

## Letter to a Lay Trainee

Rev. Master Kōten

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

This card is a picture of Maha Kala, the Protector, whose name means Great Darkness. This means that in the greatest blackness of despair, pain and anger there is still to be found the truth. Maha Kala has a fierce face because truth is not always pleasant but when we face ourselves squarely then what was so black and fearful becomes as it were your protector because now you know it and can do something about it.

Around the sides the heads and skulls mean that time and life are passing away right now. If you do not face yourselves and your suffering now when will you face it?

The gold objects are vajra-diamond sceptres which mean that there is that within us which like a diamond is bright and unbroken and shines at the very centre of the darkness. This is our, your True Nature.

I gave this to you because it is one of my favourite images and you seemed to see only darkness at that point. Maha Kala means that there is nothing more frightening than looking at ourselves and that when we do this truly nothing else can make us afraid.

I hope that this is of help.

Sincerely yours,

In gasshō,

Kōten Benson

*Maha Kala, the Protector*

