

The Year in Review
Video Commentary
For Shambhala Day 2008

1. OPENING COMMENTARY

It was quite a year in the global mandala of Shambhala, with major events on three continents. It was a year of fusing the past and the present, looking forward to the future and also preserving our living heritage. Let's start with the remarkable work being done in the archives, the Royal Treasures of Shambhala.

Spoken word from Archives:

My name is Chris Levy. I'm the lead audio engineer here at the Shambhala Archives, responsible for the preservation and digitization of Trungpa's audio tapes. This is our story.

It started out thirty-seven years ago. At Trungpa Rinpoche's command, a few devoted pioneers set out to blaze the analog trail of recording all his teachings. At first it was simple, but chaotic: just put a microphone in front of him and record everything!

A few dedicated individuals who knew what should be done, kept tapes rolling, gradually improving the sound, fulfilling the command. They performed a great service. The tapes were copied, transcribed, stored, moved, moved again until thirty years later they were starting to fall apart.

(Trungpa speaks... please listen)

It all started eight years ago. A few adventurous individuals set out to blaze a trail to undertake the insurmountable: to digitally recover all the Vidyadhara's recordings in a single lifetime.

(Trungpa and students speak ... please listen)

At first it was slow. Do one tape at a time. Precision. Then it dawned: this will take a thousand immeasurable kalpas - twenty year, but who is counting?

(Trungpa speaks ... please listen)

Then some insight arose: let's expand outward. Add a second machine. Let's get on the bhumis! Through the generosity of donors, and the exertion of the technicians and so forth we sped up the process. Our prajna expanded. Digitizing tapes and burning CDs simultaneously, WOW! We began to make progress on the path. But at this rate our goal would not be met for a hundred immeasurable kalpas, ten years - but, who is counting?

Drastic obstacles call for drastic measures, for the quick path. We pacified the centres and that enriched our fund-raising. A host of new equipment was magnetized. Then while our audio engineer sat in technical samadhi that expresses the profound LED illumination, technical terma arrived!

(Please listen to his key to the quick path -- please listen)

This resulted in the destruction of the final obstacles. At this pace the goal would be achieved in one lifetime, well, three years. And this time we are counting! We round them up and play them through. We keep those reels rolling and rolling!

2. THE SHAMBHALA CONGRESS COMMENTARY

It was a year of community -- on an increasingly international scale. People from all over the mandala came to Cologne, Germany, for the Third Shambhala Congress. It was held in the Kalapa Centre Europe, and was attended by 180 people from 68 Shambhala Centres and groups from 19 countries Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America.

As Carolyn Mandelker begins to speak:

It was a time for presentations, much reflection and heartfelt discussion.

(Carolyn explains the structure of the proposed new curriculum ... please listen to her voice)

As people begin to applaud:

Great work, great exuberance...

3. ORISSA WEDDING COMMENTARY

It was a year of pilgrimage. Over a hundred Shambhalian travellers travelled to sacred Buddhist sites across India to reach the Ripa family wedding of the Sakyong and Khandro Tseyang in the eastern Indian state of Orissa -- one of the ancient sites of tantric Buddhist culture."

Arrival of the royal couple:

For the thousands of Tibetans who live in the camps of this remote area, this was a royal wedding, replete with pageantry, offerings and celebrations.

Lingdro dances:

After the formal proclamation of the marriage, the three-day event was largely given over to offerings -- the sacred dances of King Gesar of Ling and traditional folk dances from all regions of Tibet.

Kasung demo:

Drill by our very own Dorje Kasung was a big hit with the locals.

Ending:

The revelry continued long into the night, celebrating the coming together of these two great lineage holding families..."

4. WU TAI SHAN

After the festival, the Sakyong continued his own pilgrimage eastward.

Spoken word in the video:

High in the mountains of northern China is one of the world's most revered sites, Wu Tai Shan, the sacred abode of Manjushri, the bodhisattva of wisdom. It is a place of drala that he Vidyadhara Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche always wished to visit.

As the reincarnation of Mipham the Great, who in his lifetime was enthroned as the living embodiment of Manjushri, the Sakyong Jamgon Mipham Rinpoche held for a long time the aspiration to undertake a personal pilgrimage to this sacred site.

In March 2007, he visited the principal temples and monasteries nestled among the mountain's five peaks. Most poignant of all, was the visit to a stupa built by American nun Ani Lodro in commemoration of the great meditation master Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, heart-friend of Trungpa Rinpoche and teacher of the Sakyong.

His Holiness writings filled 25 volumes, described by a close disciple as a veritable encyclopaedia of practice texts, commentaries, prayers and poems.

At his cremation the Shambhala Anthem was the last offering, made before his funeral pyre was lit.

After prostrating, making offerings and circumambulating his stupa, the pilgrims offered the anthem before bidding farewell.

5. THE KALAPA FESTIVAL COMMENTARY

It was a year ago that Halifax, Nova Scotia was the focus of national media attention for the festival of the Blossoming of the Sun. This year, people converged for The Kalapa Festival under the banner of King Gesar and the Royal Lineage of Shambhala. His Eminence Namkha Drimed Rinpoche gave teachings on the epic of King Gesar of Ling, which the Sakyong described as the milk on which the young Trungpa Rinpoche was raised.

Commentary for the party:

The Kalapa Festival was a family occasion, a gathering of the generations and a display of the Shambhala arts.

6. WASHINGTON COMMENTARY

It was a year the Tibetan people will remember for the

award of the Congressional Gold Medal to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. His words were inscribed on it:

World peace begins with inner peace.
Peace is not the absence of violence.
Peace is the manifestation of human compassion.

(His Holiness speaks ... please listen)

7. Commentary linking to President's message:

Feeling the power of the dharma on this historic occasion, and with immense devotion and gratitude for our courageous lineage of teachers who have endured so much to bring such treasure to the world, I recorded the following brief message to Shambhalian everywhere -

Spoken word:

Hello Everyone,

I'm speaking to you from Washington, DC. I'm here with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche to attend the award of the Congressional Gold Medal to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

I want to take this opportunity while I'm here to tell you about the next really massive campaign that we are all engaged on. Which is to try to put Shambhala's future on a firm financial footing. The most important message that came out of all the financial discussions that we had over the last few years involving people all across the mandala is that now is the time to stabilize the finances of the mandala.

That's what we need in order to be able to deliver the kinds of services that will support everyone's practice and study; that will enable us to provide the community care that we all know we need in order to sustain us as a living community. And also to be able to create the kind of outreach we need, in fact in multiple languages, to carry these vital teachings in this dark age across the planet where there is such tremendous interest in hearing the word of Shambhala and then to understand its deep meaning.

Our approach here -- and it is one that I take full responsibility for because I believe this is the way

forward - is to ask everyone, whatever your level of connection to Shambhala is, to make a regular, recurring donation to the Centre of the Mandala. I think we can do it, if we all did it, with everybody giving at least \$10 a month. I know that may be a little difficult for some, so if you have to give less that's absolutely fine. What really matters here is the gesture, the offer and the willingness to give. Then that can be matched by others who could give more.

The idea is to try and create this pool of everybody supporting the entire situation -- supporting our Sakyong and the work that he's doing, and supporting us who work for him in extending these teachings and providing what we call the Mandala Services (that frankly every single centre benefits from but are so, in a sense, invisible & continuous that often we just don't notice they're there).

We have given a fantastic kick-start to this campaign, by one of our members Gregg Campbell, who lives in Boulder, who came forward and said that what he would like to do would be to match every new dollar that comes in with \$10 of his own up to a staggering amount of a quarter of a million dollars.

The way we are going to get the benefit of that generosity is by all of us contributing whatever we can to match Gregg's generosity. And when we've reached that point that's when we'll be able to start delivering the services that so many of you, have over these years, told me you really want to see Shambhala deliver. And of course it will also help us put a huge dent in our debt.

So through this message which I hope you'll pass it on to others -- is simply to take the time, when asked, to give us this support.

Please don't think that a little won't make a difference. My idea here is that if we all give a little, that difference will be huge.

And for those of you who are motivated by this to give even more, please do!