Paul Catanese: Visible from Space
Collection CAE1610

Introduction/Abstract
Artist Paul Catanese has created an interdisciplinary artwork titled Visible from Space that erupts from a thought experiment about creating drawings on Earth so large they would be visible from the moon. Materials in the archive include video, photographs, printed ephemera, and notes.

Biographical Note: Paul Catanese
Paul Catanese, who graduated with his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, is a hybrid media artist and Associate Chair and Associate Professor and director of Study in the Art and Art History Department at Columbia College Chicago, Director of the Interdisciplinary Arts & Media MFA Program, and President Emeritus of the New Media Caucus, a College Art Association Affiliate Society. His artwork has been exhibited widely including at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, SFMOMA Artist's Gallery, La Villette and Stuttgart Filmwinter among others. Catanese is the recipient of numerous grants and awards, including commissions for the creation of new artwork from Turbulence.org as well as rhizome.org, and has had residencies at the Goldwell and Playa AIR programs.

Scope and Content
Visible from Space (2009 – present) is an interdisciplinary artwork that erupts from a thought experiment about creating drawings on Earth so large they would be visible from the moon. Central to this project are experiments and “field recordings” involving camera-equipped aerial vehicles (e.g rockets, balloons, kites, drones) to capture aerial views of temporary diagrammatic drawings created in the high deserts of the American Southwest, including at the Playa residency program in southern Oregon.

For his premier solo exhibition in Chicago, artist Paul Catanese introduced Visible from Space to the region by activating the Sidney R. Yates Gallery at the Chicago Cultural Center as a site for a three-month residency and exhibition where modes of production from the artists’ studio, film set, black box theatre, and site-specific installation purposefully intermingled. Throughout the duration of the exhibit, Catanese composed large-scale diagrammatic drawings on the floor of Yates using a modular set of props that includes reflective mylar, tripods, marking flags, non-adhesive tape, rope, aerial targeting panels, and hundreds of rigid dimensional lines. At regularly scheduled times each week, Catanese piloted a 12’ helium-filled blimp to fly over, observe, project and record aerial footage of continuously evolving “viewed from the moon” drawings. Viewers were encouraged to visit multiple times over the course of the exhibition to witness the evolution of this materialized drawing practice and the transformation of drawings into field recordings via flight events. Simultaneously, as the recordings accumulate during the residency, they were edited into a long-duration, single-channel video.

Project support for Visible from Space provided to Paul Catanese by the Efroymson Family Fund via a 2014 Efroymson Contemporary Arts Fellowship, and Columbia College Chicago via a Faculty Development Grant in 2015. This project is also partially supported by an Individual Artist Program Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events, as well as a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency, a state agency through federal funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. Development has been supported via a number of residency programs including the Central School Project in Bisbee, Arizona; the Goldwell Open Air Museum near Death Valley; and the Playa Artists’ Residency in Summer Lake, Oregon. Materials in the archive include video, photographs, printed ephemera, and notes.
This archive is currently in process.