

# DANCING WITH THE GODS - MANIFESTING YOUR OWN MYTH

## A SEVEN-DAY RESIDENTIAL WORKSHOP

Presented By Members of the Fool's Dance Gestalt Company - Paul Rebillot School  
in Ireland

The Slí an Chroí Centre, Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow, Ireland.

February 15<sup>th</sup> to February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

**MANIFESTING YOUR OWN MYTH:** There can't be many Irish people who are not familiar with at least a few stories from Celtic mythology - the sad fate of the *Children of Lir*, maybe, or the heroic exploits of *Fionn* and his companions of the *Fianna*. Classical Greek myths have also found a place in our collective consciousness as shown, for instance, by our use of the term '*Herculean*' for a particularly demanding task - a reference to the twelve near-impossible *Labours of Hercules*. Even some myths from less-familiar cultures have now become quite well-known in the West - among them the Sumerian saga of *Inanna* (Goddess of love, fertility .... and of war) journeying to the Land of the Dead to visit its Queen, her vengeful twin sister *Ereshkigal*. Or the story of how the Egyptian Goddess *Isis* found, reunited and reanimated the scattered remains of her murdered husband *Osiris* so that she and he could still conceive a child together. In pre-literate societies such stories would have been preserved in the oral tradition by ritual telling and retelling over, perhaps, thousands of years. *That these ancient stories have so tenaciously survived into our own time suggests that they express deep truths about the human condition.*

Within the depths of each of us are many stories. These stories tell themselves over and over again in the lives of individuals as well as in the myths and rituals of every age and culture. If our stories remain at the unconscious level we risk being lived by them, mistaking the Gods for mere coincidences and reducing archetypal dramas to personal neuroses. Again and again, we will find ourselves tangled in the same old situations, struggling over and over with the same old issues.

*A myth or legend that attracts us, haunts us and draws us in does so because our unconscious recognises that there is something within that particular story that we need to learn.* Myths, as the eminent psychologist James Hillman put it, "*show our depth psychology in ancient dress*" Once we bring our story into consciousness, however, we can begin to draw on the energies of these archetypal patterns, cooperate with them, and by working with them creatively, live our myth forward to new awakenings.

**Participants in 'Dancing with the Gods' are asked to bring to the workshop a myth from any culture - or a legend or a folk-tale so long as the latter have a prominent supernatural element.** It is not necessary to have explored the psychological significance of the myth - it is sufficient just to be familiar with the story and to be drawn to it. That attraction indicates that your psyche sees something in the mythic story that it needs in order to become whole.

Using a combination of dramatization, movement, art, fantasy, ritual and Gestalt process participants will experience their chosen myth in depth, the better to understand how it connects with their deepest self. We will explore our personal world of mythology, not from the point of view of academic or aesthetic interest, but because it can serve as a reservoir of healing energy for ourselves and for the world that we live in.

**THE FOOL'S DANCE GESTALT COMPANY - PAUL REBILLOT SCHOOL IN IRELAND:** The Fool's Dance Gestalt Company (FDGC) is a group of people in Ireland who

have extensive experience of Paul Rebillot's work and who are graduates of his Advanced Training. We came together after Paul's retirement - with his blessing - to ensure that the unique and transformative therapeutic structures that he created would continue to be available to people in Ireland.

The name of the group has a triple significance: Firstly it references *The Fool* in the Rider-Waite Tarot deck who is portrayed as a young man carrying all his possessions in a bundle on a staff over his shoulder and blithely about to step off the edge of a cliff. He symbolises the risk-taker, setting out on a journey of self-discovery that will take him through - and energise - all the other archetypal images of the Tarot. Secondly, the '*Fool's Dance*' refers to a movement process that features in most of Paul's structures. Through the Fool's Dance participants progressively embody - and thus deepen - their experiences as they progress through the workshop. And, finally, '*Gestalt Company*' is a reminder that the Rebillot approach is firmly rooted in Gestalt process.

**THE WORKSHOP LEADERS:** The co-leaders of the workshop are all graduates of Paul Rebillot's Advanced Training and have been authorised by him to co-lead his workshops.

**Tony Carlin** lives and works in Derry and has been involved in Paul Rebillot's workshops in Ireland since 1991. He is an experienced leader of experiential groupwork in a variety of areas including the Work of Byron Katie.

**John Culhane** has an extensive background in the world of education. He graduated from Paul's Advanced Training in 2003 and has been assisting in and co-leading Rebillot workshops for several years.

**Dorothee Kölle** is an artist and a community arts facilitator, group worker and trainer. She trained with Paul Rebillot in Germany and has been assisting and co-leading Rebillot workshops in Ireland since 2008.

**Fergus Lalor** is a former academic scientist with a strong interest in the use of music in psychotherapy. He began working with Paul in the early 1980s and has co-organised Rebillot workshops in Ireland since 1991.

**Mary Mangán** is a psychotherapist, group worker and trainer. She has had a long involvement with the work of Paul Rebillot and since 1991 she has co-organised and worked in Rebillot workshops in Ireland.

**PAUL REBILLOT** was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1931. A successful theatre career as actor/director and academic was interrupted in 1971 by a severe personal crisis which brought him to the Esalen Institute at Big Sur, California. There he trained as a Gestalt psychotherapist with **Dick Price** (co-founder of Esalen and one of **Fritz Perls'** first students) and then embarked on a new path which led to his becoming a major force in international psychotherapy and experiential education and an expert in the development of ritual therapeutic structures based on myth.

Rebillot's therapeutic approach was based on classical Gestalt methodology but his unique contribution to the field rests on his integration of the wisdom, skills and experiences of his earlier life in the theatre world into his Gestalt practice. Particularly important influences were his encounter in Japan

with Nōh and Kabuki dance-drama (in which ritual and gesture is all-important) and his deep fascination with the psychology of myth. The latter was enhanced through contact with the noted comparative mythologist **Joseph Campbell** whom Paul came to know during his time in Esalen.

Personal transformation through ritual enactment is a fundamental theme of Rebillot's work. His ritual structures invite participants to discover and express their inner drama in a mode that is both safe and creative and also allows groups of people to support one another in their individual inner journeys. Returning drama to its classical Greek origins in the healing arts, his therapeutic processes integrate myth, ritual, drama, art, movement, music, meditation and Gestalt process in a powerfully original way to produce a hybrid therapeutic methodology which he called '*hyper-Gestalt*'.

For over thirty years Rebillot presented his therapeutic structures at the Esalen Institute and elsewhere in the US, Europe and beyond. From 1991 to 2008 he led a series of very successful annual workshops in Ireland, among them '*The Hero's Journey*', '*The Lover's Journey*', '*Death and Resurrection*', '*Exorcising the Demon Should*', '*The Quest for the Golden Fleece*', '*Owning the Shadow*', '*The Grail Quest - Following the Path of Parzifal*', '*The Dream Tarot*' and the present workshop. Rebillot also held Advanced Training courses in Ireland, elsewhere in Europe and in the US. Paul retired from work in Europe in March, 2008 and died at home in San Francisco on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2010 at the age of 78.

**THE SLÍ AN CHROÍ CENTRE** (the name means '*The Way of the Heart*') is situated some 40 miles south of Dublin in a scenic rural area below the Wicklow mountains and surrounded by beautiful wooded grounds. It has a welcoming, easy-going, and eco-friendly atmosphere. Accommodation is mostly in simple single rooms (but see also below). *The workshop will begin at 3:00 PM on Saturday, February 15th and will end at 5:00 PM on Friday, February 21st, 2020.*

**BOOKING INFORMATION:** Workshop Fee: The workshop fee is 750 euros which includes accommodation and full board for the week, as well as all workshop materials. Accommodation is in a mix of basic single and double rooms.

**Important:** *The recent installation of a new fire-escape at*

*Slí an Chroí has resulted in the loss of two bedrooms. Consequently some room-sharing may be necessary and single rooms will be allocated in strict order of booking with deposit.*

**Bursaries:** A number of reduced-fee bursaries may be available to those whose circumstances would make payment of the full workshop fee impossible. Applications should be made to the organisers (see contact details below), should provide just enough personal background detail to allow the request to be evaluated and will be treated as confidential. Recipients of bursaries will be expected to give some assistance with practical matters during the workshop.

**Deposit:** A deposit of 150 euros will secure a place at the workshop. The number of places available is limited by the accommodation and we would urge intending participants to pay the deposit and/or the full fee as early as possible (see above). All deposit or fee payments will be acknowledged in writing. Should the workshop be cancelled deposits or full fees will be refunded, otherwise deposits are non-refundable.

**Payment Methods:** Bank-to-bank electronic transfer (EFT) is now our default method for payment of the workshop deposit and the balance or one-off full fees because of the automatic record-keeping and enhanced security that this provides. We will supply the necessary BIC and IBAN codes on request and the payment can be made *either on-line or across the counter in a bank branch. Please contact me before making any payment if, for any reason, EFT is not possible for you or if you are resident outside the Euro-zone.*

**How to Register:** *Lodge* your deposit (see above for how) and separately *mail* the completed booking form (below) to me at: **2 Harbour View Terrace Summerhill North, St. Lukes, Cork City T23 N5X7, Republic of Ireland.**

**N.B.** All letters to the Irish Republic from outside the island of Ireland **must** be sent by **Air Mail**.

**FOR ENQUIRIES OR FURTHER INFORMATION:** Write to the address above, telephone **021-4505711** (answering machine available) or e-mail me at **fergus.lalor@upcmail.ie**

**COPY OR CUT HERE** → .....

**I ENCLOSE 150 EUROS DEPOSIT FOR PAUL REBILLOT'S 'DANCING WITH THE GODS' WORKSHOP**

**NAME:** .....

**ADDRESS:** .....

**TELEPHONE NUMBER: HOME:** .....

**WORK:** .....

**E-MAIL ADDRESS:** .....

**EMERGENCY NAME & CONTACT NUMBER (In case of illness etc.):** .....

**MALE**  **FEMALE**  (Please tick box)

**VEGETARIAN: YES**  **NO**  (Please tick box)

**PLEASE ADD ME TO THE FOOL'S DANCE COMPANY MAILING LIST**  (Please tick box)

**SIGNATURE:** ..... **DATE:** .....