Imagine a world where creativity is a core social value; where creative play is nurtured in schools, homes and communities everywhere; where all children are makers, and given the skills they need to build the world they imagine.
our story

On the last day of summer through a chance encounter, filmmaker Nirvan Mullick met Caine Monroy, a 9-year-old boy who built an elaborate cardboard arcade inside his dad’s East LA auto parts shop. Nirvan was Caine’s first customer. Amazed by the boy’s creativity, he decided to organize a flash mob of customers to surprise Caine and make his day. Then he made a film about it.

After 8 million online views, ‘Caine’s Arcade’ has been widely cited as one of the most inspirational stories of 2012, igniting a wave of cardboard creativity in classrooms and neighborhoods across the globe.

The Imagination Foundation was born soon after, leading a movement that continues to grow, bringing inspiration, hope and transformation to communities everywhere by fostering child creativity.
“The film recalls universal threads of a great American story: ingenuity, hard work, goodwill, community...”

Christian Science Monitor
our story was called one of 2012’s most inspirational!

GOOD’s Best of 2012 List of the 5 Most Extraordinary Things to Happen in Education
GOOD’s Best of 2012 Visionaries, Organizations and Innovations Changing the Way We Learn
Google’s Zeitgeist 2012 Year in Review
Youtube Rewind 2012 (Global)
Yahoo!’s Inspiring and Astounding Moments of 2012
Buzzfeed’s 17 Kids Who Will Change the World Someday
Mashable’s 14 Most Inspirational Kids of 2012

our mission

Changing the way the world learns

With a generous grant from the Goldhirsh Foundation, the Imagination Foundation launched in Summer 2012 to find, foster and fund creativity and entrepreneurship in children around the world. We want to raise a new generation of innovators and problems solvers who have the tools they need to build the world they imagine.

Our signature program is the Global Cardboard Challenge, and to-date, nearly 250,000 children from 60 countries have participated, using cardboard and recycled materials to build whatever they can dream up.

In 2014, we launched Imagination Chapters, a new and highly scalable model for 21st century education.

Turn the Page and Watch ‘Caine’s Arcade 2: From a Movie to a Movement’
“The kids who are building and sharing their own cardboard creations can instantly see themselves as part of a real movement.”

MacArthur Foundation
what the press is saying

“...a stunning portrayal of a young entrepreneur in action. Where the layman sees a pile of beat up cardboard boxes and old toys, Caine sees an arcade. His sheer inventiveness captured the imagination of dozens of folks in the Forbes offices.” Forbes

“It’s amazing what our children can do when we let them think for themselves... It’s retro and counterintuitive, in an era of Tiger Moms and competitive nursery schools.” Los Angeles Times

“Caine’s story proves that sometimes if you build it – no matter how improbable or crazy or unrealistic it might seem – they actually will come. And that is something worth celebrating...” Bloomberg Business Week

“Caine is an inspiration for entrepreneurs.” The Washington Post

what the world is saying

“For all the detailed theory that underlies this project, what convinces me of its value is that... children in a [refugee] camp in Switzerland... went from out of their minds with boredom to bright eyed enthusiasm... in a matter of minutes.” Regina Mosimann, Switzerland

“Many of our kids live in the cemeteries, sleeping among the tombs here in Makati City... Their world view is very different from other kids. Participating in events like this gives them a wider view of the world and perhaps hope for a better future.” Aina Valencia, Philippines

“There has been shift in my neighborhood... More kids outside creating and repurposing recyclables, and an increase in kid businesses also.” Mindy Soup, St. Louis, MO

“I was a teacher for years...this is truly an innovative and inspiring global phenomenon. The best part is all it takes is recycled stuff. There is such momentum here.” Valerie Levic, Tinton Falls, NJ
why creativity?

The ability to dream, take chances, and make the things we imagine… these are the skills of entrepreneurs, innovators and change makers.

Leaders agree that creativity is the most important skill for the future, but research shows it’s been in serious decline for the last 20 years.

- Creativity is a “next generation” skill critical to future success – economic, social and personal
- It’s the foundation of invention and innovation, required in countless fields, especially STEM
- But it’s declining at an alarming rate, and thought leaders say that the world’s traditional approach to education is a major reason why

What can we do now to help prepare kids for success in 21st century life and work?

“One of the appeals of ‘Caine’s Arcade’ is it demonstrates how deep those natural [creative] powers are.”

Sir Ken Robinson
power of creative play

Children are born “makers.” Building and sharing is fundamental to childhood. We call this Creative Play. We think that by fueling it, we can develop the skills and attitudes children need for the future.

Creative Play begins with inspiration and culminates in the sharing of an original artifact made by the child using whatever tools and materials are available. In this process, kids open up their minds to what’s possible, take chances, solve problems, collaborate and become better creative thinkers and doers.

Creative Play is fundamental to STEM learning as well. It incorporates engineering-thinking even at a very young age. And as kids are introduced to new and diverse materials over time, they begin to construct more robust artifacts and learn more complicated skills and concepts.

Though decades of research supports the power of Creative Play, it’s important to remember it’s a natural process for children, requiring few resources and little facilitation.
CARDBOARD CHALLENGE

Kids build whatever they can dream up out of cardboard, recycled materials and imagination. Inspired by ‘Caine’s Arcade,’ it’s a yearly celebration of creativity and the simple things adults can do to foster it. It’s also a campaign to share the value of Creative Play with communities everywhere. Real life accounts of diverse children and communities from around the world, sharing their inspirational stories of creativity and imagination as they solve problems, overcome challenges and build a better world. Stories inspire action and provide resources to get you started in your community.

IMAGINATION CHAPITERS

Pop-up learning spaces that foster creativity, entrepreneurship and 21st century skills through Creative Play. Working with children weekly, Chapters employ a range of tools and materials, from cardboard to advanced electronics, and can launch anywhere, including schools, libraries and community centers (PreK through HS).
**Purpose**: make things with simple materials and celebrate the value of Creative Play on a global scale in the Fall each year.

**Goal**: to reach 1,000,000 kids in 70 countries by 2017.

#resourceful #play2learn #sustainability #communitybuilding

**Imagination Chapters**

- 60 countries
- 235,000 participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>89,860</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>134,389</td>
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**Purpose**: make anything, anywhere, with a group of kids in a weekly format. Materials and skills advance over time.

**Goal**: scaling from our 31-site pilot in 2014, to 100 sites in 2015, to 1,000 sites in 2016.

#MakerEd #tinker #STEM #engineering #collaboration

Arlington Heights, IL | Billings, MO | Bluffton, SC | Bogotá, Colombia | Brighton, MI | Cape Town, South Africa | Cedar Rapids, IA | Chapel Hill, NC | Charlotte, NC | Coquitlam, BC | Denver, CO | Fate, TX | Indianapolis, IN | Lincoln, NE | Los Angeles, CA | Manchester, United Kingdom | Melbourne, Australia | Mostar, Bosnia & Herzegovina | Philadelphia, PA | Port Alberni, Canada | Sarasota, FL | Sonoma, CA | Westport, CT
meet a few of our friends…

In 2014, we were named **CHAMPION** in the LEGO Challenge to “Re-imagine Learning”!

The LEGO Foundation

RE-iMAGINE LEARNING CHALLENGE

#Play2Learn
Imagine the world we can build!

The mission of the Imagination Foundation is to find, foster and fund creativity and entrepreneurship in children around the world to raise a new generation of innovators and problem solvers who have the tools they need to build the world they imagine.

www.imagination.is