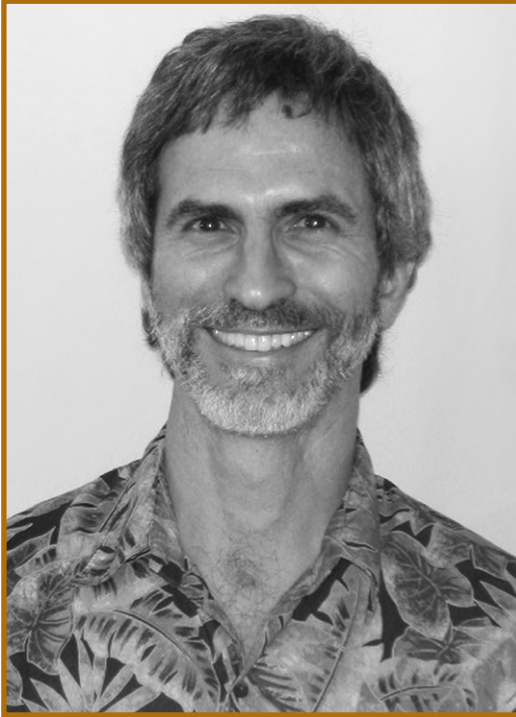


# **An Interview with**

# **Greg Bogart**

*by Kate Sholly*



*Greg Bogart is a gifted astrologer, therapist, teacher, and writer who lives and works in the San Francisco Bay Area. He is a teacher in the department of Counseling Psychology at John F. Kennedy University in Campbell, California, and the author of seven books.*

*Most of his books integrate spiritual-*

*ity and astrology in a refreshingly original way, and a few focus on vocational themes. Greg began practicing yoga and meditation at an early age and went on to study spirituality, mysticism, symbolism, and dreamwork, which have become important aspects of his astrology and psychotherapy practices. Six of his books are self-published: Astrology and Spiritual Awakening; Finding Your Life's Calling; Therapeutic Astrology: Using the Birth Chart in Psychotherapy and Spiritual Counseling; The Nine Stages of Spiritual Apprenticeship: Understanding the Student-Teacher Relationship; Rudhyar's Astrology in Plain Language; and Vocational Astrology Simplified. A seventh book, Astrology and Meditation: The Fearless Contemplation of Change, was published by The Wessex Astrologer, Ltd, 4A Woodside Road, Bournemouth, BH5 2AZ, England, Tel/Fax +44 1202 424695. Greg is currently completing a new book, Therapeutic Dreamwork: A Jungian Path to Emotional, Relational, and Spiritual Healing, to be released in the Fall of 2006. He has also produced a two-hour DVD entitled Predictive and Therapeutic Astrology: The New Alchemy.*

*To purchase any of Greg's books, call Dawn Mountain Press at (510) 412-0486 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time; Web site: [www.dawnmountain.com](http://www.dawnmountain.com). To contact Greg or to schedule a personal consultation, call (510) 594-4329. Also visit [www.gregbogart.net](http://www.gregbogart.net)*

## Greg Bogart

**Kate Sholly:** I heard somewhere that astrology found you when you were living in a tent in the woods of Eugene, Oregon.

**Greg Bogart:** That's right. I graduated from college in 1979, worked for six months in New York City, saved some money, and went to the West Coast. I lived in the forests of Oregon and Washington, on and off, for two years. I was a bit lost and confused then: Transiting Neptune was conjunct my natal Saturn at the time. It was a period of vivid dreams, awakening in nature, and vision quests. Several astrologers in Oregon did my chart and began teaching me. Mark McNutt and Susan Dearborn Jackson helped me a lot.

I also started reading astrology books. The ones that made the strongest impression were Alexander Rupert's *Cycles of Becoming*, Stephen Arroyo's *Astrology, Karma, and Transformation*, and Noel Tyl's *Analysis and Prediction*. I figured out that this Neptune transit was supposed to be a transitional time, a time of letting go of certainties. I experienced a deconditioning (Neptune) of all I had been taught by my parents and my upbringing in New York. I struggled with the values represented by my father (Saturn), who was an extraverted, highly intellectual business executive who had Sun conjunct Jupiter and Saturn. I sat in the woods, recorded my dreams, wrote music, and did yoga. Like Bob Dylan wrote, "I came in from the wilderness, a creature void of form." But through the study of astrology my life gradually took form, and I began fulfilling the tasks that my birth chart showed me.

**KS:** What got you hooked on astrology, initially?

**GB:** Astrology gave me a sense of focus and purpose. And it reassured me that the Neptune transit was, by nature, a period of uncertainty and that it was okay to be confused. As I gazed at my birth chart and transits, I got glimpses of who I could become. I didn't know



how to manifest it yet — I had to go step by step. But I had the beginnings of a dream, a vision for my life, and I trusted that this vision was the seed of my future.

Over time I realized that the chart needs my conscious involvement to unfold. My vision wasn't just going to happen by itself. Many astrologers wait out their transits, like bad weather patterns. It isn't enough to approach astrology in a passive, fatalistic way. We can work creatively with whatever we're given, including the difficult tests and tasks. We can live them consciously. We become responsive to each transit and unfold its meaning. We use astrology to anticipate the quality of the moment and act in accordance with it.

For example, when Saturn visits, we work hard. When Neptune visits, we kick back. The rhythmic activity of planetary energies moves us through a series of states — some solid, some liquid, some fiery, some icy cool. I approach astrology as a creative tool that I can use to evolve myself. I accomplish my destiny as I work with the tasks shown by my birth chart.

**KS:** So, that's what you mean when you say that consciousness changes everything.

**GB:** Yes, consciousness changes everything. It doesn't mean difficult things won't happen. Death, losses, and defeats of the ego are a part of our lives and can be accepted and courageously endured. Transiting Pluto was aspecting my natal Mars and Saturn for several years, and during this transit I had

to deal with intense power struggles in an academic environment (natal Saturn in Sagittarius). It became my task to neutralize some anger that got stirred up and to contain and focus my Mars energies. I had to be patient and strong; it wasn't easy, but I grew up a bit and got more organized.

Also, when Pluto was closely aspecting natal Mars, I was injured. I tore a ligament in my foot playing basketball and hobbled around for more than a year. I had to consciously live the Mars moment of pain, swelling, and inflammation. Simultaneously, transiting Chiron entered my 4th house and was conjunct my Capricorn Sun. The sore foot and the limp were symptoms of Chiron's wound. So, I tried to receive the injury as an initiation. I couldn't run, but it made me sit still and meditate more. My free will was exercised by how I met the circumstances (the injured foot and intense school politics) that were to some degree beyond my control. It's amazing to go through these kinds of experiences with awareness that we are passing through different planetary tests. Then these Pluto or Mars transits become enlightening, transformative experiences.

**KS:** You've written seven books now, and your emphasis has consistently been spiritual awakening or spiritual development. How did that begin for you?

**GB:** I began practicing yoga and meditation at age 14 and met Swami Muktananda when I was 16 years old. Transiting Uranus was conjunct natal Jupiter-Neptune. From ages 17 to 21, I meditated in an ashram environment. I got my college degree in Religious Studies. I was always interested in spirituality, mysticism, gnosis and hermetic wisdom, mythology, and symbolism. I got deeply involved with *hatha yoga* as a primary technique of self-liberation. I learned to free the breath, free the spine, free the mind. That's how I began the study of astrology. I would think about a transit and then meditate on it. I've always approached astrology as part of a *mandala* of practices that includes *hatha yoga*, meditation, dreamwork, and music. These five dis-

ciplines have been my practices since my teens and twenties; they are basically what I've been doing all my life. I consider astrology a discipline of spiritual awakening.

**KS: How do you see spiritual awakening? What are we awakening to? And how can contemplating our birth chart assist in the process?**

**GB:** As we study ourselves, our natal character, with honesty and self-acceptance, we can begin to sculpt and enhance the expression of our planets, so that we fully manifest our potentials. We awaken the timeless light, power, and consciousness that is embodied through us. We walk our own path in alignment with both generic transit cycles and our individual transits and progressions. Astrology is the gracious guide to our awakening as human beings, but we have to do the work. The birth chart is not a finished product; it's a map of what could happen.

Astrology can also awaken a sense of detachment, humor, and equanimity as we navigate various planetary transits. A few weeks ago, I was driving my car while transiting Moon and Mars were conjunct in Taurus and in an exact quincunx to transiting Pluto in Sagittarius, which was closely conjunct my natal Saturn in the 3rd house of motor vehicles. So, Pluto was conjunct natal Saturn and then the Mars-Moon conjunction came along to activate it. At that moment, somebody lurched into my lane and sideswiped me, smashing up the side of my car. Fortunately, I was unhurt. I remained poised, although ordinarily I'd have been quite annoyed by this little scrape. Instead I tried to contain it and receive the experience of the impact without a ripple in the mind. I remember thinking about the transit and deciding, "I'll go with it." The other party appreciated my relaxed attitude, we exchanged our insurance information, and he ended up settling with me privately, paying the whole \$2,600 bill. I learned that this, too, was a perfect moment, even if it was a jarring moment, a Mars moment of stress and friction. Astrology teaches us poise and the wisdom to face the scuffles of life.

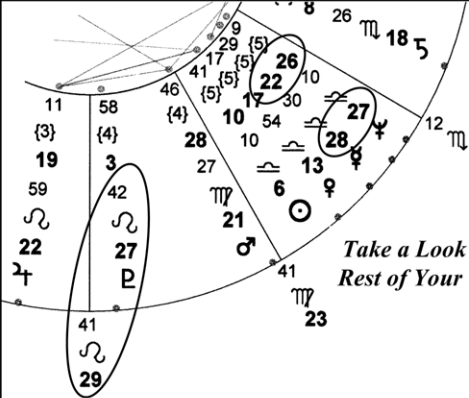
## **The birth chart is not a finished product; it's a map of what could happen.**

We learn to live each moment as it is. My dad died recently, while transiting Pluto was stationary direct conjunct my natal Saturn. It was very sad, but in its own way, it was part of perfection unfolding. My father had natal Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn conjunct in Virgo. He was focused, well-educated, stern, and analytical; he could be sharp and critical as well. He was a sociologist who studied the media and authored 11 books. He developed his natal potential admirably. He fell ill at the exact transit of Neptune opposite his natal Neptune. During his final weeks, he spent much of his time seemingly asleep but with his eyes wide open and gazing upward toward his forehead and his third eye. He seemed to be perceiving something beyond his physicality. Witnessing that during his Neptune transit was enlightening for me, and hopefully for him as well. He died October 15, 2005, during the lunar eclipse precisely at his Midheaven.

**KS: I've come to view astrology as a tool that can help us to see through the ego and all its self-protective strategies. Through the planets, signs, and aspects in our charts, we can understand the ego's limitations, stop fixating on the joys and difficulties of being human, and become willing to focus on the eternal Self.**

**GB:** Yes, one of the results of our art is that we begin to live in the open space beyond astrology, beyond the planets. In my book, *Astrology and Meditation*, I wrote: "We learn not to freeze any moment or experience or emotional state into permanence. Everything is changing. Reflecting on the ever-changing celestial pattern, we start to live as the Witness, the one who sees all with compassion. At the center of the chart is the Self, I Am, the field of consciousness. We are... the tranquil, eternal Being, not the constantly changing flux of events... We are unchanging Presence... I witness myself going through a variety of experiences, some pleasurable, some boring or tedious, some exciting, some gut-wrenching. But none of these experiences is what I am. I am the consciousness that grows through the totality of all experience."<sup>1</sup>

I mentioned earlier that astrology teaches detachment, so that we don't



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## Greg Bogart

react so much to the planets. Once I asked my friend and teacher Chakrapani Ullal how he was doing during some transit, and he told me, "I am always the same." It's such a paradox: We learn that we are changing, but we are also witnessing all of these experiences. This is how astrology becomes a tool for awakening. It is a means for realization of the eternal Self through experiencing manifestations of the divine in various archetypal situations.

Astrology also enlightens us about our feelings and relationships. I recently spoke to someone after a two-month period when the progressed Moon was conjunct Uranus in her 8th house. She wanted to leave her husband. They were in the middle of a real estate deal, and there were some disagreements about money, sex, and lack of intimacy. I told her, "This is not a warm and fuzzy moment. Uranus feels chilly, like you want to separate and be independent. But this, by itself, is not an enduring trend — the progressed Moon is already separating from Uranus. Is it worth letting go of your marriage over some financial squabbles? Let this moment be what it is. The progressed contact in Gemini has stirred your creative think-

ing about 8th-house shared investments." She thought hard about that. If we can help save one marriage through such a rudimentary insight about the progressed Moon, then our practice of astrology is powerful, and its immense therapeutic value is self-validating.

Then I said: "You have Mars in Aries in the 7th house opposite Venus in Libra. You've always been the conciliatory peacemaker. You also have to learn to accept your husband's dynamic and assertive energy. Sometimes it feels like he's pushy. Can you see that engaging with his energy has made you stronger? Does it really diminish you if Mars sometimes gets his way? Would your relationship change if you could be more accepting of his initiative?" She conceded that, without him, she never would have made all these changes. She said, "I've been failing to see how beautiful and noble he is. I project my Mars onto him and let him take the initiative, and then I get angry at him for it." I was challenging her to change her way of relating. My favorite Huna teaching states that "to love is to be happy with." Learning to be happy with other people is one of the things astrology can teach us.

**KS: In your book, *Astrology and Spiritual Awakening*, you wrote about planetary yogas in some depth. What are planetary yogas?**

**GB:** Everything in astrology — the entire wheel of planets, zodiac signs, and houses — all are yogas, paths to the center. A spiritual life is more than just meditation and yoga practice. It is an entire life lived with consciousness and purpose. It includes our 2nd house and how we deal with money; our 4th-house lives as householders and as land dwellers; our Mercurial life of the mind and learning; our Saturnian responsibilities. All of these are necessary facets of becoming a whole and evolved human being.

Sometimes our path involves navigating the complexity and occasional discordance of 7th-house relationships. When the Moon's rays are felt, we're in our feelings, experiencing a longing for attachment, contact, comfort. During 12th-house transits and Neptune passages, we become receptive, fluid, and plunge into stillness. All of these planetary and zodiacal gateways are yogas, paths to freedom. These are all ways that the great dragon of transformation roars and rouses us to our fullest self-expression and radiance.

**KS: What about Pluto yogas?**

**GB:** The Plutonian moment may involve power struggles, endings, sometimes death or losses. It's a time for release of resentments and fixations. Things need to be brought to closure. Plutonian initiations reveal and clarify

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our deepest motives for action, teaching us about the right and wrong uses of power and the destructive effects of our greed, envy, and urge to dominate. With Pluto, we deal with our negativity, destructiveness, cynicism, and despair. Sometimes, we encounter people who are hostile and controlling. It's a reptilian world out there. We must strive to release the poisons of hatred, greed, resentment, and fixation, and have a pure intention. Then it's possible to become magnetic and influential, conduits of power and intelligence. These are goals worth striving for during a Pluto transit.

**KS:** In your book, *Astrology and Meditation*, you describe a method called symbol amplification. Tell us about that.

**GB:** Symbol amplification is the method of pausing over the meaning of our natal planets or our current transits and progressions and asking ourselves: What could it mean? How can I unfold the highest potential of this? Just as, to understand dreams, we ask questions and unfold the meaning of the dream symbols, chart symbols need to be amplified by imagining possibilities and projecting outcomes. It helps to assume that all of this is instruction for us.

For example, in a quiet, meditative state, ask yourself: What is the potential outcome of this Neptune transit? Maybe everything is on hold. Maybe everything is uncertain, nebulous, and fluid. That's the moment when you need to cultivate serenity, silence, and receptivity. If it's a Saturn challenge, ask yourself: Where do I need to make a decision or define a steadier focus? You don't have to be the tragic victim of a Saturn transit. Just accept that there's always work to do. As Saturn moves through your chart and activates each planet and house, strive to improve your functioning and expression in those areas. Each transit and each experience is the precise ingredient we need right now to transform ourselves. To the best of our abilities, we become both masters of ourselves and servants of the great work.

Symbol amplification is a way of cutting through our tendency to become scared of astrological events, afraid of

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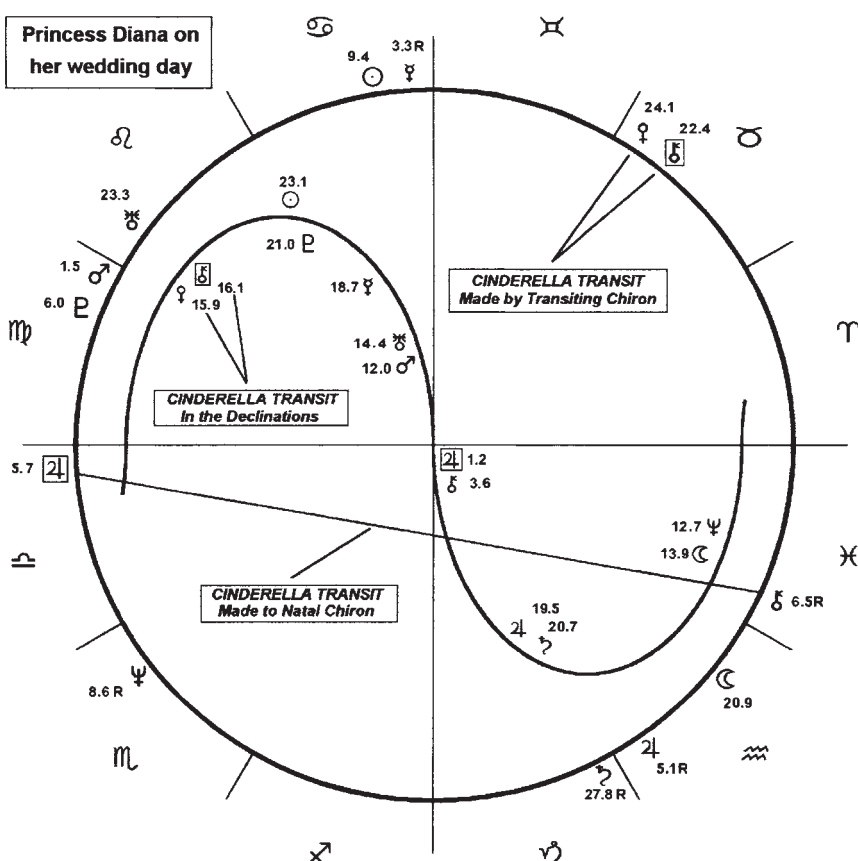
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## Greg Bogart

what's coming. That is totally natural. We all go through daunting experiences; we all have our heroic challenges. These long Pluto or Neptune or Saturn transits certainly call forth all the courage we've got, but that's what they're for — to test us, to strengthen us, and to refine us.

**KS: In your book *Therapeutic Astrology*, you've written about integrating astrology with your psychotherapy practice. Can you say a few words about this synthesis?**

**GB:** Astrology is an important tool for psychotherapists, because it provides symbolic reference points that focus our work by giving us a sense of timing and teaching us about the process. By translating planetary symbolism into the psychotherapeutic setting, astro-therapists gain insight into a person's core feelings, traumas, and relational conflicts. Therapeutic astrology is process-oriented rather than event-oriented.

I'll give you a brief example: I worked with a young woman who had transiting Uranus conjunct her Pisces Moon in the 7th house. She wanted to know what was happening; she was quite depressed and crying all the time. She and her boyfriend were separating. She had moved to a different apartment (the Moon rules the home), and she was not feeling close to her friends. This brought up sadness about the loss of her mother when she was a small child and feelings of being abandoned, both past and present. All of this was in line with the Pisces Moon symbolism. I said, "It's okay that you're crying. Bring me your river of tears." We bonded at that moment, and her emotional healing process began.

Gaining awareness of the planetary symbolism helped to make this a workable situation for her. She was able to acknowledge her loneliness and hopeless feelings. The transit to the Moon signified her desire to reach out to form new emotional connections, especially with women, and she lived through the transit as a period of emotional trans-

## *Saturn teaches us to be more responsible for what is happening to us, for how our lives are unfolding.*

formation and renewal. There was no single crucial event during this period, but she began to change and experience freedom from old emotional patterns.

She validated her need for close emotional attachment (Moon in the 7th). Part of this was achieved through her connection with me as an empathic and responsive presence. I said, "Uranus is moving the furniture around in your 7th house; it is changing the cast of characters right now. If you resist change, you suffer. If you celebrate change, you transform." Later, she told me, "I feel elated! I'm free! It's a good thing my boyfriend and I are breaking up. I'm free of his needs and always considering what he wants first. I can do what I want." She was describing the tendency of her 7th-house Pisces Moon to merge with her partner while submerging her own emotional needs.

She also began to touch a deep wellspring of instinctual mother energy. She realized that she'd been in a state of emotional fusion with her mother, who suffered from postpartum depression. She said, "Mom's depression seeped into me on a lunar, unconscious level." Recognizing that she had been carrying her mother's feelings was profoundly liberating. She began to transform her loneliness into an experience of depth in aloneness.

I love to work with astrology in this way, not to predict what is going to happen but to remain a part of the process while trying to help the client realize the potentials of the process. The astro-therapist is a facilitator of change. The work should be grounded and lead to tangible and dynamic change.

**KS: Does this process orientation keep you from predicting for your clients? I heard you say in a lecture that you're much more interested in what's happening now in a client's life.**

**GB:** No, it doesn't mean I never predict for clients. All astrologers predict, to one degree or another, because they anticipate trends and possibilities. But, for me, it's not just a matter of predicting what's going to happen. I feel things as they are happening, and I become part of what's happening. I also focus on helping clients to understand what is being asked of them during difficult transits: How is this a task? What actions need to be initiated? My goal is not just to predict but to find the meaning, the potential, the emotional quality of each transit or progression. Instead of being resigned to "what's in the stars," I want to use astrology to transform myself and others, to understand what action needs to be taken at any moment.

**KS: As a Capricorn, and an astrologer who's written eloquently on the planet Saturn, what can you share about dealing with challenging natal Saturn placements, as well as transits and progressions involving Saturn?**

**GB:** The natal placement of Saturn denotes areas where we face challenges and delays in development — the areas of life signified by Saturn's sign, house, and natal aspects. The first step is to deal with our fears and inhibitions and develop ourselves in those areas of life. For instance, if Saturn is in the 2nd house, we may have some initial stresses around finances that teach us the value of money and what we have to do to get it; over time we could develop a very grounded, practical consciousness about money matters. Wherever Saturn is placed, we face difficulties from youth and immaturity or the unwillingness to face reality; sometimes we confront the problems of aging and accepting our limitations.

Saturn represents the unending tasks of maturation and the need to develop patience, focus, and persistence. We have to master the task of Saturn in its house. If it's in the 1st house, we have to master our self-doubts and gain confidence in our competency and seriousness of purpose. If Saturn is in the 11th house, we need to accept the responsibilities of group membership and being part of an orga-



nization, helping that organization to fulfill its purpose in fostering change within the collective. If Saturn is in the 7th house, we have the tasks of long-term relationships and how to be a responsible partner, how to find someone who is appropriately saturnine. With Saturn in the 4th house, we learn about the responsibilities of home ownership or making a family environment resilient and workable.

We do have to operate within certain structures and limitations. We operate within the limits of our field of life, our occupation, our relationships — all the things that define our enduring life structures. Saturn transits can bring their challenges and adversities, but I choose to believe that these experiences are in some sense intended for us. I try to hold the awareness that “I really need this.” Saturn teaches us to be more responsible for what is happening to us, for how our lives are unfolding. Through conscious attunement to Saturn, hard work and sustained effort become an integral part of how we shape our lives.

**KS: I heard part of a lecture you gave on the Jupiter–Saturn cycle recently. Jupiter in Scorpio will soon be squaring Saturn in Leo. What do you see happening in this new phase of the cycle?**

**GB:** The 20-year Jupiter–Saturn cycle helps define the tasks of adaptation within the Jupiter–Saturn world of culture and social existence: setting goals, making plans, and patiently working to achieve them. In the spring and summer of 2000, Jupiter and Saturn were conjunct at about 24° Taurus. You can find out which natal house, or realm of life, was the focal point of the Jupiter–Saturn conjunction by locating 24° Taurus in your chart. At that time, you may have made important choices pertaining to this area of life. This winter, and into the summer of 2006, Jupiter in Scorpio will square Saturn in Leo. This is an important time to act decisively, to make more growthful and substantive whatever had its birth during the conjunction of 2000.

The First Quarter square phase of any cycle is about a crisis in action and

the growth of form. It’s time to get on with it, to figure out what we have to do to manifest our vision now, because the Jupiter–Saturn square is about making things happen to realize our plans and goals. It’s a moment to more fully invest ourselves in the Jupiter–Saturn task of meaningful involvement in our social, occupational, and relational environments.

I track the phases of this 20-year cycle just as I track the monthly lunation cycle. The Jupiter–Saturn cycle will be moving toward its culmination in May and August of 2010, at the Jupiter–Saturn opposition, during the Uranus–Pluto square. Understanding the phases of this cycle lends a sense of purpose to our lives as we contemplate how to proceed with long-term projects and commitments. We can also consider the current transiting house placements of Jupiter and Saturn in our charts.

**KS: Many of us have been looking ahead to a slew of outer-planet transits between now and 2012, but the one coming right up is Neptune’s**



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## Greg Bogart

### opposition to Saturn. What kinds of change will this transit bring?

**GB:** I'm going to practice a little symbol amplification right now by asking what it could mean. How can we become part of this energy in 2006? Reinhold Ebertin says that Saturn-Neptune signifies "self-restraint, cautiousness, foresight ... Suffering, renunciation, asceticism."<sup>2</sup> That's very interesting to me right now at this moment of great planetary suffering. The institutional, social, and structural decay and uncertainty implicit in Saturn-Neptune symbolism have become vividly apparent in recent months — Hurricane Katrina and the images of water flooding in through the walls and streets of a great city, the failures of FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), the Arctic ice melting. It's going to be quite a ride. Saturn-Neptune also denotes taking care of oth-

ers and the necessity for compassion. This seems relevant, given the fierce storms that have been blowing through our land recently.

Ebertin also writes that Saturn-Neptune means "methodical execution of plans."<sup>3</sup> We may need to cultivate *practical vision*. Saturn-Neptune can be that experience of disillusionment where we feel that our existing life structures don't measure up to our ideal. We must realize that this moment is *it* — this life is our vessel of the spirit. Saturn-Neptune tells me: Manifest your vision now. Master your disappointment and discouragement. Build and sustain the temple of your life. Don't fall apart and waste away or become dysfunctional.

To me, Saturn opposite Neptune represents the task of self-mastery through meditation and achieving composure, equanimity, and nonattachment in the face of changing and impermanent forms. I'm trying to breathe more and to focus on having a more spacious body. I want to connect to nature and feel its living spirit in plants, vegetation, and food. I feel my own physical nature

being spiritualized. To manage the vibrational blending of Saturn-Neptune, I move constantly between attunement to the formless realms, awareness of the ever-changing planetary-archetypal tapestry, and my embodied life, my daily schedule of events. My dream life is very active, and I'm constantly translating the inner world of symbols and archetypes into the daily world of choice, action, and embodiment. So, I imagine various levels of meaning in this planetary alignment. Using symbol amplification, I let myself evolve within the archetypal patterns of this astrological moment.

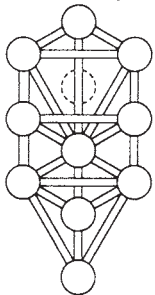
### KS: Can you also talk about some of the other outer-planet alignments later this decade and beyond?

**GB:** From November 2008 to September 2009, Saturn squares Uranus. Then Saturn opposes Pluto from November 2009 until August 2010. Finally, in 2012–2013, Uranus in Aries squares Pluto in Capricorn. This will be an eventful transit, of course, because

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it marks the First Quarter square of the Uranus–Pluto cycle that began with the conjunction of the mid 1960s. This transit will be an opportunity to more fully realize the progressive and revolutionary potentials that emerged at that time: open defiance of corrupt political leadership; anti-war activism to resist destructive militarism; the formation of intentional communities; breakthroughs in science and space travel; new paradigms in health, diet, organic farming, and sustainable living; to name a few. Finding new solutions to our energy needs is essential and will be a central issue of this transit. We'll see major changes in how we generate the energy and electricity (Uranus) that drive the engines of change, commerce, and human technology. Our increasing reliance on nuclear energy is creating a radioactive waste disposal problem that no one seems prepared to deal with.

Uranus–Pluto is the power of transformation. Things will be changing rapidly, and we need to welcome change and become part of it. Our task is to merge with the power of change. Ebertin says that Uranus–Pluto is “the process of revolution and transformation... the fight for the establishment of innovations and reforms.”<sup>4</sup> To be a part of that, we need to be transformers, harnessing the creative genius of Uranus and of our consciously expressed individuality. The powers of the Earth and the heavens are also accelerating change in our world. Uranus–Pluto is volcanic energy, heralding strong earthquakes and furious storms. It also inflames explosive expressions of the Plutonian element. As always, there will be those who resort to violence and terrorism. Already, we have torturers within our government and our military. That's the part I find really disturbing: the flagrant, lawless violations of human rights. During Uranus–Pluto, one hopes that applied principles of nonviolence can be cultivated and put into practice.

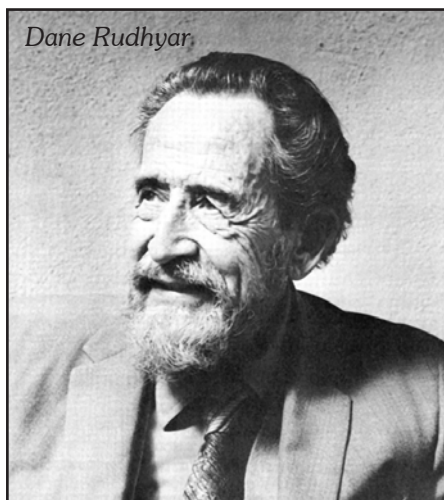
Meanwhile, immense powers have become centralized into increasingly complex systems of global management. We can expect more of this while Pluto is in Capricorn. Our democracy is facing its ultimate test. Uranus–Pluto is also going to be a continuing story of military force and occupation, the

## ***Accelerated planetary upheaval requires that we become magicians of change.***

march of advancing economic globalization, and resistance that cannot easily be subjugated. During the 1960s conjunction, the U.S. tried to impose its will in Vietnam and was defeated. Today, the U.S. military occupation of Iraq faces an uncertain outcome, morally and politically. In the process, we have exposed countless thousands of Iraqi citizens and U.S. soldiers to depleted uranium, white phosphorus, and other toxic chemical agents. One would be naïve not to anticipate some of the destructive emanations of the Uranus–Pluto energy.

During the alignments of Saturn, Uranus, and Pluto, accelerated planetary upheaval requires that we become magicians of change. If there was ever a moment to fully activate ourselves, this is the time to do it! Plan. Act. Ground. Join together. Stay steady. The Uranus–Pluto conjunction of the 1960s was a time of immense political change and social unrest. Now, added to those issues are unprecedented waves of environmental disturbance. At times, Uranus square Pluto means change with the kind of volatility that erupted during the recent riots in France.

Uranus square Pluto represents forces of revolutionary change. We can expect radical changes in the technol-



ogy and politics of how we live. And given that we've massively disrupted the rhythms and order of nature, which now need to rebalance themselves, however tumultuously, it's a good idea to be prepared for climate change.

I try to remember that Pluto is the energy and power to engineer change; it's the power of unshakeable intention. It can evoke our sense that divine will and the spiritual powers of the universe are helping direct and shape our individual and collective destinies. Poet John Trudell wrote, “Synchronicity is the rendezvous where magic and power meet.” I think the Uranus–Pluto square is that convergence of magic and power. It signifies an increasing influence of the principle of synchronicity, a sense that we are part of the fabric of accelerated evolution, a sense that everything is unfolding perfectly, in precise alignment with planetary cycles. We are each a part of this; that's why we're here at this time. So, get into it. Transform yourself in accordance with the pattern of your nature. Uranus–Pluto represents powerful waves and surges of change. Don't resist it. Merge with it.

**KS: Recently, you published a book called *Rudhyar's Astrology in Plain Language*. Tell us about your connection to Dane Rudhyar and how his ideas have affected your life and your practice of astrology.**

**GB:** Rudhyar taught that astrology is a philosophy of life and a psychology of spiritual evolution. His person-centered, humanistic astrology went beyond the traditional focus on prediction and events and emphasized the spiritual meaning of events. He showed that events gain new meaning when viewed as moments within structured cycles of change. Astrology is a means of discerning the shape and structure of time, its waxing and waning phases, its orderly unfolding. The person-centered approach to astrology implies that planetary motions do not absolutely determine our destinies and that there is a significant place for action, will, and responsiveness to planetary cycles. This means that it is up to each of us to try to realize the potentials indicated by our birth charts. We have divine

## Greg Bogart

potentials, but we must actualize these by conscious passage through a series of human situations. This approach assumes that challenge and suffering (the tests of Saturn or Pluto, for example) are meaningful parts of preparing and crafting our character.

### **KS: Did you actually meet with Rudhyar?**

**GB:** I met with him several times the week of his 90th birthday in 1985, right before he died. I first wrote to him in 1983, when I was reading his book, *Culture, Crisis, and Creativity*.<sup>5</sup> We began a correspondence that lasted through the final two years of his life. I was interested in his idea that we're living in an autumnal phase of our current cultural cycle, when many social institutions are decaying. At such a moment, he said, it's the task of seed individuals to concentrate their efforts on those projects and visions that will give birth to a new culture cycle. Those who are aligned with the flow of time (through astrological study) can live through difficult historical moments with grace and courage, serving as conduits of creative intelligence and of the spiritual energies of wholeness, love, and unity.

Rudhyar described how our evolution is accelerated as we become responsive to the outer planets. For example, Uranus awakens our capacity to act as agents of innovation and change. As we cross the threshold of Uranus, we make a decisive "act of severance" from the past and from the mindset of the dominant culture. We respond to what the universe wants us to be and do. Strong winds of change pour through us. We wield the power of invention, technology, and innovation. Touched by the high-voltage electricity of Uranus, we find our own direction and become part of an exciting energy of collective change. As an example, I recently had Uranus quincunx natal Uranus. I became electrified by the world of digital video technology, which enabled me to produce my

***Time evolves.  
We're not just  
repeating cycles  
that have happened  
in the past.***

own music videos in an astonishingly short time.<sup>6</sup> It was almost effortless.

### **KS: How did Rudhyar view the transpersonal state and its connection to Neptune?**

**GB:** Rudhyar wrote that individuals on the transpersonal path make an internal shift he called "self-consecration to the whole." They turn the center of their being from the lesser to the greater whole, from the ego to the spirit and wholeness within and around us.<sup>7</sup> As we respond to Neptune, we strive to live in conscious connection with the spiritual need of the moment, the spiritual intention of the Whole. We cultivate compassion, stillness, a selfless attitude, the imagination of dreamers and visionaries. We become a clear lens through which light and consciousness can be expressed.

Rudhyar saw astrology as a form of contemporary discipleship that prepares us to perform our role with heightened consciousness and power. To approach astrology as discipleship means that we view each astrological moment as an initiation. As we move through some of these passages with consciousness, we are changed permanently. All our circuits are activated.

### **KS: Which of Rudhyar's techniques do you find the most helpful in your personal practice and in your work with clients?**

**GB:** I use the lunation cycle, the progressed lunation cycle, and interplanetary transit cycles. These techniques make us aware that life cycles are constantly beginning and ending. These methods help us discern at any moment where we stand in the flow of infinite time. We realize that we've been through similar transits, experiences, and phases before — nebulous Neptune moments, fiery Mars experiences,

climactic Full Moons, and waning Balsamic phases. But each moment is also new and unexpected. Time evolves. We're not just repeating cycles that have happened in the past. Each cycle is lived on a new tier of the evolutionary spiral. Each moment is full of possibilities. We gain freedom within the structured unfolding of time and change.

I think Rudhyar was one of the most practical philosophers and metaphysicians of all times, because his cyclical approach to astrology has so many powerful applications in our daily lives. His message is still deeply relevant to the practice of astrology today. In my book, I focus on Rudhyar's basic principles and techniques, his philosophy of Wholeness, and what he referred to as a transpersonal approach to astrology. I also draw parallels between Rudhyar's astrology and Buddhism, Jung's depth psychology, and Assagioli's Psychosynthesis. I wrote, "Surveying Rudhyar's work is like hiking on a great mountain. Trails lead off in all directions."<sup>8</sup> Rudhyar's books are as fresh and alive for me today as they were when I first discovered them in 1980.

### **KS: Greg, thanks for enlightening us about astrology's spiritual and evolutionary potentials.**

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