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## The Accompanied Experience and the Aesthetics of Memory

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THE ACCOMPANIED EXPERIENCE AND THE AESTHETICS OF MEMORY

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the Honors in the Major Program in Film  
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## **ABSTRACT**

For me, a memory is the thought of a feeling. Feeling, in this case, is the appreciable radiation of sensory emanating from all objects and persons in a given moment of time. "All thought, like all feeling, is a relationship between one human being and another human being or certain objects which form a part of his universe" (Astruc). Be it an instance of attraction to another person, a place, a creation, an object, or purely an aesthetic pleasure, said instance will become ingrained as a part of an aggregation of moment-to-moment experiences that form an individual's universe and lifetime of perceptions. Through film, I hope to give a visual tangibility for such feelings, a re-playable, and relatively more permanent, representation. It's a process similar to the way a headstone memorializes a life. A few words in stone could never measure up to the present time of actually living, but this is because they are not comparable. In much the same way, a synthesized montage of images cannot be compared to a memory, but should be used as way to experience the memory in a new way.

***DEDICATIONS***

For all of those  
who have contributed in any part,  
large or small,  
to my memories,  
you have made me who I am.

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## INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of this thesis the "aesthetics of memory" will be defined as the set of artistic values represented in the visualization of images created within the conscious mind during the process of recalling an experience. The mind must have a process by which a person associates this experience with specific and unique discernable features that allows them to access it time and time again. These features may or may not hold true to the real-time experience. This theorization is an attempt to understand and make a connection to humanity as whole, regarding each individual's own visual comprehension processes.

Those that accompany the experiencer affect their experience. Furthermore, the experience affects the relationships that exist between co-experiencers.

In order to lucidly and voluntarily recall a memory, one must visualize the event that is subject to the recollection. The mind must determine subject focus, color, content, composition, lighting and various other aesthetic elements of the event. A very similar process to visualizing a film before it is captured and edited.

In an exercise of co-experiencing, capturing experiences, creating memories, and recalling experiences, one may take a road trip. A loose structure of aesthetic attraction will guide the operation of the journey. Simply

letting whatever the eye catches and is agreed upon by the co-experiencers be the intermediate stopping points (or experiences). This process will further be captured, in an act to create a film to both study experience and memory, and to also serve as a tangible product of the experiences.

It is an interesting process to consider, that by which a person translates memories and experiences they are familiar with and weave them into a visible and relatable display such as filmmaking.

## AESTHETIC ATTRACTION

Aesthetic attraction is the gravitational-like pull from something alluring on cognition. Alexander Baumgarten, who coined the term *Aesthetics*, defined it as to study the "art of thinking beautifully (*ars pulchre cogitandi*)" (Baumgarten). Given the potential fluidity of said definition, it could be hypothesized that the converse of that statement is also an applicable definition: the beauty of art that provokes thought. Art, then, is an experience encircled in subjective response by both the work [the artist] and the viewer. This idea ties in beautifully with the structure of the art of filmmaking, in particular.

The general theme of essay film is observation. This is present in both character's narrative and in the audience's self-awareness of the narrative they have created. What is film, if not an indication, of varying subtlety, of the function of real life, for it has originated merely from those experiences. All art is wrought by the superimposition of human nature. "People sense beauty in many things, from natural objects to skillful artworks, and aesthetics is the study of how the mind beholds beautiful objects. Baumgarten posited that certain physical properties of an object may evoke feelings of beauty, but the experience itself is purely a mindful event. Many contend that the sole purpose of art is to create objects that evoke feelings of beauty—that is, to instill an *aesthetic* response." (Shimamura) Film is an assay of both the natural and the contrived. Humans

are intrinsically drawn to the physiognomy of objects, be they human, animal, or inanimate. Regardless of those objects' possession of reciprocal sentience, humans long to find connections with anything, and understand the exposition of them. This is what makes art so tantalizing to so many. It is an opportunity to unabashedly stare into the soul of something, to figure it out, to extract some meaning from it, to be taken by whatever type of beauty it may be endowed with.

It is also important to note that artistic aesthetics and every-day aesthetics can be divisible. There are those that practice under a school of thought that says aesthetics are exclusive to the fine arts, and may not be applied to the banal mechanics of day-to-day life. This idea of aesthetics makes them elusive and, perhaps, not attainable by any other than aficionados and artists. A well-known essay, written by Andre Bazin to Guido Aristarco, titled *In Defense of Rossellini*, is an all-telling characterization of the Italian Neo Realism Movement. He stressed the importance of the freedom of the art itself and its opposition to the restrictions of the traditional dramatic systems of film and literature. He believed in the presentation of the events and rejection of synthetic character action. "Increasingly less concern for social realism, for chronicling the events of daily life, in favor, it is not to be denied, of an increasingly obvious moral message." (Bazin). People have, and will seek a reflection of themselves and their

environment in the art that they make and view, aesthetics being the one of the major motivating qualities for the continuance of that cyclical transfer.

#### **SEEKING EXPERIENCES BASED ON AESTHETIC ATTRACTION**

Given that a person seeks a subject to reflect upon, and also given that that reflection deals largely in the idea of aesthetics, one could assume that people would choose things to experience based on aesthetic attraction. This is why advertising utilizes color and aesthetically pleasing structures and visual rhythms. "[...] A student's capacity is not simply equivalent to her ability to identify formal qualities such economy, unexpectedness, or inevitably in mathematical entities. Rather, her aesthetic capacity relates to her sensibility in combing information and imagination when making purposeful decisions regarding meaning and pleasure." (Sinclair) If something looks appealing, it will lend itself to the idea of being pleasing. This can be true for art and it can be true for life.

In the nature of wandering road trips there is a tendency to break for things that look interesting. Those things appear to be experiences that are worthwhile, that could potentially forge a greater bond between those experiencing it, and will ultimately lead to the creation of fond memories. Using the same principal, it also the nature of a filmmaker, or an artist of an imagery medium, to capture things that look interesting, and, subsequently, of

the audience to connect with things that look interesting,  
thus creating visually pleasing, and emotion conducting  
filmic memories.

## **EXPERIENCE**

The matter of perception is a complex notion to evaluate. The acuity with which a person discerns an occurrence that they participated in is intricate and unique, due to the bilateral manner in which people perceive things. "Every perceptual experience has both an objective and a subjective side. We perceive the railroad tracks as parallel but we can also observe that they converge in the retinal projection. We not only see that a dinner plate is round, but we can also note that it makes an elliptical image. The roundness is a permanent property of the object. The elliptical projection is a transient matter that depends on the observer's vantage point." (Hatfield) According to that theory, in a given instance, there exist both: that which one knows, and that which one decries in the microcosm of a moment of perception.

The comprehension by integration with the totality of one's previous knowledge and experience is usually the conquering factor in a person's assessment of an experience. "Normally we are interested in the objective side of our experience. Vision is used to determine the size and color of objects, their spatial position, and the kind of illumination on them. Our normal habit is to ignore or brush aside the subjective aspects of visual experience in order to get at the thing itself—the permanent properties of the object. But the subjective dimension of experience is also available to us, sometimes more and sometimes less so."

(Hatfield) To obtain the ability to utilize the subservient subjective function of observation is to look through the lens of memory.

### **SHARED EXPERIENCE**

Humans are, by nature, social beings; therefore, it would be apt to say that, for the average person, an experience can be greatly augmented with the addition of company. The quantity of, the relationship to, and the cohesive elements in the situation, of companions in the experience have great impact on how one would perceive it. "In the context of sharing hedonic experiences with others, we posit that congruence of opinions engenders a sense of belonging and that incongruence of opinions engenders a feeling of alienation. This is because people interpret conformity as a signal of psychological closeness and nonconformity as indicative of interpersonal differences that are potentially irreconcilable. Thus, we expect that exposure to congruent and incongruent opinions will lead to enhanced and diminished enjoyment, respectively, of shared experiences." (Raghunathan, Corfman) Through sharing experiences people are exercising their intrinsic social functions. It is a very basic tactic that is employed in daily routine, and amplified in extra-ordinary circumstances (i.e. travel, adventure, thrill seeking activities).

### **SECONDHAND EXPERIENCE**

The exhibition of art gives viewers an opportunity to be involved in an experience secondhand. Though it is not

the event as it occurred for the artists, it an interpretation of it. This translation then creates an entirely new experience for the viewers in witnessing its demonstration. This succession of experience becomes more multidimensional when a work has been popularized and has experienced mechanical reproduction.

An example of effects on perception can be found in Van Gogh's *Starry Night*. This, like other iconic works of art, has been dispersed through culture and meticulously dissected. Replicas of this work hang in thousands of rooms, seen by thousands of people each and every day. Someone mentioned that their girlfriend had a print hanging above their bed. The significance of this fact is twofold. One: this print means a tremendous amount on an interpersonal level. Every time she sees this painting, perhaps it makes her reminisce on the beautiful memories she and her lover have. Alternatively, if their relation was to end terribly unsuccessfully, she may not be able to stand the sight of the work anymore. Two: After viewing this piece of art, everyday, for the span of nearly a lifetime, studying every detail, color, and stroke, the piece becomes routine, it becomes a fixture in her life. If she is ever afforded the opportunity of seeing the original of this piece of art, the aura of it will be so much more valuable. Now she can relate the energy of the Van Gogh's work to her own life, there is a deeper connection. If these replicas were not in existence

the act of premeditated study would not be available to practice.

Second hand experience may also manifest in the form of the accounts and anecdotes that people hear circuitously. Perhaps a mother tells a daughter tales of the mermaids of Weeki Wachee. With enough detail in the storytelling, the secondary party can form an image of what the memory looks like, and subsequently, that vision joining her bank of memories. This could lead one to presume, as well, that if the secondary party were to ever visit an experience had by the primary, she will have a preconceived notion that will affect her own, firsthand experience.

## **ASSIGNING AESTHETICS TO MEMORY**

The aesthetics encompassing an experience are the foundational bricks for shaping the images that recall an event once it has passed. When a person has experienced something, and has found such a connection, they most certainly will wish to commemorate the occasion through memory. A memory is quite like an experimental film, utilizing all senses; it draws the beholder through varied junctions to narrative, visual apparitions, and psychological convolutions.

Creating art can be a useful tactic in capturing the spirit of an aesthetic experience, and giving it some sort interminable tangibility. "The nature of aesthetic experiences can be approached from many perspectives. [...] Four philosophical approaches are considered: 1) mimetic approach or how successfully an artwork offers a window to the real world, 2) expressionist approach or how well an artwork expresses feelings and moods, 3) formalist approach or how well an artwork induces a sense of significant form, and 4) conceptual approach or how well an artwork conveys intellectual or thought-provoking statements." (Shimamura) The possibilities for assigning artistic interpretation to the memory of an event are virtually endless, expanding as far the mind will allow. "The color in which we have most consistently seen an external object is impressed indelibly

on our memory and becomes a fixed property of the memory image...All objects that are already known to us from experience, or that we regard as familiar by their color, we see through the spectacles of memory color [...]" (Hering)

Through the experimentation with image, sound, and essay, a filmmaker may attempt to apprehend the essence of how a memory is rendered in the mind's eye.

## **ADAPTING EXPERIENCE AND MEMORY TO THE ESSAY FORM**

The Essay Film is fully aware of, and calls attention to, the act by which it is created. This reflexivity serves to further elaborate on the idea that impressions are recorded, to be continuously assessed by the conscious mind. It further theorizes that there are many ways in which a person may chronicle certain, impressionable experiences. The film both observes and transposes into the narrative an objective act of filmmaking, and annotates its own creator's process. "One of the natural subjects for personal essay-films is movie making itself, since it is often what the filmmaker knows and cares about most" (Lopate) A natural course of filmmaking is to use its product as "research" (Lopate) for further filmmaking. This lends to the idea that the interpretation of one image is preserved and will affect the experience of the next image, subsequently those two observations will collectively affect the third, and so forth. The filmmaker's subjective narrative is their own rambling account of the discovery of this notion. "...The skeptical evaluation of the subject matter, which self-reflexively includes the evaluation of the author's same conclusions. The essay contains and incorporates in the text the act itself of reasoning." (Rascaroli) Throughout the film, the narrative is simultaneously hypothesizing, experimenting, and proving or disproving the theories it presents.

The images tell one objective story and the narrative a

separate subjective collective of stories and theory. Each image has a varying association with the concurrent narrative, and is mostly "images for mental notations" (Rascaroli).

As mentioned above, there are those that would like to make aesthetics exclusive to the fine arts. The essay film is an important liaison between the fine art aesthetic, and those that can be tied to the experiences of everyday. This is because they celebrate, focus and thrive on the banality of real life.

#### **TOOLS OF THE ESSAY FILM**

"Characters" are various elements in the footage and/or dialogue.

- **The sights of the Florida highway system, and major tourist destinations:** Images focusing on them will be mix of static and transitory shots. The synthetic and natural structure blend together to create a harmony, the likes of which may not actually be found outside the boundaries of the film.
- **The culture of the environment and its inhabitants:** Nuances in the culture surrounding these establishments, from both the natives who prevail over the land, and the travelers who visit it.
- **Those that accompany the journey; in either spiritual or physical presence:** Individuals who have been an integral part of my growth intellectually, emotionally, as an artist/storyteller, or any of the above, will

each join me on separate legs of the journey. These relationships will aid some aspects of the filmmaking process, particularly in the narration. My aim is to let each leg of the journey be a sort of Vignettes in the narrative, and each individual's style of speaking and experiencing, and their connection to me, will affect the tone of my monologue.

- **The filmmaker:** My account and retelling of my experiences. The artisan of the patchwork of theory, anecdote, experimentation and experience. The subjective narration that is omnipresent in the film.
- **The camera:** The tool by which memory is captured and made tangible; the objective eye that assigns some sense of tangibility to my subjectivity, as the filmmaker. "It becomes a part of his [the filmmaker] surroundings, performing its own rituals of observation...the camera is part of the history of the place he is in." (Le Cain)

### **CAPTURING EXPERIENCES**

The motivation and origin of film is documentation. The pure novelty of capturing and viewing the documentation of commonplace, nonfiction events was enough to win the attention of the first film audiences. Significant technological advancements beginning in the late 19th into the 20th century had all of humanity fascinated with movement, particularly by the fact that it could be recorded, reviewed and studied.

As filmmaking advances so do the capabilities to study its subjects. Auguste and Louis Lumiere are famous for their establishment of "actuality" filmmaking. Actualities, like the later notion of documentary films, were depictions of non-fiction instances on film. The Lumières first film *La Sortie des usines Lumière à Lyon* is referred to as the first motion picture. It is a simple fifty-second, static shot of workers leaving the Lumiere factory. It was, in part with nine other of their films, the first public exhibition of actualities at the Grand Cafe in Paris, 1895. The Lumiere's made over a thousand of these short films, ranging in category from urban/industrial to military events.

The turn of the century came with the advent and popularity of travelogue films, also sometimes to refer to them as "scenics". Though not the first to make them, Burton Holmes was the first to incorporate travel stories, slides, and films into his travel lectures, which become predominately film based as he progressed. At this point some of more modern ideas of documentary films become apparent in his works, such as *Seeing London*. His films were multi-scene with inter cut images and included informative text which had originated from his lectures. With growing recognition, Holmes was able to travel more extensively and experience significant world events, like the first modern Olympics in 1896. He was also able to hire associates as camera operators and business management functions to allow him greater concentration on the notes and stories of his

locations. Holmes also enjoyed success within the rise of Hollywood. He was employed by Paramount and then Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer to make short travel films. Taking to the idea of escapism so commonly found among American audiences, Holmes avoided the politics and poverty of the destinations he lectured about, and instead focused on the scenic beauty and rich culture of the given area.

In the first half of the 20th century, before the invention of the in home television, newsreels became one of most popular and frequently viewed forms of documentary. They were screened as part of entertainment presentations in public venues. With the world political climate growing increasingly hostile audiences were, for the first time, given the opportunity to see news and information on current international affairs. An interesting note to this particular category of documentary is their own individual evolution. What then, in the early part of the century, were documentaries of current events, have now, through the passage of time, transformed into historical documentaries. They remain largely the only recollection of such monumental historical events of the period.

One of the renowned filmmakers of the newsreel movement was Russian director Dziga Vertov. Vertov, feeding off of the informative, non-fiction nature of newsreels, dispelled the entrancing structure and fantasy of narrative drama, and instead, sought cinematic truth. Vertov wanted to assemble bits of real life to expose deeper truths that humanity was

blind to on a day-to-day life, perceptual scale. He began his *Kino-Provda* (film truth) series of newsreels in 1922 with this series in mind. He introduced a type of shooting style that pushed the boundaries of cinematic ethics. He would often go into places housing large gatherings of people, such as schools and markets, with his camera hidden and without permission of those he was filming. His work is noted as the earliest instance of the Cinema Verite movement. He produced over twenty issues of the series in a three-year period. All of them followed a very similar structure, lasting roughly twenty minutes, and generally covering three main topics. The issues did not contain, with very limited exception, any scenes that were reenacted or staged, nor did they ever follow the institutional mode of representation, they were merely descriptive.

Documentary films, particularly its sub-genre, the essay film, are valuable tools in capturing experiences. The essay forms give both image and word completely to the filmmaker to shape around how they've viewed experiences in the world. Setting out to create an essay film is setting to experience things. The goal is not only to gather images, but even more so, to gather life, to mine anecdotes, characters, scenarios, cultures, and environment through living.

#### **RECREATING EXPERIENCES**

One must evaluate the myriad of mediums available to surmount the task of recreating an experience. The

differentiation in medium is substantial when comparing, for example, painting and film. Beginning with creation, in painting, the artifice is ubiquitous from first stroke through exhibition. When viewed, the components utilized to create the piece, i.e. paint base, brush stroke, canvas, color, are always explicit. While a painting is most commonly generated by a solitary artist, in film, the creation of artwork is a collective effort. This concept assigns film a benefit of diversity spawned from the variable nature of the medium. Lastly, reality can be much more closely achieved in film as opposed to in painting. The interpretation and physical movements of painter will always leave the final piece feeling respectively detached from any idea of realism.

Because of the amount of information being passed through twenty-four frames, every second, is so vast, human nature isn't conducive to easily following it. In single frame presentation, found in nearly any other medium of art, an audience is allowed a virtually infinite amount of time to appreciate and comprehend a piece of art. Because of the amount of information presented in film, an audience is often forced into a mode of passive viewing, deeming them an "absent-minded" examiner. In this attitude, their ability to fully engage in the piece is extremely limited.

Memories, though it is hard to have a collective idea of them, operate in a very similar manner. "Viewing" a memory is a very pliable experience, and they are prone to

exponential amount of variables. While the basic, scientific perception of a film is subject to the physiology of human cognition, and memory is subject to psychological factors.

#### **RECALLING AND EXPERIENCING MEMORIES VIA FILM**

The subject in the images of the film, Florida's roadside attractions, explores the shift in aesthetic between the moment of experience and what is recalled by memory. The once brilliant structures are now dilapidated, the lights have dimmed, the paint tarnished, the natural surroundings are reclaiming their stakes. Florida, as a breathing being, reflects on what it once was, what has been a part of it, what it has been a part of, what has birthed from it, and, comparatively, what it is now. Further still, Florida reflects to a time that precedes the eclectic attractions, those that are now a fond nostalgia that it mourns the loss of. A time when all that it was existed organically and the present and near future of human culture was synthetic and invasive. The only trace of its initial, experiential distain is found in the way the organic material is now dominating the structure of the synthetic. Perhaps the impatience of a child, at the end of his attention span and sanity, being unwillingly dragged along by his parents to one more stop on the roadside, is another metaphor for this process, the evolution of emotion from experience to memory. At the moment of experience his insolence toward the object of exploration clouded his appreciation of it, he knew no better, but as time marches,

he grows to understand the importance of that experience, and of the connection, deepened by mutual discovery, that he has with the people that accompanied him through it. It is now a cherished and idealized memory.

*AN ESSAYISTIC INTERPRETATION OF AN EXPERIENCE*

- **Sedimentary Memory:** It's difficult for me to remember things that have passed; even the most untraveled person has been a lot of places. The best I can do is tie feelings to the physical spaces and the smells, and my states of mind. Perhaps I won't be able to access a certain memory upon request or by desire, but somewhere down along road someday I'll happen on to a familiar place or smell or feeling. And the familiarity will be warm and it will invite a pleasantly cascading flashback of memories. For a moment I'll be transported to a different time, a previous experience, in the presence of certain persons that have shared the thing with me, and most importantly, I will revisit a different self, an old, defunct version of myself; layers of me that have long been shed; layers I have not missed or even identified until I realize that they've fallen away from me. But for a brief moment I can wrap myself back into those layers, into the safety of something that had been a part of me. I can pause to eulogize them, to celebrate what they once made me and I can grieve for their loss. And then I will lose that moment too, and eventually I will have to leave that

place, to trudge on to other old and new places. Every space I will ever occupy is either a place where any number of memories has taken place, or it's a place that will be added to my bank of memories. If one had the time, every inch could be at least vaguely familiar. Someone with unfathomably more wisdom than myself explained to me that "the reason time appears to move more quickly as you grow older is because when you are young you don't have many things to look back on. The more time you spend living, the more things you will have to spend time on remembering". The deeper you voyage into a lifetime, the less time you will spend consciously in the present, and the more time you will inevitably spend on reflection, lost somewhere deepest folds of your metaphysical mind; more and more hours spent lingering in hours past.

I imagine that everyone's storybook of memories is a delicately woven tapestry of montage, seeped in the radiation of sensory emanating from objects and persons in all of the moments of a lifetime. The colors of experience and symbiosis will tint each new memory variously than the last. One, in particular, may be foggier than another, or perhaps more whimsical than it originally had been, and many may have lost lucidity, unfastened by time or some other kind of corrosion. One has then, no other choice, but to amass as robust and ornate a collection of mnemonic artifacts as possible.

- **The Early Impressions:** I can recall, even from the earliest times, being lead down a wandering path. Something in my DNA, something passed down through generations of my lineage, something ingrained in the very fibers of my being... but then maybe everyone feels this way. It must be that, just human nature. Why else would we go through all the trouble to walk around on a cold, dusty, grey rock? Strong roots in a warm, old, wood floored Florida home, which saw my fist steps and almost that followed, encouraged, always, steps out in to the world. When there's something certain to return to, the idea of venturing is far more hospitable. All the trips were the three of us, later four, they were adventure, and they were history. A particular bond strengthened with each mile, many a roadside investigated, many a trail hiked, many waters swam, and many a rich culinary reward. I would've followed him anywhere, and I still would. My father was the omniscient and all knowing narration on the self guided tour of childhood, and always an assurance of the sense of accomplishment of taking the unbeaten path and successfully, or unsuccessfully, navigating a road map.
- **The Road Alone:** The world is both a lovely and terrifying place to be lost in. I walk into a garden of neon myth, with a heart set on plunging into a muggy spirit journey. No matter where I am, it seems I can always find home in something. When traveling alone, I

always seem to find, whether coincidentally, consciously sought, or subconsciously willed, someone to share my experience, someone perhaps, similar in voice or imagination to one of my "saudade" traveling companions. It's hard to assimilate to the rhythm of pre-interstate-red-light driving. I'm so impatient. The game of advertisement is quite a hindrance to the quest for roadside attractions; looking for anything to catch my eye. After a while everything becomes an attraction: a giant, inflatable tire outside of Tire Kingdom, a grungy man smoking a cigarette in front of a neon "Bada Bing Adult Video Store" sign on south 41, rednecks fishing a roadside ditch... baby cows. I've quickly realized that everything on the road is a desperate cry for attention. Mastering both the U-turn, and the no break turn are essential to the sport. After a while I began to pray for some re-alignment of the universe that would cause everything of interest to be on the right side of the road... but then, I guess that would make the way back pretty uneventful.

- **A Hearts' Journey:** The thing about adventuring with that person is that normal life is already an adventure. When you throw in the variables of a road trip, a beautiful chaos ensues. Each leg of the journey is already a stamp in the scrapbook as you're experiencing it. Everything is a precious, love-soaked

occasion, a fanciful tale that you've already started rehearsing for some blue-eyed, blonde haired, rosy cheeked pre-teen, sitting on an old rug in front of your rocking chair, that has just begun to scratch the surface in discovering the wiles of romance. She loses herself in the saturated deep pinks and purples and oranges of the evening sky, the rainbow wooden chairs and tables filled with cheerful faces on the pier, songs of love, lust and soul, a music box ballerina that gracefully pirouettes in and out of perfectly strong but gentle arms and a pair of the sweetest eyes, under strands of twinkling lights, breathing the balmy key west air in late august.

But where do all the moments go when they've passed? All the beautiful laughter, the sunsets, the colors of the buildings that have faded under an unforgiving sun. I'd like to think that all the images and sounds are all immediately sorted and stored neatly in labeled boxes, with some sort of Dewey system to locate them in an infinitely expanding attic, in some dimension of the universe. And on a rainy day, you could go there, and pull a card, thumb through the bindings, blow of the dust of all the time that passed in between, and pull out exactly what you need. You can find exactly the moment you want to be in again. And you'd settle into a graphitized wooden stall for the day and lose yourself in a novel of memories.

Maybe there will never a be a person to tell the story to, no one who would want to listen, or, maybe, you decide not to tell it. Maybe the memory is more beautiful in a foggy patchwork of movements; the story is changed a little, somehow even more brilliant than it actually was.

He once told me that cars passing on the highway sounded the same as waves crashing on the beach. I bet you hadn't even notice...

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