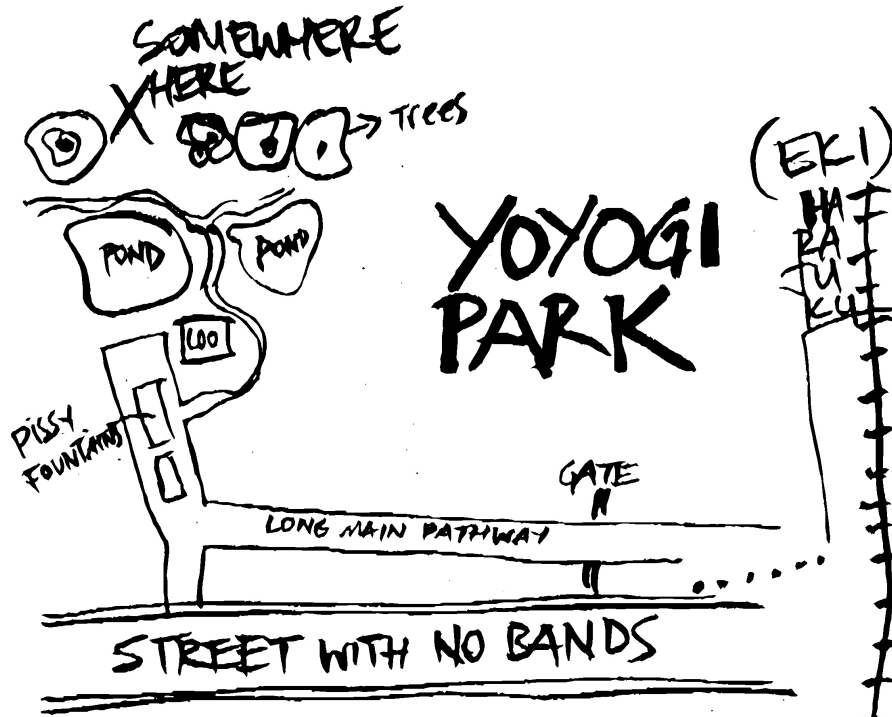


Following Maps

Strolling before map24.

Gabu Heindl, 1997/2007



We follow maps. But what precedes maps? Or rather: what preceded the totalizing and homogenizing maps of Google Maps or map24 we are now habitually using? Only ten years ago (and probably until today), people in Tokyo were used to handing out hand-drawn maps with personal comments to direct others to specific places in the confusing, ungridded and unnumbered cityscape of Japan's capital. Unlike standardized maps from web-sites, a self-drawn map gives insight into the psychogeographic production of the drawing authors' cities. It is a rhythmic arrangement of marker points along a path, consisting of buildings or plants, fast food chain stores or city furniture, but also of the city's synaesthetic qualities such as lights, sounds, etc.: a personalized collective experience of the everyday becoming notational parameters.

„Following Maps“ is a collage of twenty-five maps, collected in Tokyo in 1996 and 1997 by way of asking people to draw the route to their favourite spots in the city.

Similar to Guy Debord's „The Naked City“, „Following Maps“ consists of islands of atmospheric entities, city quarters with blank spaces inbetween. However, in my arrangement, each map is linked to a preceding and following one. This way, its notational content produces a rich yet incomplete city structure, a city of contingency produced by strolling; or rather, a movement diagram composed of precise scripts for pleasures or confusions within the multi-perspectival heterogeneity that is urban life.