Remember – Roerich, 1924
Alchemy is an Art of Change - the evolution of one thing to another by a carefully conducted sequence of transformation that brings the Arcanum within to light. The processes involved are valid for both the internal and external. Practice in the lab, study of cryptical works, meditation, reapplication in the lab - together these practices may lead to a series of internal and external changes. Practitioners of Alchemy could be qualified in modern day language as Managers of Change. Our students may go by the title of Philosophers of Nature, but a most interesting common denominator of those who study the Noble Art is the experience of a continuous and profound metamorphosis, similar to the way a dedicated effort in any other Art may change us.

Traditions and wisdom of old continue to serve as a basis for study, as these traditions aimed to pass on universal laws and universally applicable knowledge, which have been tried and rectified over many centuries. This may help as a foundation as well as enhance our flexibility to adapt to the changing world around us. Many active Orders and Brotherhoads still aim to perpetuate such ancient and noble wisdom.

One such brotherhood is the Order of the Frères Aînés de la Rose+Croix. The story goes that it was in the Bayt al Hikmah and the Arab world that the founders of this Order studied Alchemy. At the time of persecution of the Templars in 1314 a small group of Knights managed to escape to England, with the aim to return to France once the political climate would improve. So they did, and in 1317 they founded the Order. This was no military Order, but one dedicated to pass on a secret path to the Philosopher’s Stone. The Knights felt they owed their knowledge to the Arabs who had taught them. Hence the Règle of 1317 contains an honourable mention of Saladin.

Having been part of the Frères Aînés, I am grateful for the teachings I received and honours bestowed: the Grand Cross of Merit, the title of Grandmaster – the only one besides the current Grandmaster. Unfortunately, recent blogs under name of the Order contain a political element that cannot be reconciled with the Order's original tolerant outlook. A change not for the better, and one I choose to forfeit. The Oath of the Order of “simplicity, charity, and obedience (to the Holy Hierarchy)” may be better pursued independent from this development. However, I won't forget the teachings and those who taught me. I move on. I am thankful and will remember.

Moreh.
This year we added a preliminary exercise called **Vigil of Nature** to our introductory Alchemy course. This exercise used to be given by Frater Albertus to a number of his students, and has now been clarified and written down as an exercise by Br. JML in addition to note N000. It presents a practice that is intended to help beginning students to develop an intimacy with Nature and an inner link with the elements and forces and laws of Nature – a link that lies at the roots of our Art.

The “Turba Philosophorum” or “Assembly of the Alchemical Philosophers” from the 12th century CE is a good example of the insights and wisdom that may be gathered from a steady observation of Nature. The Turba introduces many of the key themes of the alchemical tradition in a number of alchemical dicta. Such reading may complement the practice of the Vigil of Nature. **Inner Garden** also supplements reading material to warm the student up to practical operations. For that purpose the Alchemical Laboratory Bulletins 1960 – 1969 were digitized and bundled as pdf.

An Art Gallery has been added to our website. You can now browse through a slideshow of strange, curious, beautiful, rare and everyday pictures from the Royal Art. It is at times amazing to see the changes of the matters we work with. The changes in fragrance and colours are considered most valuable and telling, so the occasional photograph helps to record and remember.
Thanks goes out among others to Br. Ibn Hamda and Dr. Schein for their contribution to the Gallery. We welcome contributions of other pictures as we intend to expand the gallery in the future.

Publications

Inner Garden did not release new publications this year. However, there is an interesting book which will be made available soon, namely: “Azoth” by Basil Valentine.
Moreh has donated an ioSafe Rugged Portable Hard Drive to the Foundation. A significant part of our library and lessons are distributed and archived digitally, so the importance of a good durable backup is obvious. This rugged disk is quite well protected from the Elements and will keep our digital archive safe.

Highlighted in this report is a 2013 paper titled: “The Gentle Taming of the Dragon” that has been added to the Partner section by Br. Ibn Hamda. The Dragon in this case refers to “Galena”, the main ore of Lead. This is ore presents an important starting matter for many alchemical works. For example, it is used for a specific Wet Path to the Philosopher's Stone (with vinegar, also called the acetate path). This paper explains and presents a method to convert Galena into lead carbonates using mild conditions, that thus preserve the vital seed and result in the easy to process Cerussite mineral (which is more difficult and expensive to obtain directly).

The method is essentially a wet calcination using mild alkali salts under temperatures of about 55 degrees C. Normally mild alkali salts are too weak to react with Galena, so the salts need to be given an extra notch of power from the Fifth Fire, as it is referred to in some circles.
In line with what has been mentioned in the preface, we would like to emphasize that Inner Garden is open to both men and women and that we do not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion and sexual orientation. We are all connected. Inner Garden is non-political and not a religion. We are in search of wisdom that transcends the duality of either/or and is best classified as a Philosophical Society. We consider tolerance an important quality, which may help bring about the kindness that is sacred in human nature.

However, we do not profess blind tolerance and we do not close our eyes to those who intentionally harm people or our environment. A healthy environment, freedom and stability provide the foundation which allows us to practice our Art in peace. We are grateful for the opportunity we have been given to study our Noble Arts and the workings of Nature, and we believe it is appropriate that we remain watchful and vigil to defend our freedom and environment. This way we can add something of value to the greater good as well as to our own lives. This form of care for society has been interwoven into many branches of our tradition – in the west, for example, under the banner of “Chivalry”. As was taught within Order of the Frères Aînés de la Rose+Croix, this included an Earthly and a Celestial Chivalric component.

In light of the Celestial Chivalry, the Frères Aînés bid us to remember that “one day we will leave this world for the next”. This was not meant as a message to renounce the world. It was meant as a reminder to try and find those values in this world that look beyond the material, and to cherish and transmit the virtues that are limitless. It was meant to inspire a legacy of kindness, compassion,
care, simplicity, humility. To add something of value to the greater good, acts of kindness and courage, that may live on after we have left this world. Non Nobis...

Speaking of Courage, the words of Ramon Lull\textsuperscript{1} speak to us from ages ago: “If you want to find true courage and bravery, you will find it where you see faith, hope, charity, justice, strength, loyalty and other noble virtues. Chivalry is not the mere possession of a horse or armour; rather it is an inward possession of the Knight who properly trains his horse, himself and his son with good teachings and virtuous works. In the practice of knighthood the quality of inward resolve is more important than that of physical strength.”

This inward resolve springs from within. This was one of the reasons why the Templar pledge of “Chastity” was excluded from the Oath of the Frères Aînés. Even if this would be a beneficial part of the path for some at a certain stage of life, forcing such a resolve upon a knight by Oath and Initiation would run contrary to the natural development of inner resolve. It would force the knight to renounce part of their earthly existence, rather than being in the world. Such a dictate could affect the opposite, and increase a longing for worldly matters, eventually binding to them with chains. Instead, by partaking of life without remorse, one can experience being in the world, but not of it. The Alchemist has his or her head in the cloud, yet stands with both feet on the ground. In daily life this could mean we are tolerant to our fellow-man from the perspective of the abode in the clouds, where we find many common ideals and universal concepts. However, as students of Alchemy we also are taught to remain grounded, so that we may recognize in the here and now whether the application of these concepts and manifestation of these ideals is in sync with the world around us.

Since our forum is private and Inner Garden does not use a blog or twitter, this annual report is one of the few public transmissions about who we are and what we do. In light of our connection with the Rosicrucian Tradition - a connection which precedes the establishment of modern Rosicrucian Orders - and our association with the Frères Aînés, we found it necessary to elaborate on our philosophical viewpoint, and to refute misconceptions that could arise on the basis of recent web blogs about the Frères Aînés.

In 2013 the Foundation received much interest and a select number of candidate-Partners have been admitted. It should be noted that the specific number is not important, as we grow from strength to strength. With the inflow of a few candidates with an orientation towards Indian Alchemy some interesting discussion with regard to Indian and Burmese Alchemy followed. No admissions of Partners took place.

\textsuperscript{1} Ramon Lull was a Knight, Philosopher and Alchemist who lived in the 13\textsuperscript{th} century

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A copy of our Balance Sheet is available on request for donors to the foundation. We would like to thank all donors and all those who contributed their time and effort in transcribing, translation and compiling research notes and lessons.