

Shakti Guitar

Stevin McNamara



A Yogic journey from Radiant Dawn to Deepest Night

Shakti Guitar is the continuation of a musical journey that began many years ago when I first fell in love with North Indian classical music. Having grown up in South Africa, surrounded by African sounds and rhythms and imported music from the USA and Europe in the forms of jazz, blues and rock, I was unprepared for the stunning effect on first hearing Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan and Nikhil Banerjee, to name a few. The result was an ever-growing passion for North Indian classical music that became even more real as I was fortunate to study sitar with Ram Das Chakravarty of Benares.

As the years have gone by, all this music has grown into a personal style that encompasses all these influences and is now presented on the nylon string guitar.

It is important to note that the music on this album is not classical North Indian music, but rather a personal style that has developed through a deep immersion in that centuries-old tradition.

In contrast to most of today's computerized music, every note on this album has been played on an acoustic instrument or sung with the voice, by real people.

"From my heart to yours." –Stevin McNamara 2014



About the Music

Indian music has its roots in the ancient Vedic culture where it was originally used for religious and devotional purposes. Over the centuries it has developed into what we hear today. Even in the modern performance of ragas, the music still retains its profound, devotional character and humility. It is a living music that has been personally handed down from teacher to disciple over centuries and cannot be learned in any other way.

The ancient yogis, through deep spiritual practice, were able to see the effect of music on all of life and developed ragas according to their experience and inner knowledge. The word raga means “that which colors the mind.” Each raga has a particular scale and set of notes that are brought to life when performed correctly. In contrast to much western music, a raga concentrates on one particular mood.

In addition, the scales (combinations of notes and their expression) are chosen for a particular time of day when the raga is in harmony with the forces of nature and will have its greatest effect on the listener. Ragas were also composed for different seasons and special occasions.

The concept of *Shakti Guitar* is to present a musical cycle of a complete day. We start at the first glimmer of dawn and move through the day and evening, ending in the deepest night where we go into our dreams.

In the Hindu tradition, Shakti is the primordial cosmic energy that moves through all life and sustains the universe. Additionally, Shakti is the personification of the divine feminine, the creative power, symbolized in deities such as Saraswati, the goddess of music and learning.



About the Musicians

“In the making of *Shakti Guitar* I was most fortunate to find master drummer and sound healer Christo Pellani, who brings his many years of experience in the rock and world music spheres to this project. This amazing connection forms the foundation of all the pieces on this album.

In addition, several other truly gifted and inspired musicians have made musical offerings, and their talent, experience and passion for Indian music has enriched these compositions so beautifully.

I am honored and immensely grateful to all.” –*Stevin McNamara*

Musicians

Stevin McNamara

Nylon String Guitar (*All Tracks*)
Bass (*Sun Moon and Stars, Prajna's Dream*)

Christo Pellani

A vast array of drums, percussion, bells,
gongs from all over the world (*All tracks*)

Mala Ganguly

Vocals (*Shakti Sunset*)

Steve Gorn

Bansuri (*Greeting the Dawn*)

Sheela Bringi

Vocals (*Prajna's Dream*)

David Trasoff

Sarod (*Midnight in the Darbar*)

Ben Leinbach

Bass (*Shakti Sunset, Sungod Dance, Midnight in the Darbar*)

Itai Disraeli

Bass (*Heart of the Lotus*)

Brandon Turner

Acoustic bass (*Greeting the Dawn*)

TJ Troy

Tabla (*Greeting the Dawn, Heart of the Lotus*)



Stevin McNamara

Cooper Madison

Tabla (*Midnight in the Darbar*)

Marla Leigh Goldstein

Layered frame drums (*Shakti Sunset*)

Anamari McNamara

Tamboura (*Shakti Sunset*)

Aram Ram

Tamboura (*All Tracks*)



Stevin McNamara



Christo Pellani, Mala Ganguly, Stevin McNamara

Track List

- | | | | |
|---|------|--|-------|
| 1. Salutation | 1:37 | 7. Sun Moon and Stars | 6:27 |
| 2. Greeting the Dawn - Part 1 (Alap)
<i>Rag Jogiya - DAWN</i> | 6:01 | <i>Rag Khamaj - TWILIGHT</i> | |
| 3. Greeting the Dawn - Part 2 (Theme)
<i>Rag Jogiya - DAWN</i> | 7:56 | 8. Heart of the Lotus - Part 1 (Alap)
<i>Rag JhinJoti - MID EVENING</i> | 6:47 |
| 4. Sungod Dance
<i>Rag Sarang - NOON</i> | 9:05 | 9. Heart of the Lotus - Part 2 (Jor)
<i>Rag JhinJoti - MID EVENING</i> | 4:16 |
| 5. Shakti Sunset - Part 1 (Alap)
<i>Rag Bhimpalasi - SUNSET</i> | 7:31 | 10. Heart of the Lotus - Part 3 (Theme)
<i>Rag JhinJoti - MID EVENING</i> | 10:56 |
| 6. Shakti Sunset - Part 2 (Theme)
<i>Rag Bhimpalasi - SUNSET</i> | 8:56 | 11. Midnight in the Darbar
<i>Rag Chandranandan - MIDNIGHT</i> | 12:54 |
| | | 12. Prajna's Dream
<i>Rag Malgunji - LATE NIGHT</i> | 9:40 |

Bonus Tracks

- | | | | |
|--|------|---|------|
| 13. Midnight in the Darbar (Remix)
<i>Rag Chandranandan</i> | 4:46 | 14. Prajna's Dream (Remix)
<i>Rag Malgunji</i> | 8:45 |
|--|------|---|------|

Lyrics

Shakti Sunset

Sung by Mala Ganguly

DURGA STUTTI

Yaa Devi Sarva Bhooteshu Shakti Roopena Samsthita
Namastasyai Namastasyai Namastasyai Namaha

*Oh Goddess (Devi) Shakti, who resides everywhere in all
living beings as intelligence and beauty, I salute to you.
Take my salutations again and again.*

Prajna's Dream

Sung by Sheela Bringi

OM SAHANA VAVATU

OM Sahana Vavatu
Sahanau Bhunaktu
Saha Viryam Karavavahai
Tejasvi Navaditamastu Ma Vidvishavahai
OM Shantih Shantih Shantihi.

*OM, may we all be protected.
May we all be nourished
May we work together with great energy
May our studies be
enlightening and not give rise to hostility
OM - Peace, peace, peace.*

TWAMEVA MATA

Twameva Mata Cha Pita Tvameva
Twameva Bandhushcha Sakha Twameva
Twameva Vidya, Dravinum Twameva
Twameva Sarvam Mama Deva Deva

*You are my mother and my father,
You are my friend and my companion,
You are all wisdom and all wealth,
You are all in all, the utmost Divine.*



Credits

All songs composed, arranged and produced by Stevin McNamara

Drum arrangements & co-produced by Christo Pellani

Recorded by Stevin McNamara at Crystal Mountain Studio, Ashland, Oregon

Additional recording by Christo Pellani at Soundformation Studios, Los Angeles

Mixed & mastered by Stevin McNamara at Crystal Mountain Studio

Management by Bernie Walters :: Indian Ledge Music Group

Artist photos: Anamari McNamara (pg 5), Crisanto Santa Ana :: Live Free Productions (pg 6)

Saraswati Statue on front cover generously donated to White Swan by Serenity Tibet

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