

There is no denying the importance of keeping a journal. It is important to spend time reflecting upon the experiences that we encounter throughout our lives. Robert Gruden, in his book *The Grace of Great Things*, refers to this as self-knowledge ... “our unique ability to reflect on the past and the future.” Spending the time to draw a few lines within a blank sketchbook to analyze and imagine should inspire and develop within each of us a meaningful state of awareness to last a lifetime. We live in a Post-Modern age where our experiences are fast-paced and our cognition of these experiences is very rapid. More often than not this cognition is processed after the fact, which nullifies and sterilizes the effect. A graphic journal is the antithesis of such phenomena - it tends to stop time so as to entice us to meaningfully absorb and instantaneously reflect upon the experience in real time. This is how we mature as individuals and designers.

This book is a summary of more than 15 years of teaching students the art of generating ideas and graphically communicating their ideas. Throughout these years, I have come to the conclusion that great ideas are generated by individuals who are operating at a very high level of awareness of the world around them and highly reflective upon their own personal experiences. Of course, I can not prove this statement scientifically... it is my opinion!

This book is not a recipe for producing great graphic journals. Rather, it is intended as a celebration of the work of many individuals who view the world as a series of lines to be scribed by their pens and pencils while trying to comprehend why things are the way they are! The journaling paradigms/case studies were carefully selected from a wide gamut of submissions to illustrate different issues associated with intent, compositional aspects, and technique.

I have personally kept and maintained a graphic journal for more than twenty-five years. My work exhibits varying degrees of success, and a fair share of utter failure at times. My first attempts were meager, the subsequent were better! If anything, this indicates that keeping a graphic journal is a journey and a quest for a perfection that might not be attained; however, it is the journey that matters. **Pack your supplies and go!**

