

# A Game of Tarot: The Unoppressive Game

by Amanda Millet-Sorsa



Exhibition at the  
**Unoppressive Non-Imperialist Bargain Bookstore**

June 1, 2021 - September 13, 2021

34 Carmine Street, New York, NY, 10014

Events:

*Postcard Writing Thursday July 1st, 2021 5pm-9pm*

*Tarot Card Reading Sunday July 11, 2021 4-6pm*

**w/Daniel Larkin**

*Tarot Card Playing Event TBD*

## Press Release

When you walk into a bookstore, what emotion does that bookstore evoke? James (Jim) Drougas is the owner of the Unoppressive Non-Imperialist Bargain Bookstore, an independent bookstore standing on Carmine Street in the West Village for the past 30 years, embodying the spirits of William Blake, Patti Smith, Bob Dylan, Allen Ginsberg, Bernie, and AOC with a strong revolutionary vibe worthy of the green forests of Vermont where everything happening in the store is simply a part of Jim's life. It will make you want to throw everything in the air, your spirit driven with madness and passion, trying to make sense of the absurd as the bookstore kitty looks at you with those nonchalant eyes of a New Yorker on the subway. We met in 2020 through a Craigslist ad in the midst of the pandemic in New York City. I wanted to give away my extraordinary murphy bed/hidden desk/bookshelf furniture piece, which I had kept in my apartment to host visitors through Human Hotel—a network aimed at matching like-minded travelers and hosts. Jim had always wanted this kind of bed for his small West Village apartment and, in exchange, I received poetry books. I called this bed a cocoon as it was enclosed by a curtain-poem written by a New York poet, who coincidentally, lived on Carmine Street as a child.

All in the universe is connected, many would say. "A Game of Tarot: the Unoppressive Game" is a selection of 10 cards from the 78 handmade tarot cards made by me as part of the Art-In-Buildings Time Equities Inc. W10th Street Window in 2015. Today you can also see a limited edition printed card deck, housed in a box and info booklet printed and folded on origami paper, as well as individual digital photo prints and postcards of six cards displayed in the bookstore next to a neon "Psychic Reader" sign, pleasantly enrobed in a royal purple environment. This exhibition is a way to understand those synchronistic encounters that weave into our lives and how and if to attribute meaning to them or simply toss it in the air.

After living through the unexpected stagnation triggered by the pandemic, the close call of the Presidential election, the deepening mistrust between government and the people, I was ready to believe in magic. In this deck of cards, I was looking to re-imagine the hierarchy and suits in the card deck to fit the values of our 21st century society. It asks, who do you think are the knights and suits of today? The knight having mysteriously disappeared from today's reduced face card family. One of the most satisfying things in life is to surrender to chance, to coincidence, and to feel as if an encounter, or an event has occurred in one's life as if by absurd magic—what are the chances that a seemingly random encounter is meaningful and can relate to other parts of your life? How many times do you end up in the same subway car as a long lost friend or that you cross someone on a street corner far away from your usual paths? One wonders if it is coincidence or synchronicity.

The images in tarot cards are used by astrologers, and have interested psychoanalysts like Carl Jung to inform the unconscious. It can also serve to pass time, bring five people together through the card game of tarot as is often played in France alongside pétanque as a way to connect, unite, and bring people together. A card game is a form of communication and connection and can also bring out the worst in us especially if the card table is abruptly thrown to the floor in the heat of an argument with cards flying all over the place.