

Virtue of Your Soul



SOHAN KO

We are Sohan Ko and the band. Our wonderful musicians are Greg Higgs, Thomas Ford, Richard Bruce and Nella Banner.

Based in the Kootenays, British Columbia, we have been writing and playing medicine songs for years. My family, the community and I believe that music is a powerful tool to facilitate healing and growth during this challenging time in our world. Music connects us all. It holds vast power, helping us to remember past events, to incite powerful emotions, to take us on a journey to a new territory, or even to sow seeds for spiritual transformation. We hope that by sharing our music, this is what our album will do. We believe that Vine Of Your Soul has the ability to be used as a tool for reconnecting to our spirit and growing a deeper relationship with our true selves.

First of all, I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to our wonderful community and all the donors for supporting this project through our Indiegogo fundraising campaign. It has been 18 months in the making.

Thank you to all the musicians: Greg, Nella, Rich and Thomas for your talents, fun and commitment to bring this album to life. Thank you Greg for sharing four of your beautiful songs. Thank you Arnaldo for Quiero Cantarle. My deepest bow to our producer, Nella, for your amazingness and countless hours to complete this project. Thank you Barry for mastering all the songs. Thank you Joseph for your extraordinary art (@josephdavidnillo). Thank you Bowen for organizing the crowdfunding campaign and for your faith in me. Thank you Jerry for managing all the details and holding this project together. Thank you Jarah for inspiring me to create. At last, my deepest gratitude to all my loved ones for your ongoing love and support!

This album is dedicated to our work to help people with addiction, trauma and spiritual transformation.

Sohan Ko

September 22, 2022

1. Quiero Cantarle

Written by Arnaldo Sandy

Vocals and chakapa: Sohan Ko

Handpan: Thomas Ford

Lead guitar: Richard Bruce

Rhythm guitar: Greg Higgs

Quiero Cantarle a la vida
Con palabras bonitas
Quiero Cantarle a la vida
Con palabras que salen del alma
Quiero cantarle a amor
Con versos y poemas
Quiero Cantarle a amor
Con versos y poemas

Asi eres tu medicinita
Medicina curandera
Asi eres tu medicinita
Medicina curandera
Cura cura cuerpecito
Limpia limpia espirititos
Cura cura cuerpecito
Limpia limpia espirititos

2. Tai Tai Timbira

Written by Rosa Giove

Arrangement by Sohan Ko, Greg Higgs and Nella Banner

Vocals and chakapa: Sohan Ko

Guitar: Greg Higgs

Violin: Nella Banner

Tai tai timbirai
Tai tai ashé
Tai tai timbirai
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé

Como las flores se nutren de la tierra
Así mi alma se nutre de Dios

Tai tai timbirai
Tai tai ashé
Tai tai timbirai
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé

Con la miel curas y con el espíritu
Cura mi alma y mi corazón

Tai tai timbirai
Tai tai ashé
Tai tai timbirai
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé

No es la materia sino el espíritu
Que crece y crece al compartir

Tai tai timbirai
Tai tai ashé
Tai tai timbirai
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé

No son los ojos ni la razón
Es el corazón quien ve el camino

De la sanación
Tai tai ashé
Tai tai timbirai
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé, ashé, ashé
Tai tai ashé

Profound gratitude and respect to the late Rosa Giove (cofounder of Takiwasi Center in Peru) who dedicated her life to bridging the gap between western medicine and traditional wisdom, helping people on a recovery journey. We learnt of her passing during the process of getting permission to cover her song and wish to pass on the vibration of healing that the song was founded on. Taitai Timbira is the spirit that Doña Santana channels in Brazil, who turns flower petals into honey with which she performs miracles of healing to hundreds of faithful who visit her daily.

3. Namostute (I bow to you)

Written by Sohan Ko

Vocals: Sohan Ko

Ukulele: Sohan Ko

Guitar: Greg Higgs and Richard Bruce

Percussion: Thomas Ford

Namostute, namostute, namostute, namostute
Dissolves in the space where everything is a song for the God
Resonate with your heart strings

Namostute, namostute, namostute, namostute

Embraced by your grace
Bask in your sweetness and your radiance
Oh love is space, love is space
Love is grace

Namostute, namostute, namostute, namostute

Stay in the present, you only have this moment
Feel your feet walking on the ground
I bow to you, I bow to you
I pray to you

Namostute, namostute, namostute, namostute

With every song we chant to the mountain top
Every breath we breathe to the heart of the ocean

Emotion
Creation

Namostute, namostute, namostute, namostute

Thank you for the joy and sorrow, and
Every laughter and tears
I'm grateful for your love
It's the sunshine of my soul

Namostute, or Namaste, means the divine light within me bows to the divine light within you.



4. Song of Compassion

Written by Sohan Ko

Vocals: Sohan Ko

Ukulele: Sohan Ko

Guitar: Greg Higgs and Richard Bruce

Percussion: Thomas Ford

Violin: Nella Banner

Om tare tuttare ture soha
Om tare tuttare ture soha
Let the seed of ancient wisdom
Grow into your heart of existence
Let it go, let it flow, let it grow

If you open your heart light will come to you
If you open your heart love will come to you
Let the song of ancient wisdom
Lead you to your heart of compassion
Let it guide, let it fly, let it shine

Om tare tuttare ture soha
Om tare tuttare ture soha
Om tare tuttare ture soha
Om tare tuttare ture soha

"Om tare tuttare ture soha" is the mantra of Tara, the Divine Mother in Buddhist tradition. She is the embodiment of compassion, wisdom and protection. Tare means liberation from suffering. Tuttare means to liberate from the eight kinds of fear: ignorance, jealousy, anger, pride, attachment, doubt, greed, wrong views. Ture means liberation from illnesses in our body, mind and spirit. By reciting the mantra, we ask for transformation and enlightenment.

5. The Wheel of Life

Written by Sohan Ko

Vocals: Sohan Ko and Richard Bruce

Ukulele: Sohan Ko

Guitar: Greg Higgs and Richard Bruce

Percussion: Thomas Ford

Violin: Nella Banner

Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

Let go of your attachment, be gone with the flow of life
Let go of your attachment, be gone with the flow of life
Let go of your illusion, be gone with the pulsing of life
Let go of your illusion, be gone with the pulsing of life

Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

Let go of your attachment, be gone with the flow of life
Let go of your attachment, be gone with the flow of life
Let go of your illusion, be gone with the pulsing of life
Let go of your illusion, be gone with the pulsing of life

Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

Let go of your attachment, be gone with the flow of life
Let go of your attachment, be gone with the flow of life
Let go of your illusion, be gone with the pulsing of life
Listen to your heart, listen to your soul, gone beyond the wheel of life
Listen to your heart, listen to your soul, gone beyond the wheel of life

Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

Let go of your attachment, be gone with the flow of life
Let go of your attachment, be gone with the flow of life
Let go of your illusion, be gone with the pulsing of life
Listen to your heart, listen to your soul, gone beyond the wheel of life
Listen to your heart, listen to your soul, gone beyond the wheel of life

Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha
Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

"Om gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi svaha" is the mantra from Buddhist scripture 'The Heart Sutra'. It can be translated as "Gone, gone, gone beyond, be completely gone beyond to the shore of enlightenment, wow!" The wheel of life represents the perpetual cycle of births and deaths. It has six realms: the hell realm, the hungry ghost realm, the animal realm, the human realm, the demi-god realm and the god realm. Nirvana, is the liberation from the endless sufferings coming from greed, hatred and ignorance.



6. Samsara Sound

Written by Greg Higgs

Vocals: Sohan Ko and Greg Higgs

Guitar: Greg Higgs

Violin: Nella Banner

Time...

goes around, round and round, Samsara sound

Time...

slows down, slow... breathe

Breathe...

to the sky, into the Earth, into her soul

Breathe...

breathe in, breathe out, breathe within

Breathe in the pain, the fears, darkness and the tears

Breathe in the pain, the fears, darkness and the tears

Breathe out your joy, your light, your love and the truth

Breathe out your joy, your light, your love and the truth

Truth spreads like a wildfire burning in the night

What seems wrong might just be right

Blinded by the shadows of time upon time

Seeing through the veils of the emptiness of mind

Find without seeking, and find without seeking

And seek without finding, and seek without finding

And know (grow)

Samsara, in Buddhism, means the seemingly endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth - a perpetual cycle of suffering that is driven by the so-called three poisons of anger, desire and ignorance.

Tonglen is a practice to cultivate compassion and selflessness. We breathe in suffering and darkness, and we breathe out light, love, joy and boundless compassion. Through this practice we become a force of change that lifts all sentient beings from suffering.

7. Vine of Your Soul

Written by Sohan Ko

Vocals: Sohan Ko and Richard Bruce

Ukulele: Sohan Ko

Guitar: Greg Higgs

Violin: Nella Banner

Percussion: Thomas Ford

I look upon the stars shining through the night
I remember in the essence we are light
I listen to the silence before words arise
Feel the heart space open wide
I see the depth of blue in the sky
Reflecting your true nature in my eyes
I smell the scent of forest, coming alive
Feel the spirit of the sacred fire

The fire of your soul
Burning in eternity
Be free, create your destiny
Stand up tall and sing aloud with thee

I look upon the stars shining through the night
I remember in the essence we are light
I listen to the silence at the dawn of time
Feel the heart space open wide
I see the depth of blue in the sea
Reminding me the truth, simply be
I smell the scent of forest, my mother earth
My home, my home, my home

The Vine of your soul
Guiding me, infinitely
To love ourselves in harmony
Live the truth and walk this path with thee

The fire of your soul
Burning in eternity
Be free, create your destiny
Stand up tall and sing aloud with thee

Stand up tall and sing aloud with thee
Live the truth and walk this path with thee

8. Ode to Gayatri

Written by Sohan Ko

Vocals: Sohan Ko

Ukulele: Sohan Ko

Guitar: Greg Higgs

Violin: Nella Banner

Om Bhur Bhuvah Swah
Tat Savitur Varenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi
Dhiyo Yo nah Prachodayat

In the times of troubling confusion,
Lost and tumble in broken connections,
I am blinded by the shadows in my mind.
May you shine the light like a prayer in the night

Om Bhur Bhuvah Swah
Tat Savitur Varenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi
Dhiyo Yo nah Prachodayat

Feel the pain from our separation,
You and I, are the flames in fragmentation,
Cold and lonely, isolated in my fear.
May we love one another in truth and unity

Om Bhur Bhuvah Swah
Tat Savitur Varenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi
Dhiyo Yo nah Prachodayat

Arise from the dream world, souls transitions
Birth and death, wake and dream, cycling in action,
We grow and learn, shining in our souls.
May the source of light illuminate my heart and my mind

Om Bhur Bhuvah Swah
Tat Savitur Varenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi
Dhiyo Yo nah Prachodayat

May you shine the light like a prayer in the night
May the source of light illuminate my heart and my mind
Dhiyo Yo nah Prachodayat
Dhiyo Yo nah Prachodayat

In the beginning there is the Whole, then there's the split into "You" and "I". It is the very first suffering of separation in human experience. The darkness, fear and isolation are all part of the process of returning to the Light. This is a song to pray for Gyatri, the mother of the Vedas, to illuminate our mind and our heart, to shine light on our path back home.

9. Death my friend (Padmasambhava song)

Written by Greg Higgs

Vocals: Sohan Ko

Guitar: Greg Higgs

Ukulele: Sohan Ko

Violin: Nella Banner

From the burning ghats to the charnel grounds
My sense of death is heaven bound
From the burning ghats to the charnel grounds
Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padme Siddhi Hum
Om Ah Hum

From the burning ghats to the charnel grounds
My bones are scattered across the land
From the burning ghats to the charnel grounds
Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padme Siddhi Hum
Om Ah Hum

As the eagle flies across the sky
Her talons stretch my heart to cry
As the eagle flies across the sky

Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padme Siddhi Hum
Om Ah Hum

Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padme Siddhi Hum
Om Ah Hum

Death, death my friend

"Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padme Sidhi Hum" is a mantra of Padmasambhava, the second Buddha, the Lotus Born Buddha. "Om Ah Hum" are the three seed syllables, representing body, speech and mind. They can also represent the three jewels in Buddhism: Buddha (the full embodiment of our highest potentials), Dharma (the teachings, being the protection of our hearts), Sangha (the spiritual community). Vajra means the indestructible truth; Guru means the spiritual teacher; Padme means the lotus, the purity; Siddhi means enlightened mind and wisdom. Tibetans bring dead bodies to the charnel grounds - high in the mountains where the vultures and other scavengers are invited to come and devour the rotting flesh. Death is not an end, but a transitory state.



10. Ista (The first mother)

Written by Greg Higgs

Vocals: Sohan Ko and Greg Higgs

Guitar: Greg Higgs and Richard Bruce

Violin: Nella Banner

Hand drum: Sohan Ko

Hear the drums echoing in the trees
Feel the spark of the fire that we need
To stay warm through the night and share our dreams
That the trees grow strong and the rivers...
Rivers runs free

Wayala wayala wayala wayala
Wayala wayala wayala wayala
Wayala wayala wayala wayala
Wayala wayala heyawalaa wayala
Wayala wayala heyawalaa wayala

Hear the ancestors singing through the trees.
Smell the rain, the mist, the cedar and the sea
Where the masks of the raven and the thunderbird tell me
To dance with the Earth and let her...
Let her dance with me

Wayala wayala wayala wayala
Wayala wayala wayala wayala
Wayala wayala wayala wayala
Wayala wayala heyawalaa wayala
Wayala wayala heyawalaa wayala

Hear the stories that are weaving through the trees.
Trees that fill the land and help us to breathe
In the air that gives us courage to believe
That we are the Earth and she...
She'll always be free

Wayala wayala wayala wayala
Wayala wayala wayala wayala
Wayala wayala wayala wayala

Wayala wayala heyawalaa wayala
Wayala wayala heyawalaa wayala

The origin stories of the Nuxalk people tell of a place called Ista [pronounced ee-sta] where the first woman descended to the earth. In 1995, Nuxalk elders, youth and hereditary chiefs, along with their invited supporters, traveled to this remote island to protect the sacred area from clearcut logging. I remember the elders talking about this as a sense of duty rather than an act of defiance. Their courage and determination inspired many people around the world to take action to help save the Great Bear Rainforest, the world's largest coastal temperate rainforest. With deep humility, I wrote this song as an offering to the Nuxalk people, the forests and the spirits, past, present and future. I also wrote this as a way to process a deep and transformative period of my life that I am still trying to understand today. The words of the chorus are borrowed from the Nuxalk welcome song, which was sung by the youth with an indescribable combination of strength and humility while the RCMP approached to arrest and jail everyone. In memory of Quatsinas, Nuximlayc, Nunanta (Amanda Siwallace), Skwucwlikwana (Lucy Mack) and Rita Snow.

11. Love is Always Here

Written by Sohan Ko

Vocals: Sohan Ko and Richard Bruce

Ukulele: Sohan Ko

Violin: Nella Banner

Guitar: Greg Higgs

Percussion: Thomas Ford

Piano: Sohan Ko

Floating through the clouds of magic and mysteries
My body dissolves away from me
Beyond the clouds the sun is shining over me
The love we share is always here

Moving though the tides, ride on the waves
Willing to change, be brave
In illusion we separate, but we will never be apart
The seed is growing in your (our) heart

Floating through the clouds of magic and mysteries

My fear melts away from me
Beyond the storm the sun is shining over me
The song we sing is always here

Moving though the tides, ride on the waves
Willing to change, be brave
In illusions we separate, but we will never be apart
The seed is growing in your (our) heart

Floating through the clouds of magic and mysteries
My mind returns to home and peace
Beyond the sun the stars are shining over me
The truth we seek is always here

Moving though the tides, ride on the waves
Willing to change, be brave
In illusions we separate, but we will never be apart
The seed is growing in your (our) heart

12. Go Where You've Never Been

Written by Greg Higgs

Vocals: Sohan Ko, Greg Higgs, Richard Bruce and Nella Banner

Guitar: Greg Higgs

Violin: Nella Banner

Let illusions which have built up around you crumble
Let illusions which have built up around you crumble
Dissolve all sense of self and
Dissolve all sense of self and I
Go where you've never been
Go where you've never been
And when you've got there
And when you've got there go again