

# JEAN-MICHEL JARRE

1979 the success of his second album 'Equinoxe' in 35 countries firmly established Jean-Michel Jarre at an international level. Always seeking to utilise the unique, Jean-Michel performed live for the first time at the Place de la Concorde on 14 July 1979 (Bastille Day) before a million spectators and 100 million TV viewers. This set a record which has earned him a place in the Guinness Book of Records for attracting an outdoor audience of over 1,000,000. "This spectacle", he later remarked, "is the realisation of one of my dreams: to renew the old popular tradition of the free and open musical fête". The first full-length music video to be released was filmed at this event.

Jean-Michel Jarre's third album 'Magnetic Fields' (inspired by Andy Warhol's Marilyn Monroe project) was based on traditional music, but exaggerated and supplemented the underlying themes to create a completely different sound. Two weeks after release the LP was in the top ten in the charts of every European territory and appeared in all three chart categories of pop, jazz and classical in America.

Jean-Michel also became the first Westerner to have his music broadcast on Chinese radio and, as a result of the intense interest generated, he recruited seventy musicians and technicians, loaded 15 tons of equipment on to a plane bound for Peking and became the first Western rock musician to play China (a five-date tour of both Peking and Shanghai). 150,000 spectators witnessed the concerts, which were also seen by 30 million on television and heard by 500 million on radio. To link Chinese tradition and modern culture, Jean-Michel wrote a special composition for a 34-piece Chinese orchestra using two string lutes, violins, Chinese lutes and flutes and this was performed between the sections of his live set.

A double album - 'The Concerts In China' - of live recordings from the adventure (including 40 minutes of compositions created for the occasion) was released in May 1982. Yet another huge international success, 'Concerts In China' went platinum in virtually every country in the world.

The next step Jean-Michel Jarre took in his career came as a shock to everybody. He lived up to his already-established reputation for eccentricity by going against normal record business practice; he recorded an entire LP 'Music For Supermarkets' and pressed only one copy before having all printing and lacquering machinery destroyed. The one and only disc was then auctioned for £10,000 at a gallery for promising young artists and sculptors. The next edition of The Guinness Book of Records will include this event as a new entry.

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'The Essential Jean-Michel Jarre' - a compilation from the previous albums (excluding 'Supermarkets') was released later that year (1983) and followed the pattern by soon achieving platinum status.

In November 1984 Jean-Michel Jarre released 'Zoolook', an LP which demonstrated Jarre's pioneering work in the use of vocal effects - all European, some Oriental and African - as rhythm tracks. Laurie Anderson, Adrian Belew (of King Crimson and ex Talking Heads) Yogi Orton (who has worked with Talking Heads too) and Marcus Miller (ex Miles Davis) were all invited to contribute to the album. Containing several eminently commercial, highly polished dance tracks ('Zoolook' and 'Zoolookologie', for example), the record shows yet another progression in Jean-Michel Jarre's infinite musical ability.

A spectacular video was made for 'Zoolook', the first single to be lifted from the LP. Its world premiere media screening on 30 January was one of the highlights of MIDEM '85 and gave a very large number of media representatives an ideal opportunity to satisfy their understandable curiosity about the latest Jarre work. Later in the year Jean-Michel undertook a promotion visit to Japan and Australia, where he was invited to visit the Aborigines by their head man and went to Ayers Rock. It is typical of this artist that even his promotion tours do not follow the norm.

When the organisers of events surrounding the 25th anniversary of the N.A.S.A. headquarters as well as the 150th anniversary of the city of Houston and State of Texas in the USA cast around for personalities to take part, it is not surprising that they also hit upon Jean-Michel Jarre, not only because of his avant-garde reputation but also because of his own interest in connecting technology of any kind with art.

On 5 April 1986 he will stage the biggest show ever produced on this planet against the impressive background of downtown Houston and a skyline of skyscrapers reaching 1,200 feet high and 3/4 of a mile wide. His aim is to create the ultimate multi-media concert tapping every form of entertainment technology known to man and using technology to bring the concert to a bigger audience than has ever before been dreamed of. Huge screens and the sides of buildings will pick up visuals of the concert beamed by lasers and projectors, which will also be used to put on an amazing light show. Jean-Michel is writing a special music score which will tell the city of Houston's history in three main movements - rural space, urban space, outer space.

To coincide with this event and the subsequent transmission of a TV show from it, a new album 'Rendez-Vous' is to be released.

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