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- [My LA to Z: Jon Lovitz](#)
- [My LA to Z: Jason Bentley](#)
- [My LA to Z: Syd Mead](#)
- [My LA to Z: Steven Ehrlich](#)
- [My LA to Z: Rita Moreno](#)
- [My LA to Z: Shanda Sawyer](#)**
- [My LA to Z: Colbie Caillat](#)
- [My LA to Z: Tom LaBonge](#)
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- [Current Issue](#)
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LA to Z Guides

MY LA TO Z: SHANDA SAWYER

Shanda Sawyer is the director/choreographer behind the re-imagining of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey's iconic "Greatest Show on Earth," which premieres at the Staples Center on July 8. She's worked with stars like Mary J. Blige, directed network comedies, and taken home a pair of Emmys. Now Sawyer tells us her favorite places in the city to experience nature, culture, and magic

Interviewed by Yennaedo Balloo

LAmag.com, June 22, 2009



1  Grand Performances at California Plaza

On summer nights you're in this outdoor plaza with family and other people watching incredible world culture performances surrounded by the buildings and light. The stage is set into the water so it's as if the performers are performing on water. It's really magical.

[Map](#) | [More info](#)

2  Yamashiro

I think Yamashiro's is the most romantic restaurant in all of L.A. I've had some of my most romantic evenings there. Whether you're eating sushi in the Japanese garden or sipping a cocktail while looking out on Hollywood, it takes you back to the glory days of Hollywood in a really nice way.

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3



The Bourgeois Pig

I love The Bourgeois Pig coffee shop on Franklin. There are writers camped at every table, and there's just a wonderful sense of creative energy in the room. Everyone's writing and doing their thing. Maybe it's just a great latte, but it feels like there's creativity in the air.

[Map](#)

4



The Hollywood Bowl

There's nothing more magical. As a director and choreographer of big, live events, I spend a lot of my time going to these big live environments. I think the Hollywood Bowl is one of our great national treasures. You get this unique sense of transcendence, sitting there under the summer sky in this beautiful, natural sort-of bowl with 15,000 other people.

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5

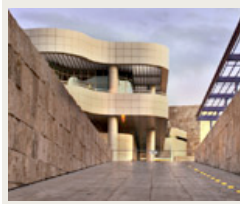


Out of the Closet

When I do shop I think there's nothing like the magic of finding the perfect thing in a thrift store. My favorite places to go and to donate are the Out of the Closet stores. I love the idea that I'm recycling. It gives you the thrill of shopping while being environmentally conscious.

[Map](#) | [More info](#)

6

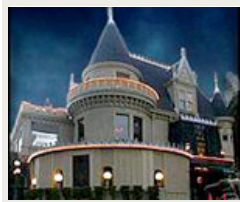


The Getty Museum

I love the sense of the environment that exists within the Getty. It's a wonderful place to stroll if you have time on a weekend to explore the new exhibits. The nighttime programs are phenomenal. They have music programs and some really interesting, cutting-edge new films.

[Map](#) | [More info](#)

7



The Magic Castle, Houdini Room

At the Magic Castle, I discovered the Houdini room. It's the ultimate place for my next big birthday celebration. They cater dinner for you and your friends. You're in this manor and it's geared for all kinds of magical surprises—ghosts come out at you during dinner. A little scary, a little creepy, a lot of fun.

[Map](#) | [More info](#)

8



Dance Camera West

The Dance Camera West Festival is coming up this summer and they'll have events all over the city. It's about keeping in touch with the world's creative pulse and seeing what other people are doing. I think that here in L.A., we have the best opportunity to that.

[More info](#)

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