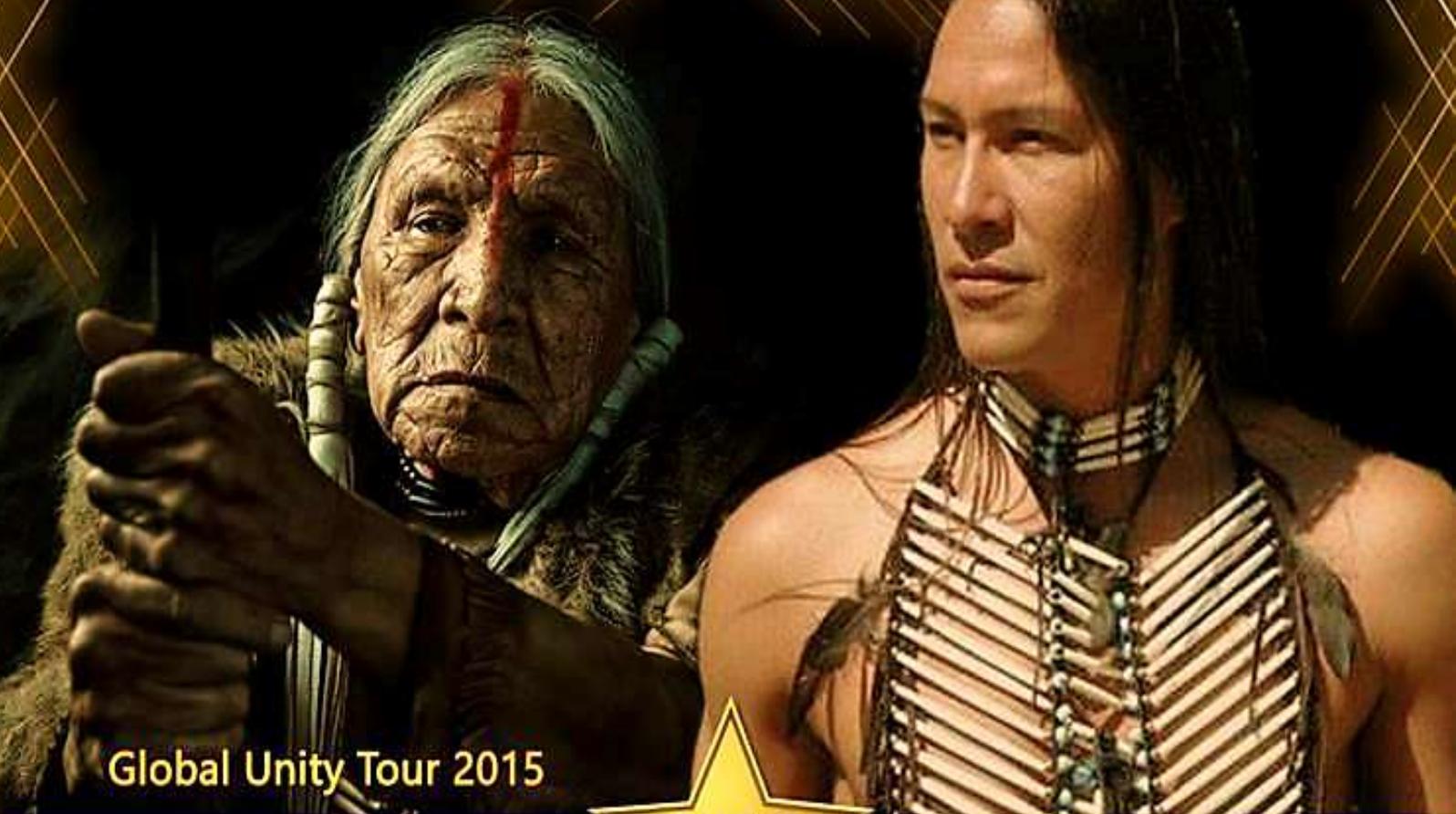


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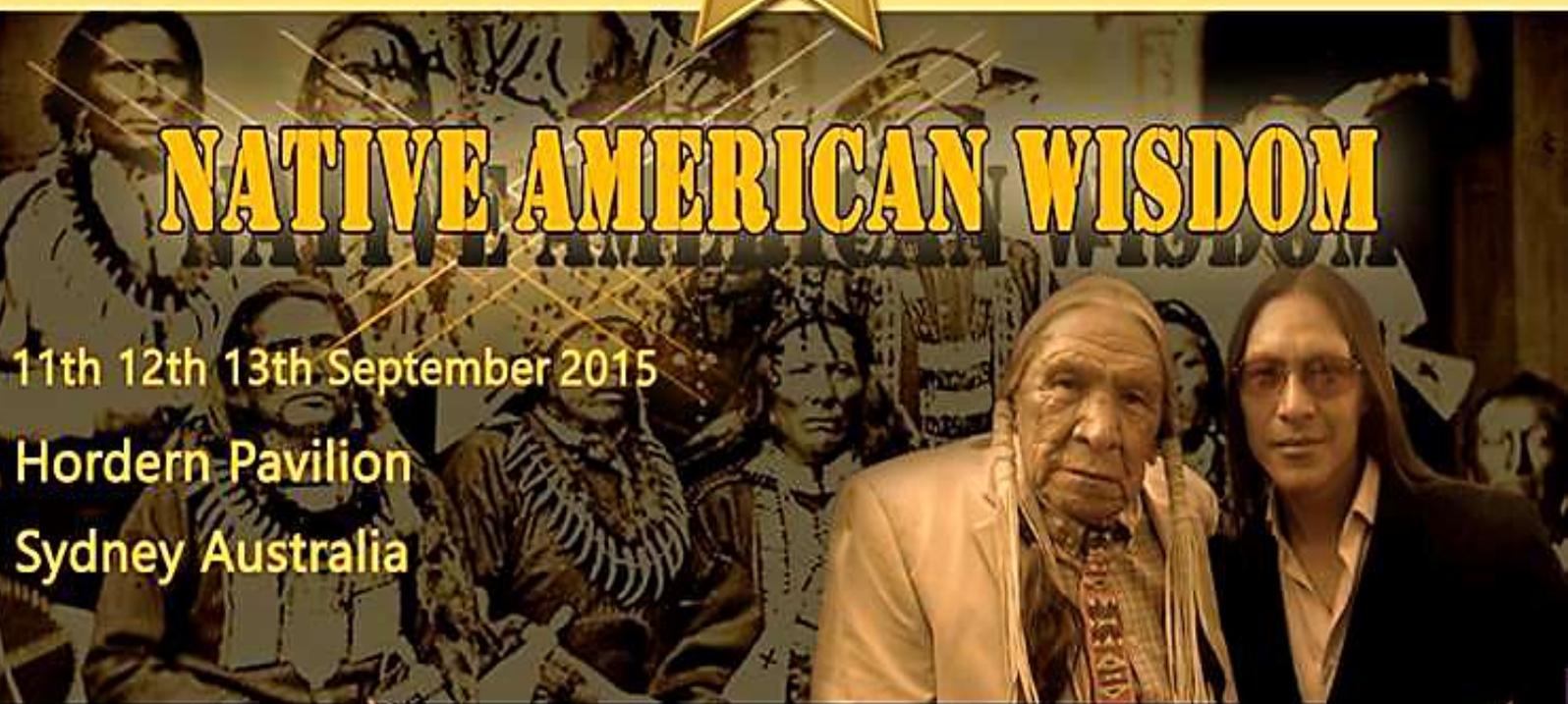
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Tickets

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Contents

Notes from the Editor	page 5
Ostara	page 6
The Role of Masks in Ritual	page 10
The Guardians of the Stellar Graal	page 12
The Venus and Mars Dance 2015	page 16
Crow/Raven Whatever!	page 20
Seasoning or Curing Cast Iron Cauldrons	page 22
Introduction to the Sabbats	page 24
What is a Super Moon?	page 28
Tarot Corner	page 30
What is PAN Inc.?	page 32
Axis Mundi Advertising rates	page 36
Cover – Rabbit Mask	http://www.goblinart.com/2011/03/piles-of-masks.html

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Note from the Editor

Life stands before me like an eternal spring with new and brilliant clothes.

Carl Friedrich Gauss

Spring has finally arrived and I look forward to the warmer days. On an emotional and spiritual level spring connects us to the spirit of birth, renewal, growth, expansion, and all that is creative. It is also a time for the warrior within to emerge ready to take on new challenges and to incorporate disciplinary processes to ensure that we have the focus to pursue our goals and creative projects. It is a time of hope and inspiration, and a time to take ourselves out of the comfort zone and stretch ourselves as the new sapling that allows itself to bend in the spring wind.

Blessings

Janine





Eostre – painting by Christopher Bell

Ostara is a time to celebrate the arrival of Spring, the renewal and rebirth of Nature herself, and the coming of Summer. It is at this time when light and darkness are in balance, yet the light is growing stronger by the day. The forces of masculine and feminine energy, yin and yang, are also in balance at this time.

At Ostara we renew our thoughts, our dreams, and our aspirations. It is a time of evaluating and renewing our relationships. This is an excellent time of year to begin anything new or to completely revitalise something. This is also an excellent month for prosperity rituals or rituals that have anything to do with growth.

Ostara/ Spring Equinox occurs in the Southern Hemisphere on September 23, 2015 6:21PM

The Goddess at Ostara



Eostre is the Goddess of the rising sun and new beginnings. Her name is similar to the word for the Christian Easter, because that holiday took its name from the ancient Pagan Goddess of Spring and rebirth. Another name in the same family is

Ishtar, the Babylonian Goddess of the forming and evening stars.

We also associate the Spring Equinox with Kore or Persephone, daughter of Demeter, the Greek Goddess of grain and growing things. In the Spring, Persephone comes back from the Underworld to be reunited with her mother. A part of the Goddess that has been sleeping all winter reawakens with the warming of the ground of Spring.

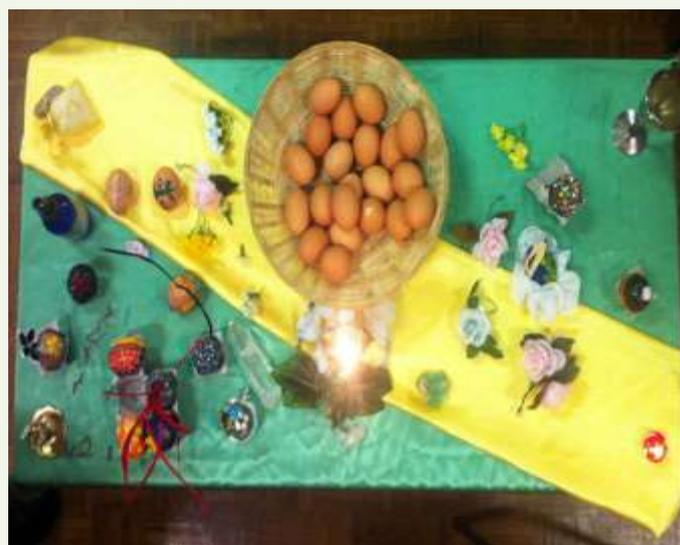
The God at Ostara

The God of Spring is the young God, the trickster who is playful and joyful. He is raw, creative energy that has not yet been harnessed, tamed, or civilized.

The trickster is an important spirit power in many earth-based cultures. He is known in many different cultures as the Coyote, the Raven, Elegba, the small child-God who as a point of light constantly runs circles around the universe. He is also Brer Rabbit, who tricks his way out of trouble.

In European earth-based traditions, he is the Fool of the Tarot, who takes that leap of faith off a cliff...

The Altar



The altar for spring often includes fertility images of rabbits and birds, eggs, nests, flowers, and living plants.

Symbolism of Ostara

The Hare/Rabbit

Eostre's sacred animal is the rabbit or hare. Rabbits are well known for their incredible fertility. As with many animals rabbits bear young in the spring, and is one of the symbols for abundance. Hares, in particular, have been identified with magic, the spring, and occult mysteries.



In Celtic tradition, the hare is sacred to the Goddess and is the totem animal of many lunar goddesses such as Hecate, Freyja and Holda - the hare is a symbol for the moon.

The Egg

The egg is a symbol of the potential of life. Back in ancient times the egg was a symbol of the universe, of creation, and in some cultures, luck wealth, and health. The egg is appropriate to Ostara and the Spring Equinox when all is in balance for just a moment, although the underlying energy is one of growth and expansion.



Ostara Activities

- You can perform rituals to ask for balance in your life, and to honour both dark and light.
- Go out and collect wild flowers if they are out in your area.
- Take a walk and look for signs of emerging life in the forests and fields or in a local park.
- Do a spring cleaning rites/ritual and cleanse your home of negativity and any energies that might prevent you from taking advantage of prosperity in your life.
- Perform oomancy (divination by eggs). To perform the most common form of egg-divination, separate egg whites and yolks. You then drop the white into hot water and divine from the shapes it assumes.
- Perform magick by planting a seed to grow with your spell. You can use the energy of this time of year to fuel any new project or goal. Think of how you wish to change and grow while planting the seed and watch it flourish as you do.
- Dye eggs with natural dyes and try decorating them with magickal or other symbols.

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The Role of Masks in Ritual

by Rebecca Busack



“Sometimes people carry to such perfection the mask they have assumed that in due course they actually become the person they seem.”

- William Somerset Maugham –

A mask. What is a mask? When one thinks of it, they see ornate designs, tribal masks from Africa, Halloween masks, opera masks, and even masks worn by dancers and seen in Noh theatre. But what of the masks that are not physical? The ones we wear every day, or the ones we put in place when attending a ritual or event? A mask can be both physical, as well as symbolic. The topic of discussion in this essay will be the role of masks in ritual.

Masks have been used throughout history for many different purposes, such as theatre, rituals, art, etc., and even in everyday life. There are many reasons as to why masks are

used in rituals, and what sort of role they play in that particular area. Von Furer-Haimendorf states that when one puts on a mask, they become a different person, and when in ritual can in some ways forge a crude sort of link to the spirits; such as used by shamanists. “The donning of a mask is believed to change a man’s identity and faculties, for the assumed appearance is held to affect the wearer’s inner nature and to assimilate it to that of the being represented by the mask (Von Furer-Haimendorf, 1756).”

According to Subhash Kak, the mask is intimately connected to the ritual in either hiding one’s true face, or by adopting a ‘public face’. The idea is that the mask makes the change from ordinary time, to the workings of the ritual and its connection to the spiritual, so that it becomes acceptable psychologically.

Wearing a mask is a way of concealing one's personality, and in ritual, this helps one to 'connect' with a spirit or the supernatural. Yet it is not only the mask itself that is important, as the creation of the mask itself is seen to be a form of ritual. Some tribes from West Africa believe that the masks, even though made by human hands, have an individual existence that is separate from the craftsmen who shaped them.

In regards to ritual, masks have many different forms of purpose. Some, such as the masks of the shamans of the Eskimo, are representations of their guardian spirits, and they believe that they can induce a state of trance by wearing these masks and establish a 'link' with the said guardian spirit. Masks can also be used as a form of protection against supernatural dangers, such as to avoid recognition by the spirits of the dead at a funeral. "The warrior wearing a mask symbolizing a superior power identifies himself with this force and is thereby fortified in spirit (Von Furer-Haimendorf, 1764)." Often times, masks have been used in a form of ritual to ward away evil spirits, or to act out sacred texts in a festival. Von Furer-Haimendorf also says that in certain Asian countries, such as Ceylon, masks are used in rites of exorcism and curing, and in many cases the masks themselves represent the disease spirits that ail the patient.

Ritual shifts one's perspective from the outer, to the inner. "The creation of internal reality by the mind is confirmed by the consideration of altered states of consciousness (Kak, 1)." However, in some religions masks were seen as evil and were condemned; such as with the rise of Christianity where the Church Councils damned the practice of using masks. Cesare Poppi states: "...not only the Devil himself 'a mutant', but he was a mask, a false appearance in need of constant re-masking due to the as many exposures he had to undergo. In this respect, he was the non-identical, the confounder, the Great Liar – and he lied first of all about himself and his appearance (Poppi, 148)." Without anything other than the word of the Church, there are no facts about this so called 'Devil'. So why do some condemn the use of masks when others embrace it freely? Many priests and such use ritual garbs, and in a sense use a non-physical

mask, is this any different? According to Von Furer-Haimendorf, the use of ritual masks in Europe really only continues in some folk customs in remote areas where pagan practices have coexisted with Christianity.

A mask can really be almost anything; a physical object to hide one's face and be used as a sort of spiritual medium, or even the use of a specific attitude or persona in a certain setting. There is no doubt that a form of mask is used widely in many different forms of ritual around the world, and can be seen as a very important prop in those rituals; whether for their cosmetic use, or their ability to help one connect to the spiritual, among other things. Is it essential to use masks in ritual? I doubt that it is essential, however, it would help those doing the ritual and allow them a certain freedom they would not achieve 'un-masked'. Are all masks somehow connected to the spiritual? It could be a possibility, if one thinks of how much energy and precision is put into some masks, though the generic Halloween masks and such seem to lack that little something more. Whatever one's opinion of masks in ritual, they have been highly helpful in rituals and for Shamans throughout history.

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This article was posted by Studies in Religion and Spirituality at <http://tranceshamanismbodyandsoul.blogspot.com.au/2010/03/role-of-masks-in-ritual.html>

Guardians of the Stellar Graal



Les Gardiens du Graal Stellaire



Judith Page & Paul F Newman

The Guardians of the Stellar Grae

Anatomy of a book by Paul F Newman

'To the Stars through the Moon.'

Who is the mysterious Vivienne that history professor Gareth Owain encounters in his two-year stay in Brittany? And who are the shadowy sect of wealthy men behind her who are backing her to become his consort? Tensions will arise on both inner and outer planes as Gareth is swept up in dangerous relationship jealousies and long-foretold liaisons surfacing in seasonal rituals in stone circles and enchanted forests and hidden ceremonies behind closed doors...

The above is part of the back cover synopsis of a new fictional work published this month with a story set in the ancient fields and forests of Brittany, in northern western France and built on the magic and rhythms of the turning seasons.

The new novel by myself, and Judith Page builds a dramatic relationship mystery around the way the sky and the natural world revolves and underpins our lives. Every seasonal ritual is met and played out in depth by the characters enmeshed in this tale of enchantment and magic. The writing commenced in a year (2014) when a Cardinal Grand Cross of planets hung in the skies, and there is a depth of understanding of astrology and magical working underlying.

When Judith began writing this book it was very much a ridding of a nightmare situation on her part. Being a city person born and bred, and having only known the creature comforts of having everything on hand, she left a vibrant bustling town to live in a hamlet with a population of around sixty, with no shop, no bus link, houses with no numbers and streets with no names... and found it incredibly hard to adjust. She initially likened herself to one of the characters in this book, called Vanessa.

For the two years she lived in the hamlet of Botcanou she took the opportunity to wander,

and discovered forests so dense and devoid of natural sunlight it was impossible to locate true north as moss grew on all sides of the trees. The strange limpid light held its own enchantment but it was easy to get lost, and trying to find the right direction was difficult, to say the least.

Judith eventually found Brittany to be one of the most magical and mysterious places she'd ever lived in. There are thousands upon thousands of Menhirs, or what we term Standing Stones, strategically placed to catch the rising or setting sun, a full moon bathing their ancient façades in its pale beams. There are dolmens still with the ancient markings made by the people that buried and honoured their dead. Some are parts of heritage sites, whilst dozens of others are in woodlands, their only caretakers the trees that have grown in and around them over the millennia.

Since leaving Brittany in 2010, she was plagued with bad memories of the place called Botcanou that served to sour the time she spent there. It's said that if you share your thoughts with another things don't seem so awful. In October 2014, together we picked over her experience in Brittany and created a new adventure.

The places are real enough, and just a few of the names were changed.

So what is fiction and what is fact? It is odd that what we create and imagine every day, in some form life will imitate. What is the dividing line between fact and fiction? Or, between science and mysticism for that matter. And does such a gateway equation make sense, as in: fact = science and fiction = mysticism? If we mix up the words we get 'science-fiction' and 'mysticism-fact', and it is the latter that comes closest perhaps to the work we ended up with, and which we as the authors prefer to term as 'factoid'.

A similar blurring of realities happened when we set up an astrological chart for the principal character, Professor Gareth Merlin Owain. He was a Taurus that was necessary for the plot, for in the tale he will take his seat at a secret round table of zodiac signs. Yet sometimes for a Taurus, a slow and steady sign, he acted in the story very impulsively. When I worked out his astrological birth chart, already knowing his fictional age and birthday, I found that he was born on a day when Mars was conjunct the Sun. No wonder he was impulsive with all that fiery Martian drive in him. But we didn't know he had this birth chart when we were creating him in the story, if we were creating him. He seemed to already act that way of his own volition.

Astrological birth charts can be cast not only for people, whether fictional or flesh and blood, but for places and countries, or the start of businesses, the release of films and plays – and indeed books. We set up an astrological chart for the time and moment that our book went public and was available for sale. The moment of its birth into the greater world, you could say, its natus. We had an idea that we might be able to control this, to choose a favourable time to announce 'It's here', 'It's born'; but modern technology beat us to it and it was up and running far faster than we had anticipated. Nevertheless it gave us a chart with the Sun in Leo (the sign of France) in the fifth house of creativity – and there's certainly a lot of creative drive and fire in the pages. The Moon was in Gemini with Mercury just entered Virgo – words are emphasised. And the rising sign or Ascendant, which describes the outer face or front door of the chart, was Aries. In the case of a book the ascendant can describe the front cover. Judith had already painted the dynamic front cover many months before – a woman holding a prominent red moon. But this emphasis on red was clearly also the Mars-ruled Aries ascendant of a horoscope that had not yet happened.

A red moon is a full moon at eclipse, a strange energy, and one that opens the story in the dark night of a sinister forest. Imagine for a moment a man, real or imaginary, escaping for a two-year sabbatical in ancient woodlands haunted by the spirits of Merlin and Arthurian enchantresses. Imagine his surprise at being caught up in a mysterious group whose rituals

centre on the seasonal turning points and who believe that the starry sky influences the land though the intercession of a beautiful Moon priestess. Is all this real or unreal? Has it all happened before a thousand years ago? Will it yet happen? It is very hard to draw the dividing line between truth and fantasy when astrology is used to analyse 'fiction'.

We are left to ponder how many worlds may continually run beside our own.

http://www.amazon.com/Guardians-Stellar-Grael-Gardiens-Stellaire/dp/1508730237/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1439069449&sr=8-1&keywords=judith+page+guardians+of+the+stellar+grael+gate+behind+you

About the Authors



©Joe Page

Judith Page was born in Australia. She graduated from Chelsea School of Art in London. She is a respected painter specializing in representations of Egyptian Pantheon groups with a strong emphasis on astronomy. Her work has featured on the covers of numerous magazines and books. She is a great storyteller and poet, and brings mystery and magic alive.

Other books by Judith Page

Song of Set

Song of Bast

Song of Meri-Khem

Song of the Ibaru

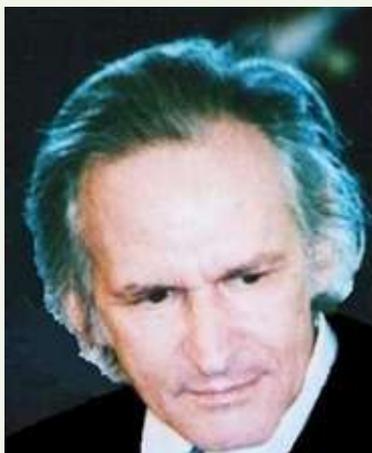
Theft of the 7 Ankhs

Pathworking with the Egyptian Gods

Invocations to the Egyptian Gods

Angelic Magic

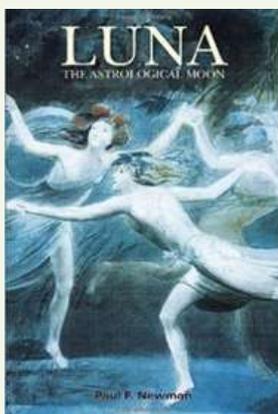
Realm of Angels



©Paul F Newman

Paul F. Newman is a professional astrologer and has had over 300 articles on the subject published in magazines throughout the world. He is also a freelance copy writer and editor of fiction and nonfiction work for dozens of authors.

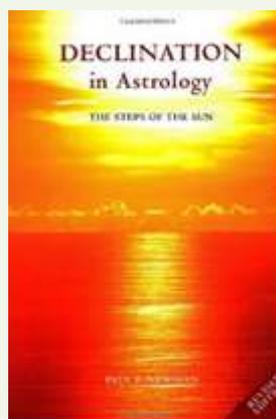
His published books include
Luna: The Astrological Moon
Declination in Astrology: The Steps of the Sun
You're not a Person – Just a Birthchart
Email: pneuma@live.co.uk.



Whether as muse, silver goddess, nourishing mother, priestess, maid, siren or witch, the influence of the Moon on our personality and perception is one of the least understood factors in our daily lives. Luna has fascinated, inspired, and frightened us since the dawn of human

history yet She of the Three Faces is the clue to our most emotional and instinctive selves. This new work by Paul F. Newman probes the subtle meanings of habit and the irrational that the astrological Moon conveys and how we can comprehend it and make use of it for our benefit and security. The triple aspect of Luna is treated as paramount with examples of the effect of New Moon, Full Moon and Old Moon in the monthly round. There is also a new way of grasping the consequence of New and Full

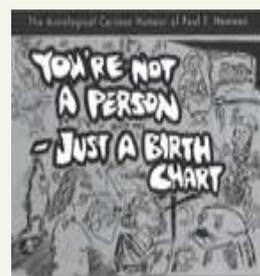
Moons according to their declinational hemisphere, and the difference between summer and winter moons. While all computational aspects of the Moon are covered (phases, cycles, moon mansions, progressed moons, magic squares etc.) along with the meaning of how these things affect us, it is the poetic side of Luna that equally informs our approach. A substantial part of the book also covers the Black Moon Lilith, (the Moon at apogee), with new insights into this lady of noire and her astrological resonance. From the fall of dew to the markings on a cheetah's eyes, there is more to the Moon than we know...



Declination in Astrology: The Steps of the Sun

In western astrology we have grown accustomed to perceiving the Sun's path as circular: the years revolve and the days and months return again, the 360 degrees of the zodiac go round in a ring. But the Sun has an up and down path too.

It climbs steps of declination from each equinox to solstice and descends again from solstice to equinox. It marks off time in a different way which gives an extraordinary view, and adds an extra breadth to the meaning and movement of the heavenly bodies. This comprehensive work not only covers the technique of declination, but it is full of the fascinating myths and traditions which form the cornerstone of our culture - it will therefore be of great interest to anyone who follows the natural rhythm of the solar and lunar festivals in the course of their everyday lives.



Paul Newman's irreverent cartoons have appeared in astrological magazines all over the world. This collection gathers together some of his most popular cartoons in one volume and should

appeal to anyone with an interest in astrology.

MARS and VENUS conjunctions 2015

22nd Feb @ 1°41' Aries

1st Sep @ 14°55' Leo

3rd Nov @ 24°02' Virgo



www.cosmicintelligenceagency.com

The Venus and Mars Dance 2015

By Michele Finey

In terms of our personal methods of evaluating, Mars measures success in terms of quantity; he thinks the biggest and fastest is the best. He is competitive he thinks that winning is everything. Venus however measures the value and worth of her experiences according to quality, and her innate personal standards. Mars is mostly focused on manifesting his own desires and short term gain, but Venus is patient and appreciates that beauty and worth is in the eye of the beholder.

Venus–Mars aspects are played out in our personal relationships and in many circumstances where we have differences in terms of our value judgements and desires. These powerful archetypes fuel our creativity and self-expression.

Because of their natural oppositeness and rhythm in the heavens, Venus and Mars seem to almost enjoy being at odds with one another. Their tense aspects can be highly creative and equally they can be destructive, and the tough angles in particular generate a vast amount of heat, energy and passion.

On average, Venus and Mars unite in the heavens once a year, but their cycle is not regular. It was this irregularity that intrigued me and led me to investigate the Venus-Mars Sacred Dance. Eventually I mapped over 1500 years of their cycle and it was only then that its true magic was revealed. Such is the complexity of their celestial dance that there is no apparent pattern until you take a closer look. Each and every conjunction of Venus and Mars is part of a 32 year cycle. There are

about 25 of these cycles active at any given time.

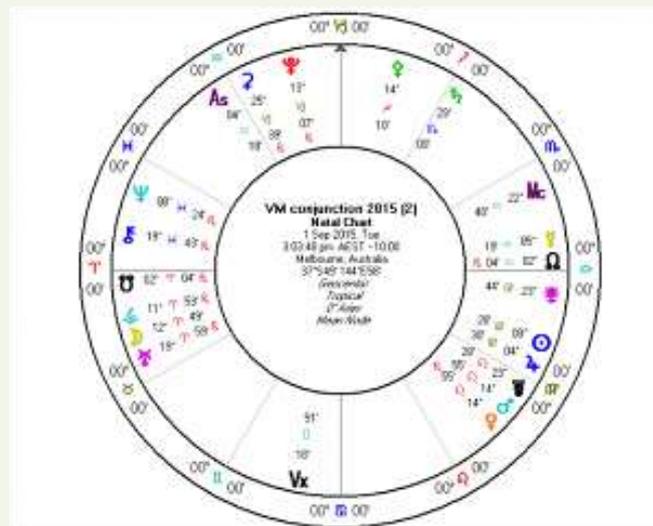
Venus and Mars have not renewed their cosmic vows since their last conjunction on 7 April 2013. This 23 month hiatus is the longest possible separation that the lovers ever experience. But in 2015 we'll witness three conjunctions.

The last time there were three Venus-Mars conjunctions in just one calendar year was in 1985 when two cycles concluded. We also had three conjunctions in 1983 when two new cycles began.

I personally recall the intensity of these years, both in my life and also in a global sense. There was a euphoric feeling in the ether. A great deal of creative energy was unleashed. It was a time of endings and of new beginnings. There was drama, there was excitement. Relationships ended and new connections were forged.

It's now 32 years since the two new 1983 Venus-Mars cycles were born. The September and November 2015 conjunctions are the second instalments in these cycles.

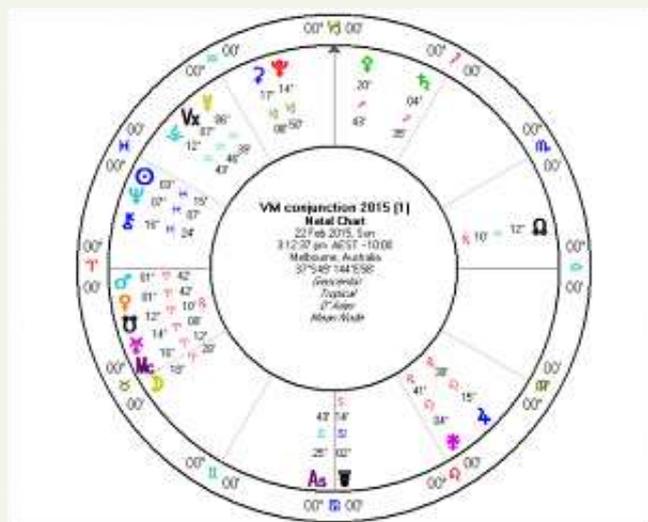
If you have natal planets at 14 Leo or 24 Virgo these conjunctions in September and November will have a powerful effect in many areas of your life.



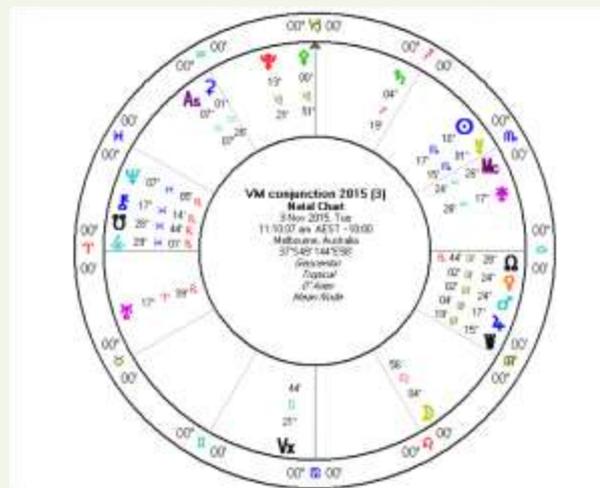
The February 22 2015 conjunction is part of a much older cycle that has been in play since the year 1118. While all Venus-Mars conjunctions bring opportunities for love, this one is part of a mature cycle and it's therefore more likely to affect existing relationships in a positive way. It is however happening at the start of Aries, so it does have the potential to spark new love and encourage us to reach out to one another with honesty and openness.

Venus will be retrograde in the middle of this year, and it is this time of re-evaluation that drives the whole Venus-Mars Sacred Dance. The conjunction with Mars that falls on September 1, she is still engaged in that process.

After she turns direct on September 6, she'll be truly ready to embrace Mars once more.



2015 is likely to be a powerhouse year of changing allegiances, creative highs and passionate exchanges. It also seems set to be a year when many people will forge new love relationships, especially in the latter part of the year when these new cycles come into play as Venus and Mars will be in the morning skies once more.



For more info on Venus and Mars see Michele's previous article on Mars and Venus here:

<http://www.cosmicintelligenceagency.com/mars-and-venus/>

**SEPTEMBER 4TH/3RD 2015 –
THE SACRED DANCE OF VENUS AND
MARS –
MICHELE FINEY**

This year is special in that we have three Venus-Mars conjunctions; something that has not happened for 30 years. Conjunctions of Venus and Mars occur at random intervals and skip back and forth across the zodiac. There is no obvious pattern to this cycle; in fact the Venus-Mars synod seems to defy explanation. Intrigued by this mystery, Michele Finney spent many years researching the Venus-Mars cycle and discovered that the cosmic lovers have an intricate celestial relationship which is reflected in the complex nature of our personal relationships; as above; so below.

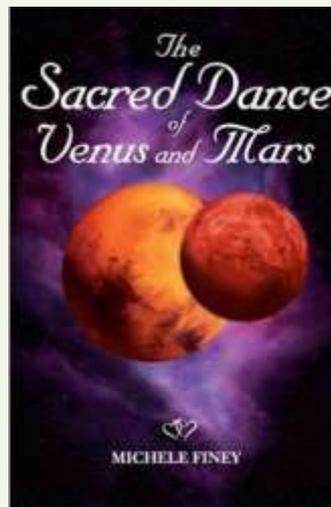
In her 2012 ground-breaking book, *The Sacred Dance of Venus and Mars* Michele examines 1500 years of this cycle revealing for the first time its significance for us all, both personally and collectively.

In this presentation we'll explore the power, beauty and magic of the Venus-Mars cycle and the particular significance of the 2015 conjunctions, revealing, among other things, your Venus-Mars soul group and the best time to embark on a new relationship.

Michele Finney is an astrologer, hypnotherapist and author based in Melbourne, Australia. Michele's feature articles cover a wide range of astrological themes and have appeared in numerous publications including The Mountain Astrologer, Dell Horoscope, the NCGR Journal and Wellbeing Astrology. She has presented her research at venues across Australia, in the

US and via webinar. Michele is the author of two books and Solar Fire's Health and Wellbeing Report. Michele also produces an annual 32 page astrology calendar which can be ordered via her website. www.celestialinsight.com.au

Agent – 36 Michele Finney – Michele can be contacted at <http://celestialinsight.com.au/>



Read -Michele's book *The Sacred Dance of Venus and Mars*– A beautiful book which for the first time explores the relationship between the cycles of Venus and Mars and their impact on our lives – especially where relationships are concerned. Michele Finney has

thoroughly researched her subject, and using many case histories she shows how, although synastry is important, possibly of greater importance is the aspect between the two planets within their cycles because that can dictate the timing of key moments in a relationship. She shows how the degree of the original conjunction between the two planets ('the degree of passion'), based on the time of birth can indicate the kind of the people we are attracted to and the course a romance can follow. A really absorbing book which will prompt hours of research!

<http://www.bookdepository.co.uk/Sacred-Dance-Venus-Mars-Michele-Finey/9781902405810?b=-3&t=-20#>

Quartz Singing Bowl Healing at Yoga Align Australia



Crystal singing bowls are made from silica sand which is pure quartz in nature. Crystal acts as an oscillator, magnifying, and transmitting pure tone. Clear quartz contains the full spectrum of light that is related to the seven energy centres (chakras) and thus heals the listener by bringing pure light through sound as specific colour back into the human aura.

Location: the Lavender Room at Yoga Align Australia Shop 2, 282 Princes Highway, Sylvania

Janine Donnellan's holistic services uses a variety of therapeutic techniques to clear, repair and balance the body's energy systems. Each session is tailored specifically to the individual requirements of the client. Janine is a full member of the International Institute of Complementary Therapists.

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL ~ To book a session contact Janine on 0408 025 268.

illumination.spheresoflight.com.au



Energetic Healing at Yoga Align Australia

Location: the Lavender Room at Yoga Align Australia Shop 2, 282 Princes Highway, Sylvania

Janine Donnellan's holistic services uses a variety of therapeutic techniques to clear, repair and balance the body's energy systems. Each session is tailored specifically to the individual requirements of the client. Janine is a full member of the International Institute of Complementary Therapists.

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CROW/RAVEN WHATEVER!

By Ray Baines



CROW/RAVEN WHATEVER!

In the June Axis Mundi there was an article about Ravens, short but informative. Only a few weeks later while being paid to watch someone (and thoroughly bored) I was lent a copy of National Geographic published in 1999 which had a longer article about Ravens and Crows; which I found very interesting. Shortly after that the crows up here in the land of queens (QLD) decided that they needed to tell me something and they started doing wingovers near me at least daily.

We apparently don't have ravens up here, but we do have some crows that are a match size wise for NSW ravens and they're just as vocal. So I decided to do some research about Crow Magick.

I found a website called "Spirit Animals & Animal Totems" and they said that crows are commonly associated with magic and the power to manipulate physical appearances, which is very similar to ravens. They mention that we can find crows all around the globe, and they are a reminder that magic is everywhere. So when you encounter a crow or a raven, try and tune into its behaviour and it will give you a clue on how to use the magic powers it carries (more on this later).

Because of the crow's affinity with life mysteries and magic, it is seen in many shamanic traditions as the spirit animal of choice for those who use magic and have the power to manipulate the law of our physical universe.

Crows carry the energy of life mysteries and the power for deep inner transformation. As a spirit guide, the crow can guide you in getting in touch with life mysteries and develop your ability to perceive subtle shifts in energy within yourself and in your environment.

Crows are known to build their nests in very tall trees. In doing so, they can get a better vision or perspective on the rest of their surroundings and by affinity with this trait, those who have the crow as a spirit animal or totem will enjoy a position from where they can see things from a higher perspective.

The crow is also watchful of intruders and predators. The sound it makes is characteristic of a loud, strident bird noise that can warn the other members of its clan over great distances. When you see your crow spirit animal, be on the watch and try and decipher what it's trying to say!

Just this morning I heard a loud cawing near our front door and when I looked out there was a very large crow looking back at me. It cawed loudly and then took off, I think I've been told to stop procrastinating and write about what they have been telling/showing me.

How you use this next section is up to you. I've used it just to gain perspective and the feel of energy, but it would be even better if you used it in a meditation.

You think of a crow or raven as they are flying, you have observed their wing formation, their feather fingers splayed or unsplayed. Next you visualise yourself transforming/assuming the shape of the crow/raven and you feel the energy shifts as you fly as they do. What do you feel, what do you see, for as the crow/raven the perspective is very very different from your human self. How you incorporate this difference in your magickal practice I will leave up to you!

Crow totem can bring the gifts of clairvoyance and change.

Crow can share the medicine symbols of authenticity, ancient wisdom and sacred laws. Crow can teach the animal magick of shifting dimension and mystical messages.

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Seasoning or Curing Cast Iron Cauldrons

By Jenny Taylor



What is seasoning?

Seasoning is preparing a cast iron cauldron or other cast iron cookware for use. There are two objectives in this process:

1. Coat the cast iron to prevent rust; and
2. To create a natural, permanent non-stick cooking surface.

Seasoning is an easy, but very important first step when using cast iron. Unlike synthetically coated cookware, cast iron can be seasoned, re-seasoned, and its cooking surface restored. When you season a cast iron utensil, you are preventing rust and providing the cookware with a natural, permanent non-stick surface. Remember: Seasoning takes time and repeated use before a pan develops the shiny, black surface.

How to season your cauldron

1. Wash new cauldron with hot, soapy water. (This is the only time any cast iron should ever be touched with soap.) Rinse and dry completely.
2. Apply a thin coat of melted vegetable shortening (i.e. Crisco) to the entire surface (including lid if applicable) both inside and out.
3. Line the lower oven rack with aluminium foil (to catch any drippings), and preheat oven to 350° F (180° C).
4. Place cauldron (and the lid) upside down on the upper oven rack, and bake for one hour.
5. Turn oven off and let cauldron and lid cool before removing from oven.
6. Store in a cool, dry place. If you have a lid for your cauldron, place a folded paper towel between the lid and the utensil to allow air to circulate.

Tips for care and cleaning

After use: Clean using a stiff brush and hot water only. Towel dry immediately and apply a light coating of vegetable oil to cookware while still warm.

NEVER wash any cast iron cauldron in dishwasher. Remove any heavy food or grease build up (including resins and incenses) in a self-cleaning oven or with steel wool, sandpaper, etc. Then re-season.

NEVER wash cast iron cauldron with soap or dishwashing detergents as it will cause rust, and in cooking, a metal taste. If this happens scour off the rust and repeat the seasoning process.

NEVER use any cast iron to store or save food in.

NEVER leave liquid materials in cauldrons.

And remember that seasoning is an on-going process. The more you use your cauldron or any other cast iron, the better seasoned it gets. That's why witches have extremely wonderfully shiny black cauldrons, "They Just Keep Looking Better".



Effie Seguel

In Light of Healing

Energy may not be visible, but it is as real as the air we breathe. Having that energy balanced within and around you is vital to your emotional, mental and physical wellbeing.

In Light of Healing was born to bring such balance, to give you the treatment and tools you need to live your life, amongst all the good and bad, while maintaining the most magnificent and optimum version of you.

EVIL EYE REMOVAL:

Negative energy is a force that can affect us more than we realise, the Evil Eye is the belief that a person can bestow bad luck onto another through the very gaze of their eyes, the words that they speak or even the thoughts that they have. Such energy can leave the receiver feeling tired, sick or simply out of sorts. I clear these energies through an ancient Greek ritual that lifts the Evil Eye restoring positivity and equilibrium to the person affected.

CHANNELLED HEALINGS

My channelled healings are a gentle non-invasive process that restores harmony and balance to your mind body and soul. Guided by Spirit my healings are tailored to the individual needs of my clients ensuring that they are attuned to their very own perfect vibration.

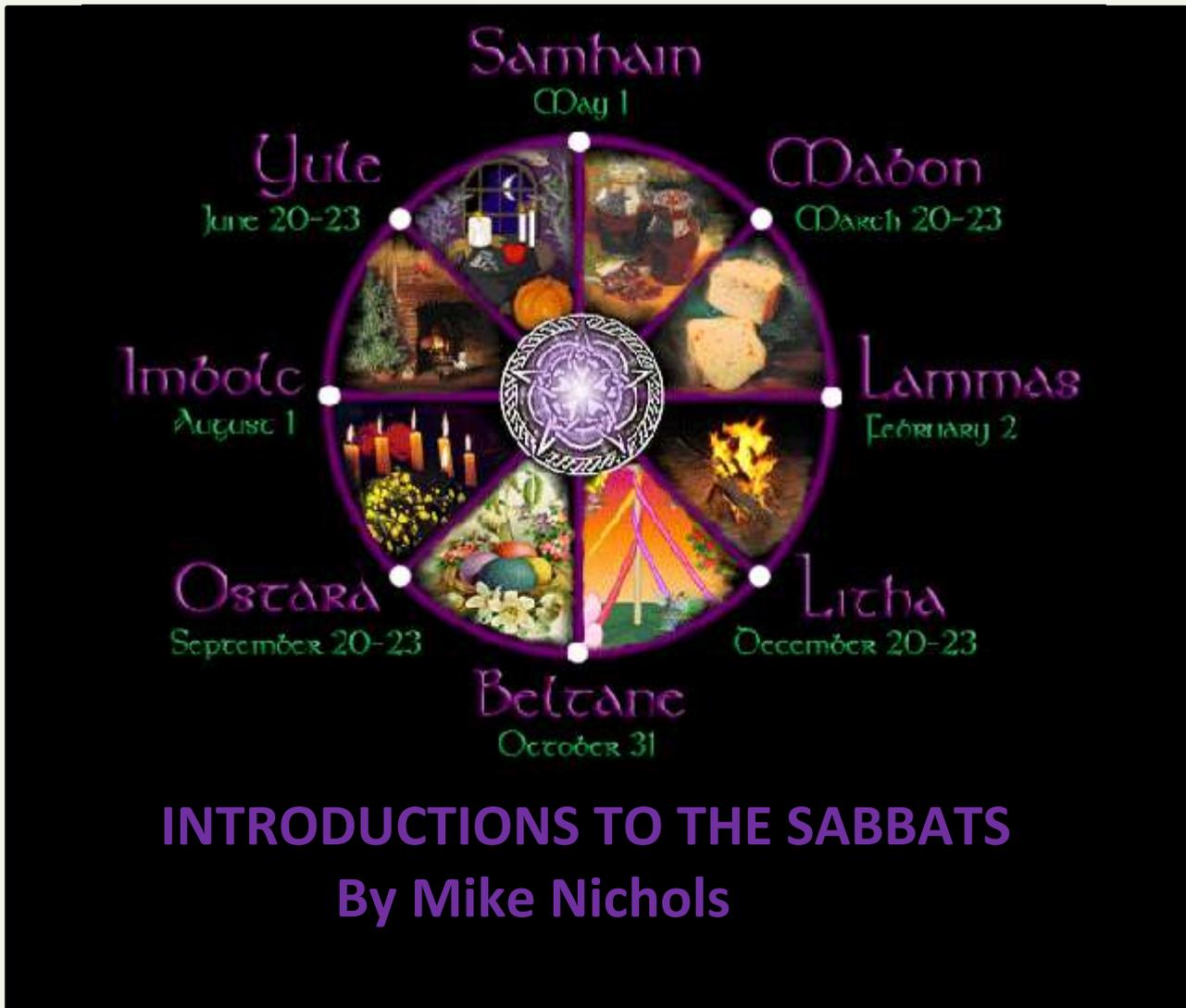
During my Healings and Evil Eye Removal I also receive messages and when guided I use cards as a tool for Divination.

Blessed Be Effie

Email: angel4e@optusnet.com.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/inlightofhealing

Website: <http://www.inlightofhealing.com>



*Thank you for the days,
Those endless days, those sacred days you gave me.
I won't forget a single day, believe me.
- The Kinks, "Days" (Ray Davies)*

The most important thing to understand about the eight Witchcraft Sabbats is that they are not man-made. By this, I mean that they are not holidays in the same way that Independence Day is a holiday, i.e., a calendar anniversary of some date that has a special importance in history. Indeed, the Sabbats of Witchcraft do not commemorate any historical event and are, as we shall see, almost antithetical to the concept of history. Nor are they randomly chosen holidays to observe some social institution, such as Mother's Day. No, the eight Sabbats of Witchcraft were not man-made because they existed long before man was made. Or woman. Or the dinosaurs. Or life on this planet. Indeed, these eight holidays might be said to be as old as the Earth

itself. They might not have been called "Sabbats" then, but they were there just the same.

The reason these holidays are so old is because they are a basic part of how the Earth works. Consequently, these holidays are not of history; they are of nature. You see, we happen to live on a beautiful blue-green planet that spins on its axis. And that axis is tilted, slightly, to the plane of the Earth's orbit around the sun. The practical upshot of all this is that once a year, we have a night that is the longest night of the year, accompanied by the shortest day. When the hours between sundown and sunup are the greatest, and the hours between sunup and sundown are least. And we call this

time the "winter solstice". And exactly opposite it on the wheel of the year, we have its opposite, the longest day of the year, and the shortest night. And we call this time the "summer solstice".

And having got this far in our analysis of the planet's yearly cycle, it becomes easy to spot two more days that are similar and equally important. Each spring, there comes a day when the hours between sunrise and sunset are exactly equal to the hours between sunset and sunrise. And we call this the "vernal equinox". Likewise, there comes a day each fall when the hours of darkness and the hours of daylight are exactly in balance. And we call this the "autumnal equinox". It cannot be overstressed that the importance of these four days lies in the fact that nobody 'made them up'; rather, they are simply a part of how this planet works.

It is reasonable to assume that even the most primitive of humans noticed this change in the hours of daylight, and the consequent change in the seasons. One can well imagine the anxiety in the mind of the "noble savage" as he witnessed the dwindling hours of daylight each autumn. And the sense of relief he must have felt when the year "turned the corner" at the winter solstice, and the days started to grow longer again, promising that spring would indeed return. Is it any wonder then that the oldest astronomical alignment of which we have a record points to the sun's position in the sky on the winter solstice? And this is in a burial mound in Co. Meath, Ireland.

In fact, the relatively new science of archaeoastronomy underlies much of what has been discovered about the Old Holidays. Megalithic sites such as Stonehenge, for example, have clear alignments to both the summer and winter solstice, and the vernal and autumnal equinox. Nor are such alignments confined to the British Isles; indeed they can be found the world over: from the pyramids of ancient Egypt to the ancient temples of China; from the cliff dwellings of the Anasazi to the temples of Peru. The two solstices and two equinoxes must certainly be the oldest holidays known to humans, and they were known worldwide. Folklorists refer to these four days as the "quarter days", inasmuch as they quarter the year. Astrologers

know them, too, for three zodiac signs fit neatly into each quadrant, beginning with the first day of Aries at the vernal equinox. And modern Witches tend to call them the four "Lesser Sabbats" or "Low Holidays".

The four "Greater Sabbats" or "High Holidays" of the Witches' calendar may seem slightly less obvious at first. Essentially, they bisect the quarters we have already discussed, falling at the midpoint of each. For this reason, folklorists refer to them as the "cross-quarter days". With these in place, the circle of the year begins to look like an eight-spoked wheel, which is a sacred symbol in many ancient religions. Because these four days are not as firmly marked by terrestrial events as the solstices and equinoxes, some writers have been led to speculate that they are derivative, and that their observation evolved at a much later stage of cultural evolution. Yet, although they may not be completely contemporaneous, their great antiquity was quite recently underscored by the discovery in Ireland of earthwork alignments of the sun's position on the horizon for each of the cross-quarter days! That means that the holiday we today call "Halloween" has been celebrated as far back as megalithic times!

That the cross-quarter days should be regarded as more important than the solstices or equinoxes should come as no surprise. It is a common human experience that things reach their greatest strength, their moment of peak energy, at their midpoint. In observing a human life, for example, a person is usually at the apex of health and vigour at a point about halfway through his mortality. So, too, with most other things in nature. So, too, with each quarter of the year. The cross-quarter days can thus be seen as the four "power points" of the year. Consequently, those power points were marked by the four most important holidays of the Witches' year which, according to the old folk calendar, also marked the turning of the seasons. These also correspond with the tetramorph figures of the zodiac, and were later adopted by Christian tradition as the sigils of the four Gospel writers.

Whenever I am asked what things make a Witch's worldview different from other people's, one of the first things I think about is the Witch's sensitivity to the cycles of nature,

especially the cycles of the moon and sun. In our modern world, insulated as we are from the progress of the seasons, we can go to the local supermarket and buy veggies and fruit year round, without consideration of what is "in season". Still, a Witch can usually tell you where she is in the course of the year, or what phase the moon is in. (Incidentally, the word "Sabbat" was originally Babylonian and was used to designate the quarter days of the lunar cycle - full, new, first and last quarter - thus occurring about every seven days. It was only later that the ancient Hebrew people borrowed the word and used it to denote a day of rest and prayer, occurring every seventh day without exception.)

And nothing can keep a modern Witch in tune with the cycles of nature like observing the Old Holidays. I can still remember the feeling I sometimes got as a child that a particular night during the year was somehow special, charged with magic and power, alive and responsive to my inner thoughts and desires. Like Halloween night (always my favourite holiday) in some ways, but different too, and occurring at other points of the year. I never knew why such nights occurred, but I knew they had to be celebrated, by placing candles on the front porch railings, creating mysterious shadow plays where the light of an old incandescent street lamp fell on the side of the garage, or playing hide-and-seek with the neighbourhood kids, the wind helping my running. Or maybe an impromptu weenie roast

(always a good excuse for building a big bonfire) was called for. I can't prove it, of course, because I didn't keep a diary, but I'd be almost willing to bet that I had stumbled onto the Old Holidays, vestiges of their primordial power still echoing down through the centuries.

Finding out more about these ancient holy days has been a lifelong labour of love for me, and I sincerely hope that the gleanings of my own research into these mysteries will kindle in my readers that same sense of magic and grounding or "connectedness" with nature that I have always experienced when contemplating the Old Holidays.

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Tarot Readings
with Janine Donnellan

*Location: the Lavender Room at Yoga Align Australia
Shop 2, 282 Princes Highway, Sylvania NSW 2224.
Phone for a booking on 0408 025 268.*



EarthSong WitchCamp

25 September - 29 September 2015

Registrations are open!

Registrations to EarthSong 2015 are now open. Registering early will secure you the most affordable rate, and will also help organisers to put on this magical event!

Visit EarthSong Registration for this year's pricing, as well as to register. We look forward to seeing you at EarthSong 2015 :)

About EarthSong

EarthSong is a growing community of Pagans and Witches who come together in many creative ways - one of these being an annual gathering called 'WitchCamp'.

WitchCamps are intensives that focus on the teaching of magical skills, community building and ritual. Together we celebrate the sacred mysteries and practice magic and ritual in the Reclaiming Tradition. EarthSong is now in its fourth year. For more information about WitchCamps, please see our FAQs.

Regular updates will be posted on the website, on Facebook and Twitter.

[Register Now](#)



What is a Super Moon?

By Bruce McClure and Deborah Byrd

What is a supermoon? We confess: before a few years ago, we in astronomy had never heard that term. To the best of our knowledge, astrologer Richard Nolle coined the term supermoon over 30 years ago. The term has only recently come into popular usage. Nolle has defined a supermoon as:

... a new or full moon which occurs with the moon at or near (within 90% of) its closest approach to Earth in a given orbit.

That's a pretty generous definition and allows for many supermoons. By this definition, according to Nolle:

There are 4-6 supermoons a year on average.

Some astronomers have complained about the name ... but we like it! And it's entered the popular culture.

What did astronomers call these moons before we called them supermoons? We called them a perigee full moon, or a perigee new moon. Perigee just means "near Earth."

The moon is full, or opposite Earth from the sun, once each month. It's new, or more or less between the Earth and sun, once each month. And, every month, as the moon orbits Earth, it comes closest to Earth. That point is

called perigee. The moon always swings farthest away once each month; that point is called apogee.

No doubt about it. Supermoon is a catchier term than perigee new moon or perigee full moon.

We first became familiar with the supermoon label in the year 2011 when the media used it to describe the full moon of March 19, 2011. On that date, the full moon aligned with proxigee – the closest perigee of the year – to stage the closest, largest full moon of 2011.

About three or four times a year, the new or full moon coincides closely in time with the perigee of the moon—the point when the moon is closest to the Earth. These occurrences are often called 'perigean spring tides.' The difference between 'perigean spring tide' and normal tidal ranges for all areas of the coast is small. In most cases, the difference is only a couple of inches above normal spring tides. Image and caption via NOAA.

About three or four times a year, the new or full moon coincides closely in time with the perigee of the moon—the point when the moon is closest to the Earth. These occurrences are often called 'perigean spring tides.' The difference between 'perigean spring tide' and normal tidal ranges for all areas of the coast is small. In most cases, the

difference is only a couple of inches above normal spring tides. Image and caption via NOAA.

When are the supermoons of 2015? By Nolle's definition, the new moon or full moon has to come within 361,836 kilometers (224,834 miles) of our planet, as measured from the centres of the moon and Earth, in order to be considered a supermoon.

By that definition, the year 2015 has a total of six supermoons. The first supermoon, for 2015, came with the January 20 new moon. The new moons on February 18 and March 20 were also considered supermoons, according to Nolle's definition, and that same definition dictates that the full moons of August, September and October will be supermoons, too. Thus, the full moon supermoons – aka near-perigee full moons – in 2015:

Full moon of August 29 at 18:35 UTC

Full moon of September 28 at 2:50 UTC

Full moon of October 27 at 12:05 UTC

The full moon on September 28, 2015, will present the closest supermoon of the year (356,896 kilometres or 221,754 miles). What's more, this September 28, 2015 full moon will stage a total lunar eclipse, concluding a series of Blood Moon eclipses that started with the total lunar eclipse of April 15, 2014.



Tarot Corner



Six of Pentacles



The 6 of Pentacles is often a sign of a turn for the better, particularly with regard to money, which would be nice for a change.

The Six of Pentacles is much like the three fold law, stating that what you have been putting out to the world is coming back to you. This is usually a good card indicating a change in circumstances that comes from good works.

If you have been on a good path in work or finances with your intentions... that is working hard and trying to seek success then you are likely to see the fruits of your labour and you will be rewarded handsomely.

You may even be coming out of a hard time financially and need a little extra help. In this case you need to put your thoughts out into the universe so they can come back to you as a reality.

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Your Healing Journey Starts Here!

**Location: the Lavender Room at Yoga Align Australia
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Theta Healing has achieved immediate, life changing transformations. Astounding results have included the rapid healing of serious illness, the manifestation of abundance and freedom from depression and anxiety.

Mobile: 0433 418 512



Energetic & Shamanic Healing with Janine Donnellan

A healing session will utilise a combination of Meditation and Chakra Balancing and Energetic Healing techniques. The healing sessions are designed to help you balance your body, emotions, mind and Soul.

Janine is an Energetic Healer and a Reiki Master Practitioner and teaches a variety of spiritual workshops on Shamanic Journeying, Chakra Balancing and Aura Viewing.

Mobile: 0408 025 268



What is PAN Inc?

The Pagan Awareness Network Incorporated (PAN Inc) is a not-for-profit educational association with members Australia-wide. It is run by a management committee whose members are drawn from a broad cross-section of the Pagan community. The Association is incorporated in the state of New South Wales, with sub-committees in other states of Australia. It has no formal ties with any religious body, but works in a proactive fashion, both within the Pagan community and as a point of contact for the public, including government and media organisations.

PAN Inc aims to continue as the Australian Pagan community's most effective networking and educational body.

Our Mission

The Pagan Awareness Network Inc (PAN Inc) aims to:

Correct misinformation, raise awareness and educate the general public about Paganism and associated beliefs and practises in order to achieve religious tolerance

Foster the growth of the Pagan community through service

Brief History

The Pagan Awareness Network began in January 1997 when the Witches League for Public Awareness (Salem Mass. USA) withdrew their regional controllers. David Garland was the Australian representative and with the support of the coven he worked with,

had already embarked upon the task of making the WLPA a registered organisation here in Australia when this happened. Rather than waste all the work that had already been done David decided to start a new group here in Australia and so came up with the Pagan Awareness Network (PAN).

Join PAN

When you join PAN you are helping us to continue to provide help and services to the Pagan community. You will receive:

- a regular newsletter mailed to you.
- a membership card entitling you to discounts at selected PAN friendly businesses.
- discounts on selected PAN run events
- occasional giveaways and special deals.

Your membership goes towards helping us advocate for the Pagan community in the media and support events, groups and initiatives around the country.

Applying to join

To join PAN, first obtain a membership application form from our site. Applicants must be 18 years or older unless they have prior approval of the committee. Then fill out the membership form and send it back to us with payment. If you have any questions about joining please email us via our contact form [here](#).



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.



Full Moon Circle - Sydney & Nowra



Spheres Of Light holds regular Full Moon Circles in the Sutherland Shire area of Sydney (Australia) and in Nowra (NSW south coast) on the Friday before each Full Moon (see dates below). 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.

TIME: arrive at 7:45pm for an 8:00pm start

WHAT TO BRING: a plate of food and/or drink (non-alcoholic) to share at supper afterwards.

WHAT TO WEAR: neat casual attire - cloaks/robes/ritual clothes may also be worn if desired.

COST PER CIRCLE: \$15 per person to help cover venue rental and other ancillary costs.

If you would like to attend a circle please contact us for further details please send an email to inquiries@spheresoflight.com.au for Sylvania Circle or phone Janine on 0408025268.

Contact Nowra Circle at nowra.circle@spheresoflight.com.au

[Website: spheresoflight.com.au](http://spheresoflight.com.au)



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Intuitive Tarot Class

This one day class facilitated by Janine Donnellan will teach you the tips and tricks for learning how to read tarot intuitively with confidence. You'll be able to find clear, specific messages in the cards without thinking of the specific card meaning. Soon you'll be creating your own spreads and giving awesome readings with nothing more than your cards and your super tuned psychic skills!

When: Sunday 1st November 2015

Time: 10am – 4pm

Where: Sutherland Shire – Venue TBA

Cost: \$150

[BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL](#) ~ Please contact Janine on 0408 025 268 to make your booking. A non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 is required for all bookings. The final payment can be made at the workshop.



Mediumship & Psychic Development Circle

We all have natural psychic abilities. Learn to Awaken Your Psychic & Mediumship skills at the Medium & Psychic Development Circle. These classes present a dynamic, 'hands-on' opportunity to explore your psychic & mediumship abilities to strengthen your natural intuition in a fun environment. Tap into the power of your psychic intuitive abilities and make them work for you in all areas of your personal and business life!

These classes are facilitated by Janine Donnellan. Classes are conducted on a fortnightly basis (5 nights a term).

Location: Sutherland Shire – Venue TBA

Dates: Fortnightly on Tuesday nights (13th October, 27th October, 10th November, 24th November, 8th December 2015)

Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm.

Cost: \$180 per term

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL ~ Please contact Janine on **0408 025 268** to make your booking. A non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 is required for all bookings. You can pay [Here](#). The final payment can be made at the first workshop.

Please note there is an early bird registration offer of \$160 if full payment is paid by the 1st October 2015.



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For further information and payment details.

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SOL Illumination

Welcome to SOL Illumination

Offering Holistic Services and Personal Development Workshops:

- Reiki Healing
- Chakra Balancing
- Energetic Healing
- Shamanic Healing
- Tarot Reading
- Mediumship & Psychic Development
- Paranormal Investigations
- Parapsychology
- Space Clearing
- and much more...

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