

A blurred photograph of a parking garage. In the foreground, a person in a dark jacket is walking away from the camera. In the background, two other people are standing near a white car. The scene is lit by overhead fluorescent lights, creating a warm, yellowish glow. The overall image has a motion-blur effect, suggesting activity and movement.

Gnarleans

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Screenshots from "Gnarleans", a documentary directed by **Raul Buitrago**





What does it mean to call a city home? Does home make us who we are, or does who we are make our home what it is? Home tells our stories across the pages of its ever-changing streets. Home is too much of us and not enough. It oscillates as we do – that love-hate, love-hate, love-hate that might lead to leave – it challenges us as we scuff it up and make it ours.



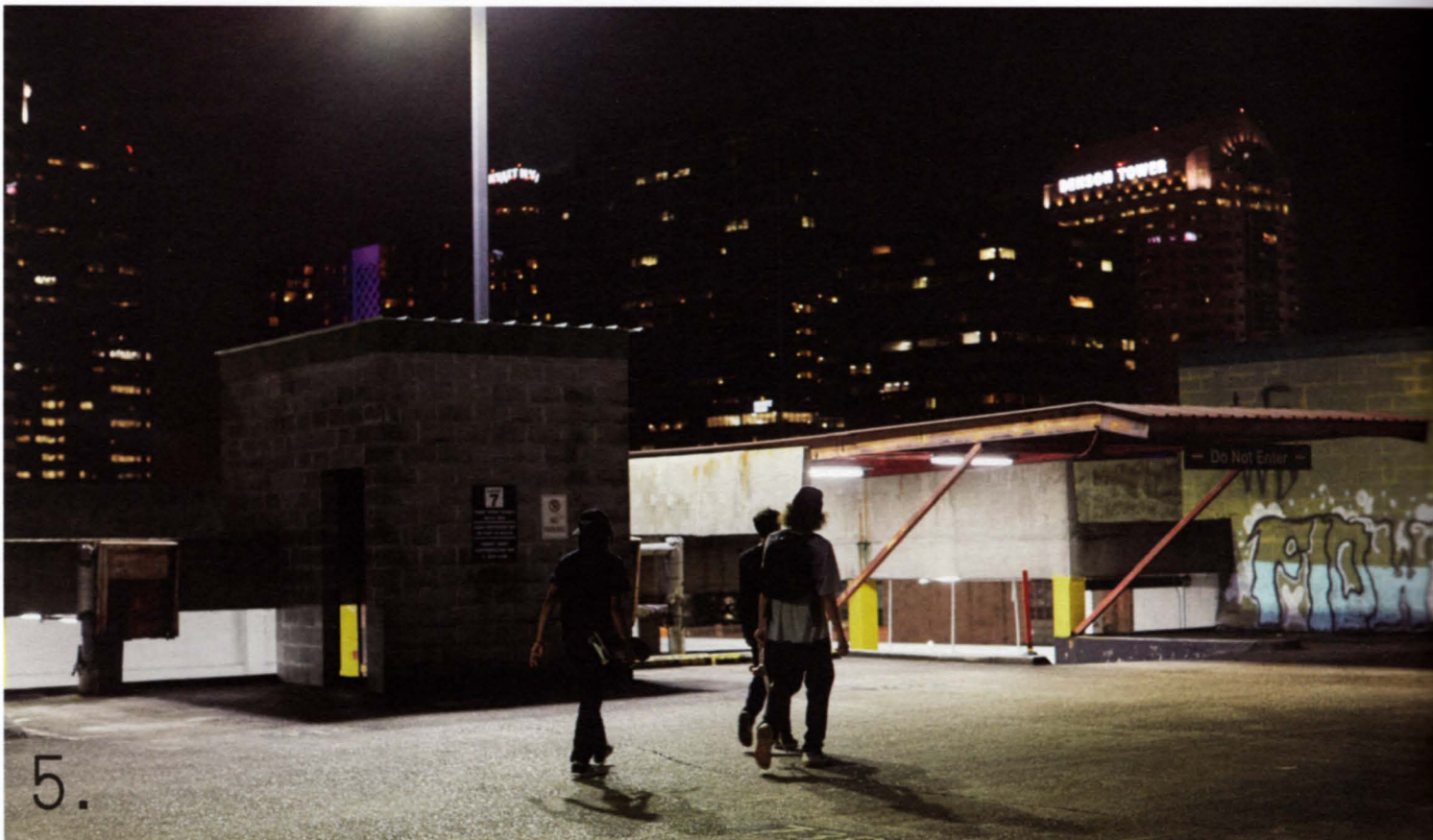
What does rebellion mean when anarchy is the water you swim in? How do you rebel when the city you call home is raised on rule-breaking, those rule-less spaces filled in only by more absence, by abandonment and neglect?

Is skateboarding a rebellion in that world, or is it a meditation? Is it a mode of transportation or of expression, a hobby or an art, an escape or a release? Does not skating mean not living, end of story, like a lifeline for survival?





A reputation for revelry draws in thirsty tourists, but there are laws that even New Orleans cannot break. Laws like heritage. Undiscussed laws about race that inform the written laws paving the decidedly dark roads to prison. The laws of physics that propel a projectile forward or make a bullet fly, no matter how we feel about it, no matter through how many layers of flesh and bone.



5.

In skateboarding, there are no rules. There is no question of responsibility either. It's never the wall's fault, or the ramp's, or the board's. You are both question and answer. If you stick it out you can negotiate with fate, so you keep at it for the maybe.

Maybe it's possible. Maybe this one obstacle is surmountable. Maybe this effort will matter and your commitment will pay off. Maybe there's light on at the end of the night, a light at the end of this tunnel called home. Maybe there's a way to win.







Maybe it's not just a fucking wall ride anymore.









Bombing is a ride through someone else's world, a world that has forgotten the boys of Gnarleans' or actively ignores them, the parking decks an industrial example of how spaces built for someone else can serve us too. We can weave the curves of that world and we can play its angles. We can ride the wave of someone else's forward motion, hanging onto the wheel well, hiding in the blindspots that no one cares to check.







We can call this jungle home.