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UNORGANIZED TERRITORIES

CHRONICLING THE CREATIVE EXPLORATION OF SPACE AND PLACE

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THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2007

ArtForum



The most recent (March 2007) edition of ArtForum has an article by Tom Vanderbilt on page

119 about [Christian Nold](#), "a young London-based artist who--as someone deeply interested in capturing and visually conveying our moments of psychological 'arousal' in the city,... has for the past few years been investigating a practice he calls 'emotion mapping' or 'biomapping.'"

He's basically layering biological data linked to psychological states ([lie detector stuff](#)) with GPS data, journals, and snapshots taken by volunteer subjects on walks around the city and then dumping it all into Google Earth. The completed map is available for free download on his site but when I did it, all photos open blank. The journals are too brief to be evocative and the routes are more legible when viewed individually, rather than as a collective forest, though the forest itself is rather lovely.

Though visual, it is less powerful in some ways than audio walking tours such as those created by [Janet Cardiff](#) and others for the last decade and a half ([Cardiff mp3](#)). Important factors in these are the intimacy of the voice of the recording individual, the layering of background sounds from the recording with background sounds from the present, and (what is most lacking in Nold's maps) the real-time experience of the path as a journey. It's too easy to simply jump to the next labeled waypoint when I come to a lull, rather than slog it out, waiting for minutes at a time with nothing but the expectation of what might come next.

This is one of the tools that is perhaps uniquely available to "performing" the map, where the physical experience of moving through a place becomes paramount and personal.

P I C A S A W E B A L B U M

M A P S



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