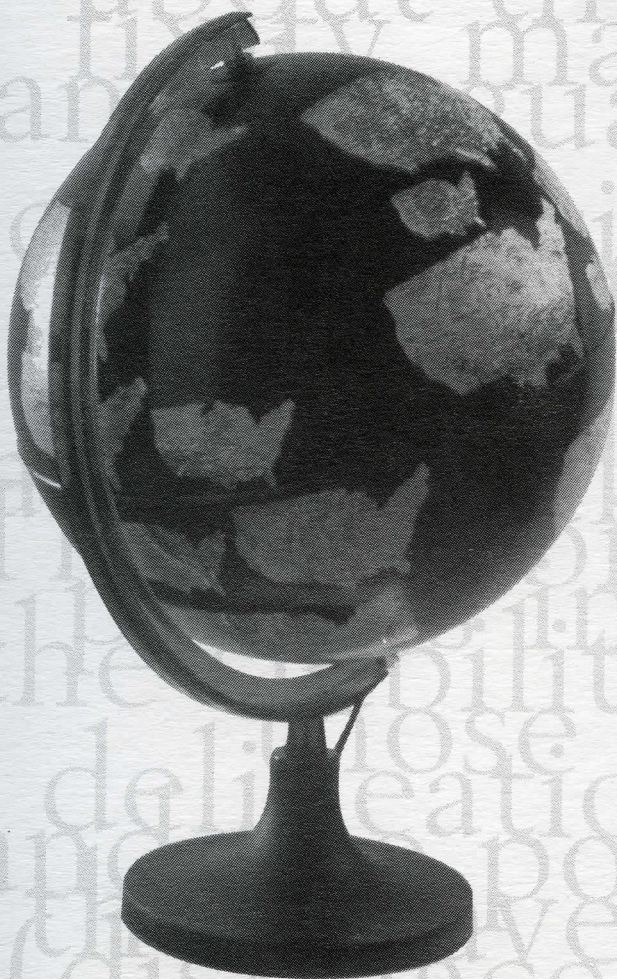


# **Text and Territory: Navigating through Immigration and Dislocation**

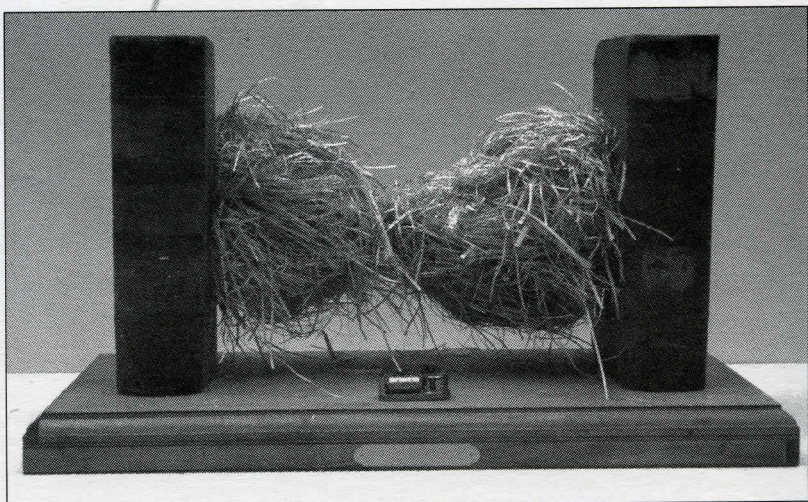
6 October through 8 November

Opening Reception: 6 October at 7pm

Panel Discussion: 7 October at 7pm







**Joe Nicastri and Sherri Tan**

*The Penal Colony*, book, paper, music box, wood, brass, 12 1/4" x 21 3/8" x 11", 1998

In a poem accompanying his wall sculpture

*Obviously, There Are Such Towns*, Dan Rose writes:

"With [this] collection of earths and texts I can  
reconstruct the recent world."

## Text and Territory: Navigating through Immigration and Dislocation

comments on the use of earth as territory, and  
text as a force, in identity formation. From a floor of  
law books to embroidered cloth—and including wall

sculpture, painting,  
photography, and film—  
the many mediums in the  
exhibition conglomerate  
into a plurality of  
approaches to the  
same question: How is  
cultural identity formed  
and maintained using  
maps and language?

*Screen background:*

**Julie Mehretu**

*Untitled*

ink on vellum mounted on board

21" x 27" framed

1998

*Cover:*

**David Wojnarowicz**

*Globe of the United States*

mixed media

16" x 12" x 12"

1990

Courtesy of PPOW and the estate  
of David Wojnarowicz.

This exhibition is partially funded by  
a grant from the Illinois Arts Council,  
a state agency, and  
Border Subjects 3: (Dis)Locations in Culture

design by Richard Russell

— Jean Luther, curator



The artists in *Text and Territory* approach this question from disparate backgrounds and locations.

**Joe Nicastrì** and **Sherri Tan** utilize law books, canonical texts, and plot maps to create sculptures that are as beautiful as they are troubling. The installation focuses on the use of text as a marginalizing vehicle leading to surplus population groups. Referring to scorched imagery of the Holocaust, these works address how both legal and religious text can be used to justify atrocities of intolerance and racism—then and now.

The other artists in *Text and Territory* concern themselves with issues of the postcolonial subject, particularly the effects of hybridity.

**Indira Freitas Johnson** articulates the sensation of hybridity by combining the traditional needlecraft of India with sweepstakes entries. Johnson probes into the empty promise of “instant value” offered to the immigrant by American corporations. The work exemplifies the process of subversion through which minorities adapt superficially to the hegemony without rejecting their cultural identity.

*Pure Chutney*, a film co-directed by **Amitava Kumar**, articulates the diversity and hybridity of Trinidadian-Indian culture with a sophisticated awareness of the difference between individuals and the community in which those individuals participate. Hybridity often involves technology—revealed as problematic for the women portrayed in *Vanishing Orient: Papa's Harem Is Shifting to Mama's Civil Society*. The text and photography of *Vanishing Orient*, a collaboration between photographer **Ruth Ward** and writer **Fatema Mernissi**, disturbs the notion of the Orient revealing the power and, conversely, the difficulties of women in the Moslem world.



Where

Rose appropriates objects associated with "uncleanness," **David Wojnarowicz** appropriates images in a more propagandistic effort to subvert the authority tangled in roads and maps. Whether incorporating territorial lines drawn on a map or visible lines delineating the difference between bodies, Wojnarowicz vividly undermines the boundaries of identity. These paintings critique the systems of capitalism and nationalism in a colorful struggle for identity, be it national, economic, socio-political or sexual.

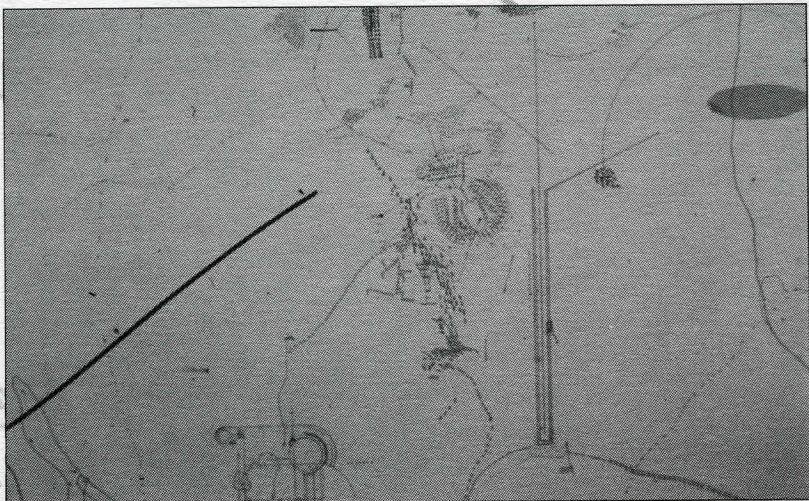
Suggesting

that the boundaries between peoples are as constructed and dislocating as the illusory boundaries between nature and culture, **Dan Rose** uses the individual as a locus through which we examine our problematic intervention with one another and the materials of the world. In this series, Rose uses cooked earth—dirt as a base medium, swept out of all the houses of the world—as a problematic medium and locator. Accompanied by poetic texts, the wall sculptures elucidate the collapse of distance, and the uncleanness of dirt as metaphor for the uncertain future of the interconnectedness of people(s).

On

yet another front, vibrating between image and information, **Julie Mehretu's** work elaborates the pattern of migration in images that reveal movement of people and the passage of time through layers of drawing. Mehretu maps spaces from a corner of a room to the blueprint of a building, expanding outward into topography and migration patterns. The layers of the work function independently, yet assert the connections between each.





**Julie Mehretu**

*Untitled, ink on vellum mounted on board, 21" x 27" framed, 1998*

The artists in  
**Text and  
Territory**  
reveal to us how,  
strangely enough,  
identity can be constructed  
through lines and words drawn  
on paper. Despite our assumptions  
about their fixity, maps and languages are  
constructions we use to define our surroundings  
and ourselves. The exhibition probes into  
the stability  
of those  
delineations  
and the power  
they have to  
(dis)place us.

**Panel discussion  
with artists**

Joe Nicastrì, Dan Rose, Julie Mehretu and  
curator Jean Luther, on October 7th at 7pm.

**in conjunction with the  
exhibition—  
Border Subjects 3:  
(Dis)locations in Culture**

The conference,  
running October 8 - 10, concludes with  
a talk by *Pure Chutney* co-director  
Amitava Kumar, on October 10th at 7pm.

