

## What is The Goddess Foundation?

### \*\*\* A Mythical Introduction \*\*\*

**The Goddess Foundation**, established in September 2021 by Dr. Courtney Kleftis, is a non-profit organization dedicated to reclaiming the long-silenced voices of the divine feminine throughout world religions and across large spans of time. For approximately the past 5,000 years, (hetero)patriarchy has dominated the globe, oppressing millions of people, including women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, POC, and anyone who lives on the margins of the privileged white male ideal. In spite of this, a thread of life (and body)-affirming wisdom has prevailed; a subtle red thread twining its way through our dark past and turbulent present. The Goddess - mother, lover, creatrix, dreamer of the cosmos - has never abandoned us in spite of patriarchal authorities' ongoing attempts to silence her and erase her presence from the world stage. Like the mythical figure, [Ariadne](#), herself perhaps a proto-Persephone figure from a pre-Greek (Minoan) pantheon, the Goddess always has stood lovingly guiding all of humanity through the bewildering labyrinth of life. While seemingly trapped and lost in this hellish environment, like Ariadne she carries with her a red thread which functions as a sort of cosmic umbilical cord protecting us from the many dangers that lurk in the dark underbelly of the patriarchal worldview (embodied by the monstrous figure of the half-man, half-bull, Minotaur). **The Goddess Foundation** - like Ariadne, and by extension, the Goddess Herself - offers a skein of this red thread to anyone who wishes to take it, use it to navigate the trials and tribulations of the labyrinth of life, and ultimately to reclaim their sovereign agency which is the birthright of *all* sentient life in the cosmos.

### \*\*\* Mission Statement \*\*\*

1. **The Goddess Foundation (TGF)** is a collaborative, public, non-profit organization devoted to honoring and reclaiming the voice(s) of the Goddess and the divine feminine.
  - a. **TGF** explores the Goddess and divine feminine cross-culturally (e.g.: as a global phenomenon) from both ancient and modern perspectives.
2. **TGF** is invested in the pursuit of social justice and spiritual activism on behalf of marginalized peoples, especially but not limited to women of color, LGBTQIA+ communities, plant and animal life, etc.
3. **The Goddess Foundation (TGF)** serves as a platform and safe space for women and all goddess folx (transgender and/or non-binary) to gather and share their personal experiences and divine wisdom in a society that generally dismisses and denigrates said experiences.

### Initiatives and programmes

**TGF's** two pillars are:

1. **Non-profit Library & Living Archive**

**TGF's** non-profit library is currently available online only. With member support and external funding, we hope to eventually supplement this digital resource with a physical collection.

- a. This digital library contains links to open-access, online publications and resources on the Goddess and/or divine feminine.
- b. It also offers extensive bibliographies and librarian-curated guides to both research material and practical resources for Goddess devotees.
- c. In lieu of a physical library, **TGF** currently offers links to **WorldCat (OCLC)** records which provide information about which libraries world-wide own and circulate Goddess titles. This enables those interested in those titles to find the nearest library which owns them and check them out.

The archival component of **TGF** exists with the purpose of capturing the voices and lived experiences of contemporary Goddess devotees within the U.S. and beyond. This living archive includes diverse collections in multiple formats (i.e.: from journals/journal entries and magickal grimoires to audio/video recordings of rituals/ritual performances) and welcomes ongoing donations, especially in alignment with core initiatives (see below):

- a. "Goddess in Everyday Life" - Oral *Herstory* collection project collecting the stories of community members by submission (or request to be interviewed).
- b. **TGF** papers
  - Including recordings and documents from **TGF** events (i.e: workshops and conferences).
- c. In memoriam - donated material in honor of late Goddess luminaries (i.e.: Carol Christ and Marija Gimbutas).

## **2. Goddess Spiritual Center**

**TGF's** Spiritual Center exists to establish a robust, virtual community of Goddess devotees from across the U.S. and beyond. It offers a range of virtual spiritual activities (over ZOOM) including:

### **a) Spiritual Workshops**

- i) Monthly New Moon circles devoted to bringing us all together as a community and sharing how the Goddess shapes the struggles and triumphs of our daily lives.
- ii) Biennial dream workshops providing an opportunity for collective dream interpretation and advice for how to connect with the Goddess in the dream world. These include sessions on lucid dreaming, liminal dreaming, and dream incubation, among other helpful tools to awaken to the wisdom of the unconscious, sleeping mind.

### **b) Goddess Activism Retreats**

- i) Annual retreats devoted to Goddess-related causes (e.g.: saving the earth - Gaia, women's rights, LGBTQIA+ rights, animal rights, etc.). These retreats bring

members together as a community dedicated to social change by undertaking concrete action as a collective.

**c) Goddess Theater** (inspired by the brilliant work of Goddess scholar & performer, [Annalisa Derr](#))

- i) An annual improvisatory performing arts series featuring professionals and amateurs alike as we bring ancient ritual to life from a post-modern perspective.
- ii) These performances can include masked theater, vocal performance (e.g.: singing), dance, etc.
  - 1) Ex. 1: A modern recreation of the *Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys* over the death and dismemberment of their brother, Osiris.
  - 2) Ex. 2: A night devoted to members performing (via song, dance, or spoken theater) their own Goddess liturgy and scripture.

**d) Guest Lecture Series**

- i) A bimonthly Guest Lecture Series featuring luminaries of the field from scholars, to priestesses, artists, and musicians devoted to bringing the Goddess' eternal wisdom back into the light.

**e) Reading Circles/Book Clubs**

- i) Two bimonthly Reading Circles (Book Clubs) providing an opportunity for those interested to engage in informal dialogue with one another about:
  - 1) Non-fiction titles on the Goddess/divine feminine
  - 2) Fiction titles on the Goddess/divine feminine

**f) Film and Documentary Series**

- i) An annual Film and Documentary Series featuring 5-6 titles per year ranging from those produced within mainstream Hollywood to independent cinema from across the globe.

**g) Writing Retreats**

- i) Writing Retreats offered four times per year on four different topics:
  - 1) Spiritual memoir writing
  - 2) Fiction writing (featuring Goddess/divine feminine themes)
  - 3) Crafting your own Goddess liturgy and/or scripture (inspired by the Hebrew *midrash* tradition)
  - 4) Writing your own guided meditations and/or visualizations to connect with your inner divinity.

### Who is behind TGF?

Established in September 2021, **TGF** was founded by Dr. Courtney Kleftis, Goddess-devotee and queer-feminist librarian. Courtney has always been fascinated by exploring the role of women and their unique voices in the arts, specifically opera, through her previous career as an amateur opera singer, musicologist, and later music librarian. In her current role as founder of **TGF**, she remains deeply invested in recovering and reclaiming marginalized voices and wisdom traditions, especially those of women devoted to the Goddess and/or divine feminine in a less than hospitable (patriarchal) environment. Considering her background in the performing arts, **TGF** promotes Goddess theater, dance, and song from both a professional and amateur

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level (open to all who wish to bring their love for the divine feminine into their bodies). For anyone interested, see [this video](#) in which Courtney speaks to her audience and tells her story in greater detail.

The long-term vision for **TGF** entails a robust, non-hierarchical collective run and managed by a range of Goddess scholars and devotees worldwide. If you are interested in contributing to this project, please consider joining our **Patreon** account ([coming soon](#)) at various tiers/levels (an online crowd-funding source) and/or reaching out to Courtney on the **Contact Us** page. Also, please consider joining us and signing up for our monthly Newsletter covering upcoming events and resources available on the organization's website.

**Other similar U.S.-based initiatives to consult (a partial list):**

- [Pacifica Graduate Institute](#) (including [OPUS Archives](#) which houses the papers of Goddess luminaries such as Marija Gimbutas and Christine Downing)
- the [Women's Spirituality MA/PhD program](#) at the [California Institute of Integral Studies \(CIIS\)](#)
- the non-profit [Association For the Study of Women in Mythology \(ASWM\)](#)
- the Gimbutas-inspired [Institute of Archaeomythology \(IAM\)](#)
- [Tehom Center](#) (Goddess retreat center in St. Petersburg, FL, devoted to queer feminist spiritual activism and artistic explorations of the divine).