



# SAMĀ

Spiritual Singing



Come, come, whoever you are.  
Wonderer, worshipper, lover of leaving.  
It doesn't matter.  
Ours is not a caravan of despair.  
Come, even if you have broken your vow  
a thousand times  
Come, yet again, come, come.

**Rumi**

Edited by Mahmud Norris



*Samā*, or spiritual songs in Islam, represent the mystical journey of man's ascent through mind and love to perfection. Turning towards the truth, the adherent grows through love, deserts his ego, finds the truth and arrives at perfection. He then returns from this spiritual journey as a man enlightened, so as to love and to be of service to the whole of creation.

Rumi, Hafiz, Saadi, Yunus Emre, Omar Khayyūm, and Khalil Gibran, were all devout Muslims who understood this journey of Love and eloquently expressed it in the form of poetry that has been rendered into song and rhyme.

Islam has a long and beautiful tradition of reciting spiritual odes and mystical songs, which can be traced as far back as the time of the Prophet Muhammad [peace and blessings be upon him]. History recounts that when he entered the city of Medina the people welcomed him with songs and his noble companions would often recite poetry in his praise.

These songs are traditionally sung in acapella and sometimes accompanied with certain types of instruments such as a daff – hand drum. Other symbolic instruments like the reed flute were later introduced to enhance and compliment the songs.

In the Arab lands, the purest form of Sama has more direct roots in the origins of the religion, but as the tradition spread it has taken other forms such as the *Qawal* of India and the sub-continent, producing famous contemporary artists like Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Despite its various forms and colours, the essential themes remain the same, that of Love, Unity and Respect for all Humanity; a much needed message of hope in our current time.



Niche of Lights is seeking to promote traditional and practical *Tasawwuf* (*Sufism*) and its relevance in modern times.

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