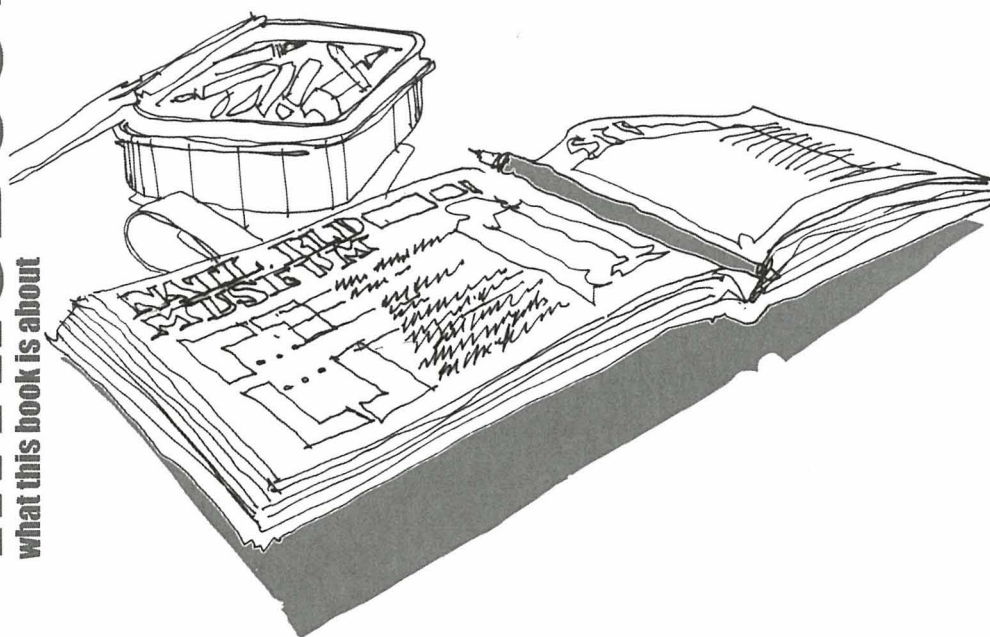


00 - INTRODUCTION

what this book is about



Prior to discussing the virtues of graphic journaling and attempting to de-mystify and divulge its secrets, please note that it is not my intention in any way to downplay other techniques and strategies nor endorse one graphic medium or product over another. I will be as factual and unbiased as possible, so as to allow the reader to become aware of the attributes and eccentricities associated with the world of artistic and architectural representation and graphic/drawing supplies.

In terms of methodology, this book is not a report nor a recipe about the subject of journaling. This book is a personal testimony of what a graphic journal is, what its possibilities and benefits are, and how it can be conducive to a person's development.

Over the course of ten years, I have collected hundreds of diverse examples from students, academicians, and professionals. This collection contains a rather colorful palette of styles and techniques; my hope is simply to promote this wonderful design habit!

I came to the United States of America as an international student to study architecture. Learning about architectural history - in English - was not as easy as I thought; I soon realized that I could remember more about the buildings by quickly sketching the slides shown on the big screen. The brief time period that the professor showed the slide on the projection screen ensured a honing of my abilities to sketch at lightning speed, only recording the most important aspects of the image.

My class notes became a mélange of the written word and the drawn image. In the beginning, the pages turned into a complete disaster... chaos and poor page composition. This led me, ultimately through necessity, to devise a master page composition that was more conducive to this image/word combination. That is when I started to favor the landscape page format over the portrait.

When color was the topic of the slide, it was faster for me to annotate the slide with the name of the color instead of taking the time to color the drawing on the page. I did, however, color the drawings when I went back to my desk with colored pencils if I had the time. My fondness for bright colors and my penchant for speed led me to watercolors, and I never stopped using them.

During my third year in architecture school, I discovered the architect, **Le Corbusier**. This is when I lost interest in sleep and would rather spend my free time reading about this fascinating individual's life and work. He subsequently became my hero. I learned that Le Corbusier kept a journal and used a fountain pen (Parker 51 to be exact), as well as graphite and colored pencils when working in his journal. Further investigations led me to the fact that most of the influential designers throughout history had maintained a journal in one form or another.

Who were these individuals interested in self-development through graphic journaling? **Leonardo Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Goya, El Greco, Isaac Newton, Darwin, Thomas Edison,**

Albert Einstein, Vincent Van Gogh, Pablo Picasso, Joseph Turner, Cezanne, John Singer Sargent, Lawrence of Arabia, Norman Foster, Richard Rogers, Renzo Piano, Carlo Scarpa, Le Corbusier, Richard Sapper, Laurie Olin, Frank Gehry, Zaha Hadid, and Santiago Calatrava, to name a few.

Since 1986 I have maintained a graphic journal. My shelves are lined with these journals and I still return to them to review what I drew and wrote many years earlier. These recordings and thoughts help me make decisions today. This is why I continue to use a graphic journal.

Periodically I conduct regional, national, and international field study courses that explore the complex relationship between humans, the natural environment, and architecture in various conditions. I teach my students the art of graphic journaling, to help them mature as designers and as individuals. The majority of the work included in this book is from these students' journals as well as my own. I have also included the work of practicing architects and that of others in academia, in the hopes of showing a wider gamut of graphic journaling.

Please note that the journal entries included are stylistically diverse. They all, however, share a single goal which is to more thoroughly understand the world around us.

Moh'd Bilbeisi

