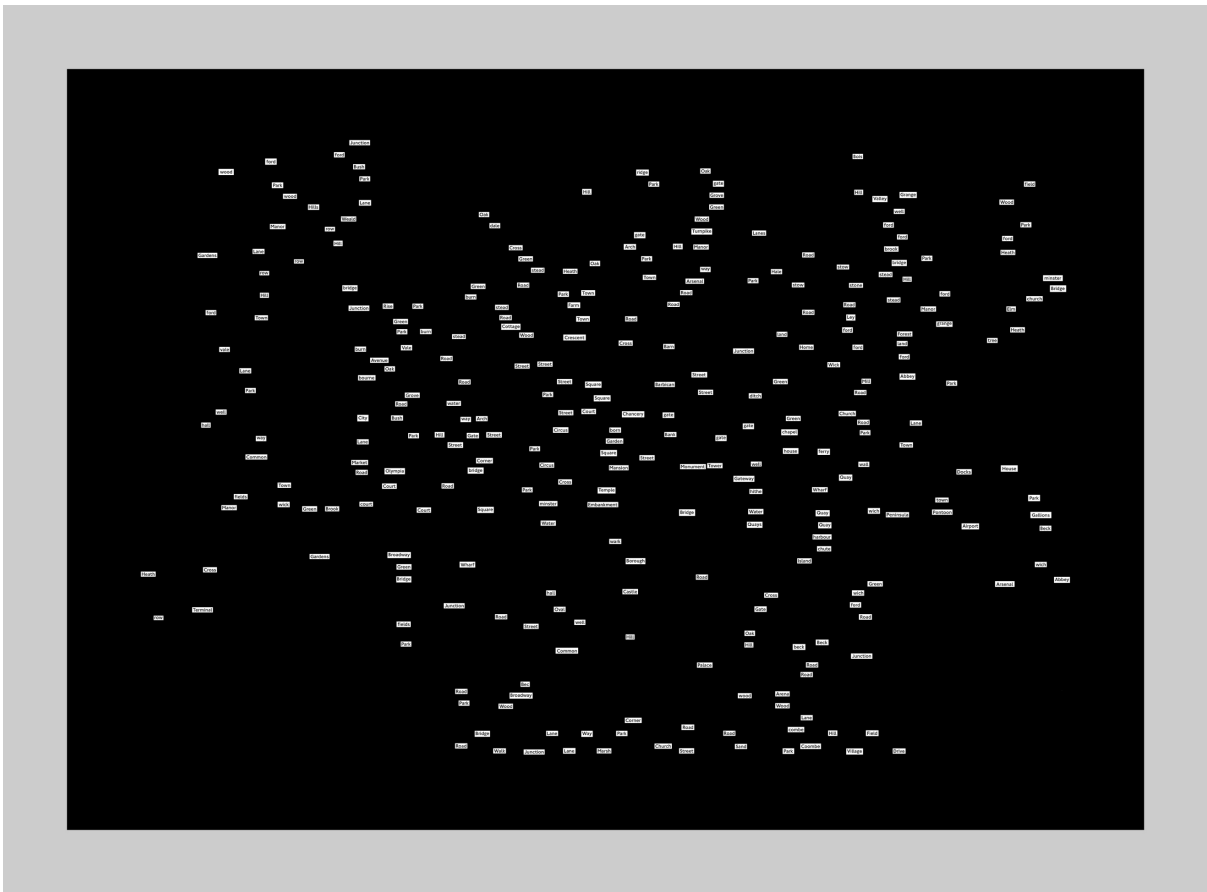


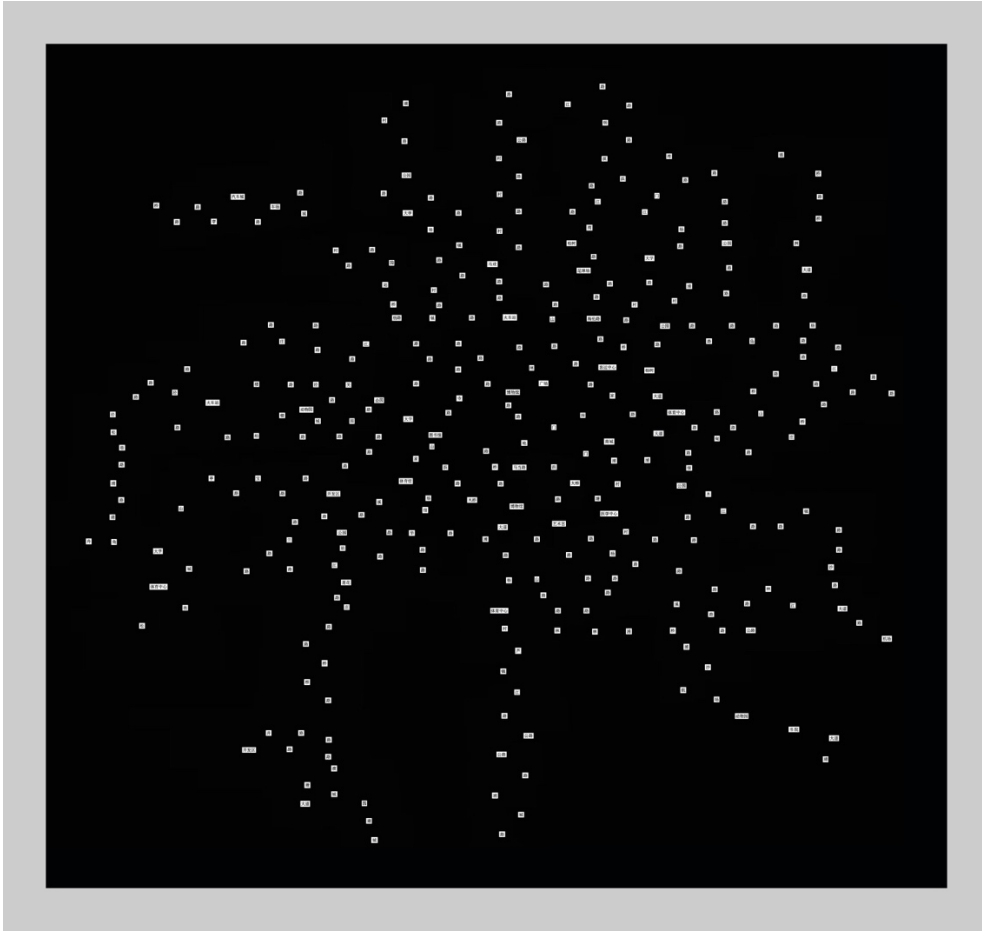
London Redact & Shanghai Redact

Bill Aitchison



London Redact. Original size 95 x 70 cm

The two maps, London redact and Shanghai Redact, are part of a larger series of map works from cities around the world that apply a similar methodology. They are heavily redacted public transport maps that leave just traces of their former selves in the form of clipped names from stations. These two, London and Shanghai, are in English and Chinese, others are in French and German and Hong Kong is a bilingual piece which reflects the city's mixed cultural history.



Shanghai Redact. Original size 117 x 110 cm

I wanted these maps to capture the sense of walking through an unfamiliar city and experiencing it as a succession of sites. This contrasts with the way I see transport maps which position the viewer outside of and above the hubbub of the street. I have tried to do this by removing the sense of ownership and specificity that is often present in place names, hence St James's Park is rendered Park in this sort of map. Although the Chinese place names operate in a similar way, due to the particularities of both the language and city, the result is quite different. A great many locations there are named after other Chinese cities or regions in much the same way we have, for example, Oxford Street in the centre of London. In these cases, I did not clip the name to the more interesting 'ford' but kept with 'street' as the ford that is referred to in the name is one in Oxford and not one in the centre of London.

These maps are only one direction of my artistic practice. I not only make prints and collages, I also write texts more broadly, work in sound, video and, perhaps most of all, in performance. One line of performances takes the form of city tours: guided tours of guided tours, tours that deliberately get lost, a tour of the city's "hyper-heritage." A general trend running across all of these is an interest in the city and the specificity of site. I have therefore visited and even made work in and about many of the places that feature on these maps as the city is for me both a canvas and a subject matter in its own right.

