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!