



Shamanism of the Uchi people : pages 38-41

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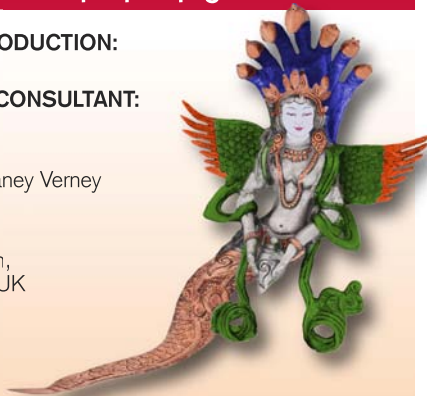
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The beauty of peyote stitch beadwork : page 25



The art of Gabriel Tamaya : pages 26-31

Contents

LA RENOVACION 6-15

The Huichol people of Mexico are well known for their long pilgrimages in their desert homelands, but they recently came to Britain to do sacred pilgrimage here. **Jez Hughes** travelled with them and tells of their journeys.

A WITCH AMONG THE NAVAJO 16-24

The Diné (Navajo) people of America's South West have a great fear of witchcraft. So what happened when **Malcolm Brenner** - a self-proclaimed witch - went to live in the area?

PEYOTE STITCH BEADWORK 25

An introduction to the beautiful patterned beadwork found on many Native American fan and rattle handles.

SHAMANIC ART OF GABRIEL TAMAYA . . 26-31

As an artist working closely with his spirits to produce sacred paintings, **Gabriel Tamaya** is gaining quite a reputation as a fine artist. **Faith Nolton** talks to him about his creative process.

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Huichol ceremonies in Britain : pages 6-15

RELINQUISHING TO THE DIVINE 32-36

Shamanism is all about trance and altered states of awareness. But what happens when trance goes wrong; in Mongolia it is said many shamans die when it does.

Amalia Rubin shares experiences of this in Mongolia.

MORIN KHUUR 37

Mongolia is famous for its 'horse-head' fiddles. We look at the history and traditions of the instrument.

GENEROSITY AND HOSPITALITY 38-41

The Uchi people live in Eastern Siberia and their last shaman **Grandmother Nadia Duvan** is now ill and in need of our help. **Jan Van Ysslestyne** introduces us to the healing traditions of Nadia's people.

NAGA OF THE LOW FIELDS 42-45

Knowledge of water spirits is a world wide tradition. **J. Julia** shares her encounters with these spirits in the South of England, and introduces her work reclaiming and renovating the area's sacred wells and springs.

WINDOWS ON ANOTHER WORLD 46

Bronze and iron mirrors were important sacred objects to the Celtic people of the Iron Age. We examine their beautiful sacred art.

BOOK AND MUSIC REVIEWS 47-49

PEOPLE ON THE PATH EVENTS DIARY 50-53

THE FOUNDING INSPIRATION FOR SACRED HOOP MAGAZINE IN 1993
"Then I was standing on the highest mountain of them all, and around and about me was the whole hoop of the world... I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit and the shapes of all shapes as they must live together like one being. And I saw that the Sacred Hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, wide as daylight and as starlight and in the centre grew one almighty flowering tree to shelter all the children of one mother and one father, and I saw that it was holy."
 (From the vision of Nicholas Black Elk Lakota Holy Man: 1863 - 1950)



The dangers of shamanic trance : pages 32-36

From the Editor



I've been thinking about the land where I live quite a bit in recent months. I've done some small pilgrimages to a few sacred places and become drawn to an early Celtic saint, Saint Melangell. But my pilgrimages are nothing compared to those of the Huchol people of Mexico - some of which came recently to my homeland of Wales to do ceremony in one of the sacred places here.

Now a part of me is not at all sure about that - and they had a hard time with our powerful, protecting land spirits too: "You have proper spirits here". they realised. Do we need shamans visiting from other lands to do work with our land? That's something to ponder deeply on, I think. I suspect there is no easy answer.

However, sometimes things are reversed, as our second article recounts - an Anglo 'witch' going to Navajo lands and practicing his mojo there. Working on the patch of another culture raises so many ethical questions.

The spirits are everywhere - of course - connecting to us and with us in so many ways - increasingly it seems in the West through the arts. I really enjoyed looking at the paintings of Gabriel Tamaya, through whose images the spirits certainly seem to flow.

But letting the spirits flow through you - come into you - can be a dangerous thing. Here in the West there is a tendency to treat 'shamanism' in a somewhat lightweight way, whereas in traditional shamanic cultures, like Mongolians, the people know shamans can easily die if their trance goes wrong and the spirits come through too strongly.

Of course, the spirits are essential for shamanism - 'no spirits: no shaman'. Is that the other way around too I wonder - 'no shaman: no spirits?' Uchi Grandmother Nadia Duvan is the last shaman of her people, what happens to the connection between the spirits and the people when there are no more shamans?

Perhaps the spirits are always there and ready to connect to the 'right' person? They certainly seem to be there in the shape of the water spirits - the naga - in the South of England.

And we end with a small article about ancient Celtic mirrors, so much like Siberian shaman's mirrors in many ways. They create a window into the spirit world - as do artists and shamans.

In this time of war and change and despair (and hope) we really need those windows to the spirits don't we!

Blessings to all Beings
 Nicholas Breeze Wood

