

Maxwell: So this one, I kept going back to this one to watch it because it seemed so - something about how straight and fluid the lines were I found to be very crazy. So tell me more, tell me more about the *Slate Lines* piece. How does this come together? What do you see happening here?

Sarah Jenkins: Sure. Yeah. And thanks for the compliment. Yeah. So this work is my first site-responsive animation. So I had done my thesis. I had done *Patch Work* and I had graduated - I had graduated from grad school. While I was in grad school, I got a grant to travel to South Wales. I traced my family's labor history on my maternal side back to South Wales. Starting with my Pappy and like five generations back, every single man in the family was a coal miner. And so I traced that back to South Wales, which has a very similar landscape to where I'm from in Pennsylvania. And the county that I live in is called Cambria, which in Welsh means "Wales," and learned all these things. When I was there, I also recorded a bunch of oral histories of coal miners, ex-coal miners. I did a bunch of work and I wanted to go back there. So I applied to a residency called Studio Mailer, which is where I created this project. And I returned to Wales with no plan. I brought my animation gear. What I had was just a few things: my camera and my laptop. I ended up hiking around the area. So when I arrived in this place called Corris, Wales, I quickly realized that it was a slate mining town. So it was interesting because I'm so interested in mining, otherwise. I had never considered slate mining yet. The entire town is made of slate. All of these rocks in the hills are slate. So I hiked around and I found this beautiful, old slate ruins, likely an old slate mining site or some type of structure for that. There was a waterfall nearby so my guess is that it was somehow powering it. I'm not sure. But anyways, I looked around me and realized that I was surrounded by drawing materials. Right? Slate is a drawing material, right. So I picked up a slate rock from the ground and started making drawings on the rocks. And then I sort of formulated this idea for doing a site-specific animation in the woods. I sort of hyped up to the area every day for two and a half weeks with my gear and made these animations by taking my slate little rock, my stylus drawing like, you know, a millimeter or two on the rock, stepping back, taking a photo and doing that enough times that it gives the illusion that the line is traveling through the landscape.

MC: Very cool. And one thing I'm interested in - I turned the sound down just so we can talk - but there's like a very strong chalk drawing noise. How does your sound factor in, and is that something you do later?

SJ: Yeah. So the sound was a mix of foley and sounds I recorded on site. So I recorded the birds and the sort of, there's a little bit of a waterfall sound. I recorded all of that onsite with my phone and used that. So the birds are real birds from the area. And then the slate sound I did record in the studio, in a studio in my bedroom, later. It was, I brought the stylus home that I had found and then I got some slate, a slate panel from like Lowe's and recorded. I watched the piece and as the things were drawing, I was at the same time trying to replicate the movements and that's how I did it. And that's how, you know, sound is still done for like action movies and things like that. So as foley as you might know. Yeah. So that's how I did it.