

## ***"thin places"- sacred spaces*** **The spirit of this place**

The Celts talk of special places like Iona or Lindisfarne as "thin places" - places where the line between heaven and earth is not so obvious as in other places. For many Australians Uluru - the Rock - is just such a place.

It is the largest monolith in the world, but no geological explanation exhausts its meaning. Deeply mysterious and solitary, revealing many faces and hiding as many secrets, it means many things to many people.

Such a place as Uluru- like many other places in the natural world- is both a focus and a stimulus for appreciating beauty and experiencing the power of place to engage those of us who are open and responsive to the experience of mystery and transcendence.

*In our culture....there is a feeling you get from the spirit of a place. All you have to do is walk across the land and our history surrounds you. To a newcomer's eyes it might just look like bare land and rocks, but if someone who knows the place is to sit down with you and tell you its stories and secrets, that will open the eyes you need to see the land. Through these different eyes, you can see what the land has to give you.*

Boori Pryor

*When you touch them, all things talk to you, give you their story....You understand that your mind has been opened to all these things because you are seeing them; because your presence and their presence meet together and you recognise each other. Those things recognise you. They give their wisdom and their understanding to you when you come close to them.*

David Mowaljarlai

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Philip Carter is a retired Anglican Priest. He was the inaugural president of the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD). He ran the Julian Centre in Adelaide, an independent and ecumenical centre for spirituality, from 1997-2009.

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Stay with these passages from two Australian First Nation writers and listen to what they say. See if you can get in touch with what is going on in you as you listen.

**Is what arises in you inviting you, gifting you, challenging you?**

**Where do I come from?**

**Where am I most at home?**

**Is there a place which is special - because of its beauty,  
its connection with my story, what it still says to me?**

**Where do I go in my imagination?**

**Is there a place I carry with me - or carries me, informing and enlivening me?**

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