

AATMA – 11 Track Jain Stavan Album by Hemina Shah

Singapore-based British Halari Oshwal, Hemina Shah, produces an 11-track soulful devotional album for the Oshwal Community worldwide. The album is called '**Aatma**,' which means soul, and will be available to all Oshwals as a free download from the UK Oshwal website from August 2022.

Jain Stavan refers to the chanting and reciting of virtues of the Lord in Jainism. In Jainism, there are twenty-four Tirthankars, and there are separate Stavans. Beyond them, the stavans include verses glorifying the importance of places of enlightenment for the Tirthankars and their pilgrimage places.

The world came to a standstill in 2020 with the worldwide lockdowns, and many people lost their loved ones. Therefore, when many families approached Hemina and asked her to put together tributes for the lost ones, she also thought about compiling a Jain Stavan Album. She started recording the Stavans and giving them a new life with modern music and aesthetically pleasing ensembles. "It was a soul-searching experience," said Hemina.

"Covid-19 pandemic brought out a spiritual side of me that I didn't even know existed. My spiritual journey started when vulnerable family members contacted me during the Covid-19 pandemic to help them by singing a few prathnas on YouTube Live and on Zoom," said Hemina

Everyone was uncertain as people could not meet each other for funerals and prayers, which became a challenging time worldwide.

Hemina said, "I started learning some bhajans and realized just how much peace it brings me when singing them. It gave me a sense of accomplishment that I was able to do something good for the community. When I was a child, I would always sit beside all my family members when they sang some of our popular Jain Stavans during satsangs and in times of mourning. I would join the chorus by following the hymn books with the English lyrics. There was no music or beats, and I always wondered how these hymns would sound with some beautiful modern music."

"All this has led me to produce **Aatma** for our community so that everyone can listen and once again enjoy our traditional hymns, time with some soulful and heart-touching music. I hope this album will appeal to the community's younger generation so they can learn some of our traditional stavans. The eleven songs I have chosen for the album are a collection of some of my favorite and memorable stavans while growing up", says Hemina.

In 2021, Hemina had to undergo emergency surgery to remove half her thyroid. The doctors found a significant growth that risked squeezing her windpipe. Fortunately, the

surgery was a success. However, she needed extensive vocal training as she had "lost her voice." "Fortunately, after many months of speech therapy and training, I was able to recover and come back stronger and with a new voice.", said Hemina

After the surgery, Hemina recorded and released a devotional album called "**Devotion**" at the end of 2021, which consists of all the most powerful mantras. During the same year, she collaborated with many musicians worldwide to recreate some of the great Bollywood songs giving them a unique fusion feel.

"I have always believed music is the one true universal language that transcends all barriers, cultural differences, and religions and can bring people together," says Hemina.

She was recently featured on BBC World News and many worldwide media stations for releasing the first-ever Hindi-Afrobeat track in collaboration with a Nigerian artist.

Hemina was born in the UK and currently lives in Singapore with her husband, Jay Shah, and two children. She is the daughter of London-based Rekha and Ashwin Devchand Dodhia from Navagaam and daughter-in-law of Nairobi-based Minakshi and Ajitkumar Premchand Gudka (Slush Coffee World) from Kakabhai Sihan.

Hemina's other music can be found on her YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/HeminaShahMusic/>. Don't forget to click on the subscribe button on YouTube (it is free), as you can always follow her music.