

OTCHO

issue



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This is the first issue of Otcho, with many more to come. Hopefully it's not super boring. I'm making this zine because there is not enough long-form content in fingerboarding, we max out at 1 minute Instagram videos.

Fingerboarding has been around for awhile now, but there has been little documentation of our history. I've been going to Rendezvous for a couple years and I'm always hearing amazing stories from people. If you're in to fingerboarding, you're into skating, you're into art, music, other DIY communities. It's such a unique community which means everyone has a story to tell. What originally sparked this idea was something Mallory Curtis said to me in 2014. We were talking about the upcoming Rendezvous and how excited I was to finally meet one of my favorite fingerboarders. Mallory had met this person before so I asked her what they were like.

"They're super friendly and easy to get along with but they're kinda weird."

"What do you mean?"

"Every fingerboarder is kind of weird in some way, I mean think about it."

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ISSUE ONE
NOVEMBER 2018

JAMES O'NEILL

INTERVIEWED BY ANDREW HILL
AND THOMAS FARRELL
APRIL 2018

“I have a fucking VX in my bag.”

AH: Let's start with the roots. Where are you from?

JO: I'm from Richmond, Virginia. I grew up in Yorktown though, which is about an hour east of Richmond, 30 minutes away from Virginia Beach.

AH: You don't skate anymore right, you just fingerboard? But you used to be in to skating?

JO: Yeah yeah, I started skating in middle school. Skated all the through high school and college, and when I moved to Richmond and went to VCU college up there. I was still skating but I was playing a lot of music. I'd play in bands and tour all the time. I'd fall and hurt myself, and at one point I broke my wrist and was like well I gotta just chill on this.

TF: You could always scooter.

JO: I could scooter, but that's not really in the cards for me. But yeah fingerboarding has always been there. I've always fingerboarded alongside skateboarding.

AH: How long were you using Tech Decks?

JO: I'm 34 years old. So I was using them for a long time. In 2008 I searched “wooden fingerboards” or something like that and Morning Wood came up. A year or two later I found out about Blackriver and got a Berlinwood. I bought a complete and it changed the game for me, it was really cool. I didn't know there was a whole other world out there.

AH: Yeah It's the craziest feeling using a real fingerboard for the first time.

JO: Even back then when I got the Morning Wood, I just used skate grip.



JAMES PROBABLY DOING SOMETHING CRAZY.
PHOTO BY HARALD SCHÖN

“I didn’t know there was a whole other world out there.”

“Wise Hot Cheese popcorn. It’s the fucking best shit ever.”



DENIM DON MAKES AN APPEARANCE.
PHOTO BY JASON BARD

AH: Did you have friends growing up who fingerboarded?

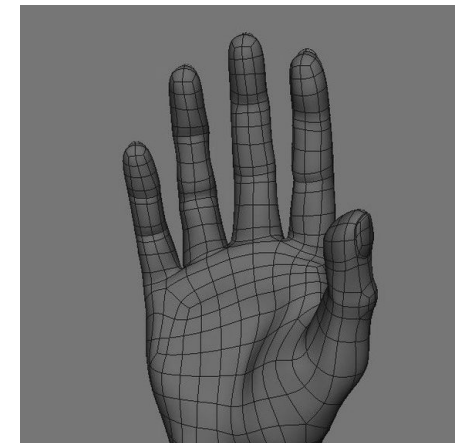
Yeah, one friend in particular. I met him in high school, we played music together. He was a punk kid. I met him one random day when he was walking out of the bandroom. I saw this kid and he was wearing an Operation Ivy t-shirt and a backpack with a bunch of punk pins on it. I was like “Yo, who is this kid?” Long story short he was with me when we got our first Tech Decks. He doesn’t really fingerboard anymore but he and I used to always play skate at lunch in high school. He still lives in Richmond actually. When he comes over I have a specific deck he’ll use. He will straight up go, no tuck, straight up, because that’s how we learned. But he can still do good shit, hes got a good style.

AH: What made you get in to skate culture?

I guess I was just always fascinated by skateboarding. The first deck I ever got

was a Foundation. It was an Ethan Fowler pro model. That was the board that I broke my elbow on in highschool. I learned how to ollie standing still on a carpet in my garage.

TF: Okay but what about your favorite snack?



JO: Wise Hot Cheese popcorn. Wise products. It’s the fucking best shit ever.

TF: Are you vegan or vegetarian?

JO: I’m vegetarian. Wise popcorn is grain-free, which is kinda cool. Its got MSG in it which is probably why it’s so fucking delicious.

TF: I don’t care about that dude.

AH: How do you view fingerboarding connected to your other interests like graffiti and skateboarding?

JO: Its all interconnected. Whenever you watch skate videos, every bowl that you see theres always like, oh Tober from Philly, I know that dude, he did a huge fill in this pool. Any graffiti artist you know, theres always shit affiliated with skateboarding. That culture is super intertwined. I feel like that's very similar to fingerboarding. Where fingerboarding is intertwined with skateboarding. All these dudes at Mike's right now are outside skateboarding, but everybodys gonna be hanging out, drinking beers, fingerboarding later tonight. Everybody's gonna be filming each other. Its all the same shit. I have a fucking VX in my bag, a skateboard camera, and now we're using it for fingerboarding.

AH: That's why its so easy to make friends at Rendezvous because you can go up to anyone and be like oh they skate? You guys probably share like 5 other hobbies.

JO: Thats how I met Daniel Ray, the guy who introduced me to everyone. Shout out Daniel Ray.

Geoff Rasco: We want your tacos.

TF: Yo I've only heard MYTHS about this man. I ain't never seen his tacos!

AH: Dude he comes to Mike's, and hes like "Hey man, is it cool if I use your kitchen? I think everyone here is hungry and I'm thinking about frying up some tacos." and this is like in the middle of summer and its hot as fuck out. Daniel starts cooking up in the kitchen and it get sweaty real quick. "Yo we gotta open up some windows!" He was cookin' up an insane amount of chicken, this was large scale taco making. You guys remember that?

JO: Dudes a legend.

"Or it can be bad because you will get kids who are like oh my house burnt down!"

JO: I met Daniel through FBHQ. There was a Virginia thread and Daniel was like "Yo, I'm in Mechanicsville." which is like 15 minutes away. Daniel's the homie. I fingerboarded untucked, I used my third finger to set up, I would do all the no-no's of whatever is cool in fingerboarding right now, y'know? I had no clue. Daniel was the dude who was like "Yo theres this company and that company! Go check it out!" Full circle now it's like now we're here at Rendezvous, it's my third time coming. I pretty much knew about the scene for two years now, and its been cool. I've met a lot of good people and its fucking sick.

TF: It's crazy to think about being influenced by media, art and skateboarding and how that directly influenced fingerboarding. I think it's nuts how everyone has their own filming style. You can tell who listens to what music and what they're influenced by strictly from their fingerboard videos. That goes for skateboarding too. It's weird to think, when I didn't know anybody and I was just like lurking FFI, the people that made my favorite videos, they're all my friends now.



The people who made those crazy videos are the ones I find myself hanging out with in real life now at Rendezvous.

AH: How do you feel about the progression in fingerboard media? I feel like it's a good and bad situation.

The fingerboard community is much more accessible now which is great. But fuck instagram right? James you've been in the scene for a few years now, what's your perspective?

JO: I think it's great. I know a lot of people who would probably say otherwise. I like it because it's an intro for people like me. I'm not gonna think to go to YouTube now, or two years ago. I'm gonna think to go, let's look at the hashtag fingerboard, and I'll see the top clips that are getting views. Which is probably Blackriver, Cowply or Woob. That's cool because it gives you that outlook to know that there's a lot more to it than this. That's why I think instagram is good, because it will lead those people to the right place. Or it can be bad because you will get kids who are like oh my house burned down! I need BRTs!

ED GARNER

INTERVIEWED BY ANDREW HILL
AND THOMAS FARRELL
APRIL 2018

“It’s like a Pandora’s Box, and we’ll never be able to stop it.”

TF: Alright we got Ed Garner here.

EG: Hey if this is how ya’ll wanna do this, I’m gonna eat y’all up. I’m the troll king. Okay let’s start.

TF: How you feeling today Rambo?

EG: I’m feeling slim.

TF: You feeling good off last night?

EG: Yeah. Yes. I was really drunk. But we’re here, we’re fingerboarding, because I love fingerboarding. Let me tell you a story about what happened this morning. I was at the bar and the lady she took my ID and said “Yo, it’s not real.” I said “Bitch, it’s real.” she says “I’m going to have to research it.” so she googles like Maryland IDs and short story short she let me drink yo.

AH: Most state IDs probably look the same anyways don’t they?

EG: No, not at all. They’re actually all different. You don’t know shit about America, Andrew. Get out of my country.

AH: Alright Ed, my bad. So fuck Instagram, is that the movement?

EG: Nah, I like instagram. Generally it’s not that bad. Yeah, I don’t think that’s a good movement. Instagram is all about building. With all social media if you can use it to build your brand, then you’re smart enough to know how to do that. People that tend to not like it are the people that can’t do shit with it. What y’all think about that?

TF: Yeah that’s a fact. See I don’t care about posting on Instagram. I’m sure if I really wanted to hustle out there I’d be on Instagram.

ED: Yeah if you had a brand that you working on.

TF: I got the brand, I make boards. I just don’t care dog.

EG: Yeah see thats a cop out. You could care and you could be making money.

TF: Dude I’m making hella money!

TF: I got the money in ma pockets!

EG: I’m just saying I want more for us. I want more for us, man.

TF: I’ll be honest Ed, I’ll do more just for you.



EG: Yeah but do it for me *and* you, do it for fingerboarding.

AH: So I take it you support Instagram.

EG: Keep posting on instagram, but at the same time keep living organic.

TF: Keep posting full length YouTube videos?

EG: Yeah yeah, even though I haven’t posted one in awhile. I posted one last year.

TF: One last thing for you. Fingerboarding is in a good spot right now, but if you could change one thing about the scene what would it be?

EG: I wish that boards never got wider. After 30mm, I wish that was the cap. Know what I’m saying? I feel like it’s gotten out of hand. It’s kinda too crazy. Now it’s like a pandoras box, and we’ll never be able to stop it. You saw that Devise board? 50mm, that’s gonna be the norm! Everybodys gonna be like “Yeah, this is so chill!”

AH: Then the park gets bigger, everything gets bigger.

TF: You’re gonna need a rollercoaster to ride along on the park. We’re gonna need toboggans to sesh at Rendezvous.

Go find Ed on Instagram making music and fingerboarding. @ronnie_exotica

TIMO LIEBEN

INTERVIEWED BY ANDREW HILL
AND THOMAS FARRELL
APRIL 2018

We caught Timo for a quick chat in between 150 kids at Rendezvous 27.

TF: Whats your favorite fingerboard trick?

TL: My personal tricks that I do myself are probably flip stall tricks. But when I see what other people go for... dude there is so much technical stuff. I'm blessed to see all these freaks making more progress, it's awesome!

AH: The new kids are getting so good these days. What do you like about coming to these events?

TL: It's meeting the people. At Rendezvous, thats the most exciting part. I just noticed there's so many new kids here, it's awesome. They are the next generation. It's great to see them grow up every year. Make them progress! I love meeting old friends every year too. It brings joy to my life.

AH: What do you have to say to all the kids who are just fingerboarding on their desks at home, making Instagram edits. They're missing out, right?

TL: They're missing a lot of stuff if they don't go to events! I can't help them, but if there is an event close to them, they should do it. It's awesome to meet other people, and see how they fingerboard.

TF: Even if you have like two friends in the same city, you should get together. Fingerboarding in groups makes a big difference, even if it's just like one person. Don't be a keyboard warrior, come fingerboard.

TL: Social media scene is impressive, and I see a lot of people making friendships and stuff there also. It's wonderful. But dude we are here between a hundred, maybe hundred fifty people. This is intense, like really intense!



TIMO BLASTING A KICKFLIP DOWN THIS ICONIC STAIR SET.
PHOTO BY MARTIN BECKMANN

TF: Are you for or against instagram?

TL: I think I am in the middle of that. I really enjoy instagram.



PHOTO BY MARTIN BECKMANN

For videos and stuff it's so mainstream. There's stuff going around every minute. On YouTube at least you have a chance to look at it a year later. But on Instagram it just vanishes and that's it!

TF: I think that's one of my biggest gripes, people are posting good clips on stories. Now fingerboarding content isn't like, manageable. I can't save it or see it again.

AH: Yeah now there is a few different levels. Mediocre clip will go on the story, better clip will be an Instagram post and if you really want to make a good video you post it on YouTube. Not everyone does that. I know I do.

TF: Do you think we should bring back YouTube? Start making full lengths again?

TL: I would love to see a little more full lengths. I think a lot of people do. But to be honest, I'm not following stuff a lot so I'm missing things.

AH: There's maybe a handful of fingerboarders that are still uploading YouTube videos regularly.

TL: Instagram is totally that social media short life thing. You go through it, see a minute clip that's it. Gone.

**THANK YOU FOR READING.
LOOK OUT FOR ISSUE #2 AT RENDEZVOUS 29.**