

Cartographies, 14 artistes d’Amerique latine

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Cartographies: 14 artists from Latin America

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THIS IS THE TIME of multiculturalism in North America (or even, in what might be regarded as a sign of education, in the past decade the coexistence of contemporary art has been attempting to encompass other artistic forms as strictly bounded areas. From a Northern Hemisphere perspective, the Latin American might represent the least well-known. After all, the Latin American speaks a European language, is Christian, usually Euro-orientated and largely heterocultural. They may well account for the common language of European and North American museums on Latin American art. An interest that is often expressed as a continuing project of stabilizing—mapping—what this Latin American art is such is.

The large majority of such exhibitions present a conceptual construction which provides the structure of terms and implications of their works and which is associated with the flagrant consideration of a certain postcolonialism. It, on the one hand, one of the most visible consequences of postmodern thought and practice has been to reduce and collapse the complex cosmopolitan that signified the aesthetic language (writing and reading) in the visual arts, documentary and fiction to film, television and beyond in literature, on the other hand certain postcolonialist theories establish as a new stage of cartography we must define as a kind of solitary or monolithic construction of gender, national origin and sexual preference. Behind so many exhibitions devoted to showing other postcolonialist is a desire to define and classify this other as a way of reducing itself to be irreducibly aestheticized, quantified and reduced. Also, current of useful additional ways to give the map—the historical mapping of these processes—a brief representation (of histories of diaspora) that may be scientific and technical, but still a representation. And in such it is filtered through cultural, racial, gender, national and class. The work for such is deemed to fail.

Cartographies—the first major exhibition of Latin American art in North America—organized by a Latin American curator for a Northern Hemisphere institution—a questioning the very activity of multiculturalism essential mapping. Organized and first hosted by the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the exhibition has travelled to Caracas, Bogota and Ottawa, and will be in New York this fall. The cartographer is St. Paul-based



Two maps: the left one is a map of the Americas and the right one is a map of the Philippines.

In this issue, the title of the exhibition—the phrase “Cartographies”—indicates the possibility of multiple paths, different cartographies. The volume “14 artists from Latin America” points towards a subtle difference between being Latin American and being from Latin America. The former is almost an inescapable, essential condition, and as such takes on the features of a national character. The latter is less rigid and suggests some sort of construction—it can be seen which—

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