

Environmental Family Guide



We're so glad you're here!

Use this guide to find and explore spaces, plants and animals around the museum.



Look:

We care about your observations!



Discuss:

- What do you notice?
- Share and discuss with others in your group.
- We learn more when we look and discuss together.

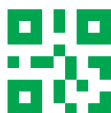


Draw, sketch, or doodle in this guide—it is yours to keep.



Dig Deeper:

Read some information to learn more about what you are thinking about—if you have more questions, you can always do more research on your own!



QR Codes:

If you or someone with you has a smartphone, open the camera and look at the QR code. It will show a link that can bring you to more online information.



When you finish, trade in your clipboard for a prize and come back for another visit!

To learn more about the exhibitions and artworks currently on view at MOCA, scan this QR code.



This brochure is aligned with MOCA's commitment to sustainability and is printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

Support provided by the MOCA Environmental Council.

To learn more about the work of the MOCA Environmental Council, scan this QR code.



Illustrated and written by Michelle Antonisse

Let's get started!



1 Grounding into a Space



Let's take a few minutes to ground into your bodies and notice your surroundings. Begin by taking a few deep breaths, noticing where in your body you feel the breath go.



What sensations do you notice in your body? Are you warm? Cold? Calm? Itchy? Where in your body do you notice these feelings?

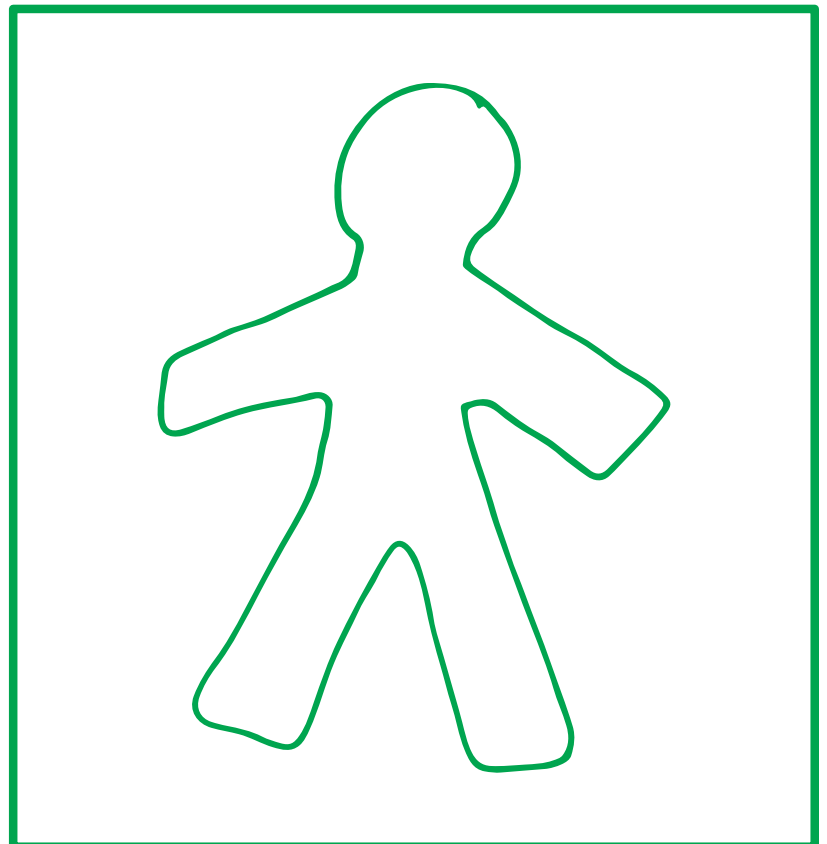
Do you feel any moisture in the air, or does it feel dry? What shades of blue do you see in the sky? Are there any other colors? Are there clouds?

What sounds do you hear? Can you smell anything?

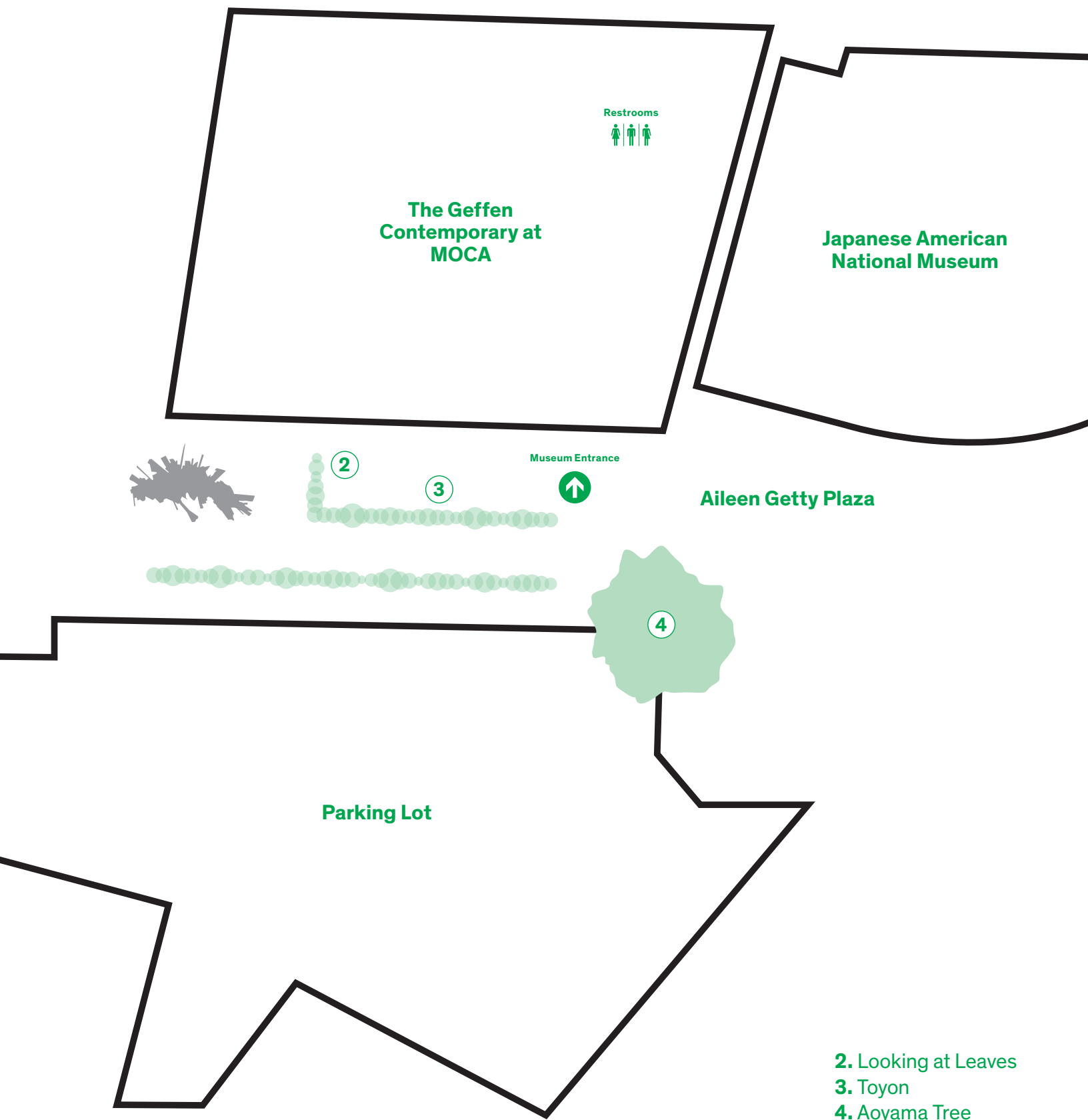


Activity:

Using words or images, describe the space around you with what you noticed, and fill in the body shape with the sensations that you felt.



The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA Guide Stops



② Looking at Leaves



Walk around the area in front of the Geffen, where there are plants living in cement planters. Take a moment to look at all of the different shapes and colors. Notice differences between the plants, and ways that some are similar.



What do you notice?



Activity:

Find leaves with each of the below shapes. Choose one specific leaf shape and fill in all of the details that you see—veins, spots, holes, etc. Describe all of the colors that you can find on this leaf using as many words as possible.



Using the QR code, try downloading this app, called iNaturalist, to identify the plants that you see here. If you take clear pictures and upload them, the app will help you find what species, or type of plant, it might be.

③ Toyon



Find the Toyon plant, *Heteromeles arbutifolia*, in the concrete planters in front of the museum. Look for the leaves, berries or flowers shown below.



What do you notice? What does this plant remind you of?

Toyon is also called Christmas Berry, and California Holly. To protect this beautiful and festive plant, people are asked not to take it for decorations—it is even a law. In 2012, it became the official **native plant** of the city of Los Angeles.



Activity:

Are there special plants connected to holidays that you celebrate? Write, sketch, draw or diagram your answer below:



Many of the plant species, or types, that we see in Los Angeles were brought to this area by people from other places. A native plant, or indigenous plant, is one that lives in a space without being introduced by humans. The species has developed in the ecosystem that it lives in over hundreds or even thousands of years. Usually, this means that it is well suited to the climate, and has lots of local pollinators.

④ Aoyama Tree



Find the Aoyama tree, a large Moreton Bay Fig Tree (*Ficus macrophylla*), located between MOCA and the Center for Democracy.

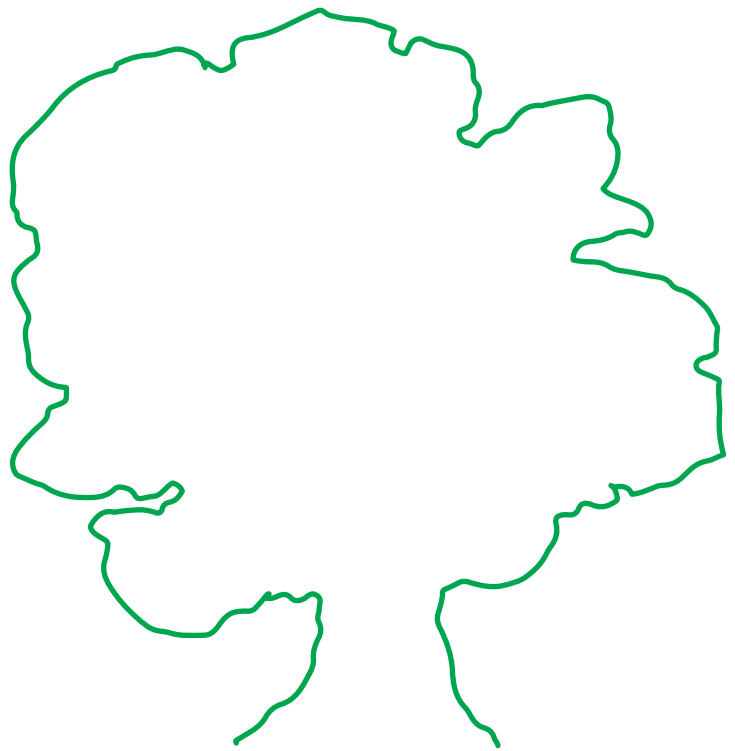


How would you describe this tree to someone who is not here?



Activity:

Fill in this outline with details that you notice, using lines, words, sketches and diagrams. Show details like fruits, seeds, leaf shape, or bark texture.



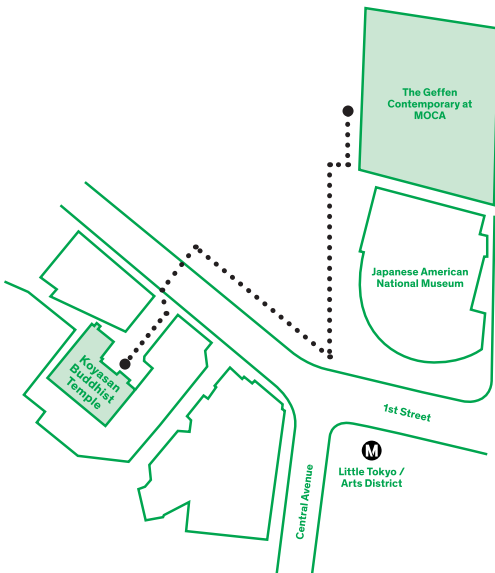
Look at the bottom of the tree. The Moreton Bay Fig Tree is known for its large, wide, shallow roots, called buttress roots. The word buttress means an architectural support, and these roots keep the tree solidly upright while gathering nutrients.

Now look above the roots to where there are leaves. This area is called the crown of the tree, and many things are happening there. Many creatures like squirrels and birds make their home there. Fig wasps also live in the tree—they pollinate the figs. Do you see any signs of creatures in the tree?

4 Aoyama Tree



Here is a picture of Rev. Aoyama with the young Aoyama tree in 1920.



Look for a bronze plaque that marks the Aoyama tree as Historic-Cultural Monument No. 920.



Can you imagine what this space was like in 1920, when this tree was planted?

This tree was named after Reverend Shutai Aoyama, a Buddhist Reverend who started the Koyasan Daishi Mission in 1912. He planted this very tree at the entrance of his temple's new location here in 1920.



Activity:

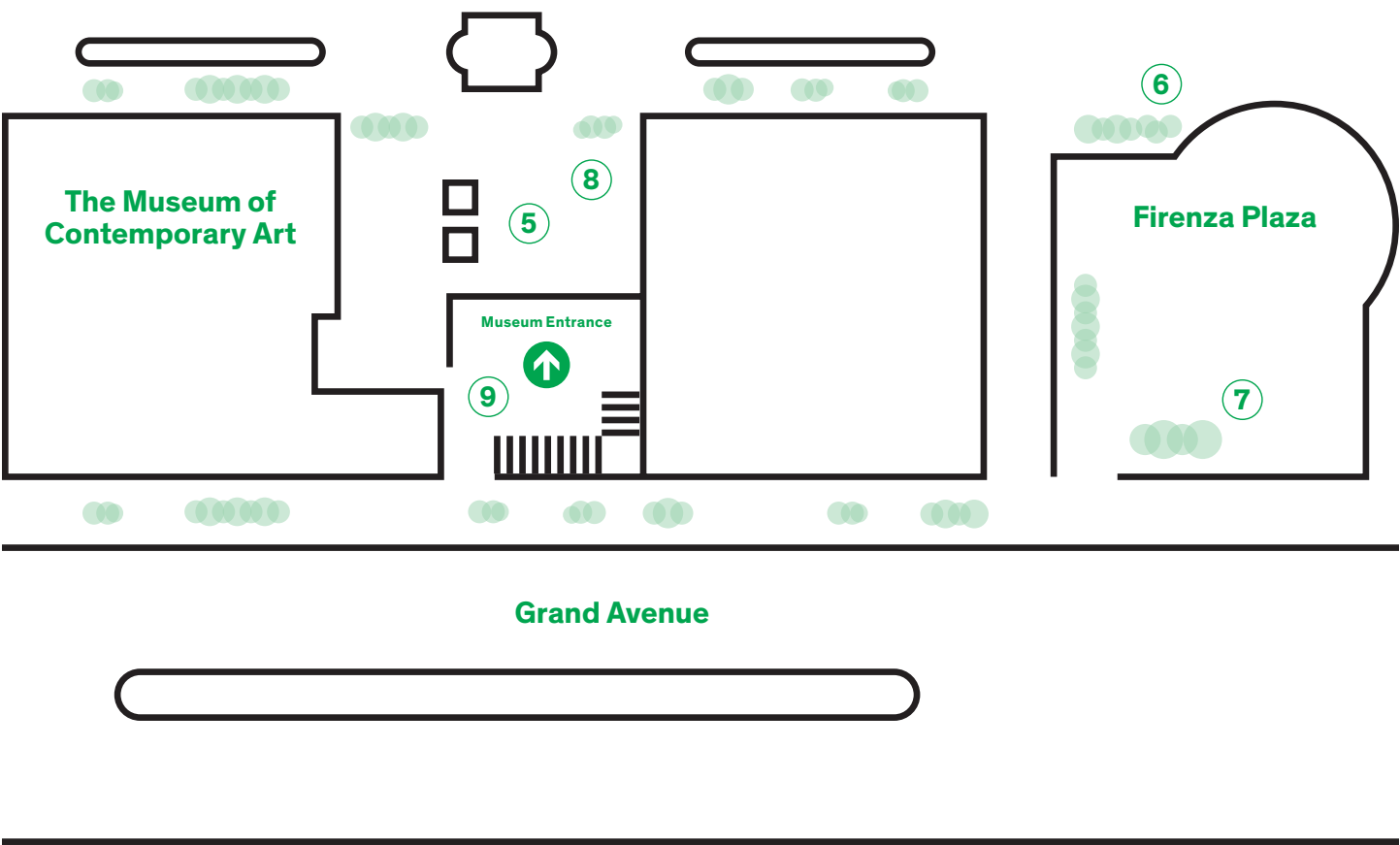
The Koyasan Buddhist temple (also known as Koyasan Beikoku Betsuin) moved for a third and final time in 1940, around the corner at 342 1st Street. Use this map to walk around the corner and visit the new location. Even if you cannot go inside the temple, use this space to write, draw or diagram what you notice:



During World War II, Japanese people were persecuted by the government and many families were forced to live in internment camps. The temple held the possessions of many of its members while they were far from their homes. To learn more about this history, visit our neighbor, the Japanese American National Museum, at 100 North Central Avenue.

MOCA Grand Avenue

Guide Stops



- 5. Tree Planters
- 6. Nonhuman Community
- 7. Bee Hive
- 8. Century Plant
- 9. Lemonade Restaurant and Organics Recycling

5 Tree Planters



Take a moment to find the plants that surround MOCA’s Sculpture Plaza, where the red cubes made by the artist Larry Bell are. These plants are in the concrete rectangles around the plaza.



What do you notice about these plants? How would you describe them to someone who is not here?

One of the reasons for this guide is to combat plant blindness. Plant blindness* is the idea that most humans do not see or notice the plants that are around them. Because plants do not usually move quickly, and because they are often green, it can be hard for people to notice them as much as we notice animals. But plants are very important! They provide habitats and, since they are at the bottom of many food chains, they are the basis of most life on Earth.



Activity:

Let’s spend some time thinking about what plants you have noticed and spent time with. These plants could be grasses on a lawn, a special tree, a pretty flower, or a prickly cactus that you remember, or even just plants that you see today.

Plant (name or drawing)	What do you remember or notice about the plant?

*Plant blindness is a term coined by Elizabeth Schussler and James Wandersee.

⑥ Nonhuman Community



Take a moment to look around the plaza with the red cubes (*Bill and Coo at MOCA's Nest* by the artist Larry Bell).

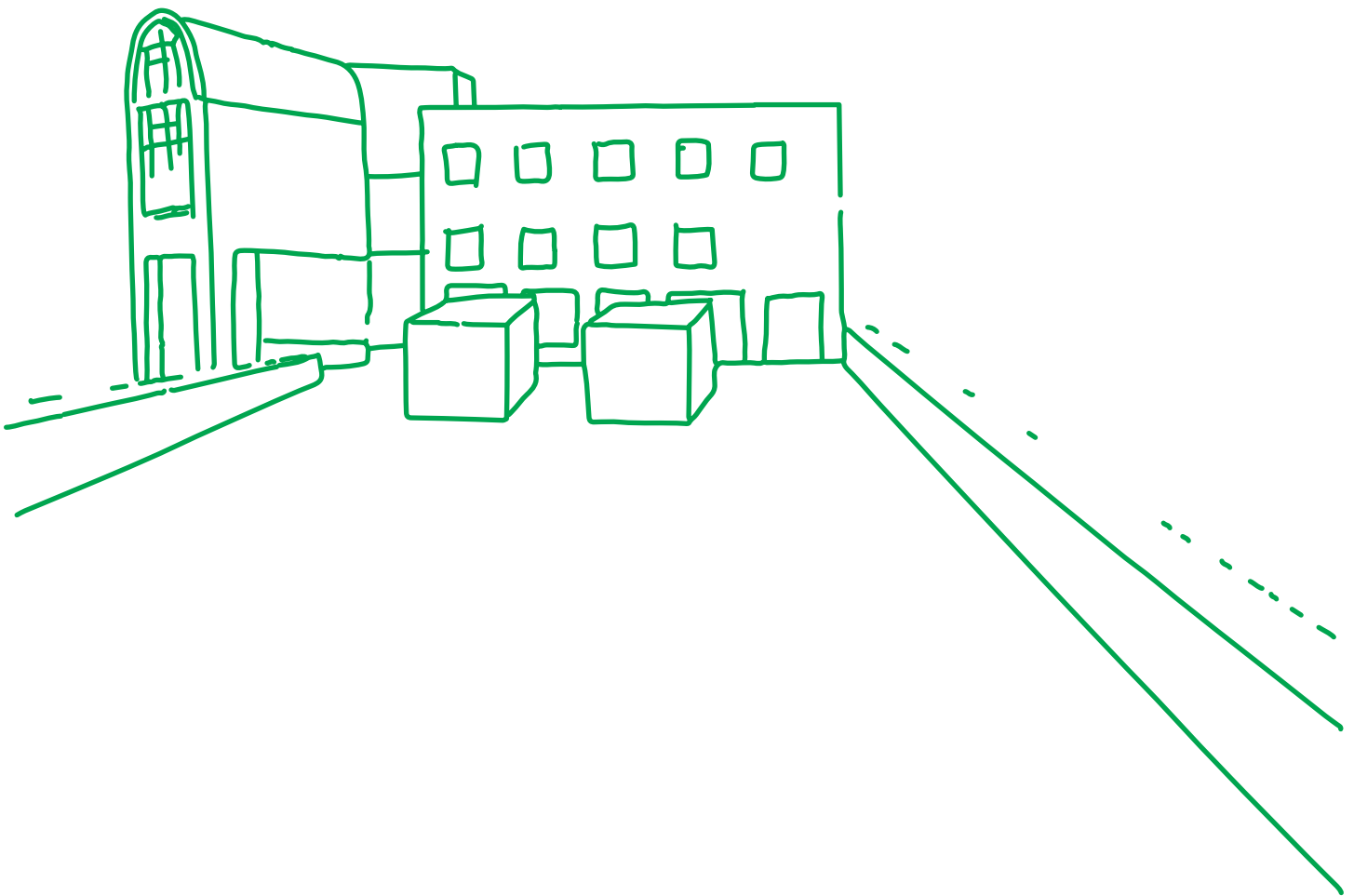


How would you describe the plants that are in wood containers around the edge of the plaza? Do you notice any birds, fungus, insects or other plants in the area?



Activity:

What would you like to see in this space? What kinds of plants, animals, fungus or insects could you envision in this space? Fill in the space below with your ideas, using words or drawings.



Take a moment to imagine what colors or textures might there be. What smells would you experience? How might the space feel the same? How might it feel different? Add any of these notes to the space above.

7 Bee Hive



A company called Alvéole installed the beehives here in Cal Plaza. Use the map to find it!

Each season marks a different action for bees. In the Spring, they forage for pollen from local plants like the surrounding lemon trees. The hive becomes full of pollen that the bees collect from local flowers, and in the summer, this pollen ferments into honey. In the fall and winter months, the hive is closed and insulated with beeswax.

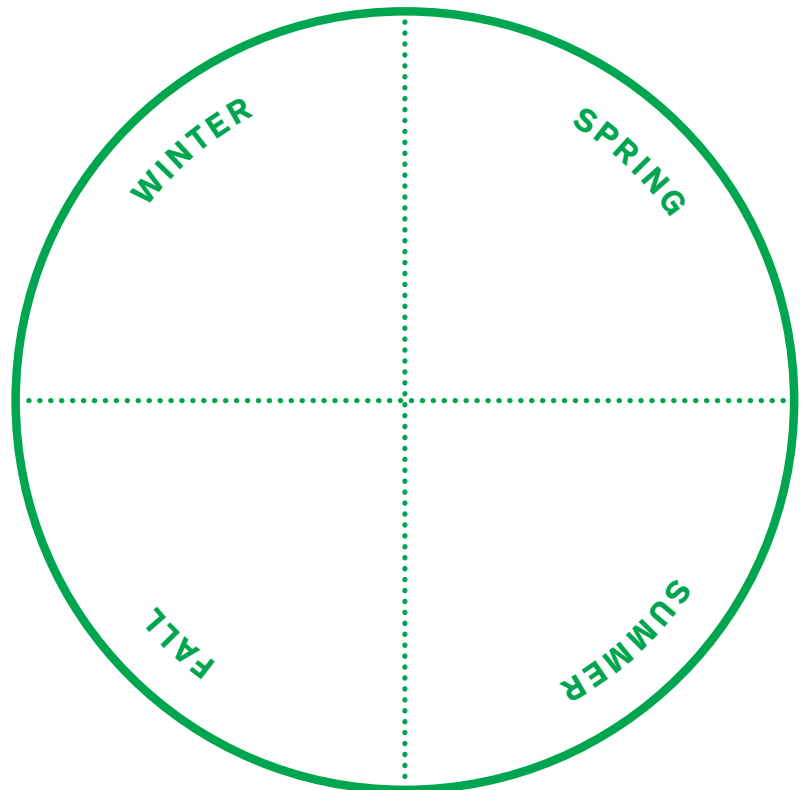


What do you notice the bees doing (or not doing) today?



Activity:

Write, sketch or draw yourself in each season, thinking about the way that your life changes as the weather does.

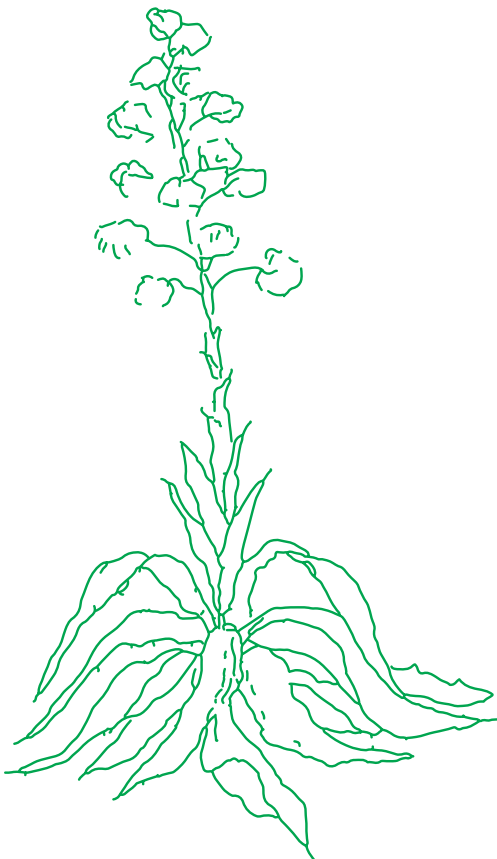


Learn more about this hive by scanning this QR code, where Alvéole shares updates and images about this particular beehive.

⑧ Century Plant



Walk towards Grand Avenue again and look for the row of plants along the sidewalk, at the corner of Grand and 3rd Street. Look for the *Agave americana*, also called century plants, shown below. There are several varieties—look for plants that have yellow edges on their gray-green leaves, and that look like the drawings below.



What do you notice about these plants?

Even though these are called century plants, they live around 10–30 years. At the end of this long life, the plant sends up a large flower, like the one in the drawing below, to reproduce just before dying. This action uses most of the plant's lifelong energy. The plant also sends out new shoots from its base upon its death. So, it continues to live, but in a few different ways.



Activity:

Where and when do you spend the most energy? Move your body to show those actions. You can just use your hands or fingers if you like.

Where and when does your body rest or recharge? Move your body, hands or fingers to show your answer.

If you are responding in a group, how were people's movements different? How were they the same?

9 Lemonade Restaurant and Organics Recycling



At Lemonade, the restaurant in MOCA's Arco Court (downstairs near the front doors of the museum), there are places to put trash (labeled LANDFILL), bottles, cans, plastics and cardboard (labeled RECYCLING) and food waste (labeled COMPOST).



What kinds of things might belong in each container? Think of a specific thing that would go in each one.



Activity:

Imagine yourself doing something to help protect the environment. Draw a portrait of you doing that action or making that change here:



In addition to recycling and composting programs, MOCA is rethinking the way that we think about waste in art and museum spaces. We are changing how we ship artworks from place to place, and are even finding ways to reuse large exhibition elements like walls that get built for each show. For more detailed information on how MOCA is working to help the environment, please scan this QR code.

