

The MOUNTAIN ASTROLOGER *Magazine*

ISSUE 1 • CANCER SOLSTICE 2025

COVER DESIGN: SARA FISK • EDITING: NAN GEARY • ADDITIONAL DESIGNS: CRAIG KNOTTENBELT

Your Month Ahead

by DIANA McMAHON COLLIS

SEPTEMBER 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	♀♊	3	4	5	6	☉♋
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	♀♊	♀♊	20	☿♊
♂♊	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					



2nd: Mercury enters Virgo

♀♊

Be prepared to read the small print and scrutinise every detail. Articulate your observations and give your thoughts a creative outlet. Cross the Ts and dot the Is, taking pride in your presentation – now is the time to be meticulous.



2nd-4th: Mercury in Virgo squares Uranus in Gemini

♀♊☿♊

Careful! Your critical words could cause sparks. An analytical edge cuts through an impasse. If it's peace you want, live and let live! Accept that some people only want to focus on the bigger picture.



4th-6th: Mars in Libra squares Jupiter in Cancer

♂♏♃♋

Accept that a desire for peace and equality might be hard to fulfil in a situation full of different personalities. Be ready for a relationship choice to ruffle feathers in a group situation. Be sure that any fighting spirit is aligned with the greater good.



6th: Uranus goes stationary retrograde in Gemini

♅♊♊

Put aside a project that's been splitting in too many different directions – it's time to make clearer choices. The break from it may feel awkward, but you can reach a better place by understanding the message behind it once you have space from it all. Then you can decide which changes will support you best. Be prepared to include more than one point of view. Change things up to make space – fresh air will lead to a fresh perspective.

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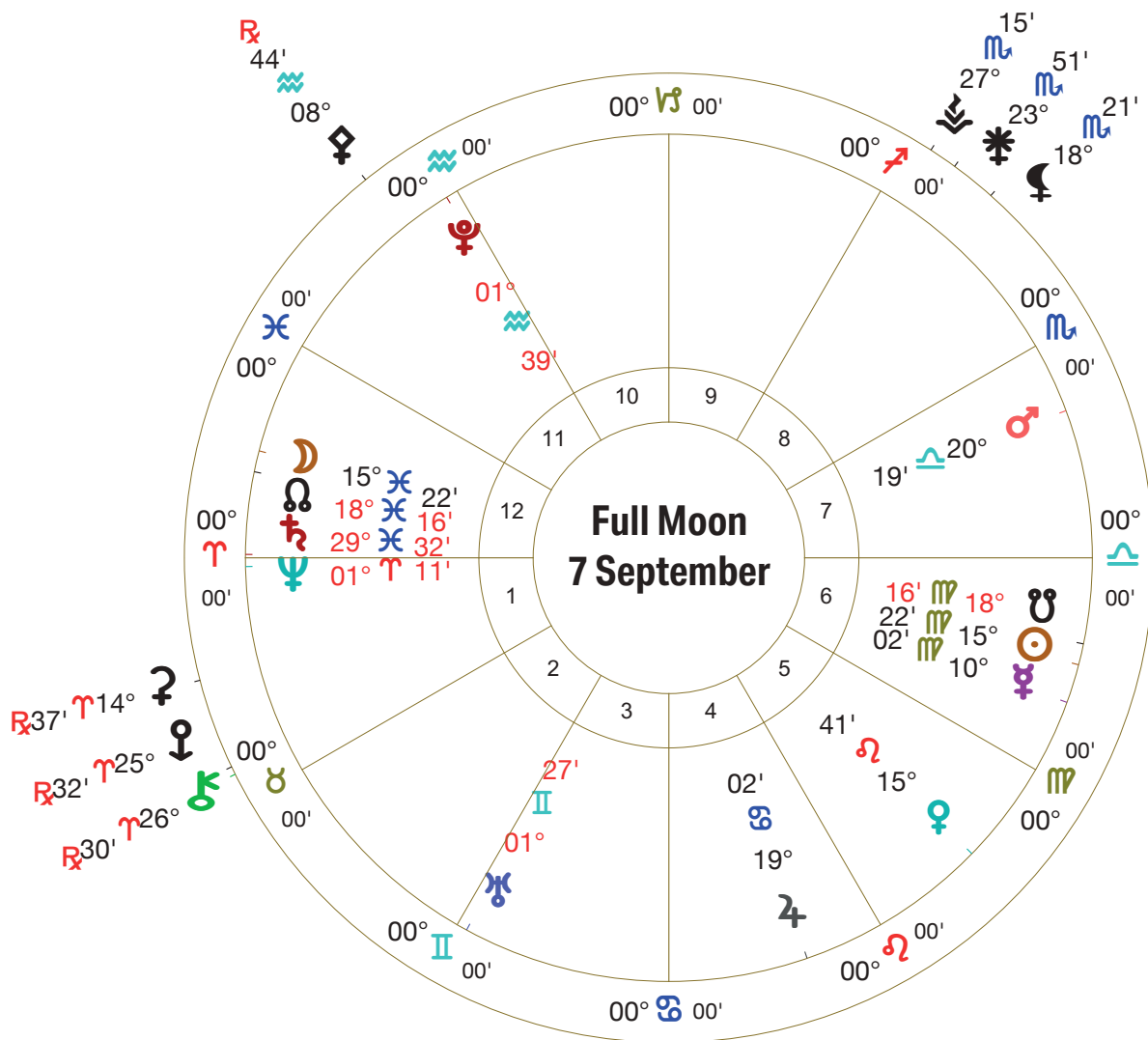
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15	16	17	♀♊	♀♊	20	☉♋
♂♊	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					



7th (19:09 BST): Full Moon (Lunar Eclipse) in Pisces

☉♋♂♊☉

Use this eclipse to escape the madness of a hectic schedule. Something needs to give or be released. If hazy thinking prevents good performance, it's a signal to take a well-earned break. The art of delegation may be required to prevent a glaring oversight.



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♂♊	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

11th-13th: Sun-Mercury in Virgo sextile Jupiter in Cancer ☉♀♊✳♋♎

Positive talks are possible now, even with people you would normally be nervous of hearing criticism from. Open up the conversation that requires detailed discussion. A creative vision can go further once the right person speaks or hears about it.

12th-14th: Sun conjuncts Mercury in Virgo ☉♂♀♊

Communicate the core factors in a situation to make clearer progress. Someone's light may seem to shine brighter ... until you manage to shout louder! It's time to blow the trumpet for your super powers and heroic qualities to be fully known.

15th-17th: Venus in Leo sextiles Mars in Libra ♀♌✳♂♏

Put your courage behind what you love in order to be your authentic self around others. Let someone know how much you care about them. Take a risk and allow your passionate feelings to become more obvious – it could seal a romantic bond.

16th-18th: Mercury in Virgo opposes Saturn in Pisces ♃♊♂♏♎

The hardest task is to say nothing when you want to say everything! Keep expressions confined to the main issues, rather than getting bogged down in details. Going with the general flow may be easier and less taxing. When it comes to physical, personal movement at this time, less is more.

18th: Mercury enters Libra ♃♊♂♏

Have a think about what's truly fair in a situation – it'll help keep the peace. Talking about any imbalances could assist with identifying where and how adjustments will be helpful. Employing diplomacy during a sensitive talk will help you through a sticky situation.

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♂♊	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

17th-19th: Mercury in Libra opposes Neptune in Aries ♀♊♂♈♆♈

Something needs to be mutually discussed and cleared up so everyone knows where they stand. Check to see if you and another are on the same page. It's time to identify where and how a misunderstanding may have arisen so easily.

18th-20th: Mercury in Libra trines Uranus and Pluto ♀♊♅♈♇♈♆♈

It becomes easy to please everyone ... well, almost. Ideas flow quickly and your only task is to capture the really useful ones. Take time to consider those people and projects you want to reconnect with – pop something in the diary to make it definite.

19th: Venus enters Virgo ♀♍

If perfect love exists, it will have ways to show itself soon! Make an effort with appearance – yours and your home's. Aesthetics matter and create a greater impression at this time, so pay extra attention to the small finishes and polishes.

19th-21st: Venus in Virgo squares Uranus in Gemini ♀♍♅♊♇♊

Wanting things both ways doesn't work now – it just won't prove productive. There's a right way and a wrong way, or at least one that will get distinctly better results. Try to avoid arguing for the sake of argument, unless you want to create havoc – along with more work and effort for yourself and/or others.

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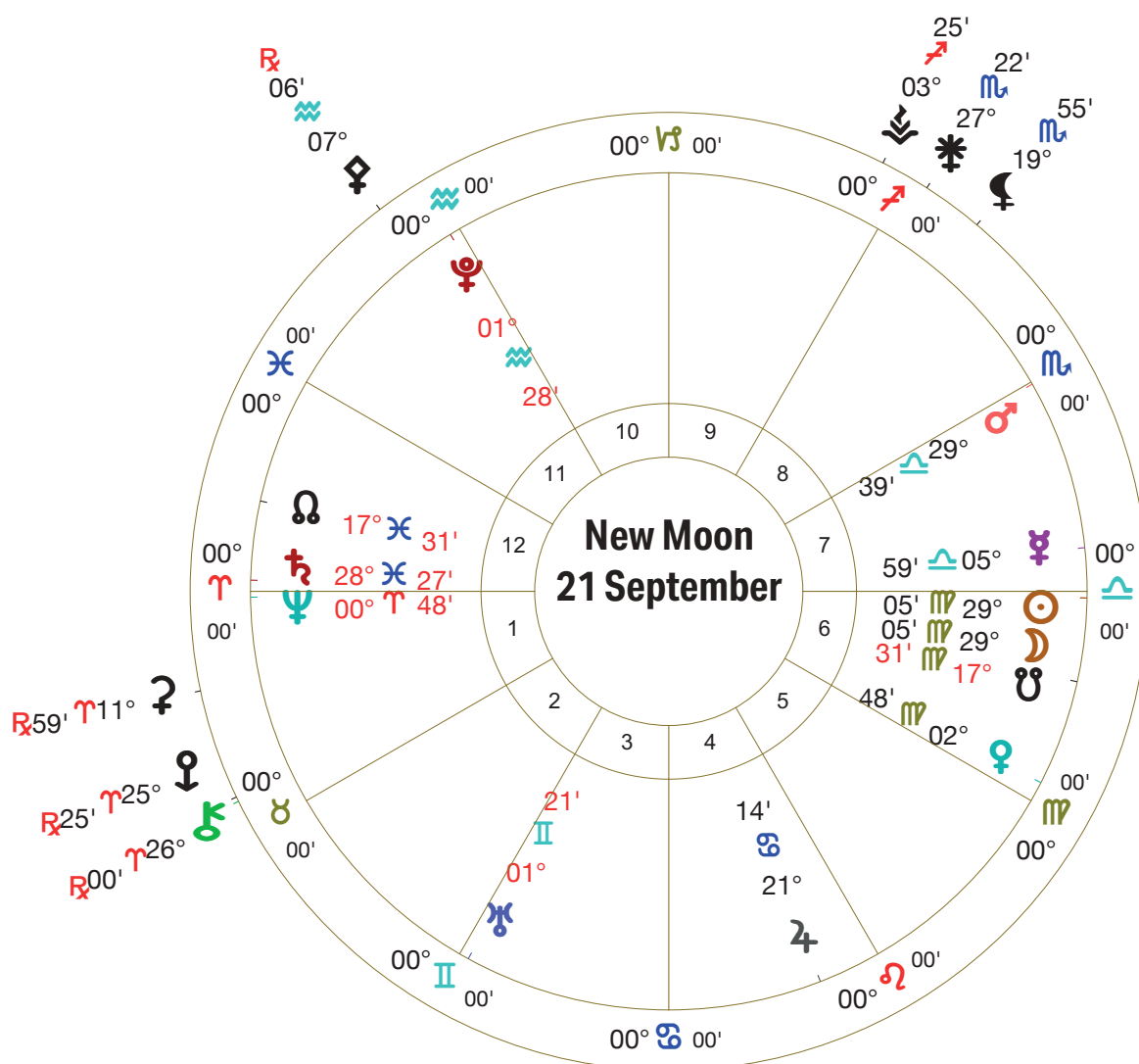
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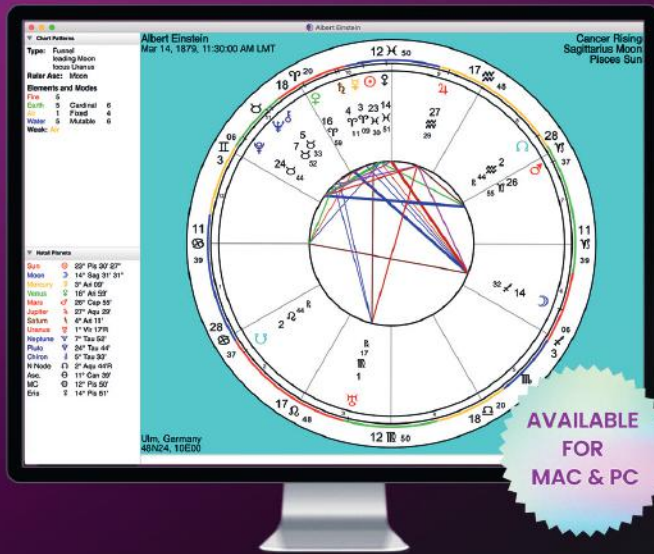


21st (20:54 BST): New Moon (Solar Eclipse) in Virgo

☉♍♊♎♏

Little things feel bigger and perhaps worse than they really are, but it's important to implement change if you're feeling uncomfortable. Being sensitive to these things can ruffle feathers, so be prepared to argue your point to those who doubt you.





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22nd: Mars enters Scorpio; Sun enters Libra opp. Neptune ☿♂♏, ☼♊♎♆♑

Be ready to dig deeper to understand the impact of a recent situation. There's a chance to get to the hidden reasons behind an emotional upset. Work towards keeping harmony with others rather than trying to do things by the book in a rather clinical way. An opportunity exists to see yourself more clearly through a behaviour or issue reflected in another's behaviours or concerns.

October's 'Your Month Ahead' will be published at the end of September in Issue 2

Coming in Issue 2 (October): Luration forecasts for each month

TMA's regular forecast writer **Diana McMahon Collis** studied with the Company of Astrologers and has practised astrology since the 1990s. She also trained with mediums before co-founding TABI (the Tarot Association of British and International readers) in 2001. Diana works as an editor and author-mentor in mind, body, spirit nonfiction with Oxford-based Jericho Writers. For tarot and astrology consultations, see: <https://mindbliss.co.uk> and a collection of Diana's articles can be found at: <https://celestialspot.blogspot.co.uk/>

Best Dates Planner

September 2025

with Frank Clifford



What is electoral astrology?

Electional astrology is the art of choosing the most auspicious astrological moment to begin an endeavour. Whether this is sending an important email, making a phone call, applying for a job, getting married or signing a contract, the premise of electional astrology is to align our intentions with the cosmos and create a horoscope that will maximise an endeavour's future chances of success ... and minimise potential difficulties. This is astrology in action, and being in rhythm with the planets gives us the edge.

There is no such thing as a horoscope *perfectly suited* to an endeavour, but we can get close! We are usually looking for a chart that reflects harmony and a path forward that's as stress-free as possible. But no election chart can turn a poor idea into a good one or cancel out ongoing natal or forecasting challenges ... but a chart can help to mitigate difficulties. Electional astrology works within the limits of probability, our consciousness and abilities. As Steven Forrest put it eloquently: 'It does not override the basic principles of natural law or common sense.'

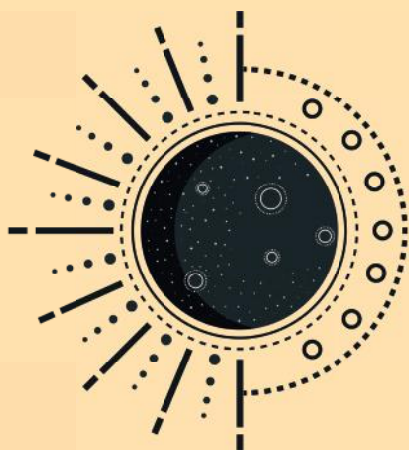
For a complete course, please click here:

<https://www.londonschoolofastrology.com/courses/electional>



Issue 1
Cancer Solstice 2025

The Mountain Astrologer Magazine
www.londonschoolofastrology.com



This monthly column will outline the **best planetary aspects** for the month ahead, including the month's **happiest, most favourable Moons**, which are essential for daily affairs to run smoothly. These aspects are non-specific to your own birth chart,* but are effective enough to help secure successful elections. Times listed are to the nearest five minutes and take into consideration daylight time.

Space does not permit us to show the most fortunate angles (ASC, DSC, MC, IC) to choose for these periods as they will depend on your own location and time zone, but we do advise which Ascendants (ASC) are best during the time periods presented (an astrology program will help you find these).

** If you're keen to use your birth chart to fine-tune and personalise these periods, a good starting point is to choose a degree of the Ascendant (ASC) or Midheaven (MC) in your election that matches an appropriate part of your birth chart (for instance, the degree of your natal Sun, Venus or Jupiter). For example, if a Cancer Ascendant is recommended, use your program to select an Ascendant that is the degree of (or very close to) of your natal Sun, Venus or Jupiter in Cancer.*

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A faster-moving planet is either applying to or separating from another planet. There are **no orbs**, just a focus on applying aspects (ones that take place in the future) as long as they eventually take place in signs that can aspect one another (by conjunction, sextile, square, trine or opposition). Here are the aspects and happiest Moons to work with and make the very most of.



A Series of Sextiles: Sun–Jupiter, Mercury–Jupiter, Venus–Mars



from 8th September

to 15th September

Once Mars has faced off against Jupiter, there's a series of stunning bridge-building sextiles between five planets. These offer brief windows of opportunity, so before the Sun and Mercury oppose Saturn, take advantage of these aspects by:

- showing family and friends that you care through acts of consideration, kindness and generosity
- establishing more trust and two-way support with work colleagues
- putting your organisational skills to use by attending to documents
- building connections with other creative people to advance a project
- taking time to compliment those whose efforts you recognise

Best Ascendants during this time: Taurus, Cancer, Leo, Virgo



Happiest Moon periods: 7th–8th September (Moon in Pisces)

from 10:40 BST on 7th September

to 01:25 BST on 8th September

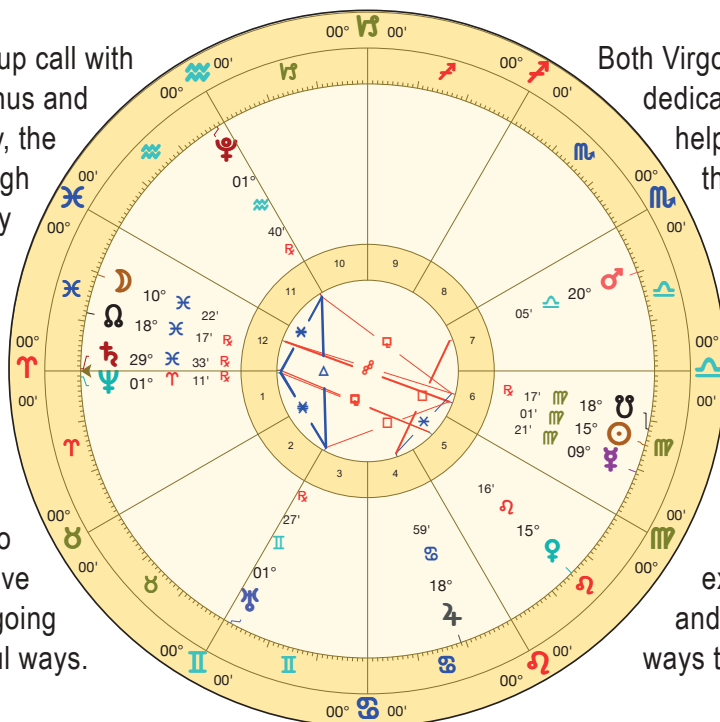
02:40 Pacific; 05:40 Eastern;

17:25 Pacific (7th); 20:25 Eastern (7th);

17:40 Beijing

08:25 Beijing (8th)

After a wake-up call with caustic Uranus and critical Mercury, the Moon sails through Pisces on its way to oppose the Sun in Virgo, suggesting this Full Moon is a good period to harness your vivid imagination and find ways to apply this creative spark to an on-going project in useful ways.



Both Virgo and Pisces are dedicated to service and helping others. Pisces the artist loves to roam free with its imagination, while Virgo the craftsperson wants to find solutions and make things work better. Enjoy this fertile period exploring your gifts and finding practical ways to share them.

New Stars for a New Era:

A Consciousness Workbook for our 10 New Planets

Reviewed by Christeen Skinner in the NCGR Syzygy Research Journal.

In his book 'New Stars for a New Era', Alan Clay presents compelling argument for testing the cosmic waters beyond Pluto at the personal and collective level. He is immersed in the worlds beyond Pluto and offers exciting insights into the potential influence of these dwarfs.

Alan Clay has a distinctively writing and teaching style. He seeks to involve the reader and student at every turn. Sentences often begin with 'we'. This approach is interesting:

we are shepherded to collaboration as we explore these new worlds.

The word 'spiritual' is used frequently in this work and Alan does his best to illuminate how spiritual welfare and general well-being might benefit from knowledge of the positioning of each of these dwarfs by house in a natal chart.

Each dwarf is given its own chapter. There is a discourse as to the meaning of each, followed by interpretation by house position. Reference is made to the charts of famous people that give insights as to how the influence manifested in their lives. The challenge for the reader is to develop the suggested interpretations which will no doubt be modified as we incorporate the dwarfs into our own work.

Alan Clay is focused on our expanding consciousness. Panpsychics argue that the laws of physics as we know them might not explain everything and that it may be that consciousness is not an illusion but everywhere.

In inviting the dwarfs into our charts, Alan Clay suggests that we may be tuning into cosmic consciousness and perhaps experiencing the wonder that has been expressed by returning astronauts who have been given rare and privileged views. It is clear that the addition of these dwarfs into our charts offers new perspectives.

The work now required of today's astrologers should not be viewed as daunting, but as exciting and thrilling. 'New Stars for a New Era' is only one of the many works offered by Alan Clay whose legacy to astrological literature will surely be appreciated.



Haumea



Gonggong



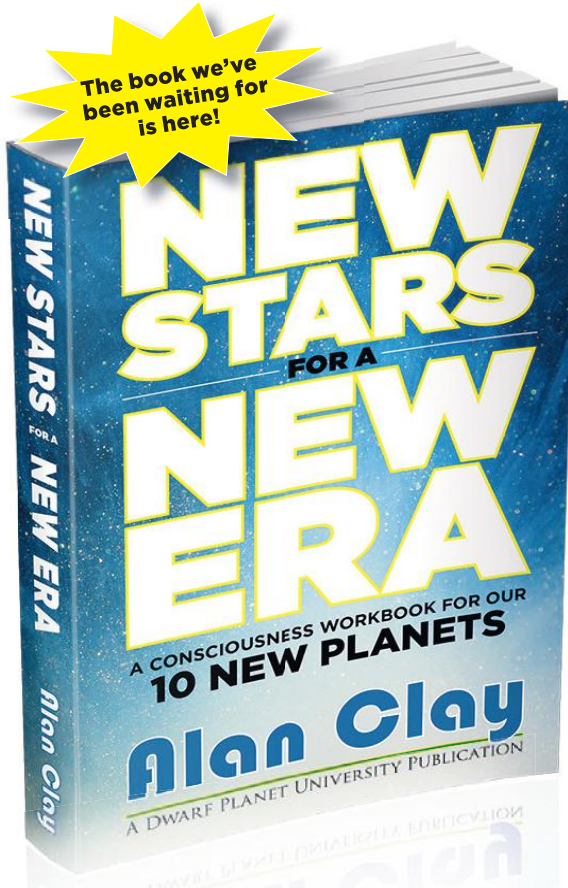
Salacia



Sedna



Varuna



..dwarfplanet.university..

Happiest Moon periods: 10/11th–12/13th September (Moon in Taurus)

from 01:20 BST on 11th September

to 21:10 BST on 12th September

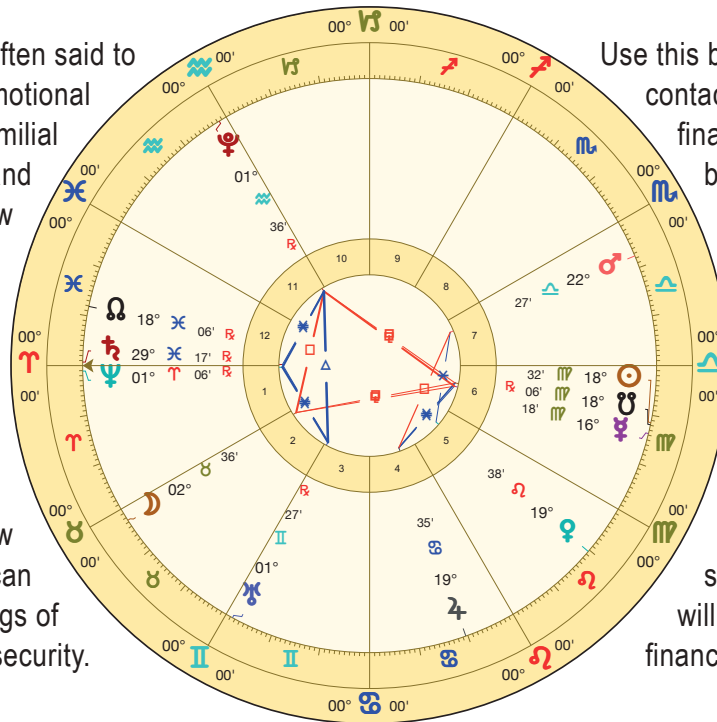
17:20 Pacific (10th); 20:20 Eastern (10th);

13:10 Pacific; 16:10 Eastern;

08:20 Beijing (11th)

04:10 Beijing (13th)

The Moon is often said to represent emotional safety and familial protection, and its journey now through Taurus (and aspects to planets in Virgo and Cancer) is a reminder to us all in such uncertain financial times of how important money can be to these feelings of security.



Use this brief period to make contact with employers, financial advisors or bank managers to investigate ways in which your earnings, investments or pensions could work better for you. You may find that changing or adding one small component will be the key to financial growth.

Happiest Moon periods: 14/15th–17th September (Moon in Cancer)

from 05:00 BST on 15th September

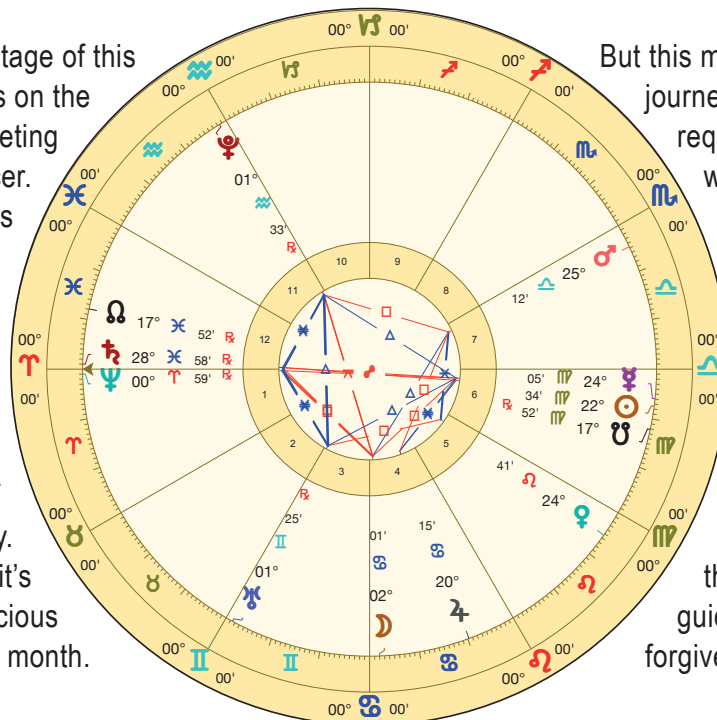
to 04:10 BST on 17th September

21:00 Pacific (14th); 00:00 Eastern (15th); 20:10 Pac. (16th); 23:10 East. (16th);

12:00 Beijing (15th)

11:10 Beijing (17th)

Take advantage of this Moon while its on the way to meeting Jupiter in Cancer. Both placements have a bountiful, prosperous energy and offer feelings of joy and great promise in the areas of home and money. Through the year, it's the most auspicious time of each month.



But this month's lunar journey through Cancer requires a negotiation with someone intent on creating discord. Be diplomatic but don't bow to their demands that you see the world only through their lens. Listen to their complaints but guide them towards forgiveness or letting go.

Happiest Moon periods: 17th–19th September (Moon in Leo)

from 10:55 BST on 17th September

to 13:20 BST on 19th September

02:55 Pacific; 05:55 Eastern;

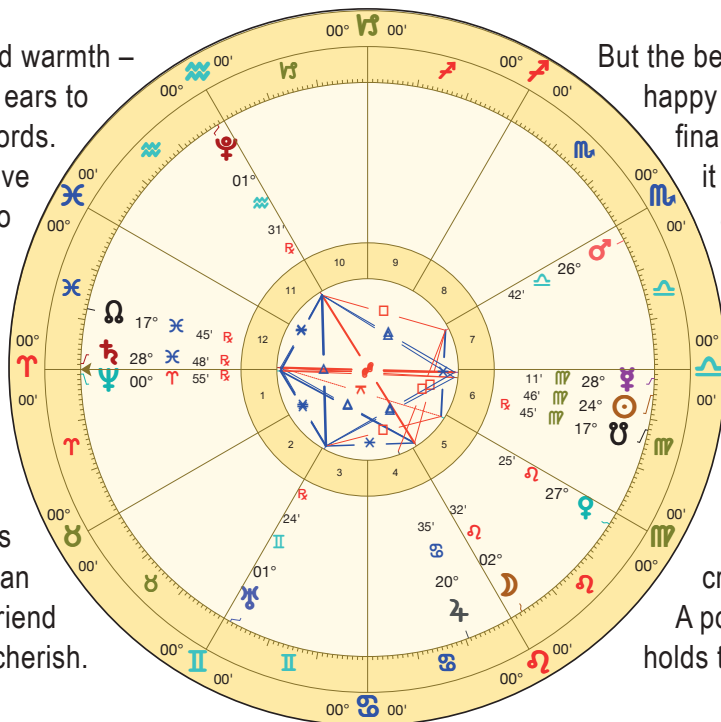
05:20 Pacific; 08:20 Eastern;

17:55 Beijing

20:20 Beijing

Feel the love and warmth –
and close your ears to
others' negative words.

The Moon's move
through playful Leo
offers a chance
to have some
fun with friends,
to put energy
into a creative
collaboration,
or to arrange
a spontaneous
celebration for an
inspirational friend
you've grown to cherish.



But the best period of this
happy Moon is in the
final few hours when
it conjoins Venus
at the end of Leo.
This has a 'never
too late' feeling
– whether it's
never too late
to start over, to
see the glass
half full, or to
pursue a long-held
creative dream.
A positive mind-set
holds the key to success.



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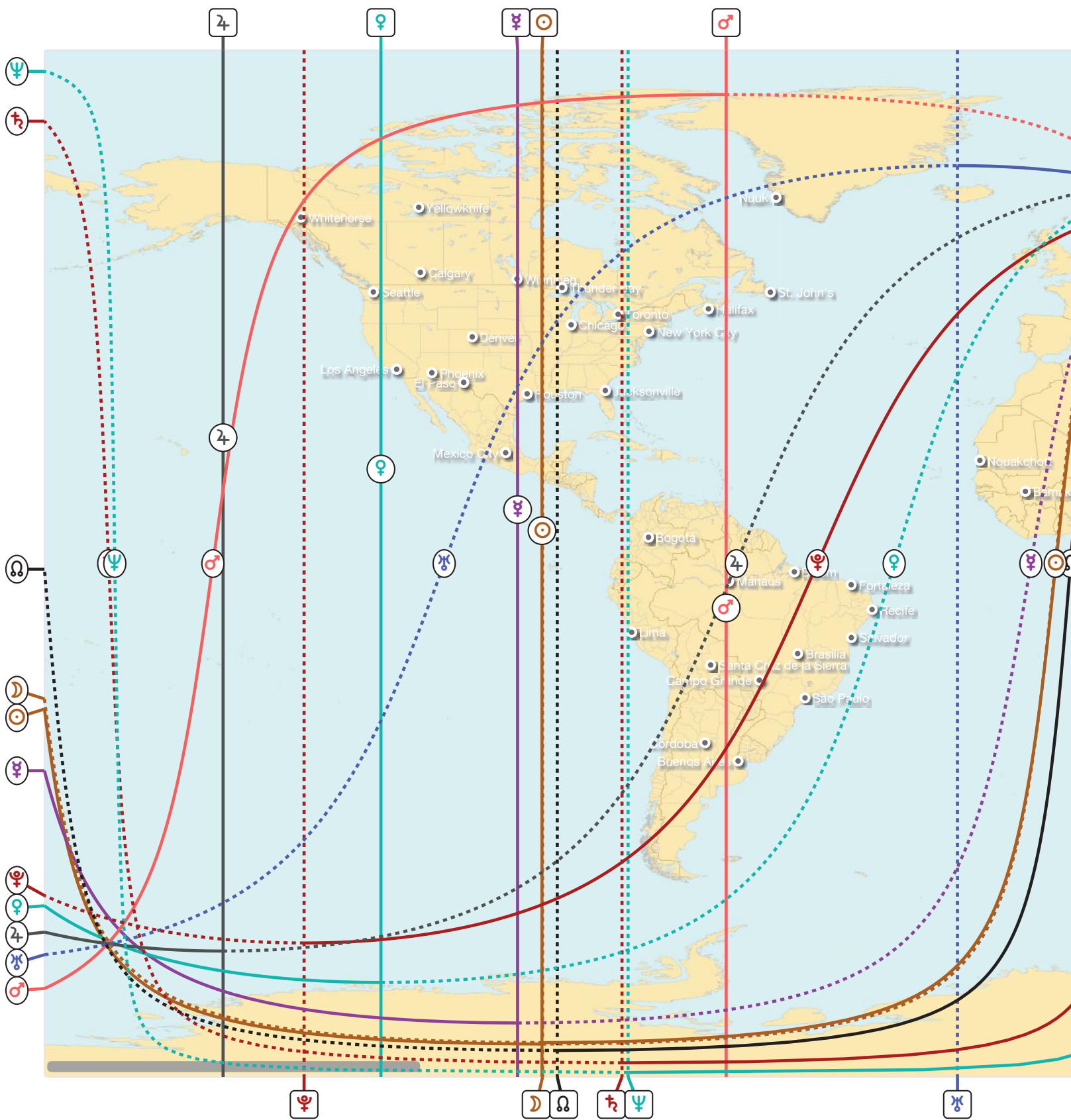
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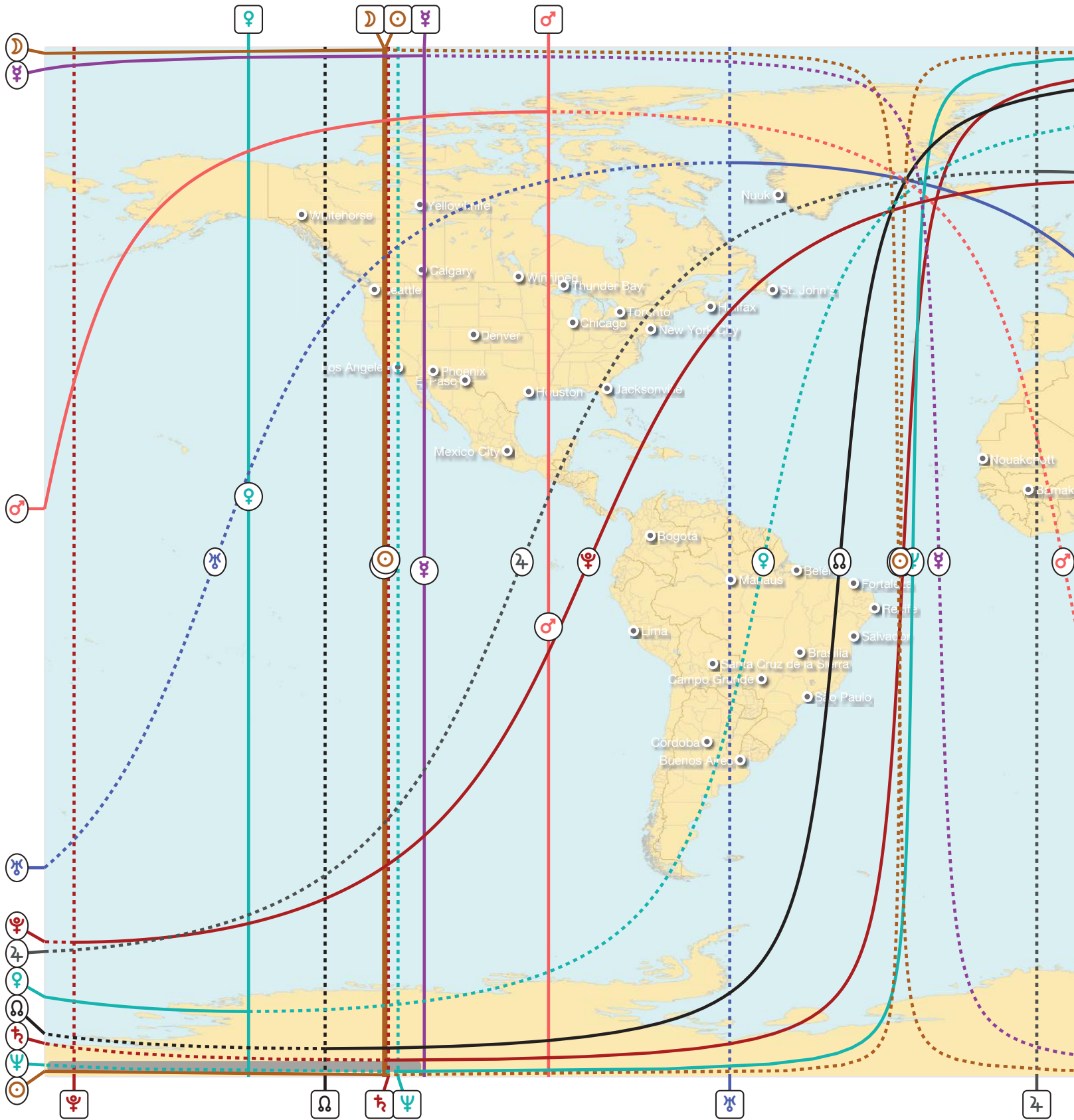


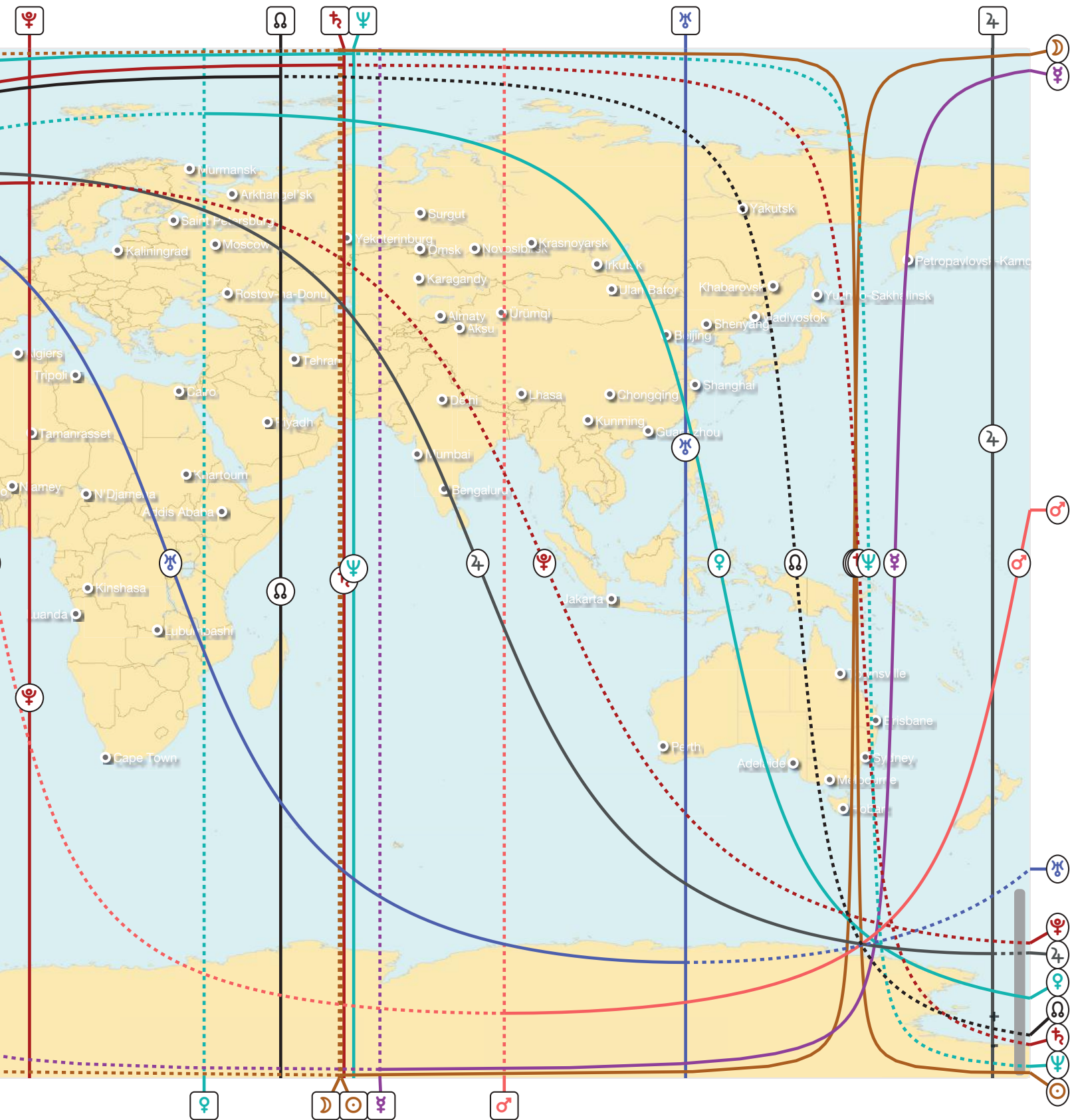
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Transits

21 Sep 2025 20:54:00







Issue 1
Cancer Solstice 2025

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A Personal Tribute to Tem Tarriktar

by Frank Clifford



I remember catching my first glimpse of Tem in person outside the hotel at UAC in Denver 2008. Having been a subscriber to *TMA* since the mid-1990s, I was a little in awe of the man and didn't make an approach. I was also in awe of the magazine and hadn't yet felt established enough to submit a proposal. But now, with over 2,500 email exchanges between us and 84 articles for *TMA*, I have been asked to write this tribute to my warm and gentle publisher-friend.

Although I submitted my first article to *TMA* shortly after the 2008 UAC and began a regular column in 2009, it would take another UAC before we connected in person. It was 29 May 2012 in New Orleans. Breakfast. The Moon was conjunct Mars in Virgo. It was the first moment all week that the two of us workaholics had been able to sit down and catch up. I casually asked him when was the last time he'd had a holiday. 'About 27 years ago,' he replied with a mischievous look. I said that he needed to pick someone he could trust to look after the magazine for one issue so that he could take a break. Three days later, I wrote him an email:

On the way home, I started thinking again about the idea of having a guest-edited edition of *TMA*. If that ever becomes a possibility, please consider this Aries as having his hand up for the role! When I mentioned it to you, it didn't cross my mind to suggest myself (perhaps because next year was going to be a sabbatical – from one of my jobs, at least), but upon reflection a project like that seems right up my alley ... In my Aries-loves-a-challenge head, I imagine a themed issue bringing together a variety of approaches, e.g. The Art and Craft of Chart Interpretation ... I imagine a DIY issue of various techniques, tips and 'voices' could be a popular and memorable issue. Anyway, just an idea to ponder when you have time. It might spell 'headache' to you or, if done well, 'month off'!

A few months later, after not hearing anything, I was surprised that Tem and his staff had met to discuss the possibility of entrusting his baby to a 39-year-old halfway across the world. He gave it the green light but although I steered the issue that autumn (a focus on interpretation that he called 'Tips and Techniques from the Pros' for the June–July 2013 issue), I believed that he would fulfil his own end of the bargain! I hadn't counted on his Mercury–Jupiter conjunction in Virgo. He watched over me like any good father would ... and never did take that holiday. And I'm still waiting to take that sabbatical. Perhaps he and I had more in common than either of us would have admitted to.

Next year, can you arrange to have me kidnapped (not by Aquarians, please – that would be too traumatic) and forcibly taken to the AA Conference?

– Tem Tarriktar

Tem wanted to travel to Europe and I suggested he do so any September (the time of the Astrological Association Conference). But the last period of his life was particularly challenging. His wife, Kate, was seriously ill and Tem was on hand for two intense years. It was a daily job and his devotion saved her life a number of times. The community raised funds for her medical care and the couple was grateful and genuinely touched by the outpouring of support and love. I stepped in to continue helping produce more content for the magazine, but the real heroes were the staff at *TMA* – Nan Geary, Jan deProsse, Sara Fisk, Linda Kaye, Linda Kubota Byrd and new recruit Rae Sapp – who worked on the daily editing, production, distribution and management of the magazine. During this time, Tem approached me to see if I would consider buying *TMA* in the not-too-distant future. And it was an honour to be offered it officially earlier this year [2019], as I knew he trusted my work ethic and skills, and Tem knew how much I value the magazine.

Life on Planet Earth is not for the timid.

– Tem Tarriktar

I drove with Linda Kubota Byrd to Tem and Kate's home on Monday 10 June. It was the final day of a long trip to the US and Canada before I was to return home to London. Tem was in distress and sleepy from a disrupted night, during which an ambulance had been called. I kept it light and shared some anecdotes of my travels and the recent Saturday night 'roast' lecture I'd given at NORWAC. (Tem always liked my warped sense of humour – something my mother has always maintained is 'an acquired taste'.) Linda was helping Tem focus on an autobiography he was planning to write once he'd recovered, but we both left



Linda Kubota Byrd, Frank and Tem, c. 2016

feeling that time was running out. Looking back at the planetary positions of that day in California and my original breakfast meeting with Tem in Denver, Saturn–Pluto straddled the breakfast chart’s Descendant, Neptune opposed its Moon in Virgo, and the Sun was on its Venus in Gemini. It was a goodbye. Today, as I write this, the Sun is on the Cancer Ascendant of that 2008 meeting.

When I returned to the hotel in Sacramento early that evening, I got news that a family member had also been diagnosed with cancer. He would be gone in days, and Tem would follow soon after. That evening I wept for them both.

Grief reconnects us to both selfish and selfless emotions. I thought about the perils of being a workaholic and missing out on truly enjoying the fruits of my own labours. And I thought about Tem: I was saddened that he hadn’t got the chance to retire, relax and enjoy the love we all have for him; to turn up at conferences without setting up a stall – to just enjoy the vibe and meet new generations of astrologers.

But I was snapped out of the maudlin mood by remembering that Tem *had* followed his bliss; he hadn’t missed out on doing what he truly loved to do. His magazine was his baby and he’d fathered a truly exceptional and accomplished offspring. The constant deadlines may have drained him, but *The Mountain Astrologer* gave him purpose and a vocation.

Tem was a gentle soul with a quirky and dry sense of humour. He had a gift for being an influential part of the community without being embroiled in all the personality politics that this can entail. He had no agenda except to make the very best magazine he could, and to introduce all kinds of astrologies to the readership. Sometimes he had to deal with disgruntled writers who took

the rejection of their article personally. But I imagine he usually made the right decision. Tem had good instincts about what would suit the readership, and most importantly, he had integrity.

And for writers like me, there are rewards from working with people with that sort of talent, respect and integrity. I've often expressed to *TMA's* senior editor Nan Geary that her expertise not only encourages me to attempt my best work but it also reassures me: I can relax while writing, knowing she'll improve what I'm doing. Some 58 issues of *TMA* and 84 articles later [as of 2019], writing still doesn't flow naturally (it's usually a mix of blood, sweat and tears!) but the rewards have been immense.

Tem's wife Kate once asked me, 'With all that you do, why do you keep writing for us?' For a moment, I was speechless. Didn't she *know* the high regard in which *TMA* is held? Didn't she *realise* that it's *the* magazine everyone wants to be published in? Of course she did – she was just being direct and curious in that Sagittarian way of hers. I managed to string a few words together: 'Who wouldn't want to work with the very best?'

I still feel that way.

Originally written in 2019 for ISAR's International Astrologer.

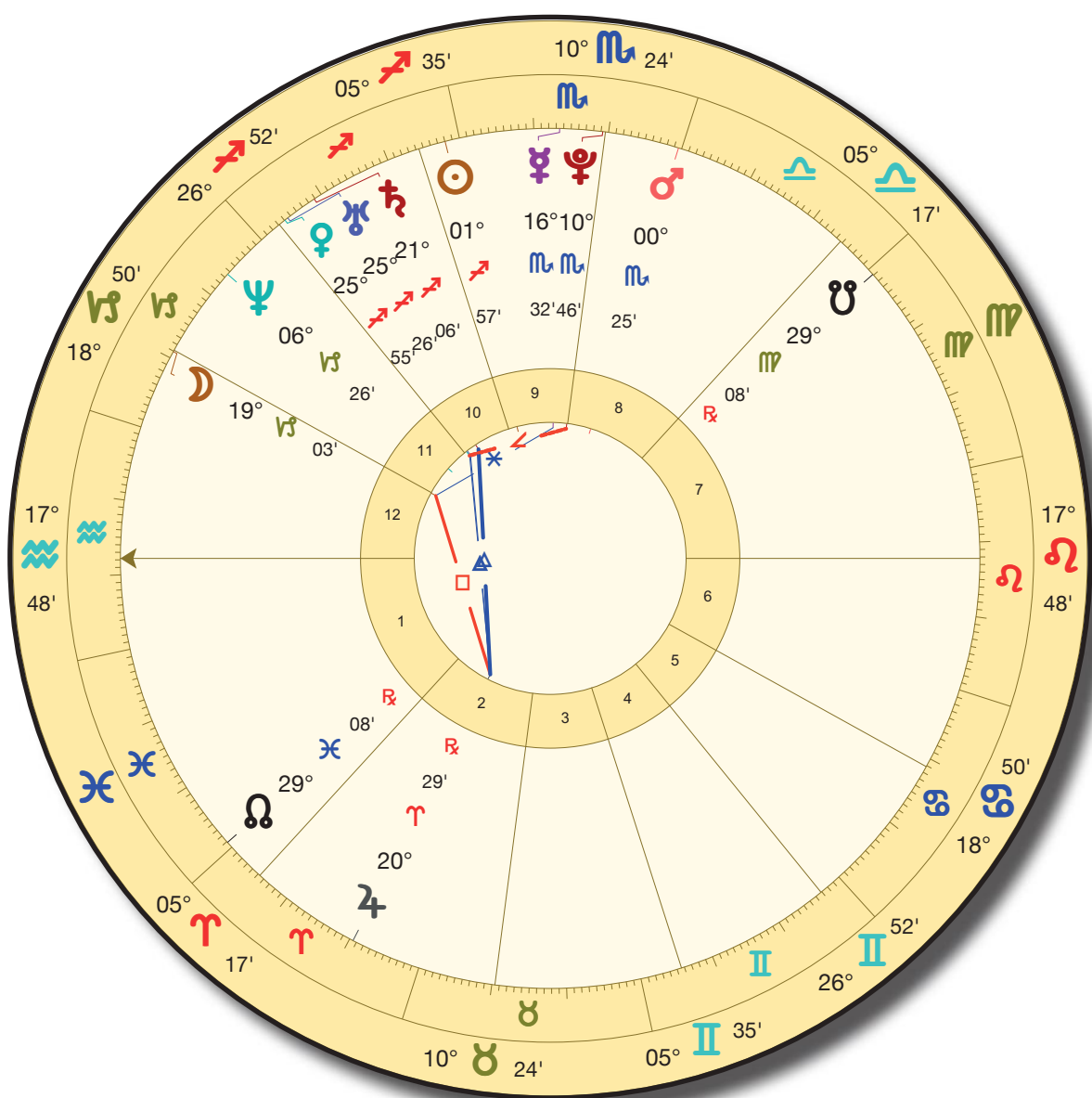
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The Mountain Astrologer is Born

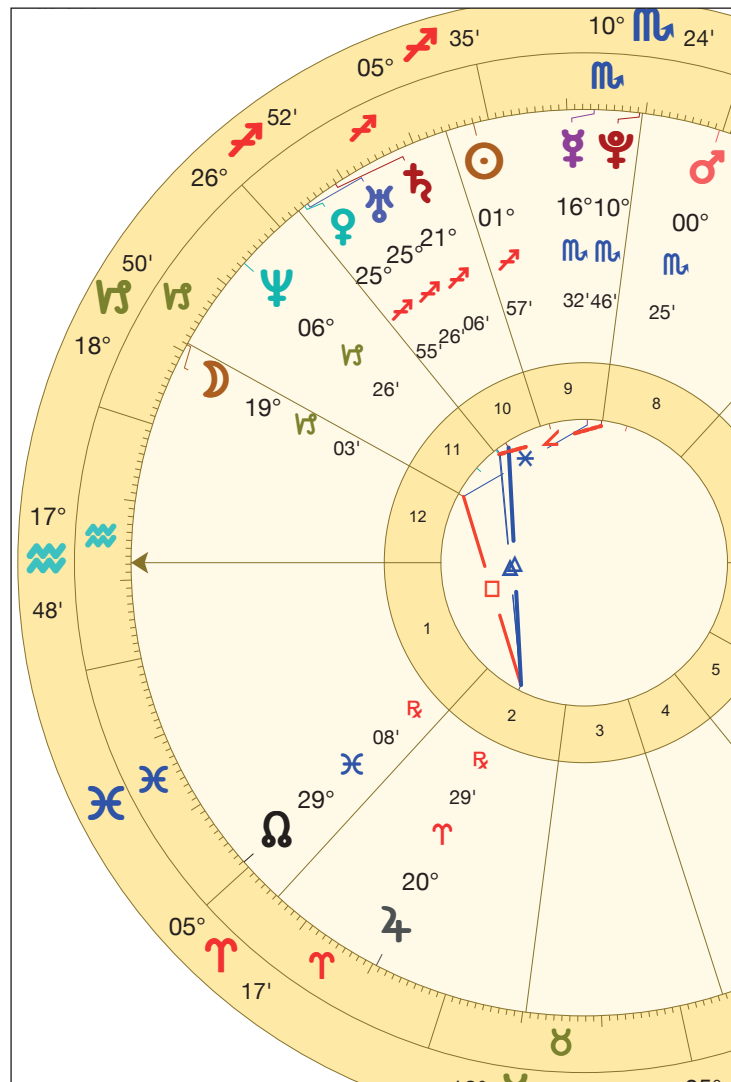
24 November 1987, 12.04 p.m. MST, Nederland, Colorado

A brief analysis by Frank Clifford



That a magazine has survived and thrived for more than 30 years is a feat worth celebrating, and that it continues to offer a variety of articles, topics and voices at such a high standard makes this worth shouting from the rooftops – as the magazine’s Sun on the Midheaven (MC) in Sagittarius suggests.

So, what does *TMA*’s bowl- or sling-shaped chart tell us? With the Sun culminating at the MC in Sagittarius, its purpose is clear for all to see: the magazine’s mission is to inform, educate, enlighten, guide and train. With Venus conjunct both Saturn and Uranus, there’s a love of all forms of astrology (from traditional ideas to contemporary uses), and there’s a grounding in the fundamental, foundational parts of the birth chart (Saturn) and interest in astrology’s latest advances and discoveries (Uranus). After all, it is a publication (Sagittarius) called *The Mountain Astrologer* (Capricorn) (Aquarius).



If we follow the planets from Scorpio through to Aries, we can see that *TMA* offers in-depth research (Scorpio) that takes us on a journey (Sagittarius) with professionals and authorities (Capricorn); it shares many ideas with the community (Aquarius) to foster an understanding of the interconnectedness of the world around us (Pisces); and then it leaves us to try it out for ourselves (Aries).

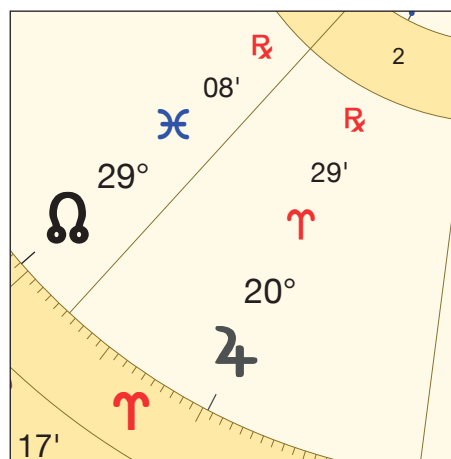
With Sagittarius and Aquarius on the ‘public persona’ angles, we have the image of the philosopher and the anthropologist; the philanthropist and the humanitarian. These signs have a cosmic, humorous, New Age or futuristic feel (as seen in *TMA*’s covers and quirky cartoons). Both Sagittarius and Aquarius are hopeful for humanity. They have a dislike of narrowness and pigeonholing, of ignorance and intolerance. They enjoy crossing (or tearing through) boundaries, exploring, being visionary, reaching out and speaking up. An



With the TMA Sun culminating at the MC in Sagittarius, its purpose is clear for all to see: the magazine's mission is to inform, educate, enlighten, guide and train.

observational, humanistic viewpoint (Aquarius) combines with the evangelical faith (Sagittarius) of knowing what astrology can do *when it comes alive* – the sort of mix that we as astrologers often feel.

In *TMA's* chart, there's a well-placed Jupiter in Aries: to boldly go places other magazines wouldn't (even if the editors are quick to catch split infinitives before print). But the chart also shows depth and staying power: Mars and Mercury–Pluto in Scorpio, plus a Capricorn Moon. In addition to the breadth of writers and subjects, each professionally polished issue is *packed* with more information and insights than we could ever absorb in one sitting.



It's hard to think of a leading light who *hasn't* contributed to, or been featured in, its pages. And if we look for asteroids for those regular contributors or high-profile subjects/interviewees, we make some fun discoveries – although there are not asteroids for everyone (try finding *Tem* and *Tarriktar*!). Indulge me, and I'll leave you to play with meanings for the following:

In Libra (opposite *TMA's* Jupiter), we have Robert *Blaschke* (17°), Kim Rogers-Gallagher (20°, while *Rogers* is further along at 13° Scorpio), and Jessica *Murray* (24° Libra). In Scorpio, there's regular columnist Dana Gerhardt conjunct herself *Danae* (6°) *Gerhardter* (9°) – give me marks for trying! – and editor Nan *Nancy* Geary perched at 28° Scorpio (near *TMA's* Sun – and Nan's) and opposite Ray *Grasse Grass* (26° Taurus).

In Sagittarius, interviewee Stephen *Arroyo* (0°) is followed by long-time software reviewer Hank *Friedman* (4°) on the magazine's MC. On the opposite side is much-loved Donna *Cunningham* (19° Gemini), who wrote for *TMA* for 27 years. In Capricorn, we meet Greg Bogart *Bogard* (4°) and Erin *Sullivan* (8°) conjunct *TMA's* Neptune, while luminaries Liz Greene and Jeff *Green* (21°) are conjunct long-time editor and Mama *TMA* herself *Kate* (21°) Sholly, fittingly on the magazine's Moon. 'Astrology News' columnist Gloria *Starr* (25°) is nearby.

Prolific Vedic writer Linda Johnsen *Johnson* (13°) conjoins Wendell *Perry* (18°) in Aquarius on the magazine's Ascendant. And, yes (after 84 issues and 113 pieces), I'm in the 7th house square the Sun, hmm ... (*Clifford* is at 2° Virgo)

– but, interestingly, my natal Moon is 2° Virgo, and transiting Saturn was at 2° Virgo on 24 September 2007, when I received initial interest from the editors about my first article proposal.

Finally, if you want a hat-trick of asteroids to play with, take a look at the advertising salesperson for *TMA*, the ever-delightful *Linda* (5° Virgo) *Kubota* (17° Libra, opposite *TMA*'s Jupiter) *Byrd* (10° Cancer).

Long may *TMA* continue! The signs are hopeful: On the day Tem began *TMA*, Google tells me that a debut album by Keith Sweat was released. Its title? *Make It Last Forever*. And if you do happen to discover an asteroid and get the chance to name it, may I suggest Tem Tarriktar – it'll make my job much easier when I do this again for the 300th issue.

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The TMA Team at Lunch, February 2015: Frank, Tem, Janette de Prosse, Kate Sholly and Nan Geary

Goodbye Tem



by Steven Forrest

Tem Tarriktar, the beloved publisher of *The Mountain Astrologer* magazine, passed away last July 8th [2019]. He had thyroid cancer. In the Age of Facebook and Instagram, most of you reading this probably knew of his illness and his heroic battle against it over the past many months. Likely, you knew of his passing within hours as well. Astrology is a small world and, at times such as this, our field and all of us who comprise it feel like a family. Death draws us all a little closer to the ancient hearth-fire.

All the standard things one might say in the face of such a loss remain true, even though familiarity might weaken them to the point that they sound like clichés: Tem will be sorely missed. Our hearts go out to those he left behind. We will always remember him. We know he lives on in spirit and in his legacy of great work.

All true. All those words need to be said. All of them are felt deeply by anyone who knew Tem personally, and by many who knew him only through his good works. Even if we did not have the joy of knowing him personally, every one of us in the community benefited from his kindness, wisdom, and competence in sustaining *The Mountain Astrologer* over all these years.

It's hard for me to believe, but the first time I met Tem Tarriktar was a little over thirty years ago. Our first encounter happened at the United Astrology Congress in New Orleans back in 1989. Time flies. I had a couple of books in print with Bantam by then and I had begun to make a little splash in AstroWorld, so Tem knew who I was. At that point, I had never heard of him. If memory serves, he approached me about a possible interview for this crazy magazine he was trying to start. He had rented a booth at the trade show to help promote it.

I liked Tem right away, but his whole enterprise seemed impossibly dubious. The 'magazine' was homespun at best – photocopied or perhaps even mimeographed, if I am remembering correctly.



TMA's inclusiveness addressed a major intellectual problem we astrologers face: trying to maintain some kind of common bond of shared language in the face of our enormous diversity.

He gave me the impression that his total start-up budget for *The Mountain Astrologer* might feed a family of four for a week or two, provided they really liked pizza.

As we got to know each other, Tem confirmed that 'wing-and-a-prayer' impression by admitting that he was saving money by sleeping under his table at the Trade Show. He would wait until Security turned its back, then he would duck behind the bunting at the end of the day. He couldn't afford 'a room at the inn.'

Of course I appreciated Tem's rebel spirit immediately – his massive dose of Leo energy lit up my Aries Moon. And I also knew that with that kind of determination and chutzpah, *The Mountain Astrologer* was going to make it despite the odds and against all reason.

And 'make it' it did. Two hundred monthly issues later, it is still going strong.

All reports are that the magazine will continue to be published despite the loss of Tem. With the current exponential expansion in public interest in astrology, I suspect it will thrive. If pride exists in the realms where Tem is now soaring, I am confident that he will be proud. And I am also sure he will be phoning in his editorial suggestions from the astral world, whispering pointed suggestions into the dream-ears of those who will take the helm.

In the past and in the mysterious future, Tem could naturally never have done any of this alone. Reading off the masthead, I want to honor and thank Nan Geary, Linda Kaye, Mary Plumb, Kate Sholly, Frank C. Clifford, Ray Grasse, Janette deProsse, Sara Fisk, Linda Byrd, Linda Ferencik, and Ann Meigs for their own hard work in the endless effort of cranking out such a high quality magazine – and never missing a publication date, despite hell, high water, and Pluto transits.

There has always been much to love about *The Mountain Astrologer*. The best part, to me, has been the way it has functioned as a kind of collective 'watering hole,' where partisans of all the different, fragmented branches of our craft could come together as equals and possibly even learn something from each other. Evolutionary astrologers, Hellenists, Cosmobiologists, Uranian astrologers, Jyotish practitioners, Horary astrologers, astro-economists – all were welcome in the pages of *TMA*.

That inclusiveness addressed a major intellectual problem we astrologers face: trying to maintain some kind of common bond of shared language in the face of our enormous diversity. But more importantly to me, Tem's wide-open welcome mat addressed a spiritual problem: that is simply the risk of division shattering our community. Blithe affirmations that 'we are all doing the same thing' may politely defuse arguments – and such affirmations are soul-miles ahead of anyone condemning the other person's house system or zodiac, thus sowing seeds of pointless competition and suspicion.

Still, the various astrological systems are in fact quite different from each other, and truly listening 'across the aisle' has never been easy. In the words of U2, Tem always reminded us all that 'we are one, but we are not the same.' Tem, in other words, did not make the issue of fragmentation any easier than it could honestly be made, but by creating common ground where we could all meet, he at least made addressing it possible.

Of all Tem's many gifts to the astrological family over the past three decades, it is that one for which I am most grateful. I salute his great soul for bringing that living example of inclusiveness, generosity and respect for diversity to us all. Perhaps more than any other figure in the landscape of current astrological practice, he embodied the notion of rising above our differences and affirming that we all live under one sky.

I just called this inclusive message Tem's 'gift,' which is correct. But I also call it his *challenge* to us – a challenge to which we are still rising as a community.

As synchronicity would have it, I am writing these words at the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies in Rhinebeck, New York, where I am currently teaching a five-day class. At the moment, I am sitting in the quiet upstairs of the Ram Dass Library, which has the finest collection of 20th and 21st century 'consciousness literature' I have ever seen.

Omega is a dozen years older than *The Mountain Astrologer*, but it is cut from the same cloth. Like the magazine, it too is part of a quiet spiritual revolution that has transformed the world. Like Tem, the founders of Omega did a lot more than simply 'have a vision.' They acted on the vision and made it real. They created a force of individual transformation that has endured – and will endure, just as *The Mountain Astrologer* will endure, long after the founders are gone.

Standing back even further, Omega and *Mountain Astrologer* metamorphose into individual stars in a far larger cultural galaxy. Conscious yoga, all the various emerging body-mind-spirit therapies, Buddhism coming to the West – they are all part of the same synchronistic wave.

For all the daunting problems that assail the modern world, it is a far more conscious society today than the one into which I was born. Back then, 'boys were men and women were girls.' Being gay was a disease – or a crime. Atomic

tests happened in the open air. The environment existed to be exploited, no questions asked. And our collective spiritual advice boiled down to 'be good and you'll go to heaven.'

It is hard to convey the magnitude of the awakening that has happened in the past half-century.

My point is that, without Tem Tarriktar, this awakening would have been diminished. He played a part in it, and I salute him for that. I am aware that my words might seem hyperbolic – fear not, this not a hyperventilated call to beatify 'Saint Tem' ... I mean, I remember this guy when he was sleeping under a table, hiding from Security. But over the years he has touched the lives of many thousands of people, myself included. He has offered countless human beings real hope and practical guidance in times of genuine personal darkness. No one could fully catalog his good works since most of them happened in total privacy – someone, perhaps someone on the edge of despair or worse, sat reading an article in *TMA*, and perhaps gaining life-saving perspective and some faith that there might just possibly be a future worth living.

We can only surmise about these very private mysteries. But we know they are there. How could it be otherwise, given the quality of the magazine, its healing content, its many readers and three decades of publication?

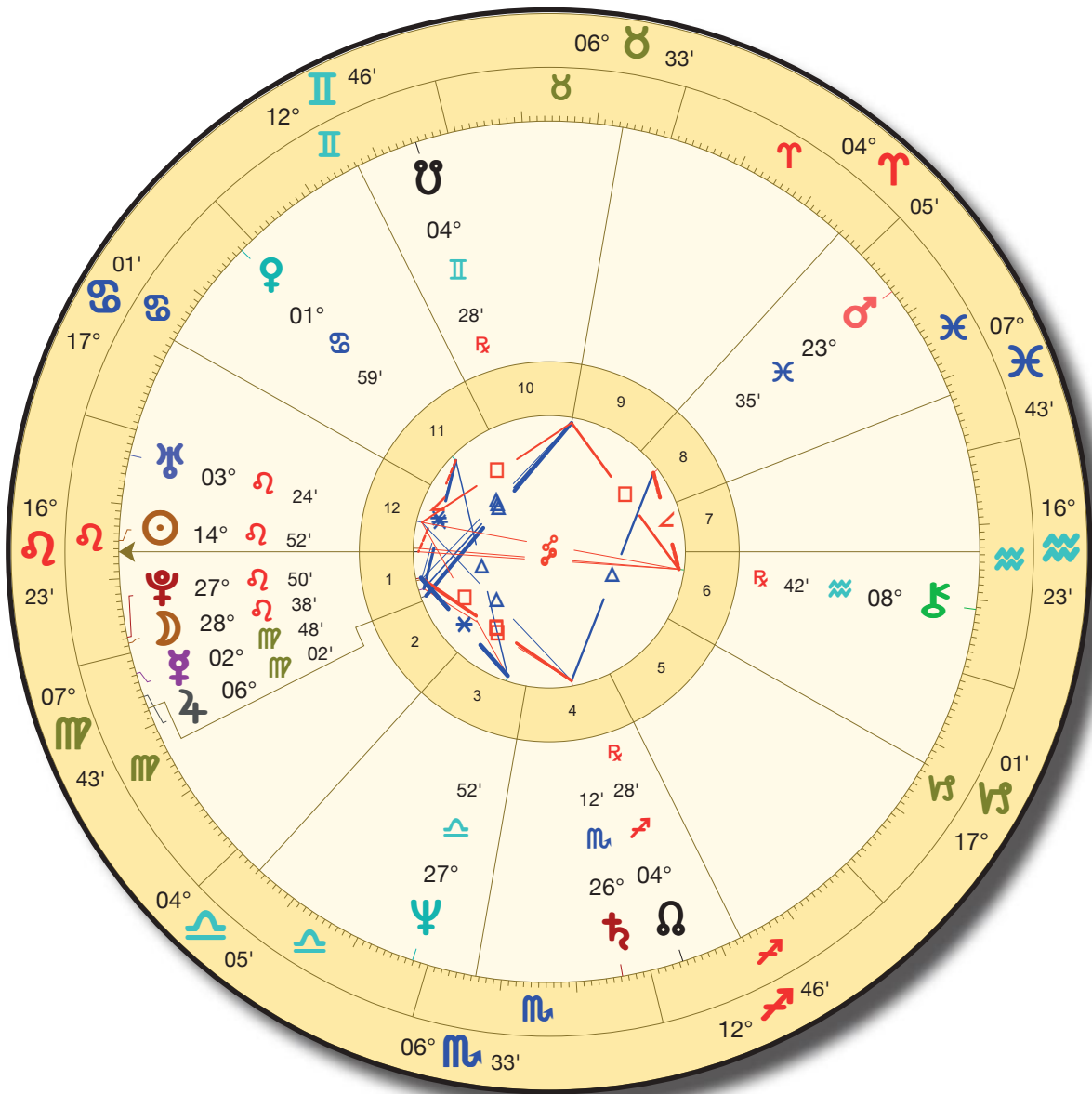
Astrologically, Tem was Mr. Leo – a solar Leo with Leo rising and a Leo Moon. His Sun was just a degree and a half above the Ascendant, his Moon conjunct Pluto in the first house, along with a Mercury–Jupiter conjunction in Virgo in the first. Leadership, power, creativity, language – it's all there in simple astrological terms. He made no secret of his chart, so I feel free to speak of it here.

In deeper evolutionary terms, there is implicit in Leo a need to recover from an ancient trauma of rejection, or worse. In a prior life, saying that 'Tem was burned at the stake,' while probably not literally true, is a metaphor that at least gets us going. His personal healing path lay in expressing his soul honestly and in a spirit of vulnerability – and in hearing some applause for it this time around. It took real spiritual courage, in other words, for him to stick his neck out 'again' by launching *The Mountain Astrologer*. I honor him for that. He could have been an executive in any industry and hidden his soul safely inside a suit.

Tem's lunar South Node was in Gemini in the 10th house. Always, once you get used to the evolutionary perspective, you see the same, reliable pattern: *the karmic past leaves a fingerprint on the present life*. In a prior life, Tem was known publicly (10th house) for *what he had to say* (Gemini).

Ditto in this present life, obviously enough. That is how it often works.

Mercury rules that South Node from its strong position in Virgo (and the 1st house) conjunct Jupiter. That means that in the karmic past, his voice was



impactful. He was a leader. He experienced some degree of success, applause and fame.

But Saturn in Scorpio and the 4th house opposes that South Node and squares that Mercury. In that prior life, he hit some kind of 'brick wall of reality,' probably one of a dark, treacherous or secret nature – that's where Scorpio enters the equations. The betrayal may have even come from his own *family* (4th house).

Mercury (ruler of the South Node) squaring the South Node implies that he did not see any of this coming. He was powerful and successful, and then suddenly cut off and silenced.

Sound familiar?

He thus entered this world in 1956 as a powerful, eloquent voice that had been shocked and traumatized into silence.

Tem took birth to heal that wound. His North Node lies in Sagittarius in the 4th house. Thus it is ruled by Jupiter – which, interestingly, is conjunct his South Node ruler, Mercury. This is a classic case of ‘getting back on the horse that threw him.’ He came to this earth with a soul-intention of *reclaiming his voice*, of being heard again – but doing it a little differently this time. With the North Node in Sagittarius, he came here to ‘reclaim faith’ – but faith in what exactly? A big part of the answer lies in the 4th house – *family*. (Remember: in his prior life, he was probably betrayed by his own family. That hurts!)

He could not heal this wound alone. I am on thin ice here, with much that I do not know, but *kudos* to Tem’s beloved wife, Kate Sholly, for the soul-healing she offered him by being his loyal and loving companion for, I believe, an entire Saturn cycle.

In a spirit befitting a 4th house North Node, Tem’s deepest evolutionary work in this life was mostly internal – private, secret and intimate. We will never know about it, nor should we.

And out of that deep well of healing emerged an ancient, powerful voice, made stronger by what it had endured, rising from its own ashes, and touching the souls of three generations of astrologers.

Thank you for all that, Tem – and godspeed.

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Steven Forrest is the author of a dozen astrological bestsellers including the classic, *The Inner Sky*. His work has been translated into a dozen languages. Over the years, he has traveled worldwide teaching his brand of choice-centered evolutionary astrology, which integrates free will, grounded humanistic psychology and ancient metaphysics. Thousands of people have passed through his Astrological Apprenticeship Program since its inception in 1998. In 2020, he launched his online school, The Forrest Center for Evolutionary Astrology (www.forreastaurology.center). He lives in the Anza-Borrego desert of southern California with his partner, fine artist Michelle Valborg Kondos.

Considering Soul

by
Brian Clark

*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar¹*

– William Wordsworth

The question of soul – *our life's Star* – is fundamental to astrological practice and tradition. Each horoscope is an invitation to consider the gods that live through us and the archetypal powers that pave our path of life. However we may consider soul – whether it is thought of as psyche, our inner life or perhaps the true or divine self – to an astrologer the symbols of the horoscope are keys that potentially unlock gates into its otherworldly realm. We may conceive of this double or secondary world as imaginary, psychic or spiritual; yet no matter how we conceptualize this place, this is where we encounter the sacred shards of soul.

Reflections on soul and its relationship to the horoscope vary considerably throughout astrological tradition depending on the epoch, the practitioner, their spiritual beliefs and philosophical orientation. Even though soul is ambiguous, defies description and is open to interpretation and imagination, it is the essence of astrological ritual. This question of soul is the heartbeat of astrology. Soul's early roots were associated with the breath of life in the body.



Astrological intelligence can be aligned with the process of soul-making, as it orders and makes meaning of our worldly trials through the study of the starry heavens.

Yet soul conveys something more than just breath – it is what gives life its depth, meaning and substance. Soul resonates with the inner life, embracing our private and spiritual self-essence, creative expression, even the vocation we are meant to follow. As an image of the life breath, soul authenticates the natal horoscope, which could be likened to a lifelong meditation on the first breath of life. The horoscope is akin to soul.

Symbols are the language of the soul. Through the auspices of astrological images and symbols, the practice of horoscopy kindles the connection to our essential nature. Horoscope symbols stimulate contemplation about living a heartfelt life and inspire revelations about our inner world and spiritual character. It is as if the symbols animate the horoscope, opening a new dimension that allows a deeper, unseen meaning to emerge. Like the soul itself, the horoscope spans two worlds: the incarnate and the heavenly; it can exist in the past, the present or the future while still remaining timeless. To imagine and work with the symbols of the horoscope as a way to affirm and animate this life force *ensouls* the practice of astrology.² I imagine the horoscope to be like a vivid dream: the dream of one's life. And, like a dream, it calls us to participate in a conversation with our soul, whatever we might imagine that to be.

With no context or ways of thinking about soul, astrological practice can drift on a sea of ungrounded impressions and intuitions. When astrological practice succumbs to a mechanistic model, symbols become rationalized as the expression of a cosmic order; no longer symptoms of the soul, but causal signs. Without the inquiry into soul, astrological symbols remain fixed in literality, facts rather than images, interpretations rather than revelations. Without the depth that soul engages us in, astrology becomes a static form rather than a dynamic process. Engaged with soul, countless impressions are summoned up that are difficult, at times impossible, to articulate; yet this is the nature of soul.

Through time, soul has accounted for the amorphous, yet eternal, aspect of the self that is freed from the body at death, a divine essence that needs to be saved from sin, even the 'wow' factor in a piece of uplifting music. Food, cities and buildings have been described as having soul. It is not material, but can be sensual and deeply felt; therefore its nature is of two worlds. Evocative, soul conjures up a collection of ideas, images, beliefs and feelings; but one

thing seems common, which is that soul appears unworldly and eternal. It is an invisible quality that breathes life into the life, a smouldering ember that becomes a passionate flame. Soul cannot be manufactured or commoditized, but is present in an ephemeral thought, a profound experience, in reflective and timeless moments or in feeling the anguish of being human. Words such as alive, appetite, breath, character, chi, consciousness, essence, force, ghost, heart, inner life, mind, morality, spirit, virtue, vocation, warmth and wisdom³ suggest its presence.

Our 'life's Star' has been likened to an acorn and a seed, linked with our destiny and our purpose, guided by a *daimon*, a genius or a guardian angel. The enduring heavens, full of images, also evoke these mysteries of soul, destiny, fate and calling. Astrology's skyscape is and always has been a living museum for the stories of the soul.

Philosophically, soul has been a prime consideration. Over time, soul has become annexed to religious doctrines, philosophical theories and New Age concepts, becoming entangled with notions of morality and spirituality which exploit the concept of soul. Its commercialization institutionalizes its mysteries and abandons soul to a product. When randomly used, the word is no longer imaginative, but glib and ordinary. Or sometimes, as Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig expresses, the usage can be 'embarrassing'.

Now 'soul' is a difficult term to use. Some psychologists avoid it, trying to create a psychology without soul. Others replace the religious-sounding 'soul' with the more neutral 'psyche'. I am all for employing the word 'soul', yet, when used too often, it sounds pompous or sentimental. There is no way out: if you don't use the word 'soul' you avoid the basic issue of psychology; use it too often and it becomes embarrassing.⁴

Similarly for astrologers, 'there is no way out'. No matter how we conceive of it, soul is at the heart of astrological handiwork. It is always there, beyond the interpretations, the astrological analysis and theorizing. As a consulting astrologer, I deeply felt I needed my own way of thinking about soul; therefore I followed some threads through time to help me feel comfortable with this question of soul.

From an ancient perspective, soul was the life energy that entered the body at birth and left at death. It was the essence of life, the breath, carried on the wind or borne lightly on the wings of a butterfly. The word 'soul' first enters Western literature in the Homeric epic *The Iliad* around the 8th century BCE. By the Classical period, three centuries later, soul had undergone a significant

semantic amplification cultivated through the philosophy of Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics. Through subsequent periods, soul remained a perpetual focal point of inquiry for all philosophers. The doctrines of subsequent practices like theosophy, anthroposophy and psychology continually redeveloped the understanding of soul. Similarly, astrology was not immune to the changing conceptualizations of soul.

In Greek, the closest word to the English 'soul' is *psyche*; in Latin, *anima*.⁵ 'Psyche' characterizes a mix of indefinable ideas such as soul, mind and spirit derived from the Greek *psychein*, to breathe or blow, continuing the tradition of linking soul and breath.⁶ *Psyche*, as an animating spirit or soul, entered the English language by the mid 17th century. By the early 20th century, it was associated with the amalgam of thoughts, emotions and behaviours⁷ or *psychology*, which suggests the study of the human soul. A *psychologist* implies a student of the soul; hence to me astrologers, in the spirit of the word, are in essence psychologists.⁸ From antiquity to modernity, soul remained a fluid and indeterminable idea, best amplified and imagined like a symbol itself.

Psyche incarnated late into Greek myth. While important concepts, virtues, qualities and feelings like Justice, Peace, Health, Love and Retribution were personified as goddesses or heroines, Soul/Psyche was not embodied by the early Greeks, even though by the Classical period soul had become aligned with the image of a butterfly. In representations of her creation, Athena places a butterfly on the head of Prometheus as an image of ensouling the first man. I find it curious that the notion of soul, so important to poets and philosophers, does not become anthropomorphized until later antiquity. In the 2nd century CE, Psyche became immortalized as the partner of Amor (Eros) through the pen of the Latin writer Apuleius in his unusual novel *The Golden Ass*. This pairing of Soul and Eros is not only a much-loved story of a heroine overcoming the odds to find love, but is both allegory and myth.

Eros is Psyche's soulmate. Unlike Psyche, Eros incarnated early in Greek myth, being one of the five primal deities that emerged out of Chaos, the gaping void and womb of creation. As a primal force of creation, Eros is many things. Essentially he humanizes the desire for life and union; no wonder Psyche and Eros are united, as the theme of life and soul is fundamental and universal.

A millennium before the old woman told the tale of Psyche and Eros in *The Golden Ass*, the Greeks had already developed a notion of psyche, evident in *The Iliad*. Psyche left the body on death and became a shade, the ghost-like mirror image or *eidolon* of the person while alive. The legacy from the Homeric period was that the soul could still be imagined after death. Thereafter, the notion that psyche was the life essence of an individual and connected to life in all its forms became established. Soul needed to be lived. It was seen as separate to



Objects become ensouled when they deepen our experience of being alive, strike a profound chord, stir a mysterious yearning or hold memory.

the body; hence Hippocratic medicine differentiated between the illnesses of the body and those of the soul.

In early epics, qualities like courage and passion were assigned to the soul. Playwrights from the 5th century BCE referred to the soul's desire, pleasures, emotions and virtues, aligning the soul with morality.⁹ Plato reshaped the ideas he inherited on soul, endowing it with wits and aligning it with an intelligible life form. His discourses characterize mental and psychological aspects belonging to the soul, not the body – soulful ideas that continue to echo through our modern discourses.

And so continued the philosophical enquiry throughout antiquity about whether the soul is separate from the body, whether it leaves, returns, even reincarnates. During creative transitions, such as the Renaissance, the question of soul was philosophically renewed, finding an expression through other mediums including painting and prose. The Romantic period also brought the soulful dimension of purity, beauty and suffering to life through the imagery and words of poets like John Keats.

Soul-making

In a letter, John Keats reminded his brother of Psyche's late incarnation: 'the goddess was never worshipped or sacrificed to with any of the ancient fervour – and perhaps never thought of in the old religion: I am more orthodox than to let a heathen Goddess be so neglected.'¹⁰ As a Romantic poet, Keats could not neglect Psyche, not just because she was the embodiment of beauty, but because her suffering through her trials of life was 'soul-making'.

Keats's interest in Psyche's anguish inspired him to reflect on the world as the 'vale of soul-making'.¹¹ A few days before he copied his *Ode to Psyche* in his journal, he wrote to his brother:

I say 'Soul-making' ... Do you not see how necessary a World of Pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a Soul. A Place where the heart must feel and suffer in a thousand diverse ways!¹²

His words resonated through me when I read them for the first time. Keats accentuates the poles of beauty and suffering as layers of the soul, but he also



Soul is mystery. Yet, ironically, openness to its ambiguity and symbols leads us to a resonant knowing.

locates the incarnate and worldly experience as being where soul is crafted. Keats's 'World of Pains' was the 'vale of soul-making', the place where a meaningful relationship between the suffering and trials of the body in the world and the beauty of the soul could be felt. Like Apuleius, Keats is struck by Psyche's trials which were 'soul-making', an active process of working with soul. The ancients knew the act of ensouling, but now Keats gives us a new verb for it: 'soul-making'.

The majority of my clients come for an astrological consultation to contextualize and understand their suffering; therefore I found Keats's image of our worldly trials as the 'vale of soul-making' not only inspiring but enormously helpful. I applied this image to the horoscope, which for me is an imaginative map of this vale. Keats helped me see that active participation and work with the symbols of the horoscope is in itself soul-making. I recognized in myself, as well as in many of my students and clients, how the images evoked by the horoscope offer ways to participate with our trials and pains, not from an analytic or causal perspective, but from a soulful one. The horoscope infuses the mundane world with meaning and connection through the medium of its symbols and images.

Reflecting on Soul

Inspired by Keats, James Hillman began his manuscript *Re-Visioning Psychology* with: 'This book is about *soul-making*'.¹³ In his efforts to realign soul with psychology, Hillman introduced an archetypal psychology that addressed life as *psychological* in its authentic sense: that is, the study of the soul and its connection to life. Similarly, astrological intelligence can be aligned with the process of soul-making, as it orders and makes meaning of our worldly trials through the study of the starry heavens.

Hillman's early reflections identified four aspects of the soul. For me, his delineation of the soul as the unknown component which engenders meaning, turns events into experiences, is communicated in love and has a religious concern, is a wonderfully succinct beginning to reflect on soul and the horoscope. In *Re-Visioning Psychology* Hillman added 'three necessary modifications'. He suggested that soul is the deepening of events into experiences, that its religious concern derives from its special *relation with death* and that soul is the imaginative possibilities in our nature.¹⁴

OPA 2025 RETREAT

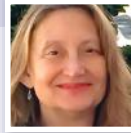
COSMIC SHIFT

CONNECTING IN A NEW ERA

CONNECT
AND LEARN

NEWPARK RESORTS
PARK CITY
UTAH
OCTOBER
15-19, 2025

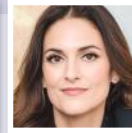
TRACK LEADERS



L. Bell



C. Brooks



R. Lang

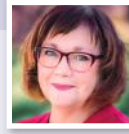


R. Levine

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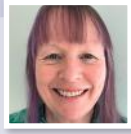
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Twenty-one years after the publication of *Re-Visioning Psychology*, Hillman published *The Soul's Code*, a more contemporary contemplation on the essence of soul, reaching back to Plato's Myth of Er to draw inspiration for amplifying soul's companions of calling, fate, *daimon* and necessity. Hillman used the 'acorn theory', which suggests that 'each person bears a uniqueness that asks it be lived and that is already present before it can be lived'.¹⁵ Astrologers were already familiar with this thought, as it is central to the system of astrology, as well as the idea underpinning Dane Rudhyar's conceptualization of a transpersonal astrology. The horoscope is a time-honoured tradition that has continuously embraced Hillman's 'acorn theory'. As the spokesperson for realigning soul with psychology, Hillman leaves a legacy of how contemporary astrologers might consider soul.

Hillman suggests that soul is not a concept but a symbol that resists definition in the same way as all symbols so.¹⁶ Symbols convey meaning beyond the limit of any definition that we could give them. In the same way, soul defies a limited view or fixed definition, and perhaps is better described in the ancient way as fluid, porous, flighty and permeable.¹⁷ Soul is a perspective, a way of seeing or thinking, a symbol rather than a fixed point of view or belief. And, like the horoscope, the soul offers us its riddles to be divined.

Ironically, what is so deeply personal, so interior to my being, so private and so soulful, cannot be said to be mine, as soul is not ruled by my personality nor managed by my will. While there are many traditions and ways to view the soul in relationship to body and even spirit, it is never aligned with self-image or ego. As the early Greeks suggested, soul is ethereal and relatively autonomous.¹⁸ Hence, for a consulting astrologer, some of the deepest and most meaningful work with our clients and our students remains private and sacred. Astrological expertise belongs to the soul, not the personality.

On Psyche's Wings

Psyche is the root for many of our modern words which refer to this human fusion of thoughts, spirituality and desires. For instance, *psychosomatic* aligns body and soul, addressing the interface between the two; *psychopathology* refers to the suffering of the soul, while *psychosis* proposes the idiosyncrasies of the soul. In a technological world that no longer has ways of thinking about soul, Psyche's words become diagnostic and clinical, ailments to be fixed or medicated, rather than essential aspects of our nature.

Soul defies description, let alone translation. As psychoanalysis was establishing itself, seeking respect as a systematic and orderly discipline, it seemed necessary to distance itself from the mystifying and unstructured 'soul' which had become patented by religious institutions. The objective-sounding 'psyche' aroused less scepticism.

Psychoanalysts were keen to align their discipline with medicine and science rather than religion and faith; hence, delineating psychic disorder rather than soul trauma became more acceptable. Soul remained a symbol of the night while psyche became its daytime counterpart.

As an overarching symbol, soul is unbound by human prescription, defying categorization and conclusion. Carl Jung experienced the split between the established scientific and scholarly avenues with his own imaginative and instinctive experience of soul/psyche. Jung's conversations with his soul, precognitive visions, automatic writing, inner voices and creative imagination gave form to many of his original psychological ideas.¹⁹ But in a world that valued literality and scientific proof, these sources could not be easily footnoted, nor acknowledged.

Astrologers too experience the pressure to be literal, predictive and certain; however, the horoscope invokes the symbolic and non-rational world where images, feelings, voices and sensations are the media for clarity and insight. Practitioners are susceptible to falling into the gap between the factual and the imaginative, as astrological techniques are guides to a symbolic way of knowing. Without awareness, astrological techniques are championed as the reason for the successful judgement, rather than the key that unlocks the portal of imagination. This was why meditation on the soul became a valuable companion to my astrological practice, as it assisted me to understand another world not bound by physical, literal or rational parameters.

Acknowledging soul as a symbol that operates autonomously, outside the boundary of coherent thought and beyond scientific statutes, frees our capacity to see through the material to a soulful world where life has meaning and purpose. I feel that ensouling our everyday life is the essence of astrological work. To return to Hillman:

By soul I mean, first of all, a perspective rather than a substance, a viewpoint towards things rather than a thing itself. This perspective is reflective; it mediates events and makes differences between ourselves and everything that happens.²⁰

Horoscope symbols awaken images previously unknown to us. Like a dream, these images arrive unbidden, not while asleep but while being reflective and engaged in contemplating the symbols of the horoscope. In its capacity to mediate and link the inner world with the outer one, the horoscope's astrological images assist in ensouling our world by rendering the trials of life meaningful, connective and coherent.



Soul is reflective, subjective and inward, offering meaning to worldly experiences so I can be involved with them, not just experience them as random, fated and/or disconnected. For me, soul is the capacity to symbolize an event or experience so that it might be felt, embodied and remembered, reminding me of the authenticity of all feeling, the eternity of all attachments and the sacredness of all life. In contemporary thinking, soul is the uplifting 'X factor' that brings a piece of music alive, renders a poem inspiring, enlivens a theatrical performance or makes work meaningful. Soul animates the mundane world through creativity and connection, encouraging participation in and with the world. Having this appreciation of soul brings the horoscope and its connections to the outer world to life.

Objects become ensouled when they deepen our experience of being alive, strike a profound chord, stir a mysterious yearning or hold memory. Possessions that have soul are not manufactured or mass-produced. They might be uniquely crafted or creatively nurtured; a treasured gift, invested with care and attention or an *objet d'art* which has an embedded integrity. Soul has been systematically separated from most contemporary creative endeavours through mass production and economic rationalism. Our plastic, fast-food, self-service, New Age, pre-fabricated, digital world has left us bereft; as the title of one of Carl Jung's books suggests, we are modern man in search of a soul.²¹ Similarly, astrology can be disconnected from soul when theory, academic proficiency, technical superiority, prediction and literality obscure the heartfelt inquiry that the horoscope invites.

I think of soul as an attitude. Foremost it respects life in all its manifestations, inner and outer. By nature it is paradoxical; it is eternal yet it is known only in the present. Soul is both incarnate and ephemeral. It is awakened through the beauty and suffering of the outer world, yet is invisible in itself. It deepens the quality of life; it stimulates and enchants. It is sacred. Soul is mystery. Yet, ironically, openness to its ambiguity and symbols leads us to a resonant knowing. I bring this attitude to mind when preparing a horoscope, remembering that soul is found in the mystery and not in clarity.

At the end of a recent consultation, a regular client ('Jean') expressed her gratitude for our sessions and how meaningful they had been to her. She had done this before, but this time I felt moved to ask her what her experience was, what was of meaning to her. She spoke eloquently about feeling authenticated and understood, 'as if my soul had been embraced by the cosmos'. She shared how important the night sky was to her as a child and that our consultations provided a space where she could reconnect to it in an imaginative way through the medium of the horoscope's symbols. She felt seen and acknowledged by the starry heavens, which she described as a feeling of being cared for and embraced by forces much larger than herself.²² Jean is both an imaginative and practical individual, and like many she values the imaginative art of astrology, as its symbolic process inspires a soulful reconnection to the night sky. Like many others, Jean cannot explain through facts or evidence what she values about our appointments; it is through the heart that she demonstrates her appreciation.

Jean's imagination is the vital aspect of the process that allows her to engage with the horoscope. Through her imaginative faculties and willingness to participate with the astrological symbols, a door opens up onto the landscape of her soul.

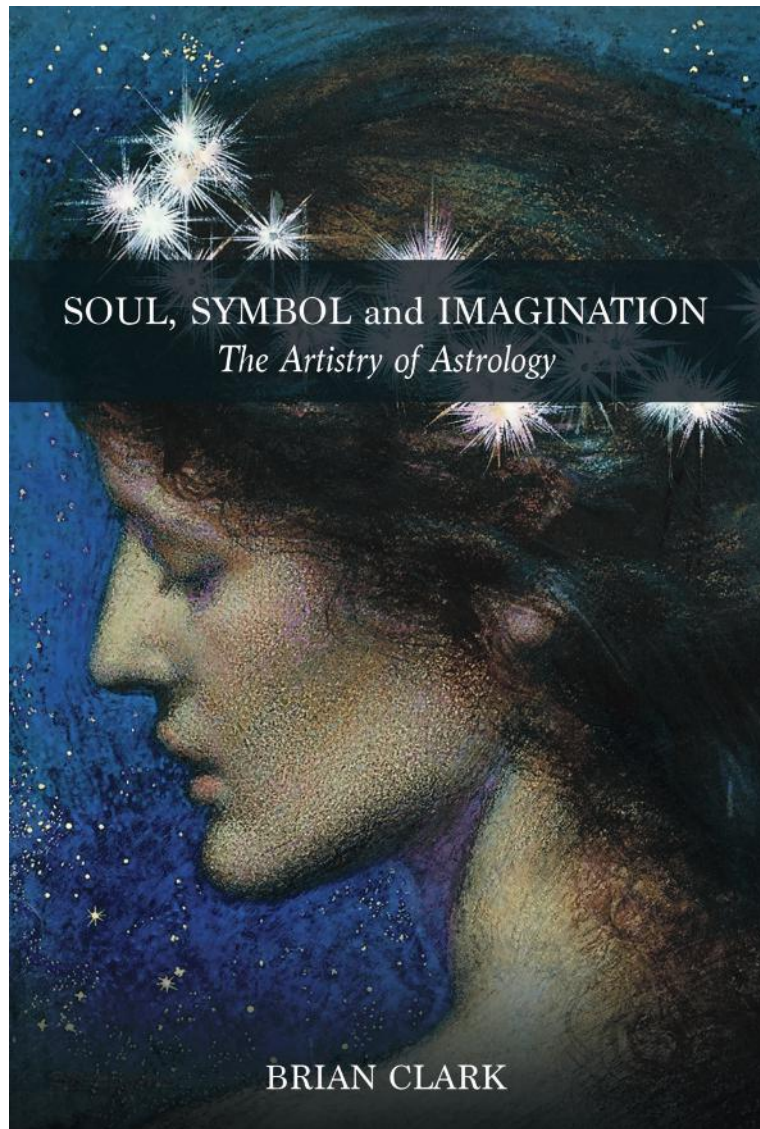
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References and Notes

1. William Wordsworth, 'Ode on Intimations of Immortality' from 'Recollections of Early Childhood' from *Treasury of Favorite Poems*, edited by Louis Untermeyer, Barnes & Noble (New York: 1996), lines 58–66.
2. I am using the words 'ensoul' and 'ensouled' to represent the enchantment and animation of an object or place. By the Greek Classical period, the adjective 'ensouled' (*empsuchos*) emerged to signify being alive. See Hendrik Lorenz, 'Ancient Theories of Soul', *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, available from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul/> [accessed 16 January 2019 and 13 May 2025].
3. *An Intermediate Greek–English Lexicon*, 7th Edition, Oxford University Press (Oxford: 1889), p. 903. The entry for ψυχή or *psyche* lists many definitions, including breath,

signs of life, spirit, ghost, heart and appetite. See also James Hillman, *Suicide and the Soul*, 2nd Edition, Spring Publications (New York: 2011), p. 44, for his amplification of soul.

4. Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig, 'Projections: Soul and Money', from *Soul and Money*, Spring Publications (Dallas: 1982), p. 83.
5. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to Classical Civilization*, Oxford University Press (Oxford: 1998), p. 673.
6. *An Intermediate Greek–English Lexicon*, op. cit., p. 903.
7. Robert K. Barnhart, ed., *The Barnhart Concise Dictionary of Etymology*, Harper Collins (New York: 1995), p. 614.
8. In contemporary vernacular the words 'psychology', 'psychological' and 'psychologist' are aligned with organizations under governmental regulation and control, far removed from the soulful meaning of the word.
9. For instance, in *Oedipus Rex* (lines 62–65), Oedipus's soul is sick with what is happening in Thebes and with its inhabitants. Euripides in *Hippolytus* (1008) describes his eponymous male lead as having a 'virgin soul'. The Greek playwrights identified intense emotion, appetite and sexual desire with the soul. Pindar and other poets also referred to the soul, often translated as spirit.
10. John Keats, *The Letters of John Keats*, Volume II, ed. H. Buxton Forman, Gowars & Gray (Glasgow: 1901), p. 106.
11. *Ibid*, p. 53.
12. *Ibid*, pp. 53–54.
13. James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, Harper & Row (New York: 1975), p. ix.
14. *Ibid*, p. x.
15. James Hillman, *The Soul's Code*, Random House (New York: 1996), p. 6.
16. James Hillman, *Insearch*, Hodder and Stoughton (London: 1967), p. 37.
17. James Hillman in *Myth of Analysis*, Harper Collins (New York: 1992), p. 24, suggests: 'the soul is better imagined, as in earliest Greek times, as a relatively autonomous factor consisting of vaporous substance.'
18. *Ibid*, p. 24.
19. C. G. Jung, *The Red Book, A Reader's Edition*, ed. Sonu Shamdasani, W. W. Norton & Company (New York: 2009). This details Jung's nightly descent into the creative reveries with his own soul.
20. Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, op. cit., p. x.
21. *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* is the title of a book of Jung's essays. While the text is a compilation of material originally delivered as lectures, Cary F. Baynes in the translator's preface suggests the book is for those who seek to acknowledge psyche in their lives or for those who 'have experienced the soul as vividly as the body'. C. G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, trans. W. S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes, Routledge & Kegan Paul (London: 1953), pp. vii–ix.
22. I have found that this feeling of being seen, held or recognized by the astrological sky, which gives meaning to one's inner and outer life, can be especially profound for those who have suffered early trauma. It is as if a sky full of stars is a nourishing and protecting mother, and astrology gives rise to these early feelings. Thanks to Jason Holley for our discussions on this and the reference: Donald Kalsched, *Trauma and the Soul*, Routledge (New York: 2013).



'Considering Soul' is excerpted from
Soul, Symbol and Imagination: The Artistry of Astrology
 by Brian Clark (Astro*Synthesis, 2019)



Brian Clark has been an astrological student, counsellor and educator (www.astrosynthesis.com.au) for over 50 years. His astrological work has always been informed by the ambiguous, yet multi-layered nature of its symbols, a focus of one of his books, *Soul, Symbol and Imagination*. Over the years, Brian has taught at international workshops and retreats in Australia, Asia, North America and Europe. He continues his consulting, teaching and tutoring practice, as well as writing for astrological and psychological journals. Brian has his MA in Classics and Archaeology from the University of Melbourne and has been honoured with lifetime membership from the state, national and professional astrological organizations in Australia.



by Heather McVey.
Becoming

Write me into being
From your inkwell of molten stars
Weave my storied fabric
Constellate my mythic heart

Interlace my essence
Decant my soul from your liquid blaze
Pour me infused with golden prose
Till I shimmer upon the page
Curve my flesh with your lyrical hands
Drench me in cadence that tilts the tongue
Write me into being
For I am the song you hum.

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Heather McVey is a consulting astrologer and occasional astro-poet who is based in Cambridge, UK, where she also chairs the newly founded Cambridge Astrology Club. Heather holds the *STA* Practitioner's Horary Certificate and a Postgraduate Certificate (with distinction) in Cultural Astronomy and Astrology from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, where she is completing her MA. Currently researching the astrological *Sappho*, Heather looks forward to upcoming talks — including one for the Astrological Lodge of London in November 2025. Her website can be found at www.invokingvenus.com.



The Illusion of Control: Saturn in Aspect to Neptune

by Frank C. Clifford

One of the reasons Saturn is considered difficult astrologically is that it's the antithesis of every other planet. Even where there may be themes in common ('authority' with the Sun, 'control' or 'privacy' with Pluto), Saturn's function and nature are contrary – *opposite* – to the rest of the planets. It's no wonder that the cold Greater Malefic was assigned rulership over Capricorn and Aquarius, the signs farthest away from 'summertime' Cancer and Leo, which are ruled by the luminaries.

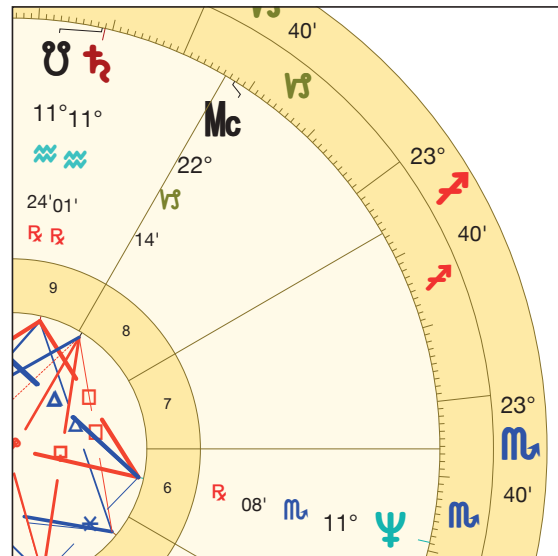
The combination of Saturn and Neptune (particularly by conjunction,¹ square or opposition) is a challenging one, especially when personalised in the natal chart (e.g. on an angle or aspecting an inner planet).² If we have this pairing, we may discover that:

- The anchors, attachments and so-called constants in life are illusions – or we have deluded ourselves into thinking that certain 'institutions' in our life are permanent and secure.
- Authority figures are weak or fallible; those we have put on a pedestal are 'just as human as we are'.
- We have much control in one major area, yet chaos in another.
- We've made some sacrifice in a key part of our lives in the name of duty. But at what cost to our dreams?

With Saturn, we face constraints and learn limits in order to come to terms with our short time on Earth. Neptune wants nothing to do with this reality! If Saturn's gifts provide structure and boundaries, Neptune's promise is an escape from the rigid, material constructs of the Spartan/Saturnian life.

Saturn is 'The System', the application of law and order, a society made up of authorities and hierarchies. Neptune represents the disenfranchised, the drop-out, the artist, the healer, helper and mystic, and is linked to the spiritual laws and rhythms of the universe.

Religion is a key theme with which Saturn-Neptune people must grapple. There can be disillusionment with the 'official word' given by a religious authority. (At the time of writing this revision, **Jordan Peterson's** most recent book is entitled *We Who Wrestle With God*, and the author has the exact square – see chart on right.) The Saturnian types are the scientists, the skeptics; they doubt, fear and control with a vise-like grip. They may deny anything that



cannot be measured or proved – or seek certainty from an authority (such as a holy book or religious leader) or follow the age-old conventions of organised religion. The Neptunians, however, search for a glimpse of Nirvana and put their trust and faith in something *beyond*. They are concerned with spirituality and the paranormal. Saturn-Neptune could manifest as a wide array of possibilities: from being an authority on spiritual matters, to a scornful skeptic, to a gullible believer of every conspiracy theory. (Interestingly, two of the highest profile televangelists of the 1980s – Jerry Falwell and Tammy Faye Bakker – died within weeks of each other in mid 2007, as Saturn opposed Neptune.)

Both planets are associated with levels of suffering and sacrifice, but at best, we're reminded that 'pain [Saturn] is inevitable, suffering [Neptune] is optional.' Those of us with Saturn-Neptune can be committed (Saturn) to a cause (Neptune). This could range from helping people in need to learning and practising a musical instrument. And rather than escaping from responsibilities, feeling guilty for abandoning these or staying as a martyr in an unhappy job, we can position ourselves in work where we can assist those who have been failed by the system. An alternative may be to work within a system that desperately needs compassion. (It is ironic to note that the welfare/benefits system – an example of Saturn-Neptune in practice – is the most open to abuse or manipulation by individuals and the 'System'.)



If Saturn's gifts provide structure and boundaries, Neptune's promise is an escape from the rigid, material constructs of the Saturnian life.

Allegedly ...

Neptune ranges from the spiritual to the shady, from the enlightened to the fraudulent. Aspecting Saturn, it can run the gamut from political idealism to corruption in government-funded organisations. It's interesting to see that Julian Assange was born at the opposition of Saturn and Neptune, and three era-defining statesmen – Tony Blair (UK), Silvio Berlusconi (Italy) and Justin Trudeau (Canada) – have prominent contacts between the pair and have political legacies tarnished by controversy.

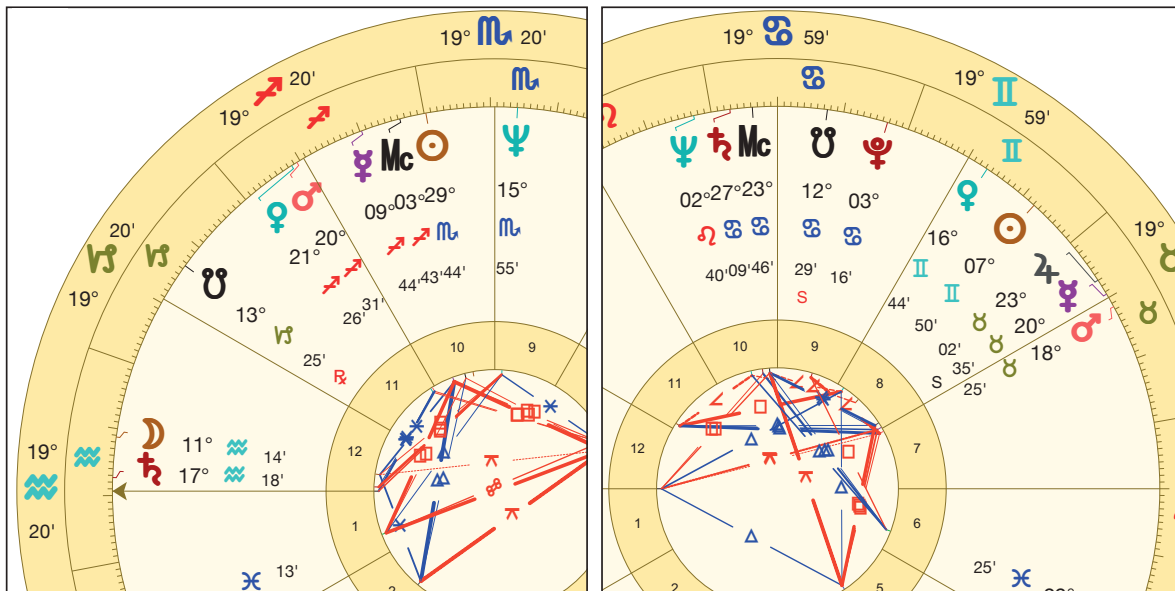
One Saturn–Neptune manifestation is the *conspiracy theory* – where we suspect manipulation or corruption (Neptune) by authorities (Saturn) or we doubt (Saturn) or cast suspicion (Neptune) over institutions and the official story (Saturn). (The term 'conspiracy theory' dates back to an article in *The American Historical Review* published in July 1909, soon after Saturn squared Neptune.)

Two of the highest profile child abduction tragedies in recent decades (Azaria Chamberlain and Madeleine McCann) occurred during Saturn–Neptune aspects in the sky (the square in 1980 and opposition in 2007, respectively).

When Matthew d'Ancona wrote more recently about the prevalence of conspiracy theories in modern society, he offered astrologers a revealing glimpse into the Saturn–Neptune dilemma:

Deference is long dead, and unmourned. But trust – a bare minimum of which is necessary for representative democracy to function – is also moribund. The more transparent our governments become, the less we like what we see, the more disappointed we are, and (paradoxically) the more we grow convinced that we are being denied the truth ... Doubt is the life-blood of post-Enlightenment democracy ... Ultimately, conspiracy theorists are the last resort of the couch potato, the perfect excuse for disengagement.³

The most famous conspiracy theory is, of course, the **assassination of John F. Kennedy** on 22 November 1963 at 12:30 p.m. in Dallas (chart below, left), when Saturn was on the Ascendant and square Neptune. **Kennedy's natal chart** (chart below, right) has the pair at the Midheaven (MC), and this elevated combination is descriptive of many aspects of his life: the glamorous



mythology of the martyred president and the unfulfilled promise of Camelot; the anti-Catholic prejudice when he sought political office; his battle with corrupt institutions run by J. Edgar Hoover as well as the Mob; his innate skill in using the medium of TV to enhance his public image; and even the osteoporosis in his lower back (Saturn–Neptune = weak, fragile bones), which required much medication. Saturn–Neptune angular in his chart (and on the day of his murder) also suggests America’s disillusionment with the system following his assassination.

Kennedy was depicted as a family man of principle and vision who inspired hope, but since his death he’s been branded a serial adulterer and sex addict. *Allegedly*. That Saturn–Neptune word ‘allegedly’ (suggesting a lack of hard evidence/proof) is the safest bet when Saturn speaks to nebulous Neptune in these scandal-hungry (Neptune) but politically correct (Saturn) times.⁴

Weakening Institutions

One major institution that has been weakened in the past few decades is the House of Windsor, which is inextricably tied to the Saturn–Neptune cycle. Following anti-German sentiment in Britain during World War I, King George V declared that the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha would become the House of Windsor on 17 July 1917, some two weeks before the Saturn–Neptune conjunction at 4° Leo, suggesting a new era of deference to sovereignty. (Interestingly, fascism – the oppressive, authoritarian ideology – was on the rise in Europe at this time.)

Queen Elizabeth II (chart below) was born with the Saturn–Neptune square in fixed signs, became heiress presumptive following the 1936 abdication crisis at the Saturn–Neptune opposition, and was crowned in 1953 at the conjunction

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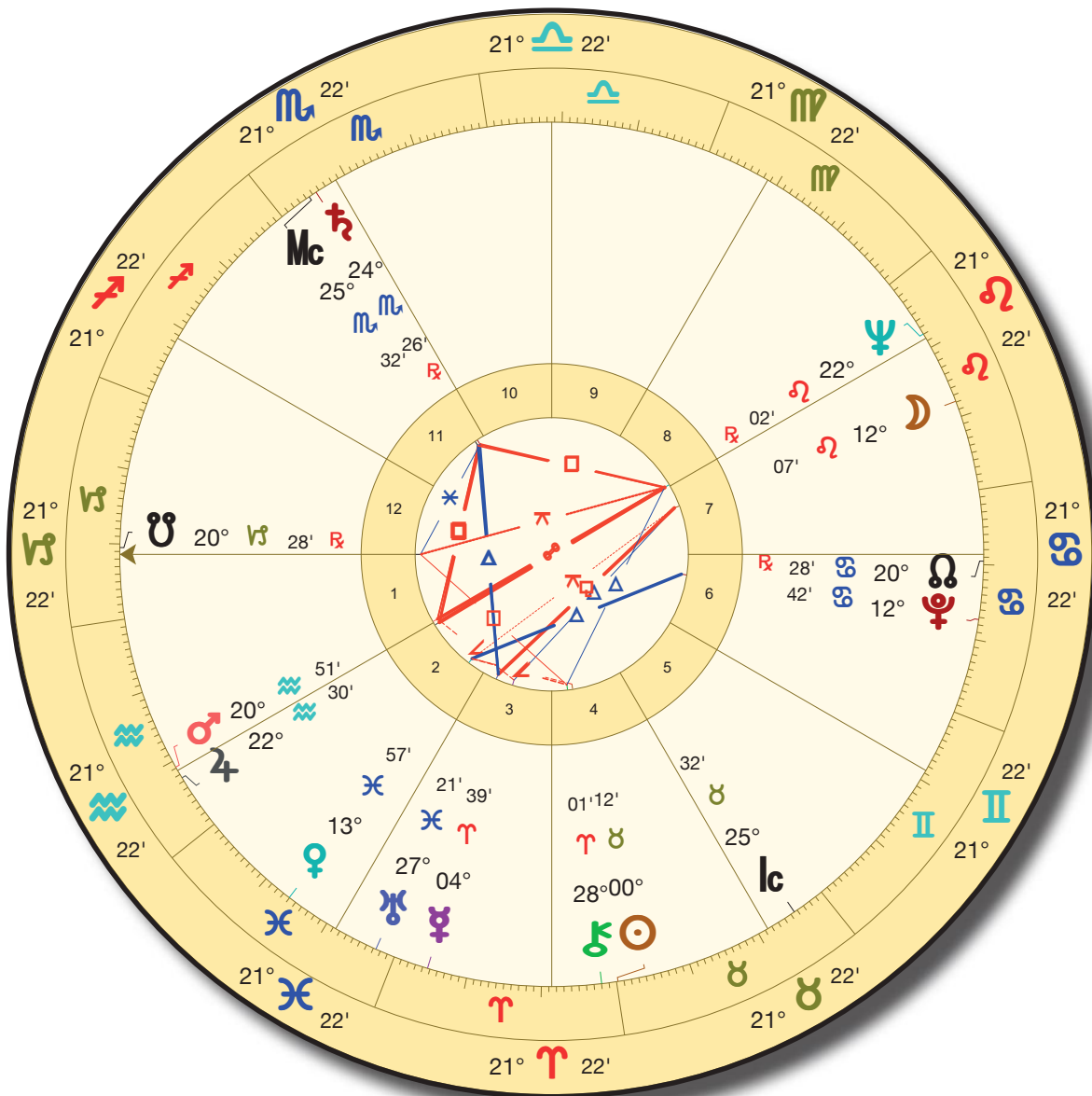


Stefanie James

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Queen Elizabeth II, 21 April 1926, 02:40 BST, Mayfair, London, England.
 AA: Cyril Fagan quotes the official announcement. (Equal houses; Mean Node.)

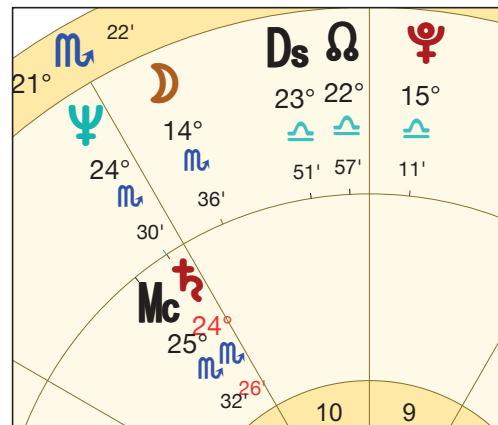
in Libra. (Her mother, known as the 'Queen Mum' to Brits, was born at the opposition in 1900, and Queen Victoria had been born at the square in 1819.) The 1989 conjunction in Capricorn saw the monarchy enter a new phase where the breakdown of the Queen's children's marriages saw respect crumble and the Windsor skeleton barely remain intact. This was at a time when an underwater (Neptune) tunnel linking England to France was under construction (Saturn) and the Berlin Wall came down (Saturn-Neptune: literally a *dissolving wall*).

Since then, when these two planets have been in aspect, there has usually been change in the powers of the Sovereign and legislative independence (devolution) of countries in the United Kingdom or Commonwealth. In late November 2015, June 2016 and September 2016, there was a series of three

closing squares, which (at the time of writing) I felt would mark another chapter of weakening the former British Empire. In June 2016, days after an exact square, the Brexit vote took the UK out of the European Union. A week later, Prince Harry met Meghan Markle for the first time.

Fittingly for Saturn square Neptune, Elizabeth's life was a combination of duty and sacrifice, yet traditional royal ways and protocols were challenged, undermined or made redundant by scandal and changing times. Adding further evidence of this pair's theme in her life, when Neptune was discovered in 1846 (while conjunct Saturn), it was at 25° Aquarius, tying into the monarch's Saturn–MC in Scorpio square Neptune in Leo.

At the time of the **Queen's passing** (on the afternoon of 8 September 2022 in Balmoral Castle), solar arc Neptune (naturally in the 8th and part of her T-square) was conjunct her T-square apex Saturn, suggesting a release of lifelong duty, which she'd promised to the Commonwealth on her twenty-first birthday in 1947.



Dependencies and Organised Chaos

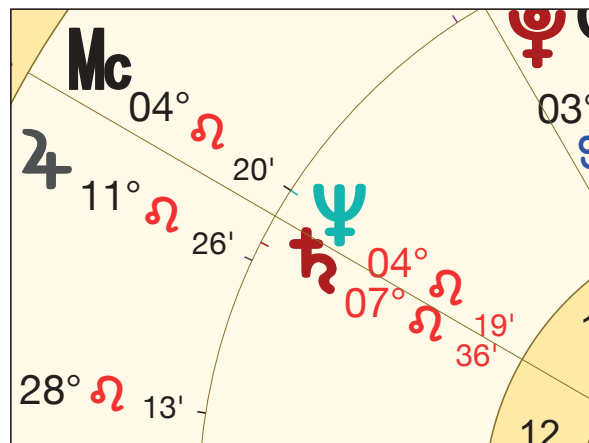
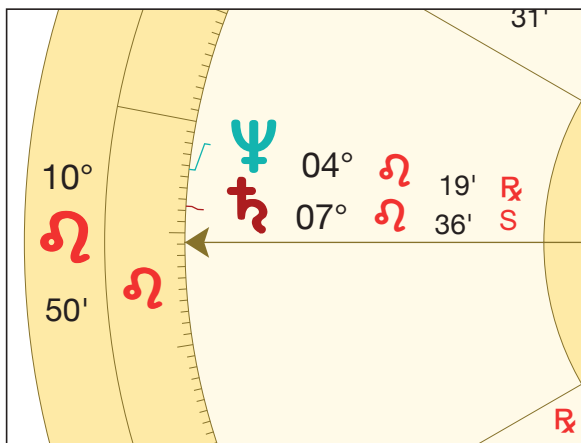
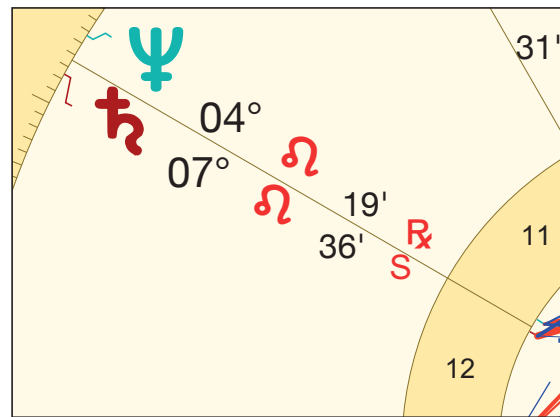
Dependency is what Saturn fears most, yet at worst Neptune is linked to codependency and parasitic symbiosis. So often, clients come to astrologers when they are feeling lost, downcast, despondent or fearful of the future. The essence of Saturn–Neptune reminds us, as consultants, that we must offer assistance to our clients without encouraging them to become addicted to us or to what astrology 'promises' or 'foretells'. Saturn–Neptune is linked to a fear of what we cannot control, and there can be a fine line between a client seeking assistance and using astrology and upcoming transits as a crutch.

Those with this aspect might look for a covert way of undoing all their hard work in an attempt to loosen the tightly coiled springs in their lives. This could be through any Neptunian form of addiction or self-sabotage. Then, they continue to run a tight ship that has a gaping, self-inflicted hole in the hull.

The Saturn–Neptune person may have one area of life where they are in control as the voice of reason or the sanity in the family (or workplace) that keeps it all together. Yet, there is also an equally important area in the shadows that could threaten that façade, where there is chaos, addiction, 'leaking' or few boundaries. Of the two planets, Neptune is the one we usually keep behind closed doors. For instance, these people may be upstanding citizens and professionals (Saturn) but scandal-addicted, fantasy-driven or self-defeating in their personal lives (Neptune).

At some point, Saturnian ‘reality bites’, and there’s an understanding of one’s dependencies, illusions and delusions. Saturn–Neptune people often go through a period of ‘sobering up’ (an apt phrase for this combination).

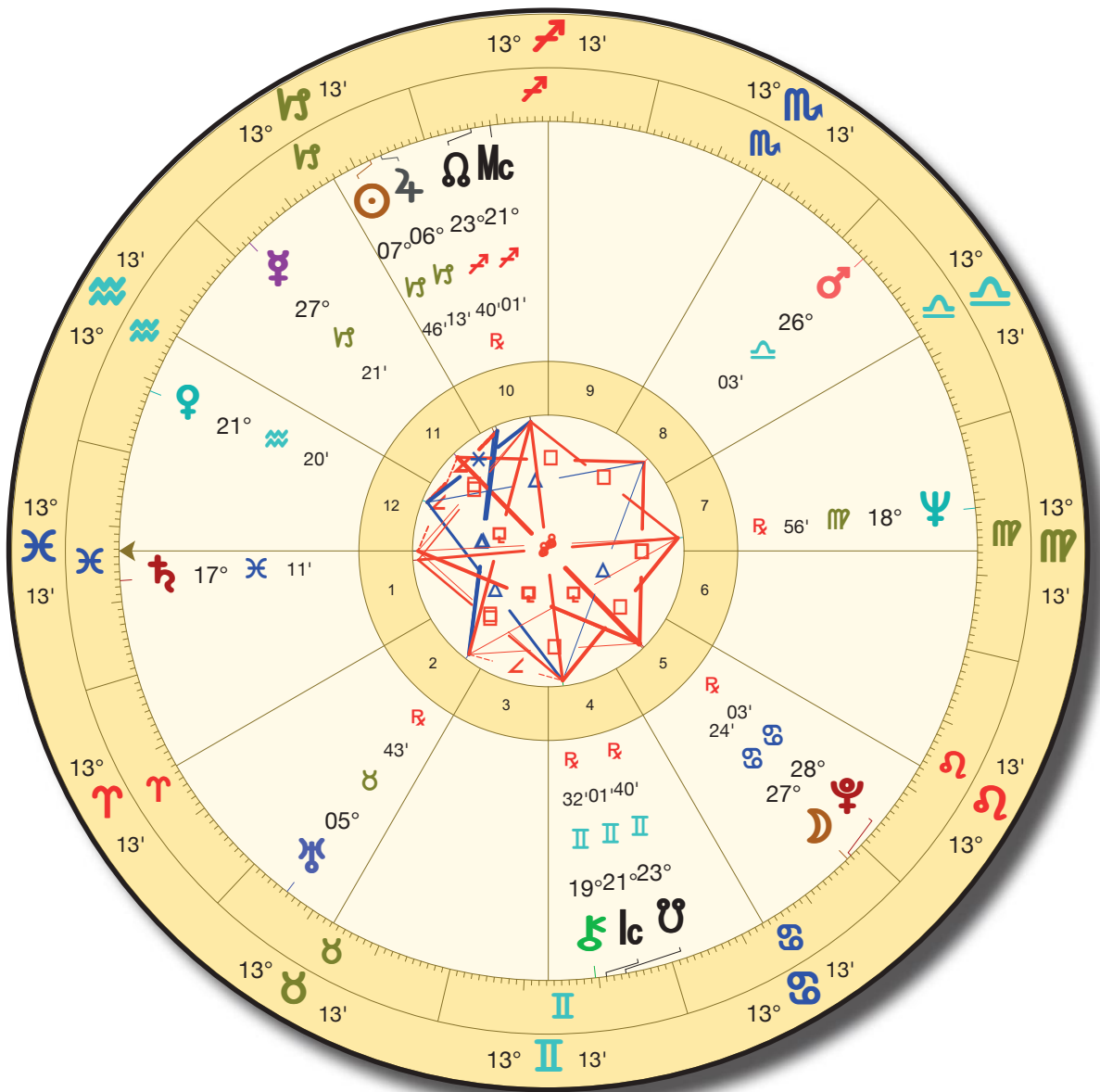
Former First Lady **Betty Ford** (chart on right) was born with the conjunction straddling the 12th house, and she juggled the societal role of a politician’s wife for years, while secretly drinking and popping pills. After 14 years of addiction, an intervention on 1 April 1978 led her to rehab and a positive new start. In her **relocated chart** (chart below, left), her Saturn–Neptune conjunction rises near Rancho Mirage, California, where she founded the Betty Ford Center on **4 October 1982** (as solar arc MC conjoined her natal Neptune – see chart below, right – and Saturn and Neptune were sextile each other in the sky).



There’s Something about Mare

Award-winning actress **Mary Tyler Moore** (chart below) was at the helm of two of the most beloved TV comedies in American history, *The Dick Van Dyke Show* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. For the latter, she set up MTM Enterprises with then-husband Grant Tinker. She was actress, producer, figurehead – holding the fort, sober on the job all day and then falling into drunkenness after hours. We might suspect that Saturn in the sign of Pisces would have further undermined Mary’s ability to keep control and avoid emotional ‘leakage’.

Moore was unflinchingly honest about her life experiences (her stay at the Betty Ford Center to treat her alcoholism, her sexual abuse as a child, her son’s accidental death). And she always personified Saturn–Neptune in her roles: she was the ‘normal’ one trying to do her best to maintain dignity and correctness (Saturn rising) amid the chaos, irrationality and wild emotions of co-workers or spouses (Neptune on the Descendant).



Mary Tyler Moore, 29 December 1936, 10:45 EST, Brooklyn, New York, USA.
AA: Birth certificate; copy in hand. (Equal houses; Mean Node.)

In the film *Ordinary People*, she gave a powerful Saturn–Neptune performance as a woman victimized by her own emotional rigidity, who flees the family nest to avoid dealing with the emotional turmoil of one son’s death and another’s suicide attempt. Moore wrote:

Beth Jarrett’s ready smile and cheerful demeanor hid the contempt she felt for weakness, self-doubt, and disorder, all of which lurked inside of her ... There was very little room for spontaneity in Beth’s life ... There simply wasn’t the energy left to comprehend the unplanned-for, sometimes unattractive, needs of the people she loved.⁵

In *Whose Life Is It, Anyway?* Moore played a sculptor (Saturn) paralysed (Saturn) from the neck down. Determined to be allowed to die, the character debates the act of euthanasia (Neptune) and to what extent government (Saturn) should be allowed to interfere in the life of a private citizen.⁶

A visual example of Saturn–Neptune that I’ve used in lectures is the famous funeral scene of ‘Chuckles Bites the Dust’ from *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. The episode first aired on 25 October 1975 and is still regarded as one of the funniest episodes of comedy every seen on TV. For the actress, the performance shows her at her early best, and demonstrates her natal Saturn–Neptune opposition across her Ascendant–Descendant axis.

In the episode, the TV news team receive word that Chuckles the Clown, while dressed as a peanut, has been crushed to death by an elephant. Bad-taste jokes from her co-workers follow, but Mary is outraged by their lack of reverence and scolds them. During the funeral, as Mary sits with appropriate solemnity (Saturn) in the hush of the moment, she starts to lose it (Neptune). To the horror of everyone around her, her giggling builds until it disrupts the service. Singled out by the minister and asked to stand, a mortified Mary pulls herself together but, when told that Chuckles would have loved her laughter, she collapses into uncontrollable sobbing. In those few minutes of TV, Moore’s comic genius runs the gamut from Saturn to Neptune.



Saturn and Neptune are associated with two different levels of consciousness, and when we’re unconscious (at either level), we find ourselves at the mercy of conditions around us. Without scrupulous Saturn, Neptune can descend into chaos or addiction, or can abandon ethics. Saturn gives structure to Neptune’s dreams or offers a realistic bottom line or time frame. Whereas rigid Saturn needs the artistic inspiration and compassion reflected by soft, supple Neptune to transcend limitations – in effect, to achieve the seemingly impossible.

When the pairing is found in the birth chart, there is often much juggling of spiritual pursuits and earthly, ambition-led desires. Even in the most profound moments of feeling connected with something higher than ourselves, we must also deal with the mundane life, the physical and the daily tasks. This brings to mind that most Saturn–Neptune of Zen quotes, ‘After enlightenment, the laundry.’

With Saturn–Neptune, it’s important to *build a spiritual practice* or to include some service into the structure of our life, and to navigate our journey with awareness and empathy. We Saturn–Neptune people can consider creating a long-term vision to manifest our dreams – but we must allow room for change,

loss and *que será, será*. Rather than being gripped by the fear of 'losing it', we can *loosen up* and learn non-attachment; we can surrender and forgive, and accept that, in most situations, control is an illusion anyway.

It's a creative combination, where imagination and mystery can be manifested (Agatha Christie has the square, with Pluto implicated, too), or where we can soften previously hard-line attitudes in societies (Saturn–Neptune activists Peter Tatchell, Christine Jorgensen and the 14th Dalai Lama fought bravely for – respectively – gay liberation, transgender acceptance and the non-violent liberation of Tibet).

It's often said that the most beautiful things in the world can't be touched, measured or seen (Saturn) – they can only be felt with the heart (Neptune). Or as Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (with Saturn opposite Neptune) wrote in *The Little Prince*, 'What is essential is invisible to the eye.' At its very best, those of us with Saturn–Neptune can manifest (through art, film or divine inspiration) some form of Neptunian magic and share it with the world around us.

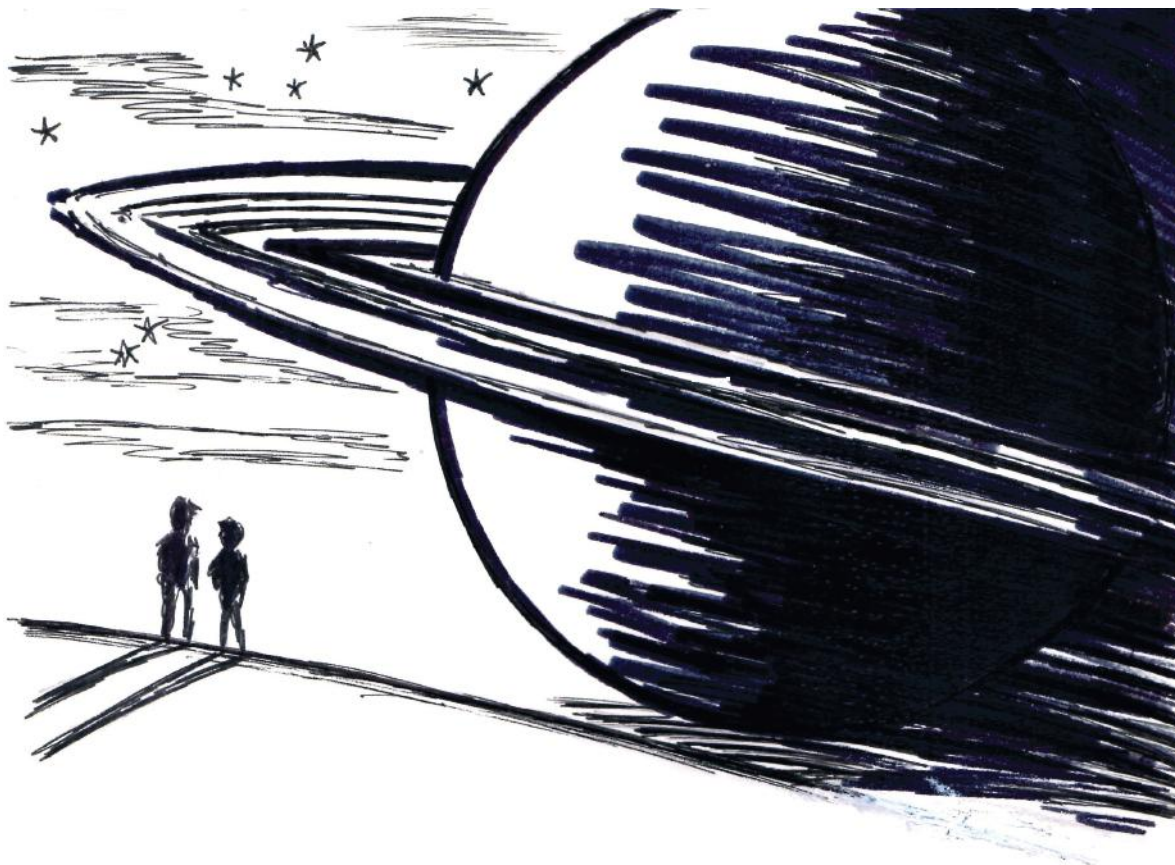
*This article was adapted and revised from an earlier version published in
The Mountain Astrologer, October–November 2014.*

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References and Notes

1. The Saturn–Neptune cycle is 35.9 years, and each conjunction occurs approximately 80° further on in the zodiac (1917: 4° Leo; 1952–53: 21°–22° Libra; 1989: 10°–11° Capricorn; 2026: 0° Aries).
2. The reader is referred to Donna Cunningham's excellent article, 'Hard Aspects between Saturn and Neptune', in *The Mountain Astrologer*, Aug.–Sept. 2006.
3. Matthew d'Ancona, 'Our attitude to politics changed on November 22, 1963 – the day Kennedy died' in *London Evening Standard*, 13 November 2013, p. 14. <http://www.standard.co.uk/comment/matthew-dancona-our-attitude-to-politics-changed-on-november-22-1963--the-day-kennedy-died-8936796.html> [accessed in 2014 and in May 2025].
4. Another Saturn–Neptune theme (rather than aspect) can be found in the birth chart of Richard Nixon. He has the Sun in Capricorn (Saturn's sign) opposite Neptune. Watergate is pure Saturn–Neptune: cover-ups and corruption in government. See Richard Swatton's comprehensive piece on Watergate in *From Symbol to Substance* (Flare, 2012).
5. Both quotes are from Moore's autobiography *After All* (Putnam, 1995).
6. A real-life, high-profile quadriplegic was *Superman* actor Christopher Reeve, born on 25 September 1952, with Saturn conjunct Neptune.

*All quotes not cited above are from <http://en.thinkexist.com/>
Chart data and sources can be found at astrodatabank.com, and are rated B or above.
With examples that are not so rated, the date of birth is not in question.*

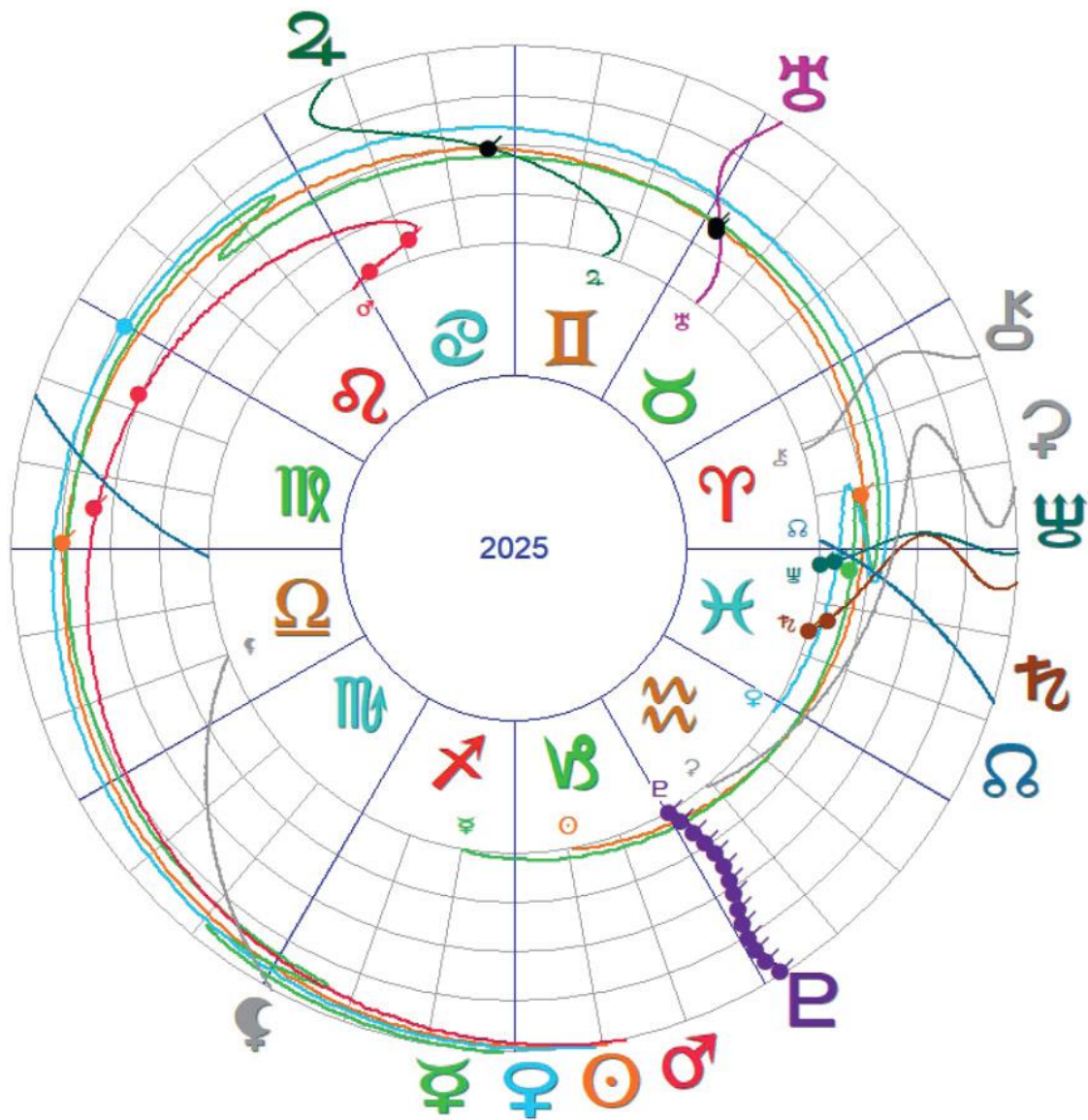


SO IT'S MORE THAN JUST AN AVERAGE SATURN RETURN THEN?

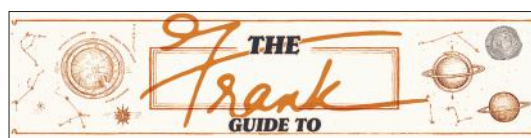
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Paul F Newman is a professional astrologer and teacher of over forty years' standing with many published works on the subject. He is also a proofreader and editor of fiction and nonfiction work. His books *Declination in Astrology: The Steps of the Sun* (2006) and *Luna: The Astrological Moon* (2011) can be purchased through Amazon or directly from the publishers, The Wessex Astrologer Ltd. Fans of *TMA* will remember Paul's humorous cartoons and we're delighted he's back sharing these with us again.



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Jupiter in Cancer

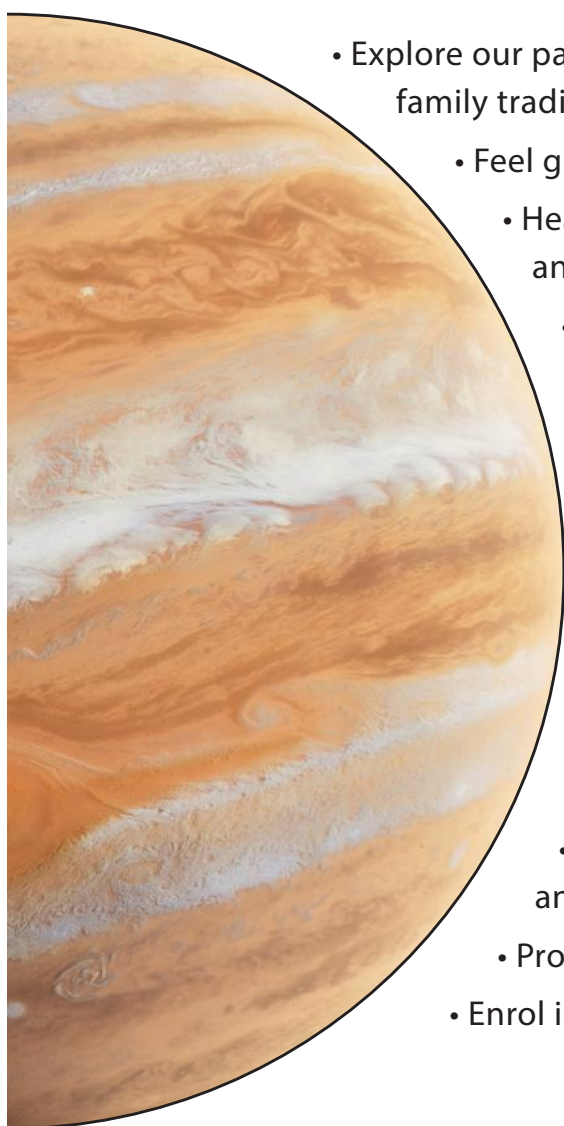
(from 9-10 June 2025 to 29-30 June 2026)

Jupiter is the planet that embodies the three Ps of the future: possibility, promise and potential. Cancer is the patriotic sign most related to the past, history and our heritage. In the year Jupiter spends in Cancer, we'll be encouraged to treasure the past and realise that it holds the key to manifesting our future. We'll be reminded that we can't envision where we're going (Jupiter) unless we know where we've been (Cancer).

'History doesn't repeat itself but it often rhymes' (a quote often attributed to Mark Twain), so look at the period when Jupiter was last in Cancer (June 2013 to July 2014) and ask yourself how and where you were attempting back then to develop your talents and grasp new opportunities. What was happening with family, your home, your security?

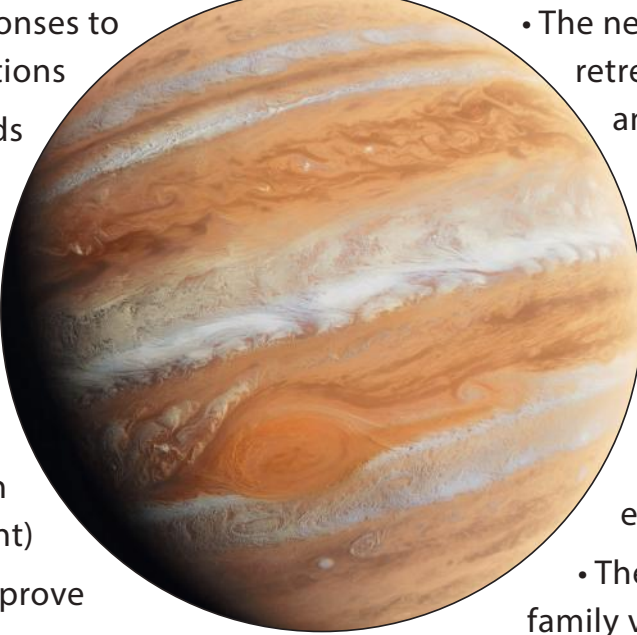
The sign and planet share the concept of 'protection': Cancer seeks to shelter, safeguard and defend loved ones and, in return, asks to feel protected emotionally by them. Jupiter, as the 'Greater Benefic', is the angel on our shoulder whispering reassuringly to us that the universe will provide – we just need to believe this and have the faith to embrace and run with its blessings. The renowned astrologer Linda Goodman wrote, 'I expect a miracle for that is the one true and sure way that a miracle will manifest.' That's the 'cosmic ordering' secret of Jupiter, and while it's in Cancer, it's time to ask ourselves the following: Where/how might we encounter meaning, growth and abundance?

We shall be called to:



- Explore our past, our roots and history; to honour a family tradition
- Feel gratitude for our emotional bonds
- Heal by reconnecting to family members and our emotional foundations
- Self-nurture and give generously to mothers, family members and to our nurturing friends ('chosen family')
- Help others feel safe, loved and secure in the knowledge that we care about them
- Treasure the blessings of the past
- Shed baggage and release toxic feelings about our childhood or any resentment towards authority figures
- Reconnect to a sense of contentment and harmony
- Probe the imagination and psychic worlds
- Enrol in studies linked to history or genealogy

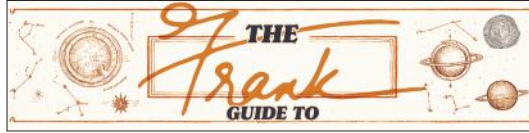
What might be amplified during this time?

- 
- Our gut responses to daily situations
 - Our moods and emotional changeability
 - Empathy for the less fortunate
 - Sentimentality (rather than sentiment)
 - The desire to improve our memory
 - The need for protection, retreat or withdrawal and for safe spaces – making our home a sanctuary
 - The urge to belong in a social group and find our emotional 'tribe'
 - The seeking of family values

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Saturn in Aries

(24–25 May to 1 September 2025; 13–14 February 2026 to 12–13 April 2028)

Additional text by Michael Nile

When Saturn begins a new cycle through the zodiac (at the reset point of 0° Aries), it signals a time when we must have **the courage to begin again**. Some of us will be motivated to take on a new project or lifestyle that will test and stretch us. Saturn in Aries:

- Demands true bravery and not mere bravado
- Rewards competence rather than charisma
- Honours what we commit to rather than merely make promises about

Saturn's three-month preview in Aries (from May until the start of September 2025) will give us clues as to where the effort needs to be directed. Saturn says 'know your limits,' while Aries says 'just don't let fear define them.' And **personal accountability** will be the headline for the period ahead. Saturn in Aries reminds us that **authority resides within**. External validation may come our way, but it should not be our *raison d'être*.

Aries is quick, impulsive and ready for immediate self-gratification. Saturn is slow, measured and invested in the long-term consequences of any commitment it makes. The **tensions between immediacy (now!) and patience (wait!)**, speed and control, boldness and caution are what give this transit its potential. Saturn tempers Aries without extinguishing its flame, while Aries pushes Saturn to act with urgency, courage and initiative. The result is not a compromise but an alloy – like tempered steel: stronger and more flexible than its components alone.

During this transit, it's worth asking:

What's our foremost commitment?

Which dreams truly deserve our time, energy and devotion
to bring them into reality?

These dreams 'should' (a Saturn word, of course) be commitments to medium-term projects: goals ambitious enough to challenge us, yet near enough to feel sustainable and attainable. Sketch a plan spanning from now until April

2028, but detail only the first few months. **Focus on 75- to 90-day sprints with clear outcomes** – over time, these short efforts compound into achievements.

Maya Angelou said it so eloquently: 'Courage is the most important of all the virtues, because without courage you can't practise any other virtue consistently. You can practise any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently without courage.'

Saturn in Aries **rewards diligence**: we must prepare thoroughly, stay present and focused, then have the **courage to act**. During its sojourn in Aries, we shall learn the importance of patience and enjoy the steady climb to personal accomplishment. Aries provides the spark, but Saturn ensures that the fire burns long.

During this transit, it's vital to track tangible metrics: words written, hours practised, weights lifted, proposals sent. **Practise tactical patience**. Aries can wait, provided it sees progress. Use visible markers and checklists to measure movement and reassure your inner sprinter. If a duty drains your vitality, revise it or leave it behind. Aries is nourished by simple honesty. Saturn seeks honour, not martyrdom.

The combination of Aries and Saturn suggests **embodied discipline**: practices that require commitment and exertion such as strength training or martial arts. Otherwise, unexpressed irritation can harden into depression. Learn to recognise frustration early, assert health boundaries and channel energy into movement and form.

Look to the past. **Reflect on the period from April 1996 to March 1999**, when Saturn last journeyed through Aries. What took root then? What required grit or nerve? The themes ignited in that chapter may now resurface, seeking resolution, or offering us the chance to respond with the passion and strength that time has since bestowed.

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Rinse and Repeat

A Brief History of the Saturn–Neptune Cycle

by Michele Finney

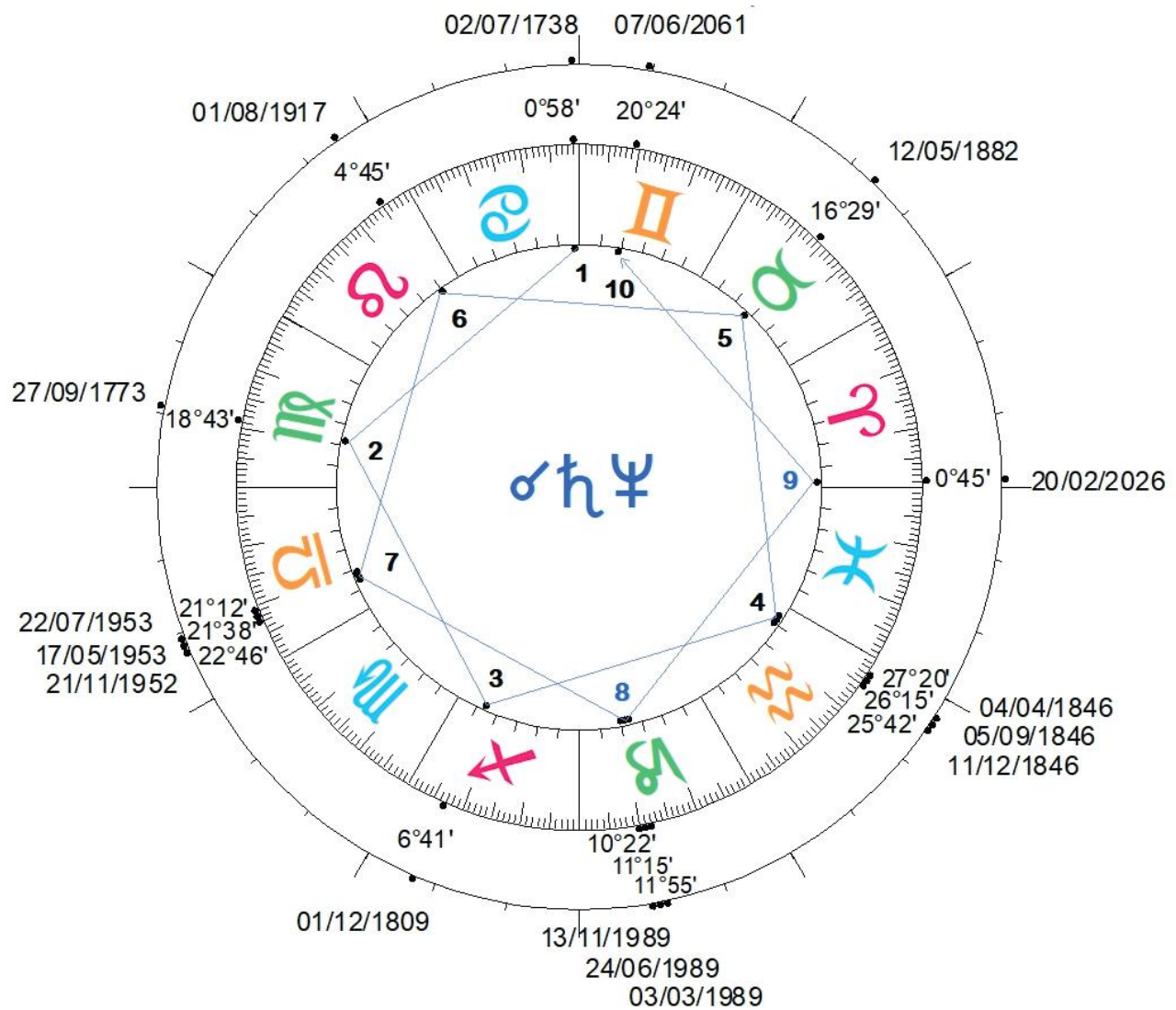
Examining history through the lens of the slower-moving planets helps to shed light on current trends and future scenarios. When we look to the past for events which are in keeping with the themes and symbols associated with particular planets, we see the significance of these repeating patterns as they unfold across time. One such cycle is the 36-year Saturn–Neptune cycle. With its next conjunction imminent, it's making its presence felt once more.

The Saturn archetype is known for its form, structure and ethics. It's associated with boundaries, rules and reality. By contrast, Neptune, with its slippery, nebulous nature, is anything but clear cut. It's often mysterious and highly confusing. Neptune is a shapeshifter, impossible to define or pin down. When Saturn and Neptune rendezvous every 36 years, events can take on a surreal quality, where the impossible somehow becomes real, and dense fog can cloud everyday reality.

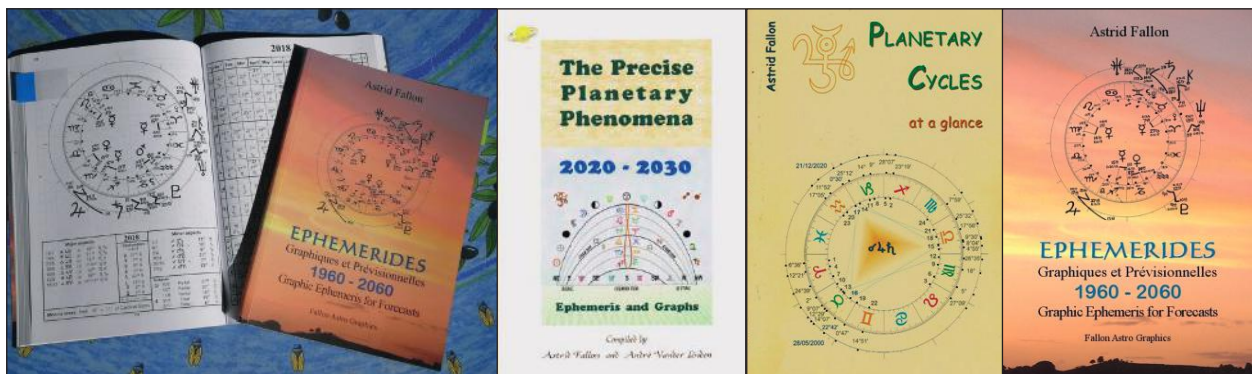
1846 • Saturn and Neptune in Aquarius

Neptune was discovered in 1846 in the socially progressive sign of Aquarius. Saturn was at the same degree (25° Aquarius) and this seems to have set up a celestial kinship between them. When Saturn–Neptune conjunctions roll around every 36 years, they coincide with emerging and often conflicting ideological concepts and social systems, such as capitalism and communism.

Saturn-Neptune Conjunctions (1738–2061)



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In his 1849 publication, *Civil Disobedience*, based on his arrest in 1846 for refusing to pay a poll tax, Henry David Thoreau argues that people have a moral duty (Saturn) to oppose unjust laws and government policies through nonviolent, passive resistance (Neptune). He advocates for conscious decision-making over blind obedience (Neptune) to authority (Saturn).

Meanwhile, in 1846, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were working on their collaboration, *The Communist Manifesto*, which was published two years later, laying the foundation for the Socialist system that would follow.

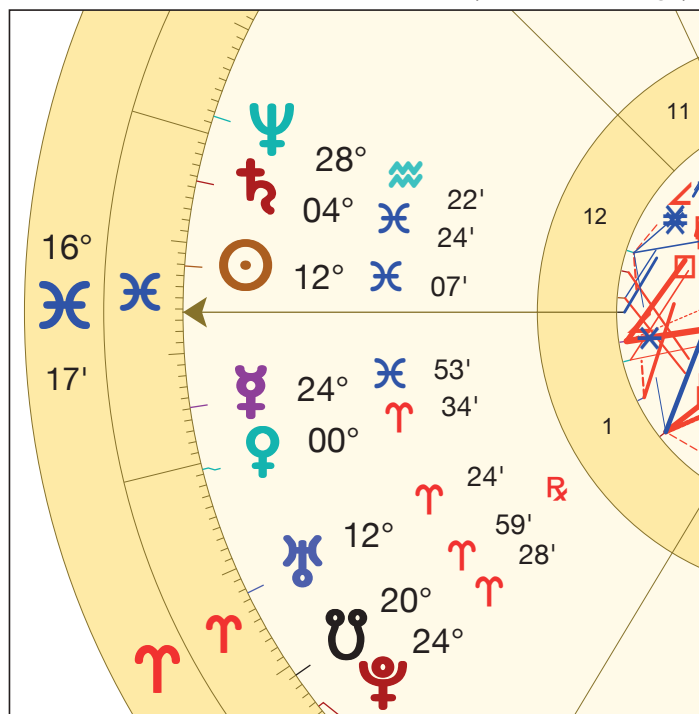
The Saturn–Neptune cycle echoes across time and appears to fuel East–West divisions. In 1846, the first modern oil well (Neptune) was drilled into the earth in Baku in Azerbaijan (then, part of the Russian Empire). This was 13 years (one Neptune sign transit) before the first oil well in the West was dug in Titusville, Pennsylvania, USA in 1859. It seems apt that oil production (Neptune), which would become so essential for building civilisation (Saturn), first began in these two, very different regions of the world.

1882; 1917 • Saturn and Neptune meet again in fixed signs

Over the years, many astrologers have noted the link between the Saturn–Neptune cycle and political events, especially those related to the rise and fall of communism. Karl Marx died in 1883, just a few months after the Saturn–Neptune conjunction of 1882, which took place in the fixed earth sign of Taurus. In keeping with the materialism associated with this sign, this was an era of rapid capitalist expansion. The motor car, electrification of cities, and a range of significant developments fuelled capital growth. The year 1882 saw the establishment of Standard Oil and the Bell Telephone Company. Interestingly,

Alexander Graham Bell (chart on right) was born with a Saturn–Neptune conjunction in his chart. In 1882, Thomas Edison set up the first electric power station, and he, too, was born around the Saturn–Neptune conjunction. Bell and Edison were born a few weeks apart in early 1847, with Neptune in late Aquarius and Saturn in early Pisces.

In Taurus, Saturn intensifies the collective desire (Neptune) to build something lasting,



and 1882 saw widespread expansion of railroads and a massive increase in steel production. Large-scale construction of high-rise towers began, thanks to the invention of the electric elevator and steel frame construction. The first high rise was the Home Insurance building in Chicago, a ten-floor 'skyscraper' completed in 1885.

The next Saturn–Neptune conjunction occurred in 1917 during World War I. This one was in Leo. In keeping with this most regal sign, the overthrow and execution of the ruling monarchy in Russia sent shock waves across Europe. The hierarchy of the class system (Saturn) was being eroded (Neptune).

Vladimir Lenin's 1917 publications included *The State and Revolution*, which greatly influenced Soviet ideology and presented a compelling argument for the uprising that followed that October. The Russian Revolution seeded the birth of the Soviet Union. This led to paranoia (Neptune) about the spread of communism in Western countries, setting off the First Red Scare in the United States.

Events in 1917 shifted the balance of global power towards the US, who entered WWI that same year. Across the globe, an estimated 20 million people were killed during WWI. Meanwhile, a global pandemic, the Spanish Flu, killed somewhere between 50 and 100 million people worldwide. Chiefly because of high war casualties, women started stepping up into leadership (Leo) roles traditionally (Saturn) held by men.

1952–53 • Saturn and Neptune in Libra

In 1952–53, the Saturn–Neptune alignment took place in Libra at the height of the Cold War. In March 1953, Joseph Stalin died, having ruled the Soviet Union for one complete Saturn cycle (1924–53). In the US, Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected president in 1952 and promised to fight the spread of communism. This became the era of McCarthyism. Paranoia about the communist threat was stoked by Senator Joe McCarthy, a right-wing Republican (Saturn), whose fear-mongering comments sparked a climate of suspicion across the US. Were communists lurking (Neptune) within the establishment (Saturn)? People were interrogated and accused of subversive acts. This was the Second Red Scare.¹ By 1954, Eisenhower eventually took steps to curb McCarthy's influence. Three years later, the senator was dead from alcohol abuse (Neptune).

The Korean War was another reason for the Red Scare and political division. During WWII, Korea was occupied by the Japanese. At the end of the war, Korea was divided along the 38th parallel (latitude). The Korean War began on 25 June 1950, when North Korea, supported by the Soviet Union and China, invaded the South. Along with the US, many countries sent troops to support the South. The bloody conflict ended in 1953 in a stalemate (Saturn–Neptune) after the

signing of an armistice (Libra), but the country has remained divided by stark political differences.²

In keeping with the concept of 'others', which we associate with Libra, there was a huge interest in science fiction, especially alien invasions, with a host of movies such as *The War of the Worlds* (1953), *It Came from Outer Space* (1953), *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954), *Godzilla* (1954) and many more. In 1952, in the shadow of the Cold War, the US Air Force established Project Bluebook to investigate the vast number of UFO sightings that were being reported.

Interestingly, in July 1952 there was a major sighting of UFOs over Washington, DC. Given the sheer number of reports of sightings, the widespread publicity surrounding them, and the Cold War in full swing, the US Air Force became concerned about devoting so many resources and time to UFO reports. As a result, the CIA established the Robertson Panel, and it was decided that it would become government policy to debunk (Saturn–Neptune) all UFO reports and discredit eyewitness accounts. This policy continued for many years.³

Governmental cover-ups (Saturn–Neptune) and misinformation designed to cloud (Neptune) reality (Saturn) appear to be common themes when Saturn and Neptune join forces. Quite recently, with Neptune's ingress into the forthright sign of Aries, we have seen more of an open policy and willingness to discuss UFO encounters.

1989 • Saturn and Neptune in Capricorn

George H.W. Bush was inaugurated as US president in January 1989. In February, the Soviet Union formally withdrew from Afghanistan. In March 1989, another event consistent with Saturn–Neptune disorder was the catastrophic *Exxon Valdez* disaster, which saw over 10 million gallons of crude oil (Neptune) flood Prince William Sound in Alaska where the oil tanker ran aground (Saturn). Multiple factors contributed to the accident: the ship's radar not working, a fatigued crew, and deviation from the normal route to avoid possible icebergs.

Saturn–Neptune motivates people to stand up for their beliefs. While the breakup of the Soviet Union was underway, protestors in China were also seeking greater political freedom. In June 1989, matters came to a head in Tiananmen Square, Beijing – an uprising that was crushed by government forces (Saturn).

The 1989 conjunction in Saturn's sign of Capricorn was pivotal for many communist countries, especially in Eastern Europe. Uranus was also in Capricorn, forever altering the status quo. This era saw the collapse of the Soviet Union. Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria and many other former communist nations split away from communist rule and held free elections. The Berlin Wall (Saturn) came down in November, marking the symbolic end of the Cold War.

Neptune fosters universal connections while Saturn builds infrastructure. Developments shaping the global systems we all now use include the 1989 invention of the World Wide Web, which became an online reality by 1991. Also in 1989, Motorola released the first truly portable cell phone, while GPS satellites first began operating.

Neptune also inspires the imagination. We can see how this is expressed in some of the memorable films released in 1989 which explore the symbolism of Saturn–Neptune. These include *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *Dead Poets Society*, *Back to the Future Part II*, *The Little Mermaid* and *Field of Dreams*.

Territorial Disputes and Trade Wars

Global trade occurs across the world's oceans; this is Neptune's domain. When Saturn joins Neptune, the ringed planet lobbies for borders and policies around trade, seeking to exert control over shipping, territorial waters and the ever-shifting currents of the seas. Historically, trade wars and territorial disputes appear linked to Saturn–Neptune conjunctions.

The year 1703 was the last time Saturn and Neptune met in the sign of Aries. This was during the War of Spanish Succession. This was not just a European conflict, but it also involved the colonies who were fighting for control of North American settlements. France, Spain and England were seeking domination over the continent.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_Anne%27s_War#/media/File:QueenAnnesWarBefore.svg

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When Saturn–Neptune conjunctions roll around every 36 years, they coincide with emerging and often conflicting ideological concepts and social systems.

By the time of the 1738 conjunction in Cancer, regional tensions had escalated. This was the time of a curiously named conflict called the War of Jenkins' Ear. It began when a British sea captain, named Robert Jenkins, claimed that the Spanish had severed his ear after boarding his ship in the Caribbean in search of contraband. At that time, there were ongoing trade disputes between Spain and Britain. The fight was over control of shipping lanes, trade and smuggling in the region. Pirating was rife on both sides.

Spain and Britain wanted to expand their influence in the region, including Central America. Imperial rivalry came to a head in 1738 when Jenkins testified before the British Parliament, reportedly presenting his preserved severed ear in a jar, though the exact details surrounding this event are under a Neptunian cloud.⁴

Whatever the actual circumstances concerning Jenkins' ear, the story stirred public outrage, fuelling trade tensions and disputed territorial claims in North America and the Caribbean. At this time, Spain controlled Florida and the Gulf Coast, while Britain had colonial interests along the North American Atlantic coast. Both powers wanted to control the lucrative trade routes and resources of the region. The Jenkins' ear incident set off a trade war.

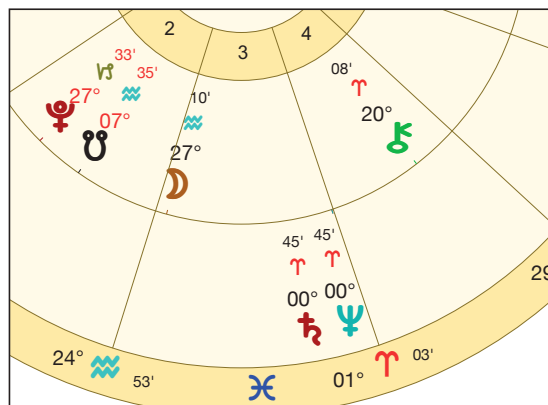
In 2026, the Saturn–Neptune conjunction is again with us, and it's in a cardinal sign once more, this time at the very start of the Tropical Zodiac: 0° Aries, exactly in square to the 1738 conjunction.

The US Sibly Chart in 2026

Today, we see that the same themes and symbols are once again in play. Trade wars, oil issues, border and territorial disputes, and communism versus capitalism. Recently we've seen news reports of Russian interference in US politics and claims that Donald Trump is a Russian agent. Trade disputes and issues pertaining to free trade vs. control of trade are once again centre stage, with US tariffs igniting a global trade war. But in the wake of these events, the Saturn–Neptune alliance is setting up a counterculture of social resistance to these measures, spurring protest action.

Given the state of play in the US, and how much it has featured in Saturn–Neptune events throughout history, we should consider how Saturn and Neptune will affect the **US Sibly chart** (below). Shortly after Donald

Trump was inaugurated for his second presidential term, Neptune moved into Aries, crossing the IC in the Sibly chart and undermining the foundations of US democracy. Neptune was last crossing this point in 1861 within hours of the start of the US Civil War. The 2026 conjunction of Saturn–Neptune will trigger the same potent angle.

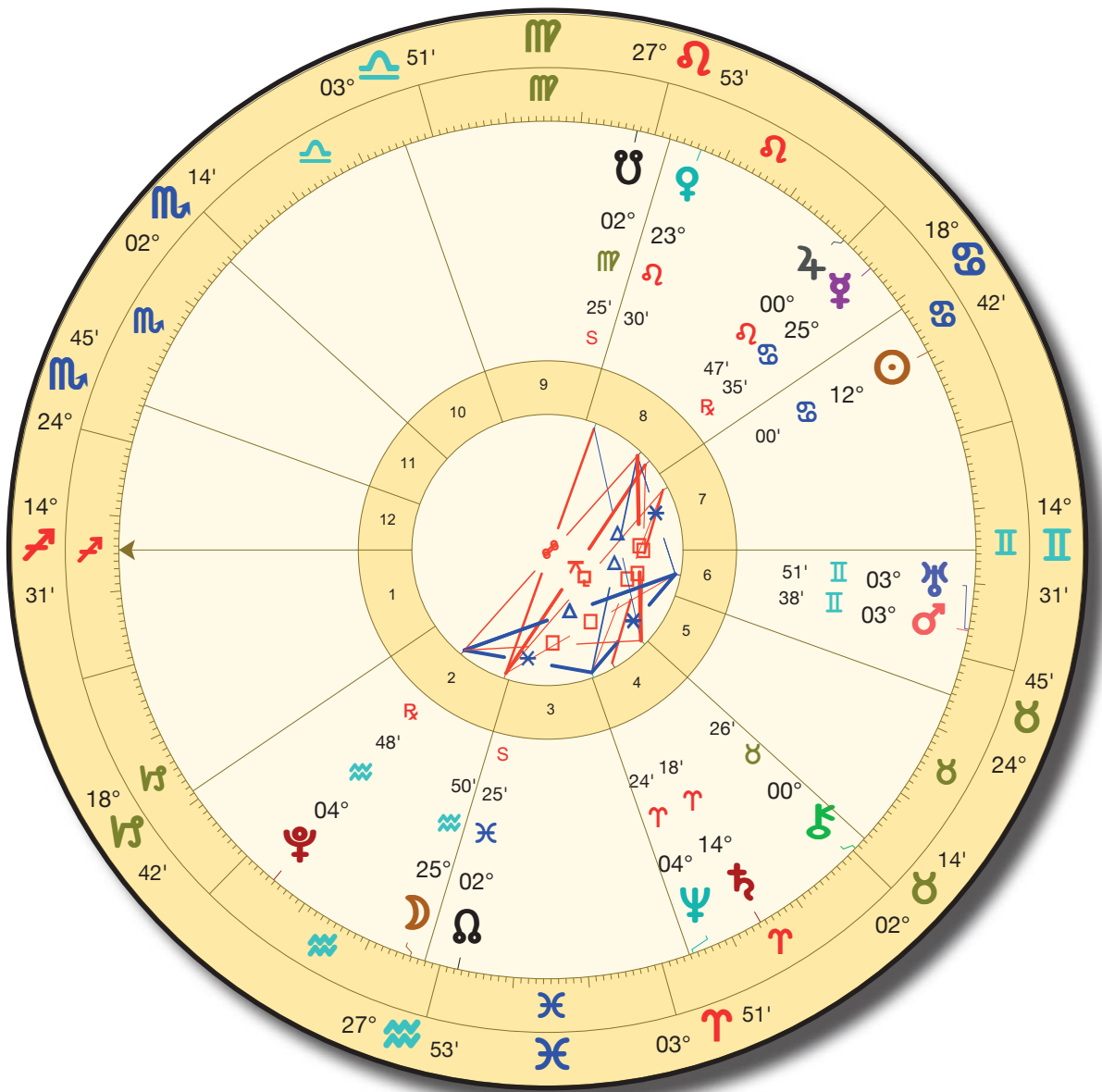


Looking ahead to July 2026, the US will be having a **Metonic cycle return** (chart below). Every 19 years, the Sun and Moon synchronise their returns to their positions in the natal chart (give or take a small margin). July 2026 also marks the country's 250th birthday, suggesting a time of celebration. Independence Day will fall on a Saturday (Saturn's day) and in the US's Metonic cycle return chart, which happens on the 3rd, we see a transiting Mars–Uranus conjunction in early Gemini. This is a volatile aspect, which can trigger radical and sudden events. Uranus is approaching its return in the Sibly chart, with transiting Pluto closing in on the South Node. Meanwhile, transiting Saturn will oppose the Sibly chart's Saturn. Given the current political climate, these transits are likely to have significant implications for the US.

At the time of the 250th birthday in 2026, transiting Neptune will oppose Trump's natal Neptune and transiting Saturn will be opposing his natal Juno, Chiron and Jupiter in his 2nd house. Trump's 2nd house planets are all virtually stationary, which adds great intensity to the chart. This cluster of stations speaks of his extreme focus on business and money, and is aptly described by his niece, Mary L. Trump, in the title of her biography about her uncle, *Too Much and Never Enough*.

Russian leader Vladimir Putin is said to have been born on 7 October 1952. Although his birth information is unverified, it seems significant that this chart has a Saturn–Neptune conjunction. Xi Jinping, president of the People's Republic of China, was born 15 June 1953, and he also has a tight Saturn–Neptune conjunction. As Saturn transits through Aries in 2026–27, it will oppose these natal Saturn–Neptune conjunctions, suggesting that these leaders will face major challenges. Any changes in leadership (Aries) in the US, Russia or China will have a considerable impact.

While Neptune and Saturn are currently destabilising the US, the upcoming conjunction could also fuel a rebuilding phase. Many of the everyday systems in America are obsolete. For example, most of the world uses the metric system, but the US still uses the Imperial system to measure almost everything.⁵ The United States is virtually the only country in the world to record the date in



*US Metonic Cycle Return, 3 July 2026, 18:27 EDT, Philadelphia, PA, USA.
(Placidus houses; Mean Node.)*

the MM/DD/YEAR format. Then there is the confusing taxation system, which differs from state to state, plus one has to add on taxes and gratuities to the cost of purchases, so the price of goods and services is always under a Neptunian cloud.

The current political agenda is to dismantle a range of vital social services (Saturn), meanwhile meaningful reform is still a pipe dream (Neptune). Gun policy, universal health care and education reform fly under the radar. According to the National Safety Council, in 2023 there were 46,728 deaths in the US involving firearms, including suicides, homicides and accidents.⁶

The lack of regulations around pollution and corporate responsibility in the US has led to a host of environmental disasters and whole towns being



Governmental cover-ups (Saturn–Neptune) and misinformation designed to cloud (Neptune) reality (Saturn) appear to be common themes when Saturn and Neptune join forces.

abandoned. With no action for decades on these and other social issues, is it any wonder that in the last presidential elections, around 33 percent of eligible US citizens didn't bother to vote?

As these currents continue to undermine the foundations of US democracy, a tipping point seems imminent. At some point, a rebuilding phase will surely follow, when hopefully a future administration will address some of these pressing concerns.

1846 • Aquarius Revisited

Back in 1846, when Marx and Engels were writing *The Communist Manifesto*, political events in Britain seeded an alternative and equally compelling model.

In the shadow of the Irish potato famine and the widespread poverty and social dislocation caused by the Industrial Revolution, the British Parliament decided to repeal the Corn Laws. These laws were tariffs applied to imports of wheat, corn and other grains, and had been put in place in 1815 to protect local farming. In 1846, there was a significant ideological shift towards free trade. This wasn't only about food production and the economy. Proponents championed free trade as a solution to numerous social and economic problems – and pursued it with religious fervour.

Free trade was seen as a saviour. In 1843 in the House of Commons, Richard Cobden stated, 'A law which prevents free trade is a law which interferes with the wisdom of Divine Providence, and substitutes the law of wicked men for the law of nature.' Later, in 1846, Cobden explained that the 'buy cheap, sell expensive' principle was not about selfishness, but was a matter of 'carrying out to the fullest extent the Christian doctrine of *Do ye to all men as ye would they should do unto you*.'⁷

The 1846 conjunction of Saturn and Neptune, happening at the time of Neptune's discovery and in fixed air sign Aquarius, configured and cemented two opposing ideological models: communism and capitalism.

At the core of the polarisation between capitalist and communist systems is the battle between a free market economy and government control. On one hand, we have the extreme freedoms granted to corporations, especially now in the US, which are largely unregulated. On the other, we have the state controlling everything with rigid regulations which impact individual free

expression. Both approaches can lead to corruption and exploitation. Today, in the West, corporations willingly donate millions to political parties in order to receive favourable treatment from politicians and avoid accountability. Meanwhile, in China and Russia, without free elections, leaders retain strict control over society.

Conclusion

In response to the massive shift to the political right witnessed recently in the US, both Canada and Australia have rejected Trumpism and voted in huge numbers for centre-left candidates. Back in January 2025, opinion polls in both Canada and Australia had strongly favoured the political right, but by the time of their elections (in April and May, respectively) the pendulum had swung almost 180 degrees. In Australia, the result was devastating for the Conservatives, whose leader, Peter Dutton, was the first opposition leader in history to lose his seat. The historic result means that the Coalition (of right-leaning political parties) will be in the political wilderness for a very long time.

Through the years since 1846, the gulf between the political right and the left has grown wider and wider, and not just in the US. Our modern world faces looming problems that will be insurmountable while the finger-pointing and blame game between Left and Right continue. Somewhere in between lies a middle ground, where corporations who exploit their workers, pollute the environment or otherwise behave unethically are held to account by government agencies and laws which protect basic rights. In communist countries, we have the same outcomes at the hands of the state who control everything without any checks and balances.

When Saturn and Neptune combine, they call forth a collective desire to create social systems in keeping with our ideals. Organising a system for the future requires both a philosophy (Neptune) and a practical plan (Saturn). What is the vision (Neptune) we wish to see materialise (Saturn)? Perhaps with this imminent conjunction happening at the start of Aries, we can harness the wisdom of Neptune and the governance of Saturn in new ways. Guided by the highest ethical (Saturn) and moral (Neptune) potential, we can use their gifts to unify and reshape our world.

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Uranus in Gemini

and Our Freedom of Expression

by Frank C Clifford

We live in challenging times when freedom of speech is under threat, important books are being banned and discussions and divergent voices are being shut down. As astrologers, we should take this very seriously. We are, after all, keepers of a great wisdom tradition and – as we are currently situated beyond the perimeters of science and academia – we are most vulnerable to attempts to shut down our work.

The prevailing phrase heard across media is ‘cancel culture’ – a reflection perhaps of the current sign positions of the three outer planets. Uranus in Taurus (2018–26) has seen seismic shifts in technology that have changed the face of money and commerce, but it’s also coincided with a greater resistance to ideological change, a stubborn attachment to our ideas and a hair-trigger response to those who oppose them.

Pluto in Capricorn (2008–24) has seen power shifts and changes in hierarchies (even though dinosaurs *still* roam the corridors of power), yet it has witnessed the world become progressively more conservative, judgemental and punishing.

And Neptune in Pisces (2011–26) has reminded us of the importance of inclusivity, but has also seen blurred definitions and a fashion for victimhood or victimisation steering the helm of social interaction. There's also been a search for labels that paint a picture of (but don't exactly define) our feelings of suffering.

Labels are for filing and for clothes, not people

If Uranus is the planet that rouses us – sometimes with a rude awakening – then Neptune drifts and dreams and sends us into the arms of Morpheus. Neptune in Pisces has seen essence overwhelm form, and feeling overwhelm reason. If Uranus declares that 'facts don't care about your feelings', Neptune responds: 'Everything is a spectrum, and definitions are fluid, malleable.' Belief and image have become the new, reigning realities.

If Uranus resists labels, we now have fascinating Neptunian terms like 'gaslighting', 'ghosting', 'virtue-signalling' and feeling 'blindsided'. And extreme labels run amok on social media as we attack people for their different views: if I don't like you, you're a sociopath, fascist or narcissist. *You're toxic!*

Blurring facts and assigning labels can result in the shutting down of dialogue; the chance to learn where others are coming from will be missed. Uranus moving into the reason-driven and debate-loving sign of Gemini (from July to November 2025, and then from April 2026) will herald an urgent need to address these trends.

Getting triggered

Nowadays you need a trigger alert to tell people that you're going to show a trigger alert! Children and vulnerable adults need protection, we can all agree on that, but the current climate caters to over-zealous souls who are looking for someone to blame for feeling a lack of agency in their lives ('agency' is another buzzword).

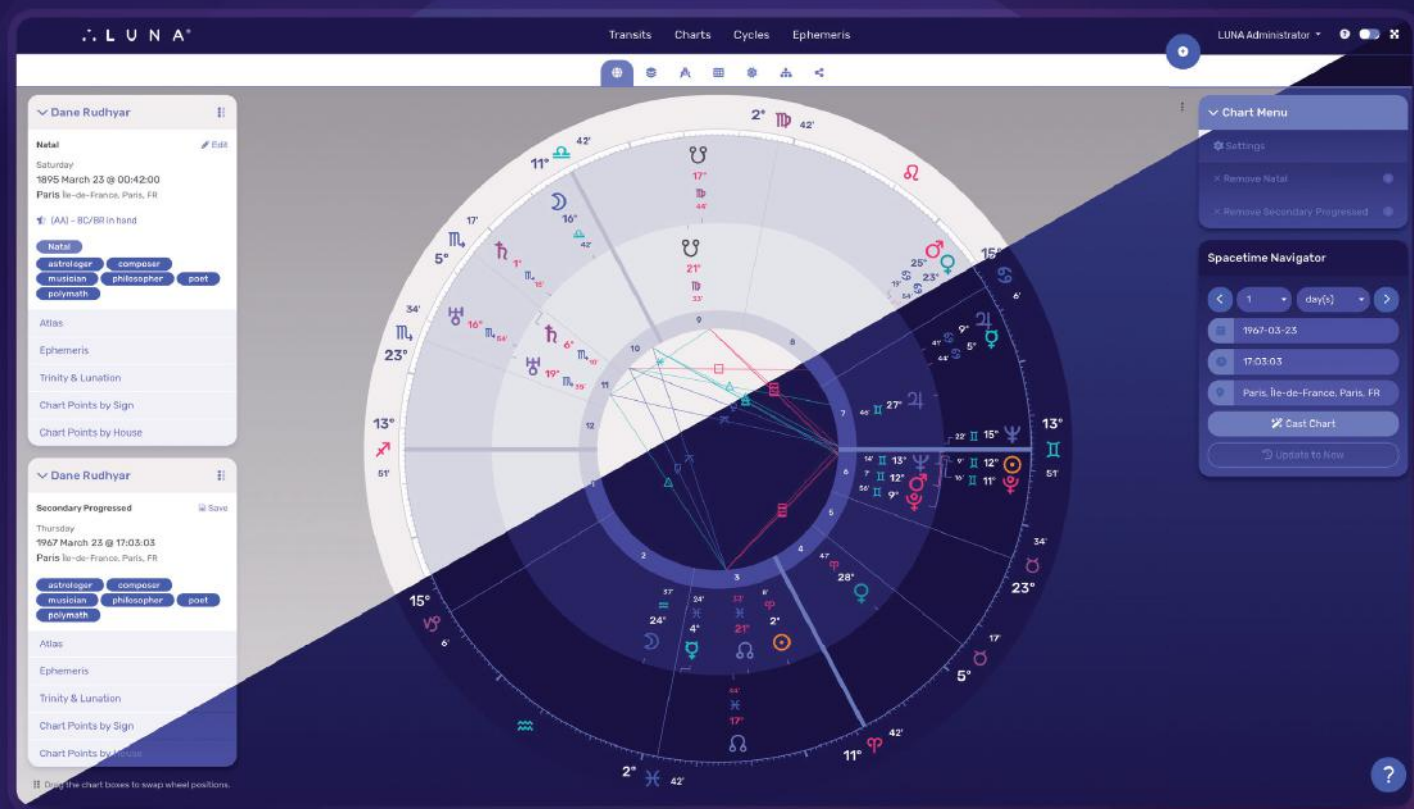
On social media, there's false outrage or unleashed anger followed by the hashtag 'Be kind.' We see gut reactions replace considered responses. The result can be cancellation, which is Uranian in nature, of course. My Gemini dad used to have a phrase, 'If you don't like me, then leave me alone.' (And sometimes we did!) Uranus was the handle of his bucket chart.

So, some of us stay quiet for fear of being cancelled for expressing what we think, while others among us try to modify our behaviour to act in accordance with what people expect. As astrologers, we know that either is a route to depression and an inauthentic existence. It goes against the Solar principle in the chart, and against the whole horoscope, really.

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Learning from the provocateurs

It's easy to spot the few truly Uranian spirits among us – just look at the people who provoke us the most. Uranians challenge us to see the world from different viewpoints. It may feel provocative (Uranus) to suggest this, but we shouldn't shy away from listening to the Uranians who elicit a visceral reaction. As an astrological opposite to the Sun, Uranus can wake up our Solar journey of self-exploration and self-definition by showing us who we are and who we're not, what we stand for and what we don't.

Many of the following appear to have been fuelled with Promethean Fire as Uranus has been waking up the Taurus and Scorpio areas of their charts: Ben Shapiro (ASC; Mars), Germaine Greer (Moon and IC; Mars and MC), Salman Rushdie (ASC and Mars; Jupiter), Jordan Peterson (Mars, ASC), Megyn Kelly (Saturn; Sun, Venus, and Jupiter), Donald Trump (MC; IC), Andrew Tate (DSC; ASC, Mercury, and Venus), Alex Jones (Mars), Natalie Wynn (DSC; ASC), Kellie-Jay Keen (Venus). Harrison Butker's speech to Benedictine College in May 2024 is another Uranian example to view if you wish (natally, he has the Sun opposite Uranus). Depending on your current viewpoint, some of these Uranians may disturb, wake up or inspire.

Uranian contradictions

We can also understand Uranus through the premise that it is contradictory in nature. In essence, the Uranian is keen on encouraging a fraternity of like-minded souls, and it fights to win progress for the group ... but the Uranian doesn't want to mix with the hoi polloi. It loves humanity but, at worst, can't stand people. It is democratic in spirit but autocratic in method. On paper, to the Uranian, all of us are equal but in reality ... some are more equal than others. The Uranian spirit is seen in Article 11 of the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*:

Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.

Once absolute, there is now an amendment to this Article that exercising these rights carries 'special duties and responsibilities' and may 'be subject to certain restrictions'. Libel, slander, pornography, incitement and the prevention of harm to others are often used to justify limitations on freedom of speech. Now, the 'offence principle' is being used to shut down speakers on college campuses and rallies. The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (adopted during the French Revolution) comes with a warning:

Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom, but shall be responsible for such abuses of this freedom as shall be defined by law.

The shadow side of Uranus is intolerance – and some Uranians are proudly intolerant of intolerance (which still means they're intolerant). As one newly-elected South American leader once declared: 'I open this country up to democracy. And anyone who is against that, I will jail, I will crush!'

As a mouthpiece for extremists or fanatics, Uranus is brutal in its allegiance to an ideology that it believes will promise a better future, and equally hardline in its nonattachment to individual suffering while it attempts to realise this goal. In other words, the long-term cause and ultimate goal are more important than the casualties along the way. Uranus fights for everyone's right to have their say, but cuts off those who don't support the mission 100%.

The Uranian is highly independent, but we mustn't confuse that with being individual. Those in the grip of a Uranian vision often think they are being truly individualistic, but as Liz Greene writes in *The Art of Stealing Fire* (recently republished by Wessex):

The very act of rebelling against something means that one is in some way deeply bound up with, and subtly dominated by, the very thing one is fighting. This is not an expression of individuality, because that comes from within.

Dr. Greene adds:

When [Uranus] takes possession of the individual ego it reflects a particular kind of madness which involves a global vision of perfect order ... Uranus can also be exceedingly destructive because it is so disconnected from living human reality.

Uranus in Taurus: ideological earthquakes

Right now we're in the final throes of Uranus in Taurus and, as we know, the natures of planet and sign don't easily mix. At worst, Uranus can be fixated on ideologies that insist on a quantum leap of change. Taurus is fixated on holding on to what it possesses and is averse to imposed change.

Uranus travelling through Taurus has seen a tendency to react with stubborn resistance to any objections to our ideas and convictions. Opposition to how we think has made us embattled and defensive – and has only served to prove how right we really were all along!

*Fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves,
and wiser people so full of doubts.*

– Bernard Russell

It's easy to forget that life is full of uncertainty. And in fact, this is often the reason we become so intent on being certain: we're anxious about *all that is no longer certain*.

The transit of Uranus through Taurus has also had a Venusian tone: the battle (once again) for the right for women to have reproductive control over their bodies; the fight for trans-rights; the divisions in the Covid and climate change camps; fighting for women's spaces and sports. The incongruities of Uranus moving through Taurus are startling. We're seeing how many people are tuning in to their Venusian sides or celebrating the gifts of womanhood, and yet we are still living in deeply misogynistic times.

One symbol of Uranus in Taurus is an earthquake – a major division into two, clear-cut sides. *You're either on our side or you're over there! Either with us or against us.* When Uranus moves into Gemini, we may still be divided (it's the sign of duality and division), but there's an opportunity to see the other point of view – the alternative – and to jump back and forth between both sides. There'll be flexibility, a needed separation from Taurean attachment; a conversation rather than a stubborn stalemate where dialogue grinds to a standstill.

Gemini doesn't have morality on its mind, but it does like to doubt, debate and discuss – and this is essential for learning and communicating knowledge. As the saying goes, 'To disagree intelligently, you need to understand profoundly.' We must always take responsibility for our words, but we don't need to (and perhaps shouldn't) take responsibility for how someone interprets them.

Gemini can entertain two opposing ideas and stay interested in the connections, similarities and differences between each. It can see your side but not necessarily commit to it. Gemini replies 'perhaps' and 'maybe'. It can play gracefully with ideas and not take them too personally.

Discovering Uranus in Gemini

The discovery of Uranus – at 24° Gemini in 1781 – shattered the seven-planet foundation that astrology had been built upon. It was a shock from which some astrologers have never recovered! And interestingly, this coincided with a period of decline in astrology and a rise in mechanistic science. It was also a time of championing human reasoning, human rights, human welfare and humanist goals. In Gemini, it was also a cosmic signpost of a dawning of new, collective ideas, individual autonomy and an evolution of consciousness. Back then, the human race was recognising the right we have to question life, our



With censorship and the curtailment of intellectual freedom, Uranus in Gemini will urgently bring forward the need for diverse perspectives and experiences in astrology.

environment and our place in the universe. It began a new era of freedom of thought. Very Uranus in Gemini.

The United States became independent when Uranus and Mars were at 8° and 21° Gemini, respectively. It will have its Uranus return from July 2027 to May 2028, and it's likely to be acted out as a war on censorship and probably a war on guns (Mars), too. Here we have an interesting connection to that word of the moment: triggered.

The English writer John Milton was born two Uranus cycles before US independence, and his chart has Uranus at 6° Gemini on the Descendant. Milton wrote:

Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

A war of the words

Gemini is concerned with the process of naming things, articulating the information and facts it discovers and delighting in staying informed and asking 'why?' When Uranus returns to Gemini in July 2025, we shall be faced with some hard questions:

Are we capable of entertaining real doubt about our beliefs?
Can we articulate our opponent's position,
or will we be too quick to close down, block or cancel?

Uranus's move into Gemini will coincide with the battle to maintain or win back freedom of speech: our right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas. This transit will be concerned with the fundamental human right to speak our mind – and that includes the right to express ourselves to those who have different opinions.

The transit will witness the fight over language and semantics. At the time of writing, Uranus has yet to change signs, but we are already seeing the battle lines being drawn between freedom of expression and the legal moves to compel or regulate speech. And if speech is regulated, who will define what's offensive or hateful? Gemini philosopher G. K. Chesterton foresaw our Uranian



times: 'We shall soon be in a world in which people will persecute the heresy of calling a triangle a three-sided figure.'

We are already facing social media regulation and punishment. YouTube won't allow certain 'trigger' words. Facebook now censors certain phrases and suspends us for days.

Do we tiptoe around for fear of causing offence, or do we keep thinking, questioning and exploring? Surely, it's our freedom to think and express that leads to advances in society and in our relationships. Uranus's return to Gemini will coincide with the fight once again for this freedom. It will spotlight the importance of bringing back debate and fighting against censorship.

*The books that the world calls immoral are the books
that show the world its own shame.*

– Oscar Wilde

We're already witnessing the banning of important books (apparently 3,000 in the US alone last year) or edited to be 'less offensive'. Personally speaking, I don't want people deciding what I'm allowed to read, or watering down content in case I get offended. In order to learn and to grow, I'm comfortable being more than a little offended!

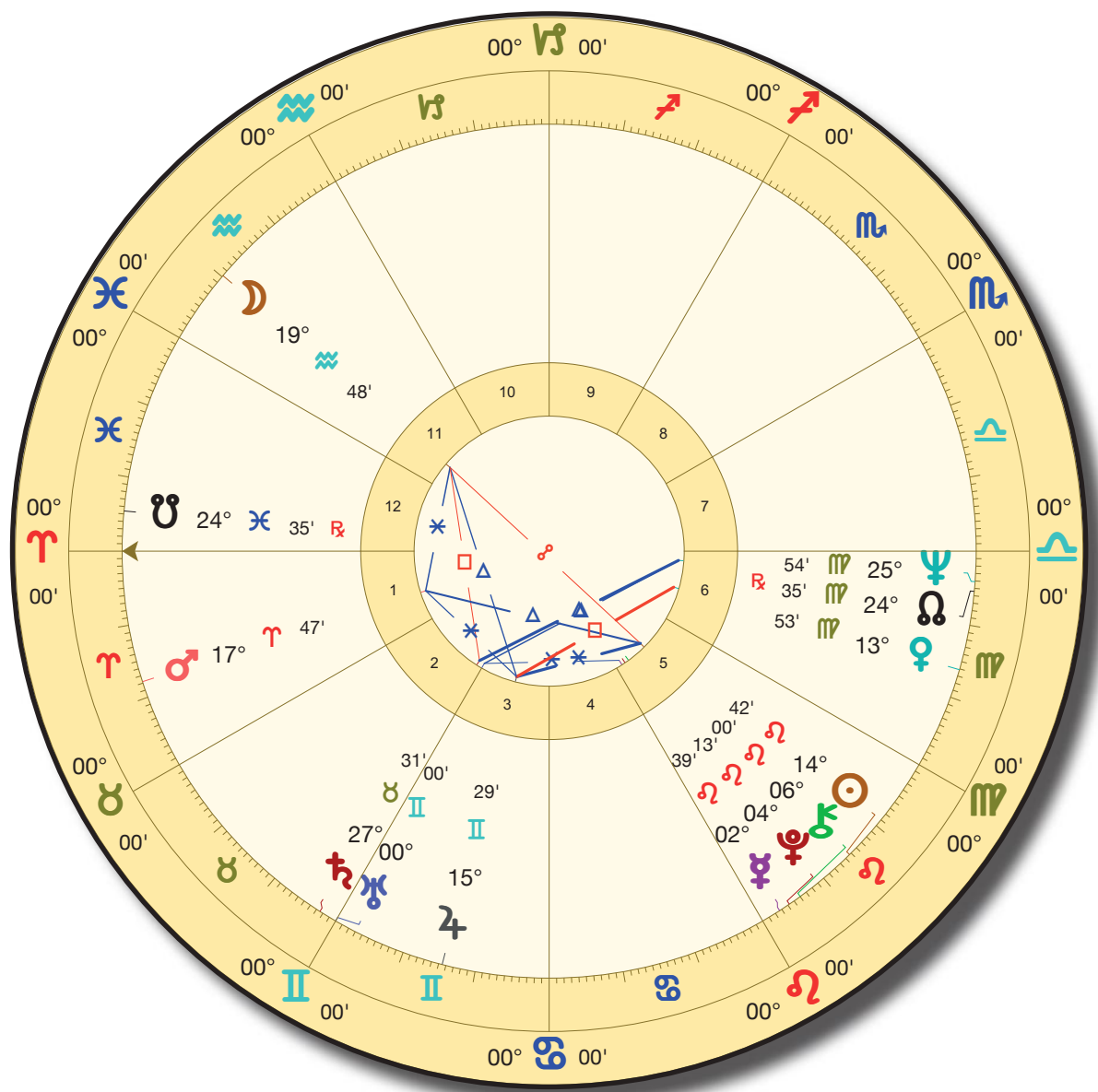
Censorship and cancellation will become so threatening in the coming years that we'll be forced to stand up and fight against both. And what happens if the authorities come after the astrology books we read and write? What are we going to do when someone decides to edit or ban Rob Hand's *Planets in Transit* because it mentions prediction? Wikipedia calls astrology 'pseudoscientific' and has deleted many astrological pages (mine included) – what if our subject is declared a 'falsehood' and falls under 'misinformation'? We book-readers and booksellers of astrology need to stay awake.

And the clocks were striking thirteen

A quick glance at the flat horoscope (see below) for when **Uranus first entered Gemini last time** (7 August 1941) provides some clues as to last 80+ years' obsession with identity and the power of self-expression, and the rise of the Me generation and, later, social media. Mercury conjoins Pluto in Leo, the Sun is in Leo, Mars is in Aries and there's a Full Moon in Aquarius. In addition, the nodes align with Neptune.

At the end of the last transit – when Uranus stood at the final degree of Gemini – George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was published. It was 8 June 1949 – just two days before Uranus left Gemini. Orwell wrote it during his Uranus half return (and Uranus had returned to its discovery degree of 24° Gemini).

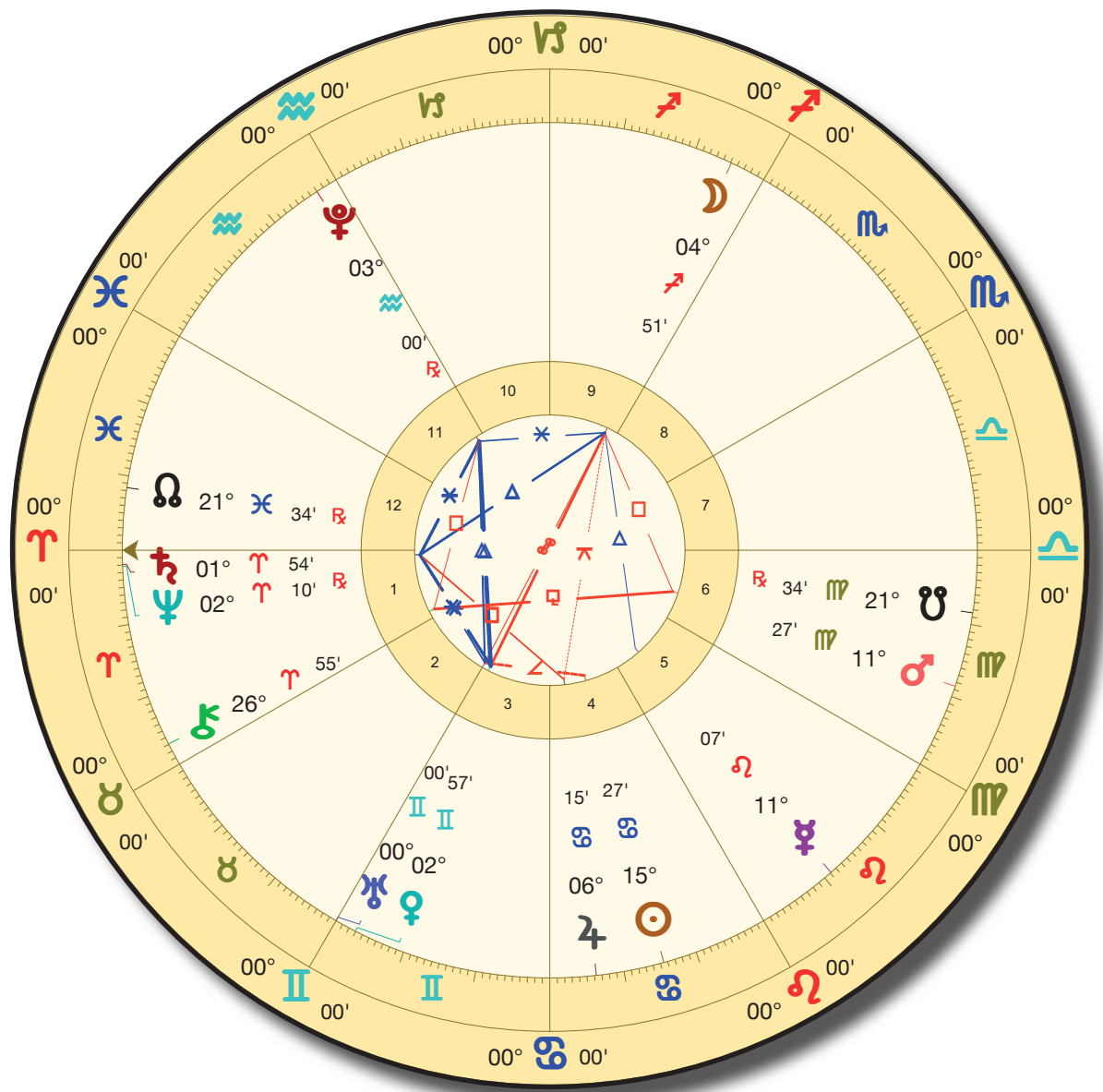
In Orwell's novel, speaking the truth is outlawed and the protagonist, everyman Winston Smith, begins his secret diary in defiance of the totalitarian government. It is a volume that addresses the manipulation of truth, mass surveillance and the repressive regimentation of a dystopian society. Anthony



Burgess, author of *A Clockwork Orange*, called it 'an apocalyptic codex of our worst fears', while Dorian Lynskey (in *The Ministry of Truth*) called it a book 'we turn to when truth is mutilated, language is distorted [and] power is abused'.

This may give us some insight into the battles ahead as Uranus travels through Gemini from July 2025 to May 2033. In **the ingress chart** (see below), Venus conjoins Uranus in Gemini and both oppose the Moon in Sagittarius, while Mars is in Virgo: the value of words and meaning, a fight to speak up for 'The Truth' and the need for discernment and critical thinking – in spite of systemic manipulation (Saturn conjunct Neptune).

Orwell coined the terms 'thoughtcrime' and 'doublethink' (Gemini) – the process of indoctrination in which people are expected to simultaneously accept two conflicting beliefs as truth, often at odds with their own memory or sense of reality: 'War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength.' How relevant this is today in an AI world where fake news leads to continual doubt, disbelief or indifference, and lies are presented as fact.





At the same time that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was published and Uranus stood at 29° Gemini, two very different events took place – both extreme manifestations of Uranus having made its way through Gemini. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was accepted by the United Nations, and a Subcommittee on Un-American Activities released a 709-page report accusing writers and entertainers of Communist sympathies.

In August 2032, Uranus arrives back at 29°55' Gemini, its placement when Orwell's book was published. How difficult will this battle have become? As Gemini loves playing with words and connecting ideas, I Googled '8:32' and found this:

Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

– John 8:32

Keeping the humour

One of the areas most under threat is comedy. The current sensitive social climate means we have to take a risk to attempt to be funny, to use humour to get people thinking, and to speak up about the ridiculousness of what happens on our way from the cradle to the grave. Humour is one of the first areas we should fight to protect during these times of censorship. And Uranus has a claim to being the planet of comedy.¹

People without a sense of humour should not be allowed to decide what people with a sense of humour are allowed to laugh at.

– John Cleese



There's a downside to Gemini, which follows Taurus. Put bluntly, after the bull comes the bullshit.

Uranian comedians and wits are the 'shock jocks' like Howard Stern (Mercury–Uranus) and TV host Bill Maher (Sun–Moon–Uranus) and social commentators through the ages such as Oscar Wilde to Dorothy Parker (both Mercury–Uranus). Wilde knew the importance of a good Uranian surprise reversal when he quipped, 'It is only the shallow people who do not judge by appearances' and 'I can resist everything except temptation.'

George Carlin (Uranus–MC) was another comedian intent on keeping audiences from falling asleep socially and politically. Famously, he introduced 'Seven Words You Can Never Say on TV'. Comedian Roseanne is highly Uranian (Aquarius rising, Mars–Uranus). When she's not getting herself cancelled, she's asking her audience: 'Any impotent men here tonight? Oh I see ... you can't get your hands up either.' A Scorpio, she has also said: 'The fastest way to a man's heart ... is through his chest.'

A dominant Uranus is found in those who are born to cut through hypocrisy, refuse the path of compromise and speak the unspeakable. We need Uranians to wake us up from a herd mentality, and this sometimes means causing outrage. (The etymology of 'outrage' is 'violent', 'lawless', 'beyond'. All very Uranian.)

Uranians have a compulsive aversion to everything obligatory, and the result is that many are cancelled by Saturn/society. But that cancellation is often reversed when times change and what was once shocking becomes mainstream. That's something Uranian outsider Quentin Crisp knew. With natal Uranus on his MC in Capricorn, he once advised, 'Don't ever try to join society – that's a mistake. Stay right where you are and wait for society to form itself around you.' He said it another way, 'Time is on the side of the outcast. Those who once inhabited the suburbs of human contempt find that without changing their address they eventually live in the metropolis.'

Astrology's roles and plugholes

Astrology can go down the same plughole that we see on social media: using the chart to reinforce victimhood or to excuse or cancel behaviour: *I have a Saturn transit, so life is going to be hard this year. I'll never date another Scorpio Moon. You can't follow this astrologer because they use that house system.*

When I began teaching myself astrology in the late 1980s, it was the Sun-sign columns that watered down our great subject. Now, in social media and

the hunt for likes and views, we're bombarded with astrological trivia. Every upcoming transit is advertised as 'huge'. Every week we're being told of a new shift in consciousness. It's exhausting! The most recent intelligent media project on astrology was Rick Tarnas's *Changing of the Gods* – and look how much time, effort and money that took to create.

Now, most of the time we're exposed to the trivial side of astrology via Mercury. Words for words' sake. Filling air time. The need to express oneself without really having something important to say. That's a downside to Gemini, which follows Taurus. Put bluntly, after the bull comes the bullshit. There's bound to be a lot more B.S. to come.

We can express astrology in a low-frequency energy, but arguably this doesn't do justice to our subject. A Uranian breakthrough of freedom and change begins when we address our prejudices about signs and placements – or when we refuse to accept someone's narrow interpretation of who we are. This is part of the journey of Uranus through Gemini. Discernment and critical thinking and a review of how we practise astrology, how we define our work and our approach – these are pivotal to how well we navigate this seven-and-a-half-year transit. I'm fond of saying this to students:

The only true debility is an astrologer's inability to suggest something constructive to do with that placement.

There are no mistakes in the chart; there's no junk, either. It's a map of beauty and perfection, reflecting each perfect, present moment. I see a horoscope as a magnet (attracting people and situations to us) and an invitation to co-create our lives. We learn from many, but we can only interpret life and horoscopes through our own lens. As the interpreter, we must recognise our bias: how we experience and see life will be how we read charts. To quote Anaïs Nin:

We don't see things as they are, we see things as we are.

This is where 'The Truth' is replaced by 'my truth', which really means my opinion or feelings. Valid, but different. Astrology provides that deeply personal lens – one that reflects our perspective, our 'truth'. And everyone has their own, equally valid lens/chart. But we can't expect our lens to be the same as other people's. And here, our battles in the microcosm of our astrological community are mirrored in the macrocosm of the wider world's ideological battles.

I love what our late astrology colleague Jeff Jawer used to say: 'Be more committed to discovery, which requires sometimes being wrong, than to control, which demands that you always be right.' Jeff was a Taurus with a

Scorpio Moon! As an Aries, I'd add: Let us also be more committed to being effective – as people and as astrological consultants.

One gift of Uranus moving into Gemini is the revelation (or reintroduction) of a kind of self-expression that is truly genuine to us. Astrologers know that there's nothing more freeing, more alive than being awake to yourself. Again, we hear the Sun and Uranus. Our job as messengers and consultants is to inspire each other and our clients to live authentically.

Individuals serving a greater truth in a community

We astrologers are always going to resist regulation en masse because our astrology is a reflection of our individual lens on life, and that's part of its appeal: astrology serves as a Solar and Uranian vessel. What defines us as a community (Uranus) is a feeling of singularity (Sun) and differentness (Uranus). Astrology speaks to our sense of individuality and to us as a fellowship of individuals attempting to learn, interpret and communicate a larger truth. This is why Uranus in Gemini is so significant to our profession now.

Uranus begins its move into Gemini in July 2025, and as astrologers we have the chance to continue to be in dialogue with one another and to question what we encounter. We are being asked to stay open to a multitude of contrasting ideas, to reopen closed conversations, to find various forms of expression that uplift our great wisdom tradition and its sacred stories – and avoid constantly reducing it to cater to passing whims. The way to prevail during these times, I think, is to always aim to tell a better story.

Astrology is diverse – it has within it binary systems (we learn about night and day, yin and yang and various axes), but its application is most impactful when fluid, multifaceted and nonbinary. Charts are fundamentally unequal – some people have more air than others; some are cardinal, others are more mutable. Yet our approach needs to be all-inclusive. We must be open to divergent viewpoints, and to embracing all signs, all placements, all people. But our principal aim as consultants is to help people discover the power within to shape their lives according to who they are and what they want to be.

With censorship and the curtailment of intellectual freedom, Uranus in Gemini will urgently bring forward the need for diverse perspectives and experiences in astrology. It could be all too easy to break off into further subsections.

We will continue to have our own approaches, house systems and toolkits. Most of us are too Uranian to want 'one school of astrology' with laws laid down – unless these laws are our own! No truth is the whole truth, and nothing exists without an opposite.

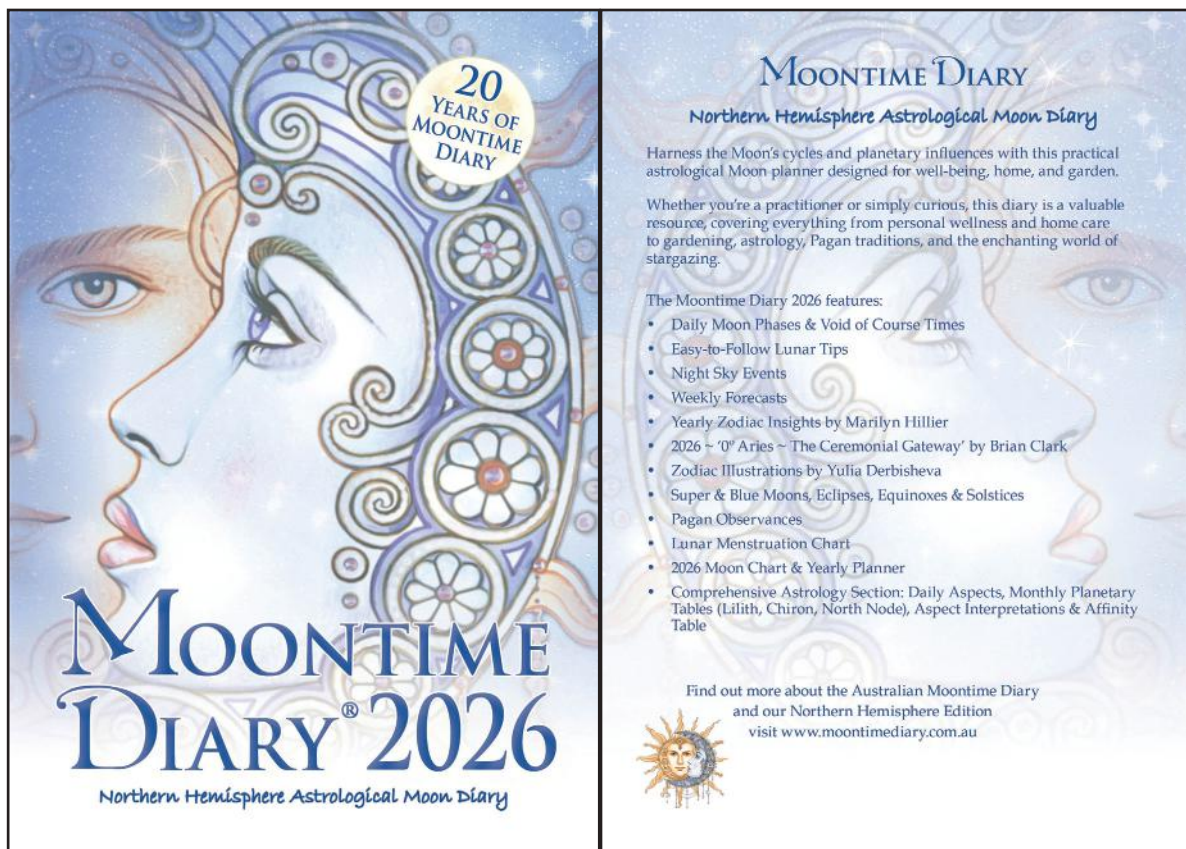
The dichotomies inherent in both Uranus and Gemini mean that we have the opportunity to come together as a community, united in our diversity and respectful in our acceptance of contrasting ideas. We are fiercely individualistic individuals all under the same umbrella in a small community. Unity is where our strength lies. Let's keep the conversations going.

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Note

1. My research into the signifiers of humour shows the importance of Mercury–Mars and Mercury–Uranus aspects, personal points in Capricorn or Aquarius, and/or a dominant Uranus. See the mini-book *Humour in the Horoscope* (Flare, 2015).

Chart Data can be found on AstroDatabank or other internet sources, and are rated A or AA. With examples that are not so rated, the date of birth is not in question.



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The Mountain Astrologer Magazine
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Words

by Carole Bone

I love words
I love how they feel as they escape my mouth
The sensation of how they form as I speak
They can tickle or tangle my tongue
I love how they appear to race as I type
And the way they grow and flower on the page
Popping up like daisies in the sun
Words can do things all on their own
When I write or think
They can grow into a story or rhyme
That was never there before
Dancing together in pleasing form
Surprising me in their chosen friends
Seemingly unbidden by me
To tell a tale I did not know
Or was hiding in me –
Somewhere –
Only they know –
Tentatively
They twine and grow
Weaving with each other
Draping across the page
In glorious dripping garlands
An extravaganza
Of wonderful beautiful words.

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Carole Bone has studied astrology for 25 years and gained her Certificate from the FAS in 2001. She also studied with Anne Whitaker, who founded Aquarius Rising, the West of Scotland Astrological Association. Carole was the group's librarian then secretary for 19 years. She also enjoys a little writing, poetry and art. You can contact her at carolebone@hotmail.co.uk



12th-house Planets

Self-undoing Blocks or Special Gifts?

by Faye Blake



In my work as a vocational and counselling astrologer and past-life regression therapist, one of the things I have noticed is that 12th-house planetary patterns seem to come to the surface early on during regression sessions. They appear to be easier to uncover than other chart patterns. Yes, they act as blocks in life and work but, when they are understood, they can be some of our greatest gifts. The often-cited 'weak' 12th house is not what I have seen, as planets here are very influential and important and, I think, misunderstood in astrology to a large extent.

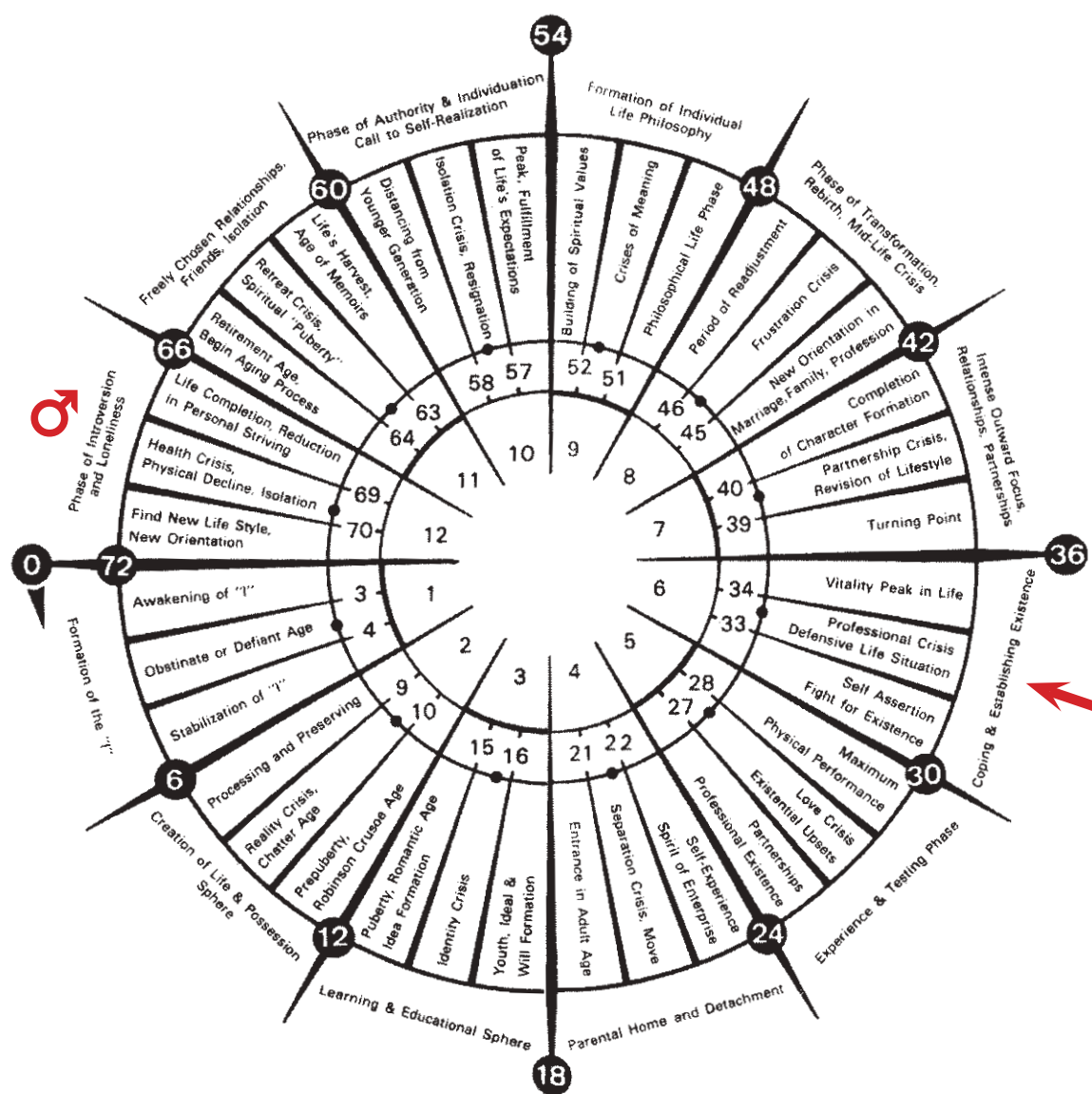
The research done by the Gauquelins suggests that planets here also play a large role in our profession. They show patterns we come in with – both positive and negative – but, for some reason, when we try to put them to good use they get rejected. So we hide them away, perhaps to keep them safe. We put a 12th-house planetary toe in the water, so to speak, and realize the temperature is not right. So the talent that we are born with goes underground until we work on the block. Dana Gerhardt writes: 'Ultimately, the 12th-house path is meant to transform us. Behind its darkness lies a brilliant light, but it takes time and faith to develop our spiritual eyes. If we insist on negotiating this world with our material values intact, we'll operate blind.'¹

I began to notice something about these 12th-house planets because I started asking questions about the situation during gestation (i.e. the time the client was in the womb). Because of this, I have come to the hypothesis that not only does the 12th house represent our nine months in the womb – as many astrologers believe – but also that the sequence of the planets is experienced in that order during our gestation.

Now, when I see planets in the 12th house, I always ask whether the client knows anything about their parents or the pre-birth situation. If they don't and can still ask parents or a relative, I suggest they do that. The stories are sometimes very helpful, as clients can then imagine what it may have been like for them in the womb. We *do* come to conclusions this early in our lives, and these form deep-seated patterns. If we can learn to express these planetary energies without fear, there are great gifts here for our working life and, of course, for our life generally.

What I will do in the following article is provide examples of what I have come across during regression sessions and offer a possible conclusion and gift for each planetary placement that you or your clients may recognize. Even without doing regression work, we seem to resonate with these life themes. The following examples are by no means intended as a complete cookbook of interpretations. They are ideas to give you possible themes to explore with your own horoscope and those of your clients.

The Huber Life Clock states that 12th-house planets are woken up by opposition, a strong trigger point, during age 30–36 (when the clock moves through the 6th house). In addition, the planet's position in the 12th house gives us a timing tool. As an example using Koch houses, if you have Mars *midway* through the 12th house, you may have registered a Mars-type event inside your mother's womb – and come to a conclusion about it – when she was about four and a half months pregnant. You will have a chance to heal that possible trauma at age 33 (when the Huber Life Clock registers an opposition to that Mars *midway* through the 6th house). This means that age 30–36 is a major opportunity to heal wounds caused during your time in the womb.



The Sun in the 12th house

The father is often a theme during pregnancy and birth. A good example is a client who was born on 29 February, with the Sun just before the Ascendant in Pisces. A television crew had asked to film the newborn and were given permission from my client's father. He was very proud to be a new father, too, so was happy to do it. However, my client experienced this in the regression as receiving far too much attention. She just wanted to be quietly with her mother. Her father's wishes would become a very strong influence in her life.

I have seen this placement often where the input (or, more often, the lack of it) of the father results in a conclusion that 'who I am is unimportant' or 'I can't have what I want, someone else will direct my life.' (This placement can also suggest that God is that 'someone else'.) It is found in the charts of those who have submitted to a higher authority in a previous life, perhaps as a monk or a nun. And in those who feel blocked from allowing themselves to be who they really are.

The gifts of the Sun in the 12th house

The actor who steps easily into others' shoes is one example, or someone who has the gift of inner peace and the ability to connect with other sources. So this can be a very intuitive placement – once intuition is seen as a positive trait and you are happy receiving attention for who you are.

There are many world leaders with the Sun in the 12th house, so this is definitely not a position that indicates being shut away. The work needed here is to go for what you really want. But it does imply a career in being of service somehow, as many world leaders have been.

I think there is a need to break away from the father, which is what often happens anyway before birth with the Sun in the 12th. Having done that, it is easier to follow your own heart and develop the gift of intuitive leadership.

The Moon in the 12th house

This is the caretaker. For some reason the child in the womb feels the need to take care of the mother. The mother is often unwell or delicate. One of my clients had a mother who didn't want to be fat while pregnant – to the mother, this would have been unattractive. My client was not nurtured in the womb and suffered a form of malnutrition. Unsurprisingly, this caused eating disorders later in life.

The pattern that develops is one of 'my life depends on looking after others. If I don't take care of the other person I will die.' Although it might not seem likely, babies in the womb can do things to help their mothers. Decisions I have

come across in regressions include 'if I keep still it will be better, I won't cause a fuss.' Many people with the Moon in the 12th recognize the fact that they take care of everyone, especially women, to the detriment of their own nurturing. Showing emotion carries some sort of block, and the feelings of others are more important.

One past-life regression of a male client showed a man who watched from afar as his wife and daughter were raped by soldiers. He was powerless to do anything about it. In this life, his pattern has been wanting to protect and look after women, especially if they have children.

The gifts of the Moon in the 12th house

Someone very compassionate, supportive and intuitive – once you can look after and nurture yourself. Someone who can read public opinion very easily. Many writers have 12th-house Moons, as there is often an instinctive 'knowing' of what others feel. Work in caring professions may be healing and rewarding.

Mercury in the 12th house

The shy person. The block seems to be that it is dangerous to have an opinion. I have seen this in someone who always asks his partner what he should do. He is not shy in the usual way we would see this, but he never comes up with his own ideas. In regressions, clients with Mercury in the 12th house have been people who have not had a voice (sometimes literally) in previous lives – being unable to speak or sometimes being deaf.

I think we are supposed to heal 12th-house planets in this lifetime, which is why they are easier to access. They are near the surface as unfinished themes from past lives. People with Mercury in the 12th enter this life with something they need to express. But the conclusion is often 'no one understands me, so why bother?' Or there is something dangerous about speaking out.

Sometimes, this placement suggests something going on with siblings during pregnancy. During one regression back to the womb, a client with the Moon in the 12th tightly aspecting Mercury saw an image of herself looking at her sister, who is not much older than she is. She saw herself as blue (she is a Pisces) but she had red hands and she already knew in the womb that her sister was very jealous and that she would have to fight her to get their mother's (Moon in 12th) attention. There was also a Moon–Mars aspect. As in this case, aspects to 12th-house planets often show up in the clients' stories, too.

The gifts of Mercury in the 12th house

A 12th-house Mercury can intuitively pick up many levels in conversations. They are great listeners. Sound is important – my client above, who always

consults his partner, is a very talented musician. Musicians are very good at distinguishing sounds.

Perhaps this would be someone who has a gift for languages. Some research suggests that people who learn music early in life are better at learning other languages. There is an intuitive understanding and knowing what others are thinking. A job giving expression to intuitive ideas or imagination could be good.

Venus in the 12th house

This position can manifest as a self-worth problem, but it can more often highlight a vital need to take account of the other person, to consider everyone else. Whatever the 12th-house person loves is irrelevant, and this can produce someone who, when asked what they want, asks 'but what do you want to do?' There can be real fears about being alone. Relationships are therefore a main focus. In my experience, a 12th-house Venus can also produce someone who is 'too nice', the pleaser. One client of mine rarely does the things she wants – her husband's hobbies mostly take priority. Doing things together is a must for her.

I can't find any past-life examples for this placement, although there have probably been many. However, I do have a client whose father was in the military. She was born overseas, her mother following her father everywhere because 'that's what you did' – the dutiful wife who puts others' pursuits first. So you can see how this might lead to a lack of self-worth or not being aware of what you love about yourself. My client has taken over this pattern from her mother.

There is sometimes a fear of expressing the feminine because the senses of taste, beauty and harmony have been called into question in childhood. I have seen relationship issues and money problems between the parents during the client's gestation in the womb.

The gifts of Venus in the 12th house

Being able to see, or rather feel, things from differing viewpoints. The mediator. An intuitive sense of what others love. Working intuitively with art or beauty. The artist. This placement would suggest someone who might be good where money is involved. The intuitive negotiator.

Mars in the 12th house

I have had three clients with Mars in the 12th who virtually said the same thing during regressions: 'It wasn't my idea to come here [in this life]. I was pushed.' Or words to that effect. This suggests a giving up of will. The image I always have



I have come to the hypothesis that the 12th house represents our nine months in the womb, and that the sequence of the planets is experienced in that order during our gestation.

is of a teenager sitting grumpily in a corner at a party she's been told she has to go to. Not that people with a 12th-house Mars are always grumpy, but there is a resignation about not having a choice of what to do: 'It doesn't matter what I want'; 'No point in wanting anything – I'll have to do what they say.' So there is sometimes a block over knowing your direction in life. It may be easier *not* to say what you want and then go for it, than to express it and have it taken away.

I have also seen this placement when there was a lot of conflict during the gestation. The decision here is: 'I won't fight; sticking up for yourself makes it worse'; 'Keeping still is safest'; 'Anger is dangerous.'

The gifts of Mars in the 12th house

The Gauquelin research² showed that successful sportspeople (along with doctors and military people) often have Mars in what are now known as the Gauquelin Sectors, one of which includes the 12th house. I suspect that the gift lies in having an intuitive knowledge of how to compete; to be fine-tuned to the will of your opponent. To have a feeling of how to direct the ball, for example, in tennis or football.

In the case of doctors, I would expect to see it more in surgeons, although I have no idea if this is true, as the gift (once the 12th-house person dares to go for what they want) is to be able to control the Mars in a manner that is very focused, such as the way in which a surgeon uses a knife, perhaps intuitively knowing where to cut. I have also seen it in my clients who have a career in which defending the underdog forms part of their *raison d'être*. I think this comes from a possible past life where defending others or yourself has proved impossible.

Jupiter in the 12th house

One way a 12th-house Jupiter often shows up is when there is a religious background. The child in the womb already seems to have a sense that his own faith will be overshadowed or put to the test. Their own belief system or philosophy is sacrificed. This is also someone who won't dare to take risks at work. Adventures can be threatening; travel can be scary.

There is an inner sense of wanting to find meaning and to have a vision, but these desires are initially blurred by the environment you are brought up in. I

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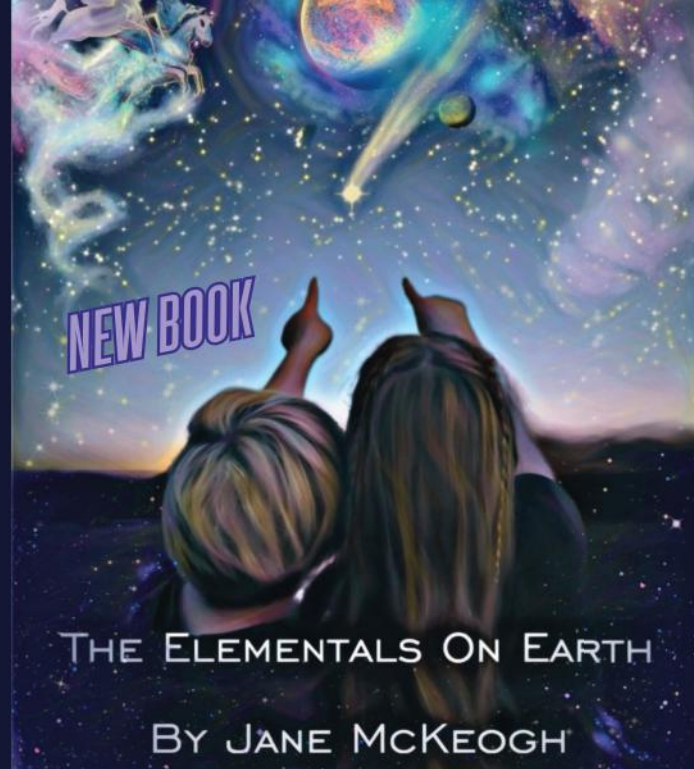

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have witnessed past-life regressions with those who have Jupiter in the 12th where religion played a role and particularly where there has been a judgement of some kind.

The gifts of Jupiter in the 12th house

An intuitive sense of the big picture. Someone who is good at recognizing patterns, so a job in demographic research could be fulfilling. There could be political gifts or a feel for marketing an idea or a standpoint. Publishers could be helped by having this – a feel for what might sell well. The intuitive entrepreneur – one who just senses what the risks are – or the gambler (in the positive sense). Someone who has a vision. The lawyer or lawmaker.

Astronaut Buzz Aldrin has this. Any career where Jupiter is put to good use in space, exploration, discovery, broadening of horizons and adventures – these are all fulfilling options for someone with Jupiter in the 12th. The work is to discover your own faith in life and what your own philosophy is, and go for it. Jupiter is often referred to as the Guardian Angel, but I think any planet can have this effect if we use it optimally. Jupiter, when working well, grabs more opportunities and has the faith that the outcome will be beneficial – optimism and belief lead to success.

Saturn in the 12th house

Many people with Saturn in the 12th suffer because they seem to know already in the womb that their own goals will not be allowed. 'It's no use having ambition because what I want to do won't be acceptable.' This feeling can come from a strict background or one where angst reigns supreme. One strategy developed is to avoid having goals altogether – at work, this manifests as a lack of ambition. Often, what has been experienced early in life is that someone else's authority and rules are more important than our own. We give up our own versions of these very early on.

I know someone who really suffers from this signature. She is number five in a family of six girls. Perhaps in the womb she already knew she was not the preferred option. The decision is 'I am not good enough.' There is a real fear of not being taken seriously, but equally a fear of stepping into one's own mission. It is a painful placement. Past lives reveal events where the regressee has fallen short in some way. 'I am to blame for the death of my companion soldier, my wife, etc. I should have...' The strategy is to overcompensate or take responsibility for everyone else's orders – it feels better to not have any responsibility in this life because of the failure to carry out one's duty during the last life.

I also have a client whose first son has Saturn in the 12th house. When she was pregnant she was quite unhappy, as the decision to have a child was her

husband's. He really wanted a child and she didn't, but she went along with his wishes. She worked hard when she was pregnant and didn't really have time for a child. This is a common theme. You can see how this might have affected a growing baby and how a pattern of not having your own goals could have been passed down. 'I am not worthy of having anyone spend time with me' is a common conclusion.

The gifts of Saturn in the 12th house

Gauquelin suggests that this can indicate the scientist, but I must admit to not having found many examples of this. I can imagine, though, that there is a desire for clarity about what the rules are, so I would expect it more in scientists who are looking for concrete physical proof. Or in geologists, perhaps. Since Buzz Aldrin was mentioned, another astronaut is Harrison H Schmitt, a geologist on the Apollo 17 lunar module and the twelfth man on the Moon. Funny how we all know the Jupiter-in-the-12th Buzz and not the Saturn-in-the-12th Harrison!

Saturn in the 12th house would fit with an instinctive knowing of how to structure an experiment or how to prove something. Science can be very Saturnian, but there are also many Uranian and Neptunian scientists. Saturn in the 12th would give an aptitude for the Saturnian types.

The lesson here is to learn to feel good enough to go for your own mission and goals in life. To appreciate that you can spend your time in the way you choose. The potential here is to become the intuitive teacher, planner, architect or anyone who works with structures.

Uranus in the 12th house

'I was burned at the stake' is a common cry of the regressee with Uranus in the 12th. At some time during pregnancy there is a shock or a breaking point. The decision by the child, caused by a feeling of abandonment, is 'I can/will/have to do it by myself', which, in my experience, is a deep-seated feeling that Uranus-in-the-12th people strongly relate to. The fear of commitment is strong, as it is better to do things by yourself and in your own way than to feel the pain of being left alone again.

There is forbidden knowledge here, hence the idea of being burned at the stake for what the person knew. But also a sense of the unfairness or hypocrisy of this. Uranus-in-the-12th people can 'download' knowledge, they just know something – but it is dangerous to show it. The desire, which is given up, is to be special and unique. In many regressions there have been accidents, sudden occurrences or shocks, which have given the person a need to understand things, to know the future. Many good astrologers have this Uranus.

Long ago I heard this placement referred to as the 'street angel, house devil'. When you are in a safe place, you can show how rebellious and quirky you really are, but to the outside world you fit in perfectly. Uranus in the 12th house gives up authenticity.

One client's mother realized very late that she was pregnant, which was a complete shock, as she thought she was menopausal. She considered an abortion, fearing her husband would leave her again. She didn't want to be unattractive and fat, as her husband had just returned to her after a long affair. My client felt the rejection physically during the regression. It dawned on her that she was unwanted, and she developed a strategy to go it alone. Although she felt wanted later, particularly by her father, she always felt different and not part of any group when growing up. Both parents encouraged that, believing in her specialness in a positive sense. However, she was very lonely as a child.

The gifts of Uranus in the 12th house

Someone who has dared to be different can develop an intuitive sense of tuning in to hidden knowledge. I often think of this as being able to know something to be true but not being able to explain why you know it. Using this talent can make someone extraordinary. This can be someone who can see the special qualities that others have and also accept them. Their gift can be to bring insight and understanding. Or to be agents of change, or even to see the future.

Neptune in the 12th house

I have encountered Neptune in the 12th when there has been some sort of loss or grieving by the mother during pregnancy. This results in the child's feeling that there is no connection with the physical realm and, during the regressions I have done, the child often expresses a wish to stay attached to other realms. There is often a strong 'spiritual' connection and no desire to be born. There is a theme of sacrifice and a need to disappear.

You might expect to see this in cases where the mother has an addiction, but I haven't seen examples of this. However, the result that seems to be recognizable by clients is one of taking care of everyone. It is similar to the Moon in the 12th house, but emphasized. The belief is that to make the world a better place you need to help everyone and to sacrifice yourself. 'I'm not important in the scheme of things.'

If a mother is grieving a loss, she may feel guilty about being happy about her new child. Or she may be unable to connect to the fact that she is pregnant, and the child becomes a sort of victim of circumstance. Children with Neptune in the 12th often disappear into fantasy worlds and dissociate from their bodies so as not to feel the pain this can cause. It is safer to disappear. Chains of past-

life situations can include being both victims and saviours, or those shut away in monasteries or convents. Any of the Neptunian themes can apply.

Interestingly, William Emerson has written a book³ about birth traumas caused by intervention. An online book review, which gives a summary, states: 'Dr. Emerson has noticed that some anesthetic babies [i.e. where the mother was anaesthetized] have difficulty bonding and later have problems with substance abuse.'⁴ To my mind, Neptune near the Ascendant would be a possible indicator of this problem.

The gifts of Neptune in the 12th house

A great imagination, huge amounts of compassion and a feeling of connectedness with the world. The ability to 'be' another person; to merge with others. The actor. The aura reader. This can be a helpful signature for people who work with animals or with children who can't communicate. Or it can be found in someone who can communicate with other realms.

Pluto in the 12th house

The control freak – and not for nothing. It is often mentioned in astrology books that Pluto near the Ascendant indicates a birth where the survival of either the mother or the baby is at stake, and I have seen this particularly where the umbilical cord has been wrapped around the baby's neck during birth.

Pluto in the 12th house has a similar theme – there is a question of survival earlier on in pregnancy. The question is, 'Shall I stay or go?' And if you have a client in your practice with this placement, then obviously on some level they have decided to live. But the decision results in 'I have to be alert to everything, I have to watch out. Earth is a dangerous place.'

The most dramatic example I have seen of this is a client whose mother felt unwell and was sent to have an examination. It was decided that she should have a D&C (dilation and curettage), an operation that clears out the uterus, which is usually done when infection or uterine bleeding or other female problems are encountered. In this case, the surgeons were halfway through the operation when they realized that what they had taken out was a foetus. Unbeknown to everyone, the woman was pregnant, but they realized this too late for the foetus.

However, my client's mother was carrying twins. The surviving foetus was my client. He was born at full term and was fine, but you can imagine what he might have concluded during the operation: 'I need to hang on tight and I need to control what is going to happen, otherwise I will die or lose those I love.' He has had a very difficult relationship with his mother. He admits to being a control freak. His life changed dramatically when he became a father (after his

wife had miscarried several times) and when he stood up to his mother and took his power back, between the ages of 30 and 36 [see Huber sidebar earlier].

Pluto in the 12th can also signify a death of some kind during pregnancy. I have often seen it in the charts of people born in the Netherlands during the Second World War when Holland was occupied by the Germans, particularly in clients born in the years known as the 'Honger Winter' (the Hunger Winter) of 1944–45. There were genuine fears of not only starving during the pregnancy, but also of death. What is given up is our power. We know we have no control over anything, although we still try.

In the review of Emerson's book mentioned earlier, one possible manifestation of Pluto near the Ascendant might be suggested here: 'The administration of such drugs as Oxytocin and Pitocin [for inducing labour] have the effect of making the fetus feel as though it is being overpowered and controlled. Both classes of such drugs interfere with subsequent bonding and sometimes result in substance abuse in later life as well as [a] feeling of being interrupted and interfered with.'

His suggestions on the use of instruments are also Plutonic in nature: 'They [people born by forceps or vacuum] have a tendency to recreate their trauma by manipulating others ... They feel that they have been invaded and subjected to violence. Often they don't want to be touched and/or held. A result can be the avoidance of sex or only engaging in sex with minimum touch. Contrariwise, some subjected to this trauma may be attracted to masochistic or sadistic sexuality in order to re-live the trauma and resolve it.' This makes sense to me. The power we have in the birth process has been taken away. The conclusion can be either to want to control everything or to feel powerless about life.

The gifts of Pluto in the 12th house

Being able to step into and take power, this placement gives someone who can transform the world. One of my clients has finally worked through some old issues of abortions and other powerless situations in her life and is coming into her own power. She is a powerful presence, her work (which concerns life and death situations) is important and she is well known in her field. Not only does she have Pluto in the 12th but also Uranus and Mars conjunct that Pluto. Her life has reflected this struggle, but the gift is that she has made, and will continue to make, a huge difference in her field. Pluto's gift is one of intuitively being able to research and get to the real truth of an issue. She has a quiet power because of this and exposes things that need to be revealed in society.

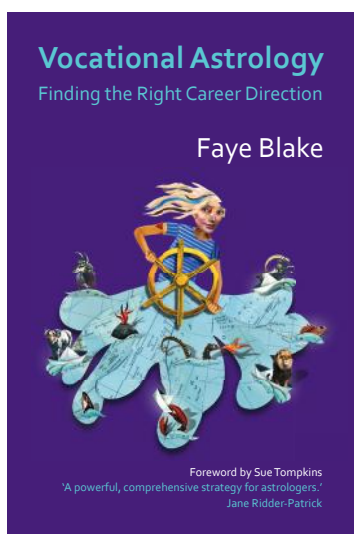
A regression I did with her shows her dilemma with this conjunction. She saw a past life where she had to choose for herself (Uranus) to either flee, leaving her family in a burning building (Mars), or to rescue them and die in the process

(Pluto). She recognized the dilemma of choosing for herself or for her family in this lifetime, both with her parents and with her own children. The Mars in the 12th shows her ability to campaign for the underdog, which she often does. Uranus reveals her sense of wanting equality for all.

*This article was abridged from a chapter originally published in
Vocational Astrology: Finding the Right Career Direction (Flare/LSA, 2017)
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References and Notes

1. From a wonderful article in a 12-part series that started in the October 1994 issue of *The Mountain Astrologer*.
2. There is a lot of information on the web now on this controversial research. If you are unfamiliar with it, it would be wise to study it, as it is often quoted in arguments both for and against astrology.
3. William R Emerson, *Birth Trauma: The Psychological Effects of Obstetrical Interventions*, Emerson Training Seminars.
4. www.primal-page.com/emer1.htm [accessed in May 2025]



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Faye Blake is a counselling astrologer, therapist and business consultant who offers original and practical ways to use astrology. Her book *Vocational Astrology*, which forms the basis of her tailor-made Vocational Apprenticeship program, has made Faye a sought-after speaker at schools and conferences internationally. Faye is a passionate advocate for using Ceres and the Huber Life Clock. Her free monthly blog, 'The Monthly Planet', covers a wide range of topics. Faye holds an M.A. in Cultural Astronomy and Astrology and is also the founder of the Amsterdam School of Astrology in The Netherlands. www.fayeblake.nl and www.asaastrology.nl

The Moon Puzzle – Linda T. Kaastra

Moon

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					

Moon

1. the moon's gravity creates these
2. after the Full Moon, it
3. monthly process
4. after the New Moon, it
5. in the Earth's shadow, first of two words
6. its placement in a birth chart
7. part of a lunar cycle
8. food choices, conceptually
9. regular activity
10. aka draconic period
11. ☉ ●(past tense), represented by hand

Magic

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					

Magic

1. prophetess, starts with s
2. 'brought down' e.g. the Moon
3. cards rich in symbolism
4. a kind of charm
5. as one ages, one becomes
6. miniature familiar, Hedwig as a chick
7. escargot
8. opportunities for neutral intent
9. charms men with song

For reflection: One word appears in all three lists. What is it? How is this word defined in these three areas? What aspects of the definition are the same, and which aspects of the definition are different?

Astrology

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					

Astrology

1. informal description of an area
2. destiny points, first word
3. before computers, charts were ...
4. a type of horoscope
5. one of twelve
6. ☿
7. names for constellations
8. planets form close contact
9. what astrologers have done for centuries

Which three keywords appear in the shadows?

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The Moon Puzzle – Linda T. Kaastra

Answer Key

Moon

1	T	I	D	E	S
2	W	A	N	E	S
3	C	Y	C	L	E
4	W	A	X	E	S
5	L	U	N	A	R
6	N	A	T	A	L
7	P	H	A	S	E
8	D	I	E	T	S
9	H	A	B	I	T
10	N	O	D	A	L
11	D	R	A	W	N

Magic

1	S	I	B	Y	L
2	D	R	A	W	N
3	T	A	R	O	T
4	L	U	C	K	Y
5	W	I	S	E	R
6	O	W	L	E	T
7	S	N	A	I	L
8	V	O	I	D	S
9	S	I	R	E	N

Astrology

1	Z	O	N	E	S
2	L	U	N	A	R
3	D	R	A	W	N
4	N	A	T	A	L
5	H	O	U	S	E
6	E	A	R	T	H
7	S	I	G	N	S
8	A	L	I	G	N
9	G	A	Z	E	D

INCANTATION

INTUITION

NURTURING

Linda is an intellectually curious researcher. She holds a PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of British Columbia and has published several scholarly articles and a book on cognition in music performance. She is a professional educator and pursues various hobbies: music (flute and guitar), knitting, astrology, and most recently, puzzle making. You can view her research here: <https://ufv-ca.academia.edu/LindaKaastra>

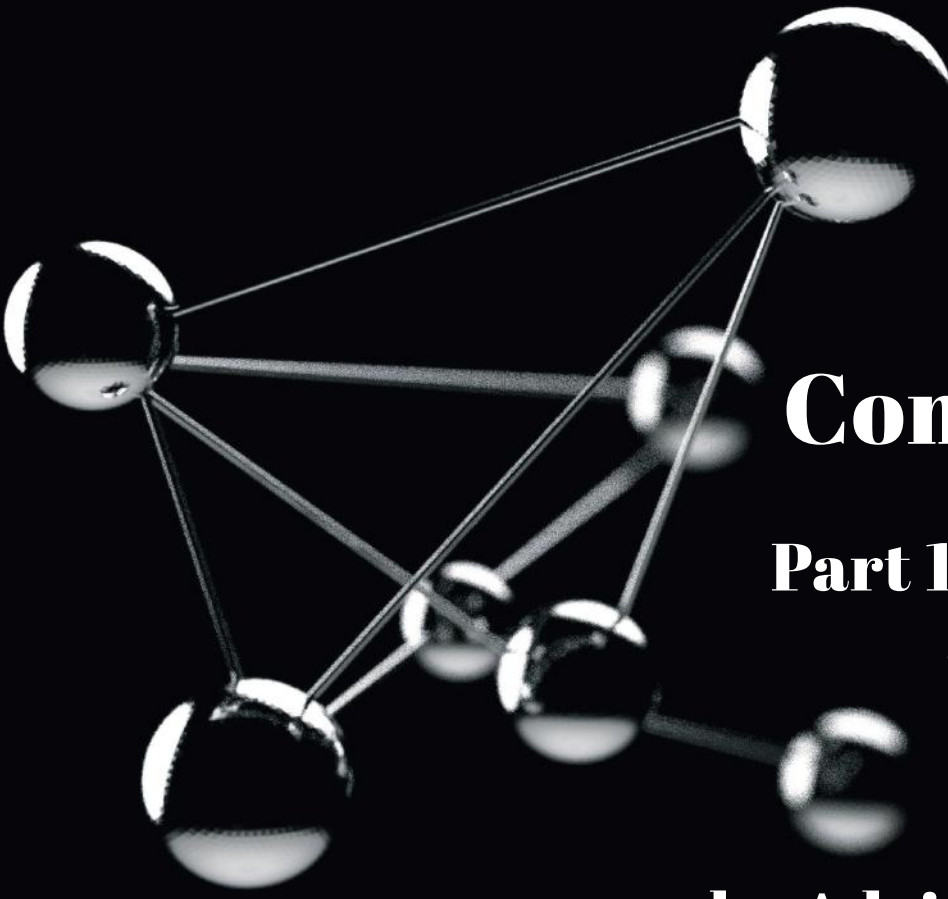
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Outer Planetary Combinations

Part 1: Jupiter–Saturn Jupiter–Neptune Saturn–Neptune

by **Adrian Ross Duncan**

Editor's Note: In this first excerpt from Adrian's book, Astrology: Transformation and Empowerment (Red Wheel/Weiser, 2002), we've chosen three cycles that are part of the current 2025–6 mundane lineup: Jupiter–Saturn, Jupiter–Neptune and Saturn–Neptune.



Outer planet combinations show long-term collective trends which affect whole generations and specific groups within them. At any given date of birth, there are vast social and political changes sweeping through society embodying a particular spirit of the times. A person born on this date will embody the aspirations of that time, and these aspirations will become crucially important at a time in the life when the planetary combination is repeated. For example, people with Jupiter–Saturn aspects will find key moments arising every 20 years (and also at the square and opposition points of the cycle – every five and ten years), whilst people with Jupiter–Pluto aspects will find key moments arising every 13 years, and those with Saturn–Uranus aspects every 46 years, and so on.

More often than not, the behaviour associated with planetary aspects is based on complex aspect patterns, rather than the interchange of energy

between just two planets. There are innumerable combinations, each one generating unique behaviour, but of greatest significance is the combination of a personal planet with two outer planets.

The ten major planetary cycles have a unique signature, and when a personal planet interacts with an outer planet pair, there is often a very specific behavioural pattern which the astrologer should be able to identify. The following descriptions relate more to behavioural patterns than to social and political trends. The following texts concentrate on the difficulties that may be apparent in the consultation, rather than on the many positive manifestations of the triple planet aspect. The descriptions here are aimed at those clients who obviously manifest the more extreme problems associated with the most difficult combinations.

Jupiter–Saturn: a 20-year cycle

Structures in society

Those born with aspects relating to the two largest planets in the solar system are strongly keyed into mainstream society in one way or another, and have the capacity to make visible changes in its structure. With the positive aspects in particular, there is a gift for being in the right place at the right time, and an ability to fulfil the needs of an evolving society. Those born with the conjunction have the potential to become landmarks which guide others. With the square and the opposition, the need to achieve something is profound, but there is less confidence, as the faith of Jupiter meets the obstacles of Saturn. In the consultation, the relevant areas to examine are work, goals and ambition, and the relation of the individual to society, with a view to maximize the client's contribution in this area.

Sun in aspect to Jupiter–Saturn

These people have the capacity to be true leaders in their field. Generally they will have an aura of responsibility, and their opinions will carry weight. The father will normally have been influential and rather dominating. Clients will take themselves seriously and be eager to make a mark. Setbacks can be seen in a positive light as gaining experience.

Moon in aspect to Jupiter–Saturn

Generally these people are serious by nature, often quite hardened by early events in their life. They have the capacity to see the positive side of negative events, after initially being weighed down by them. Family responsibilities are a major issue, and also an anchor in their life.



Each planetary combination generates unique behaviour, but of greatest significance is the combination of a personal planet with two outer planets.

Mercury in aspect to Jupiter–Saturn

This is the signature of a mental achiever, probably powerfully motivated by parents or siblings in childhood. Whilst early intellectual achievement may have been characterized by setback, these people will often go on to make significant contributions to society in the realm of education, communication, transport, etc. It's a great combination for business success if negative thinking is overcome.

Venus in aspect to Jupiter–Saturn

The need for a stable relationship features strongly here, as well as an urge to advance socially through marriage, partly because of a desire for tangible proof of self-worth. This type will have a strong focus on finances and the probable ability to increase assets by judicious investment. This is an excellent combination for business, and both material and social advancement will feature as values when choosing a partner.

Mars in aspect to Jupiter–Saturn

This is a tough-guy combination, and if Jupiter is dominating, somewhat of a bully boy. In both sexes, issues of self-assertion dominate, and they have the ability to get by in a man's world. Dynamic and hard-working, these people advance through both effort and confidence. There is a determination to win, and great sensitivity to defeat. Physical and intellectual prowess is highly valued.

Jupiter–Neptune: a 13-year cycle

Visionary dreams

The unique signature of this combination is a utopian idealism and an incredibly vivid imagination. It is very much related to film and image and to dreams or fantasies which grip the imagination of society. In the individual, visions will often founder on the rocks of reality, yet succour is sought and found in an inner dream world. These people have the ability to understand the power of the unreal, whether it be through advertising, brand image or any other method which channels the escapist aspirations of the public.



Venus in aspect to Jupiter–Saturn is an excellent combination for business, and both material and social advancement will feature as values when choosing a partner.

Sun in aspect to Jupiter–Neptune

These people are true visionaries, who have disdain for the constraints of the real world, and are strongly motivated to lead others towards a vision of the future. Depending on the aspect combination, moral restraints do not figure highly, though there can be a genuine compassionate vision for humanity as a whole. It is likely that there is an inflated and unreal perception of the father, and indeed of oneself. The tendency to see themselves as victims of a gray and unfeeling society is pronounced ... they need to weave their dreams into the fabric of reality to make a difference.

Moon in aspect to Jupiter–Neptune

Extremely sensitive and receptive, these people have the capacity to feel profound sympathy and compassion, as long as they do not fall into the victim trap ... a risk which normally stems from a perception of the mother as unjustly wronged. With this combination, the emotions threaten to overwhelm, and strategies have to be learned to gain greater perspective and calm. There is generally a talent for film and photography.

Mercury in aspect to Jupiter–Neptune

The challenge here is to assimilate the lessons of both the conscious and the unconscious mind to gain greater insight into life. This combination produces the greatest imaginative power, though how it is channeled depends on the moral values of the individual ... there is a great temptation to tell 'whoppers'. One problem these individuals face is a difficulty to distinguish between fact and fantasy, and to get real. They tend to believe what they want to believe, and to say what they think needs to be heard. Even in telling an untruth, they can truly convince themselves that it is the truth.

Venus in aspect to Jupiter–Neptune

The dream of the big romance is dominating with this combination, with a corresponding inability to live up to the everyday demands of a normal relationship. There is a tendency to idealize the partner, especially in terms of cultural and creative prowess. Materially, too, there is the dream of the big win. Generally, then, the problem lies in hopes about how things could be, rather

than a satisfaction with the way things actually are. There is a gushing ebullience in the character which gives it a siren-like quality. Both sexes are prone to the allure of seduction ... that's when they get closest to the dream.

Mars in aspect to Jupiter–Neptune

The fiery enthusiasm of this combination can easily be diverted along morally questionable avenues. Whilst there is the power to effect social reform along idealistic lines, or to work extremely creatively in areas of fantasy and imagination, there is more often than not a real suffering through sexual drives. These seem to take control of the character and will, and drive the person to the verge of corruption. Women fall for charlatans, whilst men are drawn into pornographic cul-de-sacs. In the long run, insight will dawn about the emptiness of sexual desire.

Saturn–Neptune: a 36–37-year cycle

The yoke of time

This combination shows spirit crucified on the cross of matter, and people with this aspect will indeed often experience suffering relevant to the house positions of these planets. There is a sense of helplessness in the face of circumstance, and indeed, with this aspect surrender and acceptance is often the best course of action. The lesson is that some things in life cannot be changed, and that by willingly accepting burdens there is long-term spiritual liberation. Quite often these people find succour in dedicating themselves to others who suffer in society.

Sun in aspect to Saturn–Neptune

Often there is a long and sad story connected with paternal circumstances, though the father may simply be perceived as deeply religious with a tendency to self-denial. The rather oppressive atmosphere in these people's upbringing will often give tremendous depth of character and an ability to deal with difficult issues very sensitively and responsibly. However, long experience tends to induce a sense of negativity that undermines confidence and self-esteem. There is an air of resignation and low expectations. Transformation comes when responsibility for their life's circumstances is taken at the deepest spiritual level.

Moon in aspect to Saturn–Neptune

In childhood there will have been sadness and even deprivation, and the experience of the mother will have been tinged by a perception of martyrdom or slavery. The profound effect of the heavy childhood atmosphere induces a depressive state which can be difficult to shake off. Old habits of duty and



The challenge of Mercury in aspect to Jupiter–Neptune is to assimilate the lessons of both the conscious and the unconscious mind to gain greater insight into life.

sacrifice tend to dominate adult behaviour – one set of prison walls is replaced by another – and the tendency to accept one's lot in life in a spirit of resignation will often mean accepting negative circumstances which can, and should, be changed.

Mercury in aspect to Saturn–Neptune

Early learning difficulties, and the experience of having been eclipsed by siblings or classmates, tend to induce a lack of faith in abilities, which further inhibits communication and learning. The experience of not living up to educational expectations leads to evasive mental patterns and communication, which has the purpose of disguising or obscuring flaws in knowledge. These evasive tactics will often be perceived as dishonest, and they only serve to render the whole process of communication more fraught than it actually need be. These people need to redefine their perception of failure, and begin to appreciate the successes they have attained against the odds.

Venus in aspect to Saturn–Neptune

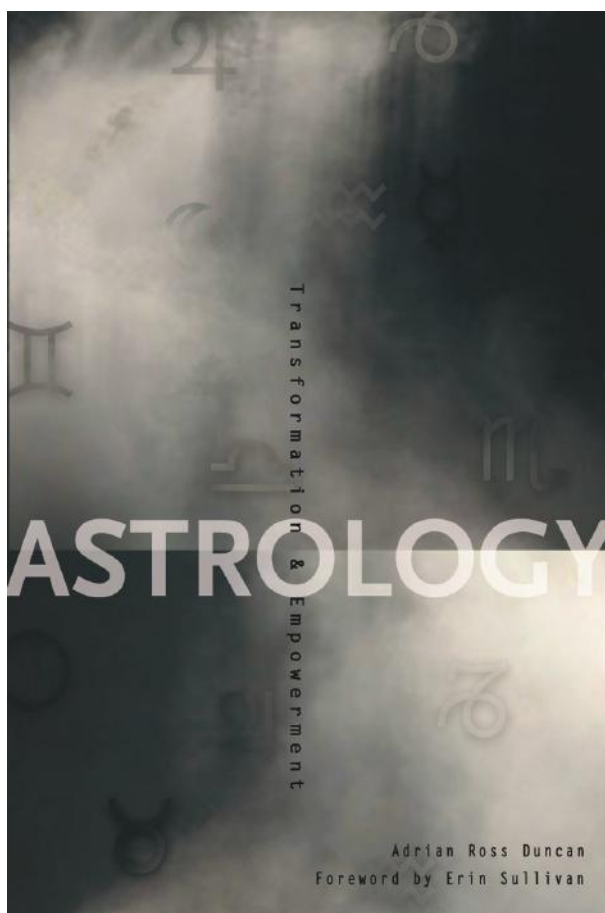
The burdens and sadness characteristic of this outer planet pair are here transposed onto relationships and the love life. Early setbacks connected with a perception of the parents as unhappy in their relationship, or with personally feeling unloved or undervalued as a child, give a low expectancy of happiness. Sacrifice or oppressive circumstances may characterize later relationships – often because they feel they deserve nothing more – but it is also possible that these people voluntarily shoulder a difficult relationship burden and thereby attain redemption. Often unhappy in existing relationships, their attempts to find happiness through affairs lead to failure and disappointment. By accepting inner responsibility and embracing a compassionate approach, satisfaction can be achieved.

Mars in aspect to Saturn–Neptune

On the positive side, this combination can portray tireless reformers who are so moved by the plight of others that they work selflessly to alleviate their suffering. On a personal level, however, there are many inhibitions to overcome, especially sexually. The tendency to self-denial and even celibacy is strong; in

any event, sexual confidence and erotic pleasure are difficult to attain. Women tend to project their inhibitions onto a supposedly depressive and inhibited male partner; men despair at living up to supposed ideals of masculinity. Openness and instruction can solve many of these problems. In professional life, there is a sense of long struggle without due reward.

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Adrian Ross Duncan has had a full-time astrology practice since 1985, is a former editor of *The Astrological Journal*, and is author of *Doing Time on Planet Earth*, the World of Wisdom software/reports and *Astrology: Transformation and Empowerment*. His work can be seen today at www.astrowow.com, which features articles, videos, astrology reports, apps and software. His webinars and teaching can also be seen on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@AdrianDuncan>



A Charm of Goldfinches

Moon by Tony Vowles

Old friend, have we not been here before?
Standing on a differently framed porch,
fresh from travel, mind full of ideas.

The dragon's head and disappearing tail
loomed brilliantly upon the eaves.
It's been nineteen years.

Was this the occlusion between us?
The curved sword of our borders?
Old friend, the former things pass
with one voluminous gulp,
and in the excitement and dread
we lose geometry – those familiar things.

This quiet disturbance tears us in two,
is the space walking the floor
of our private thoughts.

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'The Cosmic Birds' is the mercurial odyssey of Tony Vowles, a poet, astrologer and fine artist from Bristol, UK. His artwork utilises soft/oil pastel as medium, incorporating 'found' objects and completed as mixed-media 'giclée' prints. Tony's paintings, like his poems, which have been prize listed and published widely in the UK poetry press, consider the ephemeral nature of things, so too the natures of wanderlust and joy. For further information, contact and sales: <http://www.thecosmicbirds.com>

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