

VASA Publishing

Vancouver Canada

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Hindu Renaissance Poet chosen as Award-winning FINALIST

Nava-Hindu mystical poet Kavindra Rishi (Jeffrey Armstrong) has been chosen as an award-winning finalist in the poetry category of the National Indie Excellence Awards 2007, for his book *The Night We First Met - A Mystic Journey*. The awards will be presented at Book Expo America, held at the Jacob Javitz Center in New York City on June 1-3, 2007. This award-winning book will be on display at the Center's Crystal Palace Lobby at the *New Title Showcase*. Award winners will be interviewed by the media, sign books and be hosted at a variety of literary functions.

The Night We First Met - A Mystic Journey is written in the tradition of Tagore, Kalidas, Blake, Mirabai, Rumi, Aurobindo, Shelly, Hafiz, Keats, Jayadev, Surdas, Tulsidas, and Gibran - all the great romantic and mystic poets whose words reach our hearts and heal our souls. Inspired by a forty year journey of studying the Vedas and the Bhakti and Tantric schools of mystical poetry, Kavindra's poems reproduce subtle states of spiritual perception with a voice that longs for intimacy with the Divine Beloved. His words guide the listener directly into the ecstatic emotional states of spiritual bliss, reflecting the sacred beauty, values and wisdom of the great Hindu Vedic Sanatana Dharma culture.

In 1969, after five years at university studying English Literature and Creative Writing with an emphasis in poetry, Kavindra was introduced to the Vedic knowledge, the universal wisdom for which his heart truly longed. Initiated into a traditional Vedic lineage, Kavindra spent the next five years as a brahmacharya, serving in his guru's ashrams while absorbing the wisdom contained in the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Puranas, the Bhagavad-gita, the Upanishads, Vedanta, Jyotisha and Ayurveda.

As if the mango tree of India had been grafted to the apple tree of North America, the essence and flavours of the Vedic knowledge began to reveal themselves through Kavindra's English poetry. It produced an entirely new fruit. Kavindra reflects: "The real treasures of the Bharatia culture of India were not jewels, spices or exotic perfumes - but rather the amazing treasure house of sacred and universal knowledge contained in the Vedas."

For the last ten years, Kavindra and his wife Sandhya Devi have lived in Vancouver, Canada, teaching full time and traveling the world to present the wisdom and beauty of the Vedic culture in its many forms. When they met ten years ago, Sandhya Devi, a long-time Vedic practitioner herself, immediately fell in love with Kavindra's poetry, amazed at how the poems would "just drop down" in minutes, complete, requiring no editing. Recognizing this ability as a Divine gift, she vowed that Kavindra would not die an "unpublished romantic poet" – as so many great poets have.

Finally in 2006, in honor of Kavindra's 60th birthday, Sandhya established VASA Publishing – funded by his students – and published *The Night We First Met*, a collection of 108 of his most treasured mystical poems in a Limited Edition of 108 Signed and numbered books. Now in its second printing, it is available in select book stores and at www.JeffreyArmstrong.com.

Kavindra is also in New York at Book Expo America 2007 for book signings and the media release of his latest book *KARMA – The Ancient Science of Cause & Effect* published by Mandala Publishing - Booth 4182. Last year Mandala published his ground breaking work on Jyotish called *The Vedic Astrology Deck*. In 2002 his first publication, *God/Goddess the Astrologer* (Torchlight Publishers), was chosen for the prestigious Independent Publishers NEW AGE Book of the Year Award.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A poet since the age of 13, Jeffrey Armstrong (Kavindra Rishi) has degrees in History & Comparative Religion, Psychology and English Literature. He is an author, speaker and frequent guest on TV and talk radio. He was previously a corporate executive in Silicon Valley and a speaker for Fortune 500 companies. He is currently a full-time Vedic teacher and advocate on behalf of the Hindu/Vedic Sanatana Dharma culture. He travels the world speaking to and inspiring the global Hindu community at Universities, colleges, temples, corporations and various civic groups. As an active leader in the global renaissance of Hindu Dharma and culture, Jeffrey is currently the International Media Coordinator for the Vedic Friends Association (VFA), the Director of Media & Communications for the Hindu Collective Initiative of North America, Adjunct Professor of Hindu University of America, Florida (www.hua.edu) and founding Director of Vedic Academy of Sciences & Arts (VASA). www.JeffreyArmstrong.com

For more information: *Jeffrey Armstrong will be the featured author at two lectures and book signing events in New York on Sunday, June 2, 2007: at **Exhale Spa & Yoga Studio**, 150 Central Park South, NY, 2:45 pm, cost \$20, (212)561-7400; and at **OM Factory Yoga**, 265 West 37th St. at 8th, NY, 7 pm, cost \$20, (212)616-8662. For all other inquiries please call 1-866-872-6224 or 1-604-521-6567. www.JeffreyArmstrong.com.*

Listen to some of the poems in this book at
www.JeffreyArmstrong.com

"The motivational speaker, who left his corporate job ten years ago to foster the spread of Hindu and Vedic culture in the West, looks like a typical American till he opens his mouth."

INDIA TIMES

"Your work is a direct transmission of transcendental energy...You are the new Rumi."

PATRICK BERNARD, Award winning producer and composer of devotional music. Montreal, Canada

"As I read the poetic verses in *The Night We First Met*, I felt once again that joyful, blissful glimpse of divine love that I had first experienced many years ago in my life when I had read Gitanjali of Sri Rabindra Nath Tagore, who was awarded a Nobel prize in literature for his work. I am thrilled to see the depth of experience of Hindu divinity in the verses composed by a nava-Hindu, Sri Kavindra."

VED PRAKASH CHAUDHARY, Ph.D. General Secretary, Hindu Collective Initiative (HCI) North America

"You have a God-given gift of words which makes the mystical easy to reach...Upanishadic phrases and beautifully imagery are woven seamlessly with modern symbols. Kavindra has done a service to the English speaking

world by bringing out this volume.” **ABHINAV DWIVEDI**, Vice President, Hindu University of America, Orlando, Florida

