

This is not a regular lecture. This lecture is not about industrial design as if it were a thing. This lecture is about me and what I expect from you. The lecture is about twenty four years of teaching visually gifted young people. Have I really done anything? I am not sure. Teaching for joy is easy but a concomitant failure is just as easy. It is one thing to teach a class, to love the visual talent of the young people, to have fun. It is another thing to do something more than entertain for a semester. Do I ever make clear the demands of the life of a visual artist? I takes so much for each of you to become you.

The event that begins the story is a man. The man paints; the man is a friend of mine. He came to my house to see me because I asked him to come to my house to see me. I have been drawing. I am sure he, as well as you guys, wanted to know why fogler would draw. I love to teach and three dimensions is my best love. Why do I draw? The answer is not easy. The answer is in the man that came to see me. He once said to me, "Fogler is there anything in you to let out?". I was twenty-five years old and an industrial design senior at Pratt. He was the same age and my teacher in an industrial design painting class. (you don't know there ever was such a class or how important it was). When the man asked if there was anything in me, he was not refering to a psyche. He was not asking about words. What he wanted to know was flat and straight. He wanted to know if I was alive. He knew I had the talent and education necessary to make a painting. He did not want me to make a painting. He wanted to know if I could react to the potential joy in front of me. Dead or alive was his question. He knew the answer. He knew I was dead.

Dead or alive, my use of the words needs explanation. Dead is a person who lives in the head; a person guided by principle as they move to the world. Alive is the ability to trust the past, what you know, but not be ruled by it. It is the ability to live in the moment, the present tense.





It was years before I understood what my friend said to me. He only said, "look, Fogler, can you get out of your head long enough to give your talent and the canvas a chance?". I did OK in the class. I did not understand. I got a degree. I thought that meant I was an industrial designer. How could I have thought I was that which doesn't exist. There is no such thing as industrial design. More than that there is no such thing as painting, sculpture, drawing, print making, crafts, the list could go on as <sup>LONG AS</sup> the english language refers to life. Understand that a list of words is not art. Alive, gifted people create art and dead people label what they have done. The civilized western world is dominated by words not art. We love by and live by words. We love the fact that we have learned so much and can say so much. The joy is real. The joy covers but does not hide a price that no person should have to pay. Words are the death of life. Words are the past tense or the future tense but not the present tense. Words can express what once was, what could be, but only serve as an escape from right now.

The fact of life is that we are alive. I will do and I will be. I will not give in to the fact that western culture is the word and all else is void. The problem is that no one can be a word. There are so damn many words. Nowhere do words do as much harm as in the community of visual artists. Think of all the words; painter, graphic artist, illustrator, designer, industrial designer, sculptor, drag queen. The list does not have an end. The list is as long as the human ability to make up words. Think what that means. The words are fashioned by dead people to categorize the issue of visual people who are alive.

Who are the dead people? They are the art critics, the design critics, the people who write the magazines, the museum directors, the gallery owners, and last and not least the clients and art historians. They can be important to you; they can be great. Don't forget that they are dead people who are building careers by sucking your blood.

Please remember that words come after you and not before. Think of it





this way; suppose from your life, from your ability to see events as not equal, comes the birth of an event that is wonderful. It is a piece of life left behind by someone who ~~who~~ could live not only life but could leave a piece of that life behind. The act is the best of human possibility. Suppose the piece of life does not fit any of the words? What changes? Not the life but the words. The action painters, the abstract expressionists did not fit the dead and prissy definition of ~~of~~ *PAINTING* held by the museum of modern art. The museum would not show their work. Now the museum has a space devoted to their work. What changed? The work has not changed. The prissy museum has not changed. The word, "painting" has changed. That which was once not, now is.

You can become an industrial designer and join the world of the dead. Your life will never be more than the illustration of words. You can be so much more. The one thing each of you can do better than anyone else is be you, you alive. I ask so much of you. I tell you that it is not possible to become an industrial designer and be as good as you are. I tell you that I have a friend who came to see me, to help me. I tell you now that my friend does not do paintings. He explodes onto a canvas with all of the incredible life force that is in him. (I once told him that there is no one life that contains as much life as there is in him) He is not the end product of the word, "painting". He is one of the magnificent people who make dead people redefine the word.

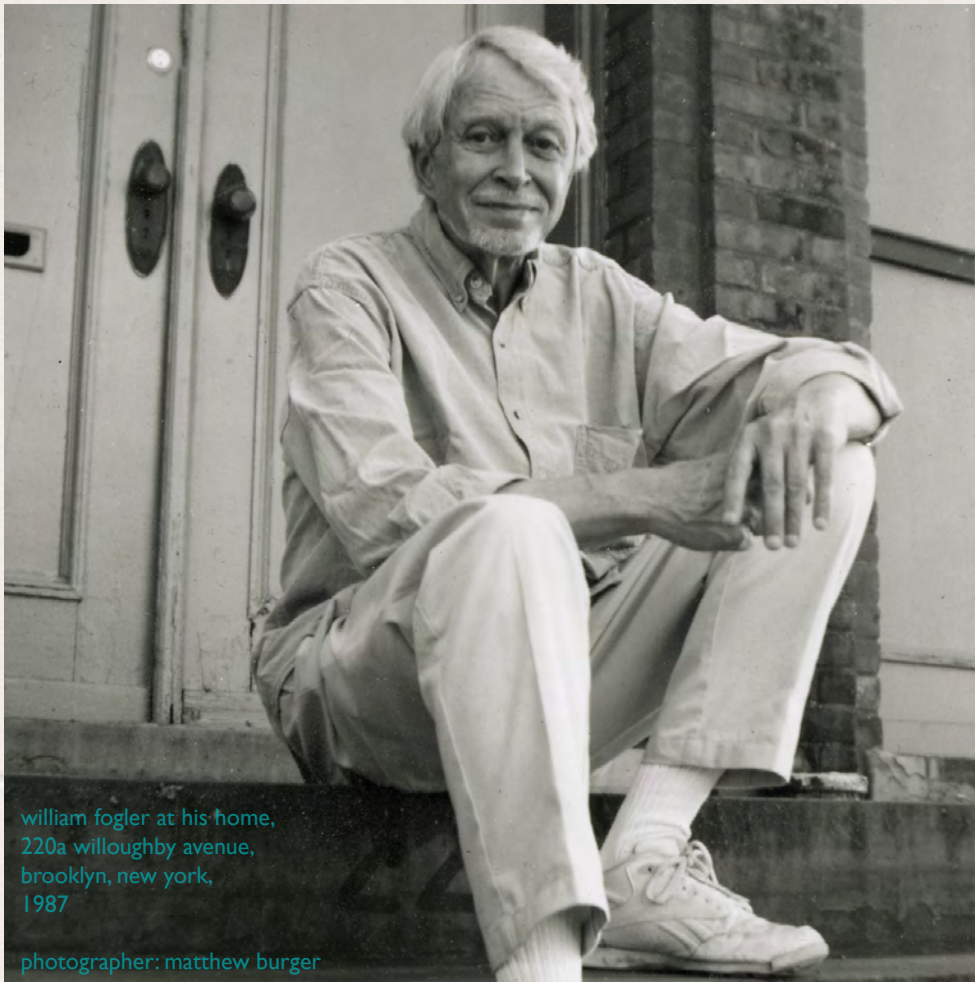
I ask you to consider living your life as my friend does. Don't become industrial designers; insist that industrial design become you. You are the only people planning to devote their professional lives to the meaning of the basic forms of the culture. That focus gives you the edge. Why not give your best? Your best is not design method or IDSA. Your best is all that is you.

Why do I draw? I want to see if any of what I ask of you can be found in me. If I find it I think I might teach it better. Drawing seems to be the right place for me to start. Drawing can be fast.





I am a nice man ; I am an inhibited man. I love three dimensions and most of all I love volume. I know too much and I love too much. Give me time and I will give you trash. I will give you all that I love and nothing alive. I have always loved the visual step out of my self and into the world. I have always loved looking. Drawing can be fast. On a good day it can be fast enough so that the marks on the page are not a self conscious record of what I know but a method for catching the joy of seeing. Sure I want to do more. Right now the problem is to find the joy of being me.



william fogler at his home,  
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1987

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