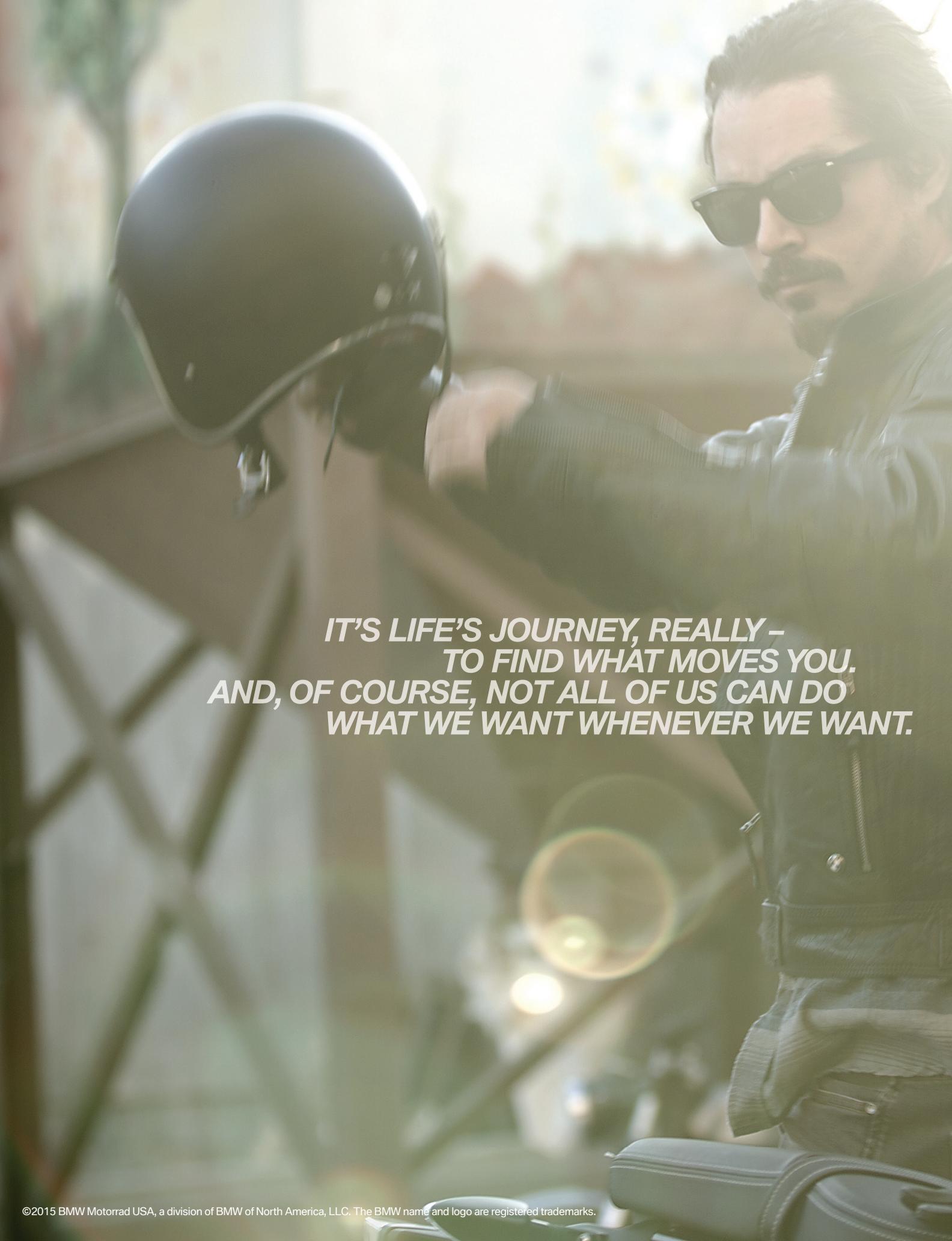


Iron & Dine

L I N E



ISSUE
020

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing sunglasses and a black leather jacket. He is seated on a motorcycle, looking off to the right. The background is out of focus, showing some foliage and a bright sky.

**IT'S LIFE'S JOURNEY, REALLY –
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AND, OF COURSE, NOT ALL OF US CAN DO
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THIS PAGE | The first (and almost last) Motos in Moab event. Photo by Tyson Call. Story on page 90.

COVER | Omar of Elders Company. Photo by Aaron Brimhall.
Read how Aaron turned potential disaster into a life-altering experience in Indonesia on page 44.



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The motorcycle and the places it takes us.

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FOREWORD

RISK.

ADAM FITZGERALD

Editor/Visual Director

There's something to be said for being scared shitless. It usually occurs when our lives are unexpectedly altered. We glide along, navigating the straightest path we can, and then it happens: a car crash. Losing the job. Divorce. Cancer.

But the fear we face in these moments can be a powerful motivator. It drives us towards greater risk. With each measure we take, we are greeted by the corresponding result – the best possible outcome of which is reward.

There are serendipitous moments of reward within the chaos – like a car crash that brings two lovers together – but if we can tip the scale on purpose, taking greater chances and pushing the boundaries of discomfort further, there is a whole side of life we've yet to turn over.

Stories like "Lost and Found," on page 44, put us in the middle of Indonesia through the eyes of *Iron & Air* ambassador Aaron Brimhall, who found himself stranded in a country where his only point of contact had vanished without warning. Aaron's choice to put himself in this place was heavy on risk, and the outcome changed his life.

Then there is the dangerous art of photographer Nick Veasy (page 24) – manipulating radioactive X-rays to achieve one of the most unique bodies of photographic work we've seen.

Even organized events like Motos in Moab (page 90) and the El Diablo Run (page 96) came with trials that left 200 people stranded in a flooded Utah valley and one rider close to death in Mexico. But the stories from those who were there are anything but tragic.

Everything is risk. If you're only intention is to mitigate that, you might just end up mitigating your life away. Every time you leave your home, decide to take the long way around, leap before you look, or find yourself in a spot where pain and fear can potentially take hold, you are likely right where you need to be.

Welcome to Issue 020.



FEATURED BIKE

FUTURE/PRIMITIVE

"I CAME TO APPRECIATE THAT HE WAS JUST A TINKERER
IN THE WOODS MAKING WEIRD STUFF. MOTORCYCLES
JUST HAPPENED TO BE ONE OF THEM."

WORDS & IMAGES *Stan Evans*



As a photographer I'm always looking for strange and obscure things to shoot. I'd heard about this place in Brooklyn called Jane – a shop that had custom motorcycles, specialty coffee, and apparel – and as a moto enthusiast, I had to check it out. What I found inside was one of the most interesting incarnations of a Ducati I'd ever seen.

It looked like a WWII-era P-51 Mustang fighter plane on two wheels. Bright blocks of colored paint made up the body work while it was adorned with intricate details of gold. It was bold, brash, and sexy.

Adam and Alex, the owners of Jane, didn't have much information beyond the fact that the bike was on consignment for the current owner, who wanted to remain anonymous.

As I spent more time there, I finally convinced them to let me take her out. I wanted to shoot some impromptu lifestyle photos, and Alex was kind enough to ride the Ducati for the photos you see here. But the images begged more questions than answers. I sent a few comps out to magazines and blogs curious to see if anyone had any info. No one had seen it before or knew any builders familiar with it. Without any details, publications were also hesitant to do anything with the bike. I was at a dead end.

I knew I had something exquisite, but I couldn't understand it. It was like wandering through the woods and happening upon an Andy Goldsworthy sculpture. How did this thing end up in Brooklyn?

No less than three months later, a young kid came in to the shop for a cup of coffee, and found himself drawn to the mystery Ducati as I was, but for a completely different reason.

"My dad built that bike!"

Alex called me immediately with the kid's contact information. After reaching out several times to get a lead on where it came from, I received no response. My encouragement dissipated to disappointment and frustration.





Another month passed until the kid came in again for coffee. Alex obtained his email once more and realized the address was off by one letter.

I finally reached Henry – the builder's son – and he gave me the email address for his father's wife Laura. She then connected me with her husband, and within a few days, he emailed me back confirming that he was indeed the builder of the bike in the photos. His name was Jon Aesoph. His nickname was "Einstein."

When we were finally able to talk, Einstein was matter of fact, though he never came off as pretentious. Instead, he was almost aloof to his own abilities. I came to appreciate that he was just a tinkerer in the woods making weird stuff. Motorcycles just happened to be one of them.

"I am an artist, who works mainly in drawing and painting. I love machines, and try to get them to love me. As much as

bike from the '50s or '60s. The new bodywork was painted the dark Ducati Green, and the stock white racing stripes were continued over the top of it. During this time, I did all the sexy motor things that I could afford, such as open Desmodromic belts, the gold anodized grips and clutch/brake controls.

"Though the overall seat and tail combination came from Airtech, I needed to re-fabricate portions of it to fit. I lengthened it almost three inches, and molded it to fit the tank shape at the forward end. All this consequently required my moving the taillight, which was a quite acceptable round piece, and I put in flexible LED turn signals, which were molded into the sides of the tail. It looked pretty cool to me, and I rode it in that guise for quite awhile.

"Some months later I was sitting in the shop staring at it (this is an activity that provides endless mirth and confusion for my lovely wife). I decided the large open space at the rear would look better if I moved the exhaust pipes from low on

"That was the last I saw of her until my son let me know she had shown up in Brooklyn."

I appreciate what the manufacturers offer us, I really need to make it my own. I don't consider myself to be a 'builder,' but have always re-imagined any bike I've owned, and tried to make it unique for myself."

The mystery Ducati was a Sport Classic "S" that Einstein purchased new in the fall of 2009 from Skagit Motor Sports in Mount Vernon, Washington. The "S" meant it came with the front fairing, unlike others in the Sport Classic line.

Einstein, a retired art teacher living on Whidbey Island off the coast of Washington state, says he only rode it stock for a few months.

"I like to get to know a bike pretty well on a daily basis; it helps me choose a direction. I wanted something a bit different, as is my usual modus operandi, and decided to change the tail to a 'Don Vesco Big Butt' from Airtech Bodywork. This immediately took the bike back in time. The 'Big Butt' suggested a race

the side to up under the seat, and culminating by appearing from out of the box seat. That proved to be a good move; she looked like a piece of history, but with an attitude."

In 2011, Einstein's eyes shifted towards another bike – the BMW S1000RR – prompting the need to move the Ducati from his shop to make room. In order to sell the bike, he needed to make some changes that would appeal to more buyers.

"We've all seen the stir that café racers have made on our contemporary motorcycling scene, even to the point of manufacturers producing them, lifeless as they are. I decided to again change the tail/seating area on the bike, and chose a Ducati race seat intended for the Ducati MH900e. While I was at it, I decided to do the Italian flag colors on her, with silver being the main accent. Again, pining for the past, I sat down and in one session drew my spraying plan, not following any vintage bike in particular, but desiring a result that would make people want to hug her. There's something that





happens when you decide to spray a separate color around the headlamp. Don't ask me why, but to me, it makes the bike more accessible, more human. While I was prepping for the spray, and had all the bodywork off, I decided to lengthen the pipes out the rear a full three inches. That move really brought on that badly serious attitude she began to take on.

"I have always loved Ducati's propensity for drilling holes wherever they can fit them in. They call this 'lightening,' but let's admit it: this is also another great design tactic. I drilled the hell out of everything. Where I could add a hole, I did. Another design tactic I have is to use Caterpillar Yellow a lot. I was on a UH1B in Vietnam, and I loved the markings that usually designated danger in that same yellow. Once I was finished, I put her up for sale, and it sold in two days, to a gentleman in Texas. That was the last I saw of her until my son let me know she had shown up in Brooklyn. Amazing..."

Despite a missing block of time in the lifespan of this Ducati, the mystery of its birth was solved. While all of this could live on a spec sheet about upgrades, performance stats, and mechanical specifications, it is really about a photographer, two shop owners, a son, a patient wife, an eccentric builder, and finally, a publisher willing to tell the story. The tale of this single machine – chased from NYC to Whidbey Island through a tangled and intertwined circle – is unraveled, and finally complete. ■

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