

Michael Stirling, Exponent of Hindustani Raga Singing in Oregon, Performs at Vihara

By Joshua Proto and Rabin Man Shakya



Portland, Sept 5, 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 Thursday, Sept 5, 2024. This was the second Raga concert at the Vihara by Michael Stirling this year. Stirling, no doubt, is an exponent of Hindustani Raga singing in Oregon, USA.

Prior to the starting of the Hindustani Raga concert, Prajwal gave a brief introduction of Michael Stirling, Joss Jaffe and other artists.

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

The performance kicked off first with alaap in Raga Multani. The note-by-note unfolding of this desert Raga matched the heat of the day as it was one of the hottest





evenings in Portland to date this year.

With the sound of Michael's voice, the tambura's drones, and Joss's tabla filling the temple, the distinction between the long shadows and waves of heat from the day became inseparable from the vibrations of

Raga Multani surrounding the audience.

Following the alap, was both a short vilambit and then drut composition, where Michael's voice effortlessly extended the characteristic atmosphere and mood of Raga Multani in combination with Joss's excellent and consistent laya.

Following Raga Multani, was Raga Puriya Dhanashree, a lovely evening Raga and a staple in the Kirana Gharana. Once again, Michael demonstrated a technical and emotional embodiment of the alap that enlightened the spiritual and serene atmosphere.



Both vilambit and drut compositions were displayed as well.

Finally, there was a brief discussion of mood and artist expression as it pertains to this art form before closing the concert.

There were over 30 attendees and each one expressed their gratitude to Michael, Joss, Lucy and Joshua for their artistic display as well as expressed gratitude to co-founder, Spiritual Director and Head Priest Prajwal Vajracharya, Teya Vajracharya and Dewa Vajracharya for hosting this musical offering at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara.

Meanwhile, writing on his social media platform on Friday, Sept 6, 2024, Michael said: "Thanks to all who came out to the Vihara last evening. Was a high level crowd of listeners and lovely time. Our band of artists deeply appreciated your presence and reception of our music."

Michael further added in his Facebook post: "Most importantly, thank you to Prajwal Ratna Vajracharya for his kindness, generosity and hard work. We all appreciate you very much! Among others, look who we got to sing for, baby Dewa ! Thank you."

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 Prem Nath (1918-1996) and a student of Nathji's senior disciple, the legendary composer / performer, Maestro Terry Riley.

Naga Puja Held at Forest Refuge, Damascus, By Teya Vajracharya and Rabin Man Shakya

Portland, Sept 27 A Naga Puja, (worshipping of snakes) was held at Forest Refuge, Damascus in Oregon on Friday, Sept 27, 2024. Forest Refuge at Damascus, OR is the residence of Ms Helen Appell who is the founder of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland, USA.



The purpose of Naga Puja, which was ritualized by 35th generation Vajrayana priest Prajwal Vajracharya, is to honor the Nagas, recognize them as great protectors of nature and make offerings to show gratitude for them.

Naga Puja is an elaborate ritual in Newar Buddhism performed to honor Nagas (serpents), and make offerings to land spirits.

Wherever there is beautiful nature, there are Nagas. During the puja, Naga Samadhi proceeded, respecting Nagas in their rightful places.

Also, during the Naga Puja at the Forest Refuge, priest Prajwal Vajracharya arranged Naga vessels in the four directions with a Naga Mandala in the center.

After Samadhi, honoring the Nagas, offerings were placed in the four directions, dispersed on the beautiful Forest Refuge land.

In Buddhism, Nagas represent Dwesha or anger. When the earth is polluted or harmed, the Nagas are filled with rage.

Nagas are land protectors and usually dwell near water, rivers and oceans etc.

Because the earth has been polluted, the spirit protectors of the land are unhappy and in their anger they create obstacles in places where nature is being altered by human presence and any activities performed will be unsuccessful.



Naga Mandala includes 36 different types of Nagas. Offerings include milk, honey and butter representing sweetness and cleanliness to counteract the defilements of this living world.

Lama Dorje's Teachings on Tara Jigpa Kunkyop Empowerment Held at Nriya Mandala Mahavihara

By Joshua Proto and Rabin Man Shakya

Portland, Sept 15 (Nepal Oregon News): A three-day teaching on Tara Jigpa Kunkyop, Terma and Sun Wu Kong empowerment by Lama Dorje (an American Buddhist Lama from Georgia) was organized on Friday - Sunday, Sept 13-15, 2024 at Nriya Mandala Mahavihara.



We are delighted to host Lama Dorje Sherab to teach on the **Nature of Pure Vision & Terma** and offer **Empowerment of Sun Wu Kong & Tara Jigpa Kunkyop**

SCHEDULE:
 Friday, 13th September 2024
 6PM-8PM: Talk on Pure Vision & Terma & Sun Wu Kong Empowerment
 Saturday, 14th September 2024
 10AM-12PM: Tara Jigpa Kunkyop Empowerment
 2PM - 4PM: Tara Jigpa Kunkyop Teachings
 Sunday, 15th September 2024
 10AM-12PM: Tara Jigpa Kunkyop Practice Session, Sang Offering, Serkyem
 To register, contact prajvaladancemandal.com

On Friday, Sept 13, Lama Dorje's talk focused on pure vision and Terma and Sun Wu Kong empowerment while on Saturday, Sept 14, emphasis was laid on teachings and empowerment of Tara Jigpa Kunkyop. Similarly, Sunday, Sept 15 was devoted to Tara Jigpa Kunkyop practice session, song offering, serkyem.

Addressing the gathering at the Mahavihara, Lama Dorje said: "The forms of Arya Tara emanated to liberate beings are



endless. Though she is well-known as arising in her Green and White forms, many other collections have appeared overtime, in various sets of eight, twenty one and one hundred and eight names."

Lama Dorje further went on

saying": In the many teachings brought by Padmasambhava to the lands he traveled, Tara is known in both Kama and Terma lineages. That is, those preserved from the time he came and those hidden for the benefit of the future."

Explaining about details on Tara Jigpa Kunkyop, Lama Dorje said: One of these Terma traditions is called Tara Jigpa Kunkyop, which means "the one who protects from all fears." In this profound Mandala, many forms of Tara are brought together to protect from a variety of outer, inner and secret terrors and misfortunes.

Further, Lama Dorje, during the presentation, noted: This Terma was originally revealed by the Tertön Yakchar Gyalpo, but lost overtime. Later, the Master Rongpa Tertön revealed it again. This lineage continued for a while until only the Agama, or oral transmission remained, while the empowerment lineage no longer existed, making practice virtually impossible.





Lama Dorje further shared: "In the later 19th century, the Great Guru Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo revived this lineage through Yang Ter, or bringing to life a tradition that has been lost. It was then included in the massive Rime collections of Termas.

Lama Dorje Sherab received Lama empowerment in the context of various traditions, particularly the Guhyagarbha, eight Kagye, and other Sarma and Nyingma systems from masters, such as, Trulshik, Namdrol, Garchen and Gosher Gyaltzen Rinpoche.

Lama Dorje's root Guru, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, guided him on which empowerments to take and how to train them. Lama Sherab studied under Khenpo Drimed in Shedra, learning Tibetan and receiving the five treasures of the Rime tradition compiled by Jamgon Kongtrul.

Under Norbu Rinpoche, he compiled a retreat of the three roots, received blessings to teach and give empowerments, and underwent extensive training and empowerments in Anuyoga and the three series of Atiyoga.



In 2020, Lama Dorje co-founded the Tantric Revolutionary Center, now a non-profit organization with Lama Federico

Andino from Argentina where they are committed to bring Buddha Dharma to all beings with no exceptions and is proud to serve future Bodhisattvas of all ethnicities, sexual orientations and gender identifications.

Paru Bhoje Organized at Vihara

Sept 4, Portland (Nepal Oregon News): A month-long Maha Manjushree Naamsangiti recitation held everyday at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland, USA to mark the auspicious



Gunla Dharma month, came to an end on Wednesday, Sept 4, 2024.

The month-long Naamsangiti was held in-person at the Mahavihara and on the zoom. In total, about 30 people from the USA and other countries took part at the Naamsangiti

recitation on different days.

Naamsangiti on the last day of Gunla Dharma month was recited by Rev Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya and eight other people at the Vihara while Stacie, Tina, Markus, Crystal, Angela, Ling Ling, Dina, Daya and Rabin took part at the Naamsangiti recitation on the zoom.

On the final day of the Gunla Dharma, before the recitation of Naamsangiti, Prajwal Guruji threw light on the importance of Yenya Punhi and Indra Jatra.

Similarly, a Paru Bhoje dinner was organized at the Mahavihara on Friday, Sept 6, 2024 for the in-person and zoom participants of the month-long Naamsangiti recitation.

