

Reflections and Meditations on Miwa Matryek's *This World Made Itself*

On her creative process:

"[Miwa's] process starts with daydreaming...abstract thoughts that become a puzzle to try and figure out how to create it."

"I set up in my living room."

"I start with animation, experimentation, and trying multiple approaches."

"It's an integrated process."

Miwa enjoys "mixing animation with my body."

On inspiration, animation, and performance:

She is inspired by "the imagery of mythology, [but she refuses] to anchor into just one [source]." Instead, "I like the idea of creating mythology...transformation."

Miwa's work is "choreographed like a dance."

"Music helps [her] along."

Miwa suggests it, "feels natural and meditative to be back there [behind the screen]."

Miwa obtained the music for her piece "from friends" and uses what "feels right."

"The imagery [she uses] sometimes comes from the music first." Miwa cites the volcano scene as an example.

The "shadow hides me." She doesn't "want to be in front of the audience."

She seeks to "become less of [herself on stage] and more of a symbol of a person. She is a "general body in these spaces [which] allows the audience to relate to [her] from her body to the world [she's created]."

She was inspired to create this piece by, "natural history museums...timelines...photography...found images...scanned images...a chicken in [her] friend's yard...[her] friend's baby...flying and seeing the Earth's dead river beds...fault lines...reading the Earth [from above] while traveling and seeing different kinds of nature percolating in the back of [her] head."

She immersed herself in "playing, testing out new ideas...what seems the most interesting...tinkering, inventing, [and] discovering."

She enjoys merging “the languages of cinema and performance” showing “the struggle, tension” in her “physically demanding” piece. She “likes the struggle, muscles tensing up, [it’s] like doing Pilates [back behind the screen].”

She is “interpretive through media.”

Found it an immense challenge to portray the world from “the big bang to now.”

Seeks to encourage a “visceral sense of empathy” with her audience.

Evokes “an elemental transformation [communicated] physically through [her] body.”

Wants the piece to be “surreal, dreamlike.”

On Her Past:

She was a “physics major for two years” as an undergraduate. Figured out she “could approach science through art...[in her desire] to feel science.”

An assignment she thought “sucked” and only did “because [she] thought it was a course requirement” forced her to “collaborate..which opened up [her] brain with different ways to approach animation and [work with other artists in other genres.]”

[Side Note: how awesome is it that everything we saw may not ever have existed had it not been for a teacher?!]

It took Miwa “one and a half years” to create her composition. As an “animator [she] gets to control every pixel...[as much as] 1/36 of a second...animators are control freaks.”

Miwa uses the program “After Effects” to create her animations.

Ultimately, Miwa show us “this is [both] the world [that] made itself [and the world] we’ve made.”