

Spirit Call: Embraced by the Crown of Pachamama
February 5-12, 2010

I sat on the airplane, with my usual pre journey anxiety... Will I be cold and whining? Will the Northern Lights come for us? Have we done enough research? Will people be happy that they said "yes" to this journey? I had no idea that this would be a journey that would leave me in complete awe.

We knew early on that we were going to return to Nord Kapp, the most northern point of Europe. We knew that it was a part of our work to bring ceremony there, and to source from the Rainbow Fountain of the Earth itself. We said to each other, while planning, we will offer this out to the Ayllu (Spirit Community) and see if there are others who feel called, but no matter what, we are going.

Inside me, there was an old knowing that sometimes these kinds of vision quests can be difficult, can take everything you've got, and more. I was prepared to stay up night after night, alert to see the Northern Lights, to sleep uncomfortably on the bus for days. I was prepared for bad weather, driving delays, difficulty helping people stay in the mythic energy of the trip, so they would not get stuck in physical issues. What unfolded was a breath taking flow of events that reached my very core of understanding, transformed my connection with the Earth and all of the natural world. I am still a swirl energetically, as I write this.

The group got together on the 5th settling into the hotel, the frigid air, and ceremony with a Swedish shaman and teacher. We went out into the dark and held a fireless ceremony by the half frozen half rushing river. The shaman called in the Nordic gods Freye, Oden, Thor, to guide us on our journey, to bless us on our way. We all called in the wolf, a threatened animal of the North. We called it in from Russia, and from Finland. We called in it's mysteries, it's medicine.

The next day we crossed the Arctic Circle, spent the day at a 400 year old tradition called the Sami Market in Jokkmokk, Sweden. We attended the presentation of Patricia, a British woman who has been living in Sweden and studying the Northern Lights for 10 years. Among other things, she informed us that the activity of the Northern Lights is connected with the activity of the sun. And that the sun had just been observed sending off solar flares that could produce Lights over the next several days. We were thrilled to hear that we were indeed in the right place and time, that our chances of seeing them were good. A spark of magic, my heart relaxed a bit.

The next morning in the pinkness of dawn we gathered again by the half frozen, half rushing river. This time we created a fire ceremony in the snow. Our group came together and one by one made our offerings to the fire. We circled around each other in the crystal snows and morning sunrise. We sang our songs to the Frost Giants and Spirits of the Northlands. I felt recognized by this place I had been to just

once before. I felt a tumult of joy coming from the snow, the rocks beneath, the trees, and the wild river; a spark of magic thrilling through me.

We began our journey North, our longest day on the bus. By night we reached our hotel in Norway, checked in, and had dinner around 8:30. It was very black and clear outside, and yet we felt no rush. We were anticipating a long vigil night, waiting for the Lights, and we were preparing. At the end of dinner one of the men in the group started to ring his wine glass with his finger creating the lovely sound of a bell. Soon others joined in until most of the group was playing or trying to play their wine glasses. The sound created a harmonic of a whole different sound; one which rolled and changed and rang very loudly. When the harmonic started, I got the internal message that we were calling to the Lights. I dropped into my intention and fed that call, inviting the Lights to be with us, whether we were to see them or not.

As we rolled out of dinner, and into our outdoor layers, I was sure to have my 12 hour hand warmers with me, for the long night ahead. People were outside before I got there, nothing in the sky. As the last of the group trickled out, we began to see it. A large arc across the sky, it looked white at first, was it a cloud? Was it a light from the top of the building? Was it the Northern Lights or not? We fought ourselves and our disbelief as the arc became green and then expanded and held pink edges. A heart shape appeared straight over our heads. Before long we noticed pinky clouds were gathering and moving towards the Lights. Within just another few minutes the sky was clouded over completely. We gathered together to celebrate and give thanks, creating the same arc shape on the ground. It was an incredible gift to receive, and so early in the journey. We lit sparklers, watched to see if the clouds would clear, and then full of gratitude, went off to bed. It was as if Pachamama (Mother Earth) was saying, "yes, the Lights are here with you, now go to bed and dream". Another spark of magic, my heart feels as if it will burst. My hand warmers saved for another night.

We wake in the dark, and still the sky is cloudy. Gathering in the restaurant, we give thanks to the Scandinavian people who offer such incredible breakfasts to their guests. In addition to the usual cereals, breads, tea and coffee, there are 3-5 kinds of fish, eggs, meats, cheese, fruits, veggies, yogurts etc... an abundance to start the day. Off we go again, in the bus, which has by now taken on a mythic and playful air as people deal with the hours contained on it. It is labeled with big Swedish lettering that looks very much like Galactic Taxi, and so it is christened and called by us. Out the big windows we see snowy landscape reaching out horizon to horizon. The trees are shorter now, a few reindeer on the road. Even the bus driver is warming up to this caravan of mystic misfits, courageous sweet shaman. He shares with us secret places and people he knows from his many journeys and life in this Northern land.

Today we drive through a spectacular canyon, with huge frozen waterfalls of incredible blue ice. We ooh and awe our way along, even seeing ice climbers

attempting their thrilling sport. The light is unworldly, as the angle is so low in the sky. The sun does not “go down”, it rolls across, leaving hours of pre dawn and post sunset light. This angle, combined with the million rainbow snowflakes, casts pinks and blues out on to the land. It creates dramatic sunrises and sunsets. This may be the dark time, but it is full of color and its own kind of light.

We arrive at the north coast, west of our destination. There are petroglyphs here, stone carvings all over the rock hill sides. They show people, animals, fishing in deep waters, that we shaman can only think of as the depths of the indigenous soul. Of course they are covered with snow this time of year, so we must be content to see them through the museum exhibits. However, some of our group prefer to experience the glyphs by creating them in the snow. So outside there are snowglyphs created with today’s vision of life, union, balance, and the ancient spirit canoe. I wonder if they will last a thousand years, or at least until May. At this point I feel a deep sense of peace in the journey. We are not sure how the roads to Nord Kapp will be, and we have hours to reach our hotel for the night, but there is a feeling of momentum, of grace.

Ceremony is planned for the morning, in preparation for our drive out to the monument at Nord Kapp. We gather together, bringing our thoughts and prayers. Our creation flows from the journey so far, and beautiful offerings of words, art works, and singing come forth. One of the women takes paper and weaves a little mat. It is her representation of a reweaving of the matrix to bring more grace and beauty to the world. A practical woman, she says, “I got tired of waiting for it to be done, and did it myself”. “That’s Charlotte”, I think to myself, “how great!” The man next to me says – “oh yes Charlottes recreated her web”. The room is filled with joy. None of us knows what the day will bring. And yet there is a feeling of great anticipation.

At about 11:30am we begin to gather at the bus. Several of us, out and ready, are walking on the road looking out at the great fjord waters of this coastal fishing village. Someone shouts, “look up”. There in the sky, circling above us, is an eagle. He floats on the winds, motionless. And again the spark of magic lights me up. It is a good day, clear and glowing. The weather is on our side leaving the roads snowy but free of ice. Everything is with us.

Onward we go, to meet up with the caravan going to the monument. Just one time a day can we go in, and we must be on time for the escort. We drive out of the fjord and up onto a huge plateau. The sun is about 4 fingers above the horizon, and someone calls, “look there’s a rainbow following us”. We look back and the road turns so that we can see another incredible site. The sun is ringed with rainbow. Sundogs they call it, where I come from. I have only seen it one other time. The sun shines through snow crystals in the air, causing a rainbow of light to ring the sun. Two additional suns flank the sun within the rainbow arcs. The bus driver pulls over. Everyone pours out of the bus with their cameras. We all take in the light of the sun, and the energy of the white, white landscape. It is breathtaking. It is here

on this sweeping plateau, with the snowflakes whistling my name that I am completely taken into a new place. I feel the life of the sun, the life of the snowflakes, the life of all creation dancing. I am abuzz inside. I cannot quite take in the enormity of it. Is this something of the "Oneness" others have expressed? I am present to the journey, to each person in our group, and yet I have a whole explosion going on inside. All of creation was singing to me, "we see you", "we are so glad you are all here". "We appreciate you". I am amazed at the lack of feeling that I should have brought more, offered more. That feeling is from another time. That is the old way of being for me. All of nature is screaming to me in a chorus of energy, "Giving is receiving, receiving is giving". "You are our joy". Time stands still, even while we are in motion. This joy is rewiring my energy field.

Soon we are back on the bus, waiting for the convoy to take us the last few miles. We get all our clothes on now, as we know this will be the coldest experience we will have. The wind is high on the cliff edge above the ocean. We go off to the side, away from the building and the other visitors. Wake takes out the Q'ero pancho he has brought from Peru and the US. He and Thomas hold on tight to it, as it flows in the frigid winds. I see a pattern I have not seen in it before. It looks so different here.

As each person sources their own way around the monument, we meet up again inside looking out the big windows towards the ocean. Roses are brought out, one for each person, the Peace Rose Ceremony. Each person is to offer their breath into the rose as they receive visions or ask for help for themselves, their families, or greater communities. And we drop into the energy of this northern place. A journey appears in my mind... each of us, in our spirit canoe, paddling out into the Arctic Ocean together and into the Rainbow Fountain of Light that pours from the crown of Pachamama. I am speaking it to the group as it unfolds in my vision. The energy fills us up, clearing each chakra, spinning it with its own color of the rainbow until we are paddling rainbows. We offer our gifts out into the energy of the fountain, to be shared around the world. We offer the availability of grace, beauty, cooperation, community, and more. As the journey ends, we go outside once again. Each person offered their intentions and gifts again to the great waters of the Arctic Ocean. Hundreds of prayers went flying on the wild winds, held by rose petals.

As if all of this was not enough, the day continued to unfold in its own way of beauty. We returned to our hotel full of joy. Still in awe of the day's experience, there were few words as we gathered again in the circle with candles. Instead we drew pictures and let the energy flow on to 4 white pages of paper. Each page a different mandala of expressions that we all contributed to simultaneously.

After dinner we boarded the bus again and set off, out of the city lights, in hopes of communing with the Northern Lights again. The bus driver, as excited as we were pulled over, jumped off the bus, returned immediately to say, "They are here". Again, in an arc of light across the sky, we watch as long as we can stand it. Cold in our boots we reluctantly depart.

On the ride back to the hotel, I am reminded of all the “arcs” we have encountered on this journey. The Arctic Circle, the Arctic Ocean, the rainbow arcs around the sun, the arc of Northern Lights not once, but twice. What did it mean to have this symbol appear so many times to us?

We had two days left, driving south. The morning greeted us with another sparkling day, rainbow and sundogs coming in the front window of the bus for an hour! Some people talked of the day before, but much stillness on the bus. The card game that had been a consistent part of the bus ride carried on. As planners we had a few more surprises up our sleeves. Some of which we ourselves had not seen yet in winter.

The bus driver pulled into the property of a Sami family. We were greeted and taken into a large lavu, a teepee style shelter common to the Sami people who herd reindeer out on the tundra. The mistress Anna told us their family was one of the few who still led the herding life. She shared stories with us, as well as hot soup and the warmth of the hearth fire. She introduced us to her son, who led people out to meet a few reindeer. The bravest of us rode the sleds, holding the reins, as the reindeer raced around the corral. Others practiced the lasso with mixed results. Anna’s husband entertained others with stories of herding reindeer: a story I look forward to sharing in the future.

Our last night in Norway, I felt very satisfied, content. I was still filled with the swirl of energy that had been working me for the past few days, but I was so happy that the journey had gone so unbelievably well. Those who woke in the night went outside to see another vision of Northern Lights, a sky of pink draping curtain shapes. And our last day of Galactic Taxi Vision Quest began. This day just a few hours of driving and we arrived at our destination, the Ice Hotel, a marvelous place. Earlier in the journey we saw ice sculptures, beautiful carvings of animals and reindeer herders, but it was very small compared to what we now approach. At the Ice Hotel we see massive walls, a cathedral of ice, and of course the ice bar which we are sure to visit before leaving. As we arrive, though we go out onto the frozen river, from which all the ice has been sawed and taken to make the hotel. Now frozen over again it is glowing with the red and oranges of sunset. The fire is set, and we circle around to energetically offer our thanks for the gifts of the journey. The feeling of awe has been sustained through so many events that many of us are speechless except to say thank you to each other for coming, witnessing and participating in our collective experience. There is a knowing that this was truly an experience of a lifetime. It will be a while, if ever, before we can fully understand what has taken place.

As I write this, I am still in a swirl of energy that feels like it is recalibrating my energy field. I still say the wrong thing at the wrong time, I still make my usual mistakes and yet, there is a new knowing inside of me. My awareness has been expanded. I feel the life in the sun, the wind and the snow. I feel the connection

with all of nature that rejoices in my presence, not my doing. Spirit Call: Embraced by the Crown of Pachamama. Yes we are.