

# ***Vestiges***

**30 August to 28 September 2019**

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**Enar de Dios Rodríguez  
Project Space  
30 August to 28 September 2019**

At the beginning there is a definition. A small part of something larger, stronger, or more important that still exists from something that existed in the past. A group of finely divided parts of rocks, corals or shellfish that existed in a larger form in the past. A vestige. Sand.

There is also a premise: if sand is the vestige of million-year journeys during which minerals slowly eroded, then, if readable, every grain of sand could in principle reveal an odyssey about disintegration and assembly –a story about displacement and place-making.

There is a fact and its existence won't depend on someone believing in it or not. In 2014, humans consumed 40 billion tonnes of sand, twice the yearly amount of sediment carried by all of the rivers of the world. It seems that before we run out of time, we will run out of sand.

There is an island. One day you will spend your paid holidays there. You will be amazed by the pristine beachscape. You won't notice that its white sand has been imported from a distant place, you won't learn the meaning of "beach nourishment". There is no point in realizing that the building where you are staying aggravates the recession of the beach, that you should feel like stepping into the Sahara desert instead

of into Teresitas beach. Downtown, you will buy a postcard in a souvenir shop. One month later, someone will open a white mailbox and will encounter your idealized memories designed by Touristic Gaze. It happens all the time.

In fact, there is not just one, but many islands. Unlike me, they don't have a specific start or end. Unlike us, their sand allows them to change their size and shape according to the dynamic diversity of its surroundings. In an attempt to understand them I created a typology in four chapters: the inverted island (the spaces where humans extract sand from), the temporary island (the spaces humans use to transport sand), the artificial island (the spaces where humans unload the transported sand) and the disappearing island (the spaces that humans nullify because of all the above). I'm really sorry the resultant videos are too human-centric. I tried my best. I just got caught up in a maze of colonialism, dredging machines, land reclamation projects and environmental refugees.

There, on the two walls on the back, there are black lines dividing the pristine white space. It could be a scale of something larger. One line marks four centimetres, because if you own a piece of land in Australia, you only own the top four centimeters of its topsoil; everything

below is owned by the state. The other line marks 155 centimeters, the point at which artworks are considered properly placed. You might imagine which line is which and what it means to have such conventions; what might happen in the space. Now, imagine sand as a scale of something greater.

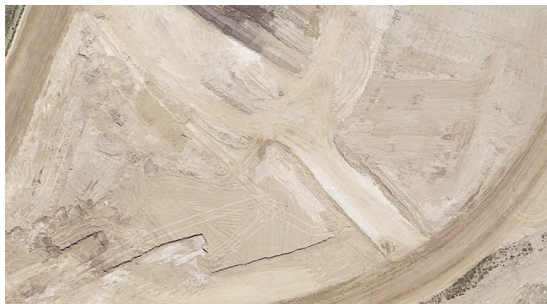
There is a book, or rather, a vestige of a book. In it, Lewis Carroll tells how hunters navigate the ocean looking for the Snark, guided by the best map that has ever existed. I brought it to you and you can take it with you. It's possible to draw the island of Utopia in it. But it's also possible to leave it blank, Utopia means *no place* anyway. One way or another, it will look fantastic hanging on that wall of your living room.

There is a quote that should have been at the beginning of the text but now is at the very end: *the map is not the territory, the word is not the thing.*

1.

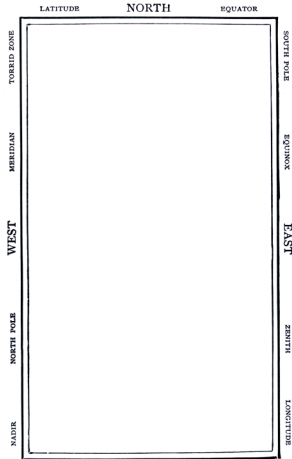


2.



3.

4.



Scale of Miles.

OCEAN-CHART.



1.

**Greetings from**

C-prints, mailboxes, LED lights

31 x 26 x 9 cm each

2.

**Vestiges (an archipelago)**

Videos

10 minutes each

3.

**Regulations**

Black paint on wall

4.

**I brought you the best**

Xerox copy, poster, vinyl

84 x 59 cm

29 x 21 cm

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The RMIT University School of Art manages INTERSECT—six creative projects that together form a dynamic program of exhibitions, residencies, creative laboratories, talks and events. These projects consider and use contemporary art as a means of intersecting with and enriching our University community, as well as our broader local and global ones.

Enar de Dios Rodriguez is a guest of SITUATE through the SITUATE / AIR Krems Austrian arts exchange. This project has been supported by AIR Krems and the Lower Austrian Government.

RMIT University acknowledges the people of the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung language groups of the eastern Kulin Nations on whose unceded lands we conduct the business of the University. RMIT University respectfully acknowledges their Ancestors and Elders, past and present. RMIT also acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their Ancestors of the lands and waters across Australia where we conduct our business.

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