

TAROT UNVEILED

YULE EDITION 2016



TAROTSCOPES
ARCHETYPES IN THE WILD
CARTA AWARDS NOMINEES
SHADOW WORK FOR JANUARY
INTERVIEW: COURTNEY ALEXANDER
AND MORE.....

INTERNATIONAL
TAROT FOUNDATION

Welcome to the Yule edition of Tarot Unveiled,

We trust our members and readers are all well and looking forward to Yule and Christmas celebrations. Not forgetting that we will also be welcoming the New Year's energy of the Magician in 2017.

The Wheel of Fortune turns and brings an interesting energy for us, one that is auspicious for setting our intentions for positive progress.

We have an exciting December Newsletter for you to enjoy, this issue is a special 'bumper' issue with some very interesting shares and resources included.

You may have seen the voting form for this year's Cartomancy awards? If not you will find a list of the nominees and a link to the voting form. Be sure to make your vote count!

The voted Best Deck will be receiving a prize from the International Tarot Foundation of \$500, so please do not miss your opportunity to vote for your favorites.

We have included some wonderful offers for this month which you will find inside the Newsletter as you read through, not forgetting our News updates and fantastic articles.

Please enjoy!

Lara

Blessings and Merry Yuletide from the team at the International Tarot Foundation!

The Spirit of Christmas Past

By Lara Houston



When I think of Christmas, It is with a longing for the days of old when Christmas held the true spirit of giving.

The commercial bells were not 'Ho ho ho-ing' in our ears with the arrival of the UK Autumn and we still smiled to those passed us by and wished them 'Merry Christmas'.

I do thank my traditional roots for being ever present and not changing my perspective on Yule/Christmastide.

I love Yule and the Winter Solstice because it does not change with the time. It is part of the natural cycle of nature and for this, it is special.

What would be a shame is if the business world took the opportunity to embrace the wondrous celebration of the Winter Solstice into its commercial bosom.

So, here I was , some 2 months ago, trying to think of something that I can give everyone in my family as a Christmas present.

Something that would capture the essence of our past and our traditional and would also be something that they would not or could not just go and buy for themselves.

Thankfully, it came to me! How wonderful it would be for me to be able to give the gift of our ancestors by the means of researching our Family Tree .

My sisters and I have often talked with our Mum about our family who have been here before us, who they are and what they did. We have a good idea of where our roots are from but how wonderful it would be, to actually see their names on paper, how they went about their everyday lives and the places they had lived and seen through their eyes.

I will be honest, it is not a task for the faint hearted, i have spent many an hour/s researching whilst unravelling layers of my past.

It has been and still is, a fascinating journey and I am so looking forward to sharing this with gift with my family members.

So, I am quite satisfied with my endeavors to embrace the Christmas spirit and to be perfectly honest, It will be an absolute pleasure to give the gift to them.

The lady who comes to help me out with some housekeeping is being gifted a Tarot reading and last year I gave a reading in return for 2 litres of Fresh cream (from his cows that morning!).

I would love life to be simple but on the other hand, we have so much to be thankful for that only technical progress could have brought to us. What I would

have quite enjoyed doing this year (if I had a suitable log burning fire) would be to burn the Yule log to celebrate both Yule and Christmas. It used to be a tradition here in England, in fact a Nordic tradition, that each year at this time, the largest log would be burnt, which was from the largest tree. I would imagine that some people still carry out this tradition in some form.

I remember that the ideal is that is to light the new log from the remnants of the last years log and also that the person who lights the Yule log must have very clean hands...But I shall light my candles in the same spirit, after all, something symbolic is just as appropriate.



However, back to the Winter Solstice, I for one am very pleased to be welcoming back the Sun's energy.

I am not a winter person and I do not enjoy the early dark nights (Unless of course, the Full Moon is out in her wondrous glory) and I much more prefer spring and summer evenings.

So just a reminder for those who are in the UK part of the world-December 21st should be the longest night, and then the nights get a little shorter each day until we can mark Spring as being upon us!

Whichever tradition we hold, whether that be Christian or non Christian, we have one common theme among

us and this is to enjoy those whom we have in our life to share these celebrations with. I for one will still be decking the halls with boughs of holly and getting into the Christmas cheer.



Festive Mince Pie Recipe



Ingredients

225g cold butter, diced
350g plain flour
100g golden caster sugar
280g mincemeat
1 small egg
icing sugar, to dust



To make the pastry, rub 225g cold, diced butter into 350g plain flour, then mix in 100g golden caster sugar and a pinch of salt. Combine the pastry into a ball – don't add liquid – and knead it briefly. The dough will be fairly firm, like shortbread dough. You can use the dough immediately, or chill for later.

Preheat the oven to 200C/gas 6/fan 180C. Line 18 holes of two 12-hole patty tins, by pressing small walnut-sized balls of pastry into each hole. Spoon 280g mincemeat into the pies.

Take slightly smaller balls of pastry than before and pat them out between your hands to make round lids, big enough to cover the pies. Top the pies with their lids, pressing the edges gently together to seal – you don't need to seal them with milk or egg as they will stick on their own. (The pies may now be frozen for up to 1 month).

Beat 1 small egg and brush the tops of the pies. Bake for 20 minutes until golden. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then remove to a wire rack. To serve, lightly dust with icing sugar. They will keep for 3 to 4 days in an airtight container.

Introduction to 'Spirit Shadows' Challenge

By Steve Dailey



In January, we will be beginning a month long, shadow work challenge in our [Facebook group](#). I was asked to write a little about what we will be doing as a group.

Shadow work can be uncomfortable, yet quite helpful at the same time. It is my sincere desire that the month of January will be one where we all acknowledge and discover new things about who we are.

I feel the most important thing one must do when taking part in shadow work is to be truthful with yourself. It's not helpful for you to lie to yourself, you need to be truthful and possibly admit to things that make you uncomfortable.

You also need to use a deck that you are very familiar with; a deck that you have a connection with.

Now, you don't need to use a "dark" deck for shadow work. Consequently, a deck that is consistently "light" will probably not work either.

We all know that life has its good and bad moments. Your deck needs to be capable of showing you both of these sides.

One of the biggest questions I am asked about Shadow Work is “How many cards should I draw?” That is entirely up to you. Maybe it’s only one, or maybe it’s five. The point is that it’s your Shadow Work; do it in a way that works best for you, I always draw two cards. The first card is the main issue that relates to the question, while the second is a clarifier of the first card. That just works well for me; it may work for you as well. If you’re not comfortable with two cards, then use as many, or as few as you wish. What’s really important is that you do this when you have some uninterrupted time. Television is off, phone turned to silent, and definitely not done in front of the PC with



Facebook on the screen.

Shadow Work needs to be a priority for 31 days; you will get out of it, what you put into it.

My personal moment was in the morning before going to work. The house was quiet, and I could do my work without the anxiety of being bothered. That made me more relaxed, open and receptive.

You will need some type of notebook to use as a journal. Each day you should write the question you asked, the cards that came up, and your TRUE interpretation of the message.

You have to be honest with yourself!

If you can’t be honest with yourself, then you are just wasting your time. I also kept a list of the cards that came up each day. If a card had appeared previously, I placed a checkmark beside it on my list, while a new card was written on the list.

At the end of the 31 days, you will then be able to see which cards came up the most. Quite often that is a message in itself.

As the question’s are posted each day in the development group, you are free to post a picture of your spread and comment on it. However, I will caution you against posting a picture and asking for interpretations.

Nobody knows your shadow better than you. You need to make a sincere effort in trying to figure out what the message is all about.

I did 31 days of shadow work during October using the Thoth deck. Flat out...that deck kicked my ass. The first 1/3 was me being stripped bare.

The 2/3 part was me seeing just who I truly was. It got to the point where I hated doing the work, but I stuck with it. The last 1/3 was when healing took place; where I learned how to help myself.

I hope that your experience will be as beneficial to you as mine was to me.

Semper Fidelis; see you in January!

THE TAROT READERS DEVELOPMENT AND STUDY GROUP
MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

I would like to introduce you to a new feature for our newsletter: - "Highlights of the Month" - I think you would all agree, that we have had some really interesting posts on our Facebook Group over the last month. We hope to capture some of the insights and wisdom often shared by our very skilled members.

Michael Welch (... In a lighthearted mood ...) Who's up for some Druid Craft cake? Yeaaaaaah!! And NO! He didn't share the recipe



NO! He didn't share the recipe! 😡

Richard Avila She looked straight at me, took a drag off her cigarette and said, "You want to get high? Walk through customs with heroin strapped to your body after stepping off an international flight. Now THAT'S a high." Right at that moment I made two important decisions. Number one - no second date here, and pay the check in cash so she couldn't get a look at my credit card number. Also - no more internet dating, at least for a while, and possibly forever. Which of course brings us to the Press.

Bec Irons Sound advice, another tip I picked up off an experienced reader Is that most cards depending on what system they're based on will have a similar core meaning, but with variants, there's a twist in that core meaning. Find the core meaning, then look for the point of difference that creates the twist

Karli Spruce I like to think the king of swords is a thinker, highly intelligent and someone who is possibly an air sign and can appear very withdrawn. Kings usually can indicate older gentleman and this one usually has lived more than others. Good luck meeting your king of swords, let's hope he is your twin flame xx

Tarot Tidings *What's better than a good tarot reading?*

Kaycee Shaw Do anyone else have a specific wish list on amazon for tarot decks? I have 92 on mine. Also 30 odd oracle decks haha xx

Randy Throw Lol score one for the leaps in logic crew. Most of the time my intuition is... well... it makes sense... i don't know where i came up with it... but it makes sense lol

Debora Sparrow I cleanse decks whenever they seem to be evading a question or replying in a hateful manner. Then I cleanse by 4 elements: 1) Earth - place deck in bag of sea salt, shake vigorously, leave in bag 1 hour, then place under the moonlight for 1 full night. 2) water - I dot each card with rainwater, leave deck out 1 full day. 3) fire and air - I use cedar and white sage together, smudge down deck, reorder it in original order of major and minor arcana and suit. Cleansing is done

Maria Manghise Delaney 6 of cups is nostalgia, if this reading is past and present, then perhaps this person is thinking of happier times.

Michael Welch Is there some relation between the black greyhound and the mistletoe?

Melissa Amyx In druid lore, mistletoe is sacred, and the greyhound is the goddess Cerridwen in one of her manifestations

Any idea which deck this is?

Andrew Lee When there's a new baby in the home, it's understandable that all of our priorities shift and center around that. I can remember when... I think people's suggestions are great, by a card or two on the refrigerator door, by your desk... Keep perhaps a card-of-the-day, and learn about the energy and its revelation. When and if your baby-schedule allows, do an occasional reading for a friend. Reading experiences are the best learning tools

Loller Koaster Really great post! I believe that this is where our intuition needs to kick in stronger than the traditional meanings ascribed to the cards and read for the energies they represent as well - sometimes cards show up in the damdest places and as readers we need to suss out how they apply to the question at hand!

T. Susan Chang
So I was in a bit of a Failure Funk today, and **Peter Stuart** was talking me off the ledge as only he can do, and we got to talking about the 7 of Disks (the "Lord of Failure"). What, I asked, would you prescribe as a corrective to the 7 of Disks [Saturn in Taurus]? The 6 of Disks (the "Lord of Success")? The 4 of Swords [the "Lord of Truce," Jupiter in Libra - opposing planet, opposing sign?]. Spiffo came up with the 8 of Wands (the "Lord of Swiftness," Mercury in Sagittarius), which I really like for a couple of reasons. First, it's Hod vs. Netzach on the Tree. It's Jupiter (ruler of Sagittarius) vs. the aforesaid Saturn. It's Mercury (Hod) vs. Venus (Netzach), and ruler of Taurus. And it's a hot, dry (wands) energy vs. a cold, dry (disks) energy. And it's a kind of movement vs. stagnation.

We also thought about the Tower (XVI) as the path between Hod and Netzach and how its combusive force might be of use. Sorry about the crappy resolution on the diagram - kind of threw it together in a hurry.

Do you ever think about how one card can counteract another - medicine, as it were, for what ails you?

Journal the Questions

by Brooke Barnett

Many tarot readers keep a journal of their readings. Some of us free-associate for pages, exploring feelings, research, and correspondences. We might revisit an entry later to add insights and detail in hindsight. Other readers keep quick notes-to-self, which we may or may not even look at again and plenty of taroists keep no notes at all. Over time, each of us develop our own habits and styles, both as readers and as recorders of our readings.

For those who like to keep a tarot journal, I'm sharing a strategy that I call ***"Journaling the Questions."***

The Question Journal

I have two separate journals. One is my regular daily diary. This is where I write how I feel, what I did, what I'm thinking about--regular diary stuff--and also where I record readings. My entry might be as elaborate as the first style mentioned above, or as short and unintelligible as the second.

The length and depth of the entry depends on a lot of things, such as my state of mind, the gravity of the question, or how tired I am. If a card reappears regularly, I might note in the margin the previous dates it appeared, so I can flip back and forth from event to event and see what connections I can make.

But flipping back and forth across multiple years' worth of journals can be more annoying than insightful. So now I use the Question Journal. (In my case, it's an 8.5x11 wirebound journal with at least 78 pages. I drew some woo-woo art on the front and went through and assigned every card in the deck a single page. Each page has about 50 lines.)

When I do a reading, I still have my regular routine: either journal about it for pages and pages or don't--in my regular diary. Then I open my Question Journal and flip to the page of the card(s) in the reading.

Instead of writing everything that the card might mean, I write the question in response to which card was drawn.



I keep the entry to one line--including the date, the question, and a word or two at the end if warranted. That's it. So, in one journal, I have a compendium of all of the times I've drawn a particular card (not *all* all, of course--I do forget or not bother sometimes), along with the dates/circumstances of the card drawn. For example, a page might look like this:

Ace of Swords

9/12/12 How can I better relate to my mother-in-law?

(New perspective?)

12/14/12 What will my new work environment be like?

(Different points of view? Objective?)

3/3/13 What does my child need from me today?

(Vision/direction? See her P.O.V.?)

3/5/13 "Let go of" position, Full Moon reading

(was job hunting)

6/11/13 At the rate he's studying, will he pass this test?

12/25/13 How I can be less angry when I'm fighting with my husband?

5/29/14 Future position, Celtic Cross - How can we finance this house?

(We got the money.)

Over time, the accumulation of questions can begin to fill out our understanding of what our cards are trying to tell us.

For example, the Ace of Swords above comes up more than once in a communication context. It also comes up both for how to get along with someone and how to treat a child; perhaps there is overlap there that helps us get at a deeper understanding of the card.

Two caveats

1. Time investment. Yes, this method does require many draws for the full potential of the journal to be realized. But given that we often draw the same cards over and over again, it can take less time that you might imagine for meaning to take shape on those pages. Also, many tarotists I know do a lot of readings, anyway, so the journal begins to come in handy pretty quickly.

2. The right question. This method also works best with meatier questions. If you do a lot of Past-Present-Future or other spreads where the positions have more generic

meanings, this method might not do a lot for you. However, it does work with those questions if you can add some context -- such as in the 3/5/13 and 5/29/14 readings above.

In my practice, I use the Question Journal for only one deck (although I journal about cards drawn with other decks, I don't add them to the Tarotpedia.) And I also only include questions from readings for myself.

An Ace is an Ace?



Finally, a word about dignities, elements, and intuition. Good taroists know that the Ace of Swords doesn't mean the same thing every time it appears--not even close. Our close reading of the cards in the context of the spread, or our psychic mojo, might point us toward an non-traditional interpretation.

What that Ace meant in December's reading might not be relevant to what it meant in March--especially if you're reading for more than one person or with more than one deck.

If that happens often in your readings, then the Question Journal might not suit your style. Only you know if this approach might deepen your understanding of the language of the cards.

My Home-Made Skin Oil-Holiday Season Share!

For the ladies and the guys!

Lara Houston

I tend not to buy pharmacy prepared lotions and moisturizers as I find that the vital and beneficial ingredients are a very low percentage compared to the additives to make them more commercially profitable.

So I decided to look at what vitamins were beneficial to skin repair and looked for natural alternatives to the shop bought lotions.

So after researching i sent my Mom to the herbal shop to buy some grapeseed oil, vitamin E oil, pure Argon oil and pure honey . Good lotions for the skin can be very

expensive so i personally would rather invest in my own product that has all the important ingredients without additives and is completely natural.

For a daily all over moisturizing I use Grapeseed Oil as a base oil. Then add vitamin E drops to it, olive oil and Argon oil. I tend to buy the oil in 250 ml bottles and then transfer to a larger bottle.



For the all over body moisturizing oil here is the preparation:

250mls of grapeseed oil

20 drops of vitamin E oil

A small squirt of Argon oil

50mls of olive oil

Just to add:

the Argan oil is optional. it is a little costly but I add it as I already use it.

(Just add some extra vitamin E drops to replace it.)

I tend to use after my shower. It applies to the skin very easily and not too much is needed. This preparation should last 2/3 weeks but you can

make it last longer by adding more olive oil to it. If you do this then just add some extra vitamin E drops to it.

Homemade Face Wash

I also make up a face wash which leaves your skin feeling amazingly soft and nourished.

The preparation for this is:

1 teaspoon of pure honey

1 teaspoon of milk

5 drops of vitamin E oil

This will be enough to use morning and evening.

Simply apply to the face, massaging into the skin for a couple of minutes and then rinse with cold water.

For a twice daily moisturizer I apply pure Argon oil

Further info

Grapeseed oil is greatly beneficial for the skin. It is great in skin repair as it has mildly astringent and antiseptic qualities. provide protection against cellular and tissue damage caused by free radicals.

Rapeseed oil is often used in moisturizers and sun-screen lotions. When applied it 'glides' easily over the skin and is also a great massage oil.

It also has anti inflammatory properties so can assist with arthritis and joint problems.

Vitamin E is well known for its benefits to this skin...it helps feed skin. It can help prevent skin cancer, help with stretchmarks and scars and promotes skin repair.

Sourced [Here](#)

Argan oil is high in vitamin E, essential fatty acids and antioxidants, it leaves the skin feeling smooth and moisturized. Its also great for skin repair. [Here](#)

Extra Virgin Olive oil is also great for the skin, it is known for preventing skin cancer and skin repair. Sourced [Here](#)

Raw honey benefits:

Acne: Honey is naturally antibacterial, so it's great for acne treatment and prevention.

Aging: Full of antioxidants, it is great for slowing down aging.

Complexion boost: It is extremely moisturizing and soothing, so it helps create a glow.

Pores: Honey is clarifying because it opens up pores making them easy to unclog.
Sourced [Here](#)

Perils for the Empath During Seasonal Holidays Self Protection Awareness

This article is about the need for increased protection and awareness for the Empath during the Holidays. I will discuss the importance of claiming responsibility with the increase in contact with family during the holiday season and discuss how we can best handle the extra stress this means for us.

Please bear with me and know that I understand there are way bigger issues out there. This is not for those but more so, this is for helping you to understand “Aunt suzy” and how to enjoy the best possible experience with her during the holiday season.

Guidance

I apply my own personal protection firstly.

During any interactions and discussions with lovely ‘Aunt Suzy’ I endeavour to look at her perspective.

This is not meant to diminish my own experience, but more so to make sure that what I am focusing on, IS what the real issue is.

As an empath, we have a leg up and can feel what the other person is feeling, remember, this does not mean it would be something that they would generally share.

I think of it like looking at the skeletons in the other people’s closets but without their permission.

As empaths, we can have a tendency to sometimes react to other people's feelings rather than what they are trying to say. This can lead to issues that cause more pain to all involved, kind of like a boomerang effect.

Whilst reacting to the emotion, we may call them out on something that they may not have been ready to face themselves. This has a knock on effect which then causes the person to react defensively.

This is, by no means, a ‘pass’ for that person but as empaths, I believe we have to go that one step further to make sure that we respect the private feelings of have.

After all, we all have thoughts that we would rather not make known to everyone.

So all I am suggesting is to make extra sure that you are putting up your personal protection during this time and taking just a moment to see where the information you are getting is actually coming from.

We talk about protection often, but we seldom talk about protecting those around us from the invasion of our empathy.

I feel that we have been given a gift and we need to be responsible about how we use it.

I have included a tarot spread that I hope will help you to pinpoint any potential issues with anyone that you have in your life and of course how best to deal with them.

Please use this spread before the holiday event, hopefully, this will give you insight into relationships that are based on holiday contact only and those relationships that seem to have underlying issues. .

I am not speaking about issues that are long standing in a family, those are really something else entirely, but it would be nice to not have any more hurt feelings than you need at the holidays.

Empath Spread for Close Relationships

Start by choosing the person the reading is about and focus on that person:



1. What should I focus on when spending time with “____”?
2. What keeps me from seeing blocks I may have towards “____”?
3. How can I remove those blocks and have a relationship with “____”?
4. How does “____” view our relationship?

Futhark-'Runes

By Lara Houston



A little Info;

























The actual correct and original name for Runes is Futhark which is the Old Norse name for "inscription or text".

Futhark translate to the meaning of 'secret' so most sounds very appropriate for a medium of Divination. Here in the UK the influence of the Vikings will quite possibly have introduced the initial use of Rune reading.

Mostly, Futhark inscriptions that have been found show the usage to be used in Balkans to Germany, Scandinavia and the British Isles.

Traditional reading of Runes involves taking 3 runes from inside the bag of Runes (eyes closed) and then laying each one side by side. They can be read upright and reversed. The Chart below gives you a reference point for the symbols and their associated meaning but for those

who wish to learn to read Runes, it is advisable to get some instruction and then develop through practise.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fehu [F] feoff/own (wealth) | Urus [U,V] aurochs (power) | Tpurizas [Th/P] thorn (troll/tor) | Ansuz [A] asir/ash (mouth) | Raido [R] ride (road) | Kanu [K,C] ulcer (torch) | Gebo [G] gift (talent) | Wunjo [W] win/vane (joy) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hagall [H] hail (havoc) | Nyedis [N] need (night, not) | Ice [i] ice (freeze) | Jera [J] year/yeild (harvest) | Eywas [Ē, Ey, Ei, Y] yew (strength) (egis) | Pertho [P] pear? (hidden) (game) | Ælghiz [Z,X,Y,-R] elk/reed (defence) | Sowuli [S] sol (sun) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teiwaz [T] tyr (warrior) | Berkana [B] birch (birth) | Ehwaz [E,Eh] horse (wheel/luck) | Mannaz [M] man (human) | Lagu [L] lake (lagoon) | Ingwaz [-Ing, ŋ] ing (living) | Dægaz [D] day (dawn) | Othala [O/Ω] heritage (estate) |

The Year of the Magician



This year we bid farewell to the Hermit and thank him for the wonderfully insightful year of lessons and discovery that he brought our way.

We can truly appreciate his energy as we consider and reflect on the the year as it approaches closer to 2017 and the year of the Magician.

You may wonder why the Magician and not the Wheel of Fortune...As some may already know, in regards to Numerology, the Tarot Card's energy for that year is based upon Numerology.

2017- becomes $2 + 1 + 7 = 10$. We are looking for the digital root number which is the number 1.

The double figured numbers reduce to the single digit, this gives us the energy of the 2017 which is we think about it, it is quite right because 9 (2016) is a number of attainment, 10 brings the completion and with that the Wheel of Fortune takes us back to the beginning with 1.

It is a great opportunity to consider the past year/s that brought us to this stage and reflect, looking back allows us to consider how far we have come and to consider our growth. But for us, now, we have a wonderful new energy ahead of us, enter the Magician!

I am sure he will be a welcomed presence for 2017, where we can expect to see more confidence and determined effort to where we want to be.

The Magician often works on his own, he is single minded, sets his goals and can solve problems that may arise.

In general, this is a positively motivating energy so get your elements to the ready because in good Magician style, he may like to work on his own but he still needs his tools. If you have been wanting to get your voice heard, set up a new business or just have the confidence to strive towards set goals, now is your opportunity.

Of course, we have the Sun shadowing the 2017 energy too, so more power to your bow. The Sun will help you to keep up the pace, help to energise you and keep your spirits lifted.

As a little exercise, why not take your 4 Aces out of your deck and ask which you will best need for each month ahead. If you want to take the reading a little deeper, then why not ask how the Ace can help you for the month ahead.

Journal your thoughts, you will be amazed by the end of the year in what you actually achieved!

Talking Tarot with Courtney Alexander

By Sandra Geddes

This month we had the pleasure of speaking to artist Courtney Alexander about her upcoming first deck 'Dust2Onyx: A melanated Tarot'. The project has recently been funded through Kickstarter and will be available soon.

What inspired you to create such a unique and beautiful deck?

My main inspiration was the lack of decks I felt represented me and the energy of my own people. Most decks are heavily Eurocentric and as a person of color, there is this disconnect at times. It made me feel like an outsider using some decks and being in particular circles because nothing felt like it was FOR ME or by a creator who understood me. It's not always enough to see yourself in a card or two.

The first deck I bought was the Aquarian Tarot which was, to me, attractive in its art style and close enough to the traditional RW deck to feel like a safe choice for me to learn with. However, I was still looking for that ONE deck that felt kindred. There were so many decks out that I found to be artistically beautiful but never called to me on a soul level.

So, Dust II Onyx came from my desire to see a melanated deck that not only spoke to my cultural background, but also broke the boundaries of gender and religious tradition. I thought a long time about how to artistically represent it all, and after going through a very stressful summer I had a dream of black on black paintings that became the inspiration behind the style of the work. Up to this point I had been working as a multimedia artist so the variety of texture and material felt natural and helped keep me in an intuitive space.

I'm also a lover of contemporary art and was inspired by the freedom of expression and creative use of materials I saw in artists like Wangechi Mutu and Trenton Doyle-Hancock. Materials speak to me just as much as the imagery it forms so I brought that thought process into this work.

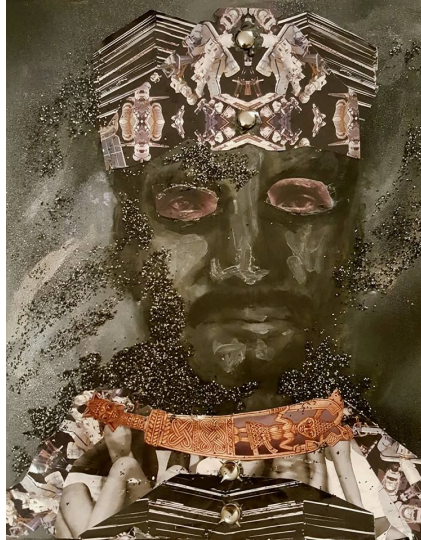
Do you have a favorite card?

My favorite card changes as the production of the deck continues. Out of the Major Arcana the Empress and Justice are two of my favorites. The Empress is totally an embodiment of who I am as a person and I feel that I'm reflected the most through her card. She is the mother creator yet has this sort of powerful and masculine presence.

Her confidence and freedom is so evident. I've compared her to the High Priestess, who I feel is the Empress once the wonder of this world and creation no longer satisfy her appetite. She ages and becomes the High Priestess, the Oracle, who isn't afraid to turn that creative energy inward towards deeper more mysterious endeavors.



Justice turned out so differently than I had imagined it'd be. I love how it sort of reminds me of Elegba, the embodiment of karmic justice. Elegba is also described as the trickster and Justice has a sort of joker/jester type of look that came forth unintentionally. The symbolism of the owl's wisdom along with the numerous eyes



depicted show that nothing we do is without acknowledgment or consequence in the eyes of the universe. We must all pay for the choices we make.

I've also enjoyed creating the minors. I've taken a lot more freedom in the material combining glitter, sand, oil paints, acrylic and pastels to create these interesting and fun textures. I especially love the court cards. I've been referencing many icons in current and past pop culture to bring their energy into the cards.

For example, Neil Degrasse Tyson is the King of Swords and has the eyes of G.W. Carver. Tyson is America's

favorite astrophysicist and Libra. George Washing Carver is a great inventor and botanist whose accomplishments would warrant another two paragraphs alone.

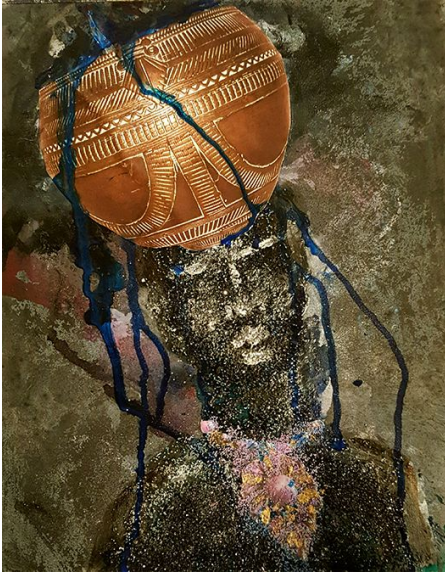
Which was the most challenging card to create?

The most challenging card for me was the Tower. I was inspired by the Egungun masquerades honoring Oya. Her energy is very destructive yet transformative. So once I let go I began to piece together from what I had. It was a bit difficult initially since I had to break my mind out of the image looking exactly like a masquerade costume.

What emerged was very chaotic and intense just like the energy of the Tower. There are a pair of hands seemingly holding on to each other. The soft fabric texture at the bottom show the lack of firm foundation that accelerates the crumble. The head seems to be attached to what looks to me like a sort of divine hammer. There are so many layers to this card that I could go on about, which makes it another favorite of mine.



What has been the highlight of this journey for you?



Of course meeting the Kickstarter goal was such a huge accomplishment for me. No one knew who I was coming into this journey and it has progressed so quickly. I also managed to run the campaign while starting a new job and regaining a sense of stability after such a rough summer.

So I felt extremely proud of myself. It was also humbling because so many came forth to show their support and how much they believe in this vision.

The pressure is on of course, but it's the kind I want. I've come into contact with so many beautiful souls in this process and I'm so thankful for the changes that have taken place.

I also grew a lot spiritually through the process of running the campaign. It takes a lot of energy and

faith. This forced me into a place of surrender to a degree. I could only do what I could manage too and let the universe handle the rest.

This meant not only running the campaign, but also doing rituals to prepare myself for the outcome I wanted. I performed multiple rituals to heal my shadow self, create a sense of wholeness, as well as a 7 day manifestation ritual to drive home my desire to soar and be successful. Doing these rituals gave me so much confidence and has drastically decreased the worry, anxiety, and lack of confidence that plagued me only a couple months ago.

Do you plan on creating more decks in future ?

Actually, I'd like to. This really is only the beginning for me. It has been so rewarding to see my art touch others so deeply. So as long as I have breath in my body my goal is to continue to bring forth powerful and transformative artwork. I feel it is my legacy and what I'm meant to leave in this world.

What would be one piece of advice you would give to budding artists you have inspired?

Live authentically and fluidly. Don't invest too much in what you think life should look like. We have already come into this life with a purpose and some of us become blinded

by the world's idea of success and happiness. We then find ourselves chasing goals that don't serve our highest purpose. But once we let go and simply say "Hey, I want to be true to myself and live my highest potential" so many doors begin to open. It isn't an easy road but it's been so rewarding. Most importantly as an artist you will find your unique voice because you have allowed yourself to be true to you, and that is where you will find that special quality that no one else can possess.

Thank you for your time and insight Courtney. We are looking forward to seeing the finished deck in the near future and wish you every success.

You can find out more about Courtney and the deck at dust2onyx.com/

The International Tarot Foundation

CARTA Awards



2016 Nominees

Best Author of a Tarot Deck 2016

Ravynne Phelan - Dreams of Gaia Tarot

Christine Aguilar - Twisted Tarot Tales

Ann Moura - Green Witch Tarot

Kim Huggens - Tarot Apokalypsis

Leeza Robertson - Animal Totem Tarot

Best Author of an Oracle 2016

Roxi Sim Hermsen - Joy and Sorrow Oracle
Misha Huntting - Flowers from The Dead
Stuart R. Kaplan - Bluebird Lenormand
Alana Fairchild - Divine Circus Oracle
Marissa Massie - Spirit de la Lune

Best Illustrator of a Tarot Deck 2016

Ravynne Phelan- Dreams of Gaia Tarot
Erik C Dunne - Tarot Apokalypsis
James Battersby - Twisted Tarot Tales
Tegan Swyny - The Lumina Tarot
Eugene Smith - Animal Totem Tarot

Best Illustrator of an Oracle 2016

Misha Huntting - Flowers from The Dead
Gabi Angus West - The Wyrd of Sarah Howard
Terri Foss - Earthly Souls & Spirits Oracle
Anna Simonova /Dmitri Shvetsod -Legend of the Northern Journey: Rune Cards
Jena DellaGrottaglia - Wisdom of the Oracle

Best first work for an Illustrator 2016

Monica Bodirsky -Lucky Lenormand Oracle
Joseph Stretch - Stretch Tarot
Renata Lechner- Thelema Tarot.
Maggie Stiefvater -The Raven's Prophecy Tarot
Terri Foss - Earthly Souls & Spirits Oracle

Best First Work for an author 2016

Monica Bodirsky -Lucky Lenormand Oracle
Maggie Stiefvater - The Raven's Prophecy Tarot
Joseph Stretch - Stretch Tarot
Mike Dooley -Notes From the Universe on Abundance
Rosie Shalhoub - The Chocolate Lover's Message Cards

Best text for divination 2016

Ravynne Phelan -Dreams of Gaia Tarot
Ciro Marchetti - Fin de Siecle
Marissa Massie-Spirit de la Lune
Kim Huggens- Tarot Apokalypsis
Leeza Robertson - Animal Totem Tarot

Best Lenormand/Kipper 2016

Lucky Lenormand - Monica Bodirsky
Fin de Siecle -Ciro Marchetti
The Bohemian Wild: A Lenormand Oracle -Tiffany Sosa
Maybe Lenormand - Ryan Edwards
Bluebird Lenormand - Stuart R. Kaplan

Best Oracle 2016

Whispers of Lord Ganesha -Angela Hartfield and Ekaterina Golovanova
Flowers of The Dead - Misha Huntting
Joy and Sorrow Oracle -Roxi Sim Hermsen
The Wyrd of Sarah Howard - Gabi Angus West
Earthly Souls & Spirits Oracle - Terri Foss

ITF Best Tarot Deck 2016

Dreams of Gaia Tarot - Ravynne Phelan
Twisted Tarot Tales - James Battersby & Christine Aguilar
Green Witch Tarot - Ann Moura & Kiri Ostergaard Leonard

Stretch Tarot - Joseph Stretch
Epic Tarot - Riccardo Minetti & Paolo Martinello

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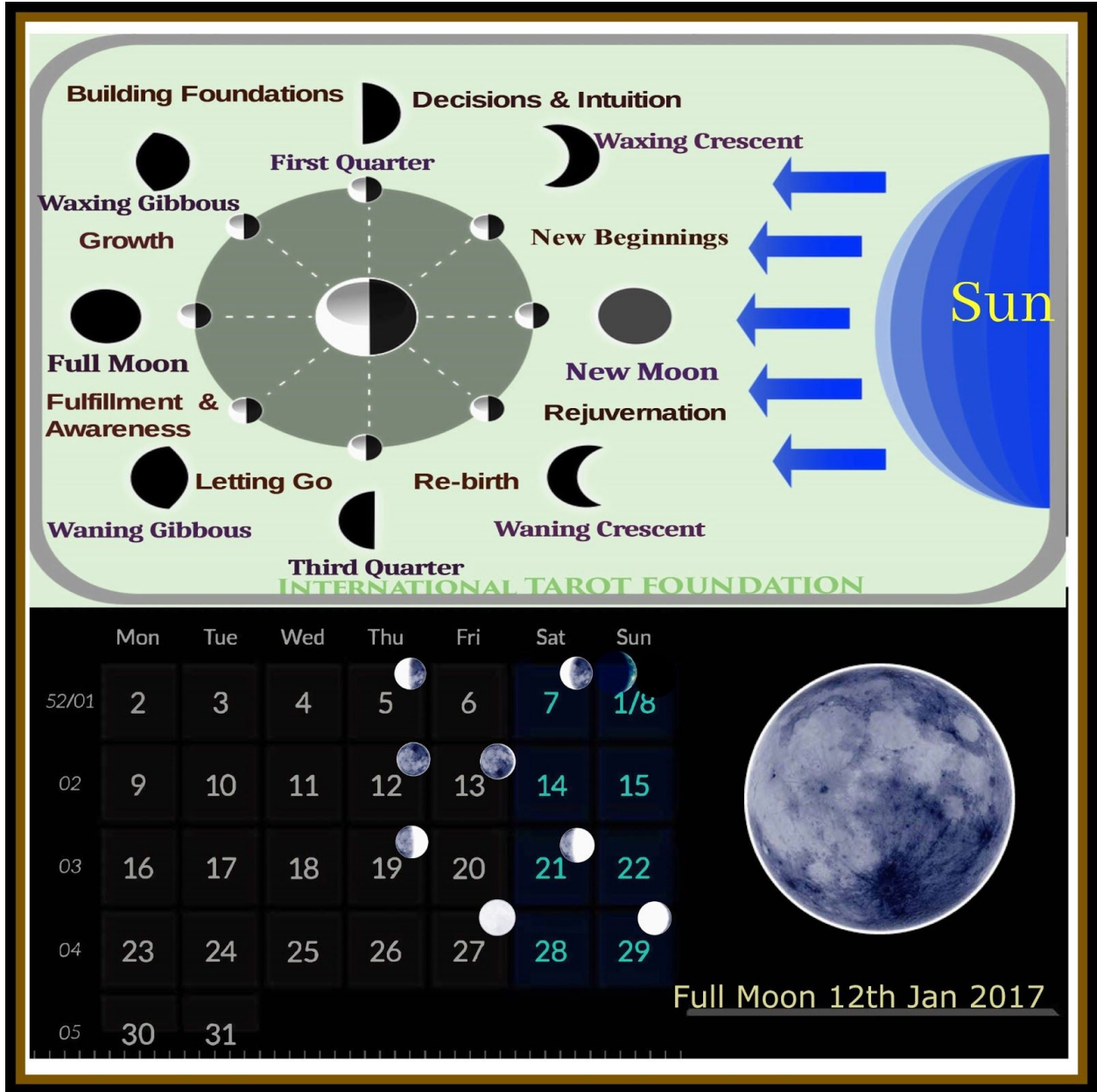
[**CARTA AWARDS VOTING 2016**](#)



January 2017

Moon Phases

For those who like to consider the Moon phases in their 'work'.



Archetypes in the Wild:

Led Zeppelin & The Hermit

By Richard Avila

Those of you who follow the Tarot Reader's Development and Study Group on Facebook are probably aware that I am currently writing a series of articles on the Major Arcana, where the card images are traced from the Visconti Sforza deck – created approximately 1450 – to the present. Sometimes we stop at the Waite Smith cards, sometimes we move past them.



If you haven't followed, this article is a one-off you may find interesting, and if you are following, this is sort of a bonus round. So, let us march forward and face the Hermit – and his close friend Jimmy Page – head on.

We are as I said, (sort of) going to discuss the Hermit. How would one describe the image on the card? A hooded figure, standing upon a height, with a staff in one hand and a lamp in the other. This is an archetype that has maintained itself essentially unchanged.

If you look at the accompanying image, here we have our friend the Hermit. This image is found on the inner sleeve of the Led Zeppelin album Led Zeppelin IV.

The album was released November 8th,

1971, and was produced by the band's guitarist, Jimmy Page. Jimmy didn't just produce it – he also designed and commissioned the artwork, played guitar, and contributed lyrics. This happens to be – in the opinion of many – the defining Led Zeppelin album.

It contains songs such as Stairway to Heaven (no, that's not a kabbalah reference!), Misty Mountain Hop, and – my favorite – When The Levee Breaks. It doesn't really get better than John Bonham's rolling drums, Robert Plant's harmonica, and Jimmy Page's

iconic guitar work. All of that is lovingly thrown over and around an old blues tune written by Joe McCoy and his wife, Memphis Minnie, written in the wake of the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927.

The flood covered 27 THOUSAND square miles, and displaced over 600,000 people. But I digress.

Since 1971, the album has sold something like 35 million copies worldwide. But we have to ask - what is the Hermit doing on the inside sleeve of a Led Zeppelin album? Good question. Here's the deal: Jimmy Page, aside from being one of rock'n'roll's great guitarists, has an interest in the occult. One of his primary interests is Aleister Crowley.

Allegedly, Page read his first Crowley book at age 11 and it snowballed from there. At one time Page owned Crowley's former home, Boleskine House, and republished some of his books.

When asked about his fascination with Uncle Al by Sounds magazine in 1978, Page said,

"I feel Aleister Crowley is a misunderstood genius of the 20th century.

It is because his whole thing was liberation of the person, of the entity and that restrictions would foul you up, lead to frustration which leads to violence, crime, mental breakdown, depending on what sort of makeup you have underneath.

The further this age we're in now gets into technology and alienation, a lot of the points he's made seem to manifest themselves all down the line. ...I'm not saying it's a system for anybody to follow. I don't agree with everything but I find a lot of it relevant."

So yeah, you can't have Crowley without Golden Dawn, and can't have either without the Tarot. It's probably safe to assume Jimmy Page is probably an awesome card reader, too.

And THAT kids, is how the Hermit ended up being so prominently featured on Led Zeppelin IV, and on posters in college dorm rooms just about everywhere.

Tarotscopes

By Sandra Geddes

Aries - 'Patience' looks like the word of the month for you Aries. I hope all those family gatherings coming up aren't going to be too trying for you. This is the kind of patience that usually pays off in the end though, so not strangling Auntie Joan over the dinner table 'should' be worth it ;) Good things come to those who wait.

7 of Pentacles/ Strength

Taurus - It may be Christmas season with plenty of opportunities for a few extra glasses of wine and slices of cake with all the celebrations going on, but remember to try to keep it balanced and not overindulge eh Taurus? I don't mean a fruit slice in your cocktail either or nutty chocs either!

4 of Pentacles/10 of Cups

Gemini - You look to have had a run of success lately Gemini and it's ok to be proud of yourself, healthy even, but watch out for that Ego growth that isn't so healthy. No one wants to be around Susie Smug even if her Christmas pudding 'is' the best.

The Devil/6 of Wands

Cancer - I want to caution you to leave nothing to chance this month Cancer. I know you like to just plod along however the flow takes you but that could prove risky this month as things may end up needing more effort from you to go smoothly.

Knight of Pentacles/ Wheel of Fortune

Leo - You could find yourself using your shining personality and 'gift of the gab' to your advantage this month Leo, especially in getting others onside with a new idea you have. Use these skills wisely and keep things honest and open.

The Magician / Ace of Swords

Virgo - You may have to take a step back and let others help you this month Virgo. You are a perfectionist and like to be in control we know, but sometimes a change of outlook can freshen things up a bit. Relax a little.

The Hanged Man/ Queen of Wands

Libra - Ahhh peace. You've had some stresses lately Libra so will be pleased to know that this month looks nice and quiet for you. Are you going away for Christmas or hiding from the family at home alone? Either way some serene recuperation and relaxation is the order of the day.

4 of Swords/6 of Swords

Scorpio - Are you feeling a little stuck in a rut at the moment Scorpio? This could be a good time to try some new things, but don't rush in too blind or impulsively. At least read a few recipes before you decide to totally change Christmas dinner ;)

The Fool/8 of Pentacles



Sagittarius - I'd avoid any family board games this holiday season if I were you Sagittarius as it looks like the competitive spirit is alive and well in your house! You may end up feeling knocked off your perch a little as King..or Queen.. of your little castle.

Five of Wands/King of Pentacles

Capricorn - This time of year can be challenging emotionally for all of us but it looks as though you could be feeling especially down this month Capricorn. Chin up Chicken, there really is no point in crying over spilled mulled wine. Look at things logically and try to nip anything that upsets you in the bud.

Queen of Swords/5 of Cups

Aquarius - Keep an eye on those relatives that may be behaving a little too nicely this month Aquarius. There may be a little plotting and manipulation going on behind that smiley exterior. Be your usual loving self and rise above.

Queen of Cups/ 7 of Swords

Pisces - Remember to check all the facts before you make any decisions this month
Pisces, especially when it comes to matters around family harmony . Keep a level head
and things will work out just fine.

King of Swords/6 of Pentacles

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