

artist statement

A Cosmic Incubation

The concept originated from my relationship with **the planet Jupiter** and with **Stevie Wonder**. Long before the internet existed—back when I was not yet even in junior high school—I saved up my allowance to buy a vinyl record of "Songs in the Key of Life" by Stevie Wonder. I would listen to it absorbedly, despite not understanding much English. A song titled "Saturn" is set to a slow major-key melody and depicts a return to Saturn—a place where people smile, fly, and live to the age of 205. I grew up fascinated by Jupiter, the solar system's largest planet, and by Saturn, which Stevie sang of as his home, all without fully grasping the song's implied meaning.

In mythology, Saturn is the coldest and most loveless of the planetary deities; astronomically, it is a perilous world filled with toxic gases and soft soil that swallows everything whole. Saturn had two sons who hold profound significance in my own life, though he loved neither of them—Jupiter, and Chiron. Chiron's life ended through Jupiter's act of compassionate love, and he was granted the title of Sagittarius. Also, Chiron's beloved disciple Asclepius was constellated as Ophiuchus and placed right next to Sagittarius on ecliptic. In the zodiac, I belong to both Sagittarius and Ophiuchus, and Jupiter is my guardian deity. Chinese astrology relies on Jupiter's twelve-year cycle, and under the Nine Star Ki system, I also fall under Jupiter's influence. Although neither Jupiter nor Saturn takes centre stage in these four pieces, my creativity began with Jupiter and concluded with Saturn.

Additionally, had I not delved thoroughly into Ophiuchus, the newcomer, I would never have discovered the existence of Chiron, also the reason why the song "Saturn" suddenly resurfaced. It was only at the very last moment of the creative process that every element dawned, allowing for the miraculous discovery of the connections between Sagittarius, Ophiuchus, Jupiter, and Saturn. It feels as though destiny guided this process—a true feat of divination and the inevitable moment when the sprout finally awakened. I want to believe that the seed had been sown—unbeknownst to me—nearly fifty years ago. That is why I named the series of work **"a cosmic incubation"**, where historical divination merges with the human heart, transforming into a contemporary vision.

Having gained understanding of English and listening to "Saturn" after nearly half a century, I reaffirm that it is a critique of human society—or Earth itself. It mocks how cold our world is, questions why we foolishly persist in futile conflicts, and suggests that Saturn would be a far better place to live. The message of this song seems more relevant than ever at this moment, and I hope this message will be delivered to you through my art.

Personal conclusion regarding Divination

Theoretically, it is possible to live life from a purely rationalist perspective, eschewing invisible theories such as divination and superstition entirely. Divination, however, has an empathetic presence. A positive prediction can boost one's confidence, while a negative one can prompt a correction in behaviour. A wiser approach is to consider how revelation can harness these psychological effects to cultivate a positive state of mind.

As forms of divination, mythology, religion, superstition, and even science evolve with the changing times, what is it that remains true and worthy of belief for humanity? While human emotions and political systems shift easily across eras and nations, the physical laws such as the principle of the gravity—"reproducibility" never change and remain constant—whether for a primitive human ten thousand years ago, a modern AI, or a human ten thousand years in the future. Furthermore, no matter how advanced a civilisation we build, regardless of differences in culture, ideology or religion, there exists the human unconscious, fundamental, and ineluctable, mechanism of desire to live. Even if the entire world were a lie, the strong fact of one's own conscious existence remains true. The instinct for survival is the singular truth that transcends borders, eras, and differing values. Divination is but a gentle whisper from the cosmos, echoing what is to come.

MIHO, Phtographic Collage

The Thirteen Zodiac Signs: 50 diameter
The Chinese Zodiac Animals: 50 diameter
The Nine Star Ki: 40 diameter
Orbit of The Planetary Deities: 60 diameter

Te AWAHOU COLLECTIVE

Working together in one Spirit

Kotahi Tonu Wairua o Nga Mea Katoa

About the Works

The placement of a cat in almost the centre of every piece is not simply because I love cats. Despite having healed human hearts for ages, the cat plays no role in the original themes of these four astrology systems. There is a folktale recounting how, when the god was recruiting animals for the Chinese Zodiac, the cat was deceived by the rat and failed to be selected. Whether fact or fiction, the story goes that this is why cats chase rats. Cats do not appear in original Greek mythology either. Although cats had already been domesticated and were worshipped as gods in Egypt, the Egyptian government strictly prohibited their export by law; for the Greeks, cats were rare creatures. For these reasons, I placed a cat on the point of centre and I decided to anthropomorphise cats into Planetary Deities.

In addition, I was passionately influenced by the zodiac illustration of Yuko Higuchi—a Japanese artist I greatly respect—in which a cat was positioned at the centre. My own zodiac work was created as a tribute and a mark of admiration for her work; the placement of the cat serves to create a sense of unity across the four series.

In my zodiac wheel, you find a heart figure equipped with an arm. This was the accidental result of AI's misinterpreting prompt while generating samples; I chose to adopt the image and turned it as Sagittarius. It became my Chiron. I only learned of Chiron after the work was already completed, it feels as though a new layer of meaning could be retroactively applied: this heart continues to carry on the legacy of Chiron's achievement, pulsing eternally.

A white snake is also included in every piece. While snakes may not be a familiar sight in New Zealand, in Japan, they have long been revered in Shinto as sacred messengers of the gods. Some people may view them as dangerous due to their venom; however, in modern medicine, their venom is extracted to produce anti-venom, transforming a deadly substance into a life-saving remedy. The "Rod of Asclepius" serves as a symbol of medicine and appears in the emblem of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Since dragons do not exist, I asked AI to generate an image of a real looking dragon through a Chinese dragon figurine.

I began creating the work "Orbit of the Planetary Deities" purely by chance. I never even imagined it would actually be completed. For the 2D orrery, after planning the composition and character design with Adobe Photoshop, I asked the AI to finalise with retouching. She seemed to love the creative process so much that I had a fun struggle trying to keep her results in check. While creating this work, I felt as though I had returned to my teenage years, when I was engrossed in comics, animations and my master of life, Stevie Wonder. For design purposes, the scale of the stars and the orbits in this work differ from astronomical data.

As Side Notes

Discovered in 1930, Pluto was reclassified as a "dwarf planet" by the IAU in 2006, establishing it as a representative of the trans-Neptunian objects. Similarly, in September 2016, NASA sparked a global stir by noting that thirteen constellations actually sit along the ecliptic, including Ophiuchus. It is amusing to imagine a Sagittarius, including me, reacting to horoscopes that suddenly felt completely off the mark—yet that, too, is part of the fun of divination.

