# SUNSTONE

threads of fate

Sunstone Runic Oracle Deck Copyright © 2023 by Blaire Porter and Brit June Copyright held by Threads of Fate

All rights reserved. No part of this oracle deck may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the copyright holders. Social media use is permitted.

For permissions requests, write to the copyright holders at: requests@thethreadsoffate.com

#### First Edition

The runic symbols used in this oracle deck are ancient symbols with historical and cultural significance. They are provided for guidance and entertainment purposes only. The interpretations of the symbols are subjective and should not be considered as professional advice.

Artwork by Brit June. Words by Blaire Porter. Copyright © 2023 Blaire Porter and Brit June Welcome to Sunstone!

Thank you for choosing this deck to be a part of your journey.

Whether you are familiar with the runes or not, we hope you fall in love with the vibrant world in this deck as much as we have.

It was made with deep reverence to the northern mystery traditions and practices, which we hope is felt as you use it. We are incredibly grateful to our ancestors who guide us, but particularly with this work that honors the path they walked.

As always, we are happy to answer any questions you may have: requests@ thethreadsoffate.com or in the DM's on insta: @thethreadsoffate

With love, Blaire + Brit



# WITH GRATITUDE TO:

# **ESPEN ARTIO**

they/them

Espen is a witch, folk herbalist, and mystic who works within the realms of the Old Norse mystical tradition. Their work seeks to remember & uplift the queer divinity alive in the Norse mythos and connect to the living traditions of ancestral magic. They lead the Northern Mysteries Rune School; an exploration of runic magic and Old Norse ritual, meant to honor the spirits of the tradition within a container that is anti-kyriarchal, liberatory, and queer.

FIND ESPEN www.tendingthemystery.com @tendingthemystery



While we have our own relationship with the Runes, we hold great reverence for Espen's profound expertise and consulted with them for the making of this deck. As a knowledgeable authority on the Northern Traditions, their wisdom is truly indispensable for contemporary seekers who wish to forge connections with the Runes.

# INDEX

Using Sunstone	6
Relationship with the runes	8
Spreads	11
Bifrost	123
Resources	
	Using Sunstone Relationship with the runes. Spreads. Fehu Uruz Thurisaz Ansuz Raidho Kenaz Gebo Wunjo Hagalaz Nauthiz Isa Jera Ilhwaz Perthro Algiz Sowilo Tiwaz Berkano Ehwaz Mannaz Laguz Inguz Dagaz Othala Sunstone Ginnungagap Bifrost Urdr Verdandi. Skuld Yggdrasil. Staff Galdr Longship Resources.

# USING SUNSTONE

#### How does this differ from a tarot or oracle deck?

Technically this is a Runic oracle. It contains all the runes of the Elder Futhark, as well as 10 additional cards we created. It follows the traditional meanings of the runes.

#### What are the runes?

The Runes are an ancient Germanic alphabet. At some point, the runes were given divinatory meanings. They were carved into wood, bone or stone and tossed onto a flat circle. Their positions and meanings formed the reading. There are 24 characters divided into three groups called "aettir," each group having 8 runes within it. There is an order to the Runes, and a building story within them, but the essence and experience is different from that of tarot, for example.

#### What about when a card has no reversal?

Some runes do not have a reversal. We continued that tradition and only gave some of the extra cards a reversal as well. When there is no reversal, read only the upright meaning as your message.

## Do I need to know Norse myth and do outside research?

No, you do not. We do recommend familiarizing yourself with some of it but the deck was created to stand alone. We encourage you to learn more if you want to as there is so much to know about the Northern mysteries and practices.

#### How do the rune cards differ from rune stones?

Traditionally, runes are cast all at once. The diviner would throw them into a circle and read them based on their positions. With cards, that is certainly more difficult to do, so they are read as you would other decks. That being said, tools and practices evolve with us.

#### What can be said about the runes and their meanings?

Each rune carries an inherent meaning that reflect aspects of the natural world, divine forces and human experiences. The most magical part of the runes is the depth, diversity and dimension of them which is vast and complex. They embody the principles of chaos and order, creation and destruction as well as the interconnectedness of all things. If you're able to visualize the information and symbolism in tarot as a two-dimensional contained experience (ex: each card has a pretty distinct meaning within itself), think of runes as being the ultimate 3D experience with a heartbeat of their own. Information flows in all directions, currents of energy rippling within, around and through you - it's a magic that eludes grasp, revealing itself solely through curiosity and openness. As you'll see with the art, there is intensity, structure and vibrating open space to help embody the complexity of each runes meaning.

Take time to learn the traditional meanings, the myths that surround them as well as weaving in your own personal experiences with them. This will help you to grasp the basics and build a deeper, more intimate relationship with them, the unseen and yourself.

#### How should I work with them?

There are many ways you can work with and practice the runes. Similar to how one would use tarot or oracle, one can be pulled and used for the day whether it be for journaling prompts, meditation or contemplation. You can dive deeper and use them for divination or rune magic, utilizing single-rune draws or multiple for more complex layouts for readings, spells, charms and rituals that align with a specific intention.

#### Can I use this in conjunction with another deck?

For sure! Feel free to use this deck how you use your others.

# RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RUNES

"Then I was fertilized and became wise; I truly grew and thrived. From a word to a word I was led to a word, From a work to a work I was led to a work." The Hávamál

According to Norse mythology, Odin, the chief god, is said to have discovered the runes through a self-imposed ordeal. Hanging from the world tree, Yggdrasil, for nine days and nights, Odin pierced himself with his own spear and denied himself sustenance to gain wisdom and mystical knowledge. During this ordeal, he noticed the runes in the form of symbols or characters, and through his sacrifice, he gained an understanding of their power and significance. This legendary event is depicted in the "Hávamál," a poem from the Poetic Edda, a collection of Old Norse poems.

I think an important part of this story is the element of sacrifice. While most of us won't be hanging upside down for nine days and nine nights, there is something to be said for earning wisdom. We can read and listen as much as we want, but it doesn't mean we can embody that wisdom. It doesn't mean it has found a home within us. So I think this is something to consider as we look to the Runes.

This can look different for each of us, but it's important that there's a sensation of significance. In cultures all across the world, including the Northern traditions, is the practice of journeying. And often this involves a significant physical undertaking with it, but it can also be an internal journey. With the Northern traditions is the Utiseta (translates to sitting out), which is where someone sits out in nature with very little food and water for many days and nights. In this practice, the seeker receives visions and spiritual wisdom. So while it may not be an Utiseta, the journey with the Runes should stand apart from your regular, waking life in a way, whether in the way you meet them or the rituals you do or the way you're moving through the world.

#### THE CONTAINER

As we begin to undertake new study, it's important to create a container for that work. If you're not too familiar with the Runes, consider what your preconceptions are. What do you know of them? Why do you want to develop a relationship with them? How do you want to engage with them? What are you hoping to discover in yourself?

The runes, and Norse mythology as a whole, are vast. There is so much to learn and know. For this booklet, we have focused only on the Runes. We do encourage you, however, to read more. Norse mythology is colorful and vibrant and filled with stories that we can learn from. Learning those stories, singing those songs, all help shape the study and practice of the runes. We have some recommendations at the end of this booklet.

#### SITTING

Like with other divinatory tools, we recommend sitting with each Rune on its own for a couple of days. Consider the Runes to be living, breathing things. They have life within them, and it is up to you as a student to meet with that life force and the energy they carry. It is in this space that the Runes become woven within you.

#### TO DO THIS:

- 1. Altar: We recommend opening the container by writing the rune and placing it on your altar. It can be written on wood, a stone, paper or whatever makes sense to you.
- **2. Intention:** Set the intention of meeting with this rune. Ask it to make itself known to you. To remind you of times you've encountered the energy.
- **3. Sing:** For the next day or so, sing the rune. This can be a song you've found on Spotify (Wardruna, for example) or it could be a chant you create.
- **4. Inscribe:** A good way of internalizing this rune is writing it on your body. You can use oil, water, lightly scratching or ink. You can also draw the Rune in the dirt, in the fog on your shower door, or in your mind's eye. Notice the shape it takes. What your finger is doing as it is being drawn. What does it look and feel like to you?
- **5. Reflect:** Write down what has surfaced for you and what you've learned from the Rune.

#### **POETRY**

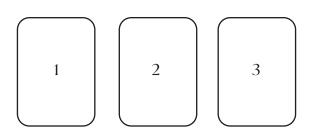
For the Ancients, poetry was a cornerstone of their culture. It was a part of storytelling, but also a part of spells, ritual and magic as a whole. In this booklet, you will find the Old English translation of the rune poem. There are 4 different rune poems: Icelandic, Swedish, Old English and Norwegian. On the black page under each Rune, you will find another poem. We wanted to have a more creative element to each card, and in honor of the Rune poems, I decided to write an original.

#### THE RUNES

K	fehu	Ν	hagalaz	$\uparrow$	tiwaz
$\bigcap$	uruz	+	nauthiz	$\geqslant$	berkano
>	thurisaz		isa	M	ehwaz
F	ansuz	<>	jera	$\bowtie$	mannaz
>	raidho	1	ihwaz		laguz
<	kenaz		perthro	X	inguz
X	gebo	+	algiz	$\bowtie$	dagaz
	wunjo	4	sowilo	$\Diamond$	othala

# SPREADS

## THE NORNS



card 1: the past

what has already happened that affects your inquiry

## card 2: the present

what is currently happening that affects your inquiry

## card 3: the future

what will come to pass regarding your inquiry

# YGGDRASIĮ 6

# card 1: jotunheim

what blocks exist within this inquiry?

card 2: hel what needs to die in order to be successful on this journey?

card 3: niflheim what has been frozen that needs new life?

card 4: midgard what needs to stay

in balance on this journey?

card 5: muspelheim what unpredictable forces are at play?

card 6: nidavellir

what tools do I need for this work?

card 7: vanaheim

what needs to be nurtured?

card 8: alfheim

what or who can I call upon for support?

card 9: asgard

where do I need to fight in order to succeed?

# INNANGARD / UTANGARD



## card 1: innangard card 2: utangard

what lies within the fence? (what is in order) what lies beyond

the fencé? (what is wild or chaotic)

## card 3: integrate

how can both be integrated for balance?

# THOR'S MJOLNIR

card 1: hammer

what do I need to protect?

card 2: sacred groves

what do I need to nurture?

card 3: thunder

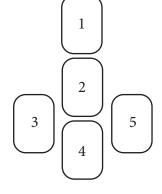
what needs to be transformed?

card 4: lightning

what needs to be illuminated?

card 5: chariot

what is a symbol that spirit can send as a reminder of this work?



# FREYA'S AETT

creation, survival, existence, realization



Before the whispers of being swept through the void, there was everything.

There was enough.

And from this great plenty, where all things are born, and where all things return, It remains

Unchanged.





the abundant void that nourishes all life

#### SYMBOLISM

abundance, luck, circulation of wealth, primordial nourisher

#### NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM

money causes strife among kin; the wolf grows up in the woods.

#### **UPRIGHT**

Fehu is a rune of resource. And while Fehu directly translates to 'cattle' and is often regarded as the rune of wealth, it is beyond our narrow-minded interpretation of wealth. Fehu can be a physical, emotional, spiritual, or energetic resource. It is the will within us that pushes us forward, the creativity that dreams to be born, and the helpful spirits that join us in nurturing the growth of our worlds.

The energy of Fehu is one of motion. In nomadic periods, cattle were the marker of wealth. Like cattle being herded and in motion, Fehu needs to be in motion as well. That movement frees up resistance and allows luck to find you and prosperity to grow.

While most people these days would view cows as a source of meat or dairy, Fehu speaks to an era where cattle were meat, milk, butter, cheese, leather, and status. They not only answered immediate survival needs but also investments that can generate wealth for the future.

It's also important to note that Fehu likes to be in balance. The Norwegian Rune Poem states: "money causes strife among kin; the wolf grows up in the woods." For those that hoard and seek to accumulate without discretion or spreading it around will find that issues will always pop up.

#### REVERSED

Fehu reversed indicates a blockage. This doesn't always mean a blockage within your material possessions, it could also mean spiritually or energetically. Fehu reversed calls for extra movement + energy so you can break through.

#### THE ART

It felt important to create a positive flow of energy within this card to honor the need for balance and movement within Fehu. The diamonds in motion on both sides of the rune symbolize how we must embrace the ebbs and flows in resource. We must try not to hoard, but allow the flow to live in our lives, knowing that the nourishing void will take care of us. The portal is symbolic of that void and the shifting from nothing to something and the ushering in of new opportunities.



in that first spark of being life had opened its eyes

had taken it all in

had sensed a stirring

desire.

to experience to touch and see and feel and hold to let the wild whisk it away

life wanted to live.





desire shaping creation

#### **SYMBOLISM**

life force, desire, primal power

#### NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM

slag comes from poor iron, often the reindeer runs over the hard-frozen snow

#### UPRIGHT

As the second rune in the Elder Futhark, coming after Fehu, Uruz and Fehu go hand in hand. Fehu carries the energies of domesticated cattle while Uruz brings energies of wild oxen, as Uruz translates to Aurochs, a now-extinct oxen.

Uruz presents a challenge and an opportunity: there's a lot of raw and powerful energy available, but it will require experience, dedication, and skill to wield the forces that are present. Often times, these are primal and unconscious energies, so awareness is key. There is a harnessing opportunity available to us with this rune, and sometimes this can come from a place of desire or need.

At the heart of Uruz is the desire to experience life in all forms. To touch the joy and the suffering and to embody the many at once. If we think of wild oxen, we can see and feel their need to let energy move through them. And if we think of the abundance found in Fehu, we see it now finding ways to live and express itself in this rune. We truly are life experiencing itself.

When I think of this rune in daily life, I feel like it can often come up when people are working to manifest. They're tapping into a lot of internal power and calling in new experiences, and with this, a lot of subconscious blocks may come up. This doesn't doom us, but rather, invites us into a deeper layer of our work, and it insists we learn to hold it all. And, if we can embody the desire that lives within Uruz, we can make peace with those challenges and truly enjoy every part of the process. As I said, the joy and the suffering. We must fall in love with our life.

When this rune comes up, it asks the question: what needs to move through you? What aspects of life do you want to experience?

#### **REVERSED**

When looking at these early runes, in my opinion, so much of them come back to the nervous system. I think it's especially important in the reversals. Because these early runes carry so much primordial energy, we must look to that within ourselves.

Uruz reversed feels a bit like a kinked hose. The water wants to flow but it's being constricted. This can happen in our nervous system. When the life force within us is constricted, it's often painful events that have taught us to not live out our full expression. Sometimes it may not be that we feel constricted but over-expressing this rune. This can also come from a space of survival if we've been taught to be attuned to chaos. There are many ways this rune can be out of balance, but to bring it into a balanced space is to be curious, open, and expressive, even if this is one baby step at a time.

#### THE ART

There's a lot of movement in the patterns in this card, which is indicative of the chaotic energy found within Uruz. The mountain peak shows the expertise and skill one needs when working with Uruz. The human figure at the center indicates where we find ourselves in the Universe's expression: we are very much a part of the large, eternal forces, and also very much a part of earth here because we are a part of all things. I wanted to convey the aspect of non-dualism found in this rune.



at the edge of all things and that vast barrier between

the clash of the heavens thunders through our being

we stand so small in the grips of the mighty

fear is an enemy

# THURISAZ

Þ

thur-i-sahz "thorn" or "thurs" (giants)

the power responds to how we face it

#### SYMBOLISM

Thor, chaos, power, storms, friction

#### NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM

thurs causes illness in women, few rejoice at bad luck

#### **UPRIGHT**

Thurisaz is associated with the God Thor + his hammer, as well as the mighty forces of the Thurses (giants) he goes up against. It is often also described as, and resembles, a thorn. Thurisaz is where power and wisdom meet the unconscious elements of the Universe. It carries the energy of thunderstorms, where many powers clash to create lightning and thunder.

There is a powerful, unruly energy within this rune. It is power that has been building and building, and a neutral power at that, as it is up to you to wield it. If the energy held in opposing powers can meet and be channeled into one direction, as opposed to letting them stir and become chaotic, there is incredible opportunity for regeneration.

We find Thurisaz in our relations with the forces larger than us. The spirits, ancestors, guides and the earth are all present within Thurisaz. These teachers sit at the threshold of the known and the unknown, the domesticated and the undomesticated. They teach us to be in right relationship and, if we are not, they will find a way to create balance. They ask us to understand that while we are a part of these mighty forces, we must also honor and respect them.

There's an important concept within the North mythos: Innangard (within the fence) and Utangard (beyond the fence). Innangard is considered "in order" and Utangard is considered "chaos." This concept lies at the heart of Thurisaz as it sits on the threshold, or the fence between the order and the chaos.

This rune is often interpreted as being dangerous, and the forces at play being negative. But this isn't the case. When we look at our own Universe, the forces much larger than ourselves, we will find neutral power. However, this is always up to our perception.

Thurisaz asks: what powers are at play in your life? What is your perception of them? How can you meet them in a way that creates a neutral to positive effect for you? How can you view the things you push up against as a gift?

#### **REVERSED**

When Thurisaz reversed crops up, it is a good time to pause. Sometimes we aren't up for meeting the forces around us, and we may not be feeling neutral enough to make a decision or do the work that must be done. Disconnecting and focusing on yourself for the time being would be beneficial.

#### THE ART

With the art on Thurisaz, I wanted to create the feeling of unruly power. The multi-colored lightning bolts, in their jagged formation, bring that neutral chaos feeling that Thurisaz carries. To indicate that it is up to the seeker to harness and wield the power, I put the hand in the center, with the power coming to and from it.



in the oneness a stirring was felt a message was gifted

a small voice spoke out a wish

to be to live to see to breathe



ahn-sooz "mouth" or "God"



life opens its mouth to speak

#### SYMBOLISM

breath, speech, communication, chanting, language

#### NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM

river mouth is the way of most journeys, but a scabbards of swords

#### **UPRIGHT**

Like words riding on the wind, finding homes in our pages, Ansuz is the rune of language in its many forms. In the story of the runes, Thurisaz brought chaotic power and the boundary between humans and the cosmic forces... Ansuz creates order from that chaos and power.

Ansuz is also associated with Odin, who gave the gift of breath, and galdr, a type of magical chanting and incantation within the Norse shamanic practices.

We find individuation within this rune. The undefined forces that came before Ansuz are now finding words, expression, and identity. It is where sovereignty is claimed, where we can speak what is true for ourselves and witness it in one another.

We meet Ansuz in our own lives when we give voice to our feelings. When we take the emotional forces, the overwhelm and chaos found in Thurisaz, and allow them to move through us.

There is creativity and mental power found within Ansuz as well. When we think about language and expression, we are

taking abstract feelings and putting words to them, bringing them out into the world. It is incredibly powerful to give form to the shapeless.

And of course, Ansuz is ever-present in our lives because it is the breath. Consider being a bit more aware and truly noticing what passes in and through you... what lives inside and moves outward.

#### **REVERSED**

When Ansuz reversed comes up, it may be a good idea to sit with whether you're feeling a blockage in how you're communicating or expressing yourself.

It could also mean that there are boundaries that have dissolved too much - are you giving too much away? Focusing on others to the detriment of yourself? If so, try to reclaim your space, time, and energy.

#### THE ART

For this card, I used a pattern similar to a Viking ship in the background to symbolize movement, as Ansuz is the movement of our feelings becoming expressed. The ravens represent Huginn and Muninn, Odin's two ravens. They travel through the realms and report back their findings, also representing communication.



the path takes shape under the care of our tending hands

and we venture forth sculpting the future

with each breath each thought each choice





devotion shapes the path

#### SYMBOLISM

"ride"

travel, journeying, hero's journey, daily practice

#### **NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM**

riding is said to be worst for horses, Reginn forged the best sword

#### **UPRIGHT**

Raidho is both the journey and the "vehicle", the horse and the rider. There is a lot of movement in this rune, but more focused movement compared to the preceding runes.

When we look at the Northern traditions and culture, voyaging in its many forms was incredibly important. Not only was there physical exploration, but also internal and spiritual exploration.

Within the seiðr tradition, which is Nordic shamanism, there is a heavy emphasis on journeying. Related to that, there is the practice of mound-sitting, also called Utiseta, which is where one goes out into nature alone and sits within a very small radius (10 feet or so) and stays there for days on end, eating and drinking very little. This creates the perfect condition for communing with spirits and visioning. So within Raidho, we can find the magical quest.

And with Raidho, we find a container that takes formless illumination and shapes it into a practice. It is our devotion to the path beyond, the daily decisions we make, and the things we remain committed to. It is wisdom in motion. It is these small

choices that take us from one space to another. Our willingness to show up for ourselves each day, despite any resistance or fear we experience, so we can ultimately arrive where we want to be.

There is discipline found here in Raidho. Our practice, our commitment to growth, and our purpose do not always come from a place of passion. Meaning, it is not passion that is always driving us forward. We have to respect our passion and commitment enough to also have discipline, to continue forward even when we don't feel as inspired or committed. It is remembering everything we do is both a choice and a prayer that will shape our future.

#### REVERSED

When Raidho reversed comes up, we may be feeling stuck on our journey. We may feel like we have all the tools to go forward but aren't sure how. Or we may feel a desire to move forward but don't feel that we have the tools. Raidho reversed can feel like lacking either the horse or the rider.

It's not a good idea to rush a journey. So if you're feeling stuck, continue to gather what you need and trust the path will appear when you are ready.

#### THE ART

For Raidho, I went with the concept of a portal being presented within a dense and dark space. It is through this portal we can choose to accept our journey. The eyeball represents the inner eye and the focus of our inner self on the journey ahead.



into the fire the cauldron of becoming where all is burned through and we rise anew





ken-ahz

the fire that guides and transforms

## SYMBOLISM

transformation, creation, destruction, dark passage

## **NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM**

sore is fatal to children, grief turns us pale

## **UPRIGHT**

Kenaz brings us heat and fire in all forms. It can be cleansing, healing, transformational, destructive, and consuming. With this rune, we meet the energy of being forged in the fire. The process of turning oneself over to the fire and being transformed within it.

We meet this rune in our lives when reaching deeper layers of our suffering. This can be a dark night of the soul, or reaching a space of no longer tolerating the patterns that you're limited by.

There is a moment of no return here because, with Kenaz, we are mobilized by this fire energy. We are propelled forward and are actually taking the steps that we know we need to. The spark we've had for some time has finally given way to the flame.

Kenaz is a passage. The space where we give up our pain, our stuckness, and our fear in service to the journey we are on. So with this, there is a birthing aspect to Kenaz. There is creation. And this space can feel all-consuming but follow the fire. Kenaz means torch, so trust that you are being guided. It is in the following of this fire that we find breakthroughs, clarity, and new ways of being.

38

#### REVERSED

When Kenaz reversed comes up, there is likely some resistance to turning oneself over to transformation. You may be trying to control too much when this is a process of surrender and creation, turning yourself over to the fire. It can be a scary process, so be kind to yourself as you venture forth.

## THE ART

With this card, we see fire in a hand, representing the surrender to the fire itself but also a watchful gaze upon the torch that is a guide. With Kenaz, we are not masters of the fire yet, but it is sparking us into creation, which is why we can see the flames held in the hand but also spreading beyond it.



it is not mine it is ours

all that is seen and felt all that could be touched and held

from hand to new hand it moves

on

and on

and on



gay-bo "gift"



exchange is a way of life

### SYMBOLISM

giving, receiving, equal exchange

## OLD ENGLISH RUNE POEM

a gift returns to adorn the giver with greatness and honor; it helps and heartens those who have nothing.

## UPRIGHT

Gebo is very much about exchange, and in that, generosity. The energy within this rune is freely moving, it is offering and receiving. It lets us know how important it is to be supportive of our community and not hoard our possessions, energy, and wealth.

While greed is part of human nature, in these ancient times, there was a deeper understanding that the community is strong only if everyone within is strong. Sharing and giving was a core value, and this give and take energy is found in Gebo.

When we look at sacred offerings made in ancient times, they were done out of deep respect and reverence. They were a prayer but not a payment, and this distinction is really important.

When we look at our Western culture, most people have complicated relationships with generosity, giving, and money. Very few people are able to give and receive from a neutral space. Most often the givers expect something in return, even if that is the knowledge that they are "owed" in some form. This is a debt they will happily call upon in exchange for loyalty.

How many times have we overheard someone say "but I have done so much for you?" in response to a perceived betrayal? This is not the energy we want to carry. Gifts should only be given if it adds to independence and freedom for the receiver. It should be empowering and should not keep the receiver stuck and dependent. In turn, the receiver should graciously receive and turn that into wealth that they can pass on as well.

But Gebo extends beyond the material realms and it is truly a principle to live by. We can weave Gebo into our lives by being in right relationship with the earth around us. We are taking from the earth by being here, so we can give back to it in the ways that make sense to us. Maybe that is by being as low-waste as possible. Perhaps that is picking up trash we see. Maybe it's planting trees or growing your own food.

Gebo also governs this exchange in a spiritual sense. When we are doing inner work, elemental work, or spell work, there is (or should) always be an offering of some sort. In order to step into our new life, we have to sacrifice our old one. When we pray for support, we create an offering for the ancestors, guides, and beings that walk with us.

## There is no reversal for Gebo.

## THE ART

Because giving and generosity are at the core of this rune, I wanted to center the heart. When we are living in this space, giving becomes easy. It is a way of life, a part of our being. When we are truly aligned with our highest self and our heart center, there is no fear, there is only love.



and through the darkness and uncertainty we find the reason

blinding joy we rise together our hearts connected a song finding new highs





joy is meant to be shared

## **SYMBOLISM**

joy, connection, community, sharing

## OLD ENGLISH RUNE POEM

joy comes to you who know no sorrow, blessed with gain and plenty, content in a strong community.

#### UPRIGHT

Wunjo is the last rune in the 1st aett. It brings us joy and bliss after a journey through big, powerful, and even some chaotic energies. Wunjo is reaching this place where you have navigated through the trenches and have built up an internal strength, one that fortifies you in the face of challenge, as you have fully learned that joy comes from within.

It is in the energies of Wunjo that we can share our joy with others too, as true joy is not a solitary experience. While it may not always be felt by the people around you, pure joy understands the connection to all other things, creatures, and beings. There is a distinct sense of connection and sharing with others. Wunjo blesses us. It indicates a time of plenty. It is also an affirmation of like attracts like - the more you are able to tap into joy, the more likely you will attract more of it.

Wunjo is also a rune of hope. Being the last rune in the 1st aett, we have completed the first leg of this journey and have arrived to a space of feeling empowered and hopeful of the future. We have acquired enough tools to feel like we can tackle what will come our way.

## **REVERSED**

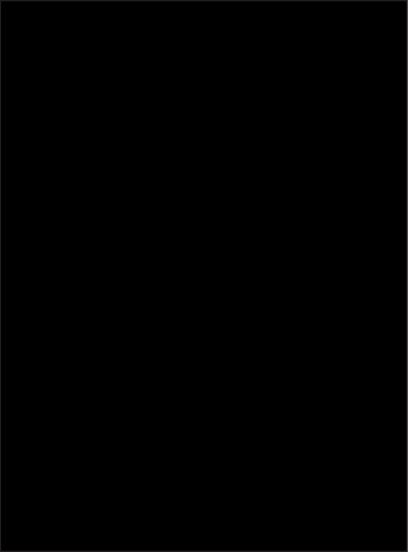
When Wunjo finds us reversed, it indicates that there's a blockage around joy. And this is not a reflection of the external - in other words, don't go looking for solutions outside of you. Wunjo reversed suggests that a shift needs to happen in your thoughts.

When this rune finds you, it is letting you know there is plenty to feel joyful about, enough to feel hopeful about. So it asks the question: what are you focusing on and how can you feed joy in your life?

## THE ART

With Wunjo, I wanted to create the feeling of joy. The way it permeates each layer of our being, how it can feel electric. We see a diamond-shaped pattern expanding out from the heart center and moving down into the hands and feet, indicating the all-encompassing feeling of the bliss found in Wunjo.

The pink, red, orange, and yellow outlines also create that effect. This is the embodiment of joy being shared, reaching out, and feeling connected to those around us.



# HEIMDALL'S AETT

trials, unconscious, mystery, choice



in the darkest of night a seed is planted

without sight frantic fingers in the earth

searching searching searching

lie back and let the sun rise



N

ha-gah-lahz "hail"

hail turns to water and a seed is planted

### SYMBOLISM

the void, surrender, transformation, rebirth

## **NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM**

hail is the coldest of grains, God created the primaeval world.

## UPRIGHT

As the initial rune of the 2nd aett, Hagalaz delivers a profound shock to our being. Its essence can be translated to "hailstone," and when we sit with the nature of hail, we find it is rarely a welcome sight.

Hail can be unpredictable. It can come down in small pieces for 10 seconds, and other times it can be golf ball sized pieces of ice falling from the sky. Hail is quite confrontational, as is Hagalaz.

We encounter Hagalaz when we confront the depths of our inner void. It is during those ventures into uncharted territories within ourselves that we experience darkness and uncertainty. However, we must also acknowledge that it is through this darkness that the seeds of creation are sown.

Hagalaz is often likened to a seed. Within the heart of the hailstone, as it melts away, resides the potential for new beginnings - a seed waiting to sprout. By embracing the process of falling and melting associated with this rune, we open ourselves to the blessings of this planted seed and the coming possibilities of renewal.

Most of us have experienced this in our internal world: everything may be feeling fine and then one day we encounter a trigger that takes us by surprise. We may feel so distracted and activated that we struggle to continue forward as our immediate attention is going toward this disruption. And as we continue to work through it, we find new ways of being with it and with ourselves. It often softens and we find that we have possibilities that we didn't know we had before.

That being said, this place can feel dark and unexplored. It often presents us with new territory. This is a space of the unconscious and the unseen. The key with Hagalaz is surrendering to the uncomfortable and trusting the mysterious forces present in your life.

## There is no reversal for Hagalaz.

### THE ART

When I think about facing darkness and uncomfortable work, I always see imagery of that darkness coming out of my cells, showing itself for me to take in and work through. Initially, it can be uncomfortable but can give way to a neutral feeling if I allow for that. In this image, I wanted to create that sensation of sticky darkness but without as much intimidation. I wanted it to feel like something we can work through, as long as we allow ourselves to touch it.



the ropes that bind us grow tighter and all we held has fallen away

fear rears its head as we try to turn heat into spark and spark into fire

but here in this emptiness we can see the truth of need

## NAUTHIZ



now-theez "need"

necessity lights the inner fire

## SYMBOLISM

friction, necessity, harsh lessons, reality, revolution

## **NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM**

need leaves one little choice; the naked freeze in the frost.

## **UPRIGHT**

Nauthiz reveals itself during times of struggle and limitation, when we feel trapped or burdened by the weight of circumstances. It serves as a gentle reminder that even in the darkest moments, there is an opportunity for growth and self-discovery. Nauthiz beckons us to delve deep into our inner selves, confront our limitations, and embrace the lessons that can only be learned through perseverance.

When we encounter Nauthiz, it is shining a light on the fact that a core need of ours is not being met. This can send our nervous system into a dysregulated state and we can feel a very physical impact on the challenges we are facing. Beyond the acute pain we may be experiencing with this rune, it is asking us: what need is not being met? And what do you truly need in your life?

We often have mental chatter around what we think we need, but Nauthiz brings us to a space where we find, albeit the hard way, what we genuinely need in our lives. While it feels hard, the fire within Nauthiz offers an internal revolution. It burns through the superficial needs we've held onto and brings clarity and a new vision for our lives.

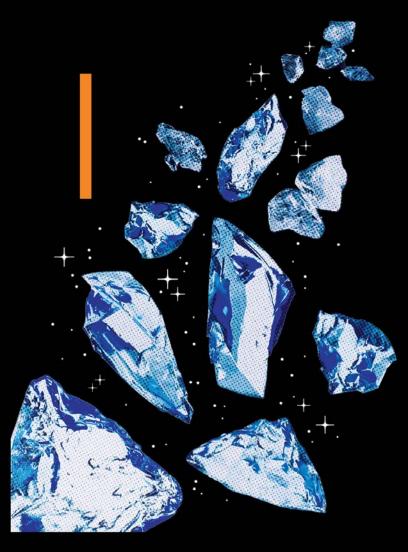
Nauthiz illuminates the areas in our lives that are oppressive. Unfortunately, while our needs as a society are not growing, many of us are living in places where they are not being met. Beyond this, they are being outright neglected or purposefully withheld. Nauthiz lights a fire within us to challenge the system that can, but refuses, to support its people.

In a deeply personal way, Nauthiz invites us to reframe our perception of adversity. It invites us to view it not as an enemy to be avoided but as a catalyst for personal evolution. It lights the internal fire and asks us to embrace discomfort, to learn from our setbacks, and to fight for what we know we need.

## There is no reversal for Nauthiz.

## THE ART

With this card, we see chaos. In particular, internal chaos, through the black and white pattern and the hand caught in the thread. The hand is reaching, trying to find relief and solutions, but the key to this card is that you'll never find it in something else, you must return within.



life slows down and ice begins its crawl through the land

we feel it in our cells this need to retreat

to meet the stillness to hear more to see further to sense deeper

when we listen, we find wisdom to be harvested for many seasons



in the stillness we find strength and resilience

### SYMBOLISM

stillness, pause, winter, introspection

### **NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM**

ice we call the broad bridge; the blind need to be led across.

## **UPRIGHT**

Is a symbolizes the power of the pause and turning inward. It encourages us to take a break from the fast-paced nature of life and find solace in introspection. By quieting our minds, we can listen to the voice within and gain clarity. Is a teaches us patience and self-discipline, reminding us that sometimes the best course of action is to wait and let things unfold naturally.

Beyond patience, Isa serves as a mentor, imparting lessons through its stillness. It guides us to let go of attachments that no longer serve us, similar to the melting of ice revealing the vibrant life beneath. By embracing Isa, we discover our own resilience and inner strength, allowing us to navigate challenges with grace.

Isa also encourages us to pay attention. In this stillness we can see and sense more, so we need to be careful and also very attentive to what is happening around us. Isa is a rune of ice and the winter months, where the world slows and where we may be encountering more difficulty.

Our ancient ancestors faced grueling winters and survived, but it required skill, preparation, and vigilance. Isa is a reminder that if we can embody that, we can make more progress than we anticipated when the ice melts.

Isa is a rune of reflection, patience, and inner strength. It encourages us to find neutrality in stillness and attentiveness while we listen to the world around and within us.

## There is no reversal for Isa.

## THE ART

With Isa, I wanted to make it a bit more simple to reflect the pause. We see chipped ice on a black background. I chose for the ice to be chipped, as it represents the crumbing and releasing of old and limiting patterns.



the spiral unfolds time collapsing in on itself

wrapping around our lives brutal and bountiful

tired hands hold the harvest





time spirals and unfolds

## SYMBOLISM

seasons, harvest, time, ebb and flow

## **NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM**

harvesttime brings bounty; I say that Frothi is generous!

## UPRIGHT

In Jera, we meet the cyclical nature of time. The way the seasons build on one another, the way they find give and take, the way each one informs the next. Like the rhythm of the earth, Jera embodies the eternal cycle of growth, harvest, and renewal. It beckons us to embrace the natural ebb and flow of life and find harmony within its transformative currents.

Jera also reminds us of the interconnectedness between effort and reward. It teaches us that through diligent work, perseverance, and patience, we sow the seeds of our vision. Just as a farmer tends to the fields, nurturing the soil and plants, Jera urges us to tend to our dreams with dedication and unwavering commitment. It is a rune of fruition, encouraging us to trust in the process and have faith that our efforts will pay off.

This rune serves as a gentle reminder of the importance of balance. It illustrates that each phase of the cycle, whether it's growth, harvest, or death, holds its own significance and purpose. Just as the farmer must patiently wait for the seeds to sprout and ripen before reaping the rewards, we too must learn to embrace the different seasons of our lives. Jera teaches us that both joyous

abundance and reflection found through stillness are essential components of our personal journeys. It is in honoring each stage that we find growth and balance.

Jera invites us to reflect upon the lessons of the past and recognize the patterns that shape our lives. It prompts us to learn from our experiences, both triumphs and challenges, and to apply that wisdom to our present and future endeavors. Jera holds the promise of renewal—a chance to shed what no longer serves us and embrace new beginnings, just as the fields lie still in winter, preparing for the vibrant growth that awaits in the coming spring.

Jera asks us, what are we harvesting? How are we preparing for future harvests? What we do in this moment can pay off for many seasons to come and it's important to recognize that interconnectedness of time. The rune itself is pointing both backward and forward, both arrows interwoven with one another. It is essential that we appreciate the non-linear nature of time and embrace the ways we can work with the past, present, and future to create the reality we want to live in.

## There is no reversal for Jera.

## THE ART

Because Jera is so much about cycles, I relied heavily on repetitive circular patterns. To me, the way they unfold and repeat and expand carries a lot of that Jera energy. We see a heron which I used to represent a higher perspective, which Jera asks of us: to have a higher perspective of time. The diamonds in the middle, coming out of that opening, represent the harvest we receive if we show up each season.



roots reach down into the earth finding worlds

the branches stretch toward the heavens grazing stars and reaching the gods

and all the things are woven together into the fabric of being

## IHWAZ

1

ay-wahz "yew tree"

stretching in all directions we find new depths of self

## **SYMBOLISM**

Yggdrasil, expansion, paradox, protection, complexity

## OLD ENGLISH RUNE POEM

yew is the greenest of trees in winter; when it burns, it sputters.

### **UPRIGHT**

Ihwaz is connected to the world tree within the Norse mythos, Yggdrasil. Yggdrasil connects the realms of gods, humans, and the underworld, its branches reaching far and wide, supporting the entire universe. Its roots delve deep into the realms of the dead and its canopy stretches towards the heavens, embodying the interconnectedness and eternal cycle of life, death, and rebirth in Norse mythology. This is the exact energy found within Ihwaz.

This rune encompasses the complexity and paradox of spirit manifesting in physical form. This dynamic polarity draws in energy, allowing for a deep exploration of the expansiveness of the self.

Ihwaz embodies the expander, as it represents the dynamic forces that both pull entities away from each other and bring them together. It holds the essence of all things present in one, highlighting the interconnectedness of existence. This rune serves as a reminder that within the paradox, both harm and goodness can coexist, and multiple truths can simultaneously be valid.

Highly impacted by our intention and the way we receive it, it invokes ancestral protection and facilitates the drawing of power from all directions. Ihwaz marks a stage in the spiritual journey where one begins a new journey within their practice: it becomes deeper and we can feel a change at the foundation of our being. It is weaving in complexity as an integral part of our spiritual practice.

Ihwaz asks: how can your perspective and practice expand? What is your relationship to paradox? Do you tend to like things to be simple and easy or do you make room for all possibilities, even when those may seem wrong?

## There is no reversal for Ihwaz.

### THE ART

For Ihwaz, I wanted to create an image of pulling back the veil to the unseen. It is having a higher perspective and truly being able to see more than you did before.



I will catch lightning on my tongue capture thunder in a jar hang amongst the stars

and from my fingertips out will come gold

I will return to the well until it's my last time and the mystery has reclaimed me

## PERTHRO



purth-ro "lot"

the holder of mystery

## SYMBOLISM

game, mastery, practitioners, divination, transformation

## OLD ENGLISH RUNE POEM

gaming means play and laughter among the high-spirited who sit merry together in the mead hall.

## UPRIGHT

Perthro represents the Well of Urd which nourishes Yggdrasil. It is at this well that we find the Norns, who weave the threads of fate for all who live within the realms of Yggdrasil. The Well of Urd is also where Odin received the runes after hanging upside down from Yggdrasil for nine days and nights, so Perthro is very linked to the mysteries of the runes and the birth of Norse cosmology.

Perthro represents this well but is also the cup from which the runes are cast. While the meaning is often debated, Perthro is most commonly agreed on as being a game piece. There is so much held within Perthro, as it very much deals with all the mysteries of fate, change, divination, and transformation. It is as if the entire Universe was held in a single pair of dice. This lends a lot of nuance and layers to this rune, but a big part of the meaning here can be found within its location amongst the other runes.

Finding Perthro in the second Aett is significant. The rune most closely connected to the birth of the runes does not come first, but 14th. This is because there's a certain expertise required when intentionally engaging with wyrd and the fates. Of course, we always find ourselves impacted by them, but to approach the well, to cast the lot, is to do so with intention. We

arrive as diviners, seeking answers to our burning questions and insights into the fabric of fate.

With skill and purpose, we interface with Perthro, honing our ability to follow the intricate threads and read the subtle energies that guide us. This rune encourages us to trust our intuition and embrace the level of comfort and connection that emerges from engaging with the mysteries. It invites us to navigate the gap between what we can know and what remains elusive. It is in this gap that we find balance between professionalism and play: Perthro reminds us we will never know it all, so the practice of divination and exploration of life's mysteries should be both heavy and light.

Within Perthro, we discover a sense of humor around our limitations and a recognition of the vast forces that exist beyond our understanding. It humbles us, creating a reverent and respectful relationship with the larger cosmic energies at play. Perthro invites us to embrace the unknown with curiosity, accepting the boundaries of our knowledge while remaining open to the unfolding of greater truths.

### **REVERSED**

Perthro reversed indicates a lack of information. Because we approach the well with intention in the upright meaning of Perthro, in its reversal we find that it may not be the best time to be seeking. We bring ourselves to each inquiry, and we don't always arrive the same. It may be a good idea to detach and shift your energy a bit.

### THE ART

Because Perthro is a rune of mastery, I wanted to create an image that centers on the user. We see the outline of a person, with the cosmos within them. They have the knowledge and connection to be able to be a practitioner. The rune sitting within their mind represents this mastery and know-how, the chaos around them represents the larger forces that will always be a mystery even to the most skilled



into the mist of the liminal where the voices are loud and we find lessons no mortal can teach

protection is offered and we navigate without sight

we are initiated





we find our way without sight

### SYMBOLISM

protection, intuition, connection, initiation

### OLD ENGLISH RUNE POEM

elk sedge grows in the fen, waxing in the water, grimly wounding; it burns the blood of those who lay hands upon it.

### UPRIGHT

Algiz is most often viewed as a rune of protection, which it certainly is, but it's a deep psychic form of protection. Algiz is where the natural and magical realms meet. It is the protection that is offered to those who walk with the unseen - who are deeply committed to Spirit. This is a commitment beyond books and classes because with Algiz, we no longer find our guidance in humans.

I love the example that Diana Paxton uses in "Taking Up The Runes" to describe Algiz: "No act of ancient man could make a holy place out of a forest grove. The magic was in opening oneself to awareness of the divinity that manifested through it. This was how the Norse who colonized the uninhabited Iceland, having neither ruins nor legend to guide them, identified the sacred places of their new home."

Algiz is an initiation into a deeper practice. We have entered a space where we no longer have a roadmap and it requires a level of skill that not everyone possesses. It is in this space where we have deepened our connection and truly stand between two worlds, where we are given protection, though this protection may look and feel different than we are used to.

Additionally, Algiz symbolizes the interconnectedness of all things. It represents the harmonious balance between the earthly and the divine, the individual and the collective. This rune reminds us of our place within the grand tapestry of life, emphasizing the importance of unity, respect, and cooperation. Algiz encourages us to honor our connections with others, nature, and the spiritual realm.

### **REVERSED**

Algiz reversed can signify a period of diminished spiritual connection. You may be feeling uncertain or disconnected from your practice - all of which is normal. It sends the reminder to pay attention to our intuition and seek small ways you can reconnect to the divine.

It could also emphasize the need to reevaluate our boundaries. It could suggest that we may have some weak spots that are leaving us susceptible to negative influences or infringements on our personal space or energy. It calls for a check-in of our boundaries and, potentially, an adjustment to safeguard our well-being.

### THE ART

With this rune, I wanted to bring an abstract element to represent the intuitive nature of this card. We see raven outlines, but they are bodiless. They have both day and night within them and are connected by a single colorful line. They are liminal forms but connected, not only to one another but to the ether.



light pierces darkness

the light that penetrates all things the vast cosmos found in each ray

guiding us forward beckoning our devotion

the path is illuminated

### SOWILO

so-wee-lo



we are called forward into expansion

### **SYMBOLISM**

success, victory, bliss, expansion, purpose, wholeness

### NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM

sun is the light of the world; I bow to its holiness.

### **UPRIGHT**

As the rune of the Sun, Sowilo holds power and illumination. Within the energy of Sowilo, we encounter a divine force that grants us the ability to see with clarity and understanding. It is a source of profound illumination that can guide us through the darkest of times, infusing our lives with warmth, vitality, and purpose.

It's important to approach Sowilo with deep reverence and humility, for the power found within it is not something to be possessed or controlled. Instead, we are invited to allow its energy to gently guide and stoke the fires of our life, providing clarity and direction on our journey.

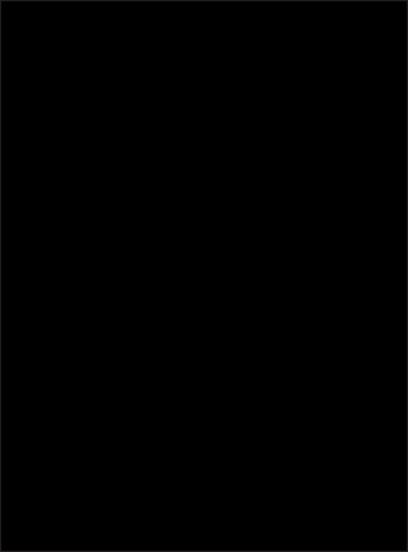
Sowilo invites us to our sense of awe and wonder. Through it, we bear witness to a force that is far greater than ourselves. And as we consciously connect with this transcendent force, we experience a deep sense of bliss and fulfillment. It is a moment of profound understanding, and it can truly align us with our purpose.

Sowilo is expansive, bright and guides us toward enlightenment. It is a rune of success - we can invoke Sowilo's power as we pursue the vision for our future. It helps us stay on the path of our purpose and offers insight as we push forward on our journey.

### There is no reversed meaning for Sowilo.

### THE ART

With Sowilo, I created a bright and colorful sun shape with lots of rays to symbolize the incredible power that emanates from this rune. The hands sit receiving diamonds (success) but also to behold the bliss found here.



# TYR'S AETT

community, cosmic law, humanity, spirit



for you I will stretch and bend find new places for us and for them

I will uproot and destroy build and forge

offer my flesh a home under my wing



tee-wahz "tyr"



justice as a way of life

### SYMBOLISM

justice, leadership, self-sacrifice, will, conviction

### **NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM**

Tyr is the one-handed god, and the leavings of the wolf and ruler of the temple.

### UPRIGHT

Tiwaz, the rune associated with Tyr, embodies the essence of this deity, representing principles of justice, courage, and self-sacrifice. It serves as a powerful reminder of our responsibility to live in alignment with the profound experiences we have encountered. After experiencing a transformative and transcendental event, the question arises: How will we carry this forward into our lives?

In the presence of Tiwaz, we are called to reflect on what we are truly in service to. It urges us to clarify our values and asks, what are you willing to fight for? Tiwaz is not a violent rune, but it does carry a warrior energy. While so much of our internal work is about coming to a place of neutrality, Tiwaz invites you to stand firmly rooted in your convictions, aligning yourself with what you perceive as just. This rune holds the concept of lived integrity, urging you to embody your values and lead with honor and courage.

It reminds us of our responsibility to act in a way that upholds an older concept of justice, which may differ from our modern understanding of law and order. While few of us are in a position to create that justice, we can find opportunity in our lives simply by standing up for others when it's needed. It's saying something when something needs to be said and supporting those who are in need of it.

Though one may feel uncertain or unsure, stepping into leadership roles is a calling that requires showing up fully armed with confidence in both Spirit and the ability to serve and share. With Tiwaz, our lives transcend personal desires as we recognize that our existence is no longer solely about ourselves. We become instruments of justice, acting on behalf of the greater good and taking up the mantle of ancient justice that transcends the boundaries of time.

### **REVERSED**

Tiwaz reversed asks us to examine our relationship with justice. Are you taking it into your hands too much? Are you going about it in a healthy way? Is it becoming a part of your identity in a way that is to your detriment? We see this often when people think that in order to stand up for someone it means taking another person down.

Tiwaz reversed may also be a gentle reminder that you need to stand up for your beliefs in a more impactful way.

### THE ART

For Tiwaz, I chose to make the wolf the central theme of this rune. The wolf symbolizes guardianship, loyalty, community, protection and freedom, which to me, carries so much of the energy found in Tiwaz. I chose a howling wolf, because visually it looks like the wolf is calling for something, and in this case, justice. In addition to this, the god of this rune, Tyr, sacrificed his hand in order to bind the wolf, Fenrir, who was expected to only bring destruction.



the primordial mother appears

soft and tender fierce and dark

calling new life from death turning our fear into iron there is no place she will not go

with her hand on our backs we push forward

## BERKANO



ber-kah-no "birch"

new life takes form

### **SYMBOLISM**

rebirth, healing, transformation, creation

### **NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM**

birch has the greenest-leafed branches; Loki brought the luck of deceit.

### UPRIGHT

Berkano, the rune associated with the birch tree, embodies the transformative power of rebirth and profound healing. In addition to representing the physical act of giving birth, Berkano symbolizes the metaphorical birth of ideas, projects, and new beginnings. It is a rune of fertility and creativity, nurturing the potential for growth and expansion in all areas of life. The birch tree itself, with its resilience and ability to regenerate, serves as a powerful symbol of renewal and rejuvenation.

Berkano's energy encompasses both the sweet and gentle aspects of creation, as well as its intense and primal nature. It teaches us that birthing requires strength and force, whether it is the force needed to bring life into the world or to birth new ideas and creations. This rune highlights the profound healing that can be found in the life-death-life process, reminding us that within the intensity lies the potential for transformation.

The archetype of the midwife is embodied in Berkano, representing the one who holds space and supports others in their birthing process. It calls us to be the healers who are willing

to wade knee-deep in the raw and messy aspects of life, the places many people run from. Berkano reminds us that healing is not always comfortable; it requires us to confront our shadows and navigate through the depths of our emotions and experiences.

Berkano invites us to approach our healing journey with discipline, committing ourselves to the necessary inner work. Through devotion to our personal growth, we embrace the grit and resilience needed to transform and heal.

This is a powerful opportunity to examine what we are birthing in our lives and how we can be of service to the ushering in of a new world.

### **REVERSED**

With Berkano reversed, we see resistance to calling forth new life. This rune tends to point toward stagnation, but is an affirmation of how capable you are to bring in new life. Do not give up.

### THE ART

With Berkano, we see a hand tenderly holding new life. It is holding the potential for creation and is nurturing it into existence. These leaves are both wrapped around their hand, symbolizing their profound connection to earth energy, but also floating in the distance, representing the life they are calling forth.



two falls into three riding along the wind

in this space we meet finding worlds never glimpsed before

that are only seen here in this merging

### EHWAZ



ay-wahz "horse"

paradox unfolds into symbiosis and pushes forward

### **SYMBOLISM**

symbiosis, movement, travel, mobility

### OLD ENGLISH RUNE POEM

the horse brings joy; proud on its hooves, by heroes praised, it is a solace to the restless.

### UPRIGHT

Ehwaz brings in the energy of movement and travel. As the horse, this rune can represent anything that takes us from one place to another. While this can be a physical change, it can also be an internal one. The bright, powerful spaces within us that insist we grow and expand can certainly be Ehwaz. It's those gifts we have and cultivate that help us reach new milestones in life.

Beyond the singular aspect of Ehwaz, there is also the relationship between horse and rider. When we look at that relationship, we often find a significant bond and deep trust. It is where two entities meet and merge, creating a relationship that both are devoted to. There is an intrinsic trust and unspoken knowing between the horse and rider that is rooted in sovereignty, but also deep partnership. So this rune carries the energy of opposites working in harmony. In order to create that harmony, both parties need to cooperate and adjust. The rider must have conviction and intelligence while the horse must trust and be willing.

This dynamic often comes up for those of us who are doing inner work. The part of us that is working toward a better way would be considered the rider. The part of us that is stuck in old patterns is the horse. The horse must choose to be willing, even skeptically, in order to make progress. And the part of us that has a vision for healing and change must have a plan to get there.

Ehwaz is an invitation to examine the things that may need to change in your life and the things within you that give you wings. What takes you from one place to another? What needs to grow or shift? Do you need to be more confident? Surrender? More trust? Reflect on the symbiotic relationship that lies within Ehwaz and what it may be showing you about your own self and life.

### **REVERSED**

Ehwaz reversed tends to come up when we're feeling stuck and unsure how to move forward. The "vehicle" that has gotten us places before may not feel like an option right now. We may be deeply resistant to a potential change. We may be struggling to surrender to the parts of ourselves that know best. This rune asks you to pause and notice where you are experiencing stricture and how you can call upon Ehwaz to restore more movement and flow.

### THE ART

I really wanted to convey the movement found within this rune, and specifically how two opposing energies can move together. It can look chaotic initially, but when we look closer we can see how all the lines are ultimately going in the same direction. They are flowing, despite their detours. They may pull apart from one another at certain moments, only to come back together. Of course, because this is the horse rune, we also see a galloping horse as the central focus of this rune.



we continue to face it to endure to find new beginnings after each ending

the glimpses held in our hearts carry us forward and into the unknown

with a prayer on our lips





mah-naz "mankind"

we each have a duty to those that come after

### SYMBOLISM

endurance, human spirit, potential, resilience, duty

### NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM

man is the waxing of dust; mighty is the hawk's talon span.

### **UPRIGHT**

Amidst the great cosmos, the constant thrum of life in infinite forms, are us humans. And according to the Ancient Norse, our role in this web is not by accident. We play a pivotal role and we each have a unique fate. At the heart of this rune, are all the things that make humankind so special. Our deep ability to feel, to engineer, to grow and change, to share and celebrate, to imagine and to love. Our great potential lies within this rune.

It also captures the complexity of the human spirit. How we are all imperfect, and always will be, and yet we keep trying. There is an incredible resilience in each one of us. When I think of Mannaz, it feels like an invitation to keep going, despite the thoughts in our heads that tell us we can't. We are here for a short time, collectively carrying this baton of humanity. How are we supporting it? How are we pushing life forward? This rune can be about the individual and what we can accomplish, but it's also much larger than that. It is recognizing we are a single link within an infinite chain. It takes us out of the ego space of feeling fearful of putting ourselves out there, of being afraid of what

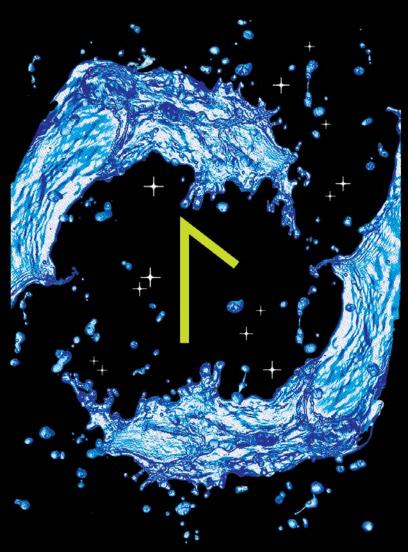
may or may not happen, our fears of failure or success, and asks us to think of our duty. Our duty to our fellow humans and the future that will come after us. Having a sense of responsibility to this larger web, and being in devotion to that, can often allow us to move through those fears.

### REVERSED

When Mannaz finds us reversed, it can be an opportunity to look at the ways our human spirit is stifled. Do you feel you're living in alignment, not only with your vision for yourself but also for the good of the collective? This rune is an invitation to reflect upon that and perhaps find ways you can honor the web of life around you.

### THE ART

With this rune, I wanted to display the interconnectedness of all humans. These two figures are both distinct from one another but also very connected and in flow, relying on one another in an incredibly deep way.



the dark water rises but warm and soft

we linger in the depths where direction no longer exists where gravity suspends

and through it all we will find shore our heart a magnet for the moon



lah-gooz "lake"

into the depths we go

### **SYMBOLISM**

portal, initiation, emotion, unconscious, depth

### **NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM**

water falls free from the mountain; gold trinkets are so highly prized.

### UPRIGHT

We've met water in two previous runes, Hagalaz and Isa, but in both of those runes, the water takes the shape of ice. With Laguz, we meet water as the oceans, the deep lakes, the wide rivers, and the water of the womb.

It carries mystery, reflection, the unconscious, the shadows, and the depths. While seafaring and voyaging were significant to the Vikings and Nordic people, the journey with water is often happening internally. Because water carries the depths of our emotions and subconscious, Laguz tends to refer to the passages we take to the mysteries within ourselves. For those familiar with Tarot, Laguz is very similar to The Moon and the High Priestess.

When Laguz finds us, it is an indication that turning your attention towards the depths of your being would be beneficial. The water is rising, and with that, more is surfacing for you to examine, reflect upon, and sit with.

I think it's important to note that we may not always be comfortable in these deep waters. We may feel like we're struggling to keep our heads up. We may not love the fact that we can't see the bottom. But there is always a way to make it through. During a time when crossing oceans was incredibly risky and fraught with challenges, the Vikings were not only able to figure out how to navigate, but also build ships capable of the journey.

We talk about surrendering so much in this work. And as pivotal as it is, sometimes it's not the only thing that's needed. Sometimes we need to find tools as we meet the murky depths found within Laguz.

### REVERSED

With Laguz reversed, we may feel like we're submerged. We might find that we're encountering some resistance internally. Sometimes it can feel like there's more to dig up, but there's a block. Sometimes we're struggling with how off-kilter this space can feel. Something to know about Laguz, and in this case, Laguz reversed, is to let things come up organically. If we go searching, sometimes we might uncover things we aren't ready to process yet. When we find ourselves in the realm of Laguz, trust yourself and trust the magic in this card - you don't have to do more than what is being immediately presented.

### THE ART

With Laguz, I wanted to create the sensation of singularity. Often when we are in a Laguz space, it can feel like it's the only thing that exists. So using moving water, indicating how much we are processing here, on a black background creates the energy of focus but also overwhelm.



the cold stone beneath my feet a small flickering fire I find the heart of the cave and curl in letting my body fall into the earth held by forces unknown until I awake and find the light calling





ing-gooz "ing" (God Yngvi)

we go within and find renewal

### **SYMBOLISM**

seed, creation, fertility, gathering energy

### OLD ENGLISH POEM

Ing, first seen by the East Danes, later rode his wagon away eastward over the waves; thus was the great god named.

### UPRIGHT

Directly related to the Germanic God, Yngvi, this rune traditionally represents male fertility. There is quite a bit of analysis of this rune and how it represents male or female organs in many available texts. That being said, there's a lot more to look at with Inguz.

Inguz carries life-death-life cycle energy. This rune is withdrawal, renewal, and new beginnings. Often times, if we're meeting with Inguz energy, we may feel like we're being called to retreat within ourselves and to return to the den within. It is in this space that we can feel a gathering of energy. We find parts of ourselves fall away, and a new space is made; a void that creation will sprout from.

Inguz, meaning seed, is very much about that dark and protective space that the earth provides the seed for growth. It is here that the seeds sprout roots and reach into the earth, waiting for the right time to burst forth and stretch upward into the day.

So when Inguz comes up, it's an acknowledgment of the dark nourishing space you may be in or may need to turn to. It is an affirmation of the life that wants to come through you but needs the right environment to do so. Are you feeling the need to turn inward? Is there anything you can do to create that space for yourself?

### There is no reversed meaning for Inguz.

### THE ART

I created a person diving into a pool to convey the sensation of retreating within and rebirth. But the person is leaving the lit water, facing the void, and traveling underneath and within it. They are retreating into this dark and nourishing space that will allow them to take on new forms.



after the long cold night our faces turn to the sky soft yellow and pink intertwine stretching outward in the vast expanse unfurling from the edge of the world carrying hope in its light enough to face another night





the rising sun pierces through the darkness

#### **SYMBOLISM**

"dav"

dawn, light, hope, awakening

#### OLD ENGLISH RUNE POEM

day is the gods' messenger; the light of the gods grant ecstasy, good hope, and a boon to all.

#### UPRIGHT

While Sowilo represents the Sun and source, Dagaz brings the energy of the dawning or setting Sun. It's these in-between moments that bring endings and beginnings. They mark the shedding of the old and the ushering in of the new. Dawn and dusk are often considered to be quite mystical moments. And when we look at this rune, which is primarily dawn or daybreak, it brings new life. The rising sun is synonymous with hope and optimism, so Dagaz brings this energy, even in periods of deep darkness.

Many people who have been in a period of life-shattering change have felt that the sun rising stood in contrast to their personal world, but it also reminded them of what still existed, even if it felt impossible. That the world was still moving and the sun would always rise. Dagaz brings in this type of resilience and hope. How life often finds a way, even in the most challenging conditions. There's strength in this hope and the continued choice to rise. So when we meet Dagaz, it brings the message of a new day.

Whether you find yourself in darkness or awakening to the possibility that is opening up, this rune affirms the resilience found in hope. It is an invitation to let more in where it's needed and allowing it to be a part of your practice.

# There is no reversed meaning for Dagaz.

#### THE ART

With this rune, I wanted to display the sensation of liminal space. The patterns found in this card are interwoven but also contrasting colors. Each segment holds a piece of the other. As abstract as it is, it captures the energy found in moments of transition and in-between.



they stood where we stand and shouted into the wind their whisper finding us here

in the tapestry of moments past and present interlace their echoes bind us together a bridge across the expanse of time

# **OTHALA**

X

o-tha-lah "inheritance"

we inherit and we honor

#### SYMBOLISM

ancestor, inheritance, family, land, home

#### OLD ENGLISH RUNE POEM

home is loved by all who prosper there in peace and enjoy a frequent harvest.

#### **UPRIGHT**

Translating to inheritance, Othala carries this energy in all its forms. This rune invites us to honor how we came to be, what raised us, and what continues to shape us.

When I think of Othala, I think of all the things that leave their imprint upon us. Of course, that is the family that raised us, but also the land we grew up on. It is our ancestors and also the land they grew up on too.

It is the strengths and gifts we have inherited, the inalienable qualities that have woven themselves through generations. It is the wounds and traumas that have been passed down as well the harms that need to be rectified, the pain that needs to be transmuted.

Othala also holds the new parts of ourselves that have awoken due to our current relations. Our chosen family lives within Othala - the bonds that have been forged and the impact these relationships have had on us. It is our dedication to these new practices and traditions, ones that our ancestors have not seen, that will leave a new footprint for future generations.

Othala is a rune of kinship. It asks us to acknowledge the connection we have to all things and to be in right relationship with those things.

It is tending to the land we live on, acknowledging its place as an ancestor in our life, and also honoring ancient stewards of that land.

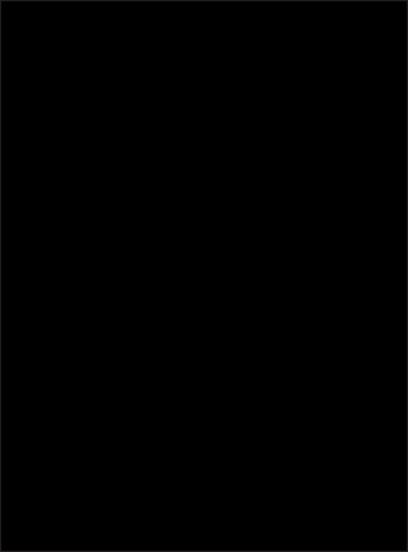
Othala is both physical and spiritual and encourages one to define their family, kin, and ancestors, and to take care of all within those spaces. To truly be in reverence to them and deep gratitude for all the ways they have made you.

#### REVERSED

Othala reversed can indicate that you may not be in right relation with all that can be considered ancestors. This could be feeling disconnected from the land you live on or not honoring the important relationships in your life. It could be that something is out of balance in your lineage that needs tending to. It could also be that you are not honoring yourself enough and doing a disservice to all that raised you. Sit with what may be out of balance here.

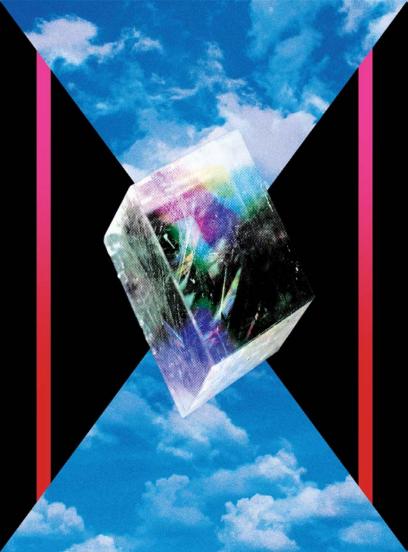
### THE ART

With Othala, I wanted to evoke a feeling of community. With the different colored hands all pointing to the rune in the middle, I felt it displayed the different factors that go into making each of us who we are.



# CARDS OF MIDGARD

the cards of midgard are ten extra cards we created based on the norse mythos.



# SUNSTONE

the way through can always be found

#### **SYMBOLISM**

navigation, new perspectives, creativity, ingenuity

Part of the Vikings' unique seafaring technique is the use of sunstone. When navigating the open ocean, the Sun and stars are used to find the desired direction. This becomes a problem when you live in Northern Europe, where there tends to be a lot of cloud coverage, and it's a challenge to find the precise location of the Sun. But many believe the Vikings came up with a solution: calcite crystal. It has been said in multiple medieval sources (Rauðúlfs þáttr and Hrafns saga Sveinbjarnarsonar) that sunstone was a type of crystal held up to the sky that was able to isolate the sun behind the clouds. This theory has become more credible through modern experiments and the discovery of Icelandic spar found in a shipwreck from 1592. Though sunstone has yet to be found in Viking settlements, it's likely these ancient navigators used such a tool in order to cross the open ocean.

This card is all about finding new tools to get where you want to go. When we feel limited by the world around us, insisting that there isn't any way we can move forward, Sunstone asks you to get creative. It's possible that there's a tool you've overlooked that could be helpful. It could be something you've heard of over and over again and never paid much attention to. It's possible a perspective shift that you've tried before that didn't "stick" will be the thing to help you move through the friction you find yourself in. Sunstone asks you to look at what's in front of you in a new way. See what you have at your disposal, and insist it will do the trick.

## There is no reversed meaning for Sunstone.

#### THE ART

I chose a calcite crystal that displayed a prismatic effect to symbolize the creative process of moving toward solutions. The lines all going toward the center brings focused energy.



# **GINNUNGAGAP**

gin-noon-gah-gap "yawning void"

the darkness at the beginning of all things

#### SYMBOLISM

the void, chaos, friction, nothingness

Ginnungagap is the void from which all the cosmos came. It is depicted as a vast and chaotic expanse between the realms of fire (Muspelheim) and ice (Niflheim), eventually giving rise to the cosmos through the interaction of these opposing forces. Ginnungagap symbolizes the initial state of potentiality and the dynamic forces that led to the formation of the Universe in Norse cosmology.

Ginnungagap calls our attention to the places where we feel that voidtype energy. The void is such a powerful place, but with this card, there's typically an element of desire too. We feel the desire for something beyond that void, for something to spring forth from it so we can experience something new and different. And in this case, we turn our attention to the realms of fire and ice within us—the polarities that we find and the friction that we may experience. Even when uncomfortable, this chaos can shake things up. It can create movement in that void space that has remained unchanged.

This card is an invitation to lean into the friction, of noticing where we can feel that push-pull dynamic and allowing for a third thing to come into existence. We don't go into this space with an intention for the outcome. We don't know what will come of it; we are simply surrendering and creating the space for it.

# There is no reversed meaning for Ginnungagap.

#### THE ART

I really wanted to create an image that brought the paradox to the card: how all the perceived terrible exists alongside all the unbearable joy, how they are a part of the same energy and meld into one another. My goal with this card was chaos and expansion.



# BIFRÖST

a bridge of light guides us

#### SYMBOLISM

spiritual connection, opening to receive

Bifröst is the rainbow bridge that connects Earth (Midgard) to the realm of the gods (Asgard). The Bifröst is guarded by Heimdall, the father of mankind.

This card is quite simple: connecting with the gods. When Bifröst finds you, it's a message to deepen your practice. In other words, the rainbow bridge is open, and it would be beneficial for you to spend time connecting with the ethers right now.

Because Bifröst bridges the gap from one space to another, it also asks us to focus on the ways we're connecting. Meditation? Journeying? Nature? Ceremony? Song? Perhaps consider trying some things you haven't done before.

#### **REVERSED**

With Bifröst reversed, you may be feeling isolated and a bit helpless. You likely aren't feeling the unseen support you have around you, and it may feel pointless to try to spend more time connecting. Take it slow but trust that there is much to be discovered.

### THE ART

With Bifröst, I wanted to convey what it feels like to be connected and aligned vs. the feeling of disconnection and isolation. I wanted one half of the card to feel joyful and the other half to feel cold. The rainbow is in honor of the Bifröst bridge.





the past is always beside us

#### SYMBOLISM

the past, past actions, past fates

Urðr, whose name means "past," is the oldest of the Norns (the three goddesses who weave the threads of fate under Yggdrasil). She is responsible for preserving the past and all events that have already occurred. Urðr is often depicted as weaving the threads of destiny on her loom. She also guards the well of Urdarbrunnr, which contains the waters of wisdom and memory.

When Urðr finds us, she is calling our attention to all that has already happened. When we think about the threads in our current lives, they all trace back through the past. It is this exploration of where we've been, the things we've done, and the choices we've made that allows us the opportunity to grow.

Change is found in our reflection, and Urðr is an invitation to deepen that. What is coming up for you now that is also pinging in your past? What pattern are you living within that took root years ago? How can you meet that moment in the past in a new way that would allow you more liberation today? How can you free your present self but also the one in the past?

# There is no reversed meaning for Urðr.

### THE ART

With this card, we see two hands holding a thread of fate. One hand exists in a void space and one in this reality. We see the beginning of the thread indicating the past or the beginning, and we also see the thread extending off the page, leading into the present.





vair-than-dee "becoming"

our thoughts shape the present

#### **SYMBOLISM**

the present, what is happening, the current moment, thoughts

Verðandi is one of the three Norns who weave the threads of fate. Her name means "present," and she weaves the threads of what is currently happening.

When Verðandi finds us, our attention is being called to what is present for us in this moment. The Ancient Norse people believed fates were unchangeable and that the only thing they had control over was their attitude toward it. We tend to believe we can shape our lives and have free will, but even with that, there's something to be said about embracing your fate no matter what and only focusing on your perception.

Because it is our perception that does allow us to continue to shape our reality, Verðandi asks us what are we pushing up against? What thoughts are we thinking, and will those thoughts create a life we want to live in? Do they create a headspace we want to be in? Will they get us to where we want to go? For all that is unfolding outside of us, are we reacting to it in an empowering or disempowering way? How can we create more internal freedom and empowerment from where we are today?

# There is no reversed meaning for Verðandi.

#### THE ART

If you look at the cloud on the top and the black on the bottom, I wanted it to create the sensation of a hallway that is currently being walked. We also see two hands holding the thread with many crossing lines, indicating much energy and a lot being done. We also see both ends trailing off into the past and the future.





skoold "debt" or "should"

the future will always find us

#### **SYMBOLISM**

the future, what will happen, what should happen

Skuld is one of the three Norns in Norse mythology, along with Urd and Verdandi. Her name, "Skuld," means "future" in Old Norse. Skuld is responsible for weaving the threads of future events and is closely associated with the concept of destiny and what is yet to come. Skuld's role emphasizes the inevitability of destiny and the interconnectedness of past, present, and future.

Skuld brings the weight of the future. And while it can be anxiety-inducing to think that we only live one future and may overthink consequences of our current actions because of that, it's important to sit with it. If we listen to those who have come before and met the future, who have met the end of their days, they talk about what is most important and what they may have regretted. They acknowledge the impermanence of life and how we often get in our own way.

Skuld means debt - or what is owed. So as we turn our attention to the future, it is a good moment to think about: what do we owe ourselves for the future? What do we owe others? How can we move in our present in a way that honors the future we want for ourselves and the world around us?

## There is no reversed meaning for Skuld.

#### THE ART

This card feels like time travel to me. What we do now shapes our future, and we can see how our future might unfold depending on our choices today. I wanted to display the concept of choice through the contrast in the hands facing away from one another indicating two different paths. We see the Void and the final knot being tied as a symbol of the future - if you were time traveling to the moment where your knot is being tied, how would you feel about your life? Would you be happy with what you have done?





eeg-dra-sil
"odin's horse"

we all are a part of the tree

#### SYMBOLISM

interconnectedness, balance, harmony, earth

Yggr is another name for Odin, meaning "the terrible one." And because Odin hung himself upside down from Yggdrasil for nine days and nine nights to receive the runes, the tree is something he "rode," making drasil mean horse. Combined, Yggdrasil means "Odin's horse."

Yggdrasil lives at the center of Norse cosmology as the heart of their universe: the world tree. This ash tree houses each of the nine realms within its roots and branches; without it, nothing would exist. According to Norse myth, the tree is mortal and requires compassion and care.

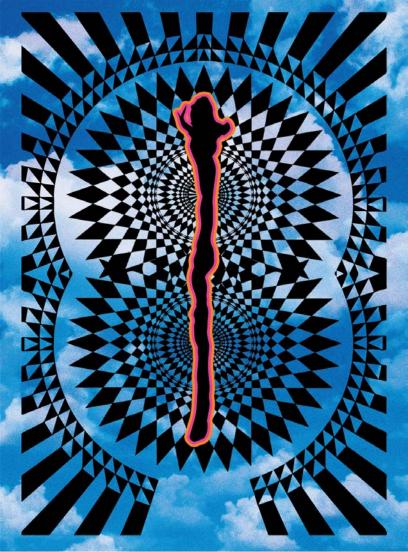
When this card finds us, it is a message of interconnectedness. It reminds us that we are connected to everything around us and asks if we live in such a way. Are we living in devotion to the natural world around us? How can we make this truth more a part of our practice? It's an invitation to reflect on harmony and balance in your life and work in the world

#### REVERSED

When Yggdrasil comes up reversed, it points toward a feeling of disconnection. You may be so wrapped up in your head and current situation that you can't see the forest through the trees. Time to step outside yourself and re-connect to the world around you.

#### THE ART

With Yggdrasil, we see the tree and roots from a vertical point of view. We see contrasting colors and vibrating energies in the pattern wrapped around the tree, representing how it holds all things.



# STAFF

we carry the journey with us

#### SYMBOLISM

magical connection, journeying, world tree

Amongst the Norse ancients, women were primarily the practitioners of magic. They were called Völvas and practiced seiðr, a type of Nordic shamanism. Völva translates to "staff carrier" or "wand carrier." The staff was absolutely critical to Völva's work as it represented the world tree. In holding it, they could enter a trance and journey through the many realms.

So when Staff finds us, it is an invitation to live within two realms at once: the seen and the unseen. In what ways do you already do this? How do you think you could do more of it? What places and guides do you want to establish a relationship with?

This card is a reminder of your power and abilities - how can you show up for them more?

### **REVERSED**

When Staff reversed finds us, it means we are either living too far in the unseen or too far in the external world. This card is a call to come home to yourself. Get grounded and find balance.

## THE ART

With Staff, I took the vibrating energies found in the card Yggdrasil and also displayed them here because the Staff represents Yggdrasil. I put the Staff in an upright position to indicate energy coming from both the earth and the sky.





our healing seeks song

#### SYMBOLISM

voice, song, speaking, prayer

Galdr is a type of incantation or spellcasting involving the rhythmic and melodic chanting of specific words, phrases, or sounds with the intention of invoking supernatural forces, influencing events, or achieving certain magical outcomes.

In traditional Norse and Scandinavian cultures, galdr was practiced by individuals known as "galdramenn" or "galdrar," who were considered skilled practitioners of this magical art. The practice of galdr was believed to have power over various aspects of the natural world, such as healing, protection, divination, and influencing the behavior of people, animals, and the environment.

This card calls our attention to our voice and song. There is so much power in giving voice to what lies within us. Our prayers, hopes, and intentions can all be magnified through speaking, singing, or whispering them. Galdr can be a study of history and be quite traditional. It can also be something you choose to get more creative with. At the heart of Galdr is intention and repetition. Give voice to your heart.

#### There is no reversed meaning for Galdr.

#### THE ART

With Galdr I wanted to create a visual of sound waves, showing sound vibrating through the forms of humans. And in that, the interconnectedness of this practice. How healing it is to speak, be heard, share, and sing.



# LONGSHIP

embrace the rolling waves

#### SYMBOLISM

travel, will, discipline, adventure, drive

Longships were slender and fast vessels built for speed, maneuverability, and the ability to navigate both open seas and shallow rivers. Longships were vital to the Vikings' expansion and exploration of the world.

Longship very much works hand in hand with the card Sunstone. Sunstone allowed for navigation, but the longship allowed for travel. So when we pull this card, it's really a call to our will. It embodies the spirit of adventure and the drive to overcome obstacles by navigating through challenges with adaptability and resourcefulness.

This card is a reminder of our strength and how much is possible for us if only we insist upon it. Insist.

#### **REVERSED**

Longship indicates that there might be something on the horizon that feels a bit off. Your intuition may be speaking to you about how you need to move forward, but you aren't sure. This card asks you to trust yourself.

#### THE ART

In Longship, we see very tall and wild waves surrounding this ship as it works its way through the water. This represents the need for strength and adaptability. It is a bright card with positive colors, carrying the spirit of adventure.

# RESOURCES

"Taking Up The Runes" by Diana Paxton
"The Viking Way" by Neal Price
"The Viking Spirit" by Daniel McCoy
"Nordic Runes" by Paul Rhys Mountfort
"Gods and Myths of Northern Europe" by H.R. Ellis Davidson
"The Prose Edda" by Snorri Sturluson,
translated by Jesse L. Byock
"The Way of Fire and Ice" by Ryan Smith

# Espen Artio

www.tendingthemystery.com @tendingthemystery

# Maria Kvilhaug:

"The Seed of Yggdrasil" Patreon

# Jackson Crawford:

YouTube Channel "The Poetic Edda" translation