



The Mythology of the Phoenix

“All that dies shall be reborn!”

The theatre, ritual and celebration of our Vinotok festivities are very unique in this world. All of our ceremonies are created *out of* and *for* the sacred spaces in our village and surrounding valley.

Yes, there are other Fire Festivals, some of which create performances in both the U.S. and Europe, and which have grown out of Vinotok’s joyous example. But none of these utilizes the entire local community and environment as their stage. Nor do they create their festivities with only local volunteers and history drawn from the direct and unbroken oral transmitted legacy shared by the local ancestors and still-living elders.

When the Passion Players, Mummers and Archetypal Embodiment characters “play you a play”, we are doing this to build deep respect for Place Spirit, and to re-engage humans with the sacredness of every location in the village and the surrounding Lands.

The Phoenix is a peaceful Place of Regeneration. Located at the top of Elk Avenue, our main street, this Archetype of galvanizing Rebirth acknowledges and ennobles the Earth-justice sacrifice of the Great Grump effigy. After being consumed by the Fires of Equinox, there is always the core, and molten, metal heart of the effigy which arises from the flames.

This rebirth reminds us that the Autumn ceremonies require blessing and releasing and the sacrifice of crops and animals, a time when the Dark Chases the Light, snow and frost prevail and the Earth Mother and Green Man enter deep hibernation.

Even though throngs of people join our celebration festivities the Phoenix is a quiet, sheltering spot where we drape the red prayer flags which commemorate our Mother Mountain, and are unique to our community. This meditation spot is on a direct ley line between the Red Lady to the West--the mountain into whose bosom our town is nestled--and to the East--the mighty Butte from which our mountain community gets its name.

Here is where the Metal Heart of the Great Grump effigy rests in state, just below the Altar to The Godmother and Crone whose all-seeing concern and vision look out over the village and valley. Accompanying these are head wreaths worn during the Vinotok festivities, hand-made green prayer flags to honor our environment, and small notes of Beckoning and Blessing from towns folk. Between Mabon, or the Equinox and Samhain, or Hallowe’en the prayer flags continue to waft offerings of gratitude and requests for blessing and protection to our Mountains and our town.

By Marcie Telander, Vinotok Godmother and Founder

