

The "Accidental Artist": Beneath the Topsheet

Contributed by Tyler Cohen

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Svoboda, a Grand Junction, Colo.-based backcountry skier and aspiring splitboarder, is no stranger to graphic arts. She holds a BFA in Graphic Design and works as a graphic artist designing ads for Grand Junction's The Daily Sentinel. "I always look for stuff to do on the side because the world of ad design can be kind of plain," she said over the phone en route to Telluride. "I look for [projects] that are a little more creative; where I get to express a little bit more." She submitted two other designs in this year's contest, but neither was as popular as her winning ZenOxide topsheet.

To craft the image, Svoboda began by defining the word ZenOxide. According to her blog, titled Accidental Artist, ZenOxide is "a binary compound of Oxygen with Meditation and Intuition, emphasizing experiential Wisdom in the attainment of Enlightenment." Sounds complex, but really she wanted to combine the feeling she gets while climbing Colorado's peaks with the look of oxidized rock, she said. Once she figured that out, she got right to designing.

She used a weathered, oxidized texture with images of mountains to connect the design to a place. "I chose an image of oxidized metal as my background because my favorite mountains are mined for their precious minerals and metals," she wrote on her blog. Finally, Svoboda encircled the ski name and G3 logo with an oxidized ring "as a reminder that anyone can attain a state of ZenOxide."

This month, Backcountry Magazine is the fourth and final partner in this year's G3 Skigraphiks Contest. Topsheet designs for the G3 Infidel will be accepted until December 31 at skigraphiks.com. Svoboda plans to participate: "I hope I can get something out for that one. I don't really want to win it, because I've already won and I'm beyond excited about that. I want everybody else to have their chance, too."

For more on Nola Svoboda, visit nolasvoboda-accidentalarist.blogspot.com.

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