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## FREED: MAQUETTE FOR AN AMERICAN RIVER

After wandering from Chicago to Alexandria Bay, NY, collecting garbage from communities along the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River for the past six months, Brooklyn-based multimedia artist Paul Lloyd Sargent is proud to announce the opening of a site-specific installation, entitled *Freed: Maquette for an American River*, on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 4 – 8pm. Admittedly, the opening is a long way from Brooklyn but this project is worth the drive up here to the small town of Clayton, NY, in the 1000 Islands along the St. Lawrence River.

The project takes its name from Barry Freed, the pseudonym used by Abbie Hoffman while living “underground” in the 1000 Islands during the 1970s and ‘80s. Sargent grew up on Wellesley Island, not far from Hoffman/Freed’s cottage and has used parallels between their two lives as the basis for much of his recent video and installation work. In fact, this project is a collaborative effort between Sargent and Save the River, the environmental organization Hoffman-as-Freed helped to found in 1978 in order to successfully fight the impact of the shipping industry along the St. Lawrence Seaway. Sargent’s *Maquette* responds to this complex history with a fractured video narrative featuring the-artist-as-Hoffman-as-Freed displayed within a chaotic backdrop of projected ship imagery and a 20-foot high working artificial river made entirely from trash and discarded objects.

At 38, Paul Lloyd Sargent is a multidisciplinary artist, writer, and researcher whose work focuses on ways in which humans interact with and attempt to control the natural environment. This is the third artificial “river” in his *Freed* series, as previous versions of the project have been mounted at Big Orbit Gallery, in Buffalo, NY, and the Zhou B Art Center, in Chicago, IL. To gather items for this installation of *Maquette for an American River*, on August 8<sup>th</sup> Sargent led a river clean-up by trash barge around many of the islands along the St. Lawrence. The final result is his “trash river” designed specifically for display in a huge 1930s-era Jamesway barn on the historic Zenda Farm Preserve, located on Route 12E, a mile and a half southeast of Clayton, NY. This collaborative exhibition between Sargent and Save the River, the Thousand Islands Land Trust, the Thousand Islands Art Center, and the Thousand Islands Performing Arts Fund will be available for public viewing beginning with an opening reception on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup> from 4 – 8pm. Public viewing hours will then continue by appointment with the artist through Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. To reserve a viewing timeslot after the public reception, please call Sargent on his cell phone at 312-860-0562. More information is also available on the artist’s website at [www.recycledcarbon.com](http://www.recycledcarbon.com).