



YARLUNG RECORDS
BOB ATTIEH, PRODUCER

Suryodaya

exaSound
DSD

Robert Gupta, violin
Badal Roy, tabla



- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 1 | <i>Calcutta Sunrise</i>
Badal Roy | 3:56 |
| 2 | <i>Istanpitta (Chominciamento di gioia)</i>
anonymous , arr. Robert Vijay Gupta | 5:31 |
| 3 | <i>Raga Redux</i>
Robert Vijay Gupta | 12:55 |



The Collaboration

It was our friend the music critic David W. Robinson who twisted my arm into the DSD realm. Our success with Yarlung's Single, Double and Quad DSD releases is "all his fault." For which we are grateful. David loaned me his Hapi and Pyramix software from Merging Technologies in Switzerland to make these transfers from analog tape. Thank you David. Recording legend Tom Caulfield helped me set up the Pyramix system and then cut our recordings into tracks and added the metadata for our releases on NativeDSD.com. Working with Tom, and his cohorts Jared and Jonas Sacks at NativeDSD has been a pleasure, and the Merging Technologies system worked flawlessly without ever once requiring a reboot during our weeks of transfers. All three of them, Tom, Jared and Jonas, were tirelessly patient with this old-fashioned vacuum tube and analog tape guy (me) as we transferred the SonoruS Series of analog tapes to Quad DSD for these releases.

Many audiophiles believe that Quad DSD is the finest medium to deliver great music on the planet. Given what we have heard it is hard to argue with them. Recording music to Quad DSD is one thing, but playing it back is another much more difficult process. The circuitry and design aesthetic required to take the super high resolution DSD files and deliver them as living and breathing music takes enormous skill and care. For this most important and delicate step we are especially grateful to George Klissarov. It is his musical aesthetic and from-the-ground-up engineering that enabled him to create the exaSound e22, which must be one of the finest Quad DSD and high resolution PCM digital to analog converters on the planet. exaSound also makes the e28 multichannel DAC for surround sound but Yarlung remains a "purist stereo household" and it is the e22 we know and love. Not only is it small and easy to use, but it is intensely musical, such that one marvels at the quality of the music performance and has the luxury of forgetting that one is listening to a digital stream rather than living and breathing musicians performing for you in your listening room. This is magic, but the magic comes not from tricks but from superb engineering. We are honored to collaborate with George and exaSound to bring you this first Yarlung quartet of DSD releases. Learn more about exaSound at exasound.com

Famed audiophile critic Brian Moura, who first introduced us to George at exaSound, wrote this to me:

exaSound has been an early leader in providing Direct Stream Digital (DSD) playback in their DACs. This includes the first DAC for the consumer market that provided both Stereo and Multichannel playback at resolutions up to Quad DSD (11.2 MHz) – 4 times the resolution level offered by the Super Audio CD (SACD). exaSound is also noted for their responsive customer service and custom software drivers that support Windows, Mac and soon Windows Server and Linux. It's no surprise that they continue to win new customers with their products.

David W. Robinson writes extensively for Postive Feedback Online, for which he is also the publisher and Editor-in-Chief. Like Brian Moura, David is known as “The Mountain” for his knowledge and experience with high resolution playback. David sent me this description of exaSound:

Over the past several years, I have gotten to evaluate a number of DACs with DSD capabilities. Each has its own set of strengths, and a few weaknesses, which is only to be expected. But the exceptional work of George Klissarov and exaSound in their e22 and e28 DSD DACs is truly noteworthy -- in every sense of that word. The combination of ease, naturalness, harmonic balance, detail, and silky elegance of presentation, make it a top-tier product, one of the very best in my experience. This is no surprise to me: George himself has wonderful sensibilities, well attuned to the task of fusing the audio arts and the music they cherish with the technical challenges posed by bringing the best out of the latest DSD advances. The results are splendid: A noble marriage of music with technology. We are all the beneficiaries of George Klissarov's achievements at exaSound!

People have asked me “Why NativeDSD?” Why should Yarlung focus on one distributor for these much-anticipated Yarlung albums? NativeDSD.com results from its founder's love of music more than his love of profit. Jared Sacks is a superb musician and recording engineer living in The Netherlands but working all over the world, with a superb musical sense and extraordinary results with his recordings. Yarlung's recording library includes many albums from Channel Classics, Jared's label, and we were a fans years before we knew who Jared was. He created NativeDSD to serve the DSD listening community exclusively and to support labels that wished to join him in making these recordings widely available. Jared works with labels we respect greatly. Jared has this to say about his mission: “If you are tired of listening to compressed audio and your desire is to instead play uncompressed, original recording quality sound, this is your one stop shop. You will find detail in the music you were never able to hear before.... NativeDSD was founded... to create a central place where music fans could go to find the highest quality music in the world in both Stereo and Multichannel, directly from those labels recording [and releasing] in DSD.” How could we resist? Please let us know what you think of the results.

-Bob Attiyeh, producer
www.yarlungrecords.com

Producer's notes:

Suryodaya is personal music and a tremendously personal recording. Robert invites us inside his world as he plays and bares his soul to you, in the magnificent temple that is Walt Disney Concert Hall. This is not flash, not technical bravura, but rather a testament to the deeply personal, a meditation. As we listen to and live through this recording, let us imagine that we are Robert; that we stand in this almost holy acoustic space, playing Nathan Milstein's prized Stradivarius.¹ Please enjoy this recording and feel at home in Walt Disney Concert Hall, just as we did when making this album. I am intensely grateful to Robert Gupta and Badal Roy for giving us this music, and to Deborah Borda, President of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, for inviting us in and making it possible to produce this recording in her concert hall.

Robert has become a beacon for the City of Los Angeles. He serves as the youngest and one of most vibrant members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic (Robert won his audition and joined the orchestra when he was 19 years old). And as a TED Senior Fellow, Robert speaks internationally on his work with Nathaniel Ayers (the formerly homeless musician whose story is told in the book and movie "The Soloist." Robert continues to be Nathaniel's real-life violin teacher). Inspired by his relationship with Nathaniel, Robert founded Street Symphony,² which brings music to mentally ill people on skid row, men in high security prisons and veterans: human beings in situations many of us would prefer to ignore.

Robert brings "humanity to places humanity has abandoned. The music has an authenticity that cannot be faked, and that engenders everyday interactions that open the door for healing."³

The famous tabla player Badal Roy, Robert's illustrious cousin, joins us for many of the works on this album. This record is Badal's umpteenth disc. We follow in the footsteps of the performances and recordings Badal made with Miles Davis and Ornette Coleman. Yet in his typical funny and humble fashion, with a grin he tried to suppress for effect, Badal told me "Bob... you are in the presence of the most important free jazz tabla player in the world! Of course there is only one of us." Then followed his fabulous laugh and bear hug. Badal does not offer us free jazz on this album. Rather he offers a combination of East and West, per the theme of our album's title (more about that later), in ways that channel centuries of Indian and specifically Hindustani musical tradition. Badal blends this inheritance comfortably with new music written in the West in the 21st Century. Badal opens our album with *Calcutta Sunrise*, a work for solo tabla commissioned by Yarlung Artists and underwritten by our friend Linda Joyce Hodge. I invited percussionist and friend Jose Angel Gurria-Cardenas to this session. Gurri and I had worked together on an album with Ciaramella Ensemble the month before. Gurri told me "This man is a Living Legend! I must have seventeen of his recordings. Sitting here in this recording session with you, in this hall, is like being in the presence of a deity."

¹ *Suryodaya* is the third Yarlung recording which celebrates Jerry and Terri Kohl's 1716 golden-era Stradivarius, the "ex-Goldmann," which used to belong to Nathan Milstein. We are grateful to Jerry and Terri for their generosity, and for their joy in sharing the sound of this magnificent violin with the world. Playing this violin during rehearsals and recording sessions for this album gave Robert one of his life's peak experiences.

² Street Symphony is a 501(c)3 California nonprofit corporation, www.streetsymphony.org. Robert has donated his royalties from this CD to Street Symphony so the organization can grow and continue to give free on-site classical music outreach concerts of the highest artistic quality. His generosity reminds me of one of Robert's favorite quotations by Robert Schumann: "To send light into the darkness of men's hearts - such is the duty of the Artist." Before joining the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Robert planned to be a medical doctor. Indeed had Robert not won his Los Angeles Philharmonic audition he might be a neurology or neurosurgery intern today. Robert's work with Street Symphony combines these two areas of interest: Street Symphony has seen music act transformatively for people with various psychoses (people like Nathaniel Ayers), people with post traumatic stress disorder, and so forth. You will find more discussion and several videos on this topic on the Street Symphony website and on Robert's TED talks on the internet. Search "Robert Gupta music as medicine" on Youtube.

³ From the TED-India (INK) blog. Nina Gannes, 2012.



“Suryodaya” means “sunrise,” or the “coming of light,” almost the “grace of light” in Sanskrit. Our album title works for us on many levels. Robert and Badal bring musical illumination to us as listeners, from rich musical traditions that may be fresh and new to many of us. I like to think of the music Robert and his friends bring to the homeless and unfortunate through Street Symphony as a gift of illumination and grace. Additionally, this album traces one version of the story of the origins and development of the violin in the western world. In truth, the “modern” violin (such as our example made by Antonio Stradivari in Cremona Italy in 1716) came from several parts of the world over centuries to become what we know as the modern concert violin of today. One of these stories, however, tells the tale of the violin as an instrument with antecedents in India which later developed into the sitar, esraj, dilruba and sarangi. The instrument migrated out of India on the Silk Road, and eventually found a following in the Roma communities (the Roma, or Gypsies, originated in India) who brought it among other places into Europe via Iran, North Africa and the Balkans. I love to imagine the great ancestors of the Stradivari, Guarneri Amati and Guadanini violins played around Gypsie campfires along their caravan routes.

Yarlung Artists commissioned *Raga Jaunpuri* (we include a shorter alternate take, *Raga Redux*, on this recording) with generous underwriting from David and Margie Barry. Robert plays this raga using his heart even more than his violin. *Raga Jaunpuri* is a salutation to the late morning. The roots of Hindustani music stretch back four millennia in history and this particular melody originated in the 15th century. Despite its antiquity, it is not the melody which is important. The melody is the framework, the skeleton, upon which Robert Gupta and Badal Roy build this creation. When you listen to this raga, focus not on the melody but feel instead the rise and fall of energy, the beat, the variations, the humor and the sheer joy. Feel the slow burn as it begins quietly, builds incrementally to its ecstatic climax, and then ends just as quietly and serenely as it began. This is what “Suryodaya,” the coming of light in the late morning, is all about. Robert felt strongly that we should record this raga at the time it should be heard, in the late morning. And so we did. We began our takes at 10:15 in the morning on July 6th, 2011, and we were finished before noon.

We offer “Raga Redux” for the third work on this tape. It is shorter than *Raga Jaunpuri*, the full work. “Raga Redux” is an alternate take, which begins with Badal Roy’s solo. Robert and I very much enjoyed thinking about this raga before he wrote it. Robert is, after all, completely American. Robert was born in the United States and studied at the Manhattan School of Music, Juilliard, and Yale. Yet his parents are Bengali, from Calcutta. Robert’s raga is not a “classical” raga, such as one might hear in a concert performance in India (Robert never studied at the foot of a great Indian music master). But neither is *Raga Jaunpuri* “new age Western.” Instead, *Raga Jaunpuri* is a synthesis of Robert’s American and Indian inheritance. Complimentarily, Badal’s performance on tabla blends his free jazz improvisational history with the Indian classical tradition to give us a fresh take on a deeply beloved iconic style. A raga is a series of pitches, a tone row. This raga takes its name from the city of Jaunpur, in Uttar Pradesh, about an hour’s drive northwest of Varanasi.



Assistant Producer & Recording Engineer Jacob Horowitz



Robert discusses his raga, its inspiration and its movements:

Although I have never formally studied the vast musical genre of Indian classical music, this is the first music I heard. I grew up in a traditional Bengali household, one in which my mother always sang while cooking, the strains of a sitar or a voice accompanying most daily activities. I discovered this particular raga when I heard *New Dawn Mind*, an album which includes two morning ragas, *Jaunpuri* and *Bhairavi*, by the famous Bengali sitarist Purbayan Chatterjee. After hearing many other interpretations of *Jaunpuri*, including the voices of masters Bhimsen Joshi and Mallikarjun Mansoor, the sitar of Nikhil Banerjee and sarod of Ustad Amjad Ali Khan and countless other pundits of the Hindustani tradition, I knew that raga *Jaunpuri* was the framework for the first raga I wanted to write. The composed *Jaunpuri* you hear on this album is an amalgam of various instrumental and vocal elements from the great masters. I use the violin – maverick emulator that it is – to express a wide range, from the sultry lyricism of the voice to the percussive twang of the sitar.

Jaunpuri is a raga for the late morning. Although the pitches of this particular raga are identical to a D Minor scale in Western music, the character is more pentatonic, leaning on a flattened 6th tone (B Flat), and cadencing just a half-step below at the 5th degree (A), never quite returning us to the defined resolution of the tonic. Instead, this melody leaves us with an open-ended, sensuous question, as if gently and evocatively imploring us to create yet another variation, another form.

The raga's intensely improvisational style is anchored by several distinct forms, such as the *Alap*, *Khyal* and *Teental*. These forms develop the nature of this raga in various ways, some gently explore the melodic line, others play with rhythm, leading to some fun virtuosic fireworks. The first movement of *Jaunpuri* is the *Alap* – literally the meeting or encounter, where the musician slowly reveals the raga, note by note. Our *Alap* gradually develops the character of our yearning melody. Our tune then evolves, accompanied by tabla, into the *Khyal* – or 'play' section of this first movement.

This playful mood establishes a "taal" (or "groove") in the next movement called *Intermezzo* in *Shikartaal*. The violin repeats melodies from the *Alap* as the tabla improvises on an off-kilter beat pattern of 17 (or 8-and-a-half) beats. We explore the *Shikar* for a time before mixing in a bit of musical mathematics: Badal adds a 15-beat segment to the 17-beat section, extending the phrase to 32 beats. After a short interlude, this rhythmic frenzy reaches its climax in the 16-beat third movement, *Rondo in Teental*, where a melodic memory from the *Alap* is spun successively into longer variations. "*Teental*" literally means "three claps." In the sixteen beats of the *Teental* the stresses (what would be hand claps) come on the 1st, 5th and 13th beats.

A raga is not about the resolution of harmonic tension and accompanying sense of release and arrival, as we would expect in a piece of western music. Instead, a raga develops continuously as it builds toward an internal goal, the *Raga Jaunpuri* melody itself, which compels us to rediscover these notes in an ever more complex and novel light.

The second work on our album is *Istanpitta*, a 14th Century Italian tune with antecedents from Iran and further east. I first heard this music as a choral work, *Chominciamento di*



gioia, sung in Italian.⁴ Robert and Badal interpret this song for violin and tabla. Once again, I like to think of the Persian kamanjah (or kamancha) as one of the great ancestors of the violin.

Robert shares his thoughts with us:

When we think of Medieval music, our association draws us into the austere halls of Gregorian chant, monks and heavy incense. But right outside, on the steps of the cathedral, ensembles of troubadours sang bawdy madrigals, a parody of a world at odds with itself. At the courts, the height of chic was music from the Orient – from the trade routes of Persia and Turkey, melismatic Arabian melodies plucked from the strings of a cittern or oud, accompanied by the European viol and pipe.

Istanpitta comes from a set of Italian court dances from the 14th century called “Chominciamento di gioia,” or the “Beginning of Joy”. Our interpretation attempts to capture the mash of Occident and Orient, with the rhythmic texture provided by tabla under the strains of the fiddle-like violin.

Last on our album comes *Raga Redux*, one of our takes of *Raga Jaunpuri* which begins with an extended improvised solo by Badal Roy. Yarlung could not make these recordings without generous support. We especially want to thank

David and Margie Barry and **Linda Joyce Hodge**

for commissioning the two new works on our recording, *Raga Jaunpuri* and *Calcutta Sunrise*.

Major underwriting came from

Gary and Marcia Hollander and also **Ira Ehrenpreis**

whose support formed the backbone of this album. Robert Gupta and I also express our sincere appreciation for his Kickstarter friends who made such a significant contribution to this recording.



⁴ When planning this recording I wanted to find a Persian piece for violin, linking our raga from India with Europe, from a place geographically in-between the two. I asked our friend Adam Gilbert, director of Caramella Ensemble and professor of music at USC's Thornton School. "It's a stretch, Bob, this is only one of the many musical and instrumental antecedents to the 17th and 18th century European violin, and many scholars will disagree with you." Adam played me several pieces that "bridged this gap," and *Istanpitta* stuck in my mind. It tells a fun story of the violin as it moves westward over the centuries, and I like to imagine it is true.



We are deeply grateful to all of you for your support and trust. Robert wants especially to mention

Bhupesh Patel
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Melody O'Connor
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Nancy Sanders
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Milo Talwani
Robert Willoughby Jones

Bob and I owe a great debt of thanks to the many behind-the-scenes partners on this project, for their presence at every stage of the process. To my collaborator and cousin, Badal Roy, for his flexible virtuosity; Jerry and Terri Kohl for their generous loan of the Milstein Strad; The Los Angeles Philharmonic, Deborah Borda and Walt Disney Concert Hall;

Joe Pereira for his presence during the recording of his *Partita for Solo Violin*; Perry Chen at Kickstarter, and the TED Fellows team for their advice before and during our funding campaign; Yana Reznik for her friendship and for donating her fantastic album as part of our Kickstarter rewards, and the indomitable Cooper Bates, for his constant presence, guidance, photography and great eye, and Hint Mints.

-Robert Vijay Gupta

Producing an album in Walt Disney Concert Hall is always a treat. The quality of the acoustics presents an exciting challenge: one wants to do them justice, both with the performance of the music and with the sound recording itself. My assistant producer and fellow recording engineer Jacob Horowitz and I spent many hours on stage with Robert and his violin in advance of our recording sessions finding “the spot” in which we wanted Robert to stand, as well as our approximate microphone position. This planning saved us much time on our first real recording day. Jon Fisher loaned us his prized AKG C-24 microphone from Gearworks Pro Audio. This is my favorite microphone for recordings of this intimacy. We chose the Messenger Microphone preamp by Elliot Midwood, and ran Yarlung interconnects into our analog tape recorder and high resolution digital system. For this recording we used RMGI 468 tape with analog recorder electronics designed by Bob Hovland and Len Horowitz.

-Bob Attiyeh, producer







In a surprisingly short period of time, the adventurous GRAMMY® Award winning classical music label Yarlung has produced an eclectic catalog of impeccably recorded performances by a roster of adventurous musicians, including many that are well-known and others soon to be. The varied repertoire, with a refreshingly international flavor, covers everything from modern percussion to solo piano and violin to large scale symphonic works with singers.

The minimally miked “purist” recordings produced and engineered by label founder Bob Attiyeh in some of the world’s great concert spaces, are captured simultaneously on analog tape and high resolution digital and released on vinyl, reel-to-reel tape, CD and as high resolution Studio Master downloads.

Yarlung’s production and sonic model is distilled from the recording industry’s glorious past—one that pessimists were certain could never be successfully resurrected—while its forward-thinking business and distribution model points the way towards a healthy future for a “record business” long given up for dead by trendy “futurists.”

For older lovers of recorded classical repertoire, Yarlung’s catalog represents a return to sonic and musical greatness. For younger ones familiar only with dynamically and spatially compressed low resolution recordings, these from Yarlung are like 3D IMAX but without the glasses.

–Michael Fremer

Editor analogplanet.com

Senior contributing editor, *Stereophile*

Once upon a time there was a land of hi-fi. And it was gone all too soon. But thank Heavens for Yarlung Records. In the age of compressed digital downloads, it is refreshing to hear real sound and real music again, reminiscent of RCA Living Stereo in its golden age, or Mercury Records at its height. Yarlung's sound is liquid and transparent, just as if you were sitting in the concert halls with superb acoustics, where these recordings are made. Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, Ambassador Hall in Pasadena, and Zipper Hall at The Colburn School, to name a few.

What Mercury did for Howard Hanson and the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra in the fifties, Yarlung Records is now doing for The Colburn Orchestra and Metropolitan Opera mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke. You can hear the evidence on the album *If You Love For Beauty*, released in 2012. Who would have thought that a conservatory orchestra (granted the players are young superstars, soloists all), could capture the world's attention like this. I understand that Yarlung does this by using similar techniques to those in the golden age of recordings. Only one stereo microphone for smaller ensembles, and up to four microphones for full orchestras, recording directly to two track analog tape and high resolution digital.

Don't worry, Yarlung's recordings are all on iTunes, Amazon MP3 and so forth, but you can also order 180 Gram virgin vinyl LPs, exquisitely made CDs mastered by mighty Steve Hoffman, and high resolution downloads, all available worldwide through Naxos Global Logistics in Munich. Most exciting for analog tape enthusiasts might be the SonoruS Series of recordings on ¼ inch master tape. I recently reviewed Yarlung's *Martin Chalifour and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Walt Disney Concert Hall*, another album I recommend highly.¹ Yarlung offers us a true feast for the ears, and this reviewer for one, wants more.

-Mori Shima
Stereo Sound, Japan

¹ *Stereo Sound*, June 2013

Walt Disney Concert Hall

Suryodaya

- 1 *Calcutta Sunrise*
Badal Roy
- 2 *Istanpitta*
(*Chominciamento di gioia*)
anonymous
- 3 *Raga Redux*
Robert Vijay Gupta



Breaking the Sound Barrier

This recording made possible with generous support from:

Gary and Marcia Hollander

Ira Ehrenpreis

Underwriting for *Raga Jaunpuri*: **David and Margie Barry**

Underwriting for *Calcutta Sunrise*: **Linda Joyce Hodge**

Recorded in Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, July 5-6, 2011

Producer and Recording Engineer: Bob Attiyeh

Assistant Producer and Recording Engineering: Jacob Horowitz

Mastering Engineers: Steve Hoffman & Bob Attiyeh

Monitoring Equipment: Elliot Midwood

AKG tube microphone: Gearworks Pro Audio

Analog tape technicians: Len Horowitz & Bob Hovland

www.yarlungrecords.com

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