



Photo: Kwan Um School of Zen–Poland

and said: “If you want, you can go before me in the line.” This really hit the mind of this man. He got a red face and stammered, “No, no. Thank you. I’m sorry.”

If you clearly perceive the current situation of our world, there is no time to waste. You have a job to do: help this world. One point must be fully clear though. Where will you do it?

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with

the stick.]

If you say you will do it in the suffering world, emptiness world or truth world, this stick will hit you 30 times.

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

If you say you will do it in neither of these worlds, this stick will also hit you 30 times.

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

If you say you will do it in all of these worlds, this stick will hit you 90 times.

So, where is the correct place to help?

KATZ!

Thank you for coming to this ceremony and listening. ♦

Koen Vermeulen began practicing in the Kwan Um School of Zen in 1992. He participated in a seven-week retreat in 1995 and a three-month Kyol Che in 1998. Koen lives with his wife and two sons below the Brussels Zen Center. In his free time he loves to play piano.

In his current job as Secretary General of the Belgian Buddhist Union he is actively involved in the recognition of Buddhism in Belgium, in prison work and in the development of training programs such as Buddhist philosophy and counseling in the health sector.

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INKA CEREMONY FOR

Igor Piniński

March 9, 2013, at Warsaw Zen Center

DHARMA COMBAT

Piotrowski PSN: I’m very happy to see you at this place.

Piniński PSN: I’m also very happy too see you, Poep Sa Nim.

Piotrowski PSN: I have a question for you. I think it may be close to your heart. I know that professionally you’re an actor . . .

Piniński PSN: It’s not true.

Piotrowski PSN: OK, but the rumor was that you’re an actor. I know that you have studied acting and it happens that in Zen we often say that Zen means being a good actor. You have been studying acting for so many years,

what does it mean to be a good actor?

Piniński PSN: What are you doing now?

Piotrowski PSN: Sitting and talking with you.

Piniński PSN: Very good actor!

Piotrowski PSN: But what about you?

Piniński PSN: Not enough?

Piotrowski PSN: No.

Piniński PSN: A dog chases a bone.

Piotrowski PSN: *[After a moment of hesitation . . .]* OK.

Schaefer PSN: Dzień dobry! [“Good day” in Polish.]

Piniński PSN: Guten Tag! [“Good day” in German.]

Schaefer PSN: So, Igor, it looks like you are getting something today and I’m losing something. You are becoming a Poep Sa Nim, and for the last three years I had the title of “baby Poep Sa Nim.” The youngest Poep Sa Nim. That’s what’s going to be your title now. And I will enter a very difficult stage now, called puberty. So I wonder, you are becoming a beautiful, just born, new Poep Sa Nim and you probably need no guidance anymore. How would you help me with my puberty?



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Piniński PSN: You already understand.
Schaefer PSN: Yeah, that's why I ask you.
Piniński PSN: Please, teach me.
Schaefer PSN: Oh, please, teach me!
Piniński PSN: I already did.

Question: So Igor, I'm Jewish and they say that Jews like to bargain. So here I have some money. [*Hits the floor.*] Let's bargain. How much would it cost to have your dharma?

[*Piniński PSN hits the floor.*]

Q: Only that?

Piniński PSN: Not enough?

Q: No.

Piniński PSN: A dog is chasing a bone.

Q: But I said I want to bargain!

Piniński PSN: The bargain is over.

DHARMA SPEECH

[*Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.*]

This hit means that the teacher is a student and the student is a teacher.

[*Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.*]

This hit means there is no teacher, there is no student.

[*Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.*]

This hit means the teacher is the teacher, the student is the student.

Which of these statements would you like to follow in your practice?



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KATZ!

Today is Saturday, the inka ceremony. I thank all my teachers for their teaching.

Because two new teachers appeared at our school today I thought it's a good occasion to take a closer look at what appeared, what is a teacher and what is a student.

We were all brought up in the world, which is full of names and forms. In our school we also have a lot of names and forms. Today me and Koen received titles: Ji Do Poep Sa Nim. A new name. We also received beautiful kasa, sticks. Different kinds of forms. But if we become attached to these names and forms or if any one of you becomes attached to these names and forms it will be very bad. The teacher's work will not be possible.

So what is a teacher? What is a student?

A while ago we had a dharma combat here. Everybody could come up and ask his or her questions. Candidates answered these questions. In this situation, who was the teacher and who was the student? At the end everybody said "thank you for your teaching." That would imply that the candidates were teachers. But everybody who came tested the candidates, they gave it a try, and the Zen Masters noted down their remarks, which would imply that the candidates were students. So this is that relative world, where everything changes constantly. The teacher

is a student and the student is a teacher. In fact, a teacher in the Kwan Um School of Zen does the teacher's work in the short intervals of time. All of his or her time a Zen teacher is a student. And if he's a good Zen teacher, he's a beginner-level student. We keep coming back to the beginning. Everybody in the dharma hall does that. Everybody tries to accomplish this in their lives. When we sit in the dharma hall, everybody—Zen masters, Ji Do Poep Sas, senior dharma teachers, dharma teachers, people with five precepts, people who have come here for the first time—everybody does the same thing. We all try to perceive this moment. We all try to perceive this primary point. [*Claps his hands.*] This very point. Just now. In this point there is no teacher, no student. Everything is one. Everything is complete. The whole universe is made up of this point. The whole universe is made up of this moment. This moment is the only substance you can find in this universe. That's why from this point [*claps his hands*] comes the world of truth. The teacher is the teacher, the student is the student. This looks like returning to the world of name and form. But the essence is this primary point from which this world of truth emerges. If we truly perceive clearly [*claps his hands*] this moment then we can correctly perform our functions as a teacher or as a student.

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[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

Can you see it?

[Raises the Zen stick over his head, then hits the table with the stick.]

Can you hear it?

If you say you understand this teaching this stick will hit you thirty times.

If you say you don't understand this teaching this stick will also hit you thirty times.

If you say you understand and don't understand then this stick will hit you sixty times.

So what did you understand?

One mouth finishes talking, many ears continue listening. Thank you. ♦

Igor Piniński JDPSN graduated in acting from a famous film school in Łódź, Poland. Right now he is working in his own film studio in Łódź, focusing on educational films. He lives with his wife in the countryside near Łódź.

He has been the abbot of the Łódź Zen Center for last 14 years and is a member of the Polish Zen Kwan Um Sangha Council. He started practicing in Łódź Zen Center in 1995 and has participated in more than 120 Yong Maeng Jong Jin retreats in Łódź led by Kwan



Photo: Kwan Um School of Zen—Poland

Um School of Zen teachers. He also participates every year in the Kyol Che in Falenica.

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INKA CEREMONY FOR

Barry Briggs

April 7, 2013 at the Providence Zen Center

DHARMA COMBAT

Question: Yesterday, you told me about your blog, Ox Herding. You said you're going to put it to rest, probably. So I ask you: if you're not herding the ox, where will it go?

Briggs PSN: Please return to your seat.

Q: Thank you very much.

[Questioner turns and crawls back to his seat on hands and knees, mooing, accompanied by laughter from the audience.]

Lerch PSN: You know, you're doing really well, your teaching is—

Briggs PSN: I was.

[Laughter.]

Lerch PSN: Your teaching is very clear and gentle, but I've got to tell you, man, I was hoping for some action.

Briggs PSN: You were?

Lerch PSN: Yeah. So what's the correct action?

Briggs PSN: I love you, Tim. *[Hugs him, and the audience laughs.]*



Photo: Brenton Sheehan