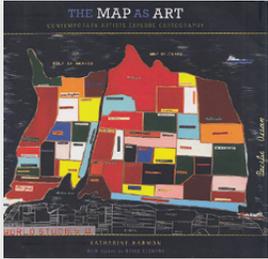


and perfectly known” (p. 2). *The Goddess and the Nation* both corroborates that observation and helps resolve the shortcomings it describes by providing a view of India from an Indian perspective.

THE MAP AS ART: CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS EXPLORE CARTOGRAPHY



By Katherine Harmon
with Gayle Clemens.

Princeton Architectural Press, 2009.
256 pages, 360 color illustrations.
\$45.00. Hardbound.
ISBN 978-1-56898-762-0.

Review by: Jonathan F. Lewis and William Scarlato,
Benedictine University

The Map as Art is a collection of photographs documenting a variety of artistic creations having maps or cartography as their theme. The works of 160 artists are included, utilizing a variety of media: paint, photography, sculpture, pen and ink, etc. Following the introduction, the book is divided into seven sections, most containing relatively brief coverage of several artists and almost all concluding with a more extended treatment of one particular artist.

In her introduction, Katherine Harmon points out that while there has long been art in cartography, less frequently has there been cartography in art. But “since the 1960s there has been an exponential increase in artists working with maps” (p. 9), a claim documented in part by a timeline identifying major 20th century figures who have produced notable works directly incorporating maps or otherwise inspired by cartography: Salvador Dali, Joan Miro, Marcel Duchamp, Jasper Johns, and Robert Smithson, to name just a few. She offers brief descriptions of some of these individuals’ work, and provides quotations supporting her observations about the manner in which maps encouraged these artists to consider new ways of capturing landscape, space, and atmosphere. These opening passages set up her criteria for selecting examples of contemporary artists engaged in extending these explorations, undertaking new approaches, subverting traditional cartography, and taking risks in an effort to effectively depict inner space; of what she terms *psychogeography*. That term is left unexplained but appears inspired by Baudrillard’s contention that in the contemporary world, unlike previous periods, maps precede territories. According to Harmon, if maps, as traditionally understood, provide visual guides to understanding where things are, then

these new works similarly (or more self-consciously) reverse the relationship by making “a mark on a bigger map, calling out, I AM HERE” (p. 16).

The first section, entitled “Conflict and Sorrow: Maps of Opposition and Displacement,” contains works by eleven different artists, culminating with extended description of Joyce Kozloff’s work in a subsection entitled “A Geography of History and Strife.” Kozloff’s use of maps centers on their connections with conquest and combat. Her nine-foot globe, *Targets*, for example, places the viewer inside a sphere whose surfaces contain “aerial views of twenty-four countries that have been bombed by US warplanes since 1945” (p. 35) while her series *Boys’ Art* documents links between masculinity and the siege of territory. The book’s second section, “Global Reckoning: Maps That Take a Stand,” presents the work of sixteen artists before introducing Landon Mackenzie in a short essay called “The Politics of Land.” A Canadian painter, Mackenzie drew inspiration from the manner in which very early maps conveyed a sense of remote territories to inform contemporary depictions of ancient territorial quests. Her series *Houbart’s Hope*, for example, refers to ship’s pilot Josiah Houbart, who was for a while thought to have discovered an entrance to the long-sought Northwest Passage. Briefly generating considerable enthusiasm, the feature “disappeared from maps in the eighteenth century” (p. 71).

The next section, “Animal, Vegetable, Mineral: Maps of Natural Origins,” displays works by twenty-six artists, and then describes the work of Ingrid Calame in a portrayal called “Constellations of Residue.” Calame’s work moves the scale of mapping to the normally unthinkable 1:1, as she literally traces the various residues of human existence onto paper, primarily those left by the feet of men and women engaged in activities both ordinary (for example, the wear and tear of foot traffic on sidewalks) and exalted (such as found patterns on the aisles of churches and the floors of observatories). The book’s fourth section, “Personal Terrain: Maps of Intimate Places,” offers works from twenty-eight artists, but no culminating artist’s work is featured.

“You Are Here, Somewhere: Maps of Global Positioning” incorporates thirty artists and their work into its pages before moving to “Maps of Presence and Absence,” an essay describing works produced by Guillermo Kuitca. Where Ingrid Calame lifts patterns of human movement in space from existing surfaces and places them onto traditional surfaces like paper and canvas, Guillermo Kuitca, in some of his works, takes maps and transposes them onto the surfaces of everyday objects, embedding them in unexpected objects. Illustrations in this essay include two examples, both involving maps painted on the surface of mattresses. Section six, “Inner Visions: Maps of Invented Places,” is composed of works by seventeen artists, with the book’s concluding section, “Dimension/Deletion: Maps

That Play with Cartographic Conventions,” presenting twenty-five artists. The section wraps up with an extended treatment of Maya Lin’s work in a subsection called “Where Opposites Meet.” Lin, perhaps the best known, to general readers, of all the book’s artists, here is shown to have great interest in replicating recognizable landscape forms, such as hills, in her work. She also expands on cartographic techniques both new (a wireframe surface bearing a strong resemblance to a digital elevation model) and established (stacked sheets of plywood carved and offset to resemble contour elevations). As Clemens notes: “Her installations are complex fabrications, but they are also stripped-down, powerful forms created out of simple materials” (p. 253).

One clear strength of this collection lies in the large number of individuals and works assembled. Together, it provides a resource for readers curious about the ways in which maps have inspired and been incorporated into artworks, many of which do not appear particularly map-like on first consideration. Given the number of art exhibits in recent years featuring cartography as a theme (several of which are listed toward the back of the book) as well as the volume and variety of ongoing work, *The Map as Art* cannot be considered so much a comprehensive collection as a thorough representation.

Another of the book’s successes resides in Gayle Clemens’ essays, which generally provide greater depth and clarification of the activities and work of the selected artists than appear in the necessarily brief, fragmented descriptions accompanying most of the works. Art of this sort needs text, as it is intrinsically silent and benefits from the provision of information that shapes its context. Here, the shorter treatments are sometimes scant, which can make it difficult to grasp the work or connect the samples with the descriptions provided. While most of the descriptions are adequate, some seem somewhat obtuse or abstract and so remote or un-revealing. Heidi Whitman’s *Brain Terrain* paintings, for example, are described as “churning” mental maps responding to “turbulent” events in the world, but the images presented are calm in both their composition and color. It may very well be that in this case, the stimulus to undertake the painting ultimately yields a result that, in becoming art, loses connection with the initial impulse behind it. In becoming removed from her original motive to make sense of shifting dream themes and images associated with a dynamic world, then, Whitman produces a work that achieves a higher accomplishment in terms of its artistic value. But the brief narrative doesn’t so much exonerate such speculation as to mandate it. Another problem is that while some of the works contain text, many of the illustrations are so small as to make the words unreadable. Richard Long’s maps of personal excursions, for example, are very difficult to make out, as is the writing found in Landon Mackenzie’s paintings, and those done by Dan Mills.

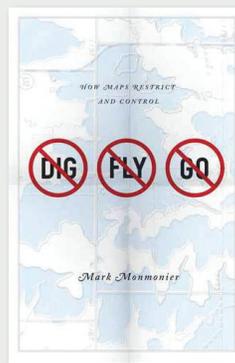
The selected works themselves vary in significance from the playful (Coriette Schoenaerts’ maps made from pieces of clothing scattered on her floor, for example) to more interesting and arguably worthwhile explorations having a clear motif, theme, or device showing that the artist has struck upon something that could reward further pursuit. Melissa Gould’s ghostly floor plans of Titanic and Holocaust memorials, for example, are especially evocative of spaces haunted by individuals whose lives are memorialized within the glowing boundaries she lays down. Similarly, Ingrid Calame’s constellations of human activity transcend their sources, making the places she chose to map less inspirational in themselves than pretexts for something more substantial.

Other effective pieces are site-specific, such as Yukinori Yanangi’s installations at Alcatraz, which gain much of their strength from their setting, and probably can only be completely experienced on location. This is also true of Alban Biaisat’s *The Green(er) Side of the Line*, which extended a broad green cloth along contested sections of Israel’s border.

The variety of things presented is both interesting and impressive, with color providing something of a common ground. That is, while the works’ reasons for having been created are different, the use of color to represent the variety of ideas produces a common idea about color—and the works become decorative and delightful to the eye.

The Map as Art is essentially an anthology of what can be done with maps, of what can be gleaned from an artist’s imagination with a map serving as a prod or motive to create. Harmon has produced a compendium of broad scale containing important active artists and their works. Often colorful and even exciting, these works are always innovative and few can be appreciated with a quick glance. It won’t take anyone long to read this book, but it will take them time to completely see it.

NO DIG, NO FLY, NO GO: HOW MAPS RESTRICT AND CONTROL



By Mark Monmonier.

242 pages, 63 halftones, 19 line drawings
Cloth \$65, paper \$18.
University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Review by: Mark Denil

No Dig, No Fly, No Go is map history. There is a long history of histories, going back to Herodotus and Thucydides (both from the 5th century BCE), and there are many types of histories. There are academic histories (Gibbon and