Scene Seen: Alternative Cartographies @ McDaniel College

Rebecca Juliette
December 1, 2015
Art and Culture
Feature Story
Scene Seen
Visual Art
McDaniel College’s Department of Art and Art History presents “Alternative Cartographies: Artists Claiming Public Space,” through December 18 in The Rice Gallery in Peterson Hall.

* Photos by Rebecca Juliette

Cartography, or mapmaking, is an act of power. Historically, maps have been used to advance national, political, and economic interests. They have constituted powerful instruments in processes of colonization and domination, military surveillance, navigation, business transactions, and commercial advertising. In recent times, real-estate developers and architectural firms employ maps as reliable and convincing visual documentation in negotiations with community boards. Current political campaigns and elections are impossible to imagine without maps that designate the political fabric of a nation. Despite its presumed objective basis, mapmaking represents a highly subjective, selective and flexible practice.

In recent years, a number of contemporary artists and artist collectives have been employing participatory and collaborative cartography as a valuable tactic in their art and activist practice.

Curated by Izabel Galliera, the exhibition Alternative Cartography: Artists Claiming Public Space brings together six contemporary international artists, Matei Bejenaru, Graham Coreil-Allen, Jason Hoylman, Daniela Kostova, Olivia Robinson, and Miryana Todorova, who are concerned with the subversive potential of cartography.

Working in diverse artistic media, including performance art, drawing, video art and installation, the artists seek to convey cartography as an instrument of empowerment. They share an interest in proposing critical alternatives to our increasingly privatized and surveyed public space. Moreover, illustrating a major worldwide trend in contemporary art,

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Sedated ghost signs of a mid block void
overlook asphalt, tile and concrete.
This flattened forest of tactile rupture
begets an ambiguous bleed of enigmatic pavement.
Take a map, get lost.

Supple terrain providing the ideal incline from which one may vista gaze from a wise viewing distance.
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**REBECCA JULIETTE**

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Rebecca Juliette is the Assistant Editor and Manager of Events & Calls for Entries. She has the heart of the artist and the brain of a librarian. The person who invites her to their party knows that by the end of night their record collection will be alphabetized by category. She studied music at Western Maryland College but somehow ended up with a science degree.

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