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SAT KARTAR

As interviewed by Leanne Wood for Sacred Sounds Radio



forefront of my mind...

Sat Kartar has been chanting and performing kirtan since the 1970's. Her music is beautiful, deeply inspired and engaging. Songs from her latest album "Flow" are currently in rotation on Sacred Sounds Radio. I recently began an email dialogue back and forth with her that resulted in a desire to expose larger audiences to her music and a sincere wish to get to know her better. Below is the resulting interview that I feel in part accomplishes that goal. She is clearly a woman with intelligence, eloquence and a commitment to her journey and although we have yet to meet in person, the expression "still waters run deep" keeps coming to the

How did you get your start in music?

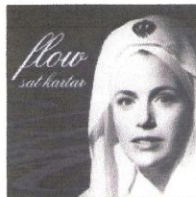
Music has always possessed me. At age 5, I was picking out songs on the piano. I studied ballet and would dance for hours to whatever records I had. I used to play guitar and sing after school for 2-3 hours a day. By the time I was in high school, I knew that I'd be doing music. In college I performed cover tunes of artists and it was a time of mass shift in our country's consciousness. I had a burning desire to write songs about the political and social changes going on, and spiritual awakening I was witnessing. Songwriter's block motivated me to look for a release in a yoga class, which is where my musical chant journey started. I used to go and chant with my first yoga teacher, Livtar Singh, in Atlanta, at different gatherings. We have played together, and in other chant bands ever since.

In the early 1970's you found your spiritual teacher, Yogi Bhajan and also became a Sikh. Can you talk a little bit about that journey and what led you to him and Sikhism?

I was led to Yogi Bhajan by journeying far enough into Kundalini Yoga to go to a Winter Solstice retreat they have annually. There, I first experienced his presence, teaching style, parameters of his consciousness, and the ocean of unconditional, inspiring love which flowed from his heart. Becoming a Sikh was a result of two things: my falling in love with the sound current of chanted mantra and Divine poetry of their scripture, Siri Guru Granth Sahib, one the most richly musical holy scriptures on the earth, which is organized in mystic raga scales. I gradually realized that a lot of the practices and beliefs in the ashram yoga lifestyle I was living, were derived from principles and values of the Sikh path.

Clearly the music you create and share is more than just something you "do." It seems to be an outward expression of something deep within...can you share what the music does for you on a personal level?

For me, making music is breathing, bloodletting, therapy, stretching creatively, balancing, practicing being an open instrument for the Divine to play upon, lovemaking with God, and birthing parts of myself. There is no choice: its spirit uses me; I have to do it. There were 2 previous generations of musicians in my family. Both my grandmothers, one a singer, the other a promising concert pianist, and my father, a songwriter; they all tried, but never achieved their musical dreams. I think that



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