

At Can Serrat, I made something completely unexpected for me. While previously, I've made very organized films, working from scripts or storyboards, while I was here I made a film rather organically. I walked around the town and grounds, collecting little sound recordings and when in the studio, animated the 'fluff,' the seeds that were falling during my stay. After animating the falling seeds, I realized they looked a bit like the film grain I've become quite used to adding to my work. Film grain has become an artificial remnant of a once native part of the film-making process. As an act of slowing down and paying attention to what's really in front of me (rather than disappearing to an idea or construction) I've tried to work with the film grain and fluff as the primary interest.

In the film I made, there are still a few subjects. One of them is me, a person typing in a room somewhere. You can hear the sound of me working and thinking through the various problems of the film, as text appears on the screen.

The other subject is a very loose association, but none-the-less something I'm still interested in understanding. In 1928, the first successful television transmission was of a small statue of Felix the Cat. As an animator myself, I find it very curious that the scientists working on television transmission would have chosen to send a sculpture of a flat idea (a cartoon) across town to a television set, where the 3-D object would once again become flattened. In animation, I deal with flatness quite often. Thinking through visual problems often becomes how to represent something that is dimensional in a series of layers or flatness.

And yet, the grain, though technically flat does something very different for me. It creates a field where otherwise there would be flat color. Much like the seeds, which flow through the sky and define the space around them, the grain describes dimension by filling the small space of the cinema-frame.

These soft and fluffy things lead me to explore the cloud like structure of life at Can Serrat. Admittedly, this has been a very restful time for me, where ideas have functioned better in their simplicity, as opposed to through complication and reworking. I'm drawn to the process of effortless 'life as clouds' as it is so incredibly different than life outside of the residency. Strangely, it's life outside of the residency that is filled with the 'digital cloud' which is the evolution of that Felix transmission almost a century ago. The digital cloud distorts, complicates and makes it harder to return to a life as clouds.

Leaving here, I may keep this piece more or less the same, if only to revel in having made something through intuition and from the specificity of this place, but I'm sure this mode of working will inform me as I head back to Los Angeles. Despite having worked primarily in video and animation, I think when I get home, I might try my hand at painting!

Stills:



