



WHO IS

Vivien Feil

Photography by Jean Feil & questioning by Ben Powell



Here, Always one to impress the ladies by showing them his arse, Vivien tries to pick up a bronze bird whilst switch backtailing off the flat.



Don't let yourselves be fooled into thinking that this Who Is... interview is nothing more than a chance to bash our Epicurean neighbours over the channel via the medium of a skateboarding magazine. I mean, it is that, but there is a reason behind this xenophobia too, well kind of...

Vivien first came into our collective consciousness during an adidas jaunt to Berlin in the not too distant past. Unlike many of the other people on the trip there seemed to be an immediate connection between this big-lipped French prick and us, without anyone having to trapse up and down the well-worn path of conversational niceties first. In fact, almost instantaneously, Vivien was calling us both fat ugly bastards with our witty ripostes focusing on the size of his lips, his fruity pronunciations of our glorious language and our shared love of deliberately offensive comedy. It was one of those rare occasions where disparate personalities gel due to a shared passion, a passion which in this case was wholly concerned with idiocy and laughing at the misfortune of others. So without further ado, please allow me to introduce you to our new favourite Frenchman: his lips are big and he sounds like a noice when he speaks French but, other than that, il est une bête. For real...

So then Vivien, aside from being French and having big lips - what should us amazing British humans know about you? - That I also have a fairly big nose...

Where are you from and how did you get tangled up in jumping around on a piece of wood rather than writing poetry and drinking Creme de Cassis? - Well, if the choice had really been such, I'd be pounding Creme de Cassis writing about how wonderful my gay lover is right now, without any hesitation. But in the world I come from, I graduated last year from one of France's top business schools. That broadened my horizon with a wide range of dreadful possibilities that made jumping around on a piece of wood or stabbing yourself to death using only a staple sound like brilliant ideas. I'm originally from Strasbourg and moved to Paris on Soy Panday's couch about 3 years ago. It was a carefully planned, slow process. I was staying always a couple more hours every week-end. Then an extra day, then another and before he could realize what was happening, I had my name in the mailbox and

he was begging me to have his own set of keys. He finally couldn't get rid of me last year. Since then I've been living in a shoe box in the middle of the road with 149 other people.

Despite being French, you have a sense of humour much, much closer to the dark violence of the British mind - in fact that is how we originally became friends (as far as I can be friends with a Frenchie of course): tell us what you like about British humour and why it's better than French comedy. - Well, I believe national traits ultimately come from the specific habitat of each country. For instance, we French people are good at making love to beautiful women. That's because we're natural born well-mannered athletes and our enviable natural environment provided with all the reasons to be happy about ourselves. Now at the opposite hand of the spectrum you have Great Britain (that man conquered over monkeys a couple thousand years ago for a purpose that remains a mystery to even the fiercest evolutionists).

bollocks continued overleaf >



> It's an island so at some point of your history, your great, great, great grand-dad had babies with his sister, aside from rocks and grass it's about empty, and the last time you guys have seen the sun was on the 16th of July 1875. On top of that, you people have been going through the miserable lives that inevitably unfold from this tragic situation within sight of our flourishing land for thousands and thousands of years. Now if that doesn't spawn the world's leading sense of self-derision and humour, what will?

Horse and I usually use the Brasseye 'Paedophile' show as a way of testing whether foreigners will be able to handle the stupid bullshit that spills from our mouths and you passed with flying colours - what did you think of Brasseye? Do you think that would be allowed on TV in France? - I was absolutely amazed when you guys introduced me to Brasseye. Not only because it's insanely funny, offensive and yet clever, but also by the fact it was featured on national TV. You could never see such a thing on French TV. The last controversial thing they had on was the Teletubbies.

Since embarking on your research of obscure and wrong British comedy which other comedians and TV shows have you come across that you like? - What's most striking for someone coming from France where decent comedy is very rare is that in England you don't even have to look too deep to find some genius stuff. It's everywhere. Some of the British stuff I like is: everything by The Monty Pythons, League of Gentleman, I'm Alan Partridge, Derek and Clive, anything by Chris Morris and The Office. My dad would wake us up to watch Benny Hill when I was young. That was one of the rare occasions we were allowed to watch TV.

You told me that most French TV comedy is just some guy wandering around saying 'cock' over and over again: is it really that bad? - Well, it might be a little exaggerated, but one of France's most popular comedians is named Jean-Marie Bigard and, as incredible as it sounds (and is if you

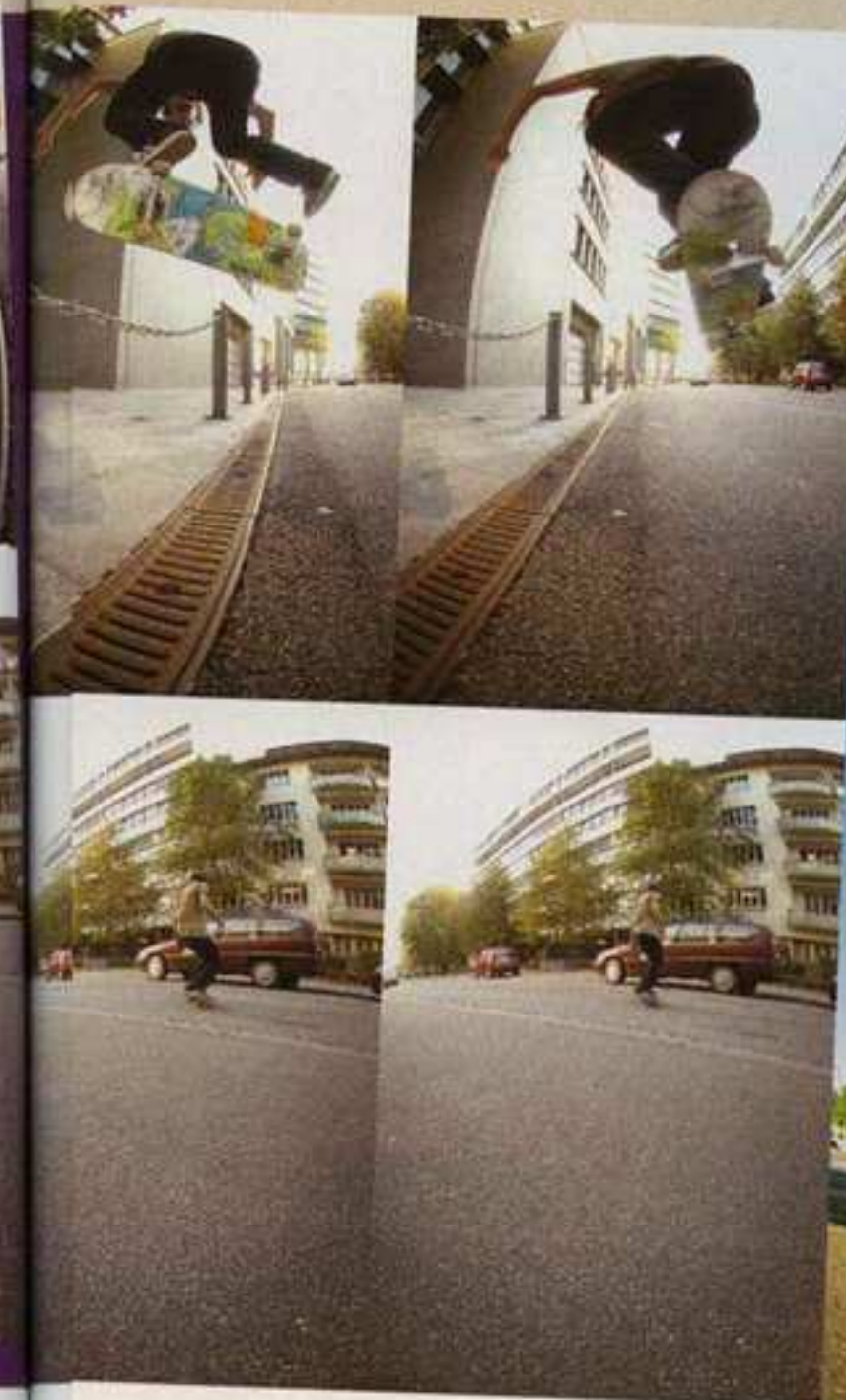
understand French), his act completely revolves around swearing out loud. That's about all he does really. He fills up the country's biggest stadiums where he wanders on stage shooting 'f**ker!', 'Pussy!' and 'cock!' to the public's greatest delight and admiration.

To most uneducated Brits all Frenchmen smell of garlic, ride around on bikes, get to screw beautiful women every night and run away from wars - how much of that is true? - That's the most accurate description of my everyday life I've ever read.

What about the typical French person's view of us 'Roast Beefs'? - To most uneducated Frogs, all Brits eat roast beef with mint and pudding at every meal, sleep with an umbrella and spend their day plotting on how they're gonna stab another country in the back while their mother (who is also their wife) makes tea in the kitchen. It's also a common fact here that Brits never have sex with their ugly women and their greatest possible achievement in life is to buy a house in the south of France.

Seq left Chain backside flipper to switch manny, then onions sure to help you balance!

Below After a hearty meal of wheels and seat Vivien washes it all down with a mighty healthy krooked grind.



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Are you still on Krooked's world flow team? What's the deal with that then - you had a bit of footage on the Krooked DVD didn't you? - Yup, I'm still on. They really insisted that I turn pro and run the company but I said no, too busy. They were bummed. That's why they put my stuff in the bonus of the Krooked Kronicles' DVD instead of giving me the last part like it was initially planned.

Do you have any good Gonz stories to share? - Honestly, when I met Gonz he acted just like a normal person so I don't have anything funny to say about him. Let me tell you a good story about my dad instead. You'll need a little historical introduction for this one. When France surrendered to Germany in WW2, its fleet was staying in the harbour of Mers-El-Kebir in Algeria. The English attacked and destroyed the fleet without warning even though France was still officially their ally. About 1300 French sailors were killed. It was viewed by the public as a French Pearl Harbour and an illustration of England's viciousness and perfidy. This incident is however almost completely forgotten in the collective memory and only a handful of old weirdoes will ever bring it up. First time I went to England about 7 years ago, my dad took me to the train station. He seemed a little worried when we were both on the platform. I thought he was getting emotional because it was the first time I was going in a foreign country alone for more than a few days. When the train was about to depart, he grabbed my shoulders, looked at me in the eyes for a minute with a solemn expression on his face and gave me his one and only advice for the trip: "Remember Mers-El-Kebir". And then he left.

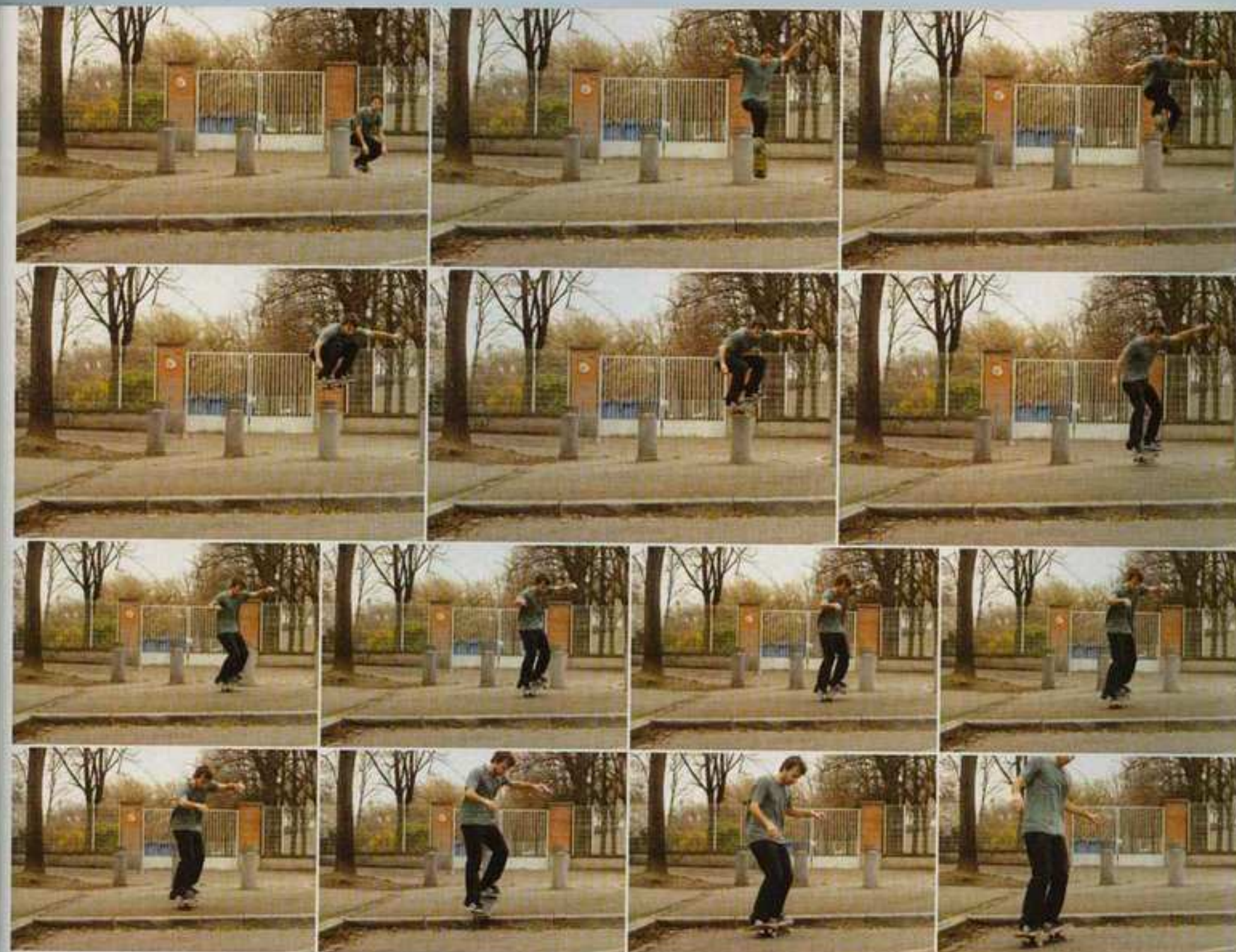
Were you in France/Paris during the riots of 2005? - Oh yes! The way British and American television covered those events is a prime example of media manipulation. I was skating everyday in one of the city's worst neighbourhoods. I don't listen to radio, don't have a TV and was only using internet for porn at the time. For days it didn't occur to me that anything was wrong or unusual till one of my British friend called me and told me to stay home cause 'riots' were turning the country into a bloodbath. I asked her, "what the hell are you talking about?"



"That broadened my horizons with a wide range of dreadful possibilities that made jumping around on a piece of wood sound like a good idea"

Above Vivien gets high on the blues using a French mobster's impromptu early grave as a kicker. Up there wallride.

Seq top right Most people would crack one off for being able to ollie this bollard whereas 'Peter Feil' adds a nosewheelie



So where do you stand on Sarkozy? He seems like a bit of a twat to me - is he your hero? - I say he's an absolute twat indeed and a disgrace to the human race. Any hit men reading this interview right now and up for the task, meet me at Gare du Nord in 20 minutes. You'll get good money plus a bunch of coupons for Pret a Manger. 40% of the amount paid in advance. The 75% remaining when the job is done.

After the banlieue riots it seemed as if French hip hop ended up getting blamed - is there anything to that or is it just right wing excuses and scapegoating to divert attention away from the poverty/racism at the heart of what caused those riots? - Noam Chomsky said something like: if you want people to do as you please, scare them first with a fake threat to their security that you created and then hand them the solution on a plate. That's the easiest, most effective political manipulation move available. That's how Sarkozy got from Head of Homeland Security to where he's at right now. That's what Bill O'Reilly is doing on his show everyday: "Look at France burning in the background, that's what will happen to us if we don't support our troops who fight for our freedom in a remote third-world country that never so much as threw a rock at us and is conveniently full of oil". And that's what Pearl Harbour and 9/11 might well have been as well. On the opposite, dealing with real issues profoundly rooted in society like racism or renewing ghettos is much harder and never got anyone elected. Forget about it.

Who's your favourite French artist and why? - Carla Bruni, for obvious reasons.

You travel a lot and your brother is a really good skate photographer - that's pretty convenient eh? Do you have to pay your brother to hang out with you, like you do with most of your friends? - Even though he indeed cost me a lot to hang out with, my younger brother is convenient on many levels. He skates, shoots photos, films, edit, has a driving license (which I don't), knows where to find anything for half the price on the internet, can fix about anything that goes wrong anywhere in the house and does the best chocolate cake I've ever eaten. I think my mom had him after having sexual intercourse with a Swiss army knife.

As for travels, yes, I like them a lot. Just going with a small crew of friends on your own schedule is the best way to do it. I'm trying to take advantage of the possibilities and freedom that skateboarding allows me to visit as many different places as possible while it lasts. I'm not sure I'll get that many travel opportunities when that thing is over and I'm just a drunk hobo begging for change at the metro station, so I'm fully going for it right now.

You've been over to the States to stay with Matt Irving a few times - what do you think about the US from your French perspective? - I've almost only been to big cities on the coasts (SF, NY, LA, Washington and Philly) and I don't think they really represent America. I want to cross the country from one coast to another to see the real redneck side of it. Something like the journeys in "On the Road" by Kerouac. As for my opinion, I think Americans are some of the most welcoming and generous people I've ever met. It comes as surprising judging by their country's selfish and ruthless foreign policy. I guess it takes a lot of twisting facts and lies to get good people to approve of evil decisions. I read a lot about that particular matter actually. Chomsky's "Manufacturing Consent" is a good start in that field.



Below: Straight from Le Shaojin slums, Vivien follows his switch tre all the way to the bakers for some sticks bitch!



Seq: Banger & mash to finish! Flip backtail to backside flip out again, that's a lot of processing for a French brain to do!



How's the Adidas thing working out? Looks like a pretty rad thing to be involved with.... - Yup, Zidane and I are the ones who can't really complain about their contracts.

Who's your favourite French skateboarder of all time and why? - Soy Panday because he has the softest belly of all.

What about British skateboarding - do you know much about it? - I go to London every year for a few weeks so I got to know the scene there a little. It's the tightest I've seen so far. It seems everyone knows each other well, hangs out and skate together, which is really sick. The city itself is one of the most inspiring to skate for me. I like the architecture and the vibe there a lot. Blueprint is obviously a great ambassador for British skateboarding. I remember we were watching Waiting for the World before skating all the time when it came out. Landscape and Heroin do some good stuff as well. Soy was getting Document and Sidewalk for a while as well. The Sidewalk video was really nice by the way. You guys should make a new one instead of trying to manufacture fake tits full of warm guts for the Indian market.

What's going on with the Paris scene these days? Is it all still split into little groups that don't talk to each other or has it mellowed out a bit? - It's all good now. No more torch-lit gang duels in ditches like in the movie "Thrashing". The scene is still composed of lots of small groups but they live in peace and harmony with each other now.

If you could swap lives with any French human from any period in history for a day; who would you pick and why? - I'd be Louis the 14th on a Saturday in Le Chateau de Versailles. I'll get shows and fireworks in my honour, a massive banquet and tons of hoes fighting for my body. The banging costume with white tights alone would make it worth it.



Say you were taking me out on a romantic day out that had to be as authentically French as possible, what would we do/where would we go and why? - We wouldn't leave the room and have sex all day while I stick cheese in your mouth and pour red wine on your chest every 6 minutes. THAT would be authentically French.

You're going to Asia for the winter aren't you? What are your plans with that then? - I'm actually already in Delhi in the back of a small shop trying to finish this on a post-WWI computer buried under an inch of dust. Apu, Rashkumar and 6 of their friends are gathered around me watching my every move and staring at my face, which helps me a great deal. I'm gonna travel in India for a while and then head to south-east Asia (Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam...), Japan, the Philippines, Australia, New-Zealand and wherever else will sound interesting. The idea is to break my Parisian/western routine to experience tons of new things, skip a cold euro-winter and hopefully come back alive. I'm pretty excited to see what I'll find to skate, especially in remote places like Laos or Cambodia.

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"All Brits eat roast beef with mint pudding at every meal, sleep with an umbrella whilst their mother (who's also their wife) makes tea in the kitchen."

As Sheckler said when asked about one of his upcoming video parts: "It should be amazing".

Tell us a good French joke. - 'Cock!'

Finally, do you have anything else to add or wisdom to share with the snotty British kids reading this? - My advice to the British youth is this: avoid mixing crack and speed if you've been drinking absinthe and taking speed in the past 17 minutes. That'll save you a bed breath in the morning when you wake up. Hope it helps.

I want to give a shout out to all my black brothers in England: Glass, Dom, Fos, Mathieu, Rory, Joey, Snowy, the Slam City crew, Dan, Shier, Baines, Chewy, Chaz, Pat, all of my thugs, all my hustlers...and of course thank you guys for this interview.



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