

Building the Land of Kalachakra

As Tibetan Buddhism develops in the West, the need for authentic teaching and practice centers which can nurture the tradition grows increasingly important.

Contributor **Ted Arnold** of the Namgyal Monastery Institute for Buddhist Studies in Ithaca, New York, writes of a new home for Kalachakra practice in the U.S.

Due to the great kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, many thousands of practitioners have been initiated into the Kalachakra tantric system. However, there has been an obvious problem: how to maintain and deepen one's practice after the initiation? Even with the tireless activities of the late Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche and other kind teachers, there has been no single location where Kalachakra practice can develop and flourish – but this is about to change. His Holiness' personal monastery, Namgyal Monastery, is well-known as the storehouse of the Kalachakra teachings and rituals, and so it is fitting that its North American branch – Namgyal Monastery Institute of Buddhist Studies – is building The Land of Kalachakra Study and Practice, *Du Khor Choe Ling*.

Kalachakra is well known as a vehicle for world peace, with its association with the glorious kingdom of Shambhala and its correlation between environmental and individual 'wheels' of experience, which are perfected through Kalachakra practice. The teaching was given by the Buddha at Amaravati at the request of the king of Shambhala, and there it was disseminated widely. It was only in the 10th century that the teachings finally returned to India and were transmitted soon after to Tibet, where they became regarded as the pinnacle of Buddhism. Now the precious opportunity for these teachings to become fully-transplanted in the West has arrived.

His Holiness will visit Namgyal Monastery Institute of Buddhist Studies [founded in 1991] for the first time this October and bless the site of Du Khor Choe Ling. The two-day

event will feature a public talk at Cornell University, entitled *A Human Approach to World Peace*; a Dharma teaching at Ithaca College, commenting on *The Eight Verses on Mind Training*; and an interfaith session at Ithaca's historic State Theatre.

In 2004, after a dozen years in operation, Namgyal Ithaca received a generous donation which has been used toward the purchase of twenty-eight acres on which to construct this new facility, the plans for which have been overseen by His Holiness and Jhado Rinpoche, the former abbot of Namgyal. The complex of buildings has been designed as a mandala, with the shrine room surrounded by lodging, dining, and auxiliary buildings.

His Holiness has directed Namgyal to continue his efforts in dialogues between Buddhism and science and in interfaith forums, and these larger accommodations will enable this, as well as the growth of other teaching programs and cultural events.

Since 1992, Namgyal monks have provided detailed traditional instruction to students in philoso-

phy, ritual arts, and tantra, and the non-sectarian institute has hosted teachers from all four schools of Tibetan Buddhism, as well as Western scholars and teachers from other Buddhist traditions. Since Ithaca is home also to Cornell University, which houses an extensive collection of Tibetan texts, DKCL may become a research center for scholars as well as a major practice center. ☸

For more information on Namgyal Monastery Institute of Buddhist Studies, Du Khor Choe Ling, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit, please go to: www.namgyal.org



Architectural rendering of the future Kalachakra center.



Namgyal monks get their hands dirty at the construction site.

Credit: Allan McLane Chambliss, Jr.