

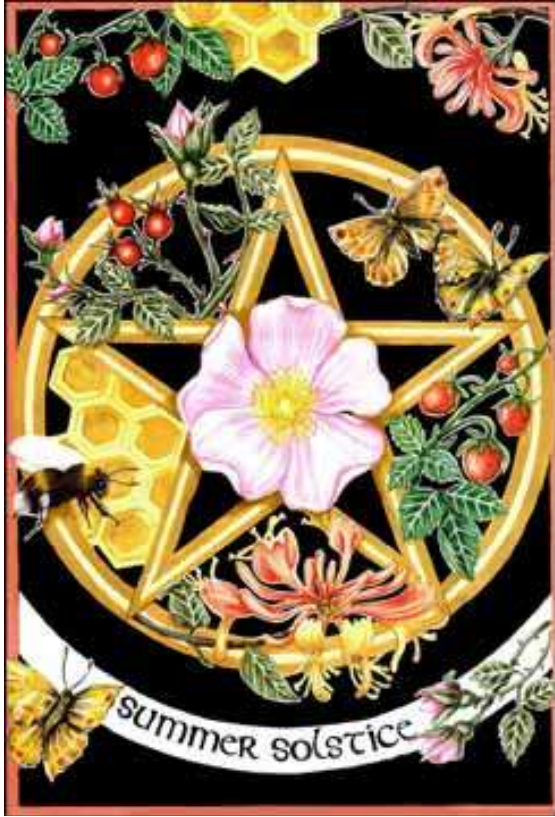
# The Web

Litha, June 21, 2021

Newsletter of the 13th House Mystery School  
Produced by the Founders and Elders of the 13th House Tradition



The 13th House Mystery School Tradition of Witchcraft and Shamanism is dedicated to the facilitation of self-realization and self-expression through creative acts.



## Greetings and Welcome!

Hello All! The Litha issue once again features our usual repertoire of stories, articles, rituals, recipes, and announcements.

The Tree of Life  
Initiation is at the  
Heart of 13th House  
Mystery School

**News, Articles, Essays, Poems, Short Stories, Spells and Rituals, Personal or Business announcements, Accomplishments or Rites of Passage, Acknowledgements or expressions of gratitude and appreciation, Offers of Services or support for your community, Images of your Artwork, Creative projects or craft works, Herblore, Gardening tips, Kitchen witchery, and whatever else tickles your fancy, are always welcome.**

Remember this is your newsletter and one of the many ways we invite you to contribute to building a thriving community, co-create the 13th House Tradition, and bring your magic into the world. you are invited to submit your offerings for inclusion in the upcoming 13th House Newsletter to Yvonne at: [yvonne.owens@uclmail.net](mailto:yvonne.owens@uclmail.net)

**With love and bright blessings,  
Your Editorial Team: Angela, Tamara,  
Yvonne and Alison**





## Table of Contents

<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Editorial by Alison Skelton</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Seasonal Feature: 'SUMMER, and what we do in the Shadows...' By Jessica North-O'Connell</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Erotica by Schuyler</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Poems by Jessica North-O'Connell</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>'Can I Rest with Uncertainty?' by Julia Stolk</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>'STRENGTH' by Alison Skelton</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>'The Thirteenth Sign of the Zodiac,' by Rosechild</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>'Themes of Sovereignty Seen at Litha' by Yvonne Owens</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>'TENDING THE GARDEN OF SPIRIT' by Alison Skelton</b>	<b>32</b>
<b><i>13th House Announcements</i></b>	<b>38</b>
<b><i>13th House Credo</i></b>	<b>60</b>

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## Editorial by Alison Skelton

### Greetings and Salutations!

As one of the founding priestesses and an elder of the 13th House tradition, I have always been concerned with supporting and mentoring new members as well as those who feel they have a calling to be in service to the tradition itself. I am feeling that it is a perfect time for me to rededicate myself to the 13th house and to encourage new connections, structures and expressions of the magical community that I am so privileged to serve.

13th house mystery school tradition was birthed at the Autumn Equinox in 1993. This year we will be turning 28 and entering into our first "Saturn Return" the influence of which will be strongest during May and June 2022 and again in January of 2023. Non astrologers (And I include myself in that category) may wonder "what's all this about then?" According to Wikipedia a Saturn return is an astrological transit that occurs when the planet Saturn Returns to the same place in the sky that it occupied at the moment of birth. Psychologically, the first Saturn return is seen as the time of reaching full maturity, and being faced, with challenges and responsibilities that might invite a restructuring or new level of commitment. At this time we are particularly interested in hearing from those with knowledge and skill in astrology to offer their perspective on the 13th House Tradition's Saturn return. We are also open to any other divination or oracular input as to what's in store as our community moves into it's second act. It's been pretty wonderful so far with 28 years of teaching, mentoring, and developing friendships and collaborations, full of magic creativity, healing and growth.

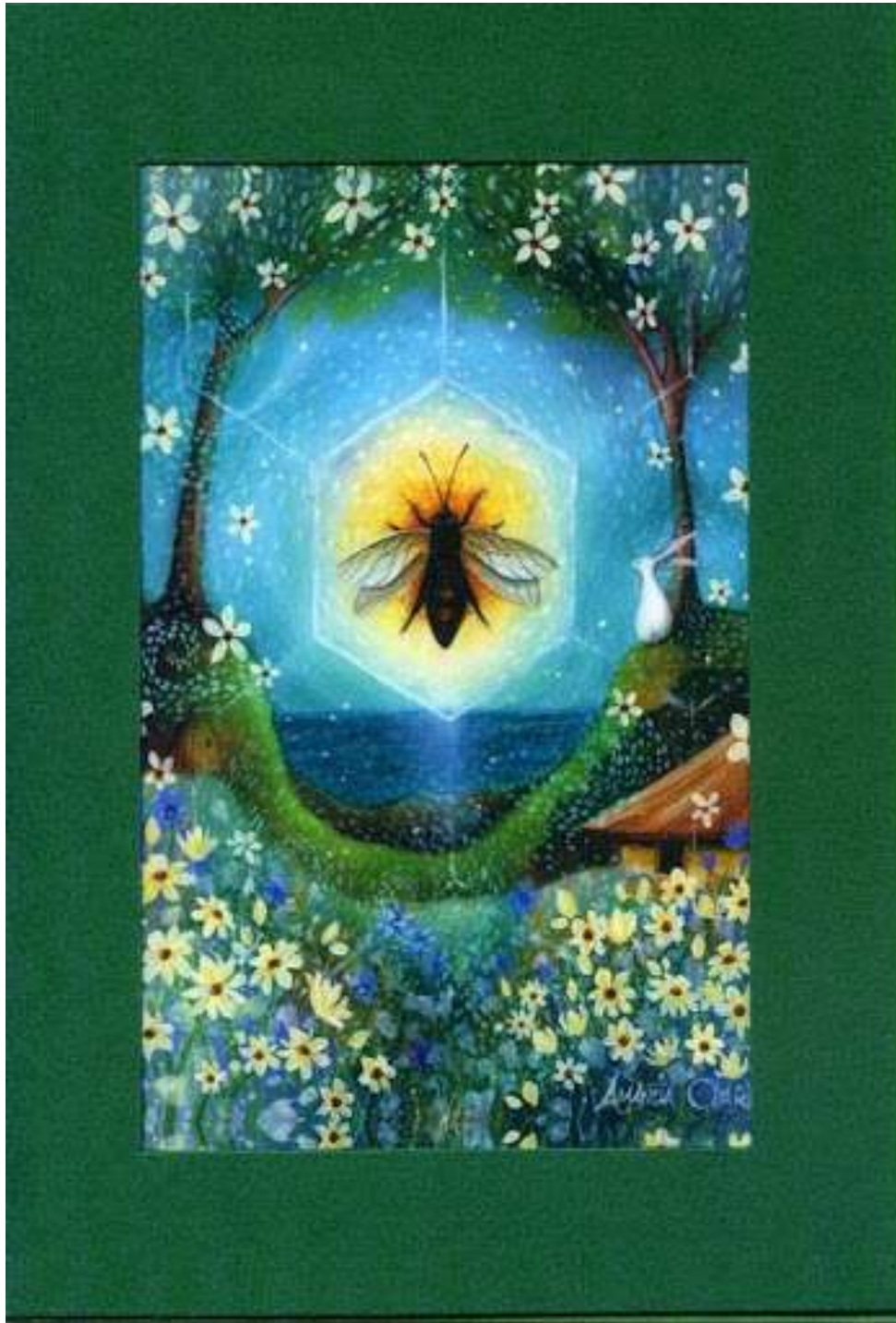
"The WEB" Newsletter, is a resource open to all 13th House members, and you are encouraged to support it's publication with contributions to its contents and to empower yourself and the publication by helping to direct it's content, and make it part of your 13th house legacy. This will give all members of the tradition a chance to express their particular creative and visionary perspective as well as maintain the connective thread that weaves the greater 13th House Tradition together.

For me, the most important things about the 13th house tradition are that it provides a place for community to build and renew itself, to create magic with a vision of inclusion universality, and work in alignment with nature spirit. We have so many wonderful members now after so many years and as new members join us they access a legacy and a history that supports them as soon as they step into their self-dedication process.

As the 13th House approaches it's first Saturn return it is time for those of us like myself who are part of the inception of this magical child to encourage others to rededicate themselves to the ongoing creation of this community and express their

vision of the world we are living into. This can be done in so many ways, and each of us have unique gifts to offer that are valued and appreciated.

**With Relentless Love**  
**Alison**



## **SUMMER** *and what we do in the Shadows...*

**Jessica North-O'Connell**

*A word before commencing: I realized as I was writing this bit that it is actually part of a much (much!) longer piece and I've tried to simply offer a few things to think about. This isn't an article about judgments of other's lifestyles or career choices – simply about reclaiming our personal authority as humans who are anticipating and creating new paradigms...*

Ah, Summer! We wait all year for this very season, even if we truly appreciate the others; the inception of this flourishing, beautiful time when the Earth (at least that part we call home) sings forth in the colors and scents of flora, the varying sounds of life offered by birds, insects and other fauna, and the increasingly warm temperature. The returning sunlight kisses us, urging us to expose more skin to the Elements; winds gentle, and that early spring smell of rot has given way to more subtle and pleasing fragrances as plants tempt pollinators to participate in their fertility rituals.

And while everything loosens and relaxes into fertile expansion, our thoughts often turn to themes of playfulness and enjoyment: love and romance, a celebration of the sensual and erotic, our Divine sexuality, and possibly even a return to the innocence of our younger selves. We find ourselves frolicking more, antsy, or wishing to be languid under some shady trees, with our full picnic baskets and no agenda rather than sitting at a desk in some windowless office for eight hours a day, attempting to ignore the “itch.” No matter how old we are, the kid in us returns and demands attention. Sometimes this leads us down dark paths; we may find ourselves experiencing anything from a simple anticipation for the workday's end to deep reservoirs of resentment and other murky emotions. Sometimes our emotional selves turn to the shadows where our personal haunts reside – and make no mistake about it; our haunts are deeply personal!

In my own youth, while pursuing a film major at university, and as the daughter of a lapsed Catholic mother who found me “distasteful,” I found myself haunted by our cultural concepts of pornography, and set out to investigate this issue as the topic of one of my films. I had difficulty accepting how our sexuality could be construed as “pornographic,” especially when we were constantly being bombarded with images and ideas that were deeply offensive, even damaging, to our psyches and perhaps our very Souls in their impact. Hence, as a result, my film consisted of contrasts between some charming still images, garnered from an Art book I'd found in our library depicting the (Greek Goddess of Love) Aphrodite's romantic escapades, with other images I personally found distressing, such as a mother discovering the dead body of her son who had been shot at a local pub, a man crippled by the effects of

contaminated food he had had been forced to eat for most of his life, and a group of nine-year old girls in uniform, each holding a military weapon – and smiling as they were being taught to “hate the enemy!” I used the music “Mars” from Hans Holst’s suite, *The Planets*, as the soundtrack because it so convincingly represents threat, and titled the work “Turbulence” as it was intended to upset the apple cart.

My film was completed somewhat prior to the theatre release of Bonnie Sherr Klein’s film “Not a Love Story” – a film I was never able to actually view because it consistently sold out in theatres before I could get a ticket! If you aren’t familiar with the subject matter, Bonnie’s film is “...a thought-provoking chronicle of two women...as they explore the world of peep shows, strip joints and sex supermarkets...motivated by a desire to know more about pornography – why it exists, *the form it takes* (italics mine), and how it affects relations between men and women...”

*The form it takes...* Well, *that* phrase begged me to look below the surface of the issue as it was being presented. In its most basic interpretation, the word *pornography* derives from Ancient Greek and literally refers to “writing about harlots,” but what we must bear in mind is the existence of slavery at that time as a way of life which featured the *buying and selling of humans for a variety of purposes*; in that specific case, the purpose of sexual activities.

The very act of buying and selling humans immediately brings to my mind the dominance of some humans over others (Starhawk would say, “power over”). It conjures that sense of inequality, misogyny and the disruption of personal will which heavily underscores the patriarchal world view and agenda. So, for me, the “pornographic” essentially seeks to divide us into different camps: the dominators and those being dominated. It is also whatever hurts and debases us, whatever blankets us in shame, assaults and offends our deepest senses; it is exploitative and insinuates itself into that part of us which is vulnerable, seeking to destroy our individual sense of Self, to create simply another “consumer,” or perhaps more properly, one who can easily be *consumed*; it bulldozes the inner planes, forcing a belief that depth, beauty and meaning are irrelevant and obsolete. It reflects the disillusionment a culture, and a worldview which is actually at the end of its age.

And that dominance is held in place through ensuring that we internalize our feelings of inferiority, that we “know our place,” that we essentially become haunted by our own unique Shadows into believing there is something “wrong” with us – and so often it shows up in those realms which ought to be pleasurable, sometimes turning pleasure into a distorted version of itself, e.g., food anxiety, body image anxiety, performance anxiety. It is the appropriation of our deep selves by commercial dominator dynamics – how many diet ads have you seen today? How many ads that try to tell you that you will be happier, more popular, more successful if you purchase their products, implying that you are naturally “less than” without them? *Have you seen any that affirm you, that say you are lovely, whole, good just as*

*you are?* (This is not to imply that you couldn't or wouldn't benefit from counselling or therapy, but does not automatically assume that you are "damaged goods.")

This is a far cry from the erotic, which seeks to entice us into our own deep sensual and sexual enjoyment! Eros invites exploration, it does not dictate, nor does not colonize. Eros calls us to investigate, it does not insult nor damage us (sure, we might skin our knees hiking a mountainside or fall out of bed because we are rambunctious in our lovemaking, but our Souls remain intact!)

Perhaps it is time to take ourselves back to the mythic Garden and to take another bite of the fruit of that Tree of Knowledge so that we can finally develop our discernment about what is right for us as individuals and what is not, even though it may be right for someone else. We will have plenty of time to explore our non-corporeal Beingness; this is our opportunity to explore the realms of the senses.

Across the Wheel from Samhain, this is another time when the veils between the realms are "thin," making this an excellent opportunity to venture into the depths, especially our own.

Wishing you a deeply sensual, lovingly embraced, life-affirming and beautiful Summer season.

***Blessed be!***

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**Here are some engaging suggestions to explore:**

***To read ~***

Aphrodisiac: The Herbal Path to Healthy Sexual Fulfillment & Vital Living (2021) – Kimberley Gallagher

Sacred Pleasure: Sex, Myth and the Politics of the Body - New Paths to Power and Love (1995) - Riane Eisler

***To hear ~***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jehLTgnsB20>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58ZNeCS05II>

***To see ~***

A waterfall

A full eclipse of the sun and/or moon



***To feel ~***

Kisses from a dog  
Water tickling your bare feet at the beach

***To smell ~***

Roses  
The forest

***To taste....***

Anything cooked by Sean O'Connell:

Summer celebrations and foods are often linked to courtship and sensuality. Aphrodisiacs, 'exotic', hard to produce and short-lived ingredients play central themes in the foods of this season. It's the beginning of the planting season, so there are still few crops to harvest. Locally, the first foods tend to be wild early berries such as salmon berries, and other perennials such as asparagus, baby fiddleheads & cattails. It's also the tail end of the nettle season.

In Imbolc, milk and eggs were starting to be produced, during the Beltane season (and Eostre before it), chickens are in full egg-laying mode and milk is being produced with wild abandon, creating an abundance of these food items, and with them an abundance of soft, early cheeses. When one combines these ingredients with the dried grains from the previous autumn harvest, we have all the ingredients for baking.

With ingredients like that, who would not want to make a quiche - or frittata if you are avoiding the grains in the crust?

## **Asparagus and Nettle Quiche**

***Ingredients:***

½ tablespoon of clarified butter (or oil of your choice)  
8 - 12 tender asparagus spears - woody ends removed and cut into 2 cm lengths  
4 cups fresh nettles  
1/8 cup chopped chives  
5 large eggs (no less than 1 cup by volume)  
One cup of milk  
½ cup of hard cheese shredded  
Salt & pepper to season  
9" pie crust (if using)  
½ cup soft goat Chèvre (to put on top)

*Directions:*

If you are making the pie/quiche shell, prepare in advance and chill in the fridge until ready to use.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.

In a large sauté pan, heat the ghee. Cook the cut asparagus for about five minutes (should still have a bit of a crunch to it) and put aside. In the same heated pan, add the nettles and sauté. Add more ghee if needed. Once cooked and wilted, place in a colander and firmly squeeze out all the liquid from the nettles.

In a large bowl, whisk together eggs and milk. Season with salt & pepper.

In the pie shell, place all sautéed asparagus & nettle with the chives and shredded hard cheese. Pour the egg mix into the shell and place into the oven. Bake for 45 minutes(ish) until the egg is set and slight browned. Remove from the oven, let cook for 15 minutes, then spread the goat Chèvre on top of the quiche. Cut and serve.

***Bon appétit!***



**Photo: Sean O'Connell**

**This should have been published in the Beltane issue (that didn't happen), where I'd advertized for erotic imagery. Schuyler responded to the call, with some stellar content, so...We publish it here, along with his contextualizing comments, and a loving, sexy Bee poem. ~ Yvonne**





*Hi there,*

*It's Schuyler here—white belt, I mean white cord!*

*I have a few submissions for the newsletter. First, a photo of Jonathan Dawson (soon to be white cord) taken by me. I mean, I find the image erotic, so I hope others will enjoy it also.*

*Also, a bee + flower photo with a little bit of writing about spring to go with it.*



*What can the bee tell us about work?*

*That penetrating the blossom is an act of desire and pollination is but a by-product of bliss*

*What can the flower tell us about the bee?*

*That she tickles as she works and as she tickles nectar flows*

*What does springtime tell us about life?*

*That life begets more life and the begetting is pleasure*

*Happy Lunar Beltane,  
Schuyler*



## *Poems by Jessica North O'Connell*

### **Dakini**

Come, let us love  
 pure and sweet  
 long and deep into the Night

Let us love  
 essence spilling forth  
 like rivers  
 rushing in song  
 to meet Life's ocean

Let us love  
 celebrate passion  
 like spring buds  
 bursting forth  
 full-blown  
 into summer

Let us love.

And I  
 dancing upon you  
 lightly, lightly  
 as the raiment of Dreams

You, god and man,  
 frail human  
 and seed of the Divine  
 yielding to unending sky  
 One  
 with the Queen of Inner Space

And let our dance be ever joyous  
 ever fresh  
 Self-renewing  
 Self-aware

And let our Joy  
 be fountain and foundation  
 silken breeze and shooting star  
 Light and delight  
 to all who witness.

## Te amo

You recently told me  
that I love too much

But I ask you  
what is loved  
if not the new spring green  
that pleasure paints your eyes  
or the way profoundest joy  
rests upon your face  
when Nature moves us  
to intercourse  
the tongue silvered  
spreading tenderness  
like jewel dust  
caressing my inner skin

the way rivers  
flow to the banks  
of our eyes  
spilling over  
spilling over

the heart moved  
to courage  
and to grandeur

the flesh engaging  
in a dance  
of nurture

what is loved  
if not that which is imparted  
one to another  
expressed  
through interchange

secrets and mysteries  
yet unknown  
inner truths  
Death

what is it

which drives me to wisdom  
trims and surprises me  
promising everything

how can you tell me  
that I love too much  
when I have but just begun  
and as yet  
cannot love enough?

© Jessica North

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**Sir Frederic Leighton, 1895, 'Flaming June,' oils on canvas**

## Can I Rest with Uncertainty?

By Julia Stolk



The Wise Fool, Tarot Card, Kevan Lane Miller

**A million ways to say no.**

**A million ways for the mind to show me why.**

Uncertainty is just that – the not knowing. And when asked, can I rest with uncertainty, there is an immediate response heard that says no. And a felt sense of tightening in the body that says there is an agreement with the mind. Many of us, if not most of us, have experienced traumas in our childhood. Some traumas too horrific for re-telling, and others, almost too small to believe they could affect the system as they did. But...the body senses/interprets the world of form in such a different way than the mind. It holds the story, it keeps it all locked away, in both safe keeping and protection for us and from us. So, when we arrive to this continued experience of Covid, a time where no one can tell us when a sense of true normalcy will return, there lies uncertainty.



This uncertainty may be for some a long overdue period of rest, an opportunity to slow down. Others, an intense period of anxiety, fear, loss. And there may be a time, even for those in a state of rest and recovery, where anxiety, fear and loss enter. As days have turned into weeks, and weeks turned into months, I notice an ever growing stirring in the body - anxiety. I hear myself say, I can do this for my fellow beings. I can maintain physical distance. I can continue to mask. And what I notice is that there is a “no” creeping in. It’s that tightening in the belly again. A tightening and lifting of the shoulders. A tightening in the brow. There is a feeling of becoming braced – braced for the unknown. And that is the response of our body to trauma. The noticing of what is going on in our external world, whether in our immediate or external reality. Our bodies and mind are constantly determining the level of safety in our environment, all mostly unconscious, and all mostly informed by our past. This past is both our own, and that of our family (epigenetics) and our ancestors, but that is for another day.

Here. In this moment, is the offering of an invitation, to arrive to this present moment in our lives. How you arrive to the present moment does not have to be prescriptive, we each have our own way. Some of us use breath, some use mantra, others find stillness in movement. And whatever your dropping in is, or arrival to this present moment looks, this is the place from which to notice. What are your thoughts that come in response to, “can you rest in uncertainty”, noticing without judging, labeling, or interpreting. And if a thought or many thoughts pull you away, can you invite yourself back to this moment? Again, without judgement. All is allowed here. What if the mind was simply doing what it is asked, and curiosity simply just wanted to follow? For me, there is a softening that comes with that, an allowance to come back to present. Of course, there are times when I get completely lost in the landscape of questions, sometimes for hours before I realize I have moved away from present.

And now, as you arrive back to present, and you rest in your place of stillness, can you also include the body? Notice what it is telling you. Like the noticing of my tightening belly, shoulders, and brow. Again, inviting the possibility to sit without judging, labeling or interpreting, but simply allowing. This place of allowance takes practice. It can be incredibly uncomfortable, it can be incredibly provoking, it can be incredibly informing. I leave you with this invitation.

Find a quiet place.

Whether it’s on your cushion, in your car, on your bed, at your kitchen sink.

If only for a few minutes, invite your attention to be with you exactly where you are.

And notice.

Your thoughts.

Your body’s talk.

Notice if you can allow the thoughts, images and feeling sensations to just be here,

In this exact moment.

And there is no getting it right.

No getting it perfect.

Simply just an exploration to notice what is here in this space,  
Speaking to us when we listen

Sending you all so much love and light. Holding you in the place of the heart. As we navigate in this time of uncertainty, may you be reminded you matter, you belong.

*Julia lives in Victoria, and is a proud mother of two beautiful souls. When not learning or holding space in her own healing practice offering Craniosacral Therapy, Somatic Inquiry, Sacred Healing Journeys and Women's Circles, she loves finding ways to connect with nature, family and friends. You can find Julia at [www.juliastolk.com](http://www.juliastolk.com). See her schedule of Women's Moon Circles for 2021 in 'Announcements.'*



Strength, Tarot Card, by Kevan Lane Miller

# STRENGTH

Alison Skelton



**This card is ruled by Leo, the fixed fire sign, whose energy is bold, brave, generous and playful.**

**The lion in this Tarot Trump is red, the colour of passion, vitality, and action.**

Lions are usually connected with the masculine solar deities but, in Goddess worship, they are associated with Hathor as the sphinx and Cybele, whose chariot was drawn by lions.

The Woman is dressed in white, she is the pure "virgin" goddess, in the old sense of the term. She represents our authentic Spiritual Self, independent of patriarchal domination, a free agent, expressing love and power as she chooses.

The two figures depict our relationship to our own power, both spiritual and physical, and the many advantages, and pitfalls that this dynamic can present. Pure spirit and pure passion, when equally strong, can be expressed in many ways, some more workable than others.

The Lady is often seen opening or closing the jaws of the lion, or caressing it, and some times she looks onto it's mouth. The lion is like her Power Animal, an elemental ally which must be respected, honoured and embraced, lest it turn on her or abandon her. Neither has more power than the other, and their relationship must be consciously cultivated in order for both to thrive.

How do we choose to wield our power? Will we apologize for it, close its mouth? Open up and roar it out, or bite someone's head off? Use it to persuade, protect, oppress, encourage, protest? Or will we cooperate with it and allow it to be expressed as an integral part of our authentic self?

Our integrity comes into question here; are we honouring our word, and walking our spiritual talk? Are our actions aligned with our intentions? Are we more interested in holding power than in cooperating with other powerful beings? Do we play nicely within our relationships, or do we try to gain the upper hand? Is it more important to be right than to be compassionate?

And if knowledge is power, how we will use it? With spiritual consciousness, or from a place of ego? Knowledge can easily be abused, often unconsciously, and our evolving spiritual consciousness can become a ego based tool to exert power over others!

A garland of red roses entwine the two figures in a double loop like the infinity sign that is above them. This "rose wreath" or "rosary" acts as a "hand-fasting" garland, marrying the woman and the lion and showing how they are inextricably intertwined. This indicates the constant and perpetual exchange of energies that this archetype represents. Roses were sacred to the goddess in many cultures and the red rose has become a symbol of spiritual sexual passion, eternal and constant.

The woman engages, and perhaps merges with the beast, in an active cooperation between the purity of spirit and the passion of the soul. Masculine and Feminine energies are working together, creating a potent alchemy also known as the Great Marriage, where equality of power is a cooperative expression of consciousness. Together they express the vitality of physical sexual energy coupled with spiritual consciousness.

The vows that we make to ourselves and that we exchange with the ones we love must not be based on domination and control of the other, or on abdicating our sovereignty. All relationships are like contracts, they must be negotiated with consciousness. All parties must have power for a marriage of this nature to thrive.

The Strength card puts it all into practice in an exuberant physical expression of lust for life, for one another, and for the experience of cooperative power and knowledge. The great marriage is now consummated and expressed in very active terms in full agreement and acceptance of diversity. We abandon our ego's desire for merely sensual experience, taking joy in our transformational strength and energy.

Strength is where life and love can get wild, messy, complicated and out of control. If either the Lion or the Lady become too strong, or too weak and neglected, we will suffer, and can start playing our relationship power games to try to compensate. Sexual energy is very powerful, but ultimately it is ours to express as we so chose, and no one can force us to feel passion. The Lady has the choice to open or close her lion's jaws, either is fine if it is her will.



Strength represents qualities that take a lot of energy to maintain. Courage, will power, passion, cooperation, generosity, integrity, honour, trust, and respect; these are the ingredients needed to maintain our primary relationships, both internal and external.



**Photo by Alison Skelton**

## *The Thirteenth Sign of the Zodiac* *By Rosechild*



<https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/568931365398926695/>

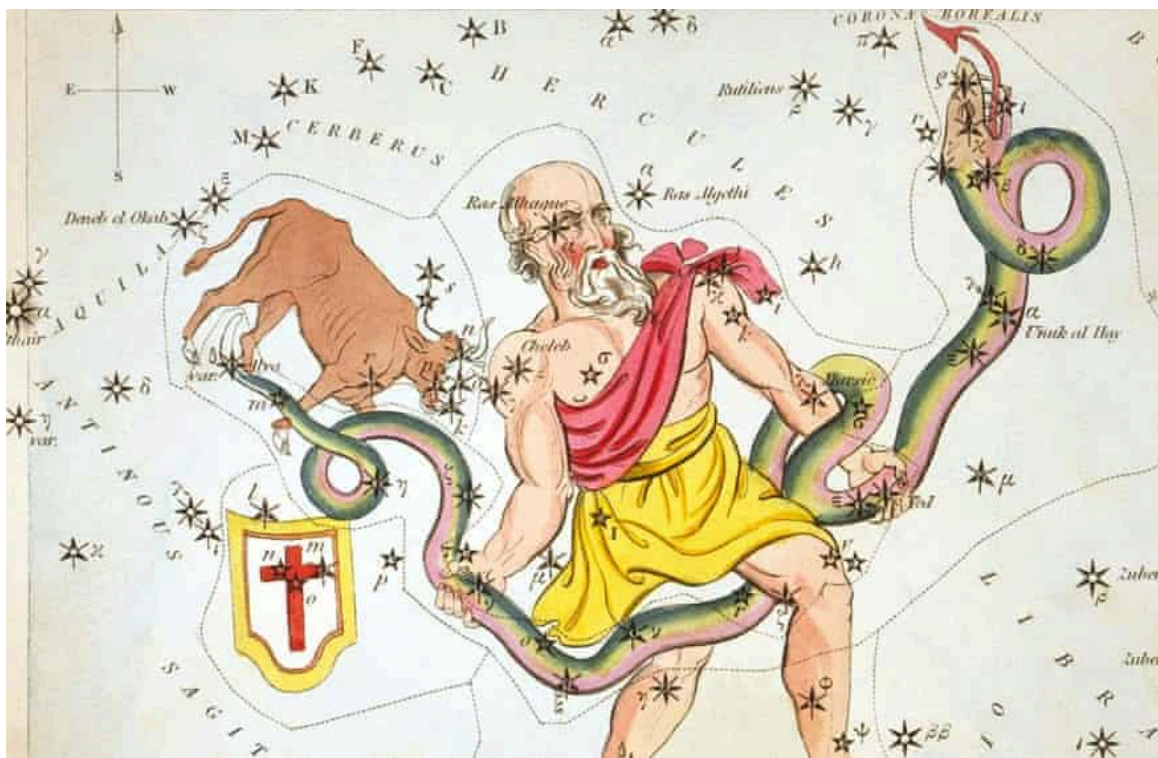
An interesting tidbit came up on the CBC Kelowna morning show, Mindbreakers, related to this weeks' theme of horoscopes. I've always been interested in astrology, but never delved into it too-too deeply. Other than from the first weekly horoscopes in the local Salmon Arm Observer in the late '60's, to forking out unknown amounts of cash on personalized readings. (Notably from renowned and incredibly insightful Astrologers like Jessica North-O'Connell and Renn Butler, to many less talented practitioners...)



Suffice to say it has always been a part of my life's periphery. So when the question of the day was, "What is the long hidden constellation that used to be a part of the astrology cabal, called the Serpent Bearer", I did what many people do these days, I "Googled" it.

I was fascinated to discover Ophiuchus, (pronounced off-ee-YOO-cuss).

Apparently, the first recorded mention of Ophiuchus was around 300BC, and there is evidence the Babylonians recognised it much earlier. But the zodiac signs – the constellations the sun passes through across the year – were restricted to 12 by emperors, popes and astrologers for convenience. And also an attempt to quash the feminine influence in world.



"So, if you were born at the start of December you are actually an Ophiuchus instead of a Sagittarius? That's the idea.

So instead of "adventurous, optimistic and good with horses", you're what? A snake-handling oddball? It affects everyone: the presence of Ophiuchus shunts all the other signs along. People who thought their star sign was Gemini are now Taurus.

That's impossible. I don't have any Taurus traits. Are you sure? Tauruses are kind and patient but also stubborn and uncompromising. Oh God! It's all true! Why has Nasa1 done this? It hasn't, really. The blog post – written in 2016 – has been largely, perhaps willfully, misunderstood. Nasa's main point was that dates assigned to

constellations are completely off any way because constellations are different sizes – Ophiuchus is the biggest – and there are as many as 21.

Does this mean we need to completely rethink the entire zodiac system in order to produce accurate horoscopes? No, we don't need to do that.

*Why not? Because astrology is nonsense.*

*What do you mean? It doesn't work, and it never has. The stars do not affect your personality, your romantic prospects, your financial situation or your future.*

*But astrology is ancient.*

*Ancient rubbish. I'm sorry.*

*But the sun ... The sun does not actually travel through constellations. It just looks like that, because the Earth is orbiting around the sun.*

*But Nasa ... Nasa knows all this, and deep down, so do you.*

If I'm not a Gemini, then I don't know what I am. You can still be a Gemini for the purposes of making small talk with people at drinks parties. That's something, I suppose. (Not really, but whatever.)

*Do say: "Avoid handling serpents today, and tomorrow, and the next day."*

*Don't say: "This could be the moment you realise that your whole life has been meaningless up to this point."*

The Guardian article and picture published Thu 16 Jul 2020 (Never mind the bull or the fish ... meet the serpent-bearer | Space | The Guardian)

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Another great interweb page has more about the caduceus connection to Ophiuchus. My friend Dana pointed me to it and had this to say about it:

"I found one more interesting article [snip] thought this was interesting — the Greeks may have identified him as Asclepius — another connection to the caduceus. And this story has a Greek explanation for why crows turned from white to black. I have been finding that idea, that crows were originally white and then turned black in several sources - Norse, Coastal BC indigenous legends, and now the Greeks."



From the web page:

The Greeks identified him as Asclepius, the god of medicine (Aesculapius in Latin). Asclepius was the son of Apollo and Coronis (although some say that his mother was Arsinoë). The story goes that Coronis two-timed Apollo by sleeping with a mortal, Ischys, while she was pregnant by Apollo. A crow brought Apollo the unwelcome news, but instead of the expected reward the crow, which until then had been snow-white, was cursed by Apollo and turned black.

In a rage of jealousy, Apollo shot Coronis with an arrow. Rather than see his child perish with her, Apollo snatched the unborn baby from its mother's womb as the flames of the funeral pyre engulfed her, and took the infant to Chiron, the wise centaur (represented in the sky by the constellation Centaurus).

Chiron raised Asclepius as his own son, teaching him the arts of healing and hunting. Asclepius became so skilled in medicine that not only could he save lives, he could also raise the dead. (<http://www.ianridpath.com/startales/ophiuchus.html>)

They are interesting articles. And, as many of us do, I dived down the rabbit hole and found yet MORE! A GODDESS representation of the Serpent Bearer. Can you guess who? YES!! Medusa. The epitome of a serpent bearer.



**Medusa" By Hiroko Sakai**

### **All About Ophiuchus (sidereal.com)**

This article talked about when women dominated society, held any position, went where they wanted to, yet they weren't domineering. There was a balance and harmony in the 'verse<sup>2</sup>.

I've always been intrigued by the caduceus as a representation of a healer. The snake is also the opposite sign of my Chinese horoscope sign, the monkey. I strive for balance in my life, accordingly, I wear snakes to remind me of that. I have always loved snakes. – They keep rodents and insect populations down. I've never understood the innate fear some humans have of them. Mind you, I've never been bitten by one in this lifetime either... It's this same reasoning that allows me to love spiders – they eat bugs! And I HAVE been bitten by spiders, plenty of times.

The iconography of snakes and spiders in my chosen spiritual path seems a no-brainer to me. When I find positive reinforcement of these things, I get very excited. The early Greeks and Romans changed the then female archetypical representations of the zodiac to mostly male representations and no longer based their astrology on the moon as Chinese, Hebrew and Islamic paths still do. Women have maintained their connection with the moon, despite patriarchal influences. Many women are seeking to reclaim the mysteries of their relationship with the moon. All of this whispers to me that women's wisdom is resurfacing, coming out of the shadowed corners and standing up to be seen and heard again. I believe our shamanistic roots and self-esteem are tied together. I love the expression: "Be the woman who fixes another woman's crown, without telling the world that it was crooked."

What's the point of becoming "enlightened" if we aren't helping others to do the same? "A rising tide, floats all boats". As we continue to seek enlightenment for ourselves, let us share our knowledge and insights along our path.

**Blessed Be Sisters and Brothers.  
Great Gratitude.**

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### **Footnotes**

1 NASA National Aeronautics and Space Administration, U.S.A. - Government agency  
<https://www.nasa.gov/>

2 'verse'-- Fans of the short-lived but long-adored TV Series *Firefly* will know this means "Universe." [Editor's Note: Love *Firefly* beyond reason!]

# Themes of Sovereignty Seen at Litha

Yvonne Owens



**In the Celtic lunar calendar of trees**, the summer months include the moons of Oak, Holly and Hazel, and the festivals of Beltaine, Summer Solstice, and Lammas. The Sacred Hallows this season illuminates are the Wand and the Pentacle, the magical instruments of elemental Fire and Light married to Earth and Fertility in harmony. The name Lammas, celebrated on August 1<sup>st</sup>, was Christianized from the Festival for the Irish light god, Lugh and Welsh Llew Llaw Gyffes and means 'Loaf Mass.' Lugh or Llew Llaw Gyffes is a solar light deity also known as 'The Long-armed Spearman,' or 'Spearman with the Long Shaft,' which suggests the lengthening days leading up to the Summer Solstice. He is associated with Holly, both as the Sacred Solstice Tree, and also the Celtic lunar tree month of Holly and as the sacred King. As the 'Holly King,' he also comes into play at Lammas, or the Festival for Lugh, when Ivy Girl 'captures' him after a merry chase by suggestively tossing her holly wreath over the 'head' of his Holly staff. Litha, observed on and as the Summer Solstice, is commemorated by huge bonfires, ritualized observances of the Sacred Marriage of the Goddess as the Earth or Land with the God as the Fire and Light, and by handfasting ceremonies among Witches and Pagans.

The 8<sup>th</sup>-century monk, Bede, wrote in his 'The Reckoning of Time,' about the summer months, giving "Litha" as the seasonal name for both June and July in the Roman Julian calendar, a term adopted by modern Pagans of every stripe, and Druids observe Midsummer's Day as ancient Welsh 'Alban Heruin.' The lunar Celtic

moon ('month') of Hazel spans the Summer Solstice. The Hazel tree confers "female wisdom" and, like Rowan and Willow, is considered a quintessential Witch tree ("Witch Hazel"). The Irish Celtic Sea God Manannán mac Lir (Welsh, Manawydan fab Llyr, Lord of the 'People of the Goddess, Dana) gave Lugh his initiatory magical armor and is also associated with Hazel; the wisdom-conferring well fed by nine magical Hazel trees stood in his fairy hall. Manannán also possessed a Cauldron of Regeneration and a Shaman's "Crane Bag," which contained all the esoteric wisdom of the Druid, including poetry, chants, incantations, divination, symbolism, history and the lore and secret significance of all things. That is knowledge was considered "women's magic" from the earliest times is evident in the legend that the Crane Bag was said to be made from the skin of a woman; Woman contained the inspired wisdom of evolution and rebirth, like the Hazel nuts in the legends, as magical, divine women were thought to be capable of shape-shifting into Crane form.



**Every woman carries within her the genetic code** that marked the evolution of the first human woman. The "Mitochondrial Eve" theory refers to this phenomenon, whereby each woman carries the DNA or genetic blueprint of the first human female in the mitochondrial lining of every cell. As the Divine Ancestress, the Original Woman is the human Clan Mother, and the actual stuff of her revolutionary design passes, intact, through the female line. This may be why, in many cultures past and present, sovereignty and "royal blood" was originally traced through the mother, and why "kingship" was conferred through marriage to a royal woman, mythologized as Guinevere, Blodeuwedd, Epona, Elaine, Isis, and others. The complete record of evolutionary changes that render us "human" are passed on only



through the female line. A “sacred marriage” between the candidate for kingship and the Goddess was a traditional means of elevating the newly crowned king to his throne. The Mother Goddess archetype contains the concepts of genetic memory, wisdom, maternal protection and resurrection.

An understanding of this ancient human lineage from the Original Mother underscored the most ancient concepts of the Goddess held by our ancestors. Many traditions practice ancestor worship, honoring those who have gone before and who have left us their legacy. Linking to ancestral wisdom and informing it with our current knowledge will enable us to proceed more wisely into our collective future.



**Hazel month spans the Summer Solstice** and the event of the sun entering the sign of Cancer. The Hazel Rune is Kaunaz, meaning hearth fire, forge, creativity, passion, craft and instinct, but also blemish. Gwion was scarred by Cerridwen’s scalding potion conferring wisdom, but was thereby transformed into the legendary Bard, Taliesin. The Gaelic name for Hazel is Coll, and its letter is C. Hazel nuts were once thought to contain enlightenment, visions, and poetic inspiration. The Solstice also falls under the influence of Cancer, the watery denizen of deep emotions and sensitive perception. Nut trees of all types are characteristic of this Solstice, and of the hard-shelled richness of its Cancerian quality. The Apple tree shares this Sabbat, called “Quert” (“koo airt”) in the Celtic lunar tree calendar, and fruit trees of all kinds are appropriate to remember here. This is a time when deeply submerged wisdom may emerge into conscious awareness. The encoded, genetic wisdom of generations of female ancestors may come forward to inspire the actions of the

present, forth this is the time of Mother-Wisdom. The Isis-like ability to intuitively know what is right in certain situations, like the High Priestess card of the Tarot, may inform your choices, and if you choose to verbalize your choices your words will be well chosen and judicious. You may find that you have the capacity to inspire others and they you. Flow of energy is the character of this month, and an appreciation for the fertile and renewing properties of water.



Christopher Williams, Blodeuwedd (1930)

Blodeuwedd (Welsh pronunciation: blō'-de-weth) is from Middle Welsh for "Flower-Faced." She is the supernatural wife of Lleu Llaw Gyffes, the solar hawk god, in Welsh mythology.

She was made from Nine Sacred Flowers, including Broom, Meadowsweet, and Oak by the magicians Math and Gwydion. She is a central figure in Math fab Mathonwy, the last of the Four Branches of the Mabinogion. Guinevere is a version of the Flower Maiden, whom Arthur married in order to ensure his covenant with Albion, an ancient name for England.

Blodeuwedd's animal avatar is Owl, and the honorific, 'Flower Face,' also applies to Owl, owing to the owl face resembling a pansy flower. Owl bestows the ability to see in the dark, to hunt and pinpoint Truth with accuracy, to communicate with The Ancestors, to pierce the shadows of depression or obscurity, to travel in the Otherworld, to journey to all realms of the Tree of Life, and to see beyond the veil. She is the Bride in all Her glory.

**Traditional Summer Solstice motifs** survive within modern national sovereignty feasts, outdoor picnics and fireworks celebrations. In Europe, feasts surrounding St. John's Day preserve many ancient, Summer Solstice motifs, including bathing in sacred wells of various Goddesses and weaving wreaths of the nine sacred flowers to the ornamenting of wells in honor of the Flower Maiden, Blodeuwedd. Outside of Pagan communities' observances of Summer Solstice, people mark these traditional celebratory modes during the early July festivities of Memorial Day picnics. (The province of Quebec celebrates St. Jean-Baptiste Day, June 24th.) Certain archetypal



images, which have to do with the theme of clan regencies, have survived in the observances of Mother's Day, Father's Day, Memorial Day (honoring the ancestors), and, of course, American 4<sup>th</sup> of July. July 4<sup>th</sup> marks America's independence from a king, and the beginning of self-rule, or ultimate national and personal sovereignty. (By contrast, July 1<sup>st</sup>, Dominion, or Canada Day, commemorates the formation of Canada as a dominion, a self-governing territory under another's rule.) The remarkable thing about Independence Day's proximity to the Summer Solstice is that Midsummer was, for time immemorial, the occasion for the Rites of Sovereignty, when the King was invested to the throne and married the Goddess as the land.



**Celebrant at LITHA Celebration, Edinburgh, 2015.**



Photo by Alison Skelton

## **TENDING THE GARDEN OF SPIRIT**

### **Alison Skelton**

We are well on the path of Summer now and Beltaine has come and brought the furthering light as we planted and fertilized our intentions. The spirits of nature are blessing us with birdsong and flowers and the well deserved boost of initiation and ignition we need to plan the coming months. Litha reminds us that whatever seeds



we planted will have taken root and be pushing down into the darkness just as leaf and flower have emerged to reach for the ripening sun.

This is a great time to tend to the garden of the self. An opportunity to weed out that which is not thriving, or is taking up space that is needed for newer growth. Some weeds are invasive, like thought forms that spread unwanted messages throughout the garden, choking out paradise. It's also important to make sure that we are fertilizing that which we wish to grow strong and vigorous, and providing proper support, and access to the optimal ratio of light and shade. The waters of life are essential too: nurturance, creativity, emotional expression and honouring of the cycles and rhythms of growth and emergence. Regular journeying to the sacred sanctuary of the garden in a shamanic state of consciousness helps build a bridge between the psyche and the Spirit world, and is the first step to developing a bond with our spirit guides.

Nature Spirit loves us and wants to express this love in every way possible, yet these are difficult and trying times for us humans, and the supportive messages of spirit can sometimes fall on deaf or distracted ears when we most need to hear them. At times we may feel that we have 'fallen from grace', and we may lose faith in our power to create a new world. We may feel alone, and afraid, or pressured to fix ourselves, or save the world, or we may be tempted to give our power up to external authorities that may then appear to control us.

During challenging times we may be fooled into thinking we have been forsaken, and that the healing energies of Spirit are not available to us, or we may feel unable to embrace the necessary change or choices that will help us. We may resist our own path of power and fall back into painful identification with the past. All it takes to break free of this is to embrace the truth of who we are, united in love and community with all that is. And when I say "All" I mean everything that we are, including the shadow and the light.

I recently had message from Spirit that was so simple yet far reaching and profound: That any one of us, by breaking free of the prevalent belief systems that appear to dictate our lives, and limit our freedom, can open a portal into a whole new realm of possibility. When we break away, even for a short while, from the illusion of separation, we create a new field of opportunity, not only for ourselves but for anyone and everyone in our sphere of influence.

We don't have to convince anyone or explain how it works, we can just BE it and allow that those who are ready to glimpse this truth can and will find a way to BE this too. There will be no need for explanation, rationality, argument, conflict, comparison, judgement, or institutionalized spirituality. And even though the societal environment we live in will tend to re create the illusion over and over again, each time we break the spell the construct will be weaker. And perhaps this is enough to eventually collapse these patterns that seem to bind us so thoroughly.

This is a time of resurrection, rejuvenation and preparation for a new way of being in the world. A surge of growth is upon us, and this can be trying and challenging, but also hugely rewarding. As we learn to embrace our spiritual path and intentionally tend and nourish the garden of our being, we will encourage the most fruitful harvest of all: A future created from love and unity.



**Photo by Angela Bone**

## **NATURE AS A HEALING SPIRIT**

Nature is imbued with healing spirit, every plant and stone and creature has a specific spiritual presence, and anything derived from nature embodies an aspect of that spirit. In the Shamanic view, which includes Witchcraft, we consider all things to have spiritual energy, vibration and even personality.

We may speak to the waves and commune with the trees, we work with crystals and ask the power of fire to transform or energize our intentions. Not only do we heal with herbs and flowers, we recognize the spirit in many substances as having power to heal, through essences and homeopathic preparations as well as through their symbolic associations.

Our relationship to nature can be one of the most healing relationships available to us. Nature as a whole connects us with the elements and with the sense of interconnectedness of all that is. It allows us to transcend the illusion of separateness. We have some of our most profound moments of intense presence and peace when we are faced with the grandeur of the natural world.

We humans often forget we are part of nature, our language suggests a separateness and our literature often presents themes of man versus nature. What we may fail to

realize is that when we are in any kind of conflict with nature we are in conflict with ourselves.

Spirit is an expression of All That Is, the great Goddess, God or the limitless un-manifested, whatever we wish to call it - it's all about connectedness and unity. We are part of nature and we are spiritual beings and to heal one heals all.

Spirit wants nothing more than for us to recognize this interconnectedness and to embrace and become fully conscious of our complete and unified spiritual truth. When we cooperate with nature and with spirit for our healing there is an opportunity for miraculous results on all levels of being.

We can heal ourselves through our interface with nature and we can heal the planet by healing ourselves, and once we become fully conscious of our true nature we will be all the more inclined to want to do whatever we can to protect and nurture the natural world as it will be experienced directly as part of us, as we are part of it; Sacred, magnificent and filled with Spirit.

Spirit is what connects everything together. To be healed is to be whole, and when whole and complete, and unencumbered by inappropriate energies, we will simply heal ourselves naturally. This can be achieved through our connection to Spirit.

## **WEEDS IN THE SOUL GARDEN**

The garden is planted and the sun is warming the ground. Plants are reaching up into the light and beginning to express themselves in tender leaf and delicate bloom, in ecstatic fruit and developing bulb. Weeds may threaten my garden; big thick thistles, broad leaved dandelions, and unwanted crabgrasses creeping amongst the strawberries. Bindweed and morning glory abounds along the back fence.

If my garden is an expression of my Self, then even the weeds are welcome and have a lesson for me, and a healing. Does the thistle intend to cause me pain, or is it only when I try to grasp it harshly that it stings? Maybe this prickly friend is protecting it's territory until it has a chance to bloom and show me something beyond my assumptions about it's value. The shadow self looks threatening, but if allowed to emerge fully into the light, it can only add to the beauty of my world.

Perhaps I judge these unwelcome and messy 'weeds' too harshly just as I judge my own messy thoughts and feelings, which opportunistically take up any available space not already 'planted' intentionally. The dandelion is nourishing and healing, as is the plantain that persists between my paving stones. They are a necessary and valuable part of my teaching path, drawing attention to where the healing is needed... in the in between places that I often forget to notice.



Bindweed teaches me that no matter how often I pluck away at the surface, the roots of my invasive stories about myself will find a way to pop up again until transformed. Often the roots of the thoughts are not even mine, sneaking under the fence, they are part of the cultural neighbourhood. And crabgrass, likewise, reminds me of how easily these old patterns of thought can take over if allowed to run wild.



**Photo by Alison Skelton**



We have a psycho-spiritual contract with nature that means it will always provide whatever we need for our evolution and healing. Our Soul-Self is like a garden, and whatever 'weeds' are flourishing in our hearts and minds are there for a reason, to help show us the path of healing through self-knowledge. We can learn to love them, and do the work to transform them. We can allow them to take over, or we can recognize their power to overwhelm and pluck them as they appear.

No one can tell you how to tend your Soul garden, nor can another define what is a weed for you. Ultimately it is up to you to cultivate what you will, and to focus on the aspects that bring you joy and nourishment. Even the act of defining and differentiating flower from weed, healing herb from noxious intruder, is the soul gardener's choice.

Invasive patterns planted in the past can be collapsed, Soul aspects retrieved and re-planted, Intrusive thought forms extracted, and the ground of our being nourished and empowered by rituals and ceremonies that are like the sunshine and rain that bring growth and ripeness. Juicy, delicious fruitful life!

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## 13<sup>th</sup> House Announcements



**Nikiah Seeds, Black Cord  
Elder Priestess, New York**

<http://www.nikiahseeds.com/mystery-school1.html>

**Nikiah is an author, animist, spirit walker and minister, drum maker, ceremonialist and sacred beekeeper.**

Nikiah and her husband now live in New York, where she continues to teach, initiate and shamanize: "Living here has been a mixture of many things, the reality of what makes up the USA and folks that grew up here, and just how different we are as Canadians. I could write an entire book on that, but for now I will say that folks so far have been kind and we have managed to keep ourselves sufficiently busy every day so that we do not miss home too much. Mostly it's just missing our daily interactions with the kids and family dinners, but I take heart that we are among millions not being able to see family right now."

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**'There is a light that never goes out'**

**Self-portrait (Detail)  
by Kristin Sweetland**

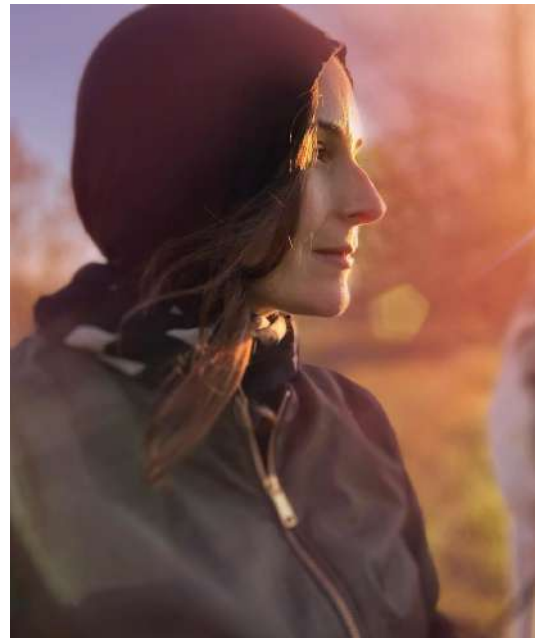




Photo by Jen Squires

**Kristin Sweetland's newest music collection, *Trilogies, Part 2*, is available to download and stream now.**

**Download** on iTunes:

<https://music.apple.com/.../trilogies-pt-2-single/1506046617>

**Stream** on Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/album/4uYjH5H09rgIcBqKJGeyho>

**Order physical CD's directly from [www.kristinsweetland.com](http://www.kristinsweetland.com).**



### **Women's Moon Circles 2021**

Join your hosts Angela Rennie from [www.HealingwithRitual.com](http://www.HealingwithRitual.com) and Julia Stolk from [www.JuliaStolk.com](http://www.JuliaStolk.com) to come together to celebrate the feminine under the light of the full moon. Our very first Moon Circle takes place under the Buck Moon, on July 23rd at 6:30pm - 9:00pm at The Sacred Space! Pre-registration is required, as space limited to a capacity of 10 for an intimate evening. The July Moon Circle fee is \$35.00 or \$200 for the final six Full Moons in this calendar year. Please reach out by contacting either Angela or Julia.

**Future Moon Circles will be held on August 22nd, September 20th, October 20th, November 19th, December 18th.**

Julia lives in Victoria, and is a proud mother of two beautiful souls. When not learning or holding space in her own healing practice offering Craniosacral Therapy, Somatic Inquiry, Sacred Healing Journeys and Women's Circles, she loves finding ways to connect with nature, family and friends.

**You can find Julia at [www.juliastolk.com](http://www.juliastolk.com).**



## **Class Update by Angela Bone**

### **Another session of the 13th House Introduction to Witchcraft class has completed!**

This was our second time presenting the class over Zoom! With the support of Evan Rohr, our Tech Master, we are now very adept at presenting our high-quality content in an on-line format.

This allowed students from outside of Victoria to participate, students who couldn't attend each Wednesday to watch the recorded session and the return of Founding Members Jessica North-O'Connell and Daniella Sorentino (both living outside of Victoria) to teach again!

How many of these classes has 13th House provided over the many years?

So many!! All of which have provided so much value, such wonderful and evolving content, and so many fabulous instructors teaching hundreds of curious open-minded students.

I've been registering the class since 2005 with the help of Beth Threlfall taking over for a few years. It's been fun to see the interest continue with some advertising through Triple Spiral and general Internet searches.

Let's congratulate ourselves on our commitment through good times and bad, big classes and small, and now continuing to teach through a pandemic! We look forward to our Fall session of the class.

If you, or anyone you know, is interested in more information for this class: please email me at [angela-bone@shaw.ca](mailto:angela-bone@shaw.ca)

**BLACK CORDS: Please let me know if you would like your name to be put forward to students inquiring into Initiation.**

## **Notification from Phylis at Triple Spiral**

The Triple Spiral classroom will continue to be available to anyone that wants to use it, whether it be for the intro class or any other small group get-togethers or classes.

**Please contact Phylis at [triplespiral@shaw.ca](mailto:triplespiral@shaw.ca) for availability and cost.**

# Real Witches Ride!

**Sunday, August 1**

Time/location TBA



**Hop on your bike and join members of 13th House and Victoria's witch community for this riding ritual to spread Lammas energy around Victoria!**

"Witches Rides" have been popping up in various cities around North America over the past decade, but few involve actual witches. With that in mind, we decided to reclaim the concept by having a witches bike ride for actual witches.

Strap a broom to your bike and put on whatever real-witch clothes you like as we perform a Lammas day riding ritual through the city!

Keep an eye on the 13th House Facebook page for details about the time, location and route ~ <https://www.facebook.com/13th-House-Mystery-School-350837443869>

**AWEN**



**BOTANICALS**

*Small batch, made by  
the moon with love,  
plant-inspired  
medicine & magic*



ALL ORGANIC VICTORIA, BC

**Awen Botanicals is sold at Spiral Scents and Triple Spiral in Fan Tan Alley.**

Using organic herbs lovingly grown in my garden and ethically, gathered-by-the-moon local plants, I make small batch ritual bath salts, salves and balms, Celtic Goddess soaps, saining wands, magickal black salt, loose herbal incense blends, teas, tinctures, aura sprays & more!

I like to use fresh, whole herbs whenever possible as they contain more of the plant's vital essence. I honour the plants' spirits with reverence and love for their beauty and power and I believe this potentiates the healing goodness of the medicine. I am excited to be co-creating medicine and magic with some new 'plantcestors' this year! Wood Betony, Angelica seeds, Woad, Costmary, Clary Sage and Rhodiola.

**Watch for these small batch, made-by-the-moon with love herbal offerings:**

**AIRMID'S CLOAK HERBAL HEALING SALVE** made with betony, woad, wormwood, lemon balm, sage, rosemary, chamomile, calendula, comfrey leaf, lavender, red rosebuds, & essential oils.

**ECHTRA SPIRIT JOURNEY BALM** anointing balm made with fresh herbs including mugwort, angelica seeds, lavender & wormwood (available mid Summer).

**CRONE MOON BLESSING BALM** (to aid in times of transformation) made with mugwort, sage, wormwood, vervain, lavender, mint, rue, willow, fennel, yew, essential oils of mugwort, sage, mint, and patchouli.

**ARIANRHOD FULL MOON SOAP** scented with mint and mugwort oil, & silver eco-sparkles.

**SOUL SOAK** purifying ritual bath salts made with Himalayan pink salt, Epsom salts, kosher salt, rosemary, mint, birch, white sage, sage, yarrow, lavender, essential oils of clary sage, sage, mint, rosemary, & lavender.

**ANGELICA AURA SPRAY** made with fresh root angelica tincture, clary sage, sage, and rose geranium.

**BLACK SALTS** made with sea salt, kosher salt, fresh rue, rosemary, rosemary oil, angelica leaf & a black lava stone from Sooke.

**SAINING WANDS** made with aromatic herbs such as mugwort, bay, sage, juniper, lavender, rosemary, yarrow, wormwood etc (herbs vary depending on season).

**CAIM CIRCLE OF PROTECTION** loose incense with angelica seeds and leaves, betony, rowan, yarrow, hawthorne flowers, rosemary, bay, cedar, sage, wormwood, & mugwort.

Includes a Caim sticker!

**DRUID'S DREAM** loose incense with vervain, mugwort, yarrow, cedar, angelica, betony, rosemary, wormwood & lavender



**WOOD BETONY TEA** -little bags of dried betony for tea! Tastes like a vanilla black tea.

**MUGWORT & ROSE** – Coastal mugwort mixed with sweet Nootka Roses.

**HERBS** for magic & medicine: mugwort, vervain, wood betony, calendula, wormwood, roseroot, angelica seeds and roots, woad, white sage, sweetgrass, ceremonial tobacco, rue, lemon verbena, catnip, & more!

I also make tinctures to order not sold at the store of motherwort, (made with fresh flowering tops), fresh olive leaf/fresh echinacea root, & a sleep blend (chamomile, passion flower, valerian root, oatstraw, & lemonbalm. If interested in these please email me: [sandybeach5@shaw.ca](mailto:sandybeach5@shaw.ca)

**Works in progress: Woad-dyed altar cloths, scrying bundles, 9 sacred woods fire bundles, candle dressing herbs, Cailleach Bheur incense, Elderberry syrup kits, Stevia tincture.**

Find me on Insta [www.instagram.com/awen\\_botanicals/](https://www.instagram.com/awen_botanicals/)  
and Pinterest <https://www.pinterest.ca/awenbotanicals>

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**Triple Spiral products and services include the above-featured Awen line of botanicals and the opening of their new shop, *Spiral Scents*, in Fan Tan Alley.**

Triple Spiral also sells the well-reviewed book by 13<sup>th</sup> House Co-Founder and Elder, Yvonne Owens (your Web Editor), ***The Journey of the Bard***. Complimentary copies of the book are available to 13<sup>th</sup> House Black Cord Elders who would like to use the book as a guide or map for transmitting the Tree of Life Initiation to initiates embarking upon their year-and-a-day Self-Dedication, upon request.

You can read the Introduction online, here:

[https://www.academia.edu/35340473/Journey\\_of\\_the\\_Bard\\_Introduction](https://www.academia.edu/35340473/Journey_of_the_Bard_Introduction)

### **Review:**

*Adopting the framework of the ancient Celtic worldview, Yvonne Owens weaves the reader into the fabric of the Story, juxtaposing the initiatory process with extensive multi-cultural references. Miles Lowry's artwork and poetry add another magical*

*dimension to the work. In the tradition of path-working, the reader becomes transformed through participation while exploring the archetypal Tree of Life/Tree of Knowledge. The result is the awakening and activation of the profound heart of the Artist who dwells within each one of us awaiting realization. A shift in consciousness is enabled as we travel with (or as) the Bard from the Garden to the Realm Beyond the Stars and back again, arriving with fresh new perspectives on the here-and-now, our perceived everyday lives. The author recommends that the journey through the process be allowed to proceed over the course of a year, in the manner of initiation, so as to allow for the awakening of subtle influences within the reader's inner consciousness, intuition and creative self. During this time, the outer life will synchronously mirror the inner processes.*



Cover

*Yvonne's book on these ancient mysteries presents a cosmological map to the Celtic otherworld of Traditional Celtic Shamanism, hidden and encoded in folk and fairy tales. The Journey of the Bard is a beautiful book, published by Horned Owl Press, illustrated and designed by Miles Lowry, an internationally renowned artist from Victoria, BC. Miles also wrote the poems that face each chapter, as a means to enter into and access the imagery entailed in the timeless, sacred narrative.*

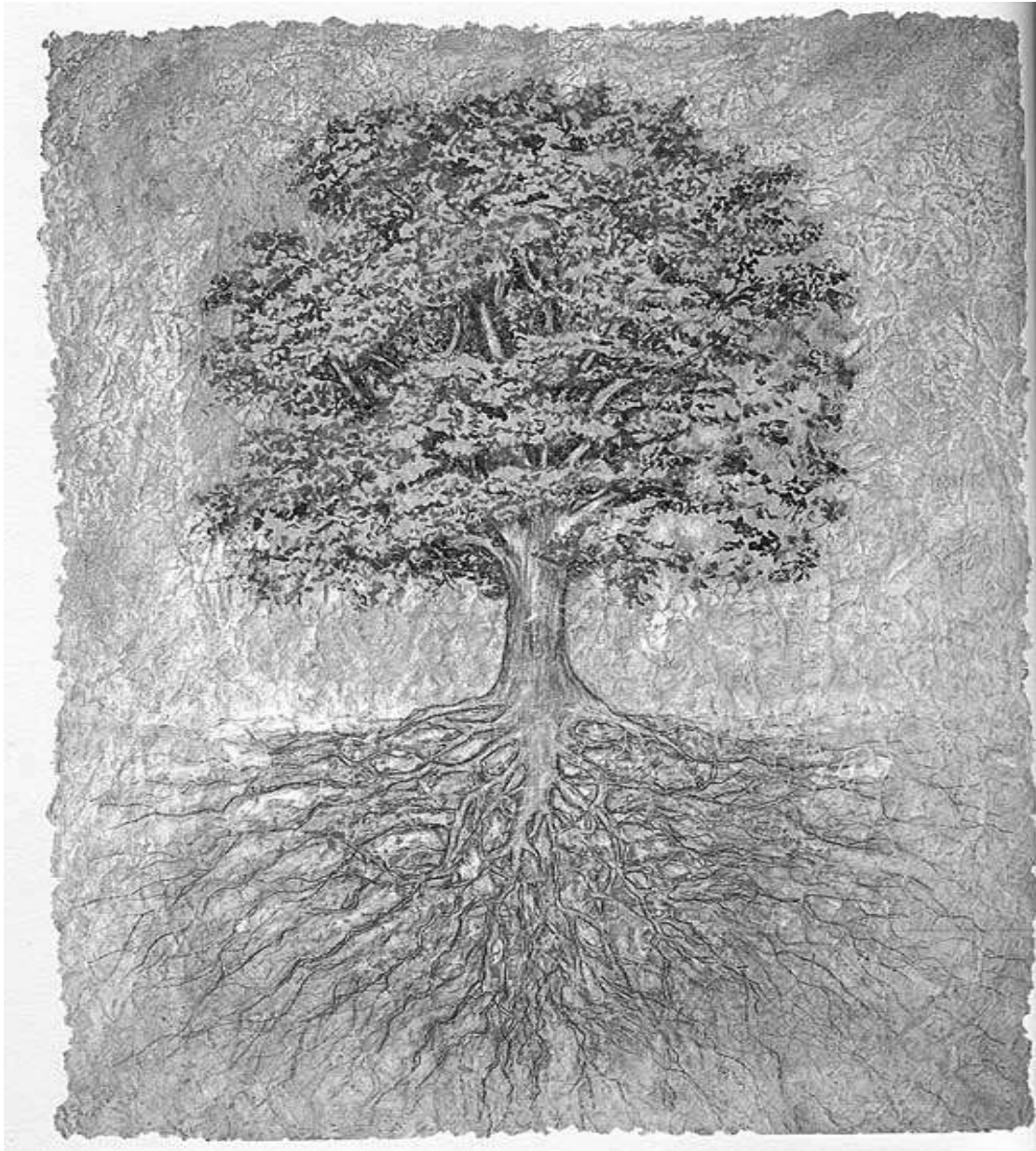


**Miles Lowry, Illustration for *Journey of the Bard*, 'Gwynedd: The Way There,'  
Chapter I, The Garden**

The book tells the tale of a seeker's journey through the realms of the Tree of Life 'Rainbow Body,' activated through the unimpeded movement of Life Force Energy, or 'Chi,' spiraling through the Chakras. It can be seen as an intrinsic, divinely designed, conscious energy dynamic we are all 'hardwired' with. Through the body, we commune with the World Soul, Gaia, She who is so eager to communicate through (and as) our personal and collective awareness. Because of this, our essential communion is with our own Inner Teachers, Power Animals, and Guides.



Self-realization transforms us with love of Self in recognition of ourselves as vital parts of the whole – incarnated reflections of Spirit. From this unity flows the ability to teach, to heal, to minister to suffering on every level and on a grand scale, to choreograph transformative soul evolution in the individual and in the collective, and to manifest profound, radical change within the world and beyond. This is a concept our ancestors knew well, and the Journey of the Bard transmission of teachings begins and ends with ritual acknowledgement of (and gratitude for) this living, evolving world.



Miles Lowry, Illustration for *The Journey of the Bard*



## **Black Cord Elder, Ulrike Spitzer, Presents Ongoing Teaching and Initiation Programs**



### **Yearlong Training in Practical Animism: The Path of the Priestess**

Priestess is not a lofty concept of floating in the upper realms of love and light and serving the Goddess. Priestess is about embodying the Goddess and doing Her work on Earth, serving the people in her community. A priestess is an animist. Animism comes from the Latin word *anima*, which means soul. It means that everything is en-souled: animals and plants, rocks, forces of nature like the wind, clouds, water, etc. Everything is sacred. For an animist, the world is a community of persons, only few of which are human and all of which deserve respect. Animism is about living in Right Relationship, to cultivate more alignment and a natural sense of sacred connection to the world around us. It provides a pathway for awakening, healing, and transforming our lives, allowing us to build inner resources and access sacred guidance that bring us home to our highest self and fosters a soul-powered way of living on Mother Earth that truly benefits all.

Over the course of the traditional "Year and A Day", you will dedicate yourself to the Goddess, diving deep into the mysteries of the Divine Feminine, and learn animistic practices for our modern world. This is a Tree Of Life initiation in the tradition of the 13th House Mystery School - universal, non-hierarchical, and sacred.



Similar to our animism training [The Path of Shaman](#), you will explore another realm of the Tree Of Life each month, assemble 12 power stones or power objects, learn self-healing rituals, and more. At the end of this process you will have attuned yourself to the energy of your Attuning Goddess, developed good working relationships with your guides, and assembled the tools you need to answer the question “Why am I here?”— knowing your unique gifts and how you can bring them into the world.

1. White Cord initiation, the feminine blood mysteries
2. Root Chakra, Earth element: physical & energetic health, boundaries, grounding
3. Sacral Chakra, Water element: feelings & emotions, water rituals, forgiveness practice
4. Solar Plexus Chakra, Fire element: transformation through death
5. Heart Chakra, Air element: mindfulness, compassion
6. Throat Chakra, Space element: reclaiming our stories, finding our voice
7. Third Eye Chakra: intuition & divination
8. Crown Chakra: The Upper World, beings of light, archetypes
9. The Divine Feminine - balancing & healing feminine archetypes within
10. The Divine Masculine - balancing & healing masculine archetypes within
11. Dreams and Dreamwork - dream interpretation, conscious dreaming
12. Personal Power & Red Cord Initiation

Since we are taking a shamanic approach to animism, the ability to do shamanic trance journeys to drumbeat is very helpful. This is taught in our introductory workshop [The Shamanic Journey](#). A free question-and-answer session about the yearlong training programs follows each introductory workshop.

### **Training options include:**

**Group training at a distance** consists of monthly lesson packages in the form of PDF documents and monthly group Zoom calls, plus email support and a sharing group on Facebook with optional outdoor gatherings for group ritual.

**One-on-one mentorship** is offered to those who cannot commit to the time schedule of a group process and is offered at a distance through lesson packages in the form of PDF documents and Zoom or Skype calls plus email support.

The group training starts every year sometime between Imbolc (early February) and Ostara (Spring Equinox) when the Earth Goddess re-awakens from her winter slumber. The one-on-one mentorship can be started any time. For more details and to register, please contact us.

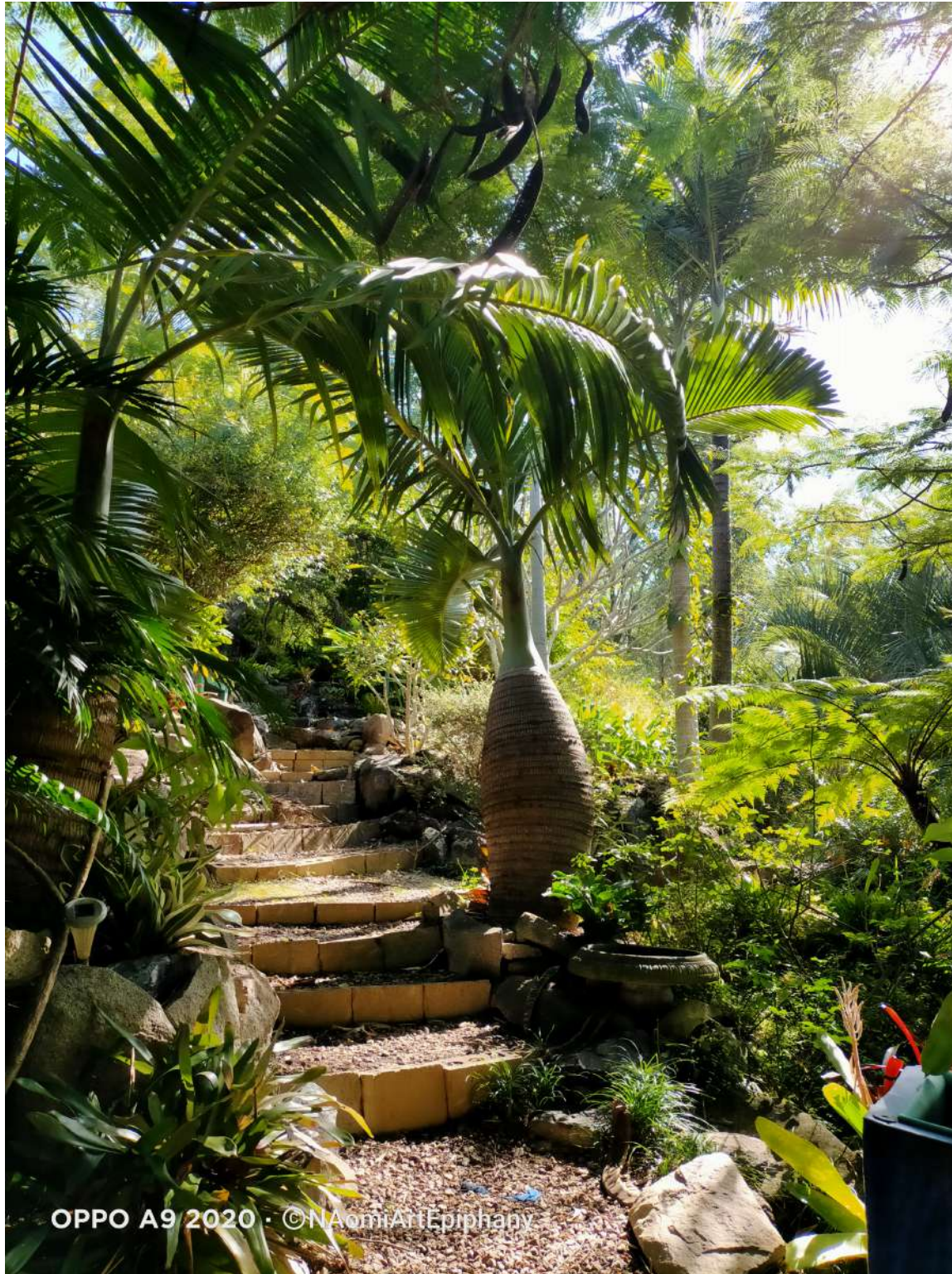
### **Initiation**

At the end of the Year and a Day, you have the option to practice as a solitary Priestess, or to be initiated into the [13th House Mystery Tradition](#). Ulrike was initiated by Nikiah Seeds under the mentorship of [Yvonne Owens](#), Founding Priestess of the 13th House Mystery Tradition in Victoria BC and author of the book *Journey of the Bard: Celtic Initiatory Magic*. To find out more about the Tradition, please visit [13thhousemysteryschool.weebly.com](http://13thhousemysteryschool.weebly.com).



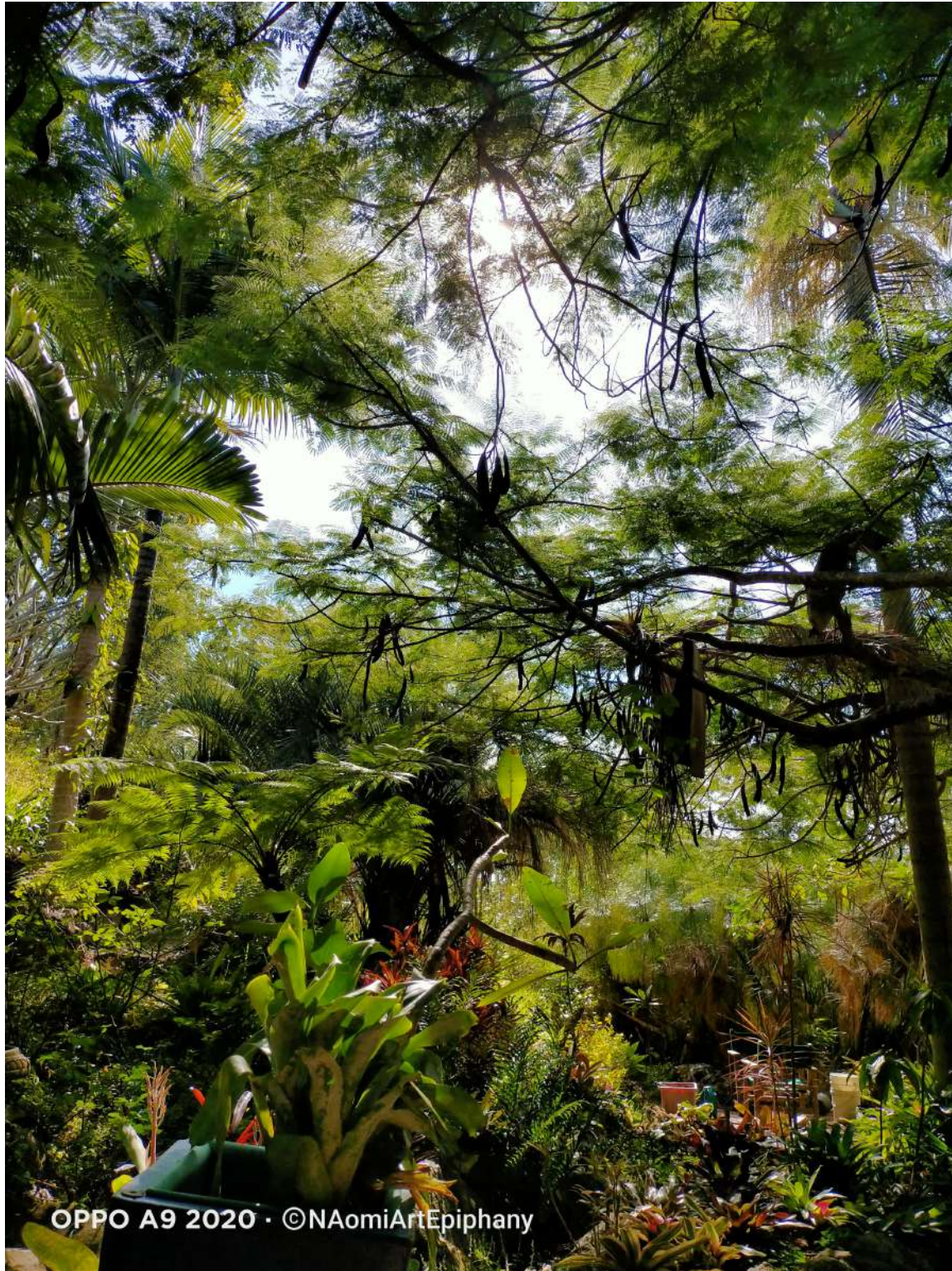


**Black Cord Elder Naomi Kennedy**  
**Teacher and Initiatrix**





Using *The Journey of The Bard* as a handbook and guide, Naomi Kennedy is commencing teaching the Tree of Life Journey as a path toward self-awareness and also as an initiatory process for 13<sup>th</sup> House. She lives in Australia now, working amid her cool but sunny gardens, where it is their winter solstice and longest night.





You can contact Naomi about Zoom classes at [evolvingepiphany@gmail.com](mailto:evolvingepiphany@gmail.com) , on her Facebook art page, <https://www.facebook.com/NaomiKennedyArtEpiphany>, or here: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100009373772703>







## Triple Spiral, Victoria BC

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and Handbags  
Colour Energy products  
(colour bath and oils)  
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## Readings

We are pleased to offer tarot, palmistry, numerology and other readings in a private setting. Readings are available daily between 1:00pm to 5:00pm. For more information or to book a reading call us at **250-380-7212**. Interested in renting our workshop space? We offer competitive rates in a convenient downtown Victoria location.

**13<sup>th</sup> House Mystery School, Tradition of Witchcraft and Shamanism**, was formally initiated at Mabon, 1993. We are located on **Vancouver Island, British Columbia**, headquartered in **Victoria**, on the southernmost tip, surrounded by mountain ranges on the mainland, with the Pacific Ocean and the Georgia Strait in between.



Our general neck of the woods, image courtesy of Tourism Victoria

If you are just discovering us, or are reading this newsletter at a 13<sup>th</sup> House friend's place or something, and want to know more, you can find us on our webpage, at: <http://13thhousemysteryschool.weebly.com>

Or on our Face Book page, at: <https://www.facebook.com/13th-House-Mystery-School-350837443869/?ref=hl>

Or, if you're in Victoria and want to get connected, you can always stop by **Triple Spiral in Fan Tan Alley**, to find out about **13<sup>th</sup> House classes, group trainings by 13<sup>th</sup> House members, or events**. Individual Priestesses and Priests of the Mystery School frequently have their brochures, cards, and publications on the desk or bookshelves of Triple Spiral.





## **Kristin Sweetland, Black Cord Elder Priestess, Toronto ON**

**Kristin is an award-winning musician, writer, dancer, visual/performance artist, and photographer, whose hive of like-minded witches operates out of Toronto.**

**She has released several CDs, including *Root, Heart & Crown* (2002) and *Own Sweet Time* (2007), and is featured on Borealis Records' Canadian instrumental guitar compilation *Six Strings North of the Border Volume II*. Kristin has been written about in many magazines and publications, including *Witch Magazine*, *Entertainment*, and *Cosmic Debris*. More information about Kristin and her magical arts may be found at:  
<http://www.kristinsweetland.com/category/news/>**



**Naomi Kennedy is a Black Cord Elder Priestess of the Journey of the Bard Hive of 13<sup>th</sup> House Mystery School. She is an artist, shaman, and healer, who has studied at the *Victoria College of Art* and volunteered with Indigenous youth at *Surrounded By Cedar Child and Family Services*. In the past five years she has apprenticed with Yvonne Owens in Techniques of Eurasian Shamanism, and with Lanne Rice in the practice of past life redemption and mediumship-channeling. She also has spent time under the wing of Light worker, Jane Brown, and shared knowledge with Gerry Ambers and Sonara Ettles. Contact her at: [Evolvingepiphany@gmail.com](mailto:Evolvingepiphany@gmail.com) for readings, healings and consultations.**

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### **Brigid Barner, Black Cord Elder Priestess, Nelson, BC**

**Brigid** is a Hypnotherapist, Witch and Shaman, teaching and working in Nelson BC. She is one of the founding members of the 8 Hearts Hive of the 13<sup>th</sup> House Mystery School. Brigid combines science and metaphysics in her Hypnotherapy practice to offer clients a full range of emotional, psychological and spiritual healing modalities.

**For more on Brigid's practice in Nelson, her website is:**  
[brigiddbarner.wix.com/north-shore-hypnosis](http://brigiddbarner.wix.com/north-shore-hypnosis)

## **What is Hypnosis?**

There are many myths and misconceptions about hypnosis though, in fact, everyone is in and out of hypnosis many times every day. When you are so engrossed in a project that you lose all track of time - you've been hypnotized. When you arrive at your destination and can't remember passing a familiar landmark - you've been hypnotized. Used in a therapeutic setting, hypnosis is a partnership between the client and the hypnotherapist to create an altered state of consciousness where the client becomes more open to suggestions for their well being. In this highly focused state of concentration a client can replace limiting or negative beliefs with positive suggestions and new ideas to manage a wide variety of issues from pain control to the fear of flying.



## THE 13th HOUSE MYSTERY SCHOOL TRADITION of WITCHCRAFT AND SHAMANISM MAINTAINS THE BELIEFS:

\* That the Divine Principle is manifest within the personal AND the collective Self.

\* That any and all initiatory entrance into this revealed Mystery is undertaken by virtue of Self Realization.

\* That all people carry within them the knowledge of their own perfect and unique Path.

\* And That we of the Thirteenth House Mysteries Tradition, as Initiating Priestesses and Priests, serve merely as facilitators of entry into the Individual, Collective, and ultimately Personal Mystery.

### **Structure of Tradition:**

Circle or Clan structure, interconnecting groups of one to thirteen individuals, ideally.

### **Founders of Tradition:**

Nine Founding Priestesses, all of whom were Initiatrix.

### **Growth, Expansion of Tradition:**

The structure allows for "hiving-off" from founding body into sub-groups.

### **Rank and Hierarchy of Tradition:**

None. There is one initiation into the Mystery, whereupon Priestesses or Priests choose their Avocation. The core structure is directed toward upon Self-Expression through Creative Acts, with a focus upon Art, Performance, Writing, Healing or Teaching. A further Initiation into the personal legacy of genetic or soul lineage is available for those who are called to create, perform, heal or teach under the auspices of the Thirteenth House Mystery Tradition, whereupon the Priestess or Priest is entitled to represent the Tradition, and pass it on through initiation, if they so choose.



**Initiation into Tradition:**

Any and all Initiations into the Personal Mystery of the Thirteenth House Tradition are to be undertaken after an apprenticeship to the Tradition for a period of time lasting A Year and a Day of study, observation and introspection, as well as the Tree of Life initiation.

**Dogma, Doctrine and Credo of Tradition:**

In that this is a Revealed Mystery Tradition, no one dogma, lore or Book of Shadows is obligatory for Initiates, Priestesses, or Priests of the Tradition. Each individual is empowered within the collective to formulate their own mythos, theology, theory, and practice within the Wiccan Rede, including that of Shamanism. The Wiccan Rede states: If it harms no one, do as you will.

**Functions of the Thirteenth House Mystery Tradition:**

- To provide a matrix with leadership for Self Realization for individuals within the collective.
- To provide public classes, to conduct rituals, and facilitate Initiation into the Mystery of the Tradition, when appropriate.
- To provide private, personal teaching and guidance when Initiation into the Tradition is appropriate, within the context of Wicca and Shamanism.



Merry Meet and Merry Part, And Merry Meet Again!



Alison Skelton, 'Wheel of the Year,' original print.

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