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Stacy Jo Scott
Comittee Chair
Jovencio De La Paz
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Comittee Members



MARY EVANS

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Change is a gateway. Upon passage, it alters states of consciousness and perception of reality. There is no undoing of change.

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**Stacy Jo Scott
Committee Chair
Rick Silva**

**Jovencio De La Paz
Committee Members**

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Co-Director
Co-Producer
Score**

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Sound
Art Advising**

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Angel's Trumpet

The wheel of change spins, creating cylindrical space like a slow-moving tornado in which we reside in the center. It collapses in on itself. Memory creates the shape of a spiral thrust forward into the future, mimicking the travels of the solar system. On birthdays, TV reruns, and with whiffs of familiar smells, we return to what is stored in the body. What feels like apparitions of the past are alive and well, moving through our DNA.

The ending of things leaves occupation for something else, A growing thing.





CRUXIFIX- Datura

As a child, I was mystified by the crucifix. A line that divides space into four quadrants, the seasons, marked in the center by death. I continuously return to death, resurrection, and transformation in my work. In 1974, a Lithuanian archeologist, Marija Gimbutas, published controversial theories developed from her digs in Old Europe. Her ideas about Pre-Indo-Europeans were informed by her discovery of over 500 Goddess figurines with breasts, buttocks, and vulvas. She understood that this culture worshiped the Goddess as a birth, death, and resurrection symbol. The female form was seen to mimic the cycle of life seen on the Earth as the changing of seasons. This recontextualization of the Christ archetype outside the patriarchy was powerful for me. On this Earth, death must occur for spring to arrive. Eternal spring does not exist here, but eternity is found in the only constant, which is change.

When a caterpillar enters the chrysalis phase, its previous form dissolves into goo. Somewhere in its cellular memory is a blueprint of how to build itself back together in the form of a butterfly. We fall apart into dust, and there is no path ahead. In my experience, there is a call to the inside, to the cellular memory, the part of yourself that built your body in the womb that still remembers how to build you. And that is how you crawl out.

The Tower can touch your life despite any securities used to void the discomfort of change. In the tarot, The Tower represents the unavoidable change that levels you. It makes you start from scratch and address what is fundamentally important. Sometimes these are the necessary events that bring us back to who we are.

The Tower is evidence of attachment. It stands built with purpose, an echo of power, a mirror of ambition, and a structure to lean on. This buildup of ideas rarely overpowers or escapes the reality of nature and time who is a destructionaress.

On the phone with my mom, I am talking about the soap crucifix. The one that keeps haunting my memory. I tried to recreate it once. Carving soap is a lot more difficult than you might imagine. I realized that outside of having limited materials in jail, the many idle hours benefit this craft. It's a video call and I see her eyes widen as I recall the tale. A woman whose sister was assaulted and murdered brings the orange museum quality crafted Jesus to our middle school bible study, his holy orange glow beaming as the window light illuminates every thorn and drop of blood. This man had saved up soap rations to carve it. He had "come to Christ" through a letter correspondence with her while incarcerated. I explained to my mother that these were my first introductions to violence. It was not MTV and HBO that she had blocked on the television. As an imaginative child, it was the depictions of power-hungry men, Rames II battling Moses, sacrificing babies for power and God fighting back by making it rain blood and sending plagues of frogs and lice. The song we would sing as children to the tune of Louie Louie.

Pharaoh Pharaoh ohhhh baby let my people go UH! Yeah, yeah yeah yeah yeah. Well, all of Pharaoh's army was coming too, so what do you think that I did do? I raised my rod and cleared my throat and all of Pharaoh's army did the dead man's float!



Crucifix carved from olive oil soap



**St. Paul's Episcopalian Church
Franklin TN**

The glass windows in Saint Paul's were made by Louis Comfort Tiffany himself. After perfecting his stained-glass method, he never took on an apprentice and his technique went with him to the grave. The images have a depth that I have only seen in Tiffany Glass. One of the windows was broken and the replacement is obvious. The light shines bright through it. The original windows are not washes of color. It's not color at all, it's living. It's a mirror room of refractions but deep and inky like blood.

It's always dim in the church like it is meant to be lit by candlelight. Not "God's" natural light. We don't survive on "God's" light. We survive by tending to the candles. It's the light that you maintain.

DIVINATION- Blue Lotus

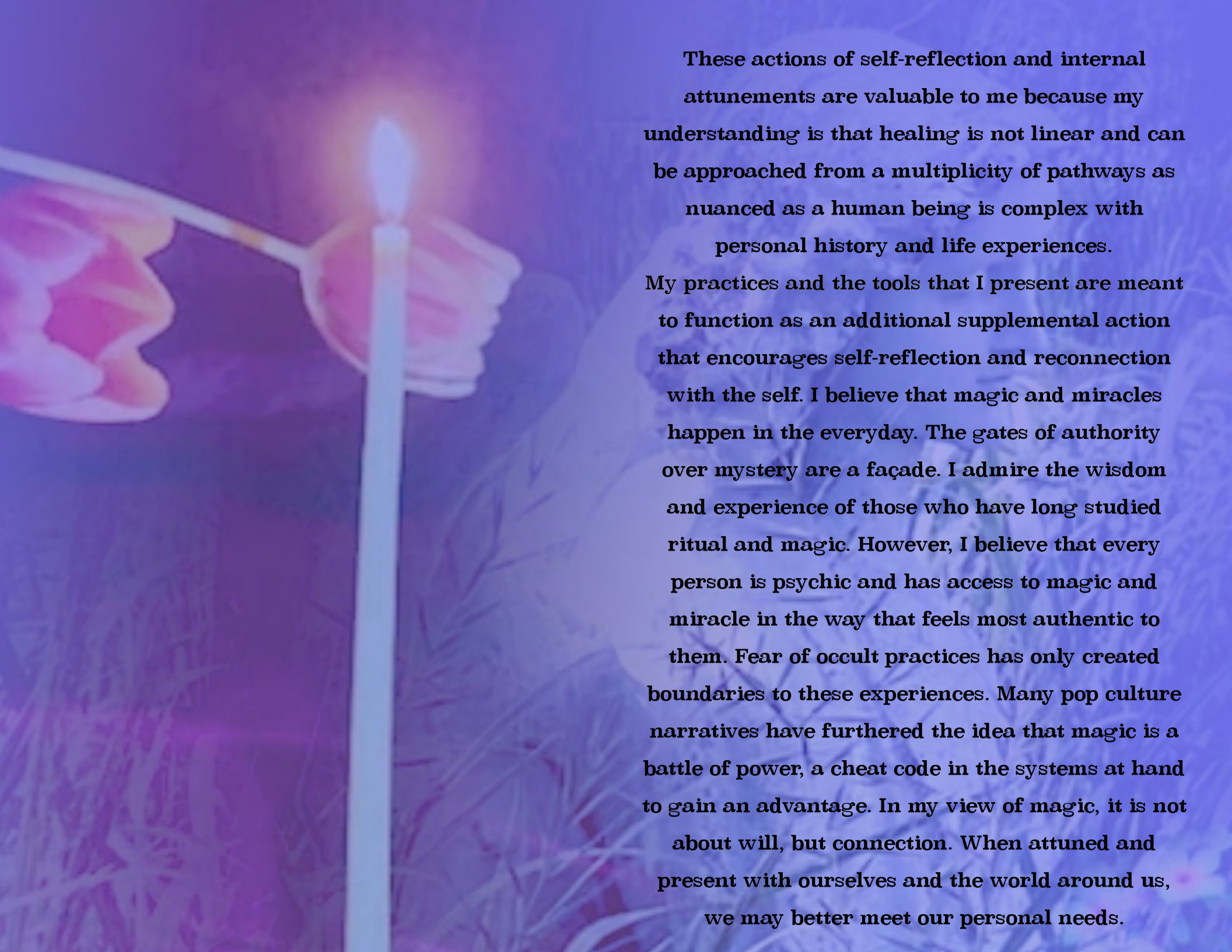
Divinity; the state of being divine.

Divination; the practice of seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown by supernatural means.

The funny thing about my job as a tarot reader is that I am rarely talking about the future. Clients often think that knowing the future will solve their current ailment or confusion. The future is difficult to reach without reflecting upon the past and current.

In the production of my divination tools, the healing that I offer is self-guided. I am not the one who performs healing but rather I am offering an optional tool that when activated, may aid in the spiritual and emotional comfort of the participant. Self-guided healing is not to be seen as an alternative to other healing modalities. One's discomfort can accumulate from a multiplicity of directions. To address healing holistically, there are not one, but many actions to take. My current research focuses have been aimed at better understanding the power of the mind in seeing beyond 3-D reality and seeing into itself to address ailments. The most important of these studies is the practice of medical hypnosis as analgesia. Studies of medical hypnosis have expanded my understanding of the powers of the subconscious and altered states.

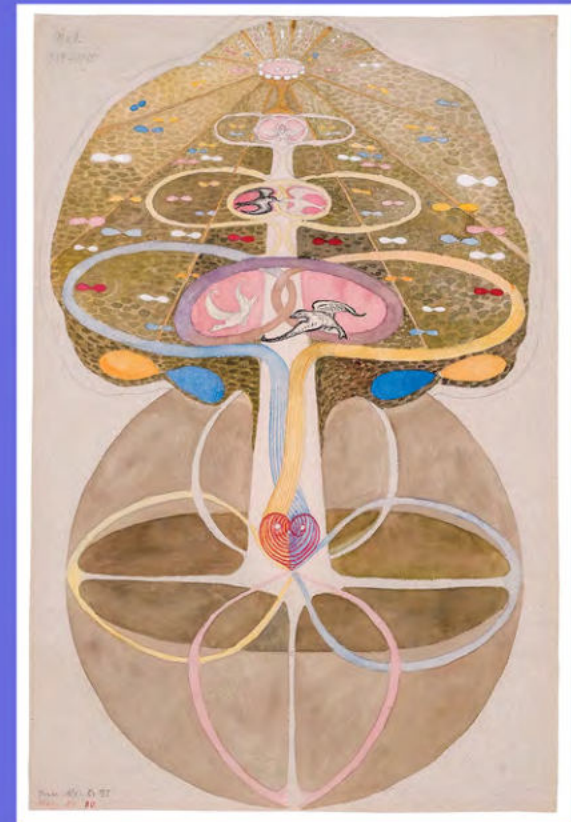
The scientific study and long history of hypnotic practices show that the human subconscious has the power to shift sensations of the physical body when led into trance states. Under hypnosis, the body can decrease the experience of pain, recall specific details about the past, and will the body to act under suggestion. Giuseppe De Bendittis in *Understanding the Multidimensional Mechanisms of Hypnotic Analgesia* "described pain as a multidimensional experience which is essentially sensory-discriminative, motivational-affective and cognitive and which is registered on several levels and sites of the central nervous system."



These actions of self-reflection and internal attunements are valuable to me because my understanding is that healing is not linear and can be approached from a multiplicity of pathways as nuanced as a human being is complex with personal history and life experiences.

My practices and the tools that I present are meant to function as an additional supplemental action that encourages self-reflection and reconnection with the self. I believe that magic and miracles happen in the everyday. The gates of authority over mystery are a façade. I admire the wisdom and experience of those who have long studied ritual and magic. However, I believe that every person is psychic and has access to magic and miracle in the way that feels most authentic to them. Fear of occult practices has only created boundaries to these experiences. Many pop culture narratives have furthered the idea that magic is a battle of power, a cheat code in the systems at hand to gain an advantage. In my view of magic, it is not about will, but connection. When attuned and present with ourselves and the world around us, we may better meet our personal needs.

I follow a lineage of artists whose work is informed by intuition and specifically communication with the spirit realm. It is not a visual parallel with these artists that I connect with, but I find kinship in the practices that led them in their making. Women who followed words from spirits like Hilma Af Klint, used body intuition to apply art as a healing prescription like Emma Kuntz, or Agnes Pelton who transcribed states of meditative realities into her paintings. These were artists who exercised art as an arm of their spiritual work in the world. Beyond my personal interest in the healing capacities of hypnosis, I am also curious about the artistic senses that can develop from diving into states of meditative trance.



Tree of Knowledge No.1, Hilma Af Klint 1913-1915



Emma Kuntz Pendulum used for her drawings
Penta, Emma Kuntz, 1958



You Both Make The Desert Flower, Agnes Pelton, 1953

For the past decade, I have been studying the practice of cartomancy. Tarot is the story of life told through a narrative of symbols in the form of 78 playing cards. In my experience, I have found that reading cards for others and myself provides a process of self-reflection and personal insight that can be helpful to imagine a positive future. Something unique happens between the reader and client in which time becomes suspended as the focus is singularly on addressing the issues at hand the client may be sitting with. I have wondered if what is most beneficial in these interactions is the act of intentional listening which is so rarely granted in our fast-moving world.

In Pamela Coleman Smith's depiction of The Tower card a tower in the sky is struck by lightning. The golden crown that was atop this tower is toppled off exposing the fiery destruction caused by the lightning. The crown, a symbol of social status and power cannot withstand the humbling force of natural destruction. The storm and its effects are unpredictable and unavoidable. The crown is also said to represent the crown chakra in the body which is at the top of the head and references spiritual connection and enlightenment. Meaning that these events, although they may take place in the material world, could shift personal understanding and ideas.

Two people fall from the tower, one a king and one a peasant. This represents that this action of change or destruction is universally unbiased to stature.



Spirit Speak Tarot, Mary Evans, 2014



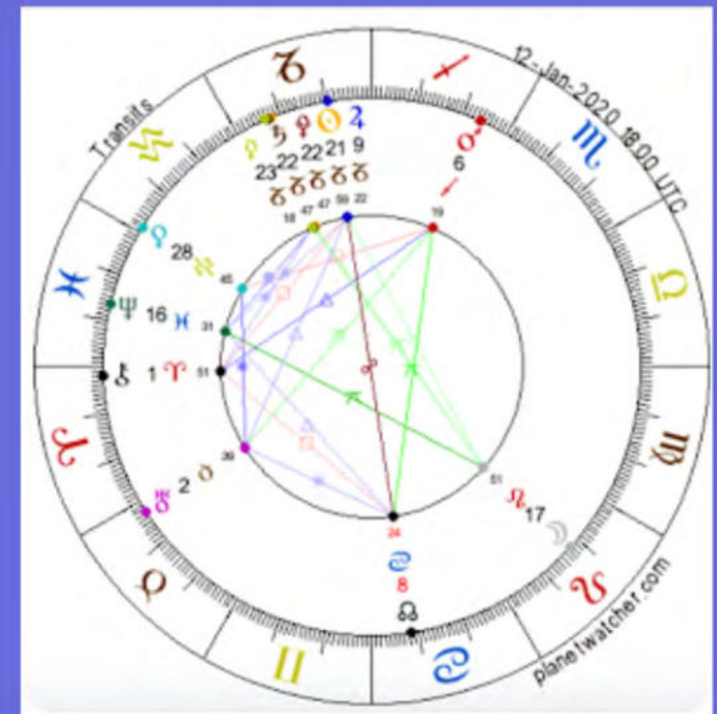
The Tower, Pamela Coleman Smith, 1909

"Just when you think you're safe and comfortable, a Tower moment hits and throws you for a loop. A lightning bolt of clarity and insight cuts through the lies and illusions you have been telling yourself, and now the truth comes to light. Your world may come crashing down before you, in ways you could never have imagined as you realize that you have been building your life on unstable foundations – false assumptions, mistruths, illusions, blatant lies, and so on. Everything you thought to be true has turned on its head. You are now questioning what is real and what is not; what you can rely upon and what you cannot trust." (Brigit Esselmont)

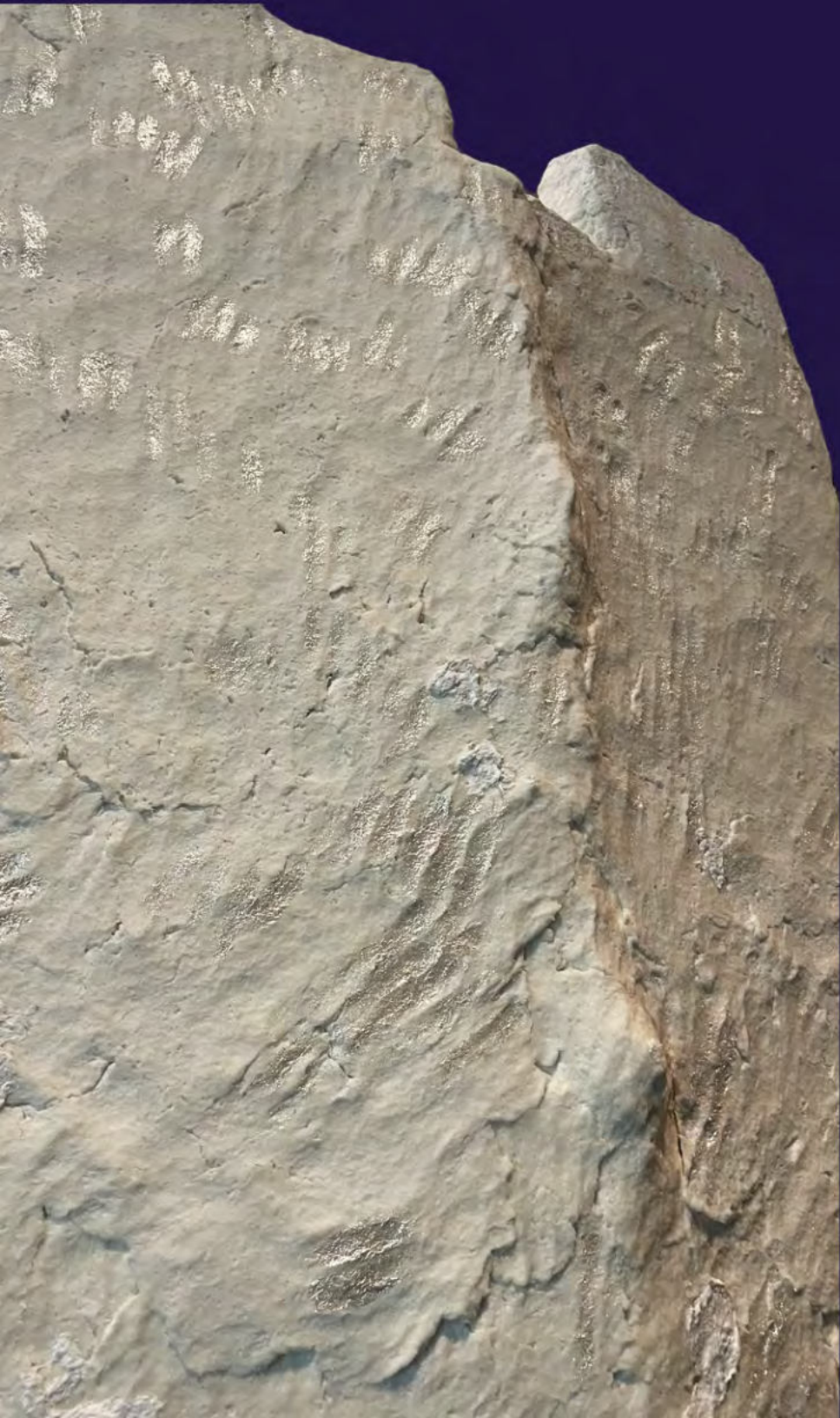
In the year 2020, the United States entered a Saturn-Pluto conjunction that many astrologers predicted would bring great and potentially destructive change. Historically this same conjunction was aligned with the fall of the Roman Empire. This transit happens every 100 years after the birth of a nation.



June 4th 2020, Washington Monument, Washington DC



The US Astrology Chart, January 2020, Planet Watcher



DEVOTION- Blackberry

In the studio I am dancing around the tower, shifting my body into micromovements to find evidence of my handprints. I fill each fingerprint I find with iridescent paints. Every inch of this sculpture was touched by my hand; every space was made with my attention. I am highlighting my hand with a silver glimmer creating a pattern of marks. The surface is awakened by the glow of my instinctual movements.



I enjoy labor-intensive intimacy with my work. With a sculpture of this size, I am fully committed to this piece both mentally and physically. In preparation for this work, I went through months of physical training to avoid injury or pain from straining my body. This is an experience with my work in which I am activating body intuition and a sense of primal shaping. I sit on the floor cupping the wet mush of the paper fibers. My parents had to watch me as a child. When left alone in the yard, I would often return nude and covered in mud. The instinct to build by hand, to dig in the earth, to create structure feels natural. I am holding a mud pie, a giant spit wad. I slap it on my structure smearing it with my hands, giving it friendly pats to settle the fibers into place so it cements properly. This information is not something I had to learn, it lives already within me, I just open it up.

The Paper Mache material that I applied for this sculpture is made from a mixture of toilet paper and Elmer's glue. This project standing 8.5 feet tall, and 5 feet wide used about 300 rolls of toilet paper and 50 gallons of glue. The method I chose is derived from recipes used primarily by cosplay communities and for small craft purposes. I have worked over the process of three years to manipulate this material in my own personal style. I mix this paper clay material in 5-gallon batches at a time. It's a physically draining process. Each batch weighs about 75 pounds when wet. I don't use any machinery to mix my raw material, I use my hands and arms to mix each batch. The material is then applied by hand in palm-sized pieces and is worked in a similar way to ceramic clay. Many of the sculptural forms are multi-purpose. They are shown in gallery settings, and function as props in video works and furniture. The design of these objects is intuitive and quick. They are a manifestation of what is already living in my imagined reality.



The Tower, Mary Evans, 2023



Much of my current work is about material, scale, and an almost ridiculous devotion to an object or project, inspired by sites like Salvation Mountain. Placed in the high desert of the Salton Sea, Leonard Knight's devotion to God led him to build a psychedelic technicolor mountain. Salvation Mountain is my ideal art gallery. The Salton Sea is a site of failed destination. Once a tourist attraction and a popular beachfront property, it became a stinking and barren toxic site. I relate to artists who are dedicated to their work for no clear reward other than serving the work itself a type of faith in the practice of creation. Any artist must have devotion and faith to choose the path of an artist which will always come with some type of resistance and personal battles. So, you follow something. Whether it is a belief or an inkling within yourself. A bell that rings inside.

I grew up in a rural town outside of Nashville Tennessee and I was rarely exposed to art that was made as a gesture to art culture or art history. The work that I encountered was made from two places: faith and function. I see my work aligning with one of these two arms of practice. These types of works became known as "outsider art" and were collected in the 1990s. Outsider meaning an artist who is untrained and outside the realm of art culture. I appreciate art that is earnest and upfront. Like Woody Guthrie, simple and purposeful but with a message that can run deep and true.

"I am out to sing the songs that make you take pride in yourself and in your work. And the songs that I sing are made up for the most part by all sorts of folk just about like you. I could hire out to the other side, the big money side, and get several dollars every week just to quit singing my own kind of songs and to sing the kind that knock you down still farther and the ones that poke fun at you even more and the ones that make you think that you've not got any sense at all. But I decided a long time ago that I'd starve to death before I'd sing any such songs as that." (Woody Guthrie)



Howard Finster, 1989, From Kieth Haring's personal collection



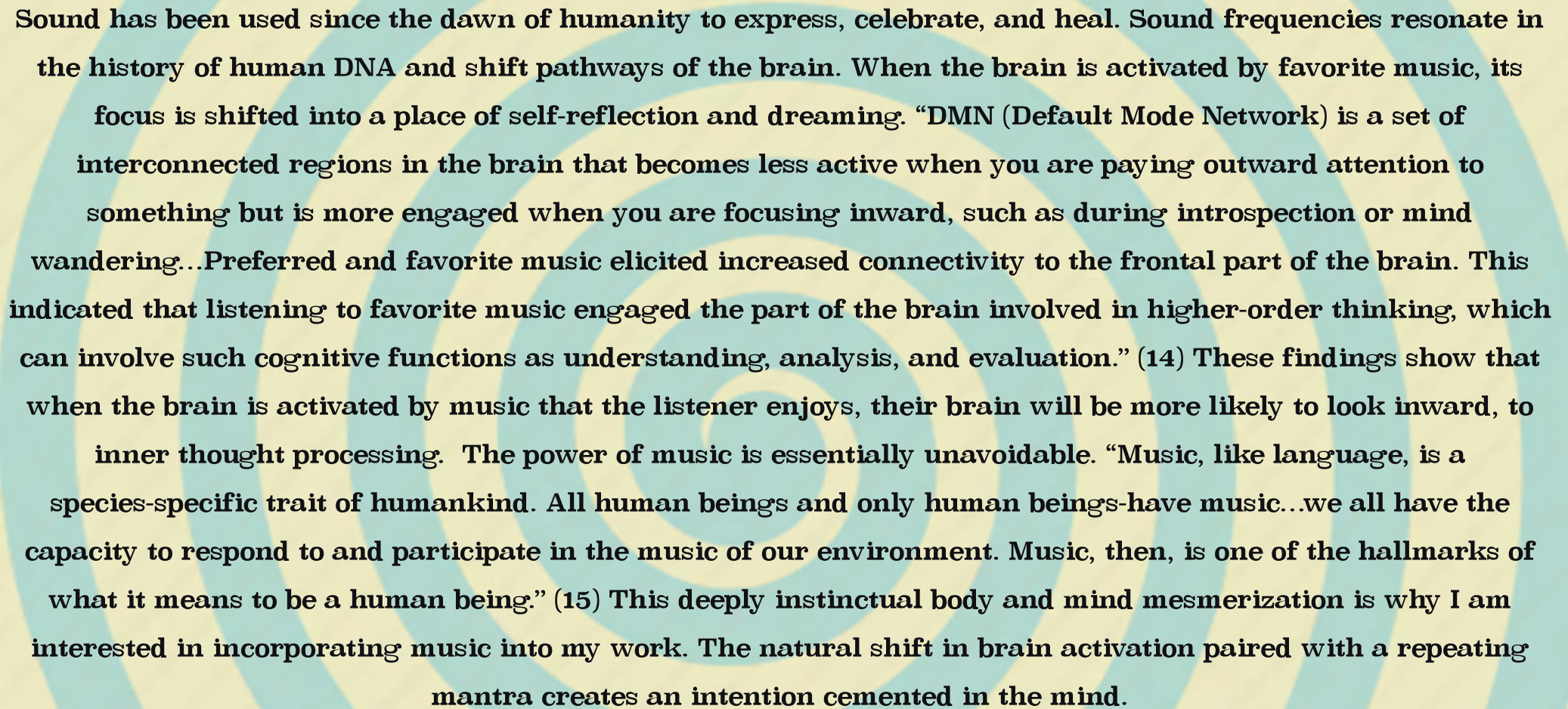
Niki De Saint Phalle also built mountains beyond imaginable capacity. Her tarot garden, twenty-two sculptures built in Garavicchio, Tuscany from the years 1979-1996 represent the major arcana of the Tarot. She self-funded this project by selling perfumes and multiples of her work. She desired to build this project without any investors manipulating the vision. Her idea was to "build a garden of Joy. A little corner of Paradise. A meeting place between man and nature." (De Saint Phalle). She felt that this project was her destiny and worked on it consistently although she was battling Rheumatoid Arthritis at the time. "This garden was made with difficulties, love, wild enthusiasm, obsession, and most of all faith. Nothing could have stopped me." (De Saint Phalle)





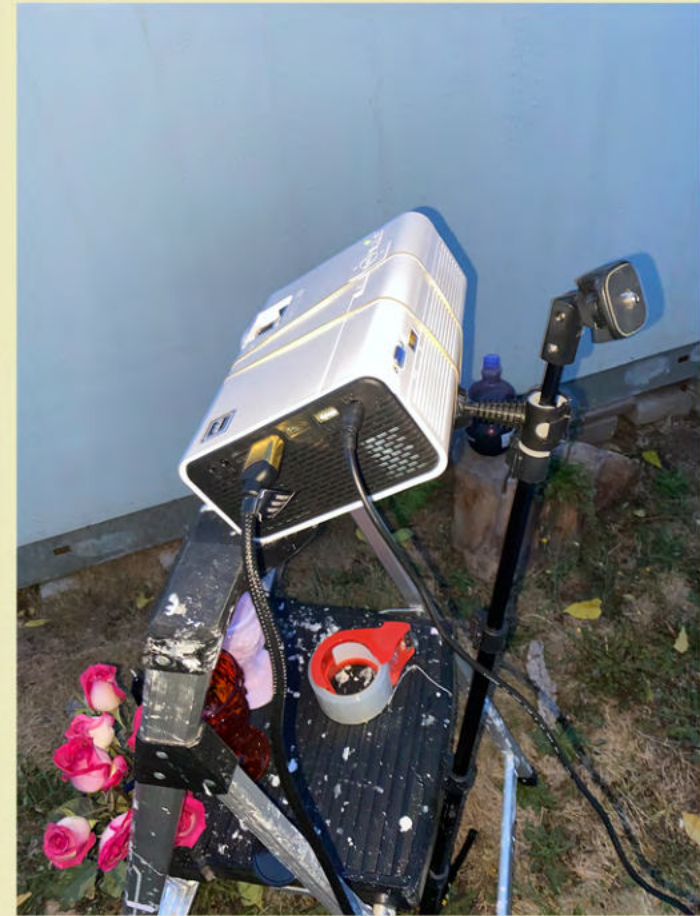
S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G- Henbane

**Words are spells and lyrics are
incantations. Pop music is magic.**



Sound has been used since the dawn of humanity to express, celebrate, and heal. Sound frequencies resonate in the history of human DNA and shift pathways of the brain. When the brain is activated by favorite music, its focus is shifted into a place of self-reflection and dreaming. “DMN (Default Mode Network) is a set of interconnected regions in the brain that becomes less active when you are paying outward attention to something but is more engaged when you are focusing inward, such as during introspection or mind wandering...Preferred and favorite music elicited increased connectivity to the frontal part of the brain. This indicated that listening to favorite music engaged the part of the brain involved in higher-order thinking, which can involve such cognitive functions as understanding, analysis, and evaluation.” (14) These findings show that when the brain is activated by music that the listener enjoys, their brain will be more likely to look inward, to inner thought processing. The power of music is essentially unavoidable. “Music, like language, is a species-specific trait of humankind. All human beings and only human beings-have music...we all have the capacity to respond to and participate in the music of our environment. Music, then, is one of the hallmarks of what it means to be a human being.” (15) This deeply instinctual body and mind mesmerization is why I am interested in incorporating music into my work. The natural shift in brain activation paired with a repeating mantra creates an intention cemented in the mind.

My aesthetic video influences are rooted in the language of pop media, nostalgic places of childhood joy and wonder, and early experimental video. Most of my video works are in creative collaboration with interdisciplinary artist Sol Kupersmid. Each production is focused on a specific intention and our executive roles shift based on the project. Most of the time our video production teams consist of just the two of us. One or both in character, one of us adjusting the lighting before jumping into acting, swapping the camera, and directing from behind and in front of the camera. Sometimes we start with the visuals and Sol will craft a score based on our rough cut. Other times we will work on an intention for a song and the visuals will develop from Sol's music. Before we start each shoot, we gather. We take a moment to talk about the intention, the purpose of this action, or the world we are trying to create. We embrace the equipment we have access to, a camcorder from the thrift store, iPhone, and sometimes a Canon Rebel from 2012. I am more interested in the magical act of production and video making than being technically articulate. In my opinion, video is the most transformative art. The tone of the music, the movement of the camera, and the expression on the character's face. It's natural to place yourself in the view of the characters. Horror movies haunt us because we take them home with us. Leaving the theater, the essence of the characters is still fresh on the skin. The refrigerator makes a sound, and you jump. Video doesn't have to tell a linear story. Shifting or inviting a mood or energy is what feels precious to my video practice.



**Behind the scenes documetation,
Portal, 20220**

Stara is a character I created inspired by films like Teen Witch, The Craft, and Sabrina the Teenage Witch. The young witch archetype in these movies follows a coming-of-age path, the discovery of power. In my youth, it was rare I was gifted stories of women becoming powerful. As these young women come of age they discover a secret, they are witches. They hold a secret power, a way to navigate the world and bend experiences to their will in covert ways. These powers traveled on a frequency that was beyond the patriarchy, beyond the material. It could not be caught or detected. It was a power that could not be punished by the rules of man.

Stara is a teen witch turned pop star who bedazzles her surroundings with magic and wonder. She spreads the happening of Miracles. She manifests a pop anthem of good things happening. Anything is possible if you believe in Miracles. She is an archetype who lives in my creative world. The sequel "Miracles Never Die" is a continuation of the idea of a miracle.



Miracles, Mary Evans, 2020

**I'm a miracle
and no I'll never never die
turning into dirt
whisper in a dream
I still believe**

**even though I know we're gonna die
the miracles survive**

**I know we're gonna die
circles meeting
feelings fleeting**



Teen Witch, 1989

Donkey Skin, (Jacques Demy, 1970) is one of my major influences for this project and generally all the set designs I imagine in my creative process. The set design (Jacques Dugied) and costuming (Gitt Magini) are fantastical and dramatic down to the very last detail. The king doesn't simply sit on a chair or throne but sits atop a giant white plush cat sculpture a tree above him with glass iridescent orbs hanging above his head. Blue repeats through this imaginary kingdom, the people of the castle painted blue in blue costumes, the king's crown embellished with blue gems, and the bookshelves filled with books with blue edging. In the film, other saturated color themes are introduced, yellow, silver, gold, and red. The use of these color themes is like Pamela Coleman Smith's tarot paintings (The Ryder Waite Smith Tarot Deck 1909) blocks of saturation that lend to narrative symbolism. These contrasting hues are echoed in Anna Biller's creation of The Love Witch (2016). A film that creates of sense of a 1970s B-movie cult classic in which a beautiful witch murders all her boyfriends is littered with symbolism from the Tarot.

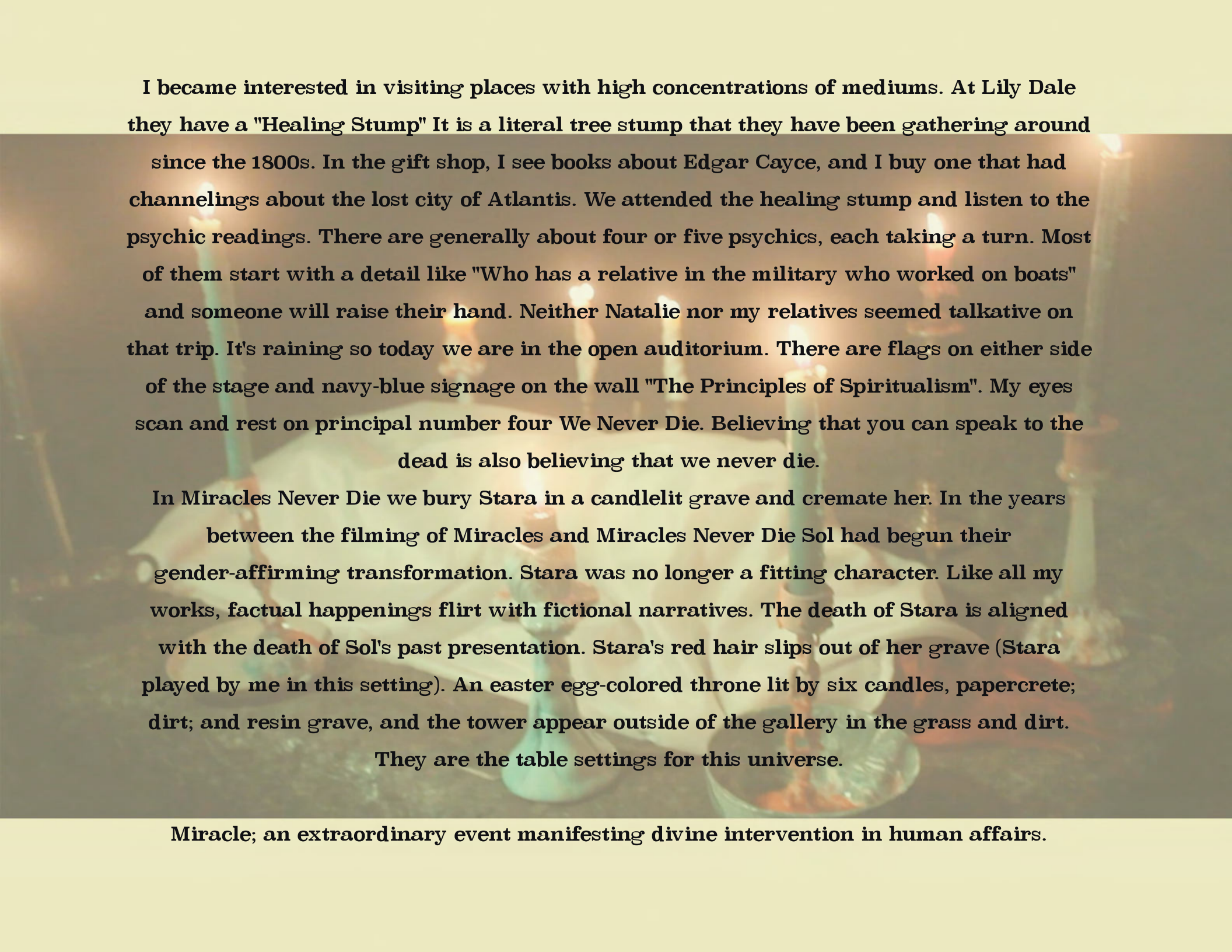
I find similarities between my own process with set design and video to Anna Biller's reflections on the production of the film. "The film took seven-and-a-half years to complete, and Biller handled nearly every task. She wrote, directed, and edited, storyboarded every shot, and worked closely with her cinematographer, M David Mullen, an expert in reproducing classical camera styles. She designed (and sometimes built) the lavishly detailed sets and the many vibrant costumes (many of which she stitched herself). Her own paintings adorn the sets, and she wrote special music and songs and commissioned musicians to perform them. 'It's not important that I do it all,' she says. 'It's important to be the right tone.'"(17) For me, I am looking most importantly to create an environment that emits a particular feeling. Whether I can translate that through the capturing of video is secondary and perhaps something I will get better at in time.



**Donkey Skin,
Jaques Demy, 1970**



**The Love Witch,
Anna Biller, 2016**



I became interested in visiting places with high concentrations of mediums. At Lily Dale they have a "Healing Stump" It is a literal tree stump that they have been gathering around since the 1800s. In the gift shop, I see books about Edgar Cayce, and I buy one that had channelings about the lost city of Atlantis. We attended the healing stump and listen to the psychic readings. There are generally about four or five psychics, each taking a turn. Most of them start with a detail like "Who has a relative in the military who worked on boats" and someone will raise their hand. Neither Natalie nor my relatives seemed talkative on that trip. It's raining so today we are in the open auditorium. There are flags on either side of the stage and navy-blue signage on the wall "The Principles of Spiritualism". My eyes scan and rest on principal number four We Never Die. Believing that you can speak to the dead is also believing that we never die.

In Miracles Never Die we bury Stara in a candlelit grave and cremate her. In the years between the filming of Miracles and Miracles Never Die Sol had begun their gender-affirming transformation. Stara was no longer a fitting character. Like all my works, factual happenings flirt with fictional narratives. The death of Stara is aligned with the death of Sol's past presentation. Stara's red hair slips out of her grave (Stara played by me in this setting). An easter egg-colored throne lit by six candles, papercrete; dirt; and resin grave, and the tower appear outside of the gallery in the grass and dirt.

They are the table settings for this universe.

Miracle; an extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs.



**The Healing Stump, Lily
Dale NY**



**Miracles Never Die,
Mary Evans, 2023**

I envy those who haven't experienced feeling dead inside at some point in the last few years. Miracles never die is about finding a miracle within the guttural depths of spirit-numbing soul-sucking disassociation. That even death can't take you away from you. At the end of the day, it's all you have. Sol's new unnamed character inspired by the leather daddies of Kenneth Anger's Scorpio Rising walks us through this world of transmutation. The early video works by Kenneth Anger and Maya Deren are significant to my video practice. Both artists have served as a widespread cultural creative influence in video media but worked independently in the underground. What I share is the priority on symbolism and direct contact with the video. Although I am not against working with larger video support, embracing D.I.Y production imprints my hands directly on the footage. My voice is there, my words spilling out unedited. Music videos are generally a marketing tool for record companies. My works engages the medium of the music video while also wanting to subvert its predetermined cultural purpose. "Kenneth Anger can be credited for introducing pop music (as early as 1941 in one of his first films Who Has Been Rocking My Dream Boat), often with raunchy humor. Toying with the ironic possibilities of juxtaposition, synchronizing the soundtrack to the chance meetings of disparate images, Anger took up where Un Chien Andalou left off. Dali and Bunuel's surrealist classic used music ironically, sampling Wagner as an incongruous provocation. Anger took this a step further, using music to underscore the theme of the film itself." (16) I want my video work to implement music to broaden the actions, visuals, and symbols of the film. They don't need to complement each other necessarily but at times the two find resonance.

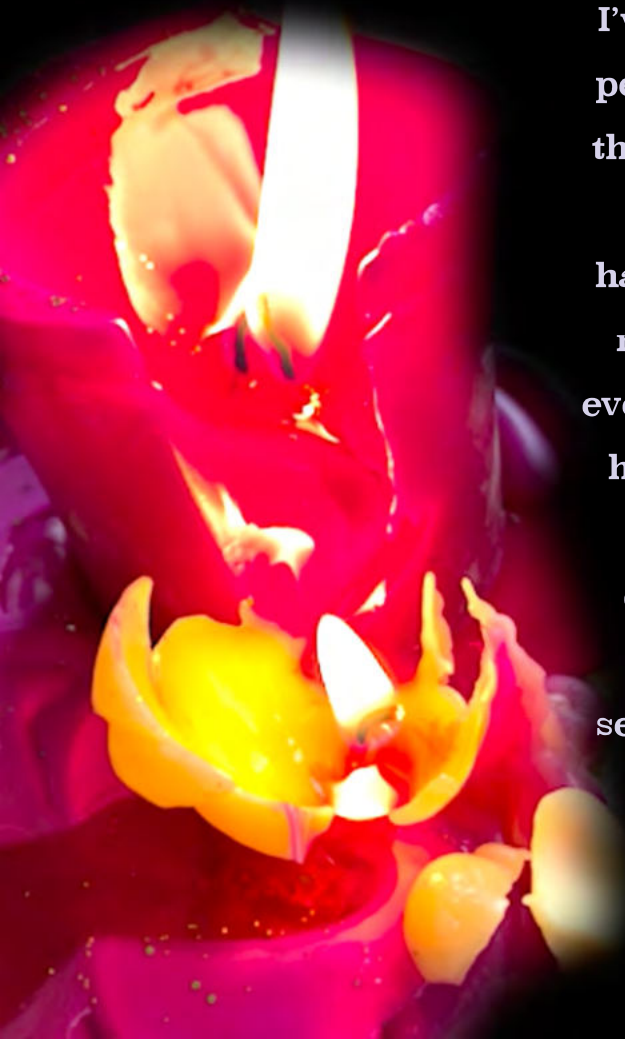
Kenneth Anger, Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome, 1954



Scorpio Rising, Kenneth Anger, 1963

Miracles Never Die, Mary Evans, 2023

"The sun comes out right away,
right away."- Iruka Maria Toro
After death, we melt into words
from artist Iruka Maria Toro, a
guardian angel who unremittingly
reunites our death with purpose.
Through the mantra of miracles
survive we reach our final form
and then the cycle loops into time.
I've heard that from a spirit-body
perspective, birth is more painful
than death. If this is true, what of
the rebirthing processes that
happen throughout life? We are a
miracle that continues through
every destruction and end. What is
held onto as comfort can also be
what keeps us away from
ourselves. When I am stripped
bare, I am confronted by the
self-unmasked, the indestructible
cockroach inside.



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Mary Evans is an interdisciplinary artist working primarily in experimental video and Paper Mache sculpture. Evans has developed a unique visual and conceptual vocabulary that speaks to ideas of consciousness, spiritualism, and interdimensional realities. Rituals of symbolic transformation are performed as characters travel into and flirt with the void in the format of pop music videos.

