

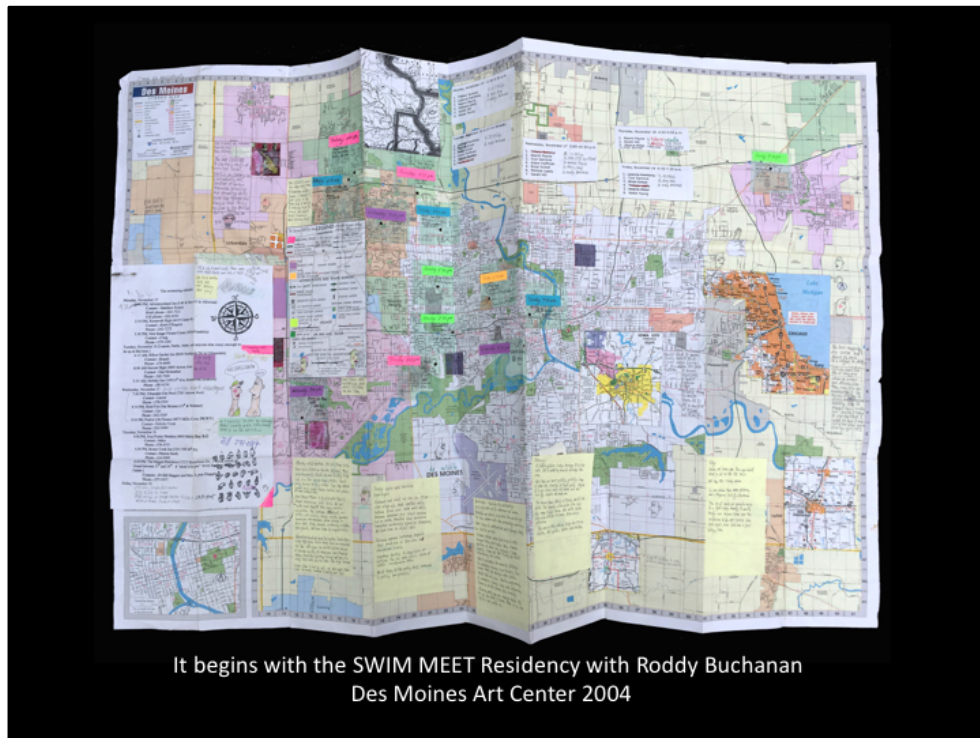
Ramble

Walking and Visual Journaling

Mary Jones

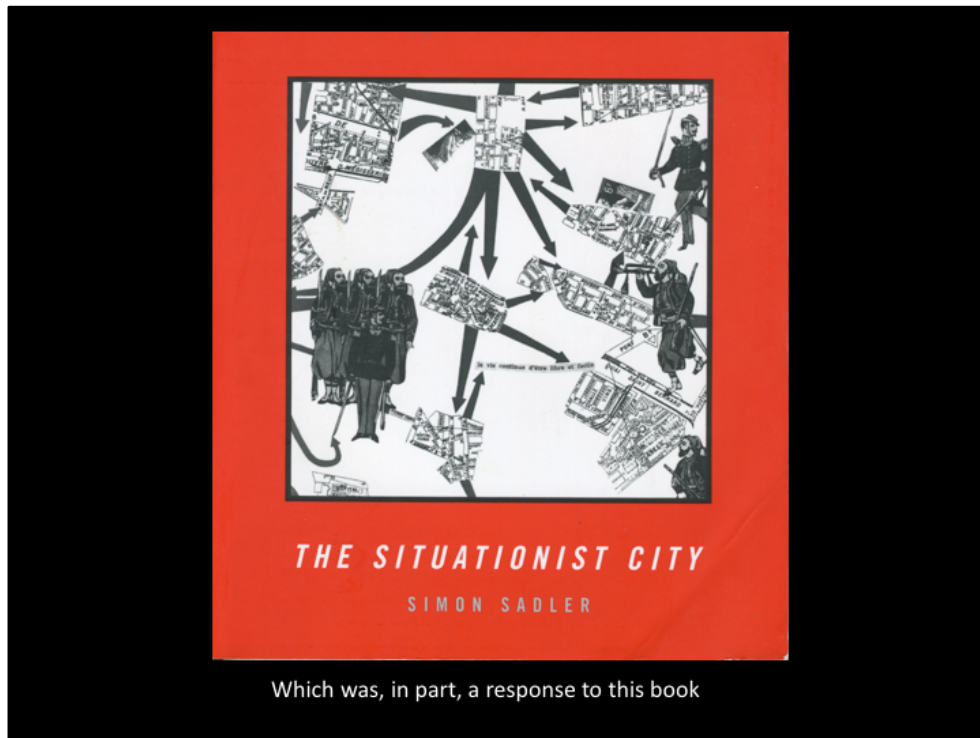
Iowa State University • February 15, 2017

I am a printmaker, and like all printmakers I like process. I like mixing media and modes. My most recent work is formed in a process of walking, looking, and representing in as many ways as possible. It is a process both random and ordered at times. There is a story behind how I came to work this way. The following is a map of how I got here.

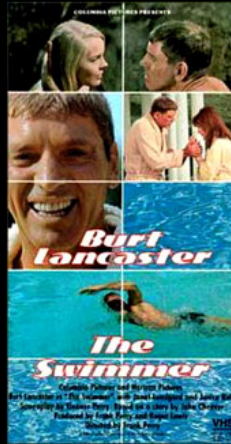


Along with eight of my students at Grand View (the adventurous ones) we swam in three Des Moines area pools a day, for five days. We were getting to know Des Moines in a new way, along with Roddy. There were several health clubs, the hotel Ft. Des Moines (a favorite), a high school and a private pool in a home south of Grand. Roddy is from Glasgow, and an avid soccer fan. Usually he gets to know new cities by visiting the soccer field, but he'd decided to try something new, for a couple of reasons.

We all made maps. Mine has the schedule, and it also incorporates stories from my earlier life in Des Moines, when I was four. It incorporates everything I was thinking about.

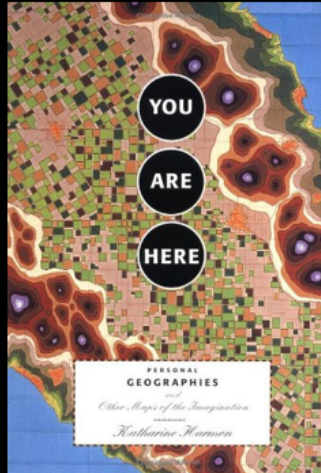


Roddy had had us read most of this book before he met with us. Our swim can be seen as a psychogeographic action, in Guy Debord's words, “



And this film, based on the John Cheever short story

And we watched this film, based on the Cheever story. The protagonist discovers that his neighbors' properties are loosely strung together by their private pools. He swims the neighborhood, stopping along the way to talk. He tells his own story to himself.



This book made a big difference in 2004



This revised map pulls in my every experience of DSM. Or at least I tried. Goes back to 1952. Incorporates photos for the “always stupefying evidence of *this is how it was*” I think of this work as a palimpsest, but in the digital sense, as so many of my digital pieces are. Maybe it is the nature of digital.



Here's another work in the mapping vein, about a place, in this case, a street and a particular walk on a particular Sunday morning in 2003. Quote from Walter Benjamin. The flâneur "composes his reverie as text to accompany the images." Piece had to be done in a hurry. I chunked it together digitally as a sort of storyboard for a final and then realized that it worked as is.



This piece was commissioned by a client of the gallery that showed the division piece. These are three of a set of six mixed media pieces roughly based on Clark Street in Chicago. At this point I was put in touch with my walking history in Chicago and started to make connections with the 19th century concept of *flânerie*. *Flânerie* is the act of strolling, with all of its accompanying associations. Most of what we know about it comes from Walter Benjamin's writings about the modern, urban experience of Paris in the 1860's.

The crowd is his element, as the air is that of birds and water of fishes. His passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd. For the perfect *flâneur*, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world—impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define. The spectator is a prince who everywhere rejoices in his incognito. The lover of life makes the whole world his family, just like the lover of the fair sex who builds up his family from all the beautiful women that he has ever found, or that are or are not—to be found; or the lover of pictures who lives in a magical society of dreams painted on canvas. Thus the lover of universal life enters into the crowd as though it were an immense reservoir of electrical energy. Or we might liken him to a mirror as vast as the crowd itself; or to a kaleidoscope gifted with consciousness, responding to each one of its movements

and reproducing the multiplicity of life and the flickering grace of all the elements of life.

— *Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life", (New York: Da Capo Press, 1964). Orig. published in Le Figaro, in 1863.*

The more I have read, the more gendered I see the role to be.



The flâneuse question

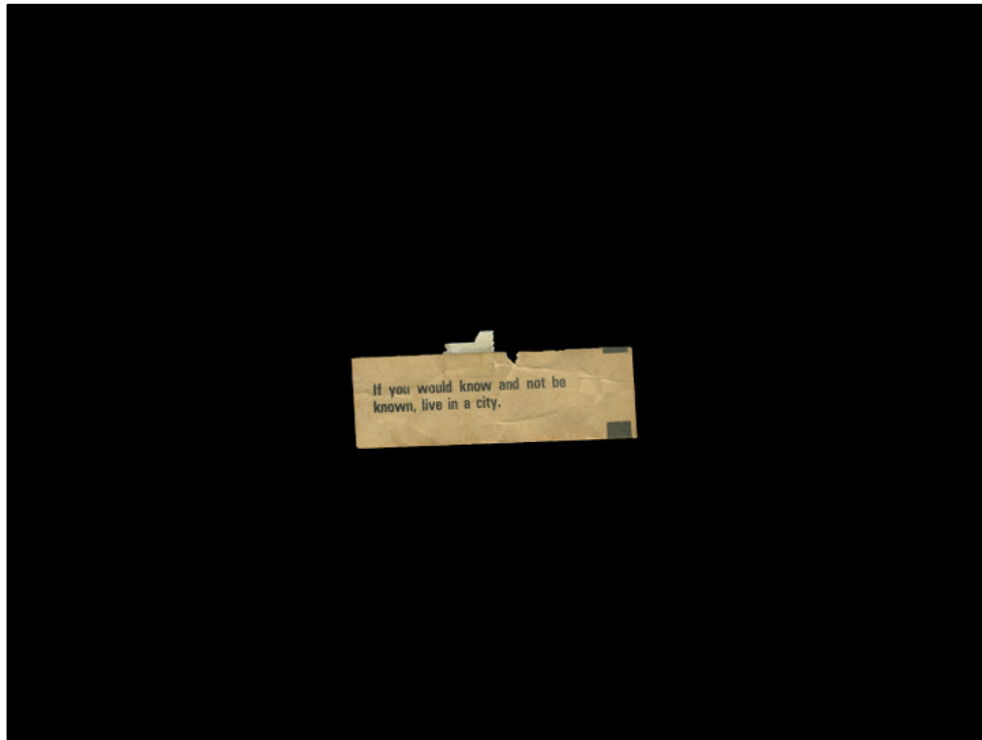
A larger problem is the role of the solitary female urban stroller. As Janet Wolff once argued, given the social restrictions put on women's behavior, the 19th century flâneuse as a figure in public space probably didn't exist. (3) There are a few notable exceptions, such as George Sand, who dressed in men's clothing to go walking. Virginia Woolf's 1930 essay, "Street Haunting, A London Adventure" alters the discourse some in that she is shopping, an acceptable activity for women. Yet also, she is caught in the reverie of looking, diving into deeper questions and then retreating to the surface of things. She is a writer, so, metaphorically, her journey is driven by a desire to purchase a new pencil.

Window shopping



Window shopping: the dialectic of flânerie
observer and participant, hidden and in view

[Window shopping would have been a socially acceptable activity for women.] The simultaneous phenomena of seeing through as well as seeing one's self played a part in my next major project.



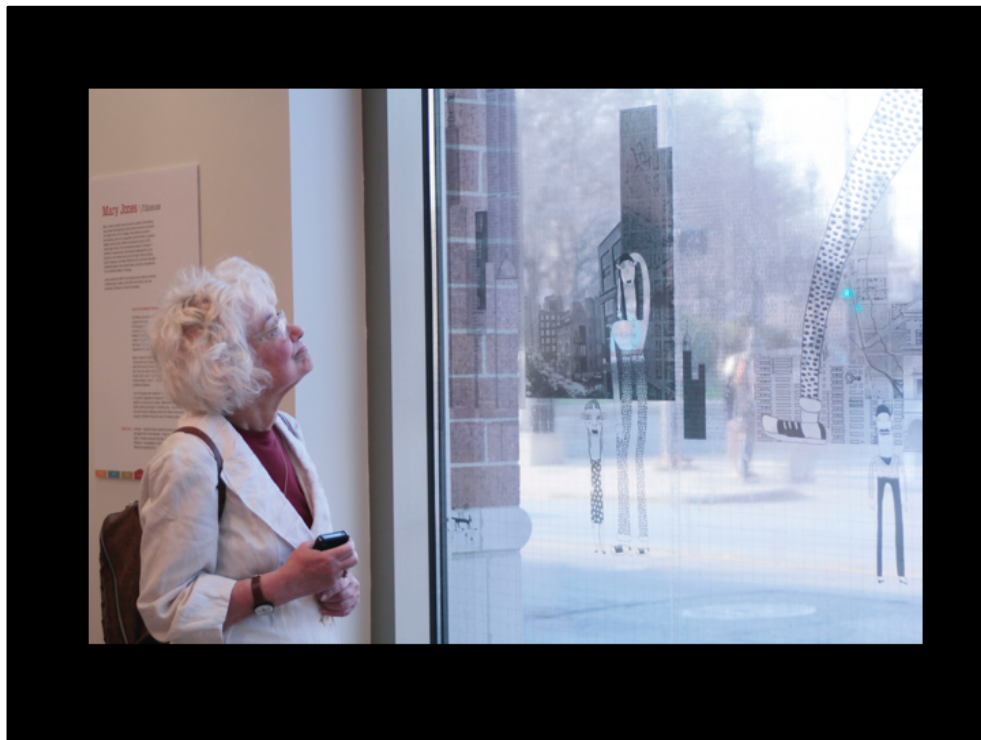
In other words...



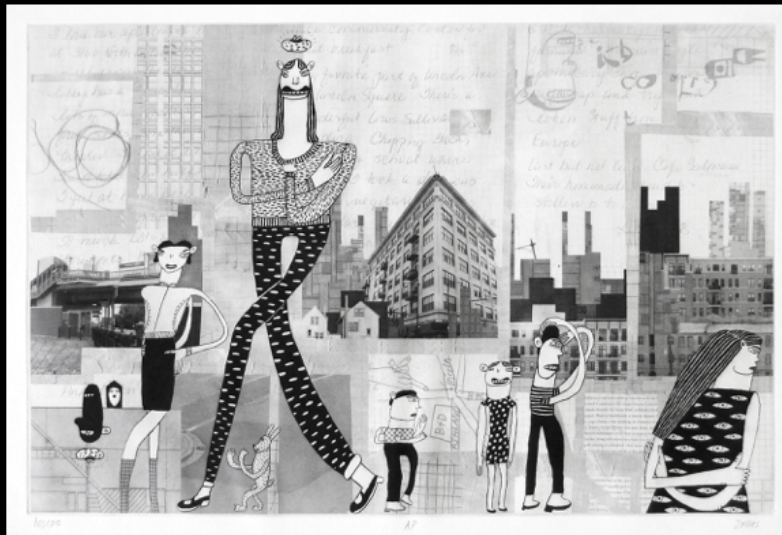
In 2013 I had an opportunity to assemble an exhibit in a gallery that is at least half reflective surface, Loyola University's gallery on Sheridan Road. I had window clings printed for the three 8 by 8 foot windows. Full sized figures of drawings cut out of polystyrene and mounted on the back wall. Window shopping would have been a socially acceptable activity for women. The simultaneous phenomena of steering through as well as seeing one's self played a part in this project at Loyola University in 2013.



At dusk it was possible to see the images on the clings, the people in the gallery looking at the art on the rear wall, and the street reflected in the window.s



Looking out layered images, too.



Lincoln Avenue: A Deep Map

Roscoe is about a three-way intersection
moving, looking, remembering
writing, drawing, photographing

Deep mapping is an assignment I gave myself because it is an assignment that we give to students in the visual culture class I co-teach with Josh Call. working with the students on the concept of the rhetoric of place. Here's how we define deep map for them:

Less a traditional map than you might expect, the deep map serves to bring together images and representations of space and place, with the histories, values, ideas, associations, thoughts and feelings we have about those spatial features. Deep maps allow us to explore the ways we think, feel, and act in spaces while also linking those actions and associations to our sense of what space and place mean. In effect, they are an exercise in making the abstract more visible.

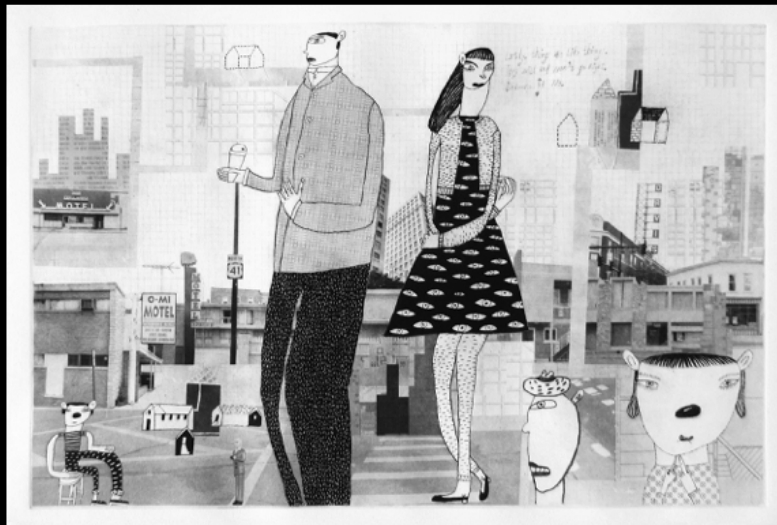
Deep mapping is another concept that has informed my constellation of interests, another process for exploring space and place. The first deep map was William Least Heat Moon's *PrairyErth*, which explores landscape, geography, history, space and time. Deep Mapping is an expansive concept. There are geologists, geographers, dance troupes. What the maps has in common is that they are multimedia and multimodal. And interdisciplinary, usually. Currently a lot of work done in deep mapping is gis-based. What is important is that a deep map embody the particularities of one's own experience.

A deep map is a detailed, multimedia depiction of a place and all that exists within it. It is not strictly tangible; it also includes emotion and meaning. A deep map is both a process and a product – a creative space that is visual, open, multi-layered, and ever changing. Where traditional maps serve as statements, deep maps serve as conversations. (quote from the Polis Center)



Harryette
Seeing and being seen

Photopolymer is the perfect medium. Allows me to combine two of my favorite things: intaglio and photoshop. Each piece in this series is a palimpsest. Parts of the original surface are kept yet the street matrix changes with the intersection. The eyes appear on the walking skirt. The looking costume.



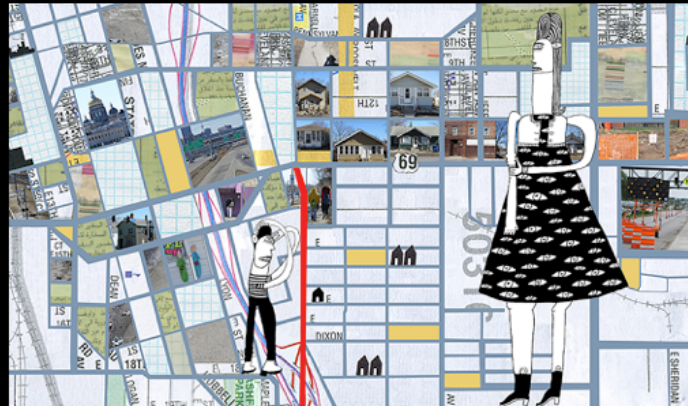
Things are Like Things
Physiognomy studies and flânerie association

Caspar Lavater's *Physiognomies* was widely read mid-19th century, flâneur noted as the "physiognomist of the street." Became popular at the same time as photography.



Spatial Practice
 Perspective(s): both streets and frames

Working with several perspectives is a part of a spatial practice. I mean it in two ways. DeCerteau uses it to describe a daily practice in a particular space. for me, constructing space in two dimensions is a practice. There are two perspectives combined here, both elevation and aerial.. The streets also form the frames of a graphic narrative.



14th Street Flâneuse Walking , Looking, Mapping

Collaborative animation with
found and performed sound

Accordion book

Series of paintings

Deep maps combine realtime perceptions with the space of memory and imagination (6) I wanted represent multiple mapping perspectives by combining aerial perspective with elevations and the wide angled linear perspective of the camera. I represent myself and others with a combination of drawings, photos of people and their shadows, Writing form a daily journal work their way into additional layers. The sound is composed of found sounds on the route with studio recordings of metaphoric sounds, throat singing for traffic drone, humming for harryette's musings. The frenetic bass is the composer's response to the confusing message of the street as a whole. Drums, the notion of daily practice.

As a walker, I had done the moving. I had been a body, moving through space. As a deep mapper, I wanted the art to move. I wanted to represent 14th as a place where [thirdspace], where things come together, subjective, objective, real and imagined.



The post pedestrian city

I wanted to find ways of representing the visual rhetoric of the street, in this case the evolving urban corridor which is also the way I get to work. I radically altered my daily practice of driving, which is how most inhabitants operate in this space. I walked, which meant taking a very long walk on a straight path through a post pedestrian city. [slide of traffic]



Harryette

I walked as Harryette, a shadow self, clearly female, an amalgam of times and places, both real and imagined. In her full skirt and sensible mary janes, she is anti-erotic, safe, a dreamer.

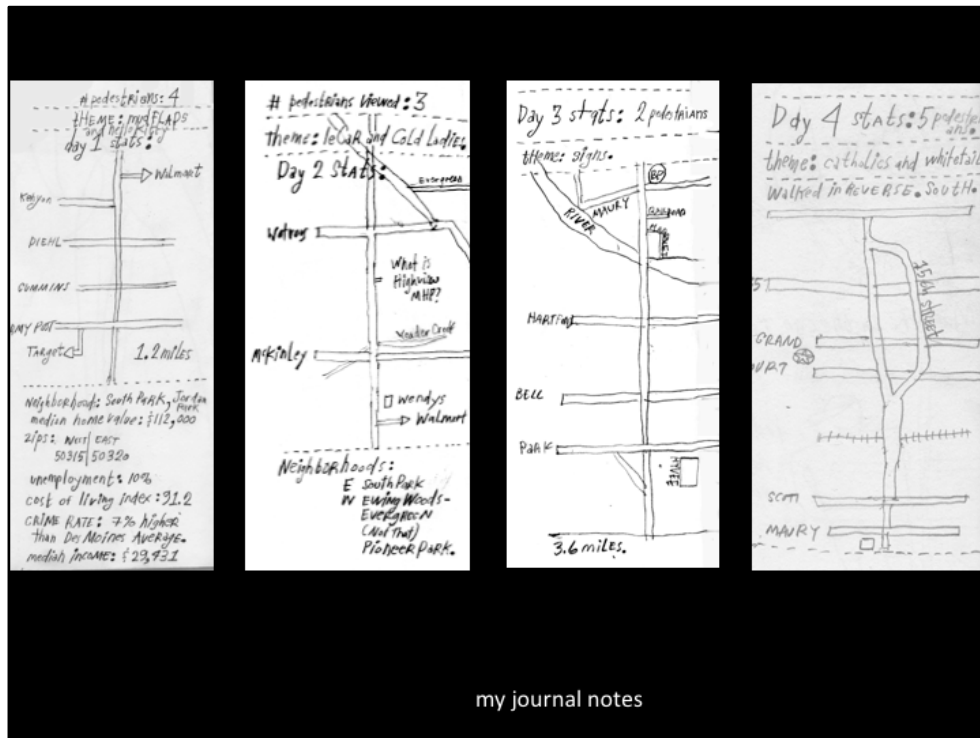


Smokin' Dude

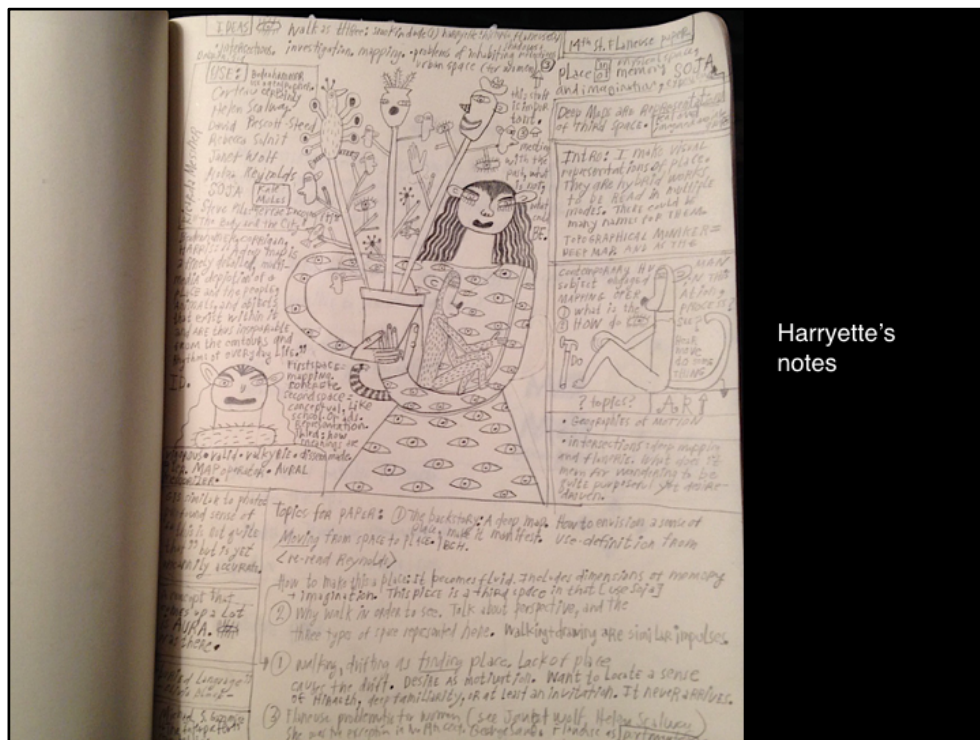
Who was I as a solitary female stroller? For the 21st century woman, the situation hasn't changed much. She might not be in as much danger, or the subject of scorn, yet the awkwardness remains.

Could I then invent a looking place for her through my own walking practice? As artist and theorist, Helen Scalway has noted, from her own walking experience, the journey starts with clothes (3)

Here's what I tried. First, following the model of George Sand, I disguised myself in men's clothing, I walked as "Smokin' Dude," a role composited from the solitary male stroller I encountered.



Notes were recorded daily, on site. I found places to stop and draw. Later I recorded some statistics, but my intent was never that of a social scientist. In the years since I started doing this, 2012, deep mapping has been more closely associated with digital and spatial humanities, using GIS as a matrix and linking from there.



Harryette is a looking human subject, but with a pencil, a notebook, a camera. These are her notes, far more self-conscious than mine. Hers are meant to be looked at.



Here's the whole thing:

Deep maps combine realtime perceptions with the space of memory and imagination (6) I wanted represent multiple mapping perspectives by combining aerial perspective with elevations and the wide angled linear perspective of the camera. I represent myself and others with a combination of drawings, photos of people and their shadows, Writing form a daily journal work their way into additional layers. The sound is composed of found sounds on the route with studio recordings of metaphoric sounds, throat singing for traffic drone, humming for harryette's musings. The frenetic bass is the composer's response to the confusing message of the street as a whole. Drums, the notion of daily practice.

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Rebecca Solnit, "Paris, or Botanizing on the Asphalt," in *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (New York: The Penguin Group USA, 2000)

Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life," in *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, 2 Edition (London: Phaidon Press, 1995)

Janet Wolff, "Gender and the haunting of cities (or, the retirement of the flâneur)," in *The invisible flâneuse* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006)

Helen Scalway, "The Contemporary Flâneuse," www.helenscalway.com (access September 10, 2013)

Virginia Woolf, "Street Haunting, A London Adventure," in *The Essays of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 4 (London: the Hogarth Press, 1994)

David Bodenhamer, "Narrating Space and Place," in *Deep Maps and Spatial Narratives* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015)

Roland Barthes, "Rhetoric of the Image," from *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978)

Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1984)

14th Street Flâneuse

Composition Jude Mathews
Musicians Kyle Jones
Noah Silver-Mathews
Engineer David Whitcomb
Stray Dog Recording Company
Animation Cyndi Wiley
Photography Rachel Merrill

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