President’s Report

Maurice Fernandez

Welcome to the new edition of The Career Astrologer with the Jupiter in Leo theme. This is the first one under our new board. The OPA elections and our recent reorganization prompted us to postpone the summer issue of the magazine so we could include the latest updates from our annual board meeting in Boulder in July. I’m excited to say that we had a very productive time with an abundance of ideas and a strong vision for the development of our organization, (and Jupiter wasn’t even in Leo yet!)

The OPA Retreat

Our next retreat is confirmed for October 22-25, 2015 in Asilomar (Pacific Grove), California. We have a very special line up of Track Leaders, including some of our well known and beloved presenters, such as Monica Dimino and Arlan Wise, as well as new presenters, such as Anne Ortelee and Chris Brennan. We are excited to be back on the West Coast and presenting this diverse and high level program.

I-Astrologer

While the retreat may seem to be far in the future, OPA will be both developing ongoing programs and creating new ones during this year’s term. In order to complement OPA’s signature program, intended essentially for professionals, the Peer Group Work, we will now be offering a new program for those who are not professionals yet. The purpose of this new program is to help those who intend to begin a new practice, or enhance their existing one, launch their career as astrologers and generate greater mass appeal and lasting success. Stay tuned for I-Astrologer!

International Outreach

OPA will also be developing its international outreach to benefit astrologers across the world. In this issue you will meet the representatives of the different OPA Satellites, in Greece, Norway, Russia, and Israel (see page 16). We are humbled by the growing interest in OPA’s program in the US and abroad, and look forward to sup

IN THIS ISSUE

President’s Report .............................1
Interview with Frank Clifford ............1
Jupiter in Leo — OPA Astrologers Share Insights ........3
Fasting, the Moon & Astrology ...........8
Mercury Retrograde .........................10
Palmistry Today .............................12
OPA International Satellites .............16
The OPA Retreat 2014 ......................18
OPA Book Review ..........................20

By Maurice Fernandez

Tell us about your family status: I’m a son, brother and uncle.

Religious background and conditioning?

Unusual. My father was an avowed atheist, but my parents sent me to a secondary (high) school when I was 9 (very early!) and the school taught eastern philosophies, Sanskrit and Hinduism. This wasn’t in the prospectus, but looking back it was a great education! (By Solar Arc, my preferred method of direction/progression, Jupiter had reached my MC in Aquarius.) My father ‘conditioned’ me to think for myself and although he didn’t ‘believe’ in astrology (preferring to worship the Sun, Moon and seasons!), he respected my intelligence enough to know there must be ‘something’ in it.

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[CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 14]
OPA is dedicated to promoting excellence for astrologers. Incorporated on October 4, 2000 at 1:45 pm EDT in Tallahassee, Florida, OPA provides members with tools to establish or improve their astrological practice. Membership is open to aspiring and current astrologers. Benefits include subscription to the Career Astrologer and E-news, free monthly talks by top notch astrologers and members registration fees at OPA retreats and conferences. Annual dues are $60.00.

OPA BOARD
PRESIDENT
Maurice Fernandez
maurice@opaastrology.com

VICE PRESIDENT
Alexandra Karacostas
alexandrakaracostas@yahoo.com

TREASURER
Sandra Leigh Serio
sandraleigh@sandraleigh.com

COMMUNITY OUTREACH DIRECTOR
Boaz Fyler
opacomunityoutreach@gmail.com

RECORDING SECRETARY
Moon Zlotnick
moon@astrologybymoorabbit.com

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY
Nancy Beale
847-864-1063
nancy.virgovision@gmail.com

PUBLICATIONS AND PRODUCTS DIRECTOR
Arlan Wise
wisearlan@gmail.com

THE CAREER ASTROLOGER EDITOR
Twink Mckenney
mrmckenney@att.net

OPAastrology.com

The President’s Report  [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

porting many new communities. On this note, OPA is organizing an event in Greece, tentatively scheduled for June 2015: Yassou OPA! We are excited to bring our European members together under the Hellenistic skies, where classical astrology has many roots.

New Publications

OPA has been developing an extraordinary body of work in its retreats and through its peer group experience. We are now ready to publish some books that will help capture these principles and creative ideas. OPA will publish two books in the next two years, the first one on the essentials of establishing and developing a professional practice, and the second one, a selection of the most prominent tracks offered during past OPA retreats. Release dates are scheduled for later 2015 and early 2016.

3-Year Membership Deal

As you can see, we are in it for the long term, and hope that you will be inspired by these ideas in the same way that we are. We value and rely on your support and want you with us as we continue to grow, inspire, and provide support for you in return. Therefore, we are now reducing the costs for our 3 year membership to $150 (instead of $175).

In more immediate terms, we hope you find great interest in our Free Monthly Talks and that you keep participating in our Question of the Month. Through these simple exchanges, we all learn so much about Astrology and each other’s perspectives. Thank you for participating and keeping these activities vital and interesting.

With blessings for a prosperous Jupiter in Leo cycle. Maurice Fernandez
from the 16th of July 2014 to the 11th of August 2015 Jupiter transits Leo. Here we can speak of an expansive influence on our creativity and our vision for ourselves and the communities in which we live. The importance of this vision for me is held with the north node of the planet Neptune being at 11 degrees Leo. From 27th of August 2014 until the 15th September 2014 and from the 22nd of March 2015 until the 25th of April 2015 transiting Jupiter will conjunct the north node of Neptune (within 2 degrees). So during this whole Jupiter transit, and especially within the several week periods of close conjunction, the importance of individual and community creativity is emphasized; especially in its capacity to envision a healing future for humanity.

The danger within the media saturated modern age is that due to unresolved feelings about our own value (Taurus square Leo) that we project the heroism of our everyday lives onto various celebrities and public figures. This transit encourages us to imagine our own lives as if we were the hero or heroine of our own important and healing story. The north node of Neptune being in Leo reveals that this capacity to embrace the nobility of our soul’s creativity is a fundamental aspect of the spiritual empowerment of humanity. Your voice, your vision, really matters to the world. The individual, the household and small community can, and does, make a difference.

[Continued on Page 4]
Jupiter in Leo

GEORGIA STATHIS
www.starcycles.com

Jupiter entering Leo suggests some great opportunities for taking risks, creating new babies – either of the mind or body, and expanding upon those things we love and enjoying them. These are all fifth house delineations and since Leo is the natural zodiac’s fifth house, it seems logical that these things occur during the course of the next year. However, and as always, we need to bear in mind that there is a subset of other planets involved in this once every twelve year transit.

One of the subsets is that during the time Jupiter travels through Leo, Saturn will retrograde back to Scorpio on August 3, 2015 creating a square between Jupiter and Saturn (at that time) at about 28°. This is preceded by a similar energy with transit Jupiter in Leo contraparallel to transit Saturn this coming fall on October 8, 2014, which falls between the two eclipses in October 2014. Contraparallels are similar to oppositions and anytime Jupiter and Saturn are square or in opposition to each other (or parallel and contraparallel), there is cosmic restraint, economies pull back as do people. These occurrences are previews for 2016, when Jupiter (then in Virgo) and Saturn (then in Sagittarius) square each other throughout that year.

Therefore, it is important to get one’s life (Leo) in order. All the Jupiter in Leo options mentioned above are still in play. However, if you take risks, make them calculated. If you create new babies or your mind or body, make a plan first making sure you have a plan B. If there is a hobby or pastime you love, take a risk and make it more viable. At this juncture, this is the more conscious use of the current cycle of Jupiter in Leo.

ARLAN WISE
www.arlanwise.com

I’m a Leo so I write this from a personal point of view. Jupiter in one’s Sun sign brings a banner year of growth and opportunities. For everyone, Jupiter in Leo helps you open up your heart and gives you the confidence to create in your own individual way, but it’s extra special for us Leos.

When I look back at the five times that Jupiter has graced Leo, I see they were big years, not always happy at the time, but always appreciated later on for the changes he brought to my life.

I was ten years old in 1955-56. That was the summer my parents first sent me to sleepaway camp for the whole summer. I sobbed the night before I left, but once there I had a wonderful time. I learned the value of communal living. In 1967-68 I graduated college and moved to Boston to join Michio Kushi and the Macrobiotic community. That taught me to pay attention to what I eat, gave me the knowledge that I am responsible for my health, and introduced me to a spiritual/philosophical way to look at life.

In 1978 I moved to Martha’s Vineyard, where I still live. It felt like coming home in a very real sense. That was the year I started my professional astrology practice. Jupiter gave me a big challenge in 1990-1991 when he ended my marriage of 25 years. He freed me. That was also the year Jupiter introduced me to Buddhism and I attended the Kalachakra initiation given by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I was elected president of OPA in 2002 and traveled extensively representing OPA. Now I look forward to Jupiter’s gifts to me this coming year. I know he has already planned a trip to Greece for the OPA conference in June 2015.

I see a theme of spiritual liberation as I look back at Jupiter’s transits over my Sun. His gift has been to free me from the bondage of expectations, either my own or those of family, friends, and society. He has shoved me forward and stood by me, holding my hand through the scary passage from the known to the unknown.
As much as I think about what Jupiter’s move into Leo means in terms of the basic symbolism—what we would expect every twelve years—this time around I’m focused on what it will mean in terms of the configuration of the outer planets. I’m almost tempted to think that it is more significant that Jupiter is moving out of Cancer, and so out of a harmonious relationship to Saturn in Scorpio, than that it is moving into Leo.

The two major configurations over the past year have been the Grand Cross and the Grand Trine. While the cross has correlated with increased strains and tensions that highlight the need for change, the trine has fed a more conservative, traditional approach to things. Jupiter in Cancer trine to Saturn in Scorpio certainly suggests an energy that maintains the status quo, while the sextile between Saturn and Pluto provided connection to the edgier energies of the Grand Cross.

With Jupiter in Leo, the energy will shift. Instead of supporting Saturn in Scorpio, Jupiter will now be in trine to Uranus in Aries, pushing the revolutionary energies forward. Jupiter will even square Saturn from late Leo to Scorpio next summer, perhaps undoing some of the deals made when they were in a cozier relationship.

We can each riff on how this will play out in collective world of politics and social phenomena, but I would suggest also paying attention to how it will affect us (and our clients) on an individual level. The changes we have felt coming—whether desired or feared—may have a greater opportunity to manifest when the pull towards personal conservatism abates. Those who have been held in check, stopped at the light with the engine revving, may finally get a green light and release the parking brake.

When Jupiter makes its journey into Leo this month which will last for one year we can expect romance in the air, an abundance in socialising, over-speculation in the markets and perhaps a few diva’s to be born (note; Diana Ross, Elizabeth Taylor, Celine Dion, Mick Jagger all have Jupiter in Leo). It is a mood lifting time which brings a promise of better times and a reason to celebrate.

During its tenancy in Leo, Jupiter will make trines to Uranus (September 2014, March and June 2015) which will hopefully bring some ease (and much hope) to the continuing challenging Uranus-Pluto squares. Whilst these two provoking planets (Jupiter and Uranus) trine in the fire element they will bring fireworks around the globe and perhaps some dare devil scenarios in sports with some new initiatives in the arts, cinema and in music – note the last time Jupiter was in Leo (2002), songs such as ‘Hero’, ‘Without Me’ and ‘What About Us’ were all nominated for VMA awards.

As it starts its exit in August 2015 Jupiter makes a square to Saturn in the last degrees of Scorpio and here we might witness events to do with regulation or policy changes in the entertainment industry (particularly gambling) and issues to do with children and survival (such as fertility advances or abuse). An appropriate quote for this period might be ‘The test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children’, from Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906 - 1945). One of the great things about Jupiter in Leo squaring Saturn in Scorpio is that we strive to be the best that we can be – interesting that the Guinness Book of Records was first published only days after the last exact square from Jupiter in Leo to Saturn in Scorpio in August 1955.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 6]
**Jupiter in Leo**

**MAURICE FERNANDEZ**

**mauricefernandez.com**

Transits of Jupiter in fire signs commonly bring dramatic development. There is a tremendous urge to express oneself and release anything that has been held in check during the passage in water signs. We feel the need to give birth to new versions of ourselves and conquer completely new ground, leaving self-conscious attitudes behind to free our wild spirit.

Jupiter in fire signs is exuberant, untamed, immensely creative, courageous, and at times, even dangerously over-confident—it can be a “loose cannon.” In 2011, when Jupiter was in Aries, we saw the Arab spring blossoming with great enthusiasm, but with the perspective of time, the results of this “manic” episode are evident as the great promises made at that time, seem very hard to keep today.

The Jupiter in Leo period ahead of us is an incredible opportunity to take our lives to the next level. This influence brings such fertility, vitality, and boost of confidence, that many of us will feel tremendously inspired to launch new projects, express our truth more authentically, and make babies!

Looking back at previous cycles, in 1990 the world wide web was first conceptualized, a creative inspiration that changed our lives completely! In 2003, Dewey and Prometea, the first cloned deer and horse, were born. The creative juices were in full effervescence.

It’s no coincidence that both Iraq invasions occurred with Jupiter in early Leo. Desert Storm led by Bush senior on January 17, 1991 and the Post 9/11 invasion by Bush junior on March 20, 2003. Jupiter in Leo can excite ideological fury, self-righteousness, and temerity. Will we see another US-
led offensive in Iraq as Jupiter reaches that critical zone at the end of August 2014? We know that Obama’s Sun is in this proximity, so this transit will not go unnoticed.

In our own private lives, we can set our intentions for the highest expression of this influence: to fall in love with life again, and give the best of ourselves to Creation, being intoxicated with generosity and heart.

**ROBERT CORRE**

*www.forumonastrology.com*

Just as with a lunation or an eclipse, Jupiter’s passage through Leo (or any planet migrating from one sign to the next) is considered a general event. But what Jupiter in Leo will mean for an individual or for a region or country in the world will depend on how it is determined in the natal or mundane chart.

Every planet has an analogy to a whole class of things. For an individual, you cannot say that Jupiter represents ethics, freedom, or optimism more than it means wealth, rank, or the liver. As Jupiter by analogy means all of those things, the question is which meaning should we give?

What will the passage of Jupiter in Leo revive? Only events as already determined in the natal or mundane chart. As a general rule, Jupiter’s natal or mundane advantages will manifest or be revived by the house through which it transits,

If for example, Jupiter in Leo would be transiting through the 11th, that Jupiter acts as the representative of the natal house in which it is posited. If Jupiter natally is posited in the 10th meaning inclining towards professional advancement, the transit through the 11th will mean professional preference is realized through the good fortune of friends or some form of networking. And the same may be deduced for all other transits. Jupiter posited in the 12th and Jupiter transiting in Leo over the 10th can mean that sickness anticipated through its position in the 12th is either greatly mitigated or escaped entirely. Putting a planet in context of the natal is the mandatory and a pivotal consideration before deducting the meaning of a transit. This principle may be applied to the transit of any planet through any sign.

Universally by transit, Jupiter in Leo is especially very beneficial for the entire world as when in Leo, it is posited in a sign where it has great dignity. Both the planet and the sign benefit. Jupiter recognizes that we are all subordinated to the higher laws and cooperates with the Sun by becoming the advisor or counselor to the king or central authority. In this way, Jupiter is helpful to the Sun the ruler of Leo, and the Sun permits Jupiter’s to influence to come out in a constructive manner.
Being born and raised in the western hemisphere and a practicing Vedic (Indian) Astrologer has proven to be a challenge as well as a blessing. A challenge due to the language and cultural barriers, but a blessing due to an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and a never-ending quest for truth. It is such a rewarding process to share a few personal realizations of philosophical and practical relevance with respect to Vedic Astrology for the wellbeing of all the readers.

According to tradition, Vedic astrology (Jyotish) is of divine origin and is considered one of the six accepted “darshans” or Indian philosophies as well as the eyes of the Vedas. In that regard, it is just as important and profound as Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras or the Bhagavad Gita.

Given its importance, it is not surprising that India has the highest per capita ratio of practicing astrologers to citizens in the entire world. Although all the planets (Grahgas) share similar importance in the bigger scheme of things, it is evident that Vedic Astrology put extra emphasis in studying and analyzing the Moon more than in other astrological systems. Many calculations regarding the native’s chart or horoscope, predictive techniques and planetary combinations have the Moon as its main character. Just like many ancient cultures devised, the Moon plays a key role in peoples lives. Furthermore, it plays the most important role in dealing with individual karmas.

Understanding the Moon cycles is an essential element of deciphering the hidden meanings of the Moon. In India, the lunar-solar calendar (called Panchanga) use such cycles to rule every aspect of the Indian culture, including life as a whole. With respect to this Lord Krishna says, “I become the Moon and thereby supply the (vital) juice of life to all vegetables” (Bhagavad Gita 15.13). This is an enigmatic statement that deals directly with the Moon as the life force that supports us all. We can further infer that the life force the Moon provides varies daily in accordance to its relative position.

From the full Moon creepy tales to the ocean tidal motion, we know that the Moon (Chandra in Sanskrit) has so much influence on our life on Earth, and Krishna reveals another hidden element by comparing it to a Star or Nakshatra (constellation)... “among the stars I am the Moon.” (Bhagavad Gita 16.21). This is a surprising statement given the Moon is a satellite, but Vedic stories corroborates this by stating that the Moon, or Chandra, married the 27 Star portions of the heavens. We can see how ancient mythology aligns with the cryptic statement made by Krishna. This is another example of how the mystical moon has more to it than meets the eye. In plain language, the Moon is the connector to the message received from the stars.

Ancient sages or Rishis, considered the Moon as a gentle planet when waxing (getting full) and not so gentle when waning (getting empty). Interestingly, the Moon is actually two planets in one! This is nothing short of amazing, stressing the duality and deep meaning of the Moon. Furthermore, when the Moon’s path intersects the Earth’s trajectory around Sun, the ancient
Rishis said this motion forms the Moon’s North and South nodes!

These two very important and independent forces/planets (Grahas) are known as Rahu and Ketu, respectively! They have a deep impact on our lives and destiny.

As stated in ancient scriptures, the Moon also controls the descent of our karma or destiny, if you will. The Sages of India or Rishis, described the way this happens and even to this day many spiritual traditions follow the lunar calendar to honor their holidays and religious festivities. One of the most powerful methods used by spiritual teachers to get the most out of these Holy Days or Moon-energized days, is by fasting. It is through fasting that human beings cleanse body, mind and spirit. From the Mexican Shaman to the Imam in Mecca to Jesus in Jerusalem to the Yogi in Rishikesh, all saw fasting as way to get closer to God. Holy Scriptures from every tradition gives special importance to fasting as well.

Related to fasting and the Moon cycles, Vedic Astrology is the science that provides direct clues to the best days for fasting. It is said that if we do the right thing at the right time with the right intention, then everything changes for good. Thus, when fasting we use the Moon as our guide to get the most out of our “penance” and atonement for our “sins”. As stated above, the cycles and phases of the Moon are key to this. Among the twenty-eight (28) days of the lunar month, there are two very special days when the sages particularly recommend fasting. One of these two days occurs during the eleventh day after the new Moon (Sukhla Paksha Ekadashi) and the other occurs during the eleventh day after the full Moon (Krishna Paksha Ekadashi). Ekadashi means eleventh, and in any lunar month there are two ekadashis, one in the waxing phase and the other in the waning phase. You may do a complete fast (no food or water) or a partial one, for example, a juice detox. For fasting to be effective, no animal products or grains (or byproducts, including oils) should be consumed. But, why is fasting on ekadashis important for us?

Ancient sages taught that the seed form of our karma enter our minds during those two specific days. By fasting on these ekadashi days one can begin to manage and/or cleanse our own individual karmas. It is said that these seeds are the reactions to our previous auspicious or inauspicious deeds that enter our psyche and bear fruit at a later date in our lives. In other words, we receive our karma on those specific days of the month according to Vedic scriptures and tradition. Therefore, fasting is the recommended tool provided by sages to manage our karma and we all could benefit by making it a part of our healthy lifestyle. As you can see, the Spiritual traditions of Old placed a huge importance on fasting with an spiritual mindset, not only for our overall wellbeing but also as a technique to “cast out the devils” of our karma. So next time you schedule a detox or a fast, think of those Ekadashi days, think of the mystical Moon and think of Krishna.

Happy fasting and better living!

Hare Krishna. Jorge Vrajabasi Torres

Jorge Torres was born and raised in San Juan Puerto Rico. He is the president of Sanatan Dharma Society of PR an organization dedicated to preserve and further the ancient knowledge of the Vedas in our beloved Caribbean. He has been studying Vedic Astrology for the past 20 years and practice it full time. After working for 25 years for different multinational companies and climbing the corporate ladder, he decided to follow his heart’s dream and practice astrology full time. “If you happen to be in my neighborhood feel free to call me maybe we could have a Pina Colada and talk about the stars.” Nar Seva Narayan Seva, that is sanskrit for, service to mankind is service to God. You can reach Jorge at vrajabasi@yahoo.com
Mercury Retrograde

It’s not what you think.

Victoria Peltz Smoot

There is a voice that doesn’t use words ... Listen! — Rumi

Is Mercury really to blame: for techy and mechanical things breaking down? for lack of understanding what was said? for failing to communicate exactly what you mean? for changes in plan or agenda? for procedures and habits that suddenly don’t work? for mistakes of choice or circumstance? for things happening THAT YOU DIDN’T EXPECT?

It seems, sometimes like Mercury, The Trickster, has become THE ULTIMATE EXCUSE!

The recent Mercury Retrograde is in it’s post shadow right now, but it has been a powerful one. It originated in Moon ruled Cancer denoting the need for security, safety and support in communications. Then it went BACK into Gemini – the mentally oriented mutable air sign, of “Why is this happening?” Important to consider, however, is that in it’s pre and post retrograde periods AND throughout the retrograde period, it has made NO exact ptolemaic aspects to any other orb or planet (except the Moon, of course). This is not the usual scenario. Flavored with emotional needs and curious intensity, this Mercury was powerful and hyper-informative.

Let’s look at the Archetype of Mercury and its origins. Mercury is the archetype of communication, information, and technology. Right? This is called the time of the “Truth Tellers.” In fact all secrets seem to be observable and available and “transparent” by way of technology. Yet, this was not always so and leads me to question that technology is not under Mercury, or at least there are other planetary energies involved. How far back do we look for understanding Mercury? How deeply have we looked at where communication takes place? If things aren’t working, where and how do we find out why?

As one of the richest archetypes, planet Mercury has come to stand for the MESSERGREN OF THE GODS with winged helmet and winged feet from the Greek mythology as Hermes and from Roman mythology as Mercury. In Egypt, Mercury as Thoth was the Patron of knowledge, secrets, writing, and scribes, appearing as a man with the head of an ibis holding a scribe’s palette and stylus.

Thoth = Thought

For Mercury this is thought, corresponding to Thoth, the Neter or nature principle of Ancient Egypt, depicted by the human figure with the head of an ibis bird, and also by the seated baboon. It seemed to me that the Ibis with its probing beak as a bird is poking down into the water for nourishment described the activity of Mercury in its direct movement. The baboon is always shown seated and quiet represented the contemplative and inner activity most suitable to the retrograde cycle of Mercury.

Thoth is shown both as full ibis, and as baboon. The ibis is recording the events
To be retrograde is to regress within so going on around about, and the baboon plays on his smartphone or abacus.

Thoth is an unusual god. Though some stories place him as a son of Ra, others say that Thoth created himself through the power of language. He is the creator of magic, the inventor of writing, teacher of man, the messenger of the gods, and thus, is identified by the Greeks with Hermes. He is also the divine record-keeper and mediator. Read more of this at: http://www.touregypt.net/godsOfEgypt/thoth.html#ixzz2gn9UwpyB

Some years ago I had thought deeply about Mercury Retrograde and sincerely asked on a soul level, “What is this about? What is the purpose of this Retrograde for our development? Is it really only about causing chaos and confusion?” Study confirms that the Retrograde of Mercury, as with the other planets, has something to do with intuitive activity inside of us. Ivy Goldstein Jacobson in her book The Way of Astrology, wrote: “The Retrograde condition taken both positively of negatively according to the planet’s good or bad side . . . has the positive equipment to turn within and research his inner resources for whatever he wants in life ... A retrograde planet is turned away ... refused early recognition, but the retrograde direction gives the power to go back and try, try again; the person has the ability to reverse and reconcile all differences.” p. 50.

Further, Ivy talks about the development of the intuition, or still small voice, within the individual with more than one retrograde in the birth chart, cultivated and matured out of patience and the need to deal with the frustration of waiting for what cannot be directly and quickly thought, said or manifested.

“To be retrograde is to regress within so that the native learns by in-tuition, research and revelation; he is considered recondite, a word that means mysterious, remotely profound and given to secret knowledge. Such persons are possessed of inner reasoning power and such planets register strongly in their future ... More is required of a person with more retrograde planets than one; he registers ethically because he recognizes this moral obligation early in life, and has ability to renounce his personal desires in the name of duty, conscience and honor ...” p. 52

The more I thought about it, the more I came to realize the true wisdom of the Trickster’s retrograde cycle in the evolution of our thought and communication. What if, when Mercury is actually closer to the earth in its perceived retrogradation, it was actually stimulating so many extra energies of communication and thought, that there was a stronger inner voice available to us. Not only that, but there was an opportunity, a purpose afoot, whereby the inner voice, the intuition, was supposed to be developed and practiced to most beneficial result, so that the habitual patterns of thinking, communicating and traveling about to get this done could be challenged, changed and reset. Aren’t we supposed to be growing in wisdom and ability to keep our own counsel in all things, all the time? What if this Mercury Retrograde cycle was rigged to train us to do just that? What if the Trickster, Mercury, was the master teacher who gets us to actually break our habits of thought? How useless this lesson would be if we merely create another negative habit of thinking that we cannot ever decide or do anything original during a retrograde Mercury period.

In 2013, the three Mercury retrograde cycles all took place in the Water Signs exactly where the Grand trine in Water was also in the sky. It was the Chinese year of the Water Snake, of course! This year, each of the three cycles begins in the water sign and retrogrades back to the previous air sign before moving on. It is the Chinese year of the Wood Horse, growing beside the water and grazing from thoughts and gathering information. It started with Pisces going back into Aquarius. The second cycle, in June, highlights Mercury’s own sign of Gemini, unsuspected, so it is very powerful. Mercury started in Cancer, then backed into Gemini before going forward to join the Sun entering the Moon’s sign of Cancer magnified by Jupiter. Decisions about whether to be logical or emotional have been raging across our world unmitigated and with the post shadow we only hope that the brink of wars will be reconsidered, and that the storms forecast will be diverted or downgraded in severity somehow. In October, the retrograde period of October 4, 2014 through October 25, 2014 will start in Scorpio and revisit Libra. During that time Mercury will trine Neptune, sextile Jupiter, square Pluto and oppose Uranus. What changes we cannot complete after the June cycle, we may have an opportunity to balance and negotiate in October. May we all listen to the Still Small Voice within and bring out our authentic voice of experience and wisdom no matter what is going on around us, not withhold it out of fear driven habit of hesitation and indecisiveness, but speak out with compassion, patience and perseverance.

Just before she died, Maya Angelou posted this:

Listen to yourself and in that quietude you might hear the voice of God.

— Maya Angelou

2:43 PM - 23 May 2014

Victoria (Peltz) Smoot, M.S. of Ed., has been an astrologer since the 1980s, based in Lakewood, Ohio. She combines metaphysical studies and experience on Egypt tours with astrology. Since 2009, she joined ISAR, with CAP certification, and is editor of ISAR’s The International Astrologer. She is a certified professional member of OPA, and teaches workshops with IAA, the International Academy of Astrology.
The art of reading character, motivation and the future from our palms is no longer shrouded in mystery. There are simple and accurate ways to engage in some DIY hand-reading.

Palmistry (or hand analysis, as it is often now known) is finally being given the thumbs up in some scientific quarters. Leading scientists have been discovering connections between our hands and inherited talents, behaviour and health patterns – scientific findings that not only back up what palmists have been declaring for years, but also provide further insight into this fascinating subject.

Palm lines are formed in the womb and develop over a lifetime. The lines are directly linked to nerve endings from the brain and are not a result of hand folding or excessive use. Research has noted, for example, that the Heart Line (which runs horizontally under the fingers and is linked to emotional and sexual development) can change greatly during puberty. In addition, lines in our palms begin to fade if our mental faculties fade, either temporarily (e.g. during a breakdown) or with age. When we recover, so do the lines.

But how can the subject help us? Our hands are living mirrors, reflecting personality, needs and drives – as well as future possibilities. By interpreting the language of the hands, we gain an immediate ‘aerial view’ of our journey in life, a road-map of our individual life path. Palmistry can zoom in on the important aspects of this journey, make us aware of alternative routes and prepare us for the exciting road ahead.

Learning to read palms opens up a whole world of insight, but can also be great fun and a great deal easier than people think. When interpreting the palm, there’s room for many common sense associations that aid quick interpretation. Here’s an example:

The Head Line has been linked to the way we think and process ideas. The horizontal line, below the Heart Line, can be straight or curved. When we think of the word ‘straight’ we might picture a direct, uninterrupted course, without digression; words such as linear, conventional, conformist, orderly, and unbending. Indeed, a straight Head Line is found on someone with a level-headed and practical mentality. This person works from A to B in a straightforward manner and will prefer to do things according to a set plan. The word ‘curved’, however, brings up notions of bending, meandering, shooting off at an angle, and taking a new turn. A curved
Head line suggests a mentality that is more lateral in its thinking and allows for more flexibility and change. Such a person would think of new ways of working or approaching a problem, and be able to ‘bend’ by working around any preconceived notions.

Frank’s Party Piece

When others discover what I do for a living, palms often appear under my nose for inspection. So over the years I’ve devised a number of ways of picking up instant information without delving into specific lines and their courses. I call the following method my party piece because it’s quick to do, easy to remember and offers insights into our current needs and behaviour. I hope it’s useful.

First of all, shake your hands and lay them palm-up on a desk or solid surface. You’ll notice that some fingers naturally lie closer to each other than others, while some stick out from the rest. It’s rare to have all the fingers with equal distances between them.

In general, fingers held close together betray a conservative person who prefers not to take risks. When fully splayed, however, expect a bohemian type determined to do things his or her own way.

Keep two points in mind. Firstly, regardless of which hand you write with, relative finger positions on the left hand show traits that apply mostly in your personal life, while on the right hand, these are characteristics seen more vividly at work and in social situations. Secondly, finger positioning shows current needs rather than fixed behaviour patterns. Only when the finger has begun to bend towards (or away from) another will this reveal a long-term character trait.

• **Thumb tip held close to the palm:** Self-contained, private and wary of intrusion; at present others will be in your life ‘by invitation only’.

• **Thumb tip held away from the palm:** Open and needy – what you see is what you get; you are currently self-confident in presenting yourself and relaxed enough with others to encourage intimacy, but you may have trouble saying ‘no’ and discriminating.

• **Index finger held away from the middle finger:** Shy and lacking in confidence or courage; at present you are seeking reassurance and feeling unsure of your abilities.

• **Index finger tilted towards the middle finger:** Duty-bound, guilt-ridden or reluctant to let your hair down; you are currently feeling put-upon but may secretly enjoy being a bit of a martyr.

• **Middle finger held close to the ring finger:** Independent and unwilling to be tied down; at present you are seeking space from, or avoiding, a full-on relationship.

• **Middle finger held close to the ring finger:** Focused on personal projects; you are now determined to enjoy your life and put family duties to the back of your mind.

• **Little finger jutted out away from the palm:** Individual and unwilling to be tied down; at present you are seeking space from, or avoiding, a full-on relationship.

• **Little finger curled in on itself appearing ‘reticent’:** Fear of intimacy; at present you are unwilling to focus on your sexual needs or get physically involved.

• **Low-set little finger, where its base a ‘step’ down from the base of the other fingers:** Focused on problems with one parent, who may have been either physically absent or emotionally remote; you may often feel the need to address this with partners, but should avoid letting parental issues dominate or mar personal relationships in adulthood.

**Self-determination**

Our hands are our personal autobiographies, but not all the chapters have been written yet. Lines change to reflect our actions, reactions and decisions in life. The choices we make and our reactions to the events and people we encounter all shape our lives and, in turn, the lines on our palms. Our actions and reactions of today will show in our hands tomorrow. We influence our environment and it also affects us.

The hands reflect this two-way process and are a living testament to the power we have to shape our own destinies. With palmistry, we are reminded that the future is negotiable. © Frank C. Clifford, 2014

Frank Clifford has been a palmist for over twenty years, and his two books Palmistry 4 Today (Random House) and Palm Reading (Hamlyn) have been translated into eight languages. He teaches a palmistry correspondence course and astrology classes at the London School of Astrology (www.londonschoolofastrology.co.uk). Frank is also an astrologer and writes for The Mountain Astrologer (Horoscope Detective), for whom he recently acted as Guest Editor of two issues. Frank’s dozen books include Solar Arc Directions and his textbook Getting to the Heart of Your Chart. A data collector, researcher and consultant, Frank compiled The Clifford Data Compendium for Solar Fire. In September 2012, he was awarded the UK’s Charles Harvey Award for Exceptional Service to Astrology. Visit Frank at www.flareuk.com
Interview with Frank Clifford [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

Spiritual orientation – Do you follow any specific practice? No, it’s eclectic.

What’s the worst thing and then, the best thing about you? Taking things personally and being over-sensitive. Wanting to make a personal contribution by offering support and generosity in areas of love, friendship and work.

You never tried… Only a few things … that I will get around to trying one day.

You can’t refuse… A chance to laugh, or eat some good chocolate.

What is playtime for you? Laughing with friends, watching DVDs in bed, reading biographies.


Your favorite place on earth? My home in leafy, green Kent, known as the Garden of England. Places on the east coast of Australia are a close second.

What would you define as an important evolutionary lesson for you in this life? To follow my own desires, to discover the reasons why I’m here on the planet, and to have the courage to pursue these with others.

Your chart: 13 April 1973, 08:58, St Pancras, London (Asc 24 Gemini)

Tell Us About Your Astrology Journey & Practice


How long have you been practicing – how did it start? 25 years. It began with a visit to Tad Mann in August 1989, and that afternoon I returned home and started teaching myself astrology.

You seem to be everywhere and be a strong force in so many projects, from writing and publishing books, to organizing conferences, lecturing everywhere, and being guest editor of The Mountain Astrologer, (I’m sure there is more to the list)… how do you keep up and manage?

I love what I do, so it’s a labour of love and rarely feels like ‘work’. I’m driven to run my school, write, publish, lecture, and take on new challenges. Life is short and I want to pack a few lifetimes into the time I have. I have lots of ideas and goals, and a very basic, direct Aries philosophy: make it happen!

Your Astrology teachers? I taught myself, but used to go to experiential classes led by Derek Hawkins in London when I was 17–18. Derek died last year so I wrote an obituary and the memories flooded back. Living in London, I’ve been blessed to have gone to some amazing seminars given by some truly exceptional astrological talents: Melanie Reinhart, Liz Greene, Sue Tompkins, Darby Costello, Lynn Bell, Deborah Houlding, and others. I dedicated a recent book to these and many more women in astrology.

Your Astrology hero? Difficult to say – I don’t really elevate people as heroes, but I do admire talent and the ability to be yourself. I loved the magic that Linda Goodman introduced me to as a teenage reader of her books. When I got interested in researching, then Lois Rodden was a guiding force and I loved the years of corresponding, sharing data and gossip with her, too.

Three favourite Astrology books? Lois Rodden’s Astro-Data books (and her superb book ‘Money’), Sue Tompkins’ Aspects in Astrology (endlessly informative), and I’m proud of my own Getting to the Heart of Your Chart because of the hard work I put in to the profiles and observations.

What made it possible for you to become a full time astrologer? As a teenager, it was supportive parents who wanted me to be happy; later, sun sign astrology columns and client work gave me an income.

What is the great thing and the hard thing about being an astrologer? The magic of our astrological language, as seen every day through clients, people in the news and loved ones. The hard thing is encountering people who are bigoted, ignorant of our subject or closed minded.

What inspires you to be an OPA member? Having lectured at the NCCGR conference in 2013, I started to meet more American-based student and professional astrologers (and other international ones). They were very kind and encouraging. I felt it was a good time to reach out beyond the community of astrologers in the UK. I first heard about OPA from Bob Mulligan via his wonderful book Between Astrologers & Clients.

What are your future ambitions in the field of astrology? Watch this space.

Any advice for those who would like to become professional astrologers? Follow your heart and follow your chart. Know yourself and know what you do best – then work damn hard to be the best you can be and share your gift with clients. Open your heart to receive them and work to inspire them to follow your own gifts.

I’m reminded of a quote by Edith Wharton: “There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.” As astrologers, we have both jobs to do – both are equally important. We’re the mirror when we’re able to reflect to the client their inner drives, talents and then ‘turn them on’ to why they’re here/why they’ve been born. And we’re the candle when we personally demonstrate what it is to work in a field like astrology that we love. In doing so we create an energy around us that brings opportunity and advancement, and inspires us and others to ‘follow our bliss.’
Expanding on the observations of Jupiter into Leo, it is crucial to remember that every ingress of a slower moving planet creates waves, often marked by natural or political world events, particularly because the planet always meets with the Sun just before or soon after it enters the new sign. Jupiter will receive the blessings from the solar “King” for its journey into Leo on July 25th, as both bodies will be at 2 degrees of the sign. This meeting will stimulate high expectations and promise, and will boost creativity and leadership. It coincides with a square to Mars, making its first steps into Scorpio. If Jupiter in Leo represents the fertility of life, abundant creativity, heart and celebration, Mars in Scorpio brings ruptures, change, and intense power fluctuations. The Sun, Jupiter, and Mars are the fire planet triad, and when in fire and water signs, they carry an intense emotional charge, potentially moving us in extreme ways: they can stimulate important breakthroughs and bring the necessary changes to open up new pathways for our development—we will feel the deep need to break free from anything that holds us back from our fuller potential.

Notwithstanding, this change can be experienced as a climax of intense emotions where we simultaneously celebrate a new birth and grieve a painful separation. Both pain and joy are dramatized by the square of Jupiter in Leo to Mars in Scorpio.

The Leo-Scorpio dance of life, death, and transformation will continue all through August with Mercury and Venus eventually joining in, and further stimulating our creative juices.

Mars marches on to meet Saturn at 17 Scorpio on August 25th. This high octane conjunction has strong militaristic tones, and with a Middle East already overheated by the fire of ISIS and Israeli-Palestinian defiance, we can only expect more defensive attitudes, there and in other places around the world. Soon after, Venus squares this conjunction and intensifies the potential for clashes and separations. The glass will need to be broken, the tooth extracted, and the abscess drained—it is not comfortable, but it has to be done. On a personal level, if you’re contemplating leaving your job or an unhealthy relationship, this could be the green light—break those eggs and make your omelet.

In the course of August, Jupiter in Leo quincunx Neptune in Pisces can spur a deflation or disappointment for those who got too carried away by overly optimistic expectations. Initially both Jupiter in Leo and Neptune in Pisces transport us to the boundless realm where everything seems possible, and we feel invincible, but through the quincunx, the excess is curbed, and we are humbled. We may need to downsize or rethink our approach. However, if we remain centered and aligned, this configuration can open the gate for higher inspiration and for new spiritual revelations in order to better understand the true role and purpose of what we do.

With Saturn in Scorpio quincunx Uranus in Aries throughout the month of August, we are negotiating very complex forces. This aspect calls for solutions and breakthroughs in existing problems; however, at the same time, nothing can be rushed or forced. The knot can only be untied with patience and attention. Otherwise, the risk of complication, miscommunication, and crises increases.

While there was such a strong focus on Cardinal signs during the first half of the year 2014, the focus shifts this season the fixed signs. Whatever was conceptualized at that time, can finally be brought to fruition now. This birth will stimulate strong reactions, both enthusiasm and controversy, but as it is in fixed signs, the power to make life truly meaningful is completely in our own hands!
Dmitriy Paramonov

**RUSSIA**

opa.astralife.net • E/MAIL paramonov@astralife.net

skype: mebiusx • tel: +7-950-161-41-40

I was born in Izhevsk (the Udmurt Republic, Russia) on 21.12.1972 at 7:42 pm. I practice astrology on the Internet at some Russian-language sites, forums and social networks.

Astrology is my only source of income. In the beginning of my astrological career I combined it with other activities, but I am now a full time astrologer. I provide counseling for clients, I teach astrology, I collect electronic library of astrological literature and help astrologers sell their books, and I created an audio and video recordings of lectures on Astrology. I also help astrologers create their website, electronic payment system for consultation, and promotional materials (guides, booklets, banners). With other astrologers, I organize astrological conferences and competitions for professional astrologers. I’m also involved in research esoteric fields, and take part in a project called “Astrological Cartoons” as well as a certification program in accordance with Russian legislation.

I find it difficult to delineate the scope of my astrological interests, but I am not interested in medicine and politics, because I do not have suitable education (in these disciplines). I am interested in the reasons for the evolution of human personality, the reasons of the formation of certain events in a person’s life, in process of social adaptation. Astrology is for me a tool for learning the laws of karma, to determine human destiny, it is a channel for knowledge in itself to better understand our world. I ask you not to consider me an exalted personality, but Astrology came into my life so deeply that now I find it difficult to tell where in my life ends astrology and begins ordinariness.

**Can you share a bit about the work and the community of astrologer in Russia?**

Astrology is popular in Russia and there are now many astrological schools and associations. Today in Russia are not only representatives of the European school of astrology, but also Indian astrology, Chinese astrology, American astrology, Cabalistic astrology. There are many astrological books available in bookstores, but most of them are beginners-level. Because of language barrier Russian astrologers don’t read books of some modern astrologers from America, Australia and Europe.

Boaz Fyler

**ISRAEL**

boazfyler@gmail.com

I’m 37 years old, born and currently based in Tel Aviv, Israel.

I have been studying astrology since 1999, and essentially practice Evolutionary Astrology. Living in Israel has always given me perspective. I have been lucky enough to grow up with two Hippie parents who taught me that the value of peace, love and happiness outweighs the race for money, power and dominance.

**About the Astrological Community in Israel:** The Astrological community in Israel is rapidly expanding and although it’s still relatively small, we are a mutually supportive and professional. The community is always looking for new ways to learn and expand our knowledge, and find new ways to connects with the global scene. The connection with global organizations such as OPA and ISAR, instigated thanks to the efforts of Maurice Fernandez in recent years, has created wonderful new exchanges with peers and teachers. It stimulates the community with new knowledge and inspiration, and it advances the local professional practice.

I’m looking forward to play a part in further enhancing these dynamics and to contribute to the professional community of astrologers, as I now serve as the representative of the Israeli Satellite of OPA.
Sol W. Jonassen

**Norway**

sol@sol-with.com

I practice all over Norway and do some work internationally. I have an office space in Bergen, on the west coast of Norway, where I see clients and give classes in astrology. I write an astrology column for an online magazine, and I am a member of the board for the Norwegian Astrology Association, to which I also contribute to their quarterly magazine. I have presented internationally at the Norwac Conference (2014), The River of Stars (2011) and in Israel (2009). I’m also the organizer of an annual astrology conference in Norway, Polaris.

My orientation is evolutionary and spiritually oriented astrology. I also have a strong interest in different healing modalities and yoga. I see astrology as a healing and liberating tool for people. I do not put too much focus on predictions, even though I maintain an interest in classical astrology.

About the astrological community in Norway: Due to the relatively small size of Norway’s population, astrology is not very big here, and there aren’t many astrologers that are able to make a living from their practice; however, thanks to the internet, the community is growing stronger. There is one big school of astrology in Norway, called Herkules, and this school is prominent in the astrology community, offering classes all over Norway.

With the new addition of Polaris, our annual Astrology conference, the future of Norwegian astrology is looking bright!

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Smaro Sotiraki

**Greece**

www.astrology.gr

I love Astrology and astrologers but I disdain those who exploit Astrology, and false prophets in general. I cherish teaching astrological symbolism and its application, and I dream of the day that Greece will be the astrological navel of the Earth. Since I was a child, I was attracted to esoterism and that is what led me to studying Astrology. Astrology’s magical world impressed me as it helped me realise that there is a complete system of self-knowledge and simultaneously of interpreting the Universal Law. Regardless of schools and teachers that helped me in my course, I feel that the greatest part of my knowledge has come from my personal research, from studying and examining horoscopes, and from recovering astrological knowledge from within.

In my personal sessions I focus on the psychological, esoteric and karmic aspect of astrology and specialise in relationship counselling. However, I mostly enjoy teaching and helping my students trace the links between archetypal images and astrological symbolism.

**Can you share with us a little bit about the work and the community of astrologer in Greece?**

My career began in 1990 and since, I have worked for numerous Greek TV shows, and for many Greek and Cypriot astronomical magazines. Moreover, I have edited in whole, and co-authored the first Greek astrological encyclopaedia that was published in Greece in 2012, “Lessons of Modern Astrology”. Today, I write for the Cypriot magazine ‘O’ and the astrological website www.astrology.gr, as well as for my personal blog www.smarosotiraki.blogspot.gr, and I pen the video passages for the TV show ‘Stars System’ where I also often appear.

I am one of the founding members of ASTROPAIDEIA, the first Laboratory of Liberal Studies in Astrology, in Greece, which started its operation in January 2014. Naturally, I also am part of ASTROPAIDEIA’s teaching team, and furthermore hold the position of Director of Studies.

I have written two books ‘2012-Fact and Fiction’, and ‘The Astrological Archetypes of Love’, both published by IntroBooks.

Unfortunately, Astrology in Greece is limited mainly in prediction. As a result, most people and many astrologers themselves do not understand or do not promote it as a pivotal philosophical system of self-awareness.

Fortunately, the younger generation of astrologers shows a substantial interest in the mystical, inner and psychological side of astrology, the knowledge of which I consider as essential for a correct interpretation of a chart or even for an accurate prediction. Personally, I try to do the best that I can to support this new generation.

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If you there is no representative in your country and you would like to lead the satellite, write us!
This retreat was special because of the many international members who attended from Israel, Norway, and Canada. Monica Dimino opened the retreat with a day of teaching focused on the path to professional practice.

We ended the retreat with a panel consisting of Grace Morris, Arlan Wise, Sandra Leigh Serio, Maurice Fernandez and Rick Levine. These group leaders discussed different facets of the April Cardinal Cross. We packed a lot of knowledge, thought, conversation and fun into those four days.
We had another Song of the Stars poetry contest and we celebrated International Astrology Day at our Saturday night banquet with readings of the poems, talks from noted astrologers, and a keynote talk by Rick Levine.

We bonded and networked by meeting at lunch each day. OPA has always felt that eating at least one meal together is important to let the attendees meet and mingle with each other. This year we had a hospitality room to provide a place to gather at night.

The group leaders gave excellent instruction in the three days they met with their students. There were four informative short talks given by Karianne Stenshagen, Judy Tsafrir, Sue Morris and Gali Livneh. Maurice Fernandez also taught yoga.
This book offers dynamic insight to identify astrological relationship signatures and specific qualities of transition timings. Armand Diaz makes clear that his book is not about predicting relationship breakups, but illuminates how different people may react or respond to relationship changes based on their natal personal aspect patterns and transit experiences.

The first 4 chapters are dedicated to the personal planets. He explores Moon by house and sign then Sun, Venus and Mars with potential aspect patterns. Following chapters dedicated to Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto have a powerful client examples and with a concise summary with specific strategies to offer clients: “Five things to do during this breakup.”

Other chapters highlight general tendencies how modes and generational markers of the outer planets create specific imprints which may impact a persons response to relationship change.

Armand Diaz offers a clear and holistic perspective on the topic of relationships and partings. As many astrologers support clients during times of transition, both the advanced and beginning astrologers can find support in this book to further empower clients with context and compassion in times of change.

Armand provides specific strategies to offer clients ... including five things to do during this breakup