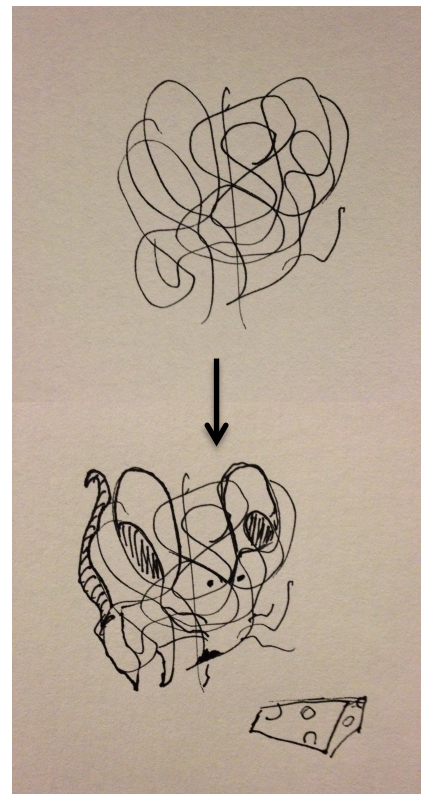


Drawing My Life

As kids, we all start out with simple school assignments. Our hardest task was to try to color inside the lines. We try to make pretty pictures made out of macaroni and the lucky ones even got to play with paint. Then we come home filled with happiness to show our parents the pretty picture we made. Afterwards, if your parents were good at lying they would tell you how good it is and how one day you'll be a famous painter. They follow this praise by grabbing your "amazing" picture and hanging it on that big metal box where mommy got your juice boxes.

For the most part, kids grew out of drawing pretty pictures when they had nothing better to do. Not because they were bad at it, but because they found Barbie's and toy cars more entertaining. As for me, I have drawn my whole life and obviously not only when teachers forced me to. In school I would draw just for fun. I would make random doodles on the margins of my notes, which most of us are familiar with if you had that monotone teacher.

At times, however it turned from more than just doodles. I started creating games that involved drawing. One common one being, drawing a line, pass it to a friend, then they would add a line to it, pass it back, and so on. In the end we would have odd figures and shapes, sometimes even funny. But the best of all was when friends and I passed "drawing notes", which



were mainly composed of drawings with maybe small captions. My friends and I then communicated strictly through drawings. We somewhat made a whole new language that if somebody looked at our “drawing notes” they would have no idea what it meant.

These notes were more of a story line. Starting with a simple setting, then a character. As we passed our notes back and forth the story line would develop and the character would experience different things. However, only we would know the various things that were added or erased from it’s beginning. We would start to understand who this character was and why we would put it in a certain setting.

Having this particular language was the best part about our drawing notes. It was like having an unknown language or Morse code. It was secretive; it was just simply the perfect way to communicate during class. Since most of the time we would talk and make fun of our teachers.

One teacher in particular, was my “art” teacher. He had the biggest ego and he pissed everyone off. He mainly made people angry when he would mention how free and creative his class was and then follow by meddling in and making changes to our own artwork without our permission. When confronted about any forced changes he would simply say that he made it much better and show the whole class and say “ohhhh, yeah! That’s looking good”. Sad thing is that he didn’t know a thing about art. He had the biggest head, with a lot of “hints” of grey hair. He always thought he was so hip and cool. But truth is no

one liked him. Especially when he would go up to someone's art work and completely ruin it by adding his so called "mojo". On one instance, he attempted to add a shade on this girl's painting and he completely covered most of it with black paint. Following anything he made on someone's work he would yell out: "look y'all, I added my mojo".

I don't want to go into much detail about what we drew about him since it wasn't really school appropriate, but just to have an idea we could say it was devil horns on his huge grey-haired head. Maybe some really mean captions. Maybe I kinda drew him as a scrawny little person in the 70's misusing the word "mojo". For mojo I guarantee, he does not have and never did have.

I eventually started finding myself drawing every time I was mad or sad. Drawing became much more than making pretty pictures, which by the way stopped being hung on the big metal box. Drawing became my liberation. My place of relaxation wasn't the playground, or the baseball field, and definitely not some high school party where certain substances being smoked had the power to relax. Where I would relax the most was simply anywhere where I had a piece of paper and a pencil. Actually I didn't even need paper, I could have a pen and draw on my skin for all I cared.

This is all true to this day. As a matter of fact, once college started and I had a billion things going on, I would make diagrams. Diagrams have become my best friend. I bought an agenda and I still haven't opened the damn thing. My schedule is in the forms of diagrams in my sketchbook. As a visual person, it

helped when I would draw out important things bigger and with more visual appeal than others to let me know that it needed to be done first or beforehand other tasks. For example if I needed to really do my laundry before math assignments, then I would draw a big pile of dirty clothes with more detail and emphasis on its dirtiness following by a small calculator.

Along with diagrams I found that with drawing I have always been able to express exactly what my brain was trying to say. Some find this in writing, some in music, for me I could let it all out with a drawing. For me this is like when someone is trying to describe how to get to a certain place, some will tell you how to get there by talking you through it, some will write down steps on how to get there, some will tell you to screw off and use your GPS because that's what technology is for. But as for me I'm the one that takes out a paper and pencil and draws out how to get there.

Drawing is my best form of communication. Especially because I stutter a lot, and I still have that recognizable Colombian accent. Now that I have started my major in architecture I found that I'm not the only one that has this not-so-common form of communication. However, I also found I'm not the best when it comes to drawing. This has helped me tremendously, and instead of trying to pretend I'm better than others, I know where I stand and it has shaped me into a more modest individual. Lord knows I don't want to become my "art" teacher with an ego bigger than his head.

Drawing has been and will continue to be a huge part of my life. Well it kind of has to be if I'm going to be an architect to begin with. I realize now how much of an influence this type of literacy/communication has become. Especially in times of stress I could make diagrams to reorganize my thoughts or simply kick back and make doodle drawings to liberate myself. It ultimately molded me who I am today. It wasn't my parents it wasn't my schooling, it wasn't being able to color inside the lines, and it certainly wasn't the "mojo" given by my art teacher. It was simply finding myself by myself through drawing.