

A detailed landscape painting of a forest stream. In the foreground, a stream flows over large, moss-covered rocks. In the middle ground, a waterfall cascades over a rocky ledge. In the background, a large, layered rock formation rises, surrounded by a dense forest of trees with autumn foliage. The sky is a soft, hazy blue.

AGRELLA'S CASTLE

ELDERS & ANCESTORS

Music for a healing space



1 Elders and Ancestors

2 Adrift

3 Breathe

4 Spirit Dreaming

5 Sonnet

6 Wayfaring Stranger

Feat. Mike Farris

7 Agrelia's Lullaby




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*It is this place
Where I shed my several skins
All my ways of being in the world
I lay down all my weapons
Give up my defenses
And rest.*

*It is this hour
Earth still warm from God's embrace
I breathe myself into eternity
My heart breaks open wide
And all my truths
Confess*



OUR STORY

Our story started in June of 2003, when Paul and I met on Beale Street. He was playing with a band called FreeWorld. Awesome band. Not two months later, on July 29, 2003, I found out I had breast cancer. So, our story has always been entwined with my cancer journey. I feel like God – or the universe or whatever appellation you might give to what I have come to understand as the collective consciousness of everything – brought Paul into my life just when I was going to need him the most.

Six years ago, in January 2009, I was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer – the cancer had returned and had spread extensively throughout my skeletal system. After a major surgery followed by more radiation therapy, I began trying to figure out how to live with an incurable disease and the promise of a much shortened life expectancy. My life was full of constant sources of stress: frequent doctor visits, medications, side-effects from medications, medical bills, chronic pain, mobility issues, and an uncertain future. The only thing I knew for certain was that the median survival time for metastatic breast cancer was (and still is) about three years.

I was fortunate enough to find resources, such as Gilda's Club and Wind River Cancer Wellness Retreats, that helped me put things back into perspective and reconnect with my authentic self. My priorities in life began to change, and I began exploring meditation, mindfulness, and creativity as ways to help resolve and relieve some of the stress in my life. My musical journey began at a Wind River retreat; we enjoyed a small drum circle around a bonfire and at some point, Shannon (one of the co-founders) brought out her Native American Style flute. I have always loved the sound of the flute, but now I had a desire to learn to play this magical and soothing instrument. That desire deepened as Paul and I started working together to produce a meditation and relaxation CD for Wind River.

Paul gave me my first flute for my birthday that year and it felt as if I was being reunited with an old friend. I felt so much peace and joy when I played. I played flute on a track for the Wind River CD; later, I sang a vocal background on another track. These were first experiences for me, but I found great joy in participating in the musical creation process. Paul and I became closer as a couple while we worked together on this project, and have remained so.

After we completed the Wind River project, we decided to continue our musical collaboration. At first, we were just recording for the pleasure of working together; but as we began sharing our music with close friends and family, we realized that it spoke to people in a very calming and soothing way. My Aunt Patsy suffers from Alzheimer's disease and is frequently stressed and frightened by a world that is becoming strange to her; our music helps calm and relax her and allows her to feel less stressed by her disease.

The songs on this CD are very meaningful to me. They have grown from our journey through the cancer landscape. They come from a desire to create peace, joy, and hope in our lives. When I listen to our music, I feel soothed and uplifted. It is my hope that other people, people living with chronic illness or those in caregiver positions, will experience the same soothing, uplifting feelings when they listen to our music. I believe music can be another tool in the toolbox for anyone trying to manage stress. This is our humble offering to the world; and for me, it's a way to give back for all of the help and guidance I have received along the way. I have had some wonderful teachers, many of whom are no longer with us, who have shown me how to live, and die, under difficult circumstances, with beauty and grace. This music is dedicated to all of them.

SONGS

- 1 Elders and Ancestors 14:23
April and Paul Brown
- 2 Adrift 4:53
April and Paul Brown
- 3 Breathe 12:22
Paul Brown, April Brown and Tom Shinness; lyrics, April Brown
- 4 Spirit Dreaming 9:59
April and Paul Brown
- 5 Sonnet 6:56
April and Paul Brown; lyrics, April Brown
- 6 Wayfaring Stranger 10:22
Traditional
- 7 Agrelia's Lullaby 6:58
April and Paul Brown

MUSICIANS

Paul Brown: Hammond B-3, Fender Rhodes, Keyboards, Drums, Percussion, Vocals

April Brown: Native American Style Flutes, Drums, Percussion, Background Vocals

Mike Farris: Vocals (Track 6)

Tom Shinness: Harp Guitar, Guitar, Cello, Bass Guitar (Tracks 3, 5, & 6)

Richard Cushing: Sitar (Track 3)

SOUNDS

Creek and singing bowls courtesy of David Pschirer, Shannon Carney, and Ed Mattheus

Rain sounds on Track 6 courtesy of R. Humphries, taken from: freesound.org/people/RHumphries

Crickets and cicada sounds on Track 5 courtesy of SoundDogs.com

PRODUCTION

Produced by Paul and April Brown

Engineered by Paul Brown

Recorded at Ocean Soul Studios, Madison, TN

www.oceansoulstudios.com

Mastering by Kevin Nix, L. Nix Mastering, Memphis, TN

Logo and Graphic Design by Amy Karns

Cover and Inside Cover Art by April Brown

All songs published through BMI

THANKS

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Paul Brown proudly uses Hammond, Yamaha, Steinberg Cubase Pro and The Grand, Sony Creative Software, Behringer, Hear Technologies, Tascam, Toontrack, Ultimate Support, Sennheiser, and Lava Lamps.
