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The Rhythms Of Nature: Pearl C. Hsiung's Yellowstoner



A large part of **our conversation with Pearl C. Hsiung** dealt with her work *Yellowstoner*, a thirty minute video piece that she has been working on for nearly four years. Along with two paper works, the film debuted at **Human Resources** over the weekend. The film is a distillation of Pearl's aesthetic onto film and it is the type of work an artist makes that says *everything* about the artist. *Yellowstoner* is an enveloping work that plays like a nature film on acid. That may sound ridiculous but, listen, it is a captivating natural mindfuck, one of the most entrancing film works in recent memory.

Drawn from over forty hours of film, *Yellowstoner* takes place at Yellowstone National Park. It features bubbling pools of mud and exploding geysers and rainbow tinted pools, natural marvels rarely encountered in person but familiar thanks to nature documentaries like ***Planet Earth***. However, all of these features are different from Pearl's view: they seem more active and like little personalities speaking to you. The bubbles are clearly explaining their lives while gassy still waters detail their most recent outings in the park thanks to the coloration of the ground. During this crazy nature porn, a character in an overly long sleeved hoodie and jean vest romps through the area. There is some literal nature humping and cartwheels through fields. You feel this person's connection to earth and, while you see him or her (Pretty sure it's Pearl, though...) exploring nature, you assume their point of view. Everything is beautiful and captivating: these simple, natural acts are all revelations to both the represented viewer and the literal viewer.

By **Kyle Fitzpatrick**
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The film is about many things. It's about the rhythms of nature and our rhythm with them. There is an extended, literally moving scene where you watch a geyser erupt as the sun sets. The mist and steam it produces dances out of frame thanks to winds and, as the sun extinguishes itself, a heavy musical beat is introduced to the film, a bass based jam that articulates the rising smoke. As you view scenes like this from the *Yellowstoner* point of view you realize that nature and the beauty it possesses is insane. It can intoxicate you, blinding your reality by its own: you get high off of their visual splendor. For those seeing these elements in person, it is a full sensory explosion of sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch. You are blinded by nature until you and it are not two separate things but two sides of the same coin. Like the character, you've gone so far into your wanderlust that you cannot return the same. Some of that natural high will always be a part of you.

The way Human Resources presents the film is delightfully overwhelming too. The space is practically converted into a small movie theatre where the film plays on loop against a giant wall. The sound shakes you and—if you time your visit to see the film correctly—you will be alone with the film and transformed by it. A few paper works are also included in the showing that are a smearing of color with allusions to the nature portrayed in the film. They work well together, showing how Hsiung takes her natural inspiration and translates it into her painting practice.

You may not think that nature or a film about nature could alter your reality but *Yellowstoner* does. It sucks you in. It commands you. It reminds of how powerful nature is and that, despite our means to control it, it has been here longer than us and will likely outlive us. We may think we have tamed the wild in Los Angeles: *Yellowstoner* and the work of Pearl C. Hsiung reminds that we will never be able to confine it. It is nature's character to be uncontrollable.

Yellowstoner is on view at Human Resources through March 15. Learn more about it [**here**](#).