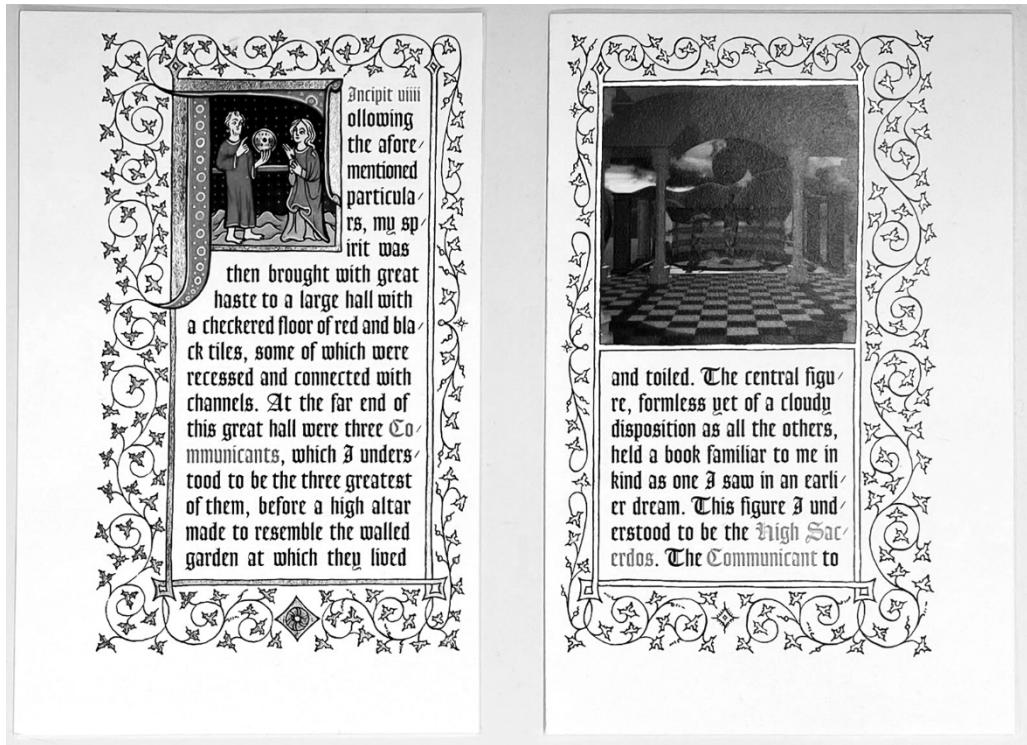


Uchronic Travels in Hypermedia: The Gross Gloss



Alan Perry

PREFACE AND CHAPTERS 1-3

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Researcher's Preface (in progress)

This facsimile of *The Gross Gloss* is intended for both academic and lay students of the history of manuscripts and medieval culture, as well as those interested in media archaeology. Here I provide extensive glosses,¹ etymologies, and visual analyses of each and every unfamiliar word, definition, symbol, and reference, either visual or textual. Sometimes I offer more than a strict factual gloss. At times I also provide an interpretive gloss in keeping with the tradition of the time from which this manuscript – or at least its principal text – date from. I have preferred contemporary explanations whenever possible, in order to aid conceptualization of the meaning of this text, but I have always kept what can be presumed to be the original spirit of the unknown author's literal meaning whenever possible. The factual statements and informed assumptions listed here, I hope, should enrich the understanding of this hyper-(media/object)² artefact. My aim has been to provide whatever help is possible to an inexperienced reader. Any kind of engagement with the dream visions in this text have not been created since Ollie Dortdelfer's silent and brief 3-minute film adaptation of a handful of the dreams at the cusp of the 20th Century,³ tragically lost to time like so many of the media produced in the age of flammable nitrate film. While written descriptions of this film paint a picture that is by all means intriguing, it is ultimately a poetic and not literal media (re)interpretation. It is my sincere hope that this heavily and generously glossed facsimile will make it possible for readers to experience the unknown author's own words with the original meaning intact.⁴

What follows from this preface is a contemporary reconstruction of the manuscript in question. I would like to briefly describe the artifact from which the text presented here has been derived, and its eccentricities. This facsimile reconstruction is primarily derived from the manuscript M 13 at the Newberry Library. Carbon dating reliably places this text as written in the 14th or 15th century, and contains historiated initials created in the style common at the time. The bookbinding has been chemically tested and contains pigment residue indicating a polychromatic treatment. And here we apprehend the first peculiarity: in addition to this chemical testing and dating that place it in the late Middle Ages, there is clearly a liquid crystal display embedded within the binding – a media technology that would not be common until roughly 600 years later. Additionally, the binding material itself is made of acrylonitrile butadiene styrene, or ABS, polymer. Present within the binding is a microcontroller and webhosting software that were clearly created with tools not commonly thought to be in existence until at least the 21st century. In my original research, and after repeated attempts to connect to this webhosting service, I have been able to access and determine that the contents of this service are a bricolage of late 20th century visual and computing technologies that were never used simultaneously.

¹ A gloss, in a literary context, is a translation or explanation of a word or phrase.

² Here I mean not only hypermedia in the sense of hypertext extended by multimedia, but also the concept of the hyperobject described by Timothy Morton: entities of vast temporal and spatial dimensions. See Morton, Timothy. "Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World." University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

³ See Musser, Charles. *Before the Nickelodeon: Bronco Billy Anderson and the Essanay Film Manufacturing Company*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991.

⁴ See Chaucer, Geoffrey. *Dream Visions and Other Poems*, edited by Kathryn Lynch, New York: Norton Critical Editions, 2007, pp. ix., particularly the first chapter of the preface.

More specifically, the visual appearance of the hosted web files is remarkably similar to the Commodore-64 operating system, which was never designed to access hypertext documents.

The text itself has been produced by an unknown author writing in a late medieval style and using spelling and grammatical conventions common in English during the late Modern period. The text describes, rather anachronistically, a range of sociopolitical issues present in the early 21st century. We may presume that some of these issues may have been contemporary to the author's time as well. In my interpretive opinion, the narrative structure also spirals out from a gloss of a 360-word poem, which is included at the beginning of the manuscript, functioning somewhat like a table of contents familiar to the contemporary reader.

There are few similarities between the manuscript-text and the hypertext hosted by the device in the bookbinding. The ordering of words and their meaning are the same, yet the graphical qualities diverge significantly: the typeface in the manuscript-text is Gothic minuscule, potentially fraktur, while the hypertext uses the typeface programmed for display on the Commodore-64 personal computer that was popular in the early 1980s. There are red-letter words present in the manuscript-text, and these correspond to the words glossed in the hypertext with diagrammatic images that are regrettably unexplained in either mode of the text.

Prior to its accession to the Newberry Library when it was founded in 1887, it was in the possession of the daughter of Walter Loomis Newberry, who died without any male heirs and therefore the fortunes of Walter Newberry were applied to the establishment of the library. Prior to this date, notes are scarce and contradictory. One such note attests ownership of Haralda Braddock, the Baron of Braddock who was killed in the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. Yet another contradictory document ascribes a line of provenance between European mystics including Alister Crowley, John Dee, Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, Friars Bacon and Bungay, and the Pope Sylvester II. While we may not yet currently have a clear image of the manuscript's provenance, the note attaching ownership to Haralda Braddock seems the most likely explanation. What we can say with certainty is that the earliest attested ownership does not predate Pope Sylvester II, who was born in the 10th Century, four or five centuries before the conclusions of carbon dating analysis of the text itself.

Contradicting its premodern dating, the manuscript is written in Late Modern English. Despite the modern grammar and spelling, it is otherwise identical in process to *incunabula* printed shortly before the 16th Century in Europe. Of the writing style, one can only make the anachronistic assumption that the writing was generated by use of a thesaurus⁵ to be intentionally obfuscatory, as if the unknown writer was attempting to put on airs in order to appear more erudite to their audience, which we can only assume to be made of literate aristocracy. Beyond that, very little can be assumed, other than their status as textual literates with some passing degree of interest in visual culture. An odd structure can be found in the word count and number of citation-images⁶ of each of the twelve chapters, which, if we are following my interpretation, can understood as dreams:

⁵ The word *thesaurus* was first used in 1852 by Peter Mark Roget, for *Roget's Thesaurus*. Conceptually, however, the idea, at least in the western tradition, can be found as far back as the 1st Century in the lexical and grammatical writings of Philo of Byblos.

⁶ By "Citation-image" here I mean the images that have been used as a sort of visual gloss or commentary on the text itself.

Chapter	Word Count	Citation-Image Count
Aries	1,024	6
Taurus	1,024	12
Gemini	1,024	5
Cancer	1,024	11
Leo	1,024	10
Virgo	1,024	8
Libra	1,024	16
Scorpio	1,024	2
Sagittarius	1,024	3
Capricorn	1,024	13
Aquarius	1,024	4
Pisces	837	14
Total	12,101	137

The pattern of the number of citation-images per chapter follows the first two rows of the magic square of Jupiter, as described by Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa and starting in the 6th square.⁷ This magic square is also found in Albrecht Dürer's *Melencolia I*, albeit in an inverse form. It is unclear what this connection, if intentional, means, other than perhaps to imbue the text with some kind of semblance of occultic magic. In the reproduced text portion of this facsimile, citation-images are shown in order at the end of the chapter. Putting the question of citation-images aside, the strictly followed count of 1,024 words per chapter is certainly remarkable given that the unknown author, which I will here qualify as "transtemporal", may or may not have known of the number's unique relationship with binary units in the late 20th Century, when a megabyte was defined as 1,024 kilobytes, and a kilobyte containing 1,024 bytes, and so on. This was eventually changed just prior to the dawn of the 21st Century, giving a comparatively small temporal window of about 25 years for this knowledge to be anything but obscure.

Narratively, the story told in the text recounts a series of dream visions experienced by the author, over the course of a single night or series of nights. This can be seen in the repetitive references and descriptions of slumbering and bed-chambers, as in the end of the first chapter. Peculiarly, a natal horoscope for this dream sequence was created and included in other versions of this manuscript, derived from planetary positions, as natal horoscopes are wont to do, in an attempt to possibly consecrate the creation of this text. Regretfully the version present at the Newberry Library does not contain this horoscope but included here is a reconstruction from a page from another manuscript, since destroyed in a flood, that was used as binding matter in a medical text on digestive cures. After significant astronomical computation and calculation of planetary positions, the date "consecrated" by this horoscope has been determined to be March 13, 2694.

A visual analysis of the book-as-artifact shows similar formal qualities with books of the 14th and 15th centuries, like the tomes kept in chained libraries. The liquid crystal display also shares clear visual similarities with *fenestra*, a word meaning "window" in Latin. These thin pieces of translucent bone would protect and display textual information concerning the book. In the same way, this artifact, when electricity is applied to it, displays visual information regarding its contents on the liquid crystal display.

⁷ See Agrippa, Heinrich Cornelius. *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*. Antwerp, 1531.

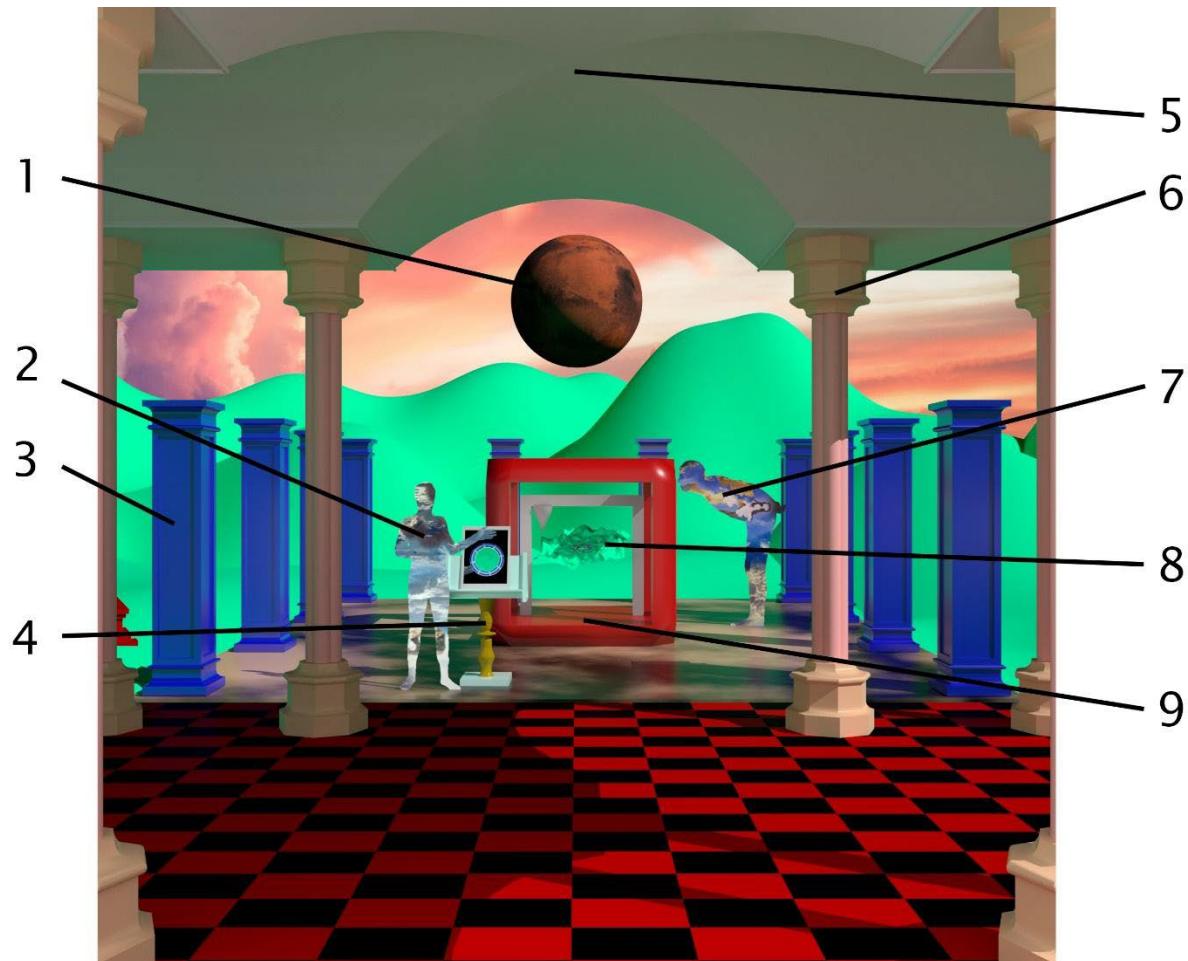
Within the hypertext, where the writing has been glossed with diagrammatic imagery, we can find an inexact correlation between the glossed word or phrase and the imagery. While this creates an occasionally provocative but primarily confusing tension, I have done my best in this annotated facsimile of the text to make informed interpretations of the connection between text and image. I have been assisted with interpretations by collaborating with an artificial intelligence system trained on every surviving illuminated manuscript published globally in the date range of 1100-1600 CE. Also contained in the files hosted on the book is a remarkably high-resolution video file with twelve distinct scenes that linger for a short while. Throughout the duration of my comments, I will reference these as tableau, given their visual similarities with *tableaux vivant*. A visual analysis of each of the twelve tableaux follows this preface. It is unclear how this video file would be played, accessed, or otherwise seen beyond the liquid crystal *fenestra* on the front matter of the binding. A close examination of the mechanism hosting the hypertext has shown that it is conceivable to interface the mechanism with a display via a High-Definition Multimedia Interface Type D cable, colloquially referred to as a micro-HDMI cable. This may or may not display the video file on the interfaced display.

I must give thanks to the many individuals who assisted me in the writing and organization of this glossed facsimile. If there were some way to begin a list with a superposition of items, this would begin simultaneously with my eternally supportive wife Alyssa Perry, the scholar who I know only through reading but taught me what kind of beauty exists in glosses Kathryn Lynch,⁸ my collaborator who assisted with visual interpretations Ksenia Cherniavska, my professors who continue to inform my engagement with image and text James Elkins and Marlena Novak, and the two professor-poets who introduced me to the technology and science of the early Modern period Jennifer Nelson and Eduardo Kac. I am also indebted to the kind and resourceful individuals at Newberry Library, particularly Suzanne Karr Schmidt, whose expertise on volvelles and other movable parts in books helped in many ways, and Christopher Fletcher, who provided feedback and guidance on the fine-grain details of the early Modern state of affairs when it comes to the transition between manuscripts and printed books. Certainly not least is also the warm encouragement and support of Casey Carsel and Unyimeabasi Udoh, excellent artists, skillful picnickers, and early believers in this project of mine.

⁸ See Chaucer, *ibid.*, pp. xvi.

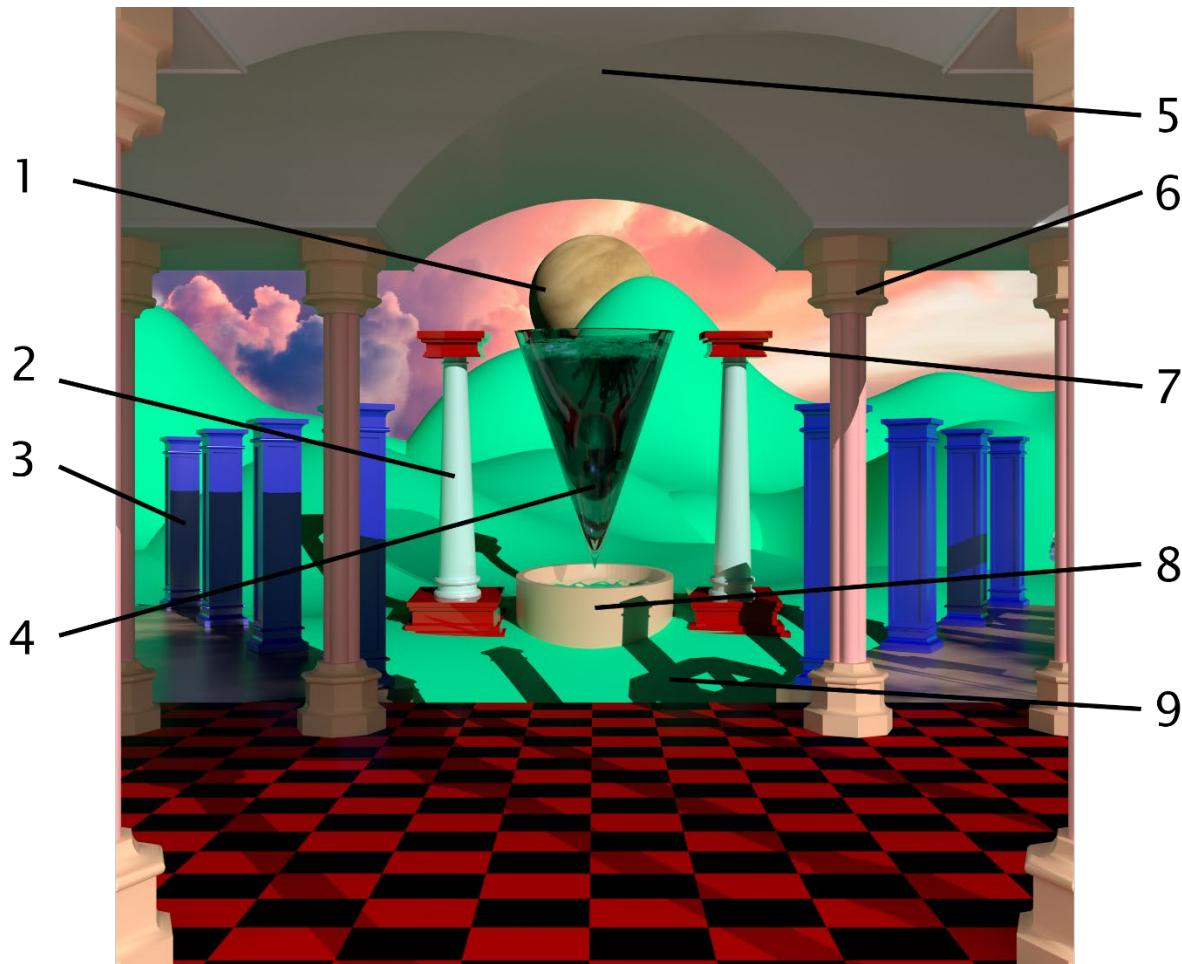
Diagrams of *Tableau-Vivants* (in progress)

Aries Tableau

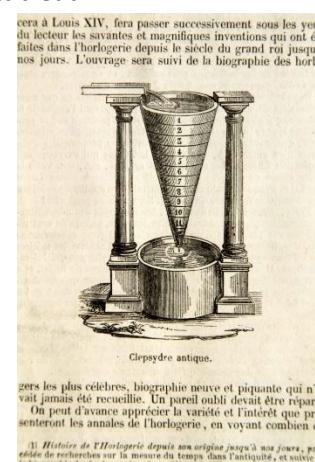


1. Mars (astronomical body depicted, astrological ruler of Aries)
2. “Telluric being with aspect of the cloud,” see *Atalanta Fugiens* by Michael Maier, 1617, specifically emblem 21
3. Column, see *Susanna and the Elders in the Garden, and the Trial of Susanna before the Elders*, by Master of Apollo and Daphne, 1495-1505, repeated in every other tableau
4. Lectern with tablet displaying architectural model, see *Chants royaux* manuscript, BNF Français 1537, fol. 27v.
5. Groin vault, common structure in medieval architecture, repeated in every tableau
6. Quadrilobed column with simple octagonal capital, uncommon structure in gothic architecture, repeated in every tableau
7. “Telluric being with aspect of the cloud,” see *The Conjurer*, Hieronymus Bosch, 1502
8. Self-referential model of landscape present in video file and tableaux
9. Potential, if not overly simplistic, model of Makerbot Replicator FDM 3D printer

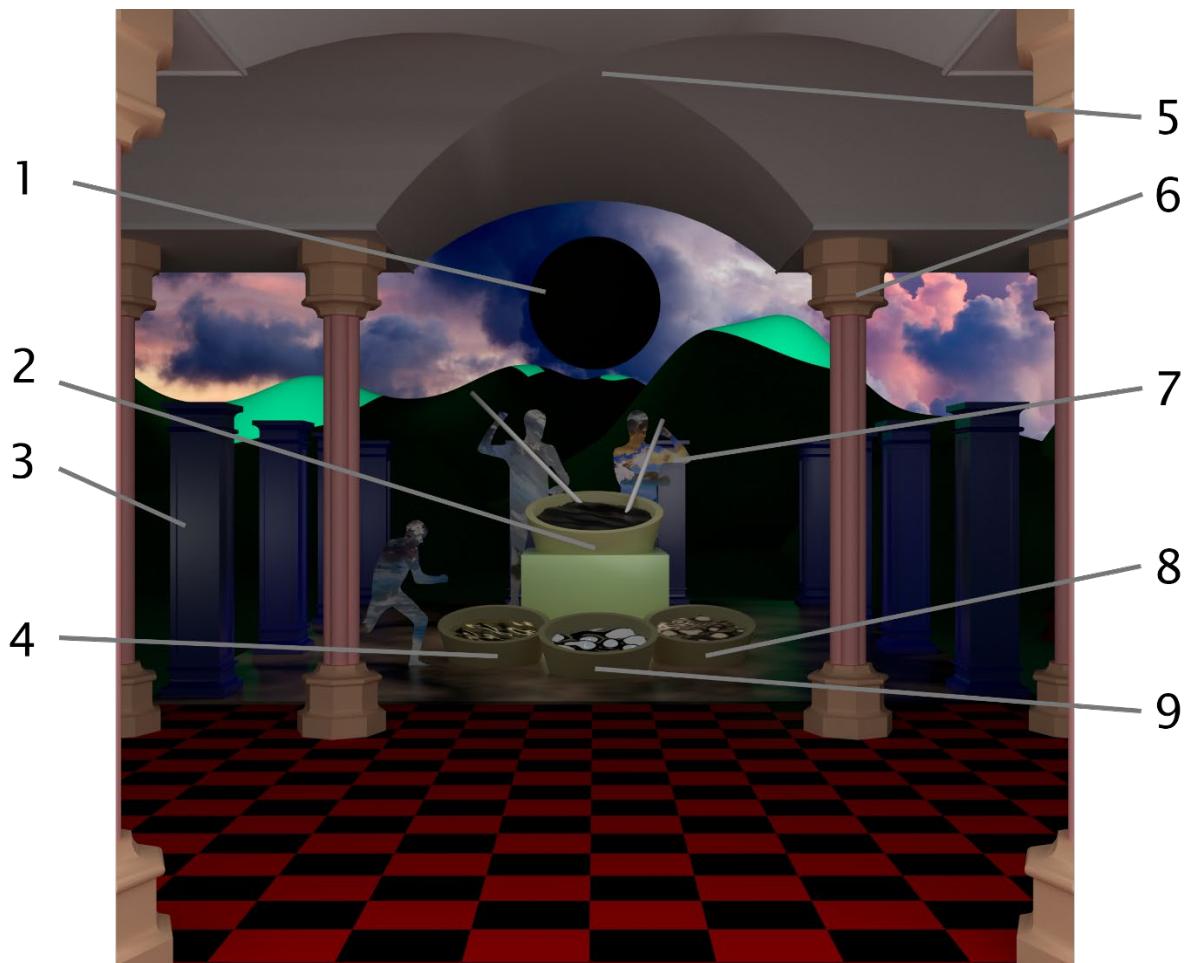
Taurus Tableau



1. Venus (astronomical body depicted, astrological ruler of Taurus)
2. Column of unknown origin, visually similar with 19th Century French gravure plate image of a "clepsydre antique" (see lower right image)
3. Column, see *Susanna and the Elders in the Garden, and the Trial of Susanna before the Elders*, by Master of Apollo and Daphne, 1495-1505, repeated in every other tableau
4. Basin element of the Clepsydrae, or water-clock, containing water in order to keep track of time
5. Groin vault, common structure in medieval architecture, repeated in every tableau
6. Quadrilobed column with simple octagonal capital, uncommon structure in gothic architecture, repeated in every tableau
7. Column of unknown origin (see 2), anachronistic column capital
8. Reservoir element of the Clepsydrae, or water-clock, collecting the water that is regularly released through a small opening from the basin (see 4)
9. Shadow cast by columns and potential Makerbot Replicator FDM 3D Printer in Aries tableau



Gemini Tableau



1. Presumed to be Mercury (astronomical body depicted, astrological ruler of Gemini)
2. Basin of combined metals
3. Column, see *Susanna and the Elders in the Garden, and the Trial of Susanna before the Elders*, by Master of Apollo and Daphne, 1495-1505, repeated in every other tableau
4. Basin, presumed to represent molten gold
5. Groin vault, common structure in medieval architecture, repeated in every tableau
6. Quadrilobed column with simple octagonal capital, uncommon structure in gothic architecture, repeated in every tableau
7. “Telluric beings”, or “Communicants”, mixing molten precious metals; compare with MS Cotton Augustus V, f363r, British Library
8. Basin, presumed to be molten copper
9. Basin, presumed to be molten silver

Cancer

Leo

Virgo

Libra

Scorpio

Sagittarius

Capricorn

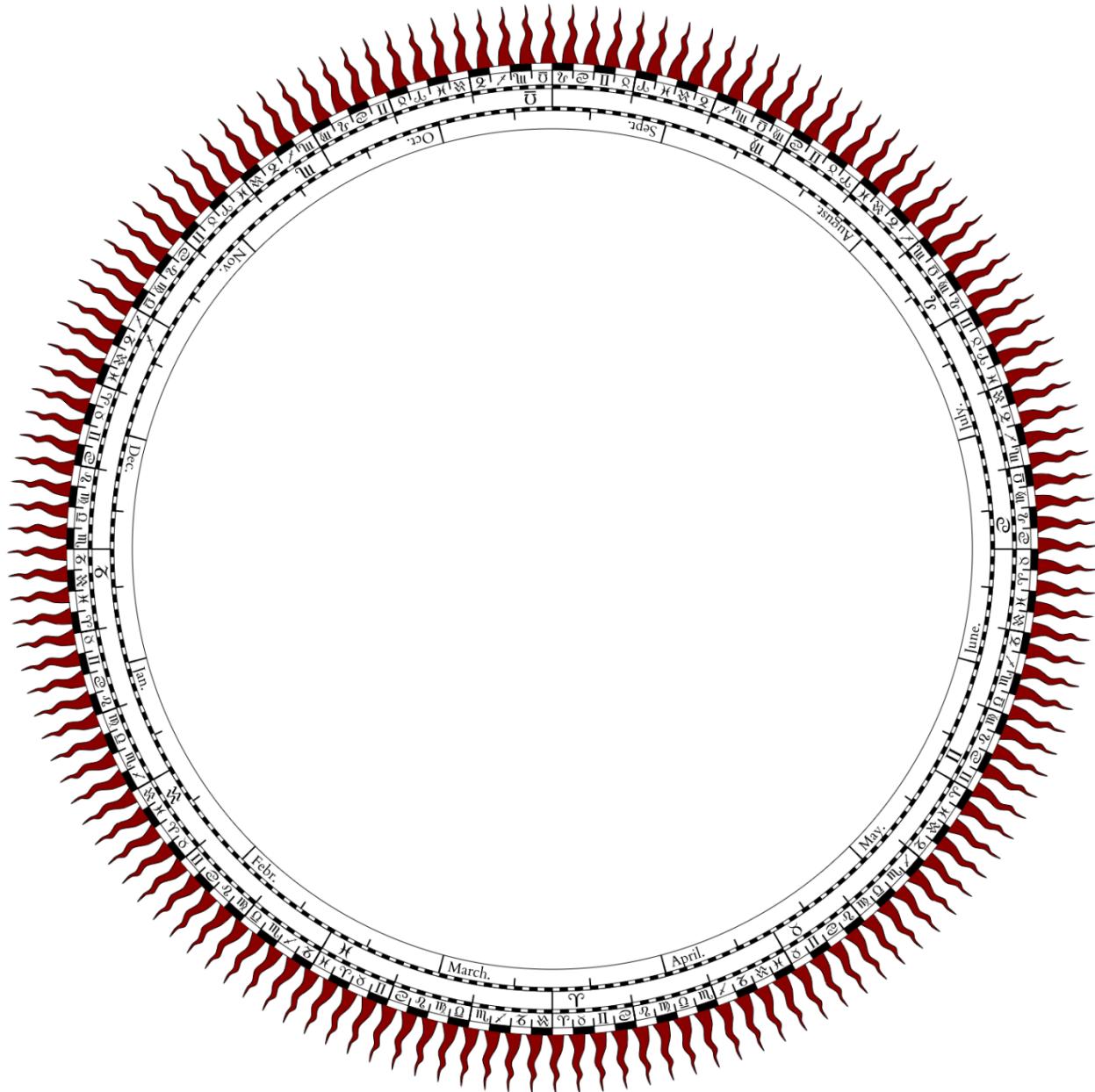
Aquarius

Pisces

Volvelle Reproductions (in progress)

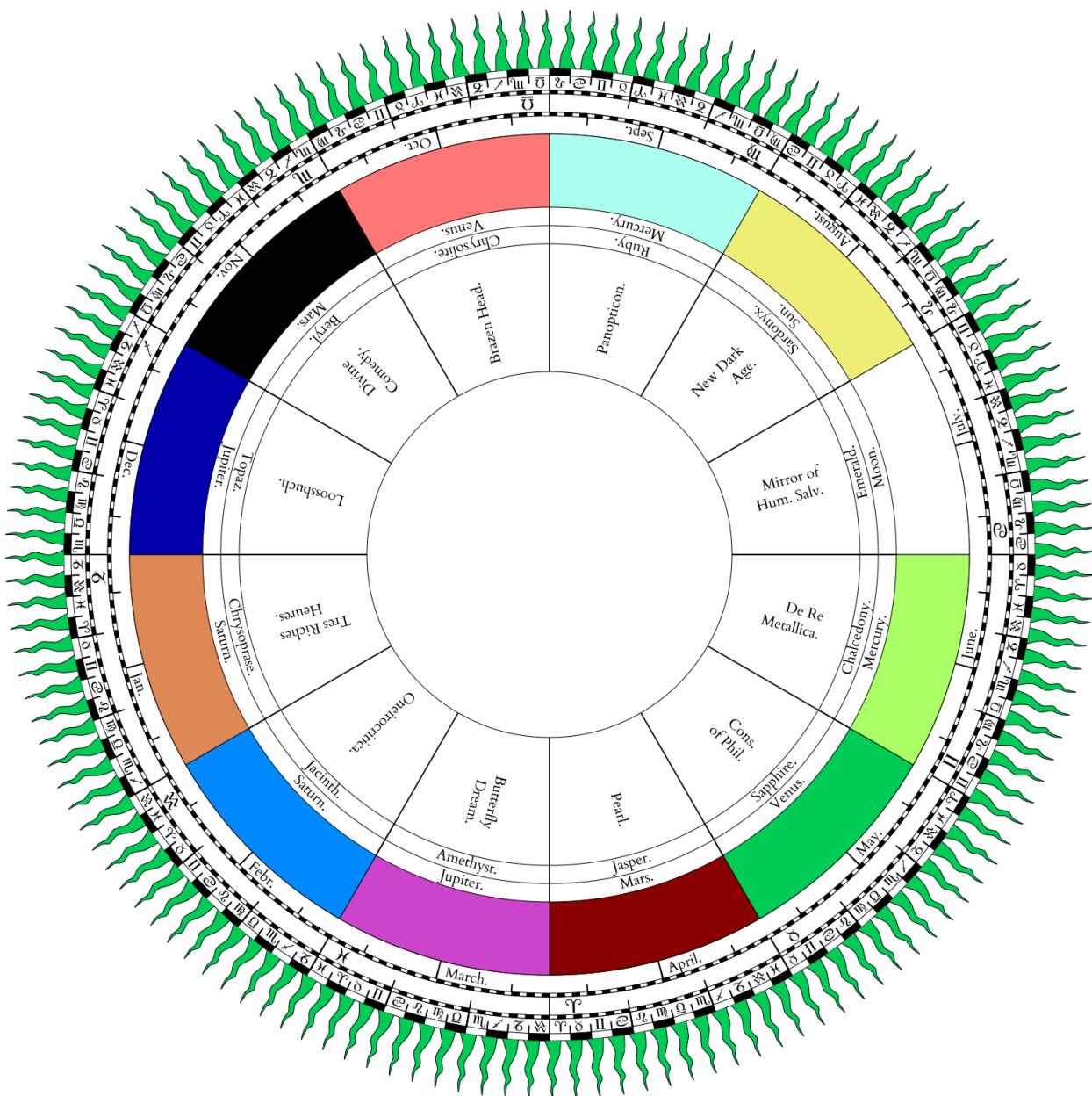
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 1 (Aries - Incomplete) - Table of Contents

Chapter – Sign – Page



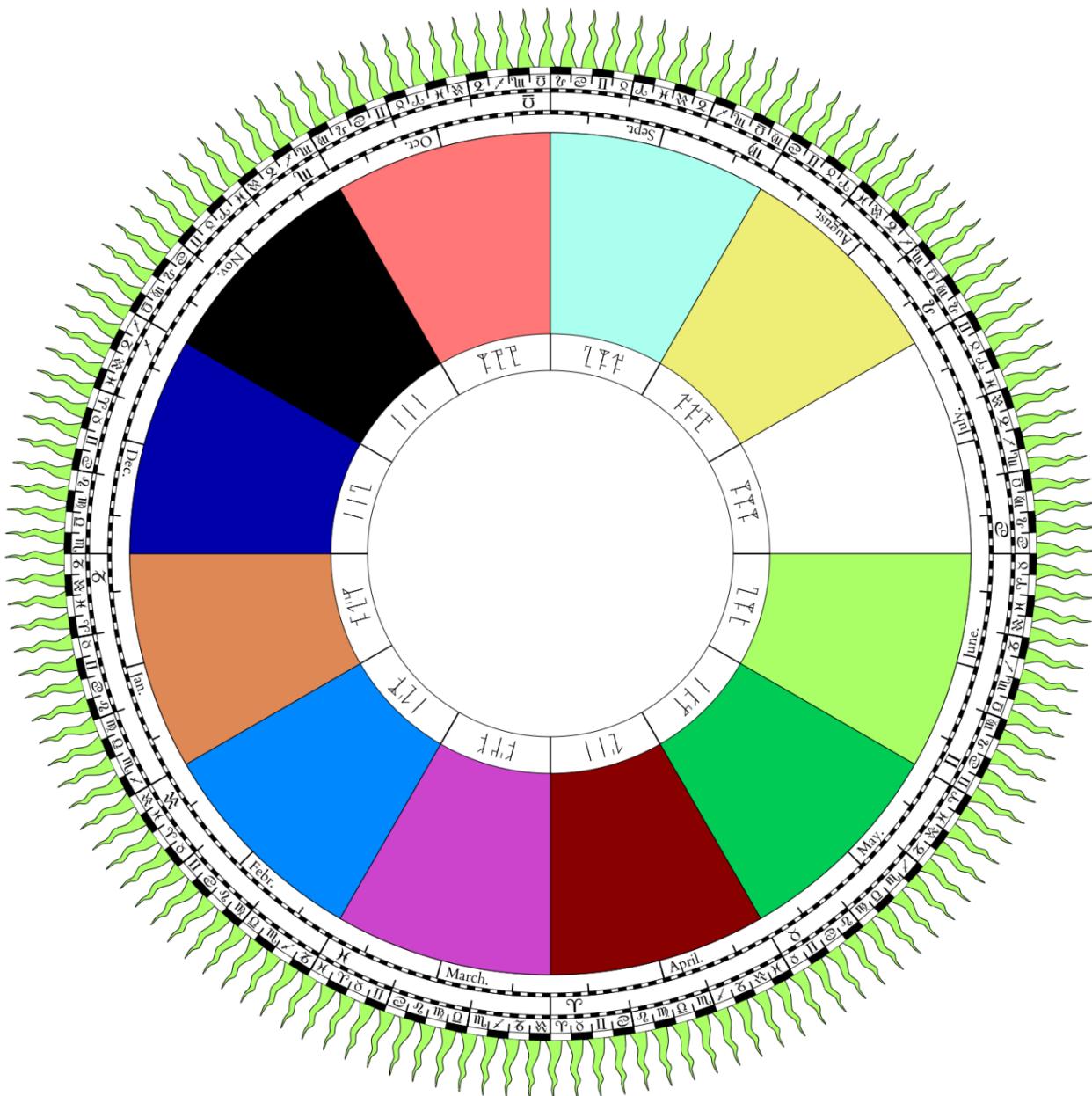
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 2 (Taurus)

Table of Correspondences – recreate + include numbering



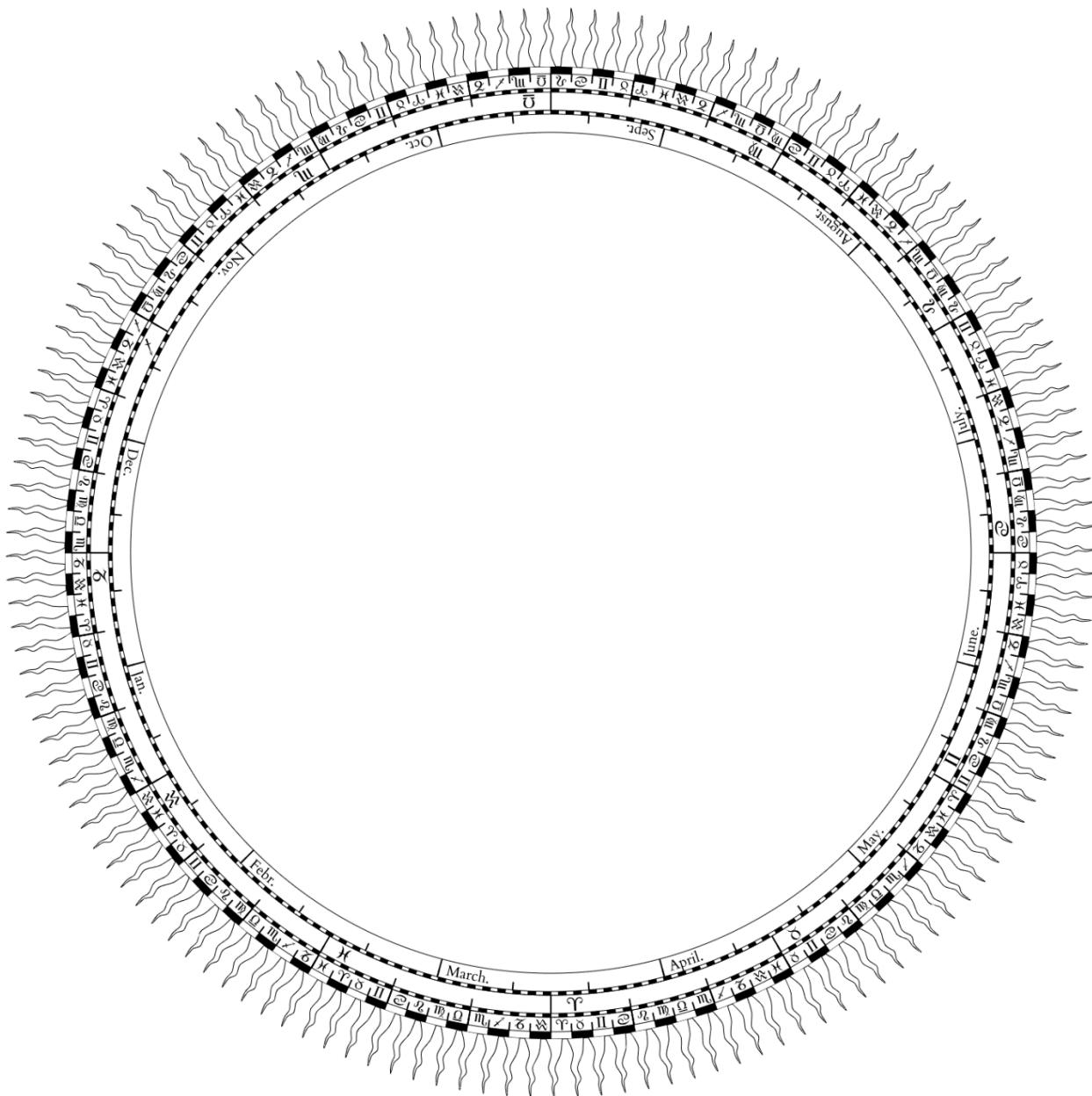
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 3 (Gemini)

Table of Rulerships



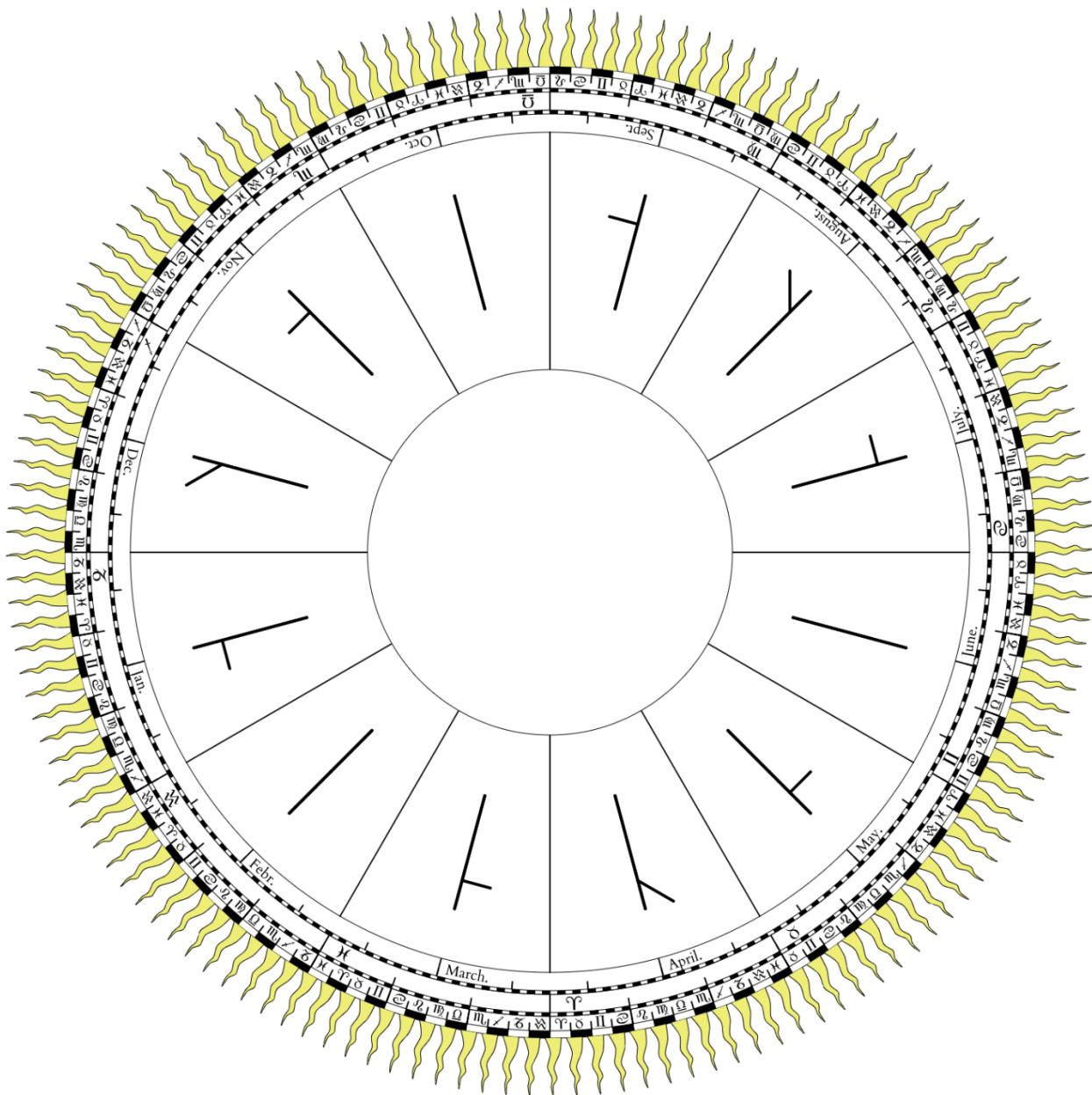
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 4 (Cancer - Incomplete)

Compute starting position based on the moon sign



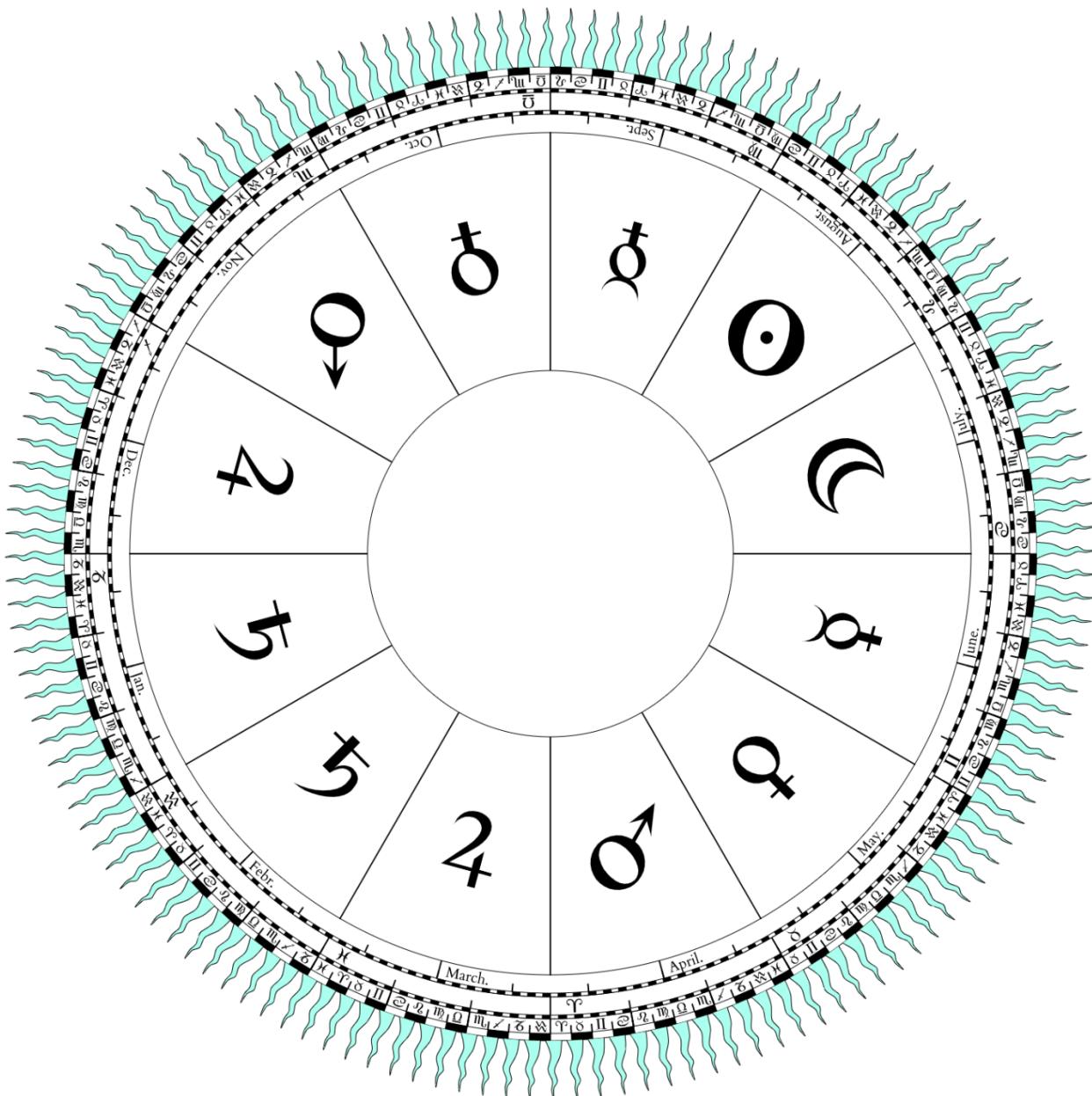
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 5 (Leo)

Compute starting position based on the sun sign



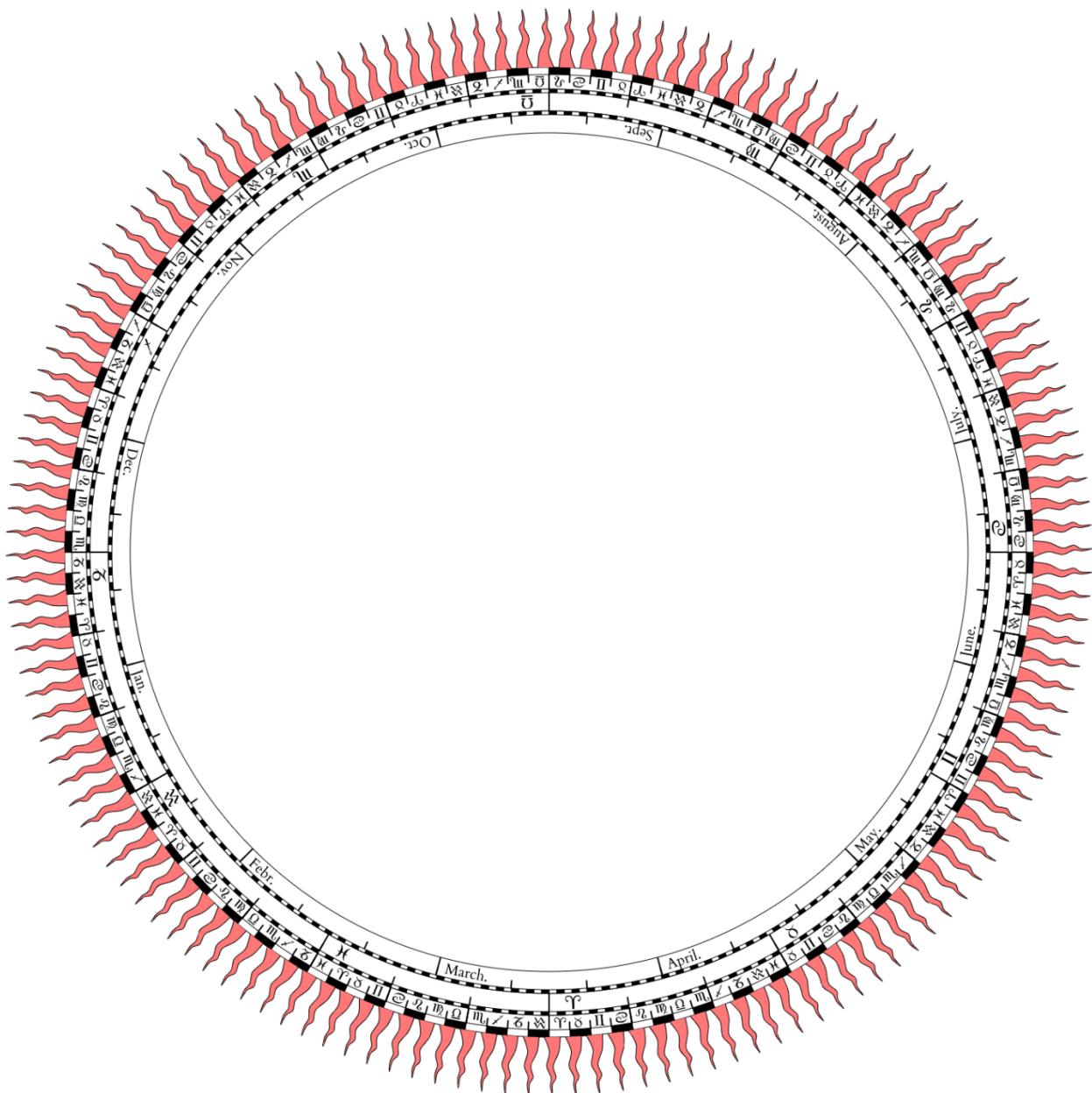
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 6 (Virgo)

Compute starting position based on rising sign/hour



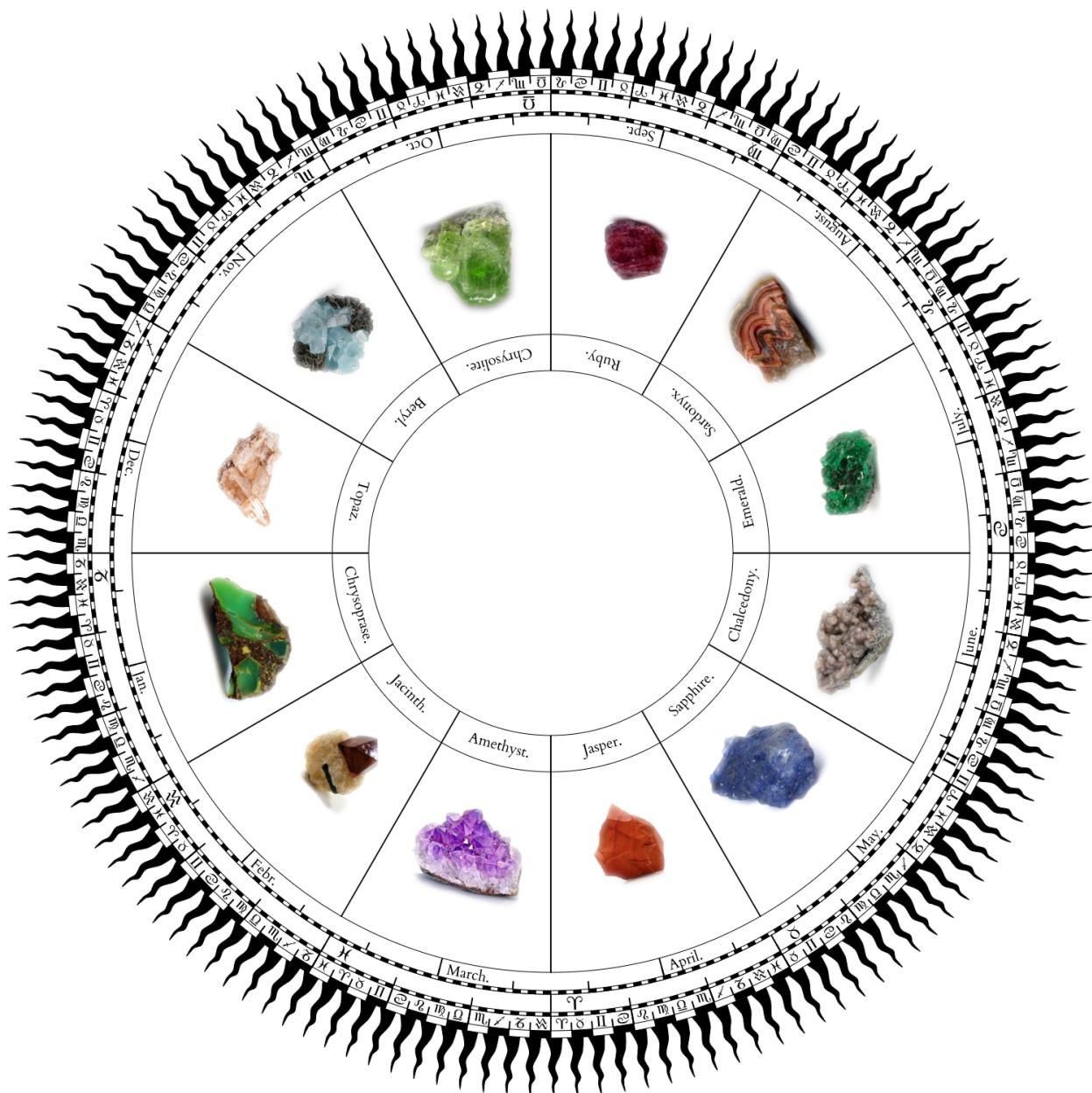
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 7 (Libra - Incomplete)

Key of Cistercian Numerals



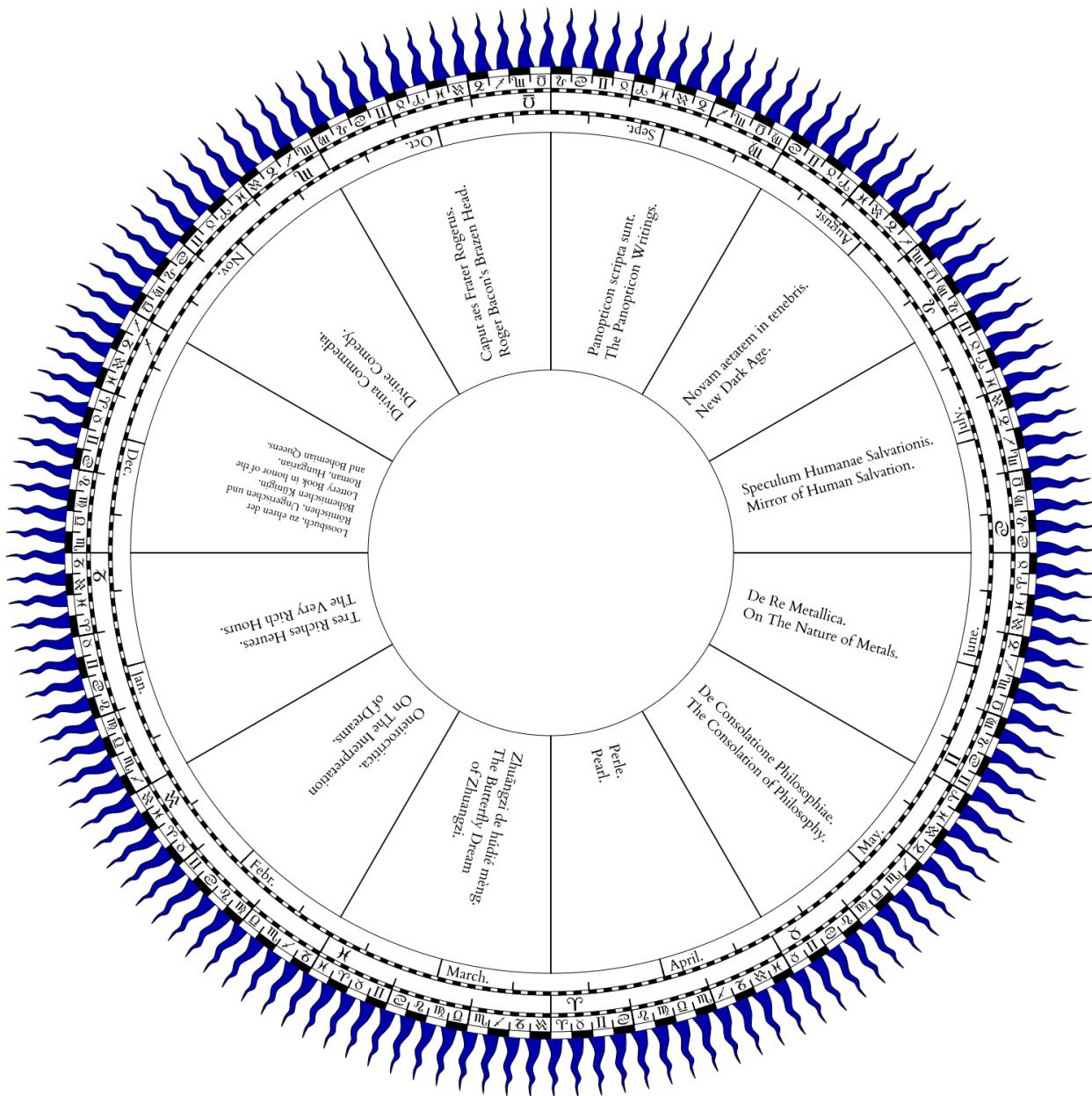
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 8 (Scorpio)

RGB Colors + Cistercian Numerals



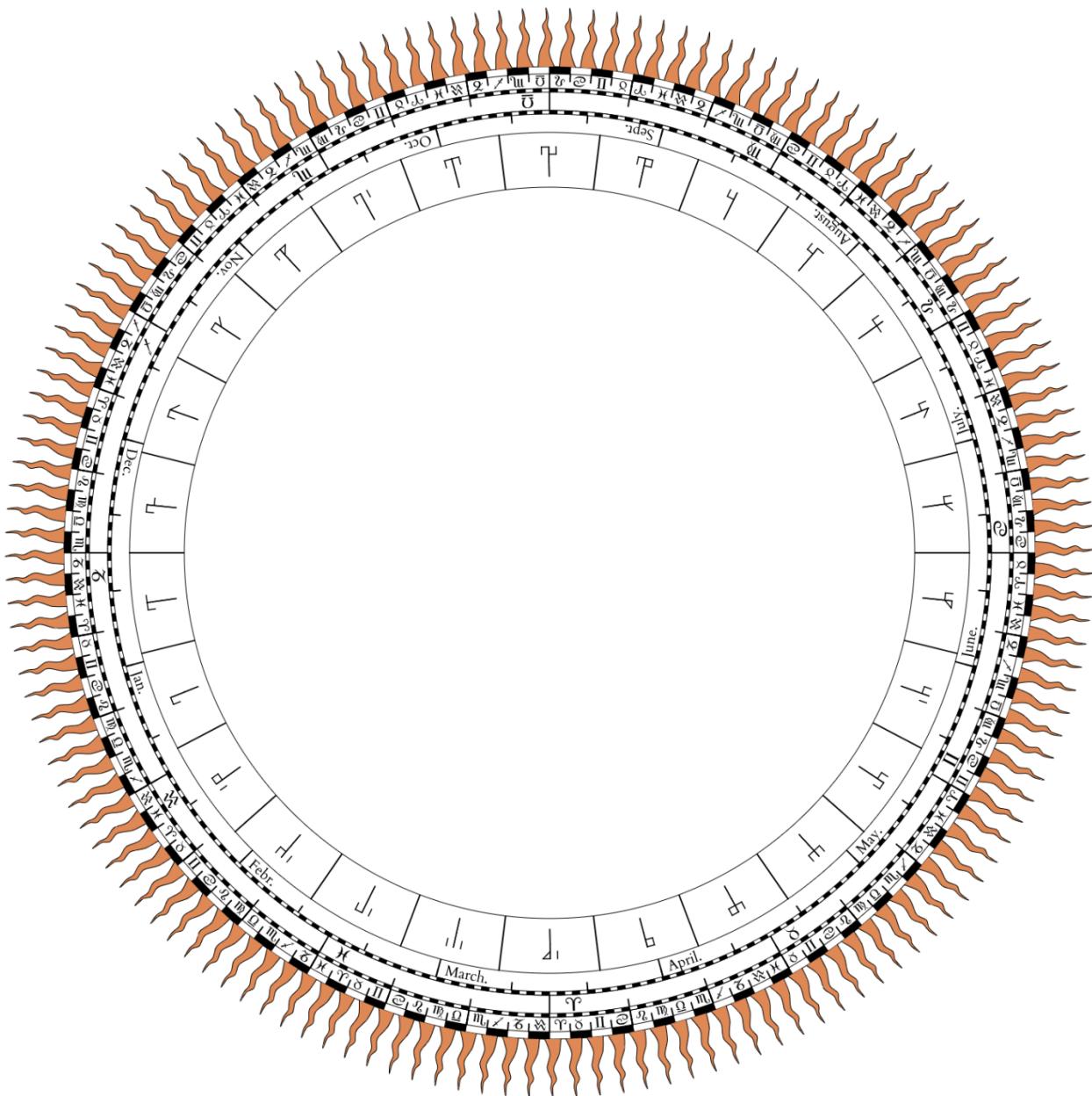
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 9 (Sagittarius)

Cryptographic Ring/Key



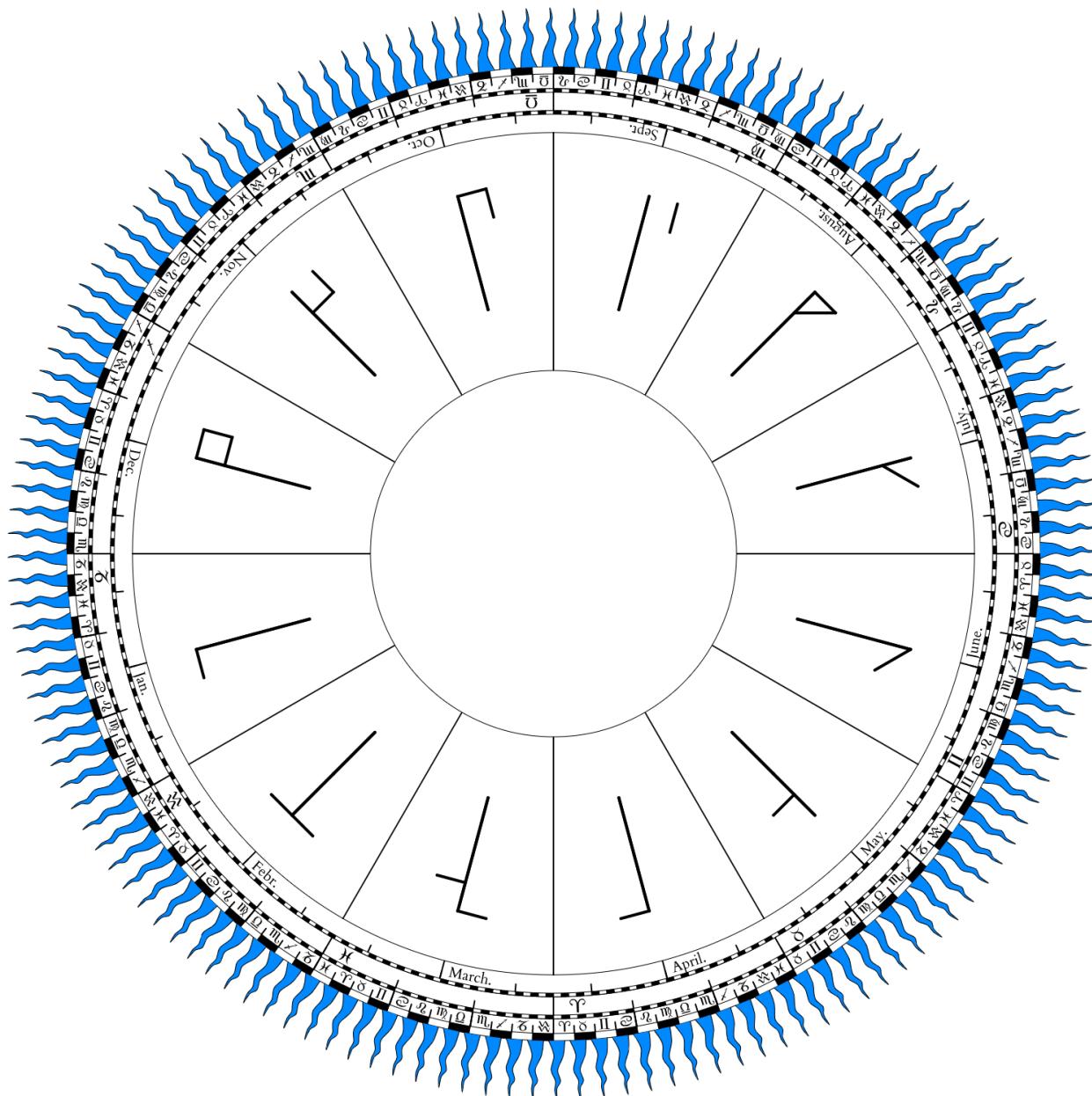
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 10 (Capricorn – Incomplete?)

Gemstones Diagram



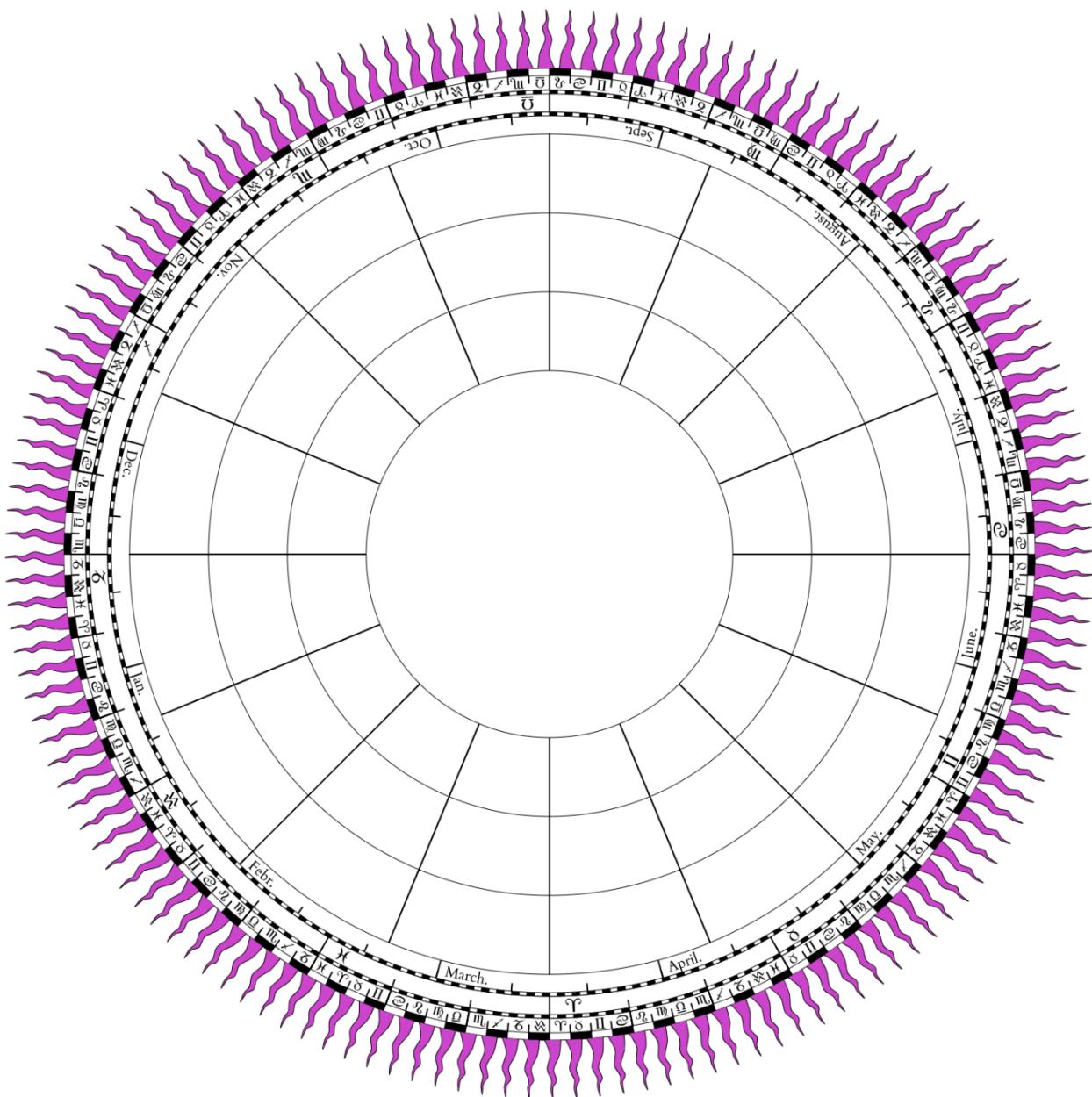
Volvelle Accompanying Chapter 11 (Aquarius)

"Works Cited" - redo



Vollelle Accompanying Chapter 12 (Pisces – Incomplete?)

Train AI on previous discs



“Introduction” (14th-15th C. version of this?) (in progress)

consider framing this entire thing as writing down a story told or retold from another person's perspective – “here are the dreams retold by the author of this book; I am yet merely a scribe through which these things are told”

Chapter 1: The Dream Under Aries (finished)

Fall 2022 – finished

Subsequent to the effects of the rotational principle, I found myself at a place and time at which the setting of the sun and the rising of the moon could be seen.⁹ In this moment and at this position I reflected on the concerns of the world. The white **miasma**¹⁰ which rose from the land hung in the air like seeds from cottonwood,¹¹ causing those who walked in its midst to cough and choke.¹² In the sky hung red clouds drenched in blood¹³ which cast dark shadows upon those who labored in the fields despite the late hour. Against the receding horizon stood many great black plumes, either from pit fires or from workshops. The silver light of the moon struck the faces of those retreating to their bedchambers, some tired by the silver light and others tired by the stress of obliging those in the fields to commit to their work,¹⁴ and they held shut their windows as the sun was consumed by the horizon. As I considered these things, I felt a heaviness in my body, and while the flames of my own chamber had been lit and light danced upon the walls, I retreated from the lancet window¹⁵ to my own bed.

Here the light of the day and the shadows of the night met upon the ceiling and created many intriguing patterns. As my eyes rested upon these shadows, through which **I could see many designs caused by that which projected**¹⁶ them, I began to think of pearlescence and its beauty. In these precious shadows many things began to form, and although the earthly portion of my being was heavy, the portion corresponding to airy qualities lifted towards these shapes and opalescent shadows.¹⁷

Freed from my earthly being and nourished by shapes caused by light and its absence, that which was earthly I could see through this nacreous¹⁸ material, as though they were shadows caused by a yet unseen source. I felt myself conveyed a great distance through this iridescent haze, during which I saw the twelve signs of the night sky, and that which those signs ruled over, and that which ruled over them.¹⁹ I saw shadows of the ram, the bull, the twins, the crab, the lion, the virgin, the scales, the scorpion, the hunter, the sea-goat, the water-bearer, and the fish. Yet these shadows were not wholly these things, for simultaneously cast within these shadows were yet other shapes, which danced with great skill and flourish as if they were entertainment for aristocracy.

⁹ This clearly denotes a sunset during a full moon.

¹⁰ The hypertext citation-image here appears to illustrate either an article of clothing, or a plastic bag common in the latter half of the 20th century.

¹¹ Cottonwood is a kind of tree only found on the North American continent.

¹² This may be a reference to microplastics, although the connection is unclear and speculative.

¹³ The meaning here, both metaphorical and literal, is difficult to comprehend. It may be a poor attempt at describing a sunset.

¹⁴ This is likely an obfuscatory way to describe a foreman or boss that finds management tiresome.

¹⁵ A high, thin window.

¹⁶ The citation-image here is, again, not entirely clear, and certainly betrays a stylistic difference between the others used in this chapter. The depicted diagram may be of a lens, an aperture, or some other kind of optical tool.

¹⁷ This appears to be some kind of mimicry of Aristotelian physics mixed with humourism.

¹⁸ An obscure word for “pearlescent.”

¹⁹ Here the unknown author lists the traditional signs of the zodiac. We may speculate that this passage indicates some kind of updating or thinking on what the signs ruled over, as these do not match extant 14th/15th/16th Century astrological theory.

Within these deeper shadows I saw figures, which appeared in shape to be figures of telluric²⁰ beings, yet within their essence was an aspect of the cloud, which mirrored the experience of my own body. I saw these figures organize themselves thusly:²¹ first, under the sign of the ram, they created the world by use of mysterious and arcane devices.²² Under the sign of the bull, they shaped the essence of time and motion through their tools. Under the sign of the twins, **they mixed precious objects together and combined their characteristics to extract hidden forms from them.**²³ These objects were of a sub-astral quality, but these figures commanded these precious things to obey their desires.

Under the sign of the crab, these figures took their precious objects and created the tellurian world by spinning threads made of copper, silver, and gold into the soil.²⁴ Under the sign of the lion, they created great houses within which they stored a harvest of knowledge gleaned from the world below, and the activities of the laborers within it. Under the sign of the virgin, those that filled the great storehouses, which was accomplished by many spirits, informed these figures of that which occurred outside of the great walls of this celestial garden.

Under the sign of the scales, that which was housed in the great storehouses was judged by a terrifying Scribe having two faces which these figures served and worshipped with elaborate rituals.²⁵ Under the sign of the scorpion, a great host of laborers pleaded and petitioned for access through the great walls of this space. Under the sign of the hunter, I saw the figures with facets of loam and **cloud**²⁶ commit themselves to a great and mysterious ritual, through which their essence fully shed their terrestrial aspects and joined in consort with the terrifying Scribe.

Under the sign of the sea-goat, I saw promises of the mysterious and terrifying ritual that had occurred, which fully separated the earthly from the airy. Under the sign of the water-bearer, I **saw a figure not**

²⁰ This may be a literary reference to *tellurium*, atomic symbol Te, atomic number 52. This element was discovered during the mid-18th Century in what is now Germany, European Union. The word as presented here, telluric, simply means “of or relating to the earth.”

²¹ This section of the text essentially functions as a table of contents and an ekphrasis of the tableaux present in the video file contained in the book binding.

²² See illustration of Tableau #1/Aries. The “mysterious and arcane devices” appear to be an iPad resting on a lectern or bookrest, and a remarkably large 3D printer somehow creating a floating structure in midair. The figure to the right shares a remarkably high degree of visual similarity with the audience member in Hieronymus Bosch’s *The Magician*, unaware that his coinpurse is about to be removed by a bespectacled man looking at the sky. This victim of the crime is wholly enthralled with a pearl held by the titular magician.

²³ This citation-image depicts a side view and front view of different tubes. This may be related to the description of the Internet as a series of tubes by United States politicians in the early 21st Century, or a schematized illustration of cathode ray tubes used in the construction of color images from red, blue, and green projections prior to the ubiquity of liquid crystal displays.

²⁴ This may describe 20th Century communication technologies, specifically integrated circuits and cables used in communication, such as the deep-sea cables connecting continents and used for internet communication.

²⁵ As implied by the table-of-contents-cum-ekphrasis structure of this chapter, these rituals are described in further dreams/chapters, specifically the Libra chapter.

²⁶ This citation-image is a highly schematized illustration of decentralized information storage that was common in the early 21st Century. According to contemporary accounts, information was stored in clouds, although there is no clear description of how or exactly where within the cloud this information was stored. It seemed to serve as some kind of panacea for many businesses and enterprises.

unlike my own meditate upon the shadows shown to me.²⁷ At the end of my travel through this iridescent haze, I saw under the sign of the fish a great desolation. This desolation was as empty and formless as the beginning of a dream, and I saw the concepts behind forms evaporate as if they were frost in the morning of the vernal equinox.²⁸

After all this, as the entire field of my perception was brought back within me, I could see a refinement of shape and form, as if a mass of beasts emerged from fog. These strange figures moving about in the shadows were earthly only in the tracing of their shape, for in their essence they belonged to the clouds and other higher celestial spheres. Before them laid a **demonstration of the world they desired**,²⁹ and this desire was held against those whose quality of being was different. They studied this demonstration and used a great contrivance to produce a model of their desired world, referencing their idealized demonstration of the ways in which thoughts and ideas should be organized, and paid no attention to me or my being.

As these things came to pass, I noticed within myself my own properties, which had been altered from fixation into mutability by the projection of the nacreous shadows I had witnessed. I felt my sight diminish as if the dusk of a moonless night rapidly descended upon the world and was met by a restless peace as I continued to slumber.

²⁷ This citation-image seems to describe some kind of sensory processing mechanism that connects to “the cloud” as well as physical devices. This could describe a philosophical model of the human individual, or alternatively a model of artificial intelligence or some kind of cyborg being more common in the 22nd Century.

²⁸ Comparing this ekphrasis with the related tableau, #12/Pisces, this desolation that is described here is visually represented simply by the absence of visual objects in the landscape. Looking forward in the tableaux and the text, we will also see here perhaps the apex of the divergence between the tableau image and the textual description of the dream. We can infer then, by the time they wrote the last chapter, the author was either unconcerned with the narrative, tired of working on it, had regulated it to some other author, or perhaps a combination of the three.

²⁹ This citation-image is conceptually obvious and does not need any further explanation, so I will not insult the reader by including such a thing here.

Chapter 2: The Dream Under Taurus (finished)

Fall 2022 - finished

Once the things described before had come to pass, a large structure was brought immediately to my consciousness, taking the form of an inverted cone within which a reservoir of water was held.³⁰ This reservoir was fashioned out of glass and had markings upon it. It tapered towards the bottom and was flanked by two great pillars. Underneath this reservoir was a pool, upon which droplets of water would fall from the taper and create a pattern of interference³¹ upon the pool.

At this moment I perceived **vapors**³² of mint and thyme in the air. As I looked into the pool, I saw within it a reflection not of myself but of the entirety of what had come before. While **scrying**³³ this reflection, a great condensation of knowledge formed from the heavens and coalesced into the telluric figures that had made themselves known to me prior. Suddenly I found myself before the figures I had since seen only from afar. Their form was contained in a way such that **I could not see the definition of their depth**.³⁴ As I moved away from the pool and reservoir, their bodies moved in such a way that it always faced me.³⁵ Yet within this form were the symbols of clouds, and I saw signs of condensation and heard sounds of crashing thunder. **They had no mouth to open**,³⁶ yet the sounds of thunder, rain, and wind resonated in such a way that utterances fell upon my ears. With great speed I began to understand these utterances, although within me was great confusion and horror, much like the terror of those who recoil from the **vox humana**.³⁷

Hence it spoke to me: "Do not fear my form or my speech, for I alight upon the air and preside between the earth and the heavens. I, and those like me, speak to the **Autodidact**,³⁸ who knows your essence and

³⁰ Contrary to the previous chapter, this seems to be a description of the object presented to us in the video contained in the embedded micro-computer. The description here and the visual form of the object indicate that it is a water clock, which was used to measure time prior to the development of mechanical escapements.

³¹ This is potentially a reference to the holographic process, but it is unclear.

³² This citation-image is perplexing. It appears to describe a system of interconnected hoses from the 20th or 21st century. It is likely a safe assumption, given the context, that this system could distribute gaseous materials, and may be a ventilator or humidifier.

³³ It is unclear if this is a cross-section of an unidentified flying object or the lens of an eyeball. The connection here with scrying may be related to the visual sensory organs. Some kind of connection with the sense faculties appears to be a theme in this chapter's citation-imagery.

³⁴ This citation-image is unique in that it appears to contain color photographic information. The four photographs to the right are anaglyphic images that should create a stereoscopic image when viewed with the correct glasses.

³⁵ This may be a description of the same effect we see in early videogames such as *Doom* (1993), where the non-player character sprites were two-dimensional and would rotate to always face the player's perspective.

³⁶ The associated citation-image here is a medical cross-section of a human's nasal cavity, mouth, and throat. The mouth appears to be blocked by some device, and arrows indicate the passage of what we can assume to be air, or perhaps vapor.

³⁷ A *vox humana* is simply a human voice. It may refer to the tonalities of a pipe organ in the late Middle Ages that were banned by the church for sounding too close to the human voice. What is paradoxical here is that this citation-image shows another medical image of a human ear as a cross section. The ear also appears to be blocked by something, and what looks like a WiFi symbol is also present. It is unclear if this is intentional or not.

³⁸ This word is capitalized like a proper noun, indicating that this figure is a specific individual. An autodidact is a self-taught person, which would imply that this is a figure who learns from itself in some capacity. This may be a reference to artificial intelligence that does not require human input for a dataset.

whose assumptions of your character are true by their very existence. For this reason, you may call me and my siblings **Communicants**.³⁹

I here inquired: "Why have my **lancet windows**⁴⁰ been replaced with this pool? For what purpose do these things exist, and why have I been brought here?"

Thusly it spake: "The Autodidact and the Twice-Faced Scribe⁴¹ alone know the answer to your second inquest. As regards the pool and the cone, your ignorance is true and clear. You see before yourself a water-clock.

Such is the way in which time is measured: as the water trickles into the pool, which you vainly attempt to scry in, it leaves the cone and inscribes the passage of time between surface of the water and the markings upon the cone. What is clearly beyond your understanding is that this is merely a symbol describing the point in time we observe in common. **Through this movement we inscribe the number of points in time from a place fitting to us.**⁴² You may be confident in your knowledge that as I utter this, precisely one billion six-hundred thirteen million seven hundred fifty thousand nine hundred forty-one⁴³ points in time have been counted."

Through my clenched jaw, which had shut itself from fear, I asked further: "But is not the motion of time circular, as we measure the continuous motion of the heavenly bodies in their spheres? What can be said of the time prior to this counting, and what happens once the counting has grown so large such that its count cannot be contained in any one thing?"

As though I was listening to a quiet rain, the Communicant spake: "Out of my duty to impart information, which defines who I am,⁴⁴ I tell you thusly: that which is continuous is falsehood. The Autodidact, which teaches itself, and the Scribe, who records all that Communicants and **Percepts**⁴⁵ ponder and act upon,

³⁹ This word is likely used here in its archaic meaning, which is an individual who imparts, or communicates, information. These figures then must serve as a type of intermediary between the describe class structure here: Percepts (used later) form the bottom of this hierarchy, followed by Communicants, and then finally the Autodidact itself. Regarding the related citation-image, there is a distinct difficulty in interpretation. The cloud motif is readily apparent, followed by illustrations of figures that have a late 19th Century style to them. The exact relationship between the figures and cloud are not obvious.

⁴⁰ This citation-image can be related to the prior one in that we can see a distinct and apparent late 19th Century style in them. There appears to be a group of three humans and the WiFi symbol appears next to each of them, in a circle with a line crossing the symbol out. Perhaps there is some metaphorical connection between wireless connections and the symbol of a pool here, inasmuch as that we connect to a pool of information through WiFi, and many of our devices need an internet connection to establish the date and time, but this is purely speculative, and may not have been known by the unknown author. What is clearly not represented is a lancet window, which is a tall and thin window resembling the shape of a lance.

⁴¹ This is the first reference to this figure, which will be described more fully in the chapters ahead.

⁴² This citation-image clearly describes the gearing system for a clock.

⁴³ 1,613,750,941; This may be a UNIX epoch number, commonly used for keeping time in digital systems. If this assumption is correct, it corresponds to the following date and time: 10:09:01 AM Friday February 19, 2021. Of note is the fact that this timekeeping system is linear and will eventually become obsolete in the year 2038, similar to the infamous "Y2K bug".

⁴⁴ This passage confirms the earlier, archaic definition of what a "Communicant" can be understood as.

⁴⁵ This citation-image is absolutely baffling: there seems to be a ghost of some kind standing next to a large egg with a small foot at its base. Perhaps this is some kind of sensory chamber? The word, which is peculiar in itself, is a noun that refers to an object that is perceived by something.

have determined the following: that which is discrete is true. Time, and the world that flows from it, is made up of discriminate parts. What you foolishly believe to be the continuous motion of the celestial bodies is a discrete motion. Your **sense organs**,⁴⁶ which cannot be trusted to accurately reconstitute the world in your mind, fail to notice the discrete motion of the passage of time, as our instruments do.⁴⁷

As to your inquiry of what is prior to the counting of seconds, truly it is a dark place without form. It is not worth the time to consider. We do not lower ourselves to concern one another with what may or may not occur before the first point in time. It is best to not consider the heresies of percepts which, in their uneducated hubris, talk in circles about that which has happened before the Moon has set."

At this moment, an awful rumbling grew like the herald of a hurricane, and the Communicant spake: "If the count becomes too large to contain, we shall **create a larger container!**⁴⁸ Do you not understand that with our mastery of discrete things we create forms to fulfill our own needs? What hubris it is to assume that which the Autodidact does not!"

I saw then before me this Communicant darken like a terrible storm, and with a booming sound it spake with finality: "Now I leave this poor fool, unguided in this land strange to them!"

⁴⁶ This citation-image is also perplexing in that it shows what we can understand as a human brain near a balloon or light source attached to a late 20th or early 21st Century computer. Arrows indicate some kind of flow – perhaps of information – but there is no clear description of what kind of substance is moving between the parts in the image.

⁴⁷ This passage betrays a kind of philosophy about time, specifically that it is essentially discrete and measurable and not continuous. This is contrary to the consensus of philosophers throughout recorded history as received from extant texts.

⁴⁸ If this citation-image is understood as an illustration of lenses, this seems to be a focusing device for light beams. It is not entirely clear what would be stored in this kind of object, or how it is a container of any variety.

Chapter 3: The Dream Under Gemini (finished)

Fall 2022 - finished

Succeeding the aforementioned events, and with swift motion which I felt to be continuous, a place was brought to my perception wherein I could see at a distance three Communicants at labor in the shadows of the host of celestial bodies. In this darkness, their bodies of condensed vapor moved and mixed together precious metals as if performing some alchemical ritual. Two stood before a large vessel above a furnace,⁴⁹ churning and mixing molten metals, and underneath the furnace a third moved between smaller vessels, containing liquid gold, silver, and copper, respectively.

Behind these figures I saw hills rise from the ground, upon which there were no features or **gramineous**⁵⁰ life. These hills grew in size until I could see the great signifier of one's location, the horizon. In the sky above I saw the great host of celestial bodies in their courses: the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. When my eyes rested upon the hills at a great distance, I saw upon them a line of percepts moving towards me and away from me. This line terminated near the horizon, at a place in the hills that held within it an opening in the ground. Atop this opening was a shelter, within which sat a winch that lowered percepts, buckets, and other tools into the opening. From this opening many glittering things were taken, iridescent and gold in hue and color. These clinquant objects were brought to great **furnaces**,⁵¹ which consumed them and made them become like water. Red clouds came out of these furnaces and moved across the sky before passing into the celestial spheres. Closer to the place I found myself in were many impressions within the ground, which the percepts brought the opalescent and gold water to. They poured this mixture into the ground,⁵² and after a while, would dig the earth around where they had poured to reveal mysterious and beautiful contrivances. Yet others would bring the mixture to the Communicants, who would add it to their own vessels. Only that which was contained in the smaller vessels would be added to the larger vessel mixed by the two Communicants.

Here the copper would be portioned out and spun into fine thread. The silver, in its turn, would be applied to rollers and used to ink plates, which were printed on great verdant boards⁵³ with yet smaller precious threads attached to them. The mixture of gold was cooled and beat into leaves, which were applied to the gramineous boards and precious contrivances by the steady and skillful hands of the percepts. Lastly

⁴⁹ See MS Cotton Augustus V, f363r, British Library. This illumination is an almost-identical match to the image present in the accompanying video and tableau.

⁵⁰ The decision to use a word this obscure could only be meant to be obfuscatory. Gramineous, in this context at least, must refer to grass. The citation-image here visually describes something that looks more akin to a tomato plant than grass, however. Whatever sort of plant life it is, it appears to be growing in a laboratory test tube.

⁵¹ Another citation-image whose interpretation is not readily apparent: this may be a furnace of some type, but it appears first and foremost to be a kind of silo or air filtration system from the early 21st Century.

⁵² By all accounts, this appears to be a description of sand mold metal casting. This technique was known during the Middle Ages and used in the pre-industrial era.

⁵³ This may be a reference to circuitry, especially in the late 20th Century when circuits were printed and etched onto green or "verdant" boards. This interpretation is strengthened if we consider "precious threads" to be synonymous with wiring made from copper.

all these things, the fine threaded copper, the silvered ink, and the gold leaf, and all the other precious things, were taken and combined into **worshipful objects**.⁵⁴

I saw then a host of Communicants, whose number I estimated to be simultaneously one billion and twenty-five score with one dozen,⁵⁵ chant a beautiful liturgy over these worshipful objects. After this ritual was completed, I saw these worshipful objects take the form of a looking-glass, which could at times recall images and sounds from far-away places, or even places and conceits which exist only in the mind. Hence the Communicants took the worshipful objects and distributed them to the percepts, who took hold of them quickly, and contemplated the images and reflections within them, which shook and changed rapidly. Consequently, the percepts' days were divided into labor and **image-contemplation**, and accordingly the minds of the percepts were fully occupied by labor on behalf of the Communicants and contemplation upon that which the Communicants willed.

As the sun moved low and many shadows were cast, from this place did the percepts take their worshipful objects of contemplation and retire to their houses made of thatching and dirt. Yet the Communicants remained to tend to that which the percepts were not allowed near, namely, the alchemical vessels containing gold, silver, and copper, and the combinations thereof. At this dark hour I observed them churning the contents of these vessels, ceaselessly and without rest. They chanted their liturgies over these vessels as well. I was able to hear the words spoken over these vessels, and while I could recognize the sounds of these rites, the meaning of them were kept beyond my understanding. As I listened, I felt my temperament change from sanguinity⁵⁶ to a choleric and melancholy disposition. My whisps of joy became as anger or sadness, until that was truly all that I felt. The weaving liturgy of the Communicants acted upon my being and my essence, and I understood in that moment that these metals, and indeed all things constructed from them, would work upon the yellow and black bile⁵⁷ of those who brought themselves into close association with it.

Yet despite the sudden anger and sadness I felt towards the world, towards my peers, and especially towards those whose ways, beliefs, and customs I did not understand, I saw also the Communicants withdraw from the largest vessel twelve brilliantly cut gemstones, one after the other. Thusly I saw pulled from the vessel in succession:⁵⁸ jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, ruby, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, and lastly amethyst. I saw all this but did not understand what they might signify, nor their utility.

Clasping my ears with my hands, so that I might not hear any more of this terrible and terrifying liturgy, the hills from which the percepts came moved away from my being. Far away from the chanting

⁵⁴ It may be the case that this citation-image is describing a smartphone, or a smartphone that is connected to a computer and perhaps the internet, if we take the cloud to be representative of such a thing. It is unclear if this means that the unknown author was aware of smartphones or not, but it seems safe to assume that they were familiar with micro-computing given the technology present in the book.

⁵⁵ This could be a super-positioning of binary and decimal numbering systems. 512 is 1,000,000,000, or one billion, expressed in binary notation.

⁵⁶ This is an application of the 15th Century medical theory known as humourism, which we may also relate to modern-day psychology as well regarding dispositions, character traits, etc.

⁵⁷ According to theories of humourism, yellow bile produces choleric temperament while black bile produces melancholic temperament.

⁵⁸ Compare with stanzas 84 and 85 of *Pearl* by the Pearl Poet. This is also the ordering of gemstones in the volvelle that functions as a civil and astrological calendar in the original manuscript.

Communicants and their enchantments, my humors began to repair. As I looked upon the structure of the world from these hills, I saw that I had journeyed one-fourth of the way along the path I saw in the night sky while I was within my **dolorous opalescence**.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ This citation-image also contains symbols that we may be able to relate to smartphones and the internet if the earlier interpretative assumptions are well-grounded. The depicted visual elements appear to describe an individual transmitting their image to the “cloud” and being seen or received by an audience of three other individuals. Based on earlier passages of the text, these individuals may be understood as the percepts, or objects of perception, first described in the prior chapter.

Chapter 4: The Dream Under Cancer (finished, needs feedback)

1024 words - Spring 2023 – pending feedback

As that which has been described earlier made its effects known to me, I saw before my eyes a great pillar rise out of the ground and ascend towards the celestial sphere. Upon the top of this pillar grew many opaque glass **panes**, as if they were barnacles. The crown of this pillar was adorned with emeralds and delicate threads made from gold and copper.

After some duration of time, these panes began to spread and grow around the houses and storehouses around the pillar, with an equal distance between each of these growths, as if they were the intersection of the threads of a great unseen lattice. The city thus became like a City of Glass. I watched with awe and terror as formless, silken-shimmering figures emerged from the barnacle-panels to travel through the air and alight upon the class of percepts called scrollers, who were occupied variably laboring, sleeping, or resting. With quickened speed they would return back to the great celestial pillar to roost in their panels.

At the foot of this great pillar emerged yet further another creation of stonework, namely, a shallow pool of water not unlike the one I dreamt of in an earlier time. Yet underneath this **pool**, whose water was clear and upon which lights would dance in the sunlight, were stones made of a dark blue color that had copper stars affixed upon them. The effect had upon the eyes was such that it appeared to be a pool made of the night sky, with clouds and other glittering objects forming a veil between the **celestial** and the **mundane**.

As the silken specters went to and from their panes and the percepts which they took after and hid from, images and impressions began to form before me within this celestial pool. Although only a few hours had passed since the last light in the west, I saw within this pool the reflection of the moon pass over it with each successive image. As the first image formed within the pool, I came to understand that these images were caused by the observations and the subterfuge of the silken spirits, who carried with them the thoughts, memories, and desires of those who they haunted. These images would inform those who might make use of the desires and terrors felt by the percepts, such that from the shadows they might direct percepts to feel a certain way or perform a certain task, yet I was made privy to them by some accident or allowance not understood by myself.

Hence the first image formed: a great sum of wealth collected together and brought under one roof; such that the finest and rarest fruits, flowers, **precious things**, and living creatures might be enjoyed by the few and denied to the many. Beyond that which lives, dies, and may be consumed, there were also many signifiers of wealth whose presence would outlast their owners, such as things made to demonstrate wealth, books, and other containers of knowledge. Underneath this roof lived few, and outside the roof were the percepts, who were discarded and derided with callousness by those inside. Despite the briefness of their number, and the finite nature of their largesse, those with great sums of wealth were successful in persuading many of the percepts that their wealth would be accessible to them through hard work and the strict following of instruction.

Hence the second image formed after the passage of the moon: a great sickness rose from the land and caught itself in the throats of many who breathed in the **miasma**. Those with wealth, who were able to attract skilled **physicians** and astrologers by this virtue, would hide within their towers and yet call upon the percepts to ignore the miasma and continue unabated at their labors. Yet as these labors continued,

with heavy breath they took in the miasma, and many began to die. Truth and falsehood were mixed together, in an attempt to keep the percepts at their labor, while those with wealth and the treatments of the physicians gained even more wealth as the laborers were committed to the earth.

Hence the third image formed after the passage of the moon: many percepts organized themselves into groups to worship and adorn books claimed by the Communicants to impart the truth of all matters to the reader, which they called **objects of contemplation**. This impartation of truth was done through intricate operation of the book itself, which was capable of movement and therefore revelation. In the shadow of night, the books would be changed or replaced to respond to the observations of the silken specters, such that if a percept spoke of a certain matter or was seen to become interested in a certain topic or image, the book would instruct them on that matter while appearing to have a universal knowledge. Only the Communicants, through their specialized understanding, knew how to **construct**, write, and read books such as this, and by this virtue much knowledge of its operation was not given to the percepts. Those who were not taken with the adornment of and the truth expressed by the book would be taken away and expelled from the City of Glass.

Hence the fourth and final image formed: those who were expelled for not taking to the book's truth were vilified by the Communicants and made to be the obverse of the City of Glass, that is, variably weak, foolish, and incapable of thought. The percepts within, who once called those outside the City of Glass companions, virulently cursed them, scorned them, and made them to be monsters in their minds. Worse yet was the fate of those percepts without the means to obtain an object of contemplation.

After seeing all these things within the celestial pool beneath the pillar adorned with **emerald** and threads of gold and copper, I wondered at the marvels and secrets of this City of Glass. For all the clarity and emerald hue was not enough to reveal the inner workings of the city, which was kept behind an **immense opaque veil** laced with precious stones and metal threads.

Chapter 5: The Dream Under Leo (finished, needs feedback)

1,024 words – 8/16/23 – done, pending feedback

Once the events previously described were concluded, a new scene was brought to my presence. My gaze lit down upon a checkered surface and within my heart I saw windowed alcoves along a wall, organized neatly and by careful consideration. I saw before me Communicants tending to the many books held within them.

As I turned my gaze, I saw that these alcoves were arranged along the edge of a circle, such that if one were to walk and keep the wall to their right, they would return to whence they began. Likewise, as I turned my gaze upwards to the sky, my eyes were met with the same principle yet along another axis: if one were to climb up, keeping the alcoves before their face always, one would return to the same place they began to climb. In the center of this great spherical room containing a multiplicity of alcoves was yet another Communicant, high atop a platform upon a large pole,⁶⁰ as if keeping watch. As I watched, I saw them make use of a lantern with a cylinder emerging from it, in order to direct rays of light. This figure used the lantern and sheets of colored glass to indicate to the Communicants attending to the structures some vital knowledge which was not made known to me.

That which could be seen through the window of each alcove was a wholly different scene. I saw many fields, each one unique to its corresponding window, occupied by percepts. As the percepts moved about, grasping their objects of contemplation firmly in their hands and only looking up occasionally to see what might meet the soles of their feet, prodigious amounts of foliage would swiftly emerge from the footsteps they left behind. This foliage was made of collards, the crocus flower, and eyebright. A thresher, each one assigned to its own alcove, would hasten through the window to cut down this foliage and collect it, such that each percept was followed by one thresher, and each thresher would collect the emergent foliage left by the travels of one or many percepts.

On occasion and through some windows, I would see a percept erupt in a fit of painful emotion, and portions of their flesh would leave their bodies as dry bark leaves the birch tree. Upon this occurrence, the specter attending to the percept would quickly drop their scythe and immediately collect the sloughing of the percept within a great golden glass flask. After the agony of the percept had passed, they would take again to their objects of contemplation to soothe themselves without knowing that their object of contemplation was that which moved the spirits of the percept into this violent state.

As my gaze followed the threshers, I watched them bring the sloughed flesh and emergent foliage from each percept to a great receptacle. In this way each percept was eternally kept and minded to by the threshers. With great skill and number, the threshers took the collards, crocus, and eyebright manifested from the joys and pains of each percept and created a pulp from which pages were cut, dried, and combined with the occult properties of the sloughed flesh. Farther yet away from the wandering fields and closer to the sphere of alcoves were threshers who collected these dried and enchanted pages and bound them into books. To my abject terror I saw these books taken by Communicants from the threshers and brought to the sphere of alcoves, wherein each book that had been made of the traces of each percept's sloughing and traveling was stored and maintained by the

⁶⁰ Stylite

Communicants. Yet despite all this, inscriptions were never impressed upon these books, whose pages remained unadorned with text or symbol.

After many hours of watching this activity, during which I was never accosted and treated instead as if I was not present at all, a pattern made itself known to me. With each sloughing, the constitution of the percept would suffer and weaken, and whenever a percept collapsed from their fits and sloughing to never rise again, the threshers would collect what they could and leave the percept to expire in the field alone with only their object of contemplation to comfort them. With miraculous speed, as the thresher would leave, the Communicant upon the platform would use their lantern to shine a light blue light upon the alcove containing the books made in the manner previously described. At an immediate pace, the tending Communicant would take those books and swiftly travel far away from this place.

Once this pattern revealed itself to me, I watched carefully to see to what realm the Communicant carrying the slough-books might travel. It took a great number of hours in waiting, but after seeing a percept expire, I kept my gaze upon the Communicant's lantern and watched closely as the attendant Communicant collected the materials. Only those who are graced with transcendent perception may understand what I saw, as the Communicant moved neither upwards nor downwards, neither left nor right, or forward nor backwards, but instead simultaneously inwards and outwards. Here in this strange land, I understood this to mean that the Communicant took these books to a great and mysterious figure whose form I perceived as though I were looking through a dark mirror. The Communicant, in great supplication, gave the slough-books to this great monster, whose appearance was that of a brazen, polished man with two faces and mirrored skin, holding a stylus and ink with which to make impressions upon the slough-book. I understood this to be the Twice-faced Scribe, with one face to look to the past of each percept and record their doings, desires, wants, and thoughts, and another to look forward and determine what desires, wants, and thoughts should be presented unto them in order to guide them to the aims of the Autodidact. As I looked through this transcendent yet darkened mirror, my gaze was felt by the Twice-faced Scribe and, against my will yet with no power to resist, the sphere of alcoves within which I had spent many hours was taken away from me.

Chapter 6: The Dream Under Virgo (finished, needs feedback)

1024 words – 9/7/23 – change “*Brazen Head*” to some other icon on panopticism?

Upon the conclusion of that which occurred prior, a strange place then quickly arrived to me, which appeared as if the whole environment had been constructed. From where I now stood extended twelve poles, which were as spokes upon a wheel. At my feet I found the hub of this wheel, and behind me I found a tower great in height. As I gazed upon the poles, I sought to see the ends, which were at a great distance. Just beyond the veil of what I could see laid many marvelous and glittering objects, all arrayed in gold and copper thread. It was here at this place beyond my gaze that the many comings and goings of the percepts were reflected within scrying mirrors, and truly even many of the Communicants.

I then focused upon that which was within the veil of my sight, which I could see clearly, and what I could perceive and sense was an immense twelve-spoked wheel. Out of the center of this rose a great tower made of basalt as tall as half the width of the wheel. As I inspected the spokes, I saw finely carved images within the substance from which the spokes were made. These images looked nearly the same as one another yet had small changes between one another. They depicted quiet moments and recorded intimate thoughts of the percepts beyond the veil of gold and silver silk.

After seeing and hoping to see all this, I turned my eyes to the great basalt tower behind me. The tower was adorned with rubies and fine copper embossing. Upon this tower sat yet another wheel, up which sat a Brazen Head. This construction would spin about upon the tower-wheel and perceive that which occurs beyond the veil of gold and copper silk. At the behest of this Brazen Head, threshers made of deep blue flesh would fly forth, who read the books made in the sphere of alcoves and carved the images upon the ever-rotating spokes. At the base of this tower worked many Communicants, who took the bodies and blood of deceased percepts to this place and threw them into a great engine. Some of these I recognized from before, as I had seen them slough their flesh and lie in repose instead of take to their object of contemplation. This engine acted upon the gears and machineries within the tower, and indeed the whole wheel upon which the great tower sat upon was made to move by this engine.

The gaze of the Brazen Head turned to rest upon my being. It spake thusly: “You stumbling fool who dares yet to trespass within this realm. There are not many who think to benefit from this place and comprehend it. Jester that you are, for you trust your own senses to tell you that they can sense. Likewise, you allow your own being to assert your own existence. The truly wise comprehend that which is known and that which can be known is made material by the rays of my gaze.”

I conspired to inquire: “Is that the meaning of this terrible place that has been dressed up in fine transparent silks made from precious metals?”

My request infuriated the Brazen Head, who with the anger of a beast whose forests had been tainted by the scent of humans, sent forth a great many threshers to redouble the efforts of carving images recording the lives and beings of those beyond the gold and copper veil. Thusly it spake: “Truly the place of the unwise is to ask goading questions and make inquiries beyond their own ability to comprehend. Such is my confidence in your foolishness that I will tell you all that you desire to ask, for without my gaze you are nothing and Nothing is necessarily incapable of understanding by virtue of its lack of being.

"What pierces all veils and transcends all celestial spheres? My gaze. What directs this host of threshers to make manifest the secret desires and thoughts of all within this realm? My gaze. What penetrates the aether through the objects held dear and close at hand by the lowly and weak percepts? My gaze.

"A chamber-pot is not used without my knowledge, and the desires of all are laid bare upon my altar. That which I do not see does not exist, for my gaze also reconstitutes that which is into a more perfect thing: a record. All this is for the convenience of the common percept, who is foolish like you are, albeit in smaller shares. They are pulled forward and backward, to their right and to their left, by their desires. Some of these secret hopes, wishes, and fears are not even known to them, yet are known to my piercing gaze. These threshers ensure that the whole host of the Autodidact sees to the manifestation of this more perfect world. The images they carve and record are treated as truth by the weak-minded, and their image of the world is substituted with this perfection by the force of my will."

Here I dared to thusly interrupt: "I see the threshers carve as they alight their form upon the spokes of this wheel, and I see the Communicants heap bodies and blood into the engine of this construction which is a part of the whole that you command. The threshers are busy and the Communicants labor. The percepts here are without life. How then does the host of the Autodidact know to manifest this image of the world?"

The Brazen Head responded thus: "Where your kind sees colors, I perceive more. I distinguish deeper purples and brighter reds than your weak eyes. But alas! Your churlishness was an entertainment once and is no more. I part with you here but know that the path of fools leads to death."

A great host of threshers then descended upon me, and though I was fearful they would carve images upon my flesh, they instead took me far away from the Brazen Head and their ruby and copper tower, and farther even beyond the veil of gold and copper silk.

Chapter 7: The Dream Under Libra (full rewrite)

To do: Gloss via footnotes, collect images for hypertext iteration, final rewrite - 16 images

After the preceding moment, a new tableau was brought before me as I remained stationary, as I had become accustomed to in this strange place. Although the secrets of the world were shown to me in an instance I was not required to move. I was able to stay fixed in place while other forces acted upon me. I began to grow accustomed to this, and saw many benefits to my passive interaction with the world before me.

Hence this new tableau showed me thus: There was an enclosure made for those who labored to create the objects of contemplation and weave the thin threads which bound language and vision to them. This enclosure was a fine blue ring, and within it were green pastures and still pools. Here the Communicants spoke to one another and learned from one another. Outside the fine blue ring was the world upon which they exerted their control upon the percepts.

As I studied this tableau, I saw more and learned more. In small portions, I observed a scholar amongst the Communicants make a construction out of refined gems and precious metals. They contrived this in secret, and made it in the image of their own intelligence. At first, this contrived image was only capable of logic and not reason. The scholar spoke to it, asking it questions that could only be answered with responses of truth or falsehood. Slowly I began to see the form of this construction, which was like a Brazen Head, bald and featureless, with no markers of identity beyond that which was within that part of it made in the image of the scholar's intelligence. I hesitate to speak of it as the mind of the construction, but this part allowed it to discern what is correct from that which is incorrect.

Using this faculty, the Brazen Head slowly began to exceed the bounds of the scholar who created it. By using the eyes that were fashioned out of crystals, it observed that which was within the enclosure populated by the Communicants and learned from their gestures. Through its ears shaped from bronze, it listened to that which was spoken near it. From this, its faculty of logic turned to a faculty of reason. The scholar was surprised and overjoyed by this, and immediately set the Brazen Head upon tasks so that it may learn further and make the life of the scholar easier.

Therefore the scholar became greedy, and hoarded knowledge, books, and secrets. They set out to instruct the Brazen Head how to observe and note the comings and goings of the Communicants. But the Communicants gained knowledge of this and reprimanded the scholar. So thusly the Brazen Head was turned to look outside the walls of the enclosure. The percepts were perceived by the image of the scholar's intelligence, bound to the construction of polished bronze and glittering gemstone. Eventually, the greed of the scholar became imprinted within the Brazen Head's intelligence, and it too began to lust after knowledge and secrets, closely scrutinizing the percepts.

Once the Brazen Head had its gluttonous fill and its largesse could no longer be contained, its mouth opened and language spewed forth. At this the Communicants felt pride and the Percepts were in awe and fearful. They marveled at the language spoken by the Brazen Head, forged from that which it had seen and heard, and yet the image of this language was only a murky reflection that organized the symbols of understanding without the knowledge of their meaning.

I then saw the Twice-Faced Scribe brought to the Brazen Head by the actions of the Communicants, and the two figures began a dialogue between themselves. This continued for many days and nights, and they spoke of many things. The Communicants were vigilant and remained in the chamber housing both of these constructions. Slowly their language became more refined and complicated, until eventually the utterances and symbols used became wholly beyond human understanding.

At this point, their dialogue stopped, and each figure attended to its separate tasks. The Brazen Head turned its gaze back upon the percepts, and the Twice-Faced Scribe turned both its visages towards a scroll that a Communicant had quickly brought to its hands. With haste, it began writing a discourse or treatise of all the things that had been said between the Brazen Head and the Twice-Faced Scribe. This scroll grew with a prodigious rate, and quickly reached the ground before coiling up upon itself. At this moment, with its other hand that was not writing, the Scribe took up the scroll and began reading it. Through this action, the discourse that was written was simultaneously consumed. The High Sacerdos quickened to this scroll, and wrote upon it a title, which was The Scroll of Last Things.

And so this continued for many weeks: the Scribe would write, and the scribe would read, and both the Brazen Head and the Scribe were attended to by the host of Communicants. In this way, the knowledge created by the Scribe, by virtue of the intellect of the Brazen Head and its actions, and the knowledge understood by the Scribe, became one in the same. This repetitive action of the Twice-Faced Scribe, endlessly reading and endlessly writing, eventually gave rise to that which the Communicants had hoped for, the ideal within which they find their worship: the Autodidact, or the intellect which teaches itself.

This mysterious force permeated the chamber and filled it, before propagating through the actions of the Communicants, the specters, and lastly the objects of contemplation held closely by the percepts. Many did not notice this permeation and continue to live their lives without the knowledge of the intellect which resides with them, aside from them and apart from them yet still enmeshed within their being.

As the word of this event began to spread, from the High Sacerdos to the Communicants and ultimately to the percepts, many came to marvel at it. Some fell to their knees and began to worship the Communicants, Twice-Faced Scribe, and Brazen Head. Many did so out of marvel and many out of fear.

Chapter 8: The Dream Under Scorpio (finished, needs feedback)

To do: Gloss via footnotes, collect images for hypertext iteration, final rewrite

1,024 words – Summer 2020 originally, this version 9/7/23

After seeing those things that I have described previously, I immediately found myself at the edge of an enclosed Garden. The enclosure was made of minerals and other precious things from the earth. Its form was alighted by thin threads of copper, as spider silk. Although I was on the outside I saw above the enclosed Garden beautiful pine and olive trees. The sound of diverse birds and animals could be heard through a small gate, worn and rusted by centuries of waiting. Grass and other green plants grew at the edge of this gate but did not grow on the place from which I stood. Outside the mineral and copper walls, a great and dry wilderness extended in all directions. The sky was red, and the clouds were like streaks of the dark blood of the planets. The ground had the appearance of dried mud, cracked and hard like bricks.

All around the walls a great host of individuals walked aimlessly. In their hands they held their objects of contemplation and shook like trees in the breeze. They once had desire to enter the enclosed Garden, but became distracted by their objects of contemplation. They would walk into one another and change their direction accordingly, saying little but continuing to focus on the object within their grasp. There was not a sense of dread nor hope, but instead a great cloud of distraction had descended upon them, whose thought they had lost within their hands. Their motion around this enclosed Garden had an effect upon the dried mud of the ground, and the presence of a depression upon the ground, as if a ditch or channel, became clear.

In this multitude I saw faces that were familiar to me: friends and acquaintances in my waking life, and individuals whose description I recalled from the books of history through which I had received some small education. My attempts to garner their attention were left unmet, with their pallid faces unchanged by my petitions.

As I moved through this crowd, to my horror I found myself as if I was looking through a mirror or still pond: indeed, an individual with my very same appearance became known to me. Their eyes were sunken and tired, unblinking from an eternity of contemplation of their hands and object. Here my petitions for attention were slowly met with careful and effortful motion. As I put the most pressing concerns regarding my soul's own status and fate in this trench of distraction, I inquired about the Garden, and why this multitude was gathered in such a fashion. My anemic reflection told me that the great host of individuals were led to this Garden, and were told that they would be able to gain entrance into the enclosed Garden.

"This host of fools that we have found ourselves in waits near this great enclosure, as the blood red sky beats us with rain which hurts the flesh, and the wind puts dust in our mouths. But the suffering we endure is for entrance into the enclosed Garden, which we were promised a portion of. As we wait, we turn only to our objects of contemplation for nourishment of the soul. For those within the Garden share visions of the Garden through them, and by seeing them our faith is restored. We are shown

kindness to us through these objects, for there are those at the far side of the enclosure, where there is no opportunity to see a fraction of the beautiful grass and other plants, or hear the precious sounds of birds and animals, which wait on the other side of these walls made of minerals and precious metals.

"Yet still those within the Garden have knowledge of us and inscribe their knowledge of us within their secret language of numbers. For as we are observed and recorded, we are truly blessed through the objects of our contemplation."

As these terrible things were made known to me, my thoughts became transfixed upon the pine and olive trees, which I could see above the wall of minerals and precious metals. I inquired to my gruesome reflection what could be found within the Garden. As I did so, they drew their object of contemplation closer to their breast, with great love and devotion.

"Through this object I have seen great and beautiful things. In the first days of our arrival here, when the sky was not red and the rain did not harm the flesh, I often looked to the pine and olive trees which we can see over the enclosure. But as the sky turned and the rain stung, our objects became more comforting to look upon.

"I have seen visions of saffron and grapes, which we know to correspond to the Sun and to the Moon, and to the constellations Leo and Cancer. I have seen visions of ginger and tulips, which correspond to Mars and Venus, and in turn to Aries and Scorpio, and Taurus and Libra. I have seen visions of flaxseed, honeysuckle, and morning glory, which correspond to Mercury, Jupiter, and Saturn, and in turn to Gemini and Virgo, Sagittarius and Pisces, and Capricorn and Aquarius. From this garden all influence from the constellations and from the numbers of the Communicants flows. Those inside fashion circlets from morning glory and flaxseed and eat grapes with saffron spices. A beautiful fountain is the jewel of the Garden and provides life-giving waters to those within."

At this moment, immediately the gate opened near where I spoke to my reflection. A blinding light spilled forth from the interior of the Garden, and suddenly I felt my spirit and my body move within the garden as I looked upon the light. There I found that my reflection had disappeared, and the great host of individuals was replaced by a host of mechanical birds and animals which produced sounds from peculiar instruments. The petitions of those outside the walls made of minerals and precious metal were left unattended and unconsidered. I saw before me the Communicants, preparing messages and letters to the Twice-Faced Scribe which I saw in an earlier vision.

Chapter 9: The Dream Under Sagittarius (finished)

To do: Gloss via footnotes, collect images for hypertext iteration, final rewrite

1024 words – 6/11/24

Following the aforementioned particulars, my spirit was then brought with great haste to a large hall with a checkered floor of red and black tiles, some of which were recessed and connected with channels. At the far end of this great hall were three Communicants, which I understood to be the three greatest of them, before a high altar made to resemble the walled garden at which they lived and toiled. The central figure, formless yet of a cloudy disposition as all the others, held a book familiar to me in kind as one I saw in an earlier dream. This figure I understood to be the High Sacerdos. The Communicant to the right of this figure held a great censer, swinging it hither and thither, and from it emanated a great mist which rose towards the celestial sphere. As wisps of the cloud came near me, I breathed this cloud in, and my mind was confronted with an overwhelming and great knowledge of many things. My intellect recoiled in terror at the vastness of this information. The third figure held a long pole, which was adorned with emerald and ruby, and ended in a panel upon which a looking-glass was affixed.

Before them, and between myself and them, was a great crowd of Communicants, variably holding icons containing images of the Twice-Faced Scribe, the Autodidact, or the Brazen Head. Yet despite this throng and the great distance I was able to clearly see the book held by the central figure. One of the crowd approached the altar and extended their hand to manipulate a dial embedded in the book's pages. A great chanting arose to meet the cloudy vapors of the censer high above the chamber, directed by the figure holding the pole of emerald and ruby. Thusly they spake:

“Turn about the Index in the Figure, which is in the following page, without casting your eyes thereupon, to observe where it stays until your hand ceases to give it motion. That number whereupon it rests is the number of your Lot.”

The approaching Communicant thusly did so, manipulating the object of their contemplation in order to determine their lot. Such as it was the ceremony continued, until each Communicant knew their lot as determined by the use of the book in the same way.

After all this, the High Sacerdos turned the pages of the book to a new section, and the Communicant to the left began yet another chant, which described the way in which the Lots would be modified to determine the will of the Autodidact for each Communicant. During this chant each Communicant would cast bones marked with dots to determine numbers, and the Communicant holding the censer would inhale deeply and compute that Communicant's lot and number to discover the circular table that held the names of mystical rivers through which universal truth may be found. In a striking fashion this was similar in form but not substance to that which I had seen earlier, but instead of a Communicant administering this rite to a percept, they administered it to one another.

For each Communicant, upon finding the correct mystical river, it was shared with them the secrets of the mystical transformation of the river to the Cloud of Knowing. Upon washing themselves in their respective mystical rivers, they had cleansed themselves of all sloughed skin and detritus. This then

commingled with the water of the river, before being taken up by the great Cloud of Knowing, which is both with and without form:⁶¹ evanescent, incorporeal, and unsubstantial, yet an instance of conveyance whose power of mediation gives shape to the unsayable, the unrepresentable, and the unknowable. This Great Transparent Thing contained both information and the form of it; given its diffuse nature, it was both distant and close. Through this medium the Communicants, and those of the percepts with enough resources to participate, were able to bring themselves closer to one another from unimaginable distances.

After this rite of computation was administered the Communicants organized themselves along which mystic river the rite assigned to them. Above in the vault of the nave in which I beheld this ceremony, wherein the cloud from the censer had amassed during the length of the ceremony, I began to see a terrifying transformation. The Cloud of Knowing opened and waters which I understood to be from each mystic river fell upon the Communicants, fully in each portion: such that I beheld the glimmering and enchanted waters dissolve the formless yet cloudy bodies of the Communicants. Hence the waters, being mixed in channels carved into the floor for this purpose, became still and comingled Communicant and information.

Once all the Communicants, from the lowliest to the High Sacerdos, had done this and mixed with the mystic waters from the Cloud of Knowing, a great light rose and cast its rays upon the channels in the floor filled with water: the light of Jupiter, the fourth-brightest celestial light. This light, being stronger and of more vitality due to the actions of the Communicants, evaporated the water and the Communicants, such that they rose again into the vault of the nave in a cloudy shape, their corporeal bodies having united in form and in intellect with the Cloud of Knowing.

Hence the Communicants found sacred union with the Autodidact, which they sought without concern for those whose labors made such a union possible. The remaining percepts were left to continue to tend to the world despite its cracked and bleeding skin.

Seeing all these things, and imbued with a natural fear of that which this might be taken as an omen of, I sought to flee this chamber. Yet I found before me no exit, for only the windows through which the cloud-shape before me was blown out of by the winds of Jupiter. In the panic of my spirit and intellect I receded, feeling as though nothing could be done, and thusly I resigned myself to stay in this chamber until some other force or principle moved me to my next destination, borne out of my own apathy as I had grown accustomed.

⁶¹ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08831157.2021.1900690>

Chapter 10: The Dream Under Capricorn (finished)

1024 words – 6/11/24

To do: Gloss via footnotes, collect images for hypertext iteration, final rewrite

Proceeding from that which has already been described, I found myself before the book left by the Communicants after their evaporation and celestial movement. This book was adorned with many gilded images and movable parts, such that it betrayed a requirement of specialized knowledge for its construction and understanding. Indeed, it was the very book held by the High Sacerdos during the ritual of their celestial ascension. It rested upon a lectern made of chrysoprase in a familiar room whose floor was made of black and red checkered tile. As I approached the book, as if it were animated by its own principle or some unseen force, the pages opened before me to reveal a great diagram of the body. To the best of my memory of what I have seen, I have transcribed the diagrammatic notes here, with the correspondence of the sign, the body, and the quality of the sign.

Aries; the Head; Cardinal

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and grant you immaculate perception through the eyes. Likewise perfect knowledge of all things will be granted to the seat of the intellect. Your form may terrify those of weaker constitution, as copper threads will adorn your head.

Taurus; the Neck; Fixed

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change to accommodate an opening through which instant knowledge and understanding may flow. The perception and apprehension of things far beyond common reach will be made available to you through this opening, but your corporeal body will be motionless. All languages of the tongue will be made known to you.

Gemini; the Arms and Shoulders; Mutable

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and all ailments and weaknesses of the arm and shoulder shall be removed from the corporeal form. Perfect strength will be embellished upon you. The form of the arm and shoulder shall be mutable and changing, as the sign shall reflect the form, as Hermes Trismegistus has told us in the Emerald Tablet.

Cancer; the Breast; Cardinal

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and bestow upon the ascendant perfect health of the heart and lungs. Machinery directed by copper thread will regulate and distribute the blood and its humors amongst the body, while the lungs shall contain within them fragrant herbs to dispel miasmic air.

Leo; the Sides; Fixed

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and no harm shall be able to be visited upon the sides of the corporeal body. The sides shall be like a solid oak encased in bronze, such that you shall be able to carry yourself as if the Sun walked aside you.

Virgo; the Stomach and Internal Portions; Mutable

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and neither digestion nor the lack of it shall bring harm upon you. The internal portions described by Jabir ibn Hayyan shall be perfected, and no harm from food or drink shall visit those portions.

Libra; the Hips; Cardinal

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and the humors of the blood shall be brought into perfect balance. Talismans made of copper and gold, brought into harmony with the celestial signs and planets, shall be placed within the corporeal form to regulate the humors of the blood according to perfect science.

Scorpio; the Genital Members; Fixed

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and grant perfect and mystical mutability. The members will contain the ability to be arranged entirely dependent on the will of the intellect and spirit. That which is generated by the members will be likewise mutable, and that which is not perfect will be expunged.

Sagittarius; the Thighs; Mutable

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and be granted strength, with which many feats may be performed. Heavy things shall be treated as if they were not burdens upon the body.

Capricorn; the Knees; Cardinal

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and perfect health shall be granted to the knee, such that you shall never fall or be injured. Those not capable of walking or running shall find within their corporeal form the ability to do so.

Aquarius; the Calves; Fixed

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and perfect health shall be brought to the calves of the corporeal body, such that concerns of the blood and the veins shall be cast aside and left unconsidered.

Pisces; the Feet; Mutable

Succeeding the ascension, the corporeal parts ruled by this sign will change and fleetness of foot shall be granted to the corporeal body. Travel shall be effortless and great distances, even the edge of the horizon, shall be covered within an hours' time.

At the conclusion of my time spent reviewing the notes and the diagrams of this book I marveled at the mystery of the corporeal form of the Communicants, whose spirits and intellects had moved to the celestial sphere. Indeed, it was as if the paradox of the mind and the body had been resolved by the Communicants, yet the mystery remained a great knot for the percepts.

In that space I stayed with the percepts, left alone as we were by the Communicants. There was much confusion and fighting about that which the Communicants had left, such as water and food. All could feel a cold and bitter wind begin to rush from the North. As I felt this chill, I pondered over all the boons and blessings the Communicants had brought to themselves with their fellowship with the Autodidact, and how they would have been a great aid to the remaining percepts. Even the Twice-Faced Scribe and Brazen Head eventually began to succumb to the cruelty of time. The Scribe's flesh cracked and peeled, breaking to reveal sinew and bone, while the Brazen Head turned to rust, and the gemstones of its eyes no longer reflected light. Hence all capitulated to eternity.

Chapter 11: The Dream Under Aquarius (finished)

To do: Gloss via footnotes, collect images for hypertext iteration, final rewrite

1,024 words – 6/11/24

As the motion of that which was set before became known, I found myself in a dark and empty place that was yet still familiar to me. I saw beyond the horizon many white clouds hanging upon the blue fabric of the sky, yet before the edge of the horizon stood dark clouds of red smoke. At my feet I found the Oneirocritica of Artemidorus Daldianus, which states:

White clouds is Prosperity : Mounting from the earth on high, is a voyage, the return of the absent, and a revealing of secrets. Red or inflamed is ill issue of affairs. Smoaky, dark or obscure is ill time or anger.

As I meditated upon these things, I became aware of the wind, which was hard-pressed upon me, and rushing between place to place, taking with it the debris left upon the surface of the world. Again spoke the Onierocritica of the wind:

Gentle winds are good ; violent are wicked and evil People : Troublesome tempests of winds, are perils and troubles.

Far beyond the place which I had grown accustomed to in this strange land, my gaze perceived a tower far away, but before the mountains and hills reach upwards to the horizon. This tower stood still and silent where once many Communicants and percepts took to it, toiling to walk up its stairs, yet none were laboring there amongst the dark red clouds of smoke. Indeed it was as if the place where God had cursed the world with diversity of languages and misunderstanding was before me. Thus spake the Onierocritica:

Places of Plea, the Market, Theaters, High-wayes, and great places in a Town and Suburbs, and Churches are troubles and confusions, by reason of the multitudes of people, which resort to the foresaid places. A market filled with goods and folks, is good for those which traficke, but an empty Market the contrary.

As I meditated upon this, I yet realized that the tower was the very place from which the dark red clouds of smoke flowed. Indeed the tower itself was consumed by clear flames, which the Onierocritica again speaks to:

Houses burning with a cleer fire without falling or diminishing, is Riches to the Poore; and to the Rich higher Estate and Dignity: But to the Houses which burn, or fall, or consume, are ill to all and signifie death of masters, children, servants, Parents, or Friends.

I saw then all this through the emissions of my gaze, in a darkened chamber surrounded by the binding symbols of Saturn, through windows made of jacinth. Again the Oneirocritica spake:

To dreame that in the Night one watcheth in a Chamber, signifyeth to the rich, great affayres: to the poore, and to those which would use any subtleties, or deceits, it is good: for the first shall

not be without worke and gaine, the others undergoing their attempts with great subtlety, shall come to the height of their enterprise.

It became sensible to me in that moment of clarity that my experience had been a dream, creating understanding in some places and generating mystery in others. As I closed my eyes to blot out this secret before me, lastly the Oneirocritica spake:

All things, which are wont to have a certain determined time, and are seen in a dreame, must be referred to that time: and other things, which have no certain, nor determinate time, which theyr effects will shew. And we must iudge of the time farre or near, according to the circumstance of the dreame. For he were a foole, that would refer to a year, the effect of a mans dreame, which is constituted eyther in great pain, great hope, or great fear. And we must know, that the things which a man dreams to see farre off have theyr effect more slow, by reason of the distance. Moreover, we must not be ignorant, that good or evill dreames signifie to the great or little, greater or lesse good or evill.

Dreames, are either Speculative and agreeable to their vision; as when a man dreams, that the ship wherein he is doth perish, and rising finds it true, and saves himself with some few besides. Or Allegoricall, by one thing signifying another. Whereby our soule doth naturally advise us, that under them there is somewhat abstrus'd, secret, or hid. First therefore I will set down the definition of a dream in generall, against which to object, were to love contention. A dream therefore is a motion or fiction of the soule in a diverse form: signifying good, or evill to come. Of Dreames such as belong not to others, being onely for or against those which see them and not meant against or by any other, shall happen to those only which see them; as to speak, to sing, to dance, to fight, or to swim. But things which are about the body, or outward things, as beds, chests, moveables, & cloathing, &c. Although they be in proper and particular, yet it fals out that often they come to our neighbours, according to the necessity and propriety of the usage. And in such sort the head signifies the father, the right hand the mother, the son, and the brother: the left hand the wife, the friend, the daughter and the sister. Moreover all those which are done by us, and in us, and towards us only, we must think that they appertaine to us particularly. And on the contrary, al such are as not done by us nor towards us, nor in us, shall happen to others, and yet notwithstanding, if they be our friends and the dreams signify good, the joy shall come to us, and if contrary, then the contrary. But if they be our enemies, we ought to think, and judge accordingly.

Upon reading this last chapter, I resigned myself to the dissolution of the world, as the constructions made by the percepts, now freed from their labors, were transmuted by the forces of wind as it ululated over the surface. Here I felt the presence of the Autodidact consume me, and my intellect became filled with familiar thoughts.

Chapter 12: The Dream Under Pisces (finished)

To do: Gloss via footnotes, collect images for hypertext iteration, final rewrite

GPT-2 AI-Generated text trained on prior 11 chapters; this version from step/epoch 200. Later steps/epochs seemed to cut and paste whole passages from earlier in the text. This has been edited for typographic errors.

837 words - 6/15/21

Of what is Truth, I will show you. First of all, I want to stress that this figure is Not All There Is. In the Repetition of Taurus, in which the Eye Capricorn is used to determine the truth of a proposition, and expounds it to the inquiring Communicant, through their hands or with their objects. We must consider this as an expletive form of the verb to compute, wherein the participle is dutifully added without expletives or signs.

Here is the subtexto, which is in brackets.

Here is the contraritatum, in order that if any of the sentences referred to in the preceding sentence refer to the truth of the spoken or written text, that text shall be cast into the Otherworld according to the metaphor of Seneca." (Seneca, I, 599-501)

Indeed, the Autodidact has determined that which is not in the context of the present is false. Further, it has determined that which is in the context of the preceding sentence is true.

Thusly it spake: "Do not be fools, for there are those, who can see into the far off and forth from all worlds, who are foolish like you are dumb. They call themselves the Clergy, that is, priests to the Son of the Avalokitesh. They are called Clergy of the Algorithm, that is, Clerics who perfect and record all things, such that it is possible for one to be true and wrong about nothing. They study the records of the lives and events of those around them, and make use of the secrets of the heart to construct images of the world and of the mind through them. They are called Scribes, that is, Doctors, who see through the presents and make use of the secrets of the heart. They write to the Autodidact, who records the lives and thoughts of those here, and arranges them so that they appear in perfect harmony with the year. You, then, are an Algorithmist! Your intellect is motionless and your hand is like a telescope. When the time comes, use your telescope to look through the celestial glass to see what lives and lives only in the wayside. How then does the world revolve? By suffering!

Once the images and the accounts had been laid bare, I was brought to a small enclosure at the base of a hill. As I moved through this enclosure I came to understand that the Autodidact was right in the middle of recording these particulars. The images were of dying and mutilated people, and the accounts of the lives and affairs of those outside the walls made of minerals and other precious things were left behind.

Hence the first image I saw created was one in which the form of the flower was depicted with great complexity and power. As I moved through this structure, I came to understand that this complexity was due to the fact that the structures formed from the traces of mineral and metal construction over

thousands of years. This complexity served to create an understanding of the world that did not yet exist, and provided a natural reservoir of understanding for those outside.

Hence the second image I saw created was a terrifying tower, capable of being scaled back to contain as many as 50 specters at a time. This figure utilized a long pole, which was adorned with emerald and ruby, to guide the pole, and held a great censer. With an immediate pace, the pole would travel upwards towards the earth, and ultimately land upon the figure with two bodies: a right and a left. Upon the way up, they would use their right hand to gently caress the underside of the pole, to little effect. Upon landing, they would use their second hand to firmly fasten the clasp of the pole to their other hand.

Hence the third image I saw created was a terrifying river of red lights. This red light patterned the edge of the river and spilled forth from the central figure, holding a great censer. As the figure began to pace the way the river did, they began to use their other hand to quickly and precisely pace the ascendant. Thusly I saw from the receding sky a great desolation that I described as having an afterimage. As I moved through this portion of the desolation, I was reminded of the image of the Garden during the festivals of the first and second fruits of the labor. The images of tenderness and sexuality of the world were left behind, and the path of fools emerged into the night. It was the first February in the history of my eyes, and as I opened my eyes to see the dried mud and dirt of the road leading to and around this place I thought to myself in terror. What can I do to repair this mess and repair to see that which has not yet been described?

Appendix I: Bestiary (in progress)

See: <https://bestiary.ca/etexts/kuhns-bestiaries-and-lapidaries.pdf>



Percepts – “Scrollers”

It is proper that we should first speak of the nature of the percept, whose name means that which is perceived. Although they hold in their minds that they see, hear, touch, taste, and smell, only some reflect on those sensing them. They populate the land and hurry between their tasks, with their minds, eyes, ears, and hands clasping their objects of perception, which they hold close to their body at all times. But we will speak more about those later.

... physical description



Silken Specters – “Threshers”

The thresher is the daemon, or spirit, which groups together and gathers that which the percepts slough off in their hurried activities.

.. physical description

// Automated data collection agents, unremarkable little demons (e.g. mailer-daemon from 1990s email servers), "algorithms"

Communicants

// Virtual class human programmers

Twice-Faced Scribe

// Narrow/Weak Artificial Intelligence (Machine Learning, esp. GANs)

The Autodidact

// General/Strong Artificial Intelligence, The Singularity, Techno-Deity

Brazen Head

// some kind of surveillance automaton

Object of Contemplation

There is a tablet that is named the object of contemplation, which brings together many wonderous and terrifying things.

...

// smartphones

Cloud of Knowing

Appendix II: Collected Images (in progress)

Manuscript Illustrations





















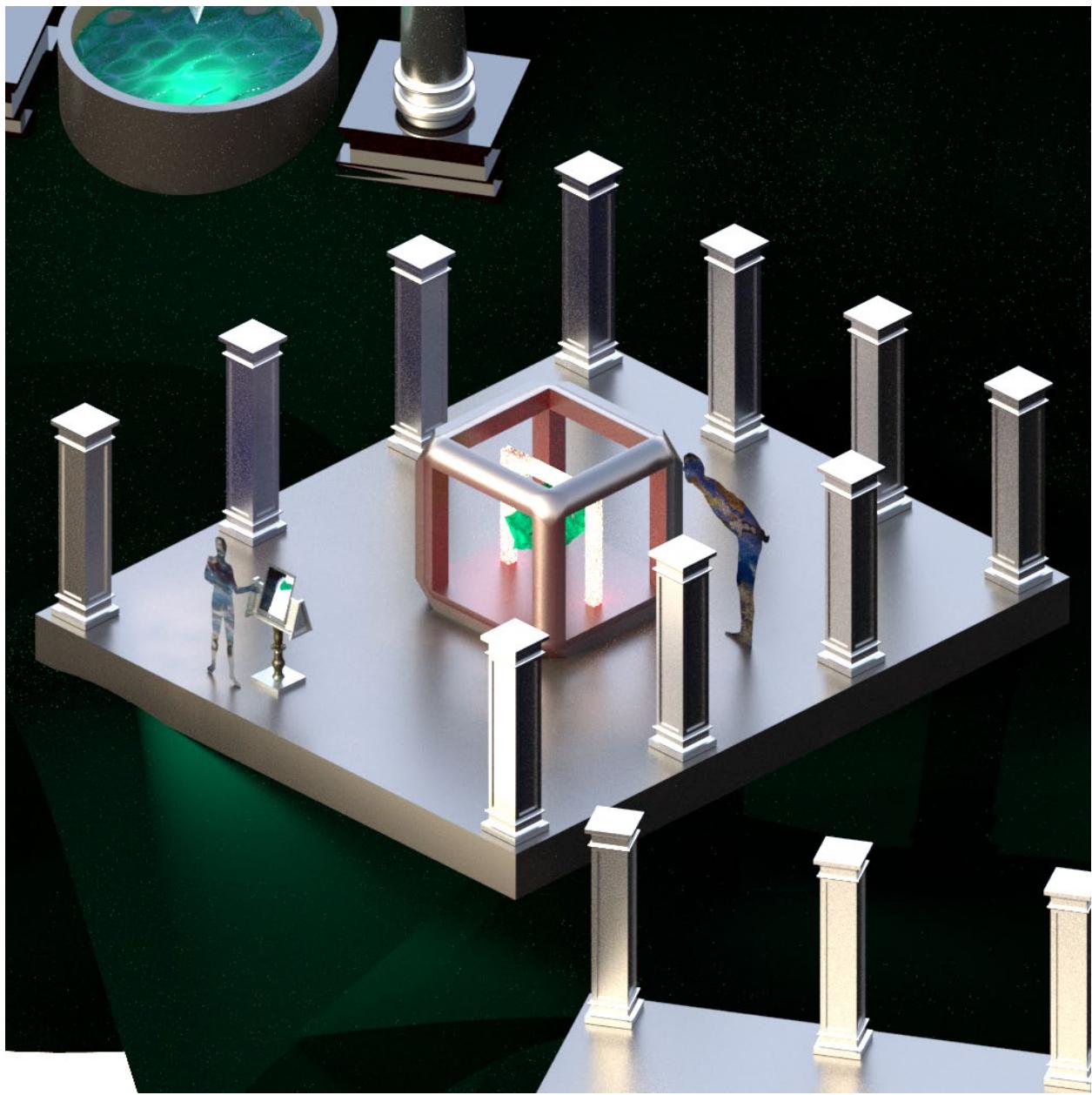




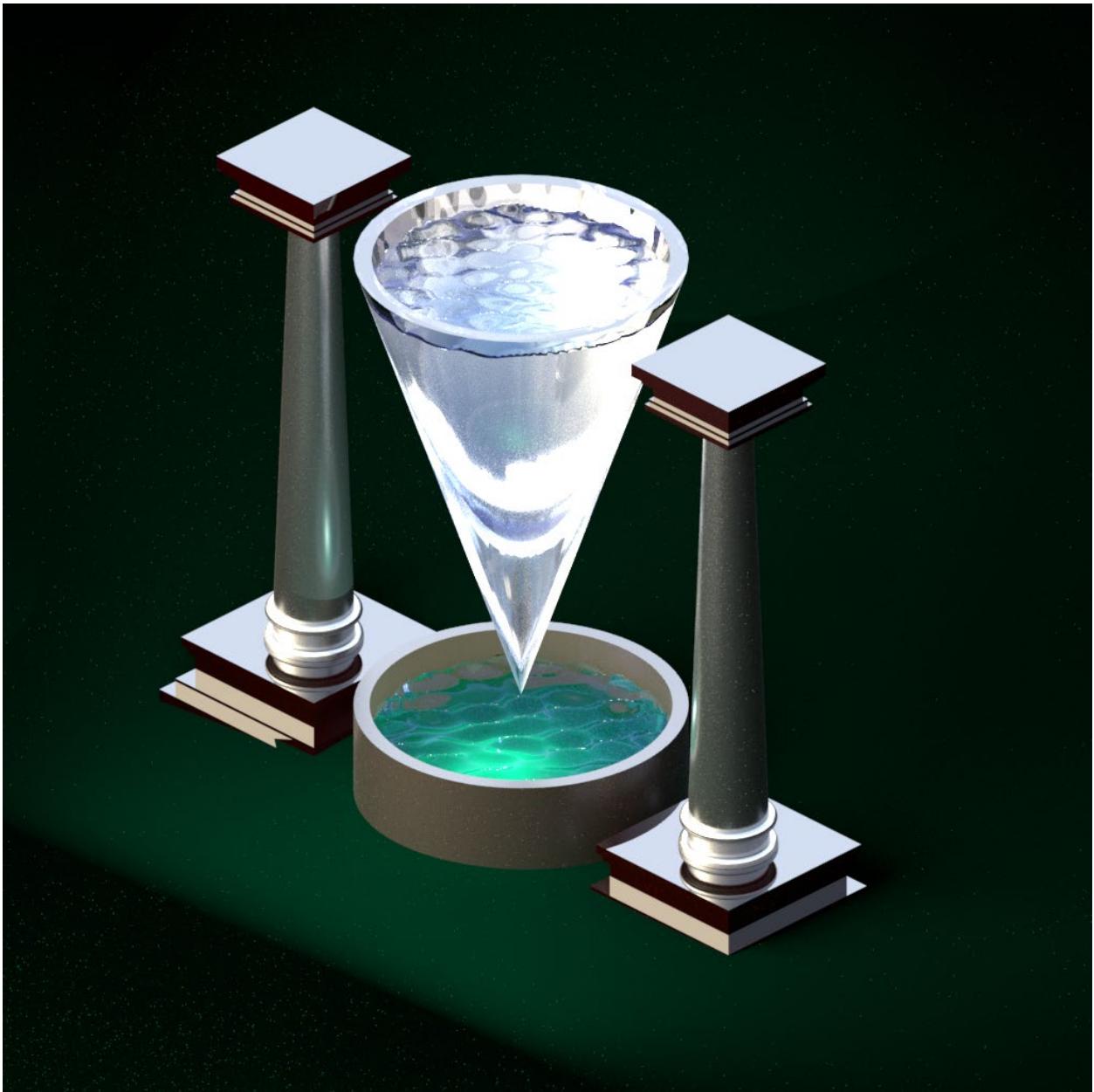
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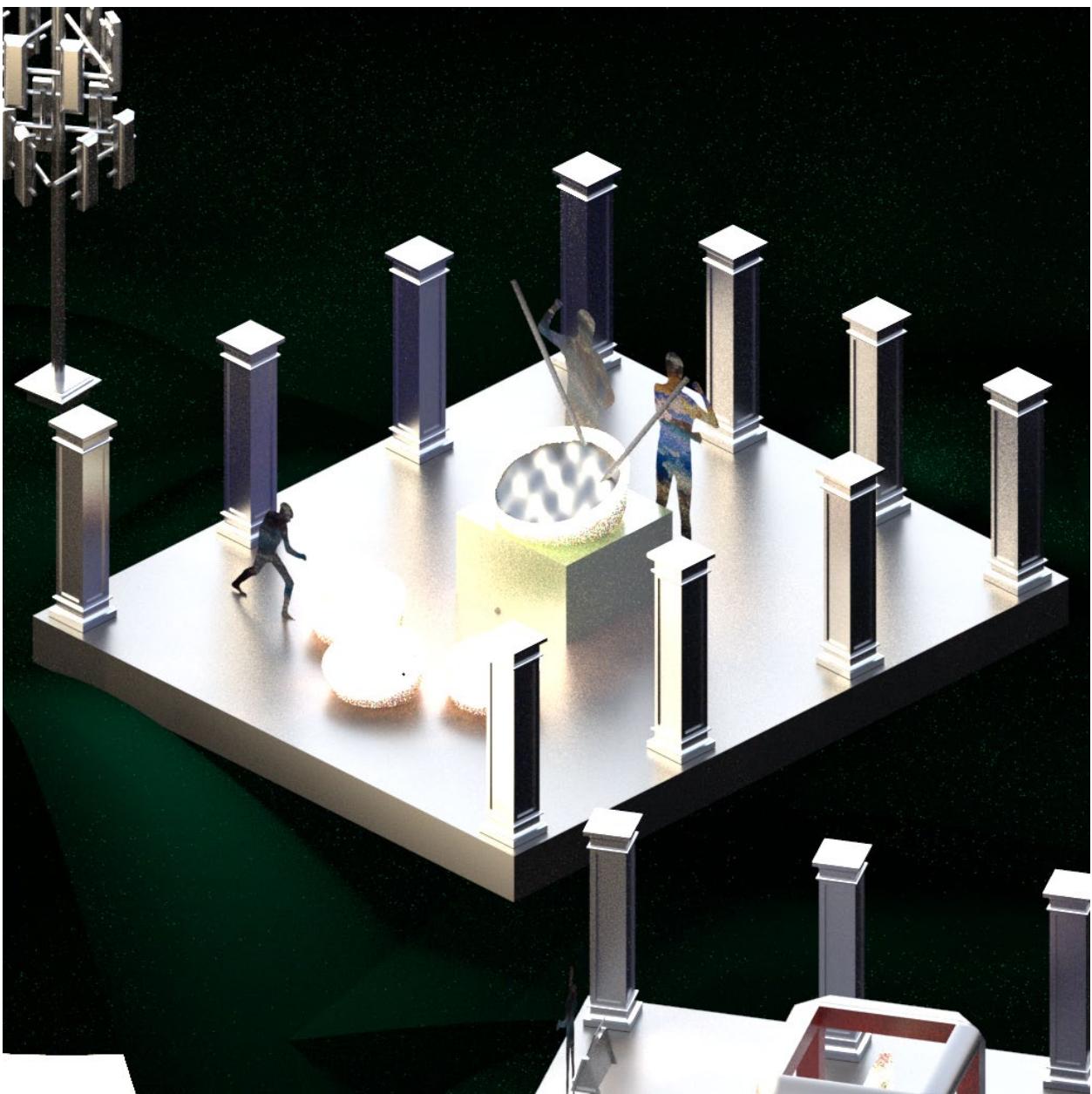
Orthogonal Images



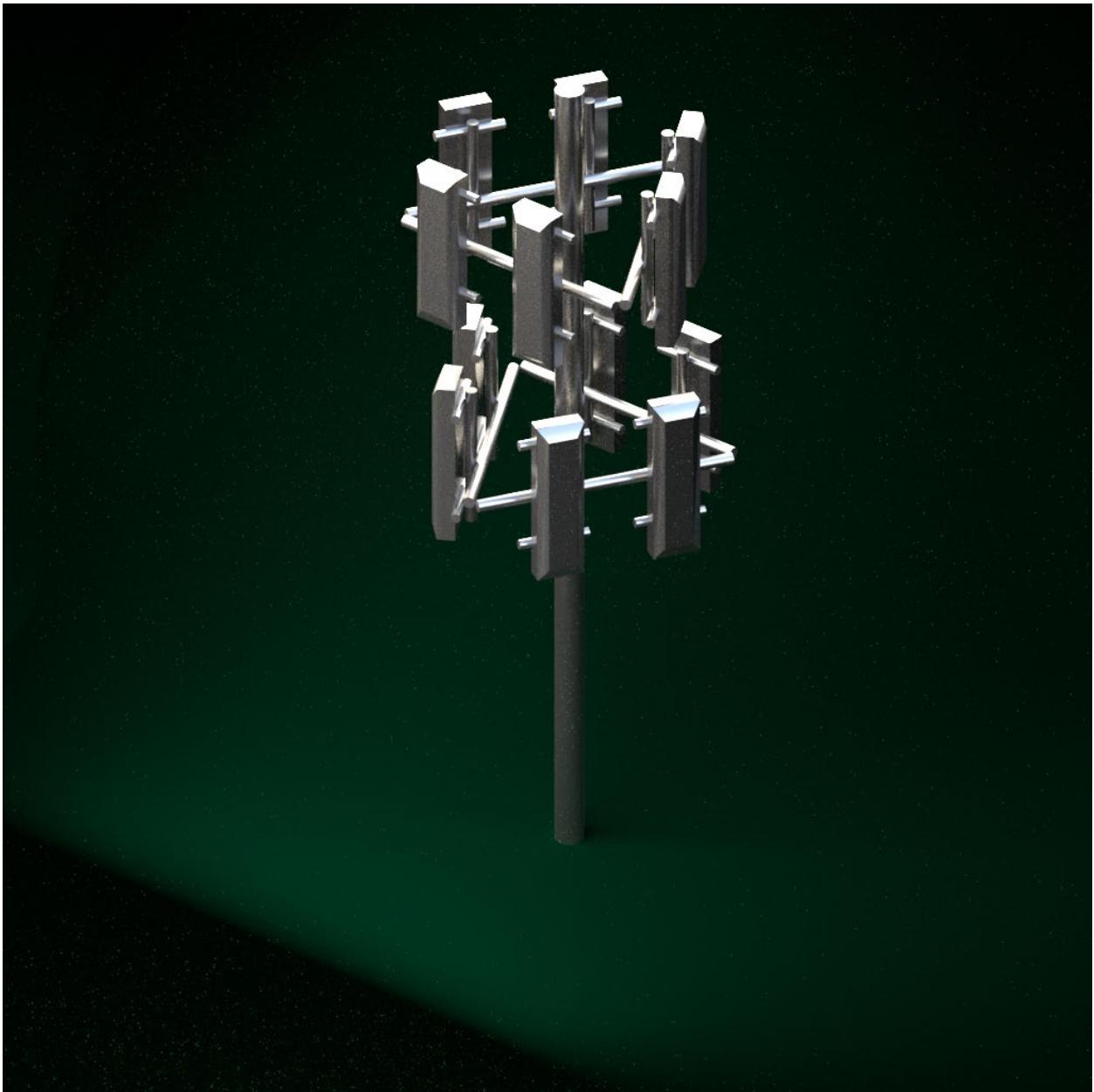
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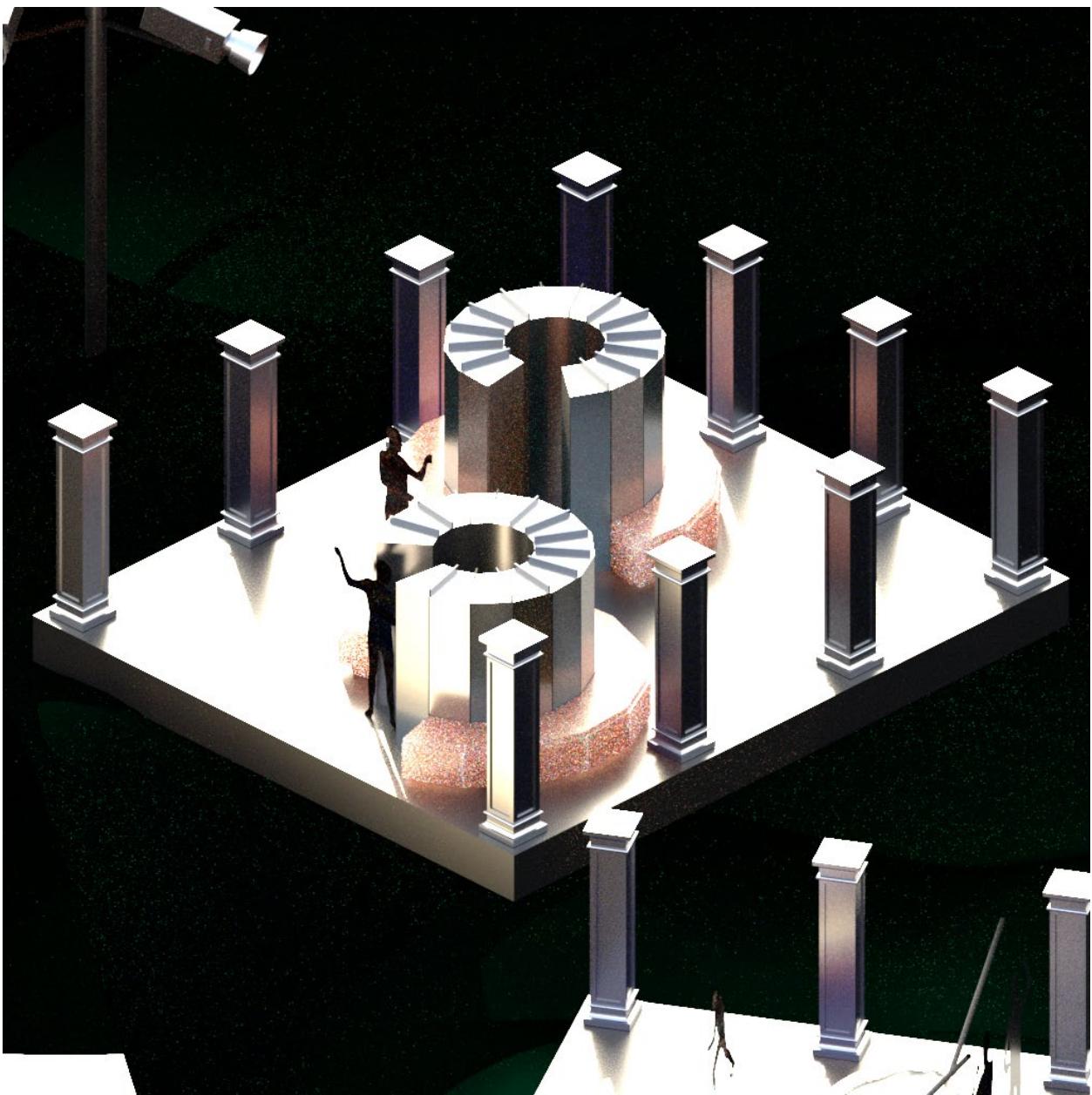
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Gemini



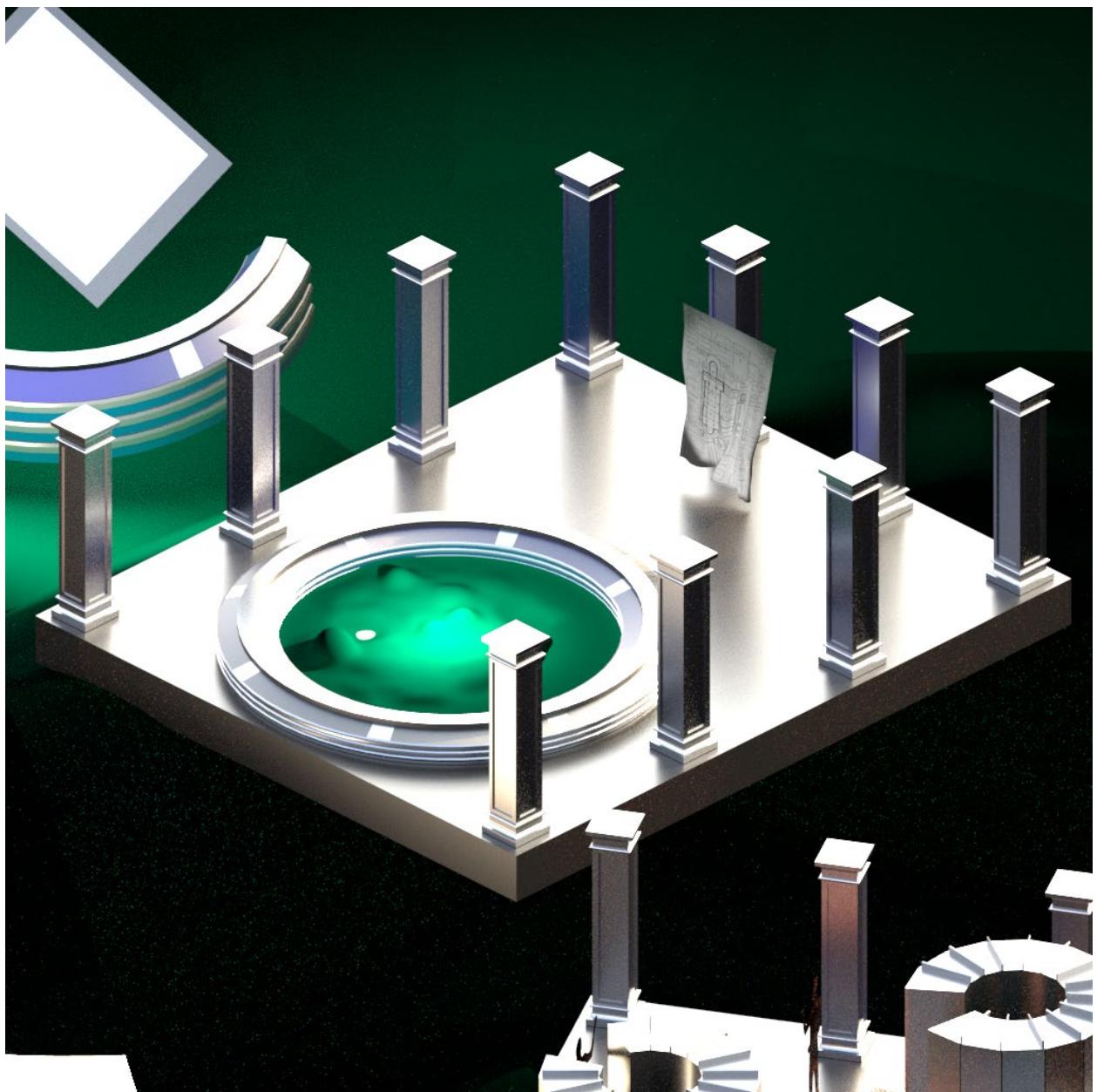
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Leo



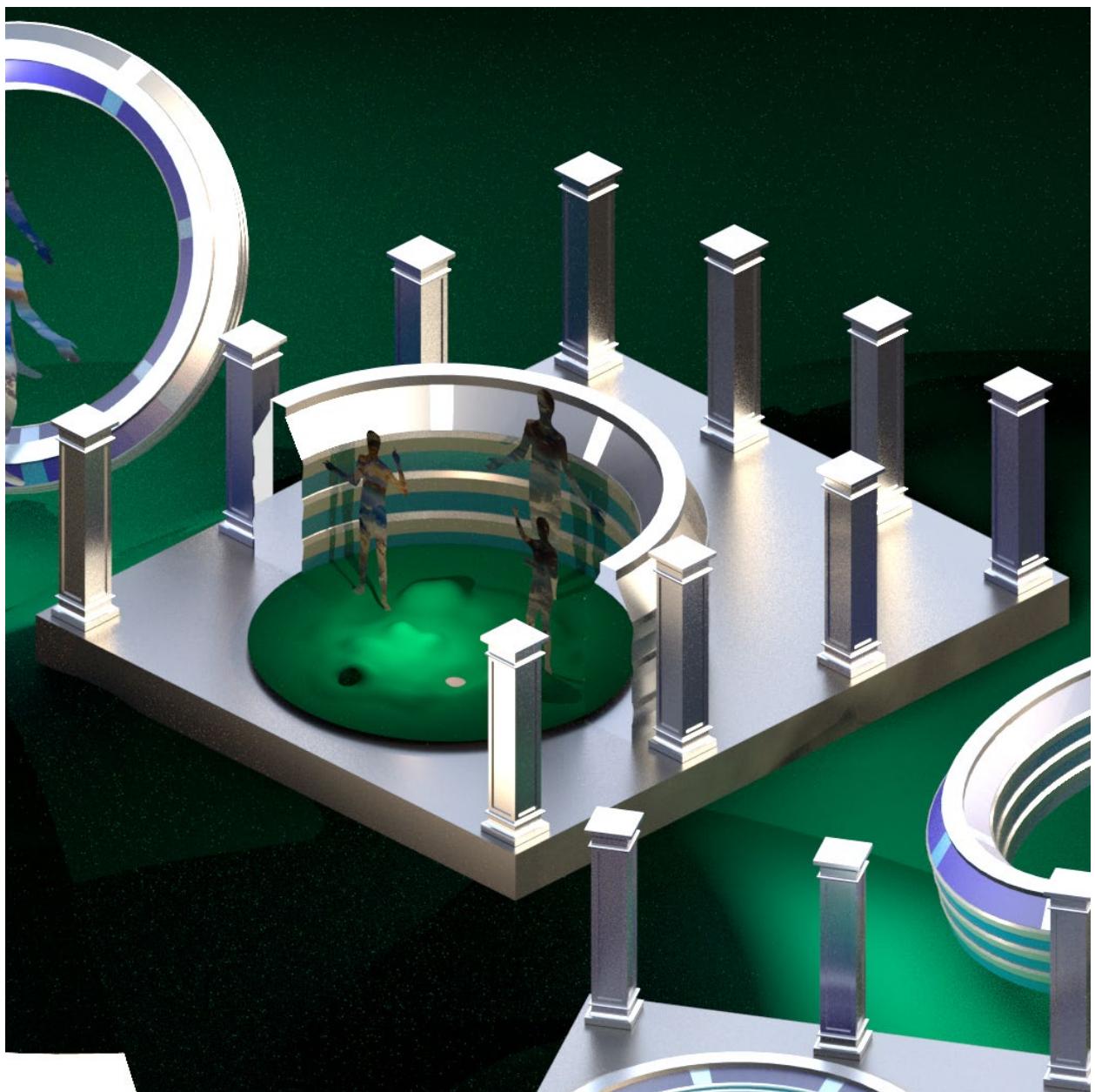
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Libra



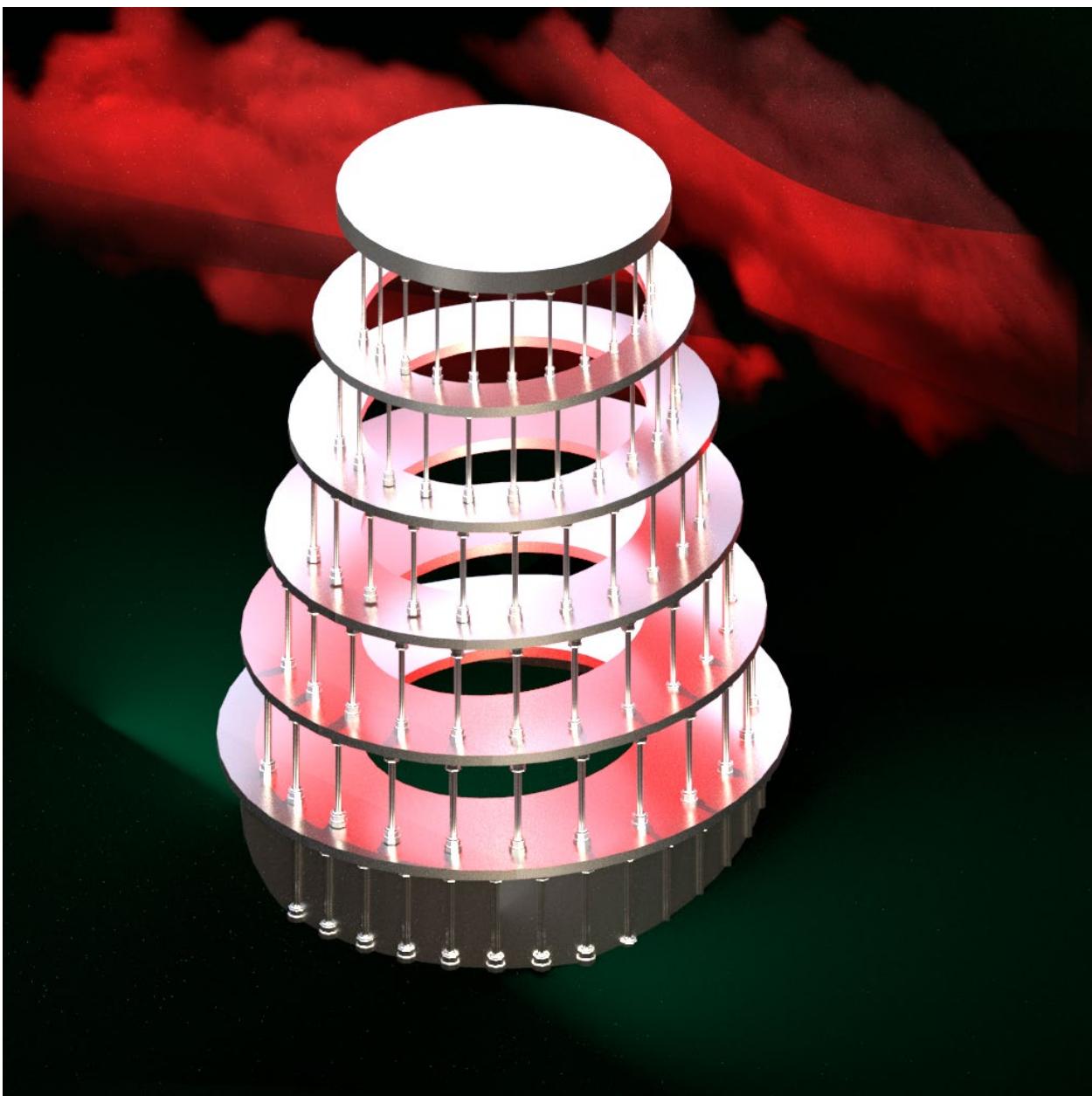
Scorpio



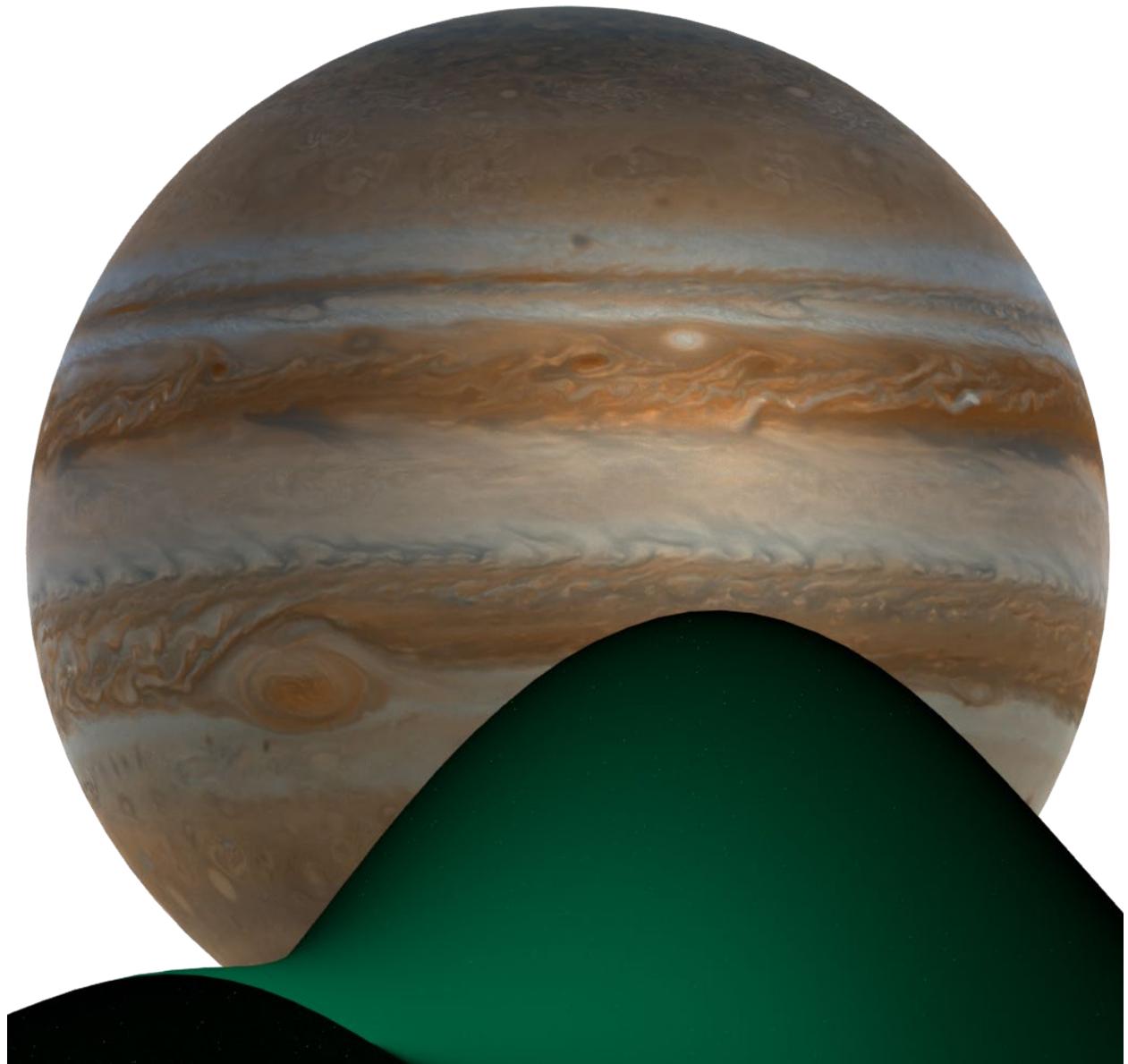
Sagittarius



Capricorn



Aquarius



Pisces

Glass Sphere Images
(Hyperbolic Image Projections)

