



POINT LOBOS

Volume 32 * Number 1

Spring * 2009

Cover photograph by Kenneth Parker: Pinnacle Ridge, Point Lobos State Reserve



WHISPERS OF THE IMAGE; WORDS IN PLEIN AIR

Photographs: Kenneth Parker

Prose & Poetics: Joselyn Ignacio Zimardi

Sounds of the ocean, the wetness of the bough, the fragrance of the earth,
the coolness of rocks, captured in poetry and photography.

Cypress, Lace Lichen, Trentepohlia Algae, Point Lobos State Reserve

How One Writer Experiences Point Lobos: Joselyn Ignacio Zimardi

There are power spots on this earth and Point Lobos is one of them. Like a gem among many in the palm of the “one force” (Mani Bhaumik), this sacred place is offered to you and me as a gift. Is Point Lobos shaped by our need for a secret spot, a community venue, a respite? Yes, yes, and yes; Point Lobos exists. And so we try to make sense of its beauty, put an order to nature—like unwitnessed layers of life; nature’s penitence. The following is a fragment of what comes of a writer’s perspective; a photographer’s eye—enter language, enter visuals—all tincture and taint.

**Enveloped in the natural quiet
Senses ablaze
I think not. I say least**

I bring my out-of-town and local friends to Point Lobos. We are enveloped in the power and beauty of this area. It is a cold morning and my physicist friend Robert from Boston gazes down at a sheltered cove, crowned with seaweed. We are cold and huddle closer together. For a moment, reality bites, the wind bites. We are on the edge of the bluff; the cove comes into focus. “How do we market such beauty,” I ask? “Make a jacket stuffed with Point Lobos kelp.” We laugh and continue our hike, immersed once again in our private thoughts.

**Sea surface
Full of seaweed
Epiphany!
A jacket born**

I meet up with Christine, a long-time county resident, just a few feet from the gate entrance. We are in single file. We hike. Our experience is cerebral; human utterance abounds. Rocky stone steps ascending to the sky, prickly brush scraping our skin, sprites on the ocean waters. We round the perimeter of Point Lobos in 30 minutes flat. Then as quickly as we had met, we embrace, promise to meet again; then depart.

**Beauty buzzing by—
Heart in high gear; we trail
Life ahead of itself waving**

Point Lobos is a community. It brings a town together for activities, events, and meetings. CK is my friend and colleague. Our day jobs keep us indoors most of the time. Point Lobos is our respite, when we are up, when we are down; it becomes our private place to journey inside of ourselves. It is CK’s own backyard to contemplate, her swimming hole to research dive. With other Point Lobos advocates at a moonlight picnic, we pass bread and wine—it is our “first supper” and before and below us, the sea.

**Visitors
From all walks of life
Taken by the view
Shutterbug**



Dead Cypress, Trentepohlia Algae, Point Lobos State Reserve

How One Photographer Experiences Point Lobos: Kenneth Parker

The first time I was exposed to the awe-inspiring Point Lobos was at the end of that archetypal cross-country-family-car-trip-that-changes-your life, all the way back in 1963. Then elusively beckoning me back in 1977 while a transfer student at UCSC, Point Lobos was indeed destined to become my favorite local treasure power spot back then and especially now, privileged as I've been the past fifteen years to be living here in blessed Carmel.

Having a breathtakingly craggy expanse of mystic wildness as a beckoning backyard to stroll through is an important reason for cherishing this land as my home. The astonishing shoreline that begins at that Point

and continues along the transcendent spectacularity that is Big Sur is unsurpassed by any other on the face of the Earth. I endeavor to keep pace with such echoing beauty at every turn along the Cypress Loop and North Shore Trail! And it remains a lifelong dream to mine its secret haunts, along with others southward down the coast . . . until I've produced a compelling portfolio of rocky jagged yet intimate color landscapes.

A uniquely rare convergence of beachless land and sea, Point Lobos is like “a Chinese landscapepainting” (Robinson Jeffers) with a delicate balance of exquisitely intricate line and form. It is those gnarled old cypress trees flourishing there in the moist air that delight me the most . . . whorled and windswept, wizened with wisdom against an engrossing intrigue of bestial granite chiseled by storm and sea.

Striving as I do to capture with camera the pure impact of this enchanting scene, it happens authentically only when I am acutely present to its sense of place. It is an unspeakably poignant mystery really, just how or why which shots “hit” and which ones don't; and all too insufferably infrequent of course. But when everything is just right, when the mind's eye is open and tuned. . . it simply clicks. You become it, it becomes you, and then. . . well you're really making art of it, really capturing a true trace of its magic.

Like Beethoven's Seventh Symphony I often find myself transported by the iridescent palette of the Point Lobos North Shore — from its sweet somber laments and inscrutably subtle moods to gently soaring flights of ecstasy. Since my first enthralled peek into its mysteries forty-five years ago, I've been fortunate enough to wander all over the world. But while Kauai's astoundingly sculpted Napali cliffs are undeniably dazzling, my eyes have yet to embrace another coastline as mythically dramatic as our own beloved Point Lobos and Big Sur. It is truly an apotheosis of planetary landscape that must forever remain the finely unbridled, unfractured, lovingly appreciated jewel it has long been to our community.

Carmel-by-the-Sea, February 2009.



Parker working in Thubchen Temple, Lo Monthang, Mustang, Tibetan Plateau.