

Issue 35

March 2023

WITCH



OSTARA





WITCH

Magazine

Dearest Witches,

A blessed Ostara to you - the days get warmer, sunnier and longer as we head towards Beltane.

It's not quite time to put away the winter boots just yet, but we can shed a layer or two as we grow towards the sun.

Cover art by P J Richards

Be blessed,

All other images belong to the writer/artist, are sourced from UnSplash, Pixabay, or are from the public domain.

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WITCH

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★
**WITCH
BELTANE**

*Submissions due 24th
April*

WITCH is an independently published magazine featuring writers across the globe, from all paths. We feature anything from witchcraft to the occult, pagan and druid practices and anything in between.

Even if you've never written before, we welcome new voices, previously published works and artist features of all kinds.

We'd love to hear from you!

*Send your submissions to:
submissions@witchzine.co.uk*



Ostara

Blessings



WITCH
Magazine

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"This story is gripping and compelling and soon makes us familiar with ritual and witchcraft as normal and essential to awaken and maintain a healthy soulful lifestyle..."

Maureen Walton O'Brien
Visual Artist, Canada

O'LAN RUADH & SARAH BERTI

THE MUSEUM OF MAGIC, FORTUNE-TELLING & WITCHCRAFT

The Museum of Magic, Fortune-telling & Witchcraft has recently opened Scotland's capital, just off the Royal Mile in Edinburgh's historic Old Town. The artefacts displayed range from the 17th century to modern day. One of interesting artefacts is the two hundred mummified cat which was found in the walls of an old building in France. Others are antique Fortune-telling cards, crystals and other witchy and magical related artefacts.

It also features the Witches Kitchen serving witchy themed food and drinks, along with a gift store and an opportunity to have your palm read, tarot or tea leaf reading in a recreation of a traditional fortune-tellers tent.

Instagram: [museumofmagicfortunewitchcraft](https://www.instagram.com/museumofmagicfortunewitchcraft)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/museumMFW





The Witch and the Cat

Darkness and Light

Andrew Anderson

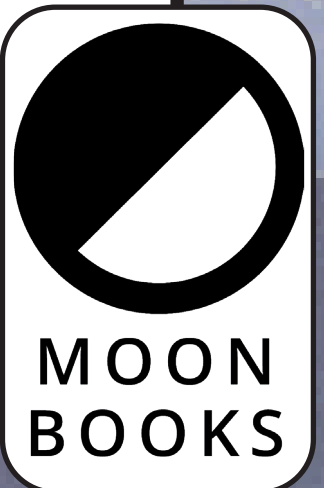
When I began to write my latest book, “The Magic of Cats”, the relationship between witches and cats was my starting point. That relationship lies deep at the heart of our understanding of witchcraft, finding resonances in ancient Greece, across medieval Europe and persisting in our popular culture today. Whether Cats are companions of a goddesses, such as Hekate, or modern teenage witches, such as Hermione and Sabrina, wherever we find depictions of witches, we find their familiar felines.

Has there been a more magical relationship in human history?

Our love of cats has never been greater. They are one of the most popular pets of the twenty first century and many cat lovers want to share the joy of having a cat with the world. The prevalence of cat videos and even cat ‘celebrities’ is such that the subject of “Cats and the Internet” even has its own Wikipedia page. Not that I’m surprised; I’m sure I’m not the only one who has lost a couple of hours while surfing the net looking for more cute cat content.

Of course, the relationship between cats and humans, particularly humans who engage in magical practices, hasn’t always been viewed as positively as it is today. To those of a superstitious nature in medieval Europe, the relationship between humans and felines was not only suspicious but wholly un-Godly. The cat appeared as a shadowy and thoroughly untrustworthy creature who stalked the shadows at twilight and revelled the silvery half-light of the full moon. The link between the cat and the moon, and therefore the female aspect, also goes back centuries. Roman author Pliny even suggested that a cat would have 28 kittens in her lifetime, the same as the number of days in a lunar cycle.

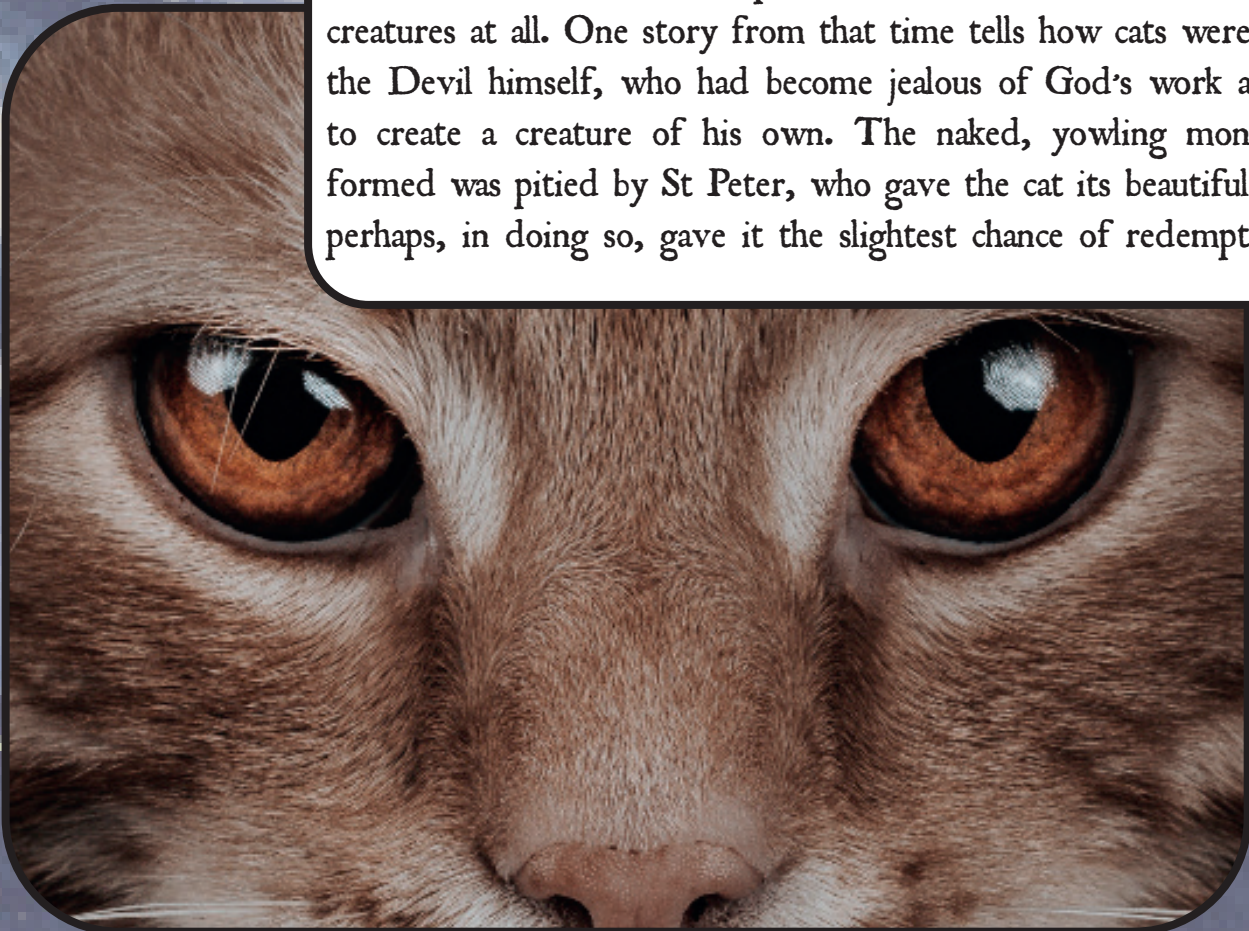
It is, however, the cat’s eyes, not the number of kittens they would bear, which seems to have been the main point of connection between the cat and the moon. Just as the moon waxes and wanes in the night sky, so the cat’s eye contracts and dilates, ranging from the fully round, dilated pupil, emulating the full moon,




to the thinnest slit in their iris. The changeability in the cat's pupil, perhaps the most distinct of any domesticated animal, imbues it with a sense of magic, a sense of mysticism. However, just as the changeability in the moon made it a symbol of inconstancy, the distinct change in the cat's pupil meant it became viewed with suspicion, as something that couldn't be trusted.

However, there is another aspect of a cat's eye which I think contributed to the relationship between magical practitioner and feline, and to the sense of superstition which came to surround them; that is the intelligence we seem to see when we look into a cat's eye. Cats look back at us with a deep sense of understanding, as if they can perceive the secrets of the universe. There are many stories of cats who have seemingly had foresight of catastrophic events long before they happened, stories which also connect them to the spirit world. Cats often seem to look through their human companions, as if they are staring at the mysteries of the great beyond which we have yet to comprehend. Cat lovers are great advocates for the intelligence of their feline companions while non-cat people tend to think they are haughty and aloof.

The intelligence we see looking back at us from cats' eyes made many Christians in medieval Europe believe that cats were not one of God's creatures at all. One story from that time tells how cats were forged by the Devil himself, who had become jealous of God's work and wanted to create a creature of his own. The naked, yowling monstrosity he formed was pitied by St Peter, who gave the cat its beautiful coat (and, perhaps, in doing so, gave it the slightest chance of redemption).





Then there were those who believed that the intelligence we see in cats' eyes meant that they weren't felines at all, but demons in disguise. This was particularly the case with black cats, who were felt to be the devil incarnate. The reason why some may have made this connection is to do with the medieval presentation of the devil. In our popular culture, as can be seen in examples as diverse as *South Park*, *Doctor Who* and *Hocus Pocus*, the devil is portrayed as red skinned. However, medieval woodcuts show the devil to be a beast with shaggy black fur, far more mammalian in form than our current conception. So, wholly black creatures became the source of much suspicion and, therefore, wholly black cats became prime evidence of devil worship and witchcraft.

The combination of the cat's obvious intelligence and their black coats doomed them to a terrible fate, with cat burning ceremonies arranged by Christian churches across Europe. We still see the legacy of those pyres in our cats today; it is very rare to find wholly black cats because they were essentially wiped out in the religious frenzy which surrounded the witch trial. Cats with a few white hairs in their coats may have been spared from the flames, the white hairs taken as evidence of goodness, giving them the possibility of redemption. If you have a wholly black cat, hold it close - its ancestors escaped a terrible fate.

The names of those cats who were killed for the sake of piety have been passed down to us and still have some cultural currency. Greymalkin, or Grimalkin, a name for a smoky female feline, is often associated with witch's cats, appearing in texts as diverse as Shakespeare's 1606 play *Macbeth* and Ursula Moray Williams' 1942 children's book, *Gobolino the Witch's Cat*. Similarly, Pyewacket, a familiar caught up in one of Matthew Hopkins' notorious witch trials, became the name of a cat in Rosemary Weir's 1967 children's novel and the name of a demon conjured in a 2017 horror movie.

As practitioners, it is important that we confront this history and honour those who were persecuted, including the animals who shared homes with those humans - and shared their fate. However, it is also important that we don't simply reduce cats to a series of stereotypes from the past. We need to look at them honestly and see them for what they are.

Although the image of the witch's cat was my starting point for "The Magic of Cats", it ended up being a small part of a much larger and more magical story - and that story was one I found by working with my own cats, Marlowe and Alfie. Marlowe is the quintessential cat of the night; he loves going out in the dark and is the sort of chap you could imagine sitting next to a gently bubbling cauldron. But Alfie is a very different sort of cat. He loves nothing more than laying in the sunshine, his ginger

coat seemingly emulating the warming rays of the sun. He is much more grounded than Marlowe. Alfie seemed to me to be something I hadn't really encountered in any of my magical reading. He was, in essence, a cat of the day.

And that's where I found the real magic of cats, by considering their future as well as their past, by accepting the darkness of their persecution and the light of the love they give us.

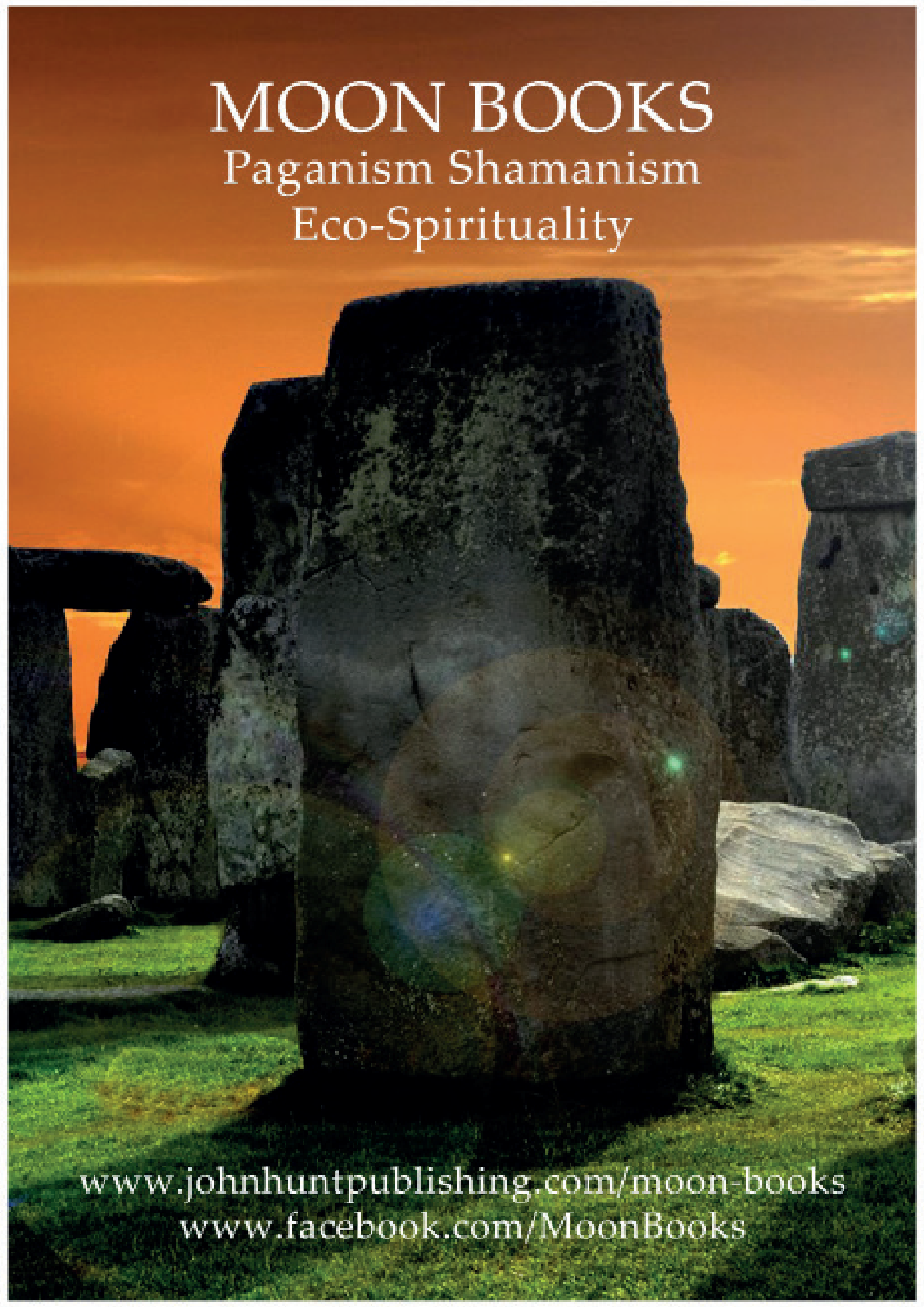
Cats are truly our most magical companions.

Andrew Anderson is the author of The Magic of Cats published by Moon Books



THE Magic OF Cats

ANDREW ANDERSON
ILLUSTRATED BY HANNAH WILLOW

A photograph of the Stonehenge monument in England, featuring several large, dark grey stone structures arranged in a circular pattern. The scene is set against a vibrant sunset sky with shades of orange, red, and yellow. The foreground is a lush green field. The overall mood is serene and ancient.

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spirit dolls

Helen J.R. Bruce



Spirit dolls are vessels created to hold a familiar spirit. They may be shop bought dolls which have been personalised, hand crafted creations or commissioned artifacts made in ceremony by one practitioner for another. Unlike a poppet, which is made in the likeness of an individual as part of sympathetic magic, a spirit doll is not modelled on a human counterpart. Rather, it is a physical object within which the energy of a god, goddess, animal spirit, elemental, plant spirit or other divine being can be invited to reside.

Most commonly, a spirit doll will be kept on an altar or shrine, although during the first stages of honoring some magical workers will keep a new doll with them at all times, even when sleeping or cleaning. The advantages of this intense period of bonding, if appropriate for the spirit attracted, include learning quickly how the doll chooses to communicate and what level of devotion it requires. Some spirit dolls may house god or goddess energy which prefers a static altar setting, with regular offerings of candles, alcohol or incense. Other dolls may convey a desire to travel, to be brought to sacred sites where they can absorb energy, or to be included in regular rituals and meals.

The materials used in the creation of a spirit doll are varied. If investing in a ready made doll, then choosing the appropriate colours, shape and expression are important. Intricate spirit dolls may include crystals, pieces of bone or antler, precious metals, tree bark, herbs, resins, wool and hair. Each of these elements carries a different vibration, and research into which will best align with the type of spirit to be petitioned will help yield the best results. For example, a spirit doll intended for a sea spirit might include seashells, dried seaweed and beach pebbles as adornments. In contrast, a doll dedicated to a woodland deity might have miniature antlers, be dressed in oak bark and wear a belt made from honeysuckle twine.

Crafting your own spirit doll can be a lengthy, but ultimately rewarding and healing, process. Many prolific doll makers speak of finding a strong connection with their maternal ancestors through the repetitive work of felting and sewing. Like with many crafts, time taken to focus on the movement of the hands can be particularly useful for grounding and settling into the present. The process of creating the doll is also the ideal time to begin inbuing it with intention, blessing each element used with incense, moon water or prayers. Wool can be collected from brambles or fences while on your favourite walks and garden herbs can be cut and dried in line with the moon phase and season best fitting the spirit the doll is intended for. There really is no limit to the intricate layers of symbolism and meaning which can be woven into a spirit doll.





Once the doll has been crafted, cleansed and blessed in whatever way the maker deems appropriate, then the next stage is to invite a spirit to take up residence. This process can be very personal, and will be tailored to both the practitioner and the spirit in question. A ritual invocation to the deity chosen may include words of praise and retellings of associated myths and stories.

Food, such as honey, meat, eggs or

bread can be appropriate offerings, as can be drinks such as mead, milk or wine. Such offerings should be left on the altar, or other sacred place, for a day and night before removal.

It may be immediately obvious that a spirit has responded. A thoughtfully made spirit doll, surrounded by offerings and addressed with heartfelt words of invitation, should make for an attractive vessel. If a particular deity has been approached, then signs of residence should align with their focus and character. Smells, such as earth, flowers or woodsmoke, can be strong indicators, as can shapes revealed in incense smoke or candle flames. If the ritual has involved a more open call to any good spirit with a desire to work positively alongside the practitioner, then meditating with the doll or using shamanic gazing to connect with it may help reveal more about the newly inhabited doll's nature. Once the ritual is complete it is important to thank the spirit or energy communicated with, regardless of whether it has moved into the doll or not. There may be a settling period of a day where it is not completely clear as to whether the spirit doll is inhabited or not, although time spent in the presence of the doll should soon be able to clarify either way. An inhabited doll will have an 'aliveness' to it, which may be heat, vibration, a glow, a smell, a change in expression or a deepening of colours. Some spirit dolls remain active for long periods of time, working with a practitioner over many years. Others are inhabited more briefly, with the divine en-

ergy dissipating once a particular task or ceremony has been completed. It is important to retain a respectful and devoted attitude when working with a spirit doll, even a well settled one, as the relationship is a partnership in which favours should not be assumed. It is worth remembering that powerful deities may accept petitions and offerings through spirit dolls, but there is never the guarantee of requests being granted.

THE FIVE STAGES OF WORKING WITH A SPIRIT DOLL

Creation - the doll is either made by the practitioner or is purchased, ready made, with certain attributes and qualities in mind.

Cleansing - the doll is cleansed using smoke, water or herbs, removing any residual energy from the materials which is not required.

Blessing - the doll is blessed in ways appropriate for the type of spirit invited, sometimes including the addition of further ceremonial adornments.

Invitation - the doll is placed in a sacred space and gifted food, drink, candles, incense and other items intended to please and attract the intended spirit.

Honoring - this is the continued process of bonding, inclusion in ritual, and the leaving of offerings which honors the spirit that resides in the doll.

My own spirit doll is made in the shape of a black dog, designed specifically as a vessel in which to house the spirit of Black Shuck. Although Shuck is probably best known for the deadly attack at St. Mary's church in Bungay in 1577, I have found him to be an steadfast companion when negotiating liminal phases of life. He sits on my altar and has daily offerings of candles and incense, alongside regular gifts of mead, whiskey or gin. Particular requests are accompanied by an offering of raw, red meat. As part of spiritual practice, maintaining a spirit doll is an excellent way to delve deeply into working with a particular deity or energy, and also teaches commitment on the part of the practitioner. Alongside this, having an ally to call upon during ritual is an emboldening and empowering experience, which may allow for greater magical feats to be achieved.

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a bundle of dried sage leaves. The bundle is smoldering, with a thin stream of white smoke rising from the top. The background is softly blurred, showing warm, golden light and hints of green foliage, creating a serene and spiritual atmosphere.

**CLEANSING,
CHARGING &
AWAKENING**

**WISE WORDS FROM
THE OLD CRONE**

OK..... who likes housework cleaning and tidying?????

.....Put your hands down you two..... :o)

Whilst I love a tidy neat house free of dust and clutter, I don't always get on and do it as I'd far rather be out on the garden, reading a book or writing.

I was writing my latest circle casting script for The Circle of The Crystal Moon and I picked up a few crystals to put on my seasonal altar. I picked up my big Ganesh and he was so dusty I had to apologise to him. I looked at all the crystals, tools and artefacts and I was horrified. When had I last cleaned here? Oh dear, as I was not able to remember it must have been a very long time ago.

I do cleanse, charge and reawaken the crystals, artefacts and cards I use on a regular basis but decided it was time to do the entire lot on my window sill.

It is a deep bow window so I had my work cut out. Let's face it, I do change my altars and crystal grids, which I have in almost all rooms in the house, on a regular basis but I did need to take a good look at all my artefacts and set to with a vengeance. There was no time like the present so began straight way so I would not be distracted. I am very easily distracted.

Cleansing and charging are different from each other but are often done together, which means you can cleanse your crystals or altar items, anything you use regularly, then straight after, you are able to charge them as well.

If you feel your cards, crystals, pendulum or even your altar itself is a little stale, cleansing is worth doing. My main altar and a lot of my crystals reside on a wide windowsill in my dining room. I find that removing all items, cleaning the windowsill and the window, polishing my silver platter on which some items reside and rearranging them, not only makes the area clean but also recharges everything too. Although I don't do this very often I do it with care and thought and speak, in my head, to each item. Yes it sounds crazy but I like to do it. It makes me feel closer to each object.

Sometimes items and artefacts can feel blocked and don't seem to be working so well so after the cleansing and charging perhaps it is a good time to awaken them.

Crystals can become stagnant and blocked especially if they have not been used for a while. I move mine around the house as well not only to get a full cycle of the moon and sun but also to liven them

up. How do you feel if you are on one place for a long time? I know I feel I need a change and sometimes a change of scenery is as good as a rest. It is the same with your crystals and magical artefacts.

When you get a new tool or artefact and you want to make sure there is no negative energy, it is a good idea to cleanse the item as you would a new cup or mug, knife and fork, plate and bowl etc. Not in the dishwasher of course, please note, but in a ritual.

I cleanse and charge my Tarot and Oracle cards quite often because as a regular card reader they too need a change, a cleanse and recharge. They work hard for me so I need to make sure I look after them. After each reading I perform, I do a very quick recharge for my Tarot cards simply by putting them all in numerical order again before I read for

another Querant. I find this not only removes any negative energy or even the previous querants intent, but also gives me a reset as well.

This is not so easy to do with Oracle cards as generally they have no numerical values, so I put a crystal near them or on top of them. When I am working as a professional card reader I always lay out my table with rose quartz, amethyst and selenite in a triangle and place cards in the centre, or just to ring the changes place a piece of Selenite on top of the cards.

At home I use the smoke from smouldering dried herbs to cleanse. I reset my altar and crystals using the phases of the moon as well as blessing them in a ritual circle. It is similar to charging but for me it is a little more respectful. I use the power from meditation and the four guardians of the elements. North, East, South and West as well as Spirit. I then use a bell to charge and awaken.

You can cleanse with salt. You don't have to cover the item or artefact with salt, just draw a circle around them and leave it for a while. You can also just place a small bowl of salt nearby as it is a great magnet for any negative energies, as well as being a great healer and cleanser.





Once your crystals are cleansed and re charged you will find that they too can be used to cleanse and recharge other items.

Here is one method you too can use.

Cleansing

Find your target items/artefacts and chose a method suitable to the item and also a meaningful one for you. Please don't just wash them especially not selenite. Intent and aim Focus on the item or items. As I stated above, you can place salt nearby or in a circle and place your objects within that circle. I must admit to always lighting a candle, placing a small bowl of water nearby as well and smudging the area with herbs.

Grounding

Make sure you are well grounded and say aloud,
I cleanse and ground these items with earth, air and fire and water.

Charging

We all charge up our phones and tablets etc in an easy way, just plug them in to the power source.

With our ritual items it can be as easy and as complex as you desire. I sometimes charge mine in a blessings ritual as part of my regular Sabbat circle casting. I also

invite anyone else who is in attendance to bring a few of their items to be blessed and charged. This does seem to work well as the energy from all of us is so much stronger than just one person.

Awakening

There are times when you can cleanse and charge and still feel that the artefact is stagnant and it may be that it needs a little push or awakening. Choose a method suitable to the items and also to your own mantra.

Here I use a bell. No ordinary bell I should tell you. I have a Chinese temple bell on a wooden stand rather like a gong, with a brass hammer. When struck, even gently, the note resounds and reverberates beautifully.

You can use any kind of bell which has a clear ring and tone. You can use dance bells which look like small twin cymbals attached with thread. These are cheap to buy and have a clear tinkling ring. Sometimes I use a bell to clear negative energy and as I use a bell to clear negativity from them at the same time.

I wish you luck love and light
Blessed Be
The Old Crone
theoldcrone5@gmail.com



Sisters of the Moon Lunar Temple

<https://seekingblissonline.com/courses/1465/about>

Sister, are you feeling the call to be part of a global lunar sisterhood? Would you like to deepen your connection to the moon, the seasons, Goddess and your own internal rhythms? The Lunar Temple is an online monthly membership giving you the opportunity to receive lunar and seasonal guidance and be part of a global community of like minded women.

As part of the membership we gather live once a month via zoom to honour the New Moon. These are beautiful online circles where we gather in the Lunar Temple to set powerful intentions for the month ahead and to connect in sacred sisterhood. Michelle combines her knowledge and passion for all things divine feminine to bring you these beautifully crafted circles.

Our theme for 2022 is 'The Inspired Feminine' - we are going to be exploring badass women throughout history and weaving their magic into our own lives. There will be some really juicy journaling prompts each month as well as creative invitations as we explore pirate queens, warrior women, artists, writers, revolutionaries, poets, truth seekers and much more. Dive deeper into astrology and lunar self care and learn how each of the zodiac signs can take you on a journey of self discovery & empowerment.

Awaken the wild woman within, gather round the collective fire of our ancestors and howl at the moon!



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FOREST SPELL
AYSHE-MIRA YASHIN

AYSHE-MIRA YASHIN @ILLUSTRATIONWITCH

Artist Bio:

Ayshe-Mira Yashin (she/her) is a lesbian artist of Jewish-Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot origin. She is currently London-based, studying Illustration at Camberwell College of Arts (UAL). Her art primarily involves linework and ink illustrations, menstrual blood paintings, risograph prints, zines and bookbinding. She relates her work to her Turkish and Cypriot culture and lineage, with frequent references to mythologies, spiritual practices and visual archetypes and languages of symbolism which originate from her region of the Earth. Additionally, her work focuses on themes of queer love, ecofeminism and witchcraft, celebrating raw feminine power through an empowering representation of women's bodies, imagining possibilities of what queer love and intimacy could look like in a peaceful, matriarchal world.



Instagram: @illustrationwitch

Etsy: @theillustrationwitch

Website: <https://illustrationwitch.hotglue.me/>



DRAG QUEEN OF PENTACLES



SHOOTS

EMILY SEVILLE

Artist bio:

Emily Seville is a Manchester based visual artist and meditation practitioner integrating clay, painting and spirituality, with a focus on nature and wellbeing. Current themes in her practice explore a ritualistic approach to relationships with nature. Recognising the importance of ancient nature ceremonies to contemporary discourse on ecological issues as a way to return and re-examine the relationship with nature. An intimate relationship encompassing ideas of oneness and of nature being sacred.

Artwork details:

Shoots, Terracotta Vessel with black slip detail

Through creation, alchemy and story-telling, 'Shoots' celebrates and uplifts the cycle of nature.

www.emilyseville.com



LIMINAL SPACES

FAIRY BEC

I attended the Witchfest mini event in Feltham back in November and listened to a friend of mine, Jonathan Argento, discuss liminal spaces. It is a concept that has got stuck in my head, turned up in many situations and been a part of many conversations since.

A liminal space is a space between spaces. A sort of limbo, no-man's land, a dreamworld. It is a threshold between two spaces.

In liminal spaces, I find that the 3d world seems to be non-existent, warped, twisted somehow. Often, if we think too much about it, we will question reality. It is a space where we are offered the opportunity to journey inward, a space to go when we are not sure which direction to take next or where we are put when a decision needs to be made. It is the ideal place for a Hedge Witch who sits between worlds.

What happens in a liminal space?

Some people thrive in a liminal space, others feel trapped, and some feel overwhelmed.



Jonathan was discussing how historically; people were buried at crossroads - liminal spaces - as punishment so their souls were trapped and could not find a direction to go in. He also discussed how the bones of those buried in such a manner would also be super charged with energy.

In liminal spaces, we can sit and raise our power ready for our intent/spells/rituals and super charge them too.

If we look at the 'The Hero's Journey' by Joseph Campbell, being in a liminal space is similar to

hearing 'The Call to Adventure':-

"The call to adventure signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of this society to a zone unknown. This fateful region of both treasure and danger may be variously represented: as a distant land, a forest, a kingdom underground, beneath the waves or above the sky, a secret island, lofty mountaintop, or profound dream state; but it is always a place of strangely fluid and polymorphous beings, unimaginable torments, superhuman deeds, and impossible delights."

A liminal space can be perceived as a pause. Within that pause, we are given the opportunity to reflect . . . or not, to act . . . or not, to be . . . or not. Time rarely exists/is important in a liminal space when we are within it. It can be a place to lose yourself and find yourself at the same time. Either way, it is a space within which we are empowered.

We move through liminal spaces at many points within our days and don't necessarily notice them. A doorway is a liminal space. Opening the fridge and thinking about what to eat puts you in a liminal space.

Additionally, liminal spaces can be those moments such as walking in the dark and realising that all you can hear are your shoes padding away underfoot or walking up a winding staircase that suddenly feels never ending and you have no idea how high up you are. A liminal space can be found whilst skiing/snowboarding when all of a sudden all you can see is whiteness and the 3d world seems to melt away.

Liminal spaces can also be extended times in your life such as a break up of a marriage when you are awaiting the divorce, the few weeks after a birth or a death in the household before you adjust your life accordingly, even puberty could be viewed as a liminal space.



A liminal space can also bring the unknown and the unpredictable. The reflection can be surprising to those who have not delved deeply enough into their true feelings. People can also feel uneasy or anxious, perhaps concerned about making the 'right' decision. Many people find that uncomfortable which is why 'The Call to Adventure' is often left unanswered for fear of not knowing what to do.

How can we create a short term liminal space?

- Mindfulness is a great way to help you fall into liminal spaces. That moment on a lazy morning when you close your eyes and slowly eat a hot croissant with jam. That has a liminal space quality as well as one of mindfulness. A time to not think about anything but the sensations in your body before you then start to plan your day.
- Meditation. Many people try to clear their mind immediately but, in my opinion, a meditation is more important when you allow all the



feelings at the forefront of your brain to swim in front of you. Then you will know better what is important at that moment. Additionally, those able to clear their mind can experience a hyper-reality in which anything is possible.

- Floatation chambers have had their popularity in recent years. For those who have not heard of them, they are tanks of heavily salted water with a lid. The user will lie inside the tank floating in darkness which brings a deep sense of dis-connection to everything except your own body.

- Being outside in extreme conditions also puts you in a liminal space. Like being by the sea and allowing the sounds of the crashing waves and the breeze to feel like you are blowing cobwebs away from your body. If you have ever tried to walk down Glastonbury Tor in the winter after sunset, you can intrinsically feel like you are in a liminal space. It is so windy that you can imagine that you are flying for a moment.

Why should we embrace a liminal space?

This is just my opinion but within those liminal spaces we often make decisions based on what we feel, rather than what we think we should be doing, thus tapping more into our intuition, and becoming more organic. It could also be argued that we find the things that we are supposed to in these moments rather than trying to create what we think should happen. If we are to believe in Akashic Records then why do we make any effort planning? Surely it would just happen? Maybe more of these liminal spaces would create a faster achievement of what we are supposed to be doing and what we will end up doing anyway?

Decisions are often made in a liminal space which helps keep momentum and affect change.

A liminal space is ideal for shadow work as it takes time and other dimensions away from your present reality in order to allow what is most important to surface.



Liminal spaces also help with journaling.

Here are some suggested questions to journal with when we you are in/have been in a liminal space:-

- Where is my mind wandering to?
- What is most important to me right now?
- What do I desire most in this moment?
- If I take this opportunity, what might happen?
- If I don't take this opportunity, what might happen?

Healing can be done in liminal spaces. We step out of reality and into a situation where thoughts do not have to be thought. We can just be. Just for that moment/those minutes.

Afterall, a liminal space brings the opportunity of change and we are in the age of Aquarius where the opportunity for change (in whichever direction we choose) is in abundance.

So . . . next time you find yourself in a liminal space, see if you have time to stop a moment and reflect on the endless possibilities ahead of you in that moment and remember - YOU are in charge of your own adventure.

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SCOTT IRVINE BALANCING THE FORCES

The reasoning behind the equinoxes, Latin for 'equal nights', is the awareness of the harmony of the two opposing powers of day and night, light and dark, hot and cold, fertility and sterility and in Celtic thought, Briget and Cailleach. Equinoxes are the mid-point between the extremes of summer and winter exposure to the light force that reaches our neighbourhood. While it is spring in the northern hemisphere, it is autumn below the equator. The motion is part of our Star's yearly cycle on our part of the world with every day different with new and old energies coming and going. The spring equinox is the point in time when the light and warmth of the Sun gradually grows stronger than the diminishing cold breath of winter.

In the old Celtic world, the Oak King will acknowledge his mortality around now, his demise is beginning to reveal itself on the horizon when he has to relinquish his hold over Mother Earth to the Holly King when the power of summer rules supreme.

At the time of writing, at the tail end of Imbolc, a Sabbat that most see as the beginning of spring instigated by the arrival of the Flower Maiden aka Briget. At the moment of her arrival on February 1st/2nd, her influence is still entrenched with the icy forces of the dark and cold of midwinter. It is a time of twilight heralding in the glory of the morning sun. The Flower Maiden only really comes into her own at the midway point of Imbolc, around the 24th February when the final hold of midwinter has ebbed away and the harmonial balance of light and dark has yet to arrive. She is still wild, raw and unsullied by external forces and yet to experience human love that she knows is coming her way. Her heart is still free and her mind is full of youthful innocent curiosity. For many, she is Briget, the brightness and loving warmth of our star.

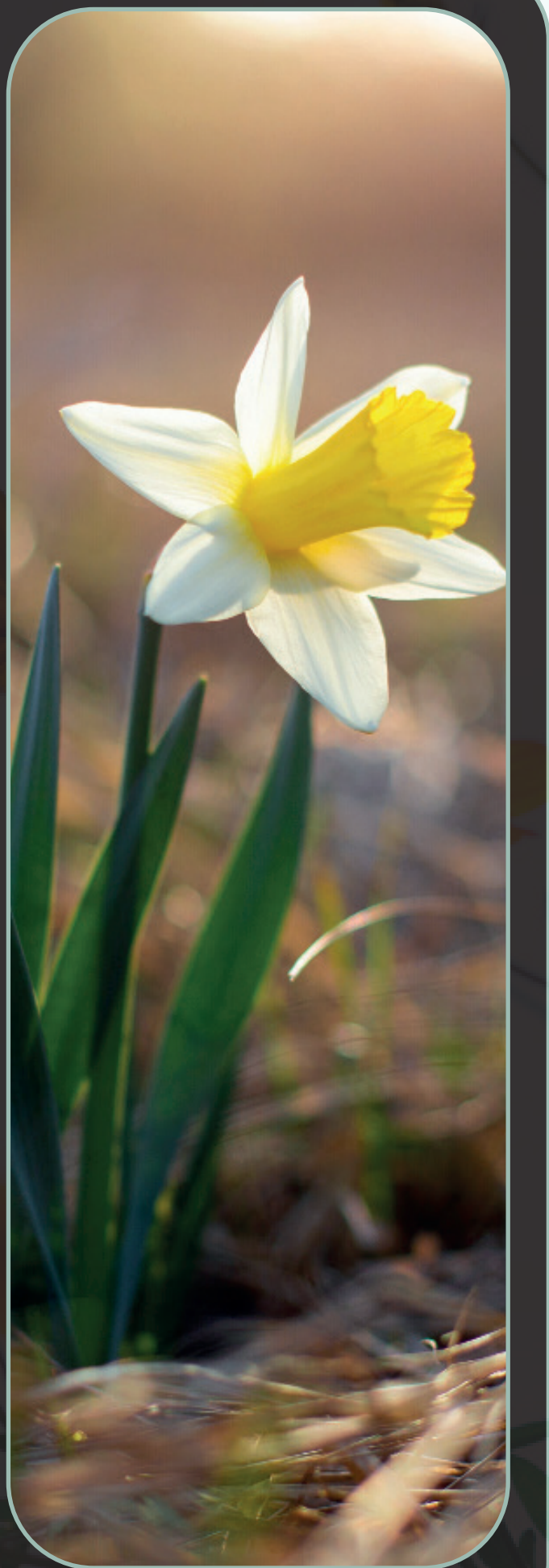
At the spring equinox, the Divine Son/Sun, Maonos arrives into our kingdom, steals the heart of the young inexperienced Maiden, a force she cannot resist and preparations made for their divine wedding at Beltain and the (re)union of their body and soul. It is the transition from dark into light when the hidden becomes visible. Mother Earth begins to bloom with her fruits that will in time, mature and be ready for harvest in around five moon cycle's time. Now, both the light and nature are growing with the rebirth of snowdrops, daffodils, crocuses, tulips and this year, bluebells. It is when I sow my peas, beans, carrots and chilli peppers and chit my potatoes ready to plant into the ground or in pots in time for the Beltain fires and the tender reunion of the Earth Mother and the Sun of Heaven.

The spring equinox represents first love, a love that causes butterflies to run riot in the stomach, an enchantment that eats at every organ in the body that knocks on the door of the soul. It is an innocent love, a divine feeling that has never experienced heartbreak and the hell that goes with it. It is a love that is pure and fully committed. For Briget and Maponos, it is an exciting time; expectant, blissful and passionate.

The Wheel of the Year is the cycle of the Sun God around the trinity of the Maiden, Bride/Mother and the Crone or Wise Woman. The spring equinox is represented on the wheel by the compass point east in the elemental realm of Air and symbolic of a new dawn, sunrise, and the start of a fresh new day with the sun's energy growing stronger exponentially towards midsummer.

This year, the midpoint between the equinox and Beltain coincides with the erratic yearly cycle of the crucifixion and resurrection of the Son of God, the Christ or anointed one, the transformation of man into god. My understanding of this midpoint, of around three days is the pure essence, free from other influences that is the power of the union between male and female, between heaven and earth, when the man and woman transform into gods and goddesses who in turn, become human. It is an energy of transition and a change for the better, not only for yourself but for those around you also.

Hail Briget as the Maiden, preparing for motherhood and Spring Equinox blessings from Dorset.



HILMA AF KLINT & PIET MONDRIAN FORMS OF LIFE

TATE MODERN, LONDON
20 APRIL - 3 SEPTEMBER 2023



fig.1

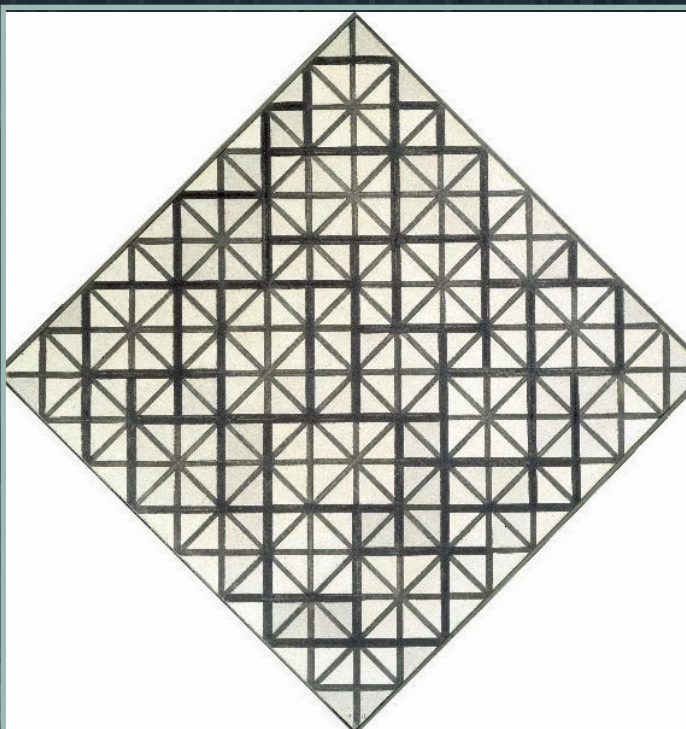


fig.2

Two artists who never met, but shared interests in the revolutionary spiritual, philosophical and scientific ideas that were being born at the turn of the 20th century - the works of Hilma af Klint and Piet Mondrian will be in exhibit together at the Tate Modern this year.

Tickets to experience this unique exhibition can be booked at www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/hilma-af-klint-piet-mondrian

fig.1 Hilma af Klint, The Swan, The SUW Series, Group IX, No. 19, 1914-1915. Courtesy of The Hilma af Klint Foundation

fig.2 Piet Mondrian, Composition with Grid 3 Lozenge Composition with Grey Lines, 1918. Kunstmuseum Den Haag

fig.3 Hilma af Klint, Tree of Knowledge, The W Series, No. 1, 1913-1915. Courtesy of The Hilma af Klint Foundation

fig.4 Piet Mondrian, Metamorphosis 1908. Kunstmuseum Den Haag - bequest Salomon B. Slijper

HILMA AF KLINT

Hilma af Klint was a Swedish artist who was involved in the fashionable spiritism movement at the end of the 19th century. Hilma had interest in the works of Madame Blavatsky, Rudolph Steiner and Christian Rosencreutz. At the Academy of Fine Arts she, and four other artists who shared interests in Theosophy and the paranormal, regularly held seances and created a new system of mysticism in the form of messages from entities known as The High Masters.

It was these High Masters that requested Hilma to create paintings for 'The Temple' - although she never quite understood what the Temple referred to. These works were the first abstract art that Hilma ever created, at the age of 44, and differed greatly from her previous style. The collection contained 193 paintings, created between 1906 and 1915.

The works are embedded with symbolism, letters and words, and Hilma felt she was directed by forces that guided her hand. When the works were completed, the spiritual guidance ended.

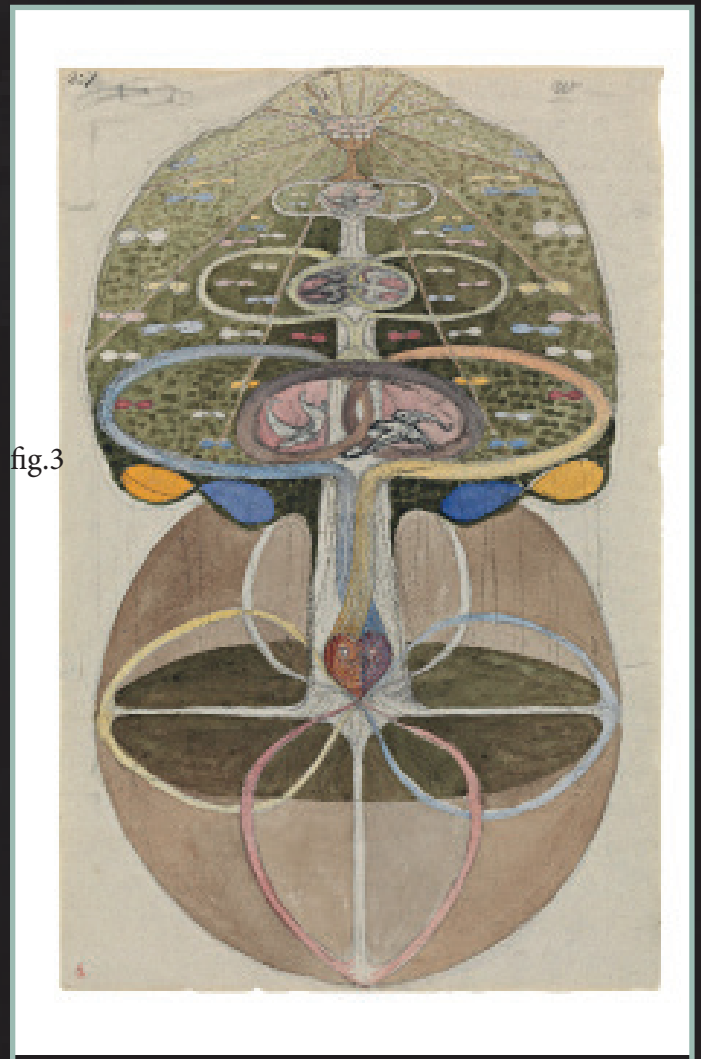
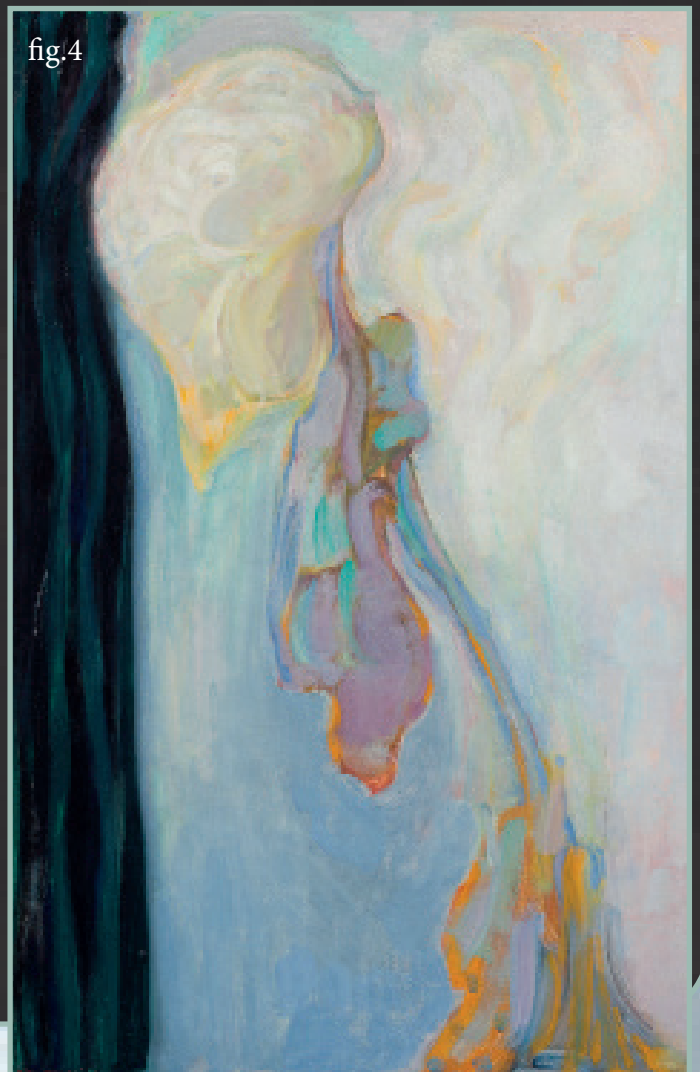


fig.3

PIET MONDRIAN

Piet Mondrian was a Dutch artist and theoretician. Though influenced in his early years by various art styles, his abstract works began around 1905. His art was closely related to his spiritual studies, and, like Hilma, he was also interested and later inspired by the works of Madame Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner and the Theosophical movement.

These interests meant that much of his work for the rest of his life was focussed on the search for a spiritual knowledge of nature.



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Poetry by Yvonne Brewer

brewer_y@yahoo.ie

SPRING SENDS LOVE LETTERS.

Spring sends
love letters
to Summer,
written in ink of green
a love affair blossoming
secret nocturnal awakenings,

sunrises unwrapping nakedness
in orange and gold,
sunsets hiding moonlit secrets
only bats and owls can be told.

Love bursting buds
sensual smells of fairy bluebells
ring out to the lovers
to come lie here
in beds of purple

under shady oaks
where time stops and
the earth's love making
is camouflaged by
bird song and frog croaks.

Spring wraps her thighs
around summer
letting bog heat and
garden juices flow

and longer nights by
cool water banks
as the river bends
shyly,
as if
not to know.



Pigeon girl

Born in open peat lands, where a seashell
finds its way into the beaks of herons, amongst trees
that held her in their homily barks.

Grass touched bare knees and whispered
you are safe here. Pigeons watched her every move
dropping twigs in her hair as she sat in an oak tree chair

Queen of the riverbank, where many a time a heart
that had sunk would be renewed by a jumping trout
or surprise visit from a swan, or swallows flying low.

A pigeon feather became a shooting star
in a horse chestnut breeze. Crow, carried wide winged
while sea gulls found shelter from the ocean's un-
ease.



BOOK REVIEWS - BEKKI MILNER

THE MAGIC OF CATS

BY ANDREW ANDERSON

James Branch Cabell · 1902

A beautiful compendium of the myths, magic and lore of our feline companions. We will never quite understand why many of us find cats so magical, but Andrew Anderson has done a marvellous job in diving deep in to their magic and sharing it in this beautiful book, alongside delightful stories of his own feline friends. A delightful and cosy read whether you happen to be owned by a cat or not! Available from 28 April from Moon Books.

<https://www.johnhuntpublishing.com/moon-books/our-books/magic-cats>

WIN A COPY OF THE MAGIC OF CATS

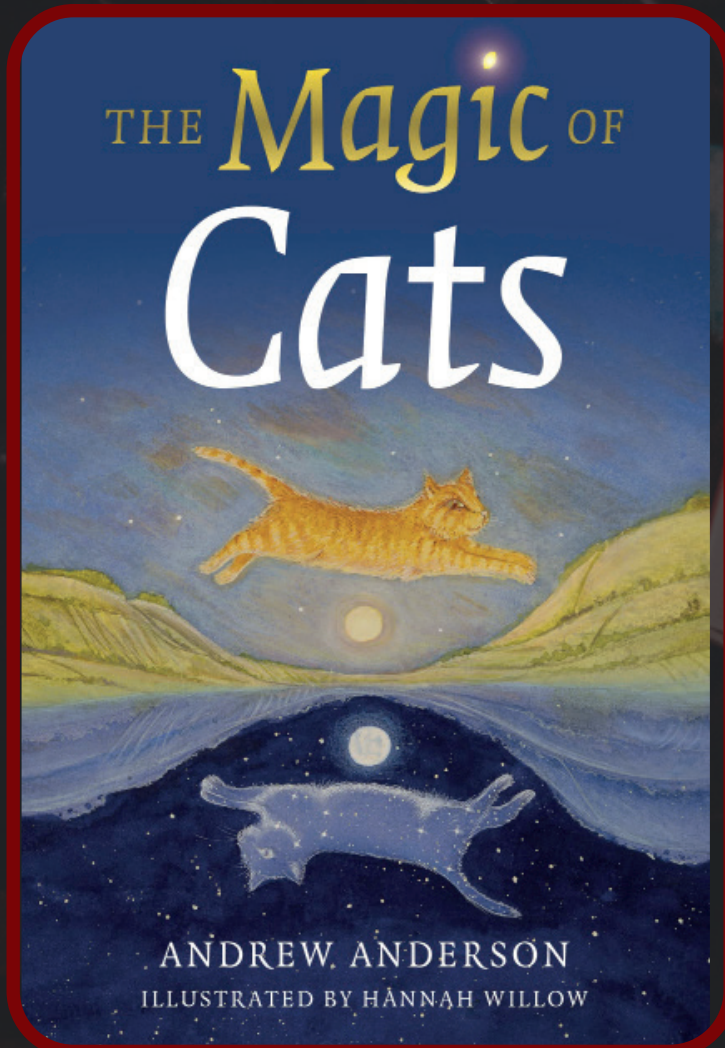
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Who plays Puss in Boots in the popular animated movies of the same name?

- A) Antonio Banderas
- B) Patrick Stewart
- C) Sylvester Stallone

Closes 1st April 2023, winner will be contacted by email.



EXQUISITE SIN

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