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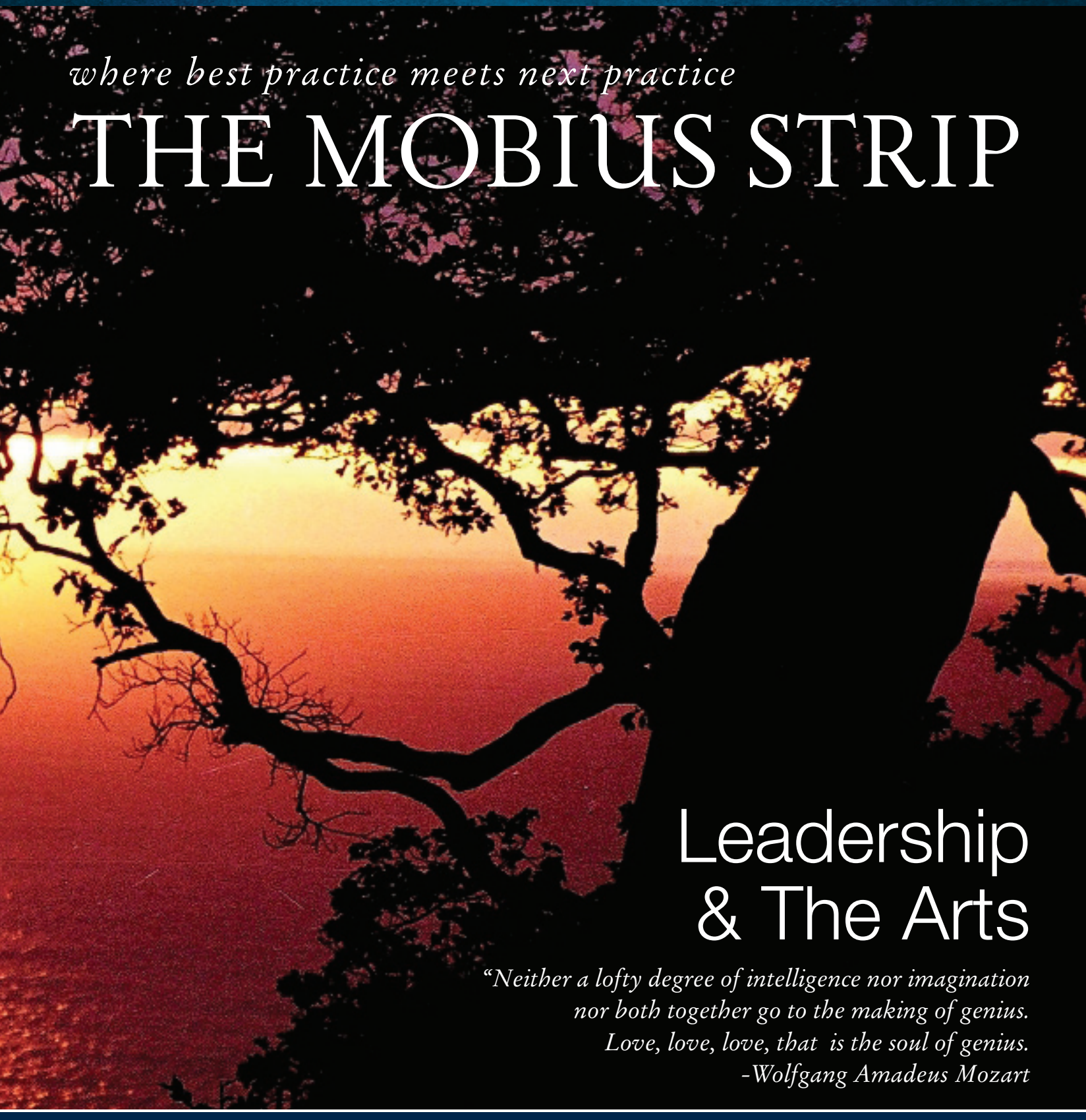

Leadership & The Arts

"Neither a lofty degree of intelligence nor imagination nor both together go to the making of genius. Love, love, love, that is the soul of genius.
-Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

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The Voice of Great Leadership: Evoking the Power of Authentic Presence

By Claude Stein, Mobius Transformational Faculty

Courage and Change

It is July 2000. I'm sitting at a piano in central Europe at the invitation of an engineering firm with 60+ billion Euros in revenue, working with their senior management team, asking them to take risks to free their most authentic voice.

They are in a difficult situation. Their stock is depressed and they have hired a new head of training to redesign their leadership programs. He has invited me to come and do a program using singing to "get them to feel something below their noses" - to be more emotional, more passionate, more real. At first there is resistance. I quickly take failure off the table, inviting them to sing poorly … and to sing loudly. There is some laughter and we begin with a simple warm-up. Soon they volunteer lyrics that articulate the qualities of great leadership. By the second evening, they're belting out favorite tunes. By the third day, someone has found a guitar and remarks "we haven't felt this much camaraderie since we were youths." The group as a whole becomes visibly more alive and engaged in their daily programs. Their spirits are higher and they have become optimistic. Finally, at the end of the week they take to a stage to accept their completion certificates. But suddenly the celebration comes to a halt. The manager of operations in one of their largest countries grabs the microphone: "We must revisit our plans and build our nuclear plants further away from populated areas. It's not safe enough." He reminds the group that the firm's vision explicitly states that they maintain "the highest commitment to ethical and responsible actions."

I was utterly amazed at the risk he took to confront the group like that: upending such an enormous project during the final celebration. Freeing his singing voice with mission driven lyrics and emotion had awakened a profound voice of responsibility and leadership.

Later that night, when I got back to my room, I thought about the courage each of them showed when they dropped their guard and sang from the heart, even though their voices were untrained and their corporate culture constrained. I thought about the necessity of taking brave and uncharted risks to move forward authentically - and how finding one's true voice can change the world.

Music and Methodology

What happened during those five days of what I call "Natural Singing," that is, singing with a more authentic intention, was remarkable. There were exercises and songs with no requirement to sing well. Little by little you could see the fears melt in the absence of criticism and feel the quality of presence and connection evolve. I used call and response exercises to both reframe the challenges and give voice to the positive values they had articulated on day one. These are exercises where I sing out a relevant phrase and the group echoes it. The very short, single line affirmations, set amid well-chosen tonalities on the piano, got them back in touch with their corporate mission and unleashed powerful qualities. The words they sang gave voice to concepts of encouragement, pride, respect, innovation and accountability. Some lines were defiant, some humorous, some had a blues feel and some were uplifting anthems. I worked until people were clearly touched by the words they were singing.

Then, I began individual coaching. I helped each person identify a core message which, when cultivated, gave far greater meaning to their words. There were dramatic shifts in dynamics, confidence and charisma. The group became fascinated and fully engaged with each other's growth as they witnessed new aliveness, spontaneous gestures and compelling stage presence unfolding right in front of them. The room was filled with smiles and applause amidst the triumphant breakthroughs. I had encouraged them to move beyond fear of judgment, to step outside the box and allow their full voice to be heard. They were re-connecting with what fueled their passion in the first place.

The Power of Vulnerability

Imagine the skeptical reaction of senior management teams when they find out they have been taken away from their desks in order to sing in front of each other! When clients discover I use singing as a tool for accelerating the growth of leader-

Knowing the quality of great leadership that each individual wants to bring forth, I can compose a simple line of song to sing, and frame it with an evocative context at the piano.

ship and personal presence, I often hear things like "You're not going to make *me* sing, are you? I'm TONE-DEAF!" and "What does this have to do with the bottom line?" Often there is a look of panic. Dr. Robert Lengel, founder of the Center for Professional Excellence, told me he believes these programs can present more risk than high ropes courses. This is because singing is so personally revealing – and our voices are so closely tied to our self-image that when we sing solo in public, we are vulnerable. We are vulnerable, but with the potential to be enormously powerful.

Singing easily touches our emotions. This is precisely what makes it such a good tool to call forth authentic leadership. We can become real, take risks and open our mouths: connecting thoughts, hearts and stance. By taking risks and being real we motivate others and create change. We become stronger leaders. But, furthermore, as groups rally in support of one another they also create a wonderful culture of empowerment. A culture that encourages each and every person in the room to rise up with a strong voice. Whether we sing or provide the option of speaking is up to the corporate leader who is sponsoring the program. But whichever mode of expression, we move to a much deeper level of communication and engagement.

The Technology of Authenticity

Although we are using voice and music as a tool, many people quickly forget that we are singing any note, any key, as a way to tap into feelings, presence and right brain activity - and not to become good performers. They fall into the trap of striving to sing well. And this is how our authenticity and power gets derailed. We can hear the notes go off key when we are too self-conscious. This ego and fear driven agenda of wanting to do well hijacks our original intention and fullest possibilities. Some of this is survival instinct: to achieve success and avoid failure, shame and embarrassment. We do this even at the potential cost of losing our authentic selves. But it can also be a defense mechanism that conceals our true selves.

Authenticity stems from a re-energized connection with our original desire – something I like to call a "core" intention. You could define it as the change you would like to bring. In Natural Singing, it is the intention that justifies the lyric and organically drives the dynamics of self-expression: tone, volume, pacing, inflection, eye contact and gestures. These are the things that inspire trust, inform presence, create engagement and a successful presentation of one's message.

Let me give you an example: Someone wants to sing a lullaby to their child but can't/won't, because they don't think they have a good voice or the right words. Their primary agenda has become sounding "good." But the original change they wanted to bring was an expression of peace, gentleness and safety to the child. If they stayed with that more authentic intention, every note they sang, no matter in or out of tune, would bring those heartfelt qualities forth.

Finding Core Intention

A client of mine from a Fortune 500 firm wanted to sell a multi-million dollar website to the state of Nebraska. She had been through presentation coaching courses all of her career. Here she was, with a small stack of index cards in hand and a tried and true method of triangulating all of her language towards the benefits of her value proposition. She was using an approach that was formulaic, that curtailed the richness of her authenticity. After five minutes of some persistent detective work I discovered the core reason she loved what she was doing was that she believed in her heart that "computers bring us all closer together." I asked her to be convincing, to persuade with a whisper, then speak and then sing this core belief while I played the piano. Then we launched into the prepared presentation.

In the end she went to that meeting with only one index card sitting on her podium: "Computers bring us all closer together." This acted as the driver of her energy, her spirit, the dynamics of her voice, her comfort and confidence and interestingly enough, her knowledge capital. The comment from her boss was "That was the most articulate you have ever been." The presentation was a success and the sale went through. When we are true to our most authentic intention, comfortable being seen and unafraid to support our

words with genuine emotion, we become far more persuasive and charismatic.

Storytelling

I was coaching a leadership team at N.A.S.A. to improve their ability to tell the N.A.S.A. story. Not just the story of scientific discoveries, moon landings or the exploration of Mars, but rather the unequivocally relevant story of benefits reaped here on Earth: fire retardant uniforms for firefighters, advanced imaging for early cancer detection and cat scans, cutting edge solar panel technologies. The list goes on and on and yet it's not the story that is often heard when we talk about the benefits of investing in space exploration. Members of the leadership team took the stage with their memorized presentations. One by one, I asked each of them again and again what really excited them about why they were there and what got them into science.

Then, by cultivating the energy of that inspiration and seeding it through their prepared language, each person became compelling and got spontaneous positive feedback. Their spirit was felt. They were better storytellers because they were THEMSELVES. They were in the moment. Emotional. Connected. Real. The common feedback was how people got to really know each other. The room was filled with the pride they took in their noble achievements and the excitement of being pioneers at the leading frontiers of space exploration.

Passion and Presence

Several years ago I had the privilege to coach a congressman on his floor speech in the House of Representatives. He had been successful in gaining compensation for victims of Agent Orange and now was looking to do the same for Gulf War Syndrome victims. Sadly, he had been suffering from Parkinson's disease. His voice was debilitated and not projecting with much resonance or volume. It was time to call in his original motivation: the core intention. The reason that he was so passionate in the service of these ailing veterans was that he had an enormous sense of duty and was himself at one time on the battlefield. After some digging, tears came into his eyes as he exclaimed, "We all have blood on our hands."

The results of embedding this passion into his speech as subtext brought fire into his voice, conviction into his body and as a result he deeply impacted his audience. Votes were influenced. He came alive bringing forth the change he wanted to see in the room.

Reconnecting to Mission

Theses stories highlight a theme in which corporate, community and personal mission are interwoven and elevated. At the leadership academy of a world-renowned hospital, we begin with the basics of vocal physiology and some exercises to warm up, build confidence and project. I give tips for correcting nasality, shrillness, softness, breathiness, monotones, memorization, etc. Then, we focus the authentic intention, aligning with the hospital's mission statement: "… to deliver the very best health care in a safe, compassionate environment …" As participants give their presentations, passion and personal presence emerge as they communicate facts and information. By day's end all are more relaxed and confident, engaged and re-energized.

At a telecommunications company with 55 million customers there were marketing research presentations with hundreds of data points. Dry as a bone right? Not after singing their true credo. When the speakers conveyed their honest desire to support their customers with the finest possible service, their words came to life. The senior VP in charge of the group said they were "the best presentations the team has ever given."

There was a manufacturing crisis at a major pharmaceutical company. Confidence had been shattered, trust broken. My colleague and I walked into a room filled with heavy energy. We asked the group to identify the key aspects of the company that they were proud of. Weaving those aspects into their presentations worked wonderfully. Smiles emerged and pacing picked up. Their speaking revealed

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their personalities and hope was restored.

At the 5th largest nuclear company, spirits were low as they were coming off some of the largest fines in history from the nuclear regulatory commission. All of their training had been geared towards identifying problems and possible dangers in such a high-risk environment. After coaching each executive in front of the group, I required all feedback to be positive. They refocused their listening on the improvement in each voice and presentation. By the end of the morning their excitement was palpable as they re-energized around their great skills and their sense of purpose. They re-engaged as individuals and as a team.

Intention as a Driver

Why is this? Why does a core intention so influence tone, tempo, volume and presence? Why and how can it bring about such an organic, trustworthy and engaging flow?

Most speech and presentation coaches direct people from what I call the outside – in. "Drop your jaw." "Speak from the diaphragm." "Lower your pitch." "Now, raise your pitch." "Pause here." "Do this with your hands." "Emphasize that line." "Find four friendly faces in the audience to look at." "Choose different parts of the stage for fundamental points." It's your typical presentation coaching. But it's only from the outside in.

I have coached at the Juilliard School, the New York Actors Institute, the National Speakers Association and worked with artists on every major record label. I also teach from the outside in. I can help you to stay hydrated longer, breathe from the diaphragm, create more resonance, better diction and increase projection. There are techniques to eliminate a monotone, to speak through a cold, to quiet a racing heart and to memorize a text. However, the effectiveness of all these techniques PALES in comparison to working from the inside - out.

Your primary intention is the key driver of the sound and dynamics of your voice. When there's a crisis, we use better diction. When you need a cab in New York City, a loud voice comes out. When the umpire misses a call, ditto. You don't stand there, thinking about dropping your thyroid cartilage (voice box), creating space in your pharynx (for resonance), trilling your lips or articulating your consonants. You just want the cab. You just want the kid to fall asleep with the lullaby.

Whether we choose to use whispering, speaking, or singing as a way to energize and bring emotion to our core intention (the change we wish to bring), once we do, we imbue our speaking voices with an exquisite variety of organic dynamics from the inside-out.

Why Singing?

Singing is particularly effective as a tool for building presence. For the most part, words tend to derive meaning from their context. Language plus context yields meaning. Try saying the word "right" a few ways and you'll see what I mean: "Yeah. Right. You want me to sing an operatic solo in perfect 18th century Italian." Or, "Riiiiiight. I see what you're saying."

The secret lies in how music provides an enormous variety of contexts for meaning and how it triggers emotion. We have an endless assortment of rhythms and harmonies at work that put us in touch with our feelings and deeper meaning. Music accesses emotions and passion more readily and reliably than speaking which can often be purely informational and conceptual. As both head and heart align the results are inspiring. When we sing in front of others we are quite vulnerable, thus it provides the perfect opportunity for risk-taking, acceptance, group support and personal triumph.

I regularly teach a program for change leaders who are turbo-charging a large operational transformation at a chemical company. They sing about their aspirations for the organization but they also sing their own leadership song - sometimes bold, sometimes animated and sometimes terribly tender. The audience encourages each participant, taking the stage one at a time over the course of the evening to sing and receive coaching. This uncritical support creates the empowering space where people can emerge as stronger leaders. Each one becomes more open, more transparent and impactful with this permission from the group, the role modeling of their own senior leaders and some guidance from me. I am always touched by the joy and collective, humanistic possibility that is unleashed for the organization in these sessions. The voice holds the key to their full leadership presence.

Whole Mind

Musical arrangements set evocative contexts for language. We have the discursive, concrete, conceptual

world of words (left brain), interacting with the feel, sound, expressive world of the music (right brain). So if a particular quality or message is challenging, I can support that expression by the way I play the piano (context) and offer a simple lyric in call and response style. Knowing the quality of great leadership that each individual wants to bring forth, I compose a simple line of song to sing and frame it with an evocative context at the piano. I also step in with some practice exercises. It takes a remarkably short time to get this kind of alignment going. Whether it is a small group or an interactive keynote with hundreds of people, these energetic shifts occur with amazing speed.

The Result

Groups bond on a deep and common ground as we become more of who we really are. We have aligned our inner and outer message: head, heart and mission. Voices ring out effortlessly, fear-less-ly and honestly. Casual at times, poignant at times, but absolutely, undeniably real, authentic and inspiring. Spirits are lifted. Courage is fostered. Communication is clearer. Innovative ideas come out of the quiet person who is no longer captive to their shyness, or from the brusque speaker driven by ego who is no longer controlling and cut off. People risk being seen and heard. They are creative, highly competent, vulnerable and powerful. They become animated and excited about their work. They give more of themselves. They create stronger leaders around them. They have renewed confidence and their talents are better leveraged. And having evoked the power of authentic presence, they re-engage with the world, speaking with the voice of great leadership. ■

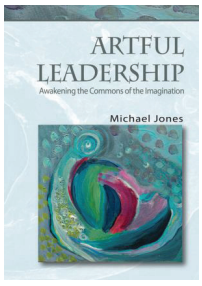
Claude Stein, Mobius Expressive Arts Faculty, is an internationally celebrated voice and performance coach with 32 years of experience. His VoiceLEADER programs have been offered in the U.S. House of Representatives and to senior management at Siemens, JPMorgan, Sprint, General Electric, N.A.S.A., Vistage International, Johnson & Johnson, Genzyme, The Hartford, Altria, the Center for Creative Leadership, Maersk Shipping, N.Y.U., PixelMEDIA,the MIT Sloan School of Management, The Conference Board, Zachry Construction, the Young President's Organization and the Women's Leadership Forum. He has been a main stage keynote speaker for the National Speakers Association, the International Coaches Federation, The Creative Problem Solving Institute, The Qualitative Research Consultants Organization, the Global Sufficiency Network and the California Workforce Association.

Claude is also a Multi-Platinum award winning voice coach whose private clients include artists on Atlantic, Island, Elektra, Sony, Virgin, Polygram, Warner Bros., R.C.A. and M.C.A. Records. His Natural Singer Workshops have been presented at the Juilliard School, the NYU Music Therapy Graduate Program, the Rubin Academy of Music and Dance in Jerusalem, the New York Open Center and The Actors Institute. Pro-Bono programs have been offered at Every Voice Counts for disadvantaged youth in Australia, the Mastery Foundation leadership forums for Arab and Israeli community activists and Catholic and Protestant community leaders in Belfast, Ireland, and the Global Sufficiency Summit.

The approach Claude developed blends easy-to-learn vocal skills with the secret techniques of professional performers who embody power, creativity and authenticity. It is an innovative and highly experiential method which engages both the right and left brain, and that quickly empowers both beginners and professionals alike. The results have received rave reviews from top industry experts in the fields of communication, healing, and creativity.

He is on the perennial faculty of the Massachusetts General Hospital Leadership Academy, the Center for Professional Excellence, the Omega Institute, Esalen, the New York Open Center, and the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health. He studied composition and conducting at Bard College, vocal physiology with the Voice Foundation at Jefferson Medical College, performance coaching at The Actors Institute, and vocal technique with several of New York's premier opera and rock and roll instructors.

Artful Leadership



by Michael Jones, Pianist, Leadership Expert and Mobius Expressive Arts Faculty

A Third Way of Knowing

Not all those who wander are lost.
– JR Tolkien

Robert M. Ingle, in an article in Scientific American entitled "Life in an Estuary" writes, "Life in an estuary may be rich but it is also almost inconceivably dangerous… twice each day the ebb and flow of the tide drastically alters the conditions of life, sometimes stranding whole populations to die."

Leading in turbulent times is much like living at the moving edge of a salt marsh: survival requires extraordinary presence and adaptability, and flourishing requires something even more. As leaders today, we must be willing to suspend our dependence on past knowledge in favor of being fully alert to what is emerging before us. Yesterday's route home is of little use when faced with the need to move more quickly than the tides. Only in being alert to new possibilities and dimensions may we navigate wisely, finding natural, unique, even unrepeatable ways of dealing with the challenges of leadership and governance.

The unpredictability of these sweeping changes suggests that, beyond both the cognitive and social sciences, we need a third way of knowing – what physicist David Bohm describes as 'a subtle intelligence' that seeks the wholeness behind all things, and invites into awareness whatever might normally seem vague, ambiguous or unclear. The root of subtle is subtex, which means 'finely woven.' This third way of knowing is at once refined, delicate and indefinable. It is a kind of intelligence that can hold in awareness the things that slip by us when we rely too much on memory or past knowledge. It is also an intelligence that loves all that does not yet exist.

We need to understand this subtle intelligence not as a separate mental function, but rather as the source of an imaginative response to our world. As a kind of sense organ, the imagination reaches out and makes tentative contact with wholeness – that is, the things of an order larger than we can see directly – making visible that which is hidden, so as to begin to draw into awareness that which cannot yet be heard or seen.

More than almost any other faculty, the capacity to sense these almost indiscernible forces is essential to navigating our uncertain and changeable world. By developing this ability, we reawaken our relationship to our imagination, which makes available the twin gifts of intuition and inspiration. Together these serve as an effective counterpoint to the more usual mechanistic view of the world.

This is, of course, a skill-set that takes time to mature; it is not enough to summon our capacity for insight only when we are quiet or deeply engaged. In the time ahead, the most valuable leaders will be those who see what others don't yet see and think what others are not yet thinking. Merely to say, "I didn't see it coming," is not an effective strategy for survival in the tides of change.

While not entirely common, these ideas are slowly taking root alongside the more conventional inventory of today's leadership wisdom. I shared many of the ideas in this book with John, a consulting client and vice president of marketing and sales for a large international pharmaceuticals company, whom I met while working on this manuscript. He knew the territory well from his own experience. As he insightfully put it, 'Things are changing so quickly now that if I already know where I am going, it is probably not worth getting there.' The creative conversations he and I had about this have infused much of this work.

On one of our frequent walks I asked John what he saw as the leading edge of leadership. "When I think of it," he reflected, "truly outstanding leaders are not remembered largely for their professional, technical or cost-cutting skills, but for their wisdom, presence, intuition and artistry. These are the qualities that prepare them for making an organic response to critical situations.

Technical knowledge is important, but it is only part of the story; listening, getting a 'feeling' for things and engaging others in imagining possibilities, is the larger part of it. So much of a leader's work today is not about playing the notes but listening for what's emerging in the space between."

This idea of 'the space between' brings to mind the words of Thomas Merton, who claimed, "There is in all things…a hidden wholeness." The possibility that, just back of our human world, there exists a more-than-human sphere – an area of potential in the spaces between and around things – is an intriguing one. For John, it ran contrary to what he had been taught in business school. His curiosity about how we may engage a sense of wholeness to find this bridge between the visible and invisible was the starting point for many explorations. Often our

informal conversations took place over lunch, complemented by long walks in a lakeside park.

Our considerations were influenced by the elemental beauty of our surroundings; the sun, the wind, and the waves that washed along the shore served to balance our work. Our walks were a reminder not only that we share with the land a reciprocal arrangement of care, but also that what we were trying to be faithful to was not the examination of a set of finished facts, but to an unfolding story. It is a narrative that only makes sense when it is enlivened by the elemental presence of wind, water, sun, rain, trees and rocks. It is a story that could only be told while walking, for every gust of wind helped us to think as nature thinks – each moment evolving, organic, innovative and unique.

John spent what little free time he had reading and thinking about reimagining leadership in the context of a world engaged in constant and disruptive change. The image of tidal marshes resonated very strongly with him. He believed the major challenges facing leaders today were not technical but transformational, based more in transforming situations than fixing them. He anticipated that leaders would need forums where they might explore the dimensions of their own subtle nature. This would include honest personal investigation of such questions as: Who am I really? Where is home? What is my relationship with beauty? Where do I go for inspiration? How can I serve the well-being of the whole?

As John and I talked over time, it became clear to both of us that there are two predominant leadership stories today. The first utilizes management sciences to ensure the integrity of organizational structures and processes and to develop the cognitive intelligence of leaders. In order to build relationships, enhance communication skills and forge commitments, this journey has depended largely on the application of the social sciences.

"Yet," as John pointed out, "even though these two approaches offer many benefits, management and social sciences alone aren't going to help leaders like me who get overwhelmed by the pace of change."

And so began another conversation. "It's true," I said. "As you have highlighted, for the things that really matter we often can't know with absolute certainty where we are going until after we have arrived. By necessity our actions need to be spontaneous and improvised, and for that we need a third way of leadership. It needs to be grounded in a new form of intelligence – one based in what you might call an engaged imagination. This can help us 'sense' more deeply into the reality of our experience so we can draw into awareness whatever is unclear, clarify it and express it in a fresh and evocative way."

"And," John said, "for most of us leaders this is as unsettling as it is useful." Despite his trepidation, John was excited to explore the possibility that the artist's gifts of awareness and sensory ability might blend into the field of leadership. He was hungry for the kinds of ideas and experiences that would further nourish his own curiosity. Having earned his own MBA several years before, he already knew that leaders need to establish competence in the core areas of management, but he also saw that this in itself is not enough.

Like many executives, John made a distinction between managers and leaders. For him, the first is one who predominantly occupies an organizational role. The second, a true leader, is anyone who is committed to living a complete life, regardless of organizational function. In this context, he considered such qualities as uniqueness, beauty, home, quality of place, and the ability to find one's signature voice to be in the domain of leadership. He also believed that considerations about these areas need to be kept in the forefront of leadership thinking, not only because these explorations inspire leaders, but also because they inspire the communities and organizations they lead.

Like John, I see such meditations as a crucial part of a leader's responsibility. I believe there is a growing need for new forms of social space that make possible the exploration of deeper questions – ones that bring together functional and social considerations with the aesthetic. Effective leaders need to able to both create such spaces and participate in them. Also, leaders themselves must be committed to gaining a better understanding of their own needs and wants as they reflect on the inner core of their nature, and such considerations naturally lend themselves to this kind of work. Connecting this range of leadership function to a language of community and of the common good puts unique demands on leaders, particularly those who have largely defined their role more strictly in the context of strategic priorities and performance goals. This is why I always learned from my conversations with John. Like me, he was very passionate about these ideas and wanted to make visible in his own practice the underlying principles of this more 'organic' form of leadership. He also had a keen sense of the need for balance between the public and the personal self. He believed that the application of these principles was directly related to the development of the imagination, and particularly to those virtues of presence, gifts, beauty, grace

and voice that make up the realm of the imagination. He was convinced that leaders cannot truly engage in cultural or social change unless they have first re- imagined their own life and work.

"When I hear you describe the imagination's influence I translate it into leadership language" John said "What you call gifts corresponds with qualities of identity, integrity and being true to one's self; beauty corresponds to perception and adaptiveness, the ability to recognize one's own home and make finely tuned adjustments quickly; grace is related to the emergence of shared meaning; and voice is the ability to know your own experience and articulate it clearly."

"That's a great translation," I said, "and I'm sure you'll find that the crossover between artistic endeavour and leadership ability is a natural one."

John was particularly intrigued by the idea that these aesthetic principles were grounded in ancient practices that contributed to the coherence, pattern and order of complex and successful communities for thousands of years. Given his background, John's openness symbolizes a new stage in leadership and human development. For any true leader, it begins with an essential humility as we realize how much we don't know. For John, the revelation of 'not knowing' was an ongoing struggle. As he often commented, "I get paid for knowing, not for not knowing!"

Yet he recognized that these virtues live in the spaces between us, spaces that can never be adequately defined or known. He also sensed that they may be the source of deep reserves of energy that could revitalize our currentday organizations and communities. It was this openness to 'not knowing' that made him into the effective leader he was. It was also this acceptance of himself as a constant and curious learner that helped him acknowledge the process of becoming – and exploring the space between – not as a temporary condition but as a permanent state of being.

The Space Between – Leadership and Personal Artistry: Reverence for the Moment

"When I think of this process of becoming," John once said, "it seems to involve a shift of attention from goals and outcomes to means and processes – to reverence for each moment. Reverence opens the way to respect, and it is difficult to generate respect when your mind is set on a narrow set of goals."

"Yes," I said. "Years ago I attended a piano concert performed by Don Shirley. What I remember most were his first three notes. They had such a quality of attention to them. It is as if it had taken him his whole life to arrive at this place and at this moment. In addition to the sound of the note itself I also heard in them a reverence for the audience, the auditorium, the other musicians – even the rainy weather outside. Often in the presence of a musician or speaker you feel 'played to' but he offered something more. We felt held in a common field of appreciation, a moment to pause and listen and to find one another in a spirit of neutrality and openness."

"For me, this is where the life of the leader and the artist intersect," John said. "Leaders can learn a lot from artists about respect for the moment, of pausing and listening for the spaces between the notes. In leaders' terms, it's the space between the words. Sometimes leaders are so focused on outcomes that they can't leave space to listen to other points of view; their mind is already made up. They know where they want to go and only want help to get there."

"That's what impressed me with that piano concert," I said, "he wasn't trying to get somewhere. Too often we miss the greater potential that attention to the moment might bring. If the more technically based form of leadership is built around realizing goals, the other, more artistic way is constructed around a series of moments in a flow of experience that leads towards a sense of wholeness and a less divided life. To find these moments we need to step off the path of our own habits and routines."

"That's true," said John. "These moments build up through a precision of listening and seeing. I sense that this is a gradual awakening of attention – of bringing back from sleep such elemental aspects of the human experience as our relationship with nature, as well as with poetry, dance, music and the spoken word – that helps us awaken this inner perception."

"And when we have that experience with art," I said, "then we can grow out from it to bring a similar quality of attention in other things later on."

What John had been outlining could be considered the pure expressions of reverence: times almost outside of time that serve to amplify the moment in a

way that helps us more deeply perceive and respect what is present. This is what these experiences teach us – how to be with that which we cannot define or fully understand.

As we shared these ideas I recalled the words of poet W.S. Merwin, who reminds us that: "If you can get one moment right, it will tell you the whole thing. And that's true of your own life – each moment is absolutely separate and unique and it contains your entire life." (Merwin, 2005: 39)

Merwin's words also find an echo in those of Bob Dylan, who said, in explaining his being absorbed as a teenager in the music of Woody Guthrie, "You could listen to one of his songs and learn how to live."

For leaders this means seeing ourselves as artists, where the first few actions taken are like the brush strokes of a painter – each carrying the destiny for all that will follow. Leaders who can shift their attention from goals to a respect for the unfolding of a moment will find within it a hologram revealing the pattern of the whole.

"What this means for me," John said, "is that when I'm looking at something like a leaf, for example" – and he took hold of one in a tree nearby – "I can either analyse this object as inert and in its finished state or see it as continually coming into being."

"Yes," I said, "and by seeing it as a process rather than as a thing changes our relationship to it. It draws us into this more subtle intelligence because it is reciprocal. The only way we can know it is to also be known by it. As I suggested earlier, this intelligence is tuned to relationship. And it loves what does not yet exist. So we can analyse and make concrete our concept of the leaf, or we can participate with its continuous unfolding as something organic. In this way, its wholeness will become more and more visible to us over time." In this newfound awareness we may be more reluctant to impose our will on things and instead become curious to discover what the moment is trying to tell us. Engaging in the moment does not necessarily mean trying to change or even interpret or understand it. Acting organically begins by being with the other and sensing into the nature of what is there. For example, an artist's sensibility will cause us to ask about a moment's atmosphere, how alive it feels, what story it is telling, what we want from it, and what it wants from us. Inquiring into the nature of the moment invites responses that are quite different and more reciprocal than those that occur when we try to impose our will upon it.

John laughed.

"I initially came here expecting to talk over some business problems with you," he said. "But I'm beginning to think that the root of these problems has to do with what you just said – too often I try to analyse and fix a situation without taking time for reverence – that is, to experience and participate in what it is trying to tell me." John paused for a moment then said, "Maybe what we need are fewer planners and more 'perceivers' – leaders who can take in the full and immense complexity of events."

Living Into the Question

This was indeed at the root of John's dilemma. His training had prepared him to plan, control, fix, measure, evaluate and problem-solve – skills well suited to the kinds of situations that arise in a more stable and predictable world. These very skills, however, kept him from being fully present to the space between, and to fully experience those valued moments that would bring him closer to a sense of being at home within himself and his world. This led John to ask, "How do we preserve these moments, when there is such a pressure for executing planned action and meeting anticipated results?"

"By living in the question," I answered.

"You'll need to explain," said John.

Successful artists understand what it means to 'live in the question'. As an improvisational pianist I have learned that when I am no longer 'in the question' – when I stop exploring and settle for what my memory has to offer – then the music stops as well. So to attend to the moment, artists devote as much of their attention to staying in the questions as they do to the mechanics of their craft. They realize that there is a holographic quality to the imagination. Again, if they can get one moment right; that is, if they can find the right phrasing or starting image, as Don Shirley did, then their perception for seeing the whole in a vital new way is heightened.

For example, an artist may ask, "Is what I am doing leading me to feeling more alive? Does it hold my interest and curiosity? Does it express beauty in a unique and original way? Does it lead me to feeling more nourished and engaged? Does it capture or express the moment in a way that feels right and true? And does it connect me in some way to a larger sense of the whole?" Such questions are answered more fully at the sensory level than the intellectual. Sculptor Henry Moore, in a conversation with poet Donald Hall, said this of life-guiding questions: "The secret of life is to have a question or task, something you devote your entire life to, something you bring everything to, every minute of the day of your whole life and the most important thing is – it must be something you cannot possibly do!" (Hall,1993:54)

"To see my entire life in the context of a question," John said, "is both profound and overwhelming."

"It helps if we begin with finding a path to the question and following it," I replied. "That is, we may begin with a sense of the whole, knowing that often it is not very clear. Instead it may be fuzzy and vague, more like a feeling, sensation or impression. Beginning with this awareness deepens our relationship with the question. It nurtures an inquiring state of mind."

"I notice you have used the word sense instead of thought – what's your reason for that?" John asked.

"Whatever we hold in our intellect probably started as sensation. Artists by necessity need to be masters in this range, because they are always working with the unknown. To find their way, artists must pay attention in each moment. And while there may be an overall sense of the whole, the artist's central focus is on making infinite aesthetic choices as to how to proceed slowly, step by step, towards something that feels right – something that, through conscious awareness, is being made more coherent and whole. But it is only after you have taken the first step that you find the next."

"So let me be clear about what you mean," John said. "You're saying that the space between only exists in the moment. It cannot be planned in advance."

"That's right."

"This would suggest a new vision for leaders," John said. "As I think of this way of seeing things, I believe that it offers a more accurate reading of the needs of the situation than a plan or prescription that has been formulated in advance."

"Yes," I said, "It gives us a suppleness of mind, and with it, the ability to make very finely-tuned adjustments, each instantaneously calibrated to the moment – something we will need in order to meet a world that is changing so quickly. This approach also helps us suspend the need for judgment or certainty. Instead we can hold back, pause and wonder."

John reflected for a moment. "I believe that would mean we need to become servants to the question rather than masters over it. To be reverent is to serve the moment, to be open to its changing form, isn't it?"

"Yes!" I laughed.

"This is a great distinction. To be 'master over the question' likely suggests that we think we already have the answer and just need to bring others around to it. It directs our attention to the solution rather than the inquiry. But to be a servant to the question… well, that suggests being willing to live deeply into the uncertainty of the question itself, doesn't it? When we can be tentative and fluid with the question rather than absolutely certain and fixed in our response, we discover a field large enough to wander in. It also teaches us something about being vulnerable in that we cannot control where the question will lead us."

"That's it!" John said. "It's exactly what I've been thinking lately. This letting go, allowing something other – a question, a momentary impulse, something unexpected that seems outside the habitual. It's what brings us closer to the power of creation. All this, despite the fact that as leaders, we are so impatient with questions and seek closure through quick, serviceable answers!"

As we continued to walk and talk together I was pleased to notice how easily John and I were setting a template for our conversations. The root of conversation is 'convers', which means, 'to turn together'. The ideas we had been exploring about attending to the moment and living into the larger questions were helping us to recover the very attention needed to re-imagine the place of leadership. It was apparent to both of us that these insights would not come ready-made. Instead, the reality we were exploring was as fluid and ephemeral as the beauty of the scenery at the periphery of our attention, drifting in and out of our awareness. Much of it would be easily missed if we were not attentive to impressions that were floating in the spaces between.

"I find it reassuring," John said, his eyes brightening, "to know that we innately possess the capacity of awareness to navigate the unknown. But unlike the other intelligences – managerial and social-science based – I have the impression that this subtle intelligence, because it is a property of the imagination, will not tell us what to do and therefore remains little understood."

"Yes," I replied. "And at the same time it is vital. If we cannot look and listen well – that is, if we don't try to see things whole – then we begin to disown ourselves."

John shook his head. "This happens so much at work. People will not own the authority of their own experience. They are always looking out to see what others think and try to match their thinking to that. It's as if they don't trust themselves, as if they are not at home in their own skins. People have so much to offer but there must be something we do that inhibits them from speaking out."

"I wonder, if the beginning question we need to ask is, 'Where is home and how do we find our way there?'" I said.

Finding Our Way Home

In the absence of a sense of belonging, including a sense of home in corporate culture, as organizational issues have grow in complexity, most of us fail to grow in presence to adequately meet the underlying needs of today's situations. Too often, instead of slowing down to reflect and gain a deeper perspective from our own direct expe-

rience, we get busier. When we adopt the common belief that any action is better than no action, we accelerate the cycle of cause and effect, which leads to solutions that often prove, in hindsight, to have been based on an historical perspective that is reflexive and overly simplistic.

"I believe the question of home has everything to do with what you said about looking, listening, and feeling what is alive in us in each moment." John said. "This is what brings us closer to 'home', and I think it is what you mean by listening. We cannot listen well unless we are 'at home' and present with ourselves."

"Yes," I said. "I also wonder if most leadership failure can be attributed, not to a lack of knowledge or resources, but rather to a failure of presence. Despite the proliferation of theoretical concepts, models, knowledge and technology, we have not developed the corresponding imaginative capacities to see the overall pattern."

"I agree," John said. "But when we get so far off track, how do we find our way back?"

I think home is a unique place for each of us and we recognize it when we are there. I remember a beautiful line from a Robert Frost poem:

"Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in."

Our conversation had opened the possibility that we would need to shift our focus from problem solving to problem discovering. When we frame issues in the context of finding the right questions, it slows our impulse to action and invites a renewed focus on creating a home for the question – that is, of actually taking the question in. These kinds of questions engage the imagination and serve as powerful attractors, drawing insights that are often beyond what we could foresee. In this sense, a leader's greatest asset is not technical knowledge but rather the commitment and curiosity to ask the kinds of questions that invite others to suspend what is familiar in order to see and hear with fresh eyes and ears.

"This curiosity cannot be trained into us, can it? " John wondered aloud.

"You're right," I replied. "It is already in us and needs only to be evoked."

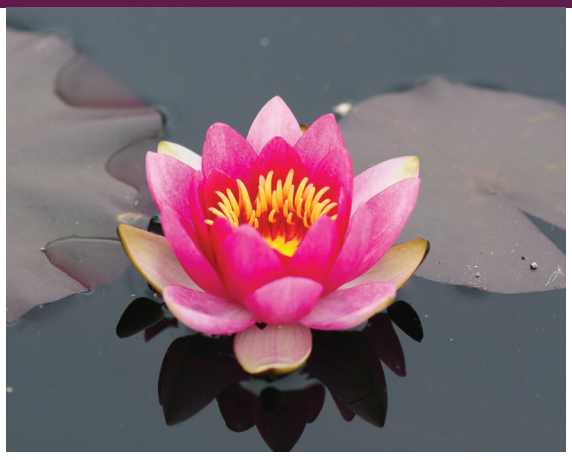
"I can see how it unfolds naturally when we are able to bring to the forefront questions that awaken those virtues you spoke of earlier: of presence, gifts, beauty, grace, and voice. But these are different from the virtues we commonly speak of, such as honesty, justice, courage and truth. What makes these so unique and important now?"

"They represent the common meeting-place of the imagination," I said.

"They awaken our senses and that subtle intelligence. And they bring to light the innate artistry that was such a cohesive element for ancient cultures for thousands of years."

"The purpose now is not so much to educate leaders as 'artists,' but more to help them find something that engages reverence in the way that music does for a musician or words for a poet. Beauty and grace both do that. It gives them a chance to read the world afresh and see it in its full complexity. It is these aesthetic qualities that offer tangible nourishment to the imagination." John completed my thought: "And the imagination is marginalized when the only lenses we use to measure value are statistics and facts – and, of course, the economic benefits."

"The irony is that it is precisely when these aesthetic qualities are needed most that they are most often overlooked." I said. "This happens in school curricula for example, and in other ways. The development of the imagination represents the next



frontier in leadership development. It holds the key to navigating complexity because, as a home for the senses, it expands our attention so that we may more fully comprehend the full complexity of unfolding events."

John reminded me how difficult it is in his world to measure the value of such an approach.

"Acts of the imagination tend to be messy, evocative and nonlinear," he said. "Even though I agree that the managerial and social sciences don't offer a vocabulary for creating a home for our gifts or discovering how to belong in the world, neither does that make it easy to engage others in something that does not yield immediate results."

"It's clear to me that the imagination needs multiple points of interest." He added. "To recognize these points, we need to encourage others to see and speak in their own unique way." John paused. "Having said that, however, I work in an environment where everyone is compartmentalized. They stay very close to others who think the same way they do. It's becoming increasingly difficult for us to step out of our tribal affiliations and meet in the middle."

"This may help explain why authentic curiosity is difficult to achieve," I said. "By definition, curiosity challenges us to release the old and leads us towards the fresh and the new. Specifically, it is naturally

responsive to what spontaneously arises in the flow of our direct experience. At first, this will most likely yield only an ephemeral impression: a moment found in nature; a tug at our heart in response to something spoken that is real and true. This is where we find one another. As Merwin once noted, it is by being open to these moments that we realize they are unique and also hold certain things in common at the same time."

"Ah yes," John said. "And so we begin to fulfill what we always wanted but did not know how to ask for. My own longing has not necessarily been for a greater measure of understanding, but rather to be gripped by life; to experience something that feels authentic and true."

We walked on for a while in silence, listening to the rustle of the wind in the pines overhead.

"And this is what happens in what you've called the commons, isn't it," John said. "It makes the spaces between visible. And it's what we are missing. I'm seeing it now as the opportunity to pause and listen, to be reverent and respectful – maybe even find home. What was that you said? The world will have to take me in."

"In a manner of speaking, yes," I said. "And in so doing you may also be a part of an experience that offers the possibility for greater depth, discovery and surprise."

Following Our Attractions

"It is this hunger for something more that has attracted me to these conversations," John said. "But I always thought it had more to do with actions than with being. I have come to realize that the very words that had once been my touchstones – targets, performance, efficiency, solutions, results, breakthroughs – are now beginning to suffocate me."

At the same time, John acknowledged the difficulty in breaking free of these habitual ways of being. "The proliferation of knowledge and technology for its own sake has put many of us in a trance," he said. "In my organization, language creates our reality, and that language originated in the Industrial Revolution. So we are still being informed through language that was most relevant to a world that existed 300 years ago. There is no language for being stewards of the imagination."

For many analytical processes, the skills of managerial planning and the allure of performance measurement are the waters we swim in. As John so often asked when we first met, "If I wasn't managing people in order to meet performance goals, what would I do?"

Even as we struggle to apply our well-hewn skills to a world that is in constant flux, we need to recognize the need for something more. Leaders must learn to move further upstream. When unanticipated events dramatically affect even the most certain plans, we need to see action in the context of the quality of our collective gifts, strengths and self-knowledge – and better understand the atmosphere, or soil, in which they can best grow. In other words, the journey to wholeness begins with a renewed commitment to following what attracts us, even if it seems like nonsense and impossible to explain. Following these paths may become critical in formative times when we must bring into awareness – and eventually into reality – something that was not there a moment before. ■

Michael Jones is a Juno nominated pianist and composer whose fifteen recordings of original piano compositions have served as a benchmark for contemporary instrumental music. He is also a widely recognized leadership educator, speaker and award winning writer who has published three books on leadership and creative practice including *Creating an Imaginative Life, Artful Leadership: Awakening the Commons of the Imagination and the Soul of Place: Transforming Leadership Through Nature, Art and Community.* He is a uniquely gifted story-teller and widely recognized for how he integrates his music in his work with leaders on creativity and innovation.

Michael has presented at TedX Burlington, The MIT Sloan School Innovation Period, Banff Centre Leadership Development, Quaker Foods and PepsiCo Global Nutrition Group, Tamarack Collaborating Communities Institute, Health Nexus, The Creative Problem Solving Institute and The Proctor and Gamble Global Innovation Group among many others.

He has also been engaged in long-term projects as a Senior Associate with the MIT Dialogue Project, as a consultant with the Leadership For Transformation Dialogues at the Fetzer Institute and as a core faculty for the four-week Executive Creative Leadership Series and EMBA programs at the University of Texas San Antonio.

Michael has led programs on The Foundations of Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together and has facilitated transformative conversations with a variety of groups including Quaker Foods and PepsiCo Global Nutrition Group as well as dialogues on re- envisioning our future with a variety of community boards and leadership teams.

He has a BA in Music and Psychology from Mount Allison University and an MA in Adult Learning from the University of Toronto. He lives in Orillia Canada with his partner a fine artist and practitioner in the healing arts.

Moving Performance

by Ben Hines, Founder, Moving Performance, A Mobius Alliance Partner

Music plays a significant part in all of our lives, whether we know it or not. Ben Hines, founder of Moving Performance, an organization pioneering the use of music in people development, shares his thoughts below on how music can make a shift in performance in businesses and organizations today.

Throughout the auditorium, the bankers were moved to tears through the emotional power of what they had just experienced. These were tears of appreciation, accomplishment, and the deep realization that new possibilities had just opened up before them. The catalyst for creating this experience was my intuitive hunch that music could unlock a powerful communication for the group. I took a gamble and it worked. The result was not only a highlight for the conference, but subsequently the launch of Moving Performance, a training organization committed to improving business through the power of music.

The challenges that block the best in business are emotional, not rational. The programmes we've been developing at Moving Performance break open these blockages and release new learning. We use the power of music to do this. Top leadership raise their game through an immersion experience in brilliant performance, teams catch a vision for greatness when sitting amongst a world class collaborative ensemble, struggling employees shift their mindset when the issues faced in a change situation are given voice. The key is not merely the music, but how we've developed creative approaches to link the power of music and music performance to effective business learning.

Here's the story of how we got to this place, and what we've been learning.

In 2004 I was a senior member of the product management team in the African business of Barclays Bank. I managed the product portfolios and was responsible for bringing to market new and innovative propositions for the Bank's retail and business customers across the continent. At that time, I attended a three-day leadership conference for the top 150 leaders from the business. Delegates attended from all over Africa. Half way through the conference we were divided into 6 teams of 25 people and told to write a play on the customer lifecycle. Each team contributed to a six-part drama documenting the sequence of turning a bad customer experience into a good customer experience. My team was given the part of the "turn around". The activity was to be competitive and the winning team would be announced for the best performance.

Having been around groups of business people trying to act before, I figured that the majority of "plays" would be at best amusing and at worst embarrassing. Wanting to win the challenge, I suggested that rather than stage a "play" where all 25 of us would inevitably be trying to get our turn on the stage, why not make a real impact and do something altogether on the stage? Why didn't we sing a song?

After some discussion, some creative song writing, and much rehearsal, the end result looked like this: Stage lights down, our group of 25 people huddled together in a scrum on stage. Silence in the auditorium. Then through the PA system came the haunting hummed tune of the hymn *Amazing Grace*, sung by a lady from Zimbabwe who had a beautiful soulful gospel voice. You could hear a pin drop.

The second verse continued with hummed harmony from several of us, and some finger clicking to get a rhythm going. Then the Zimbabwean lady started to sing the lyrics to our new song, *Amazing Change*. The

words hit the conference theme perfectly. Three more verses followed each building up with more and more energy, passion and volume. Meanwhile, the stage lights started to increase, our scrum opened up like a flower and by the end this group of 25 bankers were a full-on arms-in-the-air gospel choir belting out *Amazing Change* from their hearts.

It was stunning. The audience was moved to tears - they could not believe their colleagues had just achieved what they did. The choir had just achieved something that most thought impossible – new possibilities opened up to them. For myself, it was the start of something very special - it sowed the seed that music can make a real impact and difference in organizations. Of course, we won the competition hands down!

So how and why does music make an impact in business?

Here are 3 examples of how music is effective in organizations.

1. It is the most emotive art form, and as such everyone responds to it. If used skillfully, it becomes an enabler for people to start to engage with the deeper, more emotive issues in the workplace.
2. As a metaphor for performance, team work and leadership, music contains a wealth of useful insights for performance in the workplace, especially when demonstrated with world-class ensembles.
3. As a practical activity, music making becomes an excellent role-play for challenging situations in team performance, leadership and stepping outside one's comfort zone.

1 Music is the most emotive art form

Most organizations I come across share that the biggest challenges they face are around executing change, innovating ahead of the curve and inspiring their people. All organizations need to change, be that a result of growth, decline, external pressure, re-organization, or implementing a new strategy. The rational reasons for change are relatively straightforward; the hardest thing is getting the organization to *want* to change. And this is an emotional issue.

Organizations tend to communicate change by explaining the rationale. They do this well. People understand that sales need to increase, costs need to go down, or the operation needs to become more efficient. And yet many leaders wonder why change is so difficult to bring about.

The problem is that for many, they just don't *want* to change. They are not happy with the change; they don't like to move away from what they know. It makes them feel uncomfortable. There is nothing intrinsically wrong in this, it is just our survival instinct kicking in – it is safer to go with what you know when the future looks uncertain. Yet many leaders and organizations fail to address this in their employees.

Music can make a difference here.

Back in the middle of the UK banking crisis, one of the banks bailed out by the Government asked me to speak at their management conference. The new leadership team had a vision for where to take the organization. Their challenge was the management population seemed "stuck" in the leftovers of two years of uncertainty, lost share portfolios, and continued negative press. They lacked enthusiasm and resolve to pursue the new vision. How could we help turn the mindset around?

It seemed to me that the organization was trying to implement their new vision in a rational way, whereas the people were responding emotionally. It was clear the new leadership team had not dared to ask the question of the organization "so how do you feel?".

Our solution was to access peoples' emotions through music. In the conference we started talking about music and the courage it takes to stand up and perform, and relating it to our own experience in the FS industry. Through various ice-breakers and activities designed to lower people's inhibitions, we played them a range of music and then asked them to discuss how the music made them feel. The fascinating thing was the diversity of peoples' responses. On listening to a clip from a Mahler symphony, one person said it made them

feel frightened, whereas another said it made them feel energized. We not only demonstrated that everyone has feelings (even bankers!), but that everyone feels differently to the same thing. By expanding this into a process of facilitated discussion on their corporate situation, the delegates started a song-writing process. They shared their journeys, and their positive and difficult emotions. We then brought them together in a grand performance.

The results were stunning. Firstly the lyrics were brilliant – they were powerful, they said it as it was. They were very real. They were also amusing. The process of song writing brought the team together, discussing for the first time things that really mattered. The moment of performance stretched them. They were taken outside their comfort zone, and yet all performed fantastically well.

Most important was the transaction that took place. In musical performance performers communicate to an audience, and the audience listens. For the first time this organization listened to itself, to how it really felt about itself, the situation they found themselves. They now had a common understanding – it was aired, and it was done so in an incredibly creative and inspiring way.

Symbolically it drew a line in the sand. It was a cathartic moment, allowing the management to move on from the past and embrace the direction they were being led into. That organization has now successfully been re-privatized; they attribute the musical input in that conference has a significant step on their journey.

2 Music is a powerful metaphor

Leonard Bernstein, the composer, conductor and educator, said "the best way to know a *thing* is to understand it in a different discipline". The idea of stepping back from your own context and into another to gain fresh insight or new ideas is a proven way to problem solve. The music metaphor gives a wealth of opportunity to explore business challenges in a dynamic and creative environment.

Using the symphony orchestra as a metaphor for organizational performance is one such example. Our leadership programme, Know the Score, takes business leaders into the heart of the world-renowned Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. The focus here shifts to the music making itself. How does this group of experts working in multi-functional teams create such consistently brilliant performance? We get inside the orchestra to experience first hand the dynamics of collaboration, leadership, communication, and support that happen in surprising ways hidden from a normal viewing audience.

For opening up insight into how complex teams operate, the orchestra has proven to be one of the best tools out there. For one thing, the whole team is right there on stage for the delegates to scrutinize. Any shifts in performance are immediately discernable. This aspect of immediate feedback and accessibility to the thinking of the orchestra members is fully exploited in our carefully crafted workshop programme. Delegates discover how communication happens within the orchestra to enable immediate change to happen simultaneously throughout the whole ensemble, how vision is translated from the composer's notes and brought alive with powerful clarity, and what is actually going on when the conductor takes the podium.

In each workshop we open up more than 20 such areas for learning. And the key to powerful learning is that this is not merely a chalk talk, it's live on stage. Experiential. Inspirational. Even those who don't think they like classical music are awe struck when sitting on stage in the midst of a performance. The nature of music bypasses intellectual barriers.

The senses are awakened and the brain is activated on many levels. Delegates feel the pain of an ensemble playing out of tune. They know when it's put right. They sense the beauty of a soloist's contribution and note how the entire ensemble adjusts their performance to support that individual. Collaboration and synergy within a team takes on a whole new significance.

On their own, these are merely experiences. And learning from such an experience won't happen naturally. There is a difference between enjoying a concert and using an orchestra as a learning tool. We prepare delegates beforehand in order to focus their attention on their particular area of interest. We teach them how to use what they see, what they hear, and what they think throughout the workshop to capture key observations. We then lead them through a process to connect their observations to their workplace. The power of metaphor is that the delegates discover their own learning through this experience. When the learning comes from within, it sticks. They own it. We design the programme to open up each delegate's understanding about what brilliant performance is all about and apply it to their own situation.

Our experience is that they get it. And can then see themselves and their team in a new light.

Through the immersion in the metaphor and understanding the inner workings of an orchestra there is a significant amount of insight, which if carefully and relevantly connected to the corporate world, can make a transformational change in the performance of individuals and organizations.

One team that went through the programme recently came from a leading global firm. They were already a high performing team, experts in their field. Yet they knew they needed a higher level of collaboration in how they worked together. They didn't need more information or analysis, they needed a dynamic and strategically creative space to re-envision how they could be a brilliant team. That is what we provided.

The orchestral session with this team was transformative. They were immersed in world-class performance, teamwork and leadership. In the afternoon application session we asked them to think of this experience as a yardstick, as though the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was a 10/10 performing team, where did they see themselves? A gap was articulated, the issues and obstacles drawn out. The work then shifted to generating an action plan using our leadership tool "*Six Keys to Brilliant Performance*". This thinking tool looks at a range of orchestral performance elements such as listening, balancing, leading, and empowering star performers, and applies these directly to the delegate's situation.

The team got hungry to see their own performance lifted; it gave them a common language and experience to reference brilliant performance; they were inspired to learn about each other more, to listen more effectively, to balance their own role to those around them. They have new ideas for managing their key players – to empower and encourage in order to release new potential.

3 Music as an effective role-play

Music is usually considered an exclusive activity for "musical" people. As a result most people do not get involved in music making, even though most actively listen to it.

When we take a group of people into practical music making, they are usually out of their comfort zone – they are being stretched and as such are in a great place to reflect on why they feel uncomfortable and to learn about themselves.

Practical music making can include performing on instruments, playing on their own in front of people, playing in groups, composing music, singing, writing songs, listening and observing professional musicians.

One professional services firm we work with sought to develop the emotional intelligence awareness of their management. In particular, how they managed their personal impact to leverage client relationships.

We gave this group a challenge: to compose music that would be performed by a professional music quintet. Out of their comfort zone? You bet. And this was precisely why it proved to be so effective. They had to step in and produce results in an environment that they knew little about. They were dependent on a group of professionals who knew far more than they did. How would they manage their personal impact, and manage the range of emotions they had - from disbelief that the task

was possible to fear that they may be found out as someone who was not that confident?

Once engaged, the group came alive with creative ideas. We have developed a method for how a group like this can write music, but it requires clear communication with the musicians. At the end of the exercise the compositions were performed, and they were excellent.

The process highlighted key lessons for the group in how to handle themselves in an ambiguous environment, and how to work collaboratively with complete strangers who are professional at what they do. This scenario is not too different from professional services firms engaging a client and embarking on a project. Because the subject matter (creating music) is not directly relevant to their work, the delegates are freer to explore how they managed themselves in the process – they do not feel as exposed as if this was a technical role-play situation. As such they are free of irrelevant detail, and can focus on their personal behaviors and group dynamics.

In Closing

We've found that music opens up possibilities for effective learning. One reason for this is that it so powerfully engages the whole person. Daniel Barenboim the acclaimed conductor and pianist, puts it this way: "The power of music lies in its ability to speak to all aspects of the human being – the animal, the emotional, the intellectual and the spiritual. Music teaches us, in short, that everything is connected".

It's when the whole person is engaged that individuals and teams perform at their best, and this is the key to corporate success. Music is proving to be a fantastic medium to bring about this holistic learning; connecting people to their core and helping them discover how to apply this in the business world.

One of our recent delegates described our workshop as the most amazing experience of their life. This is no longer a surprise to us, as many others have said the same thing. People want to learn, want to provide inspirational leadership and contribute to a high performing team. When they experience this first hand and gain insight into how they can do it themselves, something shifts inside them. Motivation is rekindled. Connecting this sort of experience with deeper learning focused on delivering value is what we are about. ■

Ben Hines is pioneering a new way to Learning and Development in organizations using the power of music. He combines his commercial leadership experience, built up over 12 years in the international financial and legal service industries, with his talent and passion for music. Working with leading organizations in the private and public sector, he is rapidly gaining a reputation for delivering change and results that last. He believes that in order for to bring lasting change in L&D programmes, it is vital to build an emotional connection between the learners and their objectives.

Moving Performance has recently launched a world-class leadership programme in partnership with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, which explores how business leaders can empower a multi-functional and diverse workforce to produce consistent world-class performance. Something a professional orchestra does all the time, and something businesses need to do far more often!

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Yes to the Mess, A Book Except

by Frank J. Barrett

Jazz players assume that no matter how incoherent or unpredictable the current situation appears, they'll find some positive pathway out, some creative possibility to uncover and explore. Without such a mindset (a bias toward positivity), they would have trouble performing at all because, by the very nature of the art form, they find themselves in the middle of messes all the time. Jazz musicians can't stop in the middle of a number to problem solve or put situations in order or say to other players, "I don't like those notes you played. They didn't match with what I had in mind, so let's go back and do it over." The major reason why improvisation works is that the musicians say an implicit yes to each other. Like the managers at Herman Miller who found ways to get rid of wasps and make honey, jazz musicians succeed because they have faith that whatever is happening has potential to lead in innovative directions

Because jazz improvisation borders on chaos and incoherence, it begs the question of how order emerges. Unlike other art forms and other forms of organized activity that attempt to rely on a predeveloped ch02. plan, improvisation is widely open to transformation, redirection, and unprecedented turns. Since we cannot rely on blueprints and can never know for certain where the music is going, we can only make guesses and anticipate possible paths based on what has already happened. As jazz critic Ted Gioia writes: "The improviser may be unable to look ahead at what he is going to play, but he can look behind at what he has just played; thus each new musical phrase can be shaped with relation to what has gone before. He creates his form retrospectively [italics added]."

A jazz musician might begin by playing a virtual random series of notes, with little or no intention as to how it will unfold. These notes become the materials to shape and work out, like pieces of a puzzle. The improviser then begins to enter into a dialogue with the material: prior selections begin to fashion subsequent ones as themes are aligned and reframed in relation to prior patterns.

In a sense, jazz improvisation is much like bricolage, the art of using whatever is at hand. The anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss first coined the term bricolage; those who practice it are bricoleurs. They tinker with a myriad of disparate materials and put seemingly unrelated things together into some semblance of order. They are junk collectors who bring order out of chaos. Both bricoleurs and jazz musicians examine and query the raw materials available and then entice order, creating unique combinations as they work through their resource.

Similarly, the jazz improviser attends closely to what is happening, seeing the potential for embellishing on motifs, linking familiar with new utterances, and adjusting to unanticipated musical cues that reframe previous material. In this continual exchange, each interpretation has implications for where to proceed. Jazz improvisation involves constant attention to such musical "yes and..." cues. There's always an obligation to look back on what has happened and extend it.

Organizations tend to forget how much improvisation, bricolage, and retrospective sense making managers need to complete daily tasks. In an effort to control outcomes and deskill tasks, managers often attempt to break complex jobs down into formal descriptions of work procedures that people can follow automatically. In a perfectly rational world, such strategy makes perfect sense, but that's rarely the way work actually gets done. Many, perhaps most, tasks in organizations are indeterminate, undertaken by people with limited foresight. To meet their duties, employees frequently need to apply their own resourcefulness, cleverness, and pragmatism. They play with various possibilities, recombining and reorganizing, to find solutions by relating the dilemma they face to the familiar context that preceded it. So it is with many jobs in organizations. They require bricolage— fumbling around, experimenting, and patching together an understanding of problems from bits and pieces of experience, improvising with the materials at hand. Few problems provide their own definitive solutions.

Although jazz players are best known for their soloing, jazz itself in the final analysis is an ongoing social accomplishment. Players are in a continual dialogue and exchange with one another. Improvisers enter a flow of ongoing invention, a combination of accents, cymbal crashes, and changing harmonic

patterns that interweave throughout the structure of the song. They are engaged with continual streams of activity: interpreting others' playing and anticipating based on harmonic patterns and rhythmic conventions, while simultaneously attempting to shape their own creations and relate them to what they have heard.

In order for jazz to work, players must develop a remarkable degree of empathic competence, a mutual orientation to one another's unfolding. They continually take one another's musical ideas into context as constraints and facilitations in guiding their musical choices. Here's what saxophonist Lee Konitz has to say about this interactive interplay and the challenges it constantly presents:

I want to relate to the bass player and the piano player and the drummer, so that I know at any given moment what they are all doing. The goal is always to relate as fully as possible to every sound that everyone is making . . . but whew! It's very difficult for me to achieve. At different points, I will listen to any particular member of the group and relate to them as directly as possible in my solo.

Players are continuously shaping their statements in anticipation of others' expectations, approximating and predicting what others might say based on what has already happened.

Traditional models of organization and group design feature static principles in which fluctuations and change are seen as disruptions to be controlled and avoided. Jazz bands are flexible, self-designed systems that seek a state of dynamic synchronization, a balance between order and disorder: a "built-in instability." In jazz, ongoing negotiation becomes very important when something interrupts interactive coherence. Given the possibility of disorientation and miscalculations, players must be able to rely on one another to adjust, to amend direction. Drummer Max Roach recalls a performance of "Night in Tunisia" when Dizzy Gillespie and his fellow players lost the sense of a common beat.

When the beat got turned around, it went for about 8 bars. In such a case, someone has to lay out. You can't fight it. Dizzy stopped first because he heard what was happening quicker than the rest of us, and he didn't know where "one" was. Then it was up to Ray Brown and Bishop and myself. One of us had to stop, so Bishop waved off. Then it was up to Ray Brown and myself to clear it up. Almost immediately, we found the common "one" and the others came back in without the public realizing what had happened.

When the players do successfully achieve a mutual orientation to the beat, they develop what they call a "pocket," or what some refer to as "achieving a groove." Establishing a groove is the goal of every jazz performance. Groove refers to the dynamic interplay within an established beat. It occurs when the rhythm section "locks in" together, when members have a common sense of the beat and meter. Establishing a groove, however, is more than simply playing the correct notes. It involves a shared "feel" for the rhythmic thrust. Once a group shares this common rhythm, it begins to assume a momentum, as if having a life of its own separate from the individual members.

When musicians "hit the groove," they don't experience themselves as the source of that activity. This is ironic in a time when we put so much emphasis on autonomous skilled agents making rational, individual choices. When groups hit a groove they talk about it as if the source of this activity comes from somewhere else. They apply masterly skillful activity and yet remain radically open to the surrounding situation that is calling forth a response. Musicians often speak of such moments in sacred metaphors: the beauty, the ecstasy, the divine, the transcendent joy, the spiritual dimension associated with being carried by a force larger than themselves. They talk about these moments in language strikingly close to what has been described as an autotelic experience, or flow: a state of transcendence in which they are so absorbed in pursuit of the desired activity that they feel as if they are being carried away by a current, like being in a flow. Not surprisingly, when musicians are able to successfully connect with one an-

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...You are lost,
tangled in the golden threads
covered
with turqouises,
silent,
or perhaps
in your village,
in your race,
grain
of corn spread out,
seed
of flag.
Perhaps, perhaps now
you are transmigrating
and returning,
coming to the end
of the journey,
so that someday
you will see yourself in the center
of your homeland,
insurgent,
alive,
crystal of your crystal, fire in your fire,
ray of purple stone.

Excerpt from Ode to Cesar Vallejo from Full Woman, Fleshly Apple, Hot Moon
Selected Poems of Pablo Neruda

other at this level and establish a groove, they often find themselves able to perform beyond their capacity. This dimension is perhaps the most elusive, if vital characteristic of jazz improvisation.

Pianist Fred Hersch recalls that playing with bassist Buster Williams inspired him to play differently:

Buster made me play complex chords like Herbie Hancock sometimes plays—that I couldn't even sit down and figure out now. It's the effect of the moment and the effect of playing with Buster and really hearing everything, hearing all those figures.

And Buster Williams recalls that when playing with Miles Davis, the music took on a life of its own.

With Miles, it would get to the point where we followed the music rather than the music following us. We just followed the music wherever it wanted to go. We would start with a tune, but the way we played it, the music just naturally evolved.

Imagine a self-organized flock of birds, wheeling this way and that. There's no single controller, and yet a discernible pattern emerges into the communal effect as a sort of natural art. That's really what jazz is at its best, something for all organizations to emulate. Wouldn't it be wonderful if leaders could create organizational cultures in which people are able to engage in skillful activity in the context of responsive others. The best leaders are not detached and predominantly analytic, although these are important skills to develop. The very best leaders know when it's important to be fully and passionately engaged in problems and situations, and for enhancing creativity and innovation, the crucial first step is an affirmative move.

This is what improvisational leaders do. They come at challenges from different angles, ask more searching questions, and are born communitarians. They're not going for easy answers or living off of old routines and stale phrases. Instead of focusing on obstacles (a form of negative self-monitoring), they create openings by asking questions that entertain possibilities. They're looking for the groove, the flow, knowing that like Sternin, it might carry them somewhere they never expected to go, somewhere they never imagined they could get to. Critically, too, improvisational leaders assume that the improv will work: that the mess is only a way station on the path to a worthwhile destination. The message here is powerful: start by asking positive questions; foster dialogues, not monologues; and you can change the whole situation, maybe even your life. ■

The Inner Game of Preparation

by Anne Gottlieb, Director, Mobius Presentation and Presence Practice, Actress/Director

When an actor walks into a room to audition, there are generally a few constants. There is nervousness. There is wanting of immediate approval and there is pretending not to want it. There is a changing story about power and who has it in the room and there is the material from the script. When I first began to work with business professionals on presentation skills, most especially in groups, I realized how very akin the process of preparing for a presentation can feel like the experience of preparing for an audition. So how do actors continue to show up for auditions when the ratio of rejection to acceptance is at best likely 9:1? The exploration of this from my own personal experience as a stage actor for the last twenty years as well as that of my colleagues proves to be exceptionally useful to those who are seeking to develop their sense of presence in public speaking contexts. Let me share some of these lessons.

For instance, as an actor, I have been taught to look for synchronicity and parallel process. We are mirrors of each other. Parallel process might be the way a difficulty that I am experiencing in the world is actually a mirror of what is happening inwardly. For example, I may think someone is judging me but it will not actually touch me unless it reflects in some way something I do inside myself. Synchronicity is an awareness of how one event, one tiny piece of information, or chance meeting can transform the timing and picture of one's direction or one's perspective. It is true that art mirrors life but in my case life usually mirrors art. I get a role in a production and then realize a year later it is a forerunner to something I have yet to learn personally and usually the parallel process and synchronicity are far more intelligent in design than anything I could have anticipated. This same phenomenon often happens now with my coaching work with leaders.

I found myself in the last year working with an actor on his audition for Hamlet and subsequently his work on the role at the same time I was coaching a CEO on a presentation for her company where she was asking them to confront some very hard truths. What could they possibly have in common with each other? In short, almost everything and more precisely, Hamlet: Hamlet's wrestling with the question to be or not to be, his struggle to take action, to know who and what to trust, to forsake comfort for truth, not to mention, his little problem with ghosts.

I was asked at a college audition, "What is the first line of Hamlet? Not his first line but the very first line of the play?" Had I known then how brilliant the question was, I might have made a wiser choice and gone to that school. I didn't know the answer but have subsequently learned the lesson.

"Who's there?" Bernardo, a sentinel is on watch with Marcellus asks. They are protecting the castle walls of Denmark where Hamlet is the Prince and on two consecutive nights they have seen a ghost walk before them. This ghost is the exact image of Hamlet's very recently murdered father.

"Who's there?" the play begins.

And that is where we begin as well: the CEO, Leah, who knows she must name and deal directly with problems that her company is reluctant to hear, and the actor, Don who has lost out on this part three times in the past, but can't live with himself if he doesn't try again. We are desperate, in the beginning, to jump to the end of the story, to skip over the messy process of finding out what we really want to say and to stave off the nervousness. As a response, actors want to memorize the lines. Presenters want to finalize the powerpoint. We tend to avoid the question, "Who's there?"

So when I ask Leah the question she says, "a bunch of people who

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will want to complain and not take responsibility for what's happening? We cannot drown and we are drowning and pretending we didn't choose it. I can't do this alone. Nobody wants to hear this but they have to hear it." When I ask Don, he says "Maybe I am just somebody who thinks he can play Hamlet but maybe I am kidding myself? How many times do I need to do this? I should be more confident if I am going to audition for this, right?" Leah answers from her perspective who is *out* there and Don answers the question of who is *in* here. Both angles are necessary first steps and require time to sort out especially when the stakes are this high.

Many presenters who are faced with the kind of challenge that Leah faces take one of two paths either soften the blow to keep the company feeling safe and her feeling like she is not alone or, distance herself from that emotion, deliver a scorning rebuke to whip everybody into shape at the expense of potential allies and genuine buy-in from her colleagues. This is where the actor's process as well as Hamlet's is going to become very useful to Leah.

I ask her a series of questions about relationship or what I might call the *who*. There is also the *what*, which relates to our intention, the *why* which relates to our greater purpose and the *how*, which comprise the means, the tactics, that we will employ to communicate. I will focus on the *who* and the *what* which together allow the foundation for the speaker or actor to feel grounded. I ask Leah to answer the question who's there from the inner perspective. She feels she either needs to play the forceful task-master or the encouraging mother. I ask her to try on both roles, one at a time and to fully embody what she wants to say and not to worry about the exact wording for now. The true meaning of rehearsal for an actor is not about getting it right. It's about making a choice, many choices without holding back and seeing what happens. I want Leah to practice making choices without the final result in mind but as a way to explore who she wants to be as a leader. It requires one to throw over their self-consciousness for the sake of growing and it is a prerequisite for learning, for art and for great leadership.

One reason for this is attributable to the kinds of *thoughts* that are triggered by the possibility of public failure or public success. Knowing your material, creating a strong presentation is only part of the game. Knowing yourself is the other.

I also want her to become conscious not only of the role but of the "play" she is about to enter into with her company. She doesn't realize she has a huge amount of power despite the fact that the company is in crisis. Yes, Leah is delivering a speech but she is also beginning a conversation that will likely require months of time, rolling out new initiatives, trust and a great deal of teamwork. If she thinks of this as only a speech, she will miss the opportunity to engage her company in a very different kind of story and create a very different kind of script. Leah's tendency, when under pressure, was to default to either playing the encouraging mother or the bullying task-master with little in between. This was the beginning of her developing her range.

Upon further questioning, we also realize together that Leah has already cast her company in the role of complainers, shirkers of responsibility, and people who will avoid crisis because its uncomfortable with a few exceptions. The next question becomes obvious to her. "Who might they be at their best in this situation?" This exploration for Leah was the beginning of her developing her depth and her creativity as a presenter and a leader.

As I work with Don on his audition, his challenge speaks to the heart of the question of confidence and vulnerability. People like Leah who are extremely confident presenters often want to find more range by bringing more dimensions to their strengths and finding new ones. For many people, including actors, a sense of confidence regardless of how skilled one is seems to fly out the window when they have to walk into an audition or for the business professional who is asked to present.

Don's answer to the question of who's there was "Maybe I am just somebody who thinks he can play Hamlet but maybe I am kidding myself?" I ask him. "Do you think Hamlet is confident?" And he says, "Hamlet is all over the place. He is confident one moment and then absolutely mired in self-doubt the next." "So would it be possible for you to put that awareness into the role instead of making the self-doubt about you? Is it possible you are already Hamlet?" I ask.

One of the finest plays in the history of the English language is about a soon to be leader who has a mess on his hands. He both lacks the confidence and capacity to fix things. The play is about the journey that Hamlet embarks upon inwardly and outwardly in thought, action and deed in order to come to some sense

of his own truth and readiness to act. He makes a lot of mistakes and false starts a long the way. Leah and Don are not in the life and death situation that Hamlet is in, but their nervous systems are already in a fight/flight/freeze response all the same. Why? For some, public speaking feels more frightening than the thought of death. For others, the fear feels more like adrenalin, excitement and there is a large continuum in between. One reason for this is attributable to the kinds of *thoughts* that are triggered by the possibility of public failure or public success. Knowing your material, creating a strong presentation is only part of the game. Knowing yourself is the other.

Hamlet can help us here. Not long after the start of the play. Hamlet actually sees the ghost of his father and the ghost tells him to avenge his untimely murder. Hamlet has never seen a ghost before. This despite the fact that they show up as regularly in Shakespeare plays as vampires appear on television shows these days. He is still a man who has just seen a ghost and it really messes with his head. First, he believes the ghost and starts to take action, then wonders if he is being tricked into something evil, then he starts to wonder if he is, in fact, crazy. In short, he doesn't know what to trust. This is a metaphor in the presence and presentation work for what happens to people often before they walk into a major presentation or an important audition. Their ghosts show up.

"The Ghost" is usually the voice inside ourselves that brings up self-doubt or fear. Ghosts also might push us to a challenge that feels overwhelming. It haunts us. I have worked with CEO's who cannot get the negative voice of their mothers or fathers out of their heads. It may not ruin them when they are asked to present but they become contracted, simply less of what they can be when that ghost is not hanging around. Actors often have a version of some critic that has skewered them in the press and though they may not be conscious of it, sure enough, the image of that critic is in their head on opening night when the actual critics are out in the audience. In Don's case, his ghost was a version of himself as a bitter old man looking back on his life with regret that he had never fully expressed his gifts. This is a legitimate fear but the problem with either indulging the ghost by giving into the fears or trying to push it out of the room is that it keeps coming back. These ghosts, in truth, often want to protect us or challenge us to go further but they have a funny way of showing it. When the ghosts show up, it is a sign that an excellent opportunity is waiting in the wings to move to one's greater potential.

When the ghosts show up, it is a sign that an excellent opportunity is waiting in the wings to move to one's greater potential.

Don's ghost sees Don as already defeated before he starts. "Why Bother? How many times do you need to do this? What if you fail again?" This is a common refrain for the ghosts of business professionals as well. Hamlet, like Don, does not know how to deal with his ghost but he spends the play figuring it out. When I bring this to Don's attention, something starts to open up. He realizes that he has an opportunity to bring this into the audition rather than be at the whim of it. His wanting to succeed is the same as Hamlet's own desires. His feeling of wanting to run and hide and wish the potential failure would be over is also what Hamlet experiences. Rather than pushing away his vulnerability, Don makes it an asset. He finds confidence and excitement in bringing this aspect of humanity, vulnerability and volatility into the room through the material, through the speech, through Hamlet.

In working with Leah and Don, alternately, I see that Leah is struggling with how to work with her vulnerability as she prepares to face her company. She discovered from the role playing that she didn't want to come across as too weak or too harsh. Neither felt truthful. Neither was satisfying. Instead of focusing on how *she* might come across to her audience, I ask her to focus on where *the company* is vulnerable and where the *company* is strong. In Don's case, we are looking for the parallels in Hamlet. In Leah's case, we are looking for the parallels in her company. Don's job is to illuminate Hamlet's problems and the myriad ways he struggles with it. Leah's job is to shine a light on the problems of her company and begin to find new ways to collaborate. Through the reframing of the "who" question, Leah starts to see herself in the role of ally. She sees herself not only as an ally to a failing company but an ally and guide to the people who are resistant to looking at the issues. She comes to see that their resistance is their ghost. This reframing and shift inside allows Leah to integrate her strength with compassion in her presentation.

They have both answered the question of "who's there" thoroughly. They are experiencing more ease. They have their attention off of themselves and how they appear to others and on something about which they feel passionately. The next question

follows fast: *WHAT* is needed here?

For every public presentation it is different, but another way of asking the question is what perspective or inspiration or intelligence can I bring into the conversation? Where can I add value? What do I want these people to know, feel or do differently when they leave this room? For Leah, these questions help her determine what she wants to say, what points need to be made, what stories will illustrate those points. What visuals if any will assist her? Now that we have more sense of the relationship, I ask Leah to specify her intention. Often, when I ask a new client this question before we work through the question of "who's there", people will say "To get my point across, to make sure everyone has the same information." This is not a strong intention because that could be accomplished through an email or memo. It greatly diminishes the possibility for rich exchange in the room and in short, it gives no pleasure to the speaker or audience. When the intention is not clearly defined or not bold enough, it leaves the speaker only with words on a page but rudderless in every other way. The beauty of public speaking is that it is *YOUR* intention that shapes the material. Hamlet has been played by thousands of actors, perhaps millions at this point. The plot is not spectacular. The language is well-known. It is how each new actor brings his or her special interpretation to the material that makes us want to see the play over and over again. It is the specificity of the intention and the fire that it sparks in the speaker that will bring nuance and inspiration to a play and to a public presentation.

Intention and passion combined create vibrancy in the presence of the speaker. Our passion can be intellectual, emotional, spiritual, strategic, technical, artistic, relational and visionary to name a few. A strong WHAT or intention is the key to making a presentation come alive. As Leah leans into the questions, she realizes that her intention is to have her company wake up the challenges ahead, to know that they have the inner resources to deal with the issues ahead of them and to feel that she is with them 100%. Now her creative leadership mind takes over. Instead of entering into the presentation defended and blaming or hiding behind niceness, her intention becomes about empowering the whole company. This allows her to bring up the facts as well as roll out several ideas for short, intermediate and long range goals.

Intention and passion combined create vibrancy in the presence of the speaker.

There are many other aspects to good auditioning and good presenting, not the least of which is knowing your material, honing one's speech down to its essential points, including stories and anecdotes to illuminate points, finding physical and vocal ease and power. The bigger game has to do with this illusive word, presence. I am often hired to help someone develop "executive presence." The mistake is in believing it is an image which one can attain with a few tricks around eye contact and how to read notes and so forth. The mistake is in believing it can be put on like a suit. We know the difference inside ourselves so though we may be doing all the tricks that we were taught to look executive, the inner foundation isn't there. The ghosts show up. I am often asked to help someone be "more authentic" in their public presentations. There is a look of authenticity which might resemble sincerity but it doesn't feel authentic and it is not free and it is definitely not powerful. We can feel that difference. Children can feel the difference. We are that sensitive even if we talk ourselves out of it.

The theatre is an empathic rather than sympathetic art. When the writing, acting, directing and design are working in harmony, the audience experiences the story rather than just thinks about it. When we say we are moved by some performance or someone's speech, that's literal. There is a psycho-physical connection which goes deeper than thought or emotion and all the way into our nervous system. When I work with clients for public presentation, I always ask them how they experience presence because presence only lives in the experiential realm. Our ideas or images of it don't matter. Generally, they respond by speaking of how someone's presence influences and affects them rather than an analytical definition of it. They have been touched, felt their minds expanded, awakened, stirred, lifted, blown away, set straight or impelled to take action. Public speaking is also a temporal and empathic art at its best regardless of how technical or complex the material. The inner preparation game is about bridging what is alive within the speaker through language, through empathy and imagination for the sake of liberating a deeper and more wholistic intelligence that is seeking to be mirrored in everyone of us.

We defy augury; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all.

Hamlet, Act V, Scene ii ■

Jazz As a Metaphor for Knowledge Work

by Carl Stormer, Jazzcode AS, Oslo, Norway/Boston, MA, and Daniel Penrice, Cambridge, MA

In today's knowledge-intensive world, as organizations increasingly need to create "value from difference" rather than "value from sameness," work can no longer be organized and executed as it was in the era of command and control in the executive suite and mass production on the shop floor. Large, complex organizations and traditional planning are being challenged by small groups of people willing and able to make swift decisions and leverage technology to ensure a perfect match with a complex, ever-changing context. Outcomes at work have therefore become dependent on the quality of complex interactions—their speed as well as the ability of team members to make decisions on the fly based on interpretations of ambiguous data.[1] Knowledge workers must often discover what it is they are producing in the act of producing it, and in collaboration with others, rather than carrying out their own individual roles in a pre-conceived plan. For most organizations and industries today, creating a culture of collaboration in real time is the where the major challenge lies.

The increased emphasis, in the work world, on complex interactions in real time has made the jazz ensemble—where work takes place in real time, every interaction is different, and each individual player's musicianship is valuable only in collaboration with others—a place to look for models of successful improvisation.[2] In everyday language, improvisation is often used to mean what we do do when we are poorly prepared, when we "wing it." Yet most of us improvise all the time—in conversation, for example—in order to achieve the best possible outcome in situations whose outcome is not predictable. And more often than we may realize, we improvise successfully. Improvisation, in any case, is about creating and taking advantage of new opportunities for learning and experimenting. It is a process where operating without a rigid pre-conceived plan becomes an asset, not a liability. In jazz, it is also a sine qua non, and the guidelines jazz musicians use to achieve the best possible interactions—what we call the Jazzcode—can help reinforce something we are all born with and need to use at work: the ability to adjust to new situations and, working in collaboration with others, make good decisions in real time.

Since every live situation is unique, deciding what to do—the ultimate leadership decision, as opposed to deciding how to do something, which is a managerial one—cannot be done in advance or from behind the front lines. Decisions about what to do must be made rapidly by the person or persons closest to the action, which is complex and constantly unfolding. As jazz musicians learn, however, even though you are never fully in control, you can still be in command. The Jazzcode offers guidance that can be used by both individuals and teams in order to improve their performance.

The Individual Player: Being Yourself While Being With Others

In jazz, as in any work where the goal is to create value from difference, for an individual or a team to be "different" is an asset, not a liability. In today's work world, being yourself and putting a strong fingerprint on your work becomes more and more legitimate, and even necessary, as globalization and technology make it possible to leverage almost any expertise on a global scale. How, as an individual who works in teams, can you make the best use of the talent for improvisation that almost everyone possesses by being yourself in the moment? By being *prepared*, *present*, *always learning*, and *open with others*.

1 McKinsey Quarterly 4/2005: «The Next Revolution in Interactions»

2 The analogies between jazz practice and topics such as innovation and leadership have been explored in books including *Jamming: The Art and Discipline of Business Creativity* (1997) by John Kao and, more recently, *Yes to the Mess: Surprising Leadership Lessons from Jazz* (2012) by Frank Barrett. Both employ the jazz metaphor in fairly general ways, whereas we believe that there are lessons about knowledge work to be learned from a more detailed account of jazz practice and closer analogies than either Kao or Barrett draw. See also HBS Case 609-050: "Miles Davis: Kind of Blue" (2008) by Carl Stormer and Robert D. Austin.

Preparation

How can we prepare ourselves to be good improvisers? Good jazz musicians spend their entire professional lives preparing not only for each performance but for their every interaction with other musicians by really knowing their own instrument and role, by fully understanding the context in which they will be playing and the other players, and, of course, practicing. No great jazz musician, however talented, has ever been born knowing how to improvise (although the truly great ones might seem as if they had). Preparation for improvising might seem like an oxymoron but definitely is not.

The first component of the preparation required to become a skilled improviser in jazz is *knowing your instrument and its role* in an ensemble. This means, first of all, that you must achieve a level of mastery so that the technical aspects of playing your instrument, no matter how complex, become second nature, which allows you to concentrate on the *what* rather than the *how* when you are playing. For a musician, knowing your instrument in this way involves being able to play notes, scales, and chords, vary your tempo and rhythm, and so forth; for knowledge work, the tools and techniques you must master include language (oral and written), listening and organizational skills, and concepts and quantitative skills that are fundamental to your area of expertise. Mastery of these tools allows you to apply them focus on applying them to the unique, real-time context in which you are working. When you are in the middle of a jazz performance, you don´t have time to think about execution—all your energy is focused on what you should play, which requires you to pay attention to what the other members of your group are playing. It also requires you to understand your instrument's role in the group—the bass and drums, for example, which constitute what is called the rhythm section in a jazz ensemble, each have a function in the group that is different than that of the other instruments.

If, in the midst of a jazz performance, you were to think about how to play, you would lose part of your mental capacity and your ability to fully *understand the context* in which you are playing would be lost. For jazz musicians, part of preparation for interactions and performances involves knowing jazz history and tradition so as to be able to use it to expressive effect and, especially, knowing the musicians with whom one is playing. When Red Garland played his last solo with Miles Davis (on the 1958 album *Milestones*), his improvisation consisted of playing Miles´s solo from a Charlie Parker recording done ten years earlier; Garland had memorized the solo on Parker's song "Now's the Time" and placed it in another tune as a farewell to Miles. In business, understanding the context might mean knowing your clients'—or your co-workers'—histories, values, preferences, strengths and weaknesses, possible reactions, and so on, as well as the dynamics of a marketplace.

Needless to say, in addition to knowing their instruments and understanding the context in which they play, great jazz musicians—like all musicians—prepare by *practicing*. Serious musicians spend time practicing every day. At the beginning they seek to master the basics. Later their strategy will vary. Some will spend less time with their instrument and more time listening to and really understanding the music, the tradition, and the choices made by other players. Some choose to practice what they are already really good at while others look for weak spots and work on those. One common thread among experienced musicians is that they will come back to the basics of the instrument: how to get a beautiful tone, how to control the dynamic range, how to phrase in a musical way, and how to make musical choices that allow them to play to their strengths.

In business, practicing might mean becoming intimately knowledgeable about subject matter. Carl found this kind of practicing to be helpful both when working in sales and consulting at IBM and when running a startup. Going over the subject matter of a meeting in his head, memorizing definitions, rehearsing different answers before a presentation or meeting, or just talking about a subject—all these are ways of practicing as musicians do. When Carl was running a startup, www.studentuniverse.com, he and his business partner would spend one or two hours every day for four years talking about strategy and deals. By probing their subject matter very thoroughly, they were able to see opportunities where nobody else saw them and negotiate deals more favorable than one would have thought possible for a company this size. Carl applied much of the same approach to learning business as he did to learning music, always practicing using new software, improving his skills at financial modeling, checking out new technology, trying to undestand the business models of competitors.

Presence in the moment

To survive in situations involving complex interactions and decisions in real time—whether in a jazz group or in other kinds of organizations—we need to be present in the moment where the action is taking place. Speed requires full attention; with higher speed comes a greater need to concentrate our attention on the unfolding environment. Presence— the most important asset in a knowledge organization—is poorly often managed. We try to be present in too many places at the same time, are unable to shield ourselves from interruptions, and don´t really know what it takes to be fully present in the moment (perhaps, in part, because work designed to produce "value from sameness" placed less of a premium on presence, and in part because modern technology, which enabling so much more communication than was once possible, also functions as a giant distraction machine). Yet, presence is required to interpret complex situations. As the importance and frequency of complex interactions increase, so does the importance of optimizing presence. Presence is the feedback mechanism that makes it possible for us to interact with our external environment. Without presence and active listening, even the best jazz musicians would be irrelevant and without ability to create value.

Presence is what all good musicians have in common. By "presence" here I mean not only the ability to listen but also to be totally engaged with the situation they are in, to be "lost in the moment."

We have all been completely lost in the moment at many times in our lives. This is what happens when we go participate in a sport like skiing or tennis, have sex, or engage in any interaction where something is at stake. We direct our full mental capacity at the unfolding situation in order to make sure we are able to understand and respond to what is going on. Deep concentration in dynamic settings is something humans enjoy and we do it quite naturally—so naturally that often we don´t notice how concentrated we are until after the fact.

Conversely, distraction or a lack of mental capacity can prevent us from being present in the moment. This happens if we become too preoccupied with our own execution (which is why, as we have seen, it is necessary to master one's own instrument and role), or if we worry too much or too little. In live situations, mental capacity can become divided between a management and a leadership layer. It is almost as if you have two voices in your head. The manager is preoccupied with your execution and role, concerned about recognition and criticism—in short, internally focused and in constant dialogue with itself. The leader in you, by contrast, is concerned with what is taking place in the external environment and how well you are fitting your contribution to the context. In order to clear more mental space for the leader we need to reduce the scope of operations for the manager, we need to do three things: simplify the work, create a feeling of safety ourselves and others, and become fully engaged. Some of this we can do for ourselves, although those others who help create the conditions under which teams work can also play their own role in helping team members to be fully present.

Since improvisation in jazz is such a complex task, jazz musicians help themselves and their fellow musicians manage this complexity by *simplifying* their tasks. For example, a musician will play fewer notes to lessen the difficulty inherent in the task of, say, four or five musicians all listening to one another and responding in the moment to what others are playing. In ordinary conversation, we make the task of listening and responding in real time to an interlocutor by using only our "active" vocabulary. At work, we can find ways to make our jobs easier by, for example, giving ourselves more time to do a certain task, doing a smaller part of the task, allowing ourselves to be sloppy whenever possible, and minimizing structures and processes.

Since the manager's voice inside us also worries about risks, we can reduce the scope of the manager's influence if we can *make ourselves and those we work with feel safer*. We do this for ourselves partly by achieving the mastery that allows us to play our instruments without thinking about the how of playing. We can also add to our own and our teammates' feelings of safety by cultivating their trust in us and ours in them. Members of a jazz group learn, for example, that it is critical to give one another positive feedback and act with integrity. To give a negative example, when the great bassist Charles Mingus, on the title track of the album *Money Jungle* that he made with Duke Ellington and Max Roach, defiantly played the same note over and over again—prompting Ellington to respond on the piano by angrily mimicking Mingus' playing—his violation of the trust of his fellow musicians dragged down the quality of the whole group's performance.

It is not enough, however, for members of a team—whether it is a jazz group or a work team—to feel safe in order to play well together—they must also *be fully engaged*. On "Money Jungle," Mingus shows his lack of engagement by deliberately provoking Ellington—for reasons that are totally opaque to the listener—thereby damaging the entire group's efforts. Some of the reasons

knowledge workers may be less than fully engaged while working in teams may include boredom (if the task has been simplified too much) or feelings that one's efforts and contributions are not being recognized. While an individual or team member has some control over his or her own level of engagement (by being adequately or inadequately prepared, for example), those who are responsible for creating the conditions under which teams work in an organization can also take steps to foster engagement, as we will see below.

Learning and renewal

The best jazz musicians constantly learn and renew themselves through a long career. Every performance represents a chance to try something new because every interaction is unique. It is not unusual for musicians to peak late in their careers, perhaps because the most important qualifications are not muscle power and speed but an ability to place their contributions in context in a way that provides maximum impact.

It is not paradoxical to say that improvisation—the ability to delay decisions and place an action in time in such a way that you get the best possible fit with the context and your own intent—can be learned. It is learned through imitation, careful analysis of performances, and constant practice and experimentation. This is true, of course, not only of jazz musicians but of all improvisers; this is how we learn language, manners, and organizational culture. In jazz as in many other complex activities, however, there is always a new horizon beyond which one can go, and the best performers constantly seek to do this. In order to ensure renewal, they will continually look for sources of inspiration outside their own domains. The great saxophonist John Coltrane listened to ethnic music, and Miles Davis listened to classical. Henry Ford got the idea for an assembly line by observing a meat factory in Chicago.[3] When I worked at IBM as a consultant, some of our best work was done when we were able to transfer lessons from one industry to another, as when we taught telephone companies about variable pricing of inventory-based goods in the airline industry. Sometimes the best way to get better at what you do is to try something else besides what you do, to put yourself in a context where you must learn what someone else knows and you do not.

Openness

Openness is an important trait for creating trust and fostering innovation in complex interactions. Openness in this context means both the willingness to share freely of one´s own knowledge and insight without filtering, and receptiveness to new ideas presented by others.

One of the most important principles in improvisation is to not stop the flow. You can make a lot of mistakes that might go undetected in live music (and other real-time situations) but there is one thing you must never do: stop playing. Thus the most important principle in jazz improvisation, in addition to attentive listening is that you cannot reject an idea. If someone in the group makes a leadership decision you have to follow it. If you don't, you are making yourself more important than the music. In jazz, everything that happens must be embraced; once you do embrace what has happened, you can influence it and allow it to influence you. In organizational life, this translates into saying "Yes, *and*…" instead of blocking the other person's idea by saying "No," or half-accepting it by saying "Yes, but…."

If the participants in a complex interaction are to make autonomous decisions and yet build on one another's decisions in order to achieve a goal, they must have access to the same information. This is why listening attentively is so critical: if the players in a jazz band can´t hear one another they will not be able to play together. This is true in other settings where members of a group must make decisions in real time. When the Norwegian police arrived at Utoya on July 22, 2011, while a massacre was taking place on a nearby island, they were unable to act because they did not have the necessary information; as a result, they waited passively for thirty minutes while the carnage took place.[4] Meanwhile, local residents were rescuing wounded youths from the ice-cold water using their own boats; they did not have a central command, but they could hear the shooting, understood what was going on, and, following their instincts, were able to act much faster than did the police.

Group Improvisation: Making Collaboration Happen

While individuals work on acquiring the attributes and skills—preparedness, presence, learning, and openness—that enable them to work successfully in teams, teams themselves, and those who are responsible to building and leading them, can also make collaboration by designing it in certain ways. The key principles here, which grow out of the attributes of skilled individual improvisers, are fundamental to successful improvisation in jazz. These principles are small teams with complementary roles, shared references, and empowerment.

3 Lecture at Schibsted ASA in Norway (2008).

4 NOU 2012:14: Rapport fra 22. juli kommisjonen.

Small teams with complementary roles

It is nearly impossible to improvise in large groups. The history of jazz shows that most innovation has taken place in small groups: for example, the Charlie Parker/Dizzie Gillespie Quintet, the John Coltrane Quartet, the two Miles Davis quintets, the Bill Evans Trio, and the Modern Jazz Quartet. Even in larger groups, the most interesting musical pieces have often been created when only a subset of the entire group interacts. The same phenomenon can also be observed in settings such as dinner parties: if you have more than four or five guests, chances are that the party will break up into parallel conversations. In order to keep one conversation going, jazz groups have found that less is more. If you have more than four players participating in a conversation, then you might want to plan parts of what is taking place. Moreover, in order for members of a group to collaborate, they must have distinct, complementary roles. A saxophonist, pianist, bass player, and drummer can have a conversation. Four drummers will become engaged in a battle.

There are other reasons why a small group will achieve the best improvisations. A small group is flexible; has less complexity; can more easily establish trust; ensures visibility for all its members; and enforces fewer compromises of the kind that can undermine the integrity of the work.

Flexibility. In a small group, it is easier to make decisions because it is easy to be heard and fairly easy to voice dissent. In that sense, a quartet is a more robust unit than a trio because you can have two against two, whereas in a trio, any dissent will involve two against one. Crucially, it is also easier to organize small teams and for them to change plans in midstream.

Less complexity. Not only can four players fit in a car and share a pizza but the coordination costs are acceptable. As you add more people, you are also increasing coordination costs exponentially. You might get 20% more input by adding a fifth player, but the scheduling constraints and overall complexity increase by a factor of five. Most people can´t keep track of more than five to seven simultaneous stimuli. Add a fifth player or team member to a group of four and it becomes almost impossible for everyone to keep track of all interactions and their own role at the same time—the success of many jazz quintets notwithstanding.[5]

Easier to establish trust. It is easier to establish trust in a small group because the greater transparency tends to prevent hidden agendas. A small group also makes it much harder to keep secrets and mask lack of competency, while making it more important for each member to carry his or her own weight.

Ensures visibility. In a smaller group, not only can everyone can keep track of the interactions but there is room for everyone to play a solo. When there is room for everyone to speak and be heard, everyone can also receive praise and recognition for their contributions. In jazz, small group players usually love their jobs, while players in large orchestras often hate theirs—perhaps because they are not heard or seen as individuals.

Fewer compromises. Creative decisions are often not well handled by larger groups, which often adopt a consensus approach to creativity leads to dilution of the original idea. In general, the standardized processes that large groups are tempted to adopt can become the antithesis of improvisation and decrease the likelihood that the final result will be new and fresh.

Shared References

Shared references are essential to the art of jazz improvisation. If Carl is playing the drums and the bass player throws in a quotation from a well-known tune like "Salt Peanuts," his recognizing the reference will enable him to pick up his idea and respond to it immediately. In any group, shared references are a handy way to avoid having to explain the context and the rules of engagement. Finding shared references is also a rapid way to build trust, create excitement, and explain a goal. In that sense, shared references save work. Anything the team agrees to before the performance or project can be considered shared references—for example, language, symbols, standards, anything that will reduce ambiguity (but that may also limit freedom as the situation unfolds). Organizations often exist in order to develop shared references that give the company a competitive advantage. Shared references such as values can be difficult to develop across organizational boundaries.

In general, shared references may be of three kinds: references to the past, the present, or the future. Shared references may be to past per-

5 Miller, G. A. (1956). "The magical number seven, plus or minus two: Some limits on our capacity for processing information". *Psychological Review* 63

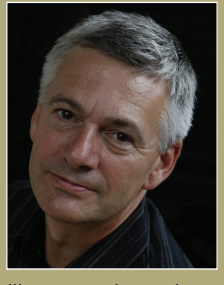
formances, established processes, or traditions. Shared references in the present might include a sense of pacing or what in music is called tempo. When teams share a sense of purpose or have an aligned vision they possess shared references to the future that are a must for a fast-moving team.

Empowerment

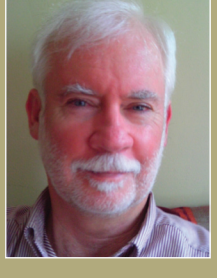
"If I had known what you should play, I would not have hired the world´s best saxophonist," Miles Davis once said to John Coltrane when Coltrane asked him he wanted his sax player to play.

In order for a small team to interact effectively, all of its members must be empowered individually, and the team empowered within the organization, to make decisions and solve problems. In the US Marines, teams are never told how to accomplish a mission, only what the mission is. Often, the person closest to the context is the person best equipped to decide. When Thorleif Thorleifsson and Borge Ousland sailed around the North Pole in a 32-foot trimaran, their rule for delegating decisions was simple: the one with the most knowledge decides. In expert teams, the players on the ground might not have the most subject matter expertise, but they have the best understanding of the context. Subject matter expertise, as we have seen, is worthless without contextual understanding. And when the context changes rapidly, the team must be empowered to figure out what to do. In order for them to do this and have the maximum impact, in turn, they must have a complete understanding of their purpose and a willingness to always think holistically about the task at hand. Or as jazz musicians would say it, the music comes first.

Although jazz, like the other arts, has often been discussed in terms that exalt genius and mystify the process of artistic creation, there are really no mysteries in jazz other than the magic of skilled practitioners working together in real time. Their presence in the moment is what unites them—provided they have the same understanding of the musical context and what they are trying to accomplish together, and confidence in their ability to accomplish it. Experienced musicians are comfortable making decisions even when lacking perfect information or certainty about what will result. They have learned to be themselves while being with others and, in so doing, to create something that none of them could do by themselves. What enables them to do all this is ultimately not genius, although jazz has had its share of geniuses. The more telling factor in the performance of even the greatest jazz groups—as well as high-performing teams in organizations of all kinds—is a code that anyone doing complex work in teams can learn and follow to achieve higher performance. ■



Carl Størmer (pronounced "Sturmer") is a consultant and public speaker and the founding prinicipal of JazzCode AS , a consulting firm specializing in improvisational collaboration and structured communication in high-performance teams. JazzCode offers class-room training in structured communication, talks about innovation, creativity in business and collaboration. Størmer often brings in musicians to illustrate how jazz musicians collaborate in real-time and to draw the paralells for professional teams. Mr. Stormer has presented his JazzCode concept with leading musicians for large and small groups at leading companies such as IBM, Oracle, KPMG, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Kraft Foods, Novartis, McKinsey & Company, Statoil, Hydro, Telenor, Schibsted, and executive leadership programs at business schools including Insead, London Business School, Copenhagen Business and others. In 2008 he co-wrote a case about Miles Davis for Harvard Business School. Before he started JazzCode Carl was the Sr. VP of marketing at Norwegian Airshuttle, one of Europes largest low-cost carriers which he helped take public. Carl was the founder and executive vice president of StudentUniverse Inc., the leading U.S. online student travel agency. Before founding StudentUniverse, Carl worked in sales and consulting for IBM Global Services. Mr. Stormer spent four years designing databases for the law-firm Weill, Gotschal & Manges in New York, founded "the Real Thing", Norways most popular jazz groups and worked as a professional jazz musician in New York and Norway for many years. Since 2007 he has released five CD´s for Jazzcode. Carl is based in Boston, MA and in Oslo, Norway. He can be reached at (707) 676-3883 or carl.stormer@jazzcode.com.



Daniel Penrice is a business writer based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

At the Intersection of Art and Ideas

by Jerry McGrath, Director of Innovation and Program Partnerships at the Banff Leadership Centre, a Mobius Alliance Partner

Leaders make a difference.

Leadership Development at The Banff Centre elevates new voices, new stories, new skills and new communities. We equip emerging leaders to make a meaningful difference for their organizations, their communities and themselves.

Leaders developed in Banff are creative entrepreneurs who identify untapped opportunities and potential. We equip innovators and high fliers with the skills to cope with conditions of extreme uncertainty, and provide the tools he/she needs to manage people and projects in today's increasingly complex world.

Leaders we work with experience transformational growth to provide the new perspectives needed for an organization's toughest challenges.

At The Banff Centre, we accelerate ideas, develop leaders, and host conversations across boundaries to imagine and deliver on a better future.

Leadership Development is situated in "nature's perfect setting" – Banff National Park, and is a part of the world's largest arts and creativity incubator, The Banff Centre. Our unique design signature applies a blend of arts and nature inspired experiential learning, mountain culture, and leadership and management development not offered anywhere else.

The Banff Centre is Canada's only learning centre dedicated to the arts, leadership development and mountain culture. We serve the needs of accomplished artists, business and community leaders, and members of the global mountain community through programs designed to enrich professional practice beyond the realm of traditional education. New art and ideas are born at The Banff Centre every day. We support Canada's finest artists. We convene Canada's top leaders. The Centre is also home to a world-class conference facility. The convergence of our resources, multidisciplinary programming and spectacular physical location affords an inspirational learning experience. Creative excellence is our hallmark.

With over 59 years of experience, Leadership Development at The Banff Centre provides a wide range of innovative leadership programming which incorporates applied creativity and hands-on learning experiences. To meet the emerging leadership challenges of our diverse clientele, we continually make advances in our program design. Numerous collaborations provide Leadership Development with a clear and unique advantage: we design leading edge program experiences that reinforce practical workplace applications, reflect shifts in external contexts and invite personal and organizational transformation.

Leadership Development is globally recognized as the place for applied creativity and creative leadership development. The Banff Centre affords personal reflection and discovery to help leaders make sense of their personal and professional journey. We make a difference in the lives of the people, organizations, and the communities we serve.

The Banff Centre is where leaders learn:

- Creative Leadership – The development of a leader's capacity for human resourcefulness to think and act beyond boundaries, in service of achieving more than was imagined.
- Applied Creativity – The development of a leader's capacity for the generation of creative ideas and innovative solutions, and the ability to transform these into meaningful results.

Leadership Development at The Banff Centre was Canada's first institution dedicated to the professional development of leaders and managers. Today we are Canada's leader in the development of hands-on, practical leadership behaviours, delivering over 70 programs annually to over 2,000 managers and executives from a variety of sectors.

Why the Arts?

There is growing evidence that the way innovation works in the Western world is shifting. An industrial economy built on increased productivity, engineered improvements, and predictable returns on assets has different creative requirements than an emerging economy built on knowledge flows, systems of value, and

The Kinnear Centre for Creativity & Innovation at The Banff Centre. Photo: Donald Lee, The Banff Centre.

2012 PROGRAMMING

Leading in the Middle:
5 days: September 23 – September 28, 2012

Centered Leadership: When Remarkable Women Lead:
4 days: October 1 – October 5, 2012

Leading Teams for High Performance:
5 days: October 14 – October 19, 2012

Coaching for Performance:
5 days: October 28 – November 2, 2012

Leading Strategically:
6 days: November 4 – November 10, 2012

Building Accountability:
5 days: November 11 – November 16, 2012

Customized Programs

interdisciplinary collaboration. There is a significant change in economic performance underway that needs to be mirrored by a significant change in the creative activities of organizations.

The emerging economy requires creativity and increased connectedness within and across organizational boundaries to effectively manage complexity and growing competitive pressure. The best way to understand creativity is as a product of a network of relationships rather than as individual moments of brilliance. Modern enterprise innovators are embedded within networks of relationships that support a specific type and direction of creative activity. Innovators approach problem finding and problem solving from the perspective of their own internal strengths.

We believe that leaders must have direct and meaningful interaction with other domains concerned with creativity but with different assumptions, tools and perspectives for true breakthroughs to occur. Competitive advantage is centered on creating value and defining appropriate forms for carrying value and the artistic process is particularly well suited for both of these tasks.

Creativity sessions have been a mainstay in Leadership Development programs for a number of years, primarily as a unique complement to the traditional training regime and outdoor experiences. Over time we have learned a great deal about what works, and what doesn't. We have been encouraged by the emergence of a number of artistic methods as pedagogical tools for developing basic leadership competencies and are now leveraging arts-based methods to inform larger questions of organizational design and function. All of our work leverages diverse approaches to solving problems, and our ability to tap into the world's largest arts incubator remains a competitive advantage.

Open Enrolment Programs

We pioneer creative ways of developing leaders who thrive when faced with the demands of the 21st Century. Through our unique learning processes inspired by art and nature, participants learn how to generate ideas, explore possibilities, and make them real with meaningful results.

Leadership Development at The Banff Centre can design and deliver customized leadership development solutions to align with your organization's vision, mission, values, and culture. Banff Centre custom clients benefit from our ongoing leadership research, experienced facilitators, and innovative resources that can create organizational capacity in areas such as:

- Building your next generation of leaders
- Developing your organization's current leadership talent pool
- Strategic thinking and problem-solving
- Leading complex change
- Enhancing cultures of accountability
- Building performance measures

Our needs assessment and design approach are also unique.

The Design Studio

The purpose of the Design Studio is to bring together stakeholders, diverse representatives from a potential client, faculty and other thought leaders to collaboratively participate in problem finding and problem solving to address organizational needs. The diversity of the group allows for the available solution set to grow and for new opportunities to emerge. Underpinning this activity is the deep exploration of ways in which arts and nature inspired learning can inform new programs, products, and services in Leadership Development.

The Design Studio is distinguished by its interdisciplinary approach to the generation of new knowledge (applied research) and in the development of unique learning processes (arts/nature based) as a means to advance the practice of leader and leadership development.

Following this process, we col-

laborate with partners to co-create a focused program or service that delivers sustainable and positive impacts. We are a proven partner in custom-designed programming that aligns with developmental needs, pace of change, business environment and culture.

Coming in 2013: Disrupt + Engage

Leaders across sectors recognize the need to question long-held assumptions about business as usual and to engage new communities to discover new sources of value. Disrupt and Engage represent two new streams of programming that equip emerging and high potential leaders with opportunities to practice new behaviours to generate breakthrough ideas and inspire a community to execute on a new future.

Starting Spring of 2013, short and highly experiential experiences will animate core ideas and processes for disrupting the status quo and enabling leaders to operate across boundaries and categories to achieve lasting success. ■

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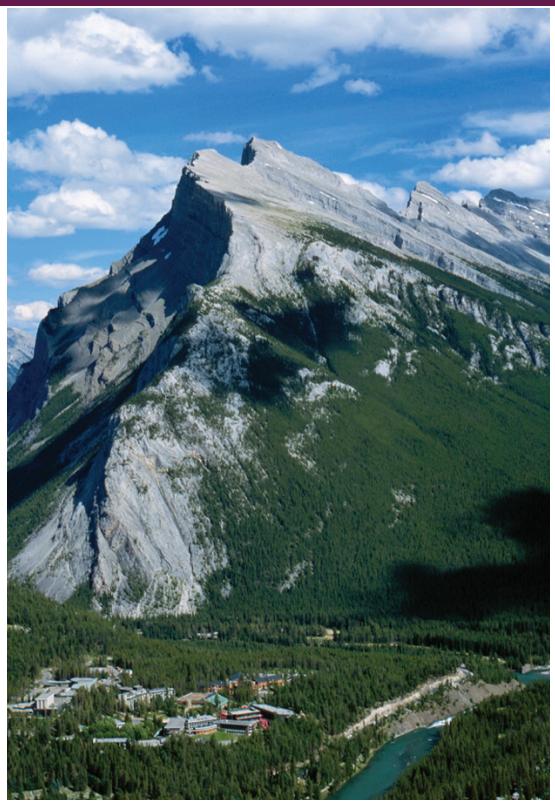

Giving and receiving love has the power to emancipate us from the confines of victimhood and prevent us from being limited by our suffering. Both our power and our sense of worth can be deeply renewed by love and being loved. However as soon as we discover that loving can involve being hurt we often find it more appealing to close our hearts. But it is not typically hurt that seals our hearts but rather the stories we create about feeling hurt. We employ the excessively permeable boundaries of childhood allowing the actions of others to define us. So when someone does or says something that hurts us we create the story that we are not lovable or deserving of better treatment. Most of us don't know how to be hurt. Learning how to be hurt does not mean being impervious to the emotional blows we receive along the way. Immunity would likely close our hearts. Becoming more creative with the stories of our pain gives us resilience and deepens our capacity to feel hurt. When our stories depict the hurtful actions of others, then they are statements about their motivations, beliefs and values...It is common to think that if we are feeling hurt, then somebody in our story is a bad person. Either we are deserving of such treatment or the perpetrator of the hurt is simply a nasty human being. I call these compassionless stories. We can feel hurt without betraying our essential value and simply remain good people who feel hurt.

–Paul Dunion, *Dare to Grow Up: Learn to Become Who You Are Meant to Be*

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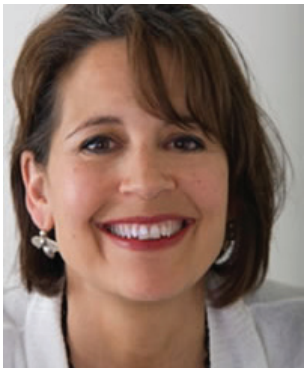

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CARL STØRMER'S JAZZCODE™

MOVING PERFORMANCE

"Love is not selective, desire is selective. In love there are no strangers. When the centre of selfishness is no longer, all desires for pleasure and fear of pain cease; one is no longer interested in being happy; beyond happiness there is pure intensity, inexhaustible energy, the ecstasy of giving from a perennial source."

– Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj,
I Am That: Talks with
Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj

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