

Cryptic Masonry: An In-Depth Guide to the Enigmatic Order



Cryptic Masonry by Fodor's Travel Guides

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 112591 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Print length : 160 pages

Lending : Enabled



Origins and History

Cryptic Masonry is a branch of Freemasonry that emerged in the early 19th century. Its roots can be traced back to the Royal Arch or Chapter degrees, which were added to the Blue Lodge system in the 18th century. The Cryptic degrees were developed as an extension of these earlier degrees, and they quickly gained popularity among Freemasons.

The first Cryptic Council was established in New York City in 1818, and the order has since spread throughout the world. Today, there are Cryptic Councils in every state in the United States, as well as in many other countries.

Rituals and Ceremonies

The Cryptic degrees are based on the biblical story of the building of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. The rituals involve dramatic reenactments of key events from the story, such as the discovery of the Ark of the Covenant and the dedication of the Temple.

The Cryptic rituals are also rich in symbolism. The altar, for example, represents Mount Moriah, where the Temple was built. The candles on the altar represent the seven liberal arts and sciences. And the robes worn by the Cryptic Masons are reminiscent of the priestly garments worn in the ancient Temple.

Symbolism and Teachings

Cryptic Masonry is a deeply symbolic order. The rituals and ceremonies are filled with hidden meanings and esoteric teachings. Some of the most important symbols in Cryptic Masonry include:

* The Ark of the Covenant: The Ark of the Covenant is a sacred chest that contains the Ten Commandments. It is a symbol of the divine presence and protection. * The Sword of Truth: The Sword of Truth is a symbol of the strength and courage of the Cryptic Masons. It is also a reminder that Freemasonry is a force for good in the world. * The Shield of Faith: The Shield of Faith is a symbol of the protection that God provides to his followers. It is also a reminder that Freemasonry is a brotherhood of like-minded men who are committed to helping one another.

Connections to Other Esoteric Traditions

Cryptic Masonry has close connections to a number of other esoteric traditions, including Knight Templarism, Rosicrucianism, and the Grail legend. These traditions share a common interest in the search for truth and wisdom, and they have all influenced the development of Cryptic Masonry.

For example, the Knight Templar legend tells the story of a group of Christian knights who were tasked with protecting the Holy Grail. The Grail is a sacred cup that is said to have been used by Jesus at the Last Supper. The Cryptic Masons believe that the Grail is a symbol of the divine wisdom that is available to all who seek it.

The Rosicrucian tradition is a philosophical and mystical movement that originated in the early 17th century. The Rosicrucians believe that there is a secret knowledge that can be accessed through the study of nature and the

occult. The Cryptic Masons have adopted some of the Rosicrucian teachings, such as the belief in the existence of a hidden wisdom that can be accessed through the study of symbols.

Christian Symbolism

Cryptic Masonry is a Christian order, and its rituals and ceremonies are filled with Christian symbolism. For example, the altar is often decorated with a cross, and the Cryptic Masons wear a white apron that is similar to the apron worn by Jesus in the New Testament.

The Cryptic Masons believe that Freemasonry is a way of living in accordance with the teachings of Jesus. They believe that the Masonic virtues of brotherly love, relief, and truth are essential for a good and virtuous life.

Cryptic Masonry is a fascinating and enigmatic order that has captivated the interest of historians and esotericists alike. Its rituals, ceremonies, and symbolism are full of hidden meanings and esoteric teachings. Cryptic Masonry is a brotherhood of like-minded men who are committed to the search for truth and wisdom.

If you are interested in learning more about Cryptic Masonry, I encourage you to visit the website of the Cryptic Masons of the United States. You can also find more information about Cryptic Masonry in the books and articles listed below.

Further Reading

* Cryptic Masonry: A History, by Francis J. Evans * The Cryptic Rite: Its Origin, History, and Symbolism, by John S. Moore * The Cryptic Degrees: A

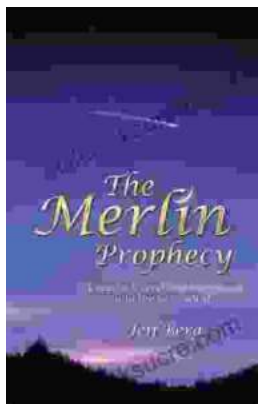
Guide to Their Development and Meaning, by Mark A. Tabbert * The Symbolism of Cryptic Masonry, by James Stevens



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