

The literary selection is an integral part of the exhibition, with stories that take place in Los Angeles or concern Los Angeles over the last fifty years. They are dotted around the exhibition like pictures. The extracts from these writings are organised so that they tell a story and amplify the artworks.

The written texts emphasise the fictional character of the exhibition.

THE WRITERS

Alex Abella (1950), Paul Thomas Anderson (1970), Kenneth Anger (1927), Reyner Banham (1922- 1988), Paul Beatty (1962), Francesca Lia Block (1962), T.C. Boyle (1948), Vincent Bugliosi (1934-2015), Charles Bukowski (1920-1994), Octavia Butler (1947), Amina Cain, Wanda Coleman (1946), Michael Connelly (1956), Bernard Cooper (1951), Dennis Cooper (1953), Trinie Dalton, Mark Z. Danielewski (1966), Mike Davis (1946), Joan Didion (1934), Dominick Dunne (1925-2009), Bret Easton Ellis (1964), James Ellroy (1948), Steve Erickson (1950), John Fante (1909-1983), Janet Fitch (1955), Angela Flournoy, James Frey (1969), Romain Gary (1914-1980), Ryan Gattis (1978), Kenneth Goldsmith (1961), Paul Haggis (1953), Joseph Hansen (1923-2004), John Haskell (1958), Todd Haynes (1961), David Hockney (1937), Christopher Isherwood (1904-1986), Aris Janigian (1960), Norman M. Klein (1945), Chris Kraus (1955), Rachel Kushner (1968), Cameron Lange, Annette Leddy, Joe Linton, David Lynch (1946), Terrence Malick (1943), Joseph Mattson, Joyce Maynard (1953), Esther McCoy (1904-1989), Jan Morris (1926), Walter Mosley (1952), Maggie Nelson (1973), Victoria Patterson, Vanessa Place (1968), Eric Puchner (1970), Thomas Pynchon (1937), John Rechy (1931), Nina Revoyr (1969), David Richards (1950), Mary Rinebold Copeland, Jean Rolin (1949), Martha Ronk (1940), James Sallis (1944), Christina Schwarz (1962), Carolyn See (1934-2016), Lisa See (1955), Mona Simpson (1957), Jane Smiley (1949), Jack Smith (1916-1996), Gary Snyder (1930), Matthew Specktor (1966), John Steppling (1951), Matthew Stokoe (1963), Donna Tartt (1963), David Thomson (1941), Rupert Thomson (1955), Héctor Tobar (1963), Bruce Wagner (1954), Joseph Wambaugh (1937), John Waters (1946), Benjamin Weissman (1957), Lawrence Weschler (1952), Christa Wolf (1929 - 2011), Rudy Wurlitzer (1937), Karen Tei Yamashita (1951)

84 writers,
138 extracts
from 104 books,
of which 60 have
never ever appeared
in French
before!

THE BOOK



The book accompanying the exhibition was designed by the London graphic arts studio Zak Group (zakgroup.co.uk).

It is a 284 page book of literary and artistic images.

The extracts were selected so that, taken together, they tell a story as the artworks do, that not only does justice to the diversity of subjects inspired by Los Angeles, but also conjures up the communities, the personalities and the landscapes that fashion the city. And the myth too, 'The Poetry of the City of Angels'.

In the first hot month of the fall after the summer she left Carter (the summer Carter left her, the summer Carter stopped living in the house in Beverly Hills), Maria drove the freeway.

Joan Didion, *Play It As It Lays*, 1970

Later, when you live on the other coast and try to explain what the point was, of wasting gas and entire nights on less than a mile of congested Hollywood road, your friends will assume you were hoping to see someone famous. They'll be wrong. You hoped to see yourself out there, shining, growing, unafraid.

Angela Flournoy, *Stars on the Strip*, 2016

Room number 7 is lovely, dark. We can see Macy's from the window. Whitney Houston has just been found dead in a hotel about ten blocks away, the Beverly Hilton. The nurses are talking about it in hushed tones as they come and go. Was it drugs, I manage to ask from the cavern. Probably, they say. In our labor room there is a bathtub, a scale, and a baby warmer. Maybe there will be a baby.

Maggie Nelson, *The Argonauts*, 2015

It was so quiet, one of the killers would later say, you could almost hear the sound of ice rattling in cocktail shakers in the homes way down the canyon.

Vincent Bugliosi, *Helter Skelter*, 1974

He couldn't make out the difference between the blue he was in and blue from the vinyl lining on the bottom of a swimming pool.

Mary Rinebold Copeland, *Tones on Tail (You Can't Be Funky)*, 2012

The Santa Anas blew in hot from the desert, shriveling the last of the spring grass into whiskers of pale straw. Only the oleanders thrived, their delicate poisonous blooms, their dagger green leaves. We could not sleep in the hot dry nights, my mother and I.

Janet Fitch, *White Oleander*, 1999



I don't like driving down Wilshire during lunch hour. There always seem to be too many cars and old people and maids waiting for buses and I end up looking away and smoking too much and turning the radio up to full volume. Right now, nothing is moving even though the lights are green. As I wait in the car, I look at the people in the cars next to mine.

Bret Easton Ellis, *Less Than Zero*, 1985

Jets were taking off the wrong way from the airport, the engine sounds were not passing across the sky where they should have, so everybody's dreams got disarranged, when people could get to sleep at all.

Thomas Pynchon, *Inherent Vice*, 2009

I felt rotten. Dead butterfly floating on the surface of the pool. Audible machine hum. Drowned crickets and beetles swirling in the plastic filter baskets. Above, the setting sun flared gaudy and inhuman, blood-red shelves of cloud that suggested end-times footage of catastrophe and ruin: detonations on Pacific atolls, wildlife running before sheets of flame.

Donna Tartt, *The Goldfinch*, 2013

It was a time of down-market plenty in Huntington Park, thanks to second mortgages and their illusory windfalls, and the extra cash on hand from copious overtime working at ports and railyards and warehouses unloading goods from an Industrial Revolution taking place on the other side of the Pacific.

Héctor Tobar, *The Barbarian Nurseries*, 2011

My parents are from Mexico. I was born there, and carried to L.A. when I was one. My little sister and brother were born here. Because of them, we're Americans now.

Ryan Gattis, *All Involved*, 2015

Driving down a Los Angeles boulevard, a billboard was legible from a half-mile away. It said one or two words. In Los Angeles, people are used to reading single words, very large at far distances, and passing by them very quickly. It's totally the opposite in New York, where we get our information by reading a newspaper over somebody's shoulder in the subway.

Kenneth Goldsmith, *I Look to Theory Only When I Realize That Somebody Has Dedicated Their Entire Life to a Question I Have Only Fleeting Considered*, 2012

Last night Don got a traffic ticket, the first in a long while. He was terribly upset, simply because it brought him into contact with a cop and he feels that cops are evil.

Christopher Isherwood, *The Sixties*, July 31, 1967

That light: the late-afternoon light of Los Angeles—golden pink off the bay through the smog and onto the palm fronds. A light I've found myself pining for every day of the nearly two decades since I left Southern California.

Lawrence Weschler, *L.A. Glows*, 1998

As he drove, in a series of shudders the landscape changed about him. First the haphazard, old-town streets of central L.A. slowly giving way to the city's ever-incomprehensible network of ancillary cities and suburbs, then nothing much but interstate for a long time. Gas stations, Denny's, Del Tacos, discount malls, lumber yards. Trees, walls and fences.

James Sallis, *Drive*, 2005

"Well, Investigator Sun, this is what we call a freeway. You know those car chases in the movies? This is where they film them. See those trees over there? Palm trees. You have those in your country?"

Lisa See, *Flower Net*, 1997



I could hear the river but not see it. It was hidden behind the homes. But its furious power was almost palpable, even from this distance. In storms like this the whole city washed itself out over its smoothed concrete surfaces. It snaked through the Valley and around the mountains to downtown. And from there west to the ocean.

Michael Connelly, *The Narrows*, 2004

When you drive along the 210 freeway, you can see the beige tract houses blended together in one giant swath, camouflaged like a sand field, all the way to the base of the mountains.

Victoria Patterson, *The Little Brother*, 2015

In the right kind of light, at 7 p.m. in the spring, 8 in the summer, 6 in the fall, 5 in winter—at twilight's turning—as the sun lets the hills go and moves on to cast its belted fist upon the sea, the smog refracts the most brilliant mix of orange and purple, a sight both overwhelmingly apocalyptic and hopeful. The color had come to define what I was now afraid to admit I was leaving: home.

Joseph Mattson, *Empty the Sun*, 2009