

**Decolonizing the Map**  
**Pratt Institute**  
**Wed, April 4, 2018**  
**12:30-2:00 PM and 5:00-8:00 PM**

[Bios and Abstracts available on doubleoperative.com](http://doubleoperative.com)

In the mapping of empire and settler colonialisms, the orthogonal line of the surveyor's transom delineated the borders and walls of the slave labor camp, the Indian reservation, the concentration camp, the refugee camp and the modern city. "Decolonizing the Map," a round table discussion of architects, social theorists, artists and film makers sets out to reveal what the maps of empire and settler colonialisms still attempt to obscure, which is that the borders and walls are perforated, and the lines of flight are rhizomatic and fluid rather than hierarchical, linear and hegemonic. The map is not the territory.

In a roundtable format, each of the presenters in the symposium will introduce research that challenge the maps of empire and settler colonialism on their own terms and show the ways in which new forms of mapping are taking place in, around and through the maps of the nation state, racial capitalism, and the walls and fences of the crisis culture of late capitalism.

12:30-2:00

Alumni Reading Room  
Unmapping place and space  
Walis Johnson  
Jenna Bliss  
Paul Haacke

5:00 PM

Higgins Hall Auditorium  
Unmapping architecture  
Gonzalo J. Lopez  
Lori Gibbs

Keynote

Higgins Hall Auditorium

6:00 PM

Eyal Weizman  
Forensic Architecture

## **Decolonizing the Map Abstracts**

### **The Red Line Archive Project Wallis Johnson**

The Red Line Archive Project is a constellation of socially-engaged art projects that work separately and together to engage New York City residents in a conversation about race, wealth and the history of the 1938 Federal Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) Red Line Maps that created the segregated neighborhoods of the city. The project was created in response to the artist's family archive and history of property ownership. It currently includes a mobile "cabinet of curiosities" wheeled along city streets and a participatory walk that create a narrative of urban history and geography that is tangible and poetic, concrete and ephemeral. The Archive brings together discursive, often unruly and seemingly disconnected fragments of the artist's research and family history of property ownership where the narrative of redlining has been erased or concealed. The work helps us consider the past and imagine a different future

### **The People's Detox Jenna Bliss**

In November 1970, Lincoln Hospital in the South Bronx was taken over for the second time through the collective organizing of local heroin addicts, revolutionary health organizations, the Young Lords and members of the Black Panther Party. This talk will discuss how the establishment of a drug detoxification program that served the needs of the community existed within the very medical establishment that many groups involved were in direct conflict with. Through political education, the clinic examined the role of global politics in the influx of heroin into urban centers as well as the economic incentives of the established protocols for drug treatment. With the introduction of acupuncture as an aid in detoxification, eventually replacing pharmaceutical treatments, it was not only the the walls of the hospital that were breached but the very apparatus of addiction and recovery.

### **Paul Haacke, "Remapping Ground Zero: New York, Hiroshima, New Mexico"**

While the trope of "ground zero" is now associated with the attacks on the World Trade Center on 9/11, this paper traces its genealogy back to the nuclear bombing of Japan and the nuclear testing and radioactive mining sites on and around Native American territories in the U.S. Southwest. It questions the synchronic flattening common to cartographic depictions by investigating "deeper" (more multi-dimensional, historical, and literary) approaches to space and place, emphasizing especially the vertical axis (from uranium mining to air power and architecture) and the non-visible for understanding both the shocks of terror and the slow violence of empire.

**Gonzalo Jose Lopez Garrido**

**Mapping Social Injustice**

**Radical Geography and the DGEI (1968-1972)**

At the end of the 1960s, a group of radical geographers led by William Bunge experimented with the “Geographical Expeditions”, a working method that aimed to educate citizens to become “folk geographers” in order to directly involve them in the urban planning discussions of the city. The first Expedition (the Detroit Geographical Expedition and Institute) happened from 1968 to 1972 in Fitzgerald, Detroit, a neighborhood predominantly African-American, and can be included within specific countercultural manifestations as those part of the African-American Civil Rights Movement. This paper seeks to explore two aspects of the movement that put in direct intersection Geography and Urban Planning and argues that revisiting the DGEI helps to push current discussions on both disciplines.

First, their understanding of the concept “participation”. Radical geographers tried not to build consensus in the community (as participation is often applied today), but to provide training to those involved so they gain the ability to build its own facts and conclusions. To produce, and not only receive, knowledge, providing them with the chance to take the initiative to ask for changes and proposing a redefinition of the role of the planner as a social agent.

Second, their production, a series of maps that can be considered pioneer in the field of today’s Public Participation Geographic Information Systems (PPGIS). The maps they produced were a successful example of Data Visualization, almost without the use of any technology, becoming a series of argumentative maps, de-neutralizing data and asking for social equality for an ignored and abandoned community.

Gonzalo Jose Lopez Garrido

PhD Candidate in Sustainability and Urban Regeneration (R.D.99/2011)

Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM)

**After-the-fact graphics: Redrawing Macau’s architectural heritage**

**Lori M Gibbs**

Macau, a former Portuguese port colony, was “handed over” to the The People’s Republic of China in 1999. After this handover, heritage sites were selected, surveyed, carefully documented by architects, and preserved in situ. The local government described these sites as representative of the peaceful co-existence between the “west” and the “east” in the territory’s history. UNESCO recognized these sites as an exemplar of “outstanding universal value” and designated them as a World Heritage Site in 2010.

This study re-reads and compares this heritage recording project (drawn after-the-fact) with other archival sources, and raises questions about the contemporary role of architectural documentation in re-writing history and the use of architecture as historical evidence. Just how

does architectural drawing come to play a role in larger processes of negotiating and reformulating historical and cultural narratives in a shifting political landscape? What is depicted, and what gets left out?

Lori M Gibbs

Visiting Assistant Professor, Pratt Institute

PhD Candidate, in Architecture, University of Pennsylvania (2014-present)

MA in Architectural Histories and Theories (AA) 2010

B.Arch, Pratt Institute (2007)

## **Decolonizing the Map**

### **Bios**

Walis Johnson is a multidisciplinary artist/researcher whose work documents the experience and poetics of the urban landscape through oral history and ethnographic film, performance and artist walking practices. She holds a BA in history from Williams College and an MFA from Hunter College in Integrative Media and has taught at Parsons School of Design.

Jenna Bliss is an artist and filmmaker living in NYC. Bliss was a 2016-17 participant in the Whitney Independent Study Program, New York. She holds a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design and an MA from Slade School of Fine Art, London. Her work has appeared recently at Raven Row, London (2017) at Cell Project Space, London (2017), *Whitney Independent study Program*, Elizabeth Foundation, New York and a solo presentation at OUTPOST, Norwich (2017). Also in 2017, Bliss organized a series of private, semi-private and public events, *Nihilism or Self-care* at KW, Berlin.

Paul Haacke, faculty member at Pratt, is completing a book on the history of the vertical imagination in transatlantic modernism, based on his PhD Dissertation from UC Berkeley. His work on literature, architecture, film, and critical theory includes publications in *Thresholds*, *Pin Up*, *diacritics*, *Cinema journal*, and *French Forum*.

Gonzalo Lopez is a PhD Candidate in Sustainability and Urban Regeneration at the Polytechnic University of Madrid, where he develops his research "*The Participatory City. Collaborative working methods applied to urban planning. The cases of American shrinking cities: Baltimore, Philadelphia and Detroit*". He is a visiting Assistant Professor at Pratt Institute and co-founder of knitknot architecture.

Lori M. Gibbs is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Pratt Institute, and a PhD candidate in Architecture at University of Pennsylvania. Her dissertation examines survey documentation methods that actively craft architectural histories and heritage sites in a cross-cultural context (US, France and China) between 1920-1940. She has worked in architectural practice, and taught studio, seminars, and lecture courses at the University of Hong Kong and at the

*University of Pennsylvania. She earned an MA in Histories and Theories from the AA, and a B.Arch from Pratt Institute.*

Eyal Weizman is an architect, professor of spatial and visual cultures and director of the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths, University of London. Since 2014 he has been a global professor at Princeton University. In 2010 he established the research agency Forensic Architecture (FA). The work of FA was documented in the exhibition and book FORENSIS (Sternberg, 2014). In 2007 he set up, with Sandi Hilal and Alessandro Petti, the architectural collective DAAR in Beit Sahour/Palestine. This work was documented in the book Architecture after Revolution (Sternberg, 2014). In 2013 he designed a permanent folly in Gwangju, South Korea which was documented in the book The Roundabout Revolution (Sternberg, 2015). His other books include The Conflict Shoreline (Steidl and Cabinet, 2015), Mengele's Skull (Sternberg, 2012), The Least of all Possible Evils (Verso, 2011), Hollow Land (Verso, 2007), A Civilian Occupation (Verso, 2003). Weizman is on the editorial board of Third Text, Humanity, Cabinet and Political Concepts and is on the board of directors of the Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ) and on the advisory boards of the ICA in London and B'Tselem in Jerusalem, amongst others. He studied architecture at the Architectural Association in London and completed his PhD at the London Consortium/Birkbeck College.