

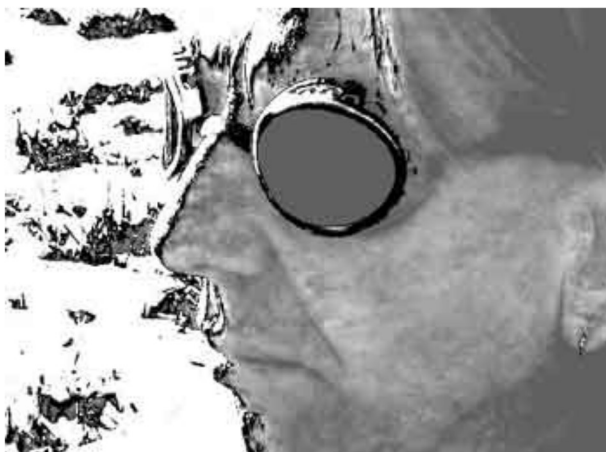
CHAIN D.L.K.

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Al Comet

Interviews

Posted by Marc Urselli



Chain D.L.K.: Hallo Al! So to start with, what is your background? Where are you from?

Al Comet: I was born in 1959 in a little town called Fribourg. Fribourg is on the "border" between the French and German parts of Switzerland. My interest in music started very early...I began to study classical piano at the age of 7. Soon, I discovered some of the bands that would influence me most: Led Zeppelin, Steppenwolf, Beatles and, most of all, Jimi Hendrix. I started my first band: "experience;" played guitar at the time...This was when I was around 15 years old. We were playing Hendrix's songs...This was my first band, and my first rock shows...Since then...I haven't been able to stop! huhu!

Chain D.L.K.: You've been involved with a number of projects. Tell us about them.

Al Comet: Yeah, musically, I have two things...The Young Gods and my own solo projects. For sure, I do remixes and some other musical jobs here and there...music for theater, music production, etc...I wouldn't mind doing music for film, for example...I'm also taking care of my business. It's pretty new. I was working with a manager for the last 15 years, but today it's different. I've got everything in my hands and I kind of like it.

Chain D.L.K.: Who or what has inspired you?

Al Comet: Everything is inspiring me...I mean, not only music or different forms of art but everybody, everything. All my surroundings.

Chain D.L.K.: Let's talk about a couple of your more recent releases, "White Planet" and "Sitarday". What are the

concepts in these works? And how has your style evolved?

Al Comet: "Sitarday" is one word out of Sitar and Saturday! (? ! ? ! ?) At that time (1999), I didn't have the right balance between music and the family lifestyle. So for the first time in my life, I decided to take less time for music and more for people and relations. I decided to close my studio on Fridays and re-open on Mondays! (It took me 20 years to get out of these kinds of rules, but here we are!) During this period, well, just the idea of no music for 48 hours straight was a little too much! To ease the transition, to make it smoother, I finally settled on allowing myself 2 hours of music on Saturdays, that was the "agreement"... but not more. I was asking myself, how can I do music for only 2 hours? This is where the Sitar came in. In fact, it's a guitar customized by Tim Lazer, a French genius. This guitar-maker went to India and brought back the technique of making the Indian sitar, and applied it to making a traditional acoustic guitar, which ended up with only 3 strings, a microphone, and a few other little tricks. I started playing a lot at home, for friends, for fun etc... And that was the idea: every Saturday, I spent 2 hours recording and editing my sitar improvisations. I also split the 24 hours of the day into two-hour slices... setting my alarm clock, for example, at 2 in the morning, going into the studio and doing these two hours of improvisation in the middle of the night. That was radically changing the feel of the music. After 4 months and quite a lot of "slices", I decided to put together a selection of these recordings and release the whole thing on the net (www.al-comet.com). This was done in March of 2000. Today, I can take weekends off without going crazy and I'm able to do music for 5 minutes only... great!!!

"White Planet" is different. It's the continuation of Al Comet-electro-duo concept and it's about a human-robot hitchhiking in space, or something like that! I wrote the music with the help of Bertrand Siffert, who is the "sampler-player" of the band and also does sound in the studio. Ray Lumihre gave me a hand with the lyrics. Ruflu Johnes played some bass here and there. It's to be released by the end of February in Europe, and hopefully soon in America.

Chain D.L.K.: What other artists have you collaborated with? Who, or what projects, are most memorable to you?

Al Comet: Hmmm, 20 years in that world... that adds up to a lot of people! Anyway, the most memorable collaboration has been The Young Gods. 15 years of R&R together and still around. OK, it's nothing compared to the Rolling Stones, but it's already a good start!!!



Chain D.L.K.: Projects for the future? Tours?

Al Comet: The future is now... and yes, we are doing some shows: with TYG (Amazonian Ambient Project and Aquanautes) and Al Comet (Sitarday). We are not really touring because we had planned to finish the recording of TYG's new material in the summer of '04. By the way, the latest TYG's album's gonna be released as well by the end of February. It's an ambient one and it's called "Music for artificial clouds".

Chain D.L.K.: We hear you're also a pilot, and that you're in love with flying. How did you get involved in that?

Al Comet: My father was pilot. He got me hooked to the thing very young. I'm addicted to the real 3-D. Doing rolls and loopings around little clouds or above the Swiss Alps was one of my favourite things to do and share with friends. Today, I concentrate more on music. I don't fly anymore. No time yet. I miss it, but I'll be back one of these days. I like the Ultra-Light-Airplane's concept a lot. They've made a lot of progress: a small engine, a small plane, electric motors, very good and safe performances... Yeah, I'll get back to this, sooner or later.

Chain D.L.K.: What's your daily life like? What might happen in a typical day?

Al Comet: We are a family here, so most of the time, if I'm home and depending on my wife's schedule, I'm taking care of the kids: wake them up, breakfast, send them to school, get the food ready, etc. The rest of the time is for music or business and so on... it depends. In fact, I don't have a typical day! It's changing all the time. I like this – no chance for "routine"... I switch between jobs: musician for 5 minutes or 2 hours, and father for the next 1/2 hour, and maybe manager in between. The only common thing, day by day, is to face the situations the best I can: all directions, all domains, everything. Basically, I just work on "being ready" for doing everything on any day! I don't think it's important to do this or that. For me, the most important is to do it well. It's a little like my way to be thankful for Life, and appreciate the present.

Chain D.L.K.: Any message to our readers?

Al Comet: Yeah – my English is pretty poor so if you don't understand something or have any question to ask, go for it. E-mail: alain@al-comet.com Ciao tutti and thanks for your interest. Al

Visit **Al Comet** on the web at:

www.al-comet.com

[interviewed by Ant & Maren] [proofreading by Maren]

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