

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Maps of All Sorts Charting Mind and Space

Eight Artists Make Various Topographical References Their Own

By BENJAMIN GENOCCHIO

Like many words in the English language, cartography comes from a Greek root, in this case *chartis*, meaning map, and *graphein*, meaning write. Mapmaking as a kind of writing is a theme that is explored in "The Map Show" at the Rockland Center for the Arts. It is one of the more striking

ART REVIEW

shows in this space, which has a vigorous art school and exhibition program.

The show presents the work of eight artists who make maps of one kind or another. Some use representations of the earth, on a flat surface, to broach issues of globalization and corporate multinationalism, while others plot information to create readable, ordered representations that communicate complex ideas about a person, theme or place. These, too, are maps of a sort.

Prompting these thoughts was Carol Irving's powerful 20-minute video installation, in which she submits herself to a series of lie-detector tests about her job, relationships and family. The questions become increasingly intrusive, to the artist's obvious discomfort. The results of the tests, four framed polygraph charts surrounding the video screen, map out the contours of her life and personality.

Maureen Catbagan's "Aggression Mapping" series takes this idea one step further, treating the human mind as a living landscape. To help us navigate this cloudy, unfamiliar terrain she makes topological collage drawings based on her own thought patterns, random associations and experiences. By attaching specific thoughts and feelings to land forms and structures, she lays out a kind of map of her brain function.

Difficult to read and comprehend, Ms. Catbagan's beautiful collages are not terribly useful as maps. By contrast, Mike Estabrook pinpoints the exact locations of all of the McDonald's restaurants in Manhattan, which are spread over the wall using unusual, psychedelic Shrinky Dinks to represent each store. There are a lot of them, in your first reaction, followed by laughter at the wacky designs.

A similar combination of cutting social observation and humorous whimsy characterizes John Maier's "Pepsi vs. the Past" (1993), an installation of identical woodcut panels based on the Buckminster Fuller projection of the world in which each land mass is shown in correct proportion. Over one of the maps Mr. Maier charts PepsiCo's global reach in the early 1990s through a meticulous mapping of the locations of its worldwide spots and franchise restaurants

"The Map Show," Rockland Center for the Arts, 27 South Greenbush Road, West Nyack, through April 6. Information: (945) 358-0877 or www.rocklandartcenter.org.



NAVIGATING
Above, works from Maureen Catbagan's "Aggression Mapping" series, rear, and Mike Estabrook's "Bubblegumization," on the floor. Left, Adam Henry's globe, "A Few Things Happened No. 4," made from a crumpled-up flat world map. Below, Mr. Estabrook's "Swarm of Ronalds."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LYNN STEYR

Wacky designs, polygraph charts and other cartography.

chains. PepsiCo's operations extend much farther than the reach of ancient empires, including the Romans, Persians and Ottomans, whose past territorial boundaries are marked on the other map. The comparison is skewed, but it gives viewers cause for thought.

Are newspaper headlines also maps, helping us to navigate the day's main events? That is one reading of A. J. Rocchino's "New York Times Headlines (1982-1989)" (2006-7), a huge, colored inkjet print on canvas of hundreds of New York Times headlines from 1982 to 1989. It is a map of the past, or at least those past events that were deemed newsworthy to an influential newspaper. It also speaks to issues of news me-

dia bias, official history and cultural memory.

Vandana Jain, the exhibition curator, has included works that employ actual maps, like Adam Henry's globe, made from a crumpled-up flat world map, as well as works that, strictly speaking, are not really maps at all. Sarah Kipp's digital video "Timepiece" layers imagery of her childhood and other family members onto a video image of her face to chart the passage of time from birth to old age and back again. It is a study in human evolution, or the way in which our appearance changes over time.

Ms. Kipp's video is installed in a newly constructed black box space, with a bench for viewers. This is a big improvement for the Rockland Center for the Arts, where until recently most video artworks were displayed in rudimentary structures in the main room. The video runs for 10 minutes and could be oppressively tiresome if not for the decent production values and comfortable seating, a definite plus for this plucky exhibition space.

