

The Perfect Jewel

The Gyuto Monks Tantric Choir

Sacred Chants of Tibet





The Gyuto Tantric Choir here intones excerpts from their most important chants in a continuous stream of sound. To provide a variety of sounds, the Chant Master selected these segments from much longer chants for their power and sonic beauty.

TRACK ONE – solo, choir, small bells (drilbu), small drum (damaru)

A) INITIATION CEREMONY OF GUHYASAMAJA TANTRA (0:00-8:00)

Tibetans believe that every living being has the potential to achieve Enlightenment. The vast number of Tantric deities reflect the infinite variety of human temperaments and cultural conditions. Focusing on the potential for enlightenment, Tantric meditators visualize themselves as one of these Buddhas. During this ceremony monks and nuns visualize themselves as the deity Guhyasamaja in order to reach Enlightenment sooner.

B) OFFERING OF SEVEN ROYAL EMBLEMS. (8:00-14:17)

Tibetans think of Buddhas as conquerors: they have overcome armies of their own errant thoughts and discordant emotions and created an inner peace that can spread far beyond their individual selves. The Seven Signs of Royalty, ancient Indian symbols of a universal emperor, reflect this belief. They are: the wheel of universal rule, the perfect jewel, the perfect empress, the perfect prime minister, the perfect elephant, the perfect steed, and the perfect general.

C) CONSECRATION CEREMONY OF YAMANTAKA "RAINING GOOD FORTUNE" (14:17-25:42)

Whenever a sacred object is made, consecration infuses it with the essence of the spiritual being it portrays. The chant creates a sacred space, invoking the blessing of the Lord of Transcendent Wisdom.

D) EIGHTY THOUSAND OBSTRUCTIONS (25:42-28:00)

An ancient ceremony of exorcism and blessing that Tibetans used long before Buddhism came to Tibet. The Buddhist ritual invokes the auspicious energies of all enlightened beings to pacify the 80,000 kinds of demonic obstructers, free us from disturbing and harmful situations, and create abundant harmony.

TRACK TWO – solo, choir, small bells (drilbu), small drum (damaru), large drums (nga), short trumpets (kangling), long trumpets (dungchen), horizontal cymbals (rolmo), vertical cymbals (silnyen)

E) OFFERING OF TEA (0:00-16:43)

To encourage Mahakala to use his awesome powers for the good of the spiritual community and the world at large, the monks visualize a wide range of pleasing offerings for the divine enlightened beings of all four Tantras.

F) MAHAKALA CHANTING (16:43-27:51)

Six-armed Mahakala is chief among the Fierce Protectors of the Buddhist path. The monks invite Mahakala to manifest himself. They lavish gifts and praise on him. Reminding him of promises he made to Buddhas past, the monks petition Mahakala to nurture their spiritual practices and to protect the earth and all beings that live upon it.

G) PRAISE AND REQUEST TO KALARUPA (27:51-29:07)

Praising each deity invoked is an important part of Tibetan ritual. This prayer poetically describes the superhuman power and wisdom of the fierce deity Lord Dharmaraja, known as "Protector Kalarupa," which can demolish inner and outer obstacles to progress in meditation, and extend powerful helping hands in times of danger and joy.

All music traditional. Arranged by Gyuto Tantric Choir. Published by Ice Nine Publishing (ASCAP).

2,500 years ago in India, the Buddha realized enlightenment and founded his teaching of freedom, love, and wisdom. Buddhism slowly spread all over Asia, coming to Tibet in the 7th century A.D. By the 15th century, Tibetan Buddhism had become the conservatory of the complete array of ancient knowledge, long lost to invasions and holocausts in outer Asia. Huge monastic universities were founded in Lhasa, and students came from many regions to cultivate enlightenment.

To preserve the most advanced and esoteric teachings, the Gyuto Tantric University was founded in 1474 by Jey Kunga Dondrub, a graduate of the older Gyume Tantric University. Monastic training was based on the rituals of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*. From practice of its unexcelled yogas, unique arts and sciences emerged. In particular, a type of multiphonic chanting was developed, in which each monk sings two or three tones simultaneously. This transcendently beautiful sound is the result of many years of practice and dedication.

Gyuto grew from the original 32 disciples to over 900. They spent their days and nights in prayer, study, contemplation, and practice of ritual arts, including making tankas and mandalas both with paint and colored sand; sculpture in metal, clay, and butter; chanting and spiritual healing. They were often invited in small groups all over Tibet, to perform ceremonies blessing the land and people. In 1949 China invaded Tibet and began systematic suppression of Buddhism, the center of Tibetan culture. Many monks and nuns were jailed or killed. After the Lhasa massacre in 1959, only 90 Gyuto monks were able to follow His Holiness the Dalai Lama into exile in India. They have since reestablished their University at Tenzin Gang in a remote area in North East India, and have initiated over 400 monks of the younger generation.

In 1987, tensions between Tibetans and Chinese increased dramatically, and refugees again flooded into India and Nepal. Many young men wanted to use their freedom to become Gyuto monks. To accommodate this need, Gyuto leaders decided to construct a larger monastery in Dharamsala near the residence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, where 500 new monks could be trained. To raise funds, they traveled to Europe and the USA to perform their ceremonies for the Western public, sharing the splendor of Tibetan culture, and blessing the entire planet. They succeeded in this project, and most buildings are now completed. Subsequent tours have raised funds for improved facilities and expanded educational programs.

It is important to remember that these chants are not intended as entertainment, but as prayer. Further, the selections presented are only small parts of rituals that may take many hours or days to perform in full.

PRODUCED BY MICKEY HART FOR 360° PRODUCTIONS

Recording Engineer: **TOM FLYE**

Assistant Engineer: **JEFF STERLING**

Mixed by **TOM FLYE** and **MICKEY HART**

Production Coordinators: **DANNY RIFKIN** and **CAMERON SEARS**

Recorded at Studio X in April 1995

Recording session coordination: **HOWARD COHEN**

Mixed at Club Front Studio

Assistant Engineer: **RUDDSON SHURLIFF**

Monitor EQ: **DR. DON PEARSON**

Remix Production Coordinator: **LIZ DELONG**

Thanks to **JEFFREY NORMAN**

Mastered at Future Disc Systems

Mastering Engineer: **STEVE HALL**

Digital Transfer and CD Mastering: **STEVE HALL**

Introduction Liner Notes: **HUSTON SMITH**

Liner Notes: **THUPTEN DONYO** and **THUPTEN JINPA**

Series Ethnomusicology Consultant: **FREDRIC LIEBERMAN**

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Thanks to **ARTHUR MANN** and **GEORGE HOWARD** at Rykodisc.

Special Thanks: Caryl and Reya Hart for the love and light they always send my way, Lois Cohen, Grateful Dead Productions for their generous studio space, Robert A.F. Thurman and to Gyuto Vajrayana Center, San Jose.

For more information on the Gyuto Monks visit www.gyuto.org, or write

Gyuto Sacred Arts, P.O. Box 358, San Rafael, CA 94915

For information on Mickey Hart's THE WORLD series, visit: www.mhart.com

Text Notes:

At the Studio X recording session, The Gyuto Monks were recorded using a selection of high quality Neumann and AKG Vintage Condenser microphones in a close field miking technique. Additionally, four stereo pairs were placed at graduated distances to capture the ambience of the large studio space.

The Monks overdubbed their own chanting several times, to achieve the sound of a much larger choir typical of their home monastery.

This project was recorded using a NEVE 8058 Console onto three Studer 24 track Analog Tape Recorders with Dolby SR Noise reduction. It was mixed on a NEVE VR Console to a 1/2-inch Ampex ATR 102 Analog tape machine with Dolby SR.

Meyer 833 Monitors were used throughout the project.

The Gyuto Monks Tantric Choir:

Abbot Tenzin Sherab

Lobsang Tsering

Konchok Tenzin

Lobsang Phuntsok

Jigme Tsering

Sonam Wangchuck

Thupton Dhondup

Thupton Norbu

Thupton Choney

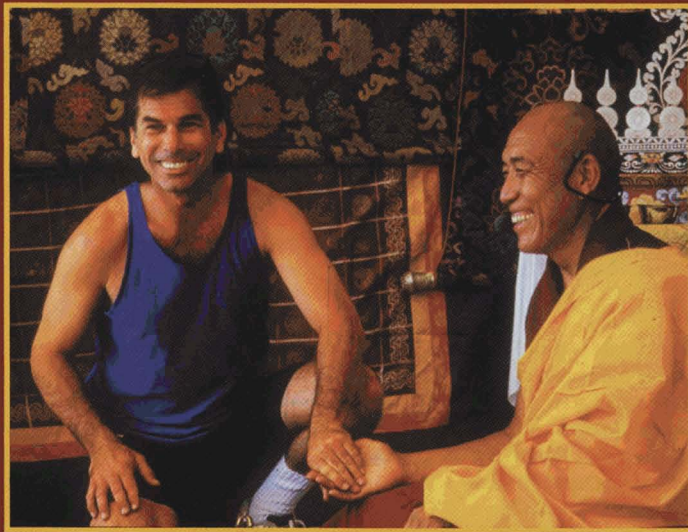
Tenzin Chotak

Tenzin Norgyal

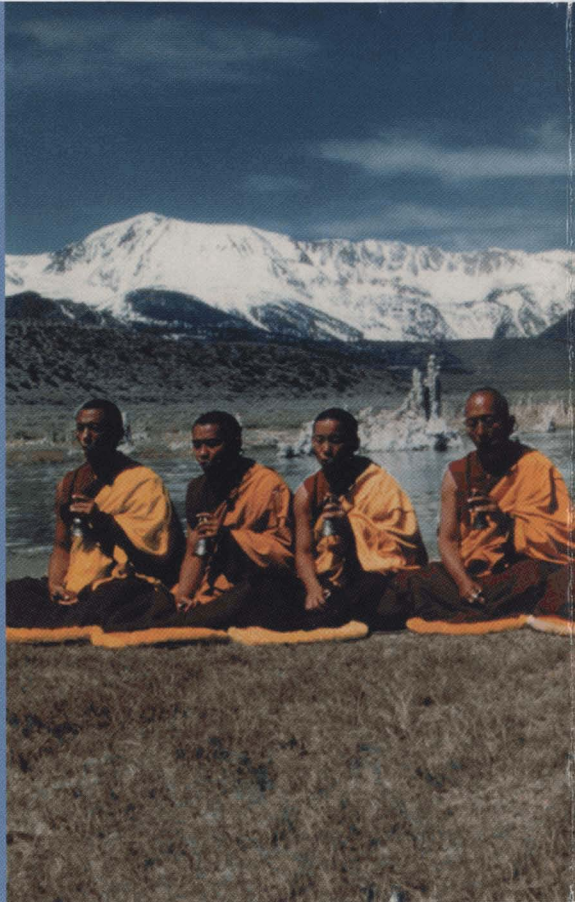
If there is one thing I would like to be remembered for, it is not that I wrote *THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS*, which has become a standard textbook for introductory courses. Nor is it Bill Moyer's 5-part PBS series, *THE WISDOM OF FAITH*. Rather, it is that mine were the first western ears on which the chanting of the Gyuto monks comprehendingly fell. This made me the conduit through which this astounding vocal phenomenon was transmitted to Europe and America.

That sound has introduced a new phrase into the lexicography of musicology, "multiphonic chanting," defined as multiple tones emanating from a single larynx. First coming to me in the pre-dawn darkness of the Himalayan range, it was and has remained the holiest sound I have ever heard.

Though I published the first recording of Gyuto multiphonic chanting, it is Mickey Hart's indefatigable labors (through multiple coast-to-coast sellout tours for which he mobilized the infrastructure of the Grateful Dead, and CDs that have improved in quality over three generations of recordings) that have brought the Gyuto monks into the spotlight of the world acclaim. —HUSTON SMITH



Ever since first hearing Huston Smith's recordings of the Gyuto monks in 1969, these amazing and inspiring sounds have been my constant companions. With kindness and compassion, the monks chant for freedom, hope, and peace. We therefore dedicate this recording to the promise of a safer and better world. —MICKEY HART



RCD 10626



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The Gyuto Monks

Tantric Choir

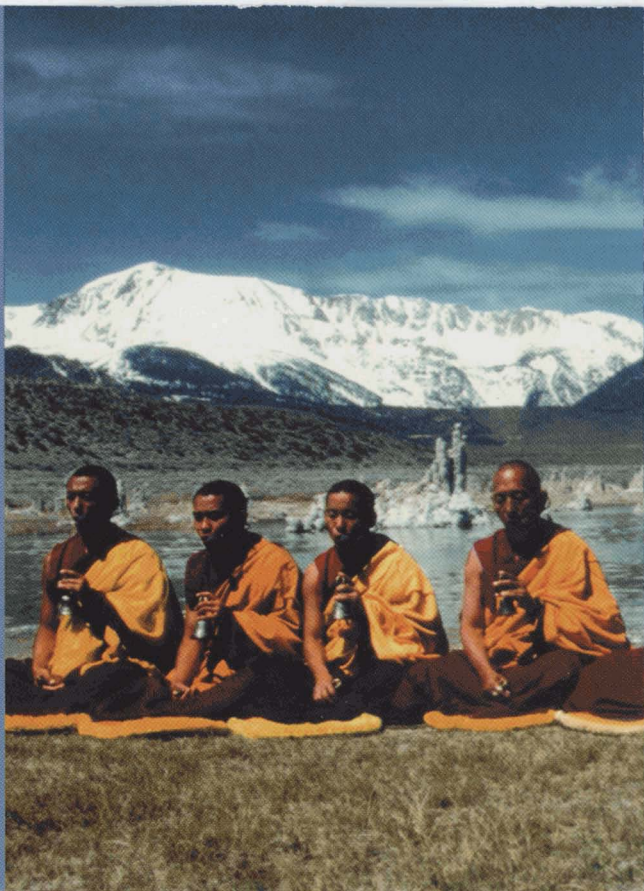
Sacred Chants of Tibet

Total Running Time: 57:07



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Profits from this recording benefit
 The Society for Gyuto Sacred Arts and
 for support of The Gyuto Tantric University.



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Sacred Chants of Tibet

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Produced by Mickey Hart



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