



# MUZORACLE

MYTHOPOETICS AND USER'S GUIDE

J S KINGFISHER

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Welcome to the second edition of the Muzoracle handbook, *The Muzoracle Mythopoetics and User's Guide*. Much has come to light since the system's initial release in 2008. Foremost, the workings of the *Harmonic Engine*—which underpins the entire system—have revealed themselves in much richer detail, via a simple bit of math I discovered within the Harmonic Series. This equation lends a mathematical basis to Muzoracle cosmology, and sheds interesting light on Gurdjieffian cosmology as well; it also led to a unique system of instrument tuning, which, when sounded, further connects castings to resonances within the body and to the world at large. I am very excited to share all of this!

In addition to the above, connections between the chakras and pitch have come into play in the system. I was resistant to those lines of metaphor initially, as the connections traditionally drawn seemed to me arbitrary and lacking juice. This changed with further study of Schumann Resonances and the development of said engine, and with real field work. Once those lines became part of the practice, the method of casting changed somewhat; not in *Full Layout* castings, but in the short and sweet *One-ups*, which now always include a pitch reference.

The biggest shift in practice, however, came with the addition of the *hermeneutics*: simple words or short phrases attached to each card and dice face. This was another line of metaphor I was initially resistant to: I was reluctant to assign something as concrete as single words to something as etheric as musical elements. I instead used columns of keywords that took place in the realm of other columns of keywords, leaving the majority of interpretation to be found in sound. Well, those columns, and of course the sounds, are still there, and very much in play; but the hermeneutics didn't, as I feared, narrow the interpretive experience. They instead provide an entrée to it, in the way an underlying sketch can further a painting. They also make the whole system a lot more accessible to novices.

In the first edition, I was afraid of overwhelming new users with too much information, especially technical information. I was also, I see now, overly concerned with coming off as some sort of wannabe “Gurdjieffian guru”—as oxymoronic as that term may seem, there are a few pretenders to it, and I didn't wish to be among them, nor in any way do a disservice to the Gurdjieff Work. As to the first, I needn't have worried: folks who are put off by the density of the Muzoracle material are put off from the start and run the other way fast, while folks who brave the waters tend to want all they can get. As to the latter, I needn't have worried there, either. In *In Search of the Miraculous*, P. D. Ouspensky refers to Gurdjieff's ideas as “fragments of an unknown teaching”; the Muzoracle is partially inspired by—and not a chronicle of—fragments of those fragments, and I never pretended otherwise and no one thought I did.

All in all, you'll find a great deal more material in this second edition than the first, yet somehow, too, that the system is easier to use. When I first released the system and its handbook back in 2008, I'd just finished four years of inventing it—I hadn't had much time to actually use it. I pretty much just lobbed it into the world, with a, “Here it is, I think this is how it goes, cheers!” Now I've been at it ten years, and I know how it goes—the kinks have worked themselves out, it flows easier, it's grown into itself. The whole thing is more relaxed now, more easily engaged.

If you've been with me on the journey so far, I thank you. If you've just joined us, welcome! May the work serve us well!

*Blessings,  
Jeff Kingfisher*

*Autumnal Equinox 2018  
Palm Desert, California*

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## INTRODUCTION

**What the Muzoracle is.** The word “oracle” is derived from the Latin *orare*, which means to speak, plead, or pray. In antiquity, an oracle was a shrine, or a priestess or priest at a shrine, through which the voice of a goddess or god could be heard, such as the Oracle at Delphi. As an “agency or medium of the gods,” “oracle” came to refer as well to systems of divination, such as the Urim and Thummim of the Hebrews, the I Ching, Runes, the Tarot—and the Muzoracle.

The word “music,” literally “the art of the Muse,” refers to the artful organization of vibrations that fall within the range of our hearing. The Muzoracle, then, is a system of divination that uses music as its medium.

That being said, the word “divination” doesn’t apply to the Muzoracle in the usual sense. “Divination” is rooted in the Latin *divinare*, to be “inspired by a god,” and *divinationem*, “the power of foreseeing or prediction”; Merriam-Webster defines it as “the art or practice that seeks to foresee or foretell future events by the interpretation of omens.” The Muzoracle, however, is not a fortune teller. Rather than predicting the future, the Muzoracle’s purpose lies in creatively responding to the present. It is the present, after all, that creates the future, and what we can change today will change tomorrow as well. Seeing what’s in front of us, though, apprehending the present in a thorough and unbiased way, is not always an easy task. The Muzoracle presents elements of story and music that we in turn weave into narrative; doing so forces new perspectives and illuminates new possibilities, which in turn broaden our view. Ultimately, *the Muzoracle is a tool for engaging the intuition and imagination through music and story, and forming creative responses that align with our intent.* It is a means of self-counseling: even when we cast the oracle for others, it is they who create the story—we just help with the language, perhaps pointing them toward better questions.

**Where it comes from.** Way back in 2004, when the Muzoracle first began to arise from the ethers, I thought to “figure it out,” to fashion an oracular system based on the “true” meanings of its various components. Music, however, doesn’t lend itself to such clear-cut certainties. Approaching harmonics and the physics of sound and the way they interface with music theory, and the way both physics and music interface with the esoteric, I soon found myself in a house of mirrors. Attempts by others to quantify the musical experience, to objectively define it for any purpose, seemed contrived and overly academic; I didn’t want to burden the world with yet another tidy tome. Nonetheless, I was driven to explore. The process of uncovering the Muzoracle was a divination in itself, a constant stepping back, a sharpening of focus, a softening of gaze. The result is not a definitive answer about what music means; it’s an ongoing exploration of the questions music poses.

Much of the meaning in the Muzoracle—particularly within the Harmony Cards—is drawn from the feelings that its components evoke when played. Feelings are subjective, of course, and the definitions of both the cards and the dice are purposefully simple and broad in that regard—there’s plenty of wiggle room for interpretation, for *listening*.

The theoretical basis of the Muzoracle arises chiefly from the Harmonic Series, which is not only the foundation of music, but is at play across the entire vibrational spectrum. Also at play within the system is the Golden Ratio, which is related to the Harmonic Series and is the basis of spirals in nature; everything in the Muzoracle, from the dice to the cards to the box it comes in, follows its proportions. The Platonic Solids, which are also associated with the Golden Ratio, are the basis for the iconography of the suits and their correlation with the classical elements.

Finally, the cosmological and philosophical underpinnings of the Muzoracle are much inspired by the ideas of G. I. Gurdjieff, as found in his writings and those of his pupils,

and by the Taoist, Animist, and Pagan notions and ideals that to me are both native and dear.

**Components.** The Muzoracle deck consists of 89 cards. Among them there are essentially two types: the Suit Cards and the Compositionals. The 55 Suit Cards are divided among five suits, each of which is based on an instrument family; they are Brass, Strings, Woodwinds, Percussion, and Voices. The 34 black and white Compositional Cards are based on elements, concepts, and directives used by composers and/or found in musical compositions.

There are thirteen twelve-sided dice in the Muzoracle: 12 white dice marked with *solfège* (*sol-FEZH—do, re, mi*, etc.) and one black Musician’s Die, which is marked with musical pitches. The Solfège Dice refer to steps in a musical scale and indicate points in process, points in time. In a traditional Tarot spread, the cards are laid out in specific positions—“future,” “past,” “hopes and fears,” and so on. In a Muzoracle casting, it is the white Solfège Dice that define the positions: which dice faces come up determine which positions are revealed.

The black Musician’s Die determines both the keycenter and the “direction” of a casting. The keycenter is a necessary reference point when playing the casting on an instrument or listening to a casting’s positions online; it also references a chakra or movement between chakras, providing the casting with a connection to the body. A casting’s “direction,” determined by the direction the die is pointing when it lands, indicates whether the casting is based on an ascending or descending scale, which influences further how it is interpreted; it also determines whether the casting is generally referencing the future, past, or present.

**Onward, ho.** There are different paths available through which the Muzoracle can be learned—which one you choose will depend on how much about music and the esoteric you already know, and how much you’d like to find out. It is quite possible

to use the Muzoracle with very little musical expertise, and without delving too deeply into the concepts underlying it. You can use *Basics* section and the indices on their own to begin, perhaps exploring a sound or two as you go on the website. Or, you may wish to start that way, then add in a chapter from “Metaphors in Play” or “Mechanics to Metaphor” here and there to deepen your knowledge. Or, if you’re a musician or a composer with a good theory background, you might want to read this entire book from the get go. The Muzoracle is essentially a storytelling tool; it’s effectiveness lies in it’s ability to trigger the intuition and imagination. You don’t need to be an expert in order to experience that—a metaphor here, a sound or two there will do. The advantage of knowing more is that the experience gets richer—but you don’t have to rush.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The first step in learning to cast the Muzoracle is understanding how to lay out the dice and cards. That’s covered in the next section, *Basics*, which is a must. Also included in *Basics* are the basic methods for interpreting a casting. Watching the how-to videos on [muzoracle.com](http://muzoracle.com) is strongly suggested—simply seeing how it’s done will help you master both layout and interpretation quickly.

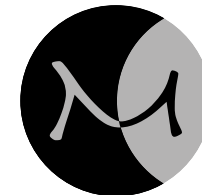
The simplest way—and probably the best way for all novices to begin—is, once your casting is laid out, to simply use the indices that follow the *Basics* section. They provide *hermeneutics*—short phrases that serve as entrées to meaning—for each of the dice faces and cards (the Suit Card indices provide “possible shades and subtleties” as well: further suggestions to further inspire.) You may also wish to keep the Muzoracle website open; there, along with all the information provided in the indices, the sound of each card may be experienced.

When interpreting, the entrée the indices provide is often enough—the intuition can take over from there. Sometimes, though, you’ll want more. When that’s the case, the fifth section of this book, *Metaphors in Play*, can be consulted. There, the meanings

of keycenters and their associated chakras, the scalepoints on the Solfège Dice, and the suits, harmonies, musicians, and compositional elements that define the cards are explored in depth.

The fourth section of this book, *Mechanics to Metaphor*, is somewhat technical in nature. When reading the book straight through, it makes sense where it is—understanding what is presented there brings a richness of understanding to the *Metaphors in Play* section that follows it. It is not, however, necessary to read *Mechanics to Metaphor* to use the system or have a useful understanding of its parts. You may wish to take in one or two chapters of “M2M” now and again, and give yourself time to absorb and apply the information.

The sixth and seventh sections of this book, *Deeper* and *Further*, are just that. They explore a few more subtleties in interpretation, and some of the strictly musical aspects of the system, like playing castings on an instrument, and the tuning system that arose from the Muzoracle’s mechanics. There’s also a chapter on optional layouts, and using the Muzoracle with traditional Tarot.







## PREPARING TO CAST

**Creating Space, Without and Within.** In terms of the physical space needed to cast the Muzoracle, you'll need a hard flat surface so the dice don't roll about after they're cast (a bed won't cut it). Depending on how the dice land, a casting can contain up to 12 positions, which requires a bit of width—a 32" wide x 12" deep (80cm x 30cm) rectangle will do easily. (A standard card table is 32"/80cm square.) If you're casting for yourself, you'll obviously lay out the positions in front of you; if you're casting for someone else, keep in mind if they sit across from you, you'll be looking at their casting upside down. A way around this is to sit alongside them; another option is to use a lazy susan.

Space-wise, you'll also need to consider what reference material you'll be using. If you're using this book as a reference, and/or a tablet or laptop or Kindle, you'll need to have space for them. Personally, I sit across from clients at a 48" wide table (I used to have a lazy susan on top, but have grown accustomed to reading upside down and no longer need it.) I keep my laptop to the right, and have a piano keyboard right in front of me (obviously not necessary if you don't play), and the Muzoracle reference poster on the wall to my right. (The reference poster contains the same information as the indices in this book on one big sheet—and it's pretty!) There's a set of speakers on bookshelves behind me facing the client.

In addition to preparing an outer space before casting, it's also important to create an inner one. The more quiet and centered we are, the more clearly our questions and thoughts can arise, and the more present we can be to our casting's results. There are many different methods for finding a quiet center, of course: following the breath, for example, or sensing the body bit by bit, releasing tension as we go. We need to calm the inner chatter and get into the moment—whatever works is fine. If we're casting for someone else who is unfamiliar with inner silence, or who is nervous or uncomfortable in some way, we can still find our own center—a calm and attentive approach is infectious, and can set the tone for the casting ahead.

**Posing a Question.** We needn't approach the Muzoracle with a literal question, although we certainly can. We can simply have something general in mind about which we're curious—sometimes our questions sound more like stories. Other times there's an urge to cast with nothing particular in mind, and we look to the oracle for inspiration. In any case, what we're aiming for is a willingness to be open, sincere, playful, and creative.

**Mixing the Cards.** The deck can be shuffled, as a whole or half at a time; alternatively, the cards can be swirled round and round and in and out of each other, face down. In any case, we need to make sure that the cards can vary their orientation while we're mixing them, as some cards mean different things depending on which end is up. (Mixing the cards can be part of creating inner quiet, by the way—the process can be very meditative.) After the cards are mixed, a final cut is traditional—make one, if you like.

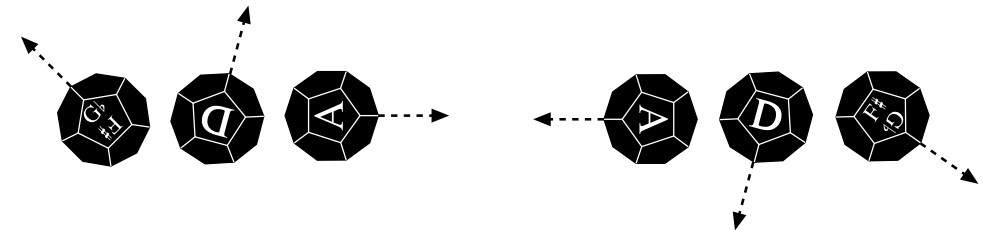


*The Casting Room at Philomusica, J S Kingfisher's studio in the Coachella Valley near Palm Springs.*

## LAYING OUT THE CARDS AND DICE

There are two basic Muzoracle layouts, the *One-up* and the *Full Layout*; the former contains one position, while the latter can contain as few as one or as many as twelve. Both the One-up and the Full Layout involve the same elements and method: the black Musician's Die is rolled first, then, alternately, the white Solfège Dice are rolled and cards are drawn. Below is a detailed description of the casting method. The Full Layout is explained first, as the One-up is simply an abbreviated version of it.

**Rolling the Musician's Die.** All castings have a direction: they are either ascending or descending. This direction is determined at a casting's outset by rolling the Musician's Die. If the die is pointing upward or hard right when it lands, the casting is ascending: the die is placed at the bottom of the work area, and the ensuing Solfège Dice and cards will be placed above it. If the Musician's Die is pointing downward or hard left when it lands, the casting is descending: the die is placed at the top of the work area, and the ensuing Solfège Dice and cards will be placed below it.



*The examples in the left group are all pointing up or hard right; each would indicate an ascending casting. The examples in the right group are all pointing down or hard left; each would indicate a descending casting.*

**Laying Out the Solfège Dice and Cards.** Once the Musician's Die is rolled and set in place, a Solfège Die is rolled, then a card is drawn. Where the Solfège Die and card are placed in relation to each other is determined by which *scalepoint* comes up on the Solfège Die.

**Do, a Deer ...** There are two kinds of scalepoints on the Solfège Dice: *diatonic* points and *chromatic* points. The diatonic points are the ones most familiar: *do* (doh), *re* (ray), *mi* (mee), *fa* (fah), *so* (soh), *la* (lah), and *ti* (tee). (If you don't know them, check out *The Sound of Music*—Ms. Andrews and the kids will teach you!) The chromatic points are the other five points on the dice: *se* (say), *me* (may), *ra* (rah), *te* (tay), and *le* (lay). Diatonic points: *do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti*; chromatic points: the other ones.

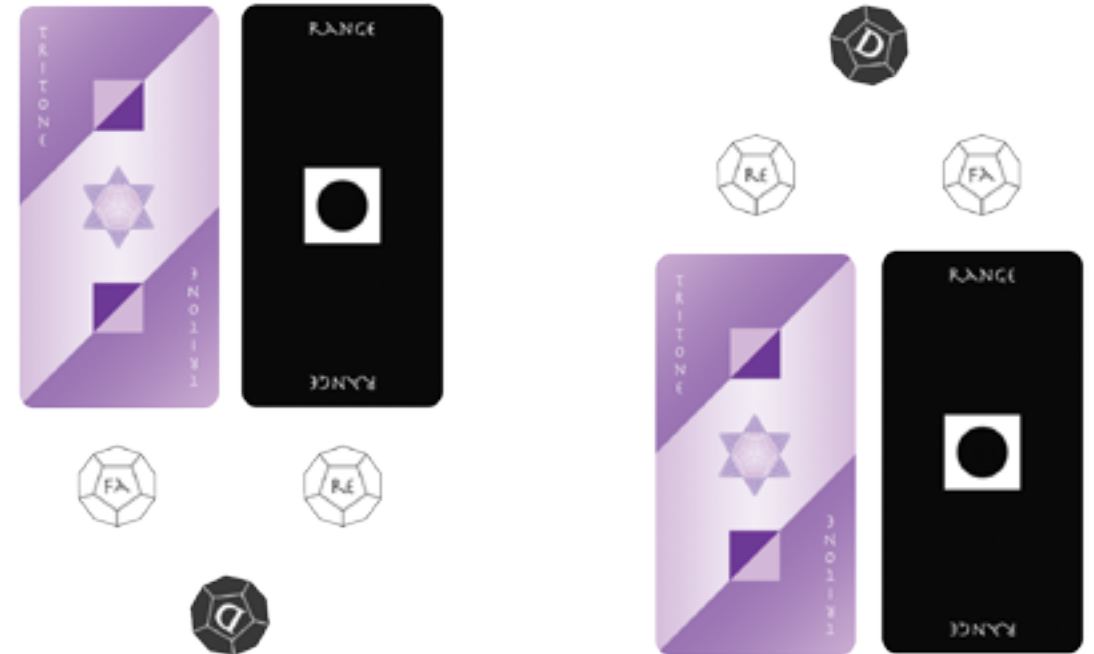


*The Diatonic Scalepoints*



*The Chromatic Scalepoints*

Castings are based on ascending or descending diatonic scales: *do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti* going up; *do, ti, la, so, fa, mi, re*, coming down. Ascending castings build upward: Musician's Die, diatonic scalepoints, cards, bottom to top. Descending castings build downward: Musician's Die, diatonic scalepoints, cards, top to bottom.



*At left, diatonic scalepoints in an ascending casting—the cards go above the Solfège Dice. At right, diatonic scalepoints in a descending casting—the cards go below the Solfège Dice.*

When a chromatic scalepoint appears in a casting, it's actually a note from another scale traveling in the direction opposite the casting. In the ascending casting at right, for example, the diatonic scalepoints *mi* and *do* are traveling upward from the Musician's Die, with the cards above them. The chromatic scalepoint *se*, however, is traveling from the opposite direction—it's coming down, so the die goes above the card instead of below it.



In the descending casting at left, the diatonic scalepoints *ti* and *re* are traveling downward from the Musician's Die, with the cards below them. The chromatic scalepoint *me*, however, is traveling upward, so the die goes below the card instead of above it.



**Completing a Casting.** In a Full Layout, we continue rolling dice and drawing cards, adding more and more positions to the right, until we roll a scalepoint for a second time. When that happens, rather than forming a new position, the repeated die is placed adjacent to its mate, and another card is drawn and placed *across* the card already in that position, with its defining end left (see below.) That final, two-dice, two-card position then becomes the *axis* of the casting, and the casting is complete. If we never roll the same scalepoint twice, the casting is complete when we run out of dice (that doesn't happen very often).



*Above, a Full Layout in D Ascending. The fourth roll yielded "re" for a second time: thus it was put next to its mate and the final card of the casting was drawn ( the Major Sixth of Brass.)*



**The One-up Casting.** The method previously described is for the Full Layout Casting. The One-up method is just the same, but limits the casting to just one position: the Musician's Die is rolled, then a Solfège Die, then a card is drawn and placed—and that's it. We don't keep rolling and drawing until a double is rolled.

Full Layouts can be very deep and complex, especially if they end up having a lot of positions. A One-up can be a real powerhouse, and can be just the ticket for a certain sort of inquiry—between the chakra reference, the scalepoint reference, and the card, there's still plenty to work with. The simplicity of the One-up also makes it a good choice for beginners.



*Above, a One-up in A Descending.*

## LAYOUT IN FIVE STEPS

**1. Roll the Musician's Die.** If it's pointing down or hard left, your casting is a descending one: the die goes at the top of the work area, and all subsequent dice and cards will go underneath it. If it's pointing up or hard right, your casting is an ascending one: the die goes at the bottom of the work area, and all subsequent dice and cards will go above it.

**2. Roll a Solfège Die.** If your casting's **descending** and the Solfège Die comes up *diatonic*, set it below the level of the Musician's Die at the top left of the work area—the card you're about to draw is going to go under it. If the Solfège Die comes up *chromatic*, set it at the bottom left of the work area—the card you're about to draw is going to go above it.

If your casting's **ascending** and the Solfège Die comes up *diatonic*, set it above the level of the Musician's Die at the bottom left of the work area—the card you're about to draw is going to go above it. If the Solfège Die comes up *chromatic*, set it at the top left of the work area—the card you're about to draw is going to go under it.

**3. Draw a Card.** Place the card above or below the Solfège Die you just rolled, as described in Step 2. If you're casting a One-up, stop here—your casting is complete. If you're casting a Full Layout, continue to steps 4 and 5.

**4. Repeat Steps 2 and 3.** Continue to roll Solfège Dice and draw cards until you roll the same scalepoint for a second time. When that happens, continue to step 5. (If that never happens and you run out of dice, skip Step 5—your casting has twelve positions, and is now complete.)

**5. Form the Casting's Axis.** When a scalepoint is rolled for a second time, place the Solfège Die alongside its mate, then draw a card and place it across the card already in that position, topside left. Casting complete!

## INTERPRETING CASTINGS

**Metaphors Be With You.** As you begin the process of interpreting your casting, it's important to remember that what you're doing is *finding a story*. The Muzoracle is a system of metaphors; it's not a fortune teller. There are no good or bad cards or dice, just elements of story, pieces of a narrative; your doom is not being forecast. Stories are useful in all sorts of circumstances—perhaps the story you're creating addresses a question, or a quandary, or a problem. Perhaps you're approaching the oracle with your mind a blank slate, wishing to see what it inspires. Maybe you're looking for another perspective on an existing situation; or maybe you want to literally write a story, or a piece of music. In any case, the process of casting is a creative one—there are no right or wrong interpretations of its elements. Stay relaxed, open, playful, and sincere.

Another important thing to remember is that you don't have to utilize *all* the layers of metaphor available every time you cast. The Musician's Die alone provides three layers of metaphor; the Solfège Dice, another layer with many substrata; and ditto for the cards. If you start out trying to include everything, you will likely become overwhelmed, or at best lost in thinking. More important than being an expert is keeping your intuition and playfulness intact. Take a little here, take a little there, for a start. Successful use of the Muzoracle is about creating a story that is useful to you—often just a trigger or two will set you on the path.

There's a few different ways that information about the cards and dice can be accessed while casting; you can have this book handy, for a start. If you're a musician, you can also have your instrument at hand to explore things musically. If you don't play, or even if you do, you can use the Muzoracle website instead of or along with this book—each of the card pages there includes a dice reference, and you can listen to the music of your casting's positions. Another option is to have the Muzoracle reference poster hanging nearby.

**Hermeneutics, Shades, and Subtleties.** Part of the definition of each scalepoint and card is its *hermeneutic*, a word or short phrase that serves as an entrée to its meaning. Hermeneutics in are listed the indices, on the website, and on the Muzoracle reference poster. In addition to the hermeneutics, the definitions in the card indices include "possible shades and subtleties"—short lists of further suggestions to further inspire.

The hermeneutics, the possible shades and subtleties, the breakdowns by element (e.g. "Strength/Wholeness/Balance in the realm of Thinking and Ideas"), the detailed explorations in *Mechanics to Metaphor* and *Metaphors in Play*, the sounds on the website, the artwork... ultimately, all these things are merely triggers to help the querent form a narrative. In practice, the meanings of the cards and dice vary quite a bit depending on who's asking what and why—they constantly take on different hues.

Following are some guidelines for interpreting the elements of a Muzoracle casting, presented in the order in which the elements unfold. As you'll see, the Musician's Die generally references "where"; the Solfège Dice, "when"; and the cards, "what" and "how".

**Interpreting the Musician's Die.** There are several layers of metaphor at play in a Muzoracle casting; the Musician's Die alone accesses three. First, as mentioned in "Laying Out the Cards and Dice", the direction the Musician's Die is pointing when it lands determines whether the casting that ensues will be "ascending" or "descending".

Ascending castings reference ascending scales, which in turn reference *ascending processes*. These are the processes guided by intent: they speak of the things we make happen, or try to. Descending castings reference descending scales and *descending processes*; they speak of "what's coming down," of the things that happen to us and around us. As any casting can contain both ascending and descending scalepoints, its direction simply marks a viewpoint from which things are seen: ascending castings generally look at things relative to what we're trying to make happen, while descending castings generally look at things relative to what's going on around us. An ascending

casting with a lot of chromatic points might indicate an effort meeting with resistance; a descending casting with a lot of chromatic points might indicate a going against the grain.

The second layer of metaphor determined by the Musician's Die is a casting's *keycenter*, determined by the pitch that lands face up when the die is rolled. In addition to defining the tonal center of the casting—its *do*—a casting's keycenter also references a *chakra*, or movement between chakras. Chakras are energy vortices within the body associated with various aspects of being. The keycenter/chakra associations are rich in metaphor, and provide a connection between castings and the physical body. A good way to experience the keycenter/chakra connection is to sound the pitch—either on an instrument, via the website, or vocally—and feel its resonance. The keycenter of a casting marks its gravitational center: the casting as a whole lives within or around it and its associated chakra or chakras. Keycenter/chakra associations are explored in depth in the "[Keycenters and Chakras](#)" chapter in *Metaphors in Play*. Their meanings can be accessed quickly and briefly in the [indices](#).

A third layer of metaphor available from the Musician's Die regards whether it is pointing generally left or generally right. The further to the left it points, the more it looks to the past; the further to the right it points, the more it looks to the future; the more vertical it is, the more it observes the present. This "time reference" interfaces interestingly with ascent and descent: a Die pointing at 3 o'clock, for example, might indicate an intentional process with a sharp eye to the future; a Die pointing at 7 o'clock might look at what's coming down around us, with a nod to the past.

**Interpreting the Solfège Dice.** The scalepoints we roll define a casting's positions: they frame the windows through which the cards are viewed. They are time-based; they speak of points in process; they are a casting's "when." Their meanings are derived from an "[astrology of vibration](#)" linked to musical scales, which is explored in depth in *Mechanics to Metaphor*, and in the "[Points in Process](#)" chapter in *Metaphors at Play*. A quick reference to the scalepoints can be found in the [indices](#).

**Interpreting the Cards.** There are two basic types of cards in the Muzoracle deck, the Suit Cards and the Compositionals, and their indices are organized accordingly. First are the five suits: [Brass](#), [Strings](#), [Woodwinds](#), [Percussion](#), and [Voices](#). (Each suit contains eleven cards: fourteen Harmonies spread over eight cards, plus three Musician Cards.) The 34 black-and-white [Compositional Cards](#) come next in the indices—they are arranged alphabetically.

Each of the individual suit cards is defined first by its hermeneutic, then by its Harmony or Musician, then by its suit, then by its "possible shades and subtleties." (Harmonies and Musicians are interpreted "in the Realm of" the suits.) The Compositional Cards are defined in the indices simply by their hermeneutics; each card is explored in depth in the "The Composer's Hand: The Compositionals" chapter of *Metaphors in Play*.

**Interpreting the Axis.** The axis position of a casting is its chief emphasis. It is the position around which the other positions revolve; it has weight. An axis functions similarly to a "cross" in traditional Tarot: the two cards within it may be in opposition to or in support of one another, but in any case have irrevocably met, and together form a single notion.

**Putting it Together.** The meanings of a casting's positions do not necessarily come clear as they are being laid out, one after another. Each position informs and influences the others. Often one position comes clear first and the others begin to morph around it. Sometimes there's nothing, then it's all at once; other times we have to dig. Divining the meaning of a casting as a whole is much like divining the meaning of a single position: we soften our gaze, we return to the question or thoughts we started with ...

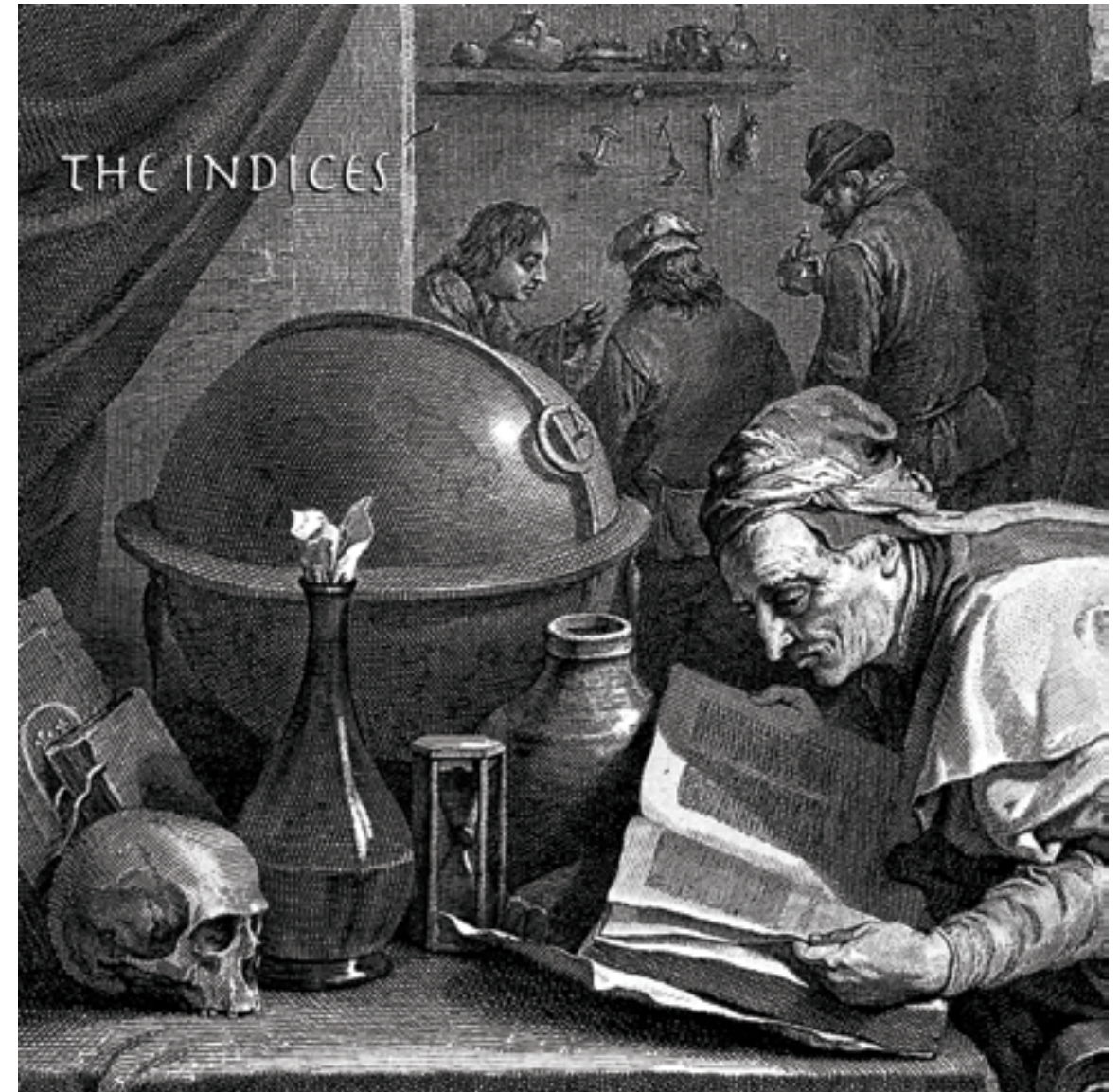
... and we let the querent speak. As readers, we are first and foremost translators. A casting is the querent's story—we're just helping with the language. Many times in the course of a casting, I've had very distinct ideas regarding the meaning of a position or the casting as a whole, and the querent piped in with something unexpected—and brought the whole thing together. The querent's input should be encouraged. Our job















as readers is not to impress others with our wizardry; we want to help the querent find *something that belongs to them*. If we're reading for ourselves, this rule of thumb can help us remember that the oracle doesn't have the last word—we do.













## INTERPRETATION CHECKLIST













- Is our casting ascending, referencing what we desire or intend? Or is it or descending, referencing what's coming down around us? Are there chromatic points, which could indicate resistance to those flows?
- What chakra, or movement between chakras, is associated with the pitch of the Musician's Die? Listen to the pitch if you can, feel its resonance. What are the attributes of that chakra or movement between chakras? They indicate the general area to which the casting refers.
- Is the Musician's Die pointing to the left, looking toward the past? How sharply? Or does it look to the right, toward the future? Or is it mostly vertical, observing the present?
- Listen, play, or sing each position, if possible; get inside them. Take in the colors, the geometry. Remember that scalepoints are generally the "when," while cards are generally the "what" or "how." Think of positions as "card" at-the-point-of "die"—a Major Third of Voices over *mi*, for example, would be "Peace" at the point of "Effort." If the hermeneutics and "possible shades and subtleties" in the indices aren't giving you enough, you can explore the chapters in the *Metaphors at Play* section— but don't get too lost in detail, save that for later. When you're actually casting, you're looking for inspiration—stay in creative mode, maintain a light touch, remain triggerable.
- When taking in the elements of a casting, and especially when interpreting the casting as a whole, stay open, relaxed, playful, and sincere. Remember, a casting is not a puzzle that must be correctly solved—it is a story that is being created.















<b>ROOT</b> <i>Safety, fight or flight, groundedness.</i>	<b>ROOT RISING</b> <i>Evolving into creative response.</i>	<b>SACRAL</b> <i>Relationships, intimacy, creative partnership.</i>	<b>SACRAL RISING</b> <i>Creativity and cooperation as a path to empowerment.</i>	<b>SOLAR PLEXUS RISING</b> <i>Shifting from “me” to “us.”</i>	<b>HEART</b> <i>Love, trust, forgiveness, kindness.</i>
 <b>C</b> 	 <b>C#</b> <b>Db</b> 	 <b>D</b> 	 <b>D#</b> <b>Eb</b> 	 <b>E</b> 	 <b>F</b> 
<b>ROOT</b> <i>Safety, fight or flight, groundedness.</i>	<b>SACRAL FALLING</b> <i>Creativity coming to fruition.</i>	<b>SACRAL</b> <i>Relationships, intimacy, creative partnership.</i>	<b>SOLAR PLEXUS FALLING</b> <i>Bringing to bear the will to create.</i>	<b>SOLAR PLEXUS</b> <i>Willpower, determination, self-acceptance.</i>	<b>HEART FALLING</b> <i>Charity and compassionate action.</i>

Where within? The Musician’s Die and the Chakras.

<b>HEART RISING</b> <i>Sincerity, speaking from the heart, prayer.</i>	<b>THROAT</b> <i>Communication, honesty, listening, expressiveness.</i>	<b>THROAT RISING</b> <i>Being understood.</i>	<b>THIRD EYE</b> <i>Intuition, visualization, deep knowing.</i>	<b>THIRD EYE RISING</b> <i>Transcending thought.</i>	<b>CROWN</b> <i>Higher Self, transpersonal experience.</i>
 <b>F#</b> <b>Gb</b> 	 <b>G</b> 	 <b>G#</b> <b>Ab</b> 	 <b>A</b> 	 <b>A#</b> <b>Bb</b> 	 <b>B</b> 
<b>THROAT FALLING</b> <i>Inspiring others.</i>	<b>THROAT</b> <i>Communication, honesty, listening, expressiveness.</i>	<b>THIRD EYE FALLING</b> <i>Sharing wisdom.</i>	<b>THIRD EYE</b> <i>Intuition, visualization, deep knowing.</i>	<b>CROWN FALLING</b> <i>Received wisdom.</i>	<b>CROWN</b> <i>Higher Self, transpersonal experience.</i>

<b>INTENTION</b> <i>Desire, goal, commitment.</i>	<b>BROAD CHALLENGE</b> <i>Life lesson, karmic debt.</i>	<b>MECHANICALITY</b> <i>Unconscious or unexamined response; habit.</i>	<b>ACCEPTANCE</b> <i>Forgiveness, letting go.</i>	<b>EFFORT</b> <i>Effort required, work at hand, tools available.</i>	<b>REVELATION</b> <i>True or hidden nature revealed.</i>
 <b>DO</b> 	 <b>RA</b> 	 <b>RE</b> 	 <b>ME</b> 	 <b>MI</b> 	 <b>FA</b> 
<b>INCEPTION</b> <i>Beginning, underway, imminent.</i>	<b>VITALITY</b> <i>Driving forces, energy sources.</i>	<b>DEPENDENCE</b> <i>Neediness, energy drain.</i>	<b>GOVERNANCE</b> <i>Ruling principle, underlying cause.</i>	<b>OPPORTUNITY</b> <i>Providence.</i>	<b>TRANSITION</b> <i>Coming to fruition, manifesting.</i>

At what point in process? The Solfège Dice.

<b>INTENTION</b> <i>Desire, goal, commitment.</i>	<b>BROAD CHALLENGE</b> <i>Life lesson, karmic debt.</i>	<b>MECHANICALITY</b> <i>Unconscious or unexamined response; habit.</i>	<b>ACCEPTANCE</b> <i>Forgiveness, letting go.</i>	<b>EFFORT</b> <i>Effort required, work at hand, tools available.</i>	<b>TRANSITION</b> <i>Death/rebirth, moving to the next level.</i>
 <b>SE</b> 	 <b>SO</b> 	 <b>LE</b> 	 <b>LA</b> 	 <b>TE</b> 	 <b>TI</b> 
<b>INCEPTION</b> <i>Beginning, underway, imminent.</i>	<b>VITALITY</b> <i>Driving forces, energy sources.</i>	<b>DEPENDENCE</b> <i>Neediness, energy drain.</i>	<b>GOVERNANCE</b> <i>Ruling principle, underlying cause.</i>	<b>OPPORTUNITY</b> <i>Providence.</i>	<b>REVELATION</b> <i>True or hidden nature revealed.</i>



# BRASS: The Element of Fire

Possible shades and subtleties...

<b>UNISON: Collaboration</b> <i>Unity, Sameness in the realm of</i>	<b>M O V I N G  C R E A T I N G  D O I N G</b>	→ Doing or creating things together; moving in tandem; over or under-reliance on a partner's efforts.
<b>OCTAVE: Assertion</b> <i>Strength, Wholeness, Balance in the realm of</i>		→ Strength and conviction in an activity or creative process; over-zealousness; pushing too hard.
<b>PERFECT FIFTH: Leadership</b> <i>Initiative in the realm of</i>		→ Taking the leadership role in an activity or creative process; bullying; tyranny.
<b>PERFECT FOURTH: Yielding</b> <i>Receptivity, Inclusiveness in the realm of</i>		→ A passive role; following another's lead; including others in an activity or creative process; unintentional submittal.
<b>MAJOR THIRD: Mediation</b> <i>Ease, Resolution, Improvement in the realm of</i>		→ Resolving conflict or bringing ease to a process; sweeping issues under the rug.
<b>MINOR SIXTH: Seeking</b> <i>Hunger, Desire in the realm of</i>		→ Driven seeking, a passionate journey to find; thrill seeking; chasing down one thing to avoid another.
<b>MINOR THIRD: Prudence</b> <i>Seriousness, Solemnity in the realm of</i>		→ Judicious action; economy of movement; managing resources; pacing oneself; over-cautiousness.
<b>MAJOR SIXTH: Courage</b> <i>Planning Ahead, Positive Outcomes in the realm of</i>		→ Acting boldy and with confidence or faith; impetuousness; a fool's errand.
<b>MAJOR SECOND: Vacillation</b> <i>Division, Disparity, Independence in the realm of</i>		→ Uncertainty as to which path to take; competing courses of action; going one's own way.
<b>MINOR SEVENTH: Flying Blind</b> <i>Mystery, Future Unknown in the realm of</i>		→ Uncertainty as to where things are headed; unknown or ill-defined ends; directionlessness; a journey of faith.
<b>MINOR SECOND: Battle</b> <i>Discord, Opposition, Struggle in the realm of</i>		→ Active conflict, ongoing or impending, helpful or harmful, without or within.
<b>MAJOR SEVENTH: Inertia</b> <i>Lack, Absence in the realm of</i>		→ Lack of drive; laziness; fatigue; slowed or stopped movement; space for creative input.
<b>TRITONE: Compulsion</b> <i>Impetus, Catalyst, Incentive in the realm of</i>		→ Fire in the belly; provocation; urgency; knee-jerk reaction; obsessive behavior.
<b>MAJOR TRIAD: Efficiency</b> <i>Fulfillment in the realm of</i>		→ A smooth running engine; satisfaction in doing; fussiness.
<b>CONDUCTOR: The Director</b> <i>A Leader, A Coordinator in the realm of</i>		→ One who leads others in activity; one who maintains creative control; a boss; a tyrant.
<b>SOLOIST: The Self-Starter</b> <i>An Individualist, A Loner, A Star in the realm of</i>		→ An entrepreneur; a solo act; one who can't work or play with others; one who can't solicit help.
<b>ACCOMPANIST: The Aide</b> <i>A Support, A Helper in the realm of</i>		→ One who helps others by their actions or creative input; servility; fear to take action on one's own behalf.



UNISON: Empathy	Unity, Sameness in the realm of	→
OCTAVE: Commitment	Strength, Wholeness, Balance in the realm of	→
PERFECT FIFTH: Impulse	Initiative in the realm of	→
PERFECT FOURTH: Love	Receptivity, Inclusiveness in the realm of	→
MAJOR THIRD: Joy	Ease, Resolution, Improvement in the realm of	→
MINOR SIXTH: Longing	Hunger, Desire in the realm of	→
MINOR THIRD: Sadness	Seriousness, Solemnity in the realm of	→
MAJOR SIXTH: Hope	Planning Ahead, Positive Outcomes in the realm of	→
MAJOR SECOND: Indifference	Division, Disparity, Independence in the realm of	→
MINOR SEVENTH: Anxiety	Mystery, Future Unknown in the realm of	→
MINOR SECOND: Anger	Discord, Opposition, Struggle in the realm of	→
MAJOR SEVENTH: Insensitivity	Lack, Absence in the realm of	→
TRITONE: Change of Heart	Impetus, Catalyst, Incentive in the realm of	→
MAJOR TRIAD: Contentment	Fulfillment in the realm of	→
CONDUCTOR: The Inspirer	A Leader, A Coordinator in the realm of	→
SOLOIST: The Self-Possessed	An Individualist, A Loner, A Star in the realm of	→
ACCOMPANIST: The Consoler	A Support, A Helper in the realm of	→

F	→	Sharing the feelings of another, in tandem or in empathy; assuming responsibility or blame for another's feelings.
E		Loyalty; determination; constancy; attachment.
E	→	An initial surge of feeling; a sudden spur to action.
L		The heart opening; letting someone "in"; embracing regardless of differences; allowing oneself to be manipulated.
I	→	Good cheer; relief; serenity.
N		Pining; yearning; infatuation; despair; covetousness.
G	→	Somberness; melancholy; grief; melodrama.
A		Optimism; blind optimism.
N	→	Unawareness, misunderstanding, or unconcern for another's feelings; differing emotional responses.
D		Apprehension; nervousness; nervous excitement.
	→	Angst; despair; paranoia; bitterness; hate.
E		Disregard; lack of desire; emotional shutdown; feelings of emptiness.
M	→	Falling in or out of love or friendship; changes in taste, appreciation, likes or dislikes.
O		A full heart; a balanced and gentle happiness.
T	→	One who controls, directs, or influences the feelings of others; a muse; a manipulator.
I		One who is satisfied and confident on their own, and immune to judgments; they may also be cold or lonely.
N		
G	→	One who gives emotional comfort or support to others, who encourages or soothes.



# WOODWINDS: The Element of Air

Possible shades and subtleties...

<b>UNISON: Agreement</b>	<i>Unity, Sameness in the realm of</i>	→
<b>OCTAVE: Certainty</b>	<i>Strength, Wholeness, Balance in the realm of</i>	→
<b>PERFECT FIFTH: Focus</b>	<i>Initiative in the realm of</i>	→
<b>PERFECT FOURTH: Open-mindedness</b>	<i>Receptivity, Inclusiveness in the realm of</i>	→
<b>MAJOR THIRD: Comprehension</b>	<i>Ease, Resolution, Improvement in the realm of</i>	→
<b>MINOR SIXTH: Curiosity</b>	<i>Hunger, Desire in the realm of</i>	→
<b>MINOR THIRD: Factuality</b>	<i>Seriousness, Solemnity in the realm of</i>	→
<b>MAJOR SIXTH: Foresight</b>	<i>Planning Ahead, Positive Outcomes in the realm of</i>	→
<b>MAJOR SECOND: Differing Ideas</b>	<i>Division, Disparity, Independence in the realm of</i>	→
<b>MINOR SEVENTH: Uncertainty</b>	<i>Mystery, Future Unknown in the realm of</i>	→
<b>MINOR SECOND: Argument</b>	<i>Discord, Opposition, Struggle in the realm of</i>	→
<b>MAJOR SEVENTH: Ignorance</b>	<i>Lack, Absence in the realm of</i>	→
<b>TRITONE: Thoughts Provoked</b>	<i>Impetus, Catalyst, Incentive in the realm of</i>	→
<b>MAJOR TRIAD: Knowledge</b>	<i>Fulfillment in the realm of</i>	→
<b>CONDUCTOR: The Mastermind</b>	<i>A Leader, A Coordinator in the realm of</i>	→
<b>SOLOIST: The Free Thinker</b>	<i>An Individualist, A Loner, A Star in the realm of</i>	→
<b>ACCOMPANIST: The Tutor</b>	<i>A Support, A Helper in the realm of</i>	→

<b>T</b>	→	Sharing an understanding; congruent ideas.
<b>H</b>	→	Commitment to or unwavering belief in ideas; integrity or power within ideas; hardheadedness.
<b>I</b>	→	Concentration; scrutiny; single-mindedness.
<b>N</b>	→	Learning; gullibility.
<b>K</b>	→	Ideas or concepts mentally grasped; a mystery solved; an increase in understanding.
<b>I</b>	→	A need to know; searching for information; nosiness.
<b>N</b>	→	Cold, hard facts; a need for rationality; thinking without feeling.
<b>G</b>	→	Knowing what's coming; mental preparation; visualization; wishful thinking.
<b>A</b>	→	Beliefs or opinions based on different premises; misunderstanding; not "getting it."
<b>N</b>	→	Inconclusiveness; lack of proof; confoundedness; the unknowable; incalculable outcomes.
<b>D</b>	→	Disagreement; opposing ideas; contradiction; the Devil's Advocate.
<b>I</b>	→	Being uninformed; insufficient information; not thinking things through; space for new ideas.
<b>D</b>	→	Provocative or exciting ideas; challenges to beliefs or the status quo.
<b>E</b>	→	Complete knowledge; a full and balanced understanding.
<b>A</b>	→	One whose articulate views, formulations, and enthusiasm magnetizes others; a dogmatist.
<b>S</b>	→	One who thinks for themselves; a genius; an iconoclast; a wise-ass.
	→	A teacher; a contributor of ideas.





# PERCUSSION: The Element of Earth

Possible shades and subtleties...

- UNISON: Partnership** *Unity, Sameness in the realm of*
- OCTAVE: Stability** *Strength, Wholeness, Balance in the realm of*
- PERFECT FIFTH: Growth** *Initiative in the realm of*
- PERFECT FOURTH: Welcome** *Receptivity, Inclusiveness in the realm of*
- MAJOR THIRD: Wellness** *Ease, Resolution, Improvement in the realm of*
- MINOR SIXTH: Neediness** *Hunger, Desire in the realm of*
- MINOR THIRD: Crisis** *Seriousness, Solemnity in the realm of*
- MAJOR SIXTH: Readiness** *Planning Ahead, Positive Outcomes in the realm of*
- MAJOR SECOND: Separateness** *Division, Disparity, Independence in the realm of*
- MINOR SEVENTH: Changeability** *Mystery, Future Unknown in the realm of*
- MINOR SECOND: Disorder** *Discord, Opposition, Struggle in the realm of*
- MAJOR SEVENTH: Poverty** *Lack, Absence in the realm of*
- TRITONE: Transformation** *Impetus, Catalyst, Incentive in the realm of*
- MAJOR TRIAD: Abundance** *Fulfillment in the realm of*
- CONDUCTOR: The Overseer** *A Leader, A Coordinator in the realm of*
- SOLOIST: The Self-Sufficient** *An Individualist, A Loner, A Star in the realm of*
- ACCOMPANIST: The Provider** *A Support, A Helper in the realm of*

- H** Friends, lovers, business partners; marriage; profitable relationships; cohesive community; taking others for granted.
- O** Wherewithal; physical strength; solid business venture; a powerful organization; over-centralization; lack of diversity.
- M** Making or finding a home; taking care of oneself; business proposals; maturation; people coming together.
- E** Accepting oneself and others as they are; susceptibility to pathogens; ability to heal; receiving gifts.
- B** Simplicity; improved health; rest and relaxation; easy money; peaceful coexistence.
- O** Desire for things; sexual desire; bodily deficiencies; need for community; addiction; greed.
- D** Health, finance, or community issues requiring serious attention; a trial; a burden; a loss.
- Y** Being prepared; contingency plans; maintenance; savings accounts; obsession with detail.
- W** Separate spaces; disparate paths; shared or split wealth or resources; independent factions.
- E** Unpredictability; ungroundedness; lack of security; unclear diagnosis or prognosis; community in flux.
- A** Confusion and disarray; illness or exhaustion; finances in shambles; community in turmoil; hardships to overcome.
- L** Material lack; incomplete projects; homelessness; isolation; freedom from attachment; space to build anew.
- T** Home, health, financial, family, or community emergency, boon, or drastic shift; remodeling or relocating.
- H** Happy home; vibrant health; money to spare; a loving family or community.
- T** A head of an organization, family, or house; a foreman; a financial or health advisor.
- R** One who supports themselves materially; who lives alone; is responsible for themselves; or is aloof, isolated, or selfish.
- I**
- B**
- E** One who provides necessities: food, water, shelter; a nurse; a secretary; a cook; a home builder.

- UNISON: Fellowship    *Unity, Sameness in the realm of*    ➞
- OCTAVE: Integrity    *Strength, Wholeness, Balance in the realm of*    ➞
- PERFECT FIFTH: Avowal    *Initiative in the realm of*    ➞
- PERFECT FOURTH: Compassion    *Receptivity, Inclusiveness in the realm of*    ➞
- MAJOR THIRD: Peace    *Ease, Resolution, Improvement in the realm of*    ➞
- MINOR SIXTH: Avocation    *Hunger, Desire in the realm of*    ➞
- MINOR THIRD: Sacrifice    *Seriousness, Solemnity in the realm of*    ➞
- MAJOR SIXTH: Faith    *Planning Ahead, Positive Outcomes in the realm of*    ➞
- MAJOR SECOND: Diversity    *Division, Disparity, Independence in the realm of*    ➞
- MINOR SEVENTH: Surrender    *Mystery, Future Unknown in the realm of*    ➞
- MINOR SECOND: Conscience    *Discord, Opposition, Struggle in the realm of*    ➞
- MAJOR SEVENTH: Humility    *Lack, Absence in the realm of*    ➞
- TRITONE: Evolution    *Impetus, Catalyst, Incentive in the realm of*    ➞
- MAJOR TRIAD: Right Living    *Fulfillment in the realm of*    ➞
- CONDUCTOR: The Guru    *A Leader, A Coordinator in the realm of*    ➞
- SOLOIST: The Mystic    *An Individualist, A Loner, A Star in the realm of*    ➞
- ACCOMPANIST: The Boddhisatva    *A Support, A Helper in the realm of*    ➞

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- ➞ Shared higher aims and/or purposes with others
- ➞ Aspects of Self in service to higher aims; inner unity expressed in state and action.
- ➞ A sacred vow; commitment with the whole of oneself.
- ➞ Opening one's heart to the suffering of others, and responding with love and care.
- ➞ Loving acceptance and grateful calm: within, given, and received.
- ➞ A higher calling.
- ➞ What we must let go of to further our aim.
- ➞ Confidence coupled with acceptance; hope coupled with trust.
- ➞ Understanding, acceptance, or celebration of the myriad ways in which life is expressed; embracing differences.
- ➞ Letting go into the mystery; relinquishing notions of control; “Let go, let G-d.”
- ➞ The call of deeper knowing as it rubs against what might be convenient or desired superficially.
- ➞ Acknowledging the virtues we do not possess, the understanding not gained, the conscience not followed.
- ➞ That which spurs the growth of being; a shift into a higher state.
- ➞ Engaging with life in ways best suited for the growth of being; doing the dharma, balancing the karma.
- ➞ One who leads or inspires by example in the areas of personal growth, and/or serving others or the greater good.
- ➞ One whose path to fulfillment is a solitary, inward one; one who eschews orthodoxy, valuing instead direct experience.
- ➞ One who dedicates themselves to alleviating the suffering of others.

<b>A CAPRICCIO:</b> <i>Impulsively, as one fancies.</i>	<b>More on page 99</b>	<b>MELODY:</b> <i>Articulacy, sincerity.</i>	<b>More on page 113</b>
<b>ACCELERANDO:</b> <i>Speed up.</i>	<b>99</b>	<b>OBBLIGATO:</b> <i>Obligation, duty; following directions.</i>	<b>114</b>
<b>A DUE:</b> <i>Come together; reconcile.</i>	<b>100</b>	<b>ORCHESTRATION:</b> <i>Delegation, managing resources.</i>	<b>115</b>
<b>AGITATO:</b> <i>With restlessness, agitation.</i>	<b>100</b>	<b>OSSIA:</b> <i>Simpler path; alternate route.</i>	<b>116</b>
<b>AL CODA:</b> <i>Cut to the chase.</i>	<b>101</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE:</b> <i>Spotlight; proving ground.</i>	<b>117</b>
<b>AL SEGNO:</b> <i>Watch for signs; follow the intuition.</i>	<b>101</b>	<b>PIVOT:</b> <i>Shift in context; new role.</i>	<b>118</b>
<b>CHOPS:</b> <i>Facility, discipline, perseverance.</i>	<b>102</b>	<b>RANGE:</b> <i>Limits, boundaries.</i>	<b>119</b>
<b>CON AMORE:</b> <i>With love.</i>	<b>103</b>	<b>REPEAT:</b> <i>Repetition, redundancy, perseverance.</i>	<b>119</b>
<b>COUNTERPOINT:</b> <i>Balance factor; integrating adversity.</i>	<b>103</b>	<b>RHYTHM:</b> <i>Pattern, routine, consistency.</i>	<b>120</b>
<b>CRESCENDO:</b> <i>Increase force.</i>	<b>104</b>	<b>RISOLUTO:</b> <i>With resolve or resignedly.</i>	<b>120</b>
<b>DIMINUENDO:</b> <i>Decrease force.</i>	<b>105</b>	<b>RITARDANDO:</b> <i>Slow down.</i>	<b>121</b>
<b>DIVISI:</b> <i>Divide; separate.</i>	<b>105</b>	<b>SFORZANDO:</b> <i>With sudden force.</i>	<b>121</b>
<b>DOLENTE:</b> <i>Sorrowfully.</i>	<b>106</b>	<b>SILENCE:</b> <i>Quietitude; mystery; secrecy; the unexpressed.</i>	<b>122</b>
<b>EDITING:</b> <i>Revision, alteration, culling.</i>	<b>106</b>	<b>SMANIATO:</b> <i>Angrily, with fury.</i>	<b>123</b>
<b>FERMATA:</b> <i>Wait; hold till further notice.</i>	<b>107</b>	<b>STANCHEZZA:</b> <i>Wearily, with fatigue; ploddingly.</i>	<b>124</b>
<b>FIERO:</b> <i>Vigorously, passionately.</i>	<b>108</b>	<b>STYLE:</b> <i>Presentation.</i>	<b>124</b>
<b>FORM:</b> <i>Foundation; stability; time management.</i>	<b>108</b>	<b>TIMBRE:</b> <i>Inherence; individuality.</i>	<b>125</b>
<b>GIOCOSO:</b> <i>With humor.</i>	<b>109</b>	<b>THEORY:</b> <i>Analysis, conjecture; system of ideas.</i>	<b>126</b>
<b>HARMONY:</b> <i>Interrelationship; affinity; quality of blend.</i>	<b>110</b>	<b>TONALITY:</b> <i>Center of gravity.</i>	<b>126</b>
<b>IMPROVISATION:</b> <i>Conscious response.</i>	<b>111</b>	<b>TRANQUILLO:</b> <i>Calmly, peacefully.</i>	<b>128</b>
<b>LISTENING:</b> <i>Paying attention, reading between the lines.</i>	<b>112</b>	<b>TUNING:</b> <i>Joining, conforming, simpatico.</i>	<b>128</b>



The Muzoracle is a system of metaphors. While much of it is inspired by theoretical, esoteric, and scientific ideas—namely those of music theory, Gurdjieffian cosmology, and acoustics—casting the Muzoracle, and the Muzoracle itself, is not theory, nor an esoteric system, nor science; it is kinetic, participatory art. It is not necessary to fully understand the system’s roots in order to use it; doing so, however, may broaden and enrich your experience. This section explores those roots.

## ALL IS VIBRATION

**Vibration** *noun* \vī-ˈbrā-shən\: a periodic motion of the particles of an elastic body or medium in alternately opposite directions from the position of equilibrium when that equilibrium has been disturbed (as when a stretched cord produces musical tones or molecules in the air transmit sounds to the ear.)

“Matter” is a deceptive term, “solidity” a relative one. What we perceive as or have believed to be solid and unchanging is—as science increasingly tells us—in movement. If that movement is not in itself periodic, the effects of it are: we live in a vibrating universe.

Vibration occurs across a wide, possibly infinite, spectrum, of which only small ranges are perceivable to us. We can, for example, simply see the swing of a pendulum, which is relatively slow. When a guitar string is plucked, we can’t quite see its to and fro; it moves so fast it’s just a blur. We can, however, hear it. The string’s periodic movement sets the molecules in the air around it into wavelike motion, much in the way a stone dropped into water radiates waves. When those waves find our eardrums, our eardrums vibrate in turn and send messages to our brains, which we interpret as sound. Much faster than sound waves are the ones created when light is generated or reflected—those are the waves we see. Above, below, and in between sound and light are ranges of vibrational frequency that are perceivable to us only by their effect: the ultraviolet range that burns our skin, for example, and the ranges we use for wireless communication.

Vibration occurs in particular, predictable ways in response to various actions and circumstances. The chief phenomena associated with vibration—amplitude, frequency, harmonics, and resonance—underlie many of the metaphors at play in the Muzoracle.



## AMPLITUDE

Once plucked, a guitar string moves to and fro through space. A chain reaction then begins from the molecules adjacent to the string: each knocked molecule knocks into another, forming a wave. The harder we pluck the string, the taller the wave is, and the louder we perceive it. The stone dropped in water analogy is helpful here: the heavier the stone, and/or the harder we throw it, the bigger the waves it makes. The same phenomenon is at work in other instruments, of course—the harder you blow a trumpet, the harder you whack a drum, the louder they get. Amplitude, then—loudness/softness/wave height—is a result of *force*.

In the Muzoracle, musical terms associated with amplitude are metaphors for force. The *sforzando* card, for example, refers to a sudden or shocking increase in force; *crescendo* and *decrescendo* refer to steady increases or decreases in force, respectively.

## FREQUENCY

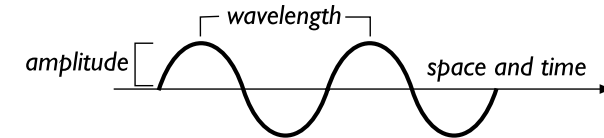
Back to our plucked guitar string. The harder we pluck the string, the taller the wave and the louder the sound—that's amplitude. The longer and/or less tense the string is in the first place, however, the *longer* the wave it generates is from end to end—and the *lower in pitch* we perceive the note. Think of a piano: the long strings are for the low notes, the short ones for the high. On a guitar, the strings are all the same length, but the low strings are wound relatively loose; the high strings are pulled tight. The phenomenon manifests similarly in vibrating columns of air: the pitch range of the short, tiny piccolo is very high, while the range of the bassoon is much lower. Ditto with percussion: a large tympani creates deeper sounds than a small snare. Bigger, looser = long waves, lower pitch; smaller, tighter = short waves, higher pitch.

The actual, physical length of a wave is called—you guessed it—its *wavelength*. Wavelengths are easily measured, in both space and time: we can say a given pitch is

made of waves of a certain length, and that, at the speed of sound, each one of those waves takes a certain time to cycle through. But it's much more common to refer to wavelengths and the pitches they engender in terms of *how often* waves occur in a given period of time: in other words, by their *frequency*.

Say we're looking at a wave that's traveling across a room to our ears. If each wave is short from end to end, say 6 inches, it's going to occur a whole lot more times, a whole lot more *frequently*, before it gets to us than a wave that is 3 feet long. Fewer waves in a given distance = lower frequencies, lower notes; more waves in a given distance = higher frequencies, higher notes.

Specific frequencies have a place in Muzoracle mythopoetics—they relate to chakras, energy vortices that correspond with points in the body. This is explored in depth later in this section. While the general highness or lowness of frequency doesn't play out directly in the cards and dice, it is intertwined with the Muzoracle as a whole via something called the *Rhythm Line*—that's next.

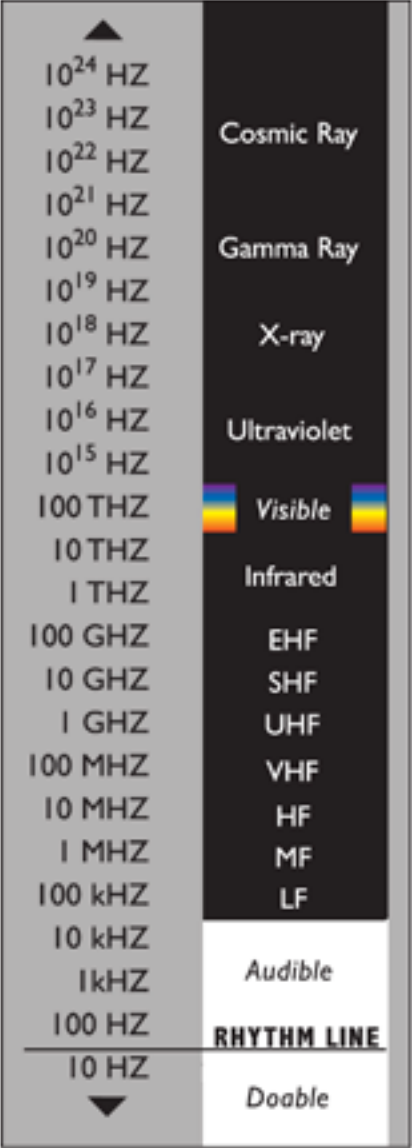


## THE RHYTHM LINE

As vibration falls in frequency downward through light, though ranges imperceptible to us and down through sound, it eventually slows to the point where we can apprehend each individual vibration: pitch becomes pulse. Experientially, vibrations within our pitch range and above exist without regard to time: while we can point to the time when such a frequency begins and ends, while it is occurring, while we

are inside of it, time is not referenced; pitch simply *is*. Pulse, in contrast, for us measures time; it is forever concerned with where it's been and where it's going. Of course, just because we can't count individual vibrations beyond a certain speed doesn't mean they're not occurring in time; we may experience A440, for example, as timeless, but it's still a wave cycling 440 times per second. But the fact that we *perceive* pitch as timeless, and pulse as time-based, suggests two separate modalities so ubiquitous to human experience that they're easy to miss: *being* and *process*. Our lives are spent being and doing; what we perceive as which is a matter of frequency. Again, we're not talking about what we can scientifically measure, or imagine; we're talking about what we perceive and experience. The implications of this are considerable: what we perceive and experience as "is" and what we perceive and experience as "does" defines for us what is fixed and what is mutable; our beliefs, our notions of reality, are intertwined with these distinctions.

In Muzoracle mythopoetics, the frequency that divides these modalities is called the *Rhythm Line*. It's more, however, than a fixed number where vibration falls out of our hearing range; it marks a shift in consciousness and varies for different people in different ways at different times. It is quite possible for us, for example, to bring more being *into* doing, to become more present in time, as any good drummer or meditator will tell you. *Presence in life is an altering of our relationship to frequency.*



Experientially, for us human critters, pitch—and by extension, harmony—is timeless. Pulse—and by extension, rhythm, scales, and melody—is time-based. In Muzoracle mythopoetics, pitch and harmony—expressed chiefly through the cards and the Musician's Die—indicate states of being. Rhythm, scales, and melody—expressed in a handful of cards and the Solfège Dice—indicate processes or points within processes.

THE HARMONIC SERIES

Back to our plucked string. So far we have been looking at a string vibrating along its entire length and generating a single wave. But there's another phenomenon that occurs when a string is plucked: in addition to the string vibrating along its entire length, it at the same time vibrates at half its length twice as fast—though to a much lesser degree. To a lesser degree as well, it vibrates at 1/3 its length at 3 times the speed, 1/4 its length at 4 times the speed, and so on.

These "inner vibrations" create smaller waves—*harmonics*—that travel concurrently with the primary one—the *fundamental*. We don't, however, perceive the fundamental and its harmonics as separate pitches. Instead, the harmonics add *color* to the singular sound of our plucked string: they give it its character. The volume of harmonics in relation to the fundamental, and to each other, let us know that it's a guitar we're hearing, and not a banjo or a harp.

Just which harmonics appear within a sound, and at what amplitude and when, is determined by physics. In the case of our guitar, it's the length, thickness, material, and tension of the string; the materials of the guitar's body, which have their own vibratory properties; the fact that the string is stretched across the guitar's sound hole, which channels some of the waves into the guitar's interior, where some resonate and get louder while others are absorbed and disappear; and the acoustic properties of the room in which the string is being plucked, where some of the waves are additionally reflected or absorbed. All of this occurs in the instant between the plucking and the hearing, and us identifying the sound as "guitar."

The pattern of harmonics, or “partials,” that arises from a fundamental at 2:1, 3:1, 4:1, and so on is called the *Harmonic Series*. This series doesn’t exist only for a plucked string, of course—it exists in all sound, and in all things that vibrate. As with our guitar string, harmonics everywhere appear how and when depending on the physics of what’s vibrating and where. A trumpet engenders one particular set of harmonics, tires screeching on the pavement, another. Sounds with loud fundamentals and soft harmonics, like a flute, sound “dark” or “pure” to us; sounds with more upper harmonics, like a violin or a sax, sound “bright.” When a sound’s harmonics compete in volume with its fundamental, pitch becomes a bit nebulous—that’s why church bells always sound vaguely out of tune. When harmonics overwhelm the fundamental, or when there are several sources within a sound, or when the source or sources within a sound are shifting shape or moving around, pitch goes out the window—we can’t really hum along with those screeching tires, or a whacked snare drum, or the sound of the surf. Nonetheless, the pattern of harmonics from which all those sounds emerge, the ratios between those harmonics, *is always the same*.

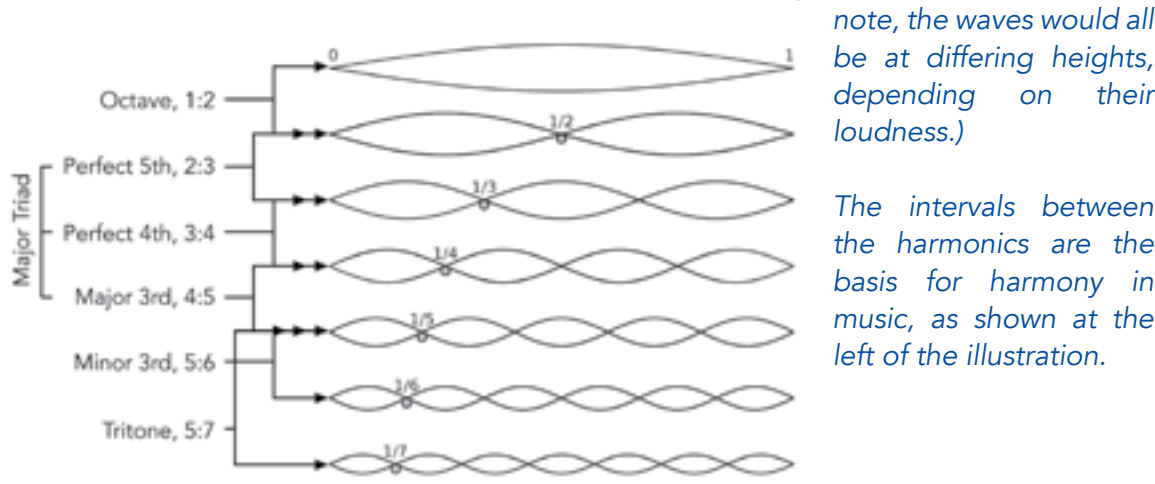
The ratios in the lower reaches of the harmonic series are the basis for harmony in music. 1:1 is a unison, two frequencies the same; frequencies at 2:1 are in an octave relationship; at 2:3, they make a perfect fifth; at 3:4, a perfect fourth; at 4:5 a major third, at 5:6 a minor third. In fact, if we assign each of those first six partials its own note, we get a big fat major chord—easily the most ubiquitous and sonorous harmony in western music. (Most anyone who plays an instrument knows that certain notes go into making one of these chords; fewer realize that each single note within the chord is built, via the Harmonic Series, of the same stuff.) That we find these lower ratio harmonies consonant and pleasing and others less so is more than cultural indoctrination—it is the laws of vibration at work.

**The Seventh Partial and the Harmonic Engine.** The relationships between the first six partials of the Harmonic Series are marked by consonance: they are at rest. When the seventh partial arises, however, a dissonance appears between it and the fifth partial below it—a *tritone*—that sets things in motion, and the *Harmonic Engine* kicks into

gear. What is commonly called “the Circle of Fifths” unfolds, as do diatonic (*do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti*) and chromatic (all the notes on the piano) scales. As explained earlier, the Rhythm Line is crossed when frequencies fall; as we’ll see, the Harmonic Engine *makes* them fall. The Harmonic Engine is explored fully in its eponymous chapter.

**Sonic Archetypes.** Along with their role in the Harmonic Engine, the organic harmonies that arise from the first seven partials of the Series play another significant role in Muzoracle mythopoetics: they are the basis of the *sonic archetypes* that define, along with the suits, the 55 Harmony Cards. The sonic archetypes are explored in their eponymous chapter as well.

*Below, the to and fro of a plucked and vibrating string: during the course of one cycle, all of the below (and then some) happens at once. (Keep in mind that middle C, for example, cycles more than 250 times per second.) The frequency shown at the top of the illustration is the fundamental—it would likely sound the loudest, and for us define a pitch. The frequencies below the fundamental are harmonics (or partials, take your pick.) They would sound much softer, and rather than sounding like separate frequencies would instead add color to the sound overall. (If the below illustration was a snapshot of an actual sounded*



## RESONANCE

Generally speaking, *resonance* describes when a vibrating object or system, or an external force, drives another object or system to vibrate with greater amplitude at a specific frequency. An understanding of resonance is essential in many fields: there is mechanical resonance, electrical resonance, optical resonance, orbital resonance... and acoustic resonance. The basic mechanics are the same in all.

**Acoustic Resonance.** Imagine we're generating a frequency—say a bass frequency, with waves 3 feet long. Let's say we're generating that frequency from a speaker at one end of a hard-surfaced room that is 12 feet long. Our 3 foot wave, then, will cycle 4 times, hit the wall, then bounce back. After it bounces, the wave coming back will be *in phase* with the sound still coming out of our speaker: the bounced wave will ride the hills and valleys of the original wave back across the room. When the bounced wave bounces again, the process will happen again, then again and again, back and forth, back and forth. While that is happening, those hills and valleys get taller and deeper with each bounce; and our frequency gets louder and louder. In other words, we don't need to turn up the volume at the speaker; at that frequency, the room turns up the volume for us. When a wave compounds like that it's called a *standing wave*; standing waves are the effect of a room's *resonant frequencies*.

Resonant frequencies are a big deal in acoustic design—you obviously need to take heed of them when building a concert hall or recording studio in order to get a pleasing sound that does not artificially color the instruments being played. Surfaces in those spaces are often not parallel, so waves can't bounce endlessly between them; and there is much attention paid to the absorbing and reflecting properties of building materials. Resonance plays a major role in instrument design as well: which frequencies resonate within and how they get out greatly determines an instrument's character (think guitar body and sound hole.) Interestingly, resonance crosses the Rhythm Line: when designing aircraft, for example, engineers have to design fuselages so they don't resonate with engine drones and begin the very process oriented activity of falling apart.

**After Science.** So far we've been considering vibration within media that science can measure. There is more of life that science doesn't see, however, than it does. Contemporary science, as of this writing, has no knowledge of, no language for, the materiality of thought, or feeling, or sensation; it only measures the correlations of those materialities with things it can measure, like brain and neural activity. But the effects of vibration plainly do reach into those materialities. How is it that certain music can make an entire room of strangers from different cultures all feel sadness, or peace, or excitement? Why does sound healing work? What are the charms music has to soothe the savage breast? Why is it the food of love? How is it that we dance?

Thought, feeling, and sensation are the stuff of our lives; we are utterly within them. And they are material—nothing exists outside of Nature, there are just some materialities we've yet to describe, some nature we don't yet include in our mansplaining. There is plenty to suggest, though, and nothing to suggest otherwise, that the laws of vibration reach into our immeasurables as well as our measurables—and resonance is chief among those laws.

**Vibration, Excitation.** How is it that we become excited? Someone tells or suggests something to us, and we become enthusiastic, or agitated, or it gets us thinking... this is resonance at work. The (as yet immeasurable) vibrations of an idea or feeling or act are put forth into the ethers, rather like a musical note, and there is something like within us, an ideal space or similar set of ideas or feelings, that are set into motion accordingly. This vibratory exchange, this broadcasting and receiving, resonating or no, goes on constantly in every conversation, in every interaction, even between species. Resonances make friends and enemies, they drag us to war then out again; they make tribes, nations, families.

Inwardly, resonance can be addictive—the increase in amplitude makes us feel alive. There's something satisfying in those “that pisses me off every time” moments, for example; unconsciously, we might set up a frequency to draw whatever that is to us, because we love to hate it. Resonances found in empathy or love, on the other hand, do



more than make us feel alive—they make us *be* alive. There are resonances associated with disease and with good health, happiness and misery, in body, in mind and feeling, over and underwhelming, criss-crossing the Rhythm Line...

We are bells a-ringing, waiting to be rung.

**The Secret.** Much is said, with either enthusiasm or disdain, about creating our own prosperity or lack thereof, our successes and failures. Much credence has been given to, and much snarkiness directed toward, the effects of affirmations and positive thinking. On the credence side, resonance is real. We absolutely draw people and things to us by what we put out, and we can use that constructively.

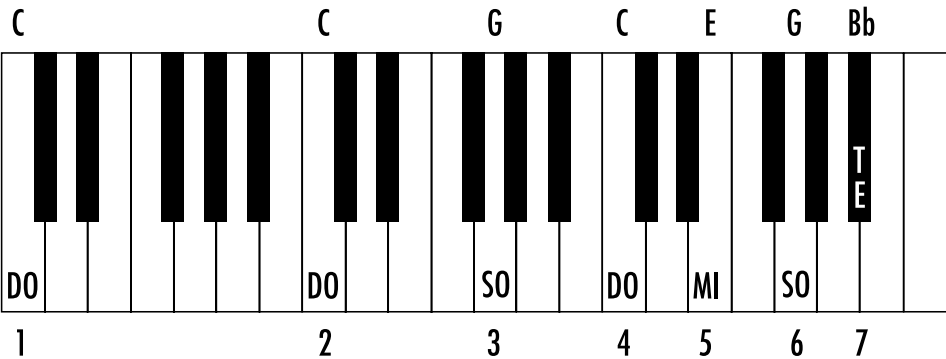
On the downside, we rarely know what we're putting out; we're distracted, we're not present to know. We're regretting the past or fretting the future, or fantasizing, or worrying about what others think of us, or running any number of unconscious mechanical routines—and while we are, *those* are the vibes we're putting out. When something from outside resonates within us, we begin judging and filing it before we can absorb or understand it; or, we hear only what we want to hear in the first place, and use what we think we've heard to prop up our beliefs; or, we fly into some crazy reactive behavior with no awareness we have done so, all the while asserting all is well, we're in control.

Yes, we're approval whores, and yes, we reactively judge and file, and yes, our own opinions and beliefs are often so noisy we don't hear the voices of others. That's the kind of critters we are, and lucky us: life is a gift and crucible, amen. But let's not pretend we're conscious creators when in fact we only occasionally are. Resonant frequencies within and without bat us about like pinballs in a machine, shifting our moods and courses of action without our permission. Bottom line: there is no way to make resonance work for us without working on ourselves. In order to consciously create, we must first be conscious.

## THE HARMONIC ENGINE

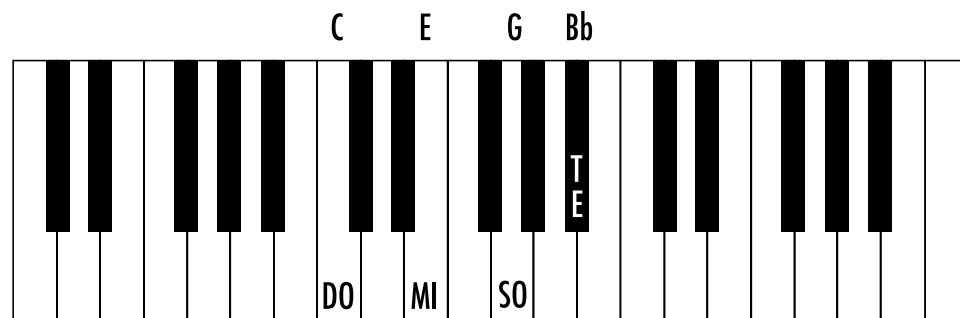
Both Muzoracle mythopoetics and the mechanics of Muzoracle castings arise from and depend on the interplay of two modes of experience: being (above the Rhythm Line) and process (below it.) Each of those modes is continually being generated by the other: being gives rise to process, and process gives rise to being. Mythopoetically, the impetus for this continual becoming begins in the *Harmonic Engine*.

A good visual reference for the workings of the Harmonic Engine is the piano keyboard (though it's not entirely accurate sound-wise given the way pianos are usually tuned—more on that later.) We'll use the piano keyboard and the key of "C" for demonstration purposes in this chapter.



Above are the first seven partials of the Harmonic Series shown on a keyboard in the key of C.

If we “reduce” those notes to a single octave—if we take all the frequencies from the series and double or halve them until they fit between two consecutive Cs — we wind up with the following:



As we can see, the first six partials are part of a diatonic scale: they are all either *do*'s, *so*'s, or *mi*. *Do*, *so*, and *mi* sounded together make something lovely: a Major Triad or chord, in this case a C major chord, *do-mi-so*, C-E-G. This is very sonorous to us, and for good reason: the notes that comprise the chord are close in ratio to its fundamental, close to *do*. These three notes, derived from these first six partials, together are at rest, and we are at rest within them.

The appearance of the seventh partial, however, of *te*, throws a bit of a wrench in the works. It marks the arising of dissonance, especially between itself and the fifth partial—*mi*—below it. This dissonance, called a *tritone*, wants to resolve—we want to resolve it. Or perhaps we don't—in any case, the possibility of resolution presents itself. Wanting, desire, resolution, possibilities... what, along with the seventh partial, has come into play here? What does this dissatisfaction, this possibility of resolve, require and involve that was not, for us experientially, present before the seventh partial arose?

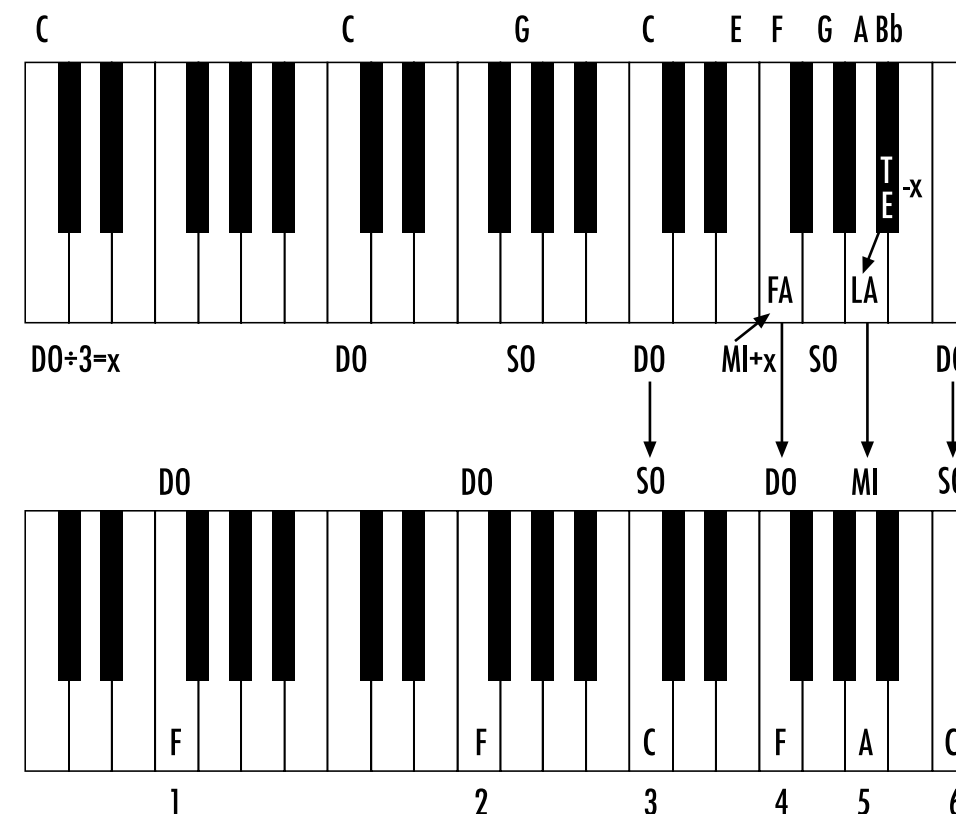
Time. In Muzoracle mythopoetics, the arising of the seventh partial marks the birth of time.

So: the seventh partial has risen. We were being, now we're doing; we were at rest, now we move. But where do we go?

The dissonance of the Tritone, its hunger to resolve, has a particular character: the fifth

partial aches to rise, and the seventh to fall—and by precisely the same amount, in fact. By adding *one third of our fundamental frequency* to the fifth partial and subtracting that same third from the seventh partial, we find the resolution we seek—and much else as well.

The fifth partial, *mi*, rises to become *fa*, and the seventh partial, *te*, falls to become *la*. *Fa*, however, is not just the fourth step of *do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti* in C; it is also *do* of a new key: F. And *la* is not only the sixth step of a C scale; it becomes *mi* of that new *do*.



Musically speaking, we’ve just seen and heard the movement of a dominant seventh to a tonic (if you don’t know what that means, you’ll recognize it in a second when you hear it.) That movement is a driving force in much—all, arguably— of the world’s music, either by its inclusion or in its avoidance or lack.

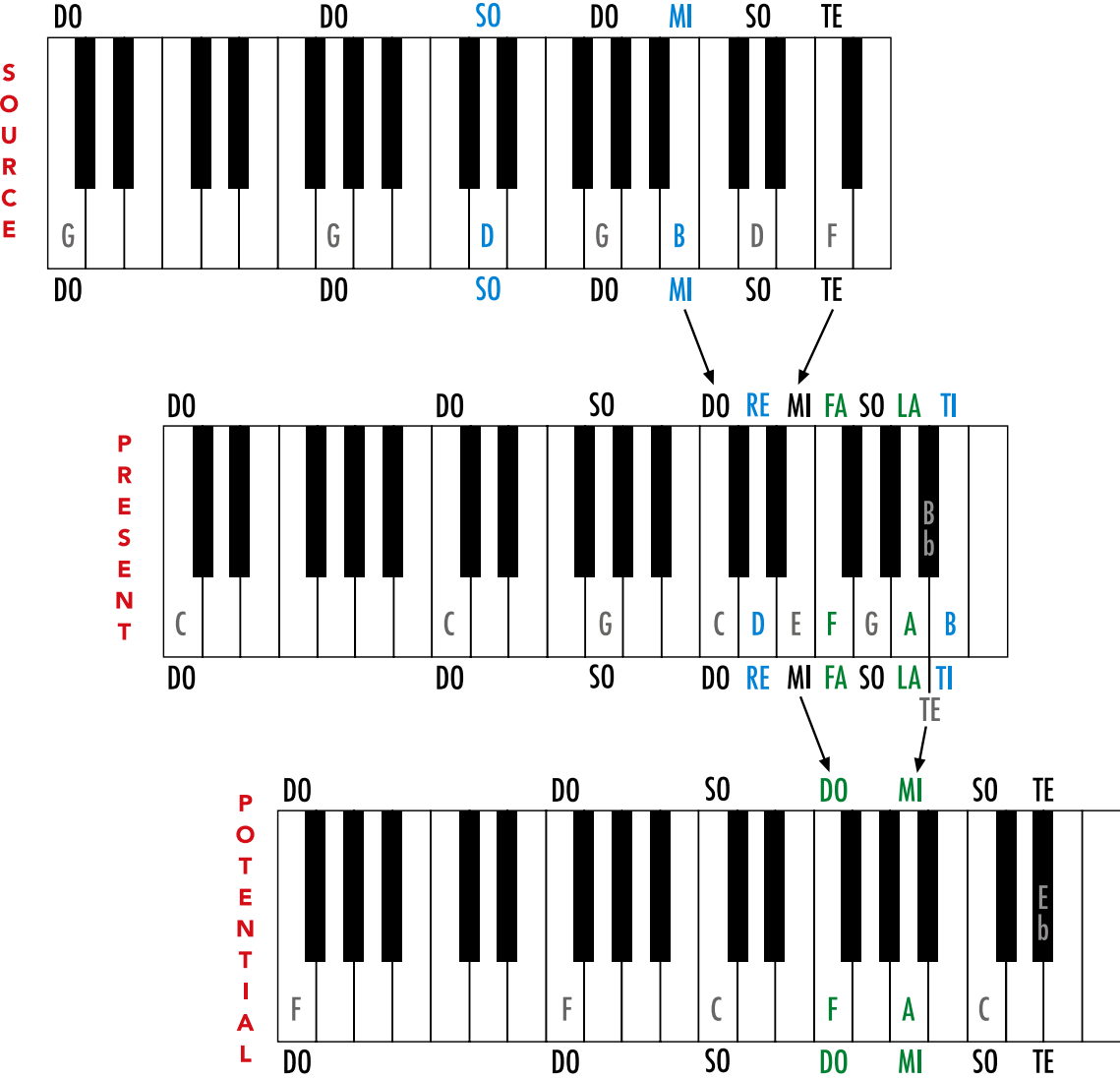
Mythopoetically, we’ve witnessed a dissonance arising in the present and spawning a future.

$$\frac{f_5 + \frac{f}{3}}{f_7 - \frac{f}{3}} \div 2 \approx \frac{(\frac{2}{3}f)4}{(\frac{2}{3}f)5}$$

Let’s go back to our first scale, the one in C. There are now only two notes missing from it: *re* and *ti*. Where might they come from? Well, if our second scale—the one in F—was born of a scale a fifth above it—the C scale—then the C scale must have been born of a scale a fifth above it: from the key of G.

In the language of the Muzorcle, what’s emerging here is a *ternion*: three interlocked harmonic series a fifth apart, with the center one flushed out into a diatonic scale. Mythopoetically, they speak of where we’ve been, where we are, and where we’re going; they are *Source*, *Present*, and *Potential Series*, respectively.

The scales engendered by the Harmonic Engine are descending ones: *do-ti-la-so-fa-mi-re*. Time is born within being, and moving downward through frequency eventually falls below the Rhythm Line, becoming our experience of process. Process gives birth to that which is; and from that which is arises process again. Spurring into movement, falling into being: the Harmonic Engine provides us a glimpse into this, and motors the Muzorcle mythopoetics down the road.



**A word about tuning.** One might think that, via the Harmonic Engine, we could start with one harmonic series and extrapolate the next, then the next, then the next, creating a cascade of keycenters, one after the other. C would lead to F, which would lead to B-flat, which would lead to E-flat and so on, until we circled back around and had all twelve keys (musicians will recognize here the *Circle of Fifths*; it's how we all learn sharps and flats and keycenters.) And that does happen with our equation, but we don't stay in tune for long. A ternion will stay in tune with itself, but go beyond its confines—to the source of a source, for example, or the potential of a potential—and the scales near the outer rim go further and further out of whack; and we end up not with a Circle of Fifths, but a spiral.

And that's all well and good, unless we want to make music every which way that moves freely through all twelve keys and still sounds in tune—which, of course, we often do. And how do we do it? Well, we play out of tune—but make sure we're just a little out of tune, and *equally* so (and hope no one notices.) Seriously—it's called *equal temperament*: we tune our octaves perfectly—1:2, 2:4, 4:8, etc.—and just divide everything in between the octaves evenly by 12. This allows for the more-or-less-in-tune chromaticism we know and love, and it's symmetrical, and we're used to it, and our Circle of Fifths stays a circle; but it is not congruent with the organic harmonies that arise in Nature. The Perfect Fifths are not perfect, the Major Thirds, majorly not. Equal temperament has wonderful advantages in many applications, but it is close-but-not-close-enough for many involved in music healing, for example; nor for those who can discern, and/or care about, or at least want to have the option of experiencing, low ratio, deeply consonant intervals; nor for those who want to make use of all sorts of intervals, consonant and otherwise.

The temperament used in the Muzoracle—on *muzoracle.com* and by its creator in the Muzoracle studio—is the *Telluspheric Tuning Matrix (TTM)*, a tuning system based on the workings of the Harmonic Engine as it plays out in the Earth's atmosphere. There are many “pure,” as in low ratio, intervals within the matrix—and many that are noticeably whacked. In a casting, the consonance/dissonance of a given Harmony Card, for example, will vary quite a bit depending on the Solfège Die it lies above or under. But this is appropriate, as the card will also vary quite a bit in meaning. The [TTM is explored in depth](#) in the *Deeper* section near the end of this book.

## THREE FORCES

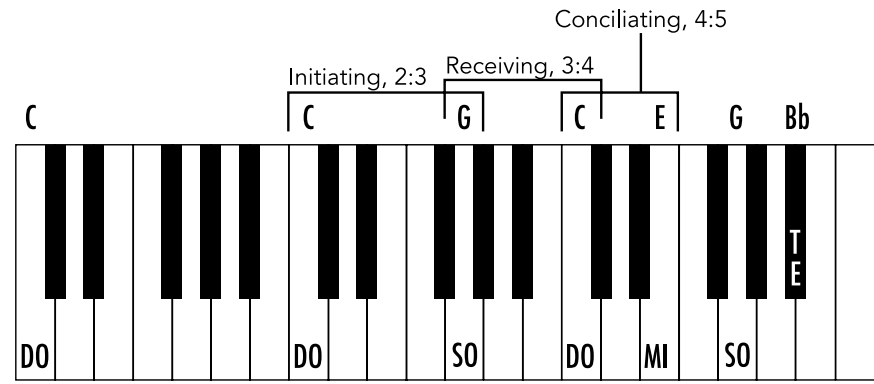
The Law of Three, as defined by G.I. Gurdjieff, states that there are three primary forces at work in our world, the affirming, denying, and reconciling; in the Muzoracle they are called the *Initiating Force*, the *Receiving Force*, and the *Conciliating Force*. The Initiating and Receiving forces are somewhat analogous to the Taoist concepts of *yang* and *yin*, respectively, to active/passive, positive/negative, masculine/feminine, and so on. Yang and yin, however, are sometimes used to describe states of being, while the three forces are just that: they are forces, they “act upon” or within. The Receiving Force refers to the “passive action” of that which is preexisting and receptive. It is alive in the darkness from which existence springs, and the nothingness into which “something-ness” enters. The Initiating Force is that which springs forth from the Receiving, and penetrates it as well: it is active, bright, rising, falling, and actuating change. The Receiving Force is a foil to the Initiating, a resistance; yet without the Receiving there would be nothing from which the Initiating could arise. Like yin and yang, the Receiving and Initiating forces are contained within one another, and are interdependent.

The third force, the Conciliating Force, is that which brings the first two together and allows phenomena to manifest. In electricity, for example, the first two forces flow as positive and negative currents—both of which are moot without the presence of the third force, alive in the conductor. The third force can also express within a catalyst, as when flour and water become bread with fire; or within a conciliation, as when two sides of a case are resolved by a judge; or within a result, as when a teacher and pupil ensure transmission of a teaching.

While we can observe the effects of this third force and sometimes see what brings it about, the force itself is ultimately a mystery to us. Electricity is a classic example—we don't really know what it is. We can measure the activity of fire on flour and water, but the true how and why of that activity is a mystery (and so, by extension, is bread.) We can see a judge resolving two sides of a case, but the actual activity of resolution—what is that? Slippery as the Conciliating Force is to define, it is easy to see when it's lacking: the first

two forces play off one another endlessly, and nothing furthers. Lack of the third force can readily be seen, for example, in war: regardless of either or both parties' intentions or roles, it inevitably winds up a game of pass the gun.

In Muzoracle mythopoetics, the Initiating Force is expressed in the ratio of 2:3, in the interval of the Perfect Fifth, which marks the first appearance of harmony in the Series that is not an octave. In the Harmony Cards, Perfect Fifths are equated with initiative and assertion. The Receiving Force is expressed in the space between the Perfect Fifth and the Octave just above it, in the interval of the Perfect Fourth at 3:4. Perfect Fourths in the Harmony Cards speak of yielding, inclusiveness, and essence. The Conciliating Force is expressed in the sonorous Major Third, which arises just above the Perfect Fourth at a ratio of 4:5; in a Major Triad, this is the interval that truly sweetens the pot. In the Harmony Cards, Major Thirds are equated with resolution and ease. (Note, however, that when *mi* sounds, the sixth and seventh partials await, are implied; *mi-so-te* forms a little triad of its own, a “diminished” one, framed in a tritone. Even resolution and ease are on their way elsewhere. Also notable is the fact that our initial *do* arose, via the Harmonic Engine, from the key a Perfect Fourth below itself—the Initiating Force does not only penetrate the Receiving, but is born of it as well.)



The Three Forces in the key of C.

## ASCENT AND DESCENT

Muzoracle castings are based on the diatonic scale: *do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti* going up, and *do-ti-la-so-fa-mi-re* coming down. As explained in the Harmonic Engine chapter, the notes of this scale emerge from a ternion comprising three interconnected harmonic series: the Present Series, which gives us *do*, *so*, and *mi*; the Potential Series, which gives us *fa* and *la*; and the Source Series, which gives us *re* and *ti*. Each series within a ternion gives birth to the next through time—source to present, then present to potential—via the arising of each’s seventh partial and the workings of the Harmonic Engine.

The yields of the Harmonic Engine are downward in nature: as each seventh partial arises, another series is born a perfect fifth *below* its own. When we reduce a ternion into a single diatonic scale, it is a downward traveling one: *do-ti-la-so-fa-mi-re*. In Muzoracle mythopoetics and castings, descending scales represent the downward flowing, organically proliferating processes of Nature: the things that happen around us, to us, and through us. Ascending scales, on the other hand, represent intentional processes: the things we make happen, or try to.

Descending and ascending processes are not necessarily in opposition—they are, however, interdependent. They correlate with, and are fueled by, the Initiating and Receiving forces: the upward push of intention and action brings the new into being, at which point it joins the downward flow of manifestation; but without things being manifest in the first place, there would be nowhere to set intention and take action from.

The notes in a diatonic scale, and the scalepoints on the Solfège Dice, are like rungs on a ladder; they have a different significance, a different meaning, depending upon which direction we are traveling. The bottom rung of a ladder, for example, marks the beginning of an effort when ascending, and the end of a journey when descending. That’s why, with

the Musician's Die, we determine the direction of a casting at its outset: the scalepoints we roll afterward mean different things, depending on whether we're going up the ladder or coming down.

"What's comin' down" manifests in many ways: tides of misfortune, streaks of luck, remarkable strangers, friends at the door... Ultimately, though, in its finest form, the Descending Force is love. Bursting forth from Unfathomable Source, love descends through slowing levels of vibration and increasing levels of density, expanding each as it is expressed: *love is how the universe expands*. By the same token, love expands our hearts: it creates more space than it occupies, making room for ever more love to be expressed.

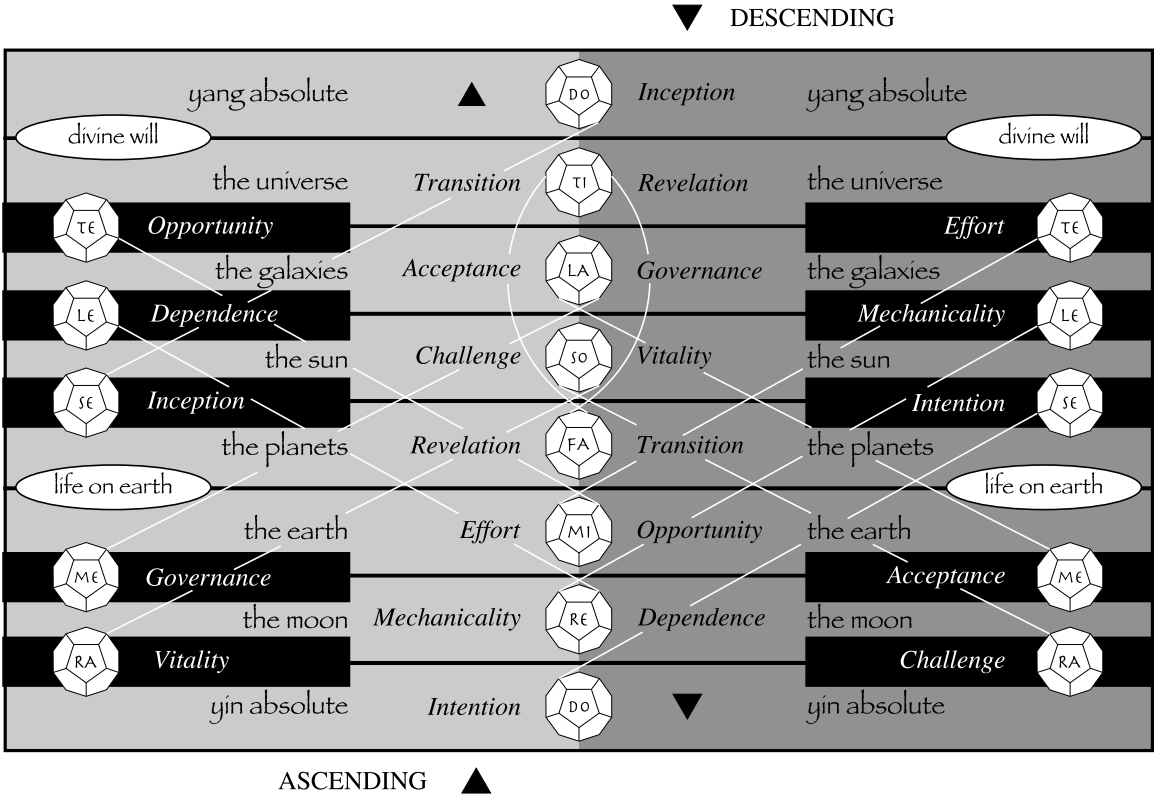
The Ascending Force is expressed when we try "to do," and like everything is an expression of the Descending Force: we make efforts because we have a place to make efforts from. The Ascending Force is born of and serves the Descending, which depends upon the Ascending to further itself. In all this, whether we try or no, succeed or fail, we eventually come to love.

*Love cannot be ungrown—once it becomes, it remains. The universe has changed.*

*We mourn love lost, but it cannot be—it can be buried, denied, cast off, illegalized, unexpressed, but the born cannot be unborn; the sky cannot unrain.*

*We cannot love or be loved less than we did or were; if it is less than we thought, it never was more.*

*No one has ever been loved more than they are now. Every tender moment is eternal*



## AN ASTROLOGY OF VIBRATION

The notion of plotting processes on ascending and descending scales is drawn from the *Law of Seven*, as found in the cosmology of G. I. Gurdjieff. The law in general, as Gurdjieff presents it, doesn't name each point in the scale beyond its solfège title; his emphasis instead is on the differences in vibration and density between the points, and how they might be discerned in any process, and how we might navigate those differences. Gurdjieff does provide, however, one point-defined example of a

very large descending scale: the *Ray of Creation*. In Gurdjieff’s cosmology, the macro-oriented Ray of Creation runs parallel to a micro-oriented alchemy that correlates with the transformation of substances as they fuel various aspects of being. In Muzoracle mythopoetics, the points within the Ray retain their connection to the cosmos, but are further defined in a way unique to the Muzoracle itself.

The Ray of Creation plots the ancestry of the cosmic beings of our world—galaxies, suns, planets, et al.— on a giant diatonic scale. The highest point in the scale—the pre-big bang *do*—vibrates the fastest; it is also the least dense, and levels of increasing density and slowing vibration cascade downward from it, through the cosmos to our relatively law-bound world. The fastest and finest, however, permeate the slow and coarse: the cosmic ancestry that we are contained within is contained within us as well. Through conscious effort, through becoming what we already deeply are, lies the possibility of individual evolution: the downward and outward flow of nature provides the possibility of inward and upward ascent. We can climb the ladder by virtue of being on the ladder. (It’s worth noting that the Ray of Creation is only our ray, the ray we can discern—one ray among who knows how many. How big was that bang? [Further explorations of each of the scalepoints](#) as they function in the Muzoracle can be found in the *Metaphors at Play* chapter.)

**Chromatica.** The Ray of Creation is plotted on seven notes, *do-ti-la-so-fa-mi-re*; these are the notes generated in a ternion, the notes of the diatonic major scale. However, the chromatic scale contains, and Solfège Dice exhibit, twelve scalepoints—what about the other five, the chromatic scalepoints?

Chromatic scalepoints do not have meanings separate from the diatonic scalepoints—they are instead mirror images of them. Here’s how and why.

The twelve notes used in the Muzoracle are not drawn from the chromatic scale—they are drawn instead from *two separate diatonic scales a tritone apart*, one ascending while the other descends. The reason why two seven note scales give us only twelve

points and not fourteen is that the two scales share two notes: *ti* and *fa*, which are themselves a tritone apart. The mechanics of this can be seen in the “Kingfisher’s Mirror” at right: on the right side of the mirror is a C Major scale, on the left, a major scale in F#/Gb. While the notes reflected in the mirror are always the same—*la* is always opposite *me*, for example—the scales are actually always in motion, one ascending while the other descends. (Next time you’re playing a piano and catch a reflection of your hands in the lid, well... there you have it.)

This explains why, for example, *do* and *se* share the same meanings. In an ascending casting, *do* is the Point of Intention; *se* is actually a different *do* from a descending scale a tritone away, and is the Point of Inception. In a descending casting, the reverse is true: *do* descending is Inception, while *se* ascending is Intention. We would never find both *do* and *se* ascending in a casting and have Intention twice—because of the way casting works, diatonic and chromatic points always show up on opposite sides of the mirror.

SE			DO
FA			TI
ME	MI	TE	LA
RA	RE	LE	SO
TI	DO	SE	FA
TE			MI
LE	LA	ME	RE
SE	SO	RA	DO
FA			TI
ME	MI	TE	LA
RA	RE	LE	SO
TI	DO	SE	FA
TE			MI
LE	LA	ME	RE
SE	SO	RA	DO
FA			TI
ME	MI	TE	LA
RA	RE	LE	SO
TI	DO	SE	FA
TE			MI
LE	LA	ME	RE
SE	SO	RA	DO



It is significant that the interval that separates ascending and descending scales is a tritone, whose ratio is 5:7—the same dissonance that drives the Harmonic Engine. Whenever the Musician's Die is rolled and a keycenter presents itself, we are not only invoking a scale based on organic elements arising in the harmonic series; we are also invoking its twin opposite, born of the same whirring mechanics.

**Decrements.** The diatonic scale is comprised mostly of “whole steps”: the ratios between the notes are either 8:9 or 9:10. Two of the intervals, however—the ones between *mi* and *fa* and *ti* and *do*—are “half-steps”: the distance between them is quite a bit less, at 15:16 or tighter. (This can easily be seen in the key of C on a piano: there's no black key between E and F and B and C.) These naturally occurring smaller intervals—called *decrements*—are significant in that they bracket the naturally occurring tritone between *fa* and *ti*. They also figure prominently in mapping descending and ascending processes: successfully navigating *mi* to *fa* and *ti* to *do* requires a new sort of energy input, a kind of lessening for the shorter distance, perhaps in the form of finer material or a dissolving of attachments; a “shock,” as Gurdjieff put it.

In the Ray of Creation allegory, the decrement between *do* and *ti* descending, between Yang Absolute and our universe, is filled by “divine will,” the unfathomable descending force. Bridging the decrement between *fa* and *mi*, between the planetary, archetypal world of gods, goddesses, and dreams and the Earth, is the delicate, vibrating film encasing our planet: organic life.



## PITCH, CHAKRAS, AND A WORLD “DO”

Chakras are energy vortices in our subtle, or spirit, bodies that correspond with locations in our physical bodies. Our subtle bodies contain complex networks of channels called *nadis* that carry *prana*, or vital energy, much in the way our veins carry blood. Chakras are the places where these channels intersect. The chakras carry out functions necessary to our subtle bodies in the way that organs carry out functions necessary to our physical ones. They maintain their position relative to the physical body, but are in constant rotating motion, animated by the energy coursing through them.

The theory of subtle bodies and chakras comes from the Tantric Yoga traditions. The exact number of chakras varies from branch to branch, and varies further still in the many other practices that have adopted and adapted the theory. Most contemporary systems, including the Muzoracle, acknowledge and work with seven major chakras. They are the Crown Chakra, the activity of which can be sensed in the area just behind the top of the skull; the Third Eye Chakra, which can be felt between and just above the eyes; the Throat Chakra, felt just above the V of the collarbone at the lower neck; the Heart Chakra, behind the breastbone and in front of the shoulder blades; the Solar Plexus Chakra, two inches below the breastbone behind the stomach; the Sacral Chakra, two inches below the navel and rooted to the spine; and the Root Chakra, between the tail bone and the pubic bone.

Energetically, we are conduits between the Heavens and the Earth. Descending energy enters us through the Crown, increasing in density and slowing in vibration as it falls downward. Accordingly, each chakra spins slower than the one above it, converting the energy passing through it into a form appropriate to its function. Ascending energy rises from the Earth and moves upward from the Root, decreasing in density and increasing in vibration as it is transformed. These “Seven Steps to Heaven,” this Jacob's Ladder, are analogous to the seven steps of the diatonic scale.





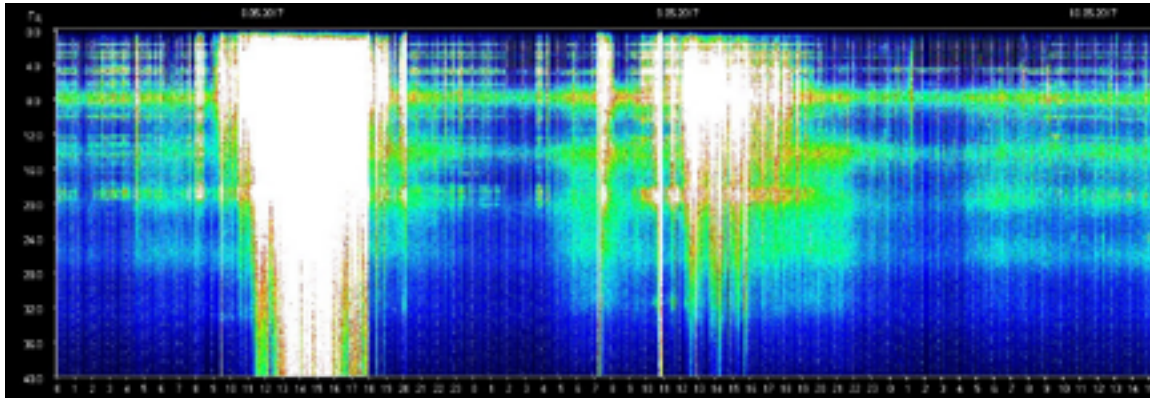
In Muzoracle mythopoetics, and in many other practices and traditions, the note “C” is aligned with the Root Chakra. Unique to the Muzoracle system is the exact frequency assigned to C—it is lower than in most tuning systems, as explained below. Also unique to the system is the use of the chromatic notes that fall between the seven diatonic ones: they reference energy moving up or down from one chakra to the next.

The keycenter of a casting defines its *do*, and thus its tonality; musically, everything in the casting references it, either by consonance with it or lack thereof. The chakra associated with a casting’s keycenter relates similarly: the entirety of the casting takes place within, around, or in relation to it. A casting’s keycenter can be thought of as its “where”: the casting takes place in or around its associated chakra, referencing the chakra’s properties and touching upon its metaphors.

**Schumann Resonances and the Muzoracle C.** The most common frequency assigned to middle C is 261.63 Hz, which is what we end up with when we tune the A above middle C to 440 Hz (“A440.”) Many composers and musicians, especially those involved in healing work, use A432 instead of A440, which puts middle C at 256 Hz. The Muzoracle uses a C lower still, at 250.56 Hz. The Muzoracle C is derived from the Schumann Resonances.

Schumann Resonances were first documented by Nikola Tesla in 1899. A German physicist named Winfried Schumann studied them extensively and began trying to measure them in the 1950s, and got his name attached to them (although accurate measurements weren’t possible until the 60s—and Tesla’s numbers were right from the start.) The resonances arise from lightning storms—of which there are around 2000 occurring planet-wide at any given moment—exciting the cavity of air between the Earth’s surface and the ionosphere. Acoustically speaking, life on Earth arises and exists within a room whose boundaries are these. Due to the ongoingness of the storms, this torus-shaped expanse that encases us is forever singing, like a wine glass forever flicked by the finger of fate. The fundamental frequency of that song, the *do* of its tonality, is, on average with slight variations, 7.83 Hz: the fundamental Schumann Resonance.

To say that the fundamental Schumann Resonance has an influence is an understatement: all of life on Earth—including us and our thoughts and feelings—arises within it and its harmonics. That sounds like a world *do* if I've ever heard one—and that's the frequency associated with C and the Root Chakra in the Muzoracle system. (While 7.83 Hz is far below the range of our hearing, we can hear—and certainly feel—the resonance two octaves higher, at 31.32 Hz; three octaves higher than that we find our middle C at 250.56 Hz.)



*A spectrogram of the Schumann Resonances, recorded over a few months in 2017.*



So far we have explored the mechanics, and metaphors drawn from those mechanics, that underlie the Muzoracle system as a whole. This section of the handbook explores metaphors specific to individual cards and dice: keycenters and their related chakras, which relate to the Musician's Die; scalepoints, which relate to the Solfège Dice; and the suits, sonic archetypes, musicians, and compositional elements that make up the cards of the Muzoracle deck.

## KEYCENTERS AND CHAKRAS: THE DIATONICS



**Keycenter of C: Muladhara, the Root Chakra.** The keycenter of C is aligned with the Root Chakra, which is centered between the tail bone and the pubic bone. Castings in the key of C tend to take place in areas regarding safety and security.

Jokes abound regarding the anal sphincter and fear—we've all heard of someone so scared they "just about crapped their pants." When someone's stingy with money, or stingy in general, we say they're a "tight ass." As humorous (or not) as these phrases might be, they point to something real: when we're fearful or anxious, that's where we tighten up. When the Root Chakra is open and balanced, we are grounded and secure, relaxed and at home in our bodies; we exhibit poise and confidence, we trust our instincts, we trust the trustworthy. If the chakra's blocked or underactive, we can be unreasonably suspicious or worried for our safety; if it's overactive, we can be bossy or greedy. Suspicion, worry, bossiness, greediness: all fear-based stuff. When the Root Chakra's balanced, they don't happen.

On a cosmic level, the Root Chakra connects us energetically to the Earth: energy rises from the planet through it and upward through us, as well as downward through us and down to the planet.

Cards in the suit of Percussion share an affinity with the Root Chakra, as do colors and

stones of red and black, the herbs of dandelion root and sage, and the scent of cedar. In the body, the Root Chakra is associated with the health and well being of the spine and skeletal system, the intestines, the legs and feet, the kidneys and bladder, and the immune and endocrine systems.



**Keycenter of D: Swadhisthana, the Sacral Chakra.** The keycenter of D is aligned with the Sacral Chakra, which is located two inches below the navel and rooted to the spine. Castings in the key of D tend to take place in the areas of relationships, intimacy, and creative partnership.

Sex is a very powerful thing. Through it, physical life is furthered—for a start. The Sacral Chakra is sex central, and energy manifesting through it affects intimacy issues, certainly; but it affects nonsexual relationships as well, and is profoundly connected to creativity. When the Sacral Chakra is open and balanced, we are relaxed and playful with others; we appreciate them, we appreciate ourselves. We're free to be flirty, though not necessarily in a sexual way; there's winks and jokes and camaraderie. Creativity flows through us and between us—we give life to new projects and ideas cooperatively. A blocked Sacral Chakra looks like sexual repression, even if it's not sexual: we're uptight around others, we're scared to touch one another, we can't cooperate, smiles are rare. If the chakra's overactive, we can be manipulative or clingy.

Cards in the suit of Brass share an affinity with the Sacral Chakra, as do the color orange and orange stones, the herbs of calendula and hibiscus, and the scent of gardenia. In the body, the Sacral Chakra is associated with the health and well being of the reproductive system, the lymphatic system, and the urinary tract.



**Keycenter of E Descending: Manipura, the Solar Plexus Chakra.** The keycenter of E is aligned with the Solar Plexus Chakra, which is located two inches below the breastbone, behind the stomach, around the navel. Castings in the key of E tend to take place in areas regarding willpower, determination, and courage.



The Solar Plexus Chakra lives in our core, and energy expressed through it is suffused with the power of will. It is the fire in the belly; it gets things done. It is the seat of courage, confidence, and respect for ourselves and others. When the Solar Plexus Chakra is blocked or underactive, we procrastinate or are apathetic; we may suffer from low self-esteem. If the chakra is overactive, we may find ourselves stuck in anger, bullying others, or being stubborn or judgmental.

Cards in the suit of Brass share a strong affinity with the Solar Plexus Chakra, as do colors and stones of yellow and gold, the herbs of rosemary and fennel, and the scents of cinnamon and sandalwood. In the body, the Solar Plexus Chakra governs cellular respiration, and is associated with the health and well being of the nervous system, stomach, gall bladder, large intestine, liver, and pancreas.



**Keycenter of F Ascending: Anahata, the Heart Chakra.** The keycenter of F is aligned with the Heart Chakra, which is located behind the breastbone and in front of the shoulder blades. Castings in the key of F tend to take place in areas regarding love.

Of all the chakras, the Heart Chakra is the most easily understood, the most readily recognizable. We all know the feeling of the heart suddenly opening, when we spontaneously give to others, or they unexpectedly give to us; we feel it in the hug of a child, in gratitude for a partner or friend, in the scent of a rose. When the Heart Chakra is open and balanced we love and are loved, are empathetic, kind, grateful, and compassionate. If the Heart chakra is blocked or underactive, we may become lost in self-pity or fearful of rejection. If the chakra is overactive, we can be jealous, or feel entitled, or cast blame on others.

Cards in the suit of Strings share a strong affinity with the Heart Chakra, as do colors and stones of green and pink, hawthorne berries, and the scents of rose and jasmine. In the body, the Heart Chakra is associated with the health and well being of the lungs, the heart and circulatory system, and the thymus, which is critical to the adaptive immune system.



**Keycenter of G: Visuddha, the Throat Chakra.** The keycenter of G is aligned with the Throat Chakra, which is located just above the “V” of the collarbone, and includes the larynx; it engages as well the ears and nose. Castings in the key of G tend to take place in areas regarding communication.

It is via the Throat Chakra that we speak and sing, of course—and also that we listen. When the chakra is open and balanced, we are honest and expressive, and we listen deeply; we seek and share truth; we communicate. When the chakra is blocked or underactive, we can’t seem to express ourselves; we may be afraid to speak in public, or have a hard time comprehending what is said to us. When the chakra is overactive, we talk too much: we prattle on without regard to whom we are speaking, and/or keep our inner chatter running while others speak, and so do not hear them.

Cards in the suit of Voices share an obvious affinity with the Throat Chakra, as do colors and stones of bright or pale blue, the herbs of red clover and chamomile, and the scents of bergamot and frankincense. In the body, the Throat Chakra is associated with the health and well being of the thyroid gland and endocrine system, the larynx, the trachea, and the mouth, ears, and nose.



**Keycenter of A: Ajna, the Third Eye Chakra.** The keycenter of A is aligned with the Third Eye Chakra, located between and just above the eyes. Castings in the key of A tend to take place in areas regarding conscience, intuition, and visualization.

It is possible to observe the sensation of thought in various parts of the head. Thought in its finer forms—as conscience, as intuition and deep knowing, as clear visualization—manifests where the Third Eye Chakra spins, just above and between the eyes. When the chakra is balanced and open, we see things clearly; with the help of the heart, we know the right choices to make. Our expanded vision includes more of the future: we can see what’s coming, in the form of a simple hunch, or as sustained psychic ability. Our imagination is powerful and focused: we can visualize. If the Third Eye Chakra

is blocked or underactive, we are confused, uncertain, and unfocused. If the chakra is overactive, we can suffer monkey mind, as our thoughts flit from one to another; or we can be spacey or lost in fantasy; or our doubts can escalate into a feedback loop of worry.

Cards in the suit of Woodwinds share an affinity with the Third Eye, as do colors and stones of indigo and purple, and the herbs and scents of rosemary, mint, and clary sage. In the body, the Third Eye Chakra is associated with the health and well being of the pineal gland, the eyes, and the ears.



**Keycenter of B: Crown Chakra.** The keycenter of B is aligned with the Crown Chakra, located just behind the top of the skull. Castings in the key of B tend to take place in areas that address the transpersonal, our common core, and our connections to higher/deeper self and transcendent realities.

The Crown Chakra is the passage on the roof—the finest and fastest enter and exit here. It overlaps the personal and the transpersonal, the ego and the infinite; it is an invitation to unity; it is Adam's hand on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. When the Crown Chakra is open and in balance, synchronicity is rampant; joy is available; purpose is felt. When it is blocked or underactive, we find denial or ignorance of the interconnectedness of life; rigid beliefs, religious, scientific, or otherwise; we can't have fun. If the chakra is overactive, there may be obsessive thoughts, or a living in the past or future, or being "spiritual" to the point of ignoring bodily needs.

Cards in the suit of Voices share an affinity with the Crown Chakra, as do the colors of violet and white, and clear, white, silver, and violet stones. The scent of myrrh, and lavender as both a scent and an herb, work well with the Crown Chakra. In the body, the Crown Chakra is associated with the health and well being of the brain.

## ENERGY IN TRANSIT: THE CHROMATICS

**Up and down and sharps and flats.** Each of the chromatic notes on the Musician's Die—which correlate with the black keys on the piano—are spelled two different ways. C# ("C sharp") and Db ("D flat"), for example, are both on the same face of the die. That's because C# and Db are actually the same note, which can be arrived at by either going up from C or down from D. (To "sharp" a note means to raise it, to "flat" a note means to lower it.) If a casting's ascending, we use the "sharp" spelling, as in "C# Ascending." If a casting's descending, we use the flat spelling, as in "Db Descending." While the keycenter in both cases would sound the same, the Chakra Reference would be different: C# is on its way up from the Root to the Sacral Chakra, while Db is on its way down from the Sacral to the Root.

**C# Ascending: Energy rising from the Root to Sacral Chakras.** Evolving from safety and security issues into creative response; moving from fear-based isolation into camaraderie and companionship and/or intimacy.

**Db Descending: Energy falling from the Sacral to Root Chakras.** Creativity coming to fruition; intimate relationships shifting to a more grounded and safe place.

**D# Ascending: Energy rising from the Sacral to Solar Plexus Chakras.** Creativity as a path to empowerment; transmuting sexual energy into personal power.

**Eb Descending: Energy falling from the Solar Plexus to Sacral Chakras.** Bringing to bear the will to create; bringing intent into intimate relationships.

**E Ascending: Energy rising from the Solar Plexus to Heart Chakras.\*** Shifting from "me" to "us"—evolving from personal concern to include the concerns of others.



**F Descending:** Energy falling from the Heart to Solar Plexus Chakras.\* Charity and compassionate action.

**F# Ascending:** Energy rising from the Heart to Throat Chakras. Sincerity, speaking from the heart, prayer.

**Gb Descending:** Energy falling from the Throat to Heart Chakras. Speaking to the hearts of others; inspiring others.

**G# Ascending:** Energy rising from the Throat to Third Eye Chakras. Being understood; speaking to the higher in others.

**Ab Descending:** Energy falling from the Third Eye to Throat Chakras. Sharing wisdom and insight.

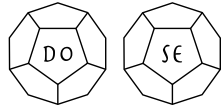
**A# Ascending:** Energy rising from the Third Eye to Crown Chakras. Transcending thought; surrendering preconceptions.

**Bb Descending:** Energy falling from the Crown to Third Eye Chakras. Receiving wisdom; divine inspiration.

*\*The keycenter/chakra connections in the Muzoracle mythopoetics are built around a diatonic scale in the key of C: C-D-E-F-G-A-B, do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti. On the piano, all the notes in that scale are white keys separated by a black key—except for E and F, which have no black key between them. Thus, as we travel up and down the scale E rises directly to F, and F falls directly to E. That's why, though E and F are notes in a diatonic scale, they are in those instances included with the chromatics—they are on the move.*



## THE SCALEPOINTS



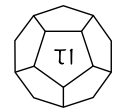
### The Scalepoints of Do and Se

**Descending: Inception.** *Beginning, underway, imminent.*

**Ascending: Intention.** *Desire, goal, commitment.*

Brahman, G-d, the Absolute, the Tao: *do* is the unfathomable source from which all springs, the ultimate first cause, the final, underlying, unanswerable question. It is boundless, yet we contain it. It is the ultimate particle, a substance beyond the notion of fine, a vibration beyond the notion of high. *Do* is the Unmanifest as well, the Void, the sacred nothingness into which something-ness expands, and from which anything-ness is born. *Do* permeates everything everywhere, yet is ineffable; it is the core and mystery of Being.

In the downward flow of nature, in a descending scale, *do* is the precursor to being. Cards drawn below *do*—or its chromatic counterpart, *se*—occur at the point of *inception*: like a seed in the womb, they speak of that which is impending or imminent, but may or may not yet be visible. In the upward flow of will, in an ascending scale, *do/se* is the point of *intention*. Cards drawn above *do* or *se* occur at a time when intentions are set, when desires are voiced or commitments made.



### The Scalepoint of Ti

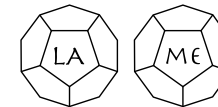
**Descending: Revelation.** *True or hidden nature revealed.*

**Ascending: Transition.** *Death/rebirth, moving to the next level.*

From Unfathomable Source bursts forth Divine Will, and through it a myriad of worlds is born. *Ti* is the first child: in our Ray of Creation, it is the cosmic being that is our Universe. In it we are like fish in the sea: we have nothing to measure it against and

cannot conceive of its boundaries. We cannot observe its density, for it is itself the stuff of the observer. It is the very notion of matter and vibration, the very notion of notion.

In the downward flow of nature, in a descending scale, *ti* is firstborn and represents *revelation*: we see the child's face. Cards drawn below *ti* occur at a time when true nature is revealed. In the upward flow of will, in an ascending scale, *ti* is the last note. Cards drawn above *ti* speak of *transition*: heavy with portent, pregnant with change, they occur at a jumping-off point, at the last step of a long climb.



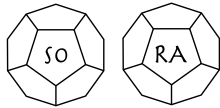
### The Scalepoints of La and Me

**Descending: Governance.** *Ruling principle, underlying cause.*

**Ascending: Acceptance.** *Forgiveness, letting go.*

Contained within our Universe are its children, the Galaxies. Life at this level, like all life, is ultimately an effect of Divine Will; at this level, though, it is once removed. Galactic life operates under the laws of our universe, which is not the Unfathomable but a manifestation of it: *la* is the level at which mechanical lawfulness first appears. Here, the singular becomes palpable and many, and between the many we see lawfulness at work: in gravity, in inertia, in the basic phenomena that govern life as we know it. Comparative knowledge arises; we have a sense of place. In our Ray of Creation, the scalepoint of *la* refers to one particular Galactic Being that is of great significance to us: our galaxy, the nurturing Via Lactea, our own Milky Way.

In a descending scale, *la* represents *governance*. Cards drawn below *la*—or its chromatic counterpart, *me*—occur at a time when rules are laid out, when structures are put in place, when constructs and paradigms are formed; they speak of governing principles or underlying causes. In an ascending scale, *la* is the last point before transition, the point of *acceptance*. Cards drawn above either *la* or *me* occur at a time of accepting, forgiving, or letting go.



### The Scalepoints of So and Ra

**Descending: Vitality.** *Energy source, driving force.*

**Ascending: Broad Challenge.** *Life lesson, karmic debt.*

“My God, it’s full of stars!” Yes, it is: within the galaxies live these magnificent gaseous beings, and within our own Milky Way lives the one star upon whom our lives directly depend: the Sun. *So* is Sol Invictus, the unconquered sun: Surya, Shamash, Ra, the warm-fingered god to whom the flowers turn their heads. He brings energy, heat, and illumination to all who revolve around Him, including us.

In a descending scale, *so* represents *vitality*. Cards drawn below *so*—or its chromatic counterpart, *ra*—occur at a time of energy influx; they speak of driving forces or energy sources, or of that which is crucial or critical. In an ascending scale, *so/ra* represents *broad challenge*. Cards drawn above either *so* or *ra* occur at a time when the challenges at hand have broader implications, such as those of karmic import or those that impact the collective; they reference the task behind the tasks, the work beyond the work.



### The Scalepoint of Fa

**Descending: Transition.** *Coming to fruition, manifesting.*

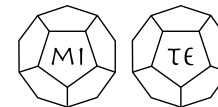
**Ascending: Revelation.** *True or hidden nature revealed.*

Orbiting around the Sun and drawing its energy are the planets and their moons. Their vibration and density level is that of *fa*. *Fa* may well have been the end of our particular Ray of Creation, except for a most extraordinary, and for us fortuitous, event: the chunk of rock that smacked into the Earth, creating the Pacific Ocean and the Moon. This was, in essence, a birth. Energy-wise, the Earth was altered in terms of its absorptive capacity; on top of that, She had a child to feed. Two more levels of slowing vibration and increasing density appeared: that of the newly altered Earth at *mi*, and that of Her child, the Moon, at *re*.

*Fa*, then, resides at the planetary level—the astrological level. It is the uppermost layer of our Archetypal World, the world of our goddesses and gods. In the downward flow of nature, in a descending scale, *fa* appears as *transition*: here begins the crossover from, the infiltration of, the intangible into the touchable; here the gods come out to play. Cards drawn below *fa* speak of that which is coming to fruition or becoming manifest.

In the upward flow of will, in an ascending scale, *fa* represents *revelation*. Now begins the crossover from the touchable to the intangible; now we begin to recognize forces at work larger than ourselves. Cards drawn above *fa* reveal the deeper, more profound nature of what’s at hand.

*Fa* and *ti* are unique in that they form a tritone within the major scale (a tritone built from any other diatonic point takes us out of the scale.) *Fa* and *ti*, then, are counterparts of each other—diatonic counterparts, if you will—hence their inverse relationship in terms of meaning. Both *fa* above and *ti* below represent *transition*, though with different emphases; both *fa* below and *ti* above represent *revelation*, ditto.



### The Scalepoints of Mi and Te

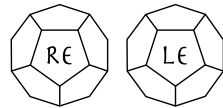
**Descending: Opportunity.** *Providence.*

**Ascending: Effort.** *Effort required, work at hand, tools available.*

The density and vibration level of *mi* is that of our beloved Earth. She is the source through which we incarnate: our flesh is Her flesh; our sustenance, Her gift.

In a descending scale, *mi* is the point of *opportunity*. Here we are incarnate, sentient, and sustained—now is our chance. Cards drawn below *mi*—and its chromatic counterpart, *te*—point to an opportune time, a time when essentials are graciously provided. In an ascending scale, *mi* represents *effort*. In order to realize our intentions, we must work. Cards drawn above *mi* or *te* occur at a time of demand, and speak of efforts required; they may point to specific work at hand, or to tools available for the job.

Ultimately, the scalepoint of *mi/te* is about what we are given and what we wish to do with it. Ascending or descending, it is a gateway to the experience of gratitude.



### The Scalepoints of Re and Le

**Descending: Dependence.** *Neediness, energy drain.*

**Ascending: Mechanicity.** *Unconscious or unexamined response; habit.*

The density and vibration level of *re* is aligned with the Moon. She is Earth's child, the youngest in line, the growing one who is always hungry. In a descending scale, *re* is the last step, the furthest point from *do*, and hangs like a weight, representing *dependence*. Cards drawn below *re*—or its chromatic counterpart, *le*—point to a time in which we are needed, in which our energy is required. We may find ourselves faced with a person or situation that sucks the life out of us; or, we may be confronted with someone or something that simply needs us, like a child needs its mother.

In an ascending scale, *re* is the second step; as soon as our intention is voiced at *do*, *re* appears as *resistance*. Cards drawn above *re* or *le* appear at a point of *reactivity*, of unconscious or unexamined response. *Re* ascending is the point of *mechanicity*: it's when we're on auto-pilot, when the mechanisms within that operate unconsciously or without our permission are in control. We can see mechanicity in our habits, in the lies we tell ourselves, in both our posturing and posture, in our knee-jerk reactions, in the things we cling to; we *can* see it, but rarely do. Unexamined response isn't always a bad thing: in the case of a hot stove, it's best to remove one's hand quickly rather than stop to think about it. In any case, *re* or *le* ascending presents an opportunity to see what we usually can't.

One might begin to get a negative impression of the Moon, with *dependency* and *mechanicity* as its scalepoints. Heaven knows, She has taken plenty of hits from culture, from Her association with the insane (*luna-tics*) to Her ties to women's mysteries, emotionality, witchcraft, and other things that scare the men.

The Moon, of course, embodies a sacred and necessary force. As the last planetary being in our Ray of Creation, She is the pathway to the vital nothingness of the Void. She is aligned with what within us is most dense, and a groundedness deeper than the ground. She is the beauty and glory of all we are right now, without changing a thing.

In Greek myth, the moon goddess Selene falls in love with the handsome shepherd Endymion; in order that he remain forever hers, she casts a spell to keep him eternally asleep, and in this sleep he fathers her fifty daughters. (In some versions of the myth, he chooses this fate.) The scalepoint of *re* is the Beloved not yet awakened; when we wish to wake, the Moon hangs in the sky like a mirror, showing us who and where we really are.



## INSTRUMENTS, ELEMENTS: THE SUITS

The five suits are aligned with the four traditional instrument families—Brass, Strings, Woodwinds, and Percussion—and the one singular instrument that combines attributes of the other four: the human voice. Each suit is also aligned with one of the five classical elements, a Platonic solid, and a set of colors.





## THE SUIT OF BRASS

*Moving, Creating, Doing*

**Element:** *Fire* • **Platonic Solid:** *Tetrahedron*

**Colors:** *Red, Yellow, Black*

The sound of a brass instrument is generated by the column of air vibrating within it in conjunction with the vibration of the player's lips. Varying the tension in the lips allows the player to select the harmonic at which the instrument's column of air will vibrate; the length of the horn's tubing, often manipulated using valves or slides, finally determines its pitch. Unique to brass instruments is the directionality of their sound; while the sound of other instruments tends to spread more or less in all directions, the sound of a horn shoots straight out the bell.

Played soft and low, brass instruments can be mellow and velvety, and express a wide variety of moods—think trombone section, think Miles. As an instrument family, though, Brass really finds its stride when it's big and hot. There's an excitement, an anticipation, in just seeing horn players on the stand—Brass is the fire in the orchestra, and it wants to ignite.

As a suit, Brass is about doing. It often involves the physical, but is not about things; it is instead about things moving. The other four suits are essentially nouns; Brass is a verb. When we paint a picture, for example, we may engage the feeling and the intellect, while residing in and sensing the physical body and the physical canvas. But the brush hitting the canvas? The picture actually being done? That's Brass.



## THE SUIT OF STRINGS

*Feeling and Emoting*

**Element:** *Water* • **Platonic Solid:** *Icosahedron*

**Colors:** *Blue, Green*

Stringed instruments generate sound when their strings are plucked, bowed, or struck. The pitch of each string on a given instrument is determined by its length and its tension; the overall character of the instrument, however, is determined not so much by its strings, but by the resonant body its strings are stretched across, such as a piano sound board or the body of a violin. Unique to strings as a family is that most of the instruments within it can play more than one note at a time; a guitar's capacity for expression, for example, is greatly increased by the fact that it can generate harmony in and of itself.

The suit of Strings corresponds with the emotions. Cards within it address our passions, our sensitivities, our vulnerabilities, our likes and dislikes. Strings are aligned with the element of Water, and like water the feelings they represent can either drown us or nourish us deeply. They can be as pleasurable as joy, as profound as love, or as miserable as depression; as powerful as the tide, as persistent as the rain.

Strings are very dramatic, and the sound of a string orchestra can sweep us away—it grabs us by the “heart strings.” Similarly, we are beguiled by our feelings—they always seem justified. Part of navigating the suit of Strings is recognizing when our feelings are having us instead of us having them. They *will* have us—it's when we don't know it that we can slip into melodrama. Of course, sometimes it's grand to be had: gratitude, love, and compassion all swell when the Strings swell.





## THE SUIT OF WOODWINDS

*Thinking and Ideas*

**Element:** *Air* • **Platonic Solid:** *Octahedron*  
**Colors:** *Sky Blue, White*

The sound of a woodwind is produced by a player blowing air over an edge or across a vibrating reed, in conjunction with a column of air consequently vibrating within the instrument's body. Those instruments that utilize only an edge are classified as flutes; those utilizing reeds are, not surprisingly, called reeds. In their case, the player forces air between a mouthpiece and a reed, or in some cases between two reeds. In both flutes and reeds, the pitch of the instrument is determined by its length, which is often effectively altered by covering and uncovering holes with the fingers or via keys.

The contemplative sound of woodwinds aligns them with the mind: they turn us inward, addressing our thoughts, our insights and understanding. Cards in the suit of Woodwinds address the qualities of our thinking, the depth of our understanding. As Woodwinds embody the element of Air, they can also address issues regarding the communication of our thoughts to others.



## THE SUIT OF PERCUSSION

*Home, Body, Wealth, Tribe*

**Element:** *Earth* • **Platonic Solid:** *Cube*  
**Colors:** *Browns, Greens*

Percussion instruments are those that are sounded by striking, shaking, or scraping. There are two basic types of percussion: tuned, such as xylophones and orchestra bells, and untuned, such as clappers, shakers and cymbals.

Unlike brass, strings, and woodwinds, which need to be blown and plucked, cajoled and coerced into making music, our relationship with percussion is primal: it responds to simple touch. There is an "is-ness," a kind of ancient presence in percussive instruments. After the human voice, they were probably the first instruments we used. Unique to percussion as well is the fact that its primary function is rhythmic, which is also primal: the beating of the heart, the tapping of rain on leaves, the recurrence of seasons, the coming and going of life.

The suit of Percussion is aligned with the element of Earth. Cards within it deal with instinctive physical needs and drives: survival, shelter, sex. Furthermore, the suit addresses the manifestations of those needs and their place in our lives and cultures: money, health, the places we live, the company we keep. All that is tangible falls under the beat of the drum. Finally, Percussion addresses our sense of belonging. No doubt when one ancient started banging two bones together, another soon joined in: percussion is tribal.



## THE SUIT OF VOICES

*Being, the Higher Self, the Transpersonal*

**Element:** *Aether* • **Platonic Solid:** *Dodecahedron*

**Colors:** *Violet, Lavender*

The human voice is the instrument within: with it we make music using nothing but ourselves. The first four elements—Earth, Fire, Water, and Air—are contained within and penetrated by the fifth element, which is Aether, the “air of the gods.” Likewise, the other four Muzoracle suits are all present within Voices. Like Strings, Voices are deeply expressive and engage the heart. They are similar to Woodwinds in that the vocal chords function like a double reed. They relate to Brass in their dependence on the solar plexus as a source of energy, and in that the mouth directs the voice pointedly outward like the bell of a horn. Finally, Voices are associated with Percussion in that all of this occurs within the vessel, the drum, of the body.

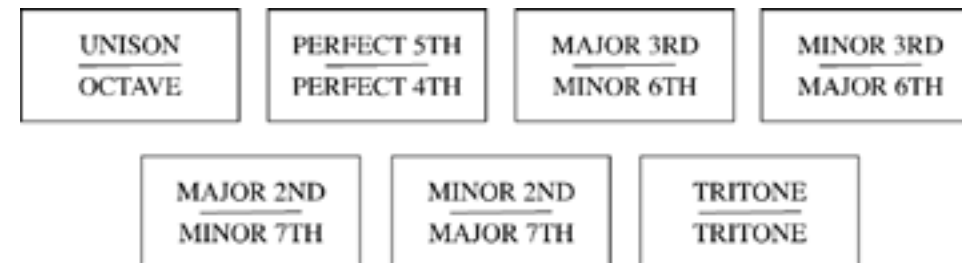
The suit of Voices is aligned with the Soul, our essential being and true individuality, and Spirit, the aspect of our souls that is interconnected to all Being. Cards within the suit deal with issues at an essential level, such as karma and life purpose—they always prompt us to look at the big picture. Voices is also the suit most closely connected to intent, as it is through the voice that we let our wishes be known and that prayer and mantra enter the world.

## HARMONIES: THE SONIC ARCHETYPES

When two or more pitches sound simultaneously, they are said to be *in harmony*. Within an octave there are twelve possible two-note combinations within the twelve-note chromatic scale; thirteen, if we include the Unison (which is technically not a harmony, but two instances of the exact same note.) These combinations are called *dyads*. The dyads are formed from the harmonics that arise organically in the Harmonic Series, and are expressed as ratios.

If we double the frequency of the bottom note of a dyad—raise it an octave—or cut the frequency of the top note in half—lower it an octave—we obtain a new dyad, which is an *inversion* of the former. A Perfect Fifth inverted, for example, is a Perfect Fourth, and vice versa; a Major Third inverted is a Minor Sixth, and vice versa.

The two dyads given on each dyad card are inversions of one another, with one at each end. In a casting, the dyad at the top of the card is the one in play. In each of the five suits of the Muzoracle, there are seven dyad cards, with the thirteen dyads distributed among them. (Note that the Tritone cards are the same on either end; in the chromatic scale, tritones are at the center of an octave, and inverting one creates a mirror image of itself.)



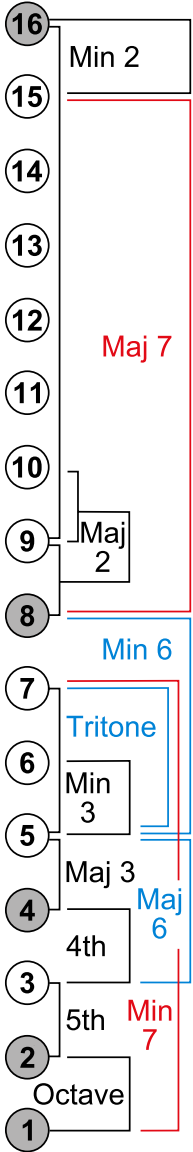
### The Octave, 1:2

*Strength, Wholeness, Balance*

In the Harmonic Series, the first harmonic to appear above the fundamental is that of the Octave, and it signifies the arrival of “the other,” of duality. This duality, however, is completely contained within the singularity of the Octave experience: the higher and lower are in perfect consonance, in perfect obeisance to one another, in perfect support of each other—they are one. All three forces are present in the Octave dyad: the Initiating in the fundamental and the Receiving in its first harmonic, or vice versa; and the Conciliating in the dyad’s mysterious, magical singularity. It is two to one, two in one, and two and one. In a casting, the Octave manifests as *strength*: that which is intended is that which is, and vice versa; there is integrity, balance, and innate wholeness.

The dyad of the Octave is so consonant that it sometimes disappears. Notes an octave apart can easily sound like a Unison, like the same note: men and women singing the same melody, for example, tend to sing in octaves without trying or even knowing. The strength of the Octave can be so native to us that we don’t know it’s there, and if we are blind in this way, we can inadvertently step on some toes. Successfully navigating the Octave involves including others in our vision and care.

*At right, the dyads as they appear in the Harmonic Series. The numbers running up the left of the diagram are partials: the frequency of the first partial is usually the loudest and defines for us a sound’s pitch, while the other partials give the sound its color. These inner workings, these ratios, are present in all sound, and are the basis for harmony in music—and the Sonic Archetypes. Harmonics are explored further in the Mechanics to Metaphor section.*



In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Octave is *assertion*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *commitment*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *certainty*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *stability*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *integrity*.

### The Unison, 1:1

*Unity, Sameness*

If we invert an Octave dyad—raise or lower either of its notes by an octave—we end up with a Unison: two instances of exactly the same pitch. Although included with the Harmonies, the dyad of the Unison is technically not a harmony at all: there is no open space within it, no difference in frequency.

In a casting the Unison indicates unity. Its extreme consonance points toward ease between that which is unified. If the Unison is playing out unconsciously, however, it can indicate codependency or enabling.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Unison is *collaboration*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *empathy*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *agreement*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *partnership*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *fellowship*.

### The Perfect Fifth, 2:3

*Initiative*

In the Harmonic Series, the balanced wholeness of the Octave gives rise to the Perfect Fifth. The Perfect Fifth marks the primary appearance of the Initiating Force within the Series, and it penetrates the Octave’s restful singularity. The Perfect Fifth is the first harmony that arises in the Series, and is probably the first harmony we sang. It marks the birth of structure, of multiplicity, and is an affirmation of individuality; it is the Tree

of Knowledge and the birth of consciousness; it is primal action and primal intent.

Musically, the Perfect Fifth has a clarion quality: it is an annunciation and sometimes a battle cry. In a casting, it indicates a rising up, a taking of initiative. If not navigated consciously it can be overly aggressive or brutal.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Perfect Fifth is *leadership*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *impulse*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *focus*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *growth*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *avowal*.

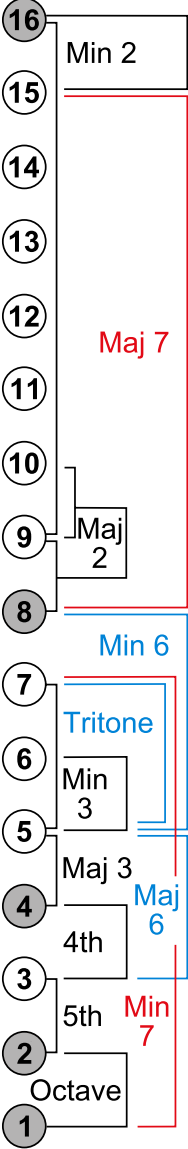
### The Perfect Fourth, 3:4

*Receptivity, Inclusiveness*

Arising from the Perfect Fifth, the next harmonic in the Series creates another octave of the fundamental, this one at four times the fundamental's frequency. The interval between the Perfect Fifth and that of this new octave is a Perfect Fourth.

The Perfect Fourth receives the Perfect Fifth; through it, the Fifth arises yet also returns to the Octave, to the source. The Perfect Fourth is the Divine Mother, the musical embodiment of the Receiving Force; through Her all things arise, and to Her all things return. In a casting, the Perfect Fourth indicates a purposeful yielding, a taking in, an embrace. It can also indicate a fearful or unconscious submission if it arises or plays out unconsciously.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Perfect Fourth is *yielding*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *love*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds,



*open-mindedness*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *welcome*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *compassion*.

### The Major Third, 4:5

*Ease, Resolution, Improvement*

When we speak of “harmony” or think of “singing in harmony,” it is the sweet beauty of the Major Third that first comes to mind. It is the most pleasing of dyads, the most “harmonious.” Arising in the Harmonic Series above the Perfect Fourth, it embodies the Conciliating Force and carries its magic: hearing, singing, or playing the Major Third, we experience a lightening of heart, an easing of burden. In a casting, the Major Third reflects this; if it appears habitually or as an unconscious response, however, the Major Third can indicate a pollyanna attitude, a blind optimism.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Major Third is *mediation*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *joy*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *comprehension*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *wellness*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *peace*.

### The Minor Sixth, 5:8

*Hunger, Desire*

The inverse of a Major Third is a Minor Sixth. This poignant dyad sounds stretched and lonesome—a little sweet, a little sad. It wants home, or perhaps what was, or a feeling once had. It is strongly aligned with the emotions; it wistfully aches.

In a casting, the longing the Minor Sixth represents can be misty and overly sentimental or passionate in its hunger. It needn't, however, represent only a hunger for something we are attached to; it might point to a longing for something we deeply know or are; it might be an echo of our heart's true desire.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Minor Sixth is *seeking*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *longing*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *curiosity*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *neediness*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *avocation*.

**The Minor Third, 5:6**

*Seriousness, Solemnity*

Arising from the Major Third in the Harmonic Series is the Minor Third at 5:6. In music as well as in castings, it is the Minor Third that most clearly defines minor keys and the somber, serious feelings we associate with them. This is a powerful dyad: it can shake us from our daydreams with its sudden, solemn beauty, or provide an entrancing underscore to our attachments and self-pity.

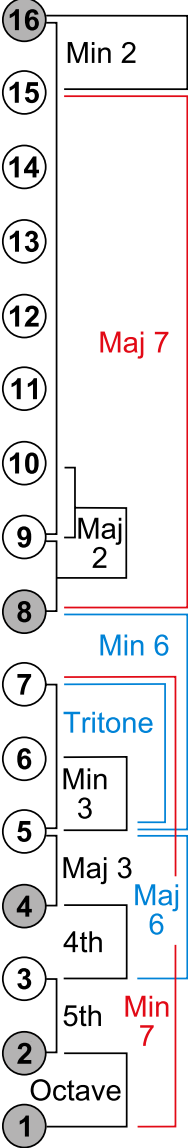
In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Minor Third is *prudence*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *sadness*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *factuality*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *crisis*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *sacrifice*.

**The Major Sixth, 3:5**

*Planning Ahead, Positive Outcomes*

The inverse of a Minor Third is a Major Sixth, and it is a joyful sound. It implies the consonance of the Major Third, but lacks its intimacy; it is instead wide open and exuberant. The Major Sixth is all about positive attitude.

Both Minor and Major Sixths reference the future. The sound of both



dyads is characterized by their “stretched-ness,” by their “hole in the middle.” But where the Minor Sixth carries a longing into the unknown, the Major Sixth knows where it’s going and proceeds with confidence.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Major Sixth is *courage*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *hope*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *foresight*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *readiness*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *faith*.

**The Major Second, 8:9 or 9:10**

*Division, Disparity, Independence*

Perhaps best known for being the first two notes of “Chopsticks,” the dyad of the Major Second is bright and lively; it is dissonant, but not unnerving or grating. Neither note within the dyad predominates—each has equal weight.

In a casting, the Major Second indicates division: two elements not necessarily in opposition, but operating independently. It can refer to a state of ignorance regarding another, or a lack of care. It can point to a split in values or concern, or indicate a parting of ways or a difference in agenda. The Major Second functions in a casting as rather the opposite of a Unison: where the Unison represents sameness, the Major Second represents difference—and possibly indifference.

Although the notes within the Major Second are seemingly unrelated, ultimately they are. The challenge of the dyad is to either find commonality or accept its lack, and to acknowledge in any case that fate has thrown its disparate streams into relation.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Major Second is *vacillation*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *indifference*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *differing ideas*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *separateness*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *diversity*.



**The Minor Seventh, 1:7**

*Mystery, Future Unknown*

When, in the Harmonic Series, the seventh partial arises, its dissonance calls us to move. It is via the seventh and fifth partial together, however, the Tritone, that the move actually gets underway. In the harmony of the Minor Seventh we find the seventh partial and the root, but with nothing definitive between: there’s a shift underway, but we can’t see to where or what. Its sound signals mystery; it contains a question mark.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Minor Seventh is *flying blind*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *anxiety*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *uncertainty*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *changeability*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *surrender*.

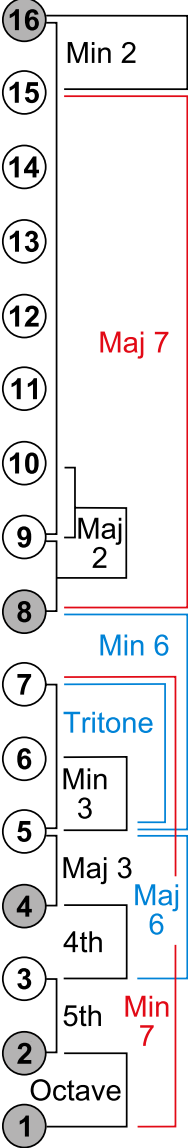
**The Minor Second, 15:16**

*Discord, Opposition, Struggle*

Harsh and dissonant, this most discordant of dyads sounds like a fight. Where the Major Second is close but maintains a distance, the Minor Second is too close for comfort. These two notes are in each other’s faces—they couldn’t be closer together, and they couldn’t be farther apart.

In a casting, the Minor Second usually indicates some kind of unpleasantness. It doesn’t, however, always lead to or indicate misfortune. Sometimes confrontation is necessary and ultimately beneficial. Struggle, of course, is how we grow.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Minor Second is



*battle*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *anger*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *disagreement*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *disorder*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *conscience*.

**The Major Seventh, 8:15**

*Lack, Absence*

This widest of dyads is stretched almost to the Octave—almost. It certainly wants something in the middle—but what? There’s an unease in this dyad; it’s dissonant, but at the same time not really in a hurry to go anywhere.

Empty and unfinished, the Major Seventh is about what’s missing. In a casting, it refers to some kind of lack. Any number of things can fill it—the good news being that we have a choice of with what, the challenge being that we have to decide. Under the influence of this dyad, we may find ourselves facing ennui or restlessness.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Major Seventh is *inertia*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *insensitivity*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *ignorance*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *poverty*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *humility*.

**The Tritone, 5:7**

*Impetus, Catalyst, Incentive*

While the Initiating Force makes itself known within many of the dyads, it is within the Tritone that it is most purely expressed: Tritones are pure fire, pure Yang. They are the fuel in the Harmonic Engine, propelling us from one key to another, interlacing ascending and descending scales and bringing the scalepoints to life.

In the Middle Ages of Europe, the Tritone was considered evil: it was the *diabolus in musica*, the “devil in music,” and was forbidden. This, of course, only testifies to its power and mystery. Tritones are both profoundly dissonant and leading; they cannot sit still, nor will they allow us to. In a casting, they represent impetus: they set things in motion. If not consciously navigated, the Tritone can kick us into somewhere we’re not quite ready to be; oft times it’ll kick us there in any case.

In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Tritone is *compulsion*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *change of heart*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *thoughts provoked*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *transformation*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *evolution*.

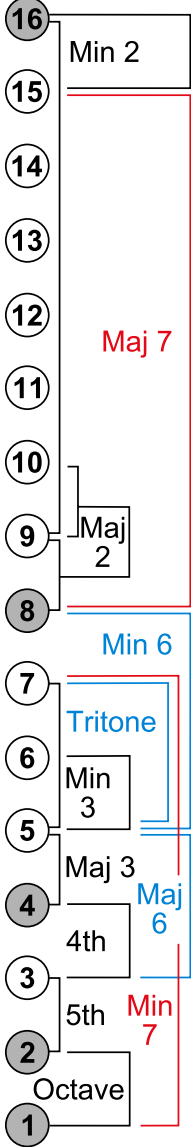
### The Major Triad: 2:3, 3:4, and 4:5

*Fulfillment*

In addition to the dyad cards, there is one Major Triad card per suit, each determinable by their three suit icons and no text. The thirteen dyads and major triad together make up all the Sonic Archetypes of the Muzoracle deck.

All three forces—Initiating, Receiving, and Conciliating—are present in the Major Triad, and the Major Triad Cards represent them at a moment of perfect equilibrium: through them, each suit is expressed in its complete and balanced form.

The Triad cards imply no movement—they call for nothing, need nothing; they are at rest. In a casting, they indicate fulfillment. If not navigated consciously, however, they might see us resting on our laurels too long.



In the active suit of Brass, the hermeneutic for the Major Triad is *efficiency*; in the emotional suit of Strings, *contentment*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds, *knowledge*; in the physical suit of Percussion, *abundance*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices, *right living*.

## MUSICIANS AT LARGE

There are fifteen Musician Cards in the Muzoracle deck, three of each in each of the five suits: they are the Conductors, the Soloists, and the Accompanists. The Musician Cards might represent people we know; they are certainly people we can all sometimes become.

### The Conductor: Mastery

*A leader, a coordinator*

In music, a Conductor is primarily a leader. While each individual in an orchestra is responsible for playing his or her instrument well, it is the Conductor’s job to get the individuals to play together; it is she or he who transforms the orchestra into a single instrument.

When we become Conductors, we take the helm. All eyes are upon us. We have power over others—it is essential that we remain sensitive to their concerns and needs and well-being, lest we become tyrannical. We are a primary shaping force in the outcome of what’s at hand; we must remain focused on our intent, and be wary of our clever egos. Sometimes what’s at hand changes course midstream, in which case we need to roll with the changes and make things work. Others are depending on us.

In addition to being leaders, Conductors are also conduits: they are the link between

the composer and the band. This implies a sacred duty: even as we lead, we serve a greater design.

In the active suit of Brass, the Conductor appears as *The Director*; in the emotional suit of Strings, as *The Inspirer*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds as *The Mastermind*; in the physical suit of Percussion as *The Overseer*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices as *The Guru*.

### The Soloist: Autonomy

*An individualist, a loner, a star*

The Conductor leads others; Soloists lead themselves. As Soloists, we are self-motivated and self-governing. We can also be self-centered, reclusive, or arrogant. In music, a Soloist either has the stage to themselves, or they're in the spotlight; correspondingly, the Soloist cards can indicate a time for us to shine.

Drive, self-sufficiency, and success make the Soloist appealing on the surface; underneath, however, there's always the issue of keeping the ego in check. One of the benefits of working with others, of being dependent on others, is that they serve as a mirror: we see our behavior reflected in their reactions, and, if we are self-aware enough, see our reactions to their behaviors. With only ourselves as a reference we can become deluded, lost in our own soup. Sometimes, of course, circumstances demand autonomy—and the payoffs of going solo can be high. But it's a walk on a fine, high wire.

In the active suit of Brass, the Soloist appears as *The Self-Starter*; in the emotional suit of Strings, as *The Self-Possessed*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds as *The Free Thinker*; in the physical suit of Percussion as *The Self-Sufficient*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices as *The Mystic*.

### The Accompanist: Service

*A support, a helper*

Musically, an Accompanist is person who “plays behind” whatever or whomever is being featured: a soloist, a dance troupe, a comic, etc. It is his or her job to provide, and often improvise, structure and support so whomever is up front can do their thing. Accompanying is not an easy task—it requires great attentiveness and a willingness to be invisible.

When we become the Accompanist, we become *of service*; we are the support team. As Accompanists, we can be noble, fighting the good fight. We can be selfless, putting the needs of others or the task at hand in front of our own. Consciously navigating the role of Accompanist means following when following is called for, yet taking the initiative when necessary: the goal or purpose is always foremost in mind and deed.

Unconscious Accompanists are subservient rather than being of service. Perhaps they feel unworthy to lead; perhaps they're convinced that the world is an oppressive place, and they must take what they can get. True service is a beautiful thing; playing the martyr or victim, not so pretty. Like the paths of the Conductor and the Soloist, the path of the Accompanist is a slippery one. All that work and no glory can lead to—or come from—all sorts of twisted little places.

In the active suit of Brass, the Accompanist appears as *The Aide*; in the emotional suit of Strings, as *The Consoler*; in the intellectual suit of Woodwinds as *The Tutor*; in the physical suit of Percussion as *The Provider*; and in the spiritual, holistic suit of Voices as *The Bodhisatva*.

## COMPOSITIONALS: THE COMPOSER'S HAND

The 34 Compositional Cards in the Muzoracle deck are based on concepts, elements, and processes used by composers or in composition. While generally referred to as a single group, the Compositionals are actually divided into subcategories: *Elementals* and *Directives*, the latter of which are further divided into *Instructives* and *Expressives*.

The 21 Elementals are just that: elemental. They can refer to the basic building blocks of music, such as *Melody* and *Rhythm*; to tools and techniques employed by the composer, such as *Editing* and *Listening*; or to types of musical passages, such as an *Obbligato* or an *Ossia*.

The remaining 13 cards in the deck—the *Directives*—are unique in that they can be interpreted as actual instructions to the querent: go here, go there, speed up, quiet down. They might also reference ways in which we are being directed by others—or they might just describe what's at hand.

Eight of the Directives are *Instructives*, light grey cards with musical staves on them. Instructives are based on instructions found in a musical score: things like *Accelerando* and *Ritardando*, which tell us how fast to go, or *Crescendo* and *Diminuendo*, which speak of force; or things like *al Segno* and *al Coda*, which function like musical GPS.

The remaining five Directives, the *Expressives*, speak of emotional tone. They are dark grey with musical staves, and have names like *Agitato*, which speaks of agitation or restlessness, or *Con Amore*, which speaks of love.

There are 42 musical terms spread across the 34 Compositionals (some of the cards contain a different term on each end.) Following are all 42, listed in alphabetical order.

### A Capriccio

*Impulsively, as one fancies.*

In a musical score, *A Capriccio* (*ah-kah-PREE-choh*) is a directive to play a passage in a frivolous and unpredictable manner. This might involve taking liberties with dynamics or tempo, and/or taking a playful, improvisational approach to the melody and the passage as a whole.

*A Capriccio* is an Expressive card. It gives the okay to be unpredictable, to do the unexpected, to express playfulness; it implies a kind of freedom. It can also indicate a time when unpredictability, frivolity, or caprice is at hand.



### Accelerando

*Speed up.*

In music, an *accelerando* (*ahk-say-lay-RAHN-doh*) is a steady, measured increase in speed. In a score, the word "accelerando" is followed by an ellipsis stretched to a length that indicates over how many bars this increase is to take place.

*Accelerando* is a Directive card. It directs the querent to step up the pace, or indicates a time when things are ramping up, or possibly spinning out of control.



### A Due

*Come together; reconcile.*

In a musical score, *A Due* (*ah-DOO-way*) is a directive for two instruments, or two sections of instruments, to return to playing in unison after a *divisi* or solo passage. It can also simply indicate a duet.

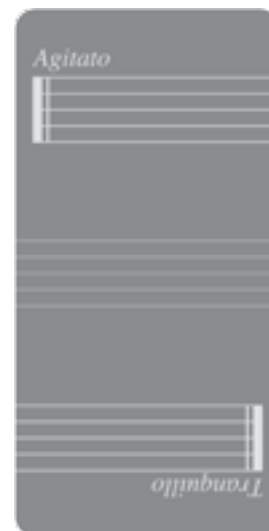
*A Due* is a Directive card. It directs the querent to come back together with another after a separation, or to reconcile elements, processes, or people that have been estranged; or, it indicates a time when such a reunion is at hand. (See also "Divisi.")

### Agitato

*With restlessness, agitation.*

In a musical score, *Agitato* (*ah-jee-TAH-toh*) is a directive to play a passage in a restless and agitated manner.

*Agitato* is an Expressive card. It directs the querent to acknowledge and/or consider nervousness or discomfort, within themselves and/or others; or, it indicates a time when or place where restlessness or agitation is present.

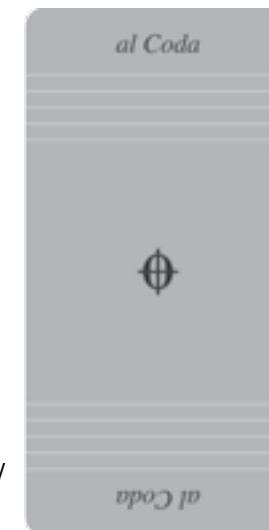


### Al Coda

*Cut to the chase.*

In music, a *coda* is a concluding section of a composition extraneous to its usual form; it is a piece's closing gesture, its final word. *Al Coda* (*ahl-COH-dah*) means "to the coda," and is a directive to the musician to advance from where they are in the score to the coda section, which is delineated by the symbol seen at the center of the *Al Coda* card.

*Al Coda* is a Directive card. It directs the querent to cut to the chase, to get things over with, or indicates a time when such a closure is underway. Musically, codas can be very dramatic, and *al Coda* can indicate a kind of swan song, a going out with a bang.

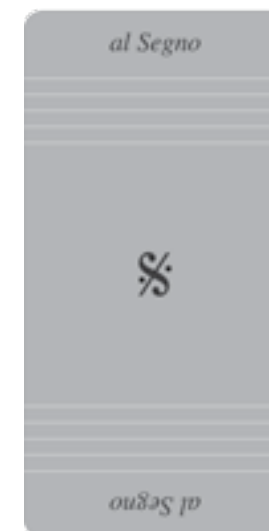


### Al Segno

*Watch for signs; follow the intuition.*

In a musical score, a *segno*—the symbol seen at the center of the *Al Segno* card—is simply a signpost, a marker. Directions elsewhere in the score tell you what to do regarding it. *Da/ segno al fine*, for example, means "go back to the signpost and play to the end"; *da capo al segno* means "play from the beginning till you get to the signpost."

"Al segno" translates simply as "to the sign"; in music, it tells the player to *go the sign now*. In a casting, *Al Segno*—a Directive card—indicates the presence of a sign, and a need to take heed of it. It might be the sign is an obvious one, but perhaps not—the





Al Segno card is about knowing a sign when you see one, interpreting it, and following it, or at least considering doing so. It is a call to intuition.

There is a risk, in looking for signs, that anxiety and/or hidden agendas come into play, and that we begin to see signs everywhere; or that we interpret the signs we see to suit our desires. Calm presence, an acknowledging of our attachments, and knowing when to trust ourselves is key to making good use of the intuition.



**Chops**  
*Facility, discipline, perseverance.*

"Chops" refer to a musician's technical skills. An accomplished player is said to have "great chops"; if we need to hone our skills, we say we need to "get our chops up."

*Chops* is an Elemental card, and refers to facility, dexterity, and adeptness; it implies a need for discipline and perseverance. The Chops card can indicate an obsession with work or discipline, however, if our need for better-stronger-faster is operating unconsciously; we may find our self-worth tied up with our notions of success, for example, or be immersing ourselves in work in order to hide from something else.



**Con Amore**  
*With love.*

In a musical score, *Con Amore* (*cohn-ah-MOR-ay*)—"with love"—is a directive to play a passage in a tender and affectionate manner.

*Con Amore* is an Expressive card. It directs the querent to express the love they feel, or indicates a time or situation where love is present.

**Counterpoint**  
*Balance factor, integrating adversity.*

In music, *counterpoint* refers to the combination of two or more melodic lines. It is from the Latin *contrapunctus*, which means "note against note."

There are three types of motion that combine within counterpoint: *contrary motion*, where one melody goes up while another comes down; *parallel motion*, where two melodies go either up or down together; and *oblique motion*, where one melody remains static while the other one moves. Whether contrary, parallel, or oblique, the overall effect of counterpoint is that of melodies against one another, of opposites in balance; the result is magical. Adding



to counterpoint's compelling quality is the constant flow of harmony created as its concurrent melodies play.

*Counterpoint* is an Elemental card, and it speaks of processes or intentions that flow counter to one another. In a casting, this often presents as adversity, as resistance. The Counterpoint card offers an opportunity to see the presence of this "other" movement not merely as something to be overcome—though it may be that, too—but as the emergence of a necessary and valuable denying force. That which appears as opposition to us is often in fact unconcerned with us, and may serve as a balancing factor; if not that, then as a foil to test our mettle or strengthen our case.

There is a time for contrary motion, and a time for parallel, and a time for oblique. We cannot choose a path, however, if we are identified with the fight. The Counterpoint card is a reminder to step back and take a larger view of the situation at hand, to take into consideration which movements are serving what in the grander scheme of things.

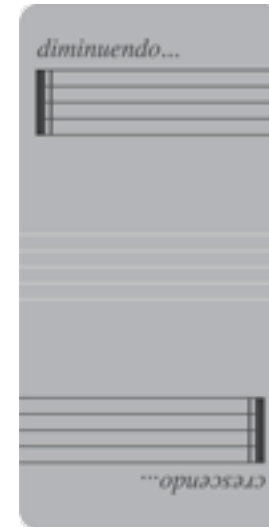


### Crescendo

*Increase force.*

In a musical score, a *crescendo* (kray-SHAYN-doh) is a dynamic marking indicating a steady, measured increase in volume over a certain period of time.

*Crescendo* is a Directive card. It directs the querent to increase force or pressure, or to speak up in order to be heard; or it points to a time when such an increase is underway.



### Diminuendo

*Decrease force.*

In a musical score, a *diminuendo* (dee-meen-yoo-AYN-doh) is a dynamic marking indicating a steady, measured decrease in volume over a certain period of time.

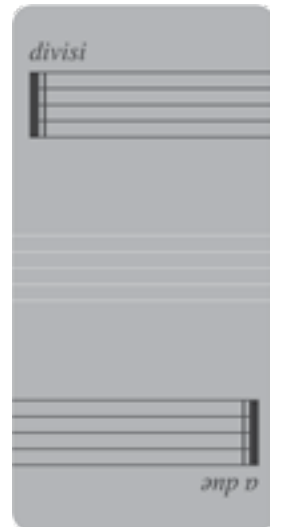
*Diminuendo* is a Directive card. It directs the querent to ease up or quiet down, or points to a time when such a decrease in force is underway.

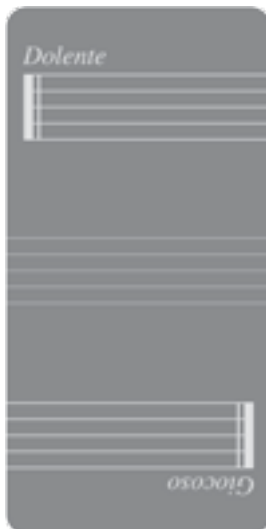
### Divisi

*Divide, separate.*

In a musical score, a *divisi* (dee-VEE-see) is a directive for a group of musicians playing together to split rank. If there are eight violins playing in unison, for example, the *divisi* directive might indicate that they split into two groups of four in order to play in harmony.

*Divisi* is a Directive card, directing the querent to split off from another or from a group, or to perhaps split a group, or divvy up resources or tasks; it can also refer to a time when such a dividing is at hand. *Divisis* are often temporary in nature, made with an eye toward eventual reconciliation; in music, a *divisi* is often followed by an *a due*, a coming together. (See also "*A Due*.")





### Dolente

*Sorrowfully.*

In a musical score, *Dolente* (*doh-LEN-tay*) is a directive to play a passage in a sorrowful, mournful manner.

*Dolente* is an Expressive card. It directs, or rather allows, the querent to grieve what needs grieving for, or to allow others to grieve in their way, to mourn a loss or express sorrow. It can also indicate a time when such a time is underway.

### Editing

*Revision, alteration, culling.*

The editing process comes into play in many areas of musical composition. An initial melody or lyric might be changed to accommodate later developments, for example, or an arrangement or orchestration might be changed to improve flow or impact, or a change in venue or personnel.

*Editing* is an Elemental card, and refers to making changes in order to maintain the focus and integrity of what's at hand. There is often an element of culling involved, of letting go of what is not necessary. Successful editing requires a keen, unattached intuition, a continual recalling of intent, and a relaxed approach.



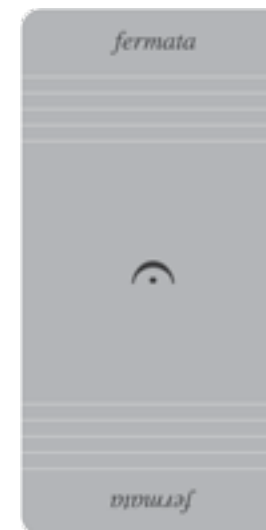
The editing process—the rewrite, the spit and polish, the tweak, the toss —can be essential at certain points, but not at every point. It can be deadly, for example, if engaged too early in a creative process (the infamous paralysis by analysis.) If the need to edit arises unconsciously—from anxiety or as a knee-jerk reaction, for example—we can end up shooting ourselves in the foot.

### Fermata

*Wait; hold till further notice.*

In a musical score, a *fermata* (*fayr-MAH-tah*) placed over a note or rest indicates a pause or hold; the pulse of the music is temporarily suspended until the Conductor resumes it.

Fermata is a Directive card, directing the querent to put things on hold, to delay until further instruction or insight is gleaned. It can also indicate a delay imposed from elsewhere.





### Fiero

*Vigorously, passionately.*

In a musical score, *Fiero* (*fee-AY-roh*) is a directive to play a passage in a fiery, passionate manner.

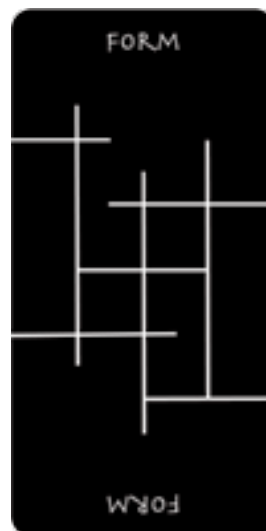
*Fiero* is an Expressive card. It directs the querent to bring passion and/or vigor to what's at hand, or indicates a time when passions are running high.

### Form

*Foundation; stability; time management.*

In music, *form* refers to the underlying structure of a composition. The form of a piece is usually defined by dividing it into repeating and non-repeating parts; "A-A-B-A" is a familiar form in pop music, for example, meaning "verse-verse-chorus-verse." Certain forms have given rise to large oeuvres of music, such as the sonata; others are closely related to style, such as 12-Bar Blues.

Form in music is different from form in architecture or painting; it occurs in time instead of in space. It is related to rhythm in that it deals with measured durations and repetition; rhythm is in



motion, however, while Form is more fixed. Form is like a broad "over-rhythm" within which music arises; it is structure built in time.

*Form* is an Elemental card, and speaks of structure, particularly as it relates to time; in addition to foundation and stability, it addresses issues of planning and time management. It might also refer to an existing blueprint that must be worked with or around.

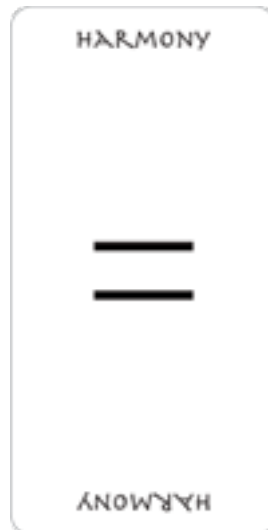
### Giocoso

*With humor.*

In a musical score, *Giocoso* (*jee-oh-COH-soh*) is a directive to play a passage in a playful, merry, or teasing manner.

*Giocoso* is an Expressive card. It directs the querent to bring a lightness of spirit to what's at hand, a playfulness and sense of humor. It can also point to a time of festivity and high spirits, or to an amusing turn of events. Like its cousin the Joker, *Giocoso* can also reference being tricked or fooled.





## Harmony

*Interrelationship, affinity, quality of blend.*

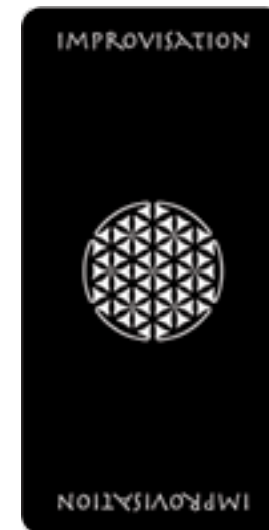
When we hear the word *harmony*, we tend to think “harmonious,” as in consonant or pleasing. In music, though, harmony occurs when any two or more pitches are sounded at once, pleasing or not.

Although each of the pitches within a harmony is essential to it, pitches do not in fact define a harmony. They are defined instead by what’s *between* their pitches: the difference between their vibratory rates, and the consonance or dissonance we experience because of that difference. While “harmony” is a noun, it’s a very verb-ish one: harmony is a living dynamic.

*Harmony* is an Elemental card, and speaks of the relationship between two or more people, places, or processes: the affinity between them or lack of it, the quality of blend. It is a call to examine and consider.

## Improvisation

*Conscious response.*



When musicians improvise, yes, they make it up as they go along—but there are a few things that must be in place for them to do it well. First, they must have *Chops*—the ability to get around on their instrument. Second, they must have some kind of *Theory*, some knowledge or sense of what’s going on around them. Third, they must have *Listening*: whether soloing or accompanying, the success of one’s improvisation depends greatly on one’s ability to hear—and thus respond—to the other players on the stand. Successful improvisation requires the attention to be divided several ways. One must remain relaxed in body and attentive and open in mind, while fluidly maintaining a balance that reflects both one’s personal feelings and the overall feeling and intent of the music at hand.

*Improvisation* is an Elemental card. It points to a time when things are not going as planned, or a time when there are no plans: we are required to simply take it as it comes and do our best. Successfully navigating such a time involves more than just single-mindedly plowing through it, focusing only on what we want; we must stay attuned to subtle changes tipping the balance all around us. We can remain intent on a desirable end, while allowing that end to manifest in unexpected ways; relaxation and focus together are key. Ultimately, *Improvisation* is about *conscious response*: the more conscious, the better.

Life as a whole can certainly be seen as one long improvisation. There are times, though, when improvisation is inappropriate, when ends are best served by closely following directions. Sometimes what looks like improvisation is actually a knee-jerk reaction to authority, masquerading as intent. Improvising can also function as a cover for laziness or lack of discipline.





## Listening

*Paying attention, reading between the lines.*

The precise effect of the observer in quantum experiments seems to be infinitely arguable; what is plain, however, is that there *is* an effect. Attention—that by which the observer observes—is a *force*. When we engage that force, when we listen to someone or something, there is a sense of yielding, of surrender on our part; that's the "pay" in "paying attention." We also, however, give something: we become generators of that force, or perhaps conduits for it. The implications of this are enormous: our attention, at some level and in some way, affects reality. When we listen deeply, when we pay attention, we may be giving more than we know. To quote Cheryl Richardson, "People start to heal the moment they feel heard."

Alas, the fact is we rarely deeply listen. We play at listening, pretend to listen, fool ourselves into believing we are listening while, actually, behind our "I'm listening" mask, we're unconsciously dodging the uncomfortable bits, lost in the reactions spurred by the tidbits we do pick up, waiting for someone else to hurry up and stop talking so we can start.

In order to truly listen, we must first have the intent to do so; then, enough continuity of presence to maintain that intention; and finally, enough self-awareness to know whether we're listening or not. It's a subtle and slippery business. In addition to the inner distractions of our thoughts and feelings, we also have the bodily tensions that arise from them—all of these things weaken our attentive power. A hard-nosed determination to listen doesn't work, either—it's too attached, which is itself a distraction. A kind of relaxed presence is key: a broad observing—absorbing, really—of the other, along with an awareness of our continuing reactions, without a repressing of or an indulging in those reactions.

*Listening* is an Elemental card. When it appears in a casting, the importance of listening and the question of whether we are listening or not comes to fore. Something is requiring or demanding our attention: we need to get our stuff—our preconceived notions, our inner chatter, our opinions and neediness—out of the way. And listening deeply is, of course, more than just hearing words—what is not said is sometimes more important than what is.

## Melody

*Articulacy, sincerity.*



Although the sound waves that comprise pitch occur over time, our experience of pitch is aligned with the eternal present. There is a profound beingness in a single note: it floats unattached, its beginning and end are irrelevant; it is only sound, only now. When pitches begin to succeed one another, however—when melody arises—duration comes into play, as do the horizontal, time-based qualities of rhythm. Melody is the verticality of being come alive in the horizontality of process; it is pitch made language in the body of time.

Melodies pass down through generations; their language is universal and transcends both culture and era. They are the stories that our hearts tell and that our hearts hear; they are the *lingua franca* of feeling. They cannot lie: truer words cannot be spoken.

*Melody* is an Elemental card. It represents language and the issues that arise around language: intelligibility, articulacy, comprehension. Because of its inherent candor, *Melody* is also aligned with truth and sincerity.



## Obbligato

*Obligation, duty; following directions.*

In the Baroque era, musical accompaniment was often improvised. The melody of a piece would, of course, be scored; its bass line would be, too, but would include Arabic numbers alongside the notes. These numbers would indicate a basis upon which a musician playing a chordal instrument, such as a harpsichord, could improvise an accompaniment.

In contrast to these improvised accompaniments was the *obbligato* (*oh-blee-GAH-toh*), a scored accompanying part that one was "obligated" to play exactly as written. In the years since, an *obbligato* has come to mean

any prominent, but chiefly ornamental, accompaniment, usually in the form of a countermelody.

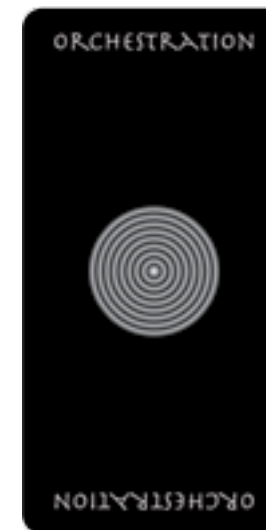
*Obbligato* is an Elemental card, and references something we are obliged to do, or are convinced we are obliged to do; it can point to an actual duty, a sense of duty, or a duty pressed upon us. It's rather the antithesis of the *Improvisation* card, which has us making things up as we go; *Obbligato* is more about following directions and codes of conduct, self-imposed or otherwise.

## Orchestration

*Delegation, managing resources.*

Orchestration is the art of employing instruments in various combinations; an orchestrator decides which instruments in the band play which parts. In order to successfully orchestrate, one must be familiar with the strengths, limitations, and character of the instruments at hand, and know how to blend and find balance between them.

*Orchestration* is an Elemental card. It's about delegation and organization, about deciding where and how to use resources. These resources may take the form of people—as in who does what and when—or not; we might orchestrate a series of events, for example. At its best, *Orchestration* aims for fairness, a sense of teamwork, and group success; if not consciously navigated, however, micro-managing, misplaced authority, or a lack of group focus can arise.





## Ossia

*Simpler path, alternate route.*

In a musical composition, an *ossia* (*oh-SEE-yah*)—meaning “or”—is an alternative version of a passage, usually printed above the original in smaller type. *Ossia* passages are often easier to play; their usual purpose is to allow less technically proficient players—or ones with smaller hands—to get through the tough parts.

*Ossia* is an Elemental card, and points to the possibility of an alternate path—usually a simpler one. Choosing to take it can be wise—simple is often best. Taking the simpler path can also, however, be a cop out. Questions arise regarding our motivations: are we drawn to the path of least resistance with a conscious end in mind, or are we avoiding something?

An *ossia* doesn’t always indicate an easier passage; sometimes it’s just an alternative, a “player’s choice.” The only way to really know the nature of a path is to take it; sometimes the easy way out isn’t so easy. Ultimately, the *Ossia* card is about choice: whatever road it is we’re traveling includes a fork.

## Performance

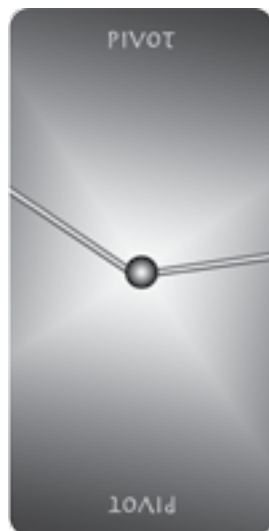
*Spotlight, proving ground.*

*Performance*, in a musical sense, usually refers to a theatrical presentation; it can also refer, though, to a level of accomplishment, as in “job performance.” Both aspects are in play when the spotlight is upon us: it’s both a time to shine and a time to be scrutinized. Tanking, of course, is always a possibility—the pressure can be enormous.

*Performance* is an Elemental card, and indicates a time when we are called to step up to the plate, to rise to the occasion; to share our talents, to speak our truth, to further ourselves or the end at hand. We may, however, find ourselves on a proving ground.

Where the need to perform operates unconsciously, we find the *ham*: one who performs out of an unconscious need to impress others, or who remains constantly in character out of fear of exposure.





## Pivot

*Shift in context; new role.*

Musically, a *pivot* is a device that can be used to smoothly change tonal centers. A pivot is accomplished by introducing a new tonal center—via harmony—under a melodic tone that’s still in the original key. For example, if we sing *do, re, mi* and hold the note *mi*, then shift the harmony underneath it so that *mi* becomes *so* of a new key, our original *do* becomes a thing of the past: our new key, our new *do*, is now magically a third lower than our first.

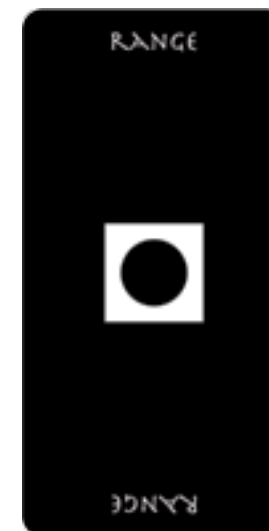
*Pivot* is an Elemental card, and indicates a shift in context: a change in external circumstances is thrusting us or what’s at hand into a new role. We may find ourselves, for example, occupying a new position at work, or a different significance in a relationship,

but not by our own volition: somebody else quit, the baby was born, etc. Conversely, the Pivot Card can indicate a shift that we initiate, like keeping the same career but moving to a new town with a better clientele.

Pivots need not apply only to individuals. There are pivots in perception, as when changes in external circumstances cause us to see something or someone in a new light. There are mundane pivots, like changing your shirt to match your tie. In any case, pivots are transformations uniquely marked by one thing shifting and thus redefining something else.

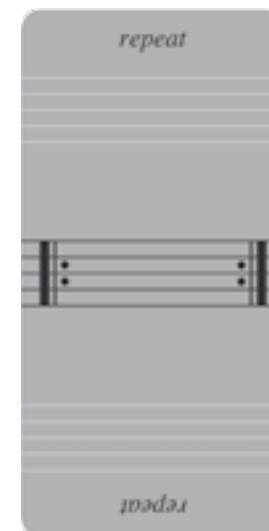
## Range

*Limits, boundaries.*



The range of a musical instrument refers to the span of pitches between the highest and lowest notes it can attain. It is an instrument’s upper and lower limits.

*Range* is an Elemental card, and refers to limits in capacity, resources, or ability; its appearance indicates that we’ve bumped up against some sort of edge, some boundary. That boundary may be real, in which case we know what we have to work with; or it may be imagined or assumed, in which case it might be holding us back unnecessarily, or falsely coloring our view.



## Repeat

*Repetition, redundancy, perseverance.*

In a musical score, the colon-like repeat symbols—as shown on the Repeat Card—bracket a passage that is to be played again. There’s usually a notation above the passage indicating how many times it is to be replayed: *2x*, *3x*, etc.

*Repeat* is a Directive card, and directs the querent to try, try again. It might also indicate a rerun, or an endless loop or cycle that needs to be broken out of.



## Rhythm

*Pattern, routine, consistency.*

In music, *rhythm* is defined as the organization of sound and silence in time. “Organization” implies organized around something; in music, that something is the beat. In terms of their duration, all events within a piece of music relate to and can be measured against a recurring pulse. Events as they relate to that pulse—and combine with each other, time-wise—create the phenomenon of rhythm.

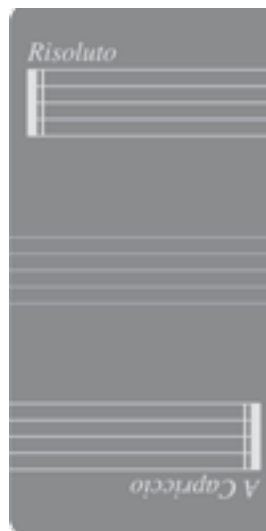
Rhythm is an Elemental card. It refers to patterns of events that can be clocked, such as routines and regimens; it may indicate or be a call for consistency. The Rhythm card can also refer to “finding a groove”: clocking to a natural rhythm, or to the rhythm

of something or someone we wish to be in step with. Finally, the Rhythm Card can point to larger patterns we may be a part of, or to probable outcomes based on observable patterns.

## Risoluto

*With resolve or resignedly.*

In a musical score, *Risoluto* (*ree-soh-LOO-toh*) is a directive to play a passage in a resolute and determined manner. *Risoluto* is an Expressive card, and directs the querent to proceed with resolve and determination, to “stick to their guns.” It can also indicate hardheadedness or a sense of resignation.



## Ritardando

*Slow down.*

In music, a *ritardando* indicates a decrease in speed. The number of bars over which this decrease takes place is indicated by an ellipsis, just as with an *accelerando*. Where the *accelerando* tends to be steady, measured, and longish, however, the *ritardando* tends to be shorter and more dramatic, as if it’s slowing down to make a point.

*Ritardando* is a Directive card, directing the querent to slow things, or themselves, down. It can also indicate things grinding to as if to a halt, or an increasing lethargy: suddenly, one is wading through deep mud. Or there may be a beneficial slowing, an easing into a more manageable pace.



## Sforzando

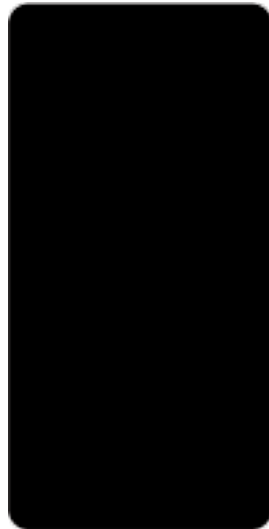
*With sudden force.*

In music, a *sforzando* (*sfort-SAHN-doh*) indicates an abrupt increase in volume. The performance mark—shown on the center of the card—is usually placed over a single pitch or chord, which is played at a sudden increase in volume. The effect is startling.

*Sforzando* is a Directive card, directing the querent to act quickly and with force. It can also indicate a shock, a sudden arrival of the unexpected.







## Silence

*Quietude; mystery; secrecy; the unexpressed.*

Where in this life do we find silence? Even in a soundproof anechoic chamber, there is the movement of air, the sound of blood coursing through our veins. True silence exists where matter is so scarce that waves cannot propagate, as in the relative vacuum of outer space; it would seem that if we were in a position to experience true silence, we wouldn't be alive to do so. Yet there is silence as well in the vast emptiness of the atom: we are literally filled with silent space.

In music, there are silences within melodies, called *rests*, and complete silences, such as those found in the *grand pause* and in the breaks between movements. Silence puts the sounds

interspersed within in it into relief; it gives us time to absorb and reflect, however briefly, on what has passed, and to anticipate what is coming.

Silence is the before and after of all things, and the space between.

Meditation is a falling into silence, a slowing into stillness. There are many different sorts of meditation practices, but what they all have in common is quieting thought. Not by repressing thoughts—because that in itself requires thinking—but by shifting the attention to following the breath, for example, or to sensing the body, or repeating a mantra. In practice we find we have many layers of chatter running, and that when one layer quiets, another starts up. But always we return, lightly and without judgment, to what we are following—and eventually we come to a quieter place. The effect of this is that many of our automatic associations and thinking habits are given a respite. They are seen and let go, our inner knots loosen, the emotional and bodily tensions that accompany our thoughts are released; and we continue afterward, we begin anew, with somewhat of a cleaner slate.

The appearance of *Silence* in a casting can refer to this activity, this quieting and slowing. It can be a call to practice, to renew in this way, to somehow, anyhow, move toward silence before proceeding.

*Silence*—an Elemental Card—can also indicate the presence of the unexpressed, in which case we might find secrecy, or at least circumspection; or possibly stifling, a purposeful or enforced keeping of things under wraps.

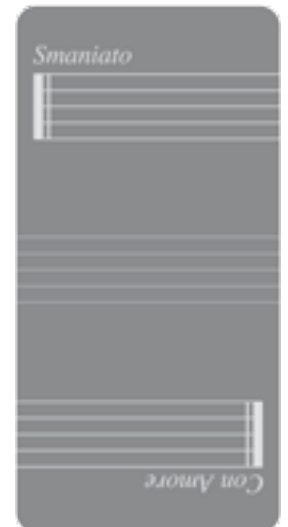
Finally, beyond the unexpressed, *Silence* can represent the inexpressible, the things for which words fall short. In this case we're called not to speak, but to simply be or act.

## Smaniato

*Angrily, with fury.*

In a musical score, *Smaniato* (*smah-nee-AH-toh*) is a directive to play a passage furiously and with vehemence.

*Smaniato* is an Expressive card, and there are times when anger is best expressed. But pure anger is a response that quickly fades. What continues are our habitual play-outs: indignance, self-righteousness, self-pity, irritability. Anger can be invigorating, toothy—sometimes we like it. *Smaniato*, however, is a check on anger: ours or another's. Is it there, is it justified, is it expressed, should it be expressed, are we just running with it, is it serving an end, is it toxic? Are we having anger, or is anger having us?





### Stanchezza

*Wearily, with fatigue; ploddingly.*

In a musical score, *stanchezza* (*stahn-KAYT-sah*) is a directive to play a passage ploddingly, so that it expresses weariness.

Stanchezza is an Expressive card, and directs the querent to acknowledge, consider, or express weariness or fatigue; it may be that rest or renewal is called for.

### Style

*Presentation.*



Style, in a general sense, can be defined in contrast to content: content refers to what is being said, while style refers to the way we are saying it. This distinction is easily seen, for example, in representational painting: there's more than one way to paint a tree. In music, however, there is no tree; music is by nature abstract, and a change in style *is* a change in content.

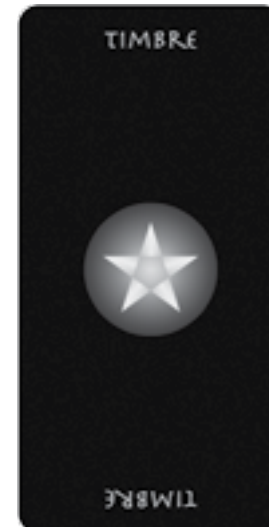
The meaning of style in music is very ambiguous. It can broadly refer to genre, as in "jazz" or "classical," or to sub-genres like "Dixieland" and "doo-wop"; it can refer to a composer, as in "the style of Joni Mitchell," or to a period, as in "Baroque." Musical styles can be defined by a general way of playing, such as "stride piano," or by the way an individual plays, as in "the style of Bill Evans"; they can be defined by a rhythm, such as "bossa nova," or by a purpose, such as "dance music."

*Style* is an Elemental card, and refers to the manner in which someone or something is presented or presents themselves. It is the surface, and the handshake to the world—it is the first thing others see, and often that by which they judge. In a casting, it raises the question of whether the style is true to the content, or intent, or purpose.

On another level, *Style* can refer to the way we see ourselves, to our self-image. We adopt styles based on value judgments, and for a variety of reasons. Style can be an artful, playful, genuine expression of ourselves, or it can be fear-based or resigned, or even forced upon us. Our manner, our way of speaking, of walking, of interacting with the world, even the clothes we wear... what are we working with those? Style is a surface that is transparent to the core—if we look.

### Timbre

*Inherence; individuality.*



The timbre (*TAM-bur*) of an instrument is what allows it to be differentiated from other instruments; it is the instrument's own unique sound. What gives an instrument its timbre is its physical attributes: the materials from which it's made, its planes, curves, openings, its vibrating and stationary parts. Each of these attributes engages specific harmonics and resonances when the instrument is sounded, and together they give an instrument its color, its distinct harmonic signature.

*Timbre* is an Elemental card, and represents our individuality, the singular resonant shape we are each uniquely given to sound. It can refer to asserting our individuality, to being ourselves; it can also point to the uniqueness of what's at hand, and the singular approach required to handle it.



## Theory

*Analysis, conjecture; system of ideas.*

"Music Theory" is a term that refers to our ideas about the mechanics of music; it can also refer to the study of those ideas.

*Theory* is an Elemental Card, and points to our ideas regarding what's at hand. It speaks of intellectual constructs and systems, of analysis and conjecture.

Ideas about a thing, of course, are not the thing; theory can take us only so far. Having coherent ideas about how things work is a necessary step toward mastery; becoming overly identified with our theories, however, can lead us to mistaking the map for the territory. Intoxicating as our ideas may be, they are no substitute for

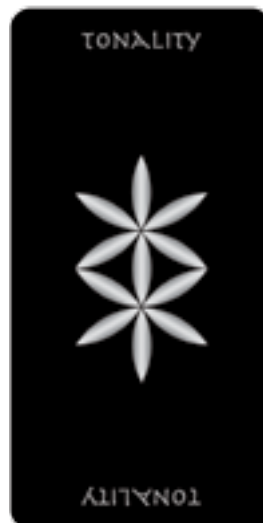
experience and deep understanding.

## Tonality

*Center of gravity.*

In music, tonality is the phenomenon in which a group of pitches appears to gravitate around, to reference, a single pitch. This single pitch and its posse are sometimes called a *key*-- the "key of C" is a tonality, for example, in which a group of specific pitches, expressed via harmony or melody or scale, is centered around the note "C."

The phenomenon of tonality arises from the Harmonic Series. When the relationship between a single pitch and one or more pitches is analogous to the relationship between a fundamental and its lower harmonics, we perceive that single pitch as *do*, as

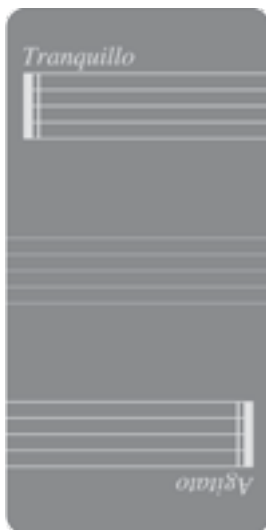


home. Tonality, then, arises from natural law—that's probably why we find it so pleasing, and why we find atonality unsettling (no judgment there—sometimes unsettling, or at least a different kind of settling, is just the ticket.)

*Tonality* is an Elemental card, and references a central point, a gravitational center toward which things are drawn and around which they orbit. It is a vibratory rate, and its harmonics are fixed to it, and like rates and their harmonics will resonate with it: thus it defines the shape things can take and the support that will be drawn. It asks us to consider what is central, what is *do*: is it clear and well defined? Does it reflect what we want or what's needed? Are there other tonalities, other issues, in play as well, and if so, are they harmonious together, or at odds? *Tonality* is closely related to intention, but while intent sets things in motion, *Tonality* is a state: it asks us to see what's at center, and what's being drawn to it. Or who's at center—*Tonality* can also reference a person at the center of things.

Although tonalities speak of the "is-ness" of things, they are not in fact static; they are always on the way to and from higher and lower tonalities (this is explored in depth in the *Harmonic Engine* chapter.) In Muzoracle mythopoetics, shifts in tonality reference shifts in state. In a casting, this may be worth considering: how permanent is this center of gravity? Where did it come from? Where might it go?

What constitutes a center of gravity? When we look at the Earth, for example, we see less something singular than an integrated system. When considering *Tonality* in terms of work on ourselves, we are called to see more than a single aspect of ourselves that we wish to be central; we are asked instead to find a center that includes all the deepest wishes of our being. Ultimately, the center of gravity is the Self. The more self-realized we are, the more unstuck in the pools and eddies of identification, the stronger our gravitational pull, and the more things we draw and are drawn to that are in line with who we deeply wish to be. In musical terms, the more well defined a fundamental, the clearer its harmonics, the more powerful its resonances.



## Tranquillo

*Calmly, peacefully.*

In a musical score, *Tranquillo* (*trahn-KWEE-loh*) is a directive to play quietly, in a calm and restful manner.

*Tranquillo* is an Expressive card, and directs the querent to express calm. It can also indicate a restful or peaceful time.

## Tuning

*Joining, conforming, simpatico.*



Tuning refers to manipulating an instrument—by changing the tension of its strings, for example—in order for it to produce specific pitches while being played.

The reason for tuning is twofold. First, we tune in order to play “in tune” with others; when a guitarist and trumpet player each play an “A,” they want their “A’s” to match in frequency. Second, we tune in order to facilitate particular music: if we’re playing traditional Chinese music, for example, we might tune our instrument to a Chinese scale.

*Tuning* is an Elemental card, and refers to mutual understanding, to being simpatico or “in tune” with others. It can also refer to joining others, to altering our frequency in order to fit in or be a part of something. Finally, *Tuning* can reference a conforming to standards, as when we tune our instruments for a particular piece or style.



## INTERPOSITIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

When interpreting a casting, we find meaning in each position by considering its elements, its dice and cards; then, we consider each position in succession, allowing them to combine as we create a narrative. In addition to the above, however, there is another subtle layer of information that can be mined: that of the relationship *between* the positions, both in terms of harmony and/or suit.

**Interpositional Harmonies.** In a casting, the scalepoints and the positions they anchor occur in succession. They are not “stacked up” like harmony, but play out horizontally over time—more like a melody. Nonetheless, there is a harmonic relationship between positions. If, for example, we are examining the relationship between a position above *fa* and another position above *so*, we can consider the fact that the space between *fa* and *so* is that of a Major Second. The interval of the Major Second indicates division or disparity; thus we might explore division or disparity between the two positions. Positions separated by the interval of a Minor Sixth might have a longing or hunger between them; positions separated by a Tritone might create an impetus or motivation between them; and so on.

Musically, because scalepoints occur one after the other and not at once, the harmony between them is not directly heard—it is implied. In the context of interpreting an entire casting, the harmonic relationships between scalepoints often play a subtle role; they are not as prominent as the actual “sounded” harmonies, not as obvious. Still, though, they can sometimes further or strengthen our narrative.

Yet another layer of meaning can be uncovered when Harmony Cards in two or more positions are compared to one another. Then there are not only the implied harmonies between the scalepoints to consider, but the implied harmonies between the harmonies. Examining things at that level might seem over the top, but once in awhile something extraordinary emerges. If a casting were to contain, for example, a Perfect Fourth over *fa*, a Minor Third over *so*, and an axis position under *te*, the axis scalepoint and the harmonies formed by the other two positions would all nail the same note—that’s pretty rich.

**Interpositional Suit Relationships.** Interesting correlations can often be drawn between positions that contain cards of the same suit. A Perfect Fifth in one position and a Major Seventh of the same suit in another position, for example, might not only speak of initiative here and lack there; it might point to initiative regarding that lack, or to a lack regarding that initiative. (If the same two cards were in differing suits, they might still relate to each other similarly; their being in the same suit, however, puts them in the same realm and suggests a more intimate connection.) Further still, the correlations in suit between positions can interplay with the interpositional harmonies described above.

As we can see, beyond a casting’s basic elements lies a complex web of interrelationships. Exploring the subtle harmonic and suit relationships between positions is hardly crucial, but knowing how can provide an extra set of tools when finding our story.

## THE TELLUSPHERIC TUNING MATRIX

The Telluspheric Tuning Matrix—TTM—is a tuning system based on the workings of the Harmonic Engine as it plays out in the Earth’s atmosphere. The note “C,” the system’s primary *do*, is set at 7.83 Hz, the average fundamental frequency of the Schumann Resonances. The TTM is a floating “*do*-centric” twelve-tone system: the ratios between frequencies stay the same regardless of key, but the frequencies of individual notes change from key to key, as the *do* from which they arise changes.

The twelve tones in any given key derive from its two ternions, its *primary* and its *antipodal*. Primary ternions are built from interlaced Source, Present, and Potential Harmonic Series, as detailed in the Harmonic Engine chapter. It is from the Primary ternion that the diatonic notes of the key’s scale—*do*, *ti*, *la*, *so*, *fa*, *mi*, *re*—are derived. Antipodal ternions are also built from interlaced Source, Present, and Potential Harmonic Series, but their *do* is in a 5:7 relationship with that of the Primary. It is from the Antipodal ternion that the chromatic notes of a key’s scale are derived: *ra*, *me*, *se*, *le*, and *te*. (Although Antipodal ternions generate a *fa* and *ti* as well, it is the *fa* and *ti* of the Primary ternion that are used.)



The Telluspheric Tuning Matrix is always referencing a *do*. In a Muzoracle casting, that *do* is determined by the Musician’s Die, and remains *do* throughout the casting. When the tuning is used compositionally, however, the *do* may be changed at will—from section to section, or even from note to note. The *do*’s themselves, however, in any case, are always derived from the Primary and Antipodal ternions in C. If *do* is F, F is at 167.04 Hz or one of its octaves; if *do* is Ab or G#, its at 394.632 Hz or one of its octaves. Thus the frequencies within the tuning are always tied to the Schumann Resonances, and the life that thrives within them.

The tables on the following page show the Primary and Antipodal Ternions in C; the other eleven keys are constructed using the same formulae, setting the frequencies of their *do*’s according to the ternions in C. Following these tables are tables of the ratios that sound as the sonic archetypes—dyads and triads—occur above or below scalepoints.



PRIMARY TERNION in C >>>

	SOURCE “G” >>>		PRESENT “C” >>>		POTENTIAL “F”	
PARTIALS	Note	Frequency	Note	Frequency	Note	Frequency
Fundamental	so G2	93.96	do C2	62.64	fa F1	41.76
2nd Partial	so G3	187.92	do C3	125.28	fa F2	83.52
3rd Partial	re D4	281.88	so G3	187.92	do C3	125.28
4th Partial	so G4	375.84	do C4	250.56	fa F3	167.04
5th Partial	ti B4	469.8	mi E4	313.2	la A3	208.8
6th Partial	re D5	563.76	so G4	375.84	do C4	250.56
7th Partial	F5 657.72		te Bb4	438.48	me Eb4	292.32
8th Partial	so G5	751.68	do C5	501.12	fa F4	334.08
9th Partial	A5 845.64		re D5	563.76	so G4	375.84
10th Partial	ti B5	939.6	mi E5	626.4	la A4	417.6

<<< ANTIPODAL TERNION in C (Gb)

	“Cb” POTENTIAL		<<< “Gb” PRESENT		<<< “Db” SOURCE	
PARTIALS	Frequency	Note	Frequency	Note	Frequency	Note
Fundamental	58.464	Cb1	87.696	Gb2 se	131.544	Db3 RA
2nd Partial	116.928	Cb2	175.392	Gb3 se	263.088	Db4 RA
3rd Partial	175.392	Gb3 se	263.088	Db4 RA	394.632	Ab4 Le
4th Partial	233.856	Cb3	350.784	Gb4 se	526.176	Db5 RA
5th Partial	292.32	Eb4 Me	438.48	Bb4 Te	657.72	F5
6th Partial	350.784	Gb4 se	526.176	Db5 RA	789.264	Ab5 Le
7th Partial	409.248	A4	613.872	Fb	920.808	Cb5
8th Partial	467.712	Cb4	701.568	Gb5 se	1052.352	Db6 RA
9th Partial	526.176	Db5 RA	789.264	Ab5 Le	1183.896	Eb6
10th Partial	584.64	Eb5 Me	876.96	Bb5 Te	1315.44	F6

INTERVALS AND RATIOS: ASCENDING SCALES/CASTINGS

SONIC ARCHETYPES	Over DO	Over RE	Over MI	Over FA	Over SO	Over LA	Over TI	Under TE	Under LE	Under SE	Under ME	Under RA
Unison	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1
Octave	1:2	1:2	1:2	1:2	1:2	1:2	1:2	2:1	2:1	2:1	2:1	2:1
Perfect Fifth	2:3	27:40	2:3	2:3	2:3	2:3	75:112	3:2	3:2	3:2	40:27	3:2
Perfect Fourth	3:4	3:4	3:4	16:21	3:4	20:27	3:4	21:16	27:20	4:3	4:3	4:3
Major Third	4:5	45:56	50:63	4:5	4:5	50:63	45:56	5:4	63:50	56:45	56:45	63:50
Minor Sixth	40:63	9:14	5:8	40:63	9:14	5:8	5:8	14:9	63:40	8:5	14:9	63:40
Minor Third	6:7	27:32	5:6	160:189	6:7	5:6	5:6	7:6	189:160	6:5	7:6	6:5
Major Sixth	3:5	3:5	25:42	16:27	3:5	25:42	25:42	5:3	42:25	42:25	5:3	42:25
Major Second	8:9	9:10	25:28	8:9	9:10	8:9	25:28	10:9	9:8	28:25	10:9	28:25
Minor Seventh	4:7	9:16	5:9	4:7	9:16	5:9	9:16	7:4	9:5	16:9	7:4	9:5
Minor Second	20:21	27:28	15:16	20:21	20:21	20:21	15:16	21:20	21:20	21:20	28:27	21:20
Major Seventh	8:15	15:28	15:28	8:15	15:28	100:189	15:28	28:15	189:100	28:15	28:15	28:15
Tritone	5:7	45:56	5:7	32:45	5:7	5:7	45:64	64:45	56:45	7:5	7:5	7:5
Major Triad	4:5 5:6	45:56 21:25	50:63 21:25	4:5 5:6	4:5 5:6	50:63 21:25	45:56 5:6	21:16 56:45	27:20 7:6	4:3 6:5	4:3 7:6	4:3 189:160

INTERVALS AND RATIOS: DESCENDING SCALES/CASTINGS

Over TE	Over LE	Over SE	Over ME	Over RA	Under RE	Under MI	Under FA	Under SO	Under LA	Under TI	Under DO	SONIC ARCHETYPES
1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	Unison
1:2	1:2	1:2	1:2	1:2	2:1	2:1	2:1	2:1	2:1	2:1	2:1	Octave
21:32	27:40	2:3	2:3	2:3	3:2	3:2	32:21	3:2	40:27	3:2	3:2	Perfect Fifth
3:4	3:4	56:75	20:27	3:4	27:20	4:3	4:3	4:3	4:3	75:56	4:3	Perfect Fourth
7:9	63:80	4:5	7:9	63:80	9:7	5:4	80:63	9:7	5:4	5:4	80:63	Major Third
5:8	63:100	28:45	28:45	63:100	45:28	100:63	8:5	8:5	100:63	45:28	8:5	Minor Sixth
5:6	21:25	21:25	5:6	21:25	6:5	25:21	32:27	6:5	25:21	25:21	6:5	Minor Third
7:12	189:320	3:5	7:12	3:5	27:16	5:3	320:189	12:7	5:3	5:3	12:7	Major Sixth
7:8	9:10	8:9	7:8	9:10	9:8	10:9	8:7	9:8	10:9	9:8	8:7	Major Second
5:9	9:16	14:25	5:9	14:25	9:5	25:14	16:9	9:5	16:9	25:14	16:9	Minor Seventh
14:15	189:200	14:15	14:15	14:15	15:14	15:14	16:15	15:14	200:189	15:14	16:15	Minor Second
21:40	21:40	21:40	14:27	21:40	27:14	15:8	40:21	40:21	40:21	15:8	40:21	Major Seventh
7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10	10:7	10:7	64:45	10:7	10:7	45:32	10:7	Tritone
7:9 27:32	63:80 6:7	4:5 5:6	7:9 6:7	63:80 160:189	27:20 25:21	4:3 25:21	4:3 6:5	4:3 6:5	4:3 25:21	75:56 6:5	4:3 6:5	Major Triad

# INTERPRETING CASTINGS ON AN INSTRUMENT

When expressing the music a casting generates, there are two things to consider. First, we need to hear the sound that each position creates: its pitch and its harmony (if it has any) played on an instrument that expresses its suit or suits, if it has any. Secondly, we need to hear the casting as a whole, one position after another. This gives a sense of melody and composition, and provides our story with a narrative, musical arc.

The simplest way to hear a position is to audit it on the Muzoracle website. If you play an instrument, however, you may wish to play the positions yourself— it's not hard to do, if you can read music and know your way around intervals and solfège. In the key the Musician's Die has determined, you simply play the solfège notes indicated, adding harmony below or above each if there are harmony cards involved. (You build harmonies upward when the cards are above the dice, and downward when the cards are below the dice.)

If you're playing an instrument with fixed, equal temperament tuning—like an acoustic piano—you'll miss some of the acoustic richness found on the site. Firstly, you'll miss the harmonies in the casting being heard in their suits/instrument families; secondly, you won't hear the differences in ratio that the Telluspheric Tuning Matrix provides. What you'll have instead, though, is performance—and that's worth a lot. There's a kind of heightened awareness, a getting inside of each position, that happens when one plays while finding meaning. If you're casting for someone else, there's a different kind of energy exchange when you're playing for them rather than hitting a button.

If you're working with a DAW, like Logic or Cubase, your options of what to play increase. You can create a template using whatever sound you like for each instrument family, and, if so inclined, download the Telluspheric Tuning Matrix on the Muzoracle site (as an .scl or .tun file) and include it in your template.

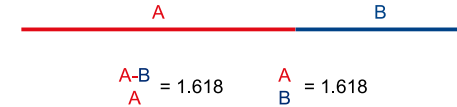
Whatever the instrument in front of you, what you do with a casting as a whole brings an entire other level of creativity into play. You can, of course, simply play the positions one after another—but you can do that on the site. With practice, you can also improvise, using the casting as a starting point. One approach to that is to underscore the narrative on the fly, as if scoring a film; another is to focus on providing healing tones, using your intuition, knowledge, experience, and intent to bring what is needed. A third approach, and the approach of the author in private sessions, is to combine the first two.

## FLOWERS AND FIBONACCI: NOTES ON DESIGN

The design of the elements in the Muzoracle—its iconography and the cards and dice themselves—arise essentially from these: the geometric forms of the *Vesica Piscis* and its cousin in bloom, the *Flower of Life*; and the *golden ratio*, *Fibonacci sequence*, and *platonic solids*, which can be derived from or found within those forms.



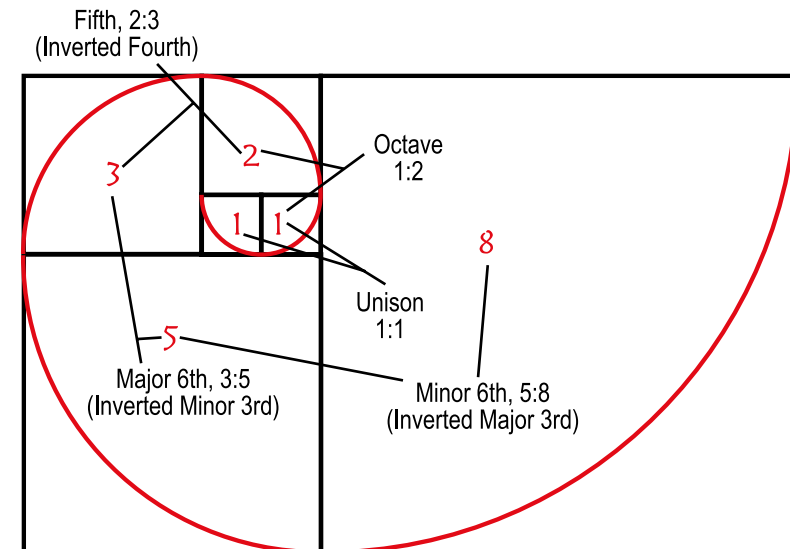
The history and significance of these forms and numbers is beyond the scope of this book; there is much material available that addresses them. Following are some notes specific to the Muzoracle's design; their subject matter can be further explored on one's own.



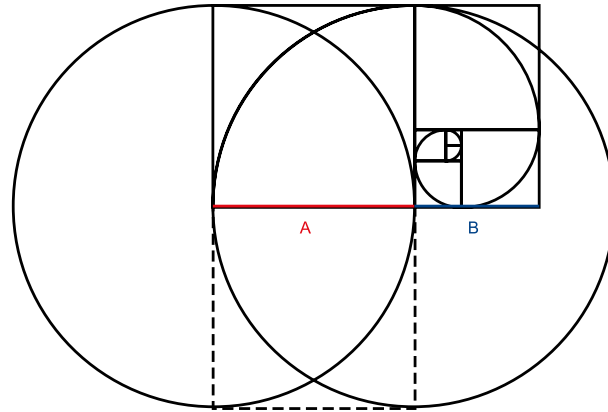
- The golden ratio, or *phi*—1.618033988749895...—is found in numerous proportions and spirals in Nature, and is often applied in art and design.

- The *Fibonacci sequence* is a series of numbers wherein each number is the sum of the previous two: **0,1,1,2,3,5,8,13,21,34,55,89...**The further one goes up the sequence, in terms of the ratios between adjacent numbers, the closer one approaches *phi*.

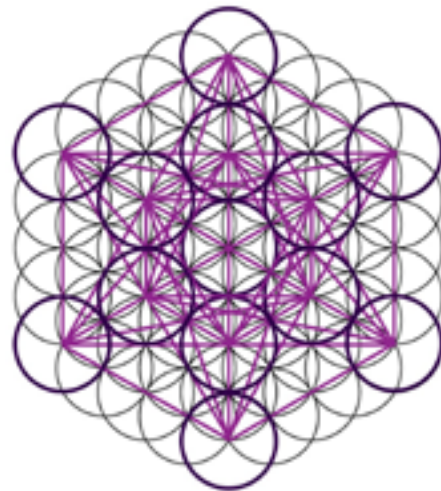
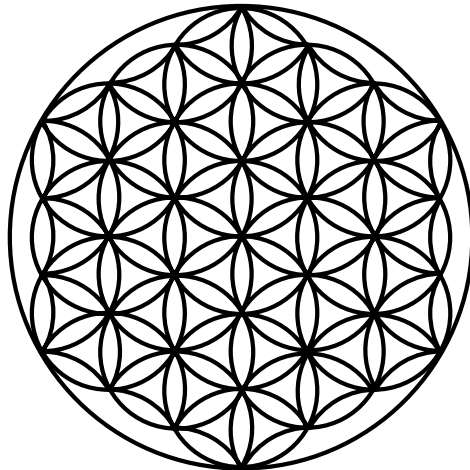
- The ratios between the first 6 numbers of the Fibonacci sequence are also found between the first six partials of the Harmonic Series: 1:1 is a Unison, 1:2 an Octave, 2:3 a Perfect Fifth, 3:5 a Major Sixth, and 5:8 a Minor Sixth. Inverting a Perfect Fifth creates a Perfect Fourth; inverting a Major Sixth creates a Minor Third; and inverting a Minor Sixth creates a Major Third. Thus, within the Golden Spiral, is a Major Triad expressed, and all of the intervals in the Series before the Harmonic Engine kicks in at partial 7.



- The *Vesica Piscis* is formed by connecting two circles together at their midpoint. The Golden Spiral and Fibonacci sequence can be derived from its geometry.



- The *Flower of Life* is comprised of overlapping Vesica Pisces, of nineteen similarly intersecting circles. Two-dimensional renderings of the *platonic solids*—the five regular, convex polyhedrons that can be constructed in three dimensional space—can be formed by connecting points within the Flower of Life.



- The five platonic solids, the discovery of which is (arguably) attributed to Pythagoras, were associated by Plato (and Kepler, as shown below) with the five elements: the tetrahedron to Fire, the icosahedron to Water, the octahedron to Air, the hexahedron (cube) to Earth, and the dodecahedron to Aether, or spirit. The Muzoracle associates each of the solids with an element and an instrument family/suit: Tetrahedron/Fire/Brass; Icosahedron/Water/Strings; Octahedron/Air/Woodwinds; Hexahedron/Earth/Percussion; and Dodecahedron/Aether/Voices.



- The intersecting circles of the Vesica Piscis and Flower of Life expand into eternity on the back of the Muzoracle Cards. If you soften your gaze and look into them, they will take you places!
- The proportions of the cards and dice reflect the Harmonic Series/golden ratio. The cards themselves are in a proportion of 2:1: an octave. The dice in relation to the cards are 4:1: two octaves. The width and depth of the Muzoracle box is a unison, 1:1, as is this book. The height to width and depth of the box is 2:1, another octave; its width and depth to card length is 5:7, a tritone.



- The Fibonacci sequence winds its way through the system in other ways as well:

1 Musician's Die; 1 Major Triad per suit  
2 Basic types of Cards (Harmonies and Compositionals)  
3 Musicians per suit; 3 types of Compositionals (Elementals, Instructives, Expressives)  
5 Suits; 5 Expressives  
8 Instructives  
13 Dice; 13 Directives; 13 dyads per suit  
21 Elementals  
34 Compositional Cards in total  
55 Harmony Cards in total  
89 Cards in the entire deck  
144 Faces on the Solfège Dice





## ALTERNATE CASTING TECHNIQUES

Once the two basic layouts are mastered, the variations are endless—feel free to get creative. Two additional variations, for example, that have found their way to the fore are *Two Choices* and *The Triad*. *Two Choices* is good if there's a fork in the road, or two alternatives that must be weighed. First the Musician's Die is rolled, then a Solfège Die rolled and card drawn for both choice A and choice B. *The Triad* is a three position casting: after the Musician's Die is rolled, a Solfège Die and card is drawn for *Affirming*, *Denying*, and *Reconciling* positions: left, right, then center. The *Affirming* position speaks of what is initiating or driving; the *Denying* position speaks of what is resisting or obstructing; and the *Reconciling* position speaks of what brings together or resolves.

In any casting—Full Layout, One-up, one of the above, or one of your invention—simply rolling another die and pulling another card is always a possibility. It's a good idea, though, to check yourself before doing so, making sure you're not just being lazy or impatient.



*At left, "Two Choices," one on either side of the Musician's Die.*

## USING THE MUZORACLE WITH TRADITIONAL TAROT

Although the Muzoracle is subtitled "The Tarot of Music," the only things it really has in common with traditional Tarot are *a)* it has cards, divided into two basic sorts; and *b)* one of those sorts is in suits that correspond with the classical elements.

Besides the fact that it is unrelated to music, what perhaps distinguishes Tarot most from the Muzoracle is the nature of its meanings: meanings in Tarot tend to be vividly drawn, while the ones in the Muzoracle are more open-ended. In a Tarot spread, one might see an archetypal image in the past, another in the present, another in the near future, and another presented as an outcome. The archetypes are ancient, ingrained, powerful, weighty: the Fool, the Hermit, the Devil. The narrative that emerges plugs into our beliefs, our fears and hopes... there can be a sense of inevitability, of things unfolding beyond our control. These qualities lend the Tarot a predictive air, and in culture the Tarot is commonly associated with predicting the future, with fortune telling. Such power and weight imbues the Tarot with both potential and risks: in the hands of a master, it can prod and inform and lead to profound insight and creative responses; in the hands of the fearful, it can reinforce fears and bolster unquestioned beliefs, leading to an oppressive sense of doom or a pollyanna's hope.

In contrast, the archetypes of the Muzoracle are abstract: they're sounds, shapes, pick and choose keywords. The positions in a casting reference points in the processes of nature or intent, and are meant to trigger questioning: the Muzoracle asks more than it tells. Broadly, one might say that the Tarot is more concerned with *defining*, the Muzoracle with *inspiring*; that the Tarot leans toward helping us *see*, the Muzoracle, toward helping us *create*.

Interestingly, the two can work well together. When a Tarot card is added to a Muzoracle position, details begin to flesh out—and the possibilities for interpretation begin to narrow. Not to nothing, however—a Muzoracle casting with Tarot still won't go predictive

on you. The best thing to do, if you're interested, is simply try the two together. You may find the addition of Tarot spoils the broth; or you may find it salts it. Or you may, like the author, keep a deck around and occasionally bring it in, when the intuition says *yes*.

**Laying Out the Muzoracle with Tarot.** Usually, when Tarot is added to a casting, it's added last: the Muzoracle dice and cards are laid out first, the casting completed. Then a Tarot card is added to each position. If a position is descending, with a Solfège Die on top and a Muzoracle card underneath, the Tarot card goes under Muzoracle card, at the very bottom of the position. If a position is ascending, with a Solfège Die at the bottom and a Muzoracle card above, the Tarot card goes above the Muzoracle card, at the very top of the position. Usually, just a single Tarot card is placed below or above the axis position, although another cross could be added—just keep in mind you're pulling a lot of information!

In a Muzoracle casting, Tarot cards don't have upright and "reversed" meanings; the Tarot ascends or descends, just like everything else. Tarot cards that are drawn upright move in the direction of their position; cards that are drawn inverted, however, move in the direction *opposite* of their position, from the scalepoint a tritone away. In the example at right, positions 1, 3, and 4 simply include the Tarot: position 1 is a Major Second of Brass, a Conductor of Brass, and a Two of Wands under *la*; position 3 is a Triad of Woodwinds and a Queen of Swords under *ti*; position 4 is a Perfect Fourth of Percussion and Judgment over *se*. In position 2, however, while Harmony is under *mi*, the 10 of Cups is traveling upwards from the other direction, over *te*. All of this makes for some interesting dynamics: the Tarot often moves counter to the Muzoracle cards. This, along with the inherently different nature of the Tarot, gives castings with Tarot a feel all their own. Give it a try!





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The painting that heads the “Beginnings” section is *Rayons de soleil*, by Louis Janmot (1814-1892); the engraving that heads the “Indices” section is *An Alchemist Poring over a Book* by Jacques Nicolas Tardieu (1716-1791). Heading the “Mechanics to Metaphor” section is *Jacob’s Dream*, painted by William Blake in 1805; the painting that heads “Metaphors in Play” is *Lord Henry Spencer and Lady Charlotte Spencer: The Young Fortune Tellers* by Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792). The painting on page 79 is *Diane and Endymion* by Pier Francesco Mola (1612-1666); the engraving of Fibonacci on page 140 is from 1850, artist unknown. All of these are in the public domain. The photo that heads the “Basics” section is by Hugh Brackett. The rest of the artwork is by J S Kingfisher.

## THANKS

Thanks upon thanks to my husband and my parents, for their ever-patient support (okay, mostly patient!) and especially to my Muzoracle clients, whose number has increased considerably since our move to the Coachella Valley in 2016. Their input, the real stuff that happens in castings in real time, has shaped the practice and emphases of the Muzoracle immeasurably. With each casting I learn something new about listening, and that makes this gift of a life a deeper and more interconnected adventure—for that I am most grateful. —*Namaste, JSK*



## ABOUT J S KINGFISHER

J S Kingfisher—Jeff—is a composer and recording artist, arranger and producer, lyricist, keyboardist, and vocalist. His recorded works include *From the Moon to the Earth*, a 21-piece song cycle released over 21 consecutive full moons (released as a 2-disc set in 2016); *Vesica Piscis* (1998); and *Floating Upstream* (1993). He is also the creator of *Muzundrum*, a musician’s game of chance and skill.

Jeff releases his work through *Philomuse*, his record label and the manufacturer of his wares. He makes records, casts the Muzoracle, and practices *Swenakailo*, a therapeutic sound immersion technique integrated with Muzoracle concepts, at Philomusica Studios in the Coachella

Valley (yes, that Coachella.) He lives nearby with his family of humans and dogs.

For more information on Jeff, and to hear his music, please visit [jskingfisher.net](http://jskingfisher.net).

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