
STOP NINE *Corner of 10th Avenue
and 19th Street*

Look west on 19th Street, back towards the Kitchen. See yourself a little while ago, standing next to that new tree, looking at Kamco Building Supply. How much "time" has "passed"? How much have you changed since you stood in that spot?

We are still in the theater, building our forest, or perhaps taking it down. We'd love for you to come back in and see how it has evolved. Once you're there, take a moment to feel yourself in our forest, surrounded by the world you've just walked through. It's so difficult to see ourselves at all, much less see ourselves in the midst of the "big picture."

Why not now?

We Need to Do It Ourselves

HOW TO BUILD A FOREST:

*High Line Walk
Pearl Damour + Shawn Hall*

This walk begins in your seat in The Kitchen.

It will take you on to 10th Avenue, on to the High Line and back to the theater. Move through it as quickly or as slowly as you like. We, of course, recommend taking your time.

Note: The things you pass in between stops may be even more interesting than the stops themselves. Give yourself time to meander.

This walk takes you south from 18th Street on the High Line, to the end of section one. Be sure to check out the newly opened section two, to the north, as well.

Many thanks to the High Line, Johnny Linville and Rachel Karp for their assistance in making this tour.

Design by Catherine Burke

Tree Time

STOP ONE *Your Seat*

This forest in front of you began with things that were lost: 100 trees at L'Esperance, a family home co-owned by Lisa's extended family, that were snapped, cracked and uprooted during Hurricane Katrina. Of course, being human, the family immediately wished they could put them all back.

Here we are imagining that we are Lisa's Uncle's hands, feeling the vibration of a chainsaw as he cuts through the thick trunk of a one hundred-year-old tree that has fallen across the road.

Here we are imagining that we are one of the hired clean up crew, maneuvering a bobcat to drag the giant felled trunks down the shell road to the wood chippers and stump grinders.

Here we are imagining we are one of the fallen trees left to rot deep in the woods of L'Esperance. The edges of our tree-ness disintegrating as we become host to new layers of life: lichen, moss, bugs, birds who eat the bugs, fungus, vines, more trees.

And here we are back in the theater. Watching a group of people trying to build a forest.

The walk has begun. Exit the building and take a right out on 19th Street. Walk about 30 feet until you get to the three "young trees" planted in the side walk on the south side of the street, and read Stop #2 on the next page.

STOP TWO *Building Supplies*

You are probably noticing the many city sounds that have flooded your ears since you have left the theater. Give yourself a moment to take them in.

These three cherry trees appeared here the week of April 17th, 2011 planted by the city of New York.

Take a moment to look east and west on 19th Street. Notice all the trees in your sightline. Notice how they move in the breeze, how they change shape and even color. Look behind you through the fence at the greenery growing out of the dirt on the edge of the parking lot. What other greenery do you see growing out of cracks and up walls around here?

Across the street from you is Kamco Building Supply. This is a construction company with branches up and down the East Coast. This location has been open here for a year and a half. The manager of this site is Cesar Chavez. He has ten employees.

Think about how Cesar Chavez and his employees help to distribute building materials to construction projects around the city. Sheetrock and lumber and steel. Think about how they depend on their job, and the economy they are a part of, an economy that has transformed this island into the city it is today. Now imagine Cesar Chavez and his employees, carting every building material back to the place in the earth where it came from. The lumber on fork lifts going back to the harvested grove of trees, the sheetrock on a flatbed truck going back to the gypsum mine deep in the earth, and so on.

Bring your eyes back to this new tree. Where do you land in the middle of all this?

Next Stop: The base of the High Line -- take a right on 10th Avenue, and then a right on 18th Street.

Note: If you need an elevator to get to the High Line, proceed to the 16th Street entrance, head south through the tunnel to the Hudson River view, and skip to Stop # 6 in this tour.

STOP THREE *Base of the High Line Steps*

OK, you are about to climb quite a few steps. Trust us, it's worth it. Be sure to notice the skyline changing as you move higher up. When you get to the top, stand at the railing at the top of the steps, or on the High Line just off the steps, facing the Hudson River, and read the next stop in this guide.

STOP FOUR *View from 18th Street*

Now you are on the High Line, looking towards the river. Take a moment to take in all of the varied landscapes. The gardens of the High Line. The parking lot and buildings, including the ICA Building designed by Frank Gehry. The West Side Highway. Chelsea Piers (research Chelsea Piers online, you'll be astounded at the number of things that fit in there!). The Hudson River. And people, people everywhere.

We're going to tell you a little about how the High Line started. Find a comfortable place to sit or stand.

In 1999, two men named Joshua and Robert were keeping their eye on the natural habitat that was growing up in the abandoned raised train tracks you are standing on right now. The tracks had laid dormant for so long that an ecosystem developed – soil was created by birds, animals and wind depositing natural material; buildings created wind protection that allowed trees and larger plants to grow in certain areas; wind brought with it seeds from other parts of the city and state. Joshua and Robert formed Friends of the High Line and started working with the city to transform the High Line into a park. The landscape architects who were eventually brought on board kept this original ecosystem in mind as they worked. Species that had overtaken the High Line were replaced with plants similar in texture and color that would thrive yet not take over – Queen Anne's Lace was replaced with ornamental garlic, for example. Today, this is a highly managed ecosystem – it takes 7 gardeners working full time year round with hundreds of volunteers to keep these plants and trees in good health.

All this management has resulted in great beauty. But what parts of this picture are NOT managed by humans? The deepest parts of the Hudson? Perhaps. The bedrock of marble and schist hundreds of feet below us? Arguably. Take a moment to consider the way we humans try to control the natural world around us.

Please stroll south on the High Line. In about a minute, you'll see some colored tables and chairs on your left. Stop anywhere around there, along the west side guard rail, so you can get a good view of 10th Avenue for the next tour stop.

STOP FIVE *Gazing on 10th Avenue*

From here, you can see the traffic moving down 10th Avenue. This has been a busy thoroughfare for more than 150 years.

Imagine back 20 years, when this expanse was a dormant railroad yard overgrown with an improvised ecosystem.

Imagine back 75 years, when trains would be zipping right past you right now, delivering all sorts of cargo directly into buildings along 10th Avenue.

Imagine back 100 years, before the raised rails were constructed, when the train traffic on 10th Avenue killed so many people that the street was called "Death Avenue."

Imagine back 200 years, when 10th Avenue was a dirt road, with only horses to make transportation faster.

Imagine back 500 years, when there was very little here that was "man made" – this island was primarily trees, animals, insects, birds....the wild.

Come back to now. Back in the theater, we are still building our forest, trying to gain a better understanding of time.

Continue south on the High Line through the tunnel to about 15th Street, and stop wherever you like on the upper deck with the Hudson River View.

Everything is Going to Have to Be Put Back

You are Here

STOP SIX *Hudson River View*

Again, the Hudson River. You might want to take a moment to cool off your feet in the foot bath in front of you.

A few things to note:

The kinds of trees in front of you: Smooth Sumac, Staghorn Sumac, Cutleaf Staghorn Sumac.

The abandoned pier in front of you: Pier 57 which began its life as a shipping pier, eventually fell dormant after a fire and is now a controversial public works project – many companies have put in bids to develop it into an entertainment mecca. Many deals have fallen through. The latest to try: Young Woo and Associates.

The gray building downriver to your left: Department of Sanitation.

The brick building in front of you with the American Flag – The Liberty Inn, perhaps the last hourly-rate motel in the meat-packing district, which bills itself as “your rendez vous for romance.”

The business behind you: Phillips De Pury, an art auction house that has been in business since 1796.

Pick a few to research, either right now or later at home. There are layers of intrigue in each of these structures, sitting so quietly here along the river. A good 99% of the world is a mystery to us, and we rarely have the time to investigate what is going on right in our line of sight. Why not now?

Please proceed south on the High Line to the grove of trees near West 12th Street, at the end of the High Line. Be sure to spend some time in the next tunnel you move through on the way, and check out the Bells of New York City sound installation.

STOP SEVEN *West 12th Grove*

Find a place along the path where you can stand in the midst of all these trees. Look all around you, at the shapes of the leaves and blossoms and trunks. Make note of all concrete, metal and bricks. Make note of telephone and electricity wires. Any trash and debris. Glass of all kinds. People. Any insects? Animals? Sky. Clouds.

Look down at your feet. See that they have turned into roots. Feel your roots pushing through the cement of the High Line, twisting down the pilings that hold the High Line up, pressing at the concrete of the paved road until it cracks, slithering your roots down, down until they reach thick, dark, moist soil. Ahh. Here we are enjoying the feeling of that thick, dark soil.

When you are done enjoying it, go to the exit stairs on West 12th Street and move to Stop #8 in this guide.

STOP EIGHT *The Walk Back*

Take a leisurely walk back up 10th Avenue, stopping at the corner of 19th Street. On your way, choose two of the nine words below (you can circle two if you want). Use those two words to guide your vision. See what you notice. Okay, choose two:

ANIMALS	FUEL	SHELTER
TIME	CIVILIZE	LIVING BEINGS
FEET	TRASH	AIR

Please pause at the corner of 10th Avenue and 19th Street before you continue back into the Kitchen.

No Pretending

Pay Attention