Slide Presentation on 'Female Buddhas and Sacred Sexuality in Vajrayana Art and Practice' Held at Portland Baha

April 25, In Vajrayana Buddhist iconography and tradition, male-female Tantric union between the Dakinis and deities is a

spiritual, sacred and esoteric practice.



Prof Dr Miranda Shaw said this during a slide presentation on "Female Buddhas and Sacred Sexuality in Vajrayana Art and Practice" organized at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara, Portland on Wednesday, April 24, 2024.

Vajra Yogini, Vajra Varahi and many other Dakinis who are female embodiment of enlightened energy are female Buddhas widely worshipped in Nepal and Tibet, Dr Shaw added.

The slide presentation by Dr Miranda Shaw on this lessresearched and less studied Vajrayana Buddhist aspect was very brilliant and thought-provoking.

During the presentation, Prof Dr Shaw shared her insights into the iconography and character of Tantric female Buddhas, drawing on her field research in Nepal and India as well as her background as cultural historian.



Also, during the program, Prof Dr Shaw explored the pure vision of sacred intimacy portrayed by Buddha couples.

Likewise, Dr Shaw previewed new findings on different modes of Tantric partnership that she derived from the movement qualities of various Charya nritya dances.

Prior to the beginning of the presentation, Prajwal Vajracharya of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara gave a short introduction of Prof Dr Shaw to the participants at the Vihara.

25 people attended in person at the presentation event at the Mahavihara in Portland. Likewise, 30 people from the US and other countries took part at the event via Zoom.

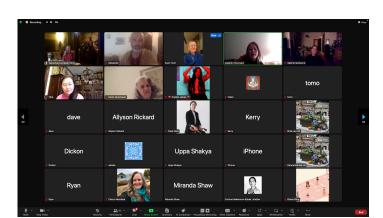


At the end of the program, Prof Dr Shaw replied to numerous questions put forth by the participants at the Portland Baha and by participants from the Zoom.

Miranda Shaw, Ph D, Harvard University, is a Buddhist scholar known for inspiring and

groundbreaking work on women in Vajrayana Buddhism, chronicled in her renowned book 'Passionate Enlightenment', which has been translated into seven languages. She is also the author of 'Buddhist

Goddesses of India', a thorough and fascinating historic and



iconographical study based on extensive research and deep engagement with the feminine divine.

Dr Shaw is currently completing a companion volume 'Buddhist Goddesses of Tibet and Nepal', and writing a book on Vajrayana dance to be titled 'Dancing Enlightenment: Tantric Buddhist Dance of Nepal'. She is Prof Emerita of Religious Studies at the University of Richmond and continues to explore and convey her discoveries about the profound sacred arts and embodied spiritual practices of Himalayan Buddhism.

Baby Shower for Teya Organized

Portland, April 28 A baby shower event was organized at the Forest Refuge, Damascus, Oregon on Saturday, April 27 for



expressing excitement, extending blessings and wishing joy and happiness to Prajwal-Teya family.

All the participants, who were seated like at a conference, congratulated Teya and Prajwal on their baby shower passing over the candle light to each other and praying for the new comer.

"May the Buddha bless your beautiful family" said the participants at the baby shower.

About 25 people including Teya's dad Roger Desesa graced the baby shower. Prof Dr Miranda Shaw, Prof Dr Ter Ellingson, Prof Dr Linda Iltis, Sangha members and Nepali community members were among the guests at the baby shower.



Speaking on the occasion, on behalf of all the baby shower participants, Phyllis Moses - a Sangha member and a Yoga Therapist - congratulated Teya and Prajwal and said: May the new baby bring you endless joy and happiness.

There is a tradition in Newar culture to feed pregnant mother



with Dhau Baji (beaten rice with yogurt). So the Nepalese and American participants at the baby shower event at the Forest Refuge also fed Teya and Prajwal with Dhau Baji. The baby shower was followed by a vegan, vegetarian and non-vegetarian pizza lunch.

Meanwhile, Ganga Sharma, former president of Nepali Association of Oregon, writing a post in the Facebook said: "Our day started with unique baby shower for Teya and Prajwal Vajracharya. The uniqueness of this baby shower was: rather than going and getting a glass of wine, it started with offering blessings for Teya, (mother-to-be-



soon)."

Wedding Reception Held at Forest Refuge, Damascus

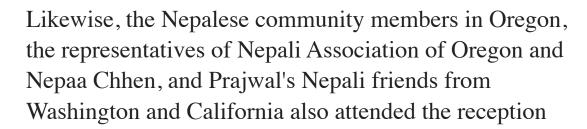
April 27 A wedding reception was organized at Forest Refuge,



Damascus, Oregon on Saturday, April 27, 2024 to celebrate Teya-Prajwal wedding.

About 120 people including Joseph Houseal of Core of Culture, Chicago, professors from California and Washington attended the wedding reception. Almost all the Sangha members of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara attended the wedding

reception.



"Our dear friend Helen Appell - who is the founder of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara -provided space for wedding reception at Forest Refuge, Damascus," said Prajwal Guruji and added that



without her generosity this reception would not have been possible.



Snacks and drinks were served to the guests at a Buddhist style gazebo on the premises of Forest Refuge. According to the guests, the surroundings at the Forest Refuge were so amazing and wonderful. "The snacks were yummy especially the Nepali style Wo (lentil cakes)."

On Saturday, April 27, the baby shower and wedding reception was followed by a sumptuous dinner prepared at Forest Refuge by chef - Tom Weatherell and his daughter.



The wedding reception was followed by Nepali songs by Gauri Vaidya, Bikram Vaidya, Shashi Bajra Bajracharya and Suva Shakya, and also a beautiful dance by Teya and Prajwal. The guests were also seen dancing on the floor on the songs of Gauri and Shashi.

The wedding reception at Forest Refuge -- a celebration of Prajwal and Teya's union and journey

forth as a married couple -- was an unforgettable wedding event.

Sangha Member Ani Bereaved of His Brother

April 9: Durgatiparishodhana text was chanted every day for a

week (April 9-15) by Prajwal Guruji at the temple of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara for late Surendra

Muni Shakya who passed away at Max Hospital in New Delhi on April 8, 2024. Shakya died at age 57 of liver disease.

Late Shakya is the elder brother of Anirudra Muni Shakya, a Sangha member of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara.

Late Surendra Muni Shakya, who was born to father Dasharath Muni Shakya and mother Japa Laxmi Shakya in 2023 BS in Tansen, Palpa, Nepal, was associated with various associations and organizations. Late Shakya was former president of Palpa Jaycees and former treasurer of Lumbini Development Trust (LDT). He is survived by wife Neelima Shakya and a son and a daughter.



Indian Classical Music Concert Held at Portland's Newar Buddhist Temple

By Joshua Proto and Rabin Man Shakya

Portland, April 6, An Indian classical music concert featuring Portland's very own representative of the Kirana Gharana -Michael Stirling - was organized at the Nritya Mandala

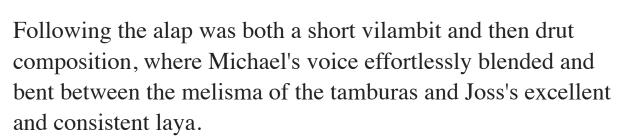


Mahavihara on Saturday, April 6, 2024.

Prior to the starting of the Hindustani Raga concert, Prajwal Vajracharya, co-founder of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara gave a brief introduction of Michael Stirling, Joss Jaffe and other artistes.

Michael Stirling, the lead vocal artist, was joined by multi-instrumentalist and Tabla maestro Joss Jaffe. Lucy Stirling and Joshua Proto also accompanied Michael Stirling on tambura.

The performance began first with alap in Raga Bhimpalasi. The note-by-note unfolding of this springtime raga lulled the audience into a relaxing and peaceful mood.



Following Raga Bhimpalasi, was Raga Malkauns, the Midnight Raga, another staple in the Kirana Gharana. Once again, Michael demonstrated a technical and emotional embodiment of



the alap that moved the atmosphere to a peaceful and contemplative mood.

Both vilambit and drut compositions were also displayed as well. Finally, Michael wrapped up the concert with a drut composition in Raga Bharavi. Raga Bhairavi is tradtionally the last raga of the concert.

There were 50 attendees and each one expressed their gratitude to Michael, Joss, Lucy and Joshua for their artistic display.

Writing on his social media platform on Saturday, April 6, 2024, Michael said: "What a blessing to sing Raga in such a beautiful high vibrational space with so many wonderful people surrounding us."

Michael added in his Facebook post: "Grateful for such a wonderful experience offering our group performing Indian classical music at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara. And to Prajwal Ratna Vajracharya for hosting us. As a friend of mine is known to say, Big Infinite Heart. Thanks too, to everyone who came out on a rainy spring evening. We all really appreciated your presence and ears! Was wonderful."

Michael Stirling is an instructor of Raga singing at Sun Gate Studio and adjunct faculty at Lewis & Clark College, Portland.

He is a singer of North Indian classical vocal music of the venerable Kirana Gharana. He is



a disciple of the late master of classical Indian Raga singing, Pandit Pran Nath (1918-1996) and a student of Nathji's senior disciple, the legendary composer/performer, Maestro Terry Riley.