



Monica Tap: *Escape*, 2010, construction paper, adhesive putty (detail)

Escape

My favorite teachers could make the walls disappear, magically opening up worlds to us; a marvel! But in the hands of other teachers, the same walls closed in, suddenly confining and restricting. Faced with the latter, I'd imagine myself outside, wondering what it would be like to be a bug or a bird. What struck me most about this classroom are the windows with their marvelous treetop view. If I were a student in this room, that big tree would offer a handy escape.

The tree images are derived from historical engravings and 18th century landscape drawings. In scale, my drawings approach life-size, forming a connection with the real trees outside. I envisioned a drawing as big as a room—big enough to dissolve the walls, opening up to the world.

Construction paper suggested itself as a good material for this, a school project. The ripped edge reminds me of enlarged etching lines, a quality I like because the resulting picture is on the verge of falling apart. Up close the drawing is incomprehensible, but in the long view it coheres. Education is like that too—up close it's messy and often baffling. As a teacher, I hope that the long view will prove worthwhile for my students.

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installed for *Art School (dismissed)* at the decommissioned Shaw Street School, Toronto
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