

# celestial harmonies

music from india



GODDESS: divine energy  
music from india  
various artists  
celestial harmonies 13266-2  
upc 0 1371 13266 2 8

in praise of the goddess  
pt. premkumar mallik  
prashant, priyanka &  
nishant mallik  
celestial harmonies 13267-2  
upc 0 1371 13267 2 7

file classification: world

in praise of the goddess  
devotional songs from north india  
pt. premkumar mallik  
prashant, priyanka & nishant mallik



In India, the worship of the mother goddess is a living tradition which has existed in the Indus valley civilization, for more than four thousand years, since well before the Aryan migration and the advent of Vedic religion. Developing and broadening through the millenia, it has also been adopted and incorporated into Buddhism, and has grown into a rich and vibrant cult which is practiced today across all castes and divisions of Hindu society. The rituals surrounding worship of the goddess vary widely throughout India and the Himalayas, but they invariably include pilgrimages to temples and sacrifices to the goddess as well as the creation and perception of images and the utterance of sounds.

Goddesses are venerated as consorts of the gods, but her followers regard them as aspects of the one great mother goddess who is perceived as the supreme force and creatrix of the universe. She has an ambivalent and contradictory character, benevolent as well as terrifying. She is addressed as Devi or Shakti, the divine energy, but is known by other names as well: Amba, Ambika, Jagadamba, Kali, Bhagvati, Bhavani, and many others. Most commonly she is called Durga, and is usually represented surrounded by Karttikeya, the god of war, Ganesha, the lord over all obstacles, Saraswati, the goddess of music and learning, and Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.

This CD contains a wide variety of selections, ranging from the bamboo flute bansuri to sitar, harmonium, percussion, female and male vocals; the famous bells of the Durga temple in Varanasi are also heard as are acoustic/electronic sounds by David Parsons

In no other living religious tradition of the world is the veneration of goddesses — or rather, different aspects of the mother goddess — as important as in India. Since its earliest beginning, a major part of the Indian pantheon consists of females who play a special role in transmitting values which cannot be reciprocated by their male counterparts, reaching from graceful and nourishing aspects to the darker and more dangerous realms of the human psyche. The Mallik family — founded by the saintly singers Rashakrishna and Kartaram in the second half of the 18th century — has an unbroken history of venerating the mother goddess in all her different aspects. The songs featured on this CD — examples of a vast body of compositions transmitted in the family — provide ample proof of this long-lasting tradition.

The collection of songs on this CD is centered on Durga, the most venerated goddess in the Hindu Pantheon. She is regarded as the Shakti, the essence and counterpart of all the male divinities. When the buffalo demon Mahiṣāsura threatened to destroy the world, Durga was born from the fire emanating from the mouths of the gods. Due to her slaying of the demon which earned her the title of Mahiṣāsuramardani, she is regarded as the saviour of the universe. All other aspects of the primeval mother goddess are born from her. Usually she is represented surrounded by Karttikeya, the god of war, Ganesha, the lord over all obstacles, Saraswati, the goddess of music and learning, and Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. Her festival, the Durga Puja, is celebrated all over India for nine days during autumn in the month of Ashvin.

These recordings were inspired by and produced for **GODDESS: divine energy** - A major exhibition exploring the myriad imaginative expressions of divine female power in the art of India and the Himalayas at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney (13 October 2006 - 28 January 2007) in co-operation with Radio Berlin-Brandenburg (RBB), Berlin, Germany.



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