



DEVOTIONAL MUSIC OF INDIA: Songs of the Saint-Poets

by

Dr. Krishnakant Shukla,
Varanasi

Wed., November 17, 2010, 7 p.m.

Bldg 420, room 50 (lower level), Stanford University.

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FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

While teaching physics and astronomy as an assistant professor in upstate New York, Dr. Shukla decided to leave academia and follow his heart and soul into the fathomless waters of Indian classical music. Having studied with great maestros like Srimati Laxmi Shankar, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, and Dr. Tapan Bhattacharya, he returned to India in 1994 to explore the roots of Indian classical music in the great living oral folk traditions. His musical search led him into remote villages in the Himalayan foothills, as well as far-flung and difficult to reach locations in the central plains. He has been particularly influenced by the songs of Kabir, Gorakhnath, and other nirguna bhakti poet-saints—songs that have been sung as part of a living oral tradition that is over six hundred years old. Dr. Shukla's repertoire includes compositions of Tyagaraja, Tulsidas, Surdas, Meera, Tukaram, Purandaradas and other poet-saints of India, as well as the musical compositions of Sufi saints. He has also been researching, recording and performing the folk songs of rural northern India, which, according to him, represent art forms of unparalleled beauty which are in danger of disappearing.

Dr. Shukla has performed widely in India and is currently touring the U.S. He has been recognized as a singer of devotional music by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, an agency of the central government that supports artists to represent Indian culture abroad. For more information, see www.krishnakantshukla.com

This program is presented in association with Religious Studies 159, "Music and Religion in South Asia."