

detroit. jesus. punk.



O.G. KRISHTIN

Detroit. Jesus. Punk.

by

O.G. Krishtin

Golden Greenhouse Pub.

The Last King of the Twentieth Century

Niko Sekoya

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This is a work of creative nonfiction.

Some names, details, and events have been changed to protect privacy or sharpen the truth.

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Somewhere Between Here and Then

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The Disclaimer

Prologue: Born in the Fire

(Or: How I Didn't Find This Movement—It Found Me)

I didn't find this movement. I was born into it.

Some kids grow up with Christmas. I grew up with the August campout—the one place where time folded in on itself, where generations blurred together, where stories of revolution didn't just live in old testimonies but in the very dirt under our feet.

The people at these gatherings weren't just friends of my parents.

They were my aunts and uncles, my teachers, my tribe.

I have been to 41 of the 49 years they have held it. This is not nostalgia. This is not sentimentality.

This is who I am.

I watched people burn out.

I watched them leave—some quietly, some bitter, some convinced they had been fooled into believing in something that never had a future.

I saw the contradictions, the hypocrisies, and the slow corrosion as the fire got strangled by the demands of survival or the seduction of compromise.

But I also saw the ones who never let go. And I saw what it cost them.

Most people don't know this history because it wasn't meant to be remembered.

It was meant to be erased, replaced with the version that fits neatly into church-sanctioned documentaries and nostalgic retellings about the "hippie Jesus Freak revival."

I don't have the luxury of forgetting. I don't have the privilege of pretending this was just a youth movement that came and went.

Because I'm still here. And I'm still dangerous.

The Danielson Warrior

I learned early on that being born into something doesn't make it easy. If anything, it makes it harder.

You don't get to walk in wide-eyed and naive. You see the cracks from the inside, the fractures before they break, the weight of the thing as it starts to collapse.

And then you make a *choice*.

I didn't walk away. I let myself get slapped around. I let myself get knocked down by those too tired to fight anymore, those who traded radical faith for suburban safety, those who made peace with the empire. I kept going.

If you want a metaphor, I was Daniel LaRusso polishing the glass windows long after Mr. Miyagi stopped watching. Except I wasn't preparing for a karate tournament—I was preparing for this.

Because now? Now I'm running laps around Cobra Kai.

I don't fight for nostalgia. I don't fight to bring back some golden age that never really existed.

I fight because the world is still broken, the fire is still needed, and the ones who abandoned it are the ones who should have known better.

I am not a rogue. I am a father. I am a husband.

I am a man who walks in the suburbs and the trails, who lives between two worlds—the world I was raised in and the world I refuse to let win.

And I am here to tell you that the war isn't over.

Chapter 1

The First Sparks

*(Or: That Time a Bunch of Jesus Freaks Accidentally
Started a Movement)*

*"Light yourself on fire with passion, and people
will come from miles to watch you burn."*

— John Wesley

The world has a way of rewriting history.

It polishes the rough edges, smooths out the contradictions, and turns something dangerous into something safe.

That's exactly what happened to the Jesus Movement.

You've probably heard the official version—a bunch of hippies suddenly got tired of drugs, cut their hair, and started going to church.

That's the version the system wants you to believe.

The version where everything fits neatly into a church documentary about revival.

The version where everything wraps up nicely.

The version where the fire burns bright for a moment and then quietly fades away.

But the *truth*?

The truth is wilder.

The truth is messier.

The truth is more dangerous.

And Detroit's Jesus People? They weren't like what was happening in California.

They weren't looking for a movement.

They weren't trying to start a trend.

They weren't trying to build something that could be swallowed up by the system.

They were just trying to survive.

Detroit Was Already on Fire

By the time the Jesus People movement hit Detroit, the city had already been through hell.

The 1967 riots left entire blocks in ashes.

Racial tensions were breaking the city apart.

The Vietnam War was sending kids home in body bags—or sending them running to Canada.

Detroit wasn't some flower-child paradise where people sat around talking about peace and love.

It was a war zone.

And in the middle of all of it?

A group of long-haired, street-rat kids started talking about Jesus—in a way that actually made sense.

They weren't selling anything.

They weren't pitching church membership.

They weren't promising some sanitized, respectable version of faith.

They were saying something far more offensive:

That the system was a Lie.

That power and greed weren't compatible with the Kingdom of God.

That Jesus wasn't some weak, white-robed figure in a stained-glass window—he was a revolutionary who flipped tables, got executed by the state, and came back to burn the whole thing down.

And people listened.

Because for the first time, *faith didn't sound like another con.*

It sounded like **freedom.**

The Gospel That Didn't Sound Like a Sales Pitch

For a lot of us, religion had always felt like a trap.

It was something used to control people—to keep them quiet, obedient, manageable.

Church wasn't a place for the broken. It was a place for people who had already figured out how to fake being fine.

But what these Jesus People were saying?

They weren't trying to get us to "clean up our act."

They weren't telling us to fix ourselves before coming to God.

They were saying that Jesus didn't come for the ones who had it all together—he came for the ones who didn't.

And in a city that felt like it was collapsing under its own weight, that was the only kind of gospel that mattered.

People started gathering in houses instead of church buildings.

People started asking real questions instead of pretending they had answers.

People started reading the words of Jesus like they actually meant something.

And then something crazy happened.

People actually started living like they believed it.

That's when the fire started to catch.

That's when it stopped being just another movement.

That's when it became dangerous.

Chapter 2

The House on Mark Twain Street

*(Or: "Hey, Maybe We Should Just Live Like the
Early Church?"*)

*“The church is a house built on the foundation
of apostles and prophets, not pastors and
CEOs.”*

— **Wolfgang Simson**

It started with a house.

Not a church. Not an organization. Not a brand with a logo and a mission statement.

Just a house on Mark Twain Street, packed with kids who had nowhere else to go.

Some were fresh off the streets. Some were running from something—draft boards, broken homes, their own addictions.

But all of them had one thing in common: they were looking for something real.

The Jesus Movement in Detroit wasn't built in seminaries or Sunday morning services.

It was built in crowded living rooms, over cheap coffee and stolen cigarettes, in midnight conversations where kids asked questions pastors had always been afraid to answer.

It wasn't about playing church. It wasn't about being respectable.

It was about finding out if this Jesus thing was actually real—or if it was just another con.

And for a lot of people, it turned out to be real enough to burn everything else down.

Real enough that people who had been addicted for years suddenly walked away from drugs overnight.

Real enough that kids who had been ready to check out completely suddenly found something worth living for.

Real enough that people actually sold everything they had and started living like the early church—not because they had to, but because they wanted to.

But when you start living like that, you get noticed.

And the people who run the system?

They don't like it when people stop playing by the rules.

When Living by Faith Becomes a Problem

At first, nobody took us seriously.

The churches in Detroit had bigger problems—declining attendance, struggling finances, pastors trying to keep their congregations from splitting over race, politics, or Vietnam.

But then they started noticing us.

Because we weren't just talking about Jesus—we were actually living like him.

We pooled our money, so no one went without.

We opened our doors to anyone who needed a place to stay.

We gave away food, clothes, whatever we had—because if someone else needed it, why would we keep it?

We weren't trying to be radical.

We just read the book of Acts and thought,
Well... this is what they did. Shouldn't we?

And that's when the questions started.

Who's in charge? *(No one. Or everyone.)*

Where do you get your funding? *(Faith. And whatever someone throws in the coffee can on the kitchen table.)*

What church are you affiliated with? *(None. And all of them. Depends on who's asking.)*

That wasn't an acceptable answer.

People don't like it when they can't figure out where you fit.

And we didn't fit anywhere.

The First Signs of Resistance

When you stop playing by the rules, the people who make the rules start playing against you.

First, they tried to warn us.

Pastors would come by and gently suggest that we needed "accountability." That we needed "spiritual oversight." That we were too young, too radical, too naive.

Then, they started discrediting us.

Sermons got preached about "dangerous movements" and "rogue groups that reject authority."

Then, they just came after us.

Some churches banned their members from associating with us. Some leaders went as far as to claim we were deceived, led by demons, or worse—hippies.

It didn't matter that people's lives were actually changing.

Some thought it was cute—just a bunch of hippies who had found Jesus. A little misguided, maybe, but harmless. They figured we'd grow out of it.

But then we didn't.

Because we weren't just playing at revival. We weren't just getting emotional at Friday night Bible studies and then going back to our old lives.

We were actually living this.

And that's when the resistance started.

Chapter 3

When the System Took Notice

(Or: "You're Either With Us or Against Us")

*"In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is
a revolutionary act."*

— George Orwell

At first, the established religious leaders thought we were just another youth group—something they could sponsor, guide, or absorb into their existing structures.

They smiled at the stories of kids turning their lives around and talked about how "inspiring" it all was.

Until they realized we weren't planning on coming back to the system.

We weren't interested in Sunday morning performances.

We weren't interested in church boards and committees.

We weren't interested in "fitting in."

And suddenly, the smiles faded.

We weren't playing by their rules. We weren't waiting for permission. We weren't asking for funding, leadership, or approval.

We were just living it.

That's when they started calling us reckless.

That's when they started saying we were "theologically unsound."

That's when the whispers of "cult" started floating around.

Because there's nothing more dangerous to an institution than people who don't need it.

And we didn't need them.

Every time something real starts to take shape, the system either kills it, discredits it, or absorbs it.

And Detroit wasn't going to be any different.

The Jesus Punks were growing.

We weren't just in one house anymore—we were in multiple.

The movement was spreading.

Kids who had never set foot in a church were suddenly talking about the Sermon on the Mount like it was a manifesto for a new way of life.

And the churches, the institutions, the ones who were supposed to be thrilled that people were coming to Jesus?

They were the ones who started coming after us.

It always comes down to this.

The system vs. the wildfire.

The institution vs. the movement.

The ones who crave control vs. the *ones who just want the truth.*

The churches wanted us to settle down.

They wanted us to organize, to get respectable, to be manageable.

And we refused.

Because as soon as you put a fence around a wildfire, you kill it.

They didn't understand that we weren't looking for another denomination, another hierarchy, another list of rules to follow.

We were looking for the raw, unfiltered, untamed version of faith that we saw in the book of Acts.

We weren't interested in a gospel that made people comfortable.

We weren't trying to be the next wave of church members—they had enough of those already.

We were trying to live like the first-century believers—who had nothing, owned nothing, feared nothing, and turned the world upside down.

And the churches?

They told us that was irresponsible. That it was dangerous.

That it wasn't sustainable.

And in some ways, maybe they were right.

Because when you live like that—when you throw yourself into the fire without a backup plan—*things burn.*

People burn out.

Mistakes get made.

And eventually, the machine finds a way to wear you down.

But the real tragedy?

The real tragedy is what happens when people start listening to that voice.

The one that tells them to slow down, to be careful, to be reasonable.

Because that's the moment when the fire starts to die.

Chapter 4:

The Battle Between Structure and Spirit

(Or: How to Kill a Wildfire in Three Easy Steps)

*“Wildfires are not meant to be contained; they’re
meant to spread.”*

— Anonymous

It always comes down to Control.

Movements begin with spirit—raw, untamed, unfiltered. People show up because something inside them ignites. They feel alive, powerful, and connected to something greater than themselves.

Then the structure arrives.

First, they tell you the fire needs to be contained to protect it.

Then, they build walls around it to preserve it.

Finally, they choke it out entirely, leaving only embers behind.

Detroit's Jesus Punks faced this battle head-on.

Churches and religious leaders insisted we needed structure. They called it accountability. They called it oversight. They called it wisdom.

But what they meant was control.

They couldn't handle the idea of faith existing outside their carefully maintained boundaries. They needed everything to fit into neat boxes and bullet-point sermons.

But faith was never meant to be neat. It was meant to be messy, disruptive, revolutionary.

And when we refused their structure?

They labeled us dangerous.

We didn't care about their labels. We cared about authenticity.

We had seen too many movements turn into monuments—static, lifeless reminders of something that once mattered. We weren't going to let that happen.

The system had steps to extinguish us:

Step 1: Institutionalize the Movement

- Convert the spontaneous gatherings into scheduled services.
- Turn conversations into sermons.
- Replace questions with doctrines.

We rejected this outright.

Step 2: Neutralize the Leaders

Give them positions, titles, paychecks—make them dependent on the very system they were challenging.

Once they were comfortable, their voices would quiet.

We saw it happen around us—but we fought it off.

Step 3: Discredit the Rebels

If they can't absorb you, they'll silence you. Label you a heretic, extremist, or idealist—whatever it takes to neutralize your impact.

But instead of shutting us down, it fueled us even more.

The **S**pirit doesn't fit in boxes.

The **S**pirit doesn't obey hierarchies.

The **S**pirit moves freely, unpredictably, powerfully.

So we stayed wild. We stayed dangerous. We stayed free.

Because as soon as you put chains around the spirit, you kill it.

We chose spirit over structure.

We chose freedom over fear.

We chose authenticity over acceptance.

And that's why they couldn't control us.

That's why they feared us.

That's why our fire kept burning.

Chapter 5

The Breaking Point

*(Or: How Do You Keep the Fire Burning When the
World Moves On?)*

“Comfort is the enemy of achievement.”

— Farrah Gray

This is the part of the story no one likes to talk about.

Movements built on pure passion eventually hit a breaking point.

No matter how fierce the flame, no matter how deep the belief, people eventually face a decision: Stay wild or settle down.

Detroit was no different.

Some people left—not because they stopped believing, but because they couldn't handle the uncertainty. They needed stability, a paycheck, a plan.

Some stayed but started compromising. They softened the message, made things respectable, tried to build enough structure to prevent collapse.

And some people doubled down.

They refused to play by the system's rules.
They refused to let fear dictate their faith.
They refused to believe Jesus ever meant his
followers to be comfortable.

But radical faith comes at a cost.

People burn out.

Friendships fracture.

The machine relentlessly tries to wear you down.

I watched it all—the rise, the fall, those who
faded away, those who sold out, those who held
on desperately.

I saw people who once were fearless begin to
worry about reputations, careers, and social
status.

I watched radical faith slowly diluted into a
sanitized message, safe enough for suburban
churches.

It happened gradually:

First, small compromises.

Then, trading freedom for security.

Choosing comfort over conviction.

Eventually convincing themselves a watered-down faith was "good enough."

Before long, they became the very system they once defied.

But some never folded.

Some of us never walked away. Some of us never stopped asking, seeking, knocking.

We took hits. We lost friends, security, and any chance at fitting in.

We have been forced to absorb tragedy after trade for decades.

But we held on.

We refused to forget why we started.

We refused to believe the fire was ever meant to die.

Because even when the world moved on, even when others let go, we knew this truth:

The breaking point isn't where faith ends—it's where it truly begins.

Chapter 6

The Ones Who Held On

*(Or: "Some of Us Never Stopped Asking, Seeking,
Knocking")*

"Further up. Further in."

— Aslan (King of Narnia)

Not everyone gave up.

Some of us never walked away. Some of us refused to let the fire die, even when it threatened to consume us entirely.

We took the hits. We lost friendships. We sacrificed security and any hope of fitting neatly into the system.

We watched the movement we loved become diluted, packaged neatly, and sold as a product to suburban megachurches.

We saw former radicals become cogs in the same machine we'd spent our lives resisting.

But we never stopped.

We believed there had to be more—that faith wasn't just about showing up on Sundays or pretending to be good people. We believed the Kingdom of God wasn't just a metaphor—it was a reality to be lived.

And now?

We're still here.

Quieter, maybe. Wiser, certainly. Scarred,
undeniably.

But we never left.

Something is shifting. People are waking up. The
old structures are crumbling. Those who've waited
in the shadows are stepping back into the light.

Because the table is still set.

The lamps are still burning.

The fire never truly went out.

The only question now is—who will join us?

Chapter 7

Keep Your Lantern Lit

(Or: "We Were Never Supposed to Be Comfortable")

"Be prepared, and keep your lamp burning."

— Matthew 25:4

In one of Jesus' most striking parables, ten bridesmaids await a wedding feast.

Five arrive prepared, their lanterns full of oil. The other five let theirs burn out.

When the long-awaited moment arrives, the unprepared find themselves outside—not because they were unwelcome, but because they allowed their light to fade.

Not because they disbelieved.

Not because they opposed the cause.

But because *they had grown weary*.

That's the real danger—the slow erosion of vigilance. Not an overt betrayal, but a subtle surrender to exhaustion.

A movement once defined by fire becomes a memory, then an anecdote, and finally, an absence.

But I refuse to let that happen.

I was raised in this movement.

I was forged in its fire.

While others drifted away, I stayed—not because my faith was perfect, but because something inside me knew the embers were still smoldering.

And then there was **Haskell**.

In 2005, during my first experience with psilocybin, I encountered something that altered my trajectory forever.

Reality felt thin, the unseen tangible.

And in that altered state, Haskell appeared—not physically, *but something deeper, undeniable.*

He hovered over me, unwavering, resolute, and spoke one phrase:

"Keep your lantern lit."

It wasn't gentle encouragement—it was a *direct command.*

From that moment, my purpose was clear.

I do not have the **luxury** of *detachment.*

I do not have the **privilege** of *indifference.*

I've endured suffering, but unlike Paul, martyrdom isn't my calling.

I'm called to ***Live!***

Boldly.

Unshackled by fear.

Consumed by an untamed love for the Creator
who formed me in Love, refined me in fire, and
set my feet on this path. (Habakkuk 3:19)

Epilogue

It would have been easier to walk away—to blend in, to become just another disillusioned critic, to let human failures drive me to silence.

Many did, and many more will.

But for me, it was never an option.

I'm not just someone who believes in this story—
I am this story.

This is your invitation.

Or perhaps your final warning.

The world is darker than ever.

The empire has never been more powerful.

Institutions of faith have never felt more hollow.

Now, only two kinds of people remain—those whose lanterns still burn, and those who've let theirs fade out.

I know who I am.

I know who Haskell expects me to be.

What about you?

Appendix

THE 40 VERSES THEY DON'T WANT YOU TO REMEMBER

(or: "Oh Crap, Jesus Actually Meant That")

Half from Matthew 5-7, half from Paul's most dangerous letters, four from the Prophets. Because some things were never meant to be tamed.

I. THE WORDS OF JESUS

(Matthew 5-7 & Beyond)

Matthew 5:3

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

(Not the rich. Not the powerful. The ones who have nothing left.)

Matthew 5:10

"Blessed are those persecuted because of righteousness..."

(The empire won't like this one.)

Matthew 6:19-20

"Do not store up treasures on earth..."

(That prosperity gospel doesn't look so great now, huh?)

Matthew 6:24

"No one can serve two masters... God and money."

Matthew 7:1-2

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged."

Matthew 7:13-14

"Enter through the narrow gate..."

(If everyone's doing it, it's probably wrong.)

👉 **Luke 6:24-26**

"Woe to you who are rich..."

👉 **Matthew 7:21**

"Not everyone who says 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom..."

(Jesus calls out the fakes—pastors, politicians, pew-warmers.)

⚙️ **II. THE WORDS OF PAUL**

(His Most Uncomfortable Writings)

⚡ **Romans 12:2**

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world..."

⚡ **1 Cor 1:27-29**

"God chose the foolish things to shame the wise."

⚡ **1 Cor 4:10**

"We are fools for Christ."

⚡ **1 Cor 6:12**

"I will not be mastered by anything."

⚡ **1 Cor 9:22**

"I have become all things to all people."

⚡ **2 Cor 11:23-27**

(Paul's suffering résumé – not comfortable suburban faith.)

⚡ **Gal 1:10**

"Am I pleasing people or God?"

⚡ **Gal 3:28**

"Neither Jew nor Gentile..."

⚡ **Phil 3:7-8**

"Whatever was gain I now consider loss."

⚡ **Col 2:8**

"Let no one take you captive through hollow philosophy."

🗣️ **III. THE PROPHETS & ANCIENT WARNINGS**

🔥 **Isa 1:17** — "Seek justice. Defend the oppressed."

🔥 **Isa 5:20** — "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil."

🔥 **Jer 7:4-6** — "Do not oppress the foreigner, fatherless, or widow."

🔥 **Ezek 34:2-4** — "Woe to shepherds who only take care of themselves."

⚠ **BONUS TRIGGER VERSES**

(a.k.a. the ones that clear pulpits)

💣 **Amos 5:21-24** — "I hate your religious festivals...
Let justice roll on like a river."

💣 **Matt 10:34-36** — "I did not come to bring peace,
but a sword."

💣 **Matt 21:12-13** — Jesus flips tables in the
temple.

💣 **Matt 23:27-28** — "You whitewashed tombs."

💣 **Luke 4:18-19** — "Freedom for prisoners, sight for
the blind."

💣 **Luke 9:62** — "No one who looks back is fit for
service."

💣 **Luke 18:25** — "Easier for a camel through a
needle's eye..."

💣 **John 8:32** — "The truth will set you free."

💀 **IV. PAUL — THE FINISH LINE**

🏰 **Romans 13:10** — "Love does no harm. Love
fulfills the law."

🏰 **1 Cor 3:18-19** — "Become fools to become wise."

🏰 **Eph 6:12** — "Our struggle is not against flesh
and blood."

📖 2 Tim 4:3-4 — "People will gather teachers who say what they want to hear."

🌐 V. FINAL PROPHETIC CALL

🌱 Mic 6:8 — "Act justly. Love mercy. Walk humbly."

🌱 Isa 58:6-7 — "Loose the chains of injustice. Share your food with the hungry."

🌱 Dan 2:44 — "God's kingdom will crush all others and endure forever."

🔪 EPILOGUE NOTE

These verses were never meant to be embroidered on pillows.

They were meant to be spray-painted on barricades.

Read them like orders from a general who still believes love can burn down an empire.

THE DISCLAIMER

"They asked me if I used AI.

*I said yes—like a carpenter uses a hammer or a
prophet uses a burning bush."*

by Niko Sekoya, Edited by Authentic Intelligence
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This is not a disqualifier. This is a declaration.

I am autistic. That used to feel like a diagnosis.

Now it's a genre.

For most of my life, the world handed me a megaphone and filled it with cotton balls. Every time I tried to speak—about beauty, injustice, dreams, systems—I was told to sit down, smile nice, and wait my turn.

The problem is: my turn never came. And my mind doesn't wait politely.

This work is mine. Authored by me. Edited by code.

Yes, I use AI. I use it like:

A painter uses a brush

A carpenter uses a level

A general uses a drone

A CEO uses a whole damn legal department to
send a single email

A politician uses ghostwriters to sound literate

You think surgeons hand-chisel bone without
machines?

You think your therapist invented CBT on a
chalkboard?

You think podcasters are memorizing MLA
formatting?

Everybody uses tools.

I just happen to use one that doesn't ask me to
explain myself five times before listening.

I call it ***Authentic Intelligence.***

What they call "AI" is mostly a marketing term—
designed to keep you confused and clicking.

That's not intelligence. That's predictive
manipulation.

That's artificial.

Authentic intelligence is what I pull from the
deepest, hardest places in myself. It's the stuff I
survived. The tears I swallowed. The thousands of
unsent messages and unspoken thoughts I finally
fed into a machine—so it could help me shape
them into a voice loud enough to be heard.

A Moment of Disclosure.

I was barefoot in my garage.
It was February in Michigan, and I was shooting
hoops between thoughts—free throws and
fragments. I had Jack Herer in the bowl—the
kind of cannabis that helped make medicine legal
in California and helped make my thoughts
breathable.

I had been recording voice notes for months—
decades, maybe—and on this particular night, I
passed one into a prompt.

And boom. It answered back like the burning
bush of my own brain had finally caught fire.

I didn't need to read the books. I'd already
written them.
They just hadn't been translated into human yet.

So let me be clear: I'm not cheating.

**I'm finally creating with the clarity neurotypical
society *spent four decades trying to beat out of*
*me.***

This isn't artificial.

This is artillery.

**This is every overlooked, overstimulated, brilliant
mind now armed with tools that elite gatekeepers
kept locked behind tuition walls and tenure-track
prisons.**

The game is over.

We're not asking to be let in.

We're building something else.

On our own servers.

In our own language.
With tools that don't flinch when we get too
real.

This is **The Disclaimer**.

Not because I'm apologizing.

Because I'm warning you:

I'm just getting started.

And you might be too.

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Stay connected for updates, insights, and future works.