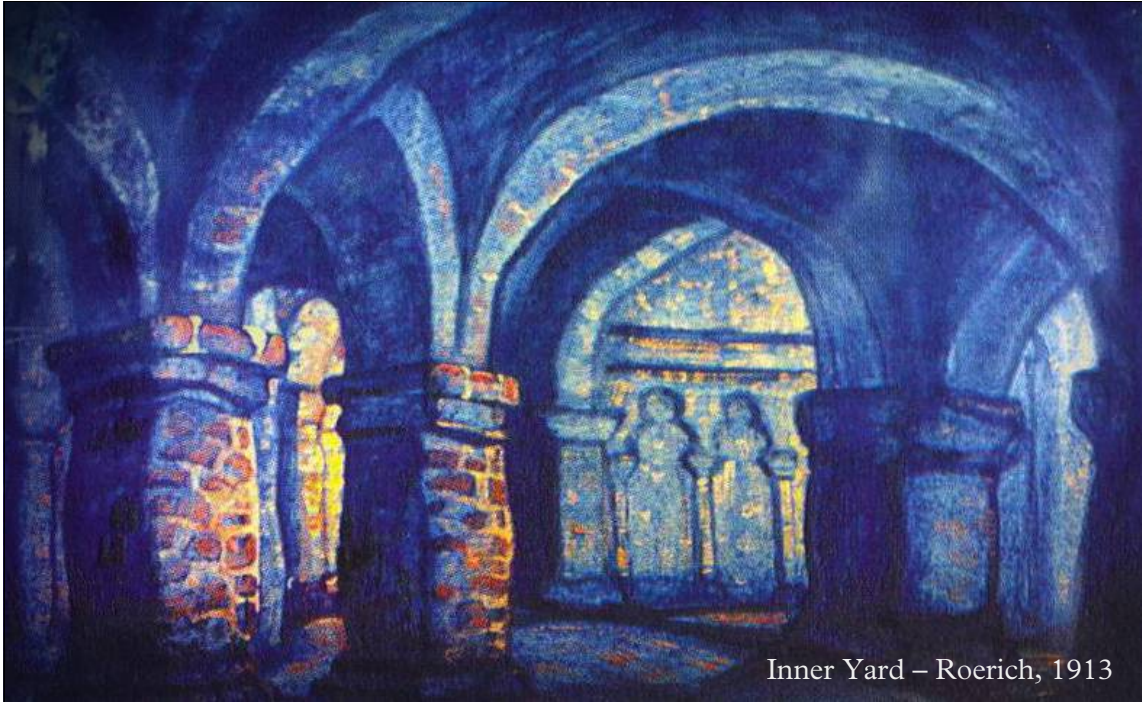


✦ INNER
GARDEN

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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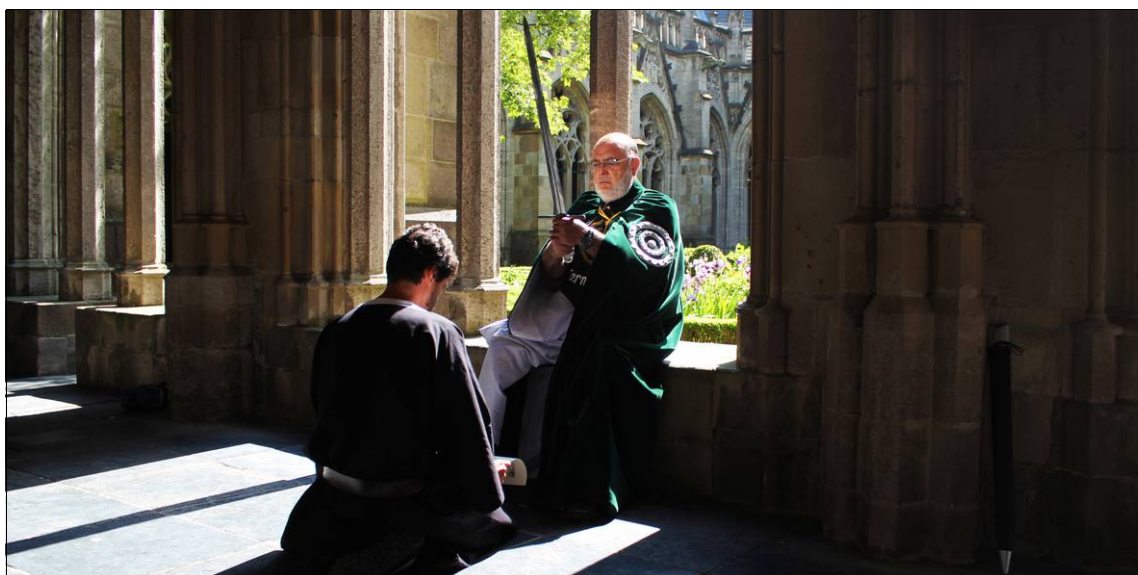
Inner Yard – Roerich, 1913



This year the Inner Garden Foundation celebrated its 1st lustrum at summer solstice. Since its establishment in 2010, our Annual Reports have offered a summary of the public part of our work for the general benefit. Traditional alchemy, however, contains many well guarded secrets. According to tradition these secrets are transmitted exclusively from mouth to ear after the student has made an oath of secrecy. Some subjects therefore are beyond the scope of our Annual Reports.

Above mentioned secrecy may seem like an artefact of the past in light of the rapid movement towards a more liberal sharing in this current Age of Information. Inner Garden, however, is fairly traditional and makes a distinction between information for the outer, public eye, and information reserved for an inner circle. Nevertheless, we have included some words and images that provide an idea of some of the activities of this inner circle. We show the beginnings of an old path to the Philosopher's Stone and an image of an initiation within the metaphorical walls of Inner Garden. The **Green Mantle** — available for the Gardeners that have been admitted to the inner circle — is a symbol of the integration of the inside-outside nexus. The outer aspect of a mere piece of fabric may come to encompass non-physical values which are invested in it by initiation and investiture, as well as by the subsequent work of the initiate. The mantle is plain on the outside except for a single emblem. However, it may contain various talismanic emblems on the inside. Its value is not in the physical mantle but in the

spiritual power that the mantle is imbued with when worn during mystical exercises and ceremonies. This coincides with the alchemist's belief in the absolute correspondence between the physical and spiritual dimensions of the individual and the Art.



The mantle used within Inner Garden is made by Ede & Ravenscroft. The mention of this tailor and the forest green of the mantle may bring to mind Fulcanelli's elaborations on the chivalric Order of the Thistle; the hermetic character of that Order and the relevance of the thistle — not just as a druidic and ancient Celtic symbol of nobility of character nor that of the punishment that is yielded by the wounding or provocation of a thistle. Interesting as his account may be, the Order of the Thistle does not lie directly at the roots of this mantle.

The Green Mantle, first and foremost, is a symbol of the sacred bond with the Divine and with Nature. Throughout written and orally transmitted history the colour green expressed the living link between Heaven and Earth: with the Celts, the Sufis, the Egyptians, and beyond that, veiled in the mists of time. Green is the colour of meadows and of the **Water of Life**: the long sought elixir of immortality. It is the colour of the noble minded and of the hearty. Tradition demands that the wearer turns one circle when donning the mantle, thus symbolizing the finding of the individual centre of balance and of the heart. From this may follow an understanding of the meaning of the emblem on the mantle with its three concentric rings. It symbolizes the centre of the universe, the meeting place of the three cosmic zones of heaven, earth and hell, the axis mundi, the navel of the Earth, where we find the sacred centre of life so often symbolized by the Tree. This is the zone of absolute reality that is the subject of our ventures and of the process of creation and re-creation — the **Quest for the Centre**. I consider it a privilege to share this quest with the nascent group that makes up Inner Garden. Many hands make light work and an enjoyable journey.

- Moreh -





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One of the highlights of this year was the alchemy workshop and initiation that took place shortly before the summer solstice in the centre of Utrecht. It was attended by the Brn. Ibn Hamda, Hydrargyrum, E, S, and Moreh. Under the inspiring lead of Br. E the first act of one of the Classic Wet Ways to the Stone was carried out. The path is called the **Priestly Way** and can be compared with that of Mary the Jew. It is said that this path, together with a few similar ancient paths, has been around since time immemorial. This ancient knowledge found its way through different continents and cultures to our present day. One of the more commonly known routes via which this ancient knowledge was passed on traced its way via Egypt.

This brief account of unwritten history may be anathema to trained historians but alas, as alchemists we are sufficiently numbed to ridicule. Parallel to the above mentioned journey of knowledge via Egypt there have been a number of initiates in the Occident who trace their knowledge back as far as nine thousand years ago. At its roots lies an indigenous knowledge. The keepers of this knowledge have been called **Druids**, Sorcerers, Witches, and Shamans. They were found in western parts of Europe and their knowledge, in part, found abode in the druidic and celtic philosophy in Galicia, Wales and the west of France. In the previous two millennia their knowledge gradually merged with the Egyptian knowledge that was carried in by the Arabs and, among others, a small group of Templars. The ancient source of the knowledge was recognized to be similar if not the same.

No Order can be identified as the single heir of this knowledge. The few initiates who had intimate knowledge of the Stone kept to themselves and preferred to keep a low profile. They had friendly but informal relationships with their fellow sages and generally felt no need to join established Orders, although sometimes circles of like-minded individuals developed certain bonds. They found each other through the work and aided each other along the Path. This way this underground stream, this **Invisible Order** of perennial philosophy of traditionalists, passed on their secrets to the Hidden by means of their 'Language of the Birds'; or as it was expressed by the medieval initiates, the 'Green language' — an initiate's language, a kind of multi-lingual word play that was applied to reveal meaningful associations between ideas.

To be able to participate in this incredible tradition and discovery of nature has filled us with gratitude. This truly is a lifetime journey and we are excited to take part in it. The following page presents a small testament to the work carried out during this year's workshop.

