

Summer Solstice 2014

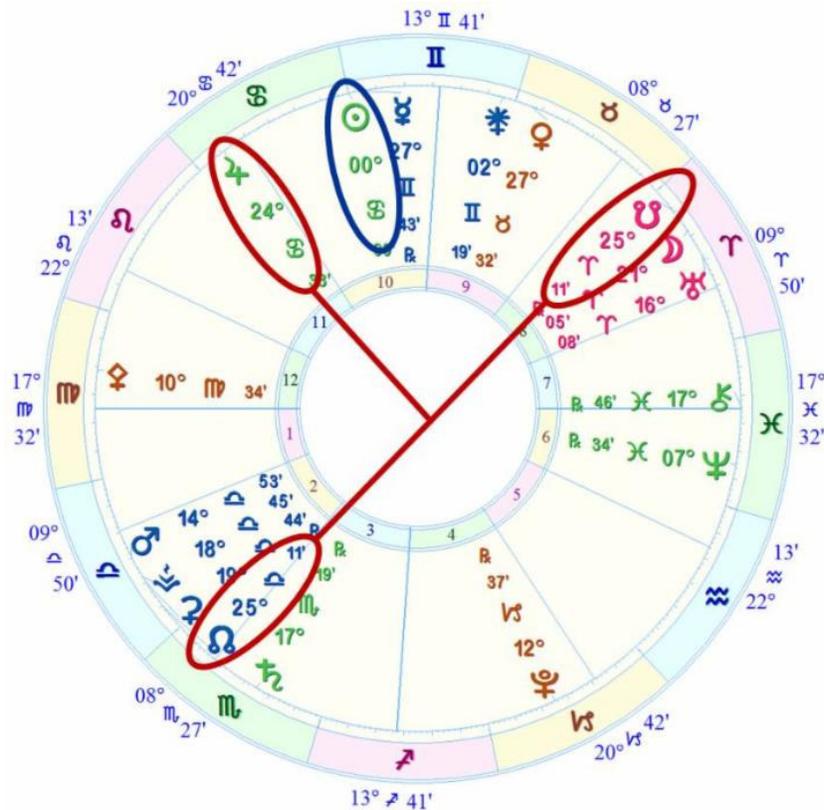
Make Love Not War

On June 21, 2014, we experience the Summer Solstice, which is the moment when the Sun enters the sign of Cancer and indicates that we have made the transition to summer (in the Northern hemisphere). This is also the longest day of the year and it is always fun to celebrate the light on this day in a special way!

In astrology, the chart for the Summer Solstice represents the "theme of the season" or, for the next three months, until the Fall Equinox. On a societal level, the themes in this chart will likely show up in the daily news. On an individual level, we can benefit by recognizing the themes of this time and acting upon them.

The chart for this year's Summer Solstice is a fun one because Jupiter is also in the sign of Cancer with the Sun. This is fairly unique because Jupiter is only in the sign of Cancer once every 12 years and, having both the Sun and Jupiter in the sign of Cancer on the Summer Solstice, is something that only occurs once every 12 years.

Today, I am writing about a specific theme in this chart. While the Summer Solstice chart always has the Sun at 0 degrees of Cancer, the astrological key to the Solstice chart is that Jupiter, at 24 degrees of Cancer, is squaring the North and South Node of the Moon at 25 degrees of Aries and Libra.



Make Love Not War
2014 Summer Solstice

So, together, the Sun, plus Jupiter square the Nodes of the Moon and a minor asteroid create the theme for the Solstice chart:

"Make Love Not War"

This phrase seems like an old cliché, but I am drawn back to the inspiration of John Lennon all the time. John sang "I want you to make love not war. I know you've heard it before" at the end of his song Mind Games. So yes, you have heard it before, but the theme of the Summer Solstice chart wants to remind us of the real possibilities for peace and love. So, let's take a closer look at how we can each use this chart (then, a little bit at the end about the societal impact).

1 - Jupiter in Cancer: An Opportunity

The sign of Cancer deals with all things related to home, family and heritage and who we are at an inner level (our feelings and needs for personal security). Since Cancer is part of the Axis of Identity (Aries - Cancer - Libra - Capricorn), what we learn as a child from our society and our own family can become a fixed part of our identity that we carry with us and that defines home and heritage for us (as opposed to it being defined by us as an individual). This initial idea home, family and heritage that we learn at a young age can become strongly imprinted upon us leaving not a lot of room for growth and change. Or, simply not a lot of room to recognize that the life we are living is actually quite different from what we have been conditioned to live in early childhood.

When Jupiter is in the sign of Cancer, we are asked to expand our understanding of ourselves, our home and sense of heritage in two ways:

- First, Jupiter wants us to be inspired by with new ideas that move us forward, because Jupiter is a progressive, forward-looking planet.
- Second, since Jupiter rules international travel and our philosophy of life, Jupiter wants to expand our philosophy by exploring the meaning of home and heritage beyond the borders of our individual city, state and country.

Jupiter is also the god of hospitality in myth. Returning to Jupiter's natural quality to promote expansion, he wants us to expand our capacity to extend our hospitality and being tolerant to others, particularly those from beyond the borders of the land of our birth. Hospitality has a nurturing quality, just like the sign of Cancer. Hospitality is opening our homes and sharing our table with others. In traditional astrology, Jupiter is known as being "exalted" or blessed in the sign of Cancer. When we expand our capacity to extend hospitality to others, we are making the best use of Jupiter in Cancer and bringing more love into our world.

No matter which country and society we are born in, Jupiter does not want us to remain with the image we have of our home, family, heritage and society that we learned when we were 5 years old. But rather to recognize that now we have an opportunity to understand the big picture of who we are a bit better now that we have navigated our own path in life.

For example, we might be taught, 'in this family, we define ourselves as this particular religion and

with a set of particular beliefs". Then, as we explore life on our own terms, Jupiter sometimes points us to explore perspectives and spiritual ideas from other parts of the world. His role is to expand our philosophy of life so that it is truly meaningful for us as individuals. With Jupiter in Cancer, our philosophy of life often expands our vision of our own heritage and we become a bit more of a citizen of the world.

When we navigate our life path and incorporate these new beliefs into our life, we often feel that we have to hide these aspects of who we are and not share them with family. Does this mean we are no longer a member of the family? Obviously no, but the response from family can vary when we share our own view of home and heritage. If we share our spiritual life with our family, they might embrace it, they might reject it, they might make fun of us, they might alienate us or they might attempt to silence us. But, regardless of their response, we need to make sure that we are clear that our vision of home, family and heritage is our own even if it is different from what we were taught to believe as children.

Summer is the time of festivals. In my birthplace of Milwaukee, we had one cultural festival after another, like Festa Italiana, Mexican Fiesta, Irish Fest, African World Fest, German Fest, Polish Fest, Bastille Days, Pride Fest (and more) and ultimately Summer Fest. So, this might be a good time to explore various cultural gatherings in your community to expand your view (like Jupiter, the Eagle, soaring in the sky to gain the broader view).

***The ultimate intention of Jupiter in Cancer
wants us to embrace a vision of home, family and heritage
that is broader and more expansive potentially
from what we learned as children.***

2 - Minor Asteroid - Niobe & A Fixed View of Heritage

With this Summer Solstice we also have an interesting minor asteroid, Niobe, conjunct the Sun at 1 degree of Cancer. The myth of Niobe plays an interesting role in understanding the concept of heritage. Niobe has seven daughters and seven sons and she is very proud of her regal heritage. In myth, Niobe makes a big mistake when she is so proud that she expresses hubris and places herself above Latona. Who is Latona? Latona is also a mother, but only with two children, a son and a daughter. But, Latona's children are divine and born of Jupiter - they are divine. Latona is the mother of the Sun God, Apollo, and the Goddess of the Moon, Diana. Latona's children, though they number just two, are truly divine.

Niobe places herself above Latona in a public way by saying essentially 'I am better than you Latona'. Niobe is so proud of who she is (her family, her heritage and her home) that she parades her children around and makes it known that she will be seeking spouses for her children and there is an opportunity to be a part of this regal heritage for others. She thinks she should be worshiped and honored over Latona because of this. After all, who has even seen Latona's divine children.

As you might expect, the myth of Niobe ultimately turns out very badly for her and her children. Niobe is saying that only her children, her heritage and her family matter. The cause of her punishment is rooted in Niobe is saying "My family is better than yours". It is a form of hubris (one of the greatest violations of Jupiter that one can commit) to think that one's family is better than all others.

Let's return to the summer, which is often the time of family reunions. Often, families can be less than supportive to certain family members for one reason or another. Often, these tendencies can be directed toward those who are those from outside (adopted, step-, -in-law). So, we can use this time to extend our hand as an example of expanding the circle of family in a supportive way.

So, this minor asteroid, Niobe, serves as a marker for us to be cautious of and something that we need to incorporate into the message of the Summer Solstice.

What we are being asked with this Cancer Ingress, this Summer Solstice is to move beyond the small version of heritage and family and identity (like that of Niobe) toward a grander and more inclusive, expansive sense of who we are and how we belong. If we can begin to understand other people, other families, other cities, other states, other nations, people with other languages and beliefs, then we take a step forward as citizens of the world and are expanding our sense of heritage and identity.

3 - North & South Node: From Me to We

The South Node of the Moon relates to the energy that we come into this Summer Solstice with and it is in the sign of Aries, which deals with issues like war, conflict, power, anger and competition. The energy of Aries expresses itself from the position of 'It's all about me', my desires, my subjective needs and this brings with it an overall lack of awareness of the other. In fact, it sounds just a bit like the perspective of Niobe!

Alternatively, as we look to the North Node of the Moon, which contains the potential that is at the core of the Summer Solstice, we have the sign of Libra. The South and North Nodes of the Moon are always opposite one another, so sign of Libra opposes the sign of Aries. When we embrace the positive aspect of the opposing signs, they seem to work like a bridge, or the ability to cross over the differences between the two signs. Just as the intention of Libra is to create harmony, we have the potential to achieve harmony when we balance Aries and Libra.



Sundial showing Aries and Libra

The North Node of the Moon in the sign of Libra deals with things like peace, harmony, cooperation, balance, beauty and mutual trust.

The energy of Libra is all about us/we (versus me) and understanding (versus conflict). Libra is an air sign and wants us to use communication to build bridges where before none existed.

With Jupiter squaring the Nodes of the Moon, we have an opportunity, since Jupiter is a benefic planet, and we can use his energy to move us from Aries to Libra. This is a good time to slow down and contemplate our responses to various situations in life. We benefit from not simply acting out based on old habits, which could be associated with Aries traits, but moving toward the more harmonious reactions of Libra. In this way, we form new response patterns and we move from ME to

WE and from conflict to cooperation with this positioning of the North and South Nodes of the Moon.

To bring this all together, we can consider:

- Embracing an evolved view of our home, heritage and inner identify. Instead of considering ourselves merely as part of a particular family and nation, explore how you might think of yourself as part of larger humanity.
- Recognizing that our version of home, family and heritage can co-exist with the views that others hold.
- Moving from Me to We and from conflict to harmony more often in many circumstances in life. This is a great time to practice this!
- Making Love Not War!

When we think of anthems like 'make love not war', 'give peace a chance', and 'all you need is love' (thank you John Lennon), then we know we can use this Solstice as a time to move ourselves and our society forward by taking our sense of self and making it larger and more inclusive.

*In this way, the world becomes our home and
humanity becomes our heritage.*

Societal Impact

We always have too much war, on many levels, on our planet. There are a lot of wars and conflicts right now and they all contain aspects of what we have just been talking about: strongly held views of home and heritage acting according to the ME concept and creating war/conflict. The news is filled with places right now where we have two religious groups and/or nationalistic groups fighting against one another for power and control.

Mirroring Jupiter square the Nodes in Aries and Libra, the United States of America is currently weighing the potential to partner with Iran to create a settlement to the current crisis in Iraq. Normally, Iran is not a partner of the United States, so it may seem difficult for some or impossible for others to consider Iran as a partner. However, for this particular situation there is the opportunity to move from competition and conflict and considering the other as the enemy, to embracing "the Libra thing" and building a bridge though dialog and communication to find the place where we can create a win-win solution.

In a similar way, we observed some examples of embracing the win-win solutions of Libra in the media in the past few days:

- Some of this was just in passing debates where we were listening to people on both sides of the political spectrum in the United States discussing current issues. We were surprised to hear people admitting the problems we face as a nation today are complex. Obviously, this is not a direct solution at all, but, at least, it is not a heated debate (Aries) and blame game. When we see a problem as complex and we discuss it with one another, where many voices can be heard, we have hope for a Libran compromise. This might be reflective of a larger shift in the political tone.
- Gary Hart's article The Destruction of Memory (June 20, 2014 edition of the Huffington Post)

explores the lost memory of a time when politics in the USA was capable of building relationships between political parties and exploring balanced solutions to the complex problems of our world.

- Christiane Amanpour's interview of Hilary Clinton, to promote her new book, *Hard Choices*, explored the complexity of balancing solutions to our challenges and the reality of politics.
- Earlier in June, at the urging of Pope Francis, Israeli President Shimon Peres and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Pope Francis prayed together for peace in the Middle East at the Vatican. This is like taking the first step that might one day lead to peace and security.

Don't know what will happen in Iraq, the Middle East, or the struggles going on in Syria, in Ukraine, and many other parts of the world, including the US political debate, which is often quite out of balance these days - all of these represent ME warring against WE and conflict (Aries) winning out over compromise (Libra).

Of course, the quality of this Summer Solstice isn't going to change the world over the next three months in big ways. I am not predicting that peace will break out globally, though that would be great wouldn't it! Almost certainly, conflict and aggression will continue at various places around the world.

Unfortunately, we cannot change the entire world.

Fortunately, we can begin with our efforts and definitely make our lives more harmonious.

As Yogananda once said, "Change Yourself and You Have Done Your Part in Changing The World".

We each add our energy to the collective and by taking some small steps over this next three months as the Summer Solstice unfolds and energizes our world is a great time to spread love. I also hope that John Lennon's wish that we 'imagine' a world in which we all live as one. So, it is only possible one little step at a time. I wish that for you, for the world, for all of us. Thank you!

*Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too
Imagine all the people living life in peace
You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope some day you'll join us
And the world will live as one
John Lennon*

Juno and The Peacock

The 100 Eyes of Argus

On a recent visit to the Munich Zoo (to see those adorable polar bears babies again), we were greeted by a very patient and dramatic peacock who displayed his feathers for all to see for about 20 minutes. This was a very Neptunian moment!



On our way home, we saw an advertisement for an optic store and their logo was a peacock. We were giddy to see this because we understood the mythic connection. So, we wanted to share a bit about the connection between the peacock and optics.

First, artists are not just skilled with brush, pen and chisel, but they need to study history and myth in order to artistically render stories for us. So, artists will incorporate symbols into their artwork that help the viewer to identify the subject matter. If you learn to recognize these symbols, it can be very helpful when viewing mythic art. Also, this gets you one step closer to being a true Symbologist just like Robert Langdon in The Da Vinci Code! Just kidding!



Jupiter with his Eagle and Juno with her Peacocks.

For example, you know you are seeing Jupiter when you see an eagle nearby. You know you are seeing Venus when a pair of doves is nearby. Likewise, Juno, Jupiter's wife, is portrayed with a peacock nearby. The peacock is Juno's symbol.

So, why the connection to optics? Enter Argus, who is a mythic character with 100 eyes.

With his 100 eyes, Argus could literally keep an eye on things for you. Juno protected Argus because she employed his optical skills to keep an eye on her ever-roaming husband, Jupiter. Let's just say that Jupiter is not monogamous in myth. The 100 eyed Argus was tasked to watch over a nymph particularly favored by Jupiter. Frustrated by this constant watchful eye(s), Jupiter instructed Mercury to kill Argus so that Jupiter could again pursue the nymph, Io. So, Mercury killed Argus.

Juno lost her 'eyes' to watch Jupiter and, to honor the service of Argus, she collected his 100 eyes and preserved them permanently in the tail of a peacock. Hence, the 100 eyes of Argus are what become the colorful abundance of the peacock! So, we have a connection between vision and the peacock.

Likewise, another connection is that many newspapers are called The Argus giving credibility to the newspaper. Meaning, they have their eyes fixed on the world and can offer their vision to you within the pages of their newspaper.

So, no great meaning here, just a fun little, mythic connection!