

In Place Out of Time

Filmmaker Statement from Erin Hudson:

When I first read about Embree Hale, I never imagined that I would invest two years to shoot and edit a film about him. Looking back, it's easy for me to see why I was so drawn to invest such a significant amount of time working with Embree -- his story and his community. Two years after first reading about him, I dove into the filmmaking process prepared to be inspired.

As a filmmaker and picture taker myself, I am endlessly curious about the practice of photography and documentary. Like Embree, I feel alive and purposeful when I'm outside exploring and building relationships through my camera. I was drawn to Embree because his home, history, and memory are ingrained in rural New Mexico. Consequently, his photographic quest deepens his already strong connection to the land and his community. In addition, Embree's personal philosophies and courage in the face of age, poverty and deprivation, all motivated me to make this film.

I believe in participatory and collaborative documentary cinema. My strategy for this film was to immerse myself in Embree's land, community, and space. I spent a lot of time making this film with no camera in hand. I made it my goal to become a member of the Hillsboro community and to form a friendship and bond with Embree. When the camera did come out and I began to film, both Embree and I trusted the process.

I'm originally from Albuquerque and have always felt a deep kinship with the landscape of the southwest. But like many of my contemporaries, I struggle with feelings of disconnection in a technologically centered, fast-paced lifestyle. My story intersected with Embree's partly through my longing to intimately experience life at a different pace, a lifestyle more similar to that of an earlier time.

Embree's community of Hillsboro, New Mexico, where I lived for seven months to shoot the film, gave me the opportunity to slow-down and in doing so, become deeply interconnected to the community and land. As I followed Embree through his daily life, I continued to learn from his choice to live his dream and prioritize his passion. I will forever be grateful to Embree and the town of Hillsboro for welcoming me so genuinely into their lives and hearts.

The burgeoning film industry in New Mexico also provided motivation to make this film. The state has become a movie-making mecca; while this is a blessing for our state's economy and workforce, New Mexico desperately needs local independent filmmakers to continue to give voice to the soul and spirit that defines our home. I hope that this film about a real-life New Mexican will serve as an example for the potential of independent New Mexico based filmmaking.

Ultimately, I hope that audiences from New Mexico and beyond will connect with Embree and find kernels of inspiration through his story.

I have also been reminded throughout the making of this film that New Mexico's history is complicated and dynamic. As a local storyteller and documentarian, I believe that I belong in the fabric of that tale. It is my goal to present a film that is open to interpretation as a work of art, which therefore exists to encourage dialogue. I welcome your comments or questions and hope that you'll also seek to share in conversation with your fellow audience members.