

# THE MIRROR

Special Issue  
December 2023



10 Years of  
Dzamling Gar



INTERNATIONAL  
DZOGCHEN  
COMMUNITY

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**D**zogchen practitioners need to collaborate and pay respect so that we become like a seed of knowledge of evolution on this globe. This is why it is very important that we have a place and a starting point called Dzamling Gar for applying this knowledge.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Front cover: Part of the Global Gar as it is today in 2023.

Back cover: When the Dzamling Gar was acquired in 2013, the area where the Gönpa/Conference Hall would be built was an enormous unfinished building site.

This special issue of The Mirror is to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the founding of Dzamling Gar, the Global Gar of the International Dzogchen Community, in Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain in November 2013 by its founder and inspiration, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

In these few pages, we bring you some of the milestones in the story of the Gar over its first decade showing how it has developed and evolved into a vibrant and innovative center for the continuation of the Dzogchen Teachings.



Rinpoche with the Mayor of Adeje and Prof. Diez de Velasco.



Photos by Paolo Fassoli

## The Opening of Dzamling Gar

November 2013

With great joy, Dzamling Gar, the Global Gar in Tenerife, Spain, opened its doors to the world for its official Inauguration from November 15–18, 2013. As a place for all worldwide Gars and Lings of the International Dzogchen Community, it is the fruition of Rinpoche's vision for "everybody and everywhere" to collaborate and enjoy. While this large scale project is still a work in progress, it has rapidly become the heart of the international mandala.

The Inauguration opened with an inspiring welcome from Rinpoche and a performance of Tibetan Dances by a group of expert dancers from the Community who had been training together for weeks. Many people from the surrounding area of Adeje were in attendance, and the Dances were a cultural showcase that was a strong attraction and entry point for locals curious about this vibrant new addition to their home. Unlike other Gars which are often located in secluded rural locations, Dzamling Gar is a very public and open environment for the Community to engage with the world.

There was a panel discussion with Rinpoche, the Mayor of Adeje, José Miguel Rodríguez Fraga, Francisco Diez de Velasco, professor at La Laguna University, Joelle Schneider, a representative of Karma Ling (France), as well as Dzamling Gar's architect, Benedetta Tagliabue and engineer, Giovanni Boni. Rinpoche explained his attraction to Tenerife, with its ideal circumstances of a perfect climate and friendly, open people. The Mayor expressed strong enthusiasm in the Gar's contribution to the cultural enrichment of the island and offered strong support for the further development of the project. Tenerife journalists covered the meeting with a sense of excitement about

the development and the word "Dzogchen" was introduced into the local media.

On the final day of the opening, Rinpoche gave an inspiring and powerful Teaching about how Dzamling Gar presents the opportunity for all of his students to come together, go beyond their sense of limitations, and make this dream a reality now. Representatives from all Gars chose from scrolls Rinpoche prepared with numbers that would assign each region a house on the property. Each Gar has its own unique set of circumstances, but all will share in rising to the occasion to develop these local headquarters for their activity. ©





Photo by Paolo Fassoli

## A Glimpse into the Future

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's message at the opening of the Global Gar November 2013

**G**ood day for everybody and everywhere. Yesterday we opened Dzamling Gar here in Tenerife and today we are continuing. We want to make people understand what Dzamling Gar means. We should remember the whole Dzogchen Community is following a very precious teaching called Dzogchen, one of the most ancient teachings existing on this globe. We can learn that in the Dzogchen tantra, Dra Thalgyur, which is the most ancient teaching tantra in existence. I don't particularly want to explain about that, however we know the understanding that is transmitted in this teaching is not only for maintaining a kind of tradition or path, but it makes us understand that we are human beings. Human beings are better, cleverer than animals and in this case we learn and understand how our condition is, how we should live,

how we can study, learn, everything, according to circumstances. This is the main point of the Dzogchen teachings.

When I started to teach Dzogchen teachings that is what I transmitted. Of course, sometimes we integrate other things such as some kinds of practice, puja, etc. But I always explain that these are not the main point in the Dzogchen teaching. In the Dzogchen teaching we try to understand that Dzogchen is the condition of the individual so we must understand how that condition is and try to be in that state. When we are in that state and we train and apply everything in our life, this is called evolution. It really corresponds to how the situation in our dimension is. So this is the principle of the Dzogchen Community.

There are many continents on this globe and on each continent there are many nations and limited places - today, if we have no passport we cannot travel - we have these kinds of limitations. But the real nature of all human beings is beyond those limitations. Why do we have them - because we are not in our real nature. We live in a limited society and in our condition it is indispensable that we pay respect to that and also apply it as long as we are in the human condition. But we must understand how our real nature is and when we have that knowledge of our real nature and pay respect to the relative condition, we do not feel that life is so heavy. When we are ignorant of our real nature, then when there are limitations and problems, we take them seriously. Even if there are very small problems, they become very heavy for us. For that reason, it is very important that people who have knowledge of evolution bring it to



After the inauguration of Dzamling Gar, everybody gathered for a boat ride on a large catamaran, cruising on the ocean in front of the land where the Gar is located. Rinpoche led everyone in an extremely unelaborate and essential ganapuja on the boat and everyone sang Tibetan songs together and enjoyed "all being in the same boat". Photo by Paolo Fassoli

the future. We must also contribute that knowledge for all human beings. This is the root of peace in the world.

Many people say that we need peace in the world and they have a big meeting in which everybody talks about peace. It is very nice but when the conference finishes, there is nothing. This is not the way to make peace. The way to make peace is developing evolution one by one. We must distinguish between the meaning of evolution and revolution. Revolution means we believe something outside, ignoring our real nature, changing, modifying and forcing things. Evolution means we enter into knowledge of our real nature.

In the teaching of the Buddha, in sutra, not particularly in the Dzogchen teaching, there are very important words of the Buddha which really correspond to the real sense of evolution: do not hurt others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful. That way you don't create problems for others, and pay respect to them. For example, if someone insults you, you don't like it. So when you have learned that, you don't insult others because they don't like it.

Evolution must start from number one and number one is each individual. It doesn't mean that I, number one, am a more important person. This is not evolution but egoism. Evolution means that if there is no number one, number two, number three, a hundred etc. don't exist. For me, I am number one. For him, he is number one. Everybody knows that they are number one, and so we modify, we change in our own condition first of all. When we have a problem with someone, then with our ego we always think that we are innocent, and that he or she is the guilty one, explaining and trying

to convince ourselves about that. This is the way of revolution. You should observe. Buddha said that everything is interdependent, so if I have a problem with someone, of course I am related to that problem. It is interdependent. If I am really innocent, why do I have a problem with that person? In this case we need evolution. We observe ourselves, what the problem is, and we free ourselves. We cannot convert other people easily because everybody has a strong ego, so when we have done our evolution, showing that, then other people slowly learn that and free themselves. If we try to force someone to change, this is called revolution.

In the Dzogchen Community all practitioners have this kind of responsibility for all human beings. That is our knowledge and our understanding. We keep that and go ahead. For that reason, all Dzogchen practitioners need to collaborate and pay respect so that we become like a seed of this kind of knowledge on this globe.

This is why it is very important that we have a place and a starting point for applying this knowledge which is called Dzamling Gar. I told you already that I am interested in this place because circumstances are very positive. We don't know how long each person will live. We have very short lives. But even though we have very short lives, we do our best. I am also dedicating myself in that way. Everyone can dedicate themselves in that way. ❁

Transcribed and edited by Liz Granger

# The Dzamling Gar Project

An interview with Benedetta Tagliabue, the architect, and Giovanni Boni, the engineer  
November 2013

**The Mirror:** You recently gave a wonderful presentation of the Dzamling Gar Project during the inauguration of the Gar in Tenerife in mid-November. Could you share it with us for The Mirror.

**Benedetta Tagliabue:** We spent a long time looking for this land. We were not sure about what we could find and where the best place was because there are so many different aspects to Tenerife. At the beginning we thought that perhaps the north part of the island would be more 'natural' with its beautiful coast, beautiful nature. But we suddenly realized that the climate in the south of the island was fantastic. However it is difficult to find land in the south so what we did was look for much longer and it was not so easy.

Actually this piece of land that is now Dzamling Gar was one of the first that we found but we thought it would be impossible to buy because of budget, because of size, because of difficulties. But then little by little we understood that our Master had this piece of land in mind and, by chance, it was a moment when this land became available because of many factors. So from that moment on we realized that although the land is very difficult to build on, it is fantastically big and with incredible possibilities. So this was the beginning of the story.

**The Mirror:** We are at the beginning of the Dzamling Gar Project so perhaps you could let people know about the situation in this moment and how you see the future.

**Benedetta Tagliabue:** I think that the program for this place is given in the Dzamling Gar Song written by our Master. I think it is a fantastic fulfillment of the path which we have already seen in many places in the world. But I imagine it to be the place where everything can happen. The perfect place. It's also very rational because this place is so easy to reach from all over the world since it is a touristic place. And it's such a fantastic climate – it's nice and very comfortable throughout the year. So this



Giovanni Boni (left) and Benedetta Tagliabue (right).

Photo by Paolo Fassoli

is what we have in mind and the program that Giovanni and I are working on.

Giovanni Boni was entrusted by the Master to be the one to look after the construction of the place. I was entrusted by the Master to help him in making the project.

**The Mirror:** What is the immediate short-term plan for the Gar?

**Benedetta:** We have a kind of definition, one of which is the fact that we bought a property that was already half-built, so we have a situation that is already in place. And because we really think that we have to adapt to circumstances, we are kind of reusing what is already in place, trying to transform little by little a place that was not so fantastic – it was done for tourists, it was unfinished – into a fantastic place.

The place itself is already giving some direction. We have, for example, thirteen houses that are almost totally built, although they are not in good condition because they were left abandoned in the year 2000.

Then we have this area in the south that was the very first place that we put into function and that we can partially use now. This place was an esplanade that could be transformed into a very big area with a tent that serves as a Gonpa for the present.

We also have this strange underground area in front of the tent that is very big and totally rough at the moment. Above it there is a cafeteria with a provisional roof for now, but there will be a bigger roof over it. Underneath here there is also space to make a lot of rooms on different levels, and next to this area we have a swimming pool. So just this south part is very big and this is a first phase that we are thinking to put into place.

Then a little more to the north there are thirteen houses. The purpose of some of these houses was only determined less than one month ago during the inauguration of Dzamling Gar when our Master specified that some of them would be used and shared by the Gars of the same name [Merigar, Kunsangar, Tsegylgar, Tashigar, Samtenling and Namgyalgar], another house by Shang Shung Institute and so on. Then in the very north of the property, in a place which is higher because it is on a bit of a slope and you can see the sea, we have an abandoned concrete structure so big that this is the reason why the property was abandoned several years ago because it is really expensive to put it into place. But that structure will definitely be the center of Dzamling Gar. We imagine, and Giovanni has this very clear sub-division, that the Gonpa will be there, and, if we have a health center, it will be there. ©



Yantra Yoga Instructors at the Teachers' Meeting, Tenerife November 2012.

Photo: A. Clemente

## First Instructors Meeting or Daghter

November 9–13, 2012  
Callao de Salvaje, Tenerife

From November 9–13, 2012, at the Hotel Callao Salvaje, in Tenerife, Spain, there was a first of its kind meeting for all the instructors of Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance, Santi Maha Sangha and other instructors of Mandarava, Chöd, Birth, Life and Death, together with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Rinpoche called for the meeting, making it clear that this was a 'meeting', a place to exchange and talk with others, express concerns and get clarification, and also bring those concerns and questions back to the bigger group and directly to Rinpoche if needed, and not a traditional teaching retreat. This did not mean that a great deal of teaching did not occur, as Rinpoche explained, clarified and deepened our understanding of the role of an instructor, the view, application and behavior that an instructor in the Dzogchen Community responsible for the transmission must apply. For both the Yantra Yoga and Santi Maha Sangha instructors it was the first time a meeting of this nature had occurred. There were 65 Yantra Yoga, 48

Vajra Dance, and 23 Santi Maha Sangha instructors from all over the world.

On the final day, Rinpoche gave a very powerful talk to close (see excerpt below) followed by a Ganapuja. Thanks to Rinpoche for his tremendous patience, generosity and inspiration, in continually refreshing, renewing, assisting and encour-

aging the instructors to carry on the purity and perfection of this incomparable transmission and lineage. ©

### Opening Words of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on the last day of the meeting

We are here in this time for the teachers' meetings. A teacher means someone who is teaching something. So many kinds of teachings exist, someone is teaching music, or how you should work with wood; all is teaching. All is teaching, but what we are teaching is a spiritual path, dealing with a spiritual path, so that is different. It is different particularly when we are considering the Vajrayana tradition of teaching, then the teaching is connected with vajra, and that means the teaching is connected with our real nature. Whoever teaches, teaches that kind of knowledge directly or indirectly. ❁



Photo by Ans Swart

## First Steps Aboard Dzamling Gar

Enriching Our Journey with Mandarava  
November 2013

Carisa O'Kelly

The big tent was ready, tried and tested through several weeks of daily Tibetan singing and dancing with the Master. The wind and sun frequently reminded us that we were indeed in a tent and even more so was the feeling of being all together on a ship with the sound of the sails and rigging creaking and straining with the elements.

Now it was time for the first retreat at Dzamling Gar, the topic, Mandarava Teachings and Practice with Chudlen. In case we had overlooked it, Rinpoche pointed out the significance of this first retreat at the youngest Gar being linked to long life which made it feel especially auspicious.

During his opening remarks for this retreat Rinpoche said: "This is our first re-

treat and we are doing in particular a Mandarava retreat. For individuals the practice of Mandarava means increasing our potentiality and going well in our life. This is also combined with the first retreat at Dzamling Gar so my hope is that it will bring more prosperity for Dzamling Gar and everybody."

The title for this practice of Mandarava explained that it belongs to the practice of Jnanadakini, and that the principle of the practice of Jnanadakini is "for having total realization". Its principle method combines both Anu and Ati yoga. Rinpoche repeatedly emphasized the importance of going to the essence of the teachings, so, while it is important to know the words, mudras, the mantra recitation and do the practice precisely as it has been transmitted to us, the main point is to integrate all of this with the state of contemplation. He illustrates this for us in so many ways at different times reminding us to always work with circumstances. And in this retreat again he did so with the precise, yet flexible way in which he led us in the practice each day.

Some people remarked on how profound and precious it was for them to do this practice together in this time and place with the Master and all the students here

present and around the globe (Dzamling). And even the elements sang with us and the skies poured down cascades of rain until the barrancos were running fast with torrents.

Rinpoche's birthday fell during the retreat and so we began the day with the long practice of Mandarava and then we continued into the evening with Tibetan singing and dancing, about which he recently said: "I never do things that are useless". We can understand from this remark and other things he has said how important these activities are for us as Dzogchen practitioners, developing our presence and also as a way of respecting and even going towards preserving Tibetan language and culture.

During the evening festivities, the Gar was able to make a live video connection via Skype with a well-known Tibetan singer, Lobsang Delek, who sent his birthday greetings, and offered a live rendition of one of Rinpoche's favorite songs "Puyana". While he sang from across the globe, all those in the Gonpa were able to dance along, thus creating a unique and memorable moment, adding to the vibrancy of modern Tibetan culture at the Global Gar.©



# The Dzamling Gar Song

January 2013

This song was composed by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu during his stay in Tenerife in January 2013, on the occasion of the birth of Dzamling Gar.

The words and melody arose spontaneously over three days, while the Master was relaxing in the swimming pool at his home.

May this short text, which is a complete teaching, bring joy and benefit to all sentient beings!

This version is the transcription of the first oral translation by the Master himself and expresses the meaning of the song rather than a word by word translation. The transcription was made by Rita Bizzotto and the English translation by Nick Simmons.

Any possible error is exclusively due to our lack of understanding.

## Dzamling Gar Lu

Dzogchen Communities of the whole world,  
 Dzogchen Communities of the whole world,  
 As soon as possible, in a relaxed manner,  
 Come to Dzamling Gar!  
 As soon as possible, in a relaxed manner,  
 Come to Dzamling Gar!

Happiness is not lacking,  
 Come as soon as possible, in a relaxed manner.  
 Happiness is not lacking,  
 All is perfected, nothing is missing,  
 Come to enjoy happiness,  
 We want to enjoy this happiness together

Perfecting our fortune and all positive things,  
 Manifesting all self-perfected qualities,  
 In all directions victory is manifesting, without any  
 obstacle.

All together let's unite our strength and capacity,  
 All together let's unite our strength and capacity,  
 All Dzogchen Communities, unite your strength and  
 capacity,  
 All Dzogchen Communities, unite your strength and  
 capacity,

- 1 It means that it does not depend on effort
- 2 The knowledge of Ati must not remain only on an intellectual level.
- 3 This is our duty, what we must do.
- 4 Here *Gun san*, Samantabhadra, means that all goes well, that this arises, does not refer to the Buddha Samantabhadra.



Transcription by Oleg Troianovsky

Happiness is not lacking,  
 unite your strength and energy!  
 Happiness is not lacking,  
 all is self-perfected and manifests  
 when we live in the knowledge of the primordial  
 state<sup>1</sup>  
 With this, happiness arises in the world

Perfecting all fortune,  
 Manifesting the self-perfected qualities,  
 And developing our knowledge and application of evolution  
 The entire world enjoys happiness.

Integrate in your state the meaning of Ati!<sup>2</sup>  
 Integrate in your state the meaning of Ati!  
 The knowledge itself of evolution  
 and its application. Thus the whole world is brought into a  
 state of peace.<sup>3</sup>  
 The knowledge itself of evolution  
 and its application. Thus the whole world is brought into a  
 state of peace.

Happiness is not lacking,  
 Let's go, let's bring the world into a state of peace.

Happiness is not lacking,  
 our state, our condition as it truly is, as evolution, we  
 integrate  
 and applying it, the sun of Samantabhadra<sup>4</sup> arises

Perfecting fortune and all positive things,  
 Manifesting the self-perfected qualities,  
 All enjoy the state of definitive happiness.

## Gars Choose Their Houses

Afternoon of the final day of the 3 day inauguration of Dzamling Gar that went from November 15–18, 2013

In the afternoon of the final day of inauguration of Dzamling Gar in the now famous White Tent, Rinpoche gave an inspiring and powerful Teaching about how Dzamling Gar presents the opportunity for all of his students to come together, go beyond their sense of limitations, and make this dream a reality now. Representatives from all Gars chose from scrolls Rinpoche prepared with numbers that would assign each region a house on the property. Each Gar has its own unique set of circumstances, but all will share in rising to the occasion to develop these local headquarters for their activity. ©



Gar Representatives choosing their house numbers.

Photo by Paolo Fassoli

## Bringing Benefit

The 2nd Annual Tibetan Medicine Conference in Tenerife March 16–17, 2015 at the Universidad de La Laguna

Leela Whitcomb-Hewitt

Bringing benefit – this is the meaning of *sman*, the Tibetan word for medicine; doctor being called *sman pa* – the one who benefits. At the 2nd annual Tenerife Tibetan Medicine Conference I was once again humbled and deeply inspired by the true bringer of benefit, our Dr Phuntsog Wangmo. She purified body and mind and all phenomena into the essence of the five elements in her opening talk on the subject. Then the fundamental root of health and all internal disease was revealed, the digestion, thanks to the medicine wisdom of Dr Yangdron Kalzang. Dr Namgyal Quasar, in his clear and patient manner, helped us understand the ways to keep our digestion heat strong and balanced. Drink boiled water – whether warm during cold season or colder if it is hot outside, plus many other important tips. Then diet ac-



Presenters with Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, author 2nd from right.

ording to season and constitution. Finally Matthew and I helped people apply some basic dietary principles to their own conditions through a short questionnaire and advice sheet. (Be in touch if you want a copy.)

The next day in true collaborative spirit of Tibetan medicine, wisdom of other traditions were shared. The scholar, researcher and doctor Dr Roberto Di Sarsina highlighted the principle of people center medical care. Dr. Duran gave an inspirational talk about Integrative Medicine, the best of all fields working together. Yes! True to Tibetan medicine.

Our Vajra sister and compassionate allopathic doctor and Yantra Yoga teacher

Stella Rungen, told us how her patients are benefited from her knowledge of Yantra Yoga and Tibetan Medicine. The wisdom continued to flow with Tibetan medicine talks on treatment of obesity and cardiovascular disease with Dr Phuntsog Wangmo and Dr Namgyal Quasar.

And, as we know, Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance and Khaita joyful dances all make us feel good. Matthew and I presented them as means of staying healthy in the context of Tibetan medicine. As a triumphant finish, like incredible rich, sweet, light, perfect icing on our super duper cake, Rinpoche gave the concluding talk. He came in strong and clear blowing all our minds open. He is for sure the supreme bringer of benefit. ©



## The Garland of Jewels That Connects Us

*On February 19, 2015, during the Mandarava retreat at Dzamling Gar, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu set in motion a highly original and effective effort to raise funds for the future Gönpa of Dzamling Gar. From that date forward, under the name Evolution Creations, he has been personally making hundreds of jewel ornaments offered in exchange for donations for the project. Of course anyone can also offer any amount independently. All of the donations go toward the construction of the new Gönpa. The first Evolution Creations were necklaces, but Rinpoche soon added other types of protection ornaments to ensure that there is something for everyone. To date, he has created more than 800 necklaces, 700 bracelets, 600 car protections, and 600 key protections.*

*The Jewels are offered in two different ways: During teaching retreats a new selection is offered each day until 9:00 p.m. (retreat location time) in exchange for donations pledged both at the retreat location and online. Once a month, in between retreats, a single selection is offered online only for an entire week, starting on Monday and ending on Sunday at 9:00 p.m. (Dzamling Gar time). People from around the world can participate. Both retreat selections and online-only selections are announced to past participants and to Norbunet subscribers. For more information, contact [evolutioncreationsbychnn@gmail.com](mailto:evolutioncreationsbychnn@gmail.com).*

*This article, in Rinpoche's own words from recent teaching retreats, explains the special benefits of these unusual and priceless creations.*

**A**s you know, we need to build a Gönpa so we do not have to remain in a temporary structure like this tent for many years. Two years have already passed like this. So we are trying to build a Gönpa. It is very expensive in a real sense. We need to make money.

Sometimes I am asking all of you to participate and make an offering. And when I ask people that, everybody is participating. It is really wonderful. Even if you have no way to make anything but a small offering, no matter how much it is, it is very, very important to participate in any way.

Any offering, big or small, is a very good way for you to make a connection with the Gönpa, because as you know when we have the Gönpa every day people will be doing practice here and dedicating. Particularly in retreats we will be singing the Song of Vajra, the Six Liberations. Even when we are no longer on this earth, our generations will continue and our families and descendants will receive benefits. Knowing that, try to do your best.

When you make an offering, it is very important that you write your first name and your last name, because the names of everyone who makes an offering will remain in the Gönpa for centuries and centuries.

I am also doing my best, I know very well it is something very important. And day and night, whenever there is time, I am making necklaces and also jewel ornaments for protecting cars and so on. I am doing this work because it is my contribution for the Gönpa. Your contribution is when you participate by making an offering.....

When people buy these jewels, they also give their names, and we will always keep these names as well. This means the merit continues for generations and generations.

By making a little offering for the Gönpa, everyone becomes connected, then it is very positive. When we feel we are really part of the Dzogchen Community, like a family, then we all have this responsibility. If you are not participating it means you do not feel like you are part of this family. So your participation is also very important symbol. For that reason I would like thank all of you for your participation. ❁



Photo courtesy of Lesya Cherenkova

## The Vase Burial Ceremony

May 19, 2016

Julian King-Salter

**O**n May 19th at 11:00 am Tenerife time, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu performed the Vase Burial Ceremony at the

new Gönpa at Dzamling Gar, the Global Gar in Tenerife, along with a Fire Puja, Sang and Serkyem practice. The morning started cloudy, but warm and without wind. Seats for over 100 people were brought up to the center of the Gönpa site the night before, and more were needed. The hole was ready, with fill and concrete lid nearby – a temporary Sangkhang was burning brightly and fragrant smoke filled the air. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu sat happy and relaxed until the appointed moment for the practices of Sang and Serkyem, followed by a short

rite of consecration of the organized the fit-out of a 2nd apartment. As we all sang the Song of the Vajra, the clouds parted and the sun shone down. Afterwards in the Gönpa, architect Benedetta Tagliabue and project manager Giovanni Boni gave an update on the plans. The plans are prepared, permissions granted, and work can start very soon, with a completion date aimed for 2017. Rinpoche is very happy! ©

## Jogur Meditation Platform

Installed on June 20, 2016

Julian King-Salter

**L**ast year, Dzamling Gar gekö Rabgyi made a Jogur at Dzamling Gar – a kind of circular tent of *lungta* (prayer flags). So this year, Rinpoche remarked that it would be very nice to build a meditation platform within the space enclosed by the *lungta*, and that there is a special practice which can be done there. So Maxim Leshchenko made the design, a site was chosen below Rinpoche's house and beyond the swimming pool, and despite a full schedule of Yantra Yoga activities, he managed

(with several helpers) to complete the construction in time before Rinpoche's departure. More willing hands raised the central pole topped with a golden Longsal symbol, and enclosed the whole space with many strings of *lungta*. Then after the Full Moon Ganapuja on June 20th, Rinpoche gave explanation and Lung of the practice for the Jogur, the *JoGur Drib-Jyong*, which was webcast so that it could be received by as many as possible. In this way people who are interested can come to Dzamling Gar and do this practice with the wind element, in a place where the wind is often active! Rinpoche also remarked that in future there could be similar Jogurs built in other places. Until then, please come, in a relaxed way, and do the practice here! ©





## Symbols on Houses

### Auspicious Symbols Now Ornament the Gar Houses

In the first days of February 2017, Migmar Tsering, Tibetan artist and craftsman resident at Merigar West in Italy, was invited to Dzamling Gar in Tenerife to decorate the six houses of the Gars with six of the eight auspicious symbols over each of the main entrances.

Assisted by several artists at the global gar, Migmar painted the following symbols:



- The Tashigar House – the Wish-Fulfilling Vase
- The Namgyalgar House – the White Conch Shell
- The Samtengar House – the Endless Knot
- The Kunsangar House – the Lotus Flower
- The Merigar House – the Precious Parasol
- The Tsegyalgar House – the Golden Fishes.

Previously, the Houses could be identified by their position and the individual flower-like shades they are painted. Now each building has its own symbol and name, another addition to the embellishment of this wonderful Gar at the center of the International Dzogchen Community mandala. ©

Photos by Paolo Fassoli



Four new teachers from left to right: Adam Okerblom, Anasuya Weil, Matthew Schmookler and on Rinpoche's immediate left Yeshe Tsomo.

Photo by Daniyal Ibragimov

## Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine Celebrates First Group of Certified Teachers

February 19th, 2018

Adam Okerblom

The Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine recently celebrated the certification of four alumni as First Level Teachers of Tibetan Medicine. Rinpoche awarded these certificates at a brief ceremony held at Dzamling Gar, Tenerife, during the Mandarava Drubchen retreat, on February 19th, 2018 in the first week of the Earth Dog year.

The ceremony followed the morning Thun practice, in the Dzamling Gar Gönpa, with hundreds of practitioners from around the world in attendance. A few brief speeches presented the occasion and its significance. Speakers included Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, Director and Head

Instructor of the Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine, Will Shea, Shang Shung Institute Board Member, and Matthew Schmookler, Shang Shung School alumnus and recipient of the Teacher Certificate.

The Shang Shung alumni recipients included Matthew Schmookler, Yeshe Tsomo, Anasuya Weil, and myself, Adam Okerblom. The four Alumni approached Rinpoche, offering prostrations, khatas and gifts. Rinpoche personally awarded each of us our certificate, along with warm handshakes and smiles of encouragement. The four newly-certified teachers then offered gifts and thanks to their beloved teacher of Tibetan Medicine, Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo. We offered our heartfelt gratitude for her years of tireless dedication to teaching us the wonderful healing science of Tibetan Medicine. Dr. Wangmo has been our guide and mentor for many years. She is a constant inspiration and a shining model of the conduct, skill and compassion of a true Tibetan Physician.

The ceremony concluded with congratulations and photos with Rinpoche, Dr. Wangmo, the now-certified teachers, and some of our long-time supporters on the Shang Shung team. These included Will Shea and Naomi Zeitz, SSI board members, and Oliver Leick, SSI international director. This was a beautiful occasion for us alumni. We are very excited about the opportunities made possible by this certification.

Tibetan Medicine is gaining recognition and popularity internationally. In this exciting time, the Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine's Certified Teachers will help to pave the way for a bright and busy future for Tibetan Medicine. We hold the sincere intention that Tibetan Medicine will become available to many more people in many places. We hope that it may help ease the suffering and improve the lives of many people. With the great potential of this ancient healing science, may we all realize the fruits of long-life, health and happiness!

For more information about the School of Tibetan Medicine contact: [secretary@shangshung.org](mailto:secretary@shangshung.org) ©

# Introduction to Khaita Joyful Dances and Their Deep Meaning

A webcast talk on Khaita Joyful Dances given by Adriana Dal Borgo on Guru Padmasambhava's anniversary 29 July 2020, Merigar West

**T**onight I will talk a little bit about the Khaita project that Chögyal Namkhai Norbu started in the north of Tenerife at the end of 2011 and to which he dedicated most of his time until 2018 when he left this dimension.

What does Khaita mean? Kha means 'sky' or 'space', and khai is genitive, so 'of the sky' or 'of the space'. Ta means 'harmony' or 'melody'. So this short word beautifully expresses the sense and the goal of Khaita that is discovering harmony through melody. 'Space' gives an idea of openness, something without limitation, without beginning or end. We usually translate Khaita as "Harmony in the Space" This harmony we discover through songs and dances.

The logo that Rinpoche chose for Khaita is an infinite knot, golden and shining, on the planet Earth. This symbol is also one of the eight auspicious symbols and represents the continuation of love, compassion and energy. Continuation in this case means "without corners", because we say that everything is round, so without obstacles, without limitations. And it's on the planet Earth, which is the dimension where we live at this moment.

And, particularly, we call these dances joyful. Rinpoche chose this word, so it's 'joyful dances'. In this case 'joyful' means something stable, a state that we discover inside of us that is not connected with positive or negative circumstances. Once we discover it, it doesn't change.

What does the Khaita project consist of? Chögyal Namkhai Norbu dedicated most of his time to it from the end of 2011 till 2018. First, he searched for songs and discovered some interesting songs by young Tibetan artists on Internet. He chose around 400 songs according to the melody and the lyrics out of the thousands that he watched and listened to. The lyrics of the songs that he chose talk about values that are important not only for Tibetan culture but for all cultures, and for each of



us as human beings. For example, love for our own fatherland, the importance of respecting the environment and maintaining our own culture and language, respect for our ancestors and parents, the importance of spreading peace in the world, and also overcoming limitations and borders between groups and countries as well as the limitations of our own judgment. The third criteria according to which Rinpoche chose the songs were the singers. He chose singers who dedicated themselves to supporting their country.

This was the first step. Then Rinpoche transcribed the Tibetan texts of all the songs from the videos one by one. And he not only transcribed, he also corrected some points and slightly changed some words. And the way he wrote was very elegant. Now we have more than 400 texts that are very beautiful to see. He put ornaments like flowers at the beginning or to separate the parts of the songs. He also created a system of small ornaments, like a small wave, to help us to understand the melody of each song.

And then he transliterated all these songs into the Drajaor phonetic system so from that moment we could also start to sing with him.

At the very beginning we would sing the whole day and later we started to have an appointment at 5 o'clock. Rinpoche would say, "At 5 o'clock in every place we sing and dance together." If there was a retreat a 5 o'clock session was part of the program. If it was between retreats we would sing and dance in the Gönpa at Merigar, Dzamling Gar or other Gars. Or, when Rinpoche was travelling, if there was no common place where we could come together, he would

invite everybody interested in singing and dancing to his private house.

We have three collections of songs now. The first one that was published is called Message from Tibet and has 108 songs. This book has texts in Tibetan, Drajaor, and their translation in English.

Then there is Comments on Message from Tibet, a collection of Rinpoche's commentaries on these songs. Many of the songs have a hidden or more profound meaning and often Rinpoche gave a profound explanation connected to Dzogchen Teaching.

The second collection is called Barsam, which means 'Bridge in Between', and now contains 70 songs. The third one, Mekhor, has 180 songs. The name Mekhor and the subdivision of these 180 songs follow the principles of Tibetan astrology of the elements.

The Khaita project united two aspects that mostly characterized Rinpoche's life. One is that Rinpoche was a great erudite in the knowledge of different fields of Tibetan culture. The other is that he had infinite wisdom and knowledge as a Dzogchen master. The songs and the artists are Tibetan, the language is Tibetan, so there is this aspect of supporting Tibetan culture.

Rinpoche said many times, "I am doing this not because I am Tibetan, not because I want to support my own culture, but because the Tibetan language is the key to access the most ancient Buddhist or Dzogchen texts. If we lose the language, then we lose this direct access." And the other aspect, as Rinpoche was a Dzogchen master, the use of worldly music and worldly dance as a contemplative method, is really original, innovative. It's a way to relax through presence and awareness. ©



## Dzamling Gar Gardens

### Creating a Paradise

Alix De Fermor, designer and head gardener of the beautiful Dzamling Gar gardens

**W**e started working on the gardens in the fall of 2013, so nearly nine years ago. Rinpoche wanted something special at the Gar and so I tried to do something out of the ordinary. It's not a formal garden with a unity that combines all its parts into one but there are a variety of different spaces so it's very varied. There are many different types of gardens here.

For example, now we are sitting in the Moon Garden. Then there is the Mandarava garden, the Milarepa garden, called this way after we had to take so many rocks out

of the earth to make it. Then there is the Longsal garden and also the Corona garden because we created it during the winter of 2020 when there was the lockdown during the pandemic.

My greatest joy was to see how Rinpoche enjoyed it while he was still alive. Sitting here and there, speaking about different flowers and recounting some interesting stories about the trees.

What is incredible is that so many trees that you see now have been grown from seeds that I took from different areas in Tenerife and germinated in pots. Some are already nine metres high and it has only been seven years since they have been growing. Even I was amazed because although we water them, there is no water coming from the sky so I think there must be something special in the earth here because I have never seen anything growing so fast.

When we first came here, there were no birds, however, this kind of garden, which is a bit wild and informal with a wide variety of plants, has brought an enormous amount of life. Of course the birds are the most striking of the wildlife because they sing, particularly in springtime when they are making nests.

But I've also seen little hedgehogs that come and drink from the irrigation pipe at night and sometimes eat a little bit of the compost that we put out. Then we have a lot of bees that come for the rosemary, the lavender, and the *gaura* plants (beeblossoms) which are abundant and proliferating at the Gar. And once the summer starts the garden is full of butterflies, including some rare species that are rarely seen.

I think that one of the aims of a garden is to provide a habitat for animals, not only for humans. I read an article about birdsong and they say that it makes people happy and they relax when they hear birds chirping, especially in the morning.



There is not only the sound of the birds, but you can see them coming and going in the gardens. We also have the wonderful hoopoe (*upupa*) bird coming here, a colorful bird with a crown of feathers. The first one came when I planted the grass, and now there are many. There are also many native Canary Island birds nesting in the gardens.

People love to come here to the Gar, especially in winter, because when it's cold in Europe, here it's possible to be outside. And they can enjoy not only the colors, not only the birds, but also the scents of the garden.

I remember that Rinpoche loved flowers, and he loved when the flowers attracted animals. One time at Merigar he commented on the lavender growing there: "Oh, it's so wonderful. See how many butterflies there are!" The garden has become a wonderful habitat for animals and a place for the children, for everybody to enjoy. People like to walk and sit here and I often find people with their noses in the flowers.

I also think the garden is a possibility for the future, because if the Gar is going to open more and more to the exterior, the garden will certainly attract people. People

would come because it's a beautiful garden and there are not many in this part of Tenerife.

So I think it's positive not only because it's a habitat for animals, but also because it's a possibility for our opening to the outside. ©



Alix and the garden team in one of the holes dug by hand for planting a tree.

# Recalling the Presence of the Master

The first retreat to be held in the Gönpa after Rinpoche's passing.

On December 8, 2018, the occasion of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's anniversary, more than 500 practitioners from the international Dzogchen Community around the world gathered together to do the first practice in the long awaited Gönpa/Conference Hall at the Global Gar in Tenerife. The new building still requires a little time and some finishing touches until it can be inaugurated and used 'officially' but due to the significance of the occasion, Rinpoche's birthday, the red tape was overlooked for a couple of hours so that those present could remember and honor the Master in the building that he had worked so hard to complete.

For many years now, this particular day has been celebrated by doing the Mandarava Long Life practice led by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. This year Rinpoche's main translator and senior student, Adriano Clemente, led a Green Tara practice in order to recall the presence of Rinpoche. Before starting, Adriano spoke about the significance of the day and the importance of the Green Tara practice.

"Welcome to this beautiful new Gönpa that we have here. Everybody knows that this is a very important day, first of all because it is the first time that we are doing collective practice in this new Gönpa that we have been waiting for so many years and which Rinpoche put so much effort into. You know how many hours a day he spent preparing these Evolution Creations necklaces to find the money to build this Gönpa. So it is something very special that we have here and that Rinpoche left for all of us and for future generations.

And today is also Rinpoche's birthday, and over the last 10 or 15 years we have always done the Mandarava Long Life practice. That is what Rinpoche started to do with all of us for his long life and also for the benefit of the teachings and all practitioners. This time, however, I thought that instead of doing this Mandarava long life practice, for remembering Rinpoche's presence it would be good to do a Green Tara practice.



The reason is that Rinpoche was born through the grace of Tara. His parents didn't have a son so Rinpoche's father went to the great Dzogchen master Adzom Drugpa. Adzom Drugpa gave him some advice to do Green Tara practice and so Rinpoche's parents invited a practitioner, a lama, to the family's house where he did Tara practice for one month, with the 21

Tara and said, "Now this time we'll do this." It was Green Tara practice more or less as we do it now but what was different was that he included what we call the Bodhicitta commitment. Bodhicitta commitment means that we don't need to take a vow from some lama or outer object, but with ourselves, internally, in the presence of the guru, deva, dakini, buddhas and bodhisat-



Photos by Jiri Langpaul

Invocations. Then after a year or so this lama had a dream in which he saw a yellow flower blooming and understood that a male was going to be born there. When their son was born, the parents were so overjoyed that they considered him to be a gift from the sky and called him 'Namkhai Norbu' which means 'Jewel or Gift from the Sky'. Then once, I remember very well, Rinpoche told me, "I was born with Tara and I will die with Tara".

In 1986 Rinpoche was still working at the university and living in Formia so he wasn't spending all his time at Merigar. But he came to Merigar the day before his birthday and brought us a text of Green

tas. In order to do that there are some verses that we use, mostly from this Bodhisattvacaryavatara, the text from Shantideva. That day Rinpoche brought this text and I have copied and integrated it into this new booklet we have prepared now."

Many people noted the large turn out for the Sangha Retreat as well as the smooth cooperation and mixture of joy and melancholy of being together in our first large retreat in Dzamling Gar without the presence of our precious Master. As Adriano noted in his talk during the instructions, "We are a strong Community and now more than ever we need to be active and continue Rinpoche's legacy and gift to us." ©

# Public Programs

April 2017

## Chögyal Namkhaj Norbu's Conference and Khaitea Show in Gran Canaria

Over the last weekend of April, at the invitation of Terapia Integrativa and Ayuntamiento de Telde and in collaboration with Shang Shung Foundation and Dzamling Gar, a three day event on Tibetan Medicine and Culture was held on the island of Gran Canaria. The local authorities were very open and friendly towards our Teacher and all the community. Rinpoche declared his wish that this event could be like a door opening from Tenerife to all the other Canary Islands. Our host, Dr. Juan Carlos Duran, founder of Asociación Terapia Integrativa and vice-president of the Federación Española de Medicina Integrativa, talked about the development of this relationship and his



commitment to bringing Tibetan Medicine to local universities, hospitals and therapeutic associations. Rinpoche gave a wonderful conference on "The Relation between Body, Energy and Mind within the view of Tibetan Medicine". This was followed by an amazing Khaitea Show and two days of Yantra Yoga workshops with Fabio Andrico and other experts. ©

From left to right: Alexis Rodriguez, Ayuntamiento de Telde, Carolina Romero, Asociación Terapia Integrativa, Namkhaj Norbu Rinpoche, Ilaria Faccioli, Shang Shung Institute, and Dr. Juan Carlos Duran.



Thubten Rabgyi teaching meditation and Ilaria Faccioli translating

2020, October 30–November 1

## Tibetan Yoga of Movement & Breathing Weekend

Co-sponsored by Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine and Atiyoga Foundation.



Menpa Phuntsog Wangmo on Zoom.

## Mentalizate – Health and Wellbeing Conference in Adeje, Tenerife

**O**n December 17th, 2021 an important project was initiated by the Mayor of Adeje, Jose Miguel Rodriguez Fraga, "Mentalizate", which aims at making the public of Adeje aware of the consequences of the ongoing pandemic on their own mental health and equip them to cope with the effects in a positive way.

Various workshops were organized and held in the public spaces of the town hall of Adeje, managed by a team of professionals who work with various target groups: adults, children and teenagers. The core concepts to develop are Communication, Emotional regulation and Personal and Social wellbeing.

Among the professionals running the workshops, there is also a team of instructors from the Dzogchen Community who were requested to take part and lead courses of Yantra Yoga, Kumar Kumari and Khaita dances for both adults and children spanning the whole school year. We hope to continue this collaboration and benefit the public by sharing the precious and living heritage of wisdom of which we are depositories. ©



Left to right: Ilaria Faccioli, Mayor Jose Miguel Rodriguez Fraga and Maria del Rosario Clavijo Maza. Photo by Urara Takao



International Yoga Day.



Photos by Javier Durán Cantos

## Yoga/Pilates June 10, International Yoga Day June 12, 2022

**T**he Yoga/Pilates event was held in Dzamling Gar as the closing of the sports campaign of the municipality of Adeje, before the summer. As a result of the continuous and good relationship between the municipality of Adeje, the International Atiyoga Foundation and Dzamling Gar the different schools of yoga and pilates of the municipality along with the group of Yantra Yoga students of the Men-

talizate Project enjoyed an afternoon full of yoga, Pilates and Khaita Joyful dances.

Sunday, June 12, Dzamling Gar was the host of the International Yoga Day in Tenerife thanks to the collaboration of the International Atiyoga Foundation, the Embassy of India in Spain, the Ministry of Culture of India and the City Council of Adeje. The Sabai Dee School, Inspiraes School, Iskcon, TF Sur Hindu Community Cultural Center, Ghe Phe Ling Canarias, Respira Prana, Yantra Yoga Internacional and Respira Method participated in the celebration. The event was attended by different authorities from

the Adeje town hall and representatives of the Embassy of India.

The entire day was broadcast in streaming on the City Council's YouTube channel and a report was also broadcast on RTV Canaria with an interview with Fabio Andrico (YY International Instructor) and Casilda González (ATIF Institutional Relations). It was a massive event where visitors were able to enjoy classes of different styles of yoga, Joyful Khaita dance and popular Hindu dance. ©



2022, April

## YogAdeje World Peace

**O**n April 30, we had the first public event of this kind in the Gönpa of Dzamling Gar. It was a collaboration of Atiyoga Foundation, Dzamling Gar, Iskcon and local Yoga instructors in an important event for our Community to welcome everyone into our home!

Local authorities came to the opening and the closing of the event. We had the support of the Spanish National Commission of UNESCO, Cabildo de Tenerife, Ayuntamiento de Adeje, and the Indian Embassy and the wish is to repeat the event once a year.

We invited schools of yoga of Tenerife, including Iskcon (International Society of Krishna Consciousness) Tenerife, Inspiraes – School of human development with Aleksei Gomez and Sabai Dee School and Studio, Thai and Classical Hatha Yoga with Tania Martin. Approximately 100 people participated. ©



2022, June

## First Wellbeing and Vajra Dance Retreat at Dzamling Gar

**T**his retreat was a test run. The Vajra Dance course, which usually takes 3 days, was extended to 5 days with more time for practice, so that even beginners could master the steps. In addition to the course, there was Ku Nye massage and a breathing session in the beautiful garden of Dzamling Gar. During the lunch break, the participants recharged themselves with the sun and sea energy on the beach. It was the first time for us to operate this type of retreat, so it was a bit of trial and error, but everyone's shining faces and the improvement in dancing made us feel deep joy. ©

2022, October and November

## Differently One

In October a pilot project was carried out for all instructors of the International Dzogchen Community and in particular those of Vajra Dance, to approximate the Vajra Dance to people with functional disabilities. We titled it "Differently one": each of us is unique and different from others, but at the same time we all share the same Potential, the same Primordial Nature. The course was taught by Carmen Rivas and Nataly Nitsche.

On November, we were invited to participate in the Meeting of Families of the Center for Attention to Functional Diversity "Los Olivos" (CAD Los Olivos) to celebrate the International Day of the Rights of the Child. On Saturday, November 12th, together with the children of the center and their parents we were able to share a marvelous experience. We guided them on simple movements of the Vajra Dance and easy circle Khaita Dances.



©

2022, October 22

## ESPACIO Yoga Studio

Opened October 22, 2022



Alina (left) and Nataly in Espacio Studio.

Photo by G Martinez

ESPACIO Yoga Studio in Playa Paraiso was founded by Nataly Nitsche and Alina Kramina inside Dzamling Gar in collaboration with the Dzamling Gar Dzogchen Community and came about as a result of Dzamling Gar becoming more open to the wider public over the last few years. It is situated in the Jya Kyip, a hall under the Cafeteria.

**Alina:** We felt like it was time to offer a Yantra Yoga program for the local people and tourists. We have many things that can be taught publicly: Yantra Yoga,

Kumar Kumari, Soft Yantra and on the chair, Prenatal Yantra, Respira Method, Khaita, Meditation and other activities.



Meditation with Rabgyi in Espacio.

**Nataly:** Once we have a more complete and solid program of Yantra Yoga, we plan to also have Hatha Yoga classes by local teachers. This will bring more life and more connections and interactions and make ESPACIO a really open and transparent space, that can eventually offer everything you need.

**Alina:** Our intention for the future is to set up all necessary processes for seamless work with other parts of the Dzamling Gar infrastructure, and to organize events together with local authorities. ©

2023, July

## A Month of Joy, Discovery, and Kumar Kumari

Yoga Kids Summer Camp  
July 3–28, 2023

In July, Dzamling Gar hosted a Yoga Kids Summer Camp for the first time. 1 month, 2 teachers, 18 kids, 150 meals served in the Cafeteria, every day yoga and an abundance of happiness.

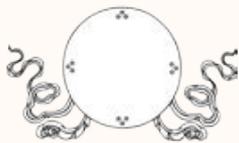
It was an answer to the needs of families, both from within and outside the Community, who faced the challenge of working while their children enjoyed their summer break. Moreover, it presented an opportunity for Dzamling Gar to connect with the local community and become a regular annual event.

The camp's central theme was "Discovering Myself" through Kumar Kumari Yantra Yoga for children, mindfulness, collaborative games, arts and crafts, nature exploration, storytelling, and loads of fun! The camp was bilingual, with some activities in English and others in Spanish.

The camp exceeded our expectations and there are plans to repeat it next July, possibly combined with retreats for adults, making it a family-friendly event. ©



Silvia Gallego García (left) and Nataly Nitsche.



### THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the  
International

Dzogchen Community of  
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

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