

A LOCAL TREASURE

Arts Commission Honors Richard Denner with Arts Treasure Award

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Article by Rodney Harwood, Staff Writer

Recipient: Jampa Dorje (Richard Denner)

Organization: Ellensburg Arts Commission

Ellensburg Arts Commission chairman Alex Eyre is quick to point out that Jampa Dorje (Richard Denner) has long been a unique presence in the Ellensburg arts community and in the fabric of the town.

And that he has, and as dozens gathered at Gallery One Visual Arts Center for the First Friday Art Walk, the Ellensburg Arts Commission honored Dorje with its 2022 Arts Treasure Award for his work with both on the canvas and the written word.

The Arts Treasure Award started as a way for the Arts Commission to recognize and educate the community about someone who has chosen to make their art and life in Ellensburg.

“I really like Ellensburg. It’s a smalltown, but it has the arts, it has the university. I grew up in Berkley with a bigger university. But the artistic community around the campus is only five or six blocks, so (Ellensburg) is like that,” said Dorje, whose experiences include mixing with the Beat Poets in 1960’s Berkley, Calif., to cattle ranching in Ellensburg in the 1970’s and later owning the Four Winds Bookstore in downtown for 20 years.

“I’ve seen (Ellensburg) rise and fall like the Phoenix, but we always learn something from the changes.”

His artwork hung on the gallery wall behind the stage where five local and area poets read to a full house as part of the Celebrate Poetry community gathering to welcome Ellensburg’s first Poet Laureate Marie Marchand on a night where art and poetry mingled in a show of creative thought.

The audience was treated to poetry by Xavier Cavazos, Jen Lynn, Ed Stover, and Marchand. Dorje closed out the evening with one of his own to cap off a night of the spoken word in downtown Ellensburg.

“Xavier (Cavazos) and I did poetry readings for four years before the COVID-19 epidemic,” Dorje said. “We would bring poets in from all over the state. We had venues, restaurants, bars, in the galleries wherever we could.

“I think it says something for a smalltown to have a night of poetry like this. The university has poetry workshops and now we have a Poet Laureate. So, the interest is coming back.”

Richard Denner was given the name (Jampa Dorje) by Tibetan Buddhist Lama Tsultrim Allione, meaning “Indestructible Loving Kindness.”

Today, Dorje is a poet, hosting a poetry program on Ellensburg Community Radio, a publisher, a prolific multimedia artist and an a spiritual presence often seen on the streets and at exhibitions of his work in the galleries of Ellensburg.

His art is available to view on his websites, www.dpress.net or www.kapalapress.net

“The Ellensburg Arts Commission celebrates Richard Denner and all of the gifts he brings us through his pursuit of art and philosophy and hope that he will share them with us all for many years to come,” Eyre said.

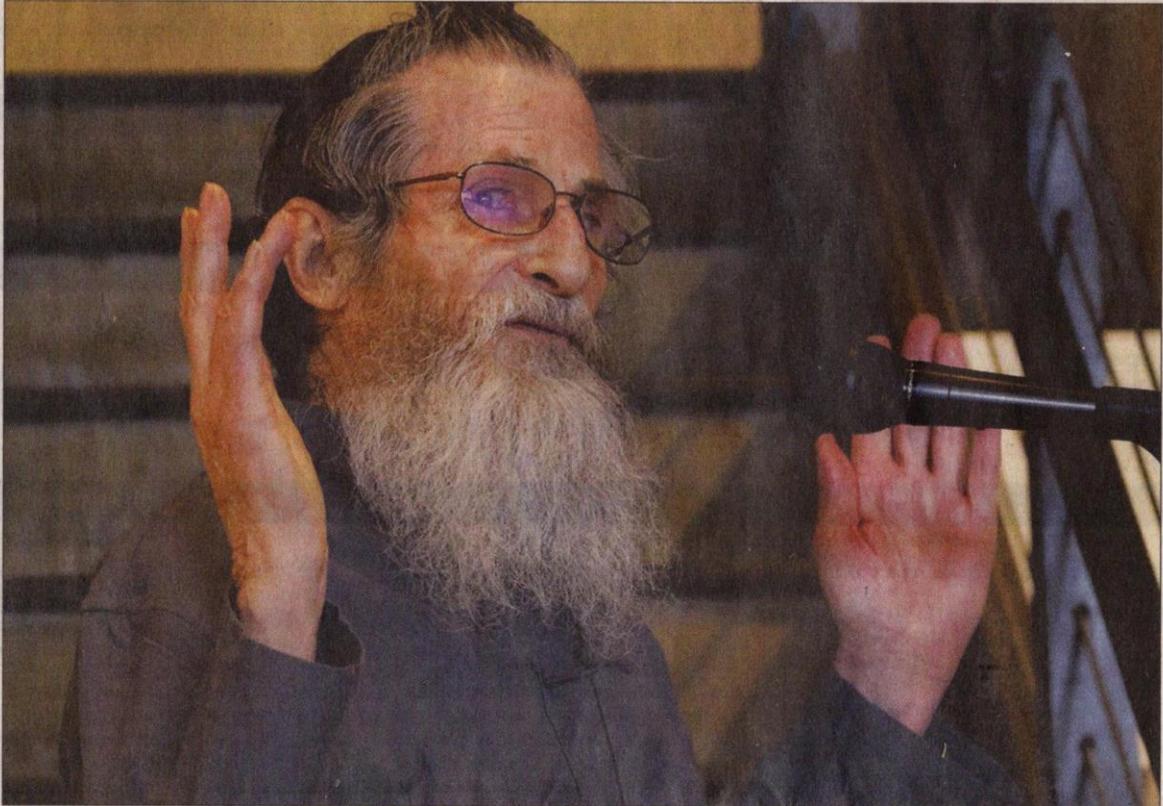
Previous Arts Treasure recipients have included Lenny Price (2017), Rob Fraser (2018), Therese A. Young (2019), and Don O’Connor (2021).

Photo by Julie Prather, taken at Gallery One during the installation of Marie Marshand as Ellensburg’s First Poet Laureate and Jampa as Art treasure.



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By **RODNEY HARWOOD**

staff writer

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2022 ARTS TREASURE AWARD

What: 2022 Arts Treasure Award

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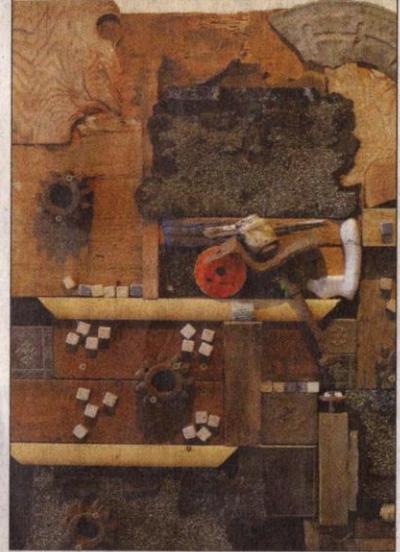
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Websites: www.dpress.net or www.capala.net

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RODNEY HARWOOD/DAILY RECORD

Jampa Dorje’s art hangs on the wall at the Gallery One Visual Arts Center as part of the Kittitas County Open Art Show.

More **AWARD** | **A6**

Award/^{from A1}

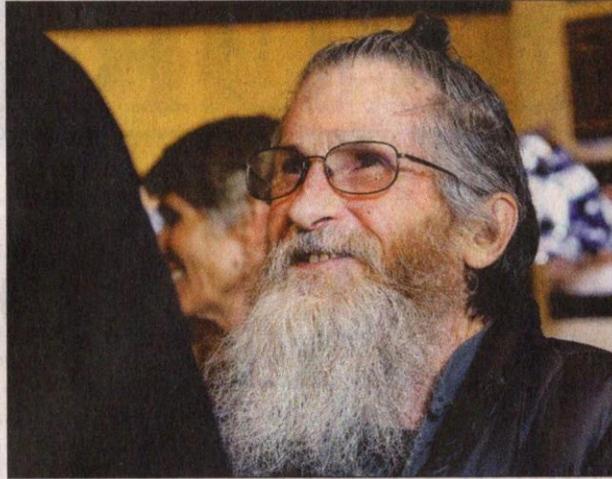
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Jampa Dorje enjoys a moment with an art patron after the poetry reading Friday night at Gallery One Visual Arts Center. Dorje was honored with the Ellensburg Arts Commission 2022 Arts Treasure Award.

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