

# THE CARTOMANCER

MAKING  
YOUR OWN  
TAROT  
IMAGES WITH  
GELATIN  
MONOPRINTING

*by Eric K. Lerner*

YOUR TAROT  
YOUR WAY

*by Barbara Moore*

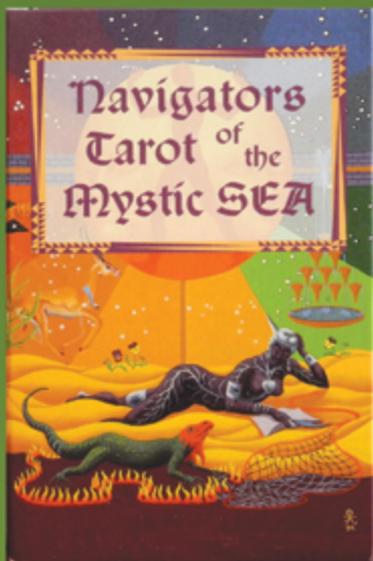
TIPS FOR  
PROFESSIONAL  
READERS

*by Monica Bodirsky*

TAROT DE  
ST. CROIX

*an interview with  
Lisa de St. Croix*

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## *The Cartomancer*

### **Mission Statement**

Our primary 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 and 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.

Reviews of new and classic decks from major publishing houses as well as independently published, limited editions by our in-house review staff.

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# IN THIS ISSUE

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## **19 TIPS FOR PROFESSIONAL READERS**

*by Monica Bodirsky*

## **23 PSYCARDS: THE NEVER CARD**

*by Catt Foy*

## **24 YOUR TAROT YOUR WAY**

*by Barbara Moore*

## **27 INTERVIEW WITH JULIA HESSE OF THE LIVING TAROT ORACLE**

*by Katrina Wynne*

## **29 WHEN TAROT TURNED ESOTERIC**

*by Sherryl E. Smith*

## **32 MAKING YOUR OWN TAROT IMAGES WITH GELATIN MONOPRINTING**

*by Eric K. Lerner*

## **35 INTERVIEW WITH FABIO LISTRANI, CREATOR OF NIGHT SUN TAROT**

*by Robert L. Scott*

## **37 THREE LETTERS**

*by Cynthia Tedesco*

# ON THE COVER

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## Tarot de St. Croix

This issue's cover image is The Hanged Man from *Tarot de St. Croix* by Lisa de St. Croix. Read the interview on page 8.

# ART

---

## 12 SALTWATER READING CARDS

Laura Bowen

## 13 MATILDA LENORMAND

Lynn Boyle

## 14 WONDERLAND TAROT

Chris & Morgana Abbey

## 15 THE EVOLUTIONARY TAROT

Richard Hartnett

## 16 BOTANICAL INSPIRATIONS

Lynn Araujo

## 17 CHAKRA LENORMAND

Reall

# ASK THE WIZARD

---

## 18 ASK THE WIZARD COLUMN

with The Wizard

*Send your questions online through  
[www.SteeleWizard.com](http://www.SteeleWizard.com) and get your answer here in  
the next issue of *The Cartomancer*!*

# REVIEWS

---

## 42 THE MAGIC TAROT OF PRAGUE

Review by Leo Chioda

## 44 101 TAROT SPREADS BY 20 MODERN TAROT MASTERS, VOL. 1

Review by Jadzia DeForest

## 45 TRIONFI DELLA LUNA

Review by Robert L. Scott

## 47 TAROT MYSTERIES

Review by Jadzia DeForest

## 48 THE ENGLISH MAGIC TAROT

Review by Jadzia DeForest

## 50 TAROT AT A CROSSROADS

Review by Bonnie Cehovet

## 52 THE TAROT DE BESANCON OF J. JERGER

Review by Sherryl E. Smith

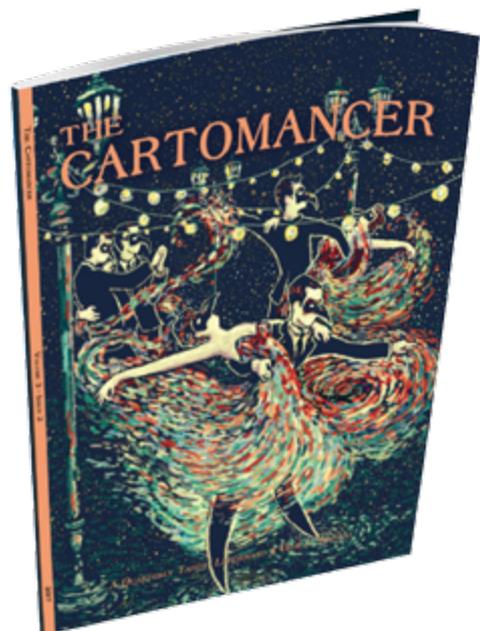
## 54 TAROT TRIUMPHS

Review by Jadzia DeForest

# NEXT ISSUE

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May is the next issue, featuring the *Prisma Visions Tarot* by James R. Eads.



# EDITOR'S NOTE

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*W*elcome to year three! I'm delighted to feature the *Tarot de St. Croix* on the cover as our new year begins. We enter the third year of *The Cartomancer* just as Lisa de St. Croix is launching the second edition and printing of her deck. Good stuff all around.

This issue is our most diverse yet. Some of the goodies included are interviews, tips on conducting readings professionally, arts and crafts, a bit of history, and learning to do tarot *your way*. Plus, the most book and deck reviews we've ever included.

That all goes quite nicely with my goals for the magazine this year. Because, let's face it, you either found this publication through a friend, Facebook, or happened upon it at an event (if I'm wrong that's delightful and means my reach is much greater than I'd thought). I figure that since this is year three, which means *The Cartomancer* is growing up, it's time to start advertising and promoting it to the world. I put out a post on our Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/thecartomancer/>) asking for suggestions and have received some really good ones. If you have any ideas, feel free to send them my way. I'll be pursuing those suggestions in the near future. After NWTS of course.

It is prep time for the Northwest Tarot Symposium (NWTS), which is what I'm spending most of my time doing during January and February. It's also year three for the conference! March 3rd - 5th in Portland Oregon, and I hope to see you there.

Besides further promoting *The Cartomancer*, I also plan to grow it in other ways. The May issue should have some fun additions. There is a small section I'd like to add, but need to see how possible it is before fully committing to it. Ultimately though, what do *you* want to see or read about in here? Email me. I'll see what I can do to have it included.

A note from Robert L. Scott, who interviewed our previous cover feature: "Due to Joseph Stretch focusing on and dedicating time to university studies, he is currently not working on any book or future deck at this time, as previously planned."

Do remember that we are always seeking article and deck artwork submissions for upcoming issues. If you have an idea, please get in touch through our website — we'd love to hear from you! We also are in need of decks and books to review, questions for the *Ask the Wizard* column, and we have ad space available. We welcome your comments and questions which you can send via our website's contact page or email to [jd@thecartomancer.com](mailto:jd@thecartomancer.com).

Blessings,  
Jadzia and Jay

*The Cartomancer* is published quarterly in print and online:

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Issue Two — May

Issue Three — August

Issue Four — November

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*Many thanks to:*

December Lynd

Jaymi Elford

Arthur Graye

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# CONTRIBUTORS



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Her website is <http://tarot-heritage.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 <http://Amazon.com>).

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



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JADZIA DEFOREST has been reading tarot professionally for over ten years in the Portland, Oregon area. She's the owner and editor of *The Cartomancer: A Tarot, Lenormand, and Oracle Journal*, co-director of the Northwest Tarot Symposium, co-owner at Portlandia Fortune Tellers, and co-author of the *Living Magick Learning Cards Series*. In addition to reading tarot, Jadzia is a palmist and astrologer. She teaches classes on tarot, astrology,

and palmistry. Jadzia lives in the forest just outside of Portland with her husband and six spoiled cats.

Her website is <http://www.JadziaDeForest.com>



CATT FOY introduced Psycards to the U.S. in 1988 and is the author of *Psycards—A New Alternative to Tarot*. She teaches classes, seminars, and makes appearances at mind/body/spirit events and bookstores in the western U.S. You can contact her at [psycardsusa@gmail.com](mailto:psycardsusa@gmail.com), or visit [www.psycardsusa.com](http://www.psycardsusa.com).



ERIC K. LERNER'S artwork has been featured in *Tarocchi Appropriati* (<http://www.arnellart.com/museodeitarocchi/msdk47.htm>) and his own *Radiant Spleen Tarot* ([www.radiantspleen.com](http://www.radiantspleen.com)). He has published many articles and essays on tarot. He has taught classes on reading the Thoth tarot for MSN's Suite University and other groups. His e-mail is [eric\\_k\\_lerner@hotmail.com](mailto:eric_k_lerner@hotmail.com).



CYNTHIA TEDESCO M.A.

Tedesco worked for many years as an Audiologist and Speech/Language Pathologist for the Lexington School For The Deaf. She is certified as a Kaizen-Muse Creativity Coach using skills as a professional tarot reader to assist clients in their creative work.

Tedesco's poems have appeared in *Apex of The M*; *Avocet*, *Barrow Street* (and former editor), *Black River Review*, *Caliban*, *The Cape Rock*, *Coffee House Poets Quarterly*, *Columbia Poetry Review*, *Gargoyle*, *Italian Americana*, *Iodine*, *The Lucid Stone*, *Montserrat Review*, *No Roses Review*, *Outerbridge*, *The Panhandler*, *Space and Time*, *Talisman*, *Tamarind*, *Weirdbook* and *Yefief*. Her short story, 'Suitcases' was published and is archived at [www.Archipelago.org](http://www.Archipelago.org) Tedesco has a book of poems, 'Letters Found After,' published by Sesquin Press. She is currently working on her second book, 'Chthonic Luminosity' as well as the novel.

Tedesco lives in N.Y.C. with her husband and two Havanese dogs. The Tedesco's are serious collectors of vintage tarot decks. She can be reached at: [INTUITIVEARTSENTERTAINMENT@gmail.com](mailto:INTUITIVEARTSENTERTAINMENT@gmail.com)



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.

She's online at [www.SteeleWizard.com](http://www.SteeleWizard.com).



At a party someone put a tarot deck in Barbara's hands. She's held on tight ever since. Her life has been a crazy-quilt of experiences—beauty school drop-out, theatre geek, stay-at-home wife, history student, editor, academic, Catholic, fundamentalist Christian, Methodist, Nothing, Everything, pagan, shaman—and

tarot helps her make sense of the eclectic soup that has been her life. Barbara lives in St. Paul, Minnesota with her wife Lisa and their two dogs, Whiskey and Norman. Every morning, she takes Whiskey for a walk and they play hide and seek with the Divine, finding magic (and burrs) everywhere. She also loves cake, art supplies, summer, traveling, and playing Magic: The Gathering, a few of the things that convince Barbara that the Divine loves us and wants us to be happy. Since her wife won't be her sugar momma, to earn her keep Barbara spends her days consulting for Llewellyn and Lo Scarabeo, creating decks, writing books, presenting at conferences, reading for clients, and teaching. Website: <http://www.tarotshaman.com>



LEO CHIODA is a Brazilian poet, lecturer and professional Tarot reader. Articles, iconographic studies and more of his work can be tasted at the Café Tarot, one of the most influential Tarot blogs in Brazil.

<http://www.cafetarot.com.br>



KATRINA WYNNE, M.A. is an international teacher, writer, Tarot Consultant, and Transpersonal Psychotherapist. With over 40 years of Tarot, metaphysical, and oracular experience, combined with 25 years as a professional counselor, Katrina shares her passion for our art in her many articles and her podcast with co-producer, Gina Thies. Her very

popular "Professional Tarot Consulting Certificate Course" is offered online, with personal supervision and study partners. For information about scheduling private sessions and mentoring, please contact her by email. Email: [mail@TarotCounselor.org](mailto:mail@TarotCounselor.org)

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# AN INTERVIEW WITH LISA DE ST. CROIX, CREATOR OF THE TAROT DE ST. CROIX

with Jadzia DeForest

First published in 2013, the *Tarot de St. Croix* is about to be released in a new edition. Check out Lisa de St. Croix's website for details.

This is one of the most unique decks I've ever come across. There are merpeople, Indian deities, Egyptian goddesses, and angels. The cards include pagan, Japanese, Native American, Roman, African, Eastern, nature, South American, Arthurian, and contemporary imagery. How multicultural can you get? And yet the color palette and art medium bring it all together into one cohesive deck.

**JD:** When and how were you initially drawn to the tarot cards?

**LC:** When I was a child of eleven, I accompanied my mother to get a reading from a tarot reader on the other side of Johannesburg, South Africa. As I waited on the wide verandah, I thought about destiny, wisdom and faith. These were new concepts for me and I was taken by them. The predictions of that tarot reader came to pass; within a year my mother divorced, fell in love with a foreigner and left to live



with her new husband on the Mediterranean Sea. Many years later after my mother had died, through a mysterious set of circumstances the old *Marseille* deck she had bought from the tarot reader came back to me. I immersed myself in the study of Tarot.

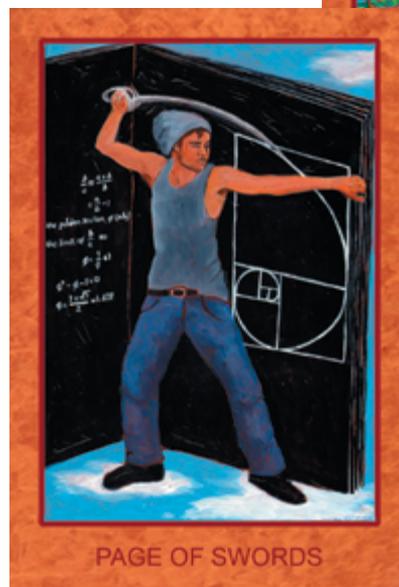
**JD:** What inspired you to create a tarot deck and what was that journey like?

**LC:** About eight years ago on the winter solstice I did a shamanic journey. I travelled to a small

black and white temple in the Upper World. On the throne lay a tarot card of the High Priestess: Isis. She instructed me to paint a tarot deck. I painted this tarot deck as if it were a tarot reading: receiving divine wisdom. Each time I pulled a card to paint I was amazed how perfectly the meaning of the card related to the world I inhabit. I opened my senses to messages. Synchronicity was my guide.

I painted intuitively, having faith that I would convey through the visual medium of the tarot, a message that would have meaning and wisdom.

**JD:** Tell me more about the *Tarot de St. Croix*. What is the overall theme, or is there one?

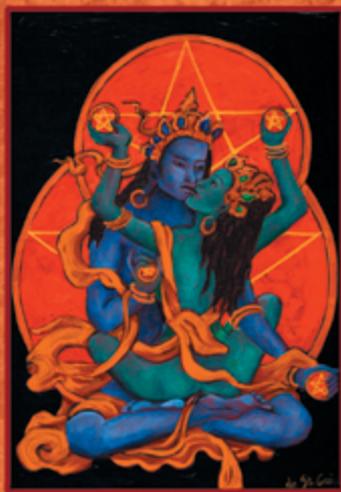


**LC:** *Tarot de St. Croix* is a contemporary multi-cultural deck. It was inspired by current affairs, personal experiences, mythology and synchronicity. Although the images in this deck are unique they still hold the essence of the universal archetypes. The visual metaphors are easy to understand and carry information that can help us on our journey through life. I think the tarot is a visual encyclopedia of the soul, a tool to help us find answers to life's questions.

**JD:** How did you decide which art medium you wanted to work in? And what was your process?



**LC:** As I have been a painter using oils since my days at art school, it was natural to use oils as my medium. First I would sketch my ideas and then transfer the drawing onto a 13" x 8"



SIX OF PENTACLES

board (the golden mean ratio) which I had prepared with venetian red gesso. The layers of oil glazes I used gives a rich and classic look to the paintings. Sometimes I used a magnifying glass to paint tiny details. It took me five years to complete the 78 oil paintings plus the back.

**JD:** Is there a best way to use your tarot deck for readings, and if so what is it?

**LC:** I believe one should really look at the imagery in the cards and pay attention to how it makes you feel. We so often rely on old learnt information using our brains instead of our hearts or instincts. I think it is best to allow oneself a fresh approach. I think how the cards relate to each other

*Social media has been fantastic in helping me show my deck visually and reach a global audience.*

is important too. Are the figures looking at each other or away? Make up a story about the cards, journal, make art. Let the cards have a voice. I teach many of these techniques in my Tarot Visual Journaling workshops which can be done as eWorkshops at home.

**JD:** What kinds of pros and cons have you experienced in self-publishing?

**LC:** The pros are: I liked being in charge of all the aesthetic decisions while creating my deck and I make a good income from the direct sales of my decks compared to the miniscule royalties publishers pay artists. The cons are: I spend a lot of time away from my studio marketing my decks and I am still learning how to do it. I don't have wide distribution in shops — still hoping that might happen. I sell mostly online.

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

**LC:** Open yourself to the magic of Tarot, there is a mysterious and magical force at work. Find pleasure in creating, let it be a labor of love then doors will open.

**JD:** Your deck is very popular! What sales, advertising, or promotional tips do you have for others?

**LC:** I started by blogging about every card I created and have kept it up since completing the deck. Over 60,000 people have visited my site



THREE OF WANDS

I also regularly post my cards on Facebook both on my personal page and my TAROT DE ST. CROIX page. Sometimes I buy an ad on the page; it is easy and affordable. More recently I have been posting on Instagram. Social media has been fantastic in helping me show my deck visually and reach a global audience. I did an



Indiegogo campaign to raise money to print the first edition.

Find out more at:  
<http://lisadestcroix.blogspot.com/>

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# Monica Bodirsky

## *Lucky Lenormand* oracle deck






Photos: George Faburzin

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# Tarot Art



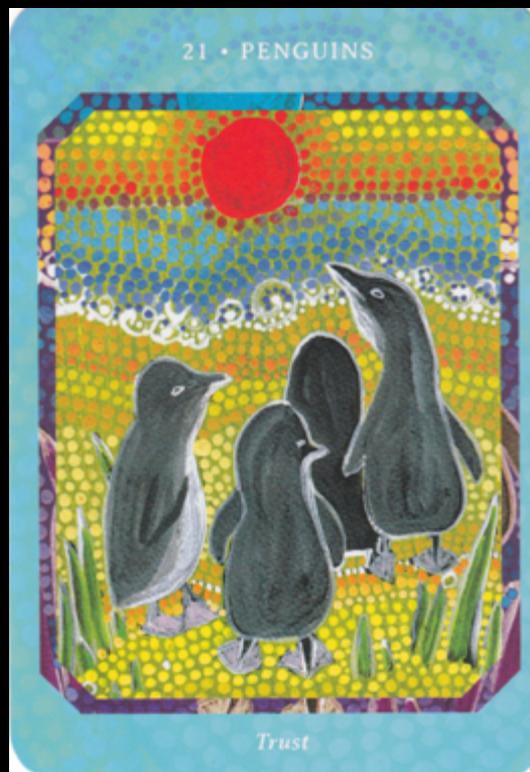
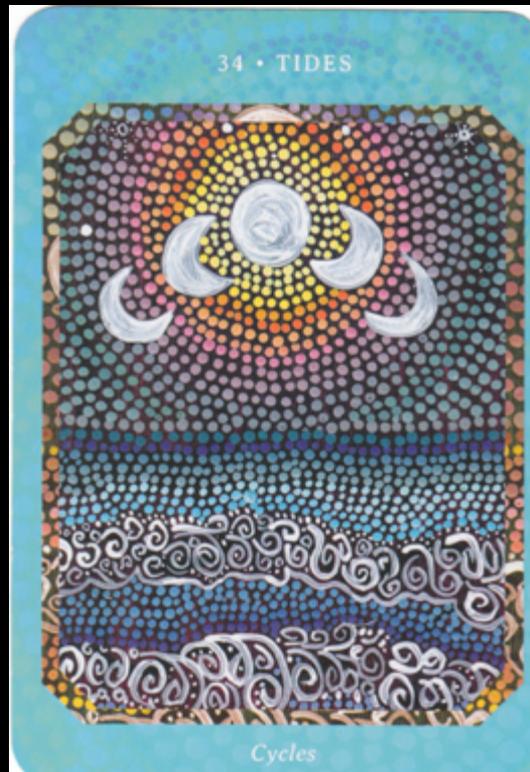
# SALTWATER READING CARDS

LAURA BOWEN

Laura Bowen is an Australian artist and Author; whose natural environment inspires her artworks, especially the flora, fauna and seasonal cycles. Each of her artworks are hand painted and feature colorful images dotted with bird feathers.

Laura is the Author and Illustrator of the *Dreamtime* reading cards published by Rockpool Publishing in February 2015 and the Saltwater Reading Cards published February 2016

The *Saltwater Reading Cards* are inspired by the ocean's flora, fauna as well as its natural cycles and rhythms. The *Saltwater* messengers are easily recognizable and hold a place in the hearts of many. The meanings of each card are based on the observed natural tendencies, physical characteristics, energy, cycles or behaviors of each animal, element or environment.



Website:

<http://laurabowen.com.au>

Facebook page:

<http://.facebook.com/LauraJBowen>

# MATILDA LENORMAND

LYNN BOYLE

The *Matilda Lenormand* is a 38 card deck with the normal 36 cards plus an extra Man card & Woman card so the reader can customise the deck to suit the reading. The extra people cards can be used for readings on same sex relationships, business partnerships or friendships. The design for the *Matilda Lenormand* follows a more traditional layout, with the playing card insert taking centre stage & quite large at the top of each card; the card number appearing in medallions on either side of the card insert. The name of the card appears in a plaque at the bottom. Subtle divisions within the card layout & an antique tapestry fabric look to the border, along with vintage style images, make this a classically romantic Lenormand deck. The images are colourful without being garish, clear & unambiguous, with faded backgrounds to make the image stand out. The images in this deck are from around 1850 to early 1900s. Each deck comes shrink-wrapped with gift bag. Ongoing readers' support & exercises are posted in my Prophecy Corner study group on facebook

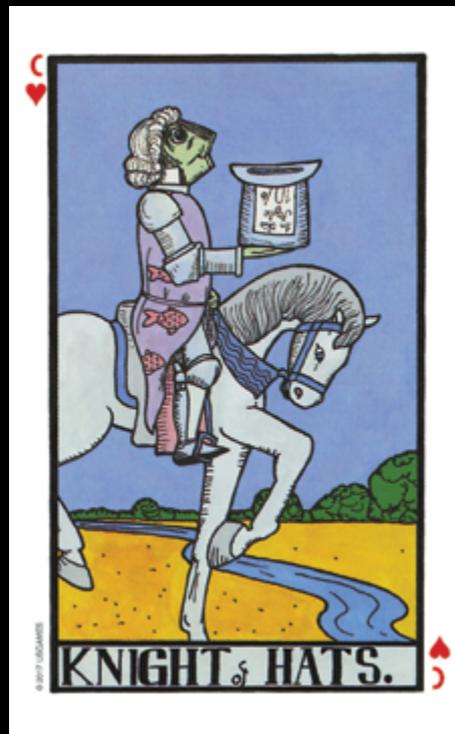
Lynn Boyle, RN, Reiki II channel & Australian Bush Flower Essence Practitioner lives in Sydney Australia.

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# THE WONDERLAND TAROT

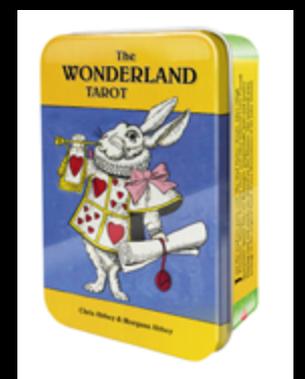
CHRIS & MORGANA ABBEY



Join the mad tea party with the beloved characters of Lewis Carroll in *The Wonderland Tarot*, including The Mad Hatter (Fool), Alice (High Priestess), Humpty Dumpty (Sun), the White Rabbit (Judgement) and all the others. The delightful artwork by Morgana Abbey pays homage to the hand-drawn Victorian style of Sir John Tenniel, illustrator of the first edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. In this whimsical tarot deck the Minor Arcana suits are flamingos for Swords, peppermills for Staves, hats for Cups and oysters for Coins. In the spirit of the Alice books, as a nod to the Queen of Hearts, playing card suit marks are included on the Minor Arcana cards, so this deck may be used for traditional card games as well as tarot readings. This pocket-sized deck comes in a tin with a 56-page booklet.

Published by US Games Systems, Inc.

<http://www.usgamesinc.com/The-Wonderland-Tarot-in-a-Tin/>



*The Evolutionary Tarot* is a new expanded deck with 6 additional cards beyond the traditional 22 illustrations of the Major Arcana. Each new card is based upon an archetype. The foundation for and the application of all the cards is thoroughly documented in the companion book of the same title, which will be available in both ebook and print form. For over 20 years Richard Hartnett has researched the application of each of the new cards, and have found them to be relevant in over a thousand readings. This Deck is based in part on Numerology giving the entire Tarot another layer of relevance.

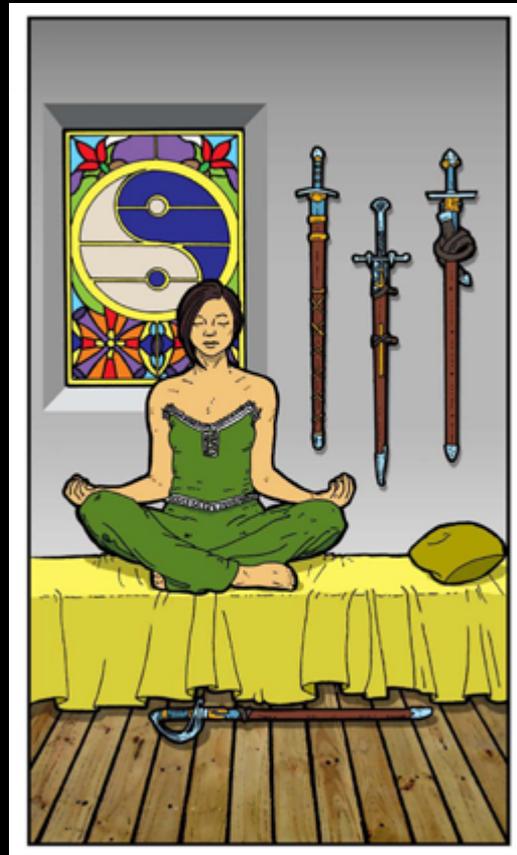
The art for this deck has been developed by a team of 5 fantasy illustrators who are well known in the art world. Yet, there is a visual consistency to the deck.

There will be a presentation by the deck's creator on the development and use of this deck at the Northwest Tarot Symposium March 3rd though 5th.

<http://nwtarotsymposium.com>

# THE EVOLUTIONARY TAROT

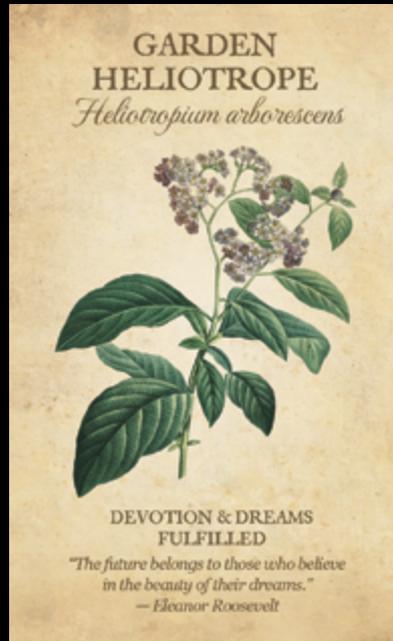
RICHARD HARTNETT



# BOTANICAL INSPIRATIONS

LYNN ARAUJO

In Victorian England, and in other cultures, flowers were used to convey specific meanings and messages, especially in the coy rituals of courtship. *Botanical Inspirations* Deck & Book Set brings together the Secret Language of Flowers with the treasured artwork of Pierre-Joseph Redouté. Each *Botanical Inspirations* card features a thoughtful quotation that alludes to the symbolism of the flower. The accompanying guidebook presents inspirational affirmations and narrative vignettes culled from history, mythology, lore and legend. From the demure violet to the noble magnolia, all flowers have stories to tell and lessons to share.



Published by US Games Systems Inc.

<http://www.usgamesinc.com/Botanical-Inspirations-Deck-and-Book-Set/>



The *Chakra Lenormand* is a 54 card deck with the traditional 36 Lenormand cards and 18 additional ones.

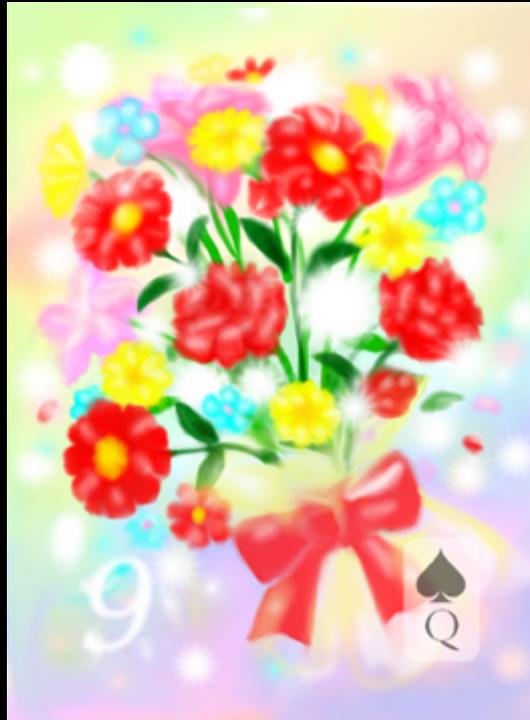
This deck is made in an impressionist style and inspired by Chakra Rainbow colors!

It can be used as a Lenormand Oracle, for meditation, or for spell-work.

It is a sweet, colorful, and vibrantly colored deck. There are several card size options available on the POD websites. All of the cards are borderless and come without the watermark.

You may also download the free ebook for this deck on the website.

# CHAKRA LENORMAND REALL



Gamecrafter:

<https://www.thegamecrafter.com/designers/reall-s-games>

Website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/chakralenormand/>



Dear Conflicted,

After reading your letter I have to admit I'm surprised it's taken this long for someone to bring up this topic. Upon consulting the cards The Hermit offers wisdom in this area.

What you're providing is expert advice from Spirit or a Higher Power. You're taking the jumbled information your clients present to you in the form of questions and shine a light on their issues. You formulate a Plan and explain step-by-step the why, when and where to implement this Plan. You delve into the unknown, beyond this plane of existence and retrieve valuable information in your readings.

In a way, your clients are correct. It is a Gift from Spirit. However, that being noted, a Gift Demands a Gift. So if they're not willing to part with a fee, ask them to choose from a list of gifts you'll need to continue your services. For example, one could pay your rent or mortgage. Another could fund your utility bill. Someone else could pay your phone bill. They wouldn't have to wrap it or even put a bow on it, but they can choose how to reciprocate. There's also groceries and clothing. See? The list is really endless so if they choose to not give the gift of cash they can show

their appreciation in other ways. You may need to post on your gift list what is not accepted. Perhaps you have no need of barnyard animals or more pets. You may not be interested in taking one of their children in trade either. You'll need to be clear and concise in what you will or will not accept as a gratuity. Be sure to state "cash is always preferred" and decide the amount of money needed for the length of the tarot reading.

Furthermore the Hermit always makes me think of the song titled "This Little Light of Mine." If you know the words, please sing along. If not, just hum a few bars.

Sincerely,  
*The Wizard*

Dear Wizard,

I've been reading tarot for over 5 years now. Recently I began asking for payment for my readings as I would like to make this my official business so I can quit my day job. I'm now doing up to 10 readings each afternoon which usually go well into the evening. Everyone who comes for a reading swears they're right on and are completely happy with it, but they all insist that reading tarot is a Gift from God (or the Goddess) and I should give my gift freely as I have in the past. Please advise me on this problem.

~ Conflicted in Calgary



# Articles & Stories

## TIPS FOR PROFESSIONAL READERS

by Monica Bodirsky

*“It seems that these old cards were conceived deep in the guts of human experience, at the most profound level of the human psyche. It is to this level in ourselves that they will speak.”*

- Sallie Nichols, *Jung and Tarot: An Archetypal Journey*

During a Lenormand workshop in Salem, Massachusetts, one of my students asked about logic versus intuition when reading the cards. She perceived cartomancy as a completely intuitive process and asked how her method of reading might fit in with standard written interpretations of card symbolism. I said there is no correct or incorrect technique and perhaps a balance could be found between logic and intuition depending on each person's abilities, and, that neither approach needs to be completely rejected. My comment was met with some skepticism. “Well I just allow things to pop into my head and don't want to overthink. I think this makes my readings better.” The flip side of this comment can be heard amongst those purely intellectual readers who feel that using anything but the written word undermines the profession and sullies the sacred, hermetic gene pool. Regardless, of where you weigh in on a preference, a salient point was raised. This student is

no longer a new reader, and our group shared methods and several common challenges facing a professional tarot reader and ways to improve, expand, or advance from an average and competent reader to a well-rounded professional?

Speaking with both new and advanced readers over the years, I have found one thing in common: most confident and successful professionals use a combination of methods and possess a diverse range of practices from setting up booths at psychic conferences, to dedicating their lives to academic contributions in the field of tarot. Although difficult to quantify, the general context of any reading practice is vital in taking your competency to the next level. Context of questions, client demeanor, reader's experience, location, and the cards themselves are all active ingredients in the cartomancy recipe book.

Here is a partial list of considerations that may assist you in developing your confidence and talent as a reader.

1) Offering more than one deck for readings.

I realize that many readers have such a close relationship with one particular deck it is too difficult to consider, however, allowing the client to choose a deck allows a client to become an active participant in a reading. I find that clients who do this feel more connected and subsequently more receptive to information.

2) Resist reducing card symbolism to the binary of good or bad.

Some new readers may refer to cards within the binary of good or bad. Most experienced tarot readers however, agree that all cards may be both, and, it is the reader who will interpret them as potentially neutral, positive or negative depending on the surrounding cards or question. The coffin card in the Lenormand deck or the death card of tarot may seem unequivocally negative, however, it has appeared in

readings for many of my clients when a difficult situation is being consciously ended and will be to their benefit even if psychologically daunting.

### 3) Be sensitive to your clients' ability to hear certain truths

Perhaps clients diverse needs should affect your how you deliver information. A sensitive reader can discern whether or not a person is prepared to hear a difficult truth delivered in blunt terms or whether you need to exercise extreme diplomacy. You may say you are always gentle, or always blunt, but each client may perceive this differently. Body language, tone, eye contact, the environment, a client's mood, and experiences, should all be considered. I am speaking about nuances and attentiveness on your part, and not suggesting you alter the truth as you see it or withhold vital information. Negotiating the space between diplomacy and avoiding hard truths can be difficult for some unseasoned readers, but remaining attentive to your client's reactions instead of being focused on your own style will assist here.



### 4) Find a balance between logic and intuition

I think memorizing the symbolism and history of cards and meanings may intimidate some readers or leave clients finding their reading prescriptive, or, conversely, a reading comprised of entirely intuitive flashes may seem a little less than genuine, especially if the client is aware of card meanings. I have learned the history of cards and symbolism and appreciate tarot as well as Lenormand cards as a structured system, but, I always include intuitive leaps that create a very personalized reading even when the same cards are pulled by a variety of people. Learn to trust your instincts during a reading. The more feedback you receive and practice you have, the more confident you'll become. I have spoken to a reader who never studied or read any information about tarot and preferred clients who knew nothing of card meanings so she could say whatever she felt. I have never known readers who are successful and have a thriving practice who read this way.

### 5) To receive a specific answer a specific question is beneficial

Sometimes clients have a difficult time articulating their true wants or needs and a rambling five-part question may subsequently appear. Make sure you distill the query down to its salient points and try repeating to clarify the clients needs. For example, if someone wants to know if there is a new, bigger, better job on the horizon. Perhaps asking about blocks in the current job, or what they can do to achieve happiness in their career, even, what type of career they should pursue may be helpful. Help your client with precise questions because there will always be a better job out there on the horizon for someone.

### 6) Offer more than one card layout when you read

I realize that spontaneity for some readers is nerve wracking. Many readers are creatures of habit, myself included, and hate to deviate from their own perceived strengths and patterns, but remaining open to the client as needs shift from one person to another and changing the card layout accordingly should not send a seasoned professional into paroxysms of anxiety. Keep it fresh; we are all learning from each client as we go regardless of how many years of reading experience we have.

### 7) Location

Having clients in your home can be risky unless you have someone else around or know the client. Having read early on in my career in some sketchy parts of town, it can feel just as unsafe to read in public with walk-in clients. Your neighborhood is just as much a factor as whether it is your home or a busy area of the city. Also, paying rent for a professional space or reading within an establishment in which someone takes a percentage can also be a factor financially. If you have a solid client base and they are referring others to you that are trustworthy, or have someone else with you, reading from home can be a safe and lucrative practice. Check your neighborhood zoning by-laws if you are concerned with commercial enterprises in a residential area.

### 8) Dealing with 'difficult' clients.

There is nothing you can do about this happening on occasion. Sometimes a client is resistant to the truth because they don't wish to acknowledge it. Stay calm and confident in your abilities and exercise your diplomacy. I have found that patience and reiterating information or rephrasing a question

often resolves this issue.

Also, you may be having a bad day. Take a deep breath and realize that you will find the answers in the reading even if a point or two seem incorrect. Repeating preparation rituals before a reading is helpful by informing your mind, body and spirit that it's time to tap into your card reading capabilities.

I light candles, have aromatherapy in the space, and ask all of the energies that exist within and without for information to come to me so that I can assist the client for their highest good. It hasn't failed yet.



I have had two clients who remained silent and didn't ask a single question throughout a 60-minute reading. I was a little thrown but enjoy a good challenge, and, free from interruption, I was able to tell these people exactly what I saw unfolding on their respective paths. When the sessions were over, both smiled and essentially said the same thing. "You were so accurate, at times it was tough, but it was a relief and exactly what I needed to hear. Thank you."

I enjoy a good challenge, however, if this sounds too hellish for you, make sure you inform your clients ahead of time that they need to prepare questions in advance of the session.

I don't often receive clients with serious mental health challenges beyond the everyday urban anxieties of finance, relationship or career questions, however, when I began reading professionally, I spent more than a few walk-in sessions suggesting psychiatric help, as well as many other professionals such as accountants, relationship experts, real estate agents, and lawyers. Often people feel safe expressing themselves to someone they feel will be less judgmental.

One particularly tough reading was with a woman who was clinically diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia; however, she informed me that she had reduced her own medication due to poisoning fears and was experiencing difficulties. We spent a great deal of time together and while I suggested a visit immediately to a therapist or psychiatric professional,

she insisted that tarot was the only way for her to receive advice that had not been tampered with. She did leave relaxed and less suspicious, her anxiety reduced, but I did have some training with mental health concerns while employed at a community centre, and, I don't suggest you read for anyone whose condition you feel you may inadvertently exacerbate. I think many experienced readers would agree that simply refusing to read while suggesting professional help is preferable in many circumstances. Don't be afraid to say no.

Arrogant or disagreeable clients can be a challenge. Sometimes people give readings as gifts to unappreciative recipients; some do it on a lark, others to prove tarot is nonsense. Whatever the motivation for these types, I quickly learned how to grow nerves of steel (or at least appear that I had), smile, and read to the best of my ability despite the negativity. I am proud to say that every one of them left with a slightly different point of view than when they arrived. Their defenses dropped once I discussed topics that they thought were invisible. Don't let arrogance shake you, sometimes clients display bravado because they are new to tarot, had bad previous experiences or are simply nervous about what they might hear.

Other considerations you may have if you plan to read professionally include.

Will you read for people who are using substances?

I don't read for people who are intoxicated. For those of you who label your readings as entertainment, you may not feel this way. Be forewarned, though lucrative, large parties can be quite a handful

with a group of party animals and not always pleasant.

How many hours can you read without feeling exhausted?

Know your limits, it is better to deliver quality over quantity any day. A lot of energy goes into a reading, rest, rehydrate, and get some air.

Do you use decks with appropriate symbolism?

Keep in mind we all have different points of view and some clients find certain tarot imagery offensive due to violence,



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symbolism, or for some, nudity.

Do you read in your home?

If so, make sure you are safe. If your clients are word-of-mouth referrals from current, trusted clients, that is much different than accepting walk-ins.

Do you read when feeling ill?

That's a personal choice but please be considerate. We all need to make a living, but touching cards and handling them may make my clients ill.

Will you read for yourself or people you know well?

Some people do others refuse because they hate to deliver messages that may appear biased, are biased or in case bad news needs to be delivered. If you find it too difficult to read for yourself or those close to you, don't. Seek outside readers.

Do you read for children?

If so, do you use a children's deck or age-appropriate imagery?

I do not read for children because I feel they are too young to understand the deeper spiritual messages I deliver and their concerns do not generally include health, finances, career aspirations or romance.

As an artist I love creating my own oracle card art and am often captivated by the imagery I've seen, but cards, no matter how beautiful, are only as good as their reader. I wish you success in implementing any of these or your own suggestions so that you may increase your confidence as well as your abilities, enjoy the profession more fully, and take your card reading to the next level.

© Monica Bodirsky

*Oracle Lenormand - Coffin card, David Palladini's Aquarian Tarot - Death card, Ellen Dugan's Witches Tarot - Death card and the Lucky Lenormand Coffin card.*

*Photo credit Monica Bodirsky*

# PSYCARDS

## THE NEVER CARD

by Catt Foy

The Psycards deck of forty cards contains a unique feature—the four direction cards—consisting of “Yes,” “No,” “Now,” and “Never.” These cards act primarily as signals to the potential answer for yes/no questions. But their presence in a reading can carry shades of interpretation that will contribute to the overall tenor of the reading in which they appear.

In this issue’s column we will look at the potential meanings for the “Never” card.

In the Never card, we see a Raven, cawing, in a winter landscape. If in answer to a yes-or-no question, this card does not bode well for the outcome. We are reminded of the Edgar Allen Poe poem, “The Raven” where the raven says “nevermore!”

This indicates a time of scarcity, of lack of resources. Now is the time to conserve resources and energy, not expend them or take chances. Seeds cannot take hold in frozen soil. The “climate” is not conducive to growth at this time. It can also indicate that we are trying to get something out of a situation or relationship that has “died”—lived past its usefulness. Trying to get back with your ex or restart a dead business are usually destined to failure.

This card can indicate that the questioner has chosen the wrong thing on which to pin his or her hopes. Find something else to pursue or wait until the spring thaw!

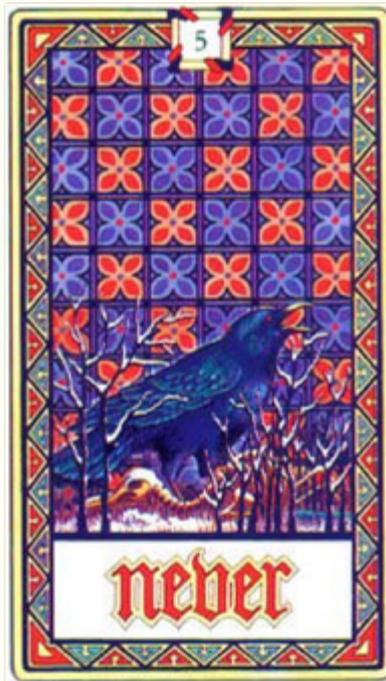
There is no need to allow this card to create depression. The wise person understands that there is a time for everything, and is patient enough to wait, or wise enough to let go.

Reversed, I have often seen this card represent the people around the questioner—people who are negative or

discouraging in some way. These are the folks who say, “It’s not possible” or “It’ll never happen.” For them, believing something is impossible makes it so. If the other cards are of a positive or encouraging nature, I counsel my clients to ignore the nay-sayers and follow their hearts and their dreams. If the other cards indicate a time for restraint, then client should take the critics to heart.

Nick Hobson, the developer of the Psycards deck, reminds us, “The Never Card seeks to rid you of illusions. It tells us it is psychologically damaging to cling to a dead dream. There are habits and relationships in our lives which are destitute and we need to break away...”

That “dead” relationship could represent drug or alcohol abuse, something that does not “grow corn” for you, as the Native American saying goes. What is it that you are putting your energy into that is no longer worth it? Who are the nay-sayers around you? Is what they are saying a true warning, or just an alarmist point of view that says something is impossible? Upright or reversed, this card is a message to pause and think—consider your position and the things you are putting your hopes and energy into and make sure they are worth your time and effort.



© Catt Foy



# YOUR TAROT YOUR WAY

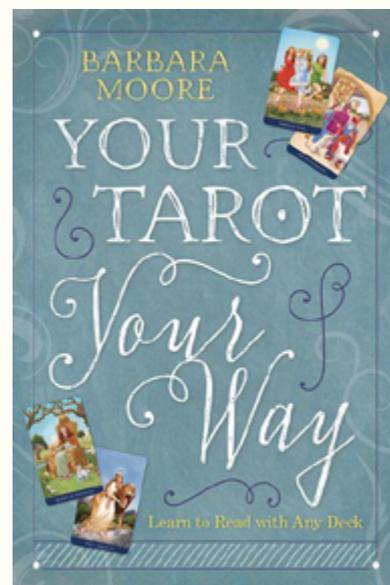
by Barbara Moore

At the Minnesota State Fair, there are lots and lots different categories for entering your best efforts in the arts, baking, knitting, crop art, and more. In each category, there are many different lots, or subcategories, you can enter. In the baking category, there is one that I always find interesting. Each year, they pick a different recipe—in 2015 it was Snickerdoodles—and each entrant bakes the cookies using the exact same recipe.

Even though they all supposedly used the same recipe, the results are all different. I'm sure there are lots of reasons: quality or specific types of ingredients, relative humidity, technique, tools, the type of oven used, and timing. Even if they controlled for all of that, I think the cookies would still come out differently because each baker adds something of him or herself to the mix, something that is uniquely themselves.

Besides making me want to eat many cookies, looking at them reminded me a lot of tarot readings. In some groups or on Facebook, sometimes people will do a reading for themselves and ask the group for input. I always wonder about the usefulness of that, because I think that you can put the same, say, three cards in front of a dozen readers and even using the same question and positional meanings, you will get different conclusions. The reason goes deeper than tarot education and experience. Underneath all of that are our personal beliefs about what tarot is, how it works, where the answers come from, the role of the reader, etc.

These are all questions (and there are even more) that I have my students answer before we even get into “what the cards mean.” Because what the cards mean depends on your core beliefs about how the world works. Good bakers understand that baking is more than measuring ingredients and following directions. Just like a good artist doesn't simply make a painting that looks like a photograph; they make a painting that expresses a core truth that lies in their heart or mind or soul. There is an alchemy that happens in the creation, an alchemy that starts from within.



In fact, the alchemy starts from within and affects the reading before it even begins. It will influence what kind of querents you read for, how you handle their questions (including type, wording, and approach to the reading), how you interpret the cards, and how you present the information (as well as how, if at all, you “edit” the information you see in the cards).

These are all things that new readers want to know the “rules” for. But unless the rules come from their core, it's not really their most authentic reading.

Many readers tap into that core accidentally, because they are trying to access their intuition or something they think of as something “more.” Cultivating a firm understanding of your beliefs will help you tap into that place of alchemical wonder more easily

and more consciously, and, in the long run, it will help them become a better reader.

And this is, precisely, why I wrote *Your Tarot Your Way*. This book is available by itself under that title. It is also available packaged as a kit, along with the Llewellyn's *Classic Tarot*. The kit is called *Tarot Made Easy*. Llewellyn approached me, saying they wanted another beginner level kit, but did I have any ideas for presenting either new tarot information or classic information in a new way. The timing couldn't have been better, because it was time for all of these ideas to culminate and find expression in a book.

*...what the cards mean depends on your core beliefs about how the world works. Good bakers understand that baking is more than measuring ingredients and following directions.*

How is this book different? It starts at what I think should be the beginning: asking you to explore, understand, and define your belief system. Many books for beginnings include text addressing the question: How does tarot work? Well, I can tell you how I think it works, but what difference does that make, unless you and I share the same set of belief system or spiritual views? And maybe you don't even think tarot is spiritual but rather psychological. More importantly to YOUR development as a reader is: how do YOU think tarot works? Likewise for any of the commonly asked questions about tarot: can tarot predict the future (well, do you believe the future is set in stone and can be predicted?), can you read about other people, do the cards predict death?

Some of the important foundational questions have to do with ideas and beliefs. Then these ideas and beliefs shape and influence your practice. New readers often ask: should the querent shuffle the cards? The answer depends entirely on your answer to "how does the tarot work."

The first part of the book explores these questions and guides the reader in formulating their own answers. This foundation is essential but, sadly, usually skipped entirely when people first pick up tarot. While it is a bit of work to figure out what you think, it does, in the long run, make reading tarot much easier, because your practice will be built on a solid foundation and come from your core essential beliefs, and therefore will feel more authentic and natural.

After you've got yourself sorted, we turn to the cards. The latter part of the book includes, as is usual, interpretations for each card. But before that, you are guided through an exploration of the structure and symbols of tarot. There are no set-in-stone, true forever and ever, meanings to the symbols in tarot. They evolve, they change, they are alive (this is one reason tarot fascinates us for so long...it is a living experience). Whatever traditional interpretations you incorporate into your practice, they will feel staid and dull unless you also fold in your own soul's response to the symbols presented.

These two practices—being clear on your beliefs and being clear on your symbolic associations—will do more than almost anything else to make the tarot feel alive and organic in your hands. If you are looking for that "something extra" in your readings, it's not somewhere "out there." It's within you. This book will help you find it.

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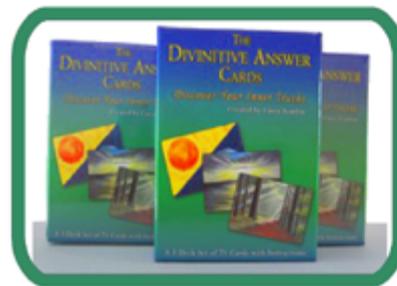
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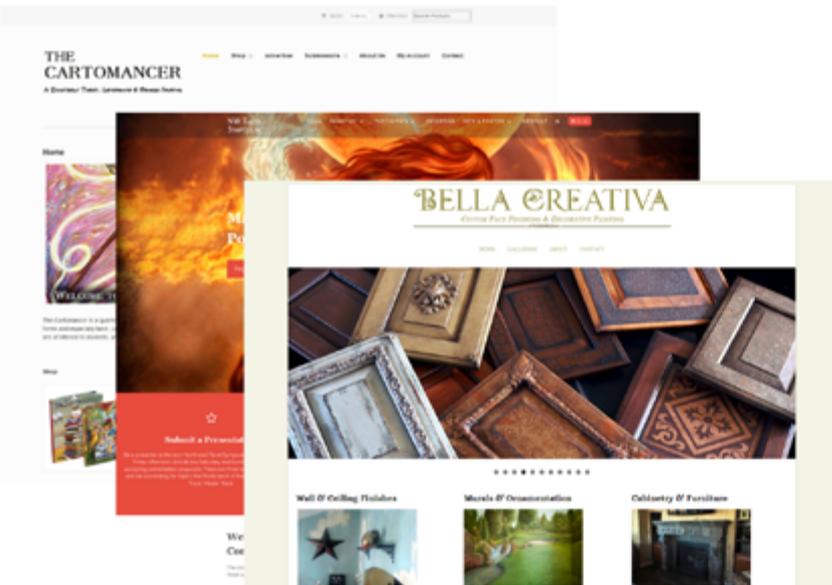
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# INTERVIEW WITH JULIA HESSE OF THE *LIVING TAROT ORACLE*™

by Katrina Wynne, M.A. & Julia Hesse

Julia Hesse and I lighted upon each other while in Portland, Oregon, the beginning of November 2016, as we were each teaching and reading at New Renaissance Bookshop. I seized the opportunity to attend her “Living the Tarot” workshop. Our mutual friend, Carrie Paris, had been raving for years about Hesse and her sacred interactive theater event, the *Living Tarot Oracle*™ so I was eager to make this personal connection. Having produced my unique experiential workshop called Tarot Alive™, currently in its 21st year, I was so excited to see this embodiment style of relating to the wisdom of the Tarot expand into a new form. What follows is an interview and conversation we wish to share with you as we explore the transformative potential of our favorite oracle, Tarot.

Katrina: Hi Julia...finally, we have an opportunity to talk. I know there are many people curious about the *Living Tarot Oracle*. How do you describe this unique theatrical event?

Julia: The *Living Tarot Oracle*(LTO) is a transformative experience in two parts: first part is a training program and the second part is a sacred, interactive theater event where audience members receive readings from living tarot cards.

Participants in the training program begin their transformative process by selecting (or being selected by) a major arcana Tarot card and connecting with the archetypal energy that card represents by learning techniques of embodiment, becoming the Oracle. The culmination of the

training is the interactive theater event where the team opens its doors to the public. Each visitor receives a reading from 1-3 living tarot cards of their choosing.

The resonance and magic that is created in the training process carries over into the event, so when the public appears, they are entering a truly magical realm, while energetically already benefitting from the transformational energy preceding their readings.

Katrina: Such a dynamic happening! I know you have been producing the LTO for about five years. How did this grand production come into being?

Julia: The LTO grew, organically, as a collaboration between myself and my friend, Tami Graham, in our little cowboy town of Mancos, Colorado (CO). We each had separate experiences that inspired the LTO.

One birthday I had a week alone without my husband, so I took the opportunity to set up a ritual space with my annual card reading spread out on the floor. Through the process of cultivating my ritual the cards came to life for me as I walked through the spread as if in a labyrinth. Each card spoke to me.

I wondered if I could teach a way for other people to receive the benefit of this live readings, so I gathered groups of women and began to develop this process. It was very profound and exciting. Tami came to one of those circles around the same time that she was in a local circus theater production where she was a Tarot reader. In the circus theater they performed the Tarot readings she gave.

Tami, as a local event promoter, approached me with the idea of making this its own production...and the rest is history!

What amazed us after years of producing the training and events in Mancos and Durango, CO, was how profound the experience was for the participants, oracles and public clients alike. They experienced life-changing insights and synchronicities that positively influenced their lives.

Katrina: You had me at “Transformative experience.” How does the LTO inspire these life-changing opportunities and can you share a story that exemplifies this potential?



Julia: I'm so glad you asked these questions as I feel that the word "transformation" is lightly used and thrown about so much that it loses the impact of it's meaning.

Using the definition of transform as the act of changing from one state to another, the LTO cultivates inner and outer transformation in both the cast and the public who enter the event. The cast goes through their own change through the process of learning how to get out of their own way in order to embody an oracular archetype.

One alumni shared with me how being an Oracle for several years helped her to find her voice just as she was being a voice for her card. She gained courage to speak her truth in daily situations and not feel that she had to filter her conversations to make them acceptable. One Seeker who went through the LTO shared with me many months later how her experience receiving a reading from living cards affected her so deeply she was able to lose weight and keep it off, having addressed the underlying cause of her weight gain.

Katrina: These are the kinds of stories I get so excited about...people finding their true selves and shedding the fears and shadowy elements that hold them back from living their most wonderful lives.

Can you share the philosophy behind your work with the LTO with The Cartomancer Magazine readers?

Julia: My experience, and I guess it would be my philosophy too, is that Tarot is a living wisdom system. It's alive because it's dynamic and responsive to the moment. The cards describe very human experiences with which we can all relate. The major arcana cards represent archetypes that exist in each one of us. The LTO is an opportunity to both experience Tarot as this living dynamic as well as to activate the major arcana archetypes latent in us. This activation brings the archetypes into our consciousness from our subconscious, or in other terms, out from the shadow into the light. The more we are aware of the archetypes active in our lives, the more choices we have in our responses and focus in our lives.

Katrina: Tarot truly is a living oracle in itself and the LTO is a dynamic way to leap into this enlivenment.

Julia, where next...how can people get involved with this unique program?

Julia: After five years of producing and watching the LTO evolve in Durango, CO, I have spent the last year developing a plan to offer the training and event itself in cities around the world! The LTO website, [www.livingtarotoracle.com](http://www.livingtarotoracle.com), has all the information on how to get involved. If people are interested in bringing it to their community they can contact

me and I can walk them through the process of setting up a small production team that can coordinate the training and event.

In the meantime, I am planning a series of weekend immersive oracular experiences for next year and when we get a critical mass of people trained we'll put a LTO on in some lucky city. People can sign up for the *Living Tarot Oracle* newsletter and get notices of when and where something is happening.

I will be attending and teaching at the Northwest Tarot Symposium (NWTS) in Portland, Oregon, on March 3-5, 2017. They have an incredible line up of teachers from around the world and I'm honored to be presenting with them. Participants in my Sunday session will go through a few of the physical training exercises and games, followed by a personal opportunity to experience being an Oracle themselves. It's quite fun and enlivening!

Katrina: It really is a potentially transformative and empowering experience. I enjoyed the workshop you brought to New Renaissance Bookshop in Portland, Oregon last November. We are so fortunate to have you join us at NWTS this year. See you there!!

© Katrina Wynne & Julia Hesse

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*JULIA HESSE has been studying and living Tarot for 20 years, and offers private sessions and Tarot classes. She co-created the Living Tarot Oracle with her friend, Tami, and continues to enrich the lives of many Seekers and developing Oracles with these transformative trainings and events.*

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# WHEN TAROT TURNED ESOTERIC

by Sherryl E. Smith

During the run-up to the French Revolution in the 1770s and 1780s, the Parisian air was filled with talk of scientific marvels, Mesmerist water tubs, secret societies, and an outbreak of Egyptomania. This is also the time when tarot was transformed from a card game to an illustrated book of wisdom. Considering how much pseudo-science was in the air, it didn't seem at all strange that ancient Egyptian magi could speak Hebrew and inscribe their timeless wisdom on 78 gold tablets under the pyramids.

Everyone was crazy about science. The newspapers were full of stories about the latest crackpot inventions, reports of monsters discovered in South American jungles, and fantastic stories about the little creatures you could see under microscopes. Everyone knew Benjamin Franklin, that charming American diplomat, who proved that lightning and electricity are the same thing.

Any evening you could attend a demonstration by an amateur scientist that featured fizzing chemicals, mechanical marvels and electric sparks. On weekends you could join thousands of people on the outskirts of Paris to watch a hot air balloon ascend to the heavens. You would marvel along with the crowd at how man could rise high enough to brush shoulders with the gods using the power of those newly discovered invisible gases.

If you were metaphysically minded, you could get a tarot or astrology reading and purchase a love spell from the magician Etteilla. A special few could join Cagliostro's Egyptian style Masonic Lodge, the Temple of Isis.

The hottest ticket in Paris was a healing session with Anton Mesmer. In a purple chamber decked with astrological symbols, you joined hands with several other people around a contraption involving a large tub full of water and iron filings, ropes and iron rods. You were guaranteed to at least feel a



tingle since the treatment was delivered with a mild electric current.

By the end of this period, science, mesmerism, alchemy, and astrology were uncritically mixed together in one exciting stew.

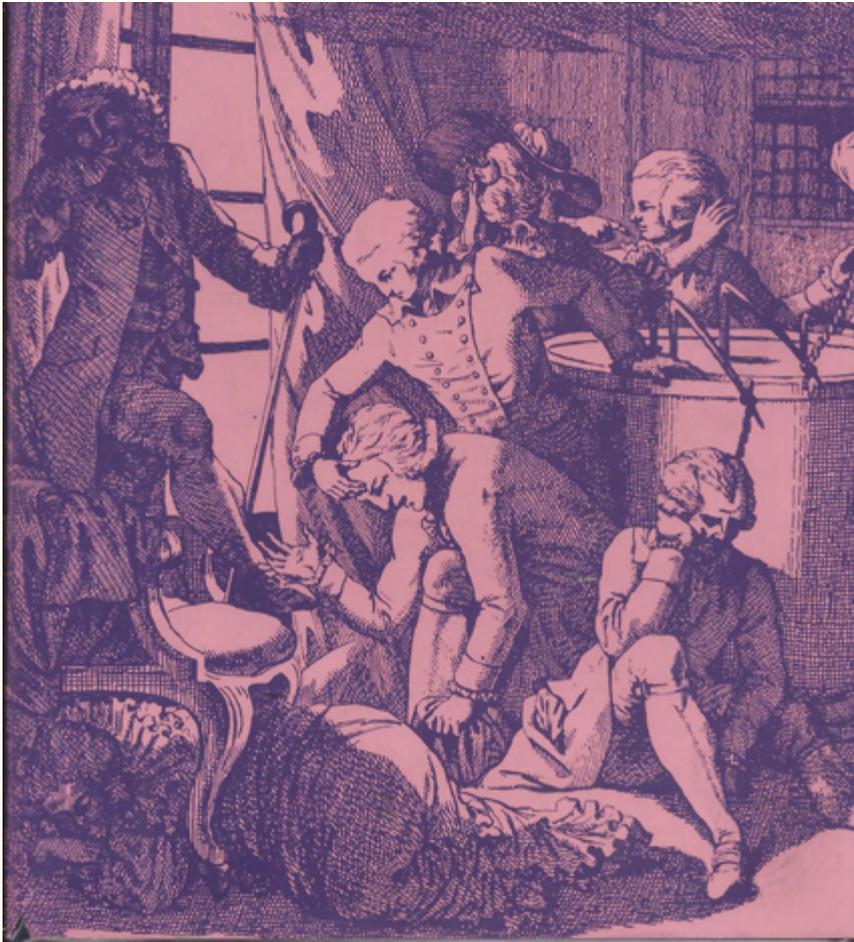
But a layer of anxiety lurked beneath the sense of wonder at how the human mind could harness technology and science to control nature. The world was changing too fast. Urbanism and technology were sweeping away the old connection to the land and to a slower pace of life. This translated into romanticizing a simpler more primeval time when humanity lived in tune with nature's cycles. People longed to find a universal substance, like Mesmer's magnetic fluid, that could explain everything from the motion of the planets to the mutual attraction of lovers, as well as psychic and spiritual phenomena in the unseen world.

A Swiss ex-clergyman, Antoine Court de Gebelin, encapsulated all these trends in his life and work. Then he stirred tarot into the mix, drastically transforming it. Historians often divide tarot history into pre- and post-de Gebelin, although his theories were probably not unique to him.

De Gebelin was one of the band amateur scientists and



philosophers who took to the podium to lecture on the latest scientific wonders. His masterwork was a multi-volume tome called *Le Monde Primitif*. He shared the common belief that there was once an original human society whose language, customs and religion formed the bedrock of all subsequent civilizations. If one could only contact that civilization, one would be in possession of the true, primal, original wisdom of the human race. De Gebelin was obsessed with analyzing languages, especially Hebrew, in order to peel away their differences and reveal humanity's original primal language, which would teach us much about that civilization. Like



many people of the time, de Gebelin believed that Hebrew was closest to the primal language, and ancient Egypt was the first civilization and the source of humanity's greatest wisdom.

De Gebelin's unique contribution was publishing for the first time the idea that tarot was part of this primal civilization and that Egyptian magi compiled their wisdom into 78 pictures. He claimed he had an epiphany while watching some ladies play the game of Tarot in a Parisian drawing room. It suddenly struck him that the images were actually Egyptian hieroglyphics and the cards contain the essence of

ancient wisdom disguised as a vulgar game. Actually, this idea had probably been floating around various Rosicrucian and occult lodges for at least a couple of decades.

Volume 8 of *Le Monde Primitif* has a section on tarot that expands these ideas. It describes the original Egyptian tarot images before they were adulterated by medieval Christianity, and links tarot and the Hebrew alphabet for the first time in print. This volume also contains an essay on tarot by the Comte de Mellet which gives specifics about how the ancient Egyptians used tarot for divination. These essays have been translated into English for the first time by Evelyne Hall (see the reference below).

The essays were filled with absurd, unfounded statements of fact bolstered by far-fetched connections. But this was no different from what passed for science in newspapers and popular lectures. These were not fringe ideas. De Gebelin was a respected intellectual proclaiming concepts that were hotly discussed at the time.

If you were a subscriber to *Le Monde Primitif*, you would have received a letter from De Gebelin in 1783 telling you how mesmerism had restored his ruined health. He lived in the same building as Mesmer and served as one of his most prominent spokesmen. Tragically, this association proved to be his undoing. Something went terribly wrong during a Mesmerist healing session and he was electrocuted in a tub in 1784.

At the time of this mishap, Etteilla was just hitting his stride. He had a thriving business doing readings and teaching classes while making the rounds of all the occult lodges in town. He wrote books on divination with playing cards and tarot, established his Society of the Interpreters of the *Book of Thoth*, and designed the first deck to

illustrate Hermetic teachings.

This world crashed to an end in 1791. By this date nearly everyone involved with progressive metaphysical thought was either dead or had left town; and the French Revolution destroyed life as it had been. Etteilla's students kept his teaching alive for a few more decades. But esoteric tarot went virtually dormant until the mid-1800s when Eliphas Levi revived the grand synthesis of esoteric traditions, wedded tarot to Kabbalah, and laid the groundwork for a later generation of occultists like Oswald Wirth and Papus. Levi's teachings were the foundation of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which introduced ceremonial magic,



tarot and Kabbalah to the English-speaking world.

By the early 19th century tarot had faded away as a popular card game, and the deck was not available in most regions of France. It was French occultists who gave tarot new life, and ultimately preserved it by converting it into a book of ancient wisdom.

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#### ILLUSTRATIONS

Trump 15 from the Grand Etteilla Egyptian Gypsies Tarot, published by Grimaud.

Portrait of Antoine Court de Gebelin, from Decker, et al.

A Mesmerist Session, from Darnton.

Four of De Gebelin's major arcana from *Le Monde Primitif* showing the "corrected" Hanged Man signifying the virtue Prudence, from Hall.

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# MAKING YOUR OWN TAROT IMAGES WITH GELATIN MONOPRINTING

by Eric K. Lerner

Tarot's history and that of printmaking are intricately linked. Playing cards were introduced into Europe in the late 14th century around the same time Gutenberg introduced the printing press. The earliest Marseilles-style decks were reproduced from woodcuts. Some authors have argued that early printmakers were unaware of the symbolic implications of tarots. I disagree. Harold Bayley's 1912 study *The Lost Language of Symbolism* (available in reissue from Dover Publications) explores paper watermarks and printers' chopmarks. Any tarot enthusiast perusing that exhaustive study will recognize many of these symbols are incorporated into both historic and modern tarots. As members of professional guilds, it seems likely that printers would have been at least acquainted what these symbols meant. In many cases they themselves created them.

As a traditional printmaker, I want to keep the tradition of printmaking and tarot alive. For many the prospect of hand-printing one's own tarots seems daunting. To practice traditional printmaking one needs education and access to a printmaking studio with expensive equipment, inks and chemicals. However, there are many printmaking techniques that one can do at home with inexpensive supplies and no printmaking proficiency.

I want to introduce you to gelatin monotyping. It is termed monotyping because each print will be slightly different. With a little planning you can produce long print runs. In this article, I will explain some basic techniques, and examine how I used this technique to produce editions for *The Hanged*

Man and the Devil.

First, let's start with your printmaking support, the gelatin plate. You have two options: buy a synthetic one such as a Gelli Arts Gel Printing Plate, or make one yourself.

Each has advantages. A synthetic plate has a long life, is easily portable, and requires no prep time. They come in a variety of sizes and cost between 12 and 65 dollars. Homemade plates can be any size you wish and can be cut to odd shapes. They record fine organic details such as vein patterns in leaves or insect wings better than their synthetic counterpart. They can break during use, and have a life of roughly 4 to 7 days and

must be refrigerated between uses.

To make one, all you need is unflavored gelatin, a tray, pie-tin or deep cookie sheet and water. Mix the gelatin with a small amount of cold water. The amount should be at a ratio of double the amount of gelatin to water recommended. For instance, if instructions indicate one packet to one cup of water, use two packets per one cup.

Determine the amount of water you will need by filling your tray so that the water is roughly one half inch high. Measure the amount. Once you have mixed the gelatin and water, add it to the rest of the water in a pot, stir gently and heat until it just starts to boil. Remove from heat. Rest for a minute and add the mix to the tray. Refrigerate until the gelatin is firm and you are ready to start printing. (Most people remove the plate from the tray, but this is only necessary if it is too awkward to work around the tray's constraint.)



*Material for gelatin printing, including the printing plate, brayer and objects for impression.*



*Objects laid out on an inked plate.*

Additionally, you will need:

- Textural objects such as textured papers, fabric, meshes, plants, feathers etc. to make your impressions.
- A waterbased paint or ink (In both examples I used inexpensive craft paints that you can pick up in most craft stores. They work fine. As your practice expands, you may wish to use professional grade acrylic paints

and inks. The only reason for doing so initially is for metallic colors and solid blacks. Less expensive ones simply do not print in this media very clearly.)

- Paper. For practice standard typing or construction paper will suffice. However, if you intend to exhibit or sell your work, please use an archival grade paper. You will find different papers give unique results. Experiment.



*Inked objects to be impressed on the plate. Note the red ink impression already present.*

- A brayer, some foam sponges, some brushes, and perhaps a barren.
- A spray bottle filled with water and some paper towels.

Set up your working area:

1. Position your gelatin support. I like to place a drawing under it for positioning objects. If your printing paper is bigger than a plate also put a sheet of newsprint under the plate with four cross-hair registration marks.
2. Organize objects you will imprint.
3. Set up your printing inks/paints. An advantage of this technique is that it is easy to experiment with different colors on the different layers on the print. One rule is that you do not want to mix complimentary colors on the same layer as they will mix and give you a muddy brown.
4. Have a water spritzer, your brayer and paper towels handy.

To Print:

1. Place a small amount of paint on the plate. I usually dab a couple drops of retarder on the plate and spread it across the surface with a damp paper towel first.
2. Brayer your paints (you may use more than one) across the surface until you have a translucent film. Using too much paint gives



you a muddy image and over saturates your paper.

3. Place your objects on the plate and gently impress them. You have the option to leave flat objects such as textured papers, leaves or netting on the plate when printing. (You can remove the object and then make a second impression or print.) You may use a paper stencil to block out areas from printing.
4. Remove unwanted objects and place the paper on the plate. Smooth it with your hand or barren. When all of the paper is in contact with the plate and pull your impression.
5. Spray water on the plate and wipe off excess paint/ink with a paper towel and get ready for your next impression.

For the Hanged Man I pulled the print with a single



*The linocut used for the print.*

impression. I inked the plate (homemade gelatin) and placed plants across it. I removed the plants and impressed an old lino block of the hanged man figure inked with a dark gold block printing ink. The gelatin plate broke after the first impression. The break occurred at precisely the correct position for the pole from which the figure is suspended, so I joined the two pieces of the broken matrix together, and the edges of the lino block left just the right impression for the two supports. The

process went very quickly, and I was able to pull more than twenty-five prints.

With The Devil, the printing process was more complex. Each finished print took between four and seven impressions. I used a 5x7 Gelli plate and cut all the paper to the size of the plate. I started with background textures, using fabric

netting, corrugated cardboard, bird feathers and a pinecone. I generally printed these using warm colors, orange and flesh tones. I did maybe five with cool colors. I wished that I had used a gelatin plate for the bird feathers because I could have achieved better detailing. Next, I began adding more objects. I inked each and impressed it on the plate that had been prepped with retarder. I did as many as three at once. The objects included a kitchen sponge, a balled stocking, a heavily threaded paper cut in a circle, and a dried

rose. (I also tried a few where I inked the plate first and did straight impressions.) By keeping cool and warm colors on separate layers I was able to achieve translucent overlays of color.

I next cut a lino block to add abstracted figurative details. (It is not necessary to add such an image layer. I chose linocut because I can execute one quickly and assuredly. You can simply draw a figure with a hot glue gun on a firm piece of cardboard and ink it, use a pre-cut rubber stamp or paint directly on your gelatin plate to add a figurative image.) I inked it lightly and impressed it on the plate.

The prolonged process of working on The Devil resulted in significant observations about the card's nature.

1. In preparing the image, I chose Eliphas Levi's Baphomet drawing collaged with elements from Grunewald's crucifixion image as inspiration. In reflecting on Levi's image, I was drawn to the sphere and cube supporting the figure. I realized there is no way that circle is proportionally squared by the cube, and the The Devil Card itself cannot square a circle.

2. When choosing a pinecone to mimic the reptilian scaling patten of the Devil's torso, I realized the pinecone's sap yielding property mimicked the Devil's brutish fertility.

3. When carving the lino block, I finished 8 of the lines with downward pointing arrowheads. Eight is the number of the Justice card. I realized that The Devil might represent a sense of carnal justice emanating from the very bowels of the earth. The Devil is definitely "down there." Justice is more "up there."

4. I realized too that the Devil can be very hard to see and that was integrated into the highly distressed composition of the entire image. I became involved in a process in which different layers overwhelmed others never yielding a simple clear image. Hopefully overlaid textures and colors hint at shapes upon prolonged examination and suggest divinatory meanings.

In total, I yielded twenty viable prints before adding the



5. *In gelatin printing, you can quickly produce many variations on a theme.*

linoblock layer. I set five aside because I could see taking them in another direction. For now I'm going to set aside my fifteen prints and consider if I want to do more to them. Because gelatin prints are relatively quick to produce, even the ones that don't work are valuable for collage pieces, book markers, book end papers, etc. And they can all be printed on again or enhanced with collage bits, pen and ink drawing or painting.

Making your own tarot cards, provides rewarding opportunities to meditate on the meaning of the cards. The fugitive nature of gelatin monotyping can achieve unexpected results. When doing personal work, I tend to work in a more abstract expressionist vein. When using gelatin printing, I welcome creating more feral and less well defined images. But this is your personal work, so be true to your own aesthetics. It's certainly possible to use this technique to produce

clear visuals, and YouTube has many how-to videos to assist you. I hope you consider trying it. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at [eric\\_k\\_lerner@hotmail.com](mailto:eric_k_lerner@hotmail.com).

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# INTERVIEW WITH FABIO LISTRANI, CREATOR OF NIGHT SUN TAROT

by Robert L. Scott

*F*abio Listrani is the creator of *Night Sun Tarot* both artistically/design and the text of instructions.

1: What is your background knowledge in Tarot prior to creating the *Night Sun Tarot*? Have you read tarot, are you a regular tarot reader?

I'm not only are a regular tarot reader but they entered in my life since an early age, probably because of my Italian heritage. Over the years I have been interested in esotericism and psychology and I deepened the way of Tarot.

So, when I started working as an illustrator the idea to create a real tarot deck (not a collection of illustrations) with its own system was always at the center of my thoughts.

2: Beyond the little white book that comes with the cards, and what most tarot readers already know of tarot do you have any further suggestions for working with the *Night Sun Tarot*?

I would definitely recommend the free and constructive approach of Jodorowsky, which is why I decided to give a verse to the back of the cards.

I never found it very useful to force a negative reading, but instead bring out the advice of the card to resolve the negative situation of the consulting.

The cards of the Night Sun have also some "progressive" meaning, so I recommend to observe also them in this direction. For example, if you look at the egg of The High Priestess, you'll find it hatched on the Empress skirt and fully formed on the Emperor's arm. Or again, if you look for

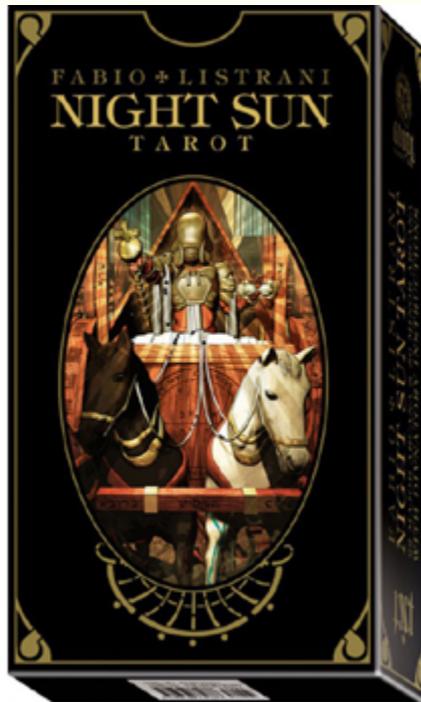
example the hat/mask of the fool, you can find it in a binding situation in the devil's card and finally freed (the chains are broken) on the card of the sun.

Specifically, for each card instead, it would be too long explaining the whole deck, so let's say that in general there are disparate references to different cultures and religions in accordance with the meaning of the cards (such as the I-Ching on The Wheel of Fortune or the Nataraja on The World) and you can study in deep on different levels according with your preparation or necessity.

Each card has in the graphics its astrological, esoteric or Kabbalistic significance, while in the illustrations, in accordance with the energy of the card, you can find from the sacred geometries to the Solomon's seals.

3: What is your art training and background?

As I said before having Italian origins (I come from Rome), my background was mainly classic with a particular interest in sculpture and over the years, I started to be interested in various forms of arts, as well as the illustration.



My artistic training it's totally self-taught and my education was purely scientific, culminated with a degree in a university oriented towards math. Something must have gone wrong heheh.

4: Other than your own tarot card decks, what tarot card decks do you like?

I am particularly interested in old decks for their appearance more iconic and "direct", so my favorites tarot deck are unavoidably the *Marseilles* in the first place, Minchiate and Etteilla.

Looking to more (relatively) modern decks instead I particularly love *The Hermetic Tarot* from the

Golden Dawn, the *Thoth* of Aleister Crowley and recently I discovered the beautiful *The Fountain Tarot*.

5: What books or decks do you consider influence you for tarot?

Two books that speak specifically of tarot cards are very important to me, the first is *The Way of Tarot* by Alejandro Jodorowsky and Marianne Costa, the second is *The Secret Language of Tarot* by Laura Tuan. The first one has a very

original and positive approach while the second absolutely traditional.

Moreover, there are two books that instead does not expressly talk about Tarot, but which are equally important to me and they are the “Mystical Qabalah” of Dion Fortune and “Magick” of Aleister Crowley.

6: What artists influenced you as an artist? What inspires you?

The artists I admire are really a lot and I could write a long and boring list, from classics such as Bernini that I love, to visionaries like Alex Grey, through illustrators and comic artist like Katsuya Terada or Moebius. In general, however the inspiration comes from more sources, I am an omnivorous devourer of art, movies, music and literature.

7: How would you describe your creative or creation process?

I must make two distinctions according if this process is for a customer or for my personal work or project. For my personal work it's a free process, a direct flow from my head to the first sketches on paper, until the final result. A real magic(k)al act.

Instead, If the work is for a customer the creative process becomes slightly more methodical introducing some steps such as a first collection of material/information, a phase of incubation, find some solutions, preparation of some test, preview etc.

A little less poetic but certainly efficient.

8: What medium, tools do / did you use to create the Night Sun?

Examples would be software, hardware, paint, brushes, photos...

I work for several years completely digitally merging 3D modeling programs like Zbrush to digital painting through graphics tablet, so the Night Sun it's a fusion of different digital techniques with a base of 3d sculpture. The initial phase however is totally traditional, simple sketches on paper with pencil or brush pens.

9: What other art projects do you have in the work in progress?

I currently work as cover artist for the publisher Titan Comics and as freelance illustrator also in the creation of artwork for bands. I am also currently working on my second Tarot deck that will be released in 2017 and on my first comic project.

10: What other tarot deck cards work is in progress or on the way from you?

The new deck will be focused on the Mexico's Trinity of Death: Santa Muerte, Day of the Dead and The Catrina. It should have a most prestigious edition, larger size and also a limited edition but probably for now I cannot say much more heheh

11: Where is the best place to see your art and to buy your works?

The best place to see my art is my portfolio here <http://stb01.daportfolio.com/> but probably my most complete gallery at the moment is on my account of deviant art <http://fabiolistrani.deviantart.com>

To buy my personal work I have an account (not very updated) on Zazzle <http://www.zazzle.co.uk/stb01store> where you can find my works on various supports as canvas, poster, mousepad etc.

12: I see also that you are a musician. How would you describe the relationship between your music and your visual art?

In my case the relationship is very close, because in addition to composing songs for my band OTUS, I also take care of the artwork and all the visual and conceptual aspect. So, the ideas behind the songs and our texts become the guide for the realization of the artwork as well as for our video projections.

13: Is there anything else you'd like to share?

93 & 93!

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# THREE LETTERS FROM PCS: A NOVEL

by Cynthia Tedesco

Dear James,  
When I think of you, which is often, you are here sitting next to me as I take up my pen to write. Gretchen is not sure, or so she writes from Brooklyn, if you remain on the Continent or have returned to America. We know not if you live, if you are safe nor what secretive mission you may be undertaking. In short, you have left those who love you best, alone, bereaved and with broken hearts. The Three of Swords for Arthur's tarot project depicts our condition. Mine most of all.

Today I took a world map and held my pendulum above it. I steadied myself, closed my eyes, allowing the crystal its independent circulations and waited for the movement to stop. Do you know where the pendulum stopped? I suspect you do. Turkey. I believe you are in Turkey. Last week I felt you close. Closer than Turkey. I dreamt of Spain, although I confess I've never been there. Have you left Spain for Turkey, James? What dark pilgrimage are you on? Southern Europe abounds with the faithful walking to holy sites. Are you The Hermit of my Major Arcana standing atop a mountain holding the light for others to see their way by? In my dream of Spain, I felt The Hermit to be you but I have no vision of a mountain, nor a sense of a specific pilgrimage.

Confident I am not hallucinating, nor deluded in my assertions I write to you. You left me cruelly, James. Cruelly. However, I am willing to post this to you by way of Gretchen, ever my faithful friend, in the hope you remain in contact with Professor Dow. If so, and I believe it to be so, you must get in touch with me. Gretchen and Martin our 'tattoo man' are Professor Dow's dear friends. Are

they not yours too, James? What has happened to our friendship? Are we too diverse a group for friendship? Indeed, what of love, James? My tarot offered me The Lovers as our card. What choice will you, have you or are you making? The Four of Wands shows such felicity, but The Hermit holds his light to all. He is not seeking me, nor interested in who arrives at such a lofty place as he.



I wept as I cast my bits of paper onto my table. I wept fearing The Four of Swords and The Ten of Swords would appear. They did not and I am confident you live, uninjured on your strange mission. What is it James that binds you to endless roaming? We were happy. We could be happy anywhere in the world, if together. As I am currently, not unhappily, living rather 'communally' here at Smallythe Place, I know I would be more content to be living so with you, Gretchen and Martin, unorthodox an arrangement though it may be. There are huge cottages in disrepair all over England, some in

beautiful spots that would suit us all. We could be a family together, I long to share a life in The Tens of Cups and Pentacles with you! Take out your *Marseille* or is it your Lombardy? Cast your cards and write to us, to me James, to me! Tell me of your heart. Please don't think it through. If you overthink it all you will be under the influence of The Five of Cups, three spilled with two remaining and you thinking it simply is 'not enough.'

Yeats and his Georgie visited last week. I am afraid they find me terribly dull company as I am working hard to finish Arthur Waite's project. They examined a few cards and I could tell from their faces they were horrified by

my 'Pope.' I have promised to change 'Pope' to 'Hierophant.' I rather liked 'Pope' but I believe 'Hierophant' will suit Arthur as well. Poor Willy and Arthur ... always vying for position in terrible competition. I'm sure you understand how it sits with me. Our Society is always coming asunder



and reforming under this leadership or that one. I long for stability. Right now its illusion would be brilliant. My life is singularly 'maybe' and 'let's see.' I've written to Stieglitz practically begging for payment from the huge success of my show in New York City. I'll hold it another month before posting it. I'm praying I will not have to send it. I am considering a trip to New York. Will you be there? Shall we throw my cards, all seventy-eight into the air and watch them fall? Shall we read the mapped story that results? Are you game James? Shall we play?

EverYour,

Pamela

Dear Gretchen,

Forgive me for not having written sooner after Mr. Waite's tarot creation proposal. I am working like one possessed as I get paid only at the very end of the process and must work (at least part of the time) as Nanny to whomever is youngest at the moment at Smallhythe Cottage. Visitors come and go, my duties with them. I am in official capacity as Nanny to Craig, Edy's younger brother but he is no bother and is more a friend or younger brother than my charge.

How do you fare my dear Gretchen? Martin? Are you happy now that you can live under the same roof? I am looking forward to visiting you in America and hope you won't hesitate to come to England whenever that whim strikes you! I'm sure you miss James almost as much as do I. Professor Dow has written that he sometimes gets the odd telegram from James hither thither somewhere in this world. Where is he Gretchen? I don't mean to burden you or Martin but I must know, know at minimum that he lives and where he lives.

He believes we will not meet in this life. He believes my tarot will meet with great success but not in my lifetime. He left me weeping on the steps of my London studio as he drove off in one of his fancy (dare I say, outrageous) cars. I know he loves me! Why is it that he believes we must be apart? What strange mission does he believe he must undertake and why?

Sadly Gretchen, sadly and begging your forgiveness in advance, I must ask if you discussed with James the reasons I left Pratt? That horrible rumor my so-called friend, Jan, spread about me ... well it undid me. The shock of her betrayal, the awful humiliation of being accused of making advances towards her that she reputed to be unseemly! Perhaps I am overly affectionate towards all friends, but advances?! If it were not for you, dear Gretchen, I do not

think I could have survived it. My father, gentle father, was so right. The world's Puritans abandoned Europe and filled America. Here in England it is so different. I can breathe, kiss those I've affection for openly, as I do not have to be afraid of that kind of misunderstanding. It still rankles. Will that wound ever heal?

I do not think James would misunderstand me as he knows me well enough, how my affections must find expression or I suffocate. But love is another matter altogether. I do love him, Gretchen, his fate is my fate. I know our lives are bound together by all that is Holy. Yes, our love is Holy and I feel I have taken the bands of engagement with him though, of course, I know we have not taken that step.

Please Gretchen find a way to see to it that James gets my letter. Better yet, tell me where he is so I may communicate directly with him. Do not fear that I am relapsing into the condition I was in when you nursed me back to health after Pratt. My parents, as well as I, are forever in your debt.

Remember the awful stink of the Valerian the doctor prescribed? I must leave any chemist's shop if I get so much as a whiff of the stuff! Horrible! The Golden Seal Root Tea was the worst though! Unimaginable and unforgiveable that it still is used as a purgative! What courage you showed standing up to the doctor and to my parents by insisting to manage the patient your way! I will be grateful into the next life. My tarot owes many techniques to Martin's gorgeous tattoo images and to Professor Dow as well. I owe, I owe. Yet I implore you all to help me again! Find James!

I feel so alone. James implied there would be war, not only war but multiples of wars. Why did he say such a thing? I know the world is a precarious place but to place one's thoughts upon what can only bring carnage, well, why so extreme? What condition does one survive or die in under such circumstances without the support of a beloved? He is so sad Gretchen! He is burdened by some foreign, inhuman knowledge. My tarot's Five of Cups shows James' broad shoulders bent, by such a burden under the black cape of loss and more loss. There are three fallen cups but two upright cups remain! I will send, along with this letter, a quick sketch of this card.

I created this Minor Arcana card in a trance state. When I saw what resulted I knew, I knew Gretchen, that it was James. Take pity on my confused, broken heart once again.

My Love Always Dear Gretchen and Dear Martin,

Your Pamela

Dear Pamela,

My heart breaks to bring you news of our beloved Gretchen's passing. Yes Pamela, Gretchen has died. Pneumonia. I cannot soften the blow this news brings you. She was so young, so vibrant and full of life. We were so happy. No one could have been as happy in this world of turmoil... in some small way I believe our love improved the lot of all walking the path of life. She does not remain with us in a way we can hold onto but I 'feel' her by my side at times dear Pamela and if you think well of us... I believe you will sense her presence by you.

Your sketch of The Five of Cups... well that is me as I feel myself to be right now. I send you a Mass Card from her funeral and a lock of her hair as I know she would wish you to have some token of her. Jewels and gems we could not give you as a remembrance but I hope this brings you a small comfort.

Shortly you should, if the Post is reliable, receive one of her Rosaries. In her own way, Gretchen was devoted to Our Lady, and she often would pray to her as well as Saint Magdalene.

I gave Professor Dow your letter for James. He feels, as do I, that James would be in touch if he wanted such communication. That is not to say he will never get in touch with us at some point. James thinks in different terms than we do Pamela. His sense of time and distance is on another plane entirely. Perhaps he inhabits the elements differently than we do. At times, in the past, I almost felt he was not earth-bound as are we. Has conventional thinking brought us any wisdom?

Do not ask me for the specifics about Gretchen's illness. She was cheerful to the last and concerned only with my welfare and that of others. She spoke of you often and fondly Pamela. Try not to grieve too much. I do enough for both of us!

James does love you Pamela. You can rest your mind on that point. I have known James a very long time and you need to know his feelings, while deep and enduring, do not find expression in the way, for example, Gretchen and I did. You will work this relationship out in time but it will be on James' time and in James' way. He knows no other. He does not conform to the sensibilities of society. As your friend, as an older friend, I implore you to carry on with your life. You are

too young to pine away for James. Trust me Pamela, love is grand but it is not enough to base a shared life upon.

My work and friendship with your Professor Dow continues. It is work and friendship that sustains me now. I do not think I will ever love another as I loved Gretchen. I am old Pamela.

Older now after her death than I was while she lived. She kept me young. It is so hard to face the days without her let alone the nights. I must remember the good times we had as must you. You made me laugh describing the odor of Valerian and The Golden Seal Root Tea! Forgive me for reading your missive to Gretchen. I could not resist. It made her all the closer to me.

With Deepest Affection,

Martin

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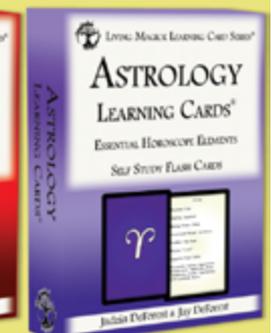
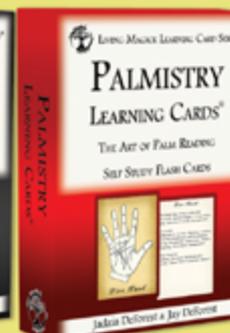
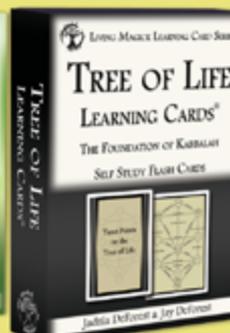
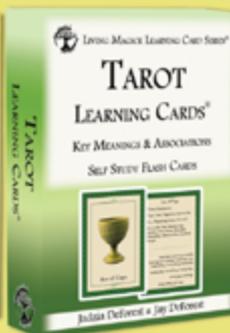
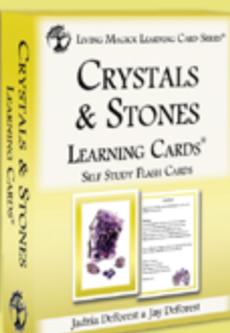
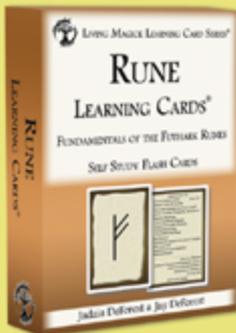
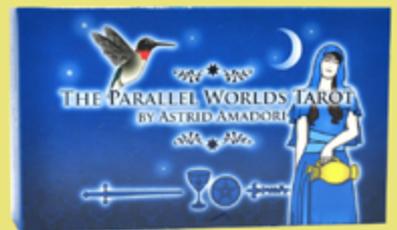
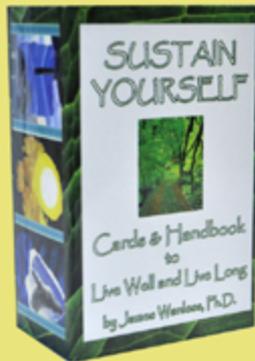
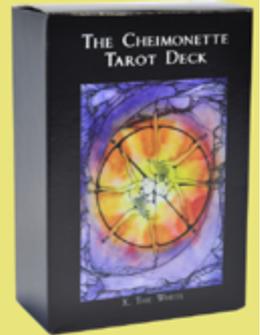
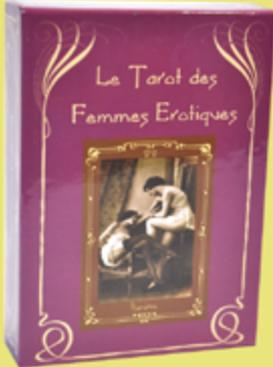
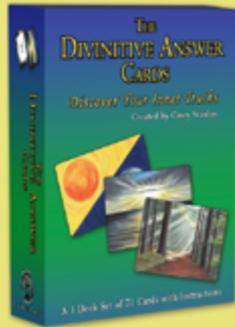
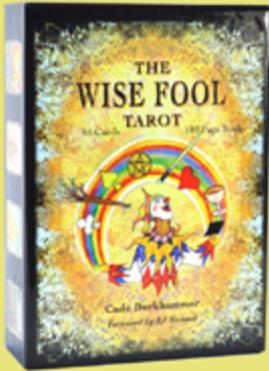
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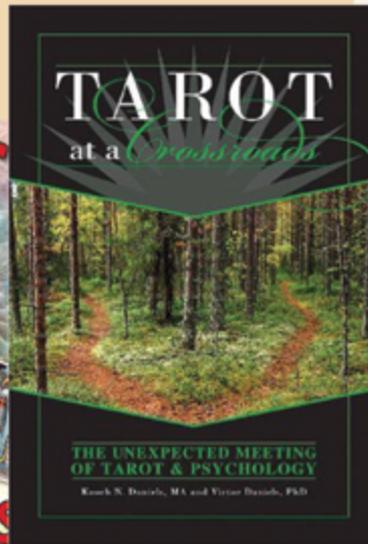


# Reviews



REDISCOVERING THE REAL MEANING OF THE CARDS

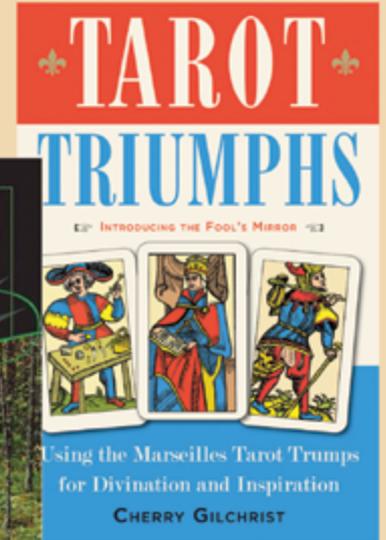
Jonathan Dee



TAROT  
at a *Crossroads*

THE UNEXPECTED MEETING  
OF TAROT & PSYCHOLOGY

Kenneth S. Daniels, MA and Victor Daniels, PhD

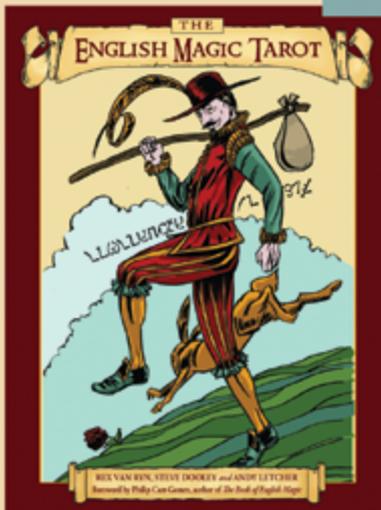


TAROT  
TRIUMPHS

INTRODUCING THE FOOL'S MIRROR

Using the Marseilles Tarot Trumps  
for Divination and Inspiration

CHERRY GILCHRIST



THE  
ENGLISH MAGIC TAROT

WILL VAN EGIN, STEVE DOOKER and SNOW LETTERER  
Revised by Philip Carr-Gomm, author of *The Book of English Magic*



THE TAROT  
OF PRAGUE

KAREN  
MARGONYI

ALEX  
CAPRONI



TAROTS VINS FAITES  
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Patrick Valenza

# THE MAGIC TAROT OF PRAGUE

Review by Leo Chioda

The *Tarot of Prague* is one of the most luxurious decks that have ever been created. As a result of intense historical and iconographic researching and frequent photographic tours by Karen Mahony and Alex Ukolov, this deck is not only a tribute to the capital



of the Czech Republic as well as a unique tool for oracular expression. It introduces us to the symbols of several centuries and reigns of Bohemia, all of them combined in an original way by one of Europe's largest art studios: the Baba Studio.

A predictive reading that I've made on *Tarot of Prague* is a main reason for this article. 'A rebirth is coming', have said the cards. In a first sight, it was strange due to the continuous denying from

the authors about a reprint. Out of the blue, the idea of a magic tour in Prague has changed their plans.

I realized the existence of the *Tarot of Prague* in 2005, when it was already out of stock. After many years of searching, I finally found it out in the end of 2014 and since then I started to use it in my professional readings. It's my favorite deck ever. As a tarot deck collector, I can assure this is one of the most beautiful ever made worldwide. I also assert it is one of the seven wonders among all tools in the oracular universe. The link among its symbols and the Prague's scenarios converges with the oracular structure undertaken by A. E. Waite and Pamela C. Smith: the *Tarot of Prague* is entirely based on the RSW system, which makes it a handy deck to any reader who is familiar with illustrated Minor Arcana. The simple act of contemplating the cards or reading them proves the magnificence of one of the most mysterious and beloved cities in the world.

The first and the second editions of the *Tarot of Prague* — sold out since 2004 — are totally overpriced today. Thus, 13 years after the first edition, Alex Ukolov and Karen Mahony give birth to new versions of the deck: a standard edition and a limited edition. There are two main reasons to the

return of the *Tarot of Prague*: the first is the 'Magic Prague Tour', happened between 2016 April 16th and 22nd, developed by a partnership between BabaStudio and Markéta Hradecká from Caput Regni Private Tours. Their idea attracted a restricted group of astrologers, magic enthusiasts and Tarot readers from several countries (Brazil, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Australia, England and USA), which was conducted to one week of activities related to Magic, Cabala, Alchemy, Astrology, Tarot and the Czech culture. Handling the *Tarot of Prague* would absolutely necessary to understand better Mahony and Ukolov's creative process and to visualize the city through the arcana, which are the better artistic tribute to the history and magic of Prague. The second is, as the deck's little white book expresses, "in part, a farewell to the city" — BabaStudio moves to Ireland and gets a new name: BabaBarock.

## THE REVISED AND THE LIMITED EDITIONS: A REVIEW

According to Kafka, "Prague doesn't let you go". It's true. We can say the same about the *Tarot of Prague*: those who touch it once will be transformed forever. All the cards have been resized and recolored. There are also two extra cards in each deck: 'The Death' and 'The Sun' (Standard Edition); 'The Death' and 'The Lovers' (Limited Edition). Such changes make this new edition very different from the precedents "but as wonderfully readable as ever".

It's really impressive that a statue in Nerudova Street is on a card randomly selected by someone in Rio de Janeiro who wants to know about work or love. It's magical. Before, the images were based in drawings and some photos. Currently, the pictures are powerful

than ever, making every card crystal clear. The metallic overlay makes this deck so alive as an open window in Malá Straná, the charming quarter. The new decks were printed in a high quality cardstock, more resistant than the first and the second editions. On the back of every card we have the gorgeous illustration of the four elements with the a magical palindrome, the same of the previous editions. The inscription, found in the New Town Hall Tower, was used a protection against evil forces. It fits perfectly for the cards, avoiding bad influences in the readings. It's magic. Magic from Prague.

On the other hand, the LWB is the same but presents some new keywords. The Standard Edition comes inside a sturdy box whose cover shows 'The Moon', one of the most famous cards of the deck. The Deluxe Edition is in a large size (about 6.5 by 4 inches) which comes with an exclusive silk scarf, is presented in a special hinged box, with the 'Knight of Wands'. This version



box, which assures the Baba Barock's authenticity.

The Italian poet Angelo Maria Ripellino wrote: "If I look for another word to say arcane, I find only the world Prague." Your masterpiece, 'Magic Prague' (1973), was one of the inspiring titles for the Companion Book. Mahony shows a huge bibliography about Prague, symbolism and Tarot, which makes this one of the best Tarot books ever written. It was edited in 2003 with the first edition of the deck but the new one, revised and

expanded, is now sold separately. It has 264 pages and presents:

- a brief description, keywords, short and fuller interpretation of each card — including different meanings of extra cards
- the sources from the visual and historical references of each card, as illustrations, photos and important details of the city and the cards
- historical information on the city and famous characters as the Rabi Loew and his Golem; Libuse, the Celtic founder of Prague; the Royal Route; the Golden Lane and Madame of Thebes, the most famous Czech cartomancer killed by Nazis; the Memento mori concept in Bohemia; and many of the historical notions, mythological figures and places included in the deck
- a Tarot readings section with spreads as the Celtic Cross, the Three Cards Spread and The Threshold Spread — 'threshold' would the real meaning of 'Prague' — developed by the author exclusively for the deck
- storytelling with the cards, symbology and a summary of terms

The new editions of the *Tarot of Prague* are undoubtedly indispensable in any Tarot collection. I can say those decks will be sold out soon. There's no need of another predictive reading to forecast it.

© Leo Chioda

MORE TO READ:

*About the Magic Prague Tour and more of The Tarot of Prague:*

[www.cafetarot.com.br/2016/04/the-magic-tarot-of-prague.html](http://www.cafetarot.com.br/2016/04/the-magic-tarot-of-prague.html)

*An exclusive review designed for The Tarot of Prague*

<http://www.cafetarot.com.br/2016/05/the-magic-city-spread.html>

## UPCOMING TAROT EVENTS IN 2017

20TH MAY 2017

3RD JUNE 2017

13TH & 14TH OCTOBER 2017

# 101 TAROT SPREADS BY 20 MODERN TAROT MASTERS VOL. 1

Review by Jadzia DeForest

Author: Sheila Hite

Self-Published - 2016

ISBN #9780991655311

This book of spreads is a wonderful contribution to the tarot community; giving you the opportunity to essentially work with some of the greatest tarotists of our time. Just to

name a few...Nancy Antenucci, Sarah Barry, Mary K. Greer, Carrie Paris, Rachel Pollack, Teresa Reed, and James Wells.

*101 Tarot Spreads by 20 Modern Tarot Masters* is in workbook format so that you can fill in each spread that you use. The author also recommends copying the pages for future use, especially the Major Arcana Teacher Cards section.

In here you'll find spreads for just about every area of focus, including spiritual life, day-to-day situations, internal, external, etc.

Hite put this book together for a multitude of reasons. One purpose of this book is to "learn the techniques and the creative process of Masters as you study and use the spreads". It can also be used to inspire you to create your own spreads, using the layouts in the book for inspiration.

The sections in this book include: What Can the Tarot Be Used For, What is a Tarot Spread, and Outside the Box — a

360 View. (exploring and experiencing the variety of methodology presented). It also has an overview of the Major and Minor Arcana, a reminder of gender and the Court Cards, how to use clarifying cards, and how to choose a deck.

Hite also included a section on determining your Life Path Number and Major Arcana Life Path (Birth) Card. You'll also find the section on recommended books and resources to be of interest.

Each chapter begins with a photo and short bio of the Tarot Master and their contact information. This is followed by their five specific spreads.

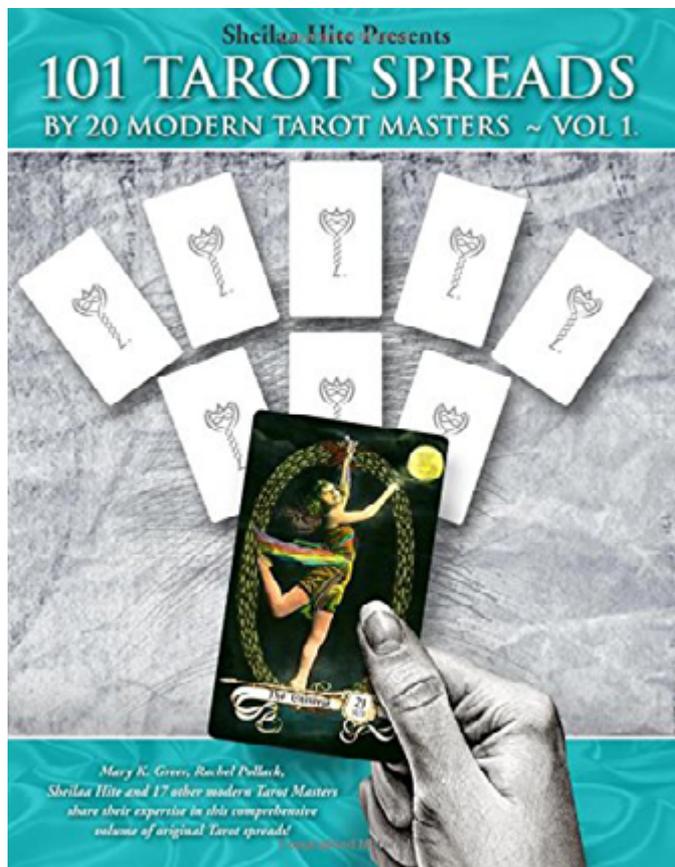
The spreads all begin with its name and an introductory paragraph, including any special pre-layout instructions. Space is left for you to fill in the Question or Issue, Feelings or Interpretations, Name, Date, Time, and the Deck that you used for the reading.

Below the fillable space is a graphic of the card layout. Each card space is numbered for the order in which it should be laid down, with the position name, and a brief description.

*101 Tarot Spreads by 20 Modern Tarot Masters* is certainly worth adding to your shelf. From the title I can only assume there will be a volume 2, which I'm already looking forward to!

Visit <http://www.SheilaaHite.com> for ordering and more information.

© Jadzia DeForest



# TRIONFI DELLA LUNA

Review by Robert L. Scott

Creator: Patrick Valenza

Self-published - 2015

As someone who is trying to get more into Marseilles-style decks, I stumbled upon the *Trionfi della Luna*.

If you are already familiar with the *Deviant Moon Tarot*, you may have heard of this project, the “cousin” of the *Deviant Moon Tarot*, in more of a *Marseilles* tarot style.

First the physical, and pure logistical information.

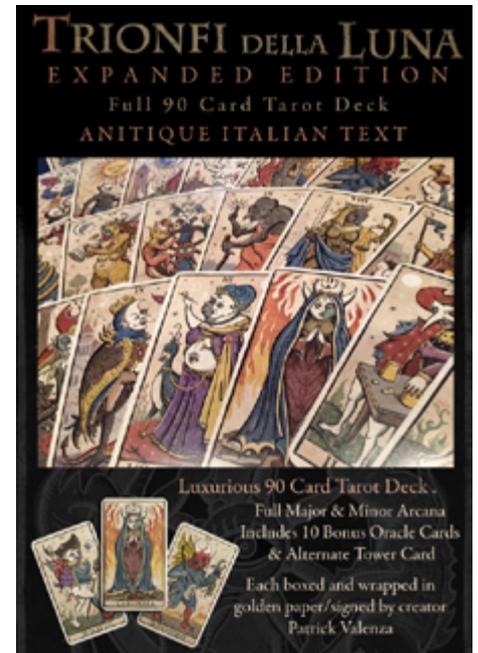
The size is just slightly larger than ‘standard’ RWS deck, so to anyone familiar with handling tarot cards should feel typical size in the hands.

The card stock is solid but flexible, a professional level card stock that seems to handle a shuffle well. It has a nice finish and coating that should hold up. The background, rather than being a stark white, has an overall sepia antique paper color, giving the illusion of age or antique while being in physically good shape.

The backs appear the same either direction, allowing for the reading of reversals, should you include the reading of reversals in your methods.

Currently, it is packed with 10 additional art/oracle cards, an alternate Tower (Lightning), an alternate Devil card, in a sturdy tuck box, and the tuck box is wrapped in nice paper, signed by the artist, Patrick Valenza.

The characters are reminiscent of the *Deviant Moon* “world”, but you don’t have to be a *Deviant Moon* user to appreciate the art or the cards. The figures in *Trionfi della Luna* seemed to have naturally developed over the course of various wrapper sketches, rough or alternate versions of *Deviant Moon*. They are a bit comical and satirical, but are also very representative to *Marseilles* roots. The facial expressions, body positions and gestures, are very exaggerated and amplified, lending to read their emotion fairly easily, in this tarot readers opinion. On the *Trionfi*’s / *Triumphs* / *Majors*, you have satirical



comical figures. Moons and masks are prominent in the characters. There are butts and boobs drawn in a cartoon like way.

There is no front pelvic anatomy or genitalia drawn.

The Majors are closer to Marseille-style Majors, and not merely redrawing’s or copies of a RWS style major. There also seems to be some *Mantegna* and *Etteilla* influence as well. The Strength incorporates the lion into the woman, carrying the column similar to *Mantegna*. The second Tower card, the Lightning, reminds me of the *Etteilla* card. Both revolve around quick



, chaos, but lightning can even be taken to be a play on the words “enlightening” and “lightning”. There are , at moment, also an extra Devil card.

Minors and pips, while may be a challenge to those used to reading more scenic or acted out minors such as *Waite Smith* or *Waite Smith* based decks, are illustrated. There are interesting things done with the ornamentation that I feel



reflect and add to the meanings of the card visually. For example, cues are given with plants and vines , or fullness and emptiness of cups.

One challenge readers typically face with pips only decks are similarities between swords and wands. Remember that the swords are curved, and wands are straight. This deck does a few additional steps things to address that challenge, in that the swords and wands are a bit more clearly drawn in comparison to some other pips decks, as well as often there is symbols or crests in the middle of the card. Also, the swords have a bit of blood on them.

The card titles are all in Italian, so if someone was unfamiliar with the tarot

in general, and also didn't read Italian, this could be a challenge. However, suits are fairly obvious by symbol, and the items can be counted. Knights all are mounted on various beasts which relate to their element; the Knight of Wands rides a dragon, the Knight of Cups rides a mermaid type creature. Kings are male, crowned and on thrones, Queens are obviously queens, and pages have no crowns nor mount.

There is currently no physical guide book, nor little white book included. This cartomancer is personally satisfied with the additional cards as a trade-off for the little white book.

I've done a few effective remote readings with the deck, based on the questioner's feedback. I feel this deck is a very contemplative read to me, and has a narrative, storytelling voice. This is difficult to explain other than the fact that my “oracular voice” sounds a bit different, compared to a reading with another deck. The art has a distinctive personality.

It has been suggested that this deck and the *Deviant Moon Tarot* “play well” together, in those instances in which

you would like to utilize two decks.

The online guide book is in production and should be finished soon to be available at: <http://www.deviantmoon.com/trionfi.htm> .

This deck will probably be well appreciated by anyone who:

- Already likes / uses the *Deviant Moon Tarot*
- Anyone who reads Marseilles-style deck but would like to add a modern or different style artwork
- An entry point for someone newer to Marseilles-style

The deck would probably not be as well appreciated by:

- Someone who reads or only wants to read *Waite Smith* structure / style or scenic pips only
- Someone without the interest or time or dedication to learn this Marseille-style/ non scenic pips style of cards.
- Someone that a lack of a little white book or physical guide book now is a deal breaker.

© Robert L. Scott

# TAROT MYSTERIES

Review by Jadzia DeForest

Author: Jonathan Dee

Hampton Roads Publishing - 2016

ISBN - 9781571747501

*T*arot *Mysteries* is an eclectic, multi-faceted book that's easy to read and follow even though the information can be dense at times. I'd put the level of this book as beyond beginner. It's a great read for intermediate to advanced students and beyond.

I've been studying and teaching tarot for years and kept finding myself drawn



deeply into this book, murmuring “fascinating“ to myself every few minutes.

The main sections begin with: What Are Tarot Cards, The History of the Tarot, The Holy Qabalah, The Major Arcana and the Zodiac (which references astrological and tarot correspondence charts from many authors including Mathers, Crowley, Levi, and Waite), The Four Grail Hallows, The Minor Arcana of the Tarot (which looks at the Minor Arcana and Zodiac, elements, decans, Tree of Life, and numerology), The Art of Reading the Tarot, Basic Tarot Spreads, and Answering Questions.

In the Minor Arcana section each card has information headings as follows: Astrological Relationship, Tree of Life Position, Positive Meaning, Negative Meaning, Esoteric Title, and Key Concepts. It also includes the card image from the *Rider-Waite-Smith* deck.

The Court Cards section includes: Alternative Descriptions, Esoteric Title, Character Type, Key Concepts, Astrological Relationships, Correspondences, General Interpretation, Positive Meaning, Negative Meaning, and Subsidiary

Symbols (when applicable).

While for the Major Arcana, Dee covers each Number, Alternative Title, Qabalistic Letter, Tree of Life Pathway, Direction, Astrological Correspondence, Description, Symbolism, Upright Meaning, Reversed Meaning, and Esoteric Title.

One piece that I found really interesting in this book was Dee's diverse history and correlations to tarot. He includes both mythological and historical stories from Christian, Irish, Welsh, French, Roman, and Arthurian cultures mostly.

Although Dee makes several unflattering comments about Crowley,



he does a good job of giving Crowley and Waite both their due throughout this book; which I found refreshing as usually books lean more toward one or the other. In this case I will say that since the book is illustrated with the RWS deck, that may be the dominant system. But, all of Crowley's alternative titles and correspondences are included.

Dee also does a good job of mixing humor with historical fact, stories of myth, and sober tarot study in *Tarot Mysteries*. It's a real gem among tarot books! Since it was first published in 2003, I'm surprised I'd not read it until now. And I'm glad I finally did.

© Jadzia DeForest

# ENGLISH MAGIC TAROT BOOK & DECK SET

Review by Jadzia DeForest

Creators: Rex Van Ryn, Steve Dooley  
and Andy Letcher

Weiser Books - 2016

ISBN #9781578636006

What an interesting new tarot deck. *The English Magic Tarot* puts tarot into the time period of King Henry VIII (1509) to the Restoration (1860s). Which was a great era for the practice of English magic.

The Introduction covers the history of that time period with an overview of notable events and monarchs. Then goes on to explain English magic as “the art of causing change to occur in



accordance with will“.

Part two, Signposts On The Way, begins with the Major Arcana card descriptions. Each card has the



number, title, keywords, the card image, Description, Interpretation, and Reading. While all of this information is presented, the author, Andy Letcher, encourages readers to find their own interpretations to the cards and to always trust their intuition.

Some of the Major Arcana feature historical figures. The Magician is John Dee, The Emperor is Henry VIII, and Sir Isaac Newton is the image on The Star.

Let’s take a look at The Lovers card.



The keyword phrase states “Love affairs of every hue”. In the Interpretation section is written: “If the Lovers falls out in a spread, the chances are that most people will breathe a quiet sigh of relief (unless it’s James Bond shuffling the deck). It’s a card that doesn’t need an awful lot of interpretation. There’s something chaste about the way these two are touching, as if this were a recent and unconsummated courtship. Don’t be fooled. The ram, the tree, and the broomstick all suggest an undercurrent of sexuality”.

The Minor Arcana section starts with the suit of Wands. Each card has the title, keywords, the image in black and white, Description, Interpretation, and Reading.

The Eight of Swords Interpretation: “Humans seem to possess an innate conservatism that becomes hardened as we age. Our minds stiffen along with our bodies; we become set in our ways, less tolerant and less willing to entertain new ways of seeing the world.

We may think we crave novelty, but when presented with genuine newness,

we are unsettled and unnerved.

Here's a young woman, fresh with the rigour of youth and ready to overturn the old moribund ways of viewing the world. As you can see, she's meeting considerable resistance. The old guard would have her silenced locked up, put away. She's standing her ground, however, and one sweep of her sword will block and parry the incoming thrusts. It may look like her hands are tied but it's only a loose ribbon that binds her wrists. It doesn't matter that she's blindfolded. She moves like a ninja. Her ideas are so fertile that leaves and petals fall from the sweep of her sword."

Section three is Using The Cards. It includes how to use them and four unique spreads.

The last section is The Memory Theatre. It is a technique used for memorizing large amounts of information. The author walks you through how to do this and how it can be helpful when learning tarot, as well as its uses with the practice of English magic.

The Major Arcana are borderless. The Minors have colored borders that correspond to their element. The cards are slightly oversized at 3 inches by 4.75 inches. They follow the traditional tarot system in 78 cards.

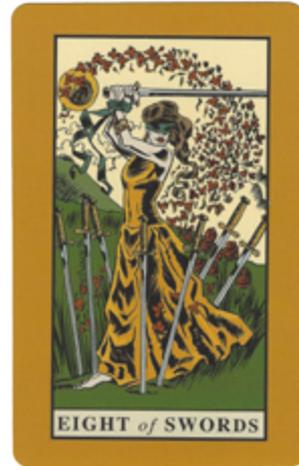
The book that comes with this set is 160 pages with a color cover and black and white interior. It measures 8 inches by 5.5 inches.

The box is a sturdy cardboard in full color and the same size as the book.

*The English Magic Tarot* is certainly not your fun, fluffly themed tarot deck. Which automatically sets it apart. This deck reflects its historical setting — a time of war both civil and abroad, religious conflicts, advancements in art and science, the heights of absurd wealth and power by the aristocracy and the struggles of the common people, and the underlying current of magic in a time of strict religious enforcement and persecution of witches. Again, not your sweetly themed deck.

But for those looking for a tarot that resonates with magic, witchcraft, druidry, and general paganism, I recommend this one. Of course if you practice English magic specifically, then this is your deck for sure!

Looking through the cards I noticed a lot of interesting detail. If you have any knowledge of basic pagan, and specifically Wiccan or Druid, study there will be pieces that you'll



recognize.

I don't want to give too much away because in the Introduction Letcher comments: "You may have spotted strange writings, or books with unusual titles, or that some letters are printed in odd colors. All those are significant and have been placed their deliberately." He further mentions that "...the riddles do all point to something. It's a kind of treasure hunt, if you will, and there is an actual answer at the end."

However, you won't want to go into it lightly. Letcher writes: "It will take you many hours of research to follow up all the pointers, but if you do, your understanding of both the tarot and English magic will undoubtedly be enriched".

So there you have it. Happy hunting down the royal road of tarot!

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# TAROT AT A CROSSROADS

## THE UNEXPECTED MEETING OF TAROT & PSYCHOLOGY

Review by Bonnie Cehovet

Author: Kooch N. Daniels, M.A. and  
Victor Daniels, Ph.D

Schiffer Publishing - 2016

ISBN #978-0-7643-5186-0

Please note that the material within this book is not intended to be used as treatment for any form of psychological or physical disorder. The authors or publisher make no claims or take any responsibility for healing problems. When using the information provided in relation to the Tarot cards, the authors advise novice readers, Tarot professionals, and licensed practitioners of counseling or psychotherapy to work within the framework of their expertise.

~ from the book

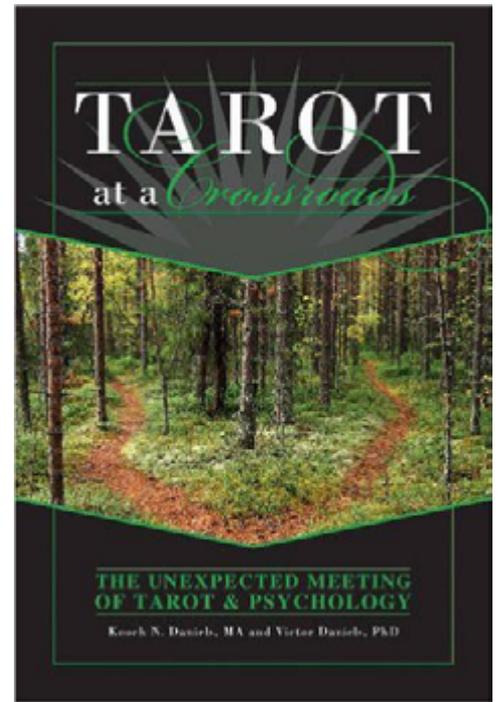
I put this disclaimer from the book out front because it is well worded, and should be taken into consideration by anyone reading the Tarot, anyone doing counseling, and anyone combining these modalities. As you can see, I do not necessarily consider my readings for clients to be divination. I consider them to be counseling sessions, even though I do not have the degree to call myself a counselor. I am a Cappie, and I love all things serious. I love this book! It is serious, it is playful, and it combines

two of my favorite modalities: Tarot and psychology. At 270 pages, this is short enough to not be overwhelming, and long enough to properly cover the subject.

I was impressed with this book from the time that I took it out of the box! The cover shows a very interesting outdoor scene, with a clear path in the forest split by a stand of trees. Is this not life, after all – the choices that we make to continue on our path! I found the slightly raised lettering and imagery intriguing, and had to ask Schiffer Publishing's Christopher R. McClure what the process was. It turns out that the process is called Spot UV, and that Schiffer is planning on using it on more of their titles. It adds class to an already classy hardback book!

In her forward, Elinor Greenberg talks about meeting the Daniels' at a Gestalt conference in Mexico, where they were presenting. She refers to *Tarot At A Crossroads* as the book that she wishes had been there for her when she started her Gestalt therapy and Tarot journey. I have to add a comment of my own here: I have always been very pleased with the work that Ms Greenberg has done with the Tarot School. Before it was popular to combine the two modalities, she gave those of us in the Tarot world something to build on.

Throughout the book we find full color images from diverse decks of the



Tarot world. The Daniels' have taken the time to list the artists and their illustrations – which include some of the seminal decks out there. I thank them for this – and I thank Schiffer Publishing for doing such a wonderful job with this book.

The Daniels do a very good job of explaining divinatory readings, with an emphasis on the reader working with the client to empower themselves. They talk about the decks available to readers, and give a short history on the development of the Tarot, including the *Marseilles Tarot* as a common model for Tarot decks. They talk about unseen inner events, as well as observable outer events. They talk about early therapists, including Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, and the use of something called “art therapy”. They talk about how as the Tarot has become more accepted by mainstream society, it has become recognized as a healing tool.

In their practices, the Daniels began to use some of the practices from gestalt therapy with the reading of Tarot cards. They note that when their central focus is on using the Tarot in psychotherapy or

counselling, traditional interpretations are left behind. They also make the suggestion that anyone reading this book make note of how they personally connect with and experience visual imagery, as well as suggesting that readers use a collage technique to create their own deck.

We are gently but purposefully walked through the process of reading the cards: viewing the cards in different ways, learning to read the symbols, viewing the cards through the lens of personal experience and perception, and looking at the over-lay of numbers and color within the cards. There is also quite an interesting list of twelve activities to help the reader design their Tarot environment, as well as the suggestion to keep a Tarot journal.

Transference within a reading is discussed, as well as how the reader and the client connect through the cards. In discussing representational uses of the cards, “stacks” of cards – two or more cards used together. Each card takes us to a deeper emotional level. There are sample readings, along with a three card emotional stack template that the reader can use for themselves, with questions that the read can ask themselves.

An interesting concept termed “identification” is also discussed. Here the client is asked to either identify with the central image in the card, or with one or two of the smaller images. A three card Self Discovery Spread is presented, along with actually physically moving with the card. (A similar technique has been used before – to have the client take the same pose as the central figure in a card.) There is a great section on using the projective dialogue method, along with questions the Seeker can use to keep a record of their session.

I loved the section on internal dialogues – I have those all the time! The reader is shown how to use a two card spread for themselves, and while reading for others. There are also hints at hearing the subliminal messages through freestyle writing.

Working with multiple others involved in the same issue presented quite an interesting scenario. The example given here is a client, and her dysfunctional relationship with her parents. There is quite an interesting spread presented that deals with interactions between others in the client’s life, gifting the client with an expanded view of their world. Spreads were also presented that dealt with complex interpersonal dynamics, and with family dynamics.

An entire chapter is devoted to improving a working session. One suggestion was to begin the session with a mini-meditation. There were suggestions on both identifying with and distancing yourself from a client (from personal experience, this is done on a client by client basis), and understanding a client’s inner world, and their experiences. Tips were also given on reframing negative thought patterns into positive ones.

It was interesting to see that the topic of Tarot groups was addressed. Some of the pro’s to joining a Tarot group are listed as structure, support, and multiple perspectives. The structure of the groups themselves is discussed, as well as group problem solving.

Meditation is, IMHO, a very powerful tool. I was very pleased to see it addressed in conjunction with the Tarot. Techniques include concentration, mindfulness, practices for everyday awareness, stress reduction, and contemplation. Using these tools in conjunction with a Tarot reading truly open up possibilities.

In the section on the Major Arcana symbols the cards are presented in a small, full color image, with key ideas, the psychological link, and reflections on how the card applies to the client’s life situation.

The section on the Minor Arcana (the four suits) starts off with a chart of correspondences between the suits, the elements, their Zodiac link, a key phrase, and primary associations. The cards are presented by text only, listing the divinatory meaning, along with keyword suggestions for the card number, the elemental association, and intent.

The section on the Court cards starts off with a chart listing the associated social roles for each of the titles (King, Queen, Knight, Page). As with the Minor Arcana Pips (numbered cards), the presentation is text only, listing keywords, the associated element, and intent.

Appendix 1 is a journal template, Appendix 2 shows the archetypes associated with the Major Arcana. This is followed by endnotes, a bibliography, and an index.

I feel that *Tarot at a Crossroads* fully accomplished its goal – to bridge the world between Tarot and psychology. The full color card images spread predominately throughout the book are beautifully done. Each chapter presents a concept, then shows how the concept is relevant in dealing with clients. Sample conversations with clients are presented, as well as sample Tarot spreads. A wonderful way to move Tarot from the world of divination into the world of counseling, without anyone misrepresenting themselves. A quality book all around!

© December 2016 Bonnie Cehovet

# THE TAROT DE BESANÇON OF J. JERGER

Review by Sherryl E. Smith

Original deck printed by J. Jerger,  
Besançon, France @1800

Reproduction: Evalyne K. Hall

Evalyne's Garden Gate, UK, 2016

It must be a labor of love when a tarotist faithfully redraws an historic deck, reproducing every line from the original wood block and replicating the original colors. The only copy of this Besançon-style deck resides in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Thanks to Evalyne Hall's meticulous work, we're able to hold a faithful reproduction in our hands.

## WHAT'S A BESANÇON DECK?

Like the *Tarot de Marseille*, this deck style is named after one of the cities where it was printed. It's a traditional *Tarot de Marseille* with Jupiter and Juno substituting for the Papesse and Pope. The story goes that having religious figures on playing cards offended Catholics, so card makers were forced to make substitutes. Actually, the altered deck was used in predominantly protestant areas of eastern France, southwestern Germany



and Switzerland where card players didn't want the head of the Church and his sidekick staring at them during games.

## JUPITER AND JUNO



Jupiter, Juno and Minerva were the original triumvirate of Roman deities whose roots go back to the Etruscan civilization.

Jupiter Optimus Maximus was the greatest of gods and the protector of Rome. Originally a sky god associated with storms, his thunderbolts are an extension of his divine will and an instrument of punishment and disaster (like the lightning bolt on the Tower card). On the other hand, his eagle is an omen of victory in battle since it flies higher and closer to the gods than any other bird. It's been used by many political entities from the Holy Roman Empire to the United States as a symbol



of authority and sovereignty.

Juno was originally the protector of women in all stages of life, especially during childbirth. Later she became the co-protector of Rome along with her husband Jupiter. Juno is usually accompanied by a peacock that commemorates her servant Argus. Argus was an all-seeing watchman with one hundred eyes scattered over his body who was charged with keeping track of Jupiter and his latest love interest. When Hermes tricked and killed Argus, Juno placed his eyes in the peacock's tail. The peacock later became a symbol of everlasting life because it was believed its flesh never decayed.

Most of Juno's stories are soap operas about her jealous rages when she discovered her husband chasing nubile nymphs through the woods. But Juno was depicted in Roman statuary as a regal, larger than life matron, often with a shield and spear. In the tarot, she looks like a hard-working housewife who has rolled up her sleeves and hitched up her skirts, ready to tackle the day's washing.

## THE DECK

Hall's deck has crisp lines and rich colors printed on smooth playing card stock. The faces can be rather odd and lumpy. Le Bateleur looks like he's about to burst into tears; and the Lovers' wonky eyes seem to be inspired by

Picasso. Another feature of this style is the fat, enclosed Ace of Cups. I doubt the block carver could read French as there are many misspellings on the card titles, including Batons on all cards of that suit. Rather than being annoyed, I find these anomalies charming, as they bring me closer to the people who toiled in the print shops.

Hall was inspired to re-create the deck while translating the esoteric tarot writings of Antoine Court de Gebelin and the Comte de Mellet, who used a Besançon deck. Read more about de Gebelin and how he radically changed tarot in my article *When Tarot Became Esoteric* in this issue.

The deck can be purchased through GameCrafters. There's a convenient link on the website [www.EvalynesGardenGate.com](http://www.EvalynesGardenGate.com)

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THE TAROT ASSOCIATION OF THE BRITISH ISLES

# TAROT TRIUMPHS

## USING THE MARSEILLE TAROT TRUMPS FOR DIVINATION AND INSPIRATION

Review by Jadzia DeForest

Author: Cherry Gilchrist

Weiser Books - 2016

ISBN #9781578636044

*Tarot Triumphs* specifically explores the Major Arcana of the *Marseille Tarot* through Gilchrist's three-fold approach:

- As a moving tableaux
- General interpretations
- In-depth meaning, imagery, and history

This book includes a lot of Gilchrist's personal history and experiences with divination. The purpose is to share an approach she learned several years ago from one of her tarot teachers. The method and spread is called the Fool's Mirror.

Unlike so many books that focus on the RWS system, *Tarot Triumphs* is all about the Major Arcana of the *Marseille Tarot*, specifically on using those trumps or triumphs for reading with this Fool's Mirror method.

Gilchrist's style is a dense read, but the information is worth it. Her personal tarot stories help to break up the amount of information into manageable chunks.

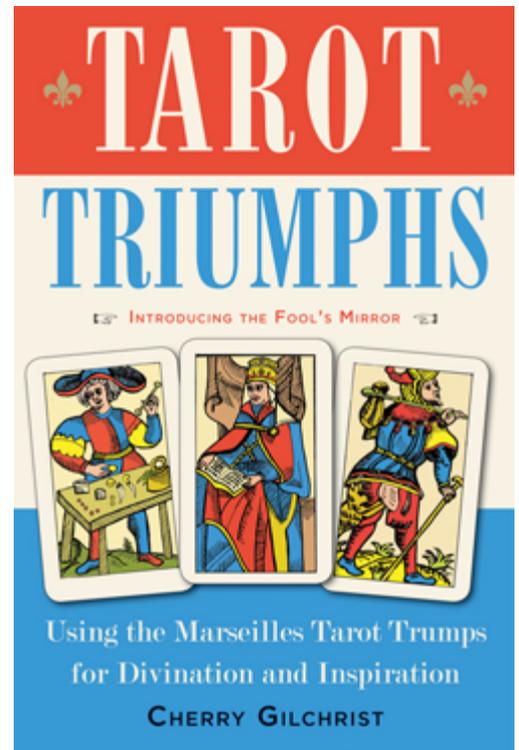
The Fool's Mirror is a system from her third tarot teacher. She describes it as "...a means of capturing the impressions that we hope to interpret. Then, in patterns innocently captured, you can read the imprint of cosmic purpose and events that are coming to pass."

There's a good focus on divination and what it is. In the section "Taking On the Tarot" Gilchrist includes an introduction to the Major Arcana's basic meanings. She also focuses on threes or trios as a method, noting "Three makes a situation...One card simply is; two cards either oppose or unite with each other; but three cards give insight into the unique mix and interplay of a situation".

This section includes questions to help the student begin to explore card reading interpretations of their own. How to prepare for a reading and spreads are also covered in detail. She emphasizes method, pattern, and the question asked during the divinatory process.

Tarot history is also covered, with a bit from Gilchrist's own research from the 1970s. Since I enjoy history this part was a fascinating read.

In chapter five: Becoming The Diviner — Grasping the Fool's Mirror, Gilchrist introduces the basic principles of this method. The rest of that chapter is an in-depth look at the individual cards



accompanied by a full page drawing for a detailed view.

As a warm-up for the Fool's Mirror, chapter six takes the student deeper into ways to look at the cards followed by a shortened version of the Celtic Cross spread.

Toward the end of the book, in chapter seven, the Fool's Mirror Layout is introduced. This specific spread uses all 22 of the Major Arcana. The graphic for the spread includes the layout sequence and card positions. The rest of the chapter walks you through it.

In the next chapter she looks at some of the tougher topics in tarot: How to manage the reading; Fortune, Fate, Destiny, and Free Will; Ethics and Responsibility.

The last couple of sections are Notes and Glossary.

Whether you choose to incorporate the Fool's Mirror into your studies or not, this book is still an interesting read for anyone interested in Cherry Gilchrist's work or the *Marseille Tarot*.

© Jadzia DeForest

## ***Tarot Conferences & Symposiums***

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### **Bay Area Tarot Symposium (BATS)**

Date: TBA

San Jose, California

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

### **London Tarot Festival**

May 20th, 2017

London UK

<http://tarotconference.co.uk/tarot-festival/>

### **North Star Tarot Conference**

January 27 - 29, 2017

Eagan, Minnesota

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

### **Northwest Tarot Symposium**

March 3 - 5, 2017

Portland, Oregon

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

### **Readers Studio / Tarot & Psychology Conference**

April 27 - 30, 2017

Queens, New York

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

### **Tarot Festival in the Castle**

June 3rd, 2017

Zurich Switzerland

[www.tarotconference.co.uk](http://www.tarotconference.co.uk)

### **TABI Tarot Conference**

TBA

The British Isles

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

### **Tarosophy Tarot Conventions**

September 15 - 17, 2017

Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

[www.tarotassociation.net](http://www.tarotassociation.net)

### **Tarot Guild of Australia International Conference**

Date: TBA

Melbourne, Australia

[www.tarotguild.org.au](http://www.tarotguild.org.au)

### **UK Tarot Conference**

October 13 - 14, 2017

London UK

[www.tarotconference.co.uk](http://www.tarotconference.co.uk)

## ***Tarot Associations***

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### **American Tarot Association**

[ata-tarot.com](http://ata-tarot.com)

### **Tarot Association of the British Isles**

[www.tabi.org.uk](http://www.tabi.org.uk)

### **Tarot Professionals**

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### **Tarot Guild of Australia**

[www.tarotguild.org.au](http://www.tarotguild.org.au)

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