

A special feature from the archives of ReclaimingQuarterly.org

from RQ #102

Spiral Dance Feature

Welcome to Reclaiming Quarterly #102. This is the Spiral Dance feature article. You can download other sections or the full issue at our website.

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Our online issues are set up for easy printing at your local anarchist cooperative copy shop (or Kinkos, whichever is closer). Many shops will download the file as well — just take this sheet and show them the website info. Be sure to tell them “black and white printing” to keep the cost down.

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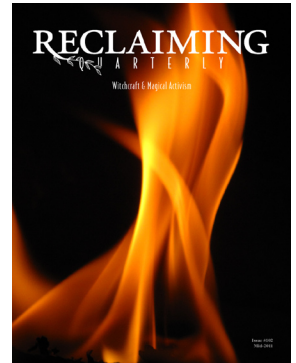
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Latest Issue Online!

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Each issue of RQ brings you the latest in activism, spiritual practices, Reclaiming news, interfaith pagan humor, and much more!

Visit www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org



Reclaiming Music CDs

Chants & Music available online



Reclaiming has released four CDs of Earth-based chants and music. All four are available on our website.

Many Reclaiming musicians and teachers have also released CDs. *Witches Brew* is a good introduction to Reclaiming's musicians.

Visit www.reclaimingquarterly.org/music, or contact quarterly@reclaiming.org



Athena

THE SPIRAL DANCE: THE BEGINNING

by *Gede Parma*

And so we enter the holy space...that place trembling with the anticipation of Other...that place we of the Wise know so well. Descending by aid of Graces, we are made blessed again – renewed – with each droplet of water infused into our breathing skin. I bow to the sovereignty of that touch, of that embrace by invisible hands that take on silver hues as I walk deeper into that place between.

I bow to each Altar...I bow to the youth, who in their hour of need fell, but will be reborn to Love...I bow to the wounded Yemaya, the Great Black Mother whose blackening by oil has desecrated the light that shines forth from her brilliant sheen evoked forth by the kiss of the Lady Moon...I bow to the other nations – to those of the fur, the feather, the scale and the fin – I

pray for their salvation...And I bow to the Directions – the South and the Fire and the Phoenix ushering forth impassioned pleas for *life*, the West and the Water and the

healing rivers that run deep, the North and Earth and the harvest we all gather in. I come last to East and Air, where the Eagle crests the dawning sun.



I sit, not to wait, but to breathe and live in the space; to become acquainted with the holy ground that we shall chant, sing, love, and dance upon. I watch as a sacred circle is traced by the death-walkers as they read the names of our Beloved Dead, those that have passed over the Sunless Sea and alighted upon the Holy Isle of Apples...I hear their sacred litany and can only chant back – What is remembered lives.

Music...a symphony is struck... suddenly a cacophany of child-like shrieks...I listen and I heed the intent. We banish. Widdershins they streak in chaos and the besom becomes the focus for a communal spell of “be gone all that is profane.” Lest we paint the dangerous

Top: Kesar Pavilion in San Francisco's Haight Ashbury neighborhood — sacred temple for sports, concerts, and spiral dances. Lower: Volunteers circle before the ritual begins. All photos © 2010 Michael Rauner — www.michaelrauner.com

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dichotomy, it must be remembered that what is profane is the thought that profanity is possible. We let go of this human folly and we surrender to the Abyss...which is filled with the Circle!

By the Earth that is Her Body and the Grove that is His Home,

By the Air that is Her Breath and the Wind that is His Song,

By the Fire of Her Bright Spirit and the Heat that is His Passion,

By the Waters of Her Living Womb and the Dew of His Tears,

The Circle is cast.

I relax, and then the chorus begins... heavenly, and yet filled with an intensity unmatched by the calamities of mortality. I yearn to join them – the dancers, as they weave tales of the essences of Life, of the Elements coming together to make the Hidden Quality we long for, yet know intimately is ours.



I watch as yellow becomes red becomes blue becomes a forest of nymphs...I rejoice as the Feathered Twins make love held by our silent reverence, as the Goddess is honoured in Her faces as Transgendered, Maiden, Mother, Crone and Activist! I weep as I watch children of manifold families and clans hold heralds of justice, sovereignty, empowerment, and equality. My face becomes streaked in the



signs that I am home. I am Reclaiming...

And oh, the Lust in the Air as we breathe in the dark of the moist Earth and the Light of Heaven's splendour...more tears roll down my coffee-coloured skin – I think of my colouring in that moment, something I take for granted. I cherish the ancestors who gave me this beauty, this skin to keep safe the spirit within. I look around and see *shining* everywhere. The beauty that surrounds me. I re-member...I am *here*...I am *now*.

We whisper and weave stories of our Dead... the Mighty...the Beloved...the Ancestors...and those who have come and will come new-born from the Cauldron of Immortality. The babes are blessed in the name of renewal – for in death there is life.

I stand now. I stand proud and tall, and the rhythms of magick move my pulsating flesh, as I follow a humble voice of priestess, of shifter, of

Spiral Dance 2010 — invocations to the West and North, food blessing
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changer, of poet, of Witch, and I am brought from the shores of this world to the Other. I come to the Land of Youth that I know so well, and I smell the red flesh of apples and taste their sweetness on the breeze. I come to the Well and I perceive Blue Flame, only to kneel before the Mother of the World, of Mercy, Healing and Compassion to have her say, Be Free – You are Alive, You are ever your own forgiveness. It rains, the heavens heave and tremble as the cascades of pure water saturate my being...I drink in the depths upturned and I too am shining. The voice leads me back to the Circle of Life...and the Dance that we call Spiral begins.

*Let it begin with each step we take,
Let it begin with each change we make,
Let it begin with each chain we break,
And let it begin every time we awake!*

Our song of power ebbs and flows as our serpent enlivens itself and uncoils. I pound the Earth with my feet saying “Mother, can you hear me, I am free, and I unshackle you!” I look deeply into



the shining pools of soul that dance past me and I swim in succour I have barely tasted until now. I *am* free and this sacred truth is tearing my skin away in strips. I am blood, bone, muscle, and marrow and I am spirit, soul, mind, and heart...And I am ever a part of the Goddess, the Living Mystery. I love everything and everyone. I am reconciled beyond the need for reconciliation. I am *awake*! I no longer value perception...I am in my Deep Core.

I have found the Grace, and the dance my feet take me on is a dance that can only be woven by the thousandfold feet of the Many who are One.

Release! Breathe in and hum to the Earth – for this year we renew Her. Oh, to be her son, oh to be her lover and her guardian. These relationships are precious beyond understanding. I am relinquished of the sorrow of ignorance, I am simply given into the keeping of the Secret

That Bears No Name and is Ever-Revealed. I am looking now, I am listening and as I journey back upon the moon-boat, across the sunless sea, to the shores of this time and place, I can only breathe in Magick.

We unravel and embrace. The drum never stops its pounding, and the blood can only call back in hysteria!

I pause and look inward. I see the mirror and the Goddess has no words, only that look that seems to mean the three words with any semblance of meaning, of truth:

I love you.

Gede Parma is a Witch, initiated priest and teacher of the WildWood Tradition. He weaves threads of Feri, Reclaiming, Stregheria, WildWood, Greek Paganism, British Traditional Witchcraft and ancestral traditions into his personal syncretic and shamanic path.



Spiral Dance 2010 — hundreds of participants dance the spiral of rebirth

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Portland Reclaiming is excited to welcome the larger Reclaiming Community to the Pacific Northwest for Dandelion 5.

What is Dandelion?

Like the seeds of the healing Dandelion plant, the Reclaiming tradition has spread all over the world. The Dandelion Gathering is a gathering of the international tribes within the Reclaiming tradition occurring every two to three years. Dandelion has been hosted all over the US: in the Southwest, the Northeast, the Bay Area, the Midwest. We are so excited to announce that for the 5th biannual gathering in 2012, Dandelion will be held in the Northwest US just outside of Portland, Oregon.

Dandelion is an open format event which means that the programming of Dandelion comes together from you, the community of participants. Past gatherings have seen ecstatic, healing, and political rituals, skill-building workshops, hilarious entertainment, networking between groups all over the world, children's programming, social gatherings for teachers and community leaders, and lots of time to meet new folks and connect together as an international community. Dandelion also hosts the BIRCH meeting, the Broader Intra Reclaiming Council Hub, a council who represents many different parts of Reclaiming including witchcamps, guilds, cells, event and action organizers and Reclaiming communities from all over the world. At the meeting this year, we will make some edits to our Principles of Unity to include our multiplicity of gender and reflect our changing culture.

When and Where is Dandelion?

Dandelion 5 will be held August 1 – 5, 2012, in Molalla, Oregon. We will be at the beautiful Camp Adams, Milk Creek Site, located about 45 minutes from the Portland, Oregon, International Airport. For more information on Camp Adams visit <http://campadams.org/>

Registration is now open. Early bird pricing is available through February 15th, 2012 so if you know you are coming, please take advantage of the discount! For full information on rates and contact for volunteer roles, scholarship and accommodations information please see the website. There are many opportunities for being a part of Dandelion and we need YOUR help! We are seeking folks to volunteer with one of the organization cells, offer a workshop at the event, and fundraise in their communities to help send more witches to the gathering. Are you ready to get involved? More information is available on the website. Visit <http://dandeliongathering.org/index.html>

For questions contact: dandelion5.magic@gmail.com

We look forward to working with you and seeing you at Dandelion!

- The Dandelion 5 organizing cell