

Reviews

Beyond the Book of Shadows **by Lynden Clarke**

Green Magic
167 pages £12.99

Very occasionally a book on practicing Wiccan ritual comes along that breaks the stranglehold of the Gardnerian/Alexandrian orthodoxy. Lynden Clarke's book is one of those rare volumes.

The author focuses on two of the major aspects of Wiccan rites: the setting up of the magical circle, and the invoking of Divine forces into it.

Within this framework we are given advice on creating a temple, either permanent or 'not so-permanent'; designing and using the altar and magical tools; creating the circle; invoking and banishing pentagrams; invoking elemental guardians; raising energy and invoking the gods.

While the book is designed as a more advanced guide to circle building within the overall framework of a Wiccan ritual, it is written in a straightforward, down-to-earth and accessible manner, and yet there is no 'dumbing down' here; the author succeeds in presenting modern witchcraft as a mystery religion of great spiritual depth and subtlety.

Clarke makes a very good case for departing from common Wiccan practice with regard to the traditional placement of the elements in the circle, and also the invoking and banishing pentagrams of which he says the Golden Dawn derived method is difficult and over-complicated.

His suggestion that the athame should symbolise Spirit, as it is "used for absolutely everything", and that "single element" tools be kept for specific tasks also seems eminently sensible.

A worthwhile and thought-provoking manual.

Recommended