

JARRE, THE P

French musician Jean Michel Jarre stunned the music world by staging a 12-hour opera and laser show to mark the new millennium on 31st December last at the Giza Pyramids, south of Cairo. He staged the huge show despite complaints by Egyptian members of the parliament about the 9.5-million-dollar cost of the unprecedented event which he named "12 Dreams of the Sun".

Born and brought up in the colourful life of Lyon, France, synth and techno music pioneer Jean-Michel was actually a guitarist back in early seventies. His first band was "the Dustbins". Then in the mid seventies, Jarre set up his own studio to explore the amazing soundscape of synthesizers- a musical tool that was just being explored by certain progressive rockers.

Jarre recorded *Oxygene* by using extensively the ARP synthesizer along with other synth and electronic instruments in 1976 and released the album light-heartedly (only 2000 LPs were released at first)- never realising that it was the biggest ever synth-symphony that would take the global market by the storm. *Oxygene* remains as one of the highest sold albums of the world.

Following *Oxygene's* success, Jarre became intensely involved with the evolution of electronic and synthesiser music as well as with the making and promotion of new musical instruments.

Jarre had been very ambitious about his concert projects. He is so serious about the live performance that he would put maximum finances there. In the early eighties, Jarre staged an experimental concert in Paris where around one million people attended!

When no rock musician were thinking about holding a concert outside the "capitalist" part of the globe, Jarre ventured to China back in '82 and staged a spectacular show. He held extravagant shows in Moscow, Hong Kong, Barcelona, London, and many major cities in Europe. His stage designers include Arthur C. Clarke!

And there had been major disasters too. In 1991, he planned a mega-concert to mark solar eclipse in Teotihuacan, Mexico in '91. But concert could never take place as the ship carrying the stage from Europe to Mexico sank on the Atlantic Ocean and the promoters failed to provide bank instalments three weeks before the concert.

He has a daughter- Emily and a son- David.

From the late seventies, Jarre got involved with designing his own instruments. One of the notable designs include a custom made synthesiser that is played like the guitar. In the recent concerts, he has used a laser harp- which is played by using placing the palm on an array of laser beams. The Laser Harp uses a 20 Watt laser tube, which is so powerful Jarre has to wear asbestos gloves to not burn his hands.

In his last album- *Metamorphoses*- Jarre reveals his new found interest on vocals. It's an album of hooks, intelligent lyrics and exciting vocal performances which even include some by Jean Michel Jarre himself. Some ideas of the songs of this album would impress you: "Hey

Gagarin"- the track was inspired by a live link-up with the crew of the Mir space station at his 1997 Moscow show.

"Tout Est Bleu" - Hi-fi interference of a mobile phone underpins the rhythmic track.

"Miss Moon" - The track is built around a sample of a lawn sprinkler.

"Bells" - Somehow it manages to encompass elements of Orbital, reggae, Sparky's Magic Piano and Ennio Morricone.

"Millions Of Stars" - This is perhaps the closest to MJM's Planetarium rock of yore.

"Gloria, Lonely Boy" - Dubby electronic feedback co-exists with an Almodovar drag queen!

Darkness always terrified me, but I am afraid that now I was the victim of the darkness. It was Alan and I read in St William Collage in New York. When I was five years old, I was locked inside a cellar. It was so dark inside that I couldn't see my hands properly. I screamed and it turned into a growing fear. Then my little body could not bear it any more and I fell unconscious. I was rescued by my uncle. After then I was allergic to darkness. I had to sleep at night with the light.

One fine day I was gossiping with some of my friends. The topic of our discussion was more than darkness. Roy told us a wonderful story about darkness and we all liked it.

Then Noel said, "I know a deserted house in Benson Street and at night it is totally dark. If you people have enough time then you must go there and see the darkness."

Without thinking anything I said that I could spend one night in that haunted house. My friends it was a bolt from the blue.

Noel said, "Alan, what did you say, Do you really mean it? If you can do it I'll give you a thousand dollars in cash so think before you answer".

I tried to explained to them that I was joking but I failed to make them understand. As promised me to pay thousand dollars if I could spend the night there. But it was a great foolishness. So on that very night we went there. It was a terraced house.

Noel said, "there are many rumours regarding this house. It was the house of a man named Rupert. He killed his wife in this house and killed himself too. The reason of the murder was unknown. It happened more than a hundred years ago."

They gave me a torch, a blanket and some sandwiches. I said good-bye to my friends and inside the house and closed the door. It was really dark inside so I lit my torch.

The window panes were covered with dust. Cobwebs were hanging from the ceiling. I lit the furniture and I had to sit on the floor. In my watch it was ten O'clock. Then I ate my sandwiches and a cigarette because I was feeling cold. Little by little my fear of darkness was engulfing me. To keep my self calm. So I closed my eyes and tried to sleep.

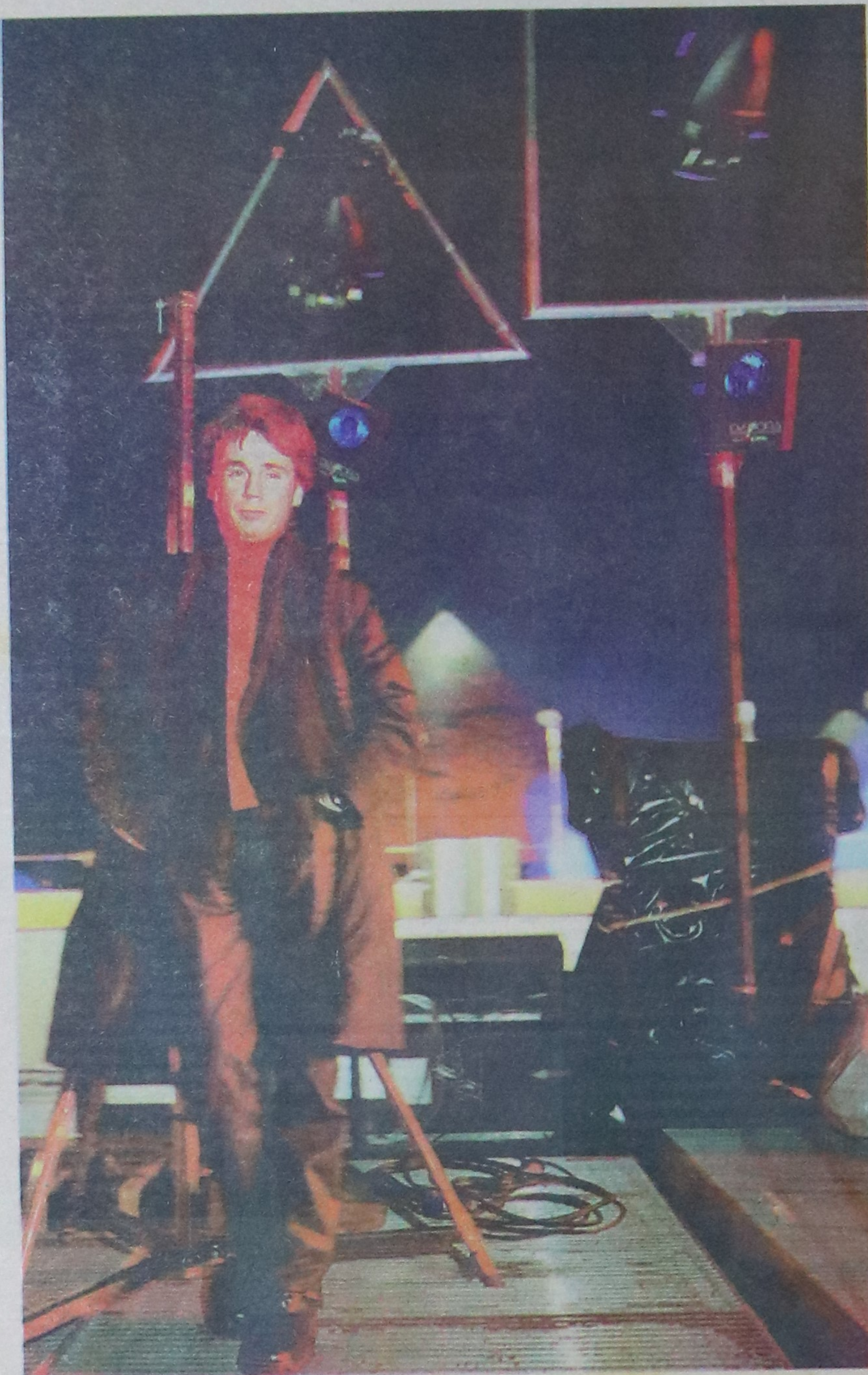
I was awakened up by a noise. It was a man and a women talking. I stood up and went to the room. Then what I saw was simply deniable.

A man and a women were quarreling. I peeped through the window and saw a man and a woman. The man was weeping and trying to say something. Rupert was accusing his wife of adultery. She was shot her twice and killed himself with his gun. Then everything vanishes.

I was speechless and my heart was hammering faster and I ran inside the room. I saw a pool of blood on the floor. It means I had seen the murder which was committed more than a hundred years ago. Or maybe it was a hallucination. My nerves could not bear it any more and I fell unconscious.

When I opened my eyes I saw my friends around me. To them I had lost consciousness. They actually I didn't. Noel still gave me a thousand dollars because I was everybody's hero.

It is now one year after that incident. I haven't told anything about that night to anyone. I had done a good thing for me. I was no more afraid of darkness. That feeling of fear was gone due to excessive pressure on my nerves. Now I can sleep at night with the light and it is a sleep of peace.



- Albums: *Oxygene*
- Equinoxe*
- Magnetic Field*
- China Concerts*
- Zeitraum*
- Supermarket*
- Zoolook*
- Essential*
- Rendezvous*
- Houston Lyon*
- Revolutions*
- Jarre Live*
- Waiting For Cousteau*
- Images*
- Chronologie*
- Hong Kong*
- Jarre Remix*
- Oxygene 713*
- Odyssey*
- Metamorphoses*

By Gulrukh Nawsheen

It was the year 2052 and the first day of March with an air of spring everywhere. Dhaka is now quite a different city from what it was 52 years back. The streets of Dhaka are now nice and clear. Trees were planted all along the road islands. Now they have grown big nice, green and full of leaves. If you drive slowly through the city roads and look up you will see nice green trees more than the sky scrapers.

Dhaka has also developed far more than our expectations. All the automotive engines have been made pollution free. The government is maintaining the industrial wastes so nicely that it quite a wonder. All the wastes from the industries go to a plant where it is treated with chemicals and then released into the sea. The materials which are being released into the sea are totally harmless. I can ensure you that. The Dhanmondi lake is a wonder too. With nice clear and sparkling water it is just the spot for preteens, teenagers and old people to sit and chat together.

As it was Friday my twin grand children "Rumi" and "Roni" made me come here and they both went swimming on the side of the lake where the water is shallow. They both are 8 years old. Rumi is only 5 minutes older than Roni and they both nearly look alike. The only difference is that Roni has a mark on the left side of his head and Rumi doesn't. Here I met Quamrun my every old friend. Her grand children had also come to swim at the shallow end of the lake.

After sometime I decided to take them home for their mother would worry if we were late. We asked a rickshawallah if he would go to Sukrabad where we lived. Nowadays the rickshawallahs are fully trained from the training centers. They are not like the ones there were 52 years back.

The roads are as smooth as could be and a traffic police is in every turning of the road. My grand children have only heard from me what traffic jam was when we were their age but never experienced it.

Now in Dhaka there are good hospital with well behaved and cooperating doctors and all the modern facilities there could be. They even found a cure for cancer!

The Mirpur zoo has been named Mirpur Park and is quite different from what it was 52 years back. Here you get inside a protected car and move along the tracks. You get to see the giraffes, Zebras, deer and nearly all the diurnal animals and if you are lucky enough you can even see a tiger though they rarely come out during the daytime. Here the animals run free instead of staying in cages. They feel as if they are in a jungle.

Dhaka has now become a maintained and nice city with law and order every where. Dhaka has now become quite like the city I wished for when I was my grand children's age. As I rock on my rocking chair and knit a sweater for one of my grand children, I look through the window I was sitting by and I see a nice city and a city I wished for.

EXPECTATIONS

