

BROKEN



90



COASTAL

AN INDEPENDENT PRINT MAGAZINE FOR CYCLISTS WITH
COURAGE—THE NON-TRADITIONALISTS AND THE RULE-
BREAKERS WHO DARE TO LIVE LIFE OUTDOORS.

INSPIRED TO DO OUR PART IN MAKING THE WORLD
A BETTER PLACE, THIS MAGAZINE HAS BECOME A
PLATFORM TO EMPOWER STORYTELLERS, INSPIRE
CREATIVITY, GIVE TO CHARITY, AND SUPPORT, ENGAGE
AND FOSTER OUR COMMUNITIES.

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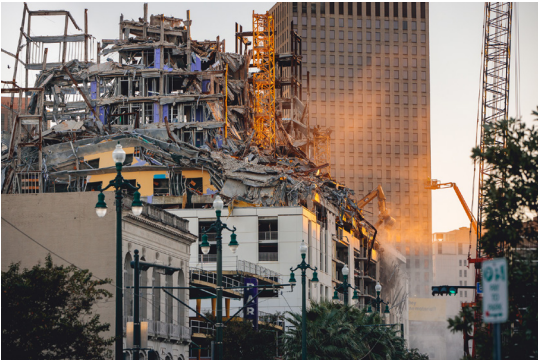
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SAMPLER

ENSURE OVER ENSURE OVER ENSURE OVER

WORDS BY RYAN WORCESTER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE EMERY PECK

A SUMMER VACATION IN A PANDEMIC

The more things change, the more they stay the same. Convexly and equally axiomatic, the only constant in life is change. These statements are not mine but are repeated as a verbal illustration of the paradox that is life. Charged, black and white polar opposite perspectives can both hold merit. This has been especially apparent in a year of pandemic stay at home orders, global travel restrictions, curfews, riots and the continued wealth consolidation as small businesses shuttered their doors, and people are replaced by robots.



Without respite, the mechanisms of conditioning we are barraged with manifesting themselves as two-dimensional distractions “feed” us skewed statistics, flawed math and hidden “news” agendas. Doom and gloom. And this is progress we are told. Collectively and almost inadvertently, immersive books have been replaced by sentence fragments on Twitter. Tacit, tangible full bleed printed photos have been replaced by postage stamp sized fleeting visual candy that you tap twice and never remember again. Tell me it saves paper, and I'll ask you about the lithium mining for your battery. Things aren't as simple as we try to make them.





I think that is one of the reasons why the outdoors has always interested me on an intrinsic level. It's widely agreed that Earth is 4.5 billion years old, and humanity's existence has been a blink of the eye relative to that which has been becoming exponentially detached from the natural process at an increasingly alarming rate. But being outdoors and less vested in the mass media costumed charade feels like an untainted dose of reality.





I lived in this part of Washington over a decade-plus ago, and while I've had a transient existence in this lifetime, part of traveling to the Bellingham area feels like coming home. It was really good for mountain biking when I lived here, and it has since transcended that to the point that it is now a bit of a mecca for it. I can't say I'm complaining, but it does make things a little tricky for me. I sunk a ton of my life into bike riding and skiing, but now I don't have access to these activities or the terrain to do them in like I once did, which is most likely compounded by getting older (— though I'm not 40 yet!). So whenever I go on a trip like this, part of me feels like I have to shuffle through the dusty, concussed, disorganized, dog-eared files of muscle memory to remember how to do and ride some things in the “expert” realm of my younger years. Kind of a flashback to a past chapter, but it was a long chapter. Call me soft, but I went into this trip with one simple guideline I was hoping to follow: “Don't go to the ER this trip.”

Luckily, I was somehow able to pull that off. We also rode a fucking ton of bikes. It was summer in September, and part of it felt like a time machine. It was a flashback to a slowed-down existence where sleepy mornings were tempered with copious amounts of coffee and contented appreciation for the present moment, of a simplified existence complete with old friends talking about life, talking about bikes, talking about bikes some more, then riding lots of bikes. Pot luck dinners and repeat. It felt like 15 years ago in Seattle, where we would do the same thing, but the concrete skateparks and handrails were swapped for the forest, mountains and trails.

LET'S GO OUT



Kyle works in the Bay Area as a photographer and has spent a lot of his life riding bikes. He has raced them in a few different disciplines. He also can display just enough of an outwardly stoicism that I can remember ramping up increasingly absurd comments to get him to crack. Seth has also worn plenty of spandex outfits and raced other people wearing spandex outfits. He builds trails for the USFS and has snowboarded off the top of Denali. I am telling you this to show that they are both under the radar hard-asses, and in addition to my “no ER” guidelines, I’ve largely been riding solo for a long time. So along with them and some other Gu-pounding, heart rate monitor wearing industry type cardio friends, my relaxing vacation occasionally made me feel like a steamy, sweaty, fat kid chasing my former racer friends who looked like dusty specs in the uphill distance. But it was worth it and then some.

LET'S GO OUT

One of the observations I've made as far as bike riding is concerned, is that a lot of people subscribe to one niche of bike riding only, even within the different genres of bike riding. One of the things that was really nice about the collective group present on this trip was that our riding ran the gamut between full-day cross-country epics, freeride lines, car shuttle laps and afternoon jump line sessions. It felt flexible and fun, even if there were a couple of times when I wished I had a full-face helmet on. And to round it all out, we did some mushroom foraging, got in some fresh new snowfall, and gave a couple of stark blue azure glaciers a gander. I got to see a lot of old friends (shout out to Chris, Steve, and Frankie) and made a few new ones. I was amazed again by the mountain bike terrain in Washington, and all in all, had the perfect summer trip, even if it meant sleeping in a rental car in September. Best of all, most of it was outside, in a reality that no screen can ever match. The more things change, the more they stay the same. And the wheels still spin. ♦



NEW ORLEANS

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY NILO HODGE

IN A PANDEMIC

During the shutdown, this musician played on this same corner every evening. He was one of the silver linings in such a dark time.



The palm tree lined Canal Streetcar Line.



NEW ORLEANS

Mardi Gras, alligators, hurricanes, Bourbon Street and general debauchery used to be the only things I thought of when it came to New Orleans. But when I visited the city some eight years ago on a work trip, I was immediately taken by how the city is uniquely its own and much more complex than I anticipated. The architecture, the self expression, the music and the art culture really resonated with me. It seemed more free and open than a lot of places I've visited in my life, and over the years I've come back time and again. My wife and I even decided to have our wedding in the Treme neighborhood.



When tragedy meets art.

PERSEVERES

IN A PANDEMIC

NEW ORLEANS

Then, in February of this year, my wife and I left our home in Pennsylvania to move to New Orleans for my wife's new nursing job. I was excited to explore more of this city that I had grown to love and document my experiences through photography. We had just shy of a month to experience the city before the COVID-19 shutdown started. After the city fell silent, I spent a lot of hours on my gravel bike pedaling around the city and capturing the rare emptiness on the streets. When the city opened back up I could finally start to grasp the different aspects of its bike community and culture.



Bourbon St. cyclist before the nightly crowds form.

IN A PANDEMIC



I love seeing this lady around. She blasts music and has a great time riding her trike around town. Once in a while, she stops to dance and bring smiles to people's faces.

NEW ORLEANS

PERSEVERES

IN A PANDEMIC

Being in the south there were many confederate monuments in the city. This a pedestal on which one used to stand. Replaced by a discarded couch and some graffiti banter.



Live music vs. bluetooth speaker.

NEW ORLEANS

Coming from the mountains in Pennsylvania, New Orleans feels incredibly flat in comparison. With the highest point of (man-made) elevation reaching just 43 feet above sea level, I believe bikes are a really reasonable means of transportation here. Before moving here, I never realized how vast the bike culture is in NOLA. On my daily rides I see people commuting, riding road, transporting musical instruments, operating pedicabs, carrying all of their lively possessions and the list goes on.

PERSEVERES

IN A PANDEMIC

NEW ORLEANS

One of the French Quarter pedicab riders in and out of shadow.



IN A PANDEMIC



In the shadow of the Hard Rock cafe collapse. The demolition of the collapse was delayed by the pandemic and now it's in full swing. This area is much more accessible by bike these days.

This city is unique in every aspect, including in how people use their bikes. It's not uncommon to see a bike covered in beads or Saints memorabilia, or riders blasting music or hauling a large bag of clothes/shoes on their bikes to be sold in Jackson Square. I really wanted to showcase the different ways bikes are used in conjunction to things that are uniquely New Orleans in this era of COVID. New Orleans is no stranger to hardship, and the way people can persevere through a global pandemic is a thing of beauty. I'm fortunate to have moved somewhere with such an appreciation for life at all times. ♦

Spatial

Awareness

Awareness

Spatial

Awareness

Spatial

Awareness

Spatial

Awareness

Spatial

Awareness

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY ERIN CAROLAN

There's something about being in Canada, so separated from the rest of the Pacific Northwest, that's always led me south of the border in the summer. But this year has been a great opportunity to spend more time in my own backyard, and to find a new appreciation for the incredible places I have access to so close to home.

The Chilcotin - Tsilhqot'in Nation traditional territory - was a hot 2020 destination for mountain bikers who were more comfortable with the prospect of running into a grizzly than a group of non-mask wearers in the city. Once we were given the green light to travel responsibly within the province, I set out with my best ride buddy, Shawn, to the South Chilcotin Provincial Park for a glorious weekend of slogging through the backcountry.



We set up camp at Tyaughton Lake with plans to do two big days of pedaling, pushing, getting lightheaded and saying 'Holy shit, this is beautiful!' too many times to count. The second morning's climb up to Taylor Creek cabin featured us dodging a huge pile of fresh grizzly poop and an equally large paw print of its owner along the trail. I felt like I blacked out momentarily as the reality of the wilderness set in. To stop my thoughts from spiraling over the news of recent attacks in the area, Shawn and I settled on a Charlie's Angels-inspired tactical formation to deploy our cans of bear spray in case we found ourselves in a bad situation. Reaching the rickety cabin, we stopped for a sandwich and a beer, and were soon joined by three older folks from Germany on ATV's. They joked with us about getting there the easy way, then one of the women turned to us and asked with a laugh, 'Wow, did you see that big grizzly dump on the way up?!' They were the only people we saw that day, and I wish she knew how much that comment lightened our moods.

Spatial Awareness
Spatial Awareness

Spatial Awareness
Spatial Awareness



Spatial Awareness
Spatial Awareness

A lot of hike-a-bike later, we started the traverse along a stunning and very exposed ridgeline. When presented with the option to drop into a big meadow descent or to stay on the ridge for one more section of savory alpine, well, the choice was obvious. Legs and lungs roasted, we came around the final corner of the ridge to see a very loose interpretation of 'trail' leading straight down the steep fall line of the mountain.

Nervous laughter.

A few deep breaths.

A plunge into the endless chute.



As we flew past trees that seemed to be having an equally difficult time holding onto the mountain, it felt surreal to be doing so much and so little at the same time. No turns, no decisions and no idea of when we'd get to a point of slowing down. Just settling into the discomfort and trying to not let things get out of control.

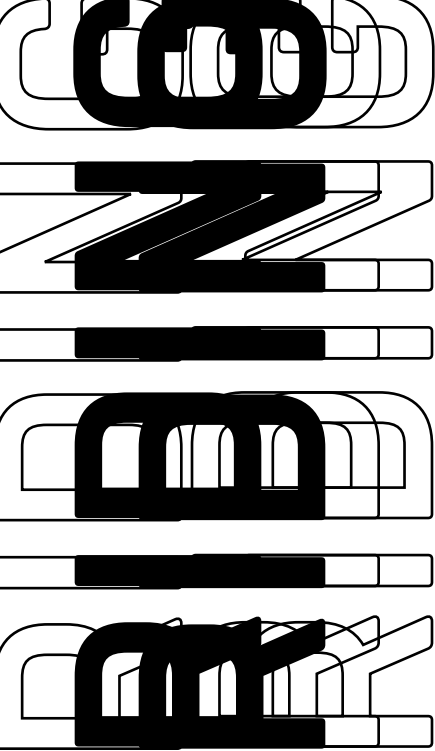
Spatial Awareness
Spatial Awareness
Spatial Awareness

Spatial Awareness
Spatial Awareness



There are a lot of common feelings between riding in the backcountry and processing the events of this chaotic year. Moments of isolation, vulnerability, humility and challenge, but the context of these feelings couldn't be more different. Choosing to take a trip in search of these impactful experiences is a privilege, and as we move through our fast-paced lives, it can be easy to take these things for granted.

This year has forced us all to slow down and be more intentional with our choices. We seek out these remote spaces to disconnect from everyday reality, to feel free for a few extraordinary days, and to come home restored. But these places have history, and for British Columbia, along with most of North America, it's often a dark past of stolen Indigenous land and culture. Spend time educating yourself on where you are, who was there before you, and why you get to be there. Share space, don't take it. ♦



THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IS A NETWORK OF ONCE-SECRET ROUTES BY WHICH BLACK FREEDOM SEEKERS ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE SLAVERY BEFORE AND DURING THE CIVIL WAR. THE NETWORK IN ITS ENTIRETY COVERS NEARLY 2,000 MILES FROM ALABAMA ALL THE WAY TO THE CANADIAN BORDER. IN SEPTEMBER OF 2020, JOHN SHACKELFORD, A 25-YEAR-OLD NYC BICYCLE MESSENGER, AND HIS FRIENDS SET OFF ON A 1,114-MILE MIXED TERRAIN ADVENTURE ALONG THE INFAMOUS ROUTE WITH A MISSION TO INSPIRE, EDUCATE, EMPOWER AND, OF COURSE, SEEK AN ADVENTURE.



WITH THE HISTORY OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD AS A BACKDROP FOR THE PRESENT CONFLICTS AND REALITIES, SHACKLEFORD ALSO EXPLORED BIG QUESTIONS LIKE, “WHERE BLACK PEOPLE HAVE COME FROM (FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY), TO WHERE BLACK PEOPLE ARE TODAY. IS THERE A DIFFERENCE, ARE WE FREE?”

SHACKELFORD WAS JOINED BY HIS FRIENDS, RASHAD, ALEX AND EDUARDO, AS WELL AS A FILM CREW, HOPING TO DOCUMENT EVERY STEP ALONG THE WAY AND INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION OF POC ADVENTURE CYCLISTS THROUGH A FORTHCOMING DOCUMENTARY.



PHOTOGRAPHY
BY TERRY BARENTSEN



VISIT [UNDERGROUNDRAILROADRIDE.COM](https://undergroundrailroadride.com) TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE JOURNEY AND DOCUMENTARY IN PROGRESS.



INSPIRATION



“With all the chaos going on in the world, and the civil uprising at home, we decided the Underground Railroad would be the perfect trip. We found a pre-existing route on Adventure Cycling's website, but we decided to create our own route and hit historical landmarks along the way. The reason we decided to film a documentary along the way is because I noticed the lack of Black representation in [adventure] cycling culture. I wanted to create a real account of our journey that would inspire more folks to explore the freedom a bicycle can bring you.”

-
JOHN “BOBBY” SHACKELFORD

“My main concern was spreading awareness of inclusion and that Black kids love riding bikes too. Unfortunately, Black representation in cycling isn't very present on the big screen and even less in the adventure cycling genre...I just want younger messenger kids and off road rippers who look like me to know that they aren't alone ya know? [...] Cycling is not a ‘white people's’ sport. Bikes have saved so many lives from all different walks of life, so we should treat people on them like family.”

-
ALEXANDER OLBRICH



“If I had to choose one reason, behind the inspiration for this ride, it would have to be representation... I mean representation in all aspects of life for people of color. All my life I was exposed to what society thought was cool to show off. All in the magazines, in the TV shows, the images on billboards... But I never saw people of color front and center... This was a moment in time, where I and the team got to be front and center. And we got to show the world that people of color can do great things. And I really hope this connects with even one person like me, and show them that they can do this shit too.”

-
EDUARDO GARABITO



“My most memorable stop along the trip had to be Brunswick, GA. We stopped in Brunswick for our first bike giveaway and to meet with Ahmaud Arbery’s family. He was a young man shot and killed by locals while jogging in a majority-white neighborhood. We gave away 25 or so bikes and helmets to everyone. The smiles on the faces of those kids were worth more than even completing the journey. We also talked about important racial issues devastating Brunswick and the rest of the country. That was the most important part of the entire trip and the most memorable for me.”

-
JOHN “BOBBY” SHACKELFORD



Passing through Alabama early on in the tour. Seeing old structures and towns that haven’t changed much felt like being in the twilight zone or something. Casually biking past cotton fields and old slave structures felt like reality shifted. It all felt unknown but I never felt vulnerable. We all had each other’s back.”

-
RASHAD MAHONEY

“I had some emotional thoughts run through my head when we visited the museum of lynchings (EJI Museum) in Montgomery, Alabama, just because it was super saddening to think about the lack of progression we’ve made up until now. Black men are still being lynched today by police before any trial has taken place, and in broad daylight.”

-
ALEXANDER OLBRICH



“The one place that really hit home on this whole trip was the stop in Jameston, Va, at the Historic Jamestown Museum. That place was a load of bullcrap — unfortunately completely whitewashed with a history that they try to sell us as being, ‘Good for the slaves’, and ‘it gave them lots of opportunities.’ With so much contradicting information, and a lot of white folk walking around in Native American ceremonial garments. Needless to say, I don’t bang with Jameston anymore.”

-
EDUARDO GARABITO



SUFFER



“My fitness was my biggest worry and challenge for me. It was my first bike tour so I wasn’t exactly aware of what I had signed up for. I was just confident I knew how to suffer through 9 hours a day on the bike from past messenger work experience. I quickly had to learn how to eat enough and drink enough to endure those long days in the saddle.”

-
ALEXANDER OLBRICH



“The entire trip was hell, and I came out of the experience like a new person, almost like my whole mindset about myself was reset. I’m not the lightest guy in the world — I sat at 6ft 3in and 250lbs at the start — so that was a lot of body to carry 1100 miles. The miles hurt, the weather hurt, people’s feelings were hurt. But overall we did it, and I couldn’t have done it without the support of the team, crew, fans, and family. And that’s something I wouldn’t trade for the world.”

-
EDUARDO GARABITO



SUFFER

A MESSAGE



"The world is a really big place, filled with so many things and so many people. It's easy to get lost in it all and think you don't matter. Whether it's your race, where you come from, poor or rich. We all matter."

This whole project started from an idea of a Black man's mind. And through his idea, it reached the heart and soul of so many people. Enough that they believed in us. So much that they helped us create, spread, and value the message we wanted to share with the world. Moral of the story. The world ain't as big as you think, and if we work together and help each other out, then anything is possible, my dudes."

EDUARDO GARABITO

A MESSAGE



*QUOTES WERE EDITED FOR LENGTH AND CLARITY. FOR THE ENTIRE INTERVIEW VISIT WWW.BROKENANDCOASTAL.COM

A MESSAGE

WORDS BY ALBERT OCAMPO
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MISHA GRAVENOR





IF YOU WERE TO ASK ME ABOUT WHAT KIND OF CYCLING I WAS INTO BACK IN MARCH 2020, I PROBABLY WOULD HAVE ANSWERED THAT I WAS A ROADIE. AFTER ALL, I SHAVE MY LEGS, I AM COMPLETELY COMFORTABLE WALKING AROUND IN PUBLIC IN A FULL LYCRA KIT, AND SOME 90-ODD PERCENT OF MY STRAVA* RIDES ARE ON THE ROAD. I'VE RIDDEN A ROAD BIKE FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO LOS ANGELES TWICE. I'VE DONE L'EROICA IN ITALY, AND I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO BUY OR BORROW A VINTAGE ROAD BIKE FOR THE EVENT BECAUSE I ALREADY OWNED ONE.

COMFORT
ZONE



AND
FORWARD



I wasn't always like this. I'd only recently become a full-on MAMIL (Middle-Aged Man In Lycra) after moving back home to LA from New York. I spent quite a long time regretting the move. I'd evolved as a person in the 5 or 6 years I'd been away and being back in my hometown felt so unfamiliar. Most of all, I missed the strong community that you easily find in a dense, urban city like NY, and the insular, car-dependent lifestyle of the sprawling suburbs of Los Angeles made it hard for me to find something similar there.

Until I started cycling.

Fact is, LA is pretty damn great for cycling, and a strong cycling community has sprung up to enjoy all the epic rides it has to offer. Whether you're an ex fixie foo who's graduated to gears, a hardcore crit racer, a weekend warrior lawyer/dentist riding a carbon spaceship, or anywhere in between, it's not hard to find your tribe(s).

Through pacelining with my cycling club and attending the highly social and fun local shop group rides, I finally felt part of a larger community again, and my world started expanding. I started to race cyclocross. I bought a mountain bike. I tried hitting the boards at the velodrome. I started doing local underground coaster brake klunker races.

And then COVID-19 hit.

Group activities across the board were no longer safe or allowed. Group rides, cancelled. Race seasons, cancelled. Hanging out and shooting the shit at the bike shop? Cancelled. The things that brought me joy were pretty much put on hold indefinitely in March 2020, and 8 months later, they still haven't come back yet.

I'm frankly not comfortable yet riding with more than just 1 or 2 people that I know and trust, especially as 400,000 Americans have already died and we are seeing a third major spike in COVID cases. While I love the social aspect of cycling that has defined my cycling life for the past few years, it's just not a thing that I'm comfortable doing, so I've mostly been riding alone, ironically going back to the type of bike riding I did before moving to NY.

In these Unprecedented Times™, I've found comfort and joy in the past. For those who continued to ride BMX past the time we got our drivers license, it's in our blood. We grew up seeing the world differently, looking at the entire planet with an eye towards what we can jump, spin or grind. You can always spot us on a road ride, jumping curbs, doing wheelies and generally acting foolish.



COMFORT ZONE
BANKS AND DITCHES
LEDGES AND WALLS

ZONE

COMFORT ZONE

And so my coping mechanism and my comfort zone in this time of isolation has been in going back and revisiting all the places I'd grown up riding in LA: ledges and walls and banks and ditches all over the city. Whether on the BMX bike I dug out of the bottom of my storage unit, my dirt jumper MTB or my full squish MTB, I have nothing to train for and nobody to answer to but myself. I'm back to riding for pure fun. No obsessing over Strava segments, no worrying about my FTP, no thinking about how tire pressure might be affecting rolling resistance — just daydreaming about the next time I'll be able to get out for a good session.

My new cycling friends who I never get to see anymore are awesome people and one day it'll be OK to hug them, high-five them and have post-ride drinks with them again. Until then, you know what I'll be doing.

*The simple fact that I'm referencing my Strava profile as if it were the source of all truth should be proof enough. ♢

COMFORT

COMFORT ZONE
BANKS AND DITCHES
LEDGES AND WALLS



A CONVERSATION WITH ELIOT JACKSON



PHOTOGRAPHY
BY DOMINIQUE POWERS

Christopher San Agustin chats with Eliot Jackson, the founder and main driving force behind Grow Cycling, an organization intended to promote education, access and opportunities that increase diversity and inclusion in cycling. Founded in 2020, Grow Cycling was created in light of the 2020 George Floyd protests and in recognition that the cycling world is not immune to a culture of exclusivity and racism.

Eliot is a former World Cup Downhill Mountain Bike Racer, Red Bull TV presenter and an entrepreneur. Eliot has also worked on marketing campaigns that have reached millions of people, and is a published author in multiple national and international magazines.

CHRISTOPHER SAN AGUSTIN: The theme of this issue is a reflection on 2020. The pandemic, the resurgence of a civil movement and the year in general. I think everyone experienced this year differently, and it certainly was harder for some more than others. What was something positive that this year taught you or maybe changed you?

ELIOT JACKSON: I think this year for me has been really difficult, but also really positive. It's brought me closer to a lot of people that I hadn't been in touch with. From a social justice standpoint, I don't think that there would have been as much of a movement if it wouldn't have been for COVID, in that people were able to be off work, able to go protesting, able to be paying attention. So I feel like the theme of this year is struggle, but also progress and positivity that's come out of that struggle.

CSA: Progress like the launch of the Grow Cycling foundation this year.

EJ: It was perfect timing for me because I had transitioned out of being a world cup racer, then there was this catalyst that was George Floyd, and being able to reconcile that personally with all of the stuff that I had felt. Then seeing the response from the mountain biking world where I was like, "Okay, there's more progress to be made here. There's more awareness that needs to be developed." Also there needs to be something for people to rally around. Because I think in road cycling and in BMX, there are more people of color. But in mountain biking, I feel like there wasn't really a cohesive group of people who were really championing that as much.

CSA: A lot of us grew up cycling but we don't necessarily realize till later just how powerful of a tool it is to connect with one another.

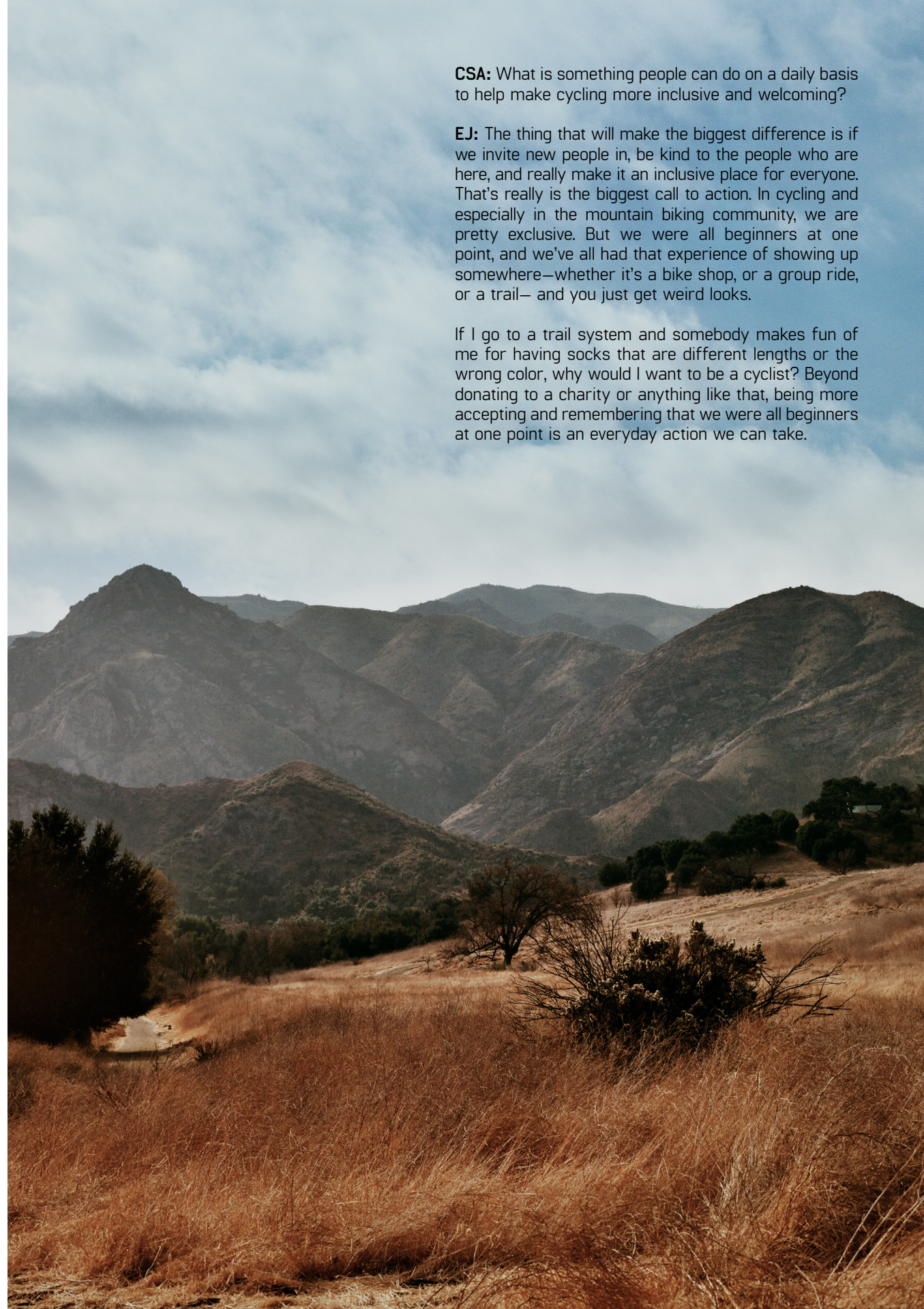
EJ: It's so true. Bikes have this ability to connect us on a more individual level, because it means something special to each of us. We can all cite these crazy experiences that we've had on them. It's a common thread. No matter who you are, what gender or race we can all connect over the bike.



CSA: What is something people can do on a daily basis to help make cycling more inclusive and welcoming?

EJ: The thing that will make the biggest difference is if we invite new people in, be kind to the people who are here, and really make it an inclusive place for everyone. That's really is the biggest call to action. In cycling and especially in the mountain biking community, we are pretty exclusive. But we were all beginners at one point, and we've all had that experience of showing up somewhere—whether it's a bike shop, or a group ride, or a trail— and you just get weird looks.

If I go to a trail system and somebody makes fun of me for having socks that are different lengths or the wrong color, why would I want to be a cyclist? Beyond donating to a charity or anything like that, being more accepting and remembering that we were all beginners at one point is an everyday action we can take.



CSA: I'm dealing with that now because I grew up not going to the snow at all. But now that I live in the Northwest, it's winter time and I really want to get into skiing, but the idea of doing that is so daunting. It's interesting because it makes me directly relate to how other people feel about cycling.

EJ: For sure. It's one of those things where I don't know what it is about us humans that we have such short memories. Like I was for sure the dude who was riding a bike that was way too big for me, doing stuff that was totally wrong. But it's just about having fun. There's no right way to do anything. And I think that we forget that... It's like, "oh yeah, you're supposed to do this, ride like this, look like this," but no, it doesn't really matter. It's just about having fun!

CSA: Looking ahead, what's next?

EJ: I really want to try to get a pump track built this year, which is our first Grow Cycling initiative. A pump track to me is something that everyone can relate to: a two-year-old can ride it, a 90-year-old can ride it, a pro can ride it, a first-timer can ride it, and have a similar experience. In BMX, we think about that more, there's a skate park that you can just go to and you know your friends are going to be there. I think that experience is so important because not everyone has that community, not everyone has that spot. So to go somewhere and know that you're going to have a good time, whether you know the people that are there or not.



CSA: Portland doesn't have any mountain biking in town, but we have a place called Gateway Green. It's this strip of property between two highways and they built a Velo Solutions concrete pump track. It is amazing. Even for me, I feel like a kid again. I've been going to the pump track almost every day even if it's just for 20, 30 minutes. And I'll run into a friend and do a couple of laps. I missed that, so I think you're totally on to the right thing.



EJ: It's so cool to just see truckloads of kids going to these places. I think that's one of the key things [to mention in] talking to cities and local governments. They see that there's not that many cyclists around, so they think that people don't want to ride bikes. But there's nowhere to ride a bike. Not only are there no bike lanes. But if you're a kid, you're not going to be riding your little BMX bike or whatever down the side of the road. So I think it really takes us building these dedicated spaces to show people like, "No, people really do want to ride bikes, but you need a safe environment and a fun environment to do it in."

It's something that I'm really passionate about, but it's something that a lot of other people are passionate about too so it's even more sensitive than normal. Just trying to be careful and have the right message and all of that is really interesting.

CSA: Yeah, that's been a really hard thing I think for me personally, messaging and how I'm identifying myself this past year.

EJ: I think that was definitely something that I went through and why I never made race a platform in my career. When you're in competition, it doesn't really matter what you're going through in your personal life. At the end of the day, it's very objective. If you won, you won. You don't get extra points for being sick that day, or we're having something [personal] going on.

The other reason I never made my race a platform was because I always felt it was really negative. Like being Black was always seen as like, "Oh, it's a struggle and there's discrimination." I think it took me a second to find my voice in that, "This is a really positive thing." Of course, there are barriers and we need to break those barriers. But being a person of color can't be seen as a negative thing. And it can't be seen as always a handicap because being Black is not defined by bad experience. I feel like George Floyd was really an exercise for me to be like, "Okay, how do I even feel about this? What about all this stuff that I have gone through, the racism I felt or not felt or?" And do I deserve to talk about it because I have a pretty good life now?"



CSA: I too took some time off to figure things out. Coming from a biracial background, I've never really identified as a person of color, because coming from the Bay Area we are just used to this sea of color. Then when I moved to Portland, I immediately felt and saw those differences and biases, especially when it comes to my wife who is Thai.



EJ: I think that was the most interesting thing for me this year — really just going through the process of being a bit more introspective. I think there were a lot of white people who had to be like, “Okay, I was totally missing this stuff.” And a lot of Black people or people of color who were like, “Okay, really let me try to understand how I feel about this beyond just...” Because if people are now listening, how do you want to build it? If you haven’t had a seat at the table before, and then what does it look now to use that seat at the table?

CSA: When I was in my early 20s I had a video camera that I shot BMX with. A local artist and community leader in West Oakland named K-Dub had seen one of my films and brought me onto this really cool project for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

The film shadowed a group of kids from West Oakland who over a summer immersed themselves in an art and culture program led by the museum. The program was centered around De Fremery Park which is a historical oasis in the heart of the city.

When everything happened this year, that moment came back into my mind. Looking back, seeing what K-Dub was doing for his community, it really resonated with me and definitely made me think of how I want to move forward and work on projects that help giving back.

EJ: It can really be those small moments for somebody to say, “Yeah, I had a place to ride my bike and it really let me escape a bad situation.” That moment is so powerful. It’s about affecting a small population of people’s lives in a really meaningful way.

I’m a strong believer in that if I change a few people’s lives, to me that’s 100% worth it. I’ve been thinking about that a lot. It’s funny; it feels like human nature because we think of the bad stuff. We think the world’s a terrible place — “my boss is terrible,” or my workplace, or this political party or whatever — but when you ask somebody what has been the most impactful thing that has happened to them, it’s always one tiny moment.



Yet when we think about doing good things, we think about how overwhelming it is where it’s like, “I’m a drop in the bucket. Why should I vote?” or “I’m never going to be able to solve world hunger”. But it’s actually like the most impactful thing we could do is be that fourth grade teacher and have that impact on that one person, because that one person could go on to be Bill Gates, or somebody like Barack Obama. It’s that one moment. ♢



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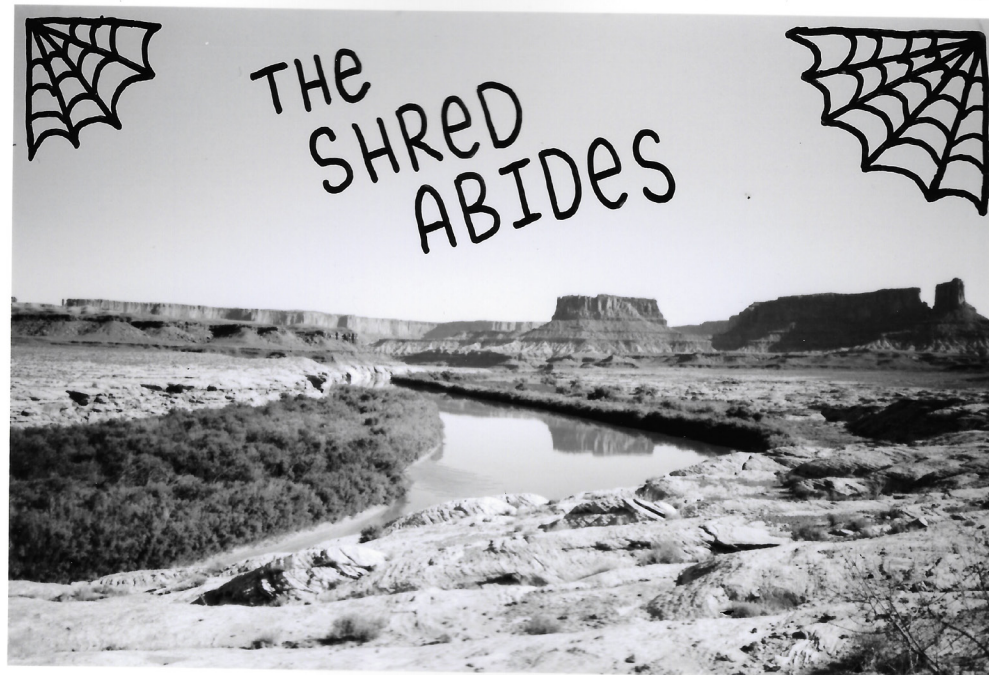
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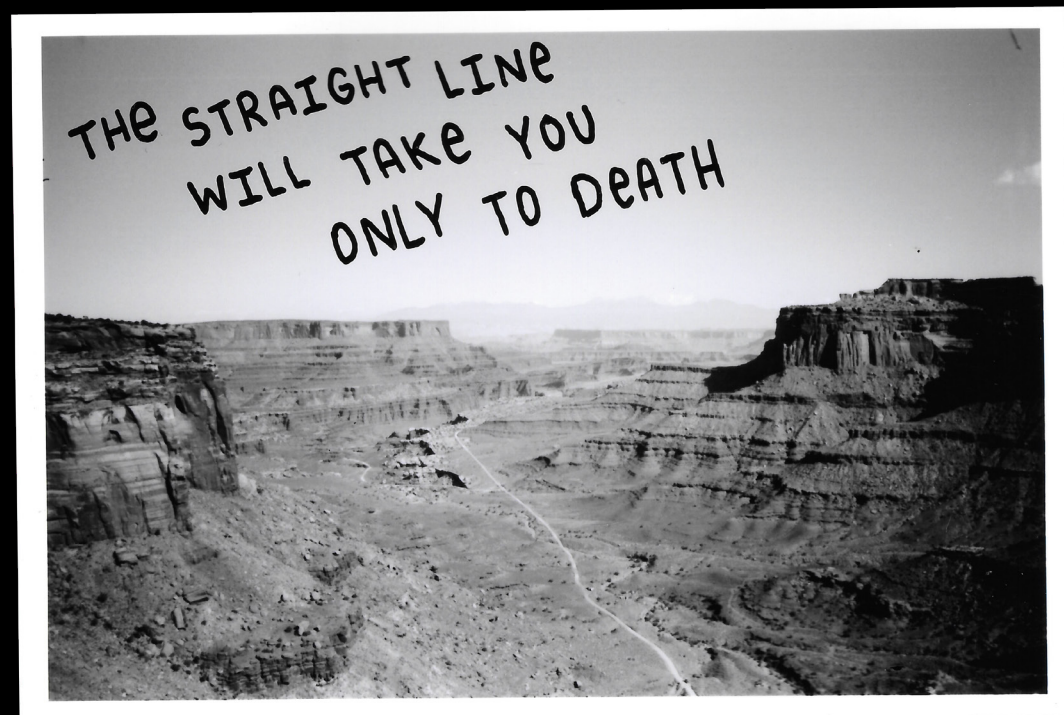


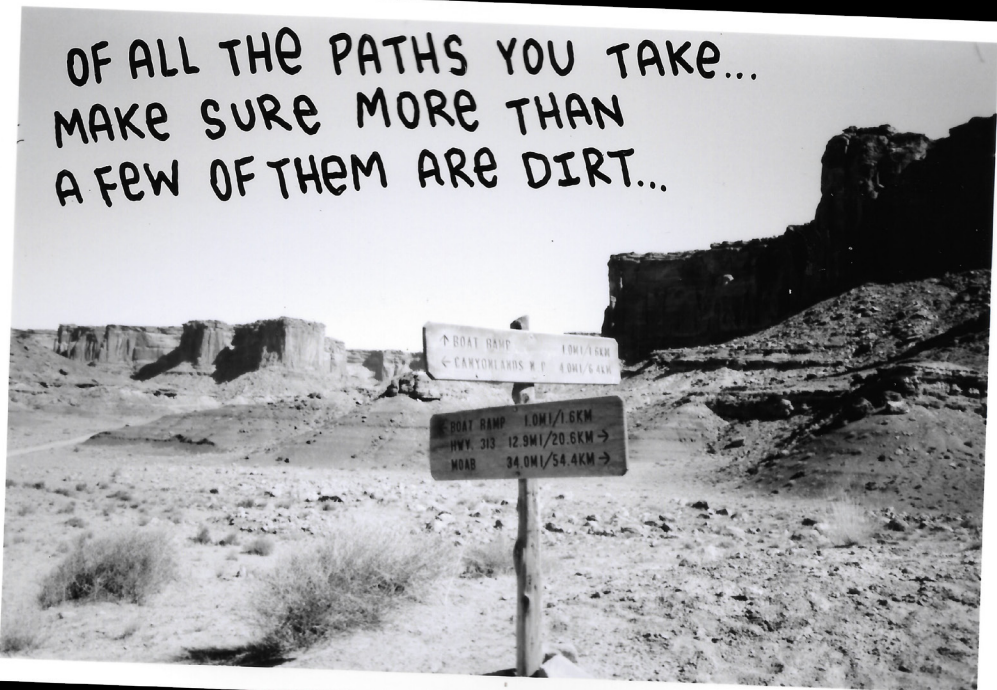
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WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY ALEXA EVERSON

THE VOR TEX

Humanity is a fluid in a tall glass that is the Earth. Each human being an atom that forms communities like the molecules that ebb and flow within the glass. I imagine this fluid was once calm and settled and hardly filled the very bottom of the glass — a time when life was simply sedentary, and all concerns centered around survival. As time has gone on, the fluid has expanded in volume to take up more and more space in the glass, and not without turbulence. As the fluid expanded, the molecules collided more frequently and violently. Humanity has triggered a vortex.



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For most of us, 2020 seems to be the very center of this vortex. It seems that centuries of an infinitely developing species, growing at the cost of its own kind and the environment beyond, has created an ever-accelerating vortex of events that is so turbulent we can hardly find a way to slow down and find our calm. A global pandemic, numerous socio political movements, historical fires, an excruciatingly anxious election, and many innocent lives lost amidst the chaos that has always been our nature. The only difference now is that the veil that made all of this nebulous in the past has thinned to nearly nothing. Thanks to the exposure of truth through social media we can now see.

A pandemic has forced us to slow down and turn inward. We have been challenged to find solace in sitting with ourselves for longer than a quick turn of pages in a self-help book before bed or a bi-weekly appointment in therapy or a walk on the beach on an annual vacation. Those of us who are privileged enough to do so have taken this time to gain more self-awareness and understand the truth of where we fit in the fluid that is humanity. Yet at the same time, there are others with the same privilege who have only polarized themselves further from this awareness at the behest of a fascist commander. All the while, the Earth is still turning and all the same problems remain — and in some cases, have worsened.

THE VOR TEX



I lost my awesome job and had to move to another state with no hope of finding community due to social distancing. We have been trying our damndest to sit still in a vortex that has shifted the most vulnerable molecules to the very center, facing the highest turbulence of all humanity.

I reach out my hand to these molecules. One hand reaching for the edge of the glass to slow down the vortex and the other holding a place for others to join me in finding peace together. What a lovely way to illustrate what is, in all actuality, some of the most exhausting, soul-crushing labor a Black woman can obligate herself to. I am eternally grateful that this labor has cultivated a community of support through The Black Foxes, a collective of unapologetically Black cyclists and outdoors people who are reclaiming our narratives and roles in the outdoors. Together, we are throwing a wrench into this machine that never had a right to be constructed in the first place. The labor is an emotional roller coaster riddled with disappointingly incremental changes, growth of community, fits of disapproval, fortuitous bonding, routine burnout and yet unwavering ambition above all.



THE VOR TEX



The work is ongoing and I keep my hands extended, but I will admit that I have clawed at the glass from time to time just gasping for a moment of pause to protect my energy. These are the moments when I found myself riding gravel into a cold night that numbs my body, bikepacking solo in the desert in late summer with gray skies thick with the smoke of a burning coast, and flying over the handlebars of my mountain bike from chasing the adrenaline of dropping over red rocks. These moments feel selfish. How could I possibly ride my bike with a smile on my face while others are murdered in cold blood by those meant to protect them? What good is it doing to recreate on land that was stolen and abused? These moments are not simply selfish. They are acts of revolution. On the surface, I am escaping my labor and recharging in these moments, but truly the work continues as my Black body takes up space. It takes up space to live with love and light for those who cannot. It takes up space with respect for the land and those who are its true stewards. It takes up space so that my brothers and sisters will be uninhibited to do the same.

Never fret the vortex. Though it may be turbulent, we as humans have evolved with it. We are equipped to calm the storm. We only have to extend our reach, fuse our molecules, and as our community becomes one, so does the vortex decelerate and procure peace. ⚡

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THE VOR TEX



AN INTERVIEW WITH
TOPE SOSANYA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
BRIAN BARNHART



TOPE SOSANYA, IS A PORTLAND, OREGON BASED DESIGNER WITH A LIFELONG PASSION FOR BMX RIDING. HE STARTED RIDING BMX WHEN HE WAS 13 YEARS OLD AND WENT ON TO COMPETE ON BOTH THE AMATEUR AND PRO LEVEL. THESE DAYS, SOSANYA RIDES PURELY FOR FUN AND CREDITS BMX FOR HIS ONGOING CREATIVE INSPIRATION. THE POSITIVE ENDORPHINS RELEASED BY RIDING HELPS KEEP HIM THINKING CREATIVELY, HE SAYS.

PASSIONATE TO MAKE PORTLAND A BETTER PLACE TO BMX, HE FOUNDED PDX SKATEPARKS, A COLLECTIVE OF PEOPLE ADVOCATING FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE 2008 SKATEPARK MASTER PLAN THAT CALLED FOR THE CREATION OF FIVE COVERED SKATEPARKS THROUGHOUT THE CITY. WHILE SOME OF THE MASTER PLAN'S PARKS HAVE BEEN BUILT, AS OF DECEMBER 2020, NOT ONE OF THESE ARE COVERED. SOSANYA AND HIS FELLOW ADVOCATES ARE DETERMINED TO SEE THIS PLAN COME TO FRUITION. BRIAN BARNHART SAT DOWN WITH SOSANYA TO CHAT ABOUT THE PDX SKATEPARKS INITIATIVE AS WELL AS HIS EXPERIENCE AS A BMXER IN PORTLAND, OREGON.

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BRIAN BARNHART: HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN ADVOCATING FOR MORE SKATEPARKS IN THE PORTLAND AREA, AND HOW DO YOU STAY INVOLVED?

TOPE SOSANYA: After attending college and traveling afterwards, I moved back to Portland to find it becoming a place with many more skateparks, which I thought was awesome. I was a bit disappointed, however, that the Burnside skatepark continued to be the only covered skatepark in Portland. After doing some research about the efforts made by people in Portland to get skateparks and covered skateparks built, I discovered that in 2008 a group of advocates made a "Skatepark System Plan" that called for 5 covered skateparks. Twelve years later, we have 0 of the recommended 5 covered skateparks. Given the combination of discovering the Skatepark System Plan and my love for my BMX / Skate community, I decided to do what I could to bring awareness to this issue. I've started an Instagram account —@pdxskateparks— to raise awareness for the need for these spaces to be built and as an organizing tool to preserve the existing skateparks and community.

After starting this account and posting semi-frequently, I was approached by Dean Dickinson, a fellow BMXer who has been a big advocate for skateparks around the Portland area. He invited me to a skatepark planning meeting for a new skatepark to be built in SE Portland. I am now in the design group for this new skatepark and am advocating for it to be covered. Unfortunately, shortly after our first meeting, COVID hit, and things have been up in the air since then.

I am now staying involved by continuing conversations of how to develop covered skateparks with others who want to see more of these spaces around Portland. Together we can come up with some ideas of how to push this and make some great spaces for our communities. I do digital advertising professionally, so I feel like I am well equipped to use my skills gained from my work to do this advocacy work to push for more skateparks in the Portland area.

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BB: WHY COVERED SKATEPARKS? WHAT'S THE ADDED BENEFIT OF COVERAGE?

TS: We experience wet weather conditions in this city for a large majority of the year. Burnside Skatepark is the only place where at least some of the skatepark is skateable no matter the weather. But Burnside is not large enough to house all of the talent in Portland. It is also designed to be used by 1 or 2 people at a time as most all of the lines are directly connected. It also does not receive city funding, so public restrooms are not available and it is a very rugged space as it is not located within a park with green spaces. It is also not friendly to other sports besides skateboarding it and isn't fully covered. It still gets wet when it's raining if it's windy.

A great way of addressing this would be to not only build the proposed 5 large scale covered skateparks throughout the city, but to also develop a series of spots that are already covered and owned by the city. I have been traveling to many city parks ever since I got my eyes on the 2008 document, scoping out where new skateparks and spots could go, and I have noticed that many parks have small covered areas that do not get used much at all. I think these spots could feature small or medium size half pipes. I think expanding the scope of the system – to make sure everybody could easily skate, ride or take a bus ride to a nearby covered skatepark or spot— would be hugely beneficial for overall community development and health benefits.

BB: WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE FOR YOU BEING A BLACK/MIXED-RACE BMX RIDER IN PORTLAND? HOW HAVE YOUR EXPERIENCES IMPACTED YOUR QUEST TO BRING MORE PARKS HERE?

TS: Growing up a Black / mixed BMX rider in Portland, I definitely stood out as the majority of people in Portland are white, and that also included BMXers at the time. I didn't ride alone; luck had it that my brother, and friends next door and from blocks nearby got into the sport early on, most of us Black, from a nearby community. Eventually we coined the name "PBC" for our crew, which was an acronym for many things as we evolved: Portland Bike Crew, Poor Black Children, Poor Bike Control, Peanut Butter Cookies, etc.

We didn't come from much money and didn't have the best bikes, so we traded and helped each other fix bikes, and rode together a lot. We knew we stood out and in that we found our own space and meaning. We had Black kids outside of BMX telling us BMX was a white boy sport, and white kids within and outside of BMX telling us what being Black is and isn't. I think having pushback from all sides has made me a better bike rider.

More than any divisions, BMX brought us together across these boundaries through this connection we shared. I believe that what we enjoy doing, or how we play as adults and kids, is more important than our genetic background. It's what really brings us together across many barriers that society puts emphasis on. Now as an adult, I see all kinds of young Black kids coming up and see BMX and skating as racial and gender inclusive sports. Because we have more skateparks, the connection and conversation opens up to more kids who can skate or ride to their local skatepark. From my experience I know that skateparks enhance and create community around positive stress releasing and creative sports that allow for unique connections across culture, gender, age and other divides.

BB: DID THIS YEAR'S RACIAL JUSTICE UPRISING AND PROTESTS CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT SKATEPARK ACCESS?

TS: It made the call for more accessible skateparks even more dire. I've always thought about skateparks as a way of connecting across differences. To me the protests against police brutality and systemic racial oppression are further validation that we continue to be divided in many ways in this country, and we are in need of cross cultural communication to heal some of the historic and present racialized trauma. Skateparks can provide a dynamic where people can do some of this work. Many lifelong friendships are made at the skatepark. The way I see it, large societal changes start small, with communication.

Part of the reason the uprisings were so pronounced was because COVID shut everything down and people had the bandwidth to look at systemic racism more intently. Also- because COVID closed all of our gyms and indoor spaces, there has been a big uptick in people picking up their bike, skateboard or rollerskates for the first time in a long time, or ever. I have seen a big surge in popularity of skateparks- and also bicycle companies have experienced an unprecedented surge in sales during this time.

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BB: WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE BIGGEST BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY SKATEPARKS?

TS: Firstly, the opportunity to practice a sport with a low cost of entry is among the largest benefits of community accessible skateparks. A brand new skateboard can be purchased for \$100 or less. A brand new skatepark worthy BMX bike can be purchased for as little as \$300 or less. Not all families can afford team sports for their children. These sports also teach kids mechanics — from working on their skateboard, BMX bike or rollerblades. The people who you run into, the things you learn from others, the excitement and encouragement you give to other people trying new tricks for the first time are also abundant in the energy of the community skatepark scene.

I see the 2008 Skatepark System Plan as a great guiding document for the future of skateparks in Portland. Some of the proposed skateparks in the document have been built, and additional smaller parks not outlined in the plan have been built as add-ons to new parks going into the city. Although some work has been done, I think the most glaring thing that is still missing are the addition of covered skateparks in a city that is so rainy.

AFRICANA TRIDE



BB: WHAT WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE READERS TO DO TO HELP MAKE THIS A REALITY?

TS: I would encourage readers to look into what we are doing at www.pdxskateparks.org and Instagram @pdxskateparks, where you can read the 2008 Skatepark System Plan, and take other actions to help with the movement. ♦



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WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY CHRIS CORONA

The Santa Cruz Sampler

The Santa Cruz Sampler





THE SANTA CRUZ SAMPLER, A 20-MILE RIDE ON THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST, HAS BECOME SUCH A TREASURE FOR ME. OVER THE COURSE OF COVID QUARANTINE AND WILDFIRES, I HAVE HAD TO KEEP MY BUBBLE SMALL TO ENSURE THE HEALTH OF MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS. AND LIKE MOST OF US, I HAVE SOUGHT THE OUTDOORS FOR MENTAL CLARITY AND PEACE.



ON A GIVEN DAY, I ROLL OUT THE FRONT DOOR AND RUN INTO FRIENDS ON THE TRAIL. WE SPEND TIME CATCHING UP, RIDING AND ENJOYING THE LAND TOGETHER.

THE LOOP CONSISTS OF THREE
STATE PARKS, A RAILROAD AND
THE UC SANTA CRUZ CAMPUS.

EVERY RIDE IS VISUALLY
DIFFERENT.





THE LIGHT, THE FOG OR ANY SLIGHT VARIANCE OF THE TRAIL CAN GIVE ONE A DIFFERENT SENSATION ON VIRTUALLY THE SAME LOOP.





WE ALL SHARE A LOVE FOR THE SPORT OF CYCLING AND ENJOY EVERYTHING THE SANTA CRUZ SAMPLER HAS TO OFFER. TO START IN THE REDWOODS AND FINISH ON THE COAST IS ONE OF THE MOST AMAZING FEELINGS. THE CHANGE OF SMELLS, TEMPERATURES AND VIEWS CAN BE SUCH A VIBE. ◇





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