



SIVANANDA YOGA VEDANTA CENTRE SINGAPORE

APRIL '09 NEWSLETTER

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NEW LOCATION-from centre

APRIL Announcement

5 April, New Kids Class

10 April, Centre Close
for Good Friday

1-17 May, Centre Close

18 May, New Location

Expired Pass-card to
use-up in April

Yoga centre is moving into a new location in May! All classes will run as scheduled at current location (Spottiswoode Park Rd) till Thursday 30 April'09. Then there will be a break for 2 weeks between May 1st to 17th. We will start at new location 21B Bukit Pasoh Road on Monday 18 May'09. The new premises is sitting on 3rd floor of a nicely decorated conservation building, a 1,050 square feet area, with one changing-room and one restroom; the yoga centre will host more activities in addition of current scheduled yoga classes. There will be workshops and special yoga most recommended for people with special needs such as: back pain/stiff, arthritis, indigestion, constipation, insomnia, thyroid condition, weight loss, elderly and many more.

PASS-CARD-from centre

Notice: pass-cards that have expired on 31 December 2008 or earlier can not be used any longer after 30 April 2009 or at the new location. Regret that we have to draw a line for this matter as we have been giving enough time to finish up the pass-card, hope you understand our positions. Please come to practice, use up your card before 30 April'09.

YOGA IN YOUR LIFE-article

Many people are first drawn to yoga as a way to keep their bodies fit and supple-good to look at and to live in. Others come seeking help or relief for a specific complaint, like tension or backache. Some are merely impelled by a sense that they are not getting as much out of life as they could be. Whatever your reason, yoga can be a tool, an instrument for you-giving you both what you came for, and more. To understand what yoga is all about you need to experience it for yourself. At first glance it seems to be little more than a series of strange physical postures, which keep the body lean and flexible. But in time, anyone who continues with regular practice becomes aware of a subtle change in their approach to life-for, through persistently toning and relaxing the body and stilling the mind, you begin to glimpse a state of inner peace which is your true nature. It is this that constitutes the essence of yoga-this self-realization that we are all seeking, consciously or unconsciously, and towards which we are all gradually evolving. If you can bring your mind and thoughts under control, there is literally no limit to what you can do -since it its only our own illusions and preconceptions that hold us back and

your mind and thoughts under control, there is literally no limit to what you can do -since it is only our own illusions and preconceptions that hold us back and prevent us from fulfilling ourselves.

The Physiology of Yoga

Just as we expect our cars to depreciate in value with age, so we resign ourselves to the fact that our bodies will function less efficiently with the passing years-never stopping to ask ourselves if this is really necessary, or why it is that animals seem able to go on functioning well throughout most of their lives, while we do not. In fact, ageing is largely an artificial condition, caused mainly by auto-intoxication or self-poisoning. Through keeping the body parts clean and well lubricated, we can significantly reduce the catabolic process of cell deterioration.

In recent years, medical research has begun to pay attention to the effects of yoga. Studies have shown, for instance, that relaxation in the Corpse Pose effectively relieves high blood pressure and that regular practice of asanas and pranayama can help such diverse ailments as arthritis, arteriosclerosis, chronic fatigue, asthma, varicose veins and heart conditions. Laboratory tests have also confirmed yogis' ability to consciously control autonomic or involuntary functions, such as temperature, heartbeat and blood pressure. One study of the effects of Hatha Yoga over six months demonstrated the following effects: significantly increased lung capacity and respiration; reduced body weight and girth; an improved ability to resist stress; and a decrease in cholesterol and blood sugar level-all resulting in a stabilizing and restorative effect on the body's natural systems. Today there can no longer be any doubt about yoga's effectiveness as both a curative and preventive medicine.

-The Sivananda Companion to Yoga-

QUIET DETERMINATION-from students by Chi Cheng Hock

It was a warm afternoon at Fort Canning Hill that day in October 2006. I had already been practising yoga for more than half a year when I wandered around the exhibition stalls at the Holistic Living fair going on there. I stumbled upon a small stall, just a table really, at the far end of the walkway outside the main exhibition hall. Two young ladies, with pleasant smiles and quiet demeanour, were sitting behind the table, under a sign that said simply "Sivananda Yoga".

Yoga had been good to me. I took up the practice mainly to improve my flexibility. My usual answer to the question, "why yoga?" was always the tongue-in-cheek, "so that, if I live to 80, I can still tie my own shoelaces!" But yoga had given me much more than I had expected. I felt stronger, stood taller and my breathing and balance became steadier. People kept coming up to me and saying that I was looking better than before. Nothing else in my life then had changed very much, and so I had to credit my improved well-being to the yoga practice.

I was enjoying my practice sessions. I had a variety of teachers who introduced us to many different asanas, or yoga poses. They also helped me to learn to be more conscious of my breathing and my posture. I could have just happily continued at this school, learning new asanas from time to time.

However, as I stood at the table, I thought to myself, "why not try another school of yoga?" And, so, I put my name and contact details down on the registration list, and soon started my first Sivananda yoga class which was conducted in the Red Dot Traffic Building in December of the same year. Since then, I have always felt that it was my good fortune to have come across the school.

Sivananda yoga was a new experience for me. The standard routine of the pranayama or breathing exercises, sun salutations, the constant 12 asanas (with counter-poses and rest in-between asanas) and the closing savasana was very different from the practice in my first school, which I continued to attend at the same time. Someone not familiar with the Sivananda method may say, "How boring." However, I and many other practitioners find comfort in the routine. The Sivananda method and philosophy bring a steadiness to our practice and allow us to set clear goals for ourselves.

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We learn to develop concentration and equanimity with the pranayama breathing exercise and, at the same time, raise our energy levels. The sun salutations prepare our body for the physical exertions to come. This preparation helps us focus when performing the 12 asanas so that we become aware of the benefits we gain from each of them. The growing awareness makes it easy to find the motivation to improve in our practice. We also learn the value of patience and gradual progress and develop confidence as, with each passing session, we find that we get better at each asana. I have learnt to be more focussed and have slowly become more understanding of my body, not only of what it cannot do but also of what it can potentially achieve. In some ways, I have also started to understand my mind better. The counter-poses and rest in-between asanas teach us to re-balance and restore our body before moving on to the next asana.

The savasana, or corpse pose, at the end is as important as all that which comes before it. With the teacher's soothing guidance, we learn to be truly in touch with the different parts of our body as we mentally help our muscles, bones and organs to relax completely and absorb the benefits of our practice.

Step by step, we progress with the patient and kind guidance of our Sivananda yoga teachers. The two young ladies I met on Fort Canning Hill that October day are sisters named Janti and Susiyanti, but are better known as Janaki and Sumukhee to their students. They inspire us with their quiet confidence in our ability to become good yoga practitioners. Their calm and steady disposition, with no sign of irritation or impatience, and constant encouragement and sensitive instruction, help each of us find our own ways to reach deeper and higher. Certainly, our practice is all the more fruitful as we learn to trust their guidance, secure in the knowledge that they are teachers who have genuine care and concern for our well-being.

My wife, who joined me at the Sivananda Yoga Centre half a year ago, loves the Sivananda yoga method and looks forward to every session. With Janaki's and Sumukhee's nurturing, she can already move up to a half headstand, something which I am still aspiring to do, after more than 2 years of trying! However, if there is one thing which I have learnt, it is that we are all different and grow in each asana at different paces. Her progress has strengthened my resolve to keep on working on the asana, and building my confidence.

I am looking forward to more years of Sivananda yoga practice, but not because I am intent on mastering the headstand (although, I shall certainly be very pleased when I do so one day!). No, it is because these practice sessions have become the few precious hours I set aside each week to learn and appreciate the valuable lesson of cultivating quiet determination.

Om, Shanti, Shanti, Shanti. Om, peace, peace, peace.

May all beings be well and happy.

Cheng Hock

DANCE-DRAMA -where to go

Temple of Fine Arts (TFA) presents a unique dance-drama based on the book

Jonathan Livingston Seagull

by

Richard Bach and set to the music of Neil Diamond

on

Friday, 10th April to Sunday 12th April 2009
Victoria Theatre, 7p.m.

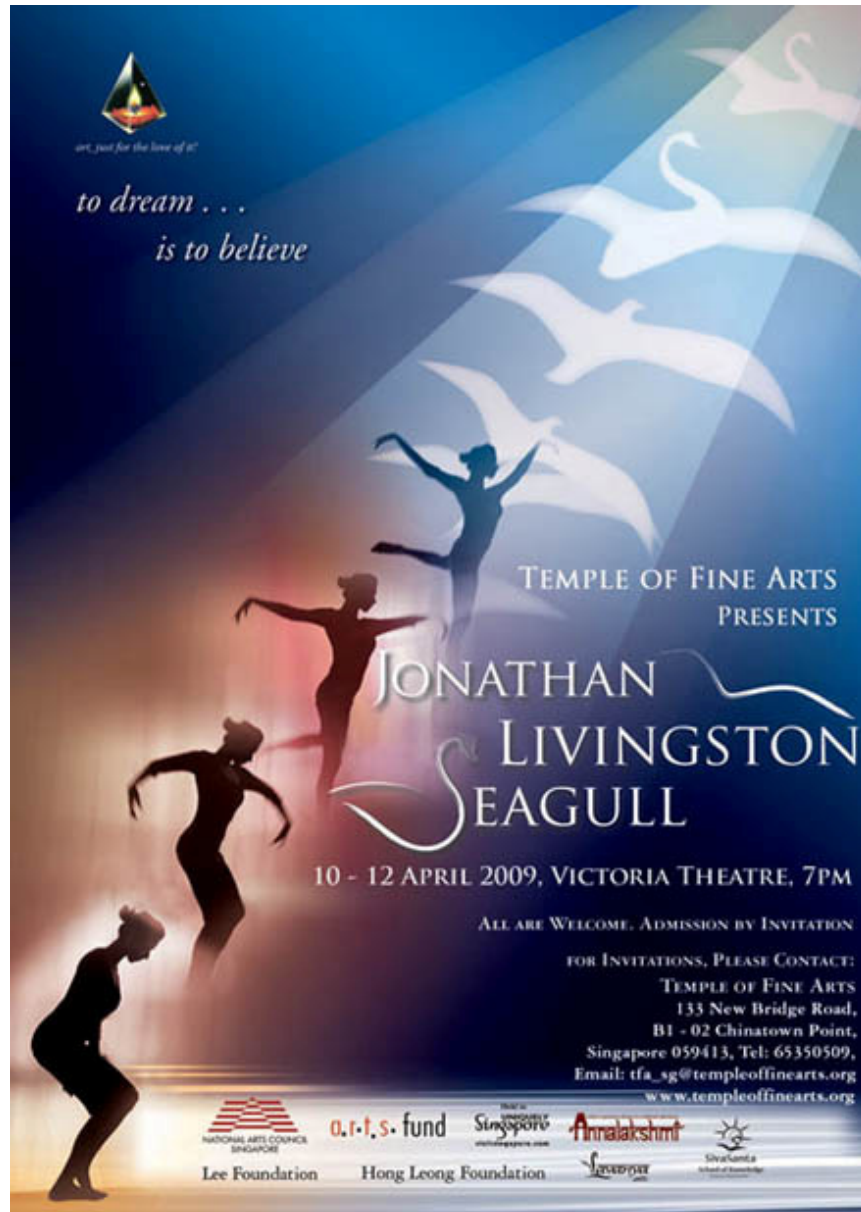
Come join us in this magnificent journey through a TFA production of spell-binding dance, drama, and music.

Call: 6535 0509 for your Invitation cards. Donations are graciously accepted with love.

Jonathan Livingston Seagull was first presented by TFA in Singapore in 1993. It is the story of you and me. It is the story of the struggles we all go through to find answers to some of life's recurrent questions;

Is there more to this daily grind? Is there more to my existence than making ends meet and staying ahead?

Can I find my 'perfection' in this seeming chaotic world we live in? Can I find my peace in this rat-race?



CLASS SCHEDULE

Time	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
8.45 - 9.45 am							Kids
10.00 - 11.15 am						9.30 - 10.30am Satsang	Beginner

10.00 - 11.15 am						10.30am Satsang	Beginner
10.45 - 12.00 pm						Open	11.30 - 12.45pm Open
12.15 - 1.30 pm						Beginner	
6.30 - 7.45 pm	Open	Open	Open	Intermedi-ate	Beginner		
8.00 - 9.15 pm	Intermedi-ate	Beginner	Intermedi-ate	Beginner	Open		

Description:

Satsang = 20 mins silent meditation, followed by Bhajan and Arati.

Beginner = work on coordination between breathing and basic postures; gaining flexibility.

Intermediate = start learning headstand and postures on strength training.

Open = intermediate to advanced students practice together (not suitable for beginner).

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