

# THE CARTOMANCER

## TAROT FOR SOUL TENDING

BY CAROLYN CUSHING

## PRINTING YOUR OWN DECK

BY ERIK K. LERNER

## WILD NATURE

BY CHASE TWO OWLS

## TAROT TRENDSPOTTING

BY MICHELLE GRUBEN

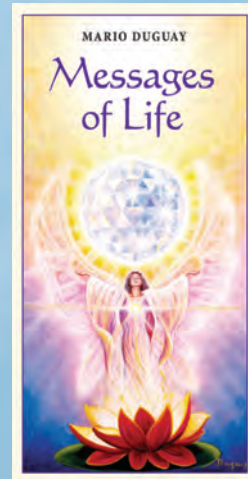
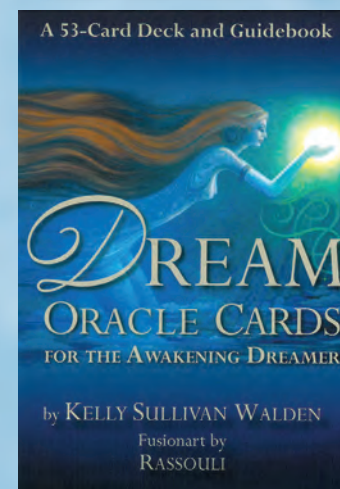
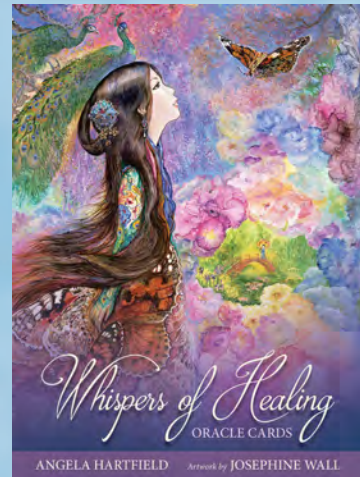
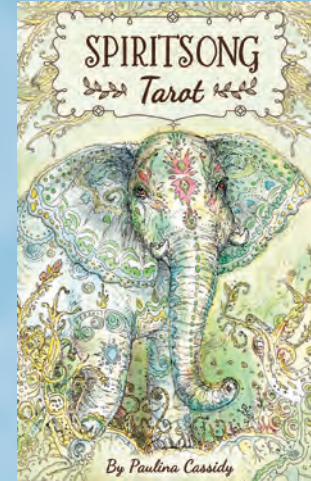
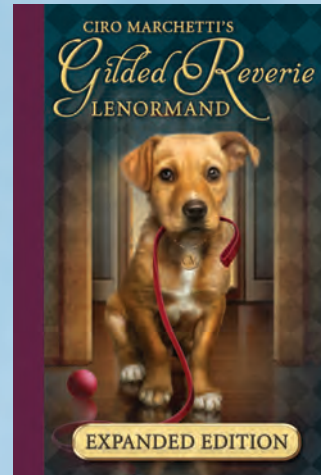
## MELANATED

INTERVIEW WITH  
COURTNEY ALEXANDER





## New Decks for Divination and Inspiration from U.S. Games Systems, Inc.



## EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the beginning of Volume 4 of the Cartomancer. With issue one, this is my baby now. The Winter edition, and thank you so much for all the comments, was the work of both Jadzia and I. This issue finds me making fewer frantic calls to Jadzia as I branch out on my own. The acceptance from the community as been truly amazing. Thank you from a grateful heart. I'll be at a few events this year, so I hope you will come find me. I'll be presenting at the Northwest Tarot Symposium in March. Then, right on the heels of that, I'll be at Nature's Treasures in Austin, TX in April for their Expo. I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can. Your word-of-mouth recommendations to your friends is invaluable. Don't forget to tag us using #thecartomancermagazine (long I know, but it was available. )

What's up for this issue? I'm so delighted to give you Courtney Alexander on the cover. Our resident interrogator, I mean interviewer, chats with the charming Carrie Paris. Beyond that we welcome columnists Carolyn Cushing and Toni Puhle. Be on the watch for the TarBros roundtable too. You will learn about journaling, writing, and even printing your own decks. Speaking of decks, we've got a list of ones you should be on the lookout for. I'm particularly pleased to have Michelle Gruben of Grove and Grotto join us for this issue to give us her perspective on Tarot trends. I've even sneaked an article on runes in this edition.

The Cartomancer is a community-driven magazine. It is my belief that with your input, we can make this magazine the best there is. So please feel free to contact me at [editor@thecartomancer.com](mailto:editor@thecartomancer.com). If you have a topic you'd like to see, let me know. If you are ready to write one, you can find guidelines at [thecartomancer.com](http://thecartomancer.com) (look for Submission in the menu bar. ) Maybe you know of a deck that needs more attention. Tell the creator to submit their artwork for more exposure. What do you want to see on these pages? I want to hear from you.

*Arwen Lynch*

NWTS 2018, Portland, OR, Mar2-4, 2018 [nwTarotsymposium.com/](http://nwTarotsymposium.com/)  
Tarot & Oracle Exhibition, Austin, TX April 14 & 15, 2018 [bit.ly/TarotATX](http://bit.ly/TarotATX)



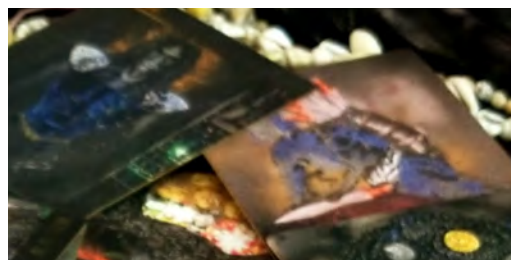
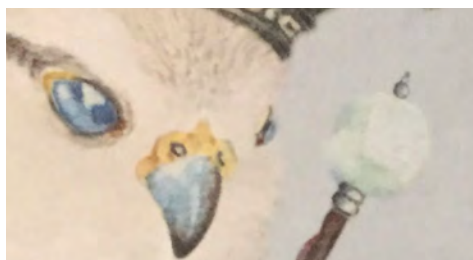
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### THE CARTOMANCER

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 All images and content within this issue of *The Cartomancer* are copyrighted and may not be used in any form (reproduced, duplicated, or printed) without the expressed permission of the copyright holder. Please contact us to inquire. ISSN 2378—5780, recorded with the Library of Congress U. S. A.



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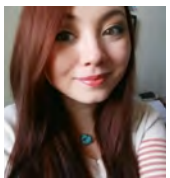
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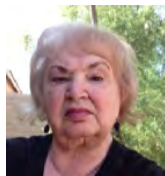
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BONNIE CEHOVET lives in Nevada with four cats and a houseful of books, decks and crystals. Known for her reviews, she is also author of *Tarot, Birth Cards and You: Keys to Empowering Yourself*, *Tarot, Rituals & You: The Power of Tarot Combined with The Power of Ritual* and more.



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## THE CARTOMANCER

Published quarterly in print and online:

Issue One — February

Issue Two — May

Issue Three — August

Issue Four — November

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3608 N. Prince Street

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Clovis

*Many thanks to:*

Serena Bean, Eric Lerner

Arthur Graye, and Chad Morris



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*The Cartomancer* journal is owned and published by Arwen Lynch-Poe in Clovis, NM

Thanks to Jadzia and Jay DeForest for founding this magazine.

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# TAROT TRENDSPOTTING

## FORECASTING TAROT'S FUTURE FOR 2018 AND BEYOND

by Michelle Gruben

An exciting and bewildering revolution in Tarot publishing is underway, with new decks appearing nearly every day. As a retailer, I find it hard to keep up with. As a Tarot lover, I couldn't be happier with the richness of this marketplace. Let's visit the publishing trends that have defined the current moment of Tarot—and make a few predictions about what the next 600 years will bring.

### AN INDIE RENAISSANCE

The age of social media has shaken up every art form. In Tarot, we're seeing a new era of creativity and collaboration. Crowd-funding platforms, such as Kickstarter, have helped solo artists to take their ideas from concept to finished product without traditional financial backing. Multi-artist projects allow illustrators to get published without the commitment of producing a full 78-card deck. It's easier than ever for budding deck creators to reach the eyeballs of patrons and admirers.

What does this mean for the Tarot buyer? We will witness a kaleidoscope of specialty decks for every imaginable interest and taste. (This trend will only slow down when we run out of colors, objects, holidays, forest animals, and mythical beings. ) We will also see major publishers paying more attention to "influencers"—breakout artists and personalities with large social media followings.

### DAZZLING DIGITAL ART

Digitally created Tarot decks have always been hit-or-miss. But as technology improves and artistic techniques are refined, we'll certainly see some better ones. Out with plastic-y limbs, vacant eyes, and shoddy compositing. In with surreal visions, fantastical human forms, and digital art that just looks like—well, art.

Hordes of young people are studying digital art right now. And some of them will surely want to create Tarot decks. A few of these decks will reach new heights in Tarot illustration. Expect to see lots more photo-based artwork, as photo manipulation tools become ever cheaper, more powerful, and easier to use.

### BEYOND RWS

The Rider-Waite-Smith format has been boss for more than a century. Nobody's predicting that to change anytime soon. RWS-style decks will continue to be effective reading tools (and brisk sellers) for decades to come.

Yet some deck creators are looking to break away from the rules of the old grand dame. More artists are opting to create original Minor Arcana scenes, just as Pamela Colman Smith did all those years ago. To re-create (not just re-draw) the Tarot is the ambition of these Tarot innovators.

In an era when every cultural artifact is problematic, some of the less-woke aspects of RWS are also being addressed. That esteemed old deck is also Anglo-centric, gender-binary, monarchist, and (gasp! ) anthro-centric. Deck creators are wrestling with—and occasionally overturning—these Tarot conventions. The inspiration of the natural world has become a handy escape from identity politics, as the many plant- and animal-based decks of 2017 have demonstrated.

### MAINSTREAMING OF TAROT

Bookstores wouldn't sell Tarot decks in the conservative Texas town where I grew up. Now, the same town has Tarot-inspired shirts in the juniors' department at the mall. In December 2016, *The Economist* magazine featured eight Tarot trumps on its cover (for a story entitled "Planet Trump"). Drones of news illustrators



jumped on the bandwagon. Tarot imagery is making its move from the incense-laden back room to the bright lights of the big time. And get ready for a flood of Rider-Waite merchandise when the original images finally pass into the public domain in 2022.

Has Tarot shed some of its occult mystique? Certainly. Today's Tarot is more Star than High Priestess—a figure of wisdom and beauty who pours out her blessings indiscriminately (appropriate, perhaps, for the Age of Aquarius. ) A new crop of non-occultists—designers, marketers, therapists, screenwriters—are finding inspiration in the visual language of the Tarot.

### DELUXE EDITIONS

That flimsy cardboard box and semi-gloss cardstock are so 2008. That little white book is so... little and white. Now, deck creators are caught in a feverish contest of upgraded packaging and limited deluxe editions.

Today's indie decks are miniature works of art, and often come with a trousseau of extras to woo the denizens of Pinterest and Instagram. Are you persuaded by a hand-bound guidebook? Walnut card stand? Screen-printed linen reading mat? Personalized court cards? The decks themselves are awash in snazzy extras like metallic accents, spot gloss, textured paper, and special shapes. Even mass-market publishers are getting into the game with sturdier boxes and oversized cards.

All that swag is pushing the price of new decks upward. But millennials—who love customization, online shopping, and niche

buying experiences—don't seem to mind opening their wallets for upgraded Tarot.

### TECH-ASSISTED TAROT

There's no shortage of Tarot mobile apps, but most are limited to just a few features: Daily draws, journaling, and basic tutorials. Tomorrow's Tarot programs will be even more sophisticated. Tarot fans will be able to sample readings from hundreds of different decks. Creating and sharing new layouts will become easier. Apps will be able to offer the user additional insights based on astrological conditions, reading history, and travel habits. We are even seeing digital Tarot begin to influence traditional publishing. The Ostara Tarot (2017) began life as a mobile app before incarnating into printed form—a strategy that may become common for test-marketing new releases.

### LOOKING FORWARD, LOOKING BACKWARD

As the future of Tarot dawns brightly, there's also a resurgence of interest in cartomancy's past. Tarot enthusiasts are dusting off arcane historic decks and packaging them in shiny new editions. Lenormand and Kipper have enjoyed a recent revival. Marseille-style Tarot is reaching a wider audience, thanks in part to the availability of online tutorials. As publishers continue to mine the vein of historic Tarots, expect to see new printings of some lesser-known decks: Mitelli, Minchiate, and Etteilla.

Michelle Gruben is a Tarot reader/collector and owner of the online shop Grove and Grotto. Her publications include Tarot Tangents, or Little Essays Toward Thoth (writing as Emmie McKellen). Find out more at [groveandgrotto.com](http://groveandgrotto.com). ✨



# DAY OF THE DEAD TAROT

LAUREL THORNDIKE

## Deck Art

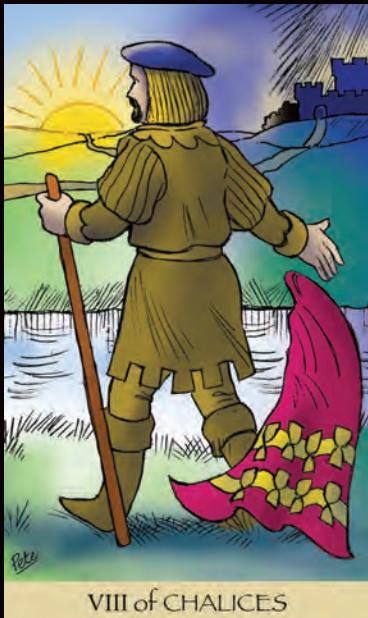
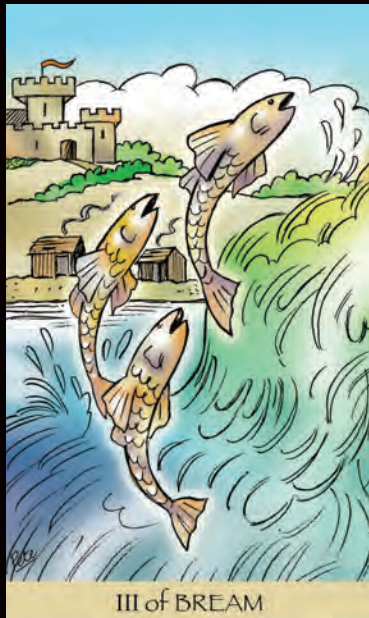
Laurel grew up painting and drawing. She uses both research and her innate intuitiveness for creating all her images. For over twenty years she has been interested in Celtic myths & legends, Native American cultures, Dia de los Muertos celebration, metaphysical & spiritual explorations in connection to the natural world. She adds these elements, as well as music, personal emotions and experiences, including 14 years of dance training to all her work to create pieces that are not just aesthetically beautiful, but meaningful and thought provoking as well.





# TROUBADOUR TAROT

PETE GLAZIER



The Harmony-9 Troubadour Tarot came into being because of a series of ‘right time, right place’ events and a desire to create a working Tarot deck which was uncomplicated and easy to understand (using much of the readers own imagination and interpretative skills). It is completely independently produced. This makes the Troubadour Tarot appealing to established and novice readers alike, both will find something of interest and intrigue within the deck and also the pages of the accompanying book if they so choose.

Pete Glazier has been a graphic designer, illustrator and cartoonist for over 40 years. His interest in the Tarot was sparked by his wife, Karen. His enthusiasm for the subject was given an outlet through a lucky meeting with Sara. Although challenging at times his gradual understanding of the Tarot has helped interpret Sara’s ideas to a point where the deck seemed to create itself!

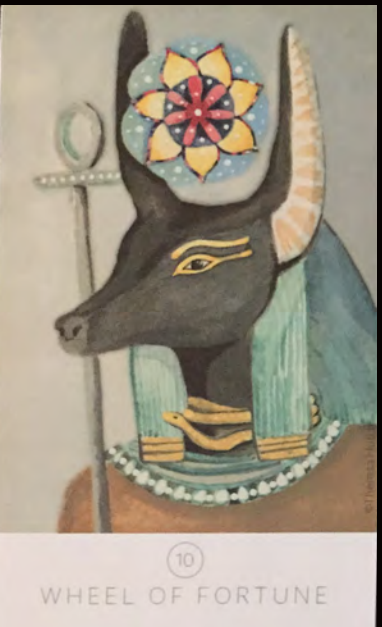
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# WHITE SAGE TAROT

THERESA HUTCH

The intention of this deck is to help people find clarity and flow while navigating life’s journey. The open composition and soft color palette, was influenced by the year I lived in Japan. Every card was created with intention, intuition and were inspired by traditional symbolism from the Rider-Waite deck. My deck was traditionally painted using Schminke Watercolors in the foreground and gouache in the background. I chose animals who connected with specific elements. An example of this is to have very sturdy elephants represent the earth element, pentacles. The characters also connect with traditional archetypes. The Queen of Cups is an otter momma who is laid back and sips her chamomile tea. Seeking a way to balance the hyper-masculine energy in our culture with a soft, strong and feminine deck, White Sage Tarot was born. The traditional methods of watercolor and gouache have a mind of their own. The name, White Sage Tarot comes from its use in smudging; an ancient method, found around the world, used to cleanse spaces and people. coming soon from U. S. Games Systems Inc.





# MONSTAROT

JOANNA NELSON



STRENGTH



NINE OF CUPS



THE SUN



KNIGHT OF WANDS

Monsters don't have to be scary.

The MonsTarot deck is designed to help you reach that innocence and absolute truth we all have inside us. It is a Tarot deck that can be used by Tarot readers of all levels. Created by Joanna Nelson, a full-time illustrator living in Napa Valley, CA. A long-time fan of Tarot as a self-help tool, she wanted to create a deck that, while serious, and faithful to Tarot, would deliver the messages with grace and kindness. So, she spent one year illustrating all 79 cards (with wild card) – bringing to life a world of gentle micro-monsters, helpful bugs and fantastical, whimsical creatures. It is a light hearted and compassionate world, not so very different from our own, but these are not naïve creatures to be ignored.

The harsh truths we faced from time to time are shown to us with empathy by these monsters. They live their lives with hope as a constant, and the aim of the MonsTarot is to bring a little of the same into all of our lives. You can still find limited 1st edition decks of the 500 LE decks including a signed and numbered sticker included.

Personal Space Tarot grew from disinterest in the gendered and heteronormative artwork and themes commonly present in Tarot.

As an illustrator from a background in art history and visual analysis, I built a deck with limited palettes and stylized motifs to enable the viewer, reader, or whomever to infer more of a personal meaning into the cards.

Without so many blatantly human figures, without prescribing the gender binary upon each card, Tarot can be a healing experience that allows a more diverse audience to be represented among the images and themes. It provides personal space, however you may need it. Personal Space Tarot is an experiment in human intimacy. A project looking at how people take in the world around them. A tool for creating a narrative.

Personal Space Tarot's goal is to allow for teaching and learning opportunities for self discovery. We hope to bring people together, and allow for those who need it, a personal space to discover something about themselves.

# PERSONAL SPACE TAROT

EMILEE GRAVERSON





# 1917 TAROT

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

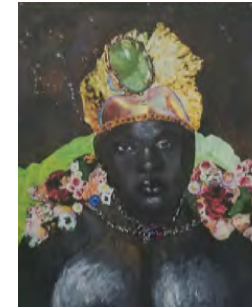


The Silhouette Publishers' international non-profit project the 1917Tarot deck is dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the 1917 Revolution in Russia.

This 78 card deck made by more than 40 painters from 14 countries and all the continents except Antarctica.

The list of artists and Tarot historians who joined and made an appreciable contribution to the project includes Osvaldo Menegazzi, Ciro Marchetti, Alexander Daniloff, Robert Place, Alexander Rybalka, Georges Colleuil, Eric K. Lerner, Giordano Berti, etc.

*The Hanged Man* by Carlos Pumariega (Argentina). Black birds, the night of July 17, 1918, the sky opens and some columns appear. Several cords stretch from these columns, and below them we can see a demonstration of Bolsheviks. The demonstration ends with an execution of Nicolas II in front of the Kremlin on Red Square. His reign is over. The Russian Revolution begins.



## AN INTERVIEW WITH COURTNEY ALEXANDER

by Arwen Lynch-Poe

**ARWEN:** Courtney, why Tarot? What drew you to this system? And chicken or egg? Were you a Tarot person first or an artist first?  
**COURTNEY:** I was drawn to Tarot through my general interest in understanding myself. I had other experiences early on with intuitive and clairvoyant readers who helped me see myself in a broader light. However, to be honest I still was like a lot of us in the beginning, just looking for answers and a way for me to tap into my own gifts. Tarot was the perfect gateway for me because the illustrate of nature of the cars resonate with my own language of communication. So it was easier for me to see the narrative of my readings unfold rather than to sit and channel. Especially because I have still been learning to trust my own intuition. Tarot essentially gives me confirmation and really helps me to cut through the mental clutter.

As for what came first I would say mainly the art but most of this journey unfolded as my spiritual identity did. As I journeyed through art, I began to blossom and accept more of myself, which in turn helped me evolve spiritually. I grew up southern Baptist so for a long time, Tarot and other forms of divination were taboo for me. My very first reading with a clairvoyant was with a woman I affectionately call Ms. Nancy, sometime around 2010. She made me feel safe because she didn't use cards (I wasn't there yet lol). But her gifts were real, I felt safe with her, and she assured me there was nothing evil about using our gifts without the covering of church. It still was many years before I'd venture into Tarot. When I began in 2015, I started with Tarot apps. I know some don't believe in their effectiveness, but it was truly helpful to me. It demystified Tarot, and helped me understand the system.

I didn't begin searching for my own cards until the end of 2015. After searching for about 6 months, I realized there wasn't a deck that reflected my identity or the energy I desired. So early 2016 I set in my mind I'd create a Tarot deck. Having no idea that I was about to create something people would consider important...

**ALP:** What card did you create first for this deck?

**COURTNEY:** The first card I created was the Death card. I was going through so much stress and anxiety right before the birth of this project. I was getting over a previously abusive relationship, I'd just graduated and needed to figure out what to do with my life. Then I lost my job. I was having all of these intense dreams that were scaring the shit out of me, LOL. I struggle with anxiety about sickness and death, so I was dreaming of dying and was paranoid about making through each day by this time. It was a flood of irrational paranoia. I was a total mess. But it was literally as if a part of my previous life was dying off so quickly and outside of my own control. Yet, I had no idea that I was heading right into this new labor, on the verge of birthing something that would be so pivotal in my life and for others.

So there could be no other card more appropriate than Death. compared to all of the other cards, it has an intense stillness as it lingers between this state of decay and resurrection. It's exactly where I was at the beginning of this project.

**ALP:** What lessons have you learned as a creator?

**COURTNEY:** Oh my goodness. What lessons have I NOT learned. My identity as a creator has evolved so much. As a young girl I saw myself as an inventor and designer. I'd come up with so many ideas and sketch them out, design clothes, daydream about the technologies I'd come up with. As I became an adult, my interests turned to graphic design and for a long time I fought through that space to learn, be validated and feel recognized. To no avail. It wasn't until 2013, when I made the decision to go into the University of South Florida Studio Arts program did I even think of myself as a creator. Even then, I only entered the program because I wanted to be a better graphic designer, having no idea that I'd one day be an artist in the traditional sense. So, I guess the main lesson I've learned so far is that to be a creator is to be fluid and boundless. The ultimate creator--whether you see it as "God", a "system", or the





Universe--is constantly shifting and evolving. I think as creatives we often are pressured to do the opposite for our survival or to fuel our other ambitions (which isn't inherently wrong either). So allowing myself to experiment, to be vulnerable, and to not feel restricted by the multitude of ways I can express myself has given me so much more freedom to make work that people can feel my intention in, through and through.

**ALP: What is your own creative ritual? How do you start a painting?**

**COURTNEY:** I have a variety of rituals depending on my mood. The main thing I must always do is make sure my music is right. Sound is so important to creating the atmosphere. Especially when life has me tired, when my mental health isn't always at its peak either, or when I'm simply distracted by everything going on around me. That's why I especially love Afro-beats, soul and funk because those powerful rhythms can be so grounding for me. The bass cuts through the smog and lifts my spirits. I also love to burn floral herbs, use homemade sprays, and I have different stones in my space. I live in a very urban setting so candles, plants, and stones bring me back into contact with that manifesting energy.

**ALP: Did you have support from the Tarot community or was there any pushback?**

**COURTNEY:** I think that I had a good amount of support. I was

unknown as a Tarot reader and unknown as an artist. So I'm sure there was also a healthy amount of skepticism about who I am and if I would be able to pull through. One of the main issues I'd heard about was creators not following through on their promises and it was a perception I was determined to overcome. So I immediately set in my mind that if given this one chance, that if people invested their hard earned money in me. I'd create something that would blow any dollar they spent out the water. I said to myself: "I want people to literally feel like what they gave wasn't enough". Not just for my personal satisfaction, but mainly because I considered all of the support I received to be a gift that I wasn't entitled too. It was to show my appreciation for those who believed in little ol' me. The support and review of my work through this creation phase has been mostly positive. I know there were some people who felt unsettled by my style of work. Which I believe has a lot to do with the association of blackness with darkness or evil. This idea that light and love can't exist within this space. So I wasn't surprised by some people feeling that way. That's exactly why I chose to work with the color black, to combat that stigma because it's been so pervasive psychologically and even socially when we speak on racism and the misunderstandings about traditional African spirituality. Yet black, at least in painting, is the combination of all colors. Our universe is made up of dark matter. And from all the darkness this existence emerged.



**ALP: Do you ever have artist's or writer's block? If yes, how do you resolve that? Also, which is more challenging for you? Writing or painting?**

**COURTNEY:** Absolutely, I have blocks all the time. When I have blocks I like to expose myself to other creative mediums. I step back from my own work to read, listen to music, look at more art, and just appreciate the creative process from a different perspective. There are other times where I will just create anyway. I'm a Virgo so if I had it my way I'd have everything perfectly planned and visualized before ever painting a single stroke or typing a single letter. But that's not always realistic, so sometimes the best remedy is to just start. Create without judgment or filter. You lose nothing but have the potential to gain so much more. The majority of the paintings I created for this deck have been very intuitive without much foresight or planning. So being comfortable in uncertainty was another lesson I learned. As for what was more difficult, the writing definitely was. There's a freedom I found in painting that I did not feel in the writing process all the time. There was more pressure to write a book that would stand toe-to-toe with the artwork in regards to quality. I also had to think a lot more about my audience. With the cards, I made what came to me because it was more about my own inspiration. But writing the book was for readers to learn more and that was a challenge I wasn't super confident in facing. I'm so thankful for having a wonderful editor like Amanda Michelle Jones who helped me tremendously with my writing. I also had a wonderful group of beta readers from a variety of backgrounds in Tarot who ensured I made the book inclusive of different skill levels, as well as ensuring I respectfully

approached the traditions and information I shared.

**ALP: Can you tell us about some of your personal Stars in the creative world? Other artists or authors who kindle that creative spark? Perhaps some of the people who supported you in the birth of this deck?**

**COURTNEY:** My favorite artist is Wangechi Mutu. She inspired so much of my artistic journey. I learned of her my first semester at USF during a sculpture class and it was love at first sight. She wasn't afraid to approach even the most difficult subjects with this interested since of beauty and grotesqueness. Everything exists at the same time in her world, just as it does in this one. Her world is so fantastical and overwhelming and even in whatever discomforts it creates, you still want to be present. That's so powerful to me. So I often read about her and review her work. I also began learning more about West African art. When I was younger I had no appreciation for the depth of meaning in their textiles, architecture, hairstyles, sculptures, and everything else they created. I also love artists like Yinka Shonibare and El Anatsui who bridge these gaps between the innovations of traditional African art with modern materials. Also Nick Cave is a genius with his take on masquerade and performance. Like, it's all so captivating to me and I could go on for days talking about all of these wonderful artists. As for support, I'm very thankful for people like Pamela Steele who introduced me to the Tarot deck creator's group and gave me so much advice about this process. She's a total gem. My best friend Sadie Dean, who is a tireless activist, has always been present in healing me and uplifting me through my creative journey. My partner James came into my life the day my



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Kickstarter ended. His love created the perfect environment for my art to flourish even more. I’m also thankful for so many of my fellow artists from USF who supported monetarily. It’s even more of an honor to see fellow artists purchase your work.

ALP: What message do you hope to deliver with the Dust II Onyx Tarot?

COURTNEY: My desire is for Dust II Onyx to bring people home. I speak a lot about ancestor reverence and trusting self. I encourage everyone to honor those who came before them and to look to the gifts that already live within. To learn what our lineage and present legacy has to offer, even if on the surface it doesn’t seem like much. We are so powerful, capable, and have so much to offer each other in the way of love and healing. But it begins with self, always.

ALP: What is the lesson of the Dust II Onyx Tarot for you, the creator? Pull a card from your Dust II Onyx to answer this one.

COURTNEY: The card that I pulled is Strength, how appropriate lol. I actually remember during this process, a dream I had where I was on this strange walkway that floated in the sky. I was walking along and there was a lion. I approached it and at some point in the dream I remember laying on top of it and rubbing my face in its mane. It was so vivid that I still remember the softness of it. So pulling this card confirms the message of that dream for me as well. I believe this journey has been about solidifying my resolve to be who I’m destined to be. To release the fears of inadequacy and failure, knowing that I’m supported no matter what. The lion is a ferocious animal, but also strikes me as a loyal companion in this card and in my dream. It’s a message to see beyond my limitations and to boldly rise up during this time in my life. What’s next on your creative plate? More work essentially. I decided to launch my own publishing company, Black & Sage, to assist artists from marginalized communities who would like to publish or create products. I also have two art series that continue the use of divination as a vehicle for my work. I’ve also launched Mutha God, an apparel company “fostering fearlessness”and promoting authentic living. At the root of it all is art for me, so I will always be seeking opportunities for exhibitions and other events that allow me to showcase my work or curate for others.

ARWEN: Where can our readers find you and your decks?

COURTNEY: As of now, my deck is available through my website at dust2onyx.com. Second editions will also be made available through select retailers mid-2018. To stay up-to-date, you can follow me on Instagram or Twitter @dust2onyxTarot or on facebook.com/dust2onyx. You may also sign up to receive email updates at dust2onyx.com. ⚡



# PORTALS OF PRACTICE TAROT FOR SOUL TENDING

by Carolyn Cushing

When we think of Tarot, the picture which first comes to mind is spreading out the cards in a pattern and reading them for meaning. We seek specific outcomes in such readings: insight into the present, a glimpse into the future’s unfolding, advice for moving through a challenge. There is a Tarot maxim that we shouldn’t get readings too often, lest we become Tarot dependent or think that our life can change just by seeing a new set of cards.

I support the idea of lessening dependency, but over the years I’ve found my way into playing with the cards on a daily basis. As I did, I loosened up on seeking definitive answers or meanings. I surrendered to the images. I encountered the Greater Than Me. I saw my life held in a larger pattern. In this way, the Tarot became essential to my practice.

I like the word practice; it can be modified by so many descriptors: musical practice, business practice, yoga practice, spiritual practice. There is a humble dailiness implied, and, yet, practice is the foundation for the extraordinary: music shared with others transports an audience; after days of mundane tasks a work action makes an unexpected positive contribution; a stressed body stretches finally into longed for relaxation; or meditation moves into an epiphany of deep knowing and sense of connectedness. This doesn’t happen every day, but integrating practice into our lives opens up the space for these moments of transcendence to occur when the time is right. The more practice, the more space is opened up. And we are never done with practice. It has no end goal; practice flows from the infinite. And what then is Tarot practice? The answer is dual fold.

First, of course, we practice working with the cards. Before we read the cards—for others certainly and even for ourselves—we study meanings and symbols, learn the structure of the deck, discover spreads, and the crafting of questions. We just play around with the cards before we really use them.

After all, Tarot started as a card game so play is at its root. And might not play be the best kind of practice?

And in our playing with the cards, the wisdom that seekers and artists, philosophers, and cartomancers have imbued the Tarot with seeps into us to guide our awareness and actions. Our practice of Tarot leads us into a practice of living life aligned with the Greater Than Us, which could be values of Strength, Justice, and Temperance; the Divine showing its face in, say, The High Priestess, The Emperor, the connection between the figures in The Lovers; or the energy of the cosmos as it takes shape in and flows between earth, moon, sun, and stars. Once the Tarot opens us up to this Greater Than (however we perceive it), the cards also offer guidance for continuing the connection and living out its imperatives in our lives. Yes, the Tarot is a full-service provider giving us *Guides and Pathways*, *Prompts for Practice*, and *Models for Being*.

## GUIDES AND PATHWAYS

Each Major Arcana card shows us a guide for traveling a unique pathway of wisdom. Explored in combination, Majors offer us teachings on the ebb and flow of our seeking. The Empress, Hanged Man, and World, for example, are all linked by rootedness in triplicity—both 12 and 21 reduce to 3—and tell us a story of how we might fruitfully engage in practice. The Empress invites you to tune into your heart’s desires and imagine them flowing into your life. Inspired by her energy, you take steps to give birth to these desires in manifest form. Then the Hanged Man draws you into to his circle, and reminds you that you are just practicing. You need to let go of your desire for a specific outcome. You need to re-anchor yourself in the Greater Than which first inspired your desire. You sigh and surrender. Most likely the reward—the fruits of your practice—will come when you least expect it and perhaps even in an entirely different form than you first imagined. That’s when you find yourself not just being guided by, but becoming yourself, The World/dancer.



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PROMPTS FOR PRACTICE

Embedded in the Tarot’s very structure and shown specifically in The Magician, Wheel, and World cards is a recognition of the equality of spirit/fire/wands, heart/water/cups, mind/air/swords, and physical reality/earth/pentacles. When practice recognizes and tends all these elements, then I call it a soul practice. Because we can’t always be The World dancer balancing all four elements, our practice may call us to focus on one element for a week or awhile. Here the Minor numbered cards are great helpers.

The elemental threes, for example, suggest different practices for walking the Empress path. Taking a look at these from the Gaian Tarot, you are invited to: dance to raise your energy; undertake a guided visualization journey to a land with three suns; or imagine yourself living your best life by the Three of Fire; take a break and play; gather with friends; or immerse yourself in waters of ocean, stream, or your shower by the Three of Water; surrender to your heartbreak and grief and let it flow out of you; take time to journal; or draw/doodle to give shape to your challenges and better understand them by the Three of Air; create something healing; share with others what you

have been creating; or come together in community to create something which could not be done alone by the Three of Earth.

As cards constantly shift when shuffled, the Tarot can offer us just what the soul needs on a particular day or for a particular period of time.

MODELS OF BEING

The Courts, too, have gifts to offer in regard to practice. They show us ways of responding to the path and the practice. The Pages/Children/Princesses are enthusiastic receivers. The Knights/Explorers/Princes are energetically focused on their quest. The Queens/Guardians/Mothers lead through drawing out the best in each person, including herself. The Kings/Elders/Fathers lead through mastery, authority, and understanding of the longer-term vision. Each of these identities would invite you to bring something different to, say, a Three of Water practice of play. As the Page, you could dive right into the first play practice available without much thinking, perhaps running out to dance amid the drops on a rainy day. Embodying the Knight, you might first resist a detour from your quest, but then decide to dedicate your play practice to the Goddess that you serve. Taking the stance of the Queen, you’d recognize that playing cards with friends is better choice than a long drive to the beach for you today. Wearing the crown of the King, you realize all your duties have kept you from time with your family and so you plan a get-a-way with them.

THE PORTAL OF PRACTICE

There is a vast combination of cards to offer us guidance for our practice. And with new decks coming to us constantly, each with its own view into the Tarot’s wisdom, the well of inspiration may be infinite. The Tarot is truly a portal to a whole universe of soul tending practice. So each season here in this corner of The Cartomancer, we will enter the portal of practice to explore how the Tarot can aid us to tend our souls. I’ll be sharing gleanings from my practice of Tarot that guided me through cycles of Love, Death, and Awakening. You are invited to send me an e-mail (carolyn@soulpathsanctuary.com) with musings in response to questions like: What is your practice(s)? What role does the Tarot play in your practice(s)? What is your understanding of the soul? What do you most need now to tend your soul? How does your playing with the Tarot have a positive impact more broadly on your life? Feel free to modify “life” with other words such as spiritual life, work life, creative life I look forward to your musings and to our coming times together traveling through the portals of practice. ✨



# THE CARD GEEK: READING LENORMAND

by Toni Puhle

UNDERSTANDING  
LENORMAND LANGUAGE  
STEP 1

Lenormand has been making a comeback for a number of years. Many readers jump into this “quaint little deck” of 36 cards as the source of an “easy read” or a “break from Tarot”. However, Le Petit Lenormand is much more than a breather from a larger deck. It has a language of its very own and a structure to read as a system. The early instructions from Lenormand decks have one thing in common, the reader is given the “essence” of a card meaning in just one or two lines together with the instructions of how to lay a GT (a reading using all 36 cards).

In the next 2 editions of The Cartomancer, we will be taking a walk through this system step by step to enable any reader to fall in love with what can be a very complex language!

For the Summer issue, we will discuss “Understanding the Lenormand Language”. The Autumn issue covers laying the GT(GT). We will end the year with how to read the GT. The only rule is to keep it simple to start with and then build upon your knowledge.

CORE MEANINGS

Each Lenormand card has a core meaning. These are the meanings at the heart of each card: They make the card what they are. For example, Fox is described as wrongness of all kinds. When Mr. Fox enters a read, we look for an explanation of what is “wrong” in the situation and what the Querent needs to know. Similarly, the Bouquet card has a core meaning of happy occasions and something given as a gift, surprising perhaps in its beauty. We take our core meanings and we string them into a narrative read applying it back to the question asked.

Consider the following core meanings:

(1) Rider	News	(2) Clover	Joy
(3) Ship	Movement	(4) House	Sanctuary
(5) Tree	Health	(6) Clouds	Misfortune
(7) Snake	Betrayal	(8) Coffin	Loss
(9) Bouquet	Happiness	(10) Scythe	Danger
(11) Whip	Discord	(12) Birds	Stress
(13) Child	Simplicity	(14) Fox	Wrongness
(15) Bear	Power	(16) Stars	Luck
(17) Stork	Change	(18) Dog	Loyalty
(19) Tower	Longevity	(20) Garden	Social
(21) Mountain	Obstacles	(22) Cross-roads	Choice
(23) Mice	Erosion	(24) Heart	Love
(25) Ring	Union	(26) Book	The Unknown
(27) Letter	Communication	(28) Man	Male Querant
(29) Lady	Female Querant	(30) Lilies	Ecstasy
(31) Sun	Life Force	(32) Moon	Honor
(33) Key	Certainty	(34) Fish	Prosperity
(35) Anchor	Hope	(36) Cross	Suffering

APPLYING THE LANGUAGE

The important factor in card reading is to answer questions asked. Our question/intention is the foundation upon how a reading is completed. We need to apply the question to the core meaning for the card and understand how that card acts within the situation of the question. If we are completing a reading on a relationship, our cards will have a different meaning than if we are reading about work, health or technology! A great test of



your understanding of the cards is to ask yourself what would cards mean when applied to a theme, for example: Card 31. Sun (Fairy Tale Lenorman Core Meaning: Life Force (without the sun nothing can grow – from the early instructions! ). Themes (example keywords):Relationship, Positive relationship, Work, Success, Health, A fever. As you can see, a certain amount of application and practical thought process is required to begin with!

SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE

Once we apply our practical reading brain and understand the theme of the read, we then need to know how the cards communicate with one another. Unlike Tarot and Oracle Cards, Lenormand cards are quite chatty with one another. They behave as storylines rather than single card reads. You will rarely see a Lenormand reader pull less than a handful of cards. The GT (GT) is the mac daddy of reads and is often laid in order to dissect a situation fully. Imagine a puzzle laid out before you where all the pieces fit together to make the whole overview of the situation – that is Lenormand. Lenormand cards communicate as follows: If you lay a three card spread your answer will look like this: Card 1 + Card 2 + Card 3 = answer to the question. We do not see past, present, and future, or any other separation of the cards. Instead we see a narrative laid out before us. This is the easiest way of learning and understanding Lenormand. There are many books available for deeper knowledge (including noun/adjective relationships etc) but just lay the cards down in this way to get you reading! Example:

Question: “What will my day be like today”  
Answer: 1. Rider + 21. Mountain + 32. Moon  
Keywords: News + Obstacles + Honor.

If we add these keywords together as a narrative we can say



“news of obstacles is recognized,”or “messages brings obstacles but recognition,”or similar. However, saying this to a client isn’t as clear, so we then translate that into “normal”language (e. g. There will be news coming today that will cause delays in receiving recognition”). How do we know which option/ interpretation is correct?This is where your intuition comes in. Intuition applies the card meanings and the card narratives to the situation like a cherry on the top! Let’s try the same cards in another situation:

Question “What will the outcome of the job interview be?”  
Answer 1. Rider + 21. Mountain + 32. Moo  
Keywords News + Obstacles + Honour

These cards suggest that the outcome of the job interview will be news (Rider) that is difficult (Mountain) but recognizing talent (Moon). Again, translating this into everyday language we can suggest the outcome of the interview will be news from the employer that, despite certain difficulties, they recognize your ability to fulfill the role.

Would this tell the querent whether they got the job? Not strictly speaking because the querent did not ask “Will I get the job”. They asked the outcome of the interview and an outcome is a very different question – this is where most readers fall down at first – understanding how you answer the question.

The cards will always act differently to the question asked. This is important to remember. Always refer back to what it is the Querent would like to know.

HOMEWORK TO TRY

Start practicing your skills with 3-card spreads. Pull a few cards for yourself on various questions and see how the cards behave. We are looking for occurrences if we are asking for a daily read, we are looking for illnesses or healing with a health related question, etc.

Take the core meanings above and see how you can apply these to every day themes. Don’t forget to string the cards into a sentence rather than a single card read and most most importantly, KEEP IT SIMPLE! ⚡

Toni Puhle  
Founder, World Lenormand Association  
worldlenormandassociationAuthor, The Card Geek’s Guide to Kipper thecardgeek. co. uk



SAGE ADVICE  
EXPERTS ROUNDTABLE

by Various

What if you could sit down with a group of Tarot experts to ask them your questions? When someone asked me a question about a new deck, I sent out a blanket email asking those that could to respond. Below are the five responses I got back. If you have a question, please send it to editor@thecartomancer.com. We will send it out to the experts or ask the Wizard to answer.

QUESTION

Can you combine decks on the same reading?  
How would you advise someone to combine decks from different systems such as Tarot, Oracle and Lenormand?

BENEBELL WEN: To the first question, only if you can walk and chew gum at the same time. To the second, a Tarot deck for getting the thesis and main points, then an oracle deck of a style resonant with the theme, used to get keywords or supplemental details. Who, what, where, when, and why--ask Tarot or Lenormand. To answer the how--most oracle decks are outfitted for addressing the how. Benebell Wen can be found online at benebellwen.com

CAROLYN CUSHING: In a way a Tarot is already two decks. The Major Arcana presents the bigger picture wisdom lessons and soul pathways we are invited to walk on while the Minor Arcana offers advice for how to walk those pathways in the everyday and meet life’s challenges. We most often work with our Arcanas all mixed together but there are certainly spreads and processes for working with them separately. Since we love the threes so much in the Tarot, you could certainly add in a third layer with the use of an additional

Tarot or other kind of deck. Following up a Tarot reading with a Lenormand reading could bring greater specificity to what is happening and the particular action to take in response. An oracle deck could connect you with angelic or divine guides who can help you work with what arises from the Tarot reading. One of my favorite approaches to blending is to pull a card from, say, the Oracle of Initiation or Dark Goddess Tarot which connects me to a Divine energy. I surround this card with Tarot cards to see how I can honor and bring this energy forth in my life. All these cards then travel with me out into the natural world and I pull them out and make new arrangements in response to what is in the landscape. I often take pictures and then meditate on the image that has emerged. So that’s two decks as well as the images of the natural world combining to guide me in meaning making and walking my soul’s path. Clearly, I think dynamic combining of decks is a good thing! Carolyn can be found online at soulpathsanctuary.com







release in March 2018. Published by HarperElixir, this deck is the same black and white, with splashes of rainbow style as its predecessor, the Wild Unknown Tarot. You can find it on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Books-A-Million, and wherever books are sold .

Flowers of the Night Oracle by Cheralyn Darcey will be released in April 2018. This 44 card deck features a traditional wood carved block prints that are then enhanced by water colors. Originally an

indie deck, it is now being published by Rockpool Publishing and can be found where books are sold.

Speaking of RockPool Publishing, they are releasing The Zodiac Reading cards by Patsy Bennett (Dec 17), Guardian Angel Reading Cards by Debbie Malone (Feb 18), The Lunar Nomad Oracle by Shaheen Miro (Mar 18), and Saints and Mystics Reading Cards by Andres Engracia (Apr 18). You can find them at: rockpoolpublishing.com. au



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US Games Systems will be releasing Eight Coins' Tattoo Tarot by Lana Zellner, Oracle of Mystical Moments by Catrin Welz-Stein, Tarot de Maria Celia by Lynyrd-jym Narcisco, The Urban Tarot by Robin Scott, and Ethereal Visions Tarot by Matt Hughes. As of this writing (December 2017) there are no release dates for these decks, however they are all expected in 2018. You can keep watch for them on Facebook and at usgamesinc.com/.

Schiffer Publishing is set to release the Lenormand Oracle by Alexandre Musruck (April 2018), The AlcheMystic Woodcut Tarot by D. W. Prudence (April 2018), Fahnama: Turkish Oracle by Asli & Polat Canpolat (May 2018), Rumi's Gift Oracle Cards by Ari Honarvar (March 2018), and The Hip Chick Tarot by Maria Strom (May 2018). You can find the list of new releases at schifferbooks.com

Llewellyn will be releasing Elemental Divination by Stephen Ball (Mar 18), Tarot in Wonderland by Barbara Moore (Apr 18). You can find them at llewellyn.com ✓

# THE WILD NATURE OF DIVINATION

by Chase Two Owls

Imagine yourself sitting in the middle of the greenest, most alive forest you've ever seen. The birds converse all around, water trickles through streams on either side of you. Chimes can be heard through the rustling of the leaves in the breeze. Just barely inside your circle of vision between two trees, you spot Moose staring straight at you. From your soul space you hear a message, a message of celebration and of confidence. These are no doubt the words of Moose.

Just as soon as you receive the message, your attention is stolen by Squirrel, scampering from tree to tree. Energetic thoughts of gathering and preparation for the change of weather linger as Squirrel disappears into the shadows of lush limbs. Eagle calls to you, and your body is filled with the power of Spirit.

Mother Nature is full of messages if we are open and willing to listen. We easily forget that we, too, are animals. In order to elevate and to seek answers, sometimes we must bring ourselves back to our primal origins, our basic instincts. Wolf is always eager to teach us lessons about spirituality and to keep us grounded on our life path.

What is your Totem Animal?

We all have at least one, some have many. Have you ever tried including your Totem Animal into your divination practice? The results will astound you.



Before we talk too much about totems and Tarot let's first discuss how to find your Totem Animal. We can find them in many different ways; there is not just one method to determining which fauna finds us. Sometimes, it is just that – the spirit finds us first and we simply accept. Other times, an animal spirit will come to us in meditation or in dreamtime. There are many cartomancy tools to help guide you along this path as well. I am, personally, a huge fan of the Medicine Cards by Jamie Sams and David Carson. These cards work with a system that has been around for a very long time – it is solid, it is grounded, and it works. The proliferation of the Rider Waite Smith Tarot deck has resulted in

some great decks with animal themes. Professionals, such as Tribal Leaders or Animal Speakers, exist around the globe to help guide you to animal clarity. Dance is another great way to find your Totem Animal – mimicking the movements of Mother Nature is one of the best techniques to get in touch with the animals moving through your life. What instincts and movements feel most natural to you? Explore them fervently and find your answers.

So you found your Totem Animal – now what? If you have already established a connection with your Totem Animal, it is now time to solidify that bond. Finding the spirit is a great first step, but it is certainly not the last. Every great relationship takes effort from both sides in order to grow. Research your animal. Where does it live? How does it live? What season does it thrive in? Does it hibernate? Research its prey – maybe it IS prey. This changes



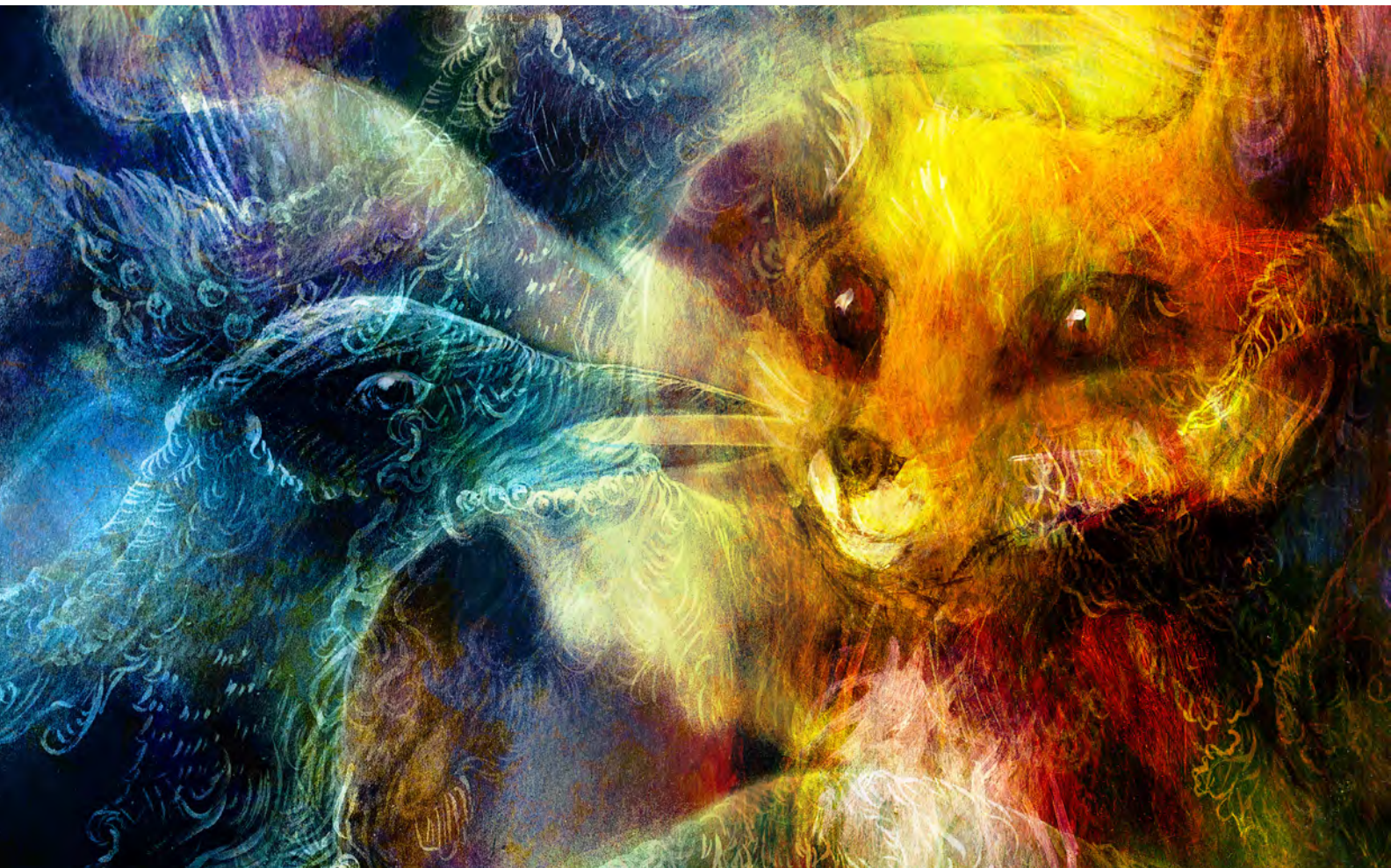
the way you will connect with it. Find out what time of day it prowls – this could possibly be the same for you. Study its color, its size, its shape. How the animal sounds may be something you can mimic in your energy work. Lastly, find out how it makes its home. This can, in turn, help you feel at home in your own space.

Once you find and connect with your active animals, new sights, sounds, and signs will pop up left and right. For me personally, including my active totem into my divination practice is quintessential. I openly invite Spirit and my totem into every Tarot reading I do, whether it is for me or for my clients. I have actual totems sitting in my reading space – small figures or even pieces of the animals themselves. Representations of the animal can work as well, such as an acorn to represent Squirrel.

You will find that every card takes on a deeper meaning when you have an army of primal, spiritual energy backing you. This is true

of any deck, even if it isn't animal themed. The more personal your connection is, the better your results will be. I find this to be true with anything regarding divination.

There is so much to be found in the spiritual realm, and animal guides can help you find it all. Mother Nature is just as open and ready to listen as you are. Don't get stuck on just one means of finding your inner animal – explore them all. Come wide open and eager to listen to every animal call – you may walk away with a completely different spirit than you expected. Never stop working with your totem, no bond is ever too strong. Don't stop at divination, your guides want to be a part of everything you do. Good luck finding your pack, I wish you all the best in your spiritual endeavors. I leave you with the message of Grouse, who is always dancing: *the invitation to join the Great Spiral is always open, all the animals are waiting for you.* ✨



# PRINTING YOUR OWN TAROT DECK

by Eric K. Lerner

So, you have produced the art for your beautiful Tarot deck, and now you want to print it yourself. You have two options for how to proceed. You pay a professional printer to do the work for you, or you become your own printer.

Three popular options have emerged for today's Tarot artists in publishing their own decks. The first option is to price the deck and its packaging with a commercial printer, and then to try to cover the cost with a crowd funding campaign. Popular crowd funding sites include Kickstarter and Indiegogo. Keep in mind they take a percentage of the funds raised. Other factors to consider when building and running a crowd funding campaign include: You provide those who donate with a copy of the final deck or other rewards. Basically, this is a pre-sale. Also, it gives you an idea of whether there is public interest in your work or not. I have found that most successful crowd funding campaigns for deck production limit the number of gifts or rewards to three or four. A common offering might include postcard(s) for a small donation, a deck in exchange for the projected final price of the deck (often for a



slight discount); two decks; and an original piece of art for a large contribution.

Make sure you have priced out what the printing is going to cost you. This is not just the price for the cards, but also includes packaging and the little white book. Be clear about the number of your edition. Remember that the ultimate asking price needs to factor in your expenses and your labor. Anything above your expenses is your profit margin. That profit margin should include a premium for your hard work.

Funding campaigns often will reflect your social media presence. Lots of followers translates into a healthy number of donations/sales. In general, successful crowd funding campaigns feature videos showing the deck and someone talking about it. Almost all successful campaigns feature them. These are often made with a cell phone and low- or no-cost software. Of

course, it helps to have a spot that is professionally produced. If you or a friend has the technical capability, go for it! Remember if you pay a professional for one, you need to factor that into your budget and how you price your deck.

If your campaign succeeds, then you should go ahead, print your



deck, and count all the money. If it doesn’t, take a moment to analyze why it did not succeed.

- Were there issues with your presentation?
- Did you devote enough time to your social media campaign?
- Did the theme of your Tarot resonate with people?

Any type of self-critique is difficult, but learning from mistakes increases the chances for your success in the future.

A second option for professional deck printing is print on demand. Businesses like The Game Crafter have become very popular with a wide variety of Tarot artists, ranging from amateur to professional. Selecting the print on demand option minimizes up front financial risks. If you see that your deck is selling wildly, you can always withdraw it as an offering and either pursue a publishing contract or print the deck yourself through other methods. If you do go with this method, you will have the expense of having proofs printed for the cards and packaging. Do not omit this step. This is important work. Take steps to put your product in the best light.

Finally, you could opt to pay an established Tarot artist to produce your deck. Mentorship from an expert can help you make better decisions. Typically, you pay your mentor an up-front fee in addition to the normal printing expenses. Sometimes such a mentor will ask a royalty too. Many respected figures in the Tarot community offer project development services. Some I respect very much. Rather than make endorsements, check the websites of artists you admire to see if they offer this service.

If the above options don’t seem right to you, you can make your deck yourself. I did so with the now out of print *The Radiant Spleen Tarot*, and learned a great deal from both the anticipated and unanticipated challenges of undertaking this project.

Let me enumerate some of the biggest lessons learned.

The most important area of decision making regards paper. The type of paper you choose effects the appearance of your artwork. A good choice will do it justice. A bad one can seriously undermine it. I assume that you will print your deck using either an inkjet or laser printer. Remember that photographic quality printing paper designed for one of these types of printers does not work on the other. Know which one you are using! Also, remember sheets printed by inkjet printers require drying time and sometimes fixative spray. Ink can smear until it dries. The cost of professional printing paper ranges from about \$20 to \$65 for a pack of 25 letter size sheets. You will be able to print about four cards on each sheet of paper; so, printing a single deck of 22 cards will cost you between five and

thirteen dollars in printing paper alone, not factoring the cost of toner or ink cartridges. Manufacturers offer a wide range of paper types with different textures. Consider how these will portray your artwork.

The following are my thoughts on some of the options available on the market:

- Matte Photo Finish: In general, this works for both continuous tone (photographic) and flat illustration art. Obviously it does not have sheen. Be careful how smudge sensitive the paper is, particularly with inkjet printers.
- Glossy Photo Finish: This comes in a wide variety of grades, and may require use of a fixative. It mimics the appearance of photographs. It tends to be light sensitive; so, the images may degrade when exposed to direct light for long periods of time. Watercolor, wove, and textured finished papers: These tend to be best suited for artwork with solid color fills. The texture of the paper can significantly deteriorate the appearance of continuous tone art. For instance, a linen weave paper can make a photograph look like a noise filter was applied in Photoshop.
- Metallic and Pearlescent: These tend to be the most difficult to find and are often among the most expensive. The brand I used to produce *The Radiant Spleen Tarot* has gone out of business. It was a metallic gold. Such papers can add vibrancy and depth to both flat and continuous tone art.
- Plastic film and transparencies: Although not specifically meant for image printing, these can offer some unique creative possibility when backed by the right paper; however, especially with transparencies, realize the adhesive you use can distort or destroy your image.

There is a lot more trial and error involved in this selection. With all of these papers, it is important to do test prints. You need to know how your intended materials and processes effect your images and gauge whether or not the ink smears or the paper tears easily.

You also need to determine whether or not it requires use of a fixative. I tested about five different papers for The Radiant Spleen Tarot. In the end, it was a close call between a gold paper that did not require fixative and a silver one that did. I broke from a pattern of lifelong respiratory system abuse and opted for the gold. If you choose a paper that requires fixative, you need a well-ventilated area!

Backing and packaging your cards will be discussed in the next issue. If you have questions, feel free to e-mail at [eric\\_k\\_lerner@hotmail.com](mailto:eric_k_lerner@hotmail.com). ✍



# INTERVIEW WITH CARRIE PARIS ARTIST AND DIVINER

by Cynthia Tedesco

To Play & To Divine  
My subject, Carrie Paris, needs no introduction. Mentoring thousands with her classes, cards, charms & charmed divination tools, she is known for her generosity to the divination. You will be amazed & charmed by Carrie Paris!

Cynthia Tedesco - At what age would you introduce a child to Divination?

Carrie Paris: I think kids already spend much of their time in the diviner’s ‘zone’ and for me the idea of introducing them to divination would simply mean supporting them in what they’re already ‘seeing’ rather than telling them what they see isn’t real. A lot of kids get shut down from revealing their magical thinking or speaking to what adults often refer to as, imaginary friends. I don’t think there’s a set age when a kid should be introduced to divination, it either happens or not in natural time. But I do support and honor the concept of sacred play (at any age! ), and won’t shut down what a child is experiencing as they express their experience.

ckt - Is this how you came to Divination?

CP: A treasured photo reminds me of a line in a Rumi poem:



“What you seek is seeking you. “That photo shows my brother Jimmy (my ‘Irish Twin’) and I at ages 5 and 6 during one Halloween. You can see Jimmy dressed as a Pirate and me as a Fortune Teller-Gypsy. This early photograph was divining us years into the future when we, indeed, became what is shown in the photograph. I became a Diviner and creator of Oracles and Jim is a VP of marinas and lives on a yacht.

ckt - How did you come to create and offer charms to the Tarot & Lenormand community?

CP: The charms came when I was sitting on the living room floor looking through a Lenormand

deck. I recall holding the Anchor card in my hand, then I noticed a bracelet with an anchor charm attached to it. It was a ‘light bulb’ moment that caused me to immediately look for other matching charms I might have around the house. After that I went online and started ordering all the charms I could find that matched the cards. One thing led to another and suddenly I had all 36 charms to match the 36 Lenormand cards. Once in hand the charms showed me that I could go from the strict order and systematic style of Lenormand to something more playful and fluid, or what I





like to call Sacred Play. Casting metal charms offers diviners a messy, shiny, musical experience. There is a sense of play and freedom in charm casting that is lacking in card reading with spreads that are historically systemized; yet, I stand by the fact that this approach still offers accurate results.

ckt – Do you think there is a relationship in the terms charm, magic, talisman, and amulet?

CP: Absolutely. I view charms, amulets, and talismans as charged objects that are given and have absorbed intention. And, this can be accomplished by energetic transmissions through a ritual or blessings, or prayers where an object is assigned a specific intention that carries special meaning to the holder. This type of charged intention is also an option with the charms. When used with divination the charms are held together with intentional thinking and usually by magically-minded folk—a powerful combination! In fact many diviners create an alignment with their readings with charm divination by wearing their charms on pins on chains or bracelets. In a way they are wearing their reading. I’d say those charms are magically charged in the same way as an amulet or talisman.

ckt: You offer several renditions of Madame Lenormand’s Oracle. What attracted you to her Game of Hope?

CP: From what I understand, Mille Lenormand never published a deck of her own. But after her death, publishers took advantage of the name “the most famous fortune-teller” and so Lenormand soon replaced the name of the original Game of Hope. My Lenormand decks and the Magpie Oracle Lenormand Charm Kit are in the tradition of the 36 symbols found in Lenormand as it has come down to us. I’m attracted to this system not only because of its lateral association with Mille Lenormand, but its tie-in with coffee and tealeaf reading, where it is thought the original 36 Game of Hope symbols were born. I’m currently working with author, Rae Hepburn of the Tea Leaf Fortune Cards to create a tealeaf oracle

that branches from Lenormand symbols into a wider array of reading methods.

ckt: What place do Tarots and oracle decks have in your practice? Do you have a ‘go to’ preference for your Tarot deck? Why?

CP: I like to use my own charms, decks, and oracles just to make sure ‘they are working.’ I’m always learning new things about how they speak in a reading and I can use that information when in the process of making a new deck or casting kit. Right now I’m using The Lenormand Revolution, which my co-creator, Roz Foster and I are reprinting. We feel this deck’s message of political freedom is perfect for what is happening in the world and our country right now. Each card features an image from the American and French Revolution. With revolution in the air, we feel it shouldn’t be out of print at this time.

ckt - Please describe how the magpie has a special meaning for your charm sets.

CP: The first time I saw a magpie was when I was living in England. I’m from the coast in Northern California so we don’t see them here. So, when I saw them I was awed by how beautiful they are. Then I got to know the history of magpies while taking my Masters’ Degree in the cultural study of cosmology and divination in the U. K. The whole study was a rich cultural study of divining cultures and we were often encouraged to ‘pay attention to the signs.’ At some point, I talked to my adviser regarding the magpies I saw everywhere on campus and she suggested I look into their history and bird divination. Even at that early stage this bird was important to me though I didn’t fully understand why. One thing is for certain; I was being informed about what would be a major focus for me years later. I think this is often how divination works, especially when we pay attention to the signs. I feel that’s when divination really informs into the future—through early inspiration. After leaving the U. K. , my husband and I moved to the town my Nona was from in Italy to write our theses and it was there that I began researching how family and cultural lines might inform a person’s birth cards. This eventually lead me into making the Relative Tarot deck. After Italy we moved to Santa Fe where we became the caretakers at The Audubon Society and its magnificent bird



sanctuary. I was thrilled to be surrounded by magpies! We fed them a lot; so, we got to know more about them and their intelligent ways. I knew then that something was going on and that there would be significant relationships between magpies and myself. When we moved back to California I made The Lenormand Revolution deck with Roz Foster and not long after the anchor charm revealed its secrets to me. I looked at that shiny object much like an excited magpie and quickly took it into my nest of creativity. A few days later someone who knew nothing about my relationship to magpies sent me a postcard and there was a picture of a magpie on it! At the time of delivery, I was thinking about ‘What will I call this oracle?’ ... This was yet another ‘lightbulb moment’ and so the Magpie Oracle was born! Since then I’ve researched magpies and discovered they have an unfortunate history in Europe due to a line in the Bible where the magpie ‘mocks’ Christ while He is on the Cross. It has also been depicted in paintings at the birth of Christ that somehow presages Mary’s sorrow. From there, the magpie went through a terrible time and almost became extinct due to these superstitious associations. Amazingly this association still holds today. In Europe there is a line in a traditional nursery rhyme that still has many people tilting their head in gesture when coming across a lone magpie, as a way to counteract bad luck. The line, “One for sorrow,” suggests you politely ask the Magpie where his family is. Doing so delivers the second line in the nursery rhyme, *Two for Joy*.

Magpies have a better reputation in Native American cultures where they are viewed as messengers that often forewarn the coming of an enemy, while in most of Asia they are seen as intelligent, fortunate, and lucky signs.

ckt -On your website you offer videos that are ‘meditations and visualizations’ as well as guides to using your unique casting sheets, charm sets, and decks. These ‘moving images’ are fascinating spiritual guides. Please tell us about the concept of casting as it pertains to your practice and offerings in your shop. I would have to say you are a filmmaker as well. Referencing your casting sheets for your charm sets: is there a ‘spine’ or a ‘form’ for them?

CP: No! I have no place for complacency. I really hope I can come up with something unique and a little bit different every time I put something ‘out there!’ It’s important to me that I offer something useful, approachable, and not complicated. In reality, there is something in common with every casting sheet and that is that you throw objects on top of it and watch where it lands and how it informs your situation. I love creating visuals because, more than



writing, imagery is my true language. So, for me, visuals are the easiest and most magical way to communicate.

ckt: What is a deck creator’s best attitude and attribute?

CP: To stay true to the process and their inspiration, their muse, their theme; to honor the signs. Once you stray from any of these you are no longer true to your originating inspiration.

ckt: We have a long and proud history of abolition, women’s suffrage, and spiritualism in our country and in England. Mediumship enjoyed great popularity at that time. . . You mention mediumship on your website... can you explore that topic?

CP: Oh sure! Are you familiar with Andrew McGregor of the Hermit’s Lamp in Toronto? Well, he and I started a mediumship and casting course last October. We realized it’s a topic of huge interest, as the course sold out in a day. I’m certain this might also be due to the popularity of the mediums we see on television, but we are NOT teaching that style of mediumship, or what’s referred to as ‘spectacular entertainment’. Andrew has a great

background in ancestral work and my background is in divination and trance mediumship. Together we have created a casting kit strictly for mediumship work and included charms that mediums come across most in a session. This particular kit is not on the market ,as we give it to people who take the course. The 48 charms and pendulum key come with a casting cloth that’s inspired by vintage talking boards. The people who complete the course have the option to go on to take a subscription class with us where we send them 5 new charms a month with a casting sheet, how-to video, and monthly live class. We are going to give the course twice a year due to its demand and how much we love teaching it. In March of 2017 we went to China to teach the

*One for sorrow  
Two for joy  
Three for a girl  
Four for a boy  
Five for silver  
Six for gold  
Seven for a secret  
Never to be told.  
Eight for a wish  
Nine for a kiss  
Ten for a bird  
You must not miss.*





course. Mediumship in China has an ancient past and I enjoyed the opportunity to research their methods.

ckt- Please tell us what you believe is the relationship of the ancestors to divination and the relationship of the tradition of mediumship to your decks, charms, and creative process.

CP: I'm expanding the Relative Tarot to a 78-card deck. It was important to me to make a deck with Birth, Annual, and Significator cards, as I rely on

those when I do readings. It was also a way for me to honor my ancestors because, originally, I didn't plan on making decks... Decks kind of show up and let me know they want to be created. For the Relative Tarot, I had a box of photos of my relatives from Italy. One photo had three people in it. It was showing three obviously impoverished people. The child had no shoes, the woman's stomach was distended with hunger, and the man's shoes



were made of leather bundles. It was a photo they had done at great expense to themselves to give to my Grandfather when he left Italy and was sadly his only visual memory of them because he never returned. However, like many young men who immigrated to America, he was able to send money back home and get them out of the terrible situation they were in. I remember looking at that photo growing up and wondering who that little boy was because no one was sure. It was around New Year's a few years ago, when I photoshopped that photo and placed a coin found in the Rider-Waite-Smith deck, into that little boy's hand. For me this was an artistic act that promoted the wellbeing of future generations. From that project I began to lay more Tarot imagery onto other photographs in order to have a conversation with my ancestors. This is how the Relative Tarot got its start. I found it re-awakened my passion for ancestral communication and mediumship work. I'm certain that current events and mediumship will take me in new directions again; so, I'm paying attention to the signs.

ckt: What would you say to young deck creators in this day and age?

CP: I have about ten people I'm currently working with who are creating their own divination products as either a way of personal exploration or as sales items. I've kind of gotten into this line of work quite by accident. People want to create but don't quite understand how to honor the process or see it through from start to finish. The number one thing I see that challenges deck creators is when they compare their ideas and work to somebody else's. This is the guaranteed death of the inspiration and the creation process. It stops artists in their tracks. They think they have to be, or look, or sound a certain way and it's simply not true. I don't believe divination wants to be put in a box; it's so big and so expansive and there's so many possibilities yet to be explored. So my one piece of advice is DO NOT COMPARE YOUR WORK! Always return to the questions: Why did I start this in the first place? What was my inspiring spark that said, "It's time to bring forth this magical idea?" Once they truly understand that, they can enter the flow of Sacred Play that we've discussed and create an original piece of work. And the world loves originality because it promotes inspiration.

ckt: Thank you Carrie for this interview and for the extreme generosity in discussing your work. I encourage everyone to explore your website's expansive offerings! You can find her here: [CarrieParis.com](http://CarrieParis.com) [LenormandRevolution.com](http://LenormandRevolution.com) ⚡

# TELLING A BETTER STORY

by Bonnie Cehovet



Tarot is, at its heart, a story-telling device. It helps us to look into the past, to understand the present, and to note how the future might unfold, were we to take no action, or were we to take specific actions.

In the field of writing, we can use the imagery and symbolism of the Tarot as a tool to:

- Define characters
- Determine how characters will interact
- Determine story structure
- Create a believable, rich environment for the action to take place in
- Move the story along
- Reconcile a character's thoughts/actions
- Help overcome writer's block
- Open up your personal creativity as a writer

Note: A word here about which Tarot decks are best to use in conjunction with writing. There is no best deck! The deck that works for you at any given time is the best deck. You may find yourself using multiple decks in the process of developing a single story, and this is fine, especially when writing your Bible, and defining characters. Different characters may be defined more easily with different decks.

## DEFINE CHARACTERS

The Court cards in the Tarot can be used to help define a character. I use the Kings to represent mature men, the Queens to represent mature women, the Knights to represent adolescents, and the Pages to represent young children. Look first to the character's basic energy, which is represented by the four suits: Wands (Spirituality, Fiery Energy), Cups (Emotions, Relationship, Creativity), Swords (Power, Intellect), and Pentacles (Physical

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World, Finances, Material Possessions). Choose the suit that best represents your character’s basic self. Then choose the appropriate Court Card to represent your character. Spend time with the card, and allow your character to evolve.

DETERMINE HOW CHARACTERS WILL INTERACT

Characters may interact differently depending on their motivation, on the surrounding action, and the direction the story needs to move in. Start by defining the characters: protagonist, sidekick, store owner, policeman, etc. Then define their basic relationship: antagonistic, friendly, ally, competitor, etc. Then look at how they normally behave around each other, as well as how they view each other. Pick cards from the Minor Arcana Pips (numbered cards) that represent the action that you would like to see. You can pick as many cards as you want for each character. Allow the action to evolve (action is something that a writer does not want to over-think).

DETERMINE STORY STRUCTURE

Before you begin your story, you want to determine the structure. It might be a three-stage structure (setup, confrontation, resolution), or a five-stage structure (exposition, rising action,

climax, falling action and resolution). Whichever structure you wish to follow, try drawing one card from the Major Arcana as the basic energy for each stage, and two or three cards from the Minor Arcana Pips for how that energy plays out.

Create a believable, rich environment for the action to take place in. The Minor Arcana Pips describe what goes on in life on an everyday basis. The Court cards represent the people in our daily environment. When creating the environment for your story, take into consideration things like adding detail and expanding your characters’ environment as the story progresses. Each detail, while providing background for your story, can also act to move the plot/story forward.

Be aware of the aspect of time, and how over time things may change. Whether your story is evolving over weeks, months, or years, make sure that the changes in the setting are reflected in the story. Allow the details in your story to act as symbols for the telling of the story. A dreary day is a completely different background than a bright day with sun streaming in through the windows. Make it easier to write the details in your environment by using all five of the senses: sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell. This will draw the reader in, and make them feel that they are part of the action. A close study of the cards you’ve selected for your writing can inspire many of these details.

MOVE THE STORY ALONG

What do we mean when we talk about moving a story along? Think about it this way – how many stories have you read that where the plot was moving slowly, seemed bogged down, or did not seem to have any sense of direction? You want to keep your readers interested, you want to involve them in the story to the point that they do not want to put it down. How you pace your story depends on how your story is structured, as well as how you describe the movement of characters and events. Things that can move a story along include action, the type of dialogue used, suspense, events happening in rapid succession, short chapters (I really do not personally like shorter chapters, but they do work), and your choice of words. Try drawing a theme from the Major Arcana for each scene, as well as several cards that tell you how the scene can be played out (generally, these cards should be drawn from the Minor Arcana, which talks about the day-to-day events of life).

RECONCILE A CHARACTERS THOUGHTS/ACTIONS

Your characters’ actions are based on their thoughts and beliefs. Adding thought to the story, showing where the character is coming from, adds detail that keeps readers interested in the story. It holds their attention, and keeps them turning the pages.

Any actions your characters take have to have a reason, or your story. This is where a writer’s bible comes in handy. How have you defined your characters beliefs? What are their goals? What are their priorities? Here, take out the Court card you had determined represented this character, and study the imagery within the card. What does it tell you about your character? Now take out the Minor Arcana Pips and look through them. These are the cards of action, the things that move the character through the day-to-day of life. What action does your character want to take, and why? You will also want to look at how your characters interact with each other. How is an action taken by one character going to impact another character, and any action that they might take?

HELP OVERCOME WRITER’S BLOCK

Sometimes a story comes to us full blown – it writes itself. Sometimes we can’t even get a story started! There are many things that we can do to overcome writer’s block: we can work on another project for a while, we can take a walk or go to a movie, we can get up and move around – exercise, or dance to some really great music – we can schedule our writing for the time of day that best suits us. All of these are physical things that we can do. If we want to apply the Tarot to writer’s block, we can take out the Major Arcana and draw cards for one or more of the following:

- 1. The overall story theme
- 2. The theme for this section of the story
- 3. How the characters want the action to flow
- 4. What the block is really about
- 5. Whether you are happy with where the story is headed
- 6. What your goals are for the story

Do a kind of “soft focus” study/meditation with each card that you have drawn. In other words, place the card before you, note what images draw you in, then soften your focus so that the imagery is a bit blurred. What comes to you is what you need to know. Open up your personal creativity as a writer. By nature, writers are creative people. Especially when we are writing fiction, our creativity can at times know no bounds! We can use the Tarot to help us open up our creative muse, as well as to put some boundaries around said muse, if need be. Tarot cards are basically cards filled with imagery and symbolism. It is good to know the basics of the Tarot, but it is also good to allow the images to talk to you through your own life experiences – through the way that the images affect you without thinking about what they “should” mean. You will need a basic understanding of the breakdown of the Tarot (Major Arcana cards represent archetypal energy, Minor Arcana Pips represent events that are happening in the real, physical world, and the Court cards represent aspects of your characters, or people in your characters’ lives), and the four suits (Wands represent Spirit,

Cups represent emotions, Swords represent intellect and the mental world, and Pentacles represent the physical world). Above all, have fun combining the Tarot and writing!

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# THE THIRD TIME’S A CHARM—PCS

A novel by Cynthia Tedesco

Edy took over communications with Loretta as she called several times daily, no longer using the post. Even Gordon was tip-toeing around me. Not that he needed to for I took to bed completely depressed. Sleep eluded me but I did rest in that in-between world that’s so infused with ideas, dreams, and sometimes the most wonderful creative ideas. Not this time. All I could think of, all I could see in my mind’s eye was James the Priest, or was he a Bishop? An Archbishop? Looking back on that miserable day when Loretta got into the red car with James—I realize I no longer ‘loved’ James. I probably hadn’t in a long time. What I loved was the idea of being in love with James. Of James loving me romantically.

I was raging inside . . . not that I cared, in hindsight, that he had betrayed his vow of celibacy, that didn’t bother me a wink. I was on fire with anger at his cowardly avoidance of me. He was using Loretta to do his dirty work and on top of everything—they considered asking me to join them in service of King and Country. What a shabby trick! Of Arthur Waite, I recoiled at his actions as well. He had agreed to entice me to find out more about James at the American Embassy. I felt so betrayed by everyone except Gordon. Even Edy had been quick to note that I’d an affair with a Priest and alluded about breaking his vow of celibacy. What made her think he was R.C. ? Don’t Anglican Priests marry? I guess it

was overhearing Loretta’s diatribe about the impossibility of my romantic illusions about James. Rather to the point I’d say.

When I woke, washed up and dressed, I started down the stairs to the hall only to catch myself from going further. Loretta stood there looking up at me. The stairs do creak. Edy grabbed her attention with a cheery, “Loretta, my dear, do come with me! “I was trapped. How foolish would I look if I turned heel? Very.

As I descended the stairway I realized I did care what Loretta, and by extension, James, thought of me. ‘Why? Why care? There is no answer. Perhaps it was patriotism?’ I shouldn’t joke about that as these are dark times and I barely paid attention to the many newspapers and tabloids of the day. I would go to tea with Edy and Loretta. Hopefully Gordon would be there too. *Does the cook have the day off?* If so, Gordon can’t be asked to eat with the cook, but with us. His presence might diffuse Loretta’s more pointed remarks.

That was not to be. Gordon had gone to London last night, I was too cheerfully informed by Edy, to be with his mother and enjoy some time with her. I couldn’t get mad over it. Ellen has a busy schedule and Gordon doesn’t get much time with her. Had Edy confided to Ellen about my “little emergency”? Had Ellen decided that these

matters were best settled while Gordon was not here to overhear and speculate. Young boys think they know everything and Gordon is no exception. Further, would Ellen get annoyed at me? I was supposed to be the Nanny. It appears Edy has had to take over that job all too often. The weather was horrid as well. It had been raining for days. Ellen would take that into consideration as London has distractions, even in rain, that Smallhythe can’t provide. All this ran in mind at split second speed. Now Loretta stands before me still chatting happily—it would seem—with a glowing Edy. What to say? Where to begin?

I need say nothing it seems. Loretta sat at the table Edy has set for tea and began to eat after Edy gestured for her to begin, please. Then Edy and I followed, I sullen and silent, Edy and Loretta chatting about gardening. What a ridiculous conversation! Edy hates gardening and I am quite sure Loretta doesn’t know a rose from a daisy!

After Loretta gestured with significance for Edy to leave. Not that Edy wanted to, mind you, but the dictates of manners declared she must. Edy gone! What to do?! Loretta quickly filled the vacuum.

“Look Pamela, I am not asking for us to be friends. I am asking you to listen to my Employer’s offer of employment for you. “Her emphasis on the words employment and employer were two words I could not, literally, afford to ignore. I nodded with a bit of shame that she should proceed.

“In America, and here as well, there are persons from all institutions and walks of life working as agents or ‘spies’ if you will, though I hate that term, to serve our country’s needs. I am currently in The English Diplomatic Service but not in a diplomatic way. I speak many languages and I serve as an interpreter of sorts. “

“And your Embassy is . . .?” Loretta turned red.

“Pamela, I work in the employ of both the American and British Embassies. We share, after a fashion, the services necessary. I’m stationed here in England. London to be precise but I have been to New York and to Washington D. C. many times. “

“And James. . . ? This time Loretta rolled her eyes. “Now we come to the heart of it for you. May we go into the parlor now and have a coffee, or something stronger there?” I am not a lover of spirits but I felt we both needed something to proceed. I showed her to the parlor, a very grand room indeed. I left Loretta gazing at some of Ellen’s paintings and books, not that they are her first rate works for those are in London. She has even generously made purchases for friends, family and several worthy institutions. Ah what money

can do! I found Edy and asked for a bottle of Sherry and its glasses. If I learned anything all these years living in the shadow of Ellen’s generosity, like a painting or a book, it was that there is a special drinking and eating implement for absolutely everything!

Edy brought the glasses—three to be exact—then went back to get the Sherry. When she arrived back at the parlor Loretta was handing her the third glass back. Edy smirked, “Well I thought I’d try! “Then she backed out as if leaving an audience with royalty.

I’m quite a good reader of lips and Edy was mouthing, “She’s a Duchess and that James is a Duke! “So Edy had managed to get that tidbit of information without me! I sighed and so did Loretta. She began to laugh. I must say she has a most infectious laugh and I found my mood changing utterly. It was time to let go of ill will. Edy’s little comedy had broken the ice.

“I surrender Duchess. Do tell all. “Loretta had quite the short of it to tell.

“To tell all is impossible but here’s the central issue. You are a member, though not in very high standing of The Golden Dawn. Its members are some of British Society’s most important members—from all walks of life, much like the organizations we deal with all the time in my line of work though not TGDS as yet. Your contacts are diverse; theater, letters, art, and some of the most important leaders in the Empire are associated with TGDS or have important constellations or networks of importance to us. We need a trustworthy contact in the Society. We also need your talents as an artist with a mind for visual detail. Not to speak of your psychic reputation. Pamela, we are asking you to join us. “

“I can provide my eye for visual detail, I can provide my services as a psychic. I will not report on people who are only trying to advance humanity not injure it. “ “That’s good Pamela. We respect loyalty. However, your King and Country come before an individual or relationship to an organization does it not?”

“I believe that’s what Pilate said in, more or less, the same words about Jesus as you have just done for those in TGDS. “

“Ah Jesus. Well. . . ” Loretta poured us each a rather large glass of Sherry. I believe my mention of Jesus knocked the breath out of her. I realized just saying out loud the name of Our Lord’s Son had made her speechless or reluctant to go on. I sipped my Sherry. She sipped her Sherry. I found myself saying, “Not that I’m an Biblical expert but I am taking measures to convert to becoming a Roman Catholic.”



“Yes, we know. I’m staying with your Priest, Father De Costa. He graduated from the same Seminary the same year as James. All very convenient. He too, assists us from time to time.”

“Have you people no shame?! How can you invade people’s privacy with impunity?”“Nothing is private once we join this or that. Particularly when we change. It was not James or I who found your, shall we say, religious beliefs—unusual and eclectic. Born a Swedenborgian, immersed in the religions of Jamaica: Obeah and even Voodoo and conversant with the religious practices and rituals of all the Caribbean to TGDS to becoming an R. C. is not your everyday experience. Not at all. You came to the notice of both the American and British intelligence services. So please... do not blame us! Fr. De Costa has been very circumspect. Not a word about you. He just thinks I needed the country air after working too hard in Turkey.”

“Is it true that James is R. C. and a Priest no less?”

“It is. James went into the Seminary—a Jesuit Seminary when he was fifteen. Much too young, but there you go. We were orphaned when James was three and I was six. We lived with our grandparents: spring and summer in Venice with our maternal grandparents and the rest of the year in New York City and London with our paternal grandparents. If orphaned, one should have a sibling like James and a generous inheritance. We had loving care and the best of educations. It was found I have a good ear for languages as does James. However, James has another gift... he’s an uncanny—how shall I put it? James finds things, he’s something of a genius in Paleontology of all things. He’s not bad at Archeology either.”

“Well I certainly can’t work at near that level of expertise in anything at all! ““Oh yes you can and yes you do! “ Loretta leaned towards me, very serious and determined. “And that might be... ?”

“Art for one thing! That Tarot of yours is a gem of intuitive creation not to speak of technical perfection. Your synesthesia—not a topic of conversation, for another, your psychic sensibilities and your contacts within TGDS and the theatre and world of letters etc. Pamela, there is one more thing you’ve a genius for.... “

“Well... ?”“That bit of a photocopy in The British Museum, The Sola Busca Tarot? You are the only one living who has spent significant time spent with it. I’m quite sure you could help us decode it.”

“Loretta I’ve no idea what you’re talking about. That Tarot is only a copy and I merely used it as a reference for my ideas for my Minor Arcana, much like the area of this countryside, it’s towers and hills,

it’s stained glass church windows, this very cottage, and so forth. “Loretta stood up. “It’s enough for one day. I’ve given you plenty to consider. We say we need you. You say you are not needed. We differ for now. I have every confidence you will come to see how very valuable you are to the Empire as well as across the pond. I know with thought and insight you will not disappoint us. “She drained her glass. She poured another. She downed it saying, “To your health Pamela, may I ask you to tally up what makes for a life worth living? Really that is the only question you need to be asking yourself at this point. May I return in two days’ time? I need to debrief in London and then I’ll be driving back here to stay, once again, with Father De Costa. We all report to someone and my ‘someone’ prefers London. Thank you for listening Pamela. May James return with me on the ninth? He’s very repentant, should that make a difference at this point.”

“Here it is,” I thought to myself. I was paralyzed. I didn’t know what to say then suddenly my mind was full of questions I wanted to ask James... some things, things of geography and timing were not adding up. How could James be in Seminary and Coney Island at the same time? How could he make so light of me? Of our friends in Brooklyn? “Yes, of course. “I found myself saying the words I thought I’d never say. What more surprises would unfold for me? Loretta had drained me with her profound question: the very question anyone with a brain asks. But not today. With what was left of today I’d draw and write in my journal. Hopefully I would within the next two days. Loretta could see I was done for today. As if by cue Edy breezed into the hall where we now stood holding it. Loretta smiled at the two of us, thanked us both and said, “Until we meet again.“ Edy tried to get the conversation out of me but I started up the stairs to my room. I heard Edy say, “Well when the good Father comes nothing is keeping me away! He, I’ve got to see! “

I waved her away and said, “Edy my dear girl, for God, country and King would you clean up the dining room and parlor and do NOT drink any Sherry either! “She laughed but she turned to comply. By the time I was sitting at my easel to draw I knew what my answer would be. Despite trepidations about James, in spite of as yet an unknown salary or reimbursement, I knew I’d take the position. How could I not try? I knew I’d never forgive myself if I did not, at minimum, make an attempt. There was only one thing I was truly in terror of... strangely enough, The Sola Busca Tarot had given me nightmares when I worked with it. I was relieved when done choosing examples from it. Now I was going to promise to work with it in detail, in whatever manner they needed me for that project. I wondered if I’d ever feel safe. Are we all just blustering to keep up a brave front? What is the intrepid Loretta afraid of, what is James truly scared of? Nothing? I don’t believe it. 🌩

# PARANORMAL TAROT TOOLS

by Jenifer Hodgson



In 2009, when I began doing paranormal investigations, I never thought I would be using Tarot or other types of divination to get a feel for locations or to help communicate with the other side. As I investigated with my group - Professional Paranormal Investigations - almost on a weekly basis, I began exploring ways to communicate and connect with spirits who were either around the family or had some connection to the land, home, or business that was under investigation. One of the communication methods I began to use before an on-site investigation was Tarot.

I know you might be thinking, how can you connect to the other side or get a feel for the energy of a location by using Tarot? Just as you tune into a person’s energy to give them a reading, you tune into the energy of the location or the family under investigation.

With each question that you ask, pull a card to look at it. What do you see? What does this card say to you concerning your question? Continue to pull a card for each question you have. You may wish to write down all the messages that you are receiving or even record them in audio or video format. This way you can go back later and compare notes against what took place on site during an investigation or what you picked up from your audio or video equipment. Or, if you are a channeler like me, looking back at these notes may help trigger memories of channeled messages received during the on-site investigation.

This brings us to what kind of questions should be asked. It can be as simple as asking, what do I need to know about this location? What do I need to know pertaining to this family? These two questions

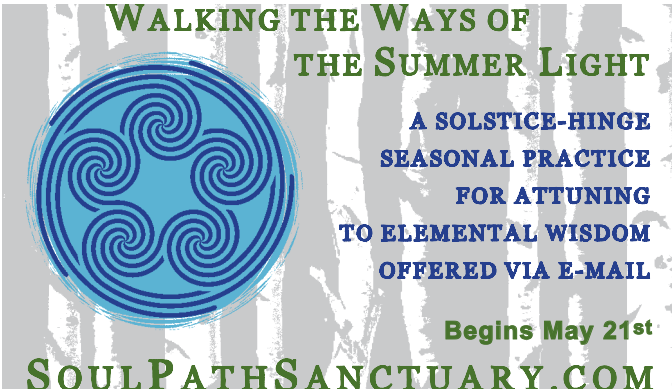


alone can provide a lot of information. Other questions you might ask: Are the spirits in this location positive or negative? Do I need to be cautious at this location?

The above are the very questions that I asked before investigating Poasttown Elementary School, in Ohio.

Shown above are three of the cards I pulled before the investigation. The following is the short version of my thoughts on the cards:

Two of Vessels (Attraction): I asked, what do I need to know? What came to mind is there were a lot of emotional things that took place.



Because the card is reversed, to me the emotions were of sadness and a negative nature. Lots of tears but not happy tears.

What I do know after that investigation is that there were tragedies that took place, a train wreck went through this location. I also heard from the owner of the building that a little girl fell from the second or third floor and there was another event that took place in one of the classrooms where someone was violated. I can validate the train wreck, there is documentation to back this up.

The Wheel: I asked about the energies of the spirits in this location.

My thoughts on this card are that during the day it's quiet, it's peaceful, and then at night it takes on a whole new atmosphere. The Wheel itself reminds me of the cycle of life, death, and rebirth, just as the day is life the night is death for me in this reading. Death did play a part in this location, as many lost their life in the train wreck. The spirits combine their energy together with the living and invite you in to hear their story.

Ten of Bows (Responsibility):  
Do I need to be cautious of this location?

The message I received from this card was one of yes, I need to be careful. I need to be responsible for my actions, not to do something foolish that may get me hurt or my team hurt but to take the time to do the work needed to get the job done, which is to protect myself and others.

During the investigation, there was one location where the energy felt very heavy, it felt like you were being called out to play. This location was a hallway and, in the hallway, was a chair. I sat in this chair for a short time and felt very sick. (picture shown below) I am not the only one who has sat in this chair and felt the strong energies around them. This I have no doubt is what I was being warned about. There is a strong presence there and this presence isn't always what you think.

Having over 100 investigations under my belt this was the first and only time where I was so sick that I busted blood vessels in my eyes. I have done over 100 investigations and only one other location where I have felt this type of energy, The Old Blackford County Hospital. This location is now something else and can't be investigated.

Will I be going back to Poasttown? The answer is yes, will those same energies affect me the same way? I don't know, that remains to be seen. I am looking forward to going back to this location and seeing what else I can learn about the energies that live in the building. ⚡

# TAPPING TAROT MAGIC

by Chloë McCracken

Have you ever had a conversation with a Tarot friend where you talked in Tarot shorthand?

You know the kind of thing: "It was a total Tower moment, but after I'd slept on it I drew on the Queen/King of (name your strong suit) and now I feel the Star's in sight."

It's more than that, though.

Sometimes you do a reading and you just know what a card means to you, even if it's unrelated to the traditional meaning. Something in the image speaks to you. It might challenge you, or tease you, or delight you.

The symbolism of the Tarot offers a very direct, sometimes visceral way to understand and perceive life. It also allows for a huge variety of meanings. Not only does a picture speak a thousand words, it also moves you in a very direct way. And you can use this intentionally to move yourself in the direction you want.

## WHAT IS TAROT MAGIC?

As I often do, when thinking about writing this piece I decided to draw a card to ask, what is Tarot magic? And as so often, the answer made me laugh: The Magician from the Tarot of the Hidden Realms!

Tarot magic is incorporating magical symbols to unite intent and action. It is channeling energy to manifest your desires. It is embodying energies to change your perspective.



So, what does that actually look like?

## USING TAROT CARDS IN MAGIC

There are lots of different ways to use Tarot cards in magic. How you use them will depend in large part on what makes sense to you. For example, if you're an astrologer, you might place a card or cards for the energy you want in the 'house' that best represents your theme. You might also help energize your spell by creating an affirmation to represent your intent. Personally, I'm more into ritual and magical meditation, as well as magical tapping.

## MAGICAL MEDITATION

Tarot cards are a wonderful springboard for imagination. For example, you can choose a card that represents something you want, or something you

struggle with. Then, you enter a trance state and step into the card. Interacting with what or whom you find there can be an amazing path to greater insight and clarity.

You can do a meditation or ritual to 'become' the card and experience its energy, which might help you amplify it in your life. Try tuning into the card, then become either the main figure or any element in the card that inspires you.

You might also enter a trance state and imagine holding a card in your hand, feeling its energy. If it's an energy you want to release, imagine destroying the card. If it's an energy you want to enhance, imagine incorporating it into your heart, head or other appropriate part of your body.



RITUAL

Anything from a simple altar setup with prayer to a High Magick-style working can be enhanced by Tarot cards. Add them in as representations of deity, or of the person or people you are doing your working for, or to represent the energies you want to manipulate.

In a cleansing, for instance, you might spend some time drawing a Tarot image. Then, burn or rip up or bury the image as part of your ritual to symbolize cleansing yourself of that particular energy.

For other workings, you can put an image under your pillow at night, or carry it around with you. Of course, if you aren’t going to destroy the image, you can just use a card from an actual deck. Still, drawing the image (no matter how poorly) imbues it more strongly with your intention!

ON YOUR ALTAR

If you use an altar, Tarot imagery can support you in creating sacred space.

The cards can represent the spirits, ancestors, or deities you call upon. They can also symbolize the quarters and/or the elements.

For example, you can use the Empress and the Emperor (or the High Priestess and the Hierophant) if you want to represent the masculine and feminine aspects of deity. You could use all four Queens according to their elemental associations in the four quarters to represent the Goddess. Or use a mix of Kings and Queens, perhaps Kings for Fire and Air (Wands and Swords), and Queens for Water and Earth (Cups and Pentacles), for a powerful, balanced sacred space. Pages or Aces can be used to represent their elements, too, at a more pure or seed level.

You can also set up a spell on your altar that you interact with over time. For instance, you could choose a card for where you are and a card for where you want to get to. Then, let Spirit choose a card for the energy to get you from here to there. On the first day, you might start with the cards laid out in a line, with the ‘spirit energy’ card in the center. Every day between full moon and new moon, move the card that represents where you are now a little further under the spirit energy card, and the card that represents where you want to be a little further over the spirit energy card. On the last day, your goal card should cover the old situation entirely, transforming it.

TAPPING

EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques), is often called tapping

because, well, talk about a hokey sixties-inspired name! The techniques themselves, though, are gaining more recognition. Tapping combines exposure therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, and the use of acupressure points to calm the nervous system and improve energy flow in the body.

In and of itself, some people would call tapping magical, in the sense of ‘the power of apparently influencing events by using mysterious or supernatural forces.’ There is a growing body of clinical EFT research, but the scientific establishment is not exactly well-known for embracing controversial new ideas.

ANYTHING FROM

A SIMPLE ALTAR SETUP

WITH PRAER

TO A HIGH MAGICK-STYLE

WORKING CAN

BE ENHANCED

BY TAROT CARDS.

MAGICAL TAPPING

So, what does magical tapping add?

Traditional EFT tends to focus on resolving problems, whereas magical tapping emphasizes living joyfully. I don’t want to just get by, I want a deep sense of wellness in every area of life, and I want that for my clients, too. In a magical tapping session, you can use Tarot cards to clarify your situation and desired outcome. You can also ask Spirit, through the cards, for advice on what energy you need to move you forward.

These answers can be incorporated into the tapping. This is done both at the level of what you say and of what you visualize, increasing the session’s impact. On top of that, if it feels appropriate, you can incorporate your spiritual beliefs into the structure of the tapping. This turns it into a prayer or ritual in its own right.

Another magical addition is to tap using a crystal. You can have the crystal on you, call on it by name, or even hold it in your hand to do the actual tapping. In this way, you use the crystal like a tuning fork, cleanser or amplifier for your own energy.

MAKING YOUR LIFE MAGICAL

All of these are beautiful ways to incorporate Tarot and other magical practices into creating your heart’s desire! They are just some examples, as there is really no limit to how you can meld Tarot and magic. Let your intuition guide you...

And if you’d like some help in making your life more magical, I offer sessions either in person or via Skype or equivalent (FaceTime, Zoom, Google Hangouts). Check out magicalwellness.co to see how you can benefit from my services. ⚡



# RUNES: ANCIENT WISDOM, MODERN TRANSLATION

by Jan Tjeerd

For nearly 40 years, the Elder Futhark runes (also referred to as “the runes”) have been the most popular of the runic systems to be utilized in modern divination practice. The Elder Futhark is the oldest known of the rune systems (which includes the Anglo-Saxon, and Younger Futhark).

The earliest known listing of all of the 24 staves dates to around 400 CE, though some theories place the formation of the system before the Common Era. In the surviving historical examples, the Elder Futhark are used as a writing system and not as divination tools.

The term “rune” comes from the Germanic root “run-” which means “secret” or “whisper.” There is historical evidence of other ancient cultures using tools and techniques for divination, and it is likely that divinatory techniques have been developed since humanity began to form tribes with religious ideas and practices. One of the main texts thought to support the use of runes as in the context of divination is an account written by Tacitus of his observation of a divination practice by a Germanic tribe. In Germania 10, he writes of the

priest or family patriarch cutting branches from a fruit bearing tree, slicing it into strips, marking the strips with signs, and throwing at random onto a cloth. Interpretations were then made from the strips after prayers had been made. Although there is no direct evidence of these runes being used in ancient divinatory situations, they do appear to have been used for magical purposes such as spells, sigils, and protective talismans on swords, shields and other items.

As valuable and important as the signs inscribed by our Germanic ancestors on those pieces of wood in the tenth century, so are the divination and magical techniques of runes developed for modern people today.

Two authors, Ralph Blum and Edred Thorsson (pen-name for Stephen Flowers), are primarily responsible for establishing the foundations of modern divinatory use of the runes. Blum states that the runes discovered him when he was given a set while doing research in England. He took the timeliness of their reappearance as a sign and spent a night in meditation which led to his personal

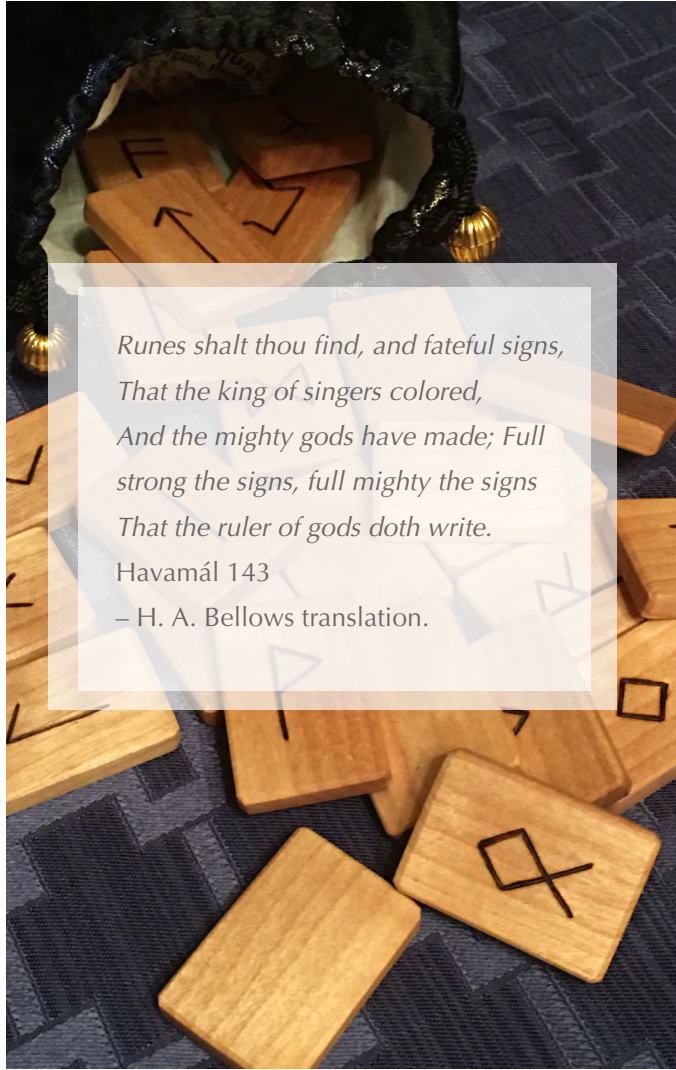


insights about them. This night resulted in the work he published as *The Book of Runes* in 1982.

Thorsson's *Futhark: A Handbook of Rune Magic*, published in 1984, also explores the use of the Germanic runes. In it, he sets the rune student on a journey of unlocking rune mysteries through a combination of the rune poems and references to Germanic and Nordic culture, archeology and history. He also includes using the runes in magic, meditation, talismans, and other ways as a Germanic practice.

Authors such as Nigel Pennick, Diana L. Paxson, and Freya Aswynn followed adding a wealth of personal and archeological information incorporating the divinatory and practical use of the runes with modern Heathen and Ásatrú practices.

The major difference between Blum's work and Thorsson's is the use



of the “blank rune”. The blank rune is a tile or card with nothing on it, to which Blum assigns a divinatory meaning which he counts as part of the system. This blank rune is not part of any of the historical futharks, and is derived from his meditations. The blank rune is perhaps the most significant factor that divides the metaphysical discussion of the runes in the Heathen community. With no historical or practical use of a blank as part of a writing system, many who study runes discount Blum's interpretation out-of-hand, and often discount his entire body of work.

One interested in the runes may wonder which system is best: Blum's, Thorsson's, or another author's? The answer to this rests in the individual, and in what they are looking for in their relationship with the runes. Including the blank as part of the divination aspect is acceptable, but one should know that the blank is just not part of the historical system and was added as part of the modern interpretation.

Thorsson himself indicated that journey of rune study is a personal one that involves developing a relationship with the power of the runes themselves:

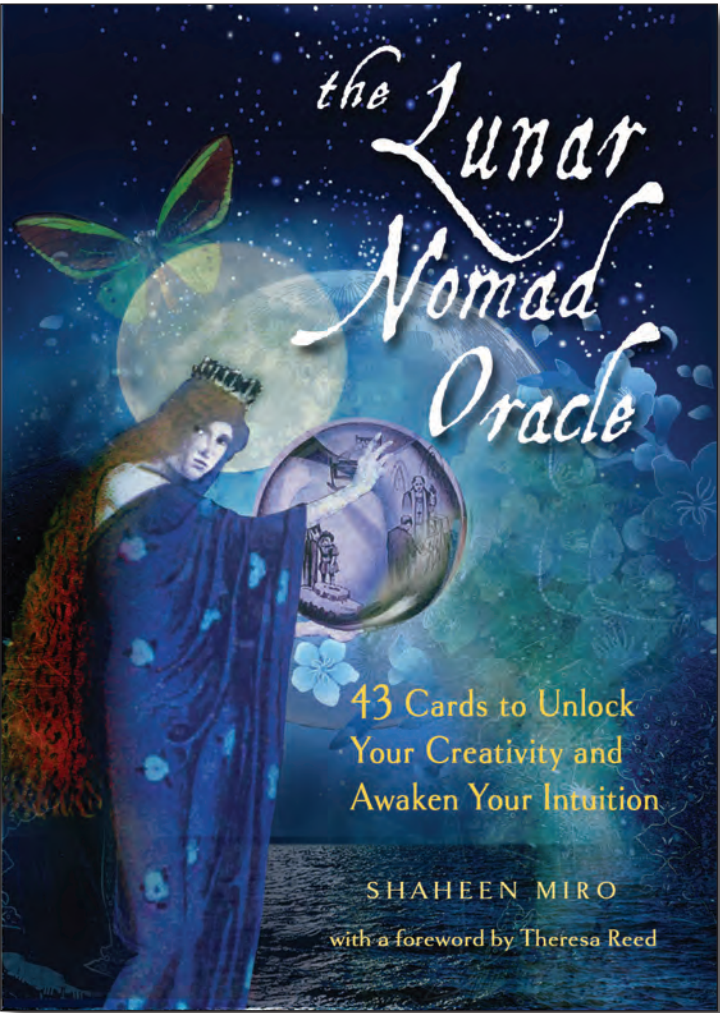
*“One of the most potent aspects of the runic system of magic and philosophy is its openness and lack of dogmatism. Information given in this book is intended to be a guide for the talented and inventive vitki [Old Norse: wise one], who should use it as a stepping stone toward becoming a true philosopher in his or her own right.”*  
— Edred Thorsson  
*Introduction to Futhark: A Handbook of Rune Magic.*

It is important to understand that no one can truly claim that their interpretation or practice with the runes is the historical (or “correct”) method. With this in mind, it's best to not rely solely on the meanings provided in the “little white book” or in other interpretive volumes.

The strongest connection with the runes often comes from a mix of research and personal gnosis. It is also recommended that seekers find varied materials that approach the runes through cultural, spiritual, and historical lenses.

The runes can be amazing resources of divination and magical power. Their power rests not in the material they are carved or printed upon, but in how they reveal themselves to the individual rune student through mediation and use. Developing a relationship with the power and magic of the runes, while connecting with the Gods, Goddesses, culture, stories, beings, and people who embody them, will lead to a vibrant and living experience. ⚡

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# PSYCARDS: THE SEVEN FUNDAMENTALS THE SKILLS

by Catt Foy

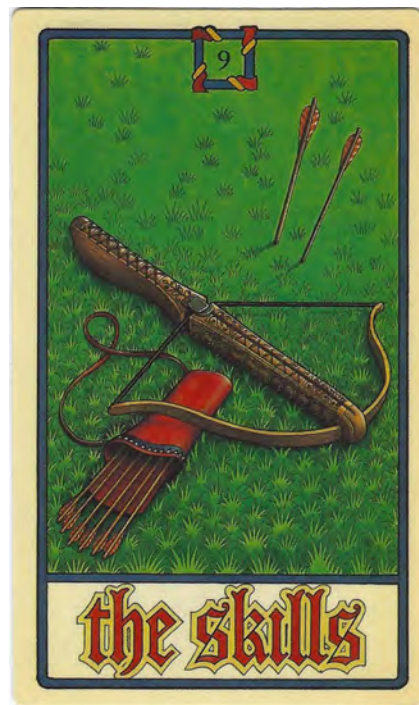
The seven Fundamentals are those cards that relate to those elements of our lives that are common to each of us and nearest to our daily existence, reflecting background and environmental influences.

## THE SKILL

In a lush green field lay a crossbow, arrows and quiver, waiting to be used or resting after recent use. The crossbow requires skill to use, and practice. The arrows represent the ability to reach one's mark, even at great distances. The quiver represents resources to be used in the future. The field demonstrates prosperity and the fruitfulness of summer. The image, as a whole represents your personal talents and skills. Nick Hobson writes in his book, *The Psy\*Cards*, "You are equipped with a bundle of special skills. "You are being encouraged to develop and use these talents and abilities to their fullest potential. This card confirms that you have what it takes to achieve your goals. It is also a reminder to recognize that you have talents that are uniquely yours and they may require some attention and development.

This card represents our skills and talents, both latent and active, to perform a task or achieve a goal. It is the tools of the workplace and knowing how to use them. I can represent talents or aptitudes that one is born with—such as musical or artistic ability—or aptitudes for things such as mechanics or mathematics. It also represents skills that are learned, whether through formal or informal education.

I often see this card appear in readings for people who are contemplating a return to college or other training. It can



represent an upcoming period of learning or developing existing or new skills. It may mean applying existing skills in new ways. The strong link with the archetype of Sagittarius, the archer, suggests higher education, or in-depth education acquired through travel or immersion in a new environment.

The individual arrows can represent specific skills. What tools are in your toolbox? What tools do you need to sharpen or acquire?

Reversed, this card points to a lack of skills or a lack of tools to cope with or handle a specific situation. It can also indicate an unwillingness to learn the skills necessary to solve a problem. Or it could mean that the person in question doubts themselves or fears they won't measure up to learning new skills. Remind the individual that there may be dormant or unused skills that may need only a belief in oneself. As always,

look to the surrounding cards for clarification. 🍀



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# Reviews





WHITE SAGE TAROT REVIEW  
AUTHOR/ARTIST: THERESA HUTCH

The White Sage Tarot was named for the use of white sage in smudging; an ancient method, found around the world, used to cleanse spaces and people. The intention is this Tarot deck is to balance the hyper-masculine energy in our culture with a soft, strong, and feminine deck.

Hutch certainly succeeds in what she set out to accomplish with the White Sage Tarot. The use of watercolor and gouache create a smooth, organic, and inviting sense to each card. With modern minimalist artwork on a neutral background, these borderless cards draw you in.

The deck is standard size: 2.75 inches by 4.75 inches. The cards are borderless with a wide white band at the bottom that the card name appears on in a subtle and non-distracting color and font. There are 78 cards with the Rider-Waite-Smith titles: Wands, Cups, Swords, and Pentacles for the Minor Arcana. In the Major Arcana, Strength is number 8 and Justice is 11.

A sturdy cardboard box is the packaging. Inside is also a little white book, although this one is in color. The LWB includes a brief introduction, Chakra keywords, and keywords for both the upright and reversed cards. Each card has a Chakra associated with it, as an alternative way to read with this deck. After each card's keywords the Chakra number is noted. On the Minor Arcana cards, the ribbon color indicates the corresponding Chakra energy.

The card back is a grey and white basket weave, which is reversible for those readers who have that preference. Hutch uses the colors red and black sparingly and muted them to pink and grey to give a softer feel. The card backs in grey certainly adds to the modern, soft, minimalist aesthetic.

First thing I love about this deck: The smooth matte finish on the cards; they feel good in my hands. I'm drawn to Marseille style decks and the White Sage Tarot fits in that category. Although the deck's symbolism is inspired by the Rider-Waite-Smith Tarot, the Minor Arcana are non-scenic.

Each of the Court card animals, which are quite whimsical, represent the suit's element. Birds are for Wands, Wild Cats for Swords, Otters for Cups, and Elephants for Pentacles.

The Major Arcana feature animals and objects. The Fool is a puppy. How appropriate! The LWB has the first Chakra associated with this card. The upright meaning: fresh start, inner child. Reversed: hesitancy to start, lacking confidence. Dive in head first, innocence of a child.

The Chariot cards is one of my favorites in this deck. The two horses, a wheel, and the sun shining down. It gives the feeling of movement, harmony, and hope. In the LWB: (U) karma, action, driving force, (R) wild horses, thoughtless action. Your path has cleared. Chakra 3.

I found the Devil card with the snake and the apple imagery quite fascinating. So simple and yet so powerful of an image. For this card Hutch writes: (U) addiction, hopelessness, self doubt, (R) breaking free, power reclaimed. A choice, end patterns. Chakra 2.

Another card that I really liked is Death with the light at the end of the spiraling tunnel imagery. The LWB says: (U) big transformation, (R) subtle transformation. Change is a part of life, go with the flow. Chakra 7.

Hutch writes that the open composition and soft color palette was inspired by her year in Japan. That really comes through in the suit of Wands. The organic forms and simple imagery is reminiscent of Japanese watercolor art.

The White Sage Tarot is not ideal for Tarot readers who prefer scenic Minor Arcana to assist with interpretation. While the Major Arcana in this deck offer a little more of a story on the cards, again it is minimal.

However, for readers who enjoy non-scenic pips and lean more toward the Marseille style decks, I recommend looking at the White Sage Tarot. What I find particularly interesting about this deck is the mix of styles. Many of the cards are obviously Rider-Waite-Smith inspired and, yet, the people are taken out of the scene and the suit icons become the only focus.

I think this deck would be a great tool for those who are familiar with the Rider-Waite-Smith Tarot and would like to learn to read the Marseille style decks. It's like a bridge between those two Tarot worlds.

If you study the Chakras, the White Sage Tarot may be an especially interesting deck to pick up. Personally, I've never thought to overlay the Chakras onto Tarot, but nearly everything else is so why not? I can see this additional way to read that cards being particularly insightful during spiritual, wellness, or energetic focused readings.

To contact the deck creator and learn more, visit [whitesageTarot.com](http://whitesageTarot.com)

SPIRITSONG TAROT REVIEW  
BY AMANDA BELL

I have long been a fan of Paulina Cassidy, still when I found out that she was creating an animal themed deck, I was skeptical. I don't normally gravitate toward animal decks. Upon receiving the deck, I let it sit for a few days. I was nervous. I wasn't ready to dislike a deck by one of my favorites. I opened it, and found something that seemed light with a little whimsy thrown in.

It wasn't long before my flipping through the cards slowed to a crawl. They are stunning. They are lush. The larger-than-average bound guidebook shares three spreads for Tarot reading plus a



section on using this deck as an oracle.

I always look at the backs to study the artwork there. It's important to me because it's what my querant will look at. The deck image is gentle with an appearance of two flowers sharing their pollen. That seems indicative of how these cards will share their information--soft and reciprocal. This deck feels as though it will lead with kindness. The cardstock is thinner, but as a riffle shuffler I like it. The size is 4.75"X 2.75"which fits comfortably in my hands.

Let's start with the Majors. The Magician is a raven, and I know ravens to be a tricky lot. I know I can expect the same from the Magician. The Lovers are renamed Love featuring wolves. A change I quite like. Strength is eight and Justice is eleven. We find a change in the Death and Devil cards. They have been replaced



with Transformation and The Shadow. Transformation is a cicada that not only symbolizes change, but patience and liberation. The Shadow is a jackal which doesn’t let us forget the ambition involved in this card.

For card twenty, we find that Awakening has replaced Judgment. I like this. Judgment always leaves me feeling...judgy. The purpose of the Judgment card for me has always been to learn from the sum total of all of our deeds. Awakening fits this idea to perfection. I’d also like to highlight the peacock used to symbolize Awakening. Peacocks are gorgeous when defending their territory. All that plumage! We sometimes forget that when we are taking an accounting of ourselves, we tend to puff up, too.

In the Minors, I always want the suits and Aces first. I like to know what I’m dealing with. In SpiritSong, we have Crystals (pentacles), Shells (cups), Acorns (wands), and Feathers (swords). I love that the Ace of Crystals is a Panda. Pentacles get a boring reputation, and this ace highlights the lighthearted ways our most steadfast suit can create new ideas. The Ace of Feathers is a goat, and the Ace of Acorns is a ram, and they seem wholly appropriate for these suits. I find that newness in the Air and Fire suits needs to be a bit more forceful and stubborn. The Ace of Shells is a turtle, always moving, carrying its most important resource with him. He is perfectly ok with his aloneness. All too often aloneness equates to loneliness which just isn’t accurate in my opinion.

The cards that really stood out to me in this deck were the Nine of Crystals, the Five of Shells, the Ten of Acorns, and the Two of Feathers. The Nine is represented by a spider--what creature is more knowledgeable about the treasures in its web? This tiny creature knows what it’s got, and how much, and what it’s there for.

It’s easy to admire the Firefly in the Five of Shells which can be looked at as creating beauty, lighting the way, and being a beacon to itself and others. This Ten of Acorns is represented by a donkey. Donkeys are always carrying someone else’s burden, yet they still find time for silliness. Sometimes, I think carrying the burdens of those around us is unavoidable and the lesson becomes less about what we are carrying, but how we handle it. The Two of Feathers is a chameleon. Perfect. Just perfect. Chameleons cannot change the space around them, so they adapt to find the silence for thought that they need.

The Court cards are standard Page, Knight, Queen, and King. I think the Pages here are my favorite. Paulina really captures the playful innocence of the Page by using the Raccoon, Monkey, Frog, and Fox. I like the flow of the court cards, and the subtleties in them. I think I could look at them for hours and still not find all the things in them.



MYSTICAL MANGA TAROT REVIEW  
BY MADHAVI GHARE  
Taroticallyspeaking.com

Love manga? Totally into Tarot? Add the Mystical Manga Tarot to your wish list! Among the decks that use the manga style of illustration, the lush and decadent images of this deck are beyond compare. This deck totally deserves a place in your collection. The artwork of the Mystical Manga Tarot has been lovingly created by Rann, a French author and illustrator with an awe-inspiring career in the field. Amazing examples of her work can be found on her website [poisoncage.com](http://poisoncage.com)

The best part: this deck follows the Rider-Waite-Smith style of imagery, which makes it easy even for beginners to pick up and get into. Since the Mystical Manga Tarot Card Deck follows the RWS system, there isn’t much change in the nomenclature or structure of the deck. The cards are an easy to hold and shuffle 4. 61 inches X 2. 76 inches or 11. 7 cms X 7 cms in size. And the lovely back design is reversible.

The deck is packaged along with a paperback-sized book (5. 2 inches X 8 inches), in a sturdy box with a magnetic closure. The book, by Barbara Moore, has 216 pages and full-color images of the cards. Right from the beginning, you will be walked through the world of the Tarot Cards — which is great for beginners. After a quick introduction to the Tarot, the book dives right into the

various terms and FAQs. The second chapter of the book goes in-depth into doing readings, with many of examples. And then the third chapter dives right into spreads like the Celtic Cross, Susyn Blair’s Yes/No Spread, a Generic Spread, a Choices Spread, and The “One” Spread. After this, the fourth and fifth chapters get into the meanings of the Major and the Minor Arcana, respectively.

Each Major Arcana card gets 2 pages, while the Minor Arcana cards get 1 page each. For the Majors, a short write-up of the card accompanies the full-color image of the card, along with the Divinatory Meaning, Advice, and a list of questions to consider should the card show up Reversed in your reading. For the Minor Arcana, the card image is accompanied by the Divinatory Meaning, Advice, and keywords for the Reversed cards.

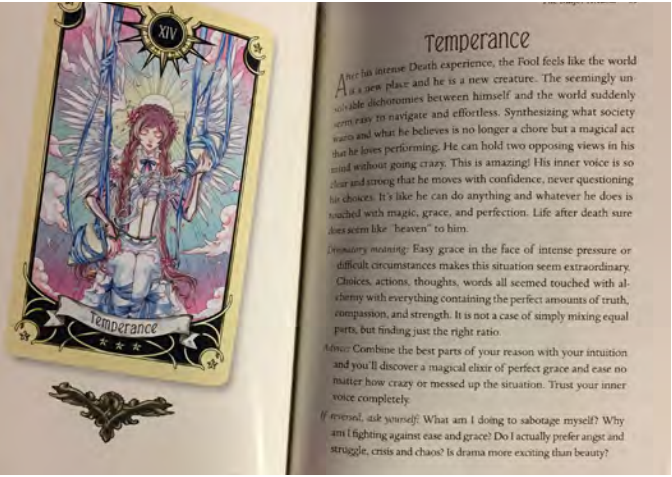
In my opinion, the book could confuse beginners since the chapters about the spreads are placed before the chapters about the card meanings. Appendix A is a list of resources and books for further study, and Appendix B is a write-up of The Fool’s Journey through the cards of the Major Arcana — an interesting story, well written.

If you’ve spent a fair bit of time with the Rider-Waite-Smith system, then you can start reading with this deck right away. You won’t find it difficult to get into the imagery. And while you do that, do appreciate the lovely images and appreciate the artwork. Although the card stock is a bit on the thinner side, the deck does shuffle well. Having a slightly thicker card stock would’ve somehow made me more confident that the cards would last longer and won’t bend easily.

Doing a reading with the Mystical Manga Tarot Card Deck was simple and straightforward, since the RWS imagery is totally my thing. As a lover of the manga illustration style, I found myself getting lost in the artwork — which of course, led to some colorful (and therefore, extremely intuitive) storytelling during the reading.

Another thing that bothered me is that the court cards don’t offer much beyond a basic image of the person. If you are a seasoned reader who knows, for example, what sort of person a King of Cups is like and what his personality is about, then I guess this won’t bother you. But if you are the type to notice the image and draw upon it for more information, then you won’t find much to go on with the court cards of this deck.

Regardless of these little things though, I did find myself enjoying doing a reading with these cards. I guess, that’s what matters in the end, isn’t it?



*Special Offer for Cartomancer Magazine Subscribers!*

By a strange quirk of fate, I have ended up with 2 copies of the Manga Tarot Card Deck. This means I get to share this good fortune with one of you. Should you want this copy for yourself, please email [editor@thecartomancer.com](mailto:editor@thecartomancer.com) with Manga Giveaway in the subject. Only for subscribers. Thanks.

Mystical Manga Tarot Card Deck  
Publisher: Llewellyn Publications  
Artist: Rann  
Book: Barbara Moore

RUNES OF THE NORTHERN LIGHT  
INSPIRATIONAL CARDS  
Concept and artwork by Paola Tartara  
Booklet by Jaymi Elford  
Publisher: Lo Scarabeo  
Article by John Hyatt

The latest rune deck offering comes Lo Scarabeo distributed by Llewellyn Publications. The deck consists of 24 cards depicting the staves of the Elder Futhark rune set with the name of the rune below it.

The artwork is a simple design with the rune in the middle surrounded by bold bright splashes of color. Early promotional images showed colorful cards center which intrigued as reminiscent of 1960s-style advertising images. This prompted an initial appeal to the cards.

The finished product, however, exceeds expectations. Not only is the artwork created with bold primary colors, the cards have metallic accents that were not shown on the original image. These



highlights do not show up as well in the current promotional material. The silver, gold, and copper shine making the cards stand out and sparkle under the light.

Generally, runes are engraved upon wood, stone, clay, glass or other small tokens because it is mostly the symbols that are worked with rather than additional imagery. Over the years, card decks have been created from various authors and artists to make the runic system available as a cartomancy tool as well. These decks have varied from the symbols on the card (as The Runes of the Northern Light) to images depicting the meanings of the runes, interpretive connections to Gods and Goddesses, or random images.

For rune users who enjoy having an option of the symbols on cards, this is a beautiful deck that will create beautiful spreads during a reading. The cards are a sturdy coated stock that should last for many years with careful use. They are 3.5 x 5 inches which is a little large for a riffle shuffle, but a great size for handling, viewing, and overhand shuffling.

The symbols, about two inches in height, are very easy to see on the cards. The cards are also numbered only to show the order of the cards and not any connection to the rune meaning or numerical significance. The deck does not include the historically incorrect “blank”.

The rune names are listed at the bottom of the cards. This poses the main criticism of the deck. The author has mixed the names from different rune systems including the Younger and Anglo-Saxon names. This being the Elder Futhark runes, the deck should be using the Germanic names which are more closely associated with the system. This is an issue because it will confuse the user as to which name to use when learning the names of the runes.

What makes this deck so fun and enjoyable are the vibrant colors used. The color scheme on each card is unique with no repeating combinations. If the colors chosen for each card had a specific meaning to Tartara, it is not evident in the artwork nor in the accompanying booklet. They are simply bold and lively which makes a delightful spread.

The booklet that comes with the deck is written by Jaymi Elford. Although it is 130 pages, the relevant text is covered in about 25 of the pages. The remainder of the book is text translated into 6 additional languages. Elford does a very good job at providing the basic meaning of each rune, distilling it to its very basic concepts as understood by current study. Also included is a brief introduction to rune history and spreads for using the runes in

divination.

She does address the inconsistent use of the names by including the Germanic name of the rune in the text of the book. The explanation with each rune has two components: the meaning and a meditation. The meanings are derived from her personal studies including knowledge learned from others who use runes. The meditations are from her own experience of connecting to the rune power of each. The goal of the mediations is “attempting to recreate the vibe/spirit of olden days and the heathen path.”

With limited space for the book, she did a very good job by being concise with the meanings, impressions, and to provide a personal experience for those new to the runes to begin their journey. Here she honors the intent of this wonderful divination tool by setting a good starting point for more in-depth study from other resources.

As one who uses the runes for divination, readings, and connection to their universal power, this deck is a great resource for those who prefer using cards. The color, sparkle, and size make for a dynamic display when used in private or public settings. I look forward to using it in my practice and think it will make a good addition to a rune student’s resources. ⚡



# SMALL MYSTERIES: A MAGICAL DECK BY MEL DAVIS

by Serena Bean Fox

I was sitting in a small cafe up north reading Tarot when a young woman came up and was excited to show a special deck her friend had made: this is how I “met” Mel—the friend and author of this magical deck. It is available on Etsy in a pocket and large size: I bought the pocket and adore it—and love the little book that accompanies as well. Mel agreed to speak a bit about the deck:

**Serena Bean Fox:** Ok, this is the best, most magical and tiny dang deck. (Though tiny, it’s deep. ) What caused or moved you to create it?

**Mel Davis:** Thank you! I was really happy with how the mini deck turned out. So I have been reading Tarot since I was a teenager and I have always had a little fantasy of drawing my own deck, but it always seemed like such a huge undertaking. There was a couple of years where I was somewhat estranged from the Tarot and in the attempt to get to know the cards again I filled a notebook with pages of notes on all of the cards; researching and learning their planetary and botanical equivalents helped me reconnect with Tarot again.

I showed those notes and drawings to a friend I grew up with and she told me that I should publish it. I then started to show other friends my drawings and notes and as I started to get more interest I started to think seriously about actually making a deck! When I was thinking about the type of deck I wanted to make I decided I wanted to make one that had something that I just couldn’t find in other decks.

**SBF:** What are “Small Mysteries?”

**MD:** I like the idea of this deck whispering secrets to you, secrets about your own life, and secrets about the human condition. I wanted to re-encapsulate concepts of Tarot in small things, imagery that may not be common in Tarot, but is part of our understanding.

I have always used Tarot as a way to create a road map to my own emotions, or conflicts, or feelings of confusion. Often when I am at the precipice of making a big decision I use Tarot to help me parse

out my current state. Finding a way to spell out what I am currently feeling is a great way to start thinking about making decisions. In some ways these, to me, are part of the small mysteries.

The small mysteries are also the way that the human condition draws parallels in all of us, making Tarot and other oracle cards a universal tool. I was not very interested in drawing a deck made up of humans and human actions (also people are hard to draw) but a deck that drew upon the imagery of little things in this world that so much depends upon. The ecological significance of insects and plants to our existence is astounding and I wanted to draw on their power for my imagery.

**SBF:** Tell me about the Butterfly.

**MD:** The Fool is actually roughly based off of the saturniid moths (a beautiful family of moths that include giant silk moths and royal moths). Having a moth for the imagery of The Fool was completely done without question. To me moths are these wonderful creatures that are tragic, and beautiful, and naïve, and mysterious. A moth in constantly searching for the moon to light it’s way and yet always finds itself flying towards light bulbs and human-made lights. Like The Fool the moth is completely drawn to this light without the fear of its own visibility.

**SBF:** And speak a little bit about the Snake.

**MD:** Historically snakes are utterly fraught with meaning. I use snake imagery twice in the major arcana, for the magician, and for the wheel of fortune. Both of these cards were very fun for me to draw (I love snakes) and they are both distinctly different from each other. The Magician has knotted itself into a lemniscate (infinity symbol) and is surrounded by poppies. The Wheel of Fortune is in an ouroboros (figure of snake eating it’s tail) which is also a symbol of infinity or wholeness. For the magician the snake is representing a messenger between worlds, where as with the wheel of fortune the snake represents the natural cycle.



SBF: So, I know you are weaving Tarot with herbs, “animals” and astrology. Tell me more:  
**MD:** For me astrology is sort of a way of understanding the world. The primary premise of divination, and especially the naural world, is that nothing stands alone. Meaning that it is impossible for anything to exist without something else. I think that this is important in divination and was part of what brought me to the realization that Tarot and astrology are actually very closely tied--both Tarot and astrology create narratives out of mythological roots and I think that drawing on that is a very complete way of telling the story of Tarot.

SBF: Tell me about the dots around the knives and wands, matches:  
**MD:** I love mark-making as an act of art. The markings around these cards can represent action, or sparks, or rays of light. Mark-making speaks as much to the action of drawing as it serves as an aesthetic choice.

SBF: What’s your spin on sacred geometry? Any connect with this?  
**MD:** Sacred geometry is something that I honestly don’t know a lot about nor have a lot of experience in. I don’t intentionally have a direct correlation with the concepts of sacred geometry with the deck.

SBF: Talk to me about the herbs. (The magic of herbs)?  
**MD:** Plants are amazing. There would be nothing without plants—our medicines, our food, oxygen--it all exists because plants! ! Plants hold a lot of weight in symbolism historically, and they also represent seasonal and yearly cycles; through this I started to make connections with plants and astrology. Some of the correlations are based off of mythology and some are based off of the plant almanac. For example, to me the High Priestess represents Persephone of Greek mythology, whose symbol is the pomegranate.

Dandelion is associated with resiliency and medicinally is an immune booster. These ‘weeds’ are extraordinary in their ordinariness. In most cases dandelions flower in mid to late summer—during Leo season. For these reasons the dandelion became the obvious choice to represent Strength and Leo.

SBF: What’s your favorite card in the deck?  
**MD:** Oooh that is so hard to answer. I have always identified with the Queen of Knives and my favorite to draw was the Devil. But my favorite cards are probably the High Priestess and the Star. Both of these cards act as guiding hands that sort of hint at answers, but let you find them yourself. ✨



# JOURNALING (WITH TAROT) DISCOVERING PERSONAL NARRATIVE

by Renee Yin



For the night owl, another option would be to draw a card in the evening which surmises your day and journal of its importance. This method is great for beginners in Tarot who are learning initial card associations. I still use this method as it allows me to see the multiplicity of specific cards, such as the infamous three of swords. Is it a warning or lesson? Is the cause internal or external in this moment? Could I potentially be causing more internal pain for myself mentally? With this method, I have noticed a common theme with the three of swords on a personal level. This can be experienced with each card.

But why journaling? Why do people always recommend having a Tarot journal or some way to account for readings? The answer is quite simple. Primarily for beginners, keeping a record of readings requires the application. The reader must physically place a deck in their hands and work with it. A reader can delve into the sea of literary resources regarding Tarot, but they will never be able to learn to read nuance and hyperbole from a book the way application will. What makes Tarot so personal is the way each reader interfaces with their cards.

Journaling isn’t just for beginner Tarot enthusiasts. However, this doesn’t necessarily mean the learning aspect of card reading ever ends for a tenured card slinger. A beginner would be applying the act of journaling to learn by habituation and sensitization. This would be using the cards often and daily while improving. Through time, the reader would continue to peel each layer and more intimate details of each card and themselves.

For the experienced reader, journaling Tarot readings can give you a separate account of your life. This record would give all the benefits known to journaling and will provide your story with a fuller, more vibrant picture. Depending on how you view Tarot, it can be described as “spirit telling your story”. It’s the same narrative you experienced through the day but will include key points you may have missed or may not have realized in the moment.

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This is most helpful on those nasty, glum, bad days. In this case, the story often develops into how the heroine or hero overcame a struggle. This allows the narrative to change from a victim’s account of events to one of achievement.

In my practice, my daily entries are not for the purpose of prognostication. I am not attempting to see what will happen beyond the present. It’s a self-improvement exercise. I pull a card at the end of each day with a single question in mind. “Why?”The subject matter would be based on my personal performance, feelings, or any hiccups from the day. What is the source of the situation and what is my part of it? This ritual keeps me accountable in multiple areas in my life while making my working deck a daily part of it.

This exercise is not for a reader to see their negative attributes on a daily basis. The questions themselves can often be much more important than the answers. To avoid self-flagellation, be sure to include questions such as “Why was this successful?”or “How did this improve a situation?”.

The avid planner can incorporate Tarot and readings in their agenda.

In my mundane life, my planner is akin to my left kidney. It never leaves my side. I will lay out a Celtic cross spread every Sunday afternoon with a steamy cup of tea and write out the common themes and energies for the upcoming week. Then, I will attach it to my weekly view. This may not be the most exciting Tarot practice but, for me, it is the most practical. This weekly ritual does focus on prognostication and it helps to prepare me for the week ahead. I often will receive reminders of things I may forget or lose sight of.

One of the main aspects that draws individuals to Tarot is the narrative. People want to hear more about their life whether from someone else’s eyes or their own. Journaling through Tarot gives an opportunity to discover, create, or adjust your story.

Some of these methods may ask for you to be vulnerable. Resist the urge to shy away from it if you feel any resistance to it. Through writing this chronicle, you have the ability to connect with those who came before you, or learn more about what drives you and who you are.

So, storyteller, what will your first entry be? ⚡



# TARBROS KINGS OF THE TAROT

by et al

Cartomancy has a reputation of being female-oriented, but we know it’s not.

Welcome to Tarot Brothers aka TarBros, where the masculine perspective rules. In each column, Chase Two Owls wrangles a rotating group of male cartomancy enthusiasts. Contact Chase at twoofowls@. gmail.com if you have a desire to join in on the fun or would like to submit a future topic to cover. In this issue’s column Chase and the panel discuss their selections for the Kings of Tarot.

These men were chosen for their impact on each panelist and their contribution to the world of Tarot and cartomancy.

**WALD AMBERSTONE** (by Angelo Nasios)  
Wald Amberstone (along with his wife, Ruth Ann) has been running the Tarot School in New York for the over twenty years. They also host the international Readers Studio Tarot conference every spring. Wald is undoubtedly a King of Tarot, though if you asked him he would probably ask, “what is a king really?”I call Wald the Tarot Socrates for he has had the ability to make me question all my assumptions in Tarot (and many other subjects).

Hosting weekly meet-ups in their home, the Tarot Salons are popular events. I arrive extra early, to hear Wald ask me, “What’s new and exciting?”From here, our conversation unravels into many directions: history, religion, philosophy, kabbalah, and, of course, Tarot. I always learn something from those conversations. Wald’s influence over me and my Tarot journey is hard to pin point. Over

time. little similarities between his journey and mine have appeared. We both found the Tarot in the same type of store and we share similar characteristics through a common “Tree”in their Birth Card Qabalah system. We have similar thoughts regarding Tarot practice as a private affair (though I do read for others). If I had sum up the influence, it would be this: Wald has given me confidence to be the type of reader I am, instead of the reader I “ought”to be, according to some fictional idea of what a Tarot reader is. Tarot readers forget an important rule: We do not have to do everything as a Tarot reader, including reading for everyone. I am just fine the way I am with how I use the Tarot.

**MARCUS KATZ** (by Chase Two Owls)  
Marcus Katz is undoubtedly one of the most well-known names in the realm of divination. A man from England with decades worth of cartomancy experience, it was only a matter of time until he created a realm all his own. Have you heard of “Tarospohy”? If so, you’ve heard of Marus Katz. Along with his working partner, Tali Goodwin, they operate the Tarot Association. He has conducted more than 10,000 readings and continues to read. I, personally, have grown up in the world of Katz and owe much of my knowledge in divination to The Tarot Association. I first heard about Marcus merely by coincidence (if you believe in such).

Years back, I opened my first Lo Scarabeo deck and found an invitation to join The Tarot Association. I immediately opened my laptop and researched the organization. I was very surprised to find the master mind behind it all was a man. I immediately signed up for the service, and have never looked back. It’s easy to be inundated with the amount of information The Tarot Association offers: video courses, live chats with Marcus himself, and written lessons. All of these gave me the confidence to take my own divination career to new heights.

Marcus recreated the theology surrounding cartomancy and put it out into the universe in a way that was easy to understand and

Looking for companionship on your tarot journey?  
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follow. Tarot was really being picked apart and put back together with an almost scientific and historic precision. Because of this, thousands of people come out of the Tarot Association as educated, confident readers. For this reason, Marcus Katz deserves a crown and gets to be dubbed one of The Kings of Tarot.

**JAMES WANLESS** (by Dan Liss)  
James Wanless, creator of the Voyager Tarot, is an active contemporary teacher of Tarot. At the age of 75, he not only teaches workshops in the US but in China, Japan and Europe. He began his training with the Thoth deck, and his New Age Tarot workbook is a must have companion (although you can use it with any deck). However, his biggest contribution to cartomancy has been his Voyager Tarot deck and the companion books including: The Way of the Great Oracle and Strategic Intuition for the 21st Century.

The design of the deck captures the imagination of practitioners around the world. It’s multicultural, featuring people of all races. He changed the court card names to Sage, Man, Woman and Child, making it more user-friendly. While his collage style of art does not appeal to everyone, it made Tarot accessible to a wider audience. James is a proponent of using Tarot as a self-teaching tool.

He encourages users to view their deck as a tool for fortune creating rather than fortune telling, nurturing an active rather than passive attitude toward using this magnificent tool. I picked up my first deck more than 45 years ago and learned by doing. In the 1990s, James got my attention when he was touring and, so I took two of his workshops just to see what I could learn from him. His energy and enthusiasm are engaging and enlightening. While I may not use his deck often, what I learned from him I use all the time. He is an extremely influential person in the field of Tarot.

**ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE** (by Richard Avila)  
Tarot includes many Kings throughout the ages. The one who looms largest in terms of knowledge and influence, for me, is Arthur Edward Waite, founding member of the Golden Dawn and author of The Pictorial Key to the Tarot.

Students of Tarot (or Western esoteric traditions for that matter), whether they realize it or not have been influenced by him, has read him, or run across him.

He and Pamela Coleman Smith are mentioned together for their work on the Rider Waite deck. Waite revolutionized Tarot by commissioning a deck to include pictures across all the cards.

Brilliantly executed by the talented Pamela Coleman Smith, the deck changed Tarot’s history. His companion book, the Pictorial

Key to the Tarot, contains huge repositories of knowledge. Both the Rider Waite Smith deck and the Pictorial Key to the Tarot continue to be reprinted and enjoyed year after year. since 1909.

**MONTÉ FARBER** (by Steven Bright)  
Many men, including myself, view the cards through a practical lens. As my inspiration, Monte Farber is one such commentator. He efficiently breaks down their meanings into manageable chunks. In addition to his abilities, Monte has a creative and imaginative spirit. A well-respected reader, he has never lost touch with the excitement we all encounter when we meet with Tarot for the first time.

Another husband-wife duo, Monte is responsible for writing over 40 books and creating (alone and with Amy) many divination systems, DVDs, and card decks. He has a skill for passing on important information. It’s done in a poetic and charming way, even. Monte not only describes what happens in Amy’s beautiful cards, but enhances the art with his language.

Creative writing is commonplace within guidebooks now, but twenty-five years ago when the Enchanted Tarot Book was written, it stood as a piece of art (and still does). Monte’s stories allowed me to dive into the landscape of each Tarot card early on in my journey, instead of wading in stock interpretations. As an inspiration for my own work, Monte reminds me of the importance of language and the setting of a scene. Being able to impart information and make it stimulating can make or break a Tarot book and, through writing my own manuals, has reminded me of how important a supporting text can be.

While flamboyant and colorful in character, what makes Monte a king within the Tarot world is his ability to walk comfortably in two worlds — of magic and of practical advice. While many clients are interested in the simple facts a reader provides, what would Tarot be without a little imagination and mystical sparkle? ⚡



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Tarot History & Divination

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# ASK THE WIZARD

by Pamela Steele (December 15, 2017)

Dear Wizard:  
*I’ve been studying Tarot for a number of years and have read every book I can find on how to read and interpret the cards. One card that still confuses me is the Fool. Why is it called the Fool? Why is its number “0”? How is the best way to approach its guidance?*  
—Lost in Louisiana

Dear Lost:  
Good for you for taking time and initiative to study different authors and books. First I’m going to suggest you start a Journal (if you haven’t already) and make notes of the commonalities between the different books as to the possible meanings regarding your readings. Finding the common thread can be a great help. Writing it down helps you remember.

As for the name, The Fool is titled ‘Le Mat’ in the Tarot of Marseilles and referred to as The Madman or The Beggar. Traditionally being un-numbered, or Zero, allows the Fool to be apart from rather than a part of the Major Arcana thus the Fool becomes the protagonist in regards to the Journey of the Major Arcana. Kind of like the Fool is a teenager who believes it knows EVERYTHING embarking on a life path with not much, if any, preparation. To further confuse you, the Fool can also represent the highest number (in certain Tarot games) becoming number 22 in the Major Arcana.

What I’ve found is the Fool is essentially the Inner Seeker who approaches each situation (represented by the individual Major Arcana) with little to no knowledge or experience. The Fool can only rely on instinct and trust to guide its footsteps on the path of the Great Mysteries of Life as represented by the human archetypes.

Think of the Fool as your internal GPS for Life’s Challenges. As we grow and evolve, the Fool grows with us and so our journeys continue. The Wisdom of the Fool reminds us the choices we make today define who we are tomorrow and to choose wisely. As well as the lowest and highest numerically, the Fool can “float” through the Major Arcana.



At any juncture we can once again become the Inner Seeker (Fool) and approach the next mystery with openness and joy. Or we can totally botch the whole thing and start over. Either way, take notes and keep that journal. Sincerely, The Wizard~If you have a question you’d like answered, please email “The Wizard” at steele. wizard. Tarot@gmail.com ⚡



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