



IRASCIBLE MUSIC



STUART A. STAPLES (UK)

Music for Claire Denis' High Life (OST)

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EPK: irascible.ch/releases/stuart-a-staples/music-for-claire-denis-high-life/

Claire Denis' highly anticipated first English Language film 'High life' will be released in the Spring of 2019. 'High Life' was written and directed by Denis and stars Robert Pattinson and Juliette Binoche in the lead roles. It focuses on a group of criminals who are tricked into believing they will be freed if they participate in a mission to travel on a spaceship towards a black hole to find an alternate energy source while being sexually experimented on by the scientists on board. The soundtrack to the film was created by Stuart A. Staples of tindersticks and is set for digital & CD release in April and on limited Vinyl later in May via City Slang. Pre-order: <https://tindersticks.lnk.to/highlife>

Taken from the soundtrack, the song 'Willow', performed by tindersticks and featuring guest vocals from Robert Pattinson is released today. 'Willow' was written for the final scene of the film and the accompanying video to the song includes footage from the movie. There will also be a limited edition 7 inch released as part of Record store day on April 13th. 'High Life' represents the pinnacle of Staples' work for director Claire Denis; it is the eighth Denis soundtrack by either tindersticks or Staples. From the orchestral romanticism of 'Trouble Every Day', the dry African landscapes of 'White Material' and the dark, electronic brooding of 'Les Salauds', 'High Life' is the most ambitious and experimental score to date. Although 'High Life' exists loosely within the sci-fi genre and is set on board a prison spacecraft, the music concentrates on the hypnotic nature of that existence and the intimacy, both violent and tender, of the relationships within.

Staples' spoke about his new work, saying:

Most of the music for High Life was made before the filming. The conversation with Claire started maybe as far back as 2012. There were many ideas I wanted to explore and I appreciated the foresight of Claire and the producers in offering me support and encouragement to do this. As well as work with usual collaborators Dan McKinna, Neil Fraser and Earl Harvin, this afforded me purely experimental recording sessions with

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David Coulter, Thomas Bloch, David Okumu, Julian Siegel, Seb Rochford and the BBC singers. Several long sketches / pieces were created from these sessions that the eventual score was formed from or informed by.

I approached High Life with the simple idea of creating a sort of random music, existing in a void – like the constellations themselves – a framework that was always hidden from the musician and that they had only minimal or no information to play or react to as we recorded. The first piece completed was ‘The Yellow light’ for the early Claire Denis / Olafur Eliasson collaborative short film ‘Contact’ (2014). For this, each instrument / part was played into silence with arbitrary start points creating random movements and relationships when brought together. This theme / way of working runs through the entire making of the score for High life. Musicians generally worked ‘in the darkness’.

For ‘the void’ itself a series of hums and drones were created in the studio - various instruments played, or feeding back, or with their notes Sellotaped down, to make the studio space resonate in different keys. These stereo recordings were alive, working and changing within themselves – this approach was informed by my experiences creating the sound installation ‘Ypres’ at the In Flanders Fields WW1 museum in Belgium and the adventure of making this 12th century hall vibrate and resonate with its evolving orchestral score.

And then there was ‘Willow’. a seed of a song shared by myself and Dan Mckinna that eventually grew to be the conclusion of the High life with Robert Pattinson, the lead actor, singing the song in character to his daughter Willow, a theme that runs through the film.

For the flashback sequences on earth I spent many consecutive nights recording in the rain waiting for the right intensity of heavy drops falling from the guttering of my studio onto the carefully positioned paella pans below.

I felt the score should be intimate and hypnotic. Music made of hands and breath - acoustic instruments, electric guitars, fingertips.

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