



Arian Jansen, executive producer

Sitar Cello

Paul Livingstone & Pete Jacobson

ANDELAIN

Confluence: Music From Inside The Heart Of The Raga

SANGAM

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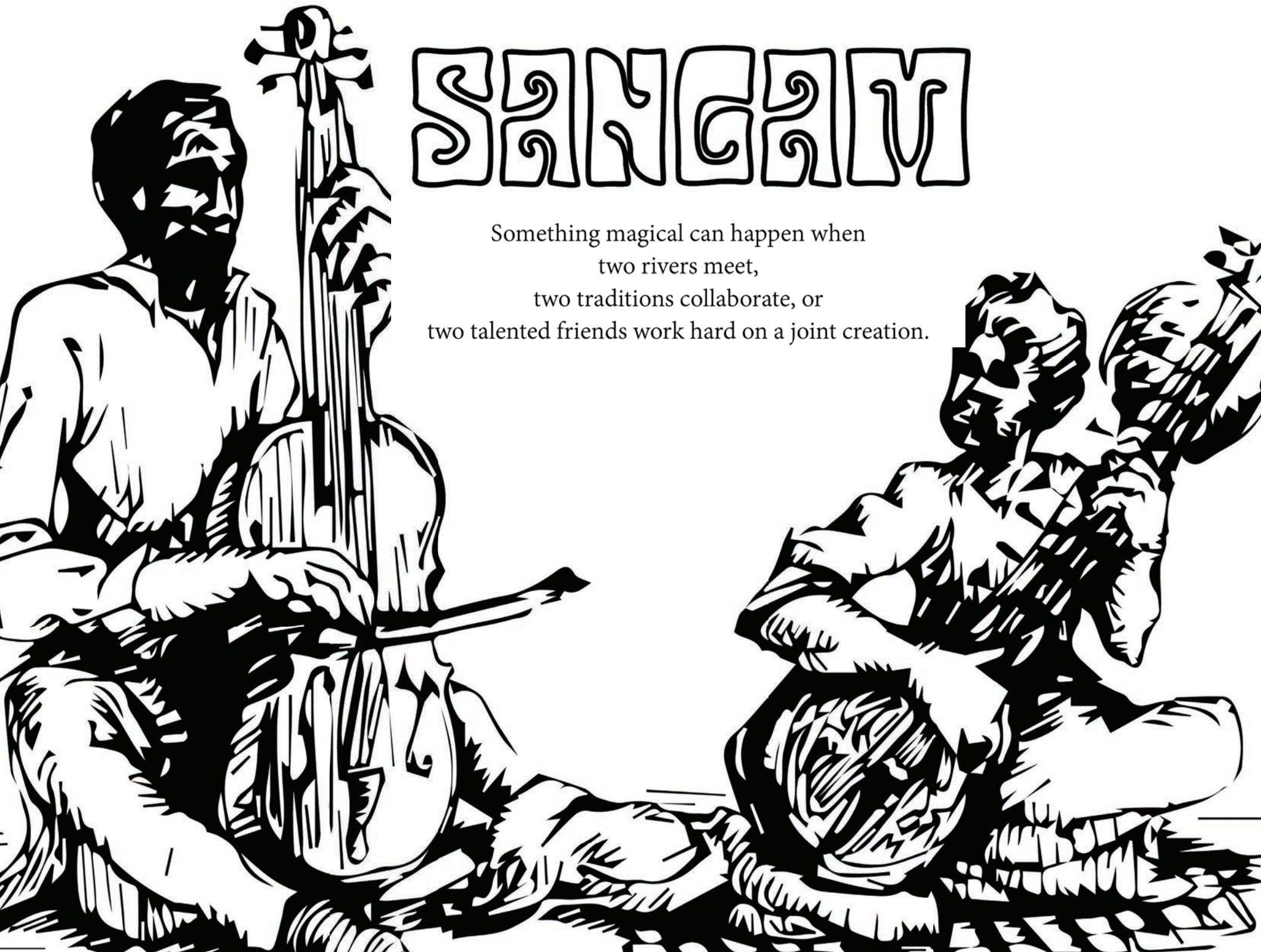
Paul Livingstone, sitar

Pete Jacobson, cello

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|-------|---|---------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Jaisalmer | 04:35 | 5 | Jungli Storms | 11:03 |
| | Improvisation on <i>Raga Chandrakauns</i> | | | <i>Raga Megh</i> | |
| | | | | I. <i>Alaap-Jor</i> | |
| 2 | Duality | 19:29 | | II. <i>Jor</i> | |
| | <i>Raga Yaman</i> | | | III. <i>Jor</i> | |
| | I. <i>Alaap</i> | | | | |
| | II. <i>Gat</i> | | 6 | River to the Ocean | 16:23 |
| | III. <i>Jhala</i> | | | <i>Raga Desh</i> | |
| 3 | Zila Kafi | 11:26 | | I. <i>Alaap</i> | |
| | I. <i>Alaap</i> | | | II. <i>Jor-Sargam</i> | |
| | II. <i>Gat</i> | | | III. <i>Gat-Jala</i> | |
| | III. <i>Alaap-Jor</i> | | 7 | Bhairavi | 03:34 |
| 4 | Playas | 06:52 | 8 | Surrender | 03:16 |

SANGAM

Something magical can happen when
two rivers meet,
two traditions collaborate, or
two talented friends work hard on a joint creation.



PRODUCER'S NOTES

Something magical can happen when two rivers meet, two traditions collaborate, or two talented friends work hard on a joint creation. Paul Livingstone on sitar and Pete Jacobson on cello take inspiration from the Hindustani musical tradition, and from Paul's teacher and mentor Ravi Shankar who collaborated so eloquently with Yehudi Menuhin on violin and helped to popularize Hindustani music in the West. Pete and Paul also draw inspiration from American jazz improvisation. *Sangam*, in Hindi, means many things, including "confluence," or the blending of two people, ideas or traditions into something fresh and new.

These two men love each other and enjoy playing together. Their families are friends and their wives and children enjoy the connection almost as much as they do. One can hear this joy and collaborative spirit when Paul and Pete play together. It imbues everything they do as people and as musicians.

In yet another confluence, Paul and Pete traveled to the Imhof Studio in Taos, New Mexico for this recording as part of a southwest tour where they performed for college audiences in Arizona and New Mexico, and for members of the Navajo Nation near Gallup. As so many creative people have been drawn to New Mexico in the past, Paul and Pete felt drawn to Taos, nestled

Woodblock print of Pete and Paul on prior page taken from original artwork by Arm-yan Mathäus Nispel.



in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Rocky Mountains. From members of the original Tiwa pueblo to later artists like Georgia O’Keeffe, Andrew Dasburg, Agnes Martin, D.H. Lawrence, Ansel Adams and the painter and lithographer Joseph Imhof, Taos has long served as a great caldron, a crucible really, of transformative collaboration for these artistic giants and many others.

Joseph Imhof painted in the studio where we recorded, a large and airy adobe space where his creativity bridged the gap between the most sophisticated lithography at the time and the Rio Grande pueblo traditions of the native tribes. A successful inventor in his own western tradition, Imhof was also inducted into two kiva clans, one at Cochiti pueblo and another in Taos. This extremely rare honor for a non-native meant much to Imhof, and helped imbue his work with a true *sangam* from two radically different traditions and world views. Paul and Pete felt this inspiration when they made this recording and I remember these sessions with great pleasure. Paul and Pete “play from the heart.” And to help us experience this highly personal confluence, this *sangam*, we used SonoruS Holographic Imaging technology, Frank Sinatra’s famous AKG C24 microphone owned by my friend Ted Ancona, microphone preamplification by Elliot Midwood, and the Merging Technologies HAPI with Pyramix software recording DSD256 to capture this music in a rich two-channel and surround sound immersive environment.

Hopefully you too will find yourself within the heart of this music when you listen. Paul and Pete loved hearing this album as we played back tracks to select our favorite takes, and they nicknamed the monitoring system the “SonosauruS” in honor of Arian’s technology.

Many thanks to Ms. Eiko Oba and Ms. Cheryl McEnaney who helped with transportation logistics for this recording.

As with so many instruments arising in deep musical history, the antecedents of the Hindustani sitar remain unclear. Some scholars and performers, including Paul's teacher Ravi Shankar, maintain that the sitar arose in India and took inspiration from the veena or वीणा, a lute-like instrument that evolved before the first millennium BC. An equally dramatic but possibly more accurate version maintains that the sitar took form inspired by the tanbūr or تنبور family of instruments that came to India via Iran from Mesopotamia or even Central Asia. This historical thread suggests that it was the Sufi master and inventor Amir Khusrow who adapted these earlier instruments into the “modern” sitar in the 13th century. This story proposes that the sitar rose to prominence during the Mughal Empire and took its current shape and string complement in the late Mughal Empire in India, during the first half of the 19th Century. Paul's research indicates the sitar achieved its present form in the 17th Century. Whether native to the Indian subcontinent or imported, the sitar remains one of the most iconic of the spectacular instruments in Hindustani music to this day. And I am grateful to Paul for allowing Yarlung to record our first sitar album featuring Paul and his magnificent sitar made by Radha Krishna Sharma.

overleaf: Many years ago, on a trip to Ladakh in late Autumn, I sat and took in the grandeur of the confluence of the Indus and Zaskar rivers between Leh and Alchi Monastery on the Leh to Srinagar highway. I was certainly unaware at the time, but perhaps dreaming into the future, that this river confluence might inspire the title for this recording and the name of the duo.



Paul and Pete focus on the Hindustani tradition in this recording. Hindustani music centered in Northern India after diverging from Carnatic music in the 12th Century.¹ The most basic elements in South Asian classical music are the *raga* and *tala*. A *raga* is traditionally a monophonic melody, though Paul and Pete take liberties, incorporating occasional counterpoint and harmony (often in thirds). Each *raga* adheres to a strict musical structure, which can be executed vocally or on instruments in their individual styles. The *tala* is the cyclic rhythmic framework which outlines a beat cycle and provides the glue to bring the instruments together in polyrhythmic play. I love what Pete and Paul do within this classical tradition, blended from time to time on this album with their inspired incorporations of new music and jazz. This is not as far-fetched or radical as it may at first seem to the reader; both Indian classical musicians and modern jazz cats focus on improvisation on the main melody or idea, just as European players did in the Renaissance.

While South Indian Carnatic music incorporated the violin in the 18th Century, Hindustani music began to use the modern violin only about 100 years ago. As the two members of Sangam, Pete and Paul take this tradition further into the modern world with Pete's cello, here used in ways both classical and cutting edge.

—Bob Attiyeh, producer

¹ *Carnatic music concentrated thereafter in the South of India.*



PAUL AND PETE THEIR NOTES ON THE MUSIC

Jaisalmer - A spontaneous improvisation on the night *raga Chandrakauns*. This *raga* illuminates the mysterious stillness and quiet of moonlight.

Duality - A fairly traditional exposition of the king of evening *ragas*, *Yaman*. Sitar and cello explore an extensive *alaap* (a pure improvisation and free time meditation on the core themes and mood of the *raga*). The suite progresses through three *gats* (compositions) in the cycle of *teental* (16 beats) with extensive improvisations and *tehais* (cross rhythmic calculations, as the cello and sitar outline

the cycle with *lehra* (melodic ostinatos) and simple harmonic loops frame in the *raga bhav* (mood) and structure.

The final section combines a high speed chase in counterpoint as the sitar leads the cello in thirds and flows into the *jhala* (rhythmic climax) and concluding *tehai* (rapid fire cadence) to bring the duet to a close.²

Zila Kafi - A *raga* variant of the popular afternoon *Raga Kafi*. A short *alaap* (meditation), is followed by a classic *gat* in *teental* (16 beat composition) by the grand guru of the Maihar *gharana* (lineage) Ustad Allauddin Khan. This composition is unusual in its five part form and is interspersed with *taans* (improvised runs) trading between cello and sitar.

² *With the absence of tabla, the maintenance of the melodic and harmonic lehra (repeated sequences) serve to maintain the space and integrity of the tala (rhythm cycle).*





Playas - A playful composition loosely based on the light *Raga Manj Khamaj*, with elements of classical counterpoint, and the simple harmonies and rhythmic bounce of Caribbean music of Veracruz and Cuba.

Jungli Storms - Based on the rainy season *Raga Megh*, a brief *alaap* is followed by an extensive composed *jor* (pulsing development) followed by a gradual buildup of improvisation in a whirlwind of rhythm.

Jungli Storms tells the story from the perspective of various animals as they become aware of storm clouds, mists and light rain making their preparations for an impending deluge. The scenario builds through waves of rain, wind and thunder into a frenzied climax of jungle drama.³

³ *The English word “jungle” has a Sanskrit root, jungli meaning “wild.”*

River to the Ocean - Based on *Raga Desh*,⁴ this tender *raga* moves through several movements, opening with an *alaap* and *jor* reimagined with creative accompaniment. This is followed by a reinterpretation of a traditional *sargam* (etude) and several original *gats* (compositions) with improvisations.

Bhairavi - A cello feature in the classic morning *Raga Sindhi Bhairavi*. Sections of the performance were inspired by the interpretation of the great violinist of South India, L Subramaniam.

Surrender - A vulnerable sitar solo inspired by the *Sarabande* in Bach's 5th cello suite. Reimagining creation as an act of surrender, this improvisation on the spur of the moment developed into some uncharted territory.

⁴ "Desh" means country and is evocative of the natural beauty of Bengal, the emotional depth of the people and their beautiful folk traditions.





PAUL'S NOTES

For me, the experience of *Sangam* is a kind of play. Pete and I aim for a universal sound, a music beyond category, label, or genre; neither Indian nor American and definitely not fusion. Instead, we aim to create something new from what we find available in the tradition. We find the building blocks all present in the combination of strings, both bowed and plucked, and from the musical lineages Pete and I have been blessed to enter. Sometimes we emphasize one tradition or another in our music, and occasionally venture into other worlds.

“Sangam” is a Hindi word: it is the meeting of rivers, waters from divergent places into a confluence or a single stream of creative consciousness. By utilizing the great musical

traditions of South Asia and of the West, we enter a new flow, carefully guided around the ensuing rapids by our imagination.

Like water for all of us, I hope this music offers nourishment for the heart and soul. We offer you, the listener, a place of peaceful repose. Music for me is inwardly energizing, like meditation in action. It is an expression of love. The painting of sound on the canvas of time. To co-paint this collection of pictures with Pete has been a wonderful challenge, refining and re-inventing a sound we've been developing together for many years.

For us, "Sangam" is a pool of music fed by diverse streams, some from the East and some from the West. Pete and I have imbibed the classical *raga* discipline of South Asia and also drunk from the rich harmonic and contrapuntal art music coming from the European tradition. As a duo Pete and I continue to study and learn in these oceans of music as we welcome water from other tributaries into the pool of sound that is *Sangam*. We invite streams of rhythm and thematic improvisations influenced by Jazz, Cuban and Mexican folk, rock n roll and other popular rhythms churn through the eddies of our music. I hope we can offer you some joyful surprises during this journey of sounds.

This recording has been influenced by musical giants, from Ustad Allauddin Khan, the luminary composer, musician and eccentric guru of the Maihar gharana⁵, to the artistic and spiritual

⁵ *The Maihar gharana is the Hindustani musical tradition founded for the court of the Maharaja in Maihar by Baba Allauddin Khan, who lived from approximately 1862 to September 6th, 1972. This musical tradition is apparently conducive to a long and healthy life! One of Allauddin Khan's more illustrious disciples in the West was Ravi Shankar.*

pinnacle of Baroque music, Johann Sebastian Bach. This record was a reach for something beyond what we thought possible or perhaps even correct. Yet through encouragement and challenges from our fastidious producer Bob Attiyeh, we somehow came up with something quite unexpected. Bahoot badiya!

—Paul Livingstone

PETE'S NOTES

When an idea comes to us, it does just that. We don't make it happen, it simply appears. And more ideas are always on their way if we make ourselves available and listen carefully. To play spontaneously is at once a relaxed act of flow and an astute act of attentive balance. In my experience, Western classical music performance traditionally celebrates ideas, but is scared to death of that place where ideas and flow originate. And rightly so, for it is a powerful and anarchic place of liberation.

The compositions in this album mostly inhabit a rhythmic cycle (*tala*) of 16 beats called *teental*, which can be felt in 4 big groups



of 4 beats. In playfully improvised sections, the game of spontaneously inventing new patterns, groupings, and subdivisions within the *raga* comes alive. I particularly delight when we end a section of improvisation in *tihai*, a phrase repeated 3 times within the cycle, and land in time at the start of the next cycle. I was able to feel a certain freedom in improvisation by keeping track of the rhythmic cycle with my bare feet as we played, and I encourage listeners to experiment with keeping time this way. Notice where the melody starts, how the improvisation takes off, and lands again in time.

A *raga* is, in part, a nuanced pattern of melody. It is literally a "coloring, tinging, dyeing," or "that which colors the mind," and carries associations with season, time and mood. Rather than tuning like an "equal tempered" piano (capable of producing nearly in-tune chords in all 12 keys) each tone of the *raga* has a precise microtonal position and often moves in a gliding motion, or *meend*, between tones.

I was blessed with many years of intense study with Eleonore Schoenfeld, a Western classical cellist who demanded deep listening and pushed her students to greatness through insight and sometimes crushing criticism. It took prodigious effort to make music that was acceptable to her, and only after many years did I begin to feel a sense of ease on the cello. Even so, learning to play in a spontaneous improvised style has required me to approach music again as a beginner.



As an adult I began studying classical Indian music with late sitar maestro Rahul Sariputra, a Mahar (the original ethnic group of Maharashtra, one of the many outcaste groups in India antagonistically called untouchables). He ran away to Mumbai at 13 to seek a career in music. He sought and received acceptance as a student of Baba Allauddin Khan, the greatest teacher of traditional Indian music of the 20th century, the father of Ali Akbar Khan and teacher of Ravi Shankar.

I am forever grateful to my teachers, and I hope all who listen can sense the sincere joy of play within the structures of *raga* (melody) and *tala* (rhythmic cycle).

—Pete Jacobson

paulzlivingstone.com/sangam

paulzlivingstone.com

peteplayscello.com

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Recording engineer & producer: Bob Attiyeh

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Duality

Zila Kafi

Playas

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River to the Ocean

Bhairavi

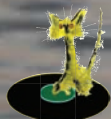
Surrender

Paul Livingstone, sitar

Pete Jacobson, cello

Sonorus

Arian Jansen, executive producer



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Breaking the Sound Barrier

YAR84146

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