

HIDDEN SKY LINER NOTES

I could never have predicted that an animal such as the elephant, would summon me to awaken and recognize the inherent connection underlying all that appears separate. In the midst of the sheer joy that permeates life with the elephants, one must walk with the constant grief of their captivity and the perpetual threat of their extinction. In this CD, my mission has been to embody both the grief and the joy I knew while in their presence.

In 2001 my friend, and filmmaker, Galen Garwood, invited me to Thailand to meet and play music with the Thai Elephant Orchestra. Galen knew long before I did that the elephants would profoundly affect my music. There, at the Thai Elephant Conservation Center, I met Phong, the young elephant who played a xylophone (renat) and kissed me on my nose with his trunk, and Prathida, the drummer who followed the movement of my bow with her trunk as I played. With them and at least eight other orchestra members, I experienced a mystical collaboration I had never known before. This communion has forever changed the way I see and feel the natural world. In addition to Galen, I thank Richard Lair, Prassop Tipprasert, and the mahouts at the Conservation Center and Soraida Salwala at the Friends of the Asian Elephant Hospital, who shared with grace their expertise and the elephant world.

I have come to know that elephants have a creative rhythm, intelligence and language. It doesn't matter whether or not their music fits our definition. What matters is that music is a bridge that connects us. The ineffable richness of my meeting with the elephants in the shared moment of our music sustains me and gives me hope that we may remember our connection to all beings on this beloved earth.

Once upon a time, Richard Lair invited me to "go to your elephant self". I now invite you.

SONG LIST

1. Maenam

This is the improvisation I played when first introduced to the elephants. It was the invitation that called them towards me. Maenam: Mae is the word for mother. Naam is water. Together it is river - mother of the water.

Jami Sieber- electric cello

Rick Heizman- Korean zither (Kayagum)

Benjy Wertheimer- Raagini

don benedictson- space bass

2. Out of the Mist

"We awake at dawn to meet with Puen, the mahout, and to bring Tantawan in from the forest for her workday. The jungle holds a quiet magic at this time. The mist hangs low and the distant silhouettes of elephants call us forward." Jan. 2002

Jami Sieber - electric cello, vocals

Nancy Wilson - classical guitar

3. Homage

Through the mist Tantawan comes into focus.

Jami Sieber - electric cello

4. Sukhothai Rain*

Jami Sieber - electric cello

The Thai Elephant Orchestra - angklung, renat, gong, drum

5. Red Moon

Take me home to the lush forest of knowing.. of remembering what lives in every cell. You walk with grace the paths of our future, holding generations of an ancient line. In the joining of sun and moon - and you and I,

I stand in your shadow

I bow to your heart.

There is a fire in the black sky - Red Moon

Red Moon, is the English translation of the name Jan Daeng - the elephant that carried me into the forest.

Jami Sieber- electric cello, vocals

Eyvind Kang- viola

Rick Lazar- timba, riq, udu, caxixi

6. A Common Music*

The elephant named Phong, came to be a favorite of mine. He seemed to dance while he played the renat. (xylophone)

Jami Sieber- electric cello

The Thai Elephant Orchestra- renat, gong, drum/cymbal, vocalizations

7. All I Hear

All I hear are prayers. All I hear are simple melodies, and thoughts.

It's like life here - a rainstorm - the frogs at night - the monks singing unison at dawn. All I sing are prayers. All I sing are simple melodies. It's you that lives inside me. It's you that carries me from wake, to sleep, to a dream...

In search of a tribe. Constant longing for another. Searching for a place to call home.

All I hear are prayers. All I hear are simple melodies. In the silence between notes I am listening for your thunder. Will I hear you answer me?

All I hear are prayers. All I hear are simple melodies.

Is it where the answer...is it where the answer lives in me?

Jami Sieber- electric cello, vocals

Hans Teuber- soprano sax

Rick Heizman- Burmese twirling temple bells (kyi-tzi)

8. Prayer 1

After reading Barbara Gowdy's book "The White Bone", this prayer came to me in my hotel room in Lampang, Thailand.

Jami Sieber- electric cello

9. Hidden Sky

Buddhism teaches that our true nature when revealed is the vast and clear blue sky. Even though there are clouds and storms coming and

going, the "hidden sky" behind those habitual emotional states and confused thoughts is always there, waiting to be uncovered at any moment, through meditation or an experience of the mystical.....or in my case, being with the elephants.

Jami Sieber- electric cello, vocals

don benedictson- electric bass

Benjy Wertheimer- tabla, esraj

Rick Lazar- riq

Rick Heizman- Burmese harp (saung byat).

10. Mandlovu Mind

Mandlovu is the word the N'debele people of Zimbabwe use for female elephant. It is connected in resonance with MamboKadze, the name for the deity that is both elephant, the Virgin Mary, and the Great Mother.

Mandlovu - poem by Deena Metzger

Suddenly, I am of a single mind extended
Across an unknown geography,
And imprinted, as if by a river, on the moment.
A mind held in unison by a large gray tribe
Meandering in reverent concert
among trees, feasting on leaves.
One great eye reflecting blue
From the turn inward
Toward the hidden sky that, again,
Like an underground stream
Continuously nourishes
What will appear after the dawn
Bleaches away the mystery in which we rock
Through the endless green dark.

I am drawn forward by the lattice,
By a concordance of light and intelligence
Constituted from the unceasing and consonant
Hum of cows and the inaudible bellow of bulls,
A web thrumming and gliding

Along the pathways we remember
Miles later or ages past.

I am, we are,
Who can distinguish us?
A gathering of souls, hulking and muddied,
Large enough – if there is a purpose –
To carry the accumulated joy of centuries
Walking thus within each other's
Particular knowing and delight.

This is our grace: To be a note
In the exact chord that animates creation,
The dissolve of all the rivers
That are both place and moment,
An ocean of mind moving
Forward and back,
Outside of any motion
Contained within it.

This is particle and wave. How simple.
The merest conversation between us
Becoming the essential drone
Into which we gladly disappear.

A common music, a singular heavy tread,
Ceaselessly carving a path,
For the waters tumbling invisibly
Beneath.

I have always wanted to be with them, with you, so.

Jami Sieber- electric cello, vocals, angklung
don benedictson- electric bass, space bass
Rick Lazar- surdo, assorted percussion

11. Arms of the Mother

Jami Sieber and Rhiannon (ASCAP)

Croatian translation by Milena Soree

Before a performance in Dubrovnik, Croatia, Rhiannon and I each went our ways to gather some inspiration for the show. This chant came to her while swimming in the Adriatic Sea; an idea for the music came to me as I walked along her shores. At the sound check we shared our pieces and magically they fit together. I thank the women of the Balkan region - Zena Zenema in Serajevo, Desa in Dubrovnik, Centre for Protection of Women and Children in Prishtina, and Fran Peavey of Crabgrass (San Francisco) who sponsored our tour. This is dedicated to all the waters of this planet that connect us as one people.

In the arms of the mother

The great Adriatic Mother

In the arms of the mother, I lay down.

Jami Sieber- electric cello, vocals

Rhiannon- vocals

don benedictson- electric bass, space bass

Benjy Wertheimer- djembe

Rick Lazar- dumbek, riq, triangle, shakers

Rick Heizman- tar

Ya Elah- Croatian Vocals (Bon Singer, Alisa Fineman, Cyrise Beatty,
Marsha Attie, Nina Perlman)

12. Prayer 2

Jami Sieber- electric cello

Credits

Jami plays a Jensen electric cello

All music and lyrics by Jami Sieber (except where noted)

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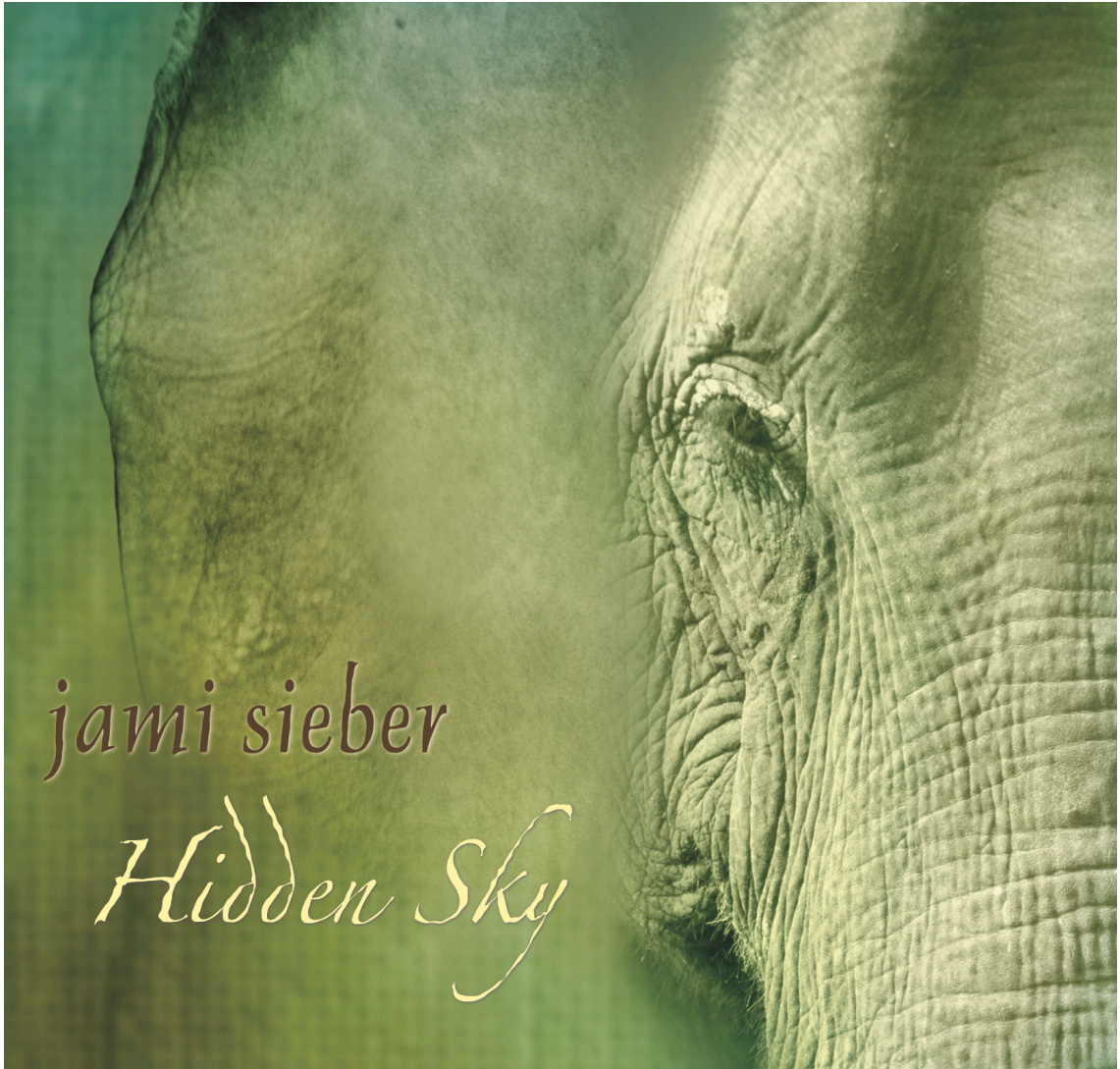
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A portion of all proceeds benefits the care and preservation of the elephant

1. Maenam 5:39
2. Out of the Mist 5:36
3. Homage 1:38
4. Sukhothai Rain 1:35
5. Red Moon 5:47
6. A Common Music 6:13
7. In the Silence 4:13
8. Prayer 1 3:00
9. Hidden Sky 7:05
10. Mandlovu Mind 10:52
11. Arms of the Mother 7:10
12. Prayer 2 2:44



jami sieber

Hidden Sky