Age of Artists

Research Essentials

What you need to know about growing a creativity culture

July 2015

Introduction

This document represents a condensed version of our research and an invitation for dialogue and exchange. Our investigation was realized between October 2013 and July 2015 and continues on. Up to now we conducted interviews with close to 50 artists from all genres to learn about their work in general, and more specifically their mindset, approaches, practices and action paths. We engaged as well in conversations with individuals that work at the intersection of art and other disciplines, and with leading scientists in various disciplines such as brain science, sociology, education, art and design, and creativity research. Finally we also engaged with business executives in various industries to find out about their needs, expectations and current thinking. The transcriptions of our interviews and conversations will be gradually published at www.ageofartists.org. Our research objective is identical to our mission, which is to "learn from creative disciplines for better outcomes in business and society". We've been particularly interested in learning about elements of the artistic attitude and practice that map to the demands of today's society and economy and that may be transferred and used in other disciplines such as business and science - *independent* from art as a domain, artists, works of art or the art market. Using, not abusing, practices from art more broadly and more consistently is what we refer to as the Age of Artists.

Research Essentials:
What you need to know about growing a creativity culture

#1: Artists across all genres display a particular artistic attitude that is increasingly and highly relevant in other disciplines as well. This attitude consists of:

- **Curiosity**. A general readiness to perceive, receive and to learn.
- **Position.** Holding a personal belief that is articulated with integrity.
- **Passion.** Pursuing what matters with initiative, determination, courage and persistence.
- **Resilience.** Appreciating uncertainty, flexible towards change, robust in conflict and crisis.
- **Transcendence.** Ability to surpass limitations of ego and self-interest in order to create something new.

Curiosity, position, passion, resilience, and transcendence characterize artists - but are not exclusive to them. Everyone can develop several or all of these features since they are, in fact, not

innate talents but emergent through the ongoing artistic practices in which a person engages over time.

#2 Artistic Practice is a non-linear, iterative process that consists of recurring creative patterns that can be observed across most or all art genres and that are applicable to other disciplines. This process includes:

- **Searching** - Observing, Listening, Communicating, Exploring, Collecting, Sensing

- **Reflecting** - Abstracting, Deconstructing, Reframing, Ideating, Challenging, Contemplating, Reasoning

- **Creating** - Experimenting, Composing, Improvising, Bricolage, Cooperating, Designing, Rehearsing, Doubting, Critique

- **Performing** - Creating awareness, Stimulating emotions, Evoking meaning, Inspiring

#3: Going through this process will allow people to eventually build and extend generic skills in addition to their core expertise.

- Through searching they acquire perception skills
- Through reflecting they gain mindfulness & understanding
- Through creating they learn problem solving, design and collaborative creation
- Through performing they understand how to create awareness, stimulate emotion, and evoke meaning

#4: Artistic attitude and artistic process amplify each other. An artistic attitude enables experiencing the artistic process more profoundly and as a result leads to higher competence levels. Going through the artistic process changes your attitude.

#5: Organizations that embrace search, reflect, create, perform realize important outcomes:

- Questions will be asked in a different way.
- Decisions will be taken in a clearer manner.
- Solutions will be more sustainable.
- Customer experiences will be outstanding.

#6: The artistic process is the starting point for both the development of an individual artistic attitude and an organizational culture of creativity. The cultural values of an organization correspond to the elements of the individual attitude. Thus, it develops and adapts its culture of creativity from the core and based on its own activity:

- **Diversity:** A common appreciation for variety and discovery and its positive influence on organizational success.
- **Focus:** A clearly defined working area and business direction (without running the risk to define objectives on a too detailed or central level)
- **Purpose:** Organizational cause that transcends economic considerations to promote employee identification, physical and emotional customer value and that guarantees a deep connection with society.
- **Flexibility:** Ability to continuously change independent of the degree of complexity, dynamics and uncertainty.
- **Humility:** Avoid being seduced by success and always challenge your own position.

#7: The creativity culture and the artistic practice amplify each other. The creativity culture allows the artistic practice to fully develop. The artistic practice leads to higher maturity of the creativity culture.

#8: The artistic attitude and the creativity culture coalesce individuals and the organization and amplify each other, too: For

example, individual curiosity leads to organizational diversity. An individual position will allow the organization to focus, and so on.

#9: Such a shared value system helps to resolve business and societal challenges. It helps to drive:

- Inspiration
- Insight & Intuition
- Imagination & Invention
- Innovation

#10: If your work is meaningful, original, and vivid - if you create - the outcome, your approach, and your attitude will grow. The artistic process offers numerous patterns. Choosing from them will be case-by-case decisions. The path is non-linear and twisty. The practice is iterative. Not all of the results are predefined. Many will develop over time.