

## IN THE CLASSROOM: ENTER THE PSYCHOMANTEUM

BY ZEHARA NACHASH

The first time that I ever heard of the psychomanteum was when I was driving home from work and listening to the “Lucky Mojo Hoodoo Rootwork Hour” podcast with special guest Jon Saint Germain, a spiritual reader and rootworker (hoodoo practitioner). Saint Germain briefly discussed something I had never heard of: the psychomanteum. As a practitioner who works mainly with the dead, I was shocked that I had never heard of a psychomanteum before.

Before I tell you what a psychomanteum is, let me tell you about the man who reinvented it and brought it to modern times. Most of us who work closely with the dead are very much aware of the writings and workings of Dr. Raymond Moody, a psychologist, philosopher, and the man who coined the term “near-death experience,” or NDE, in 1975. In the late ’70s, Dr. Moody began to document cases of near death experiences and eventually wrote a book called “Life After Life.” Inspired by the Ancient Greek chambers in which ancient Grecians would communicate with spirits, Dr. Moody built a psychomanteum in Alabama which he named the John Dee Memorial Theater of the Mind.



Psychomanteums are rooms built specifically for spirit communication, to recall past lives and to ask the dead for their help in personal causes. Psychomanteums first appeared in Ancient Greece 2,500 years ago at the oracle of the dead in Ephyra, better known as the Necromanteion. Those who wanted to communicate with a lost loved one would enter the chamber following rituals that would protect them. After passing through three gates, representing entry to underworld, they would then be able to communicate with the spirits.

Modern psychomanteums, such as the one Dr. Moody created, are rooms (usually the size of a closet or slightly bigger) in which there is a very large floor-length mirror and a comfortable chair. There is no light, although some people like a lighted candle to be placed near the mirror to help induce a trance-like state. Relaxation is key when working with after-death communication, as it is essentially mirror-gazing. While in a hypnogogic state, one would just stare in the mirror until spirits appear. And they will appear! Sometimes just as clouds, and other times as full apparitions. You may also hear them speak. They may even touch you. Once you become an expert in the psychomanteum, you can also ask the apparitions questions. It all depends on how relaxed your state of mind is.

As a modern-day necromancer, I have used several methods in spirit communication, but I find that creating a psychomanteum is one of the best techniques, simply because you are in a room specifically made for the purpose of spirit communication. There is no doubt of what will happen when you enter the room. Regardless of whether you are good at scrying, most people who enter the psychomanteum have had experiences with the dead. That is not to say that all experiences were pleasant, however!

With any means of spirit communication, the key is knowing your boundaries. If something doesn't feel right, something is wrong; that is when the communication needs to stop, and you can give it a try on another day. Remember, the difference between a psychomanteum and simply scrying is that the psychomanteum is a room made solely for the purpose of spirit communication and the mirror used is large, making communication easier.

One thing to remember, is that if you decide to make a psychomanteum in your home, it is a space for the spirits and should be treated as such. Before you enter the room, gently knock on the door to let the spirits know that you are about to begin a session. After the session, I always emphasize using sage, Florida Water, or copal to cleanse before and after using the psychomanteum.

As with all communication with the dead, always be cautious and remember that you are in control. Also, be mindful and respectful. The dead are not play things for entertainment. Souls and spirits should be treated the same as when they were living.

Psychomanteums are a great tool for advance practitioners in spirit communication. Using a psychomanteum is a very different, unforgettable experience. Stay alert, respect the dead, and enjoy the experience. You never know what will happen when you enter the psychomanteum.

