

// 5 Points of Authenticity



A scene from Colorado's 5Point Film Festival last weekend.

At Hence, authentic is the promise of the real; storytelling that appeals to the core while not alienating the uninitiated *and* still aligning with sponsors.

Sounds like a dream. It's not. The Hence team witnessed that caliber of work at Carbondale, Colorado's **5Point Film Festival** last weekend. It was fortifying.

There were the brand sponsored mountain biking shorts with no talking heads that made you want to ride bikes—now.

We watched films on hairball climbing, and a sailing adventure through the ice flows of the Northwest Passage. Those stories resonated because of their authenticity. And audiences are grateful to brands that fund such work. Over time, that means more than ROI.

We also witnessed inclusivity done right. Instead of virtue signaling ads, at 5Point we got inspirational storytelling about Black role models in BMX and surf.

In one presentation, would-be writers learned about the writing process and audience awareness from a *New York Times* bestselling memoirist. In another, a veteran soundtrack and music rights specialist lifted the veil to his world. It's hard to get more real than that type of access.

And finally (this is point five from 5Point if you're following), we witnessed filmmaking for filmmaking's sake. Festivals remain driven by creatives who dedicate their lives to film because they must. That's what it means to have a calling. And that, at its essence, defines authentic storytelling.

// Stop Underselling Yourself



OUTDOOR CREATIVES DEVALUE THEIR WORK. WE NEED THAT TO STOP.

"So why is devaluing yourself such an issue for creatives in the outdoor space? Because so many outdoor creatives came into their crafts through love of sport and adventure, many people I spoke with point to the notion of not being 'classically trained,' and that makes them question how to classify themselves—even after they've built a career doing good work." Read the rest of **Gordy Megroz's** story about an epidemic in the creative industry [here](#).

// Meet a Creative

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Cole Sax's entrance into a career as a producer, director, and project developer was pretty standard. At age 14, he cut edits of his buddies skiing. That bit is almost cliché. The rest of Cole's story isn't.

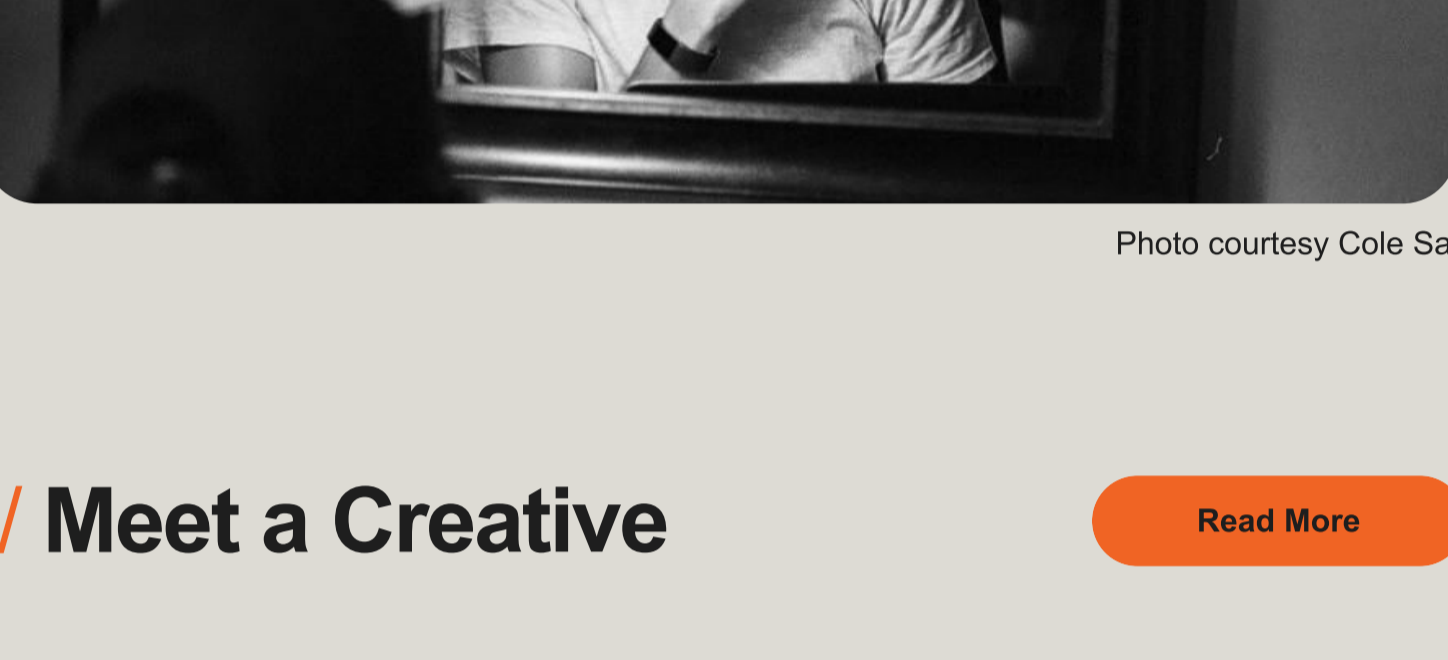
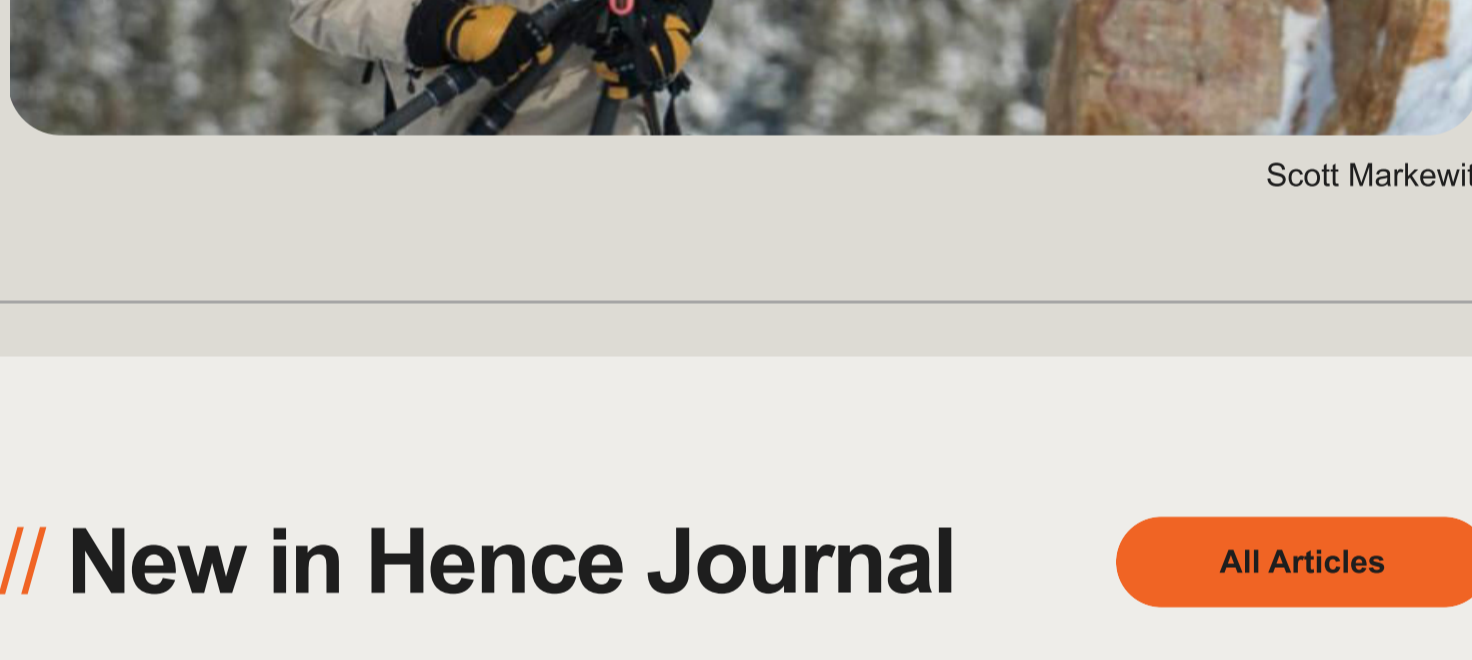


Photo courtesy Cole Sax

// Meet a Creative

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Scott Markewitz knew he had to be more than a ski photographer to be successful. Today he shoots, skiing, cycling, and all manner of outdoor pursuits as well as golf, pharmaceutical, and other commercial brands.



Scott Markewitz

// New in Hence Journal

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Trade Secrets: Journalists Record Everything

Hence Journal contributor Julie Brown Davis presses the record button whenever she's sitting down for an interview. "If I know I'm getting all the quotes I need in the recording, I can relax during the interview and stay more present," says Julie.



Trade Secrets: Focus on the Story, Not Just the Image

"A lot of people can take a picture, but they're not telling a bigger story," says the renowned photographer Pete McBride. "It's not just about getting the perfect shot and overprocessing it, it's about thinking about what story you're trying to tell with it."

// Weather Dependent Work



Photo Dave Cox | Location Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire New Mexico

Startlingly warm water in the Galapagos and a historically thin winter in the Northern Rockies are the results of an El Niño—the pooling of warm water in the eastern equatorial Pacific—that began last summer. Now we're learning that a La Niña pattern—less bath water near the coast—is forming, which got us wondering how the Niños and Niñas impact outdoor photography. Here's what Hence Journal edit intern Karston Montoya found out.

There's good news for powder skiing and whitewater photographers in the northwest. The current El Niño is ending. Scientists at NOAA are predicting a 60 percent chance that a La Niña pattern will kick in by late July. But in the near-term, the residual effects of the El Niño linger. The National Interagency Fire Center says that could mean more fire risk in the Northern Rockies.

It's not just the Northwest experiencing the fallout. The underwater photographer Kat Zhou has seen El Niño's effects firsthand. While shooting in the Galapagos last summer, Zhou experienced water surface temperatures of 83 degrees Fahrenheit instead of the usual 70 degrees. Cooler temps from a La Niña could bring their own challenges. She also saw high sea levels last year while in Indonesia shooting leatherback turtles, whose nesting beaches are threatened by rising tides That's an observation that speaks more to climate change than El Niño, but it's disturbing nonetheless. "It's disheartening to travel to a destination hoping to encounter an animal, only to find them in distress or missing altogether," says Zhou.

Back on land, El Niño's effects are far less predictable, even if scientists are forecasting higher risk of wildfire. Veteran Wyoming Hotshot and wildland fire photographer Kyle Miller puts "no stock in the speculation" of the forecasts. His 20-plus years fighting fires informs his thinking. But as someone who has built a parallel career out of capturing wildfire images—complete with canopy fires, transporting embers, and blood orange sunsets obscured by smoke—Miller has witnessed the trend of bigger and more intense fires firsthand. He expects more of the same this summer—somewhere. "The idea of what I thought was a large fire has changed over the years," he says.

What's good for Miller, though, presents challenges for Montana outdoor photographer Trevan Hiersche. With the Beartooths and Yellowstone as backdrop, Hiersche prefers to shoot clear skies and the vibrant colors offered by full spectrum light. But his approach is to stay flexible: If smoke moves in on a shoot, he'll capture what he can while he's there before moving on to a new landscape. "When things don't work out, there is always a new perspective to be found," says Hiersche. —Karston Montoya

MORE FROM THE BROADER CREATIVE WORLD

What We're Reading Now

- Jerry Seinfeld Says Movies Are Over.** But he's making one about the origin of Pop-Tarts. Our favorite line from the interview: "Film doesn't occupy the pinnacle in the social, cultural hierarchy that it did for most of our lives. When a movie came out, if it was good, we all went to see it. We all discussed it. We quoted lines and scenes we liked. Now we're walking through a fire hose of water, just trying to see." ([GQ](#))
- The Apocalypse is Nigh—Example 3,786:** A camera that demeans both photography and poetry. ([TechCrunch](#))
- And a Sign of Hope.** Although the bikes purchased during Covid are now laundry racks, the trend of people reading books has staying power; well with fan fiction anyway. ([Sherwood News](#))
- We Aren't Against All AI.** Perhaps some good can come from it. [AutoDesk](#) takes a look at the pros and cons of sicing AI on old movies for restoration and more.
- And More Hope if Only in Pun.** Ted Hope of the "Hope for Film" blog on [Substack](#) offers up nine ways that film festivals can change with the times. He's talking about the big fests, but the lessons are universal. ([HFV](#))