

AISLING EALA SWAN DANCE CEREMONY

Information and Guidelines

for the Sweat lodge on Friday 21st March

—Arrival at 10am

General Intent: We will gather on Friday 21st March at 10am to assist the Dance Sponsors, Drum Chief and Dance Guardian with preparations for Saturdays Ceremonial dance.

This will consist of setting up the Dance Field, erecting the Drum Tents/ Guardian Tent, moving firewood for the ceremonial Fire etc. When all preparations are complete, we will have a sweat lodge to clear and cleanse ourselves of our daily baggage to enable us to Dance in joy, beauty and harmony.

Please check the weather forecast in advance and bring waterproof clothes and sturdy shoes. We are going to spend a good part of the day on the Land.

Sweat Lodge checklist: For those new to the Sweat Lodge, you will need,

Sarong, skirts, shorts or swim suit, within our tradition we emphasize respectful and modest clothing within the sweatlodge ceremony

Towel to sit on and dry yourself after the sweat lodge

Waterproof bag to keep your clothes dry while we are in the Sweat in case there is a drizzle.

Food for the evening

Drum and Chant Practice

Drum Practice: From 6pm to approx. 7:30 pm there is going to be Drum Team practice in the Temple. Anybody who wishes to join and learn or simply enjoy the chants is very welcome, ***however this is a very important time for the drum team, please be respectful of this time and space..*** You may like to bring a pair of warm socks or slippers and having a blanket or a pillow to sit on is always nice.

Staying in the Temple: For those staying in the Temple for the night, please bring your own bedding and a mat .Please note: This is a Temple space, please treat it as such, no shoes

inside and please
walk clockwise around the altar.

A nominal donation of 7e is appreciated for sleeping in the Temple/onsite camping.



Please note there is no entry to the main house.

Information and Guidelines for the Dance on Saturday 22nd March

The Dance Chiefs, Trish, Lighting Star and Hilary, Earth Dragon, are holding the energy and the protection for all participants, they have the ultimate responsibility, and all dancers are asked to heed any requests, direction and guidance they may have. They are assisted by the teams led by the Drum Chief, the Fire Chief and the Head Dance Guardian.

Dance Prayers: We recommend that you read and be with the prayers, and those of your own heart from the time you choose to take part in the ceremony. *Please see the prayers in email..*

Checklist for Dancers

- Dance outfit; white ceremonial robe
- Comfortable shoes
- Ceremonial headband and waistband

- Shawl/ceremonial blanket/coat
- Raingear and rain proof boots (just in case!)
- Shield and Pole
- Finger Plumes
- Sacred Well Water for greeting and blessing the Tree each time you start to dance
- Sacred item (if used)
- Prescribed medicine, food or water if necessary
- Sunblock (if looking like we might get sun!)
- extra small blanket or equivalent to sit on. Provision will be made for those who feel they cannot sit on the ground to bring a small chair. If this is needed please let us know.

On the day itself, you should be dressed (ceremonial clothes, headband and waistband) with shield and shield pole and ready to go by 6.30am. Mobile phones left in the car please. Raingear and rainproof footwear are advisable and perhaps a blanket or shawl with you. (see checklist at the end to ensure you have everything). We will gather in the house carpark and the walk in procession to the Tree. We enter by the east and go clockwise to our places, which will be allocated on the day Time will be allowed for shields and shield poles to be erected. We greet the tree by blessing it with blessed well water the first time we come to the tree, and again with any break in the dancing. Each dancer stays dancing in their own lane throughout the ceremony. We dance until the energy, intents feel complete, which usually comes through sometime in the late afternoon. All dancers stay until the dance is complete.

Fasting

Traditionally, people would fast from sun up to the end of the dance, and then there is a communal feast. We invite those who are able to follow with this tradition. However there may be medical or other reasons why this would not work for you, or you may be unsure as to whether you can do it or not. So, we recommend that you have a small lunch box with fruit and nuts or other protein if you feel this is necessary and a water drink. This will be left in a tent near the dance site. Please note that you should not bring water bottles into the dance space.

Feasting

At the end of the dance it is important to feel grounded before leaving and driving. We will provide some soup and tea before you leave. Please bring some food to share to

supplement this too.

Health and safety

There is a Head Dance Guardian who takes charge of our safety and who has a first aid kit. Any dancer who takes prescription medication and needs to have this with them should do so, but should notify us ahead of time with any necessary information. No alcohol or recreational drugs should be taken in the 24hrs before the

dance.

Clothing for the Dance

As an honoring of the swans of this land, **we ask that all will wear white** clothing, with a ceremonial headband and waist band, which cover the third eye and the naval, which can be of other colours. **The robes should be full length for both men and women,** although Aikido type white trousers may also be worn for those who work with Martial Arts. Footwear such as running shoes, open sandals should be comfortable.



Finger Plumes

Finger plumes help us to hold our intent and prayers as we dance; Swan feathers are traditional for dancers and we recommend them for all as an honouring of Swan. They

should be wrapped on stem as above with leather, ribbon etc, with a loop so they do not fall out of your hands. Beading adds beauty to them.

Shields

Each dancer has a shield at the end of their dance lane. The shield helps us to hold ourselves and our soul essence on the web of the dance and to receive the blessings.

They are usually circular and of about 30-50cm diameter. They can be made from canvas, or wood, or thick card (but need to be weather proofed) . Here are some very traditional images of mainly native american shields at the turn of the 19th century.

<https://www.pinterest.ie/paulabidwell/shields/?lp=true> . First year dancers might well decide to use a swan image to hold them in this dance. If you would like to discuss this further with someone we invite you to contact aislingeala@gmail.com

Shield Pole.

Our shields rest upon a wooden shield pole which is about 5.5 feet, 160cm, forked near the top about twice the width of a sweeping brush. . The shield will be tied to the Y part.

Other considerations.

Visitors

Visitors are welcomed to the dance, to come individually or with children. We would ask that those who come understand the intent of the dance, as expressed in the prayers, and that they come in support of that, along with any individual intent or prayer they may have for themselves as visitors to the dance.

Please inform Dance Guardian/Sponsor of your intent to come.

Children.

We invite those parents who would like to dance, but cannot do so due to childcare issues to join us with their children. There will be a dedicated lane for parents to dance with children to the tree from 11 a.m. till 1pm. Please contact Dance Guardian/Sponsor so we know in advance if you are coming with your child/children.

The Children's Fire

The Children's fire is lit in the east at the start of the ceremony and once it is lit the energy lines between it and the tree should not be crossed. We all enter in the east and exit in that area also. The dance guardians will guide you in this.

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Contact List

Info/ Enquiries aislingeala@gmail.com Templeofeiriu@gmail.com

Note: First time attendees are invited to an instructional zoom call with the sponsors, please let us know if you are, and we will send you the zoom link when you register.