

INSIDE+OUT

CELEBRATING AND CONNECTING THE HUDSON VALLEY

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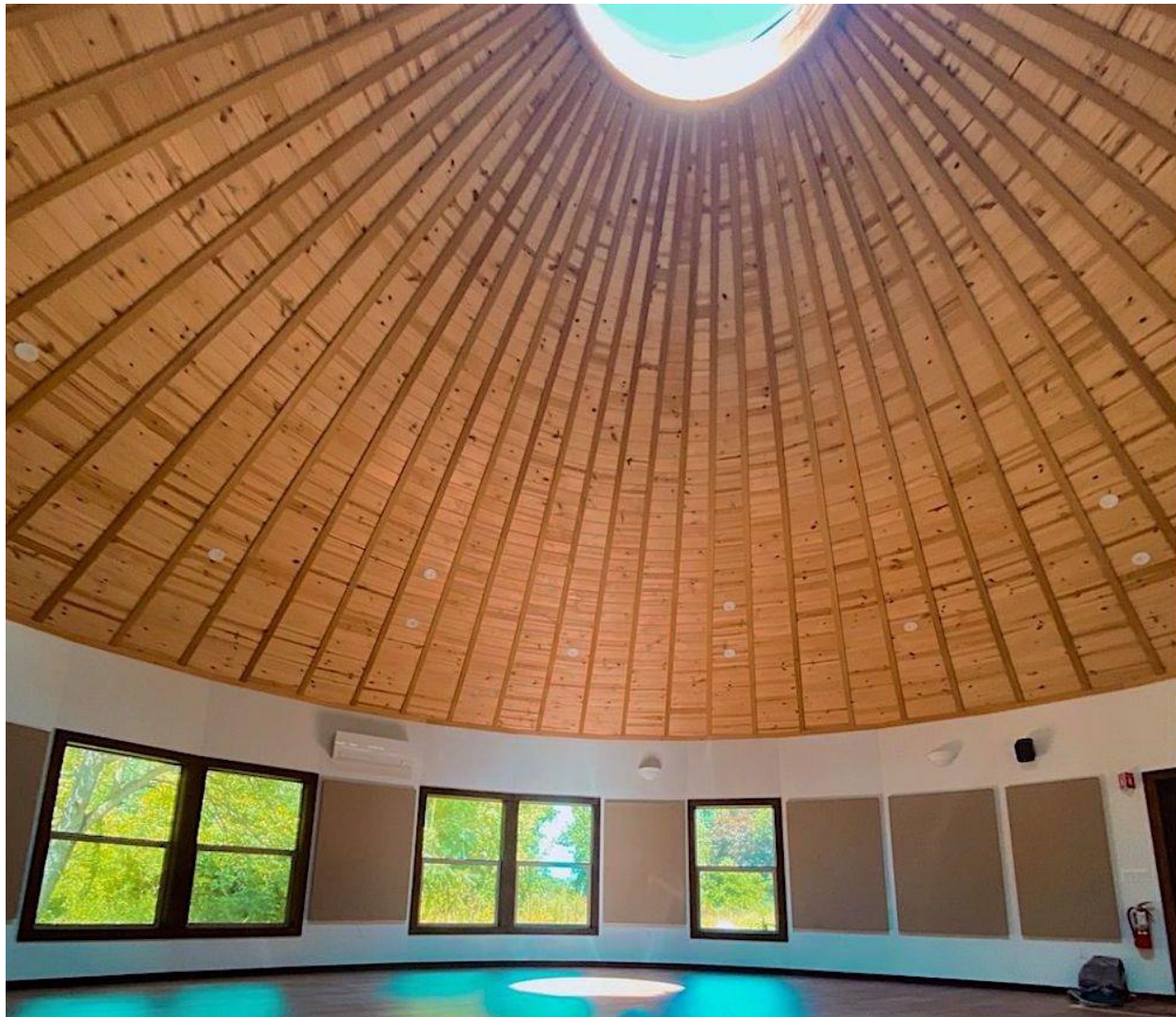
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GATHER ROUND

By **Nixa De Bellis** | June 10, 2023

Why do Circular Rooms feel so comfortable, look so pleasant, and sound so good? Round buildings have a certain allure that is difficult to describe, not just because they are rare. They possess a certain ineffable quality that makes them feel like sanctuaries just by way of the simplicity of their shape. Like yurts and kivas, round buildings have a rich history of human gathering that dates back thousands of years. The circular shape of these structures is not just a matter of aesthetics, but it also serves a functional purpose as people gather face-to-face in a shape of equality and oneness to truly see one another.

Beyond being a practical gathering space, round rooms also have a certain spiritual quality to them. They seem to connect us back with the ancient parts in each of us that remember a time before so many flat planes and right angles, as these do not organically exist in nature. The circular shape is often associated with the cyclical nature of life, death, and rebirth. It's a symbol of wholeness and completeness, like the ouroboros (snake eating its tail), which is why many cultures have used circular structures for recursive rites and rituals.

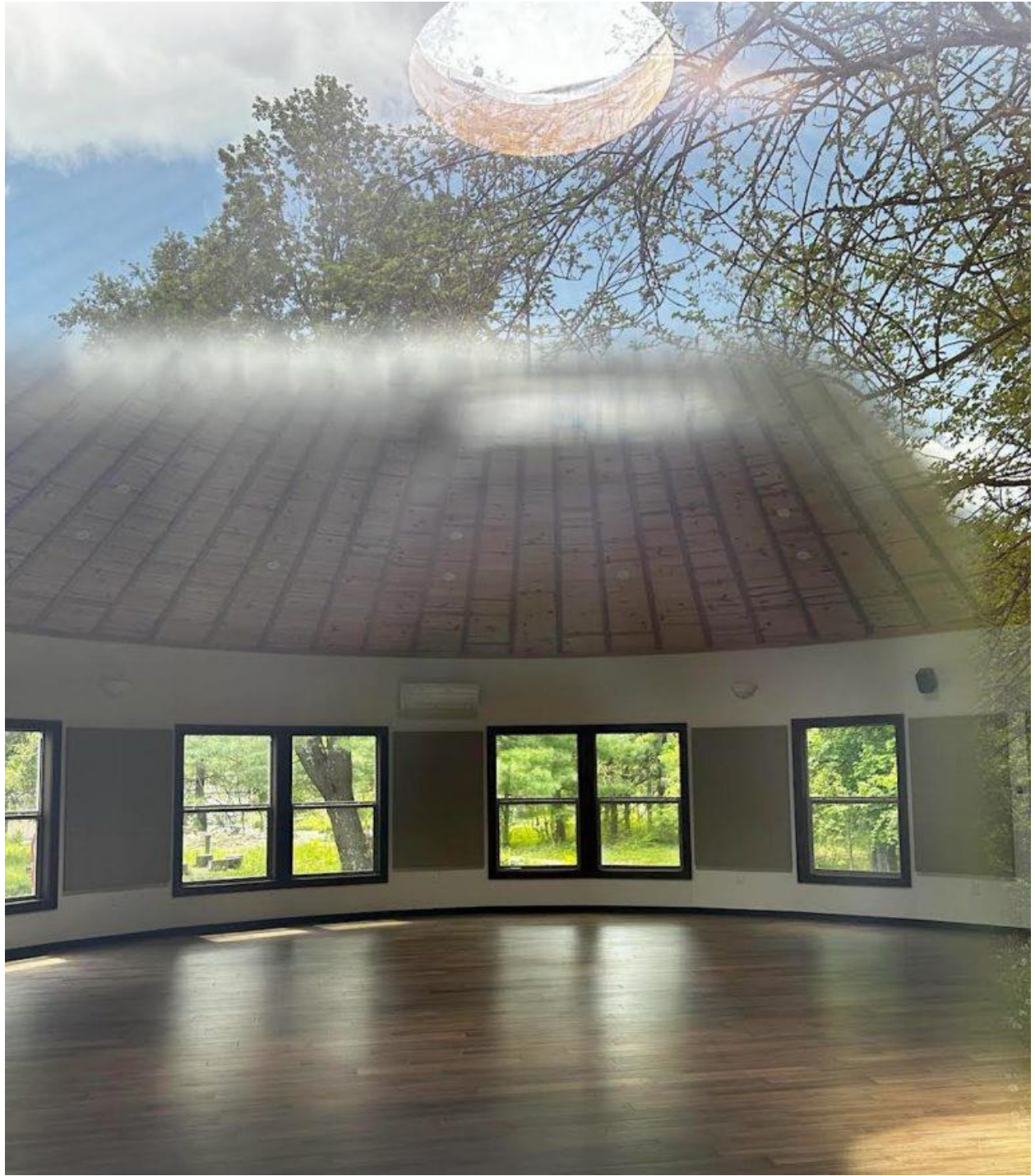


The Kiva in Stone Ridge, the new home base of [MaMa, or Marbletown Multi-Arts](#), (behind [Whole Sky Yoga](#)) is a gorgeous round building replete with an outdoor fire ring circle and is a splendid place to make circles, hold circles, be in a circle, in sound, movement, silence or stillness. Since its construction in 2020 and opening in 2021, the Kiva has become a beloved venue for music, meditation, cathartic dance and spiritual conversation.

Evry Mann, Founder of MaMa, sat in a [Hopi kiva](#) in New Mexico in the 1970s, and the experience of meditation, ritual, and its special acoustic and energetic

vibration stayed with him – and a long vision of round building ensued. He ordered a kit and did some modifications to it, including the magnificent central skylight that holds our awareness of both earth and sky.

The ceiling of a round building is a feature that adds to its unique atmosphere. Whether it's a point or a skylight, the ceiling draws the eye upward and creates a sense of expansiveness. It's as if the building is reaching into the sky while situated roundly on Earth. This kiva is precious and exceptional.





Before it opened its doors, the Kiva had a traditional blessing by **Tiokasin Ghosthorse**—a member of the Cheyenne River Lakota Nation of South Dakota—who buried sacred objects under the center of the structure to orient it spiritually for goodness. **Amazj’hi Dona Ho**, the creator of ***Violet Alchemy Healing and Purification***, also called in a pillar of light there to anchor the space and amplify all prayers made in the round circle of community. Their intentions, along with

Evry's, are evident in the remarkable response of participants that have particularly felt strong healing capacities and impact in the space. The Kiva has held **Dance Lab, Raga Concerts, 5 Rhythms, Cacao Ceremony, Dance Church, and many Sonic Tonic sound baths**, among other curated inspiring events.



On **Thursday, June 15, the Kiva welcomes special guest Odeya Nini** who is a vocalist and composer from California, to give a vocal sound meditation, intended for the sonic vibration of well-being and evocation of the mind and emotions to be moved by the particular strong expressive vibration of a human voice. **Nixa De Bellis**, teacher and body/mind therapist in the Hudson Valley, will assist in opening the ceremonial space with aromatic and shiatsu touch points to inspire relaxation and receptivity to the greatest potential of the experience.



Odeya regularly makes vocal sound baths in a round building in Joshua Tree, CA, called the **Integratron**. She says that she is drawn to the resonance, or the acoustic phenomenon of sound bouncing off the surface of space and returning to our ears. “Domes and such architectural spaces,” she says, “have acoustics that make it easy to sing and literally amplify the voice. These spaces catch you,” she continues, “in the most beautiful way, and don’t let your mind escape the vibration and sound of the here and now. Their unique resonance allows sound to be experienced like an immersive, warm and strong embrace.”

The Kiva is our Hudson Valley local round room space with a skylight to the celestials for us to enjoy a special visit. Kindly, they provide cushions and ‘back jacks’ for your seated comfort and ample space to dance or lie down.

See and hear a taste of Odeya’s offering **HERE**.

Click **HERE** to check out MaMa’s website for their monthly schedule for June. There’s always a lot going on!

In a world that’s becoming increasingly chaotic and unpredictable, being in a round building can provide a sense of refuge and stability. It’s a reminder that there are still places where we can feel grounded and connected to something deep and meaningful. The absence of sharp corners and the design of the spacious ceiling with a sky view creates a feeling of tranquility and harmony. Whether it’s a yurt in the woods or a kiva in the Hudson Valley, these circular structures have a timeless quality that transcends culture and time. Being together in a circle is different than in a row of numbered seats because it renders us as equals.

As we continue to create in Hudson Valley communities, could there be an allure to learn from the wisdom of our ancestors and incorporate more circular structures into our architecture, as Evry Mann’s vision has?

Come enjoy the power of human voice within this round sanctuary and experience, as Odeya Nini expressed, “sonic vibrations that move the very water in our bodies, so we are able to be soothed and feel better.”

Gather Round.

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Here are a few. round houses and structures in the Hudson Valley. Please leave a comment below if you know of any round structures in the Hudson Valley and what they’re used for.



Stunning Hudson Valley Round House Vacation Rental



Exterior of the house above



Known as the Mothership



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[Odeya Nini](#) will sing at the round [Kiva in Stone Ridge Thursday, June 15th, 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM.](#)

BY [NIXA DE BELLIS](#)