

# Storefront for Art and Architecture

97 KENMARE STREET NEW YORK NY 10012 TEL 212 431 5795  
www.storefrontnews.org

For further information or to receive high resolution images please contact:  
**Storefront for Art and Architecture**  
César A. Cotta  
212.431.5795  
cc@storefrontnews.org

For interview and press preview requests, please contact:  
**Future Plural**  
Nicola Twilley & Geoff Manaugh  
510.219.1483 / 510.219.0783  
nicola.twilley@gmail.com  
bldgblog@gmail.com

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Upcoming exhibition: LANDSCAPES OF QUARANTINE

March 10 – April 17, 2010

Opening reception: Tuesday, March 9, 7pm



*Landscapes of Quarantine*, a group exhibition exploring the spatial implications of quarantine, will open at **Storefront for Art and Architecture**, a renowned non-profit gallery in SoHo.

**NEW YORK CITY – February 26, 2010** – On Tuesday, March 9, 2010, *Landscapes of Quarantine*, a group exhibition exploring the spatial implications of quarantine, will open at New York's landmark Storefront for Art and Architecture. The exhibition consists of new works by a multi-disciplinary group of eighteen artists, designers, and architects, each of whom was inspired by one or more of the physical, biological, ethical, architectural, social, political, temporal, and even astronomical dimensions of quarantine. Curated by Nicola Twilley and Geoff Manaugh of Future Plural, the exhibition will be on view at Storefront until April 17, 2010. Entrance to the exhibition is free; the launch event on March 9 is open to the public and will showcase a one-night-only, inflatable quarantine prosthesis attached to Storefront's façade, designed by architects Jeffrey Inaba and Joseph Grima, as well as a range of beers generously donated by Brooklyn Brewery.

At its most basic, quarantine is a strategy of separation and containment—the creation of a hygienic boundary between two or more things, for the purpose of protecting one from exposure to the other. It is a spatial response to suspicion, threat, and uncertainty. From Chernobyl’s Zone of Exclusion and the artificial quarantine islands of the New York archipelago to camp beds set up to house HIV-positive Haitian refugees detained at Guantánamo and the modified Airstream trailer from within which Buzz Aldrin, Neil Armstrong, and Michael Collins once waved at President Nixon, the landscapes of quarantine are various, mutable, and often unexpected.

According to Nicola Twilley, the exhibition’s co-curator, “Typically, quarantine is thought of in the context of disease control. It is used to isolate people who have been exposed to a contagious virus or bacteria and, as a result, may (or may not) be carrying the infection themselves. But quarantine does not apply only to people and animals. Its boundaries can be set up for as long as needed, creating spatial separation between clean and dirty, safe and dangerous, healthy and sick, foreign and native—however those labels are defined.”

“As a result,” adds Geoff Manaugh, co-curator, “the practice of quarantine extends far beyond questions of epidemic control and pest-containment strategies to touch on issues of urban planning, geopolitics, international trade, ethics, immigration, and more. And although the practice dates back at least to the arrival of the Black Death in medieval Venice, if not to Christ’s 40 days in the desert, quarantine has re-emerged as an issue of urgency and importance in today’s era of globalization, antibiotic resistance, emerging diseases, pandemic flu, and bio-terrorism.”

*Landscapes of Quarantine* began with an eight-week independent design studio directed by Geoff Manaugh and Nicola Twilley of Future Plural. Each Tuesday evening, from October to December 2009, a multi-disciplinary group of studio participants met to discuss the spatial implications of quarantine and develop their own creative response: the resulting work forms the core of the *Landscapes of Quarantine* exhibition.

For most people, the word “quarantine” evokes fear. Artist **Daniel Perlin**’s installation recreates the discomfort of health screening at international borders as a kind of quarantine theater. Meanwhile, set designer **Mimi Lien** and graphic designer **Amanda Spielman**, working in collaboration with her brother, **Jordan Spielman**, have created works that play on the surreal banality of the quarantine experience, with (respectively) evocative, depopulated dioramas of unexpected quarantine locations, and a tongue-in-cheek public health campaign filled with helpful tips on making the most of your time in quarantine.

Any exploration of quarantine, however, inevitably touches on serious constitutional and ethical issues associated with involuntary medical isolation, as well as questions of governmental authority, regional

jurisdiction, and the limits of civic responsibility. Game designer **Kevin Slavin** and comics artist **Joe Alterio** have both produced projects that investigate the challenge of shared responsibility and individual decision-making in the face of a deadly disease.

The extraordinary engineering and logistical challenges of designing for spatial separation inspired artists **Jamie Kruse** and **Elizabeth Ellsworth** of **Smudge Studio**, who focus their attention on what they have termed the “limit-case” of quarantine: plans for the million-year containment of nuclear waste in geological repositories around the world.

As a project of spatial control, the implications of quarantine ripple outward to affect the layouts of buildings, the shapes of cities, the borders of nations, and sometimes even the clothes we wear. Architects **Yen Ha** and **Michi Yanagishita** of **Front Studio** present an investigation of the implications of inserting quarantine spaces into the fabric of the city, raising thought-provoking questions about quarantine’s economic impact and unacknowledged discrimination. Meanwhile, architect **Brian Slocum** mounts a physical intervention onto Storefront’s iconic façade, in order to examine the way quarantine spaces shift and blur the border, sometimes moving it into a bubble inside a country or home, and sometimes externalizing it back to the country or place of origin.

Other works on display include a short story exploring the fictional potential of quarantine by Pushcart Prize-winning author **Scott Geiger** and an analysis of the infrastructural requirements of quarantine as it applies to both orchids and the President of the United States by architect **Thomas Pollman**, of the NYC Office of Emergency Management. Photographer **Richard Mosse** traveled to Malaysia, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo as part of his filmic exploration of vampires, the limits of documentary photography, and the devastation wrought by the Nipah and Ebola viruses. Remaining within New York City, artist **Katie Holten** presents field notes from her visit to North Brother Island, the final home of Typhoid Mary. Finally, architect **David Garcia** offers inspiration to visitors in the form of an illustrated guide to the spatial possibilities of quarantine, complete with his own proposals for a Quarantine Library and a Zoo of Infectious Species.

*Landscapes of Quarantine* is free and open to the public from March 10 through April 17, 2010. It is curated by Geoff Manaugh and Nicola Twilley of Future Plural, and designed by Glen Cummings of MTWTF. From March 1st, more information and images will be available online at [www.landscapesofquarantine.com](http://www.landscapesofquarantine.com).

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### **About Future Plural**

Future Plural is an independent research lab, non-academic academy, and umbrella for creative collaboration. Founded in 2009, its activities include the production of seminars, studios, events, publications, installations, and exhibitions that investigate spatial questions and propose intriguing responses. As Future Plural, Geoff Manaugh and Nicola Twilley co-directed the *Landscapes of Quarantine* studio and co-curated the *Landscapes of Quarantine* exhibition.

**Geoff Manaugh** is the author of *The BLDGBLOG Book* and the founder and author of *BLDGBLOG*. He is also a Contributing Editor at *Wired UK* and former Senior Editor of *Dwell* magazine. His writing has appeared in *Volume*, *Domus*, *Abitare*, and *Space & Culture*, among others, and he has lectured internationally.

**Nicola Twilley** is a freelance journalist and the founder and author of *Edible Geography*. Her writing has been published by *Volume*, *Landscape Architecture*, *Dwell*, and *GOOD*, among others. With Sarah Rich, she is the co-founder and curator of the Foodprint Project.

-bldgblog.blogspot.com

-ediblegeography.com

-foodprintproject.com

### **About Storefront for Art and Architecture**

Since 1982, Storefront has presented the work of more than a thousand architects and artists who challenge conventional perceptions of space – from aesthetic experiments to explorations of the conceptual, social and political forces that shape the built environment. Storefront creates an open forum to help architects and artists realize work and present it to a diverse audience in a program that includes an exhibition, film, publication, and conversation series. In 1993, Storefront commissioned a collaborative building project by artist Vito Acconci and architect Steven Holl. The project replaced the existing facade with a series of twelve panels that pivot vertically or horizontally to open the entire length of the gallery directly onto the street. The project blurs the boundary between interior and exterior and, by placing the panels in different configurations, creates a multitude of different possible facades. Now regarded as a contemporary architectural landmark, Storefront's facade is visited by artists, architects and students from around the world.



The *Landscapes of Quarantine* exhibition opening reception is generously sponsored by Brooklyn Brewery.