

= A Meeting by the River =

A Meeting by the River is an album recorded by Ry Cooder and Vishwa Mohan Bhatt ; it was recorded in September 1992 and released in April 1993 through the record label Water Lily Acoustics . This improvised , collaborative album features Cooder on slide guitar and Bhatt on the Mohan veena , a stringed instrument created by Bhatt . A Meeting by the River was produced by Kavichandran Alexander and Jayant Shah , engineered by Alexander , and mastered by Kevin Michael Gray and Paul Stubblebine . It peaked at number four on Billboard 's Top World Music Albums chart , and earned Cooder and Bhatt Grammy Awards for Best World Music Album at the 36th Grammy Awards (1994) . The album is included in Tom Moon 's 2008 book 1 @, @ 000 Recordings to Hear Before You Die .

= = Composition = =

A Meeting by the River was recorded in September 1992 ; it features Cooder solely on slide guitar and Bhatt on the Mohan veena , a stringed instrument he created . Allmusic 's Daniel Gioffre described the instrument as a hybrid between a guitar and a vichitra veena ; it is played with a metal slide moving across steel rods along the neck . Cooder had heard a recording of Hindustani classical music performed by Bhatt and was impressed by his playing and the " haunting clarity " of the Mohan veena . Cooder and Bhatt met for the first time less than one hour before recording began ; they improvised much of the set ; the album 's liner notes state , " this recording was unplanned and unrehearsed " . The album was produced by Kavichandran Alexander , founder of Water Lily Acoustics , and Jayant Shah . It was engineered by Alexander , and was mastered by Kevin Michael Gray and Paul Stubblebine . Cooder and Bhatt are accompanied by Cooder 's fourteen @-@ year @-@ old son Joachim on dumbek , a Middle Eastern drum , and by Sukhvinder Singh Namdhari on tabla .

The collaboration between Cooder and Bhatt is Alexander 's first attempt to record musicians of different cultures together , one of his goals when he founded the record label . Author George Plasketes described Bhatt 's playing as " highly nuanced " and said , Cooder performs in a more " loose @-@ jointed , slip ' n ' slide style " . According to Gioffre , Cooder and Bhatt use improvisation and " voice @-@ like " phrasing , showing melodic performances in an alternating fashion and in unison . The album contains four tracks , three of which are credited to Cooder and Bhatt ; tracks range in duration from approximately seven @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half minutes to twelve minutes . " Longing " has a structure similar to a raga . Author Tom Moon said Cooder takes the lead on the hymn " Isa Lei " as Bhatt contributes " elaborate squiggling asides " and " swooping nosedives " . In 2011 , Bhatt performed " A Meeting by the River " at a music festival in honor of guru Kelucharan Mohapatra . Bhatt said of the song , " Music has no religion and no geographical or linguistic barrier . It speaks a universal language . My composition ? ' A Meeting by the River ' ? aims at explaining this . " Bhatt has said he considers working with Cooder his " most special " collaboration .

= = Reception = =

Gioffre wrote a positive review of the album and called Cooder and Bhatt " genuine masters " of their respective instruments . He described the musical interplay between the musicians as " nothing short of astounding " and the album as a rare instance in which a combination of genres works . Gioffre also wrote , " this album is masterfully recorded ; each instrument is clear , distinct , and three @-@ dimensional sounding . A Meeting by the River is a must @-@ own , a thing of pure , unadulterated beauty , and the strongest record in Cooder 's extensive catalog . " Peter Margasak of the Chicago Tribune awarded the album four stars out of four , describing Cooder 's performance as " arresting " and Bhatt 's as " haunting " . Margasak wrote that the fusion revealed a " rare , often transcendental beauty " as the two artists " gently and intuitively " found common ground . Rolling Stone called the album " fruitful " and awarded it three stars out of five .

= = Chart performance and recognition = =

A Meeting by the River reached a peak position of number four on Billboard 's Top World Music Albums chart . In 1994 , the album earned Cooder and Bhatt Grammy Awards for Best World Music Album . Bhatt became one of a few Indian musicians to have received a Grammy Award until A. R. Rahman won at the 52nd Grammy Awards in 2010 . Previous Indian award winners had been recognized jointly with Western artists . The February 25 , 1995 , issue of Billboard , which featured the annual " Indies Spotlight " and covered independent music between the January 29 , 1994 , and January 21 , 1995 , issues of the magazine included A Meeting by the River at number ten on its list of the " Top Indie World Music Albums " . The album is included in Tom Moon 's 2008 book 1 @, @ 000 Recordings to Hear Before You Die : A Listener 's Life List .

= = Track listing = =

All tracks by Ry Cooder and Vishwa Mohan Bhatt unless noted otherwise .

" A Meeting by the River " ? 10 : 03

" Longing " ? 11 : 56

" Ganges Delta Blues " ? 9 : 57

" Isa Lei " (Caten) ? 7 : 39

Track listing adapted from Allmusic .

= = Personnel = =

Credits adapted from Allmusic .