

## CONTACTS:

Jinny Khanduja  
jk@storefrontnews.org  
+1.212.431.5795

Pieter-Jan Oddens  
p.oddens@hetnieuweinstituut.nl  
+31 (0)10 4401232

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Storefront for Art and Architecture and Het Nieuwe Instituut Present:

## ***CONTROL SYNTAX RIO***



### **Exhibition Dates:**

March 28 - May 20, 2017

### **Exhibition Opening:**

Monday, March 27th, 2017

6-7 pm: Press and Members Preview [\[RSVP\]](#)

7-9 pm: Public Opening [\[RSVP\]](#)

#controlsyntaxrio    @storefrontnyc

**New York, NY** -- Storefront for Art and Architecture and the Het Nieuwe Instituut present *Control Syntax Rio* at Storefront's gallery space at 97 Kenmare Street. The exhibition will open on Monday, March 27th at 7 pm. *Control Syntax Rio* examines Rio de Janeiro's civic command center, Centro de Operações Rio (COR) as both a model of computational smart city governance and as a symbol of new spaces of representation of the 21st century city.

### **About *Control Syntax Rio***

Rio de Janeiro is one of the most visible sites of smart city experimentation. In response to catastrophic natural disasters, calamitous traffic congestion, and urban health epidemics, the Centro de Operações Rio (COR) was designed as a corrective tool and as a new command and control hub that would allow the city to prepare for the 2016 Olympic Games. Launched in 2010, COR now monitors its urban camera network and sensors, gauges optimal traffic patterns, determines landslide risk zones, predicts weather disruptions, and maps disease paths.

Rio's wild topography, wealth disparities, and aging infrastructure make it an unlikely testing ground for the smooth rationality of urban management that smart city rhetoric proclaims. Through COR, the predictable impression of Rio de Janeiro as a lush playground of beaches and samba dancers conflicts with the new image of a Rio governed by smart city control systems. As it becomes increasingly marked by extreme police tactics and political protests, Rio appears less a case of urban optimization than a platform for viewing the conflicts that have erupted around urban data management, civil rights, and issues of social control. Yet, COR also signals a new form of participatory civic politics. Citizens visiting COR headquarters are able to observe COR operations and the data COR collects and displays. Through this demonstration of openness and access, COR serves as a public relations space from which the city attempts to broadcast an image of informational transparency and competent urban administration.

*Control Syntax Rio* shows the city of Rio structured through COR's control syntax and smart city command processes. This syntax is assembled from seemingly banal "if-then" statements that become surprisingly charged by their encounters with the political and circulatory life of the city. Through COR, the exhibition sees traffic engineering as urban politics and as haunted by potential catastrophe.

In the exhibition, a street route through Rio de Janeiro doubles as a COR decision path. COR assesses every incident to learn if it will escalate to an event, an emergency, or a crisis. Through this code, we are able to perceive glimpses of the current image of urban computational governmentality, not only blithely directed toward engineered efficiency, but also saturated with a thousand narratives of possible threat, risk, disruption, and instability.

## **Exhibition Credits**

Curators: Farzin Lotfi-Jam, Mark Wasiuta

Exhibition Design: Sharif Anous, Farzin Lotfi-Jam, Mark Wasiuta

Graphic Design: MTWTF

Exhibition Design and Production Assistance: Florencia Alvarez, Javier Bidot-Betancourt, John Dwyer, Jennifer Komorowski, Chelsea Meyer, Jacqui Robbins, Miranda Römer, Augustine Savage, Jen Wood

Sound Design: Sonic Platforms (Michael Christopher, Max Lauter)

Film Voiceover: Louise Dreier

Audio Recording: Marco Pavão

Videography: Terry Barentsen

Production: Team Het Nieuwe Instituut

This project has been made possible through the initiative and leadership of the teams at HNI, led by Guus Beumer (Artistic Director) and Marina Otero Verzier (Head of Research), and at Storefront, led by Eva Franch (Chief Curator and Executive Director).

## **Public Events**

3/21 - *Manifesto Series: At Extremes* (with Lateral Office and editors of *Bracket Vol 3*)

4/13 - *Definition Series: Resilience* (with Stephen Phillips, Cal Poly LA Metro Program)

4/23 - *Urban Epistemologies / Smart Cities?* (with The New School)

5/4 - *Cabaret Series: Paradoxes* (with Antoni Muntadas, Gediminas Urbonas, and the ACT program at MIT)

5/9 - *Productive Disagreement Series: Semantics of Urban Control* (with Habidatum)

## **More Information**

Visit the gallery space at:

97 Kenmare Street, New York, NY 10012

Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11 am - 6 pm

Phone: (212) 431-5795

To learn more about the exhibition and affiliated events, please visit [www.storefrontnews.org](http://www.storefrontnews.org) and <http://hetnieuweinstituut.nl>.

## **Members of the Press**

Members of the press are invited to attend a preview of the exhibition on Monday, March 27th from 6-7 pm at Storefront's gallery space at 97 Kenmare Street.

If you would like to RSVP for the press preview, arrange an interview with the curators, or cover *Control Syntax Rio*, contact [jk@storefrontnews.org](mailto:jk@storefrontnews.org).

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

Founded in 1982, Storefront for Art and Architecture is a nonprofit organization that advances innovative and critical ideas at the intersection of architecture, art, and design. Storefront's program of exhibitions, events, competitions, publications, and projects provides alternative platforms for dialogue and collaboration across disciplinary, geographic, and ideological boundaries.

### **About Het Nieuwe Instituut**

Het Nieuwe Instituut aims to illuminate and map a rapidly changing world while at the same time fostering discussion of topics related to the vast field of design. All the institute's activities are grounded in the principles of design and innovation – two concepts bound up with changing value systems and conflict. Het Nieuwe Instituut organizes exhibitions, lectures and fellowships, carries out research and development projects, and publishes reports on the outcomes of its projects.

### **Exhibition Support**

*Control Syntax Rio* is presented in New York City as part of a year-long joint cultural crossover program between Storefront for Art and Architecture and Het Nieuwe Instituut. The partnership, supported by the Netherlands Consulate General in New York, seeks to examine the relationships of power between those involved in the construction of the contemporary city through a series of events, exhibitions, and projects to be developed in New York, Rotterdam, and other cities around the world. *Control Syntax Rio* was commissioned by Het Nieuwe Instituut, where it was presented from June 2016 to January 2017.

Special exhibition support for *Control Syntax Rio* is generously provided by Samsung and FoyerLive.



---

*Storefront's programming is made possible through general support from Arup; DS+R; F.J. Sciamè Construction Co., Inc.; Knippers Helbig; KPF; MADWORKSHOP; ODA; Rockwell Group; Roger Ferris + Partners; Tishman Speyer; the Foundation for Contemporary Arts; The Greenwich Collection Ltd.; the Lily Auchincloss Foundation; the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; The Peter T. Joseph Foundation; and by Storefront's Board of Directors, members, and individual donors.*



---

Image: *Control Syntax Rio*. Farzin Lotfi-Jam & Mark Wasiuta. Het Nieuwe Instituut & Storefront for Art and Architecture, 2017.

###