

Sundialtech Pictures  
*in association with*  
The Studios for Integrated Media

# THE STRANGE CASE OF DJ COSMIC

A film by John Celona



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## SYNOPSIS AND SCRIPT

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## SYNOPSIS

THE STRANGE CASE OF DJ COSMIC is a 22-minute HD film in five parts, delivered by three actors, using non-linear narrative based on beat poetry. Five videostories spiral in and around the main actors' text, and are delivered by eight women in five languages (English, French, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese) and six locations (Vancouver, San Francisco, Banff, Puerto Vallarta, Guadalajara, and Montreal).

## CAST AND SET

The main set features a HD videoconference for a virtual coming-together of the three principal actors: DJ COSMIC, JOHNNY, AND LORETTA.

DJ COSMIC, a wise though fallen man, is isolated in a large space, a networks room, thousands of miles away, within a research facility. His contact with the outside world is confined to a series of HD video monitors.

JOHNNY (son of DJ COSMIC), a talented and rebellious young man, and LORETTA, symbol and figure to both men (wife; mother; muse), are in a time-suspended, virtual location with multiple monitors, screens, and projections. DJ COSMIC'S sense is failing. JOHNNY is detached. LORETTA is confident, playful yet innocent.

Dialogue for the five movements, between DJ COSMIC, JOHNNY, and LORETTA, is set within the framework and network-specifics of a HD videoconference, a portal world and its own dream.

Five videostories stream from the monitors, sometimes attracting the main trio's attention, interrupting conversation, sometimes not. The eight women (sirens; facets of DJ COSMIC, JOHNNY, and LORETTA'S subconscious) draw from and manipulate the text of the main trio, acting as a sort of Greek chorus, or baseline. English text runs simultaneous for clarity.

The HD videoconference broadcast set interpolates throughout the film; sometimes in full screen, sometimes as a singular dynamic (moving) screen within a multi-screen format. Other videoconference techniques, their latency and resolution are also incorporated and include iChat, Polycom, videoSkype, and VLC multiscreen montage.

The film explores thresholds of intelligibility with simultaneous text and streamed perception. DJ COSMIC'S existential journey, with commentary and paraphrase from the eight sirens (as in Greek drama), combines themes of desperation, privacy, emotion and hope, spun into a hip, rhythmic landscape of jazz, trance, jungle, dream and pulse. The project is all shot in HD.

## SCRIPT

The film opens split screen. Screen to the top (or left) is in B/W showing DJ COSMIC, well-attired, driving into a parking lot with buildings and grounds, then walking into a large, non-descript government building. Bottom screen (or right), in color, shows JOHNNY walking up a grassy incline, then disappearing into a large, open, darkened archway bunker.

### PROLOGUE (TEXT TIMING : 1:30)

DJ COSMIC is alone. LORETTA is present with JOHNNY.

*(distant industrial background noise)*

DJ COSMIC

*(as if in mid-sentence; vulnerable)*

. . . Last time was different.

JOHNNY

*(casually)*

It was hard to be really sure of understanding you.

DJ COSMIC

*(sort of talking to himself)*

Conclusions wrong, timing is everything, underlying—

JOHNNY

You were explaining something, something . . .

DJ COSMIC

*(incoherent yet moving)*

Not saying, said.

*(beat)*

Given not much time. The isolation . . . to pass.

JOHNNY

It's hard to believe.

DJ COSMIC

Becoming me?

JOHNNY

Is there any reason?

DJ COSMIC

You mean—

LORETTA

*(like a jazz lyric)*

Everyday, everyday brings new problems.

JOHNNY

*(to DJ COSMIC)*

Becoming your problem.

DJ COSMIC

The latest visions, I . . .

JOHNNY

*(reminding him)*

Those dreams—

LORETTA

What about?

DJ COSMIC

Hearing something different.

LORETTA

You were searching, the continuous fascination.

JOHNNY

*(to DJ COSMIC)*

You recognized in me—

LORETTA

*(to JOHNNY, imploring)*

He told you, ‘Keep moving, keep moving.’

JOHNNY

*(to LORETTA)*

Spontaneous.

LORETTA

Living up to his reputation.

DJ COSMIC

*(recalling)*

Worse things in dreams.

*(as an aside)*

Fascination in absurdity.

JOHNNY

Tell me.

DJ COSMIC

You mean I am dreaming?

*(to himself)*

To meet that which we cannot know?

LORETTA

You were learning the stars.

*(attacca)*

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## MOVEMENT I : SAN FRANCISCO BLUECITY

(TEXT TIMING : 0:00-2:25)

Cue SAN FRANCISCO BLUECITY (3:12) and VIDEOSTORY I : MONIQUE IN SAN FRANCISCO (English)

*(in tempo; relaxed jazz beat poetic delivery; cool, non-chalant)*

JOHNNY

You said answers.

DJ COSMIC

*(rambling)*

Not concerned with extremes. Similar things.

*(ponders)*

Am I devoting too much attention to this?

JOHNNY

You began making history without being aware of it.  
Changing the world, creating systems, you said, complex  
in devolution, metaphor, some facet of your imagination,  
those dreams, your latest visions.

DJ COSMIC

I wasn't attracted by routine. Those memories now.

JOHNNY

You found a place in this everyday world. What  
happened to you?

DJ COSMIC

I conceived an idea . . . but everything changed.

LORETTA  
*(comes back)*

Everybody changed.

DJ COSMIC  
My face changed.

JOHNNY  
What?

*(Music cue 1:15)*

DJ COSMIC  
*(to LORETTA, glaring, glassy-eyed)*  
There was no life in your eyes, no light in your life, such  
lies in your life's eyes.

LORETTA  
*(whispered)*  
What has happened to us?

DJ COSMIC  
Impossible of really understanding it; so surprising; the  
unexpected.

JOHNNY  
Look. I am here, you were warning me.

DJ COSMIC  
I wish I could give you a complete description.

JOHNNY  
Tell me about, about that.

LORETTA  
*(to DJ COSMIC)*  
You were putting it down.

DJ COSMIC  
Existence. Rules, sliding rules, spaces.

*(Music cue 2:18)*

*(reflecting)*  
Heading into the unknown, plowing the dark.

*(Music finishes [c.0:40 with fade])*

*(attacca)*

**MOVEMENT II : PUERTO VALLARTA CASA**  
(TEXT TIMING : 2:15)

Cue PUERTO VALLARTA CASA (3:37) and VIDEOSTORY II : ALEJANDRA AND MORENA  
IN PUERTO VALLARTA (Spanish)

*(Videostory opening: Alejandra, "I shall always remember" – attacca)*

LORETTA

*(into camera, holding back yet emotional, in rhythmic relation to soundtrack: smooth, tireless, breathless, confident)*

When did it happen? To belong to you. You and your augmented reality. I am not a dimension of your imagination. Did you think we could step outside of nature? *(beat)* You realized the sublime understanding in fascination. But I was not concerned with your extremes. Capturing the danger. Remembering the pressure, expansion, surreal . . . *(more emotional)* Hold on, I—*(beat)* *(imploring)* Oh, I wish you were here.

*(Music cue 0:55)*

What happened to us? Those thrills? *(beat)* To laugh? To love? To remember? To return? To recall? Our loss . . . ?  
*(beat)* It was hard to believe and you were warning me. I was part of your spontaneous . . .  
*(whispered, slowly)*  
. . . Throbbing, euphoric atmospheres.

*(Music cue 1:40)*

But he said, she said:  
There was no life in those eyes,  
No light in her life,  
Such lies in her life's eyes.

And whispered: *(whispered yet articulate, more lips)*  
La stato non vita in queste l'occhi,  
non luce in la vita,  
molto mentire in la vitae l'occhi.

Doubtless, we began making history without being aware of it.

*(Music cue 2:20)*

LORETTA

*(con't)*

I took your passion. Those rules, those sliding rules.  
Oh, compadre. What were those underlying principles?  
I can't say much about our memories. Even you who do  
not agree with me can understand. We never took into  
account that Methos, the emotions shouting awareness.

*(Music finishes [c.1:20 more])*

*(attacca)*

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### MOVEMENT III : GUADALAJARA

(TEXT TIMING : 0:20)

Cue GUADALAJARA BUMPER (2:32) and VIDEOSTORY III : ALMA IN GUADALAJARA  
(Spanish)

DJ COSMIC (O/S)

*(very unsteady)*

They began killing me *(beat)* with treachery.

LORETTA (O/S)

You know timing is everything.

*(beat)*

Ah, compadre, I'll never forgive you.

*(Music finishes)*

*(attacca)*

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### MOVEMENT IV : MONTREAL LA CROIX

(TEXT TIMING : 1:30)

Cue MONTREAL LA CROIX (6:45) and VIDEOSTORY IV : BENEDICTE, ENRICA, AND  
CHRISTINE IN MONTREAL (French and Italian)

*(Music cue 0:12)*

JOHNNY

*(into camera, slowly spoken, partly whispered, slightly defiant)*

I remember. There was a number, *(beat)* a number of  
very clear links, which explained your continuing  
fascination: changing the world, creating systems, you  
said, complex in devolution, metaphor, irony and . . .



JOHNNY

*(con't)*

*(with sarcasm)* Post-Toasties. *(laughs)*

*(Music cue 0:52)*

You began making history without being aware of it. Those dreams, your visions, a facet of your imagination. What happened to you? When exactly did it happen? Those memories now, finding their place in this everyday world. Impossible of really understanding the unexpected. Heading into that unknown, working fast, plowing the dark. It should not come as any surprise. Tell me about, about the sublime extraordinary, *(beat)* the passion.

*(Music cue 1:40)*

*(beat: c.0:45)*

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**MOVEMENT IV *(con't)* : ENSEMBLE**

(TEXT TIMING : 2:00)

*(Music cue 2:23)*

LORETTA

*(ecstatic)*

Oh, what thrills we could have if you were here.

DJ COSMIC

*(quickly, to LORETTA and JOHNNY)*

Capturing the danger, expansion, pressure.

JOHNNY

But when did it happen? The extreme surreal, the alter ego?

DJ COSMIC

*(sentimental)*

When we forgot about play? To laugh? To remember?

*(Music cue 2:58)*

LORETTA

*(gently)*

To love? To belong? To lose?

DJ COSMIC

To return?

JOHNNY

*(coldly)*

You, your augmented reality. *(pauses, then pushes)*  
How does this work?

DJ COSMIC

*(confused)*

Parallel . . .

*(desperate)*

Take the heat off, put in suspension.

*(Music cue 3:30)*

LORETTA

Did you think you could step outside of nature?

*(pauses and stares)*

*(Music cue 3:39)*

*(then so very passionate)*

Oh, those souls without imagination.

*(reflects, shakes head, somewhat condescending)*

JOHNNY

*(pressuring DJ COSMIC)*

What were those underlying principles?

LORETTA

Yeah, where were they hidden?

DJ COSMIC

*(shrugging)*

Difficult to comprehend.

LORETTA

*(critical)*

Yet something more important than ego.

DJ COSMIC

*(interrupts, exasperated)*

Wait, I can't breathe.

*(beat)*

*(Music cue 4:10)*

JOHNNY and LORETTA

*(to DJ COSMIC)*

Ci vediamo.

*(Music finishes [c.2:50 with fade])*

*(attacca)*

## MOVEMENT V : NIGHTCLUB

(TEXT TIMING: 5:10)

Cue WHO IS MONIQUE (4:58) and VIDEOSTORY V : LUCIANE IN BANFF, PUERTO VALLARTA, CHRISTINE IN MONTREAL (English, Portugese, French)

*(crowded bar, people milling, some dancing plus watching monitors, two DJs playing on stage, simultaneous screen of HD videoconference with main cast)*

*(Music cue 0:05)*

LORETTA

*(with attitude, strutting)*

It's becoming apparent; choices are limited, different. You remember. It has happened to everyone at one time or another.

DJ COSMIC

*(more alert)*

Even those who do not agree with me can understand. I took a chance. It's hard to believe.

LORETTA

You were devoting so much attention to this. A change was in order.

*(Music cue 0:40)*

JOHNNY

Am I here? Exploring points in your unusual world? I was not concerned with your extremes.

DJ COSMIC

*(reflecting)*

I didn't take into account the pressure. Making history without being aware of it?

JOHNNY

*(smirks)*

Yeah, but that was last year.

LORETTA

*(mocking)*

But next time, make an appointment.

*(looks at and laughs with JOHNNY)*

*(Music cue 1:20)*

**DJ COSMIC**

*(obsessed)*

What happened? They began killing me with treachery.  
I conceived the idea, the clearest proof.

**JOHNNY**

Your rules and existence. You knew timing was  
everything. But everything changed.

**DJ COSMIC**

*(frankly)*

It will be tougher this time. To act toward that  
unknown, plowing the dark, putting it down.

*(rambling again)*

Motions in space, vendors shouting awareness, realized  
within, the essence of wisdom, profoundly moving.

*(aside)*

God was not kind.

*(beat)*

*(off on a tangent)*

And once upon a time, they were going to change the  
world. But, alas, something more poignant and  
important, so surprising.

*(recovers)*

Perhaps it's time for some plain talk.

*(Music cue 2:30)*

*(beat)*

*(Music cue 2:45)*

*(lucid, directly at LORETTA and JOHNNY)*

The only way, say it: Mutatis Mutandis.

**JOHNNY**

*(uncertain, pauses, looks at LORETTA)*

Mutatis Mutandis?

**DJ COSMIC**

*(softly, failing)*

Mutatis Mutandis.

**JOHNNY**

*(to DJ COSMIC)*

Mutatis Mutandis.

**DJ COSMIC**

*(sotto voce)*

What must be changed, should be changed.

*(whispered)*

Mutatis Mutandis.

**JOHNNY**

*(intoned whisper)*

Mutatis Mutandis.

**LORETTA**

*(delicately)*

Mutatis Mutandis.

**DJ COSMIC**

*(breathy)*

Et cum spirito.

**JOHNNY and LORETTA**

*(not too in sync)*

Et cum spirito.

**DJ COSMIC**

Carpe diem.

**JOHNNY and LORETTA**

Carpe diem.

*(Music cue 3:35)*

**DJ COSMIC**

Ci vediamo.

**JOHNNY and LORETTA**

Ci vediamo.

**DJ COSMIC**

Let go.

**JOHNNY**

Let go?

**DJ COSMIC**

Let go. Your place in history.

**LORETTA**

*(ridiculing DJ COSMIC)*

Funny, but difficult to comprehend, Kimosabe.

JOHNNY

Your place in history?

DJ COSMIC

*(to JOHNNY)*

Your place in history.

LORETTA

*(looks at JOHNNY)*

Your place in history?

DJ COSMIC

*(again to JOHNNY)*

Your place in history.

*(Music finishes and Videostory V fades to black)*

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## EPILOGUE

(TIMING : 0:15)

Close-up of JOHNNY. Scene transposes to him looking out to sea, having emerged from bunker complex. Inverted thunderhead cloud formations, upside-down. Stillness.

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*Credits*

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