



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS
Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

HARE KRISHNA NEWS

November/December 2022



Art by Vishal Mothilall

Special Art Edition

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Vaishnava Calendar

12 Dec	Mo	Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur's Disappearance (Fast until midday)
19 Dec	Mo	Ekadasi
20 Dec	Tu	Break fast 04:51 - 09:32
24 Dec	Sa	Sri Locana Dasa Thakur's Appearance
26 Dec	Mo	Srila Jiva Gosvami's Disappearance
2023		
2 Jan	Mo	Ekadasi
3 Jan	Tu	Break fast 04:59 - 09:40
6 Jan	Fr	Sri Krsna Pusya Abhiseka
12 Jan	Th	Srila Gopala Bhatta Gosvami's Appearance
13 Jan	Fr	Sri Jayadeva Gosvami's Disappearance
14 Jan	Sa	Sri Locana Dasa Thakur's Disappearance
18 Jan	We	Ekadasi
19 Jan	Th	Break fast 05:12 - 09:48
26 Jan	Th	Vasanta Pancami Srimati Visnupriya Devi's Appearance Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakur's Disappearance Sri Pundarika Vidyanidhi's Appearance Srila Raghunath Das Gosvami's Appearance
28 Jan	Sa	Sri Advaita Acharya's Appearance (Fast till noon) Bhismastami
30 Jan	Mo	Sri Madhvacharya's Disappearance
31 Jan	Tu	Sri Ramanujacharya's Disappearance
1 Feb	We	Ekadasi Fast until noon for Lord Varahadeva
2 Feb	Th	Break fast 05:25 - 09:54 Varaha Dvadasi: Appearance of Lord Varahadeva (Fast is done on Wed 1 Feb)
3 Feb	Fr	Nityananda Trayodasi Appearance of Sri Nityananda Prabhu (Fast till noon)
5 Feb	Su	Srila Narottam Das Thakur's Appearance
10 Feb	Fr	Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur's Appearance (Fast till noon)

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Srila Prabhupada

By Serena Naidoo

As a child, I was always curious and constantly searching for the purpose of life. When I was 7, on my second visit to the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple along with my family, my dormant love for Sri Radha and Krishna was awakened. I looked at Vaisnavas with awe. And I am still completely enamoured with them and their pure love for Krishna. I craved their association and enjoyed their company where my questions were answered swiftly and with ease. It was sweet serendipity for me. I was fortunate enough to find Jagannath Deities in a box while doing service at the Ratha Yatra Festival in 1990, at the age of 10. My love for them is boundless. I live for serving my

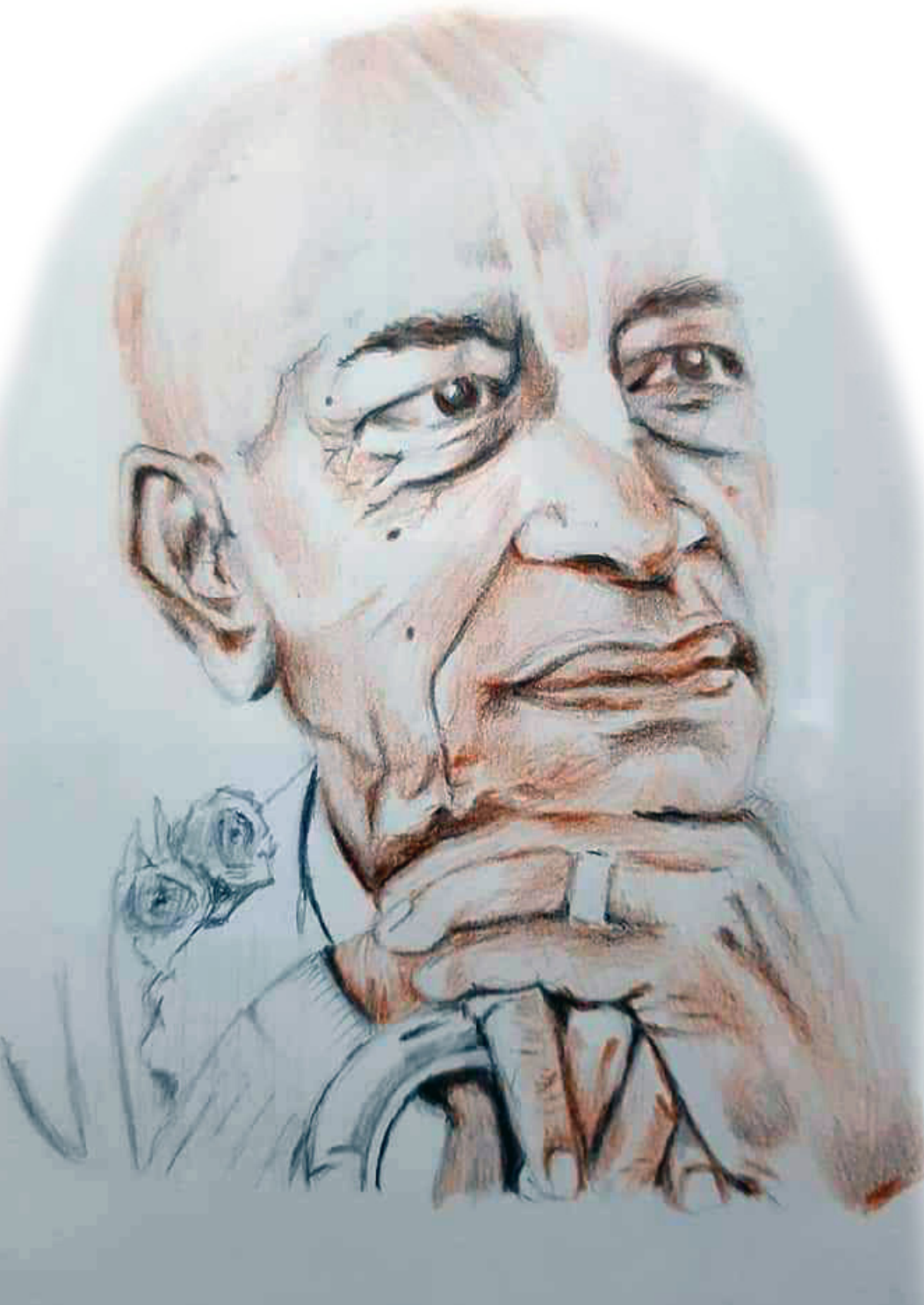
Deities and worshipping Them. Caring for Them and tending to Them is the purpose of my life. I am now a mom of two beautiful girls and my husband is one of the greatest souls I know because he is a steadfast pillar of a Vaishnava. We live for our Deities and the Vaishnavas. It is the most fulfilling and blissful experience we share as a family.

From a tender age I had a talent for creativity. I was able to draw almost anything I saw. I delighted in doing sketches of family members. When I was 7, I was blessed with the association of Partha Sarathi Das Goswami. He guided me with my art and narrated beautiful pastimes of Radha and Krishna, which were then forever etched in my heart. It was under his guidance that I managed to do an oil painting of the

Divine Couple by the age of 12. I was also blessed to have had the opportunity to do the illustrations for his Vyasa-puja book. He guided me in Krishna consciousness and I managed to do many different types of drawings of pastimes. I am forever grateful to him, and offer my continuous humble obeisances unto him for guiding me on this path.

With this drawing I used a regular A4 page, HB pencils and only 1 colour pencil to add depth to the sketch. This drawing was done in 2010. My inspiration for this artwork is Srila Prabhupada. I am forever grateful to Him for saving me and millions of others. His books gave me the answers and guidance I was desperately searching for as a young girl. When I began reading Srila Prabhupada's books fervently, I immediately felt my thirst for my answers as to why I was here being satiated. I look at Him with great reverence.

I hope that when my art is viewed, the emotions with which it was drawn with, become evident. I pray that when one looks carefully at Him the urge to read His books awakens and one can then ultimately achieve bliss.

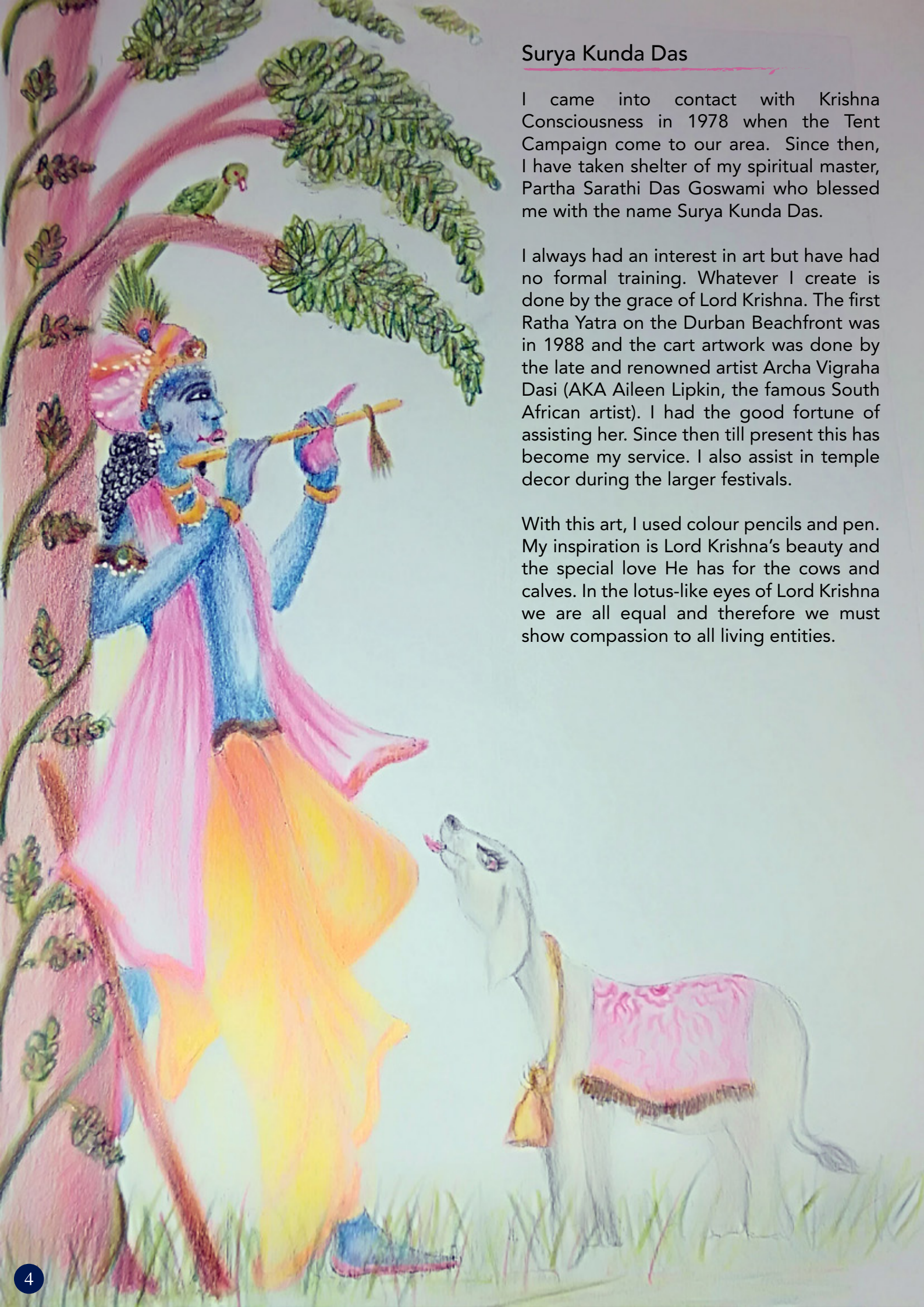


Surya Kunda Das

I came into contact with Krishna Consciousness in 1978 when the Tent Campaign came to our area. Since then, I have taken shelter of my spiritual master, Partha Sarathi Das Goswami who blessed me with the name Surya Kunda Das.

I always had an interest in art but have had no formal training. Whatever I create is done by the grace of Lord Krishna. The first Ratha Yatra on the Durban Beachfront was in 1988 and the cart artwork was done by the late and renowned artist Archa Vighraha Dasi (AKA Aileen Lipkin, the famous South African artist). I had the good fortune of assisting her. Since then till present this has become my service. I also assist in temple decor during the larger festivals.

With this art, I used colour pencils and pen. My inspiration is Lord Krishna's beauty and the special love He has for the cows and calves. In the lotus-like eyes of Lord Krishna we are all equal and therefore we must show compassion to all living entities.



Sri Sri Shyamakunj

On The Cover

By Vishal Mothilall

For me creative fine art is the highest form of *bhakti* as it can become an integral part of *smaranam* (remembering the Lord), *sevanam* (serving the Lord), and *archanam* (worshipping the Lord as per the scriptures). I started drawing at the tender age of 4 with only devotional art as my genre. I do not have any formal training or any tertiary education in the art. I am a Durban-based architect by profession and balancing my devotional art career for the Divine has been the most rewarding form of devotional service. My very first painting was of Sri Radha Krishna on a swing in 2008.

Having my art featured in various publications, on national TV interviews, book features, various art exhibitions, including the Indian consulate, my most special memories are having my art worshiped at a shrine in Bangalore, India and Diwali 2022 where my painting of goddess Maha Lakshmi was displayed on billboards of Mumbai (India) skyline at the most prominent addresses to wish "Happy Diwali" to the capital city of India.

Art as a means to connect with the divine is the highest *sadhana* which results in months of dedication and focus on each painting. Many ask why only this genre of painting, and I usually respond with, "why not this genre only, why paint anything else! When one has tasted this divine nectar, nothing else compares to this *bhakti* art."

This original painting of Lord Krishna, appropriately named "Sri Sri Shyamakunj" had taken me two months to complete and the medium used was oil paints on canvas. In August 2022, on Sri Krishna Janmashtami, I released it on social platforms. This painting of the Lord was one of the most rewarding in devotional service and a blessed chance to paint and share this *swarup* (image) of the Lord, which I believe to be Krishna for me.

This painting is set in a forest of Sri Vrindavan dham, where the Lord is playing his transcendental flute to call every *jiva* (soul) to the *amrit* (nectar) and *prema* (love) of his form. The Kadamba tree with its fragrant flowers,

which is most special to Krishna, reaches out symbolically to attain him as well as the animals that are blessed to have the mere sight of and proximity to the Lord.

This artwork is a result of inspiration from an array of sources. The main being the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, which explains the Lord's pastimes and the nature of his being whereby even the little details such as bumble bees being attracted to Krishna's garland. The second inspiration is a *kirtan* sung by Sri Pandit Rattan Mohan Sharma called "Aage Krishna... Pache Krishna...ittha Krishna...Uttha Krishna..." which creates the mood of devotion and helped me concentrate my mind and heart, which enhanced my artistic process. A special painting indeed needs special colour choices and a careful selection was done to bring out Krishna's *shyamasundar* – dark skin form and the beautiful mystical forest around. My most favourite artists include Dhriti Dasi and Ram Das, Syamarani Dasi and Raja Ravi Verma.

I believe every single art offering unto the Lord's lotus feet is valid, no matter how trained or amateur an artist is. The real value that carries weight is the *bhakti* which flows through the art piece and that matters the most. *Bhakti* in the arts requires discipline and patience but can be exceptionally rewarding in which I encourage all to explore and find their own Krishna in each piece. Art is a journey with no end and when enhanced with divine vision, this can really help on the spiritual path to reach the ultimate goal of the Lord's lotus feet.



ISKCON Environmental Initiative: The Ecotheology of our Tradition – Part 2 Krishna Kishore Das (Christopher Fici, PhD)

[In this series we explore the need to care for the environment. Are green practices important or necessary for the aspiring bhakti-yogi? How does green practice affect our devotion? Do green practices have roots in the Vaishnava tradition?]

Material nature is always an intimate element of Krishna's energy and we should relate to creation accordingly, with great care, respect, and compassion. The devotees understand that, as explained by Prabhupada in his commentary to verse 5.226 from the *Adi-Lila* of the *Chaitanya-Charitamrita*, "what we call stone, wood and metal are energies of the Supreme Lord, and energies are never separate from the energetic. As we have several times explained, no one can separate the sunshine energy from the energetic sun. Therefore material energy may appear separate from the Lord, but transcendently it is nondifferent from the Lord." A truly ecological perspective for a devotee comes from the ability to discern that the difference between the Supreme and creation is always balanced and enhanced by the oneness between the Supreme and creation. Oneness and difference between the Supreme and creation is a complementary ontology which promotes ecological harmony.

This document will illustrate that care of creation is an essential and indispensable part of the Chaitanya Vaishnava tradition and therefore needs to be an integral part of the culture of ISKCON. Care of creation is a practice of devotional service which can help the practitioner remember the Supreme Personality of Godhead, realize their relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and achieve the goal of love of God. As Mukunda Goswami and Drutakarma Dasa (Michael Cremo) illustrate, it is through care of creation that we can return to the original spiritual creation of Vrindavana: They write:

The temporary natural beauty of this world, in the form of flowing pure rivers, forests full of trees bearing fruits and flowers, and mountains with cooling waterfalls, is, according to Vedic literature, a reflection of the eternal divine nature of the topmost planet of the spiritual world, known as Goloka Vrindavana.

The goal of the Krishna consciousness movement is to make this world's nature as much like the divine nature of Goloka Vrindavan as possible,

and to give everyone the means to return to the spiritual sky at the end of this life. There, in a body free from the contamination of birth, death, old age, and disease, one can enjoy the transcendently pure environment of Vrindavan in the company of the Lord of Vrindavan, Krishna, who eternally herds cows called *surabhi* through forests of desire trees. (Cremo and Goswami, 85)

This document will illustrate four elements which define the ecotheology of our tradition:

1. The ecotheological core of our tradition emerges from the understanding of *acintya-bhedabheda-tattva*.
2. Creature care and protection is at the heart of the ecotheology of our tradition.
3. We are able to serve, access, and experience the Supreme Personality of Godhead through the elements of our Earth planet and the elements of universal creation. Thus all have a sacred purpose and can be used in the practice of *bhakti-yoga* (devotional service).
4. Our devotional tradition and culture advises and directs us how to live in harmonious relationship with creation

The Ecological Elements of Chaitanya Vaishnava Theology

1. The ecotheological core of our tradition emerges from the understanding of *acintya-bhedabheda-tattva*.

Our tradition's core teaching of *acintya-bhedabheda-tattva* (simultaneous oneness-and-difference between the Supreme Personality of Godhead and all living beings, as well as the entire creation) is ecotheological. We understand that Krishna, while always eternally different and transcendent from the elements of material nature is also always eternally immanent and available within the elements of

We are able to serve, access, and experience the Supreme Personality of Godhead through the elements of our Earth planet and the elements of universal creation. Our devotional tradition and culture advises and directs us how to live in harmonious relationship with creation.

material nature. In the *Chaitanya-Charitamrita*, in a narration of a conversation between Krishna and Brahma, Brahma remarks to Krishna that "as the earth is the original cause and shelter of all pots made of earth, so You are the ultimate cause and shelter of all living beings." (*Adi-Lila* 2:37) In his commentary to this verse, Srila Prabhupada

explains that "since all living entities are minute sparks of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He is the Supreme Soul in both the material and spiritual worlds. The Vaishnavas following Lord Chaitanya stress the doctrine of *acintya-bhedabheda-tattva*, which states that the Supreme Lord, being the cause and effect of everything, is inconceivably, simultaneously one with His manifestations of energy and different from them." This simultaneity is *acintya* (inconceivable). As Radhika Ramana Dasa (Ravi M. Gupta) explains, "the relationship between Bhagavan and his energies is *bhedabheda*, simultaneous difference and non-difference. The polarities seen above must be accepted as they are. Both sides are equally reasonable, supported by scripture, and necessary; therefore, both must be held together. This, of course, is inconceivable to the human mind, and so the relation of *bhedabheda* is called *acintya*, inconceivable." (Gupta, Kindle Location 1081-1091)

As Gopal-Hari Dasa (Gopal K. Gupta) explains in his study of the concept of *maya*, which is commonly understood in the traditions of Hinduism to describe the illusory nature of the world, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (*Bhagavat Purana*) teaches us that *maya* is synonymous with *prakriti* (material nature). However, this does not mean that we must consider *prakriti* to be a completely adverse element in our development in Krishna consciousness. Gupta explains that "by identifying *maya* with *prakriti*, the Bhagavata ...affirms that *maya* is a positive force... *prakriti* is seen as mother-although she ensnares the soul, her purpose is to ultimately lead the self to freedom, *kaivalya*." (Gupta, 70). Material nature can be considered a dynamic servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's desires for each and every one of us to return back to the spiritual world. The message of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* convinces us that material creation is temporary and that therefore our existence within this creation is temporary. Yet the temporary nature of material nature does not mean that material nature is completely illusory or completely useless. As Gupta further explains, the message of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* explains that: ...the self's association with the natural world is a necessary step in its spiritual evolution, and is



Artwork courtesy of Mukundanghri Das

therefore permitted, but not desired, by God. "Your *maya* carries on the creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe (for the progress of the *jivas*), though not desired by You (for Your own sake)." (*S.B* 5.18.38) When the self remembers its eternal relation with Vishnu, and takes refuge in him, he or she breaks out of the bonds of *maya* and after death returns to its home beyond matter. (Gupta, 72)

The ecotheological understanding of our tradition is always in service to the core theology of devotional service as exemplified by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and as presented and interpreted by the Six Goswamis of Vrindavan and all of the following *acharyas* in such texts as the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, *Chaitanya-Caritamrita*, and the supplementary works of the Goswamis, our *acharyas*, and our tradition of devotional scholarship.





Tirumala Devi Dasi

I am a disciple of His Holiness Kadamba Kanana Swami and serve on the African BBT and on the international BBT Marketing and Communications team.

I enjoy making things with my hands and expressing myself in this way. I started painting again earlier this year after spending a lot of time using other mediums of art over the years. I started with "one stroke painting" and used this to paint floral arrangements. Afterwards, I decided to try painting landscapes. After offering a few of the landscape paintings to my Spiritual Master, he asked me to paint Vrindavana and told me that I should meditate on what he meditates on. Soon afterwards, I attempted painting a picture of Srimati Radharani and now I practice painting pictures of Krishna whenever I can.

I used slow drying acrylic paint for this portrait of Krishna. As with any medium of art, there are pros and cons. Ordinary acrylic paint dries significantly faster than oil paint. This allows faster turn around time of paintings. One downside however, is that the fast drying time that acrylic paint offers, makes blending on the canvas more difficult. Eventually I found an acrylic paint that dries slower than typical acrylic paints, but faster than oil paints do. It offers a nice balance which works for me. My little art buddies inspire me the most. Whenever they try to surprise me with their beautiful squiggles and brave brush strokes, I find new inspiration to try harder and do more.

I painted this picture of Krishna as an offering to His Holiness Bhakti Chaitanya Swami Maharaja for his Vyasa-puja celebration earlier this year. We all need to "find the juice and anchor ourselves" in Krishna consciousness, as I have learned from my spiritual master. "Finding the juice" means to find an activity in Krishna consciousness from which we can draw inspiration, an activity that allows us to engage our talents and find nourishment at the same time. I find that painting allows me to re-focus and center myself. It gives me time to reflect and to meditate on whatever I am reading. While I find nourishment and inspiration through painting, I am still constantly in search of "finding the juice." It is my hope that the readers find something in Krishna consciousness that inspires them in the way this painting inspires me, if they haven't already.

**Hare Krishna
Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna
Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare**



Lila Shuka Dasi

I am a stay-at-home mom of two, wife to Venu Gopal Das, former attorney and second language English teacher, and a "forever seeker of truth and beauty." After reading "On the way to Krishna" at 16 I found so many answers I was desperately looking for. It would be a few years later that I would commit myself fully to devotional principles. The Bhakti Yoga Society (UKZN Howard College) helped me thrive, serve, and associate with some of the finest devotees in this movement. I took initiation and became Lila Shuka Dasi in 2014. I've served at Okinawa Bhakti Yoga (now ISKCON Okinawa), ISKCON Tokyo and now currently serving and homeschooling my little Vaishnavas. I would love to, as a future goal, assist Vaishnavi mothers to see the importance of their service to their children.

From scribbles to crayons to paint to clay to paper

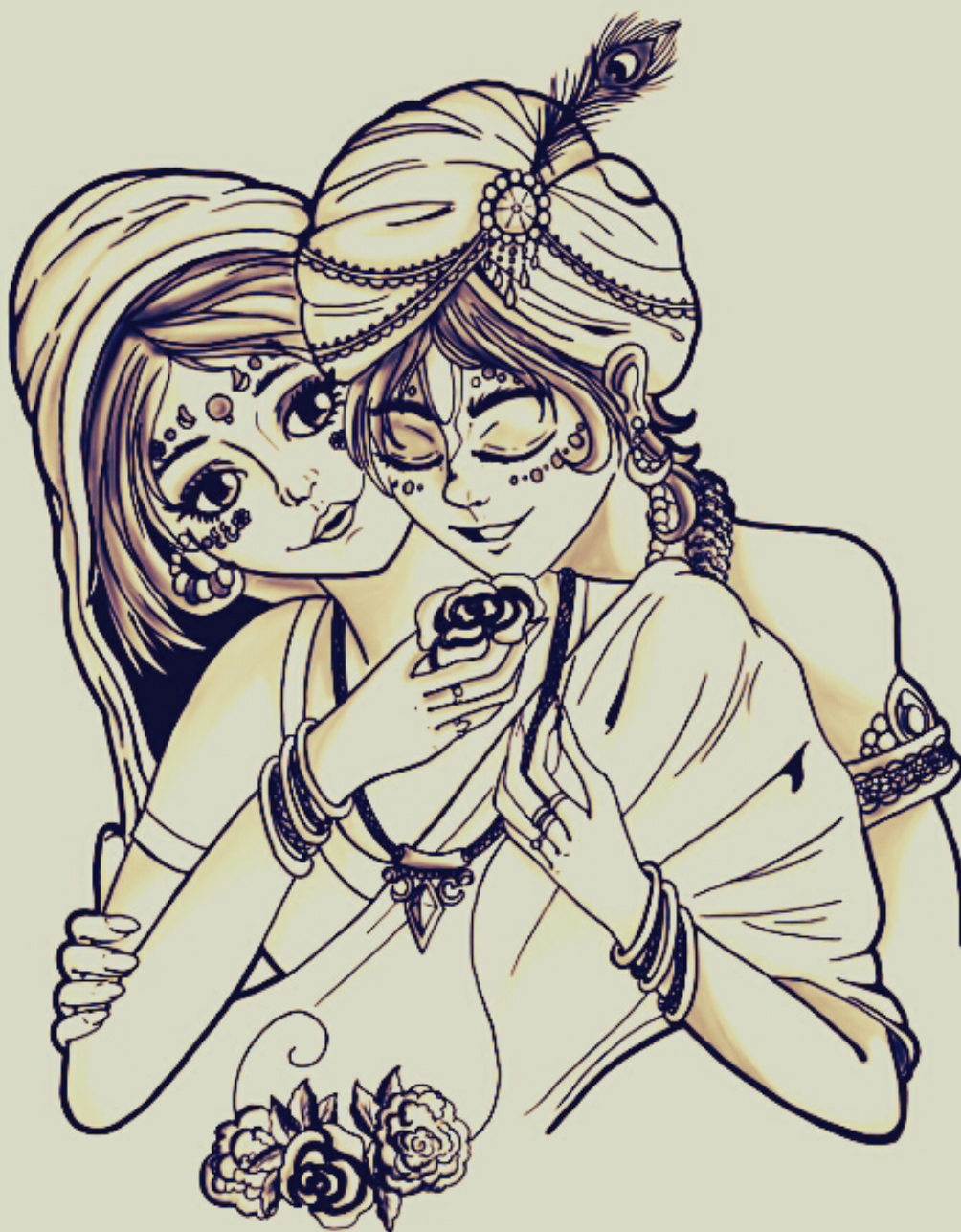
to walls, from as young as I can remember, using my hands to create was therapeutic. I would spend hours on end happily engrossed in a drawing, a sketch, a clay creation or craft. The beauty of the world inspires me but so does my boundless imagination – to create in reality what I see in my mind's eye. I haven't been much of an artist after becoming a mom. But one thing we always have ample of is art supplies. With this art, in reality none of this should have worked – I used the wrong paper (ordinary A4 printing paper) for the type of paint (water colour) making it difficult to paint over a surface that became bumpy when dried. I thought of using different layers to create a 3D effect, painting and cutting out and pasting certain aspects of the art and using a ballpoint pen for the finer edges.

I am inspired by the song "Krishna Deva Bhavantam Vande" by Srila Rupa Goswami (Stavamala)

*krsna deva! bhavantam vande
man-manasa-madhukaram arpayā
nija-pada-pankaja-makarande*

O Lord Sri Krsna! I am offering a prayer unto You. Please let the bee of my mind be offered the nectarian honey of Your lotus feet.

This art is not a self portrait. Our soul's natural state is female therefore, I painted a woman. There are flowers surrounding her on either side. Some are beautiful and bright, a call for material pleasures. While others are full and dark, a depiction of our attraction to things that are unpleasant and that give us pain, destructive behavior, anger etc. Rupa Goswami's song calls for his mind to be attracted only to the nectar of Krishna's lotus feet. This piece shows a visual interpretation of this and goes a step further to show how, if we ignore the other distractions in life, both good and bad our minds will find the nectar and true joy of our existence. The liking of the mind to a bee is such a perfect one in my opinion. Always busy, doing this or that, planning away, fluttering left and right, always buzzing. Unlike bees in nature, if left unchecked our bee-like minds won't seek out true nectar. This is a reminder that our busy minds should occupy itself with seeing Krishna and seeking Krishna always, in every situation along our journey – gathering those nectar drops collecting pollen filled association and always seeing Krishna's lotus feet in the haze of this material world.



Dheepana Gopi Devi

I am a devotee of Krishna since birth. Volunteer work had always been my service to Krishna, however ever since the lockdown things have not been the same. I am still drawn to Krishna and decided to draw Krishna in happy pastimes using digital means. I am studying Art in Visual Multimedia. I aspire to one day work with animation in movie productions. Krishna and Radha are drawn on digital media with digital pencils and brushes to create the idea of a 'sketch' with simplicity and inciting the viewer to colour in the image in their mind. Radha threads a new garland for Krishna while he admires her.

Home Altar Decorations

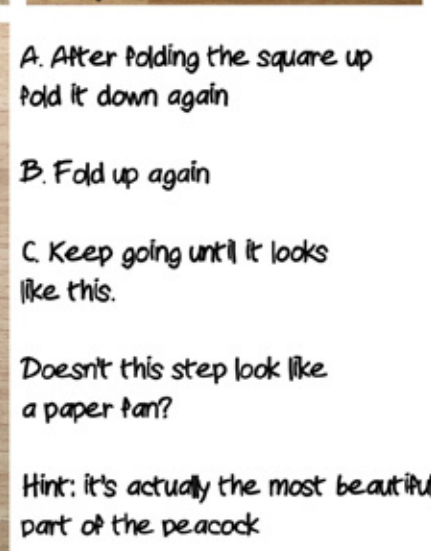
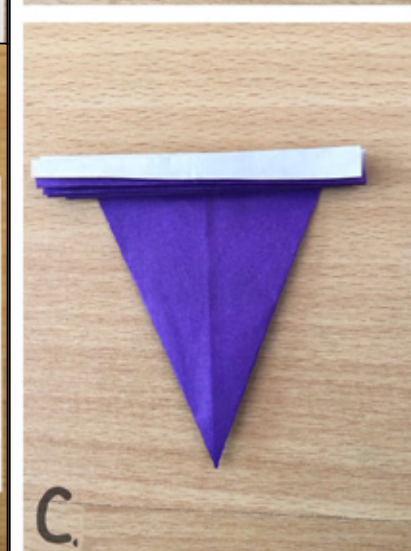
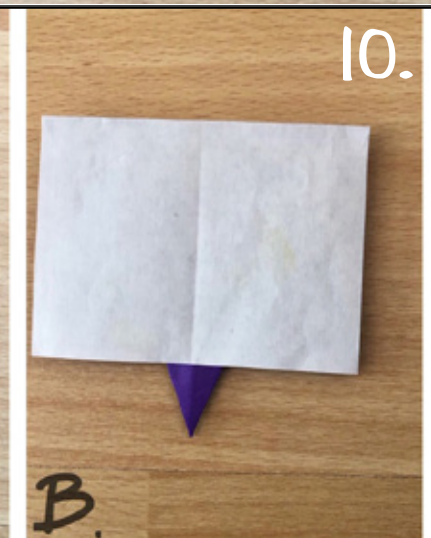
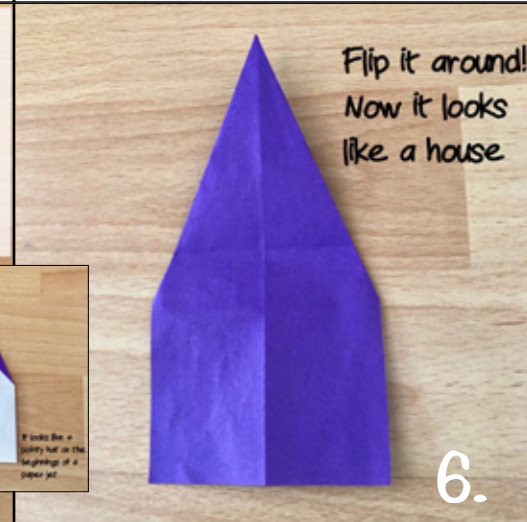
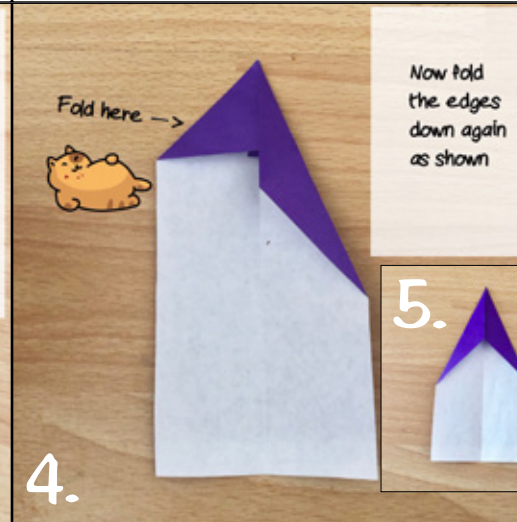
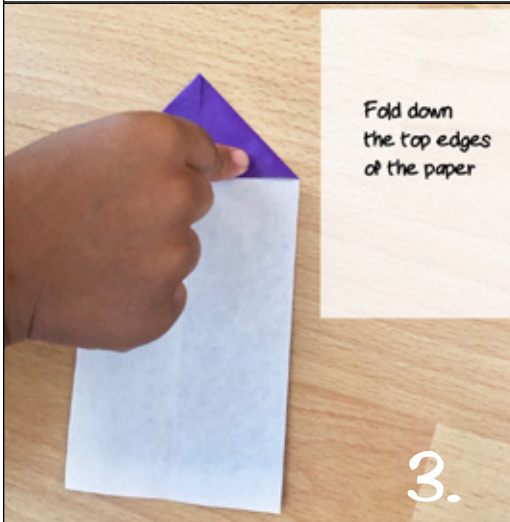
for Kids

Ages 4+

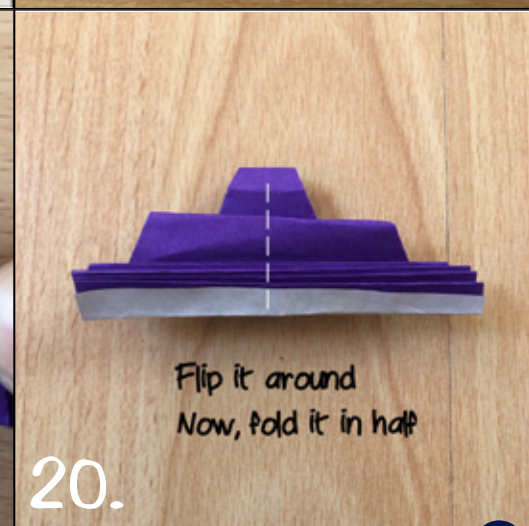
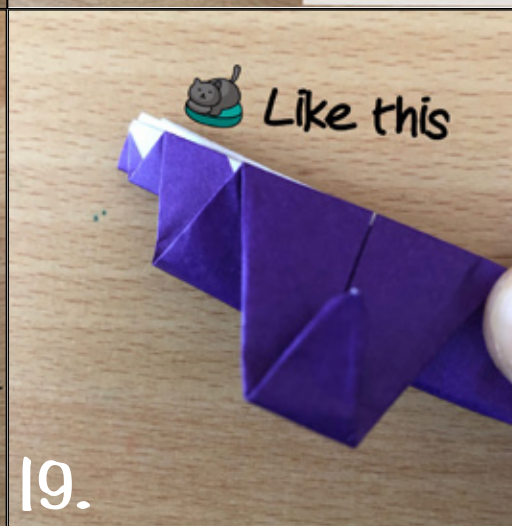
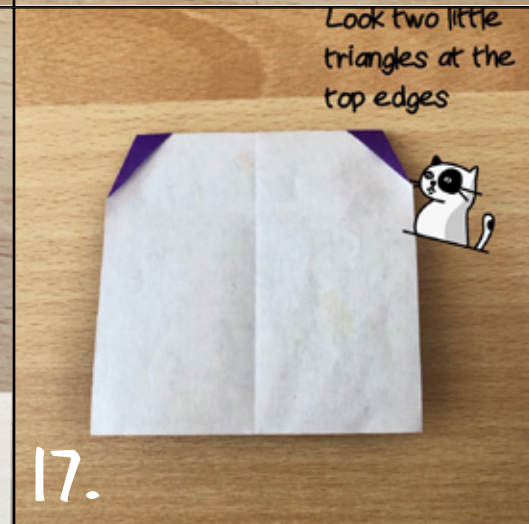
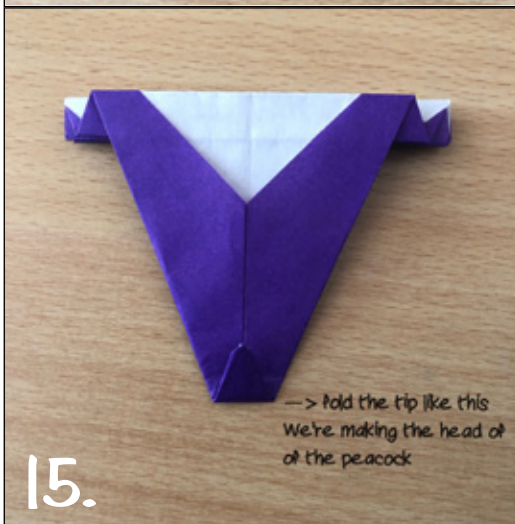
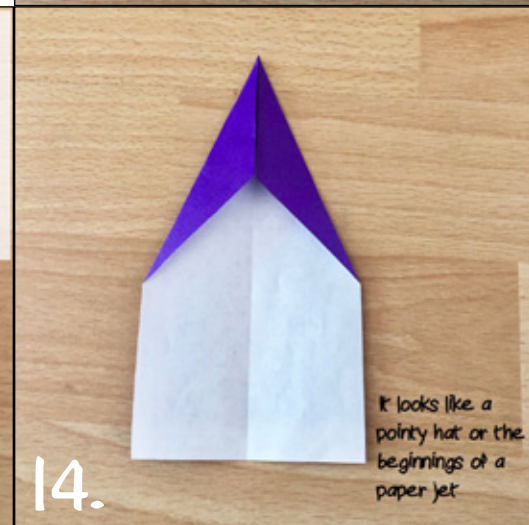
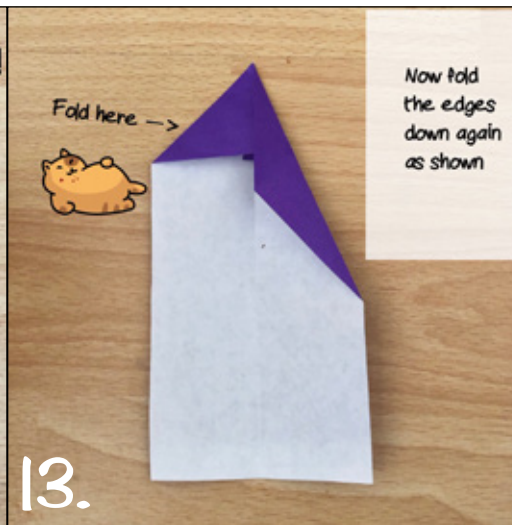
By Lila Shuka Dasi

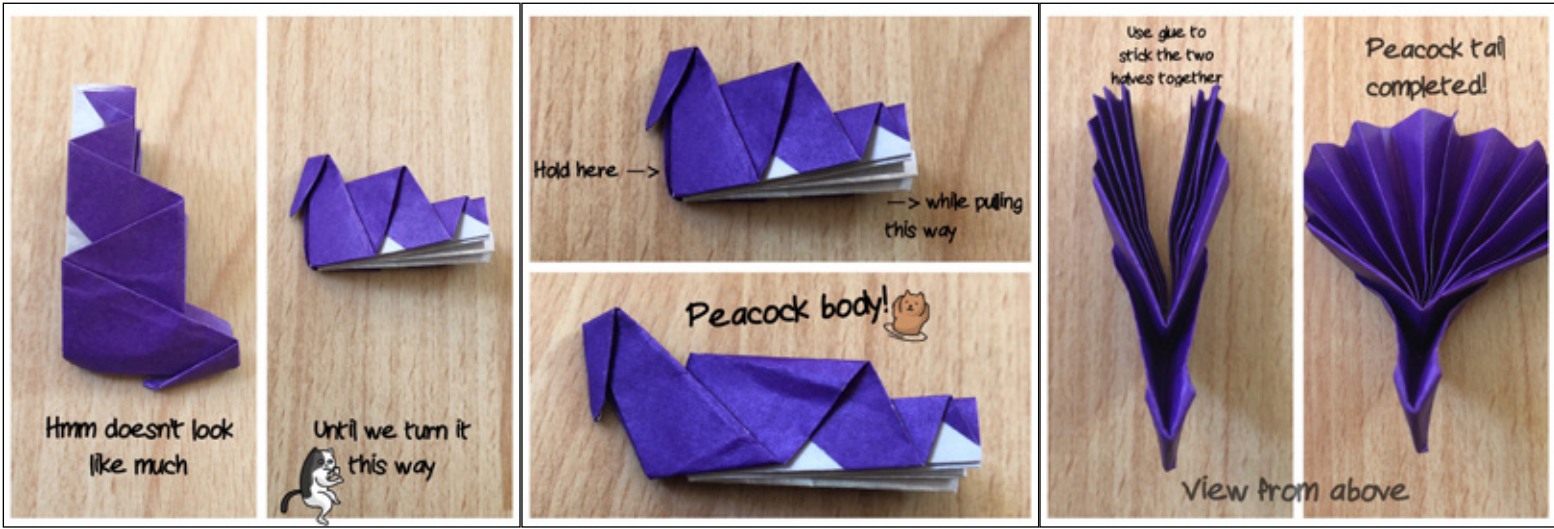
Origami Peacocks

You will need:



Keep going...you doing great!





Send photos of your peacocks to temple@iskcondurban.net





Festive Butternut Roast

The Vaishnava Chef

By Ananga Sundari Dasi

For the stuffing

½ cup quinoa
 1 cup soya mince washed and soaked
 5 tbsp. oil
 ½ tsp ground ginger
 Few sprigs fresh thyme
 1 aniseed
 1 small bay leaf
 ½ stick cinnamon
 2 tomatoes, blended
 ½ carrot finely chopped/cubed
 ½ stick celery chopped fine
 ½ tsp *hing*
 ½ tsp black pepper
 ½ tsp mixed herbs
 ½ tsp paprika
 ½ vegan chicken spice (optional)
 ½ tsp *garam masala*
 ½ tsp *dhania* and *jeera* powder
 1 heaped tsp red chili powder
 Salt to taste

1 tbsp. chopped pecans
 1 tbsp. dried cranberries (optional)
 1 block feta, chopped
 1 whole butternut, washed, seeds removed, halved and roasted in oven with salt, pepper and a drizzle of oil for 60 minutes (not fully cooked)
 Kitchen string, soaked in water

Method

Heat oil in pan and add whole spices, fresh thyme, ginger and fry for 5 mins. Add in the tomatoes, *hing*, chopped celery and carrots with all powdered spices and salt, cook for another 5 mins lid on. Then add in the soaked and washed soya mince and allow to cook for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Do not add in any liquid, cook on low so it will not dry out easily and once mince is cooked switch off heat and allow to cool. The mixture should not be watery but moist enough to absorb in the quinoa and, then add the nuts, cranberries and feta, thereafter fish out the whole spices. Mix and set aside.

Once butternut is cooled, scoop out some of the cavity, leaving about 1cm along the sides depending on the size of the butternut. Carefully fill the cavity with the prepared stuffing and pack down firmly, so there won't be any spillages when you tip the one half over the other half.

Tie the squash firmly with string and roast for another 60 minutes or until cooked. Say and prayer and serve.

Notes:

The stuffing can vary according to your taste
 This can be made on *ekadasi* days if you omit ingredients such as *hing*, soya mince
 Sabhudana can also be used in place of quinoa
 Remainder butternut scooped from the cavity can be used as a filling for ravioli or soup
 Butternut seeds can be planted
 Serve with creamed spinach, gravy and potato wedges on the side or use this dish as a side dish for any main