



Data Mining in the Information Age

Dan Landrum, April 4, 2016 ·

Gail Parker asks, "You seem to have a whole new body of art coming out, Dan. Rorschach art? What motivates you with this series?"

Rorschach ink blots intend to supply a 'neutral conversation starter' onto which a patient projects their subconscious thoughts and perceptions. In the Digital Age there is no subconscious, it is either conscious or not. Black or white, there is only story.

In the SERIES: Digital Art, I am exploring Data Mining in the Information Age. Analogous to wave/particle is the objective reality of the thing itself (matter) and the story we tell about it. We could say 'consciousness' for 'story telling,' but for now let's stick simply with story, the thing itself and its story.

In exploring Data Mining in this two-dimensional screen we are viewing through (your monitor, iPhone, etc), we attend to the mind-only POV. That is we compartmentalize and ignore the reality of the thing itself that serves up our 2D story and are immersed in the fiction of the story itself. THAT becomes 'the thing' within this realm of exploration. THAT thing is a disembodied field of data laden context.

Gail continues, "Anyhow, I'm now pretty sure I get what your new art is about. You are in visual poem mode again, this time about THAT. Honestly, I kind of intuited something like that, but I didn't trust myself to really know it. And I got distracted by the word "seem", or maybe waylaid, looking too hard at the Rorschach idea."

"I see where I went wrong. Your art makes me FEEL that issue, and does so in a way that provokes the part of me that has been conditioned to GET EXCITED by that ubiquitous "Ooooooh, shiny!" thing and the prospect of stuff, stuff, and more stuff, all so modern and addictive."

In "Why Humans Run the World," Yuval Noah Harari [<https://youtu.be/nzj7Wg4DAbs>] argues that a mere seventy thousand years ago, our human ancestors were insignificant animals. What eventually separated us from the other animals is imagination, the ability to form story detached from objective reality. He says, "Today, the most powerful forces in the world are fictional entities like nations, Gods, money, and like corporations."

In instinct and feeling, all animals have a magnificent capacity to crunch data at lighting speed. Without a thought, within a nanosecond you knew that this objective reality structure you now reside in was safe to walk into. You compiled a huge amount of data in an instant and made the vital judgment that this building was sound and it was safe to walk into. The windows and doors are plumb and perpendicular, the steel and wood construction spoke to you of solid and reliable quality. This holds true for psycho-socio structures as well. We instantly read people as we walk down the sidewalk...are they a threat, a potential benefit. We make a wide array of complex value judgments...do they drive a Honda Civic, or a Mercedes?

It's all embodied in feeling. Feeling is the processing of a dense history of experiential and ancestral data. The vastness of feeling data sets overwhelm symbolic language and cognitive functions, yet can encode 'truth' with amazing precision.

In "How beauty feels," Richard Seymour [https://youtu.be/YiXd_9DFCOQ?t=5m0s] demonstrates the power of even a brief, abstract story in accessing deep and profound feelings that go to the core of our existential reality. In watching this video clip, you dramatically see the difference of cognitively registering symbolic information and how the briefest bit of story can generate a powerful, universal and transformative "state of being" feeling.

For the past few decades, my art has been concerned with stepping out of the associative cognitive mind and into directly feeling the thing itself.

The Age of Reason brought us out of the Dark Ages and lead us to the Industrial Revolution. In art we see the movement from the representational Renaissance window to Cezanne's proto-reductionist abstractions (abstraction in art running parallel to extraction in biochemistry to tell the story of the essence of the thing,) to the mystically infuse symbolic abstractions of Theosophists such as Wassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian. Continuing the lineage, Solomon Guggenheim, opened his Museum of Non-Objective Painting in 1939, here "non-objective" expressed an immaterial, formal, felt sense or spiritual aspect. The truly modern moment that broke with tradition came when Jackson Pollock tells Hans Hoffman, "I am nature!"

In a sense this is the pivotal point in the cultural story when humans are no longer separate from nature and the Information Age begins to emerge. The Information Age changes the focus of identity from the individual against nature, product formation/consumption/destruction, and time driven efficiencies to "I/Thou" network field encoded processes and point of interest search parameters. In data sets this can be informed by hierarchical taxonomy, semantics, metadata, keyword and algorithms that sort and select for fluid priorities.

So, in one instance, Horst Tress, who, though I had no previous knowledge of him is clearly an active member of a loosely forming network, which can be labeled with many names, such as International Mailart, created a piece which was captioned, "new identity" (<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php...>) I instantly recognized it in the zeitgeist of some of the work I am currently entertaining and reply in the riffing convention of the network with #HorstTress @IDENTITÄT {SERIES: Digital Age:}



Mining the data from Horst's original piece you have a barcode "tattooed" on a thumbs up. The 'thumbs up' symbol alone is a deeply loaded image. Though we now use it as a most light sense of positive approval, it has historic corollaries going back to Roman emperors making life or death choices for gladiators to entertain the masses. Bar codes speak to current Digital Age black/white movement of identifying, labeling and owning the universe of things, and here including ourselves. My riff puts Horst's thumbs up in a field other digital age encodings, binary ones and zeros, the Quick Response Code [which has itself origins in the Japanese auto industry for cataloging car parts] for my own Apple Eye Design website and gradients of the energetic contained in the #CC0000 color red. A networker I do have a personal history with, *Jesse Edwards*, adds



his "THINK . . . as we say at IBM" riff which layers in what could be taken as the post WW2 Victory sign or the post '60s Peace sign with barcode and referential text on a field (antiquated technology??) stubby pencils. I further reply to Jesse's piece by adding a 'kiss' that frames the word 'context'



Data Mining in the Information Age is fluid network processing. Fixed objects are matzah balls in the soup. It's the stories we tell around the dinner table that hold our interests and the power to see and make things

different. With Teflon-free adaptability and flexibility there is no indigestion, even when gulping all of it at once. Please pass the hot salsa.

Jesse Edwards the hotter the better digital thermometer



Dan Landrum



Jesse Edwards #asseenonfacebook

Gail Parker Aha! I mistakenly thought that all of what you were showing was your original creation.

Ah well, it was fun THINKING I understood for a few minutes... Now I'm pretty sure it's necessary to be a member of a very exclusive group that is bonded around a common history and identity I don't share...

Modern life provides a LOT of opportunities to feel like an outsider. (Now THERE's a theme for someone --not me though-- to riff on!)

But even from out here I can clearly see what a delight it is for you to get to play in that tight knit arena, and THAT makes me happy.

Jesse Edwards Gail Parker #THATmakesmeHAPPY and i went to school for 4 years at the old mission #swallowsfocapistranostjosephsday



Dan Landrum Jesse, what can you say to Gail about being a member of a very exclusive group that is bonded around a common history and identity?

Jesse Edwards and i thought that this club was inclusive I don't care to belong to any club that will have me as a member". As quoted in The Groucho Letters (1967) by Arthur Sheekman.
<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/54/GrouchoCaricature.jpg>

Dan Landrum I'm not even sure it's a club you can't belong to. It more of an anarchistic tendency pretending to have shared interests to scratch an inner itch that couldn't be reached any other way. Like the Anonymous network only with very degree of celebrity wannabeness (or not.) For me, it's what you make of it, but no doubt *Mark Bloch* would say otherwise.

Mark Bloch No actually I believe mail art is inclusive and wide open. Is that what you mean?

Dan Landrum Yes.

Dan Landrum Oh, PS. Many of the images in this album are original to me, some are riffs, some grew out of collaborations, some found, some stolen and many are mash-up of all the above. That's the thing about Data Mining in the Eternal Network, there's endless undo and re-sort possibilities.

April 4, 2016 · **Dan Landrum** {Objective work SOURCE:}

Dan Landrum shared his post to the group: 5089, March 20, 2016 ·
{FOUND outside Sparks Gallery, 530 6th Ave., 92101}



Gail Parker But... I DON'T share your history of Mailart and non-representational art, and I definitely don't identify with those things as you do. I DO understand that I'm perfectly free to start NOW to try to build such a history and identity.

I have a long-time (50+ years) friend who is, and has always been, a solidly identified political Conservative, and he has extended the same kind of invitation of inclusion to me. It's clear that he is unable to grasp why I don't join in and enjoy what he's enjoying.

But I DO appreciate what a wonderful sense of self and happiness my Conservative friend gets out of his affiliation, and you two with yours. We all do well to find "our group" and enjoy that sense of belonging with like-minded others.

Gail Parker By the way, Jesse, it is kind of a mind blower to learn that you attended the SJC mission school!!!!

Also, the image you posted with that comment, with the shelves of brightly colored STUFF and Dan's matzah balls and salsa riff pasted on top is WONDERFUL.

Jesse Edwards well i borrowed and reworked the shelves . they originally came from an AUSSIE / FRENCH friend Remy Galet-Lalande he was tripping out on all of the yogurt / desert products that are available in french markets and of course i used the salsa balls that **Dan Landrum** provided as for the SJC MISSION school i went there for about 4 years half of the 3rd grade to halfway thru the 7th i have great memories of the school it was where i had my first lesson in ART CRITICISM i traced a picture of the LIBERTY BELL that i found in the encyclopedia and used a color scheme of bright purple and bright yellow gold the NUN / SISTER that gave the art class was not happy with the colors i choose as i remember it , she ridiculed the choice of colors but this was long ago so my memory of the criticism may be off a few

weeks later in the same art class i drew a deer in a forest glade and used clear scotch tape to affix real grass to the lower part of the picture when i showed it in class the NUN / SISTER said that the clear tape gave the illusion of water i had not planned that effect kind of like the comment that dan made (referential text on a field (antiquated technology??) stubby pencils) such is life in and out of school

Gail Parker That's quite a story, Jesse. Bummer about your grade school teacher and her need to ridicule your creative use of color. I had a crappy 4th grade teacher. She had a name she called me instead of "Gail". She addressed me as "Mediocre". Can you imagine? Happily I wasn't crushed by it, I just thought it was bizarre, that SHE was bizarre. Ultimately, one can only wonder what happened to HER that made her like that.

Anyhow, I find that I'm wanting to apologize for going off on you guys the way I did. But I also want to try to explain what triggered that unfortunate response.

I was SO excited when I initially saw the stuff Dan showed. Well not at first because I didn't "get" it. Then when I saw his post about Yuval Noah Harari I made a connection, saw the potential for that kind of art to make an incredibly important statement.

However, that kind of statement (if that's even REALLY what was going on at all) is risky, tricky... but given enough of a connection with the audience it could be so powerful!

So when I saw how much it was really just a private conversation between the two of you, a playful thing, a private joke, I kind of allowed myself to be deeply disappointed.

But I had no right to expect anything other than whatever the hell you guys feel like doing. No matter how much greater a potential I thought I saw in it.

So.... sorry....

And having made it that far, I find that I am now quite entirely able to see it as you and Dan (and others who get just as big a kick as you out of this playful collaborative/creative game) do. The world needs more FUN and PLAY! And this looks like a rather marvelous way to synergize the happy vibe!

Jesse Edwards *Gail Parker* . . . without your comments we would not have had the opportunity to go where we have gone maybe we would have just exchanged images . . . your comments inspired *Dan Landrum* to verbalize the game / club . . . which gave me insights to what i / we were doing . . . i never took it as GOING OFF if that is what it was . . . keep doing it

Gail Parker You are marvelous, Jesse. I am very honored and pleased to have met you. I look forward to whatever/wherever you go with what you are about, and I hope to learn and grow as a result!

Dan Landrum Once again you've nailed it, Gail. Yes, that kind of statement is risky, tricky... and, to what ever fortune, I don't have enough of a connection with an audience to make it round and well-formed. I could have a lot to say, both in words and pictures about art in the Information Age and how it differentiates from art in the Industrial Age -- its cultural significance for our times, but I haven't as yet found an audience that wants to have the conversation in an overt way. Then again movements rarely self-conscientiously self-define themselves as they are emerging, seems we have to let the dust settle, look back, take a stroll down Nostalgia Lane and sigh, 'Now, those were the Glory Days, weren't they?' before we can say what we're doing, or at least what we THINK we're doing.

But, yes, "The world needs more FUN and PLAY!" and that's the stronger pull.

I'm also very grateful for these after thoughts, @[undefined:Gail] & @[undefined:Jesse]. Made getting up early to spew out my cosmology all the more satisfying. At least SOMEBODY heard my spittings in the wind! ... and connected.

Jesse Edwards #spittingintothewind #tiltingatwindmills fun and play in the glory days
#thosewerethedaysmyfriend



Dan Landrum <https://www.facebook.com/groups/825007620888801/permalink/1064736353582592/>

Dan Landrum to 5089, April 5, 2016 #Jesse Edwards @tiltingatwindmills



Gail Parker Dang! This one makes me go all tingly with the wish I had come up with that. I find that I now desperately want to try to play too.

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Gail Parker, April 4, 2018 Wow, *Dan* and *Jesse*, here you are, doing this, two years later. You may be surprised to know that I have thought of this whole conversation many times over the past 2 years. Not in terms of specifics or even word thoughts but the feel of it, the suchness, the playfulness, the funny journey I made in my head around it. Passing the Mission School sometimes reminds me of it. Yet I've never actually revisited (looked at) the actual conversation until just now. What a trip. What a delight. Thank you.

Dan Landrum LOvely reminder, *Gail*.

Alas, I am no longer in that space, enjoyed it for the Lila the moment afforded, but can no longer defend it. Not that it needs defending, as it's more akin, as you suggested, to a self-selecting club whose members have all stumbled off the beaten path and found under a particular rock that specific magic mushroom that created harmony among their collective discord. However to me, the outer world -- in the intervening 2 years, oh so short a time, oh, such a long, long-tail infusing spin of events -- has irrevocably tipped over that changing point where the fun in this play is functional, or even useful for the survival of our consensus reality. And hence, now, the space I occupy can simply state, "Why I Am Out of the Art Conversation" : ... and move on.