

CREATIVETIME



"The unknown is more than an occasion for possibilities, it is a provocation that propels us on a journey, a route of unknowing in which we experience many of the ways that we do not know something."

—Matthew Buckingham

CREATIVE TIME PRESENTS

MATTHEW BUCKINGHAM

MUHHEAKANTUCK - EVERYTHING HAS A NAME

40-MINUTE FILM SCREENED ABOARD A NY WATER TAXI NAVIGATING THE HUDSON RIVER

PRESS PREVIEW

Friday, March 28, 6 to 7 pm

DATES

Friday, Saturday, Sunday March 28, 29, 30

(Armory Show weekend)

Friday, Saturday, Sunday April 4, 5, 6

TIMES

Two 40-minute screenings/water taxi trips daily, 7pm and 8pm

LOCATION

Pier 45 @ Christopher Street and the Hudson River

PRICE

FREE

RESERVATIONS

www.creativetime.org/buckingham

MEDIA INQUIRIES

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CREATIVE TIME PRESENTS
MATTHEW BUCKINGHAM
MUHHEAKANTUCK - EVERYTHING HAS A NAME
MARCH 28, 29, 30; APRIL 4, 5, 6
PIER 45, THE HUDSON RIVER, NEW YORK CITY

MATTHEW BUCKINGHAM MAPS THE HUDSON RIVER'S TURBULENT COLONIZATION IN A FILM SCREENED ON BOARD A NY WATER TAXI

(February 22, 2008 New York, NY) Creative Time presents Matthew Buckingham's film *Muhheakantuck - Everything has a Name* with free screenings aboard a New York Water Taxi, navigating the river from Christopher Street to the film's endpoint at the Statue of Liberty, and back. The 40-minute-long film features a single continuous shot from a helicopter as it traveled above the Hudson River. The film is accompanied by a narration by the artist meditating on the region's turbulent history, and asks the question, "What role does social memory play in defining the present moment?" The screenings, two per evening, launch during the Armory Show weekend and continue into the first weekend in April. The trip is free, but reservations to www.creativetime.org/buckingham are required.

Buckingham's film explores the social and political impact of the relatively brief but violent period of contact between Dutch colonists and the Lower Hudson River Valley's indigenous Lenape people. By examining how maps are constructed, how places are named (and thereby owned), and what stories are left silent, the film exposes the consequences of Henry Hudson's journey. Buckingham's narrative reminds us that "The river that became known as the Hudson was not discovered—it was invented and re-invented."

The film describes how differences between the languages of the Lenape and colonists were integral to how each group experienced concepts of place, but that for all people, maps and other abstractions of place are like histories: condensed versions that contain only shades of truth.

Passengers will board a NY Water Taxi on Manhattan's West Side at Pier 45. The screenings will take place in the early evening, when the light is low yet still present, allowing viewers to see the river from the windows of the boat—linking the present with the historical narrative of the film.

Muhheakantuck - Everything Has a Name was originally commissioned by Minetta Brook as part of *Watershed: The Hudson Valley Art Project*, and is being presented in honor of Diane Shamash.

ARTIST TALK

Creative Time will present a talk with the artist at NYU Cantor Film Center (36 East 8th Street) on April 1, at 6:30pm. This talk will be free, and no reservations are required.

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GALLERY EXHIBITION

Matthew Buckingham will concurrently show two new works—the film installation *False Future* and the video installation *Everything I Need*—at Murray Guy Gallery, New York City, from March 1 to April 12.

ARTIST

Matthew Buckingham was born in Nevada, Iowa in 1963, and currently divides his time between his home in New York City, teaching in Sweden, and installing exhibitions nationally and abroad. He works across the media of film, video, writing, drawing, and print. Recent solo shows include *Play the Story* (2007) at the Camden Arts Centre, London; *Time Lines* (2005) at Kunstverein und Kunstmuseum, St. Gallen, Switzerland; and *Currents 94: Matthew Buckingham* (2005) at the St. Louis Art Museum. He has also participated in several prominent group shows including *Mapping the City* (2007) at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; *The Nam June Paik Award 2006* at the Museum fur Angewandte Kunst, Cologne, Germany; and *Post No Bills* (2005) at White Columns, New York. Buckingham recently completed a residency at Artpace in San Antonio and will be re-presenting his show *Play the Story* at the Des Moines Art Center beginning January 25, 2008.

CREATIVE TIME

Since 1974, Creative Time has presented the most adventurous art in the public realm and changed the notion of what public art can be. From its base in New York, it works with artists who ignite the imagination and explore ideas that shape society, initiating dynamic conversations among artists, sites and audiences in projects that enliven public spaces with free and powerful expression. Creative Time also has a long history of exploring the space of New York City and its rivers, including *Art on the Beach*, *Art in the Anchorage*, and *Plain of Heaven* at the base of the High Line. Recent projects include Paul Chan's *Waiting for Godot in New Orleans*, *Mike Nelson: A Psychic Vacuum*; *Doug Aitken: sleepwalkers* (in collaboration with MoMA), *The Dreamland Artist Club in Coney Island*, and *Tribute in Light*.

SUPPORT

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MATTHEW BUCKINGHAM, ARTIST STATEMENT, NOVEMBER 2007

Working across the media of film, video, writing, drawing and print I hope that my work asks the question 'what role does social memory play in defining the present moment?' By this I mean, what are the politics of interpreting past events and how is this alternately hidden or articulated? The term social memory evolved partly from an interest in pursuing an alternative to 'academic' or 'historical' memory. This was seen as a more flexible discipline that could accommodate 'unofficial' modes of recall such as oral history or 'visual culture.' The academy and historical memory later countered that, not being systematized or rigorous, social memory ran the risk of collapsing into the type of memory which also reproduces stereotypes or nationalistic narratives. By the last quarter of the twentieth century many historians had synthesized something of each, developing historical practices that incorporated aspects of both position, particularly within strategies of 'history from below' and the 'new historicism' that came out of feminism and queer theory. Susan Buck-Morss, writing about Walter Benjamin, asserts that for Benjamin the 'vanishing point' of history is always the present moment. Formulating it this way implies that to think about the past is much more a process of re-staging events here and now, rather than actually returning to a past time to make discoveries. I think this way of approaching the present and past places more responsibility on us as we make decisions and exercise whatever agency we may have. This idea of history vanishing into our present also signals a degree of urgency in those decisions, an urgency that is echoed in the often-quoted phrase from William Faulkner: 'The past is never dead. It's not even past.' Memory is one of the most pervasive elements and tools of human life. Within photography, film and video, questions of time are endemic. Photography and film always insist on something that was. Roland Barthes might have said that, in terms of language, the tense of film and photography is: 'this-will-have-been.' This is a kind of future/past tense which I believe always provokes speculation and interpretation over the meaning of images. This speculation unfolds between three positions: the photographer, the subject photographed and the viewer of the work. Each has a different role and different role and different stake in the triangle between them and in the image produced. I attempt to use this speculative aspect, the interpretation that every image demands, to rethink the ways that we represent events and narrate out experience and others' experience. This is what I set out to do with my project 'Muhheakantuck- Everything has a Name,' which looks at the relatively brief but disastrous period of colonial contact between the Indigenous population of the Hudson River valley and the Dutch in the 17th century. Most histories of New York City allocate only a few pages to the city's 24,000 people. Even fewer are aware that today almost three times that number of Native Americans live in the city. By focusing explicitly on this passage of time, and its resonance, I hoped to defamiliarize New York to the majority of its citizens, and to those who, by proxy, believe they know something of the city's history.

Material histories, and in turn, the material limits of production are central to my practice. I aspire to cause the spectator always to question what they see and the context in which they find it. This has meant working very closely with the physical environments in which my work is made and shown. This is not always apparent in the static (or, for that matter, moving) documentation of the projects. Hopefully by stretching the conventions for showing work and recognizing—as the philosopher Edward Casey points out—that to be is to be somewhere, and 'somewhere' is always a place, viewers of my work may extend the questions I'm raising into the surroundings and their own lives. Physically, this often has to do with scale, position, and relation to the surrounding architecture or even neighborhood where my work is shown, something that sometimes must be experienced in person.