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A ‘Home Land Security’ Art Show, at the Foot of the Golden Gate Bridge

By Jori Finkel
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SAN FRANCISCO — For its biggest public project to date, the nonprofit group For-Site [brought Ai Weiwei’s artwork to Alcatraz](#), to explore the goals and effects of imprisonment. Now, it’s planning its next hot-potato exhibition: “Home Land Security,” a group show on the human costs of war and nationalism, to take place in deactivated military structures in the Presidio national park near the foot of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Running Sept. 10 through Dec. 18, the show will use buildings in Fort Winfield Scott that were active in the first half of the 20th century: a set of coastal defense batteries, a Nike missile program administration building and a chapel for military personnel. Cheryl Haines, For-Site’s founder, said she was most intrigued by the coastal batteries — concrete buildings designed for rapid-fire weaponry that “have been locked or welded shut for years.”

“I’m hoping these artworks ask questions like: what is home, what is safety, what is security, and how do we erect barriers between one another individually and nationally?”

she said. “We’ve really tried to stay away from a direct political conversation and to address these issues from more of a personal, experiential level.”

While many artists are contributing existing works, the Chicago duo [Díaz Lewis](#) will be leading public pillow-making workshops in the Nike missile building. Their goal is to turn scraps of used clothes from undocumented immigrants into 34,000 pillows — representing [the number of beds](#) that Immigrations and Customs Enforcement fills each day with detained immigrants.

Sixteen participants have been confirmed so far, including the Vietnamese collaborative the Propeller Group; the Korean artist Do Ho Suh; the Chinese artist Yin Xiuzhen; the Syrian artist Tammam Azzam; the Iranian-born artist Shahpour Pouyan; and the artists Bill Viola, Liza Lou and Al Farrow, based in the United States.

Partnering organizations are the National Park Service, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy and the Presidio Trust. The first two collaborated on the Ai Weiwei project

Any chance that Mr. Ai will contribute to this show as well? “My conversations with him about refugees helped to spark this idea,” Ms. Haines said. But she added that they’ve only had preliminary conversations about his joining the group this fall: “I really can’t say any more at this moment.”