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MICHAEL ORLANDO YACCARINO

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

Play

...leave yourself open to any possibilities that come your way....Jump in and trust your inner guide. The purity of your own yearning and of the methods you follow will show you the way.

—Ram Dass, *Journey of Awakening*



Party games can be an irritating challenge. This is especially true of those requiring players to be instantaneously and in equal parts knowledgeable, clever, and madcap when deciphering inscrutable questions—such as explaining the purpose of the world’s creation. As for this particular query, the Hindu concept of Lila clarifies all that in a snap. Let’s try a user-friendly version of it. Lila indicates the creator’s blissful game out of which all manifest reality arises. Here, the game-master *par excellence* being Brahman. And as for the rest of us? The trick is all in the way we confront this ever-transforming existence of snakes and ladders.

Certainly, a myriad of philosophers, mystics, and late-night comedians have all accurately compared life to nothing more than a game. Without question, the Tarot allows us to contemplate realms of being ranging from the mundane to deeper planes of meaning. But lest we

forget, historically-speaking, the deck’s origins are in 15th-century Italian gaming. So while always mindfully respecting the reading process itself and our seekers’ yearning for insight, there is no reason why we cannot have fun with the cards.

One among the many public misperceptions about Tarot readings is that they focus solely upon situations of dire consequence. Yet another unwanted boon bestowed upon us readers by the gypsy fortune tellers of the horror film. Now it would be accurate to say that most seekers *are* interested in our using the cards to explore anxiety-fraught areas of imbalance. But opportunities do happen in which a more light-hearted touch is appropriate, desired by, or even best for the client.

At some point, many among our ranks have taken on the role of guest Tarot reader at a public or private event or party. Do not be too quick to scoff! For once we have gained a certain degree of confidence in our art, growth can result when reading for a number of individuals in relatively quick succession. Perhaps attempt a variety of spreads, especially those newly learned or devised. Or, test out different ways of delivering a reading in terms of what is said and the manner in which it is conveyed. Welcome such an occasion as a worthwhile experiment—allowing it to become a splendid lab in which to test oneself fearlessly.

Such “entertainment” readings are typically of short duration and performed in settings lacking the intimacy conducive to depth explorations. In addition, diving into highly-charged waters might produce emotional tidal waves of an undesirable kind at odds with the merrymaking at hand. So while keeping these parameters in mind, be more assertive in shaping the reading queries proposed toward a positive light.

Seeker’s question: “Is my boyfriend going to dump me?”

Reader’s rephrased suggestion: “Why don’t we take a look at the beneficial aspects of your relationship needing further encouragement?”, or some variation on this much more productive theme.

In this way, while the core concern is not being ignored, practical, usable, and honest guidance of genuine value can be given.

Furthermore, you will probably encounter the terrified seeker who only appears before you after good-natured coercion by fellow revelers. And also very likely, this same reluctant soul will not specify a question to delve into. An excellent method to overcoming such apprehension is demystifying through play.

You might begin by sharing just a brief overview on Tarot’s card roots in game-playing and how, over time, the deck evolved toward use as a divinatory instrument. Conduct an “open reading,” that is, allowing your interpretation of the cards—either placed in a pre-determined spread or not—to uncover the nature of a relevant concern or imbalance at hand. Once again, rely upon your creativity to shape messages both life-affirming and insightful.

Games of all kinds and Tarot share a similar playing field. This is composed of such key aspects as respect for all involved, good sportsmanship, adaptability, and faith in our inner-voices. And lest we overlook it, one of the benefits of reading the cards is the palpable joy in offering up our transformative revelations.

Illustration Credit

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Author Biography

Michael Orlando Yaccarino is a Professional Tarot Reader, instructor, and founding ACE member of Tarot Professionals whose practice serves numerous private clients and groups. A bestselling author, his varied work is published internationally. Visit www.orlandotarot.com to learn more.

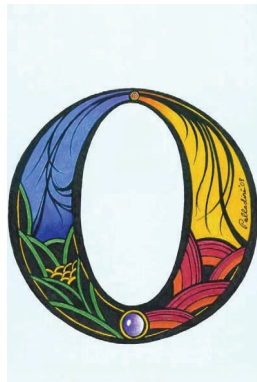
Michael has written the original core manual material for Tarot Professionals' intermediate course *The Journey Begins*. Among the world's leading Tarot authorities who have offered their praise, Donald Michael Kraig, author of *Tarot & Magic*, describes it as "an informative introduction to the Tarot 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.

Illustrator Biography (Common Reader Logo)

Scot D. Ryersson is a renowned illustrator, graphic artist, and bestselling author 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. 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.

Michael Orlando Yaccarino Transformative Tarot Readings



Illus. "O", David Palladini

Michael Orlando Yaccarino invites you to experience an always insightful, sensitive, and confidential Tarot reading: "Life can be an ever-evolving journey toward greater illumination. A transformative Tarot reading is a portal through which you may obtain deeper awareness on many levels. Pause awhile on your mystical voyage for a moment of reassessment and self-discovery. As we explore the cards together, you will receive messages on releasing past issues, while reducing undue concern about future events. Our shared goal is mastery of your optimal self in the present. Let the journey begin." Michael's unique gift combines decades of spiritual exploration, study with internationally renowned Tarot specialists, and intuitive knowing. A founding ACE member of Tarot Professionals, 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>

MOVING STILLNESS: A MOMENT WITH VISIONARY ARTIST GARY LUND

Michael Orlando Yaccarino, Professional Tarot Reader, instructor, and author.



Illus. Artist Gary Lund
(image © Gary Lund)

Gary Lund is an award-winning, widely-exhibited American painter, sculptor, and animation film designer. During the late 1960s and 1970s, he was responsible for the unforgettable production design of several highly-regarded animated films, including *The Point* (1971), superstar songwriter Harry Nilsson's celebrated, Emmy Award®-winning fable of non-conformity; and the Academy Award®-nominated short *The Legend of John Henry* (1974), narrated by singer Roberta Flack about the African-American hammer-wielding hero of the American railroad. In 1989, Lund earned the Benjamin Franklin Award for Excellence for his design and illustration of the book *Life: Before, During and After*. His distinctive work has been featured in such leading publications as *Rolling Stone* magazine and the *Los Angeles Times*.



Among Lund's lesser-known contributions is the Third Eye Oracle. This extremely rare deck was twenty years in the making. First conceived in 1985, it was not printed until 2004—and then only privately—by the artist himself. Oracle cards such as these facilitate direct communication with the inner realms and elemental forces. In the artist's words, this stunning deck assists in accessing “your inner vision within cycles of growth and change.”

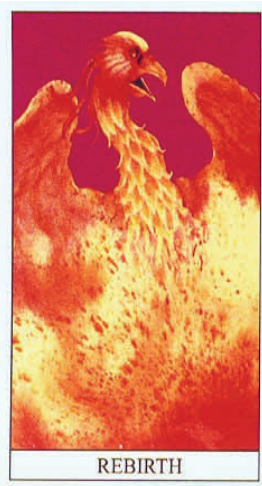
Exhilarating, sumptuous, and psychedelic, the exquisite images achieve direct contact with the soul through the eye. From his studio in Silver City, New Mexico, Lund reveals one of his most intriguing creations in his first interview on the Third Eye Oracle.

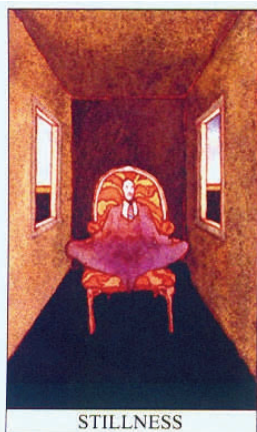
When and in what way did you first realize you had more than a passing interest in art?

I was born and grew up in Los Angeles. From the age of eight through twelve, I constantly drew pictures of Indians. And from twelve to sixteen, I was carving copies of Native American, Oceanic, and African figures—large and small—to sell.

Was your early life shaped by any form of spirituality?

Early on, I just had the feeling of holding things open. But then quite suddenly at the age of thirty five, I felt tremendous surges of energy, like being thrown open...I found myself laughing and crying for hours.





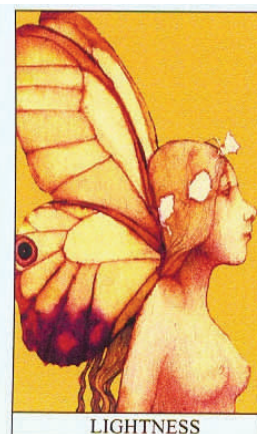
STILLNESS

That must have been an intense period.

It was. I remember later reading the children's classic *The Wind in the Willows*; *Seth Speaks* as channeled through Jane Roberts; and Castaneda's shamanistic *Journey to Ixtlan*, and thinking: "Of course!"

Can you describe your formal art training?

I attended Chouinard Art Institute, now CalArts, in Los Angeles for four years where I studied drawing, painting, and illustration.



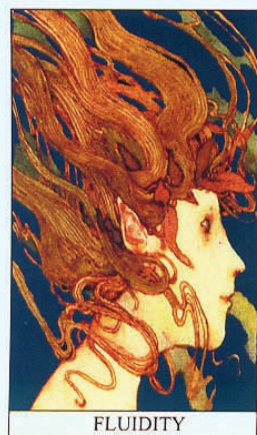
LIGHTNESS

Are there any artists you admire in particular?

That's hard to narrow down. Rembrandt; Vermeer; Bonnard; Rothko; and Robert Irwin, the American installation artist. And specifically in illustration and animation design, I would include Winsor McKay, the creator of *Little Nemo*, and George Herriman of *Krazy Kat* fame.

Does a link exist between them?

Each seems connected by the common thread of exploring light on form...or perhaps light *into* form, or form *into* light.



FLUIDITY

Historically-speaking, illustration and animation are not afforded the same respectability as those forms falling under the "fine arts" such as painting and sculpture. From the perspective of someone capable of all of them, what do you believe contributes to this prejudice?

While over time, I have given a lot of thought to what people respond to or don't, I have to say that after all these years, I still haven't a clue.

That's more than fair! So then what is your opinion of making such qualitative judgments on different types of art?

Comparing one art form to another doesn't seem to take me anywhere. What *does* is sensing that an energy or vitality will pass through the art and be felt by the viewer no matter what form it comes into.

Can you relate this to a personal experience?

I can remember coming back into illustration, after working with film for some time. I seemed unable to produce a single illustration within the boundaries of the paper itself—that is, trying to keep the image contained within one frame of



THE UNKNOWN



film...feeling all the movement going on outside the frame.
How did you resolve this artistic dilemma?

By ending up having to draw a sequence of illustrations instead of just one.

Can you describe the genesis of the Third Eye Oracle deck?

When I moved from Los Angeles to Northern Colorado in 1980, I felt for the first time the movement of the seasons—the constant cycles of change and their underlying movements that reveal themselves and touch us all. At first, the cards were conceived as an entertainment, inspired by the Japanese gaming decks called Hanafuda or “flower cards”.



This forty-eight card deck is made up of four suits of twelve cards each. Among other things, they represent a variety of flowers, plants, trees, and animals, as well as months of the year.

Do you recall anything unique about the creation phase of this project?

It was the first time I was *consciously* aware of a channeling or opening to bring the images into form. Having the cards reveal themselves became an ongoing process—finding the words and concepts to enhance the images seemed only to limit or put boundaries on them. As with most things, this gift seemed to be more about my own growth or learning as anything else.



How long did the project take from start to finish?

The forty eight images took two months to produce.

What was it like seeing the finished deck?

In actuality, to finish it seemed a quite arbitrary stopping of some flow. To this day, I do not see the deck as completed. It just seems to continuously open up and expand beyond me.

Can you share your thoughts on how divination with cards “works”—and why they can be used as a practical tool in understanding ourselves on a deeper level?



Perhaps they just offer a focus point we respond to—to open us to greater possibilities, to clarify the present moment we find ourselves in. Stillness within movement.

How does spirituality figure into your current life as an individual and an artist?

Sometimes my efforts to translate spiritual/ecstatic experience onto paper or in other forms seem very primitive to me—falling short of the impulse. So I direct my efforts to allowing any divisions or limitations I might throw up between Spirit and myself as an individual and an artist to just to fall away.



Illus. Untitled, digital print from a painting with computerized imagery combined, 2005 (image © Gary Lund)

The following text by Gary Lund is excerpted from the introduction to his guide for the Third Eye Oracle:

As far back as we allow our memories to carry us on this earth, we have asked for guidance from the unseen realms, from Spirit, to our questions, large and small, consulting with sticks and stones, the stars, vapors rising from within the earth, sacred groves, tarot decks and seers. *Oracles.*

These cards originally came to me as a kind of card game, an intuitive entertainment, a celebration of our connection to the cycles of growth and change upon the earth. Cards that would activate and bring forward our own inner-knowing, our intuitive seeing of our world. The images and sequences came so quickly and easily, as though they already existed and had only to be brought through me onto the paper....

Open to *your* own seeing. There is an order to this movement, greater than your intellect and your senses. May these little cards point you toward your own inner knowing. *You* are the oracle.

Notes

For further information about the Third Eye Oracle or Gary Lund's work, you may contact the artist directly at: glundbrinkley@yahoo.com

Special Thanks

I express my sincere gratitude to Gary Lund whose joyous and deeply-spiritual work provides a true reflection of its creator. He has blessed me by his enthusiasm for this interview.

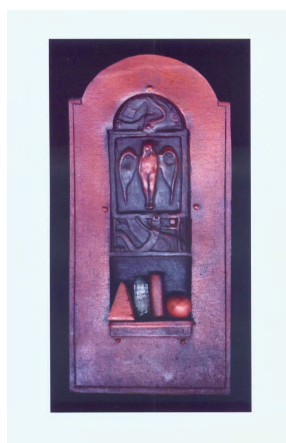
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Illus. Shrine, stoneware, 1999 (image © Gary Lund)