



ONE LIFE and beyond: a chat with media composer Jim Lamarche in Toronto

Telephone interview (excerpt) with Laure Adler for Pitchfork Avant-Garde, Paris. – update: June 2019

Links and contact: bottom (interview edit by Jim Lamarche)

Humanity, Love, Family

it's a place I go

Introduction:

I originally found Jim's clips doing a music search for contemporary audio-visual artists, internet, YouTube for a new net series here and found his website/music page and emailed him, introducing myself. We arranged a chat by phone at 2pm EST January 22, 2019 and then a second conversation on May 12.

LA: I see One Life has expanded since our last chat – now Two and Three Lives. What happened?

JL: Well One Life became too big and there were splinters so I just moved them into their own albums. Two & Three Lives are still in progress. I'm going back and finishing what I started long ago.

LA: They're all very different. How could you describe these 'splinters'?

JL: One Life is my main muse ATM but the others are expanding. The first about humanity. The second about love and the third about family. Once I spread them all out it became easier to group them.

LA: I'm curious to know where you got the idea for the Lives trilogy 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 1983-1986 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 is 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 of what it was. With these simple tools, I'm able to explore further and further each time.

LA: Cool, well I listened to all 3 now. It's great that you dedicated individual pages on your site to that (easier to access). 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 workflow look like?

JL: I remix YouTube clips. I take audio/music samples and visuals (from everywhere online) and cut them up into small pieces, rearrange and then put them back together again in Logic Audio and Final Cut, then add voices/synths etc and master it (so it conforms with the others). I call them remixes (both audio & visual). They're like collages; like cutting pictures out of old Life magazines and gluing them back together and reframing them with new sound if you will, telling a new story. I've gravitated to remixing both music/audio and video components because it allows me to create and launch a new story on-line (blog & music page) in a few days and time plays an important role. The quicker I execute, the better it becomes. I find that the projects I spend the most time on become my least favourite. Simple and fast works best.

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 think of myself as a chronicler. One Life (the track) is an ambient blend of world music samples I found on-line w/music I recorded and mixed 20 years ago from an album called Temple Redux blended with sounds from German composer Aljosha Konstanty. I especially enjoy merging my stuff w/another's.

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

JL: Well, for all three albums as a whole, it usually starts with sound. I fish or search for cool samples from compilation clips in YouTube (listening to hundreds). 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. It's back and forth between Logic and Final Cut (over a few days), to get it right.

LA: *So what's the future look like for you, now that this has become three?*

JL: Creating new entries for Two and Three over the rest of this year. I like posting this stuff when it's in progress – I'm hoping it gives it new life. After that? Not a clue.



LA: Well it's been a blast connecting again. My fave is Entangled in Algiers for what it's worth.

JL: laughs, long story. Awesome and thanks for listening. More in development as we speak.

RECOMMENDED VIEWING:

<http://jimlamarche.blogspot.com/2019/04/entangled-in-algiers.html>

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

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