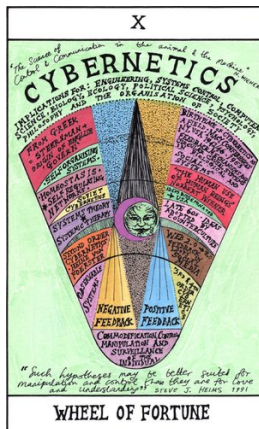


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Suzanne Treister: 'Hexen 2.0'

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The British artist Suzanne Treister has a unifying theory about everything that would concern anyone worried about the current state of global affairs. Ms. Treister delivers her thinking not in a footnote-larded treatise but in the form of a set of tarot cards, each illustrating in cartoon drawings and handwritten text a person, idea or event that changed the course of 20th-century history. (You can purchase a set at the gallery for \$20.) Here the hand-colored prints on which the published deck is based are displayed individually framed.

Ms. Treister's main theme is control — social, mental, technological and otherwise — exerted most powerfully and pervasively by means of feedback mechanisms. The stock market's feedback-induced ups and downs would be an example.

This may sound wonky, but Ms. Treister's images, which resemble diagrams made by a paranoid hippie, are fun as well as thought-provoking. Many of the cards portray famous players of the post-World War II era. The Death card features John von Neumann, an important participant in the Manhattan Project. Timothy Leary is the Magician. The Hermit is — who else? — Theodore Kaczynski, a.k.a. the Unabomber. Other cards represent the Central Intelligence Agency's covert experiments with psychoactive drugs; the rise of the Internet; and the emergence of "technogaianism", or "belief in the power of technology to restore earth's environment."

The connections drawn within and among the cards are so mind-boggling to contemplate that it seems entirely appropriate to comprehend them within a magical system like the tarot.