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# OZZIE WRIGHT: BAD CARS, BAD TEETH & GOOD ART



Ozzie Wright. All photos © Volcom

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## The Surfersvillage Interview

### *Aerial pioneer admits he could never sell shoes...*

**Surfersvillage Global Surf News**, 29 December, 2014 – In 2000 I walked into my local surf shop looking for a new surf video. The counter guy pulled out Volcom's 'Computer Body'. "This kid Ozzie Wright does these crazy airs," the clerk said. "It's amazing. But his style is kinda choppy."

I watched the video and was blown away. On the screen was this goofyfooted kid landing all these impossible-during-that-era airs. At the time Sunny Garcia was world champ and the air-reverse had yet to become a standard move (I think they were still called Air-360s). Power surfing was waning and a future of full, functional skate tricks was in the process of being mapped out.

Something had changed in the collective surfing psyche. And Oscar Wright, the rock-n-roll kid from North Narrabeen, was exploring this new territory with surf media in tow.

In the roughly 15 years between 'Computer Body' and today, the collective surf culture can now also thank Ozzie for his paintings, music, films in addition to those new airs as his contributions to modern culture. The man-child keeps creating. And fortunately, if you check his recent clips, his style has mellowed out.



**Ozzie, How old are you?**

Hhhhhhaaaaaaa I can't remember but I'm just gonna say I'm very immature and so it's easy to play with my kids, and surf for a living.

**Share with us something most people don't know about you.**

When I was a kid we lived in an army tent for a year on a bit of land while my dad built us a little house to live in.

**Which is more satisfying: Coming up with some otherworldly riff, painting or nailing a new air?**

The thrills of a new painting can last for a longtime which I like. Writing a new song though is really awesome if it's one you like. It's hard to tell if you're still gonna like it in a week or in a year, if you still wanna play it five years later well then that's awesome. As for airs they feel unreal and you can be on a high for a few days about it, if it ends up on a movie on YouTube. It's cool 'cos you can watch it in years to come hahaha. I can't pick a winner. I enjoy all forms of creation so much.

**Who's bigger in your book, Raymond Pettibone or Andy Warhol?**

I really appreciate Andy's work especially just his larger than life persona. He was a superstar and it seemed like he had a lot of fun. Raymond's work however is much

more important to me, I find it very engaging I can look at it for hours. His old flyers and drawings are incredibly cool and beautiful to me.



**How would you describe what you do for work to a very small, inattentive child?**

I would just say that I'm a renaissance man, kids are so smart these days they would be like, "hey man that's great, but does it really contribute anything to the survival of planet earth and the human race." to which I would reply "can I please borrow your crayon"

**What is that you do professionally that you are most proud of?**

Easily the thing I am most proud of is meeting people who have said that I was a big inspiration to them. Especially when I see what they are doing and get inspired right back.

**Tell us what has been your biggest mistake?**

Once I bought a really bad car for way more money than it was worth, plus I didn't clean my teeth enough when I was a teenager.

**What did you learn from that mistake?**

Look after your health, as it matters more than anything else, no point being a million dollar man if you're too sick to enjoy it. Health is wealth.



**Is there something going on in the world that makes you scratch your head and think: “But this is soooo important! Don’t they get it?”**

The destruction of our natural world is so heartbreaking, it’s hard to see how earth can survive the human beast but I know it will, it may have to wipe us out eventually, but I hope we evolve into a more harmonious species.

**Share with us your biggest Rocky Balboa moment.**

I once got punched in the face by a large male on the side of the road, a full sucker punch which broke my nose badly, blood every where it was ugly, I felt like boxers must feel all the time. I also named my son Rocky River Wright, but not after the mythical boxer. I named him Rocky for strength and River for flow. Kind of inspired by the American Indian names.

**If you weren’t doing this, what would you be doing? Selling shoes?**

Ha I bought my son some new school shoes the other day and the sales guy was like a professor of shoes. He went on about shoes and arches for an hour and taught us a poem about how to tie your laces, which we have forgotten now, but he was like a Ben

Stiller character. So no I could never measure up to the status quo of shoe salesmen. I would like to be a poet.

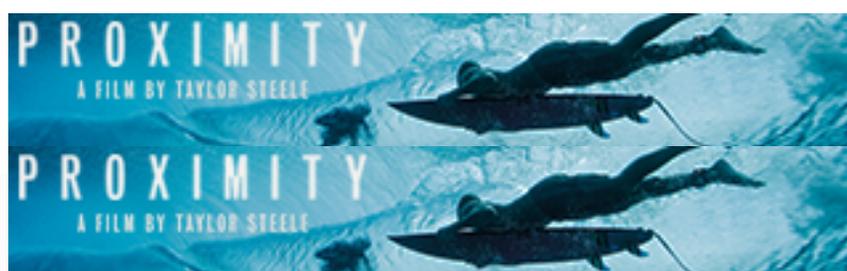
**OK, you get to drop into five moments in history – surf or otherwise. Please name them and why.**

I would like to discover perfect waves and surf them to pieces secretly for as long as I could stand it, Desert Point, Ululawatu, Macaronis, Nokanduis, Kirra.



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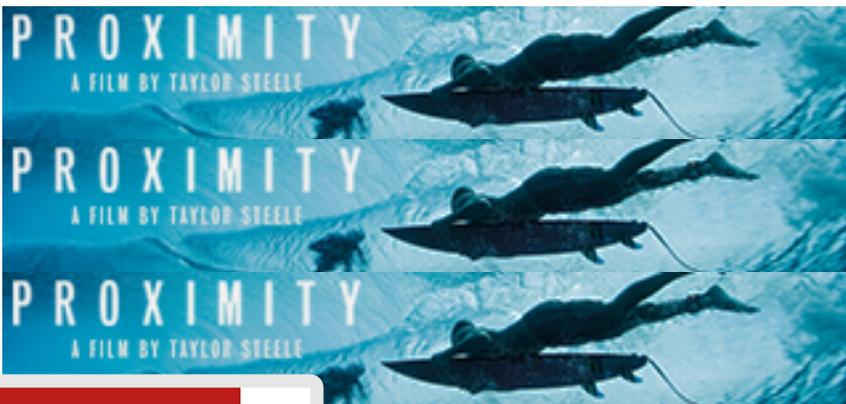


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