

SHININGWORLD

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2016

HELLO, EVERYONE

from Sundari

MOST OF JUNE saw us preparing our home on the river for the seminar. James worked many hours a day getting the house and yard ready, and I was constantly occupied with arrangements for travel,



accommodations and catering for the seminar. We're happy to report that it was an unqualified success. The audios and videos will be available soon. At the same time, I jammed more or less non-stop on the *guna* book, which James is now editing. We've been promising it for so long, it's almost embarrassing to

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Left: At *The Yoga of Love* June seminar in Bend, Oregon.



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At the Berkeley, California, seminar last weekend. Much thanks to Vance and Erin Selover, who are in India, for the use of their yoga studio, and to Mark and Catherine for their splendid organization. James said it was one of the best seminars in recent memory.



James teaching at the Berkeley seminar.

mention it again, but we finally see light at the end of the tunnel! James will teach the *gunas* in Reigate, Surrey, England, in October. With its publication, our stable of basic texts is complete. This is not to say that more texts are not in the pipeline. Look for an illustrated edition of Shankara's *Atma Bodh* soon.

By *Isvara's* grace we actually managed some time off, a highlight being a hike in the mountains for a picnic along a beautiful stream, with our dear friend Susan Taylor. James has yet to wet a line; the fish are still safe!



Taking a rare break in the mountains of Oregon.

I returned to South Africa shortly after the end of the



With my daughter and granddaughter in South Africa.

seminar and will, sadly, be missing Trout Lake this year. We had decided to sell our apartment there and had a buyer, so I came early to settle things and pack up. We have since changed our minds and decided to keep the apartment until we know for sure what is happening with our Portugal plans. James will meet me here as soon as he can. ☸



Georg and James in Bend.

OUR NEW SOCIAL MEDIA WIZ

JAMES INVITED GEORG from Germany, a tech-savvy young man who is very keen on Vedanta, to spend a couple of months with him while I'm away. They are working on a series of audio books. James gets up early every morning while the house is dead quiet and records an hour or so of one of his books, and Georg edits it. *The Essence of Enlightenment* is almost complete and should be available in a month, perhaps sooner. Those of you with daily commutes can use the time profitably to do your inquiry. Even those of you who have busy lives that involve menial tasks which don't require a lot of attention can also benefit, not to mention that some people just learn better by hearing than

by reading. The Vedic tradition is called *sruti*, a Sanskrit word that means “heard.” The knowledge was committed to memory and chanted during the Vedic period and passed down to the modern era orally. When you hear the word spoken by someone who knows the truth, the meaning is very easy to grasp. ☸

SOCIAL MEDIA

RECENTLY, DUE TO the help of Georg and myself, our social media activity has been growing at an unexpectedly rapid rate. We now not only have a forum at the website, but here is the list of our media addresses. Both James and I make comments to interesting posts, particularly James. Social media are interesting environments. Check them out. Here are the links:



- ***Friends Who Like Non-Dual Vedanta Wisdom by James Swartz and ShiningWorld*** is the most active Facebook group presently.
- The ***ShiningWorld Facebook*** page.
- A series of interesting short *satsang* ***videos with Georg and James*** on our YouTube channel.
- And last but not least, don't forget our ***ShiningWorld forum***. ☸

A NEW ONLINE INTRODUCTION TO VEDANTA COURSE

TWO AMAZING ShiningWorld inquirers, Vinay, from India, and Lidija (also known as Samadhi), from Latvia, have created a wonderful online course, ***ExploreVedanta.com***, that offers the basics of Vedanta in an aesthetically pleasing and beautifully organized way.

The course will be published in Russian and Latvian soon. We will post the link at ShiningWorld presently. ☸



JAMES' INDIAN SON GRADUATES!

JAMES IS PARTICULARLY pleased that Mani, whom James befriended 14 years ago in Tiruvannamalai when Mani was in elementary school and, with the help of Ben and Susan, supported throughout his education, graduated last month from university in Chennai with an honours degree in computer science! He will soon be working in the technology industry. Way to go, Mani! We wish you all the success in the world, which you richly deserve after so many years of dedication to your studies. 🌟



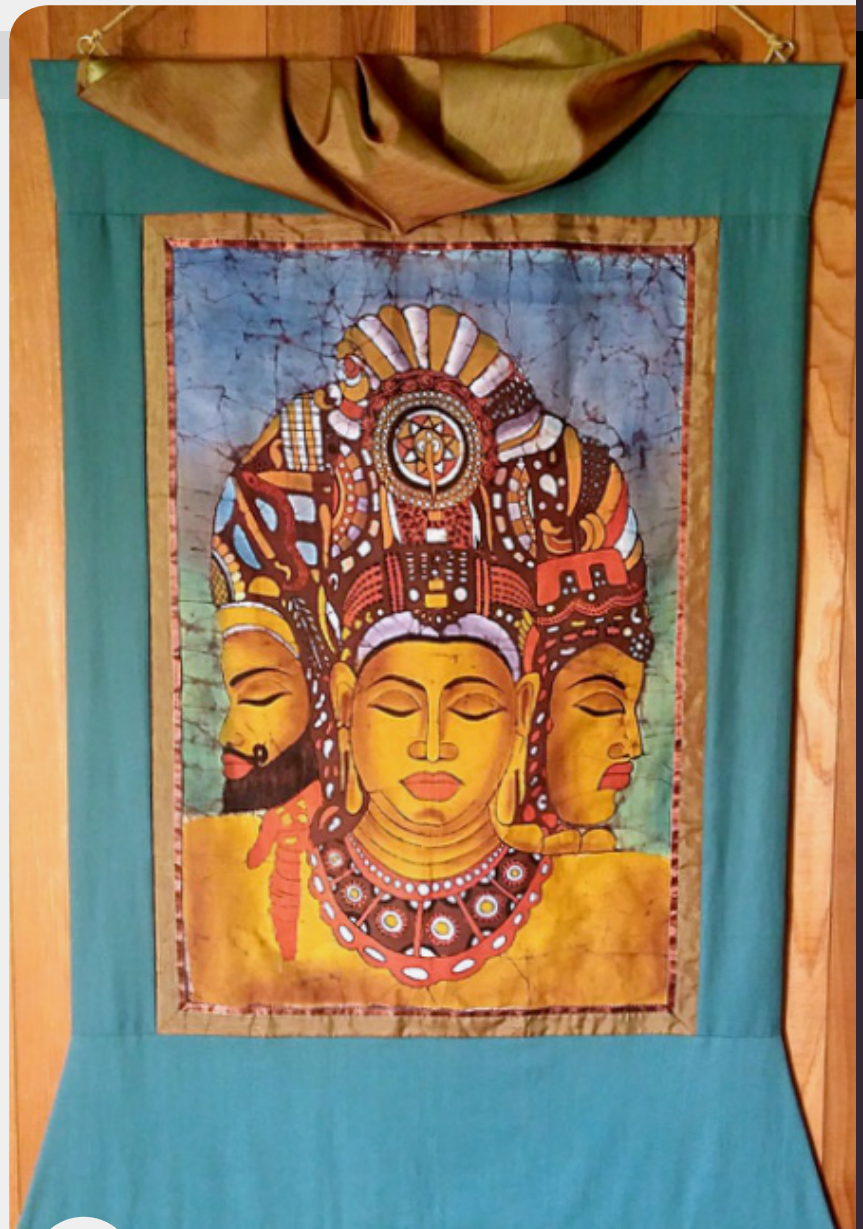
Mani, James' young friend from Tiruvannamalai, India, has graduated from university in Chennai.

THE THREE GUNAS

WE WANT TO thank Lisa Baxter for beautifying James' favourite symbol of the self, to which we offer worship daily. He picked it up in a bazaar in New Delhi forty years ago, and it has been around the world as many times as he has. Lisa, who is a quilter par excellence and one of our favourite people, made an absolutely fantastic *tanka** out of it, which now adorns one of the walls of our living room cum temple. It is called *Trimurti*, the three forms of the self: *rajas* as Brahma, the creator, *sattva* as Vishnu the preserver, and *tamas* as Shiva, the destroyer. 🌟

*A Tibetan name for a religious painting on a scroll, hung as a banner in temples and carried in processions.

Trimurti, the three forms of the self:
Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.



A SURFEIT OF BEAUTY

NOT TO BE outdone, Amy, a professional artist, gave us this amazing painting. The amorphous upper half represents the formless self from which *maya*, the dark circle (think of James' chart, below the line), emerges, with the sun on the right and the moon on the left (duality), and the beautiful bouquet of Vedanta teachings placed at the lotus feet (*bhakti*) of *Ishvara*, the Lord. These teachings, which are not different from the self, stand under us, just as our feet support our bodies. Thanks so much, Amy! ☸

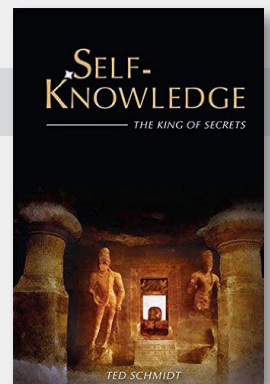
Below the painting is a bronze statuette of Shiva dancing as Nataraja, who destroys a weary universe and prepares it for Brahma's creative renewal.

His face impassive, he moves within a circle of fire, representing the manifest universe. His long, matted hair loosens during the *tandava*, the dance, and crashes into heavenly bodies, knocking them off course or completely destroying them. His upper left hand holds fire; his upper right hand is in the gesture of the *mudra* for fearlessness, bestowing protection from ignorance to those who uphold *dharma*. The lower left hand points towards the raised foot, which signifies upliftment and liberation; it points with the sign of the elephant which leads out of the jungle of ignorance. His right foot rests on a dwarf, the demon Apasmara, symbolizing Shiva's victory over ignorance. Around his waist is *kundalini*, the *shakti*, or divine force.



TED'S NEW BOOK

WE ARE MOST happy to announce the publication of Ted Schmidt's beautiful book, *Self-Knowledge: The King of Secrets*. Ted, as some of you know, is a teacher by profession and it definitely shows in this excellent work. We are terribly impressed with the clarity and quality of the writing. James said that with this level of Vedanta available in the King's English, he can finally relax. Don't miss it! It is available at his website, NeverNotPresent.com. Please support Ted in any way you can. He is a courageous person, about to resign his teaching position to teach Vedanta full-time, letting *Ishvara* take care of his getting and keeping. If you would like to host a seminar, invite him. He's the best! By the way, the cover features a photo James took in the Elephanta Caves, near Bombay, India, forty-five years ago. ☸



NEW SATSANGS

WE ARE HAPPY to report that we still have time to write *satsangs*. In fact we enjoy it very much. James has just posted 35 of them. They are all excellent, but he particularly recommends the following ([click link](#)):

- *The Eternal and the Non-Eternal Jivas*
- *What Is Bhakti?*
- *Words Have Come to an End*
- *Grieve Happily*
- *It Is and It Isn't* 🌀



Satsang is a compound Sanskrit word that means “keeping the company of the self.”

SEMINARS



YOU CAN CHECK the [events section](#) of the website for all details.

You don't want to miss our annual campout at **Trout Lake, Washington** state, from August 14 to 19. James will teach selected chapters from the *Bhagavad Gita* for *karma yoga*, selected verses from *Panchadasi* for *jnana yoga* and selected verses from *The Yoga of Love* for *bhakti yoga*.

James will be teaching in **Europe** this October, starting with **Belgium**, followed by **Amsterdam, Norway** and finally, **Reigate, Surrey, UK**. Please check the website for details.

Finally, you definitely don't want to miss **India** in January. Start getting your ducks in line now, as **Tiruvannamalai** promises to be a great event! 🌀

Arunachala (“red hill”) at Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu, India, is an important place for devotees of Ramana Maharshi, with Sri Ramana Maharshi Ashram at its foothills.



SOUTH AFRICA: A NEW EVENT FOR 2017

WE HAD NOT planned to return to South Africa next year, but with our change in plans will be doing so after India. We will be there from February to April and have factored in the time for a seminar in the Cape. For those interested, please contact Dan: danielbandits@gmail.com. All details soon to be released, but our provisional dates are March 18 to 21, 2017, and the venue is most likely going to be in Kalk Bay. ☸




SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

HERE'S GOOD NEWS for the subscribers to our ever-expanding Media Center: on July 11, 2016 we added eight new video sets! Here's the list:

- *Bhagavad Gita*: Bad Meinberg 2015
- *Panchadasi*: Bad Meinberg 2015 and Amsterdam 2016
- *Self Inquiry*: Connecticut 2016 and Bavaria 2014
- *Vivekachoodamani*: South Africa 2014
- *The Yoga of Love*: Berlin 2016 and Cologne 2016

NEW IN THE MEDIA CENTER



We've added 8 new video/audio sets to the [Media Center](#), including Panchadasi, Bhagavad Gita, and the Yoga of Love.

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

Check it out! For those of you who are not familiar with this service, you get access to all the ShiningWorld archives (hundreds of hours) for \$150 a year, which if you do your maths is a little over \$10 per month. It is a good way to support ShiningWorld and save money over the shop prices. To see why you should subscribe, what you get by subscribing and how to subscribe, click [here](#). ☸

FINALLY, AN APPEAL

IF ANY OF you ShiningWorld denizens have knowledge of how to set up a non-profit (educational) corporation and would like to share it, please contact James:

shiningworld@gmail.com ☸

