"Connecting Movement to Music: [LoopFlow by Garrick Peters"](#)
written by Martine Holston

"I'm always on the lookout for my next favorite teacher at Yoga Tree. Some friends recommended I try out Garrick Peters' classes and I was instantly hooked. Not only is he a great alignment and sequencing teacher, but he has a unique style of matching movement to music that he calls *LoopFlow***. By using music loops a few seconds in length, LoopFlow allows you to explore all the spaces between poses and allows you to intentionally reach the peak of the pose. Moving with music is very meditative."**

Q: What is LoopFlow?

GP: *LoopFlow is an approach to yoga asana that brings attention to transitions and the quality of movement between poses in a flow sequence. We can use the same awareness we use to find a safe, stable and enjoyable experience in a pose, to movement itself as we flow from pose to pose - in Vinyasa for example. In movement, poses are markers and the space between has its own timing, most often measured in breaths. I have seen some yogis move consciously between poses to the beat of their breath, slow and deliberate, spreading the movement across the whole breath, but this is rarely taught. So if an inhale or exhale is 5 seconds, the entire 5 seconds could be used to arrive into the pose.*

In LoopFlow, music loops are used to facilitate the timing of a slow transition between the peaks of poses in a sequence. Music loops are repeating melodies and rhythms, typically a few seconds in length, with a clear beginning and end, that guide the timing of breath and movement, and bring spirit to the quality of movement. By moving slowly, and in time with repeating loops, yogis hone a continuous state of focus, dropping into deep moving meditation.

Q: What sparked the idea for Loop Flow? How did you develop it?

GP: *have always had an interest in proprioception, paying attention to my body and breaking down movements into parts to better understand them. Growing up I played sports, but I especially loved basketball. For practice, I would slow down my jump shot and other moves, repeating them over and over at slow speeds, to teach my body and establish muscle memory, before building up to full speed. In college, one of the early spiritual groups I was involved in did a moving meditation in imaginary honey, where much could be learned by slowing down or freezing movement at random points, like the kids' game Red Light/Green Light.*

Before I found the use of music loops, I would ask students to follow a count as they moved between poses. Many years ago, I was practicing at home and the Rolling Stones song, Gimme Shelter, came on; I was suddenly flowing to the count of the intro melody. So I asked a music producer friend to clip the 8 count (two measure) melody and loop it for ten minutes. That was my first loop, and it is still one of my favorites. Now when I listen to music I have an ear for sections of songs that would make good loops, and have developed a library of hundreds of loops with different timing and musical quality that I use when I practice and teach.

Q: How do you use Loops in the context of a class?

GP: *In a given practice, I find that the first time I come to a pose, I like to feel it for a few breaths to acclimate how the pose is that day and to find a sweet spot. Typically in the early part of class, I will build a set of poses and give alignment queues, which will become the tool set for the LoopFlow sections later in the class. Occasionally, I will use a shorter loop - called a BreathTrack - at the beginning of class to guide a continuous focus on the breath cycle, then add basic movements such sun salutations. This way, the class can synchronize to a steady timing of breath and movement.*

Q: How does LoopFlow change the practice for your students (and yourself)?

GP: *With LoopFlow, timing is brought to movement, where the focus on moving proprioception is heightened. In addition to timing, a good music loop can bring an inspiring spirit, in which the yogi can harmonize with to shape the quality of his/her movement. The use of music and music loops as a tool in yoga continues to evolve for me. I have always felt that music can stimulate deep experiences, and in ways that are beyond our ability to fully describe.*

There are some interesting neuroscience studies that try to explain the mechanism of how music affects our heartbeat, blood pressure, pupil dilation; and activates regions of our brain associated with body movement - bringing increased blood flow to the legs. It always amazes me when I see babies and toddlers respond to music with this innate sense of dance and movement. I am very interested in anything that can help us get past the repetitive looping of our thought patterns and into body, breath, and movement.

I am very selective of each song or loop and its placement in my playlists, to assure the spirit and feeling add to and not distract from the practice. In yoga, music is often used as a background filler, but it is possible to bring it more into the foreground, feel it, interact with it, be influenced by it, and build coordinated layers into the movement and breath of a yoga practice.

Q: What's your vision for the future of LoopFlow?

GP: *LoopFlow has brought so much to my own practice and teaching, and I get a lot of feedback from students that it is really appreciated. I would like to share it more by offering workshops to teachers and students, and having a resource of loops available as teaching and practice tools. The concept of LoopFlow is simple, but teaching it in a class requires a solid understanding of sequencing, preparing for the flow, and sensitivity to queue in the midst of the looping music.*

Many of the loops I've been using over the years have been clipped from existing songs. I have since been working with several artists making novel loops, specifically designed for LoopFlow and various applications of it. This is kind of a loop crowdsourcing effort, and I am open to additional artists reaching out to me to participate; having many styles and rhythms to draw from is ideal for keeping it fresh and meeting the unique needs of a given practice.

You can check it out in my classes; I typically weave in one or more LoopFlow sequences each class.