

## [Interview] Jeff Mills et Jacqueline Caux, dans l'aire du futur

Écrit par RZOM

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**You worked on new versions of soundtracks for movies such as Metropolis and Three Ages, how do you handle the composition of an original soundtrack ? How do you compose the soundtrack ? While watching the images ?**

**Jeff Mills :** It helps to learn about the history of the film and the reaction of the first audiences. Even the era is relevant, because it provides an impression on why such a film was made and released. After that, I start the production by watching and memorizing the film. I then, section off the film into segments. Next, I start composing music sketches for each section. Once these are done, I begin to match the music to the section to see if the feeling of the scene is reflected in the music. If not, I'll compose more. If so, I'll begin to modify the music to fit perfectly into the movement of the actors and the motion of the scene. Connect all the segments together and maybe add a few small transitional parts and overdubbing to make the flow of the soundtrack consistent throughout and it's practically ready. When performing the soundtrack live, I'll bring all the separate tracks and program them in real time and in sync with the film. Not by computer, but by hand. This is why I must memorize the film.

**Although the movie is very experimental, it is focused on you : do you compose the original soundtrack as an autobiographical release ?**

**Jeff Mills :** Long before we started filming, we spent many hours talking about Electronic Music, my career, belief system and many other topics. The intent was jointly understand and agree on a perspective. One that translated how I felt about Techno Music, the methods I choose to produce, what I believe, how I see the World, etc. As a portrait, it was crucial to understand why I've chosen this profession and life. Most of the compositions were already composed, but not released before the film

was made. After filming, Jacqueline [Caux] sent a sample batch of each of the segments of the film. From those small sample of frames, I forwarded a large collection of music and suggested which track should go where and with what — explaining the meaning of each track.



**By the way, will the soundtrack be available at Axis Records ?**

**Jeff Mills :** We'll leave the soundtrack connected to the film. Though I'm preparing a release for this spring/summer that is similar in style entitled «The Wonder Years».

**I've read that *2001, A Space Odyssey* is a main reference for you, especially the soundtrack. Why ? Do you think soundtrack have to closely stick to the images of a movie ?**

**Jeff Mills :** I admire the film *2001: A Space Odyssey* greatly, but its not the main reference. Actually, its the Stars and what we know of them [so far] that is the greatest influence and inspiration. Stars, planets and all that in between. I think the soundtrack should serve the film well. It doesn't need to stick to every movement, but it should be only present enough so that it possibly disappears into the storyline.

**On which instruments have you composed the soundtrack for *Man From Tomorrow* ?**

**Jeff Mills :** Various classic analogue synths. No computer sequencing or laptop is ever used to compose the music.

**Who wrote the text read during the movie ?**

**Jeff Mills :** The narration is from many interviews that were conducted throughout the filming. Extracts were taken from those interviews.

**When did you meet Jeff Mills (I guess for your documentary *The Cycles of The Mental Machine*, maybe before ?). Have you ever worked with techno artists (for a soundtrack) ?**

**Jacqueline Caux :** I know Jeff's Music from decades, and I probably meet him briefly in some concerts in Paris. Then, when I went to Detroit for filming my movie «The Cycles of the Mental Machine», I rent a car and went to Chicago where I meet him more longer and talk with him in his Axis office. Then we meet several times in Paris before starting our movie. Necessary times and conversations to better approach his personal and musical preoccupations.



**Which type of camera do you use for filming ? Where was the movie shot ?**

**Jacqueline Caux :** I use two Canon D 5. I had filmed the movie for the first part in a special studio for pictures mode, and the second part at La Cité de la Musique, from Christian de Portzamparc architect.

**Do you work on lightning in a special «techno» way for the movie ? I mean, there is a quote during the movie about how we consider music, and how we think it should sound like, do you have the same point of view about cinema and images (a common idea wants that «true cinema images» aren't blurred, tell a story, follow a character, and so on...) ?**

**Jacqueline Caux :** I did not work at all on lightning in a special «techno» way, you can see it... Too many people did that before me... I just wanted to try to give some lights sensations related to my musical sensations, but in an abstract way, not in a narrative way. And I had filmed in silence, Jeff music where only in my head. Then I send him some selected rushes and Jeff propose me a lot of musics related to these images, to me make a choice. Then I edited the images with these music. That's the moment when images and rythms need to work together or to be detached to not being redondant. Sometime being in opposition to the music is very interesting too. It is always interesting to work with contrasts.

***Man From Tomorrow* have to be viewed in ideal listening conditions : which configuration is the best to see the movie ?**

**Jacqueline Caux :** The most important is to have a real good projector — otherwise it's like a painter you would withdraw the color with a sponge before exposing his work — and also have a very good sound system. It is necessary to be able to offer the audience to enter a world of sensations, like in a sound bath..