

“W.I.T.C.H. is an all-women Everything. It’s theater, revolution, magic, terror, joy, garlic flowers, spells. It’s an awareness that witches and gypsies were the original guerrillas and resistance fighters against oppression — particularly the oppression of women — down through the ages. Witches have always been women who dared to be: groovy, courageous, aggressive, intelligent, nonconformist, explorative, curious, independent, sexually liberated, revolutionary (This possibly explains why nine million of them have been burned.) Witches were the first Friendly Heads and Dealers, the first birth-control practitioners and abortionists, the first alchemists. They bowed to no man, being the living remnants of the oldest culture of all — one in which men and women were equal sharers in a truly cooperative society, before the death-dealing sexual, economic, and spiritual repression of the Imperialist Phallic Society took over and began to destroy nature and human society.”

– Excerpt from the W.I.T.C.H.* manifesto written in 1968

Katherine Bradford (b. 1942, New York, NY)

Julie Curtiss (b. 1982, Paris, France)

Jessie Homer French (b. 1940, New York, NY)

Cy Gavin (b. 1985, Pittsburgh, PA)

Anna Glantz (b.1989, Concord, MA)

Sanam Khatibi (b. 1979, Tehran, Iran)

Rainen Knecht (b. 1982, Gig Harbor, WA)

Lazaros (b. 1984, Salt Lake City, UT)

Nicky Lesser (b. 1988, Los Angeles, CA)

Ana Mendieta (b. 1948, Havana, Cuba)

Walter Price (b. 1989, Macon, GA)

Anna Sew Hoy (b. 1976, Auckland, New Zealand)

Marianne Vitale (b. 1973, East Rockaway, NY)

* Brazenly anarchist, anti-hierarchical, and wildly playful, W.I.T.C.H. was a female-led collective, including members of all genders, that engaged in political and surrealist protest actions in the late 1960s – 70s. Although poorly documented and understudied, the group was principally associated with the Women’s Liberation Movement and its acronym would change according to the group’s needs. It was also one of the first collectives to link the international history of witchcraft (worldwide traditions include Vodun of West Africa, Vodou of the Caribbean, Santería of Cuba, Santa Muerte of Mexico, Hoodoo of the Southern U.S., Shamanism of Asia, Stregheria of Italy, Wicca of England and much more) to political activism and the relentless fight for civil rights. This history, powered by female leadership, craft, and medicine, can be traced as far back as 2nd Century

writings on Hecate: the Hellenic goddess of light, entrance-ways, knowledge of herbs and poisonous plants, magic and moons.

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