show and tell

In this issue, we look into the tarot and oracle collections of Tero Hynynen and Geraldine Beskin

What was your first deck and do you still own it?

My first deck was the Waite-Smith (RWS) deck, U.S. Games edition (1971). I don't own it anymore. I gave it to one of my best friends in around 1992. But I know she's still got it.

How many decks do you own?

It's been a while since I last checked, but approximately 300. This includes tarot (both 78 and 22), Minchiate, oracle, playing cards and other types of decks. In addition, there's about a dozen printing sheets.

What is your most valuable deck?

It would probably be either the Etteilla I deck from 1890, or possibly the Crowley-Harris 'White Box A' deck. As to single cards, I've got one playing card from 1790, a King of Hearts (via Intercol / Yasha Beresiner - that's a dangerous website to visit!).

What is your most used deck?

Waite-Smith, no contest there. It's my workhorse. I always have it with me when I do readings. I'm currently using the Borderless edition and I like it a lot. Waite-Smith, Marseille and Crowley-Harris / Thoth form the "Holy Trinity"; they go wherever I go.

What deck has sentimental value for you?

The Madonni Tarot, by Silvia Maddonni. Not sure why, it just is. Also, Sacred Rose Tarot and Hanson-Roberts, those too - maybe because of that certain kind of innocence of the late 80s, early 90s. Alan Tarot (A. Orell / Modiano) is a bit of an oddball. I could never connect with it, and I basically never use it, but there it sits… among the first acquisitions, so definitely falls under this category.

What is the deck that got away?

Ha, quite a few! Kashmir Tarot by Nicolaas van Beek, for sure. The original woodblocks? Holy moly. And True Black Tarot, first edition; Pam A, 1909; Papus / Goulinat, Dusserre edition; Tarocchi di Dante (Poggi, 1983). So many lost bids on Ebay - then again, so many ~~£££~~ saved!

Do any of your decks have a story to tell?

It would be great to know about the previous owners of the "golden oldies" in my collection. For example, the Etteilla I deck from 1890 and all of the things it has seen. One of the playing card decks originate from my grandparents' summer cottage in Finland. It was kept in this specific drawer as long as I can remember. It still smells of candle wax and summers past.

What's on your wish list?

I'm hoping to get a copy of the True Black Tarot, 2nd edition. ◆