

The Newcomb Art Department presents the 2023 Stern Lecture



# ATLANTIC SLAVERY AND THE ETHICS OF CARTOGRAPHY: BRAZIL, SEPTEMBER 1763



Image: Unrecorded artist, *Plan of the Quilombo called Buraco do Tatú* (detail), 1763 or 1764. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon, Portugal

## MONDAY, MARCH 20, 5:30PM

FREEMAN AUDITORIUM, 205 WOLDENBERG ART CENTER

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This talk looks to a unique work of Black Atlantic visual culture: the map of Buraco do Tatú, a quilombo (primarily African-populated maroon polity) invaded and destroyed on the orders of the Viceroy of Brazil in September of 1763. Produced by a military cartographer immediately after the

battle and today held at an archive in Lisbon, it is one of only two extant maps of the hundreds of such polities that existed in Brazil during its slavery period, and by far the most detailed. With careful renderings of the quilombo's fortifications, buildings, and agricultural plots, it presents a potentially rich archive of Africans' lifeways in colonial Brazil. Yet its aerial view, its textual narrative, and its haunting rendering of Africans killed during the battle collectively testify to its ambivalence: a colonial attempt to

freeze, and thus reckon with, a fugitive landscape as a precondition of its violent erasure. Looking to a small but rich visual history of mapping maroonage - and thus mapping that which was never meant to be mapped - and dialoguing with work on landscape studies, fetishism, and Black feminist cartographies, this talk presents some initial conclusions on how this unprecedented object demands new forms of ethical engagement with the archives of Atlantic slavery.