

A Modern Case for Chiron From Individuation To Integration

Faculty of Astrological Studies, Open Day
Theme: “What Planet Rules Astrology?”
Ira Kiourti, 24 March 2012



Traditional Rulers of Astrology: Mercury

- Hermetic Arts (magic, alchemy, word...)
- Mercury rules Astrology in the widest possible sense (associated with Thoth)
- Logos, the Word, Language and Symbols, Records, Learning,
- Very general:
- While astrology paradigmatic as a magical language,
- ...all hermetic arts fall under this umbrella

Traditional Rulers of Astrology: Uranus

- The Muse, *Urania*
- 'Uranus' literally means 'Sky'
- Its Link to 20th century astrology:
- An Unconventional 'Outsiders' Art
- Concerned with Awakening
- Individuation: Freedom from Limitations through Insight
- Note: Uranus is often called the 'Higher Octave of Mercury'

Other Symbolic Candidates...

- **Jupiter**
 - Search for Meaning
 - Seeing the Bigger Picture
 - Personal Growth
- **Moon**
 - Luna, ruler of the Occult Realms
- **Neptune,**
 - Access to the Divine,
 - Symbolism & the Archetypal Realms of the Imagination
 - Capacity for Compassion,
 - The Astrologer as Priest / Conduit
- **All Important - but, these won't be the main players in this story...**

Uranus as Symbolic of 20th Century Astrology

- **Why Uranus joins or 'takes over from' Mercury:**
- **Saturn** (representing cosmic order, fate, limits, finality, laws – the 'old' astrology) **no longer has the final word**...following Uranus' discovery.
- (NB. **Aquarius' relevance:** Saturn-Uranus co-Rulers of Aquarius)
- **Natal Astrology is for each person** (not just e.g. Kings)
- **Reinvention of the Art:** Astrology not just for Divination, but as a tool of Individuation
- Fate and Divination give way to **Freedom from Constraints through Insight.**
- **Uranus the awakener!** Uranus granted us freedom. Now we are awake, what do we do about it?

From Uranus to Chiron

- Time to move from Individuation to Integration.
- From the excitement of the new and the freshly born individual...
- To its initiation into the mysteries,
- ...and its re-integration, as an individual, into the whole.

Focus on Chiron

- “Astronomers generally agree he is a comet, trapped alone in our solar system. Some say Chiron may break free of the solar system entirely some day, just as they think he’s perhaps just recently arrived” (Anne Beversdorf, www.Stariel.com)



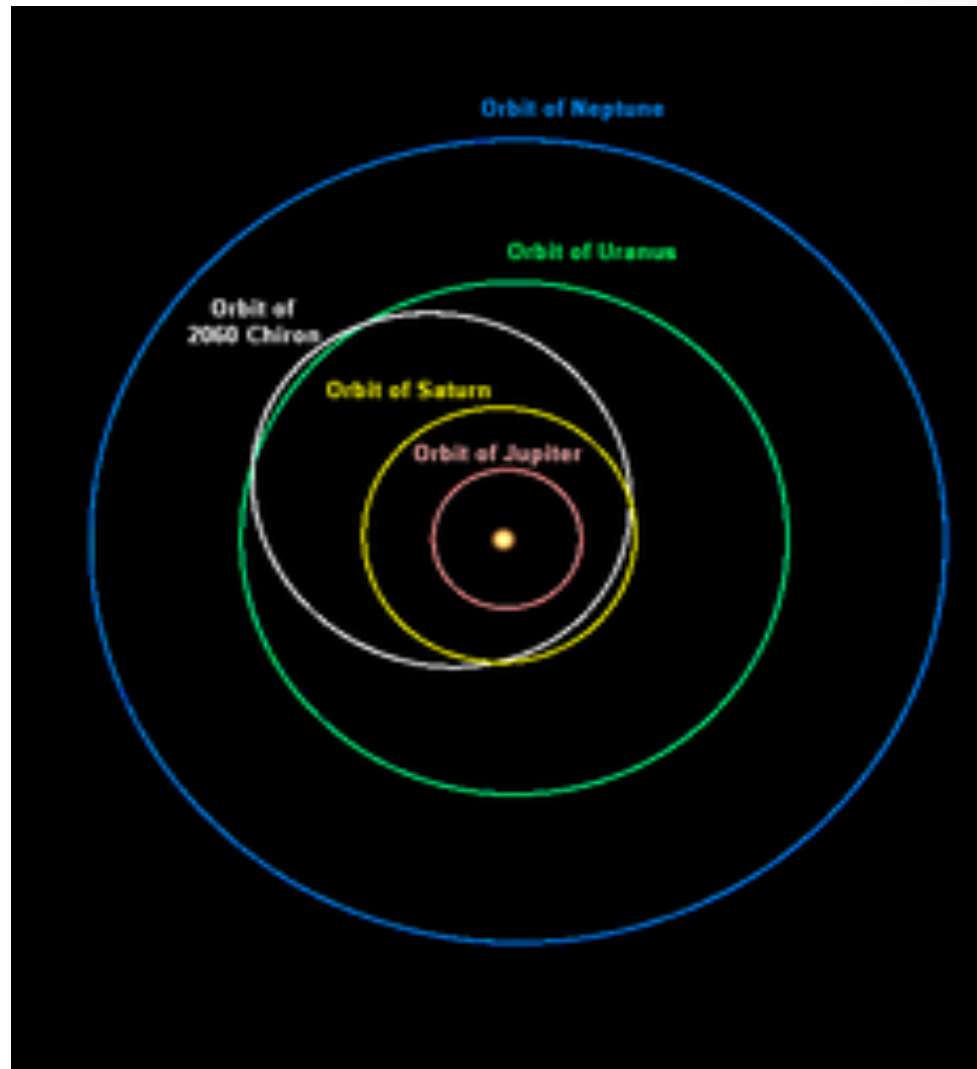
<http://www.stariel.com/the-planets/chiron/>

The Case for Chiron

- I will make an Imaginative Case for Chiron:
- The 'story' draws from three sources:
 - **Myth:** Imaginative Links between Chiron and the Symbolism of Uranus.
 - **Symbolism** (the astrologer; the nature, practice and role of modern day astrology).
 - **Esotericism:** Chiron's role in Magick, Alchemy, Transmutation

In Pictures: Chiron's Orbit

- Chiron links the old and the new rulers of Aquarius...:
- Freedom and Individuality Versus Fate and Destiny.
- Consciousness and Insight Versus Natural Law



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2060_Chiron

Some Background...

- **Centaur**: Son of Philyra & Saturn (horse-forms incidental)
- **Linden Tree** (Philyra's later form): buds: healing; bark: writing tablets, divination sticks (R.Graves 1960: 151.5/ Herodotus), also means 'supple' (Latin & Germanic roots)
- One myth-version: **Different birth** from other centaurs, who were spawned by Nepheli: (Chiron's front legs often depicted as human; first centaur)
- **Rejected** by Philyra as monstrous, grew up Mount Pelion (later, his cave is there).
- The **Teacher** (indeed, **Initiator**) of many a hero (Achilles, Hercules, Jason,...), also taught by Apollo himself (Solar themes)
- A **Healer** who taught Asclepius (father of medicine) (also putative link to Eleusinian Mysteries)
- **Permanent Wound** by Poison Arrow (Hercules)

The Mythic Link: Prometheus

- **Prometheus** as an (Aquarian) **Symbol of Consciousness and Humanity**. (Famous for stealing fire from the gods to give it to Humanity)
- **Joseph Campbell**: “Men, before he taught them, knew no arts but in the dark earth burrowed and housed, like ants in caves. They had no calendar until he taught them to know the rising and setting of the stars. He gave them numbers, the arts of writing, farming and the harnessing of the horse; metallurgy, medicine, divination; yes, and the art, even, of making sacrifice to Zeus.” (1960:279)
- He links Prometheus to the “...spirit of individualism... coming unbound within us.” (1960: 281) (c.f. also Melanie Reinhart 1989: 31)

The Mercurial Prometheus

- Prometheus the **Trickster**,
- **Linked to Mercury**, the image of the Coyote, and Loki - Germanic trickster god by Joseph Campbell (1960: 181)
- He is a titan **Out to outwit the gods**:
- ...credited with the very creation of the first mortals out of clay and water...
- looked after their interests ever since...only to be contrary... a trickster at heart –
- His later heroic humanitarian image is due to Aeschylus' play *Prometheus Bound*

The Uranian Prometheus

- **Richard Tarnas:**
- "The act of perceiving astrological archetypes and thus freeing oneself from the bondage of unconsciousness is, on one level, an extraordinary feat of human rebellion against archetypal manipulation; it is, in essence, stealing fire from the Gods." (Tarnas 1984: 31. See also Melanie Reinhart, Stephen Arroyo & Liz Greene)
- "A mythological name and legend more appropriate for Uranus is Prometheus, which expresses Uranus's essential astrological nature with regard to the act of cosmic rebellion, intellectual genius, the symbol of fire as transformative energy, and the cosmic trickster. ...The archetypal identity of Uranus with Prometheus can expand understanding of this planet's meaning." (Tarnas 1984, abstract)

Chiron Swaps with Prometheus

- **In Myth, Chiron takes Prometheus' place on Caucasus**, dies & is immortalized in the stars as Sagittarius (NB: Jupiter-ruled).
- Prometheus (human consciousness) is thus freed from bondage/suffering through the agency of Chiron.
- NB: Upon Release, Prometheus must wear a stone-set-ring and a willow tree crown. (Willow tree associated with Hecate (Moon-symbolism) – accept own mortality/natural side) (Reinhart 1989: 32)
- Chiron as a good antidote to hubris in the form of rationalism/individualism cut off from nature and the instincts.
- **The Case from Myth: Chiron literally takes Prometheus' place** (Prometheus here standing for Mercurial/Uralian symbolism)
 - Fun fact: Chiron's discovery was during its roughly 3-decade opposition to Uranus

Symbolic Case I

The Nature of Astrology

- Chiron is half beastly and half human, much like the art of Astrology itself.
- Astrology relies heavily on **rigorous data analysis** & the rational brain (unlike, say, card-reading), but equally on **intuition** and the creative brain. It is not a science but an art – albeit a highly technical one.
- **The difficult questions of astrology around Fate and Free Will** come together in the image of the Centaur.
 - Half animal and half divine
 - Consciousness versus Instinct
 - Fully bound by the laws of nature, yet entirely free.

Symbolic Case II

Astrology in the World

- Astrology as an **Outsider** or **Maverick** in most circles...
- Scientists & academics of all kinds reject it as unscientific nonsense or as a 'pseudoscience' (who said it was a science?)
- But even in occult and esoteric circles you will often find astrology shunned. Maybe it is simply too technical – too disconcerting? Out in a category of its own.
- Astrology is often scapegoated: all that is dark and 'irrational' can be projected onto it and ridiculed.
- It may even be viewed as the incurably beastly aspect of human nature and society as a whole – the permanent wound on our otherwise rational progress.

Symbolic Case III

The Astrologer

- The astrologer as both **teacher** (bringing forth the inner hero!) and **healer** (mediating for inner integration)
- The astrologer as **maverick** & **outsider** rejected by established intellectual circles.
- Possibly, the astrologer as a '**wounded** healer' (classic Chiron-talk) in terms of their place in society – an intellectual misfit.
- **Chiron's cave**: Astrologer as a teacher in a solitary dwelling; the sacred space created between astrologer and client embarking on the 'heroic journey'.
- Many astrologers come to astrology through trying to heal their own pain, and end up learning to help others.

The Esoteric Case: The Symbol of the Centaur

- **The symbol of the Centaur & Chiron's constellation (Sagittarius) is linked to the path of Samekh ('prop') on the Qabalah Tree of Life in some western esoteric systems (Golden Dawn, Crowley's *Liber 777*):**
- This is the **Path linking Moon to Sun** on the Middle Pillar,
- The Path of the **Alchemical Marriage**,
- The Path allowing a **Direct Ascent to Consciousness**.
- The Path of the Tarot card of **Temperance** (standing for **Transmutation, Reconciliation**)
 - Curious fact: Samekh also connected to Hippogriff: cross between a Griffon (Prometheus' bird-nemesis) and a horse.

The Esoteric Case: Astrology & Centaur Symbolism

- The purpose, practice & experience of astrology at its best as
- **Transformative**
- **Initiatory**
- **A heightening of Consciousness**
- **The sense of Participation Mystique**
- The ultimate purpose of astrological practice as facilitating entry into the heroic (solar) journey – finding the alchemical gold.
- **NB: Also Possible Links of Centaurs to (lesser) Eleusinian Mysteries.**
Established by Demeter over slaughter of Centaurs by Hercules. (Note Neptunian Themes: Centaurs attracted to scene by Dionysian wine; Poseidon is a protector of Centaurs).

So, Astrology in the 21st Century

- From the beginnings of magic and language (Mercury), in an ordered world (Saturn-bound)...
- Through the awakening of consciousness & individuality, (Uranus) beyond the Saturnian bonds of Nature.
- And finally to Integration (Chiron):
- We are free yet bound
- Astrology as a placeholder of all that has been disowned as beastly, irrational and non- scientific,
- Yearning to reconcile the human faculties.
- The astrologer as an initiator to the mysteries

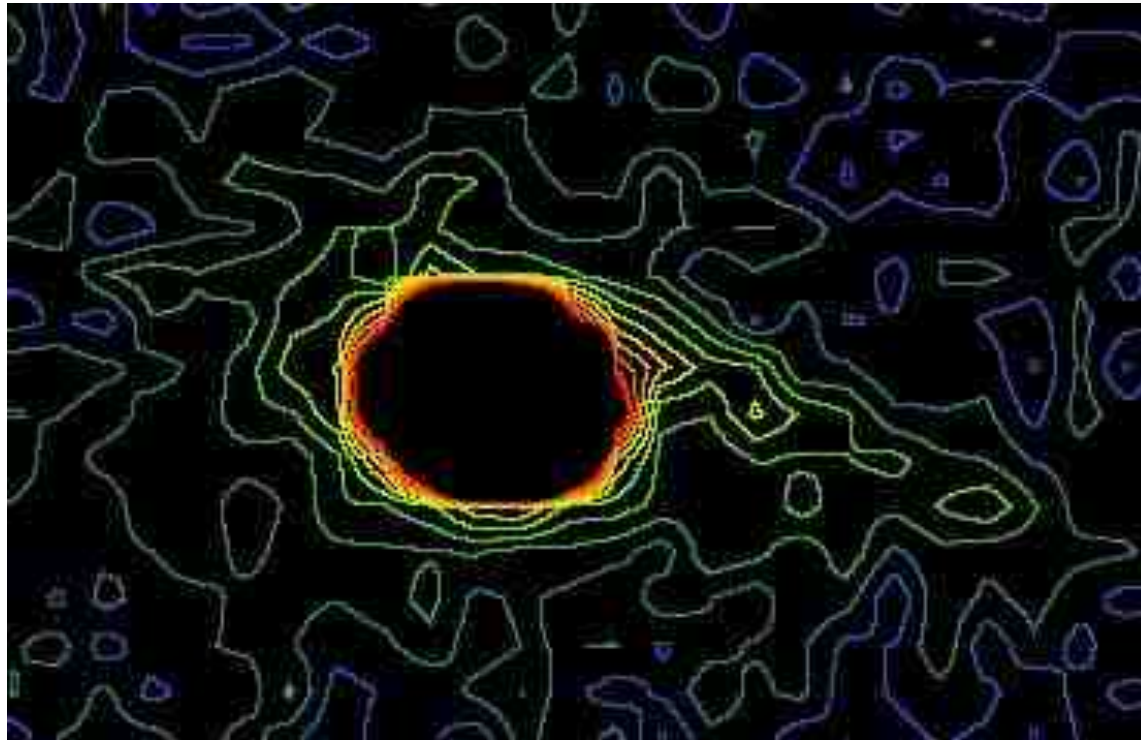


Some References

- **Melanie Reinhart**, *Chiron and the Healing Journey*, 1989, London: Penguin (Arkana Contemporary Astrology Series)
- **Robert Graves**, *The Greek Myths* Vols. I-II, London: Penguin 1960
- **Joseph Campbell**, *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1960 (free edition)
- **Richard Tarnas**, "Uranus and Prometheus' *Spring* 1984
 - (see also his: *Prometheus the Awakener: An Essay on the Archetypal Meaning of the Planet Uranus*, 1995; Spring: Woodstock CT)
- **Theoi.com, 'Kentauroi'**
<http://www.theoi.com/Georgikos/KentauroiPeloponnesioi.html>
- **Liz Greene**: *Prometheus and the Art of Stealing Fire*, (London: CPA Press)
- **Stephen Arroyo**: *Astrology, Karma & Transformation* (1992 expanded edition, Sebastopol, California: CRCS Publications)
- **Alistair Crowley**, *Liber 777*
<http://hermetic.com/crowley/libers/liber777.pdf>)

Some Chiron Imagery...

- Enlargement of photo of Chiron taken by David Bergeron on March 27, 1995.



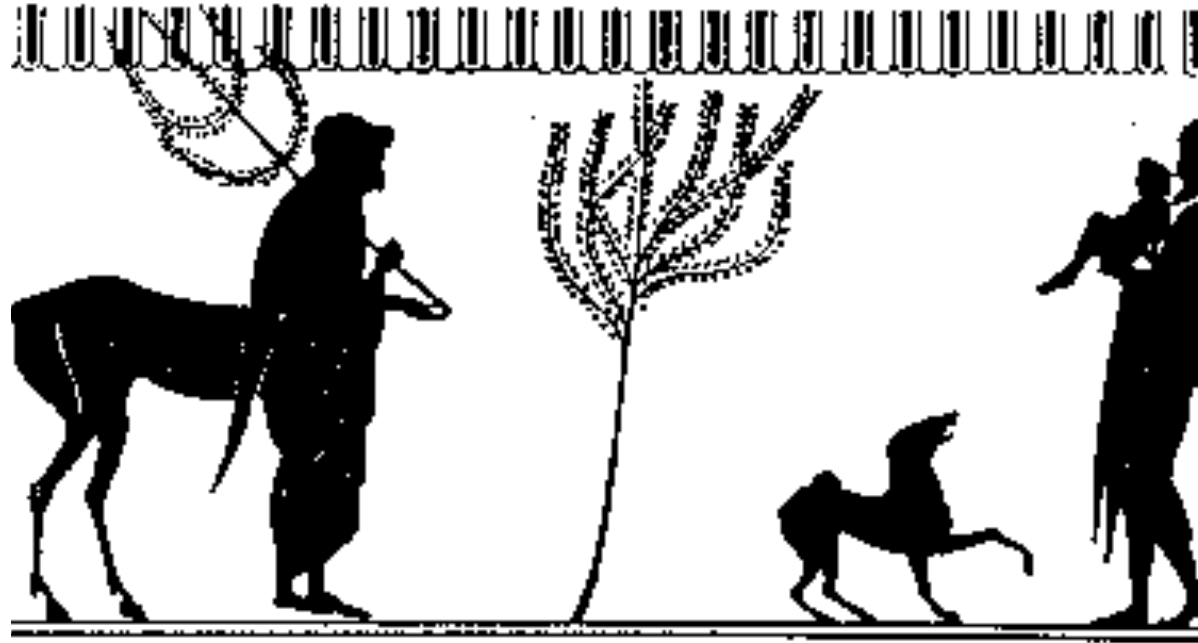
http://www.ericfrancis.com/articles/chiron_hist.html.



<http://www.reikipath.org/reiki-attunement/planet-chiron-attunement-16-march-2012/>



- Chiron and Achilles mural in Herculaneum ruins, southern Italy



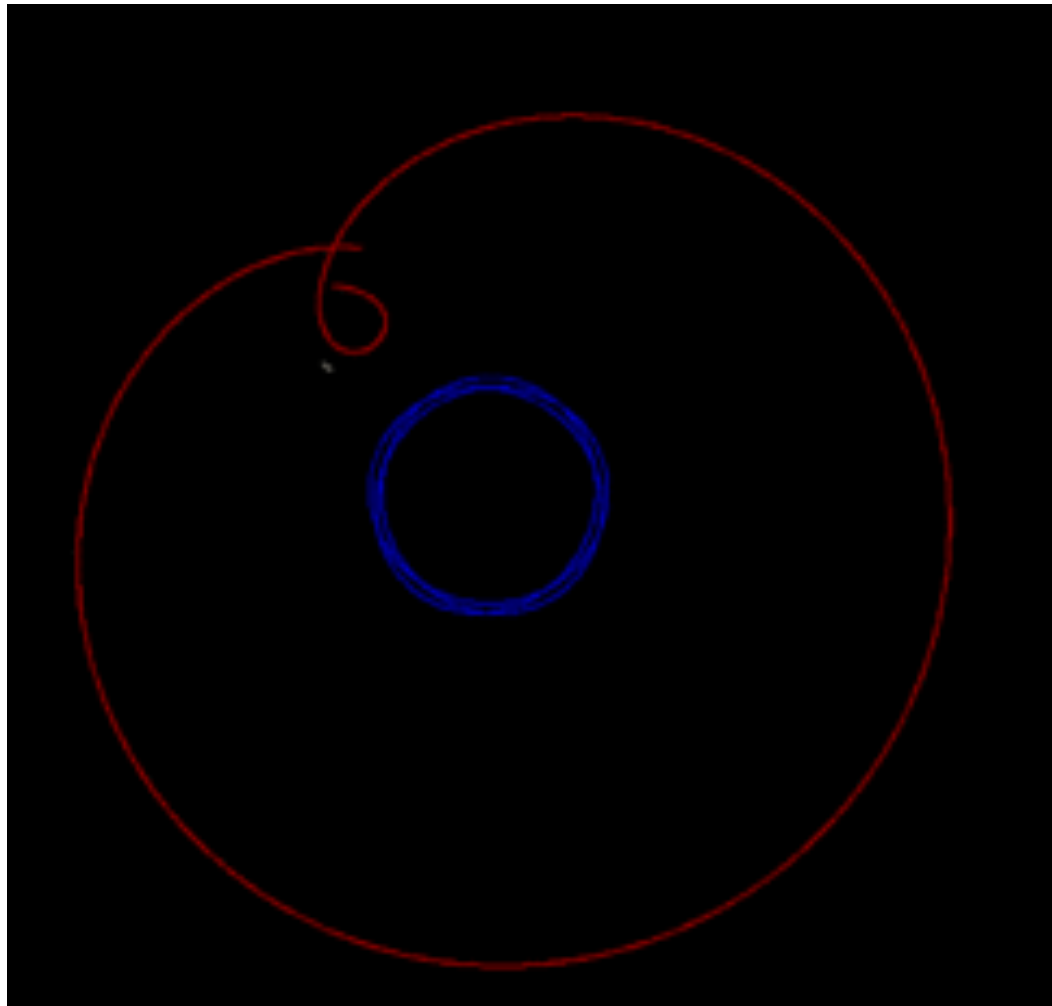
Peleus brings Achilles to Chiron. (Greek vase painting. British Museum London.)

- <http://www.chiron-communications.com/chiron.html>



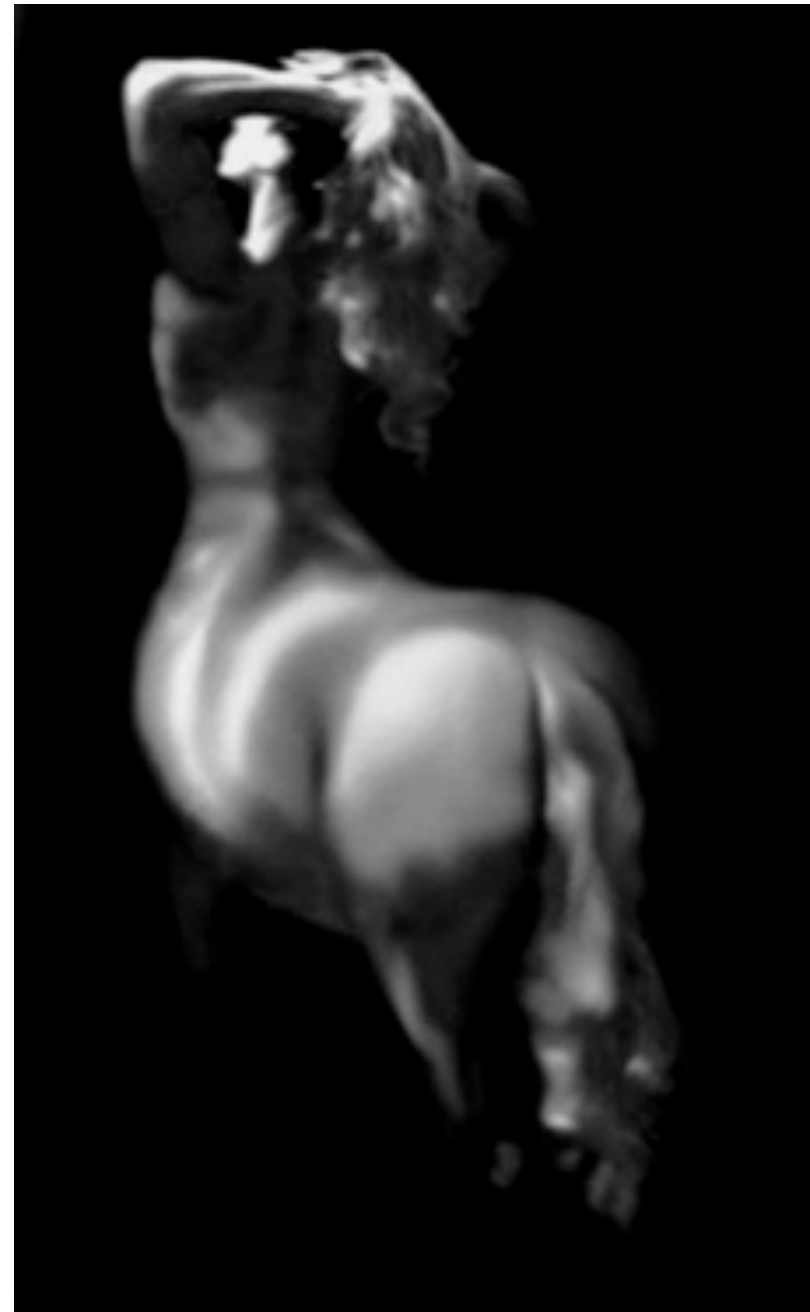
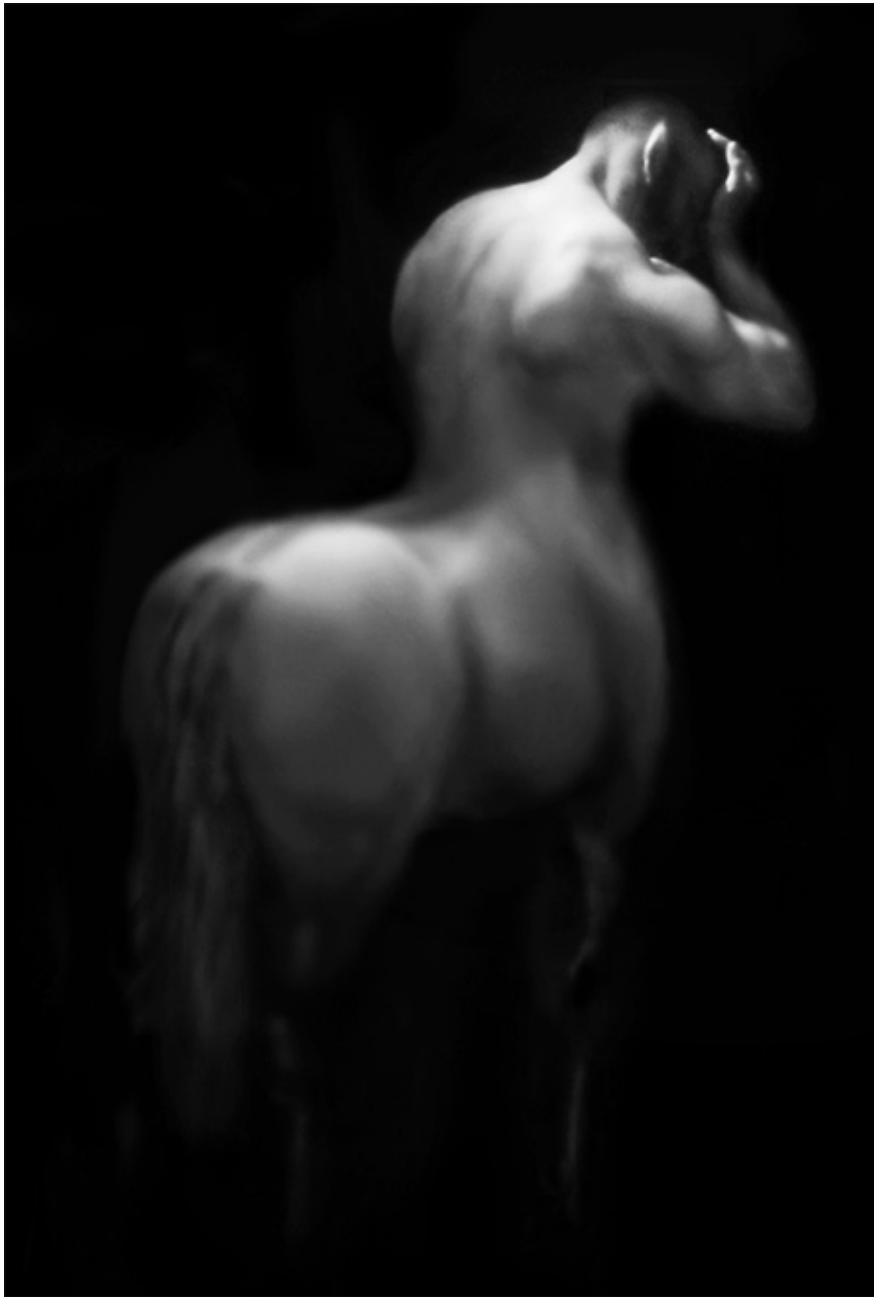
Greek Vase detail Chiron & infant Achilles, Louvre

<http://iconics.cehd.umn.edu/Chiron/Gallery/default.html>



The chaotic unstable motion of Chiron as simulated by Gravity Simulator. It is *possible* that Chiron will evolve into a 2:1 near resonance with Saturn over the next 10,000+ years. (In celestial mechanics, an orbital resonance occurs when two orbiting bodies exert a regular, periodic gravitational influence on each other, usually due to their orbital periods being related by a ratio of two small integers.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2060_Chiron



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<http://www.zoographer.com/SHERRY%20LOVELESS.html>



- <http://www.mlahanas.de/Greeks/Mythology/Chiron.html>
- From The Proceedings of the 10th Annual HISTORY OF MEDICINE, March 23rd and 24th, 2001, FACULTY OF MEDICINE THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY)



Prometheus (on Greek vase), with griffon picking out his liver

Theoi.com