



COOL FOR YOU

an animated book

a film

by Sherene Strausberg

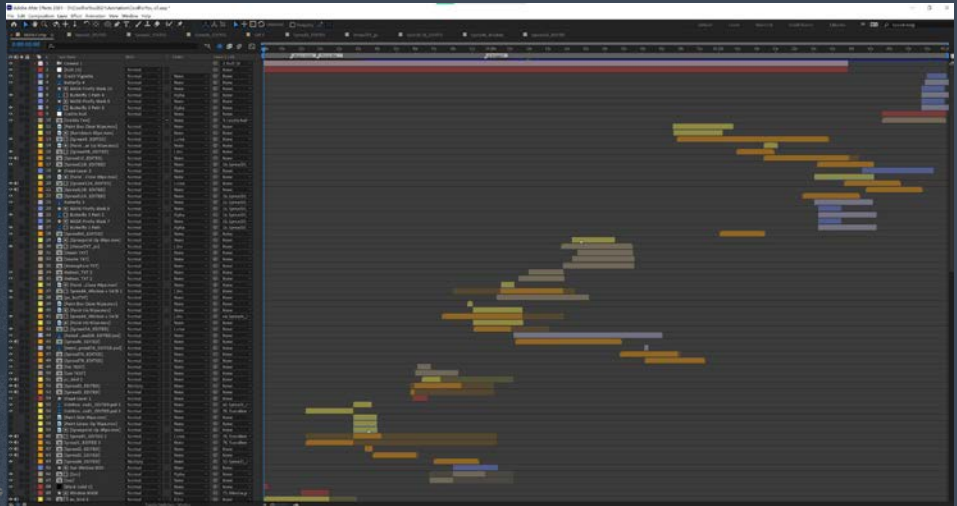




“Cool For You”, an animated film based on the book of the same title, explains global warming to children in a friendly way. Incorporating different characters and families, animals and plants, children are introduced to CO₂, and positive, easy ways to improve our impact on the earth.

Duration: 3 minutes

Screen captures of the animation process:



Character voiceover recording session photos:



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In March 2020, when the world came to a standstill due to COVID, a friend shared a picture book he thought Sheren's kids would enjoy. It was called *Cool for You*, and it explained the science behind climate change and what we can do about it. In many ways, this book felt alive: The pages were filled with billowing exhaust, swaying trees, butterflies flitting from flower to flower. While Sherene felt frozen in place, due to lockdown, this was a world in motion.

She received permission from illustrator Caitlin B. Alexander and author Marianna Linz to animate their book, and, using Photoshop files from the illustrator, Sherene pieced the artwork together into a three-minute film. With limited resources to record voiceover artists, her family became part of the project, too: she, her husband, and all three kids voiced the characters, and used music from a lullaby Sherene wrote for her first child for the score. The pandemic had brought her graphic design and animation work to an abrupt halt; in *Cool for You*, she found the creative outlet she had been longing for.

We hope this film can be a tool—not only for climate-change education—but also as a way to show others how words can be brought to life through sounds, animation, voices and graphics.





Award-winning designer **SHERENE STRAUSBERG** combines her experience in film, music and sound engineering with graphic design and illustration to create animated videos for her clients at the company she founded, 87th Street Creative. Having won a national composition competition in high school, she was awarded a scholarship to the prestigious Indiana University School of Music, where she completed two bachelor's degrees in four years. Film scores she wrote in her first career, as a film composer, have been heard on AMC, Spike TV and Netflix. As a graphic designer for Jewish National Fund, she won two awards from Graphic Design USA. Her latest passion project, the short, animated

film "Cool For You", which she animated and scored, has been accepted to film festivals around the world. Recent clients of 87th Street Creative have included Walmart, American Express and Amazon Web Services.

Through the power of music and sound effects along with moving images, Sherene knew at the age of 16, she wanted to be a film composer. After 10 years pursuing that, while also working as a broadcast engineer at National Public Radio, she changed careers, first to graphic design and then to motion design. Motion graphics returned Sherene to her true passion of how sound and moving images together can immerse the viewer/listener. Combining this with her desire to work with clients who believe in sustainability and social justice, 87th Street Creative has worked with nonprofits and businesses who help make the world a better place.

While continuing to partner with agencies and studios on projects, Sherene also works directly with clients such as Healthline, Spencer Stuart and Propublica. In 2021, a video that Sherene worked on with Propublica, was retweeted by Senator Elizabeth Warren, and received almost 80k views on Twitter. She has been a frequent contributor as a guest blog writer and is also a teaching assistant at School of Motion. When Sherene is not working, she enjoys reading, running and pottery. She lives with her husband and three children in New York.





CAITLIN B. ALEXANDER, is an illustrator based in Austin, Texas with a style that is nostalgic yet fresh, and charming yet mature.

Her work is rooted in a midcentury influence, through the lens of a modern existence. She focuses on a representation of repeat patterns and texture in our natural world, observations of daily life, and messages of strength and acceptance, via hand-lettered typography. This love of smaller details— a cluster of mismatched city buildings, lush color in an old quilt, variations in a garden— is what the artist brings to her audience: an appreciation for the lovely little things in life.

Caitlin primarily works digitally, but also paints in gouache, with a particular love for dry-brushing.



MARIANNA LINZ, explores a broad range of topics within climate dynamics, including the distribution of trace gases in the stratosphere, temperature extremes in the troposphere, and heat transport in the ocean.

In order to understand what to expect with climate change, it is critical to understand the physics of the current climate system. Dr. Linz's research seeks to understand the interaction between geophysical flows and the substances they are transporting— be that heat, carbon, ozone, or other physical or chemical tracers. Because observing tracers is much simpler than observing the flow fields themselves, and because the tracers are what cause heat extremes or pollution or ozone depletion, it is critical

to understand their interactions with the physics. This research uses a wide range of tools, from simple models to complex chemistry-climate models to satellite and in situ observations.

Linz graduated from Harvard in 2011 as the first joint concentrator in Chemistry and Physics and Earth and Planetary Sciences. She has returned after getting her Ph.D. in Physical Oceanography from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology-Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute Joint Program, and pursuing postdoctoral research at the University of California, Los Angeles.



FILM LINKS

<http://www.coolforyoufilm.com>

Book Information:

<http://www.cbaillustration.com/cool-for-you>

PROFESSIONAL LINKS

<http://87thstreetcreative.com/>

<https://www.instagram.com/87thstreetcreative/>

<http://vimeo.com/user47506727>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sherene-strausberg-2322038>

VOICE OVER CAST

Dad	Todd Drucker
Mom	Sherene Strausberg
Son	Yuri Drucker
Daughter	Saretta Drucker
Little Sister	Iris Drucker

CREW

Animator	Sherene Strausberg
Text	Marianna Linz
Illustrations	Caitlin B. Alexander
Sound Engineer	Sean Hardin at Bach2Rock
Composer	Sherene Strausberg
Executive Producers	Matthew Modine, Adam Rackoff

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Animated in Adobe Aftereffects

Plug-ins used: PQ Art Parts by Peter Quinn

Sound Effects: soundstripe.com and freesound.org

Additional Photoshop brushes created by Alena Hovorkova



POTENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR Q&A WITH SHERENE

1. Tell us about your process: How did you bring this book to life?

After I read the book, I knew I wanted to animate it. I read it to my three kids and they loved it too. I contacted the author and illustrator, and they were open to my idea. The illustrator was a little concerned at first especially since I needed all her Photoshop files to do the animation. So, she only gave me one page spread at a time. So, I took that first page, that's set in the living room, and had the camera pan across the room, while the words and word bubble animate and the father's and daughter's bodies moves a little. It wasn't a lot of movement, but it was a process to find a way to make the text move just slightly and have the light beside them focus our attention to them reading. I knew it would be easy to animate this in Aftereffects, because it integrates really well with Photoshop, so that any time I had to adjust the artwork, it automatically updated the animation.

2. You're a classically trained composer, how did your background in music influence the film?

Well, besides my classical music training, I also worked as a film composer and sound engineer for many years in Hollywood. So, my experience at how visuals and sound work together was very helpful in bringing the story to life. I wanted to use music that was very sweet and endearing, to make sure that the movie felt as warm and inviting as the book. When I was pregnant with my first child, my son Yuri, I wrote an instrumental lullaby for him that I played on headphones and placed on my belly for him to hear inutero and then played it a lot at night to soothe him to sleep. I realized this would be the perfect music for the film.

3. Do you have a favorite section of the book?

It's so hard to pick just one part! But, if I had to, it would be about half-way through the book, when the definition of atmosphere is explained; we see the little girl—sitting in the beautiful forest surrounded by trees, plants, flowers and animals — reading a book. It's a 2-page spread in the book and is so stunningly beautiful. But, also seeing it for the first time, I felt like it had to be animated—I wanted to see the fireflies flying, the branches swaying and the deer walking. So, when it came time to animate that section, I felt like a kid in a candy store, looking at all the possibilities for what could begin to move and I could make come alive!



4. Are there any other children's books you dream about animating?

Yes, there are so many great books out there, that would be amazing if they were brought to life and could move! Jessica Hishe, an amazing lettering artist and illustrator has two children's books that came out in 2019 and 2020, called *Tomorrow I'll Be Brave* and *Tomorrow I'll Be Kind*. Again, like in *Cool For You*, the characters and animals have so much energy and movement to them in the drawings. Also, the letters in the text itself are so stunning, it would be so interesting to see them move.

5. What was it like to take on an endeavor like this during a pandemic?

It was actually what helped me get through the pandemic. While I feel very blessed and grateful that I still had the comforts of a home, and enough food to feed my family, it was devastating. Suddenly I had no work. My freelance business "flat-lined". I was afraid I would never work again. My kids' schools were closed and I thought I would be taking care of my kids forever, wearing so many hats as mother, teacher, tutor, nanny, lunchlady, camp counselor and cruise director trying to keep my children entertained all day, everyday!

When I discovered this book and realized I could take on this personal passionate project, it was my savior during very uncertain times. I would look after my children (ages 2, 5 and 8 at the start of the pandemic), during the day so my husband could work. At 6pm, he would take over and I could put in 4-5 hours of work on making this film. I was so excited to jump on my computer and begin to bring this book to life.



Dedicated to my three children:

Thank you for letting me borrow the Earth.

The future is yours.