

Geekcamp ed#1, 2021
Neversink Never Ever
July 14 to 18, 2021

a Shu Lea Cheang/cycleX initiative with artists, geeks and farmhands
a cycleX + rhizome + Queens museum collaboration
[<http://cyclex.info>] [<http://rhizome.org>] [<http://queensmuseum.org>]
exhibition planned for Watershed gallery, Queens Museum, Fall 2021

Concept brief:

500 billion gallons stored in the 19 reservoirs in the Catskill mountain make up the New York City's water supply system. 1.2 billion gallons of water channeled from Catskill reservoirs are consumed each day in New York city.

In building Neversink reservoir between year 1941 and 1953, the villages of Bittersweet and Neversink were flooded over. The village of Neversink was rebuilt and relocated along route 55 at Sullivan county. The Esopus tribe, native to the region of Catskill mountains, fought the Esopus wars against early European settlers in the 17th century, was forced by The Indian Removal Act to resettle in the "inhospitable land" in Wisconsin by 1830s. Meanwhile the migrant farm hands are brought in to aid the striving farming communities. As the complex system of aqueducts channel the water from Catskill reservoirs to New York City, the city's urbanites reverse migrate to the Catskills in seeking a self-styled sustainable living. CycleX located on route 28 in the town of Andes, New York is situated among the wild forest reserves and three major reservoirs, Pepacton, Ashokan and Never Sink, which respectively means, "marriage of the waters", "a place to fish" and Neversink is Mahackamack, "always running" in Native American.

As we re-emerge from Pandemic lockdown, Neversink Never Ever (Geekcamp ed#1, 2021) proposes a summer camp, a feral lab amidst the occupied land and the ever running water. Setting the camp ground at cycleX, a hub for open farming practices, the campers including artists, geeks and farmhands spend 5 days together – walking, tracking and tracing the forest trails. Bouncing off the ebbs and flows of the reservoirs, we further engage waves of water, air, radio, wifi as carriers to recall the buried bitter/sweet sentiments of displacement and relocation. As the sun goes down, we gather around the open kitchen, cook, eat and drink together with the freshly harvested local farm produce, babbles and gabbles, uttering sense or nonsense through the night before hitting the sack.

A collective presentation by the campers is planned for Watershed gallery at the Queens Museum in the Fall 2021.

