

Mp3 Dave Stringer - Mala

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Call and response Sanskrit chants with country, eastern and gypsy influences. 8 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Fusion, ROCK: Jam-band Details: "Defiantly not your traditional kirtan album!" - yogabasics.com "Stringer's most ambitious and best work to date. "Mala" is an important addition to anyone's collection of kirtan albums." - LA Yoga Pages "Not being a practitioner of yoga, I wasn't prepared for the impact this compelling CD would have on me. The more I listened - three times in a row the first day - the more aware of my surroundings I found myself. The eight rather indescribable songs on Mala take on a life of their own with melodies so beautiful you may want to cry. Mala is easily one of the most ear-opening records I've heard during 2004. I think I just discovered what I'll be giving to those I love for Christmas this year." - seaoftranquility.org "Fluid, funky, profound and sometimes just plain fun." - Milwaukee Yoga Magazine ++++++

Dave Stringer has been profiled in Time and Billboard magazines as one of the principal innovators of the new American kirtan movement. Kirtan is a practice of rhythmic call-and-response mantra chanting that has become popular as a live music happening in hundreds of yoga studios across the USA. One of the most compelling and unorthodox musicians to arise from the yoga community worldwide in the last several years, Stringer integrates the tablas, finger cymbals, harmonium and tamboura of the traditional Hindustani style with exquisite vocal harmonies and the decidedly untraditional accents of lap steel, banjo, horns and violin. With songs like the quietly driving 'Bhagavati' and the bouncy 'Govinda Jaya Jaya', Mala contains music that can be used both as an accompaniment to yoga and as music to listen to simply for the pleasure of it. Kirtan is a participatory form of music, so singing along with the CD can be a particularly rewarding experience (the Sanskrit lyrics are helpfully provided in the packaging). 'Saraswati Ma' has a delightful blend of a young female voice with Dave's more soulful voice and is one of the most meditative songs on the CD. 'Devakinandana' has a great jazzy beginning, which then surprises as it turns into a soulful chant that has a quiet, almost pleading tone. Mala (in Sanskrit, a string of beads, used like a rosary, to facilitate concentration on a mantra) has the same intentions as its predecessor, Japa, but the melodies and modes it explores reflect a deeper Eastern influence. Produced by Saul David

Raye, Dave sings vocal duets, quartets and ensembles with a stellar group of vocalists that includes Sheila Nicholls, Donna de Lory, Danny Peck, Steve Ross, Shanti Shivani, Suzanne Sterling, Allie Stringer and C.C. White. The backing band is virtuosic, concise and swinging, with Girish Gambhira on tablas, James Harrah on electric guitar, Ian Walker on bass, and Jay Bellerose on drum set . In the CD's liner notes, Dave writes: "India blasted me into billions of spinning particles and then slowly reshaped me, a process that was somehow both excruciating and ecstatic. I can't begin to claim complete knowledge of all of the layers of philosophy represented by the mantras I learned to chant while I was there, but I can attest to their power. I'm not a Sanskrit scholar and not always a particularly focused devotee, but I am deeply committed to the process of inquiry that the practice of yoga suggests. Kirtan is rooted in a very old and profoundly joyful Eastern tradition. But I don't know that it is possible for me to be traditional. As a Westerner, I can't help but bring my own cultural biases with me. My intention, however, is to be authentic, in the sense that what I am doing originates in my heart. For me, to align the individual-dissolving Eastern tradition of kirtan with the individual-affirming Western traditions of gospel and jazz and rock music is no contradiction. Both arise from the same impulse toward giving form to what is ecstatic and liberating and transcendent. Mantras are intended as a tool with which the spirit can release itself from the prison of attachments that the mind creates. It's not unfair to say that the chanting of mantras is intended to be a completely mindless activity. Yoga doesn't ask us to believe, it asks us to practice, examining our experience until we can witness the truth in the book of our own heart. My only suggestion is that you chant along. Whether these mantras are ancient wisdom or psychological metaphor or complete nonsense is up to you." About Dave Stringer: Initially trained as a visual artist and jazz musician, Dave started chanting in the early 1990's when a film editing project brought him to the ashram of Swami Muktananda in India. When the editing project ended, he remained in India to teach school in a rural village, and continued studying the traditions of yoga with Swami Chidvilasananda. After returning to the US, Dave taught meditation and chanting to prison inmates, and began leading kirtans at yoga studios in Los Angeles and Chicago. In the past four years Dave and his band have toured all over the United States, Canada and Europe, giving more than 400 performances. He has collaborated on recordings with Vas, Rasa, Donna De Lory, Axiom of Choice, Suzanne Teng, and Sheila Nicholls, and has performed with other noted kirtan singers Krishna Das and Jai Uttal. His voice can also be heard on the soundtracks of the film Matrix Revolutions and the video game Myst.

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