



Why Art Matters in Tech...

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Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain, by Betty Edwards, is one of the best books on creativity ever written. You cannot read it too many times if you view yourself as a creative person, or want to become a creative person.

The book masquerades as a drawing book. It teaches you how to sketch, supposedly.

But really, it teaches you how to get your brain out of the way so you can see what's really going on. Michelangelo aside, engineers are usually really bad artists. We draw triangles instead of pine trees. We draw eyes on top of the face, mouths on the bottom of the face, and ears on each side. We are too caught up in our models of reality to be able to see reality.

So Ms. Edwards gives us tools. Draw a face upside down, so our hands don't know what we're doing. Draw the parts that aren't the tree (the negative space), so we don't think about branching and leaf connections and capillary action. Eventually, if we work hard enough, and it's very, very hard work, we can learn to see the actual thing we're drawing. Then we can draw it directly.

So that's the obvious connection to creativity in Tech. If we work hard enough, and it's very, very, hard work, eventually we can learn to see the actual problem we need to solve, instead of our model of the problem. Then we can solve it directly. Only art teaches us to see.

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