



STEVE VAI
**THE
BODHI
TREE**

VaiTUNES #7
(9:26)





VaiTUNES

It's not uncommon for a musician to record more work than they release. In my case I have a digital ocean of snippets in various degrees of completion. Some are leftovers from assorted project recording sessions, projects that were never completed, sound check jams, demo snippets, etc.

There are enough lonely unreleased notes in my world to fill an "infinity shelf." **VaiTunes** are tracks that are culled from this melodic abyss, brushed off, sometimes severely hosed down, and released as digital singles.

These tracks may be specific to a particular project that has never had the chance to be a completed big picture, but now, with the advent of all this digital technology and distribution, it's possible to release a variety of tracks from a potential project without having to complete the whole project itself. Eventually, if there are enough tracks completed that fall into a precise endeavor, perhaps they will be compiled and released as a cohesive CD. In any event, it's a good way to release a constant stream of music.

Although the plan is to continue to create whole, full-bodied CD releases, **VaiTunes** can serve as temporary pacifiers for some delectable melodies to be sucked through the ears and absorbed into the soul.

STATISTICAL INFO

Written by Steve Vai

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Produced, recorded, performed and engineered by Steve

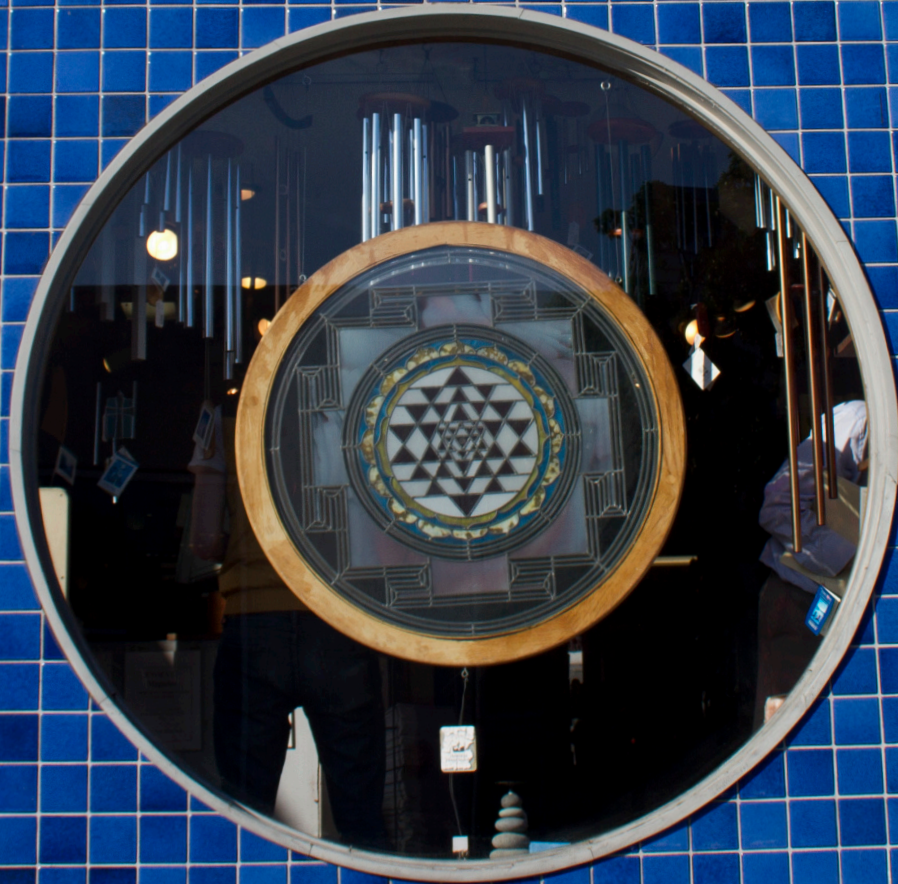
Tracked in 1992 at The Mothership in Hollywood, CA

Additional engineering by Neil Citron

Mastered by Steve Vai and Greg Wurth

@ Audio Laundry Mastering Lab, February 2011

Bodhi Tree BOOKSTORE



SONG JUICE

Ah yes, that ol' Lydian thing again...

Every now and then, I get a new piece of studio gear, plug my guitar through it, and see what I can conjure up.

One day, I built this patch using an Eventide H300 Harmonizer. After playing through the sound for 10 seconds or so, I realized I should document what was flowing through my fingers and out of the amp. It was easy and enjoyable to just play simple stuff and have this wonderful flurry of shimmering overtones emanate from each note.

I quickly built a little percussion track and just went for it. I wasn't sure what I was going to play, but I knew it was all going to work. You just get that feeling, and you know you gotta act quickly.

I was so looking forward to what the next few minutes were going to bring. I buried my head in the sound and slipped into a state of melodic meditation. I literally

thought I played only for a few minutes, but it was more than nine! I thought that if I ever wanted to release this track, it would have to be edited.

But the other day when looking for a VaiTune's selection, I came across this track and fell back in love with it. The track is close to 20 years old, and I had totally forgotten about it. I had listened back to it only once after I recorded it.

Every time I tried to edit the track for this release, I felt as though I was cutting out a piece of its soul. In the end, I couldn't bring myself to shorten it, even though it was more than nine minutes long. What's retained here is the stream of consciousness I had at the time I recorded it, and this is how I thought it should stay. I also thought that anyone who's interested in this kind of track wouldn't mind its length.

So here is that lonely, little song brushed off and brought back to life.





FROM WIKIPEDIA:

“The Bodhi Tree, also known as Bo (from the Sinhalese Bo), was a large and very old Sacred Fig tree (*Ficus religiosa*) located in Bodh Gaya (about 100 km [62 mi] from Patna in the Indian state of Bihar), under which Siddhartha Gautama, the spiritual teacher and founder of Buddhism [who was] later known as Gautama Buddha, is said to have achieved enlightenment, or Bodhi. In religious iconography, the Bodhi Tree is recognizable by its heart-shaped leaves, which are usually prominently displayed. It takes 100 to 3,000 years for a Bodhi Tree to fully grow.”

But for me, the phrase Bodhi Tree holds a very different meaning. When I moved to Los Angeles in 1980 at the age of 20, I was very much a seeker of spiritual truth. I was told to check out the Bodhi Tree Bookstore on Melrose Ave. in West Hollywood.

As it does for so many, this cultural institution holds a dear place in my heart. It's a bookstore devoted to metaphysics, psychology, ufology, spirituality and every religion, from mainstream to obscure — in short, all the things a seeker such as myself would find exquisitely enchanting.

The Bodhi Tree Bookstore is the place where I took the first true steps on my personal path. In the used-book section, you could find something for 40 cents that was filled with light and could change your life while you sipped your choice of complimentary herbal teas. The air was redolent with the aroma of nag champa incense. People bustled about, full of smiles and good wishes, seeming to float a foot off the ground.

There were shelves upon shelves of wisdom, and I devoured as much as I could. I'd read a book on fasting, and I'd fast. I'd read a book on yogic stretching, and I'd do that. Meditation, numerology, the God-worlds, saints, mystics, witchcraft, purification of mind and body — you name it, the Bodhi Tree had it, and I searched their shelves with a fine-toothed-comb, looking for priceless gems of inspiration that resonated with me.

Whenever I'd visit, I'd think, “This place has the answers for me.” And it did! I always felt that I was in a safe haven at the Bodhi Tree, in an environment where I'd feel well-being and relaxation... Just like I feel when I listen to this track!

(I understand that the Bodhi Tree will regrettably be closing in the fall of 2011, unless someone steps up to buy the business and move it to another L.A.-area location. If you are captivated by reading about this place, I would urge you to visit it before it closes. That day will certainly be a sad one for many.)

USED BOOK BRANCH

HERBS & TREES

606



GEAR

This piece was performed on EVO: Although Evo is just made out of wire and wood, I'm afraid of how much emotional investment I have in her. I think when you play an instrument long enough it becomes an extension of yourself in ways that run deeper than anyone may understand but you.

ACADEMICS

Management: Ruta Sepetys for SEG, Inc.

Label: Light Without Heat, Inc.

Booking: Brian Greenbaum & Chris Dalston for CAA

Production Management: Pamela Dancy & Lindsey Hess

PDF Design: Blake Haley

Photography: Andy Alt

Legal: Gerald F. Rosenblatt, Law Offices of Gerald F. Rosenblatt;

Chris Corabi, Law Offices of Chris Corabi.

Financial Management: Staci Robley & Margaret Robley for R&R
Business Management

Steve used: Ibanez Jem Guitars; Bogner Amps; Morley Bad Horsie
Wah & Little Alligator Volume Pedals; DiMarzio Evolution
Pickups.

Visit www.vai.com

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