Shawn’s Ongoing Spacejam: My Epic Space Oddity

One unexpected result of this coronavirus drama? I haven’t felt this creative in years. My journey to space and space bars.

April 13, 2020 By Shawn Decker

A lot of things can change in a month’s time. Anyone who has suffered loss or anyone that has gotten a positive medical test result (that really feels like a negative) knows. If you’re reading my thoughts on my POZ Blog, you probably know what I’m talking about.

In February I was planning for a couple of FutureProm shows, where we decorate the venue with lots of shiny silver fabric. At the first one, which we did a lifetime ago in April of 2016, we had a DIY robot that blinked to the beat of the music. Mostly everyone came dressed in outlandish post-apocalyptic outfits, it was a good time... but just as I was getting my set ready for this year’s FutureProm, I got sick: a cough, fever, a weird pulsing in my ears. Not COVID-19, but it kept me indoors for about three weeks. By the time I was ready to get back out into the world, everything had changed.

My friends and I decided to indefinitely postpone the scheduled March 20 show, as did other friends with shows around that time. There was an ominous feeling from all of the news reports about how this virus was affecting other parts of the world, with Seattle was suddenly the canary in our coalmine. To make matters worse, Donald Trump’s response (it’s a “media hoax!”) caused PTSD for anyone affected by Reagan’s cold and callous “handling” of the HIV epidemic in the 1980s. At least Reagan shut the fuck up and kept his vile inside- Trump’s words are the equivalent of Reagan coming out as an AIDS denialist in 1985.

But enough about politicians.

Let’s get back to me. I know me. I want you to know me a little bit better, too.

Instead of having a show to get ready for, I decided I’d do live broadcasts from space. You see, as the story goes, to prepare for the FutureProm shows I rented a spacepod for one week in an ill-advised attempt to find a portal into the future. Once I did find that future, I could observe their Proms and bring that information and aesthetic back to Earth for the FutureProm shows... well, isn’t it just my luck that the Earth goes on lockdown, leaving me in a rented clunker, floating around the Universe armed with a trusty sidekick (R.O.B.- Robotic Omnipresent Bartender) and a

bunch of original synthpop songs and 80s covers.

So, while I'm still stranded in space, oddly, I haven't felt this connected to humanity- or myself- in quite some time.

When the signal from space is really good, I blog on here. I haven't felt like blogging on the regular in years. To be honest, for quite awhile I feared I'd lost my passion for writing and I was just thankful to have creative energy to put towards music, where the emotional rewards can be felt immediately. But now, both seem to be working in harmony. There's a big writing project that doesn't seem so daunting, too, and I look forward to diving in and am not hampered by self-doubt anymore, at least not where writing is concerned.

Performing music and sharing my sci-fi adventures is not only fun for me, but I'm pretty sure it's making people laugh in these uncertain times. Up in the spacepod, it's social isolation to the extreme- but a friend seeing me on Shawn's Ongoing Spacejam isn't much different than jumping on Zoom with a family member or friend. Either way, hugs are impossible right now, right? So how do we fill that void? It varies from person to person, but I know my "brand" is surviving a plague. Even though I tend to hide in plain sight for months at a time, I know that I have a lot of people who are pulling for me and are happy that I have beaten the odds. I talk about my HIV journey on Shawn's Ongoing Spacejam, but it's usually in the context of our shared COVID-19 concerns... in between realness and music, I'm also trying to keep peace between a robot and space alien that feasts on electronics.

Right now, the psychological weight of reality is weighing on all of us, whether we are touched firsthand by this crisis or not.

Ultimately, I am hopeful that we will get through this. Right now I have a close friend in NYC who is cooped up, doing his best to wade through a rough patch of health and certain COVID-19 infection, but because he isn't sick enough to be admitted to the hospital he is keeping his physician up-to-date via online communication. He's just assessing each day in the hopes that he doesn't have to leave his apartment. He's not represented by official numbers because he hasn't been tested, and probably won't be for some time if he can avoid a trip to the hospital...

There's a sense of powerlessness that is pervasive. In a way, it's an opportunity to unite. I don't talk politics in the pod because I'm not a pundit. And there's no room for anger in space when you're just trying to cheer yourself up, or help someone get through the end of a bad day.

Stay safe down there, my fellow Earthlings. And don't feel guilty for trying to find some joy in these stressful times. Whatever gets you through the fright.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

You can read Shawn’s spacelog and support his spacecasts on Buy Me A Coffee

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