Surrealism and the Tarot

Deadline: Sep 30, 2021

Tessel M. Bauduin

Tarot cards and tarot decks have made an appearance in a variety of surrealist sources, art works and practices throughout the twentieth century, ranging from designs for tarot cards created by Ithell Colquhoun, Leonora Carrington and Roberto Matta (among several others) to references to tarot and its symbolism in surrealist novels such as André Breton's Arcane 17 and Leonor Fini's Rogolomec, and everything in between. Yet, while several studies have acknowledged the presence of the tarot in Surrealism in a general manner, the topic has received very little in-depth scholarly research. The book Surrealism and the Tarot aims to remedy that and will bring together illustrated specialist essays in a full colour large format volume.

For Surrealism and the Tarot, edited by Tessel M. Bauduin, we invite contributions exploring any aspect of the surrealists's and Surrealism's relationship with the tarot.

Potential themes include:
- iconographic potential and/or impact of tarot symbolism in Surrealism, the surrealist discourse and surrealist-adjacent milieux;
- tarot as aesthetic device and/or occult device in the visual, literary, performative or other arts by surrealists or fellow travellers of Surrealism;
- tarot practices of individuals and/or in relation to the collective;
- the political and/or ludic functions of cards, tarots and otherwise, in Surrealism;
- routes of transfer to and mediation of knowledge or material about, experience with, or even initiation in tarot for particular individuals and the surrealist discourse more generally.
Theoretical angles from which these issues are approached may include (and are not limited to): post-colonial theory, identity studies, queer and feminist theory, patronage studies, disability studies and non-human and animal studies.

Particular consideration will be given to contributions that offer an innovative approach or that focus on aspects, works, and/or individuals or collectives that are understudied or otherwise less well known. Note: "Surrealism" is considered neither a style nor a closed (or historically closed-off) delineated group of individuals, but rather a paradigm in which poets write and artists make art; accordingly, contributions can explore individuals not considered core members of any group or even part of a collective at all, active in any decade of the twentieth century.

Scope:
- 1890–2000
- All media, including the visual arts, literature and poetry, photography and film, theatre and stage-design, exhibition design, and fashion

- No geographical limits

Feature articles should be 5000 to 7000 words (excl. notes & bibliography), and should be scholarly but accessible for the general reader. Published essays can potentially include up to ten illustrations. Complete submissions must be received by: 1 May, 2022. It might be possible to include new translations of original material and/or (images/facsimiles of) rare visual material; contact the editor via the email address below to discuss options.

Please send proposal abstracts of max. 600 words to: tarotandsurrealism@gmail.com
A short (ca. 250 words) bio of the author and a preliminary list of 1-5 proposed illustrations should be included. Deadline for abstracts: September 30, 2021.

Reference:

CFP: Surrealism and the Tarot. In: ArtHist.net, Sep 10, 2021 (accessed Nov 10, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/34685>.