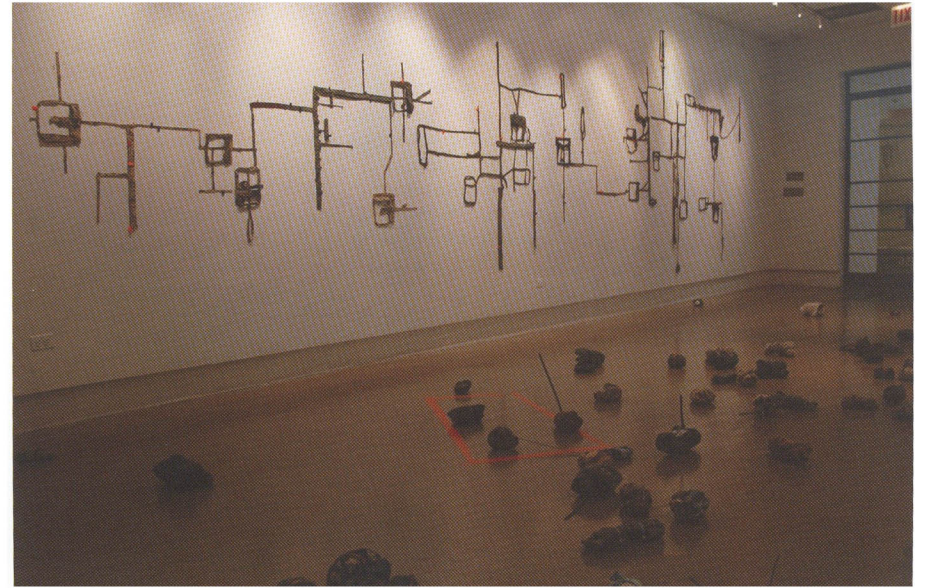


**EXPERIMENTAL  
GEOGRAPHY**

**RADICAL APPROACHES TO LANDSCAPE, CARTOGRAPHY, AND URBANISM**

Nato Thompson and Independent Curators International



## DE-STABILIZED LEXICON

**stealth:** From the eye of a smart bomb to fragments left on the pavement, *stealth* calibrates distance and scale, attempts to both measure and disrupt the interval between contested global geographies and our images of these landscapes.

**research:** In 2004 I visited the Natick Soldier Systems Center, a Department of Defense installation responsible for technology development and engineering—fielding and sustainment of military food, clothing, shelters, airdrop systems, and soldier support. After a background check, an on-site search of my car, and a final review of documents, I was granted permission to enter the base to visit the Individual Protection Directorate. A member of the Materials and Systems Integration Team, a U.S. Army group that develops and tests camouflage, met with me.

Down the hall from a poster for *Future Force Warriors*, I tried on night-vision goggles, body armor, and camouflage makeup. We viewed various climatic dioramas (arctic, desert, and woodland) used to test camouflage effectiveness, and we examined the extensive collection of military uniforms from international armies. Samples of new camouflage patterns, some digitized and others looking like '50s tablecloths, were on display. After several hours, a military team member asked if I would mind answering a question: Could I tell him about two artists, Mondrian and Seurat, and what they have to do with camouflage? Weeks later we exchanged packages, trading art books for samples of “failed” camouflage patterns.

**map:** An interlocking network, an aerial view, cut from used, recycled clothing available everywhere. Pink camouflage parkas with fur trim, stretchy lime-green camouflage exercise pants, miniature fleece camouflage pajamas, and pants in graduated sizes with flag patches on each pocket, junior uniforms for *Future Force Warriors* cut down to their seams.

**bundles:** Improvised Ecological Debris, IEDs, an ecology of production, fabricated from the recycled remains of the maps, bound in zip ties and wire, ready-to-use.

Left: Ellen Rothenberg, *De-Stabilized Geography: Map 3*, 2007–08. Camouflage fabric, metal and plastic map tacks, metal and plastic map flags, zip ties, wire, approximately 120 x 336 in. (304.8 x 853.4 cm)



Left and above: Ellen Rothenberg, *De-Stabilized Geography: Map 3*, 2007–08 (details). Camouflage fabric, metal and plastic map tacks, metal and plastic map flags, zip ties, wire, approximately 120 x 336 in. (304.8 x 853.4 cm)