

### About the Pictures

The ambitious skateboard athlete who begins training on our public streets, the sidewalks, the stairs and benches may end up in the sports arenas, vying for hundreds of thousands of dollars in prize money. Alongside this young and impulsive athlete is the photographer, who, working together with the skateboarder, strives to document the latest trick, landed or not, to prove who did it, or not. It's a culture of urban and suburban adventure, with its own legends, language and peril.

Herman Jimenez exhibition in the Carlson Gallery, *Clip Mission*, combines action pictures of the skateboarders alongside their portraits. The pictures are made in the neighborhoods where they ride, with the essential concrete and grit within which their stories come about.

Herman Jimenez was graduated from the University of La Verne with a Bachelor of Arts in Art, Concentration in Photography. His work has been included in numerous magazines and online journals. His commercial clients include [Silver Trucks](#), [FKD Bearings](#) and [BLVD Skateboards](#).

### Photographer Statement

The skateboard culture is somewhat illusive. The media portrays the skateboard community as a rebellious and "punk" society. As a consequence people associate skateboarders with criminals. These skateboarders see themselves as athletes, who invest their heart and soul in the adventures they love. They head out to the streets, risking life and limb on lipslides down 10-stair hand rails and kickflips down street gaps, then return home to tell stories, sharing the success of landing a trick or the failure of coming so close.

The photographers and filmers come out to capture these moments with the skateboarders and share the adventure and the storytelling. From the early morning text messages to everyone watching the replay of the trick, each part of the day makes the skate missions memorable to everyone involved. Each day is different, a new trick, another adventure, a new story.

In high school we all chose our cliques. Mine was skateboarding. With the skateboarders I went where I never thought I would go. While my jock friends were hooking up with the cheerleaders and my gang friends were getting into trouble, I was out skating the streets of San Fernando and Los Angeles.

These skaters are not the spiked hair punk kids that society portrays, they are street athletes on a mission to do what they love for their rest of their lives. They face the prospect of telling their parents they want to skate for a living. They go contrary to the expectations of their families, who would prefer for them to become doctors or lawyers. They are drawn not only by the thrill of skateboarding, but also to the potential to compete for as much as \$150,000 in cash prizes at the big skateboarding competitions.

Beyond this, skateboarding has giving them and me something more than any other sport or clique. It gives us a community of friends and a vast legend of adventures that continues through each day and on to the next. These talented and ambitious skateboarders, filmers and photographers converge every day to do what they love and share what they've done, coming of age in urban Southern California by their own recognition and validation.

The images are captured digitally, edited in Photoshop, and output to inkjet prints on 20x24 paper with white-bordered margins. The images are offered in pairs; each subject is portrayed in a portrait and action shot. The portraits are offered in a softer edit and the action shots are overly processed to convey the edginess and grit of every detail and texture of the street locations.

### About the Photographer

I was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley. I began to make movies at the age of ten when my father bought a video camera for me. I had a passion for the visual arts and wanted to become a film director. At fourteen I began skateboarding and have been skating ever since.

My inspiration for photography came from my interest in film making and watching my father taking pictures of our family. In addition, I have always looked at skateboard magazines throughout the years and was drawn to the amazing photographs. As I was about to graduate from high school, I thought about all the things I enjoyed, including skating, filming, and photography. I ventured off into photography and chose to attend the University of La Verne as an Art Major.

I began to shoot skating during my freshman year of college. In my classes I learned the basic techniques, borrowing an old Nikkormat, which had a broken exposure meter. Every weekend I took photographs of my friends, learning from books and my mistakes. As I began to invest in my own equipment I began making friendships with the skateboarders I had met. Over the years these relationships resulted in skateboard adventures I wouldn't have imagined if it hadn't been for the cameras.

Today, regular commercial clients include Dwindle, Skateboarder, Fuse, and others. As my work relationships continue to grow, I must acknowledge the support of my family, friends, and industry representatives, without whom I'd not be working today..

Further, I must also thank the photographers who inspired me to start making pictures and critiqued my work to help me improve as a photographer. It's by their guidance and inspiration I've realized a dream, working among them as a professional freelance photographer in a culture I love.

Herman Jimenez  
October, 2010