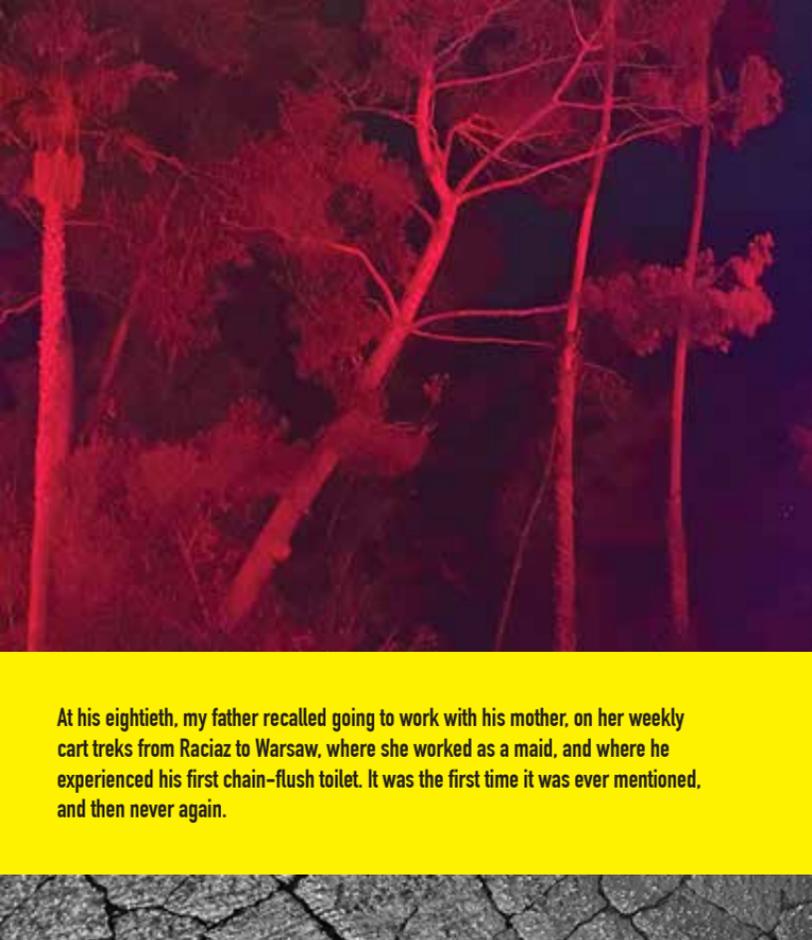


# “TEXTURE STUDY”

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At his eightieth, my father recalled going to work with his mother, on her weekly cart treks from Raciaz to Warsaw, where she worked as a maid, and where he experienced his first chain-flush toilet. It was the first time it was ever mentioned, and then never again.



It's important to remember that there are more things that we don't know, than we do know. This should be reassuring. I wonder what those things will be and realize that a large percentage of them will be useless drivel, which seems to be how it works. As long as some good appears the percentages should not matter.

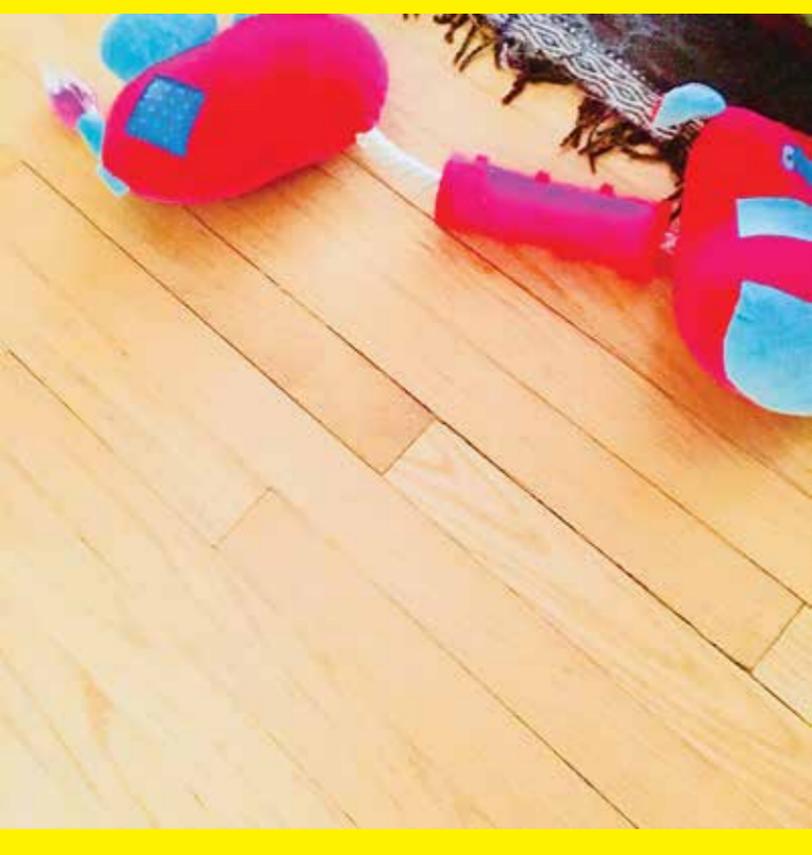


Creativity can be taught. It has form, dimensionality, basic rules. It solves problems via decision-making. Imagination, on the other hand, is a tricky bird. It has no boundaries or methodology. It is untenable, intangible and not teachable, though culturally some persons would like to believe it is. The imagination is completely un-Democratic, it emerges through individual experience alone. Cultural imagination is a myth created for different purposes, such as a cultural/collective desire supporting the endgame of any number of different groups. The imagination has no function, which is why it's imaginative. Realizing an imaginative idea takes creativity. This may be why the two are so often conflated and misunderstood.



To Experts of 20th Century:

Though you are experts of the Twentieth Century, your students [born after 1980] will be experts of 21st Century. Let them tell you what they understand and let them show you what they see. Mentor them, but stay out of their business. Let them invent their own world, first, because they have been handed a confusing mess, and, secondly, because they will do it anyways, and probably better.



I often ask colleagues, what is the difference between Art and Design? I don't usually get an answer right away. I gather it's because both definitions have been culturally usurped, and no one really cares that much about the distinction between the two. It's important to me, because knowing makes my students good decision-makers and problem-solvers. -- whether this information is culturally useful, or not.

Culturally, everyone wants to be an artist (not actually, but it's a prevailing trend). The designation "creative" has become a placeholder for all forms of people working as visual artists, gamers, musicians and designers. Artist is a respectable moniker, which takes a big question and makes it easy. I wonder why the term artist should be a catch-all? Why white-wash the hard earned specificity of skills, knowledge and craft into a frilly simplistic down-beat? Don't all disciplines -- from Architect to Visual Artist to Graphic Designer to Musician to Typographer to Media Designer -- have their own expertise? If so, why should they be lumped together under a single name?

So what is creative expertise about? What do each of these activities do that the others do not? Let me be brief -- Architects are experts in building, or better put, putting things together no matter the scale - from sky-scraper to nano technology. Graphic designer are expert of a flat page and know to organize its spatial possibilities with images and text. What do artists do that no one else does? They are experts at sensibility. An old term for sure. This is what they do that nobody else does. There are those that work with ideas and theories or social change, but those are not unique to any one discipline, or linked in any way to sensibility. It's an old concept, but think about it - eyes, ears, smell, touch, taste. Visual Artists (optical), Musicians (aural), Chefs (taste) to name a few. Typographers know letter forms -- the positive and negative space, kerning and weight of each letter forms. Musicians tell stories with words in song. Poets are experts in language, emotion and cadence.

There is specificity and complexity in all disciplines, as well as cultural change...  
1. Collaborative methodologies, where the primary maker, i.e., artist or creative, now shifts roles from an individual maker to a creative aesthetic partner. Multiple opinions reflect multiple sensibilities; 2. "Sensibility to sensitivity," the "canary in the coal mine" role, where the artists/creative morally represents "a feel good" engagement (empathy) with a subject, which may no longer be aesthetic in nature.



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