

A special feature from the archives of ReclaimingQuarterly.org

an advance section from our latest issue

## Reviews from RQ 103

Here's an advance section from our upcoming online issue. Save-As to save to your hard drive. Pages should print easily.

The full issue will be appear in later 2014, publishing faeries permitting. This section is ready now – so why hold it back? You'll find:

- Reviews In Brief – all sorts of books, music, video and film, social tendencies, and more – 25 words at a time!
- Trancers' Delight – Fabric and Rinse offer hundreds of hours of danceable, tranceable London-based house music.

As a special bonus, we've appended "Witchcraft and the Rave Scene" (RQ #79, Summer 2000). The article parallels the magic woven in Pagan rituals with the alternate environment generated in electronic raves.

*This and lots more features – free downloads – visit [ReclaimingQuarterly.org](http://ReclaimingQuarterly.org)*

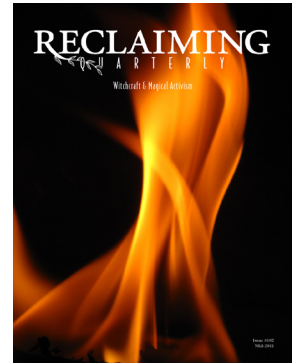
*You'll find updates on our latest issue plus downloads of recent issues at [ReclaimingQuarterly.org/current.html](http://ReclaimingQuarterly.org/current.html)*

## Latest Issue Online!

The latest issue of Reclaiming Quarterly — plus our past several issues — now available as a free downloadable PDF file at RQ.org

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

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*The dance floor at Fabric in London – home of tranceable dance music.*

# Alternate TAKES

## Guardian UK

Number one source of international news in English — London-based, with good US coverage. Web pages are print-friendly, so you can practically assemble your own daily paper. No US paper compares — [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

## Earth First! Journal

More international activist news than ordinary mortals can possibly read. EFiJ sets the standard for grassroots publications. \$25/year to Box 3023, Tucson, AZ 85702. Or visit [www.earthfirstjournal.org](http://www.earthfirstjournal.org)

## Indy Media Centers

Up to the moment, locally-based activist news from around the world. When the action is breaking, there are no better online sites. Their flagship site has links to dozens of local sites. Visit [www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org)

## Witchvox

Witches' Voice is the top networking site for Witches and Pagans online. Everything from religious liberties to the latest local ritual. Events are user-posted and come from every corner of Paganism. An inspiring site to browse. Visit [www.witchvox.com](http://www.witchvox.com)

## RQ.org

RQ.org carries photo-features and reports on grassroots activism and Pagan events, as well as reports on Witchcamps and other Reclaiming events. Our back-issue archives have dozens of magical and activist features. RQ.org's pages are print-friendly, so you can read offline too. Visit [www.reclaimingquarterly.org](http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org)

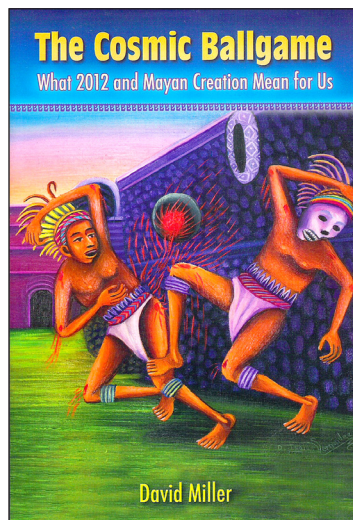
# Books • Film • Music • Resources

## READING MATTER

*What Is The What* by Dave Eggers. Eggers rewrites the very real tales of an extraordinary “lost boy” who fled the recent civil war in Sudan and spent years in refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya before moving to the US. Hilarious, poignant, slapstick, nightmare, it's a story of love, death, more death, fate, and survival. Plus a ground level perspective on East African and global geopolitics.

*Rituals of Celebration* by Jane Meredith. Lyrical and practical accounts of creating a cycle of rituals celebrating the Wheel of the Year. Community and family activities as well as personal reflections make this a rich and multi-layered book.

*The Cosmic Ballgame* by David Miller. Reflections on the rituals of Mayan and American ballgames of creation, the dilemmas posed by the transformation from a Grandmother-honoring culture to a warrior hierarchy — and lessons for today.



*Nature & the Human Soul* by Bill Plotkin offers a coherent picture of “eco-centric” human development, integrating wisdom from many traditions into a “field guide for creating an elder, starting at birth.” An inspiring and priceless contribution to those wanting to re-indigenize ourselves and our culture.

## MUSIC/AUDIO

*Higher Self* by Rod Kinny (CD). Well-crafted, positive music by a sincere and tender singer. If you're looking for music that supports your positive visions, this is it!

*Edda: Myths from Medieval Iceland* by Snorri Sturluson (CD). Excerpts from Snorri's sagas set to

Medieval arrangements — think Icelandic operetta meets Ren Faire instrumentals.

## RAP WITH A HEART — 1990

RQ is lovin' on Mackelmore and Ryan Lewis and their hilarious, socially-positive hit (“Thrift Shop”).

But when we heard a commentator gush that the duo might have changed rap history if they'd appeared 25 years ago, we had to stop and think about all the circa 1990 hip hop acts that did make music history, only to be buried by the corporate-funded “gangsta” trend. Check out these classic albums:

- Jungle Brothers *Done By the Forces*
- De La Soul *Stakes Is High*
- Brand Nubian *Everything Is Everything*
- Tribe Called Quest *Low End Theory*

## VIDEO

Long-buried works by 1960s art-video pioneers: Nam June Paik, Bill Viola, Joan Jonas, Yoko Ono, Bruce Nauman, and many more — now on Youtube.

*more reviews on next page*



# Books • Film • Music • Resources • & More . . .

## THE END OF THE WORLD GETS PERSONAL – TWO RECENT FILMS

Hot on the heels of the apocalyptic megamovies of 2012 come a pair of small-scale, personal comic dramas. Funny, insightful, and humane.

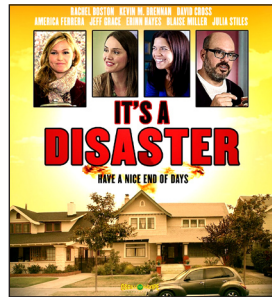
*Seeking a Friend for the End of the World* questions the meaning of culture and relationships in the face of the obliteration of all human life. Highlight: a disco whose patrons have moved in full time.

*It's A Disaster* joins eight friends trapped in a suburban house after a nerve gas attack.

A postmodern melange of non-sequiturs and crossed contexts, this is a film to watch at home with the rewind button in hand. Favorite lines:

A: I thought this conversation was hypothetical.

B: No, the conversation is real – the problem is hypothetical.



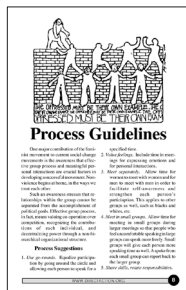
## RADICAL HISTORY

**The Suppressed History Archives** – coordinated by Max Dashu since 1970, SHA uncovers the realities of women's lives across time, challenging notions of patriarchy and slavery, conquest and aboriginality. The site offers a grassroots, global perspective on women's history and how systems of domination perpetuate themselves. Visit [SuppressedHistories.net](http://SuppressedHistories.net)

## SOCIAL TENDENCIES

**Gentrification** (2013) – ongoing performance by San Francisco. Residents of SF are witnessing an ongoing spectacle of forced relocations, new restaurants, and exodus motivated by evictions and buy outs that use the Ellis Act to force long-term tenants out of San Francisco. Activist response has been sporadic as solidarity has crumbled under neoliberalism (individual blame, corporate gain) and everyone scrambles alone to find their new home.

*Thanks for Reviews to; Luke, Keith, Susan, Seneca, Jacques, Meagan, Frida, Baruch.*



## Consensus & Feminist Process

*Free download at [RQ.org](http://RQ.org)*

This 16-page handbook is distilled from direct action handbooks. Sections cover nonviolence in action and in our relationships, consensus and group process, affinity groups, working amid diversity, and confronting oppression.

Free download: [www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org/web/handbook/](http://www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org/web/handbook/)

## 25 Years Ago: a Vintage Reclaiming Newsletter

### Reclaiming Newsletter, Issue No. 32 - Fall 1988

*Note on Page 1: "The Newsletter staff has sworn off its lamentable co-behavior and will not chase down late submissions. We really mean it this time."*

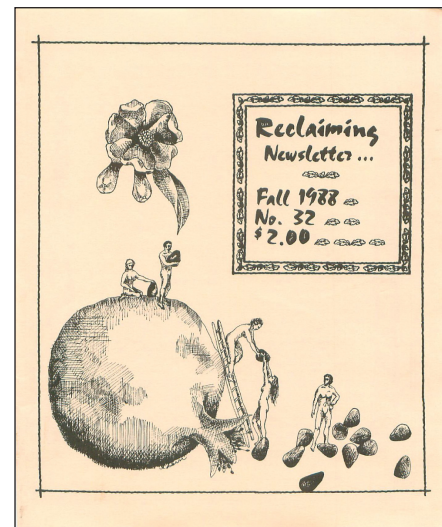
Feature articles included:

- "That Old Black Magic: Magical Ethics," by Judy Harrow
- "What I Learned on My Summer Vacation," by Rose May Dance
- "Singing Down the Rain," by Esther Frances
- "Trance," by Roy King
- "Hannah's Household Hints," by Hannah Clancy

Classes included Elements of Magic and Ritual as a Tool for Freedom.

Reclaiming Newsletter No. 32 was produced by the RQ production cell's distant ancestors, whom we honor here: Ann, Danielle, David, Karen, Laurie, Lisa, Rose, Sophia, and Roy.

*You can order copies of the RQ Archives – Reclaiming Newsletters and Quarterlies as PDF files – for just \$25/10 issues! – [www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/](http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/)*



RQ Archives — order copies online at [www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/](http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/)

# fabric / FABRICLIVE

Trancers' delight — London nightspot releases 100+ DJ mixes

by Malcolm Howell / RQ London Trance Correspondent

Back in 2000, RQ ran a feature article by Riyana Lilyhawk called “Witchcraft and the Rave Scene” (RQ #79, Summer 2000). The article paralleled the magic woven in Pagan rituals with the alternate environment generated in electronic-music raves:

“Layers of music taper off and blend with one another, although that demanding rhythm — fast, driving drums — is always there... The floor is physically, noticeably moving beneath our feet. Everywhere is energy...”

Outside of raves and dance clubs, the heartbeat pulse of house music still has enchanting power. From bouncy techno to heavy industrial sounds, the pounding bass unifies a genre created specifically to draw us into altered states.

A lot of dance music is dominated by wailing vocals — a trance buzz-kill for some of us. For meditation, instrumental house music is the key. Two cities are pushing the edge of this genre — Berlin and London.

## WHERE TO BEGIN?

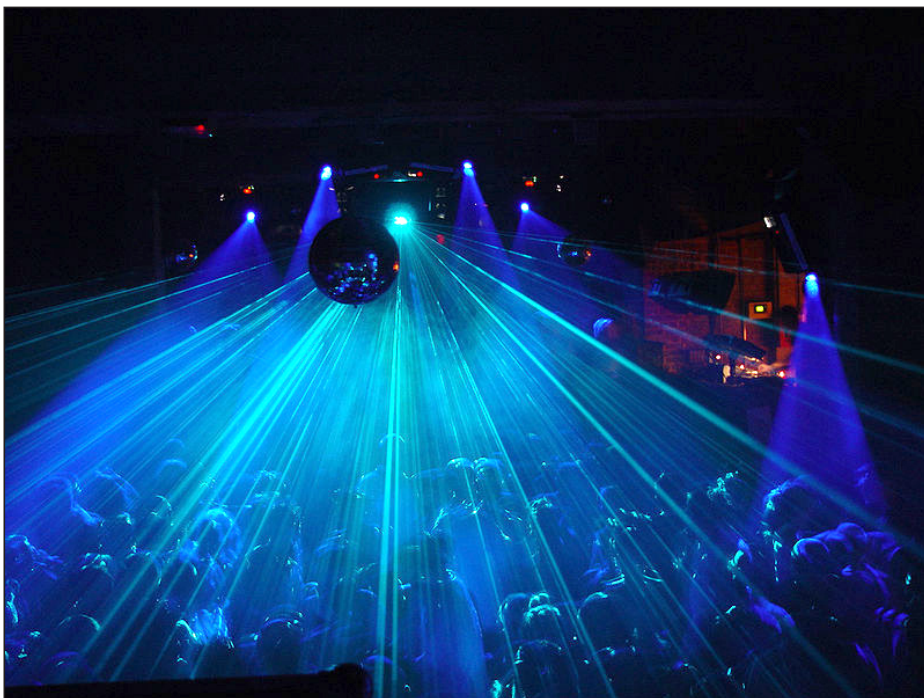
Thanks to the internet, there's no shortage of up-to-the-minute house music. Soundcloud blogs offer free downloads of the latest dance mixes — google “soundcloud house mix” for Berlin or London (or your own city).

But the sheer volume is overwhelming. How to get started?

One option is to find mixes created by proven dance DJs. Let the dancers vote with their feet.



*Fabric nightclub, located on Charterhouse Street opposite Smithfield meat market in the London Borough of Islington.*



London's Fabric nightclub has done the trance/dance world a great service by capturing dozens of premier DJs in hour-long mixes.

The independent club-owned label has released one album per month for over a decade (see next page) showcasing established and emerging artists.

The result is a stunning collection of 21st century dance music and experimental electronica at affordable prices.

CDs can be found in record stores with electronica sections or online — or join Fabric's download-of-the-month club for five pounds (under ten dollars US) per album, with older mixes at the same price.

More information and complete catalog online at [fabriclondon.com](http://fabriclondon.com)

*See next page for more on Fabric mixes.*



# fabric / FABRICLIVE

Trancers' delight — London nightspot releases 100+ DJ mixes

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London's Fabric Nightclub (see preceding page) releases a monthly DJ mix.

Alternating their Saturday night house-music "fabric" series and Friday night's more experimental "FabricLive" CDs, the series now numbers over 130 releases spanning a wide range of electronic styles.

Here are some great mixes from the past decade.



## FABRICLIVE: experimental mixes

Friday night's FabricLive shows are billed as an eclectic soundclash, mixing tempos and styles from hip hop through dubstep and drum & bass to indie and electro.

**FabricLive 06:** Grooverider — Grooverider, with roots in the late 1980s dance world, mixes turn-of-the-millennium drum-n-bass

**FabricLive 42:** Freq Nasty — cross-genre break beats, heavy on the bass

**FabricLive 62:** Kasra — up-to-date break beats, jungle, and experimental rhythms

**FabricLive 64:** Oneman — mix of old-school breakbeats and garage with more recent dubstep and house-crossover



## fabric: house mixes

The Saturday night fabric shows focus on house music, with admixtures of techno, electro, disco, dub-techno, and anything else that fits the beat. The basic requirement seems to be that the mix be "Saturday night dance music."

Within that definition, the fabric series is amazingly diverse. Here is a small sampling:

**fabric 27:** Audion aka Matthew Dear — a multi-layered, polyrhythmic cut-and-paste symphony

**fabric 34:** Ellen Allien — graceful, noisy, hand-mixed melange from Berlin

**fabric 39:** Robert Hood — Detroit-born DJ spins hard-



edged techno and deep house

**fabric 57:** Agoria — weaves 70s funk-jazz with recent house

**fabric 64:** Guy Gerber — dreamy, layered sounds, ethereal vocals

**fabric 66:** Ben Klock — hypnotic yet unexpected, from techno gems to the latest Berlin house

## RINSE FM — LONDON PIRATE RADIO WITH A LICENSE

Rinse FM, a one-time pirate radio station which now has a broadcasting license, provides London with cutting-edge electronic radio. Lucky London!

Thanks to the miracle of the internet, the rest of us can listen to selected podcasts. Favorite DJs here at RQ include Mark Radford, A-Plus, and Youngsta.

Rinse also produces a CD series featuring experimental mixes by Rinse radio hosts, each one unique.

*Listen at 106.8 FM when you're in London, or visit their website — [www.rinse.fm](http://www.rinse.fm)*

A special feature from the archives of ReclaimingQuarterly.org

a bonus feature from RQ #79

## Trance & the Rave Scene

House music and Pagan spirituality? Raves and rituals?  
Together in the pages of RQ?

As a special bonus with our house music reviews from RQ #103, we offer this classic article from 2000 – a feature by Riyana called “Witchcraft and the Rave Scene” (RQ #79, Summer 2000).

The article paralleled the magic woven in Pagan rituals with the alternate environment generated in electronic-music raves:

“Layers of music taper off and blend with one another, although that demanding rhythm — fast, driving drums — is always there... The floor is physically, noticeably moving beneath our feet. Everywhere is energy...”

Thanks to the internet, there’s no shortage of up-to-the-minute house music. Soundcloud blogs offer free downloads of the latest dance mixes – google “soundcloud house mix” for Berlin or London (or your own city).

Rinse.fm offers free podcasts of its round-the-clock electronic shows.

And as per our RQ #103 reviews, visit Fabric nightclub’s website and check out their catalog of DJ mixes.

*RQ offers this and many other features from our past and present issues as free downloads – visit [ReclaimingQuarterly.org](http://ReclaimingQuarterly.org)*



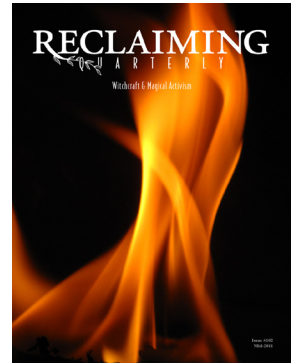
Courtesy M. Young

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# Witchcraft and the Rave Scene

## The Magic of Counter Culture

by Ri'wana Lilyhawk

**A**N HOUR AWAY from all the cities, 10,000 young people gather to the sound of heavy bass drums, the throbbing of synthesizers and patterned sequences. There are lights everywhere, spanning the entire spectrum of colors, throbbing to the deep bass that surrounds us. A ray of deep violet twists through the mass, brushing across us as we dance. The music is everything: the thick intricacies of the drums colliding with one another, the spinning chant of the MC at the mike, the soulful wailing of woman respun again and again on a turntable. Some people stand quietly, their eyes half-closed; most are dancing. A yellow strobe above us blinks on-n-off, on-n-off — we're just two little sparks of electricity in a huge, rushing current. It's the music that makes us feel that way — it's also the cold desert air pierced by hundreds of psychedelic lights, and the sand beneath our feet, and the people all around us — but most of all, it's the music, and the vibe — pure electricity.

### Rave.

It's a word that conjures up images of madness, of chaos, and drugged-out teens cavorting at "one of those rave parties." But there's more there than meets the eye. Many ravers speak of a tangible energy they feel and consciously try to focus at a rave: the "Vibe." Rave organizers use lights and rhythmic music to create a place outside of the mundane world for deep, experimental moving trances. And

ravers around the world are often misrepresented by the media and misunderstood by the public.

In short, it's a lot like Witchcraft.

In many ways, the similarities between Witches and ravers seem remarkable: the creation of sacred space for energy work, the belief in focusing energy for global healing and personal growth, and reverence for the earth.

And it's a connection many ravers embrace.

"We're Pagans," states the author of *Alt.Rave.Faq*, Brian Behlendorf. "We worship big walls of sound."

### My First Rave

IT'S EASY to get caught up in the slander. When my friend Ryan — innocent, studious, shy Ryan — first told me he went to raves, I raised my eyebrows and backed away slightly. "Isn't that dangerous?" I asked. He laughed. "The worst thing that'll happen to you at a rave is that someone you don't know will come up and hug you," he said. I didn't believe him. He knew it, too.

Then I went to a rave some young adults held at the California Witchcamp two years ago. We came back from an exhausting ritual that evening and somehow still managed to dance non-stop until 3 a.m. The music wouldn't let me stop dancing — I could feel the way every other person in the room was moving, and that we were all in synch

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with one another and with the rhythm blasting out of a tiny boombox in the corner of the dining hall.

If a group of fifty people and a bunch of flashlights could make me feel like that, I could only imagine what it would be like with stacks of speakers, entire systems of lights, and thousands of people. I had to go.

As soon as I got back to LA, I gave Ryan a call.

## **GOING BETWEEN THE WORLDS: TEMPORARY AUTONOMOUS ZONES**

THE RAVE WAS called Urban Phenomenon at the LA Sports Arena. There were over 12,000 tickets sold.

The night before we went to Urban Phenomenon, I couldn't sleep. Ryan had told me a few things to expect, and my older brother Dylan, who also goes to raves, had told me more — but still lingering in the back of my mind were all the things I'd read in the newspapers or heard through the rumor mill.

Raves.

After being searched, my friends and I walked into the brightly lit, linoleum-floored corridor that surrounds the stadium. It was crawling with people wearing everything from glow-in-the-dark jewelry to oversized pants with cuffs well over half a yard in diameter. Their faces were glittered, and many had glow-sticks intertwined in their fingers.

Through the little doorways leading onto the balcony overlooking the stadium floor, I could see the rave. Imagine looking through a window into a psychedelic night sky, where the stars are made of radiant green stripes and orange flashes and violet strobes. I slowly walked out onto the balcony, taking in the throngs of people on the dance floor, the loud music, the cascade of speakers and mechanical equipment hanging on grids from the stage in the center of the stadium. Ryan looked over at me, smiling.

"Wanna go?" he asked, motioning with his head.

I nodded.

We clambered down the balcony steps and found the escalator to go down onto the floor. Slowly, the linoleum and white paint slips away and it gets darker, louder. Somewhere half-way down, you enter another world. It's like entering the circle.

Raves are woven together. The carefully orchestrated atmosphere is intended to create the sense of an alternate dimension: the secluded desert or warehouse locations,

cosmos to come out and play," said Kath, who wrote an essay on raving called "Trance Magic." "Ancient earth drums dance in symbiotic merriment with the metallic inter-galactic beats as the circles of sound expand and astound our imagination with vibratory awareness."

The idea of the TAZ is loosely based on the writings of Hakim Bey, who said that those who attempt cultural change within the boundaries of society will find their endeavors harnessed, repressed, or destroyed.

Because of this, a separate, distinct realm must be created to cradle the change until it grows strong enough to withstand its opposition.

"It is an escape from mainstream society into a utopian world for a few hours," states Eric Steins, author of "Peace, Love, Dancing and Drugs." "It is a

creation of space where love and happiness exist beyond everything else. A rave is a phenomenon that does not exist within the rules of society; it is the creation of a separate space. Beyond the culture of escape, though, is a culture based on hope."

## **GUARDIANS OF THE WATCHTOWERS: PEACE, LOVE, UNITY AND RESPECT**

JUST AS DAWN broke over the jagged LA skyline, the dream ended. I woke up from the heartbeats and the journey next to Ryan, Dylan, my other friends, and the nearly two thousand others who had stayed the whole night. I rubbed the "eight-hours-of-dancing" exhaustion from my eyes, feeling strangely vulnerable, then blinked as a strange girl with face paint and sparkly antenna reached over and squeezed my hand.

"PLUR," she said, smiling.

PLUR is the entire rave philosophy banded into an easy four-letter word: Peace, Love, Unity, and Respect. It is like our Rede; four pillars that buttress the

# Witchcraft and the Rave Scene

music programmed by gadgets and shaped by a DJ, glittering lights and otherworldly clothing. It is here, between the worlds, that ravers attempt to get in touch with themselves and the energy that they have created. This is ritual space.

"A large part of the concept of raves is built upon sensory overload — a barrage of audio and very often visual stimuli are brought together to elevate people into an altered state of existence," Behlendof says. "The hypnotizing effect of techno music coupled with the seamless transitions and thematic progressions of rave DJs can be intoxicating."

More philosophical ravers speak of this space as a Temporary Autonomous Zone, or TAZ, a place where they can be free to explore themselves and the world outside the walls.

"We are creating TAZs for our minds to investigate the mysteries of the universe, as we once again, like our distant ancestors, cajole the spirits of the trees and the sky, the earth and the



connection between hundreds of thousands of people across the globe who are part of a common movement.

## PEACE

LIKE MANY Reclaiming Witches, ravers embrace the concept of peace as an action, rather than a lack of action. They feel it is their responsibility not only to create a sense of peace and love during the rave, but to spread peace and cultural justice into the world around them as well.

"If raves can bring about PLUR in total strangers, helping to smash the walls of isolation and ignorance, it stands as a perfect example of how the world could be," says raver Noah Raford. "The potential, energy, and technology are here to bring about sweeping global change. It's enough to give me hope and overlook the uncaring, racist, selfish politics that seem to dominate popular culture and society — the age-old dream of one world, united in brotherhood and peace."

Perhaps this sense of social responsibility comes from techno's roots in rap music; as the folk music of the sixties and seventies gave way to disco, R&B, and Pop in the eighties and nineties, songs about political action and reform all but disappeared in popular culture — except for rap music, where artists continue to revolt against the status quo. Whether you're talking about jungle, trance, house, or hardcore, electronic music is essentially revolutionary in its very construction. Instead of being based on a hierarchy of vocals over lead instruments over rhythm, most forms of electronic music come together in an organic and egalitarian way. Different harmonies drop in and out constantly, creating an integration of sounds. Whereas other forms of music seems to come out of the speakers to elicit some particular emotion, electronic music draws you in — into the music, and into



yourself and your own emotions.

"When we organize parties collectively, we learn how work can be done without hierarchies," Monicat, another raver, says. "Gathering together to create healthy communities in a culture that seeks to divide us, or give us a false sense of community based on MTV and consumption, is a radical and political act. Creating art and play outside of the marketplace is a radical and political act. Every time I rave, I voice my protest."

## Love

MANY RAVERS also take a deeply philosophical approach to their raving, in addition to seeing it as political. When we come together, it is not simply to begin change, but to feel a common bond with one another, based on compassion and

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Discography @ Discography @ Discography @ Discography

### *Homogenic, Bjork*

Although not strictly electronic, this album is a great transition from mainstream to rave-inspired music. Bjork's melodic voice and haunting lyrics float over knots of violins and cellos and synthetic drums.

### *Second Toughest in Infants, Underworld*

Music that defies category, but with roots in House and Trance. Layers of heavy bass, complex drum patterns, and abstract vocals fuse in a climactic, moving journey.

### *Last Train to Lhasa, Banco de Gaia*

Soft, magnetic ambient trance that brings together tribal percussion — daumbeks, djembes, and tablas — with persistent drum loops and lilting melodies.

### *Return to Saturn, Goldie*

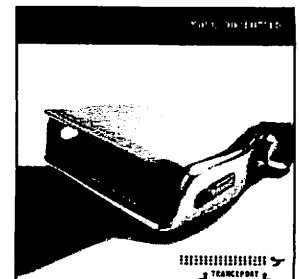
Jungle originator Goldie weaves together a two CD set incorporating many different styles of drum n' bass and live instrumentation into a broad collection of tough streetwise beats and cinematic production.

### *Decks, EFX, and 909, Richie Hawtin (aka Plastikman)*

Quality minimalist techno from track one to track thirty-eight. Hard and fast, Hawtin deftly integrates drum machines and electronic effects into the standard two-table DJ mix.

### *Tranceport, Paul Oakenfold*

Sweet, uplifting epic trance from England's most classic electronic DJ. Simply amazing, this album is a cornerstone in bringing rave music to the masses. Just a taste: "Embracing the goddess energy within yourselves will bring all of you to a new understanding and valuing of life, a vision that inspires you to live and love on planet earth. Like a priceless jewel, buried in dark layers of soil and stone, earth radiates her brilliant beauty into the caverns of space and time."



## Queer Camp

continued from previous page

queerness. All of a sudden I realized that I didn't have to come out to anyone. Not only was it assumed that I was queer, it was celebrated! And being suddenly surrounded by queer Witches made me startlingly aware of how my queer self had been hidden away, and how she craved reveling with her kin.

Did Queer Camp completely change my life? Not quite, not yet anyway. But I certainly learned a lot about my queer self, and the power and magic I hold. I have a strong pull to my fellow queer Witches and to the community they provide me. As we sang around the queer fire, "I will know myself in all of my parts, called by the Queer Ones."

## Raves & Witchcraft

continued from page 7

affection.

"I have a vision of a future where everyone takes for granted the common path of love, much like today everyone takes for granted a familiarity with the spoken word," said one raver. "When people ask me why I rave, I always think that this is what I want to tell them. This is what the music and people are really about."

In addition, "love" involves not only the feeling that binds people together at a party, but a deeper connection to ourselves. Like ritual and other forms of trance, it is about exploring inner depths, and from there, the mysterious universe we are a part of.

"The dance awakens the soul, and the

memory that humanity is not the end, just a stepping stone. Never stop moving. Never stop the process of evolution. The energy brings inner growth, new faces help nurture this growth with their loving smiles and attitudes," says raver Jason Parsons. "It blossoms. Reaching beyond the moment and building a bridge between Dreams and Reality. This is why I rave. Because I believe. Because I love. Because I live."

## UNITY AND RESPECT

ONE OF THE most striking things about raves, once you get past the whole where-on-earth-did-they-get-so-many-colored-lights?-thing, is the how-on-earth-did-they-get-so-many-people-of-different-colors-together?-thing.

Diversity is one of the distinguishing factors of the rave movement, not only in comparison to college campuses, but also to other youth-oriented events. Woodstock '99, for example, turned out to be extremely dangerous for many concert-goers, with several instances of rape and dozens of assaults. In comparison, raves continue to have a surprisingly minimal record of violence. I have never been at a rave where there was any violent incident — quite a feat, indeed, when you consider that "How Sweet It Is" drew over 35,000 young people from all different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

I noticed it even among my own group of friends at that first rave. Most of us were UCR students, and yet, our little crew was markedly more diverse compared to the school population overall (a public college which proudly claims the most ethnically diverse student composition in the UC entire system). Ryan, my best friend Lisa, and my brother and I are all of European-descent; Mark is Chicano; Fernando is Peruvian and Darren is African American. Once we got to the rave we ran into two other people we knew — my friend Desmond, who is Asian American, and Fernando's friend John, who is Filipino.

Although male DJs and producers still seem to dominate the rave scene, in more subtle ways, ravers express the ideal of gender equality. For example, rave clothing seems designed to go along with the idea that gender is more of a social construct than a biological difference. Phat pants (very baggy pants, often made of synthetic materials) are worn by guys and girls alike: on guys, the huge cuffs sometimes look almost skirt-like (especially when paired with jewelry made of plastic beads, which is extremely common), while on a girl, they take the emphasis off of her sexuality and the tendency to objectify her.

Another raver relates, "What struck me more than the immense sensory bliss was the amazing group of people who shared this experience with me — six thousand young, beautiful humans having one HELL of a good time



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together. Six thousand brothers and sisters of all raves, classes, and sexual orientations. Living equality. Raving is about unity. The whole point is to get away from the differences between us."

**MAGIC: THE VIBE**

SANTA MONICA Civic Center, Underworld Concert, Fall, 1999. Fernando, Ryan, Darren and I are squished together, driven to dance by the rhythm, and yet unwilling to step on anyone. Layers of music taper off and blend with one another, although that demanding rhythm — fast, driving drums — is always there. Abruptly the melody breaks and the violet and blue lights are replaced by a flood of pale yellow. For a moment I feel like we have entered some sort of lemonade dimension. The floor is physically, noticeably moving beneath our feet. Everywhere is energy — the Vibe.

Perhaps what separates ravers even more from other types of musical gatherings today, and other forms of social progress, is the Vibe. Various called "essence," "energy," "etherial," and "gossamer," the Vibe is always regarded as a tangible force that can be focused and shaped to bring about the ideals of PLUR — just as Witches might use magic to bring about that "change of consciousness at will."

"Cut through the clouds of trendism and commercialization that attach themselves to any major new mutation in culture — what wants to be invoked is that imaginal, incandescent core out of which all the smoke and noise is generated," says Cinnamon Twist, in "Imaginal Rave." "At the heart of the rave is a modern,

technologically-clad form of non-verbal, ecstatic communion."

Most ravers who say they feel "the vibe" also say that it isn't something new they've created. Much as Witches view magic, they see it as ancestral, old, natural, and all around us. Ravers may not ever refer to a goddess or god, but there is no doubt that many find raving spiritually fulfilling, reestablishing the sacred bond between the physical body, the heart, their community, and the earth.

"At one point, the DJ was perfectly in sync with the rhythm of the approaching waves that were pounding the coast for miles in both directions, the sound of the music blended with the sound of the waves like an intricate fractal," Geoff White said, after participating in one of the highly regarded Moontribe full moon raves. "When we rave, we simulate something that has been going on for millions of years."

**GROUNDING: PROBLEMS IN THE RAVE SCENE**

AND YET, FIVE young people in Southern California did drive their car off of a cliff last summer on their way back from a rave, all of them high on LSD.

Although ravers do find connection and magic through the atmosphere, music, and dance, drug use (and the right clothes, and the right way to dance, and the right hairstyle) is becoming more and more central to the scene. Ec-

stasy and LSD have always been prominent among ravers for their hallucinogenic and mood-enhancing qualities, but now fewer people rave sober, and fewer still remember the premises that set the scene in motion. Many people at a rave, if you asked them, wouldn't know what you meant by TAZ or "the vibe." Once, when I was talking to Fernando, I mentioned PLUR. "That's so cool," he said — but he'd obviously never heard of it before in his life. Another person I know loves to rave — as long as he's taken one or two hits of E. Otherwise, it's a waste of time. As for focusing energy for the common good of the world, you can forget about it.

"The rave scene has become swamped in commercialism," Steins says, citing an influx of speed, heroin, cocaine, and the recently-emerging drug GHB at raves, non-hallucinogenic drugs that until now have been unassociated with raving. "This is the best defense that society could have ever used against the rave scene. It is because of this that there has been a loss of the sacredness. As the rave scene becomes more popular, fewer people are going to create a temporary loving space, and more people are going to get wasted."

Ryan — the original raver, my guide and

*continued on next page*

*The Sacred Grove*



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## Raves & Witchcraft

*continued from preceding page*

inspiration — turned me down when I told him we were all going to M2K for New Year's Eve, 2000. "I don't think I'm going to rave for a few months," he said. "It's just not the same anymore."

Ravers definitely lack focus. At a rave we may be able to create energy — beautiful, strong, "gossamer" energy — but there is no focused place to send it once it is created, even if it is raised in an attempt to promote political change and spiritual development. Throw in the rising tide of irresponsible drug use and the growing crowds who have no interest in the philosophical side of raving, and you find yourself in a diffused, amorphous haze.

In addition, ravers don't ground. There may be a lot of connection and trance-work going on, but there is no anchor down, leaving many people feeling like they are "floating," unable to really take in their experiences. Dylan once explained that the reason he wished he could achieve an altered state without the use of drugs was simply that he felt would get more out of it. "I just want to be able to control it more," he told me. "Sometimes when you're in there, it's all just a rush, and you can't really process everything that's happening. We need a way to process."

### THE MORNING AFTER: A CONCLUSION

So, WHERE to go from here? I noted at the top of this article the similarities between Witches and ravers such as the creation of sacred space, focusing energy, and reverence for the earth. And like pagans, ravers face problems with

misrepresentation, commercialization, and people who are involved in the scene for the wrong reasons — in this case, drug use.

On the flip side, the rave scene might be able to teach Witches a thing or two about diversity, especially when it comes to people of color and youth.

Ravers are people who, above all, have heard the Charge of the Goddess in the heavy throbbing patterns of drum n' bass. "...All acts of love and pleasure are my rituals... You shall sing and make music... Mine is the ecstasy of the spirit, and mine is joy upon the earth..." We see the spiral in shards of light dancing on white vinyl screens and take the descent into the underworld on freeways and desert roads, rebirthing more aware and more alive than we were before.

As a raver, I know that we're going to have to choose which way the movement will go from here. But I feel inspired to think that one of the paths before us, focusing on change, energy, and magic, runs right alongside my spiritual path. There are many things that pagans and ravers could learn from one another and, more importantly, many ways we can work together towards common goals.

So perhaps next time you read in the morning paper about "those rave parties," you won't think of just the drugs, because we don't. And the next time you see one of the brightly colored fliers in a record store or laying on the ground, maybe it'll tempt you to try something new... something revolutionary... something magical.

PLUR and Blessed Be.

*Riyana Lilyhawk is an avid raver, swing-dancer, and dreamer. She is currently working towards an MFA in film at USC.*

continent."

*To get involved in the campaign to oppose the genetic engineering of food, contact NERAGE at (802) 454-8493, or visit [www.bckweb.com/nerage](http://www.bckweb.com/nerage)*

*For details on Native Forest Network's GE tree campaign, or for a copy of our Special Report on GE trees see story, page 16, or contact NFN, (802) 863-0571, [www.nativeforest.org](http://www.nativeforest.org)*

## Vermont Yankee Ritual

*continued from page 16*

contaminated by the plant, and for the healing of the people and other beings who live in the communities close to the plant. We danced for a solution to be developed to neutralize the radioactive waste and for a transition to other employment for the workers. We danced our visions for what might replace this plant seeing this site once again in balance. After raising a cone of power we grounded, shared some of our visions, and then closed the circle.

Just last week there was some indication that possibly the sale might not go through, more for economic reasons than safety issues, but the fact that this sale is going to cost ratepayers so much more money, and that decommissioning costs will be so much more in a few years, have got some people rethinking the feasibility of keeping the plant in operation.

*Contact VT Citizens Awareness Network at (802) 387-4050 or [www.nukebusters.org](http://www.nukebusters.org), (413) 339-5781. An action camp will be held near Vermont Yankee in August — see story, page 17.*

## Composting

*continued from page 29*

corner of your yard and don't check on the conditions, this entire process can take as long as a year to complete. No matter what, compost will happen!

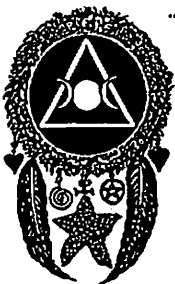
When your pile is finished decaying, you will have a beautiful dark brown material that I imagine to smell of the sweetness of the goddess. Her luscious, earthy smell may even in-

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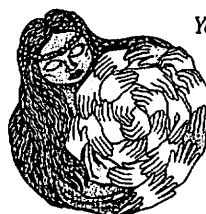
## Boston Biotech Protest

*continued from page 13*

stated, "this is hands down the largest gathering of people standing up to oppose the genetic engineering of food, trees and life in general, that has ever occurred in North America. This is the beginning of a major movement on this

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