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INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE: A Story about Navigation

Information Architect & Design Experience

A Story about Navigation





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Information Architect Specialist

A Story about Navigation

The Project

The project is to show navigational systems (type, things, buildings, street signs). Signs that I use as a mental guide to get from my home to downtown San Francisco, like navigational systems on a Website help guide an end user to wayfind in cyberspace.

I took these photographs while completing my project on navigation from my home to downtown San Francisco.



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My journey starts from my residence (see **Figure 1**).



Figure 1

Now I'm walking down the stairs—this is how I travel—day in and day out. I never take the elevator to get down to the lobby.

I'm outside looking back at the building where I live. The BLUE sign is up on the lamppost. It's a constant reminder of politics, a hypnotic suggestion, vote for so, and so! I don't know—who is BLUE?



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I've walked half-a-block, going east towards Van Ness Street. I turn right and start to walk down Franklin Street going south towards San José. The sign up on the lamppost is a SFMOMA ad. The building to the right is the EDD building (see **Figure 2**).



Figure 2



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I'm walking down Franklin Street. I can see the back of the EDD building (see **Figure 3**).



Figure 3



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Yet another colorful SFMOMA ad, I look up to see and ask to myself—is the sign still here? I know I'm going the right direction since it has been up for a while (see **Figure 4**).



Figure 4



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I've crossed Franklin Street, and I see one sign here (street sign) Redwood Street, including the apartment building with bricks on its facade (see **Figure 5**).



Figure 5



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I hit McAllister Street, yet another SFMOMA sign (see **Figure 6**).



Figure 6



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Another way I can see where I'm going is by looking down at the pavement, and it reads: Franklin Street (like headers in technical writing on a page). (See **Figure 7**).



Figure 7



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This manhole is colored from spray paint. I know I'm going the right way. Because I always notice this colored manhole, I know I'm going in the right direction. I always take the same path to catch a train at the MUNI station (see **Figure 8**).

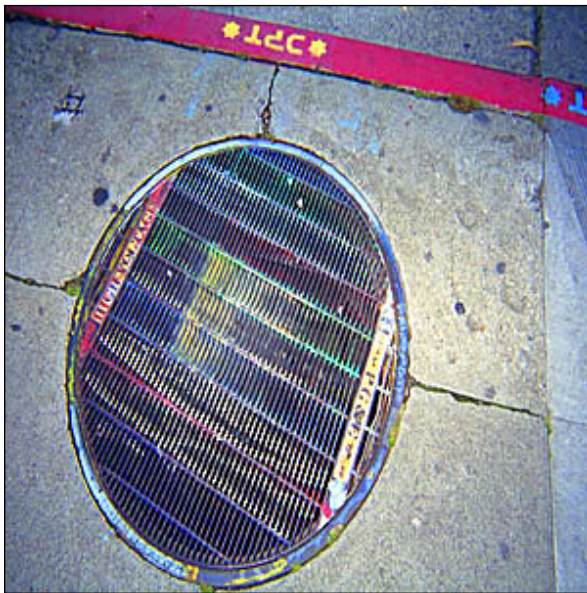


Figure 8



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Across the street, I notice the San Francisco Unified School District's building (see **Figure 9**).



Figure 9



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I look up and see Fulton Street. Then I notice the colorful and nicely designed sign. This sign is a colorful Christmas-time sign, which cheers me up! (See **Figure 10**).



Figure 10



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I always walk between these gates and down the path lined with trees. It's a nice way to relax—a *relief from city living* (see **Figure 11**).



Figure 11



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I'm entering in now through the gates, and I walk down the pathway quickly to get to work.

These trees take me back to my childhood where I grew up in California. My grandmother was a designer (without a college degree) and ran her own business. My grandfather a mathematician that graduated from U.C. Berkeley—respected Department Chair at a College—a kind Professor.

The streets in California where I lived were lined with similar looking trees. The leaves scattered every place—especially in the fall.

I used to play in the leaves, jumping up and down, sifting through the leaves on a fall day, waiting for my beloved grandmother to call me in for lunch or to help her on a design project.

The colors of fall were ever so beautiful to me. On this day, it was a cold winter day on the verge of raining (see **Figure 12**).



Figure 12



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As I come out from the tree-lined path, I can see City Hall dead center in the middle, looking up—I see it. The gold dome is bright from a far distance because it's newly refurbished and repainted (see **Figure 13**).



Figure 13



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The War Memorial Opera House is a building I always pass coming and going from work (see **Figure 14**).



Figure 14



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Now I'm walking down Van Ness—southern direction. The street sign I see now is Grove Street (see **Figure 15**).



Figure 15



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I walk past Davies Symphony Hall. The building looks really old now to me. I notice it needs a new paint job. On the building facade, it says: feed the hungry (see **Figure 16**).



Figure 16



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Across the street an interesting building—entitled the Lighthouse (see **Figure 17**).



Figure 17



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Walking down Van Ness, I notice the green street sign is Hayes Street. Where the Rite Aid store is now located. At this location many years ago, Zim's was a restaurant open 24/7. You could always see the very bright lights from Market Street.

I used to hang out with my friend John and our girlfriends (from out in the Avenues) at Zim's (when I was 17 years old); we both worked and dated girls. We used to have a ton of fun at Zim's. Then we would drive around and have fun! (See **Figure 18**).



Figure 18



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I've always been fascinated with this interesting building—the AAA building. An old building structure encased within the green windows and steel bars. Look closely at the building (see **Figure 19**).



Figure 19



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Fell Street usually has homeless people who hang around, and they beg for money all the time (see **Figure 20**).

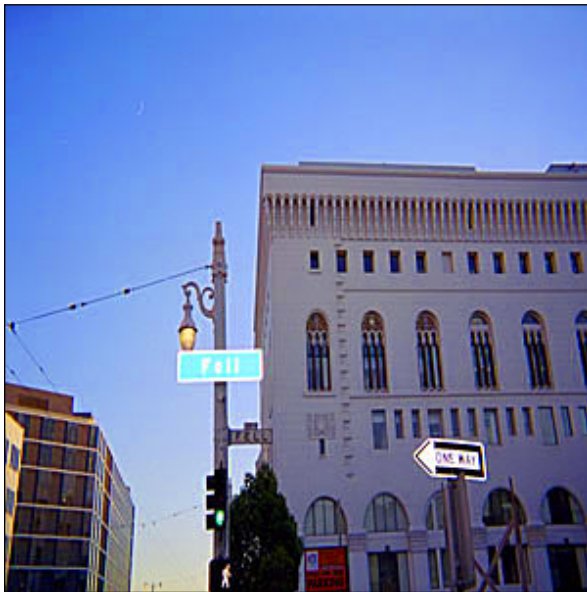


Figure 20



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I always notice the speedometer sign up on the building. Now it's newly painted typography and repainted in bright green and bright red type (see **Figure 21**).



Figure 21



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I know I'm getting close to the MUNI station. Since I see the street sign Hickory Street up on the building, then I look up and see the One-Way sign (see **Figure 22**).



Figure 22



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Crossing the street, then walk to Oak Street. I notice the green ATM sign, and I can see the Bank of America across the street and the Honda dealership (see **Figure 23**).



Figure 23



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Finally, I get to Van Ness (I notice ← **000** on the sign). I turn right and walk down stairs to get into the MUNI station. I board a train going to the Embarcadero station. The train is very crowded today. Ugh, I don't like crowded trains (see **Figure 24**).



Figure 24



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I'm walking up the stairs of the Embarcadero MUNI station. It's getting very cold and rainy. Work is just a few blocks west. I ran out of film, so this was the last shot I got. After taking photos, I run to Starbucks for some hot Chai tea (see **Figure 25**).



Figure 25

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