



# URANUS

## A Community's Compilation

collected by Frank C. Clifford

Following on from April/May's tribute to Mercury, in this issue I am presenting a collection of opinions, ideas, and observations about Uranus from members of our community. After Mercury, exploring Uranus seemed an ideal choice, as this planet has been referred to as the "higher octave" of Mercury, and both planets — along with Jupiter — have long been associated with astrology and our role as astrologers. Of the three, Uranus as an "outer," "generational," or "transpersonal" planet has been linked to the astrological community and the astrologer's place inside (and outside) society.

Attempting to define a planet that has in its nature a resistance to being categorised or pigeonholed is an interesting challenge, but I hope many of the ideas here will help to acquaint readers with the planet's key principles and perhaps even stimulate, in a truly Uranian manner, some further thought and enquiry into the implications of Uranus in our modern world. Once again, for source material, I have accessed my extensive library of English-language astrology books and back issues of *The Mountain Astrologer*. If readers wish to invest in a volume wholly dedicated to Uranus, I would recommend *The Art of Stealing Fire* by Liz Greene (CPA Press, 1996), which addresses many of the areas presented here.

### Discovering the God of the Starry Heavens

Equipped with 27 known moons, Uranus takes 84 years to orbit the Sun, spending an average of 7 years per sign (although this ranges from around 6.5 years in the signs of Leo to Scorpio, to around 7.5 years in the signs of Aquarius, Pisces, and Aries). Unlike the other planets that appear to rotate like spinning tops, Uranus turns like an extraterrestrial tombola. It

rotates at a skewed axial tilt of  $97.77^\circ$ , so each pole gets 42 years of continuous sunlight, followed by 42 years of darkness.

Before its official discovery by William Herschel on March 13, 1781 (at around 11:00 p.m. in the English town of Bath), the planet Uranus had been observed on many occasions (recorded sightings had occurred in 1690 and again in the mid 18th century). Herschel decided to name the planet *Georgium Sidus* ("George's Star") in honour of King George III. A year later, German astronomer Johann Bode suggested Uranus, and this name (the only planet to be named for a Greek rather than a Roman god) was adopted universally in 1850. It took a further 127 years before its planetary rings, first spotted by Herschel, were confirmed.

When discovered, Uranus was at  $24^\circ$  Gemini, a degree now ingrained with a Uranian quality, and some astrologers (such as Paul Wright in *The Great Ages & other astrological cycles*, Parlando Press, 2007) have written at length about the Uranus cycle — the squares, oppositions, and returns to its own discovery degree. This degree appears in many of the charts of authors referenced in this piece.

The discovery of Uranus doubled the then-known size of the solar system. It also shattered the seven-planet foundation — with its perfect, harmonious distribution of planetary rulerships and associations — that astrology had been built upon. It was a shock from which some astrologers have never recovered! Richard Tarnas would later write that the decline in astrology at that time was a direct result of Uranus's discovery and "mechanistic science's capacity to construct and maintain a disenchanted world view for the modern psyche." He adds that "the ancient astrology, like the geocentric cosmos, had to be repudiated and eclipsed for the evolution of consciousness

to unfold.” (Richard Tarnas, *Prometheus the Awakener*, Spring Publications, 1995, p. 132)

## A New Age

Astrologers of ancient times observed a planet’s appearance and movements in the heavens, then attributed relevant characteristics to it, and tracked how the planet operated in a natal chart. Astrologers of the past few centuries have begun to gauge the meaning of newly discovered planets in two further ways:

Firstly, they have explored the mythology of the planet’s given name. As we’ll see later, a number of astrologers believe that Uranus was incorrectly named.

Secondly, astrologers have gained much insight into a planet’s meaning by studying the *nature of the times* in which each was discovered and the *resulting changes* in personal, social, or global consciousness.

Looking back at society at the time of Uranus’s discovery, many modern astrologers believe that humanity was ready to embrace a scientific age of enlightenment; people were eager to challenge the existing laws and concepts of science and nature. To many, the discovery of Uranus was the cosmic signpost of a dawning of new collective ideas; the times were changing drastically and irrevocably.

Cordelia Mansall writes that the era “heralded a key period in man’s evolution in which the right to question who he is, his life and environment had gradually become the prerogative of the majority in Western society.” (Cordelia Mansall, *Discover Astrology*, The Aquarian Press, 1991, p. 85)

Christine Valentine appraises the epoch: “The collective was seized by the ideal of a classless society, the notion that man is free by nature, not bound by the limitations of his birthright. Thus freedom of thought and speech, growth in consciousness, desire for progress were given priority over nature and tradition. The excitement of such a vision heralded the technological age which has completely transformed our world.” (Christine Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, Element, 1991, pp. 169–170)

Uranus’s discovery coincided with the Industrial Revolution and an *acceleration* of technological discoveries. More importantly, Paul Wright notes, “Technology acquired a common language, so that advances in understanding could be applied across the spectrum of separate industries.” (Paul Wright, *Astrology in Action*, Anodyne, 1988, p. 171)

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Wright states that, although mutinies and insurrections were nothing new, “There were many novel features regarding the revolutions that did occur at this time ... In the first place, they transcended local or prosaic issues. The same refrains — the rights of man, the happiness and welfare of all — were on people’s lips the world over.” (Paul Wright, *Astrology in Action*, Anodyne, 1988, pp. 169–170) *Disparate groups had newfound common, humanist goals* — a fact that offers strong clues to the power and purpose of astrological Uranus.

Neil Spencer adds, “Since Uranus was discovered around the time of the declaration of human rights by the revolutionary administrations of America and France — the first time that these had been enshrined in any constitution — Uranus can be humanist in impulse, though its disruptive qualities evidently extend as easily to bloodshed. The planet has maintained its revolutionary associations over the years.” (Neil Spencer, *True as the Stars Above*, Orion, 2000, pp. 53–54)

## Prometheus the Awakener?

Uranus is linked to contrary impulses and paradoxes, so it is unsurprising that some astrologers feel that it was wrongly named. Neil Spencer sums it up well: “Modern astrology’s major problem with Uranus is that the Greek myths surrounding the planet’s namesake [Ouranos] are at complete

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odds with its symbolic meaning. Ouranos was not a revolutionary or a maverick but an old sky tyrant who was castrated and overthrown by his rebellious son Kronos (the Roman Saturn).” Spencer believes that historian Richard Tarnas found a persuasive solution, and argues, “Uranus’ flashing, humanist impulses plainly belong to the myth of Prometheus, the Titan who taught humanity the arts of navigation, astrology, mathematics and architecture and who, as a rebellious firebrand, stole fire from Mount Olympus to give to humanity.” (Neil Spencer, *True as the Stars Above*, Orion, 2000, p. 54)

In *Prometheus the Awakener* (Spring Publications, 1995, p. 15), Richard Tarnas cites the cultural and social revolutions, the age of Romanticism, the rapidity of change, the beginnings of feminism, and “the exaltation of the free human imagination and creative will.” He reasons: “In all these I could see as well the figure of Prometheus: the championing of human reason and individual autonomy; the challenge to traditional beliefs and customs; the revolt against royalty, aristocracy, established religion, social privilege, and political oppression.”

**Richard Tarnas**, who has Uranus rising and a Gemini Ascendant near the Uranus discovery degree (see **Chart 1**, following page), concedes that “the planet was named, or



# THE PLANETS: URANUS

misnamed, according to a rationalistic logic perfectly characteristic of that era, the Enlightenment, and of the science that made possible its discovery.” (p. 132) Interestingly, one of the astrologers to emerge during this time was the strongly Uranian **Ebenezer Sibly** (see **Chart 2**, below), whose focus was on the occult (Edgar Cayce linked Uranus to the occult) and whose birth chart for the United States has generated much debate.

For further discussion of the naming of modern and ancient planets, see Patricia Garner’s *A Cosmic Dialogue* (Raven Dreams, 2016).

## In the Birth Chart

So, in natal horoscopes, what does Uranus — as ruler of the air sign Aquarius — signify? Uranus opposes the key Saturn principles of authority, age, tradition, and the status quo. Its position shows where and how we might seek to break the mould, tear up the rulebook, be radical, and feel awakened. It may also signify the rebel in us that riots against confining structures or feels compelled to incite group/social change. It can indicate what we find revolting ... to the point where it’s worth revolting/rebelling against!

Our Uranus placement shows how we might feel like the outsider, the outcast — where and why we feel *different*. It’s also where we have a perfect, complete vision (“Prometheus” means *foresight*) of what we — and life — could become.

Its placement shows — when we take a stand, cut through hypocrisy, or speak our unadulterated truth — where and how we may be subjected to social “castration”/censorship/disapproval from the politically correct establishment or even alienation from our own group. Liz Greene explains: “Uranus will rebel against the norm ... But ... it will [also] try to stamp out the dissident, if he or she does not conform to the norm — ‘norm’ being the system which reflects the par-

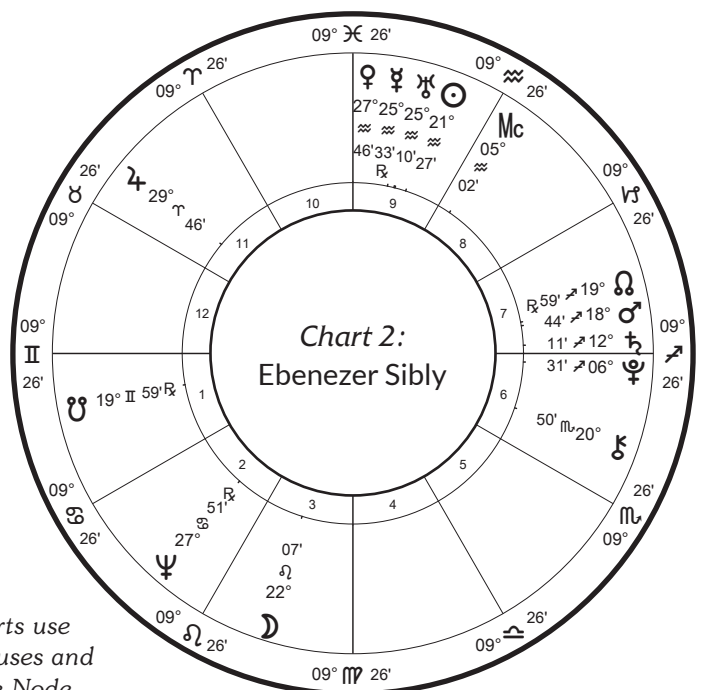
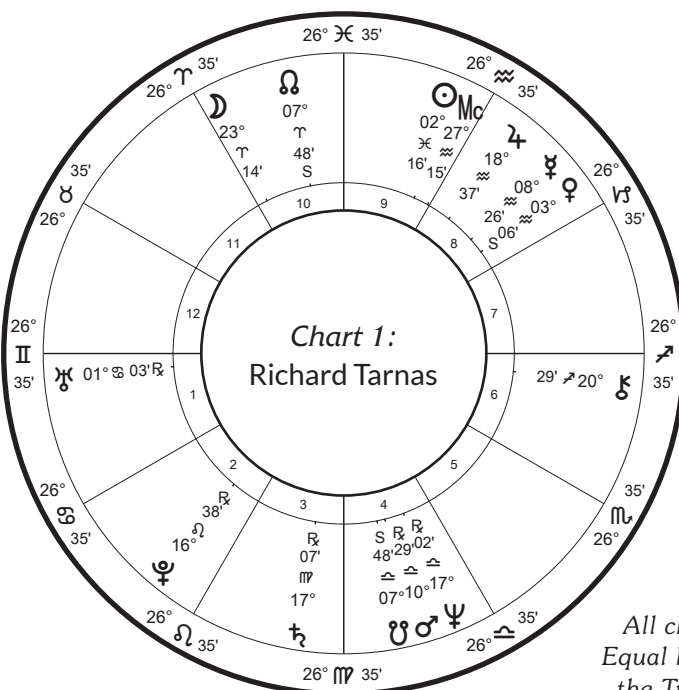
ticular Uranian ideal.” (Liz Greene, *The Art of Stealing Fire*, CPA Press, 1996, p. 41)

Steven Forrest adds, “Where it lies on the birth chart, the high drama of rebellion crackles in our mental circuitry. It symbolizes an area in which our essence makes war on the constraints imposed on us by our culture. To be true to ourselves, we must break the rules. And in breaking them, we get into trouble.” (Steven Forrest, *The Inner Sky*, ACS, 1988, pp. 127, 128–129)

Uranus in a house can show an area of life that feels unpredictable, unanchored, or exposed to sudden disturbances. Whether we feel unsafe and unsettled or excited and free may depend on the planets and aspects involved, the elemental and modal imbalances in the chart, as well as the level of our awareness of this planet in our psyche.

When personal planets or angles in the birth chart are aspected by Uranus, their principles and meanings can be turned on their head, expressed in a manner contrary to their typical meaning. The prefix “un-” (as well as “anti-” and “ir-”) is Uranian in nature (e.g., unorthodox, unacceptable, unpredictable, uncompromising, unruly), since it reverses the meaning of regular (often Saturn-type) words.

Some astrologers see Uranus as a destructive or distastefully perverse force in the birth chart; others ignore it, while some grudgingly concede that major life upheavals coincide with its transits. Certainly its associations with ruthless, unsparingly bloody revolutions and the deadly, catastrophic forces of nature (such as earthquakes and lightning strikes) back up its malefic reputation. Astrologer Dale O’Brien argues that “there’s no controlling this planet” and that pre-modern astrologers associated Uranus with disruptive matters (like fires) that could get out of hand. “They did not see this as the Robin Hood planet of bringing good things and liberation to everyone.” (Dale O’Brien, *(Sky-) High Crimes: Uranus Transits Reconsidered*, talk, CD from Sun Recording Service, 2012) He also reminds us that Uranus was out of bounds



All charts use Equal houses and the True Node.

when discovered, adding to its association with wilful disobedience. (The discovery chart lacks planets in the stabilising element of earth, too.)

## Uranus and the Sun

Uranus is a transpersonal planet attuned to group ideals, brotherhood, and progress. As Linda Reid writes, “[Uranus] can be epitomised by the sense of unique and impersonal individuality within a fraternity of like souls, separate but essentially spiritually connected.” (Linda Reid, *Astrology Step by Step*, Canopus, 2001, p. 33)

Noting the collective nature of Uranus and its sign Aquarius (which opposes Leo, the sign ruled by the Sun), Liz Greene questions the link to the concept of individuality: “Uranus is not concerned with individual development ... It symbolises the antithesis of individual expression (which is so-

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lar), because the individual is submerged in the group.” (Liz Greene, *The Art of Stealing Fire*, CPA Press, 1996, p. 1)

*Monty Python’s Life of Brian* includes one of the most memorable moments of an “individual versus the herd” mentality. Brian, the hapless, misidentified “chosen one,” is trying to encourage some self-determination in the crowd:

**Brian:** Look, you’ve got it all wrong. You don’t need to follow me. You don’t need to follow anybody. You’ve got to think for yourselves. You’re all individuals!

**The crowd:** Yes. We’re all individuals.

**Brian:** You’re all different.

**The crowd:** Yes, we are all different.

**Man in crowd:** I’m not.

**The crowd:** Sssh!

Liz Greene adds: “It sometimes beggars belief how unindividual such behaviour can be, although this is rarely recognised by the person in the grip of the Uranian vision, because the very act of rebelling against something means that one is in some way deeply bound up with, and subtly dominated by, the very thing one is fighting. This is not an expression of individuality, because that comes from within.” (Liz Greene, *The Art of Stealing Fire*, CPA Press, 1996, p. 2)

“Uranus is not, in itself, ‘creative’ as the Sun is,” Greene assesses. “It reflects our capacity, as human beings, to attune



## THE PLANETS: URANUS

ourselves to the larger system, and the sudden recognition of this bigger universe often has the effect of shattering our existing world-view." (Liz Greene, *The Art of Stealing Fire*, CPA Press, 1996, p. 51)

She observes how the solar fire of the horoscope's Sun can be extinguished: "If someone is trapped in such receptivity to the collective, without any individual sense of self to monitor, sift, and shape the revelation, he or she may lose touch with what is nourishing and creative on an inner level, and many important aspects of personal life may be unwittingly crushed ... Without this kind of perspective, Uranus may wipe out individual values and individual authenticity." (Liz Greene, *The Art of Stealing Fire*, CPA Press, 1996, p. 2)

Joe Landwehr's article, "Uranus and the Roots of Sexuality," in *TMA*, June/July 1998, suggests that Uranus can be a conduit for exploring the solar principle. On page 59, he explains, "Uranus describes a primal energy that moves at the core of our being to generate genuine individuality, creative vitality, and personal charisma ... it propels us on a deeply personal quest to reconnect with that within us that is uniquely our own, and then grow a life that springs from those roots."

"Prometheus, with his gift of foresight, saw the *potential* of human consciousness," explains Liz Greene. "The fire he appropriates is solar; it is the divine spark of immortality, or awareness of the Self ... the fire of imagination and vision, through which solar divinity and individual creativity make themselves known." She adds, tellingly, "He didn't give it to one special or chosen person; he gave it to all." (Liz Greene, *The Art of Stealing Fire*, CPA Press, 1996, p. 8)

### Profiling the Uranian: Not of Its Time

*All the world is queer save thee and me, and even thou art a little queer.*

— Robert Owen (Sun–Moon conjunct Uranus)

Reinhold Ebertin offers a list of psychological correspondences of Uranus: peculiarity, independence, a love of freedom, intuition allied with objective judgement, an obstinate nature, lack of adaptability, rebellion, strong emotional tensions, a passion for innovation, and changeability of character. (Reinhold Ebertin, *The Combination of Stellar Influences*, AFA, 1994 printing, p. 58)

So, what of the strongly Uranian type, for whom Uranus is placed prominently (or singularly) in the natal chart and contacting the angles/inner planets? Inasmuch as Uranians will tolerate categorisation and seek to "do things their own way," here are some ideas of what we can "expect" to hear about them and their life experiences when the Uranian spirit is given room to operate:

- A trailblazer/"Magician" with a radical, unemotional, or controversial stance, who insists on marching to a different drummer and tearing up the rulebook

- Someone who adopts the role of the outsider, who feels of a different era, country, or family
- A free spirit who learns to see strength in their differentness and embark upon "the road less travelled"
- Someone with strong, uncompromising political or social ideologies, who acts as a catalyst or a mouthpiece for progressive ideas from the collective psyche
- A life impacted by sudden change, quantum leaps, or startling severances
- Someone who encounters suffocating life circumstances or relationships that force them to fight for freedom and break away

The final point is worth some elaboration. After all, unless it's for the sake of rebelling (see the section "The Rebel Without a Cause" on page 56), there's rarely a need for insurrection if the world around us is seen as convivial and the universe as friendly. In *Getting to the Heart of Your Chart* (Flare, 2012, p. 13), I wrote that the Uranian person will find herself in (or gravitate towards) an environment "that she perceives as unjust and in need of shattering or waking up ... She is, on a number of levels, seeking somewhere in which she can utilise her compulsion to speak out and be a catalyst for some sort of progressive action and change." It's the same under Uranus transits: There must be some stifling of self or restriction of circumstance to warrant a Uranus transit!

Perfection is a strongly Uranian pursuit. Liz Greene refers to this as a grand vision of perfection — the perfection of an idea or Great Cause (rather than a Neptunian longing for a perfect *ideal*). As a mouthpiece for extremists or fanatics, Uranus is brutal in its allegiance to an ideology that it perceives as promising a better future, and equally brutal in its nonattachment to the individuals (their rights and freedoms) who may benefit or suffer from the results of any effort to achieve that greater good. Here we see Adolf Hitler and Charles Manson, with their Uranian vision of "perfection," and both have Uranus in the 12th, conjunct the Ascendant, opposite Mercury, and square the lunar nodes.

Uranus is also prominent in the charts of those who feel under pressure to be perfect (from high achievers to those with eating disorders to body obsessives intent on creating a perfect image), as well as in the charts of people linked to technological experiments such as genetic engineering and cloning. (Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* is a work imbued with Uranian impulses and motivations, and its author was born with the Sun conjunct Uranus.)

### Mutation: An Evolutionary Process

*How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world!*

— Anne Frank (Uranus–MC in Aries)

Uranus is not just associated with the rabble-rouser, deviant, or nonconformist. Its energy can be focused on the betterment of life and the fulfilment of potential. Paul Wright reminds us that technology, democracy, internationalism, common language, universalism, social amelioration, and evolution are key Uranian concepts. The planet "breaks down

divisive barriers, thus creating the conditions where what is separate can come together and move towards one end.” Wright argues that Uranus transcends generation, class, or nationality and that “at a basic level Uranus and Aquarius are about the improvement of life, about the creating and sustaining of those conditions in which human potentiality can flower.” (Paul Wright, *Astrology in Action*, Anodyne, 1988, pp. 167–168)

Robert Hand feels that Uranus is “an energy that strives to keep the universe flexible by preventing too much order. Uranus represents the random element of mutation that is necessary for creative innovation ... Left alone, Saturn causes people to stop at some point and be totally satisfied with the status quo ... The individual who learns to handle Uranus is able to continue growing throughout life.” (Robert Hand, *Horoscope Symbols*, Whitford Press, 1981, pp. 72, 73)

Jodie Forrest explains that Uranians “are like the mutant cells in the body of life ... Uranians have a responsibility not only to themselves — to individuate and become truly themselves for optimum sanity and soul growth — but also to the rest of life, to insist upon full individuation because this might help the species to evolve.” (Jodie Forrest, “Living with Uranus Transits,” in *TMA*, Feb./March 2004, p. 51)

Jane Ridder-Patrick suggests, medically, that the keyword for Uranus is “spasmodic,” and I imagine “fits” are Uranian, too. She writes that Uranus is “plugged into the mains,” ruling the rhythmic processes and pulsations of the body, and “concerned with the co-operation between individual units and systems, so that the whole can function in a co-ordinated fashion. Where one part operates at a different pace from the rest, the smooth running of the whole is affected ... The result is disruption ... Some Uranus disorders are spasm, shock, cramp, ruptures, strictures, paroxysms and contortions.” (Jane Ridder-Patrick, *Handbook of Medical Astrology*, Arkana, 1990, pp. 41–42)

## Ordinarily Special

*The highest result of education is tolerance.*  
— Helen Keller (Uranus–MC in Virgo)

Pauline Stone stresses the planet’s link to the concepts of equality and brotherhood: “Uranus helps us to accept each person as an individual and as our brother ... It is representative of socialism in the non-political sense (Latin: *socius* = friend). This is an influence which eliminates prejudice and snobbery, allowing us to mix freely with all conditions of man. Through Uranus we come to see the value and worth of that which is *different*. Thus we come to realize that we are all individuals yet at one with each other.” (Pauline Stone, *The Astrology of Karma*, The Aquarian Press, 1988, p. 72)

Later, on page 76, she writes, “Where we are lacking in attunement to Uranus, our understanding is likely to be limited by blindspots which divide and isolate us from others ... The measure of our mastery of Uranus is our ability to tolerate and accept every variety of expression within the cosmos — even where this is totally opposed to our own.”

“One of Uranus’s teachings,” explains Caroline Casey, “is that when everyone is truly honest, consensus is possible.

Community is real if everyone reverences the uniqueness of each member.” She writes, “Uranus encourages us to kick our addiction to following a leader.” (Caroline W. Casey, *Making the Gods Work for You*, Piatkus, 1998, pp. 142, 141)

The shadow side of Uranus is intolerance (or proudly being intolerant of intolerance, which still makes us intolerant!). It reminds me of a speech given in 1979 by the newly elected president of Brazil, João Figueiredo. Oblivious to the Uranian contradiction, he shouted: “I intend to open this country up to democracy, and anyone who is against that, I will jail, I will crush!”

Even when we feel that we’ve been awakened and can now see the light, we must allow others to be awakened in their own way and in their own time — or to remain in the dark if they so choose.

## The Divine Mind

Liz Greene writes poetically of this awe-inspiring planet: “To ancient peoples, the beauty and vastness of the star-studded vault of heaven revealed the awesome power and intelligence of an invisible creator god ... [Uranus] is an ancient and awesome portrayal of the divine mind that conceived the idea of a universe before any universe was made.” (Liz Greene, *Mythic Astrology*, Fireside, 1994, p. 42)

She describes Uranus’s gift as “the capacity to envisage the whole before it is manifest.” Such awareness has been tapped into and *received*, rather than created. She continues, “Some ancient systems of philosophy — such as Platonism and Stoicism, in which the cosmos is perceived as an interconnected, self-regulating system — bear the stamp of Uranian vision.

*The shadow side of Uranus is intolerance (or proudly being intolerant of intolerance, which still makes us intolerant!).*

So, too, does astrology. Today, most branches of science investigate the material components of the universe with great thoroughness, but without that far-seeing awareness of an interconnected whole of which Uranus is the astrological symbol.” (Liz Greene, *Mythic Astrology*, Fireside, 1994, p. 43)

Biologist Rupert Sheldrake is one scientist with a Promethean spark, and he is known for his work on “morphic resonance” (a process whereby self-organising systems inherit a memory from past members of the species). Appropriately, he was born the month after the Saturn–Uranus conjunction of 1942.

Working with Sheldrake’s concepts, astrologer Faye Cossar believes that many of the Uranian concepts — for instance, freedom, independence, technological breakthroughs — are now commonplace, and humanity, thanks to the work of recent generations, is becoming familiar with this planet’s energies. She writes, “The Uranus [morphic] field is not only becoming stable; we are seeing how to co-create positively with it.” (Faye Cossar, “Towards a Responsible Astrology of the Future,” in *The Astrological Journal*, September/October, 2009, p. 37)

## THE PLANETS: URANUS

Cordelia Mansall offers one reason that Uranus is considered the higher octave of Mercury: “The initial step towards truth is perception. It is an altruistic, inventive type of intelligence that compels the true scientist to seek solutions and determine causes ... It is the capacity to allow the intuition free rein to sift and sort information from the Collective Intelligence.” (Cordelia Mansall, *Discover Astrology*, The Aquarian Press, 1991, p. 85)

Pauline Stone writes that the planet is “based on wholistic rather than subjective reasoning,” and by breaking down the barriers of personal prejudice, it can provide access to the source of universal knowledge. She suggests that Uranus rules telepathy, extrasensory perception, and psychic expression. (Pauline Stone, *The Astrology of Karma*, The Aquarian Press, 1988, p. 71)

Alan Leo named Uranus “the awakener,” and Alan Oken considers Uranus “the force for the awakening of higher consciousness ... the planet which embodies the sixth sense. Its energy ... is beginning to be felt personally by a growing number of people ... Uranus symbolizes Man’s liberation from the bondage of the personality and signifies the power which may be achieved through the collected energies of truly individualized souls working toward a conscious connection with the Source of Life.” (Alan Oken, *Alan Oken’s Complete Astrology*, Ibis Press, 2006, pp. 216, 220)

## The Truth and Other Contradictions

*All great truths begin as blasphemies.*

— George Bernard Shaw

(Moon–Uranus conjunction, and the Ascendant conjunct Uranus’s discovery degree)

In his book *Uranus*, John Townley explores the planet’s links to religion, psychology, sexual perversion, war, and even country music. He writes, “Uranus is the primary mythological male figure ... with no female characteristics whatsoever. This fits with the dry, unbending qualities that are attributed astrologically to the planet. Uranus represents the brilliant, clear, harsh Truth, softened by nothing gentle, gradual, or in any way *yin* or female ... When Uranus in its pure form of total truth meets resistance, it cannot compromise or blend ... Certainly revolutions do not take place where compromise is available.” (John Townley, *Uranus*, The Aquarian Press, 1978, pp. 25, 26)

Townley sees the Uranian type of criminal as someone who “simply cannot compromise with society to the extent of obeying its laws when he sees the truth differently ... Unswerving reality has impelled the individual along an inevitable path of collision with society.” Townley asks (prompting thoughts of Che Guevara’s deification as a modern-day popular culture emblem of egalitarianism and iconoclasm): “How many ‘criminals’ of earlier times were later applauded as martyrs or revolutionaries when their brand of the truth became the popular belief?” (John Townley, *Uranus*, The Aquarian Press, 1978, p. 26)

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Bill Maher Behind Bars at the Toronto International Film Festival '08!!  
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Sue Tompkins observes that “most things Uranian eventually become Saturnian: whatever shocks society today usually becomes accepted, institutionalised and taken for granted tomorrow.” It takes a truly Uranian person — for instance, **Germaine Greer** (see **Chart 3**, below) — to stay on the outside, to be “alternative,” and to resist joining the Establishment. It’s also worth remembering that when a dictatorship is replaced in an uprising, it is usually replaced by a similar, but differently named, dictatorial system — revolutions come full circle. Tompkins adds, “The word ‘revolution’ literally means to turn over. It often implies returning to a former recurring position.” (Sue Tompkins, *The Contemporary Astrologer’s Handbook*, Flare/LSA, p. 182)

Uranians can be found at both *extreme* ends of the political spectrum, as both ends are obsessed with fighting for freedoms and civil liberties and espousing ideologies that back up their version of The Truth. Consider a few media/political commentators: Rush Limbaugh (Mercury opposite Uranus), Elisabeth Hasselbeck (Mercury opposite Uranus), the UK’s Katie Hopkins (unaspected Sun in Aquarius, unaspected

Uranus), and **Bill Maher**, with Sun opposite Uranus, Moon square Uranus (see **Chart 4**, below). All have provoked outrage and resistance for speaking their minds.

### The Misunderstood Genius

*I’ve always been interested in people, but I’ve never liked them.*

— W. Somerset Maugham

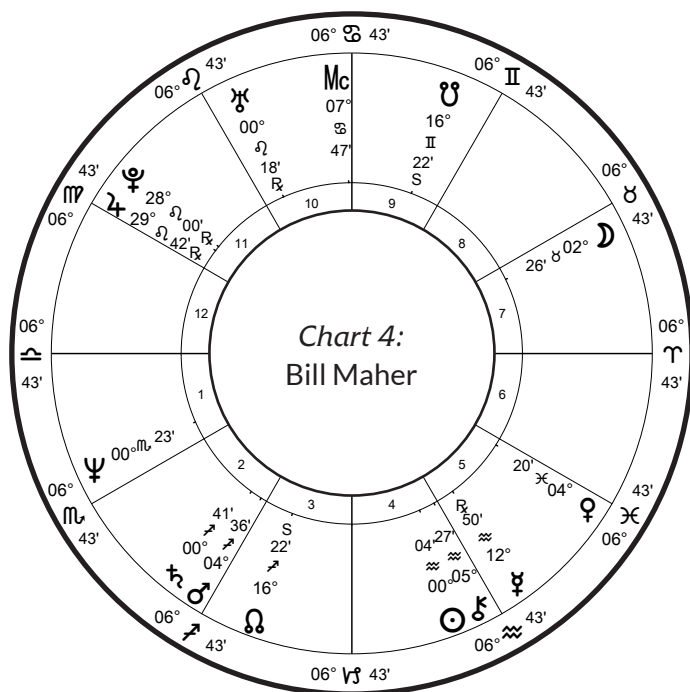
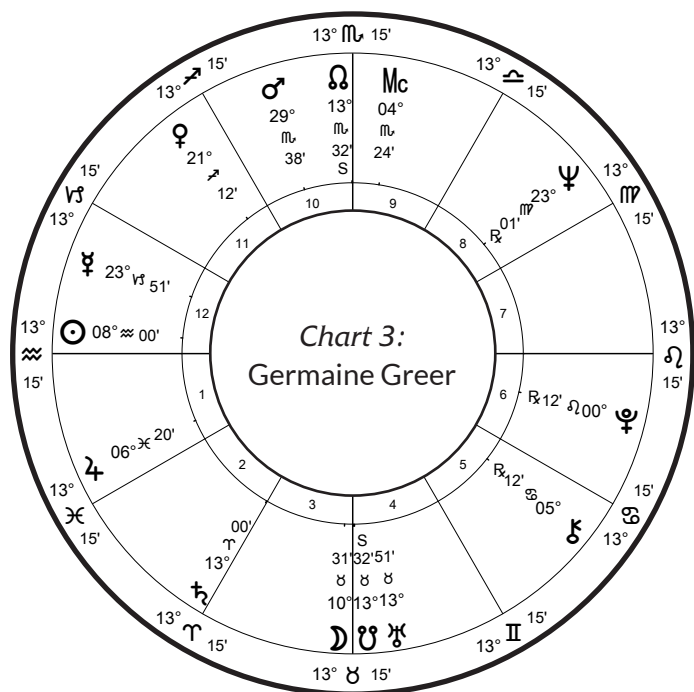
(Sun-Saturn conjunct in Aquarius opposite Uranus)

Ingrid Lind asked, “Can the average human being use his Uranus energies?” She went on to state: “At a controlled level it takes a rational, thinking person to channel the brilliance and magnetism of Uranus, and the danger is that a strong Uranus energy will be expressed in rebellion and going off at a tangent ... Uranus, unless good mental foundations are laid, is subject to misuse and eccentricity. At best the power works in raising the consciousness and awareness. At worst it seems to correspond to an incapacity to relate harmoniously.” (Ingrid Lind, *Astrologically Speaking*, Fowler, 1981, p. 99)

Charles Carter found that Uranus “easily manifests eccentricity and produces a gifted but useless crank, always at loggerheads with custom, irrespective of whether this is supported by common sense or not.” (Charles E. O. Carter, *The Principles of Awakening*, Theosophical Publishing House, 1963, p. 56)

Debbi Kempton-Smith writes, rather provocatively: “Even on the (rare) occasions when Uranus-type people are right, the style is often ‘wrong’ or offbeat. You can count on Uranus to shoot off its mouth in a shocking manner ... this kind of attitude is hardly likely to win any popularity contests, nor does it bode well for lifelong relationships.” (Debbi Kempton-Smith, *Secrets from a Stargazer’s Notebook*, Top Quark Press, 1999, pp. 275, 278)

In every field, including our own, we encounter the obsessive, intellectual Uranian type who has not developed the



day-to-day deftness to communicate with the world around them. Or the obdurate person who revels in playing devil's advocate and is detested by — or provokes extreme reactions from — others.

Phyllis Firak-Mitz writes that “if we are unable to adequately socialize this genius, much of what we have to offer the world may be misunderstood or rejected ... We yearn to experience [a] higher love in our Uranus-ruled areas, yet (usually) Uranus does not gift us with the matching emotional intelligence or the social skills needed to create this love with others.” She identifies her Uranian clients as those who have “Triple A” issues of “Abandonment, Alienation, and Aloneness.” (Phyllis Firak-Mitz, “Uranus,” in *TMA*, Aug./Sept. 1999, p. 45)

Life isn't easy for the Uranian living in a Saturnian world. “Conventional society does not easily tolerate eccentricity in the genius or in the misfit,” assert Lindsay River and Sally Gillespie. “Disapproval of the outsider comes from unconscious censorship of the Uranian streak in all of us — our eccentricity and originality are held in check.” These co-authors argue that there's a narrow dividing line between those society laughs at and those it locks away, adding: “An indicator of the health of any society is in the room it allows for difference, for human contradictions. The eccentric is vitally important, for her ‘otherness’ gives a fuller identity to her community.” (Lindsay River and Sally Gillespie, *The Knot of Time*, The Women's Press, 1987, pp. 95–96)

### **The Rebel Without a Cause (and When Rebellion Against Routine Becomes a Routine)**

Barbara Watters outlines some of the difficulties for the Uranian outsider when being perverse “for the sake of it” becomes a routine: “The rebel-without-a-cause syndrome is a typical reaction to Uranian pressure. It is a stubborn, undifferentiated resistance to conformity, or to any routine that can be construed as conformist. On its constructive side, Uranus idealises human co-operation. So the rebel-without-a-cause refuses to co-operate.” (Barbara H. Watters, *Sex and the Outer Planets*, Valhalla, 1971, p. 133)

“Uranus energies coming too soon in life can cause a chronically erratic quality that prevents any kind of maturation,” according to Robert Hand, “and produces an individual incapable of taking part in the social contract. Such people are automatic rebels: they rebel simply to negate order, even when order is still useful.” (Robert Hand, *Horoscope Symbols*, Whitford Press, 1981, p. 72)

Christine Valentine offers: “Whilst in the grip of Uranus one thinks one is being incredibly individualistic when one has in fact become stereotypical, like the revolutionary or eccentric whose rebellion is born of compulsion rather than conscious choice.” (Christine Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, Element, 1991, p. 173)

Liz Greene writes that the French Revolution “was hardly a sane and measured expression of social change. Sanity was restored only after the streets ran with blood and the thrill of

the guillotine became just another day's routine.” Uranus had become Saturn (routine). (Liz Greene, *The Dark of the Soul*, CPA Press, 2003, p. 158)

Hajo Banzhaf and Anna Haebler address the problem areas for the Uranian, which include a “compulsive aversion to everything obligatory” and “freedom at any cost, which frequently causes a breach of contract to be committed so that others feel betrayed.” (Hajo Banzhaf and Anna Haebler, *Key Words for Astrology*, Weiser, 1996, p. 16)

When contemplating those of us with Uranus on the MC, I wrote, “Ideally, when we become aware that we don't fit in, we should remould ourselves to express what it is that we do stand for, rather than what we oppose. Then something authentic can emerge from us. At best, we can offer the world an aspect of ourselves that is exhilaratingly original and that helps others wake up to their own true selves.” (Frank C. Clifford, *The Midheaven: Spotlight on Success*, Flare, 2016, p. 49)

“The greater experiment is to come into cooperative accord from uniqueness rather than similarity,” argues Caroline Casey. “Prometheus stole fire from the humorless gods of the old order and gave it to humans. His punishment was to be chained to a rock where, each day in perpetuity, an eagle would come and pluck out his liver — a gloomy prognosis for the defiant trickster part of ourselves. However, if we dig more deeply into the Greek texts, we learn that Prometheus could see the future in which Hercules would set him free. This provides more encouragement for the rascal-rebel part of us that defies the stodgy gods of convention. We are not sentenced to eternal punishment in retribution, but in fact are rescued by Hercules, a heroic Mars animation of our own strength and determination. Cultivating a strong alliance with Mars is an important key if we aspire to being successful social change artists. The strength of our alliance with Mars determines how much time we spend chained to the rock.” (Caroline W. Casey, *Making the Gods Work for You*, Piatkus, 1998, pp. 137, 139)

### **The Need for Saturn**

As many astrologers have noted, connecting to (and sharing) a source of inspiration is one step, but manifesting (or working with) it in the real world is another. Before attempting to engage productively with Uranus, it seems that we must get a grounding in the principles of its planetary neighbour, Saturn.

Penny Thornton recognises the importance of Saturn's presence and anchorage. “In myth, Uranus, King of Heaven, was castrated and dethroned by his son Cronos (Saturn). He was a tyrannical king and kept his earthly children (the Titans) deep in the earth, where they were unable to see the light. A parallel can be drawn here with the awakening of higher consciousness that Uranus represents. This would be too powerful to be unleashed indiscriminately on man — he would be blinded by its impact. So man remains in material darkness until, guided by Saturn, he has developed to the point where he can appreciate the mysteries of heaven.” (Penny Thornton, *Synastry*, The Aquarian Press, 1982, p. 63)

Lindsay River and Sally Gillespie suggest that “the value of Saturnian structure and form may need to be learnt before

*continued on page 72*

continued from page 56

Uranian energy and ideals are expressed, giving to these Uranian ideas a realism and practicality. Unceasing rebellion without any regard for Saturnian structure produces only continuous upheaval and chaos ... The compulsive rebel chooses a life of loneliness and alienation if she cannot at some point recognise her need to ‘come in from the cold.’” (Lindsay River and Sally Gillespie, *The Knot of Time*, The Women’s Press, 1987, pp. 95–96)

Karen Hamaker-Zondag concurs. “In a fairly mature personality this Uranus factor can prove liberating,” she argues, but there may be “no reasoning with the individual as he plays the part of rebel or anarchist in order to emphasise or demonstrate his own uniqueness.” (Karen Hamaker-Zondag, *Astro-Psychology*, The Aquarian Press, 1980, p. 168)

Christine Valentine warns that “Uranus is dangerous when in the hands of those who have not come to terms with Saturnian reality. For the Uranian vision is both revolutionary and electrifying in that it cuts us off from the feeling life of our own bodies, our own ordinary human needs and sensitivities. This is what produces the mentality that states, ‘The end justifies the means,’ and allows the justification for such atrocities that occurred in the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution, in Auschwitz, and in terrorist activities today, all in the name of noble ideals.” (Christine Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, Element, 1991, p. 172)

Exploring pathology in the horoscope, Liz Greene writes, “When an individual is strongly aligned with the outer planets, ego-consciousness is critical, because the ego must be strong enough to contain and mediate the collective forces. If the ego cannot deal with these energies, the personality may be overwhelmed and the individual is ‘possessed’ by collective emotions and ideas which are very archaic. The individual is then no longer an individual, but becomes a mouthpiece for the collective ... Uranus symbolises our collective ideas of progress, and when it takes possession of the individual ego it reflects a particular kind of madness

which involves a global vision of perfect order ... If it subsumes the ego, Uranus may still be brilliant but it can also be exceedingly destructive because it is so disconnected from living human reality.” (Liz Greene, *The Dark of the Soul*, CPA Press, 2003, p. 155)

Caroline Casey believes that “constantly renewing and clarifying our terms and definitions is a radical act. Once we have realized that rebelling against something places us just as much in its thrall as conforming to it, Uranus forms a partnership with Saturn. Together, they encourage us to be disciplined wild people, a necessary aspiration if we want to serve the full vitality of possibilities.” (Caroline W. Casey, *Making the Gods Work for You*, Piatkus, 1998, pp. 146–147)

## Honouring Uranus in the Natal Chart: Experimenting

External and social factors always shape our opportunities to express our natal chart, the blueprint of our potential. What of a Uranian chart that suggests a highly revolutionary character/life, but belongs to someone born into famine, where starvation and survival take precedence over “speaking up” and standing up against injustice? Or a Uranian girl born 100 years before women were given the right to vote? Either person may never experience much of what we consider to be Uranian, but with opportunity and longevity the chart will seek expression through its owner in some form that reflects this dominant planet.

Jeff Green pinpoints Uranus’s essential task in our lives: “the liberation and reconditioning from our conditioning patterns in order to identify our essential natures.” (Jeffrey Wolf Green, *Uranus: Freedom from the Known*, Llewellyn, 1988, p. 160)

Kim Falconer states, “People who are Uranian need to instigate change, alter the status quo, drive the message home, take the political stand and express their unique and sometimes unorthodox views ... If they do not do these things, then shock, rebellion and surprise happen to them. They may think it is the world playing havoc with their lives, although it is really their own selves pulling the rug out from under their feet. Anything to get out of a rut.” She recommends paying conscious attention to the

god of change. “Best let a bit of the bizarre into the life as a matter of course, lest the road becomes too predictable and mundane. Banality is sure to catch this god’s eye!” (Kim Falconer, *Astrology and Aptitude*, AFA, 2001, p. 105)

It appears that a key element to honouring Uranus is to keep experimenting and evolving, and to personally set change in motion when necessary. Stagnating with Saturn — staying with only that which can be seen and measured, or relying on only what has been formulated by others — is an invitation for Uranus to appear from outside of ourselves and wreak personal havoc.

## Honouring Transiting Uranus: The Value of Being in the Moment

When Uranus approaches a planet/point in the chart, there can be:

1. A period of extreme restriction or itching discontent which leads to a “eureka,” lightbulb moment of awakening — a fast breakthrough or coming-out — when the transit moves into orb. Sometimes this is simply a compulsion to “act at any cost” (which can create further tyrannical situations we’ll need to break away from later), rather than to make productive, conscious decisions about life changes.

2. A radical change to the existing pattern, structure, or “anchors” of life. In fact, there is *no* pattern for a while — we are asked to consider an overall, larger master plan that’s emerging.

3. A need to sever ties, to assert one’s independence in an attempt to feel liberated. If Saturn transits can, at times, put the *brakes* on our lives, Uranus is linked to *breaks* of another kind: breakthroughs, break-ins, breakups, and breakdowns.

In short, Uranus can appear to:

- Disrupt, reverse, deviate, or shock to liberate us from a situation
- Awaken or jolt us to help us achieve a breakthrough
- Reconnect us with the feeling of being alive
- Encourage experimentation to show us an alternative path



Tiredness, exhaustion, and emptiness — having nothing left in reserve to give — often accompany Neptune transits; however, with Uranus, the feeling is akin to being tuned in, turned on, and wired up. We feel alive, unable to sleep, and full of electricity.

In addition, often the people we meet during Uranus transits personify the planet; they can appear exciting, enlightening, and unconventional, offering us a new path to travel and quickening the pace of our lives. But these can be short-lived associations that end as abruptly as they began.

In his article for *TMA* on the psychology of transits, Richard Swatton wrote that “Uranus transits have a way of unexpectedly jolting us out of our complacency and routines (psychological or otherwise) and reacquainting us with uncertainty. Uranus is an adversary to the status quo and urges a fast-forwarding of our evolution — a progression to a better future.”

As with other writers in this compilation on Uranus, he stresses the importance of honouring the planet rather than having unconscious Uranian reactions *for the sake of it*: “Dyeing our hair blue, for example, may well serve to shock the establishment, but outer eccentricity is not necessarily a reflection of genuine originality or ‘higher genius’ (Uranus). Bizarre behaviour is sometimes just that — an attempt to *feel* different rather than *becoming* different in a deeper sense. Such superficial shows of change, no matter how unorthodox, might mask the underlying problems that really need addressing ... Keywords such as ‘disruption’ and ‘shock’ are often experienced only by those who are *unwilling* to look for a new way forward. Indeed, we might have to ‘fall off the tracks’ to stop us from continuing in the same old direction with the same old thinking patterns. Uranus wants us to embrace spontaneity in order to defeat incipient dullness.” (Richard Swatton, “Working with Transits,” in *TMA*, June/July 2015, p. 39)

Palden Jenkins feels that a Uranus transit “works through a deeper level of psyche, by stirring things up, disrupting, hyper-activating, rattling us and creating eccentric, extreme or polarised conditions. It rips us, people, nature away from the old, and tests the valid-

ity and flexibility of all forms and structures, in our conditioning, in society and out of the woods. It awakens the knower within: that mode of consciousness which operates a-logically, intuiting and envisioning wholenesses, which somehow land up being proven right. Uranus seems at first to drive everything off course, but, when the truth is out ... it is easy to see that things have moved more *on course* than they were before.” (Palden Jenkins, *Living in Time*, Gateway Books, 1987, p. 69)

Although writing on locational astrology, Jim Lewis captured the essence of a Uranus transit: “The surprising planet Uranus hits you like a tornado, and it can either blow you away to the Oz of a whole new consciousness or, if you try to resist its force, tear you to pieces. Obviously, people akin to its idealistic, cerebral and non-emotional nature adjust more easily to its changes; strongly materialistic, conforming, social types who depend on their possessions, stability, family and other permanent life structures may suffer most from its influence.” (Jim Lewis with Kenneth Irving, *The Psychology of Astro\*Carto\*Graphy*, Arkana, 1997, p. 213)

Daniel Lorey feels that “on many levels, Uranus stands for progress through shock. Most humans tend to disguise life, rather than discover it. Uranus pulls the covers off of us, and exposes us to reality in one fell swoop.” (Daniel E. Lorey, *The Wildman, the Earth and the Stars*, Delphi Press, 1994, p. 112)

In her article, “Embracing the Adventure of a Uranus Cycle” (in *TMA*, Oct./Nov. 2011, pp. 51, 54), Kathy Rose feels that the purpose of a Uranus transit is “to break up stagnation, plain and simple.” Warning that our routine will be disrupted, she writes, “The energy from Uranus throws symbolic bolts of lightning that use a sudden burst of shocking ‘spiritual electricity’ to shatter what is crystallized and loosen what is stuck ... There is an almost magical sense of perfect timing brought on from a Uranus cycle when we trust and *act instantly*. This is part of the adventure of spontaneous growth.”

Caroline Casey reminds us that the Uranian association with suddenness may not be all that it seems. “While the drama is a visible release, it really is not a sudden development. Emotions lurking

beneath the surface, or hidden events, brew for a long time. If we were intuitively connected to the invisible, to the energetic truth of the situation, we would not be taken so much by surprise.” Later she writes, “Truth bursts through any impediment. Uranus has no tolerance for people who are unhappy about their relationships but not talking about or working on the emotional truth. Avoidance — conscious or unconscious — is a setup for real trouble.” (Caroline W. Casey, *Making the Gods Work for You*, Piatkus, 1998, pp. 150, 151)

During Uranus transits, the temptation may be to overthrow the existing order in our lives. But rather than “throwing the baby out with the bathwater” and rationalising the cutting-off from everything that feels inhibiting, we can make specific, fundamental changes to our lives, allow room for new interests and ideas, get a clear view of the bigger picture, and give some sort of expression to Uranus and its need for change.

We must also realise that, with Uranus, prediction can be futile. As is often said, “If we can predict it, it’s not Uranian in nature.”

**Chart Data and Sources** for examples referenced in this article are from AstroDatabank (<http://www.astrodatabank.com>) and are rated A or higher, with the exception of Elisabeth Hasselbeck and Katie Hopkins (data, without birth time, from Wikipedia).

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