

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Burden

Sarah Elgart · Wednesday, March 18th, 2020

Dance is a fundamental part of self-expression, creativity, and being alive. Now more than ever, at this time of six foot distancing, social isolationism, and staying “safe” in the privacy of our own homes we need to be reminded of how we are in this together, and find ways to create a sense of community. **Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival** has always been committed to and in fact was founded on the notion of creating community by democratizing and making dance more accessible.

And so in these bizarre and unparalleled times we continue bringing you the winning films of **Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival: Round 3!**

This week we view Lawrence Fung’s beautiful film **Burden**, that won the **Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival** Award for **Best Editing**. As a filmmaker Lawrence has a unique and particular eye for shooting architecture, and suggesting the way it relates to and influences the human experience through the movement of both camera and bodies. His sweeping shots of buildings, cars, and skylines makes the city of Toronto another character in the film. We asked Lawrence about what inspired him and his process:



SE: *How did you first hear about Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival and what appealed to you about it?*

LF: Sarah invited me to submit my work to the festival. Based on the criteria, **Burden** seemed to fit all the requirements.

SE: *Was your film created specifically for the festival and/or did you have a particular urge to make a film in the public realm and if so which?*

LF: The film is actually an excerpt from a large film called “Kapsule,” which is a film that explores the idea of a life cycle based on my personal worldview and how different environments represent a specific timeline and tell a different story. **Burden** chapter represents the timeline from my past inspired by my upbringings living in Hong Kong.

SE: *What were you inspired by and/or exploring in making your film?*

LF: For **Burden**, it is inspired by my past of growing up in a metropolis environment and how stressful and depressing it can be with high cost of living, loss of human connections, and carrying

emotional and financial burden. (It is more intense in big cities environment based on my research.) And so **Burden** chapter is actually a darker story from my Kapsule universe.



SE: *What were the biggest challenges you faced in making the film?*

LF: We were filming in Toronto and it was 20-30 degrees out with the occasional snow and rain. It was extremely cold to dance and the floor was quite slippery at times, therefore, we had to really watch out when we dance and I had to be really steady while filming to not slip and fall and break my equipment.

It was also challenging to both be a filmmaker and dancer, so in my company, I actually train all my dancers to film and photograph in order to get shots of myself as well. Therefore, one of the challenges besides the cold weather was to train and direct my dancers to be able to get the shots that I wanted. It was particularly difficult due to the cold weather, large crowd, security restrictions, and traffic. The run-and-gun approach is not a problem for me but for my trainees, working under such pressure was intense. But we all enjoy and love what we do. Despite all the challenges it was an exhilarating experience and we hope to be able to do what we do professionally and consistently.



SE: *How did you raise the funds for making your film?*

LF: All out-of-pocket. As the saying goes, you have to spend money to make money, and so I believe that I have to spend and use my resource to continually create high quality, meaningful, and authentic work based on my need to create as an artist and because I am truly passionate about. Then one day the funding and support will follow through hard-work, smart decision making, and consistency.

SE: *Who was your biggest collaborator and/or influence in making your film, and what did you learn in the filmmaking process from or as a result of them?*

LF: My dancers, the matrix films particularly for this chapter, and my personal upbringings and constantly evolving worldview. Never stop learning and always be curious.



SE: *What are you craving to do next?*

LF: Currently in the process of making another dance project like Kapsule, which will have a film, stage and integrated component. This new project is inspired by the idea of a mental prison and it is based on my personal monologue in the events of my recent years. This project will primarily focus and digs deeper into my movement investigation as a choreographer and performer, going more in-depth with my background in breaking, and new understanding in contemporary, ballet, contact improvisation, and elevation technique. We have a timeline to finish the film before April of this year, then integrate the film and stage version before May, and have the stage standalone finished before June. I will also be moving to LA after I graduate with my MFA in dance at Arizona State University and build the foundations of my company Kraken Still andFilm there.

Many thanks Lawrence... we wish you much continued success!

You can check out Lawrence's elegant film **Burden** below. Learn more about Lawrence's work by following him on Instagram at @krakenstillandfilm or going to www.krakenstillandfilm.com

Stay safe, stay healthy, stay active, keep dancing and **enjoy**.

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