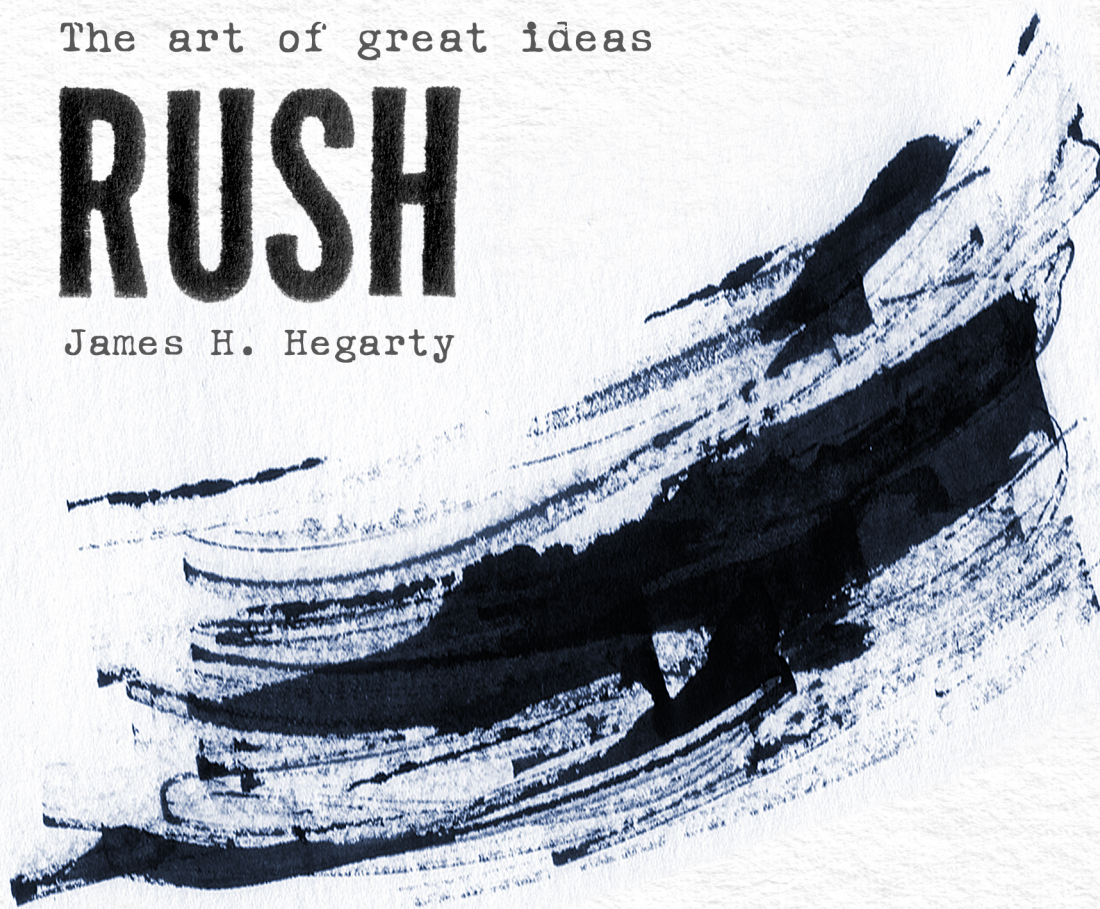


THE CREATIVE

The art of great ideas

RUSH

James H. Hegarty



Sushi

What ever happened to superficiality?

What happened to something like a plate of ordinary mac and cheese?

It's a sushi world now.

Not that I don't dig it. There's something logically beautiful about sushi. And it tastes supremely delicious, looks amazingly cool, and the materials are impeccable. Fine sushi truly represents high production values. Highly refined and developed to perfection.

Small pieces of intimacy.

And there's more. Lots more. Variety, I mean.

A multitude of shapes and colors - a thoroughly integrated design collection. Variations on the use of material. New combinations, new relationships, new connections. The blending of references and the juxtaposition of familiar and unknown. A full spectrum of ideas, realized. Colorful, unique shapes that inspire me to want to pick them up and hold them. They work. They whisper, "I'm irresistible."

Enticing.

Engaging.

Satisfying.

I just couldn't resist any longer.

Even someone like me, who grew up in the Midwest on a steady diet of ground beef and canned vegetables, got sucked in.

Serious content. Serious ingredients. No corn syrup, no filler, nothing preprocessed. But the content is deeper and richer than simply raw and natural. It is exotic and fantastic.

Impeccably preserved fragments of extraordinary creatures.

The materials express the immense diversity and beauty of infinity.

There is just so much substance in this stuff it is impossible not to respect it. If food can have *gravitas*, this is it.

Impact. The tastes, shapes, textures all hit us. Grab us.

Unforgettable

Heavy, serious stuff.

The materials? Let's face it, they're rare, highly prized, valuable. Can you go down to the local grocery and pick up fresh eel? Live? I can't. And is that grocery counter fish that they're selling really fresh enough to eat - *raw*? I'm not really sure about that.

It's just not good enough to use ordinary stuff, any more.

The content and materials have to be heavy, rare, expensive, exotic, highly complex, absurdly technical, insanely detailed, minutely precise, big, and yes, AWESOME - in the true and complete meaning of that word.

I mean that the work inspires awe.

"Awe" in fact refers to something very deep and profound. An *overwhelming* feeling of reverence, admiration, or fear. When the stuff we make causes the users to be awestruck, we're doing something that hasn't happen to them for a while. It is the overwhelming part that is where the gravity kicks in.

The material is also valuable, or fragile, or unrecognizable. To inspire awe, the work has to inspire a sense of mystery or wonder. It's really hard to be awestruck at something that is common or a known entity. If the work is full of wonder, it's giving me a first-time ever experience of something that I know is never going to happen to me the same way again.

This is the first and only time I'm going to feel this sensation.

So, I want to pay close attention.

This is what I'm talking about:

I'm walking the aisles of Tsukiji, the great fish market in Tokyo.

And I am paying close attention.

I don't want to get run over.

Hundreds of little Honda and Toyota motorized carts are darting in and out of the stalls. Each cart carries stacks of Styrofoam boxes filled with seafood. Very fresh seafood. Some of it still alive and wiggling and looking around for something to grab on to. You've got to pay attention because billions of yen are being traded here and it may look like some kind of medieval fisherman's wharf but it is in reality a huge business and these people are working seriously hard.

Beyond self-preservation, it just seemed important to stay out of their way. Gaijin or not, I'm on the work floor and I don't want to make someone's work harder than it already is by standing around like a deer in the headlights.

Respect.

It hangs in the air. I can literally feel it. Amid the chaos of activity in the predictably small spaces, the climate and facial expressions are the same as would be seen at a CSO television shoot or a mix session. Intense concentration, and some kind of inner satisfaction that is impossible to put words on except to say that something was going on inside that was far from ordinary.

This work means something. Something deep.

Dedication, sincerity, authenticity, honesty, commitment, selfless-ness.

It was communicated without words through the way people looked at each other, the way the fish were displayed, the way the creatures were handled and cared for, the way everyone was calm and purposeful. Serious work was going on here. And it drew me in.

I'm pulled in by the power of individual expression. Someone is speaking to me, directly, intimately, with passion and an open heart, I'm listening. I'm not blinking. I'm not slipping out at intermission.

Chaos?

Disorder?

It turns out there are formulas to mathematically model chaos. It's not random; it's not out of control at all. It's just wildly complicated, way highly developed. Maybe too complicated to understand objectively.

Tsukiji, Stravinsky, Xenakis.

Intuitively, I see it.

I feel it.

I feel the purpose and order and integrity and impact.

I respect that.

The first time I hit 100.

Vivid.

I remember it to this day.

All the details.

The big block Mustang was flying over the ground, the summer night air blasting in the windows. It was a real material world rush. Real-time, real experience, real life.

Owing to the speed that the cornfields were flying past the windshield, I was seriously paying attention. Highly focused. No distractions.

80 in third. Grab fourth. Keep on it. The sound, the blurring peripheral vision, the vibration of the engine, the twitchy feel of the road through the steering wheel, the lift of the body. New and extraordinary sensations.

It was graphic. And it was lasting, engaging, captivating.

Burned into memory.

All the kinds of impressions we want our stuff to ignite.

What's the same? What's different?

Clearly there's no second chance. Mess up and there's no way they're putting the pieces together. That's some immediacy right there.

But the first time, it's the only time, man.

Second time is just not the same. It's never going to be. Comparisons and disappointments. Repeated endings just never measure up.

There's just no mystery. No unknown the second time.

What does it *feel* like?

The hyper-inflated levels of expectation and perception don't come around again. Once that fundamental question's been answered.

And there's that membership card. You know, the one that reminds you that yes, you've done that. You've made your first jump, you've made your first dive, you've made your first real money deal.

You're a member now.

You're experienced.

And every time after is going to be framed in the context of that first one.

Better, worse, indifferent.

There's going to be an unavoidable relationship created between the realism of *this* time and the fantasy of the *first* time.

But I'm not giving up just because it's impossible.

What makes that first time so seriously captivating? Intensity. Pure, undiluted sensory overload. Whatever it is, I'm swimming in it, completely enveloped by it; it's inside me, overriding my vision, consuming my cognition, overwhelming me. No matter what happens later, in that moment nothing else in the world matters.

We can do that. We can push those buttons.

Great work is multifaceted, multidimensional, multi-layers. Packed with tangible and intangible references. It swirls around in the ether between reason and fantasy.

We can hardwire our work into both the intellect *and* the passion. We can captivate the logic and the dream, reality and imagination.

It's about plugging into the viewer's head with real tangible hooks. And grabbing on. It's about digging deeply into the roots of what a person feels and hears and touches and thinks. And then cranking up the juice.

It's all about provoking imagination and suggesting fantasies.

Mystery and curiosity, the search for the unknown, the pursuit of what it feels like, what it looks like. The deep desire to have secret knowledge, to

enter forbidden or exotic or private places, to have experiences that are unique.

To explore the space beyond reason.

To test the extremes.

Sensuality?

Yes. I'll take some of that.

Sushi is powerful.

Not because it is large, or strong, or oppressively overwhelming. Sushi is, in fact, not any of those. Sushi is powerful because it is extremely intense and massively captivating, deeply significant culturally, and intensely sensual and personal. It is the product of elaborately complex processes of procurement and delivery, the result of supremely skilled makers, and it carries the reference of exotic materials from mysterious and unfathomable places. Sushi captivates with its infinite variety, highly refined sense of style, shape, and use of color, and makes tangible connections to sight and touch and taste and smell.

Sushi is about as individually provocative and sensuous as nearly anything can get. Awaiting the precise moment to put it in your mouth is like a ritual of deep reverence and expectation. Each separate instance is as intense and satisfying as the first time.

It is as if in a single moment the significance of the ages and the wisdom of the world have all come together in one glorious instant of insight and transcendence.

One magnified moment of intimate passion and release.

Beyond extraordinary.

The true rush.

Can I have some more, please?

So I'm making sushi now. To the best of my ability. I'm down for serious materials, respect for the process and the work, turning up the temp on

sensory overload and intimate personal connections. I'm delving into the details of technique and execution. And I'm going after intensity rather than simply large scope. Size really isn't where the power comes from. It's from the burn. The sensations. The rich dark flavor.

It all comes together in that feeling of being awestruck, of being completely overwhelmed.

It's the experience of being captivated and transported, of being dragged into a new consciousness that leaves the ordinary and the jaded expectations lying in a pile of discarded litter on the floor. It literally blows everything away.

Like the first time.

The first time of just about anything intense. First touch, the first night together, the first performance, the first time in Shibuya or Times Square, the first time over 100. The first time I saw Monet's water lilies, the first time I saw a Macintosh, the first time I sailed. That stuff sticks and sticks.

And it can happen anytime. It can still happen today.

Go ahead, blow me away.

Do it to me. That's what I really want.