

in the times of the strike, they are horrible twenty-four hours a day, every day.»

Perec is interested in this twenty-four hours. He is not interested in the newspapers. What they actually say is: «Calm down, don't worry, you see there are a lot of worse things happening in the world». This information is more something to make us not worry. It is only about happenings. It doesn't question the things that are always there, so the things that are always there don't change; social situations and structures of power. Perec is not really an anarchist or politically engaged, but I think he is truly engaged by doing that. He asks:

«What is really happening? How do we really live? What is the banal, the daily, the obvious, the usual, the ordinary, the background noise? How to describe that? We are not used to questioning that, and it doesn't question us, it doesn't make a problem actually, because that's what we live in, so by definition it is what we are used to. So it's harder than writing about a plane crash. We are asleep, we are not aware of things, we are sleeping through our life. Where is our life? Where is our body? Where is our space? Maybe it's now time to start our own anthropology, and not anymore go in to exotic countries and looking for so-called primitive tribes, but make our own anthropology. What are our table manners, our tools, time-tables, how do we walk, how do we go downstairs, how do we open the door, how do we eat, how do we lie down on a bed. How, where, when, why? Describe a street, describe another one. Compare. Make an inventory of your pocket or your bag. Ask for each thing where it comes from, what it is used for and what it will become. Question your teaspoons, what lies under your wallpaper. It doesn't matter that these questions are fragmentary, little bits of questions that don't indicate a product or a method. What matters really much is that they seem futile, or trivial. That's what makes them very essential, to captivate something of our truth.»

In «*L'infra-ordinaire*» he says something like:

I put a painting on my wall. And then I forget there is a wall, I don't see the wall anymore. And then I don't see the painting anymore, because somehow the wall made the painting disappear and the painting made the wall disappear. I'm just producing this gesture, this social gesture of putting something on a wall. But I'm not anymore thinking that if I live in a place it's because there are four walls, what is behind those walls? Who is behind this wall? How thick is this wall?

Perec takes the freedom of being neither a scientist, nor an architect, a sociologist. But he is producing texts. It's not anymore literature, or novels, sometimes it's on the edge. I think he is someone that made a first step in, let's say, what graphic design is nowadays; building understanding of things.

I'm interested in questioning. Delcuze

says, quoting from somebody else:

The real fascism or totalitarianism doesn't lie in what is forbidden, they lie in the things that you anyway have to do, that are not questioned anymore. The rules that you don't even question, the things you do automatically.

These rules can be laws or social rules or also a way architecture is built, a way a street is built, a way a car is built, a way to talk etc. Design is producing daily things, mostly. You can design a chair or a building, or clothes or a book or a newspaper, they are daily things, things that are mass-produced, and distributed and used. Then I think the task of the designer is also to question: How does that work, how is that used? Not only in the old meaning of functional, because I don't think we need only the necessary. I think we also need unnecessary things. But I think the things that are called research and design should pay attention to the unnoticeable things, really question the ground, the basis of things. And that's hard, because we don't know where to start, how to set up a research, there is no method and there should not be a method.

There is a research piece that is trying this, it's called «*L'invention du quotidien*», it's made by three people. The main author is Michel de Certeau. In English it has been translated under the title of «*The daily practice*». It's trying to define culture as something that is not held by institutions, like schools and museums and universities, but that is something that stands in the way we live in a house, how we talk, how we shop, the way we cook, the way we save food and money. All these little inventions, trying to detect them.

I like how it is analyzing on a certain level, more then in a certain domain. It's talking about architecture, urbanism, cooking, talking. But it's on the really small invisible thing, that you learn through your mother, that is almost unconscious, but that you know how to do. You can look at the use of things and learn from that, learn from the user that invents little tricks. Using and practising are inventing, in that sense we are all designers. But it can be trained and improved. We are some kind of professional of non-professionalism.

I don't want to be a specialist that is very good at something. That's of course hard to state, because what are you good at then? You won't ever get a job if you're not good at something, if people can't say: «Oh, I need that guy because he is good at that». But I just want to also be a bit of a sociologist and an anthropologist and a writer and some kind of scientist and developer. Not professional, just as someone that not only is curious, it's more than being curious.

I like people that take their freedom, people that are not scared. I think that's such a good human quality: don't be scared, don't see the world as a hostile thing. We live in a world where already so much is made for us, where we just have to consume, and that's enough. We have to now maybe say: let's make something, let's take a risk.

SYSTEEM
Over kleuren in romans
Marit Molenaar

'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time' is een heel simpel boek, je hebt het in een dag uitgelezen. Het is wel een boek voor volwassenen,

maar ook een beetje op een kindermanier geschreven, zogenaamd door iemand die vijftien is.

Het gaat over een jongen die autistisch is. Hij houdt heel erg van wiskunde. Daarom zijn alle hoofdstukken met priemgetallen genummerd, omdat hij dat hele fijne getallen vindt. Hij houdt niet van getallen die je kan delen. En er staan ook allemaal puzzeltjes in, omdat hij de hele tijd rekent, als hij aan het rekenen is wordt hij heel rustig in zijn hoofd. Hij houdt ook van astronauten en dat soort dingen. Maar hij heeft dus een hekel aan bepaalde kleuren: geel en bruin, die kleuren raakt hij niet aan en weigert hij op te eten. En rood is juist zijn lievelingskleur. Je leest het alsof hij het boek schrijft, als een project voor zichzelf. Het wordt heel duidelijk hoe hij echt regels nodig heeft als autist.

'Ghosts' is een verhaal uit een trilogie van Paul Auster, De New York Trilogie. Ik heb het een paar jaar geleden al gelezen. Het gaat over Blue, dat is een detective, en die krijgt de opdracht van meneer White dat hij Black moet schaduwen. Dat doet hij het hele boek. Voor jaren. En achteraf komt hij erachter dat White eigenlijk Black is die hij moet schaduwen, en Black is een boek aan het schrijven waarin hij gevolgd wordt. Uiteindelijk vermoordt Blue Black. Hij heeft zijn eigen leven opgegeven, om helemaal in dat achtervolgen op te gaan. Het is best wel een apart boek, soms ben je helemaal in de war als je het een tijdje aan het lezen bent, dan snap je het niet meer. De personages verwisselen ook van karakters, daarom is het moeilijk om het verhaal na te vertellen. Volgens mij is het een boek dat wel meer grafisch ontwerpers interesseert, misschien omdat de schrijver van systemen houdt.

Ik heb in allebei deze boeken de kleuren omcirkeld. Daarna heb ik voor elke voorkomende kleur stipjes gekozen, een soort van stickers, die heb ik in chronologische volgorde achter elkaar geplakt op een A-3. Daarnaast heb ik bij Paul Auster ook een vel gemaakt met alleen maar zwarte en blauwe stipjes, omdat het verhaal daar om draait: twee mensen die elkaar in de gaten houden. En bij Haddons boek heb ik ook een extra vel gemaakt met alleen rood, geel en bruin; zijn lievelingskleur en de twee kleuren die hij echt haat. De andere kleuren zijn meer neutrale kleuren. Dit geeft een heel simpel overzicht van het boek, misschien is het ook een soort analyse. Het is denk ik leuk om te zien: 'O, zo kan je het ook bekijken.'

ADVICE
On books that give advice
Lane Kristensen

I USED TO USE IT MORE THAN I DO NOW.
BUT SOMETIMES WHEN I'M REALLY STUCK I HAVE TO GO LOOK IN IT.
IT'S REALLY STRANGE, BECAUSE IT'S ALSO KIND OF STUPID.
THIS CHAPTER IS CALLED: 'GOOD ADVICES'.
IT SAYS: 'SURPRISE YOURSELF'.
DO SOMETHING YOU OTHERWISE WOULDN'T DO OR THAT YOU DIDN'T DARE TO DO.
AVOID TO FALL IN LOVE WITH THE SAME IDEA AGAIN AND AGAIN.
BREAK THE ROUTINE, WALK A NEW WAY TO YOUR WORK.
PUT TIME OFF EVERY DAY TO THINK AND QUESTION.
USE PROVOKING QUESTIONS AS A SPRINGBOARD TO NEW IDEAS.
CHANGE YOUR HAIRDRESSER.
TURN THINGS UP-SIDE-DOWN.
IT'S SO CONCRETE BUT AT THE SAME TIME SOMETIMES YOU REALLY DO THESE THINGS.
I'M SO AWARE OF IT WHEN I'M STUCK AND THAT'S A GOOD THING.
OTHERWISE I'M DOING THE THINGS I ALWAYS DO.
THERE ARE SOME PAGES WITH JUST A LOT OF WORDS ON IT LOOSE ON THE PAGE.
REALLY COMMON WORDS.
THEY SAY IT'S COINCIDENTALLY CHOSEN WORDS.
'CHOOSE BY CLOSING THE EYES AND LET YOUR FINGER POINT ON A COINCIDENTAL WORD'.
SO NOW I'M GOING TO DO IT.
IT'S 'PRESENT'.
IT'S A BIT STUPID.
BUT IT'S ALSO KIND OF FUNNY.
IT'S LIKE GOING FOR A WALK AND THEN YOU EXPERIENCE SOMETHING YOU DON'T EXPECT.
IT COULD BE A BIRD LOOKING FUNNY OR...WHATEVER...
IT'S ACTUALLY A BIT TALKING ABOUT WHAT I DO WITH SECOND-HAND BOOKS.
I GO THROUGH DIFFERENT THINGS.
I USE DIFFERENT MATERIALS TO GET INSPIRED.
I'M NOT LOOKING INTO GREAT DESIGN BOOKS.
YOU JUST WANT TO DO THE SAME THEN.
THIS BOOK IS IN MANY WAYS RELATED TO A MUCH MORE COMMERCIAL WAY OF DESIGNING
IT'S SAYING THINGS LIKE:
'YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO EXAGGERATE!'
IN A WAY YOU CAN ALSO TRANSLATE THAT INTO OUR WAY OF DOING THINGS.
WE ALSO HAVE TO BE CONSEQUENT.
IF WE CHOOSE A DIRECTION THEN WE ALSO ALMOST HAVE TO EXAGGERATE IT.
IT'S MADE BY A VERY GOOD GRAPHIC RESEARCHER.
A PROFESSOR FROM A DANISH DESIGN SCHOOL.
SHE HAS A VERY CERTAIN IDEA OF IDEA GENERATING.
SHE IS GIVING A MANUAL TO CREATIVE PEOPLE.
HOW THEY CAN INCREASE THEIR IDEA GENERATING.
IT'S FUNNY BECAUSE IT'S TALKING TO GROWN UP PEOPLE.
BUT IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A GROWN UP INSPIRATION BOOK.
IT'S WRITTEN VERY CLEARLY.
THERE'S NOTHING TO QUESTION.
SHE DOESN'T WANT PEOPLE TO THINK.
SHE WANTS PEOPLE TO GET HER POINT.
SHE WANTS PEOPLE TO LOOK AT IT ANOTHER WAY.
I THINK IT'S DONE IN A WAY THAT WAS TRENDY BACK THEN IN THE NINETIES.
THIS WAS PROBABLY SOMETHING THEY LIKED THEN BUT I DON'T LIKE IT.
IT'S WEIRD.
THE MAKER REALLY BELIEVES IN SOME STRONG VALUES THAT I ACTUALLY ALSO BELIEVE IN.
BUT IN HER DESIGNS IT'S AWFUL.
EVERYTHING THAT'S IN IT IS SOMEHOW OBVIOUS.
IT'S JUST REMINDING YOU OF WHAT'S IMPORTANT.