

Interview with Jason - Part Three Transcript

Cam:

This is part three of my chat with Jason.

Second choice, unless you want to talk a bit more about Miles Davis?

Jason:

No, I think like that record like what's like I can still go back to that album and that's you know that track that full album and listen to it and I think the fact that I'm not burnt out from it from having to have analysed it and studied it to that level. It's I can still listen to it and enjoy it. Exactly. Yeah, so I think that's that's significant, yeah

So next next one I've got on this list is track called "Tendon" by Igorr, I'm not sure how it's actually pronounced. A French group, Igorrr - this is a hilarious track that...

Are you familiar with this group? They there is kind of a mix of, it's a mix of Death Metal, of Baroque, of Breakbeat of Classical, of Folk it's, it's... I can't remember where I heard this track first. This is the first track of theirs that I heard I was like, this is, this is bat shit crazy because it starts, there's like just glitchy percussion like heavily processed and really like, well recorded, well produced like violin pizzicato of this this bizarre melody and it just descends into blast beats, screaming metal into... Also, I mean, it ends in bluegrass. It's, it's hilarious. It's a track that... like there's a friend of mine that I played in ensembles with that was an incredible violin player and I let him hear this he was like, what...?

Cam:

WTF?

Jason:

Yeah, like he was he didn't know what to make of it at all! It's like, this this is great. This is just a fusion of all the instruments I play of the styles of these instruments that I love that - it's just, it's just great!

[**Music:** "Tendon" by Igorr from "Nostril" (2010)]

Cam:

You're tuned into 97.1 FM3 MDR. This is The Big Note and I'm talking with Jason H. J. Lim, a composer, producer, musician and music technologist, and the founder of Instruro Modular Instruments in Glasgow, Scotland.

And we just listened to Tendon by IGOR from their 2010 album, Nostril and that is Jason Lim's second choice of music to play today.

Back to the interview where Jason talks a bit more about the band IGORR and his personal experience with them.

Jason:

Yeah, I've kind of like started following this band after finding this track and just consuming all their back catalog. And there's one point, this must have been 2018, I think, we were still in the old workshop. So I was working with Kean and at that point, and he was familiar with the band.

I think it's Kean we're talking about. It's kind of Apex Twin meets black metal is this artist.

And there's a challenge, if you're at a house party or something, just sneak that into a playlist and just see how quickly you get just the worst response from anyone that's not into that type of music.

It's the IGORR challenge.

Cam:

I'm really going to enjoy playing that to my listeners.

Jason:

Yeah, it's a lot of fun. But as like, this is one of the older albums, I think. I think it was just like the main guy who's the producer behind it. So he works with a wide range of musicians, but they've kind of been touring and producing albums more regularly as a more traditional band set up.

Like, their most recent album was much more traditional death metal, but with electronic elements to it.

But they toured around that time, 2018, I think. I think it was shortly after they'd released an album called Savage Sinusoid and so I had tickets for that.

And I was like, this is great. I'm going to see him live. So that was in the calendar.

By chance, I think it was like three days before that gig. Just by chance, I saw an open call out on Facebook, because there were two bands, two local like Glasgow metal bands that I'd pulled out from supporting. So they were like, we need, we're looking for support acts. So I sent them a message.

I was like, well, short notice, but I could pull together a modular set and do something that is like this and like sent a, yeah, sent like an older like YouTube clip of it.

And yeah, just got chatting to the promoter So like he was interested in synths. So I don't know if he knew who Instruō was. Instruō was tiny at that point, this was before the CSL had launched, it must have been late 2017.

Cam:

Troika had come out.

Jason:

Troika was out, I had harmoniag. I actually had...

Cam:

We're talking modules to the listeners. And I've talked to you about modular synthesis before.

So just keep up, okay? I'll explain all this more later. This is, you are on 97.1 FM listening to Cameron talking to Jason Lim from Instruō Instruments and also quite an accomplished musician in his own right.
So you got the gig?

Jason:

Yeah, I got the gig.

Cam:

Excellent.

Jason:

Yeah, I got the gig and I was like, oh shit, I've got three days to pull together a set that is worthy of opening the stage for IGORR. So I was like, that's, it was extremely stressful, but good fun. Cause I think like that's, as years have gone on, it's kind of become a bit more sparse when I do write a set and do a performance. So I kind of, I'm able to, I feel like I'm able to justify it as, okay, I can record this and I can present it.

It can be marketing for the modules, but it was like something like that, which just came out with the blue. It's like, okay, cool, I'll just spend the next few days just patching and getting something together. But it was really good fun.

Yeah, I just went hyper aggressive with like just, lots of kicks and lots of noise. And it was, yeah, I think I did record that set, but I don't know what, I don't know if the recorder corrupted or something, but yeah, it was a one and done, a live performance that wasn't captured.

But yeah, like that was, that was kind of, that was totally bizarre. Cause I was there, I had to, I was early doors to get in and soundcheck cause I was on, I think it was the second act on, I think it was a guy doing, doing some break beat stuff on and then, and then me.

And then I think there was one other band and then, and then Igorr playing. So yeah, just kind of like hanging out. I didn't actually chat to the band at all. I don't know how good their English is, mind you. Yeah. Yeah, they're very French. So I don't know, but I was just, I was just so shy. I was like, I had tickets to come see this, because I really liked this band. That was like, full on imposter syndrome. So I was just kind of just watching and just enjoying like seeing the chaos that was their soundcheck.

And yeah, the gig was great. It was in a, a tiny venue called Audio in Glasgow. It's under one of the bridges but it's, yeah, it was, it was a good night. It was good night.

Cam:

Nice! That's fantastic. The way you've described it, sort of reminds me of the first time I heard, and I've played this to other people who weren't familiar, Focus, "Hocus Pocus", Rebecca, my daughter's boyfriend, he'd never heard Hocus Pocus. So I put it on and he's, Oookaaay.

Jason:

Yeah. Igorr's got that, that sort of same level of, it's a journey.

Cam:

Yeah, You're listening to heavy metal beats and all of a sudden, Yodeling comes in and it's - (laughing) okay. Thank you for that one.

Igorr... number three.

Jason:

Number three, turned out this one was on Spotify. I'd only been listening to it on Bandcamp previously. So it's a band called Gigantic Ant, which this album is from, when, what year? I think it's 2011 they did it. I might be before that actually. No, 2015. So later than I thought.

So this is Jared and Donovan, who I was bandmates with when I was at Berklee. So for like the latter couple of years, I was consistently playing in a band with a friend of mine called Charlie, who's an excellent guitar player.

But he kind of led this band. The band ended up being, being called "Charlie the Most", because he did the most. So it's his band, which meant, you know, like his name was, yeah. I still got a sticker on my, one of my amps, that's still the Charlie the most. I think I've got one of the back of one of my guitars as well. But yeah, we, we played together for years. But this was a, I think at peak, we were a 14 piece band. We had a three part horn section. It was big, like a couple of vocalists. It was a big like funk band.

Cam:

That's a big band.

Jason:

Big arrangements. It was, it was so much fun. And I think what's, it was like, we'd hang out.

Like we'd, we'd actually, we were actually, I think that's the difference with a lot of, a lot of ensembles that I played in, where there was like a horn section. It's like they were, they were just like musicians that brought in to play it. But like the, the guys that were the horn section, like they, they were all friends in their own sort of group as well.

So we all, we all just got them really well and we did, we did record an EP which is, is up, but like some of the tracks we did with that band were arrangements of Don and Jared's tracks that they did with Gigantic Ant. So Gigantic Ant is what it was most of the part are two piece, but I think for this recording, I think they have a bass player in it. So it's the two of them, they're brothers. So they're musically, they're just, they've played together their entire lives. And they were, they are tight. Like they were, they were playing constantly.

Cam:

I love the name. It's brilliant. Reminds me of that science fiction film, "Them", the one with the atomic accident in the desert and the ants are huge.

Sorry, I digress, what was the name of the track?

Jason:

I went to actually listen through the whole album yesterday, just, just while it was laying out schematics, Super Gyro, which is, what track is that on? Fifth track on it.

[**Music:** "Supergyro" by Gigantic Ant from Gigantic Ant"(2015)]

Cam:

You're listening to 97.1 FM 3MDR and we just listened to a track called Super Gyro from a band called "Gigantic Ant" from their self-titled album Gigantic Ant from 2015, check it out, that's really good. And this was one of Jason's choices to play for our interview with him today.

If you've just tuned in, I'm chatting with Jason Lim, musician, composer, producer, and founder of Instruō Modular Instruments based in Glasgow, Scotland.

Jason:

I mean, every track on this album is great. The track three is called "Scopolamine" which we actually did a full band arrangement of with Charlie the Most, which actually for that one, I switched to violin, so I did a violin line that's in there, which is good fun. But I thought it was helpful.

Cam:

So they were on band camp, did you say?

Jason:

It's, this album's on Spotify as well, so I'll be able to send you a link.

Cam:

I've been trying to encourage my listeners to, if they can go to band camp and buy it rather than streaming because I don't think Spotify gives that much back to the smaller artists. It's okay if you, someone like Taylor Swift who's streaming millions and millions and millions of plays, but I think some of the smaller artists, they don't, yeah, they don't get that much. And we just, last month we had Australian Music Month and we said, look, if you really want to support local musicians or artists, buy their merch, buy tickets, go to their gigs, drink beer at the gig, that'll support the venues as well, and go on band camp or if they've got a physical merch like vinyl, buy it. So I may go and buy Gigantic Ants music from band camp just to support music because, well, we both love music.

Jason:

Yeah, yeah.

Cam:

This is Future Cam here and thank you for your patience with me getting on my soapbox, Jason but I can say that I have put my money where my mouth is and I did go on band camp and bought Gigantic Ant. Please check it out, people, it's great.

Following on, I asked Jason about his label on band camp, Instruō, of which they have released one album; Instruō Compilations number one, and I played Jason's performance from that album, earlier.

Jason:

Oh, it's a work in progress. We're planning to do a limited cassette run as a follow-up release, but it's just been trying to juggle everything together. So we've got plans for sustaining that and doing more proper instrumental gigs as well as a few other artists. So yeah, there are a few artists that are featured on that first release that did placements and internships at Instruō a couple of years ago. So it was really nice to have that. That was a really nice way to get them involved in contributing to something that we're doing great.

Cam:

Excellent. So we've had Miles Davis, Igorr, and Gigantic Ant.

Jason:

So next one, I've not been able to find this album.

Cam:

That's a great name for an album.

Jason:

I got it on a hard drive somewhere. Yeah, so it's a band called Junction Pool, which as far as I know, it was, I think it was a music lecturer at one of the, I'm not sure what university in Scotland, I think one of the UHR University of the Highlands and Islands. It wasn't Perth, it may be Dundee, maybe Aberdeen, but it was, I think it was a student ensemble that the band leader, I think, was the faculty. I might be completely butchering that, but that's what I remember of it. But there's an album that was put out that I think must have been funded by Celtic Connections or something like that. So it's kind of modern folk fusion. And this particular track called "Bah Humberg," which I think I mistyped it long ago and thought it was Ba Humbug, but it's Bah Humberg. But it's just an incredible piece of music. So the time signature is, it's seven and six, so essentially 13/8 through most of it. So it's just got this really interesting meter, but melodically it just flows really well. So it's a piece that I've written arrangements of and curated for ensembles have been in.

[**Music:** "Bah Humberg" cover by Jason Lim]

Cam:

You're listening to 97.1FM, 3MDR and we just listened to a track called "Bah Humberg" by a group in Scotland called "Junction Pool." and this is a performance and arrangement of that track by Jason Lim, who I am chatting with today as part of the last Big Note of the year.

Jason:

There's an older YouTube video on, not the Instruō YouTube channel, but my own older personal YouTube channel that was back when I was, I must have done it while I was in Boston. Yeah, it was definitely in Boston because I recorded it as a music production project. So I recorded the drums at home in Falkirk. It must have been when I was home for Christmas or home for summer and mic'd up the kit, set up cameras and tracked. I actually tracked the drums onto analog tape because I think at that point I'd managed to accumulate a bunch of gear.

There was an old studio that I used to record at with my high school band that was funded by the local council in Falkirk. And I think they were renovating the studio at some point. And I was doing some part-time work for Falkirk council at the time. So I got a random phone call from a guy that ran some of the projects I was part of saying, this studio has been renovated and they're just clearing out all the gear, so all the studio stuff is just in a skip out the back. So if you can get a hold of a van, just go and get it.

So I went down and I got a StudioMaster P7 desk, which is beside me here, a Fostex G16 16-track reel to reel and stacks of Ampex tape, most of it unused. So I've got a full reel-to-reel and analog mixer, and there was a bunch of outboard gear. There were a couple of compressors, some old Alessis effects units.

Cam:

You hear stories like that.

Jason:

I think my high school band was, yeah, like it was like, yeah, exactly. Like these are stories you hear. I was like, "Shit, this is actually, I'm one of these stories now." So yeah, like I just, I can't remember who I pestered to give me a lift down, but just filled the back of a van with it. And it was all absolutely, fortunately, it hadn't been raining or anything because it must have been sat out overnight in a skip.

Cam:

For a change, it hadn't rained in Scotland.

Jason:

Yep, yeah, very fortunate timing. So I had this reel-to-reel. So that was, I think, the first project where I rigged everything up. I was like, "Okay, let's see if this works." And I've used it a couple of times. It needs to be recapped, like all the

caps are dried out. So there was one of the tracks, like I found, I thought when the channels were dead until I overdove the kick drum straight into it and that brought it back to life. So I think it was just enough of an impulse to punch the channel back into life.

So I was able to use it a few times. Yeah, so I've used it for tracking drums just so I could slam into the preamps and really drive to tape. So I recorded a version of this track. I'll need to do some digging. I'll try and find the original track for you. But if not, I've got a version of an arrangement that I recorded that's me playing drums, violin, guitar, acoustic guitar, bass.

And that was a fun project where I tracked the drums in Falkirk and then took the stems and mixed it when I was in Boston and recorded all the other parts. So like, I think I did it over a couple of years 'cause I can definitely see there's a camera angle of me playing bass that's in a flat I was in for a while on Mass Ave in Boston. And there must be another shot from somewhere else. I can't remember when or where I put the thing together, but it's all, I recorded all the parts and did the arrangement and did it as a video and multi-track.

Yeah, the original track's excellent. But that's a piece that I've revisited time and again and done my own interpretations and arrangements of.

Cam:

Must be good if you're gonna revisit it again and again.

Jason:

Yeah.