

## [At The Movies](#)

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The Call of the Flute Produced by David Karp. 60 Minutes. 1987 Access Audio/Video Productions P.O. Box 5547, Berkeley, CA 94705. \$39.95.

The Call of the Flute is what its subtitle says: A Spiritual Journey to India and Nepal. There are as many ways to see these ancient lands as there are things there to see. This video takes the high road and provides an ecumenical pilgrimage through the some of the religions of the region, including Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Although it is a documentary, it unfolds like drama. The sheer elegance and power of its primal subject matter overshadows the dust and poverty of the environment, though the latter is not hidden from view. Additionally, the film's most moving moments add a certain magic of fervor, making it more than an extravaganza of religious education.

Scarcely does one scene end when another begins. Sikhs bearing swords and turbans stroll the terrace before the famed Golden Temple of Amritsar. Bearded, ash-smeared sages, rishis and holy men - matted locks piled high - etch the unforgettable images of yet another Kumbha Mela festival. The picturesque temples of Khajuraho chronicle the wonder of a bygone era rich in art and culture. And the famous Taj Mahal reminds us that, yes, this is also the popular India the world has come to know in thousands of travel brochures. Interspersed among this parade of exotic images, Satya Sai Baba, Mother Theresa, Sant Keshavadas and Yalachariji take turns in the limelight.

But the highlight is unquestionably Sant Keshavadas. We catch him in his intimate Hindu moments. As his head is being ceremoniously shaved on the Ganges, he chants "Om Namasivaya" while tears of devotion stream down his face. At one of the Panduranga temples of Bhadrachari and Pandurapur, devoted listeners succumb to emotion as he falls into reverie and relates his first mystical vision of Lord Panduranga. At the Pashupatinath Temple of Kathmandu, Nepal, during the all-night Sivaratri festival, he strikes himself across the chest with clinched fists,

begging Lord Siva to make him His servant.

David Karp's excellent camera work has been nicely edited into information-packed sequences which, along with professional narration, define thought-provoking subject matter in a sensitive, interesting and satisfying way. The intended theme of the film is that "spiritual diversity message, manifests everywhere." Yes, perhaps its more potent message, striking the heart before the mind, is that the Lord the seekers seek is within the search as well as the discovery.

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