

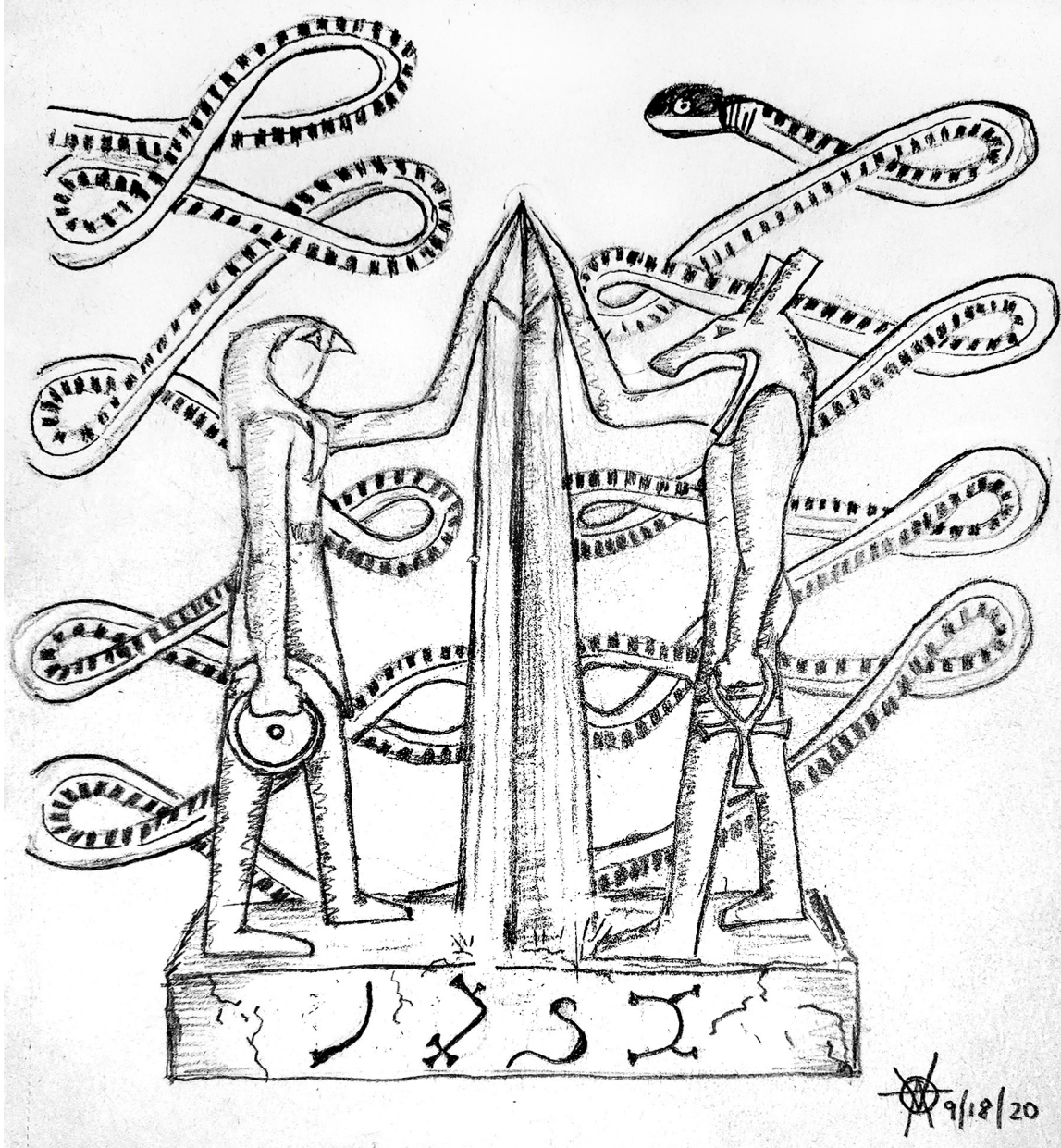
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The official organ of the U.S. Grand Lodge of O.T.O.



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Ordo Templi Orientis, U.S.A.



E.G.C.



The official organ of the U.S. Grand Lodge of O.T.O.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Happy New Year from the staff of Agapé!

As always, we are accepting submissions of articles, reviews, art, poetry, and rituals. Agapé is a 100% member-contributed newsletter, so please get your submissions to agape@oto-usa.org.

I often get questions regarding deadlines. To make it as easy as possible, our deadline falls on the same day as Electoral College meetings. For a listing of dates of E.C. meetings, see <http://ec.oto-usa.org/meetings.html>.

Love is the law, love under will.

Andrew
Editor, *Agapé*

FROM THE GRAND MASTER

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Events During the Pandemic

In-person gatherings remain limited to outdoor venues only and restricted by specific conditions. Exceptions to this are limited to those bodies receiving prior dispensation through the U.S.G.L. COVID Response Team, which is continuing to develop standards for indoor activities based on developing scientific information. For up-to-date information about what event proposals the COVID Response Team is accepting, information about the proposal process, and to see the current COVID event policies in their entirety, please visit our administrative web page: U.S.G.L. COVID-19 Information (<https://admin.oto-usa.org/covid19>).

Love is the law, love under will.

Sabazius



UPDATES FROM THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

The Electoral College took the following actions pertinent to local body leadership at the Winter meeting held online January 9, 2021 EV:

Passed mastership of Alombrados Oasis (New Orleans, LA) from S. Neith to Fr. MUAUM.

Passed mastership of Hidden Spring Oasis (Orlando, FL) from Sr. Sherri M to Br. Jason T.

Passed mastership of Vortex Oasis (Tacoma, WA) from Sr. Egypt R. to Br. Davin M.

The Electoral College wishes to thank the outgoing masters for their years of service and to congratulate the new masters on the trust placed in them.

Procedurally, we modified the start date of the new master selection process to the Spring Meeting Vvii. The new applications for change of master and to volunteer to serve as master will be available from the Document Control Officer by March 1, 2021 EV.

From the EC President

The role of Local Body Master is one of the most important and difficult positions within the structure of our Order. While they have one or more members who assist them with the running of the local body in an official or unofficial capacity, everything that happens within the confines of the body's activities or in its name, in person (when able) or virtual, are ultimately the Master's responsibility.

Due to the great trust that is placed in the hands of this member, the appointment of Master is one of the most sacred duties of the Electoral College. To this end, and working in consultation with past Masters, S.G.I.G.s, sitting Masters, and other leaders, the Electoral College has developed a new process whereby all interested and qualified members may apply to be considered as a potential Body Master for their local valley. When a Master applies similarly to the previous method for a change of mastership for their local body, whether they have met their tenure limit or life circumstances dictate that change, the College is set into motion to consider a new appointee.

The College will then, at minimum:

- confirm the applicants on file are still looking to be considered,
- review applications to serve received at the time of application for change, and,
- consult the outgoing master and officers of the Local Body on the history of the applicants in their valley.

The hope is that this process will find the best person for the job, provide a better idea of potential acting Masters in case of emergency, and provide the opportunity to be considered for selection to all who are interested in pursuing the path of leadership. Having applicants indicate their desire to serve in this capacity early on gives the Master the opportunity to train all those who are interested in this path in the duties of the Master,

rather than focusing on one potential candidate, thus better preparing all interested members for the future possibility of leadership and, as a bonus, encouraging the sharing of the workload on the local level by identifying those drawn to this work.

As mentioned in the Actions of the College, the applications for this process will be available through the Document Control Officer beginning March 1 of this year.

Fraternaly yours,
Hattie Quinn
President
U.S.G.L. Electoral College

About the Electoral College

Appeals – Those wishing to appeal decisions of the Electoral College may do so in writing to the Supreme Grand Council through the Grand Secretary General (gsg@oto-usa.org). Those wishing to appeal verdicts of the Grand Tribunal to the Areopagus may do so with the sponsorship of a seated Elector. See our website for contact details of individual electors (<http://ec.oto-usa.org/electors.html>).

Those wishing to appeal Notice of Pending Bad Report at a Local Body may do so by writing to the Secretary of the College outlining the manner in which the Notice was deficient or false.

Attending Meetings – Dues Current Members in Good Standing of V° are invited to attend regular meetings of the Electoral College. We request that those planning to attend first contact the Master of the hosting body to R.S.V.P. Online regular meetings may be observed by being physically present with a willing Elector.

Communications – In addition to hosting email lists for masters, mentors, and communication with Grand Lodge, we also maintain a blog of Updates, News, and Transmissions on our website (<http://ec.oto-usa.org/wp>) and are experimenting with a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ECUSGLOTO>).

Initiates with specific concerns or questions regarding the operation of the Electoral College are

invited to write to either the President or Secretary. See the included U.S.G.L. Officers Directory for contact details.

Revolutionary – Members in Good Standing of the Sovereign Sanctuary of the IX° living within the United States but not currently serving as Officer or Voting Member of any Governing Body of U.S.G.L. are heartily encouraged to volunteer to the post of Revolutionary by contacting the President or Secretary of the Electoral College. Thus may progress be effected.

Website – The official website of the Electoral College can be found at <https://ec.oto-usa.org/>. In addition to the aforementioned resources, one may find information on volunteering to host a meeting or organize a study group in new areas, and other services provided by the College or expected of local bodies within U.S. Grand Lodge.

Love is the law, love under will.

SPOTLIGHT - STAR SAPPHIRE

Local bodies across the U.S. are rising to the challenge of COVID-19 and demonstrating their resilience and creativity. In each issue of *Agapé* we will take a closer look at one of these local bodies with the goal of inspiring and possibly offering new ideas as we continue our journey to the other side of the pandemic.

In this issue we'll be taking a closer look at Star Sapphire Lodge in Glendale, CA. Brother Shaughn, the Master at Star Sapphire, took some time to answer our questions.

1. In what ways has your local body remained active since the COVID-19 lockdown began in March?

When things started looking bad, one of our members suggested creating a Discord server for members to stay in touch. As we began to realize this wasn't going to be a temporary situation, we created a "class pass" membership for non-members and started hosting at least one online class per week.

This has evolved into four recurring monthly class series – Eight Limbs of Yoga, *Magick Without Tears* study group, Astrology for Thelemites, and Tarot discussion group. Bishop Catherine Berry has also continued her monthly seminar/discussion on the Gnostic Mass, “Gnostic Bootcamp”, which is sponsored by Star Sapphire Lodge. In addition, we’ve had a number of reading and discussion sessions on selected Holy Books, Pentagram and Hexagram ritual classes, read-throughs of *Liber XV*, Introduction to Thelema / O.T.O., Brother Vere Chappell’s “True Will in Theory and Practice” class, and a periodically recurring Qabalah series hosted by Sister Cathy.

Finally, we’ve been periodically using the Virtual Valley G-Suite to host video chat social events, our most recent one being our post-Thanksgiving event, “Thanks-Will-ing Social”.

2. What has been the greatest challenge for your camp/oasis/lodge during the COVID-19 restrictions?

Prior to the pandemic, one of the biggest aspects of our Lodge was the social component. Sure, we did a lot of Masses, had frequent initiations, and taught classes, but always before and especially after these events would be a good amount of socializing and camaraderie. This component has been sorely missed, and try as we might, video chat socials and online classes have not been able to replace the person-to-person interactions at the Lodge.

In addition, and more on a personal level, I am greatly missing the Gnostic Mass and Initiations. I feel like both of these “fed me spiritually”, for lack of a better term, and their absence has been severely felt in my life.

I think a common result of both of these issues has been a slight waning of participation from our previously active membership. A major factor may be that more of us than ever before are doing a good portion of our day-to-day work online, and the last thing we want to do is another online meeting. This is definitely an area our Lodge Officers are actively discussing.

3. What has been your Camp/Oasis/Lodge’s greatest success?

Because of our class pass program, we are offering more classes than ever before on topics spanning the Thelemic, Hermetic and Esoteric gamut. We currently have about 22 non-initiates and 18 non-local affiliate initiates paying monthly to attend our classes. Many of these have been subscribers from the first few months of the pandemic. Because of this, we have been able to weather the pandemic-related financial downturn from local members not being able to pay regular dues and challenge our local members to learn and teach topics they may not have been experts in before the shutdown.

4. That’s a lot of content! Do the same people teach/facilitate every class? How do you prevent burnout?

Great question! It has been pretty intense. The four recurring series are handled by each of our Officers (Master, Treasurer, Secretary, and Assistant Secretary). We encourage our local members to help out when they can, but with everything from family “gatherings” to work meetings taking place online, we’ve definitely had some drop off from our previously regular members due to online fatigue. Luckily, we have an awesome officer team who are each committed to their recurring series. In addition, we’ve been able to “recruit” a few guest speakers, and we try to have at least one lower-key “social event” per month (essentially a gently structured video chat) as well as some kind of read-through (usually a Holy Book followed by discussion or *Liber XV*). Mixing the more time-intensive, structured classes with the easier to prepare events has been super helpful on the burnout front, and all the officers have really stepped up!

5. What platform are you using to manage the “class pass” and how is that working out?

We’ve been using Discord to manage who has access to what, along with a good old-fashioned spreadsheet. Discord allows for a very granular permissions scheme, so we have our regular class channels for our class pass attendees and other channels available to our local initiate members to help stay connected. Keeping up with all the subscriptions and payments has been a big task, and our Treasurer, Sister Anna, deserves the lion’s share of the thanks for keeping everything straight!

She's really been doing a terrific job! We modeled the class pass off of our normal dues system, so we haven't had to change much in the way of our normal dues procedures – Anna has just had more folks to keep track of!

6. Thanks-Will-ing – that's awesome. How did it go?

It was great! Social events like this tend to be a little more low-key, but the lack of structure usually ends up producing some pretty amazing conversations. On Discord, we learned early on that we had to stick to voice and text – using the video just killed the quality – so we've been using the Virtual Valley G-Suite with Google Meet for the social events. Just getting to see everyone face-to-face (or as much as we can be face-to-face over a computer screen) has been really great! We've also had a few non-initiates from our class pass subscribers who have been attending the social events, and although we've been unable to do initiations or actually physically meet them, they have definitely become part of our community.

OBITUARY

J.P. Lund of the Valley of Austin, Texas achieved his Greater Feast on February 3, 2021 EV at 22:55. He is survived by his wife, two sons, mother, father, and uncountable friends.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, J.P. was devoted at an early age to the Law of Thelema, O.T.O., and the mysteries of the A.:A.:. He was a member of Tahuti Lodge under Brother James Wasserman and served as an ordained E.G.C. Priest since the late 1990s. He was an initiator, teacher, and mentor, both in Texas and the international community in Italy and Australia. He was a successful attorney and had an instrumental role in formulating O.T.O. policies towards handguns.

J.P. produced, directed, and performed a series of the Rites of Eleusis in Austin, Dallas, Albuquerque, New Orleans, Seattle, and Los Angeles from 2014 through 2017; pictures of his work can be seen at <http://heartofblood.org>. He contributed to several publications, including *The General Principles of*

Astrology, Initiation in the Aeon of the Child, The Angel and the Abyss, and in particular, *The Visions of the Pylons*. His own book, *The War of the Rose and the Cross*, is expected to be published in 2021. J.P. also continued to teach at Scarlet Woman Lodge until January 27, one week before his death.

At his viewing on February 6, clothed in the robe “which few dare wear,” J.P. was laid to rest in the Pastos of St. Christian Rosencruetz, which carried the crucified body of the sun in the Rite of Sol and which J.P. and other Scarlet Woman Lodge members created.

J.P. was a devoted father, providing his two sons with many opportunities to thrive in academic and extracurricular activities. His wife Amelia was a great love who blessed him for the last five years of his life, assisting him with his transition through the bardo.

J.P.'s devotion to Thelema was exemplary, in that he aspired greatly, and put into practice that of which so many only speak. “And they that sealed up the book into their blood were the chosen of Adonai, and the Thought of Adonai was a Word and a Deed; and they abode in the Land that the far-off travelers call Naught.” – *Liber LXV*, V:59.



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O.T.O. "does not include the A.:A.:, with which august body it is, however, in close alliance."

— Liber III

O.T.O. has long worked in close alliance with the A.:A.:, which first proclaimed the Law of Thelema to the world. The A.:A.: is a teaching, testing, and initiatory system dedicated to the personal spiritual advancement of its individual members. Within A.:A.: all services are rendered free of charge, and no social activities are held. O.T.O. and A.:A.: have jointly issued the journal *The Equinox* since 1912 EV, now in its fourth volume. Although they are distinctly separate organizations, neither including nor subordinate to the other, O.T.O. has historically assisted A.:A.: with practical matters that lie outside the latter's primary mission, which is purely spiritual in nature. Aspirants to the A.:A.: may write to:

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