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Buffalo Arts Studio presents:
Carl Lee, *Unity Island*
Exhibition: September 22–November 3, 2023
Opening Reception: Friday, September 22, 2023, 5:00–8:00 pm
Part of M&T Bank Fourth Friday at Tri-Main Center



Carl Lee, *Unity Island*, 2022, triptych prints of stills from the film

Buffalo Arts Studio presents **Carl Lee's *Unity Island***, a film installation about a $\frac{1}{4}$ square mile piece of land in Buffalo, NY. Lee's practice examines ideas of perception, memory, and the spatialization of time using simple formal means. *Unity Island* is on display **September 22–November 3, 2023**, with an Opening Reception on **Friday, September 22, 5:00–8:00 pm**. The exhibition and reception are free and open to the public.

Unity Island Park is a sliver of land that sits between the Niagara River and Black Rock Canal, with Buffalo, NY on one side and Fort Erie, Canada on the other. Visitors can reach the island by crossing a railroad swing bridge that periodically rotates to allow boats to pass through. It is a green space with a pond and fishermen, where immigrant communities come every weekend to picnic and play volleyball, and where Lee has been taking his dog Augie on walks for the last eight years. It is also built on a landfill.

Shot on 16mm film, *Unity Island* is a personal look at different aspects of the island that reveal the intersecting vectors at this site. The project is primarily a visual exploration consisting of multiple projections, audio interviews, and ambient sounds that hint at other histories and experiences. Augie acts as something of a guide through these explorations.

Lee's experience of the island park is specific and personal: a "natural" setting where his dog can wander and swim. It feels to him like a timeless place where the well-trodden path to the pond has always existed. He views his intimate, long-running relationship to the island almost as an extension of personal space. He's witnessed many changes over time: the rise and fall of pond water levels, the growing colony of beavers, and the aging of his beloved Augie. These interactions also reveal the site to be a locus of so many other narratives and histories—economic, environmental, and social—that indicate the countless perspectives one space holds. Lee's exhibition includes several individualized sound installations as well as asynchronous projections of *Unity Island* that work together to disorient the visitor and amplify the fragmented nature of all of these experiences.

Carl Lee is a media artist based in Buffalo, NY, and has been making films, videos, and installation work that explore personal spaces and the built environment since the 90s. Lee received a BA from Harvard University in Visual and Environmental Studies in 1992 and an MFA in Film and Media Arts from Temple University in Philadelphia in 2000. He teaches film and video production and works as the technical director in the Department of Media Study at the University at Buffalo. Lee has exhibited at Micromania Festival, NY, Studio Waveland, MS, Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, NY, Undercurrent Gallery, NY, Burchfield Penney Art Center, NY, Locust Street Art, NY, Just Buffalo Literary Center, NY, Urban Renewal Traveling Film Festival, Squeaky Wheel, NY, PDX Film Festival, OR, as well as in Paris, France and Weimar, Germany. Lee was the recipient of the 2023 NYSCA Support for Artists grant.

For more information about Buffalo Arts Studio, please visit www.buffaloartsstudio.org

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High resolution images available upon request.