

Thelema Tarot - Review

http://i1.wp.com/thatstotallytarot.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/File_003-e1445915010847.jpeg?fit=1024%2C1024

My latest deck acquisition is Lo Scarabeo's Thelema Tarot. Designed by Renata Lechner, the original name of this deck was Thelema Dream Tarot. The deck first appeared on Deviant Art.

?Rich in esoteric symbolism, magically inspired, and beautifully illustrated, the Thelema Tarot is woven like an enchanting spell. Let the evocative cards of this deck be your guide as you explore the edge between light and dark, love and struggle. With deep wisdom and the levity of true inspiration, this is a reading deck for beginners and tarot adepts alike?. ? Amazon product description.

I loved the images when I first saw the deck. However, there has been some confusion over the name. Thelema, Greek for ?will?, is the name of a religion created by Aleister Crowley (Thoth Tarot). It would be easy to assume then that this deck would be based on the works of Crowley, the Thelemic religion and be Thoth based. You would be wrong. The Thelema Tarot has very little if nothing at all to do with Crowley, deck or religion.

False advisement? Maybe, but then again words can be used as one wishes. A perfect example of this is the Illuminati Tarot, which has nothing to do with the secret society. Instead, the deck works around the theme of illumination, the meaning of the word illuminati. Perhaps the Thelema Tarot is doing something similar, with the word ?will?. This is a deck of will, intention and manifestation?

Instead of sitting and arguing over the name, our focus on any deck should really be on the cards themselves.

The deck comes in an upright box with a pull off top lid. It is always a benefit to have a hard box which you can use to store the cards in. Inside you will find the deck wrapped in plastic and a companion book separate, unwrapped. The booklet is written by Jaymi Elford, a familiar name for myself. We were foundation partners at Readers Studio '15. The deck is a standard size deck, just slightly larger than a Waite-Smith deck. The card stock is glossy and thin. Nothing noteworthy in regards to the card stock. It is a shame as always when a deck as mediocre card stock.

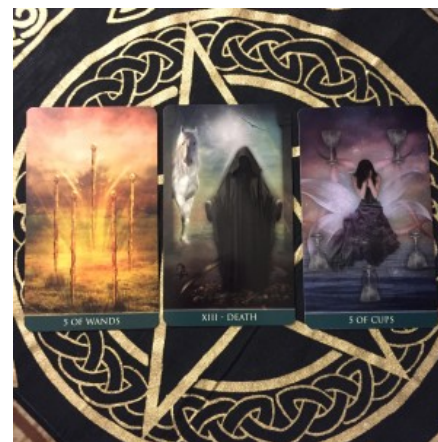
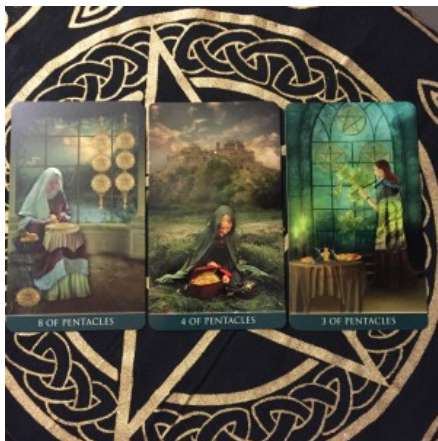


The images are done using the computer. If you are familiar with the Gilded Tarot, Mystic Dreamer, the Thelema Tarot would be its love child. The images are lush with color, ethereal and fantastical. I do see though that the faces lack consistency, some faces look photorealistic while others do not. The deck overall looks well refined except for the Hermit, which looks a little half baked. There is something off about the Hermit himself when compared to other figures. It is hard to pin point what it is.



The coloring is rich with deep blues, bold reds, lush greens. The deck is candy for the eyes without a diabetic coma. There is a whispery , misty sense to the images that adds a layer of magic to it.

The images follow closely to the Waite-Smith tradition but Ranata has taken liberties in many of the representations. As you can see in the sets of examples below, the images are recognizable as Waite-Smith influenced but not an exact reproduction. The Thelema Tarot is unique enough where the images are refreshing but still familiar.





The booklet provides a quick reference for the images and a summation of the symbols and meanings. It also includes the 'Thelema Spread?'. Jaymi did a wonderful job at explaining the cards quickly.

The ultimate test of a deck is its utility. Is this a deck that works? How does the deck work in a reading? While this test is answered differently based on each reader, for me, this deck does and has worked already for me.

I pulled three cards, asking what is the character of my Thelema deck. I pulled the 5 of Cups, Page of Wands and The Fool. I saw this as saying this deck wants to show the opportunities and good from unhappy situations. I put the deck to a hard test recently. I had the unfortunate responsibility of having to put my beloved dog Coco to sleep. In my grief I asked the deck, what is happening to his soul/spirit now? I pulled the 6 of Swords. I cried. This is my card of the journey into the afterlife. The 6 of Swords reminds me of the ferryman in Greek mythology which carries souls to the underworld. Coco's spirit was traveling now, onward from this realm. Then I asked, how do I start to heal? Pulling the Judgment card, this told me I should remember nothing ends, all is reborn and that though I no longer have my dog, he is not gone in spirit. My whole experience was summed up by the King of Swords, showing me what I did was 'the right thing?' following the King of Swords' logic and ethics. While I was an emotional wreck, my mind was the guiding force.

With all of this said, what can I say about the Thelema Tarot overall? The Thelema Tarot is a gorgeous deck that is enchanting and has proven to work. I have many pretty decks and most of them just don't speak to me. The Thelema Tarot has spoken to me and I find this deck very readable. I think it is a fine addition to a reader's collection and can be a 'work horse deck?', a deck you use on a daily basis.