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The Joy of Stealing

investigating the creative theft

Master Thesis - MFA in Design

June 17, 2015

University of Gothenburg, HDK School of design and crafts

MFA Design programme

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the relationship between sampling and illustration. It looks into how the
need to conceal one's source material affects the work process and end result. Through a series of
collaborative experiments to portray music by visual sampling the project evaluates the importance
of both the act of sampling and the act of concealing the sample. It concludes that both sampling
and the concealment of it are in fact essential for the illustrator's practice and for creativity at large.
The thesis also discusses how creativity and sampling can conflict with intellectual property rights.
It looks at both problems and solutions within this conflict and proposes a more generous attitude.

KEYWORDS: collaboration, illustration, sampling, stealing, collage, copyright

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Design issue

How does my usual practice of hiding or disguising my source material affect the artistic process and result?

Background for my choice of issue

Visual stealing is a natural part of an illustrators work. The picture maker usually works under time pressure, and therefore rarely has time to create their own sources of material to base their work on. Despite this, originality is normally sought after, and often required for copyright purposes and, ultimately, commercial value. This contradiction demands that the illustrator hides their sources, so that they are no longer recognizable.

To investigate the process of concealment, its results and impact on the illustrators artistic expression, has been the main driving force within this project and thesis.

The issue and its relation to the design project

To be able to investigate how sampling affects the design process, I want to carry out a practical investigation where I free myself of the constraints usually put on an illustrator (as described above).

The idea is to carry out an illustration project freed from attempts to hide the visual source material, quite the contrary from how it is usually done within illustration work. I want to carry it out in this manner in order to compare the differences within the process and the results.

What differences occur when you steal "openly" in contrary to the usual "secret" stealing?

The relevance of the issue to the field of design

All culture is in one way or another built on references, citations or sampling. This means that all designers use different methods of concealment, consciously or unconsciously. In today's cultural landscape there are discussions on the topics of copyright laws, originality and creativity. My thesis and examination project aims to raise awareness on these topics, and to give other designers an array of strategies and tools to use in their practice, whatever field that may be.

Methods and Process

This investigation is built primarily upon my own experiences as an illustrator and artist.

My idea as I entered this project was to do an illustration project where no attempts were made to hide the sampling. But to, all on your own, work with an artistic project for an extended amount of time can be very strenuous and hard. As a professional creator it is often expected of one to create sustainable creative cooperation's in order to achieve a drive, motivation and relevance in a project. So, therefore, I decided early on in the process to cooperate with an external partner.

After some time spent scrutinizing my personal network, I found a musician. He works under the artist name "D.J. Metal X", and is, like me, interested in sampling as a creative method.

Within music, electronica music and DJ-culture in particular, sampling as a practice has a special place. To borrow a piece of music and to transform it into something new is a well-established method. In many cases the sampling isn't even hidden, but rather left in the open, as a tribute, homage or reference to the original artist. I found this attitude, where sampling is seen as self-evident and the "natural" way to work, as opposed to "cheating" or "stealing", very interesting, and I decided to find out whether I could apply it to my own design process.

I discussed strategy with D.J. Metal X, and we agreed that we would create a common work of art, a "concept record" where sound and image melts together, and where all the parts are stolen/ sampled. This "concept record" would make up a manifest of our views on copyright law and creativity.

From this goal I built a structure for the work process. Because of the rather loosely framed goal, and to compensate for that, I decided to make the process stricter and more directed.

I decided that we should work based on a rhythmic schedule where we "answer" based on the others work, with a previously decided interval. Each Friday I would receive a piece of music from Metal X, which I subsequently interpreted and "answered" through illustration at the latest the following Wednesday. The following Friday, I would again receive a piece of music, as an "answer" to my illustration. We named this digital conversation the "ping-pong-process".

The only rule, except of the schedule, was that the majority of the material we worked with would be sampled/stolen/borrowed.

Through this process we would generate raw material made up of pictures and sounds that would then be refined to a more comprehensive and presentable form.

References that inform my methods of investigation

Aside from my personal experiences of working as an illustrator, Jonathan Lethem's essay "The ecstacy of influence" (Lethem, 2011) has been an important source of influence and inspiration for my work with this project. The essay discusses – with focus on literature an music – how famous pieces of art are often based on earlier, less known pieces. Lethem claims that copyright law today has become increasingly corrupt, using the example of large companies sampling, and then legally making it impossible for others to further sample their piece. This made a great impression on me.

Another noteworthy point about Lethem's essay is how it is written, which one discovers towards the end. It is in its entirety built from other, borrowed, texts. This further strengthens his intent and object in the essay.

I read the essay initially during a course in the fall of 2014, and carried the idea of doing a project entirely built up by "stolen" material with me into the exam project.

Visual artists that have been significant to me

Jamie Hewlett – drawer and partly creator of the virtual music group Gorillaz. His style is characterized by a total lack of respect for manners, styles, sources, material, expressions and techniques. Hewlett's eclectic expression is especially interesting as he works very closely with musicians.

Beata Boucht – Swedish illustrator who above all works with a collage technique where a variety of handmade pieces are brought together in a digital ensemble. Boucht's picture world is diverse and chaotic, filled with fascinating details. I have been inspired by her way of mixing scales and techniques in the same piece.

Dave McKean – American illustrator and artist, whose work is in constant change, jumping from handmade to digital, sculptures to painted and photographed, without any clear boundaries between them. His boundlessness and courage to change style rapidly has inspired me.

Grzegorz Domaradzki – polish designer with an interesting style, where he usually collects smaller pictures in one center or silhouette. His compositions and choices of color have greatly influenced the end result of this project.

Result and Discussion

The result of my investigation is described here in two parts. This first part describes the "ping-pong-process" and a description of each week's experiment, and how it unfolded.

Sound one

In order to start the work process, Metal X and I decided that we would need a "seed", a piece of work we could use as a common starting point. We decided to use the science-fiction classic "Ghost in the Shell" by Masamune Shirow, which is both an animated film and a graphic novel. It was chosen on account of personal taste, but also the material's richness in shape and form. Another reason for the choice is that "Ghost in the shell" (Shirow, 1996) was recently chosen to become a Hollywood blockbuster movie, which could eventually contribute to the chances of our work to be spread.

After a couple of days I received a sound file from Metal X. The sound can be described as a mechanic disco-beat, with an eager central drum rhythm. According to my colleague, the sound was mostly taken from the movie "Ghost in the Shell", but also from the last record of Björk.

My original approach to interpreting the sound was to visually tell the story of what happens in the sound. I wanted to create a short animated sequence which had the sound as a soundtrack.

After writing a short script which was a remix of characters and events in "Ghost in the Shell", I started an attempt to shape the different scenes visually. I quickly ran into several problems.

One problem was that it quickly became too important from where I borrowed material, which took the focus away from what I was trying to convey, onto what was borrowed. Shortly thereafter I realized that it would be too hard to animate anything at all during the short time I had at hand – Friday until Wednesday.

I sent these four following pictures as an "answer" to Metal X:

This is the main character in the script I wrote. She is an agent for a fictional copyright organization called Kopyright Enforcement Agency. (The name is inspired by the british band KLF, also known as Kopyright Liberation Front) The picture is built from the cover of the soundtrack from the movie "Drive", IKEA's logo and others. (image partly blurred to avoid copyright infringement)
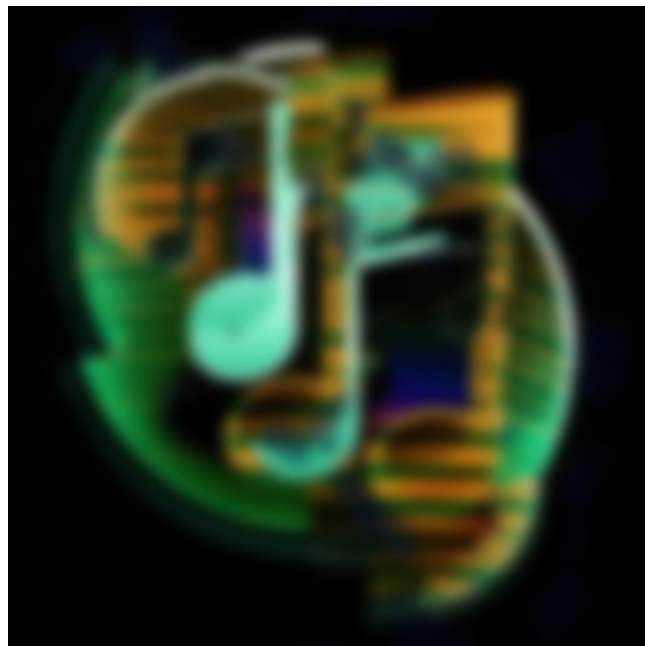
These are an array of different versions of the iTunes logo, cut together, warped and inverted. The thought was that this would be a general symbol of my examination project. (image blurred to avoid copyright infringement)

These collages were made from part of the graphic novel "Ghost in the Shell". I tore the pages apart and made them into abstract graphic elements, and then built them into new shapes. The thought behind this was to use it as a background to my animated film.

Sound two

I talked to my colleague about the outcome of our first experiment. We agreed that the level of ambition was too high, which made us stressed and subsequently lose focus. Therefore, we decided to not make an animated film. It would make more sense to focus on my real strength, illustration, as my experience with animation is very limited. Vi also agreed that it would be best for the process if the samplings no longer needed to be visible or obvious at all. The point of the investigation was, after all, to be freed from the normal constraints of borrowing material.

Some time later I received sound number two. This too was a sort of disco-rhythm, but stranger and more "whiny". This time, I got no explanation as to where the sound came from.

I decided to work with another approach: to make an illustration that derives entirely from my own impression and association to the sound.

The somewhat "whiny" jazzy trumpet sound led me to start to look at album covers of jazz records. I took a poster for a John Coltrane concert, made by designer Gunther Kiefer, and built a copy of the letters on the front out of black paper. After that I arranged the letters differently by hand on my desk until they became different words. I photographed my new words and my own hand in order to build a dramatic composition in Photoshop. Inspired by the record covers of Blue Note Records, I also added a layer of green color over the picture, which gave it a sickly, mystical note. I named the piece "No Cartel: Zombie Jazz", and sent it back to Metal X. The name derives from the nonsense words I had built in the picture, and also from the similarity the picture had come to have with Zombie and horror-film posters.

Sound three

The answer to my "zombie-jazz-picture" arrived some days later. It was a very dark, rumbling sound, with distant metallic notes. Again, there was no indication as to where the sound came from. The atmospheric feeling of it made me think of the environment where the sound might derive from. I also started wondering who might live and visit that place.

As Metal X at this stage had neither a logo type nor a visual profile, I saw this as an opportunity to both create a visual profile for Metal X, and develop a work for my examination project, at the same time. Metal X lives and works in Berlin, therefore my idea became to create an alternative fable-Berlin. To present humans with heads of animals has been done several times before, by, amongst others, Martin Kellerman, the creator of the comic book "Rocky".

Firstly, I wanted to give shape to Metal X, whom I, because of the X in his name, translated in to a Dachshund ("Tax", in Swedish). He became a humanoid Dachshund person that I created by gathering pictures from Google and cut them together in Photoshop.
Thereafter I built an environment around the dachshund, a work space where he sits and works with his music. To build fictive artists, personas or places in this manner, I borrowed from the band Gorillaz, entirely made out of animated creatures.
Additionally, I wanted to make a logotype. My idea was to use the 1990's love of the letter X. I found a suitable example on the cover of the tv-game "Dracula X". I built a logotype largely inspired by this, and also the tv-game "Samurai GUNN". The colours are taken from an illustration by the designer Grzegorz Domaradzki. The mix between new and old in the visual expression is reflected in the music Metal X creates himself.

the dachshund character

Sound four

From this point on, the project moved in another direction, as I received a sound that I didn't know what to do with. It was a rumbling, screaming, scrapy sound with a dragging disco-beat on top. There was no indication where the sound came from, other than the file name: "TAPE_TRAShER_joy_4.mp3".

Grasping the only entrance to this I would imagine, I started creating cassette tapes of different sorts. First, I downloaded several patent drawings and blueprints of cassette tapes and cassette player, cut them apart and started building them back together into something I called a "hyper cassette". The hyper cassette is a product from the future with an over-complicated solution that takes it's stance in nostalgia over physical medias with movable parts.

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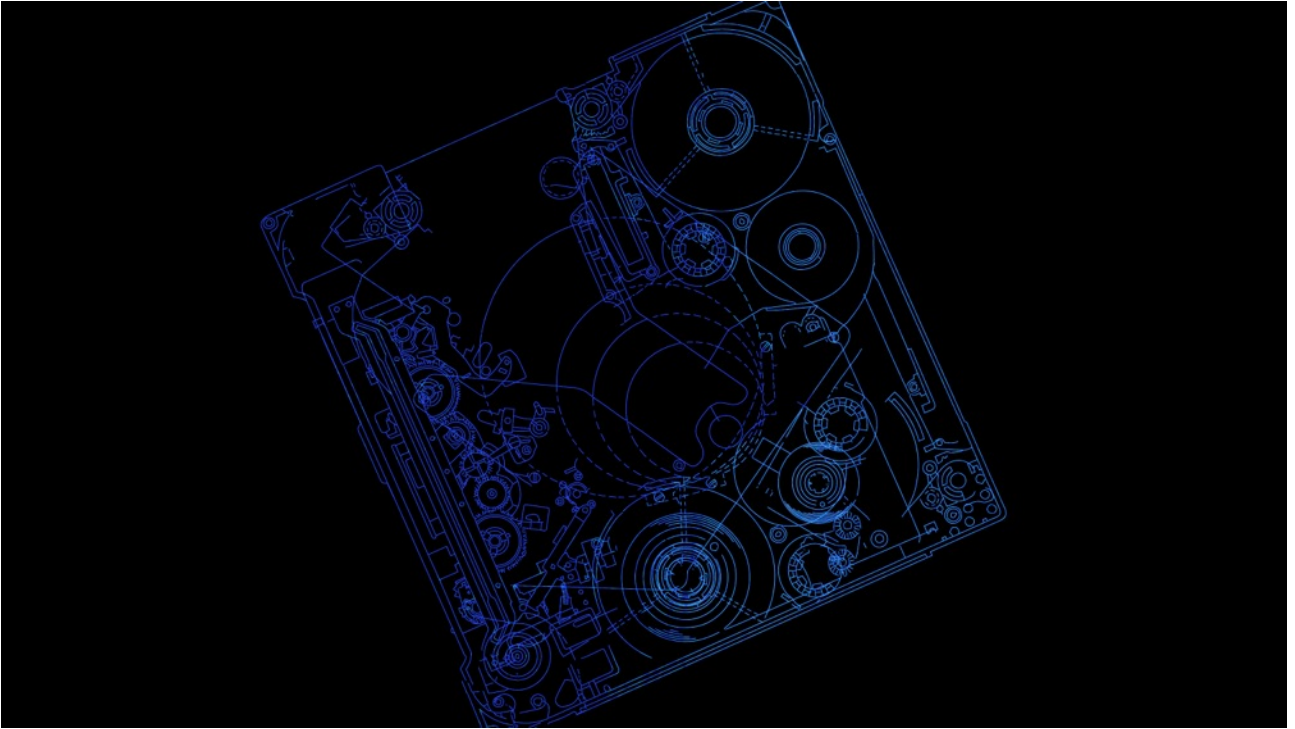
Thereafter I interpreted the title more literally, and cut apart pictures of cassette tapes and created one tape from several different ones, in order to show how the music is created by several different parts. (image blurred to avoid copyright infringement)

Unsatisfied with the result, I started asking my class mates for help. My classmate Magnus tipped be about the Japanese noise punk band "Guitar Wolf", whose record cover has a typography which is dynamic and exciting. I returned to my prior idea of making a logotype for Metal X, and then started cutting apart the letters on Guitar Wolf's cover to spell out "D.J. Metal X". Subsequently I started showing the way the music made me feel, by making a dirty, rumbling disco-machine that I envisioned. I built a "machine-lump" in Photoshop from pictures I had in my computer already, and then placed Metal X's logotype on top of this "lump".

Sound five

After a short break we both felt that the work process needed to change. Rather than send each other material, we decided to work "live" together. Metal X travelled to my studio in Gothenburg with hissound equipment, and I gathered an array of old "National Geographic" magazines. During a couple of intense hours we worked side by side, constantly trying to interpret and recreate what the other created. Metal X did this through cutting together and mixing sounds he had in his data base, and I did it through cutting in my magazines. It turned into a sleepless medley, where we put finished work aside, to later see what it turned out to be. This turned out to be an exciting way to work, that I want to continue with in the future.

The result became a rather sad sound dominated by a distorted male voice and a suctioning mechanical rhythm in the background. I tried to show the mechanical voice through long shapes that continually change direction, a organ-like shape for the pumping sound, and a distorted horn instrument that represents the voice.

How the result is expressed in an artistic manifestation

Here follows phase two: a description of how I worked with the refinement and streamlining of the concepts produced in the process.

After working 5 to 6 weeks with the ping pong process, I felt it was time to halt and see what we had accomplished. We did this in order to refine the products and "package" them in a presentable form. I performed a series of experiments in order to see how it could be packaged and framed.

Firstly, I had the idea to tell the "story of the project", and let that be the product I presented as the final result at my examination. I thought this could be a good solution, as I felt the material I had produced was rather blotchy in its format and expression. Through this form, I could therefor let the storytelling be the shape and main aesthetic factor.

Inspired by Scott McCloud, I used myself as the storyteller, as seen in Mcclouds "Understanding Comics" (McCloud, 1994). A virtual version of myself could speak in my place, and at the same time show my skills as a drawer.

During some weeks I experimented with this. I wrote a detailed script that would be used in an animated film, a documentary describing my work with the music illustrations. Thereafter I read the script in front of a camera, and took pictures of myself from the filmed material, which I then used as the basis for drawings. These drawings would then be put together to a slideshow with a voice-over, which subsequently would be the finished "design product", suitable for an examination exhibition and distribution online.

I worked with a drawing style where one traces the photos in Photoshop, where the outlines are marked with an even black line, whereas the shadows are highlighted with grey colour plates.

Even if this way of creating pictures is not something entirely new, it is new to me to be able to gather my material and be cohesive in my style. Lack of cohesiveness is something I have struggled with prior to this project. To have a cohesive and clear style and method when creating means that one is more reliable and more attractive as an illustrator on the job market, which is highly important in order to be able to support oneself as a designer.

Despite the successes with the style experiments, I chose not to finish my animated film. The main reason what that I had miscalculated the time it would take to make it, and would not be able to finish the film in a satisfactory manner and in the quality I would want it to be. I chose, instead, to use the material and the script as a base for the presentation at the examination.

But, in order to have something to show as an end result at my examination and examination exhibition, I decided to go back to the material I had created with D.J. Metal X. As I am somewhat of an amateur within the field of animation, I decided to go back to the field I am most comfortable within, illustration.

Thereafter I looked into how I could work with illustration, but nonetheless create something where picture and sound comes together, much as a video can.

A search on the web led me to a piece by the Swiss design studio //DIY, which illustrated famous music by drawings on a wall, and then placed earphones beside them, so the onlooker could listen and look at the same time. I chose to plagiarize their idea through creating one poster for each sound Metal X had sent me. In the exam exhibition, earphones would be placed beside each poster, so the onlooker could experience our common work in its entirety.

Here follows a description of how I processed the material I had created from each sound in the prior process.

Sound one refinement

The starting point was a collage made from pages of a graphic novel. I scanned the hand made collages, and processed them in Photoshop in order to make a more harmonic composition.

Sound two refinement

To accomplish a picture with greater complexity, I continued to, according to the same method used in the experimental phase, arrange the letters into new word, and then photographing them. Then I built a multi-layered ord-collage in Photoshop where a ray of sun made an additional dramatic effect. I chose to remove the hands seen on the sketch, as the words and letters carried the picture well on their own.

Sound three refinement

I wanted to make a clearer picture, which communicated in a similar way as the other posters I had made. My earlier sketch of the dachshund-character was too focused on just the one character, which made it too different from the other posters, which spoke in a more "abstract" way. Therefore I changed the picture several times, ending up with a picture where the narrative part is entirely gone, and there is only the head of a dog left, surrounded by a thick cloud of smoke.

Sound four refinement

For this sound I chose to continue with the "machine lump" I had created earlier. I continued using the technique where the picture is created by a multiple layers. Thereafter I changed the text. Instead of using the logotype (for Metal X), I used a onomatopoetic (imitating the sound) style to write out the sounds I heard in the music as I listened to it. I chose to do it in this way as to not make the logotype "take over" the picture, and make the poster out of line with the style of the other posters. The text is a fusion of clipped Japanese letters from the record cover of the band "Guitar Wolf". The colour scale came about as I put the picture up on Instagram, added a filter on the picture, and realized it improved the picture. I imitated the filter effect of Instagram in Photoshop, and the final poster was finished.

Sound five refinement

To create a more complex and visually interesting picture I scanned all the hand made collages, and put them together into one big collage in Photoshop. I aimed to build up the expression just as my original vision, and at the same time keep the hand made expression of the piece.

Analysis and evaluation of my findings

My project aims to investigate how my artistic process and result is affected if I disregard what I can and cannot borrow. This because the theft - and above all the concealment of it - is something that I am often preoccupied with as an illustrator.

During the work with this thesis project I've been having the ambition to achieve a maximum of freedom - through the liberation from the awareness of which source you actually are stealing/ sampling from. This ambition affected the process largely, since I decided at an early stage to not reflect on my sources during the actual creative process.

The pursuit of this freedom comes from a personal wish to free myself from the concern of source material, and to be able to - at least for a while - pretend that everything in the world is my material, at my disposal. I wished to take the opportunity to use the school (HDK) - and the free zone it constitutes - to find out wether my creations actually changed if I made my dream come true.

To gain perspective on the question I have been looking at what an illustrator usually needs to reflect upon regarding originality and creation in one's practice.
Working with illustration often means that you find yourself in a legal grey zone regarding intellectual property rights. It is hard to work without reference material, for example photos, but at the same time you usually cannot afford to pay the photographer for the rights to use their photos. You also want to enjoy having copyrights on your own creations to be able to sell them commercially.

According to the Swedish copyright law, I can, as a creator, obtain a copyright if my work achieves a level of "sufficient originality" (Verkshöjd in Swedish). According to the website "Lagen.nu" the term can be described as such: "A piece of work should be unique to achieve sufficient originality, i.e. that the work is a result of an intellectually creative activity which has such an individual distinctiveness so that two persons, independent of each other, couldn't reasonably have achieved exactly the same result." (https://lagen.nu/begrepp/Verkshöjd) (author's translation)

So the illustrator tries to achieve sufficient originality for two reasons: To have copyright on your own work, while also avoiding to intrude upon intellectual properties belonging to others.

To reach this, while trying to finish a client's commission under time pressure, is not always easy. But it is just that factor, how commercial your work is, that decides wether or not it could be considered okay to use parts of someone else's work. But since illustration often resides within a borderland right between art and design, it is usually a question of judgement from case to case wether a "sample" is acceptable or just plain theft.

The weight of having to think of all this while I was working, was the factor that gave rise to the idea and main issue of my thesis project.

Something that strikes me while researching the topic of copyright an illustration, is the lack of clear regulation on visual sampling, even though it is something that all creatives use in some way. This represents a viewpoint that all creativity should come from nowhere, just appear and flow out of the mind of the "creative genius", a thought that I find absurd. Both the design trade and organizations for intellectual property rights are making an economical profit by fueling this myth, since it raises the value and the perceived uniqueness of a design object.

But, as Austin Kleon writes: "All creative work builds on what came before. Nothing is completetly original." (Kleon, 2012) or, as Jonathan Lethem puts it: "All ideas are secondhand" (Lethem, 2011)

I claim that in many cases it would be better with more openness around what you've been borrowing from, especially among larger players. It would create a more allowing creative climate with an increased focus on the development of sustainable ideas, philosophies and solutions - and maybe a smaller focus on the surface and the material value.

However, there are movements that tries to be an opposing force against this hindering of cultural evolution, such as Creative Commons, which describes themselves as "…a non-profit organization with the goal to help them who create and wants to share their work (in part or fully)." (authors translation) Creative Commons is originally an american organization, but is now also established in Sweden. They work in co-operation with the University of Gothenburg and offer a kind of labeling, or license, which could be seen as an alternative to the regular copyright mark och Trademark.

They describe it themselves as such: "The recognition of the Creative Commons license means that you, as a creator, allow others to use, spread, remake, modify and continue on your work, even in commercial settings. They who use your Creative Commons-licensed work must state that you are the creator, when they use, re-work or spread your work." (authors translation)

Those who use the labeling can place a certain CC-symbol by their work to inform others on how they may use the work. There are several levels of CC-labeling, where the creator can decide over commercial usage, the right to remake the original piece and if whatever you make of it also has to be CC-labeled. Especially the last one is interesting, it is called "Share Alike" and means that "If you re-mix, transform or build upon the material you must distribute your work under the same license as the original.". The recognition of the creator is still there, but there is no strangling of the possibilities to continue work on an idea or a work of art.

This represent an attitude of generosity and openness which I welcome and hope to see more of the future design and cultural community.

An answer to the design issue

So, how is my artistic process and result affected by the need to conceal my sources? To answer that, first you have to compare that "usual" practice to what I learned in my experiment, where I didn't try to hide the sources at all. How did my thought process and attitude towards the work differ?

Usually when I work I think quite a bit about what techniques/filters I could use to camouflage a sample - the camouflage technique in it self could often be the one thing that adds a "certain something" to a work - the need itself to camouflage is what forces you to creative solutions.

In the thesis project I've only been using things I've stumbled upon or happened to have laying around - which has led to a certain laziness on my part, since I didn't have to search for any special sources for samples of camouflage techniques. I did not have ant external forcing factor to push me into creating a certain craft or solution. Which leads to that the work just stops as soon as I've reached a point where it's "good enough".

The freedom of this project has made it possible for me to borrow and use material in a way that I would not usually do. It has meant that the outcome has also been different than it would have been if I didn't have the "freedom" I had in the project. This means, in practice, that I have worked as I usually do, but skipped the last camouflaging part. In most cases I have replaced that part with another "camouflage", in order to control the material.

An unexpected problem that arose during my project was that the source of my material was sometimes too obvious. This meant that the onlooker focused on where the sampling came from, rather than the actual artwork. To avoid this I dispersed and scattered the material so as to make it totally unrecognizable to the onlooker, and then bring it all together. I have, in a sense, worked similarly to how I usually work, but for different reasons.

The scattering and dispersing of the material can be seen as a camouflage of the source, even if it in this instance is in order to conquer an expression, rather than to avoid copyright infringement.

In this case it is, as a creator and artist a question of balancing between an expression, and securing oneself against copyright infringement. It is also a question of being able to be proud as a creator – to be able to say that the piece is entirely ones own. This forces the creator to transform what one borrows in order to honestly call it ones own. Because the artist and creator always take a stance in one or several other pieces (conscious or unconscious), one could claim that it is in this process of camouflage and transformation that art appears.

In this sense I have not come to the conclusion I saw before me as I initiated the project. It has not opened up to new opportunities just because I have not hidden my sources, quite on the contrary. In stead it has forced me to transform and camouflage the material I have borrowed. But it has also led to the insight that hiding my sources is not inherently bad, but rather the most important and crucial part of my creating. This means that it is not the freedom, but rather the constraints, that gives rise to the art. As the proverb says: Necessity is the mother of invention.

If one looks at my project from a critical point of view, it becomes clear that constraints could have been good in order to focus my work process and the end result. For example, a narrower selection of source material could have given the onlooker a more clear view of how the sampling process

occurs. I could have borrowed something familiar to many in order to get more of an impact and clarified that everything created comes from something else One could have brought in critique of the corporations by for example borrowing from big companies that themselves have a long history of borrowing, such as IKEA, Disney and Apple.

Instead, I chose to focus the interpretation on the music and the exchange with Metal X. The project came to focus more and myself as a creator and the process, rather than the cultural phenomenon of stealing and sampling. This is not in and of itself something bad, but does mean that it lost some of the interesting other outcomes it could have had.

I bring with me the insight that I need to be more exact and limited from the beginning of a project as I define what to do. To leave all decisions to chance, most likely leads to ill-conceived results. Despite what one would think - I realize – that increased freedom not necessarily leads to a better design project.

The relevance of the selected references to the field of design

Scott McCloud is a comic book artist who, in a groundbreaking and influential series of books, has investigated the medium of comics and visual storytelling at large.

Austin Kleon is a writer and artist, whose book "Steal like an artist" har gained a large impact and introduced the idea of creative theft to many.

Jonatham Lethem is an writer of novels who has also written a significant amount on the topic of copyright, He is a passionate defender of plagiarism and pushes for a kind of "gift-economy" of the arts.

Conclusion and summary of the discussion

Sampling is a practice central to working with illustration. In my work I have investigated what kind of impact the practice to hide one's samplings have on the creative process. I compare with not hiding them at all and find that it is in the actual act of hiding, the transformation of or camouflage of samples that the artistic craft actually appears. The limitation and need forces creativity forward in a much more efficient way compared to total freedom.

I look upon the tricky situation regarding copyright and illustration art, and find an interesting solution in the Creative Commons system, which is trying to reinvent the view on copyright.

In the critique of my project i find that I could have achieved a greater impact in my work if I had used a much more limited and well-known source for my samples.

My conclusion is that creativity is created by limitations and that I as a designer have no reason not to embrace sampling. It is in fact my most powerful tool.

Disclaimer

This is a non-profit artistic project. The work does not intend to infringe upon anyone's copyright. Only a usage of a substantial and recognizable portion of an original work can constitute an infringement. And, as explained under "An answer to the design issue", an essential step of the work process was to disassemble all of my sampled material completely in order to remove the possibility of recognition. In the few cases where there still is some possibility of recognition, I have chosen to blur the image shown in order to avoid any infringement.

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