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Brooklyn Artists Invite Public to Look Beneath the Surface of Notoriously Polluted Greenpoint Waterway

A fleet of custom-designed model boats, outfitted with underwater HD cameras, will be available for public use on the Newtown Creek this September.

August 29, 2012 – Today the Newtown Creek Armada, in partnership with the North Brooklyn Public Art Coalition (nbART), announced the opening of an interactive public art installation in which a model boat pond will be created on the Newtown Creek, one of America's most polluted waterways. Visitors to The Armada are invited to pilot a fleet of artist-made, miniature, remote-controlled boats along the creek's surface while at the same time documenting the hidden world of its waters. The boats of The Armada are equipped with underwater video cameras, allowing participants to record a unique voyage on the creek. Video portholes at the project site give visitors a chance to virtually immerse themselves in the toxic waters of this Superfund site, with video pieces traveling past its oil slicks, sewage overflows, and returning nature.

The Newtown Creek Armada is a collaboration between three Brooklyn artists – Laura Chipley, Nathan Kensinger, and Sarah Nelson Wright – whose individual work creatively investigates industry, ecology, and change in urban spaces. The project is presented in partnership with North Brooklyn Public Art Coalition (nbART) and with support from the North Brooklyn Boat Club.

On Saturday, September 8 at 1:00p.m. the Newtown Creek Armada will set sail at the Newtown Creek Nature Walk at Paidge Avenue in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Artist George Trakas and Newtown Creek Alliance Director Kate Zidar to be first pilots.

The Armada is free and open to the public from 1-4pm on the following dates in September:

Saturday, Sept. 8 [opening ceremony]
Sunday, Sept. 9
Saturday, Sept. 15
Saturday, Sept. 22
Saturday, Sept. 29
Sunday, Sept. 30

www.newtowncreekarmada.org

About the Artists

Laura Chipley uses video, sculpture and public interventions to scratch away at the surface of the ordinary and investigate the fantastical, spiritual and subversive qualities of everyday objects, places and human interactions. She is the creator of Deep Black Sea, an experimental documentary series that chronicles the aftermath of oil spills around the world. Her installations, sculptures and videos have been exhibited in festivals and galleries across the country. For more information, visit www.laurachipley.com

Nathan Kensinger is a filmmaker, photographer and curator. His work explores hidden urban landscapes, off-limits structures, and other liminal spaces. Kensinger's photographs have been exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum, the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts, and in recent solo shows at the Brooklyn Library and UnionDocs. His recent video installation, The Forgotten City, was included in Bring To Light 2011, and his films have screened widely at film festivals, including Slamdance, Black Maria, Rooftop Films, SF IndieFest, and the Boston Underground. He is currently the Director of Programming at the Brooklyn Film Festival. For more information, visit www.nathankensinger.com

Sarah Nelson Wright is an interdisciplinary media artist whose work poetically investigates the changing urban landscape and seeks opportunities for public dialog and participation. In 2009, she created Brooklyn Makes, a site-specific video installation on manufacturing in North Brooklyn. She has exhibited in diverse New York venues, including CONFLUX, The Center, PowerHouse ArtSpace and Bring To Light, as well as in Mostra de Artes in San Paulo, Brazil, and ACVic in Vic, Spain. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts. For more information, visit www.sarahnelsonwright.com