

# SACRED RESISTANCE: RETURN

## MAMA SCRAP'S CAPITAL CAMPAIGN RETURN. RECLAIM. REMATRIATE. RETREAT.

SPRING 2021



### WHAT IS PERMACULTURE? AND WHY?

Permaculture is a method of food production that seeks to emulate the natural world's dominant means of production. Most modern agriculture utilizes a monoculture, or using a lot of space to grow only one crop. Permaculture grows multiple crops in the same space with each crop performing a unique function for the ecosystem.

We recognize that this method is less studied, but we want to use our land as an opportunity for research and education for: new ways to grow food in accordance with nature, innovative eco friendly pest management, and crop, nature, and human reintegration.



### THE HERSTORY OF THE LAND

In 1919 our great great grandmother, known to her immediate family and descendants as Mama Scrap (Eliza), purchased almost 7 acres of the land that her father, known affectionately as Paw, owned. He acquired over 50 acres the decade before and split it amongst his sons and subsequently his daughter once she married. The 50+ acres was occupied and maintained by his family for 3 generations, until my grandmother moved north to Chicago in the 1950's. When Mama Scrap passed in 1978, she left the land to our grandmother (Jessie) because her own daughter, Jessie's mother (Vera) died at the age of 51 and could not inherit it. 100 years from the time the land became Mama Scrap's, my mother, sister and I became the stewards of the last 6.5 acres that have remained from the original plot.

While it is no longer surrounded by family as the landowners, we want to pay homage to what was. On that land, our great great grandmother Scrap gave birth to her only child, a daughter she named Vera, who gave birth to her only child, also a daughter- our grandmother, Jessie Ree. My grandmother birthed 7 children, of which we are 2 of 19 grand and great grandchildren. **While she carried the future generations in her womb, she carried the history and herstories of the family and our ancestors in her bones and in her heart.** We have felt it our duty to carry on that legacy, holding on to as many stories as we can, and by returning to the land that sustained our ancestors.

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### HERSTORY CONTINUED

When our grandmother was growing up, there was a big house in the center of land, and scattered around, each of the siblings had their own space and home. Each of them had their own gardens and/or farms, and were fully self-sufficient. It was like a village for a family. While we don't have the entire plot of land anymore, we want to develop a shared housing space to replicate the essence of what once was.

**The vision is for Mama Scrap's land to house a small scale self-sufficient, sustainable wellness village offering holistic retreat experiences by utilizing our permaculture farm and eco-friendly housing.** A co-housing design will provide a shared living space with a kitchen, bathroom, living and dining room, and 4 separate detached dwellings with a bedroom and bathroom, and lofted area in each unit. Around the housing will be a food forest and permaculture farm to grow the foods we will consume and to support the local community in accessing fresh free foods.



### THE CAMPAIGN

We are currently running a capital campaign to raise funds for the project to be constructed. The goal is \$225,000 for the 1900 square foot co-housing construction. We want this space to be a safe haven and respite for people of color, a model for returning to the south and the land. For us, it's not just a retreat space or a farm or land that we can claim ownership of. It is a space we are curating for black folk the oppressed to reconnect with roots and rituals, and for people of color to find restoration.

When my grandmother moved North to Chicago in the middle of the Great Migration, she and others left the South to seek economic opportunity and refuge from the tyranny of white supremacy. But the North did not offer refuge, evident by the decades of struggle against oppression and the current movement for black lives to be fully valued. Since the 1990's, a New Great Migration back to the south by Black Americans has been underway. But Mississippi and Alabama have been slow to see this return, as the memories of a deep seated history of black terror associated with these states especially remains. And they have not had the appeal of an idealized southern life that has been shown in popular culture. Believed to be the bedrock of the Confederacy, without the establishment of safe spaces for black people, we will continue to avoid coming back to the lands of our ancestors. We want to break that mold.

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