



Welcome to the February-April issue of the Drishti newsletter! As always, if you have any feedback or suggestions, feel free to e-mail us! Thanks for reading...

Drishti Newsletter February-April 2005

-The newsletter is best viewed in HTML format if possible!-
In this newsletter you will find the following sections:

- 1) What's New at Drishti
- 2) Yoga News
- 3) Upcoming Yoga Workshops & Events (in the SB area)

What's New at Drishti

The most significant bit of news regarding Drishti is that on February 9, 2005 we will be **3 years old!!** We are extremely grateful to all of you for your support of Drishti over the past 3 years. Who would have guessed a one-of-a-kind, stand-alone yoga store would live to see its 3rd birthday? The coveted selection of yoga/lifestyle essentials we offer has helped create a devoted base of customers, without whom Drishti couldn't exist. We will continue to seek the highest quality items on the market to make available at our store. Thank you for making Drishti's unique yoga business work!

In other Drishti news, our **yoga DVD** section is stocked with new selections. One compelling selection is the informative **Yoga Unveiled**, a new yoga documentary which attempts to chronicle the origins of yoga and how the practice came to the West. Featured on this film are interviews with B.K.S. Iyengar, Sri K. Pattabhi Jois, T.K.V. Desikachar, Georg Feuerstein, Dharma Mittra, Patricia Walden and Krishna Das, as well as footage of T. Krishnamacharya, Indra Devi, and others. This film ranks high on Drishti's recommended viewing list. Another thoughtful and unconventional offering is **Erich Schiffmann's** new DVD, **Freedom Style Yoga**. Rather than providing instruction, this DVD is a film of Erich and several of his friends practicing free-form yoga at Erich's home studio. Erich hopes that Freedom Style Yoga, which he filmed and produced himself, will inspire people in their own creative home practices. Another recent addition to our DVD section is Shiva Rea's new release **Sun Salutations**, which is a follow-up to her highly-popular first DVD **Yoga Shakti**.

In the **book world**, A.G. & Indra Mohans' **Yoga Therapy** is one of many new arrivals. In **Yoga Therapy**, the authors prescribe yoga poses and Ayurvedic advice for a variety of common health problems. A.G. Mohan was a student of T. Krishnamacharya for 18 years and both he and his

wife are respected yoga therapists. The new edition of **Kundalini Yoga for the West**, the classic guide to Kundalini Yoga by Swami Sivananda Radha, has just been released with new features and a new introduction. Bestselling author Jon Kabat-Zinn (**Wherever You Go, There You Are**) has just published a new book, **Coming to Our Senses**, in which he reiterates the importance of mindfulness as a tool for coping with stress and working toward an improved world.

In the **clothing department**, we continue to offer the beautiful and stylish selection of yoga/lifestyle clothing that is so coveted by our customers. We have too many new items to describe here. Come by anytime to take a look at our fabulous collections.

Yoga News

Has the Yoga Asana Championship Become Mainstream?

As we approach the dates of the **Yoga Expo** and its Second Annual International **Yoga Asana Championship** in Los Angeles (Feb. 19-20), we couldn't help but notice a lack of dialogue and debate amongst the yoga community about this upcoming event. Last year, the first yoga asana championship was treated as **controversial** (op-ed pieces in yoga publications, discussions between teachers and students regarding the ethics of such an event, etc.) Many yoga practitioners expressed with conviction the belief that a yoga competition was the very antithesis of the true nature of a yoga practice. But this year there appears to be **little to no dissent**. In fact, quite a few established yoga businesses are even sponsoring the event this year, including **LA Yoga Magazine**, **Lululemon Athletica**, and more. (Ironically, in the April 2002 issue of Yoga Journal, Lululemon ran a full-page ad promoting a 'yoga pose off' with a \$30,000 cash prize which enraged readers – until they went to Lululemon's website and were told that the ad was an April Fools joke.) Has our yoga community come to accept – or even embrace - the yoga asana championship?

The yoga championship is an event created by **Bikram Choudhury**, who founded and franchised his method of "hot yoga", now taught throughout the world in hundreds of locations. Bikram and his wife **Rajashree** were both yoga champions in India (Bikram from 1959-1962 and Rajashree from 1978-1982). They both assert that yoga championships have been an integral part of yoga in India for thousands of years. In a recent Op-Ed piece for the aforementioned LA Yoga publication (Nov/Dec 2004 issue), Rajashree stated, "While the concept of a yoga championship is fairly new in the United States, it is an age-old tradition in India... What most people in North America do not know is that yoga championships have been held as far back as 2,000 years ago." Bikram and Rajashree feel that this long-standing nature of yoga competitions gives the events credibility in today's world.

If you were to talk to academics, however, you might hear a different version of Indian history. **David Gordon White**, professor of Religious Studies and chair of the department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, is a leading scholar of the history of yoga and Tantra. When asked about yoga competitions, he responded, "Bikram maintains that they've been holding yoga asana competitions in India for the past 2,000 years. I think he's only off by about 1,975." And **Autumn Jacobsen**, a doctoral student of White's whose work focuses on the history of Hatha Yoga in India and the U.S. comments, "While sportive competitions may be part of Indian history, there is no way Hatha Yoga competitions date back 2,000 years as Bikram's wife Rajashree claims because Hatha Yoga did not even begin to develop until the 13th century (see David Gordon White's **The Alchemical Body**.) The mere existence of such a widely-advertised and promoted 'yoga competition' here in the U.S. leaves me reflecting about the variety of yogas

in America. While there is certainly no one 'yoga' in the U.S., for whom is yoga a sport? For whom is it more than a physical regime?"

Such perspectives seem to stand in opposition to Bikram and Rajashree's claims. Should yoga championships be embraced and accepted by yoga practitioners in America today? Or are they a modern invention that waters down the core practice of yoga? What is your opinion?

Local Yoga Studio Closes

Blue Lotus Feet Yoga Loft, which operated in Montecito for 2 _ years, closed in December, much to the dismay of the many yoga students who loved the loft's environment. **Francesca Hunter** was the studio's owner and one of its core instructors. When asked about her studio's closure, she expressed "a huge thank you to all who helped create a true sanctuary and a sweet memory." She also wanted to let people know that the BLFYL **yoga mat bags** that she designed and had made in India are now available at Drishti, in case anyone would like a memento from her yoga loft. Francesca's studio offered quality instruction, a full schedule, and a beautiful practice space. Our community will miss Blue Lotus Feet Yoga Loft very much, but we hope that Francesca's students will have the opportunity to learn from her in a new venue. Francesca has posted a note to her students on her website: www.bluelotusfeetyogaloft.com.

Local Yoga Instructor Spotted in Yoga Journal!

If you flip through the current issue of Yoga Journal (February 2005), you will find Santa Barbara-grown yoga instructor **Scott Blossom** featured as an asana model on pages 58-64. The article is titled "Beginner Tips for Triangle" and consists of an extensive description of the subtleties of Trikonasana (triangle pose) alongside photographs of the pose as expertly demonstrated by Blossom.

Sacred Movement Acquired by Exhale Spa

Sacred Movement Center for Yoga and Healing, the influential yoga studio in Venice known for its world-famous instructors, was purchased by **Exhale Spa**, a respected mind/body spa with four locations on the East Coast on January 3, 2005. "The merging of Sacred Movement Yoga and Exhale is very exciting," says Sacred Movement co-founder **Max Strom**. "Both are pioneers in their respective areas of healing and transformation. Both are genuinely dedicated to helping people on their journey toward health and consciousness." Sacred Movement was opened in early 2002 by renowned teachers Max Strom and **Saul David Raye**. Acclaimed instructors **Erich Schiffmann**, **Shiva Rea** and **Leslie Bogart** were also resident teachers. All but Max Strom came to Sacred Movement directly from careers at **Yoga Works**. Although Strom was teaching elsewhere before he founded Sacred Movement, his teaching livelihood actually began at Yoga Works as well. Yoga Works has received publicity recently due to its decision to expand from a 2-location business into a 15-studio chain. It is interesting that Sacred Movement, which was spawned in part by its roots at Yoga Works, is now following Yoga Works' path by merging with the chain-like business of Exhale Spa, which "plans to open 20 locations in urban markets throughout the United States." For more on the merging of these two businesses, visit http://www.exhalespa.com/press_release55.html.

Pattabhi Jois' World Tour Dates Posted

The locations and dates of **Sri K. Pattabhi Jois'** world tour have been posted at <http://www.ashtanga.com/html/Guruji2005.html>. Registration links are also included on this page. Jois will be traveling with his family and teaching led classes with his daughter **Saraswathi Rangaswamy** and his grandson **Sharath Rangaswamy**. This is an exciting opportunity for Ashtanga practitioners to experience live classes with Ashtanga Yoga's founder Sri K. Pattabhi Jois and his family without travelling all the way to Mysore, India!

Yoga in the News

Here are some **yoga-mentionings** that we found in recent **news media**. It's intriguing to see the ways in which yoga is portrayed by the mainstream press.

- On January 28, **USA Today** ran a story called ["Yoga Rooms Are All the Non-Rage"](#) about practicing yoga at home.
 - On January 25, Britain's paper **The Independent** featured a story entitled ["The Bikram Backlash: Madonna and Gwyneth Paltrow are flexible fans, but evidence is mounting that this radical form of yoga could be a stretch too far"](#).
 - On January 16, West Virginia's **Charleston Gazette** published an interview with Power Yoga instructor Bryan Kest entitled ["Workshop Instructor Explores Power of Yoga"](#).
 - On December 23, **The News & Observer** of Raleigh, NC printed a story entitled ["Yoga With Twists: Trainers Create Catchy Hybrids, But Traditionalists Fear the Spirit is Lost"](#).
 - On November 30, Pittsburgh's **Post-Gazette** published ["A Warm Encounter With Yoga"](#) about Bikram-style yoga.
 - On November 13, The **London Times** ran an article about Britain's first yoga competition entitled ["Looking For a New Position: Extreme yoga fans want the discipline accepted as an Olympic sport. But does competition have the right karmic spirit?"](#)
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Upcoming Yoga Workshops & Events

- Introduction to Meditation: Another Day in Paradox w/ Robert Broughton at Golden Tree Yoga
Friday, Feb. 4, 7:00-9:00pm, \$25
- Therapeutic Yoga Training w/ Cheri Clampett & Arturo Peal at White Lotus Foundation
Feb. 5 – 11, \$1350
- Global Dance w/ Kristen Hoyer at Golden Tree Yoga
Sunday, Feb. 6, 6:30-8:30pm, \$10
- Body Enlightening w/ Simon Park at Lulubandhas in Ojai
Sunday, Feb. 6, 2:00-5:00pm
- Beyond Vinyasa: The Three Realms of Consciousness w/ Seane Corn at Golden Tree Yoga
Saturday, Feb. 12, 1:00-4:00pm, \$40
- Living in the Now w/ Robert Broughton at Yoga Jones in Ventura
Saturday, Feb. 12, 2:00-4:00pm, \$15
- Be My Valentine Tantra Playshop w/ Lisa Citore at Golden Tree Yoga
Sunday, Feb. 13, 6:30-8:30pm, \$25 per couple
- Valentine Restorative Class w/ Nicole English & Daniel Bowen at The Yoga Studio
Sunday, Feb. 13, 3:30-5:30, \$25

- Chakras and Meridians w/ Paul Grilley at Lulubandhas in Ojai
Friday, Feb. 18 – Sunday, Feb. 20, \$150

- Sacred Breath, Pranayama Retreat w/ Ganga White & Tracey Rich at White Lotus Foundation
Friday, Feb. 18 – Sunday, Feb. 20, \$425

- Thai Massage & Yoga Weekend w/ Saul David Raye at Lulubandhas in Ojai
Friday, Feb. 18 – Sunday, Feb. 20, \$TBA

- Relaxation Bliss w/ Jay Schwed & His Healing Crystal Bowls at Golden Tree Yoga
Friday, Feb. 18, 7:00-9:00pm, \$25

- An Evening of Sacred Chanting w/ Shantala: Benji & Heather Wertheimer at Santa Barbara
Yoga Center
Friday, Feb. 18, 8:00pm, \$15

- Valentine's Day Partner Yoga & Thai Massage w/ Cheri Clampett & Victor Borda at Santa
Barbara Yoga Center
Saturday, Feb. 19, 1:30-4:00pm, \$60 per couple

- Global Dance w/ Kristen Hoye at The Yoga Studio
Sunday, Feb. 20, 6:30-8:30, \$12 suggested donation

- Restorative Yoga w/ Cheri Clampett at Santa Barbara Yoga Center
Sunday, Feb. 20, 1:30-4:00pm, \$40

- Shakti Rising: Women Weaving the Wonder of Movement w/ Sarah Kane at Golden Tree Yoga
Saturday, Feb. 26, 1:00-3:30pm, \$25

- Intuitive Alignment w/ Kat Connors-Longo at Santa Barbara Yoga Center
Saturday, Feb. 26, 1:00-4:00pm, \$38

- Learning the Ropes w/ Suza Francina at Yoga Jones in Ventura
Sat. & Sun., Feb. 26 & 27, \$40

- Chanting w/ Girish at Golden Tree Yoga
Saturday, Feb. 26, 8:00pm, \$15

- Healing the Sacred Feminine Through Erotic Dance Yoga w/ Niav Connor at Santa Barbara
Yoga Center
Saturday, Feb. 26, 7:00-10:00pm, \$45

- Yoga and the Life of Compassion vs. The Coming Military Draft w/ Dennis Rivers at The Yoga
Studio (an informative talk)
Sunday, Feb. 27, 7:00pm, FREE

- Yoga Teacher Training w/ Ganga White & Tracey Rich at White Lotus Foundation
March 5 – 20, ~\$1600

- Global Dance w/ Kristen Hoye at Golden Tree Yoga
Sunday, March 6, 6:30-8:30pm, \$10

- Chakras in Asana w/ Anne Van de Water at Santa Barbara Yoga Center
Sunday, March 13, 1:00-4:00pm, \$38

- Yoga Workshop w/ Shiva Rea at Golden Tree Yoga
Thursday, March 17, DETAILS TBA
- Receiving the Blessings of Our Lives w/ Edward Espe Brown at Golden Tree Yoga
Fri, Sat, & Sun, March 18, 19, & 20, \$30, \$75, & \$75 or \$160 full weekend
- Relaxation Bliss w/ Jay Schwed & His Healing Crystal Bowls at Golden Tree Yoga
Friday, March 18, 7:00-9:00pm, \$25
- Global Dance w/ Kristen Hoyer at The Yoga Studio
Sunday, March 20, 6:30-8:30, \$12 suggested donation
- Intro to Ayurveda w/ Felicia Tomasko at Santa Barbara Yoga Center
Sunday, March 20, 2:00-4:30pm, \$38
- Healing the Sacred Feminine Through Erotic Dance Yoga w/ Niav Connor at Santa Barbara
Yoga Center
Saturday, March 26, 7:00-10:00pm, \$45
- Thai Yoga Therapy w/ Saul David Raye at White Lotus Foundation
March 31 – April 8, \$1750
- Personal Practice Course w/ Heather Tiddens at Santa Barbara Yoga Center
Sat. & Sun., April 2 & 3 and April 9 & 10, \$180
- Restorative Yoga w/ Cheri Clampett at Santa Barbara Yoga Center
Sunday, April 3, 1:30-4:00pm, \$40
- Practicing & Teaching From Your Guts w/ Dana Flynn at Lulubandhas in Ojai
Wednesday, April 13 – Sunday, April 17, \$400
- Spirit Dance and Yoga Retreat w/ Ellen Watson at White Lotus Foundation
Friday, April 22 – Sunday, April 24, \$450
- White Lotus Weekend w/ Kent Bond at White Lotus Foundation
Friday, April 28 – Sunday, May 1, \$600
- Healing the Sacred Feminine Through Erotic Dance Yoga w/ Niav Connor at Santa Barbara
Yoga Center
Saturday, April 30, 7:00-10:00pm, \$45

You can find more information about these events at the websites of the studios hosting them:

[Ashtanga Yoga Shala](#)

[Golden Tree Yoga](#)

[Lulubandhas](#)

[Santa Barbara Yoga Center](#)

[White Lotus Foundation](#)

[The Yoga Studio](#)

[Yoga Jones](#)

What is it you want to change? Your hair, your face, your body? Why?
For God is in love with all those things and He might weep when they are gone.
-St. Catherine of Siena

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