

WATERBEARER DREAMING

Workshops with Melanie Reinhart 2009



Well-head at Chalice Well, Glastonbury.
Photo credit: Sophia Smith

WATERBEARER DREAMING

The Aquarius triple conjunctions of 2009-2010

A 'dreaming' is a term borrowed from the Aboriginal cultures of Australia. It is a form of reverie, but not quite a 'fantasy', as it enable us to enter through the imagination the world of subtle forms of which the visible world is an expression. Through a 'dreaming', we visit the essence of what we contemplate and allow its wisdom to speak to us. Of course, the intellect and factual material of all kinds can be included, but the orientation is primarily receptive. It is a different way of learning about something.

On our workshop, we engage with a variety of facts, ideas, images, sounds, interpretations and meanings around the theme of Jupiter, Chiron and Neptune in Aquarius. This creates a space within which each of us will inwardly attune to these energies in a way that is deeply personal, and the invisible, individual sense of meaning touches us.

Here are some thoughts and ideas, as part of that process

Chiron and Neptune will be exactly conjunct in February 2010, late in the sign of Aquarius, and beginning a new cycle. During 2009, Jupiter, which moves faster than either of them, will shuttle back and forth six times between their respective zodiac positions, linking their energies together. The last time these three planets were conjunct was in 1945, and so we are at the end of the outgoing cycle, ready for a new beginning. This actually a very rare triple conjunction, which last occurred in 1945-46, and before that in 1881 in total only 6 times between 300AD and 3000AD.

The early weeks of 2009, when the faster moving planets are moving through Aquarius, see a large grouping in this sign, emphasizing its characteristics. During late February in particular, we see a total of six planets there, plus the North Node of the Moon. This serves to personalize the Aquarian themes, as described below, and the involvement of the Nodes suggests that this is the time to align ourselves with our most deeply felt aspirations and intentions, for the good of all beings. We are going forward on new paths. Aquarius is a sign with profound humanitarian awareness, social conscience and sense of the potential of all people to activate their highest. At the same time, if we are not to invite disillusionment with 'the ways of the world', we need to remain firmly anchored and in touch with our own personal field of experience, and cultivate skilful ways to process what otherwise becomes obstacles in our field of endeavour.

Trio in Aquarius

Chiron is a Minor Planet associated with expansion of consciousness, with healing and insight; its process supports us in times of transition, enabling us to integrate change and to heal. When it is active, connection with our own inner depths is facilitated.

Chiron's placing in Aquarius concerns our vulnerability to 'group think' and its potential to mislead and even wound us. As the incoming waves of thought stir within the Group Mind, we need to exercise personal discernment as we hear the voice of tomorrow. We can start by understanding clearly the difference between information, knowledge and wisdom.

Astrologically, Neptune is associated with a subtle inner unfolding which facilitates the opening of the heart of compassion, through states of higher consciousness which are inspirational, devotional and unifying. Just as Neptune was the god of the sea, its planetary process is one of melting, softening and dissolving as our feelings and perceptions are refined. When the waves of this energy connect with the density of life on the earth plane, however, the side-effects include chaos, confusion, and feelings of lack of focus, weakness or helplessness. Knowing this, we do what we can to keep afloat, so to speak, in our practical affairs, while turning within to the healing waters of soul. Remembering that things may not be as they appear, we proceed in our life and work with gentleness and caution, not allowing ourselves to jump confidently to conclusions and then to become righteous in our thinking. These aspects are an opportunity *par excellence* for inwardly releasing the areas of hardness within the soul which cause suffering to ourselves and others because they dull our sensitivity. We allow compassion to come to the fore. We engage in forgiveness work. We commit ourselves to kindness, to ourselves and others.

In traditional astrology, Jupiter was called the 'Great Benefic', bringing a time of blessings, inner and/or outer. Whatever happens, we are more able to access feelings of hope, optimism and joy; the sense of inhabiting a world of possibility and magic persists even through difficulties. A benign force makes its presence felt in so many ways, and also helps us understand the meaning of what occurs in our lives.

PLANETS IN ASPECT	DATE	DEGREE + ZODIAC SIGN
Jupiter Conjunct Chiron	23 May 2009	26° Aq12' D 26° Aq12' D
Jupiter Conjunct Neptune	28 May 2009	26° Aq28' D 26° Aq28' R
Neptune R	29 May 2009	26° Aq28' R
Chiron R	30 May 2009	26° Aq13' R
Jupiter R	15 Jun 2009	26° Aq59' R
Jupiter Conjunct Neptune	10 Jul 2009	26° Aq01' R 26° Aq01' R
Jupiter Conjunct Chiron	22 Jul 2009	24° Aq54' R 24° Aq54' R
Jupiter D	13 Oct 2009	17° Aq11' D
Chiron D	31 Oct 2009	21° Aq13' D
Neptune D	4 Nov 2009	23° Aq41' D
Jupiter Conjunct Chiron	7 Dec 2009	21° Aq57' D 21° Aq57' D
Jupiter Conjunct Neptune	21 Dec 2009	24° Aq17' D 24° Aq17' D
Neptune Conjunct Chiron	17 Feb 2010	26° Aq14' D 26° Aq14' D
Neptune R	31 May 2010	28° Aq41' R
Chiron R	4 Jun 2010	00° Pi59' R

An ancient pottery bowl

Three of the six conjunctions, plus three planetary 'stations', all occur in the 27th degree of Aquarius, as can be seen in the date list. (1) Interestingly, this is the exact point where the Chiron/Neptune conjunction occurs in February 2010! The Sabian Symbol is very evocative: '*An ancient pottery bowl, filled with fresh violets.*' (2) Violets have long been considered in folk-lore as representing humility and simplicity, and this image provides a poignant contrast with the speed, brashness and intellectual complexity of modern life. Rudhyar offers the phrase 'Delicacy of Feeling' to describe the keynote of this symbol.

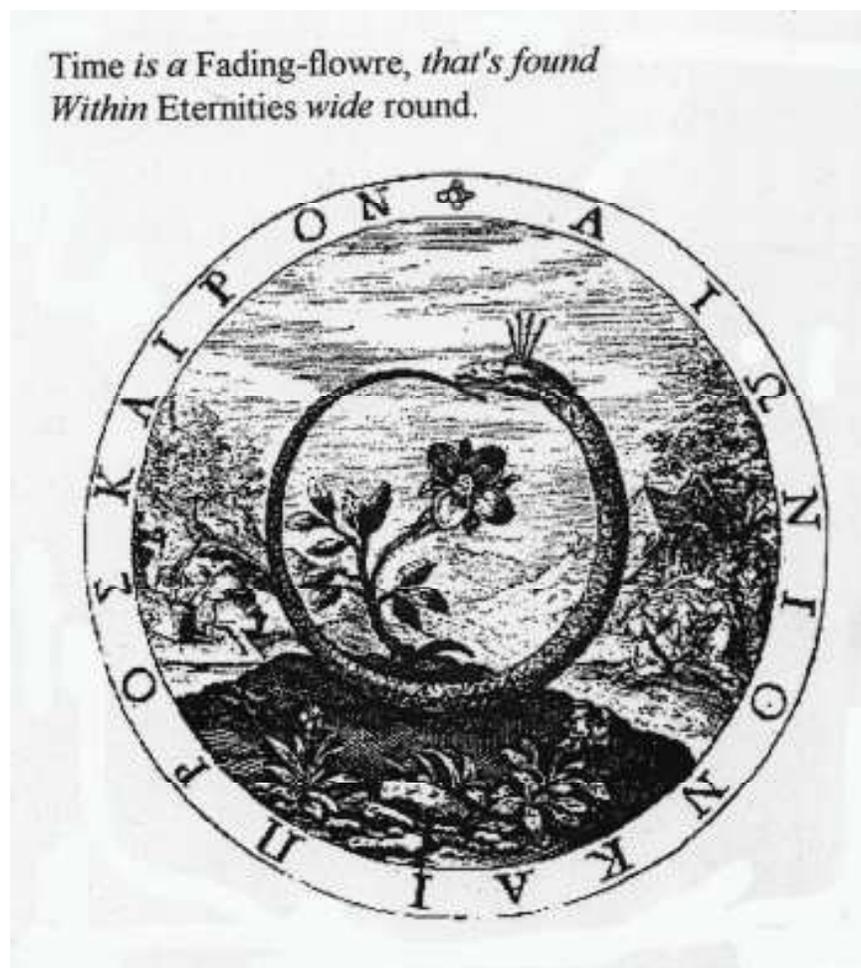
The last set of conjunctions between Jupiter, Chiron and Neptune occurred in 1945, as World War II was ending. Although recent events have not been 'officially' named as 'World War III', there has again been so much suffering world-wide that a condition of numbness has perhaps developed, sometimes called 'Compassion Burnout'. There is only so much 'bad news' that we can hear before shutting off feeling responses and going into 'escape' mode. Indeed, we have been living in a field of socially sanctioned addiction to various kinds of distractions. However, this cycle is ending as we are challenged to 'stay with' our experience.(3)

In 1945 the United Nations was founded (4), and we are already seeing a reassessment of its function and role, and the degree to which it has succeeded or failed. Reading the original Charter of the United Nations, one cannot fail to be inspired by the noble ideals codified therein. Its preamble famously begins 'We the People' During the 2009 conjunctions, it may be the time to consider whether peace, dignity and freedom can in fact be 'implemented' while individuals lack the means to deal with their inner conflicts. And yet, at the same time, these are aspirations which can prompt wise and effective action. The 'pottery bowl' offers a poignant counterpart to theoretical idealism and political ambition in the direction of 'One World'. It is domestic, personal, made of earth, and provides a container in which plants can grow

... filled with fresh violets

This powerful series of conjunctions may bring a re-kindling of faith and hope, and the *challenge may be to not misplace this energy*. Poignantly, in the horoscope of Zimbabwe, the South Node of the Moon is at 27.11 Aquarius, and at the time of writing, it seems that at last the plight of the people there, suffering under the mad despot Robert Mugabe, is reaching beyond the media lock-down that has been in place for years. Zimbabwe was founded on the wish to make right the wrongs of the past (South Node in Aquarius), and the collective impact of the people's broken dreams stretches beyond its immediate borders. For a country which once aspired to be the very model of a modern, multiracial state, reached through peaceful transition from its old colonial institutions ... is perilously close to being labelled a 'failed state'. This reversal occurred in just over 20 years. With so much activity around its South Node throughout 2009, building up from December 2008, the situation in Zimbabwe looks poised to escalate.

Today our world abounds with reminders of *impermanence*. In the midst of our shock, grief and sense of loss over personal or collective situations, we can perhaps remember this teaching, so important on the Buddhist path. For everything in the world of form has a beginning, middle and end, flowering and fading like the violets.



In the horoscope of the USA, the Moon is placed in 27.10 Aquarius, very close to all the action of 2009. Interestingly, this is exactly conjunct the Zimbabwe South Node referred to above. Given that, it is perhaps surprising that the United States has not demonstrated more interest in Zimbabwe. However, it may be that these two nations share a 'soul theme' – that of the breaking of a dream. The notion of the demise of the 'American Dream' has been widely debated in the media over recent months, and the people of Zimbabwe have endured betrayal of their dreams, in addition to the physical hardship. The leaders of these two countries are also 'framed' in a polarity: Barak Obama is seen as a Saviour, and represents a figure of hope, a positive role model for people of African, Asian or mixed ethnic origin. In counterpart to this, Robert Mugabe has truly come to personify the very stuff collective nightmare. Racial stereotypes are being revealed and also challenged and transcended on a grand scale in these two people. This beautifully expresses the Aquarian themes of revolution, social change, and opportunities for liberating the mind from prejudice.

The Sabian Symbol for this degree is 'A tree felled and sawed to ensure a supply of wood for the winter'. The USA is under the spotlight, and Barak Obama will be riding on the tide of these aspects during his first year in office, when we will no doubt see a dramatization of the very aspects we are discussing. If 'globalism' is to continue as a major 'world structure' (Aquarius) we will need to admit its potential for harm (Chiron in Aquarius), and learn new ways of being within it.

Perhaps this earthen bowl of violets is showing us the 'way of the ancients'



Photo: below an ancient Christian church hewn from granite in the hillside, reputed to be where St. Paul had sojourned. Kilistra, near Konya, Turkey. April 2009.

The Water Bearer

This conjunction occurs when the Sun is in Aquarius, and also physically placed within the constellation of the Water Bearer. As mentioned, Aquarius is preoccupied with the cosmological, and the large-scale collective ideas. We are challenged to personalise our sense of the 'big picture' through our individual beliefs and actions. Today a virtual flood of new ideas issues forth from sources familiar and new, which therefore require considerable discernment on our part.

There is within Aquarius a horror of being 'selfish', as well as a vulnerability to the influence of the group. Hence the reputation of Aquarians being 'The Rebel'. Underneath this is a deep need to belong, to identify with a group, to be accepted and feel one's place within it. Staying close to this sensitivity and honouring it is important, as our 'still small voice' will

guide us through the times when we risk simply importing the prevailing views of 'what is true', to the detriment of our own inner knowing.

The Water Bearer is a very large constellation, usually depicted as a figure carrying a jar of water which is being poured down from above. The desire to 'pour out' one's best, for the benefit of all concerned, is deep and sincere in this sign. During 2009, in ways big and small, we will be encouraged to honour this impulse. Interestingly, many existing images of the constellations show the Aquarian figure as depicting supreme effort, or stress, or a sense of being out of balance. Sometimes, the Heavenly River which pours down through the jar of the Water Bearer looks like a huge snake, or a yoke.

This poignantly reflects how in this sign we may meet many powerful obstacles, evoked by the depth of commitment and dedication to the Greater Good. Aquarius is one of the 'fixed' signs, and as such its field concentrates energy, holds it and focuses on preservation, purpose and gathering in. The capacity to stay true to one's vision is an Aquarian gift, and during 2009 this will be nourished by the prevailing energies. We are offered the opportunity to move beyond what is not working, and to be inspired with new possibilities, inner and/or outer. During January and February in particular, we have celestial support for re-setting our visions and perspectives, allowing a higher understanding to generate.

New ideas bring forth new social and cultural forms, but the spiritual path, the 'perennial philosophy' is ageless, guided as it is by the Wisdom of the Heart-mind. Located within the constellation of Aquarius, under the foot of the Waterbearer, there is a galaxy (NGC 7252) which is named 'Atoms for Peace' after the famous speech in 1953 by Eisenhower. May we use our capacity for technological innovation to benefit humanity. May it be so.

ENDNOTES

(1) Dates marked either 'R' or 'D' are turning points in the planet's movement:

- R means the planet is appearing to turn to reverse motion
- D means it is resuming forward motion.

The period of R (Retrograde) motion favours the inner dimensions of work, when it is wise to prepare, watch and wait. The consequences of past actions come to either help or hinder one's progress, internally and externally. By contrast, periods of Direct motion (D) are usually auspicious for forging ahead, making decision and initiating action.

- (2) There are several sets of symbols, each one relating to one degree of the 360 degrees of the zodiac. The 'Sabian Symbols' were masterfully interpreted by Dane Rudhyar in his book *'An Astrological Mandala'*, Vintage Books (Random House), 1974.
- (3) See the works of Pema Chodron and Tsultrim Allione for help with cultivating the skilful means to do this.
- (4) Founding of the United Nations: 24th October 1945; 16.45 EST; Washington DC.
- (5) Zimbabwe: 18th April 1980 00hr EET; Harare.

JUPITER, CHIRON and NEPTUNE in 2009-2010

The table below gives the dates of all the conjunctions between these three planets, leading up to the Chiron-Neptune conjunction in February 2010.

All those marked in red occur in precisely the same degree, and therefore these dates prefigure the conjunction, which is the beginning of the new cycle. Look for the 'signs' in your life, inner and outer, during these times.

PLANETS IN ASPECT	DATE	DEGREE + ZODIAC SIGN
Jupiter Conjunct Chiron	23 May 2009	26°Aq12' D 26°Aq12' D
Jupiter Conjunct Neptune	28 May 2009	26°Aq28' D 26°Aq28' R
Neptune R	29 May 2009	26°Aq28' R
Chiron R	30 May 2009	26°Aq13' R
Jupiter R	15 Jun 2009	26°Aq59' R
Jupiter Conjunct Neptune	10 Jul 2009	26°Aq01' R 26°Aq01' R
Jupiter Conjunct Chiron	22 Jul 2009	24°Aq54' R 24°Aq54' R
Jupiter D	13 Oct 2009	17°Aq11' D
Chiron D	31 Oct 2009	21°Aq13' D
Neptune D	4 Nov 2009	23°Aq41' D
Jupiter Conjunct Chiron	7 Dec 2009	21°Aq57' D 21°Aq57' D
Jupiter Conjunct Neptune	21 Dec 2009	24°Aq17' D 24°Aq17' D
Neptune Conjunct Chiron	17 Feb 2010	26°Aq14' D 26°Aq14' D
Neptune R	31 May 2010	28°Aq41' R
Chiron R	4 Jun 2010	00°Pi59' R

YOUR WORD-LIST FOR THE TRIPLE CONJUNCTIONS

Here are columns for Jupiter, Chiron and Neptune respectively. 'Play' with your understanding, noting down words which relate to each of them as they 'strike' you as meaningful to you, through the day. Then spend time contemplating the lists, with the intention of allowing meaning and personal connections to be generated.

JUPITER	CHIRON	NEPTUNE