

Okay, confession- I'm bad at directions, I always call Thrift Town (the thrift store)-Town House, and I have my own images of place... so excuse the inexact and vague directions- you'll have to keep your eyes peeled and a creative eye out. Start at the corner of 24th and I think it's Bryant (San Francisco, CA) but it might be one block over. Look for the snake park and there's a video store that is also a post office right there. Stop in at St. Francis on the corner there for buko ice cream... delicious. Walk two blocks past the little store that sells polka dot socks and hand drawn postcards and the laundromat with the oddly drawn washing machines on the outside (crying). Then go into the market selling mangos- try one they are always good. Say "hola" to the ladies there and offer them a scarf or something warm- it's a chilly corner. Pass on to the bookstore two blocks down and buy something small but touching for a friend, and for yourself a novel- a mystery. Then head home to read.

Dee Hibbert-Jones

34°25'39.77"N 119°52'30.59"W: cereal aisle.

Overwhelmed by indecision, I cut my losses and head for the exit.

Alex Bogdanov

Via Marisol (south of Via Colina on the East side of the street), Los Angeles CA. Just before dawn, daily. On foot, face East toward Elephant Hill. Everything is quiet and the view of the sunrise over the hill is beautiful. The feel is completely unlike the expected Los Angeles urban experience. This time and place is my daily entrée to communicate with the gods.

Pat Gomez

Martinez, CA. As far North as you can go on Alhambra Avenue—you'll run out of road before you miss it. Make a left when all the buildings become antique stores. Right on Talbart, then up Snake Road. Stop when it curls. Park in the dirt and jump the fence. Trudge through the leaves and litter and stones until you can see the Marina.

Samantha Fretwell

Summer 1981. Downtown Los Angeles, parking lot behind Philippe's restaurant on Alameda and Ord streets, first parking spot near the Ord street entrance: Early afternoon after lunch, as we were getting into the car I heard loud police sirens. I immediately hid under the car. My American friend said: "What are you doing? This is not about us!"

Annetta Kapon

From the north, take the 101 south. Exit Balboa Blvd. and turn left, the destination should very well be on the right. It is green this time of year. Follow the trail to the lake, walk left along the bank, sit on the bench under the cherry trees with a younger relative and talk about things.

Katy McCarthy

A long stretch of Second Avenue near downtown Pittsburgh is bordered on one side by a nineteenth-century retaining wall made of huge blocks of sandstone. All along the wall, in the crevices between these stones, sprouts of Paradise trees squeeze through. Over time several of these shoots have grown to full-sized trees with trunks up to eight inches in diameter, some of them slightly displacing multiple layers of stone blocks. The largest group can be found just before the ramp to the Birmingham Bridge.

Christine Lorenz

Santa Barbara, CA. On a rainy, drizzling day walk toward the water. Carrillo to Castillo to Cabrillo. Dodge the Night Herons roosting in the trees, the cyclists and runners. Turn right past the swimmers at Los Banos and follow the path to the Harbor. Past the Endless Summer, Maritime Museum, and the diving bell. Up the stairs past the crowd to the wooden bar. Reward yourself for coming out on a cold and dreary day. Enjoy the waterfront and watch the fisherman bring in the day's catch.

Tracey Morris

Spring: Highland Park, Rochester, NY. Drive south on South Goodman Drive, turn right on Pinetum Drive, veer left to Reservoir Ave, and park your car in front of the Gatehouse. Walk along the pathway past the gatehouse and take the second left, walk down the shaded concrete stairs on your right onto the grass, to the left you will find the Maureen Whitsell bench. (Lat-43.131439443282666 Long -77.60222911834717) This is the best view in the "tree park." Last conversation with Aunt J Lee in this park describing the beautiful sites and smells.

Susan Lakin

Grand Lake Theatre wall as you walk from Walker toward Grand on Lake Park Avenue, Oakland, CA. Go at night. Two refurbished gas lamps on a post near the bus stop. One lamp is almost burnt out. The brighter lamp shines through the weaker casting a diffused shadow on the wall of the old movie house. Hundreds of people pass nightly and never notice the beautiful image above their heads.

Kate Sorensen

Alice F. Schott Center, Castillo and Padre, rm. 31, Tuesday evenings during the Santa Barbara City College adult ed term, 5:15-7:15pm. I waited two years to have my Tuesday evenings free so I could take a ukulele class. I'm not as musical as I'd like to be. I've had my beauty for a while now, scratched and picked my way to some pleasure, but never as much as a recent moment in class. Melody and rhythm exist fine without each other, but are better together. With half of the room strumming while the other half played melody, and then switching roles; in this place that is not quite home, I was of the whole.

Laurel Beckman

West Camino Cielo Drive, Santa Barbara, CA, thirty minutes before sunset, any foggy day in the spring. Bring a blanket. Coming from Highway 154, stop at the first water tower on your right, climb up either side of the hill, climb up the ladder, spread the blanket near the edge of the water tower and sit down facing the Pacific ocean. The fog blanketed the channel, hiding the ocean from view. I witnessed the largest body of water morphing into different landscapes: desert plains, salt flats, a snow-covered valley.

Emily Halbardier

Directions:

Alley on the eastside of Main Street and just north of Fir Street in Ventura, CA. Midway up the hill take a deep breath and look up and right. Early September, clear day, twilight.

Description:

Hot fig potion and have a chat with Richie.

Stephanie Washburn

Los Angeles, CA. My daily drive home from the office takes me SE through Griffith Park. It is always a time to debrief, decompress from a day of television post. Past the golf course, the old zoo, the moon appears. It is the largest most amazing moon I have ever seen. It is glowing orange, vibrant beyond belief. I pull over just to stare. It is otherworldly in size. I am amazed and frightened at the same time. It follows me as I head further south, and I'm starting to feel like it's my evil twin. I can't stop thinking of the film, Melancholia. It's as if the moon is heading straight toward earth. One year of full moons: July 3, August 2, August 31, September 30, October 29, November 28, December 28, January 27, February 25, March 27, April 25, May 25, June 23, July 22.

Terri Zitnick

Long Key, Florida. Lat/Long: 24.806097 - 80.839339, between MM 66 & 67. Sand flat, low tide, between 5:30 & 7 AM, late March. On the edge of park service property is a large Sea Grape, and behind it a utility pole on the Overseas Highway. An osprey spends time on this pole and flies back and forth between it and the Sea Grape. Very unique call, generally very vocal at this time of the morning. Smell is also unique in this area- the Florida Bay waters surge at low tide between Conch Key and Long Key, mixing with the water flowing from the lagoon. Not quite Ocean smell, not quite Bay. Bonefish occasionally come quite shallow here- you can hear them break the surface with their dorsals and tails.

Robert Dansby

Brooklyn NY, C train, between Jay Street and York, seated on the east side of subway car, morning rush. Looking at the windows opposite, you see multiple layers of transparent reflections of riders both on your train, and the adjacent F train. The reflections float and shift with the train movements, and it is not clear where all the "reflections" are coming from.

Mary Ann Chafin

Downtown LA, Heading West on Fifth St. from Main facing South Spring where at the southwest corner is the Crocker Club.

I'm heading there.

The walk up the block is short but a slight drizzle and high grey clouds overhead have emptied the street for the moment.

That is temporary.

Rain is pouring down now: focused, conical and concentrated at the intersection of Spring & Fifth.

Waiting for the light to change, many of the homeless gather at the corner.

The rain has made them real and visible.

Shouting, screaming, cursing, a cacophony of sound and rage emanates from them.

I crossed to the Northwest corner of Spring & Fifth.

The rain slowed,

the clouds were high

and the street was empty again.

Barry Markowitz

Frick Park, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at best in the morning around dawn. Toward the end of a 3-mile run through the park, there is a steep climb up a rocky path on the Kensington Trail. Just when the path seems unbearably hard, there's a tiny bend around a tree and you realize that you will have to keep bearing it a bit longer; the path goes up and up for another very hard minute. At the top there's an open spot where the path levels out, one's breathing can finally ease. Just at this spot, one catches some the sun rising from behind the trees ahead.

Kim Beck

Menil Park, Houston, TX. Early Spring, blue skies. The happenstance of wandering and the newness of space result in a total Cardinal loss. Acid sunset on patch of green in a clearing between trees. Triangulate with twists of rusted metal and roped tire. Once there, I realized I had lost Time: the procession of hours replaced by the cooling and warming of light and air. This new orientation invited the physicality of sense: a needing to see sound; to touch scent; to taste feel.

Erik Sultzer