



2010



# The Otesha Project

Cycling and Performing Tours  
Info Pack





Combine sustainable living, community building, theatre, leadership training and phenomenal bike touring!

Be part of a passionate team devoted to sustainability that will live an incredible experience, changing outlooks and lives... maybe even your own.

Spend days outdoors, encounter nature, dream in tents under the night skies, bike miles of beautiful Canadian terrain, and connect and learn from communities along the way.

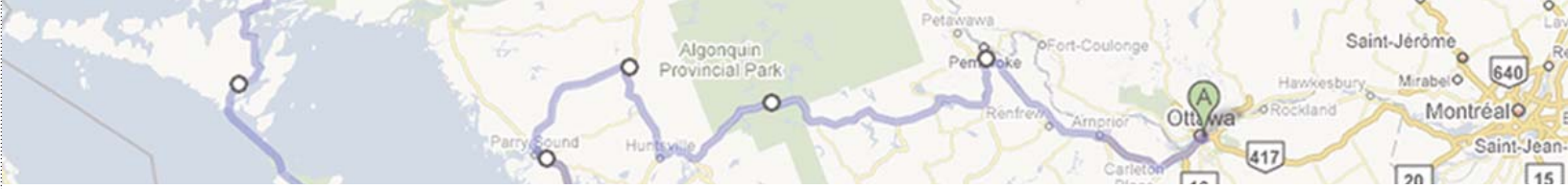
Gain and share valuable leadership, performing, facilitation, group dynamics, and biking skills.

Combine activism and theatre to open eyes and hearts to possibilities.

Best of all, be part of a movement of youth all across Canada who are being the change they want to see in the world.

Come and join us on an Otesha cycling and performing tour!





## ~ about The Otesha Project

The Otesha Project is a youth-run charitable organization that uses theatre to mobilize young people to create local and global change through their daily consumer choices. "Otesha" is a Ki-Swahili word that means "reason to dream." The organization was founded in February 2002 by Jocelyn Land-Murphy and Jessica Lax, both 21 years old, who met while studying in Kenya. They wanted to take action to address the problems they saw in the world in a way that would "bring it home" to youth in Canada. So, in 2003, they set out with 30 other

young people on Otesha's first cross-Canada bike tour, giving more than 250 rockin' performances to 12,000 people in schools, camps, and communities. Since then, Otesha cycling tours and high school teams have performed for more than 100,000 people, inspiring audiences to see how our every day choices can and do impact the world!

## ~ becoming a tour member

Teams of a dozen or more motivated and energetic young people, aged 18 to 30, will set off on cycling and performing tours in 2010. You can be one of them! Tour members will share an incredible experience as they live as a mobile and sustainable community. They will cycle from performance to performance, braving the elements, connecting with communities along the route, and exploring all the ups and downs of directly addressing environmental and social justice issues

through their own every day actions. No bike touring or other experience is necessary, just a willingness to train beforehand and give it your all!

Teams will also include members who serve as "Tour Liaisons." These members will take on added administrative and logistical responsibilities, and will liaise with the Otesha office, schools and host venues.

## ~ choosing a tour

Each Otesha bike tour is a unique and amazing experience. While we strive to place applicants on their tour of choice, that's not always possible. We also consider skills, experience and balance when building a team. Here are a few factors to consider when choosing your preferred tour:

1) Location: First and foremost, we encourage participants to join teams in their region to reduce carbon emissions that are produced traveling to and from the tour.

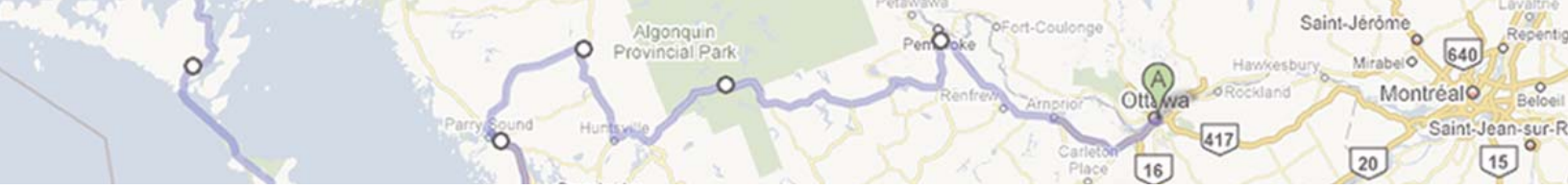
2) Physical challenge: Some tours cycle through mountains, while others follow the shores of lakes and less rugged terrain. However, our experience has shown that anyone (and we do mean anyone!) – with a little pre-tour training – can tackle any one of our tours.

3) Farming vs Regular tour: All of our cycling and performing tours combine several learning

opportunities and outreach using theatre. This year we are also offering a dedicated two month tour that will focus all its learning opportunities on a specific topic: food production. These opportunities will look at agriculture in the province of Ontario- both in the urban and rural contexts as well as small scale and conventional farming.

4) Farm Extension: Those who participate in the Farming Tour can also choose to extend their journey for two additional months through a farm internship. More information about the internships can be found on [www.otesha.ca](http://www.otesha.ca) in the Frequently Asked Questions.





## ~ the journey

### training

Each tour begins with one week of training that will include team-building, development of community standards, public speaking, story-telling, theatre skills, learning the Otesha play, media relations, bike maintenance, bike safety and more! Team-building exercises and training continue throughout the tour, offering team members the opportunity to share their knowledge with each other.

A cycling and performing tour is a high-energy

adventure and a physical challenge. That's why we ask team members to do physical training on their own in preparation for the tour. You don't need to be an experienced biker, but some training beforehand will help prevent injuries. You should aim to be able to cycle 75 kilometers on a fully loaded bike. But don't worry – it's not as hard as you might think! You will receive a detailed Prep Pack filled with tips on training and how to be well prepared for the tour.

### a day in the life of a tour member

It's 7:00 a.m. and you are stirred to consciousness by the laughter and songs of your fellow teammates outside your tent. You get up and eat a hearty breakfast prepared by the day's SuperSquad, pack up your tent, and some food for the road. You load your bike and you're off. A few minutes later your front tire blows out. Luckily, you have an awesome teammate who arrives at your side and, together, you fix the flat and get on your way. You and your teammate huff and puff up and down hills, chatting about urban agriculture and other fabulous things, then stop briefly for a snack. You let your thoughts unwind as the kilometers fly by. You feel the wind and sun on your face, and realize you've never really felt this free before.

A few hours later, you arrive at a school to perform a hilarious and inspiring play. Hundreds of students laugh and cheer. At lunchtime you refuel and make some one-on-one connections with the students. They tell you about an awesome organic garden they're starting up in the schoolyard. Then there are workshops in the afternoon with a few classes. Afterwards, you leap on your bike, re-energized by the reaction of your audience and the changes that people have committed to in their lives.

Next you're off to a meeting with a local non-profit organization to learn what they're doing to address a mounting environmental concern in their community. You bike back to the school where you and the other members of your own SuperSquad prepare an organic vegetarian meal with local produce donated from a farmer's market. The team meets to talk about how the

day went, how the performance might be improved for next time, and what the plan is for the next couple of days. You talk and laugh until you fall into a sweet sleep on the school gym floor.

Tomorrow is a "day off." After breakfast you decide to explore the town and join your teammates to check out a nearby organic farm. Then you head to the library to check your email, and share your day's experiences with your friends and family back home. There's also laundry to do. You'll sleep in the gym again tonight, and hit the road early the next day. Thankfully, there's another SuperSquad cooking up the morning meal. You can curl up in the comfort of your sleeping bag and drift off to sleep. (To read journals from past tours, check out: <http://www.otesha.ca/bike+tours/tours+2008/kootenay+mountain+tour/index.en.html>)





## the performance

The Otesha Project's performances revolve around a play called Reason to Dream. The play showcases the many ways that we can improve our ecological footprint and tackle issues of social justice and environmental degradation through our everyday choices. The performance combines theatre and improv in a high-energy (and humorous!) interactive show. The message is empowering, and lays out actions that we can all

take. A member of a performing tour can expect to give an average of three to five performances a week to schools and community groups (Learning exchange tour members will give three or four performances in total). Tour members will also give Otesha workshops to individual classes and small groups.

## how much does it cost?

Participating in an amazing Otesha bike tour requires that each team member raise a project contribution that goes towards tour expenses such as food, liability insurance, tour planning and support, as well as equipment. For the Ferocious Farming Tour, the Highlands and Islands Tours and the Appetizer Option of Coast to Capital (two-month tours), the fundraised amount is \$2,250. For the full Coast to Capital tour (four months), the amount is \$3,900.

members, and a great way to reach out to your community. We provide a detailed fundraising package, and will offer you phone and e-mail support. We encourage you to take this opportunity to spread the word about the awesome journey of change you will be embarking on!

Team member fundraising is an integral part of Otesha's three-year plan to transition from operating on subsidies provided by foundations and government agencies to economic self-sufficiency.

Bursaries will be available to cover portions of the fundraising amount if needed. You can download a bursary application on our website.

Fundraising is an empowering experience for team

NOTE: The project contribution does NOT cover your transportation to and from the tour, the costs of your bike, tent and other personal gear, or extended health coverage. These costs can vary widely depending on your circumstances. For more information, check out





~ sign me up!

Now that you're ready to ride, all you have to do is fill out an application form. Fill it out online at: [www.otesha.ca](http://www.otesha.ca). Or, if you don't have access to the Internet, please call us at 613-237-6065 and we'd be happy to mail you an application package.

But act fast! We are accepting applications on a first come, first considered basis. In other words, sign up NOW for the best chance of touring in the season and location of your choice. Team selection will be ongoing until teams are filled. The deadline for applications is March 15th, 2010.

More questions? Check out the Frequently Asked Questions section of our website. Plus don't hesitate to get in touch with us at 613-237-6065 or via e-mail at [applications@otesha.ca](mailto:applications@otesha.ca).

