



RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE

NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2013



LAUNCHING OUR NEW FOUR-YEAR BA DEGREE

After ten years of offering both a 3-year BA and a 4-year BA Honours degree, the Centre for Buddhist Studies will begin offering a single 4-year BA in Buddhist Studies in the fall semester 2013. We are excited that students will have the opportunity to get a more thorough grounding in Buddhist Studies and more time to master Tibetan, Sanskrit and Nepali.

Highlights of the new program include an extra year of traditional study with our Khenpos and Lopons, both in translated and in untranslated classes. More emphasis will be placed on teaching the critical thinking and writing skills needed to succeed in academic studies, and more depth will

be available in the philosophical classes taught using the methodology of the modern academy. For example, the class formerly taught as Mahāyāna Thought will now be offered as three separate courses, Yogācāra Thought, Madhyamaka Thought, and Buddha Nature Thought. There is also an increased focus on historical and cultural studies, including examining Tibetan Buddhism in both Tibet and the Kathmandu Valley and studying Newari Buddhism in more depth. We'll also offer an extra semester of Buddhist history, allowing a more in-depth look at Buddhism in its different historical and cultural contexts. We hope you'll consider joining us in this new learning adventure!

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2012 RYI GRADUATES

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR 2012 GRADUATES!

Ales Ryznar (Czech Republic), Christina Lang (Austria), Dawa Fruitman (Canada), Georgina Ng (Canada), Jade Lai (France), Moa Brattwall (Sweden) and Yanneke Jitta (The Netherlands) successfully completed the three-year BA program in Buddhist Studies with Himalayan Languages. John Harris (USA) and Eric Puno (Australia) completed the 4-year BA Honours program.

Three students graduated from the Master of Arts program in 2012:



Alexander Yiannopoulos (USA) wrote his dissertation on 'Reflexive Awareness in Ratnākaraśānti's Pith Instructions for the Ornament of the Middle Way.'

Alex's dissertation supervisor was Dr. Karin Meyers and his external examiner was Prof. John Makransky of Boston College. Alex first came to CBS in 2005 as a visiting student from Boston College and began his Master's degree in 2009.



John ('Zim') Pickens (USA) completed his MA degree with a dissertation entitled: 'I Remember Seeing Blue: Reflexive Awareness and Memory in Dignāga's Pramāṇasamuccaya.'

His supervisor was Dr. Karin Meyers and the external reader was Prof. John Dunne from Emory University, USA. Zim joined the Centre for Buddhist Studies in 2009. He is an active member supporting Phakchok Rinpoche's activities.



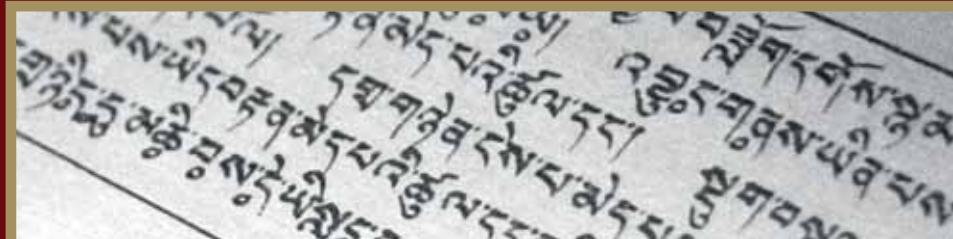
Sophie Greenewalt Pickens' (USA) thesis was entitled: Divine Blue Water: The Contamination Purifying Smoke Offering by the Great Master Padmasambhava.

Sophie's dissertation supervisor was Dr. Karin Meyers and the external examiner was Dr. Abraham Zablocki (Agnes Scott College). Sophie was a well-loved translator at RYI, and returned to the US in 2012. Before participating in the MA, Sophie also completed her BA at the Centre for Buddhist Studies.

ZACHARY BEER WINS GOLD MEDAL AWARD

Rangjung Yeshe Institute is delighted to announce that Zachary Beer (USA) was recently honored for outstanding achievement in his MA studies by Kathmandu University. Zack was awarded the esteemed gold medal 'Vidya Bhushan Kha' by Nepal's President, Mr. Ramvaran Yadav.

A graduate of Stanford University, Zack joined the MA program at CBS in 2008. Zack is a gifted translator and faculty member at Rangjung Yeshe Institute.

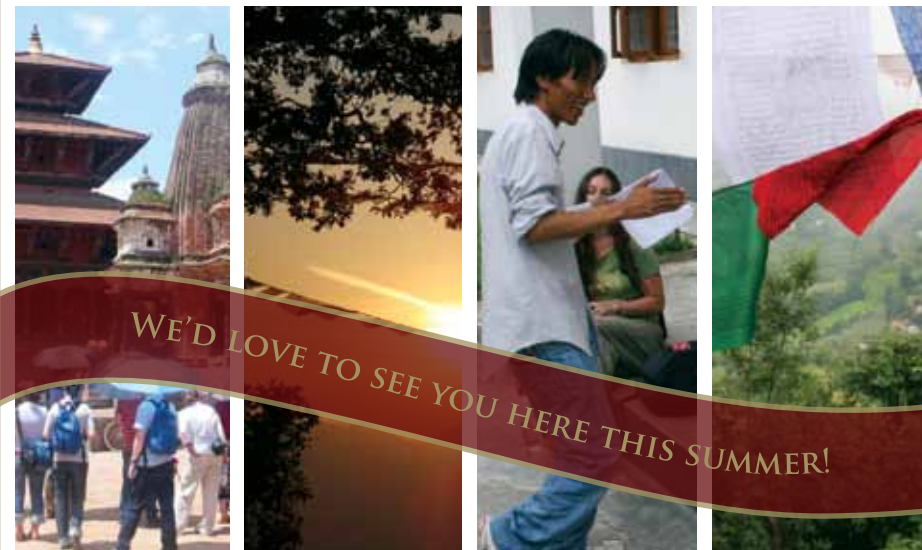


NEW SUMMER INTENSIVE FOR CLASSICAL TIBETAN

When you've thought about learning to read Tibetan were you stopped because you couldn't find a class near you, or because you couldn't make time for study? Here's a way to get started with Classical Tibetan in a concentrated and committed way. Our summer intensive language programs run for eight weeks, allowing you to immerse yourself in language learning. The course covers all of the basic Tibetan grammar, starting with the alphabet and including the eight cases, all the particles, and both basic and more complex sentence structures. The course includes two hours of grammar class each day, a reading practice class, and one-on-one reading sessions with native speakers. During the second half of the course, students will begin to learn how to compose prose in Classical Tibetan.

The vocabulary learned will be largely related to Buddhist philosophy and practice. The course is intensive and requires effort and dedication, but hard work in the class will pay off. After eight weeks of study, students, having learned all of the basic grammatical principles and possessing a strong foundation of Dharma vocabulary, will be ready to continue improving their reading of Classical Tibetan without further assistance.

During the Summer RYI also offers Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Colloquial Tibetan, Beginning Sanskrit, Beginning and Intermediate Nepali, and Buddhist Studies - the latter including a two-week meditation retreat at the end of the course. All courses start on June 12, 2013 and run until August 9, 2013.



VISITING LECTURERS

PROFESSOR JOHN MAKRAWSKY

We were fortunate to have Prof. John Makransky from Boston College visit us this past fall, and teach a short course entitled "Innate Awareness and Active Compassion: Meditations from Tibet to Empower Service, Action and Interfaith Learning". Dr. Makransky is an Associate Professor of Buddhism and Comparative Theology at Boston College and the Guiding Meditation Teacher at the Foundation for Active Compassion. With his guidance, our students were able to explore the relevance of Tibetan meditation theory and practice for becoming more fully present in the context of social service and action, healing inner wounds, and challenging injustice. They also discovered how such meditations can help bring out the compassion and awareness that lie latent in the ground of our being. These meditations help awaken



an unconditional attitude that can nourish us and others that we encounter. We are grateful to John for his continued support of all of us here at RYI.

PROFESSOR LARA BRAITSTEIN

Prof. Lara Braitstein from McGill University is a visiting lecturer for us this semester, teaching a course on Buddhist Scriptures. Dr. Braitstein is Associate Professor of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism in the Faculty of Religious Studies at McGill, where she teaches courses on Classical Literary Tibetan, Mahāyāna Buddhism, Vajrayāna Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism. Her principal areas of research include Tibetan and South Asian Buddhism, Poetics, Hagiography, Sanskrit and Tibetan Literary traditions and the Siddha traditions. She published *The Path to Awakening* in 2009, a translation of a commentary on Ja Chekawa Dorje's *Seven Points of Mind Training*, and is working on a translation and analysis of Saraha's *Vajra Gītikā*. Her clear and friendly style was



much appreciated by our summer program students last year, and we are delighted to welcome her back this semester.

CALLING ALL ALUMNI - HOW CAN WE HELP?



Here at RYI we are mindful of many remarkable students who have passed through our doors over the years and helped to make the Institute such a unique and enriching place to study at. In an attempt to re-connect with these students, we shall be launching a specialized Alumni Service in the Fall of 2013.

SO WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP US DESIGN IT?

Through this newsletter we are inviting all former students to let us know the types of services they would like to see. Perhaps access to on-line courses at discounted rates, or a dedicated alumni section on RYI's website? Would opportunities to re-connect with old friends and teachers, or to link with study groups and meditation centers appeal? Perhaps you would like to learn of ways to support RYI's current students or activities?

Why not let us know by taking our alumni survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/MDV7VY8 or by sending an email to greg.whiteside@ryi.org

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!

STUDENT FEATURE

Raju Gurung's family moved from Mustang to Kathmandu over twenty years ago. While working in town, Raju's Western friends told him about Rangjung Yeshe Institute. Shortly afterwards, he met Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche in Pharping, who also encouraged him to join Rangjung Yeshe Institute, to cultivate his interest in Buddhist Studies and learn to translate from Tibetan to aid his teachers in the future.

Raju is currently in his second year of the BA program. He considers Rangjung Yeshe Institute to be a very special place, combining excellent academic standards with a wonderful learning environment of friendly local and international students. In addition, he is deeply touched to see all that Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche does to further develop the Institute, such as, continuously teaching students and constructing new buildings. In 2012 a special class was offered that focused on Buddhist film which Raju found



especially interesting, as he was working on a documentary film about H.H. Sakya Trizin Rinpoche. Raju's dream is to make a movie on the life of Buddha Shākyamuni and many other films so that others can learn more about the Dharma.

WHAT'S NEW IN ONLINE LEARNING?



NEW TIBETAN LANGUAGE COURSES ONLINE

This spring, RYI Online Learning successfully launched two new courses: The Tibetan Alphabet and Introduction to Classical Tibetan. Both courses were created by Constance Kassor, PhD candidate at Emory University, using curricula taught in RYI's classical Tibetan courses on campus. The courses are ideal for anyone who endeavors to learn the Tibetan alphabet and basic classical Tibetan grammar.

Commenting on the Introduction to Classical

Tibetan course, one student writes, "I can only recommend this course - it feels very solid. I have already started gasping for breath as I do my usual rituals and suddenly understand what I am chanting!"

The courses have become so popular that we will be running another interactive section of the Introduction to Classical Tibetan starting from May 6th and running through to the middle of August. Self-study courses are available at any time.

Visit www.shedra.org/study-online to learn more about the courses and to register now.

OTHER NEWS AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS



Denmark (gomde.dk)

Tara Retreat - Lama Tenzin Sangpo
Apr 25 - May 02, 2013

The Path of The Buddha - Erik Pema Kunsang
Mar 22, 2013 (Danish language only)

Summer Seminars - Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche
July 2 - 10, 2013



Germany-Austria (gomde.de)

Kurukulle Retreat - Lama Tenzin
April 5 - 7, 2013

Guru Rinpoche Retreat - The Twelve Aspects of Padmasambhava (Trinley Nyingpo)
April 19 - 21, 2013

Summer Seminars - Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche
July 11 - 20, 2013



Russia (rangjungyeshe.ru)

Kiev - Group practices every Saturday from 15:50 to 17:00 in Kiev Yoga Studio

Moscow - Group practices are held several times a week at the Buddhist Cultural Center "Open World"

Summer Seminars - Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche
June 19-23, 2013



Scotland (gomdescotland.org)

Help us finish the new workshop (during April)

Lojong, training the mind in Loving Kindness and Compassion - Khenpo Gyurme Tsaltrim
April 2013 - to be confirmed

Tsoknyi Rinpoche and Ato Rinpoche
Autumn 2013 - to be confirmed



UK (gomde.org.uk)

Meditation and Study Group (from 5 March)
Meets every Tuesday 7- 9pm.

Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche's Saturday talks
Monthly viewings – call 01302 842503.

Summer Seminars - Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche
June 25-30, 2013



USA (gomdeusa.org)

Experiencing the Unity of Love and Wisdom
John Makransky, PhD
March 8-10, 2013

Individual Retreat Summer Program
Lama Tsaltrim Sangpo, Lama Gerry Prindiville
June 10 - August 15, 2013

Please check the websites of each of the centers for additional activities and teachings.



Lumbini (shedrub.org)

The ground floor at Pal Thubten Ling Monastery in Lumbini is now complete and the second floor is under way. A heart-felt thanks to all our well-wishers and sponsors!

Find out how you can get involved by visiting our website.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

RYI would like to extend its warmest thanks to the many staff, students and supporters who volunteer their time and resources in so many unseen and unspoken ways, to make the Institute such a special learning environment. We would particularly like to acknowledge the financial support provided

in the current academic year by the Tsadra Foundation, the Khyentse Foundation and, most recently, Tricycle Magazine. These selfless contributions serve as an inspiration and important reminder of why RYI was established in the first place! Our heartfelt thanks...



RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE

P.O. Box 21277 - Kathmandu - Nepal

Tel: +977 1 491 5975

www.ryi.org - admin@ryi.org

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