributor for Insight magazine since 2002, her articles have also appeared in many national as well as international publications, including Witchcraft and SpellCraft (Aus), Rainbow News (NZ), The Cauldron (UK), New Witch and Circle (USA), and the 2008 Llewellyn's Witch's Calendar. Frances also have contributed an essay on death from a Pagan perspective for the upcoming anthology Memento Mori.

Frances led the opening ritual at the 2003 NZ Pagan Festival alongside Chief Druid, Philip Carr-Gomm, and returned in 2010 where she was accompanied by occult philosopher, Ramsay Dukes, in both the opening and closing rituals. She has presented lectures on the Dark Goddess at the Australian Wiccan Conference (2009), Australian Goddess Conference (2010) and Gaia's Garden (2011); as well as a lecture on the Dark Gods at the Australian Wiccan Conference (2011). An avid writer, Frances is endeavouring to have her first book published in 2012.

Whilst based in Adelaide, if you would like Frances to present a lecture or workshop near you, she can be contacted through the Temple of the Dark Moon:

Contact: Frances
Phone: 0401 788 790
Email: frances@templdarkmoon.com
Website: <http://www.templedarkmoon.com>

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SEASONS OF THE GODDESS

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Blessed be. Tricia Szirom

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The Sacred Horse Drum by Caiseal Mór



properly appeased, saluted, honoured and cleansed.

Then, the maker ceremonially enters into a negotiation with spirits of the drum, the timber frame, the drumstick and all the various parts. The process is unlike anything that takes place in the consumer world of manufacturing and marketing. A Siberian style drum is much more than a mere musical instrument designed for entertainment.

The defining feature of a Siberian drum is way the skin is painstakingly stitched to the frame. It's an incredibly slow process compared to the simple lacing at the back of a Native American frame drum and a very tricky business to keep the skin taut while you're stitching. If you make one mistake the drum skin can be damaged beyond repair.

The drums I make are not consumer items. They are magical artefacts and spirit tools. Drums open up the spirit world for me and for many other trance practitioners around the world.

There are many types of trance drum but there's one particular style of instrument I've always wanted to make; a Siberian style drum. These are quite different from the standard Native American style drums or the double-ended Himalayan style shamanic drums I usually make. A Siberian drum is a much more challenging and time-consuming experience to construct.

Siberian and Mongolian drums are very similar and the shamanic practices from those areas belong to very ancient traditions. In fact the word we use to describe a spirit healer or traveller between the worlds - shaman - comes from this region of the world. The tools of a shaman are considered a magical technology and thus sacred. Every material element that goes into the making of a drum has spirits attached to it that must be



I decided the only way to master this skill was to try my hand and, if necessary, fail. I don't consider any project a failure if I learn from my mistakes. Over the years I've done a lot of research on the subject of Nganasan, Tungus (Evenki), Kamchatkan, and Mongolian drum traditions in preparation for this project.

Then came the next challenge and it's proved to be a big one. I love the sound of a deerskin drum and my whole body tingles when I play the deeper cow or bull skin drums. I have a strong connection to both of these creatures but it's nothing compared to the connection I have with horses. And traditionally most Siberian and Mongolian drums are made from the skin of a horse.

Now I suppose some of you will shudder at the thought of making a drum from a horse skin. I think this aspect of the process has been the main reason I haven't made a Siberian drum up to this point. Horses have been true teachers to me. They have been gentle guides and wise companions. My life has been blessed with many horse friends. Now and then I've been severely criticised by vegans because I make drums from animal skin rather than plastic. My argument is that spirit drums are about striking up a working agreement with the spirit of the animal that gives the skin.

My part of the contract is to honour the spirit of the creature that was, most likely, treated as little more than an expendable possession by the humans it came into contact with. Unlike most modern people I don't believe that the skin is dead. I hear the spirit of the animal singing through its skin.

As for plastic drum skins - I don't like plastic full stop. It's one of the most polluting substances on the planet. It's made as a by-product of the oil industry and it's toxic to most life. The spirit of greed in which it has been produced is as inhumane as the mass slaughter of animals for food. But I don't feel that plastic can be redeemed. It will haunt our species for thousands of years.

Every horse I've ever known has been a strong spirit. In Siberia and Mongolia the horse is considered the most powerful of all

helper animals, a true friend to humans. In fact the word in the Mongolian language for drum, Omisi Murin, is better translated as Spirit Horse or Sacred Horse.

The repetitive playing style of Siberian shamans, known as Riding the Spirit Horse, is quite different from dance drumming or performance based music that's all about musical skill or ego satisfaction. The shaman's drum is meant to induce a deep trance state in both the drummer and the listener.

In early December 2011 I located a horse-skin treated by a tanner who knew where the skin came from. Before I knew what had hit me it arrived. Though I was very nervous about getting it right I realised I had to take a deep breath and get on with the job. On Xmas eve the skin was measured up, trimmed to size and stitched around the outer edge to keep it from tearing.

Part of the process of a drum being created is acknowledgement of the spirit of the animal that's going to be guide to the spirit world. On this occasion as I stitched I spontaneously started singing a wordless humming melody under my breath. I've never heard it before. I'm sure it came from the spirit of the horse.

As I sang I promised to treat the skin with respect. I promised to honour its life by using the drum only for positive, creative, life-affirming purposes and never for selfish reasons. I can feel this horse had lived a good life because the spirit is very friendly and protective. Since then I've had very clear dreams about this horse many times, both awake and asleep. It often invites me to ride on its back and takes me on wonderful adventures.

On Xmas day I spent 5 hours stitching the skin to the wooden birchwood frame I'd prepared for the purpose. It's 26 inches or 66 cms in diameter. It's one of the biggest drums I've ever made. My hands, back and legs were aching afterwards. And, though it all seemed to go well, I was very concerned that I'd done a good job. You can't really tell how it went until the skin starts to dry.



To my relief the wet skin took only 24 hours to settle in, dry out and begin to sound good. After 48 hours it was already a great drum and I really haven't stopped playing it since. Did I mention that Helen puts up with a lot from me?

On New Year's Eve we filmed the shadow puppet sequence you can see here. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wtr_zTIUa_b8

I'm a big fan of shadow puppets and I've made many over the years. I hope this is just the beginning of many more to come. I like to think of shadow theatre as Paleolithic Public Television. No commercials.



Helen, my wife, made the drum-beater from half a red deer antler. The other half of the

antler forms a handle stitched to the outer rim of the drum. I wanted to be able to play the drum while the shadow puppets danced so I left the back clear without an internal brace or handle.

Caiseal Mór

Caiseal Mór is an author, musician, drum maker, painter, sculptor and spiritual seeker. He makes tribal style drums from recycled materials and holds workshops on trance drumming using these musical art objects. Caiseal has been practising trance drumming and trance dance for 25 years. Caiseal is the author of seventeen books and novels. He has produced nine CDs of original music and plays many instruments and performs at festivals all over the world. More information about his drums and books, plus samples of his music, is available from his website: <http://www.mahjee.com>



Dragon Drumming

by Jenny Taylor



This is the story of how my newest drum came to be.

It was over a year ago now, in late August 2010, when I discovered the music of Caiseal Mór via Facebook. The following month I bought a couple of his albums as well as 2 of his books. I was fascinated while reading about the process involved in creating his drums, with how he tunes the drum shell, speaks to the skins and connects with the spirit of each drum he makes. At that stage I'd never seen what Caiseal's drums looked

like as there were no photos on his website (which has since been redesigned and now has many photos) but I already knew I'd really love to have one.

I didn't even know if he was still making drums, or if he'd even consider making one for me. I knew that when he made them he only made a few each year. I didn't feel confident about commissioning a drum so I waited. I knew that if it was meant to happen it would, all in good time. I also decided to do some magic and created a sigil to put my

intentions out into the universe, just to help things along with my dream of having a Mahjee drum.

A year went by, after which I had forgotten about my sigil, but not about my wish for a drum, although I hadn't actually thought about it for quite a while. Then one drowsy November Sunday morning I drifted into a wistful, dreamy, otherworldly, psychically sensitive, disconnected-from-reality state of mind that sometimes happens to me (but is awkward to describe). I am usually drawn to burn incense and light candles when this mood strikes and have great difficulty engaging in any of the mundane jobs around the house that I should be doing. Most people would just call this plain old laziness and procrastination rather than anything 'psychic', hehe. However, after lighting the candles and incense on my altar I opened one of the drawers in the cabinet beside it where I keep a lot of my 'witchy paraphernalia' and, still in my dreamy, 'absent' state of mind, started rummaging through it, having long since forgotten exactly what little bits and pieces I'd put in there. I found a small piece of parchment-styled paper with an intricate sigil carefully drawn on it in black ink — the sigil I had created a year ago for my drum — along with a couple of talismans created for previous spellwork. I decided it was time to clean out the drawer but it didn't feel right to just throw the items away so instead I did a small ritual, focusing mainly on the drum sigil, then burned it and the other items one by one in my cauldron to release their energies to the universe. The ashes were then returned to the Earth and the cauldron was cleaned and put away. The mood passed and I reluctantly got on with my 'housewifely duties' again.

Three days later I noticed another 'dreamy mood' coming on and felt compelled to listen to some of Caiseal's music, which I hadn't played for a while. As usual I lit some candles and incense and while listening to the music I decided to check out his public Facebook page, which I also hadn't done for quite some time. I was ecstatic to see that Helen had created and uploaded a beautiful flyer to promote Caiseal's drum-making and she'd posted a message encouraging people to contact them if they'd like to commission a drum! Woohoo! I noted that the flyer had

been uploaded on Saturday evening — only 12 hours or so before I had 'randomly' felt the need to do a ritual, burn my drum sigil and start thinking about a Mahjee drum again ...hmmm ...coincidence? ...or not?!

Finally, the perfect opportunity! I sent a message to them via the contact page on Caiseal's website and included a link to a blog about my drums which I had written a year ago so they could understand my requirements and advise me which style of Caiseal's drums would be most suitable for my needs. Helen replied the following morning and, having read my blog, was wondering what prompted me to contact them when I did as, unknown to me, Caiseal was actually starting on the first drum in his latest batch that very day. She said he sometimes only makes one or two batches a year, so the timing of my request was interesting. She was also wondering if maybe the universe might have sent me as part of the 'help' she had asked for in manifesting extra, sudden, unexpected income. Gotta love synchronicity!

They recommended the "Heart Drum" (56cm dia. x 20cm deep) or the "Mother Drum" (56cm dia. x 40cm deep). I deliberated over this briefly then chose the "Heart Drum" as it would be physically easier to handle while still having a lovely deep voice. I emailed immediately to let them know. Helen replied that they were both excited and that it was strange, as Caiseal had already started on a 'spare' Heart Drum that morning! She said, "These drums are so amazing... full of synchronicities... I think the universe really wants them to be made."

I love it when apparently random things all come together in such a meaningful way — the definition of synchronicity actually. I guess the universe was letting me know that the time was now definitely right to ask for a drum!!

After my drum was born the next stage was to decide on what artwork I wanted Caiseal to create for me. Naturally I wanted a Dragon on the drum, and although I didn't know exactly what I wanted it to look like I knew it had to be a "western" dragon rather than an "eastern" dragon. I sent a few examples which I found online, then instead of seeing

Caiseal's final design first (which was offered) and discussing it and any changes I might want, I decided to take a leap of faith and trust that Caiseal had been guided to create something I would really like. I am very happy with the result... I love it!

While I was waiting for my drum to be completed and finally sent to me Helen kept me updated with photographs of its progress. So, I spent some time blogging about my impressions about the artwork and many other aspects of what I saw as my "journey" to becoming the 'parent' of this beautiful new baby drum. You can read my blog entry and see more photos, including the lovely drum bag that Helen made, at <http://dragondreaming.wordpress.com/2011/12/20/dragon-drumming/>



On the Wings of My Dragon Drum

by Jenny Taylor

Early one morning I finally had an opportunity for some uninterrupted quiet time (or so I thought) to try some trance drumming with my new drum. I settled back on my bed in a comfortable position and began drumming a steady beat, trying to quieten my conscious thoughts and let myself drift into a dreamlike meditation or trance.

After a while the sound of my drumming somehow changed the quality of the sounds from outside my house — the birds, aeroplanes, distant traffic noises — and they all blended together to become the rushing sound of the wind carried along by the steady drum beat.

An image of thick rounded cumulus clouds formed in front of me. They had shadows of yellow and violet within them, outlining their billowy folds and starkly highlighting their otherwise clean, white fluffiness. I flew through the clouds, higher and higher through their cool damp mist until I was above them in the clear blue sky. Looking down, the clouds looked softly solid, as if I could curl up comfortably on them and go to sleep.



I flew on for a while, marvelling at the sensation of flight and absolute freedom of gliding on the breeze, before descending through the clouds to see the earth below. As I flew closer I realised I was flying over a large pine forest that stretched for hundreds of kilometres over undulating hills and partway up along the sides of the snow-capped mountains ahead. The green of the trees was in stark contrast to the blue sky and the white, yellow and violet colours of the clouds.

My attention was diverted upwards again, as I saw the shape of a dragon begin to form in the clouds. It gradually took on a slightly darker, brownish tone which set it apart from the rest of the clouds. Large wings spread out either side of the dragon's long, curved neck, then it slowly faded away as the clouds it was made of were dispersed by a gentle breeze. Flashes of bright yellow suddenly flooded my mind.



A woman's face then flashed into view. She had pale skin and long, wavy red hair hanging down past her shoulders and I could see just the top of her sky blue gown. Below her shoulders the rest of her body faded into white mist over the bright yellow background. There were beautiful dark pink flowers in her hair, on her left, and she had piercing blue eyes that looked straight at me, and through me, before she too faded into cloudy oblivion. The image of a grey rabbit now floated in front of me. The rabbit blinked at me then casually hopped a short distance away and started nibbling at the grasses and other small plants and flowers growing at the edge of the pine forest which was now also revealed. Then the rabbit disappeared into

the cool shadows of the forest and that scene also faded.

I was back in amongst the fluffy clouds, flying over a distant landscape with the sound of the wind rushing in my ears. A white silhouette of a rabbit flashed past to my left, then the head of the dragon reappeared in the distance in front of me. I followed the dragon but the closer I got, the more it started to dissipate back into indistinct cloudiness.

A word started to form in my mind. Before now I had never consciously heard this word, which I felt was probably a name, and I saw it spelled in two different ways — Galaya or Gallaea — before it too faded from my sight and hearing, only to be replaced by white mist and the rushing sound of the wind. I had no idea who or what it was.

I continued drumming as the wind grew louder and louder, but I soon realised something was starting to feel very wrong. I was disappointed to find that I was being pulled out of the meditation. The sound of the roaring wind was now right outside my window rather than in the dreaming place and it was quickly transforming into the noise of a very loud, early morning street-cleaning truck on the road directly outside my house. Damn it!! I would have liked to have stayed longer but I guess trucks and traffic noise are just part of the environment for an 'urban shaman'. In spite of the noisy intrusion it was an interesting and successful first journey with my Dragon Drum.

Whenever I'm given information during a meditation I always Google it to see what turns up. First of all, there's the dragon, which I assume to be an Air dragon which can have the following meaning:

The Air Dragon brings represents inspiration, vitality, intellect, respect, insight and illumination. This power animal must be handled with the greatest of respect. With this power animal, large flashes of illumination in intellect and psyche are possible. Insight and clarity will be given for all problems. As always – trust your inner voice.

Second, there's the rabbit which as a totem animal can have the following interpretation:

Receiving hidden teachings and intuitive messages. Active around dawn and dusk, (the time of the fairies and fauns), they are guides into the mystical shadow world and it is said that if you follow after it the rabbit will lead you to the fairy realm. Rabbit is known for its ability to procreate and fearful thoughts will procreate (manifest) into what you fear. Movement by leaps, living by one's own wits, not getting boxed into a corner. Take advantage of opportunities that may present themselves only for a brief moment. Examine the foods you eat and perhaps eat more of a vegetarian diet. The Rabbit is a spirit animal that is extremely open to one on one communication and when approached as an equal it will show great wisdom and guidance. ...some good advice there.

It turns out that Galaya is the name of a town in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and is part of a name for another town in China (Galaya Linchang) but it also happens to be a feminine first name and has the following meaning:

The name of Galaya creates an easy-going, good-natured personality, meeting and mixing easily. You appreciate the company of others, to the point that you do not like to be by yourself for very long. You are gifted with natural expression, both verbal and musical, but you would find it tedious to study music and practice theory. Anything that involves concentration or just plain hard work, you prefer to avoid as best you can. Although you have many creative, original ideas, procrastination is your worst enemy because you can seldom make decisions and carry them out. The name Galaya creates the urge to be self-expressive and happy, but we point out that it causes procrastination and lack of confidence, and thus you are unable to realize your goals and ambitions. This name, when combined with the last name, can frustrate happiness, contentment, and success, as well as cause health weaknesses in the liver, bloodstream, and fluid systems. Hmm... very interesting! ...but not totally 'me', except for the procrastination part, lol. I'm not sure of the significance of this name turning up in my meditation ...some shadow attributes to contemplate perhaps?

The word Gallaea was more difficult to find anything about (that didn't involve online games) but eventually I found the following information:

The priests of Attis and Cybele of Phrygian and Greek mythology, known as Galli or Gallaea, perform a yearly ritual, mostly wearing yellow clothes, to purify the body of the dead Attis. A pine tree is chopped down, covered with violets and carried to the shrine of Cybele on Mt. Dindymus (Dindymon). Afterwards Attis is mourned for three days, Cybele brings him back to life and there is a wild and joyful celebration.

Now, I have no idea of the significance of this within the context of my meditation either, or if there is any significance at all, but it is interesting that I randomly picked up on the colours yellow (also represents Air and Spring) and violet (not quite the flower but the right colour), pine trees, mountains, and a woman — perhaps the Goddess Cybele? Although, the rabbit made me wonder if the woman was the Goddess Eostre (Ostara). Then again she might not have been a goddess, or maybe she was another expression of 'me', or it may all mean absolutely nothing and simply be the results of a pleasant but random wandering in the dreaming place. Who knows? Perhaps more will be revealed in my next attempt at trance drumming.

Sources: Cloud photo from www.distilleryimage1.s3.amazonaws.com/10399c98332a11e180c9123138016265_7.jpg
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Register now at <http://earthsong.australiareclaiming.org.au/>
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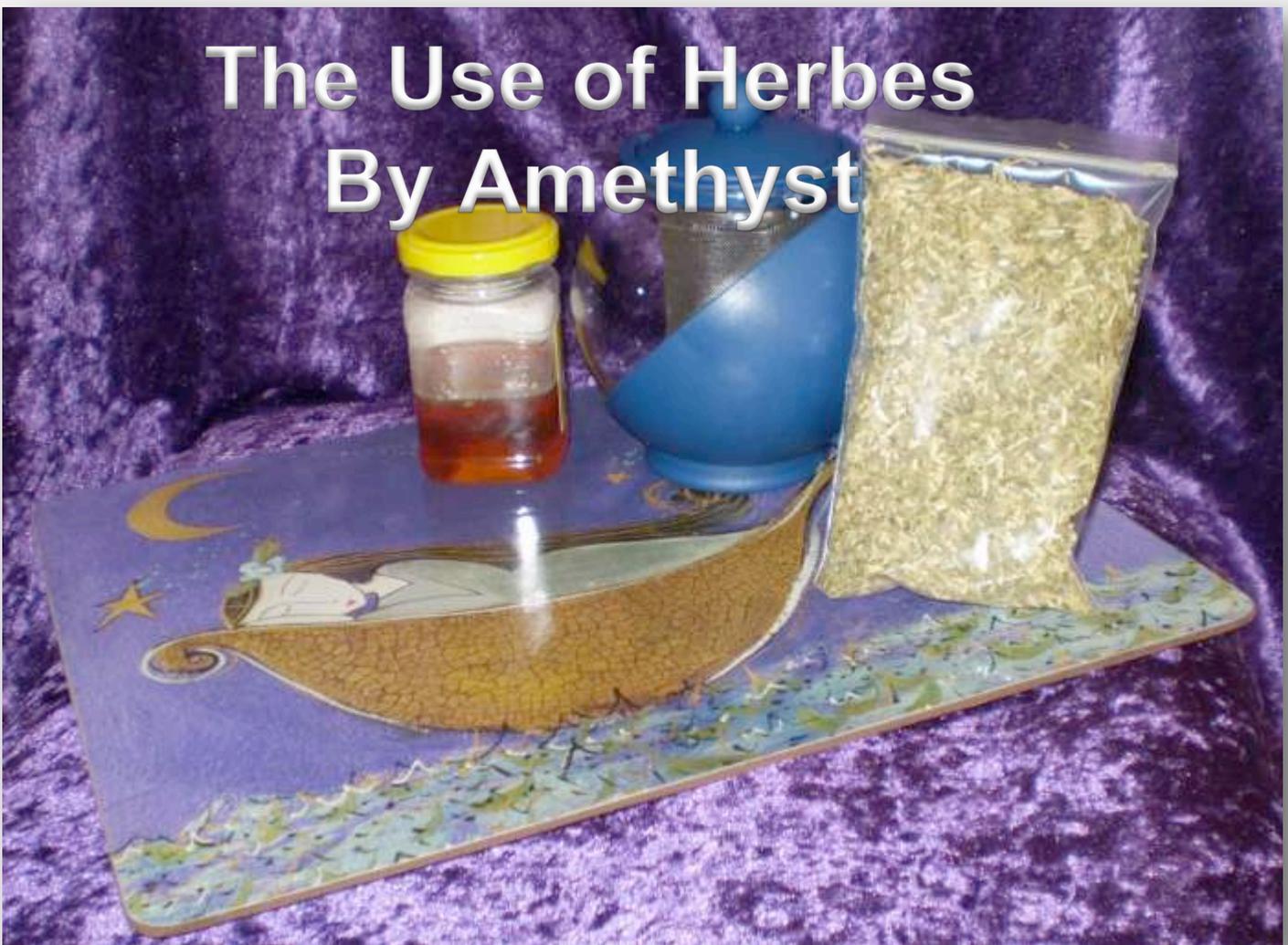


Reiki Treatment Contact

Zoe Wilson 0435 778 975

thirtythreeenergyhealing@gmail.com

The Use of Herbes By Amethyst



This month instead of writing about a herbe, I thought I'd write about an aspect of the use of herbes.

If you're like me (an asthmatic), you may find that you need to find different ways to use herbes than inhaling (or smoking), such as used in incense. You will hear people tell you of their great highs or magickal insights gained from inhaling (or smoking) magickal herbes, but you know this aspect in the use of herbes is denied you. A funny case in point - I attended a ritual where rose petals, rose essential oil etc were used. I'm decidedly allergic to roses, so instead of missing out on the ritual, I wore a man's handkerchief tied bandit fashion throughout. Even I thought I looked funny, I got to attend the ritual, but still missed out on an aspect of it.

So why not try a herbal infusion instead! Make a potion (pot of tea), drink some, but reserve some to bath in. You may be surprised at the results.

The brewing of magickal potions is a traditional skill of witches. Images of cackling witches in Macbeth might come to mind, with their bubbling cauldron and horrible potion ingredients, or you may think of Cerridwen, whose legendary potion had to brew for a year to yield three drops of magickal elixir - but in reality, potions can be made quickly, simply and from ordinary ingredients.

Tea is magickal as it incorporates all four elements: boiling water (Fire and Water), herbs (Earth), and aromatic steam (Air). To make any cup of tea with magickal intent is to brew a potion. To drink a potion is to cast a spell, as you draw the magickal power of the brew into yourself.

A possible spell that you could use as you slowly sip your potion could be - visualize your desired outcome, then use the following words: "By the power of earth, air, fire and water, I imbibe this potion to work my magickal desire", or something with like meaning.



at least one to two teaspoons (or tablespoons if desired) of dried herbs per cup of tea you wish to make. Allow the herbs to infuse for at least three to five minutes before drinking (unless otherwise noted), and keep the liquid covered during infusion so that little steam is lost. You can imbue the herbe/herbes with your intent for extra oomph if you wish.

Note:

If a potion calls for a crystal or other stone, you place it in the cup with the tea, but you **DO NOT INGEST IT**. You wash the stone after you drink the tea, and reserve it for future use. Making sure that the crystal is safe to be used this way.

References:

- <http://wackywitch.vpweb.com.au/blog/2011/01/12/Making-Magickal-Brews.aspx>
- <http://hafapea.com/thelandoffaepages/teas.html>
- Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs by Scott Cunningham

Pictures:

- <http://wickywoman.blogspot.com/2011/04/planetary-correspondences-mercury.html>



Some suggestions from the Net for DREAMER'S TEA

Lavender, Mugwort, Chamomile, Peppermint, Passion Flower and Rose Hips.

Rose petals/Hips, Lavender, Mugwort, Chamomile, Chrysanthemum blossoms, Peppermint, Rosemary, Lemon balm, Catnip, Valerian Leaf or root and Ladies slipper.

Rose Petals, Mugwort, Peppermint, Jasmine flowers and Cinnamon.

The basic ingredients for a potable potion are:

1. Water - tap water will do at a pinch, but pure water (filtered or spring) is preferred. Distilled water is inert, so has no magick of its own.
2. Sweetener – honey has magickal powers of its own (attraction), candied ginger would bring in its own magick. I'm not a fan of the cut grass taste of some herbes, so I use honey myself.
3. You could of course just use sugar (but not an artificial sweetener please).
4. Your pot, preferably not a metal one, unless specified.
5. And of course the herbe or herbes of choice.

Before ingesting any herb you've never used before, you'll need to be sure that you know exactly what it is you're taking - **NO GUESSWORK!** - Also be sure not to use anything that you're allergic to.

For a suggested recipe to make the potion/tea strong enough to work, you'll need

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SPACE CLEARING CONSULTATION

Sometimes your house or office can feel uncomfortable, and there is no real reason to explain your uneasy feeling. Other times, it's easy: someone has been there that was negative, ill or died. There may be instances when you moved into a space and just felt like someone else was there, or the space just didn't feel right.

Janine Donnellan from Spheres Of Light & SOuL Searchers can conduct a private space clearing in your home or business. Janine will clear negative or stagnant energetic 'imprints' built up over the years from the accumulation of day to day living and from previous occupants, replacing them with Love, Abundance, Prosperity, Good Health & Happiness.

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“Turning your 2012 Aspirations into a Reality”

Sunday 5th February 2012



This is a 2 hour workshop to show you how to magically enhance your spiritual & material life through positive empowerment and motivation.

You will be taught the basic techniques for casting a spell, plus you will be making a Spell Card which will encapsulate all of your hopes & desires for this year. We will be tapping into the power of the Leo Full Moon which is a great energy to create what really inspires you. You will also participate in a ritual to empower your card so that your desires can be fully realized.

Janine Donnellan as seen on Psychic TV will be the facilitator of this workshop

Whatever your goals are for 2012, whether you want to achieve financial freedom, get fit, or find true love, this is a workshop you don't want to miss.

**Where: Embrace, Shop 1015 Westfield,
Miranda NSW 2228**

When: Sunday 5th February 2011

Time: 5:30pm - 7:30pm

Cost: \$65 includes notes and supper

Bookings: 02 9531 0009

Fire ~ Maria

Of fire I seek

That power indeed

Life and will

Vitality I feel

Blood Red

Energy deep

That spark within

Flames so bright

Empowers your might

Initiates and inspires

Passion and Spirit

Towards the goal

With enthusiasm untold

That fire inside

That force of life

That gives power

On the darkest of nights

Challenging us

To transform

To rejuvenate

That cleansing force

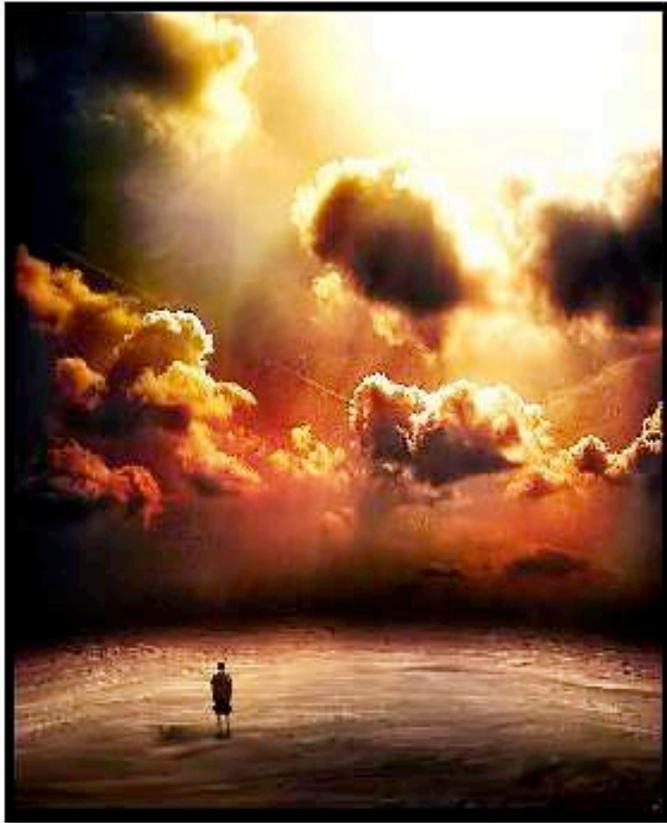
Burns away

What not need

Strengthening

Our lives indeed.

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Janine Donnellan from Spheres Of Light and as seen on Psychic TV will be the facilitator of the meditation sessions.

**Where: Embrace, Shop 1015 Westfield,
Miranda NSW 2228**

Cost: \$25

From: 6 – 7pm

Bookings: 02 9531 0009

2012 – Panic or Peace?

by Michelle Proctor



Detail of lid of King Pacal's sarcophagus, Palenque, Mexico

Despite being intrigued by everything 2012 for some years now, I'm not keen to experience the disaster hype of the just-released Hollywood movie, 2012. In contrast, even with its worrying flaws, the 14-part webcast offered mid-year by Drunvalo Melchizedek (author of *Serpent of Light: Beyond 2012*) offers a positive route through the daunting Mayan prophecies.

Drunvalo was allegedly chosen by Don Alejandro, 'the living Dalai Lama of the Maya' * to share on behalf of the Maya their 2012 message, which he reveals toward the end of his extended webcast. According to Drunvalo, the Mayans believe that reduced magnetic fields will cause at least 30 hours of extreme darkness without even the light of the stars to guide us. During these 30 black hours, the layer directly beneath the earth's crust will apparently 'melt' so that the earth's crust will slide along it and create an earth pole shift.

When light returns, each country will apparently be situated elsewhere on earth. For example (by my own fabrication!), Australians might discover that Australia is located where previously Russia was. Instead of reaching for sunblock to protect ourselves from the elements, we might need to reach for thermal underwear.

The Mayan message is that their ancestors have memories of significant earth changes such as pole shifts and have helpful information on what to do in such cases. This has been passed down through the generations, especially through Mayan star lore, which climaxes with the 2012 end-date. The Mayan focus on 2012 has helped provide a deadline to keep us wondering about and learning from the past, as well preparing for future earth changes.

So why should we listen to the Maya? For a start, they weren't even around at the last pole shift which was apparently some 700,000 years ago. Secondly, if the earth is going to go through a major cataclysm like a pole shift, it seems there's not much we can do about it, other than survive or die!

That's not the message of the Mayans. They encourage us to find ways to stay calm throughout the 30 (or more) hours of darkness so that as few of us as possible die of fright. Apparently it was fear that caused most deaths in previous earth-change phases recorded by the Mayans, even if those phases were not necessarily earth pole shifts.

It seems that the message of that Maya is that if we would like to still be around after 2012 to contribute to the new world and its fresh start, we need to stay calm throughout the 30 hours of pitch darkness. And perhaps this is why Don Alejandro chose Drunvalo as a spokesperson – Drunvalo has been teaching for many years now how to stay calm and in the heart in times of crisis. If we prepare for this time, then perhaps we can be like ocean surfers who contain their fear, ride huge waves and experience blissful transcendence.

Yet many commentators are suspicious of Drunvalo's intentions in broadcasting his 2012 web update and believe his ego has got in the way. There's quite a debate going on in spiritual/esoteric circles right now about the integrity of Drunvalo and Don Alejandro and whether or not we should believe them.

Certainly to a mainstream way of thinking, Drunvalo is a 'kook'. In *Serpent of Light* he describes how he is a 'walk-in'; i.e. a 'star being' soul that entered the human body of a departing soul and took it over before the body died. That certainly sounds like a quick and original way to incarnate! Yet it also sounds like fiction.

Even so, I know from my own experience as an energy healer and my personal inner healing journey, that it's worth considering Drunvalo's claims. Still many of us spiritual types are gullible to differing degrees. In wanting the world to be soulful, we often forget to ask the hard questions that more scientific types might naturally ask. Yet as they say, truth is often stranger than fiction; discerning between the two is a rewarding challenge.

Of course, Drunvalo Melchizedek is not the only person with something to say about 2012. A quick Google search using the keywords 'Books 2012 Maya' yielded over 2 million results. A skim read of the Wikipedia entry '2012 Phenomenon' mentioned some of the key authors on the topic, including John Major Jenkins, whose works I've read with interest over the past years.

Whether or not Drunvalo & Don Alejandro's message is authentic at least they emphasise

staying calm, unlike the recent apocalyptic blockbuster 2012. Any book, movie or other media that instils panic seems to me to be more out of touch with reality (not only about 2012, but about how to approach life in general) than 'a kook' like Drunvalo.

Surely it makes sense for us not to flip out, but rather to stay present to what is happening and participate in 2012, and indeed our daily lives, with conscious awareness. According to the Maya, conscious calm awareness is the very thing to focus on, not the details of the event itself (assuming a world-changing event does actually come to pass).

As an astrologer, I've been intrigued by 2012 for some years now. In a nutshell, the astronomical alignment behind the 2012 Mayan end date is the December Solstice Sun precessing across the Galactic Centre. It's rare for the December Solstice Sun to align with the Galactic Centre, but in cosmic timing, not that rare. It happens like clockwork every 26,000 years. The ancient Mayans somehow worked out that the next alignment would happen in a window of time around 2012, and they encoded this information into their mythology.

Ancient cultures commonly pass on interpretations of astronomical events through myths, stories and symbols. The Mayans were no exception. Integral to understanding the Mayan end date is the Mayan sacred cross. Linda Schele in *Maya Cosmos* explains how Mayan sacred cross symbols generally show the intersection of the Ecliptic (the path through the zodiac signs that we see the Sun travel around Earth each day) & the Milky Way (the galaxy that our solar system is within), where we find the Galactic Centre.

This cross image is particularly obvious on the famous lid of King Pacal's sarcophagus in Palenque, Mexico. It shows King Pacal ascending a tree (representing the Milky Way), the trunk of which is horizontally crossed by a double-headed serpent (representing the Ecliptic). Where the serpent and tree trunk meet, a cross is depicted, indicating the Galactic Centre.

It's only in recent years that astronomers have been able to analyse the Galactic Centre and they describe it thus: "hundreds of white dwarf stars, neutron stars, and black holes bathed in an incandescent fog of multimillion-degree gas.... the turbulent Galactic Center region affects the evolution of the Galaxy as a whole." <http://chandra.harvard.edu/photo/2002/gcenter/index.html> (viewed 20/6/08)

According to John Major Jenkins, author of *Galactic Alignment*, the Mayans, Hindus and Egyptians believed that periodic astronomical alignments to the Milky Way affect the transformation of consciousness. The Mayans particularly noted alignments to the Galactic Centre as markers of cataclysmic consciousness change. How interesting that science has only newly discovered that 'the turbulent Galactic Center region affects the evolution of the Galaxy as a whole'.

In ancient Mayan mythology, the home of the gods was at the centre of the universe, so it was important for Mayans to be sure where the centre was. Some argued that the Pleiades pointed to centre or the North polar star. The conflicting beliefs got debated by the different Mayan peoples at Chichen Itza in the 9th century AD and the winning location was determined to be what they called the 'black hole' or 'cosmic crossroads'. Amazingly this is the very same supermassive black hole we now scientifically know to be the true Galactic Centre.

The thrones of Maya kings were erected to align with the Galactic Centre to facilitate a direct line of communication between the Galactic Centre, where their gods resided, and the king as the gods' human representative. The Sun was seen as symbolic of the king.

The Maya kings were really king-shamans and were required to journey the inner world to retrieve sacred knowledge and the power of rulership. Archaeological records have shown that Mayan kings used hallucinogenic mushrooms to enter ecstatic trances so that their spirits could journey to the cosmic centre. The knowledge king-shamans brought back was seen as important to moving the culture forward.

When the king-shamans died it was believed their souls were transported to the cosmic centre and reborn in the Otherworld. It was understood that eventually these souls were reincarnated into new bodies. It's important at this point to note that in Mayan mythology, the Milky Way is the cosmic mother, and her womb is the Galactic Centre.

Essentially the cosmic father, the king, symbolised by the Sun, would enter the dark rift of the Milky Way in order to be rebirthed through the cosmic mother's womb. At the top of the sacred tree on King Pacal's tomb is a bird. The bird represents the transformation of the soul into a new life.

This mythic story is being played out in our galaxy right now during this window of time when the precessed Solstice Sun aligns with the Galactic Centre. The ancient Mayans believed that at the time when they could visibly track the Sun, the cosmic father, entering the dark rift at the crossroads of the Galactic Centre, one age would end, and a new age would begin.

Keep in mind that it's only going to look as if the Sun is entering the black hole of the Galactic Centre on 21st December 2012 when it rises on that solstice morning. Our sun is actually 25,000 light years away from the Galactic Centre so it's not literally falling into it.

Modern-day Western astrologers see the Sun as a symbol of the life spark in an individual's chart. Yet in a country's chart, the Sun still represents the king/queen, president, prime minister or other type of ruler. In the 21st-century the role of individuals has far greater significance than in ancient Mayan times. Back then it was only the king-shamans who went on spirit or soul journeys to the Galactic Centre and came back with information for the people. These days we can each as individuals meditate on the Galactic Centre as a symbol of the divine source and seek our own messages. Or we can collectively meditate and seek wisdom for humanity.

According to astronomers, whether the precessed Solstice Sun makes its closest alignment to the Galactic Centre on December 2012 is debatable, but we are

definitely in the window of time when the precessed Solstice Sun is making its rare alignment. Whether exactly 2012 or not, this event has been forming slowly for thousands and thousands of years and is happening in a window of time between 1999 and 2018.

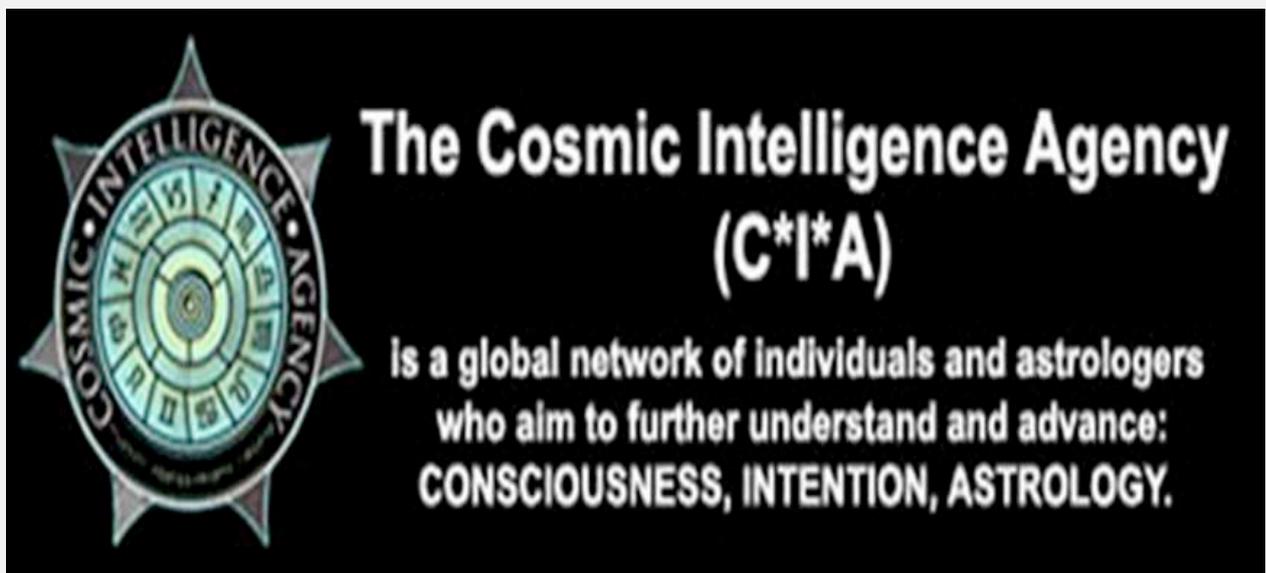
Between now and 2012, and beyond that to 2018, any solstice (winter or summer) is a perfect time for meditating on the Galactic Centre, yet December solstices are especially powerful times. Just be sure to ground yourself before meditating on the Galactic Centre so that you're able to integrate any intuitive insights to continue enjoying life as a spiritual being in a human body!

Annual solstices and equinoxes have always signalled significant wheel-of-the-year turning points to humans. The ancients aligned many of their monuments (for example, stone circles or pyramids) to solstice or equinox Suns so that these days could be celebrated and the energy of those days received. The solstices happen in December and June each year. Whether we experience them as winter or summer solstices depends on which hemisphere we live in.

To my way of thinking, December 2012 carries the energy of change in the same way that full moons and eclipses do, just to a

greater degree. When the energy of the Moon takes over (e.g. full moons) we're prone to 'lunacy'. Under a solar eclipse, the energy of the Moon also takes over and again we're prone to anxiety, panic, hysteria and other imbalances. At the December 2012 solstice, the precessed Sun is 'consumed' by the 'womb' energy of the Galactic Centre. Perhaps this also naturally tends to encourage a fear response in us humans.

Yet what if all this womb/Moon type energy is not actually something to be feared, but something to be welcomed? Anxiety and excitement are two ends of the same energy pole. What if we're receiving 'excitement' input from the cosmos but interpreting it as cause for anxiety? What if our systems get overloaded not because there's something to fear but because there's something amazing going on? Swinging between anxiety and excitement can be exhausting, as can staying in one extreme or the other. And according to the Mayans, it can be deadly. Finding ways to stay calm, grounded and centred sounds like a far better option to me. After all I'm keen on surfing the 2012 wave, if or when it comes.





SOuL Searchers is pleased to announce the commencement of a
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starting Wednesday 7th March 2012.

Parapsychology is the scientific study of paranormal phenomena. The paranormal refers to exceptional human experiences that do not seem to be explainable in terms of our everyday understanding or known scientific principles. This Parapsychology Certificate course takes a look at how we perceive ourselves and events outside our own personal world and what we understand about these paradigms. Some of the topics covered include history and philosophy of parapsychology, paranormal investigations, the nature of ghosts, spirits, hauntings and other paranormal phenomena, the role of technical equipment in investigations, geopathic stress, dowsing, vortices and portals, extrasensory perception and psychokinetcs, clairvoyance and other psychic senses.

Module 1: 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th March 2012

Prerequisite: None.

Module 2: 11th, 18th, 25th April & 2nd May 2012

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Module 1.

Module 3: 16th, 23rd, 30th May & 6th June 2012

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Modules 1 & 2

Location: Sutherland (southern Sydney, NSW)

Course Duration: 3 modules run over 3 months – 12 evenings
(2.5 hrs each from 7 – 9:30pm)

Course Payment: \$180 per module.

Class Facilitators

Janine Donnellan is the founder and Lead Investigator of SOuL Searchers Paranormal Investigations and the editor of their online magazine. Janine has been conducting house clearings and investigations for over 15 years and established the SOuL Searchers Paranormal Investigation Team in 2006. Janine has a Certificate of Advanced Achievement in Parapsychology (1998) Australian Academy of Applied Parapsychology.

Steve Millard is the Case Manager and an Investigator of SOuL Searchers Paranormal Investigations. Steve has Clairvoyant and Clairsentient abilities which he utilizes during the investigations.

For bookings and detailed information about the topics covered in this course please send an email to:

soulsearchers@spheresoflight.com.au

or contact Janine on **0408 025 268**



WITCHY CRAFTS



Lughnasadh Incense

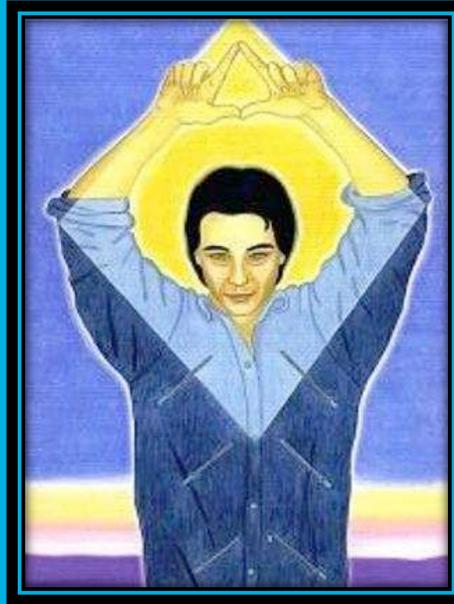
2 parts Frankincense
1 part Heather
1 part Apple blossoms
1 pinch Blackberry leaves
a few drops Ambergis oil

Lughnasadh Oil

2 parts lime oil
2 parts cinnamon oil
2 parts sandalwood oil
1 part clove oil
1 part frankincense oil
Ingredients:

Mix well and bottle. Use in Lughnasadh rituals.

JANUARY TAROT READING 6 Swords



Perception

The time has come for you to fully open your eyes and see what is really in front of you. You have been so absorbed with your own problems that you have lost true perspective of the situation, by dwelling on your issues you are only

making your path more difficult.

The Six of Swords indicates that you should start striving to express realisations and truths which come from deep within yourself. The old way of life is now being left behind and situations may not have worked out the way you planned so you need to investigate other, more liberating, possibilities.

This card is reminding you to look within yourself, and understand what your true aims and goals are, for once you have to stop deluding yourself. You have the freedom to move forward, just remember to leave your unwanted baggage where it belongs in the past.

Tarot card is from Glastonbury Tarot by Lisa Tenzin-Dolma

<http://www.ecauldron.net/lammasoils.php>

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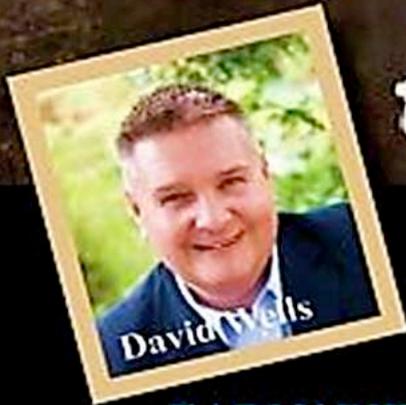
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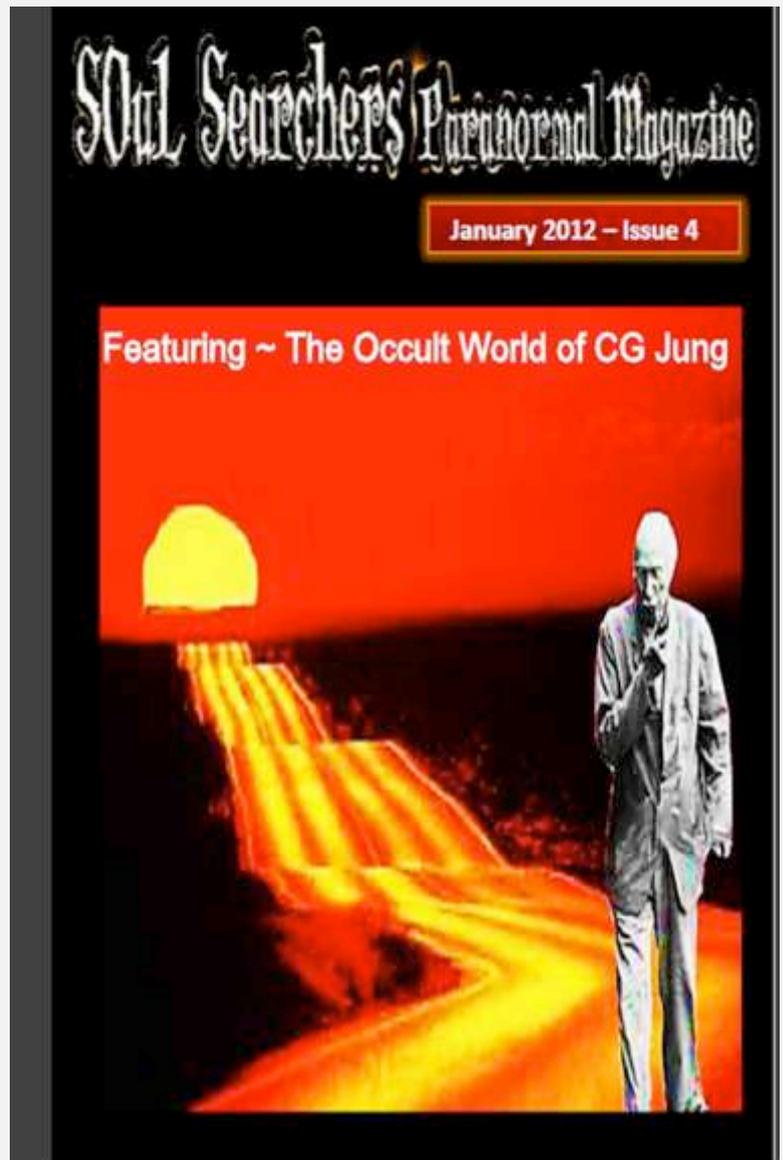


Welcome to SOuL Searchers Magazine

This free bi-monthly online magazine was developed from SOuL Searchers Investigations as a way of communicating our experiences and to further our explorations into the realms of the supernatural and the unexplained.

Our magazine is produced every two months and provides topical information to keep you up to date on news and the latest developments happening in the Australian paranormal community. In addition to our announcements on upcoming activities and events, SOuL Searchers Paranormal Magazine will contain articles, photos and information on the paranormal, parapsychology, ghost tours, mysterious locations, psychics and mediums etc.

Click on the magazine cover to see the issue



Join our Mailing List

...so you'll know when a new issue is available.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SOL?

SOL Full Moon Circle February 3, 2012



Spheres Of Light holds regular Full Moon Circles near Engadine (Southern Sydney, Australia) on the Friday before each Full Moon. These Full Moon gatherings are Open Circles, meaning that all Pagans are welcome to come along any time and experience a Full Moon circle with us. [Details here...](#)

SOL Meditation in the Royal National Park Sunday February 19, 2012



[Click here for more information.](#)

Come join us for meditation in the beautiful surrounds of The Royal National Park. Our meditations will be conducted every third Sunday of the month. Please email inquiries@spheresoflight.com.au for times and meet up details.

(Please Note: you must be over 18 years of age to attend any SOL gatherings, events, classes & workshops.)

OTHER PAGAN AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Please email us the details of any pagan or community events, classes, workshops or regular meetings that you'd like to see promoted here in this free listing.

PAN Full Moon Public Circle Wednesday 8 February, 2012 at Seven Hills, Sydney ([map](#)) 8:30pm



PAN Inc. full moon ritual. PAN runs a public full moon ritual each month at Rotaract Hill, Seven Hills. Anyone is welcome to attend - the purpose of the ritual is to provide members of the pagan community an opportunity to celebrate the full moon together & network with friends, it is also a public ritual where those new to paganism can attend to learn more and meet like-minded others, and the rituals also help inform the general public about what pagans do and dispel misguided myths about paganism and witchcraft.

The circle is held on the top of Rotaract Hill on Terminus Road Seven Hills NSW, just next to the train station. Getting there is easy. If you take the train, the hill is less than five minutes' walk (and easily visible from the station). If you drive, there is plenty of parking available both at the base of the hill and across Terminus Road. Full Moon info and contact details here.

The Teapot Pagans SUMMER Gathering



Friday, January 27, 2012 at 4:00pm until Sunday, January 29, 2012 at 4:00pm.
Where: CANBERRA, ACT (address given on registration).

This gathering is at the same venue at the Spring and Mid-Winter Gatherings, in Canberra, ACT.

It's a brilliant venue with heating, cooling and comfortable bunk rooms, superb kitchen, and rooms for workshops and rituals. There will be Pagans from all over Australia.

The weekend will include lots of workshops, discussions, rituals and time to sit around and have fun, meet old friends, and hopefully make some new ones.

Meanwhile if you're needing more info, phone Lilitu on 02 6230 2272 (bus hours - except Monday & Thursday), or email lilitu.teapot@gmail.com.



SOuL Searchers is Spheres of Light's paranormal investigations subgroup. They use a common sense scientific approach to all investigations but also have an open mind to all theories & methodologies.



Crone and Sage is a website that is dedicated to our pagan elders who want to share their knowledge and wisdom, magic and life experiences in the form of articles, poetry, recipes, artwork and music.



The Spheres Of Light Holistic Centre has within its members practitioners who can provide Spiritual Healing in a variety of natural healing modalities.



If you want to know about current topics click here. This is a place where you can discuss ideas and catch up on general news. So if you want to participate please become a member as we would love to hear from you.



The National Pagan Directory is a Spheres Of Light initiative to help Australian Pagans connect with each other in their local area. It is a FREE listing & provides links to information about covens, groups, workshops, retreats & other special Pagan events, plus Aussie Pagan businesses & services. If you would like your coven, group, regular meet-up to be listed in the NPD please send us your details. To list your one-off or special events please use our Australian Pagan Events forums. We also invite Celebrants in the Pagan community to promote their services in the NPD. For further information & contact details click on the banner above.



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Submissions to this eMagazine are open to all pagans and pagan

organisations. Submit your articles, poetry, book reviews, essays and opinions, hints and tips, information pieces and artwork. All contributors receive full credit, and are linked to their website if desired. Just send an inquiry or the completed work to us. More info here Keep up to date with SOL's activities via Facebook.





Spheres Of Light

We stand in our power. The spark within us is one with the eternal flame that guides and sustains us on our journey.



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