

Ten Pieces of Light

Joe Strouse

1. From Williamsburg Bridge
2. Seven am
3. Sun in an Empty Room
4. Office at Night
5. East Wind Over Weehawken
6. Western Motel
7. Early Sunday Morning
8. Gas
9. Automat
10. California Hills

Wrung through the wringer. The whole week has eaten your lunch. The critics in your head are screaming and your blood pressure is about to explode.

It's time for a trip through Edward Hopper's gently tough, starkly austere, and classily jazzy America.

With Joe Strouse as your guide, you will take a relaxing walk over Williamsburg Bridge in the lower East Side. You will experience the joys of early summer morning bucolic life from a previous generation, and the quiet excitement of discovering a significant room in a new house. As the hours pass, suspicions regarding the true nature of a late night office job transition into a side trip to Weehawken, painting a foreboding portrait of dark economic times. Off in the desert, through the depiction of a motel, the deterioration of a relationship moves the next day toward its night. The relief of a well-earned sleep comes to an end with a poignant account of waking Sunday morning to memories of persons here and gone, and resuming the journey to embrace the old-fashioned ambiance of a 1920's gas station. Further on down the dusty road, a mysterious stop into an automat reveals the ambiguity of a potential romantic inception, which cascades finally to the California hills, where love and loss jostle each other to the ground.

These travelogue vignettes, taken either individually or as a complete entity, evoke the smoky atmosphere of a dusky wee-hour bar in the sparsely populated lobby of a gradually hushed hotel, and are embodied by melodic lyrics and lyrical melodies, as well as the smooth and adventurous nocturnal reeds of Bob Paskowitz.

- Stewart Moser

Stereo



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