



SIEBENQUELL

A Place in the Heart: Cnoc Suain



SOURCE: WWW.CNOCSUAIN.COM

In the drive to save the planet, we are presently seeing how fear is a powerful motivator. We are being warned, that if we do not act now, a dreadful things will befall us. Fearsome pictures of an apocalyptic future are being drawn. I do not deny, they frighten me as well.

Indeed, fear is a powerful motivator, but not as great a one as we imagine. If fear were enough, then why is there not more decisive action happening? If fear were enough, they why is there so little radical change happening in people's lives? The answer lays in the nature of fear itself: It has a short shelf life. At some point, people become so sick and tired of being afraid that fear loses its grip on them.

There is an alternative, albeit a much slower and more gradual path. We can learn to save something by learning to love it. After all, why go to all the bother of saving something if we do not really love it in the first place? We can learn to care about the world until we desire to save it.

There are privileged places where this happens, and one such place of learning is Cnoc Suain. It is a Culture & Nature retreat, described by its leaders as »a labour of love and an all-consuming life project! A combined passion for Irish heritage, nature, creativity, science and experiential learning lies at the heart of our venture.«

For me Cnoc Suain is also a place of storytellers. Storytellers can teach us how to love something deeply enough to want to save it.

Cnoc Suan is a place where the land has a tale to tell, of all it supports and shelters and offers a generous home. Here the tale is told of a land that is more than a place to exploit, but a common home, that shapes its people, their culture, the language they speak, the songs they sing and the tales they spin. When Charlie Troy speaks of sustainability and bio-diversity, you will find yourself not merely better informed, but forging a friendship with the earth. Storytellers can teach us how to love something deeply enough to want to save it.

The culture has a story to tell. At Cnoc Suain the stories are told of his this culture was influenced, shaped and fashioned by the people who lived and toiled there and by those who were forced to exile themselves from the place they loved when it could not sustain them. When Dearbhaill Standún weaves the music around your heart or tells the tales born on this land, you will discover that the land itself has a voice in and through this culture. The cottages have tales to tell, of simplicity that held more warmth than all our luxuries can muster. They tell of shared spaces, of rooms made for sheltering people rather than objects, of hearths that held the center in times of cold, fright, hunger and anxiety. Storytellers can teach us how to love something deeply enough to want to save it.

Above all, at Cnoc Suain you will find passionate people, and where there a people with passion, there you will a story to be found. They are a discovery unto themselves. For their lives are a story told in flesh and blood and bone about loving something so deeply, you would invest your time, your life, your heart to sustain, protect and save it. Here you will meet people who give with soul sinew to make a place once abandoned bloom for a new generation seeking to live differently. Charlie and Dearbhaill and their daughters Eleanor and Dearbhaill Maedhbh are storytellers who can teach us how to love something deeply enough to want to save it.

Our friends at Cnoc Suain are seeking our support. We wholeheartedly and earnestly commend their kickstarter project to you. (<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/cnocsuain/cnoc-suain-conamara-a-place-in-the-heart>). Support them to whatever degree you can. Visit them. Plan a vacation that includes them. And spread the word everywhere.

The world will not end with the last story told, but with the death of the last storyteller. And now you know why. For with the death of the last storyteller, we will have lost the people who possess the passion, drive and desire that can teach us how to love something deeply enough to want to save it. If they are gone, there will still be enough to save, but no one who cares enough to bother.

Erik Riechers SAC

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