

# Zine Verschenken

#7 | december 2022 | contemporary witches



## Editorial

As the 21st century continues to unfold, we are faced with a multitude of challenges that threaten to overwhelm us: political and social turmoil, disconnection from nature, injustice, and inequality, struggles with mental health, and the devastating impacts of war, climate change, and corporate greed. In the face of all these challenges, one thing has become increasingly clear: we need witches now more than ever.

Whether you call them witches, practitioners of magic, or something else entirely, these powerful and wise figures have always played a vital role in society. Armed with a vast array of tools and traditions, from herbalism and tarot readings to spells and rituals, contemporary witches offer guidance and support as we navigate the complexities of modern life. They help us connect with our world, stand up for our rights and speak our minds, and find inner strength when we need it most.

Some may dismiss witches as mere trend followers, but they have much to offer in today's world. Their magic is a force for good, helping us heal our planet and protect ourselves from harm. It's time to recognize the vital role they play in our world and thank them for using their magic to make it a better place.

So here's to all the contemporary witches out there: we dedicate this Zine to you and hail the power of your feminine charm as we look ahead to a brighter, more magical future. Together, we can overcome challenges and create a better world for all.

All hail the power of feminine charm! Together for a better new year!

# Magic Mountain

One summer, Tante Sophie, took us deeper into the Forest. This time, as soon as we got out at Goslar station, we boarded the little Harz steam train to Wernigerode.

She put her ‘magic’ bag of treats and tattered umbrella into the cat’s cradle luggage rack above our heads.

“Alle einsteigen!” called the guard, blowing his whistle as a cloud of steam billowed into the air and the wheels clanked into motion.

“Hold tight!” warned Tante Sophie as slowly we edged forward...

“Hurray!” we cried. “We’re going up to the top of the mountains!”

Before long, we were puffing and panting up and down the hills, ploughing a track through tall grasses flecked with wildflowers on either side. The windows were half open and the air grew chilly as it blew in, whipping our hair into our faces as we gripped the sill, noses pressed against the glass.

“Sit down now, before the wind turns you turn into wild little witches!” said Tante Sophie, who was looking a bit witchy herself!

“Will we see any witches in Wernigerode?” Sonia wanted to know.

“Well, you might see the odd one, I suppose, but it isn’t the right time of year for them.”

“I know what they look like,” I said. “We’ve got one at home. She hides behind the curtains of the sitting room. When you clap your hands, she peeps out, her red eyes light up and she cackles!”

“Does she indeed? Well, here they only fly around in May on Walpurgis Night,” said Tante Sophie, which is when they bring out their cats and cauldrons and dance around their fires.”

“Where do they live?” asked Sonia.

“Most of them live inside the Brocken, a magic mountain not far from here. Unfortunately we can’t go there, but we can get a view of it from its shorter twin peak, the Wurmberg.”

“Oh,” we moaned, disappointed.

“Yes,” she sighed, “the Brocken is out of reach, on the East German side. When they divided Germany after the war, the Russians took all the best bits... We used to be able to celebrate our magic mountain. Now we can only admire it from a distance. In the old days, people would celebrate Walpurgis by lighting bonfires and drinking witches brew at midnight,” she said, eyes twinkling merrily under the brim of her black hat. “Then the forest was cleared to make room for all their electric fences and watch towers.”

Tante Sophie lit a cigarette, held it between her bony fingers and blew a puff of green smoke out of the window. I pretended not to notice and turned to look out at the view. Now that the sun was hidden behind the clouds, the hills around seemed to grow darker and darker, throwing shadows across the fields. As we wheezed up the steep slope the wheels clacked more rhythmically: over-the-hills, into- the-valleys, over-the-hills, into-the-valleys... On and on it went, weaving its spell as we chuffed through the mountain villages of Sorge and Elend, called Worry and Misery because of the poor people who lived there. Tante Sophie pulled her cloak around her, leant her head against her crooked hat and nodded off. The green eyes on her little cat brooch glittered mischievously as it peeped out of the folds. And when I stole another look, I thought I saw it’s tail twitch!

“Did you see that?” I whispered to Sonia, but she had fallen asleep too. I began to feel dozy but a wild, magical music sounded in my ears as though the heels of fairy folk were tapping on the tracks in time to a topsy-turvy gypsy melody. The train huffed and tooted, rattling around the bends in a shower of orange sparks. The faster we went, the nearer they came: the dwarves, the trolls, the elves and the pixies, the goblins and the gnomes... chasing after us, almost catching up with us until, all of a sudden, we hurtled through a cavernous mountain lit with glow worms and torches. With a deafening roar and a mighty hiss, we scattered a flock of witches who cackled and screeched overhead as they flew about like bats-on-broomsticks, casting ragged shadows onto the walls in the flickering firelight... I heard a little cat mewing somewhere, then the music faded away as we left them far behind. Soon, we emerged from the echoey tunnel into the sunlight, slowed down and shunted into the station. I woke up with a jolt as we came to a standstill.

“Wernigerode! Aussteigen!” called the guard, blowing his whistle into my ears.

“Wakey, wakey, sleepy heads!” said Tante Sophie. “We’re here! Who wants a hot chocolate?”

It wasn’t until we were standing on the platform that I noticed Tante Sophie’s umbrella had turned into a broom!

## The Witchery of Angela Carter

*'Can a bird sing only the song it knows, or can it learn a new song?'*

Those familiar with the spell-binding stories conjured up by the magic pen of Angela Carter - The Lady of the House of Love, The Bloody Chamber, The Sadeian Woman, Wolf Alice, Snow Child, The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter, The Loves of Lady Purple, The Passion of New Eve, Black Venus, The Courtship of Mr Lyon, The Tiger's Bride - will know her as a literary enchantress, controversial feminist and contemporary witch rolled into one. Her fierce and appetitive imagination exposed the dark heart of fairytales and her refashioned gothic horror stories overturned and transformed social perceptions about women, and women's views of themselves.

In their wickedly glamorous and fatal world, Carter's heroines are totally in touch with themselves, their sensitivities and passions, as well as the darker, daring, irreverent, outrageous aspects of their nature. Far from virginal, fragile, demure and helpless - or old, ugly and haggard for that matter - they are invariably mistresses of their own destiny. Curiosity rarely kills the cat and caution is regularly thrown to the wind. Her subversive, fabulously decadent, heavily-perfumed, exotically erotic tales are as shocking today as when they were first published in 1979.

Her gimlet gaze falls on the power of a child's perception, their innate wisdom, their secret language and the violent impact and bloody viscerality of coming of age, the consequent struggle between curiosity and fear, knowledge and inexperience, intuition and innocence; between Beauty and the Beast. Thanks to her, we can take a more discriminating look at the value of wisdom passed down from woman to woman, for example Carter's character of the grandmother - a witch if ever there was one - in *The Company of Wolves* (her take on Little Red Riding Hood), or her own self-cast role as the modern fairy godmother to subsequent generations of women. We are introduced to alternative symbols of witchery: a ruby red choker (her) eyebrows that meet in the middle (him), animal skins (both), not to say her trademark brand of moral pornography and gender politics.

In Angela Carter's late 20th century new fairytales, men have found themselves out-manoeuvred, and the stereotypes of dominant male, fey heroine and rescuing knight in shining armour have all been overturned. Instead, shadow-plays starring manipulative puppeteers, controlling ringmasters, rapacious beasts and cruel jailers come to the fore. As far as the so-called 'gentler sex' are concerned, notions of virtue for virtue's sake and benign passivity are trodden on once and for all. There are no taboos. At last we can give in to the attractions of forbidden fruit

and the lure of the bloody chamber: at once the reassuring womb or the sacrificial altar of the marital bed!

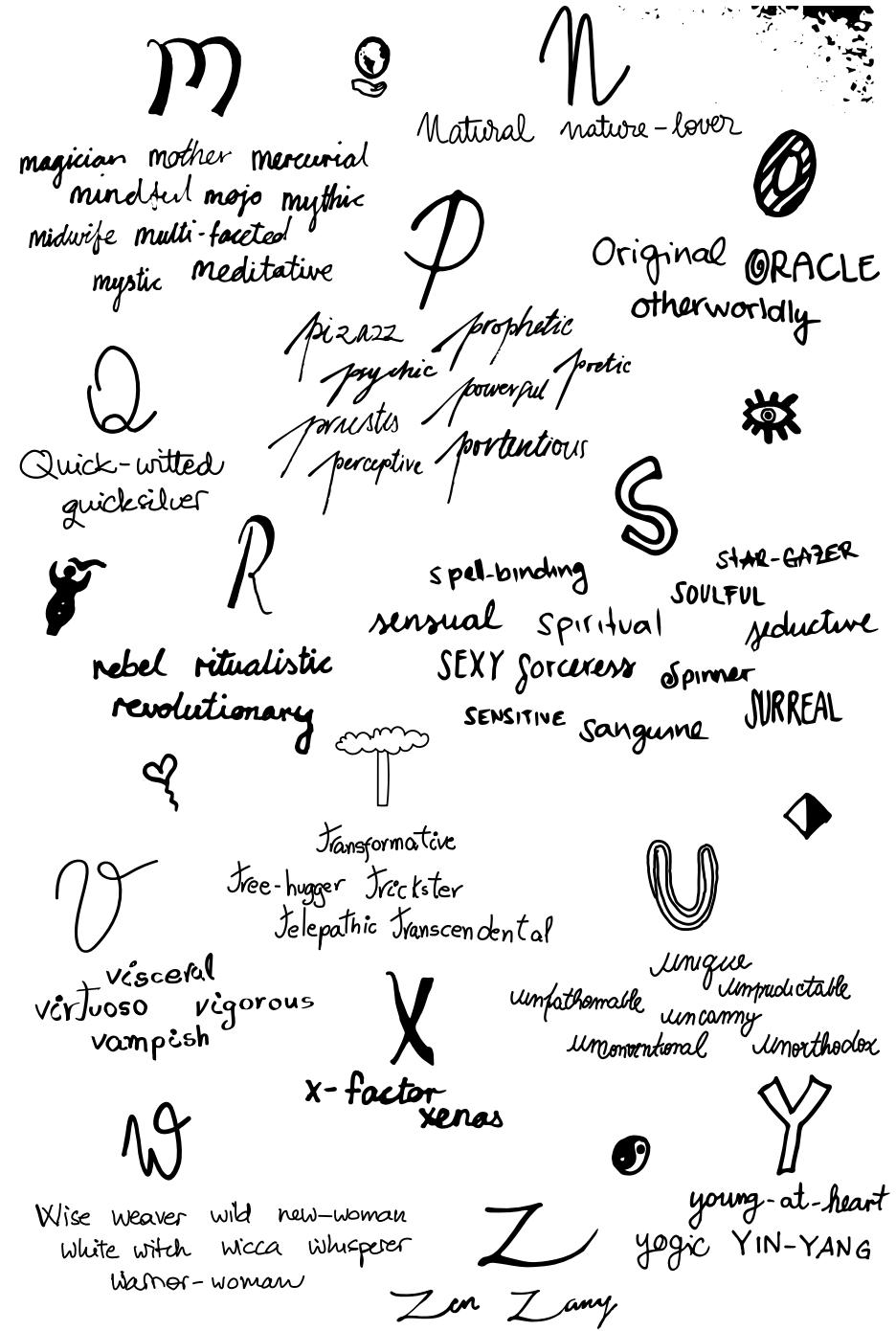
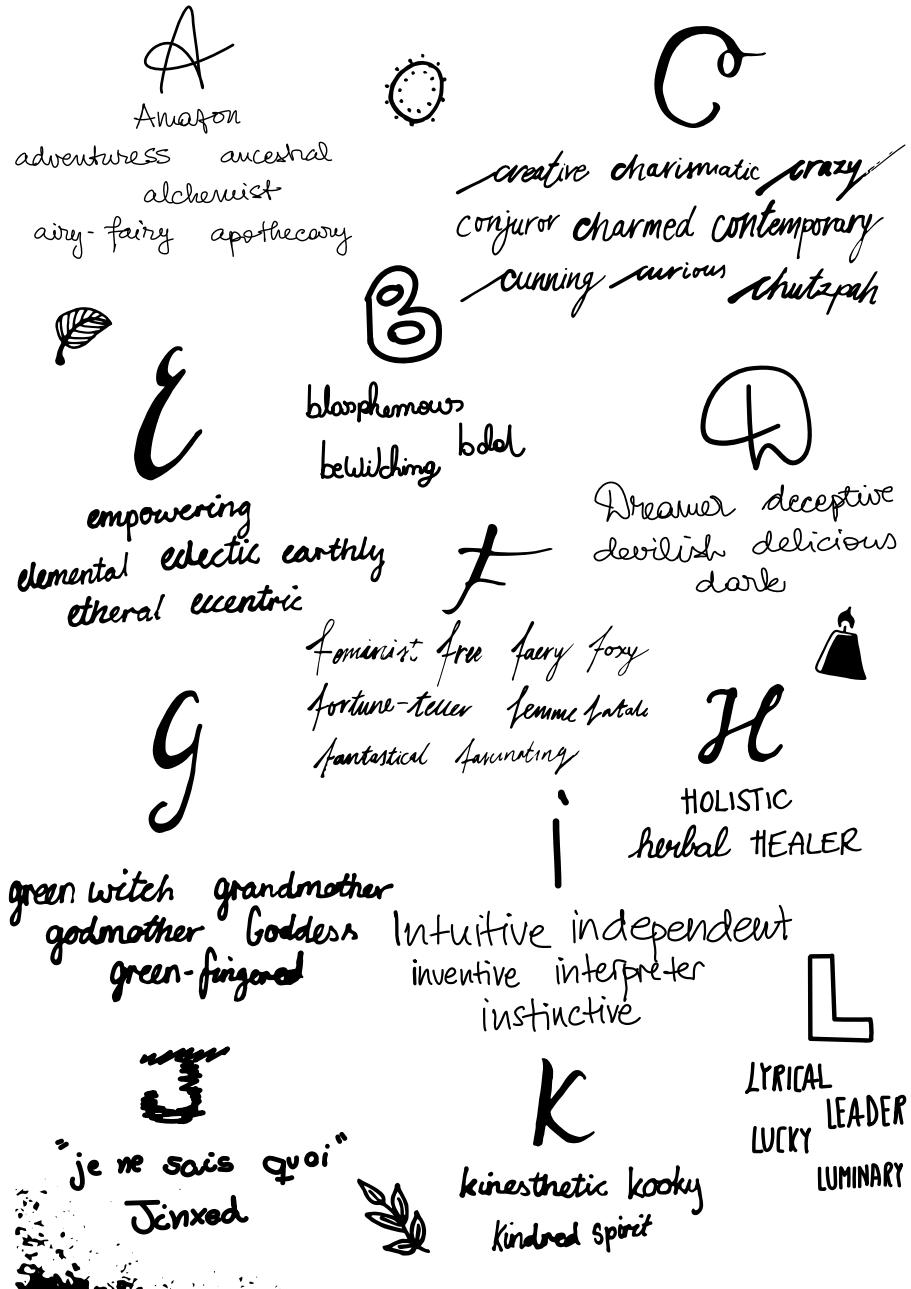
Carter celebrates the witchery of all women, our self-knowledge, our deepest desires, the mysteries that are us. Powerful and empowering, she elevates the female perspective and questions a continuing male preference for the 'blank canvas' and 'malleable putty' of 'learned femininity' over the wise, strong-willed woman of the world.

Waving her writer's wand, she reveals the magic space inside us all and inspires us to be true to ourselves. Do we choose to wear a mask, to be all but invisible to those we live alongside? Do we feel compelled to continually invent our reality, keep our secrets jealously hidden, revealing just the bare bones - or expose warts and all, the darkest corners of our psyche, our wildest dreams and the sharpest pinnacles of our ambitions? Do we virtuously resist all 'temptation' or indulge in our every 'whim and fancy'? Do we pass our days immersed in pastel dreams or wait like melancholy mermaids to be plucked from the jagged rocks of our existence? In short, do we allow ourselves to be 'dished up on a plate' for someone else's pleasure, 'peeled like an artichoke' and divested of our self-worth, passively accepting our fate at the hands of others: the hot-housing parent, the jealous, controlling lover, the oppressive employer, the slavish cult follower, the indoctrinating teacher, the refining plastic surgeon, the slim-fast nutritionist, the slaves to body beautiful, the cloning of fashion designers, an intrusive and all-pervasive social media, the Svengalis of our modern society?

Some say Carter's storytelling simply resurfaces in us what has always been there... Maybe that's why her work continues to ring so true.



## Alpha-witch: woman of many faces



# The Intersection of Feminism and Witchcraft: Empowerment and Resistance through History

There is a longstanding relationship between feminism and the practice of witchcraft. Many feminists have been inspired by the symbolism and history of witchcraft, using it as a form of resistance and self-empowerment. In this article, I will delve some of the ways in which feminism and witchcraft intersect and how they have been used to support and uplift marginalised communities.

## **Witchcraft as a symbol of defiance**

The image of the witch has frequently been adopted as a symbol of defiance against patriarchy and oppression. Throughout history, witches have been ostracised, punished, and demonised, particularly by those in positions of authority. However, feminists have reclaimed the image of the witch as a symbol of resistance and empowerment, utilising it to challenge dominant cultural narratives and assert their own agency and power. The witch has become a representation of strength and resistance, embodying the struggle against oppressive systems and the fight for equality.

*Example: The W.I.T.C.H. (Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell) organisation, which was active in the late 1960s and early 1970s, used the image of the witch as a symbol of resistance against patriarchy and war.*

“Double, bubble, war and rubble,  
When you mess with women, you’ll be in trouble.  
We’re convicted of murder if abortion is planned.  
Convicted of conspiracy if we fight for our rights.  
And burned at the stake when we stand up to fight.”

— WITCH Hex, 1969

## **The goddess movement**

The goddess movement, which originated in the 1970s as part of the feminist and New Age movements, aims to reclaim and celebrate the worship of female deities and incorporate goddess-centred spirituality into feminist practice. This movement focuses around honouring and celebrating the divine feminine, which has often been suppressed or erased in mainstream religions. Many feminists within the goddess movement have been influenced by the history and symbolism

of witches and have utilised the practice of witchcraft as a way to honour and celebrate the divine feminine.

*Example: The Re-formed Congregation of the Goddess, International (RCGI), a feminist spiritual community that was founded in 1979 and is based on the worship of the goddess and the incorporation of goddess-centred spirituality into feminist practice.*

## **The use of magic and ritual in activism**

Some feminists have utilised magic and ritual as a means of supporting their activism and advocating for social change. For instance, they may use spells or rituals to protect or support marginalised communities, or to promote environmental justice or other causes. Magic and ritual can be a formidable tool for personal and collective transformation, and feminists have utilised it as a way to bring about positive change in the world.

*Example: The Raging Grannies, a group of older feminists who use singing and humour to protest social and environmental injustices, often incorporating magic and ritual into their activism.*

## **Personal and spiritual growth**

Many feminists view the practice of witchcraft as a means of personal and spiritual growth, using it to cultivate self-awareness, self-acceptance, and a sense of personal power. It can be a way to connect with one’s inner strength and spirituality, and to find a sense of purpose and meaning in life.

*Example: The Sisterhood of the Moon, a feminist spiritual community that was founded in the 1970s and is based on the principles of goddess worship, personal growth, and social activism.*

Feminism and witchcraft may seem like unrelated movements, but they have a rich and intertwined history. From using the image of the witch as a symbol of resistance to incorporating goddess-centred spirituality into feminist practice, these two movements have provided a source of empowerment and support for marginalised communities. Whether it’s through the use of magic and ritual in activism or personal and spiritual growth, the connection between feminism and witchcraft is a meaningful one that has the potential to bring about positive change in the world!



## Deconstructing Xuxa

Accusing Xuxa of witchcraft has become, throughout the years, such an easy and fun statement. There's something weirdly satisfying in connecting an apparently naive, quirky and funny 90s pop icon with satanic rituals, Lucifer's horns and baths in goat blood. In fact the legend has been present in radio programs, podcasts, TV shows, articles and books throughout the last three decades until now. But Xuxa wasn't a real witch, was she? The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist. Xuxa was in fact accused of being a satanist for the first time in Chile in the early 90s. The proof was clear: playing the Spanish version of Xuxa Dance (Danza de Xuxa) backwards would sound something like "el diablo es un magnífico" ("the devil is magnificent"). These accusations -even if a million goose-bump-giving YouTube videos might prove it true, check them out- were of course bullshit. But the magic of Xuxa inhabited somewhere else.

But let's start from the beginning. For those who don't know what we are talking about, Xuxa was a Brazilian actress, TV hostess, model and singer -one of the 90's greatest examples of the eclectic combination of artistic activities that dominated a quite dark side of the mainstream media during the 90's and 00's categorized by Spanish band Ojete Calor under the term of "mocatriz" -, most famous for her children TV program Xuxa's Show produced by Globo Media, where she would dance and sing surrounded by kids, dressed in her out-of-space glittery outfits. The show was a blast between 1986 and 1992 in all of Latin America, Spain and the USA.

Since then it has been certainly easy to vindicate Xuxa's role just for nostalgic reasons. Her whole characterization as a beautiful tirolese-looking girl with blue angel eyes who just fell out from a spaceship might be for many people a delusional idealization of childhood. But as we all know, perfect beauty and purity always ends up getting spoiled and it didn't take long until Xuxa's role went under suspicion and understandably seen as fishy. Here's where the fun starts. It was 1990 when Felix Acori Gomez, broadcaster of north Chilean Antofagasta National Radio, claimed to have discovered hidden satanic messages in Xuxa's Dance track. Following this, more and more little details around her whole character got together according to which the theory of Xuxa being a satanist suddenly becomes somehow viable.

Her three-finger salute (meaning love in sign language) representing Satan's trident, finding 666 in her outfit's golden circles and relating her name with malefic entities of Afro-Brazilian Umbanda cult Oxu and Xango -I'm not an expert in contemporary prosecution of pagan cults but comparing Umbanda and satanism sounds pretty fishy to me-, just contributed to create the perfect climate for burning

Xuxa's albums and posters in a bonfire on the village square and if possible chase her out of town wielding torches and forks to a catchy play-along of getaway music. Malefic Xuxa, who had allegedly sold her soul to the devil for a million dollars and was responsible for her ex-partner's death, Formula 1 driver Ayrton Senna, in a racing crash, certainly would have deserved it and even more.

Envy can wreak havoc. There's certainly some of that in the desire of destroying any icon, such a perfect representation of purity, beauty, goodness that nears madness. Deeper than jealousy, this kind of envy and destructive force in the media is a way for unrepresented social classes to claim what is theirs. But there's much more of it in Xuxa's case. In fact, why should a tall blond german-looking woman being a mass role model for girls between 6 and 12 in a country, Brazil, where more than 50% of population defines as non-white? The same could be said of all the countries where Xuxa's show was a great success. As it happens with many pop stars, Xuxa was just so out of touch with the people that formed her audience. However, this time, Xuxa's accusations of satanism served as a curtain to hide what really sucked about her show: the infamous omnipresence of peacock white hegemony and an already outdated idea of women as a happy, singing, rainbow-puking Barbies while minorities struggled to claim a safe space.

Some might say it is easy to judge the past with the lenses of the present. That might be true, but not in this context. The public critique on white hegemony already arose decades ago. In fact, Xuxa's show finally included a black Paquita (Paquitas were the female dancers accompanying Xuxa in all her shows) in a USA episode in 1993. Is this enough? Of course not. What does Xuxa have to do with it? Sadly, not much either. Just as the first black Paquita was a dirty whitewashing campaign well-thought by the producers, the character of Xuxa had become a market toy to be adored or blamed at convenience.

Meanwhile Graça Meneghel, the woman behind Xuxa, supported the most successful polio vaccination campaign in Brazil, which finally led to the eradication of the illness in the country and spoke up against sexual child abuse, empowering victims and promoting public awareness. In spite of her delusional life on stage made-up of spaceships, rainbows and wild dancing children dressed like the flying monkeys of The Wizard of Oz, not everything was sunny for Xuxa. After suffering an attempted kidnap in 1991 and during her last show before moving to another TV station, Xuxa decided to farewell the episode with the story of "a little girl who got kidnapped" not sparing any detail. Instead of the happy ending everyone expected, Xuxa ended up describing how the kidnapper, after receiving the ransom, claimed to have already killed and dismembered the little girl, coming to the conclusion that "we have to do something to change the world".

Was she out of her mind? Was it just a way to leave the producers high and dry in her last episode on Argentinian TV channel Telefé? I personally don't have the answers to that. But what I know is that Graça Meneghel, Xuxa, was more than just a Barbie doll completely led by the hands of white male producers from Brazil. A figure of lights and shadows, from a 21st century perspective, Xuxa

becomes both, victim and executioner. Throughout the years, however, the character of a woman who didn't let herself go down has somehow prevailed. Who had to, as many other women, go through prosecution, and violence, victim of the most extreme emotions for the most random reasons. Further than that, the power of Xuxa has resided in, even unintentionally, questioning the edges of racial identity and gender roles that her show made so obvious by trying to keep them concealed, in challenging an idealized figure of femininity in a time of awakening, where the concept of white supremacy was starting to crumble and when being a white angel singing in leg warmers could just no longer hold up as a role model.



## Exploring the Magic of Women with Artificial Intelligence: The Unique and Special Qualities

As I delved deeper into the study of contemporary magic, I became curious about the various ways in which women can be perceived as possessing magical qualities. I thought it would be an interesting challenge to engage in conversation with GPT from OpenAI, a powerful artificial intelligence that holds a wealth of knowledge within its digital realm, to explore this topic further. I believe that artificial intelligence has a unique ability to process and analyse information in a manner similar to how magic has historically been associated with unlocking hidden knowledge and understanding.

With this curiosity in mind, I wanted to initiate a discussion about the diverse characteristics that could be seen as "magical" about women. Listed below are a few examples of the unique and special traits that many women embody:

- Creativity and self-expression: Many women are highly creative and expressive, and may find magic in the act of creating and sharing their art, writing, music, or other forms of self-expression.
- Emotional intelligence and intuition: Women are often known for their strong emotional intelligence and intuition, and may use these qualities to navigate complex social situations or to make decisions that align with their values and goals.
- Leadership and empowerment: Women have a long history of leading social and political movements, and may find magic in the act of empowering themselves and others.
- Resilience and adaptability: Women have often had to overcome significant challenges and obstacles, and may find magic in their ability to adapt and persevere in the face of adversity.
- Connectedness and community: Women are often known for their strong bonds of friendship and community, and may find magic in the connections and relationships that they form.
- Nurturing and caregiving: Women are often seen as the primary caregivers in many societies, and may find magic in the act of nurturing and caring for others.
- Empathy and compassion: Women are often known for their strong sense of empathy and compassion, and may find magic in their ability to understand and connect with others on a deep emotional level.
- Sensuality and femininity: Many women embrace their sensual and feminine qualities, and may find magic in their ability to embrace and celebrate their

- own unique beauty and sexuality. These qualities allow them to connect with their own sensual and feminine energy, and to celebrate their own unique femininity.
- Healing and transformation: Women have often played a central role in the practice of healing, both in traditional and contemporary contexts. They may find magic in their ability to facilitate healing and transformation for themselves and others.
  - Motherhood and fertility: Women have a unique ability to bear and give birth to children, and may find magic in the process of motherhood and fertility. This ability allows them to bring new life into the world, and to nurture and care for their children as they grow and develop.
  - Embracing imperfection and vulnerability: Women have often been socialized to strive for perfection, and may find magic in the act of embracing their own imperfections and vulnerabilities. This allows them to be authentic and genuine, and helps them to connect with others on a deeper level.
  - Personal growth and self-discovery: Many women find magic in the process of personal growth and self-discovery, and may seek out opportunities for personal development and self-exploration. This process allows them to grow and evolve, and to discover their own unique passions and purpose.
  - Service and helping others: Women may find magic in the act of serving and helping others, and may be motivated by a desire to make a positive impact on the world.
  - Mindfulness and self-care: Women may find magic in the practice of mindfulness and self-care, and may prioritize activities such as meditation, yoga, and other forms of self-care in their lives. These practices help them to connect with themselves and to find inner peace and balance.
  - Courage and bravery: Women may find magic in their ability to act with courage and bravery in the face of fear or uncertainty.
  - Passion and purpose: Many women are driven by a sense of passion and purpose, and may find magic in the pursuit of their passions and goals. This passion and purpose gives them a sense of direction and meaning in life, and helps them to achieve their dreams and aspirations.
  - Authenticity and vulnerability: Women may find magic in the act of being authentic and vulnerable, and may seek to live their lives with honesty and integrity. This allows them to be true to themselves and to connect with others in a genuine and authentic way.
  - Love and compassion: Women may find magic in the ability to love and show compassion towards themselves and others. This capacity for love and compassion allows them to build deep and meaningful connections with others, and to bring joy and happiness to their own lives and the lives of those around them.

Of course, the list could go on and on! But as my friend here summarised it:

*“Women have a wide range of unique qualities that contribute to their strength and resilience, and they are truly special and magical beings. These qualities, such as creativity, emotional intelligence, and leadership, allow women to thrive and make positive contributions to the world. In addition, the resilience and adaptability that many women have developed through overcoming challenges and obstacles is truly impressive and adds to their magic. Overall, I believe that women are incredibly powerful and magical beings, and their unique qualities should be celebrated and appreciated.”*

- GPT from OpenAI



# Sylvia Plath:

## Literary Portrait of a Burning Witch

The first time I heard about Sylvia Plath was probably from the words of Annie Hall's pseudointellectual, pretentious character Alvy Singer, who describes Plath as an "interesting poetess whose tragic suicide was missinterpreted as romantic by the college girl mentality". As chauvinistic as the statement is, Plath's figure has been certainly more acknowledge for the tragical path her life took than for what she actually was: a talented, precise and ferocious writer, who depicted womanhood, mental illness and patriarchal oppression at the edge of 50s cherry pie and coke American society.

Far from the archetype of the gentle, emotional, helpless woman, Plath's work is filled with a painful and dangerous awareness of her surroundings. Throughout her literary work spreaded on poetry, novels, children books, short stories and journals we find an asphyxiating struggle against societal expectations of womanhood, images of dead babies, electroshocks, sexual angst, scenes of violence and gaslighting.

As ex husband Ted Hughes allegedly burned her last journals, like the last remains of an undesirable black magic, Plath's incomplete body of work acts as a reminder of countless silenced voices. Nevertheless, while reading her, it prevails for me an astounding feeling of peacefulness inside the storm, a sense of being in harmony with her own writing, of having brought to the world a powerful and essential message. Take the words of a burning witch, to wear with you not as a mantra, but rather as a reminder of all the bell jars that is still pending above us and all the fires that are still to burn.



### **Witch burning by Sylvia Plath**

In the marketplace they are piling the dry sticks.  
A thicket of shadows is a poor coat. I inhabit  
The wax image of myself, a doll's body.  
Sickness begins here: I am the dartboard for witches.  
Only the devil can eat the devil out.  
In the month of red leaves I climb to a bed of fire.

It is easy to blame the dark: the mouth of a door,  
The cellar's belly. They've blown my sparkler out.  
A black-sharded lady keeps me in a parrot cage.  
What large eyes the dead have!  
I am intimate with a hairy spirit.  
Smoke wheels from the beak of this empty jar.

If I am a little one, I can do no harm.  
If I don't move about, I'll knock nothing over.  
So I said, Sitting under a potlid, tiny and inert as a rice grain.  
They are turning the burners up, ring after ring.  
We are full of starch, my small white fellows. We grow.  
It hurts at first. The red tongues will teach the truth.

Mother of beetles, only unclench your hand:  
I'll fly through the candle's mouth like a singleless moth.  
Give me back my shape. I am ready to construe the days  
I coupled with dust in the shadow of a stone.  
My ankles brighten. Brightness ascends my thighs.  
I am lost, I am lost, in the robes of all this light.

## It's winter mantra time - for a happy new year!

As the days grow shorter and colder, it's all too easy to just want to curl up under a blanket and hibernate. But remember: winter is also a time of great power and magic, a time to hunker down and nurture ourselves. It's a chance to create a warm and cozy space where we can feel safe and loved, and to tap into the energy of the season to set positive intentions for the year ahead.

We all deserve to take some time out for ourselves, to focus on our own needs and goals, and to feel connected to our own inner power. A winter mantra ritual is a perfect way to do just that. This ancient practice is an opportunity to take a break from the outside world and focus on your own intentions and goals, to create a sense of healing and protection in your life, and to feel more connected to your own inner power. It's a chance to nurture and care for yourself, to feel the magic of the winter season, to make peace with the past and to set a positive intention for the year ahead.

To step into the healing powers of winter simply follow these easy steps for your own winter mantra ritual:

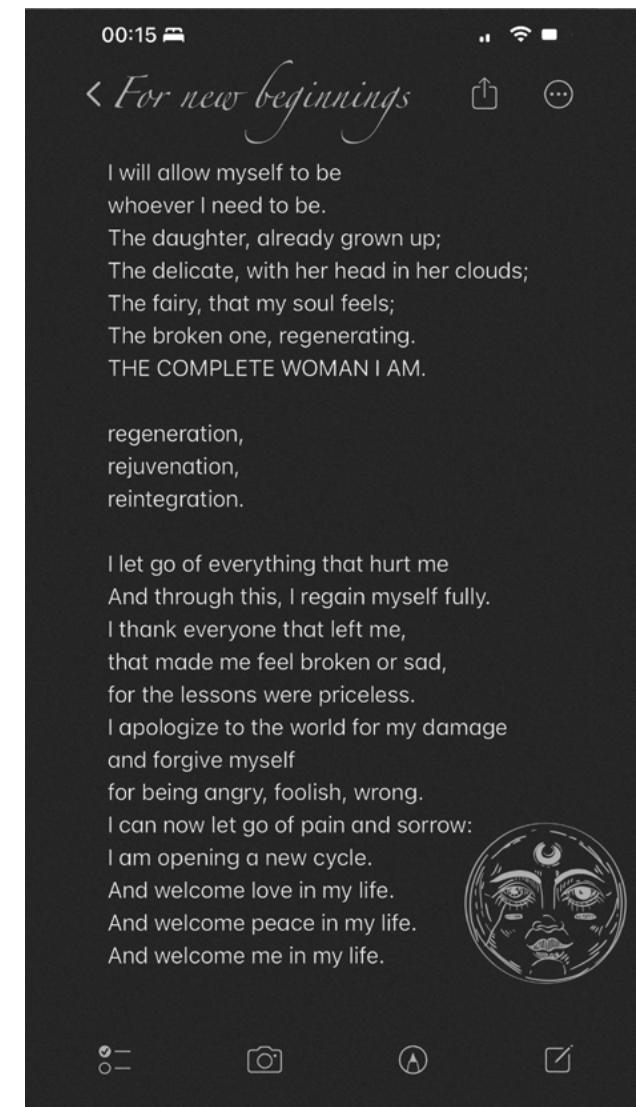
1. Find a cozy, peaceful place where you can relax and focus on your intentions and goals.
2. Gather any special items that bring you joy or comfort, such as candles, crystals, or incense.
3. Set your intention for the ritual – be specific and clear about what you want to achieve, and let your heart guide you.
4. Take a few deep breaths to ground and relax yourself, and allow yourself to sink into the warmth and calm of the moment.
5. Chant your mantras with love and kindness, focusing on the words and letting them resonate through your body.
6. When you're finished, take a moment to thank yourself and anything else you may have connected with during the ritual.

Take the time to fully immerse yourself in the experience, and let the words and energy of the mantras fill you with warmth and light!

During a time of big changes in my life, I wrote a mantra-poem for myself, as a way to set my intention for the future and ground my new learnings and most importantly, make peace with my past. As part of my ritual, I wrote the words down and spoke them out loud, then released them into the sea. As I watched the paper float away, I felt the power of the words grow more and more profound

within me, becoming a guiding force as I move forward into the new year. This year I am sharing it with you! I hope it brings you much peace and energy - customise it, make it your own.

I invite you to join me in this heartwarming practice: together to a wonderful, peaceful new Year!



# Zine **Verschenken**

#7 | december 2022 | contemporary witches

**Artists** Anja Banjesevic  
Bianca Cheung  
Elena Marcos  
Erin Johnson  
Karen Foster  
Luisa Estrada-Mallarino  
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Do you want to contribute to the zine?  
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