



MICHAEL ORLANDO YACCARINO

**Practical, ethical, and mystical advice
for the professional Tarot reader**

Sphere

Welcome. The purpose of this ongoing column is to offer practical, ethical, and occasionally, mystical guidance for both the novice and professional Tarot reader alike. In it, you will not find information on spreads, card interpretation, or symbol analyses. Indeed, if you are reading these words, you have already discovered the optimal place to develop those vital aspects of your training. Before rolling up of our collective sleeves in future installments allow me to share an intimate moment on the genesis of my own life with the cards.

Those seeking my reading services sometimes ask how I first became interested in the Tarot. The first deck I ever owned was the Aquarian obtained from a local bookshop when I was twelve years old.

The glorious beauty of David Palladini's artistry has not only retained its considerable power since I first discovered it in the mid-1970's, but has deepened with the passage of time. Indeed, it is one of the few key decks I have continued to use regularly. A trigger to my intuitive senses, the Aquarian remains a beloved companion on my own journey inward and beyond. But what led me to the "Occult" section of the bookshop where I found that deck in the first place?

I spent the first twelve years of my life in a house constructed sometime in the 1920's. While the suburban town in which it was located was fairly unremarkable, the persistence of the paranormal occurrences experienced in that home was far from common.

Fortunately, I attribute an innately inquisitive mind and a stable family environment as instrumental in my perspective on these happenings as more an adventure than an unwanted ordeal. Although to be sure, some of the dread associated with a handful of darker events connected with these otherworldly encounters have left me unsettled, but no less intrigued with a desire to understand them.

Among all of these moments, though, there is one in particular perhaps most unforgettable for its still-evolving meaningfulness and lasting sense of wonder. It took place one summer afternoon in a room suffused with warmth and sunlight. All around me, luminous spheres began to slowly appear to drift through the air in an unhurried fashion.

Vividly-colored tendrils wavered electrically within each one as they floated by languidly. I felt no fear of any kind. On the contrary, they filled me with gratefulness, both heartfelt and pure, for this direct communication.

As I write this now, I am ever thankful for this opportunity in which the invisible revealed itself so splendidly.

Even so, oftentimes in the past, I longed for the spheres to repeat their ephemeral dance since that childhood encounter. The passing of many moons on my spiritual quest were required for me to comprehend how in fact, they have never truly departed.



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I know now the spheres' original appearance blessed my young eyes in the way they did before adulthood concerns might block my open reception of them. So I make efforts each day to exist in the present by remaining free from such useless obstructions as past regret and future worry. When I do succeed in this continuing challenge, the vision returns effortlessly—only now transformed.

For the spheres accompany me as I wander a stunning stretch of surf and sand while feeling at one with the core within that ever-changing tide. They comprise the tear I attempt and happily fail to control whenever enthralled by a moving musical composition, artwork, or film. They resound in my sigh of contentment upon tasting a favorite dish. They are present each time a Tarot reading I have given encourages a seeker toward some desired change. They exist in a needed touch, either given or received. And in the gentlest whisper, they speak through the rhythmic drumming of cool rain against a windowpane as I drift into dream.

So then, what did I take away from this childhood marvel? Today, I accept it as both a greeting from and an affirmation of those realms seemingly beyond, but intrinsically part of everyday existence. Those shimmering spheres have become the guide-lights along my mystical path. I trust them implicitly since they directed me to, among other fruitful explorations,

the Tarot itself. And without question, the seventy-eight cards have nourished my spirit and those of others through my work with them.

Do I know in what form these radiant guardians will manifest themselves or to where they will bring me next? I have no idea. But I cannot wait to find out—for enlightenment will surely follow.

Author Biography

Michael Orlando Yaccarino is a Certified Professional Tarot Reader and instructor whose practice serves numerous private and corporate clients. As an author, his varied work is published worldwide.

He has also provided the original material for the Tarosophy intermediate *Journey Begins* Course in a fully-researched 300-page course manual, which Donald M. Kraig (author of *Tarot and Magic*) describes as “an informative introduction to the Tarot that is ideal for adult seekers looking for a lucid and complete approach to the subject without being overwhelming or simplistically childish.”

This material has also received excellent reviews from Mary K. Greer, Rachel Pollack and many other tarot authors and experts.

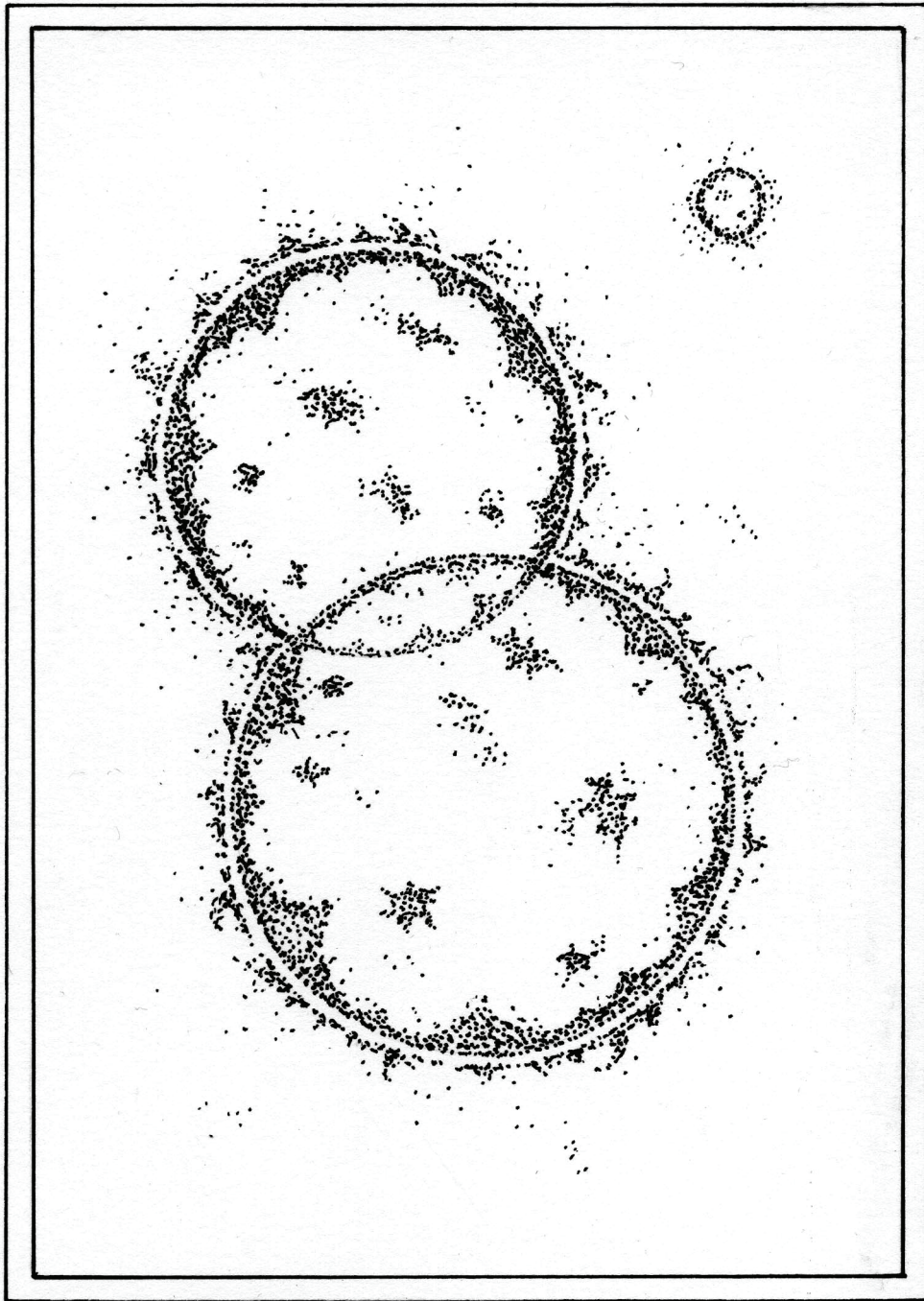
Visit www.orlandotarot.com to learn more.

Illustrator Biography

Scot D. Ryersson is a renowned illustrator and graphic artist who has lived and worked in London, Toronto, Sydney, and New York City. He is the recipient of two Art Directors of London Awards and is responsible for acclaimed advertising campaigns for many Academy Award®-winning films.

Ryersson is also the author of numerous critiques and essays on film and literature. He is co-author of *Infinite Variety: The Life and Legend of the Marchesa Casati*, *Portrait of a Muse*, and *The Princess of Wax: A Cruel Tale*, a critically acclaimed fairy tale.

Visit www.marchesacasati.com for more details.



Sphere by Scot D. Ryersson, pen and ink on paper, 2008 © by the artist.



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Lucre

When wealth accumulates beyond a certain point, it must either become completely inert and cease to be wealth, or call in the aid of intelligence to use it rightly.

—Aleister Crowley, *The Book of Thoth*

Among an excess of glorious moments comprising the animated classic *Yellow Submarine* (1968), the introduction of George Harrison into this phantasmagoria was of instantaneous appeal when first encountered in my childhood. The most mystical Beatle is shown enshrined amongst a pulsating flock of winged sphinxes, his nirvanic gaze hinting at a serenity few mortals ever achieve. Here was an icon deserving admiration—and one within the rarely spiritually-profound domain of pop culture. A definite yearning for his fab threads only made this vision all the more veneration worthy.

Perhaps the way my dazzled eyes perceived this psychedelically-stylish hero shaped my notion of how a genuine Tarot master should exist—free from every temporal concern, while practicing the divinatory arts; seeking cosmic consciousness so as to share inner-discoveries made with the enlightened; and then finally finding the absolutely

perfect Nehru jacket. In an ideal world of tangerine trees and marmalade skies, this indeed would be so. But alas, at least in the universe of my current habitation, I am fiscally bound to the landlord, grocer, and taxman.

The difference between the professional plumber and the do-it-yourself drain dabbler is that the former typically receives payment—that is, cold, hard cash. A service has been provided. Remuneration is in order. At least analogically-speaking, the professional Tarot reader joins this noble tradesman in rooting out deeper realms. So then it is reasonable, too, that we should merit financially for our efforts as service providers. Still, the philosophical pros and cons of receiving payment for what many among our ranks consider work bordering on the sacred is a landmine-sensitive subject. Whatever the position, most find the nearly unavoidable undoing of purse strings at the start or finale of a reading awkwardly disruptive. This is largely so following a particularly meaningful session, almost compelling the reader to query: “Did you want fries with that?”



Nevertheless, and quite bluntly, the ability to earn money through Tarot is ultimately beneficial to both reader and seeker alike. This is especially true for the majority of us who are not financially carefree, thus fully employed—and therefore often forced to utilize the ever-fleeting commodity of time with absolute discretion. The seemingly futile hunt for the illusive hour in which a new spread can be learned or a new Tarot book delved into rages on.

Compounding this time-crunch dilemma is the sobering adage “it takes money to make money.” For if not reading in our homes, we must typically pay out round-trip petrol, tube, or train costs to reach reading destinations, not to mention lunch money. And for any performing our art in a shop or centre dependent largely on a walk-in clientele, we surely share the experience of spending a day either just barely recouping or not even meeting such requisite initial outlay. So overall, being compensated for our services more easily allows us the capacity to devote these hours to the cards. And as experience is the best instructor of all, this enables us to grow in proficiency as readers, thus giving our clients the quality they deserve. Some may brand this approach as mercenary. Wrong—it is simple economics coupled with common sense.

At the risk of using Wonderland-worthy logic in contradiction of the preceding, I further propose that we donate our skills. Now I hasten to add here that this be done selectively and only on occasion. In the least, I firmly consider our Tarot work in service of the spirit. For through this process, the seeker may gain a better perspective of the soul’s journey, and to identifying and overcoming impediments to its progress. Surely, the world at large would benefit from any form of awareness elevation.

“Great! So where do I sign up?”

Not to worry! For if we choose to do our magnanimous bit, opportunities will indeed arise. These might take the form of reading at a charity event in benefit of a worthwhile cause. Or instead, be catalytic in suggesting the same for an organization that might be receptive to such a prospect, but not having considered the idea on their own. Alternatively and more privately, one might donate a portion of even just a single reading to where it is needed.

And finally to complicate matters further, there exists an irritating quirk of human nature by which oftentimes a service received for free is undervalued.

So for those readers out there still requiring a genuine justification for receiving monetary compensation, I humbly lay this before you.

Do good work. Keep your rates sensible. And while we should temper our childhood dreams, never loose the capacity for bedazzlement as we sail on to the sun.



Author Biography

Michael Orlando Yaccarino is a Professional Tarot Reader and instructor whose practice serves numerous private clients and groups. A bestselling author, Michael's varied work is published internationally.

Visit www.orlandotarot.com to learn more.

Michael has written the original core manual material for Tarosophy's intermediate course *The Journey Begins*. Among the world's leading Tarot authorities who have offered their praise, Donald Michael Kraig, author of *Tarot & Magic*, describes it as "an informative introduction to the Tarot that is ideal for adult seekers looking for a lucid and complete approach to the subject without being overwhelming or simplistically childish."

Visit www.marchesacasati.com to read about Michael's new book *The Marchesa Casati: Portraits of a Muse*, as well as *Infinite Variety: The Life and Legend of the Marchesa Casati*, *Portrait of a Muse*, and *The Princess of Wax: A Cruel Tale*—all co-written with Scot D. Ryersson.

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In addition, Ryersson receives many private commissions to create one-of-a-kind, mixed-media art objects. Visit <http://arcanifacts.blogspot.com/> for more details.

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Michael's unique gift combines decades of spiritual exploration, study with internationally renowned Tarot specialists, and intuitive knowing. A member of the world's leading Tarot organizations, he frequently performs private readings, as well as training workshops for individuals and groups in the art of Tarot reading. *The Common Reader*, Michael's column for *Tarosophist International*, offers practical, ethical, and mystical advice for the professional Tarot reader.

Visit Michael at: <http://www.orlandotarot.com>