

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Dare to Dance in Public Winning Films: MASTER PLAN

Sarah Elgart · Wednesday, February 5th, 2020

Over the next several weeks I am excited to be sharing the films by the Winners and Honorable Mentions of **Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival: Round 3**. We were thrilled to have our first live (and very successful!) screening at LA's REDCAT (Roy & Edna Disney Cal Arts Theater) at the invitation of Dance Camera West, a festival I previously worked with for many years. We screened 6 Award winning dance films, 3 Honorable Mentions, and 6 Official Selections from filmmakers/countries that included the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Japan, Africa, Canada, the US and beyond.

Since most of the filmmakers came from too far away to travel, I reached out to each of them via email and asked them a series of questions about their films and their processes. Jamiel Laurence's wonderful film **MASTER PLAN**, from Scotland, opened the festival and swept audiences off their feet with its amazing one shot take and a dancer's, 16-year-old Jamie Campbell, unstoppable energy. The thoughtful concept behind Jamiel's film even more appealing:

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

JL: *I first heard about the Dare to Dance in Public film festival after coming across a previously nominated film on social media. At the time I was already aiming to create danced work in a 'real-life' setting, and in researching the work of others, the festival stood out for having the work 'Public' in its title.*

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 why and where was it made? (include the country)

JL: *The application period for Dare to Dance in Public came at a fortuitous time for me creatively, as I was already into the planning phase of a work that would eventually become the dance short **MASTER PLAN** and had been getting braver with my chosen shoot locations when approaching new projects. Being based in Scotland, UK, I had already shot a few danced works in various well-known locations around the Glasgow area, such a Kelvingrove Park, and so I was keen to take this aspect of my work one step further and combine it with the "Public" aspect of the festival brief. For me, the obvious next step was to then find one of Scotland's busiest roads and film during its busiest time!*

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

JL: Celebrating the wealth of young talent Scotland has to offer, **MASTER PLAN** features 16-year-old Jamie Campbell, a student in his final year at the Dance School of Scotland. Filmed on a mobile phone, the film captures Jamie running and dancing his way down Glasgow's iconic Great Western Road. I filmed Jamie during one of the most challenging times in any dancer's journey, as at this time he was making big decision about his future, facing leaving his family and friends behind in Glasgow and choosing which of the performing arts schools he had achieved places at was right for him. It was really special to be able to capture Jamie at this exciting time, and I wanted the image of him rushing towards a destination with all of the thoughts streaming through his mind to be reflected in the traffic whizzing past him as he danced.

SE: What were your biggest challenges in making your film?

JL: One Shot films have always been very appealing to me as a choreographer and filmmaker, and I find that this style of uninterrupted capture to be visually exciting and familiar to me personally as a live stage performer. I already knew that due to the 'real-world' scenario of the traffic on the road that no two takes would ever be the same. However I also decided to push my dancer choreographically with a lot of running, jumping and turning on display; ...resulting in a lot of running, jumping and turning for me as the cameraman. By the end of the morning's shoot, both Jamie and I had earned a well deserved rest!

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

JL: I currently fund my filmmaking through my full time career as a Soloist of the Scottish Ballet, and over time have accumulated all of my own capture and editing equipment. However just ahead of the shoot of **MASTER PLAN**, Apple Europe had become aware of my other filmed works using their iPhone mobile devices and offered to supply me with a second iPhone XS, which was an incredibly valuable asset due to the associated restrictions on mobile battery life and this really allowed me to pace the shoot accordingly.

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?



JL: Although **MASTER PLAN** is a high energy dance film, it also has a biographical nature in terms of presenting my own experience of working with Glasgow dancer Jamie Campbell. I had never worked with Jamie before, however as a professional dancer I had been in a similar place to him as a graduating dancer, and so could readily identify with the some of the different challenges he was facing in choosing where he was going to go next in life. Jamie became my biggest collaborator in the process due to his fantastic approach to the challenging choreography, and he brought his own interpretation and style to my work which I had not accounted for in the planning stages. This resulted in me discovering a new and unique voice with which to present my idea, and a personal feel to the final film produced, which includes Jamie's own colourful wardrobe favourites.

SE: What are you craving to do next?

JL: In funding my own creative output as a choreographer and filmmaker, I have found that facing the many associated budgetary restrictions has in fact led to some of my best received work and strongest ideas being fulfilled. However one experience I am craving is would be to achieve a

larger cast of dancers or dance company with whom I could produce a busier and more diverse image on screen and create some larger danced landscapes. The Thom Yorke dance film ANIMA has been a huge inspiration to me since its release, and this would be an example of the scale of what I would like to do with my own ideas and choreography.

Part of our intent with **Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival** is always to share the wealth of new voices, cultures, dancers, choreographers, and filmmakers who bring light not only to our different backgrounds and cultures, but to the sameness that unites us. Jamiel and Jamie hit this right on the mark. You can check out more of Jamiel's work at www.jamiellaurence.com.

Below, please enjoy **MASTER PLAN**, the winner of **Dare to Dance in Public's** Best Interface of Dance and Camera Award. *Congrats to Jamiel & Jamie both!*

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