

# THE NATURAL MANDALA

Meditations from the Sacred Book of Nature



## CENTRAL VOID, SACRED SPACE

Many years ago I wrote in my journal of notes and sketches what has become a self-governing edict; “the center point of every mandala I ever create will always be a void.” Whether being created of organic material, a drawing, painting or sculpture, that center will be represented by a point of nothingness. The enigmatic and paradoxical power of this concept was cultivated within me over several years of discourse, meditation and contemplation. After deliberating over its ramifications, the natural world opened to me, initiating me to and revealing what feels like a secret knowing for the meanings and symbolism of space. This is the void: the mysterious unknown, source of all possibilities.

The Natural Mandala is a metaphor for the sacred wisdom that nature speaks, the veritable Language of Nature. Not only is it rendered with these expressions from nature’s bounty; but it also employs principles of design and concepts from the natural world. When you begin to look for negative spaces within nature, you can’t help but appreciate, respect and even revere the wisdom of the organics created to encompass them. Even they adopt a layer of meaning beyond their own inherent wisdom when coupled with the concept of the void.

Contemplate and meditate on these few thought-forms from nature; what do they reveal to you? Of what wisdom do they speak? What lessons do they teach? What do they symbolize and how can their iconography be applied to our understanding of our place within the world?

**“In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth. And the Earth was without form, and void”**

*In this Biblical account of creation, the Universe comes from nothingness. What was the nature of this original nothingness? Does the Bible indicate that the void is “bad,” longing to be filled? Is a void just a space not yet filled? Is that its nature? Why would it matter to know that in the beginning there was only space, that all came out of nothingness?*



Consider a symbolic meaning for the void within the powerful structures of a hurricane. Picture a vast network of independent powerful storms spanning an area over hundreds of miles wide, all held together in a spiral orbit of concentric rings by the *gravity* of that calm center, a tight column of still nothingness. Spiritually speaking, what do these contrasting forces symbolize? What is the metaphor for the gravity of nothingness?

In the insect kingdom, holes and tunnels are created as a portal of entrance and exit, or as a point of retrieval to accept or to purge. For example, consider the flight of a hornet traveling toward its nest. Below that huge blue-gray-brown sphere is a dark oculus, a void. Were it not its home, might flying near this void terrorize the hornet? Yet being familiar with the void, it enters within its threshold of knowing, community, unity and sanctuary. Enter into the fold.

Within the trunks of mighty trees, depressions evolve perhaps due to the passing of a failed branch that didn’t grow and in its roots that protrude from the earth; they coil to create circular voids. Consider the naturally occurring openings within the Earth seen as darkened orifices, such as; well springs, entrances to caves, sinkholes that open huge circles into the earth and massive crevasses that open into rock and ice. But perhaps the most notable of all oculus voids is the pupil of the eye; that proverbial *window to the soul* that penetrates deep into the psycho-spiritual realms where within, light is received and a vast world of color occurs within us.

**ENIGMATIC AND PARADOXICAL:** The center is black; a void with nothing to measure or express the past, the present, the future. The center is the dark nothingness that was before divine thought manifested form. It is the beginning and will be the end, both of which are happening now and yet never will. All That Is came from the void, the emptiness replete with absolute and pure opportunity for within this blackness, exists all possibilities for all things conceivable. Without the center, nothing would be possible. Without center, nothing would be born and nothing could die. It is what holds everything in balance, the empty matter that binds “thing” to everything else. The ring at the edge of the void is the event horizon. It is both there and not there. It is both moving into form and into the formless. All creative energy manifests from void out to the event horizon and simultaneously accepts manifested energy seeking to become transformed, reorganized (re-organic-ized), regenerated, recycled. This rim of renewal is the same as the first manifestation of matter, never before having been moved into being.

The intrinsic magnitude of center is eternal. Its grandeur is enormous, complex, and expansive. It is more dense than what anything can become and so voluminous that its totality is focused within one singular point. This point is not flat nor is it expressed by any dimensional devise. This point of void has always been and has yet to become. The center void is in constant expectation and anticipation of its own manifestation. It is self-aware and awaits its own arrival into beingness. It contemplates its constant and continuous arrival, during each and every fraction of every second, there observing its own deaths, renewals, desolation, discoveries, destruction, and reincarnations – for which of these, there has only been One.