Susan Deacy, "Entry on: Endless Odyssey: A Mythic Storytelling Game by Sarah Young", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2020). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1079. Entry version as of November 01, 2026.

Sarah Young

Endless Odyssey: A Mythic Storytelling Game

United Kingdom (2019)

TAGS: Bacchanal Centaur(s) Cerberus Charioteer Cyclops / Cyclopes Hero(es) Labyrinth Medusa Minotaur Nymphs Pegasus Vulcan





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Endless Odyssey: A Mythic Storytelling Game
Studio/Production Company	Publisher: Laurence King, London
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	United Kingdom
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2019
First Edition Details	*The Endless Odyssey. A Mythic Storytelling Game*. Illustrations by Sarah Young. London: Laurence King Publishers, 2019.
Genre	Board games*
Target Audience	Children (aged 8 and above)
Author of the Entry	Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk
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This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Sarah Young (Illustrator)

Sarah Young is a British printmaker, painter, designer and illustrator whose work often looks at myth. She first went into business as a travelling puppet show, which eventually evolved into an art enterprise. Her paintings appear in galleries throughout the UK; for example, her 'Castor and Pollux' painting is on show at Brighton. She is based on the South Coast of England and works in Brighton. She creates a huge range of products, including dolls, tea towels and puppet making kits.

Sarah was born in Surrey, and during the 1950s her mother was a fashion designer and her father a sculptor and art teacher. She gained a Foundation Diploma at Reigate School of Art and Design, then studied Illustration at Brighton. Falling in love with Brighton, she became a pavement artist, then travelling puppet show performer with Jon Tutton. She is the founder of the Brighton Art Fair.

Sarah's illustrations to date include those for *Greek Myths* (Walker Books 2012) and *Endless Odyssey: A Mythic Storytelling Game* (Laurence King 2019). Sarah says of her role in illustrating *Greek Myths,* 'I loved these myths as a child, so it was a dream job, though daunting, to be asked to illustrate them. I hope the pictures help to convey something of the excitement of these beautifully-told stories.' Her inspirations include Arthur Rackham, Edmund Dulac, Picasso, and Eric Ravilious. Information about her personal life and birth dates is scarce on the internet, possibly by choice.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: August 3, 2020);

Biographical information at back of book;

Yale Books Blog (accessed: August 3, 2020);

Toovey's Blog (accessed: August 3, 2020);

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laurenceking.com (accessed: July 30, 2020);

stjudesprints.co.uk (accessed: July 30, 2020).

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Additional information

Summary

Endless Odyssey comprises a set of 20 storytelling cards, each depicting a character or object from the world of ancient Greek myth each depicted in a landscape including mountains and with the sea often visible in the distance. Whichever order the cards are placed in, they create what the accompanying "Guide to the Games" calls a "seamless scene" which stretches to over five feet if all the cards are used.

The cards, following the order listed in the accompanying short guide are: Pegasus, Tempe, Prophetess, Shepherd, Minotaur, Messenger, Centaur, Cyclops, Charioteer, Bacchanal, Huntress, Labyrinth, Medusa, Hero, Volcano, Cerberus, Sorceress, Nymph, Warrior, Buried Treasure.

The guide gives a short caption for each card. For example, for Medusa, the player is told "You defy death nearing her swirling nest of snakes and forked tongue," while for the caption for Volcano asks: "Will lava bury the city, or might an ensuing tsunami propel our hero home over the water?" The guide comes with rules for four games for varying numbers of players ranging from "Dire consequences' (2-4) to "An Olympian Relay" for any number.

The guide notes that the game is a revival of myrioramas, or "many pictures" popular in the 19th century. Other sets are available by the same publisher including *the Mystery Mansion* and the *Hollow Woods.*

Analysis

The set of storytelling cards is presented as a "make-your-own choice" game which can be played in several different ways. In the game "Myriad Mysteries" for instance, each of the 2-5 players is dealt 4 or 5 cards, face down, and takes turns to develop a story using the cards in the order they choose. In the game "Dire Consequences," meanwhile, a story is built from cards turned over by each player until certain "special consequences" cards are played. By playing "Medusa" against a fellow player, for example, the player leaves the game turned "to stone."

Each card's depiction in the guide – presumably authored by Sarah Young, the illustrator – gives a brief account of the particular

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character, object etc. depicted on the front. As each of these accounts provides the kind of depiction of its subject found widely in textbooks and retellings of classical myth, players familiar with classical myth from other sources should be unlikely to find anything surprising on the cards. That said, players are invited to make their own decisions as to the possibilities of specific cards via descriptions which typically offer more than one possible interpretation. "Buried treasure," for example, could be "a gift from Pandora" or – in a brief departure from the fantasy-land of myth, "just an old pot." Meanwhile, Centaur ("this fantastic half-man, half-horse") might be "to be trusted"; alternatively, the player is warned, his 'wild nature [might] prevail."

In addition to being played as a game with rules, the cards might prompt players – or even individuals – to create their own stories, in keeping with the original purpose of myrioramas as leisure activities or aids to practice drawing. Such a use would be in keeping, too, with other recent uses of the cards as sources of inspiration for story-tellers, notably Philip Pullman (Pullman 2017). Indeed, If the cards are used without reliance on the descriptions, then the potential for appealing to the user's imagination becomes richer. For instance, while the description introduces Pegasus as a "four-legged flying friend," why not a Pegasus who is the hero of the story? Similarly, the "Charioteer" card includes a distant ship and a hare in the foreground, either of which might be the focus rather than the chariot.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Bacchanal Centaur(s) Cerberus Charioteer Cyclops / Cyclopes Hero(es) Labyrinth Medusa Minotaur Nymphs Pegasus Vulcan
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Abandonment Adolescence Adventure Heroism Journeys Knowledge Magic powers Nature Storytelling Travel Treasure-hunting Truth and lies
Further Reading	Bryant Davies, Rachel, *Classics at Play: Greco-Roman Antiquity in*

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British Children's Culture, c. 1750–1914, Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming.

Hyde, Ralph, "Myrioramas, Endless Landscapes: The Story of a Craze", *Print Quarterly* 21 (2004).

Pullman, Philip, "My Writing Day", *The Guardian,* 23.12.17, theguardian.com (accessed: July 30, 2020).

Addenda

ISBN: 9781786275172

Genre: Myriorama storytelling card set; Choose-your-own story

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