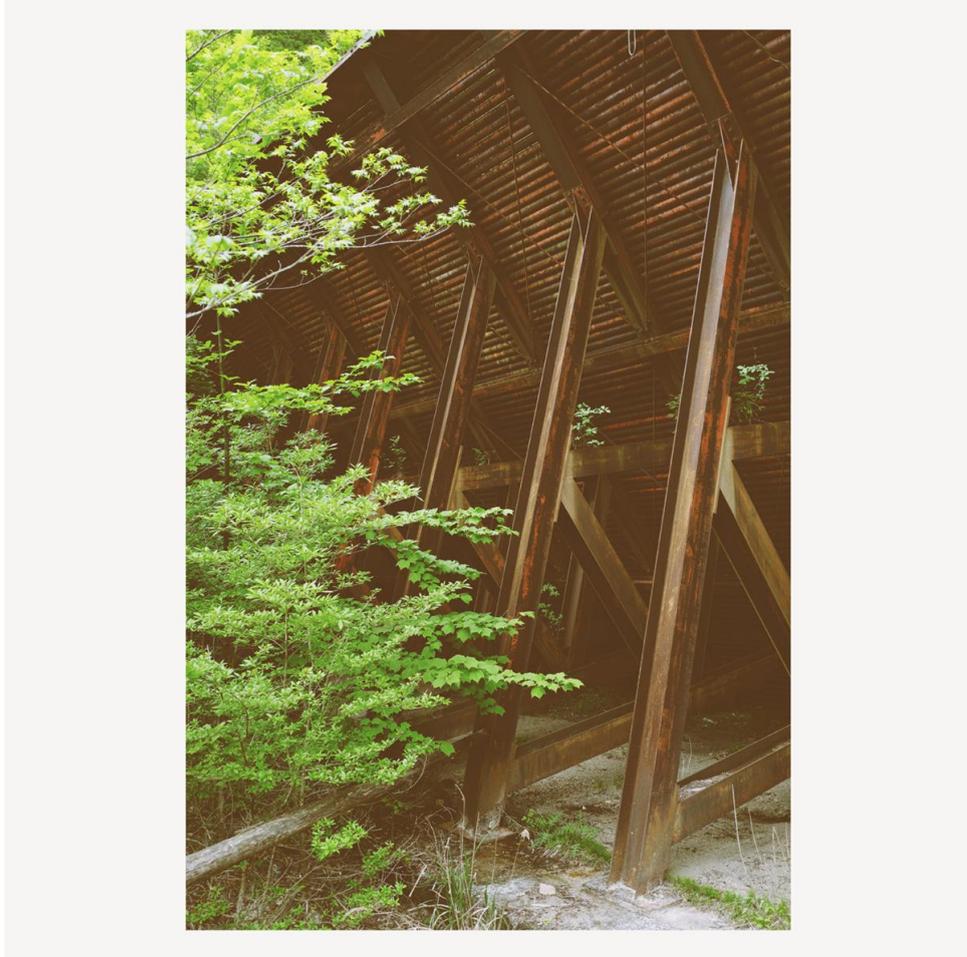


2020 Activity Report James Gibson.

Associate Professor

Art resulting from the experience of a journey expressed through photography, film and storytelling.



Interaction & Reciprocal - Miike, Shiga Prefecture, Japan 2020

Introduction

"Simplicity is the whole secret of well-being"

—Peter Matthiessen, *The Snow Leopard*

In a time where human actions are ever more interconnected and reciprocal, I —through travel, photography, film and creative writing— am exploring the topics of *'design your life'*, *'do-nothing design'* and *'well-being'* from a viewpoint of natural regenerative design. The whole time asking the question: *Do you know what good health —micro to macro— feels like?*

Outline of activities

During this academic year, forced by the unfortunate circumstance we find ourselves in, all events were cancelled and my activities shifted to theoretical research, writing, photography, photograph editing and archiving.

Activities.

One Tree Academy

All events were cancelled during this academic year due to the global pandemic. General administration, maintenance and public relationships were undertaken as per usual.

On Tree Academy Interview Archive

Over the past couple of years I conducted a number of interviews with past Campfire Talk guests and potential future guest speakers. Working with an assistant we transcribed and translated the recorded interviews for later digital publication.

Interviewees included:

- 吉原宜克 (Yoshihara Yoshikatsu) 株式会社サンデープランニング代表 Representative of [Sunday Planning Co.](#)
- 高田翔太郎 (Takada Shoutaro) [Protect Our Winters Japan](#), 事務局長 Executive Director. [HOMEPAGE](#)
- とのつかたつお (Tonostuka Tatuso) [KALPA パン屋](#)
- 山戸浩介・山戸ゆか (Yamato Kouske・Yamato yuka) [DILL eat.life](#).

Faculty Interview - A conversation with James Gibson & Maebayashi Akitsugu.

A recent email —interview— conversation between myself and the artist Maebayashi Akitsugu. Where we talk about hiking in the Himalayas with Indian Gorkhas, the joy of making, and responsible creative practices. [READ](#)

Interview Excerpt

A responsible way forward would be to renegotiate our understanding and definition of design (or that of success), forming a new responsible code of conduct and education. Making it harder and less-rewarding to produce or buy things degenerative and more easy and rewarding to produce and use regenerative designs solutions. To Re-Design our lifestyles with emphasis on healthy natural responsible value systems.

We humans are operating at an environmental deficit, each year going further into debt and dis-ease. We need to reach higher than ‘sustainable’, we need ‘regenerative’ practices to repair the damage already accumulated.

Subdivision



True Stories - 4 days & 3 nights bikepacking, Biwako, Shiga, Japan 2020

A short film, articles and photograph series.

4 days, 3 nights, bikepacking around Biwako, Shiga, Japan.

Riding at human speed observing the changing —sociocultural— coastline of Lake Biwa.

The whole time asking to myself: What is natural?

Excerpt from 'Going in Circles.'

As one generation comes to an end, a new generation naturally moves in replacing these old houses and values one by one. Slow at first, but more I peddle south the quicker and more dramatic these changes become. A series of personal bubble fantasies materialised in the form of houses, bars and water-sports resorts.

Fascinated and disgusted I pass one house I can only imagine Walt Disney occupied, and another by a drug lord from Miami Vice. Each and all fighting for their small piece of lakeside fantasy.

Film: [Subdivision](#).

Article: [A Hungry Bear](#).

Photograph series: [True Stories](#).

Article: [Going in Circles](#).

Photograph series: [Subdivisions](#).

Waters of March



Waters of March 2018 - Ten days bikepacking clockwise around the coast of Taiwan 2018

A Creative Proposal.

Art Resulting from the Experience of a Journey.

Human Powered — Human Speed — Human Interaction.

During March of any given year while in the act of human powered travel, document your personal interpretation and experience of 'the journey' through photography¹. Each photograph to be taken in succession following the lyrics of "Waters of March" (Águas de Março) by Antônio Carlos Jobim.²

For example; the second verse.

*It's a sliver of glass
It is life, it's the sun
It is night, it is death
It's a trap, it's a gun*

Equivalent to seven photographs taken in the order of: 1; It's a sliver of glass, 2; It is life, 3; it's the sun, 4; It is night, 5; it is death, 6; It's a trap, 7; it's a gun.

Attempt to complete all 24 verses, a total of 135 photographs³. Interpreting the lyrics as you see fit, don't skip, don't fake, do play and find joy in your heart. Present⁴ the resulting photographs⁵ in a media of choice, remembering to be responsible and that the journey experience is the purpose.

Film: [Waters of March 2018](#)

Noted:

¹ Interpretation of 'photography' left to the discretion of the individual artist.

² Version and language left to the discretion of the individual artist.

³ Equivalent total in a language other than English.

⁴ Share with me.

⁵ However many photographs completed within the journey.

WHATEVER YOU THINK YOUR LIFE IS GOING TO BE LIKE JUST KNOW ITS NOT GOING TO BE ANYTHING LIKE THAT

A book of photographs and stories. In the mid 1990's I traveled from London England, first to New York and later on to Seattle and finally Tokyo. The whole time taking photographs on a Canon AE1 35mm camera and writing in my journal. The majority of the negatives were developed, but never printed. Now that negative scanning technology is ubiquitous and affordable I have undertaken the task of completing the creative project I started over 30 years ago. This project is ongoing.



"Whatever You Think Your Life is Going to be Like... Just Know, it's Not Going to be Anything Like That."

Prologue Excerpt

All I had was, a 35mm camera, a skateboard, a wallet containing a couple hundred pounds and a flight ticket to New York City. I had just quit my job —got fired— and felt the need to get out of London for a while. The skate scene in NY was kicking off, I had friends to stay with and I knew the city. It was 1995 —before Juliani's gentrification and the Brooklyn migration— and the city was still ours. A melting pot of street and art culture... and I loved it. That New York-ness that those who know, know what I'm talking about. A combination of sounds, colours, shapes tastes, and smells all held together with that —sup, where you from— no bullshit attitude, that is quintessentially NYC. And that's how we skated, as if the city belonged to us.

Notes on Living Outside Cultural Norms

A book of photographs and journal entries written while experimenting with social normalities from 2010 to 2012. This project is ongoing, where during this academic year I edited and in some cases rewrote the 24 journal entries of my creative research experiment "Notes on Living Outside Cultural Norms". In addition writing the necessary chapters and sections to form a standalone photography book for this project. Further time was spent exploring and designing a template using the lightweight markup language Markdown to automatically generate eBooks from my journal entries and photographs.



A Chance Meeting - March 31st, 2014, 5pm in Sakyo Ward, Japan. It was 12°C with clouds and visibility OK. There was a moderate breeze.

Introduction Excerpt

This ebook does not go into the details of why and what the circumstances (and choices) were which lead me to put pen to paper, yet it is a —slightly edited— collection of writing and photographs from my journal at that time. The confused mind of someone letting go to understand what was important to hold on to. A process of exploration, understanding, discovery, and renegotiation. A process of designing life, which is still ongoing, and I expect never to end. Yet without taking that leap, opening that door as it were, I would never have set out asking the

questions, but blindly —ignorantly— let life happen around me, too me. A passive audience to my own story somebody else was writing.

Closing my university office, leaving my apartment and moving into my car, I set out on a journey of self exploration.