

*ed. note: I asked Kaye Mortley, who presented India Song to us on the first day of the conference, to explain why she'd chosen the piece to share.*

"I first heard **India Song** light years ago, or so it seems  
(was it before I read the book, saw the film?)  
and it has stayed there, somewhere behind the eyes,  
as a perfect example of what radio can do  
when it decides what radio is:  
a space for standing still and watching the sound of the rain..."

kaye mortley

### **India Song**

produced by Marguerite Duras

with Geoges Peyrou

Atelier de création radiophonique, France Culture, 1974

### **Music – Piano**

#### **Marguerite Duras (MD)**

*India Song* again, slow, far off.

At first we do not realize that something has started to move, from the very first note of *India Song*.

It is the woman in black and the man sitting beside her.

They come to life.

Their footsteps are silent.

They stand up.

Move towards each other.

What are they doing?

They are dancing.

Dancing.

We only realize this after they have been dancing for some time.

They dance slowly.

Dance on and on.

Where are we?

The French embassy in India...

That rumble, is it the Ganges?

And that light?

The monsoon.

She died in Bengal...

Not a breath of wind.

So much dust...

The heart of Calcutta.

Can I smell flowers?

Leprosy.

On and on they dance.

At night they used to dance.

They melt into the dance, into each other, barely moving.  
Then are still.

Why are you crying?

### **MD**

The music has stopped.

In the distance, the sound of a city.

Calcutta.

Then, other sounds.

They stand quite still in a circle of a silence drawn by sound.

Joined.

Still.

For a long time.

I love you beyond  
seeing  
hearing  
dying

### **Music - piano**

### **MD**

*India Song* comes back, from afar.

Slowly the couple moves apart, comes to life.

As the sound of the outside world becomes louder, the sky clouds over in the garden.

A leaden sky.

No wind.

- They separate, turn to face the garden. They look out onto the garden, without moving.

The sound of Calcutta stops.

A time of waiting. More waiting. It is almost dark.

Suddenly the waiting stops.

*The sound of rain.*

Refreshing.

Cool.

Rain is falling on Bengal.

*They all stand there, watching the sound of the rain.*

Rain is falling on Bengal.

An ocean of rain...