

# THE CARTOMANCER

*COMMUNING WITH  
YOUR MUSE*  
PAMELA STEELE

*SYMBOLIC LIVING:  
UNDERSTANDING SOUL  
THROUGH TAROT AND  
DREAM IMAGERY*  
TONI GILBERT

*NEW USES FOR  
DAMAGED DECKS*  
JAYMI INNOWEN ELFORD

*SUGGESTING LIVING*  
CAMBLIA ELIAS

*THE INS AND OUTS  
OF THE TAROT SUITS*  
JADZIA DeFOREST

*INTUITION AND  
CONSCIOUS EVOLUTION*  
HEATHER MENDEL

*UNORTHODOX ORACLES:  
EARTHEN ALTERS*  
MELISSAE LUCIA

*THE MAGICAL WORLD  
OF ORACLES*  
BONNIE CEHOVET

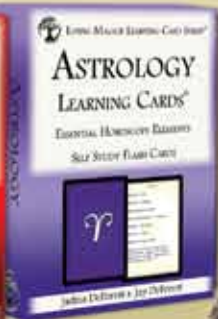
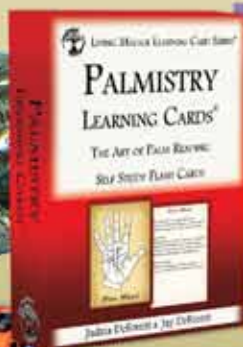
**A QUARTERLY TAROT, LENORMAND & ORACLE JOURNAL**





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## *The Cartomancer*

### **Mission Statement**

Our goal is to support an inclusive and mutually supportive community of Tarot, Lenormand and Oracle card readers worldwide through a quarterly journal that includes...

Well written informative articles by a wide range of experts for cartomancers of all levels, from novice to professional.

High quality divination inspired art from around the world and full color samples from some of the best recently published and classic decks for readers to explore.

A Marketplace for authors and artists to publicize and promote their books, decks and other Tarot, Lenormand and Oracle related products and upcoming events of interest to the community.

A public forum for letters and editorials that offer respectful and supportive commentary on topics of interest to the card reading community at large.



# ON THE COVER



## **The Wise Fool Tarot**

The cover image is The Hierophant from the *Wise Fool Tarot*. Read an interview with deck creator Cade Burkhammer on page 6.

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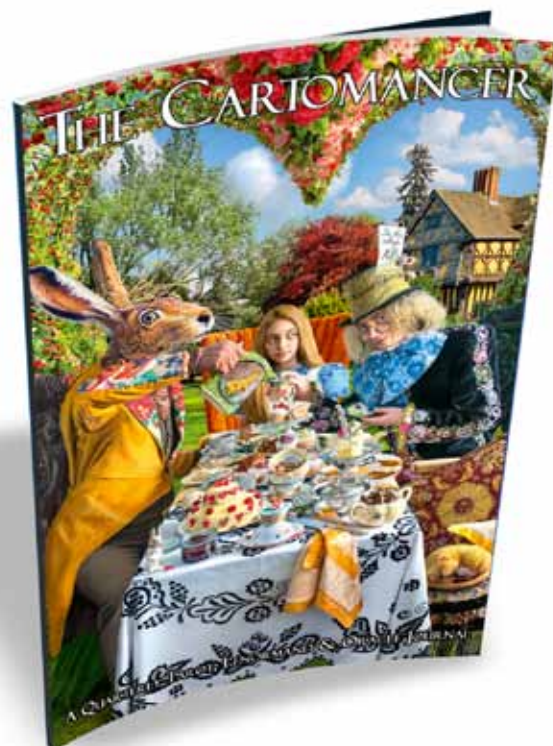
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# NEXT ISSUE

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The autumn issue will be out August 1st and we are featuring the *Alice Tarot* by Karen Mahony and Alex Ukolov of Baba Studio.



# EDITOR'S NOTE

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Welcome to the first issue of *The Cartomancer*, a quarterly Tarot, Oracle, and Lenormand magazine! After being in the works for nearly a year, it's finally manifested in this tangible form. I'm sure parts of it will evolve over time and as we receive feedback from our readers. But for the first issue, this is it.

The goal with this journal is to include many of the different aspects of tarot, and divinatory card reading in general. Featured articles, reviews of recommended decks, a showcasing of artwork, editorial columns, and humor make up the structure of this magazine. By including these sections it allows us to experience tarot in a multi-faceted way.

Tarot is a main focus in *The Cartomancer* because it makes up the majority of the card reading community. The magazine also includes oracle and Lenormand topics, as there is much cross-over. Many tarot readers that I know are especially exploring Lenormand these days, including me.

This first issue includes the basic sections originally envisioned. I would like to see it grow to include community resource listings, a calendar of events, and divination inspired art / photography that is not necessarily part of a deck.

I hope you enjoy this premiere issue, and I welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

Jadzia DeForest



JADZIA DEFOREST is a Tarot reader, instructor, and author residing in Portland, Oregon. She is co-author to both the *Tarot Learning Cards* and *Astrology Learning Cards* decks, published through Devera Publishing & Distribution. She is also the director of the Northwest Tarot Symposium, an annual tarot conference.

Visit [www.TarotByJadzia.com](http://www.TarotByJadzia.com) & [www.NWTarotSymposium.com](http://www.NWTarotSymposium.com)



JAY DEFOREST is a professional Tarot & Rune reader, Co-author of the Living Magick Learning Card series, and owner of TheGuidingTree.com, an online Body, Mind & Spirit shop.

He offers readings, spiritual & life counseling and inter-faith clergy services for those desiring compassionate support and guidance with the adventure of life.

Jay lives in Portland, Oregon with his wife, Jadzia, in their 99 year old house full of cats, plants and tarot decks.

You can contact him through [www.JayDeForest.com](http://www.JayDeForest.com).



BONNIE CEHOVET is a professional Tarot reader with over twenty years experience, is a CTGM (Certified Tarot Grand Master), and a Reiki Master/Teacher. She is a published author, including *Tarot, Birth Cards, and You* (Schiffer Publishing, 2011). *Tarot, Ritual, and You* (Schiffer Publishing, 2013), and *Surviving the Holidays* (through Amazon.com). She is co-author, along with Brad Tesh, of *Seek Joy ... Toss Confetti* (through Amazon.com).

Her reviews and interviews can be found on her site ([www.bonniecchovet.com](http://www.bonniecchovet.com)), and on the Aeclectic Tarot website ([www.aeclectic.net/tarot](http://www.aeclectic.net/tarot)). Her writer's blog can be found here - <http://www.bonniecchovet.blogspot.com/>.

The Cartomancer is published quarterly in print and online:

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Autumn Issue - August 1st

Winter Issue - November 1st

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Jadzia DeForest

Bonnie Cehovet

Jay DeForest

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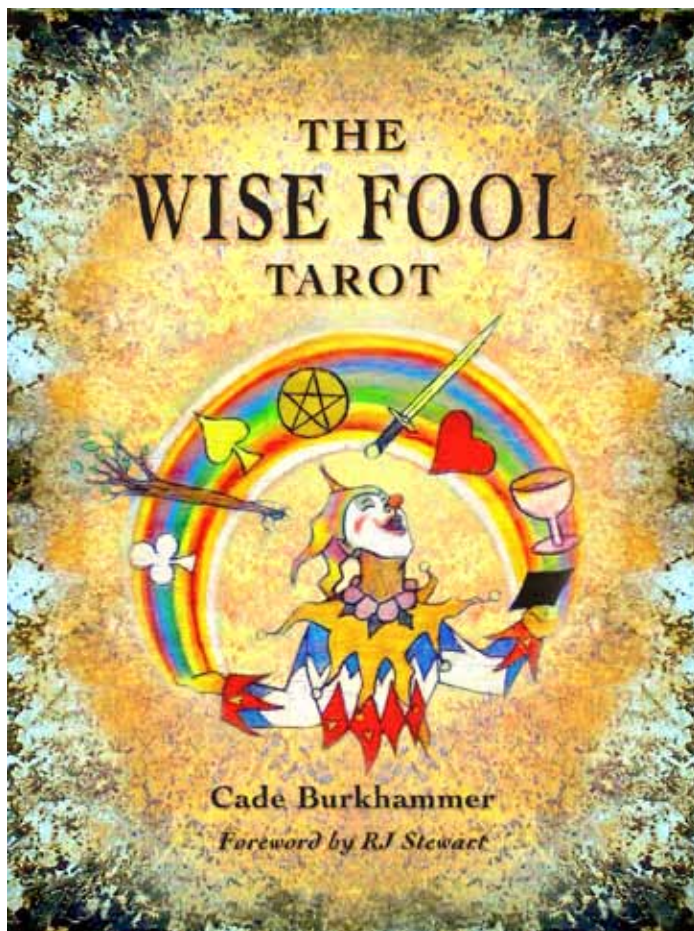
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# AN INTERVIEW WITH CADE BURKHAMMER, CREATOR OF THE WISE FOOL TAROT

with Jadzia DeForest



I met Cade in 2014 when he came up for a visit to Portland from the Bay Area. He wanted to show us his tarot project and learn more about assisted publishing through Devera. I was immediately delighted by the image samples that he'd brought. So much texture, beautiful muted colors mixed with bold accents, and the modern imagery is inspiring.

When the idea for The Cartomancer came to be, I contacted Cade about featuring one of his card images for the first

issue's cover art. He was kind enough to agree and even let me choose which card!

**Q:** How did you get into Tarot?

**A:** I was handed down a Tarot deck when I was fourteen. I felt a calling to learn the mystical arts of subjective truth, healing, and world folklore. This introduction to the Tarot was in the 1980s, and I was an artist and musician very much absorbed in the punk, goth, and industrial music movements, which all carried occult themes and challenged the systems of society, culture, politics, thought, and life. Reading Tarot came naturally to me as I discovered that the Tarot is a way for the psyche to access ancient information not readily available in our mainstream society. I quickly realized that Tarot can still the body, develop the soul, influence conscious dreaming, and increase self-awareness, and this was absolutely formative for me as a young artist.

**Q:** What was your inspiration for creating a Tarot deck of your own?

**A:** I felt inspired to create a deck with the images I wanted to see: images that relate the ancient archetypes of classic Tarot to modern society. I did a painting in 1991 of towers crumbling, an airplane, and a large angel holding energy from above. Ten years later, I saw the event on September





eleventh through the media, and the muses encouraged me to document the Twin Towers' annihilation as the traditional Tower card in the Tarot. In order to make this painting understood, a series of paintings was required to create the entire story. So I began to study the many versions of Tarot and relate them to a contemporary audience.

**Q:** Tell us more about the *Wise Fool Tarot*, what's the overall concept and theme?

**A:** The underlying concept of the Fool is the sacred clown that humbles and heals a tormented misguided personality, whether it is personal or collective. Fools are found in all world cultures. In order to keep a tribe or culture sustainable, the Fool (or Native American Heyoka) would satirize society and perform in exaggerated manners to reveal to the people how not to behave, and demonstrate to the viewer a healthier way to live. A person would be prescribed a "strange" act to perform in order to successfully heal their psyche and body,



which would affect their surroundings. The four directions inspired me to list anything in a balance of four, like times of day, ages, seasons, races, sciences, etc. in order to ponder balance, wholeness, and connection. Separation is humans greatest flaw. The goal of this deck is to restore people's

connection to themselves, the planet, and to all its living inhabitants. This deck is post-modern as it relates ancient archetypes to modern society. In essence, the Wise Fool Tarot deck is social activism, calling out for its readers to wake up to their hidden potential and to joyously laugh at their follies in the process of their own evolution.

**Q:** How did you come up with the name: *Wise Fool Tarot*?

**A:** The original name for the deck was The Three Sided Coin. There are two sides to the coin of reality plus one

*I researched Tarot, art, science, psychology, and sociology. I then reinterpreted these concepts to relate to a modern audience.*

other that connects them. Eventually, I realized it was too vague. I wished to simply introduce the deep mystical ways that replenish the beings within this planet. The Fool theme came about to integrate the juxtaposition of the concept simple yet deep, hence Wise Fool. The Fool fearlessly desires new knowledge, wisdom, and

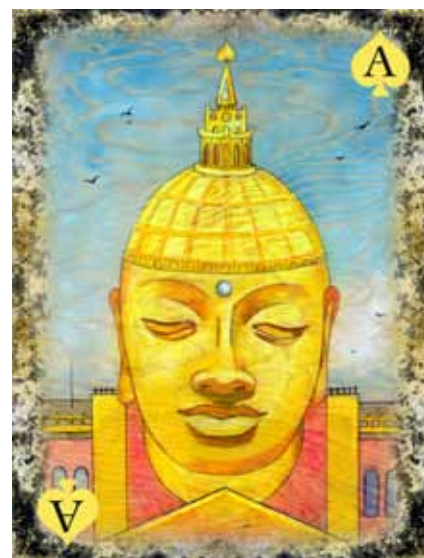
experiences. I also felt inspired to combine the widely used Poker card deck with the less widely used Tarot deck. Two Jokers are required for a poker deck. So I added four more Jokers to the WFT deck. I connected the Fools with each suit. The Fool reminds us that the more we know, the more there is to explore and to revel in the wonders of the mystery of life.

**Q:** Tell us a little about the process from a deck creator's view. How did you decide which art medium you wanted to work in? What do you feel were your greatest obstacles creating this deck? And, which parts were easiest?

**A:** Since childhood, I was inspired by the surrealist art of Dali and Geiger. When I was 8, I drew a copy of Picasso's Guernica painting. When I decided to create this deck it was natural for me to gravitate towards painting. I used acrylic, pencil, and ink on wood. I began the sketches on 88 index cards and then created larger renderings before attempting to paint. Ninety canvases would have been too expensive. Since paper is made of trees, I decided to integrate the direct source using wood. I chose plywood and cut it into similar 12 x 18 inch sizes. The individual wood would show its past life as it wished to, each sheet of plywood had unique patterns from the wood grain.

I chose the wood according to what fit for the landscape and figures represented within the painting's image. I discovered that painting on wood is more like sculpture and also proved to be more difficult than I had anticipated. The pigment absorbs into the wood, the pencil scrapes, the paint bleeds uncontrollably.

It became a sacrifice as this process took me much longer



than it would have to create the images on paper. Hopefully viewers will appreciate the unique energy the wood grain adds to each image. The greatest obstacle was creating enough time to work on the paintings and writing.

The 140 page book, with foreword by RJ Stewart, that accompanies the deck was developed to be read from diverse approaches and to be accessible to many different types of Tarot users. Complex ideas were eventually simplified and made interpretable. I had to compose and follow a list of dogmas and rules according to things such as the elemental attributes associated with each suit and the main archetypal associations for each card. I researched Tarot, art, science, psychology, and sociology. I then reinterpreted these concepts to relate to a modern audience. It took a decade to feel confident with the amount of information I collected for the book.

**Q:** Do you have any advice for those that are thinking of creating their own deck?



**A:** Envision where the Tarot emerged. Study many decks. Honor them and move on to offer your original compelling vision. Do not copy other decks or make it too personal. Discover what your Muses desire from you to reveal for them. Images are similar to the spoken word; they transgress

and transform beyond time and boundaries. Go on a walk-about and do creative things to heal the self and others. Study themes, focus on them, and integrate them into your deck. The decks that I choose to use for myself, I can tell took a lot of time and passion to create. Take inspiration from an honest, wise voice that is fading and make it loud, original, and legitimate. Be careful to not be redundant. Have a firm and constant understanding of the purpose of the project.

**Q:** Where can readers find out more about your tarot project?

**A:** From my website: [cadeburkhammer.com](http://cadeburkhammer.com), [facebook.com/wisefooltarot](https://www.facebook.com/wisefooltarot) and from the Devera website: [www.DeveraPublishing.com](http://www.DeveraPublishing.com).

[DeveraPublishing.com](http://www.DeveraPublishing.com). I will do signings in local Bay Area stores that carry tarot cards and plan to sell at the Bay Area farmers' markets and at Pantheacon in San Jose, CA in February of 2016.

**Q:** Do you have a publication date for your deck? And do you have any special plans, like a launch party, once the deck is in print?

**A:** It should be available by June 2015. I plan to throw a small party with readings and sales. I'm so excited for this venture to finally become a reality. It's been quite a journey.

**Keep in touch about the Wise Fool Tarot:**

[www.cadeburkhammer.com](http://www.cadeburkhammer.com)

[www.facebook.com/wisefooltarot](https://www.facebook.com/wisefooltarot)

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# IT'S ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE

by Bonnie Cehovet

Indeed, it is all about perspective! I want to thank Jadzia and Jay DeForest for asking me to join them in their editorial efforts. The Cartomancer promises to be an awesome addition to the world of divination – specifically Tarot, Lenormand, and oracles. As a quarterly print magazine (I love that it is being offered as a print magazine, and that a digital version is in the works!), it is definitely something to look forward to, and I feel will prove to be an incredible resource, much the same as Sagewoman is to celebrating the Goddess journey, and women's spirituality.

There will be articles, reviews, artwork, and photography featured and this is the tip of the iceberg! Through material submitted by our readers we will be delving into not only how to use various forms of divination, but we will be studying the history of each form, and how it evolved from its beginning to where we see it today. We will be taking a look at various schools of thought, and the people behind them. In doing this, we are going to be getting up close and personal with various time periods, and the thoughts and traditions particular to them.

I am pleased to see that an effort is being made to include material relevant to all levels of practitioners (from beginners to masters), as well as material relevant to authors and artists.

As an author, I love to see what other authors have to say. As a “non-artist” (no skills whatsoever!), it both fascinates me, and is important to me, to learn about the various schools of art, the process of bringing the art to life, how color and media has evolved, and how all of this applies to tools of divination.

If you look through our submissions categories, you will see such things as card layouts, educational pieces, philosophy, techniques and tips, experiential, cartomancy in daily life, cartomancy in pop culture, history and cartomancy, artistic perspectives, and interviews. This brings to mind sites such as Diane Brandt Wilkes “Tarot Passages”, Jean-Claude Flornoy’s “tarot-history.com”, and Autorbis’ “Trionfi.com”. What a wealth of information – and this is just a beginning!

I look forward to reading about the different styles of Tarot (Marseilles, Rider-Waite-Smith, and Thoth), the different versions of Lenormand (Brazilian, French, and German), and the myriad of other oracle decks out there. This is an exciting time, where we can put out a quality magazine and promote it worldwide through the Internet. Not that long ago this would not have been possible.

I hope to see many scholarly articles presented that will open our minds and our hearts to all of the possibilities out there. I want to know about the antique Tarot decks (such as Jacques Vieville,

Jean Dodal, Jean Noblet, Cary-Yale Visconti, Minchiate, and Soprafino) - how they came about, how they are being reproduced, and how they are being used. I would love to know which museums are housing which decks, so that perhaps some day I can actually see them.

I would love to see where Tarot has been translated into art, such as Niki de Saint Phalle’s Tarot sculpture garden, and the lovely Welsh village of Portmeirion (background for the Trump L’Oeil Tarot deck). Or perhaps we could look into Tarot based books, such as Kris Waldherr’s “The Lover’s Path”, or Kate Mosse’ “Sepulchre”.

We can shine our light wherever we want to. We can express through words and pictures our personal perspective concerning the world of cartomancy. Through discussing the use of the tools of cartomancy we can venture into the areas of culture, ritual, and more. We can discuss new ways to empower our lives through cartomancy, and to show respect to those that have gone before us.

Please go to <http://thecartomancer.com/>, and check out our submissions policy for articles, reviews, art, and photography. We are interested in presenting diverse, in-depth articles that both make us smile, and make us think, as well as art that is cutting edge. We hope that you will join us on our journey!



# TOLERANCE WITHIN COMMUNITY

by Jadzia DeForest

The tarot community - on this entire planet - is relatively small. I came to realize this last year when I was working to pull together the first annual Northwest Tarot Symposium. It seems as though everyone knows, or knows of, everyone else. And if they don't, it's a single degree of separation.

Especially since we are a small community, I think it is important to emphasize cooperation. That was one of my main focuses with the symposium. As the newest event of its type in the world, I didn't want to conflict with any of the established conferences. I reached out to them, specifically the Bay Area Tarot Symposium in San Jose, California and Reader's Studio in New York (two of which I'd heard a lot about), and was delighted to receive their enthusiastic support in welcoming a new regional event.

I met a lot of wonderful, supportive individuals; entered a world of artists, authors, speakers, and readers. Those just starting out and those who'd been doing this for years. I found out that so many of them have normal day jobs, but tarot is their passion, often supported by their lifelong careers in other areas. And there are those who have been successful at turning tarot into their career. I felt quite at home, like I'd found my tribe.

As I continued along my venture into the depths of the tarot community I

eventually found the other side. The dark side: backstabbing, cliques, wars between individuals, and the righter-than-thou attitudes. That certainly burst my bubble and, honestly, made me sad. Is it so hard to be part of a community and supportive of the whole at the same time?

In the exciting world of tarot there is so much available. There are tarot symposiums and conferences all over, each with a slightly different appeal; big organizations like the American Tarot Association, Tarot Association of the British Isles, Tarot Professionals, and Tarot Guild of Australia, all with their own unique contributions. I think it's great to have so many teachers, views on tarot, and organizations offering resources. What I don't understand is the undercurrent of intolerance.

There is no "right" way when it comes to tarot (and many other things in life). The whole point of tarot is in it's individual expression - a journey of the soul. Whichever approach a person wants to use, whether or not they learn Kabbalah, astrology or other methods, there is ultimately no right or wrong way. There is only the way that resonates with that individual.

As a community we should be offering resources, differing views, and our own experiences to nurture this evolving divinatory system and those who take it up. Be a part of several tarot different associations and attend

as many conferences as you can. Our focus should be on inclusion, tolerance, openness, and support. This is especially true for those in leadership positions: teachers, event producers, and organization directors, but applies to the rest of us as well.

Let's have an open mind regarding our community members, show tolerance, and embrace both the past and future of tarot.

My hope is to see The Cartomancer be a place for this community to come together and a safe place to express our opinions and learn from others with an open mind. All views and approaches are certainly welcome in this publication in an environment of mutual support and respect.



# THE THINGS PEOPLE SAY

by Jay DeForest

It took quite a while for me to be convinced to offer readings for other people, let alone to offer them for total strangers. Even though I have been using the Runes and Tarot to read for myself for about thirty years, the idea of getting out the cards or the stones for anyone who walked into the shop or our booth at a festival, holiday bazaar or street fair, seemed just a tad daunting. I know, that's a strange reaction for a Leo... We're supposed to love being "on stage", right? But, as I have always told people, whether they believe it or not, I am a Shy Leo. The idea of using my reading skills to share with others took a lot of getting used to.

But, when one is married to a professional tarot reader who teaches classes, produces symposiums, and has people lined up for readings in our booth at events, even the shyest of Leo's can't help wanting to join in the fun. And, I am pleased to say, it really has turned out to be quite enjoyable, as well as feeling like I am actually offering people something of benefit. Especially in today's world of fast paced ads, escapism and quick-fixes, there is something profoundly satisfying about sitting down with someone, especially a total stranger, and helping them to slow down for a few minutes and turn their gaze inward, using the cards or the stones, to find their own knowledge and answers.

It has been very interesting over the last few years to see the patterns that start to become apparent when doing readings for the general public. Since many of the events we offer readings at are not specifically "metaphysical", but rather more main stream things like holiday gift shows, street fairs, corporate parties, and such, I work with a LOT of people who have a minimal knowledge of tarot, Norse runes or divination in general. One of the things that has been quite fascinating is how often I hear certain phrases from people, over and over.

***"I don't want to know!"*** At every event where we have a booth, we can count on hearing at least four or five people watching others getting readings and shaking their head saying, "I don't want to know!" This happens with such regularity that I actually made a small sign to put on my table between clients that says, "Come on, you know you want to know!" I try to treat it lightly and with humor, but still it makes me sad to see how many people would prefer to keep their personal blinders on than take a few minutes for some interesting insights into their own life.

***"I have always been curious about this..."*** Fortunately, in contrast to the people above, there are those who have not ever had the opportunity to get a reading, are delighted to have a chance to experience it for the first time. Of course, for many of them, the only exposure they've had has been through movies or TV. Consequently, the only cards they have any familiarity with are the Devil, Death, and of course, The Hanged Man. You can almost hear the foreboding music coming out of their ears when one of those turns up and the color drains from their face. It's an interesting challenge to try to educate them a little as we continue with their reading.

Then, there are the skeptics with the

question, ***"Does this stuff really work?"*** I usually try to give them an analogy in the form of a question like, "I don't know, does a cookbook work?" The teacher part of me loves the opportunity to expand someone's knowledge a bit by explaining a little about how divination tools help us to discover information that is already within, and bring it to the surface. Like the cookbook, whether it "works" or not, is all in how one uses it.

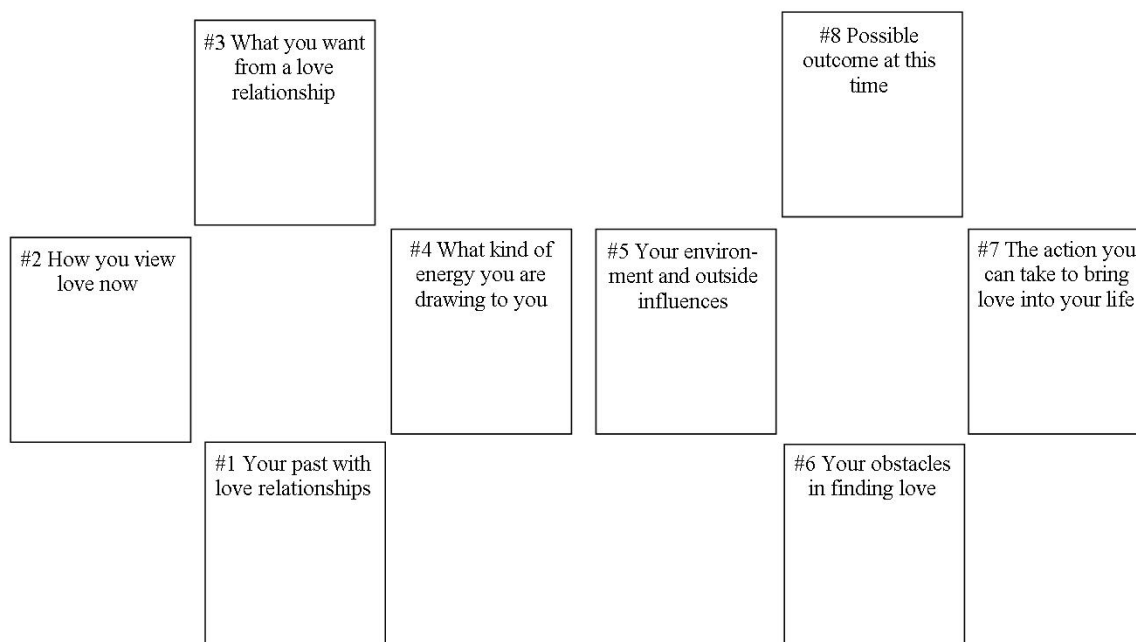
Another line that I hear, not too often, but often enough, is, ***"I don't believe in this stuff."*** Strangely, that is usually said when they are already sitting in the chair across from me to get a reading... Go figure! I am very tempted to one day reply, "That's okay, I don't believe in you either, and yet, here you are!"

One of the very frequent phrases that I hear is, ***"WOW! That just NAILED it! That is SO amazing!"*** It's amusing how the words are almost always those specific ones. It delights me to see people light up with the realization that they have the information already within themselves to answer their own questions and resolve their own dilemmas, and that tools like tarot cards or rune stones can be used to help them discover it. It's even more satisfying when their friend, who is often hovering at their elbow listening in, is nodding in affirmation, as the reading unfolds.

So, although it took a while for me to come out of my comfortable Leo's lair and bring the divinatory tools out into the light of day, I have to say it is worth it. Being able to offer people tools for insight and self discovery is very gratifying. I am hopeful that by sharing these systems in more "mainstream" settings, those of us who offer grounded reading in settings that are less "wow-woo" and more down-to-earth, are helping to make the world just a little bit better, one reading at a time.



# Looking For Love Spread



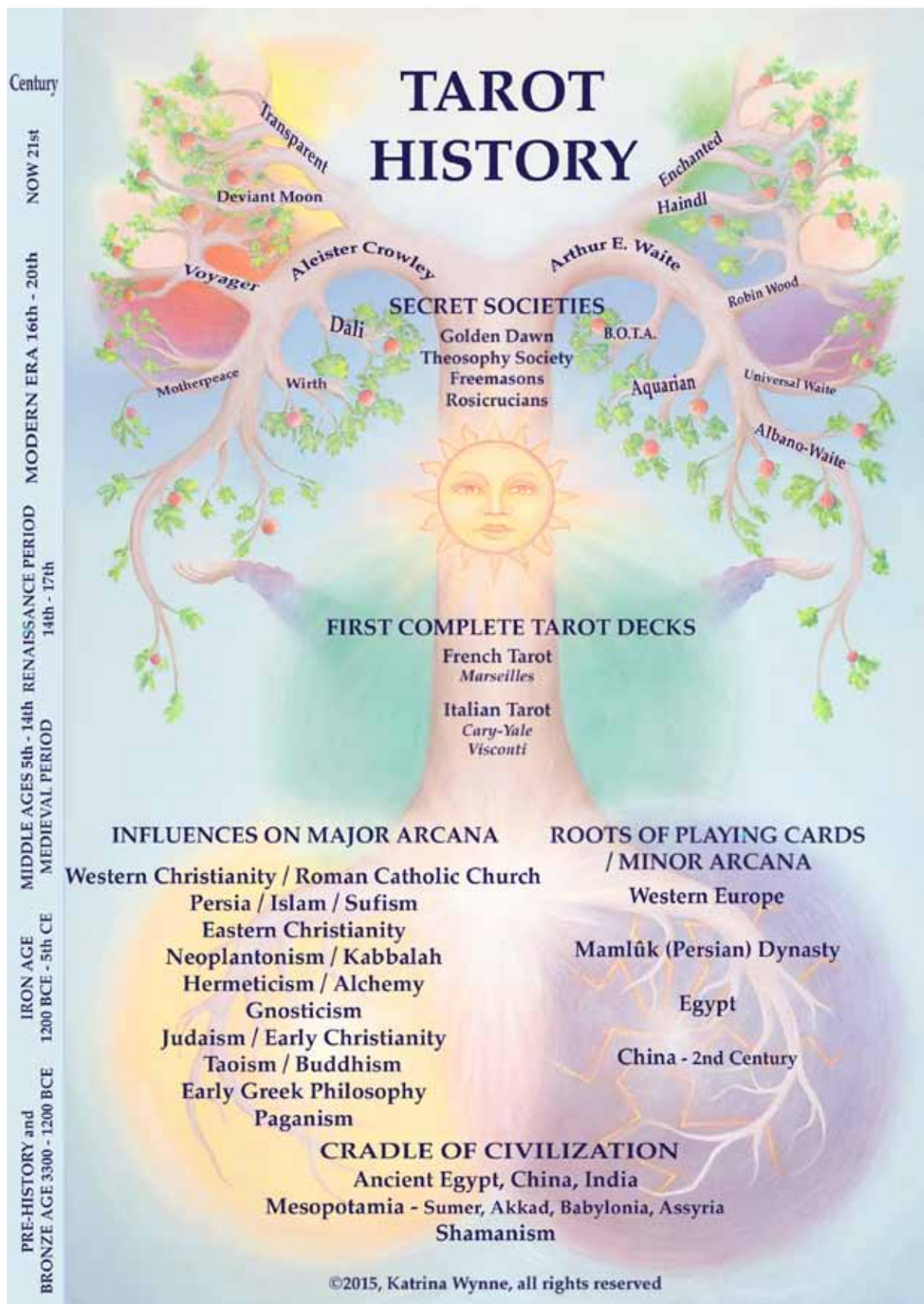
This spread is designed for questions about love, specifically for those seeking a partner. It can bring to light whether or not the querent is ready for a romantic relationship, how they view partnership, and the journey to finding love.

1. This card position gives background information and often what kind of situation they've come out of regarding romance.
2. How they view love is an indicator of what kind of relationship they are ready to welcome into their life.
3. What they want points to the type of relationship they are ready for: long-term, fling, exciting romance, or just a partner to spend their days with.
4. This position is an important one. It seems that people often draw toward them what they are *not* looking for and they do this subconsciously. They may be drawing the same type of person they've been with in the past, when what they really need it to break out

of that pattern. With this card position you can tell if they are ready to move forward or not.

5. The environment and outside influences position reveals what is happening around the querent. It can point to potential partners as well.
6. These are the obstacles that may be holding the querent back or what they need to overcome (in them selves or around them) to find love.
7. This is what they can do, act on, to bring the love they desire into their life.
8. The final card position shows the possible outcome or near future of the situation. It can answer whether they will find a romantic relationship soon, turn their attention to working on themselves, or repeat the same patterns from their past.

©2011 Jadzia DeForest



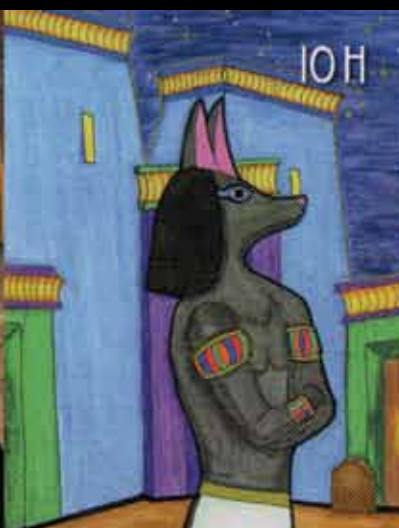
*Tarot History poster (the back has a written summary and research references.*

*Poster designed and created by Katrina Wynne and artwork by Qahira Lynn.*

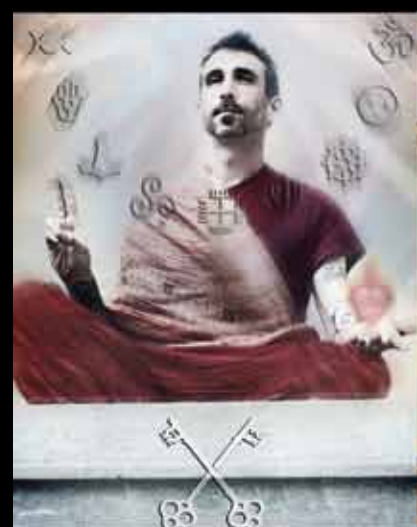
*To purchase your copy of the Tarot History poster, please visit this webpage:*

*[www.tarotcounseling.wordpress.com/products-books/tarot-history-poster-chart/](http://www.tarotcounseling.wordpress.com/products-books/tarot-history-poster-chart/)*





# Tarot Art





# MAGICAL REALISM TAROT

CHERYL FAIR



Magical Realism is a genre of art or literature that incorporates fantastic or mythical elements into an otherwise realistic setting. The style of the scenic illustrations on the cards, is the inspiration for the name of the 78 card tarot deck. The interpretation of each card in the Magical Realism Tarot honors the traditional meaning ascribed to that card, but emphasizes a more modern, psychological point of view, that encourages self-empowerment and creative thinking.

Cheryl Fair created the deck and wrote the accompanying instruction booklet. She shot and digitally manipulated photographs of various real-life artists, performers, musicians, and other creative people, in the roles of archetypal characters, as the basis for the major arcana and court cards in the Magical Realism Tarot.

*Cheryl Fair is a professional photographer/filmmaker with a degree in visual art and a family background in card divination. She is also a professional practicing astrologer and has been interpreting natal, transit, and relationship charts for clients for over 25 years.*

[www.CherylFair.com](http://www.CherylFair.com)



# THE PORTLAND TAROT

THERESA PRIDEMORE



3 - The Empress



22 - The Weir



21 - The City



0 - The Fool

The Portland Tarot is the creation of Portland artist and intuitive Theresa Pridemore. One fall day she became inspired to create a modern Tarot deck that she hoped a reader at any level would be able relate to. Over the following year, she blended this vision with an opportunity to explore her beloved city of Portland, its spirit, and its people through the creation of this whimsical and approachable deck.

Currently The Portland Tarot is a 23 card Majors-only Deck (with a full 79 card deck in the works). It comes with a 64 page reading guide with an intro to Tarot reading concepts, suggested spreads, and card interpretations. Imbued within each interpretation is the story around each card's creation and the people featured in the images. Also included are 3 Portland Bridge cards to guide readings.

Card art by Theresa Pridemore

Reading & interpretation guide  
co-written by Theresa Pridemore and Jamie Morris

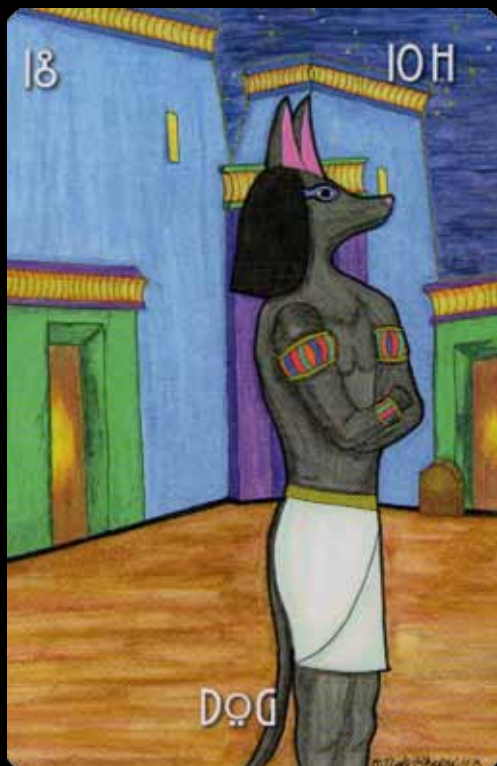
Printed in Portland, OR

[www.ThePortlandTarot.com](http://www.ThePortlandTarot.com)



# THE EGYPTIAN LENORMAND

NEFER KHEPRI



The Egyptian Lenormand is a 40 card Lenormand deck. There are 4 extra cards: an extra set of Man/Woman cards, a Cat card for cat lovers who wish to replace the Dog, (they can also be both used in the same reading), and two extra cards with the card back printed on both front and back to be used as a meditative focal point. There is also a 176-page accompanying guidebook.

My goal was to create a Lenormand deck that maintained the traditional Lenormand card interpretations while also using images and symbols from ancient Egyptian culture that held the same meanings to the ancient Egyptians, although the symbol itself may differ from the traditional European-based Lenormand symbol.

*Nefer Khepri, PhD lives in Houston, Texas with her husband, daughter, and Australian Red Heeler, Sheila. She first began creating art as soon as she could hold a crayon, at the age of 2. After taking a 12-year hiatus from art to study for her doctorate in Latin American Studies from the University of Texas, at Austin, Dr. Khepri returned to her art slowly, but surely.*

[www.EgyptianLenormand.com](http://www.EgyptianLenormand.com)



# RAINBOW TRAVELLERS TAROT

CARMEN WATERMAN



Rainbow Travellers Tarot - A magickal tarot deck woven with insights and guided messages to support the traveller on the complex journey of life.

The inspiration for the Rainbow Travellers Tarot began many years ago when I first began creating mythical and fantasy images. My spiritual journey of the past ten years has led me through a deep exploration of the tarot, and the archetypes that began to appear in my images.

The artwork and divi-natory meanings of the cards are shaped by my years of study and will stray from traditional archetypes to provide the reader/querent with guidance.

*My interest in digital art began in 1997. The visual arts have always been important to me, and became increasingly so as I used them to express deep feelings about life's many challenges. My art became an integral part of my healing journey, and helped me to rediscover the dreamer in me. It opened door-ways to my spiritual studies, especially as I began creating the Rainbow Travellers Tarot.*

[www. RainbowTravellers.com](http://www.RainbowTravellers.com)

# THE SYZYGY ORACLE

HEATHER MENDEL

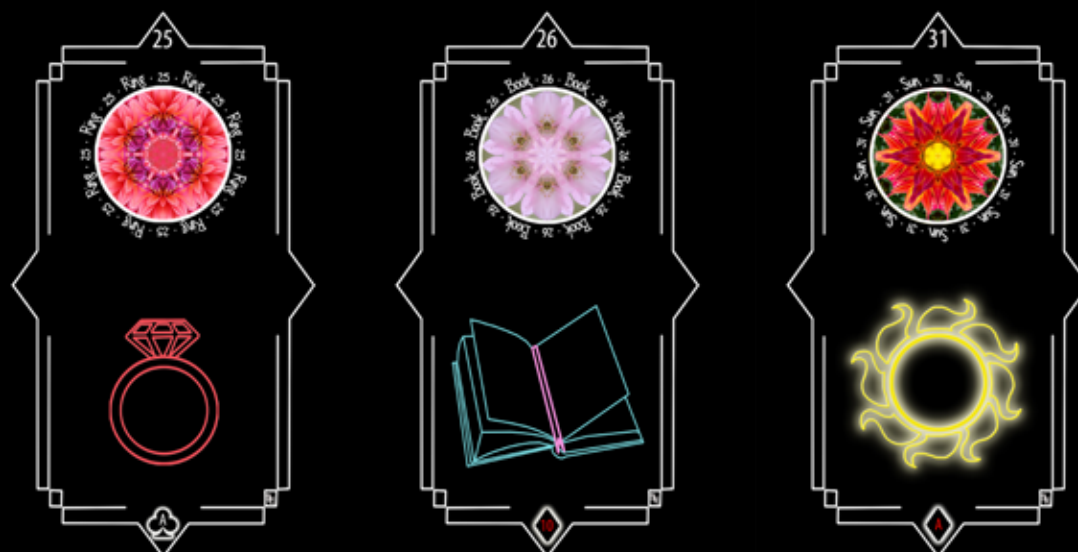


The Syzygy Oracle interweaves Kabbalah, Tarot and sacred geometry. Each card in this deck that offers a step on the heroine's journey in search of the Sacred Feminine, starts on a black background to honor all that is mysterious and unknown in our lives. The 22 cards align with the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet and a pathway on the Tree of Life.

Using the Lenormand cards deepens the intuitive sense of knowing and gives the reader more confidence in trusting the inner voice. This 40-card deck provides the traditional 36 images plus 4 additional cards to enhance the readings — Child, Man, Woman, Book. As in The Syzygy Oracle, the background is black to honor all that we do not yet know, the images simple and clear, and the association to the playing cards clearly marked at the bottom of the card. The border was designed to link images side by side as well as above and below for more in-depth readings.

# SACRED MANDALA LENORMAND

HEATHER MENDEL



[www.sacredfemininekabbalah.com](http://www.sacredfemininekabbalah.com)

[www.heathermendel.com](http://www.heathermendel.com)

[www.wordartist.com](http://www.wordartist.com)



# UNPUBLISHED MAJORS DECK

JADZIA DEFOREST



THE MOON XVIII



STRENGTH VIII



DEATH XIII



THE STAR XVII

This unnamed majors only deck I put together while taking an online tarot class in 2012.

The images are all public domain, combined in a collage style using Photoshop.

Inspiration for all of the images are from my own visioning of the cards, and traditional and non-traditional symbolism.

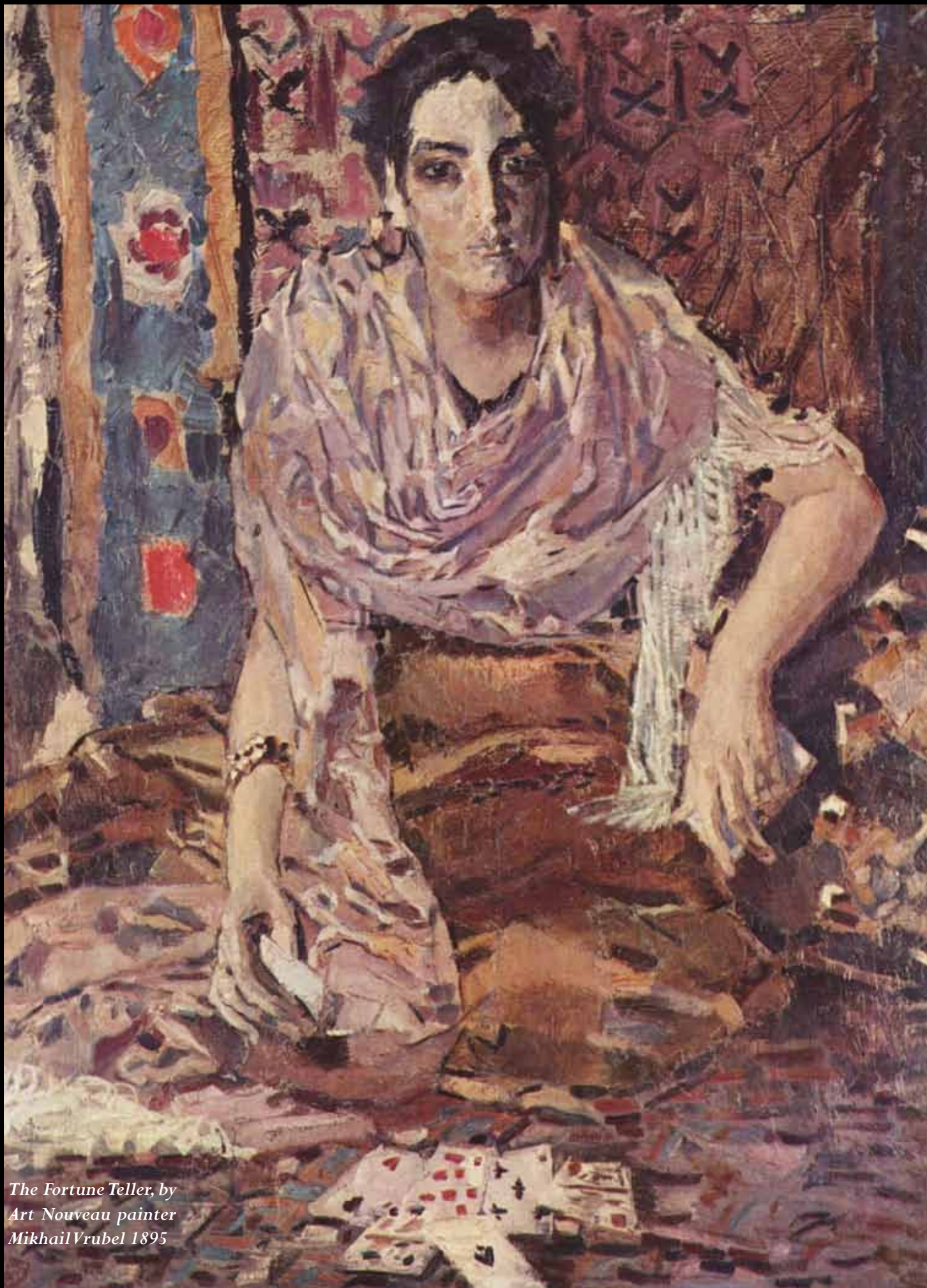
I have no plans to ever publish this deck, but it was a great exercise to put it all together. Personally, I think it is one of the best ways to really learn the cards, and your personal interpretation, by making a tarot deck.

I love the collage style because it is, for me, much easier to work with and I get just as much out of the process and working with the imagery and symbolism.

*Jadzia DeForest is the co-creator of the Tarot Learning Cards deck, a professional tarot reader, and instructor.*

[www. TarotByJadzia.com](http://www.TarotByJadzia.com)





*The Fortune Teller, by  
Art Nouveau painter  
Mikhail Vrubel 1895*

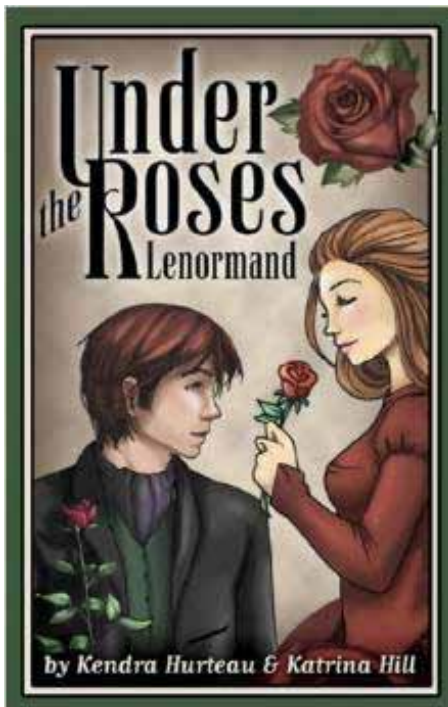


# Deck Reviews



# UNDER THE ROSES LENORMAND

Review by Bonnie Cehovet



Author: Kendra Hurteau

Artist: Katrina Hill

U.S. Games Systems Inc. 2014

ISBN #978-1-57281-760-9

Theme: Petit Lenormand/Victorian imagery

[www.undertheroses.wix.com/undertheroses](http://www.undertheroses.wix.com/undertheroses)

This is one of three editions of the “Under the Roses Lenormand”. The first two were self-published, with the first edition having keywords printed on the cards, and the second edition

being printed both with and without the keywords. There was also a mini version issued. Each self-published deck was printed in runs of 100, and are now OOP (out of print). The edition that I am reviewing, from U.S. Games Systems, Inc., shows the card titles at the bottom of the card, with keywords worked into the imagery. Quite frankly, I had a difficult time finding the keywords in the imagery.

“Under the Roses Lenormand” is comprised of 36 images based on the Petit Lenormand, along with alternate images for Child, Gentleman, and Lady (one based on European ancestry, one based on African ancestry). In the introduction we learn that “under the roses” is a euphemism for buried secrets (from the Latin phrase “sub rosa”). In classical Roman times the rose was the symbol for confidentiality and secrets. Heaven knows there are secrets that can come out in a reading! The deck comes with a 55 page LWB.

Note: In general, the Lenormand oracle cards originated with Mlle. Lenormand, a well-known card reader who died in 1843. The Petit Lenormand was named for her, and published not long after her death.

The images in the Petit Lenormand are used to identify past, present, and future influences in the Seeker’s life. As an oracle, this deck can be used for any issue or topic, by any and all levels of reader. The cards are 2 ¼” by 3 ½”

– perfect for smaller hands like mine, but still able to be used comfortably by individuals with larger hands.



The card back shows a sepia-toned background, with a blood red rose in the center, complete with a thorny stem and green leaves. The card faces show a sepia-toned background and border, with minimalist imagery. The card number is in the upper left hand corner, with the equivalent to the card from a regular playing card deck. For example ... The Rider is Number 1,



and is equivalent to the 9 of Hearts in a regular playing deck. The card name runs along the bottom of the card, against a white background. The upper right hand and lower left hand corners show a small rose illustrated in black. A black vine connects the four corners. The LWB presents the keywords for the cards only ... no image is shown.



The keywords are taken from various Lenormand traditions. It is suggested that if a reader is used to using a specific Lenormand system, that they continue to do so with these cards.

The LWB discusses how to read the cards, noting that they are read analytically, rather than intuitively. In getting ready to read the deck, it is noted that only 36 cards are to be used, so the reader will need to determine which version of the alternate cards to use, and set the remaining three aside. The cards are meant to be read in combination, so their meanings will change depending on the cards they are paired with.

Spreads include a Two-Card Combo, a Three-Card Combo, a Five-Card Line, a five-card Under The Roses Spread, a Nine-Card Spread, an 18 card Petit Tableau, and a 36-Card Grand Tableau. Advanced techniques are discussed at the end of the LWB.



The Grave (Number 8, Nine of Diamonds) references transformation, renewal, endings loss, mourning, death, and unhappiness. It represents an ending, and the transformation that comes from that ending. It is associated with the Nine of Diamonds and the Number 8. The image we see is that of an individual holding a dark umbrella over them, looking out at a gravesite that has an illuminated lamp over it.



The Clock Tower (Number 19, Six of Spades) references objectivity, enlightenment, standards, authority, analysis, discovery, and perspective. It represents institutionalized perspective or objectivity. The image here is that of a clock tower with birds flying around it.



The Key (Number 33, Eight of Diamonds) references destiny, threshold, doorway, opening, closing, unlock, lock, hide, clues, solution, certainty, and knowledge. It represents something being revealed or understood. The image is that of a hand about to insert a key into a door.

The Rider (Number 1, Nine of Hearts) references news, messages, invention, ideas, lover, young person, visitor, intuition, opportunity, surprise, renew, movement, and change. It represents news coming in short order or a person of significance. The image is that of a

white horse with a formally attired rider.

This is a very gentle deck, with a nice, Edwardian feel to it. The art is minimalistic, and is held together by the sepia tones. Several cards use the rose imagery, including The Bouquet, The Gentleman, The Lady, The Cross, The Sickle, The Dog, The Garden, The Locket, and The Ring. Whimsical cards include The Bear (which features a brown bear, standing, with a fish in its mouth), The Key (which shows a female hand about to unlock a door), The Owls (which shows two Owls on a branch), The Child (which shows a young girl chasing butterflies with a net), and The Dog (which shows a dog sitting, with a rose in its mouth).

I would feel comfortable offering this deck to clients of all backgrounds, and all ages.

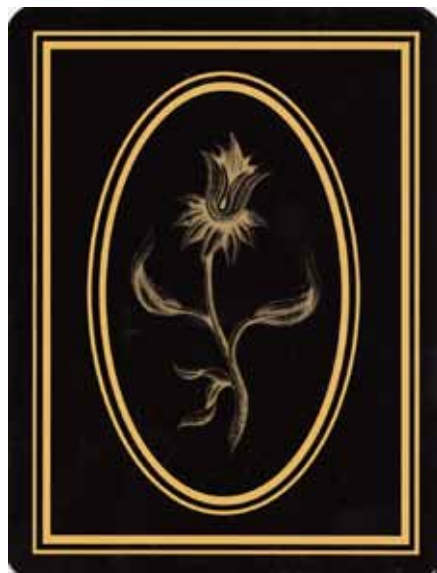
© December 2014 Bonnie Cehovet

Card Images from Under the Roses Lenormand

© US Games Systems, INC

# LE TAROT NOIR

Review by Bonnie Cehovet



Author: Justine Ternel

Artist: Matthew Hackiere

Editions Vega 2013

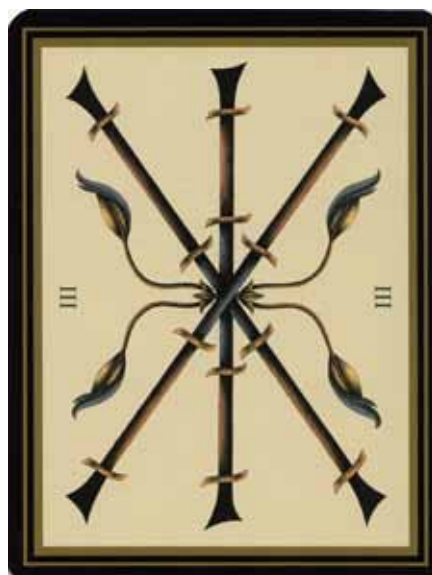
ISBN #978-2-85829-618-7

Many thanks to Alison Cross (reviewer extraordinaire!) for bringing this deck to my attention. I knew going in that I would be purchasing this deck directly from Mr. Hackiere, that it was a full 78 card, Marseilles style deck, and that the companion book was only available in French. I knew that I had to have it anyway!

It came wrapped so well that a sharp knife and I had a difficult time opening it! Needless to say, it got here in

excellent condition! Included was a well-constructed, lift top box, a 128 page companion book (in French), and the 78 card deck. I fell I love immediately!

The cover to the companion book and the top of the box are the same: all text in gold, against a black background. The image of the Two of Cups is done in a lighter gold. Throughout the companion book it is the same – gold text against a black background. There is a short introduction, with the text for each Major Arcana card on the left hand page, and a full page, full color image of the card on the right hand



side. The pips have a short write-up on each suit, and on the Aces. For Two through Ten of each suit there is an image only. The suits are Baton, Coupe, Deniers, and D'Epee. La Justice is VIII,

La Force is XI. At the end of the book is a bibliographie.

Since there is not all that much text in the book, I am going to use an online translator to create the English version of this book. It will take time – but it will be worth it! From what I understand, the text leans more towards card playing than the divinatory aspect, so I am not losing anything by not rushing to do the translation.

The cards themselves are a sturdy 4" by 5 1/2". The backs are black, with an inset border in gold (a fine border, followed by a wider border). In the center of the card we see the same border, in an oval shape, surrounding a flower. (The image is also in gold.) The backs are not reversible. The card faces show a black border, followed by a thin gold border, which is followed by a slightly wider gold border. The background for the images is a cream/bone color. The cards are gilt edged.

For the Major Arcana, the card title is presented in French in black lettering against a cream/bone background at the bottom of the card. For the Court cards, the card title and suit is presented in French in black lettering against a cream/bone background at the bottom of the card. The pips, which are presented Marseilles style, do not show a title, but do show the card number

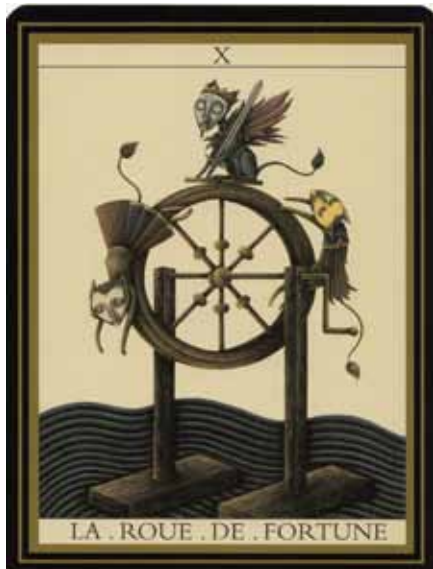




in the middle of the card on the right and left hand sides. The color palate is subdued, using green, brownish-red, blue, black, and yellow.

The pips are Marseille style, showing suit icons only.

The Valet de Baton shows a figure standing, looking to the right hand side of the card (the future). Both hands are placed on an upright baton.



La Roue de Fortune shows a wheel with three animalistic figures on it. They all have tails, and the same face (almost like a mask). They are differentiated by their bodies, with the central figure wearing a crown.

Arcane XIII (which is not named in this deck, but is known as Death), shows a skeleton wielding a scythe as he walks



through a field with arms coming up from the soil – and one lone flower in the background.

Reyne de Deniers shows a female figure, facing the left hand side of the card (the past). In her right hand she holds her suit symbol, in her left hand she holds a scepter.

La Justice shows a female figure, wearing a crown, seated. In her right hand is an upright sword, under her left hand the scales of justice.

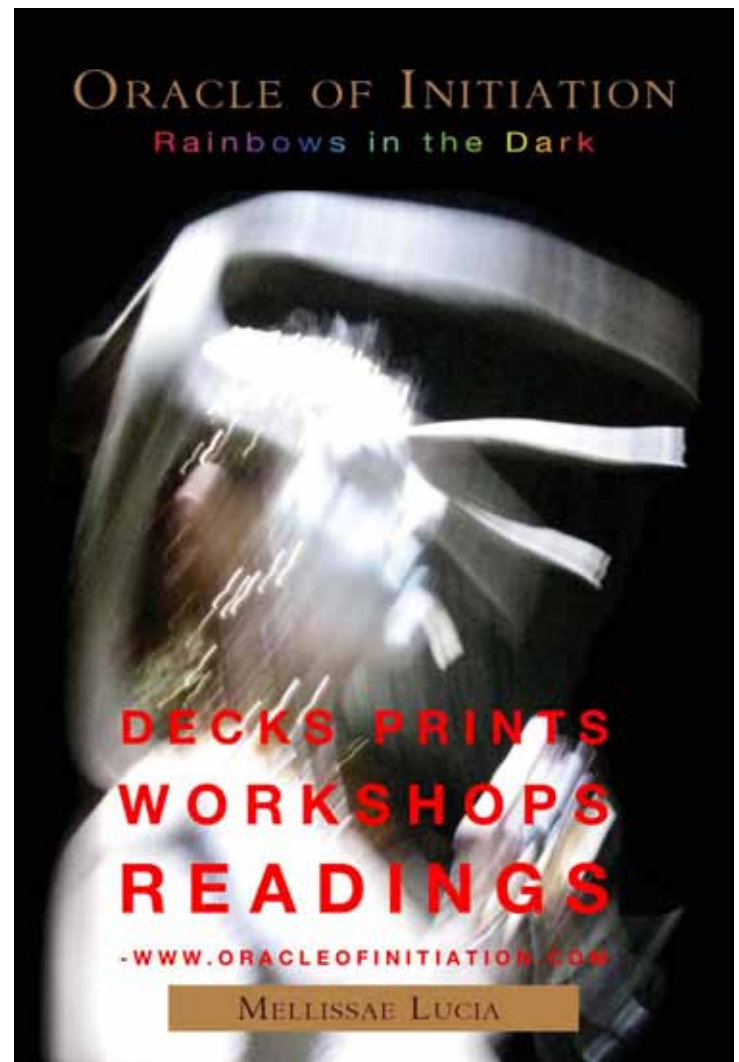
I found this deck to be very well done, with quality materials and presentation.

I would not hesitate to use it in different ways, such as divination, meditation, journeying, card a day, personal growth, and storytelling.

© 2015 Bonnie Cehovet

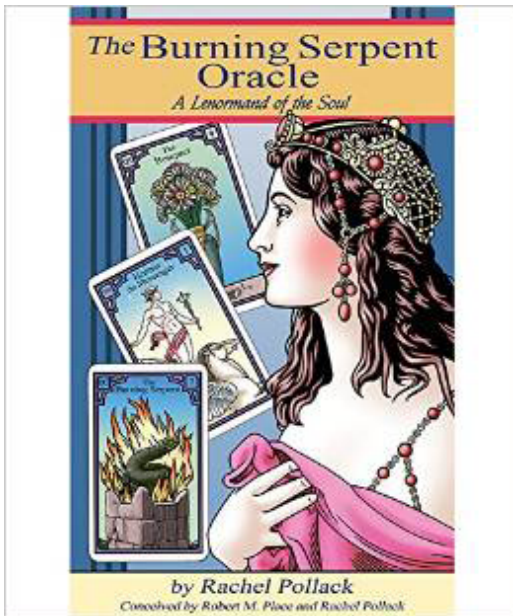
Card Images from Le Tarot Noir

© Editions Vega



# THE BURNING SERPENT ORACLE

Review by Bonnie Cehovet



Author: Rachel Pollack

Artist: Robert M. Place

Hermes Publications 2014

ISBN #978-0-9915299-0-2

Theme: Lenormand/Higher Self

[www.burningserpent.com/](http://www.burningserpent.com/)

I was very eager to work with the “Burning Serpent Oracle”. Once I had it in my hands, I was impressed with both the quality of the art, and the depth of the text. One would expect no less from luminaries such as Robert M. Place and Rachel Pollack!

I did the scans for this review immediately. Then the book and deck

sat on my desk ... and sat on my desk ... and sat on my desk. Lenormand style oracles are something that I am not quite used to. I don’t use them in readings for others, and do not use them to expand readings from other oracles. When I read with them (and I do), I do so for very specific reasons. In other words, I don’t use them for “What do I need to know?” type readings.

“The Burning Serpent Oracle” consists of a 40 card deck and a 258 page companion book. (There are four cards added to the traditional 36 card deck – two versions of The Man (card 28) and The Woman (card 29), looking in the opposite direction of the traditional versions, with two bonus cards – Osiris (number 37), and Isis (number 38). In a very special manner, cards 37 and 38 reference the higher self of The Man and The Woman.

Pollack begins her introduction by noting that this is a book about meanings, very specific meanings, based on the 19th century Lenormand tradition. Based on, but not limited to. There is a deeper spiritual dimension to this deck, allowing the reader to access their own personal visionary interpretations. Something that I found interesting was that the cards, while named for a 19th century fortune teller, were actually not published until after her death. I really appreciate that Pollack places emphasis on how the images speak to each other, their ability

to form (tell) a story, and how our lives are revealed through these stories. Pollack brings a world of experience to the interpretation of these cards. Melded together are personal stories, pertinent historical information, cultural and spiritual references. How interesting that the Lenormand tradition started out as a game, and evolved into a divinatory tool!

Each card is presented with a full page black and white image, keywords, positive and negative meanings for the card, a discussion of the imagery, and how to interpret the card (the direct meaning, the basic meaning expanded and explored, the larger context, and the potential mystical meaning.

At the end of the book is a section on doing readings, including getting to know the cards, formatting questions, and using both small and large spreads. Sample readings include a five card reading on choosing a house, a seven card reading about death, and instructions on the nine card square technique and a ten card spread. The format for the Grand Tableau (using all of the cards) is also included.



The cards themselves are 2 ¾” by 4 ¼”. The back show a ¼” white border, surrounding the image of Hermes. The card faces show the same ¼” white border, surrounding images that are bordered in brown. In the upper right hand corner of the card is the card



number, in the upper left hand corner is the corresponding playing card (i.e. The Dead Tree is card number 8, and is associated with the Nine of Diamonds (9D) ). The card title runs across the top of the card, in black lettering in the center. The styling of the images is drawn simply and clearly, with nice depth of color.

The images in this deck are all about everyday things in our everyday life – clouds, a bouquet, a fox, a bear, mice, a gold ring. They are also about things like a flaming tree, a burning serpent, and a book of life. The meanings in the Lenormand tradition are highly specific (the reader is not encouraged to add their own interpretations) – they reflect daily life with great clarity.



The Scythe references danger, change, something sharp, and a great sense of determination. It is associated with the Jack of Diamonds, and the number 10.



The Mice references things that are lost or stolen, worries or problems, and corruption or dishonesty (especially in the workplace). It is associated with the Seven of Cups, and the number 23.



The Lilies references sex and sexuality, parents or elders, a person's character, wisdom, and peace in the home. It is associated with the King of Swords and the number 30.



The Letter references correspondence (including e-mail), important news, and documents (including contracts). It is associated with the Seven of Swords and the number 27.

Isis references the “higher self”, or the best qualities of The Woman – dedication, persistence, achieving something thought impossible.

Whether you choose to use this oracle to read for others, or to read only for yourself, it is well worth the investment. We are gifted with the superb artistic and intellectual talents



of both Place and Pollack, and we need to make the best of this gift!

© December 2014 Bonnie Cehovet

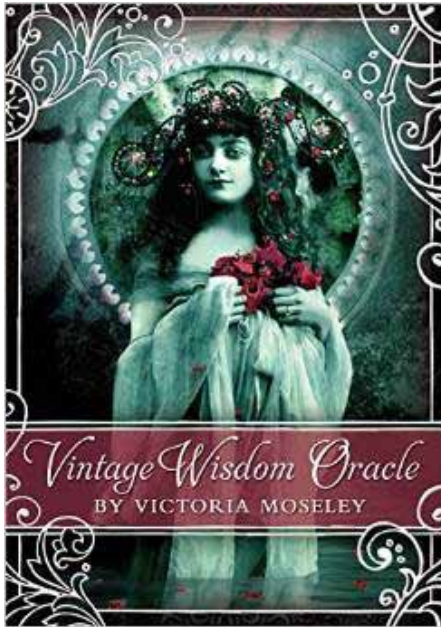
Card Images from The Burning Serpent Oracle

© Hermes Publications



# VINTAGE WISDOM ORACLE

Review by Bonnie Cehovet



Author: Victoria Moseley

Artwork: Montage

U.S. Games Systems Inc. 2014

1-978-1572817814

Theme: Vintage Montage

<http://www.usgamesinc.com/Vintage-Wisdom-Oracle/>

**“And the day came when  
the risk to remain tight in  
bud was more painful than  
the risk it took to blossom.”**

*Anais Nin (from the cover page)*

I could sit and meditate on the box cover to the Vintage Wisdom Oracle forever ... it is just that well done! I

love the sepia tone, the ethereal feel, and the gold embossing.

The set consists of 52 cards and an 80 page guidebook, housed in a sturdy cardboard lift-top box. There is a lovely back story to this deck—it is part of an “unplanned journey” for Moseley—one that evolved over several years, one of moving from the field of interior design to the exploration and development of her own intuitive gifts. Somewhere along the line a vintage-inspired greeting card company was launched, and this lovely deck came into being!

The oracle is feminine in nature, using the inspiration of goddesses, divas, and etheric muses. It combines illustrations from vintage French postcards with old sepia-toned photographs, wild flowers, nature totems, and delicate vintage lace (I dearly love old lace!). I love that Moseley also used elements from historic painters such as John Waterhouse and Vincent Van Gogh.

The guidebook presents the cards in text only, no images. The story of each card is told in a very evocative fashion. From “Abundance”: “Here we see a depiction of Pomona, the Roman goddess of abundance and harvest of the ripe fruits and fields. She is adorned with all manner of wildflowers and forest flora, as if to celebrate the yield of nature’s bounty. Butterflies dance around her, representing transformation and a lightness of being.”

Included are such thoughts as Ancestors, Divine Timing, Centering, Strength, and Wisdom. At the end of the guidebook we find a section on how to use the cards, and how to perform a reading. Five unique spreads are presented: the Four-Leaf Clover Spread, the Spyglass Spread, the Penny Farthing Spread, the Walled Garden Spread, and the Chatelaine Spread. The cover for the guidebook carries the image from the card Awakening.



The cards are 3 ¾” by 5 ½”, of glossy card stock. The backs are sepia toned, surrounding a central female face. They are not reversible. The faces show a ¼” colored border, surrounding a central image. The card title is written across the bottom of the card.

The imagery is absolutely entrancing! Dreams shows an image of Isis in a white dress, holding red flowers, and standing in a haunting, moonlit river.





Choice shows a maiden in a bright red dress, standing in the heart of an ancient ruin. Three footpaths lead in different directions - the choice is hers.



Change shows a female figure, wrapped in a windswept shroud. A daffodil is tucked behind her left ear. There is an owl perched in the tree behind her, and there are stars in the night sky.



Centering shows a Victorian fairy centered with an ornate picture frame.



She is holding an armful of forget-me-nots.

Awakening shows a woman emerging from a bed of pink roses. She is surrounded by cowslips, with the rising sun behind her.



Ancestors shows a female child wearing a floral garland, with the faded images of her parents behind her.



There are many layers of imagery and intent in each of these cards – they are very easy to work with. Each individual will take their own journey with this deck – and will need to be prepared to go deeply into the world of intuition!

© Bonnie Cehovet

Card Images from *Vintage Wisdom Oracle*

© US Games Systems, INC



# SACRED MANDALA LENORMAND ORACLE

Review by Bonnie Cehovet

Author: Heather Mendel

Artist: Heather Mendel

Independently Published 2014

<http://sacredfemininekabbalah.com/>

For someone that does not really read the Lenormand, I seem to be collecting a lot of them! Lovely things end up in my mail box, including the Sacred Mandala Lenormand Oracle! I loved Heather's earlier work (the Sygyzy Oracle), and fell in love with the Sacred Mandala Lenormand Oracle as soon as I had it in my hands. I also want to thank Heather for including me in her dedication to this deck - I find myself in awesome company!

This is a 36 card deck based on the Lenormand tradition. It allows the reader to look beneath the obvious, and see the concealed in the synchronous patterns of possibility surrounding them. Here we see how interconnected our reality really is! The deck comes with a 15 page companion book (a more extensive, color illustrated version can be downloaded from her website).

The cards are 2 ¾" by 4 ¾". The backs show a black background, with narrow colored lines inset ½", and a second set of inset colored lines surrounding a central mandala, which is also in color. The card faces show a black background, with a fine white lined border inset ½".

The card number is in white at the top, with a playing card suit icon on the bottom, with the corresponding card. There is a beautiful mandala on the top half of the card, with a line drawing of the object representing the card on the bottom half.

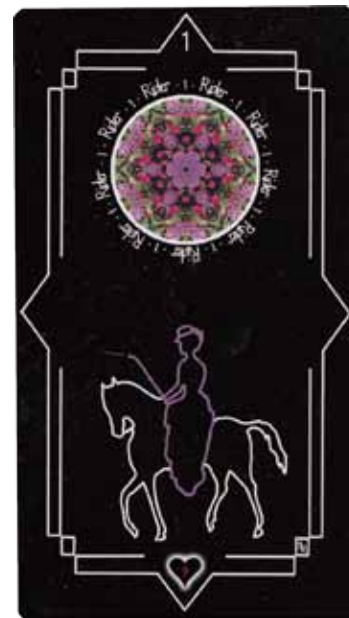
One of the reasons that I am so drawn to the Sygyzy Oracle, and to the Sacred Mandala Lenormand Oracle, is Heather's work with the sacred feminine. She encourages us to use our intuition as a reliable source of information. Too often I find that individuals are aware of their intuitive thoughts, but then choose to second guess them. In her introduction, Heather talks about the Lenormand as offering an "instant, panoramic snapshot of the rippling circumstances in which we are enmeshed, constantly unfurling as we create our own futures".

We are encouraged to become familiar with each card number, its assigned symbol, and its playing card association. Charts are included in the companion book for the card number and symbol, and for the playing card suit and number association.

Heather is a very gracious lady, and includes references to videos and other material done by others that will help individuals to learn how to read the Lenormand style with ease. She also encourages us to "practice, practice, practice"!

Under "vocabulary", Heather lists the card numbers, symbol, playing card association, and keywords.

Card number 1 shows a female rider on horseback. It is associated with the 9 of Hearts, and carries the keywords arrival/news. The mandala is done in a beautiful pink and green.



Card number 7 shows the symbol of a snake. It is associated with the Queen of Clubs, and carries the keywords difficulties/adversity/loss/betrayal. The mandala shows a lavender-pink center, surrounded by a deep pink.





Card number 19 shows a tower outlined in gold. It is associated with the 6 of Spades, and carries the keywords institution/corporation/ivory tower. The mandala is a pink and green floral pattern, with white lines crossing in the center.



Card number 29 shows the outline of a female. It is associated with the Ace of Spades, and carries the keywords woman (or man's female energy – anima). The mandala is a beautiful pink with green accents.



I truly enjoy working with this simple, yet profound deck, and I think that you will too!

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Card Images from the Sacred Mandala Lenormand

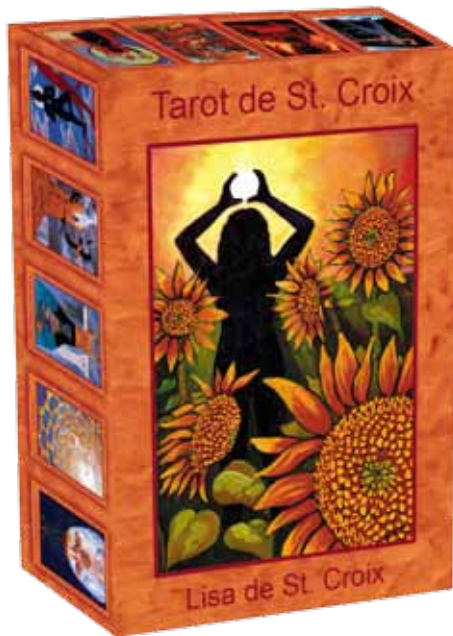
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# TAROT DE ST CROIX

Review by Bonnie Cehovet



Author: Lisa de St. Croix

Artist: Lisa de St. Croix

Devera Publishing 2013

ISBN #978-0-9858321-9-3

*Tarot de St. Croix* is a 78 card deck that comes with an accompanying 96 page booklet, both enclosed in a sturdy box with a lift-off top. The box is in the same lovely orange that dominates the deck, with a scan of the Sun on the cover, and smaller card images running along three sides. It is structured along traditional lines, using traditional titles for the Major Arcana, with Strength as VIII and Justice as XI. The suits are Wands, Cups, Swords, and Pentacles,

with the Court Cards as Page, Knight, Queen and King.

Note: I am proud to say that this deck was published through Devera Publishing, an independent publishing house in Portland, Oregon.

In her introduction, Lisa talks about this deck as being both contemporary and multi-cultural. Inspiration came from current events, personal experiences, mythology, and synchronicity. Lisa describes the Tarot as a visual encyclopedia to the soul.

Lisa's introduction to the Tarot came from accompanying her mother to a Tarot reading in Johannesburg, South Africa. Some time after her mother's death the Marseille deck that her mother had purchased at that reading came into her hands, and she began her study of the Tarot. At this time, Lisa was living near a Zuni Indian reservation. At the winter solstice Lisa took a shamanic journey, where Isis instructed her to paint a Tarot deck. She painted this deck as if it were a Tarot reading, and she were receiving wisdom. The introduction also includes thoughts on reading the cards, drawing a daily card, Tarot journaling, a three card spread, a five card spread, and a nine card spread.

While the commentary in the booklet is minimal, Lisa does have a blog where she expands on the card meanings, sharing what they are to her, and her experiences as she was painting each

card. It is well worth checking out her blog. The companion booklet shares Lisa's life experiences, and her philosophy.

The Major Arcana are presented as a two page spread, with commentary on the left hand page, and the card meaning, along with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  page color image on the right hand page. In the commentary Lisa talks about what inspired her for the card, and bits of her own life experience.

## *The Fool*

*The Fool is both the beginning and the end of the Major Arcana in the archetypal journey of the soul.*

*The Fool is inspired by the Pueblo Indian sacred clown Koshare. He wears the mask of Coyote, the trickster. He represents a playful way to look at a situation. The Fool makes a shadow puppet scene of danger. The message is to look beyond our fears to see what really lies behind it. The path leads towards the full moon which symbolizes the cyclical nature of life. The boat represents a journey into the mystery. The Fool's knapsack lays open in front of him, what will he take with him? The aspen stick with eyes symbolizes the witness and the wisdom gained on his journey.*

*I lived for a number of years on the Zuni Indian Reservation, where I was fortunate to see their ceremonial dances. One evening as I stood on the rooftop watching the dances below, a Koshare, the sacred clown climbed up the ladder and tricked me into buying a plastic turquoise necklace for twenty dollars, the crowd roared with laughter. I felt embarrassed but also delighted to play the fool in their ceremony. I treasure that necklace, it reminds me to laugh at myself.*

The Minor Arcana pips (numbered cards) are presented as groups – i.e. Ace's together, two's together et cetera. There is short commentary on what each number means, followed



by the number in each suit, a short commentary, and its meaning. Small color scans for each of the four cards appear at the bottom of the page.



### Aces

*Aces offer the potential of something new that will succeed. Aces are linked to the Magician, the great manifestor.*

### Ace of Pentacles

*The full blooming sunflower against the brilliant sky is an expression of abundance.*

*Meaning – Begin a new project with confidence knowing that it will grow to its fullest potential and flourish.*

The Court Cards are presented as groups – Pages, Knights, Queens, and Kings. A full page is given to each card, with commentary about the card at the top, a full color scan in the middle, and the meaning at the bottom.

### Page of Cups

*This young Page dreamily looks at the water cupped in her hands, imagining romance. She is sensitive and vulnerable as she sits on the lotus, nestled between the stamens.*

*Meaning: In order to blossom in love and relationships it is necessary to expose*

*tenderness and vulnerability.*



The backs show a ¼" orange border, surrounding a mirror image of clouds, the moon, and a figure. The card backs are reversible – and they really draw one in! The cards are 3" by 4.5", sturdy and semi-gloss. The card faces show a ¼" orange border surrounding a central image. For the Major Arcana, the card number (in Roman numerals) and title run across the bottom of the card. For the Court Cards, the title and suit run across the bottom of the card. For the Minor Arcana Pips (numbered cards), the number and suit, all in text, run across the bottom of the card.

The colors in this deck – predominantly orange, yellow, and gold – are intense, vibrant, and absolutely command your attention! This is a very personal deck for Lisa, not only that she was instructed to paint it while on a shamanic journey, but that it reflects her thoughts, her travels, her early years spent in South Africa, and her meditative practices. I purchased this deck while I was at NWTs (Northwest Tarot Symposium). At this time, Lisa was in India meditating and painting ... very reflective of the life of this deck.

Queen of Pentacles: Queen Sheba is carried on a gold palanquin, surrounded by the riches of the earth (ripe fruit, fragrant flowers, and abundant

herbs). She embodies the qualities of abundance, nurturing, and generosity. "Meaning – Enjoy the senses, and share with others."

Knight of Cups: This Knight welcomes the flow of feelings. Lisa notes that her son has always followed his heart, and as a result he has been able to make his dreams come true. "Meaning – A person who acts from the heart."

The Empress: As the great mother, the Empress nurtures and provides. Her rule is through love. This painting was begun on the spring equinox. As she painted this card, Lisa watched the blossoms on the tree across from her studio open, and the bulbs flower. "Meaning – If we open ourselves to what we need, and give and receive love, abundance will flow."

Ace of Swords: "The wisp of smoke at the end of the sword suggests that something is smoldering, ready to ignite. The new moon suggests the beginning of a new phase that will develop." "Meaning – Innovative ideas will expand bringing clarity and wisdom."

The World: "The World is the culmination of the Tarot archetypal journey, it speaks of wholeness and numinous revelation." "Meaning – The World shows you that you are connected to all that is."



The Hermit: “The Hermit spends time alone in contemplation. The Hermit is an ally when it comes to dealing with shadow. Look within, and let it be illuminated. Questions will be resolved.” “Meaning – The Hermit invites you to spend time alone to allow your inner wisdom to reveal itself.”



Three of Wands: “The Mother watches her progeny’s boat come in. Three wands blossoms with the promise of success. The figurehead leads the boat toward the spirit world. “Meaning – Visionary leadership will see a project flourish.”

The Magician: “The Magician uses will, the elements and Spirit to manifest that which is desired.” “Meaning – The message of the Magician is that through focused energy we are able to harness the means to create our destiny.”



Seven of Pentacles: “The girl in the leopard skin reaches eagerly towards many projects.” “Meaning – Pause and evaluate your goals, before unleashing energy to achieve them.”

I am impressed with this deck to the point that I am in awe! The vibrant

colors draw the reader in and make them feel at home – warm and protected. There is a very sacred feel to these cards, partially because of the archetype that the Tarot is, and partially because Lisa has shared so much of herself and her sacred life journey with the reader. I highly recommend that the reader make best use of Lisa’s blog, where she goes in-depth into what the cards mean to her, and where she was in her journey when she painted them.

Lisa has placed herself in some of the cards along the way, and has included other individuals from her life. Quite an interesting card is the Page of Swords, which integrates her son drawing the golden mean on a blackboard with a sword. A subtle way of showing that the golden mean is at work in this deck. This is a comfortable deck for all levels of Tarot student, and certainly what one could term a “teaching deck”.

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Card Images from the Tarot de St. Croix

© Lisa de St. Croix



BONNIE CEHOVET is a professional Tarot reader with over twenty years experience, is a CTGM (Certified Tarot Grand Master), and a Reiki Master/Teacher. She is a published author, including “Tarot, Birth Cards, and You” (Schiffer Publishing, 2011). “Tarot, Ritual, and You” (Schiffer Publishing, 2013), and “Surviving the Holidays” (through Amazon.com). She is co-author, along with Brad Tesh, of “Seek Joy ... Toss Confetti” (through Amazon.com).

Her reviews and interviews can be found on her site ([www.bonniecchovet.com](http://www.bonniecchovet.com)), and on the Aeclectic Tarot website ([www.aeclectic.net/tarot](http://www.aeclectic.net/tarot)). Her writer’s blog can be found here: <http://www.bonnielcehovet.blogspot.com/>.



# Articles

“*L*EARNING TO READ TAROT, LENORMAND OR CARTOMANCY IS A PROCESS WITH A LEARNING CURVE. AS WITH ALL ENDEAVORS, IT TAKES TIME AND ENERGY. THE MORE TIME AND ENERGY INVESTED, THE GREATER AND QUICKER THE RESULTS.”

~ PAMELA STEELE

# COMMUNING WITH YOUR MUSE

by Pamela Steele



Learning to read Tarot, Lenormand, or Cartomancy is a process with a learning curve. As with all endeavors, it takes time and energy. The more time and energy invested, the greater and quicker the results.

Eventually there comes a time when you've practiced on your friends and family enough to consider reading for the friend's friend or your Mom's neighbor or perhaps even agree to be part of the evening's entertainment at a gathering. Whatever the circumstances, we each come to a place where it's time to 'pitch your tent and hang out your shingle' that reads 'Open for Business.'

Each one of us begins our reading careers with more than a bit of hesitation. There are generally weeks, months or even years of reading and studying the cards. Keeping journals becomes second nature and when you and your 'victim' sit down you may have a variety of books handy for quick interpretations. As each card presents itself, you consider its placement and look up the possible meaning in at least one

book, and begin piecing together the story. Yes, the Story.

What you're doing when reading, either for yourself or for someone else, is telling them their personal Story. It may begin with a bit of history, as what circumstances, people or decisions began this chain of events that lead the Seeker to this particular juncture. You'll examine the influences of the surrounding cards as pertaining to their placement, and (possibly after much page turning in the book(s)) finally arrive at what appears to be the best possible outcome for the reading or the next leg of the Journey in the Story. Either way, it is choppy, hesitant and filled with doubt. You're constantly looking for, and finding, confirmation and validation. Until you're not.

Enter your Reading Muse.

This is the part where you learn to truly listen to the still small voice (a.k.a. your Personal Assistant and Reading Muse) inside your head and heart and see clearly the images being imparted to you.

You've had all the confirmations, validations, 'atta-boys' and 'How did you know that?!' you can ever want or need. Your feet are firmly planted on the ground. The cards are literally on the table. You look over what's being presented



and roll camera. You become the Tarot Bard. Your Muse dances around you and whispers bits and pieces that may or may not be in any book. You are Inspired. You Know what you're hearing is true. Whether the Seeker agrees or not becomes irrelevant.

They may even argue, but you know in the core of who you are what you're seeing and hearing is the Truth of their Story. You even realize you will probably get a mumbled apology at a later date from the same Seeker, or not. But either way, the authenticity of your Knowing is reflected in the confidence of your reading. You are literally reading a story the person sitting across from you has energetically scripted into the cards.

How do you contact and keep communication with your Muse? Some develop reading rituals where they use candles, crystals, incense or smudges to prepare the area. They may use prayer or another form of communion to connect with



their Authentic Self. Others will adopt a certain form of dress. The reading area may require special cloths or lighting. It may be a sacred space dedicated to your craft. Or not. You may just pull your favorite deck out of its travel bag, wipe the table clean of liquids and crumbs, shuffle the cards and start the reading in the middle of a diner or coffee shop. As with all things tarot and divination, there are no hard fast rules. There are generally agreed upon good ideas and guidelines, but it's up to you how you proceed.

The important thing is comfort. You have to be comfortable in your own skin with your own abilities. You have to know your Muse (or Guides, Angels or perhaps other Entities) that whisper in your ear during the readings is not some deranged gremlin that's an incompetent illiterate, but a genuine reading companion that's beside you helping you deliver the highest quality reading. Whether you're helping someone search out their Life's Partner or Life's Purpose isn't the issue. Being focused and willing to listen so you can deliver the most accurate version of the Seeker's Story is what's important. Upon completing the reading, some readers end the session with a blessing or a prayer of gratitude to the Powers that Be for their assistance in the reading. This is done with a sincere sense of thankfulness, not out of fear that their Muse will ambush them like Cato attacking Inspector Clouseau in a Pink Panther movie for being an ungrateful sot. ..Which leads us to motivation.

Connecting with your Muse will also be determined by what motivates you to perform readings. If you're doing it to get rich and become famous, you will attract a far different type of Muse than if you're setting up shop because you're called to be in service. Not that making money is bad. Quite the opposite. Money is a very good thing.

It provides the space, rent, food, candles and other essential elements not to mention lets you buy cards. If you take the word 'MONEY and write the letters in a vertical column,

you can add the words 'My-Own-Natural-Energy-Yield.' Your Muse will not only approve but assist in your success by helping you handle clients who will inform you with righteous indignation that readings should always be free. This type of comment usually comes from a person who wouldn't consider doing charity work or serving in a soup kitchen.

Your Muse will also help you help your clients formulate questions so they can gain the most from their readings.

Muse Epiphany Time.

You've figured out by now, your personal Muse is your own Inner Divinity. This is a personification of your Authentic Self. It is who you Become when you enter into reading for the public. No, you won't be right 100% of the time. But you will always relate the most accurate information given the present circumstances. You will speak with confidence and compassion withholding judgment and opinions. You will devote your undivided attention to the Seeker and the Story. When you're

finished, however you choose to end the session (red meat and chocolate are my personal favorites) is when you will automatically delete the Story from your memory as it's not your Story - which is why recording sessions for the Seeker to take home for future reference is a good idea.

All in all, it's about Trust. Trust your Muse. Trust yourself. Because at the end of the day, if you Trust, it makes it effortless for others to do the same.



*Card Images from the Steele Wizard Tarot, Wizard's Pets Tarot, and Eternal Seeker Tarot*

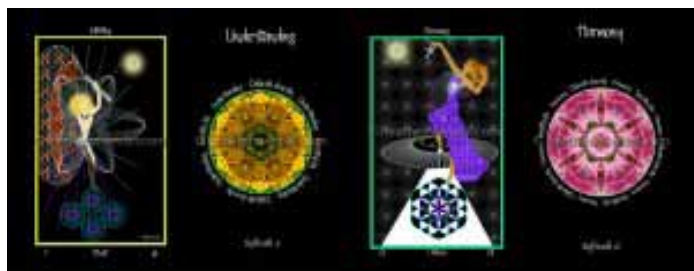
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PAMELA STEELE is a registered massage therapist, professional bar tender, event organizer, horse trainer and has taught tarot reading, art and belly dancing. With over 50+ years art experience and over 35 years reading tarot, Pamela has created the *Steele Wizard Tarot*, the *Wizard's Pets Tarot* and the currently in-progress *Eternal Seeker's Tarot*. She gets bored easily and can be distracted by everything or nothing. Her founding passions are fantasy art and horses which you will see blended into many tarot images. She has shown and sold art internationally for over 30 years and her work has graced graphic novel covers, D&D publications, the German Sci-Fi Annual, coloring books, children's books and new age books and magazines. Pamela has 2 wonderful creative sons and 3 (soon to be 4) precious intelligent talented grand children. She has 1 husband (currently) and lives with 2 Manx cats. If that changes, she will still be cohabitating with 2 cats.

# INTUITION AND CONSCIOUS EVOLUTION

by Heather Mendel



Mystics and futurists agree that in a world that is constantly evolving, so is consciousness— that state of awareness that allows us to become all that we can be. Are we willing to acknowledge that the choices we make each day can be conscious rather than chance?

Conscious evolution can be likened to the awakening of a memory of our inherent oneness, striving to know itself through myriad sets of eyes.

The key to our own awakening comes through the recognition and reverence of the intuitive sense— that small, still voice within that strives to remind us of the interconnected and invisible web of life of which we are all part. How much importance do we put on the inner knowing we each possess in a western culture that has, over the past several hundred years, tried to convince us that the intellect and the 5 senses are the only key to reality?

Optical illusions are an endless source of fascination as they disprove the commonly held belief that there is only one reality— alternatives exist before our eyes, dependent entirely on where we choose to focus our attention. In their book, 'Spontaneous Evolution,' Lipton and Bhaerman state, contrary to popular opinion, believing is seeing— rather than the other way round. Our belief systems create the frame of reference through which we understand and relate to the world.

Western culture has so overemphasized the importance of the intellect and left-brain functioning over the past several

hundred years that many of us have forgotten or are just beginning to remember that the intuitive sense— ancient, reliable, broad, and deep, is accessible to all who wish to attend to its processing; it opens for us another window into our understanding of reality.

Mystical awakening has always invited us to delve beneath the superficial and find the multileveled interconnections awaiting our discovery. Until recently, those of us who experience the power of the intuitive and base our beliefs on its ancient and communal accessibility and validity may have felt isolated in our local communities. With the access to the web, we are able to join the ever-expanding world-wide community of 'our people.'

The reading of cards— Tarot, Lenormand, and Oracle decks— are making it easier for anyone interested to learn how to deepen their own intuitive abilities. While Tarot may be the oldest of the decks that we presently use, it is probably the one that most easily divides readers in their opinions about where it originated, and how to understand its imagery and interpretation. Is there one 'authentic' way to read the cards? Is there any relationship between Tarot and other wisdom traditions— such as kabbalah, astrology and mythology?

As in life, those readers who are more orthodox in their approach, believe there is one 'correct' way to work with the teachings and that other wisdom traditions have no place in the study and practice of reading Tarot cards. Others understand that as we reinterpret ancient and sacred teachings in contemporary ways, we begin to see the commonalities in all mystical pathways and find meaning in these ancient gifts that are timeless as well as timely. For those who ascribe to this belief, many feel that where religions separate us, spirituality reminds us of our commonality expressed in diverse ways.

Wherever we find ourselves on the spectrum, the level of our own spiritual maturity can be seen in how we show our respect and appreciation of diversity as we learn to respect the opinions of others.

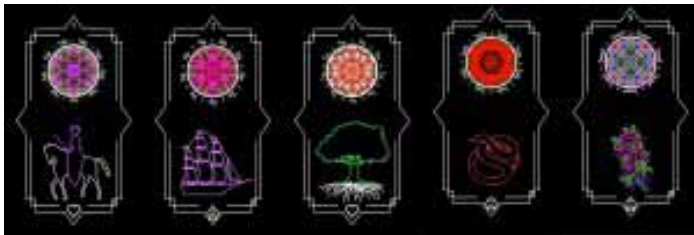
At this point in the life and times of the human family, as we evolve in consciousness, we are learning to honor our own intuitive skills and are becoming more self-sufficient in our decision making process.

We are choosing consciousness over chance. While we honor the ability of skilled and experienced readers to counsel us when necessary, personal meditation practice and guidance from oracular decks is gaining in popularity and offering us the ability to read for ourselves. A quick visit to websites like [www.aeclectic.net](http://www.aeclectic.net) offers a glimpse into the variety of decks that are available. The artistic impulse of many is being awakened to reinterpret, in image and word, and create



contemporary tools that we can use to gain a deeper and broader perspective of the events in our lives. With the vast range of styles, interpretations, and images that are available, anyone interested will find a deck or decks that call to them—for many collectors, the problem becomes one of where to store all the decks to which they have been drawn. In learning to use such decks, we show our willingness to develop our own intuitive sense that will guide us as we make the choices that are part of everyday life.

The rapid expansion of interest in oracles is happening in more fields than just Tarot. Lenormand is becoming a popular tool that is user-friendly. Without having to engage in and commit to the same intensity of study necessary to become competent with Tarot, decks such as Lenormand offer ways we can become comfortable reading for ourselves. Some oracular decks provide an illustration and affirmation with the suggestion that readers select a single card—for a day, week or month—on which we focus our attention.



Lenormand offers a new language. We read a group of cards—usually, 3, 5 or 9 as sentences—one card modifying the others in its proximity. We marvel at how easily we learn to draw insight from the cards. We celebrate the seemingly miraculous synchronicity of drawing specific cards in response to our questions about the issues we are dealing with in our inner landscape. The cards offer information and courage to persevere in times of difficulty, and remind us of the interconnected web of which we are a part—one in which synchronicity and coincidence light our way, coincidence being Divinity's way of remaining anonymous.

Oracular decks are proving to be a singular tool for broadening our scope in learning to trust and appreciate our own inner knowing. In a search for balance, we interweave the input of intellect and intuition. On the journey to conscious

evolution, we become more deeply aware of our oneness with all of life and the importance of the development and balance of the energies of both our egos and our essence, the blending of the two making us who we are.

*Card Images from the Sacred Mandala Lenormand Oracle and The Syzygy Oracle*

© Heather Mendel



The *Sacred Mandala Lenormand Oracle*, released in October 2014 is the latest creation of South African born mystic, author and artist HEATHER MENDEL. Her earlier work, *The Syzygy Oracle: Transformational Tarot and The Tree of Life*, Dodona Books, 2013 offers, in image and word a primer on Kabbalah, Tarot and conscious evolution with a daily spiritual practice for developing trust in our intuitive wisdom.

For more information on the book and her original oracle decks visit:

[www.heathermendel.com](http://www.heathermendel.com) or [www.sacredfemininekabbalah.com](http://www.sacredfemininekabbalah.com)

# SYMBOLIC LIVING: UNDERSTANDING SOUL THROUGH TAROT AND DREAM IMAGERY

by Toni Gilbert

In the last hundred years, our culture has begun to realize value in our nighttime dreams. Freud thought dreams held sexual meaning, Adler believed they represented a struggle for identity, Jung saw archetypes or basic patterns of human behavior that is universal (Taylor, 1992).

Others have seen an existential meaning for dreamers, a concern about death, a psychic or pre-cognitive meaning, and/or multi-sensory information about the health of the mindbodyspirit. For many, dreams hold religious meaning and intuitive spiritual realities.

More recently, research and experimentation has shown that working with Tarot cards will give us similar archetypal information to the dream. At the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, Dr. Culberson presented a dissertation that investigated the relationship between inner dream symbols, received through dream incubation and external waking symbols illustrated through the media of Tarot cards. The hypothesis she set forth and experimentally tested was that the symbols of dreams and Tarot are archetypally connected. They come from the same unconscious realm, and therefore, the symbols of both an incubated dream and a focused Tarot spread for a given individual, at a given point in time, will reflect the same themes, issues and content (Gilbert, 2004). After many years of study, I find this to be true.

Physiologically, according to dream research, our dreams are, in fact, part of an innate biological rhythm of a cycle; they ebb and flow throughout our sleep like waves upon the shore. Our central nervous system undergoes activation every ninety minutes or so while we sleep.

During sleep the body undergoes several changes; brain

waves slow down, breathing becomes more regular, heart rate lowers and steadies, body temperature falls, and large muscles relax. These changes continue through four stages of progressively deeper sleep.

Psychologically, the archetypal dream images are thought to come from a level of consciousness named by Sigmund Freud as the unconscious mind. Before Freud, mystics of antiquity described the attributes of this same consciousness and called it soul. The soul, or unconscious mind, always speaks to us in symbolic thoughts and images.

Any way you want to look at it this level of consciousness is a universe of energies, forces, forms of intelligence and distinct personalities that live within us. It is a larger realm than we can realize, one that has a complete life of its own running parallel to the ordinary life we live. This place in us is the source of much of our thought, feeling and behavior. It influences us in ways that are all the more powerful because it is unconscious (Johnson, 1986). Two examples of the

unconscious working in your life might be:

1. A quick intuitive insight comes to you about an issue you have been struggling with.
2. Imagery of plans and visions suddenly popping into your imagination.

This universe of energies is there to serve and inspire us as we go about our lives. The information and images are a part of who we are... Whatever that is in its totality.

Working with dreams and Tarot art images help the questioner to contact the unconscious mind with its unrecognized emotions and subtle sensations. The unconscious mind holds symbolic information about what the bodymind is experiencing during our life's challenges.

Both tools teach clients how to contact the curative and wise powers within our minds to find creative solutions to difficulties and assess progress in personal development and healing.

In working with my own and other people's dreams and art images, I find that the unconscious mind (or soul) has a dynamic relationship with the conscious personality. It reflects and validates our waking reality when we are whole and centered, and compensates and corrects when the personality becomes too one sided. One who has learned to work with the psychology of symbolic thought is able to take some degree of control over his or her spiritual growth and psychological health. Simply stated, one does this by learning to observe the archetypes operating during the emotional and physical events in life.





Learning to be an archetypal observer makes living much easier.

In my transpersonal counseling practice, I recommend that clients accept their dreams, and any insights that occur during a Tarot session, as spiritual gifts that come from a deeper more authentic part of themselves. Symbolically, dreams and art images hold information that can help a person get in touch with and express emotions they weren't fully aware of; discover meaning in past experiences; receive guidance for future and present actions; evaluate current health conditions; and learn to enjoy life at deeper levels of the self.

### Using Tarot Cards with Nighttime Dreams

There are a number of ways to use Tarot in combination with dream work. I will discuss two ways that you can use these esoteric tools to deepen your understanding of a current life challenge.

1. List the symbols in a "current" nighttime dream. Shuffle the cards as you keep one of the dream symbols in mind. As you shuffle, imagining the dream image will bring up the same archetypal energies as the dream. Synchronistically, the card drawn will give you more information about that particular symbol.

Keep throwing a card for each symbol until you have garnered the information you need to receive the insights of the dream and you "feel" done.

2. Close your eyes. Meditate upon your dream, visualizing and becoming centered in your dream. With your eyes still closed, when you "feel" ready, shuffle the cards. Then place the cards in any predetermined layout. Using a dream technique,

read the cards as if they were a dream. This exercise will give you a broader understanding of the nighttime dream and the current life challenge.

The meditative discipline required in working symbolically can lead to increasingly clear awareness of our subtle experiences both asleep and awake. If you take the time to contemplate and understand the archetypes operating in your life, you will find guidance, illumination, and attitudes for developing the conscious part of yourself. By learning to express a deeper part of yourself, you will not only learn how much you have in common with others but also increasingly realize your own uniqueness.

Lastly, it is important to keep in mind that the full growth producing potential of working symbolically will not be realized unless your insights are followed by conscious and sustained effort towards personal growth.

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*Card Images from the Osho Zen Tarot*

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TONI GILBERT, MA is a transpersonal counselor with a formal education in holistic nursing, psychology, and transpersonal studies. She is the author of *Messages from the Archetypes: Using Tarot for Healing and Spiritual Growth and Gaining Archetypal Vision: A Guidebook for Using Archetypes in Personal Growth and Healing* by Schiffer Books.

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Article images are the Osho Zen Tarot, Second Edition.

[http://www.osho.com/zen\\_tarot/mod/paradox-zen-tarot](http://www.osho.com/zen_tarot/mod/paradox-zen-tarot).

# NEW USES FOR DAMAGED DECKS

by Jaymi Elford

Our beloved cartomancy decks are lovingly printed on the highest quality paper and sealed with plastic which gives our tools years of use. Over time, however, our beloved tools come into contact with moisture, get damaged when trading them in the mail, or get creased from shuffling. So what happens to a deck that you can no longer use due to damage? Don't trash your cards, turn them into art instead.

Due to the printing process our cards go through, they cannot be recycled and turned into new products. Breathing new life into damaged decks or cards is easy. Use the list below to jump-start your creativity to turn your old decks into something new.



**Artwork.** Honor the cards and the artwork by creating new art from it. Slice a card up in long strips, or squares, and recombine them in new artistic ways. You can toss an art party where everyone brings their own slices to swap and trade to create unique mini-collages of art to adorn your house.

**Collage Deck.** Use the old deck as a backdrop for a deck of your own design. You'll need some magazines or photographs with inspirational imagery in it. Grab a card. Then assemble words, images, or other items onto the item in a way that pleases you. When you have a design you like, paste (or decoupage) that composition down so it sticks on the card.

Let the glue dry. Each card becomes a personalized, expression of your insight. When you're done you have a brand new deck that is as unique as you are.

## Frankenstein Tarot Deck.

Create your own deck using cards from a combination of decks with missing pieces. You can set



up trading circles with online friends who have cards they'd like to trade for. Once you have enough cards, you can take these cards, cut them down to a uniform size and then begin to divine with them.

**Ornaments.** Want to turn your love for cartomancy into a decoration for the winter holidays? Punch a hole in some of your cards and hang them up as ornaments or wall art to decorate your house. If you add enough cards along a string, you can make your own version of a "prayer flag."

**Bookmarks.** Cartomancy cards make great place holders for books. Dress them up by braiding string around their borders or as a ribbon. I've used the extra cards included in my Tarot decks as bookmarks. My husband, who's into playing *Magic: the Gathering*, has done this with a lot of the extra mana cards he's got laying around.

**Postcards.** Who says mail is dead? One of my good friends and I still communicate frequently by sending fun postcards through the mail. Postcards come in all sizes and shapes and you could turn an old tarot card into a new postcard by putting a blank sticker across the backside and then writing a short, meaningful note to a loved one.

**Spell Components.** For those of the pagan or witchy persuasion, why not honor the energies within the cards and use them in your spells. You can fold the cards up like an envelope and then tuck other components into them for a small sachet of energy. Burn the cards as an effigy to the intended deity or ritual you are working with. If you do burn cards, make sure you do it in a well-ventilated location, as some manufacture's plastic coating can be toxic.

**Calling Cards.** Paint the back of the card white, or put a white packing sticker on the back of cards to turn it into a personalized tarot business card.

**Pocket-sized handmade books.** Take two cards and use them as covers. Then cut blank paper (or recycle junk mail) to create either simple single signature books. You could also fold one long sheet of paper and glue one end to each of the cards making a simple accordion-style book. Use your new



tiny book to record meanings or readings.

**Collage them into a larger painting.** Another variant on creating art with cartomancy imagery, this idea has you painting or gluing the cards onto large canvasses to make bold tarot artwork. For smaller scale variants, you could glue a card into an art journal and extend the imagery beyond what is shown in the borders.

**Energy boosters.** Send appropriate cards out to family and friends. Let them know what they mean to you with images. If they are divination friendly they'll enjoy the energy boost or reminder.

These are some quick ideas that should get the creative juices flowing on turning tarot decks that are worn or damaged into something new and exciting. Instead of just tossing out a deck that has one bad card, use a bit of creative flair to re-imagine it in a new light. Have you come up with a few other creative uses for a damaged deck? Let me know, I'd love to hear what you've done with your dearly departed cards.

*Article images © Jaymi Elford*



JAYMI INNOWEN ELFORD is part Muse (writing, editing, and graphic design) and part Magic (eclectic paganism and tarot). She believes that magic is a path one walks on, as well as a tool to help explore the world we live in.

Go to [www.tarotinspiredlife.com](http://www.tarotinspiredlife.com) to learn more about her.

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# SUGGESTING LIVING

by Camelia Elias

In my writings and teachings about cards I often emphasize the power of storytelling. We lay down three cards, and we get a story going. All we need is power of observation and discernment. Not everything is essential and not everything addresses the context of the question. We have a question, the cards will have an answer. Always. But where do we begin? And how do we distinguish between the essential and the inessential? When I read the cards I start out of a premise that although I expect the cards to give me a relevant message that pertains to my concern, I actually try to think of the message in terms of information. Why is this so? For once, and logically speaking, there's no message that we can deem useful that is not already part of a thinking process.

To begin with, what we receive from the cards is information, not messages. What turns this information into useful knowledge, which we then can think of in terms of a message, is process. As some good epistemologists have argued, there's no knowledge without the processing of information. What others call an intuitive reading is still a way of processing the information. As processing involves both mental work and our involved emotions, I think of the act of reading cards as an act of recognizing an emerging pattern, against the background of how we define ourselves in context, as cultural selves, and as selves in search of escaping cultural pre-conditioning.

Let me give an example of just what kind of mental and emotional work I engage in, when I look at a string of cards. For a snappy reading that reinvigorates my capacity to pay attention, my favorite is the 3-card sequence with the trumps. For clarifying information I use 2 cards from a deck that includes the pip cards and the court cards.

Let us also look at a classical question about love.

A woman wants to know where she and her lover stand in relation to one another. The context for this question is a separation.

Three cards fall on the table:

The Wheel of Fortune, The Tower, The World



First off, and if we go with assessing the cards based on what we've learnt from most contemporary books on the tarot, and which describe each card in terms of the aim to learn a lesson and thus elevate ourselves above our condition, we could say that the World in the final position may indicate a chance for a reconciliation. The World is, after all, a card that emphasizes accomplishment. But what if this accomplishment functions here as a full stop to this relationship? Judging by the figure of the woman in the middle of her world, standing there on one foot, all by herself, is representative of the situation when we cannot talk about 'us'. There is no 'us' here. There's only one woman doing her thing – whatever that is.

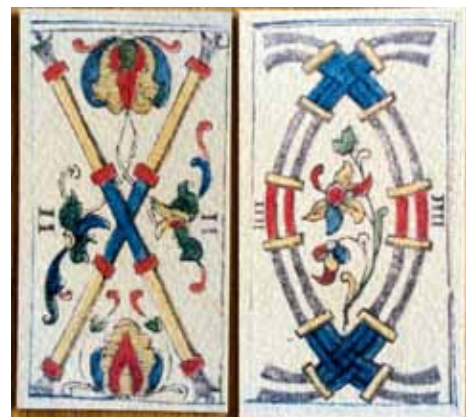
I suggested this much to the woman I was reading the cards for. But then I noticed an insistence in her body language for a firmer confirmation. 'Really, are 'we' really over?'

I grabbed the rest of my deck. Armed with a handful of pip and court cards, I repeated the initial question, but then I added a tag to it, which I formed according to the woman's facial expression and sense of excitement. After all, her heart was about to sink. She was there, at the crossroad of her ambiguity and ambivalence.

I asked again on her behalf: 'Is the World card a card that leads to elevation, to everything that this woman has ever wished for? Or does it simply mean: That's it. You've come full circle on this one.'

With this in mind, I have also recalled the initial question: 'Where do we stand now?'

Two cards fall on the table, and the woman's heart dropped even more.





## Two Batons and 4 Swords

I said: 'We go from a helping hand to a helping hand with the coffin. *PaxVobiscum*.' Now the woman's heart was on the floor.

'But why, then, why on earth, do I still do this? Why do I still hope, and what exactly am I hoping for?' The woman's tone was desperate, and for a very good reason. The situation was three monkeys and a squeezed lemon(de).

Two more cards fall on the table:

Knight of Coins and Ace of Batons



At this point the woman went blank. She stared at the coin, then at the green, voluptuous twig. There was a connection. She knew it. But what was it?

At this point I entered the picture assuming full authority. I delivered a series of one-line statements in a detached way, and then she took over in direct dialogue with the cards and me. By this last draw, she was ready to read her own cards.

'You're still hoping because there's the promise of money to be invested in strong life force. In goes a coin, and out pops a...'

'You mean, all I'm interested in is sex?'

'You said it.'

Now, what has just happened here? Nothing happened but processing two levels of signification. One cultural and the other visual.

Let's take culture first:

The image of the Knight coming riding, and reflecting himself into the big coin, transmitted subliminally to the woman querent the suggestion that he actually has that coin. The implication of this is the following: The woman is likely to fall for that recognition – of associating the coin with comfort – because she is culturally prone to it. Why? Look at our history. We have a long line of examples when this equation, 'Man equals power, and power equals comfort' is true.

So when the woman asked: 'Why am I hoping,' when she

could see how hopeless the love was, what with a broken tower in the middle of the sequence, then it's because she took a step down from her ideals. She regressed from the high, abstract concept of love, to the material. She was ready to see the coin as the substitution for love.

The assumption that we can then make here is that, ultimately, it is not love that this woman hopes for, but through the coin, she hopes that her desire for love will not stop. The meaning of this message is thus based on transference, and the exchange is the following: A coin for life. The golden coin transfers its light to the fresh, green twig. There is here the strong suggestion that if she stopped loving, she stopped living. Consequently, the woman still wants this man, but not because she loves him. Rather, she wants him because he is her ticket to staying alive. It's the 'story' of him that keeps her alive.

Now let us look at the visual signification:

If we take the visual cues into consideration, we clearly get closer to having an explanation for the hopeless love, and why the woman puts sex on the table. Her rhetorical question to me, 'you mean, all I'm interested in is sex?' indicates a shift in her focus from the gender of the Knight to the shape of his coin, which she then places in relation to the Ace. Understanding the cards the visual way makes us think of analogical connections: Round thing versus an erect thing. Does it ring any bells?

Now we can get back to the initial question again, and speculate on when the World card could be interpreted more positively? When could it give us license to say: 'Perfect. After a terrible bump, you'll get everything. You're standing at the door of the world, right on the threshold. Just enter.' We would be able to say this only if the woman we're talking to is still involved with her man in some form or another. Thus, if she comes to the cartomancer with her question from the perspective of someone who is merely speculating about a long lost relationship, then we would have to go ahead and help her realize that the woman in the World card is alone, and that her 'standing' is quite literally on one foot. The two figures in the preceding card are dead. *PaxVobiscum*.

I always insist on drawing not only on a very precisely formulated question, but also on its context, as the context makes it easier for us to determine just how much ambiguity we can handle. Anything else can just as well amount to an exercise in futility and waste of time, with pulling more cards from the deck until we finish it, in the hope of getting the 'better message'. When in doubt about the function of the trumps, certainly, we can pull some number cards, and then pull some more, and then finish the whole deck, but for that

we'd need to decide that what we are after is to construe a narrative that proceeds from the cards, rather than from the question. The truth is that we can always tell a fascinating, endless story, but is this narrative going to answer the querent's question in a precise manner?

In the above example, I've tried to demonstrate how by processing the information from the images so that it becomes useful knowledge, we also engage in two processes of transference.

First, we go from the cards to the querent. If successful, this transference often manifests as a simple conclusion: 'I see it, and I understand.' On the one hand, this affirmation is based on the activation of the conscious process of understanding (as our cultural pre-conditioning reflects how we define our needs in terms of other people's needs, or what other people want from us). On the other hand, this affirmation is also based on the activation of the unconscious process of realization (related to individual desire and the acknowledgment of personal need).

Second, we go from the reader to the sitter. In this case, we must ask ourselves: What do we emphasize in a reading? In questions about love that has ended, do we focus on the qualities in the cards that disclose the reason why the sitter hates the other, and why she should accept that they are over, or do we suggest ways in which she can get on with the program? What if the cards don't make any such suggestion?

I will leave you all to ponder on this open question, yet while suggesting the following: before you consider where the cards come from, their history, or esoterically imposed meanings, you may want to actually just read the cards.

*PaxVobiscum.*

*Note on the cards: CarolusZoya Marseille Tarot, ca. 1790, by kind permission of collector K. Frank Jensen, who has allowed me to take a facsimile print of his original and use it here.*



CAMELIA ELIAS is a professor, writer, and cartomancer. Her research interests are in esoteric movements, occult and folk practices of reading and producing spiritual texts. She blogs at Taroflexions, and has recently published a book on divination with the Marseille cards, *Marseille Tarot: Towards the Art of Reading*.

## Introducing the Wizard's Pets Tarot

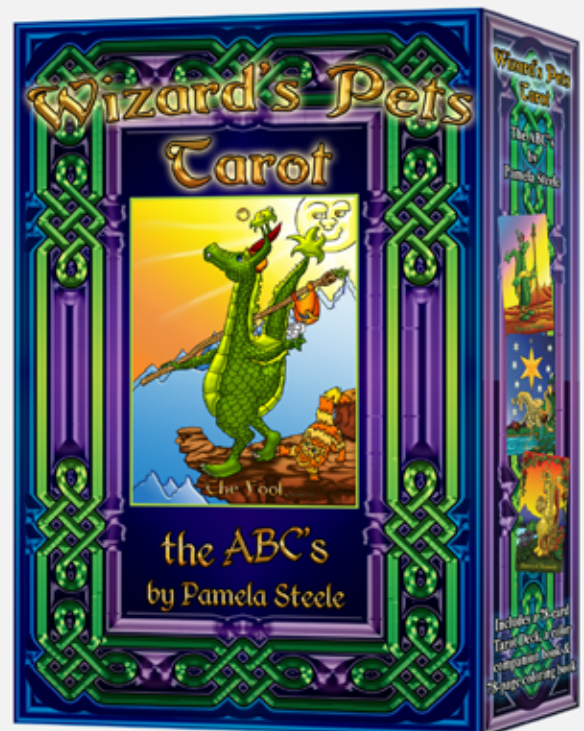
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*by Pamela Steele*

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# UNORTHODOX ORACLES: EARTHEN ALTERS

by Mellissae Lucia

It is human nature to seek meaning in a world that seems wild and untamable. Historically we've had myths and ceremonies, patterns of ritual and reverence that were deeply tied to the earth and her cycles. It was the way we made sense of things, seeing ourselves as part of the larger fabric of existence. And if we were part of the team and gave proper offerings maybe the gods would help us live another day. We are no longer completely dependent on the natural world for our survival, but our souls are still attuned to the wisdom, cleansing, and guidance of the wild places.

Earthen oracles were a time-honored practice for navigating this intense journey of physical incarnation. Indigenously we all had medicine people and shamans, diviners and seers, priestesses and rootworkers, and we still need access to the visions these mystics offered today. We once read the skies and the water, consulted animal entrails and bones, believed in faeries and devas, and saw the world as illuminated and mysterious.

As children, many of us naturally gravitated to earthen exploration. We built forts in trees, crushed berries and leaves to make secret potions, and floated little boats down the stream flowing along the sidewalk's edge. Children have not been inculturated enough to have the magic wrung out of them. Their world is enchanted and they know there are things we cannot see with the naked eye that inform our existence. To reach back into our lineage of honoring the wilderness and her great wisdom, I suggest we become more naive and curious. It is time to play and experiment again, exploring what is just out our front door. And when we bring a mature discernment and perspective to the process, we may gain incredible insights into how to more adeptly navigate

this profoundly fractured time.

So how can you welcome more wild magic and guidance into your modern life? I propose that we make earthen altars to reclaim this deep connection to our elemental knowing. I have been doing this work my entire life, creating sacred artworks spontaneously on the land. When I created my *Oracle of Initiation* deck it was my PHD in earthen co-creation. I danced nude and tribally painted, covered in soil with the energies of the New Mexico desert.

When I was living in Santa Fe, New Mexico, I met a wonderful woman named Julie Rivers. She was a desert sprite and gifted healer, scaling the walls of her beloved Cochiti canyon only wearing flip flops. She would spend months in the summer camping in the lush, cloistered terrain of this arid oasis. She has returned to source, but I still cherish this wonderful practice that she offered when I knew her. Julie said if you are struggling with something, go outside somewhere and build an altar with the elements surrounding you. Allow the

entire process to be a Medicine Walk, listening and receiving intuitively what you are to include in your healing mandala. The first one I did was under a Pinon tree in my neighborhood in Santa Fe. I collected rocks and seeds, feathers and bristly evergreen bows, sitting with the selection of earthen goodies.

As I held thoughts of what was challenging me at the time, I organically placed each stone and seed, appealing to Mama Earth to transmute the discord in my soul. With each addition I allowed a piece of the energy I was carrying to sink into the soil to be shifted and reborn. The next part of the process was to leave the sacred design for as many days as you

sensed it was needed and to go back daily to see how it had changed and morphed. All of that was information, signs and synchronicities to be read and processed about your issues at hand and how they might be integrating. In the book *The World Atlas of Divination* edited by John Matthews there is a wonderful image of a Dogon geomant from Mali, West Africa who is creating an elaborate field in the sand to read the footprint messages animals and insects leave overnight. This is what we are doing with earthen altar-making, allowing the natural world to inform our casting templates. Finally with Julie's process you were to leave it intact as long as you sensed it was still "working," and then when it was complete



you were to swipe it clean, clearing the boards.

The *Oracle of Initiation* deck was created as an homage to the Earth, and the cards have been through a variety of processes on the land. I have buried them, burned them, floated them in water, and built oracular still-life's that have disintegrated over time. I currently have five "Trust" cards with the Norse guardian Freya sitting out in the snow and rain as they decompose. What is really fascinating about allowing the elemental spirits and earth to co-create is how much actually happens. Animals and humans also pitch in consciously and unconsciously to help the process evolve. The five cards I currently have out in my yard



have been there about three weeks, and the other day a friend came by and picked up the four in front of my door that were upside down. She is a wonderful mystic herself, and loves the deck so I think she was trying to honor the cards. I actually found it funny, they were great where they were and I was waiting to see what was next. And what ended up being next was my beloved friend collecting the four she saw and turning them over so now a stack of glowing golden Freyas are sitting on my porch face up to remind me of the beauty of trust. And they shall sit there as long as they survive. The dogs will walk all over them, and the wind may displace them again, and they will eventually return to paper pulp. I have an advantage here because I have a tub full of "seconds" from printing the first edition of the deck as separate postcards, so I see them as less precious and more transformable because they did not arrive as completed sets. But I also see that a lot of decks come with extra cards, or marketing cards that you could easily use to have your own earthen oracular altars. And you can also use anything, a drawing, postcard, poem, books, or other meaningful objects and talismans. This process was also one of the projects we did at last October's *Wild Heart of Initiation* workshop outside of Seattle, Washington, on a wooded island sanctuary. When each of the participants signed up for the workshop I drew an *Oracle of Initiation* card to see what energy they were carrying for the event. When we gathered for the weekend the card was in the packet they each received and it became a central piece of each of their altars on the property. It was also divinatory information about what they might be grappling with to claim their own sovereign knowing. What transpired was so delicious, and something you can do at any time. They each went out in silence and found a secret cove or hollowed out log where

they created their earthen prayers. The collections were left out overnight and the next morning they each returned to their spot to see what had happened. Some of the cards had fallen over or readjusted, other elements of the grouping may have moved or disappeared, and one woman found a single maple leaf perfectly placed right over her photo of a recently deceased pet. Another one of the women placed a hand-turned wooden bowl between amorphous fungi on a tree trunk to catch the drippings of the natural waterfall. When I returned to my own dew covered creation there were insect guardians climbing all over the cards. When we gathered in the house again, we each shared what it was like to create the outdoor offering, gaining more insight into our unique, wild brilliance and how we may embody that more fully.

There is something primal and essential about touching back into earthen magic. It is one of the great spiritual paradoxes, that to become more ascended we must become more earthly. We came into these bodies to delight in the sensuality of being alive, and divinatory play is just one of the ways that we can bring the sacred into our mortal existence. And this doesn't need to be fancy or out in major wilderness, you could do this in a potted plant on your patio, or on the side of your apartment building under a bush. I know a friend who created a faery land in a potted plant on the porch of her apartment for her daughters. There has to be somewhere in your sphere where you can gather some magic and let the local creatures and spirits delight and inspire you with their messages. So



have fun my dears, this is one big, wild adventure and adding more joy and beauty can soothe some of the challenges of this wild ride.

Article images

© Mellissae Lucia



MELLISSAE LUCIA is an artist and adventurer, and the creator of *The Oracle of Initiation* divination deck and book. In 2015 she will be presenting at the Women of Wisdom Conference, Northwest Tarot Symposium, and Readers Studio. She teaches workshops and offers readings and Spiritual Initiation Counseling with the Oracle. [www.OracleofInitiation.com](http://www.OracleofInitiation.com)



# THE INS AND OUTS OF THE TAROT SUITS

by Jadzia DeForest

The four suits of the Minor Arcana represent life's mundane situations. The suit of Wands is our persona, business and reputation. Cups are linked to our emotions, intuition, and interpersonal relationships. Swords are our intellect and internal conflict. Work, family and finances are found in the suit of Pentacles.

Wands and Pentacles appear to relate to our external world: work, wealth, business, and the face we show to the public. While the inner aspects of self, emotion, intuition, and thought, are represented by Cups and Swords.

Our internal and external realities are directly linked and influence one another. As tarot readers we can examine a reading that is primarily focused on Wands or Pentacles (external) and delve deep into the underlying (internal) cause that brings about a specific outward manifestation.

Similarly, what are the environmental influences that shape our decisions (Swords) and emotional reactions (Cups)?



The external situations connected with Wands are business, social affairs, public image and reputation. What is behind these is an internal force driven by personal ambition, will power, and desire. While Wands manifest externally, what is revealed outwardly is the result of an inner want. Entrepreneurs do not start their own businesses because they are lazy; they are highly motivated and driven by their own will power. It is this motivation that inspires entrepreneurs to take the risk of starting and running a business. When interpreting Wands it is important to see how what has manifested externally comes from the individual's internal desire.

The suit of Cups is associated with internal qualities such as emotion, personal relationships, and spiritual development.

These are all inner aspects of self that need external influences for development and experience. Spiritual growth is an internal process that it is heavily influenced by environment. That environment can be anything from the family religion we grew up in, those we look up to, spiritual teachers, geographic location, or popular culture.



Emotion is another area that can only be fully experienced through interactions with others. When in solitude we rarely feel extreme happiness, loss, jealousy, or love. These emotions are often in direct correlation to the actions of others and our interactions with them. The internal and personal suit of Cups must encounter influences outside of self to truly experience emotional growth.



In the realm of intellect, decision-making, and internal conflict, is the suit of Swords. Inward conflict often leads us to worry, doubt, and fear, which are all driven by the mind.

The internal and external parts of this suit are perhaps the easiest to understand. The reasoning and decision-making process is an inner aspect that directly relates to our actions.

The external representation of Swords comes in the form of outer conflict. Just as with Cups, it takes interaction with others to quarrel. Swords manifest outwardly in our lives through struggle, disagreements, and difficulties with those around us. On the positive side of this suit, interacting with others can lead us to new ideas, problem-solving, and clarity.

Pentacles represent the material world, possessions, work, family, and finances. They are the tangible objects that are achieved through a grounded approach to work, wealth, and the body. Pentacles and Wands are similar in the way that they both manifest outwardly due to internal drive.



With Pentacles the motivation is often for financial stability which leads to finding the avenue by which to attain the desired level of comfort. Through the pursuit of education, skill, or manual labor, the goal of material stability can be achieved. This process combines the internal and

external aspects of Pentacles. Inwardly there is practicality, attention to detail, dedication, and embracing the role of the provider. This manifests as work to generate money with which to purchase material items or invest.

Using these same skills and process, the external result may alternatively be a tangible work of art, a fit body, healthy eating habits, a close family, or even a solitary life.

In Tarot, each of the four suits, seen as primarily internal or external aspects of daily life, actually encompass both. There has to be an internal drive to create our outer world, and just as importantly the influence of those around us act as catalysts for richer internal experiences. There cannot be one without the other, as the inner and outer aspects of each suits are integrally linked.

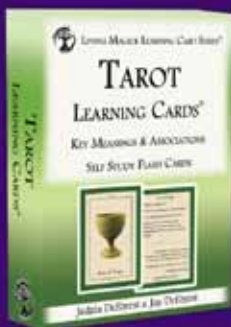
*Article images are from the Rider-Waite deck.*



JADZIA DEFOREST is a Tarot reader, instructor, and author residing in Portland, Oregon. She is co-author to both the *Tarot Learning Cards* and *Astrology Learning Cards* decks, published through Devera Publishing & Distribution. She is also the director of the Northwest Tarot Symposium, an annual tarot conference. Visit [www.TarotByJadzia.com](http://www.TarotByJadzia.com) & [www.NWTarotSymposium.com](http://www.NWTarotSymposium.com)

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# THE MAGICAL WORLD OF ORACLES

by Bonnie Cehovet

*“If art serves any purpose other than simple decoration, it’s to bring into focus, if only for an instance, that which might otherwise pass unnoticed.”*  
~ Ciro Marchetti, Oracle of Visions

For me, the magic in oracles emanates from the art itself. Oracles tell a story, and the story is brought to us through the art and images. The oracles that we are drawn to are the ones where we connect to the imagery at a soul level.

At their core, oracle cards can be used for divination, fortune-telling, problem solving, spiritual guidance, meditation, journeying and more. Oracle cards help us learn about ourselves, and the world we live in. They help us to see things from another perspective, to see the pros and cons of an issue, to see the ways in which an issue may be resolved, and how we can use our personal strengths to do so.

Oracles can be based on many sources, including astrology, numerology, Runes, Angels, Archangels, Animal Wisdom, Power Animals, Spirit Guides, Positive Affirmations, Chakras, Earth Magic, Hidden Realms, Elemental Energy, Ascended Masters, Unicorns, Celtic, Pagan, Archetypes and more. For every individual, there will be one or more decks that they connect with on that core level.

Oracle creators bring their own intuition, personal experience, perspective on life, and their own take on history and myth into the decks that they create. They also bring their connection with spirit, whatever they perceive spirit to be. Each deck is birthed from a combination of wisdom from both inner and outer realms.

Where the Seeker is, at any point in time, has a lot to do with the oracle deck they will choose to use. Unlike the Tarot,

or the Lenormand systems, which have definite guidelines, oracles are much more open to interpretation. I do the same thing with oracle decks that I do with Tarot or Lenormand decks when I want to read with them – I look at the structure of the deck (some decks have extra cards, or even an extra suit), the deck foundation (the theme that the cards are based on), and the imagery.

One of the things that I like to do with all three systems (Tarot, Lenormand, and Oracle decks) is to use them as focus in meditation. With an oracle deck, my mind does not have boundaries imposed by what the card “should” be. Whether we consciously recognize them or not, the boundaries are there with other systems. Whether I am meditating on a specific question, on a general subject, or simply for guidance, I choose a deck that appeals to me in the moment. I may want to work with Angels, Native American energy, Archangels, Goddesses, Affirmations, Victorian imagery, or something else, but I do know that intuitively I will pick up the deck with the needed background and imagery for me at that time.

Note: You will find an extensive listing of oracle decks here: <http://www.aeclectic.net/tarot/cards/oracles.shtml>.

What purpose does meditation serve, and how does the use of an oracle card enhance the meditation? Meditation can have a calming influence, it reduces stress, it helps in healing, and it slows the chattering of our mind, so that we act as a more open channel for receiving wisdom from spirit. From personal experience, I have found that I can go into meditation with one intent, but that once my focus is off the chatter in my mind, I feel calmer, less stressed, and messages that I wasn’t even aware that I needed to hear came to me. Meditation for me acts as a support system for daily life, and takes me into a higher state of awareness.

Once I have chosen a deck that I want to meditate with, I select the card that I wish to focus on. My manner of choosing a card is to do so at random, so that spirit brings me what I need. I have always had the suspicion that if I deliberately chose the card that I meditated on that I would subconsciously avoid cards that might be problematic, but which might bring me my most needed wisdom. Whichever method works for you is the one that you should use. And this may vary from day to day.

I prop my chosen card up in front of me, and allow my focus to blur. I don’t generally focus on any one image within the card, but that is an option. Sometimes I will take a question into meditation, sometimes I will simply meditate. Whichever way the Seeker chooses to meditate, the purpose is served. Oracle cards begin with a theme, and present images relating to that theme. They allow the Seeker’s focus to work within a

framework that they feel safe and empowered in. Focusing on a card, or an image within the card, opens the mind and the heart, and allows the Seeker to work within a field of pure energy, and to become part of that pure energy.

At the end of a meditation I often record my impressions. I don't try to make sense of them, I simply record them. The colors, sounds, faces, and messages in the meditation create the story of where I am, what I understand, what I need to work on, and how I need to do the work.

Another aspect of oracles is their use in a reading. The oracle that I have chosen is "Oracle of Visions", by Ciro Marchetti (U.S. Games Systems, Inc., 2014). Ciro has three Tarot decks under his belt ("Gilded Tarot Royale", "Tarot of Dreams", and "Legacy of the Divine Tarot"), so why move to an oracle deck? It was all part of the journey. Tarot has a structure, and that structure can at times seem limiting. To create a worthwhile tool for meditation and divination, structure needed to be left behind. Ciro's intention was to create a deck that required no supporting text to communicate their meanings. The images in this deck are broken down into four categories: Situations, Emotions, Actions, and Behavior. Ciro also suggests that there is no need for reversals, as the potential is contained within the images themselves. There is a LWB (Little White Book) with this deck, where Ciro summarizes his personal descriptions and meanings for the cards. It is indicated that these are to be used as starting points for the reader to do their own interpretation.

I am going to use the template of a linear three card reading, defining the positions as past/present/future:



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Her reviews and interviews can be found on her site ([www.bonniecehovet.com](http://www.bonniecehovet.com)), and on the Aeclectic Tarot website ([www.aeclectic.net/tarot](http://www.aeclectic.net/tarot)). Her writer's blog can be found here - <http://www.bonniecehovet.blogspot.com/>.

Past: Card 52

Present: Card 25

Future: Card 17

The keywords for Card 52 are Direction, Purpose, Objectives, and Taking a First Step. The image is that of a very strong female figure, standing on a globe, pointing to the future. Our Seeker is coming from a very strong place, and is on a mission! There is a strong sense of intent and purpose here – options have been considered, and a plan has been formulated.

The keywords for Card 25 are Misleading, Illusion, and Confusion. Here we see a male figure, reminiscent of a stage magician/illusionist, presenting his own version of intent. The issue in the present is to separate illusion from reality. The Seeker had a plan, and a mission. Are they losing focus in the present due to false paths? The Seeker needs to keep their focus in the present, and not be misled, if they wish to accomplish the goals that are so important to them.

The keywords for Card 17 are Balance and Equality. We see a strong male figure, with the Yin/Yang symbol on his chest, in a dance position. What balances the Seeker is their belief in a higher power, a power that will be there for them. This is the dance of life.

It is interesting to look at this sequence – it reminds me of a type of initiation. The Seeker starts out strong, faces the challenges that we all face in life, and perseveres. This is the Seeker's story as told by the oracle. The story gives the Seeker confidence, and a heads up as to what to look for. The oracle shares its wisdom through the story that its images purvey.

Whether used as a tool for meditation, as a tool of understanding, or as a tool of divination, oracles have a definite place in our lives. How we choose to use them is bound only by our own imagination.

*Card Images from Oracle of Visions*

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*Humor*

*Experiences*

*&*

*Anecdotes*

# TODAY I WILL NURTURE MY INNER DEMONS

by James Ricklef

Recently I came across a book called *Today I Will Nourish My Inner Martyr: Affirmations for Cynics* by Ann Thornhill and Sarah Wells. This smart little book provides a horde of humorous anti-affirmations like, “On this day I will look at my past mistakes and project them onto my future.” Now, who among us has not practiced that one more than once? The affirmations in this book are angry, arrogant, cynical, mean spirited, misguided, self-congratulatory and self-pitying ... and very funny as well because they ring so true.

While this book seems like a lighthearted lampoon on the practice of doing affirmations, at the same time it serves as a giggling spotlight on the foibles of human nature. Indeed, it seems that quite a few people must be using some of these affirmations. As an example, I opened this book at random and found this little gem: “Today I will develop a new, unhealthy communication technique.” Why, I have a neighbor who must repeat this affirmation daily!

So what does this have to do with the Tarot? Since I have written a serious work on this subject — my *Tarot Affirmations* book — I thought it might be fun to write a list of humorous Tarot affirmations as well, so here they are. (Remember, kids these affirmations are strictly for fun, so don't try them at home!)

0. Fool: “I have such firm belief in the path I have chosen that I may confidently tell someone who has chosen another path that he is a Fool.”

1. Magician: “I welcome magic into my life because I have absolutely no aptitude for math and science.”

2. High Priestess: “I will remain aloof and secretive so people will think I am deep and wise.”

3. Empress: “I deserve to just sit around and wallow in self-indulgence.”

4. Emperor: “I will, in all ways, strive to exert control over the lives of those around me.”

5. Hierophant: “My beliefs are the right ones, and it is my destiny to impose them on the rest of the world.”

6. Lovers: “I will only commit to a relationship when I find one that is perfect in every way.”

7. Chariot: “Today I will trample the needs of others in my mad dash for success.”

8. Strength: “When I hear someone say something stupid it is my right to put them down and shut them up.”

9. Hermit: “Since I am all that I need, it is my right to maintain a discrete distance from all the idiots in the world.”

10. The Wheel of Fortune: “Shit happens, so I give myself permission to shirk responsibility for my life.”

11. Justice: “Two wrongs will not make a right, but revenge will make me feel better.”

12. Hanged Man: “Today I will find a passive-aggressive way to make someone else feel guilty about all the suffering in my life.”

13. Death: “I work to help the people around me transform their lives so that they may better accommodate my needs.”

14. Temperance: “I serve as an example of virtuous and temperate behavior so that I may chide all who fail to live up to my high standards.”

15. Devil: “Today I will nurture my inner demons.”

16. Tower: “I have every right to feel secure in the ability of my material wealth to protect me from life's calamities.”

17. Star: “Today I will commit to at least one unrealistic goal.”

18. Moon: “Today I will find new and interesting ways to delude myself about my life.”

19. Sun: “Since I deserve boundless joy and happiness, I give myself permission to experiment with anti-depressants.”

20. Judgment: “Today I will find at least one unhappy, unfortunate person whose shortcomings I can criticize with a justifiable sense of superiority.”

21. World: “Every day, and in every way, I am becoming better and better than everyone else.”

So there you have it: bleak, nasty, and dreadful affirmations for each of the 22 Major Arcana cards.

JAMES RICKLEF, author of *Tarot Affirmations* and other Tarot books. <http://jamesricklef.wordpress.com/>



# GOOD TRADE!

by Pamela Steele

In the mid 90's I was employed as both a tarot reader and marketing director for a local new age shop. In addition, I lived out of town on a lovely acreage blessed with antique trees, spacious gardens, and shared the entire establishment with a variety of fur-buddies including a very old goat. Sadly, I awoke one morning to find Nellie had crossed over peacefully in her sleep. This created quite a stir as my place was incomplete without a ditch goat. Nellie's job had been to keep the grass trimmed in the steep ditches along the road as well as manicuring the areas amongst the trees surrounding the house.

When I got to work that morning I began searching the local newspaper for a new goat and sure enough there was an ad for baby goats at a local farm. I called the farmer and got directions. Within an hour, I'd taken off work and headed the 20 miles to arrange the purchase of a new baby ditch goat.

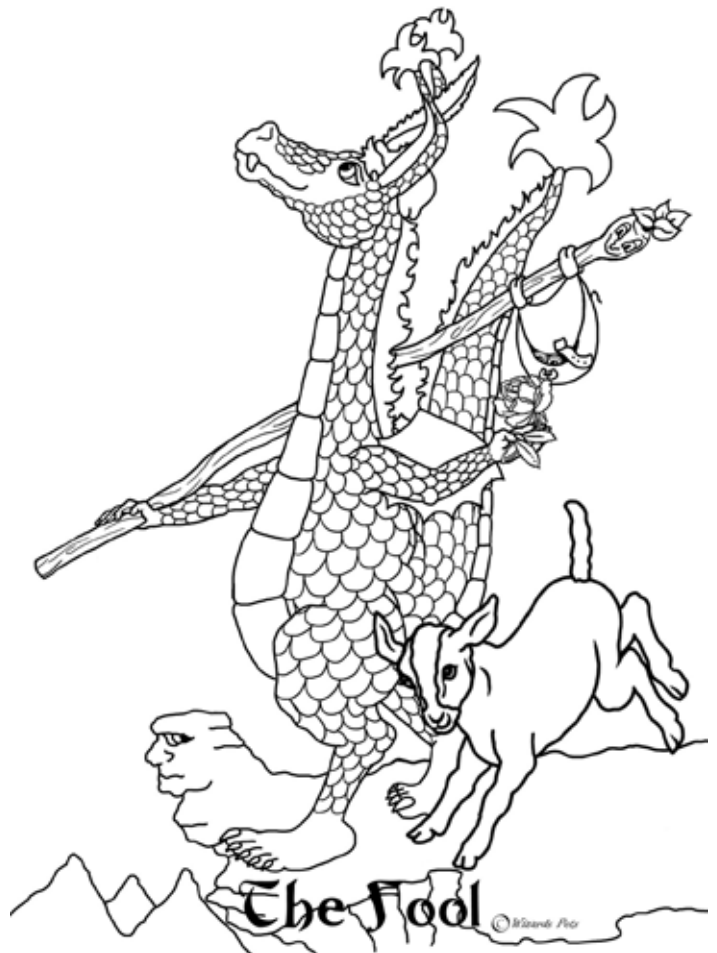
Upon arrival at the lovingly kept Mennonite (yes, there are multiple Mennonite and Hutterite colonies in our area) farm, the farmer immediately sent his teenage son to chase down and procure a kid. We stood there chatting about goats and why I needed one while the son dashed about and finally captured one.

I told him to put the little guy in the front seat of my truck, as I'd already decided that was about the only way to get it home safely. Then turning to the farmer I asked how much he was charging for the goats. At that point the man ducked his head, shuffled his feet a bit, and asked quietly 'Aren't you that there tarot (pronounced like 'carrot') reader?'

I froze for an instant. I'd just put to rest wild accusations around town about devil worshipping and sacrificing goats under full moons being as that went hand-in-hand with tarot reading. I met his eyes and replied, 'Yes, I am.' The farmer glanced around to see if anyone was close enough to hear and asked, 'Would you consider trading that there goat for a tarot reading?'

I managed to keep my jaw from dropping and replied, 'Of course.' He grinned, took my card so he could call and set up an appointment later that day, and we shook hands. He then smiled even wider and announced, 'Good Trade!' with much satisfaction.

To this day I've read for a variety of people from different backgrounds and cultures for a wide variety of products and services. But I've never made a better trade than the one for my ditch goat who soon earned the name 'Stupid'.



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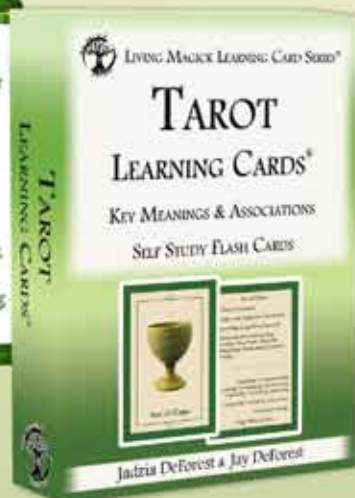
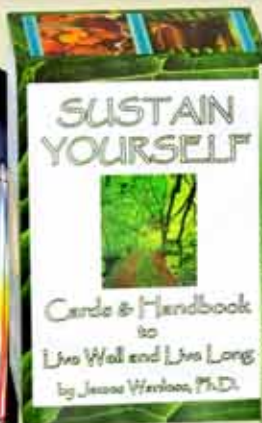
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