DEVIANT MOON TAROT

BY PATRICK VALENZA

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Acknowledgements and Dedications

I would like to thank my wife, Angela, who acted as my "second eye" throughout this project, giving me all the constructive advice and emotional support I needed to create this deck. This project is dedicated to her and to my two children, Thomas and Kristen, for all their patience and understanding.

Special thanks to H. Alan Feit, my friend and teacher, who first recognized and encouraged the surreal artist within me, providing me with an artistic foundation fortified with commitment and dedication.

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–Patrick Valenza

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The Creation of Deviant Moon Tarot

The Deviant Moon Tarot deck was created using various forms of photographic manipulation. Each card began with a complete drawing, which was then scanned into the computer where I applied various photographic textures. Nineteenth-century tombstones provide most of the clothing worn by the citizens of the Deviant Moon. I bent, twisted, and reformed my photos to become capes, boots, hats and trim. One of the best aspects of creating the deck was "hunting" for specific textures as I respectfully tiptoed around the graveyards of eastern Long Island, New York. Background buildings were created with photographs I took of a local abandoned insane asylum. Rotted doors, windows and walls became castles, factories and cities.

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My character stylization was influenced by ancient Greek art, yet I added a slightly abstracted twist. I chose to draw the figures in a flat, playing card style, rendering them with heavy light and shadows, then placing them in a shallow background.

As I worked, different styles emerged, and before long the characters evolved into the moon-faced beings seen in the cards.

Symbolism for the deck comes from childhood dreams and imagination that carried itself into my adult world. I have always been intrigued with the melancholy side of life and have sought to express my visions through the characters I create. The moon has always been a psychic friend to me. As the sentinel of the night, it feeds my dreams and casts a strange glow on the way I see the colors of reality.

Nothing has had a greater influence over my art than the tarot itself. I first discovered the tarot at the age of nine. I was captivated by the unique characters I saw on each card and studied the artwork intensely. My favorites were the old 19th century and medieval decks. While my classmates were drawing what children normally do, I was busy making my own little pictures of the fool or the magician. Over the years, I have made many attempts to create my own deck, but never completed more then a few cards each time. I held the ideas of my early random creations and revitalized them here in the Deviant Moon Tarot.

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While this physical deck has taken over three years to complete, from an inspirational standpoint, Deviant Moon Tarot has been at least thirty years in the making. It is not only a testament to my art, but a record of my life.

Major Arcana

0 • The Fool

Unaware of his surroundings, the fool begins his journey by wandering into the canal. He has no experience with life; therefore he has no fear of it.

Upright meanings: The beginning of a journey. Innocent or young person. Folly. Acting without thought. Potential.

Reversed meanings: Failure to seize the moment. Unsure actions. Uncertainty.

I • The Magician

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Blessed with a great talent, the magician performs skillfully. Although he has only begun to learn his craft, he is already gifted.

Upright meanings: Putting creativity to use. Exploring one's potential abilities. Manual dexterity. Skilled hands. Emerging talent.

Reversed meanings: Putting one's gift to ill use. Lack of imagination. Confusion. Uncoordinated efforts. Unable to learn new skills.

II • The High Priestess

The high priestess sits as a winged sentinel over the city. She protects the knowledge she holds inside, for wisdom

must be earned through the trials of life.

Upright meanings: Supreme knowledge. Intuition. A woman wise beyond her years. Virtuous. Scholarly.

Reversed meanings: Ignorance. Lack of vision. Holding back true feelings.

III • The Empress

The empress sits on her garden throne holding a flower that emanates from her own body. As the goddess of fertility, she is one with nature.

Upright meanings: Strong female figure. Fertility. Maternal.

Reversed meanings: Infidelity. Domestic strife. Infertility.

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IV • The Emperor

Dominating all that is around him, the emperor sits with confidence. Although pleased with his achievements, he looks towards other areas of conquest.

Upright meanings: Strong male figure. Leadership. Accomplishment. Ambition.

Reversed meanings: Incompetence. Weakness. Indecision.

V • The Hierophant

The Hierophant prays for the souls of the city. His position wields more than spirituality, for religion holds a man like a doll in a pocket.

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