

Land / Mark:

Locative Media and Photography

April 8-May 5, 2005

An exhibition in conjunction with the Boston Cyberarts Festival

Curated by Leslie K. Brown, PRC Curator

Opening reception: Thursday, April 7, 5:30-7:30pm

Gallery Conversation, Thursday, April 21, 12pm

Land/Mark is a group exhibition that features artists who engage photography with location-based media, global technologies, and larger geographical systems. Using the parsed phrase “Land/Mark” as a starting point, this PRC exhibition highlights Boston-area artists Margot Kelley, Brooke Knight, Josh Winer, and the new media, global public art project Yellow Arrow (yellowarrow.net), but also points to various other exhibitions and events related to mapping all over the city. Held in conjunction with the Boston Cyberarts Festival (April 22-May 8), this gallery showing represents the third time the PRC has joined local organizations since the festival’s founding in 1999. An online exhibition with images, statements, and links will also debut. Recently, there has been an explosion in the artworld addressing the idea of mapping—expanding, personalizing, obfuscating, and even undermining cartographic impulses and ideas. Related events and exhibitions by community partners are listed on the last page.



Josh Winer, *42° 57' 11N, 073° 12' 24W*, 2004, C-print, 40 x 50 inches, Courtesy of the artist and Clifford • Smith Gallery

Work in the PRC show includes Margot Kelley’s investigation of the GPS (Global Positioning System) game geocaching through color photographs and narrative; Brooke Knight’s ground studies near landmarks and minute confluences; and Josh Winer’s large format coordinate-titled images of land in flux. Also on display, will be a live-feed slideshow from Yellow Arrow’s database of arrows placed in the environment, which during the festival will feature only photographs and arrows in the Boston-area. As almost all of the artworks are titled by their exact location—either by GPS coordinates or another location-based code—thus you could theoretically visit the places pictured in the photographs. However, that meeting and interaction is subjective, changing, and always new. Moreover, these artists use the devices and systems in ways contrary and sometimes at odds with their invention. Themes of games, surveillance, networks, and alternative geographies emerge as the artists participate in some form of marking the land while showing the marks already on it. Most notably, all of the works insert the human element, positively and negatively, back into the landscape and back into the technology.



Margot Kelley, *N 42° 21.459 W 071° 04.225*, 2002, C-print mounted on aluminum, 16 x 20 inches, Courtesy of the artist

Margot Kelley (Cambridge, MA)

Kelley’s project deals with and is inspired by the game of Geocaching (and is the subject of her forthcoming book from the Center for American Places and the University of Chicago Press). A true product of the current era, this 21st century treasure hunt began when someone tested whether the government under President Bill Clinton had indeed lifted their degradation of GPS data in 2000, by hiding and then posting coordinates of a stash to an online group. Geocaching (pronounced geo-cashing) references in part the internet computer term and the hiking/camping term for hiding provisions. Currently, there are close to 140,000 geocaches found in over 200 countries and an estimated million users. Each cache is usually a plastic box that contains a logbook and some trinkets (you take one and leave one). Hunting for geocaches involves knowing simultaneously where you are but not knowing your exact destination, rare in today’s world. When photographing, she underscores this locative conundrum visually; consequently, you never see the caches themselves, but the sentiment or sense

that perhaps this person (known only by a username) wanted to share with the world. In her accompanying poetic descriptions, Kelley touches on everything from narrative to history to philosophy.

Kelley’s diverse background includes a Ph.D. in American Literature from Indiana University and a MFA in photography from Massachusetts College of Art. Currently, she teaches literature at Bentley College. Along with the Nature & Inquiry group related to MassArt’s SIM (Studio for Interrelated Media) program, she collaborated on the award-winning work “Invisible Ideas,” a GPS-enabled Artwalk through the Boston Common and Public Gardens for the Copley Society of Art and the 2003 Boston Cyberarts Festival.

Land / Mark: *Locative Media and Photography* continued

Brooke Knight (Winchester, MA) In his series, *Landmarks*, Knight traveled to cultural and civic attractions in New York City. Instead of looking up, the way most visitors do when ingesting culturally dictated spaces, he looked down to photograph. The coordinates of where foot meets pavement—an oft-overlooked interface—were later acquired and then overlaid over the scene. To these tools, all locations are just a collection of numbers; his images echo this by seeming both alien and monumental. Knight's other work includes "Every Environment is Text Rich #2," completed simultaneously with *Landmarks*, a digital video camera spelling out the title with the camera as well as a new series, ground rubbings of intersections of latitude and longitude minutes combined with photographs of the sky above. Knight received his MFA in photography from California Institute of Arts and is currently an Assistant Professor of New Media at Emerson College. Regionally, he has shown at Art Interactive in Cambridge, ArtSpace in New Haven, and the University of Maine (brookeknight.com).



Brooke Knight, *Landmarks* series, 1999, One of eight ink jet prints, 11 x 14 inches, Courtesy of the artist

Josh Winer (Boston, MA) Winer's work is a part of an ongoing series depicting landscapes in flux. Using a view camera in the tradition of 19th century photographers, Winer seeks out earth as raw material or by-product: a Quincy quarry filled with dirt from the Big Dig, a gravel pit in Vermont, and road salt in Chelsea. While the US geological surveys documented for the purposes of expansion, namely the railroad, Winer's work addresses New England's penchant for reclamation, transformation, and the automobile. The only indication of specificity comes via his titling method using GPS coordinates. We could return to the vicinity, but similar to the Greek philosopher's adage that "one can never step into the same river twice," once recorded, these landscapes have changed, destined to be moved and be torn down at will. Although alluding to the hand of man and other ambitions, agency sometimes seems transferred to the earth. Sand and rocks fall, and ultimately, gravity and entropy take over—the land being marked, and also marking itself. Winer received his MFA in photography from MassArt in 2004. He has served as the media stockroom manager at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Boston Photo Collaborative. Recently, he accepted a position as Lab Manager and Adjunct Faculty at the Art Institute of Boston. His first solo show was at Clifford • Smith Gallery in October 2004.

Yellow Arrow Yellow Arrow participants place arrow stickers at locations of their choosing, and then can post photographs and comments to their website (yellowarrow.net). Each arrow has a unique code, and by sending a text-message (SMS) from a mobile phone to a number a short message becomes attached to a site. If someone encounters an arrow, she can send the code to the number and receive the point associated with it. Cities worldwide are included, with new additions added daily. Through this location-based exchange, the group asserts, "the Yellow Arrow becomes a symbol for the unique characteristics, personal histories, and hidden secrets that live within our everyday spaces." On display at the PRC for the first time will be a live-feed slideshow from their photographic database, which during Cyberarts will showcase only Boston-area arrows. New landmarks are created and the city activated in a recipe that is one part subjective mapping and one part annotated environment. Yellow Arrow has been featured in *Wired Magazine*, *TimeOut NY*, countless international publications, and the Art Basel Festival in Miami. Yellow Arrow is a project initiated by Counts Media, a mobile art, entertainment and theatre company based in New York City (countsmedia.com). The collective's combined background includes photography, experimental live performance, urban exploration, computer programming and location-based storytelling.



Yellow Arrow #g3034, Boston, by "newurban."
TEXT = "Oh, if only I had the words of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. But sometimes, you just don't need to say a thing." Courtesy of "newurban" and yellowarrow.net.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND IMAGES CONTACT:

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ABOUT THE PRC: The Photographic Resource Center is a non-profit organization that exists to facilitate the study and dissemination of information related to photography. Operating from the campus of Boston University, it provides a highly acclaimed exhibition program, a bi-monthly newsletter, lectures, workshops, special events, and a 4,000-volume resource library to our members and the general public. It is supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Boston Cultural Council, numerous private foundations, and the ongoing generosity of its members. The PRC is located at 832 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA, 02215. Public transportation: Green B Line, outbound, BU West stop. Hours are Tuesday through Friday from 10 to 6pm, Thursdays from 10 to 8pm, Saturday and Sunday 12-5pm. Admission is \$3/general public, \$2/students and seniors and free to all on Thursdays and on the last weekend of every month. The PRC is always free to members, Institutional Plus member schools, children under 18, BU students, faculty, and staff, as well as all school groups with appointments. For more information visit our website at www.prcboston.org. The PRC is accessible.

MAPPING Related Events and Exhibitions during Boston Cyberarts

Several community partners are hosting programs and events related to mapping and the environment during the Boston Cyberarts Festival. More information and links will be available at the PRC and via the *Land/Mark* online exhibition at prcboston.org.

ONLINE PRC EXHIBITIONS: May's featured NEO artist, Lior Neiger

During the month of May, Northeast Exposure Online—a web-based initiative of emerging, regional artists—highlights the work of Lior Neiger, MFA candidate at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Featured online will be 2 videos, *Dead Pixel* and *Globe*. Relevant to mapping is *Globe*, in which a split screen shows two globes spinning and then stopping, much like a slot machine. Each time, new boundaries about each other, alluding to political, geographical, historical, and cultural connections.



Lior Neiger (Brighton, MA), *Globe*, 2003, 3 minutes, looped video, Courtesy of the artist

PUBLIC INSTALLATIONS: Geocaches

In order to point to other events and locations and as an act of artistic geocaching, PRC exhibiting artist Margot Kelley will hide geocaches in or near the following places: 1.) the PRC 2.) 119 Gallery in Lowell 3.) inside of "One Pixel" 4.) Space 200. Visit geocaching.com to learn how to begin finding her "cARTographic multi-cache."

LECTURE: Jane Marsching and Thomas Swiss

Cyberarts offering of the Word and Image Series, Co-sponsored by NESOP's Gallery One and the PRC

Wednesday, May 4, 7pm. Boston University School of Communications, 640 Commonwealth Avenue, Auditorium 101

Currently teaching at AIB and MassArt, Jane Marsching is a photographer/sculptor/media artist working with issues of belief, representation, science, and perception. Thomas Swiss is Professor of English and Rhetoric of Inquiry at the University of Iowa as well as an editor/artist in new media poetics (bailwick.lib.uiowa.edu/swiss/directory.htm). Relevant to mapping is Marsching's data mining project, *DeepNorth*, a virtual expedition to the North Pole gathering along the way images, information, stories, and imaginings of our farthest north. Follow her at janemarsching.com

EXHIBITION: On the Map, April 22-June 24, 2005

119 Gallery, 119 Chelmsford Street, Lowell, MA, 119gallery.org

On the Map features traditional prints and video environments that explore real and virtual maps and places. The artists featured are printmaker and composer Deborah and Richard Cornell, new media artist John Craig Freeman, and cartographer and printmaker Steven R Holloway. Cornells' installation is created with the assistance of the Scientific Computing and Visualization Group at Boston University. *On the Map* is the first exhibit in the new 119 Gallery in Lowell.

PUBLIC INSTALLATION/PERFORMANCE: One Pixel

A "satellite" component of the exhibit *On the Map*, *One Pixel* is a collaborative public installation that will be staged in the Fenway area of Boston during the Boston Cyberarts Festival. A "Performance Map" by cartographer Steven R Holloway, participants and volunteers will be directed to visit, document, and experience the approximately 30 x 30 meter area on the ground that is represented by a single pixel in a Landsat7 satellite image. For more info, go to 119gallery.org or email artgal@119gallery.org.

SPEAKER SERIES: "Floating Points 2": Networked Art in Public Spaces at Emerson College

Bill Bordy Theater, 216 Tremont Street, Boston, MA. Panels begin at 7pm. Free and open to the public

For more information and links visit institute.emerson.edu/floatingpoints (discussions will be streamed live on the internet) Emerson College, New Radio and Performing Arts, Inc. (NRPA), and Turbulence.org co-present *Floating Points 2*, a four-part speaker series that explores the ways artists use wireless and networking technologies (Internet, WiFi, GPS, etc.) to transform interactions with one another and our urban and natural environments by taking their work into the streets.

March 30: Pete Gomes and the collaborative team of Jeff Knowlton & Naomi Spellman will talk about recent projects that engage the landscape of the internet, wireless technologies, databases, portable computers, GPS and local surroundings.

April 27: Part of a Cyberarts panel, internationally-renowned artists Julian Bleecker, Elizabeth Goodman, Andrew Shoben of Greyworld, and Teri Rueb will discuss new directions in locative, networked, and mobile media. Rueb will debut a new Turbulence.org commission.

EXHIBITION: "Itinerant" by Teri Rueb, April 22 to May 7, a Turbulence.org commission

Judi Rotenberg Gallery, 130 Newbury Street, Boston, MA, judirotenberg.com

"Blending voices of characters both fictional and first-person, *Itinerant* presents a view of Boston from the inside - as internal monologue. The piece explores the mixed legacy of nomadism and mobility (socioeconomic and geographic) as it has shaped contemporary American life. A walk through downtown Boston with headphones and a GPS-equipped pocket PC reveals an alternately spiraling and linear monologue as it unfolds according to the correspondingly rational and irrational design of the city's streets." Participants can post responses and record the path of their journeys on the project's website.

EXHIBITIONS/PERFORMANCES: "Corporate Commands" and The Institute for Infinitely Small Things

Space 200, 200 State Street, Marketplace Center and the Greater Boston area, April 22-May 29, alternatecurrents.com

Be on the lookout for local art collective The Institute for Infinitely Small Things to lead public expeditions enacting "Corporate Commands" around the city. Donned in white lab coats and using advertising phrases such as "Just do it," the Institute will visit various sites and invite participants on an urban journey of critical cartography within public space. A temporary laboratory for the Institute and its findings will be set up at Alternate Current's new Space 200. To contribute a corporate command go to corporatecommands.com. To find out exact times and locations of expeditions, see infinitelysmallthings.net.

Visit bostoncyberarts.org or pick up a special edition of the Boston Phoenix for complete listings.