

# Photocartographies: Tattered Fragments of the Map

g727, 727 S. Spring Street, Downtown Los Angeles

May 16 – July 3

Anthony Auerbach  
Katherine E. Bash  
Cris Benton  
Noah Beil  
Frank Gohlke  
Gregory Michael  
Hernandez  
David Horvitz  
David Maisel  
Adam Ryder  
Nikolas Schiller  
Oraib Toukan  
Angie Waller

**May 16, 7pm - Opening Reception**  
**g727 is open Friday & Saturday, 1-6 pm**

**May 22 - Travelogue**  
Films by Bill Brown and a video installation  
by Bia Gayotto

**June 20 - enGage ludiCity with REMAP**  
A Situationist-inspired ludic urban action

**June 23 - Shaping LA, Panel Discussion**  
Maps for Planning, Developing and  
Resisting the City

# About the Exhibition

Photocartographies: Tattered Fragments of the Map is a curatorial project materializing in multiple forms: an exhibition, a publication and a series of public programs.

Photography and cartography are entwined in similar processes of subject orientation that structure our experience of social, environmental and virtual landscapes. A map is not a representation so much as a system of propositions. This project reveals mapping itself as a generative process of knowledge creation, a liberatory method for re-imagining and re-imagining our world, its built and natural environments, and the relationship between space and place.

Maps are tied to a history of authority, scientific rationality and practical application, masking the underlying subjectivity and biases of their creation. Satellite-based navigation, the disciplines of geography and, more recently, urban planning, have popularized and proliferated map imagery while helping to cement an aura of unassailable cartographic objectivity. Maps have become ubiquitous tools in our daily lives, and are understandably identified in accordance with a few simple assumptions: they are graphic representations of spatial relations and their creators are technicians bound to graphic systems that reflect a physical reality. However, the true nature of maps is one of distortion, beginning with their projections of three-dimensional surfaces onto two-dimensional frames, and compounded by territorialization, a habit of identifying, naming and claiming. Maps are image-objects in which different conceptions and configurations of time and space are created, not just charted.

In 1858 Gaspard Felix Tournachon executed the first aerial photographs from a hot air balloon tethered above the Paris skyline. In turn, Baron Haussmann employed this omniscient view to redesign the city, combating its perceived disorder. Over the last 150 years, people have used zeppelins, airplanes, and satellites to photographically capture and archive every piece of our globe with increasing accuracy and frequency.

More recently, public access to maps, as well as the access to their means of production, have been greatly enabled by digital technologies—most notably tools such as Google Earth and freely accessible archives like those offered by the USGS. Borges' story of mapping the entire Kingdom with exactitude may seem improbably complete. And yet, maps can never escape being part of the world their creators try to represent. Like the photographic image, "The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious" by coding power, politics, and aesthetics. All maps are still projections, and all territories are maps.

# Gregory Michael Hernandez

## ***Captive Universe #50: Confluence of the Los Angeles River and Arroyo Seco***

Round Version: Hand cut c-prints on mat board, 2009. 12" x 12" x 12"

## ***55 Stairs / 70 Steps from Broadway to Hill***

Hand-cut C-prints on paper, 2009. 34" x 28"

## ***The Path of Least Resistance #1***

Hand-cut C-prints on paper, 2009. 34" x 28"



# Gregory Michael Hernandez

## Project Description

I work with photographs as a drawing medium. Through this process I have come to think of the camera less as a rectangular framing device and more as a memory recording device: a substitute for the human eye. New perspectives can be mapped by cutting and joining photographs, revealing forms previously hidden.

“Captive Universe #50: The Confluence of the L.A. River and Arroyo Seco” is part of an ongoing series, comprised of 26 separate 35mm c-prints. It is straight photography, without the use of photoshop, and is achieved by aligning the angles and throw of the camera lens to the mathematical formation of the ‘Truncated Cuboctahedron’, also called ‘Great Rhombicuboctahedron’. For “Captive Universe #50”, my tripod was set at the intersection of the Arroyo Seco and L.A. River: the spot where the first European settlers arrived in present-day Los Angeles and declared it a beautiful location worthy of future settlement. This same “location” is still the subject of debate over its proper form and function.

“The Path of Least Resistance #1” is a hand made aerial map of the ground roots of a ficus tree on Vermont Avenue near Los Feliz Boulevard. It thrives on a rectangular plot of land, (represented by the paper size in relation to the roots), bordered between the street, two driveways, and the sidewalk. The root system cannot be seen on google earth, because the thick foliage blocks the view. I paced over the root system at ground level, taking separate photographs from head height, and then isolated the roots by cutting and joining each segment by hand.

“55 Stairs / 70 Steps From Broadway to Hill” is a cartographic view of the experience of ascending the staircase which takes one from Broadway to Hill, just north of Temple, in downtown Los Angeles. Starting at the bottom, I took a photo of each step, looking five steps ahead. Each isolated step is simply piled on top of one another in order; an expression of mapping through movement and time.

## Bio

Gregory Michael Hernandez is a Los Angeles-based artist.

# Noah Beil

Selections from *Mountain as Monument*

***Oderbruchkippe, Berlin (20080922, 12:57:11, 52.534510N 13.468234E)***

Archival inkjet print, 2008. 23" x 27"

***Teufelsberg, Berlin (20090101, 15:05:44, 52.502520N 13.241900E)***

Archival inkjet print, 2008. 23" x 27"

***Teufelsberg, Berlin (20090101, 15:42:46, 52.502920N 13.248380E)***

Archival inkjet print, 2008. 23" x 27"



# Noah Beil

## Project Description

“The intense bombing of World War II left the streets of many European cities clogged with the remains of demolished masonry buildings. In Berlin alone, over 45 million cubic meters of debris was cleared during post-war rebuilding efforts. After intact bricks were recovered for reuse, with much of the manual labor performed by women, waste materials were transported to distributed collection locations and piled into hills known in German as Schuttberg or Trümmerberg. Today, these debris hills are difficult to distinguish from naturally occurring features as they have been landscaped into parks with manicured grass and densely vegetated sections.

Berlin’s artificial hills provide an opportunity to study mankind’s reshaping and repurposing of the landscape, as well as the effects of natural reclamation on anthropogenic terrain alterations. The hills serve as unintentional living memorials to the destruction of World War II as well the years of rebuilding that followed.”

## Bio:

Noah Beil is an Oakland, California- based photographer who interprets history by examining the landscape.

# Oraib Toukan

## *TransJordan, Amman-Jerusalem*

Photo installation, 2007-2008. Dimensions variable



# Oraib Toukan

## Project Description

“Traditionally, maps were most often used for power, knowledge, and information; for divide and rule. Until the 80s, printing and distributing maps of the Arab world was highly centralized. It was only recently replaced by national geographic centers of sovereign Arab states- most of which, by then began to subtly declare independence from regional geo-politics. In Jordan alone, decentralization was perhaps a policy to slowly eradicate Arab nationalism, and hence the Arab Identity (with a capital I) off educational curriculum replacing it instead with new compulsory classes called ‘national education’. The question here for me becomes, how do borders come to be drawn (cartographically and narratively), and how have roads come to be extended in such a way to give new meaning to nation-hood?

With that in mind, I find myself increasingly interested in turning maps into picture politics. I am looking to transform historic narrative into imagined topographical lines. I often ask myself how much are terrains manipulated to become symbols of nostalgic elements of being and belonging. Why do the word Haifa and Beirut ring so loudly in my own ears? This idea of infinity in a word, and photo juxtaposition’s as miniature repetitions of the same is what I play on in the photo installation Tran-Jordan. I continuously shoot the roadside typography out of Amman in to these cities from a car window. I then place them against time by stamping the time below the photo sequences. As such they become a spatial temporal atlas of the ability to transgress what have become real boundaries. The body thus becomes a documentation tool, where the photos become an event, and the formal realization is a map.”

## Bio

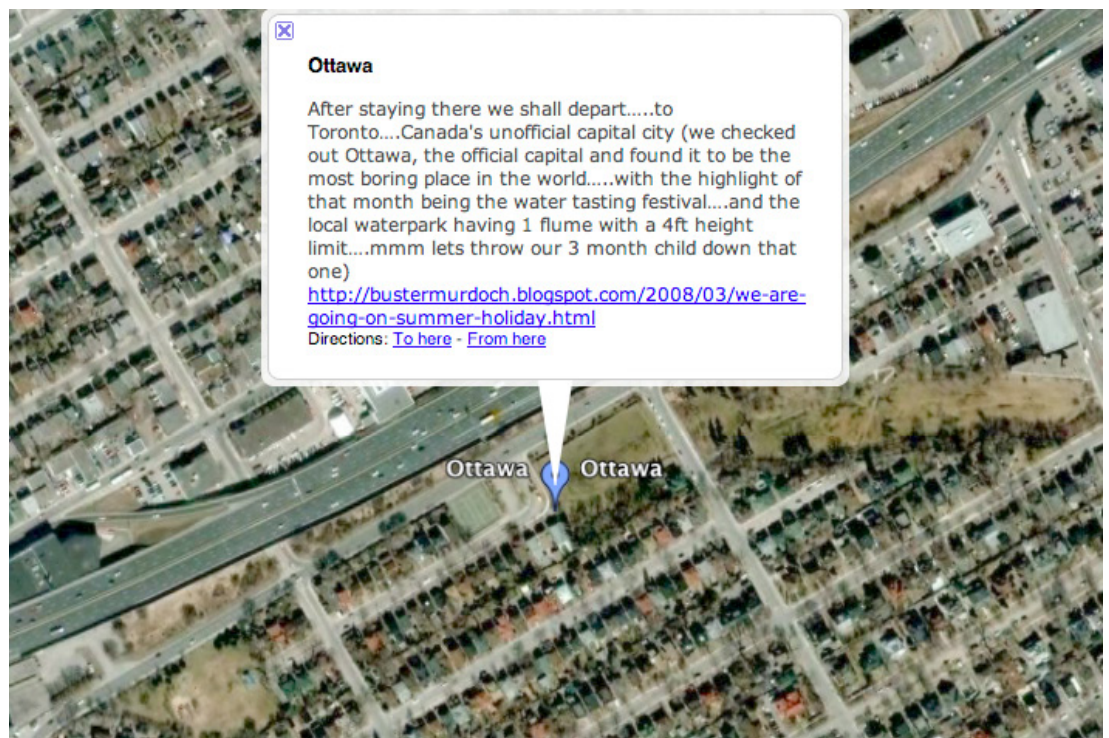
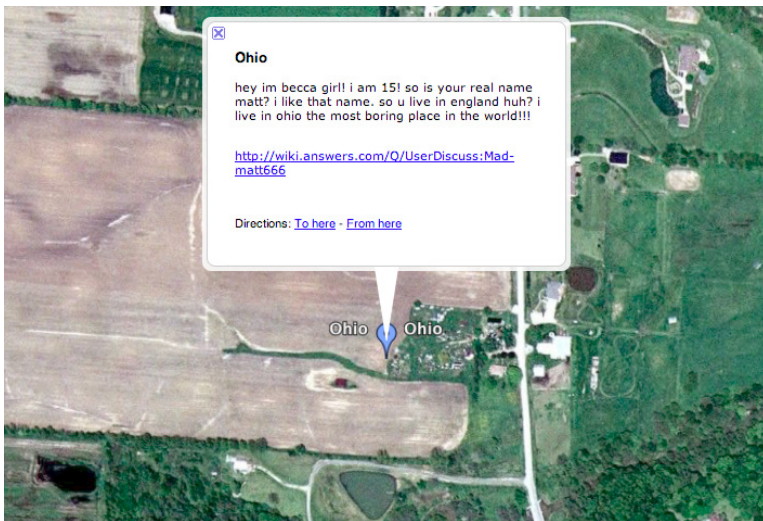
Oraib Toukan works across media in photography, video, and installation, often pushing public interventions in to her practice. Oraib is a recipient of various fellowships, awards and international residency placements, including Jacob Javits, ART OMI and Pro Helvetia, among other production grants by MAWRED and AFAC. Reviews of her work have appeared in Art Forum, Bidoun, ArtAsia Pacific, among others. She has worked with both Triangle Arts Trust and the Fondazione Pistoletto in pushing ‘studio practice’ in to social spaces, and has initiated the Shatana International Arts workshop in Jordan, as well as experimental sound/image labs for youth in Jordan. Thread throughout her work is a form of play and underlying irony in situation’s she creates. She is currently based in New York City.



# Angie Waller

## *The Most Boring Places in the World*

Digital video installation, 2009. Dimensions variable



# Angie Waller

## Project Description

“The Most Boring Places in the World” is a Google Earth tour that pinpoints the location of bloggers, live journal-ers, and commentators. They all claim that, in fact, the city they live in is more boring than any other place they can imagine. Most locations do not repeat (with the exception of North Carolina, Ohio, Zurich and Singapore). What these global residents do share in common are existential crises, home-from-college woes, and the perils of beautiful scenery, suburban sprawl and shopping malls.

Technical Data:

Google search query: “the most boring place in the world”

Posts collected from January 10 - May 1, 2009

55 entries, 52 unique locations to date

## Bio

Angie Waller’s work presents circumstances of political and aesthetic identity through meditations on everyday cultural environments and events. Using a combination of artists’ books, video, web sites and installations she forms impressionistic, systematic visualizations and montages that humorously reconfigure her source materials. She has exhibited internationally at venues including: The New York Underground Film Festival; The New Museum, New York; The Bronx Museum, New York; Sundance Film Festival, Utah; Milano Film Festival, Italy; The Shanghai Duolon Museum of Art, China. Her work has been written about in The New York Times, The Village Voice, Wired, W and The Guardian. She is based in New York City.

# Frank Gohlke

Selections from *42 30N: A Line on the Land*

***Daily Swim, Under Pin Hill Road, Harvard, Massachusetts (42 30' N. 71 35' W), 2006***

C-print, 2008. 18 1/2" x 23"

***New Housing Development, West Peabody, Massachusetts (42 30' N, 70 58' W), 2006"***

C-print, 2008. 18 1/2" x 23"



# Frank Gohlke

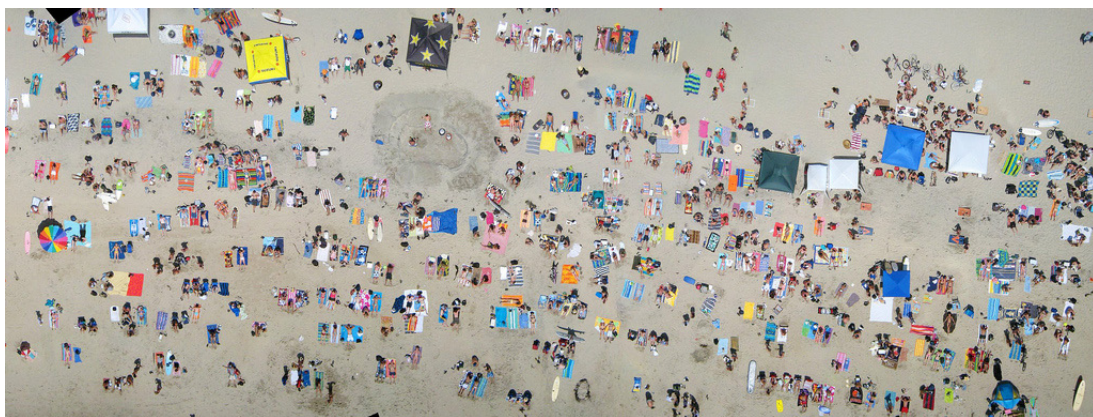
## **Project Description**

42 30 North is a collaboration between a photographer, Frank Gohlke, and a poet and landscape historian, Herbert Gottfried. It is a survey of the land within a single line of latitude, Forty two degrees Thirty minutes North, from the Atlantic Ocean at Marblehead, Massachusetts, to the Massachusetts-New York state boundary, a strip approximately one mile wide by 165 miles long. The project makes no pretense of exhaustiveness, celebrating instead the arbitrariness of boundaries and the centrality of imagination in transforming terrain into place.

# Cris Benton

## *Pacific Beach*

Archival inkjet print, 2009. 14.5" x 40"



# Cris Benton

## Project Description

“During the 20th Century a variety of more casual photographers experimented, typically in the vacuum of isolation, with alternate means for aerial imaging. Since the 1990s, kite aerial photography has enjoyed a renaissance of sorts, fueled in part by communities on the Internet and a plethora of new technologies in photography, kite making, and radio control. Among the joys of contemporary kite aerial photography (KAP) are the opportunities for invention, the physical challenge of positioning kite and rig, the unusual ‘once removed’ aspect of composition in absentia, contact with a fine group of KAP colleagues, and the distinct pleasure of messing around with kites.

For over a decade I have been taking photographs from kite-lofted cameras. The work builds on a sustained fascination with photography’s capacity to reveal patterns and phenomena that lie beyond the capacities of our biological vision - think Muybridge’s time motion studies, Edgerton’s frozen moments, and the Eames’ decadal plunge through scale.

My work has evolved into a process that I describe as “interrogating the landscape.” While it is possible to broadcast video from the kite to the ground as a form of electronic viewfinder, and I have developed rigs to do so, I never use the technique. Instead I prefer to think through where the camera’s pointing from the ground, to imagine what will be interesting from that distant perspective. I then later compare my mental image of the landscape to the actual picture. I learn an enormous amount about place through these comparisons and they have become my principal motivator.

I’ve found kite aerial photography to be a lovely confluence of spontaneity and what the philosopher Jacques Ellul called technique. The work allows me to be hyper-rational in the technology and scientific understanding required to capture the images, while also embracing chance and happenstance. The images thus created are intentional negotiations between technical prowess and the vagaries of nature.

William Morton Wheeler, Harvard professor of zoology and contemporary of Batut and Lawrence, once compared the naturalist as “impressed by the overwhelming intricacy of natural phenomena and reveling in their very complexity“ in comparison to the professional biologist who “is oriented toward and dominated by ideas, and rather terrified or oppressed by the intricate hurly-burly of concrete sensuous reality.” I am fond of the quote for it reminds me of the richness, complexity, and intimacy I find in my aerial images. Images such as the Pacific Beach panorama featured in this exhibit have much in common with normative cartographic forms. And yet these intimate aerial images are filled with the hurly-burly of their moment and are all the richer for it.”

## Bio

Benton is a Professor of Architecture and former department chair at UC Berkeley and an avid kite aerial photographer.

# Adam Ryder

## *Recombinant Landscape*

Archival inkjet print, 2009. 28" x 28"



# Adam Ryder

## **Project Description**

This composite image combines visual data from elements of 150 analog aerial photographs culled from the United States Geological Survey. Ryder showcases how the imposition of formal-rational systems on the landscape have created interchangeable spaces, capable of being assembled like so many blocks into a new, simulacral form resembling the agrarian interior of the country.

## **Bio**

Adam Ryder is an MFA candidate in the Photography, Video and Related Media at the School of Visual Arts in New York. In his work, he utilizes the unique language of photographic and digital imaging technologies to explore the myriad ways in which architecture, infrastructure, and development shape our lives.



# Anthony Auerbach

The State of New York

## ***Autopsy***

Index (2,427 aerial photographs in a drawer cabinet), slide projector and wall-mounted inkjet print, folding furniture, desk lamp, checklist, 2009. Dimensions variable.

## ***Index***

2,427 4" x 6" C-prints, custom-built drawer cabinet, 2008. 336 x 340 x 130 mm



# Anthony Auerbach

## **Project Description**

“The State of New York is an aerial survey of the whole state of New York from an altitude of seven feet. The survey records the surface of a giant copy of the Texaco road map which was inlaid in the terrazzo floor of the New York State Pavilion for the 1964–65 World’s Fair. The pavilion, designed by Philip Johnson and advertised as the ‘Tent of Tomorrow’, now stands derelict in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens.”

## **Bio**

Anthony Auerbach is an artist out of London, working in different places. He is also active as a theorist. His (photo)cartographic interests stem from a preoccupation with drawing, hence with surfaces: marks, traces, inscriptions, and erasure of the same.

# David Maisel

Selections from *Oblivion*

## ***Oblivion 10n***

C-print, 2007. 40" x 40"

## ***Oblivion 3n***

C-print, 2007. 40" x 40"



# David Maisel

## Project Description

David Maisel, a visual artist and photographer, chronicles the tensions between nature and culture in his large-scaled photographs of worlds that hover between the visible and the invisible, the natural and unnatural, the sacred and the profane. Maisel's practice is concerned with mining the visual territory of what he terms the "apocalyptic sublime," and with addressing themes of loss, elegy, and memorialization. He is perhaps best known for his large-scaled photographs in *Black Maps*, a multi-chaptered series of abstracted aerial images of environmentally impacted sites, such as open pit mines, clear cut forests, and cyanide leaching fields.

## Bio

Maisel's photographs are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, and many others. Maisel was a Visiting Scholar at the Getty Research Institute in Fall 2007, and an Artist in Residence at the Headlands Center for the Arts in Spring 2008. David Maisel's work is represented by the Haines Gallery in San Francisco and the Von Lintel Gallery in New York.

# David Horvitz

## Untitled

4" x 6" C-print, tickets and receipts, 2009. Dimensions variable.



# David Horvitz

## **Project Description**

Horvitz is exhibiting a photograph shot in Iceland on one of the artist's travels. Displayed with the photographs are documents of every means of transportation required to get from his home in Brooklyn, NY to a small island in Reykjavik.

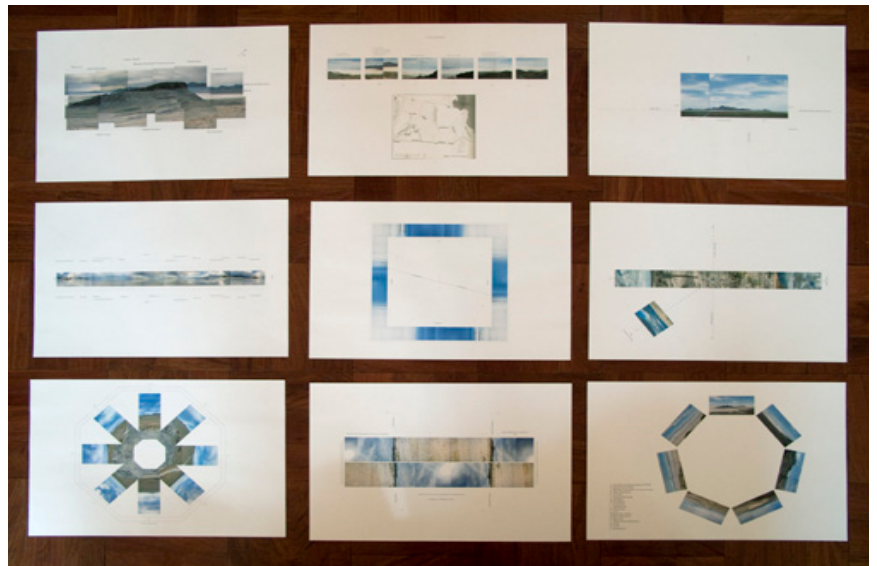
## **Bio**

David Horvitz was born in Los Angeles and currently lives in Brooklyn, NY. His art practice uses an array of forms: photography, video, web-work, writing, and mail-art.

# Katherine Bash

## *Floating Point Operation*

Table (4' x 6'), archival inkjet prints, 2008.



# Katherine Bash

## **Project Description**

“At the far end of the Bonneville Speedway stands the mountain known as Floating Island—‘floating’ because it appears to arise from water, and ‘island’ because it is separated from other elevated landscape features by accumulated silts — feet deep (the Bonneville Salt Flat). The idea of using Floating Island as a geographical referent in mental maps made by people visiting the area is somewhat ironic. Most of the mountain is underground, and what rises 1200 feet above the playa is often indistinguishable from the mountains behind it.”



# Nikolas Schiller

Selections from *Los Angeles Freeway Interchanges*

## **10 & 110 Quilt**

Archival inkjet print, 2009. 28" x 42"

## **5, 10, 60 and 101 Quilt**

Archival inkjet print, 2009. 28" x 42"



# Nikolas Schiller

## **Project Description**

Schiller's satellite mashups confront many of the power dynamics inherent in maps and manifest in our impulse to claim, know and control space. In addition to his kaleidoscopic "quilts" for major American cities, Schiller has fractured and fused contested borders, sites of environmental tragedy and political conflict. In his series of Los Angeles freeway interchanges, the disorientation of automotive navigation is heightened in images that enfold our familiar corridors and boundaries.

## **Bio**

Nikolas Schiller is a 28-year-old cartographer, consultant, digital artist, photographer, activist, and blogger living in America's last continental colony, Washington, DC.