

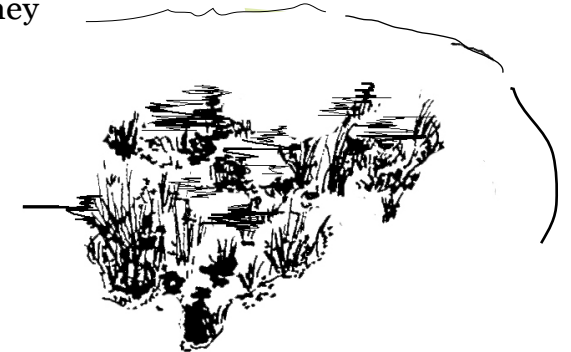
Where the Wastewater Pools

By Jan Bindas-Tenney



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Maps and layout by Teresa Pereira

Printing by Pilar Nadal & Pickwick Independent Press

Featuring the song “what if” by Kafari

Part of SPEEDWELL contemporary’s Fall 2022 exhibition,
Can’t Take My Eyes Off You, curated by Faythe Levine

Welcome!

This is an asynchronous site-specific audio walk performance and accompanying zine.

Go do the audio walk!

Go to:

The Maine Motel
606 Main Street
South Portland ME 04106

You'll need your own device and headphones. You can access the audio recording here:



<https://www.speedwellprojects.com/ctmeoy-jan-bindastenney>

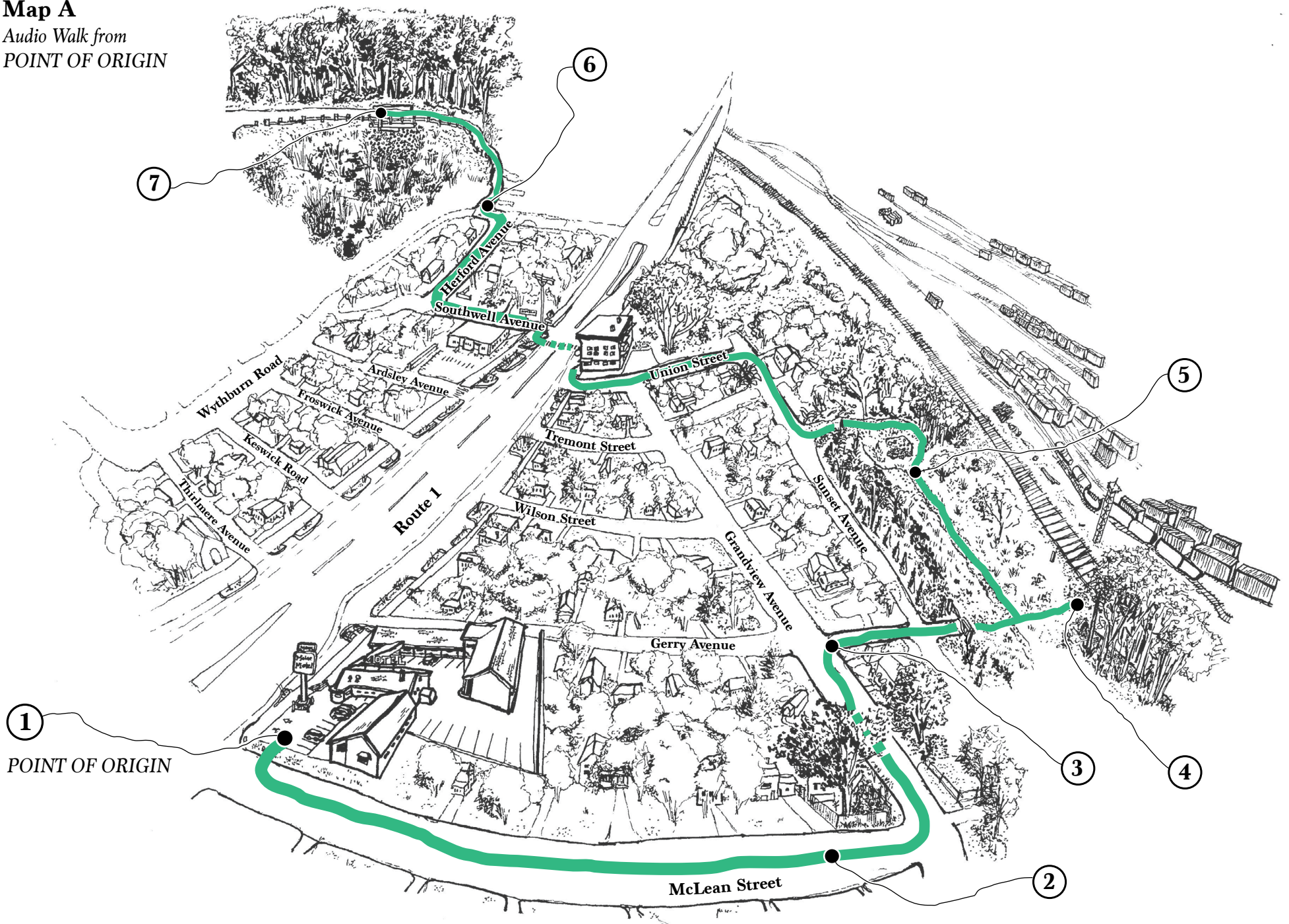
There is an option to *download* or *stream*.

In this zine, you will find two maps to guide your way as well as the poems included in the walk. The recorded audio walk takes 48 minutes and you will walk 1 mile. The fastest route back to the Point of Origin is .65 miles and takes 15-20 minutes.

You'll hear me on the walk. We'll do it alone but together. The walk will take you to a marshy place. You'll navigate back on your own using the map at the end of the zine.

Map A

Audio Walk from
POINT OF ORIGIN



This Motel is Home

Stand at the Maine Motel
under the red and white bubble letter sign.
Each room contains a world inside.
Lift your head back
to take in the sky above, light blue and lined with cirrus clouds.
Listen to the whoosh and zing
of trucks like ocean waves along this main drag.
Take in the person with bedazzled hats dragging dog,
the parents
who keep a wagon and bicycle outside,
their windows decorated with butterflies.
Find a child fluttering a tourist map overhead
like a flag.
Go look at the vegetable garden around back.
This motel is home.

I've been caught inside by a surgery, a flu, a cold, a tantrum.
I have been remade, my child has grown into a being,
another child born
while the sand accumulates on this road
and the birds come and go.
Hard to hold in the imagination all the thousands
of lives breathing living growing
birthing babies
in these rooms.
All that we've been through.

My Neighbor's Fury / My Delight

after Sara de Ibáñez

In the north the cemetery and its morning turkeys.
In the east the storm water drain marsh full of reeds.
In the south the pan am railway yard and its brambled ditches,
and in the west the motels made homes brimming with screeches.

In the north the grave diggers smoke languidly, leaning.
In the east bird song directs the morning sun.
In the south my cluster of skyscraper osprey nests and cumulus
clouds,
and in the west my neighbor's fury and my delight.

A strange enclosure or lens
this wasteland of ditches, water pools, and strip malls
that I loop and find refuge.

A train clatters by diagonally,
tiny blurred faces looking out
at my lush corner amidst the war.

Coda

In the coda of a snug and sorrowful year
me and dog find our way to our morning routes—
Here we are buttressed by a rail yard, a cemetery.

Down by the trains, dog leaps and we
face the winter sun
both bright and dark at once.

An abacus of cars
primary color containers
one train slides through, behind the other still
like that feeling on the subway when
it's not clear which train moves.

Snow gone.
Puddles with a fragile white glass surface
and dark muck below.
Winter melt drains the water
leaving things sucked dry and disheveled.

Dog noses the ground
head first into
haphazard stacks of pilings
among bramble and steel

down a ditch
where he's found a carcass
a deer maybe
so small what's left:
hooves
a skull
the rippled leather of skin.

Another day in the cemetery
the sunken earth of a plot
has such sharp edges
and the sea of headstones, shiny and new
with names, birthdates & engraved portraits
but no demise—
what if I was to imagine like that?

In the Warble Wall: A Burning Haibun

After torrin a. greathouse

In dirty jogging clothes, the cold sun of early spring. this morning in the warble wall, a trilling buzz, I lash breasts tightly to body, compressed pillows. I listen in one ear to a trans poet and in my other ear, the birds. Trans poet tells the story about sending a box of books across the world to trans people and I cry. What I'm saying is that I languish in blunt desire without movement. Why I'm taking this deep dive into my shape and shaft and wondering how to find certainty. Looking back, I try to remember how I used to imagine myself and what I come up with is a well of embarrassed lust. How to pinpoint the beginning before the covering up? There comes a point when the skin rubs discomfort, the only way to sit is to lean back so the flesh flap doesn't fold onto belly. There comes a point when the hair is too long and puffs at the sides. I don't want to be vague. When I face those dark scars, imagining arms on a tether, I feel fear.

this morning, in dirty jogging clothes I drag the reluctant dog by his collar into the cold sun of early spring. this morning in the warble wall, a trilling buzz I lash my breasts tightly to body, compressed pillows. I listen in one ear to poet torrin a. greathouse and in my other ear, the birds. They tell the story about sending a box of books across the world and I cry. what I'm saying is that I languish in blunt desire without movement. why I'm taking this deep dive into my shape and shaft and wondering how to find certainty. looking back, I try to remember how I used to imagine myself and what I come up with is a well of embarrassed lust. how to pinpoint the beginning before the covering up. there comes a point when the skin rubs discomfort, the only way to sit is to lean back so the flesh flap doesn't fold onto belly. there comes a point when the hair is too long and puffs at the sides. I don't want to be vague. When I face those dark scars, imagining arms on a tether, I feel fear.

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Regeneration

After Alexis Pauline Gumbs

My gender language is a limit between
me and back then.

Although how little
changed since
when
in the cold car
with windows cracked
in rawboned youth
we smoked cigarettes
let velocity
comb the ash from hot cherry
in a tobacco fog veneer
of winter smoke
in that red
Plymouth Reliant
three across.

When
in a steaming crowd of fury
we pressed
in moved
in sweat
our slick brows up, down
in the gray dawn.

When I try to get back
in there
those co-passengers
misgender me in front of my daughter.
In grief I find
it better to remember from afar
however severed
that old belonging.

Now like a slow lake turtle
I emerge almost
from nowhere almost from illusion
from the algae ripples
of flat limbs treading
and surface bubbles.

This daughter of mine bows her head
points
at any water even a cup
“there is a turtle in there”
she says.

Look, Where the Waste Water Pools

Look, there I go walking the same scruffy loop
as always along the edge
of this brined city,
winding the bundle of single-story, vinyl-sided & mute-toned houses
who moan off the highway,
the low-rise motels,
that howard johnson with the indoor pool, foggy and brown.

I like the valleys,
the places where water pools,
the passageways behind backyards and between dead ends,
the dip among railyard and tracks.

Look, there is a spot
where dirt entrails a grassy path and fence
what I thought of as our marsh
where common water reeds sway and in the winter morning
the blinding sun cracks over the horizon,
the cattails: back lit shadow puppets.

Three days into my scarred and weeping body,
a torso ripped open and remade,
the stiches dissolve themselves, render particulates
and bits that leak
from my openings.
A dull burn and pop, nerves reaching for cut tails,
incisions packed and wrapped.

I put on a gold earring,
one thing I haven't done in a decade.

In spring at our marsh, the red-winged blackbirds sway.
Showy and top heavy on the reeds
sounding a staccato down beat,
then tremulous trill!

Today at the beginning of a blizzard
well below freezing
I need to feel cold on face to be in body.
The dog hops his feet
and there are the ducks crowded there.

Might be fifty
a flutter without ceasing in the reeds.
There they are, still here
circling the small liquid oval,
bills snow-dusted,
a dense feather thicket on waxy back.
Look, how do they stand this blowing snow?
Do they feel?

One duck bows a head,
wings spread and
dives
flapping down below
undulating in icy water.

Look, a body can be
put under, made numb, sliced open
scooped out,
stitched.
A body can be snatched
and awaken stinging
relieved.

This water should be frozen
and yet the bog steams in the blowing snow.

I realize this marsh has drains.
Look, whose bath is this?
Storm water

or worse.

I wonder do these mallards tread
in a venomous puddle?

Look, our marsh is a sewer.

I carry like dangle jewelry
the waste water of my swollen
lacerated
chest.

The water sloughs through tubes
I check daily,
empty the drain tether
down the sink,
yellowed wet.

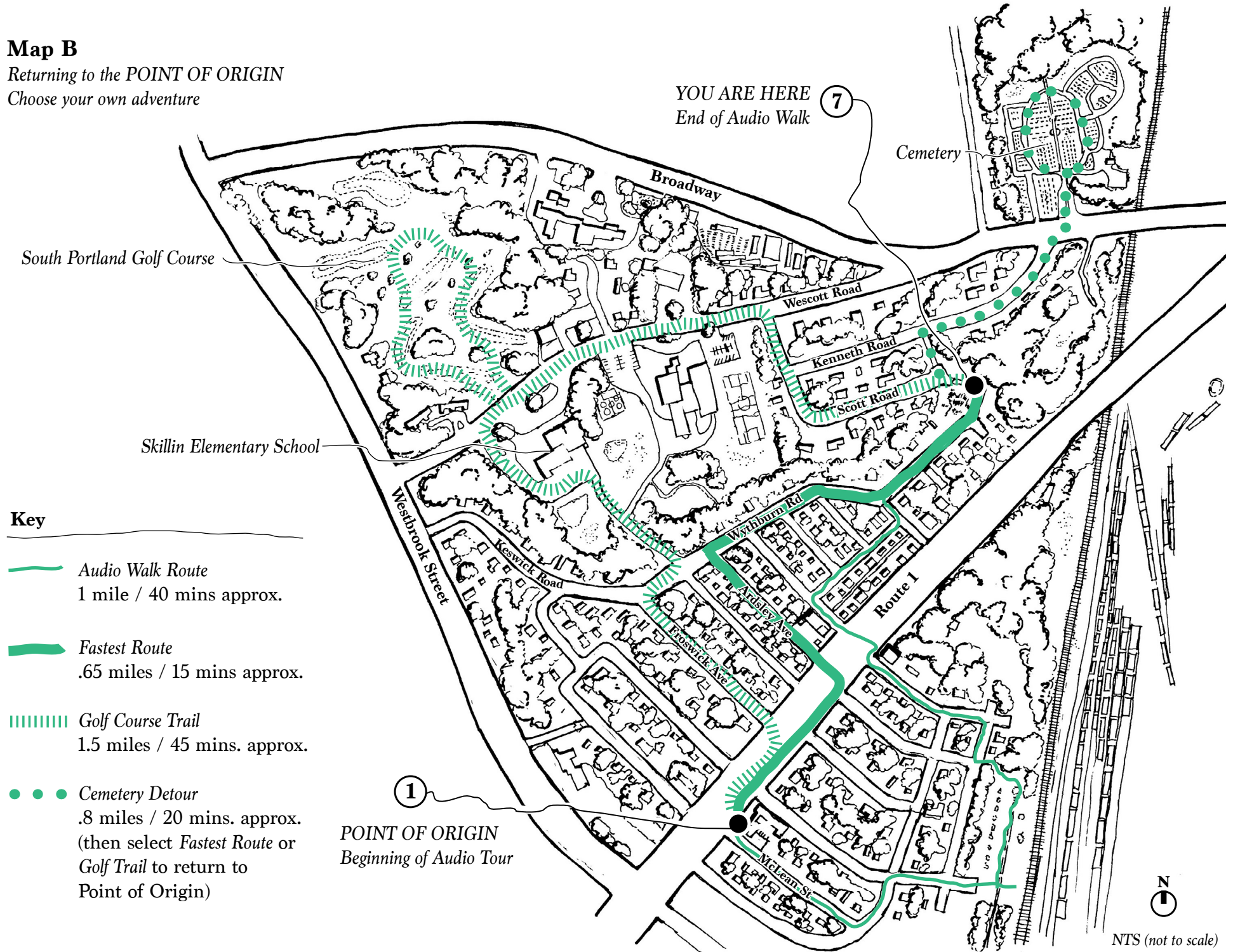
Look, the ducks flap two together
in the ruin
the repair
of my body.

I stand with face
and chest made new
in the winter sun
warmed, tethered
gleaming.

Map B

Returning to the POINT OF ORIGIN

Choose your own adventure



Artist Bios

Jan Bindas-Tenney (*they/them*) is a white trans non-binary & queer organizer, facilitator, writer, reader, lover, friend and parent living on unceded Abenaki land. They hold an MFA in nonfiction from University of Arizona. Their writing has appeared in Orion, Guernica, Gulf Coast, Arts & Letters, CutBank, the Maine Review, among other places.

Teresa Pereira (*she/her*) is a filmmaker, interdisciplinary artist, and landscape designer. She loves illustrating landscapes and wonky maps and enjoys collaborating with talented friends who are working on creative projects. Her website is teresapereira.net

Pilar Nadal (*she/her*) is the Director of Pickwick Independent Press, a Community Print Shop in Portland, Maine. She makes prints, teaches printmaking classes and workshops, and goes swimming as often as possible.

Ahmad Muhammad (*he/him*), better known by his nickname and performer alias 'Kafari' is a Portland, Maine based musician and sound healer. Check out the whole album *Blanket of Black* and all of Kafari's music on Bandcamp: kafarimusic.bandcamp.com and follow Kafari on instagram [@ahmadkafari](https://www.instagram.com/ahmadkafari)

Thank you to SPEEDWELL contemporary for funding and believing in this project.

Thank you to Teresa & Pilar for your excellent collaboration. Thank you to Kafari for the beautiful music. Thank you to Dianne Ballon for the audio coaching. Thank you to Andy Porta of Black Cat Sounds for the audio fine tuning.

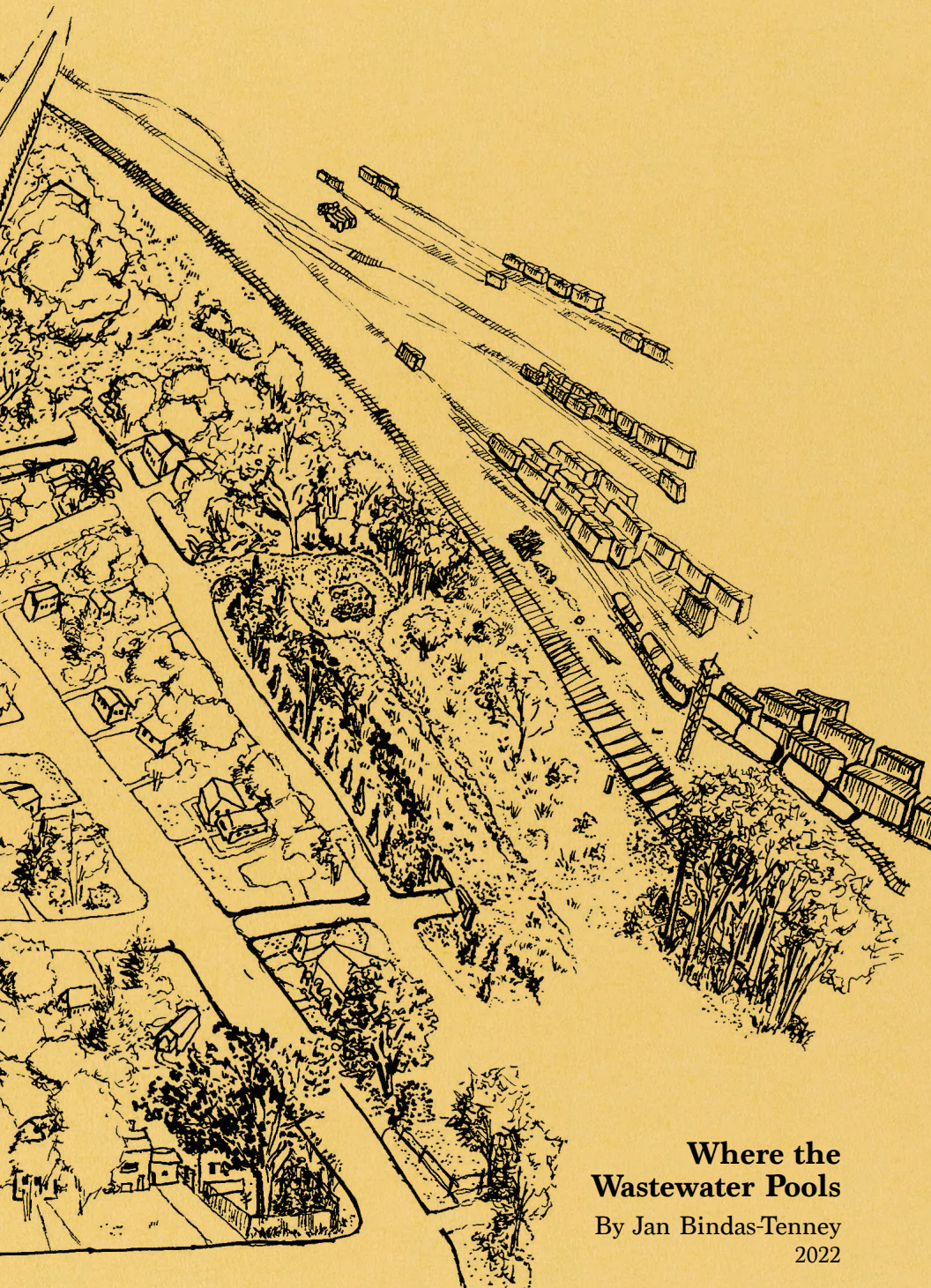
Thank you to my beautiful poetry friends: Samaa Abdurraqib, Jenn Carter, Samara Cole Doyon, LaLa Drew, Jessica Hairston, Ian-Khara Ellasante, Sass Linneken, Signature MiMi, Cait Vaughan, Maya Williams, & Myri U. for creating beautiful asynchronous space and accountability for creation.

Thank you to Jennifer Elise Foerster and the participants in Abundant Practice where the seed for this project germinated.

The audio walk draws inspiration from Janet Cardiff's audio walks, especially *Her Long Black Hair*, Cardiff's site-specific audio walk for Central Park in NYC. I make direct references to that work in the audio. I took that audio walk in 2005 and have been thinking about it ever since.

Thank you to my neighbors.

Thank you to my beautiful family becoming: Rachael, Sonny, Avi & Bisbee. I dedicate this project to you.



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Wastewater Pools**
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2022