



Lisa Jones  
*Residual*  
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***Catalogue essays by Claire Taylor, Greyspace, and Elise Edmonds, Senior Curator,  
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*Arriving at each new city, the traveller finds again a past of his that he did not know he had: the foreignness of what you no longer are or no longer possess lies in wait for you in foreign, unpossessed places.\**

Lisa Jones is an artist based in Sydney, originally from London, and her work in part examines her experience of living in between places. Her work is permeated by a feeling of being out of place: gaps that open up between the place that she left, the place that she remembers and the place as she encounters it again when she returns to visit; the cracks in her world as memories with friends and family become more distant over time and the gulf between lives widens. Derived in part from maps, her recent practice works against cartography and is more akin to a process of tracing psychogeography. Jones' works in this exhibition are drawing-based but I am always reminded that her background is in sculpture, that they are not just marks left on a flat piece of paper. Her work concerns the world of objects and being-in-the-world, as if drawing cannot be removed from surface but surface is never enough.

Across this exhibition Jones uses laser-cut paper as stencils or to create relief to disrupt the flat drawn surface. The outlines of the laser-cut paper are derived from photographs of cracks in paving. In *Untitled Site* the islands of tarmac are drawn, the cracks in between are implied. The artist describes the experience of encountering cracks in paving as opportunities to see beneath the skin of the city to other layers underneath. This surface of bitumen and concrete in the public domain covers layers that have the remains of other times in human history and geological time.

Jones finds beauty in cracks that have emerged over time, from the creep of growing tree roots or from changes in the saturation and dryness of the ground underneath, shrinking and expanding it, not the fast rupture of accidental dam- age. Walking in the urban environment and looking for cracks is a way for Jones to slow down in the fast pace of the city and find glimpses of another slower time in the here and now. In *Untitled Site*, Jones has drawn the paving cracks over a print of a historical map; the layering bringing some of this time slippage into play in her drawings. The map is of an area of Sydney's eastern suburbs, a civic survey commissioned in 1950, a time that is now distant in living memory. In this work, the map is reproduced large enough that the text can be read and its features are recognisable. It is recent enough that it depicts many buildings, streets, parks, and contours that still remain and also depicts the boundaries of individual parcels of land, delineating thresholds between public and private land. On some of the streets, tram routes that no longer exist are marked out.. Jones has a significant body of previous work tracing transport routes. These public spaces for Jones—the city's transport networks—are the city's circulation system. In this sense she considers the city akin to a living, constantly changing body, and in these most recent "crack" works, she traces some of the city's memory embedded in the streets. She

deliberately uses processes of erasure and overlay within her drawing process to represent her rapidly changing urban landscape. The slow, meticulous method of drawing also imbues the drawings with a sense of time in process: we see the marks the artist has left on the surface of the paper over weeks, months even, that contrasts with the fast reproduction of the map.

In the rest of the exhibition, Jones has taken drawing off the flat piece of paper and off the wall in a series of papier maché globes and hemispheres. Both of which reference pocket globes, fashionable as status symbols in the 1800s. Pocket globes were usually a terrestrial globe mapping geographic features and political boundaries, and often came in a case made of two hinged hemispheres that were decorated with celestial maps on the interior. Jones' globes retain the object scale of pocket globes—a size an adult could comfortably hold in their hand—but the hemispheres are a lot larger. The two fragile hemisphere shells of papier maché test the limits of the material's ability to hold form, distorting slightly under their own weight.

The hemispheres are collaged with paving cracks, in a similar manner to the globes, but are marked only by the texture of the collaged paper and the form of their mould. One of the hemispheres is collaged on its interior with positive space laser cuts and its exterior is collaged with negative space laser cuts. The other hemisphere inverts this relation: its interior is collaged with the negative space laser cuts and its exterior with positive space cuts. Presented on the floor and attached to the wall, much of the exterior surfaces of them are concealed but the way in which they reflect and invert each other as well as their own interiors and exteriors is evident. In some lights the hemisphere interiors undergo a gestalt shift to briefly appear as the external surface of a globe rather than an interior. Whilst many artists have explored notions around the antipodes, Jones instead shows us two partial globes that cannot fit together: fragments of place have been expanded to form incomplete world-views, perspectives that are incommensurate.

The globes extend drawn map-fragments as well as paving crack traces that are in many of the works in this exhibition. In some works the paving cracks are simply suggested by graphite highlighting folds in the paper, in others the cracks are referenced negatively by collaged islands of paper—they read as vast islands or continents. In contrast, Jones' drawn and collaged map details are radically enlarged rather than reduced in scale, grossly distorting boundaries and features, rendering them unrecognisable. Here borders expand to the point that they take precedence over terrain they define or divide. Jones' globes are the antithesis of the 1800s pocket globe as an encapsulated map of the world and snapshot of Western colonial ambition. Her globes instead decolonise the mapping process and return us to the root of mapping as a process of drawing and depicting day- to-day journeys. It is in this sense of representing the journey that Jones most clearly articulates her experience of being between place.

*For those who pass it without entering, the city is one thing; it is another for those who are trapped by it and never leave. There is the city where you arrive for the first time; and there is another city which you leave never to return. Each deserves a different name.\**

\*Italo Calvino, Invisible Cities

**Claire Taylor 2018**

## **Residual**

Maps are more than merely directional guides. They can be captivating, visual expressions of a place. There is something compelling about pouring over a map or a globe. It is a tactile experience; tracing lines which represent locations both foreign and familiar. We engage with maps that depict the familiar; where we live, where we grew up, places we've visited, or just imagined.

Maps describe a place, their lines denoting boundaries created by nature or human intervention. They mark topography, water courses, jagged coastlines. Some mark ownership and land use. Maps can be highly subjective, revealing the map-maker's own interpretations of space and location, viewpoints and biases. Place names inscribed on maps can denote imperialist appropriation or colonialist ambition.

Maps have highlighted inequities and political power, depicted exploration and discoveries and have claimed new territories for European powers. Map-makers have even imagined what might lie beyond the known world; mythical continents, filled with riches and fantastical inhabitants. Early maps depicting the European settlement at Sydney Cove marked out portions of land granted to the new arrivals; a promise of self-sufficiency and optimism. These maps sometimes noted the quality of the land itself; many areas of what is now prime Sydney real estate were described in a 1793 account of the Sydney settlement as 'barren and sandy', 'rocky and sandy', 'bad country', 'a patch of good land', 'wretched and brushy'.

As the Sydney settlement grew, the early maps became quickly out-dated. The very land itself was being re-shaped and hidden beneath roads, buildings, infrastructure. The natural, uneven shorelines, the mangrove swamps, the rivulets and valleys now only exist on paper, housed safely in libraries and archives.

Land around the Harbour was reclaimed and modified for 19th century industry: warehouses, wharves, fortifications. Large tracts of land were gradually carved up into smaller parcels and maps reflect this very Sydney story of ownership, subdivision and population growth.

Lisa's fascination with maps led her to the State Library's map collection, which is rich with information, enticing us with glimpses into the layers of Sydney's history and ongoing construction. Delving into the collection, Lisa explored some of the early maps of the colony, civic maps of Sydney suburbs, along with transport routes that were built, extended, then made obsolete. The maps themselves are remnants from previous generations; traces of the past, kept for posterity so that each new generation can interrogate and develop new understandings of our city and its history.

Walking through cities and suburbs, Lisa has observed and documented cracks in the surfaces. These are spindly, jagged lines which have opened the concrete, suggesting the hidden layers of our place, our city. Vestigial remains of the past hide just below the surface. The past is still with us; our history is close enough to touch.

***Elise Edmonds, Senior Curator, State Library of New South Wales  
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