

About the Songs on *eXtraOrdinary rendition*

The initial recording sessions for *eXtraOrdinary rendition* took place in August, 2006, followed by six months of production work and editing. The sessions took place at Function 8 Studio in San Francisco, and Rupa tells of the cozy atmosphere that marked the studio. "It was a nice live room, a beautiful isolation booth but the best part was it had a kitchen. I think because of my dad's Indian roots I love to cook. Rehearsals often included food, recording involved food. We would go in and cook something, then we would eat and get ready to play. The woman who did the artwork for the album, Swiss muralist Mona Caron, came in one day and cooked us this fabulous gorgonzola risotto. While we were in the studio we could smell it. I definitely believe that music and food should go together!"

Lyrics for the songs are available at <http://theaprilfishes.com/music.php>

(San Francisco)

The album opens with the sound of the noon siren, which echoes across San Francisco at 12 o'clock every Tuesday. Intended as a warning system for earthquakes, tsunamis, terrorist attacks and other emergencies, the siren serves as a weekly reminder for locals to be prepared for disaster. "I wanted to start the album with the noon day siren to reflect how our world has changed and how the government is working to keep us afraid, to keep us not thinking, reducing us to fear and reactions instead of a more careful thought process."

Maintenant (Now)

"Maintenant" "is about falling in love and recognizing the fact that as human beings there will be an end to our time here. When love comes knocking on your door you should open it. Jump off the cliff, ask questions later." The song is based on a South American *milonga*, a predecessor of the Argentinean *tango*.

Poder (Power)

"Poder" is a song about the US-Mexico border that was inspired by a photograph by documentary photographer Lars Howlett of a seagull flying over the steel pylons that stretch far into the ocean to ensure people don't attempt to swim from Mexico to the US. The image led Rupa to ponder the unnatural borders that are created to separate people. "Poder" is about what can and what can't cross the border.

C'est pas d'amour (That's Not Love)

As one could expect from the title, "C'est pas de l'amour" is about love, in this case a love story that went wrong. "It's a song about the hunger you feel when you fall in love, or this desire, or what I call 'the urge to merge'. But sometimes people tell you they love you when they mean all these other things. So it's a song about the disappointment about not finding the thing that you really wanted." Rupa sings of wanting the whole cake, but only getting crumbs. The shifting rhythms are symbolic of the interplay between expectations and reality.

Une Americaine à Paris (An American in Paris)

While sitting in a café in Paris, Rupa starts up an interesting conversation with a man from Algeria about art, music and cinema. It's a lovely conversation until he asks her where she is from, to which she replies "San Francisco." He then asks, "Aren't you afraid to be an American in Paris, with all these angry Arabs around?" The question unnerves her and she begins to ponder what it is about how people identify themselves that keeps them separate from each other. As a doctor, Rupa is witness to the ways in which people of different backgrounds are so similar, but politics and fear convince us that we are different.

La Pêcheuse (The Fisherwoman/The Sinner)

Rupa imagines the act of creating a new song as akin to fishing. "You're off in the ocean and you can feel something tugging at your line. You have to have the courage to just find it, follow it and catch it and to see what it is. When I have a new song in my stomach – it usually starts in my stomach – I say, like "it feels like a big fish." "La Pêcheuse" is a song inspired by loss and love, realizing that while life is full, our hands are empty, that everything we gather from the sea must return there.

Mal de mer (Seasickness)

Love is like going on a journey together and life – the intensity of life, the emotions of life – coming and going, the people leaving, all the things that move in our lives can make us seasick. So the lover is telling the other lover, 'when you get seasick, fix your eyes on me.' In the belief that when you are in the ocean and things are moving, if you fix your eye on a constant point you can feel less seasick. It's a song about love,, death and time's passage. It's a slow waltz featuring the bandoneon.

"Les abeilles" (The Bees)

"Les Abeilles" is a declaration and an apology. This song was written realizing how when you give yourself to art, and when you give yourself to music your life can become a little more chaotic because your task becomes a response to the immediacy of life. Rupa sings to her lover, "I'm sorry my love but I am just a student of life, I like to touch what's in front of me, I like to taste what's here."

Plus que moi (More Than Me)

This is a song about realizing that the stories you tell yourself about yourself are not the truth, and that the truth lies somewhere in the letting go of these stories to see what's really there. "I wrote it on a bridge standing in Paris and I was looking at the Seine and I was just thinking 'I need to stop telling myself the way things are supposed to be, I just need to throw all this stuff away and see what's there'".

Not So Easy

A song about the band's travails flying on Easyjet, a budget airline in Europe. After learning they would have to pay 500 euros in extra charges for their musical instruments, the band sat down in the airport to bemoan their fate. A jam session ensued with other random musicians joining in and this song was the result.

La Peinture (The Painting)

A song about loss of a painter that Rupa had fallen in love with. "Oh my love, why have you painted your absence?" she sings. A sad song inspired by the Mexican *huapango*. Rupa wrote it while she was traveling in Oaxaca, Mexico.

Yaad (Memory)

A song about the death of Rupa's father, who passed away suddenly in 2001. The attempts to recreate the visual image of the ribbon of ashes that dissolved into the Pacific Ocean where they poured his cremated body. The Hindu lyrics literally mean "your memory comes to me", which translates as "I miss you." Marcus Shelby plays on the song, along with tabla player Sameer Gupta.

Wishful Thinking

Inspired by meeting the wife of a patient in the ICU who was on a ventilator. They had been married 40 years and he was leaving her. The connection between them and the knowledge that we all must leave so many things we love inspired this sea shanty about loving and leaving. This song features found sounds recorded at dawn under the Golden Gate Bridge.