

## JASON HOLLEY WRITING ABOUT THE PROJECT

*I Still Love You (Now and Then)* was created with the same animation techniques developed more than a hundred years ago, using cut pieces of paper, a sheet of glass, and a camera. In my case, the camera was an iPhone, but otherwise the process was a very lo-fi, analog affair. To mount the camera, I modified a copy stand originally used for photographing books, that I had rescued from a mothball purgatory in the library of the college where I teach. Also included were some home-spun diffusers for my lighting, and a big magnifying glass C-clamped over the frustratingly small screen of the phone. The motion was created by moving the cut pieces of paper in very small increments and shooting a single frame, then repeating the procedure a-mind-numbing-verging-on-ritualistic number of times. The process hurts (you work standing), and mistakes are inevitable — but what you are left with is an unalterable, beautiful, physical record of your interaction with a piece of music. As a music fan, it is a totally unique experience — it's kind of like the slowest, most satisfying dance you will ever do. In the case of this video, somewhere around three thousand frames were shot to create four minutes and fifty-four seconds of animation.

I had worked with Josh on a previous record cover and we had just finished the art for his latest release, *Fever Breaks*, when he and his manager approached me about doing a lyric video. I had been making short animation experiments for a while with parts of my paintings and was excited to try to do something more complex. I worked up a few initial ideas, but when I got hold of the song and lyrics I realized what I had been doing was completely wrong for the feel of the song. My normal method for creating illustrations is to paint all of the elements on separate pieces of paper and then assemble them together in a sort of collage. I often dismantle the finished paintings and reuse the parts for other illustrations. As a result, I have a large archive of free floating images that are also perfect for using in a stop motion application. It was a matter of selecting a collection of painted pieces that fit Josh's song, and also creating a few new things as well. The typography in a lyric video is really the star of the show, and I knew I didn't have any interest in using the same stock fonts and digital techniques that I had seen used over and over again in other videos. Computers are dumb, they only do what they are programmed to do or exactly what you tell them to do and nothing more — no risk, no chance, no transcendence — everything that makes art (and life) great which the computer is incapable of doing. I drew and cut out multiple letters of my own alphabet, minus Q and Z (they don't exist in the song). Each word was assembled one letter at a time and animated like everything else. I had a pretty good system for keeping the whole thing organized, but there are a few moments where you can see some stray letters poking into the frame, also my exacto knife makes a brief appearance and despite my best effort there is one typo (and a few missing apostrophes). Nothing is perfect, and for some reason, that has always been very important to me.

