

Editors Editorial

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In this issue, Alessandra Franetovich and Trevor Paglen discuss *Orbital Reflector*, Paglen's reflective sculpture launched into low-earth orbit as a satellite. Housed in a small box-like structure, the lightweight reflective material of the sculpture was meant to deploy and self-inflate like a balloon and reflect sunlight towards earth, making it visible to our eyes as a nearby artificial star. Unfortunately, at the critical moment of the sculpture's release in 2018, the US government was on shutdown, with all agencies held hostage in order to force Congress to fund Trump's gigantic border wall between the US and Mexico. There was no way to release the mirror.

Some cuts are permanent and irreparable. Then again, destiny sometimes has a naughty sense of humor, even when it comes to destinations. Maybe another satellite opened a mirror onto us just the other day, at Four Seasons Total Landscaping near Interstate 95 in Philadelphia, nestled between Fantasy Island Adult Books and the Delaware Valley Cremation Center. It's unclear what epic mix-up led Rudy Giuliani and the Trump campaign to stage a press event about alleged voter fraud there instead of the Four Seasons Hotel in Philadelphia, but we're really glad they did.

Sean Middleton, director of sales at Four Seasons Total Landscaping, was happy to get out of Bible study when he got the call to come to the shop and help prepare for Giuliani's news conference. The *Washington Post* quoted him saying: "I have no idea why [the campaign] wanted to do it here. I don't know how the government works. Maybe they saw on satellite images that we have a big back lot and proximity to [Interstate] 95?"

Sometimes, at a moment of calamitous limbo that's absurdly heavy and light all at once, it's hard to know what to say. Thankfully, there are eight pieces in this month's issue of *e-flux journal* whose authors speak with force and substance into and out of the present gap – and others.

There are writers here who hold that another (art) world is possible. Ideas in this November issue – evidenced by long-distance vision – reveal some of the many means necessary for that possibility to come to life.

Nika Dubrovsky and David Graeber ask: "What would an abolitionist project directed at the art world actually look like?" In the course of examining contemporary policing, politeness, and protest – for example, why the police are so down on huge puppets – Dubrovsky and Graeber tie in the history of collectives, such as Prolekult, whose influence remains present, though under the radar of art discourse and practice today. Aaron Schuster reads Kafka's

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story “The Burrow” and argues that it brings the pandemic-fuelled “unbearable joy of safety” – fears of contagion, security, prepping, and privacy – into sharp focus. iLiana Fokianaki, meanwhile, investigates the range of politics around care, and asks how to bring care-full practices from art collectives into care-less art institutions. These latter two essays are co-commissioned by Katia Krupennikova and Inga Lāce as part of “Survival Kit 11 (Being Safe Is Scary),” four special contributions to *e-flux journal* spanning the November 2020 and February 2021 issues.

Jumana Manna traces resilient practices of foraging, especially in Palestine, despite laws enforcing “natural” “preservation” in states that “forget” and police indigenous plants and human life. Hou Hanru and Ou Ning map practices and theories of contemporary agrarianism and “agritopianism,” especially via the Bishan Project in Anhui Province, China, amidst a churning urbanism.

Steve Lyons and Jason Jones, writing for *Not An Alternative*, make a case for the broader left’s language in common, with a focus on lessons in counterpower from the indigenous left. Simon Sheikh takes a hard and careful look at ghosts, zombies, the last man, and other such figures – in their histories and contemporary appearances – to ask what art might look like after the end of the world.

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