

# Hermeticism and the Renaissance

A Symposium  
March 25-27, 1982  
Folger Shakespeare Library

The Hermetic tradition of philosophical and religious thought, which originated in the third century *corpus hermeticum*, significantly influenced medieval and Renaissance culture. Hermeticism has been studied in widely disparate areas of interest: in philosophy, in the history of science, in art, and in literature. The purpose of this symposium on "Hermeticism and the Renaissance" is to bring together scholars exploring the *disiecta membra* of hermetic thought and iconography in order to establish connecting links among disciplines, to arrive at a more unified vision of the tradition, and to assess its impact on the Renaissance.

Concurrent with the symposium (22 March - 18 April), there will be a display of Hermetic manuscripts, books, prints, and medals in the Main Reading Room of the National Gallery of Art Library, East Building. The display will contain materials from collections in the Library of Congress, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Gallery of Art. Most of the material dates from the

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is arranged according to the following categories: alchemy, astrology, medicine, hieroglyphs, emblems and impresse, major figures in the Hermetic tradition, and the Kabbalah. Display space is made available through the cooperation of the National Gallery, the National Gallery Library, and the Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts.

## SPONSORS

**The Catholic University of America** is a private university under the auspices of the bishops of the United States and the national institution of learning. Established at its inception as a center for graduate study, the Catholic University of America today is committed to graduate and undergraduate studies, to professional education, and to the cultivation of the arts.

Provost: John P. Murphy

Dean of Graduate Studies: Msgr. Frederick R. McManus

Symposium Director: Ingrid Merkel

**The Folger Institute of Renaissance and Eighteenth-Century Studies** is a consortium comprised of the Folger Shakespeare Library and eighteen Mid-Atlantic universities. The Institute sponsors a variety of educational programs for doctoral candidates and post-doctoral scholars, including seminars, colloquia, lectures, symposia, and summer institutes.

Chairman: John F. Andrews

Associate Chairman: Susan Zimmerman

**The Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts** was founded in 1979, as part of the National Gallery of Art, to promote studies in the history, theory, and criticism of art, architecture, and urban form from prehistoric times to the present. Each year the Center gathers a community of pre- and post-doctoral scholars. The activities of the Center include the fellowship program, meetings, research, and publication.

Dean: Henry A. Millon

Assistant Dean: Marianna Shreve Simpson



# HERMETICISM AND



S T V D I O.

9:00 a.m.

9:30 a.m.

12:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.



C H I A R E Z Z A.

5:30-7:30 p.m.



M I S V R A.

12:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.



P O E S I A.

12:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.

3:15 p.m.

## THURSDAY, MARCH 25

Registration, The Folger Theatre

**HERMETIC TEXTS: ORIGINS AND TRANSMISSION**

Moderator: *Reverend Sidney Griffith, S.T.*  
*Catholic University of America*

**Magic in Hellenistic Hermeticism**  
*William C. Grese, Oliver College*

**Medieval Spain, Bridge between Orient and Occident**  
*Josep Sola-Sole, Catholic University of America*

Topic to be announced  
*Amos Funkenstein, University of California, Los Angeles*

Lunch

**PHILOSOPHICAL AND RELIGIOUS COMPONENTS OF HERMETICISM**

Moderator: *David B. Ruderman*  
*University of Maryland, College Park*

**Hermes Trismegistus, Proclus, and the Question of a Philosophy of Magic in the Renaissance**  
*Brian P. Copenhaver, University of Oakland*

**Hermeticism and Witchcraft in Italy and Germany**  
*Paola Zambelli, Universita di Firenze*

**Hermeticism and the Kabbalah in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century**  
*Moshe Idel, Hebrew University, Jerusalem*

**The Survival of Hermes after Isaac Casaubon**  
*D.P. Walker, Warburg Institute*

Reception, Folger Exhibition Gallery

## FRIDAY, MARCH 26

9:30 a.m.

**HERMETICISM AND EARLY MODERN SCIENCE**

Moderator: *Robert Multhauf*  
*Smithsonian Institution*

**Hermetic Discourse in Some Early Modern Scientific Texts**  
*Robert Westman, University of California, Los Angeles*

**Newton's Commentary on the Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus: Its Scientific and Theological Significance**  
*B.J.T. Dobbs, Northern University*

**Alchemy and Paracelsism in Early Eighteenth-Century France**  
*Allen G. Debus, University of Chicago*

Lunch

Viewing of Hermeticism Display,  
National Gallery of Art Library, East Building

3:00 p.m.

**HERMETICISM AND RENAISSANCE ART**

Moderator: *Elizabeth T. Kerran*  
*Mount Holyoke College*

**Hermeticism and Renaissance Art**  
*Charles Dempsey, Johns Hopkins University*

**The Mystery of the Obvious: Emblems and Allegories in the Art of Bernini**  
*Philipp Fehl, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*

**Freemasonry in Frescoes: Hermetic Meaning in a Palladian Villa Program of 1716**  
*Douglas Lewis, National Gallery of Art*

## SATURDAY, MARCH 27

9:30 a.m.

**HERMETICISM AND RENAISSANCE LITERATURE**

Moderator: *Jon Quidland*  
*George Washington University*

**On the Function of Analogy in the Occult**  
*Brian Vickers, Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, Zürich*

**Literary Hermeticism: Some Test Cases**  
*Wayne Shumaker, University of California, Berkeley*

**Aurora or the Rising Sun of Allegory: Hermetic Imagery in the Work of Jacob Boehme**  
*Ingrid Merkel, Catholic University of America*

**Aurora or the Rising Sun of Allegory: Hermetic Imagery in the Work of Jacob Boehme**  
*Ingrid Merkel, Catholic University of America*

12:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.

3:15 p.m.

Lunch

Plenary Lecture  
Introducer: *Ellen S. Ginsberg*  
*Catholic University of America*

**The Children of Hermes and the Science of Man**  
*Antoine Faivre, Université de Bordeaux III*

Roundtable Discussion

# THE RENAISSANCE

Brochure design: Andrea D. Harris

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The symposium registration fee is \$35.00 if paid in advance; \$37.50 if paid at the door. Fee includes complete program of activities, as well as the Folger Reception on Thursday evening. Due to space limitations, places at the symposium cannot be guaranteed without advance registration. Registration will be confirmed by a card of admission. Pre-registered participants need not register on Thursday.

Interested participants should return this card, accompanied by a check made payable to the Folger Institute to:

Hermeticism Symposium  
Folger Shakespeare Library  
201 East Capitol Street, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City & State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

The following hotels are located near the Folger:

Hyatt Regency  
400 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.  
(202) 737-1234

Park Central Hotel  
705 18th Street, N.W.  
(202) 393-4700

Quality Inn — Capitol Hill  
419 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.  
(202) 698-1616

For further information about the symposium please contact the Folger Institute Program Assistant, Andrea D. Harris. Phone: (202) 944-4650, ext. 248