

## Artist Statement

### Within Our Gates

This work is about memory. It is about our relationship to the civil rights era, a time of mythic status in our nation's history. *Within our Gates* is a site-specific video work that draws upon 1960s news footage to create an immersive environment, and through that environment, brings to life the history of a place relevant as an architectural monument and as a vessel. This work examines where we stand in relation to our past and our future, to our parents and our son.

As artists we are concerned with the intersection of film as document and architecture as a vessel and defining place. For us, both are objects of containment and resonate as relics and receptacles of time. The physicality of the water tower, a structure built in 1906, and sited in the neighborhood where Dr. Martin Luther King was born, raised and worked is used as that undiscovered passage that will transport viewers. Our interest is not in the water tower's original function, but as a structure that is *within Atlanta's gate*--known, but undiscovered. This is a work of vessels and thresholds, physical and metaphoric, about discovering a past that we know but whose tenor is elusive. The interior walls of this impressive structure with the patina of a century of turmoil, is the surface of a photographic record that is seemingly indelible but in fact fleeting.

The work bears witness to the expressive gestures of resistance: the march, the song, the applause, the wave. The hypnotic fervor of collective prayer conveyed through the physical movement of protestors are projected in tandem with haunted places of rupture, the charred carcass of a bus and the smoldering foundation of a church. Our interest is in the fragments of film that hint at the tenor of the time, landscapes that are intrinsically tied to our segregationist past and the fluid portraits of collective action and resistance.

Our use of this site and the fragility of this film, is to create a meditation on the elusive gesture, the direct and indirect gaze, the nuanced expression, violent confrontation, the abandoned and scarred landscape. It is a reflection of the disjunctive spaces between memory and document, remembrance and possession, heritage and accountability.