

Hi, I'm Alicia Reason,  
here in Los Angeles,  
the roller skating capital of the world,  
with "If Cities Could Dance."

Let's keep rolling!

(chilled out stylish trance music)

Roller skating to me is a  
chance to freely express myself  
without any distractions  
from the outside world.

It's the truest form of me.

[Kamry] It gives us a  
freedom to do what we want  
and gain a sense of artistic liberation.

And we have to acknowledge the history  
and the power that comes  
with roller skating.

(chilled out stylish trance music)

[Raquel] This is nothing new.

This is our culture.

This is our lifestyle,  
passed down in generations.

(Funky upbeat percussion music)

(R&B soulful music)

[Alicia] The vibes in

Venice are just very creative.

L.A. is a land of opportunity.

You just never know who's watching.

People come from all over the world.

They see these YouTube videos,

shows on TV or whatever.

(R&B soulful music)

[Kamry] I haven't been

around in the skate community

as long as a lot of other skaters have.

But to me jam skating

is you have more freedom

to express yourself.

There's not that many rules

when it comes to jam skating.

It's just jammin', you know?

I got more into roller skating

when I lived in Seattle.

There wasn't a ton of Black people,

so when I moved to L.A. two years ago

that's when I really

started dabbling in it.

I started Sista Skate during a

time of racial reconciliation.

I realized that there needed

to be not only a safe space

for Black and Brown women

to learn roller skating

but also to thrive in the

field of roller skating.

We need to have a place

where we can shine light

on all the talent that's

happening around us.

(R&B with intoxicating synth music)

[Alicia] I grew up skating,

so I started when I was eight

years old at Detroit Roller Rink.

The most dancing they would do on skates

is like ballroom hustle.

I moved out to California.

I saw that there was a community  
at Venice Beach for skating.

And then when I saw them  
infusing dancing and skating,  
this is my world right here.

(R&B lofi smooth music)

I have to give it up for the OGs.

They brought essentially  
break dancing on skates.

People would really crowd around them  
and were just really fan boy  
and fan girling around them,  
allowing for them to  
freely express themselves.

They were just like one of a kind.

(R&B lofi smooth music)

Generation after generation just comes in  
and learns from them.

They've just set the tone.

(Hiphop with 80's synth music)

Mar Vista, the reason  
why we're skating there

is because our floor at Venice  
is currently under construction.

It has become well known  
because of Instagram's  
postings and all of that.

It's like the staple right  
now for pandemic skating.

(Hiphop with 80's synth music)

(Contemporary R&B Hiphop music)

[Raquel] In a skating  
rink, it's a huge difference.

(laughs)

The wood floors, it's just  
a whole different vibe.

It's more like family oriented.

It's more like a tight knit community.

We do a lot of trios, the  
circle, like the unity roll.

It started with my grandmother,  
just went down generations,  
my immediate family and my four kids.

I started them at three.

Three sounds early, but  
that's not even that early.

My cousin, her baby is a  
year, and she's in skates.

(Laid back and groovy funk music)

We're known for like sliding.

We are like really international.

We pick up a lot of different  
moves from all over.

The DJs are very important.

You just need that  
certain sound, that certain beat.

(Laid back and groovy funk music)

Skate Depot was my home rink.

They closed in 2014.

That's where I grew up.

They tore everything down.

You wouldn't even recognize it.

World on Wheels is a legendary  
landmark in California.

My cousin Nip was able to  
help reopen the establishment,

but during this pandemic

they couldn't make it.

I was kind of losing it.

I was skating inside the house,

and I need to do something.

That's when I created my

Roxy's Backyard Boogie.

I invited small businesses also

to come out and showcase their work.

I turned that negative into a positive

by creating this Boogie

and bringing all genres of skaters together.

[Kamry] Even though the

pandemic has been horrible,

roller skating now encourages

us to take up any space.

Roller skating is resistance,

because it's creating joy and peace.

As long as we have like our wheels,

we still feel like a sense

of strength and empowerment.

[Alicia] Thanks for watching, everyone.

Be sure to check out more episodes  
of "If Cities Could Dance" and keep rolling!