

**Valedictory to the London and Toronto Delegations
on the New York leg of the Creative Cities Project
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Toronto and London: what do they have in common? --passionate people dedicated to the release of passion in their respective cities. Sometimes they are called strategists, sometimes culture planners, policy makers, lovers of the urban --all of them creative, because their mission is to sculpt their cities into something resembling a work of art --so they are all artists.

I'm not going to pretend to summarize our notes for this artistry called city building—I leave that to our expert makers of narrative, Meric Gertler and Graeme Evans.

I just want to emphasize a few points about creativity, add my caveats as a poet, underwrite some of the brilliant things I have heard from some of the people I have learned to call friends in the space of a few weeks on the road (or in the air).

Jennifer said: "creativity is a way of life". I would agree. It is not a "project"; it is not a marriage of infrastructures, of levers and strategies. The one strategy is to build things in such a way that people can relax into their creative skills--for everyone is creative; the trick is to have them recognize it. And by that I mean not just the cues for invention and innovation. Invention and innovation stumble into progress. But creativity hunts a vision. A vision makes for long-term prosperity. Progress is the short-term inefficiency.

We have between us a huge talent for strategizing--but let's not forget that our task is to break down that which prevents creativity. I'm talking about the deconstruction of fear. The many reasons for global fear must be reduced to the "manufacture of delight". The manufacture of delight is a perpetual motion machine--people manufacture delight by the impulse of wanting to share in a public forum of wonder and surprise. To invent, to be innovative, to create, is to be seduced into that forum. People want to be delighted, and to share in the delight of creating; it is contagious. Good strategy is about removing those obstacles that impede the natural flow of delight.

This business of creative cities is a lot bigger than the leveraging of economies, bigger than a city's "buzz", bigger even than sustainability. It occurred to me yesterday as we were being ushered around New York, that the artists, the craftsman, the skilled citizen are all being chased out of the cities. We are being disinhabited from our cities, by the virtual, by outsourcing, by the protocol of real estate and expedience that robs us of the first forum of shared creativity; i.e. human encounter.

We are being turned into manufacturers of design--without the human measure that inspired design to begin with. We are in danger of becoming assembly-line workers for life-styles.

Someone asked yesterday if design was going "overseas"; and someone answered: "it is already overseas". We are *outsourced*. We are *resourced*. And we have to go back to knowing that we are the "source"-- as citizens, as neighbors, as co-creators. There is dignity in that. And that is the collective cry of the global citizen- "I am the 'source'; see me, know me, touch me, walk with me." That is what John Campbell is trying to do on Toronto's harbourfront--to somehow restore the body to the citizen--restore the body to the city. It is what Geoff Cape is trying to do at Evergreen, what Neil does in Paddington, what Michele Reeves does in London--trying to restore the citizens as the "source" of human delight and discovery. Finance and the mercantile are about the harvesting of that source--the "quick" harvesting; let us not abet it with hasty recruitments to invention and innovation.

The citizen is literally dying to commit himself/herself to creativity as a way of life. If we follow that allegiance, innovation and invention will follow--economy will inevitably prosper.

I've been delight and thrilled to be among some of the most active minds expressing a benevolent concern for the civic. I'm proud to have been among you, and none of us will forget the commerce of creativity we shared together. Our journey culminated in Tim's wonderful "Risk Revolution", and with a honeymoon in New York where we saw what might be a tomorrow with the artist in exile, or a future where hope and possibility prevail. I think our vote is for hope because we've seen the life instinct stated in brave projects that fired the imagination. Barcelona, Berlin, London, Toronto, New York; wherever we went we saw companions dedicated to the mission dear to our hearts-- the generation of a way of life called creativity.

I think we should remember, when optimism or despair make us lazy in our task--the words of Alan Webber who spoke eloquently at Tim Jones' Artscape Conference in Toronto. He wasn't being over-dramatic or literary when he said that, as city builders, "we are battling for the 'soul of the future'".

I'm not a historian, but I think this is our last shot at the "soul" of the future, before it is given over to the heartless strategists who see policing and regulation as the only solution to global incoherence. Life will go on in any event, but without a soul called "the creative city", people will be zombies in the forgotten narrative of what they could be. I wish us all the best of luck and love and prayers in the task of reclaiming our cities in the name of passion.

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