

# SOUNDTRACK

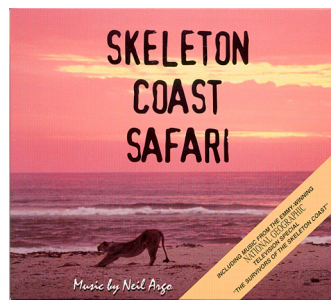
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Reviewed by Randall Larson

## **Skeleton Coast Safari**

**Music by Neil Argo**

**Cantiga Music nA0002 (14 tracks; 34:47) \*\*\*\***



Long time television composer Neil Argo (PBS's **WILD AMERICA**) has released this World Beat flavored soundtrack, compiling music from the 1993 National Geographic documentary, **SURVIVORS OF THE SKELETON COAST** along with cues from the PBS series it inspired, **SKELETON COAST SAFARI** (five cues each). Argo has supplemented these tracks with two original compositions in a complementary style.

The main theme for **SURVIVORS** is a wonderful, richly orchestrated melody for a full ensemble of woodwinds, French horn, and violins over cello, while that for **SAFARI** is a muted synth and percussion dominated theme. "The Skeleton Coast" introduces the West African coastal landscape with an evocative mix of woodwinds, drums, and synths. "Moroccan Night" mixes ethnic instruments with vocalisms, performed, oddly enough, on mostly Chinese instruments but retaining an appropriate atmosphere for the setting. Half of the cues feature drums and synths only, yet the programming is fresh and the melodies compelling. "African River Run" and "Ultralight Photography," feature sampled woodwinds over rhythmic percussion, while "Sand Dune Elephants" captures a neat sonic texture. "Lions Chasing Giraffes" stops short of being true chase/action music, "Land Cruising Namibia" is all percussion and synth, while "Coastal Beaches," which closes out the CD, adds a clear-toned alto sax and acoustic guitar.

The music throughout the CD is relaxing and absorbing, tranquil and persuasive.

For more information, see [www.neilargo.com](http://www.neilargo.com).