

## Chapter 2

# Finding Place: Mapping as Process ...

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## 2.1 Introduction

Through the methodology of a visual artist's approach to mapping Montreal, conventions and modes of cartographic language and literacy are questioned and investigated in regard to expressing and visualising the world in which we live.

Three flights + one taxi ride + five days + sketchbook + pen = Montreal, this is the problem I posed for myself. In attempt to solve this equation through the production of 'art works' with some eloquence and resonance of place, I required a hands-on direct experience with the city. Explored through the process of drawing on and from site this paper outlines my research, discussing the possibility and plausibility of mapping focused on process rather than as complete definitive document.

Place is considered as somewhere we travel to, something we carry with us and also something of ourselves that we leave behind, a trace, a mark. Drawing is posed as an act of reconciling space with self/body, enacted through the execution of a suite of drawings that formed the basis of my research and interaction with the city.

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*... the incidents to be narrated were of a nature so positively marvellous... the public were still not at all disposed to receive it as fable, and several letters were sent... distinctly expressing a conviction to the contrary. I thence concluded that the facts of my narrative would prove of such a nature as to carry with them sufficient evidence of their own authenticity, and that I had consequently little to fear of the score of popular incredulity.*

A.G. PYM.

NEW YORK, July 1838.<sup>1</sup>

Much like Edgar Allan Poe's character, the south sea adventurer Arthur Gordon Pym describes, the questionable authority placed in the hands of the author in delivering truth and accuracy to the public is indeed a daunting task. Expectation and plausibility can far outweigh the cold hard truth. The "*unavoidable exaggeration to*

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<sup>1</sup> Poe, Edgar Allen. 1838. *Arthur Gordon Pym and other tales*. London: RE King & Co Ltd, 7- 8.

*which all of us are prone when detailing events which have had powerful influence in exciting the imaginative faculties,"*<sup>2</sup> can lead us into much more intriguing and satisfying territory, despite a loose grip on reality. When it comes to the map does personal bias always cloud analytical findings? What can provide some surety to accuracy, some definitive record, or is 'truth' defunct?

## 2.2 Mapping The Real

For millennia the map has played an integral role in defining and representing the 'real.' Used to relay information, visualize and conceptualize space the map has held an authoritative position for understanding our world. JB Harley describes, "*maps as reciprocal images used to mediate different views of the world.*" Their position as a graphic visual language rich in symbolism, iconography and scientific factual information, places the map in a position of apparent power. From this venerated and authoritative stance it can be easy to forget or overlook the relatively humble beginnings of the act of mapping simply as a means of representing spaces graphically; a line, a mark, colour, shape. In essence these acts fall into the category of visual language, one with which an artist is intimately familiar.

The complexity of maps, despite their humble beginnings should not be underestimated by the simple act of linear demarcation. The cognitive understanding and transfer of information from the three dimensional 'real' into the abstracted two-dimensional visual representation of space is a highly sophisticated activity. The process of articulating space and the physical into the abstract form of document and visual communication is a difficult task, as anyone who has picked up a pencil and tried to draw what they see before them can attest to. This problematic transfer and translation of *lived* to *documented* experience is practiced by cartographers and artists alike. The difficulty lies in the telling of 'truth', in the accuracy of faithfully *re-presenting* the real. So in the map have we found the "*statement so minute and connected as to have the appearance of truth,*"<sup>3</sup> that Pym speaks of?

It is possible to recognise maps not only as scientific records as is so readily accepted, but perhaps more usefully so as social and cultural texts. Harley suggests (quoting Muehrcke) "*to acknowledge that all cartography is an intricate, controlled fiction.*"<sup>4</sup> He discounts the authority that is given to 'scientific cartography' claiming that deviation, bias and distortion cannot be avoided. Social and cultural context and the role that perception, politics and power play in the depiction and relay of

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Poe, Edgar Allen. 1838. *Arthur Gordon Pym and other tales*. London: RE King & Co Ltd, 7- 8.

<sup>4</sup> Harley, J. B. 2002. *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 63. (Muehrcke, P. C. 1978. *Map Use: Reading, Analysis and Interpretation*. Madison: JP Publications)

information should be equally recognised. He warns that accuracy deemed truthful, based purely on a scientific approach is dubious and limited, not to mention socially irresponsible and misleading.<sup>5</sup> We also know the worlds maps depict are much more colourful and varied; regularly ‘real,’ and derived from the physical, sometimes reliant upon experience, but just as often they are imagined, taken from memory, the metaphysical, or simply contemplated.

The commonality of the map within our daily lives is surprising and unashamedly familiar, yet our difficulty in deciphering and decoding their hidden language is frustratingly apparent and frequently felt. Dependent upon the quality of information gathered, its expression and communication within conventional frameworks, the uncertainty of the map as a definitive document of truth presents great difficulty for both author and audience alike. Misinterpretation and misrepresentation are rife within the world of maps, with the complexities of politics, power and struggle defining and distorting the spaces they record. So is it futile to presume that some truth or accuracy can be gleaned from these documents of apparent deception?

### 2.3 Mapping Montreal

Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010.

And so I find myself in Montreal, Canada faced with the fearsome task of creating such a loaded document. A map, a seemingly unassuming three lettered word, meagre in size and yet mighty in implication. I approach mapping from the perspective of a visual artist, not as a cartographer in the *true* or scientific sense, but as someone interested in the experience of ‘being in the world,’ perhaps more aligned to the phenomenological philosophies of Merleau-Ponty or Heidegger.<sup>6</sup> My interest is in how drawing can physically occupy the spaces we inhabit. From this standpoint my work generally falls into the gallery or exhibition category, but also ventures out into the public domain and is often specific to a site. I think of drawing in both two and three-dimensional terms, as something, which can occupy space, generate place, as well as being representational of it. With these particular interests in mind I use a wide variety of materials to ‘draw’ with and upon. Drawing for me is a way of reconciling space with self/body and a means of understanding and locating myself within *my* world. My work explores notions of place and identity and the complex relationships and dynamic between self and environment. Drawing is therefore a

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<sup>5</sup> Harley, J. B. 2002. *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

<sup>6</sup> Heidegger, M. 1962. (trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson). *Being and Time*. New York: Harper and Row.

Merleau-Ponty, M. *The Primacy of Perception*. ed. J. Edie, Evanston: Northwestern University Press.





**Fig. 2.2** Pages from artist's journal of Montreal

ideas about place and identity through the use of varied materials, and physical interaction/occupation of three-dimensional space. The three dimensional work closely refers back to and relies on those initial experiences that I have 'drawn' from life.

Necessary if not crucial for this methodology is my experience of place. Heidegger's *being in the world*, - time to walk, to look, to smell, taste, hear and feel, and Merleau-Ponty's notion of returning to the world which precedes knowledge go some way to explaining this process of encounter. It is the excitement and delight of discovery, which feeds my curiosity and drives the generation of new work. My perception of place is simultaneously created, torn down and re-created through my presence, allowing the construction of meaning within my work. "*All perceiving is also thinking, all reasoning is also intuition, all observation is also invention,*"<sup>7</sup> as written by Rudolf Arnheim describes this essential element of my artistic process and investigation. So perhaps I am a cartographer after all (if I may be so bold as to employ the term within present company)?

Maps are visualised conceptual constructs, visual ideas and descriptions; they convey an understanding of our position within the three-dimensional 'real' world. The complexity of their description and decoding by author/user presents a highly intellectual and sophisticated method of describing ourselves in relation to place/location in both a physical and socio cultural context. So do my drawings and the

<sup>7</sup> Arnheim, R. 1974. *Art and Visual Perception: A psychology of the creative eye*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Berkeley: University of California Press, 8.

journals in which they are contained fall into mapping territory? For me, yes they do.

The journals are documents of my encounter with the world and my attempt to visually communicate and express this. They are documents of engagement, *my* record of being in the world, and because of this they carry a truth about *my* experience. James Corner says, “*the power of maps resides in their facticity. The analytical measure of factual objectivity.*”<sup>8</sup> My drawings and recordings are taken from observation, they are objective and visually analytical, but they have equal consideration and acknowledgement of the subjective. My jottings and recordings each day go some way to determining my subjective response to what I saw and felt happening around me. What was worthy of recording? Each response is simultaneously subjective and objective and reliant on the other. Within my exploration both have equal weight and importance.

Broadly across both cartographic and visual art realms the map is created specifically with a viewer in mind. The cartographer presents information to be communicated and interpreted by a viewer and so does the artist. The conventional defining structures that these operate within however, determine two very different types of documents. The map is highly analytical and quantitative; apparently distanced from the author (impartial?), while the work of art; qualitative and highly self-referential. It is this aspect of denying or embracing self-reference I think which stands these two documents apart, but only at a first glance. In the case of the cartographer self-reference is deliberately removed in favour of the ‘impartial’ truth. As an artist it is specifically *my* experience that drives production and determines the information shared. Defined by the terminology one is objective and the other subjective, however if I return to my earlier explanation, I would argue that my ‘maps’ are essentially both quantitative and qualitative. In light of writers such as Harley, and Wood it is suggested that the cartographer’s map also carries the subjective in equal amounts.

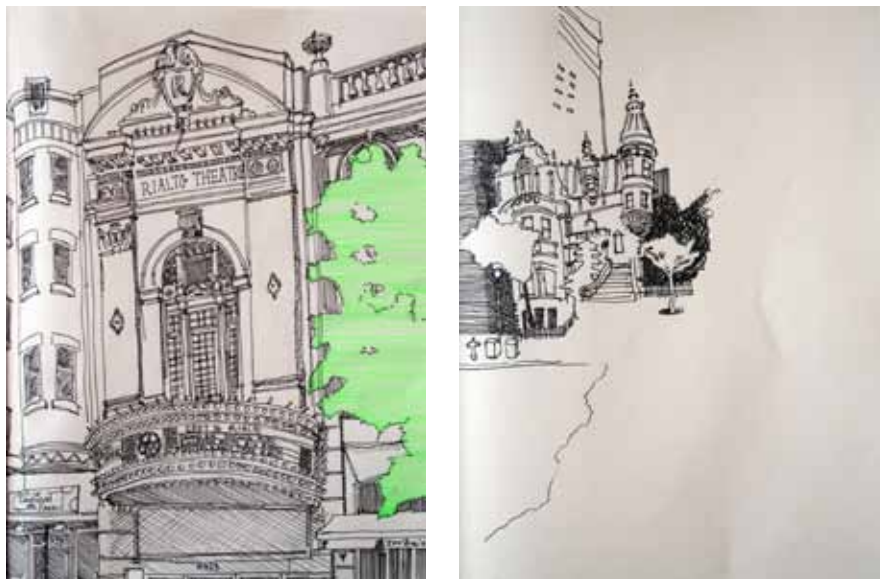
To compare, the cartographer’s aim is to objectively present the data, and it is from the accuracy of this process that the map is deemed to have some ‘truth.’ However as was discussed amongst the workshop group, ‘truth’ doesn’t always equate with effective communication of information. Is truth relative to context, one person’s fact is another’s fiction, and what about bias? Harley distinguishes between the external and internal power of maps, “*the cartographer has never been an independent artist, craftsman, or technician.*”<sup>9</sup> The power exerted upon maps by politics and the interests of commissioners (and authors) places the cartographer immediately removed from the so-called ‘objective’ view they are supposed to embody. Further discussion amongst the group posed the interesting question

<sup>8</sup> Cosgrove, D. ed. 1999. *Mappings*. London: Reaktion Books, 251.

<sup>9</sup> Harley, J. B. 2002. *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 63.

of sacrificing ‘truth’ for more effective conveyance of information. Sometimes the facts have to be fudged in order for clarification and effective delivery. Clinging to quantitative facts and truth as being absolute is then perhaps a futile endeavour, and in Harley’s view impossible. So I ponder if the effectiveness of maps lies less within their quantitative data and more from their ability to communicate information in some kind of meaningful way or as posed by Wood how the map “*will link its readers to the world it embodies.*”<sup>10</sup>

For the purpose of the workshop information was presented in a range of data sets and accessible via the Internet prior to arrival in Montreal. In preparation I printed each of these out and viewed them carefully; columns, lists, figures, and names with some reference to the island of Montreal, apparently. Fortunately for me I was able to remain comfortably distant from the scientific analysis and data, lacking the necessary language to decode the information. With a visual practice predominantly exploring notions of place and identity through the disciplines of drawing and installation, I faced a difficult if not impossible task in identifying with the database supplied. I found the information presented removed from context and without visual reference aside from colour coded charts non relational to my working methods. So I found very little I could respond to. An alternative approach was required, a plan B.



**Fig. 2.3** Pages from artist’s journal

<sup>10</sup> Wood, D. 1992. *The Power of Maps*. New York: Guildford Press, 18.

## 2.4 Drawing Place

Three flights + one taxi ride + five days + journal + pen = Montreal, this is the problem I posed for myself, all thrown in with a dose of jet lag and geo-cultural dislocation. In an attempt to solve this equation through the production of 'art works' with some eloquence and resonance of place, I required a hands-on direct experience with the city. It would be a whirlwind trip with just a few days to encounter and discover. My interpretation of the data would stem from my experience of the city, from walking, sitting, seeing and 'being' in this place. The reference for my map was simultaneously the city and myself. The city became my ultimate point of self-reference, and my map/drawing, the record of this interaction.

Previously I had considered 'place' as somewhere we travel to in the geographic sense, and as something we carry with us from one location to another, a kind of visual and perceptual construct. As I came to understand through this mapping process 'place' might also be something of ourselves that we leave behind; a trace, a mark, such as placing ourselves on or on to the landscape, in this case the city of Montreal. I became both control and catalyst within my experiment with the aim to view objectively while relying upon my subjective experience to quantify the findings.

Drawing as a process of reconciling space with self/body through physical act, inscription and imposition became enacted through the execution of a suite of drawings that formed the basis of my research and interaction with the city. I deliberately chose to work using a black felt tip pen to render some immediacy to the moment of looking. Mistakes and errors in judgement were exposed in the permanency of the ink, erasure and correction forsaken for the truth of being in the moment. The felt tip allowed me to be more concerned with the act of looking than with the 'look' of the drawing. The preciousness of correction possible with the pencil seemed in danger of removing me from the experience of seeing the city, so the felt tip resolved this problem. The difficulty of seeing I hoped would carry with it some integrity, some truth of my experience and so meaning for viewer and author alike.

This path of investigation presented a new framework of thinking in which to consider the act of mapping and drawing through my practice as a visual artist. Using the city as both database, site of representation and interpretation became integral to my mapping process through interaction and observation. From this approach, viewpoint and the authority of the author became important points of consideration. Along with completing my own drawings in situ, I left several notebooks at locations around the city situated in the street, outside community gardens, on park benches and so on.

The notebooks invited passers-by to draw a map explaining where they had travelled from to this point, how they had travelled, their name and age. I fanta-





sised about the possibility of accumulating enough hand drawn maps to eventually map the entire island of Montreal – how exciting that city would be to discover! On collecting the maps it then occurred to me that maybe they were reliant on their context, of being within the city rather than removed from it. The maps knew themselves by a described position in relation to their fixity in the site. Would they become meaningless when separated, the data non-referential and so un-readable to the viewer?

## 2.5 Framing

Back to the group: it seemed the assumption was that the map exists within a predetermined frame, separate from physical context, and most frequently upon the computer screen. While sitting in the workshop on the twelfth floor of Concordia University, the snap shot views looking over the city out of the windows around the room caught my attention. Each view captured beautifully within the window frame presented a contained compositional delight of overlapping geometric shapes and patterns. They were captivating but disjointed views, isolated sections of the city, non relational, disconnected.

Opening up my journal and taking my felt tip I began by drawing the rectangular window frame, placing it comfortably within the confines of the page. With the frame now in place I began sizing up the arrangements of shapes of the view,

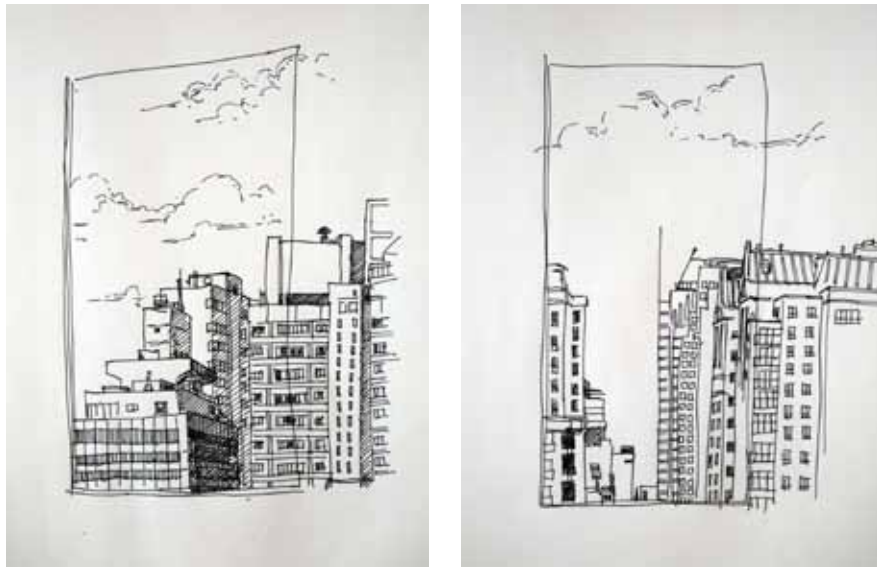
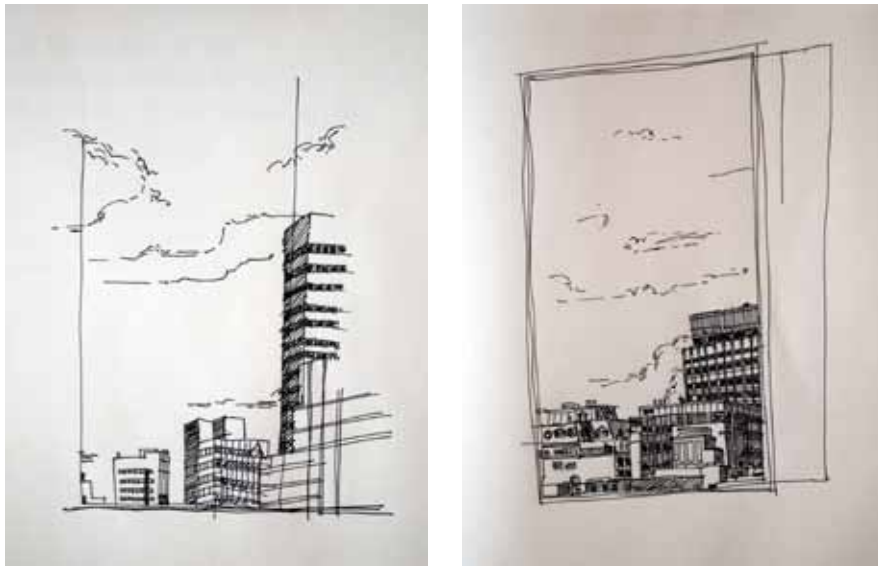


Fig. 2.6 Artist's drawn views from Concordia University Building

carefully visually adjusting proportion and scale to fit into my new window on the page. On each occasion of drawing the view from four of the windows, I found the drawing sprawled out of the designated frame. After the first drawing I especially concentrated on the second to try and make sure the drawing remained within the frame, but again despite my efforts it crept outside, and again in the third and finally the fourth. Using the felt tip prevented me from making corrections or erasing, so each time I had to follow the drawing and work with the mistakes, but each time trying to combat my apparent lack of coordination between what I was seeing and what I was drawing. The drawing seemed to have a mind of its own and suggest where its boundaries lay. It was as though my journey both visually and across the page was to create my own contexts for the city, to think beyond the contained and confined views of what I was seeing. The pen dragging across the surface of the page allowed a new way to traverse, to interact and enact the city.

The problem of the frame presented itself in a similar way while drawing out on the street. This time I used the edges of the page to determine where the drawing would end. Using the felt tip again meant that I would begin somewhere in the middle and work outwards, my eye travelling over the terrain and my pen following as best it could to keep up. In both examples my drawings appeared to be creeping off the page, leading me beyond the edges. I wondered looking back at the drawings what might be going on beyond the edge of the page, in a similar way to the wonder that kept me walking on to see what was around the next bend. It led me to ponder, ‘what if the frame becomes fluid and moveable?’



**Fig. 2.7** Artist's drawn views from Concordia University Building

## 2.6 Locating The Map

The formal notion of the map operates strictly within the frame and safely removed from physical context. It only returns to site through the user, but forever remains distant in its recollection. Stepping out onto the street from the bowels of the metro I popped up map in hand, looking about like a meerkat trying to figure out on which side of the street I was, and therefore if a left or right turn would take me in the desired direction. The map in all its apparent clarity didn't account for metro stations with multiple exits and try as I might to figure out the cardinal points from the sun I wandered off in what I thought was the right direction only to find after ten or so minutes that the left in fact would have been a wiser decision. If only the footpath where I surfaced out onto the street was inscribed with an arrow showing north! I contemplated finding some chalk to help out the next directionally challenged tourist. The uncertainty and mistrusts presented in the formal map suggested that an alternative within or inscribed into site could more effectively communicate the required information.

So if the map is to be located within the city, where is it appropriate to draw and what is it appropriate draw on? What are useful points of reference? We know that breadcrumbs didn't work for poor Hansel and Gretel, chalk washes away in the rain and I wasn't too keen on being deported for drawing/graffiti-ing on the street. As I looked for an appropriate location to draw, and maybe draw on, I discovered evidence of the city mapping itself in a number of ways.



Fig. 2.8 Examples of street (mapping) art in Montreal

## 2.7 Landmarks And ‘Man Marks

Landmarks, and ‘man marks, various formal and informal methods of locating oneself were evident all across the city. The usual suspects of more traditional methods, (to be found in most cities across the globe) such as street signage didn’t do much in the way of really describing my position in relation to place, apart from the bilingual text. Their unofficial counterparts however displayed the unique character of this French speaking Canadian city and a flavour all its own. There was of course the customary graffiti, synonymous with cities all across the world, not always interesting or creative, more often like discarded cigarette butts – environmentally unfriendly, unsightly and non-descript. With a little closer observation however some wonderful examples of colloquial street culture revealed themselves. Inuit tagging, a script completely foreign to an Australian read more like a drawing than text to unfamiliar eyes, a doodle of presence. Other anglicised versions, with sly humour, political and social comment, expertly executed delivered messages of this specific place and location. Clever, playful, insightful and definitively Quebecois ‘notations’ were to be found across the city; murals, graffiti, notices about lost cats, dropped notes with unknown names and phone numbers, decorated garden fences, and brightly coloured wool wound around the pole of a parking sign.

All of these unofficial mappings spoke so much more of *this* city, its inhabitants and *real* world action/interaction, and all questioning the authority or value of the autonomous in favour of collective authorship and representation. Considering multiple map users and multiple authors points to online collaborative mapping sites



Fig. 2.9 Evidence of the city mapping itself; architecture and signage

such as the Open Street Map,<sup>11</sup> and Platial<sup>12</sup>. These operate well within their limited context, but are again removed from actual site and exist purely on the computer screen. What I found most exciting was the implication of the map *re-presenting* location; site and map coexisting in the same given space.

## 2.8 Documents Of Exchange

Mobile technologies, interactive and collaborative activities such as geo caching, urban projects by groups such as *MapHub*<sup>13</sup>, *Blast Theory*<sup>14</sup> and *PVI Collective*<sup>15</sup> are offering alternatives to conventional methods of generation, display and dissemination. GPS and smart phone technology is beginning to allow this to happen, but these devices still operate within a removed context although they can be carried in site. There is something tangible about direct physical interaction/experience (as in the process of drawing) that these wonders of technology are still separating us from. *Grassroots Mapping*<sup>16</sup> with their collaborative, open source approach to participatory mapping present a more site-derived and hands on method, but again their maps are removed from site, but perhaps this is more about the sharing of information and documentation. The *Hand Drawn Map Association*<sup>17</sup> supports a shared web archive of user submitted hand drawn maps and diagrams. As pointed out by a reviewer on the site “*at the time they were drawn, these maps were useful and meant to explain something. But now these saved maps become records of a moment passed.*”<sup>18</sup> The map located in-site, re-framing the context as both a physical and cognitive point of reference via direct engagement i.e. the map as landmark and ‘man mark with some kind of site specificity and reliance or adherence to location, becomes a much more exciting possibility.

As mentioned earlier it is as though I carry around an invisible framing device within my consciousness, a cognitive mapping of the spaces I encounter. This seems to determine the types of visual information I am attracted to drawing. The built fabric of the city, the architecture and design present innumerable compositions for me to contemplate. The city itself becomes my frame and ultimate point of self-reference and difference – the necessary other. The geometry, layering and density

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.openstreetmap.org>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.platial.com>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.maphub.org>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.blasttheory.co.uk>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.pvicollective.com>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.grassrootsmapping.org>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.handmaps.org>

<sup>18</sup> Rothman, Julia. 2010. From Here To There. Hand Drawn Map Association website <http://handmaps.org/connect.php>. Accessed 30 January 2011.

of the city fascinate me as the mark of ‘man on nature, a way of stabilizing ourselves within the infinite of space and time. Architecture features heavily in my work in



**Fig. 2.10** Evidence of the city mapping itself; coloured wool and street art

both two and three-dimensional form as a signifier of place. Its control and intervention of how we physically encounter and conceptually organise and perceive space presents a means of exploring the relationship between two and three dimensions.

Knowing space, travelling through space and (*re*)generating space all become elements of consideration whilst making mark on surface through the act of drawing. Conventionally drawing is flat and exists on a flat surface (as with mapping), it merely impersonates space or illusionistically reconfigures. What happens when drawing (or mapping) steps outside of these conventional borders of the page and traditional materiality? In my practice drawing is explored and continually pushed and pulled through material exploration into three dimensions. Alternative materials such as wire, light and thread manifest the drawn line into a physical space and sense of being. It is this dynamic, which drives my investigation. When does drawing become sculpture? When does sculpture become drawing and what role does site and location play in relation to the positioning/reading of the work?

Drawing and the map sit precariously within this ambiguous territory. They both construct alternate realities, yet reference the real three-dimensional world. They are often used to describe our experience of place, while frequently being physically and conceptually removed from it. They borrow from and yet simultaneously create their own reality separate from that which they reference. James Corner writes,

*“the unfolding agency of mapping is most effective when its capacity for description also sets the conditions for the new eidetic and physical worlds to emerge. Unlike tracings, which propagate redundancies, mappings discover new worlds within past and present*

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*ones; they inaugurate new grounds upon the hidden traces of a living context.*"<sup>19</sup>

If we consider the abstract geographies that maps construct, why is it so hard to embrace the subjective invention in favour of the analytical and quantitative? Ambiguity and uncertainty concern the cartographers in the group; in it they see a failure of the map as an accurate representation of the data. The discrepancies visually misrepresent and misinterpret. Wood argues that maps construct, not reproduce the world, and states that to take away the frame (or to ignore it) and focus more on the information that is selectively presented in some ethical sense then accuracy is a lesser issue of concern.<sup>20</sup> He gives an interesting example to illustrate this point of a plate from the *Times Atlas* describing the border between Israel and Jordan. Series of dotted and dashed lines speak of various political boundaries with disputed claims to territory. As he points out their location is not uncertain, everyone agrees with their position in respect to latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates. The discrepancy lies however in the ownership and therefore meaning or significance these lines carry for various ethnic groups from the region.<sup>21</sup>

As an alternative if we think about maps as being sites of transfer, as documents of selection and codification rather than as absolute records of the real (as we know this is not the case), then as documents of exchange perhaps they have a greater agency and potential meaning for the user. If we consider maps as sites to trade experience and information, rather than as closed definitive documents there is room for ambiguity.

Interpretation is enacted as the act of making sense and assigning meaning through a process of interaction. As with my own notions of place these can be built up, torn down and constantly reconstructed. Re-locating the map within space and within its location of reference, instead of being removed from place, to allow collaborative authorship via use, potentially opens up a whole new way of thinking about the map. The delight of discovery, of seeing where the road takes you is one of the most satisfying parts of finding oneself within a foreign city. To not know what is around the next corner keeps me walking for hours, simply enjoying the indulgence of seeing and experiencing new things. The map's role is not to replace the real, but to act as an interface, a connection between the real and imagined world. In the case of my inquiry, that interface is enacted through the process of drawing as an ongoing conversation between subjective and objective experience, between the physical and metaphysical.

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<sup>19</sup> Corner, James. 1999. The Agency of Mapping. In *Mappings*, ed. Denis Cosgrove, 214. London: Reaktion Books.

<sup>20</sup> Wood, D. 1992. *The Power of Maps*. New York: Guildford Press.

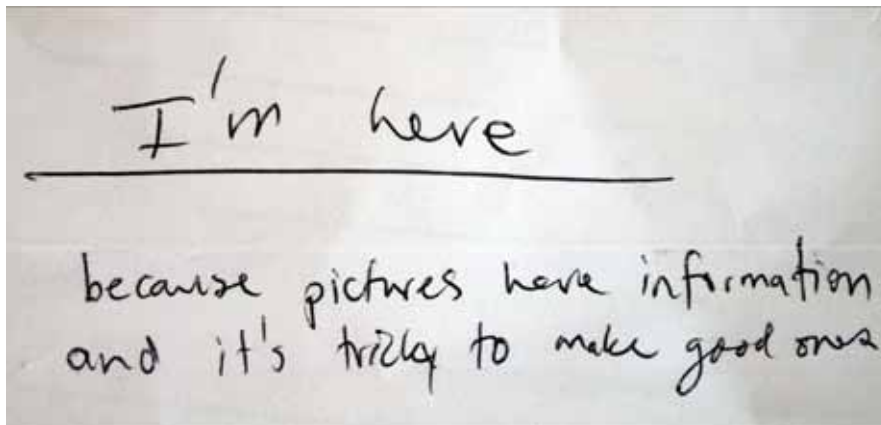
<sup>21</sup> Wood, D. 1992. *The Power of Maps*. New York: Guildford Press, 21.



## 2.9 Following The Breadcrumbs...

Returning to my journal and the drawings within, they carry some hint of uncertainty and indecision, they speak of a process of inquiry, of deliberate incompleteness. The meandering of the line speaks of the search, the discovery, while the intensity of the ink and its regularity - a particular and attentive level of concentration and engagement. These are perceptive reflections about corporeal looking. Drawings and drawing (noun and verb) are haptic expressions of inscription in and into the world. The stimulus for their enaction cannot be found within spreadsheets of facts and figures. Considering the examples I found within the city as well as my own renderings as tangible 'maps,' these are working documents of inquiry and research. They are a starting point for further investigation and development. It is the act of mapping as an ongoing process that reveals a truth, not in the infinite sense, but more of an intensely intimate and individual representation. The integrity of an intensely personal experience, that hopefully results in some kind of purport for the user.

Ambiguity of experience, uncertainty and discovery consider body as a bridge between being and world, and the necessity of 'lived experience' to construct meaning. Removal from location and *re*-presentation outside the site of reference question the usability and value of the map and the effective conveyance or communication of meaning. It also suggests that multiple viewpoints or perspectives in relation to authorship and audience perhaps may be of more use i.e. the non-autonomous map. If I return to Harley's role of the map as being a reciprocal image used to



**Fig. 2.11** Detail from map drawn by workshop participant in response to on site drawing exercise

mediate different views of the world, the map becomes an enacted space rather than a static document. Mediation occurs via its openness and accessibility to multiple user/authors. With the siting of the map within physical context the circumstances

and perceptions of how the map is made, enacted upon and interacted with are evident. Reconstruction of the physical and social settings for the consumption of the map and for it to be meaningful or to hold some truth is not required and therefore accuracy no longer an issue. Instead the map exists simultaneously and symbiotically within the environment from which it is derived; map and site are intravenously obligate.

In respect to my investigation these all became important elements and were evidenced within the city mapping itself, reinforcing the fundamental need for their consideration. My own drawings were a starting point and a necessary cognitive activity for me to experience place and begin pushing my own ideas about how locations can be mapped through the act of drawing. Drawing in its most direct sense will always remain for me the most immediate and truthful way that I can convey and communicate my perception of the world. The humble scratchings of a pen or pencil on paper ignite an infinite range of possibilities through the employ of a broad range of conventional and non-conventional materials. The tools and technologies may change and evolve, however the intrinsic value of marking the world through the act of drawing reveals a truth of experience that carries a quality explicitly unique; that of the human hand which is inevitably connected to the brain. Perception and the value of looking through another's eyes are why artists deem it necessary and ultimately essential to express themselves through the process of artistic investigation.

*"If we are truly concerned with the social consequences of what happens when we make a map, then we might also decide that cartography is too important to be left entirely to cartographers."*<sup>22</sup>

Through the methodology of this artist's approach to mapping Montreal, conventions and modes of cartographic language and literacy are questioned and investigated in regard to effectively expressing and visualising the world in which we live. The recognition of the equal value of both subjective and objective experience is to be evidenced in the very nature of a workshop of this kind focusing on art and cartography as worthy collaborators. The possibility and plausibility of mapping focused on process and dialogue rather than as complete definitive document, such as in an artist's approach should perhaps be afforded the cartographer without their credibility or authentic value of the map being questioned.

By accepting maps as cultural texts we are able to embrace a number of different interpretive possibilities, but at some point you need to know where you are when it's time to go home. Fortunately for me I was able to follow my slippery, albeit stimulating path back from whence I came to the great southern *Terra Incognita*.

All places are essentially unknown. So we delineate, describe and demarcate,

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<sup>22</sup> Harley, J. B. 2002. *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 203.

but even then the notion of 'place' exists within the relatively flimsy framework of self-reference, between that of self and other. Containment is impossible, futile and misleading. 'Place' is somewhere we travel to, something we carry with us, and something of ourselves we leave behind. So perhaps to consider the map and mapping in the same light will, if just for a moment carry *the appearance of truth*.

*... I thence concluded that the facts of my narrative would prove of such a nature as to carry with them sufficient evidence of their own authenticity, and that I had consequently little to fear of the score of popular incredulity.*

A.G. PYM.

NEW YORK, *July 1838*.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Poe, Edgar Allan. 1838. *Arthur Gordon Pym and other tales*. London: RE King & Co Ltd, 8.