

## **The Dynamics of Creativity in the City**

The problem is not absence of art in the city. The problem is not lack of funding for the arts. The event landscape of art is rich, and growing richer. The problem is how to let art spill over into the creative potential of the city at large, in commerce and routine.

Until that happens, we will be stitching creativity to the fabric of the society; that is laborious and inefficient.

Acknowledgement of tolerance, diversity and creativity are well and good, but will not generate energy. Such acknowledgements try to strategize passion, but cannot produce it. Passion is desire, and desire will not be awakened by “prescripts” of tolerance, diversity and creativity. Desire is the self-willed attraction to the marvel of creating. Prescripts of tolerance, diversity and creativity are abstractions and cannot fire the human heart. Such prescripts are seen by the human heart as precisely “prescripts”, and shunned, however intellectually valid they are.

The joy of creating enthuses, and affects and effects. It is precisely this alchemy that must not be checked. Protocol, boundary consciousness and political correctness seek to nurture the alchemy of creating, but in fact stunt it. They do not provide the atmosphere for passion, but merely a containment for it. And “containment”, in both spirit and ethic, is what enfeebles a city’s culture.

The joy of creating happens. It is not fostered. It needs no mid-wife. It is as irrepressible as the life-instinct. It is our arrogance to usher it, facilitate it and strategize it. It happens in the home, the canvas, or the street. The joy of creating knows no forum. The task of culture planning is not to provide a forum, but to unimpede the flow of the “affect” of creating. “Affect”, not “effect”. The “affect” is what touches the “other”-- the neighbor, the colleague, the citizen, after it has enlivened the creator, the one creating. And by “enliven” I mean the natural enthusiasm of delight of the creative person. This enthusiasm can be met, either by an ethic of “welcome and response”; or by an ethic of “boundary and protocol”. It is the ethic of “boundary and protocol” that the Torontonians are predisposed to. This predisposition impedes the flow of creative enthusiasm, person to person. It is a consciousness that renders each creative sector discrete, and keeps discrete the events of art in every sector of daily life.

Until these sectors flow into each other, and encourage each other by the natural impulse of mutuality, we will have events of art, and not an atmosphere of art.

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