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Inspired in self-isolation: Gabe Fraboni

With Covid-19 lockdowns worldwide and health authorities urging people to self-isolate and practice social distancing on a massive scale as part of an enormous effort to #FlattenTheCurve of this global pandemic ... we are reaching out to industry friends, colleagues, associates, partners, etc., and asking them to share their #StayAtHome and #QuarantineAndChill activities with us during this extraordinary time.

Gabe is a lighting and production designer and show director based in Los Angeles and travelling worldwide on numerous innovative projects in collaboration with a talented team of individuals from his visual design practice, Phntm Labs. Known for his insouciant passion for life and the industry, for the last four years Gabe has been production and show designer – lighting, video, set, lasers – for top DJ / music producer Martijn Garrix, working on 485 shows in 106 countries!

Robe: Where are you right now?

Gabe: in LA, California.

Robe: How are you spending time whilst isolating / on lockdown?

Gabe: My first priority was to ensure that all of my colleagues at Phntm Labs were looked after so we could stay working – remotely – from our various homes, and ensuring that our capital and resources were spent wisely while we weather the storm.

After that I have been very focused on strategic planning for the company which has included looking at how we can develop and diversify our current skill sets and embrace new ones for the future benefit of all our business.

We have concept designing for a few longer-term 'horizon' projects that are ongoing, and we are looking at future presentational opportunities and how we can optimize the possibility of digital and virtual spaces ... a project I had initially earmarked for 2021, which with Covid-19, I have brought forward!

Robe: What's the most creative thing you're able to do whilst in isolation?

Gabe: Well, there are those design projects I mentioned already, but aside from those, I am enjoying the enforced down-time to work on my personal self-development.

The past four years with Martijn has been totally full-on and while I've loved the energy and buzz ... this is now a great moment to 'reset'.

When the whole pandemic and resulting shut-downs first took hold, like most people, I was panicking and over-thinking the scenario. Then I quickly realized that rather than having almost 'a grudge' against the virus for stopping everything in its tracks ... it was time turn things totally positive, be philosophical ... and catch up on things like sleep and actually having the space and time to appreciate many things including the fantastic people around me.

In addition to that, I am doing several technology related tutorials that I never 'normally' have the time for!

All of this is keeping me challenged!

Robe: Are you looking after anyone else during the Covid-19 crisis? Like neighbors or others in the family?

Gabe: My team at Phntm Labs.

Robe: Has anyone particularly inspired you since this crisis started?

Gabe: My cousin who is a newly graduated doctor from Columbia University, and who has been on the Covid-19 front lines in New York.

Apart from this, this time has also allowed me to take a deep-dive into some of my favorite artists - which include Anish Kapoor (British Indian sculptor specializing in installation and conceptual art); Andi Watson (acclaimed lighting and stage designer) and a few others, all of whom are sources of creative inspiration.

I have actually been able to reach out to some of them in person on Instagram!

Robe: What has been your favorite book / movie / Netflix or TV series / viral video / Games / music?

Gabe: I'm a prolific reader - I like fiction and books about history and business. Last year I read around 40 titles and this year my goal was set at 52, one per week, but I've actually only got through five so far.

Two of these are biographies of Benjamin Franklin and Albert Einstein ... and they were both long and very intense, so that took some time!

I'm actually trying not to be too hard on myself with my book 'deadlines' right now!

Robe: What's the first thing you'd like to do when we are through this crisis?

Gabe: Have a nice dinner / meal out with my friends, drink at a bar and hang out!

Robe: Own question / answer / message of solidarity or something you'd like to say?

Gabe: I feel the key to getting through this period - which we all will - is to manage stress sensibly and practically on one hand, and also find pleasure and purpose in the many 'little' things in life that we so take for granted!

Also realizing that slowing down is actually ... OK!

