

Nada Night at the Web Cave

new columnist dj serendeepity on *Nada Yoga*

dj serendeepity

dj serendeepity photo by charles green, icicles by taien ng-chan, www.soyfishmedia.com

(Theme music fades up and under voice...)(CD: Chinmaya Dunster. *Fragrance of the East. 'Chance Finding'. Track 1 Runs 6:11*)

djsd: Hello I'm dj serendeepity. We met in the *Ice Cave*. I moonlight here on the web as a bi-location cyber-gig.

We've been talking about the rising popularity of yoga music, primarily with *Hatha* yogis in the West becoming listeners. This music has its roots in the traditional devotional music of India, but is changing with the interpretation of Western artists for Western audiences. This devotional music is part of an ancient practice called *Nada Yoga*.

Acharya Roop Verma is the Director of the East West School of Music at Ananda Ashram and visiting professor at Hartwick College, both in New York state. Thank you for bi-locating here with us today.

What is the difference between devotional music and *Nada Yoga*?

ARV: "There is no difference except in the logical human mind. Devotional music, mantra, *bhajan* and *kirtan* are all vehicles or tools to trigger the inner resonance, the inner *Naad*.

"The Yoga of Sound is a path of exploring consciousness through sounds to purify and harmonize the gross and subtle fields of body energy and bring them in alignment with their natural vibration. It is the opening of a door on the level of highest awareness, when consciousness becomes conscious of itself. From that state transformation and healing begin in a most natural way.

"Chanting mantra triggers one's connection to the inner sound, which is more audible when one meditates on the silence after chanting. It attunes one to a higher vibration to be more receptive to the subtler vibration of inner sound, that sound which is always present inside us but that we don't hear until we are very still, calm and quiet. In *Nada Yoga*, we connect directly with our higher consciousness by means of that unstruck, inner sound."

(Silence. 5 seconds, feels like a minute).

djsd: That was the sound of one hand clapping. Acharya Roop Verma is a regular contributor to *Nada Night at the Web Cave*.

Not surprisingly *Hatha Yoga*-focussed Westerners are increasingly interested in devotional music. Historically *Nada Yoga* was practiced together with *Hatha*, but in the West we take things step by step. Start with the body. What's next? Is *Nada* the next American yoga? I can see it on CNN "Chanting Mantra Builds a Six-Pack." Not if my next guest has anything to do with it.

(CD: *Supreme Moment*. Patrick Bernard. 'Nitai Gauranga'. Track 6. 7:13)

djsd: Patrick Bernard is bi-locating from his studio north of Montréal. He's just released his latest CD *Supreme Moment* a compilation of the last 20 years of his work. He's one of the first Westerners to record mantra or *namjapa* with his first release in 1987 followed over the years with nine more recordings. He's also the author of 'Music as Yoga: The Art of Inner Peace'.

Patrick, what was your first experience of devotional music?

PB: "I met my guru Sridhar Deva Goswami Maharaj in West Bengal in the 70's. When he asked my profession I said I was a musician but had renounced music. He laughed, called me a fool and said you cannot renounce music, it doesn't belong to you. In 1976 I met Bhaktivedanta Swami Shрила Prabhupad who gave me the key to reaching the divine through chanting *Mahamantra* which I have worked with ever since, opening the meaning of it layer by layer. It is most important to sing the names of God, *nam-mantra*. The names are powerful in themselves. The names are no different than what they name--the Absolute."

djsd: I've heard you say you don't want to be in showbiz anymore. You call yourself a recluse, spend a lot of time in meditation and perform only in very intimate venues. Where do you find the inspiration for the music you compose?

PB: "I don't compose music. I am composed by music. It's a yoga and a service. It's a prayer. The motivation of the heart is transmitted in sound. It goes into the ears and heart of the listener and has a lot of influence. It's a great responsibility for the musician. The popularity of devotional music may come and go but intention and inspiration are most important and they will remain."

djsd: Thank you, Patrick. We're not in showbiz here at the *Web Cave*. We never advertise or tell anyone our location, operating on the principle that 'the inner music plays when the inner listener is ready.'

(CD: *Mahamantra*. Shri Yogi Hari. 'Mahamantra' Track 1. 10:58)

djsd: Shri Yogi Hari is the founder of Sampoorna Yoga in Fort Lauderdale. He is a renowned *Hatha* and *Nada* yogi with many CDs of mantras and *bhajans* to his credit, and he has recently written an interpretation of the 'Hatha Yoga Pradipika'. He is a disciple of Swami NadaBrahmananda, one of the great modern masters of *Nada Yoga*.

What was Swami NadaBrahmananda like?

SYH: “He had been a court musician in Mysore at a time when music had been degraded to entertainment. *Nada Yoga* was very obscure. When he arrived at Sivananda Ashram in Rishikesh he was an accomplished musician but still did seven years of intense *sadhana* with music as yoga. He revived the lost *Nada Yoga*. He died in 1993 at the age of 97 while going to take his morning bath in the Ganga. He was the greatest *Nada* yogi of his time.

“In my own *sadhana*, I practice what I learned from my guru but am not ready to record it. There is no *sadhana* more powerful than *Nada Yoga*. It will take me my whole life to perfect what my guru taught me. *Nada Yoga* is not just any sound, but that which uplifts consciousness to a state of bliss.”

djsd: Where do you think this trend in the popularity of devotional music is going?

SYH: “It doesn’t need to go anywhere.”

djsd: Spoken like a true yogi. Thank you Shri Yogi Hari.

Tune in anytime here in the *Web Cave* or find me spinning *bhajans* at the *Ice Cave*. Either way we’re located in the spheres, broadcasting at the speed of sound and playing devotional music that may someday become *Nada*, the unstruck sound. Until then I’m dj serendepity taking your leave with *Nada* from a modern master, NadaBrahmananda.

(Outtro music fades up and under voice...) (Swami NadaBrahmananda. Sound Recording 1974. Recording courtesy Archives Yasodhara Ashram).