

All Things Natural



photo: Anne Huber 2007

Morning Glory

The name for over 1000 species of flowering plants that are funnel shaped and open in the morning. Included in this family is the sweet potato. Historically they were first described in China for the laxative properties of its seeds. A species of morning glory was used in Mezoamerica in the process to change latex to rubber.

The seeds of a species native to Mexico were used by healers in order to gain knowledge and insight as part of ceremonial healing practices.

The flower essence of morning glory is associated with an energetic life force in touch with the rhythms of life.

Kirtan

Kirtan is a sacred chant done in "call and response" format. The kirtan wallah (leader) sings a mantra (sacred word or phrase) and the audience repeats it. This process continues -- sometimes over many minutes. The chant starts slowly and then builds to a rapid and energetic level -- driven by the voice of the wallah and the drums and instruments in use. As the chant nears its end, the pace again slows. Following the chant there is a period of silence -- bring all to a state of quiet contemplation. An evening of rhythmic chanting leaves one energized and alive.

An excellent new book on the subject and stories of noted wallahs is

Kirtan! Chanting as a Spiritual Path by Linda Johnsen and Maggie Jacobus, 2007. It is available at Sheepish and online at Sheepish.us. The cover is pictured at right.

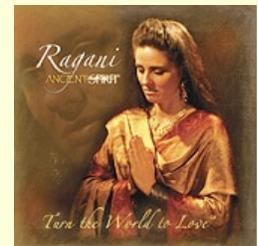
Ragani

The Milwaukee area is fortunate to be the home of the longest-running independent kirtan community in the US. Over the past 6 years, Ragani's kirtan has been a monthly first Friday fixture on the East (and now West) side of the city -- with hundreds of chanters at each event. For the September kirtan, Sheepish contributed 12 participants.

Ragani was trained in classical Indian music, but her instrumentation and style have a Western flavor that has found a home in the Midwest. Her guru, Swami Rama, founder of the Himalayan Institute, was both her first teacher and her inspiration. Ragani's interview in Linda Johnsen and Maggie Jacobus's book, Kirtan! is exceptional. By the way, Maggie was at the September event.

For those of you wanting to get an idea of what a kirtan is like, Ragani's two CD's:

Best of Both Worlds & *Ancient Spirit.*



are strongly recommended. They are available at Sheepish and online at Sheepish.us. Other kirtan artists represented at Sheepish include new releases by Deva Primal and Krishna Das (also both interviewed in Kirtan!).

Visit <http://www.raganiworld.com/> for information on Ragani's kirtan and other kirtan news.

Music and rhythm find their way into the secret places of the soul.

Plato (428B.C.-328 B.C.)

Meditation at Sheepish

For the past 5 years, there has been a meditation group meeting at Sheepish on Wednesday nights at 7:00 p.m. The meditation is led by our own Niiti who also plans a discussion each night. There is no charge.

By the way, kirtan is one of the paths to the stillness of the mind sought as part of meditation.

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* Five different honeys for your tea.



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Flowers in spring water -- left in the sun. The first step in making a flower essence.

The Neti Pot is a small ceramic or plastic pot containing water or a saline solution for nasal irrigation. Based on Ayurvedic principles, the practice is helpful for many chronic sinus conditions such as post-nasal drip, allergies, and sinusitis. Sheepish makes available the ceramic model from the Himalayan Institute as well as their plastic (blue version), neti pot salt, and several additives for specific conditions. We can also help you with learning to use one effectively -- of course instructions are provided in the box. These products are also available online.



A morning-glory at my window satisfies me more than the metaphysics of books.
Walt Whitman

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