



## Leila Daw, *Ways to Find*

September 7 – October 1, 2011

Opening Reception: Thursday, September 8, 6-9 pm

Brooklyn, NY, September 2011 - A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce *Ways to Find*, an exhibition of new work by Leila Daw. Formerly a professor at Massachusetts College of Art in Boston, with a number of public projects installed across New England and the U.S., Daw is now working as an independent artist in New Haven. This is her second solo show with the gallery.

Daw's map-inflected works are explorations, meditations and tributes to the many methods employed over the ages by different cultures in an attempt to understand our relationship with Earth.

*Ways to Find* includes a shrine-like installation created with a jumble of effusively detailed, jewel-like objects called "map icons" and "stick maps." The "map icons" are wood squares, depicting significant sites or notable journeys. Each small square suggests a larger whole, and each employs different cartographic conventions. The "stick maps" are based on the concept, but not necessarily the appearance, of Polynesian methods of explaining waves, tides, and oceanic waypoints to guide them on their voyages. Both refer to points along the continuum of traditional map making and evoke veneration and contemplation.



Additional works in *Ways to Find* include *Flow*, a 28 x 4 foot, accordion-folded, 1/12,000 scale map of the Connecticut River. The river has been cut and re-assembled to fit a straight linear format, suggesting a grandiose and pointless engineering feat. *Northeast Seas Exploration, Fragments* comprises images of sea charts on silk, perhaps relics of an ill-fated but thrilling sea journey.

The specificity of map-making creates an illusion of control by extracting only that information from land, sea, or sky relevant to the task at hand, yet many of these works suggest the opposite: situations out of balance, disasters waiting to happen, or cataclysms in progress.

Underlying Daw's work is a longing for a mythic past, for adventure, and for the wonder of a new age of exploration, fused together with a fascination for piecing fragmentary evidence together into a narrative.

Leila Daw's has permanent commissions installed at Bradley International Airport, Hartford; Wilson Branch of New Haven Free Public Library; Northwestern CT Community College Library; and MetroLink light rail, St. Louis, MO. Additionally, her work is in the public collections of DeCordova Museum, Boston Public Library, St. Louis Art Museum, Rose Art Museum, Texaco Corporation, Houston TX, and many other corporate, university, and private collections. Recent exhibitions include MASS MoCA, North Adams, MA; Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH; Art Chicago International Fair of Contemporary and Modern Art; Atrium Gallery, St. Louis, MO; The Borowsky Gallery, University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA; Boston Sculptors Gallery, Boston, MA; Guilford Art Center, Guilford, CT; The Parachute Factory Gallery, New Haven, CT; Berkshire Botanical Garden, Stockbridge, MA; Mercy Gallery at The Loomis-Chaffee School, Windsor, CT.

Recent publications featuring Daw's work include: Katherine Harmon, *The Map as Art*, Princeton Architectural Press; Denise Markonish, *Badlands: New Horizons in Landscape*, MIT press; Clare Norwood, *uncoordinated mapping cartography in contemporary art*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH, Ronald Lee Fleming, *The Art of Placemaking: Interpreting Community through Public Art and Urban Design*, Merrill Publishers. For more information visit [www.LeilaDaw.com](http://www.LeilaDaw.com)

A.I.R. Gallery is located at 111 Front Street, #228, in the DUMBO section of Brooklyn. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11am to 6pm. For directions, please see [www.airgallery.org](http://www.airgallery.org). For additional information please contact the Gallery Director, Julie Lohnes, at 212-255-6651 or [jlohn@airgallery.org](mailto:jlohn@airgallery.org)