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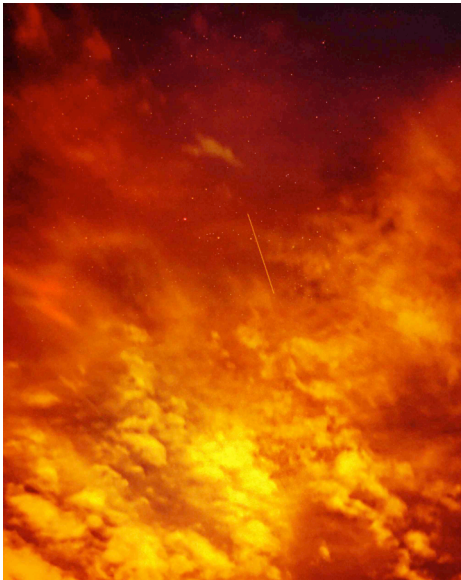
Media contacts:

Jonathan L. Knapp, Publicity Coordinator
(510) 642-8691 jlknapp@berkeley.edu

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Trevor Paglen: The Other Night Sky

June 1 through September 14, 2008



Trevor Paglen: *KEYHOLE 12-3 (IMPROVED CRYSTAL) Near Scorpio (USA 129)*, 2007; c-print; 59 x 47 ½ in.; courtesy of the artist and Bellwether Gallery, New York.

Exhibition continues artist's exploration of the "black world" and finds evidence of covert government activity among the stars

Berkeley, CA, May 20, 2008— The University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA) presents **Trevor Paglen: The Other Night Sky**, an exhibition showcasing the work of artist and experimental geographer Trevor Paglen. Though trained as an artist and a geographer, Paglen has also gained recognition in recent years for his books, which explore the covert activities of the US government. His artwork examines this same "black world." Recently, Paglen's research has turned his gaze to the stars—where he has found evidence of top-secret satellites. The exhibition, which is part of the acclaimed MATRIX Program for Contemporary Art, features photographs and a three-dimensional installation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY ART MUSEUM & PACIFIC ARCHIVE

Mailing Address: 2625 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, California 94720-2250 / bampfa.berkeley.edu

with computer animation. **Trevor Paglen: The Other Night Sky** opens June 1 and runs through September 14, 2008.

Paglen earned a PhD at UC Berkeley's Department of Geography, and his research has taken him to remote locations that range from the American Southwest to Afghanistan. He has published two acclaimed books: *Torture Taxi: On the Trail of the CIA's Rendition Flights* (with journalist A.C. Thompson) and *I Could Tell You But Then You Would Have to Be Destroyed By Me: Emblems from the Pentagon's Black World*. These deal, respectively, with the CIA's controversial practice of "extraordinary rendition" and with an unofficial US military system that uses patches as a form of classification.

Because the "black world" is meant to remain unseen, Paglen deploys an array of tactics—from data analysis and on-the-ground exploration to long-distance photography and astronomy—to map it. His visual art reflects this interdisciplinary approach, combining a variety of different media. Paglen has become particularly well known for his photographs, which frequently use telescopes. The resulting images, taken from distances of dozens of miles, depict a shadowy world that includes military prisons and testing facilities, such as the famed Area 51. Due to their blurry subjects and barely discernible details, these photographs stop short of explicit documentation. Rather, they are a form of truth-telling, offering a glimpse of something that does not officially exist.

The Other Night Sky uses Paglen's telescope technique and incorporates data compiled by amateur astronomers and hobbyist "satellite observers." His large-scale astrophotographs depict familiar fields of stars but also capture something hidden to the casual observer: barely perceptible traces of surveillance vessels, or—as Paglen calls it—"the other night sky." The exhibition's centerpiece is an installation of a globe containing a digitally animated projection that traces the orbits of 189 satellites in real time.

The presence of these reconnaissance satellites in this "other night sky" is a symptom of the changes our democratic society has undergone in the post-9/11 years of the Bush administration. Democracy and empiricism have shared roots in the Age of Enlightenment, when thinkers like Galileo and Newton looked to observable phenomena like the stars and planets in a quest for truth in the face of authoritarian institutions. Paglen looks upwards to the night sky, one of the oldest laboratories of rational thought, in order to visualize and document certain facts, looking for answers about truth and democracy in the present moment.

Trevor Paglen's work has been exhibited at Transmediale.08 Festival, Berlin; The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco; Kunstraum Muenchen, Munich; and Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams, among other venues. His work has been featured in numerous publications, from *Wired* to the *New York Review of Books* to *Modern Painters* and *Aperture*. His third book, *Blank Spots on a Map*, is forthcoming in late 2008 or early 2009. Paglen received his M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and this

summer received his Ph.D. in geography from UC Berkeley. **The Other Night Sky** is Paglen's first solo museum exhibition.

Trevor Paglen: The Other Night Sky is curated by Elizabeth Thomas, Phyllis Wattis MATRIX curator.

Free Admission

There will be free admission to the BAM Galleries from **Wednesday, August 6**, through **Sunday, September 7**. During this period BAM/PFA features the exhibitions **Trevor Paglen: The Other Night Sky** and **Scott Snibbe: Falling Girl** (June 1 through August 31). Other galleries will be closed as BAM/PFA prepares for the major exhibition **Mahjong: Contemporary Chinese Art from the Sigg Collection**, opening on September 10.

Public Program

Artist's Talk and Reception

Sunday, June 1, 3 p.m.

Museum Theater

In The Museum Store

I Could Tell You but Then You Would Have to Be Destroyed by Me: Emblems from the Pentagon's Black World, by Trevor Paglen. \$22.95, hardcover.

Torture Taxi: On the Trail of the CIA's Rendition Flights, by Trevor Paglen and A. C. Thompson. \$23, hardcover.

An Atlas of Radical Cartography, edited by Lize Mogel and Alexis Bhagat. \$30, slipcased.

Support

Produced with the support of Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology.

The MATRIX Program at the UC Berkeley Art Museum is made possible by a generous endowment gift from Phyllis C. Wattis.

Additional donors to the MATRIX Program include the UAM Council MATRIX Endowment, Joachim and Nancy Bechtle, Maryellen and Frank Herringer, Noel and Penny Nellis, Roselyne C. Swig, Paul L. Wattis III, Paul Rickert, Iris Shimada, and Jane and Jeff Green.

Programs at the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive are supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Packard Humanities Institute, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Bernard Osher Foundation, The Henry Luce Foundation, the Koret Foundation, the Andy



Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Columbia Foundation, The Christensen Fund, and other private foundations, corporations, government agencies, and individuals, including the BAM/PFA membership. Major endowment support has been provided by the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation and by George Gund III.

About BAM/PFA

The UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA) aims to inspire the imagination and ignite critical dialogue through contemporary and historical art and film, engaging audiences from the campus, Bay Area community, and beyond. BAM/PFA is one of the largest university art museums in the United States in both size and attendance, presenting fifteen art exhibitions and five hundred film programs each year. The museum's collection of more than 15,000 works includes exceptional examples of mid-twentieth-century painting, including important works by Hans Hofmann, Jackson Pollock, Eva Hesse, and Mark Rothko, as well as historical and contemporary Asian art, early American painting, Conceptual and contemporary international art, and California and Bay Area art. The PFA film and video collection now includes the largest group of Japanese films outside of Japan, as well as impressive holdings of Soviet silents, West Coast avant-garde cinema, seminal video art, rare animation, Central Asian productions, Eastern European cinema, and international classics.

Museum Information

Location: 2626 Bancroft Way, just below College Avenue near the UC Berkeley campus.

Gallery and Museum Store Hours:

Wednesday to Sunday, 11 to 5. Closed Monday and Tuesday.

Admission:

General admission is \$8; admission for seniors, disabled persons, non-UC Berkeley students, and young adults (13 – 17) is \$5; admission for BAM/PFA members, UC Berkeley students, staff and faculty, and children under 12 is free; admission for group tours is \$3 per person (to arrange a group tour, call [510] 642-5188). Admission is free on the first Thursday of each month.

Information:

24-hour recorded message (510) 642-0808; fax (510) 642-4889; TDD (510) 642-8734.

Website: bampfa.berkeley.edu

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