

wrigglers

smushers

squeezers

squishers

creakers

squirmers

stretchers

pressers

resters

relievers

surrenderers

collapsers

Erik Benjamins is Forgetting the Words
June 16 – July 8, 2018
River

BOTANICAL RAMBLERS

It has been said that the bougs are best left to roam the city, scrambling and rambling. From the periphery of a stressed driver, a gliding cyclist, or an after-dinner walker, they heat up the landscape with their always-surprising idiosyncrasies in color, depth, scale, and shape. The mega-mass off the 101 that looks like a cartoon heart is a predictable, but still lovely example. When I was an East Coaster, my visits home to Long Beach were dominated by hard stares out the car window, as if on safari, to savor and mentally collect the violets, fuchsias, peaches, and whites as they blurred by. I started a list of my favorite ones because I knew that I'd eventually return to these plants that made it so effortless to recall the gooey, regenerative warmth of the Home Place.

UNDER PRESSURE

A list of things under pressure: an exhausted walker, a hungry traveler, a vine on the scanner glass, a busted knee worked hard by the physical therapist, leftovers in the microwave, stair stepers, ribbon cutters, and so on.

CATHEDRAL CITY GRAPEFRUITS

My Grandpa's grapefruits were the best in the world. Together, we picked them from the thorny tree that loomed high and encroached on the carport overhang in Cathedral City outside of Palm Springs. A small harvest of perfect citruses concluded every visit. Finding the language to describe their flavor and aroma requires sifting through sense memories quietly amassed over three decades. A color seems more manageable. The employee at Dunn Edwards wouldn't accept the peel I gave him from the last harvest (the color match machine doesn't scan organic material). So I used photographic methods to painstakingly approximate the hue. Maybe in the future I'll commission a romantic painter or a minimal poet? This yellow is decidedly Californian. It reverberates with an optimistic warmth, not too hot and not too cold. It reverberates in the way my Grandpa's voice did: operatic, syrupy, and gentle.

Thank you
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