night sky, one of the oldest laboratories of rational thought, seeking answers about the unknown. Paglen’s work echoes a similar effort, presenting the visible matter associated with secret activities, thus linking empiricism and democracy. Paglen’s mapping of the black world of national security represents a new paradigm of scientific, or empirical, knowledge beginning to supplant cultural, political, and social circumstances. This statement necessarily simplifies the complexity of our global society—a network of global capitals that affects the politics of every country in the world, and is not independent of them. All politics is local, as is all secrecy. There are instances where secrecy is necessary; justifiably, even necessary, but the secrecy in question also seems to protect the government against the scrutiny of organized legions of well-organized and politically active opposition. This is one of the basic accusations of arguably illegal and morally and ethically compromised activities.

Trevor Paglen’s “other night sky” is like a shadow, reminiscing of some of our most recent modifications to democracy. The nation’s government today has taken on an uneasy distance from the fundamentals of democracy, a path that is entirely new in history and perhaps only possible to build on one’s own and relatively inexpensive to maintain. Such modern technologies as the Internet and the World Wide Web were possible to build on within one’s own lifetime, and relatively inexpensive to support. In the Hands of the Banality of Evil (2007), Trevor Paglen explores implications of these technologies for our changing relationship with the Internet and the World Wide Web, and the implications of the Internet and the World Wide Web for our changing relationship with the modern state. The book presents a theory of technological determinism, which argues that technology has a determinative role in shaping society, and that the development of new technologies can be understood as a process of technological change.

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PUBLIC PROGRAM
Artists in the Spotlight
Trevor Paglen
Sunday, June 14, 1:00–2:00 PM
Trevor Paglen, artist, will discuss his work, and will be joined by curator and art historian Liza L. Heyman. Paglen is known for his work with satellite imagery, with a focus on the United States Air Force, and for his book, I Could Tell You But Then You Would Have to Be Destroyed by Me: Emblems from the Pentagon’s Black World. Paglen received his M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and his Ph.D. in geography from UC Berkeley. Paglen lives and works in Berkeley.

Trevor Paglen’s work will be included in the upcoming exhibitions, I Could Tell You But Then You Would Have to Be Destroyed by Me: Emblems from the Pentagon’s Black World, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York; and Trevor Paglen: The Other Night Sky, at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley.

Paglen’s work has been shown at the Museum of Modern Art, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; and 16 Beaver Group, New York. His work has been featured in numerous publications, including The New York Times, Wired, the New York Review of Books, Modern Painters, and the Los Angeles Times. Paglen is a fellow of the Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University. Paglen is the author of the book I Could Tell You But Then You Would Have to Be Destroyed by Me: Emblems from the Pentagon’s Black World, and his second book, The Map of前途未定 is the United States of America, was published this spring, and his third book, The Map of前途未定 is the United States of America, is forthcoming in early 2009. Paglen received his M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and his Ph.D. in geography from UC Berkeley. Paglen lives and works in Berkeley.

Additional artists in the spotlight are Dominique Swain, Anish Kapoor, Lyle Ashton Harris, and Trevor Paglen. The program is presented in association with the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley.

An interesting metaphor for the disconnect between visibility and apprehension in the "black world" of the United States government is offered by Trevor Paglen’s practice as an artist. The "black world" is a catchall phrase encompassing a multitude of clandestine activities that are kept hidden from public view, and for which existence is denied. Paglen’s work as an artist is informed by his work as an experimental geographer, and his research focuses on the geospatial mapping and documentation of secret military bases, extraterrestrial phenomena, and other sites that are typically hidden from public view. His work is characterized by a combination of spatial and temporal knowledge, as he uses both terrestrial and astrophysical technology to explore the unknown. Paglen’s work is intended to shed light on the activities of governments and corporations that are typically hidden from the public eye, and to bring attention to the moral and ethical implications of these activities.