

MAPPING MEANING: 2012



A Holistic Approach Toward Human, Ecological & Technological Landscapes

July 30th

Welcome!

12:00 – 3:00	Arrival
4:00 - 5:00	Field station orientation
5:00 - 7:00	Opening Remarks and Introductions
7:00	Dinner

July 31st

Ecotone: Site of Experimentation

7:00 – 8:00am	Optional: Yoga
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast
9:15 – 10:15	Mapping Session I: Carmina <i>Infinite Spaces: Shared Terrain</i>
10:30 – 11:45	Performance: Karina <i>Past: Rosa Maria Palacios in Capitol Reef National Park, UTAH</i>
12:00 – 1:30	Lunch and free time
1:30 – 2:30	Session: Hali <i>The Outsider Advantage</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Group Discussion
4:45 – 5:30	Camera Obscura: Trudi
5:30 – 7:00	Quiet time/reflection
7:00	Dinner

Aug 1st

Ecotone: Place of Creativity

7:00 – 8:00am	Optional: Yoga
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8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast
9:00 – 12:00	Session: Sylvia and Linda <i>Artistic Expression in Animals & Mapping Natural Ecotones/Homes</i>
12:00 – 1:30	Lunch and free time
1:30 – 2:30	Session: Melissa <i>Nature/Culture Edge Effects & Cultural Fusions & Frictions as Spaces of Learning</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Group Discussion
4:30 – 7:00	Quiet time/reflection
7:00	Dinner
8:30	<i>Optional Screening: Melissa</i>
Sunrise to Sundown	Camera Obscura: Trudi

Aug 2nd ***Ecotone: Place of Emergency***

7:00 – 8:00am	Optional: Yoga
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast
9:00 – 12:00	Performance Session: Krista <i>Survival 101 (or Turning the Sun)</i>
12:00 – 1:30	Lunch and free time
1:30 – 2:30	Session: Jen <i>From Fukushima to New Mexico: Lessons from a Nuclear Disaster</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Group Discussion
4:30 – 7:00	Quiet time/reflection
7:00	Dinner
8:30	<i>Optional Screening: Vasia</i>
Sunrise to Sundown	Camera Obscura: Trudi

Aug 3rd ***Ecotone: Site of Opportunity***

7:00 – 8:00am	Optional: Yoga
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast
9:00 – 10:00	Field Session: Melanie
10:30 – 12:00	Mapping Session II: Carmina <i>Infinite Spaces: Shared Terrain</i>
12:00 – 1:30	Lunch and free time
1:30 – 2:30	Session: Emily and Vasia <i>From Ghost City to EcoPolis: The Greening of Famagusta, Cyprus</i>

2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Group Discussion
4:45 – 5:45	Performance: Karina <i>Future: Miseria in Capitol Reef National Park, UTAH</i>
5:45 – 7:00	Quiet time/reflection
7:00	Dinner
Sunrise to Sundown	Camera Obscura: Trudi

Aug 4rd

8:00 – 10:00	Goodbye Breakfast
10:00 – 12:00	Clean-up

Session and Project Descriptions:

JULY 30th

Infinite Spaces: Shared Terrain **Carmina Sanchez-del-Valle**

“The space of lived experience has been reduced to a codified system of signification, and with the increasing emphasis on visual perception there has been a corresponding reduction in other forms of sensory perception.” -- Henri Lefebvre

This session encourages both attentiveness to the environment, and increased awareness of multiple ways to experience it. A short introduction to the project will be given on the first day, and a summary on the last. A large printed map covering a one-mile radius area, using the field station as the center, will be provided. In an urban setting a mile corresponds to a twenty-minute walk. Participants will be asked to draw, doodle, and write on the map defining the spaces and places they visited during their stay. Locations which can be seen on the horizon, and they would like to reach, can be marked on the map. The goal is to coalesce into one map different paths, perspectives, and levels of engagement with the earth.

Space is a situated sense of enclosure. This feeling is strongest when entering or leaving an area. Place is a location whose uniqueness allows us to differentiate it from its surroundings, and from other places in other locations. We can return to it, because we do recognize it. Both space and place are multi-sensorial. Space is a condition of place.

The collaborative mapping effort requires challenging the representational conventions developed for the built environment. In the end we recognize we are always in the map of our own making.

Time Travels: Past and Future

Karina Aguilera Skvirsky

Performance:

Past: Rosa Maria Palacios in Capitol Reef National Park, UTAH

Rosa Maria Palacios, an Afro-Indian Ecuadorian (1893–1940) travelled on mule and by foot from the highlands of El Valle de Chota to the coastal metropolis of Guayaquil to work as a domestic for a wealthy family in 1906. Re-mapping the geospatial dynamics of her journey from Ecuador to the Utah desert, I will extend my genetic connection to her in defiance of the boundaries of time and space.

The Outsider Advantage

Hali Felt

Her maps of the ocean floor have been called “one of the most remarkable achievements in modern cartography”, yet no one knows her name.

Before Marie Tharp, geologist and gifted drafts person, most people thought the ocean floor was a vast expanse of nothingness. In 1948, at age 28, Marie walked into the newly formed geophysical lab at Columbia University and practically demanded a job. There, through sheer willpower and obstinacy, she began the task of interpreting soundings (records of sonar pings measuring the ocean’s depths) brought back from the ocean-going expeditions of her male colleagues. The marriage of artistry and science behind her analysis of this dry data gave birth, in 1959, to a major work: the first detailed map of the North Atlantic ocean floor, which laid the groundwork for proving the then-controversial theory of continental drift. By 1977 she’d mapped the entire ocean floor—and plate tectonics (with continental drift as its foundation) was being taught to schoolchildren.

This session will be part presentation and part discussion, beginning with a short talk on Marie Tharp and how my own outsider status (as a creative writer looking at the history and culture of science) allowed me to make new conclusions about the import of Tharp’s work and the extent to which it influenced the practice of Earth science in the second half of the twentieth century. We will end with a group discussion about how being a non-expert—or even being ignorant—at the beginning of a project can often lead to exciting discoveries and conclusions.

Portable Camera Obscura

Trudi Lynn Smith

Portable Camera Obscura is a walk-in, room-sized camera. The tent structure is a lightproof environment that projects and image of the outside view onto the back wall and side of the inside of the tent with a simple lens. It was first positioned in the exact location of popular photographic views in national parks in Canada, whereby viewers could literally get inside the camera through a small doorway. Once inside, the dark room with images reflected inside – upside down and backwards - became a site to loiter, and to have conversations. Viewers enter the tent to see the view and participate in that photographic moment. Slightly removed from the outside world, but still a part of it – sounds permeate through the tent walls, there is ground under foot, and the breeze stirs the image projecting on the wall – the setting providing ideal ground to think about technology, representation, and viewing as well as the notions of in between or otherwise, liminal spaces and ecotones.

This work is site-specific and nomadic. It is a temporary place whereby relationships are formed and facilitated beyond economic exchanges. Through its design, it references the history of mobility in national parks (impermanent residences such as tents and trailers) and in thinking about the history of photography, it offers an alternative view to the way that institutional authorities make the world comprehensible to the viewer through parks interpretation, maps, and guidebooks.

August 1st

Artistic Expression in Animals & Mapping Natural Ecotones/Homes

Sylvia Torti and Linda Wiener

This session will be lead by Linda and Sylvia, who both have formal training in Biology. Linda Wiener will begin this session by sharing her ideas and visuals about artistic expression in animals, including house building and decorations. Her recent work and thoughts bridge the often-taboo subject of "anthropomorphism". After Linda's session, Sylvia will provide context for how ecologists think about ecotone and then we'll go out to explore, identify and map the ecotones we find at Capitol Reef. We'll reconvene to share our maps and observations.

Nature/Culture Edge Effects and Cultural Fusions and Frictions as Spaces of Learning

Melissa Nelson

I will provide an overview of an indigenous theoretical framework that I use at the Cultural Conservancy and in my scholarship that is helpful for discussing the nature/culture edge and cultural mixing zones. We will together explore these cultural ecotones as places of creativity and spaces of learning that can expand ecological awareness and help inform environmental decision-making. I will include some exercises and media to help us tune into our bodies and senses and diad work to explore our own edges and fusions.

August 2nd

Survival 101 (or Turning the Sun)

Krista Caballero

“Localized ecological systems are known to shift abruptly and irreversibly from one state to another when they are forced across critical thresholds... The plausibility of a planetary-scale ‘tipping point’ highlights the need to improve biological forecasting by detecting early warning signs of critical transitions on global as well as local scales...”

Necessities for any survival kit, mirrors are carried for both military and civilian use while in wilderness environments and also at sea. In an emergency situation flashes of sunlight signal distress and have the ability to communicate across great distance. Depending upon weather conditions these flashes can be visible up to 50 miles away with the record rescue being 105 miles.

This session takes an experimental approach -- exploring through discussion and collaborative action the constant state of emergency we find ourselves negotiating. Participants will be introduced to basic

signaling techniques as well as emergency Morse Code. Then, through group performance, these mirrors will be employed to create our own early warning signals, exploring together ideas around agency, survival, and change.

These actions will be documented through video and later integrated into sculptural leveling rods, which were created for the first Mapping Meaning conference. This outcome will operate as a kind of triangulation — connecting the survey from 1918 with *Mapping Meaning 2010 and 2012* and signaling the possibility of an approaching “tipping point.”

Citation: “Approaching a state shift in Earth’s biosphere.” By Anthony D. Barnosky, et al., *Nature*, Vol. 486, No. 7402, June 6, 2012.

From Fukushima to New Mexico: Lessons from a Nuclear Disaster **Jen Richter**

On March 11, 2011, a 9.5 magnitude earthquake in the Pacific triggered a tsunami that swept the Eastern coast of Japan. One of the hardest hit areas was the Fukushima prefecture, which contained two nuclear power plants. The plant that was hardest hit was the Fukushima Daiichi plant, which was quickly swamped by towering waves that submerged the base of the plant. This natural event set in motion a nuclear disaster that draws into question the security, engineering, and human elements of implementing and using nuclear technologies in modern society.

This session will examine the ways that nature and science interacted in the aftermath of the Tohoku earthquake. Responses to Fukushima on several different levels, from industry, government, and the public on local, national, and international levels, reveal the tenuous control over nuclear technologies that exists today. Looking at the solutions devised for containing and tracing the radiation that emitted from the plant, which include elderly scientists willing to sacrifice themselves, and wild monkeys armed with dosimeters, demonstrates how the most high-tech solutions for providing energy can result in the most desperate and low-tech methods. These methods show the primary weaknesses in discourses that make nuclear energy a necessary part of any modern energy supply, and upset rhetorics that call for increased usage of nuclear power. They also draw into question recent efforts in the U.S., specifically in New Mexico, to increase and build new nuclear facilities.

August 3rd

Melanie Armstrong

When people enter a national park, they are typically greeted by a smiling park ranger and handed a map. These black-bannered “unigrids” or “glossies,” to use the lingo of the agency, have become deeply associated with these public spaces, and visitors who travel to parks will go to great lengths to seek out “one of those shiny maps they give out at the gate.” The National Park Service has created its brand through this mapping system, though the brand has evolved with the agency and within a changing cultural context. In this session, we will explore the meanings behind NPS maps, considering how these maps present public spaces as unique places as well as part of a larger cultural identity.

The theoretical foundation for this session comes from the fields of history and geography. After a lively discussion of maps as fluid documents, participants will analyze the Capitol Reef unigrid. In particular, we will consider how the landscape and stories experienced by participants in the conference are represented (or not) in the cartography, images and information on the park map. How is nature represented by this document? What stories are missing? What work does this map do in shaping human interactions with the landscape?

Next, we turn to an archive of park maps from the last thirty years. In this analysis, we will consider changing ideas and values as they are recorded in these primary sources. How do cultural representations of the past startle modern audiences? What do the changing representations of public space reveal about changing value systems? The opportunity to thumb through historic documents, chuckle at peculiarities of the past, while appreciating the artwork and craftsmanship of several generations of mapmakers should provide lively and stimulating conversation about the value of national parks, public lands, and wild places in people's lives.

Finally, participants will be challenged to creatively represent on their own unigrids the meanings they create in the landscape. How is a map an ecotone where lived experience tugs against the representations of the landscape? To explore the work, which goes into representations of nature in a two-dimensional technology, participants will be challenged to create a document, which is meaningful to them, and then express that meaning to others.

Infinite Spaces: Shared Terrain
Carmina Sanchez-del-Valle

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From Ghost City to EcoPolis: The Greening of Famagusta, Cyprus
Emily and Vasia Markides

Vasia and Emily will be doing a joint presentation. Vasia will show clips from *Hidden in the Sand*, a 37-minute documentary about the ghost city of Varosha, Cyprus, her mother's hometown. Cyprus is characterized by a coup and an invasion, which divided it into two. Greek Cypriots currently live in the South, and Turkish Cypriots were forced to flee to the occupied North, joining thousands of settlers from Turkey who now inhabit abandoned refugee homes. The film is about Varosha, the only place in the occupied North that has remained unsettled since the invasion. It is a ghost city, held hostage by armed guards since 1974.

The clips from Vasia's film will provide the basis for Emily to share her vision for transforming Varosha – the enclosed section of Famagusta - into an ecopolis, an ecotope of creativity and sustainability. Varosha offers the opportunity for collaboration, experimentation and conflict resolution to take place between the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots who would live there. It would be a model sustainable community that combines energy efficient solar homes, centers for local employment, onsite energy and food production and workable mass transit, restoring the railroad that once connected Famagusta with the rest of the cities of Cyprus. History and mythology will offer the backdrop of a past riddled with conquest by the Crusaders, the Franks, the Lusignans, the Venetians, the Ottomans, the British and now the Turks.

We are hoping to create a dialogue amongst the group in order to come up with the best possible approach for manifesting such a goal.

Throughout the week at Mapping Meaning, Vasia will be filming her mother, thus launching the production for her documentary film about Emily's life and vision.

Time Travels: Past and Future
Karina Aguilera Skvirsky

Performance:

Future: Miseria in Capitol Reef National Park, UTAH

A time traveler, nostalgic for a pre-apocalyptic present, lands in Capitol Reef National Park, Utah. Rather than tell tales from the future, this bipedal, hermaphroditic life form reminisces by singing a song—“Miseria”—by Los Panchos (1949). The song will be sung in its native Spanish, while subtitles and abstract landscapes roll across the embedded screen in the time traveler's chest. Rather than try to represent the unimaginable I will don a second-skin like costume evocative of low budget science fiction films from the past.