

An Alchemical Journey

With James North

Join us on an exciting Alchemical Journey!

In the New Age, the word alchemy has caught people's imagination.

Most people know that it has something to do with turning lead into gold, or with transforming the psyche. But what actually is it?

This series of 6 themed but stand alone talks will introduce us to this fascinating subject of study.



James North

James North is a classical scholar and musician, and an experienced speaker and writer on Hermetic philosophy. He has a particular interest in the Rosicrucian and alchemical traditions. He has given numerous lectures on these subjects, including a series on Hermeticism at Treadwell's Bookshop in London and presentations to the Francis Bacon Society and the Eternal Knowledge Festival. His writings have focused on the deep alchemical and Qabalistic symbolism in the writings of Shakespeare and Francis Bacon.

As a researcher and practitioner in the Western esoteric tradition, James firmly believes that theory and experience belong together, and that the revival of the Mysteries at the present time requires an approach combining creativity, imagination, spirituality and scientific accuracy.

James lives in Glastonbury and is currently researching the preservation of ancient wisdom in medieval Christian Europe.

Venue:

The Avalon Room
(Isle of Avalon Foundation)
2-4 High St, Glastonbury,
Somerset BA6 9DU

Cost:

£6.00 per talk
per person

LIMITED SPACES

Time:

7.30pm
(Doors open 7.00pm)

**BOOKING
ADVISED**

About Glaston Centre School of Learning

For millennia, Glastonbury has been known as a great place of learning. In the Middle Ages, Glastonbury Abbey was acknowledged as a powerful centre of academic and spiritual activity with a great library, a school and links with the universities and political power in London. With the dissolution of the monasteries and the closing of the Abbey all this activity ceased. In the early part of the 20th Century, interest in Glastonbury as a special spiritual place revived and well-known personalities such as Dion Fortune and Rutland Boughton established themselves in the town. The war disrupted these activities but the 1980s saw a renewed interest in Glastonbury as a spiritual place and a centre of learning.

Since the summer of 2011, Glastonbury Reception Centre has been offering a wide and varied programme of talks and presentations, all of them have been illuminating and insightful, offering those in attendance the opportunity to explore aspects of a spiritual journey.

Glaston Centre School of Learning has grown out of these talks. The School is not something in which one is required to enrol and instead aims to offer the opportunity for an individual to independently explore areas of interest on their own personal journey of discovery.

All our speakers are very experienced in their fields; presenting knowledge and wisdom that is not always easily accessible or available.

For more information email admin@glastonbury-pilgrim.co.uk
www.unitythroughdiversity.org

The Talks

22nd September

Glastonbury and Alchemy – The Search for the Red Powder

In the Middle Ages, the so-called esoteric or occult sciences were widely studied and practiced within the Church. Great scholars, monks and friars like Ramon Lull, Roger Bacon and St +Thomas Aquinas took a deep interest in magic and astrology. But alchemy was particularly strongly associated with the Monasteries.

In this talk, we will begin with the story of John Dee's sycer Edward Kelley, who claimed to have discovered a mysterious red powder in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, through which he later made alchemical gold. What did the monks know of alchemy and what light do the secrets of alchemy shed on the mysteries of Glastonbury itself?

27th October

What is alchemy? An Introduction to the Teachings of Alchemy

In the New Age, the word alchemy has caught people's imagination. Most people know that it has something to do with turning lead into gold, or with transforming the psyche. Countless books are published with the word 'alchemy' somewhere in the title.

But what actually is alchemy, which the great alchemists studied and practiced? This session will provide a clear and simple introduction to the sometimes mystifying words and symbols found in old alchemical manuscripts, with hints on how to use this teachings for inner spiritual work.

24th November

The History of Alchemy – Mother of Chemistry and Key to the Inner Realm

Alchemists have always drawn inspiration from great Masters of the Art. Many of these were experts in medicine, science or theology as well as masters of physical and spiritual chemistry.

This talk introduces the lineage of alchemical adepts and students, from Hermes Trismegistus to Sir Isaac Newton. By looking at their lives and teachings we can begin to make our own connection with the tradition.

26th January 2015

Alchemy, Spirituality and Psychology – How the Art was Reborn in the 20th Century

The great psychologist Carl Jung was fascinated by alchemy. Although he did not accept the main claims and practices of some of the great alchemists, Jung saw alchemy as reflecting deep

truths about the human psyche.

But Jung was far from the first to see the spiritual value in alchemy. Jewish Kabbalists, Christian monks and Rosicrucians, Muslim Sufis, as well as the great alchemists of the East, all left profound teachings on the spiritual meaning of alchemy. In this session, we will go deeper into the meaning of spiritual alchemy. As well as looking at the New Age revival of interest in alchemy, we will begin practical work with some of the powerful seed images of the tradition.

23rd February 2015

Rekindling the Fire – The Revival of Laboratory Alchemy

Conventional historians normally see alchemy is only an unscientific prelude to chemistry, while Carl Jung thought alchemy was a purely inner process. But most of the great alchemists didn't separate spirit from matter. They performed the intense operations of the Work in the laboratory, but knew that these processes must also be going on in the 'inner laboratory' of the soul and spirit.

In this session, we go deeper into the nitty gritty of medieval laboratory. Working with pictures of the alchemist at work, we will see how knowing how the athanor, balneum maris, or pelican were used is important – not just to see how expert they were at complex chemical operations, but because the tools of the laboratory have exact spiritual equivalents. We will also touch on the revival of herbal and mineral alchemy in modern times.

23rd March 2015

Alchemy and Rosicrucianism – the Heart of Christian Spirituality

Since the 19th Century, various magical groups in the Western tradition have identified themselves as Rosicrucian. But few present day students go deeply into the original meaning of the Rosicrucian Movement in the 17th Century, or they would find that alchemy is central to Rosicrucianism.

In this final session, we see how, for a short period it looked as if Europe might embrace a spiritual and magical form of Christianity, totally compatible with science and capable of connecting with so-called pagan mysteries and other religions. Tragically, this did not come to pass, but the spiritual heart of Rosicrucianism lives on. We will explore the Rosicrucian impulse through practical work based on one of the great texts of spiritual alchemy and initiation, *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*.

Each talk stands alone but naturally, greater benefit is obtained by attending as many as possible

BOOKING IS ADVISED