

When I asked Sharon Lockhart what she learned in graduate school, she said, with a grin, "Everything." Lockhart studied with Mike Kelley, Tim Martin, and Stephen Prina at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. "I took seven courses each semester. I wanted to get my money's worth. But that's not why I learned so much. It was rather because I knew I didn't know everything." Lockhart is smart, and that is why I like her work so much. She knows she doesn't know everything, and her work is always striving to know more. Consider, for example, her use of space in two of her films, *NŌ* (2003) and *Lunch Break* (2008).

NŌ shows a Japanese farm couple covering a field with hay. They first place stacks of hay about the field, working their way from the background toward the foreground. Then they rake the hay onto the field from front to rear. All this takes place with what looks to be one continuous thirty-two-minute take. Actually, it was done in four shots. The farmers held still or were off-screen while the camera was reloaded with a new magazine, and the time elapse was hidden with a short dissolve. Lockhart used a 16mm camera with a normal lens and designed the hay stacks to appear relatively equal in size. This was achieved by making the stacks smaller as they were placed closer to the camera, while their locus was chosen to describe a trapezoidal field, making it easier to map them into the rectangle of the camera frame. *NŌ* is about work, performance, and sound, but its use of space and its relationship to sculpture are what make these other elements so strong. The same is true of *Lunch Break*.

Lunch Break begins with a ten-minute tracking shot on 35mm film down a 1,200-foot hallway. At 24 frames per second, ten minutes of film captures 14,400 still frames. The hallway is 14,400 inches long—coincidentally, the same number. If we assume the tracking occurred at a constant rate, one frame would be exposed every inch along the way. Transferring the 35mm film to a high-definition digital medium, Lockhart then copied each frame eight times, lengthening the film to eighty minutes. Upon projection, each frame is now seen eight times longer—that is, not 1/24 of a second, but 1/3 of a second. In effect, this draws attention to the fact that movies don't move and that they are directly connected to still photography. But then Lockhart does another interesting play: rather than cutting directly from one frozen image of eight frames to the next frozen image of eight, which would jump the film down the hallway one inch at a time, she dissolves, producing a more fluid transition. In effect, what we see is a series of 14,400 still photographs, each shown for 1/3 of a second and each dissolved into the next photograph that was taken one inch farther down the hallway, placing the viewing experience somewhere between cinema and photography. It should be noted this is different than camera slow motion. Camera slow motion of 8x would use 192 frames per second, taking a frame every 1/8 inch along the hallway. Each frame would be on the screen for 1/24 of a second. There would be no emphasis on the individual frame, and in turn no reference to still photography. It also should be noted that camera slow motion would have been impossible to employ here, for it would require an eighty-minute film magazine, which doesn't exist.



Juan Sánchez Cotán, *Still Life with Cardoon and Carrots*, 1603
Oil on canvas, 24 4/5 x 33 1/2 inches. Museo de Bellas Artes, Granada, Spain

JB

I'm sitting in the Country Girl Saloon in Castaic, California, with Sharon Lockhart. I thought we should start by defining a philosophy of life. Even though our work is sometimes written about together, there are some major differences, and I think those differences stem from a difference in philosophy. Just as I say this, a song comes on the jukebox. It's a country and western song, and we hear, "God is great, beer is good, and people are crazy." That's perfect. There it is. I guess I believe in two of those things. Certainly, beer is good, but here is where we differ: I think people *are* crazy, and consequently my latest work features few or no people. Where does your interest in people come from?

SL

I'm naturally inquisitive and trusting and have always been interested in how people live and think. My mother always said, "If everyone were the same, life would be pretty boring." I feel I learn something from everyone. I've always been a social person, and I come from a very social family. What I like most when I'm making work is getting to know people and involving them in the project.

JB

How do you do that? How do you involve a community in a project?

SL

It's different each time. But in general, I find an interest, approach people whom I want to invite to participate, establish a rapport with them, and develop the project. Then there's an exchange at the end. Usually, people start out being hesitant, but also strangely intrigued. As they get to know me, I explain what I'm doing and I show them the things that are interesting me, and they see that it could be fun to participate. It's important to me to have everyone feel that they are a part of the project.

For *Pine Flat* (2005), it was an organic process: the kids found me. Slowly, over the course of a year, I realized we had developed a unique friendship and that it might be interesting to make a film with them. By that point, I knew practically everyone in town, and the adults trusted me with their children. Many times, the adults suggested that I work through the school or the church, but I chose not to because I was more interested working outside such institutions. Not everyone agrees with them, and I didn't want to exclude anyone.

For *Lunch Break* (2008), I had a very hard time gaining access to Bath Iron Works (BIW) because of strict government security. Prior to moving to the East Coast, I spent ten months having official letters sent to management explaining who I was and what the project was about. But they said "no access" each time. It wasn't until I arrived in Bath and began to talk to people in town, who I met through family friends or friends of friends, that Local 6, the union, invited me in for a meeting. They loved the project and fought for my access. Once I had access, everyone, from management to the workers, was very friendly and accommodating.

Also, I should add that bringing in books of images throughout the course of the project solidified my relationship with the workers. I first brought books with images of workers, so that the workers could see that there were

visual precedents for my project. They could see that the project included them in a visual history, and they wanted to be a part of it, which deepened their interest in what we were doing. I brought in books with photographs by Lewis Hine, by photographers employed by the Farm Security Administration during the New Deal (page 100), and by Chris Killip, who photographed at the Pirelli tire factory in England. I also brought in books showing sculptures of workers, as well as stills from the Lumière brothers' first film, which shows workers leaving a factory at the end of a shift (page 104). Later, when I developed the idea of making the lunch box photographs, I brought in images of still life paintings (page 102).

JB

Some artists gain access by using money. How do you feel about this?

SL

I've always made it clear that my work is about a different kind of exchange. When I made *Teatro Amazonas* (2000), I chose to interview six hundred people to play the part of the audience members in the theater. Everyone told me to just pay these people, but not one person I interviewed ever asked about money. Instead, I created a relationship with the participants through the interviews. In all of my projects, I work hard to make the participants partners, so that the exchange is a personal one, rather than the abstracted exchange that money creates.

JB

Earlier, you said that you learn something from everyone. Being a mathematician, I have found that there is more variability within groups than between them. That is, I could conclude that the variability within the community of workers at BIW is greater than the variability between this community and, say, a community of Los Angeles artists. Did you find this variability among the workers?

SL

Yes, there is a lot of variability among the workers, even though most of them are from very similar backgrounds. For example, when you walk through the yard, you can see a range of political viewpoints. In the United States, the labor movement has engendered a strong left-wing tendency among workers, but a certain conservatism among working-class Americans counters this tendency. The diversity among the workers was clear to see on the stickers that they put on their lockers. Also, the workers at BIW are part of the defense industry. Many told me that they felt good about contributing to the nation's defense—they saw themselves as working together for the betterment of their country. In fact, a number of them had served in the Marines or the Navy. This fact, coupled with a strong union, created an interesting relationship. But the political coalition that created this relationship is somewhat of an anachronism today. Everything is so much more fractured now—most of the guys see what they do as just a job, and they know that it is one of the best jobs in Maine. I should also add that, although during World War II, most of the workers were women, today most are men. Even so, there is gender diversity as well at the factory; not coincidentally, the first worker you see in the *Lunch Break* film is a woman.

Yet, I would say that everyone got along. They kidded each other about their different political or cultural beliefs, but they all seemed very social and worked well together. In the carpentry shop, one younger worker would spend his lunch break reading the Bible, while his co-workers gambled at cards next to him. Also, there were some really wild guys (and women) with long hair and tattoos who rode Harleys, and there were also conservative family guys—some of the long-haired bikers were conservative family guys as well.

JB

I'd like to know more about the workers. What kind of music did they listen to? What were their lunches like? What did they read?

SL

As I've said, they are a fairly diverse group. One guy had a lunch box that was like a filing cabinet, filled with every school picture of his daughter from kindergarten to senior year; after he ate, he'd go through and organize them. Many guys played cards and did crossword puzzles. More than anything, they all have a great sense of humor, and both told jokes and played jokes on one another constantly. The lunch box has been the home to a few surprises over the years. One of my favorites was when they tack-welded one guy's metal lunch box to a bench.

I heard a lot of different music as people were working. Every building in the yard has its own soundtrack. Heavy metal was always playing in the Aluminum Shop, classic rock in the Assembly Hall, and country and western in the Tin Shop. In fact, one of the supervisors in the Tin Shop was a country and western musician who had once played with my father. Walking through the yard was like listening to a radio as the tuner changed from station to station.

And, as you can see in the film and photographs, a lot of the workers read the newspaper. Newspapers were strewn around almost every work area. They know what's going on. They understand their place in the economy and are sophisticated about media. One guy I photographed is a sci-fi enthusiast who was always reading novels at lunch. Others read technical manuals, photography magazines, as well as hunting and fishing magazines. All this reading got me thinking about how this workplace is tied to analog technology, which is shared in a different way than digital technology. A newspaper gets passed around; it's social, portable, and exists in the world.

JB

In relation to this project, were you at all interested in music's role in the labor movement in particular and politics in general? I'm thinking of your use of the Led Zeppelin song.

SL

Yes, I researched the history of work songs and labor music. The connections among work songs, the blues, and rock and roll played a part in my choice of the Led Zeppelin song. I thought about using something more esoteric, but I wanted a song that would be on a pop radio station and still carry the history I was thinking of (I also liked the way it mixed with the machine sounds). Also, even though today the political content of rock and roll is not as strong as it was in the past,



Auguste and Louis Lumière, *La Sortie des usines Lumière (Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory)*, 1895
Still from black-and-white film, 46 seconds

there is definitely a “politics” of music that is still relevant in the context of labor. I’m thinking in particular of an incident I read about during the course of my research. Management at a General Motors factory once told the workers that they would no longer be permitted to listen to music during work hours because their radios used too much electricity. The workers responded by connecting their radios and huge speakers to car batteries that they brought into the factory. Management finally relented and permitted them to listen to music, a huge victory for the workers.

JB

I like the way you get to know the people you film. How do you think this affected the outcome of *Lunch Break*?

SL

It created a naturalism. Many of the workers were initially skeptical of what my assistant Carly Short and I were doing, and rightly so. This is a traditional problem of documentary work: you are an outsider looking at a person or group of people who have no idea what you are going to say about them. But over time, we developed a relationship of mutual trust and support. The people who appeared in the film were comfortable, so they were more themselves than they would have otherwise been. And for many of them, the project became a part of their lives. For example, the weekend before we filmed in the Assembly Hall, we called all the workers at home to remind them of the shoot. We ended up talking to their wives, husbands, parents, and kids, who all knew about the project and had suggestions and stories to tell. Conversations like these demonstrated that we all had an investment in the project. The workers came up with things I never would have thought of. They wanted the film to be better, so they offered their thoughts about the workplace, which they knew best. They often had sophisticated suggestions for me, from locations to shoot to technical issues. Also, many of them were amateur historians, who shared with me information about the history of BIW or collections of old photographs of the yard. Some were from families who had worked in the yard since the nineteenth century. Their mothers or grandmothers had been “Rosie the Riveters” during World War II. I also met and learned a lot from one of the previous union presidents, Rocky Grenier. He was in office during a big strike in the early 1980s. He told me incredible stories about what went on during the conflict. For instance, the governor had sided with management and came to town once to give a speech, and the union got thousands of workers to come out, turn their backs to him during the speech, and then quietly walk away.

JB

This is exactly what you have been so good at from the very beginning. In projects like *Goshogaoka* (1998), *Teatro Amazonas* (2000), and *Pine Flat* (2005), you developed a phenomenal closeness with your subjects. Do you do research about the people themselves?

SL

No, I don’t research the people. Instead, we become close by sharing information and developing the project together. I often think about my time in Japan when I made *Goshogaoka*. It changed my life because it was the first time

I had worked on a large scale in a community. It helped me to realize that I'm good at involving people. I'm very honest with them and want them to understand what they are doing and how we are making work together. There is never any mystery: all of the participants understand what we are doing, know where the camera will be stationed, have the opportunity to look through the lens. We all come together during this process.

JB

How do you do research in general?

SL

Each project calls for new types of research. I love that. I can look at sports photography, postmodern dance, ethnographic films, medical photography, Baroque painting. *Lunch Break* came about through intense research. I had done a project in 2003 called *Lunch Break Installation, "Duane Hanson: Sculptures of Life," 14 December 2002–23 February 2003, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art* (2003), in which I photographed the installation of a Duane Hanson sculpture, which portrays a group of construction workers during their lunch break, at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (pages 92–99). At the time, I was researching large-scale realist sculpture and found myself looking at Hanson's work, which is funny, because I had dismissed him as a schlocky artist. But now I find his portrayal of American working-class life very interesting. This experience ultimately led me to images of workers on their lunch break that were taken during the 1930s in connection with the Farm Security Administration photographic project. This, in turn, led me to representations of meals and food. I looked at old master paintings by artists like Caravaggio, genre paintings of card games, and still lifes of food (page 108). I saw a great show of Spanish painting at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston called *El Greco to Velázquez: Art during the Reign of Philip III*, right before I started the photographs. I also looked at any films I could find that involved work or eating. There's a great scene in a Tsai Ming-liang film of a theater box-office girl eating her lunch. And I read as much as I could about American labor laws relating to the lunch break. At the time, I was a research fellow at Harvard. I had a research partner who would go to the library to find all kinds of esoteric sources. She would come back with piles of books that we would go through, as well as music and artworks. I listened to lots of union songs and work songs of all sorts, read labor poetry, looked at posters, did research on protests. And finally, I just observed everyday life—whether it was two construction workers having lunch in the back of their truck or a librarian having lunch by herself at a table in a school cafeteria. I tried to learn as much as I could about as many aspects of this project as I thought I might encounter.

JB

How much did you visit factories and talk to workers?

SL

I did my initial research at different factories in the St. Louis and Los Angeles areas as well as Pittsburgh and upstate New York. In the St. Louis area, I tried to visit the Anheuser-Busch brewery, but was unable to get in. Then I

spent time at Allied Healthcare Products, Inc., a factory that manufactures oxygen masks. I sat through two shifts, talking to the workers there about who they sat with at lunch, what they did when their lunch companion was absent, what the effects of the closure of the factory cafeteria would be. At that point I was thinking I would do a portrait of five cities. That changed when I realized I would be short-changing any real relationship I might be able to develop with the workers. I thought that Maine would be a good place to work because it's small and has a fairly limited industrial base. Also, since four generations of my family live in Maine, and I lived there every summer when I was a kid, I strongly identified with the people there. It's a place where work is very much tied to geography, and the shifting economy is resulting in very noticeable changes. Once there, I drove around for a couple of months visiting factories and explaining my project. I would always ask people where else they had worked, for how long, and what their experiences were. Conversation with one person would lead me to the next workplace, and so on. I spent the most time at Duck Trap Salmon, Stinson Seafood Co., Falcon Shoe, Barber Foods, Osier's Wharf, Hancock Lumber, Lie-Nielsen Toolworks, and in Aroostook County in Littleton with the potato farmers, loggers, and hot toppers. I also spent time with clambers in South Bristol.

JB

Let's talk about how the project's central film, *Lunch Break*, came about. You had originally planned a very different film. In fact, I edited a version that was shot in many different locations, which was a good film, but we both concluded that it wasn't right because it didn't push film language in the way your past films have. So you chose to do something very courageous and completely change direction.

SL

Yes, this film started out from a very different point of origin. I shot in a handful of the different locations I just mentioned. I filmed lunch breaks, production, and the landscapes situating each workplace. As you know, there were lots of fantastic shots, and it made a very good film. But something bothered me about it. I had never really worked that way—designing a project, gathering a crew, and then shooting over the course of two weeks, two or three things each day. It was incredibly exhausting and didn't give me time to work out issues I was having. I also found that the film was more about work itself than the break from work, which was my original intention. Ultimately, I felt that it was too conventional, but I don't regret it at all: I learned so much about Maine and the economy. Through this process, I ended up going back and making the companion film to *Lunch Break*, *Exit* (pages 133–37). I also recently completed *Double Tide* (2009), which, like *Exit*, was inspired by shots I had made for the original film.

The one thing I really loved about the initial footage was the hallway shot (pages 3–7). I wanted to get inside BIW because it was a large industrial factory, and I pictured a large industrial lunchroom. I was interested in large workforces and the disappearance of the social spaces they gave rise to: BIW had six thousand employees when I filmed, and the whole yard took lunch at the same time and left at the same time, which is rare today. When I walked that hallway the first time, I was exhilarated. I knew it would be the center of my film. I spent more time there than at any other location. Taking



George Brecht, *Word Event*, 1961, from *Water Yam*
Cardboard box containing 102 event scores. Published in *Water Yam*
(Verona: Archivio Francesco Conz, 1986)

that shot and slowing it down changed the film for me. It became a film that captured the lunch break experimentally, rather than literally. It created a relationship to time that I felt was missing from the original film. I wanted audiences to have time to think about the break and the place in which the break was situated without being fully caught up in a conversation or activity.

JB

I'm very much interested in this idea of extended time. It allows me to see so much more. And surprisingly, I felt this space in a very real way—in fact, in a more real way than when I saw the shot in real time.

SL

I agree. The slowness allows you to get past your first impressions and engage the space. When you see the shot in real time, you are more likely to succumb to those first impressions and not notice the subtleties of the space and of the gestures of the people. But in the slowed-down version, you experience the space more as you would experience it in a photograph or a succession of film stills. I wanted the film to be photographic. I like the fact that when you're watching the film, it seems very slow, but then you have these moments in which you realize that you just missed some detail that you suddenly become aware of and want to see more closely.

JB

The sound is in real time, a mixture of sounds recorded on location, up and down the hallway, with added electronic tones that match some of the sounds found in the factory. This, too, adds to the reality of the place.

SL

When we slowed the film down, I realized that I would have to go back and record eight times as much sound. The composer Ernst Karel worked with me to walk the hallway at the slowed speed and to record conversations and sounds in real time that we thought would work well on a soundtrack. Then, Becky Allen wrote a composition using an analog electronic keyboard with oscillators from the 1960s, which you can adjust to the tones that you want. Becky, you, and I then used the oscillators to match or complement the harmonic frequencies of the machine sounds that we had recorded in the hallway in real time. In this way, we created a soundtrack that worked with the natural sounds of the space. You don't know which tones are "music" and which are the sounds of the machines themselves. Like the slowness, the soundtrack encourages you to reconsider what you're listening to and go beyond first impressions.

JB

You also made a large number of photographs in connection with *Lunch Break*.

SL

I made the photographs about six months after the film shoot. We spent an additional five weeks at BIW and worked there every day from 8 am until 4 pm. We were honorary workers. We scouted locations until the 9:30 break. Then we photographed portraits of the workers during their

fifteen-minute break, still lifes until lunch, another round of portraits during the next break, and then more still lifes or portraits (pages 17–21, 32–41, 57–78). We shot over nine hundred 4 x 5" negatives, of which I used just a few. I had the same problem with the photographs that I had with the original film: they were too conventional. Even though I ultimately didn't use these negatives, I wanted to document the yard and the people who worked there as thoroughly as possible because I knew I would never have another opportunity to have access again. Eventually, I would like to donate them as a record of this time to a local institution in Maine.

JB

When I worked in a factory, we all carried basically the same black lunch box. I looked for that kind of box while watching *Exit*, but only saw a few. How did you decide to photograph the lunch boxes?

SL

The lunch boxes were a way of getting around the conventionality of the worker portraits. I had the idea of creating an archive showing each of the trades it takes to build a ship, but the notion of the archive didn't subvert the individual portraits in an interesting way. While shooting these photographs, I also developed the idea of making a realist sculpture out of one or more of the boxes. I had collected some boxes in the final days of the shoot, exchanging an older one for a new one. Toward the end, a few people brought in boxes for me that they thought were special. I sent them back to Los Angeles to think about later. But the sculpture ultimately turned out to be too fetishistic, and I concluded that the boxes could be more challenging as photographic portraits of their owners and their trades. For weeks in the studio I tried to figure out how to shoot them. Finally I called the owners and asked them to FedEx their actual lunches to me. The content they included revealed a lot about them. As for the photographs themselves, I wanted something that fell between archeological photography, advertising, and something more artistic.

JB

Did you do any research in connection with the photographs that you didn't talk about earlier?

SL

I looked at a lot of Pop art, and still life paintings by the Spanish Baroque painter Juan Sánchez Cotán (page 102), the Dutch Baroque painter Pieter Claesz, and Caravaggio. I revisited other images that I thought might be relevant. For example, I looked at how sculpture is photographed, in particular a book about Fluxus artist George Brecht, whose work and concepts I really love. (I was originally interested in a word event Brecht had created called *Exit*, which consisted of a card printed with the phrase "Word Event" and the word "Exit" below [page 106]—the title of my film *Exit* was inspired by this.) But Brecht had also made a series of boxes that contained collections of objects, and I liked the way they were photographed in this book.

JB

You often work in both photography and film. For *Lunch Break*, how do the photographs and film work together?

SL

This is the first time I've made several films and several photographic projects to go together. Each one adds new pieces of information, giving viewers new ways of seeing all the other components. As portraits, the lunch box photographs engage the problem that I was grappling with in the film *Lunch Break*: how do you get around the clichés that riddle the representation of workers? Through their construction, their decorations, and their contents, the lunch boxes tell you so much about the people who own them and their culture—their rituals, personal choices, skills, and interests—as well as about all the trades that go into shipbuilding and about the ships the workers worked on.

One connection between different components of the project that I really like is how the film *Exit* shows the lunch boxes leaving the yard in the hands of their owners. I talked with some of the workers about the weight of a lunch box in the morning versus the afternoon—how it swings, and how that affects the way you move. We also talked about what they thought about when they were walking out each day, or the friends who always waited for them at the corner. These are simple aspects of everyday life and the moments that I was interested in hearing about. Besides being a document of the workforce—like the ratio of men to women, and how apparent that becomes when you watch everyone leaving the yard—more than anything else, *Exit* is a social film. I feel everyone can relate to it in a very direct way.

By contrast, the photographs of the independent businesses take the social nature of the factory to a different place. These tableaux allow you to see the development of an organic economy within the larger frame of industry. They also complicate any stereotype of the factory as a purely hierarchical, top-down structure. What really interested me in BIW was the way the surfaces of the factory were mediated from the bottom-up as well. Lastly, I printed a selection of the portraits we did of workers on their lunch break. These were inspired by Baroque paintings depicting groups of people sharing a meal or table. The social dynamics that lined the edges of the frame in the *Lunch Break* film are treated in a frontal way in these photographs. For the most part I tried to avoid the typical worker portrait in this project, and you don't see workers in the other photographs. In this case, though, I wanted to give the social relationships that initially drew me into this project a place of importance.

JB

Lately you have been presenting the film in both a theatrical space and as an installation. Each place has a very different feel and a completely different connection to audience. For me, they are entirely different works.

SL

I've always been interested in the social space of the cinema and the fact that, when you go to see a film, you are making a communal commitment to spend time. This was one of the reasons that *Goshogaoka* and *Teatro Amazonas* were made specifically for that kind of formal space and not for a walk-in museum space. At the time, I was reacting to certain video installations, which were not considering duration at all. Later, with *Pine Flat*, I wanted to make a film that commented on both viewing experiences—that embraced how little time one spends in a gallery and called attention to how we see both



Caption TK

still images, like paintings, and moving images. I don't think there are many people out there who actually sit through a film, start to finish, in a gallery. I figured twenty minutes was an average viewing time and worked from that. I'd been working with two friends, the architects Frank Escher and Ravi GuneWardena of the firm Escher GuneWardena, since 2000 on installation designs for my film work, and I had begun working with them more intensely at this point. For *Pine Flat*, we designed two identical viewing spaces that split the film into two equal halves, and screened one take from each half each day. That meant that you could not see the whole film in a gallery setting in one sitting. I hoped that the gallery version would be completed socially outside of the gallery—that people would talk about the parts they saw and in that way put together the whole film—or that they would choose to go to the cinema to see the linear version, or would revisit the gallery for a new experience.

With *Lunch Break*, I wanted to have the space echo the content. This time, Frank and Ravi designed a viewing situation that echoed the hallway in the film. I don't really like the way light-locked or curtained rooms pretend to be small theaters. We wanted the installation of *Lunch Break* to call attention to the architecture as part of the piece, not merely its enclosure. This is why we came up with a freestanding tunnel, creating its own set of architectural relationships with the larger exhibition space (pages 124–25). When viewers walk into it, they are not confined by the space. You enter it as you do a hallway; it feels like an in-between space connecting the space of the film and that of the gallery, a liminal space.

For *Exit*, we designed something different. While *Lunch Break* is about the movement of the camera (and vicariously, the audience) through space, *Exit* is about the movement of the people in the film through the static space of the camera. The brightness of the projection also allowed us to keep the architecture light, to reveal the room in which the film is playing. The box we built for this installation is a projection box, housing the projector and coming between the door and the screen, blocking the light (page 120). We thought of it as an inside-out version of the standard architectural intervention for showing video in a gallery. It also acts as an object you have to move around, and I like how that brings attention to your own movement in (entering) and out of (exiting) a work.

JB

When you finish a project, you often stay involved with the community. You seem to create an everlasting bond. Could you tell me more about this?

SL

Since *Pine Flat*, I have had more trouble ending a project and moving on, even after the exhibition is up or the publication is done. I am sure this is because my involvement with the communities is stronger now, in part because I am working closer to home and over a much longer period of time. After I finished *Pine Flat*, I worked for months on a slide show of the production with the snapshots I had made over the years and a soundtrack of music I thought everyone would enjoy. We had a big event, and one of the older children, who aspired to be a chef, made a meal for everyone in town. We also screened the entire two-hour film, along with the slide show, and had an awards ceremony and musical performance by Becky Allen. I worked as hard on that part of the project as

on the original production, and I was more nervous about its reception than the screening of the film at Sundance.

For *Lunch Break*, I'm producing a newspaper, called *Lunch Break Times*, which I'm taking back into the factory around the time the exhibition opens at the Colby College Museum of Art in Maine. I see the Colby show and the newspaper as ways of bringing the project back to the workers who participated. Also, the *Lunch Break* exhibition at Colby will be accompanied by a selection of Maine-related objects from the museum's collection combined with some crafts that the workers have made. They made all kinds of things, from the metal crafts you might expect, to glassware, paintings, and photographs. One guy even made his own lunch basket: he cut down an ash tree, planed strips to weave the basket, and made brass fittings for all the corners and hinges. I think my presence drew out some of the creativity of the workers, but I also think that the stereotype of the tough-guy worker was subverted at every turn. So, the entire top floor of the museum will be another curated aspect of the installation unique to its venue in Maine.

As for the newspaper, BIW has a rich oral tradition, and I wanted to expand on that. I went back to Maine this summer to record interviews, gather material, and also to distribute the 11 x 14" formal worker portraits I made of everyone to the workers, along with two six-foot-tall photographs of the lunch group scenes, which they hung in the Assembly Hall. I drove around the state, revisiting some of the locations where I had originally filmed and collected more stories, recipes, and jokes from people. I want the newspaper to include some of the people I was sad weren't represented in the final project. I also thought it might be more interesting to the workers at BIW to read something other than their own stories. I thought they'd be interested in the stories of potato farmers, sardine packers, loggers, and others. I imagine the copies of the newspaper floating around the different factories for a few weeks until they all disappear. I like the ephemerality of the analog information flow. It seems to me more on the level of storytelling. Something that circulates and disappears.

CODA

After completing this interview with Sharon Lockhart, I saw her most recent film, *Double Tide* (2009), at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. This film consists of two shots, approximately forty minutes each, of a young woman working a "double tide"—that is, pulling clams from the mud flats produced by the rare occurrence of two low tides on the same day. It was filmed in a small cove on the coast of Maine. The first shot is in the early morning; the second, near night. In each, the woman moves slowly about, delineating both time and space, and in turn defining hard work. I was reminded of the ten-hour-long shifts I spent in front of a Milwaukee drill press back in the 1960s. But there is something more appealing to the work in *Double Tide*: the outward presence of autonomy. Here, the woman's clock is the tide and sun. She gathers her own product, while I punched a clock and produced someone else's profit. Lockhart continues to learn by knowing where and how to look.

—James Benning