ISSU E002

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ISSUE 02
SHALLOW RESEARCH
DEEP LEARNING

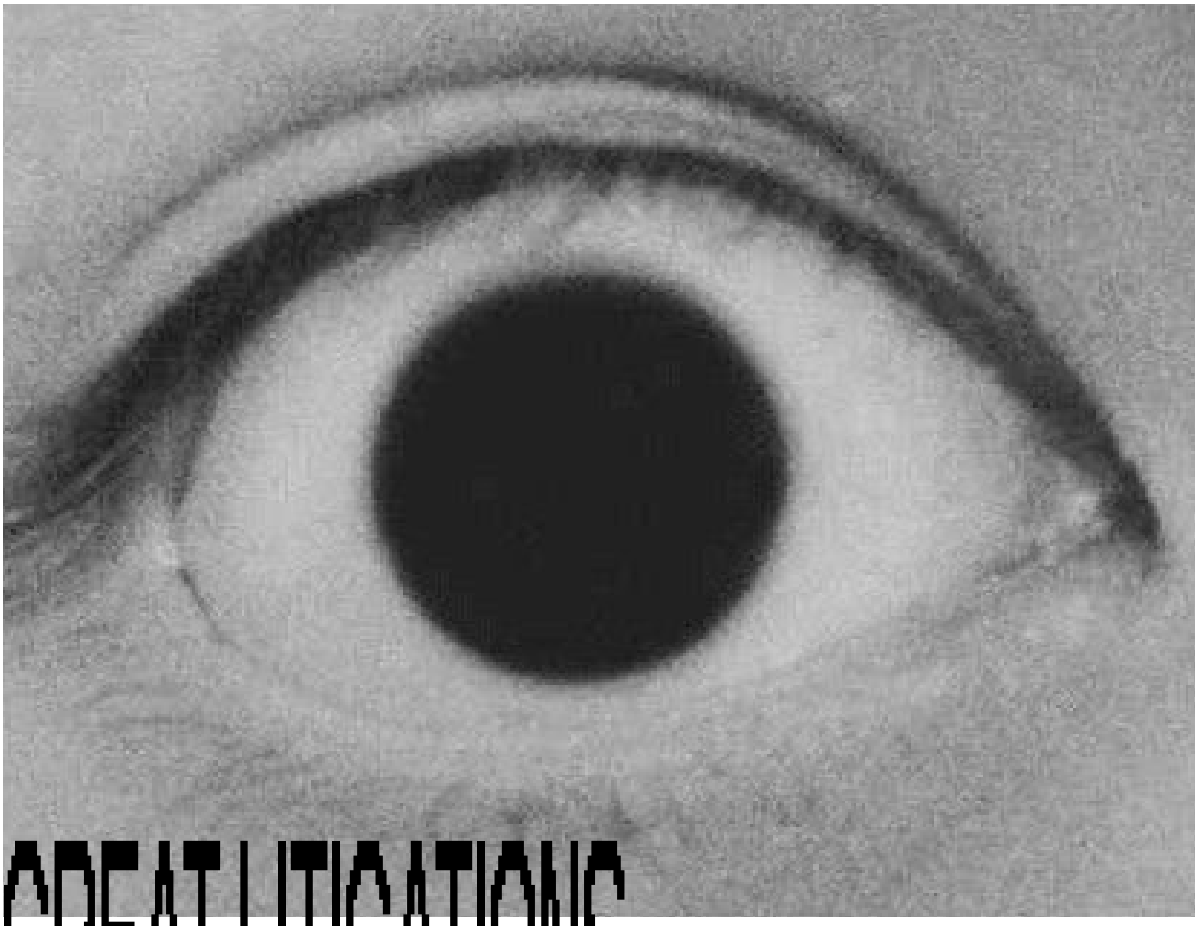
This issue, we want to address the elephant in the room: Is originality overrated?

We live in the age of on-demand. A time when centuries of art, scientific achievement, and philosophical thought have been flattened into hours upon hours of streamable "content" — accessible anytime, anywhere. More than any of us can hope to consume in our lifetimes. The collected works of Akira Kurosawa, Joan Didion's Year of Magical Thinking, Elliot Smith B-sides, Edvard Munch's The Scream, that latest episode of Love Island – all simultaneously competing for your attention. Is it any wonder we've started to notice some... shared DNA between works from different eras?

The Hero With a Thousand Faces became The Seven Basic Plots before evolving into its final form: TV Tropes. Over at Pandora and WhoSampled, teams of machines and "musicologists" have dedicated 20 years to charting the tangled web of influences, covers, and remixes that make up the last 1000 years of musical history. Since those early dawn-of-the-Internet days, they've succeeded in mapping a 6 Degrees of Kevin Bacon for sonic discovery – the source code on top of which Spotify's Discover Weekly and Apple Music recommendation algorithms are built today.

Thanks to Webs 1, 2, and now 3, it's easier than ever to reverse-engineer the genealogy of creativity. And armchair analysts certainly have – in the toxic wasteland of YouTube comment sections, on Twitter, in thinkpieces, and subreddits. Drawing a line from Virgil Abloh to Rene Magritte is all well and good, but the question we're left with is:

so what?



GREAT LITIGATIONS

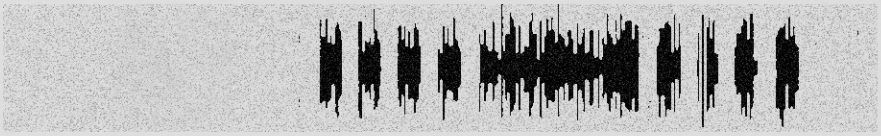
Take a look back at some of the most-buzzed-about IP infringement lawsuits of the last decade and you'll find one consistent refrain: technology is the root of all evil for the creative industries.

Case(s) in point: music's watershed moment with the Blurred Lines verdict. The never-ending cavalcade of near-identical Instagrammable "experiences" taking over the modern art world. The butterfly effect of how one Norwegian coder's decision to make the massive catalog of adult entertainment that exists in the world searchable and streamable has forever-altered the landscape of the world's oldest profession. Or the (largely unfair) dunking Spice DAO received for attempting to resurrect Jodorowksy's Dune – one of the "greatest sci-fi films never made" – as a crowdsourced cinematic universe.

"Decentralized creative collective adapts the work of one of the world's consummate auteur directors" is a story with the delicious ring of dramatic irony to it, but the bit all those Twitter commentators fail to remember is this: Jodorowsky himself was interpreting Frank Herbert's original vision from the novel. With the help of a stacked team of collaborators of his own.

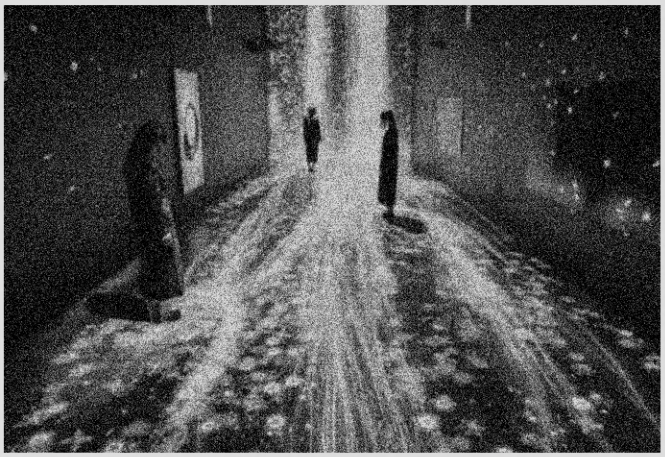
It's the perfect illustration of the unspoken truth we want to explore. For all the ink spilled and fingers pointed, the truth is: sampling, bootlegging, and remixing have always been a part of the process.

Thicke, Williams



Gaye

Figure 01
Blurred Lines vs. Got To Give It Up
diagram of chord progressions

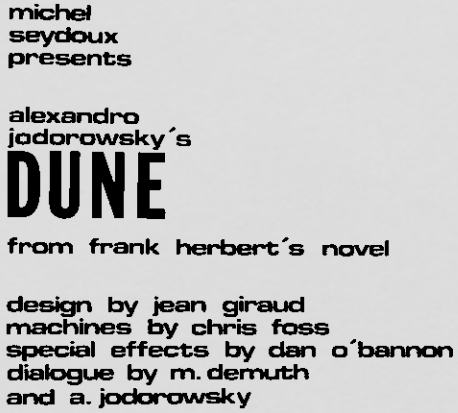


TeamLab's "Boundaries"

MODS "Season Dream"

Figure 02
TeamLab vs Museum of Dream Space
photographic comparison

H.R. Giger working on Dune Sets



Jodorowsky's "Dune" title design

Figure 03
Space DAO + Jodorowsky's Dune

ONE MAN'S BOOTLEG IS ANOTHER MAN'S HOMAGE

Sneaker culture is shall we say…particularly fraught with allegations – from Kanye's latest beef over "copied" Yeezy designs to Skechers'...entire business model. But to truly tell that story, we have to start at the beginning – with the two brands most-often held up as day-one innovators in the field of performance footwear: ***adidas and Converse.***

“Necessity is the mother of invention”

Wu-Tang Clan

Often credited as the “father of the modern running shoe,” Adi Dassler and his brother Rudolph started Gebrüder Dassler Schuhfabrik out of their mother’s kitchen – foreshadowing the vibe of start-up culture by a good half century. In the lead-up to the 1936 Summer Olympics Adi drove to Berlin from his hometown in the Bavarian countryside to persuade as many athletes as he could to take a chance on a pair of handcrafted leather track shoes with extra long spikes. One of those athletes happened to be Jesse Owens – who instantly became an icon when he walked out of Nazi Germany with 4 gold medals in what may be the most triumphant sports moment of all time. By not allowing white supremacy to factor into their marketing decisions, the Dassler brothers’ brand blew up – with sales rolling in from athletes and national teams trying to recapture a little bit of that Owens’ magic.

It could have ended there, but success came at a personal cost. In 1948, the brothers split their business into two brands that are still synonymous with German sport: Adolf went with “adidas”; Rudolf landed on “Ruda” before changing it to the more memorable “PUMA.” The blow-up for the ages came in the 1970s – when the German army put out a call for an evolution of the iconic Owens track spike for the troops. Both PUMA and adidas produced a version of the now-pervasive style, each claiming the design as their own – when in truth, the root of the branch came from their original collaboration. To further complicate matters, the silhouette of the German Army Trainer then went on to inspire the adidas Samba, the PUMA whirlwind, and eventually, the Margiela Replica.

1936 Adidas Track Shoe

Adi Dassler talking to athletes

Adi Dassler in the Gebrüder Dassler Schuhfabrik

Jesse Owens in the Adidas Track Shoe — 1936 Summer Olympics

1924 Converse Non-Skid Sneaker

1924 Ad Converse Rubber Shoe. With patented technology for the tread.

Produced in Malden, Massachusetts, roughly 100 miles from the birthplace of basketball, the invention of the All-Star came about not because of some high-minded love of design but a much more #relatable Depression-Era need for coin. Unlike baseball or American football, both of which required large outdoor playing fields, basketball could be played in tighter space – and so the pastime blew up in urban playgrounds and college neighborhoods all along the East Coast. Rubber company founder Marquis Mills Converse could recognize an opportunity when he saw one.

The All Star came with features that gave it an edge over the competition, such as the heel patch, an innovation on the inner designed to protect the ankles of players, and the diamond tread pattern on the rubber sole – which survives to this day. That rubber tread formed the bedrock of the design because it was a shape that allowed athletes to push off in multiple directions, pivot, and stop on a dime. But even as early as 1924, Converse was standing on the shoulders of those who came before. In 1832, Walt Webster patented a process that allowed rubber soles to be attached to shoes and boots. By the 1860s, a croquet shoe was made available with a rubber sole and a canvas upper that fastened with laces. Because the canvas-topped rubber shoes made you pretty much noiseless, the invention was quickly adopted by sneak thieves – hence the name "sneakers."

So what can we learn from this historical interlude?

1— Sorry to break it to you, but everyone's gotta eat.

Sneaker designers (and "creatives" in general) are, more often than not, just trying to make rent. We may want to pretend that the act of "making" exists on an ethereal plane above the petty concerns of capitalism, but art and $$$ have always been uneasy bedfellows. And believe it or not, even the most cynical of cash grabs can spark revolutionary ideas. The Medici basically underwrote the entire Renaissance, after all – creating the conditions for a hothouse of talent to develop at the intersection of technology, art, philosophy, poetry, and architecture – and in so doing, setting up a model for innovation that makes Silicon Valley look like a couple bullies in a sandbox squabbling with one another over the same grubby toys. (This is the dynasty that basically invented the concept of the artist residency...before it devolved into the "collab houses" of our day). The fact is, talent needs patronage, and the appreciation and collection of objects has always been the invisible engine powering the ability of makers to make.

2— Hot take perhaps, but the whole Form v. Function debate is kind of bullshit.

When Louis Sullivan coined the concept, the idea that the style of a building or object should reflect its purpose made perfect sense. But the truth is, function – that is to say, what people need/ want – has been pretty much consistent throughout the arc of human history. So have the laws of physics. Form on the other hand, has continued to evolve – largely thanks to technology. Designers can now cram more functions onto a smartphone than the entire computing power of the NASA system that first put man on the moon. These days the outward appearance of most of the objects we come in contact with bears almost no relation to their intended purpose. Intuitive form and experience – or UI designed to mirror

instinctual human behavior – is really what matters when we find ourselves interacting more and more with screens. And as our friends over at High Snobiety so insightfully pointed out, when it comes to sneaker design, the debate is even more moot.

> *"The human foot hasn't changed shape in close to a million years [and] there are therefore only so many basic shapes a shoe can take to shield that foot from injury. If you hit the end of that tunnel and still desire something truly original, be prepared to pay a lot per pair. Most people simply don't want the more avant-garde styles that "true originals" take, so sneaker companies that do deal in those models (Y-3, ROMBAUT, etc.) have to charge more per unit just to keep the lights on. Hence, $2000 CCP "Drips."" — Alex Rakestraw, "Here's How the Sneaker Industry is Fueled by Copied Designs," High Snobiety, 2019.*

3— Inspiration is a grind.

Although it's often romanticized as capturing "lightning in a bottle," in practice, staying inspired isn't always a glamorous process. No one who makes things for a living can afford to sit around the house waiting for the muse to call. You have to seek her out. Staying inspired is an iterative process. There's very little distinction that can be made between the process of inspiration – or "thinking" – and the process of making. More often than not, research is R+D. From blatant rip-offs to "inspired-by" designs, the line between homage and straight cribbing is blurry at best. One further complicated by the very nature of how our brains digest inspiration.

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Imitat
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Copying is found everywhere in nature. Animals use mimicry for protection and survival. See: the markings on a Viceroy butterfly duping predators into thinking it's the more glamorous Monarch to avoid being devoured. Comedians build rapport with an audience by breaking down observations into relatable anecdotes – setting up a punchline by establishing comfort before the inevitable rugpull. As babies, we mirror to express emotion, then gradually learn empathy by decoding body language. Yes, it starts as an act – but by miming, we wire our brains until it all becomes muscle memory.

Observing and mimicking is how we learn. It's trial and error. The practice-makes-perfect that leads to the development of a singular voice and the refinement of taste. In order to figure out what you like and what you have to say, you have to keep your eyes open. In fact, you could say mimicking is the foundation to any good education in the arts.

> *"You start when you're young and you copy. You straight up copy." - Shel Silverstein*

> *"Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery that mediocrity can pay to greatness."- Oscar Wilde*

Artists learn by sketching. Doodling in the margins of their school notebook. Tracing their favorite comic book characters instead of listening in math class. Observing the imperfect curve of an apple. The line that forms the shape of a smile. Apprentices during the Renaissance used to learn by copying the work of their master over and over and over again in what basically amounted to a medieval sweatshop. The first independent work Michelangelo ever made – as the story goes – was a reworking of a print by the German artist Martin Schongauer of the Temptation of St. Anthony.

Look Closely

Toward the end of his life, Monet had to undergo major eye surgery to avoid the onset of blindness, "I no longer sleep because of it," he admitted, describing how "at night I do not cease to be haunted by what I am attempting to realise." But out of the necessity to create, he invented a near-abstract style that eventually launched its own movement that went on to change the course of 20th century art: the Abstract Expressionists.

Another art form born out of necessity and limitation? Hip-hop. Sampling is a core tenet – a way to build culture and community by calling back to the ancestors. For a marginalized group overlooked and outright erased by history – many of whom cannot trace their origins back to a time before slavery – sampling represents the evolution of the oral tradition. A way to allude to an archive of shared experience and add your voice to the generational chorus.

Long before beatmakers were honing their craft by digging through the crates, musicians would run scales, learn chords, train their ear and eyes to become better sight readers – and ultimately, better composers. There's a beautiful story told by Paul Elie in Reinventing Bach:

> *"Johann Christoph [Bach's older brother] kept a collection of sheet music locked in a cabinet with latticed wood doors. Bach [yearned] to make music, not run through the exercises his brother assigned him, which he had already mastered. One night while the others were asleep he slipped a hand through the latticework, took hold of a sheet of music with thumb and forefinger, drew it out through the slats, and copied the notation onto a fresh sheet. Working by moonlight, he copied the manuscript the next night, and the next, until the moon entered a new phase. After 6 months of moonlit nights he had a complete work. Finally, one morning he brought the fresh piece of sheet music to the clavier and played it…."*

Even after he became a legend, Bach himself liked to tell that story because he saw it as the perfect illustration for how he learned to make music—by deeply studying the work of other composers. After all, one of the best ways to internalize someone's work is to copy it by hand. It's something every writer and every student of a foreign language can relate to:

Copying is the easiest way to learn the rhythms of a language. Whether it's a poem or piece of prose. The goal is not just to memorize the meaning of the words but to understand the emphasis of syllables, the symmetry of a couplet, the pauses and negative spaces that frame the artistic choices.

THE

ABSENCES

THAT

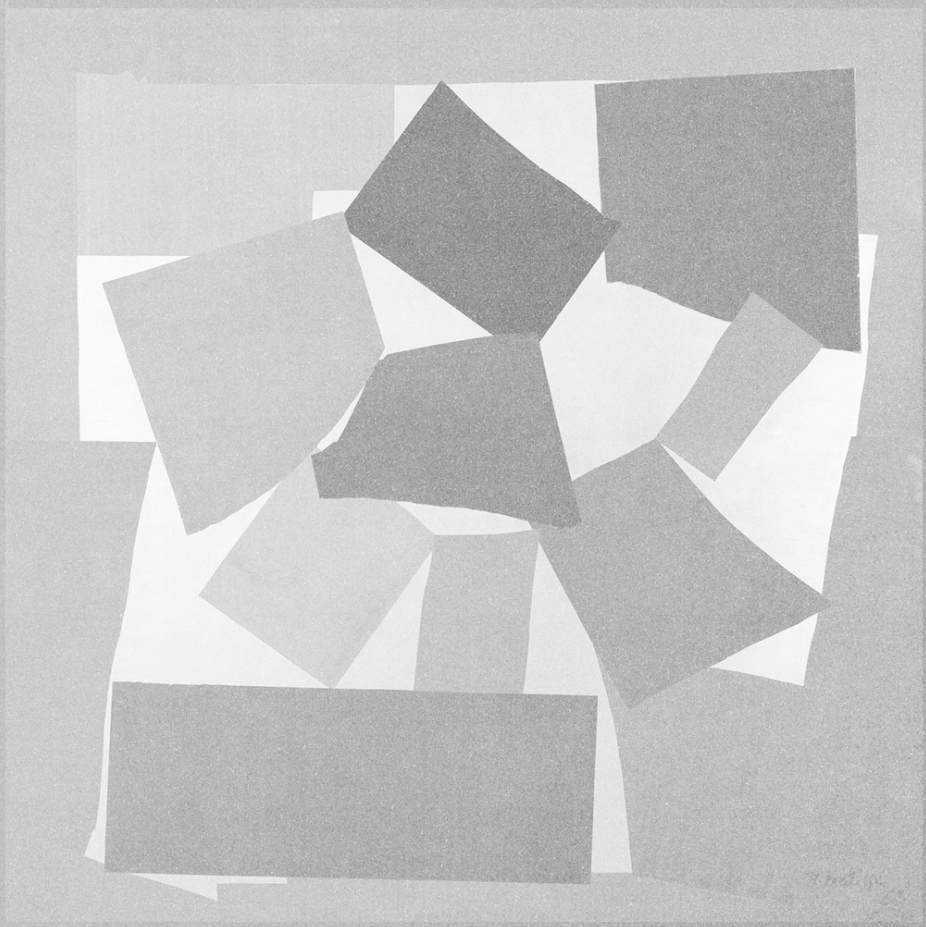
MAKE

PRESENCE

MORE

PROFOUND

It's the same process Matisse took with The Snail in his final years. First, he drew a snail. Then he used pieces of colored paper to reinterpret it. Forging himself with paper cutouts in order to deconstruct and reconstruct the process by playing with harmonies and contrasts. All in a bid to stay inspired.



Henri Matisse, The Snail, 1953, Tate Modern.

Of course what we're describing here is nothing new. It's the value of a liberal arts education. It's why they tell you to go to school. To read widely and follow the syllabus. Study the classics. Learn the historical context. You have to learn the rules to break them.

3%

"3% is applicable across practices and fields, different media, eras of our history. Our future. A series of 3%s brings the classics to modernity. Connects icons to burgeoning talent. Original style and invention are two different things. Origin stories vary but methods are universal. It's a cheat code."

VIRGIL ABLOH

001 Copy somebody’s style 002 Fuck it up 003 Keep fucking it up 004 Keep really, really fucking it up 005 Look: You’ve got your own

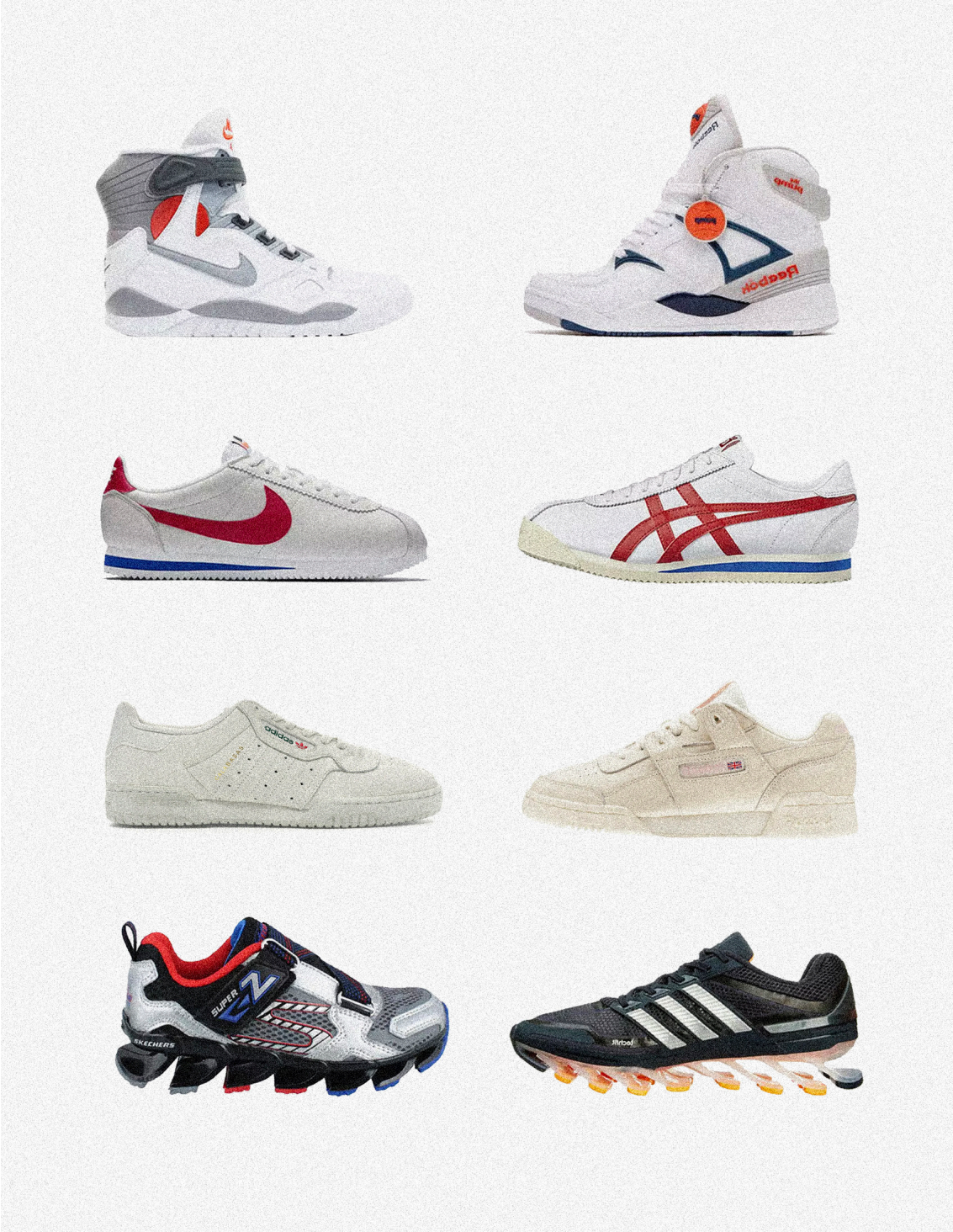
PLAGARIST OR POLYMATH?

it's all in the eye of the beholder

We've reached an inflection point. In an age where the vast amount of the world's knowledge is just…out there begging to be discovered: who even decides what the "classics" are anymore? And are we trading one kind of gatekeeping for another? What happens when the inspiration we are exposed to is selected for us — fed to us by an algorithm rather than discovered organically as we go about our day? Is serendipity dead in the era of the Explore tab?

We live in a world where the withering stare of that one record store employee judging you at the checkout is becoming a fast-fading memory. A world where access to culture is more equitable than ever before. Where subcultures can find the platforms to be created, shared, and discovered by the communities who need them most. All of this is unquestionably a good thing. As a society, we're slowly inching towards greater inclusivity, connectivity, transparency – all thanks to technology. But under the surface, we are also on the cusp of a massive shift in how culture is created, collected, and consumed.

We used to curate our identities through the objects we own. Now, each of us meticulously curates each square within that 9x9 grid to project the kind of person we want to be. And in so doing, we're tacitly allowing the machines to serve us up recommendations for what to buy, where to eat, what to wear – even what we should feel inspired by.



Sneaker Industry "Copy Designs"

So, the question becomes: what distinguishes an addict from a curator? A pathological Pinner from a visionary? Obsession from enthusiasm? A collection from an unsightly hoard? And what does any of this mean to those of us who went to school to be designers, writers, critics, curators, and artists? Whose livelihoods depend on that all-too ephemeral quality: taste? The one thing no amount of money can buy.

It's a question those French guys you muddled through in your Philosophy 101 class have been wrestling with for literal fucking years. To quote one of our favorites:

"All we sense are images." - Henri Bergson.

Bergson, for those of you who may need a refresher, codified the idea of "Intuition as Method". Here's how he broke it down. There's 2 paths to knowledge:

01. Intelligence (head) *02. Intuition (heart/gut)*

Intelligence is selective participation for the sake of efficiency. It's how we avoid the overload and make sense of an experience through needs and relevance. It's the synthesis of perception — that is to say, the hard facts: phylus/ genus, numbers/ stats, DNA sequencing. The 1s and 0s of objective reality.

Where Intelligence flattens, categorizes, and labels, Intuition invites you to enter an experience and check your judgment at the door. Intuition is honest. Not abstract or analytical. It doesn't keep the world at an ironic distance.

Intuition reminds you to just be present and feel. To trust your gut.

If life is one giant Choose Your Own Adventure book, Intuition is what keeps us turning the pages rather than agonizing over every available option out there. It is the antidote to paralysis by analysis.

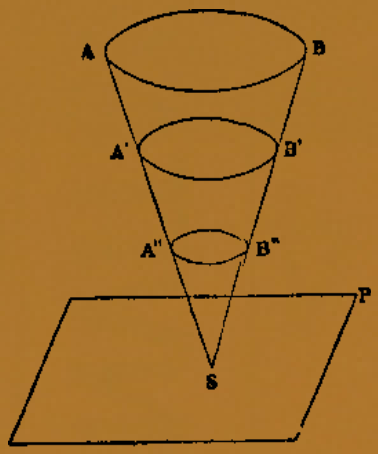


Fig. 3.

Henri Bergson, Creative Evolution, 1907, "Intuition vs. the Intellect"

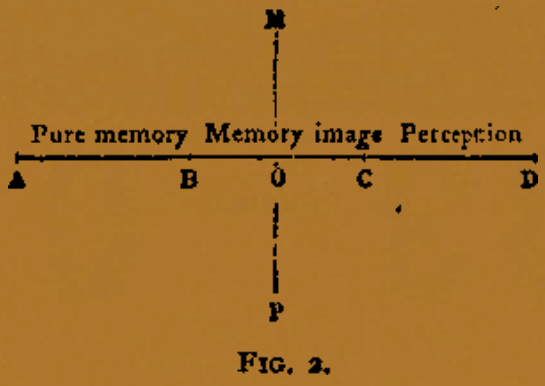


Fig. 2.

Henri Bergson, Creative Evolution, 1907, "Matter and Memory."

It's Intuition that helps us navigate from universality to individuality. Abstract to personal. It's how we each discover our lens and refine our taste. Y/N? Left or right? Thumbs up or thumbs down? When you strip it back: it's really very simple. Intuition allows us to navigate a world of infinite possibility by synthesizing data on a gut level.

Sneaker or not a Sneaker?

And part of learning to trust your gut is seeking out not originality of "content" but originality of inspiration. Casting a wide net and grazing from a balanced diet of inspiration.

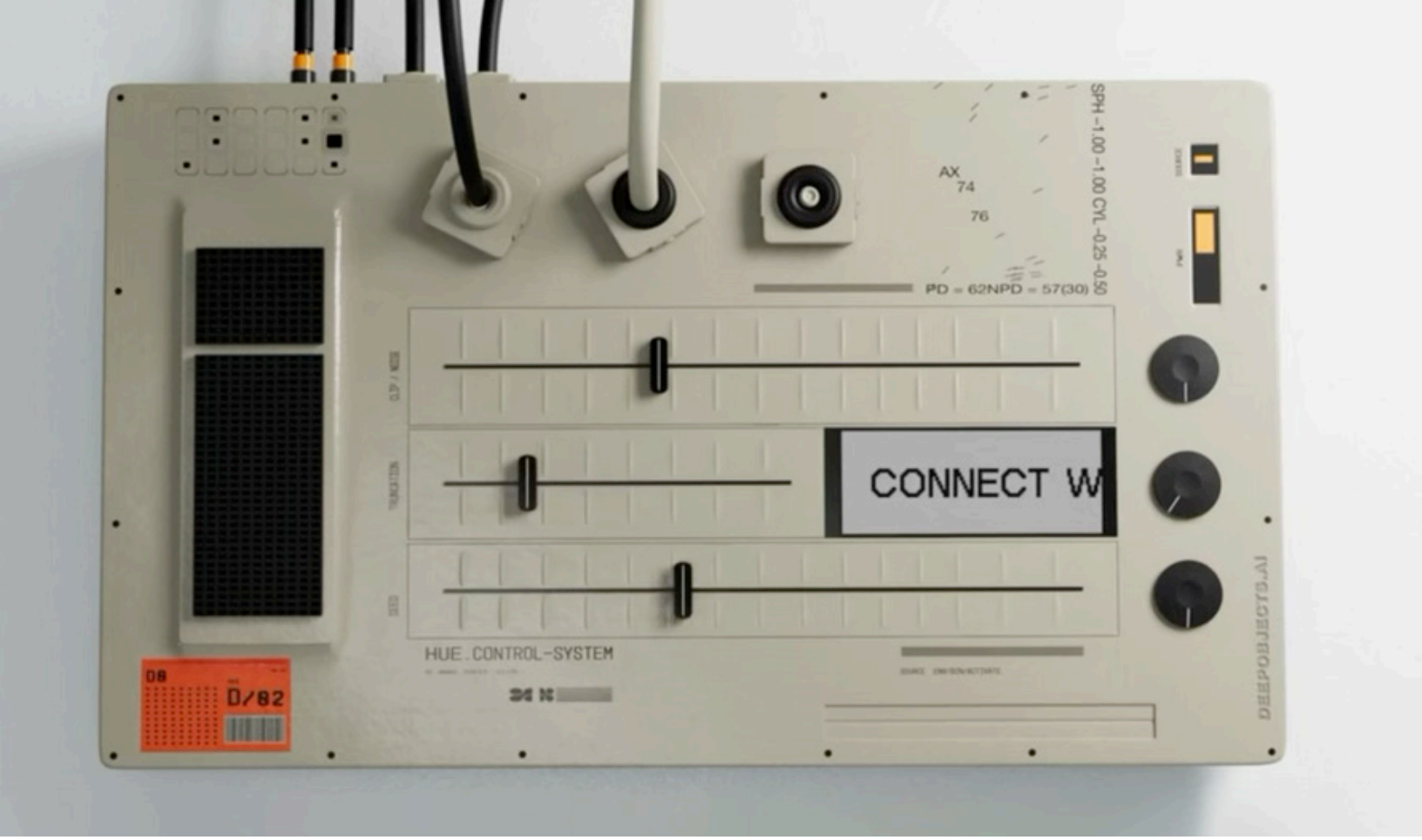
There's a crucial difference between mindlessly scrolling Pinterest and browsing the stacks. It's why libraries still exist. Bookstores. Magazine stands. Record shops. It's why we all need to go for a walk around the block once in a while. Or travel to a foreign country. Because it's the unplanned encounters that stick with us. Those out-of-search-bar moments are what excite, intrigue, and keep us motivated. Flipping through the actual physical pages of a book or simply having a conversation with a stranger opens us up to the possibility of stumbling upon a new thought.

When you venture out-of-domain, you increase the probability of coming across that elusive thing. The piece that makes the puzzle. One you may not have even known you were assembling. Lightning strikes do happen from time to time – but they rarely come out of nowhere. More often than not, they are the result of a long-simmering, half-formed idea suddenly gelling in your mind.

Perhaps it's time to update one of the most important adages in modern philosophy from another one of our favorite Frenchmen:

"~~We must cultivate our own garden~~"- Voltaire, Candide, 1759

↳ **We must build our own dataset.**



For us, that's what it all comes down to: seeking out in-domain and out-of-domain inspiration. Whether you're online or off. In order to refine taste and discover your voice, you've got to follow your natural impulses – and in this day and age, that means using all the tools we have available at our disposal to:

1. work smarter, not harder, while ...
2. allowing intuition to do its thing.

It's shallow research that over the course of a lifetime matriculates into deep learning.It's how we each write our own realities.

And it's how we've trained deepobjects.ai

PROCESS

1 — COLLECT — DATASET DEVELOPMENT

A 75,000 image dataset was meticulously curated, developed, edited, and formed over a period of a year. The dataset is the first, and most critically important, step to generative ML models. In short, shit datasets get shit results. Within the development of the set, a number of techniques and tools, including independent discriminator ai-models, were deployed to create results that felt high enough quality to be subjectively valuable but varied enough to create unexpected newness.

2 — TRAIN — MACHINE LEARNING MEETS HUMAN LEARNING

Next that model was trained on top-end data center GPU cloud machines. I, along with a small group of coders and data scientists, implemented customizations and implementations on open source code. What is happening within the training is an extremely complicated and dense process to try to wrap your head around, but here are the basics for the technologically-curious:

This type of tool, commonly used in AI art generation, is called a Generative Adversarial Network (GAN). It is essentially made up of two components, a Generator and a Discriminator.

The generator gets first play, it produces a random image using various methods of noise generation, at which point, it asks the Discriminator: "is this a sneaker?"

The Discriminator pulls an image from the dataset, enacts a series of augmentations to that image, then compares the two images. It responds: "No, this is not a sneaker"

The Generator makes some adjustments and tries again, and again. One by one, slowly and slowly, the Generator gets progressively better at generating new pixels, new information, that get closer and closer to tricking the Discriminator.

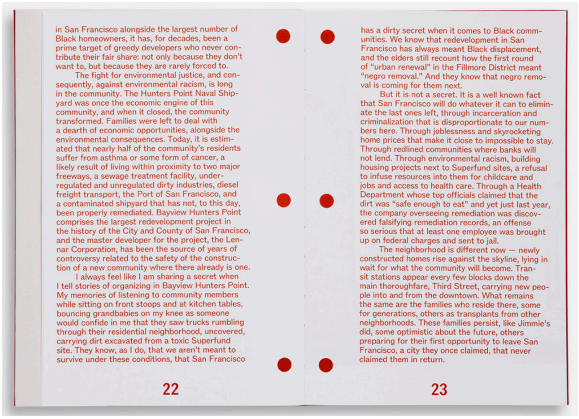
The critical and beautiful piece here is the fact that, at their core, these images are novel. This process, specifically, does not take existing data to cut and splice together. We don't see a Dunk's upper joined onto a Suede's outsole, with an 'N' stitched on the side. It truly learns how to make these images from scratch – a kind of digital alchemy.

When I look at a blank sheet of paper with a pencil to start a design, I don't start from scratch. I look at reference images, I fall back on the intuition of learned experience, I recall and challenge icons and canon of disciplines, I remix, I collage, and I sample until I find something I can call my own, something that just feels right. I am both creating and curating.

I am both generating and discriminating.

And just like the sketch on paper sometimes ends up in a trash can below my desk, the model was crumpled up and thrown out many times. I revisited the Dataset and pulled out the machete and exacto, hacking and dissecting. Then rinsed and repeated.

Perhaps the most satisfying of outputs – and what makes the nights fighting with trying to load python code environments on my PC worth it – is once you have a good sketch. It can have infinite babies. The outputs are boundless.


in San Francisco alongside the largest number of Black homeowners, it has, for decades, been a prime target of greedy developers who never contribute their fair share: not only because they don't want to, but because they are rarely forced to.

The fight for environmental justice, and consequently, against environmental racism, is long in the community. The Hunters Point Naval Shipyard was once the economic engine of this community, and when it closed, the community transformed. Families were left to deal with a dearth of economic opportunities, alongside the environmental consequences. Today, it is estimated that nearly half of the community's residents suffer from asthma or some form of cancer, a likely result of living within proximity to two major freeways, a sewage treatment facility, underregulated and unregulated dirty industries, diesel freight transport, the Port of San Francisco, and a contaminated shipyard that has not, to this day, been properly remediated. Bayview Hunters Point comprises the largest redevelopment project in the history of the City and County of San Francisco, and the master developer for the project, the Lennar Corporation, has been the source of years of controversy related to the safety of the construction of a new community where there already is one.

I always feel like I am sharing a secret when I tell stories of organizing in Bayview Hunters Point. My memories of listening to community members while sitting on front stoops and at kitchen tables, bouncing grandbabies on my knee as someone would confide in me that they saw trucks rumbling through their residential neighborhood, uncovered, carrying dirt excavated from a toxic Superfund site. They know, as I do, that we aren't meant to survive under these conditions, that San Francisco

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has a dirty secret when it comes to Black communities. We know that redevelopment in San Francisco has always meant Black displacement, and the elders still recount how the first round of "urban renewal" in the Fillmore District meant "negro removal." And they know that negro removal is coming for them next.

But it is not a secret. It is a well known fact that San Francisco will do whatever it can to eliminate the last ones left, through incarceration and criminalization that is disproportionate to our numbers here. Through joblessness and skyrocketing home prices that make it close to impossible to stay. Through redlined communities where banks will not lend. Through environmental racism, building housing projects next to Superfund sites, a refusal to infuse resources into them for childcare and jobs and access to health care. Through a Health Department whose top officials claimed that the dirt was "safe enough to eat" and yet just last year, the company overseeing remediation was discovered falsifying remediation records, an offense so serious that at least one employee was brought up on federal charges and sent to jail.

The neighborhood is different now — newly constructed homes rise against the skyline, lying in wait for what the community will become. Transit stations appear every few blocks down the main thoroughfare, Third Street, carrying new people into and from the downtown. What remains the same are the families who reside there, some for generations, others as transplants from other neighborhoods. These families persist, like Jimmie's did, some optimistic about the future, others preparing for their first opportunity to leave San Francisco, a city they once claimed, that never claimed them in return.

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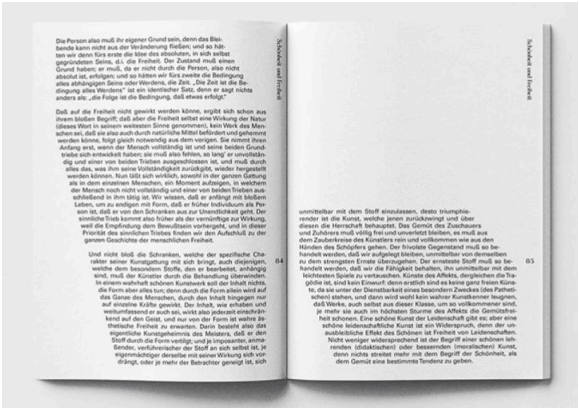
DESIGNERS: The Classics of Modern Furniture from 30 iconic designers

026 A. Aalto, 225 B. Rainaldi,
030 Patterned after the designs
of C. Eames, 221 C. J. Jucker,
044 C. R. Mackintosh, 216 D. Desky,
058–218 E. Gray, 074 E. Saarinen,
088 F. J. Kiesler, 090 G. Nelson,
219 G. Pap, 098 G. Summers,
100 G. T. Rietveld, 102 H. Bertoia,
110 I. Noguchi, 118–220 J. Hoffmann,
128 J. M. Frank, 136 L. Mies Van Der
Rohe, 160 M. Breuer, 217 M. Fortuny
y Madrazo, 178 M. Old, 182 M. Stam,
184 O. Blümel, 186 O. P. Bernard,
188 P. Chareau, 194 R. Herbst,
202 R. Mallet-Stevens,
204 T. Mizutani, 222 W. Wagenfeld


Die Person also muß ihr eigener Grund sein, denn das Bleibende kann nicht aus der Veränderung fließen; und so hätten wir denn fürs erste die Idee des absoluten, in sich selbst gegründeten Seins, d.i. die Freiheit. Der Zustand muß einen Grund haben; er muß, da er nicht durch die Person, also nicht absolut ist, erfolgen; und so hätten wir fürs zweite die Bedingung alles abhängigen Seins oder Werdens, die Zeit. „Die Zeit ist die Bedingung alles Werdens" ist ein identischer Satz, denn er sagt nichts anders als: „die Folge ist die Bedingung, daß etwas erfolgt."

Daß auf die Freiheit nicht gewirkt werden könne, ergibt sich schon aus ihrem bloßen Begriff; daß aber die Freiheit selbst eine Wirkung der Natur (dieses Wort in seinem weitesten Sinne genommen), kein Werk des Menschen sei, daß sie also auch durch natürliche Mittel befördert und gehemmt werden könne, folgt gleich notwendig aus dem vorigen. Sie nimmt ihren Anfang erst, wenn der Mensch vollständig ist und seine beiden Grundtriebe sich entwickelt haben; sie muß also fehlen, so lang' er unvollständig und einer von beiden Trieben ausgeschlossen ist, und muß durch alles das, was ihm seine Vollständigkeit zurückgibt, wieder hergestellt werden können. Nun läßt sich wirklich, sowohl in der ganzen Gattung als in dem einzelnen Menschen, ein Moment aufzeigen, in welchem der Mensch noch nicht vollständig und einer von beiden Trieben ausschließend in ihm tätig ist. Wir wissen, daß er anfängt mit bloßem Leben, um zu endigen mit Form, daß er früher Individuum als Person ist, daß er von den Schranken aus zur Unendlichkeit geht. Der sinnliche Trieb kommt also früher als der vernünftige zur Wirkung, weil die Empfindung dem Bewußtsein vorhergeht, und in dieser Priorität des sinnlichen Triebes finden wir den Aufschluß zu der ganzen Geschichte der menschlichen Freiheit.

Und nicht bloß die Schranken, welche der spezifische Charakter seiner Kunstgattung mit sich bringt, auch diejenigen, welche dem besonderen Stoffe, den er bearbeitet, anhängig sind, muß der Künstler durch die Behandlung überwinden. In einem wahrhaft schönen Kunstwerk soll der Inhalt nichts, die Form aber alles tun; denn durch die Form allein wird auf das Ganze des Menschen, durch den Inhalt hingegen nur auf einzelne Kräfte gewirkt. Der Inhalt, wie erhaben und weitumfassend er auch sei, wirkt also jederzeit einschränkend auf den Geist, und nur von der Form ist wahre ästhetische Freiheit zu erwarten. Darin besteht also das eigentliche Kunstgeheimnis des Meisters, daß er den Stoff durch die Form vertilgt; und je imposanter, animierender, verführerischer der Stoff an sich selbst ist, je eigenmächtiger derselbe mit seiner Wirkung sich vordrängt, oder je mehr der Betrachter geneigt ist, sich

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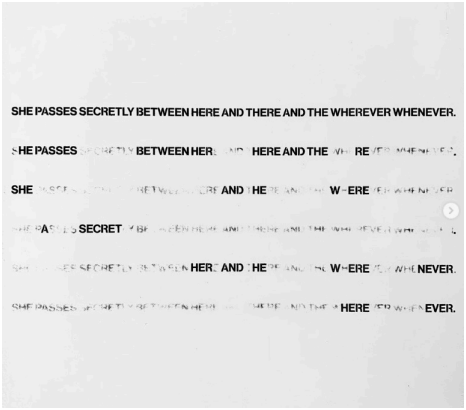
unmittelbar mit dem Stoff einzulassen, desto triumphierender ist die Kunst, welche jenen zurückzwingt und über diesen die Herrschaft behauptet. Das Gemüt des Zuschauers und Zuhörers muß völlig frei und unverletzt bleiben, es muß aus dem Zauberkreise des Künstlers rein und vollkommen wie aus den Händen des Schöpfers gehen. Der frivolste Gegenstand muß behandelt werden, daß wir aufgelegt bleiben, unmittelbar von demselben zu dem strengsten Ernste überzugehen. Der ernsteste Stoff muß behandelt werden, daß wir die Fähigkeit behalten, ihn unmittelbar mit dem leichtesten Spiele zu vertauschen. Künste des Affekts, dergleichen die Tragödie ist, sind kein Einwurf: denn erstlich sind es keine ganz freien Künste, da sie unter der Dienstbarkeit eines besondern Zweckes (des Pathetischen) stehen, und dann wird wohl kein wahrer Kunstkenner leugnen, daß Werke, auch selbst aus dieser Klasse, um so vollkommener sind, je mehr sie auch im höchsten Sturme des Affekts die Gemütsfreiheit schonen. Eine schöne Kunst der Leidenschaft gibt es; aber eine schöne leidenschaftliche Kunst ist ein Widerspruch, denn der unausbleibliche Effekt des Schönen ist Freiheit von Leidenschaften. Nicht weniger widersprechend ist der Begriff einer schönen lehrenden (didaktischen) oder bessernden (moralischen) Kunst, denn nichts streitet mehr mit dem Begriff der Schönheit, als dem Gemüt eine bestimmte Tendenz zu geben.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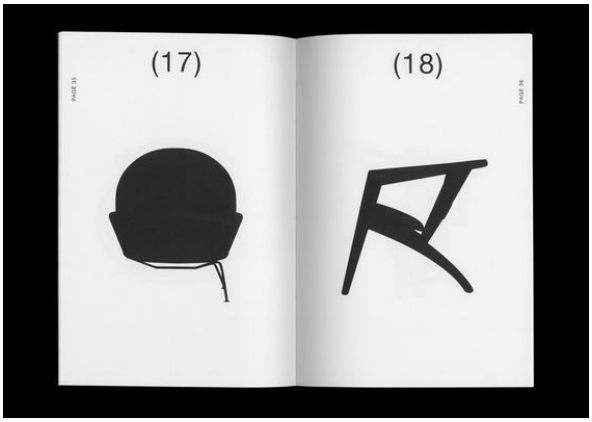
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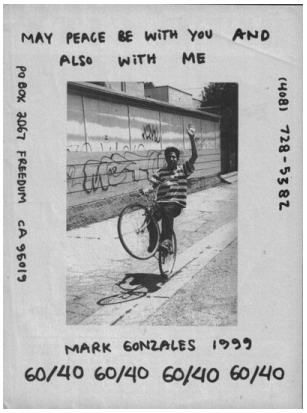
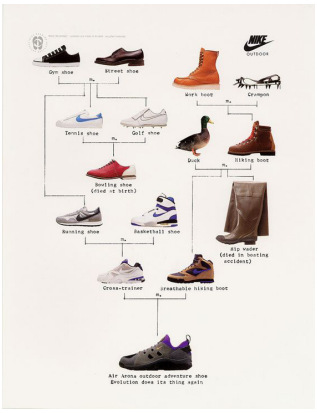




4. Growing up in an upwardly mobile family, I extrapolated our socioeconomic progress far into the future. My maternal grandparents were balancing the ridge of the proletariat; my grandfather worked as a day laborer in the fields, struggling to feed his twelve children. For some reason he eventually did reasonably well. When he died, he left his progeny a little patch of land.

Supported by economic growth post-oil crisis, and the minimal perks of social democracy, my parents enjoyed a base level security of lower middle class life. They both worked in the public sector – my father a teacher, my mother a nurse – and while they didn't own property (they've 'missed the boat', as they put it), and were struggling with debt, they live quite comfortable lives today. Next month we will finally pay off our last little bit of debt, my mother recently said.

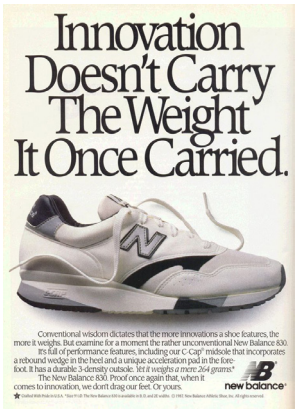
I was the first of the family with access to university. My mother had only completed lower education when she started a family, a lack she caught up with as she approached middle age. Under the table lamp after dinner, while we were memorizing French verbs or calculating tangents, she sat next to us, bowed over thick binders. I fell asleep to the rattling sound of her typing rapidly, sitting behind the heavy, cube-shaped monitor on the landing. Sometimes we helped her with assignments or math.

My mother had boundless expectations for us, her prodigies; we were raised to embody what French philosopher Chantal Jacquet calls the 'transclasse'

(a genre of ghosts, maybe). We studied Latin and classical music. (My mother took on a second job as a cleaner to be able to afford our music lessons). My siblings and I were required to take tennis lessons too, for, as she used to say, later when we'd have friends with tennis courts on their estates, she wouldn't want us to feel ashamed. We never went to restaurants, but she taught us table manners, straightening our backs over dinner, and don't lean with your elbows on the table. At the elite gymnasium I went to, I quickly realized no one adhered to these rules. I was frowned upon when I ate fries with a fork. I still don't like to eat with my hands.

I wanted to be an astronaut. A trauma doctor. An academic in classical studies. A novelist. I never doubted the feasibility of my ambitions. Even though I grew up with seven siblings in social housing. Even though I belonged to the second sex. I had seen it. I had seen how life could change, even within one and the same family. My elder siblings still struggled with the familiar problems of the working class – one a teenage mother, the other a school dropout and an addict. For me, everything was within my reach. We were standing on a wide escalator, my family, my milieu, maybe the country, and the direction was up. Post-Cold war optimism blew all the way to the neutral Netherlands. Gender didn't matter. Class didn't matter. Everyone was welcome at the end of history.

As I entered my thirties, I published my first novel. Never got the master degree I was aiming for, but no employer ever asked me for a diploma. I don't own a car. If I take on



some references + influences used in the design of Issue 02

UPCOMING ISSUES:

~~001 introduction: introducing deep objects~~
~~002 intuition/ inspiration: shallow research / deep learning~~
003 design/ iterate: i am discriminator/ i am generator
004 produce/ prototype: real / fake
005 ownership/ identity: we are what we collect

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