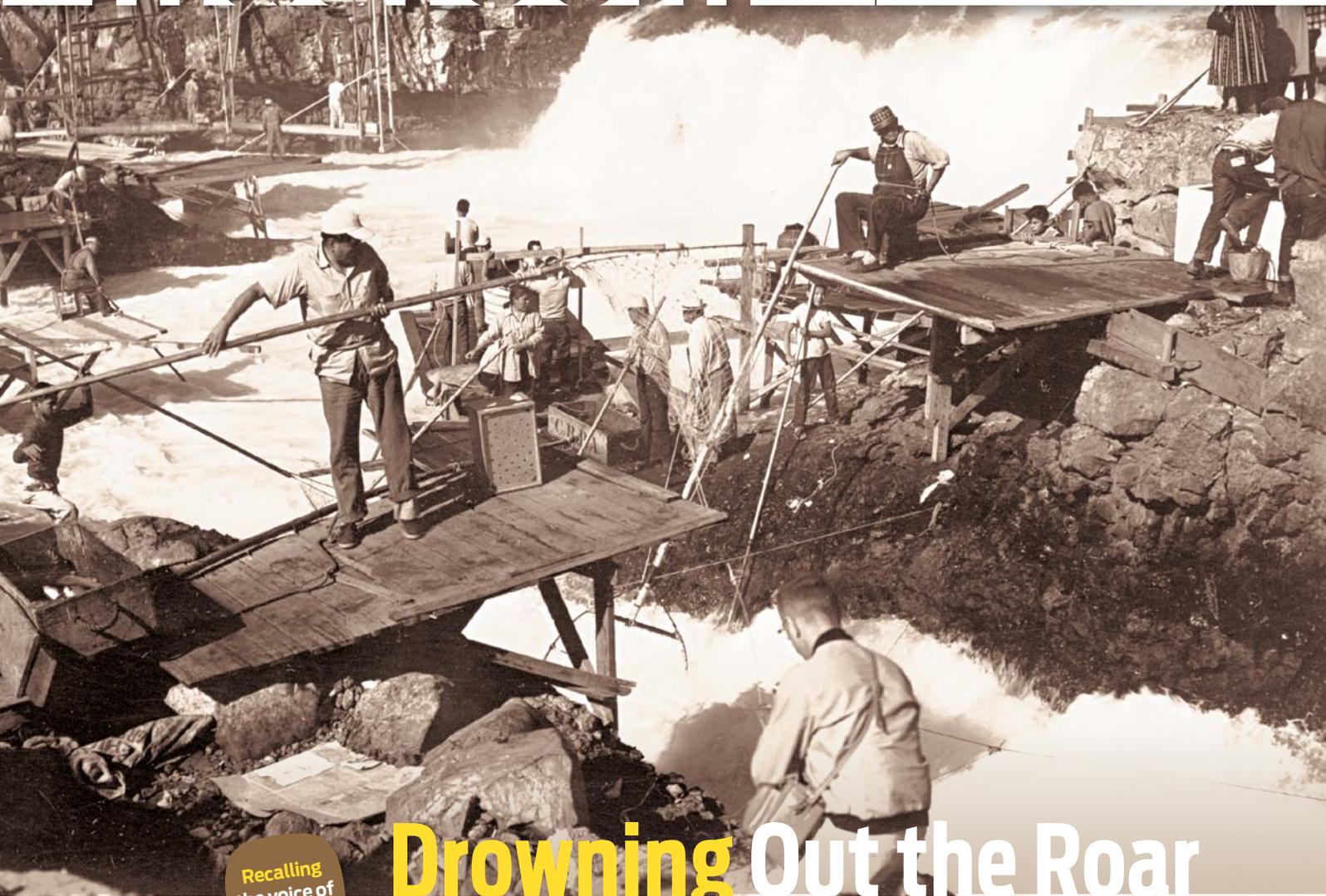


the mudroom



Recalling
the voice of
Celilo Falls

Drowning Out the Roar

CONSPICUOUS AMONG THE ubiquitous ‘For Sale’ placards planted in front of so many Craftsman homes in the Hawthorne neighborhood stands a curious hand-painted yard sign that reads: *Bring Back Celilo Falls.*

Straddling the Columbia River 12 miles east of The Dalles, Celilo was a cataract of gargantuan proportions. As much as a million cubic feet of water tumbled over its face every second—seven times the volume of Niagara—into an incandescent explosion. Teeming with salmon, it was sacred ground for dozens of Indian tribes that had gathered there since time immemorial. Archaeologists have found evidence at Celilo of at least 10,000 years of human habitation, making it one of the oldest continuously occupied settlements in North America.

“Celilo was a way of life,” says Jay Minthorn, 70, an elder of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, who caught salmon alongside his father from a wooden scaffold perched over the thundering waterfall. “You could hear it roar from miles away. You could feel the dampness in the air from the spray. That’s how big and great it was.”

But in March 1957—50 years ago this month—the steel gates of the brand-new Dalles Dam were lowered, creating a reservoir 23 miles long and burying Celilo beneath half a billion tons of water.

IN-PORT
EX-PORT



GREETING THE DAWN OF
EXTENDED DAYLIGHT
SAVING TIME (MAR 11-NOV 4)

SAYING GOODNIGHT
TO THE BLUES BUSTER
FULL-SPECTRUM LIGHTBULB



FOUR-STAR HOPEFUL HOTEL
MONACO'S FOUR-LEGGED
"DIRECTOR OF PET
RELATIONS"

THE FORMER FIFTH
AVENUE SUITES'
COMPLIMENTARY PET
COMPANION IN A FISHBOWL



PORTLAND ART
MUSEUM REELS IN
ROBERT RAUSCHEN-
BERG'S PATRICIAN
BARNACLE

YOUR PARTNER TOSSES
DOGS PLAYING POKER
INTO THE CURBSIDE
RECYCLING BIN



THE OREGON
CHANNEL—ALL
SALEM, ALL THE
TIME (SEE P. 176)

THE WEATHER
CHANNEL—IT'S
OREGON, AND IT RAINS
HERE. THIS IS NEWS?



DROWNING OUT THE ROAR

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Indian tribes, including the Yakama, the Warm Springs, the Umatilla and the Nez Perce, had lobbied against the dam for more than a decade, pleading with the federal government not to inundate a waterfall that was central to their ceremonies and their livelihood. When that argument failed, they tried to persuade the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to move the dam upstream to spare the falls. The Corps said no.

In the end, more than 10,000 people gathered along the river to bid farewell to Celilo. Minthorn watched from the riverbank as the water began to rise, swallowing the falls inch by inch. Indians were weeping and singing songs of death. "It was the biggest funeral I ever attended," he says. By nightfall, Celilo had vanished, its thunder nothing more than a memory.

Losing the falls was a traumatic experience for the tribes. "I heard a tribal elder the other day use the word 'apocalyptic,' and I wouldn't argue with that," says Charles Hudson, spokesman for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. "For thousands of years, it was probably the most prosperous single place in the Western Hemisphere—gone within six hours. Fifty years later, Indian country is still grieving."

Is it possible to bring back Celilo? Not

really. True, environmentalists have proposed taking out other dams on the Columbia, but there has never been a serious discussion about removing the Dalles Dam. For starters, how would you replace the 1,000 megawatts of electricity, enough to power a million homes, that it generates on an average day? Nor is the structure ex-

Indian country still
mourns Celilo Falls.

pected to become obsolete. "We installed it to be here forever," says Matt Rabe, public affairs officer with the Corps of Engineers.

About 10 years ago, however, Washington state senator George Rohrbacher suggested drawing down the water behind the dam temporarily to expose Celilo for a weekend, as part of the state's centennial celebrations. The tribes were horrified. The thought of uncovering the falls, only to lose them again a day later, was too painful, akin to unearthing the bones of an ancestor.

The riverbank along the submerged Celilo site is now a grassy park, where the tamed Columbia laps gently at a gravel bank and the only roar comes from the traffic on I-84. Ducks skim across the surface of the river and a barge chugs dutifully upstream. The place has the wistful atmosphere of a graveyard—a graveyard with the biggest headstone in the world. —Chris Lydgate

MP3-TOWN

THE MOST NOTABLE THING about the *iTunes Essentials: Portland* compilation is that it's actually pretty good—a surprise given its breathless prose about the city being "an absolute hotbed for breaking music." The 75 songs by Portland bands past and present are divided into three categories: The Basics, with Elliott Smith's "Rose Parade" segueing into "Louie Louie" by the Kingsmen; Next Steps, featuring less familiar names; and Deep Cuts, showcasing songs by "criminally ignored and underappreciated artists." So why is Quarterflash in Category 3? An anonymous "editorial team at iTunes" selected the songs, but we suspect the involvement of a chum or relative of local electronic musician Jona Bechtolt, since he's played with 10 of the artists included in the collection.



ILLUSTRATION BY PETER HOEY