

## Thirteenth Anniversary of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara Observed

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Portland, Nov 10 (Nepal Oregon News): A day-long program was organized on Thursday, Nov 10, 2022 to mark the thirteenth anniversary of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara (NMM), the first and only one Newar Vajrayana Buddhist monastery in the West.



The anniversary celebration kicked off with the Gurumandala Puja and Mamaki Puja which was ritualized by Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya.

In the last 13 years, Nritya Mandala Mahavihara has continuously served the Sangha or community in many different ways, and credit for this goes to co-founders Helen Appell and Prajwal Vajracharya. The NMM in Portland, USA is the first and only Newar Vajrayana Buddhist temple in 350 years and it is the first Newar Vajrayana Buddhist monastery built outside of Nepal.



On the occasion, presenting a brief Dharma talk, co-founder of the Mahavihara Prajwal Vajracharya said "Nritya Mandala Mahavihara which is the Foundation for Sacred Buddhist Arts of Nepal, is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Charya



Nritya and the related traditions of instruments and vocal music, choreography and crafts of making masks, costumes and jewelry used in sacred dances."

Denouncing the false claim that Buddha was born in India and that Charya Nritya originated from India, Guruji Prajwal said irrefutable evidences have been found that not only Lord Gautam Buddha but Krakuchanda Buddha and Kanakmuni Buddha were also born in Nepal.

"Charya Nritya is an important part of Newar Vajrayana Buddhism. It originated in Nepal Mandala. This ancient dance dates back to more than 1,000 years and is a religious discipline of the Buddhist priests of the Kathmandu valley, who perform the dances as part of their esoteric meditation, practices, ceremonies and rituals."

Evening celebration of the anniversary was followed by Buddha Bhajans and Charya Dance Show in person at the Mahavihara and online on Zoom by the members of the Hong Kong Sangha. Buddha Bhajans, such as Lumbini Yatra, Vasundhara, Tri Ratna Lumanki, Najato, Dasaparamita etc were performed by Joshua Proto, Adam Bidema and Satya Bayu.



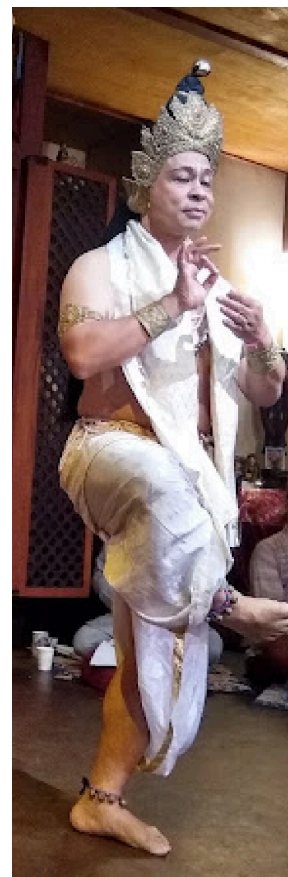


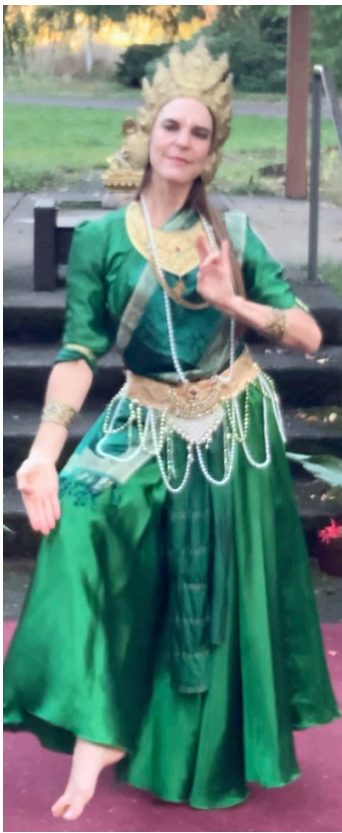
The Charya dance program began with Refuge and 16-Offering Goddess dance by the Sangha members at the temple. Similarly, a Green Tara Charya dance was presented on Zoom by the members of the Hong Kong Dance Mandal including Shira Chan, Patty Chan, Mary Lau, Jocelyn Lai and Sia Ying Leung.



Likewise, a Charya dance 'Mahavairochana' was performed at the temple by Prajwal Guruji while another solo Charya dance 'Green Tara' was demonstrated on Zoom by Dara Daniels, a student of Helen Appell, who is the co-founder of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara.

Similarly, a Charya dance 'Padmanateshvara' was offered at the temple by Anastasia Roderick followed by a group Charya dance 'Prajnaparamita' by members of the Hong





Kong Dance Mandal which includes Dr Tina Ho, Eliza Mau-Yee Lau, Lingling Lee, Eliza Lok-Yee Lau, Chin-chin Chang, Eleanor Li and Kerri Ho.

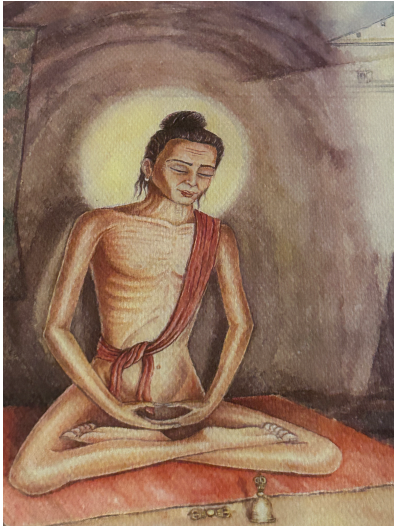
At the end of the program, a 'Vajrapani' dance was presented by Prajwal Guruji at the temple. The thirteenth anniversary program was participated by 25 people from USA and Hong Kong on Zoom and 40 people at the Mahavihara in person, and was followed by a Newar-style potluck dinner.



## **Presented in University of Salvador (School of Oriental studies) November 2nd 2022**

Kathmandu, (Nepal Oregon News): Nritya Mandala Mahavihara preserves and shares the traditions of Buddhist practice, arts and culture held by Newar people of the Nepal Mandala. Established in Portland in 2009, our center is the first Newar Vajrayana Buddhist temple in the West with performance and art-making spaces, and a library of old and new Buddhist texts.

Guruji Prajwal Ratna Vajracharya, co-founder of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland, USA and a 35th generation



Tantric Buddhist priest from Nepal said this while addressing a Zoom program 'Jornadas Budistas' (Buddhist Journeys) by University of Salvador -- School of Oriental Studies on Sunday, Nov 2nd 2022. Guruji Prajwal's student and Sangha member Joshua Proto was also present on the Zoom program.

Prajwal Guruji's Zoom talk zeroed in on Newar Vajrayana Buddhism including its ancient and medieval history, Charya Nritya and Newar Buddhist lifecycle rituals. The program started with refuge to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

Newar Buddhist tradition is the oldest Buddhist tradition in the world, said the noted Vajrayana Buddhist scholar, adding that based on Swoyambhu Purana and ancient history, there were many Buddhas before the Shakya Muni Buddha: Vipaswi Buddha, Shikhi Buddha, Vishwobhu Buddha, Krakuchanda Buddha, Kanakmuni Buddha and Kashyap Buddha. They all had visited Nepal Mandala to establish Buddhism.

Shakya Muni Buddha was born in Nepal. Before that, Kanakmuni Buddha and Krakuchanda Buddha were also born in Southern Nepal, the Guruji said during the virtual program. Vipaswi Buddha came to Nepal to plant the seed on the lake. That seed was blooming with thousands of petals. Lord Manjushree had the vision and he cut the gorge on the lake and kept the water away.





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Emperor Ashoka visited various places in Nepal and established so many Ashoka stupas in the third century, the Guruji said and added that there are hundreds of Viharas and Mahaviharas in the Kathmandu Valley, which were schools and colleges in the past.

During the remotely held discourse, Vajracharya also touched on the ancient and medieval Mahasiddhas like Shantikaracharya - the first Bajracharya Guru of Nepal Mandala, Surat Bajra Bajracharya, Lila Bajra Bajracharya, Manju Bajra Bajracharya and so on.

There are two Guheswori temples in Kathmandu, Guruji Prajwal said and added that one of them is Nairatma. In the word Nairatma, Neer means blue and Atma refers to soul, he said.



During the virtual presentation, Vajracharya took time to emphasize the role of Pancha Buddhas in Newar Buddhism. Pancha Buddhas are: Vairochana, Amitabha, Ratnasambhava, Amoghasiddhi and Akshovya.



Touching on Charya giti, the songs from which the dances arise, Prajwal Guruji said Charya gitis tell us about the iconography of deities and yoginis. In Portland, we dance more than 50 Charya dances, many of which we have created. But there are thousands of Charya dances, Vajracharya stated. "My father, Ratna Kaji Vajracharya,

collected 556 Charya in his Charya books volume 1 and 2. Likewise, my brother, who is also collecting ancient Charya gitis, has about 1,500 of them he would like to publish." The Nritya Mandala Mahavihara is a popular rendezvous for the classical Charya Nritya dancers from the US and beyond, he said.

Stressing on the need to preserve the age-old lifecycle rituals, the chief pujari of the Mahavihara said that the temple has been doing lots of work to protect and promote the Newar Buddhist lifecycle rituals. From the birth to death, we have a lot of rituals. We have rituals when people are sick and when business is down. Rituals are the part of the life because they teach you a lot in Buddha Dharma in our Buddhist tradition, the Guruji reiterated.

**Sur Sudha Team Accommodated at the  
Portland Baha, USA, Nov 19 2022**





Portland, (Nepal Oregon News): Sur Sudha , one of Nepal's most renowned musical bands, was in Portland, Oregon at the end of November, 2022. They gave an amazing and enthralling concert for the Nepalese community in Portland at the Nekusing Memorial Theater at the Hollywood Taekwondo School on Saturday, Nov 19, 2022. The Sur Sudha concert was organized by the Nepalese community in Oregon to mark the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Nepal and the USA.

The Sur Sudha team which includes Surendra Shrestha (tabla), Raman Maharjan (flute), Sarashwoti Khatri (vocal), Bikas Sunar (guitar) and Binisha Shrestha (tour manager) were all guests of Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara for four days during their stay in





Portland.

Similarly, the Mahavihara was also one of the sponsors for the concert of Sur Sudha in Portland. Prior to the departure from Portland, the Sur Sudha team members extended heart-felt gratitude to Prajwal Guruji for the warm hospitality accorded to them.

