



NOME

BEYOND THE GOD'S EYE  
CIAN DAYRIT

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N O M E G A L L E R Y . C O M

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## BEYOND THE GOD'S EYE

"The frames of the old *orbis terrarum* had been broken; only now, precisely now, was the earth opened up' ... that would permit one to link real life (history) to the real earth."

Mikhail Bakhtin quoting Karl Marx

The idea of the "God's eye" signifies a position of power, an angle of panoptic control, and a mode of producing knowledge. Cian Dayrit's practice of counter-cartography interrogates the constitutive power of the God's eye. He first peers through this eye, before re-envisaging the materialist lines and poetic memories that frame the social and aesthetic life of maps and mapping.

"Beyond the God's Eye" recontours representations of the earth's terrain and carves out the emancipatory potential of cartography. Composed of various visualizations of maps and borders, the exhibition reveals the spatial regimes that order the earth in order to expel people from their land, extract natural resources, reproduce feudal land relations, expand the powers of global neoliberalism, and further the accumulation of wealth. Land issues in the Philippines open out on to the wider experience of contested topographies, dispossession, and processes of domination in the Global South.

Approaching these issues and discourses, Dayrit orients viewers toward the aesthetico-materialist field of perceiving and experiencing maps. The perspective we are conventionally presented by maps and cartography tends to be vertical—a view from the top down. This point of view risks seducing us into a dominating disposition, while making local, lived specificities remote and abstract. Aerial perspectives have historically enchanted imaginations as well as miniaturized and depersonalized people's real spaces and experiences.

In the history of spatial governance, mapping and miniaturization play a crucial role in the control and regulation of spaces and places. James Scott explains how the miniaturization of real spaces was instrumental in the formation of imperial territories, colonial occupation, and the modern organization of land. Borrowing from Eyal Weizman's "politics of verticality," Achille Mbembe's "Necropolitics" discusses how verticality has been a kind of geometric strategy through which to deploy infrastructures of death—drones, air strikes, and satellite images—ultimately dictating "who may live and who must die." Sari Hanafi meanwhile refers to these perpetual phenomena, which decimate and destroy the places people inhabit, as "spatio-cide."

Dayrit's miniature sculptures of walls, barricades, and barbed wire, part of *Monuments of Great Divide* (2019), represent the deployment of infrastructures of control. They depict the physical spatial markers that transform wide breadths of spaces into bordered and boundaried territories, which then enforce the unequal distribution of resources and restrict freedom of movement and dwelling. The exhibition prompts us to go beyond, to stretch our "imagined geographies" (Said), and "exceed the power" (Butler), which enables spatial violence and violence against life of all kinds.

Dayrit tackles the question of "spatio-cide" through a committed art practice and sustained collaborations with other artists and communities. His time spent with communities of Indigenous people, peasants, the urban poor, and refugees, who struggle to defend their (lost) land and rights, weave a cartography from below. In the space between art-making and everyday life, the artist organizes workshops with these groups in order to animate their spaces of struggle and affirm subjects' place amid a community of collaborators. The collection of map drawings and sketches contributed by people from these workshops foregrounds their collective aspirations and culturally situate their everyday lives and local-moral spatial worldings. It is through this dialogue that the artist and the communities involved underline the intrinsic link between life and land.

The collaged, over-painted maps of the "Frontiers of Struggle" series (2019), as well as embroidered textile maps such as *Cultus dominator* (2018), disrupt the Orientalist visual worlding of colonial empires and the desires of Western capitalist projects to shrink, possess, and partition the earth. The embroideries, sketches, and community drawings alike conceptually blur the boundaries that remain from the legacies of colonialism, and which have reproduced the neoliberal world order. These map-making processes do not conform to grids; they are non-programmatic, non-institutionalized, non-professionalized, and non-specialized. They break the sharp dividing lines in the field of the God's-eye view to reconfigure the atlas of geographic power and give way to new modes of encountering and feeling maps—from a vantage point of empathy, awareness, and community engagement.

Vitality, "Beyond the God's Eye" intimates the poetic dimension of map-making. The poetic—by which I mean the powers of imagination and creation—expands the aesthetic and linguistic aspects of our geographic imaginations and excavates the places of our memories. Cian Dayrit's mode of counter-cartography folds out into a series of canvasses that plot new sites of hope, mark out the social terrains of struggles, and map possibilities for the spatial determination of the marginalized and disenfranchised. Counter-cartography breaches a new frontier where social justice may flourish, and where art emancipates map-making from the dominant perspective of the God's eye.

Clod Marlan Krister V. Yambao

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A R T W O R K S

*TREE OF LIFE IN THE STATE OF DECAY AND REBIRTH, 2019*

Embroidery on textile (collaboration with Henry Caceres)  
190 x 155 cm



*CULTUS DOMINATUR, 2018*

Embroidery on textile (collaboration with Henry Caceres)  
190 x 130 cm



*ET DIES TUUS NON EST INFERNO, 2018*

Embroidery on textile (collaboration with Henry Caceres)  
160 x 195 cm



*ET HOC QUOD NOS NESCIMUS, 2018*

Embroidery on textile (collaboration with Henry Caceres)  
103 x 153 cm



*MONUMENTS OF GREAT DIVIDE, 2019*

Wood sculptures (collaboration with Felman Bagalzo), acrylic and  
digital print on paper  
Variable dimensions



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 01, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 02, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 03, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 04, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 05, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 06, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 07, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 08, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 09, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm



*FRONTIERS OF STRUGGLE 10, 2019*

Acrylic and collage on handmade paper  
65,5 x 85,5 x 6 cm













quod novum hoc dogma. Lucrum este propo-  
 situm. Capitis quod vita. Ave sancti  
 omnium percentum.



Et dies tuus non est in inferno

MEDES

AVARIT

## Beyond the God's Eye

Cian Dayrit

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