

Ads by Gooooogle

Kundalini Yoga

Phoenix top Yoga studios. Get customer reviews & ratings!
phoenix.citysearch.com

Dr. David

Hawkins

The Highest Level of Enlightenment Reach enlightened states of being.
www.nighlingale.com/Davi

Pressure Point

Therapy

New, Located just north of Phoenix Heal your aches/pains holistically
www.mppmaz.com

I facilitate, but I also teach yoga classes and workshops.

DWB: How has kundalini yoga affected your music? Your life?

SK: It completely changed both around the time I was 20. I was an aspiring singer-songwriter, heading for LA and the folk-rock music scene there. I tried a yoga class, hoping to dissolve my songwriter's block, and stumbled upon chant/kiṛtan. Regarding music, I really liked the emphasis in each class on sound and chanting, and there were usually specific chants to do with the yoga sets. I started doing chant music with my first yoga teacher in Atlanta in 1972 and have continued in chant bands and kiṛtan groups up to this day. With regard to my life, I never expected to happen upon a community of people who were doing practices to elevate and expand their consciousness. I loved their holistic approach to living, health, career, prosperity, childraising, relationships etc. They seemed to be more about living your beliefs rather than preaching them, and this path contained a more inclusive, compassionate view of God than the church I grew up in. At that time, I was disillusioned with my dating/relationship experiences and the free love scene, which seemed pretty empty and unreal by that point, and I was looking for a spiritual relationship. The prospect of sharing spiritual practices with a partner was a tantalizing carrot that kept me seeking and practicing on this path for a long time, and even tolerating what I didn't like about it.

DWB: I've had the opportunity to take some workshops with Gurmukh (student of Yogi Bhajan) from Golden Bridge Yoga in LA. She uses music in such an innovative great way in her workshops. Flow also comes with online instructions on some "moving mudras" to work with while chanting the mantras. What is your experience with movement/mantra/meditation?

SK: The instructions on my website (satkartmusic.com) for the moving mudras were given by Yogi Bhajan when he originally taught the meditations. In my experience, mantra/chant done with moving mudras can get the sound more into your body/being/core, than just singing it. It's kind of like dancing your meditation. There is a freemove version of this we do called "celestial communication" that is mainly arm movements Yogi originally created for some little children visiting from Italy who couldn't understand English. But many adults who come to our kiṛtans love doing that with the chants and songs we do.

DWB: Flow uses both Eastern and Western modalities, from language to instrumentation, from traditional Sikh chant to English mantra—"I Am, I Am" (featuring Dave Stringer) for example. Please elaborate on the power behind language and intention.

SK: The East/West thing seems appropriate because we are Westerners seeking Eastern spiritual teachings. We are a fusion patchwork culture by heritage. Music can speak to people's hearts when it is an honest reflection of who we are now and where we're journeying. My teacher taught several different mantra/affirmations in English, as well as mantras from Sikh scriptures and other more ancient sources. We believe that sounds of specific languages have an elemental projection, which, when sung or chanted, activates that element in you through your magnetic field (aura), which is recording and holding every vibration it experiences. Sanskrit and Gurmukhi are predominantly ether-based languages. The romance languages are water. English is fire. German and Russian are earth. It even shows up in the personality of the culture. It's good to chant in a language you don't speak because the mind (subconscious pre-programming) has a harder time trying to question you about establishing your spiritual identity when it can't wrap its insecurities around what it doesn't intellectually understand. But it is also good to sing in one's own language. Both have their constructive places. Intention in how we pray, affirm, chant is very important, but I think mantric chanted sound can work positively on the psyche even before you put intention behind it.

DWB: We talked about internet radio, particularly the station "Sacred Sounds" (sacredsounds.com). Kiṛtan is really getting out there, it's great juju for healing the world! Where do you think kiṛtan is going?

SK: Everywhere! It will continue to evolve as both an art form and method of uplifting people and opening their hearts, and I think it will come more and more into the media. I love watching its influence creeping into TV commercials and advertising. I have been involved with the growing interfaith movement in recent years, and it can be a great conduit for people beyond the yoga/holistic/new age community to experience all kinds of chant. Some of my most enriching experiences as a spiritual seeker are to go and immerse myself in some kind of chanting I've never done before. It's kind of like cross training. I think chanting is an insider visceral experience of another path's essence of devotion. Chant is very universal common denominator; almost every religion or path on earth has some kind of chant as a manner of calling/longing for the Divine. I've waited and prayed for almost 30 years for kiṛtan to really emerge as a real music genre within popular music. It is most fulfilling to see it happening and a sheer delight to watch and be stimulated by the creativity and elements that other artists are bringing to it—recorded and live.

DWB: I see you as a performer really reaching out into the community. From opening the Arizona Diamondbacks ball game with the "Star Spangled Banner" (in beautiful white Sikh garb, I must add) to participating in 9/11 citywide gatherings, it's great to know that you are out there bringing the good vibe. What are some upcoming plans for you?