

# La Marée Haute

## *Buffyann*

Achievement in Use of Music: Shortlist 2009

The review below may contain spoilers for *Lost*.

**Brad:** Watching this vid kind of feels like drowning to me - in the best possible sense. It swirls and flashes to the song in such a dizzying way that you just feel swept along by the tide of it all, by the emotion and the desperation, and this man's search for himself in the images of the past. And ultimately sinking into despair and regret.

**Nicky:** I love that it simply carries you along. The vid uses a lot of water and tide imagery, but more than that, the whole vid simply *feels* like the tide, washing over the viewer in waves of images and emotions.

What's interesting is that I didn't read the title and lyric translation until I wrote my review. And it was only when I went back and checked out the translation did I realise the title of the vid literally translates to "high tide". Well, there you go!

**Brad:** Right, who needs titles when you can say everything this well in visual form? The vidder shows us instead of telling us.

It feels difficult to separate the emotion from the tech and musicality, so that you can examine it analytically and explain why it works so well in that way. The style is so organic that it's tough to strip away the layers and see how the pieces fit together. In that way, it mirrors the character and source extremely well.

**Nicky:** Neither of us knowing the source probably has something to do with that, but I think even if we did know the source, it doesn't change the fact that, as you said, the emotion is in-built into the musicality of the piece. It's the rush of urgency that really grabs you, the way Desmond starts from quiet wistfulness and then gradually descends into manic despair. When it comes to emotional resonance, it doesn't seem to matter that we don't know much about the context of what's going on; the progression of facial expressions and gestures and movements more than adequately give away the key narrative at any given point.

**Brad:** The secondary source was an inspired choice, and it's used so incredibly well! The sea and sky swell with the music and pull the character down as the pace picks up. It gives the vid a central metaphor, a visual identity, and a tremendous tool for musical expression - which the vidder wields like a master.

**Nicky:** It was secondary source? I didn't realise. Which certainly demonstrates your point.

**Brad:** I love the way she stitches together the many different timelines in the source with clip connections and continued motion, all while keeping the mood of the music and the building

pace. It's just amazing to watch that. The ironic thing is that it's difficult to spot the seams, but the more you do, the more appreciation you get for the vidder's influence and how it just disappears into the flow.

**Nicky:** It's funny but I didn't even think to look for the seams until you said that. Some vids simply have the capability of being such an organic whole that the viewer isn't concerned with looking for how the vidder edited it all together. La Marée Haute certainly falls into that category. The more you stare at it, the more you understand the masterfulness of the editing and the pacing because they are just so unobtrusive.

**Brad:** The ocean spray at 0:30 looks so beautiful over the piano, and I love how it matches up to the journey getting darker/more unclear in the song. That transition at 0:52 just kills me a little. Beyond the aesthetic perfection, I love the sinking symbolism. And at 1:00 we see exactly the source of this regret.

**Nicky:** I also love just before the 0:52 moment that you described, where the brightness and contrast changes on the clip.

The other moment that really stood out to me in the first half were the fast clips at 0:45 - 0:46, punctuated by the opening eye. It was like a quick flash-forward, a snapshot of what you can expect to come in this vid. Which - if I understand the premise of Lost correctly - fits snugly into the backbone of the show itself.

**Brad:** The narrative of Lost emerges from flashbacks and flash-forwards, and that's definitely reflected in this vid.

The changing numbers at 1:23 look terrific with the piano and serve as a great trigger for the build to a new level of desperation in the second half of the vid.

**Nicky:** The musicality there is amazing.

**Brad:** And I just adore those clouds at 1:40 and how they hit the percussion. Beautiful.

**Nicky:** They tie into my earlier comment about water - in this context and sped up, the clouds look like water and waves, further building into the vid's visual identity. The water imagery comes back at 1:52, and I simply adore the diving into the blue depths in that segment, intercut with more static shots of thematically important items such as the ring. And then it leads directly onto the gorgeous movement on the strings at 1:57.

**Brad:** My favorite moment, musically and otherwise, could be the continued motion on the strings starting at 1:57. That builds immediately into the sprint through the forest, desperate swimming, the fight, clawing at the door, and total emotional breakdown; all presented in a way that looks exactly like the music.

**Nicky:** Being able to build and hold tension up to a climax in the music is such a tricky thing to do, but La Marée Haute managed it perfectly.

**Brad:** The ending is just stunning, as the images from his life swirl into the ocean and he's left staring up at the sun through the trees.

**Nicky:** I'm in awe of Buffmann for having conceptualised that segment with no indicators from the music! It's not the kind of musicality I'm used to, in the sense that there's actually no music accompanying the visuals. But at the same time it's utterly *fantastic* musicality because

it understands that notion of having negative space in music. And that understanding is brought out dramatically and beautifully in that final shower of sun through the trees.

**Brad:** Musically, the vid doesn't feel mechanical. It feels instinctive and alive, with a pulse and flow that connects to the song on a deeper level.



THE FOURTH WALL

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