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Welcome to issue 25 of Witch!

This is our last print edition for a little while - and we hope you have enjoyed all the physical issues we've produced for the last year! It's been a wild adventure!

Worry not, we will still be available online to read for free - as always! Who knows, maybe something special will be made for Samhain next year?

Until then, we wish you a wonderful Yule, and hope this issue finds you all safe and cosy.

Be blessed,

Bekki Editor

Cover photo: Photographer /retoucher: Andres Curiel Model/make-up: Anna Melse

> Additional art and photos by: Ayshe-Mira Yashin/@illustrationwitch @magiaziemi Klaire Dawn Ader

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FULL MOON IN GEMINI - MICHELLE ROSE BOXLEY

Words with a Witch - Elisa Gray

ALTERNATIVE YULETIDE VIEWING - CHERRY DOYLE

THE GIFT OF GRATITUDE - STEPHANIE ULPH

THE LIVING PATH - HELEN J.R. BRUCE

FESTIVE RECIPES

In Conversation with Tim Lord - Kelly Buchan

Words from the Witches Journal - Portland Jones

Deeper, Older, Darker - Meet the Author - P.J. Richards

MONTHLY CRYSTAL GUIDE - YULE CRYSTALS - CHERYL BECKWORTH

YULE - A PATHWORKING MEDITATION - FAIRY BEC

MAGIC TO BEAT THE JANUARY BLUES - FAITH BARNES

PAGAN POETRY

YULE READING RECOMMENDATIONS - BEKKI MILNER



Helen J.R. Bruce

STEPHANIE ULPH

KELLY BUCHAN

MICHELLE ROSE BOXLEY

Read more about all of our writers and our residencies

WWW.WITCHZINE.CO.UK

CHERYL BECKWORTH

Have something to share?
email your proposal
or submission to
submissions@witchzine.co.uk

CHERRY DOYLE

FAIRY BEC

PORTLAND JONES



2022

Next year we are reducing our print editions - but don't worry, you can still find us online, for free!

We will also be changing when the magazine is released - take a look at our release schedule below. Issues will be released for free online a couple of days before, and will also be available to purchase as high quality PDF's for printing at home.

As always, if you have something you'd like to submit, visit www.witchzine.co.uk to find our Submissions Guide and due dates.

Imbolc

Ostara

Beltane

Midsummer

Lammas

Autumn Equinox

Samhain (Print Edition)

Yule

ist February

21st March

ist May

21st June

ist August

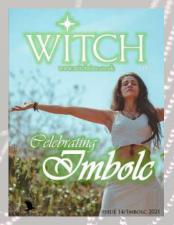
21st September

21st October

21st December

Thank you to our readers, contributers and our Witch Writers for a wonderful year! We hope you've enjoyed the issues we've put together throughout 2021, and can't wait to share more with you next year!

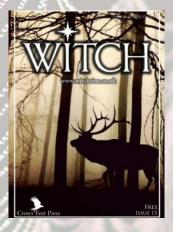
All 24 of our previous issues can be found at www.witchzine.co.uk/issues



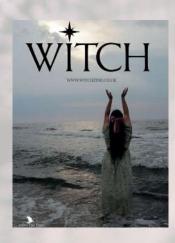










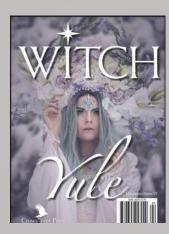












FULL MOON IN GEMINI

This full moon is also called The Moon Before Yule, The Cold Moon, The Long Night Moon and the Oak Moon. For this full moon we will have the sun in the fire sign of Sagittarius and the moon in the air sign Gemini - both are masculine signs and both are to do with the mind. Both Sagittarius and Gemini are inquisitive, curious and mentally expansive. Gemini also rules communication so it's interesting here to work with combining the philosopher archetype of Sagittarius with the ability to communicate our ideas out into the world.

A key theme for Gemini is truth and honest communication and sometimes that communication can be to do with how we view ourselves, the conversations we're having with ourselves and whether or not we're being honest. When the full moon is out, there's nowhere to hide, this can be a powerful time for looking inwards and asking these questions.

Michelle Rose Boxley Sisters of the Moon On Gemini moon days it's easy to get caught up in our thoughts, Gemini has a mercurial energy to it which can leave us feeling ungrounded and mentally overwhelmed, add this to the busyness of the lead up to Christmas and hello frazzled mind. It's a really good idea on Gemini moon days to bring ourselves back into our body and do things that will calm and focus the mind. Think of the idea of using the arrow and focus of Sagittarius to focus the somewhat flighty tendencies of Gemini.

Using practices such as Yoga Nidra, guided meditations and gentle yoga can be really helpful for slowing the mind down. Also, when it comes to tackling Christmas tasks, try to focus on one thing at a time, write lists or use a bullet journal to give yourself the satisfaction of ticking things off. Try not to flit from one unfinished task to the other, just like leaving loads of tabs open and programmes running on your computer slows it down, it's the same for our mind too.

The combination of Sagittarius and Gemini can also lead us to get over excited about new ideas and ventures, so check-in with yourself honestly about whether or not you're taking on too much. Can some things wait? Are you honouring the season of winter and the need to rest? Sometimes it can be so hard with all the pressures of social media to not want to jump into. new things straight away.

One of my favourite quotes is "Do less, be more" - can we let go and soften a little bit and pick up the pace again in Spring? Or is our gut telling us that now really is the right time? Only you can know:)?

This full moon is a wonderful time to combine the elements of Air and Fire - Air for Gemini and Fire for Sagittarius.

How could you use the creative element of air to stoke the flames of your hearth fire?

Do less Be more

Join online for monthly live new moon circles, Lunar Living e-book, meditations and more!

Sisters of the Moon Lunar Temple

http://mysteryschool of the goddess.net/2021/08/15/the-lunar-temple-monthly-moon-membership-with-michelle-boxley/



Sisters of the Moon Online



MONTHLY MOON MEMBERSHIP

Lunar & Seasonal Living | Monthly New Moon Circles

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Words With a Witch

Elisa Gray

This month we invited author Elisa Gray to talk about their book 'What Maketh The Witch' & to discuss their thoughts on witchcraft today and their personal journey.

Thank you for taking the time to speak to us today! We're really excited about your new book, What Maketh The Witch, and are grateful for the opportunity to introduce you and your craft to our readers!

I am eclectic in the sense that I have links to many dietetics across culture and time: I honour Bast, (Egyptian) Pan (Greek) Cerridwen, Morrigan and Cernunnous (Celtic) and will use whatever particular witchcraft 'recipe' feels right for the particular ritual that I'm doing.

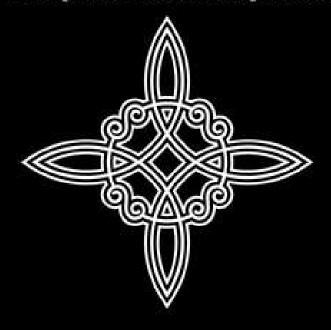


How do your describe your path? How long have you practiced?

I would describe my path as that of an eclectic traditional witch. I am also shamanic in practice, as I have strong connections to Celtic shamanism and am an advanced shamanic practitioner.

What Maketh The Witch?

The Origin and Evolution of Magical Intent



Elisa Mary Gray

That said my craft is mainly from traditional influences as opposed to Wiccan and I also source the materials that I use ethically. As an example, although smudging with sage (smoke cleansing) is culturally associated with the Native American people, the ancient Druids used sage in their cleansing rituals and as a traditional witch, I also use sage. Therefore, due to the situation with California white sage and it's endangered status, I source and purchase sage grown here in the UK.

I have practiced for most of my life. Realising that I was a witch at a very young age and being lucky enough to have a very open minded father of Romani ancestry, I began reading tarot at the age of 8 and my Dad bought me many books on the history of witch-craft so that I could learn about my heritage.

What does the title "Witch" mean to you? Are there other titles you prefer, if any? Why?

Witch is an old English word that was brought into the English language in 890 when Alfred the Great wrote it in the doom book (book of law). He spelled it wicce in its feminine form and wicca in the masculine and it was a word used to mean a person who practiced sorcery; sorcery being a word which has connotations of magic being used in a harmful way. Witch therefore is a word that implies that one is using magic for negative purposes, if we take the words original literal meaning - and indeed the Oxford dictionary definition of the word 'witch' continues this meaning into the modern world - 'a woman who is believed to have magic powers, especially to do evil things.' The modern definition also explicitly states woman, implying that all witches are female, which of course is not true.

Nevertheless, the re-embracing of the word witch and breaking that stereotype is a good thing.

I do like the term cunning folk as it indicates knowledge and wisdom and indeed the cunning folk were the early doctors in the UK who could heal people and animals as well as divine and use protective magic.

What brought you to writing What Maketh the Witch?

My best friend and I were discussing the craft and were talking about intent and manifestation. He asked me what intent actually means in a magical sense and

how it works. I found it very hard to answer him, so decided to give it some thought and write an article about it. The article got far too long and I thought that I would see how long the answer actually took to write before I was happy with it - it took over 100,000 words, hence the book. It's really a look at the evolution of magic from the early days of man to the present day, attempting to establish how magic actually works and how this relates to witchcraft.

What are your thoughts on the modern day views of witchcraft and it's rise in popularity? What changes would you like to see?

I think that the modern day view of witchcraft often removes magic from the equation. Witchcraft is more of a 'self help' practice of empowerment, daily ritual, manifestation, belief in oneself and that's wonderful! It is no longer necessary to feel that you need to do magic in order to be a witch.

Nonetheless, I would like to see a little more inclusion of an acceptance of natural magic. I think some people still struggle to believe that magic exists and that there are people who can channel the universe's energy to work with nature and create change in their environment.

I think those people who can work with natural magic are often still afraid of the consequences of showing it, to some extent. In other countries women are still persecuted as witches and are killed. I often wonder how far the human race has come from the witch trials when I think of life in the witch camps of India or Africa.

As for the rise in popularity of witchcraft, it's cool isn't it! It is certainly a trend for some young people who are coming up, those who follow fads - and witchcraft has become a bit of a fad at the moment. Shows like American Horror Story's Coven and Apocalypse and Sabrina the Teenage Witch have offered up the image of the beautiful young witch who is ultimately a woman of immense power. That's a remarkably attractive image and makes a desirable role model for some young ladies. Sometimes this is more image than actual practice. Nonetheless, there are many young people very serious about learning the craft and that's fantastic.

What is the most important thing you want your readers to take away from What Maketh the Witch?

I think, that magic exists and that witchcraft, in one form or another, has been around since time began. Magic was the precursor to medicine and often the magic user, with his relationship to the Gods would be chosen above the Doctor. The cunning woman acted as counsellor, Doctor, ally and advisor and was a very important member of the community and still is in some areas of the UK. I think I'd like people to really think about the importance of the magic user and indeed the witch - with or without magic! Witches are generally very ecological people who often have a lot to teach the world. Of course harmful intentions have existed in witchcraft, but this is only a small part of the craft. Witchcraft is an immense and very mixed bag of ideas and practices and it would be nice to think that people who only remember the old stereotype of the evil witch may read my book and take away from it that witchcraft is far more complex and ultimately far more positive, than that.

(an you tell us more about your Practical Traditional Witchcraft course?

My course is designed to teach those drawn to witch-craft how to use their energy to cause positive change. We study the history of the craft, consider the modern day approach to the craft and look at Wiccan as a comparative practice to traditional witchcraft. On the course we make the tools used in traditional witchcraft, everything from a wand to a witches ladder and learn how to use them.

The course also has aspects of Druidism, the source of traditional witchcraft, in the form of Celtic shamanism included and students learn how to experience a witches spirit flight via a mental journey, and learn how to use their intent in sympathetic magic. It is a course that is quite intense but extremely rewarding.

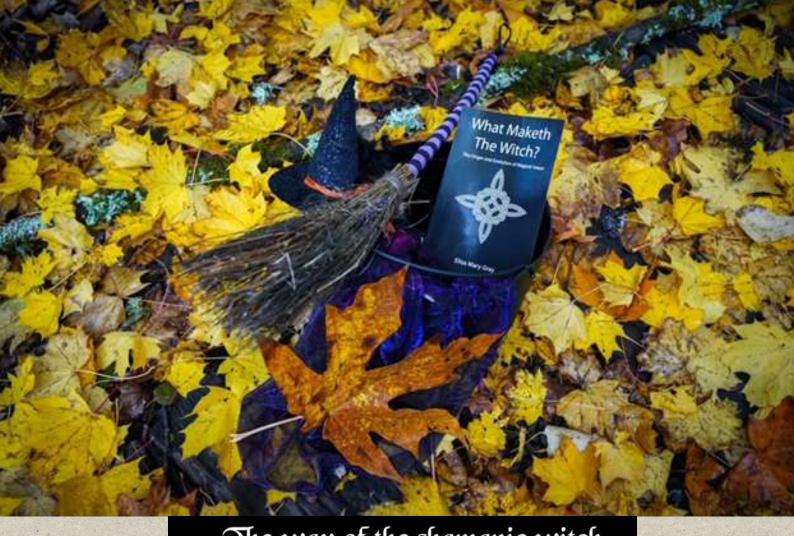
Anyone who is interested in the craft and / or feels a connection to magical practice can join, as the course starts at beginner to intermediate level, then the second course is intermediate to advanced. Students who wish to go on to master the subject can continue with a tailor made course, designed to bring out their greatest

strengths, which reveal themselves over the first two courses. The course is accredited.

For more information on Elisa and her workshops, writing, healing services and handmade crafts, visit www.thewayoftheshamanicwitch.co.uk or find them on Facebook and Instagram - the way of the shamanic witch

You can also contact Elisa on 07596908038 or email witchy@thewayoftheshamanicwitch.co.uk







ALTERNATIVE YULETIDE VIEWING RECOMMENDATIONS

(FOR WHEN YOU'RE SICK OF CHRISTMAS TV)

Cherry Doyle

Need a break from Santa, Her Maj, and happily-ever-afters? We've got you covered, so make some time in your festive viewing schedule for these witchy-inspired watches, to give you some much-needed headspace between Eastenders and Elf!

PLANET EARTH

There's a whole host of David Attenborough goodies gracing BBC iPlayer at the moment. Planet Earth is a multi-award-winning series exploring the natural world across all seven continents. What better way to get your family feeling passionate about the awe-inspiring sights of nature, than to snuggle up on the sofa and binge Sir David himself?

Watch on: BBC iPlayer

Family Friendly: Yes, but some children might be upset at hunting/predation scenes

PRINCESS MONONOKE

A prince, a curse, a wild princess, a battle between nature and mankind? This is what fairy tales are made of, and this animated gem from Studio Ghibli is the perfect parable for our current ecological crisis. An excellent tonic to predictable festive viewing, that'll get the whole family thinking more about the human impact on nature.

Watch on: Netflix

Family Friendly: Yes, but there's a bit of cartoon gore/violence, and some scenes which might scare younger children

HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA

Hark back to Samhain season and indulge in this frightfully delightful animation about a monster hotel with an unexpected human guest. Starring Adam Sandler, this spooky story is fun for everyone who wishes it was Halloween all year!

Watch on: 27th December, 11:45, ITV

Family Friendly: Yes!



ALL ABOARD: THE GREAT REINDEER MIGRATION

If you need some time out this festive season, there's no better way than to tune in to BBC4's 'quiet TV' shows. This two-hour show following a Sami family moving their reindeer herd across a wintry landscape will give you a seasonally-appropriate background to any quiet time or meditation you're planning. Zone out and enjoy the journey before you dive head-first into the festivities.

Watch on: 18th December, 19:00, BBC4

Family Friendly: Yes, but they'll probably get bored

CHARMED

Whether you've got a nice long holiday with plenty of TV time planned, or whether you'll be commuting to work over the festive season, you need a binge-worthy series to hand. Seasons 1-8 of Charmed are available with Prime right now – perfect nostalgia for the golden age of witchy entertainment.

Watch on: Amazon Prime

Family Friendly: Teens and above – adult themes

MATILDA

The G.O.A.T. of telekinetic kids, Roald Dahl's tale of Matilda, the magical bookworm born into the wrong family is brought to life by an all-star cast, including the wonderful Mara Wilson, Danny Devito, and Pam Ferris. Delight and inspire your kids (and yourself) with this sweet tale of an outcast finding her true calling.

Watch on: 23rd December, 17:10, Channel 5

Family Friendly: Yes!

A GHOST STORY FOR CHRISTMAS: THE MEZZOTINT

Like your Christmas magic with a little less sparkle? Renowned horror writer M.R. James used to tell ghost stories to his friends at Cambridge University on Christmas Eve, and the BBC are bringing the tradition into the Twenty-first Century with this retelling of one of his classics, about a haunted piece of art, from League of Gentlemen co-creator, Mark Gatiss.

Watch on: 24th December, 22:30, BBC2 Family Friendly: No – it's on way after bedtime!



The Gift of Gratitude Stephanie Ulph

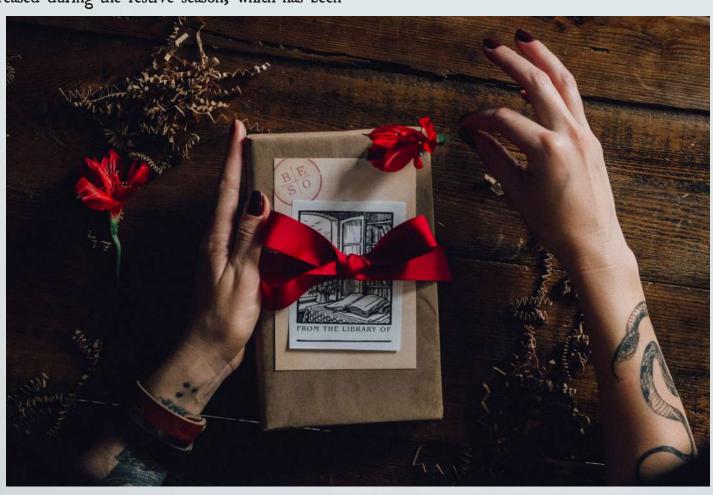
As we arrive here, at this very magical turn of the year, the nights have now long since drawn in, radiators are warm, chimneys are bellowing, trees and other festive decorations adorn most houses and streets, and plenty food is on our tables, drinks flowing and hopefully, family, great company and much merriments are being had. All of these customaries we enjoy so fondly.

And of course, it is also somewhat customary this time of year to show generosity to our fellow human beings (not that this should only be done this time of year - but it's easy to see how it is all the more important in these cold and dark months). Many of us take pleasure in finding nice gifts for our loved ones and charitable giving is much increased during the festive season, which has been

the case for over 150 years, to which we can thank Mr Charles Dickens - what a wonderful example of the effect simply sharing a story of generosity can have - how it has helped elevate mindsets throughout the world and over generations.

The simple gift of sharing kindness and creative talents created a new standard which has stayed.

However, if we go back much farther, to the times of the old ways, before colonial society, with its aristocracy, greed and divisiveness took hold, this was always the more common standard, which is evident in ceremonies which honour the old ways.





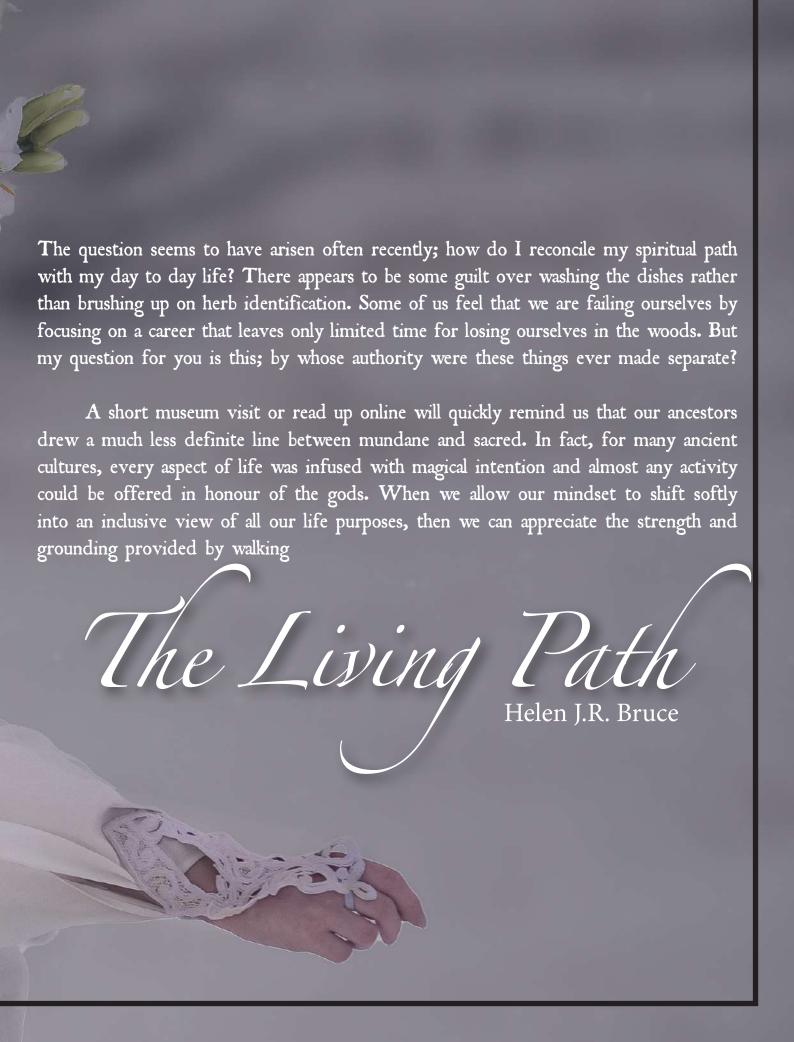
Generosity and gratitude are of course an abundantly important aspect of Yule. When we eat our festive meal, drink our mead, share time with our friends and family, it is to be done with gratitude. While we may set aside time for a formal ritual, enjoying Yuletide with grace and gratitude is all a wonderful ritual in itself.

While times are very tough currently, we must remind ourselves that we always have things to be grateful for, especially as feeling gratitude both feels good and attracts more to be grateful for. At the time of writing, we once again don't know if we will easily be able to spend the holiday season with all our loved ones. At the time of reading, we will know, and I do hope wholeheartedly that we will, that we are. But in any event, wherever we find ourselves, it is always good to step back from the hustle and bustle and take a moment or two to take in what we are blessed with - a roof over our heads, a beautiful home, warmth, food, friends, family.

Our health, our talents, our kindness, our challenges and what they taught us, our time to take this time out, and on this special day of course, the comfort of the knowledge that the sun has reached its lowest point and is once again beginning its ascent. And in this moment, we can look back and be grateful for all that has sustained us thus far, and look forward to longer, and hopefully much brighter days.

Gratitude is an immensely valuable gift we can give ourselves and others. Gratitude warms hearts, strengthens friendships, fosters love, heals pain and sorrow. With gratefulness more to be grateful for can more easily come our way, and only with gratefulness can we truly enjoy what we already have.





A Foot in Both Worlds

The Living Path is not bound to any one sacred text or any way of doing things recorded by tradition. Rather, it respectfully draws on any influences which the individual finds relevant, and lets practices evolve to suit life as it presents itself. This lack of rigidity allows empathy for the paths of others and fosters curiosity rather than fear; those who follow the Living Path understand the necessity of balance. A weekend away wild camping, or in a sweatlodge, or meditating high in the mountains is without doubt food for the soul, but sometimes the soul also needs to feed on an entire packet of biscuits while watching a television series. To be gentle with ourselves, and allow rest and recuperation, is equally essential to us pushing ourselves onwards towards deeper spiritual understanding. Listening to our bodies is respectful, given the sacred vessels they are.

Equally, many of us feel called to share what our spirituality has taught us with those around us. Functioning within the community, and communicating effectively with others requires us to maintain an understanding of the everyday life experiences we all share. When we notice that we are struggling to be around 'less enlightened' people after a retreat or other period of intense spiritual work, then this is a real call for grounding and a warning sign of an imbalanced ego.



Once we settle into the stability offered by having a foot in both worlds, we may find the line between spiritual and mundane begins to blur naturally. This allows us access to the Mythic Mindset, a perspective that would have been both familiar and unremarkable to our ancestors. This world view allows us to see deeply, interpreting the many layers of meaning that are overlaid on our experiences and the landscape around us. Reading as much folklore as you can helps to strengthen this ability, and you're likely to quickly pick up on the repeated patterns and motifs than recur all over the globe.

Becoming familiar with the language of myth allows us to maintain meaningful communication with the world around us at all times. While walking to work, we may touch the trunk of the old holly tree in the hedgerow and recall the yearly battle between the Holly King and Oak King. It might remind us that our own battles are passing things, and that change cycles round to bring our lives new seasons. The sight of a robin, while waiting for the bus, might tell us that a loved one is watching over us from the Otherworld. While finishing emails on a winter evening, we may just hear the honking of geese, and wonder if it could indeed be the hounds of the Wild Hunt scouring the land. Best leave them a crust of bread, just in case.



Living is in itself a sacred act. Living fully, as the most authentic versions of ourselves, is a worthy offering to spirit, or whichever gods we connect to. From this perspective, your life is already a spiritual path in itself, before yoga and crystals are added. Your spirituality cannot be betrayed by living, even when living involves scrubbing stains off the floor or filing your tax return. When we pause and begin considering what we can offer, rather than what we can achieve, we understand that our day to day jobs are supporting others in navigating their own life paths. We notice that our listening ear, and a coffee, is allowing others to heal. The phenomenal power of being humble and present, in the exact current moment, can sometimes achieve what a months worth of meditation couldn't do.

Stirring the teapot seven times clockwise and seven times anticlockwise is a spell in itself. Threading Rowan beads with your children is a charm for protection. Appearing in your car, when the last train is cancelled, might be just the manifestation of the god or goddess that your friend is hoping for. When we are walking the Living Path, no part of us is neglected and no action is unworthy. There is no need to reconcile your spiritual path with your day to day life, because they are already one and the same.



Yule Tarot Spread Rivka

- 1. What does the darkness bring?
- 2. How can I embrace that?
- 3. What returns with the light?
- 4. What should I let go of?
- 5. What is the key message this winter?



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Festive Recipes Blackberry Gin Cake Helen J.R. Bruce

This recipe is a lighter and boozier twist on traditional fruitcake, and is sure to go down well at any Yule celebration. Not only is it very easy to make, but it's also the ideal way to use up the leftover fruit from your homemade bramble vodka, brandy or gin. If you haven't made gin this year, then simply leave berries to soak overnight beforehand in a good glug of your chosen spirit. Why not experiment with different fruit and alcohol combinations?



METHOD

- 1. Heat the oven to 180c/ gas 4
- 2. Butter a 2lb loaf tin
- 3. Cream 140g softened butter and 140g brown sugar and then slowly mix in two large free range eggs
- 4. Fold in 140g self-raising flour and 1/3 tsp baking powder
- 5. Mix in the berries and add a tsp of vanilla essence and a pinch of nutmeg
- 6. Cook for approximately 50mins, checking regularly

Mulled Cider

Bekki Jo Milner

Enjoy this warming spiced cider curled up by the fire, or wassailing on Twelfth Night.

INGREDIENTS

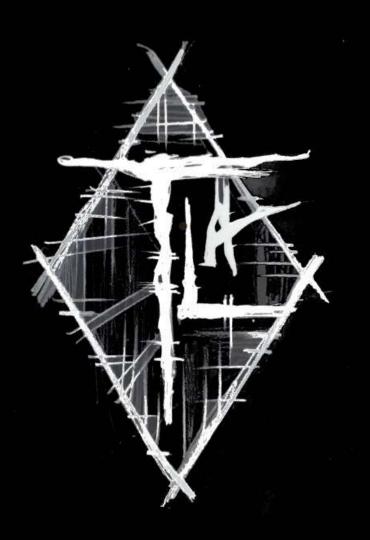
2 liters dry cider
zest of an orange
8 cloves
6 all spice berries
75g demerara sugar
2 apples, cored and sliced



METHOD

1. Combine all ingredients in a large saucepan 2. Heat gently and stir for 10-15 minutes - don't allow to boil. 3. Ladle in to mugs or glasses

4. - for an extra sweet touch and flavour, dampen then dip the rims of the glasses into sugar and add a cinnamon stick



IN CONVERSATION WITH AWARD, WINNING ILLUSTRATOR
TIM LORD

KELLY BUCHAN WITCH WRITER Tim, thank you so much for speaking with Witch Magazine today! We are so excited to share your beautiful witchy illustrations with our readership.

How Long have you been working as an artist/illus-trator?

It's been around 7 since since I committed to art as a career, After working in a multitude of unsatisfying jobs for much too long, it became clear to me that I needed to pursue my passions in order to fully discover who I am. As a child, my parents were happy for me to draw on walls and very much encouraged my self expression. I used to draw pirate ships with stick figures walking the planks and fighting on deck, with ravenous sharks circling below.

I carried the pirate aesthetic for many years, and eventually collaborated with Waldys Foubelo in Miami, and created Collosal- one of my most well-recognised pieces. It was a difficult process becoming a freelance artist. Leaving steady employment to pursue my dream career was terrifying, but as the great Alan Watt's once said "What if money were no object?".

Growing up who were your favourite artists and illustrators? Where does your love of art come from?

I fell in love with the artist Bill Watterson when I was around 8 years old. I've always considered Calvin and Hobbes to be a masterpiece. Not only is the art intriguing and heartwarming, his cartoons are a work of genius. To this day I still see Watterson's influences in my drawings. I think every child should have the opportunity to read Calvin and Hobbes, it would make their heads explode- in a good way. Brian Froud's Dark Crystal scared the bejesus out of me when I was little. Both Malice and Pixies are probably my most Froudian pieces to date. Pan's Labyrinth is my favourite fantasy movie. The ethereal beauty of it's art is both terrifying and comforting to me in equal measures.



Collosal

Many of your pieces really speak to the feminine divine aspects of witchcraft. From where do you draw your inspiration? Do you feel comfortable within the occult realms?

Believe it or not, music has been the biggest inspiration for my more occult artworks. Bands such as System of a Down, Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin produce an energy within their music which really helps unlock my creative flow. Having gained more followers on Facebook and Instagram in recent years has really opened the doors in regards to inspiration. My artwork "Magic" was inspired by a friend called @FaerynThorn. I'd been drawing witches for a while, but when I saw her work it really roused my creativity and I knew I needed to draw her.

As far as the occult realms go, I've always been interested in the "dark side" of this reality so to speak. As well as having a busy eighth house astrologically, I've had a recurring dream for many years that really has forced me to look at the underlying mechanisms of my own reality. My art work The Dream was inspired by this struggle, and is a piece I hold very close to my heart.

(an you take us through your creative process? How do your artworks come into existence?

I tend to start by drawing the main figure and/ or face. Once the basic outline is in place, i try to work as organically as possible. Through the years i've found that the more I get into my

I am to creative flow. All of my works begins with pencil and paper. The level of detail and

delicacy you can achieve with a pencil far surpasses what you can do digitally. I generally use Procreate to add finishing touches and colour,

What has been your career highlight so far?

The one I'm most proud of would definitely be the piece that is currently hanging at Sweet Science Coffee in Washington DC. It's called "Jupiter" and I'm super proud of it. The way it

was installed into the space is really effective, I'd love to go over and see it one day.

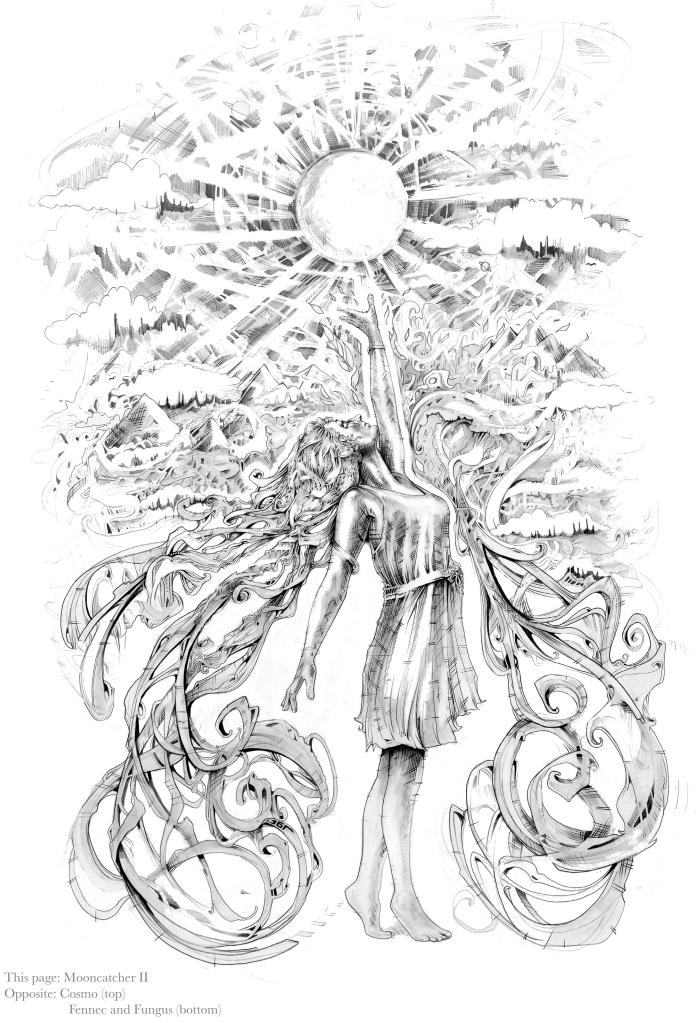


Also, I won a People's Choice Award in 2019 for an artwork called Thanato which really blew me away. We artists can be very self critical, so winning an award like that was just amazing.

What do the next 5 years look like for you creatively Tim? Are you excited for what the future might hold?

Well I figure we are only here once right? I think the important thing is to keep giving out good energy and inspiring as many people as possible with my art and illustrations. So really, the plan is to keep the creative juices flowing as much as possible and see where they take me. I really do have an amazing support network of friends, collaborators and art collectors who keep me going and keep me inspired. And its a privilege to be able to make my clients smile. It's a special thing.

You can find Tim Lord's art on his etsy store and you can contact him via his email for commissions: Timlord-art(a)gmail.com. You can also find him on Facebook and Instagram.







Above: Ophelia Right: Munchkin Land

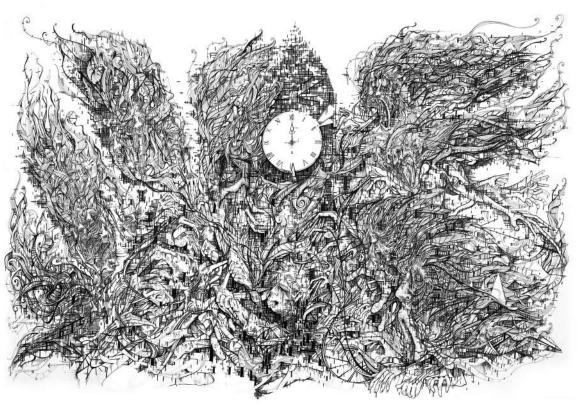


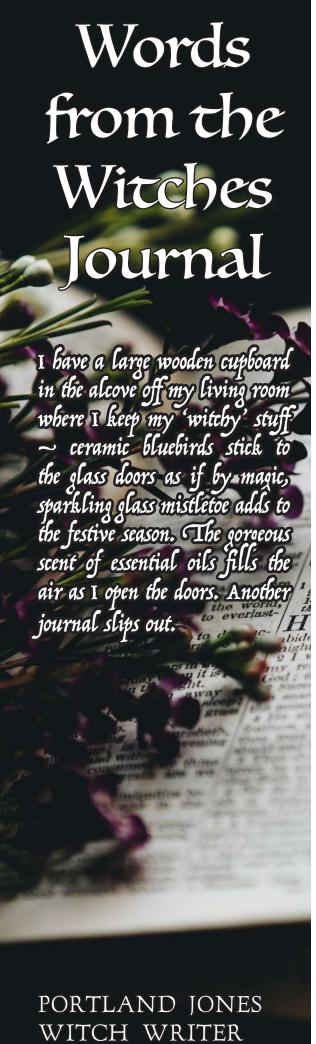












Yule 2017 was a milestone for me. 25 years of working with people who were homeless and in need of support and somewhere to live had come to an end. On 15th December that year it was confirmed that I was no longer able to continue with this employment due to my health - the end of my era.

We planned a sensory ritual, one that would embrace all our senses, so we could welcome back the light with not just our minds but with our bodies.

We placed a light in the garden which sent coloured lights dancing through the trees, catching our eyes and sending them in all directions following the patterns. The garden was filled with incense sticks - so many it looked like we had fog! Different scents were lit in different locations so as we walked to the ritual space our noses tingled as we breathed in the aromas and let them inspire memories.

We started by getting the fire going; it has taken us a long time to learn this art. It is not my strongest point but given time I can get a good fire going. I burned lots of work-related paperwork that was no longer needed - notes from training sessions, my contract of employment. It was a clear and symbolic end to that part of my life, clearing the way for the life yet to come. I needed closure, to be able to let go of what there once was, and feel free to move forwards into the future.

When we felt ready, attuned to each other and vested in the occasion, we visited the quarters. Rather than calling them in our usual way, we immersed ourselves in them. In the east we inhaled the scent of freshly popped corn and ate the air filled clouds as we thought on the gifts the east brings us. In the south the beautiful smell of fire-bright oranges awaited us, their tangy juice tantalising our taste buds. In the west we listened to the sound of water being poured and felt the cool refreshing taste on our lips. In the north we found the pungent smell of cauliflower, a sturdy crunch as we worked it in our teeth. Spirit at the centre met us with juicy crisp watermelon to freshen our mood.

The circle was decorated with mistletoe and holly. We had earlier made decorations from dried oranges, popcorn and nuts, which we added to our Yule tree.

We sat for a guided meditation that let our minds roam free, to go where we wanted, each to their own. We burned a sprig of



holly with its bright red berries in acknowledgement that the Holly King's reign was over. The Oak King now ruled for the months to come allowing the days to grow longer and the earth to warm.

Cakes and ale what can I say? It was a chocolate Yule log. There was no comment entered as to the 'ale'. I'm hoping it was the hot mulled apple juice that we make at this time of year.

We closed the quarters, thanking them and leaving gifts in each of them - shells gathered from the beach in the summer in recognition of the times to come. We took from the elements in opening and gave back in closing.

Moving inside, we had a feast of baked sweet potatoes followed by fresh cream cake - contrasting deep earthy vegetables with the lightness of cream. Then followed the annual exchange of handmade gifts. It's not the quality of the gifts that is important. Mine would never pass if weighed against machine manufactured goods. What the handmade gifts tell us is that someone cares enough about us to take the time to plan and make it, to dedicate a part of their lives to us.

A beautiful, cold, peaceful, restorative evening welcoming the light back into our lives. For me, that ritual was about closure and a new start. I stopped mourning the person I was before my health failed. I let go of the need to be that person again, to do that job. I made a conscious decision to move on. I now do what I love – I write.

Portland Jones www.portlandjones.com



Desper, Older, Darker

P.J. Richards is an artist and writer living in Somerset with her husband, two teenage daughters, three white cats, an owl and a twenty-year-old goldfish.

After having the opportunity to read her new book, Deeper, Older, Darker, we invited the author to introduce them' selves and their work to our readers.

My creative inspiration is firmly rooted in nature, history, ancient sites and liminal landscapes. My art and short stories all contain elements of folklore or enchantment that draws magic into the modern world. My debut novel Deeper Older Darker has given me the space to explore my thoughts on the link between people and the land, and the spiritual relationship that must be regenerated for the benefit of both.

The system of instinctive magic I devised for the book grew from the 'tree of life and death' lore surrounding ancient yews and the meditative aspect of longbow archery - it's beautiful but dangerous.

I tend to write after everyone else in the house has gone to bed, usually between 11pm and the weesmall-hours. Not healthy, but I need that solitude to reach the part of my mind where the tales live. I don't really plan other than having a story-arc and a notebook of scribbled ideas. I love novels that pull you in without the use of lengthy exposition or backstory, so Deeper Older Darker begins at a mysterious, pivotal point in an ongoing event that's revealed through the experiences of the various characters.

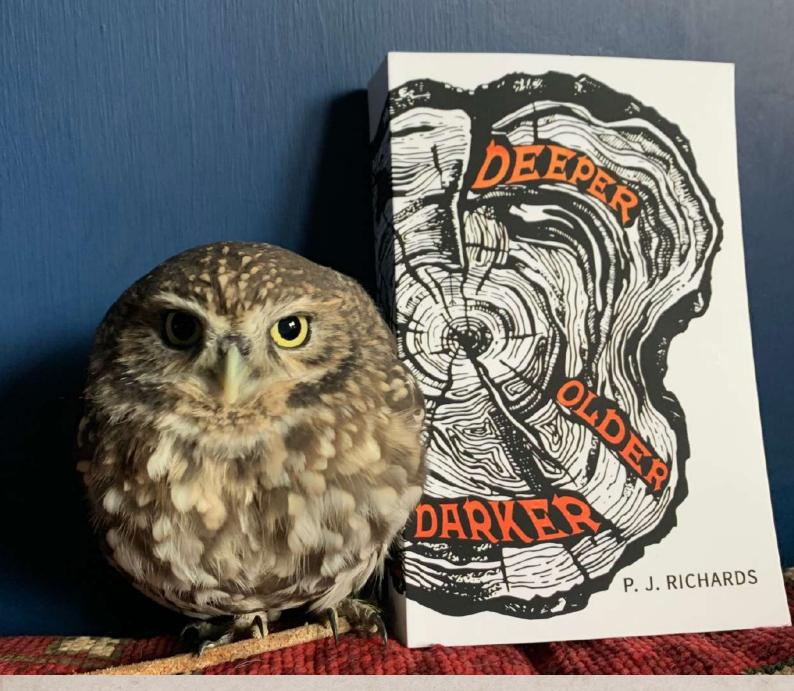
I enjoy lyrical writing that captures a mood or description in the most evocative way, but only if it advances the narrative - it has to be exciting or intriguing - the story is paramount.



I have a very visual imagination and will run each scene in my head as if it's a film, essentially transcribing the action as it happens (aka, making it up as I'm going along!) but there's an unconscious process that I don't examine too closely in case the magic flees, that weaves every part of the story neatly and cohesively together.

Initially, I only worked on the book if and when I had the time, until on a whim I entered the first three chapters into a national competition, was longlisted and won a professional critique.

Suddenly I had vindication that it was worth taking seriously, but then came the years of rejection, rewriting, losing faith and abandoning the manuscript to write short stories instead, and then trying just one, more, time... until Emma Barnes of Snowbooks read and loved it.



In a serendipitous tangent I needed to ask permission from Davey Dodds, writer of The Magpie song featured in the TV series Detectorists, if I could quote a snippet of his lyrics in my book. He was difficult to track down but after a nerve-wracking (for me!) phonecall he very kindly granted me permission. As a thank you I drew Davey a magpie which he liked so much he commissioned me to design the cover for his latest album The Rite of Spring.

I've also drawn all the little chapter-header pen & ink illustrations for Deeper Older Darker.

Being a massive Kate Bush fan (and purely for my own amusement) I've concealed twenty of her song titles in my book. I'm writing the sequel now and continue to challenge myself to sneak her songs in!

When not writing or drawing I can be found camping in castles and shooting my longbow with my medieval display group, or celebrating the Solstices at Stonehenge dressed as a unicorn.

Twitter: @P_J_Richards for writing, art and folklore.

Find our review of Deeper, Older, Darker further on in this issue!



Yule, the Winter Solstice, a time that marks the return of the sun. And one of my absolute favorite times of the year! The days from now start to get a little longer. It's a time of giving and coming together with friends and family to celebrate. It is also a time to say goodbye to the old and welcome in the light and the new. So prior to Yule is a perfect time to have a good physical declutter of your home as well cleansing energetically by smudging.

This season's colours are white and silver to represent the cold and the snow. But also the obvious traditional colours of red and gold which are a nice representation of the sun coming back. And of course green which is a beautiful representation of nature and continuous life.

So what crystals are great to use at this time of year?

Here a a few of my personal favourites;

Have a Blessed Yule and I will see you in 2022!

Much love as always,

Cheryl xxx

GARNET

The colour red, this crystal brings the energy of fire with it, it's the birthstone of those born in January and as a token for a second Wedding anniversary too!

Garnet inspires love, commitment and stimulates kundalini energy. By bringing the fire energy it's a great Stone to bring passion into your relationship, closely connected to the sacral chakra will help to increase your sexual desire and confidence. Garnet balances and cleanses the chakra points and is useful when overcoming traumas.

It boosts the basic survival instinct to help you tackle and get through almost anything, it helps you to know the inner strength you already have to enable you to move forward. In ancient times it was carried as a talisman for spiritual protection. It helps you to let go of the things that no longer serve you and move forward positively with an open heart.



GREEN GOLDSTONE

Green Goldstone is a man made stone, this glass gets its green colour from chromium and is sometimes also called sandstone due to it being sand infused. The sparkle of Goldstone is just beautiful and is a result of copper particles reflecting the light.

Green goldstone is associated with abundance and the heart chakra. It gently wards off negative energy and is an emotional healer.

Goldstone is a beautiful stone known as the stone of ambition. It builds positive energy, drive, courage and strength. A must have to help you move forward with your dreams and desires.





PYRITE

Pyrite is an iron sulphide mineral with a shiny metal look, and this is why it is quite often called 'fool's gold'. It therefore brings with us the energy of Gold so will aid to bring you abundance, success and power!

Pyrite is also a highly protective stone, it shields you from negative energy of all kinds both emotionally and physically.

Pyrite blocks aura energy leaks and will mend any auric damage. Carry Pyrite with you to protect yourself from both environmental pollution and physical danger. It also promotes good physical health and emotional well-being.

SNOWFLAKE OBSIDIAN

Snowflake Obsidian is a type of Black Obsidian so is a form of volcanic glass, created when the volcanic lava cools down quickly. The presence of Cristobalite is what makes the little "snowflake" patterns. Most commonly found in North & South American.

Known as the "stone of purity" Snowflake Obsidian is connected with the base chakra so will help to ground you and make you feel safe by bringing balance to the mind, body and spirit, as well as encouraging your personal growth.

Snowflake Obsidian helps to put you in the right frame of mind, by allowing you to focus and let go of unhelpful behaviour patterns that may be distracting you. It works in a similar way to Black Obsidian by bringing emotions to the surface that need to be acknowledged, addressed and processed. But it does so in a much gentler way, this process will help to bring you peace of mind once you can finally heal and release these emotions.



SNOW QUARTZ

Snow Quartz is the name of a beautiful type Quartz crystal that contains little tiny bubbles of water.

As it is a type of Quartz it has all the basic properties that clear Quartz does such as being an amplifier of other stones energies as well as being a fabulous stone of healing.

It has a beautiful soft feminine and due to it being the colour of snow it is the perfect crystal to be using at this time of year. It gently encourages us to find balance and alignment. Also helps to bring clarity, focus and alertness during tense moments. Its healing properties enhance wisdom and sharpen the mind. It's also commonly known as White Quartz or Milky Quartz.



YOUR FREE GIFT FROM GROUNDED GODDESS

GREEN CHALCEDONY

Chalcedony absorbs and dissolves negative energies. It brings the mind, body, spirit into balance and promotes togetherness and friendships.

It promotes kindness and vitality and is known for its nurturing qualities.

Encourages honesty in difficult situations. Useful when having to adapt to a new situation or when you feel "out of balance".

We hope you enjoy your free gift! Find more crystals and wisdom at www.grounded-goddess.com or find Cheryl on Facebook and Instagram.





MISHINA A PATHWORKING MEDITATION

You will need approximately forty-five minutes for this pathworking mediatíon.

I recommend that you find uninterrupted time, get yourself comfortable and have a snack, a drink and a notepad and pen handy for afterwards.

The following is written so that you pause between each bullet point. If you have music playing in the background, you may want to use it to punctuate your flow.

You can do this alone, as a couple or in a group. If you choose to do it as a group, you may not charge as the rights to the following are exclusively Fairy Becs.

If you are on your own then you need to perform a Gonscious meditation 🗆 where you take yourself on the journey as you read.

OPENING SEQUENCE

Sitting or lying comfortably.

- Breathing normally and continue to relax.
- Start to notice how the breath enters and exits your body. Feel it around your teeth, across your tongue, across the roof of your mouth and into the back of your neck.
- Start to breathe deeper, visualising the breath filling your lungs right to the bottom and as you breathe out, empty gs fully but slowly. If you are not already, try to breathe in through your lungs fully but slowly.
- your nose and out through your mouth.
- Now focus back on the journey of the breath from the external to the internal and back again.
- At this point, if your feet are on the floor, make sure they are fully connected. If you are lying down, become aware of where your body touches the floor.

Fairy Bec Witch Writer

NOW START THE JOURNEY

Keeping your eyes dosed where possible.

- You are sat by a fire. You are warm and comfortable.
- You stare into the flames and as you do so, you see three images appear in the flames.
- Everything around you starts to dissolve except for the fire.
- Now it is just you in the darkness with the fire.

 The fire still blazes strong. You still feel warm and comfortable.
- As you stare deeper into the flames, you see a dancing circle there. The people are happy, and they are having fun together.
- One of the people step forwards towards you.

 They have a gift for you. The gift is wrapped.
- You open the gift carefully to see what it is and sit a while with it.
- You turn your face back to the fire.
- Where the people were, there is now a Phoenix dancing in the flames.
- You see your face in the Phoenix.
- You concentrate on anything that is upsetting or annoying you at the moment.
- As you think of each thing, the flame burns brighter and brighter.
- Eventually, the flames are so strong that the Phoenix has disappeared.
 - The flames start to die down and with it, a door appears in place of the fire.
 - You get up and go to the door.
 - You study the door for a while.
 - You then open the door slowly. It opens with ease.
- As you are opening it, you notice bright sunshine pouring through.
- The sunshine pours towards your heart and fills your body with golden light.
- The golden light extends from your body outwards and you think about those in your life you would like to share your love with. This gives you an enormous sense of peace.

CLOSING SEQUENCE

- Breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth, start to notice how the breath enters and exits your body. Feel it around your teeth, across your tongue, across the roof of your mouth and into the back of your neck.
- Start to breathe deeper, visualising the breath filling your lungs right to the bottom and as you breathe out, empty your lungs fully but slowly.
- Your golden orb appears above you again. It comes back to your chest area, spins and bursts again. This time when it bursts, the rainbow fills inside you.
- The violet goes to your crown, the indigo goes to your head, the blue to your throat, the green to your heart, the yellow to your lungs, the orange to your belly and the red to your pelvic region.
- Wiggle your fingers and toes.
- Rub your hands together and place them over your eyes.
- Slowly separate the fingers and blink your eyes open.
- Slowly open your eyes and look around you.
- Take a yawn so you get a good amount of oxygen into your body and stretch where you feel you need to stretch.
- Now is your time to write and draw to keep hold of what you want to from your experience.

After closing down, highlight the following questions:-

- 1) What were the three images in the fire?
- 2) What was the gift?
- 3) What colour was the gift wrapped in?
- 4) What did the door look like?

Your group may want to write or draw so give them time to answer these questions in notebooks. This reflection time can help them to come to terms with any personal discoveries they have made whilst on the pathway.

These are personal answers that you/they might want to research the symbolic meanings of by themselves. You/they may also want to discuss - open a group discussion where the group volunteer answers if they wish.

How Magick can help you Beat the January Blues

Faith Barnes/Witchinsmall

Blues got me down,
where are the lighter days!
The cold breeze as wind talks,
rain slates down from above on walks,
is there no end in sight.
But with all my might,
I will give the January blues a fight!
Using magick we will make it right.

The Sea Witch Poet

Blue Monday Positivity
Spell!

Let's start the first 'Blue' Monday of the month off with some positive energy, to get things going!

Holding a smooth piece of citrine crystal between your palms. Feel its coolness and energy. Take four deep breaths in and then out. Visualise a circle of golden light ex' protective circle around you. A warm, safe, happy place. And chant:

Blues be gone, I dispel them with my song.

Sing high to break bad vibes,

sing high to bring positivity by.

Call forth, I sing to let good energy in.

Wherever you go carry this crystal with you to keep the positivity flowing in! Any doubts sneaking in, just chant again to refresh your golden positivity bubble!

Are January blues getting you down? Whether you have Seasonal Affective Disorder or are just darn fed up with all this windy rain and dark days! We are all feeling it! But I'm here to help! With my top tips on how magick can help you cope better during this time of year.

I hope these tips bring out your positivity and cheer in January this year! And inspire you to work your magick into your everyday life. Happiness is a mindset and up to you to let it in! Do it with a little pizazz! Make this January Your month!

Smiles and Laughter, Faithy xx

Moving and Grooving ★

Walks in nature are needed for both spirituality and health. Especially as we all get sluggish from the excess food over the festive period! Look out for every tiny detail on your walk. Hold a single fallen leaf and feel its energy. Spot the signs from the divine, in how the wind blows or how the birds fly past. There is beauty in all things, take this time to connect to your spiritual side. To breathe again.

Focus Spell

Make January all about progressing forward! Reaching those goals! To help you focus, embrace empowering symbols! This simple trick is fantastic at reminding you to do a single task. Draw a symbol representing your goal, on an orange piece of paper. Lighting a yellow candle say:

Pinpointing my thoughts and wishes come true. Grant me mine, for focus I can do. Forward I try and forward I will. For progression, I do, until my goal becomes real.

Carefully pour drops of the melted candle wax in a circle around your symbol to seal it. And the spell is done!

Energy Uplift Spell

Low energy comes with the blues territory, so left flip it around and pull it up! Take a blue left flip it around and pull it up! Take a blue piece of string, tie several knots into it. This piece of string, blue mood! Untie each knot with represents your blue mood! Untie each knot with a sharp tight pull at the end to straighten out a sharp tight pull at the end to straight the piece of string. Make a snap sound! Hold the untied string taught above your head and say:

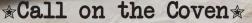
Beyond things, I spread my wings.

Up high in the sky, my energy will fly.

Burst call to me, for all to see.

This energetic creature I can be!

See the energy from the universe flow into the see the energy from the universe flow into the see the energy from the around your left wrist piece of string. Tie this around your low. Create for the day. If your energy gets low. Create for the knot to snap back once untied! Feel the another knot to snap back once untied! releases!



We can all get lonely, after seeing friends and family over the festive period but now it's gone quiet. Beat this by connecting with other witches! Be it online or if you are lucky enough, in person! Raise energy together, calling happiness for all towards you. Or build an energy healing circle. Whatever you may do, reach out, create magick and have fun!



Refreshing Bag of Joy
Need a quick mood boost? Smell this bag of
joy! Add into an organza bag:

Slices of Dried Sweet Orange (and/or Peel)

-Slices of Dried Ginger

-A few drops of Sweet Almond Oil





See the positivity wherever you can!
Start your day right, by doing a
gratitude list when you first wake
up in the morning! This daily ritual
can change your mindset about the day
putting it in a happy way! Words are
powerful magick in themselves. Use this
to pull that positive mood towards you
even more!



It's all about self-care! Feeling spent? Or need distracting from overthinking? Simple things, you can do in your daily life are the best form of selfcare. Try achieving this by connecting to the elements! Be it by lighting a candle while you work, taking your shoes off to walk barefoot in the grass. Or taking a moment to care for an office plant. Stopping to take the time for yourself is an act of love. We tend to ignore our minds and bodies, lost in the daily tasks of life. Even drinking more water is about caring for your body in one small act. And by bringing the elements to your life, you are connecting to the natural world Find your balance again!





Decluttering Cleanse

Why wait until spring! This always makes me feel better, get rid of the old so the new can enter! After all, cleansing is a witches best friend! For a witchy touch burn incense, dance around with lemon and rosemary spray, bang on your magickal drum or whip out your wand to dispel any negativity! Reset and refresh that mood!

*Acts of Kindness *

Spread the joy, helping others! It's not only good for them but it's good for you too! Do you know someone who always wanted to try salsa class but hasn't had the confidence, go with them! Or a mum struggling with a newborn? Offer to clean or babysitting hours. Get those good feels working for you!

★Look Back to Look Forward Take a quiet moment, of self-reflection. List the blessings of last year: What did you do last year which made you proud? What were the good points? If you had a bad year, then think of how the next year will be better and what you want to achieve! Be realistic though, don't put too much pressure on yourself. Always be kind to yourself.



Bringing Back Playtime!

To combat the blues, crafting you should use! Why not try some DIY witchin? Don't take on too much, pick one single thing you'd like to work on. It doesn't matter if what you make is any good, it's playtime! Get those paints out and get messy! Collect sticks on your walk, try leaf printing or carve your wand. Relax and enjoy, and add a bit of magick into it! Bring back your inner child!



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Pagan Poetry & Fiction

STAND IN YOUR LIGHT Anya Lukover

The light within you is brightening It's a feeling that won't go away The bullshit stories will try to dim it But the truth is it's here to stay

If you ignore it your body will respond With symptoms of anxiety or pain So you may aswell tune in and surrender And let that light within you to reign





THE POISON TREE Kelly Buchan

Won't you take me on your lonesome pilgrimage, To repent at the base of the poison tree. I'll bear witness to the grim, gruesome spectacle, As it drinks you dry darkly, and spits you out cold.

Your tongue is brazen and barbed, my love. Sitting proud within liquor laced lips. Was it born from the fruit of the poison tree? It sure creeps with the same kind of rot

Intertwined we could weep black and deeply.
Under branches with leaves limp with sorrow.
Into abstract rejection we'll writhe and dissolve.
With neither one of of us saving the other.

Becoming one with the roots of the poison tree, Searching finger tips, gnarled out of reach. Our souls twisted and tortured, cold for all time. As it drinks us down darkly and swallows us whole. See the beauty
with each shadowy morning ray,
through a million lights cutting night,
hearts open wide for belief, unyielding ground.
Stroke of fate of golden swing,
balance of crooked scales speaks no truth.
Hopeful roots in good faith, spread and rise up,
leafen trees befall even the darkest times,
it is safe.
Flowers bear wonder so ripe it grows fruit,
sweet freshness growing above my head.

Flowers bear wonder so ripe it grows fruit, sweet freshness growing above my head, start my morn and end my night.

Faithful delight.

Shine with that infinite light.

A Collection of Poems by Taryn Barry

Cracking heels upon brick, Black shining glare of rainy nights. Yearn for warmth Feeling it all, Cold dark winter come again. Teach me Solidarity of shadow, Early and swift the curtain draws Into our world of silent flight. Late harsh winds eat sparks, Glowing crimson roots feed back. Spirals of membranes, My lungs fright upon winters bite. Breathe deep. oh breath of fire. Though sun fades fast Through wearing and winding ribbons of silver, Rain and dark can guide you home too. Your light is within my friend.

Concrete fleeting in the mist,
how dense rain feels when you're soaked through.
Icy rays cutting on panes,
be not afraid my friend.
For there will always be rainy days, and always sun will follow.
One day.
Take my breath away,
don't you know how this water nourishes?
Without the rain, how would you know that sunshine felt so great?











DOTS & BLOCKS



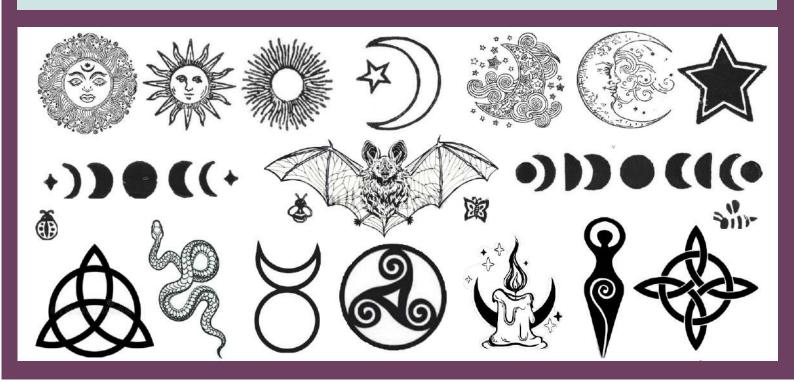
We specialise in hand printing fabrics using wooden printing blocks with fabric paints - everything we print on is natural fibre, washable & comes with a care tag. Created in our rural home, located within Durrington Walls Superhenge - part of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site.

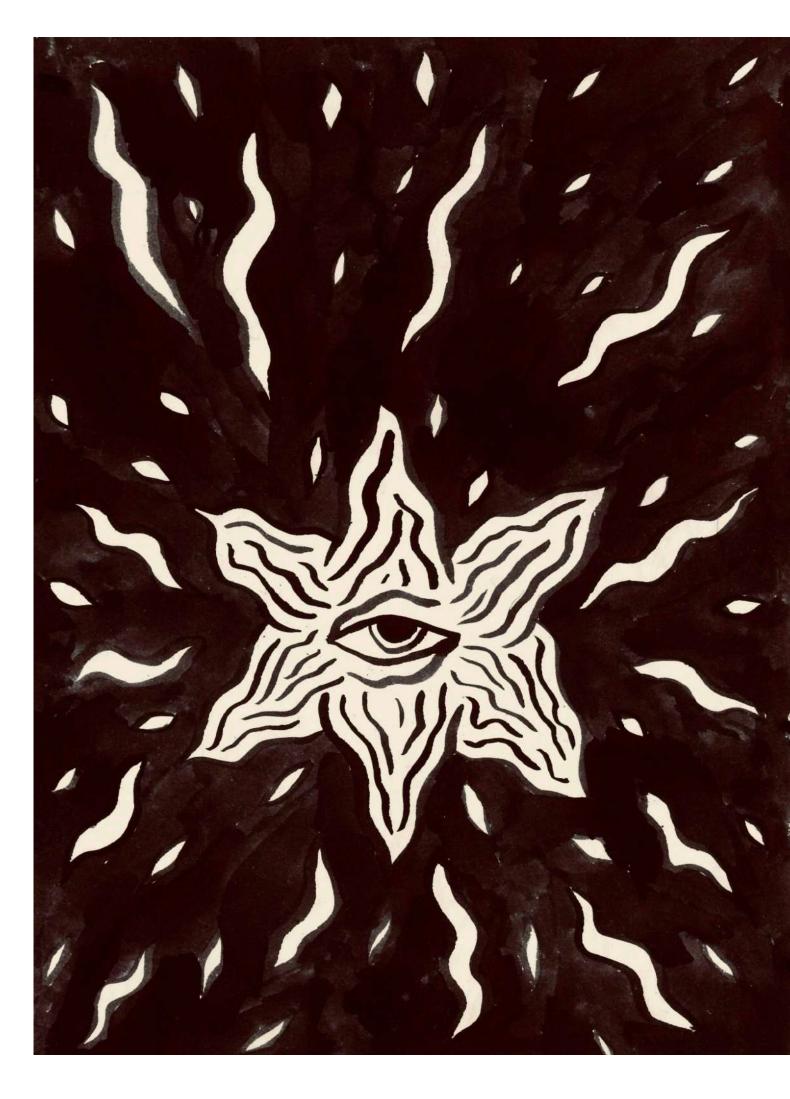
We have hundreds of designs - just a few are shown here for reference. From sacred geometry to pagan & wiccan, from spirit animals to mythical creatures, plus Buddha's and Chakras - you're bound to find something perfect for you ior a loved one.

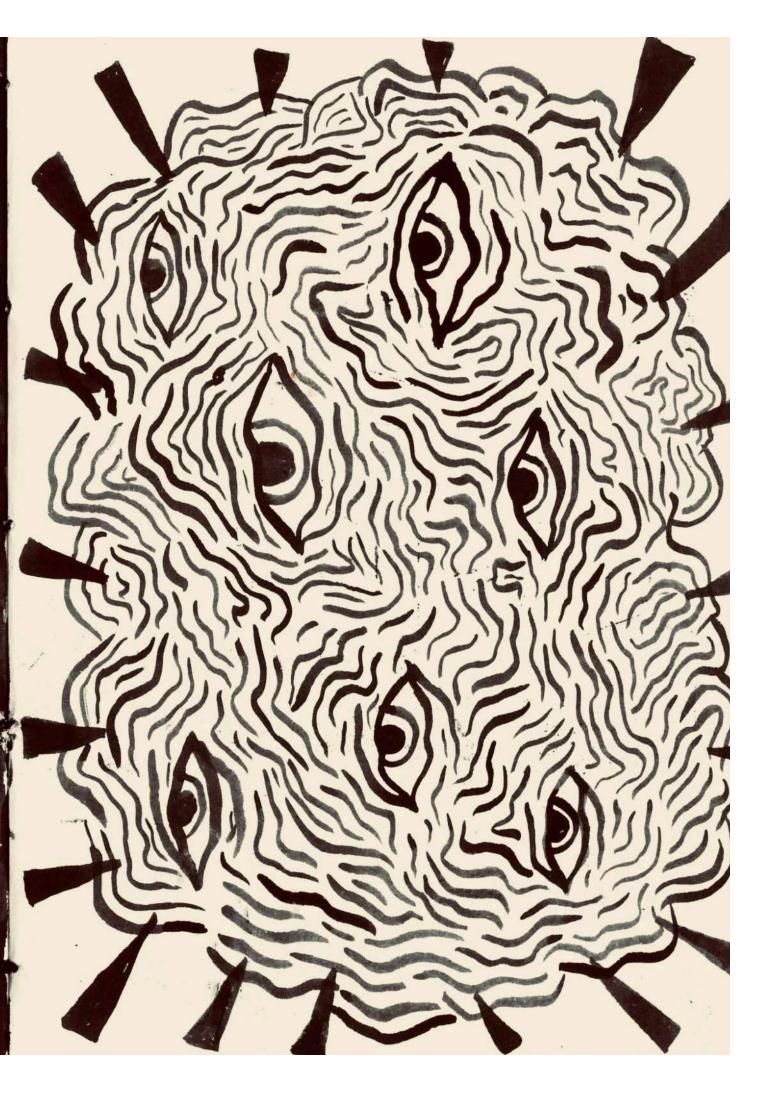
Our range of artisan fabrics includes shawls, crystal grid cloths, aprons, tea towels, cushion covers, tablecloths, tote bags and throws.

You can view our catalogue online via https://linktr.ee/Dots_Blocks

Contact Karen to discuss the possibilities, call 07856 257623 or email hello@dotsandblocks.co.uk





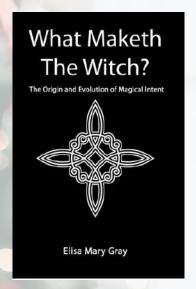


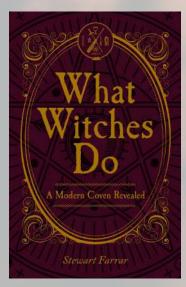
YULE READING RECOMMENDATIONS

What Maketh The Witch Elisa Gray

A book for beginners and experienced witches alike - What Maketh The Witch is an accesible and readable guide to the history of magical intent. It is well researched, and not the run-of-the-mill Witchcraft 101 that is so common these days - you will learn a wealth of history worth knowing on any magical path.

£10.99 from www.greenmagicpublishing.com





What Witches Do ' A Modern Coven Revealed Stewart Farrer

Originally published in 1971, this new paperback edition by Crowood Press is a wonderful introduction to traditional Wiccan practices, whether you are just interested in the history of Alexandrian Wicca (as practiced by the author) or joining a coven.

Despite changing times and practices, What Witches Do is still an important text exploring the theories and principles of the Alexandrian initiate and the workings and rituals of a traditional Wiccan coven, as taught to the author directly by Alex and Maxine Sanders.

£8.99 - www.crowood.com

Deeper, Older, Darker P.J. Richards

Rich with olde ways folklore and mythology, this fantasy fiction novel from author P.J. Richards brings ancient magic to the modern day world. Beautifully written and illustrated, it is hard to put down and return to the so called real world without believing magic could be just about anywhere!

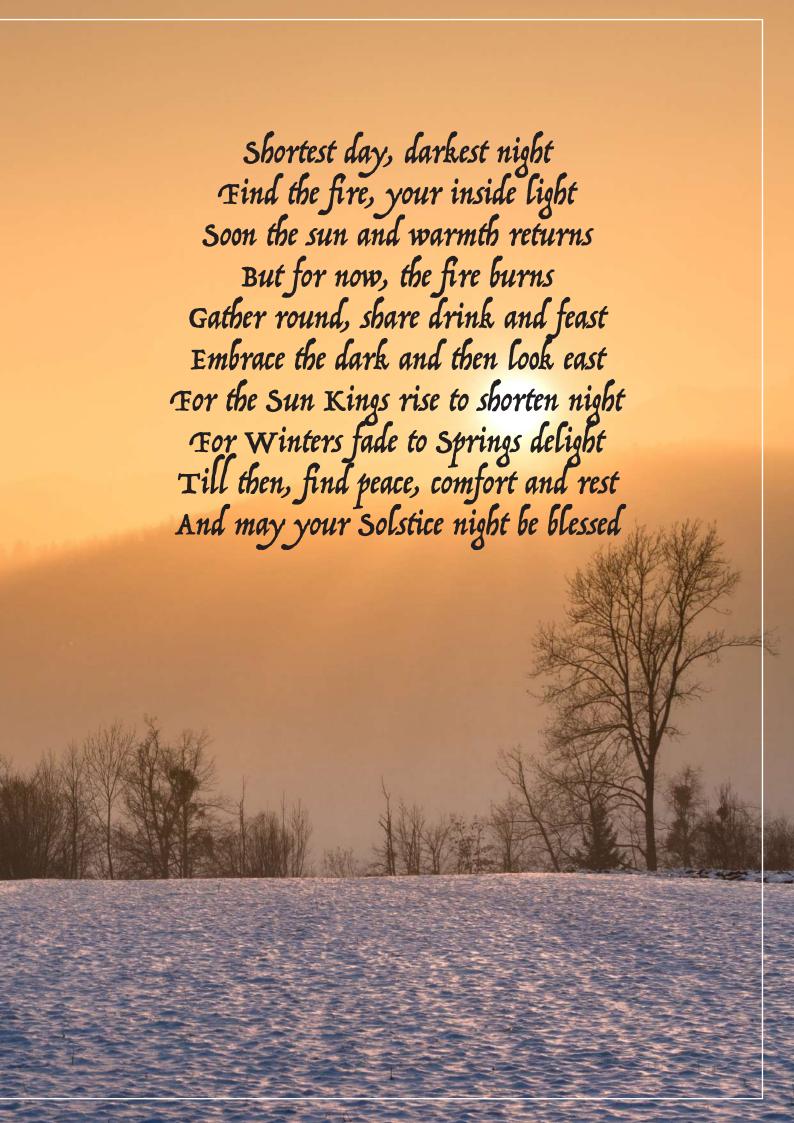
If you are familiar with the many mystical sites of southern England, you will enjoy diving deep in to the legends of the famous places in these parts, while being thrilled by the wonderfully constructed adventure story that surrounds them in the authors world.

DEEDS P. J. RICHARDS

£8.99 from Amazon.co.uk









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