

CREATIVITY? *Pursuit of Change*

BY CAROLE GUEVIN

Creativity is the capacity to evaluate, organize, deconstruct, interpret and synthesize chaos. The result? Assigning a systemically simple well-packaged new proposal to a problem.

**“IMAGINATION IS MORE
IMPORTANT THAN KNOWLEDGE”**

– Albert Einstein.

CREATIVES DEFINED

Creative people are often the last resort ‘descramblers’. They can sort contradicting or problematic information all the while letting their supercharged imagination glide over the mess. Most of the time, they have a springy attitude carrying their assignment with pure childlike delight. They feed and soar on the ‘gravity’ of problems. They shine their true best in the worst of situations. They get enthused over the smallest sparks! They see a magnificent cathedral like solution in a few significant strokes. Perceptive and receptive they zoom in on the fuzziness and ‘see’ something redeemable and salvageable. They are the extra gear, shifted to propel and sustain momentum when in total stall or status quo. They move with the precision of one expecting imminent birthing of innovation. They are fearless when everything is fearsome. They provide intellectual ammunitions when others are trekking the bland state. They do moan and pester a lot against this and that, but hey, they love problems to the point of making it a career. How can you complain about that? They are simply irreplaceable!

THE ABC(DE)’S OF CREATIVITY

One of my favorite quotes comes from a book I highly recommend: *It’s not how good you are, it’s how good you want to be*, by Paul Arden. “All creative people need something to rebel against, it’s what gives their (and clients) lives excitement,” and, “Successful solutions are often made by people rebelling against bad briefs.”

Here are some pointers to keep your creativity alive.

A Asset superlative: RISK not talent!
Risk and survive. Stall and die.
Jump and rise. Fail and learn.
Defeat your insecurities. The unknown is not comfortable.



B Build, cherish and thrive under crazy constraints. Construct and defend massive ideas only!



C Challenge and contradict existing solutions. Treat each project as requiring a non-existing idea.



D Defy past or present fashionable design trends. Don’t look for answers. Search for the drive to create.



E Excel at the process of delivery. Let go emotionally; don’t bind with your ideas.



THE CREATIVE PAST

In the past, human endeavor has revolved around the pursuit of manufacturing goods, from the industrial age to the technology age (which is still about building stuff).

Goods are tangible objects and are forefront to aptly and accurately describe our modern age's intent: to conquer the entire population's real (or made to look real) needs. Consumerism is pursuing the potentiality of an endless dream stream of profits for a few and, exploitation of the most. There is a lot of brainware involved in figuring out the best way to construct cheap and sell a lot. Problem 'solving' is mostly attached to return on investment (ROI). As the downfall of the industrious rip of earth resources is surfacing, we are now facing a whole new ball game where a paradigm shift is required, showing once again creativity to the forefront.

Relegating the pursuit of the creative process to the farthest realm of societal awareness is no longer possible! Now exists a planetary emergency and thus a new urgency to revive the value of creativity!



BRINGING CREATIVITY TO OUR FUTURE

In our fast changing world, the fore-shadow of a networked economy that sustained so much hype in the past couple of years, comprises an underlying fundamental truth: all problems are intertwined and interconnected somehow. In a world where distance, time and boundaries have shrunk to the size of your backyard – whatever happens elsewhere is no longer possible to put either out of mind or out of sight.

This indeed holds incredible opportunities! Also needed, a revival of creativity in measures unseen and unheard of! Creativity is required to succeed at persuading and dismantling the over-exploitation of our system and perhaps through ecological economy*, hopefully ensure survival of most not just a few.

Unfortunately, problem solving is too often deemed to belong to either the philosophical sphere, or secret(ive)

corporate research labs, or the political arena but rarely so, delegated to creative agents. Change never profits those in power. Don't hold your breath on getting power to support change; but isn't being creative finding a way to do exactly so?

One recent example that is getting huge media coverage of late is MoveOn.org, founded by ex-fly-ing toaster screensaver designers turned activists, Joan Blades and Wes Boyd. They found themselves concerned with the present state of national affairs and sensing it be to be good timing, initiated 'change'. Politics by definition is the 'art of managing society' so the duo saw a problem (a need) and charged with a wild dose of audacious creativity, set out to 'do' something about it.

According to their web site, "MoveOn is working to bring ordinary people back into politics..."

NOW EXISTS A PLANETARY EMERGENCY AND THUS A NEW URGENCY TO REVIVE THE VALUE OF CREATIVITY

* Ecological Economics Encyclopedia

our nationwide network of more than 1,700,000 online activists is one of the most effective and responsive outlets for democratic participation available today."

Right out of their home with no big budget, no star endorsement, no internal infrastructure, no big nothing; just motivation spurred by the 'problem'. Results? They have become 'the' reference for grassroots politics. They have been invited to talk about the new 'phenomena' and other politicians have followed their model in their campaign.

Recently, ICOGRADA (International Council of Graphic Design Associations) conducted a survey of design professionals, the results of which may or may not come as a surprise – well, I was surprised – pertaining to how designers perceived part of their 'role'. (SEE FIG. 01 AND 02)

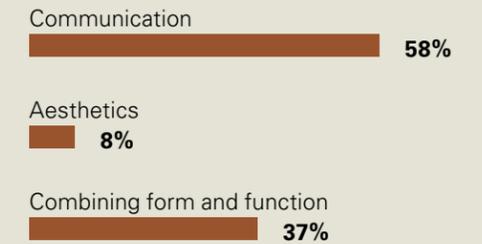
So in a world where the complexity of issues to address keeps growing every other day, this world of ours requires much more than manufacturing another ephemeral or temporary 'band aid' product or solutions! There are no longer comforting possibilities in ignoring the immediacy of tackling these issues without powerful creative campaigns, programs and thinking.

Are you ready for the challenges? I am. →

Carole Guevin is one of Pixeltable thinking design and creative code duo who has seen the web grow, who still luv's it and has a passion for everything design. She is an internationally recognized new media driving force through her work as editor and founder of netdiver.net, an online magazine + international design portal that focuses on digital culture since '98.

FIG. 01
Designers often have to define the role and value of design to clients. What does design mean to you?

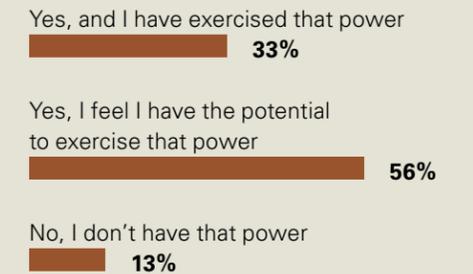
Design is mostly about...



Source: ICOGRADA

FIG. 02
The graphic design profession often plays a 'propagandist' role in society, influencing political thought and popular opinion.

Do you feel that you have the power to influence politics as a designer?



Source: ICOGRADA