

ZEN-MEN  
hang on





# Welcome and...

... hang on!

This is 2022 and the last two years passed by like a bullet train on its way to Paris. What a ride... I had so many plans, traveling to India again, visiting friends in Paris, London, Japan... nope — nada.

In the recent years, way before C19, friends were asking me, when I will make a new ZEN-MEN album. The last one, “Rue Lepic” was released in 2010 — more than a decade ago. Time flies.

Maybe you also have that one friend, who keeps going on your nerves, nagging, asking again, again and again — hey SK!

In 2019, I thought “hey, maybe a new album would be a cool thing” and started to write some lyrics, recorded nature ambiances, got some new gear, made first recordings and sketched general ideas. Then a pandemic hit the planet and the project slowly got lost under layers of (mental) dust.

2021 a dream came true, I could do a long planned sabbatical — one year off, no business work. Finally I had enough time to visit my friends around the planet but the pandemic was still going strong. Still no traveling abroad... it was frustrating.



Lovely Ganesha at a temple festival in India.

Luckily I had a weekly brunch with an old-old friend and we exchanged books, vinyl records, thoughts and ideas. Books are like “plugins” for me on my journey of personal growth. And music reminds me, that there is way more than we can see with our eyes — waves, frequencies, quantum dreams.

Late 2021 I needed a project bigger than a book. And there it was again — the new album. Suddenly energy was flowing, things fell into place, new artists stepped on the stage. Some recordings are so “magical” that I myself do not understand how this was possible.

Creating “hang on” was a splendid journey for me. Hopefully it is useful for you, too.

Namaste

Chris :)





# 01 Into ZEN



If you think about it, is there anything else than the present moment — the NOW?

This is me walking/ running around at the beach in the South of France, approaching a flagpole (without a flag) on a Baywatch house and listening to the wind playing with the wire.

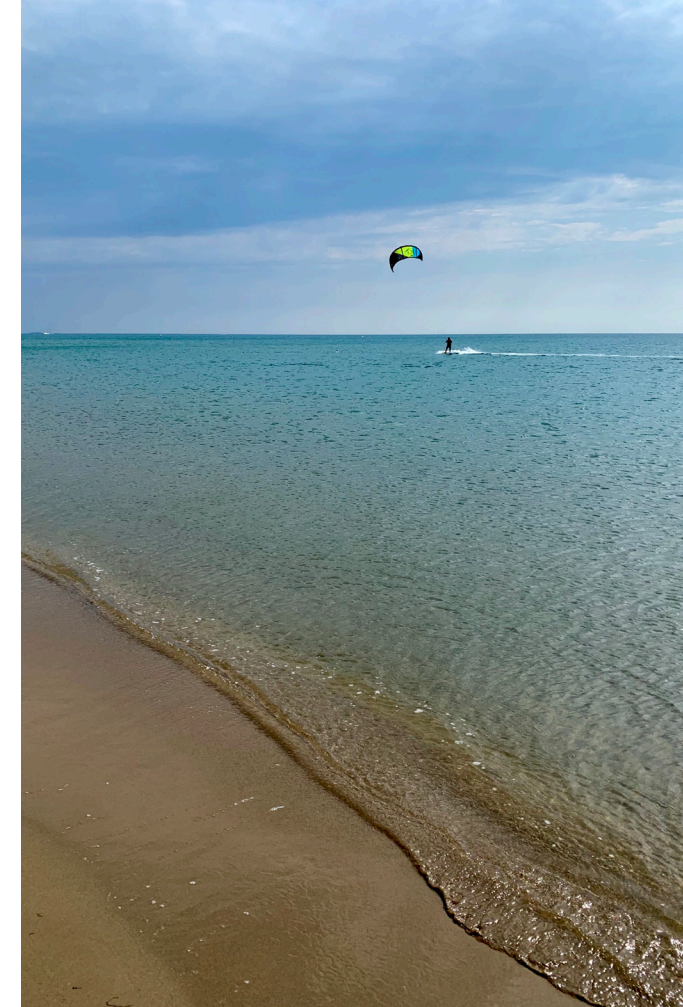
A very ZEN moment for me.



## 02 A la plage

A good day at the beach is the best  
medicine I know for overthinking.  
How about you?

I wrote the lyrics at the beach. The vocals are by Takako Sato from Tokyo who also surprisingly speaks French. The song is about living in the NOW and thinking about all the things we do in life — what makes sense and what (maybe) not-so-much...





## A la plage

Quand je suis à la plage,  
Il y a des personnes qui nagent,  
Ils y arrivent avec beaucoup de bagages,  
Dans les mains et dans la tête.

Si j'ai faim, je mange une baguette,  
Les jeunes jouent avec des raquettes.  
Ils sont heureux,  
C'est merveilleux.

La mer dans mes oreilles,  
Le sel sur ma peau,  
Mes pieds dans le sable,  
La vie, jusqu'ici, c'est agréable.

Le ciel bleu,  
Des nuages amoureux,  
Le vent veut jouer,  
Avec les longs cheveux.

J'ai jamais compris,  
Pourquoi le sang est rouge,  
Maintenant je sais,  
C'est l'amour qui bouge.

A la plage la vie est facile,  
Ma tête reste tranquille.

Mes problèmes, comme les oiseaux dans le ciel,  
Petites pointes voltiger — quel bordel!

Soudainement je vois un bateaux gris,  
Lentement avec un son bas.  
Au contraire de tous les jet skis,  
Vites et bruyant — gaspillage d'énergie.

En plein soleil je vide mon cérébral,  
Rien à faire - pétanque avec les étoiles.

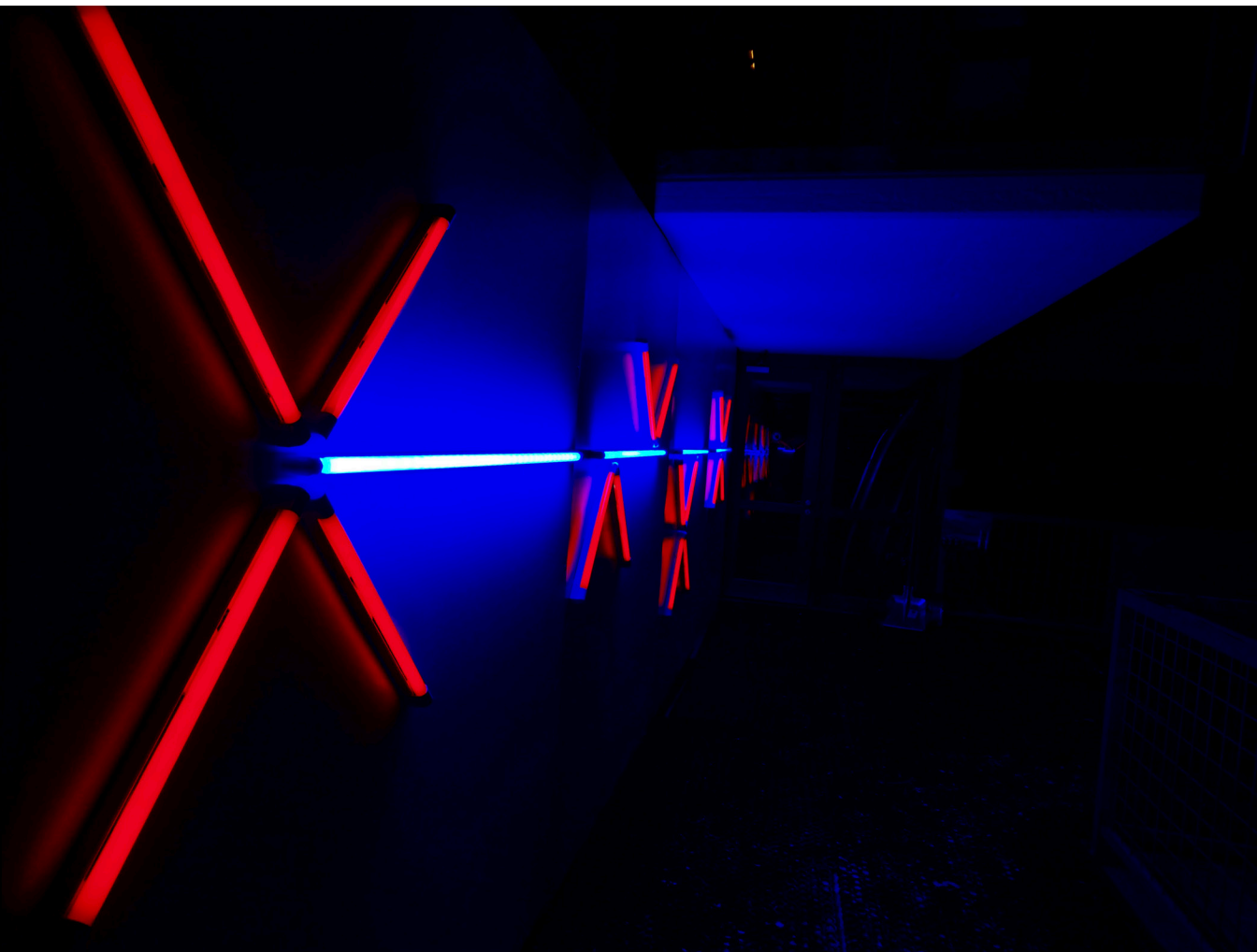
Hier ou demain - à la folie,  
Je t'écrase, mon jolie.

A la plage, à la plage.





## 03 This beat is for you



In 2020 and 2021 most clubs were closed. So I made this beat for you.

Here is my modern interpretation of what Joachim-Ernst Berendt once called “nada brahma” — all is sound. I mean, if you think about Johannes Kepler with his “*Harmonices Mundi*” (mathematics and sounds of the planets) and (late) Albert Einstein — at the end, all is energy/ waves dancing around in this cosmos — from very tiny quanta, to humans, to “All”.

All in German is “cosmos”.



This beat is for you

I am the beat,

I make your heart beep.

This beat is for you

No matter what you do,

Let love be your guide

And you will be alright.

Look around and see,

Beat made you and me,

Now dance with me,

Dance with me!

Je suis le beat,

Je fais ton coeur beep.

Danse avec moi,

L'amour c'est toi.

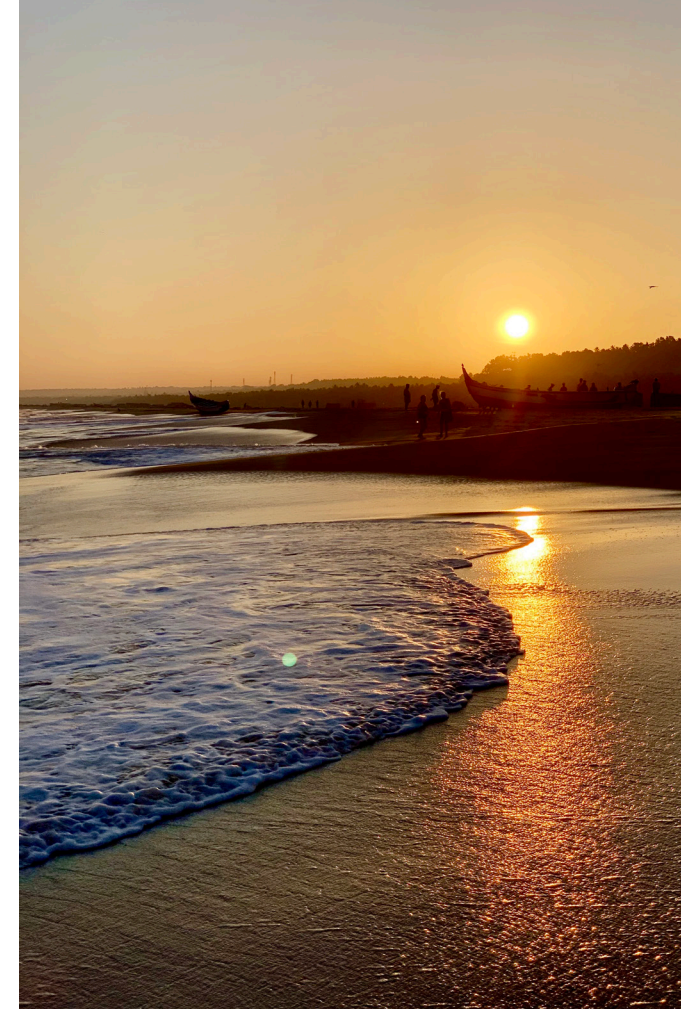
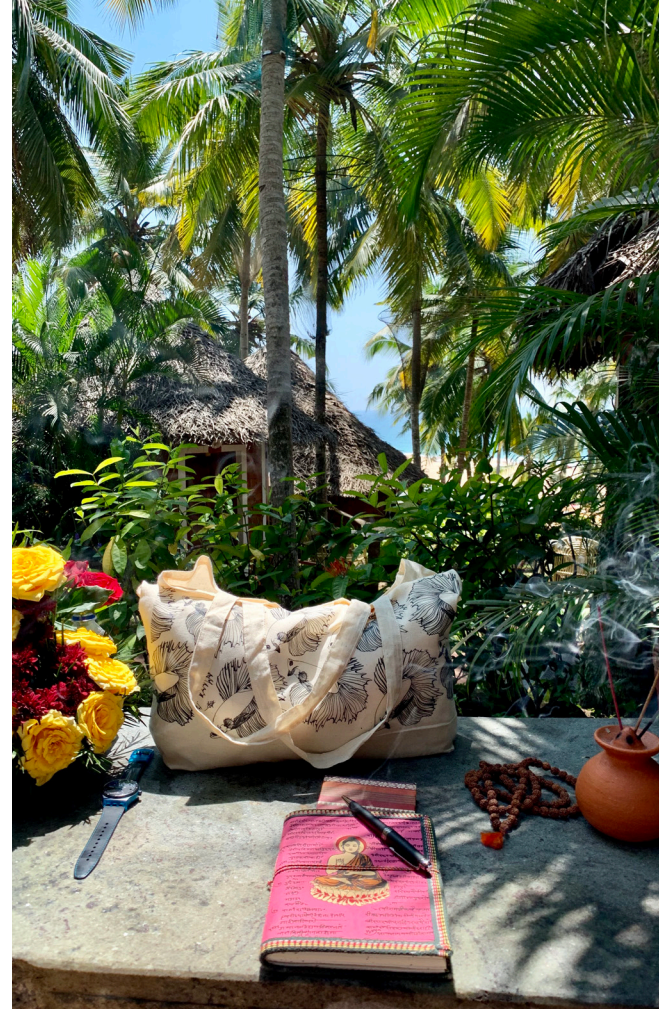
Amour, c'est moi.

私はビート

ハートならす



## 04 Above clouds



Thank you, Savitar!

Again, this is the wind playing with the empty flagpole from track 01 “Into ZEN” with memories of mine flying over clouds in the plane back home from my last stay in India. It was so awesome and surreal at the same time — the flight and the stay...

Oh, and I wrote a tiny book there, too — “Back to Center in 21 days”.







## 05 Wolkenstrand



“Das ist dein Moment!”

Wolkenstrand = CloudBeach is (again) about living in the moment and finding inner peace. There are reminders about anything is connected: breath, thoughts, our pulse, our heart, we, the beach & the sun.

Think about Carl Sagan’s “We are made of star stuff”.



# Wolkenstrand

## Der Wolkenstrand

Leg dich neben mich, hier an meinem Wolkenstrand.  
Streck dich aus, lass alle Gedanken raus.  
Deine Arme ruhen entspannt, neben dir,  
Du bist hier, ganz nah bei mir.  
Atme ein — atme aus.

Wir sind verbunden, wie die Wolken und der Strand,  
Nah und fern, fest und weich,  
Ich glaub an dich, mich und immer,  
Sind wir frei.  
Atme ein — und atme aus.

Deine rechte Hand ruht auf deinem Bauch,  
Alle Gedanken steigen auf wie Rauch.  
Deine linke Hand wärmt dein Herz,  
Dein Puls, mein Beat mit 60 Hertz.  
Atme ein — und atme aus.

Entspannung dehnt sich langsam in dir aus,  
du bist so frei, in deinem Haus.  
Sonnenwellen tanzen auf deiner Haut,  
Wir sind nun da, hier im jetzt, so wie es immer war.  
Atme ein — atme aus.

Strandwolken schweben hier am Horizont,  
schwereelos, ziellos, gedankenlos.

Die Wolken tragen uns ganz weit fort,  
Wir sind zusammen, an einem sicheren Ort.

Wir atmen ein — wir atmen aus.

Es ist dein Sonnentraum, hier am Wolkenstrand,  
Und es wird dir klar,  
Du warst schon immer da, niemals weg,  
Und alles ist perfekt.  
Atme ein — atme aus.

Jetzt sind wir da, du bist bereit,  
Es ist nur noch eine Kleinigkeit,  
Lass los und nimm meine Hand,  
Soviel Liebe, hier am Wolkenstrand...  
Wir atmen ein — wir atmen aus.

Das ist dein Moment,  
Es gibt nichts zu tun,  
Alles ist perfekt,  
Hier am Wolkenstrand.



# 06 I believe in we



“It was dark outside...”

Originally I wrote this song for a dear friend in California. Unfortunately, he was not able to do the vocals due to a Covid-19 depression. So I asked a very good friend here to speak the vocals. He himself had very serious problems with alcohol until his age of 46. Luckily he made it — today he is a teacher in pension and we meet weekly to exchange vinyl records, books and ideas.

The “in WE” is an artistic “flip” because if you tilt your head or flip the “W” you get ME ;)





## I believe in we

It was dark outside and rained the whole night.  
I sat at the table - my life, back then, was horrible unstable.

Life bent me to the ground, Hard to breathe,  
with all the dust I found.

I forgot most of it and tried to push it away,  
Unfortunately, it all came back and blocked my way.

No chance, no luck, no cheating, Empty chest —  
but my heart kept beating.

The beat of love was always there, But I did not listen,  
I did not care.

Overwhelming waves of worry, Mavericks rolled in —  
come on and hurry!

I could not move, I stone stood still, Bad idea,  
my life got seriously ill.

At some point I lost my flow, Totally forgot —  
about personal growth.

One day, life knocked at my door, With a little package —  
grounded on the floor.

Unpacked the surprise of a crazy friend,  
A pink clock - finally Tristesse did end!

These days I look up to the clock,  
So many things it did unlock.

I am back on my track and I like to share,  
It was dark and lonely — BUT I did dare,  
To stick my head out of my shell,  
and crawled outside my personal, little hell.

I learned so much about you and me,  
How life really is meant to be.

You loved me all the time,  
Even your signals were so, so sublime.

Today let me be your guiding light,  
Take it from me, you will be alright.

Now breathe in and repeat with me,  
Those twelve little words — healing me:

I believe in you, I believe in me, I believe in we.





## 07 I woke up in a dream

“Over and over and over...”

This is a song about a friend in Kuwait.

I wonder what happens, when an AI (artificial intelligence) listen to this song in a few hundred years and hears the “text-to-speech” voice saying “But I struggle. I am human. I doubt.”

The lovely painting top left is from Maimiti C.  
Below is an endless, dreamy lake in Finland.





## I woke up in a dream

I woke up in a dream,  
echos of your words still beat in my heart.

*„God won't change people until they want to“*  
was all you said.

And I was yelling at you  
*“Life is hard, it's complicated, don't you understand?”*

Only late at night, when love drops from the sky knock on my  
golden cage, life is okay. People say *“the more complicated it*  
*becomes, the sooner the relief will be”*.

What is soon?  
Why can't I pull on the grass to make it grow faster?

Sometimes it feels, like all the graces are permanent to all  
others, just nothing is left for me.

I see your calm and smiling face, telling me once more that  
with a struggle, an ease will be there. What if I am THE  
exception of the rule, THE black swan. In endless circles I am  
overthinking, over and over and over...

You say: love yourself. Do not face the insult with another.  
Have patience. Have compassion. Do believe in gods mercy.

But I struggle. I am human. I doubt.  
I plant my thoughts and harvest my worries.

I miss the smell of roses in the morning. Please help me to  
see the world with your eyes. You know, I try. And even I do  
remember, *“that a person can only see others with their own*  
*eyes”*, it's hard. So hard.

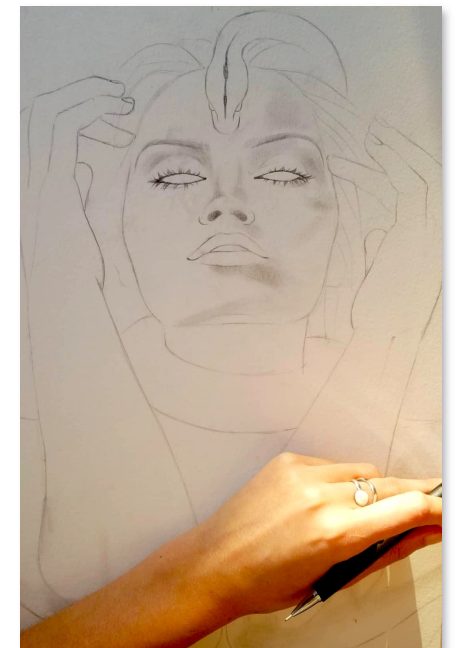
Maybe you are right and I am wrong. Still, I feel left behind.  
Maybe it's only in my mind. Maybe I am too soft and will get  
squeezed, maybe I am too hard and will break one day.

The sun rises again and maybe today I will be okay.

You smile at me and say *“don't let your yesterday create your*  
*tomorrow”*. Okay, okay.

*Finally* after all those years,  
I can clearly see:  
tomorrow is always one day away  
and yesterday is forever lost on my way.

Thankfully, I woke up in a dream. Now.

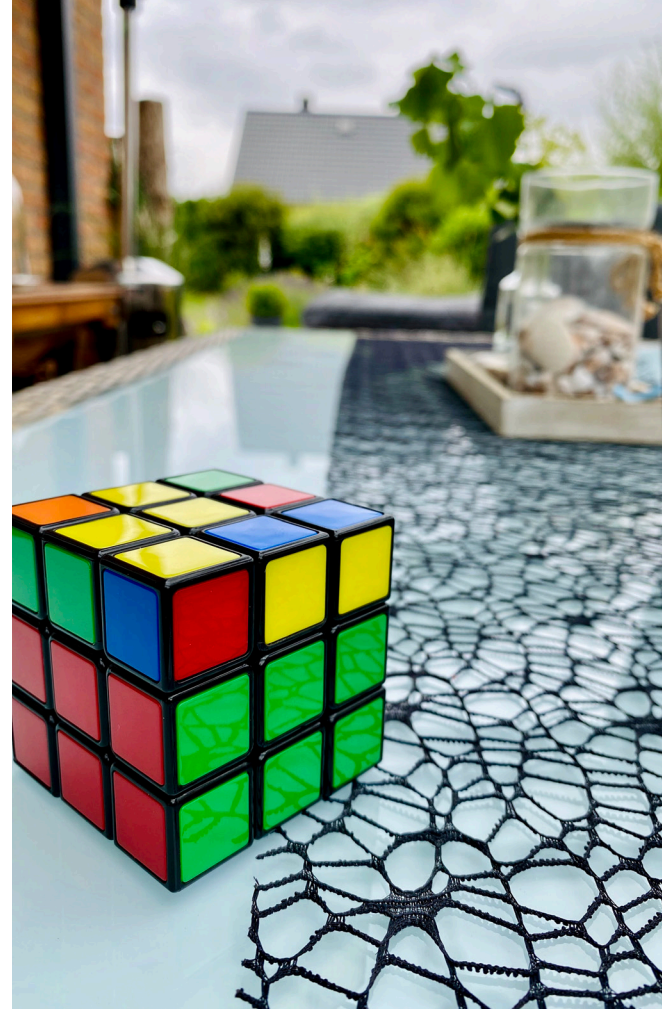


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Artwork by Maimiti C



# 08 WAMADU



Use your time wisely. Get a sand clock...

“Was machst du mit deiner Zeit, die dir noch hier verbleibt?” — what do you do with your remaining time here — is a basic Buddhists question.

The 3 female vocals are a mother with her two daughters. A “perfect timeline” from a human perspective...







## 09 Space-Filler



You are rainbow love!

This one is about being able to find and expand our personality. I have adult friends who suffer under work/ job analytics where (color) systems tell them how they are and what character (color) they need to have to do their jobs.

Other point which really upsets me is, when I see human beings staring into their mobiles instead of taking care of human beings in their (direct) surrounding.



## Space-Filler

I am walking up that hill today and sit on our bench again,  
While the moon tries to hide into the clear blue sky.

Old couples passing by, holding hands,  
They remind me of hourglasses filled with sand.

I want to grow but you want me to bow,  
I like to sing but you cling to a hope.

Your time is up but I will be kind,  
Rainbow love is filling my mind.

I am not your space filler anymore...

Crows in the trees are screaming louder than me,  
Butterflies flying by are more like how I want to be.

I pass by colourful houses with beautiful trees,  
I am not sure, which color suits the real me.

I am not red, blue, white or yellow,  
I am rainbow love!

I want to grow but you want me to bow,  
I like to sing but you cling to a hope.

Your time is up but I will be kind,  
Rainbow love is filling my mind.

Not a space filler, out of space...

Cut trees beside my way,  
love and hate cause life to sway.  
Parents stare on mobiles in their hands,  
Little girl searches for her lost love band.

How can that be?

She. Is. Not. A. Space-Filler!

I want to grow but you want me to bow,  
I like to sing but you cling to a hope.  
Your time is up but I will be kind,  
Rainbow love is filling my mind.

Not a space-filler anymore... out of space...

And you, you are rainbow love.



# 10 Mellow-Me



## Slippery when wet...

The ambience in the background is me skating on an electric skateboard in Berlin, Tempelhof — a former historic airport. It was raining and cold, so nearly nobody was there. It was SO mellow. Few hours later, I slipped on a wet bend, crashed: cerebral concussion, strained ankle and wrist. Yes, I wear full body armour inc. helmet.

Looking back — from a cosmic perspective — it was very \_grounding\_.







# 11 Back-to-Center

Om shanti, om...

I recorded the vocals last time in India. Jinu sings two prayers. She did that in every Yoga session at the start and the end. It was SO lovely in various ways.

The vinyl end loop is from one of my favourite records of the 1970s. It makes me smile every time I hear it :)





# The Credits

## The journey of “hang on”

A MEGA **thank you** to all artists who participated in this journey!

Vocals: Chris (5, 8), Jinu (11), Julia (9), MG (3, 5), Nienna Arien (5), Sheveda (5), Takako Sato (2, 3), TMOM (6), Uwe (5), Vicki (7), XK3 (8)

Guitars (2, 5) and accordion (2) by Uwe

Mixdown wingman: Takashi Watanabe, Tokyo

Mastered by Graeme “Grazz” Durham at The Exchange, London

Additional “Merci!” to Antti, Clara, Cyril, Danielle, Elina, Friedi, Jen, Jojo, KK, Lala, Laura, Lena, Ludmilla, Mikel, N1nA, Riley, Sandra, SK, Theo, Thomas, Tom and all I forgot :)

Finally thanks to the cosmos who made anything possible including the blue tilt flying into the living room and modelling for the cover.

Much love 🧡

Chris



Thanks for listening — namaste!

1. Into ZEN
2. A la plage
3. This beat is for you
4. Above clouds
5. Wolkenstrand
6. I believe in we
7. I woke up in a dream
8. WAMADU
9. Space-Filler
10. Mellow-Me
11. Back-to-Center