



snow

Shred flick chicks

WORDS BY ANNA LANGER
PHOTOS BY DAVE BREWER AND MATTHIAS INDERMUEHLE

Where would we be without snowboard movies? They get us hyped for the winter season, give us inspiration for new tricks and help us unwind after a hard day on the mountain. Unfortunately, all-girl snowboard films have always been too few and far between, but the times they are a changing. We talk to the inspirational women who are picking up cameras and working to redress the balance.

Like with everything else in snowboarding, girls are still hugely under-represented in snow flicks, a real shame considering the female riding talent that is actually out there and ready to explode. The reasons behind this are both endless and endlessly debatable. Perhaps girls feel more pressure to enter competitions as opposed to taking time out to film, or perhaps there is less sponsorship budget out there for female productions (as we still represent the minority in snowboarding). Either way, the good news is, things seem to be changing, and slowly but surely fresh all-girl snowboard films are bobbing to the surface.

It seems to be that rapidly progressing technical advances (that sometimes seem daunting in this modern chaotic world) have in fact done us all a favour in opening up new horizons in amateur filmmaking. Not only has camera gear got a whole lot cheaper and accessible over the past few years, but so has working with it, as new 'drag 'n' drop' editing programs have made it easy for anyone to cut their own little movie. Add those powers to the opportunities provided by the

reach of the world wide web to a global audience of millions, and you've got yourself the facilities to get out there and do the snowboard film thing, all by yourself. Something more and more girls seem to be getting into lately, and as the results prove, they can do it just as well as any crew of guys.

The Californian-Quebecois team of June Bhongjan and Esthera Preda pretty much blew away the snowboard scene last year with their lo-fi, low budget movie *Peepshow*. Besides some proper bad ass snowboarding, super stylish tricks and gnarly bails it was their originality and authenticity as filmmakers that accounted for much of their success.

Instead of the sugar coated riding most girl flicks seem to find so important, they showed a different side of female riding, a side that is just as real and twice as interesting to watch. Nasty slams followed by nasty swearing, bloody faces, drinking and partying all made the cut because, as Esthera puts it, they wanted to "show things how they

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Esthera urban backcountry



PEEP SHOW MANTRA: THERE ARE NO MISTAKES, ONLY LESSONS

actually are, reaching out to an audience that understands what they are seeing, rather than being offended by it”.

Gritty realism aside, it was also the riding that enabled Peepshow to stand out against other girl productions. “We wanted to show riding that we are interested in ourselves,” explains Esthera, “June and I are both from cities and we’re more into urban riding, something that is only scattered over most other movies that mainly consist of park and backcountry.” Although they never really set out to make a proper movie, “We had a rad girl crew going on and wanted to show the progression of female snowboarders” June remembers. “Esthera and I had done some short home videos before and wanted to move on to something a little bit bigger, but really it was meant to be just another home movie. From the riding and the vibe it grew on its own.”

That doesn’t mean it was always easy. Starting off late season in January with virtually no funding at all, the beginning was pretty rough. They didn’t really have money for trips, let alone enough to hire professional filmers, so they just followed each other with a camera, filling the gaps in the puzzle with a patchwork of footage they received

from the rest of the crew. Although both admit that they were pretty naive and oblivious in the beginning, they were 100 percent committed. As June sums up the reality of making a film; “You won’t get rich and most likely you won’t be able to ride as much as you used to, so you really have to be doing it for the love”.

And whilst there are always things you think you could have done differently in retrospect, both girls agree that there is no such thing as a true mistake, or as June puts it, “they are not mistakes, they are lessons!” In light of this they named their 2010 project, Let’s make better mistakes (tomorrow), which with the likes of Laura Hadar, Colleen Quigley, Jess Kimura and Desiree Melancon is looking to be another banger. With their first DVDs pressed they are also on their way to becoming a proper movie production company, but holding on tight to the DIY vibe we love so much.

Over to Europe and the two girls from Ready to Robin, the first Euro crew of snowboard chicks taking matters into their own hands. Looking for a challenge to keep themselves busy over summer, Corinne Suter and Elena Könz from Switzerland came up with the idea of



Opposite page: Peep Show girls keeping it real.
Here: Elena hucking in the slush. Below: Summer riding rules.

Get Rolling

The Peep Show girls' top tips for filming

- Just go out there, explore and get creative
- Bring something new to the table
- Don't be afraid of criticism before trying something new
- Never let yourself be discouraged by failures - just try again!
- And fully commit - if you do it half way you'll only get a half good movie



combining a snowboard movie with a documentary on summer shredding. “We just wanted to do our own thing and have something to keep us occupied when there was no powder or park. It was a challenge to do it on our own, there are so many crews and projects out there for guys but we wanted to do this without any help from the boys,” says Corinne.

With zero funding they had to stay close to their home resorts, but this enforced local vibe ended up being exactly the message their film

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promoted. “You don’t have to go to New Zealand to go shredding in the summer,” explains Elena, “you don’t even know when resorts will have to close their lifts down. We just went on the search for snow and still found loads of stuff to shred on the mountain which makes it even more satisfying.” They made most of the obstacles themselves and took on nearly all of their own filming. “We took a photographer with us once, but the rest of the time we filmed each other,” says Corinne, “we watched loads of snowboard movies over the last year and learned a lot through that. You just have to try out various angles and perspectives until you get it right.”

While epic cinematography as seen in the Absinthe or Pirate movies leaves us stunned and amazed, this is surely not the only formula for a great shred flick. For June, the most important ingredient for a great snowboard movie is good riding with personality. “Sometimes I get lost when it’s just one trick after another. But when you can laugh in awe or feel the pain from a bail it holds your attention and draws you into the film.” You don’t even need tonnes of filming or editing experience, as both examples show, all you really need is an idea and the will power to push it through. So, grab your camera, gather your crew and don’t be scared to make mistakes, it’s all part of the freestyle creative process.

Watch the trailers for both movies and last year’s full Peepshow movie on coolermag.com/videos

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