

Creativity, Inc.

OVERCOMING THE UNSEEN FORCES THAT STAND
IN THE WAY OF TRUE INSPIRATION

● Review by AISA VALENZUELA

How does Pixar do it?

Since *Toy Story* was released in 1995, Pixar Animation Studios has released 14 films that have all opened at No. 1 in the box office. What makes Pixar's achievement even more distinctive is that they've created films that aren't just visual and technological spectacles, but also instant classics that touch the heart and mind.

With *Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration*, we can now learn the secrets of Pixar's success straight from its co-founder, Ed Catmull. Steve Jobs once described Catmull as "very wise," "very self-aware," "really thoughtful," "really, really smart," and possessing "quiet strength."

All of those qualities are evident in this book. While it focuses mostly on the management strategies he developed over the years as Pixar's president, the book also serves as an autobiography of sorts for the author.

Growing up, Catmull's idol was Walt Disney, who appeared on his family's television screen once a week to talk about animation. His other idol was Albert Einstein,

and after realizing he wasn't talented enough to become a Disney animator, he decided to pursue physics and computer science in college instead. His degree in the latter would eventually lead him to the field of computer graphics.

A scientist at heart, Catmull contributed to the development of several key technologies in digital animation such as alpha channel, z-buffer, texture mapping, etc. However, it is obvious from his leadership at Pixar that he also values and understands the storytelling process, and has worked actively to keep the creative culture alive at Pixar and Disney Animation Studios (which he and John Lasseter took over in 2006).

After he realized his dream to release a computer-generated film in *Toy Story*, and reaped the financial and critical success that came with it, Catmull's thoughts quickly turned to how he could sustain the company's success in the long term. He had seen big companies fail before and become victims of their own success. How could he ensure that his company did not meet the same fate? Getting answers to these questions became his next obsession.

Collected in this book are the thoughtful and earnest management insights he has developed over the years, as well as anecdotes from Pixar's own struggles. What's striking is the culture of trust and humility fostered within the company. Honest and candid feedback is valued above all.

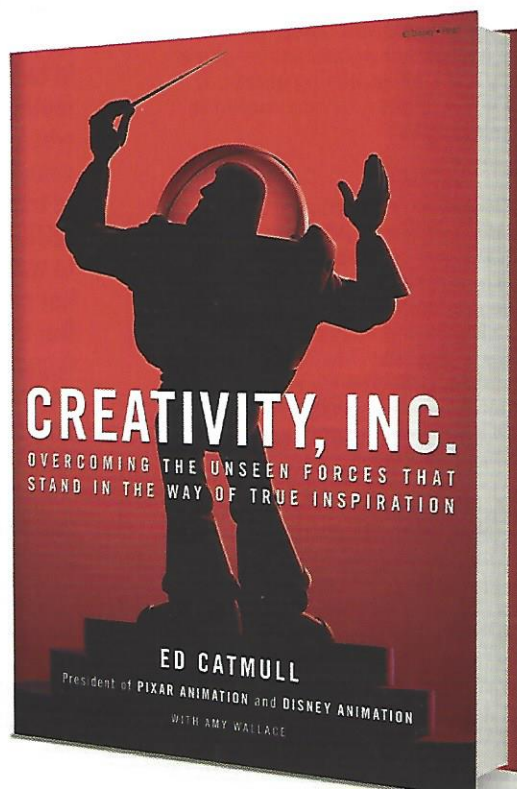
(For example, Pixar holds brainstorming meetings every few months called the "Braintrust," wherein the company's creative leaders meet and exchange views on how to solve problems in a film that's already underway. There's also a healthy acceptance of failure and open-mindedness to "protect the new.")

Since Catmull and Lasseter took over Disney Animation Studios, the company has experienced a resurgence of consecutive hits in *Tangled*, *Wreck-It Ralph*, and *Frozen*. We know Catmull's philosophy works because we've seen the results for ourselves on the big screen. On the page, his words ring with truth and credibility.



BOOK

Author
By Ed Catmull,
Amy Wallace
Publisher
Random House
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SPEED SAYS

Creativity, Inc. is a truly inspiring book and one whose ideas can be applied not just in traditionally creative fields but in all walks of life. We assume Pixar's magic is confined to the screen, but when you read this book, you'll realize that the human

GEEK METER



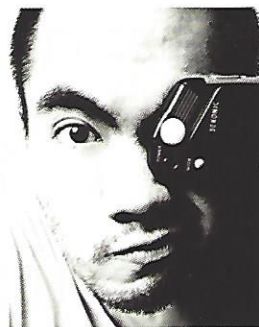
collaboration and ingenuity behind the scenes is just as magical.

Contributors

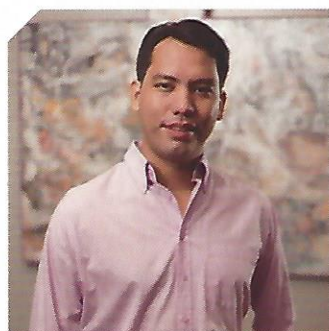


CARLO MA. GUERRERO is a professional photographer and writer whose work has been featured in local magazines. His passion for technology is reflected in his dedication and effort in various online communities and publications. He owns Guerrero Creative Enterprise, a boutique agency that prides itself of a wide range of professional creative, production, marketing, and media resources. In this issue, he writes

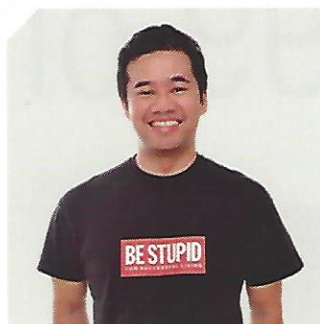
about Tesla's patent giveaway and open source philosophy, and the quest for green vehicles.



RON CRUZ is a freelance everything, and is currently debating whether that is a good or a bad thing. With his substantial amount of free time, he likes to geek it up and play board, card, and online games, sometimes all at once. He enjoys eating pizza and looking at photos of cats on the internet. A shoe lover himself, Ron again lends his photography skills for this issue's feature on sneaker collections.



INIGO S. ROCES, editor of *Manila Bulletin's* Drive section, has been in love with cars for as long as he can remember. His third word, in fact, was "goong-goong," after the sound the Volkswagen engine makes, which through no coincidence was also his first car. Besides autos, Inigo also stays in tune with the latest gaming and tech trends.



MON GUINTO is a banker by profession, with food and travel as his passions. Outside of his crazy office schedule, he tries to hang out and go on trips with his family. He is also a camera and trivia buff, and joins quiz nights for the intellectual stimulation (and for the free nachos).



LOVE-LOVE TIOSECO, the only female superbike racer in the country, is a motorcycle safety advocate. She hosts two motoring TV programs—*Stoptlight TV* and *Manibela*—on UNTV and a motoring radio show called *Inside Motoring* at DZRJ-AM. When she's not riding her bike, attending motoring events, or hosting, she busies herself by hunting for a business of her own.



AISA VALENZUELA has always had a love for books, writing, and technology. By day, she works as an IT project manager (having graduated with such a degree in college). By night, she reads voraciously and, at times, indiscriminately. She is also enrolled in a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program in Writing. She owns two laptops, two smartphones, an iPad, and a Kindle. 'Nuff said.