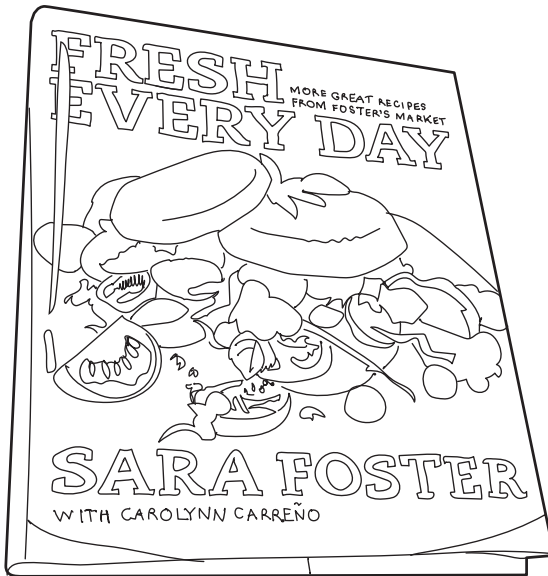


My Second Field Trip: Living Room Bookshelf

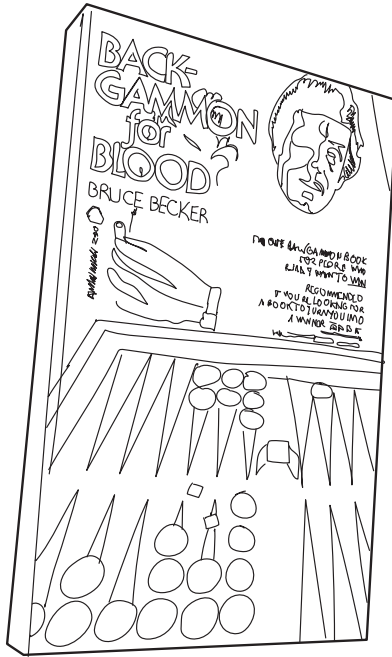
My second field trip took place within the domestic confines of my living room and involved the re-organization of the books on the largest bookshelf within this space. The activity took some time, due to a movement disorder that inhibits my physical abilities. To begin the task I pulled each book from the shelf, before I wiped it down with a damp cloth and then placed each in a neat stack on the parquet floor in front of the shelf. After all of the books were wiped and stacked, I moved the shelf down the wall five feet before placing them back on the shelf again. The new configuration was not arranged by subject as they were previously, rather their new order, seemingly at random, was dictated by those my body could reach. In their new order, a cookbook follows a book on tying knots, which follows a book on picturing death.

My Second Field Trip: Living Room Bookshelf



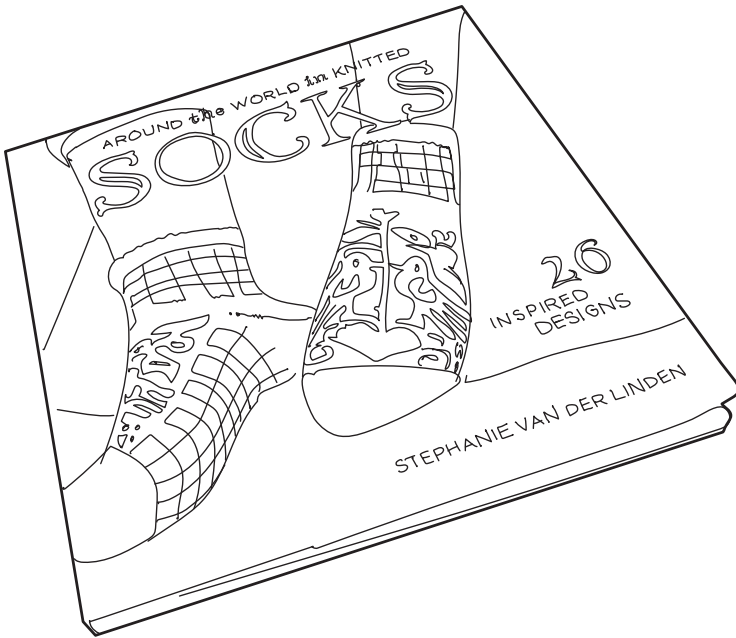
You might think of my activity as something other than a field trip. An excuse to re-organize or clean my apartment, perhaps? Certainly this is true, to some extent, but as far as my books go, any one of them could provide you with a journey. Take for example the book, *Fresh Every Day*. It is a cookbook acquired when living in eastern Washington with my then husband, Kevin. It offers a culinary celebration of simple and fresh dishes involving the sweet taste of oven-caramelized beets and juicy pieces of blood orange, served with slices of fennel. On another page a plate of delicate crab cakes are topped with an aioli spiced with Cajun flavours. I have taken many of these culinary travels, mostly in intimate gatherings of two. I have also journeyed to these places alone, as I enjoy cooking, even if the benefits are only for me to enjoy.

My Second Field Trip: Living Room Bookshelf



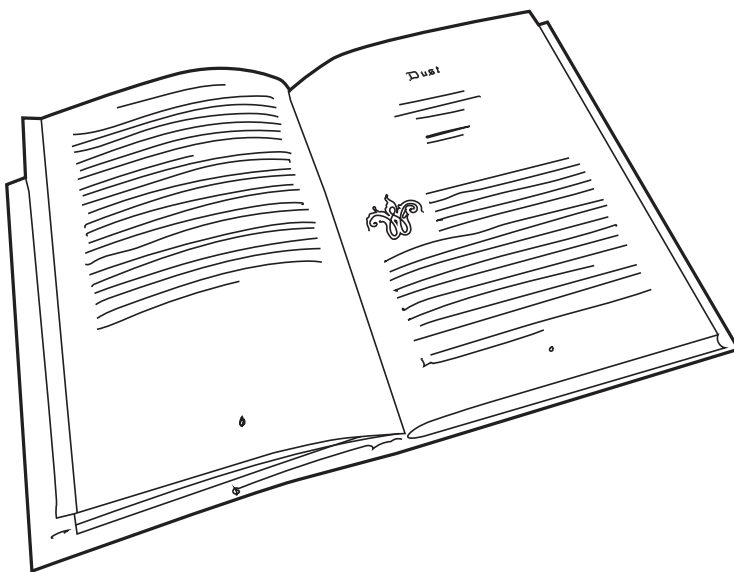
Perhaps you prefer to take a field trip into the world of strategy and competition, you may decide on *Backgammon for Blood*. It dons a cover with overtones of seventies masculinity, it features a man—gentleman if you prefer—wearing a black turtleneck and an elegant gold wristwatch. In his hand, a partially smoked cigarette billows smoke in a plume against the black background of the cover. My sister gave this book to me as a lark, when I moved to Vancouver after I finished my undergraduate degree. I read it from cover to cover and studied it well. I employed its strategies in the numerous games played with my roommate Don, in his apartment overlooking English Bay.

My Second Field Trip: Living Room Bookshelf



Should you want something less confrontational, you could learn to knit socks in: *Around the World in Knitted Socks*. This book is filled with instructions on how to knit a series of intricately patterned socks from countries such as Lithuania or Japan. I made a pair patterned in herringbone once, but gave them to Hiromi when she came to visit soon after I moved to Toronto. More recently, I started a pair in grey and white wool, for David, but I tore out the pages of the book for portability and lost them soon after. So the first sock lies in my drawer awaiting its pair.

My Second Field Trip: Living Room Bookshelf



A magical journey awaits you in Celeste Olalquiaga's *The Artificial Kingdom: A Treasury of the Kitsch Experience*. The book is filled with illustrations and flourishes reminiscent of an illuminated manuscript, albeit it is printed in black ink for the consumer market. The narrative begins with the author's encounter with a hermit crab named Rodney, which she describes in rich adjectives that transport the reader to another time and place. Passages such as: "I had found a private decor where my feelings could manifest themselves outwardly in the most palpable of ways, as if I walked into a long forgotten attic" on page 4, which sets the tone for a rich journey into the world of kitsch.

My Second Field Trip: Living Room Bookshelf

So you see, my field trip is much more than it seemed at first, as my bookshelf holds an infinite array of possible journeys between the covers of each of the two-hundred ninety-one books adorning it. I make these journeys often to escape the physical limitations that my body prevents me from taking within the world of tactility and pain.

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