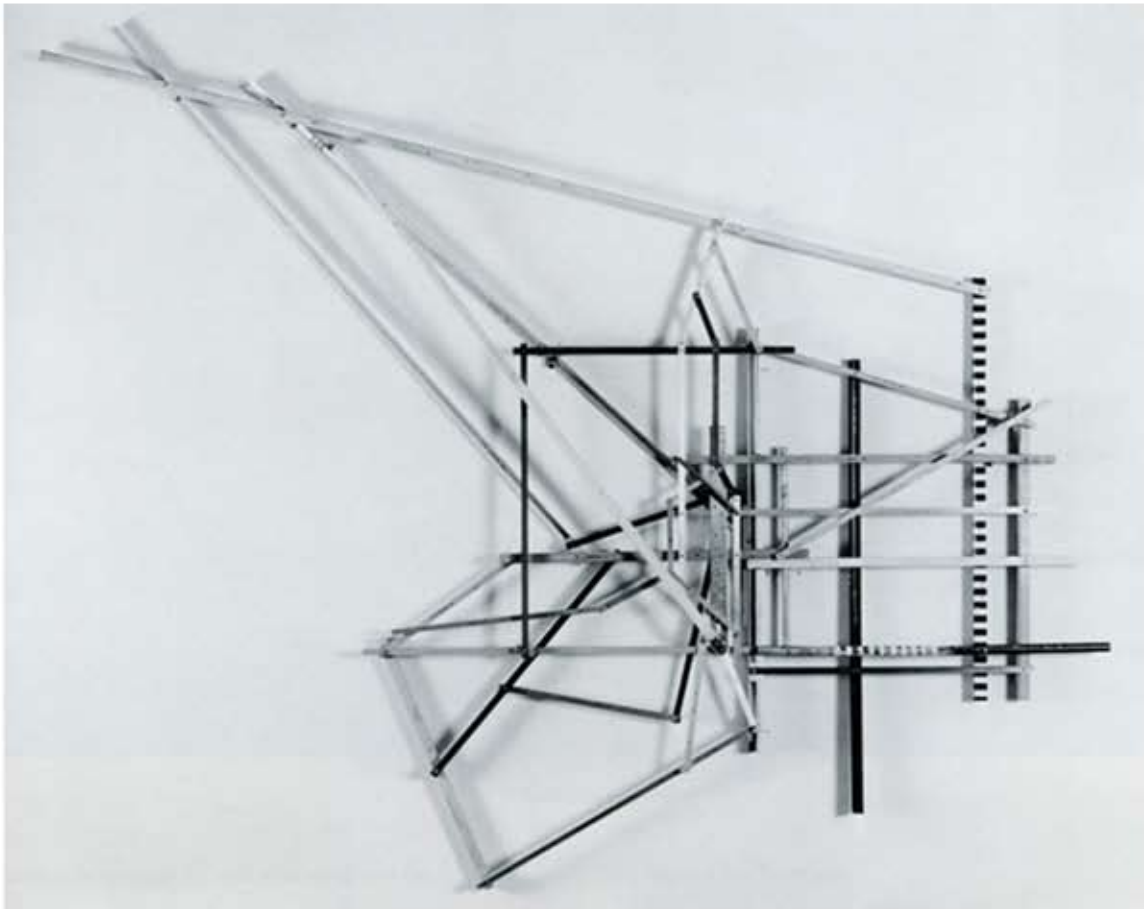


## Robert Storr essay in "Mapping" catalogue, MoMA, 1994

The maps of Californian **Greg Colson** derive their character from the aesthetic convergence of the strip and the scrape. The strip is the dominant axis of the U.S. car-dependent metropolis, and should be used as a collective rather than a singular noun, since the more they mushroom outward, the more intricately our cities are criss-crossed by such matrices. Main Street is a memory, monstrously parodied by these commercial arteries that circulate the population through what science-fiction writer William Gibson has aptly christened "The Sprawl." The scrap is the antithesis of the strip: it is an absolutely particular thing, the discard people traveling and consuming at high speed have no further use for. The scavenging artist might, however, discover that it perfectly fulfills a function in some evolving image. In an ongoing suite of urban plans – think of them as coastal annexes to the oceanic stick charts of the Pacific Islanders – Colson has rescaled the expanse of the West Coast cities he knows to the specific quality of the materials he selects. When his map of "Portland" (1992) opens to the suburbs along the oblique road that cuts north from its center, where it meets another peripheral highway, that trajectory is described by an ordinary length of metal tubing, while the older sections of town are laid out in intersecting, sometimes calibrated wooden segments. An abstract composition in the spirit of Ellsworth Kelly's "Fields on a Map," a relief reminiscent of Russian Constructivism of the twenties, and a homely object in the tradition of vernacular American assemblage, Colson's "Portland" is an engagingly makeshift template of a streamlined world.



GREG COLSON. "Portland" 1992. Enamel and ink on wood and metal. 65" x 6' 8" x 3 1/4". Courtesy of Sperone Westwater, New York