



## Dancing Tara's Praises Anytime, Anyplace By Eana Rose, Third Level Student/Teacher Circa 2004, Kauai Hawaii

I had a vision, perhaps a memory, at any rate Tara talks to me. As the Mandala began spinning, four years ago, each month on Kauai I would hear the call: "Dance naked, Dance outside." So I anticipated the moment where we would celebrate the warm traditions of Hawaii, breasts bared, feet pressing on the earth, faces moist with the ocean spray.

Soon a beloved sister was visiting Kauai and I felt the moment had arrived. Her unbridled joy gave me the extra bit of organizational inspiration, and I put out a special call to the dancers, "Lets dance on secret beach!" "Secret Beach is a clothing optional beach in Kilauea on the north shore of Kauai. We met at the temple behind my home to connect and form the Mandala. Each dancer chose one of our Tropical Tara adornments that Trishana and I had found at the local ABC stores. The silky luminous sarongs reflected the colors of the Taras and her place in the Mandala. I asked the Taras to sing the mantra as we cooperated in gathering all that we would need on the beach: CD player, some blankets, water, offerings. Limiting chatter, I have discovered, serves to concentrate the intentions of the offering dance and undoubtedly brings Taras presence into our hearts focus. The challenge of communicating logistics without words heightened our sensitivity toward one another and brought us closer together in preparation for the offering of Tara's praises.

Piling into cars we drove the short distance to the trail head and, still in silence but for the mantra, we made the pilgrimage down to the beach. It was a beautiful day. The water aqua and inviting. The beach was broad with graceful curves of sand and rivulets of ocean and sweet water making pools and streams to play in.

There were plenty of folks enjoying the magic of secret beach, each to their own pleasure. We felt guided to a bluff of sand near the trail head to dance. A place of honor, not hiding, not in any ones way. As we took our places in the Mandala, tying our sarongs around our waists, breasts soaking up the sun in glory, the CD crew tested the

player and guess what? It wouldn't play! What now Tara? We fussed around trying this and that and still no sound.

A few moments of quiet silence and I heard her whisper delightedly, "You'll just have to sing my praises yourselves, perfectly capable you are!" I understood her guidance and as Central Tara, I held the praises in the center of the mandala and began. I directed each Tara as she moved into the central position of the mandala to hold the pages and sing the praise for the dancer and then pass it along to the next central Tara before birthing out of the Mandala. Oh how our voices rose in her praise, "OM TARE" and the mantra, everyone chimed in... We were a sight!

The astounding power and beauty of the ocean was our crystal, moving altar, the sounds, humans and animals enjoying themselves, the shells and golden sand, green growth and rocks, all were our offerings as cliffs and valley behind us protected and supported. The miracles- abounded!

At one point a group of boys and their dirt bikes arrived. They pulled up right under the trees behind us, revved their engines and choose to ride down to the beach and back literally spinning circles around the sand, just feet from the Mandala! It was amazing. We remained focused, examining our judgment and the mystery. They were curious it seemed. We were Tara, lovingly, passionately meeting the challenge, making our offering to the island. They just kept it up. Others on the beach, and coming and going from the trail head observed in appreciation, averted their eyes in respect for our privacy (naked beach etiquette), or avoided for reasons of their own. By the time we blossomed our human lotus and blazed in Glory; Tara's pure land was all that it is. Fantastic, precious, empowering, a remembrance. We sat down where the lotus had bloomed, silent at first, letting it settle, then shared some personal dedications and laughed a lot!

The bikers had gone on. The whole experience was so reminiscent, we marveled, of the heckler in the crowds as we danced on the Stupa in Boudhanath during the 2001 TarDhatu pilgrimage. The challenge being to stay focused and resist "doing something about it," seeing it as a gift, trusting Tara and our pure motivation. Yet these young boys had innocence about them and our loving presence allowed them to in time, choose to be appropriate. It was an amazing example of how motherly love and non judgment can heal a situation with out conflict.

Finally, looking down to where I clutched the tattered pages of the 8x11 stapled practice we had used to sing the praises, I exclaimed in delight! Oh this is a perfect situation to use the "Pocket Praises", a version of the practice that we used on the pilgrimage. Neat, tidy, practical, complete and a dream come true. Now I had the confidence to go any where with or with out electricity or musicians and dance the Mandala out in nature.

The majestic mountaintop out my window in Idaho is calling as I write; Next spring, after the snows melt and it is warm enough, "Let's dance on top of the mountain!" Giving thanks always, I embrace this path of beauty, sharing Tara's praises in this fun filled and profound form, The Mandala Dance of the 21 Praises Of Tara.