

Pitchfork Avant-Garde

2 days ~ 7 venues ~ 46 bands
30 & 31 October
7pm ~ midnight

SHADOW TRUTHS: a chat with media composer Jim Lamarche in Toronto

Telephone interview (excerpt) with Laure Adler for Pitchfork Avant-Garde, Paris. – October 25, 2018

Links and contact: [bottom](#)

*There are natural disasters, then there are man made ones
Then there are those who decide which are more profitable
Shadow Truths: from the album ONE LIFE*

Introduction:

I found Jim's clips doing a music search for contemporary audio-visual artists, internet, YouTube for a new net series here and found his music page and emailed him, introducing myself. We arranged a chat by phone at 2pm EST October 25/18.

LA: I'm curious to know where you got the idea for ONE LIFE and why it took you 20 years to make it?

JL: It's true. I was signed to a major label here in Canada from 1983-1985 and my albums didn't sell very well. I'm old (laughs). I was a 'pop' artist back then and I really wasn't that good at it. The best thing was the airplay I got on syndicated radio shows specializing in contemporary instrumental music, on my first instrumental album follow-up, after the fact, in '91. One of my tracks 'Ricepaper Dancer' was the opening/closing theme for 'Steps Ahead', a syndicated evening program on CHUM etc. in 1991-92. I took the 2 instrumentals off my last A&M album with their permission and put them on NIGHT PARACHUTING, which got the most attention. That was years ago though. I lost interest in music. My parents passed. I was depressed for a long time. Music's back. ONE LIFE is my catharsis. My reawakening and it feels amazing. My studio now is an iMac, USB keyboard and audio interface for microphones and is a fraction of the size. With these simple tools, I'm able to explore further and further each time.

LA: Cool, well I listened to the whole album on your YouTube channel. I don't think there's anyone out there doing this (that I've seen). I'm curious to know more about your process. There's such an eclectic blend of audio/music and visual components. What does your inspiration and work flow look like?

JL: I remix YouTube clips. I take audio/music samples and visuals and cut them up into small pieces, rearrange and then put them back together again in Logic Audio and Final Cut. They're like collages; cutting pictures out of Life magazines and gluing them back together and mixing them with new sound if you will, telling a new story. The collages are mine, even the larger mural that I call ONE LIFE, only the hundreds of pictures I'm using belong to others, so I'll never release it commercially. My hope is that someone sees/hears it and wants to use it (ad/film etc). Then I would need to get sample clearances but I don't think an issue. All of these guys are unknown, from other parts of the world and young and hungry like me (laughs). It amazes me ... the talent out there and most are just kids in their 20's.

LA: Ok, what's your inspiration then? Say something like the title track "One Life"?

JL: One Life the track wraps the whole concept up in one clip. I like documenting the human condition; the ups and downs in life, the celebrations and the disasters. I like to create new perspectives on things, shining a light on the forbidden and the hypocritical brings me great joy. I am a chronicler documenting what I see in the short time I have here. It starts with sound and finishes with pictures and titles. I just enjoy doing this and having the time to do it.

LA: So where does an idea start? How does it evolve?

JL: Well, for ONE LIFE as a whole, it usually starts with sound. I fish or search for cool samples from 'chill/ambient' compilation clips in YouTube (listening to dozens of clips). I realize/connect the early visual ideas I have with the samples and build from there. Sonically, I may sift through hours before finding 60-90 seconds of something that really moves me in that moment; usually the intro to a 5-6 minute piece, editing out most of it. I download and cut that minute and a half out, chop it up again in Logic and create something new out of it and mix a first draft. Then I move into Final Cut and find pictures that reflect the dream I'm having when I listen to it. I move back and forth between the 2 programs several times over a few days, adding more sounds and pictures (synths/voices/percussion overdubs) until the final version is assembled then uploaded. It's fun. Every new piece is an expansion/extension of the last production; trying new things. One Life is essentially dreams I keep having. Once realized, they go away.

LA: So when did the idea of doing pictures with your music start?

JL: Early on, in this new phase. A couple of years ago. For me any new creation isn't complete without a clip/upload with visuals. Where once it was just sound/music? Now it has to be both. Starting with samples gives me more time to work out the visuals on the back end.

LA: So what's the future look like for you? Is ONE LIFE finished? What's next?

JL: Ya, ONE LIFE is done. I have no idea what's next. Maybe I'll wake up tomorrow after an amazing dream, espresso, sit down at my computer and realize it but right now? No Clue.



LINKS:

<http://www.jimlamarche.ca/music/>

<http://jimlamarche.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.jimlamarche.ca/>