



DISCOVERING THE SHINING SILENCE

A SILENT ILLUMINATION RETREAT

led by
SIMON CHILD

A 7-day Chan retreat, led by Simon Child, will take place in March 2019, at the Plein-air House of the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts in Dłużew, Poland. It will begin at 7 pm on March 23 (Saturday) and will end at 10 am on March 30 (Saturday).

The prerequisite for acceptance to the retreat is at least 6 months of experience in Buddhist meditation practice. It is possible to participate in 5 or 7 days of the retreat, provided one begins on March 23.

Discovering the Shining Silence: a Silent Illumination Retreat. This traditional 7-day retreat provides time and space for dedicated practitioners to learn, practice and cultivate the Chan method of Silent Illumination. Simple yet difficult, with focused practice you may encounter an opening that allows you to come to rest and find peace, a lucid spaciousness and clear Dharma insight. Facilitated in a warm, supportive manner, the teaching and methods of Master Sheng-yen will be presented through practice instruction, talks and individual interviews carefully adapted to lay practitioners of European mind and culture. This orthodox Chan retreat entails rising early, a rigorous schedule of meditation with exercise and work periods, the whole requiring a precisely focused and persistent endeavour based in a relaxed mind. Many practitioners experience clear insights enabling them to walk the Bodhisattva path with refreshed confidence and deepened serenity.

Retreat Teacher The retreat is presented by Simon Child who received Dharma transmission from Master Sheng-Yen in 2000. Simon trained with both John Crook and Master Sheng-Yen. Since many years he has led retreats in Europe and New York both with John and independently.

Further readings about the practice of Silent Illumination

- *“Illuminating Silence. The Practice of Chinese Zen”*, Editor John Crook, Watkins, London 2002 (originally *“Catching a Feather on a Fan”* 1991).
German title: *“Hege die ste, um die Wurzeln zu schtzen”* O.W. Barth Verlag 1996.



Simon Child

- “*Chan comes West*”, red. Rebecca Li, Dharma Drum Publications, New York 2002.
- “*The Method of No method*”, Chan Master Sheng Yen, Shambhala 2008
- “*The Practice of Silent Illumination (mo-chao)*”, Master Sheng Yen. The teaching published in “Chan Magazine” can be found at

<http://chan1.org/ddp/chanmag.html>

- There are many articles and reports from these retreats to be found in issues of the “*New Chan Forum*”. See:

<http://www.westernchanfellowship.org/retreat-reports.html>

How to apply for the retreat? By sending an application form and making a deposit. The application form should be sent till February 23, 2019, by letter to the address:

Pawel Rosciszewski
ul. Promienna 12
05-540 Zalesie Gorne
Poland
or by e-mail to: budwod@budwod.com.pl

A deposit of 200 Euro should be made by bank transfer till February 23, 2019 (the bank account details are given below). This books you a place at the retreat, provided there are still free places.

Retreat participation fee Retreat participation fees are as follows:

1. The 7 day participation fee is 430 Euro, with a deposit of 200 Euro.
2. The 5 day participation fee is 360 Euro, with a deposit of 200 Euro.

After making the deposit by bank transfer, the balance payment should be made till February 30, 2019. If you have to resign from participation due to chance occurrences, all payments transferred to our bank account will be returned to you provided you notify us about your resignation till February 23, 2019.

The bank account for transfers is:

account owner: Zwiasek Buddystow Czan
bank: PKO BP
bank address: ul. Pulawska 15, 02-515 Warszawa
account no.: PL 51 1020 1013 0000 0402 0336 9923
swift code: BPKO PL PW

Please bear in mind that all transfer costs are borne by the payer.

Donation You may be willing to donate some money to help those practitioners who would like to attend the retreat but are not able to afford this because of difficult financial situation. The donations may be transfered to the bank account given above.

Rules of accepting participants Preference in accepting participants will be given to people applying for 7 days, then to those applying for 5 days. In case of people applying for the same number of days priority will be given to those making an earlier deposit. On March 6, 2019, the list of participants and the reserve list will be established. People from the reserve list will be accepted to the retreat in case of resignation of people from the main list of participants. The deposit will be returned in full to applicants who are not accepted to the retreat.

Transportation Participants accepted to the retreat should arrive in Dluzew on March 23, before 5 pm. The map with access routes to the retreat venue can be found on this website:

<http://czan.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Dluzew-map.jpg>

If you need help in getting to Dluzew and/or back, please let us know by e-mail.

If there is a considerable number of people needing assistance in getting to Dluzew and back, we will rent a bus (or minibus) which is going to leave downtown Warsaw on March 23, at about 4.00 pm. The trip back to downtown Warsaw will take place at 11.00 am on March 30. The cost of the return trip will be 30 Euro (one way trip 15 Euro), to be paid directly before the trip.

Practice Each day the retreat begins with wake-up at 5 am and ends at 10 pm. It consists of a number of 30 minute periods of meditation, and also includes physical exercises, work, interviews with teachers and Dharma talks.

Retreat etiquette Observing the following practices creates inner and outer peace and harmony:

- **Silence** is golden during a retreat. So as not to distract ourselves and others from the practice, we refrain from talking, reading, writing, or using various electronic devices. If we need to communicate with someone during working meditation, we may use gestures or write a note. Otherwise, communication such as friendly gestures, silent greetings, and even eye contact are distractions, and thus not necessary.
- During retreat, we isolate ourselves and focus solely on our method of practice. Therefore, **we refrain from communicating with the outside world**, and do not receive guests, make phone calls, or check email during retreat. All mobile phones should be turned off.
- **Community spirit** is important. We support one another by being together at all times during formal practice. If we need to excuse ourselves, we notify the person in charge. Participants must remain on the Plein-air House premises for the duration of the retreat.
- Our **job assignment** is a form of meditation that is important in our practice and supports ourselves and others. If you need a rest, you can do so after you have finished your working meditation. Everyone is given an easy work meditation task; please carry out your task responsibly and wholeheartedly in mindfulness.
- So as to **maintain a peaceful and quiet atmosphere**, please do not shower before the morning wake-up call or after 10 pm. Monitors will wake you in the morning; please do not use an alarm clock.
- We all have a part to play in **keeping the environment clean and orderly**. In the Chan Hall, fold your towel each time you stand and keep your personal belongings tidy, to the left of your cushion. Keep your room, bed, and personal belongings tidy.
- Please **be on time for all activities**, as when we are late we disturb others. Signals are given to remind everyone to return to the Chan Hall; please heed them promptly.
- **Practice illumination** during walking. Walk in a manner that is calm, mindful, light, unhurried, peaceful and quiet.
- **Wear appropriate clothing**, namely loose and comfortable clothes with neutral colors. In order not to distract ourselves and others, please do not wear bright-colored clothes, tank tops, shorts, tight-fitting pants or leggings, cosmetics, perfumes or colognes.

Other information

- Participants with financial difficulties may apply for a discount in the participation fee. The request can be enclosed to the application form.
- It is not necessary to take a sleeping bag, meditation mat or cushion. Bedding as well as mats and cushions will be available at the retreat venue. However, if you use a kneeling meditation bench you should bring it with you.
- Information about the retreat is available on the Chan Buddhist Union website:

<http://www.czan.eu/en/odosobnienie-czan-marzec-2019/>

A 21-day Chan retreat will take place from July 27 to August 17, 2019 in Dluzew and will be led by Ven. Chi Chern Fashi. Detailed information about the retreat will be provided soon.