

!ori-

travel

from the source

01



KAUAI

COLOMBIA

NIGERIA

MEXICO

*Don't just travel the world,
be a part of it.*

Travel is a form of connection, not only with places and experiences, but with friends around the world. Ori is dedicated to deepening those connections, celebrating curiosity and diving into authentic encounters.

We work with talented writers, photographers, and artists to tell their local stories on a global scale, inspiring travel through experience rather than an algorithm.

*This is travel
from the source.*



Golden hour in the Mt.
Baker Wilderness, WA.
Photo: Meera Rajagopalan



Up There

Photos and captions by **Overview/Nearmap**

Previous Spread

The beaches in Perth, Australia are world-famous for their beautiful white sand and clear blue water. They're also home to currents and swirls created by waves hitting offshore reefs. While the patterns in the water may be beautiful, they also create powerful undertows that can be perilous for surfers and swimmers.

Right hand Image

The Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville, California contains an aircraft boneyard with more than 150 retired planes. Because the demand for jumbo jets has dropped significantly in the last two decades in favor of smaller, more affordable twin-engine planes, many large aircrafts such as Boeing 747s have been parked in the desert. The dry conditions in Victorville—located on the edge of the Mojave Desert—limits metal corrosion, meaning planes can be stored here for years while they are stripped for spare parts. ♪





Departments

2 Up Here		
2	WELCOME TO WILD	
Dropping By		
14	AT THE FOLD	
Street Sense		
16	KING’S ROAD, HONG KONG	
Our Words		
18	BIOLUMINESCENCE	124
Contributors		
120	MEET OUR MAKERS	
Home Cooked		
	BURANI BONJON WITH NASRIN NOORI	
Point/Shoot		
126	TRAVELING WITH FILM: AIRPORT EDITION	
Illustration		
128	ON READ	

Features

20	NO BLANK SPACES The Fight for Mexico City’s Street Food Art Words by Tamara De Anda	78	WHEN THE BULLS CAME TO TOWN Traditions Clash in Colombia’s First Free Slave Town Words & Photos by Joe Swide
36	ENERGY! How Lagos Launched the Global Afrobeats Takeover Words by Oris Aigbokhaevbolo	92	ROOTED The Regenerative Movement Fueling Kauai’s Future Words by Kaila Yu
52	HOME A Love Letter to Canada’s Rugged Backyard Photographs by Kari Medig	106	OPEN WATER Basque Country’s Greatest Race Words by Pablo Martinez
68	Category Is: BODEGA CATS Photographs by Brian Finke		

Cover
“Our legs were cooked. After trekking out of Cañon de Colca, a chasm twice as deep as the Grand Canyon, we collapsed onto a curb in the small Peruvian desert district of Cabanaconde. While our group struggled to get to our feet, this guy was struggling to get his van back on the road. We leaned into the early morning sun, realizing none of us were going anywhere anytime soon.” Photo by **Kade Krichko**

This spread, **Picos de Europa, Spain.**

Back Cover
“We spent a week in July 2022 dodging weather patterns in the Lofoten Islands of Norway, chasing golden hour in the land where the sun doesn’t set. It was epic.” Photo by **Christie FitzPatrick**



Ori Issue 01 MASTHEAD

Founding Editor Kade Krichko
Art Director Chris Bywater
Creative Specialist Shae Haglund
Publisher Josh Malczyk
Marketing Steve Hemphill

Copy Editing Heather Hansman
Jake Stern
Drew Tabke

Spiritual Editor Florence Hastings

Lifetime Subscriber Cheri Lazenby

Writers Oris Aigbokhaevbolo
Tamara De Anda
Christie FitzPatrick
Sophie Lau
Pablo Martínez
Pier Nirandara
Emily Nilsen
Joe Swide
Alex Temblador
Overview
Kaila Yu

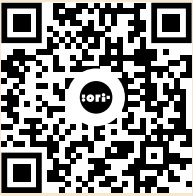
Photographers Eunice Adorno
Jess Barnard
Humberto Bilbao
Andrew Esiebo
Brian Finke
Christie FitzPatrick
Hashi Media
Christina Kayser
Nainoa Langer
Lau Family Archives
Kari Medig
Annah Nelson-Feeney
Pier Nirandara
Guy Olson
Overview/NearMaps
Vimal Singh
Joe Swide
Meera Rajagopalan
Matt Repplier

ILLUSTRATORS Martín Hernández
Natalie Dupille

Ori is published twice a year for \$60 (U.S. subscription rate). Combining stunning photography with thought-provoking narrative, we are creating a sustainable ecosystem for storytellers around the world. To get your travel from the source, visit Ori-Mag.com.

Printed in Canada, distributed around the globe.





This magazine is a product of Origen Industries, LLC.

Subscriptions and Retail Orders:
Ori-Mag.com
455 N. 44th St., Seattle, WA 98103
Email: hello@ori-mag.com

Contributions: Ori is not responsible for unsolicited contributions. All unsolicited contributions must be accompanied with proper return postage and materials. All reasonable care is taken during shipping, handling, and processing of photos and art. Ori Issue 1: Fall 2023. (Copyright) 2023 Or-igen Industries, LLC. All rights reserved. Content may not be reproduced without express written permission from Origen Industries, LLC. Ori retains rights to reprint published materials con-sistent with its original use, including use in other language editions or in future anthology forms, podcasts, films, social media, TV, etc. Contributors also retain rights. Send contributions to hel-lo@ori-mag.com with the subject “Pitch”.

Postmaster Statement: Please send address changes to Ori, c/o Hemlock, 811 First Ave., Suite 409, Seattle, WA 98104





:ori-

Merchandise

Add Ori apparel and prints to your wardrobe, coffee table, and wall. Support independent storytellers by shopping our exclusive collection.

Scan to shop,
subscribers recieve
10% off all merchandise.



ori-mag.com/merch

Dropping By

At the Fold

Words by **Kade Krichko** Photo by **Matt Repplier**

“The world is big, the world is small,” Leo once told me, his blue eyes gleaming beneath a mottled white bucket hat. Well into his 90s, he’d seen a lot of it—fleeing a post-Civil War Spain, working in the forests of Norway, and chasing down family in Ecuador before settling in Seattle, Washington.

We’d met on a park bench. He wore a shirt that read “Free Spanish Lessons,” and, well, I’d always wanted to learn. To be honest, he wasn’t much of a teacher, often interrupting me to launch into a monologue about lentil soup or bullfighting. The latter gave him particular joy, perhaps because of how much it made my stomach turn. Still, there was something endearing about the old man, about how he connected history, place, food, even the people walking by our bench. According to Leo, the world was *un pañuelo*, a handkerchief unfurling, extending, doubling back—but always a singular piece of cloth. Maybe it’s how he found such happiness in familiar faces. Maybe it’s how he endured long absences, and even longer distances.

Leo had never been back to his hometown, Santillana del Mar. *Ni santi. Ni llana. Ni cerca del mar*, he would always joke. Not saintly. Not flat. Not anywhere near the sea. When I moved to Spain a few years later, I sought out his little village in the province of Cantabria. He was right—despite being impossibly beautiful, it was none of the three.

I eventually folded back to Seattle, sharing the news, and a laugh with my old friend. Something changed in our relationship that day. He started emailing me,

typing out messages in all caps like a 90-something with a Hotmail address would. Despite often being oceans away, Leo had a funny way of always feeling close. He made that big world feel small, when normal could, at times, feel so far away.

Ori was built on this idea of connection, that we are all living on this same complex, folded, and sometimes sticky piece of cloth. The folds can be planned, random, or haphazard but, as Leo pointed out, they’re all worth exploring.

We’re leaning on friends new and old to do just that—to tell the stories of the places they call home, and to help us all find something familiar in something totally new.

One of Leo’s last messages came in the early days of COVID. He cursed being inside, saying he was excited to give me a hug—and clean up my Spanish. I never got that hug, but in many ways this magazine has brought Leo and his connective ethos into my life again. Heck, we even snuck our version of a bullfighting story into the first issue (albeit without the bloodshed). It felt like a fitting nod to an old friend.

Welcome to the first ever issue of Ori, a place to celebrate where we come from and get excited about where we’re going. Thank you for joining us on our origin story, we are so excited to meet you at the fold, wherever that may be. ♪



Street Sense

King's Road, Hong Kong

Words by Sophie Lau

Half a world away from its London namesake, King's Road unfurls across the north of Hong Kong Island and wraps its way around my heart. At first glance, it might seem nothing more than a major thoroughfare, but if you look a little deeper, you'll uncover the scent of curried fish balls and fresh egg waffles—a gentle nostalgia that transports me back to my childhood.

This street and its surrounding thruways used to be lined with hawkers, their stalls resplendent with roasted chestnuts, meat skewers, and all manners of cheap and cheerful street food. But a wave of modernization washed many stalls away. Blunt “No Hawking” signs now take their place, but I still search for a vendor covertly selling stinky tofu.

My grandma lived here throughout my childhood. When I stayed with her, we visited a teahouse every morning. Our order never changed: two steamers of *xiao long bao*, one steamer of *siu mai*, and a portion of *zhaliang* for me; a steamer of *ha gau*, steamed chicken rolls, and a plate of plain *cheung fun* for my grandma—all scribbled on a wilting order slip.

Today, the city is shifting, and our favorite teahouse is no more. But this is still King's Road, our Hong Kong. 📍

Two-Dish Delicacies

Is there anything more Hong Kong than the two-dish-rice? A takeaway container with rice and two dishes of your choosing—it may seem simple, but it's a staple along this strip. Depending on the eatery, these can range from sweet-and-sour pork to a whole steamed fish. Along King's Road, you'll be spoiled for choice, but the trick to choosing a good restaurant is looking for the glossiest roast ducks hanging in the window—the more dripping fat, the better!

Chun Yeung Market

If cooking at home is more your style, live like a local and buy groceries from a wet market. It's hard to describe the mixture of abject horror and old-school charm you feel when the pungent smell of raw meat, live seafood, and ripe fruit smacks you in the face at Chun Yeung Market, just off King's Road. Mind your feet near shoppers with trolley bags and, if you're on the taller side, watch out for the lower-than-expected overhead lights.



The Stamp Man

There is a well-known artisan on Tong Shui Road (a small street connecting King's Road and Chun Yeung Market) who carves personalized ink stamps. In middle school, when it was obligatory to label our textbooks and Bible, I bought a stamp of my name. A few years later, he etched my company logo into his rubber pad. Yeeh Man Hin started out as a teenager printing business cards and stamps in 1974, and in the five decades that followed, he perfected his craft.

Sunbeam Theatre

For five decades, the Sunbeam Theatre has been a monument to the lasting legacy of Cantonese Opera—an artform inscribed onto the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Its enormous neon sign greets me as I walk from the subway station back home, and it's not uncommon to see crowds form in the lobby, socializing under billowing “HOUSE FULL” banners while waiting for their favorite singers to take the stage.

Herbal Healing

If ever you are feeling under the weather, pay Yi Shou Tan Liang Tea a visit. Have a sore throat or feeling feverish? Have a 24 flavors herbal tea. Just need a general detox? Grab a bowl of *guilinggao*. Want a wild (and very bitter) adventure? Choose at random! Bowls are pre-filled on the counter and clearly labeled with the price, so just lift up the lid, down your drink of choice. Just make sure to pay before leaving.

Our Words

Beauty in Impermanence

Words and photo by **Pier Nirandara**

It was early spring in Cape Town, South Africa, and the ground began to warm after a cold winter in the Southern Hemisphere. I'd spent the past few months plunging deeper—physically and metaphysically—into this country, and in turn it had altered the course of my life. I approached it with my eyes open, learning more than I could have ever imagined, peeling back layers of history, race, and representation in marine spaces.

That evening, I drove through Cape Town to Fish Hoek, a community on the Cape Peninsula. On the beach, I met up with Naudé Heunis, a wildlife filmmaker, and Mogamat Shamier Magmoet, a freediver and co-founder of the Sea The Bigger Picture Foundation. I'd heard reports of bioluminescence, a phenomenon that occurs when there's a red tide—a harmful algae bloom that is exacerbated by human activity and natural factors like shifting sea temperatures and fertilizer run-off. It chokes oxygen from the water, killing other marine creatures while radiating a stunning blue—simultaneously deadly and beautiful.

A salty chill hung in the air, but that didn't deter countless Capetonians from flooding the beach, all keen to experience a sliver of real-life magic. Extra bright in the moonless night, the waves were tinged a phosphorescent blue, glowing against the darkness as each set crumbled onto the beach.

We spent hours swimming in the sea, trying to capture the scene. Bioluminescent algae flashes upon contact and with constant movement, so Magmoet swirled his hands in the waves, diving beneath the surface, stirring up water. Heunis and I followed, cameras in hand.

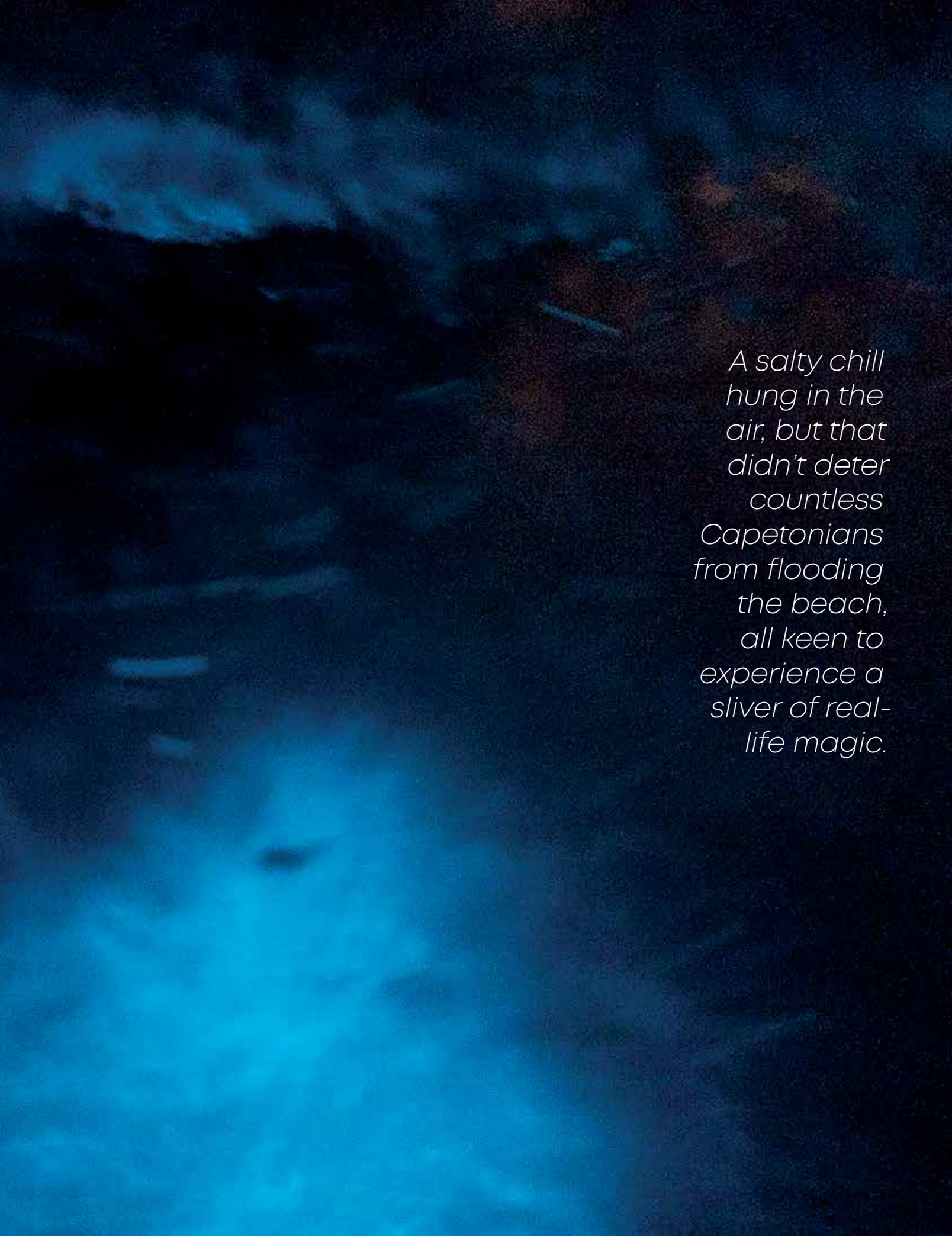
But the glow lasted for mere seconds before dissipating. Something about trying to capture it reminded me of astrophotography, but this was far more challenging. Imagine trying to photograph stars. Now make them evanescent. And underwater. The task was near impossible.

After what felt like an eternity, I gave up and glanced away from my screen. It took a few moments for my eyes to adjust to the surrounding darkness.

Slowly, the world crystallized into focus. I was swimming in an ocean of stars—beneath a larger sky of stars. I ran a hand across the surface of the water. Aquamarine sparks rippled from my fingertips.

Nearby, excited squeals from strangers echoed across the bay as they trailed streams of blue like comets in space. Parents towed kids behind, their young ones crying out in ecstatic glee. I pulled another hand through the water, trying to cup the light in my palm. Blue glitter leaked from my fingers and fled into the darkness. But it didn't matter. My heart had cracked open, allowing the light to seep in.

So often, we try to capture beauty and miss the moment. We attempt, desperately, to hold on to fleeting seconds, to phenomena, to feelings. Dropping my camera and skimming the water was a gentle reminder of transience—the inability to bottle up magic. Perhaps the point of underwater photography wasn't about capturing impermanence—perhaps it was about letting go. About ceding control to the elements, recognizing one's own powerlessness, and appreciating what a privilege it is to witness natural beauty in its rawest form. ♡



*A salty chill
hung in the
air, but that
didn't deter
countless
Capetonians
from flooding
the beach,
all keen to
experience a
sliver of real-
life magic.*

The fight for Mexico City's street food art

Words by **Tamara De Anda**
Photos by **Eunice Adorno**
Illustration by **Martín Hernandez**

"Imagine living in Switzerland and missing all of this." It's a saying Mexicans often use to celebrate all of the unusual, yet daily things that make living in this country so unique. During the pandemic, for instance, there was Pandemio, the fuzzy panda mascot that danced and entertained crowds as they lined up for vaccinations. Imagine living in Switzerland and missing that. Or the marvels of the *tianguis*, bustling outdoor markets where, while doing your weekly grocery shopping you passed between mountains of knockoff clothing, listening to the best selection of music from each stand: *cumbia* in one, *reggaeton* in the other, *corrido tumbado*, 90s pop. Or running to work in the early morning, and stopping for a tamale along the way. You can still feel the heat from the steaming pot before pulling out spongy dough filled with tender meat and salsa. Imagine.

Imagine living in Switzerland and there is no color.

19.4326° N, 99.1332° W

The cultures that make up the geopolitical invention we call Mexico are unapologetically visual, and Mexico City is no exception. Seriously, we have perhaps the only public transportation system in the world that has a different design and drawing for each stop. Have you heard the saying, “a picture says a thousand words”? Well, we are on the extreme end of the spectrum. Design and color just make sense to us. If you sell tortas on the street in our city, you would need a lot of words to describe those chewy rolls heated on the griddle and stacked with milanesa, ham, sausage, avocado, tomato, chiles, and cheese. It’s probably more efficient to hire an artist that’s up to the task, a *rotulista*, or sign painter, specializing in creating such appetizing delicacies in a way that both exaggerates and informs. Their *rótulos*, the popular street signs that are so often synonymous with local business, captivate the imagination (and wallet). Adding a flourish to your business name traced in striking red and yellow letters, rótulos have a way of imprinting the experience in memory banks long after a meal or errand is finished.

I’ve been obsessed with these signs-turned-blue-collar-art-exhibitions since I was a little girl. They were everywhere. Near the metro. Around open-air markets. Outside the bustling weekday office buildings. Seeing those bold, carefree brushstrokes relieved me of the pressure I felt to “draw

This isn’t just a change of business though, it’s a sweeping tide of gentrification that is altering the place we call home.

correctly,” the imagined artistic oppression imposed at home and in school. These street paintings didn’t adhere to the rules of art or design. Plus, they just seemed creative and fun. A family of teeth, grinning wide and holding hands while advertising a dental office? Brilliant! A cartoon key with human-like muscles and tools in hand to promote a proficient locksmith? Someone give this man a prize!

Since I got my first digital camera in 2005, I’ve dedicated myself to finding and photographing these rótulos on my wanderings through my city. It didn’t take long to realize that these works of art were fleeting. Businesses changed, the rain of fruit from the juice bar giving way to a serious looking bull on the new *tacos de suadero* stand. The changes only made me appreciate my collection more, and lament the art that escaped my lens, like the mural of revolutionary Emiliano Zapata crossed with Spongebob Squarepants that adorned a little corner store near my house.

I’m almost 40 now and I have watched as, little by little, the rótulos have disappeared. This isn’t just a change of business though, it’s a bore tide of gentrification that is altering the place we call home. The butcher shop left, and the exaggerated form of Foghorn Leghorn buying a kilogram of chicken breast went with it. Now it’s an organic grocer with an aseptic design no doubt crafted by a soulless ad agency.

But none of the erasure comes close to what happened last year in the neighborhood of Cuauhtémoc, the area I call home. In a matter of weeks, the local government painted over every temporary and permanent rótulo on one of the most celebrated streets in all of Mexico City, leaving monochrome scars where our community’s vibrance once shone. Our colorful city was suddenly reduced to a shade of gray.





GRACIAS POR
SU PROPINA



Martín Hernández hand paints one of the many signs lining his artisan shop.



A well-documented ancestor of Mexico City's rótulos are the vast painted murals of *pulquerias*, the bars that have served traditional *pulque* drinks throughout the capital city for over a century. Pulque comes from fermented maguey nectar and has been consumed in Mexico since the Aztecs roamed here. Many consider pulque, not tequila, our national drink and the pulquerias are where the nation goes to drink it. These watering holes decorated their spaces with massive paintings of landscapes, animals, and impossibly beautiful, almost godlike women. At the beginning of the 20th century, this art grabbed the attention of famous muralists like Diego Rivera, who once publicly declared them "Mexico's best visual poetry." American photographer Edward Weston said that those who wanted to learn how

to paint should find inspiration in a pulqueria, not an art academy, and the incomparable Frida Kahlo, who gave painting classes, helped her students paint the walls of the pulqueria La Rosita near her home in Coyoacán.

But as those murals gained fame in art circles, a campaign against the drink itself was sweeping the country. Those in power saw pulque as the antithesis of a culture yearning for modernity, a society better represented by an emerging beer industry that utilized European recipes and production methods. The newspaper *Excélsior* described pulque bars as "the capital's greatest shame." They also said that pulque was fermented with dog poop, a myth that made the rounds, especially in Generation X and beyond.



Mexico City's government decided to prohibit murals in pulque bars and began erasing those that already existed as a way to dissuade people from consuming the drink, but also as a way to curate the image of the city. Not even the cries of the country's top cultural celebrities were enough to deter the rulers. Goodbye murals, it was over.

The desire to ban popular foods and the expressions around them was not new either. Even tacos came under siege. When rural workers started arriving en masse in the 19th century, they brought their cheap and

accessible street food with them. The city's elites were horrified, decrying the heavenly folds of tortilla as scandalous and a threat to public health. They even tried to cite scientific studies that suggested corn was the root of the civilization's greatest problems.

Their attempts to ban Mexico's iconic snack were in vain, and taco stands (along with those for chalupas, quesadillas and tortas) expanded throughout the city. The majority were run by women, who made more sweating over open air grills than they did cleaning the houses of the rich.

Though they provided food for wide swaths of the city, from working class to bourgeois, these small businesses didn't have the means to advertise in newspapers, or later on the radio or TV., and it's from those conditions that the rótulos were born. The master rotulista Martin Hernández theorized that the movement was helped by Mexico's staggering illiteracy (which reached 42.6% by 1950), arguing that it was much more effective to communicate in this new, graphic manner.

But although these rótulos have always had a commercial goal, they have never been solely that. From the traditional paintings of the pulque bars of yesteryear to the smiling corn on the cob with dark glasses that today invites you to "buy your tortillas here," this popular artistic expression has been a reflection of ingenuity, grace, talent, and Mexican idiosyncrasy. While ad agencies filled with overpaid college graduates wrack their brains for ways to communicate the birth of a transnational company with a touch of grace and humor, rotulistas have already surpassed

them 1000 times over with a chicken dressed as a chef, who, with cannibalistic cynicism, serves up a steaming rotisserie bird outside of the neighborhood's favorite restaurant. Of course, rotulistas have the advantage of not having to deal with corporate overlords, those that contaminate approachable art with Design-with-a-capital-D from the disconnected reality of a 10th floor office building. In that way rotulistas are free, and their art often reflects that.

But while this street art is without borders, it possesses common

features—the warm color palette, the presence of food turned into characters and symbols, the excitement and energy emanating from an otherwise static ad space. In a city of millions, they are a unifying and comforting part of our day to day, a piece of the urban landscape like our art deco buildings or jacaranda trees.

Sadly, our community didn't know how to value that connector until we saw our artistic freedom on the brink of disappearing forever.



AVISO
A LA PERSONA QUE SE LE
SORPRENDA INTENTAR PAGAR
CON BILLETES FALSIFICADOS
SE LE DECOMISARA EL BILLETE
Y SE LE REPORTARA A LA
POLICIA LOCAL
(DIRECCION DE SEGURIDAD PUBLICA)





There was a period that República de Perú street in the middle of Mexico City’s historical district was a constellation of rótulo workshops, the dizzying smell of solvent wafting out onto the paint-stained sidewalks. But technology, the democratization of software design, and the omnipresence of large format printers has slowly washed away the paint-filled neighborhood. It’s just cheaper and more immediate to download an image off the Internet, and write the name of your business in tacky, pixelated font. Hernández, one of the few

remaining workshop owners, says that “lo barato sale caro,” that by buying these low-quality prints in an attempt to save money, shop owners end up spending more to replace the temporary, mass-produced art. Does cheap construction stand up against the passing storms of Mexico City’s rainy season? Not a chance. Do people keep buying them? Unfortunately, yes.

Hernández says that his post is in danger more than ever before. Under the current law of civic culture in Mexico City, city police

are allowed to consider rótulos as vandalism and often use that loose interpretation of the law to detain or extort artists.

Still, despite the gradual disappearance of the signs, there were always still enough of them to keep the big alarm bells from ringing. That is, up until Cuauhtémoc fell under its monochrome spell.

In 2021, Sandra Cuevas, from the local right-wing party, was elected mayor of the Cuauhtémoc district (an area

that includes the city’s busiest and best-known neighborhoods, such as the Historic Center, and hip centers like Roma, Condesa, Juárez and Santa María la Ribera). Within a few weeks of taking office, she decided to do away with the popular graphics that adorned fixed and semi-fixed stalls in her district, considering them eyesores and low-budget distractions. Almost overnight, the dancing hamburgers, the jovial little pigs, smiling as they were being fried in a pot of carnitas, and the keys with little faces were replaced by the official image of the current administration: the mayor’s coat of arms and the slogan “This is your house” stenciled in ominous gray.

The measure was like something out of a dystopian novel or a comedy skit. Owners and people in charge of stalls reported having been charged 150 or 200 pesos for erasing their rótulos (losing their investment of time, creativity, and money in the

process), intimidated into doing so by mysterious workers of the mayor’s office. Instead of widening sidewalks, installing street seating, or guaranteeing access to clean water and reliable electricity, the administration decided erasing art was what the neighborhoods’ street commerce really needed.

Fans of the city’s popular street graphics noticed it, but it wasn’t until May of 2022 that the issue went viral. Graphic designer Hugo Mendoza, published an Instagram video showing the erasure of the rótulos and audio testimonies of stallholders lamenting the arbitrary imposition, The video struck a chord with *chilangos*, longtime city residents opposed to the lead-colored version of their city. News organizations caught on shortly after, and for a few weeks it seemed the mayor had achieved the impossible: politicizing ordinarily apolitical citizens, all in the name of culture.

The city government tried to step in, but eventually backed off, fearing a reprisal from the mayor’s office in its most lucrative tourism districts. Cuevas and her team doubled down, washing over the community murals of Cuauhtémoc and even painting the borders separating the stalls an unsightly concrete hue.

Paradoxically, despite being banned on the street, rotulistas have started finding work in hipster coffee shops and newer upscale restaurants, asked to recreate their street aesthetic by the very businesses that have fueled the local government “clean-up.” It’s reminiscent of the traditional dances banned in neighborhoods like La Merce of Peñón de los Baños. At the same time that they face persecution on the street, these dancers are often hired to perform at official, private government events—popular culture only functioning where authorities can gain profit, and often at the social cost of its public.

City police are allowed to consider rótulos as vandalism and often use that loose interpretation of the law to detain or extort artists.



In 2024, elections will be held in Mexico, and early polls do not favor a Cuevas reelection in Cuauhtémoc.

The daring have already anticipated the change in government. On Sevilla, in Roma Norte, the Ricos Tacos “El Jarocho” painted their name, menu (*suadero, tripa, pastor*), and two elegant sombrero-with-mustache tacos around the horrendous logo of the mayor’s office. One stall was spared the chromatic massacre because it remained closed during the pandemic. This summer, the Ricas Tortas Calientes on Niza

and Insurgentes reopened with its beautiful, shiny sign: it was like waking up from a coma and being the only survivor of the zombie apocalypse. Perhaps they form the leading guard in the capital’s colorful reawakening.

For now, a man named Ramiro sells tortas outside the Walmart Buenavista, a few blocks from the Cuauhtémoc mayor’s office. While he prepares me one of chorizo with queso, he tells me that he misses the drawing of the bread with its tomato, its avocado, and its abundant ham. He doesn’t want to challenge the current administration, but says if they are voted out in 2024, he will try to recover his identity, and title “SUPER TORTAS.”

It’s important to acknowledge that some rótulos may never come back, that the conditions necessary for them to survive have been wiped out by gentrification. But it’s also true that chilangos hate blank spaces. After the media backlash to the erasure of Mexico City’s graphic art, it’s easy to imagine that we, like flowers that grow through the concrete, will find a way to fill the city with color once again. ♪

A young man is the central figure, dancing with his arms raised. He is wearing a red, white, and green striped shirt. His face is lit up with a joyful expression, and his skin appears to be glistening with sweat. He is holding a small, glowing object in his right hand. The background is a dark, crowded space, likely a nightclub or festival, with blurred lights and other people visible. The overall atmosphere is energetic and vibrant.

ENERGY

HOW LAGOS LAUNCHED THE GLOBAL AFROBEATS TAKEOVER

Words by Oris Aigbokhaevbolo
Photos by Andrew Esiebo

6.5244° N, 3.3792° E



It's Friday, three hours before midnight. In Lagos, Nigeria's Sabo Junction, a street food vendor is blasting an afrobeats hit on a portable boombox. A disheveled man, who was probably just as disheveled this morning, dances with abandon. *Keke*, buses, SUVs do their own shuffle, seemingly choreographed to the driving beat of the music, navigating the capital city's chaotic traffic. This is Lagos Mainland. There's shawarma, banana, grilled fish and *asun* ready to be served to the pedestrians just finishing up work—or the bus conductor still on the clock, bringing passengers anywhere but here.

On the other side of the junction, another afrobeats song booms, its lyrics imploring someone to “Love Me! Love me! Need me! Need me!” The music comes from a bar with speakers serving as a not-so-subtle advertisement: Come over here for a good time. But it's not the only game in town. It's not even the only game on the street. A few feet away, there's another bar, quieter, but its music is likely the same: afrobeats—the thumping, rhythmic, dance-insistent songs that form the pulse of an entire city.

For many people around the world, afrobeats is the new thing – the new sound online and in clubs around the globe. In the last couple of years, Burna Boy, Tiwa Savage, Wizkid, Rema, Davido and their compatriots have earned billions of streams and dozens of awards. They have also staged concerts at some of the biggest venues in the West.

For Lagosians, this scale of success is new, but the sound isn't. Afrobeats is the soundtrack of Nigeria's youth. In many ways, that mid- to up-tempo music tearing up global dancefloors is a perfect sonic representation of Lagos life: energetic, go-getting, relentless. If you think of cities as musical instruments, only one truly captures Lagos: Drums. Propulsive drums. But Lagos is not without its more melodic seductions and allure. While the city is hard in places, it's soft in others. The best afrobeats artists have figured out how to program that mix into their songs; a couple of minutes of sonic escapism that stick with you long after the last bass hit. The world may be catching on to afrobeats, but as far as Lagos is concerned, the rest will always just be catching up.

Off the commercial avenue at Sabo Junction, an open-air bar is playing Western pop and R&B hits—Chris Brown’s “Freaky Friday,” Major Lazer’s “Particular”—but nobody is moving yet. Like the bar’s red and blue light strips, the appetite for movement hangs in the air. In one corner of the bar’s expanse, there’s a group of men playing ping-pong, while the women look at their phones. The tables are adorned with beers, glasses, bottled water, plates of *suya*.

Soon, Wizkid starts to sing “Ojuelegba,” and the energy changes completely.

A skinny hype man, with language as colorful as his red

shoes, grabs a microphone and begins to speak over the music, riffing around it. There’s Burna Boy singing “Ye.” Then Beyonce and Ghanaian popstar Shatta Wale. As the music continues, one of the night’s first dancers emerges. She waltzes to her seat from the restroom swinging her arms to the rhythm of Ruger’s “What If I.” Back at her chair, she doesn’t sit. She keeps swaying, adding a little hip action. She considers her seat then stands again, breaking into full dance. Around the whole city of Lagos and the country, this scene—beer, *jollof*, *suya*, *nkwobi*, dance, and afrobeats—is reproduced in some combination.

Afrobeats is not easily classifiable sonically. Comprised of myriad influences, it’s less a genre and more a vibe. Its link is the energy: Afrobeat songs are about dance and a good time. To fully enjoy what is going on with this music is to respond physically.

Two decades ago, there would hardly be more than a handful of Nigerian songs playing at a place like this. Nigerian radio was the domain of American

remain, it’s doubtful Kuti would recognize what his millennial and Gen Z successors have produced. Still, it’s easy to imagine his pride in seeing his country’s music stars making waves on a global scale.

At first, many of those stars left the country to get their footing in the music game, but the sound’s biggest steps were ultimately taken at home. D’banj and producer Don Jazzy’s 2012 hit “Oliver Twist” was the first Nigerian song to enter

⚡ **AFROBEATS IS NOT EASILY CLASSIFIABLE SONICALLY. COMPRISED OF MYRIAD INFLUENCES, IT’S LESS A GENRE AND MORE A VIBE.** ⚡

pop music, and its dominance was everywhere you turned. But therein lies one of the reasons for afrobeats’ success today: its proponents have been educated enough in American pop music and other global genres and have wrapped those foreign elements into a distinctly Nigerian idiom.

At its core, afrobeats is really just pop music made by mainly West African artists and dominated by Nigerians. Its name is eerily similar to afrobeat, the sound pioneered by the late, great Fela Aníkúlápó Kuti. Although some of his influences

the UK Singles Chart in the United Kingdom, but the duo returned to their homeland shortly after and found an even higher level of success. Many Nigerian artists made a similar journey in the 2000s and 2010s, but when acts like D’banj, Don Jazzy, M.I. Abaga and Banky W. came back to join homegrown talents like P-Square and 2Face (now 2Baba), they defined the sounds of their time. Where they had found little space in the Western music industry, they came home to open arms and created a movement the world couldn’t ignore.





Lagos is split into two distinct parts. The Mainland offers up the chaotic metropolis you'd expect out of an African economic hub and cultural capital. The Island is its swanky cousin, a place where beer prices are triple or quadruple that of the Mainland, and a selection of dignitaries gather at the U.S. Consul General's residence in Ikoyi. It's also the home of the Headies, afrobeats' premier awards ceremony.

As expected, the Headies is an invite-only event, which means there's commotion at the gate. A group of staffers have to see ID cards and scan attendees before they enter. Inside the compound, there are similarities with the city's poorer neighborhoods. There is food, camaraderie, music, and before the night is over, some of the city's most successful people will dance to the same sounds as the ordinary folk on the other side of the Third Mainland Bridge. In a city of frightening inequality, afrobeats is a unifier.

As big name after big name walks up on stage, a white lady walks up to me and asks who the man with colorful hair and a black jacket is. Who, she inquires, are the famous artists in the premises? The man with the multi-hued hair is Eltee Skhillz. Last year, he scored a hit with "ODG." This year, he is a Headies nominee.



In her phone search bar, I type “Eltee.” Google produces the rest. She thanks me and shows her son. Her two daughters, clad in a modern take on a traditional Nigerian outfit, look on. Not long after, they start to move to the music coming from the stage. Perhaps this is part of what has caused the explosion of afrobeats: Young people raised on the internet, where democracy of

sounds and diffusion of tastes have created a new configuration of hitmaking.

Nigerians love exporting their culture, and music is no exception. A generation after the musical refugees returned to their homeland, Nigeria began to produce the group of artists that would become its true crossover acts. Wizkid, Davido, Burna Boy

— artists that sell out stadiums across oceans and continents, with roots in Nigeria’s capital. Performers like Rema have taken the crossover to global pop even further, scoring hits with Western stars like Selena Gomez.

Still, the genre’s greatest accomplishment may not be the awards and attention it garners abroad, but what it has been

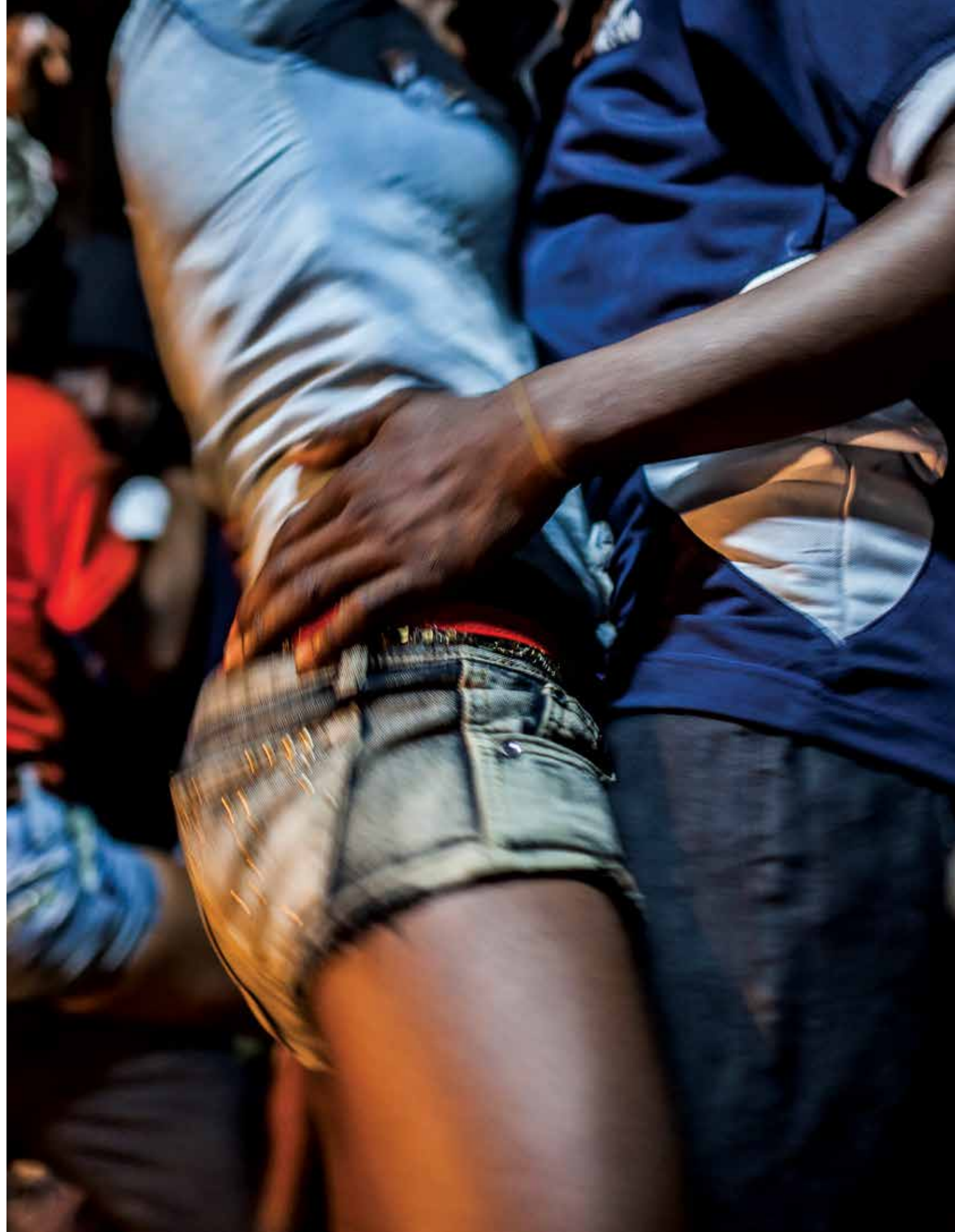
able to achieve at home. Beyond bringing generations of music lovers together, afrobeats’ major themes—enjoyment and dance—sets both the rich and the poor in some sort of accord. One class has the all-important wealth, the other class desires it—both will dance to songs celebrating it. At the richest clubs on the Island, someone is popping expensive champagne. At

the not-so-rich clubs, someone is popping, well, something. Both kinds of clubs will play Dr SID and D’banj’s hit “Pop Champagne” as the drinks go around. There is a lot of inequity between Nigeria’s rich and poor—the size of their houses, the quality of schools, the standard of living—but this one thing, the music that brings everybody out, hits the same. ♪



*Tune in to our
author-curated
afrobeats playlist.*









home



A love letter to Canada's
rugged backyard

Words by **Emily Nilsen**
Photos and captions by **Kari Medig**

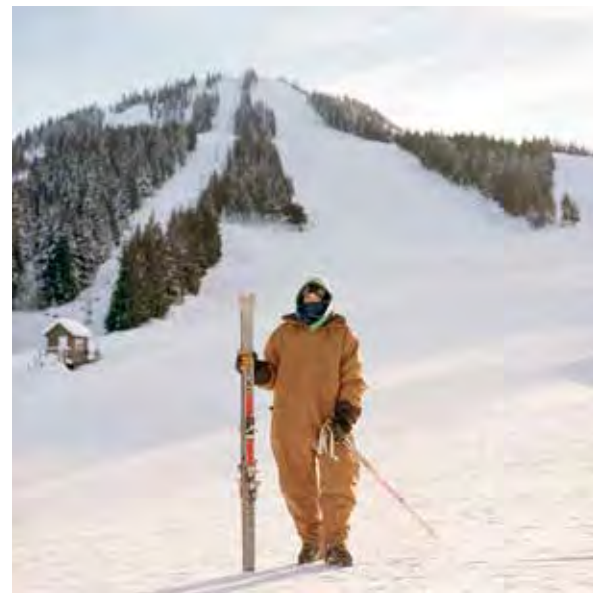
49.5701° N, 116.8312° W

I always knew I'd call the Kootenays home. In my early 20s, I spent Canadian summers planting trees around the region. On days off, our convoy of F350s would barrel down logging roads into the "big city" of Nelson, British Columbia (population 10,000). After busting our buns on remote cut-blocks, the town's offerings seemed utopic: sushi, thrift stores, coin laundry and once (serendipitously coinciding with my birthday) a local cover band called BCDC. Too cheap to get a hotel, we'd sneak onto private beaches on Kootenay Lake and sleep behind overturned canoes. Years later, I found myself back on the same lake, on the same beach, living in a cabin with a guy named Kari. Fifteen years on, we're still here.

Opening Spread
A lifty sits at the top station of Phoenix Mountain near Grand Forks, British Columbia.

Right-hand page
Fall snowfall at the Conrad Kain hut in Bugaboo Provincial Park, British Columbia.





Kari and I have opposite, yet oddly parallel stories. He grew up in the Kootenays and moved to Vancouver. I grew up in Vancouver and moved to the Kootenays. His family has been in Canada since the *coureur des bois*. My parents immigrated in the late '70s. When we met he was living in an East Van apartment working as an editorial photographer for various newspapers. I was mostly writing. We both loved to travel.

Luckily for us, the Kootenays felt like the right place to land. Tall cedars, secret valleys, swimming holes galore, it was the perfect mix of wild and familiar. It may not be the easiest place to get to (the nearest airport in Castlegar is nicknamed “Cancelgar” due to its poor landing stats), but the rugged setting and connection many people have to the land has kept us here.

Over the years, Kari has filled countless rolls of film with quirky scenes from our extended backyard. From a slushy back

alley in Nelson to a sweeping valley in Baffin Island, he somehow makes two distant points feel closer, visually connecting remote and rural geographies across Canada. It's not just natural beauty he's after. In fact, most of the images he makes with his medium format camera push against anything too pretty. Rather than glorifying nature, Kari finds moments that offer a deeper story, ones that bring the human experience to light with a little grit, raw humor, and tenderness.

This type of storytelling feels more aligned with where we live— a radically beautiful place built and broken by logging, mining and hydroelectric dams. It would be easy to look past this, to turn the lens towards alpine glow or a stand of old growth dripping with lichen— scenes that undoubtedly attract visitors and once drew us here, too.

However, our home, like every home, has far more layers than the “just picturesque” let's on.



One of the north
ridges of Mount
Logan Canada's
highest peak
at 19,551 feet.
This was on
an expedition
to climb the
mountain's
King's Trench
route in 2017.



Kari has spent much of his career photographing other peoples' homelands. His happy place is at the base of an obscure ski hill, documenting the joyful bond humans have with skiing. But the photos he takes close to home are unique. They give a glimpse into communities shaped by the natural world that surrounds them. Not surprisingly, many of these images have a nostalgic quality and hold a longing for bygone eras— before they are even gone.

Above
Moose antlers on a Ski-Doo. I wandered upon this scene between Whitehorse and Dawson City in the Yukon. To me it epitomized the feeling of Canadiana that I'm drawn to.



Above
An elderly ski couple at the rental shop at Shames Mountain, a cool cooperative hill near Terrace, British Columbia.



Above

Chris Rowat emerging from a violent storm in the King's Trench on Mount Logan in Kluane National Park.

Left

My friend Cam Shute looking at a nice ski line near the summit of Siemens Peak near Whittowater Ski Resort, British Columbia.

Page 64

Trapper Herald Friedenberger in the dining room of his Naksup, British Columbia home. The 71-year-old started to weep a bit when he reminisced about the deep love he had for the land and the animals on his trapline. I'll never forget that moment.

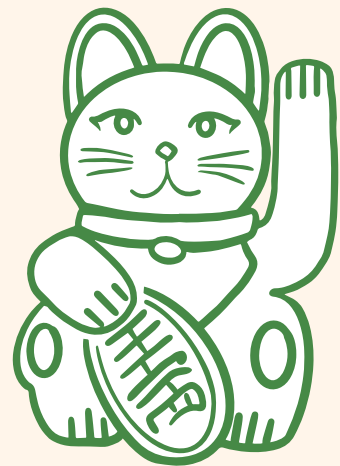
While I was growing up in the city, Kari was a kid of the mountains, lakes, and rivers. His family lived in a log cabin and often had a freezer full of deer meat, care of his dad. As a teen he earned a small wage working at a sawmill 10 minutes from where I would one day plant trees. Kari's upbringing influences the way he sees the world. Even though he never got into hunting like his dad and uncles, when he looks through the camera viewfinder a similar stillness comes. And behind every shot there's a backstory, a chance encounter, a moment that also reflects knowingness for this place he continues to call home. ♪



Riding fat bikes on a 10-day traverse of Auyuittuq National Park, Nunavut. The peak in this image is 5,495-foot Mount Thor (aka Kigutinnuaq, which means "tooth-like" in Inuktitut). The peak is 15 degrees off of vertical and claims to have the Earth's largest vertical drop at 4,100 feet.



CATEGORY IS:
BODEGA CATS



PHOTOS BY BRIAN FINKE

BROOKLYN, NY

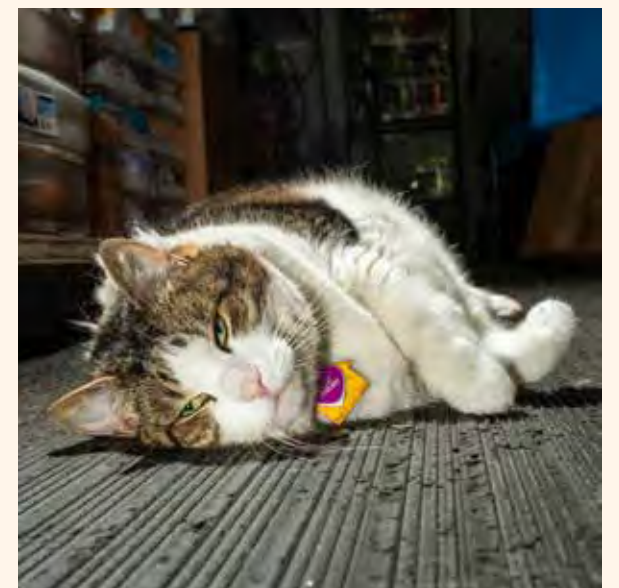
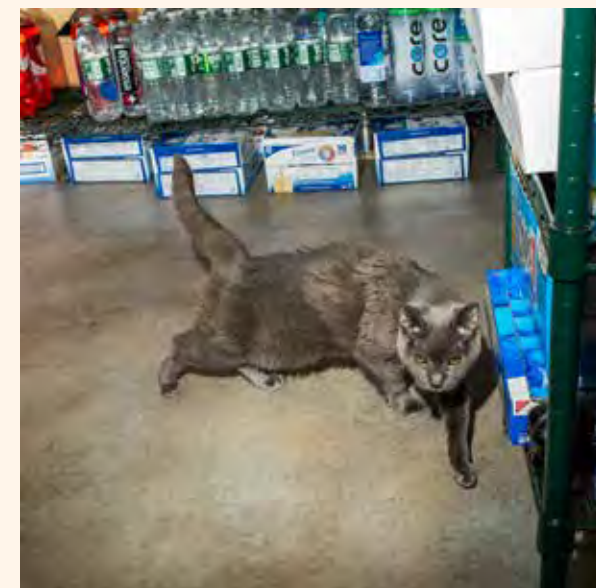
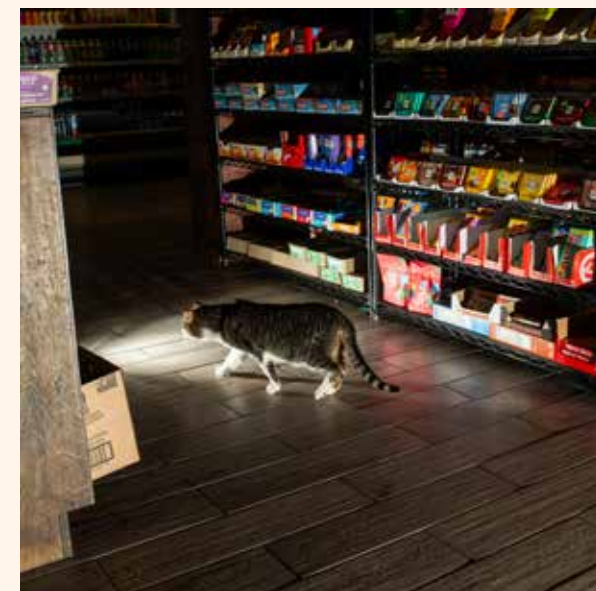
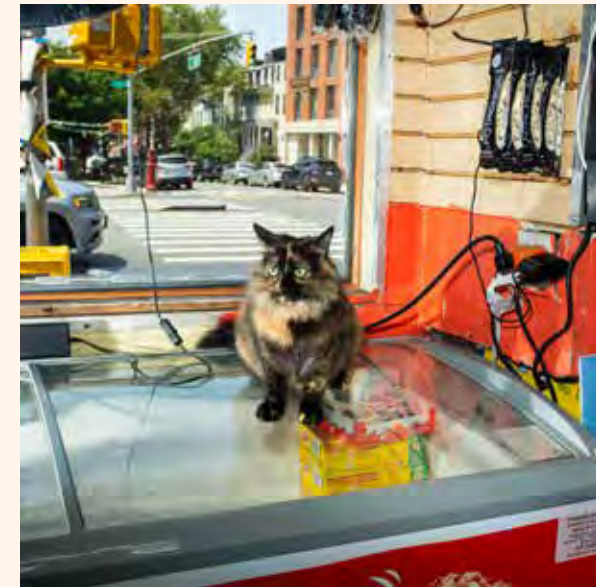
40.6782° N, 73.9442° W



*The corner markets’
most unexpected
unifiers don’t come
with an employee
badge or a price tag—
they come with a
litterbox.*

New York’s heart lives in a bodega. After all, the city’s one-stop shops are its greatest equalizers, galvanizing the world’s boldest melting pot with cross street convenience ranging from incense, to pregnancy tests, to gooey bacon, egg, and cheeses. Yet the corner markets’ most unexpected unifiers don’t come with an employee badge or a price tag—they come with a litterbox. For years, bodega cats have functioned as in-shop pest control, and today they’ve woven themselves into New York’s social fabric by earning an almost cult-like endearment.







*“When you walk in
and see a cat, it’s
like running into a
friend you weren’t
expecting to see.”*



“There’s this feeling that the bodega is part of your community, something meaningful,” explains Rob Hitt, a Brooklyn, New York resident for over 20 years. “When you walk in and see a cat, it’s like running into a friend you weren’t expecting to see.”

Hitt started snapping cellphone photos of storefront felines in 2009, and has built an Instagram and Twitter following of millions since. Though his Bodega Cats platform is worldwide, it’s centered at home, raising awareness for local causes like Greenpoint Cats and Flatbush Cats. For Hitt, like many New Yorkers, these unofficial market talismans are more than novelty pets, they’re a function of the neighborhood worth celebrating, bringing the city closer together, one big stretch at a time. ♡



When the Bulls Came to Town

*Traditions
Clash in
Colombia's
First Free
Slave Town*

10° 6' 9" N, 75° 11' 56" W

Words and photos
by Joe Swide



We hear the beat-up motorcycle before we see it. About 30 miles southeast of Cartagena's beautiful historic center, humid swamp and thick jungle have hidden this Colombian village from the outside world—and a majority of passing traffic—for over 400 years. Emerging from the trees in a cloud of orange dust, he passes between the village square and a row of colorful houses and revs the Japanese motor. Lifting his front wheel, he rips a wheelie in front of the townspeople seeking shade from the relentless Friday afternoon sun. It's hot here, so hot that I don't even feel the heat, just the sweat. From under the thatched roof of an open circular hut at one of end of the square, we watch a few other men ride horses bareback down the same main street. Suddenly, a large truck with a covered bed drives past us, blaring cumbia. A group of children run behind it, laughing and shouting. I turn to one of the Palenqueros next to me and ask what all of that was about. He answers, "*Toros.*" Bulls.



Atop a small hill on the edge of San Basilio de Palenque, the first town settled by freed slaves in the Americas, delicious smells drift out of big pots. Vendors move at an invisible cadence, preparing homemade food, pressing fresh fruit into juices, and readying the coolers of beer and soda for the 4 p.m. start of the biggest fiesta of the Palenque year—a weekend-long series of bullfights. According to the man collecting tickets, the village has put on this bullfight event annually since about 1930. A remnant of the Spanish colonists, bullfighting is hardly rare in Colombia, especially in this region of Bolivar. But in an Afro-Colombian community founded on the rejection of everything Spanish, a tiny village where two small beers from a corner store cost about \$1 and the best restaurant in town is an older woman’s backyard, well, an 80-year-old bullfighting tradition and enormous, wooden bullring feel out of place.

That ticket also lets you climb through the fence and into the fight itself, which seems to be what every man here is doing.

Built from the ground up in 15 days, the bullfighting stadium exists only for this event—it will all be torn down when the fights are over. For now, though, it’s magnificent in its own wonderfully weird way. The immense crisscross of scrap wood and occasional sheet of corrugated metal gives it an appearance that is as ancient as it is post-apocalyptic. Imagine a gladiator arena blended with the spectacle of the Coney Island Cyclone back when it first opened in 1927. Now imagine that surreal thing being constructed totally by hand over two weeks in a small village in the middle of rural Colombia. Given the context, it’s huge, with premium views in the upper deck available for 5000 pesos (a little over a dollar) while 2000 pesos gains access to the view-obstructed seating at ground level behind the fence. That ticket also lets you climb through the fence and into the fight itself, which seems to be what every man here is doing.

Crude wooden poles jut out above the upper deck, holding up metal sheets that offer welcome shade for the handful of early-arriving old guys, beer vendors, and police officers, all sitting on benches. Underneath them, children sit on boards behind the fence, eating popsicles with wide eyes. Inside the ring, the men gather in the shade on one side, making small talk and keeping cool. Many brought sticks to poke (but not wound) the bulls. A few brought sheets or blankets to wave. Some wear soccer cleats, a useful choice of footwear for escaping death. I ask someone if there’s going to be a matador, a *torero*, for the fight. “He’s

coming soon,” I’m told. I soon realize he is joking. The mood is fairly light, considering the men inside are a few moments from facing their own mortality. Yes, there have been deaths here. I receive a lot of very serious warnings about the very serious dangers of being in the ring during the fight. As one man says, “These aren’t like the bulls from Spain.” Then I hear the voice of someone I had met in the square earlier in the afternoon. He’s sitting behind the fence in one of the lower sections. I ask him if maybe I shouldn’t be out here. He responds with a wide-eyed smile, “CLARRROOOO.” Just after 4, the gate swings open and the first bull charges into the ring. If there was a time to turn back, it’s too late now.







Four hundred years ago, long before they were fighting bulls, a group of escaped slaves led by the legendary Benkos Bioho built a palenque—the Spanish word for the many walled villages settled by escaped slaves—here to fight a guerrilla rebellion against the Spanish forces based in nearby Cartagena. For the next century, the Spanish tried to destroy the village, but never managed to overcome San Basilio’s fortifications and nearly impenetrable landscape. Today, the trip from Cartagena is an hour by bus, followed by three miles down a semi-paved road on the back of a motorcycle. But in the 17th Century, the Spanish would have had to hack through jungles and swamps for days to get here. And so, finally exhausted by defeat, the King of Spain signed a royal order in 1713 that officially recognized the autonomy of “San Basilio de Palenque”, making it the first freetown on the continent.

After the Colombian government abolished slavery in 1851, San Basilio and other African communities in the region relied on the same geographic isolation that had protected them from slavery to protect their traditions and Afro-Colombian cultural identity. But 150 years of systemic discrimination has left Afro-Colombian communities today with weak infrastructure and limited access to both education and economic opportunity, resulting in the vast majority of the country’s five million Afro-Colombians stuck in extreme poverty. As government negligence—or at best, ineffectiveness—allows these communities to be destroyed, a culture slowly falls apart and its traditions disappear. Survival has become its own rebellion.

Yet, somehow, San Basilio endures. The first, and now last remaining palenque is home to about 3,500 people, many of whom are descendants of the original escaped slaves. The village has maintained an identity of self-empowerment reflected even in its name, “San Basilio de Palenque.” (“Palenque de San Basilio” is actually the correct Spanish structure, but in this case, the place belongs to the Palenque, not the other way around.)

For the next century, the Spanish tried to destroy the village, but never managed to overcome San Basilio’s fortifications and nearly impenetrable landscape.

The village has its own music, dance, religious practices, traditional medicine, cuisine, and even its own language— Palenquero, the last known Spanish-African creole language on Earth. The small community’s unique resilience has made it a powerful symbol and spiritual ancestor for Afro-Colombians throughout the country. So much so, that in 2005, UNESCO recognized San Basilio de Palenque as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

These days, only a portion of the village population still speaks the Palenquero language and many young palenqueros leave to find better economic opportunities in nearby Cartagena and Barranquilla. The community’s next struggle seems to be maintaining its history while also adapting to the unstoppable forces of modernity. San Basilio first opened to the outside world with the building of a highway in the 1960s. Electricity came in the 1970s, when the Colombian government decided to honor Palenque-born boxer Antonio “Kid Pambelé” Cervantes, the former light welterweight champion of the world. While modernity here now takes the form of DirectTV dishes and bootleg FC Barcelona shirts, a statue in the main square depicting Bioho breaking free from the chains of slavery is a powerful reminder of Palenque’s rebellious history, and the pride still felt in being *palenquero*.

A short walk from the statue, a group of small children play soccer on a concrete court, part of a small athletic complex. With a statue of Kid Pambelé out front and his name above the door, the jewel of the complex is a newly renovated boxing gym, where the next generation of palenqueros can learn to become fighters.





Classic bullfighting disguises brutality as tradition, dressing it in romantic notions of artistry and courage. Ernest Hemingway became so enamored with what he saw as the nobility of the sport that he wrote an entire book, “Death in the Afternoon”, on bullfighting in Spain. There, the torero enters the “fight” after the bull has already been stabbed and weakened by a sizable loss of blood, and his object is to finish killing the bull and impress the audience in doing so.

Palenque bullfighting is different. There are more people in the fight than there are in the audience, and it’s a real fight. The bulls aren’t stabbed or weakened before entering the ring, and there is no guise of artistry. Palenque bullfighting is that raw Evel Knievel-sort of courage dressed in sandals, soccer cleats, and varying states of sobriety. The view from ground level

Those who brought sticks chase and poke at it. Those who brought sheets or blankets stand in the ring and wave them at the bull, trying to lure it into the classic duel. Those with nothing but their bare hands confront the bull however they can. A few grab onto its tail. The bull eventually tires, and is lassoed and pulled out of the ring.

Each bull that enters seems a bit larger and more violent than the last. The fourth bull of the evening quickly isolates and plows through a younger guy wearing a long-sleeved turquoise shirt and matching snapback. The bull lifts him up, carries him briefly, then drives him into the ground near the fence. Pinned underneath the bull’s head, he manages to grab the horns that are trying to rip him apart, and forces them away. He gets dragged and pushed around

The only object here is making it out alive.

behind the fence in a bullring that was hammered together in two weeks is pure “HOLY SHIT!” mayhem. The only object here is making it out alive.

The bull hurtles towards us, a blurry terror of horns and muscle and hooves and those bloodshot red eyes. Men shoot outward from the ring as though fleeing a tornado, scrambling up the fence to safety. Others go sliding underneath the structure itself, evidence of the Caribbean coast’s baseball heritage and a reminder to me of why everyone watching from this lower level is sitting on boards off the ground. A thick cloud of dust rises up from the ring, creating an eerily hazy filter. A couple vendors, bless their sweet enterprising hearts, have stayed in the ring during the fight to sell popsicles and fried balls of something sweet during the breaks. Everyone does their best to stay out of harm’s way, while happily drinking beers in danger’s living room. After the initial surge, the bull trots around the ring and the men on the fence try to kick it from above.

the ring anyway. Still hanging onto the horns, he gets all the way back onto his feet and is now using the horns to try to drive the bull’s head into the ground. All that idealism about the courage of bullfighting is now terrifyingly real. A few others try to pull the bull’s tail to draw it off of the poor guy, but the bull shakes loose. Then it pins him back on the ground, and, suddenly, gruesome injury or death appear imminent. Frozen in horror, I watch as he somehow pushes the horns away again and scurries away to safety. His shirt is shredded, but he’s otherwise fine, jogging off with a slight smile on his face. He survived, so he won.

Before I leave to catch a motorcycle ride back to the highway, one of the guys at the stadium tells me that I have to come back out to Palenque for the next fight. He says that the bulls today were really just cows. The big ones are coming tomorrow. The palenqueros, as always, are ready. ♡

ROOTED:

*THE REGENERATIVE MOVEMENT
FUELING **KAUAI'S FUTURE***

Words by Kaila Yu



Photo: Vimal Singh

FED BY THE WAIMEA RIVER, THE KALO PATCH PROVIDES MORE THAN SUSTENANCE, IT SYMBOLIZES HOPE

Dozens of mud-splattered volunteers waded through a *kalo* patch in Makaweli Valley in western Kauai. Here, *kalo* (commonly known as taro) is harvested by hand, dirty fingers searching and then pulling the starchy root vegetable from its bed underwater. Fed by the Waimea River, the *kalo* patch provides more than sustenance, it symbolizes hope—feeding and empowering a local community in the face of over-tourism and erosion of Native Hawaiian identity.

That mission is reflected by Kumano I Ke Ala, a nonprofit dedicated to building a regenerative Hawaii centered around Native-based cultural

education and programming. “I, You, We Are ‘Āina,” reads the organization’s mantra, encapsulating the nonprofit’s quest to treat Hawaiian land as sacred sustenance. Kaina Makua, a 38-year-old local *kalo* farmer and activist, founded the organization as part of a movement of Hawaiians working to revive ancient customs and traditions in Kauai, something he hopes will kickstart future generations. He joins a growing group of Kauai residents trying to protect a local culture by changing the narrative, from farming and food, to art, sport, and even dance.

Over-tourism continues to plague Hawaii’s island chain,

causing environmental damage to its natural resources and driving up the costs of goods for locals. Kauai recorded over 29,000 visitors in March 2023, an over 6 percent increase from the same month a year before. And it’s not just critical mass affecting the islands. Scars of invasive sugar and pineapple plantations have ravaged and plundered Hawaii’s soil, forcing formerly self-sustaining Hawaiians to depend on imports for up to 90 percent of their food. The wildfires in Maui, fed by the overgrown grasslands of nonnative species from fallow farms, offer stark reminders that Hawaiians are battling against time as they look to heal history.



Kaina Makua on his Makaweli Valley farm.
Photo: Vimal Singh



Kalo harvesting in traditional, semi-submerged garden beds. Photo: Vimal Singh



Photo: Vimal Singh

*“OUR FOOD SYSTEM
IS A BARGE SYSTEM.
IT’S NOT A FOOD SYSTEM
—IT’S A DEPENDENCY.”*

— KAINA MAKUA

“Ō ka hā o ka ‘āina ke ola o ka po’e.” (the breath of the land is the life of its people). The words echo through Kumano I Ke Ala, outlining a collective goal to restore food security for Kauai’s over 75,000 year-round residents. “Āina (the land) is our elder,” says Makua. “And so, if we care for our elders, we’ll be cared for with food.” For Makua, that starts with tackling food sovereignty from the ground up.

Kalo is sacred to Hawaiians, so much so that it is heavily featured in Polynesian creation myths. The revered Sky Father and Earth Mother gave birth to human life with their daughter Ho’ohokukalani. Native Hawaiians believe kalo is the origin of life, as the

plant grew from the body of Ho’ohokukalani’s first stillborn baby son. Outside of the celestial realm, the root vegetable also provides Hawaiians with almost all they need on a nutritional level. Kalo is packed with protein, fatty acids, antioxidants, and vitamins. Hand-pounded kalo roots make poi, perhaps the most famous Hawaiian specialty. Poi is a silky paste usually eaten by hand as a starch to accompany kalua pig, poke, or lomi lomi salmon.

But what used to be eaten by Hawaiians daily is no longer readily accessible due to a storm of modernization that has left communities exposed and underfed. A lack of government budget allocation for agriculture, the prevalence of large-scale

industrial farming, and high farming costs are the main drivers of the disconnect, but the problem also hits closer to home. The average age of Kauai’s kalo farmers is 60, and there aren’t enough farmers to meet the demand, so the number of farmers—resources or not—is declining. Farmers need a second job to survive, often as construction workers or firemen.

“Our food system is a barge system,” warns Makua in an Instagram post on the Kumano I Ke Ala page, “It’s not a food system. It’s a dependency.” Hawaii only has food to last five to seven days if a disaster prevents food imports. Current local farming can help band-aid local autonomy, but the islands’ farms need to increase

output in order to create a self-sustaining food network. The Maui wildfires put that crux under a microscope in 2023, when damaged agricultural lands and crops made future food security a dire concern.

After graduating from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa in Honolulu, Hawaii, with a degree in Hawaiian Studies, Makua recognized those glaring gaps in his community, returning home to Kauai to farm kalo. What started as a grassroots preservation effort has since morphed into Aloha Aina Poi Company—a commercial poi company founded to create a marketplace for local kalo farmers while providing food for his neighbors.

Centuries ago, kalo farms covered an estimated 35,000 acres of the state. Today, only 350 or so acres remain. Western corporations bulldozed taro crops for sugar plantations and brought its own staples of rice and wheat to the island. A massive storm in 2018 didn’t help matters, wiping out many of kalo farms in Makua’s home valley. “After rebuilding, there was no place for them to sell their raw product,” says Makua. “[That’s when] we decided to start Aloha Aina Poi Company, and now we can buy kalo from multiple farmers to support them.” Makua sees the return to kalo and other native crops as a way to empower his neighbors and has dedicated himself to educating youth on cultivating them.

Makua’s nonprofit teaches youth farming skills and instills Hawaiian values, work ethic, and culture from an early age—skills he considers necessary for building local sovereignty. The organization’s Aloha ‘Āina After-School Program teaches cultural restorative agriculture, history, and the hands-on tools used by kalo farmers in order to develop a new generation of farmers and sustainable crops.

“We hope to keep multiplying and create an ecosystem for our community,” says Makua. Over 2,200 West Kauai youth have already passed through the program and the initiative offers paid part-time employment and internships to especially qualified students.



The Makaweli Valley thrives on nutrient-rich, volcanic soil.
Photo: Hashi Media





Photo: Nainoa Langer

Crowned in a head lei of yellow plumeria flowers, Leilani Rivera Low—an award-winning kumu hula (hula master)—sings the acapella words of “Ano`ai Ke Aloha” (greetings of love). She performs a traditional Hawaiian chanting style known as oli, pausing dramatically, opening her arms wide to the packed audience at Halau Ho’okipa—Kauai’s largest open-air pavilion and stage at the Sheraton Kauai Coconut Beach Resort. It’s not just glitz and glamor—Low’s performance builds an important bridge between a new wave of visitors and Hawaii’s people and history.

Born and raised in Kauai, Low is the daughter of famed, award-winning local Hawaiian composer and recording artist Larry Rivera. Known as Kauai’s “living treasure”, he passed away in February 2023 at 92. “When I was a little girl, I said I wanted

to be like my dad, full of aloha for everyone he met,” says Low. “The spirit of aloha was strong when I was growing up, but you don’t see that anymore. When I was a little girl, no matter who you were or what blood you came from, you were treated like you were Hawaiian.”

Low finds that some hula performances are rote and primarily focused on entertaining as many crowds as possible with a lack of concern for authenticity. “We can spread that aloha spirit with hula, but the dancers must live the story, dance from the heart, expecting and deeply understanding our legends and heritage.”

Low joins Makua as one of a growing number of people reclaiming an authentic Hawaiian experience as a way to preserve not only its culture, but its community. While the hula girl has become a fixed part of the commercialized imagery, it’s also

a tradition and a vital chronicle of Hawaiian history and tradition. Before written language in Hawaii, hula was a method of generational communication until it was outlawed and banned by Christian missionaries in the 19th Century. Even after Hawaii became a state in 1959, children were forbidden from speaking Hawaiian, threatening the artform until a recent Native Hawaiian push to revive the dying art. In many ways, the rebirth mirrors that of kalo farming illustrating a push for self-determination, preservation of traditions, and economic freedom.

Hawaiians are no longer satisfied with simply catering to Western guests, they’re inviting them to face history and grow. At Luau Ka Hikina, for example, audiences still enjoy the popular Polynesian fire dance, but they’ll also learn the history of



Photo: Vimal Singh

Polynesian migration to Hawaii, various styles of hula dance, and Hawaiian instruments. Instead of professional dancers, the performers are top students from Low’s own school, passing the hula tradition down to younger local practitioners. “Our dancers are imperfect but expressive and passionate to connect with the audience and share our art,” says Low.

Sharing may just be the next step in Kauai’s regenerative movement. After watching Luau Ka Hikina, guests can attend a hula class by Kuma Hula Shane Kamakaokalani Herrod, the

resort’s cultural ambassador for Hawaiian culture. Nicknamed “Maka”, he believes it’s his responsibility to preserve and spread Hawaiian culture so it isn’t forgotten. “Educating guests correctly on Hawaii is important for cultural respect and ‘āina,” he says.

Around the kalo patch at Kumano I Ke Ala, Makua allows visitors to get involved too, teaching them about the Hawaiian tradition of sustainable farming while they work in the mud. He knows his land’s ancient traditions are the key to rebuilding a more sustainable island, and sees teaching guests as part

of preserving Hawaii’s value systems. Makua also believes it’s a process that often starts with honoring the plants produced in its own soil. “Our ‘āina thrives, our sacred waters flow abundantly, and ultimately our people flourish,” reads a recent Kumano I Ke Ala’s Instagram post. It’s more than just physical nourishment however, it’s about reclaiming an identity lost, turning away from a broken system and back towards self-sustaining roots. Through the efforts of Low, Makua, and a new generation eager for change, Kauai is replanting the ideals of the first Hawaiians, right under its feet. ♡



NAVIGATING BASQUE COUNTRY'S GREATEST RACE

Words by **Pablo Martínez** Photos by **Humberto Bilbao**

43.3183° N, 1.9812° W



The river of purple drains from the open doors of coach buses into San Sebastian’s narrow city avenues. Still wet from the morning’s street cleaners, the cobblestone is slick underfoot as the human current pulses onward, meandering through the old neighborhood’s maze of fish markets, boutique stores and *pintxo* bars. It will still be a few hours before the tantalizing clouds of *txangurro*, *bacalao pil pil* and *chuléton* swirl along Calle 31 de Agosto, but Santurtzi’s faithful don’t have time to waste. Led by a chain-smoker in an indigo fedora, teenagers, old women, and baby-toting parents from the Spanish fishing town continue downstream. They collect around corners and tightening passageways. Santurtzi purple soon mixes with Orio yellow, Getxo red, and Hondarribia green—thronges of supporters celebrating Basque Country’s greatest athletes in one of its most classic venues.







San Sebastian's annual regatta, La Bandera de la Concha, is the crown jewel of the *trainera* season, a rowing circuit run in the unpredictable open waters of the Bay of Biscay. Battling overhead waves, biting winds and an armada of competitive teams from up and down the northern Spanish coastline (and as far as Portugal and France), men and women vie for local glory in a single out-and-back push, blasting through whitecaps as thousands cheer them on from shore. For over a century it's been the de facto championship for the series, and, if today's crowd is any indication, one of its biggest parties.

A drum and brass band dressed as sailors strikes up a tune that echoes through constricted alleyways. Driving, constant notes urge the herd toward the port, pushing their heroes (and boats) out into the sea.

Fortressed by jagged green mountains and the swirling waters of the Atlantic, Basque Country is one of Europe's last historical holdouts. Comprising four Spanish and two French provinces, the region, known locally as *Euskadi*, has isolated itself from European monarchies and modern governments alike, developing and preserving its own unique architecture, food, and culture. Its primary language, *Euskera*—a tongue with no known origins—has baffled linguists for centuries. Even local sporting events like boulder tossing, log chopping, and tug-of-war reflect the region's singularity, but few exhibit it more than the *traineras*.





These rowing races, like so many Basque sports, come from blue collar roots and a deep appreciation of the natural world. During the height of local whaling in the 1800s, teams would often hire the best rowers to race toward a sighted animal. The first hunting teams back to dock would make higher profit on their haul, enticing local companies to not only invest in fishermen, but fast boatmen as well. The quicker the boat, the more money that came back to town, and the deeper the rowers were written into local lore.

Today the whales are gone (a direct effect of overfishing), and the oak and pine-lined boats have been retired in favor of carbon fiber race shells, but the teams that row them remain homegrown legends. In San Sebastian's port, a group of middle-aged women in purple surround Santurtzi's male competitors, squeezing their biceps and offering fresh cloves of

garlic and other garden bounty. The team is barely able to push out into the water before tears start to flow from the eyes of their land-bound supporters.

Some of today's rowers are former Olympians. Others have spent their entire careers in factories or boatyards. Almost all of them have been in boats since they were in elementary school. Kids in rowing singlets line the concrete seawall, slipping under the raucous crowds and wondering when their day might come.

It takes a near-poetic balance of strength and precision to pull an oar. Skim the blade off the water surface and whiff at open air, dig too deep and disrupt the boat's forward momentum, or worse, take a jammed handle to the solar plexus. Countless micro-adjustments happen in tenths of a second and must line up with the 12 other pairs of hands pulling, rotating, pushing, and pulling again.



Unlike the traditional rowing made popular in England and the United States, trainera boats have fixed seats, which means athletes must rely more on pure pulling strength and less on leg power. The physical strain is written on faces and traced along forearm veins. From a distance, racers seem to move through the water without a sound, but inside the keel a mix of grunts, shouts, and oxygen-hungry heaves pervades.

The starting gun is lost under the drone of cheers, chants, and song. Suddenly, boats lurch into action. It takes a few strokes to reach human-powered glide, a prospect made more difficult by an uncooperative sea. Each boat carries 14 athletes—six rowers each on the starboard and port sides, one at the stern and a coxswain at the bow.

Where most of the world rows from point to point, in Basque Country teams race out and back, turning their large vessels around a buoy before cranking towards the start line. So important is that turn, that it has its own name: the *ciaboga*. To achieve the maneuver is a team effort, initiated by the stern rower digging an extra upright paddle into the water like a rudder as the rest of the group powers a mid-ocean pirouette. While there have been no recorded deaths in official competition, collisions and athletes lost overboard happen nearly every season. An intersection of nearly a dozen boats flipping 180 degrees at the same time? Well, that's a crux where carnage thrives.

The ciaboga happens in the blink of an eye. Before the spectators can even wrap their brains around the sheer physics of the thing, boats are already hurtling back into the bay. The crowd crescendo grows. Indigo chain smoker man has reached a new decibel level. Santurtzi purple trails Hondarrabia and Orio—it’s up to him to make the difference. Even his improbable lung capacity isn’t enough to shift the tides, though. Santurtzi crosses the line on the podium, but out of first place.

As the boats navigate back to port, rowers take turns hanging over the gunwales, grasping at oxygen long gone. Some raise fists in triumph. Others slump, exhausted in defeat. Still-shouting spectators meet the boats at the shoreline—and don’t stop there. Splashing into the bay in jeans and sundresses, they pull their heroes from boats in full embrace, jumping up and down and draping athletes in flags adorned with rowing club crests.

The races might be over, but the day’s second act has just begun. Reinvigorated by the crowd, Hondarrabia’s team scales the old concrete pier and leads an orchestra of fans, arms raised. The club’s billowing crest waves overhead. Soreness, it seems, can wait until tomorrow. On this day, the rowers are floating.

Both men and women take home equal prize purses at La Concha, winners collecting €25,000 for their efforts. It’s a crucial boost at the end of a long season, and another reason to celebrate with abandon. With boats out of water, teams, townspeople, and casual viewers cascade into San Sebastian’s myriad plazas and alleyways. Cheap beer mixes with red wine and Coca-Cola. Purple mixes with red, mingles with green, and dances with yellow.

Even indigo fedora man is in on the action, leading a group of 13 other fans from an imaginary boat in the middle of Plaza Nueva. Sitting on the cobblestone, he barks orders at the rest of his “team,” and they pull on imaginary oars. The land trainera ends with a knocked over wine glass, laughter echoing off sunbaked apartment buildings. With no competition in sight, it’s difficult to say exactly how they fared, but one thing is clear: There are no losers today. ♪





!ori-

Trips

Coming Spring 2024, travel with us to the Spanish Basque Country! Immerse yourself in the culture, cuisine, and communities of Europe's most unique coastline and find your adventure where the mountains meet the sea.

Scan for more information, subscribers receive 10% off.



ori-mag.com/merch



**Eunice
Adorno**

Eunice is a photojournalist exploring different communities with a strong relationship with the past. In 2011 she published her book "Las Mujeres Flores" and was part of the Artistic Residency Program of the International Studio & Curatorial Program in New York. She was also nominated by Susan Meiselas for the 2012 Rudin Award for Emerging Photographers by The Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, Florida. This year, she was part of the Architecture Pavilion at the Venice Biennale and at the Biennial of Photography in Mexico.



**Alex
Temblador**

Alex is an award-winning travel journalist with published work in Travel + Leisure, Outside, Lonely Planet, and Fodor's, among many others. Based in Dallas, Texas, she is also the award-winning author of "Half Outlaw", "Secrets of the Casa Rosada", and "Writing an Identity Not Your Own" (forthcoming). Connect with her at AlexTemblador.com.



**Kaila
Yu**

Kaila is a Los Angeles-based luxury travel and culture journalist and on-camera correspondent for The Los Angeles Times, Condé Nast Traveler, and Business Insider. She also has bylines in The New York Times, Rolling Stone, New York Magazine, and many more. She's a certified PADI scuba diver, freediver, and mermaid obsessed with animals underwater.



**Andrew
Esiebo**

Born and raised in Lagos, Nigeria, Andrew has emerged as one of Africa's premier photo documentarians over the last two decades, exploring and exposing the rich complexity and vibrancy of the place he calls home. In addition to exhibiting at Biennial festivals around the world, Andrew's work has appeared in National Geographic, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Le Monde, and the Guardian, among others.



**Humberto
Bilbao**

Humberto has been a photographer since before he can remember, and certainly before the world went digital. His work has always included the world of rowing, but much of it revolves around tradition and culture. He has published work with L'Equipe magazine, XL Semanal, and EPS among others and has published a book on Basque Country's rowing culture titled, "Sudor y Salitre en el Cantábrico."



**Brian
Finke**

Brian's signature stylized documentary style captures the authenticity and range of human behavior in everyday life. A uniquely American point of context, his work strikes at the core of subcultures and day-to-day contemporary life. Finke shoots for publications including New York Magazine, National Geographic, M magazine, and The New Yorker and for commercial clients, including eBay, Uber Eats, and Delta Airlines. Finke's personal work has won awards and appeared in museums, and he has authored several books, most recently Backyard Fights (2022). He also guest teaches and hosts workshops at institutions including FotoFilmic and the International Center of Photography.



**Natalie
Dupille**

Natalie is a cartoonist and illustrator based in Seattle, WA. She contributes to local and national publications including The New Yorker, Playboy, The L.A. Times, and The Stranger. An avid surfer and linguist, Natalie's dual passion for languages and waves has taken her (with sketchbook in tow) around the globe. She is in constant pursuit of new connections and fresh point breaks, not to mention hole-in-the-wall bookstores and local queer communities. Most recently, she has been exploring neon watercolors as she bides her time until her next big trip.



**The Medig
/Nilsens**

Emily Nilsen and Kari Medig love getting lost in big cities and strong black tea before 6 a.m. When stars align, they work on stories together, preferably in their backyard. They've followed modern-day trappers by ski and lodged with a silent order of nuns at a mountain monastery. Kari's work has appeared in Outside, Powder and Afar. Emily's first collection of poetry, Otolith, was written at a remote field station in the Great Bear Rainforest. They currently live on the unceded lands of the Sinxhit, Ktunaxa and Sylix people, in the town of Nelson, British Columbia. Their latest project is almost three, mischievous as ever.

Their B&B

Vorupør Badehotel Denmark's Boutique Surf Hotel

Words by Alex Temblador

On the northwest coast of Denmark in the traditional fishing village of Vorupør, surfers paddle out into the North Sea. Nicknamed “Cold Hawaii,” this collection of 30 different surf breaks sits at the same latitude as Juneau, Alaska. The waves have been attracting visitors for over a decade, but now, thanks to Vorupør Badehotel, surfers have a place to crash.

Peter Joseph Jensen was raised in Vorupør, born into a family of fishermen and rescuers who were some of the first to settle the region. In 2010, his wife Sigrid Bruun Jakobson joined him in his hometown. A year later, they took ownership of the area's first surf shop. Peter, a carpenter by trade, had already started the first shaping bay in town, repairing and designing wooden surf boards in his carport.

Peter formed a friendship with Tomas Agesen, another surfer and carpenter, who visited Vorupør in the summers to catch waves. By 2015, Agesen and his wife Nanna Nyhus had become full-time residents.

When Peter was looking for a new surf shop location in 2020, he and Tomas found a 1930s-era house steps from the beach. The property was once a home for dock workers and then a fish export company before becoming a private home. Peter, Sigrid, Tomas, and Nanna saw that it could support a surf shop, but also, with its vaulted ceilings and seaside location, it felt like something more. It felt like a badehotel.

In Denmark, badehotels embody tradition—Danish families return to these lodges near the coast year after year. The two couples bought the property together and opened Vorupør Badehotel in the summer of 2023. Peter, Tomas and their team remodeled the space into a boutique hotel with six modern rooms—with one



more on the way—all of which offer WiFi, comfortable beds, and an optional breakfast. The spaces themselves are airy, with a style that's both modern and beachside rustic, combining sleek Danish furniture with exposed wooden beams. Pops of color accent stylish armchairs and gleaming bathroom tiles.

The badehotel is also home to a restaurant and the re-imagined Vø-Surfshop, where guests can rent or buy surf boards and wetsuits and book private surf or stand-up paddleboard lessons. Bistro 123, the hotel's restaurant, has been fully booked since the property opened this year. Local cuisine like hake caught just offshore the same day or mussels in a white wine sauce paired with fennel spins a modern take on the town's fishing roots. Chefs cap off the meal with a familiar dessert: pavlova or rødgrød, a Danish strawberry pudding, next to the crackling fireplace.

Vorupør Badehotel is open year-round. After all, autumn and winter bring larger swells and the best surfing conditions in the area. No matter when you visit, you'll likely see Peter, Sigrid, Tomas, and Nanna checking in guests and cooking in the bistro. They're taking a hands-on approach in building something totally novel in Vorupør—a place where locals, surfers, and tourists gather to connect and vibe where fine design and hygge meet the sea. ♡



Burani Bonjon with Nasrin Noori

Words by **Kade Krichko** Photos by **Jess Barnard**

When Nasrin Noori fled Afghanistan with her family in the early 1990s, she worried she'd left her country and culture behind. Nasrin grew up in suburban Seattle without an Afghan community, but she found her roots in the kitchen, following her mom around as she prepared traditional dishes that transported the immigrant family back home—if only for a meal.

Now, Nasrin runs her own catering business, Jazze's Fusion, combining her Afghan culinary upbringing with fresh, organic, and local ingredients. She says she cooks to show that Afghanistan is more than just a subject of war-torn headlines, and to connect her children to their heritage.

Burani Bonjon is a warm eggplant and yogurt dish—a staple in Afghan culture. It's also one of Nasrin's seasonal favorites: a gluten-free delight that pairs well with naan bread and a fresh salad. ♡



Time: **50 minutes**

Serves: **4 to 6**

- 3 large Italian eggplants
- 2 medium yellow onions
- 1 can (8 oz) of tomato sauce
- 1 chili pepper
- 1 tbsp salt
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp paprika
- ½ tbs spoon black pepper
- 16 oz plain Greek yogurt
- 3 cloves garlic
- Mint for garnish, fresh or dry.

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Peel eggplant and slice into rounds about ½ inch thick. Lay rounds on paper towel, sprinkle them with salt, and set aside.
3. Chop onions and 2 cloves of garlic. Heat ½ cup of olive or avocado oil and sauté the onion and garlic over medium heat until translucent. Add all the dry spices and sauté for about a minute before adding the can of tomato sauce and chopped chili pepper. Add 1 ½ cup of water, stir, cover, and turn the heat to low.
4. Use paper towel to dab excess liquid from the eggplant. Heat ½ of cup of oil in a large frying pan and fry as many slices of the eggplant as possible while maintaining a single layer. Fry until both sides are brown. Remove from pan and place on a paper towel to absorb excess oil. Add the fried eggplant slices to the tomato sauce and stir to combine. Add a bit more water if the eggplant isn't fully submerged. Put the lid on and place the pan in a pre-heated oven for 35 minutes.
5. For the yogurt topping, add a clove of finely crushed garlic into the yogurt with a pinch of salt and ¼ cup of cold water. Mix until smooth.
6. Carefully remove the eggplant from the pan with a spatula and arrange on a platter. Drizzle with yogurt sauce and finish with sprinkling the mint and any remaining sauce and oil.



Scan code
to try this
recipe for
yourself.



Point & Shoot

Traveling with Film: Airport Edition

Words and photo by **Christie Fitzpatrick**

Traveling can be stressful, and doing it with film adds extra spice to the cocktail. A few years ago, major film brands like Kodak, Fujifilm and Ilford issued warnings about new and enhanced CT scan technology at airports and the damage it could do to unprocessed photographic film. The news caused confusion amongst analog travelers, and with good reason. But let's fix that. Here's a few tips from the last 10 years of traveling with camera film across the world.

First thing's first, always put film in a carry-on. Kodak advises keeping unprocessed film in carry-on luggage, and to have it hand-checked when possible (checked baggage usually goes through a stronger level of radiation than carry-ons). Ask for film to be hand-checked. If you're met with a 'no' (like I was in Stockholm, Sweden), then it's time for Plan B.

That secondary option involves having a lead-lined protective film bag to stash your film in. Personally, I've found that lead-lined film holders tend to register as suspicious, appearing as a large black box on security screens and usually leading to extra searches. Still, they are a protective option. Because of the risk for extra searches, I'll ask for a hand check first and use the bag as backup.

It's worth mentioning that many airports still have two types of X-ray machines. There's the old fashioned 'X-ray', which is safe for most film stocks at 800 ISO or lower. Then there are the new, high-powered CT scanners, which are roughly the radiation equivalent of the Death Star Superlaser. They aren't going to wipe your rolls clean, but likely that damage will be

done. In 2020, Kodak tested the new CT scanners, and found they damaged film with just one scan, diluting detail in the shadows and giving images a muddy, underexposed look.

To avoid any confusion at security, I'll take film out of all its packaging and store it in a transparent, Ziploc bag (like you would for your liquids). This means I can quickly and easily display my outdated, expensive hobby to the TSA worker without further angering the people grabbing at their trays behind me. I'm sorry, guys, I am.

It's also in your best interest to remove all film from your cameras before traveling through an airport. For cameras that are electronic, they need to be X-rayed to ensure there is nothing hidden in the film compartment. If you're trying to protect your film that is already mid-roll inside the camera, that could cause some real issues. It's best to travel with empty cameras as much as possible. Technically, this shouldn't apply to all manual film cameras (like my trusty Nikon FM2), but TSA still prefers that all cameras go through scanners.

Lastly, consider purchasing or developing your film (or both) at your destination. Most countries have film labs, and film is more available than you might think. I've bought Portra 400 in Belgium, Sweden, Croatia, Italy, and many other locations over the past couple of years, and many labs have excellent mail-in options across the U.S. and Europe. This reduces the hassle of traveling with film, period, and is a great way to support local while you're on the road. ♡



BOOK EXCHANGE

by Natalie Dupille

For as long as I can remember, I've been both an intrepid traveler and a voracious reader.

As a rule, I bring one or two books with me, but past that, I read books I find where I go.



Sometimes that's from the book exchange at a cafe, a fellow traveler, or a tucked-away bookstore that carries titles from around the world.

This way of reading lets books find us — and takes the pressure off of reading the latest and greatest.

Sometimes that means reading a trashy romance/mystery paperback picked up out of a little free library on a bikepacking tour in central Oregon, and sometimes it's reading Rohinton Mistry's "A Fine Balance" on a bus bound for Rio Napo in Ecuador.

Below are a few of my most memorable road reads and the places that took me to them.



every Eragon & Hunger Games book
PORT MACQUARIE,
AUSTRALIA, 2014



a 400-page Buffy
spinoff novel
POKHARA, NEPAL
2015



NOSARA,
COSTA RICA
2017



HUA HIN,
THAILAND
2018
super rare, out
of print lesbian
SEM erotica!



SAYULITA, MEXICO
2023



CANNON BEACH,
USA, 2023



Read Slow. Scroll Less.

