notes on creativity & learning

frieder nake

computing science | university of bremen
digital media | university of the arts bremen
L3D

life long learning
& design
what can you use a brick for?
erect a wall
build a fireplace
construct a curb

stabilize a row of books
stop a door
(when heated up) warm your bed
(when hollowed out) use as an ashtray
throw against an enemy

... etc ...
Imagine a man

in the middle of a large office space, with nobody else being there. He is looking around …

… continue!
“… It is 6:30 in the morning. The same thing as every morning. Will my boss finally realize how hard-working I am, Bob thinks. Will I finally get the pay raise? Only think of all my overtime work! But the problem is that Bob has been doing this for three years in a row, without his boss ever indicating the faintest willingness for action. He will, most likely, enter the office in a good mood at 9 a.m. He will not realize that Bob has been working for three hours already. Bob will not get the pay raise.”
“... This man has just broken into the headquarter offices of the new cornflakes company. He is spying for the competing company: How do these newcomers create those soft and wobbly flakes? After having checked most shelves, desks and drawers, the spy suddenly bumps into a document looking as if it would contain the secret formula. He hastily flips through pages, decides this must the formula, rapidly copies it and leaves the next moment. His feelings are the pride of success. – Except for the small mistake he committed when copying the formula. It lead, regretfully, to his company’s total destruction in a great blast.”
we can tell the state of a cultural epoch from its most cherished and celebrated terms

the modern age: humanitarianism enlightenment progress
we can tell the state of a cultural epoch from its most cherished and celebrated terms

our times = postmodern times: creativity, information, communication, globalization
the intelligent does what she is expected to do

the creative does what she wants to do
being capable of creative action as a personal characteristic quality as relative to situation & environment
creativity – not easy to define
»potential relative to a field of action«
creativity is an expectation or an after-effect

we ascribe the attribute “creative”
to a person’s action and its result:

before we actually know, or after the fact
designer
artist

engineer
scientist
“jeder ist ein künstler”
(everyone is an artist)
joseph beuys
expansion of art
the work of our hands
the labor of our bodies

hannah arendt
the human condition
“wir konstruieren und konstruieren, und doch ist intuition immer noch eine gute sache.” Paul Klee, 1928

we construct and construct, and yet intuition remains a great fact
being capable of creative action …

… talent?

… skill?

… method?

… tool?

… attitude!
we have explicit access to construction: study and learn

we have implicit access to intuition: feel and experience
we cannot learn how to be more creative.

we may learn how to become more productive.