

The Cartographer Tries to Map a Way to Heaven

CAMERON A. GRANGER

Cameron A. Granger (b. 1993, Cleveland, OH; lives and works in Columbus, OH) is an artist and filmmaker whose works offer poignant meditations on Black history and culture. As a Black man raised by his mother and grandmother in Ohio, Granger often uses local communities in his home state as a backdrop in his works. In *The Cartographer Tries to Map a Way to Heaven*, Granger adapted his 2021 video *The Line* to create a new multimedia iteration for the Contemporary Arts Center. Through a multi-channel video, wallpaper, and roving reading room, the exhibition features the Near East Side neighborhood of Columbus, Ohio, focusing on the site's history of Black migration and urban development. By juxtaposing a collection of found archival materials with his own personal images and texts, Granger weaves stories that complicate accepted interpretations of the past and present.

The exhibition title alludes to Kei Miller's collection of poetry, *The Cartographer Tries to Map a Way to Zion*, which investigates what happens when one system of knowledge brushes up against and challenges another. In Miller's writing, a cartographer, whose understanding of place, territory, and history is based around scientific methods of mapmaking, is forced to reevaluate his perception of the world as he attempts to map a path to a utopian city of freedom. In his work, Granger contests the perceptions of place that have led to redlining, gentrification, policing, and other public policies that disproportionately target Black people. By documenting his friends and family, his work presents the spirit of love and hope that manifests within his community.