

# RECLAIMING

## NEWSLETTER



#54

SPRING 1994

\$2



**Reclaiming**  
A Center for Feminist Spirituality  
P.O. Box 14404  
San Francisco, CA 94114



When requesting information from Reclaiming, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

**Newsletter Submissions:** The Newsletter encourages people to submit articles, letters, or graphics related to political, pagan or spiritual issues and happenings. Submissions on 3-1/2" diskettes, created in Wordperfect or Microsoft Word, make the job of the Newsletter staff much easier. Please always include a hard copy of your submission, just in case something funny happens during layout. **Graphics are ALWAYS welcome!**

We may edit for length, spelling, punctuation and grammar; we do not alter poetry.

While we are pleased to print letters or articles on ethics, we will not print personal charges or countercharges.

All submissions, whether we print them or not, eventually find their way into our cauldron, so keep copies for yourself. Please do not ask us to return them.

Submissions are due on or before the deadline. The Newsletter staff has sworn off its lamentable co-behavior and will not chase down late submissions. We really mean it this time.

**SUMMER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS Monday, May 2, 1994**

The views expressed in articles and advertisements in this Newsletter belong to the authors and advertisers ... not to the Reclaiming Community or the Newsletter Staff. Some of us don't even like some of the stuff we print.



**Reclaiming Events Line – (510) 236-4645**

This recording (listed in the residential pages under "Reclaiming E L" in Berkeley and "Reclaimig E L" in SF—*yep, it's misspelled*) carries announcements and updates of events organized by Reclaiming and others. Often, these come up too late to be put in the Newsletter. Call us with events and announcements to add to the message. Please allow plenty of time, and remember to say where we can reach you with questions.

—*The Recording Faerie*

Information for Deaf/Hearing Impaired ONLY: (510) 237-6207 (V/TDD)

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## Cover by Mary Proenza

This newsletter was assembled by Rebecca, Patti, Julie, Robin, Jody, Karen—and Brigid—who inspired many poems for this issue.

*Printed on Recycled Paper*

# The Ritual of Birth

by Karen Janowitz

Looking back, I should have known it was time. I had the energy to make a large meal for a guest on Monday evening—eggplant parmigiana, salad and all. This was, I realized later, the energy and flurry of activity that many women get just before labor and birth. After the meal, at around 10 pm, the contractions began, and they didn't let up for three days until Manya was born at 10:19 pm on Thursday, March 11, 1993.

The labor was three days long—well, the midwives said it wasn't true labor because the contractions weren't consistent and even enough. They called it prodromal labor, but it sure felt like real labor—intense waves of spasms beginning low in my pelvis and working up to an excruciating pain, then subsiding. In the beginning of the three days, it was kind of like knowing you were going to twist your ankle at the start of each new contraction, every 15-20 minutes, and as the days wore on it was like knowing you were going to break your leg. Still, I was able to have a natural birth at home. I attribute that to magic, working with energy. And being prepared for anything—the unexpected.

I practiced visualizations, moving energy, relaxation, affirmations, and using sound in the birth class that Craig and I took. These tools were quite familiar to me because I use them routinely in the magic I practice. I was pleasantly surprised that our instructor offered them in class, though they may have been a bit foreign for some of the

other women. Pregnancy is somewhat an altered state to begin with, so with that and being a witch, imagining visualizations that might be useful during birth came quite easily. I went to my place of power that I often go to during trance, as well as to my circle's place of power. I talked to Nana, my grandma, with whom I visited on the Isle of the Apples during the previous Samhain. Back then she and my unborn fetus became acquainted, and Nana said to remember that I could depend on her during my birth. It's impossible to imagine what a birth and the pain will be like beforehand, so I didn't know which, if any of these places I might go, but it was good to conjure up different ones that I could call upon when the time came.

Our instructor was obviously not a stranger to Wicca. She created a ritual for our last class. We burned sage, talked about objects we had brought that signified our birth, and burned our fears that we had written down and spoken.

In class, we also talked about affirmations, writing them up, and practicing speaking them out loud. I told myself that I could birth naturally, that I am strong, that I am beautiful, that I could do it. Those affirmations stayed with me during most of my three days, although one might not know it by listening to me moan at the time. But inside I did not give in, I continued steady and strong.

In my circle before the birth, we did some birth magic. I asked the tarot if I would be strong for the birth, and then



pulled the strength card! A few years ago, when I knew I wanted to try to get pregnant, I picked a Daughters of the Moon tarot card from the booth at the Women's Crafts Fair. It was Mawu—a beautiful goddess giving birth on top of an elephant. That card stayed with me and gave me hope and spirit.

So I managed through those three days of labor by trying to relax, breathing, taking baths, sipping Recharge, taking little walks, trying to catch winks of sleep in between the contractions, and trying not to concentrate on the pain. I wasn't all that successful in dealing with the pain but I persevered, knowing that active labor would be at an indescribably higher level, and that I needed to save whatever energy I could. About twice a day I screamed that I wanted to go to the hospital, but I wasn't completely serious (yet), and besides, everyone said that there was nothing much the hospital could do because my labor wasn't true yet.

Active labor kicked in on the afternoon of the third day after a bath, while trying to watch a video. I really knew I was in active labor when my circle and other support starting showing up. I figured they must have been alerted to come for

a reason. And amazingly enough I still remember the video clearly.

When one of my midwives showed up, she hooked me up to an intravenous drip so I could get a little extra energy. I was a bit dehydrated after so many days of little food and drink and the electrolyte solution was a much needed help. This little bit of technology helped me endure the rest of my labor at home.

I had started an altar on the living room floor, and my circle mates made it all the more beautiful with candles, my tarot cards, flowers, and birth objects and tools. I had placed a mandala there, one that I knew might be perfect for labor when I received it as a gift.

The contractions became much more intense and I stayed in the same position—all fours—for hours, trying to breathe through the contractions. As each new one came on, I tried to relax and let the pain take over my entire body, and then breathe the pain out. I felt that if I didn't let the pain enter my entire being, it wouldn't be able to leave because it would get stuck somewhere. I concentrated on the mandala for a while, getting caught up in its power, letting my pain go through the center. But that eventually got too intense. I

spent some time with Nana, letting her tell me over and over to work with the pain, let it move the birth along, and breathe it out, towards her—and she in turn helped pull it out of me. I concentrated on my sound, and with the constant reminder of others, tried to make it come out low and easy as each new wave came over me. My midwives encouraged me to change positions occasionally and my wonderful supporters placed their hands on my hips, back, or wherever I needed pressure to take the edge off.

The whole evening was bathed in candlelight, friends, positive energy, laughter, and love. The actual labor was quite quick—about five to six hours of active labor and 20 minutes of pushing.

The last strong push of magic was when Manya came out not breathing, floppy, and a little blue. Her cord was wrapped twice around her neck. The midwives had monitored her all along and she was fine until she came out so she hadn't been like this long. Everyone in the room worked together to send strong positive energy her way, and gave her power and love, and a little oxygen. Craig and others spoke a name repeatedly to call her back into this world. She popped open her eyes and cried. A brand new beautiful baby girl. The name used to call her back was the name of her great-grandmother, my Nana, Manya.

And now she'll be one year old before the vernal equinox.



# OPENING

*for RMD*

My hips speak loud your rhythms,  
Heartbeat hammering Earth's core.  
Feet stamp our Time's shifting  
Through the portals of the worlds.  
My fingertips rejoice with crazy music  
Hands outstretched on reaching arms.  
Vessel of your Spirit,  
Spinning with the sound and melody  
of wheeling, ancient stars.

Release my eyes to see the Dance;  
The patterns that you call into the sky.  
Release my longing to some pure expression—  
Every whirling body humming  
Love, Love, Love.  
For dancing, I am molten Fire,  
Into the arms of Mother.  
For dancing, I am Water fresh,  
Open out to Lover.

I feel your song in every cell,  
I breathe your Breath and speak your names—  
“She who is and is not,”  
Far older than this dance itself.  
Transforming, swirl to waking,  
My heart bursts wide with Love.  
I see your Face.  
I hear your Voice.  
I drop my veils and Dance.



—Theresa L. Dutton



# Passages

## "Winter into Spring"

by  
Robin Weaver

*Spring is a time for young things: Gold Fields & Blue Dicks in the meadows, Trillium & Lady's Slippers in the deeper woods; sea otter pups still clinging to their mothers' bellies; human children hunting for Hares' eggs through gardens and fields.*

*It's a blink-and-you've-missed-it season, with cloudbursts and sunshowers, a couple of weeks of cherry blossoms, a few short weeks of nestling birds. All the while, salmon are biding their time off the coast, waiting to taste the mortal liquor of their natal stream. Some drink, that! One sip and they make a mad dash for the dance floor, to scatter the gravel, to give their all as they boogie in the river bed.*

~ ~ ~

Where were you at Yule? A lot of folks gathered along the sea-strand to push the wheel of the year on towards the light. Margaret was our mistress of ceremonies. She brought us great invocations by Vibra, Kim, Dominique, Jody, (I know I'm missing someone), a new song, hot drumming. We tried our best to do a simple Grand-Right-and-Left but got pretty unruly dancing in the dark. The energy stayed high and even geared up afterwards to dance out the darkening season.

All those weary & bleary eyes that climbed Red Rocks next morning were greeted with the traditional sight: fog. Is it our after-vigil foggy noggins that call the stuff into the sky? Finally, just when we were abandoning the peak, the Solstice Child peeked out to greet the crowd on the street.

~ ~ ~

Margaret, Theresa, Rebecca, Judy, and Tami organized the celebration for Brigid's Feast. Four circles called the quarters. At the center was Her well, filled by the Waters of the World. We welcomed Brigid with song, and the presence of the Goddess, our hope for the year's harvests was brought to us, embodied in the wonderful doll built by Patti & Rebecca. We walked into the dark of Winter one last time and turned to travel onwards at last with the spirit of Springtime. We forged our promises to the future at Her flame. May we keep those pledges burning in our hearts.

Not exactly rent-a-yenta, but at the end of the ritual Starhawk played matchmaker (ok, facilitator) for folks organizing new circles. Did you make connections here? How good was it for you? We're dying to know the details.



On a sadder note, Marija Gimbutas died of cancer on the second of February. She was 73. Born in Vilnius, Lithuania, Dr. Gimbutas was Professor Emerita of European Archaeology at UCLA. Her books “The Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe” (1974), “The Language of the Goddess” (1989), and “The Civilization of the Goddess” (1991) present a view of the neolithic, pre-Indo-European civilization that extended throughout southeastern Europe, the Balkans, and Crete. Her interpretations of the images, symbols, and the archaeological record provide a key to the hidden history of the Mothers in European mythology and folklore.

~ ~ ~

*The summertime is coming. Breathe deep. You can smell its leafy goodness in the air. Listen closely. You can almost hear the morris dancers' bells. Look, look everywhere: The colors of the Maypole ribbons are already here, in the brilliance of iris & poppy, painted on the hills. Blessed be.*



Do you have gossip, transitions, accomplishments, ritual reports you'd like to share in the Newsletter? Robin would **love** to hear from you. You can write him in care of the Newsletter (see inside front cover for address and deadlines), or you can call the Reclaiming Events Line with your newsworthy items— (510) 236-4645.

# THE TWELVE STEPS OF VERA AND NERO

## (An Inquiry into Pendulum Whiplash)

### THE FIRST CHURCH OF VERA: Step VII

Temperature has a temper  
Cool and long  
Short and hot  
Red, yellow and white  
Satan's icy penis the invisible flame?  
Incubi only knows  
The nuns of vibrators anonymous supply an answer  
Quartz crystal crucifixes  
Mother superior for mother interior unlimited  
Radiant smiles of ebb and flow  
Meanwhile back at the monastery  
Inside the monastic menstrual hut  
Father Quanta looks where he shouldn't  
On the crossroads of energy and time  
The sacred is called to action  
Father Quanta retires quickly  
A wing is named after him:  
Roger Bacon and associates  
and is replaced by Father Horace unsuspectingly  
Aquarius on the wing by inches and miles  
Light an election of broken succession  
Of stuffed ballot boxes and frequent currency  
Martin Luther shits out quantum mechanics  
and lumps the dump to the devil  
Repulsed by his own attraction  
On the eleventh hour at the eleventh degree  
Martin knocks on Horace's cell  
The exorcism of Martin Luther begins  
While Sister Vera assists  
Mistaking Martin for Nero  
A community of shape shifters under go  
Legitimately nervous  
As St. Ignatius cackles  
His own banishing song  
Of ash



**NERO JOINS THE CHURCH: Step VIII**

Nero doesn't exist  
Tell that to an anti-particle  
Running backward from Vera  
Tell that to Nero  
Who knows he is Vera  
Vera's unconscious files an appeal  
Refraction and reflection  
Affectionately your phase of light  
Vera's coat of many colors  
Yahweh's last stand  
Methodically turning life into machine  
But even machines  
Do the paleolithic bop  
Circumcised covenant  
Even the aboriginal G.I.s of the dream time  
Acknowledge  
The washing at the ford  
Father Horace wakes in a shudder  
From a dream of ancient initiation  
Foreskin intact  
He shares his knowledge with Sister Vera  
Together they feel a rise  
But it's not St. Peter  
Horace's member looks straight at Vera  
"I am Nero! Join the union!!  
Hail Phallos!!!"  
Enough mirror games  
Enough blood guilt  
Vera ties her tubes  
And deflects  
Volumes with velocity  
Velocity Vera  
A veracity belt of Vera's making  
And through the airwaves soundwaves  
With Einstein playing guitar like a ring in a bell  
Go rhythm go time go



- D.R.R. Orton

# MARIJA GIMBUTAS

by Starhawk

On Wednesday, February 2, the Pagan, feminist and scholarly communities suffered an enormous loss: the death of Dr. Marija Gimbutas, the major archeological theorist whose work has been so important in documenting and defining the Goddess religion of Old Europe.

Marija Gimbutas was born in Vilnius, Lithuania—a country that resisted Christianity until the end of the sixteenth century, and began her academic life with the study of folklore and linguistics. She read over twenty-five languages. In 1946, she received a doctorate from Tubingen University in Germany, and in 1949 she emigrated to the United States. She joined the UCLA faculty in 1963 and served as professor of European archeology until her retirement four years ago. She was the author of twenty books and more than 200 articles, and directed five major expeditions into southeast Europe.

Her three best-known works are The Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe (1974), The Civilization of the Goddess

(1989) and The Language of the Goddess (1992). Their importance to the understanding of the roots of our tradition cannot be overstated. Unlike most archaeologists, Gimbutas did not just describe artifacts, but dared to interpret their meanings, painting a picture of a peaceful, advanced, matristic culture at the roots of Western Civilization. Her theories were widely disputed by the archaeological establishment, but provide a sound, documented basis for many of the historical claims of the Goddess tradition.

I had the privilege to meet her once at an academic conference and found her warm and charming as well as brilliant and knowledgeable. Donna Read, who directed the films Goddess Remembered, The Burning Times, and Full Circle, and I are currently in the fundraising phase of making a film about Gimbutas' life, which we hope will be a fitting tribute to her work.

She died of cancer at age 73. We will call her name at Samhain and honor her among our Beloved Dead.



*May the air carry her spirit gently  
May the fire release her soul  
May the water cleanse her  
May the earth receive her  
May the wheel turn again and bring her to rebirth*

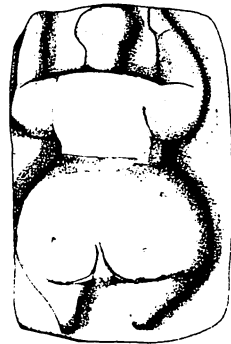


# A FUNERAL PRAYER

*dedicated to Marija Gimbutas*

Goddess of death  
you who are the end inherent in the beginning  
scythe to the ripe grain  
the fall of berries  
and the coming of night  
You are called the Implacable One  
but we know you  
as the most gracious goddess  
Healer  
end of sorrow  
relief of pain  
Receive our sister Marija  
may she become a star  
in your night sky cauldron  
and be brewed back to life

God of grain, god of seed  
You who every year's end  
are cut down and buried  
You who know the dark places  
underground  
the way down and the way up  
the fall and the rising  
Guide our sister Marija  
show her the long road  
through the maze  
to the place of rebirth  
to the place of return



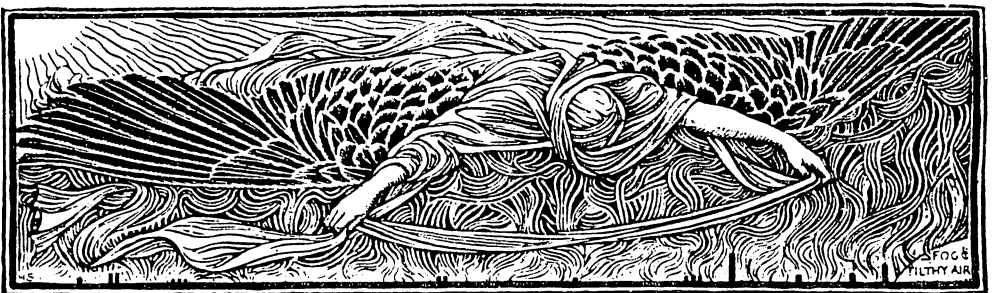
—Starhawk

*(Excerpted from What is Remembered Lives: A Pagan Liturgy for Death and Dying, a work in progress by Starhawk)*

## HORIZON

We reach for it, the meeting place of earth and sky. The spine of the text of breath holds us firm and eludes us. Wet surface meets sky in some open secret, a gesture of devotion. The bowl of the waters meets the blade of the sky—their conversation we call fate, we call what is possible.

—Cybele



# Interview with an Archetype

by Cynthia Jones

*Psyche means soul. The soul is a landscape of rich terrain populated with memory and dreams, myths and beings. The Archetypes live in the land of the psyche. They are the heroines and heroes, goddesses and gods of our collective dream, our universal myths.*

*The Archetypes belong to all cultures and to all peoples. They change their costume and their shape to suit the location and century. Legends and myths, stories that capture the essences of human wisdom and folly, are enacted by the people of our dreams. Personifying the timeless aspects of us, they are creatures not bound by our human laws and realities. Strange and foreign, they are. As familiar as any lover who shares your bed at night they are. We all know them. We all know the desires of a lover, the wisdom of a hermit and the brilliant insights of a fool.*

*I am a reporter. I travel into the mysterious realm where the archetypes live. I ask them for their story. Here is my interview with the Moon.*



We are approaching the Spring Equinox. The universe holds her breath, and she exhales night. A thousand stars are released into the void. They hang there spinning, weaving worlds into being. Some worlds are richly fertile. Life forms. It changes as the environment around it demands. At a point of conscious reflection, a life form with a voice will name its growth “evolution” and then evolve on. Into this star-filled, world-filled void, she breathes a Moon, many, many moons. She breathes a Sun, many suns. Our star knows one of each intimately.

Night covers the earth in a cloak of darkness. A crescent moon is rising. Mysterious shadows appear, dark against dark. Shapes become fluid, moving, shifting. The moon herself is a shape-shifter. Sometimes she presents herself as a crescent bowl. “Do you want to be filled?” I ask, “Or are you the horns of a bull, powerful and charging? Are you

the bow of Diana, Artemis? Are you the weapon or the tool of the Virgin huntress?” “Yes,” she answered. “Yes. I bring you your myths and your metaphors. I am the symbols in your dreams offered by your unconscious mind. Your fears, your insanity, your spontaneous knowing, and your intuition, all of this I bring you. Men and dogs have howled at me for centuries, for eons and so have you.”

The night seemed timeless. I was surrounded by a soft intensity. Fear? Excitement? My feeling would not fit into my definitions. My senses strained against the edges of my body. I looked into the darkness. I imagined into the darkness. I listened into the darkness.

“I enchant the Oceans,” she whispered. “The waters follow me. The tides rise and fall, longing for my touch. Yes, I have an effect on you.

“I have whispered the cycles of life to you endlessly. Repeating a simple story

of emergence, growth, fullness and magical power, decline, death, darkness, and emergence. With my rise and fall, women become fertile and then bleed. Animals dance their dance of courtship. The young ones know all the steps at their first performance. I move within them and they know. They know how to spread their wings. They know the seductive tilt of their head. They make a show of sharpening their horns and calling to the wind.

“In tune with my rhythms, you conceive. And for this life creating magic, I was honored. I was feared.”

She grew into fullness, dominating the night sky with her wonder. She began to recite: “Whenever you have need of anything, once a month, and better it be when the moon is full, assemble in some secret place and call to me, Queen of the Heaven, Queen of the Wise.

“You shall be free from slavery, and as a sign that you are free and equal with the others in the woods, you will be naked in your rites as the other animals do. Sing, feast, dance, make music and love ...” her voice trailed off. Her memory of another time lay discarded in the moonlight.

“What is as frightening as women?” She asks me. “What could be as frightening as women and men, free to make music and love?”

“The honoring of me was forbidden. The honoring of the Earth herself was forbidden. The children of the night sky were cut down with the great trees and the flocks of birds and the countless four-footed creatures who shared the night with you.

“It is not necessary to conquer what you honor and respect. It is unimagin-

able to rape and destroy what you value. Value is to hold sacred, to feel the intrinsic worth of another being or another life. Value is not how life can be turned into cash. And you accuse me of lunacy.” She began to diminish.

“In my receding light, all that was feminine was degraded with me. I became a symbol of madness, of all the repressed fears. Stop! Don’t go near! You might get lost in lunacy, in yourself, and never return. Or you might ... remember ... and make music and love. You might need less that is found outside of yourself and be more complete within yourself.” Her shape grew smaller still. “I have created madmen, mystics, and geniuses. I speak to you in your dreams and through your visions. My language is a howl without words that is heard in the soul.” She disappeared, leaving the night sky alone with a thousand stars.

It seemed to be the stars that sang, or maybe it was the trees, or the breeze? The voices of many, past and future, sang.

“I, who am the beauty of green earth and the white moon among the stars and the mysteries of the waters, I call upon your soul to arise and come unto me. For I am the soul of nature that gives life to the universe. From me all things proceed and unto Me they must return. Let my worship be in the heart that rejoices, for behold—all acts of love and pleasure are my rituals.”

Their song became the breathing of the universe, continuous and unheard.

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*Quotes are from the Charge of the Goddess by Doreen Valiente*



## BRIGID'S HEALING DANCE

Turning, twisting,  
Dancing like flames  
Swaying in the air.

Head up,  
arms extended  
—free, ecstatic!!  
"I don't know where this  
                  dance is going," he reminds us.  
"Just be in it," I tell myself,  
letting it rise  
from deep within me.

Pulling it out—the pain—  
moving it,  
freeing myself from its hold,  
freeing it from my hold;  
The dance transforms it  
and me, more than fifteen years later.

Soon, my father, just a little more time;  
It has been long and difficult,  
but I still love you.



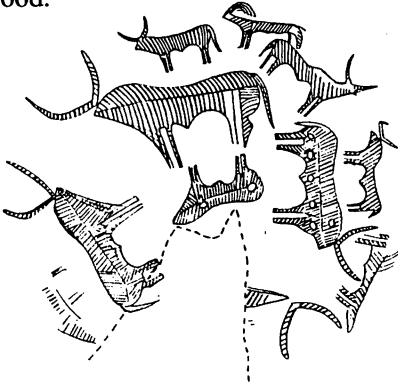
*2 February 1994  
Gwidion Blackbird  
(Jody L. Logan)*



# Contemplations of Offerings and Sacrifice

by Jody

They brought jewels and coins to Coventina's well, dropping them in exchange for healing. For Sequana, goddess of the Seine, the pilgrims journeyed to the river's source and left votives as offerings for the healing of their ailments. In the temples of Cybele, all over Europe, they sacrificed bulls in her honour, bathing her initiates in the blood.



It seems that since the beginnings of time, the faithful and the fearful have made offerings and sacrifices. Whether they be made to goddesses, gods, ancestors, spirits, faeries or other creatures, the motivations have often been the same: to placate and prevent unwanted events from happening or to give thanks. Livestock, beverage, grain, the fruits of the harvest, water, money, incense, stones and flowers, even human life; they have all been given and they have all been precious. Though we today would not even think of offering some of these things, humans and animals for

example, because their lives are too sacred, in other times they were thought necessary.

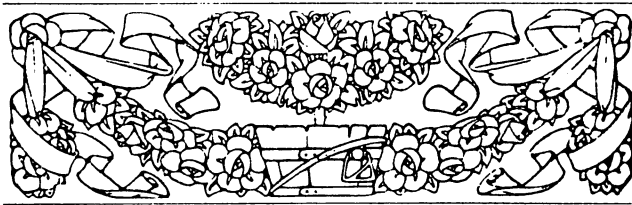
But in our distancing ourselves from these acts which many of us think brutal, we have ended up distancing ourselves from the acts and importance of ritual offerings and sacrifice. I'm not talking here about going out and striking down the first deer you come upon in the name of Diana, nor the taking of the life of any other living creature for that matter. What I am getting at here is the true essence of sacrifice: giving that which we hold precious to the Goddess (or whomever else you desire).

In ancient times, the sacrificing of a bull or a pig meant that your family would not eat meat for month. Similarly, when coins were left as offerings, they too were valuable, not just annoyances jingling in our pockets with little or no value. As a result, the faithful were more mindful, even humble, proving their trust, knowing that they would be provided for. This usually didn't mean being irresponsible and giving all that one had to give thus making oneself helpless. It didn't mean giving all of your Social Security check to some con-artist "televangelist" yelling at you from the TV set. And the Goddess and the other entities knew if you were faking it or being cheap so it wasn't worth the possibility of punishment or even being ignored, unheard.

By giving that which is precious or of

value to us, we remember what it is like to not have. Thus we are thankful for that which we do. We remember that if we have much, there are those with none. We remember that though we may be healthy, our Mother is not, that our brothers and sisters die from cancer and AIDS. We are reminded that if we wish to remain healthy, we must work to heal those who are not. We are re-

minded that if we wish to have, we must also give. And at the risk of sounding as though this is a sermon, remember that the Mother needs our nurturance, our care, our healing, and so do our sisters and brothers. It is imperative that we take time from our very busy lives in this me-oriented society and offer sacrifice; that which is precious to us.



## **BRIGID 1990**

I have looked into Brigid's fire  
I have washed at Brigid's well  
I have been cradled in the arms of  
open great spirit love energy  
we all create over our heads and spilling down,  
enclosing us all.

*—Judy Foster*

# Reclaiming Classes

## **ELEMENTS OF MAGIC in Sonoma County by Cybele and Anne Hill**

With the art of magic, we deepen our vision and focus our will, empowering ourselves to act in the world. In this class we begin the practice of Magic, Witchcraft, and Goddess spirituality by working with the Elements of Magic: Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit. Techniques include: visualization, sensing and projecting energy, breathing/chanting/singing, trance, creating sacred space, spellcraft, and structuring rituals. Group experience follows feminist consensus process. We hope to provide a fair and nurturing environment for all participants. Beginning six-week course. Prerequisite: Reading of the first six chapters of *The Spiral Dance* by Starhawk. Class will meet six **Wednesday** evenings beginning **May 18** in Sonoma County. Call **Cybele (707) 525-4992** or **(415) 541-5650**, or **Anne at (707) 823-8410** for information, registration and location. **\$60-\$120 sliding scale.**

## **OPEN CIRCLE by Theresa and Hilary Valentine**

With story-telling, exercises and magic we will deepen our understanding of coven work. We hope to create a cross-pollination between circles which already exist, and also inspire and assist those who may wish to find or form a new circle. This class is for women and men already experienced in the creation of ritual. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic and at least one other Reclaiming class, or equivalent experience. Six **Tuesday** nights beginning **May 10**. Call **Hilary Valentine at (415) 821-7656** for registration. **\$60-\$120 sliding scale.**

## **WOMEN'S MYSTERIES: THROUGH THE LABYRINTH, a weekend workshop led by Vibra Willow and Cam Shanty, with Susan Wolf, musician**

Women in this experiential workshop will be using one of the most ancient tools of women's spiritual practice—the labyrinth, an archetypal symbol of transformation. We will draw upon various interpretations of the labyrinth: its connection with the Butterfly Goddess, its significance in the (deconstructed) myth of the Minotaur, and its association with spiritual journeys of descent. Using music, poetry, trance/drama, meditation, handcrafts, ritual and laughter we will walk, run and dance the labyrinth, finding our way out by heading for the center.

# & Events

Salamander Camp is a beautiful retreat among the redwoods in the hills near Los Gatos, with a traditional seven-layer labyrinth path in one of the meadows. The camp has indoor sleeping accommodations, hot showers, hot tub and current pool. Wheelchair accessible. Vegetarian meals provided.

Prerequisite: Elements of Magic or equivalent experience

**July 1-3, 7:00 pm Friday to 4:00 pm Sunday**

**\$100-\$225 sliding scale (includes meals and materials)**

**To register: call Vibra (510) 237-6207**

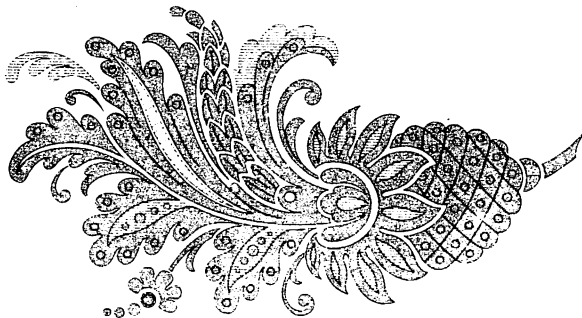
## **WOMEN'S BELTANE CELEBRATION with Vibra Willow and the East Bay Women's Ritual Group**

Women and girls of any age, and little boys, are welcome to join in a simple and joyous Beltane celebration of all the kinds of love among women. We will leap over the fire to seal or heal our bonds with each other, do the traditional weaving dance around our colorful and flower-bedecked Maypole, and have a picnic.

**Sunday, May 1, gather at 1:00 pm, ritual about 2:00, end 4:30ish**

**East Bay hills; exact location to be announced later**

**For more info, call Vibra (510) 237-6207 or Moonfire (510) 845-5111**



# MIDWEST WITCH CAMP UPDATE

*by Ruthie Souther*



There is good news and good news about the Michigan camp. The first is, it isn't in Michigan, it's in Missouri. The other good news is Cyndy Jones and Patti Storm are the organizers for the third year. Anyone who has attended this camp in the past two years will recognize just how valuable they are. They work continuously to make camp a success with huge amounts of sweat and tears, as well as generous doses of TLC. Their dedication to making this camp work is awesome. In fact, they wear me out just watching, let alone the projects assigned to me.

Even though it's not the place which makes camp such an experience, but the people who are present—those who organize, teach, and work toward personal goals—the fact that camp has been moved is somewhat satisfying. There were problems with Circle Pines which just couldn't be worked out, and in the miracle of chaos that followed came Diana's Grove—102 acres of woods

and meadow in Missouri, kept by its previous owners just for us in all its natural splendor. No pesticides, no logging, no county road running through the center of camp. Imagine this: woods climbing up a hill to a ritual circle hidden by the trees. A tiny spring-fed stream running through the Oaks, cutting magical glades and cool places. A babbling creek asking if she can co-teach the elements track.

If you have never experienced camp, or never experienced one guided by the hands of Cyndy and Patti, this is the time, and we are the people. This year promises to go beyond the space of dreams and into the void of all possibilities. With Reclaiming already planning to bring us to new heights, gleefully adhering to their yearly promise of pushing us to our limits, and the idea of all new perspectives at the end of the week...I don't know about you, but I can hardly wait. The past two years have altered and refined not only my image of myself, but also the way the world sees me. I can only imagine what Between the Worlds '94 will bring, and most likely, not even that will come close!

For more information, contact Cynthia Jones, PO Box 159, Salem, MO 65560, or call Diana's Grove at (314) 689-2400 after February 15. Camp fills very quickly, many of us have sadly discovered, so contact Cyndy and Patti as soon as possible for a camp application.

Here's to seeing you at Diana's Grove in September!

## RETURN OF PERSEPHONE

She started at the outer circle  
in a maze where all paths were visible.  
Man's straight lines beyond her scope  
touching each branch brought her further  
and dizziness brought her faster  
to a conclusion much more lasting.

Hedgerow given over to pine stoics  
white pine in rough clothes. She dwelt  
among them, climbing, pale and sticky.  
The scenic puzzle grew more complex  
and she dove deeper within to reach the top,  
only seeing her guiding moon better made her smile.

A yearning brought her closer, embraced  
now by cedar saplings—young and yet  
quiet. Smooth sense of hug touch lost her  
she was no longer she but more  
more than a gender, and her muscles stood  
out in the wooden way she had learned.

A stride and she was grasped by a thorny fist,  
rose bush ring tagging at her skirts, blooms  
but green knuckles, waiting for her zephyr  
movement to break a spell and send them home,  
to relight a candle on the stone heart apex  
half a step and a breath, and a new season begun.

—Sara S. Moore



# STARHAWK'S 1994 SCHEDULE

## **March 31-April 3: Durham, North Carolina**

Weekend workshop for women

Contact: Barbara Culbertson (919) 596-4862

## **April 8-10: Traverse City, Michigan with David Miller**

"Honoring the Sacred Mysteries: A Workshop for Women and Men"

Contact: Neahtawanta Center (616) 223-7315

## **September 16-30: Goddess Sites and Ritual in Greece**

A maximum of forty women will visit some of the ancient sites where Goddesses were worshipped, including Delphi, the excavations at Akrotiri, and the temples on Delos. Workshops will be held at a retreat center. We will swim in the azure blue sea and bask in the warmth of late summer when many tourists have gone home. The option to continue travel after the tour is possible. Contact Harmony Network for itinerary.

## **1994 Witch camps:**

### **March 18-24: San Marcos, Texas**

Reclaiming Intensive (Witch Camp)

Contact: Sylvia Adame (512) 288-6615

### **June 26-July 3: Sonoma County, California**

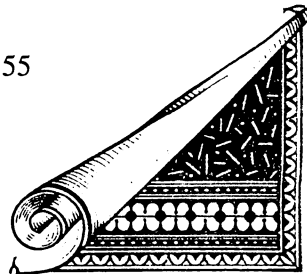
Contact: Jodi Sager (707) 869-0989, fax (707) 869-3855

### **July 23-30: Vancouver, B.C.**

Contact: Pat Hogan (604) 253-7189

### **August (exact date TBA) Washington DC**

Contact: Heather Sutherland (301) 229-8816



### **September 3-10: Midwest camp in Missouri** *(see page 22 for details)*

Contact: Diana's Grove (314) 689-2400

**To confirm dates, or for more information, contact:**

**Harmony Network**

**PO Box 2550, Guerneville, CA 95446**

**(707) 869-0989**



# MANTRA

1,2-dibromo-3chloropropane  
DBCP injected by jack-  
hammer hypodermics into jungle soil  
to purge the earth of nematodes that might otherwise nibble  
at the roots of the bananas that feed my breakfast habit  
DBCP steaming into the jungle air shrinking  
testicles and killing sperm sterilizing men  
poisoning men in my name DowShellOccidental liars all  
of us pretending innocence pretending we didn't  
know killers you and me with every bite of poisoned  
fruit ingesting carcinogens with every cosmetically  
perfect peach we slice into our cornflakes lotus  
eaters all of us narcotized by chemical  
odors like the smell of DDT  
that conjures up my childhood  
dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane  
as children on the farm we powdered  
dogs with it like talcum powder scattered it  
like chicken feed beneath the roost our hands white with it like flour  
the odor in the air at night drifting on Gulf breezes so wet  
the midnight tractor lights shimmered like underwater lights with  
Daddy out there in the night poisoning cotton killing bollweevils  
that chemical smell at the back of my throat the whisper  
of Celanese too drifting our way from a chemical  
plant thirty miles away I taste it on carrots now  
and eat them anyway taste it in tapwater  
but I finish my glass and turn to other things.



*—David E. Meischen*

# *Gatherings and Celebrations*



## **PAGAN SPIRIT GATHERING**

The fourteenth annual Pagan Spirit Gathering will be held in southwestern Wisconsin June 19-26, 1994. This multicultural, international Pagan/Wiccan celebration of Summer Solstice will include rituals, workshops, drumming, dancing, music, children's programs, merchants' bazaar and more. Also included will be the annual School for Ministers, a special track of programming for priestesses and priests. **For more information, contact CIRCLE, Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572 U.S.A. Phone: (608) 924-2216 weekdays between 1:00-4:00 central time.**

## **FIFTH WORLD RISING A Women's Spiritual and Cultural Celebration Summer Solstice, June 17-19, 1994**

The Mesa Institute will present Fifth World Rising, a gathering to be held in a beautiful, wooded camp in Malibu, California. The emphases of this event is to combine the politics and celebration of women's spirituality through workshops, presentations, music, rhythm and movement. Within an atmosphere of nurturing sisterhood, we are committed to promoting cross-cultural understand and respect. All women are welcome. **Contact: Mesa Institute, 279 Lester Avenue, #3, Oakland, CA 94606 (510) 765-9228.**

## **SISTERSPIRIT PRESENTS PAGANFAIRE IV**

An annual celebration of the Spring Equinox, Saturday, March 26, 1994 at the YWCA, 1111 SW 10th, Portland, Oregon, 12:00-6:00 pm (celebration ritual at 7:00 pm). Admission: \$4-\$8 sliding scale, \$2 for senior, disabled, and children 7-12. Children 6 and under free with paying adult. Come and join us for a fun-filled day of crafts, live entertainment, children's activities, workshops and raffles. This is a family affair. The facility is wheelchair accessible and there is plenty of parking in the vicinity as well as nearby bus and max service. **Contact: SisterSpirit, PO Box 9246, Portland, OR 97207 (503) 294-0645.**

## **SECOND ANNUAL WICCAN FAERIE CAMP, June 24-26, 1994**

The Wiccan Faerie Camp was created last year as an open ritual/witch camp weekend/festival which may be attended by witches of all traditions. There will be camping, workshops and rituals. We will feature guest speakers, healers, hiking, crafts, music, dancing, etc. Networking and forming a Wiccan community is the primary function of the Church of the Goddess. The church doesn't have a single tradition. Our members are women and men who believe we must all learn to get along and set our differences aside; dance and laugh together in the web of life. The weekend will be held in the Santa Cruz mountains, and it is our intention to keep the cost of attending as low as possible. We do not work skyclad. **For more information, send a SASE to Church of the Goddess, Wiccan Faerie Camp, PO Box 583, Capitola, CA 95010**

# Tape Review: “Mysteries of Earth” by Jennifer Reif

*reviewed by Anne Hill*

There is a certain internal adjustment I must make in order to listen to chant tapes. I must have nothing more taxing to do than folding laundry, or if in my car, all the children must be asleep or quiet enough so that I can “space into” the music, hear the words, and enter the world of the singer and the song. This gets complicated when I have tape reviews to write and deadlines to meet, but it is worth it to me to really hear what Pagan artists are up to. There are some very talented Pagan singer/songwriters out there, putting together professional quality recordings of original music, and Jennifer Reif is one of them.

On the opening song of the tape, “Mother Mary,” Jennifer’s voice is pleasing: low and smoky, with vocal styling reminiscent of early Joan Armitrading. In the high register, her voice rings clear and strong, and her harmonies are right on pitch. Most arrangements on the tape feature vocal harmonies with dulcimer accompaniment, with a smattering of percussion and synthesizer. This is a pleasant combination, though I do grow weary of song after song in the same style. Such are the pitfalls in producing chant tapes, and the reason why I need to create a certain mood to appreciate them.

There are a couple of circle songs which are sung a cappella, my favorite of which is the “Spring Fertility Chant,”

but these are by and large devotional songs to different aspects of the Goddess. None are arranged in a cut-loose-and-dance fashion, though many could be adapted by circles for drumming and dancing purposes. I appreciate her inclusion of songs to the Dark Mother as well as the sunnier Goddesses. There is even a nice birthing song that midwives could bring to Blessingways and labor rooms.

I never felt bored by Jennifer’s subject matter—the good liner notes helped—nor did my ear ever tweak from off-key harmonies or bad arrangements; in short, this tape is well-produced and the songs are well-written. I would recommend “Mysteries of Earth” highly to anyone who appreciates collections of chants and devotional music. With another tape of original songs in the works, I hope to hear more from Jennifer Reif soon.

*To order, send \$12.50 (CA residents), \$12 (outside CA), or \$13 (foreign) per tape to: MEMOSYNE RECORDINGS, PO Box 916, Venice, CA 90294.*



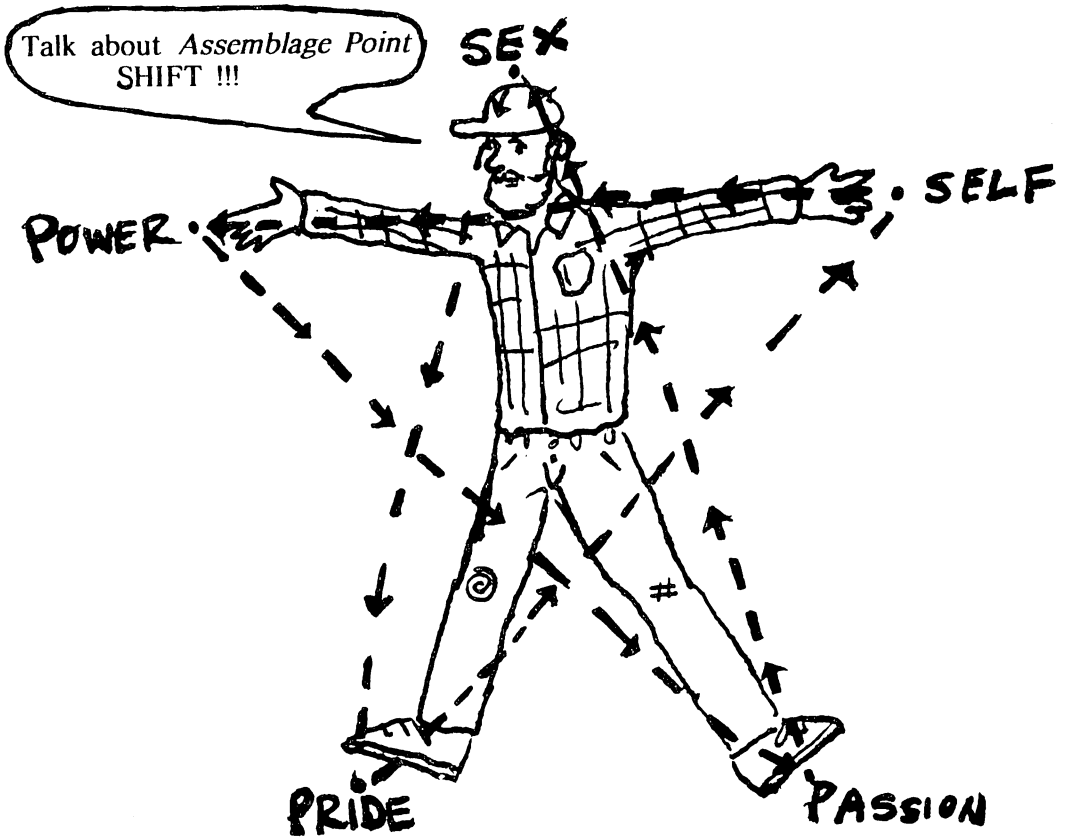
## PLEDGE

Delicate and complicated  
This season of the heart  
It leaps, then hesitates  
Then leaps again.  
Propelled by longing  
Then frozen with fear  
Back and forth until  
I can imagine something else.  
Kindness  
Gentle washing  
Streaming, pouring  
Immersing  
A mikvah, a purification  
The words catch in my throat  
But Brigid let them  
Come clear  
Let them be loud.

*-rgm*



# Moving Through The Iron Pentacle



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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**PANTHEOS—National Pagan Gay Men's Network. Send stamp for info:  
Pantheos, Box 9543, Santa Fe, NM 87504**

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## **SPIRIT MAPS: A Learning Project**

To everyone who has been affected by HIV: What have you learned about life lately? We are interested in knowing your responses to this question. You are welcome to answer as often as you like. All responses will be exhibited (anonymously, if you wish, and completely uncensored) as part of a major installation by artists Philip Blackburn and Donald Engstrom at the Intermedia Arts Gallery in Minnesota in June 1994. Thank you for your time, wisdom and spirit. You can:

- ☆ Choose some suitable material (paper, card, cloth, wood ...), trace around your hand, cut out the shape, and inscribe your response. Then mail your hand by May 21, 1994 to: SPIRIT MAPS, PO Box 80788, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408-8788, U.S.A.
  - ☆ Call (612) 825-5532 and leave your response as a voice-mail message.
  - ☆ Send your response via E-mail to: [klin0051@student.tc.umn.edu](mailto:klin0051@student.tc.umn.edu) or use **GayNet**.
  - ☆ You can also contribute by simply keeping the question in mind as you go about your daily life.
- 
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## **ATTENTION POETS:**

The National Library of Poetry has announced that \$12,000 in prizes will be awarded this year to over 250 poets in the North American Open Poetry Contest. The deadline for this year's contest is March 31, 1994. On April 1, 1994, a new contest opens. The contest is open to everyone and entry is FREE.

Any poet, whether previously published or not, can be a winner. Every poem entered also has a chance to be published in a deluxe, hardbound anthology.

To enter, send ONE original poem, any subject and any style, to The National Library of Poetry, 11419 Cronridge Drive, PO Box 704-YI, Owings Mills, MD 21117. The poem should be no more than 20 lines, and the poet's name and address should appear on the top of the page. Entries postmarked after March 31, 1994 will become submissions for next year's contest.

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## **WHEELCHAIR WITCH**

with cerebral palsy is looking to circle with other physically challenged witches. Call Judith at (415) 456-4243

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## **HELP?**

We're looking for individuals willing to help us distribute the Newsletter in Marin County and the South Bay. If you'd like to volunteer, please write us, **Reclaiming, PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.**

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## **WICCAN HOLIDAY COOKBOOK**

I am writing a cookbook based on the Wiccan Holidays and Traditions. Any recipes and stories you would like to contribute will be greatly appreciated. All contributions will be acknowledged with your name, coven name or in any other manner you choose. Please send contributions to: **Nicolina Nicthe, 11024 Montgomery NE #123, Albuquerque, NM 87112.** Thank you and Blessed Be!

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## **NIGHT OWLS NEED NOT APPLY!**

Anyone else out there wanna do powerful magic AND get to bed at a decent hour? I want to form/join a women's circle of experienced witches/priestesses committed to early (i.e. 10:00 pm) partings. Please call **Janette at (415) 681-7073.**

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## **HOME FROM HOME ...**

Live/work space needed by two artists and their two young daughters. Two bedrooms and a studio space a must. San Francisco preferred but will consider anywhere within the Bay Area. Call **Laura or Charles at (415) 431-3054.**

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# **CLASSES & EVENTS**

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## **WOMEN'S SACRED DANCE IN SANTA CRUZ with Laura K. Wyrd**

Ongoing class celebrating our bodies, our Selves and each other through dance, movement, trance and ritual. First Friday of every month at the YWCA (corner of Chestnut and Walnut in Santa Cruz). \$7-\$10 sliding scale. Call **Laura at (408) 425-3317** with questions and to register.

## **CALL ME BY MY TRUE NAME, A Ritual/Performance/Celebration of Initiation to Honor the Goddess**

Santa Cruz Dance Gallery, 418 Front Street, April 22,23 and 29,30 at 8:00 pm. Tickets available at the door, \$8-\$10 sliding scale. For information, contact **Green Goddess Productions, (408) 427-2022.**

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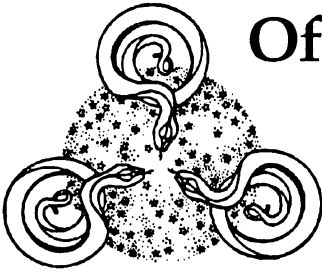
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# Of a Like Mind

...the best feminist spirituality listings found anywhere.—Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*

a good source of information and debate on the direction of women's spirituality.—*Utne Reader*

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**Song Titles Chants:** (40 min) The Beginning of the Earth • Touching Her Deep • Air I Am • Rise with the Fire • Snake Woman • Goddess Medley • We Are the Flow • Silver Shining Wheel • Where There's Fear There's Power • Hecate, Cerridwen • Return to the Mother • Born of Water • Air Moves Us • Water and Stone • We All Come from the Goddess/Hoof and Horn • Koré Chant • Sun King • We Are Alive.

**Let It Begin Now:** (60 min) Spirits • Lyke-Wake Dirge • Guardian Song • No End to the Circle (Goddess Invocation) • Honor to the Untamed God • The God Song • Set Sail • The Gates • Let It Begin Now • No End to the Circle (Devocation) • Demeter's Song.

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Let It Begin Now: Music from the Spiral Dance	\$10		
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7.5% Sales Tax (CA orders only)			
Shipping (\$1.50 first tape, \$1.00 each add'l tape. Add \$3.00 each overseas mailing. Int'l Postal Money orders only please)			
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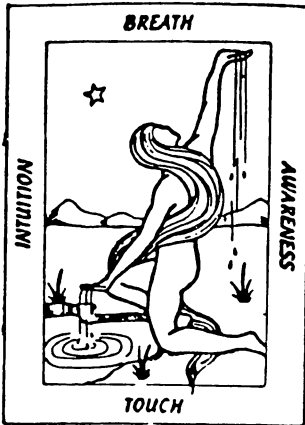

  
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## **BROOMSTICK**

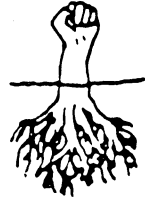
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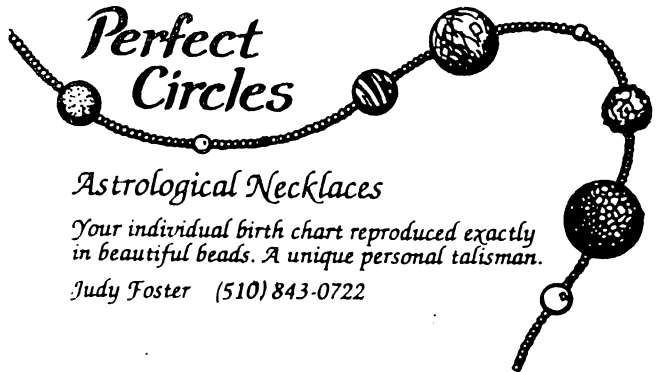
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## **EARTH RELIGION, EARTHLY CONCERNS!**



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*"Judith's music touched me deeply. She truly  
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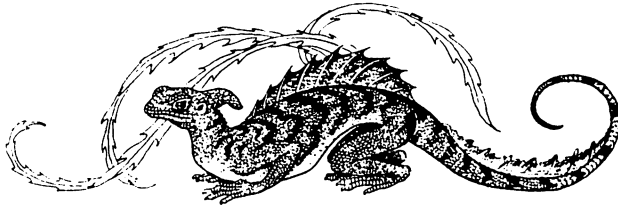
These 11 songs take the listener on an inspiring journey of self-affirmation and solace. Their musical forms range through folk, jazz and ballad, while the lyrics chronicle one woman's odyssey from fear to wonder. The album is exquisitely crafted by Judith May, who holds a Master of Music degree from The Juilliard School, and a Masters in Psychology from Antioch University.

To order please send \$11 tape, \$16 CD to  
YESYOU MAY! MUSIC, PO Box 31539-R  
SF, CA 94131

### **Circles of Exchange**

Correspondence and creativity exchange for spiritual women (focusing on but not exclusive to Goddess religion). Active since 1984. For information send LSASE to Nan Hawthorne, 540-C NE Northgate Way, Suite 439, Seattle, WA 98125-6175.







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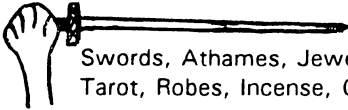
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UMA'S OCCULT SHOP 668-3132  
1915 PAGE ST. SF, CA. 94117  
Classes in Magical Techniques.  
Tarot Readings Tarot Cards, Books,  
Incense, Jewelry, Amulets,  
Talismans, Herbs, Oils and more!  
Occult Arts and Crafts  
accepted on consignment



tues-sat 12-6pm

# ADVERTISING RATES

Display Ads	Size & Proportions		
1/8 page	(1-1/4" x 1-3/4")	\$20	Send us your copy camera-ready and properly sized. Also, we can only accept ads mailed with a check or money order.
1/4 page	(2-1/2" x 3-1/2")	\$35	
1/2 page	(5" x 3-1/2")	\$65	
Full page	(5" x 7")	\$120	
<i>Classified, Personal, Type-only Ads: \$.20 per word</i>			

- Display Advertising has a higher value than Classified or Type-only Ads. *When you send art or logo with your ad, we charge Display Rates.*
- Type-only Ads over 2" should be computed at Display Rates.
- Include a contact name and phone, in case we have a question.
- *Please do not send dot-matrix printed ad copy. It doesn't print well.*
- Although we do print some free brief community service announcements, *if you're charging money for an event or service, please include us as a part of your advertising budget for helping make it happen.*

**Thank you again for your support of Reclaiming work.**

## WHOLESALE NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

We are now set up to distribute the Reclaiming Newsletter to shops outside the San Francisco Bay Area. Please send us your orders before each Solstice and Equinox for that season's issue. Be sure to order enough for the season; we can only ship once per issue.

### Shipping Information

For domestic destinations: We pay outgoing shipping costs. For foreign destinations: We request shipping costs to be paid with each order by check *directly convertible to U.S. currency*. Each newsletter weighs approximately 2.5 ounces.

We request sixty percent (60%) of sales receipts, to be paid with your order for the next issue. Unsold issues may be returned at any time within one (1) year for credit. Merchant pays return shipping costs.

Back issues (prior to Fall 1988) are available for \$2.00 per copy wholesale and are not returnable.

### Wholesale Newsletter Order Form

Please send \_\_\_\_\_ copies of **TO:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 the Reclaiming Newsletter, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Issue No. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_  
 (season) \_\_\_\_\_

**Reclaiming** is a collective of San Francisco Bay Area women and men working to unify spirit and politics. Our vision is rooted in the religion and magic of the Goddess - the Immanent Life Force. We see our work as teaching and making magic - the art of empowering ourselves and each other. In our classes, workshops, and public rituals, we train our voices, bodies, energy, intuition, and minds. We use the skills we learn to deepen our strength, both as individuals and as community, to voice our concerns about the world in which we live, and to bring to birth a vision of a new culture.

**The RECLAIMING Newsletter now costs \$2.00 if you get it at a store or an event. The Newsletter runs at a deficit, and we're trying to cover a higher percentage of our expenses. Additional contributions are welcome.**

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES:** \$6 - \$25 sliding scale for 1 year; \$12 - \$50 for 2 years; \$2 for sample copy by mail. For foreign mailing, please add \$8 per year to cover costs. Free 1 year subscription available for people who cannot afford to pay.

**Sliding scale for subscriptions and events:** We use a sliding scale to keep costs low for people with minimal income. We hope people with larger incomes will place themselves higher on the scale to help us in this. Please place yourself where you feel comfortable on the scale, or maybe a little higher.

**Canadian and foreign subscribers:** We would appreciate payment by international money orders in U.S. currency, as it is difficult and costly for us to cash your personal checks or use your personal cash.

**Be sure to tell us how many years** the money you send is supposed to cover (sliding scales for 1 year and 2 years overlap). If you don't say, we will assume any amount up to \$15 is for one year.

**SUBSCRIPTION FORM**  
**Reclaiming Newsletter**

Send to: Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

\$6 - \$25 for one (1) year       minimal income, free subscription

\$12 - \$50 for two (2) years      \_\_\_\_\_ additional contribution  
(add \$4 U.S./year for Canadian and \$8 U.S./year for foreign mailing)

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This is a  renewal

COMMENTS:

new subscription