

Introduction:
Rukmini Walker?

Is one of the earliest disciples of Srila Prabhupada,
Joining ISKCON in 1968 in San Francisco. She received her
second initiation here in NYC in 1969.

She is the founder of the Urban Devi Collective,
An initiative to uplift the voices of women in the 21st Century

ISKCON 60th Gala
7.31.2026

Om ajnana....

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming here tonight to
celebrate the founding of the International Society for Krishna
Consciousness, by Srila AC Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupada HERE in NYC sixty years ago in 1966.

In New York City, there are many rags to riches stories.
-Immigrants, refugees, and fortune seekers-
who came here, many of them
landing at Ellis Island-like my own ancestors-
sometimes in tears, gazing up with hope at the Statue of Liberty.

Some seeking freedom from oppression, or freedom from famine,
Or freedom of religion,
or freedom to seek a better future for their children.

But this story is different. Srila Prabhupada came here,
like many of them- homeless and penniless. Yet, UNLIKE
many of those seeking shelter in America,
he came here to New York City to give.

He came to plant a SEED of spiritual awakening.
He came to SPARK a revolution of consciousness.

In America, the land of LIBERTY and FREEDOM,
HE came to liberate and teach a higher meaning of freedom
to what he called a 'misguided civilization'.
A civilization that was running headlong into the wrong direction.

He carried with him a precious cargo- his English translations
and commentaries on the Sanskrit text-
Srimad Bhagavatam, or the Bhagavata Purana First canto.

In these sacred books he carried with him aboard the freighter
ship, Jaladuta, he described our real need for freedom.
He described our predicament in this temporal
material world of suffering.
He described the real meaning of LIBERTY and FREEDOM.

He wrote:

The real need of the spirit soul is that he wants to get out
of the limited sphere of material bondage and fulfill his desire
for complete freedom. He wants to get out of the covered walls
of the greater universe. He wants to see the free light and the
spirit. That complete freedom is achieved when he meets
the complete spirit, the Personality of Godhead.

SB 1.2.28

On this Anniversary of Srila Prabhupada's founding of his
ISKCON society HERE in New York, 60 years ago,
we celebrate his gifts to us-
His GIFTS- showing us the free light of the spirit
and the path to complete freedom.

And his GIFT-
introducing the Western world to the loving service of
Lord Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead.

Thank you, Srila Prabhupada!
And thank you all for being here tonight!
Hare Krsna!