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Positions through Contextualizing

1.00 Annotated Bibliography

1.10 2 texts from the reading list:

1.1.1 Benjamin, W. (1986) 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' Illuminations. New York: Schocken books. pp 219-253.

In his book, the author explores the evolution of the mechanical reproduction in art and how this negatively impacts the authenticity and aura of the original work. I don't necessarily agree with the author's views. For instance, taking the same example as the author, where he compares the experience of watching a live theatrical performance against watching a film adaptation in the cinema, and goes on to say that the former experience surpasses that of the latter; personally I believe both experiences have the power of transporting you into their world, be it through live actors or through breathtaking cinematography and sound systems. In the case of my illustrative iterations as well, which involve hand sketches of photographs that I've taken, the hand imagery offers a very personal touch to the viewers, which in my opinion makes the aura and authenticity of the original work much deeper. To elaborate further, by manually illustrating these photographs, I also specifically choose which parts to illustrate, which makes a more personalized and authentic version of the original work. As a result, the "aura" of the art also becomes more meaningful in a way.

1.1.2 Calvino, I. (1972) Invisible Cities Orlando: Harcourt Brace & Company. Italy: Vintage Digital. Vintage classics. pp. 5-35.

Similar to how this book is a collective description of imaginary cities and their unique perspectives on human desires and urban lifestyle, my illustrations also offer a personal outlook on my life. This outlook mostly consists of urban architecture, different cultures and new experiences. In the way the author has used vivid writing to evoke the reader's; Likewise through my illustrations (translated from the photographs), I wanted to convey the emotions and sensations that I experienced while capturing said photographs of these places/ things. Just like the author of the book, I realized that I too want people to feel the essence of my illustrations, the essence being consisted of the memories, desires and interpretation of the photographs. In parallel to how the author has written each passage in a different perspective, each of my illustrations also communicate different lenses through which one can experience cities and remember them. It's interesting how, this book and my iterative illustrations, both are shaped by internal interpretations of external realities.

1.20 2 texts outside the reading list:

1.2.1 Embury, G. and Minichiello, M. (2018) Reportage Illustration. 1st. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

From the above reading I find it fascinating how reportage illustration is actually quite personal, it is like looking at a captured moment through the eyes of the artist. From what I understand, reportage illustrations are immediate and quick hand drawings of a live event, situation or space, which means that the artist will only drawing elements that are important in their eyes, or catch their attention. For instance, if an artist is documenting a courtroom trial through reportage illustration, so many intangible aspects like emotions and behavior of the subjects in question, would all be annotated and illustrated purely based on how the artists interprets the situation. Thus it means that we are literally looking at the moment (rather an illustration of the captured moment) only through the artist's point of view, but are free to make our own interpretations at the same time.

Furthermore, it can be observed that in reportage illustration, there can even be use of quick hand annotations. After looking more into reportage illustration I learnt that this sort of layering approach, gives a much deeper meaning to the illustration as opposed to a flat two dimensional sketch, it adds details and a much more meaningful narrative. I have adapted a similar approach in my work, however the type of layering I have used, is different from that of typical reportage illustration, in my work, I have layered multiple frames of illustrations to create a new interpretation, while in common reportage illustrations, there are multiple layers within the same singular frame. I also find it intriguing how the use of minimal colors in these illustrations are able draw our attention only to specific things in such crowded yet organized illustrations.

While reading this book, I also considered why people would want to see reportage illustrations of wars or other chaotic events, when in today's age, there are high definition camera which could literally capture any exact moment to the tiniest detail. This made me realize, what a reportage illustrations provides to a viewer as opposed to a photo or a video of a particular moment, is the personalized point of view, or in other words, reportage illustrations have a lot more character, emotions and thus connect with the viewers on a much deeper level. For instance, the act of translating my photography into these iterative illustrations which are abstracted to some degree, enable people to derive their own meaning from it as opposed to them view the original captured moment through the photos. This is not only more engaging for the viewers but it also instills in them a sense of creative freedom and originality as each individual would derive their own unique meaning and story.

An important aspect of reportage illustration is materiality. Although one might think that for reportage illustrations, it can be quite limiting for artists to make use of quick, easy and mobile drawing tools, I think it's quite the contrary.

- 1.2.2 Bradley, S. (2016) 'An Introduction To Semiotics- Signifier And Signified', Vanseodesign, 29 March. Available at:**<https://vanseodesign.com/web-design/semiotics-signifier-signified/>**(Accessed: 27 April 2024).**

What I understand from the concept of semiotics is that the act of assigning a signifier to the signified, leads to the limiting of new/ different interpretations of the signified in question. In relation to this, my illustrations as well, which in this case are the signified, intentionally have no labeling or signifiers, so that the viewers are free to interpret these hand drawn imagery. The idea behind purposely not assigning signifiers was to allow the view to experience a similar curiosity/excitement that I experienced while being in the reality of that illustration (which was when I clicked the photographs from which each illustration was translated).

1.30 2 PRACTICES OR PROJECTS

- 1.3.1 Everyday Practice (2024) Golden Silver Town. Available at:**<https://everyday-practice.com/golden-silver-town/>**(Accessed: 8 May 2024).**

In this project, through the intention of having the public create various different renditions using the same interchangeable elements/ structures, the designers are able to analyze and understand new perspectives of what their (the public's) idea of an ideal structure might include. Similarly, using the visual communication tool that I have created, I want people to be able to make their own graphic journey or in other words, to be able to build their own world. To elucidate further, the consistent modular shape of all my iterative illustrations can allow people the freedom to connect them to each other in any possible direction and arrangement, which in turn results in various unique renditions. Another aspect of the "Golden Silvertown" project that I appreciated was that when the public create their own configurations of the building, they also get a printed receipt of their creation, inspired by this, I would consider providing some sort of a keepsake that would remind the user of what they just created.

- 1.3.2 Greeland, K. (2014) 'ART HAUS ~ Psychogeography', Wordpress, 4 June. Available at:**<https://arthausdotme.wordpress.com/psychogeo/>**(Accessed: 27 April 2024).**

The way the artist has used the concept of psychogeography in art, made me quite curious about the concept. I believe Psychogeography, i.e. the study of how geographical surroundings/ locations can impact human behavior and emotions, is completely relevant to my process in many way. Through the translation of my photographs (consisting of various geographical surroundings and locations) to iterative illustrations, I am prompting people to interpret them however they like, while tapping into their

thoughts and emotions. Much like how the author has made use of layered visual references to geographical spaces, I have also created layered iterations using my illustrations. Being from an interior architectural background (and someone who is passionate about combining spatial experiences with graphic design), I definitely find the concept of Psychogeography to be thought proving and relevant to my work. Another engaging factor about this project is that, when the viewers look at it from different angles or under different lighting, the images appearing on the main structure keep changing. Comparably, my illustrations as well can be viewed from any direction, leading to numerous permutations of said illustrations.

After understanding that the psychogeographic vision of reimagining cities, originates from surrealism and dadaism (avant - garde movements), where in they experimented with methods to let loose subconscious imagination, I strongly believe that my iterative experimentation with illustrating spatial photographs, also has a similar effect on its viewers/users. To elaborate, when people look at/ play with these illustrations, which are basically hand made imagery of various urban spaces, they too will be urged to subconsciously unlock their imagination. The playfulness of my illustrations would encourage people to freely explore through them whilst forming various unique narratives. I realized that, such a sort of interactive design, could lead to deep emotional responses, for instance a person could either end up feeling gleeful and proud of what they just created or a person could also end up creating a sad narrative from a subconscious memory of their turbulent past. I think that is the specialty of when Psychogeography is amalgamated with graphic design, it leads to a more psychological/ emotional response. Having majored in behavioral studies of interior architecture (during my undergrad), this concept is definitely riveting to me. It opens up so many new possibilities of using psychological concepts like psychogeography along with graphic design to affect people's emotions and behaviour, this could not only be helpful or therapeutic for some but it could also be a tool for people to express or let out their buried/ hidden emotions and memories.

Another definition of psychogeography, which also applies to my practice, is that it is a complete assortment of creative and playful tactics for discovering cities, encompassing anything that diverts pedestrians from their usual routes and prompts them to perceive the urban environment in a fresh light". Through my graphic communicative tool, I want people to interact with these illustrations and gain new perspectives not just about themselves (through emotions) but also of their surroundings. Especially in a world where people are so addicted to the digital world, this would be an engaging way of getting people excited about exploring real places.