

SCENE 1 - SPINNING ROOM DAY [Find some videos with dialect]

ASH

This is a story about transformation. About patterns of extraction that repeat and are sometimes broken. It is about rural ecosystems and of course, resiliency—A Southern Device. :)))

It begins after my family picked me up at the Charlotte airport and asked if I wanted to see the cloud? Well yeah the cloud! I had no idea what they were talking about but I was deeply curious...Let's say that the 'cloud' was what weaved my way back into this area to shoot a film over the past year.

So there we were speeding down HWY 321 to the Apple I Cloud THE CLOUD, Sounds so light, so magical, So airy, so non-impactful!

When I interview people around here about where they think the cloud is physically located the answers range from things like they had "no idea" to a satellite in the sky to definitely something that would be in san francisco -- silicon valley. When faced with questions about data and clouds, although many have fears about privacy and surveillance most people expressed the most concern about what would happen with their data after they die. Some see it as an archive that will live on. Others more like hording-riddled with guilt by who might have to clean it out.

I mean all of those pictures of
YOUR EX UGHHHH and my dog OHHHH---
all of those, all of those, all of
those things the duplicate images.
The endless text chats, my
shopping habits, me distracted on
the computer habits, me distracted
by the very thing I am speaking
habits. I mean a quick search can
show me all the places I 'surfed'
when I got distracted while
writing this very thing!

This is my childhood super 8 film
projector (family don't worry! I
am not going to show you old home
movies of possibly embarrassing
moments) I am showing you film of
solar farms-- APPLE -- a landscape
of transformation --once a food
farms, to data farms to solar
farms (the fastest growing
industry for energy in the SE--
have you heard!) This film has
been eco-processed meaning I did
not send it off to the lab but
instead I developed it with
processes from right here--a fun
amalgamation of Kudzu, Sundrop,
clover, flowers and grass and a
sprinkle of soil, lots of dirt,
actually, then I mixed it all
around and then mixed it all up
and this is what I have -- ouila
--This solar farm is also right
off of HWY 321 along with a
Hardees, a flowing confederate
flag and a field with this kind of
hummmm

Play the hum

There is also a hum and rythym to
this machine to the feeling of the
film to touching it in my hand. A
materiality. The physical
internet. Right now we are
positioned in between 3 large data
farms -- Apple (the Icloud),
Facebook and Google. In the
making of this film I have come to

know them intimately. Know their curves and shadows and know their unique features (like how hard they are to get close to). For example one is definitely the only one using solar power and not just extracting from local resources. One is the one that loves to come after you in their little fast white cars and chase you to back to the county line. Yes, just like back in the Prohibition and still running days -- I kid you not. One has ridiculous street names and looks like a prison. I will let you guess amongst yourselves which one that ones is.

So an example: everyone is binging Netflix's Stranger Things or Chernobyl or whatever 80s nostalgia everyone is watching right now (and also cheers to y'all for not netflix streaming rn and coming out to see some art)-- actually has physical affects on a place and in the case that place we are thinking about is right here. How much it touches us right here.

Streaming services, netflix, youtube etc. -- require servers that are simply machines that run 24/7 without a break and they require to be cooled off. But just like other machines, with the example of your car, they give off emissions of carbon dioxide. The more data means the more work they are exposed to and thus, the more waste air they have to emit.

A new [report](#) has now found that each year, our video streaming results in carbon emissions equivalent to the size of Spain. All the data centres that run these site, be it YouTube, Netflix demand for massive amounts of energy. Researchers found that YouTube alone emitted about 11

million tons of carbon dioxide in one year.

All online videos from around the world emit over 300 million tons of carbon dioxide a year, this being 1% of the total annual global emissions and that's just the streaming!

People here (and maybe even you) might think I am strange and quite boring because I am so into data farms and data--but that's not it exactly. It's more about asking why here? why now? Many speculate it is because of the water. We have lots and lots of water here. We are a water excess place. Some others speculate that it's cheap land and huge tax breaks and in some cases no taxes at all. Another interesting circle emerges with nearby minerals.

Show the two ROCKS

So not only do we have the data but we also have the minerals that make this possible. Right up the road in Spruce Pine is the highest grade silica quartz in the world. In fact it is said to be in all of our computers and phones created right now is a little piece of Spruce Pine. A ROCK A MINERAL needed to make this technology possible. Without it SV would not be named SV. Right down there is the future of the lithium mining explosion (think batteries, think electric cars)

In other words this region is tethered to technological innovations more than myself and many of us even realize. With automation and electric cars comes more dependence on Lithium. Lithium futures are big and bright.

So I have been talking a lot about the land, the environment but I have also been able to really talk with people and I think a lot about the future of data and bodies in addition to this place. I have made some friends along the way. People who live, thrive and exist here. Local Data bodies. All data is local. W is a budding fashion designer, S is a singer, painter and color specialist extraordinaire who keeps dream journals. H makes art in her living room--like S and goes to college. M is an award winning wrestler who has fearlessly skateboarded along I-40 to work. The story of the skatepark alone here in this town is one of hope and transformation as well.

Play cicadas

Our survival depends on our attentiveness to the speech of other species. I want to become a better bird watcher. I listen to the cicadas like a mantra. I dive in, I get lost and sleep deeply in them.

Play hum

In the field with the hum there are solar sheep who chew on the grass. These sheep are a part of a movement to unite solar power and agriculture where Solar and vegetation configurations are designed jointly for maximum dual output and funny enough you can't use the goats bc they want to climb on all the things!

Begin to hang up shirts or take one off tshirts over and over.

When I was born here the Morganton area could expect about 8 days per year to reach above 90 degrees.

Today the area can expect 18 days per year. By the time I'm 80 Morganton can expect between 21 and 50 days and you can imagine so on and so on.

In a few days of weather above 90 degrees my friend E and I made these shirts and blankets, beach towels, banners, flags, wall pieces - -however you want to think about them --art but also some engineering and design-- they were made with images R shot from the film along with sayings from here. These prints like the eco processed film are printed using local elements. We used the sunlight to make these-- But wait theres more:: These Prints double as Air Purifiers. They are treated with a substance that eats smog and reverses pollution. It is as powerful as planting trees. It is a titanium dioxide nanoparticles sprayed on here and when ultraviolet rays hit the treated surface, they set off chemical processes that burn away grime and convert contaminants such as nitrogen dioxide into nontoxic minerals and water vapor. The result: a self-cleaning object that also cleanses the air around it. You can hang one outside for example and it will clean the air. Or you can hang one inside and also it will clean the air. YES these are for sale wink wink.

The material that these are printed on is from Action Sports Systems Inc. A minority owned manufacturing business ran by the Thaper family that made team uniforms in Carbon City since 1981. They are closing their doors this month and liquidating everything (you should go ASAP)~

Up the road in Carbon city is Southern Devices, yes the name of this show but also the name of the

plant where my dad worked for xx X
xxx XX years, -- they made
lighting devices. There was silica
dust everyone breathed in from the
rock parts. Is this the same
silica that we spoke about that is
in our iphones? I don't think so.
When my dad was a boy he would
walk across the Rhodhiss dam,
climb the water towers and and
barefoot waterski. Rhodhiss and
Granite Falls were mill towns and
it's said that the workers in
Rhodhiss weaved the flag that was
flown on the moon. However it has
been suggested that this was a
myth. That the flag was a cheap
one picked up somewhere at the
last minute. The sign still
remains in Rhodhiss. BTW today is
the 50th anniversary that Apollo
11 landed on the moon and this
flag in question, did or did not
get poked into the moon dirt.

My grandmother, (Naomi) or Naoma
as she liked to say worked in a
textile mill right up the road
from here that is now City Hall. A
textile mill not so different
probably from the one we are
standing in tonight. She sewed the
stripe up the backs of full
fashioned hosiery. She would talk
of the craftwomanship or the
difficulty involved in getting it
right and how many had to be
thrown out that were'nt quite up
to snuff. My grandma also taught
me the art of the clothesline
hang. I dont just mean the hang
but the hangout. The partnership
of hanging and talking, ruminating
and listening.

HOLD A TREE

Like many people in this room we
can tell our histories from the
factories and plants around this
region.

Play audio of dad describing plants.

A plant. George Washington Carver taught Henry Ford how to mass produce automobiles from a theory he developed by studying plants. The idea of an assembly line came from plants. Hence the term "plant".

SHIFT TO KUDZU

In the late 1800's the surrounding area or what we know as Pisgah National Forest was clearcut to make way for agriculture. Every single tree cut to the ground.

Kudzu was a plant that was brought in from Japan for the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. In the 1930s and 1940s, the vine was rebranded as a way for farmers to stop soil erosion. Workers were paid \$8.00 per acre to sow topsoil with the invasive vine. The cultivation covered over one million acres of kudzu. Kudzu's environmental and [ecological damage](#) results from its outcompeting other species for a resource--sounds like other things we know doesn't it? Kudzu competes with native flora for light, and acts to block their access to this vital resource by growing over them and shading them with its leaves. Native plants may then die as a result. It is an invasive species. It is a system-a network. Another system that I have learned about during this film is the Waffle House Index! An index ran by Waffle house that tells the resiliency during a hurricane in the southeast. Waffle House even has its own weather control room! So cool

This is a story about the people, plants, bodies, industry and land

of this region. It is about making the unseen, seen. Exposing a data layer, a layer that impacts our lives, our loves, our futures. It is about machines we see with and their data and its affects on lands and bodies It is a drone that helps a father see a shark right before the shark attacks his kid, or the drone that just delivered the kidney in the knick of time. But we all know that drones also have their darker side too with war and policing.

Machines tell us things! They also don't tell us things. There is machine learning and there is machine unlearning.

I haven't always spoken like this. You may be thinking are you even from here? I worked hard to rid my dialect to blend in to disappear. According to machines and data:: We are in a place that is more legible by a map, by the terrain and the landscape than it is by the dialect.

Data says that in the past 7 days the most searched words on the internet were: 1) facism, but palso at the top of the list was the words: family, love and empathy. Data says that this 1 out of every 10 People is diabetic here. That the Carolina Flying Squirrel, the Red Wolf, the Grey Bat are endangered plus a long list of sooo many more! __ Data says this and that.

I dance with a drone and it dances with me. Sees me. Someone labels me. Tracks my motions, my gestures, my curves. Just like I did once to the architecture now it does it to me. It wants to know me to classify me. To put me in a larger database of information. To store me -- forever?? To sell to

me? To predict my behavior? To police me before I commit the crime?

Data labeling is said to be the new blue collar job of the future. Literally labeling data so that a machine can learn from your labels.

Southern is a geographical location, a culture, an attitude, a feeling, a longing. A place that I needed to get away from as a kid but now realize that I need to learn from it more than ever.

THE device—is a plot, a scheme, a tool. It is a strategy for survival. For making things unreadable or more legible. What is hidden in plain sight? Very early on in this project I reached out to an Appalachian dowser who reads energy to intuit where water is, where loved ones may be buried or where minerals are in the bedrock. They told me that they believe that we all have it in us. That we are all sensing systems.

As you walk around here tonight you will see Joara a civilization that is said to have once existed here as well and it's myth of rural utopia Fonta Flora flooded at the bottom of the lake James. You will also see representations of the Henry River mill village as a body double for the Hunger Games.

I read this week was that of we planted 1 trillion trees then we can reverse environmental impact from humans. On July 4 in India around 1.5 million volunteers planted more than 66 million trees in just 12 hours as part of a record-breaking environmental

campaign. I do not have a tree for you to plant tonight but I do have some objects that mimic trees in their scientific innovation. I also do encourage you to go plant a tree, turn your front yard back into a forest or a garden to feed you and your neighbors. Plant something says the person in the plant tonight.

Lastly I want to say thank you for coming tonight and sharing the work that not only myself but an amazing team of people have been able to bring together. This is the first iteration of this project and we are thrilled to be able to share it with you in this spinning mill before it changes into a new space. Please follow us and stay in touch to support the forthcoming film project!

I am realizing that there are a lot of people that have a lot to say about a lot of this stuff and its really nice to have a forum to talk with other people in a place together about your ideas or dreams. Especially OFFLINE!! I want to invite everyone to find someone, perhaps that you don't know, and talk and discuss.

What do you think about data and privacy? The physical internet and technological innovations having such and impact on the bodies and land right here? I'd also love to hear what you have to think. So please say hello.

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