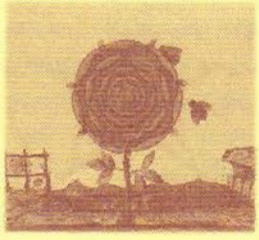
THE NEW YORK OPEN CENTER

PRESENTS

THE ROSICRUCIAN ENLIGHTENMENT REVISITED



A CONFERENCE IN HONOR OF

FRANCES YATES

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

GNOSIS & OIBIBIO

MAGAZINE AMSTERDAM

THE

WESTERN MYSTERY TRADITION IN

BOHEMIA

SEPTEMBER 8TH–13TH, 1995

IN THE HISTORIC TOWN OF

CESKÝ KRUMLOV

SOUTHERN BOHEMIA (CZECH REPUBLIC)

JOSCELYN GODWIN
The Imaginal World of the Late Renaissance

ADAM MCLEAN
The Imagery of Alchemy and Rosicrucianism

JOHN MATTHEWS
The Grail and the Rose

Z'EV BEN SHIMON HALEVI
Kabbalah in Bohemia

JOHN MICHELL
Sacred Number and Proportion

NICHOLAS GOODRICK–CLARKE
John Dee's Mission to Central Europe

CLARE GOODRICK–CLARKE
The Life and Influence of Comenius

CHRISTOPHER BAMFORD
The Meaning of the Rosy Cross

CHRISTOPHER MCINTOSH
The Rosicrucian Legacy

ROBERT SARDELLO
The Rosicrucian Ideal of Good Work

ROBERT BLY
Frances Yates and the Poetry of the Divine

R.J. STEWART
The Folklore of the Rose

In her classic book, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, the great historian Frances Yates brought alive for the modern world an extraordinary period in early 17th Century Europe long lost to memory. For a brief spell in Bohemia, a hermetic, alchemical and kabbalistic enlightenment met the seeds of modern science and attempted to give birth to a reform of the world, a new era. Only now, almost four hundred years after the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestoes and the Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz, are we awakening to the full significance of that moment and its relevance to our own epoch.

Join us on an imaginative and spiritual rediscovery of that magical time in the very region where it all took place, a part of Europe long inaccessible behind the "Iron Curtain."

Join one of the richest gatherings assembled in many years of writers on the Western Mystery Tradition. Visit the White Mountain outside Prague where in 1920 the Bohemian forces fought and lost a historic battle against Counter- Reformation forces.

Visit Trebon where John Dee, Elizabethan magus, spent months protected from intrigues at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor.

Cesky Krumlov, the site of the conference, is three hours South of Prague and is one of the most beautiful small towns in Europe. Rich in history and architecture, it has been designated by UNESCO as a world historical monument. Although largely forgotten in the West until recently, it was a center of alchemical study during the Renaissance under the guidance of Count Wilem Rozmberk. We will meet in the 16th Century Hotel Rose and at Krumlov castle. Let the rich, evocative atmosphere of old Bohemia with its winding cobbled streets and ancient buildings transport us to another time, another place when the light of a new epoch seemed visible on the horizon.

Conference Director: **Ralph White** (New York Open Center) Thanks to: **Jay Kinney** (Gnosis Magazine), **Ronald Jan Heijn** (OIBIBIO) and **Boris David** (Center for International Understanding, Czech Republic)

The structure of the conference will be as follows:

Breakfast: 7:30–9am

Mornings: 9am – 1pm

Two plenary addresses

Lunch:1 –2pm

Early afternoon: 2– 4:30pm

***Free time** to enjoy the town or surrounding countryside*

Late afternoon: 4:30–6:30pm

Workshops

Dinner 7–8:30pm

*Evenings: **Presentations**, music or poetry in Krumlov castle*

In addition, we will visit **Prague** one day and visit **Trebon**—home of **John Dee** for many years—one afternoon.

THE ROSICRUCIAN PRELUDE: John Dee's Mission in Central Europe

Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke D.Phil.

What was the inspiration behind the late outburst of Hermetic ideas in the Rosicrucian manifestoes? Who were the precursors of the Rosicrucian Enlightenment? This talk focuses on the Elizabethan magus and Christian kabbalist John Dee (1527 –1608). The adviser of Queen Elizabeth 1, Dee enjoyed wide renown as a philosopher, mathematician, geographer and navigator. A scholar–magician in the Renaissance tradition, he was also immersed in the occult arts and the influence of supernatural powers.

We join John Dee and Edward Kelley on their continental mission which was inspired by hopes of a major spiritual upheaval and religious reconciliation. His practice of angel-magic and alchemy, travels and contacts in Cracow, Prague, Bohemia and Germany throw important light on the later Rosicrucian furor.

FIRE IN THE HEART, TEMPLE OF WISDOM HOUSE OF THE SPIRIT The Meaning of the Rosy Cross

Christopher Bamford

A close reading of the Fama, the Confesio, and the Chemical Wedding, against the spiritual background of previous centuries in Europe and the Middle East reveals the inner meaning of the Great Reformation proposed by the Rosicrucian Enlightenment, helps us understand the inner significance of many Hermetic and Rosicrucian texts of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, and provides insight into what might constitute Rosicrucianism today.

MAGICAL GARDENS & CHAMBERS OF MARVELS

Joscelyn Godwin

The formal garden in the Renaissance became a place of initiatic experience , contact with chthonic forces, and celebration of the pagan gods. The Hortus Palatinus of Heidelberg, designed by Salomon de Caus, was a prime example. An indoor equivalent was the Kunst und Wunderkammer (chamber of art and marvels), in which artifacts, minerals, antiquities, and scientifica instruments were classified and displayed. The greatest collection was that of Emperor Rudolf 11. Illustrated with slides, this lecture shows how both gardens and collections were inspired by the Hermetic philosophy.

KABBALAH IN BOHEMIA

Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi (Warren Kenton)

Prague was a major center of Jewish life and esoteric studies in the 16th Century. It was the home of Rabbi Judah Loewe, the scholar and Kabbalist reputed to have created the Golem. Alchemists and occultists gathered in Bohemia from all over Europe to exchange ideas and experiences. Kabbalah, already an ancient mystical system, had great appeal in its ordered view of Existence. In this illustrated talk, Halevi will reintroduce its concepts and practices within the context of various mystical disciplines.

THE IMAGERY OF ALCHEMY & ROSICRUCIANISM

Adam McLean

Adam McLean will discuss some of the key images found in the alchemical tradition and the ways in which these were taken up and used during the early 17th Century Rosicrucian period. He will examine the structures and important sequences of allegorical and emblematic images of transformation found in the books and manuscripts of this period.

THE GRAIL & THE ROSE

John Matthews

In this talk, John Matthews explores the contact and influence between the Medieval Grail romances and the Rosicrucian Enlightenment. The symbol of the rose is one of enfoldment – as is the Grail – both are perceived as channels to the divine. The seekers of the Grail and the seekers of Christian Rosecross share a common background of symbolism and teaching and the objects of their quest are the same.

THE ROSICRUCIAN IDEAL OF GOOD WORK

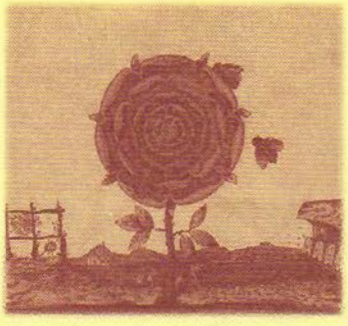
Robert Sardello Ph.D.

Beginning with an exploration of "The Laws of the Fraternity of the Rosie Cross" written by Michael Maier, this presentation develops the Rosicrucian understanding of the unity of spiritual discipline and practical work in the world. The myth of Solomon's Temple, the initiation into fire, the golden triangle, and the particular significance of the Queen of Sheeba in this elaborate imagination are examined for indications concerning the future of work in the world. We will then seek insight into how the Rosicrucian ideal of good work – the transformation of the world into a work of art – could possibly come about.

RENEWAL & REVELATION THROUGH NUMBER, HARMONY & PROPORTION

John Michell

At the root of all cultures is a single, universal code of knowledge that is renewed at different periods through revelation. From its simple base in pure number, it develops through musical harmonies and geometric proportions into a complete, coherent picture of creation which provides a standard in all things. Its ultimate expression is a dynamically balanced social order, reflecting the perfectly ordered mind. This approach is not just of academic interest, but a natural, necessary response to modern confusion, and a means of invoking revelation.



THE ROSICRUCIAN AFTERGLOW: The Life and Influence of Comenius

Clare Goodrick-Clarke

What might have happened in Bohemia if the Battle of the White Mountain (1620) and the Thirty Years War had not intervened? What became of the Rosicrucian ideal behind the "iron curtain" of Habsburg reaction? Some clues are to be found in the remarkable life of Jan Amos Comenius (1592 –1670), Czech reformer, active dissident, mystic, astrologer, pioneer of "Pansophy", and polymath. Influenced by Johan Valentin Andreae, Comenius developed a system of universal knowledge based on late Renaissance neo–Platonism and achieved universal renown as an educational reformer (he was even invited to become the first president of Harvard).

THE ROSICRUCIAN LEGACY

Christopher McIntosh D.Phil.

Rosicrucianism resurfaced in the early Eighteenth Century, having nearly disappeared by the end of the Seventeenth. This talk tells the fascinating story of its subsequent development by examining its influence in the Prussia of Frederick William 11, the Russia of Catherine the Great, amid its connections with Freemasonry, Anthroposophy and other movements. He also presents its reverberations in art, literature and music and its various present–day offshoots, underlining the continuing vitality of the Rosicrucian tradition.

"MICHAEL MAIER, THE DEEPEST OF THE ROSICRUCIANS."

Joscelyn Godwin

Frances Yates wrote in "The Rosicrucian Enlightenment": "Maier may have been the deepest of the "Rosicrucians." Yet he remains as obscure as he was then. This workshop is an attempt to plumb this depth and to discover what he was trying to do in the numerous works published between 1614 and 1621

THE ANGEL OF THE WESTERN WINDOW

Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke D.Phil.

Gustav Meyrink (1868–1932) was a leading Austrian German fantasy writer and a Prague banker deeply versed in the occult. Best known for "The Golem", his final major work was "The Angel of the Western Window" which focuses on the life of John Dee in England, Poland and Prague.

THE LABYRINTH OF THE WORLD & THE PARADISE OF THE HEART

Clare Goodrick-Clarke

Comenius' book of this name is a classic of world literature. Written in hiding in 1623, it is a spiritual allegory and a delineation of an individual's interior journey in which all branches of knowledge are represented. this workshop takes participants on an imaginative journey through the labyrinth.

ROSICRUCIANISM & ALCHEMY

Christopher McIntosh, D.Phil.

Alchemy came to play a central role in the revived Rosicrucianism of the 18th Century and afterwards. Much more than simply the attempt to manufacture gold, it was a complete system of thought and practice, rooted in the Gnostic tradition. This workshop elucidates the mysterious world of the alchemists and argues that it is still of relevance today.

ROSICRUCIAN PRETENDERS AT THE DAWN OF THE NEW AGE

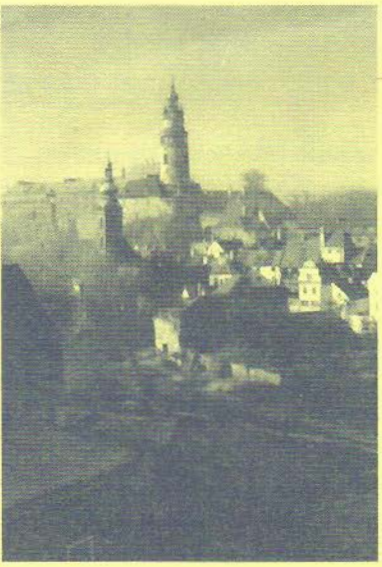
Christopher Bamford

In this workshop, we will examine the claims of many 19th and early 20th Century movements affirming themselves Rosicrucian. What have been their claims and what criteria might we use in assessing their validity?

ALLEGORY & SYMBOLISM

Adam McLean

Participants will be encouraged to investigate the structures of some of the important sequences of allegorical and emblematic images of transformation found in alchemical and Rosicrucian books and manuscripts.



THE ROSICRUCIAN IMPULSE IN ANTHROPOSOPHY

Robert Sardello, Ph.D.

This workshop explores the utilization of Rosicrucian wisdom and method in Anthroposophy as developed by Rudolf Steiner (1861– 1925). Themes to be considered include: the imagination of the soul of the world; the understanding of the human soul; reincarnation; and how the principles of Rosicrucianism are taken up in Anthroposophy.

HEALING THE WOUNDED KING

John Matthews

This will be an experiential session in which participants will be invited to embark on an inner journey to discover the Grail within and to heal the Wounded King, the guardian of the Grail who continues to suffer until someone brings the Grail from which he may drink.

SYMBOLIC GEOMETRY & THE PROCESS OF CREATION

John Michell

This is a practical workshop in cosmological iconography – the construction of the world as ideally conceived. From the number One and the primal circle, we proceed to the full depiction of that universal image, referred to by Plato and the teachers of all schools of esoteric knowledge.

KABBALAH AS A PATH TO WISDOM

Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi

This workshop discusses the concepts and practices of Kabbalah and examines its interaction with various other mystical disciplines. It is intended for those who want a deeper insight into this ancient tradition.

EVENING PRESENTATIONS

FRANCES YATES & THE POETRY OF THE DIVINE

Robert Bly

Reading poems from the European Renaissance and from other eras, well–known American poet Robert Bly will offer an evening of poetry and music in Krumlov Castle presenting poetry's attunement in several cultures to the Divine.

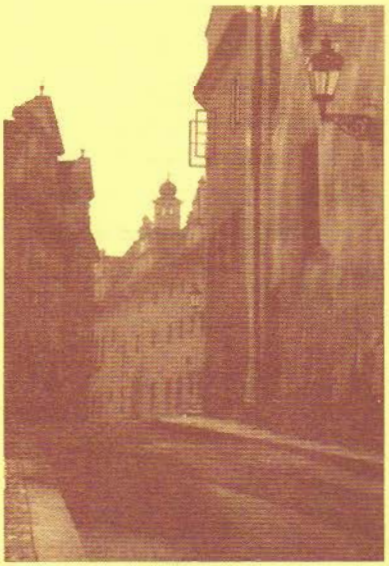
THE FOLKLORE OF THE ROSE

R.J. Stewart

R.J. Stewart is an accomplished musician and an experienced guide in the realm of pathworking or active imagination. Drawing on the symbolism of the rose, he will present an evening of both meditative attunement and entertainment in the hall of an alchemical castle.

AN EVENING OF 16TH & 17TH CENTURY CZECH MUSIC

Local musicians and singers, specialists in ancient music, will create a special evening of Czech music from the period of the Rosicrucian Enlightenment



BIOGRAPHIES

Christopher Bamford is director of Lindisfarne/Anthroposophic Press in Hudson, New York and the author of books on Celtic Christianity and Pythagoras. He is a long–time scholar and writer on the Western Mystery Tradition.

Robert Bly is one of America's best–known poets. Winner of the National Book Award, he is a translator and the author of the best–selling "Iron John."

Joscelyn Godwin is the author of books on Robert Fludd, "Music, Mysticism and Magic" and most recently, "The Theosophical Enlightenment." A professor at Colgate University in upstate New York, he recently completed the first translation into English in 300 years of "The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz." He also translated and edited Michael Maier's "Atalanta Fugiens."

Clare Goodrick–Clarke is a writer and publisher who has researched the influence of Renaissance Platonism on the English Reformation. She is the founder of IKON Productions, an independent publishing house specializing in religion and the history of ideas.

Nicholas Goodrick–Clarke D.Phil. studied at Berlin, Bristol and Oxford Universities and was series editor of the Essential Readings (HarperCollins) which includes volumes on John Dee, Paracelsus, Jacob Boehme and Robert Fludd. His publications include "Paracelsus" and "The Occult Roots of Nazism". He has traveled frequently in Central Europe.

Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi (Warren Kenton) is the author of eleven books on Kabbalah and teaches in Europe, North and South America and Israel. He lives and works in London where he was born into a Sephardic–Spanish Jewish family.

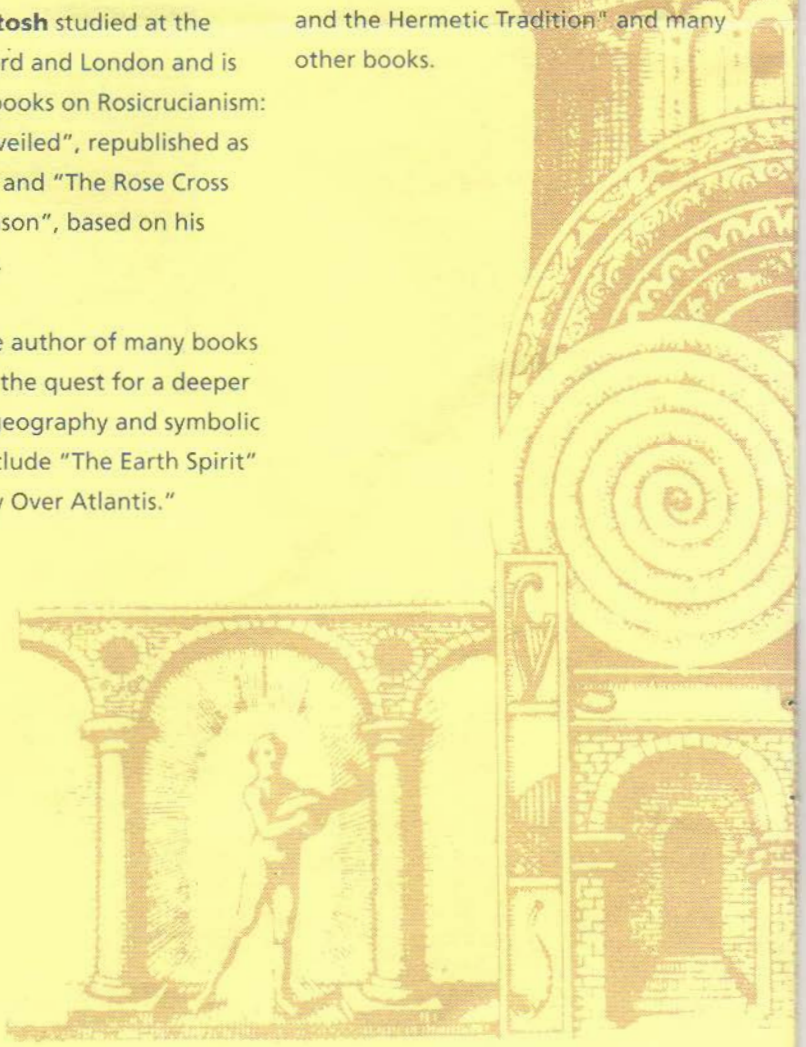
Adam McLean is a researcher into the emblems and imagery of the Hermetic tradition. The general editor of the Magnum Opus Hermetic Sourceworks series, he has published widely in this field and introduced a new edition of The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz.

John Matthews is an experienced teacher with more than thirty books to his credit, many of them on the wisdom of the Grail and associated subjects. His best–known works include "The Celtic Shaman" and "The Grail: Quest for the Eternal."

Christopher McIntosh studied at the Universities of Oxford and London and is the author of two books on Rosicrucianism: "The Rosy Cross Unveiled", republished as "The Rosicrucians", and "The Rose Cross and The Age of Reason", based on his Oxford dissertation.

John Michell is the author of many books on earth mysteries, the quest for a deeper cosmology, sacred geography and symbolic geometry. These include "The Earth Spirit" and "The New View Over Atlantis."

Robert Sardello Ph.D. is co–founder of the School of Spiritual Psychology and the author of "Facing the World with Soul" and "Love and the Soul: Creating a Future for Earth." He teaches at the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture and the Chalice of Repose Project in Montana.

R.J. Stewart is a Scottish author, musician and composer. His books include "The Dream and the Underworld" and "The Merlin Tarot." He teaches and performs internationally.

The leading Renaissance scholar of her time, **Frances Yates** (1899–1981). Reader in the History of the Renaissance at the University of London for many years, she was the author of "The Rosicrucian Enlightenment," "The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age," "Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition" and many other books.