In Vajrayana Buddhism, a Dakini is the Ultimate Personification of Fierce Feminine Wisdom.

Four-week Teaching Course on 'Embodiment of the Dakini Praise' Wraps Up

Rabin Man Shakya



A four-week teaching course on 'Embodiment of the Dakini Praise' wrapped up on Sunday, Sept 20, 2026 at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland, USA. It is to be noted that the four-week training kicked off on Sunday, Aug 30, 2026 at the Vihara.

Led by priest Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya, the educational and spiritual course brought together almost two dozen participants across both in-person and virtual zoom sessions. Ed Zaron, Jamie Dawson, Allie White, Susan Morningstar, Ashley Low, Gabriel Quitslund, Teya De Sesa, Naveena Shakya, Chaney Connor, Mathew Costagno and Clay Stenhilbur were in-person participants. 10 others including Meadow Lisa Wong and Dr Tina Ho from Hong Kong took part at the teaching course on zoom.

The themes of teaching course were Nairatma, Khadgayogini, Akashyogini and Vajrayogini. Every week was devoted to one of the Dakinis. The two-hour weekly sessions were split into distinct theoretical and practical components.



The first introductory week focused extensively on the Nairatma charya sloka (sacred dance verses) followed by further instructions and lessons on Khadgayogini sloka, Akashyogini sloka and Vajrayogini sloka.

During the teaching, Prajwal Guruji emphasized on the essence of embodiment of Dakini praise and said:"In Vajrayana Buddhism, a Dakini is the ultimate personification of fierce feminine wisdom and the ultimate energy of enlightenment."

Throwing light on sky dancer, Prajwal - who is a ritual practitioner of Mandalas, Mantras and Charya Dances - stated:"Often translated as 'sky dancer', a Dakini represents a mind completely free from conceptual limitations, playfully navigating the vast space of emptiness."



Prajwal, one of the seniormost Charya Nritya pedagogues in the world, went on saying:"Rather than a passive goddess, the Dakini is a dynamic catalyst for spiritual transformation to aggressively shatter a practitioner's ego, pride and conventional illusions."

While underscoring religious and spiritual importance of a Dakini, the Guruji said:"She manifests simultaneously across multiple dimensions - as a historical female master, as a meditation deity embodying pure awareness and as the sudden, sharp flash of intuitive insight that cuts through mental chatter."

The Guruji expressed the view:"Ultimately, to encounter a Dakini is to confront the raw, unconditioned nature of one's own mind, transforming everyday obstacles and negative emotions into the very fuel for sudden awakening."

The immersive series ran through its planned four-week curriculum, guiding practitioners through the union of sacred Buddhist texts, hand and finger Mudras and somatic movement.

During the classes, every week, Prajwal Guruji focused on Nairatma sloka, Khadgayogini sloka, Akashyogini sloka and Vajrayogini sloka one by one,

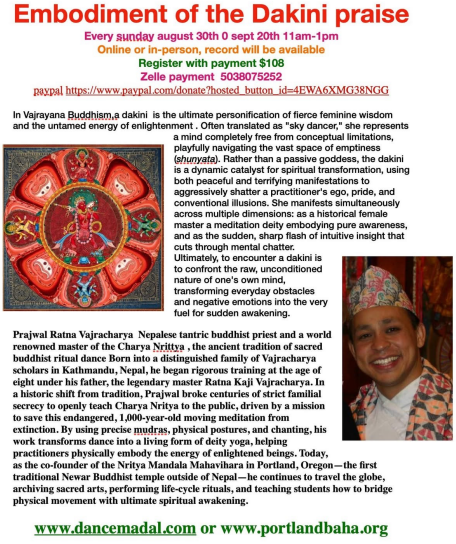


chanting them in Sanskrit and breaking down meanings of the different Deity Slokas word by word.

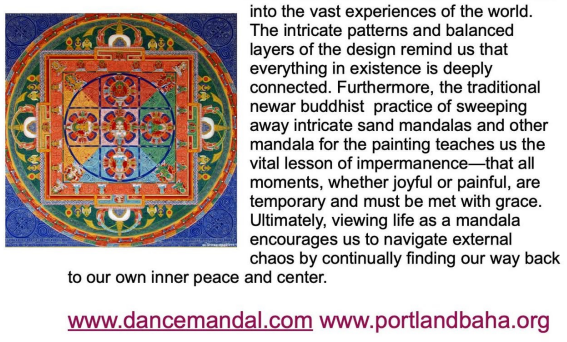
The four-week classes served as a foundational step for deeper engagement with the Vajrayana path, particularly the practices that awaken the qualities symbolized by the Dakinis.

The spiritual dance teaching was accompanied by formal Refuge practice and the ritual 16 offering goddess dances every week followed by the respective Dakini charya nritya sloka.

The teaching attempted to deepen understanding of Nairatma, Khadgayogini, Akashyogini and Vajrayogini on the participants. At the end of each class, the Guruji answered to the questions of the in-person and zoom participants.



Zoom Teaching on 'Mandala of Life in Charya Nritya' Hosted by Hong Kong Sangha



A zoom teaching on 'Mandala of Life in Charya Nritya' by Prajwal Vajracharya, co-founder of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland, USA was hosted by Hong Kong Buddhist Studies Association on Friday, Sept 4, 2026.

Prajwal Guruji started the zoom teaching by chanting the Mandala offering.

Addressing the zoom teaching, Prajwal Guruji



who is chief pujari at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara, said:"In Charya Nritya - a thousand year old sacred dance tradition of Newar Vajrayana Buddhism - the concept of the Mandala of Life represents both a philosophical teaching on human existence and the literal embodiment of the universe within the practitioner's physical body."

Defining the Mandala, the Guruji stated:"A Mandala is a spiritual geometric design symbolizing the universe, unity and balance. Derived from Sanskrit word for 'circle', Mandala holds deep spiritual significance."



Life itself functions as a living dynamic Mandala, said the Guruji adding "We should not just view Mandala as merely a static painting or sand art."

Comparing body and Mandala, Prajwal Guruji - a ritual master - said:"In Vajrayana Buddhist philosophy, your physical body is viewed as a sacred microcosm of the universe or a body Mandala."

Discussing the inter-relation between Mudra and Mandala, the senior Charya Nritya teacher said:"Through precise Mudras (hand gestures), steps and postures, a Charya dancer animates this inner Mandala. Each finger corresponds to a cosmic element activating these energies internally."

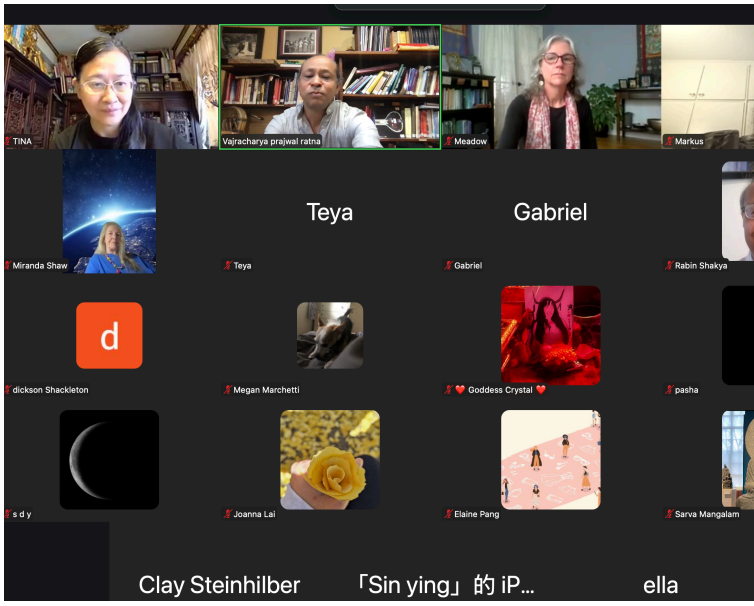
The Guruji further stressed:"By chanting and moving, the practitioners transition from their ordinary self to embody the awakened characteristics of a Tantric deity, turning the physical body into a direct expression of enlightened awareness."

The Mandala of Life serves as a profound metaphor for how human beings navigate the world, added the Guruji.

Prajwal, an authentic Newar Buddhist priest, went on saying:"Just as a traditional Mandala radiates outward from a single, concentrated center point, human life unfolds from our core inner self into the vast, complex experience of the external world."

Furthermore, the Guruji shared:"The balanced layers and intricate geometric patterns of a Mandala reflect how deeply connected everything in existence is - our actions, native and the spiritual realm."

Prajwal Guruji, a Buddhist scholar, emphasized further:"A core aspect of Newar Buddhist practice involves the meticulous creation and eventual sweeping away of sand Mandalas. In the context of life, this teaches the vital lesson of impermanence."



The Guruji further went on saying:"All moments - whether joyful or painful - are temporary and must be met with grace."

The Guruji wrapped up the zoom teaching saying:"Viewing life through this lens encourages to find their way back to their inner peace and center, even when navigating external chaos."

At the end of the zoom teaching, Prajwal Guruji replied to the queries of the participants.

Interfaith Vigil in Portland, USA Mourns Victims of Catastrophic Floods in Nepal



A candle light vigil Sunday evening on Sept 20, 2026 at Pioneer Courthouse Square in Portland, Oregon honored those killed and missing after flash floods in Nepal.

A catastrophic cross-border flash flood and mudslide hit the Nepal-China border on Aug 26, 2026 killing 1450, injuring 9300 with 4700 people still missing.

The flood has wreaked havoc on people, destroyed property, environment, economy, energy, education, infrastructure, tourism and livelihood.



The interfaith vigil was organized by Nepali Association of Oregon (NAO) and was attended by over 100 Nepalese Oregonians and interfaith representatives.

It was a community gathering where people of diverse religious backgrounds met at downtown Portland, USA to collectively grieve, pray and show solidarity for the thousands of people affected by devastating August 2026 floods in Nepal.

The vigil held in Portland offered a message of hope and solidarity for people thousands of miles away. The vigil which was conducted by community leader Ganga Sharma was addressed by Ekraj Sharma, president of Nepali Association of Oregon.



Sangha Member of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara, a Newar Buddhist monastery in Portland, Dechen Lhamo offered a Native American flute playing on Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva.

Avalokiteshvara is the revered white Bodhisattva of universal compassion, a primary deity in the Newar Buddhist tradition. The deity embodies compassion in its most recognizable form, as gentleness, softness and kindness.

Prajwal Vajracharya, chief priest at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara, chanted a peace prayer "Swostha Vakya" wishing for 'Uddhar' of all sentient beings. Vajracharya also chanted Durgati Parishodhana Dharani in memory of the flood victims.

Bharat Baskota, a Hindu devotee and also former president of Nepali Association of Oregon recited Hindu chanting peace prayer in Sanskrit.



Pastor Brian Huffman of Cornerstone Apostolic Church from Hillsboro also chanted a peace prayer for Nepal's flood victims.

Community member Mamta Singa from Hindi Sangam also expressed words of condolences. Rakesh Philbin, NAO treasurer offered a vocal rendition of heart-touching and emotional Nepali song 'Timilai' which was also collectively performed by all the attendees of the candle-light vigil.

Joshua-Stormi Wedding Ritualized as per Newar Buddhist Tradition at Vihara

A marriage ceremony of Joshua Proto and Stormi Hoebelheinrich was solemnized on Wednesday, Sept 16, 2026 at Portland's Nritya Mandala Mahavihara.



Joshua is a seasoned singer of Charya Nritya giti and, as the primary singer at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara, he is responsible for accompanying Prajwal Guruji and other Charya Nritya dancers of Dance Mandal USA in over 50 Charya songs.

It may be a coincidence, but Joshua and Stormi met each other for the first time in Japan twelve years ago. They have been living together ever since.

Joshua and Stormi are American couple but their wedding rituals were performed at the Vihara by Vajrayana priest Prajwal Vajracharya as per Newar Buddhist traditions.

Joshua is the son of Ron Proto and Ami Bailey, while Stormy is the daughter of Jarret and Stacie Hoebelheinrich.



There were about 80 guests at the wedding ceremony at the Vihara. When bride Stormi and groom Joshua entered the ritual space inside the temple, Prajwal Guruji guided them through a symbolic purification of their body, mind and speech during the Puja.

The wedding ceremony kicked off with the Sthapana Puja in which chief priest of the Vihara Prajwal Guruji not only offered ritual materials and objects but he also purified them. Also, he purified his own body, mind and speech.

Bride Stormi wore a red color Lahanga embroidered with gold thread and dotted with sequins, adorned with Luswan (a jewelry made of gold to be put on bride's head during Newar wedding ceremony).

Newar style wedding rituals are unique in its culture and traditions. Jwola Nhayakan Shinhamu was an interesting aspect of the wedding ceremony in which priest Prajwal Guruji reflected the good energy created during the ritual to bride Stormi and groom Joshua.



Kisli was prepared with rice, flowers, coins and betel nuts, while Stormi and Joshua prayed for good health and long life together. Tika consisting of yogurt, rice and vermillion powder was prepared by Guruji. Then, Guruji gave a blessing to the bride and groom.

Swayambar was the most important component of the wedding ritual in which the bride circled the groom and placed a flower garland over his head and vice versa. Guruji says that the circling binds their energies together.

After that, the bride and groom exchanged wedding rings. As an essential ritual, the groom then put Abir (vermillion powder) on the bride's head. According to Prajwal Guruji, red color symbolizes a promise as deep as bloom.

Soon after, it was time for Kanya Daan (My daughter is your daughter). The bride's parent gave her daughter to the groom.

At the same time, under Shifala Lwakegu ritual, the heads of the bride and groom were banged together and groom's grand mother poured rice, flowers and fruits from Pathi over their heads.

Saha-Bhojan (feast together in the same plate) was offered to the bride and groom.

Panjaran (Panchadan) Observed in Portland, USA

Newar Vajrayana Buddhist festival Panjaran (Panchadan) was observed at Portland's Nritya Mandala Mahavihara on Wednesday, Sept 9, 2029.



Panjaran is also Panchadan which means giving away five different kinds of alms, such as, grains and fruits like rice, paddy, salt peas, bananas, radish etc to people from Vajracharya and Shakya communities.

The Sangha members of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara - Newar Vajrayana Buddhists as well as Americans Buddhists were given auspicious alms by Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya. Daan Gatha was recited by the Panjaran participants.

Pradeep Bajracharya, Rabin Man Shakya, Joshua Proto, Ashley Low and Mathew Costagno were given the auspicious alms.

At the end of the Panchadan ceremony, a vegan kheer lunch was offered to the Panjaran participants by Prajwal Guruji.

Wedding Ceremony Solemnized in New Jersey



The marriage ceremony of Samana Shakya and Gustavo Castellanos was solemnized on Sunday, Sept 26, 2026 in New Jersey, USA.

The marriage rituals were chanted by Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya. Gurumandala Puja and other Pujas were performed by Prajwal Guruji on the occasion.

Samana is the daughter of Sagar Shakya and Shashi Kala Shakya, whereas Gustavo (Colombian American) is the son of Luis Castellanos and Martha Vinasco.

In a short wedding note that was provided to Nepal. Samana Shakya, the bride said:"Our story started in the halls of Aviation High School, long before we knew

where life would take us. Over the past 10 years, we've grown up together -- through late-night studying, college milestones, and finding our paths as Mechanical Engineers."

Samana further went on saying:"What began as young love has turned into a partnership built on support, laughter and shared dreams. Now, we're beginning our next chapter as a married couple."

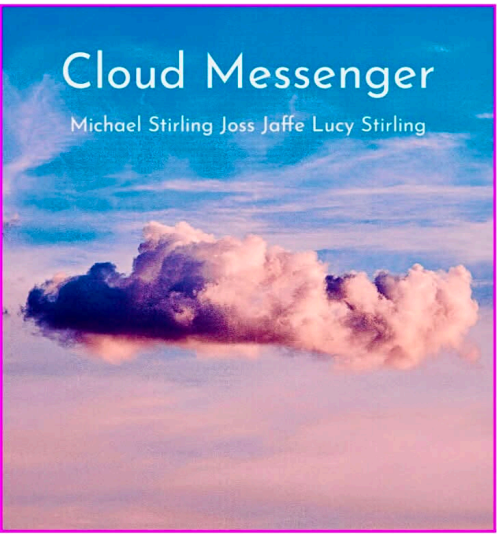
Bhawana Puja Performed for the Dog



A Bhawana Puja was performed by Prajwal Guruji at Srijana Sthapit and Sunil Tamrakar's house in Portland in memory of their pet dog - Chipu Raja. Durgati Parishodhana Paath was also chanted by the Guruji during the rituals.

Meanwhile, writing on her social media platform on Sept 30, 2026, Srijana Sthapit said:"We lost our dear Chipu Raja. We wanted to honor your life, your soul and all the love you gave us. You may no longer be here beside us, but you will always be part of our family and in our hearts. We love you and miss you always.

Cloud Messenger CD out to the world



On Sept 25 Friday first CD album realized in Nritya Mandala mahavihara with raga concert This incredible initiative shows just how supportive the platform is of the indie music community. Last Friday, our new project with Joss Jaffe, Joshua Proto, and Lucy Stirling officially launched on the platform, meaning that if you purchase it today, 100% of the price goes directly to us! We are incredibly proud of this recording, titled *Cloud Messenger*, and we can't wait for





everyone to hear it. It features a beautiful rendition of Raag Mian Ki Malhar alongside a separate, luminous tambura drone track, all beautifully recorded by Todd Boston.

Weekly Programs Continue

In September, as usual and as always, Dharani chanting on zoom was conducted once a week every Tuesday evening. Similarly, Sadhana practice and Buddha Bhajan singing practice were held on each Wednesday evening. Likewise, the practice of singing Charya giti was performed in the mornings every Friday. Naamsangiti chanting was performed on zoom during the Gunla month and also once every Full Moon Day.