

Episode #030 – The Inspiring Wendy Rule

The Infinite and the Beyond

An esoteric podcast for the introspective pagan mind hosted by Chris Orapello

www.infinite-beyond.com

Underline Theme: Awen and Inspiration

❖ Show Introduction

MM, BB, 93, Hello and Welcome to the 30th Episode of “The Infinite and the Beyond,” an esoteric podcast for the introspective pagan mind. Where we explore a variety of topics which relate to life and one’s unique spiritual journey. I am your host Chris Orapello. Intro music by George Wood.

In this episode...

- ◆ We speak with Australian Visionary Songstress Wendy Rule and get to enjoy some of her music.
 - ◆ “Creator Destroyer” from her album The Wolf Sky
 - ◆ “Guided by Venus” from her album Guided by Venus
 - ◆ “My Sister the Moon” from her album Guided by Venus
 - ◆ “The Wolf Sky (Live)” from her album Live at the Castle on the Hill
 - ◆ “Circle Open (Live)” from her album Live at the Castle on the Hill
- ◆ We learn about the controversial, “King of the Witches,” Alex Sanders in A Corner in the Occult.
- ◆ In the spirit of creativity we learn about the Awen in The Essence of Magic, but first lets hear “Creator Destroyer” a haunting track by Wendy Rule.

❖ Featured Artist

- “Creator Destroyer” by Wendy Rule

❖ Interview Part 1 : Wendy Rule

- Wild, passionate and empowering, Australian Visionary Songstress Wendy Rule, weaves together music, mythology and ritual to take her audience on an otherworldly journey of depth and passion. Drawing on her deep love of Nature and lifelong fascination with the worlds of Faerie and Magic, Wendy’s songs combine irresistible melodies with rich aural textures and a rare personal honesty.
- With the release in May 2010 of her latest full length studio album, Guided by Venus, Wendy has firmly established herself as one of Australia’s most uniquely gifted and prolific artists. With an extraordinary voice that moves from soaring heights to intimate whispers, Wendy explores all facets of the emotional world.

- Since 1996 Wendy has released 6 major albums and numerous side projects. She has toured Australia and the USA extensively and regularly performs in the UK and Europe. Her music plays a vital role in international Pagan communities, and she continues to perform and teach at many festivals as a guest of honour.
- Alongside her music, Wendy is also celebrated as an international mentor and teacher of Spiritual Self Development. Her online course, Living a Life of Magic, which she presents with her husband and Magical Partner Timothy Van Diest, is the culmination of her many years of Spiritual practice as a Witch.
- Fiercely independent, Wendy has carved a unique path through the musical mainstream. Renowned for years amongst the world’s alternative Spiritual communities, she is now deservedly gaining a much broader following. Her unique live performances and her beautifully atmospheric and richly emotive songs continue to entice an ever growing audience into her Magical realm.
- Wendy, welcome to The Infinite and the Beyond. (Interview begins)

❖ **Segment: A Corner in the Occult: (approx. 1300-1500 words): Alex Sanders**

(Background Music: “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer)

Hello and welcome to “A Corner in the Occult” Where we focus on one part or person from the history of occultism. In these regular segments, I touch upon many aspects of the occult and I hope to offer you something new or at least something to think about. The information presented is always done so in the best manner possible in regards to its content and accuracy depending on the available sources. There is a lot in occultism that one may never choose to look into, and here you have the opportunity to learn about something which you may have never bothered to investigate and oddly enough there are at least some people who may be unaware of what our topic is on...

- **Introduction**

- The controversial Alex Sanders is the primary figure behind the Alexandrian tradition of Wicca, which stands side by side with other traditional forms of Wicca such as Gardnerian.

- **Birth and Childhood**

- Alex Sanders was born as Orrell Alexander Carter on June 6th 1926 in Birkenhead, England, was the oldest of six children and was raised in a working-class family.
- His father, Albert E Carter, suffered from alcoholism and was a musician.
- He married Alex's Mother, Margaret Bibby in 1920.
- Soon after Alex’s birth they moved to Manchester, and unofficially changed their name to Sanders though no reason has been really given, this sudden name change was most likely a way help the family survive after his father hurt his reputation by appearing on stage drunk. After which, finding work was difficult for him.
- Alex was unaware of his official surname until he applied for a passport later in life.

- He was first introduced to esoteric ideas by his mother and grandmother at an early age.
- As a young man, he was said to have worked as a medium in the local Spiritualist Churches before going on to study and practice ceremonial magic later in his life.
- Much of the specific details regarding his early life are unclear as he himself caused much of the truth about who he was to be compromised with sensationalized fantasy.

- **Adulthood**

- When he turned 22 he married his first wife by the name of Doreen and they had two children, but Doreen's growing disapproval with the occult and the supernatural caused her to leave him and take their two children after four years of marriage.
- This caused him to feel even more isolated and separate from the world. As a result he began working a darker path and pursued what is referred to as the Left-Hand Path for some time.
- In Richard Cavendish's (1970) Man, Myth and Magic book series, Sanders is quoted, "I made a dreadful mistake in using black magic in an attempt to bring myself money and sexual success. It worked all right — I was walking through Manchester and I was accosted by a middle-aged couple who told me that I was the exact double of their only son, who had died some years previously. They took me into their home, fed and clothed me, and treated me as one of the family. They were extremely wealthy, and in 1952, when I asked them for a house of my own, with an allowance to run it on, they were quite happy to grant my wishes. I held parties, I bought expensive clothes, I was sexually promiscuous; but it was only after a time that I realized I had a fearful debt to pay."
- Around this time, one of his mistresses committed suicide and his sister Joan was injured in an accidental shooting and shortly after diagnosed with terminal cancer. Alex blamed himself for these unfortunate events.
- During this time he also studied such works as The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage and the Key Solomon which he almost got in trouble over after slowly harvesting pages from a copy housed in the library where he worked at the time. Unfortunate for him, the library realized what he was up to and nearly pressed charges against him, but didn't because he was able to safely return everything he took. Obviously this lost him his job at the Library.

- **Initiation / Witchcraft**

- Eventually his path would lead him towards witchcraft, but his obtainment of the Gardnerian Book of Shadows, his initiation into witchcraft and how he became a witch has always been up for debate as Alex Sanders himself has told more than one tale regarding how he became a witch.

- His first contact with Wicca was in the early 1960s, through correspondence and meetings with Gardnerian High Priestess Patricia Crowther, who felt that he was a troublesome upstart and so refused to initiate him especially after he convinced the Manchester Evening News in September of 1962 to run a front-page article on Wicca.
- However it would be odd that he would be seeking initiation at all since at the age of 36 since he later claimed to having been initiated at the age of seven by his Welsh grandmother after accidentally walking in on her while she was working magick. As described in the June John's book, *The King of the Witches, The World of Alex Sanders*, his grandmother is said to have initiated him to ensure that he would never tell anyone about her being a witch and that if he breathed a word of it to anyone she would kill him.
- He claimed that his grandmother was a hereditary witch and supposedly descended from the Welsh chieftain Owain Glynd. She let him copy her Book of Shadows when he was nine and taught him the rites and magic of witches, along with techniques of scrying in inky water and in crystals. His initiation by his grandmother was said to involve him being blindfolded, scourged, and having blood drawn from his scrotum with the use of a sickle like knife. The unusual proceedings of this rite were clarified by the statement that his initiation was different because he came from a bloodline of witches. He also stated that his Grandmother also conferred the second and third degrees upon him which involved the sacred rites of sex.
- In another version (corroborated by his later wife and High Priestess, Maxine Sanders), he claimed to have been initiated in 1961 in a coven led by a woman from Nottingham, although she even says that he was indeed also taught a form of witchcraft and magic by his grandmother when he was young, with his mother's knowledge.
- Interestingly, later initiates of him, Janet and Stewart Farrar, openly state in their book *A Witches' Bible*, that Alex failed to gain admission to any Gardnerian coven, but yet somehow obtained a copy of the Book of Shadows, then to be an exclusive piece of property only available to initiates in Gardnerian Wicca.
- Years later, Janet Farrar and Gavin Bone in their book *Progressive Witchcraft (2004)* confirm this earlier claim and that of Maxine Sanders by explaining that it was a priestess by the name of Pat Kopinsky, who was associated with the Crowthers, that provided Sanders with a copy of the Book of Shadows. Though she didn't initiate him, she introduced him to her initiator named Medea.
- Some accounts state that he was initiated into Gardnerian Wicca on March 9th of 1963 by Medea of the Derbyshire Gardnerian Coven, but the source for this information is unconfirmed. However Medea could have been the woman Maxine was referring to.

- The inconsistency in Alex's stories of his initiation into Witchcraft are often explained away by his constant seeking of attention from the media. However, why would such an important story from his life be so vague and inconsistent? One can only speculate.

- **Marriage to Maxine**

- In 1964 Sanders met his much younger future wife Maxine, who at the time was a Roman Catholic and recently a student at St. Joseph's Convent School in Manchester. He initiated her into the craft in 1964 and was made his High Priestess. They were handfasted in 1965, and in 1968, they married in a civil ceremony that was filmed and featured in a BBC documentary at the time. Original portions of this video are currently viewable online however, it should be noted that there are versions of this footage which has been incorrectly re-narrated to fulfill an ignorant religious based agenda. Links for the original footage will be available in the show notes.
- To continue, after his marriage to Maxine in 1968, they moved into a basement flat in West London, where they ran their coven and taught classes on witchcraft. Shortly after, their daughter, Maya, was born in 1968.
- One of their bigger conflicts was Alex's insistence on incorporating his bisexuality into the coven's Wiccan practice, specifically because until that point male and female pairing had been a primary practice in the religion.
- Since neither him or Maxine were able to compromise over his bisexuality, they separated in 1971. After their separation, Alex moved to Sussex, while Maxine remained in the London flat where she continued running the coven and teaching the craft.

- **Alexandrian Wicca**

- The traditional of Wicca directly associated with the Sanders line is known of as Alexandrian which was a play off of Gardnerian, being those witches who came from Gerald Gardner, and the famous library of the ancient city of Alexandria.
- The name was said to first be coined by Stewart Farrar and another student when Stewart was writing his book “What Witches Do.”
- Alexandrian Wicca is said to be very similar to Gardnerian, but some of the distinct differences found in Alexandrian Wicca are:
 - The athame is held as a symbol for the element of fire and the wand as a symbol for air. This being opposite of the Gardnerian tradition as well as modern ceremonial magick practices, and even traditional associations found within the Tarot.
 - Most Alexandrian rituals are said to be very formal and heavily indebted to ceremonial magick while at the same time as a tradition it is said to be more liberal and eclectic.

- **Media / Controversy**

- One cannot discuss the history of Alex Sanders without touching upon his experiences with the Media.
- In one of his more fantastical media appearances, Sanders presented was a ritual at Alderley Edge, where he proposed to raise a man from the dead. They had a bandaged up figure lying on a stone altar who was examined by one of Alex's colleagues posing as a doctor, who certified it was indeed a corpse. Sanders read an “ancient and strange” invocation (which was later revealed to be a Swiss roll recipe read backwards). However unlikely it may now seem, the newspapers ran with the story and Sanders' self-imposed notoriety developed still further.
- Sanders was sent into the national public spotlight after the appearance of a sensational newspaper article in 1969. This led to a romanticized 1969 biography titled “King of the Witches” written by June Johns, and the film “Legend of the Witches” in 1970 which generated greater publicity, and made him fit for guest appearances on talk-shows, and even public speaking engagements.
- Many Wiccans back then and even now accuse him of exploiting the craft and dragging it through the gutter with his media appearances. However Maxine states that he *never courted publicity, but was simply unable to avoid it. She describes how Alex's initial rise to fame came through an attempt to distract media attention away from other witches.*
- One of the criticisms often made of Alex and the many press photos of him is that he was always depicted cloth while Witches surrounding him were naked. His explanation for this was that the laws of witchcraft required that the elder of a coven to be apart from the others and easily identifiable. However, where this law is exactly stated is unclear.

- **Alleged fantastical claims by Alex Sanders**

- Beyond his unusual media appearances, Alex also has a history of fantastical claims regarding magickal feats and abilities that he had done during his career. For example:
- He was said to have created a spiritual baby by the name of Michael via a sacred act of masturbation between himself and a male assistant.
 - The spiritual baby Michael, would become one of his familiars and was said to take Sanders over during channeling sessions and force him to carry on at wild parties, insult people and otherwise act abominably.
- Another familiar of his, known as Nick Demdike, is claimed to have been persecuted as a witch at the Pendle Witch Trials of the 17th Century.
- While later in his life he was featured in another documentary adorned in a gold mask and headdress as he channeled an Aztec fire spirit.

- His alleged healing feats include:
 - getting rid of warts by wishing them on someone else.
 - curing a man of heroin addiction.
 - curing a woman of cystitis by laying his hands on her head and willing the affliction away.
 - curing a woman of cancer by sitting with her in a hospital for three days and nights, while holding her feet and pouring healing energy into her.
 - He claimed to be able to heal illnesses just by pointing to troubled spots on people’s bodies and concentrating,
 - He Claimed to have ended a pregnancy by returning the soul to the Divine.
 - He is also supposed to have cured a deformity of his daughter, Janice, who was born with her left foot twisted backwards, by following his familiar Michael’s instructions to anoint the foot with warm olive oil, and turning the foot straight.
- **Accomplishments / Death**
 - As a result of his popularity and efforts, in time he would become known as the *King of the Witches* and would go on to initiate hundreds or possibly thousands of witches during his lifetime. In fact, Janet and Gavin Bone even joke in their book *Progressive Witchcraft* that Alex was so prone to initiating people that if the Milkman stood at Alex's front door long enough, even he could have been initiated at some point.
 - Despite his eccentricities throughout his career, perhaps hindsight is indeed 20/20 as later in his life in a 1979 article titled "The Many Paths of Wicca" from issue #15 of *The Cauldron*, Alex announced to the witchcraft community that he wished "to make amends for some of the past hurts that I have given and many public stupidities I created for others of the Craft", and expressed his desire that the Wicca should some day put aside their differences and "unite in brotherly love before the face of the Lady and the Lord," allowing them to become great again and respected in the outside world.
 - Towards the end of his life he began working with Derek Taylor, a psychic and trance medium, and together they developed the magical work of Sanders' order, the Ordine Della Luna, which reportedly worked with celestial intelligences, disembodied spirits and the demiurge itself.
 - One could say that his greatest accomplishment was in the lives he inspired and his constant promotion of Wicca up until his death on 30 April 1988, after suffering from lung cancer.
 - Alexandrian Wicca is said to be a major influence in such modern traditions as Blue Star Wicca and even the Canadian based Odyssean Wicca. It continues to flourish and be a vibrant tradition in the growing Wiccan movement.

- And it is for his influence on the development of Wicca and contributions to western occultism as to why Alex Sanders, the King of the Witches, now has his own corner in the occult.

This concludes this edition of A Corner in the Occult. Suggestions for this segment are welcomed and encouraged so please be sure to contact the show online via the show website. Thank You.

Bibliography & Source Links

- http://www.witchcraftandwitches.com/witches_sanders.html
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alex_Sanders_\(Wiccan\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alex_Sanders_(Wiccan))
- http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/s/sanders_alexander.html
- <http://culture.pagannewswirecollective.com/tag/alex-sanders/>
- <http://www.maxinesanders.co.uk/index.htm>
- <http://www.nightwing.aweb spider.com/originsofwicca.htm>

Videos

- Alex sanders - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hC1u-NFAfw>
- Alex and Maxine Handfasting 1970 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xF69UCJ9YHA>
- Clip from a 1989 video “Earth Magic” - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXQr2NOQChk>

❖ Featured Artist

- “Guided by Venus” by Wendy Rule from her album Guided by Venus

❖ Interview Part 2: Wendy Rule

❖ Segment: The Essence of Magick Series (TeoMS): Awen

(Background Music: “Calling Peace” by Alexandre Falcao)

(Audio clips: Gerald Gardner and Patricia Crowther chanting “The Witches Rune;” Aleister Crowley “Excerpts from the Gnostic Mass;” An interview with Gerald Gardner, early 1960’s)

...It is a secret and you will be taught. From the basic to the complex all will be revealed. Welcome to the Essence of Magick Series... echoing forth from The Infinite and The Beyond.

❖ Awen

❖ What is it?

- Awen, is the Welsh word for 'poetic inspiration' and it is the force that is believed to drive all acts of creation and all creative endeavors. Whether one is painting, writing, dancing, singing, performing, playing music, feeling the energy at a night club, concert, or some other impressive energetic gathering, the Awen is, in some form, believed to be filtering into the act or event through those involved.
- The earliest tale of the Awen comes to us through Welsh mythology with the story of great bard Taliesin and Cauldron of Cerridwen. Where Cerridwen was cooking the Awen in her cauldron for a year and day when Gwion

Bach accidentally consumed it by licking the final three drops of it off his finger. Angry at this, because the brew was not meant for him, Cerridwen went after him and so being on land, he turned himself into a hare to speed away, but she became a greyhound. He then turned himself into a fish and jumped into a river, which caused her to turn into an otter. He turned into a bird and took to the air, and she pursued him as a hawk. Exhausted, Cerridwen forced him into a barn, where he turned into a single grain of corn and she became a black hen and ate him. This caused her to become pregnant with him and he was then born as Taliesin.

- The transcendent link inherent in the Awen is like plugging into a divine consciousness, where the flood gates of inspiration are opened and wash over us, opening our minds and touching our being. Inspiring us to move or act in a manner to bring forth creation in whatever form it takes.

❖ **How does one tap into it?**

- Probably the Awen is akin to the initial spark of manifestation that brought existence and the cosmos into being.
- Tapping into the Awen, and experiencing its flow, is most often done through some form of trance and the surrendering of one self so that we allow our mind and body to be guided to function in a sometimes fully aware, but always, inspired state, with the hope to not only transform and effect ourselves, but others as well.
- Though directly related to Druidry and the bardic tradition, the idea of tapping into the Awen, or some other divine source, can be found in many religions throughout the world. This can be observed in those traditions where ecstatic dancing, speaking in tongues, ritual possession, acts of divination, the receiving of scripture, and other forms of trance are utilized in order to commune and unite one with the divine and enrich a religious community.

❖ **How does one incorporate it into their magickal and creative practice?**

- Though it is most often associated with the arts and creativity, in magick the Awen, can serve as a vehicle for transformation through its power and inspiration enabling the practitioner to cause change to occur in their life and the world because in essence any act of creation is an act of magick and any act of magick is an act of creation.

❖ **What is it in essence?**

- In essence, through creation we touch and effect others. Through creation we experience life and through the process and ability of creating, we begin to understand the methods of magick as well as the role and power of divinity in the act of creation itself.
- This concludes this edition of the Essence of Magick. Suggestions for this series are welcomed and encouraged and you can do so on the show website or through the show forum. Thank you.

❖ **Sources**

<http://druidgarden.wordpress.com/2012/07/05/awen-and-the-spark-of-creativity-the-value-of-creative-people/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Awen>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taliesin>

❖ Featured Artist

- “My Sister the Moon” by Wendy Rule from her album *Guided by Venus*

❖ Interview Part 3: Wendy Rule

❖ Featured Artist

- “The Wolf Sky (Live)” by Wendy Rule from her album *Live at the Castle on the Hill*

❖ Conclusion

- (Background Music: “????” by ????)
- Hey welcome back the song you just heard was “The Wolf Sky” and that was a live performance from Wendy's recent album *Live at the Castle on the Hill* and earlier we heard:
 1. “My Sister the Moon” and “Guided by Venus” which are both from her 2010 studio album *Guided by Venus*.
 2. Earlier we heard “Creator Destroyer” from her studio album *The Wolf Sky*.
 3. And to close the show we'll be hearing “Circle Open” from her live album as well where you get to her really shine and perform in a shamanistic trance state as she closes her performance ritual space. Keep in mind that this was recorded in the southern hemisphere so the directions and their elemental correspondences will be a little different.
- Thank you once again to Wendy for speaking with me.
- If you're interested in purchasing her music or in seeing her perform, visit her online at wendyrule.com
- Remember that as this episode is released, Wendy is on tour right now and she'll be at Pantheacon later this February.
- And, check out her 13 month course *Living a Life of Magick* that will be starting in March and if you'd like to apply or to find out more information, Check it out online at livingalifeofmagic.com
- Next episode we'll be speaking with author Jason Miller about his work and his recent book *Financial Sorcery!* So until next time, may the circle be open, but unbroken and may the loved of Gods be ever in our heart. Merry Meet, merry part, and merry meet again! Blessed be!

❖ **Featured Artist**

- “Circle Open (Live)” by Wendy Rule from her album Live at the Castle on the Hill

❖ **Episode wrap up (12/9/2011)**

(Background Music: “Universe inside you” by Persian Paladin)

Well, this concludes this episode of The Infinite and the Beyond.

If you have any thoughts about this episode or about what I’ve said in one of its segments please let me know by contacting me through the show website which can be found at www.infinite-beyond.com.

If you like this show and are interested in hearing more or subscribing, then visit the show website where you can find links to where this show can be found online for you to subscribe, download, and friend.

A complete manuscript for the episode can be found on the show website and all links related to this episode can be found in the show notes.

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Thanks for listening, thanks for subscribing, and until next time Merry Part, Blessed Be, and 93!

Show Notes: Episode #030 – The Inspiring Wendy Rule

❖ **Show Summary:**

In this episode we speak with Australian visionary songstress Wendy Rule and have a very enjoyable time with her as we discuss her work; her online course living a life of magick; hanging out with the fae; her future album and her current US tour. All while being completely captivated by her music which plays throughout the episode. In A Corner in the Occult, we learn about the controversial, “King of the Witches,” Alex Sanders and in the spirit of creativity we contemplate the ideas surrounding the Awen in The Essence of Magic all this and more in this haunting and inspiring episode with the lovely Wendy Rule.

❖ **Breakdown: (1:34:41)**

(00:00:00) – Introduction

Music : “Proteus” by composer George Wood

(00:01:01) – Featured Artist

Music: “Creator Destroyer” by Wendy Rule from her album The Wolf Sky

(00:05:29) – Interview with Wendy Rule Part 1

(00:27:07) – A Corner in the Occult:

Music: “Piano Quartet in G, 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer

(00:42:41) – Featured Artist

Music: “Guided by Venus” by Wendy Rule from her album Guided by Venus

(00:48:28) – Interview with Wendy Rule Part 2

(00:57:46) – The Essence of Magick Series: Evocation

Music: “Calling Peace” by Alexandre Falcao

(01:02:21) – Featured Artist

Music: “My Sister the Moon” by Wendy Rule from her album Guided by Venus

(01:07:17) – Interview with Wendy Rule Part 3

(01:18:31) – Featured Artist

Music: “The Wolf Sky” by Wendy Rule from her album Live at the Castle on the Hill

(01:22:12) – Conclusion

(01:23:46) – Featured Artist

Music: “Circle Open” by Wendy Rule from her album Live at the Castle on the Hill

(01:32:01) – Wrap-up

Music: “Universe inside you” by Persian Paladin

❖ **Background Music**

George Wood - <http://promedia.podomatic.com/>

Linda Holzer - <http://www.ualr.edu/lrholzer/bio.shtml>

Persian Paladin - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/2644/>

❖ **Featured Music**

Wendy Rule – <http://www.wendyrule.com>

❖ **Links * Please see show notes for a complete list of the links from this episode**

❖ **Credits**

MusicAlley - <http://www.musicalley.com>