

JUST PICKED UP your Jan/Feb **MOMENTUM** at Cars R Coffins (www.carsrcoffins.com) in Minneapolis. First time I've seen it. Very cool!

I've been biking over 50 years. They got me a bike at age 7 and I haven't gotten off yet. Early on I was a city biking commuter and adventurer. Just for fun. In my 20s I met up with some "racers" and became a roadie, but continued also with my city biking ways. Gave up the racing after just a couple of years but the roadie mentality stuck for a good 25 years.

Then my son spent a semester studying in China. He came back telling of the joys of owning/riding one of the Chinese city bikes. It sounded great. I converted my old Peugeot racer into a pseudo "roadster" (top left photo) and loved it. I was hooked. Since then I have added a Trek L200 European citybike (top right photo) to my stable and it's my most-used ride – usually 30 to 40 miles at a crack. And my wife acquired a Pake Urban 6 (bottom left photo) for her two mile commute and general short distance duty.

I read with great interest Wendell Challenger's "City Bike Shakedown" article. I firmly believe that the US needs this type of bike and that we Americans need to be educated in its beauty.

But I do take issue with your statement "the geometry and handling of 'hybrid' and/or 'comfort' bikes have been designed with urban riding in mind." These bikes, at least all I know of, have too-high bottom brackets and do not handle at all in a way befitting city use. They are hard to balance and are "twitchy" in their handling. And

the seat is way up off the ground when set to achieve proper leg extension.

I know this because my Trek is afflicted with this problem. It has only 65mm of BB drop where my old Peugeot has 75mm. I had to order it in without a test ride, I should have known better. I am a good rider and can compensate for this and I do get along fine - but everyone else who has ridden this bike has hated it.



On the other hand, I recently built up a "comfort/hybrid" for my wife using a Salsa Casseroll frame (bottom right photo – sensible equipment added since). The Casseroll has a 76mm BB drop and rides and handles great. She likes it MUCH better than her old frame with 70mm drop. Rides better too. And everyone else who has tried it comes back with a huge grin on their face and wants one. It just feels right. I like it so much that I'm building one for myself (with full commuter

equipment and Nitto Albatross bars) for this year. The Trek will be on Craigslist soon.

If you talk to the Civia folks they will point out that their commuters are aimed at high-end sport riders, and that this group expects a quick-handling bike. But their 70mm racing-standard drop is much better than usual hybrid 65. And fine for racers who want to commute.

The thing is, people need to know how BB

height (along with other geometry) affects the riding experience. And that HIGH IS BAD! Your article would have been a great place to introduce the concept. I believe that the wrong choice can mean a bike that is not ridden. Many of my friends now have a bad impression of city bikes – based on riding my Trek. What a shame!

Scariest still: "cross" bikes are popular around here right now. They are appealing, with their cantilever brakes and ample tire/fender clearance. But cross bikes are most often the worst offenders – sometimes with only 60mm BB drop! And the buyers are getting them to use as city bikes, not for cyclocross. I talked to a shop owner just this week and he says he tries to dissuade these purchases but usually fails.

That aside, the bikes in the Shakedown article all look right. I will definitely point friends to your mag. Keep up the good work.

Mark
Saint Paul, Minnesota

We'll be doing an article on frame geometry in a future issue. – Ed.

THANK YOU FOR producing such an outstanding publication. I just received my third magazine since subscribing and each one is more amazing than the previous. The fact that you cover everything, from culture, to different commuter bikes, to food and books (two of my major loves after my bicycle), and legal issues is just astounding. I always pace myself, reading one article a day to make each issue last longer. This issue, with the story about Jan VanderTuin and the CAT was incredibly inspiring. I'm an active member of my local CSA and reading about the connections between food and bicycling was a welcome treat. Thank you for providing us with such positive inspiration on a regular basis. I wish you all the very best.



Todd Barnell
Flagstaff, Arizona

LOVE YOUR MAGAZINE. I've been reading it since I discovered a copy about 5 years ago. My bike gave me my first real independence. I used my bike to commute to university and to work and for pleasure use on my days off. I now have two girls who will be four and two this spring and who have enjoyed various trips in their Chariot trailer. Both are keen to master two-wheelers and we're looking forward to much happy biking together!

Loyal reader,
Rachel Lautard
Greenwood, BC

APRIL 5 - MAY 3, 2008



THIS YEAR'S POSTER DESIGNED BY SCOTT SHOKE WWW.LUREDESIGN.NET

ARTCRANK IS A poster party for bike people in it's second year at One on One Bicycle Studio in Minneapolis. The show's organizer Charles Youel is a Creative Director for the Dalton Sherman advertising agency by day. He describes ARTCRANK as his "cure for spare time." Though the show is a lot of work, Youel is overwhelmingly positive about it. "All of the artists came through with such beautiful, brilliant work. I remember looking at the work right before the opening, and just getting goosebumps."

ARTCRANK is all about being accessible. The show's website proclaims: "Other than walking, biking is the most widely accessible form of transportation, exercise and entertainment in the world - just as the poster is the most widely accessible form of art." The show's criteria include a maximum size for the posters and artists are required to have at least 25 copies of their poster to sell at a cost of \$25, or less. As Charles says: "I think keeping the rules to a bare minimum helps ensure a diverse body of work. Besides, creative people aren't usually fond of rules."

Last year's show saw a rich mix of creative approaches: "I had this nagging fear that the artists would come up with posters that all looked alike. If you look at the work, you'll see that certainly didn't happen. A lot of people screen-printed their posters, but there were archival inkjet prints, digital prints, prints made with spray paint and stencils, even a woodcut or two."

This year's show will feature 34 artists from Minnesota and elsewhere. Youel has already chosen all the artists for 2008 and is currently signing people up to participate in the 2009 show. For Charles Youel it sounds like a project to which he'll continue to surrender his free time: "ARTCRANK has been a way to combine the two ruling passions in my life: my crush on bicycles and my love for great design."

ARTCRANK takes place April 5 - May 3, 2008 at One On One Bike Studio, 117 Washington Avenue North in the Minneapolis Warehouse District. The opening night party is on Saturday, April 5 at 7:00 pm. For a look at all the posters from 2007, look at the ARTCRANK website.



ADAM TURMAN - WWW.ADAMTURMAN.COM



JOHN CORRIGAN



SCOTT NEFF - WWW.SHINYROBOT.COM



BRENT GALE - WWW.TWINSIX.COM



C.J. MARXER - WWW.CJMARXER.COM

www.artcrankpostershow.com
www.oneononebike.com