

The wheel thing: Will Self on the Brompton bike

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If you ever doubted your decision to buy a Brompton or are considering making the purchase but need the reason clincher, a recent article published in the 'The Independent' will set you straight, relieve your fears and put you on the wheeled path of enlightenment. It's got Brompton passion all over it.

When is a bicycle not a bicycle? When it's a foldable and fiendishly clever expression of British design genius. Will Self tells the story of the Brompton bike, and reveals how he lost his heart to an unlikely two-wheeled wonder.

It was love at first sight – the first time I saw a Brompton folding bicycle, I fell in love with it. All right, perhaps this is an exaggeration on all fronts: it wasn't the first time I'd seen one, but the first time I'd really noticed it – or her. And it was not so much love – an emotion, I concede, that unless you're seriously perverted, only truly exists between sentient beings – as a kind of lusty covetousness; but, you can take it from me, it was a very strong feeling, and one that has only increased over the years I've either had a Brompton between my thighs, or hefted one in my arms.

And if you feel tempted at this point to cast my piece aside, unread, on the quite reasonable grounds that not only do you not like bicycles, or cycling, but you especially revile the ghastly middle-aged-mannish gadget obsession that you already feel emanating from my prose in great waves, then I say: desist! Give me a chance! Read on, and if I can't convince you by the end of these 2,000 words that a Brompton folding bicycle is not only a superior means of locomotion, and a perfect antidote to the stresses of the modern world, but also a means of achieving a deeper harmony with place and culture than you've hitherto achieved, then I personally guarantee to come round to your house and sort out your old Allen keys – or something like that.

You can read it now at: www.independent.co.uk.