

## Book Review: *The Hermetic Code: Unlocking One of Manitoba's Greatest Secrets*

- by Terry Melanson ©, Aug. 15th, 2007

It is [an] extremely unique monument ... in my opinion, I think it is bar none the most sophisticated and complex, occult- Masonic-designed building in the world.

- Frank Albo, on the Alex Jones Show (3 August, 2007)

The media hype surrounding Frank Albo - dubbed "Canada's Dan Brown" by the Premier of Manitoba - is not as exaggerated as one might suspect. A more apt analogy, perhaps, is Dan Brown's main protagonist, Robert Langdon: the scholarly academic thoroughly versed in occult symbolism, on a quest to uncover that which has been hidden in plain view.

*The Hermetic Code: Unlocking One of Manitoba's Greatest Secrets* is a repackaged offering from a 15-part series which originally appeared in the *Winnipeg Free Press*. The book is beautifully put together and lavishly illustrated with large, high resolution color photography. The narrative is from the perspective of *Winnipeg Free Press* reporter, Carolin Vesely.



The story unfolds at a suspenseful pace as Albo elucidates the mysteries of the building to the inquiring reporter. Vesely's knowledge of the esoteric is nonexistent. This is a good thing. Having to explain to the layman - step by step - the intricacies and multiple layers of symbolism in the building, the reader becomes invested in the journey of discovery.

[Frank Albo's command of western esotericism is impressive.](#) With the accumulated knowledge of early religions and mythology, ancient temple design, Hermeticism, Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism and the Kabbalah, Albo's assessment of the building's hidden meaning is authoritative and complete. Moreover, as he proves, the main players surrounding the design and construction of the building were equally well-versed in the language of the occult.

The Manitoba Legislature Building is patterned after an initiatory temple. In such a case certain

characteristics must necessarily be present. The Legislature Building has all the required ingredients - without a doubt.

It begins with the Sacred Geometry of the overall design - the Golden Ratio of the Pythagoreans, incorporated prominently in temples and churches for thousands of years. Into the lobby of the building one is confronted by protective beasts or temple guardians (apotropaic icons) in form of sacred bulls, lion-heads, bukrania, Medusa and Athena. A "Room of Protection," says Albo, an integral component of ancient temples. The room is a perfect square, 66.6 feet on each side, alluding to the number 666. Albo's explanation of this - perhaps surprising to the average reader - has to do with the reverence of occultists for the works of the legendary hermetic alchemist, Cornelius Agrippa.

The importance of Numerology is apparent throughout. There's a Grand Staircase in the Room of Protection, for instance, which has thirteen steps, leading to five archways with panels having five, eight-petalled gold roses. The numbers 5, 8 and 13 are repeatedly invoked. (Astute readers will immediately grasp the significance of the sequence.)

Other features of the building include the Pool of the Black Star - the temple altar - with allusions to Ishtar, Pan, Hermes and Aphrodite. The eight-pointed Black Star, together with the patterns on the floor of the rotunda above, are suggestive of the first degree of Freemasonry. On the roof is the Golden Boy statue - a representation of Hermes Trismegistus - flanked by two Sphinxes carved with a hieroglyphic dedication to the Egyptian Sun God Re. The list goes on, and on. "The building is laden with Masonic themes and incorporates the order's ritual symbolism," Albo says to Vesely. "As you walk through it, you're unknowingly participating in a type of interactive Masonic drama. You're undergoing rites of purification and moral perfectibility, facilitated by the iconography and sacred geometric proportions." (p. 37)

Beyond the architecture itself the murals and paintings suggest the artists, Frank Brangwyn and Augustus Tack, were also privy to the occult grand scheme behind the building.

An important line of investigation includes the occult milieu surrounding chief architect Frank W. Simon. Although Simon has never been confirmed to have been a member of any Masonic Lodge, Albo shows that his training at [the École des Beaux-Arts](#) in Paris most definitely had a profound influence. The students of this school studied ancient temple design, Vitruvian theory, Sacred Geometry and Greco-Roman mythology. The instructors - Simon's included - were all Freemasons. Albo even speculates that Simon might have been connected with the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

As an historical exploration, first published in a mainstream newspaper, this offering is certainly unique. Each revelation is fortified with color illustrations and explanatory side bars. It's a large, glossy, coffee table-type publication. The stunning photography of the Legislature Building alone is worth the price of the book.

It will be quite interesting to follow the career of Frank Albo. I, for one, am looking forward to it. Presently a scholar at the Department of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents at the University of Amsterdam, Albo is also a doctoral candidate in the History of Architecture at the University of Cambridge, UK. While reading the *Hermetic Code*, I couldn't stop thinking that other famous architectural landmarks have long awaited a similar treatment. After six years of

study on a single building, will he attempt to unlock the mysteries of yet another? Frank Albo's enthusiasm seems unstoppable, and his chosen area of expertise increases the likelihood that this will indeed be the case.

*The Hermetic Code: Unlocking One of Manitoba's Greatest Secrets*: Hard-cover, 131 pages with index, over 100 full-color illustrations, \$34.95. You can [purchase a copy from Infowars](#).