

YOGA MAYA

press kit

film synopsis

About 20 million people practice yoga in America today. For most of these people, yoga means Asana, the physical postures. Not more than 20% of the yoga practitioners incorporate other aspects of yoga into their practice and lifestyle, namely: morals, disciplines, breath-work and meditation. It is good that so many people have an asana practice, yoga asanas (postures) do offer many health benefits. However, if these people expand their practice even marginally by embracing other limbs of yoga, they would benefit exponentially in all walks of life. An integrated yoga practice builds character, discipline, an appreciation for the eco-system in which we live and the resolve to face challenges more gracefully.

There is no better time than now for us to embrace yoga in its entirety. Most of the problems we face in this country today are the result of a lack of discipline, morals and holistic view of life. To name a few: We spend more than we earn, we suffer from illnesses due to poor diet and lifestyle choices, we spend money on wars instead of investing that money in the people who build our society and we are destroying the environment for short term benefits. The foundation of our country is crumbling and it is time for a fundamental change in the way we think and live. An integrated yoga practice can offer the transformation we badly need today.

Yoga has been relegated to mostly physical practices, due to a lack of proper understanding of yoga and lack of comprehensive yoga education. This documentary will clarify 4 misconceptions of yoga in America. It is an exposé on how yoga is taught, practiced and marketed in America. It also encourages the yoga community to expand their practice beyond the physical poses and embrace an integrated yoga practice. Yoga Maya is a 75-minute feature length documentary. The documentary features interviews with 12 senior yoga teachers in California, narration and confessionals by Arvind Chittumalla, producer and director of Yoga Maya.

Potential Audience

Current and prospective yoga practitioners, yoga teachers, yoga schools and yoga related businesses in the western world. More than 30 Million people are a potential audience for this documentary.

the filmmaker

Arvind Chittumalla

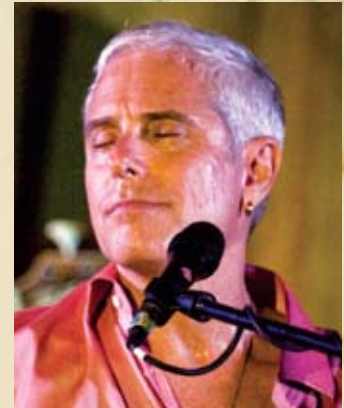
Arvind Chittumalla, producer and director of this documentary, has been practicing yoga for the last 30 years. He moved to the US 10 years ago. Ever since then he has actively participated in the American yoga industry as a practitioner, teacher and yoga entrepreneur. He has owned yoga studios and produced many yoga festivals and conferences. He has often wondered why a vast and profound way of life such as yoga has been relegated to a primarily physical practice. After interacting with hundreds of yoga teachers, yoga businesses and students, he has come to the realization that there are many misconceptions of yoga in America and it is these misconceptions that are preventing many people from embracing all aspects of yoga. In this documentary he wishes to shed light on these thought provoking misconceptions.



Unveiling The Illusions of a Sacred Science

Jai Uttal

Jai Uttal is a Grammy nominated pioneer in the world music community. His eclectic east meets-west sound has put his music at the forefront of the world fusion movement. Jai Uttal's musical roots embrace a rich variety of cultures and traditions that span the globe and the centuries. From the hillbilly music of the Appalachian Mountains to the passionate strains of Bengali street singers, from the haunting rhythms and melodies of ancient India to contemporary electric rock sounds, Jai's music distills the essence of diverse musical forms. During his early visits to India, Jai met his Guru, Neem Karoli Baba, and spent time with many great beings of both the Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Since then he became deeply absorbed in the practice of kirtan, the ancient yoga of chanting, or singing to God. This form of prayer became the core of his musical and spiritual life.



Annie Carpenter

Known as a "teachers' teacher," Annie believes that Yoga practice is a remarkable method for learning to steady the attention on what is actually happening in the moment. From this place, compassion and radical acceptance naturally evolve. Old mindsets of the illusion of separation, of me and them, and self and other, dissolve into the knowledge of wholeness. Annie has been teaching yoga for more than 20 years. She continues to lead her SmartFLOW classes, workshops and her 200 and 500 hour Teacher Trainings in California. Annie travel to festivals, conferences and studios throughout the world sharing her passion and knowledge of yoga. Annie is the author of RelaxDEEPLY, a CD and Yoga for Back Care, a DVD produced by Yoga Journal. She is a contributing editor at Yoga Journal. Respected widely in the yoga community, Annie has a distinctive way of being direct and intense, as well as compassionate, playful and loving.



Mark Whitwell

Mark is a world renowned yoga teacher and author working to make yoga accessible to everyone. Mark has taught yoga for over 20 years in US, Asia, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. Mark's mission is to revitalize the way people connect to self, community, and relationships through the power of breath & yoga. Mark Whitwell has enjoyed a lifelong relationship with the teachings of the world's greatest masters. He is the author of *The Promise of Love, Sex, and Intimacy: How a Simple Breathing Practice Will Enrich Your Life Forever* and *Yoga of Heart: The Healing Power of Intimate Connection*. A world-renowned yoga master, he teaches *The Promise* practice to thousands of people internationally. He also oversees Heart of Yoga Peace Project, heartofyoga.org, which brings together Muslim and Jewish women in the Middle East to teach them *The Promise* practice.



Swami Sri Atmananda

Swami Sri Atmananda is the founder of the Satyachetana International Spiritual Movement. Born in Orissa, India, his inner pull toward spirituality began during childhood and intensified as he progressed through higher education and university. The Bhagavad Gita was his constant companion and guide, and through intense contemplation and practice of Gita's principles he achieved profound spiritual attainment. He also served at the feet of many enlightened masters, perhaps most notably His Holiness Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, and traveled the length and breadth of India on his spiritual quest. Sri Atmananda's spiritual work as a master began in 1993. In response to his call for the manifestation of Truth on earth, several non-profit organizations were formed: Divine Mission, established in 1996, serves to guide awakened seekers to the state of highest spiritual realization, while Satyachetana International (SCI), founded in 2001, supports the overall expansion of the Movement and aims to manifest through life the highest truth that has been realized at the individual level. University of Spiritual Research (USR) was founded in 2004 to support and provide spiritual education. He travels the globe to show mankind the yoga path of the Bhagavad Gita and to revive the pure wisdom that was lost over time.



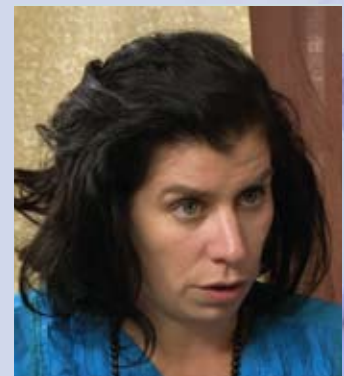
Tej Khalsa

Tej has been a student of Yogi Bhajan for over 30 years. She is the Custodian of the Archives of the Teachings of Yogi Bhajan, and a recognized authority on the teachings. She has been involved in numerous Yogi Bhajan publications as transcriber, editor, and compiler including the Woman's Camp Series, "72 Stories of God, Good and Goods," and "The Master's Touch." She holds a Masters Degree in Counseling and for many years, worked on Yogi Bhajan's correspondence during which she received extensive training from him on yogic counseling. Her classes are occasions to enjoy deep meditative experiences and to learn vast amounts of yogic knowledge.



Felicia Tomasko

Felicia Marie Tomasko RN, E-RYT 500, inspires people to follow the path to personal freedom and vibrant health through the practice of Yoga and Ayurveda. Felicia integrates more than 20 years of study of Yoga and Ayurveda with her training and licensure as a registered nurse. She is the editor in chief of LA YOGA Ayurveda and Health magazine and serves on the board of directors of the California Association of Ayurvedic Medicine and the National Ayurvedic Medical Association, on the advisory board of the Holistic Option and the Leadership Council of the Green Yoga Association. In addition to Yoga and Ayurveda, Felicia has worked in cognitive neuropsychology and plant biochemistry research and has degrees in nursing and environmental biology.



Arun Deva

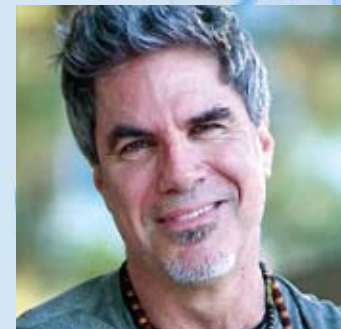
Arun Deva, DASc, AYT, E-RYT500, YTRX, is a Yoga & Ayurveda Practitioner/Therapist. He teaches internationally, lectures at Conferences, writes articles for different publications, has been featured on both radio and television, teaches the Ayurveda module for various prestigious Yoga Schools, is faculty at LMU for Yoga Therapy (YTRX) Program and Yoga Doctors 200hr Teacher Training Program. He has served both the National & State Ayurvedic Associations: NAMA & CAAM.

Born in India, he moved to Los Angeles in 1975 and has made his home there ever since. Arun works with clients internationally and at his clinic when in Los Angeles. Arun integrates yoga and Ayurveda principles to maximize his therapeutic work. But most of all Arun is a student of the ancient vedic lore and their relevancies today.



Daniel Stewart

A yoga teacher and an holistic Mind /Body Psychotherapist, Daniel is dedicated to the practice of being fully alive in each moment. His playful, heart-centered teaching, combines alignment, meditative breath, and spirit in vigorous vinyasa-flow classes that encourage reconnection to self, renewal and joy. He incorporates music, eastern philosophy, depth psychology, poetry and laughter to create a stimulating environment where students can release physically, quieting their minds to experience a deep sense of peace and well-being.



Tracee Stanley

Tracee Stanley E-RYT has been studying yoga and meditation for over 18 years. She is a rare hybrid of yoga educator, dedicated student and successful film producer. Tracee endeavors to offer an understanding of yogic principles and practices that will help people to live more expansive and fulfilled lives, allowing them to harness energy and develop the tools necessary to empower their own transformation and manifest their intentions. She has been teaching in the Para Yoga style since 2001 when she met her teacher Yogarupa Rod Stryker and was initiated into the Sri Vidya lineage. Known for her compassionate and thoughtful approach, she offers spiritual solutions sourced from ancient and authentic traditions for real world problems.



Julie Carmen

Julie Carmen is a yoga therapist, psychotherapist, and award-winning actress. Julie is on the faculty of Loyola Marymount University Yoga Therapy Rx and introduced the mental health module to the program. Her Assessment and Treatment Planning for Anxiety and Depression course is designed to begin broadening the scope of competency for yoga therapists. Along with Yoga Therapy Rx Founder and Executive Director, Larry Payne, PhD, she offered a pilot program for fourth year Yoga Therapy Rx interns to treat staff and family members of people with mental illness for the National Alliance on Mental Illness, West Los Angeles, NAMI. Julie has been teaching yoga since she completed her teacher training at Yoga Works with Maty Ezraty and Lisa Walford in 1999. Julie founded a Yoga Media Production Company YOGA TALKS tm through which she produces DVDs, audio CDs and leads yoga retreats since 2001.



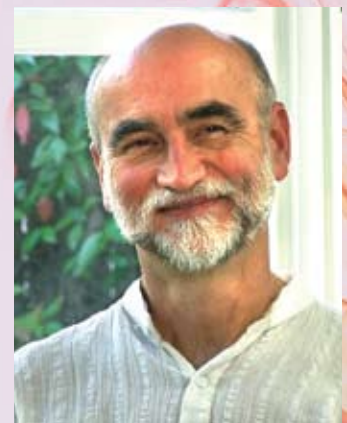
Lorin Roche

Lorin has been exploring, researching and teaching meditation since 1968. Lorin received his Ph.D. in Social Science from the University of California at Irvine in 1987. Lorin has developed an approach to meditation, which he calls Instinctive Meditation, which works with the fine structure of individual uniqueness, rather than imposing a standardized, one-size-fits-all approach. He draws on insights into how people learn from the best of Western science and Eastern Yoga. This integrative approach results in straightforward ways for people to learn many different meditation techniques. With his wife, Camille Maurine, Lorin is the author of Meditation Secrets for Women and Meditation 24/7: Practices to Enlighten Every Moment of the Day. He is also the author of Meditation Made Easy, Breath Taking, and Whole Body Meditations, and The Radiance Sutras.



Chris Chapple

Christopher Key Chapple is the Navin and Pratima Doshi Professor of Indic and Comparative Theology at Loyola Marymount University. Dr. Chapple received his undergraduate degree in Comparative Literature and Religious Studies from the State University of New York at Stony Brook and his doctorate in the History of Religions through the Theology Department at Fordham University. He served as Assistant Director of the Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions and taught Sanskrit, Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism for five years at the State University of New York at Stony Brook before joining the faculty at LMU. He co-founded LMU's program in Asian and Pacific Studies, chaired the Department of Theological Studies for five years, and served as Associate Academic Vice President for four years. He is now Director of the Master of Arts in Yoga Studies program.



**contact
details**

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For more information about the documentary or to watch the
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and our FaceBook page:
www.facebook.com/yogamayamovie

All general inquiries should be sent to
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