

# Receiving the Star People at Chaco Canyon on Dec 21, 2012:

*Participating in the cosmological ideology of the ancient Chacoans*

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A pilgrimage to the home of the ancient ancestral Puebloans on Dec 21, 2012 is now under way. The place is known as Chaco Canyon and it is located in the North West corner of the state of New Mexico in the South Western region of the United States. This ancient site along with thousands of other sacred sites around the world will witness an outpouring of humanity as once again people from around the world will return to a sacred site to honor the wisdom of the ancients.

It is safe to say that there is no other author who has given the most comprehensive voice to the celestial cycles and their return than Mircea Eliade as expressed in his book *The Myth of the Eternal Return*. The winter solstice of 2012 is a symbolic as well as a real celestial event that indicates the completion of one great year known as the precession of the equinoxes. The accuracy of measuring this precessional cycle, although important for astrophysicists in identifying physical attributes of the universe, does not, on the other hand, give voice to the way the ancients recognized this precessional cycle as expressed in their architecture known today as the study of archaeoastronomy as well as astroarchaeology. Archaeoastronomy is concerned with the positioning of ancient landmarks to recognize celestial events and astroarchaeology is the study of mythological

meanings attributed to the positions of the stars and their relation to human activities expressed in rituals and ceremonies.

Chaco Canyon is a unique sacred site developed as early as 350BCE and reached its high point in archeoastronomical expression from 900AD to 1350AD. The scholars who have spent enormous amounts of time analyzing Chaco Canyon as the home of the ancient Pueblo people, previously referred to as the Anasazi, have made it possible for us today to look at this site with a keen eye and a better understanding on how these ancient people may have used this location in the Chaco Canyon area for rituals that were closely associated with an anthropomorphic realization of beings from beyond the stars. The great return which Eliade refers to was for the ancestral Puebloans and other ancient peoples of this area a way to recognize the return of celestial activities such as equinoxes and solstices and as well as star like beings as depicted on all the petroglyphs found in the surrounding area.

*“The conscious repetition of given paradigmatic gestures reveals an original ontology. The crude product of nature, the object fashioned by the industry of man, acquire their reality, their identity, only to the extent of their participation in a transcendent reality. The gesture acquires meaning, reality, solely to the extent to which it repeats a primordial act.”*

*Eliade*



Chaco Canyon petroglyph and Crab Nebula Super Nova 1054AD

Probably the most dramatic celestial event to be witnessed by the ancestral Puebloans was the supernova of 1054AD. It shines as a nebula of magnitude 8.4 near the southern "horn" of Taurus, the Bull. The impact of seeing this bright object in the sky resulted in many petroglyphs which appear to have the form of beings that look like aliens from another world. But for these ancient people, interpreting this bright object in the sky gave cause for incorporating celestial events into rituals and ceremonies.



Chaco Canyon petroglyph star people

Therefore, the decision to make a pilgrimage to a sacred site which had a clear view of the heavens as well as a history of a people who developed a cosmology around the stars satisfied the requirements set out by the members of The Ether Ship, an electronic music performing group, that was established in 1972. The archeological record which has thus far emerged in Chaco Canyon shows that the ancestral Puebloans and other tribes had extensive trade routes even as far as Mexico and even further south into Mayan country. Putting together all the scattered pieces shows that all the tribes developed a vast ceremonial center based out of Chaco Canyon. Astronomical alignments built into the existing structures show a precise understanding of the equinox and solstice sun as it appeared over the horizon and cast sunlight and shadows on parts of their architecture.

It is a safe guess that many of the rituals which took place in Chaco Canyon had celestial significance. Further excavation also reveals that the people traded in turquoise as far away as Mexico as seen by its use in masks and other ornamentations. Excavations also have revealed the skeletal remains of the Macaw, which had to be imported from the tropics far to the south. As the Chacoan cosmology developed it is also safe to say that aspects of their cosmology came from the Aztecs and Mayans. It is impossible to

determine exactly what cosmology was developed but one that incorporated the heavens is certainly a safe guess.



Milky Way galaxy above Chaco Canyon



Blue turquoise dragon

For these reasons The Ether Ship will make a pilgrimage to Chaco Canyon and perform a ritual performance in honor not only of the ancient people from that area, but to their interpretation of the ancient skies having celestial life forms associated with it.

But more importantly for us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century it is a rare opportunity for those of us who are alive at this time, and who have the knowledge and understanding of the precessional cycle, to participate in an event that brings us closer to our place in the universe. This is a time that we can recognize the sacred center within all of us, as all ancient cultures did, and realize we can join in a global event where millions upon millions of people are

awaiting the return of the sun that will herald in the beginning of another cycle as symbolic and esoteric as it may mean to each of us.

For in truth we come from the stars and it is the star light from all the suns that gives us life and the ability to look upon billions of other suns that also contributes to life. This time will not happen again for another 26,000 years and we are just now beginning to appreciate why our ancestors spent the time to build a world of temples honoring what was to them the gods. And who are we in this grand scheme of things not to embrace the wonder and majesty that swirls above us giving us a glimpse into the heavens that just may be populated with celestial beings that the ancient people recognized and tried to represent in their art.

The Ether Ship will be bringing to Chaco Canyon a variety of musical instruments as well as the recording of natural sounds indigenous to the area such as bird calls and radio frequencies emitted from the stars. This is the time of the great hunter, Orion, who raises his sword above the plane of the ecliptic as we humans announce that we do see the play acted out by these celestial forms in the heavens and wish to recognize and honor them with an offering of sound and human gesture.



Ceremonial mask made with turquoise

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