

renegade

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COLLECTIVE

ISSUE 4

WHAT
WOULD
BRANSON
DO?

LESSONS FROM
**NELSON
MANDELA**

ART IMITATES LIFE

**ASHTON
KUTCHER**

AS **STEVE JOBS**

+

HOLLYWOOD'S
DISRUPTIVE
CELEBRITECHS

**HELENA
CHRISTENSEN**

+ ELLE, TYRA, MIRANDA

BUSINESS IS NOT JUST THEIR BODIES

BIG DATA:

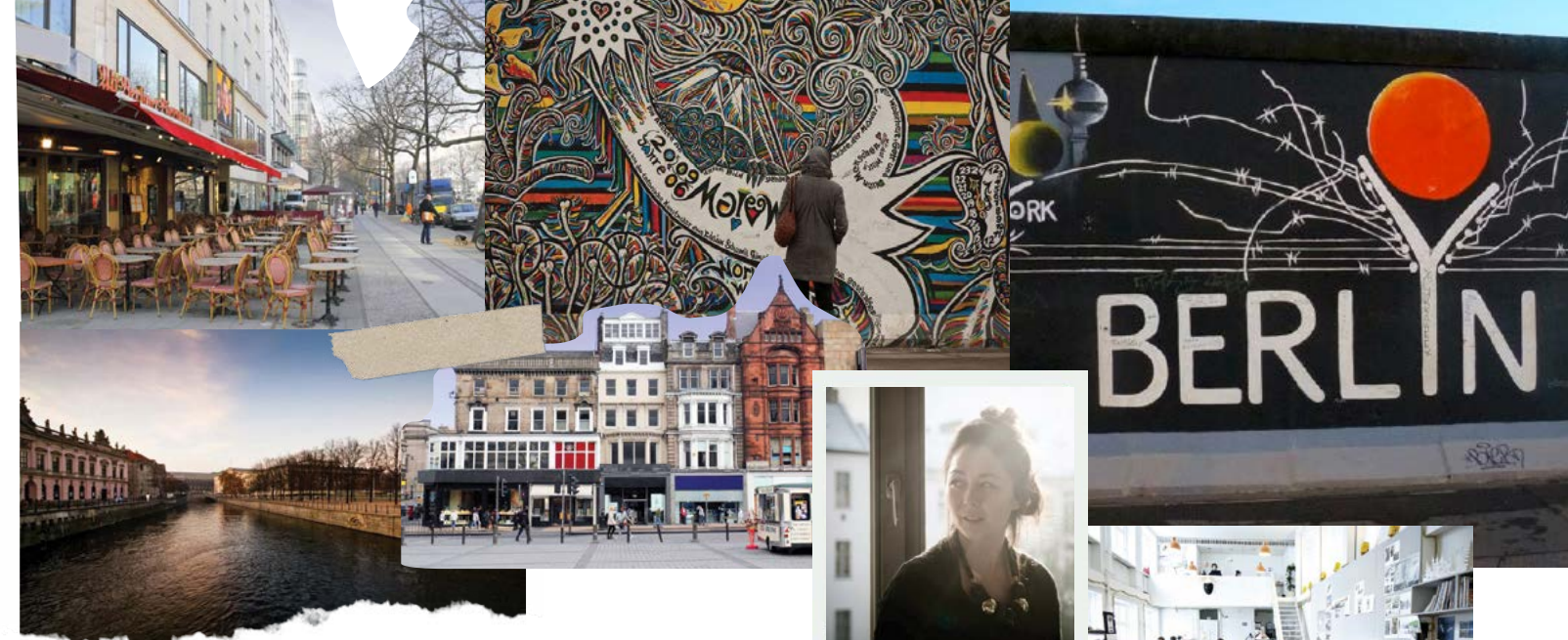
400 MILLION TWEETS PER DAY
WHERE'S IT ALL GOING?

i moved

WORDS: MELINDA BARLOW



here



{berlin}

As the daughter of Norwegian and Korean parents, it's not surprising American born Jess Erickson took to the life of an expat like a natural. Leaving her hometown of Minnesota in 2007, she spent some time in South Korea before moving to London and then spending a year in New York. Now this dynamic globetrotter is calling Berlin home and making her presence felt in the city's rapidly growing tech scene. As founder of Berlin Geekettes, a community of female entrepreneurs dedicated to nurturing and developing the careers of women in technology, Jess is one of the many expats now shaping the new face of this city and doing her bit to change the world in the process.

BEFORE I MOVED TO BERLIN
I was working for a tech start-up in Manhattan. Prior to that I worked for the governor of Wisconsin for a while and got offered a job with Hillary Clinton working on her campaign. I decided politics was not for me and began working for an NGO in South Korea helping North Korean refugees and from there, progressed to working in the tech industry.

I MOVED TO BERLIN BECAUSE
I already had a number of tech companies on my radar and it seemed to me that Berlin was becoming a hub that allowed expats to flourish. It had a great cultural component and I always felt a strong sense of community whenever I visited, so it ticked all the boxes for me. I've been here three years and I feel like I've found my city.

MY NEIGHBOURHOOD is Wedding. It's extremely culturally diverse and has a strong African, Korean and Turkish population. There's a quiet park nearby that is super gorgeous with a huge lake, which gives me a nice place to escape the city. I prefer to live in a quiet area where I can decompress.

MY FAVOURITE PLACE to hang out is co-working space Betahaus. It has good coffee and strong wi-fi plus great events on all the time – maker weekends and building and design events. It attracts around 200 entrepreneurs, so you run into a lot of like-minded people. For fun, I also love Yaam. It's a cool Jamaican-style bar with an awesome location along the Spree river near Ostbahnhof. They serve drinks from all over the world and amazing jerk chicken.

AS AN ENTREPRENEUR, THE MOVE TO BERLIN HAS HAD A GREAT IMPACT ON MY CAREER because, although I was already interested in getting into tech when I lived in New York, it was really Berlin that took things to the next level. I got a lot of independence and responsibility quickly and therefore opportunity for big career growth.

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING PEOPLE I'VE MET SINCE MOVING HERE is Zoe Adamovicz, CEO of Xyo, business developer and angel investor. Someone like her can have a huge effect on your career path. She inspires my efforts with the Berlin Geekettes mentorship program.

THE MOST EXCITING THING FOR ME IN BERLIN RIGHT NOW is our [Berlin Geekettes'] new partnership with Deutsche Telekom. We have a strong and vibrant community of female founders, engineers, designers, communication specialists and more in Berlin. We can continue to advance women through building strong, affordable education programs and mentorships and really inspire the next generation of girls in tech.

If we want to have a long-term impact we need to engage the younger generation. What do they do, how do they view tech, and what apps do they use? Understanding what they want and what they could do in the future is the priority.

IF YOU VISIT BERLIN YOU MUST go dancing at world famous club Berghain. The Sunday flea market at Mauerpark is also a must. Finally, buy or rent a cheap bike and get lost in the city to figure out how it's all connected.

THE THING I LOVE MOST ABOUT BERLIN IS the people. This city attracts amazing creative individuals. It's a very special place and it might not be like this forever. Maybe in five years it will be less cool, more gentrified, and will have become more like other cities. Culturally, Berlin is very different to me from the rest of Germany because it's super international, which makes it very exciting. I will stay here for as long as I can. ■