

SKATE URBAN PAMPHLETEER BOARD #8 TINGS

Ted Barrow p.1 Paul O'Connor p.3

Esther Sayers & Sam Griffin p.6

Kyle Beachy p.9

Tommy Carroll & Luke Cianciotto p.11

Dani Abulhawa p.13

Tobias Coughlin-Bogue p.18

Claire Alleaume p.21

Ben Rubin & Felipe Nunes p.23

Iain Borden p.26 Jilleen Liao p.30

Kava Garcia Vasquez p.32 Chris Lawton p.34

Louisa Menke p.37 Tara Jepsen p.38

Long Live Southbank p.40

Urban Pamphleteer #8: Skateboardings

Thom Callan-Riley, Sander Hölsgens, Ben Campkin and
Rebecca Ross

We are delighted to present *Urban Pamphleteer* #8

In the tradition of radical pamphleteering, the intention of this series is to confront key themes in contemporary urban debate from diverse perspectives, in a direct and accessible – but not reductive – way. The broader aim is to empower and inform citizens, professionals, researchers, institutions, and policy-makers, with a view to positively shaping change.

#8 Skateboardings

As skateboarding continuously responds to surges of urbanisation around the globe, it begins to reflect and refract the situations it finds itself in. Skateboarding is increasingly seen as a tool that can effect positive change. It allows for an expansion of the senses, seeing the possibilities of ourselves and our environments differently. Contrary to popular conceptions of skateboarding as an act of the individual, we argue that skateboarding has a broader capacity to generate an affective and intimate form of being-with-others. Skateboarding is collective.

In 2020, skateboarding is undeniably in the mainstream. Its sub-cultural capital has been co-opted and commodified by corporations, property developers, and city managers. As of this year, it is an Olympic sport. While in theory ‘skateboarding’ has been welcomed by cities around the world, the practices it encompasses, the diverse spectrum of skateboardings, and the hundred visions and revisions of what skateboarding is to each skateboarder, are often subsumed and overlooked.

Beneath the utopic view of skateboarders as an inherent public good, as creative agents transforming disused parts of the city, this issue gathers activists, artists, and educators who show more nuance within skateboarding. The lived experiences of skateboarders of colour, of diverse genders and sexualities, of different mobilities and class backgrounds, intersect with the politics of their everyday lives and negotiations with public and private space. With this in mind, we ask: what does a skateable space look and feel like, and for whom? Does skateboarding benefit from accessible urban design, and if so, why? Can skateboarders be good partners for cities?

Despite the refractions and reflections of contemporary progression and inclusivity, skateboarding comes laden with habits of misogyny, homophobia and racism. If skateboarding is collective, we have a responsibility to address these issues. *Urban Pamphleteer* #8 brings together those who – rather than accepting the mantra ‘shut up and skate’ – use their voice to push forward debate about the role of skateboarding in effecting urban and social change.

Ted Barrow

FIND A CURB



0:00:01

Find a Curb

Find a curb, skate a curb. I've been skating this curb near my parent's house for nearly seven years. I still say my parent's house even though my father has been dead for nearly six years, just as my mother still hasn't changed the outgoing message on our answering machine. It's not that we are in denial – the void left by my father in my mother's house has an almost physical presence – it's

No matter what else is going on, your mind must be clear when skateboarding, or it's not going to work.

just that home is both a place, and increasingly, a time. You know what I mean? Coming home for the holidays is like stepping back in time.

As is, for me, a good curb. Not that this curb is a particularly good curb. In fact, by most measures, it's pretty bad. The cracks have only grown over the last six years. The classic, juicy sheen of municipal red California curb paint has faded to a chalky rose. And I spend a lot of time waxing, then re-waxing, this curb to get even a halfway satisfying grind. And now the ground is turning to gravel. It's no DMV, or Rockridge, but it feels like my own curb.¹ I first started skating it with my nephew Orrian, when my father was recuperating from surgery related to lung cancer. We filmed a couple crappy tricks on it, Orrian learned slappy crooked grinds that day.

A year later, I was back in California, and my father was dying of cancer. Skating was not foremost on my mind – obviously – and a harsh slam at the skatepark that left me in a daze convinced me that ledges were far out of my purview at this time in my life. Instead, I spent 15–20 minutes each day skating this curb, not ollie'ing, trying not to think too much of what was happening.

No matter what else is going on, your mind must be clear when skateboarding, or it's not going to work. In stressful times of heavy crisis, that lesson that skateboarding teaches us is crucial. Another lesson: progress doesn't matter. I get how younger skaters may not like this lesson, because when you're young (and you care), the thought of getting older and losing ability is unimaginably depressing. But when you grow up and your skills decline, your appreciation for that time on a skateboard increases. Past a certain age, any time on a board, skating a curb, is a good time. This is the most important lesson of all. Of course you can learn that lesson anywhere, but one curb, over time, is a great place to learn it.

Learning that valuable lesson, which is really not about skateboarding at all, but about the fragility of our ever-changing life, is the fucking best. Being able to learn that from a curb is why skateboarding is the fucking best. Find a curb. Skate a curb.

Ted Barrow is an art historian finishing his PhD in New York City. He works as a curator, critic, lecturer, and tour guide, writes about skateboarding and art, and skates curbs.

¹ DMV and Rockridge are famous slappy curb skate spots in the San Francisco Bay Area.

0:00:02

TOWARDS INCLUSIVE SKATE SCHOLARSHIP AND ACTIVISM

Skateboarding has come of age and so too has skate scholarship, charity work and activism. The first international conference on skateboarding,

Pushing Boarders in 2018, demonstrated that skateboarding holds the potential to recast scholarship and charity work. The hundreds of skateboarders that crammed into rooms to listen to talks when they could have been skateboarding in the glorious weather outside is a testament to what

universities and NGOs so desperately try to do when talking about public engagement. Skateboarders are interested in what the academic and activist communities have to say, even if the information hasn't always been accessible or affordable. We know that skateboarding changes spatial relations, we know that skateboarding can be prosocial, and we know that skateboarding is now immersed in the worlds of both sport and neoliberal capitalism.

So, what must skateboarders explore next? They focus on the body, space, personal biography, and identity. They foreground a notion that skateboarding might look different to other sorts of sport and youth culture.

Let me elaborate by presenting one example from my own research. Dini, an Indonesian skateboarder, in her early twenties, represents the crossroads of various currents in skateboarding. She is a devout Muslim and skateboards in an abaya with hijab. She is an artist and an avid Instagrammer. She demonstrates the remarkable platform that women skateboarders have crafted through social media. She also represents the overlooked face of Asian skateboarding, a continent that is home to 60 per cent of the world's population. Skateboarding for Dini is a pious activity that reveals a truth about her faith, it is congruent with hard work, commitment, and discipline.

Yet, at another tangent, skateboarding is also a political activity through which she is able to represent an alternative identity – a podium to challenge assumptions about the role and capabilities of Muslim women. Conversely, she is also a marketing opportunity for commercial skateboarding – one of her photos was shared on the @Vansgirls Instagram account and was liked more than 29,000

times. On her own Instagram account she fuses messages of Islamic piety with skateboarding, one sketch of a girl pushing on a skateboard while wearing hijab holds the caption 'Ride to Jannah', that is, to paradise.

In this issue of *Urban Pamphleteer*, guest edited by Thom Callan-Riley and Sander Hölsgens, identity can



0:00:03

be inspiration. For **Louisa Menke** seeing someone who looked like her in skate videos – a woman skating in baggy pants and into hip hop – made her feel not alone in two heavily male dominated cultures. Conversely, identity can become a burden, often put on you by someone else. **Luke Cianciotto** and **Tommy Carroll** point to the potential of focusing on process and community, rather than disability as an identity. Instagram accounts have been particularly voracious in propelling unsung voices into the spotlight, and caricaturing skateboarding quite differently to what many recognise it to be in the process.

In what ways do skateboarders both perpetuate and remake skateboarding culture in their own geographies and traditions?

So, what does all this suggest for a research agenda? Firstly, I believe skateboarding has to explore the impact of social media head on. Content analysis – both quantitative and qualitative – is important. The inclusive nature of skateboarding has fused with social media and made skateboarding in many ways more democratic and more inclusive, but we need to know more about how this is unfolding. What does this mean for skate videos? For skate fashion? For safe spaces for women and LGBTQ+ skaters? Some would argue that it is also making skateboarding more fragmented than ever before. Division and conflict within skateboarding now appears to be the norm. **Jilleen Liao's** piece highlights this and prompts us to look at how the superficiality of Instagram posts are mixed with the reproduction, challenge, and questioning of much bigger social processes.

We know that skateboarding changes spatial relations, we know that skateboarding can be prosocial, and we know that skateboarding is now immersed in the worlds of both sport and neoliberal capitalism.

Secondly, the global face of skateboarding needs to be explored. While much of the skateboard world remains focussed on North America and Europe, there are many other stories to unfold. In her piece, **Kava Garcia Vasquez** discusses what they learned by researching the global growth of the women's skate movement. This is crucial, for in what ways do skateboarders both perpetuate and remake skateboarding culture in their own geographies and traditions?

Thirdly, how these images are used and reproduced is a key issue: in what ways is skateboarding being co-opted in its inclusive nature to further entrench the inequities of the global economy?

This co-option is an important theme in the pieces written by **Chris Lawton** and **Iain Borden**, both describe the development of skateboarding spaces as a complex and sometimes volatile negotiation. They bravely note that, like skateboarding itself, such community work is an imperfect process subject to constant revision, requiring a robust attitude to keep on pushing forward despite the challenges of the obstacles ahead.

And what might these spaces look like? Two pieces in this issue make the case for turning our focus away from traditional skateparks and instead

0:00:04

building skate dots: incidental skateable objects scattered across public space around the city. **Tobias Coughlin-Bogue** argues that this would not only recreate the nomadic nature of early street skating, but could actually provide space for people who have been disenfranchised by skateboarding, such as

LGBTQ+ skaters. **Esther Sayers** and **Sam Griffin** focus on the importance of participatory approaches in developing such skate dots that respond to social diversity and include the local community.

Modifications to the urban landscape can be increasingly complex – **Claire Alleaume** writes about the technological innovations developing ‘smart’ futuristic cities. Whereas **Ben Rubin’s** interview with **Felipe Nunes** shows that one of the most simple analogue interventions – accessibility ramps – can transform the city.

Other writing in this issue points to the futility of reining skateboarding into a particular discipline. **Ted Barrow** writes nakedly about the importance of a curb, revealing the biographies and emotions nestled in the process of skateboarding. **Tara**

Jepsen and **Dani Abulhawa** each address the body and the profound challenges not just of skateboarding, but of also communicating its experience and meaning. Thus, skateboarding studies complement research on urban space and sport but perhaps also extend far beyond them.

Skateboarding is special but it has become so common and popular that it seems sterile to celebrate its politics of space and potential for character building. It is disingenuous to talk of niche and core skateboard subculture when we have Nike endorsements and Olympic validation. Yet this meeting of skateboarding and scholarship recognises that there is something fascinating still to explore and it remains somewhat ineffable. This wrestling with expression and language is beautifully epitomised in **Kyle Beachy’s** piece.

Perhaps most importantly, by making academia, charity work and activism on skateboarding inclusive and engaged with its communities and their mediums of expression, the ivory tower becomes an open and skateable space.

Paul O’Connor is a sociologist interested in urban cultures and ethnicity. He is also a veteran skateboarder who performs research on skateboarding culture.

0:00:05

CITY MILL SKATE: SKATEBOARDING, ARCHITECTURE AND COMMUNITY

City Mill Skate is a proposal for a set of incidental obstacles, or 'skate dots', to sit within the fabric of UCL East, a new campus development in East London due to open in 2022. It will form a series of interlinked architectural punctuations, akin to a sculpture trail. This proposal contrasts the totalised and singular environment typically associated with contemporary skatepark design. In terms of scale, these skate dots are closer in dimensions to conventional pieces of street furniture, unlike the spectacular scale and signature architectural forms of conventional skateparks. *Skate dot* is a recently

coined term that plays on the established label of *skate spot* and describes an incidental piece of architecture that lends itself to the act of skateboarding. A skate dot is therefore a constructed equivalent of a skateable architectural feature commonly found 'in the wild'. By creating a series of skate dots, City Mill Skate aims to recreate the experience of street skateboarding – a journey navigating the city and its other inhabitants via a series of interconnected architectural curiosities.

This proposal contrasts the totalised and singular environment typically associated with contemporary skatepark design. Skate dots are closer in dimensions to conventional pieces of street furniture.

The creation of skate dots allows for a range of skateable architectural elements to be embedded in a multi-use social space, allowing

for a more varied set of interactions between different user groups compared with a traditional skatepark – echoing instead the social dynamics of celebrated public plazas, such as Justin Herman Plaza in San Francisco, Love Park in Philadelphia and the Southbank Undercroft in London. These have all served as successful test sites and openair clubhouses for different generations of skateboarders, with lessons that can be transposed to new contexts.

A participatory design process is central to our approach to designing and constructing the skate dots for UCL East. Our primary concern is to avoid imposing a pre-determined set of final outcomes on the local skate community. Instead, we recognise the need to work from the ground upward – to empower local users and use their insight as fundamental to the project. Skaters' active participation is sought alongside professional fabricators of skateable structures. This is in contrast to the prescriptive approach often used by local government during the procurement of municipal skateparks. It will help ensure the final spaces are accessible for a diverse range of users, spanning differing ages, genders, abilities and skill levels. We use participatory methods and have conducted a pilot phase of the project with five local skate user groups (totalling 26 key respondents). To date, this process has involved co-design sessions, DIY build events, and design workshops in schools and youth centres.

Our objective with these groups is to develop some interim skateable architecture on the UCL East construction sites and apply key insights from

0:00:06



Architectural render of proposed skate dots in Stratford. Image by Sam Edward.

these to inform a design strategy for the permanent skateable architecture to be embedded within the final campus. Alongside this we will instigate an activation programme and, to consolidate inclusive placemaking at the City Mill Skate sites and build further public engagement with the project, we will maintain an ongoing digital archive and social media channel, to promote the initiative to skaters further afield and a broader spectrum of East London community groups.

Making the case for integrating skateboarding on the UCL East campus, we have drawn from existing research to construct an argument that supports the values and benefits of skateboarding in terms of health and well-being, particularly in relation to young people and gender equality in sport. In thinking about the university student cohort, we are keen to understand how contemporary youth construct and make sense of their worlds through their engagement with culture and leisure, and specifically how this could take place in the public spaces of a university campus.

Our pilot research has shown that skateboarders are already reclaiming unused local spaces for their own leisure. In neighbourhoods bordering the UCL East site, following the 2012 Olympics, the right to public space is becoming increasingly transactional through the sale of coffee, lunch and other commodified lifestyle leisure, and through shifts in land and property ownership and patterns of regulation determined by real estate. We assert that the current habitation of the local unused space demonstrates that skateboard-

ing can be used as a positive catalyst for local young people seeking to construct an identity outside of the structures of consumer exchange. It allows them to create a sense of self as individuals, but also in cohesive groups. It provides an inclusive alternative in which they can influence and change the culture of

0:00:07



Architectural render of proposed skate dots in Stratford. Image by Sam Edward.

¹ For example see Iain Borden, *Skateboarding and the City: A Complete History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019)

² Ocean Howell, 'The "Creative Class" and the Gentrifying City: Skateboarding in Philadelphia's Love Park', in *Skateboard Studies*, eds. Konstantin Butz and Christian Peters (London: Koenig Books, 2018).

Esther Sayers is an artist, skateboarder and Senior Lecturer at Goldsmiths College, London. She is part of the *Hackney Bumps* skatepark regeneration project. Recent work includes a film on the materiality of skateboarding, and an article on 'Skateboarding, Pedagogy and Motherhood' in *Free Skateboard Magazine*.

Sam Griffin is an artist, writer and skateboarder. Sam has designed skateable sculptures for London's Southbank and has contributed to the skate publications *Grey, Dank* and *These Video Days*. He is the editor of the English language edition of *On a Day with No Waves. A Chronicle of Skateboarding*.

their local area.

Contrasting these reclaimed public spaces with what will ultimately be sanctioned skateboarding on a large commercial development evokes the arguments of Iain Borden, who suggests skateboarding's inherent critique of capitalism through using buildings and spaces for free,¹ and Ocean Howell, who warns of skateboarders being used as the shock troops of gentrification.² The negotiations of the design and then use of this space will provide an interesting test case of the agency of skateboarders in discussions of how people can use privately owned public space, as well as the role of a university as a public body engaging the local community. Our community-led, participatory process will provide an opportunity for local skateboarders to be key stakeholders in the design and subsequent use of this space as well as informing how we can use and transfer our research methods to other sites and skateboard communities.

0:00:08

To speak is to act. Language is action and language is the reason we're here. These are days that find me pacing, speaking the Hebrew term *bitul zman*

TO BE READ / ALLOWED

(בטול זמן), which translates literally to 'cancel time', or 'destroy time', and acting out what it names.

First there was the substance, earth, with its vast crust rutted and rolling, with hills and valleys, mountains and deep ravines, with terrain of every sort. Then came man, who, soon enough, set out working to flatten the earth, to build stairways from low to high, to bore great holes and carve the pathways that we would eventually level, pave, and make smooth.

If you would like to transgress a story, one good way is to start too soon.

For by then we had learned to propel ourselves and our things from one end of the earth to the other. We devised a fleet of different vehicles, some very fast, others very large, and some very strange. Not everything we did made sense.

Language is action. Language is action is lang – and did you know that until the late fourteenth century, the noun *stair* was used as a collective plural? Like 'deer'. As in, *a mellow set of long stair*.

Language is *stair* from the Old English *stæger*, from the Proto-Germanic *staigri*, which comes from the Proto-Indo-European *steigh-* 'go, rise, stride, step, walk.'

See the boy moving through the cool shadows and flat light of Bayside fog. It is September and you can hear the perfect clatter of brick beneath his wheels. Boy. Called as much. He is the self behind a thin, paltry mustache, wearing those loose-fitting khakis, a windbreaker billowing in the breeze that whips across the Bay and snakes through the city like nature's favorite rumor. (But what is he doing?)

Better: Desire / Obstacle Desire / Obstacle
Cause cause / Effect effect

0:00:09

See the boy push to the federal banks, be chased away, the library, be evicted, and finally (there is no finality here, the activity is ongoing) to the famous three-up-

It is September and you can hear the perfect clatter of brick beneath his wheels.

The city is an argument we've composed in language, tactile and rigid, imposing, and firm.

three-down in The Mission, where he discovers an elderly, confused woman sitting in his way. He makes a weak attempt at communicating. She spits at him, tells him to screw. The boy thinks, come on, lady, for fuck's et cetera.

Language is obsession, an other attempt to comprehend. What strange activity. Is it meaningful, what this boy is up to? Replace 'boy' with 'girl' and what then? Replace 'girl' with 'person', replace 'person' with 'self'. The city is an argument we've composed in language, tactile and rigid, imposing, and firm. *The boy / the girl / the self is scavenging the city.* Scavenging? For what, exactly? *They are out there, scavenging.* But for? Everything, every thing.

Language is the reason we're here. The performer and pedagogist Mathew Ghoulish has written, 'I don't know. I proceed not knowing'. Say these words aloud. One morning, awake early, I encounter this line in a slim volume published by a small and homeless local press, and I think yes, this is it exactly. Language is not knowing, going, walk, way.

Kyle Beachy is a novelist whose skateboard writing has appeared in *The Point, The American Reader, Free Skateboard Magazine, Push Periodical*, and elsewhere. He lives in Chicago, where he is an Associate Professor of English and Creative Writing.

0:00:10

Before I was an online blind skateboarding sensation with nearly a million aggregate views of videos made about me, I was just a kid trying to find my niche. Ex-

TOWARDS RADICAL EMPATHY

cluded from games of pickup basketball and football both at school and outside of it, I turned to skateboarding because it gave me something I could practice individually, but still experience as part of a group.

I found success and received validation from my skater peers at local parks as I built my skills and participated in increasingly high-level sessions, where I was an equal contributor in the trade of learning how to do new tricks. However, outside observers were quick to transform the significance of these moments into something entirely different. It was not long before publications including Sports Illustrated for Kids, People Magazine and the Chicago Sun Times were all trying to cast me as an inspirational hero. I've been aware from a very young age that other people wanted to decide what I represented. I didn't need my story to impact anyone, but adults seemed to have this desire to shape my experiences into a particular narrative.



Skaters, like anyone else, seek belonging in the places they inhabit. This sense of belonging cannot be manufactured. It is specific to a place, a moment, a group, a rhythm; it is to be at home. At-homeness is unquantifiable. Attempts to represent skateboarding in the media obliterate difference rather than elevate it. Here lies the dissonance between Tommy's 'story' and Tommy's story. Tommy's story is one of belonging on his own terms; a process that is as neces-

sarily collective as it is individual. However – in belabouring trite themes of 'motivation' – Tommy's 'story' isolates him as an exception. It divorces him from his places of belonging, the people with whom he shares these places, and the spaces they co-produce. This story is crushingly solitary. It is lonely. It is not home.

Spaces of belonging – or in skating terms, a good session – are practices in radical empathy: seeing one's self, seeing another, seeing one's self through another, and then re-seeing another through one's self. Practices in radical empathy create participatory spaces where mutual understanding leads to commonality, community, and inclusion in and through belonging. A good session draws skaters of all skills and backgrounds where everyone may celebrate each other's respective, and therefore mutual, successes. Consequently, it is on the level of everyday moments that we produce local and global places of belonging, finding *our* skateboarding and city in the process.

0:00:11

As the media attention poured in, I found myself becoming increasingly separated from the things that made me enjoy skateboarding in the first place. Rather than

experimenting with new tricks and learning things from fellow skaters, I started forcing myself to do things I thought the non-skating reporters would find useful for their work.

Skaters, like anyone else, seek belonging in the places they inhabit. This sense of belonging cannot be manufactured. It is specific to a place, a moment, a group, a rhythm; it is to be at home. At-homeness is unquantifiable.

I often find myself in social situations that start casually, but end as an interrogation of how I live my life. This creates major barriers to truly connecting with new people. In a good session, skateboarding allows me to temporarily escape that trap. In the words of fellow blind skater Dan Mancina, 'skateboarding is important because

anyone can do it. You can do it anywhere and no matter who you are you will be accepted. You can't say that about a lot of things in the world'.

When Steve Van Doren¹ invited me to California, I skated the daunting combi pool at the Vans skatepark with influential skaters Omar Hassan, Zach Miller, and Josh Borden. At that session I definitely was nowhere near the level of the other guys, but we were all skating incredibly well relative to our own skills, and we were

It is on the level of everyday moments that we produce local and global places of belonging, finding our skateboarding and city in the process.

all stoked. No one was saying how amazing I was; they were just giving me props, but also just focusing on their own tricks. It was a rare moment where outsiders were not making disability a main talking point.

Tommy's experiences beckon a call that is beyond skateboarding. This is a call to challenge dehumanising representations of the disabled. It is a call to consider whose story is being told through the places we build, the articles we publish, and the things we center. It is a call to return to the local and engage. Inclusivity is not only a product of its representation, but also a product of

¹ CEO of Vans, a legendary skate shoe manufacturer.

Luke Cianciotto is an incoming sociology Ph.D. student at the University of Chicago with an interest in public space. His current research project is on Philadelphia's LOVE Park, a plaza famous for skateboarding. He still regularly plays with a small wooden toy with wheels and is amazed that he gets to write about it too.

Tommy Carroll is a Chicago-based drummer, bandleader, composer and producer dedicated to developing the soundtrack to a more inclusive future. Totally blind since age 2, Tommy's music draws upon jazz, dance music, and ambient film scores to address topics of disability and diversity. As a teenager, Tommy was a semi-professional skateboarder whose videos, including an interview on Tony Hawk's Shred or Die channel, racked up millions of views.

what is lived. The disjuncture between what is lived, what is represented, and what/whom that representation serves may cause dissonance in those hoisted into the spotlight, like Tommy. Politics happens through participation – a participation rooted in the everyday. So, tread lightly, listen, take space, give space, and make that space one's own collectively.

0:00:12

Feint Lines was presented at an event called 'Lone Women in the Not Quite Light: flashes of wilderness'. Artist Clare Archibald created the event as part

FEINT LINES: NOTES ON THE CREATION OF A SKATEBOARD CHOREOGRAPHY

Skateboarding – an activity that I deeply connected with in my adolescence – has always been a point of simultaneous safety and controlled fear.

practice as an artist is similarly oriented around movement, public urban spaces, gender and skateboarding. I often make site-responsive performance work, drawn from the physical features, historical stories, users and uses, and mythologies related to particular sites. I've always been fascinated by the generic and repetitive environments of what

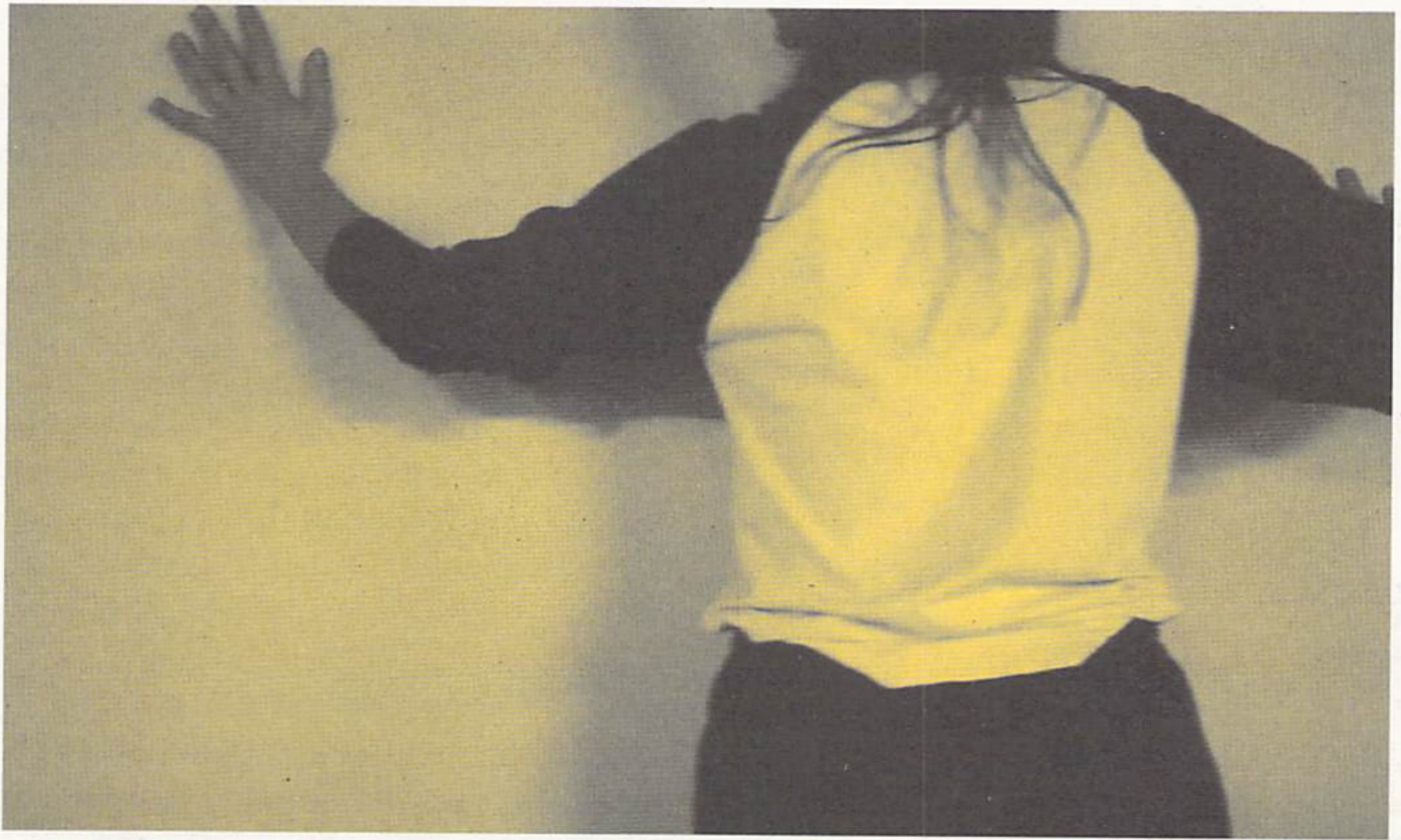
Marc Augé might refer to as 'non-places', such as car parks.² As an artist and a skateboarder, the opportunity to create a performance in this car park appealed to me.

The event was exclusively for people who identify as women, with the audience forming a contingent of women occupying a public space at night, performatively assembling together in solidarity and support. The concept appealed to me as someone who does not feel comfortable alone on the streets at night. Aside from the quite normal fear of personal safety experienced by women and some men when they are alone in the street, I have increased anxiety at times due to a health condition.

Skateboarding – an activity that I deeply connected with in my adolescence – has always been a point of simultaneous safety and controlled fear. As a teenager, I would put my hood up and walk home at night with my skateboard, adopting a kind of invisibility cloak, or more accurately, a masculine one. Skateboarding kept me occupied and calm for hours at a time. It was also a challenge, a mental more than physical one that I still struggle with: the acceptance of risk, the leaps of faith in your abilities, the ability to quiet your fears and thoughts and to focus completely.

0:00:13



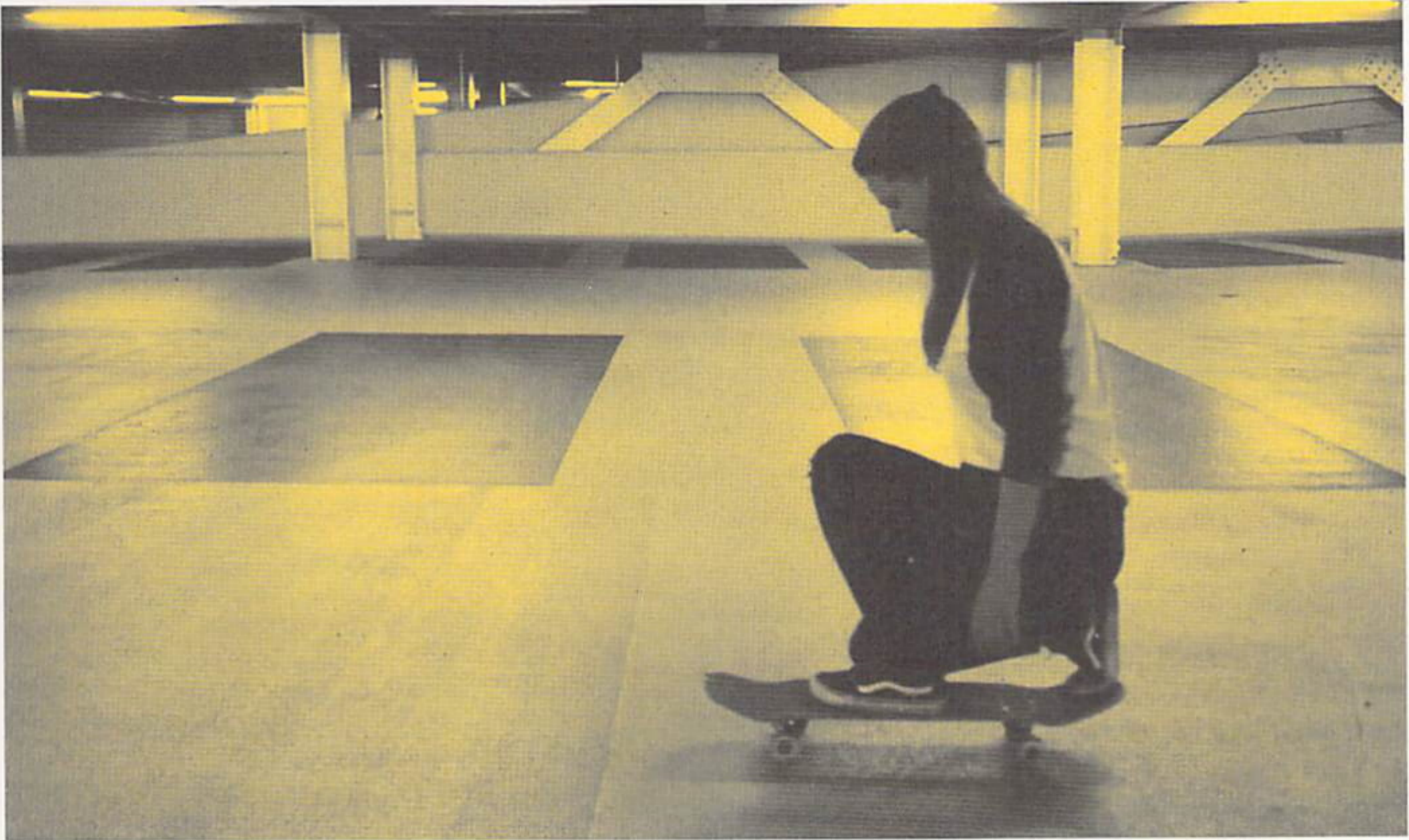


'Karina's power – if you could call it that – came about quite organically, out of necessity. And Karina had no idea at first that other people lacked the same ability she had.'

For this performance, I wanted to weave together some of these themes with fundamental features of the practice of skateboarding – its connection to surfing, to waves, and to water flows; the process of finding a precise speed, entry point, material resistance, and exit point to slide or grind without stopping or slipping away completely.

The skateboarding slide resonates with philosophers Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concept of 'smooth space' within 'striated space'.³ For Deleuze and Guattari, smooth space is unpartitioned and open, contrasting with the closed, ordered and intervalled striated space. In their work they discuss the way one distributes oneself in smooth space, as if the body is able to occupy a state across an environment in a deeply connected way. Similarly, the skateboarder performs an intricate balance of weight, timing, energy and attention that allows her this alchemy. I was particularly referencing their maritime model which seemed to resonate so strongly with the act of skateboarding. In this text, Deleuze and Guattari describe the pre-navigational sea as 'a smooth space par excellence', and the city as 'the striated space par excellence'.⁴ Skateboarding developed from its surf-ocean roots (gliding, flowing movement) toward a street-based practice in the 1980s, when it manifested in linear modes of practice and more 'technical' tricks. It has, since then, embodied a creative tension between these different sorts of practice. Symbolically, skateboarding is understood as both simultaneously 'of the sea' and 'of the city'.

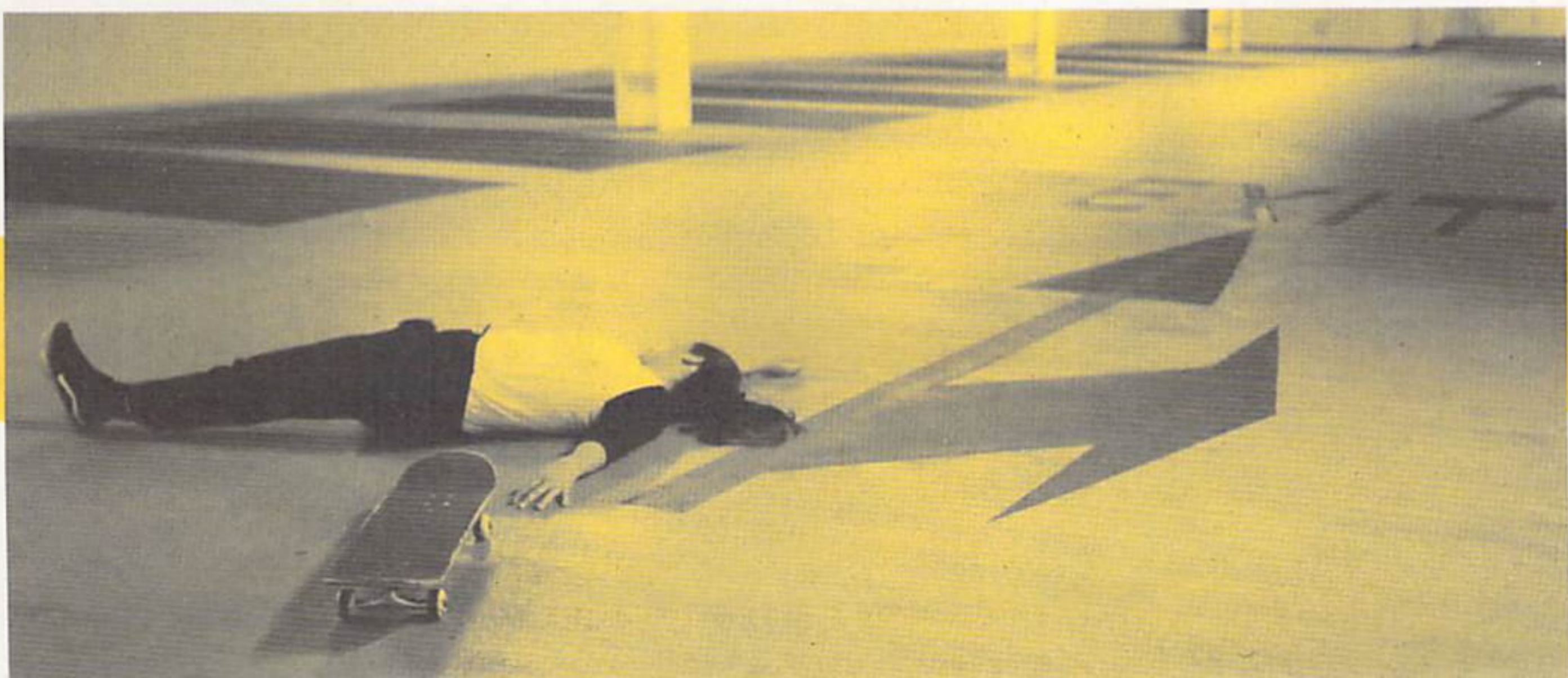
0:00:14



'As a 15-year-old, she had loved playing basketball, but couldn't often pull off fast-paced misdirection. It was one afternoon in the sports hall at school, during a long and emotionally-intense game against another local school team that she noticed a slight flicker of something.'

The skateboarding movement developed from urban space itself.

I went to the car park regularly to practise. I didn't want to perform typical skateboarding tricks – and not only because I do not have many to perform, but because I wanted each movement to be drawn from the site and not from an existing repertoire, with the skateboarding aspect functioning more as an indexical marker of my experience of this space. I wondered, how might I occupy this car park and generate a kind of smooth space? How might this performance work function like a skateboarding slide? I played with the idea of creating the smallest and slowest movements and actions I could perform. The movement took in the whole of the third floor of the carpark, and, more akin to improvisatory processes in dance took cues from the space itself – lumps in the concrete; open flat areas; painted lines, words ('exit') and arrows; the curvature of walls; hidden areas and curbs.



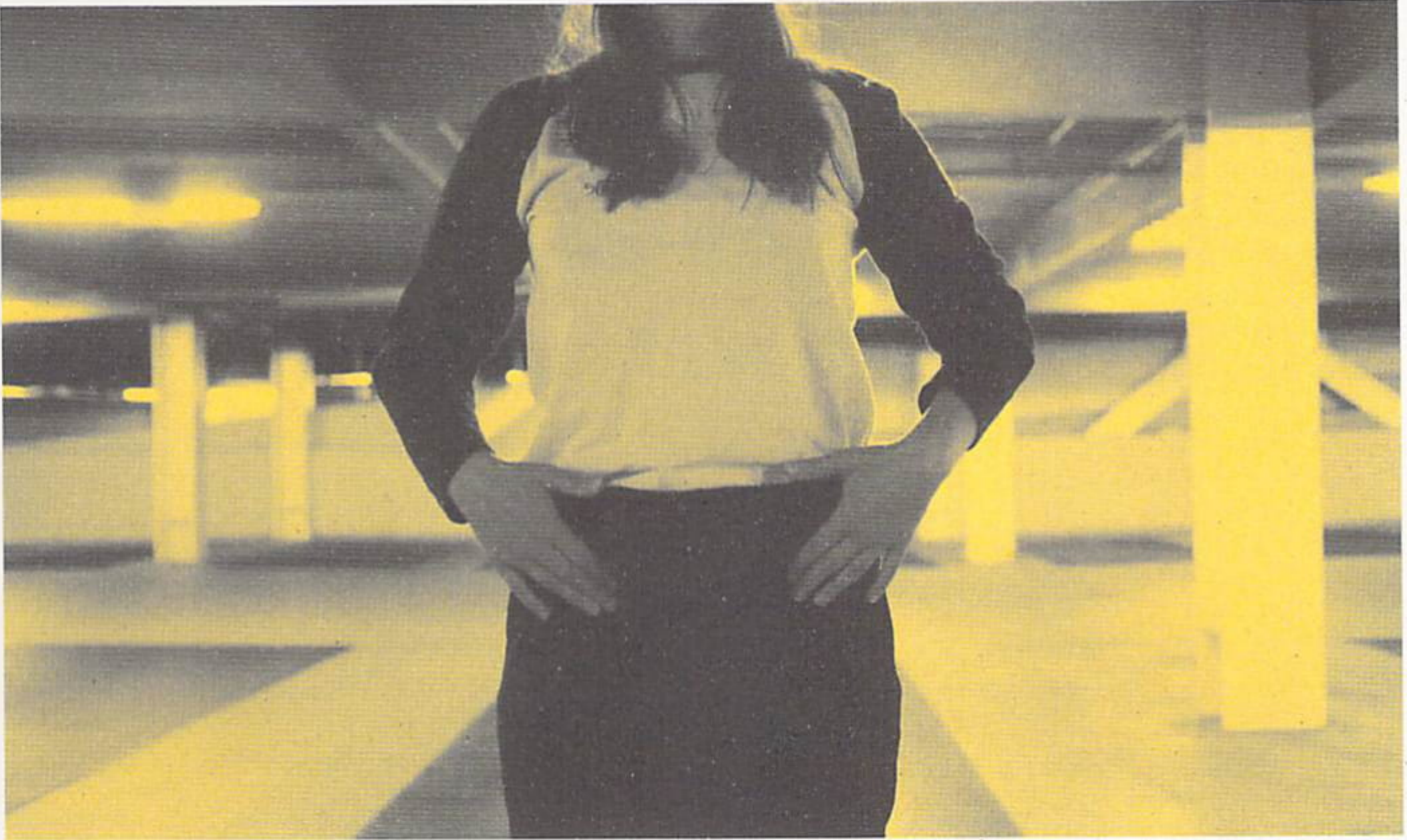
Another aspect of the performance was a voice-recorded story about a girl called Karina who discovers she can 'double' herself. As the story goes, Karina discovers this power when she is playing basketball during an intense competition between her school and a rival school team. During a tackle between Karina and a rival team member, she performs a feint move, and is able to dodge past the other player. Karina recognises that the feint she performed was actually a moment in which she 'passed the ball between herself, from right hand, to right hand, to left, making a slight movement to the right, which gave her enough space to slip past the boy and towards the net.' Over the course of the story, Karina learns how to harness this power and use it to her advantage – in simple everyday ways, and more serious ones.



'Unlike Matilda, Karina never managed to harness her power in a way that she could just switch it on and off. This is a true story, after all, but she tried though. Karina would concentrate very hard and imagine every cell in her body creating an image of itself and she imagined projecting these images using her mind to another location close by.'

The final line of the story read, 'Much better than invisibility or super-human strength, she liked the idea than she would always be there for herself in the most extreme of circumstances.' Karina's story is comical and fantastical. The idea for it came from daydreams I would have about being able to become invisible (something I've often wanted to do when walking alone at night) and – in contrast – the idea that a person might be able to make a friend magically appear, so that you always have a companion to walk home with.

0:00:16



'She fantasised about being able to send her doubled-self into boring meetings at work. She thought she would watch from outside the door as her doubled-self nodded away diligently and appeared to take down notes. Meanwhile, Karina would spend this captured time in a room nearby, watching YouTube videos, listening to interesting podcasts, stretching her legs, and teaching herself about quantum mechanics.'

1 Not Quite Light is an ongoing photographic project by artist Simon Buckley, exploring the city of Manchester (and the city of Salford) at night time and twilight.

2 Marc Augé, *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. (London and New York: Verso, 2009 [1992]).

3 Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London: The Athlone Press, 1988).

4 Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London: The Athlone Press, 1988) 479–481.

Dani Abulhawa is a performance artist and academic based in the UK. She usually works in site-responsive ways, drawn to the physical features, stories and people that belong to, navigate around, or perhaps feel dislocated in particular places.

0:00:17

To understand how to make skateboarding spaces more welcoming to LGBTQ+ skaters, you first have to understand why Unity, the most influential move-

QUEERING SKATEABLE SPACE: HOW DISPERSING SKATESPOTS DEFUSES TOXIC MASCULINITY

ment of LGBTQ+ skaters in existence, is centred around a single slappy curb in a BART station parking lot.¹ A slappy curb – for those readers who don't skate – is just a low, slightly bevelled curb that's easy to crawl up onto with the trucks of the skateboard and grind, no ollie required. One of the wonderful things about skateboarding is that any obstacle, no matter how small or simple, presents an almost endless array of possibilities; but a solitary slappy curb is still a

relative morsel. Why would they choose this curb at the Rockridge BART station to centre their group, then, instead of a more substantial skatepark?

I suspect that Unity's decision to eschew a skatepark has a lot to do with the fact that skateparks are not often welcoming places for LGBTQ+ skaters.

One of the wonderful things about skateboarding is that any obstacle, no matter how small or simple, presents an almost endless array of possibilities.

Though most skaters these days would tell you that 'skateboarding is for everyone', that aphorism breaks down in practice. Skateparks are still very much for men.

As a straight-presenting queer skater, I have never been 'vibed' out of a skatepark, but

nearly all of my LGBTQ+ and women friends have multiple experiences of being made to feel unwelcome. We have succeeded in getting more women interested in skateboarding, and more queer skaters comfortable being out, but we have yet to truly integrate. Men and women and everyone in between, straights and LGBTQ+ folks all skate now, but when the skatepark is predominantly populated by straight men, women and queers do not skate there.

This is even more frustrating when you consider how central to the culture of skateboarding skateparks have become. Capitalism, at first perplexed by skateboarding, has very effectively declawed it, turning our most talented 'street' skaters into extremely marketable extreme sports athletes, and everyday enthusiasts into willing participants in the type of sanctioned recreational activity that occurs at basketball courts and ball fields. A skatepark is a sports court, for all intents and purposes. And we all go to the skatepark because it's hard enough to support yourself, let alone find time to wander around the streets looking for ledges or finding pools to drain.

Certainly, skateparks and centrally located street plazas serve an important purpose in skateboarding, and we should strive to make them welcoming spaces for all skaters. But to create an urban environment that is more friendly for LGBTQ+ and women skaters, we have to look outside of the skatepark. We need to scatter the skateparks to the winds, building individual obstacles across the city, in places both centrally located and off the beaten path. We need to bring back the days of itinerant street skating. By doing this, not only

0:00:18



Backside slappy, 2019. Photo by Sam McGuire.

will we provide more spaces for people who have been disenfranchised by skateboarding to practice in private, which is crucial in a subculture where skill equals social capital, but we will also more quickly achieve an integrated skate culture. How?

Well, in those halcyon days of skate nomadism, from the birth of 'street' skating in the late '80s and early '90s, on up to the late '00s proliferation of publicly funded skateparks that came in response, the way that you met other skaters was very different. While wandering the city looking for spots, you'd occasionally run into another skater or group of skaters, and the sheer serendipity of this would form an instant bond. While there weren't really any openly gay skateboarders in this era of transgressive, spot-to-spot street skating, and while the culture in general might not have been conducive to it then, I think that the kind of organic encounters created by this nomadic behaviour would have served to bond traditional and non-traditional skaters in a way that skateparks cannot.

When it's just you and another skater, trying to sneak in a few crooked grinds amongst the normals, your other identities kind of fall away. You are, at that point, 'just skaters', as so many bros like to claim we

0:00:19



all are. But when you're in a crowded skatepark, clannishness takes over. The largest clan is, for the time being, cisgender straight men, and few of them are willing to jeopardise their membership to help non-traditional skaters feel welcome.

This can be improved through social means,

but speaking strictly in terms of urban design,

decentralising skateboarding might be just the thing.

Plus, integrating smaller, more approachable skate spots into the city-

scape is, according to an analysis in the City of Seattle's discarded 'Citywide Skatepark Plan', about four times cheaper per square foot than building full-sized skateparks.² Beyond the social benefits I've posited, there are also very real benefits for the environment, as skaters are encouraged to skate, bike, or take public

transit between spots. If you, as an urban planner, want to design skate spaces that are truly for everyone, I would urge you to remember E.F. Schumacher's famous exhortation: small is beautiful.

We need to provide more spaces for people who have been disenfranchised by skateboarding to practice in private, which is crucial in a subculture where skill equals social capital.

¹ A Bay Area Rapid Transport station in the San Francisco Bay area, United States of America.

² An ambitious and – sadly – unrealised urban design manifesto published in 2007.

Tobias Coughlin-Bogue is a queer skater and freelance journalist whose work has appeared in Vice, Broadly, Jenkem, and Thrasher. He recently co-chaired a panel on LGBTQ+ identity in skateboarding at Pushing Boarders Malmö.

0:00:20

I moved to this city in 2016. I told my family I moved for better work prospects, but in reality it was just better for skating. Or, rather, better for living

2025: SKATING THE SMART CITY

in, as a skateboarder. It was a place where I could move around without having to jump in the car, a huge urban area rendered pocket-sized by its navigable streets, its smooth pavements and its understanding police force, too busy with crime. After work I'd push all the way downtown, past the rows of restaurants, the shops, the nondescript office blocks, slalom through the litter, narrowly avoid the embracing couples, distract the arguing ones, and make it to Brinley in time for a couple of games of SKATE and a beer on the one ledge we hadn't yet yanked the skate stoppers off.

Today I woke up with a fuzzy head, but I could see on my apartment *videowall* that Dee and Jin had linked me and were heading downtown to skate, so I decided to join. It looked like they were on the *BeemCar* heading to Lenfields.¹ I met them there, just around the corner from where Brinley used

While the guard scanned to verify Dee's ID and behavioural history, I checked my watch and saw some of our friends were at a new plaza over in the eastern part of town.

One of the very few places where we could skate unchallenged, the plaza was actually the forecourt of a new tech campus built by Freedomm, a huge telecoms business.

to be, now a nice-to-chill-at but unskateable community urban garden. Lenfields has a low, square rail we'd spotted and thought could be good to warm up on. It was around the back of the building, past those sharp-top deterrent paving stones city planners seem to lay everywhere these days. But just as Dee rolled up to it I felt water and realised sprinklers had come on above us. As we packed up, half-drenched, a guard hurried over and confronted

Dee – it turned out the cameras had recognised him after he'd already been kicked out the previous week when checking the spot out. He wore his cap low over his eyes too, but the AI-fuelled surveillance – developed in China to identify and keep track of citizens – must have recognised his gait as much as his face. He stood talking to the guard for a good twenty minutes as Jin and I exchanged looks. Dee would take it in his stride, but we did worry about our friend. He was already struggling to find work because of his social credit, which had started off with a bad credit score and escalated with offences for skating, rendering him almost unemployable.² While the guard scanned to verify Dee's ID and behavioural history, I checked my watch and saw some of our friends were at a new plaza over in the eastern part of town. Dee waved the guard off sarcastically and we set off again, hitting one of the main avenues that cut through the city, pushing down the shared 'Light Individual Transport' lane, enjoying that feeling of air blowing against our faces as we

picked up speed. Shared bikes, electric scooters and weird three-wheel boards all whizzed past us – it was chaos down this lane but at least we could push freely.

We arrived at the plaza and greeted our friends who were already there. One of the very few places

0:00:21

in town where we could skate unchallenged, the plaza was actually the forecourt of a new tech campus built by Freedomm, a huge telecoms business.

I guess skating the city isn't quite what it used to be, but some things never change.

They'd opened it up to all and encouraged artists, athletes and musicians to use the space. Freedomm live-streamed 24 hours a day via hundreds of cameras set around the plaza, using the content as a central part of their mar-

keting campaigns. I guess we were pretty exposed there, but it was worth it for a hassle-free session.

The ground was older than the plaza itself, having been a road before it was all re-designed, but it was built with self-healing asphalt so was still smooth and crack-free.³ I spotted Jin eyeing up the rainbow-shaped rail, and I could see he wanted to try something. Dee and I rolled up and scrolled through her socials to see what tricks had been done on it before. Augmented reality showed our friend Lea, who lived around the corner, doing all the basics, and some guy we didn't recognise land a quirky switch bluntslide. Jin started heelflipping onto it and before long landed a heelflip nosebonk, the sweet metallic sound of his front truck resonating as he kissed the rail mid-air.

We were getting tired and decided to head back to mine for a few beers. There were a bunch of cars from one of my sharing clubs right outside the plaza. After a quick scan of my fingerprints on the steering wheel, we were on our way. We'd treated ourselves to a car with a good level of autonomy, so we

cruised back through the streets, lamenting Freedomm for using skating in their ads, and ripping Jin for having to do ugly heelflips everywhere because he still couldn't kickflip.

I guess skating the city isn't quite what it used to be, but some things never change.

¹ BeemCar is an urban transport system comprising driverless light-weight pods suspended from a network of beams.

² The Chinese government has introduced a 'social credit system', currently piloted in different cities. According to the *Financial Times* 'the idea is that people will ultimately be scored based on past behaviour, taking in misdemeanours such as traffic offences and past records' (Louise Lucas and Emily Feng, 'Inside China's Surveillance State', *Financial Times*, 20 July 2018).

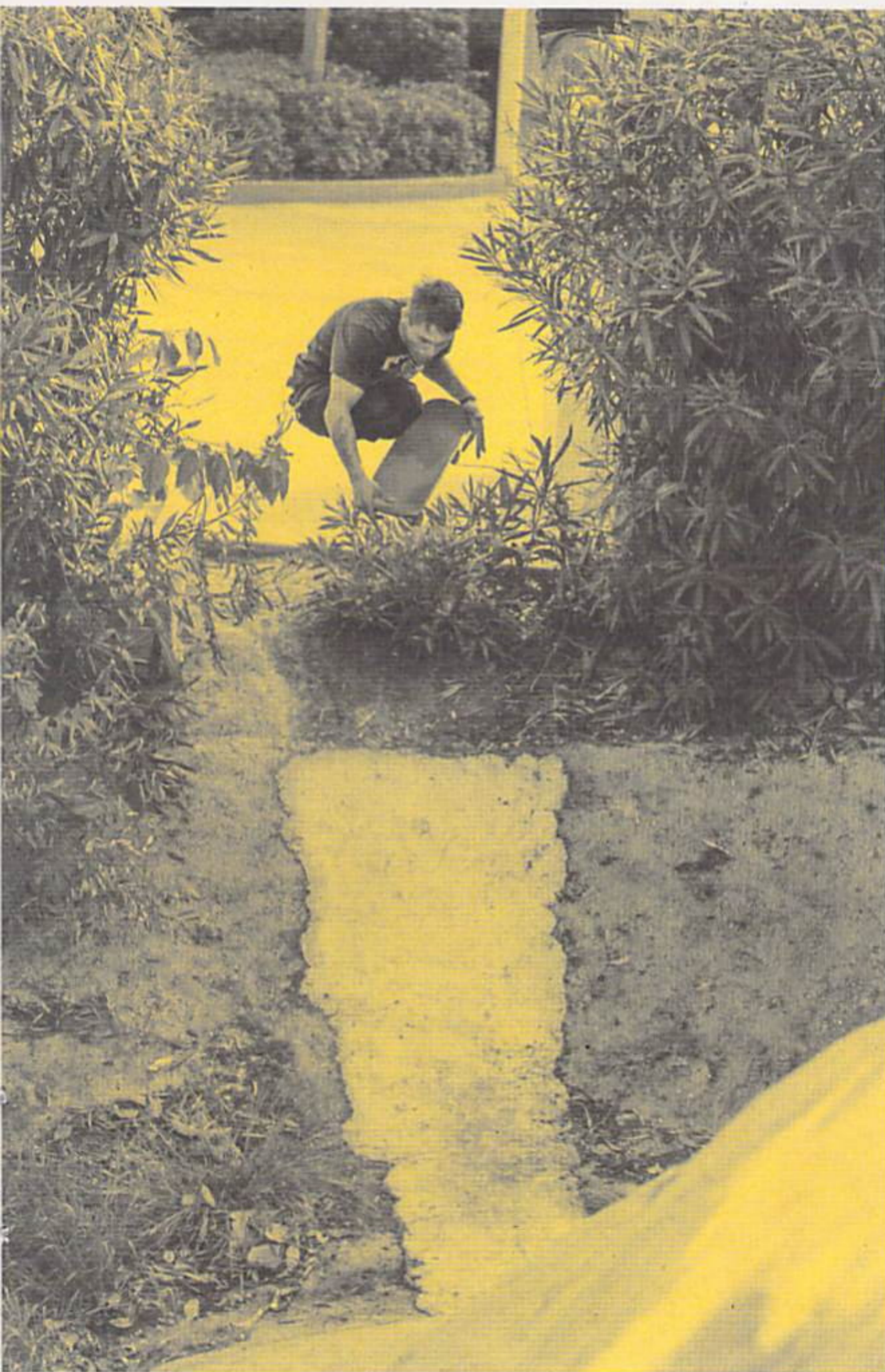
³ Self-healing asphalt, already used on some roads in the Netherlands, is created by adding steel wool fibres to bitumen. It is much more easily repaired and has double the lifespan of normal asphalt.

Claire Alleaume is a European skateboarder and writer. She founded a communication and consulting agency specialising in skateboarding, working with local authorities and experts in sustainability, design and architecture on the integration of skating in the city. She now works in connected mobility and is the editor of *Two Set* magazine.

0:00:22

Ben Rubin and Felipe Nunes

SKATEBOARDING AND MOBILITY: FELIPE NUNES INTERVIEWED BY BEN RUBIN



Skateboarding is an art form of urban mobility. Through a dialogue between wheels and pavement, skateboarders explore public space and architectural elements of universal design. They map cities like urban planners, locating stairs and handrails, transitions and inclines, benches and bumps. It's not a surprise that skateboarding and universal design were born during the same years in America. The nation's first curb cuts, designed for wheelchair users, were installed just as sidewalk surfing was taking off. It was this push to facilitate rolling travel in the downtown areas that would create the ecosystem for skateboarding. A wonderful relationship exists between the sport, accessibility, and adaptation. The following interview is with one of skateboarding's newest game changers and rising stars. At 20 years old, Felipe Nunes is challenging societal limitations as much as his own. This interview explores the intersection between skateboarding and mobility, and how urban space can be influenced by skateboarders.

MOBILITY

BEN RUBIN

When people think about skateboarding, they often overlook the obvious. A piece of wood on wheels is a way to get around. For those who travel the world without walking, wheels become a basic need. How did you discover skateboarding, and how did it change your daily mobility and independence?

FELIPE NUNES

My first contact with skateboarding was when I was 13. My neighbor gave me an old skateboard from her son. It helped me to start moving around without a wheelchair. After this I started learning basic tricks. It became easier than a wheelchair; skateboarding made me free. In a wheelchair I was always dependent on someone to help me – there were no ramps. With a skateboard it all got easier. Skateboarding truly changed my life direction. Before I started skating I had no focus. I was always changing my mind, I'd give up. When skateboarding got into my life I thought, 'This is for me – I want to make a living doing this'.

0:00:23



Felipe Nunes. Photos by Gustavo Medeiros.



Ben Rubin is a goofy-footed creative educator and researcher. Through his work, he aims to connect his passion for skateboarding with accessible education, visual literacy, and creative community development. During the last few years, he has worked with Skateistan to develop their national programs teams, international curriculum, and programs accessibility.

Felipe Nunes is a skateboarder from Curitiba Paraná, Brazil. He is sponsored by Birdhouse, Independent, Bones Bearings, Mob Grip and Bali Hai Skate Shop.

Note Translation by Renan Castagnaro.

0:00:24

ADAPTION

BEN RUBIN

Brazil has a long history of 'seated' professional skateboarders doing tricks with their hands on a parallel level to those done with legs. How have you been influenced by the skate scene in Brazil and abroad, and what do you see on the horizon?

FELIPE NUNES

Brazil gains so much having these guys skating, not only skaters without legs but disabled skaters in general. They've opened many doors and made our scene stronger. Right now we have contests for disabled skateboarders, companies are investing more, and the community believes in us. People are amazed, when I pass I see their faces – it's funny... 'A guy with no legs skating?'. They're shocked when they see me landing tricks. People always ask how can I do that, and too often I hear 'I have both legs and I can't do that'. They come to me with encouraging words and it's very rewarding for me. I never imagined meeting the international skate community, famous skaters from the US and Brazil, skating beside them and sharing good times. For me, this is a life lesson, a chance to listen to their advice and learning a little bit from them. I feel blessed! For the future, skateboarding in the Olympics and Paralympics is awesome. It's a huge step for skateboarding and for skateboarding companies, this event is bringing more visibility and will bring more investment for our market. It would be a dream to be there and to participate.

ACCESSIBILITY

BEN RUBIN

City planners often consider skateboarding as an urban liability or as a recreational attraction, but rarely do they see its connection to accessibility in public space. What are the challenges you face when navigating cities around the world and how can public space be more accessible?

FELIPE NUNES

My biggest challenge when I'm skating on the streets and in different cities is when the street has no pavement, like in my town [Curitiba] and state [Paraná]. For me this is the biggest obstacle. I can take care of the rest. Skatepark elements in the streets could help, not only for me but all those who depend on wheels to travel. Ramps can definitely make access easier to everybody and cities would be much better for getting around. It can improve accessibility and can make our lives way easier. Accessibility is the key!

EMPOWERMENT

BEN RUBIN

Different cultures often place limitations on people seen as having disabilities, and people like you are helping to challenge that. What advice do you have for the next generation?

FELIPE NUNES

Never give up however difficult it looks. Never give up! When I started it was pretty hard and I got hurt a lot of times. I thought about quitting, but in the end I always persisted. Things started to work and are still working for me. Don't give up, regardless of your dream, whether skating or in any area of your life. I want less prejudice. Like it or not, we still suffer prejudice. People need to be aware that we are all equals. Skaters belong to society, so respect is the best solution – to coexist in harmony.

0:00:25

Iain Borden

Skateparks are complex, conflictual and contested spaces. Here I track how this complexity has been manifested in London's Crystal Palace skatepark,

CRYSTAL PALACE SKATEPARK: COMPLEXITY AND CONTRADICTION



1977 UK National Championships. *Skateboard Special*, Issue 1 (September 1977).

where, as we shall see, several different conditions (heritage, campaigns, planning, designs, riders, cultures etc.) all came together, and with alternating arrangements of harmony, chance and negotiation.

History

Skateboarding started at Crystal Palace park in the 1970s, when its sweeping paths proved ideal for new riders. In 1977, the first UK national championships were hosted, and during the 1980s a skater-constructed above-ground wooden half-pipe attracted skateboarders from far afield. Today, skaters exploit the park's accommodating tarmac for longboarding, slalom and other high-speed runs. All of this had to be acknowledged and incorporated in later designs and planning applications for the skatepark.

Activism

By 2014, Crystal Palace park was clearly an ideal venue for one of the numerous skateparks then being built across the UK. A few locals – notably Jakub Grocia and Curtis O'Dell – started a Facebook petition, distributed flyers and developed initial designs with skatepark builder Wheelscape. This activism gained significant support from skaters, but still required substantial public and official backing.

Serendipity and funding

A massive stroke of luck occurred, when Chinese billionaire Ni Zhaoxing's plans to rebuild the park's famous Joseph Paxton-designed Crystal Palace building (destroyed by fire in 1936) as a hotel and conference centre were stymied by planning complexities. To off-set the London Borough of Bromley's loss of income, in 2015 the Greater London



Crystal Palace Skatepark Campaign Flyer, 2015, Facebook.

Authority awarded £1.84 million for park regeneration. Consequently, the

0:00:26

skatepark campaigners found £400,000 being given to their project, all courtesy of a curious intersection of global finance and local politics.

We had to balance personal preferences (not all skateboarders like the same terrain), immediate social groups (what would our friends say?) and the skatepark's wider appeal (would it suit those who are younger, older, less experienced, professional, on inline skates, wheelchair users?).

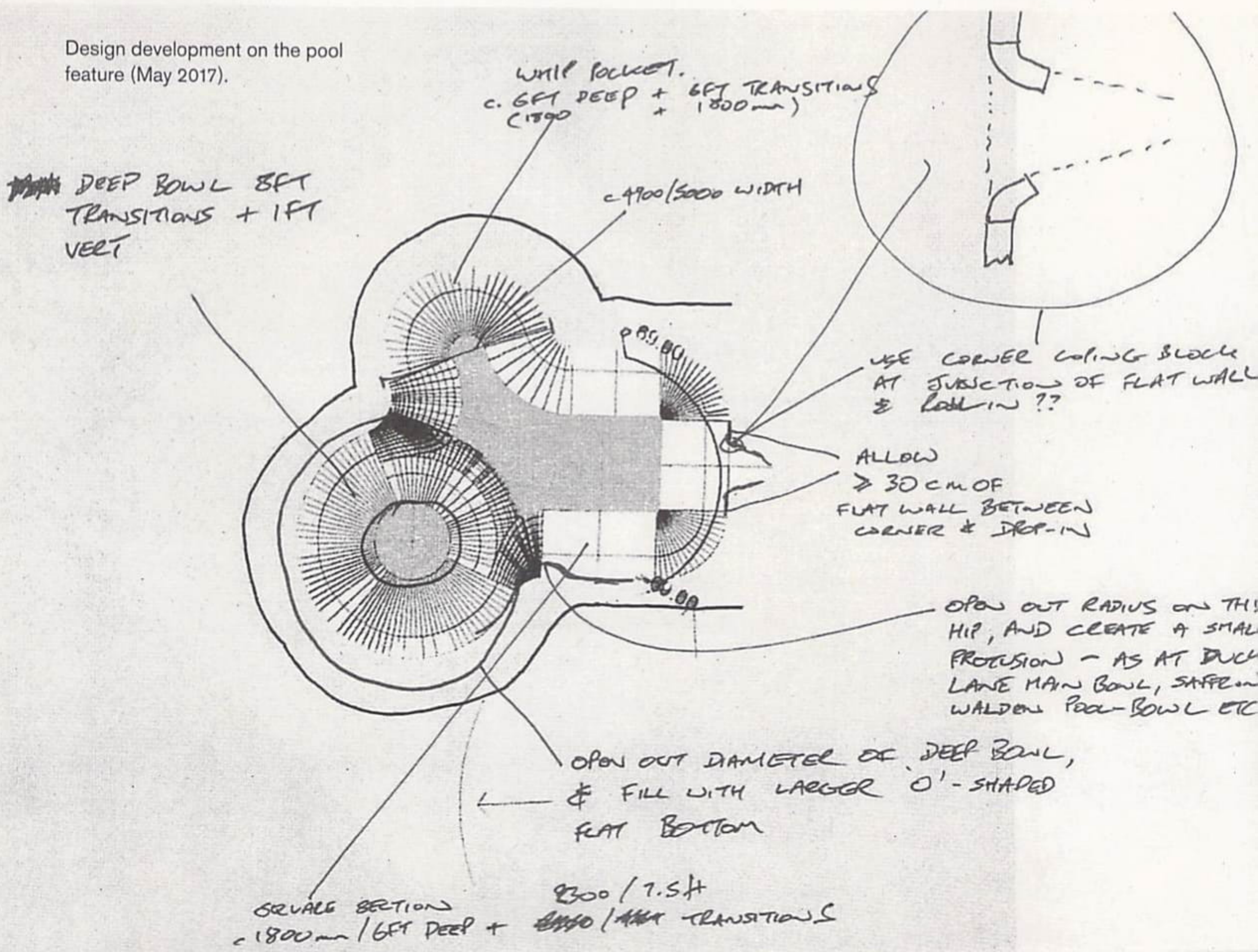
Designers, builders and users

Following a protracted tender process, Canvas became the skatepark designers and builders, working with landscape architects KLA, and a four-person User Group (Curtis, Jakub, BMX-rider Colin Austin, and myself), with Bromley as the client. Canvas's initial designs were intensely

reworked, variously involving user inputs, heritage (the skatepark sits over Paxton-designed fountains), cost-sensitivity, and a pressing timeline. We had to balance personal preferences (not all skateboarders like the same terrain), immediate social groups (what would our friends say?) and the skatepark's wider appeal (would it suit those who are younger, older, less experienced, professional, on inline skates, wheelchair users etc.?). And how would the project complement skateparks regionally? Could it be unique, yet not overly specialised?

My role as a locally-living skater and academic was particularly conflicted. Adding to Crystal Palace skate history, and getting something I would

Design development on the pool feature (May 2017).





Pool construction by Canvas, November 2017. Photo by Iain Borden.



Final design Crystal Palace skatepark, September 2017. Courtesy Canvas.

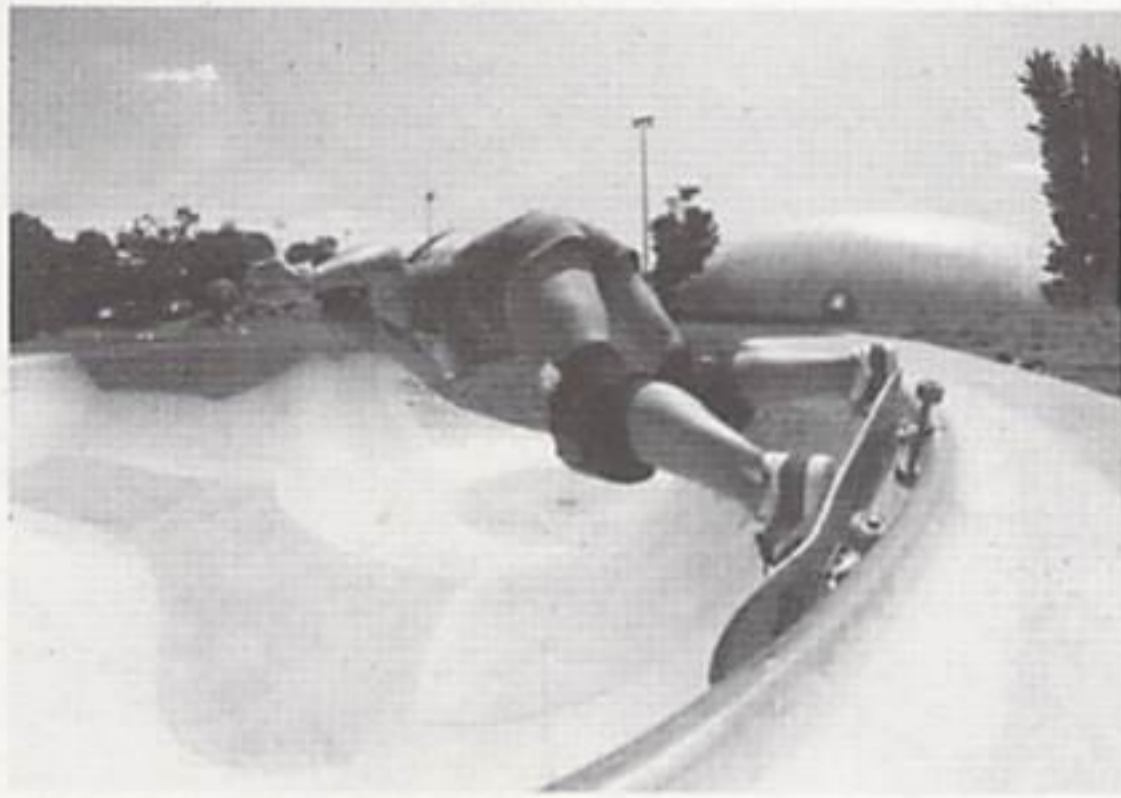
personally enjoy had to be balanced against wider skate contexts alongside intellectual, theoretical and political dimensions. As a historian of skateboarding, I was well aware of the many skatepark precedents and possibilities for the new facility, not least that we wanted to create London's first full tile-and-coping pool for over 40 years (the last was at Rom skatepark in 1978). Alongside the thoughts of philosophers like Henri Lefebvre, Chantal Mouffe and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi – offering conceptualisations of bodily, political and mental space – were more everyday but equally important factors regarding the diversity of riding surfaces and users. Not all of this could be perfectly integrated and accommodated, but it had to be at least considered.

Final design

Crystal Palace skatepark incorporates a tile-and-coping pool, a large BMX-friendly bowl, and shallow slopes particularly suitable for younger riders. Excluded are steps, rails and other street features; and myriad roll-ins and overhangs were left out for cost reasons. The park is decidedly oriented towards experienced 'transition' riders, but also accommodates those with different preferences and expertise. In short, design emerged here as an amalgam of desires and compromises.



Summer Jam, August 2018. Photo by Iain Borden.



Wings Chan, June 2018. Photo by Iain Borden.



After school skaters, April 2018. Photo by Iain Borden.

Skatepark life

Officially opened in March 2018, the skatepark was well-received by skaters, community workers, local residents and politicians alike, and unusual convergences of politics and peoples were now occurring. The skatepark attracts users of all ages, genders, ethnicities, sexualities and levels of expertise. People visit it to ride, hang out, or just watch; those strolling by invariably remark on the positive contribution it has made to the park as a whole.

And yet, all is not perfect in this seeming Garden of Eden. Some welcome the arrival of gritty graffiti (some by the skaters themselves), while others think it obscures the riding surface. Wooden fences are up-rooted and burned for illicit late-night barbecues. Heavy weed-smoking among some twenty-some-things borders on the endemic. The skatepark users are predominantly male, and homophobic remarks are occasionally thrown at scooter riders. As good as the skatepark design might be, much hard work is still to come, for this place of on-going social and spatial negotiation.

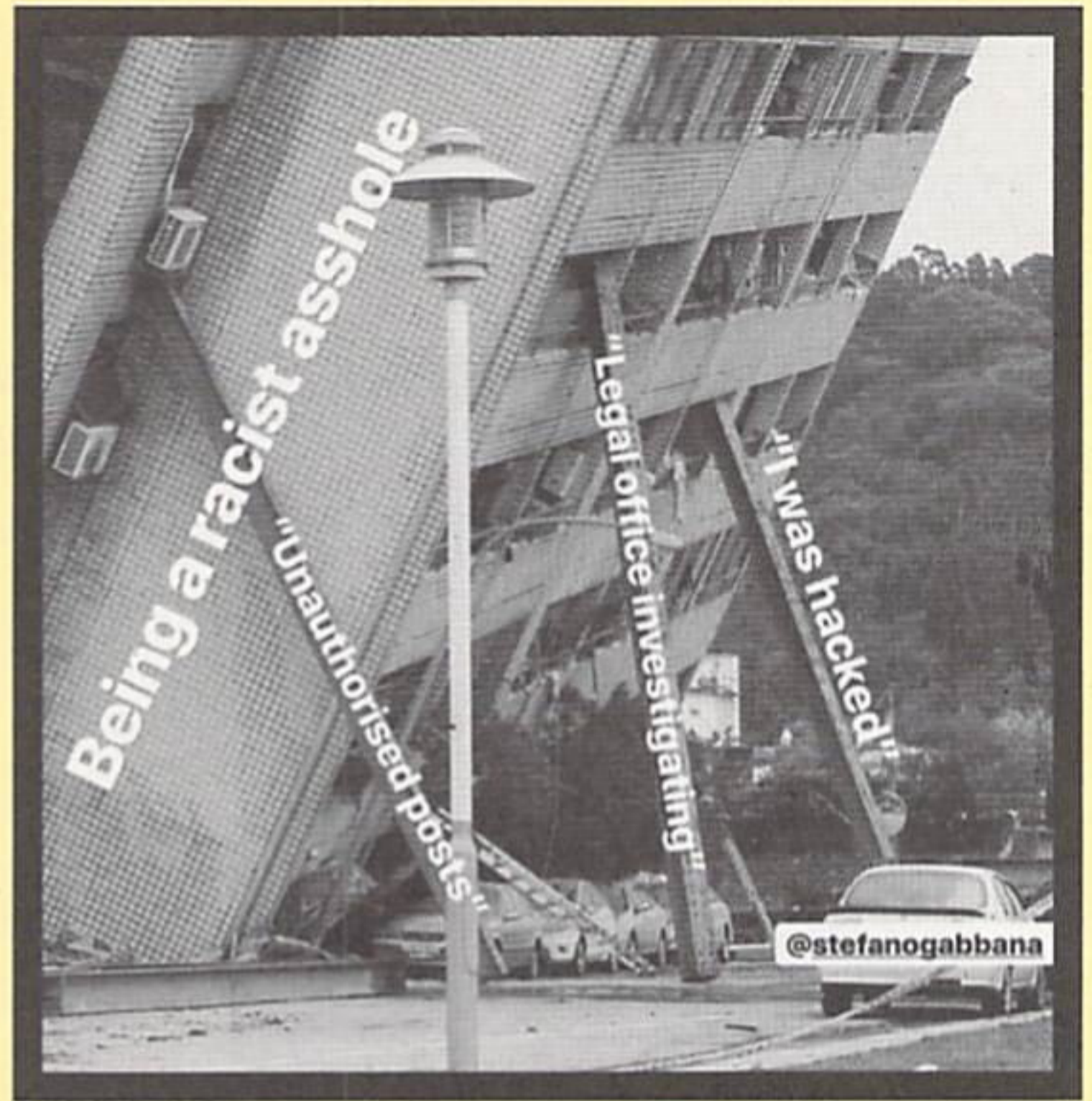
Iain Borden is Professor of Architecture & Urban Culture, and Vice-Dean Education, at The Bartlett, University College London. He most recently published *Skateboarding and the City: a Complete History*, with Bloomsbury.



INSTAPOSTS

Your Post Has Been Deleted

We removed your post because it doesn't follow our **Community Guidelines** on harassment or bullying. If you violate our guidelines again, your account may be restricted or disabled.



1

heavydiscussion So much for discussion. Disappointed but not surprised.

49w



fauxrealiti Did she report that post?

49w 1 like Reply

— View replies (1)

shadymaze WOW so fragile

49w 1 like Reply

liiskrimp how the hell was that post harassment? this is what gets IG moderators attention? like..... I look at the shit that people say to most WOC in the comments of any semi-political post that never gets removed.....the people that run this app are dumb dumb

49w 8 likes Reply

yoonion Who knew Jayden Smith was such a volatile subject?!?!?

49w 11 likes Reply

— View replies (3)

mdsdpb Oy vey

49w 1 like Reply

konartstudio Yoood

49w 2 likes Reply

dirtygary212 Yo wtf

49w 1 like Reply

prizefighterny Insta-skaters

49w 2 likes Reply

prizefighterny Honestly I just saw alot of 'hey know your roots' going on. It was you who was



2

heavydiscussion @writeapostcard #witchhunt

33w

philjacksonphoto so many men being witchhunted these days

33w 1 like Reply

dereksong Lol

33w 1 like Reply

eurevka LOLLLL

33w 1 like Reply

danielpsac I wanna watch it crumble in slow mo tbh

33w 2 likes Reply

_jaime_reyes

33w 1 like Reply

johannasaurus And nothing value was lost

33w 2 likes Reply

kimrcrooks Fuck that guy. Racist asshole. No room for that kind of crap these days, it's almost 2019, and times are (finally) changing (not fast enough). What happened yesterday, fucking world changing.

33w 3 likes Reply

adrianx_

33w 1 like Reply

anachromestudio Rofl he deserves ignorance

33w 1 like Reply

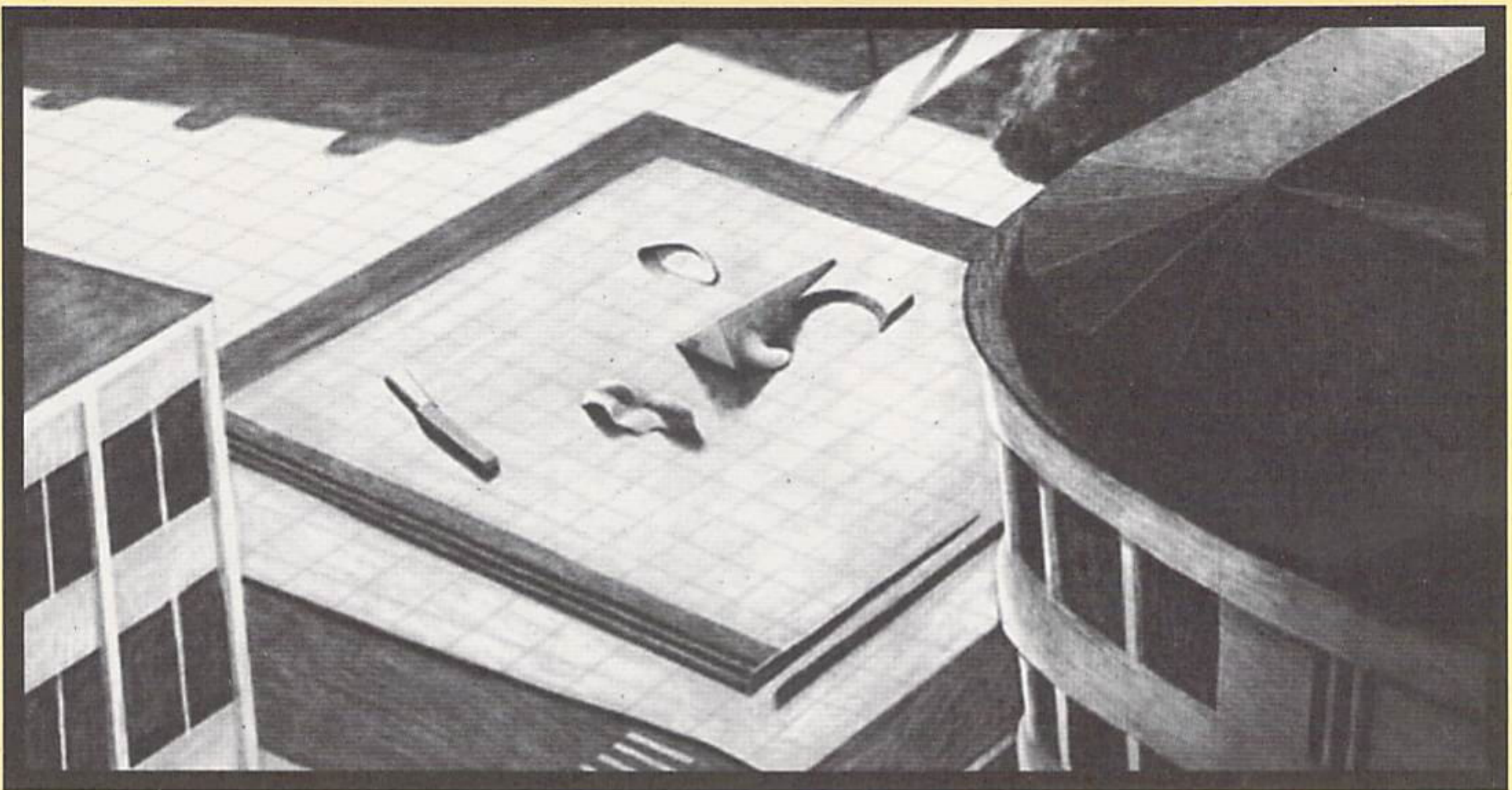
hanaokada @tashapau_ I love the memes that come out of bad things tho

33w 1 like Reply

— View replies (1)

birdisthename I feel this pag





1 Heavy Discussion, 'So much for discussion. Disappointed but not surprised', last accessed October 17, 2019, https://www.instagram.com/p/BmJfdcXlpBD/?utm_source=ig_share_sheet&igshid=1l9dsn8ewjttj Jilleen uses Instagram as a platform for discussion, but posts can be deleted when they are not following IG's community guidelines.

2 Heavy Discussion, '@writeapostcard #witchhunt', last accessed October 17, 2019, <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bqdik6YIVFj/>

3 Heavy Discussion, 'So proud of @suminaynay ❤️ this is sick. Our last HD panel in London was related to how architecture and skateboarding inform one another.. through the lens of female skaters (Alexis is also an architect). One thing I started wondering when I was putting it together are how involved are female skaters in building skateparks around the world? Maybe even more critically- how involved are female skaters during the building of skate courses at televised spectator contests with prize money?', last accessed October 17, 2019, <https://www.instagram.com/p/BnQ-sczlLOD/> - this is a skatespot in Malmo designed by pro skateboarder and MIT grad Alexis Sablone.



heavydiscussion So proud of @suminaynay 🙏 this is sick. Our last HD panel in London was related to how architecture and skateboarding inform one another.. through the lens of female skaters (Alexis is also an architect). One thing I started wondering when I was putting it together are how involved are female skaters in building skateparks around the world? Maybe even more critically- how involved are female skaters during the building of skate courses at televised spectator contests with prize money? If they

The text by Jilleen is important in that she asks how involved women are in building skateparks around the world.

Jilleen Liao is the founder of Heavy Discussion, a panel series and Instagram profile designed to increase traffic to global issues that affect skaters and non-skaters alike. This collage showcases how Instagram, has the potential of operating as a skateboarding forum with activist aspirations. Using skateboarding's most popular social media platform as its framework, Jilleen's posts address, critique and move beyond the 'shut up and skate' mantra that some skateboarders employ to distance themselves from any socio-political responsibility.

currently aren't- would they look different if they were? Etc. Her work in Malmo (to me) is a stunning and inspiring step towards answering those questions and what the future might look like. Seeing this also makes me think of this other American architect John Cary who I quoted during the panel. • "The contemporary world was literally built by men who have rarely taken the time to understand how people unlike them experience their designs. A long bathroom line might seem like a minor indignity. But the opposite can also be true. Thoughtful design can make people feel respected and seen. I've come to believe that dignity is to design what justice is to law and health is to medicine. In the simplest of terms, it's about having the spaces you inhabit reflect back your value...if good design is only for a privileged few, what good is it?"

#Repost @suminaynay

I was invited to design a skateable sculpture for a public square in Malmo this summer. Dream project. Amazing to see it all come together and so gratifying to get to skate it and see other people have fun skating it. Massive thank you to @gustaveden #jmag @bryggerietbygg @skatemalmo.se and everyone else that made it happen ❤️ "Lady in the Square"

45w



colleen.bates 🙏🙏🙏

45w 1 like Reply



_jaime_reyes @suminaynay proud of you ❤️❤️❤️

45w 3 likes Reply



michaelbarker 🙏🙏🙏 Congrats @suminaynay, this amazing!

45w 2 likes Reply

— View replies (1)



suminaynay 🙏🙏🙏



104 likes



SKATEBOARDING INTO THE SUN

I was eight years old the first time someone told me I throw like a girl. At the time, I had yet to internalize our society's association of womanhood and femininity with weakness and deficiency, so I didn't realize that 'throw like a girl' was an insult. Within a deficit model of womanhood, I was looked down on for partaking in activities typically reserved for men. Anytime I picked up

a hobby that wasn't feminine enough, my parents and family members would express their disapproval with comments such as 'you're going to have a hard time finding a husband' and 'girls shouldn't do X because it's unladylike.' Most adults in my life viewed skateboarding as an uncouth activity that drew misfits and delinquents – the antithesis of the cookie-cutter high-achieving God-fearing first-generation college student they wanted me to become. In their desire to protect me, my parents prohibited me from skateboarding, but instead of convincing me to give it up, I felt that much more drawn to the emancipatory nature of the sport.

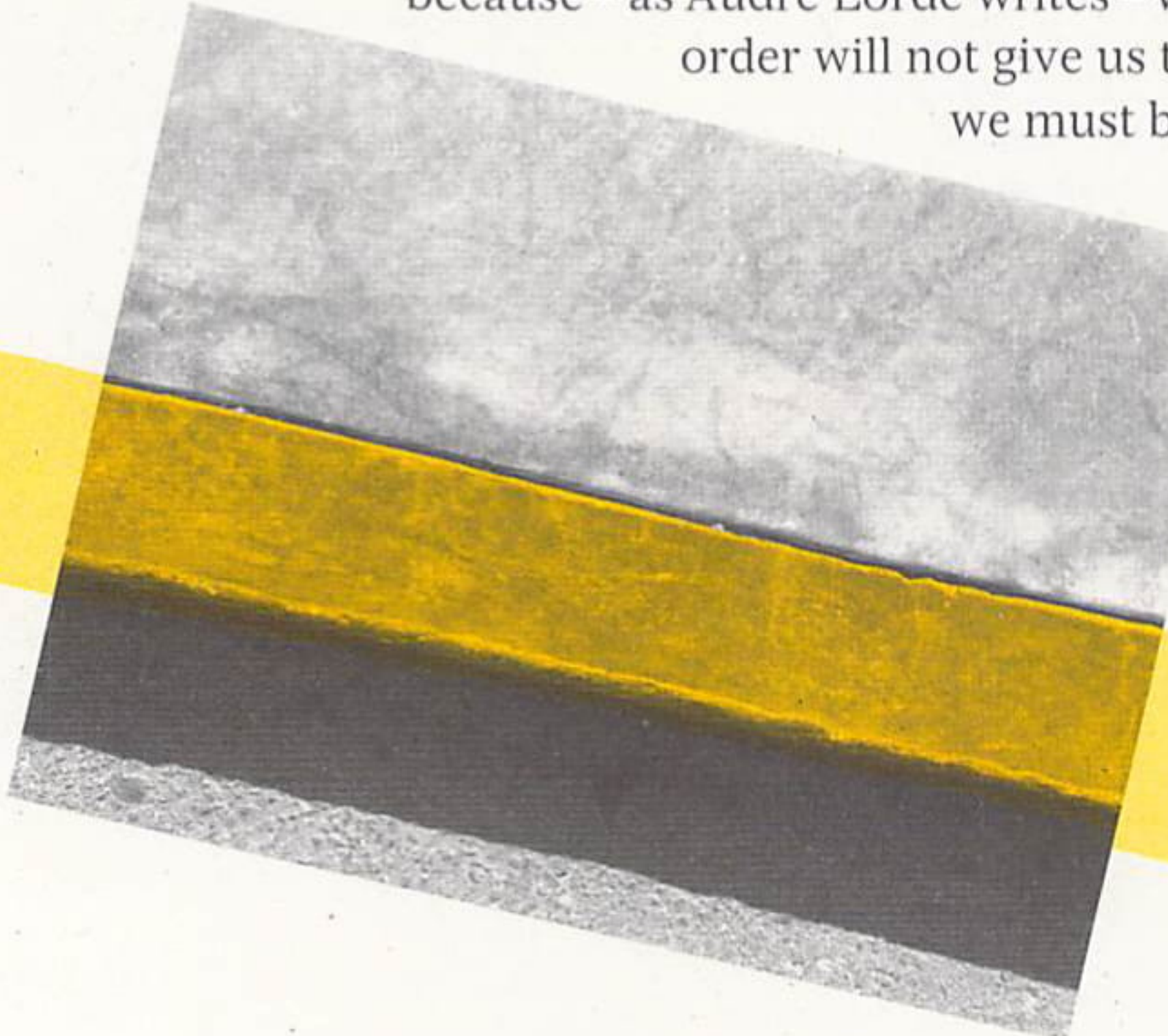
Skaters recognize that to be part of a community – to commune – is an action and that resilience involves both faith and failure. That same resilience is what powers cities – the ability to fail, learn, adapt, improve.

From Spain to South Africa, India to Mexico, I've met women who embraced the personal as political. They understood that skateboarding is a playground dominated by men because our current world order is fundamentally sexist. Instead of passively accepting systems of oppression, they invited the shadows into their practices of self-love.

They – we – sought / seek not only to resist, but to *create*. As world leaders touted politics of fear and 'me-first', skaters of all backgrounds made the impossible possible: skate parks in rural villages in South Asia, skate brands who donate all their proceeds to social projects that support youth in Palestine and refugees across Europe. We fight because we believe in a future in which we don't have to fight each other for resources and care. We build

because – as Audre Lorde writes – we know that the established world order will not give us the tools to dismantle their house, so we must build the infrastructure that supports

our vision of a more just, inclusive world for skaters and non-skaters alike. Skaters recognize that to be part of a community – to commune – is an action and that resilience involves both faith and failure. That same resilience is what powers cities – the ability to fail,



0:00:32

learn, adapt, improve. The difference is that the city is a garden; our bodies are seeds and the skateboard is the plow.

Our new cities must consider the efforts of grassroots organizations led by marginalized people who have been doing the work of challenging inequality all along. This is where skateboarding comes (back) in.

challenge the systemic inequalities that are embedded in our urban and social design. Cities must move beyond single use spaces, which are ecologically and socially unsustainable. Last but not least, our new cities must consider the efforts of grassroots organizations led by marginalized people who have been doing the work of challenging inequality all along. This is where skateboarding comes (back) in. We as skaters, architects, urbanists, academics, activists can completely redesign society; develop a completely new model for social engineering through urban, intentional, multipurpose design that leads us toward more dynamic, active, creative, community-oriented spaces.

Recognize that our fight is not about being included at the table. It's about tearing down the whole damn house and building a new one, together. This type of Interdependency that Lorde associates with women offers a 'way to a freedom which allows the I to be, not in order to be used, but in order to be creative. This is a difference between the passive be and the active being.'¹ The marginalized peoples of today say no to passive being and to being relegated to the physical and psychological peripheries of cities, societies, discourses, psychology, philosophy, possibility.

As a skater and a woman and a Black person and as a human being, I believe that girls and women should be able to do what they love and freely pursue their passions even if those passions don't conform with societal expectations of what the 'proper' role of a woman is. I believe in a future in

¹ Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press, 2007), 110–114.

Kava Garcia Vasquez is a 25 year old skateboarder from The Bronx, New York. Skateboarding is a nucleus around which Kava's passions for urban mobility, female empowerment, and social justice activism revolve. For the past two years, Kava has dedicated herself to researching the global growth of women's skateboarding movements.

which we don't have to fight each other for resources and care. I believe in a future where a skatepark is also a garden. I believe that the world we want to live in already exists in pockets around the globe inviting us to tap into both our creativity and pragmatism.

While we celebrate the skateboard's radical propositions, we must exercise caution. At the end of the day, a skateboard is ultimately just a toy. The skateboard itself is not the key to my liberation, nor is it the vehicle of the revolution. I know that the skateboard will not free me. Rather, it is a tool that changes the way I experience my body and interact with the world around me. The critical consciousness and creativity that skateboarding fosters in me are only part of the work. It is crucial that we – skateboarders, urbanists, human beings – recognize that the skateboard doesn't do the work. WE DO.

0:00:33

Despite, or perhaps because of, huge improvements in their relationship with the municipality, skaters in Nottingham risk being what foundational skate-

CAN SKATEBOARDERS IN NOTTINGHAM BE GOOD PARTNERS TO THE CITY WITHOUT BEING 'SHOCK TROOPS OF GENTRIFICATION'?

What if skaters can exercise sufficient agency to mitigate the social harm of regeneration policies by being critical and radical, rather than malleable, 'good partners' to the city?

board scholar Ocean Howell has described as – usually unwitting – agents of gentrification, and, ultimately, of their own displacement. This is visible in the story of King Edward Skatepark. Within one of Nottingham's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and close to the city's main (unofficial) street skating spot, its development in late 2016 followed what skateboarding historian Iain Borden has referred to as fluctuating 'harmony, chance and negotiation' (see page 26 above). Here, however, these phases have been overshadowed by periods of municipal hostility.

The City Council originally framed the park's development as a potentially coercive substitute for street skating. In this context, skateboarders' involvement in the park's design and activation could risk enabling 'zones of exclusion' in Glenney and O'Connor's terms in which a ban on street skating in certain parts of the city is justified by the provision of skateparks

as formally designated alternative spaces.¹ But what if skaters can exercise sufficient agency to mitigate the social harm of regeneration policies by being critical and radical, rather than malleable, 'good partners' to the city?

Conflict and exclusion

The skatepark was built in 2016 on a disused bowling green within the largely dilapidated King Edward Park. It is a short walk from (the unofficial street skating spot) Sneinton Market – a large, gently sloping plaza with granite blocks completed in December 2011. The skaters have arguably been one of the groups keeping the plaza in constant use, and the byelaw banning city centre skateboarding – including in the new plaza – is rarely enforced.² But Nottingham City Council proposed the nearby skatepark in order to move the skateboarders, commenting that: 'when considered in the public space, [skateboarders] are regularly grouped with the 'unwanted' in society... such as the homeless, prostitutes and drug dealers who no architect wants loitering in the fringes of their buildings'.³

Cooperation and development

Exercising their agency, skateboarders in Nottingham participated in the design of the skatepark. Although a very small facility, constructed with little over £80,000, it was regarded as a considerable success, even winning

0:00:34



Skater Joe Hinson being filmed by Forde Brookfield, in the otherwise empty Sneinton Market, 2017. Photo by Tom Quigley.

the 2017 East Midlands Celebrating Construction, Value Award. This success fundamentally changed the skaters' relationship with the City Council. The Council funded formal training for local coaches to support activation of the skatepark, and have since supported more recent, larger projects, including some that took place in and around Sneinton Market.⁴ To date, more than 200 locals have engaged in beginners' sessions at King Edward Park, almost half of whom were girls and women (compared to just 15 per cent nationally, according to Skateboard England).⁵

Contrast and resolution

King Edward Park seems to have enabled skateboarding to be broadly tolerated by the City. Currently, skaters are neither officially permitted in Sneinton Market – the 'no skateboarding' signs remain in situ – nor asked to leave by law enforcement. However, there are concerning headwinds for this tolerance in the form of three major redevelopment schemes that will directly border the area. The construction sites of these developments are currently cordoned off with wooden panels and adorned with commissioned street art. Is there a risk that skateboarders, having achieved a level of harmonious co-working with Local Government, are being tolerated as a form of what I will term skatewashing? That skaters' subcultural capital is seeing them conscripted as Howell's 'shock troops of gentrification'?⁶

0:00:35

Alert to the threats of gentrification on the local community and the risk of being co-opted for skatewashing, skaters in Nottingham are highlighting



Skaters at one of Skate Nottingham CIC's women and girls' beginner skate sessions, 2017. Photo by Tom Quigley.

the potentially transformative role of skateboarding: grouping people of different ages and educational levels within a non-hierarchical, mutually sup-

porting community; filling a gap created by the hollowing out of services, and; building strong relationships with other community groups, businesses and the local tenants' and residents' associations likely to be adversely affected by the new property developments over the coming years. In Nottingham – as in much of the UK – young people's services have deteriorated to an unprecedented extent.

Skate Nottingham, a Community Interest Company led by skaters, is beginning to provide services normally provided by the state that have withered or been cut. Already, the Skate Nottingham team, in delivering National Lottery-funded cultural education projects, have found themselves providing informal job search, CV and job application advice to young skaters and have signposted other third sector support services, including in cases of temporary homelessness. This heightened awareness of their agency may well be the path to skaters being both 'good partners' to the City while being both *of* and *for* the local community.

Chris Lawton is a Senior Lecturer in Economics at Nottingham Trent University, skateboarder, and co-founder of Skate Nottingham, a Community Interest Company working to develop skateboarding in the wider Nottingham area. He writes on skateboarding, politics and pop culture for *Caught in the Crossfire* magazine.

1 Brian Glenney and Paul O'Connor, 'Skateparks as hybrid elements of the city', *Journal of Urban Design*, vol. 24 no. 6 (2019) 848–849.

2 Nottingham City Council, Information Governance. *Re: Request under the Freedom of Information Act (2000)*, last modified October 30, 2015, accessed January 31, 2019, <http://open.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/informationgovernance/displayresponsefile.aspx?complaintkey=6395&filename=6395%20-%20Final%20Response.pdf>

3 Nottingham City Council, *Joint Young People Skateboard Plaza Consultation* (Nottingham: Nottingham City Council, 2014) p.17.

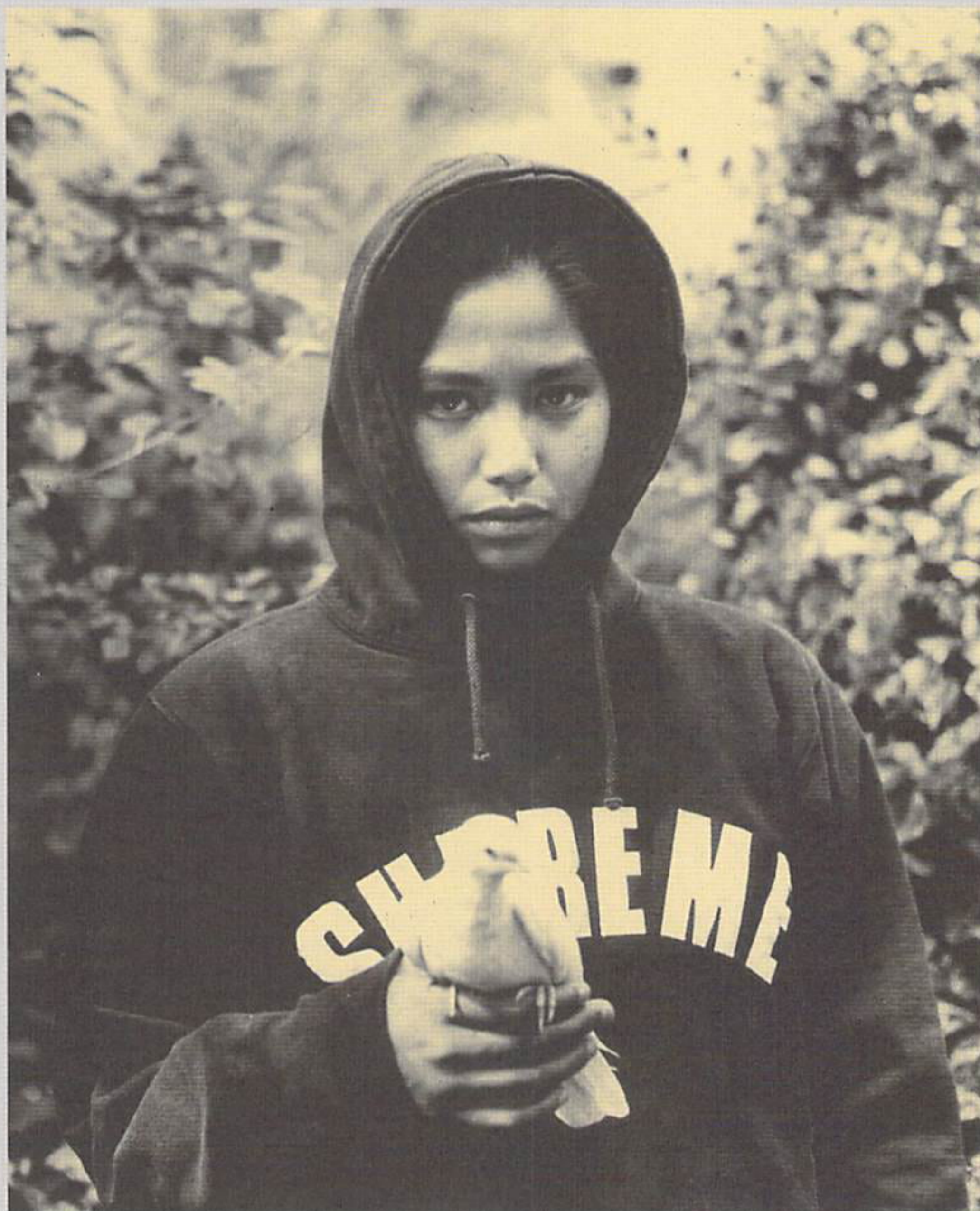
4 Skate Nottingham CIC. 'Skate Nottingham Big Lottery Fund 2018', December 2018, 2:59, <https://youtu.be/3A2fKiYyRzg>

5 *Why Skateboarding's 'not just for guys'*, BBC NEWS, last modified December 8, 2018, accessed March 15, 2019, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-nottinghamshire-46486507/why-skateboarding-s-not-just-for-guys>

6 Ocean Howell, 'The 'Creative Class' and the Gentrifying City: Skateboarding in Philadelphia's Love Park', in *Skateboard Studies*, eds. Konstantin Butz and Christian Peters (London: Koenig Books, 2018).

0:00:36

Jamie Reyes photographed by Josie Perez Ramondetta, 2003.



Louisa Menke is a professional skateboarder. Josie Perez-Ramondetta is a New York-based photographer.

When I was about 13 years old, one of the local skaters from my hometown (Hoogeveen, a small town in the Netherlands) gave me a three-hour VHS tape with copies of all of the skateboarding videos that he owned. This was the best gift someone could ever give to me at the time (1998). The VHS contained classic skate videos like *Mouse*, *Goldfish*, *Blind Trilogy*, *Blind Video Days* and a couple of *411 VM* magazines. I watched them all, over and over and over again.

At some point I noticed Jaime Reyes in one of the *411* videos, and I was so excited. I kept replaying the few tricks she had, I was so inspired, not only was she a female skater, which was extremely rare at the time, she was Hip Hop!

At the time I loved skateboarding and Hip Hop. Even though both cultures were extremely male dominated back then, it didn't stop me from identifying with it. To me it was all about the flow and the city and architecture and curbs.

Sometimes I felt crazy for doing things no other girls were doing as society made me feel like something was wrong with me.

So, seeing Jaime doing baggy-pants steezy switch back tails in an American video made me feel like I wasn't crazy and I wasn't the only one. Women like Jaime and Elissa were already out there somewhere, doing their thing. The door was open.

0:00:37

LIKE A DOG

it. Nothing physically harmful is people feel bad to me. It feels like es and all I can think is they've with a wasted woman through a night. It's too much sad shit. The know that can happen between not psychically spiraling downward. I let my friend Joni fuck me while I was wearing a vintage swimsuit one time, just by pulling the crotch panel over, okay? It's not that I'm being a judgmental asshole. It's just that about seven years ago I was sitting in a cafe and this ultra-gross dude was sitting next to me with his friend and talking about having sex with a lady through a hole in her nylons in a van while smoking crack and that was before he went to prison and got sober. So I can only be repulsed when I think of fucking through nylons. Sorry.

I skate for a little bit and mostly feel out of place, like I've stepped away from my fate on this earth and am in a weird rip in the space/time continuum. It's so baffling to be around people I can't connect with at all. I get back on the road. I try to drive a while with nothing on the radio. Now I'm listening to Barbra Streisand. I only have a *Greatest Hits* album but it's so good. I can see the grapevine ahead of me. There are still a lot of storm clouds gathered, but no rain yet. I see a little blue ahead, and it feels very disappointing. I want it to rain. I want to feel knit into an ennui bodysuit. I'm not ready for sun. I understand how grossly metaphorical that all sounds, and maybe by coincidence it *is* a metaphor,

Text excerpts from *Like a Dog* by Tara Jepsen. Copyright © 2017 by Tara Jepsen. Reprinted with the permission of City Lights Books, www.citylights.com

but I mean it literally. I feel betrayed by the return of the sun when the promise of rain hasn't been delivered.

My hotel, the Mü, is nuts. You walk is like the library of a trophy hunter. Wait, no, oh my god, those are the worst people. Like someone who is very rich and also an outdoorsman. There are geodes on the shelves! There is a basket with glass balls, some thick volumes of lit-

0:00:38

appropriate mood.

It's somewhat awkward that when I skate with a boon of dudes, they are most often way better than me with regard to Skills Executed. Tricks. But that presumes you think tricks are the highest form of skateboarding, which I don't. Style is everything. Of *course* I would be pumped to be able to do crazy shit. But I'm just looking for frontside grinds on pool coping: loud, crunching, hammering noise from my trucks into the rarefied air next to the concrete. The ether that holds all the grace and insanity of the world. This is one great way of shouting into the void. Skating needs to be about letting go of my thoughts, not about obsessing over the particulars of a trick.

There are six guys here, all from Kerlin. Brown, white, the usual. Mostly in their twenties but a couple in their late thirties. Lifers on wide boards manufactured by small companies. There is a lot of "fuck yeah" and beer going down. When I skate they are somewhat quiet, because I think they're so used to saluting trophy moves that if someone just has soul without the peacock feathers, they don't know what to do.

I drop in and completely eat shit. Down on my left hip in a pile of cheap mops (my limbs). The drop-in is super steep and not really worth attempting, but I love a scary drop-in. The dudes go silent.

"Whoa," I say.

"You okay?" one of the guys—Carter—asks.

"Totally. Mind if I try that again?"

"Take it!"

Everyone is silent again as I set my tail on the coping. I



**LONG
LIVE
SOUTH
BANK.**

For Long Live Southbank, the last four years have seen a huge spectrum of local community members and lovers of the Undercroft space coming together to help raise the £1.1m required for legendary sections of the space to be restored. The reopened 426m² of space is open for free public use 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

This is a big positive step for free creative space in London and we're thankful for Southbank Centre's collaboration in making this a reality. This project is an example to others fighting for access to free creative space, both in London and further afield, showing that with a little perseverance, communities can create better spaces for the future.

Long Live Southbank would like to thank every single individual who has been a part of this project. We would like to extend special thanks to Brixton's Baddest Skateshop, HENI, Feliden Clegg Bradley Studios, Assemble, Feed, Nice and Serious, Price & Myers, Marshalls and everybody who's sat around the table.

The restoration has been supported by the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund, The London Marathon Charitable Trust, Sports England, The Architectural Heritage Fund, Palace Skateboards, Supreme, adidas Skateboarding and thousands of individual donors.



Editors

Ben Campkin
Rebecca Ross

Guest Editors

Thom Callan-Riley
Sander Hölsgens

Design

Bandiera, Guglielmo Rossi
and Paola Ferrarotti

With gratitude

Urban Pamphleteer is
supported by UCL
Urban Laboratory.

Printing

Belmont Press

Contact

<http://urbanpamphleteer.org>
email@urbanpamphleteer.org

Urban Pamphleteer
UCL Urban Laboratory
Gordon House
29 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PY

Cover

Curb, California, 2018.
Photo by Ted Barrow.

February 2020

Back Issues

- #1 Future & Smart Cities
- #2 Regeneration Realities
- #3 Design & Trust
- #4 Heritage & Renewal in Doha
- #5 Global Education for
Urban Futures
- #6 Open Source Housing Crisis
- #7 LGBTQ+ Night-time spaces:
Past Present & Future

Available online at
urbanpamphleteer.org
Plain text version available
on request from:
urbanlaboratory@ucl.ac.uk

Thanks!

Central Saint Martins Graphic
Communication Design
The Bartlett, UCL Faculty of
the Built Environment
Clare Melhuish
Jordan Rowe
Sam Wilkinson

© 2020 All content remains
the property of *Urban
Pamphleteer's* authors, editors
and image producers. In some
cases, existing copyright
holders have granted single
use permissions.

ISSN 2052-8647 (Print)
ISSN 2052-8655 (Online)

@urbanpamphlet

Ben Campkin is Co-Director of UCL
Urban Laboratory and Professor of History
and Theory of Architecture and Urbanism
at The Bartlett School of Architecture.
He is the author of *Remaking London* (IB
Tauris, 2013).

Rebecca Ross is MA Course Leader
and Senior Lecturer in the Graphic
Communication Design Programme at
Central Saint Martins. She is the creator of
the 'London is Changing' campaign (2015).

Sander Hölsgens is a visual
anthropologist and postdoctoral research
fellow at University of Groningen. He is
a co-founder of Pushing Borders and
Re-verb Skateboarding.

Thom Callan-Riley is a PhD candidate
at the Bartlett School of Architecture
studying collective memory and collective
imagination in skateboarding. He is a co-
founder of Pushing Borders and Re-verb
Skateboarding.



WHAT IS A SKATE DOT?



CITY MILL SKATE



WE DON'T REALLY
KNOW YET - HELP
US FIND OUT!



UrbAN
PAmphlEtEeR



Follow City Mill Skate

WHAT IS A
SKATE DOT



So what is a skate dot?

WE DON'T RE
KNOW YET

T ?

urban lab



EALLY

It could look like this

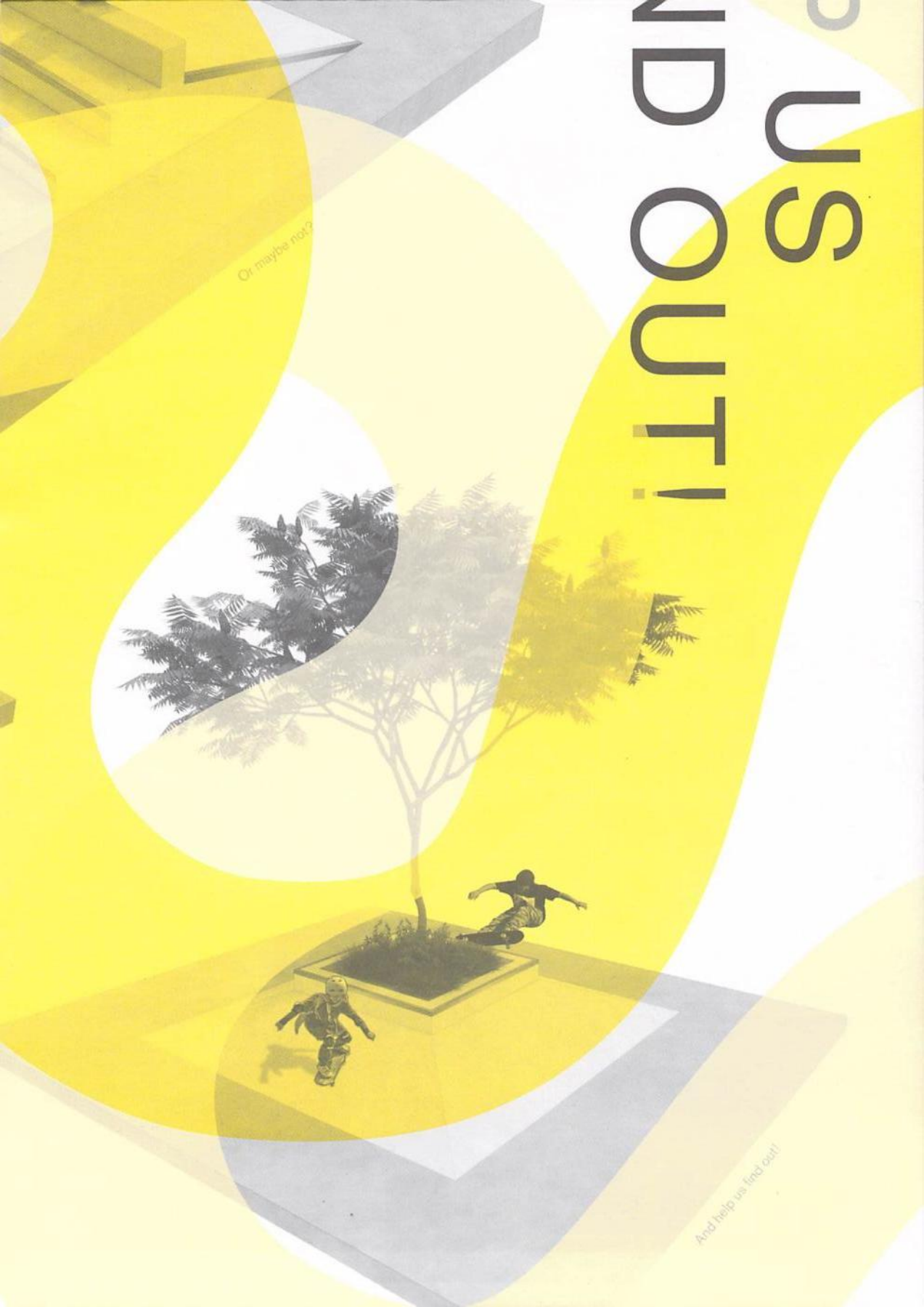
THE FIN



US AND OUT!

Or maybe not?

And help us find out!



City Mill Skate Pilot Research Locations

1 Girls Can't Skate Crew Hackney Bumps



As part of our initial research for City Mill Skate, we caught up with a group of local skaters, the Girls Can't Skate crew and battled the winds for a quick session at Victoria Park Raemers Skatepark. Afterward we headed over to Hackney Bumps, a hidden but legendary skatepark in Clapton, to hear more about their experiences of skating different spots and how their ideas around the ownership of public space could help the City Mill Skate project.

2 Girls Can't Skate Crew Victoria Park



After dodging some patchy weather, we met up with the Girls Can't Skate crew for a shred at Victoria Park Raemers Skatepark.

They shared their experiences of working on skate-related community projects, where they like to skate and why, and what makes a skate spot good vs bad. They also had some excellent ideas on how the design of skateable spaces can make them accessible to everyone.

3 Metal Pegs Crew Mabley Green DIY spot



For our initial research, we also met up with the Metal Pegs BMX crew to hear about the history of the DIY spot AKA 'The Gym' that they built at Mabley Green.

They talked us through what led them to build the spot, as well as explaining their design and construction process. They had some great ideas to share on making a spot as inclusive as possible and how this could help our project.

4 Little Wednesday Crew: Wickside



To help us understand the needs of local skaters, we met up with the Little Wednesday crew, to visit the Wickside DIY spot (now defunct) at Clarnico Quay.

The Little Wednesday skaters talked us through the history of the spot: how it was found, planned and constructed back in 2017 and how this process could influence our ideas for developing City Mill Skate.

5 E5 Skate Rats Mile End Skatepark



We began our pilot research for the City Mill Skate project by talking to the E5 Skate Rats, a group of younger skaters from Clapton in East London.

As well as taking care of business at Mile End Skatepark, they were keen to share their thoughts on where else they like to skate locally and what makes a good spot vs a bad spot.

6 UCL East campus



The City Mill Skate project aims to realise the construction of permanent skateable architecture within the new UCL East campus.

The UCL East campus will sit across two sites on Pool Street and Marshgate, next to the City Mill River in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Construction on the UCL East campus begins in March 2020 and it will open from 2022.

Other Skate Project Locations

7 Hackney Bumps Action Group



Hackney Bumps is a project started by several local skaters, to renovate the amazing (but overlooked) skatepark at Daubeney Fields in Clapton. Alongside organising several events, The Hackney Bumps team have been busy renovating sections of the skatepark themselves. Hackney Bumps also recently met with the Mayor of Hackney, Philip Glanville, and representatives from Sport England to discuss further improvements to the site. For further updates follow the Hackney Bumps Instagram page: @hackneybumps

8 Clarnico Quay



Although the Wickside DIY spot was demolished some time ago, the London Legacy Development Corporation and Make Shift architects are redeveloping the site. Clarnico Quay (as it is now known) will host an array of opportunities including workplaces, markets, and may include a skatepark. Look out for updates later in 2020!

For updates on the Clarnico Quay plans as they develop visit: www.clarnicoquay.org

9 The Bartlett School of Architecture at Here East

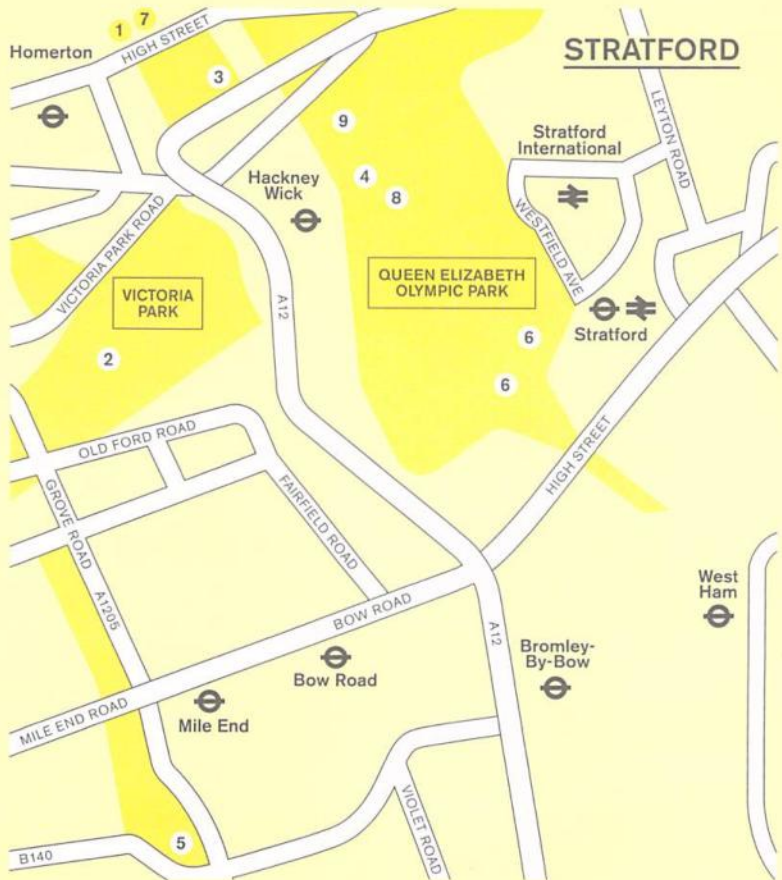


Although construction work has only just started on the UCL East campus, The Bartlett School of Architecture (a part of UCL) established a new facility at the nearby Here East complex in early 2018.

The Bartlett School of Architecture has established a history of research into skateboarding and the built environment – and several of the 2020 City Mill Skate workshops are planned to take place within The Bartlett's facility at Here East.

LOCATIONS:

- 1 Girls Can't Skate Crew: Hackney Bumps Daubeney Fields, Clapton, London E9 5AW
- 2 Girls Can't Skate Crew: Victoria Park Victoria Park Raemers Skatepark, London E9 7DD
- 3 Metal Pegs Crew: Mabley Green DIY spot, A12 Undercroft, Lee Conservancy Road, London, E9 5HW
- 4 Little Wednesday Crew: Wickside at Clarnico Quay, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London E20 3HB
- 5 E5 Skate Rats: Mile End Skatepark St Paul's Way, Mile End, London E3 4AG
- 6 UCL East campus: Montfichet Rd, London E15 2JE
- 7 Hackney Bumps Action Group: Daubeney Fields, Clapton, E9 5AW
- 8 Clarnico Quay: Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London E20 3HB
- 9 The Bartlett School of Architecture at Here East: 8 – 9 East Bay Lane, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London E15 2GW



City Mill Skate is a research project that uses a shared design process to build a proposal for the construction of permanent skateable objects within the new UCL East campus, in London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

This is part of a wider set of initiatives across UCL that seek to broaden participation in education and ultimately to change perceptions of what attending university can be like.

Via a programme of events throughout 2020, City Mill Skate will build a diverse community of skateboarders around the site of the future UCL East campus. For 2020, this will include skate lessons, design and making workshops, DIY build test projects and more. Updates at:

Instagram @citymillskate
www.citymillskate.com

