

# CONTESTATIONAL CARTOGRAPHIES SYMPOSIUM

Maps represent, maps reveal, maps entice, maps distort. They selectively omit, they unwittingly exaggerate, and they even make outright lies. Though maps strive to project authority and objectivity, they cannot help but embed the biases, blind-spots and idiosyncrasies of their human authors. As our lives are played out in increasingly networked realms, we have become carto-literate as never before; we read maps produced by governments and corporate interests, yes, but also collaboratively author maps online, inscribing new representations of ourselves and our priorities.

**Contestational Cartographies introduces the thoughts of leading "experimental geographers" who employ mapping techniques in new modes of critical practice and cultural research and, in so doing, help us "read between the lines" of the world around us.**

*Contestational Cartographies* is co-organized by the Miller Gallery and the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry at Carnegie Mellon University. Produced with support from the CMU School of Art Lecture Series, the Vice Provost for Education, Dorkbot Pittsburgh + the Brillbox.

## BIOS

**Pablo R. Garcia** is the founder and principal of Pablo Garcia/POINT, Pittsburgh, a multidisciplinary research and design studio dedicated to experiments in the spatial arts, in a variety of scales from the portable to the urban. From 2004-2007, Garcia worked as an architect and designer for Diller Scofidio + Renfro. Currently he is the Lucian and Rita Caste Chair in Architecture and Assistant Professor at Carnegie Mellon.

**Jessica McPherson** is a plant ecologist, independent journalist, and activist. Recognizing that many critical conservation decisions center on land use, she develops maps to help communicate the existence of natural ecosystems and explain their interdependence with humans. McPherson also produces radio news stories for Pittsburgh Indymedia.

**Lize Mogel** (BFA '92) is an interdisciplinary artist who works with the interstices between art and cultural geography, and she inserts and distributes cartographic projects into public space and in publications. She has mapped public parks in Los Angeles, private military contractors in Iraq and Colombia, and future territorial disputes in the Arctic. She is co-editor of the book/map collection *An Atlas of Radical Cartography* and co-curator of the touring exhibition "An Atlas."

**Trevor Paglen** is an artist, writer, and experimental geographer whose work blurs the disciplines of social science, contemporary art and investigative journalism. Paglen's meticulously researched books examine the secret relationships between land use and military power, and include *Torture Taxi: On the Trail of the CIA's Rendition Flights* and, most recently, *Blank Spots on a Map*.

**Richard Pell** (BFA '99) is a founding member of the Institute for Applied Autonomy, an art, engineering and tactical media collective. His work includes robotic, web and video based projects that call into question the imperatives that drive technological development, and explore the individual's relationship to authority. Pell is an Assistant Professor in the School of Art at Carnegie Mellon.

## ORGANIZATIONS

**The Miller Gallery** at Carnegie Mellon University supports the creation, understanding and growth of contemporary art through exhibitions, projects, lectures, events and publications. The gallery aspires to engage diverse audiences and to create and strengthen communities through art and ideas.

**The STUDIO for Creative Inquiry** is a center for experimental arts at Carnegie Mellon University, connecting artistic enterprises and research laboratories across the campus, the region, and internationally. The STUDIO supports atypical, interdisciplinary, and inter-institutional research projects and educational initiatives at the intersections of arts, sciences, technology and culture.

## AT THE MILLER GALLERY

### UPCOMING

**ART WORK: A National Conversation  
About Art, Labor, and Economics**

Feb. 2010

Featuring the writings of Temporary Services, Julia Bryan-Wilson, Holland Cotter, Harrell Fletcher, Futurefarmers, Justseeds, InCUBATE, W.A.G.E., 16 Beaver Group, many more.

**Opposite Page:** *The Other Night Sky*, T. Paglen; courtesy of artist, Altman Siegel Gallery and Thomas Zander Gallery

### BEYOND

**YOUR TOWN, INC.**

**Big Box Reuse with Julia Christensen**

Curated by Astria Suparak, organized by Miller Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University

Feb. 25 - March 19, 2010

@ Richmond Center for Visual Arts, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

## SCHEDULE

All events are free + open to the public unless otherwise noted. For more information visit [www.cmu.edu/millergallery](http://www.cmu.edu/millergallery)

### Jan. 28, Thurs.

**5-6:30pm: Blank Spots on a Map: Lecture**  
by **Trevor Paglen**, co-presented by the School of Art Lecture Series

- 1 @ McConomy Auditorium, University Center, CMU  
Trevor Paglen has methodically amassed rich visual evidence for "nonexistent" military installations, secret prisons in Afghanistan, and a collection of even more obscure "black sites" startlingly close to home. Here, Paglen takes us on a road trip through the world of hidden budgets, state secrets, covert bases, and more, guiding us through a landscape that intelligence insiders call the "black world."

**8-10pm: Information Mapping: Dorkbot**  
with **Chris Harrison + Susanne Slavick**

A special edition of the world-famous geek salon. Dinner (meat/vegetarian/vegan) + drinks available. Followed by DJ /rupture (\$7 pre-sale/ \$10 at door)

- 4 @ Brillbox Upstairs, 4104 Penn Ave at Main, Lawrenceville

### Jan. 29, Fri.

**12pm: Experimental Geography: Tour**  
with artists **Lize Mogel + Trevor Paglen**

- 1 @ Miller Gallery, Purnell Center for the Arts, CMU

**1-2pm: Closing Reception:**  
**Experimental Geography** exhibition

with refreshments @ Miller Gallery, CMU

**5pm: The World as a World Map: Lecture**  
by **Lize Mogel**

- 2 @ STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, College of Fine Arts, CMU  
As technology and commerce blur more and more geographic boundaries, the iconic world map can't adequately describe the intricacies of globalization. In this lecture, Mogel presents 'radical cartography' projects that question and re-think familiar representations of the world.

**6pm: Squatting the High Ground:**  
**Panel Discussion with Pablo R. Garcia, Lize Mogel, Trevor Paglen, Rich Pell**

- 2 @ STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, CFA, CMU

### Jan. 30, Sat.

Workshops include snacks.

To pre-register email [mmbm@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:mmbm@andrew.cmu.edu)

**12-2pm: Make a Video Microscope from a Hacked Webcam: Workshop**

with **Rich Pell**, in connection with the UCLA BioOutlaws Conference. \$20 admission includes a webcam.

- 2 @ STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, CFA, CMU  
Learn how to turn a cheap, off-the-shelf webcam into a video microscope that works with common video streaming programs like Skype and iChat. We will use them to explore the microbial lifeforms that are currently living around and on us and share the results on the web.

**3-5pm: Basic Geographic Information Systems for Artists, Activists and Naturalists: Workshop**  
with **Jessica McPherson**. Ages 14 and up. \$15 admission.

- 5 @ Baker Hall #140F, CMU  
Maps are political documents because they define the contents of our world. Many of the ones we use the most leave nature out of the picture. We'll learn how to use GIS to re-envision traditional mapping and display vital information about the state of the natural world.

## RELATED EXHIBITION

On view through Jan. 31, 2010

### EXPERIMENTAL GEOGRAPHY

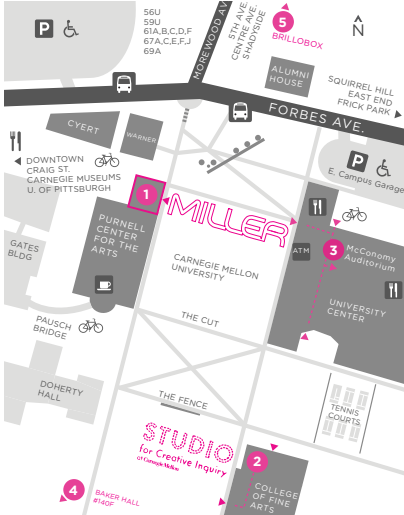
Guest curated by Nato Thompson, organized by iCI (Independent Curators International)

- 1 @ Miller Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University  
This exhibition explores the distinctions between geographical study and artistic experience of the earth, as well as the juncture where the two realms collide, through a wide range of mediums including interactive computer units, sound and video installations, photography, sculpture, and experimental cartography.

PURNELL CENTER FOR THE ARTS  
5000 FORBES AVE • PITTSBURGH, PA 15213  
412.268.3618 • miller-gallery@andrew.cmu.edu  
Hours: Tues.-Sun., 12-6pm  
Admission: Free

To update your address or go paperless, visit:  
WWW.CMU.EDU/MILLERGALLERY

Free parking in E. Campus Garage  
on weekends + after 5pm Mon.-Fri.



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- 1 Miller Gallery, Purnell Center for the Arts, CMU
- 2 STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, College of Fine Arts, CMU
- 3 McConomy Auditorium, University Center, CMU
- 4 Baker Hall #140F, CMU
- 5 Brilllobox upstairs, Lawrenceville

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STUDIO  
for Creative Inquiry  
at Carnegie Mellon

MILLER

GALLERY AT CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY  
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