

The Prayer of the Dove (2013)

Ode to Cydra Vaux

**Priscilla Pfanstiel Robinson and Laura DeFazio
with Howard Burns, Amy Hoy, and Zevn Robinson**



The dove has tremendous wealth of lore and legend surrounding it. Most of it centers around all of the traditional feminine and mother symbols. In the Greek tradition, Aphrodite was born from an egg brooded by a dove. The Oracles of Dodona which Alexander sought were founded by a dove. To the Slavs, the soul would become a dove at death. To the alchemist, it was a symbol of sublimination. To the Christians, it is a symbol of peace, while to early pagans it was a symbol for the yoni or female sexual organs. It has been associated with female sexuality through such goddesses as Astarte and Isis. Because of its association with many goddesses, it was considered the embodiment of the maternal instinct. "The name dove has been given to oracles and to prophets...The prophet sent to Nineveh as God's messenger was called Jonah or the Dove..."

To the Pueblo Indians it was also honored. Its feathers were often worn and used in prayer sticks. The mournful song of the dove was considered an invocation to water and an indication to men where the water could be found. (Again we have the ancient symbol for the maternal in the connection to water.) Its song would signify waterholes or springs to which the dove must return at dusk to drink.*

Honoring the rich symbolism of the dove and employing its role as a spiritual messenger, we, Laura DeFazio and Priscilla Pfanstiel Robinson, set out earlier this summer to begin an act of artistic creation,

with a prayerful intention. Along the way, events unfolded that impacted our lives and this project. Our close friend and spiritual sister, Cydra Vaux, passed away after living an extraordinary life, the last 12 years with cancer. Immediately following her memorial service, our close friends, Howard Burns and Amy Hoy joined us in the creation of these doves with the intention to dedicate this project, and the prayers folded into these doves, to Cydra, her family, and the innumerable lives she impacted during her 51 years on this Earth. When finalizing our decision of which Origami dove to use for this project, Priscilla commented on the resemblance of this particular dove to a hummingbird. Amy looked up the meaning of a hummingbird, and found that “a hummingbird symbolizes timeless joy and the Nectar of Life. It's a symbol for accomplishing that which seems impossible and will teach you how to find the miracle of joyful living from your own life circumstances.* Our decision was made--this was the one for Cydra!

Employing the dove as the spiritual messenger, and the ephemeral shadows to represent the passing of the prayers through the thin veils between the physical and the spiritual realm, we completed our act of creation. We invite you to join us and send your own prayers to heaven as you contemplate our creation.

To sign off as Cydra would: “Sunshine and Chocolate!”

*From *Animal-Speak: The Spiritual & Magical Powers of Creatures Great & Small* by Ted Andrews