

common room 2

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Area of Detail
Lize Mogel

apr 6–may 31, 2008
sunday may 8, 7pm: artist talk with Lize Mogel

The translation of the spherical world onto the flat plane of a map is a mathematical problem; the translation of the political world into a map is an ideological problem. How does one represent the world in a way that does not show dominance? Something or someone is always on the top or at the center.

The United Nations emblem is a world map centered on the North Pole. The continents are not divided by national boundaries, thus geopolitical relationships are not pictured. This map is purely symbolic, representing nations united under common interests, all parts considered equal.

What is at the center of the UN emblem? A blank spot that belies the geopolitical realities of the area. This area of detail, the ice-bound ocean of the Arctic Circle, is regulated by the UN through the Law of the Sea which sets how nations define and exploit their territorial boundaries. As the climate warms and ice recedes, new possibilities for commerce and capital become possible. This center of the World is becoming a focal point in other ways, as surrounding nations look to claim territory in order to develop new energy resources and commercial routes.

Area of Detail is a continuation of Lize Mogel's work on rethinking familiar representations of the world, including the world map and the spectacle of World's Fairs.

Lize Mogel is an interdisciplinary artist who works with the interstices between art and cultural geography. She inserts and distributes and cartographic projects into public space, including in Los Angeles (Public Green, 2001) and the Wood River Valley, Idaho (Migration Routes, 2007), and via publications. She is co-editor of the book/map collection "An Atlas of Radical Cartography" and co-curator of the exhibition "An Atlas", which is touring nationally. She also co-curated "Genius Loci", an exhibition of conceptual mappings of Los Angeles (Sci-Arc, Los Angeles, California Museum of Photography, Riverside). She has also worked with groups including the Center for Land Use Interpretation and the Journal of Aesthetics and Protest. Exhibitions include the Gwangju Biennale (South Korea,) Gallery 400 (Chicago), and the upcoming "Experimental Geography" (ICI, touring). She has received grants from the LEF Foundation, the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Danish Arts Council for her work.

<http://www.publicgreen.com/projects>
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