



.....

THE UNSEEN GUEST – OUT THERE

DECLAN MURRAY: LEAD VOCALS, GUITARS, SLIDE GUITAR, BASS GUITAR, PIANO AND BONGOS
AMITH NARAYAN: HARMONY VOCALS, GUITARS, MANDOLIN, VEENA AND BASS GUITAR

TIN 00102

RELEASE: 11.04.2005

.....

...first tuition release... :first tuition release: :first tuition release: :first tuition release: :first tuition release:

In all honesty, how often does it happen that you hear music the likes of which you have never heard before, but with which you can relate to from the very beginning? There is no need for long verbal introductions or explanations because *The Unseen Guest's* songs speak for themselves. Spreading quickly from the ear drum, over the nerves and blood vessels, soon filling your whole body, it is difficult to understand what is actually happening. As if in a trance, all you feel is the desire to hear more.

Declan Murray and the Indian, Amith Narayan are *The Unseen Guest*. They were introduced to each other by a common friend from London. Amith was then working in Bombay, Declan was holidaying in Goa at the time and the three met in Amith's hometown, Calicut in Kerala. This encounter had impressed Amith so much that he e-mailed Declan about a year later, inquiring about what he was up to at that time. When he wrote back that he had nothing special going on, Amith spontaneously quit his job, booked a studio and invited Declan to come by. The two of them immediately forgot everything else they were doing before and started playing together. Music can hardly blossom in a more genuine or organic way.

The result of these sessions can be heard on the CD, "Out There". Each melody sketches its own scenery, each functioning like a film. There are no two pieces that resemble each other. And it is this diversity that forms and joins these wonderful, unique sound jewels into a whole. "*It was important for us to write songs that were very different from one another, this way the excitement and thrill is kept alive and does not fade from one song to another*", Amith explains. It is, however, impossible to recommend one or the other song from the album, because each listener will have his or her own favorite, i.e. will like the song they are listening to at that moment. In this way, the listener becomes the unseen guest in *The Unseen Guest's* aural theater.

"Out There" is Indian music in the purest and most original sense of the word. The Irish element can also be subconsciously perceived. But yet, these ten songs have nothing to do with models of Indian music that we already know. *The Unseen Guest* refer to neither the countless *mélanges* of Hip Hop, Techno and Ambient that are currently being so successfully combined with Indian music in England, nor with the meditative endless improvisations derived from Ragas and other traditional forms. They write simple rock songs and are almost pragmatic in their approach.



"Because I am from India", says Amith, "I had a good idea of what was available there musically. Our intention initially, was just to combine Indian and Western music in a way that hasn't been done before. Usually, one wants to achieve a sort of fusion and calls together artists who are accustomed to playing only traditional Indian music. We, on the other hand, sought musicians who are at home in many styles. Some of our musicians have experience with film music in Bollywood, our percussionists have even composed and recorded film scores. After we had found the right musicians, the rest took care of itself. It was easy to get the musicians to play exactly the sort of hybrid we wanted, because they intuitively understood what we were talking about."

Amith and Declan flee neither into an imaginary past nor into a virtual parallel universe. Their songs are from here and now. The band's songs amaze, at the first instance, because they are simply beautiful. "Beauty", says Amith, *"is a very abstract term. But where does the beauty in our music come from? I am Indian and Declan from Ireland. I've traveled to many places around the world and now live in Singapore. I've learned a lot from other cultures. This mélange of various cultures is synonymous with beauty for me."* Only when one looks beyond this feeling of sublimity, behind the special sound secret, do you realize that they have not used any electric instruments. No glossy keyboard sounds, no electronic beats, neither samples nor technical distortion in the studio. On the contrary, *"it was a conscious decision to use only acoustic instruments. We chose a studio in which we could get the perfect acoustic sound we were after. Especially, the tablas need very special microphone placement that you seldom get to hear. Very few musicians use pure acoustic sounds nowadays. We also use vocal harmonies that would just get drowned in an electric setup."*

The Unseen Guest's songs sound like a collage of memories. Although no sound or melody is openly imitated, the music comes across as a chain of déjà-vus. One often feels transported back to the edge of the Sixties and Seventies, when Pop and Rock approached the most varied expression from the most diverse cultures. The combination of their vocals and acoustic guitar could even bring along one or another subconsciously floating psychedelic song from early Pink Floyd. *"We wanted a sound different from the present or even from the Nineties. Our sound may be associated the strongest with sounds that are thirty years old or older. But we definitely did not have any intention of drawing associations to any other band."*

The Unseen Guest consciously avoids categorization. Every time you think you have determined their sound and image, the next song changes everything. But yet, *The Unseen Guest* is astonishingly accessible and can be listened to in any situation in life. Music technocrats, bureaucrats and statisticians will have a problem with this CD, but Amith and Declan make it easy for the listener to gain a completely new experience with unheard yet familiar sounds.

:::first tuition release::: :::first tuition release::: :::first tuition release::: :::first tuition release::: :::first tuition release:::