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The *Time Spiral* Magic Museum

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Taste the Magic
Thursday, October 26, 2006



PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

If you read my [Jaya Ballard, Task Mage preview article](#), then you know that *Time Spiral* cards can hold a big dusty chest of nostalgic nods to **Magic** history. We (the entire **Magic** team from Creative to Design to Development to Editing – the whole shebang – put in a huge amount of extra elbow grease trying to maximize the coolness of each new card by packing it full of subtle to sledge-hammering references to **Magic** card history, whether they be references to mechanics, characters, words, storylines, mythology, terminology, keywords, imagery, or anything else that has that warm fuzzy feeling of **Magic's** Golden Age.

Of course, **Magic's** Golden Age is different for everybody—depending on when you first caught the cardboard bug. I discussed this concept at length in an article called [Honeymoon in Dominaria](#). Take a poke over there if you want to get the full meal deal. For the “on the go” generation, here’s a DriveThru snack:



A player’s Golden Age is the period in **Magic's** past when that player first fell in love with the game. Players tend to look upon the cards of this time with rose-colored glasses—because these cards hold a special place in their hearts.

If you just started playing in the last couple years or so, then *Time Spiral* will seem all new to you – which is a good thing of its own. All the depth and history of these cards will be like fossils for you to uncover and explore. You’ll be able to trace little bits and pieces on cards to great story events, ancient flavor text, character histories, etc. *Time Spiral* will give you more to dig into than any other set... ever – because it’s tied to just about every other set... ever.

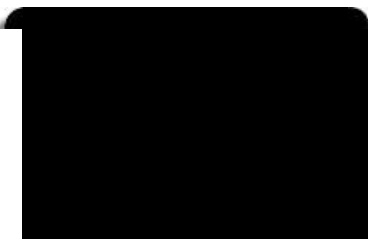
But for the long-timers, old-schoolers, and 5+ year **Magic** codgers, *Time Spiral* will be a weaving, winding trip down memory lane. But don’t get too comfortable, because the world is in turmoil, and the people you meet from the old days will not just be your old **college buddies**. You may run into a **thorn** in your side or an old **nemesis**.

The *Time Spiral* **Magic** Museum is a *place* newer players can visit to learn about bits of ancient **Magic** history as it relates to the creative elements of *Time Spiral* cards. It’s also a place where old-schoolers can stroll about and see what nuggets we have planted in **Time Spiral** from their Golden Ages.

Here’s how a *Time Spiral* **Magic** Museum exhibit looks: I’ll show you a card, Exhibit A, on the left, then list on the right all the flavor areas in which a historical reference or tie is being made. Then, if you choose to see what they are and what I have to say about them, you can click “Ask the Curator.”

I am setting it up this way because I know there are über-Vorthoses out there who like to discover all facets of **Magic** flavor on their own. Setting up exhibits in this way, the power is in your own hands. You can stop and listen to the curator talk about the origins of the Lhurgoyf species, or you can shuffle by with your fingers in your ears so that you may hunt down Lhurgoyf lore on your own.

Below is our first exhibit, and I am making this one mandatory for all. I want everybody to be able to see what sort of information the curator will be revealing so that they may make an informed decision whether or not to move on. Let’s begin.

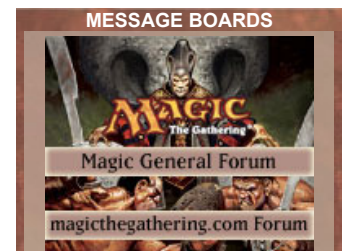


Opal Guardian

Historical references:

Name, Art, Artist, Flavor Text

Ask the Curator:





The **Opal Guardian** is a wonderful example of intermingling the past and the present in multiple facets of **Magic Creative**. It combines the flavor (and mechanics too) of **Abbey Gargoyles** and **Opal Gargoyle**.

It is from these two old cards that this new one takes its form. **Opal Guardian**'s name is phonetically similar to both. Its art is reminiscent of **Abbey Gargoyles**, with a back-lit gargoyle similarly poised atop a stone wall. **Opal Guardian** was also painted by old-schooler Christopher Rush, the very same artist who painted the original **Abbey Gargoyles**. *Time Spiral* brings back old artists like Rush in a wonderful scenario of life imitating art.

The flavor text does not so much contain bits of the past as much as it describes it:

It was a moment in time, cast in stone—a moment whose time had come again.

I like how this flavor text is successful on its own, but even more so when **Opal Guardian** is considered as a link to **Abbey Gargoyles** and **Opal Gargoyle**. On top of that it is also a clever nod to the **Magic** nostalgia reappearing all throughout *Time Spiral*.

Pretty nifty, eh? Interested in seeing more? Let's move on.



Moonlace

Historical references:
Name, Art, Storyline, Flavor Text

[Ask the Curator](#)

Moonlace is interesting in that it has direct lineage to 6 other **Magic** cards; the "Lace" cycle, **Purelace**, **Thoughtlace**, **Deathlace**, **Chaoslace**, and **Lifelace**, as well as the card **Pale Moon**. The Laces of old dealt with all five **Magic** colors, and **Pale Moon**'s power was in

colorlessness. Combine them all and you get a brand new card that does not give color, it wipes it away! The name is an obvious derivation of these cards, and the art is reminiscent of **Pale Moon**'s. The flavor text for **Moonlace** also contains a nod to **Pale Moon**.

Compare the two:



Moonlace

Once a vision of constancy in the sky, the moon had long been hidden from view by the haze that chokes the heavens. They very sight of it had become a sign that change was in the air.

Pale Moon

Denizens of Rath had never seen the moon before. It was a symbol of change, not constancy.



It's interesting how the concept of the color-washing moon is worked into the differing storylines of both Rath and *Time Spiral*'s post-apocalyptic Dominaria. Given the far-reaching power of the time rifts, **Moonlace** could take its power from the very same pale moon that appeared in Rath so long ago.



Sangrophage

Historical references:
Name, Art, Artist, Flavor Text

[Ask the Curator](#)

Looking at **Sangrophage** is like finding an entire fossilized skeleton intact in one place. It relates to its ancient predecessor, **Carnophage**, in just about every way possible. The names **Sangrophage** and **Carnophage** (meaning blood eater and meat eater, respectively) are clearly linked. The Pete Venters artwork on **Sangrophage** is a near mirror image of the **Carnophage**. It's a bit bulkier (given its extra power and toughness) and its teeth are a bit longer. Other than that, they're two peas in a pod.



The flavor text of these two cards are related as well. The **Sangrophage** text reflects the pattern of its older brother and seems to take the meaning one step further.

Carnophage
Eating is all it knows.

Sangrophage
The living is all it eats.

Lightning Axe

Historical references:
Name, Art, Flavor Text

[Ask the Curator](#)

Lightning Axe is a throwback, pardon the pun, to a card that was first discovered way back in the old days (but that lives on even to this day): **Lava Axe**. The names are phonetically and conceptually linked, each with some deadly force beginning with the letter "L" powering up a big fat axe. The illustrations mirror each other compositionally. But the most valuable historical find on **Lightning Axe** is in its flavor text. It unearths another old card from the

very first **Magic** set, Alpha. Let's take a look at both pieces of flavor text, as one seems to follow the other without skipping a beat. In fact, the flavor text from **Lightning Axe** could be the very next sentence in the ancient tome cited in both pieces.

Granite Gargoyle
*"While most overworlders fortunately don't realize this, Gargoyles can be most delicious, providing you have the appropriate tools to carve them."
—The Underworld Cookbook by Asmoranomardicadaistinaculdacar*



Lightning Axe

"A gargoyle's flesh can be carved with an ordinary cleaver, but for its petrous hide..." —*The Underworld Cookbook* by Asmoranomardicadaistinaculdacar

Ha! Apparently, you need an electrically charged blade to saw through a gargoyle's stony hide to get to the succulent flesh beneath. This is not only historically significant, it is completely relevant to the abused and overused food theme of this column!



Pendelhaven Elder



Historical references:

Name, Flavor Text

[Ask the Curator](#)

Pendelhaven Elder's historic ties are legendary, literally. Its flavor is derived from the combination of two cards from *Legends*, **Jacques le Vert** and **Pendelhaven**. The relationship in the name is quite obvious, but you have to dig into flavor text to find the ancient link. Let's first look at the flavor text of **Pendelhaven Elder**:

Pendelhaven Elder

The elder who carries the ancestral mantle of Jacques le Vert is tasked with his ancient mission: to protect the creatures of Pendelhaven.

Jacques le Vert

Abandoning his sword to return to the lush forest of Pendelhaven, Jacques le Vert devoted his life to protecting the creatures of his homeland.

You can see, right there in le Vert's flavor text, why the present day elders seek to emulate this long-dead hero. While the trees and greenery of historic **Pendelhaven** are withered by the harsh post-apocalyptic conditions, the "ancestral mantle of Jacques le Vert" lives on in *Time Spiral*!



Scion of the Ur-Dragon

Historical references:

Name, Flavor Text

[Ask the Curator](#)

It is here, in present day Dominaria, to remind us of the ancient power of a name long since uttered—that of the Ur-Dragon. The **Scion of the Ur-Dragon** is a living projection of the great spirit of all dragonkind, the Ur-



Dragon. We last heard of the Ur-Dragon back during the *Invasion*, when the dragon legends lived as examples of its might. The card name, **Scion of the Ur-Dragon**, has a historical tie to the flavor text of all five *Invasion* dragon legends' attendants:

Crosis's Attendant

"Crosis is the eye of the ur-dragon, piercing illusion and darkness."

Darigaaz's Attendant

"Darigaaz is the breath of the ur-dragon, burning away the burdens of mortality."

Dromar's Attendant

"Dromar is the wings of the ur-dragon, sweeping away all opposition."

Rith's Attendant

"Rith is the claw of the ur-dragon, scattering seeds of devastation."

Treva's Attendant

"Treva is the voice of the ur-dragon, demanding cries of worship."

And then, to punctuate the fact that the Scion of the Ur-Dragon is linked to the Ur-Dragon and these (and all other) dragons, its flavor text adapts this scheme:

Scion of the Ur-Dragon

"I am the blood of the Ur-Dragon, coursing through all dragonkind."



Sarpadian Empires Vol. VII

Historical references:

Name, Art

[Ask the Curator](#)

Sarpadian Empires, Vol. VII is not just a card that references other facets of **Magic** history, it is a history book in itself! It and its 6 sister volumes, recount the history of Sarpadia and the many races that struggled for dominance. This place and these races are the building blocks of the slice of **Magic** history we know as *Fallen Empires*.

You might notice that the name of this card is in italics. This is because the card name is not only a title but a direct quote from the flavor text of *Fallen Empires* cards, and flavor text is in italics. This might seem strange, but when you consider the fact that the words "Sarpadian Empires" appear 43 times on 35 different cards, it begins to feel less odd and more historically accurate. Here are 34 cards with *Sarpadian Empires* flavor text. Note that some of them have multiple entries from these books:

Aeolipile
Balm of Restoration

Elvish Hunter
Feral Thallid

Orcish Veteran
Order of Leitbur

Basal Thrull
Brassclaw Orcs
Brassclaw Orcs
Brassclaw Orcs
Combat Medic
Combat Medic
Derelor
Dwarven Armorer
Dwarven Catapult
Dwarven Lieutenant
Dwarven Soldier
Elven Fortress
Elvish Hunter

Fungal Bloom
Goblin Grenade
Goblin Grenade
Goblin War Drums
Goblin Warrens
High Tide
Hymn to Tourach
Hymn to Tourach
Icatian Infantry
Icatian Scout
Initiates of the Ebon Hand
Night Soil
Orcish Spy

Order of the Ebon Hand
River Merfolk
Svyelunite Priest
Thelonite Monk
Thorn Thallid
Thorn Thallid
Thorn Thallid
Thrull Retainer
Thrull Wizard
Vodalian Soldiers
Vodalian Soldiers

That's a whole lot of **Magic** history all packed in this one book. But there's a bit more too, and it's packed on this book. Take a look at the illustration – there, on the cover of the book, you can see appearances of 5 of the many “empires” that are accounted for in the 7 volumes; humans, homarids, goblins, thallids, and thrulls.



This brings us to the end of our tour for today. But this tour only scratched the surface of all the history waiting to be explored in the *Time Spiral Magic* Museum. Just about every card in the set is as packed with ancient flavor as each of these. I encourage you to dig into your *Time Spiral* cards the same way I did for you today. You will be amazed at the wonders you'll discover.

The past lives within its pages, waiting for its time to come again.

*Matt Cavotta has always been a fantasy goober. At various points in his gooberhood, he has used his nerdy knowledge to become a professional goober. He went from scribbling pictures of his own **D&D** characters to illustrating books and cards for his two favorite games; **D&D** and **Magic**. Then he channeled his inner 7th level Illusionist/3rd level Bard and landed himself a job at Wizards as a writer. He continues to cast his illusion spells each morning, lest they find out he's just another goober.*



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