
Beauty Engine



A collection of observations, musings, visionary rants, empirical research and practical solutions designed to assist and inspire you in your travels into the impending transformation and inevitable renaissance of humanity.

With Barron Scott Levkoff
and Polly Whittaker

Cover design by Polly Whittaker

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In Loving Memory

Atom Constantino
AKA Melvin Stanley

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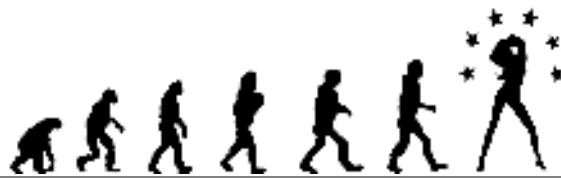
This book is not a finished product; it's a work in progress. We know it's a little rough around the edges, and could use another edit, some fancy graphic design, and maybe an introduction from a 'celebrity'. But nonetheless if you can relate to it or feel inspired by it, then please drop us a line. Perhaps you could participate in the creation of the second edition! You inspire us with your wild ideas, your magnificent visions, your fantastic solutions, your passion and creativity!

This is your **invitation**.
We would love to hear from you!



Mission Control
2519 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94110

www.BeautyEngine.org



Introducing the Beauty Engine

Chapter One

Welcome

Polly Whittaker

Imagine a reality where every interaction you have, whether it's a fleeting moment on the street or an afternoon of deep discussion, becomes invested with meaning and purpose. Deep connections reveal themselves in all spheres of life, as resources spring up around you, undreamt possibilities open up to you in unexpected places, and small talk disappears completely (unless you really want to have small talk).

The Beauty Engine is a social framework for the next generation of human interaction. It's designed to support you in fulfilling your truest potential, both as an individual, and as a unique and essential part of society. When the Beauty Engine is really humming, life gets more interesting, more manageable, and more satisfying.

Over the years we have described it in many different ways, but our friend Wilks really hit the nail on the head when he said:

“..within 5-7 years from now we will be totally broadsided by a new kind of global social interaction that the young will simply use as if humans have always had it.. It will be a global cultural movement that encompasses all the tools and systems available.. Scott and Polly are the first people I have talked to who have a concept that actually is a little frightening and does make sense.”

[Quotation source: William Henshall (Founder of Rocket Networks) in an email to John Perry Barlow (Founder of Electronic Frontier Foundation) November 2003]

The Beauty Engine allows people to be more authentic and creative in the way they live their lives. It reveals opportunities, and kick starts adventures which can increase self awareness, leaving people more accountable for their behavior, and more capable of collaborating.

We're open to the possibility that something unimaginably exciting and wonderful is happening to our culture. Wouldn't it be hilarious if we were right?

The Origin of the Beauty Engine

Barron Scott Levkoff

I just want to stop, take a deep breath, and give thanks for the amazing journey of discovery, celebration and challenge that has brought us to where we are today. All our lives, Polly and I have been exploring ways to instigate creative community. Before meeting, we both hosted numerous events, participating and studying what specific elements make a community really fly (and sometimes sink like a stone), and pursuing our individual paths as budding Social Scientists. Our uniquely colorful worlds collided in 2000 and we were immediately inspired by each other's commitment and passion for creating meaningful experiences -- it seemed natural for us to join forces.

Since that year, we have been tending to the development of a social framework which, in one form or another, could assist in the emergence of a new culture of celebration and creativity. It was an intuitive path at first and led us down many blind alleys, including a few failed partnerships such as a game company start-up that never took off. There were days of disappointment and despair, a whole lot of wading through New Age meta-babble. But we also encountered many brilliant visionaries, forward thinkers, a wild diversity of progressive communities and creative facilitators. A million incredible synchronicities later, this mad journey led to the formation of our own creative community, which continues to challenge and inspire us. We have been granted the privilege to host a multitude of events and risky social experiments -- some of which you, dear reader, have played a vital part in, and for which we give thanks!

Over these years, a most curious thing started to present itself. As event producers and Social Scientists, it came naturally to us to observe, listen and consider every social factor we encountered in our adventures. Over time, we began to notice striking patterns and similarities in the behavior, attitudes and approaches of the various creative communities we inhabited. We set about isolating the more successful social factors and have worked to incorporate them through constant trial and error application. This has

been the meat of our work these past seven years, and continues to fascinate us.

We have identified and adopted approaches from many different groups, who, if you were to introduce them to each other, would exclaim that they had nothing in common with the other. But we started to realize that this was just not the case. The more we observed these patterns, the greater our ability to hone in on them, fusing them when necessary and cross referencing one against the other. We hosted what we called ‘The SuperStar Nation’ sessions, testing our theories and applying many of these creative approaches and styles among diverse groups of cultural creatives at our S.F. Mission-based community laboratory, Mission Control. These events were so successful they even garnered us a front page article in a local newspaper, the SF Weekly.

Since the time of those first playtesting sessions, we have remained open to new ideas and approaches, but are consistently guided by the influence of these successful patterns we had been observing for years.

The more we shaped and molded our social experiments and community containers according to these prize influences, the more distilled our approach became, and thus more clearly was the Beauty Engine revealed to us. As it exists today in its still infant form, the Beauty Engine has been an integral part of over 100 themed events and celebrations, including a Beauty Engine workshop tour of Japan, numerous Beauty Engine Salons, a Festival road trip, a community medicine show, guided journeys, moon circles, community outings, a small festival in Maui and our personal favorite -- a ridiculous concoction called PeepShowMiniGolf.

On a deeper level, Beauty Engine’s collected wisdom and evolutionary presence in our lives has had a profound influence on the personal growth of both Polly and myself, as well as that of many folks in our community. As proponents of Human Evolution, this excites us to no end because it points to an inextricable link between personal evolution and participation in healthy community. Almost everywhere we go now we see aspects of the Beauty Engine mirrored. Each time we go online we see some reference to a new technology or new community that mirrors aspects of the Beauty

Engine's abundant approach. It has become increasingly clear that collaboration and mutually supportive social behavior are vital for survival, as humanity moves through our current set of challenges.

Could the world, in spite of itself, really learn how to play together? Well, not only have we seen the answers at work; so have you.

Curiously enough, the name 'Beauty Engine' was created on the spot when we suddenly had to think of a name for a salon-style community event we hosted at a yoga studio in Santa Monica about five years ago. Beyond that, the content and form of the Beauty Engine has neither one point of origin nor one distinctive creator, so you can see now what a challenge it can be to explain 'just what Beauty Engine is'.

Ultimately, we see ourselves more as the 'stewards' or 'midwives' rather than its creators. We see a massive convergence taking place right now. We feel the shift occurring and we know that we have many colleagues. The wealth of successful approaches, innovative methods and creative wisdom currently radiating outwards from the progressive culture communities gives us no end of hope for an impending Planetary Renaissance. If our efforts, rallied under the banner of Beauty Engine, can in any way accelerate the spread of good, kind and healthy social practices anywhere (and let us not forget about the proliferation of FUN), then it shall all have been worthwhile.

The Power of Play

Barron Scott Levkoff

Just ask our friends: At any given moment over the past years, Polly and I proudly spout off all manner of ridiculous, grandiose thoughts, observations and statements about the nature and future of Society. It's a slightly embarrassing fact.

“Anyone who takes himself too seriously always runs the risk of looking ridiculous; anyone who can consistently laugh at himself does not.”

In light of this famous line from Oscar Wilde, it would behoove us to allow ourselves to look a bit ridiculous now and then, wouldn't it?

‘There are a thousand forms of subversion; all of them are interesting, but few, in my opinion, equal the convenience and immediacy of the cream pie.’
-- Noel Godin, social-philosopher / guerilla-artist, creator of The International Patisserie Brigade.



Honestly, sometimes I don't know how our friends put up with us. (Surely, these 'profound pronouncements' of ours would warrant the occasional pie in the face!) Okay, I think I know why. As the community 'Class Clowns', we make them laugh. Certainly, our penchant for being ridiculous defuses the 'pompous factor' associated with our work as 'Social Scientists' ... because we actually DO embrace Ridiculousness as part of our personal ethos.



In the realm of archetypes, the Fool holds a very special place: He goes where others fear to tread (if only because he doesn't know any better), often blundering upon hidden or forgotten treasures and truths. Indeed, it was The Fool who introduced me to the whole world of PLAY. And believe it or not, this little word encapsulates everything upon which we have built our Grand Empire of Fun and Celebration. Yes, play is the eco-friendly fuel that ignites our Beauty Engine (he expounds, whilst twirling his curly mustache ...)

Seventeen years ago, I signed up as a volunteer actor at the Black Point Renaissance Faire and quickly took to making a fool of myself begging for desserts and ale in the dusty streets of a real, live (virtual) Elizabethan Village. (Yes, that's really me in the picture). Paying customers rewarded my antics handsomely with treats and I was afforded the freedom to play with people in whole new ways. This 'job' allowed me to step into a clarified reality where everything slowed down, interactions were heightened and the most mundane things suddenly took on profound meanings.

I quickly brought my cap, bells and colorful fool's motley to the stuffy banquet halls of Silicon Valley's Corporate America, amusing myself and hordes of semi-autistic yuppies by producing hot rolls and strings of sausages from out my poofy pants. Beyond discovering that I could actually

get paid to play, most importantly, The Fool presented a mirror to myself, inviting me to regard my foibles, strengths and passions with a bemused eye and a loving, if somewhat detached, grin.

The boundaries between play and work, the commonplace and the sublime, the sacred and the profane, began to blur. I spent years, literally, pondering: if ‘The play’s the thing’ - then why aren’t we all playing more often? I started to see all efforts and outcomes, follies and victories, as equally important ingredients of the feast of life, integral condiments for spicing up the grand banquet of reality.

Anthony Judge, some obscure essayist guy, writes: ‘The Court Jester offers new perspectives and helps people to look at their daily work and every day reality in new ways. Here, the court jester is concerned with the quality of communities and the well-being of all members, independent of their positions.’

My personal Patron Saint, The Fool, had given me a special perspective on the nature of Social Interaction, which helped to open the doors onto my life as a Social Scientist in the years to come.

My love of play also brought me to the world of Puppetry. I spent time abroad studying, performing and immersing myself in the rich traditions of European street fairs and Puppet Festivals. I met many amazing performers during this time, artists who instilled in me a respect for tradition and technique. They shared openly with me their belief in theater as a tool for facilitating cultural transformation.

For many years, I performed as a children’s puppeteer. This took me on countless journeys of discovery and innocence, into worlds where things are whatever we dream them to be, where magic words bring flowers to life and every action has special meaning and purpose. I am grateful to the many thousands of children I have performed for over the years who have helped me stay open to the possibilities presented by play. Maintaining a partial state of ‘arrested development’ has been critical in my ability to stay light-hearted and keep from careening off my path.

‘To be playful is not to be trivial or frivolous, or to act as though nothing of consequence will happen. On the contrary, when we are playful with each other we relate as free persons, and the relationship is open to surprise; everything that happens is of consequence. To be playful is to allow for possibility whatever the cost to oneself’

-- James Carse, *Finite and Infinite Games*

As we grow older, Polly and I genuinely feel younger and thus more connected to our shared sense of playfulness. As community builders, we enjoy seeing others discover the value of play because it continues to be one of the most valuable tools in our existential (does existential suggest intangible?) perhaps ‘community builders’ bag of tricks. Integrating a playful approach into every aspect of community and injecting fun into otherwise boring or mundane tasks, getting people onboard and keeping them onboard, letting people choose what is fun for them ... these are important highlights in our work.

‘Play helps our brains make new associations, identify new solutions to old stuck patterns, see things in a new way ... harnessing the power of play in many aspects of our daily lives ... understanding our identities, our relationships, how to create and maintain our communities ...’

-- James Carse, *Finite and Infinite Games*

As your fellow Social Scientist, I offer the following for consideration- FUN and CREATIVE is the new SUSTAINABILITY. PLAY bestows upon us The Power of Permission -- the permission to be ridiculous, to imagine, and thus recreate the world through the lens of wonder, magic and joy. What a grand freedom it is to laugh at yourself, not to care what others think, to be joyful and really laugh till it hurts ... and therein discover that there truly is a Science to Celebration.

So what are you waiting for, friends? Jump aboard the Ship of Fools, the merry throng awaits!

The Imminent Renaissance

Polly Whittaker

We live in an unprecedented time in history. For the first time ever, people across the globe are connected to the planet's mind-boggling diversity of cultures. We have access to more knowledge, ideas and wisdom than could have even been dreamt of just a few decades ago. We can google ancient alchemical texts kept secret for centuries and download images of the original parchment. We can listen to a live feed of the Dalai Lama leading meditation, or watch a video stream of aboriginal elders chanting. We can find lost friends, trace back our family trees, and chat with people on the other side of the planet who we have never met, but who are connected to us via a friend of our friend. The Worlds Fairs held in cities across the globe didn't even come close to guessing what the future had in store for us.

And so here we are, totally plugged in, teetering on the edge of human history wondering what happens next. It can look a little bleak out there some days (especially if you pay attention to the newspapers) and even though we're all so connected online, it's ironic that when it comes to real life many of us end up feeling a little isolated.

But global culture is changing. People all over the world are waking up to the fact that modern life is, for the most part, unsustainable, unhealthy and unfair. We are witnessing the birth of a movement, but it is not like other movements which have been and gone, because this time it is global, it is cross cultural, and it is technologically advanced.

It has been growing for years now, but the thing is that most of the people who are in it don't know it. The array of artists, scientists, thinkers and dreamers that make up this movement are so extremely diverse, so seemingly random, that even if they were all sitting in a room together, they probably would not understand their connection.

The Beauty Engine's purpose is to bring people together from wildly different backgrounds and surroundings, and minimize the semantic noise

and social walls that prevent them from understanding one another. The idea is just to give everyone a little common ground to stand on.

If you're reading this, then you may already hold a vital piece of this puzzle.

The time has come to re-think our lives and re-dream the possibility of what living together on this planet might look like. We do not want to lose what already exists- I love malls, IMAX movie theatres and My Space- but we could simply reinvest them with creativity and intention.

How do we do that? We have to make it cool.

What if the next pop culture phenomenon sweeping the planet made it hip to share your resources? What if it became fashionable to collaborate on creative projects? What if you were rewarded in tangible ways for being authentic and accountable for your actions? Is it possible to generate a shift which meant that every self respecting teenager was striving to be self aware and unique?

We think it is. And with the right technology, it could happen over night, igniting a cultural movement of authenticity, creativity and accountability. The technology is the Trojan horse which delivers these memes directly into the heart of popular culture, connecting intentional communities on a global scale and revealing their truest potential.

- Multiple identity management

In real life we all embody different personas according to the situation we are faced with. In order to represent ourselves authentically online we need applications that support this concept.

- Mobile technology

Nobody likes to spend hours sitting behind their computers, and it is obvious that our technology is becoming mobile. Cell phones are our windows to the world, capable of creating and viewing a multitude of media, connecting us to our social networks, and allowing us immediate access at all times.

- Web 2.0

The new Web 2.0 services such as My Space, You Tube, Blogger, Flickr and Live Journal have initiated a swarm of global creativity and exchange unlike anything ever seen before on this planet.

- Peer-to-Peer networking

With Peer-to-Peer networking the capacity of the network grows with each new user that signs on. Networks can grow exponentially without needing large amounts of resources to keep up with bandwidth, storage space and computing power.

- Open Source Software

Public, collaborative development of software allows for a greater level of innovation and accelerated development.

- Global Wisdom Sharing

Collaboratively created encyclopedias of human wisdom, which are accessible to everyone.

- Free to users

Needless to say, an essential ingredient

- Simple and intuitive to use

So simple a monkey could use it

So, picture a technology that allows you create multiple personas, that's accessible via your cell phone, that's plugged into your Web 2.0 services, that utilizes Peer to Peer networking, that's built with Open Source software, that's embedded with a growing encyclopedia of wisdom, that's free to use and simple to operate. Not that I'm saying all these ingredients are necessary, or that there might be another way of doing it, but a lot of people are thinking in this direction. In fact, this kind of technology is in development all over the world, in a race to create the 'Killer App' for the next generation. When it lands, it will become essential to your everyday life, helping you to navigate through the creativity swarm, organize your social and working lives, and adding meaning and follow through to every interaction that you have.

We propose that if that if the 'Killer App' that grabbed the attention of the public was built with the intention of supporting people in fulfilling their truest potential, and in revealing their authentic selves through creativity and accountability, it could transform global culture over night, infusing it with healthier more sustainable memes.

The Beauty Engine is a framework which could serve in this capacity, and we plan to surprise ourselves by cocreating something few of us even suspect we're capable of.

The Narrative of the New World

Barron Scott Levkoff

“The world is made of words”

Terrance McKenna

“All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players”

William Shakespeare

The question is- how do we cultivate a community that really cares about each other, that wants to get involved, that sees the value of being accountable? Driving cars fueled by banana peels will help, but ultimately it's humans making the choice to live accountably that will really change the world. There are now currently more communities on the planet formed with the intention of creating a positive future than in any time in history. The potential for the many thousands of communities, if they were able to figure out how to collaborate- is unimaginably awesome. Let's imagine what a 'convergence of solutions' would look like.

When people speak of Global community, I remind myself of the very definition of Community, which continues to inspire me- 'comm munus- to give freely among each other'. I like to imagine a world in which the currencies of beauty, compassion, true essence, presence, attention and joy are at the forefront of every exchange, and every interaction. If it's a culture of abundance we are looking for, then it makes sense to reward individuals and communities by behaving abundantly!

In times of crisis, when altruism, innovation and deeper levels of participation are required, people actually go in the opposite direction. It's an intuitive move to withdraw into your shell. So how do we coax them out? People need a narrative that can enable them to 're-imagine themselves' in the world in a new way. If we can imagine ourselves operating in harmony, creatively, joyfully- then we can make the move to do so.

When James Twyman, noted musician and peacenik, asked one of the 'Indigo Children' how they would suggest we move through our current global challenge-they merely replied – 'Pretend'. Sounds naively simple at first but when you really think about it, what they are actually suggesting is deceptively simple.

You can compare this to the 'laughing meditation'. Before engaging in the practice, you can feel depressed, anxious or angry but after having physically laughed for a period of time, the physiology of the body and actually shifts. You feel happier and energized almost 'despite yourself'. Or if you're feeling needy or neglected, give someone a gift of your time, a smile or an actual token and you'll feel better!

Introduce social systems based on abundant social practices; the users will be rewarded by mere adoption. There is no ideology or theory that needs to be embraced here. It will be embraced merely by the fact that it provides the users with immediately rewarding abundant experiences. New Narratives will emerge naturally. Voila! Less talking, more doing!

In the book, 'Massive Change' by Bruce Mau Design and the Institute without Boundaries, he proposes that the world is in the throes of a massive (and overdue) redesign job intent on improving the welfare of humanity. "Massive Change is a celebration of our global capacities but also a cautious look at our limitations. It encompasses the utopian and dystopian possibilities of this emerging world, in which even nature is no longer outside the reach of our manipulation. For many of us, design is invisible. We live in a world that is so thoroughly configured by human effort that design has become second nature, ever-present, inevitable, taken for granted. And yet, the power of design to transform and affect every aspect of daily life is gaining widespread public awareness. No longer associated simply with objects and appearances, design is increasingly understood in a much wider sense as the human capacity to plan and produce desired outcomes."

Well, Hallelujah!
Let's hear it for DESIGN!

Beauty Engine presents not only a positive alternative narrative to the overwhelming one the world presents us, but it extends an invitation to join in its crafting. The narrative structure of Beauty Engine invites you to meddle, customize, re-skin, and improvise with it in relation to your own narrative. Beauty Engine recognizes that we are each a hero in some way and have within us a mystical fire, a treasure trove of solutions, a unique voice to bring to the stage.

Collectively we have honed our pieces, our skills, our talents, and our ability to improv on any theme. Our capacity for operating as a massively networked, creative collective is strengthening fast. Just look at The Burningman community- their ethos of radical self-expression and self sufficiency is spilling out all over the earth.

“Burners without Borders, the Black Rock Arts Foundation and the Burning Man Network - indeed, the Burning Man event, itself - exist as social instruments. They are contexts that inspire interaction and spontaneous initiatives. They allow (our) culture to reach outward and self-propagate, to leap across the bright orange trash fence that encloses Black Rock City and create the world anew. It is, at last, your willingness to give your gifts to a much greater gift that is the medium of change.”

Larry Harvey, Burningman Festival Art Director

Ultimately, I think it's the narrative that the festival presents that is so engaging and manages to bring so many back, year after year. You are encouraged to **RADICALLY EXPRESS** yourself in city of thousands and cast yourself for one week in a play of your own scripting. Encounters and novelty await you around every corner, and aside from the fact that all participants **KNOW** that the Man Will Burn, the course of your journey through this amazing city of art and artistry is ultimately - unknown.

I was struck just the other day by a very touching and vulnerable post by Dan Das Man, one of Burningman's more prolific artists. In it he shared an experience he had watching YouTube footage in which that famous French puppet troupe operates 3 story puppets of elephants and figures right out of Gullivers Travels. In his email he communicated his desire for a world as

imagined through the lens of art, one of beautiful possibilities and magical encounters.

Yes, Dan, yes. I'm SO WITH YOU!

How many people make the pilgrimage to Burningman each year secretly hoping that one day that won't have to because what they call the 'default world' will become the one in which a love of play, creativity and celebration will triumph over consumer capitalism, corporate greed and lame-o competition?

The tasks once appointed to Priestesses, Dakinis, Artists, Poets, Bards and Bacchantes no longer remain separated from society, and aspects of these archetypes are now emerging in everyone. Creativity is on the rise- to quote Mathew Fox:

“Creativity as a means of connecting diversity, a way of exploring our role in relation to others and the world, as a way of knowing & experiencing SELF...giving us permission to explore our identityas a core human quality integral to a happy-fulfilling life and as an essential means of crafting relationship to the universe.....Its not only artists that benefit from enjoying a healthy creative process...Successful leaders, thinkers, scientists, facilitators, educators.. etc all integrate creativity into the mechanics of their lives”

When we, the Players of The Marvelous gather, the joy we feel when we're together accelerates our inner fire and ignites those around us. We when come together in creative celebration, a New Game emerges from our play. The Finite Game of the old world, defined by winners and losers, is giving way to the far more attractive and appealing Infinite Game, which is defined by increasing quality of play for all players.

Towards the realization of a wonderful world which is mutually- self supporting for all! Beauty Engine was intentionally designed to give people direct experience of the value of cocreating within an infinite narrative, rather than competing within a finite one.

“You’re a star—and so am I. I’m a genius and so are you. Your success encourages my brilliance, and my charisma enhances your power. Your victory doesn’t require my defeat, and vice versa. Those are the rules in The New World—quite unlike the rules in the Old World, where the zero-sum games are the norm, and only one of us can win each time we play. In the New World, you don’t have to tone down or apologize for your prowess, because you love it when other people shine. You exult in your won excellence without regarding it as a sign of inherent superiority. As you ripen more and more of your latent aptitude, you inspire the rest of us to claim our own idiosyncratic magnificence.”

-Rob Breszny, Pronoia.



The Basic Framework

Chapter Two



Explore your **IDENTITY**
delve into your multifaceted, splendidly unique self

Recognize your **POWER**
accept that you are talented, resourceful and wise

CIRCULATE your energy
Lavishly dish out your gifts, talents and brilliance

ASSEMBLE with community
get together with your tribe and bond with your friends

Understand your **DYNAMICS**
be crystal clear about you agreements and boundaries

ACTIVATE your potential
get off your ass and make it happen

There are a million different ways to put it into practice, but the basic Beauty Engine Framework is actually very simple: Clearly articulate and communicate the following elements and your community will become happier, healthier and more productive. There are all kinds of tools and methods for doing just that, but the end result is the same.

Identity: Individuals take time to think about who they are. We encourage a creative approach to identity, exploring all your social personae, not just the obvious ones

WHO AM I?

Think about your identity and where you are coming from. It might be as simple as admitting that you don't know

Powers: Within every community there exists an abundance of abilities resources wisdom and social capital. Individuals are encouraged to let their community know what they've got

WHAT DO I HAVE TO SHARE?

Think about the things you have to offer your community. It helps to understand where you fit in and where you are unique

Circulate: When members are clear about what they want to offer and what their specific needs are, their collaboration will be far more effective. Abilities can be utilized resources can be put to work and wisdom can spread.

HOW DO I SHARE IT?

Make yourself available and be an open book. Let people know who you are, what you have to offer, and how you operate.

Assemble: In order for a community to thrive members meet together in physical space not just online. Spend time exploring the mission and the vision of your group, and

state it clearly to the world

WHO CAN I SHARE IT WITH?

Do do it alone! Go out in the world, gather with folks, meet face to face in the real world.

Dynamics When a community makes clear agreements about how they operate most misunderstandings can be avoided. Rather than making assumptions about how you operate, make your agreements clear.

HOW CAN WE OPERATE SMOOTHLY?

Make clear agreements in your community so people are never left second guessing how they are supposed to behave

Activate: When members inspire each other with creative challenges and instigate activities they can really put their resources and talents to use. This is where collaboration happens and where people can share their experiences about the successful ways they collaborated.

HOW DO WE PUT IT INTO ACTION?

Think outside the box, use themes and narratives to get your creativity flowing, try out new things

An Infinite Narrative, in six words.

Barron Scott Levkoff

Identity, Power, Circulate, Assemble, Dynamics, Activate.

There it is.

Not only do these six words each represent a core element vital to the Beauty Engine but they fit together to form a simple narrative.

“I /have resources / to share and exchange/ with people/ openly communicating our agreements / and cocreating experiences together”

This six word narrative operates at the heart of every social architecture we have ever encountered. Unfortunately, most of the time its either running on default, operating largely unconsciously, or controlled by the hands of a few. When properly understood and consciously engaged, we have witnessed this simple narrative enable people to cocreate amazing experiences together.

When everyone takes a moment to consider their relationship to these six elements in relationship to their daily lives and how they participate with their communities, amazing results emerge.

If Magick is merely focused intention, and words, the conduit of our intent, then these six words are the ABRACADABRA of culture. If the world IS a Grand Play made of words, and if reality IS what we make it, then what if we were to make a simple, collective agreement to recognize our world through words of abundance and intention? A six word agreement for a world based on mutually support, endless diversity and infinite potential.

“This whole world of human life, comprising both the material and spiritual needs of man, requires the creation of a community of conscience: requires the order, the structure of a community from within which can be generated the ideals, the knowledge and, above all, the new men and women who can bring light to the whole of society.”

-Jacob Needleman

Reflections on the Framework

Polly Whittaker

Identity

The Ancient Greek aphorism "Know Thy Self" (Greek: γνῶθι σεαυτὸν or *gnothi seauton*) was inscribed in shiny gold letters above the entrance to the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. It is a fundamental concept attributed to a number of philosophers, including Socrates, and an ideal that the human race has been striving towards for 2500 years. Yet modern culture continues to struggle with the basic question "Who am I?" and millions of dollars each year are thrown at magazines, media, fashion, music and therapists in a quest to grapple the mystifying issue of identity. We follow trends to help us feel like we 'belong', identifying with music, fashion or values and build our identities around them. Whether it's "Everyone in Khaki" or "Meat is Murder" we're reaching out for things we identify with in order to fulfill our basic human desire to pin down, classify and comprehend this illusive 'Self' we're supposed to know so well.

The undertaking to fully "Know Thyself" is a seemingly insurmountable task. With so many factors and variables that change each day, with so many issues, conscious and unconscious, that cloud the picture, surely it is impossible to expect to achieve such an objective, finite state- to "Know". The only thing I know for sure is that I will never fully know my Self. I have a million facets that shimmer and change in different light, in different circumstances, and I refuse to pin myself down, because to claim to "Know Myself" would only limit the potential of what I might actually be.

I'm not saying that I don't think self reflection is a worthy pursuit; I'm just suggesting that a slight shift would create a more realistic and interesting aspiration.

The shiny gold letters I would inscribe on the lintel of my temple would be something a little more like "Explore Thy Selves"

I prefer to look at who I am in the moment, rather than who I am, period. I watch the way I change when I'm around different groups of people, and how my reactions vary depending on my mood, my agenda, and what kind of shoes I'm wearing. There are countless external and internal factors that

influence the ‘Self’ I project into the world; it can all be a bit mind-boggling. I choose to recognize that I have multiple ‘Selves’ which are unique and separate, and that gives me the opportunity to manage this multiplicity of factors and ultimately be whoever I want to be.

The Beauty Engine uses the term ‘Avatars’ to describe these distinct facets of your Self. You might have a work Avatar, a play Avatar, a special interest Avatar, or a family Avatar. Embodying a specific Avatar is like putting on an outfit which includes not just clothes, but also a tone, a demeanor, characteristics, talents and ideas. It’s still you, but it’s just one aspect of you. Separating out your Avatars and exploring the nature of each one on its own is a much more manageable way of achieving that ultimate goal to “Know Thyself”.

But what if you have an aspect of yourself that you’ve always wanted to explore but never had the chance? Crafting an Avatar to focus on a specific idea or agenda is a great way to give yourself permission to do things you might not otherwise do. For example, I always wanted to sing on stage, but was terrified of it. Since I was a little girl I fantasized about being in a band, singing into my hairbrush in my bedroom behind closed doors. Not watching myself in the mirror in a bratty, egotistical, teenage way, but singing songs that I truly loved that made the hair on my neck stand on end. Both my sister and my best friend were amazing singers with far more natural talent than I had, so my fantasy was a secret that nobody ever knew about. That is until a couple of years ago when I got up on stage for the first time and sang in front of hundreds of people (and I’ve done it a few times again since). It wasn’t bravery that got me up there, it was my singing Avatar. I created a vessel that allowed me to check both my insecure Avatar and my bravado Avatar at the door, get up on stage and sing my heart out. It was totally genuine, totally me, and yet I would never have done it without intentionally creating an Avatar for the task. Crafting Avatars allows you to explore facets of your personality in a playful way, letting you try out new things and expose yourself to new situations. I would have never had the guts to get up on stage and sing, but luckily my Avatar is a natural.

Once you have an understanding of your multitude of Avatars, and the potential for creating more, you can begin to move fluidly between them,

playing them like an orchestra to flow in and out of varied situations. In the Beauty Engine we refer to this state of being as your SuperStar Avatar- the constant and definable ‘you’ that can use the talents of one Avatar with the characteristics of another to bring nuance and novelty to every interaction. It’s your constantly changing and growing essence that can never be fully understood, that’s impossible to categorize, and will always surprise you.

Powers

“If you have a talent, use it in every which way possible. Don't hoard it. Don't dole it out like a miser. Spend it lavishly like a millionaire intent on going broke. “

Brendan Francis

You are sitting on a storehouse of wealth. Every talent you have, every skill you’ve developed, every bit of information you hold, every connection you’ve made , every piece of art you’ve created and every idea you’ve ever had are your currency in the Beauty Engine. They are your Powers and they reflect a true idea of who you are and what you have to offer the world around you. All the wisdom, energy, creativity and practical skills that you have (and some things you don’t even know you have yet) make you a millionaire.

Even a monk living in a cave who has no personal belongings and no human contact is rich in the Powers of Patience, Solitude, Dedication, and Spirit.

So what Powers do you have? Even the most seemingly insignificant resources hold vital energy. It could be as simple as having extra apples on your trees, or that workshop you took last year in video editing. Maybe you recorded a song once, but now it’s gathering dust on an 8 track in your basement. Maybe you have an interest in cacti and have read everything there is to know about them. Or maybe you’re just a really good listener. If you take some time to sit and write out all your Powers, you’ll probably be surprised at how long that list gets. In fact, you’ll probably stop before you reach the end.

In the Beauty Engine, you create your own bank balance, and your wealth depends on clearly and concisely stating your Powers.

The value of each Power you have depends simply on how much you care about it. The tiniest whisper made under your breath, or a few lines written

on a napkin, or a smile and a human connection can have immense value, if they are seasoned with a sprinkling of genuine passion. If you really mean it, you really feel it or you really love it, (or even if you really hate it) that passion makes it exponentially more valuable, and transforms it from a Power into a SuperPower!

Quoting the bible isn't something I do often, but I feel it's appropriate to point out the proverb: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." If a person literally is what they think themselves to be, then why not make yourself a millionaire, a genius and a superstar.

Circulate

"It is a fact that humankind all over the globe is dependent on one another. People have to help each other. This is a function of their natural disposition."

Rudolf Steiner

When its time to get things done, the best way to find exactly what you need is just to ask for it, and the best way to share the things you have is to let people know you've got them. Forget about modesty, and being nervous about asking for what you need- if everyone is honest and upfront about what they have to offer, then we soon begin to realize that there is no scarcity of resources, talents and wisdom directly available to us, and between us we have everything we need.

In the Beauty Engine, Circulate is the place where things are exchanged- you can let people know what you need, promote new projects and ideas, canvass for new community members, or spotlight specific skills or products you want to market. As a result, the resources and needs within a community become transparent, making it easier for people to see where they can participate. It's the town square of the Beauty Engine- a place where diverse groups can exchange, where the latest news can be broadcast, and where you can get a sense of the action in the broader community.

The internet is a great tool for this task, but more traditional methods like business cards and bulletin boards can offer a more analog alternative. In the Beauty Engine, we use customized trading cards to circulate information about who we are, what we have to offer and how we operate. These trading cards can be printed out at home and handed out like business

cards, or they can be exchanged digitally like v-cards. These cards become your currency, giving you a tool to present your wisdom, creativity, ideas, inspiration and tangible resources like goods and services, so that you can effectively navigate this vibrant social economy.

We need to look at new ways to build trust in order to encourage people to share their stockpiles of resources, and working on creative projects together -contributing to your community alongside others- is a great way to deepen connections and build trust. When we focus on creating beautiful things together, giving freely simply because it feels good, we loosen our grip on scarcity, and discover that the more abundantly we operate, the more abundantly we can live.

Assemble

Throughout human history a person's community has been defined by their geographic location, their spirituality, their occupation, and their social standing. In more recent years, that definition has been broadened to include musical taste, style of dress and sexuality. The internet has prompted a rise in the growth of even more specialty groups, and people are now able to gather together for just about any reason. Whether you're into Polynesian design and Tiki bar culture, making replicas of comic book costumes, or raw food cuisine, you can now find the communities to fit your niches. Modern society has become a complex web of sub cultures that allow people to explore a million different interests and affinities.

In the Beauty Engine we use the term 'Assemble' to talk about community because we want to emphasize the importance of actually meeting up in the real world, and not relying on online tools to build community. The internet can be very useful for communicating between gatherings, but it cannot replace the experience of meeting in the real world. When it comes to building trust, resolving disputes, and just having fun together, face to face interaction is the only option.

The origin of the word 'community' comes from the idea of common ownership, and so the true meaning of community can only really be understood through the sharing of resources and wisdom. When a person is a member of a community, they contribute because they want to participate,

and not necessarily because they see an immediate, tangible return for themselves. It feels good to be part of something that you care about, and helping to make your community flourish by sharing your precious resources is a great way of making friends, building trust, and creating a sense of belonging.

Communication is the cornerstone of every successful community, and letting people know exactly who your community is, how it operates and what its goals are gives a stable foundation to build on.

When a community is clear about its vision, it becomes easier for potential members to understand where they might fit in. If you want to attract new members, then the identity of your community should be considered carefully, and communicated openly out to the world. Whether you're looking for equal collaborators, supporters to help with your vision, or a visionary leader to give you direction, making that need known to the world is the first step in getting it done.

Dynamics

When a community clearly negotiates agreements about how it operates, and makes those agreements clear to every member, then it is less likely to fall to petty squabbles and disputes. In the Beauty Engine we refer to these agreements as your community's Dynamics. They could include something as simple as agreeing to be open-minded, or something practical like agreeing to meet every Tuesday, or something creative like agreeing to talk like a pirate. As well as communicating your agreements, your Dynamics will reflect the tone and style of your community, letting the world know whether you're, playful, thought-provoking, spiritual or intellectual. There are some broader Dynamics that most communities would approve of, such as agreeing to be respectful, or to be honest, but if these seemingly obvious, universal Dynamics are particularly important to your community they should still be stated clearly.

How a community decides on their Dynamics, which members are part of the process, and whether the agreements are up for debate depends on each community and its structure. The focus of your community will also influence the kind of Dynamics you have- for example a debating community might agree to disagree, an art community might agree to value

self expression, and a community of mimes might agree to communicate only in mime.

It's important to make your Dynamics catchy and easy to remember, and creating succinct catchphrases that sum them in just a few words is the key to making them successful. For example, Burningman festival created the Dynamic "Leave no Trace", meaning "clean up each and every tiny bit of litter that you create and take your trash home with you". Creating the catchphrase, rather than having to repeat the entire agreement each time, has made it easier for this concept to spread throughout the community, and this particular Dynamic is now so well known that it has spread beyond the desert and into peoples every day lives.

Activate

Whatever it is that you're trying to do, if you have never done it before there is a whole range of unexpected variables that might throw you off course. Theorizing about how to do something is only the first step along the way to actually doing it. Rather than trying to figure things out from scratch, its best to ask for advice from somebody with experience, and in the Beauty Engine we gather this information in a library of constantly growing and evolving wisdom. Once you have done it, and gained experience about how it worked for you, you can comment and add to the entry, letting people know your story. As Jimmy Hendrix said "Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens."

Your wisdom can be associated with anything from the most banal tasks to the most provocative social experiments. Whether you're looking for an efficient way to run a coat check, a low drama way to deal with conflict, or a party game to help your community bond, there are a variety of different methods which are tried and true and available for you to use.

In the Beauty Engine, Activate is the place where experiences are born, and wisdom is accessible, but without your feedback, it just gathers dust and withers. In order for it to live, it needs to be Activated, learned from, and mirrored back to itself.

This is where there is a real opportunity to play, to get to know each other, to be creative and to make stuff happen.

Unlocking your potential

When you recognize that you and your community have unlimited potential to achieve your dreams, then you can. The Beauty Engine works as a potentiator, designed to boost your effectiveness by making it easier for you to collaborate. It reveals the possibilities available to you, makes it easy for you to act on them, and helps you reveal those possibilities to others.

Once you are operating at full capacity, and you are connected to other communities who are doing the same, our total effectiveness increases exponentially. We are so much more than the sum of our parts.



Events and Experiments

Chapter Three

Hollywood Exotica~ our first failure!

Polly Whittaker



Our first foray into the world of Beauty Engine was in April 2002 - we produced an extravagant event in Los Angeles called 'Hollywood Exotica'. At the time we had partnered with a start-up game company with the theory that if Beauty Engine were concealed within a game, then people would be able to experience it without being intimidated by it. But at this time the framework was in such an early form and our explanations so vague, that most people did not understand what we were trying to do.

We had created a deck of cards which were supposed to facilitate interaction between guests, but the depth and scope of our creation was not understood by anyone but us!

We hired actors to play special interactive roles at the event, and guests were supposed to follow the clues and earn points. Unfortunately attendance was low, and the people who came were confused about what they were supposed to do. By the end of the night everyone had a good time - the cabaret was fun and the music was good - but they could feel our intention was for something more.

For us this first event was a huge disappointment, an intense reality check, and a benchmark in our history. In hindsight, it's easy



to see why it failed. We were so absorbed in our vision that we couldn't communicate it to the world, and the heavily self-referential cards we'd created made no sense out of context. The very concept of presenting a social 'game' was causing misunderstandings and confusion.

The idea of using cards to interact playfully felt quite natural to us, but we realized that we were not like most people! Although keeping the structure loose and ambiguous seemed a way to give people freedom to use the cards however they wanted, we found that most people wanted it more clearly defined.

So, it was back to the drawing board. We realized that if we were going to create a framework for people to interact, then we would have to put some serious study time in, observing how people actually interact.

We left Los Angeles with our tails between our legs, severed all ties from the game company partnership, and returned to San Francisco, where we went into stealth mode, watching and listening.



Some of the cards we created for the Hollywood Exotica event

Kinky Salon

Polly Whittaker

We needed a captive audience for the next phase of our experiments, so we tapped into a group of people we knew were game for anything - the costumed, open-minded, revolutionarily freaky underground community of San Francisco!

In April 2003 we opened our doors to the first Kinky Salon. We realized after the botched LA event that we would need to take a different angle, so we put the trading cards aside (for now) and focused on examining the core of what really makes community work.

We were totally transparent about our methods and intentions, encouraging the guests to be creative and participate where they could. The event was very free-form and chaotic, but it yielded some incredible experiences.

This is an excerpt from the invitation to Kinky Salon in June 2003:

“We believe that every single person who comes to Kinky Salon has something to offer. We are inviting you to think about what that is. On the night of Kinky Salon, if you feel you would like to perform, or help in some way, then arrive at 9.30 and tell us what you want to do. We will let you in for free, and give you all the support we can. If you have any special requirements, then let us know in advance by emailing.

This format may be a disaster, or it may be fabulous.

We are looking forward to finding out what happens!”

After a few months of fun experimentation, the community was really starting to find its legs - but then something unexpected happened. Although at the time we had no idea how valuable it would be, this hiccup in Kinky Salon’s history ended up being extraordinarily relevant to our work. In December 2003 we threw an event called ‘Superheros’. For reasons still unknown to us, most of our regulars were not there, and there was an influx of new people. The night was a real struggle, and we felt rushed and overwhelmed. People were rude to us, and there was an unusual

amount of drunkenness and sloppy behavior. As the evening stumbled on, we started to feel like barkeeps - cleaning up split drinks and handling inebriated, brawling guests. Obviously, this was not what we wanted to be doing with our time and energy, so we wrote a message to the Kinky Salon community and posted it to our list. It went like this:

“Goodbye Kinky Salon.

That's what we feel like saying, but we are hoping that won't have to happen. A lot of people had a great time on Saturday night (thanks have already started flooding in) but unfortunately we didn't.

Once we had finished cleaning up the vomit and recalling the nights events (including drunkenness, fighting and damage to our property) we realized that Kinky Salon had taken a wrong turn somewhere and feel it's time to bring it back on track by stating our intention and hoping our community will stand up to support us.

So here it is:

Kinky Salon is a community dedicated to sex positive self-expression, co-created by a community of intelligent, conscious, fun loving freaks.

Right now we are not sure whether there will be another Kinky Salon. That depends on you.”

We then invited the community to join us in an online discussion about the next step for Kinky Salon. The flood of support that followed this incident was more than we could have possibly imagined. There were hundreds of posts to the discussion board, and we watched in awe as the community self-organized to create a set of guidelines for behavior, and people stepped up offering to help maintain them. The next Kinky Salon was a New Years Eve party, and to this date it is one of the most magical events we have ever produced. The community was thrilled and excited to be part of something which they were helping to create, and they felt a sense of ownership and pride in Kinky Salon.

Two essential elements of the Beauty Engine were established

1. In order for a community to be successful it is necessary that they collectively create a set of guidelines which they all agree on (in the Beauty Engine Framework we call these DYNAMICS).

2. In order to maintain their Dynamics, a community needs a network of people in place who agree to take on a supportive role (in the Beauty Engine framework we call these GUIDES).

To this day, every single person who walks in the door of Kinky Salon must verbally agree to the Charter, and at each event we have a volunteer system of 'Hosts' who are the eyes and ears of the event, making sure that the guidelines are being upheld.

Four years down the line, the Kinky Salon community is still going strong, and remains a huge inspiration to us. We all thrive as a result of our ongoing symbiotic relationship - as we benefit from what they teach us, they also benefit from what we learn.

Find out more about Kinky Salon online at www.kinkysalon.com

The Social Genome

Polly Whittaker

To help us through this period, we acquired an unlikely ally in the form of a retired business strategist, who had taken a shine to us and an interest in our work. We had so many ideas, and we were so passionate about what we were doing, that it was easy for us to jet off in a million different directions when we got excited, and end up chasing our tails. He ensured that we keep ourselves focused on the big vision, and advised us every step of the way.

On a pivotal day in May 2003 he asked us to write down the entire vision in one page. Bearing in mind at that point we had only just managed to distill it from fifty pages to ten, this seemed like an impossible task.

So Scott and I shut ourselves in a room for an afternoon and sat there chewing the ends of our pens, scribbling down what we thought were the bare essentials and trying to get our heads around this insurmountable task. We chattered back and forth for hours. We balled up paper and threw it across the room in frustration. We yelled and stomped our feet. We lost our minds, just a little.

And then something happened - a flash of inspiration, divine direction, destiny, or maybe just us being really clever. We distilled it into a sentence. Just one sentence to describe the outcome of all our research and observations! It was a strangely magical moment and we sat open mouthed, stunned at our discovery. It went like this:

**I am | in a community | with offerings to share | in playful exchange
| with guidelines to help me negotiate with others | and create
experiences**

So, version one of the framework as we know it today was created. It was one sentence that covered all the aspects we knew to be essential for successful interaction and exchange. Today, after four years it has shifted a little, but the basic concept remains the same.

The SuperStar Nation

Polly Whittaker

Between March and December 2004 we carried out a 9 month pilot study, which allowed us to put our framework to the test and refine our process. We called this pilot study ‘The SuperStar Nation’ and we invited a diverse group of people to participate. Some of the testers were our friends, and some we had never met before. They were aged from 22 to 55 and they were from all walks of life. We invited a group of 100 people to participate, and there ended up being a core group of about 35 who adopted it fully and stuck with us for the 9 month period.

It was a fascinating process for us as it allowed us to try things out and see what worked. Often, things didn’t turn out as we expected, so we took our findings and reassembled the experiment in new forms, until we got the results we were hoping for. We loved being surprised by the process, and watching as the framework refined itself. We were thrilled by the collection of dynamic, open minded and creative people who flocked to this project, and we were honored to have them as guinea pigs in our lab!

The story was even picked up by our local newspaper, the SF Weekly!



Alpha site

We created a basic online profiling tool and card generator, based on the framework, which allowed testers to create custom trading cards, and print them out to exchange. This tool encouraged them to think about who they were and what they had to offer prior to attending an event.

We introduced testers to concepts of behavioral standards and informed them of upcoming events and gatherings.



Weekly events

We invited testers to interact in live situations where they could use the trading cards they had made with the online tool, and they were encouraged to give feedback on the behavioral standards they were trying out. We tested at private events, within larger events (Burning Man, nightclubs, Folsom Street Fair etc) and out in the world (parks, cinemas etc)

Results

The feedback we acquired from testers showed that they most enjoyed:
Permission and structure to interact;
Deeper, more meaningful connections;
Asylum from social awkwardness & isolation;
Empowerment through direct experience and self-knowledge.

Quotes from user feedback:

“It brings out the best in people”

“You get to find out what hidden talents your friends have”

“The archetypal moments of mayhem are profound”

“It's playful and it's an interesting way of being social”

“I see these radical tools for community building and lucid living bringing about a symbiotic relationship with technology”

“I can see how these tools would help me in my everyday life”
“I am excited to see where this project goes”
“It makes me more me”
“It gives me tools that stop me feeling so uncomfortable in social situations”
“You leave understanding more about yourself”
“It makes it easier to have fun without any pressure”
“It helps people remember how to play”
“I made some really great friends”
“It helps trigger personal initiation, but also supports you in that, sometimes difficult, experience”
“It helps people learn how to receive”
“It helps you find time and space in your life for Joy”
“I didn’t mean to grow, but I did”
“I was deeply, violently charmed by the whole experience”

The pilot study allowed us to try out the Beauty Engine for the first time and see how people would respond. At the time we did it the framework did not exist as it does today. Although the basic concept was the same, the earlier version was a little more complicated and a little less well-informed. The testing allowed us to see how people really behave, and we wove the results of our observations back into the system to make it what it is today. Many of the original testers are still active and enthusiastic members of our community, and we are grateful to each and every one of them for the time and energy they put in to help us through the fetal stages of our development.

On the next page you can see some examples of cards that were created by the test group during the pilot study.

power



yellow superpower
Goddess of
Tech-Tech
Technology

Power Type:
Services

details
I have a help
team in the cloud
& manage
effective
infotech systems.
May I help you
change the world?

www.superstarmotion.com

power

power



Knowledge.
(yellow
superpower)
Lingually
endowed

by: Professor
Ovadia

A good many
my eyes - had his
ingrids. Myrtle
European, a lot of
die more doctors.

www.superstarmotion.com

power

power



Knowledge
(yellow
superpower)
ADAM. Call to
-mynt

Power Type:
Music

details
I know the
aspirated : no to
face toward faces
are humble or else f
L & L. Pray will
me. To know what
you don't know how.
It's simple,
beautiful prof. ind.

www.superstarmotion.com

power

power



yellow superpower
Lil Drummer
Girl

Power Type:
Music

details
Like the old
days, a yellow
Keith Moon. This is
why he is a Rhythm
Broth

www.superstarmotion.com

power

power



Knowledge
(yellow
superpower)
Analyses

by: D. D. Dye-
V H A

Expertise in market
research, process
management, and
product measure to
make informed
decisions

www.superstarmotion.com

power

power



yellow superpower
A Renaissance
of Cells

Power Type:
Knowledge

details
I you're thinking
of a life design
For a job
want to know
about the
Feel our help.
Anything you need
to know about
10th century

www.superstarmotion.com

power

The PlaNetwork Conference

Barron Scottt Levkoff

On June 5th 2004, we presented our work to the PlaNetwork conference. The topic of our presentation, which won the vote on the people's choice, was entitled: "Social Architecture for The Masses- Lets Make It fun!"

Yeah. That's right. Hip factor And Sex Appeal & Social Networking Technology -gets you to the top, baby!

This is how we pitched it:

"SuperStar Avatar puts a friendly face on the rather daunting, intellectual concepts of distributed accountability, high functioning collaboration, and experience economy. It repackages them in a pop culture skin for distribution to the masses. It works as both a low tech, analog process and a high tech, blue tooth enabled, sophisticated knowledge embedded system.

We are interested in talking to people who share our interest in creating fluid, dynamic systems for self-organizing collaboration, exchange, and wealth assessment. Our background is primarily in ground roots social architecture and our ideas come straight from the communities we have been working in, so we are always looking for more technologically savvy co-creators!

Specifically, we are looking for an open-minded, PHP Programmer in the Bay Area!"

Our intention was to present 'the challenge in bringing social networking tools into the real world', present our solution, and connect with new talent and resources for moving the project forward. (Funding, programmers, biz advice, etc)

Rolling bags at the ready, we arrived via cab to the fog enshrouded Presidio Conference Center; costumes, disco light, Senor Coconut CD and laptop presentation at the ready.

It had been a looooong week preparing presentations, chucking them out and starting over, crunching new features into the website with Sir

Katin The Programmer, finishing and printing the New Avatar Handbooks, etc. and we were ready to get on with the action! We arrived during the opening PlaNetwork ceremony at which some sort of innovation in persistent identity was being presented.

Time for coffee!

We were greeted by fellow SuperStar Avatar- The Sensational Sensei, at the towering coffee station and soon jumped in to join him 'at the pour' as fellow work exchange coffee droids. (Although we had been voted people's choice for our presentation, we still had to pay the rather steep admission for the conference, but being broke bohemians, we did a work trade to get in!)

Much to the delight and dismay of the activists, technologists and docker-wearing, geek-a-zoids, Polly and I brought the ART OF ATTENDING THE COFFEE STAND to a whole new level. We whipped out card after card and turned a dull corner of the conference basement into THE energetic and cultural hot spot of the whole conference. Cards displaying Geek Error Message Haiku, Coffee Facts, Mini Conference Schedules and the like brought many a smile.

We attended a haphazardly facilitated morning session in which 'teams' of PlaNetworkers assessed their skills and ideas for Bigger & Badder social tech onto big, blank white cardboard boxes.

Lunch was nice. Sitting in the sun and grass with the Who's Who of The Social Networking Set. Eating Salad and sandwiches with biodegradable 'sporks' that looked like your average white plastic. A 'hippie-geek' type, overhearing my confident ramblings about Spork technology, made quite the face when I said convincingly that they were made of compost.

Time to present.

4.30 PM in The West Room. Classic academia surroundings, chairs, video projector- College Time again!

We pulled out our materials and got our costume changes ready, attendees filled the chairs.

A silence descended, a lone tumbleweed blew through the room- and then it happened, the InterNet went down.

Polly seemed to take the whole thing in stride while yours truly sort of paced madly, quietly pleading to any tech-head present to please help... please help!

We forged ahead, bravely, daringly....internet be D*MNED!

Of course, and I say this humbly, we were brilliant.

Point after point was delivered with consummate skill and panache. Examples of things obtuse and noble were offered to dazzle and delight the crowd. The smiling faces of our friends present beamed at us while we hailed the power of play and sang the praises of Truly Social Architecture.

I think it was the costume change paired with the KraftWerk cover by Senor Coconut that sent the crowd into a 'Justin Timberlake', post presentation frenzy. Literally, after the 30 minute chat, our offer for the crowd to come up and grab a handbook was met with an 'angry towns-folk' type of scenario. Pocket liners flew and Birkenstocks were scuffed that afternoon, let me tell you!

Overall: Some good contacts were made and SuperStar Nation introduced its colorful message to the PlaNetworkers Conference. Only time will tell what effect that fateful week had.

(Final note-the Internet came back up directly after our presentation, of course!)

The Star Dome at Burningman

Polly Whittaker

Living in San Francisco it's almost impossible to avoid the giant vortex of energy that is the Burningman festival. It is a week every year dedicated to radical self expression, alternative community, and survival in the desert. For us, this hyper-accelerated Petri dish was the perfect place for a new experiment. We put a call out to our contacts, and secured ourselves some prime playa real estate, and the obligatory geodesic dome/ parachute combo, and headed out to the desert for Burningman 2004

Only two of the people in the group of twenty who came with us were participating in the pilot study. The rest were a random group, gathered together from all walks of life. They did not know each other, and most of them had never even been to Burningman before. We knew it was going to be a challenge!

We hosted some meetings at Mission Control, and introduced them to the framework as well as cooking up some awesome décor and fun accouterments for the dome. We had colorful light sculptures and altars, and planned to create an oasis of comfort and intention - a retreat from the wacky sensory overload just outside our gates.

While we were in the planning stages of this project, we realized that the tools we had been using at Mission Control would not cut it in the desert.

At this point in our development, the trading cards had become so essential to our process that we saw them as integral. But we realized that they would be problematic in the desert. Burningman enforces a 'leave no trace' rule, and camps creating MOOP (matter out of place) are reviled by the community at large. The last thing we wanted was to be the camp that was responsible for thousands of discarded trading cards fluttering off on the wind into unspoilt countryside! So we changed our tack, and came up with some plans which would work in this environment.

Rather than using cards to represent all the different aspects of our offerings, suggestions and agreements, we decided to try out the idea of doing it more verbally, and used catchphrases instead. We still referred to them as ‘cards’, but there was no physical card to exchange.



For example, one of the first things we did when we arrived was to sit in circle and play the ‘Weakness Card’. Everyone confessed where they felt they had a weakness (I admitted that I find it difficult to ask for help when I need it). Over the week, whenever your weakness became an issue, it was easy to just ‘Play the weakness card’ because everyone already knew what to expect. (For example, if I was working too hard and unable to ask for help, camp mates could check in by just saying “Yo, Weakness Card! Need some help?”).

In a similar way we also played the ‘Power Card’. In the same circle, we declared our strengths- they could be specific ideas, talents, skills, or tangible resources. Once all our Powers were known, we were able to draw on them throughout the week when they were needed.

Then there was the ‘Wobble Card’. An awesome, simple little tool we still use to this day around Mission Control! One of the main problems at Burningman is that it is easy to get overwhelmed, and people tend to project their woes on what’s going on around them. Nerves get frayed and people snap at each other. Without a tool like the Wobble Card it can be easy for people to take things personally. In our camp, if you were feeling overwhelmed and someone was exacerbating the situation, you could simply explain by saying “You, know what- I am wobbling, could you just leave me alone for a minute”. Or if someone snapped at you for no reason

it was easy to say “sweetheart- are you wobbling?” and immediately release the tension.

A lot of the time in the dome was spent explaining to people about the framework, and helping them on the first step to creating their Avatar (or in Burningman lingo- finding their Playa name). We had ‘Hello, my name is’ stickers and we encouraged people to think carefully and creatively about what to write on them. One of our camp mates had an unusual talent which was called into use nearly every day. She would start by asking someone a few questions about who they were, what their passions were, and why they were at Burningman. Then she would improvise a song about them, which concluded in the revelation of their new Avatar name!

Our experience at Burningman was an unexpected treasure- opening our eyes to the possibilities of using the framework without cards. It was intuitively and naturally integrated into the language we used and its effects were complex and wide-ranging, fueling our research with fresh ideas.

Wise Ass Wisdom

Polly Whittaker

In the early part of 2005 we heard through the grapevine that a group of people we knew were putting together an event called Wise Ass Wisdom. Their idea was to produce a day of self help workshops and activities which were interesting and compelling, appealing to a demographic who would not usually be interested in this kind of event. It was tongue-in-cheek, irreverent and looked like fun. The producers themselves were a unique community of young, bohemian artist / hipster types with an interest in self development and facilitation, and they saw within their own community a niche for this kind of event. They were facilitating for each other, and creating the event for themselves.

We saw the opportunity for collaboration, so we offered them our services. We created a series of cards which represented the essence of their event. It was something that guests could refer to during the day, and walk away with and keep as a souvenir. Over the next few pages you can see some of the

cards, which communicate the vibe and intention of the event.



wise man
avatar

V is for Vav

Wise-ass Wisdom Producer
This test pilot of social experiments for self-awareness orchestrates opportunities for phobias and philiias to clash bloom bang

vav@soundofmind.net

SUPERSTAR AVATAR



wisdom power

V is For Vav

The Spirit of Randomina
She is the goddess of non sequitur
When life has you doubting, break the pattern by powerfully declaring something that makes no sense whatsoever. Then you're channeling the spirit of Randomina.

SUPERSTAR AVATAR

wise woman avatar



Christine McHugh

AKA Fresh, Christine is a performance coach and theatre director who helps people take the stage with the amazing story of who they are or who they think

they are. She has an MFA in Theatre from the University of Illinois. She teaches improv and mindfulness practice and has subjected people in the Bay Area to her so called "expertise" in the theatre room for the last 15 years

www.lifeinfullbloom.com

**superstar
AVATAR**



wisdom power



Christine McHugh

Blossoming

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom"
Anais Nin



wise-ass dynamics

"Check in with the quiet people"

Say this phrase, and/or present this card...

When you want to take a moment to check in with the people who haven't said much yet.

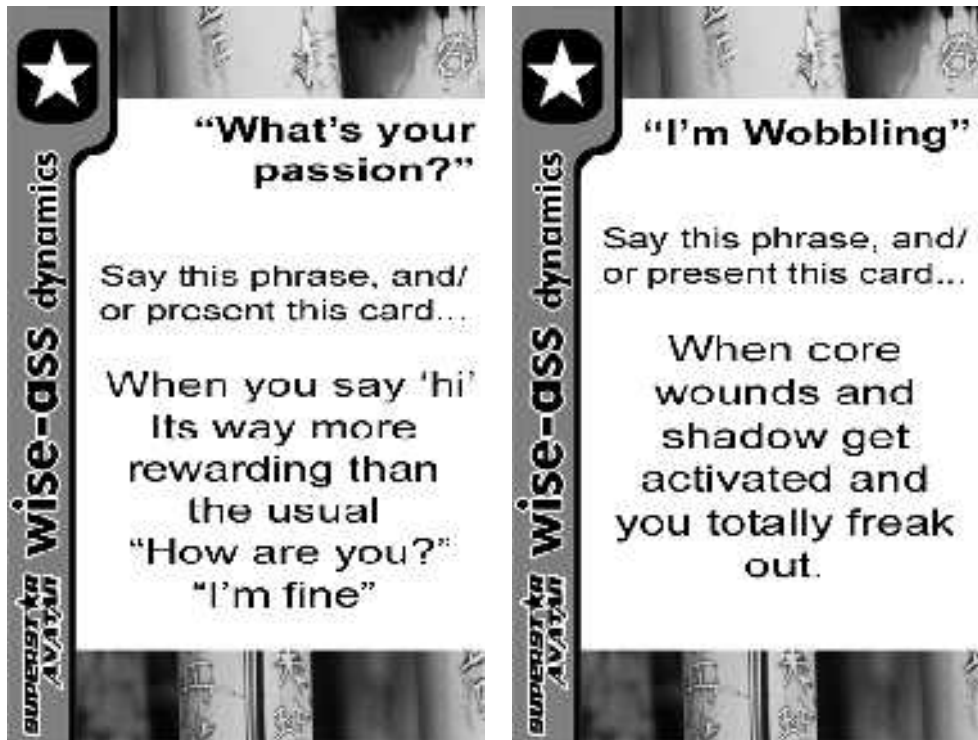


wise-ass dynamics

"Your F*cking Fabulous"

Say this phrase, and/or present this card...

When you want to give someone the ultimate compliment



Collaborating on the Wise Ass Wisdom project was a startling opportunity, as it allowed us to model the Beauty Engine on someone else's event. Up to this point we had only facilitated things in our own space, with our own people, under very controlled circumstances. On this occasion, for the first time, we were not in charge.

The response to the cards was mixed. Some people said it was the best thing about the day, other people said they did not understand it at all, but as a first trip out of Mission Control it was a success on many levels. Although it was not adopted by Wise Ass Wisdom as wholeheartedly as we had hoped, it showed us how critical a structure of Guides was going to be to implement the Beauty Engine outside our own community.

We continue to collaborate and play with the Wise Ass Wisdom community and admire what they are doing. Taking personal evolution and self empowerment out of the realm of woo-woo new age rhetoric and into something more accessible for cynical, hard to please hipsters is a noble cause. So many self-help workshops end up preaching to the converted, but

Wise Ass Wisdom is doing something far more challenging. They reach out to a community of jaded hipsters and share concepts with them that they would never otherwise come in contact with. Just like Dharma Punx (www.dharmapunx.com), the famous punk rock Buddhist group, they are making it cool and hip to be vulnerable, real and striving for enlightenment.

You can find Wise Ass Wisdom on the internet at www.wiseasswisdom.com

CrushLab

Polly Whittaker

Of all the demographics out there in the world socializing and interacting, the most willing and eager to try out new things must be the Singles Scene. They are always on the look out for novel ways to connect and meet new people. With this in mind, in June 2006 we created an event called CrushLab- ‘a twisted twist on traditional singles nights’.










We knew a singles night would be a great opportunity for us to try out using cards in an environment where they would be truly functional, so we created a deck specifically geared towards flirting and socializing. You can see the whole script of cards on the next page.

CrushLab has become a regular event here at Mission Control and is still going strong.

As well as cards, we also create stickers for this event- a ‘hello my name is’ name tag, another that showed the guests you had been ‘matched’ with, and some fun ‘tagging’ stickers which allow guests to write compliments and stick them to you. By the end of the night a lot of people end up covered in stickers!

Check out these pictures- Jason taped the ‘Shy but Horny’ card to his chest all night, and as giving a double Green Light!



 <p>CrushLab Dynamics</p> <p>I'm impressed!</p> <p>Wow! Neat! Nifty! That's totally sweet!</p> <p>Use this dynamic when you want to let someone know you're impressed.</p>	 <p>CrushLab Dynamics</p> <p>Space Invader</p> <p>Use this dynamic when someone gets all up in your personal space.</p>	 <p>CrushLab Dynamics</p> <p>Polite decline</p> <p>It's ok to say no! No biggie!</p> <p>Use this dynamic to decline an offer.</p>	 <p>CrushLab Dynamics</p> <p>Shy but Horny</p> <p>Are you shy but horny? Then let people know!</p> <p>If you never let anyone know, then you'll never get any action!</p> <p>Duh!</p>
 <p>CrushLab Activate</p> <p>What are you passionate about?</p> <p>Who cares what you do for a living and where you're from? Small talk can suck.</p> <p>Think about what your passions are, so you're prepared when you get asked!</p>	 <p>CrushLab Activate</p> <p>Tag your neighbor</p> <p>You have been given a sheet of stickers with "____ thinks I'm ____" written on them. Fill in your name in the first space. After getting to know someone, write a word that you think sums them up in the second space. Be nice.</p>	 <p>CrushLab Dynamics</p> <p>Green Light</p> <p>When you feel the sparks fly, and you wanna let them know you like them, just give them the green light....</p> <p>Go go go!!! YES! YES! YES!</p>	 <p>CrushLab Dynamics</p> <p>Social Butterfly</p> <p>Use this dynamic to politely excuse yourself and mingle.</p> <p>Sometimes you just want to flit about and meet everyone!</p>
 <p>CrushLab Activate</p> <p>Chat-up line delivery service</p> <p>If you're too shy to make the first move, find the host wearing a red bowler hat.</p> <p>He will deliver your chat up line for you with style and panache.</p> <p>If they're impressed with your line, you get an introduction.</p>	 <p>CrushLab Activate</p> <p>Personality test</p> <p>Find the personality test pinned to the wall in the hallway.</p> <p>Find out your type and write it on your name tag!</p>	 <p>CrushLab Activate</p> <p>Speedy Dating</p> <p>Go to the back room and find the host to sign up for a Speedy Dating round.</p> <p>Meet a bunch of people in a few minutes.</p> <p>You will have five minutes for each date.</p>	 <p>CrushLab Activate</p> <p>What's your sign?</p> <p>This age old chat up line is still a winner.</p> <p>Don't be shy- ask "what's your sign??"</p> <p><small>word games and quizzes at all costs</small></p>

You can find out more about CrushLab online at www.crushlab.com

Why PeepShow MiniGolf will save The World

Barron Scott Levkoff

It was the summer of 2006, a week or so before the Fourth of July and a small group of us were planning to attend a campout in the desert. We wanted to take something that would be fun, interactive and give ourselves and our fellow campmates permission to be ridiculous and PLAY. During that first inaugural, rose-tinted 4th of July outing, PeepShow MiniGolf came into its own.

On and around the PSMG course, built in it's entirety on one afternoon, Mickey Mouse anthems fueled the antics of small children who danced maniacally (and eventually tore down the course), flaming soccer balls were kicked amongst drunken clowns, a roving art-car complete with bar and stripper-pole pelted us with fireworks all in high desert winds strong enough to send the balls right back to the putter.



The PSMG 'look' for this first outing, which included All-American red-white-blue, western rodeo clown costuming and PeepShow Barker style, was born by rummaging in plastic camping bins in a dusty tent at night, grabbing whatever looked fun. We liked this mash-up style so much it just sort of stuck. The PSMG formula for fun seemed to us like the perfect way to celebrate Our Freedom As Americans. I remember getting up early the next morning, staring at the gorgeous purple-orange desert dawn, replaying weird and fantastic images from the night before, and feeling-
'Yeah, this is important; PeepShow MiniGolf is going to be an important part of the Grand Design'

Why MiniGolf, you might ask?

I've loved mini golf since I was a kid and the wackier the courses, the better. Playing on the courses were fun, sure, but it was the miniature castles and dinosaurs and laughing skulls with smoke pouring out their eyes that really drew me in. As a kid, I was convinced that that was just the way the world should look. As a kid now, the worlds of surprise and whimsy most Mini Golf courses present us with are far more interesting than the versions offered up by the party poopers who get paid today as civic planners and architects. Why must they inflict their unhappiness on others in the form of strip malls and by giving OK's to grotesquely expensive, giant concrete sculptures? Demand to your local city council that laugh tracks be mounted from trees in public parks and bus stops, ballets of colored water jets erupt at lunchtime from public fountains and of course, clown cops walk neighborhood beats armed with cream pies.

Behold, PeepShow MiniGolf.

PLAY packaged, neat and simple.

A pop-up tribute to one of my favorite books of all time, 'Finite and Infinite Games' by James Carse, now a Religious Studies Professor at New York University.

This little paper back book written (ironically) in 1984, introduced to me, what was at the time, the following ground shaking theory-

“There are at least two kinds of games. One could be called finite, the other infinite. The finite game is played for the purpose of winning, an infinite game for the purpose of continuing the play...and bringing as many persons as possible into the play”

When I first read that I knew I had found my Bible!

Talk about 'words to live by'! Could it really be that the purpose of life is to increase the quality of play for all the players? I can't tell you how many times I have referred back to that book as a touchstone when crafting experiences and events.

At a recent PSMG community road trip to a festival in Santa Barbara, Polly and I shared a real moment where we were able to slip off into the night un-noticed and watch the clownish antics on the golf course, now in full swing, from afar. The PSMG Formula was humming along perfectly; seasoned players teaching new players the ropes, the spinner wheel spun and people swapped roles, clothes and laughs. It was a formula that not only got better the more you got involved, but one that rewarded you for playing with the rules themselves.

Then there was the recent PeepShow MiniGolf iPhone line ‘media stunt’ for example.

Did we set up our one-hole PeepShow MiniGolf course complete with dancing clowns, extra wacky hats and portable laugh-track in front of the downtown San Francisco Apple Store, waiting 36 hours in line for an iPhone to actually buy a phone?



No, because as we told the press, “carny folk can’t afford \$600 phones.” Were we motivated by the chance to surf on the impending media wave, don our proverbial trench coats and go expose ourselves to the world? Sure, though we had no idea how it might play out or even pay off. Did it look like a great chance to play PSMG in an utterly unique and novel environment with possibly the most random and diverse assortment of players yet to date?

ABSOLUTELY!

‘So, what in tarnation just is PeepShow MiniGolf, anyways?’- you might ask?

Well, it plays just like regular minigolf but with the addition of dancers whose job it is to distract the putter and a game show wheel that everyone

gets to spin when they've finally 'gotten it in the hole'.(which everyone eventually does, dancing clowns be darned...)

The game show wheel suggests fun activities such as 'Conga Line', 'Hi-5', 'Whip It Out' and 'Group Hug' which everyone in the vicinity of the wheel is encouraged to do, making it a darn good time for all.

In it's bare-bones format, the whole shebang consists of putter and balls, a tiny portable spinner wheel, a boombox soundtrack, a strip of green carpet, a PeepShow keyhole cut-out to putt through, a 2 milk-crate 'stage' and a clown mouth finale you putt into.

Anybody is welcome to putt a hole, hop on the course to provide 'distraction' or cheer on from the sidelines.

PSMG really gets fun when people start bending the rules, improvising their way down the course and busting out dance moves. Invariably, spectators are drawn into the spectacle and become participants even though their better judgment may warn them otherwise.

So imagine if you will, our merry band of carny clown folk set-up on the sidewalk on Jackson at Market, between a trash can and the iPod marquee directly in front of the Apple Store. With iPhone props, kazoos, tiny putters, tiny hats, grease paint, carnival laughtrack and a constant supply of energy drinks in hand, we turned on our portable Midway and invited everyone to come 'play with our hole.'

The range of responses, as you can well imagine, was bewildering.

Most people just hurried by with a look that said-

'Oh please god, I hope the clowns just leave me alone.'

or

'Please don't talk to me, please don't talk to me, please don't talk to me....'

Some folks would stop and stare for awhile, puzzled looks on their faces while they tried to figure out what we were up to.

And of course, some people did get up the nerve to play. Aside from a random selection of passer-bys, we managed to lure Apple Store employees, sanitation workers, beat cops, homeless transsexuals, fellow line-waiters (though surprisingly few), quite a few journalists, one very 'proper' news reporter and even local celebrity eccentric, Frank Chu, up to play a round.

I'll tell you, there is nothing quite like the look of glee mixed with terror on the face of a middle aged business man as he confronts clowns with giant plaid pants and tiny hats on his lunch break.

Its not that we play on the innate human fear of CLOWNS for cheap effect, it just so happens to be that we ARE clowns and we just want others to play with!

Hey, if they have to face their fears in order to putt that shiny ball, so be it.

'We're putting the CIRCUS back in MEDIA CIRCUS' was one of the sound bites we rotated out to the constant parade of reporters and journalists that flocked to our iShenanigans.

We never gave them the same story, or names, twice.

Bottom line, we had a lot of fun, played some ridiculous minigolf and got to sleep on the PSMG course under the foggy sky of an unusually warm night on a downtown San Francisco sidewalk.

The Beauty Engine in Japan

Polly Whittaker

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“What I want to see is a world where people can receive energy from flowers, where they can learn to communicate their essence and circulate it all around the world and bring harmony and beauty and peace to humans.... and to animals.”

The young boy's mother stared at him open mouthed in amazement. Everyone in the room was smiling and astounded with their hands fluttering over their mouths. Our reaction was delayed as we had to wait for the translation!

This was our first day in Japan and it was a precursor for the amazing events to follow over the next 16 days. We visited 5 different cities, played with 3 different communities, presented at the 10 year anniversary of the PAF Global Univer-City, met hundreds of wonderful people along the way and had countless profound experiences.

The goal of the Beauty Engine is to connect people from all corners of the Earth through sharing, cultural exchange and creativity. Beauty Engine provides a basic system which gives everyone, no matter what language they speak or what background they're from, common ground to understand each other. By encouraging people to cocreate meaningful experiences together and share their true 'beauty' with each other, we hope to see it play a part in establishing a Planetary Culture of Beauty and Cocreation.

Our first port of call was beautiful Hokkaido, the Planete 28 group and Plenum Sakurah. The workshop we facilitated was unlike anything we had ever experienced before, and our many lessons on the nuances of Japanese culture began. The most obvious being the way people relate to community versus the way they relate to identity. It couldn't be more opposite to the culture in California. In Japan there is a deep sense of community, but personal identity and personal power are often sacrificed. Here in

California, where people are often more concerned with identity and power, they can sacrifice their ability to harmonize with community.

Another obvious difference between our cultures was the fact that people in Japan tend to be quieter, only speaking when they are directly asked and are not inclined towards open sharing. In California it's the opposite, as people love to talk. Dealing with these basic differences in culture was a challenge, but one we were grateful for! The second day of workshops was far more relaxed, as we were more aware of these differences and felt more prepared. The group was also more comfortable with us, and we experienced a wonderful afternoon of sharing, connecting and deepening our understanding of what the Beauty Engine can really do.

We left our new friends in Hokkaido and headed south to a town near Osaka called Takasago, to meet Kazu and the 'Open School', an alternative school where the kids choose their own curriculum and make their own schedules. In Japan there is an extremely high



suicide rate in teenagers as well as in middle aged males. The pressure from parents and society to fit in and do well at school and in society is huge and many children are depressed. Uniqueness and authenticity are frowned upon and children are taught to be seen and not heard. Kazu was the first Japanese person to officially become what is now known as a 'School Refuser'. These are children who turn their back on the traditional schooling system and teach themselves. Kazu's 'Global Vision' is one of the few places these kids have to go. Learning from our experience in Hokkaido, we decided to start the workshop by letting everyone know that

it's okay to speak out, but it's equally okay to be quiet. We wanted to let them know they had space, and shouldn't feel pressure to do one thing or the other. This added an extra layer of trust, and people seemed pleased that we had made this clear. We loved sharing the afternoon with Kazu and his group, and were excited to spend some time getting know each other a little better through the use of the Beauty Engine tools.

We drove north in convoy with the people from the Open School, toward 'Mother Lake' for the 10th Anniversary of the Global University, and to stay at Plenum Niji. When we arrived there were a lot of familiar faces there, as many people had participated in our workshops were there. We were greeted incredibly warmly and felt really honored to be so..... honored! One of the highlights of our trip was meeting Gen Oh Ryu- a group who specialized in traditional flower arranging, who had arranged flowers for the Beauty Engine, interpreting the structure of our system with flowers. It was profound to hear them speak about their flowers and how they connected to the concepts of the Beauty Engine, and we enjoyed reflecting our observations back to them. It was a true cocreation.



It was great to make our presentation to the group at the PAF Global Univer-City. We felt like our intention and our vision were received and appreciated by the crowd. It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces in the audience, and we felt a true connection and real potential for the future. It was an exciting moment for us and felt at the time that this must be the climax of our trip. We had no idea what was to come over the next couple of days in Shikoku.

We drove south to visit the Suga Izanai Dance Academy, and were were faced with the most varied group we have had so far... about 30 or so people ages 10-mid 50s, and one of them was a local monk who wanted to check it out. We were a little intimidated at first, but by the end of the workshops we were all leaping around together, singing and dancing. We have learned so much on this trip about people, about cross cultural differences and truths which we all share in common, ones which connect us all as planetary brothers and sisters. Most importantly for us, we had the honor of witnessing Beauty Engine do what it was designed to do- to encourage people to let their inner Beauty and Truth shine for others to see.



The following quote from Marianne Williamson perfectly sums up what we had experienced-

‘...as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.’

These final workshops reflected a culmination of all our experience, and the passion and energy of the Suga Izanai Dance Academy. There wasn't a dry eye in the house, and together we shared a connection and vision for the future which is truly amazing. Before we left on the final day they presented us with a dance, which left us with a deeper understanding of the true nature of Izanai. We were honored.

We were not sad when we left Japan, because so many seeds have been planted. Already, some friends we made during our trip are planning to visit us here in San Francisco, and we have heard stories of them using the Beauty Engine system in their own work. We have identified some core players and are inspired by their desire to understand more and help us to connect new communities. We feel privileged and humbled to have been able to experience such an incredible culture and we look forward to future cocreation!

Special thanks to Mayumi Jingu and PLENUM ACTIVATION FEDERATION for making this trip possible.

Over the next few pages you can see the cards we used to facilitate the experiences we hosted in Japan

The Console	Our Mission	Beauty Engine 
	<p>Beauty Engine supports everyone in discovering their true passion and embodying their creative genius. Our mission is to create a society that values each person's unique voice, encourages authenticity and promotes accountability.</p> <p>Our approach is simple- we bring people together to enjoy direct experience of cocreation, we give them a common language to take it home with them, and we inspire them with innovative new media, art, and wisdom.</p>	<p>You are about to go on a journey which will stimulate your senses, expand your awareness, defy your pre-conceived ideas and delight you in new and unexpected ways!</p> <p>Please bring YOUR genius to the mix, and marvel at the visions, talents and passions your fellow humans possess in this spirited experience of discovery and social alchemy.</p>
<p>www.beautyengine.org</p>	<p>The result is a growing network of dynamic, mutually supportive, inter-connected communities, ready for action.</p>	<p>Plenum Project</p>

Beauty Engine  Activate

The Practice of Acknowledgment

With simple ritual, acknowledge yourself as a Beauty Engine, and recognize that quality in each other.

Share thanks, and acknowledge all the players that made this experience happen.

Beauty Engine  Activate

Dress Up

Choose an item of clothing from our dress up box to represent yourself and your Identity. You don't have to explain your choice, but instead communicate through your choice.

Beauty Engine  Dynamic

Deep Honoring Gesture

Place your hand on your heart and hold eye contact to honor someone deeply

Beauty Engine  Activate

Who's Present?

You are invited to share your identity with the group. You can share your real name and story, a name of an alter ego or alternate persona, a past identity or future identity.

Beauty Engine  Dynamic

Feel the Plenum Gesture

When you experience an overflowing sense of abundance, hold both your arms out, palms up and bent at the elbows.

Beauty Engine  Dynamic

In the flow Gesture

When things are flowing and you feel good, let people know by making a wave motion with your hands

Japanese Guide Training

Barron Scott Levkoff

In March 2007 a group of Japanese educators came to San Francisco to learn about the Beauty Engine. Together we went on an amazing four day journey; with much learning, sharing and connecting. The intention of their visit was to become qualified as Beauty Engine Guides and learn about our methods in facilitating creative community and creating quality experiences.

Over the course of their visit, we explored the themes of Cocreation, Authenticity, Joy, Passion, Playfulness, Accountability and Creativity as positive factors in assisting with building and maintaining successful community.

We had already met most of the participants in Japan and each of our guides-in-training proved to hold much wisdom and understanding of the six core Beauty Engine concepts.

I experienced an amazing level of focus, dedication, curiosity, openness on behalf of each participant and was consistently impressed with the level of depth and intention behind every question poised.

Language and cultural differences poised very valuable and often funny challenges to the learning process and only served to bring us closer together as a group.

Each guide shared many distinct valuable gifts and offerings which were enjoyed by all including their own wisdom and solutions in their approaches to community facilitation.

By the third day and final experience of their trip- a Beauty Engine Salon in which they got to meet members of our core SF-based Beauty Engine community, the entire group shared a wonderful quality of connection I had always hoped could be possible with Beauty Engine.

The Japanese guides-to-be created an amazing flower arrangement at the start of the evening, which they took great care in explaining how it represented various intentions and messages.

As guides, we found that we all shared a powerful vision and commitment to facilitating experiences, being of service to Planetary Renaissance, playful learning, personal empowerment and smooth group process.

The final closing session was the most powerful for me and the most meaningful.

We all shared such a sense of connection and commitment that I felt quite emotional and teary-eyed, a good thing!

My sense of connection to these guides which most I had only known for a short time was quite intense.

Overall, I felt as sense of overwhelming Unity and Peace, being together in circle with these exemplary human beings.

An incredible warmth came over me, a feeling as if all my life efforts in service to a world of Harmony, Beauty and Joy were being received by equals

As a result of our efforts and our willingness to be open and learn from one another, to share our visions and dreams, our laughter...I felt a very real and powerful 'Rainbow Bridge' establishing itself between us and our collective organizations/communities.

I left this final experience feeling such a connection to our colleagues via a shared dedication to integrating and applying the Beauty Engine framework into our projects, communities and lives.

If Beauty Engine were a tree, in that moment more than any other before... i could feel its branches and roots spreading out, growing out as green leaves – shimmering in the light of a New World.

*On a final note, this piece was written directly after guide training in April of 2007.

During the editing of this for the BE book on July 16th, 2007, we just had a visit from Mayumi Mori, our chief Japanese colleague

She shared with us reports on how the BE framework and methods are currently being adopted in the Global Univer-City. Not surprisingly, it seems that they have made a few subtle but profound changes regarding the core terms of the framework so as to make them more 'friendly' to the Japanese culture

The Ua Noa Festival

Polly Whittaker



Izanai Dancers

March 2007

Spanning across two days, on the beautiful island of Maui, the Ua Noa festival was not organized like a traditional event. All the talents and resources of the guests were to be put into action, creating an environment that was cocreated by the people who attended.

Our intention with this event was to give people direct experience of global community in a way that recognized their unique voice as a vital piece of the puzzle.

We were not 'putting on a show' for entertainment, but instead we were interested in seeing what showed up, and recognizing the amazing synergy that can occur when intentional community self organizes.

The structure of the event facilitated on-the-go collaboration and exploration, with interactive games, workshops, discussions, performances

and presentations. Before the event began, even we didn't know exactly how it would look.

On Saturday we hosted a smaller event. It was an opportunity for the guests who were interested in participating to meet each other and connect, and set the intention and vibe for the event the next day.

It happened on the lawn of Maui Community College. The location was a very last minute thing; as we hadn't planned it, and were truly allowing the community to self organize. There were a few frazzled nerves as the day grew close and no location had revealed itself, but then Chris Taylor, an enthusiastic participant, suggested the college and it was perfect!



With a beautiful Banyan tree shading a group of 40 or so new friends from the warm sun, we shared a magical afternoon of visions, sharing, and interactive activities. It was truly a cocreation, with many different people taking the lead, and all voices being heard.

When we woke up on Sunday it was raining outside. We crossed our fingers that it was just a morning shower and made our way to the festival. Sadly, the rain became a major factor of the day, but even under these less than ideal circumstances we still had an amazing showing of talent, energy and goodwill. Braving the elements that day were singer Lauren Pomerantz (pictured top right), a Hawaiian Hula dance troupe complete with traditional music, a Japanese Bon Dance troupe, a Capoeira demonstration and interactive class, some Laughter Yoga, Abdy Svet (pictured top left) and her aerial act, a Peruvian Flute player (pictured bottom right), Alpha Lo and Joseph Jacques from Calling All Societal Truths, Cirque De Vie face painting, Alex and Carol on guitar, Dreaming Bear's spoken word, Teri Holter from Maui Magic Box, Dagen Julty with his sacred clowning and many more. Our personal favorite was the live streaming whales from a hydrophone in Kihei Bay brought to us by www.whalesong.net.

Suga and The Izanai Dance Academy from Japan pulled off two amazing performances of their dance- AMATERU, in honor of the Sun Goddess. Even the Sun herself came out to witness one performance, as the dancers danced the clouds disappeared and blue skies stretched out overhead!

When the day drew to a close, the sun came out for the final few hours of the festival and we turned up the music and danced. Some people even had a 'Woodstock' moment and rolled around in the mud!

Joining forces to create this unique event with us were:

- New World Group is a non profit organization exploring accelerated learning, human potential and holistic planetary strategies.
- Izanai (meaning 'Sacred Invitation') Dance Academy is a Japanese phenomenon that has influenced over 7000 dance troupes.



How it worked

The festival was organized using a system we developed to really get people participating. It was a Beauty Engine Script divided into multiple Activities. At the front gate there was a table of laminates, which guests could look at and see if there was an activity they wanted to help make happen. If they saw something that interested them, they could put on the laminate and go into the festival following the instructions on the back of the laminate. When they were done, they could replace the laminate on the table and give a new person a chance to try it. Some people spent all day coming back and forth to the front desk, asking for laminate after laminate, and were facilitating activities all day! There was no pressure to have the day look a specific way, and both volunteers and performers could come and go as they pleased without any expectation. All they had to do was to sign up wherever and whenever they chose.

Here are some examples of the laminate badges we created for the event. The text to the right was written on the back of the laminates.

MEET N GREET

Welcome people at the entrance to the event. Show them where they can make a donation.

If a guest is interested in Hosting, give them the badge for their task. When they leave, they should return the badge to the Welcome Table

ART POTLATCH

You are the point person for artists, showing them where to display their art or scheduling a time and place for them to present. Keep a list and check in with the welcome table.

SHARING CIRCLE

Invite guests to present projects and share visions. Offerings should be between 3-5 minutes. Ring the bell as a gentle reminder to let guests know that their 5 minutes is up.

SPEED MINGLING

Seat the guests in pairs facing each other and give them a topic to talk about. After 4 minutes, they move around to another guest. This happens in rotation until all the guests have met.

The complete script of laminates for the festival is listed below:

CONNECTION STATION

ACTIVITY: Meet and greet welcome table.

At the entrance to the event, there will be a greeting station to welcome guests. It will include printed out guidelines for the event, which are shown to everyone when they come in.

HOST: 3-4 people are needed to man this table, welcome people when they arrive, and suggest where they might participate. If a guest is interested in Hosting, then they are given a badge with their title. When they leave, they return the badge to the welcome table. Vendors will be directed to the vendor coordinator.

ACTIVITY: Village Square pin board.

Guests pin business cards to a central board. We also provide blank cards which people can write their ideas, resources, and visions on, and pin to the board.

HOST: One person needed to be the point person for this Activity.

ACTIVITY: Speed mingling

Speed mingling means you get to meet a lot of people in a short amount of time. Guests are seated in pairs facing each other and for 4 minutes talk about the topic provided by the host. After 4 minutes, they move around to another guest. This happens in rotation until all the guests have met.

HOST: One person needed to facilitate Speed Mingling

REALM OF THE BODY

ACTIVITY: Healing potlatch

Guests who have skills in any variety healing arts are invited to make an offering of a short healing session. The healing Potlatch area will be open to all guests.

HOST: One person is needed to facilitate the potlatch area, keep track of who the healers are and who is interested in receiving a session, and encourage people to participate

HEALERS: All guests who have skills in the healing arts are welcome to join this potlatch

ACTIVITY: Open Space for you to fill

Guests with a short (under half an hour) physical Activity they would like to facilitate can sign up here. They can be breathing exercises, yoga, tai chi, group energy work, dance, or anything you can think of!

HOST: One person is needed to be the point person for Guests to check in with if they have an activity they would like to facilitate.

SANCTUARY

ACTIVITY: Group Altar

Create a large Altar, with flowers, candles, crystals and intentional objects. Add to this altar throughout the day with additions from guests. ALL GUESTS are invited to add to this multifaith, cross cultural altar.

HOST: One person needed to assist with this Altar. Should arrive before the event starts

RESOURCE: Candles, fabric, flowers

ACTIVITY: Open Space for you to fill

This is a space for guests who want to offer a short ritual/ invocation/ dedication/ prayer. They are welcome to just show up on the day and sign up with the Host.

A Board at the entrance of this space will provide the schedule as it fills up.

HOST: One person is needed to be the point person for Guests to check in with if they have an offering they would like to share

THE UA NOA MAIN STAGE

ACTIVITY: Featured Performers, acts and speakers

This stage will feature various acts, speakers and performances throughout the day. Most of the performance on this stage will be scheduled ahead of time, but there will be slots left open for spontaneity to occur and things to show up at the last minute

TASK: Stage manager/ talent liaison

TASK: Sound person

DEEP THOUGHT FORUM

ACTIVITY: Hosted Sharing Circle

Guests are invited to present projects and share visions. Offerings should be between 3-5 minutes. A bell will ring to signify the need to complete the presentation

HOST: One person needed to facilitate this activity, encourage people to join in, and ring the bell if offerings go past 5 minutes.

ACTIVITY: Hosted Round Table forum

Guests sit in a circle and explore the topic of ‘Activating planetary community through creativity’. This discussion will have a loose format, with guest speakers coming in periodically to do short presentations.

HOST: One person needed to host this area, keep the discussion friendly and help people communicate clearly

ACTIVITY: Open Space for you to fill

This is a space for Guests who want to host an activity that’s under half an hour. They are invited to make a suggestion and make it happen. They are welcome to just show up on the day and sign up with the Host. They can be learning exercises, playshops, collaboratories, creative activities, or anything you can think of

HOST: One person is needed to be the point person for Guests to check in with if they have an activity they would like to facilitate.

ART QUARTER**ACTIVITY: Art Potlatch**

All guests are invited to bring their art to present. It can be visual art, poetry, music, performance etc. If they have specific requirements to have their art presented properly, they should contact us ahead of time to make sure their needs can be met. Depending on the nature of the art, it can either be left on display all day, or it can be given a time slot for its presentation.

HOST: One person is needed to be the check in point person for artists, showing them where they can display their art or scheduling a time and place for them to present.

Spirit of all things
Be free
Realize our fullest potential
Transcend All

Ua Noa

Hear wondrous sounds
Experience life's rhythms

Ua Noa

Free our energies
Celebrate Univinity
A time of Plenum
Transcend with Light

Ua Noa

With Plenum smiles, Mayumi

You can find out more about the Ua Noa festival online at www.uanoa.com

The Evolution Revolution Road Show

Barron Scott Levkoff

In May of 2007, we attended the Lightning in a Bottle Festival with thirty members of our core community. The festival, which was held on a cattle rancher's campground in the hills outside of Santa Barbara, focused on dance music, creative community and 'Green' consciousness. We thought the trip would be a great chance to rally our community to conjure something creative and collaborative outside of Mission Control as well as strengthen our friendships.

We prepared for this trip by suggesting the format of a community based 'talent show', one which we would package in the guise of a 'Beauty Engine Evolution Revolution Road Show' and present at the festival. The name 'Evolution Revolution' was inspired by a strange 1960's kid show with live chimp actors called 'Lancelot Link-Secret Agent Chimp' in which the main character, Lancelot Link, plays in an all-chimp 'flower power' band called 'The Evolution Revolution'.

This name also invoked for us the intention for the trip, which was to celebrate what we called, 'Evolutionary Fire', being that spark of creativity and passion everyone has within them. We hoped to create a positive vibe through performance and creative collaboration. The guiding aesthetic theme for this would borrow heavily from old time Vaudeville Medicine Shows and feature whatever talents and acts our community members might want to showcase.

The weekend was also designed to be a whole journey onto itself as well, with everyone invited to really show up as their best selves and take part in what we hoped would be a transformative experience for everyone. A few of the community members qualified as 'Beauty Engine Guides' and were invited to assist in facilitating the weekend according to their specific skills and passions.

Emails were sent out ahead of time and online discussions were instigated inviting everyone to think about what they wanted to share on this trip. We hosted some prop building evenings at Mission Control to create giant rainbow, star and flower cut-outs which were to be used in the show. After piling ourselves and a ridiculous amount of stuff onto a friends decommissioned Green Tortoise Bus, one complete with beds and promises of an onboard Karaoke system, we set off on an overnight drive to the festival.

While on the road, we gathered everyone together and created a set of dynamic (agreements) that would help us operate more effectively as a group. The weekend actually proved to be one of the most rewarding and rejuvenating social experiences I and many others had ever had!

The Beauty Engine guides facilitated workshops in the shade of old live oaks that encouraged everyone to think about their 'Avatars' and how they wished to present themselves. People happily shared camping supplies, snacks and helped each other with face painting and costume ideas. Many of us had not met before this weekend yet the level of connection proved to be quite high. Our shared experience as a collective took center stage that weekend for most of us and made the festival more a backdrop to our social experiment than anything else.



With only a couple of short rehearsals, we patched together our fun and silly Medicine Show complete with song and dance acts, classic vaudeville routines, sideshow antics and a 'medicine show pitch' that spoke of 'evolutionary fire washing though-out the land' delivered by a 'humanette' midget puppet in a white tuxedo from the shoulders of a rodeo clown.

The flatbed of an old pickup truck, which had been repurposed into a real wood fueled vehicle, served as our stage and despite a lot of cursing at a botched iPod sound situation, we managed to pull off a fun and entertaining show. We invited spectators at the shows end to parade under our cut-out rainbow, held aloft by the cast, and handed out little medicine show bottles with a scroll inside that simply said- 'You Inspire Us'



This is from a follow-up email I sent out directly after the trip to everybody that participated.

10 positive principles, themes and qualities exhibited this past weekend at The Lightning In A Bottle Festival in Santa Barbara by The Evolutionary Revolutionary Superstars-

1 RADICAL COLLABORATION & RADICAL SELF-EXPRESSION

it was super interesting to watch this balance play out, gauging commitment to the collective vs. personal indulgence and expression...the weekend showed us BOTH were a powerful component in its success

2 OPENESS AND TOLERANCE

we had a wide range of folks & sub-cultures present and y'all were pretty cool with it all

3 LOVE OF PLAY, LOVE TO PLAY

play unleashed big time novelty, brought us closer, brought out the kid in us

4 COMMUNITY-HEARTEDNESS

watching people experience the value of being accountable and taking an active interest in the welfare of the group experience.... building trust, being vulnerable and experience the value of being a complete circuit of GIVING AND RECEIVING, witnessed many awesome moments of closeness-

connection, shared their gifts

4 TAPPING THE POWER OF POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT

saw the value of working in these genres: improve, theater, boric/song, puppetry, burlesque, vaudeville, sideshow, carnival- circus arts, street theater, festival/fair celebration, storytelling

5 BEAUTY ENGINE FRAMEWORK-ING

guides did the guide thing, BE provided a common language, vision

6 NON-LINEAR STRUCTURE

‘non- sequitor cue cards’ conjuring a potent surreality, openness to ‘go with the flow’ as the Universe dished out technical challenges, invoking our surrealist origins

7 SHAMANIC THEMES

the intentional use of ‘Medicine’, the Hero’s Journey, working with Allies/Archetypal energies, themes of Initiation all came into play

8 PLAYFUL SEXUALITY

sexy came to play but didn’t rule the game...sweet!

9 COMMITMENT TO SERVE, PERSONAL/COLLECTIVE EVOLUTION

almost everyone on this trip exhibited a desire to serve both their own and collective evolution, to be a steward of ‘Evolutionary Fire’

10 AN INVITATIONAL SPIRIT

seeing members of our crew reach out to others, explain things, invite others to play and not be exclusionary, the ‘lightning bottle’ gifts were well received



Words from the Wise

We plan to expand this chapter in the second edition of this book.
If you have something to add, then please send us your contribution!

Chapter Four

Excerpts from Finite and Infinite Games

A Vision of Life as Play and Possibility

by James P. Carse

- There are at least two kinds of games: finite and infinite.
- A finite game is a game that has fixed rules and boundaries, that is played for the purpose of winning and thereby ending the game.
- An infinite game has no fixed rules or boundaries. In an infinite game you play with the boundaries and the purpose is to continue the game.
- Finite players are serious; infinite games are playful.
- Finite players try to control the game, predict everything that will happen, and set the outcome in advance. They are serious and determined about getting that outcome. They try to fix the future based on the past.
- Infinite players enjoy being surprised. Continuously running into something one didn't know will ensure that the game will go on. The meaning of the past changes depending on what happens in the future.
- All games are inherently voluntary. There might be consequences of not playing, but there is always a choice required. Driving in the right side of the road, shaking people's hands, and paying taxes are games one has a choice about playing. There are certain rules and boundaries that appear to be externally defined, and you choose to follow them or not. If you stop following them you aren't playing the game any longer.
- There is no rule that says you have to follow the rules.
- All finite games have rules. If you follow the rules you are playing the game. If you don't follow the rules you aren't playing. If you move the pieces in different ways in chess, you are no longer playing chess.
- Infinite players play with rules and boundaries. They include them as part of their playing. They aren't taking them serious, and they can

never be trapped by them, because they use rules and boundaries to play with.

- In a theatrical play the actor knows that she really isn't Ophelia. The audience knows that she really isn't Ophelia. But if she does a good job, Ophelia can express herself through the actor. The playing is most enjoyable when it is both clear that it is chosen play, that it is the actor doing it voluntarily, and at the same time it is so convincing, following the rules well enough that it seems real.
- You can play finite games within an infinite game. You can not play infinite games within a finite game.
- You can do what you do seriously, because you must do it, because you must survive to the end, and you are afraid of dying and other consequences. Or, you can do everything you do playfully, always knowing you have a choice, having no need to survive the way you are, allowing every element of the play to transform you, taking pleasure in every surprise you meet. Those are the differences between finite and infinite players.

Excerpts from ‘Theater of the Marvelous’ Gloria Orenstein

“...it strives to awaken the dormant psychic powers of the spectator-as-participant so that they may rekindle the spark of intense inner vision within themselves and become open to the experience of a revitalized and more passionate level of existence, where the imagination suffuses reality and produces a magical world view.”

“...the reintegration of humanity into an expanded and impassioned life on earth is the goal of The Theater of The Marvelous”

“Art is the magical vision which helps man to become a seer through the reawakening of his imagination- imagination being like the souls eye; therein forms are outlined and preserved; thereby we behold the reflections of the invisible world; it is the glass of visions and the apparatus of magical life”

“The Theater of the Marvelous is an art form whose quest is none other than that of understanding the relation of the individual to the universe. It is not a subjective art form in which the personal expression of the particular creator becomes the most important objective. On the contrary, it strives to attain a language or form of expression –whether verbal, visual, corporeal, or symbolic- that opens on to another dimension and permits that dimension to flood our vision in order to expand our consciousness to perceive the vast expanses of an infinitely unfolding reality. Each act of the ‘theater piece’ is an alchemical stage in the psychic evolution of the spectator, preparing him/her for the final transmutation which will only occur when they leave the theater.”

Excerpts from 'Salon Apocalypse:Secret Theater'

Hakim Bey

"AS LONG AS NO Stalin breathes down our necks, why not make some art in the service of...an insurrection?

Never mind if it's "impossible." What else can we hope to attain but the "impossible"? Should we wait for someone else to reveal our true desires?

If art has died, or the audience has withered away, then we find ourselves free of two dead weights. Potentially, everyone is now some kind of artist-- & potentially every audience has regained its innocence, its ability to become the art that it experiences.

Provided we can escape from the museums we carry around inside us, provided we can stop selling ourselves tickets to the galleries in our own skulls, we can begin to contemplate an art which re-creates the goal of the sorcerer: changing the structure of reality by the manipulation of living symbols (in this case, the images we've been "given" by the organizers of this salon--murder, war, famine, & greed).

We might now contemplate aesthetic actions which possess some of the resonance of terrorism (or "cruelty," as Artaud put it) aimed at the destruction of abstractions rather than people, at liberation rather than power, pleasure rather than profit, joy rather than fear. "Poetic Terrorism." Our chosen images have the potency of darkness--but all images are masks, & behind these masks lie energies we can turn toward light & pleasure.

For example, the man who invented aikido was a samurai who became a pacifist & refused to fight for Japanese imperialism. He became a hermit, lived on a mountain sitting under a tree..

One day a former fellow-officer came to visit him & accused him of betrayal, cowardice, etc. The hermit said nothing, but kept on sitting--& the officer fell into a rage, drew his sword, & struck. Spontaneously the unarmed master disarmed the officer & returned his sword. Again & again the officer tried to kill, using every subtle kata in his repertoire--but out of

his empty mind the hermit each time invented a new way to disarm him. The officer of course became his first disciple. Later, they learned how to dodge bullets. We might contemplate some form of metadrama meant to capture a taste of this performance, which gave rise to a wholly new art, a totally non-violent way of fighting--war without murder, "the sword of life" rather than death.

A conspiracy of artists, anonymous as any mad bombers, but aimed toward an act of gratuitous generosity rather than violence--at the millennium rather than the apocalypse--or rather, aimed at a present moment of aesthetic shock in the service of realization & liberation.

Art tells gorgeous lies that come true.

Is it possible to create a SECRET THEATER in which both artist & audience have completely disappeared--only to re-appear on another plane, where life & art have become the same thing, the pure giving of gifts?"

Excerpts from 'The Call to Adventure'

Joseph Campbell

Stage- The Call to Adventure

brief description: The call to adventure is the point in a person's life when they are first given notice that everything is going to change, whether they know it or not.

"This first stage of the mythological journey - which we have designated the "call to adventure" - signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown. This fateful region of both treasure and danger may be variously represented: as a distant land, a forest, a kingdom underground, beneath the waves, or above the sky, a secret island, lofty mountaintop, or profound dream state; but it is always a place of strangely fluid and polymorphous beings, unimaginable torments, superhuman deeds, and impossible delight. The hero can go forth of his own volition to accomplish the adventure, as did Theseus when he arrived in his father's city, Athens, and heard the horrible history of the Minotaur; or he may be carried or sent abroad by some benign or malignant agent as was Odysseus, driven about the Mediterranean by the winds of the angered god, Poseidon. The adventure may begin as a mere blunder ... or still again, one may be only casually strolling when some passing phenomenon catches the wandering eye and lures one away from the frequented paths of man. Examples might be multiplied, ad infinitum, from every corner of the world."

--(Campbell 58)

stage: departure

step: 2. Refusal of the Call

brief description: Often when the call is given, the future hero refuses to heed it. This may be from a sense of duty or obligation, fear, insecurity, a sense of inadequacy, or any of a range of reasons that work to hold the person in his or her current circumstances.

"Refusal of the summons converts the adventure into its negative. Walled in boredom, hard work, or 'culture,' the subject loses the power of significant affirmative action and becomes a victim to be saved. His flowering world becomes a wasteland of dry stones and his life feels meaningless - even though, like King Minos, he may through titanic effort succeed in building an empire or renown. Whatever house he builds, it will be a house of death: a labyrinth of cyclopean walls to hide from him his minotaur. All he can do is create new problems for himself and await the gradual approach of his disintegration." (p. 59)

stage: initiation

step: 1. The Road of Trials

brief description: The road of trials is a series of tests, tasks, or ordeals that the person must undergo to begin the transformation. Often the person fails one or more of these tests, which often occur in threes.

"Once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials. This is a favorite phase of the myth-adventure. It has produced a world literature of miraculous tests and ordeals. The hero is covertly aided by the advice, amulets, and secret agents of the supernatural helper whom he met before his entrance into this region. Or it may be that he here discovers for the first time that there is a benign power everywhere supporting him in his superhuman passage"

"The ordeal is a deepening of the problem of the first threshold and the question is still in balance: Can the ego put itself to death? For many headed is this surrounding Hydra; one head cut off, two more appear - unless the right caustic is applied to the mutilated stump. The original departure into the land of trials represented only the beginning of the long and really perilous path of initiatory conquests and moments of illumination. Dragons have now to be slain and surprising barriers passes - again, again, and again. Meanwhile there will be a multitude of preliminary victories, unretainable ecstasies and momentary glimpses of the wonderful land"

stage: initiation

step: 2. The Meeting with the Goddess

brief description: The meeting with the goddess represents the point in the adventure when the person experiences a love that has the power and significance of the all-powerful, all encompassing, unconditional love that a fortunate infant may experience with his or her mother. It is also known as the "hieros gamos", or sacred marriage, the union of opposites, and may take place entirely within the person. In other words, the person begins to see him or herself in a non-dualistic way. This is a very important step in the process and is often represented by the person finding the other person that he or she loves most completely. Although Campbell symbolizes this step as a meeting with a goddess, unconditional love and /or self unification does not have to be represented by a woman.

"The ultimate adventure, when all the barriers and ogres have been overcome, is commonly represented as a mystical marriage . . . of the triumphant hero-soul with the Queen Goddess of the World. This is the crisis at the nadir, the zenith, or at the uttermost edge of the earth, at the central point of the cosmos, in the tabernacle of the temple, or within the darkness of the deepest chamber of the heart"

"The meeting with the goddess (who is incarnate in every woman) is the final test of the talent of the hero to win the boon of love (charity: amor fati), which is life itself enjoyed as the encasement of eternity. And when the adventurer, in this context, is not a youth but a maid, she is the one who, by her qualities, her beauty, or her yearning, is fit to become the consort of an immortal. Then the heavenly husband descends to her and conducts her to his bed - whether she will or not. And if she has shunned him, the scales fall from her eyes; if she has sought him, her desire finds its peace."

stage: return

step: 6. Freedom to Live

brief description: Mastery leads to freedom from the fear of death, which in turn is the freedom to live. This is sometimes referred to as living in the moment, neither anticipating the future nor regretting the past.

"The hero is the champion of things becoming, not of things become, because he is. 'Before Abraham was, I AM.' He does not mistake apparent changelessness in time for the permanence of Being, nor is he fearful of the

next moment (or of the 'other thing'), as destroying the permanent with its change. 'Nothing retains its own form; but Nature, the greater renewer, ever makes up forms from forms. Be sure there's nothing perishes in the whole universe; it does but vary and renew its form.' Thus the next moment is permitted to come to pass."

--(Campbell 243)

The Golden Goddess

Bernard Lietaer

Bernard Lietaer is currently a Research Fellow at the Center for Sustainable Resources of the University of California at Berkeley. Geeky as it sounds, he is our economics hero. He's a Big Kahuna- just one slice of his rather impressive resume is that he worked for the Central Bank in Belgium, where he created and put into action the single European currency system.

He wrote this story under the title 'Fairy Tales that could come true'.

Act I

It is early morning in midwinter in the mountain highlands. The Golden Goddess goes for her morning walk. She is very lonely in her crystal ice palace, where all the furnishings are of the purest gold. Her only companion is a snow-white owl who flies in the airy silence around her.

The Goddess goes and sits at the foot of a big oak tree next to the frozen lake. She slips off her golden sandals from her golden feet and dreamily draws spiral patterns on the icy surface of the lake.

Act II

In a big cave deep under the ground, the Magician is stoking a big fire under a cauldron. He is trying to melt together all the gold in the world, because that is what the King had asked him to do. His companion, a beautiful black snake with the charming name of Ssssophie, comes slithering by. Sophie tries to draw the Magician's attention to her, but the Magician is impatient.

"Look," he says, "you see I am very busy. I have no time for your games right now. You know the King is not someone to joke with: When he gives an order; we'd better get it done and the sooner the better."

"But," says Sophie, it is precisely about that job that I have to tell you something. I just returned from the back end of the cave--you know where

the great skylight is located. And there is a big nugget of the purest gold that seems to sit on top of it. It wasn't there yesterday, but it is unmistakably there now. You'd better come and look."

So said, and so it is done. The Magician walks through the long galleries of amethyst crystals that lead to the great skylight room. And indeed, Sophie was right: just at the edge on top of the skylight glitters what looks like a nugget of gold. As he gets closer, he starts noticing that it is after all not a nugget of gold, but a golden slipper, sitting in the middle of some spirals...

Act III

The white owl flies as quickly as it can to the crystal palace of the Goddess. He has alarming news for his mistress: There are cracks and noises at the great frozen lake, something which has never before occurred as long as the owl can remember. "Come and see, there's something really wrong with the lake!" he hooted as soon as he could see her in the distance. They returned together to the big oak at the edge of the lake. And indeed, from under the ice, cracks could be heard--and there was even some movement. The Golden Goddess decided to plunge her arm through the ice, and lo and behold--she felt another arm reaching for her. We'll never know who was the more surprised of the two--The Golden Goddess or the Magician--when they found themselves facing each other. But when their surprise had passed, the Goddess was so happy to meet someone else after all this time alone that she invited the Magician to her Crystal Palace.

Once they had arrived there, the Magician, first bedazzled by the beauty of everything in sight, grew worried: "Now I'm really in trouble. How will I ever be able to complete the orders of the King? I'll never be able to melt down all the world's gold, because I simply don't want to anymore."

"But why does the King want all the gold melted in the first place?" inquired the Goddess.

"Well, he told me that he wants to make his people happy, and that giving everybody some of the gold should do that."

The Goddess started to laugh: "You mean he doesn't know that giving the people **all** the gold will not do that? Bring me to your King, and we'll have a little discussion."

And so it was done. Together, the Magician and the Golden Goddess went to see the King, and the Goddess explained her big secret to both of them:

Gold is what you are and what you do, not what you have.

She also showed them how everybody could learn to achieve their wishes without coveting gold.

When they returned to the Crystal Palace, everything had started to change: the snow was finally melting after thousands of years, the ice lake had grown balmy, and everywhere Spring was showing its first green shoots.

There was something else new. Did I mention that the white owl's name was Sophia? Well, although they had almost the same names, Ssssophie the snake and Sophia the owl did not get along as well as their companions, the Magician and the Golden Goddess. After all, what can a black snake have in common with a white owl? They were always fighting over turf and just about everything else.

But the last time I saw them, they had actually started talking to each other. At least it is a beginning.

But that is the beginning of another story....

A Culture of Abundance

Michael Michael a.k.a Danger Ranger

(From a presentation at the first Abundance League)

In a culture of Abundance, there is no need to struggle though life with only one personality. Let me introduce myself and my personalities. My name is Michael Michael. During the 1990's, I did a lot of events with the Cacophony Society, which is an organization whose mission is the pursuit of

experiences beyond the mainstream of society. It was there that I learned about the development of alternate personalities. Within Cacophony, we learned the ability to recreate one's self on a regular basis. Different types of events required different personas. My first alter ego was literary in nature, as the female editor of the monthly San Francisco Cacophony newsletter. Genieve J. Petrone was a name found on a monument in Golden Gate Park. That name is included in a list of World War I heroes carved into a large black rock which still sets in a small, wooded glen on the north side of the park. For several years, I became a channel for her expression.

Later on, as Cacophony expanded to Los Angeles, I was Maxwell Maude, organizer of urban explorations into the seedy underbelly of the city of angels. During one particular excursion we snuck into an old abandoned hotel, where I stood on the same gargoyle-decorated rooftop which was made famous in a scene from Blade Runner.

After returning to San Francisco, I used the name Winslow Leech during an active period of culturing jamming and billboard alterations. The name was taken from a 1970s movie; "Phantom of the Paradise". We often wore masks and one particular high point was the playful kidnapping of one of the SF Guardian's reporters.

My participation in the machine art world of Survival Research Labs created

the character of Zymbot, half human, half machine. This Mad Max character still appears from time to time in and around the Death Guild Thunderdome arena.

But the personality for which I am probably best known is that which was created for Burning Man. Danger Ranger fits me like a glove. In fact, I am that.

Creating different personalities is like creating a superstar role or avatar which you can fit into. The trick is to maintain your ego balance within an economy of superstars. Sharing and respect for your fellow avatars is essential. It is through defining your avatars that you learn what gifts you have to give to the community at large.

Burning Man has been instrumental in developing the concept of Gift Economy. Unlike a simple cash transaction, a gift maintains its connection between two people after the fact. A gift creates social capital. The gift culture of Burning Man is an experience economy and its currency is attention. Becoming a superstar is the ultimate participation in a gift economy. In other words, in a gift economy, everything is free except your attention.

The experience economy of Burning Man has its roots in the Cacophony Society and the Suicide Club, two social organizations which were dedicated

to the pursuit of experiences beyond the mainstream of culture. It is time to go even further beyond the mainstream. It is time for a change and the Abundance League is a part of that change. We now have everything we

need to give birth to the next step in human evolution. The biological imperative of scarcity is no longer a valid mindset. There are several important aspects to this change. First is the realization that there is an abundance of wealth and we are now moving towards a Gift Economy.

The machines of production that were unleashed during the world wars of the last century are still running. There is more stuff in the world than we

can possibly use. Need has been replaced by programmed desire through mass marketing, and consumption is now largely driven by consumer culture. This change in thinking involves a reprogramming of society and we can be the social architects of this new way of thinking. In a culture of abundance, direct experience has value over things.

There are many indications why the old model is not going to hold. The growing glut of goods and near infinite selection of corporate, spoon-fed TV entertainment are symptoms of vast abundance. The rise of Thrift stores, salvage yards, eBay and recycled goods in retail shops are more indicators. The reactionary movements of Adbusters, Buy Nothing Day, the Church of Stop Shopping (organized by Rev Billy -whom I first met years ago as Bill Talon, a local comedian.) He had the religious experience of conversion. It's something we share. Creating avatars for experience is a method of riding the new culture of abundance. You can become what you will. The new culture of abundance is within reach.

Remember-- in the future, everything will be free... Except Your Attention.

Russell Gonzaga

I put my pen to the paper
so I'm writing this rhyme
realizing that this is
a thing of my design
these rhymes are always coming
every moment of my being
in relation to these things
that I'm hearing and seeing
these words:
my reaction to experience
processed thru the breath
to make a little sense
it can get to the point
where it can drive you insane
that's why
I choose to entertain!
to let it flow out
to ease up this pressure
this pain in my brain
gives way to pleasure!

As
I
exhale these words
you inhale the energy
giving you
the power
that you need
to bust a move
or release your mind
let go to my flow
and I'm sure you'll find
the power to do
what you gots to do

to do the things that it takes
to true become you
keep it up
work it out
come straight and exact
aspirations and dreams
graduate into fact!

First, there's me
then there's my family
then there's my homies
then the community
then everything
that I hear and see
making this circle
loop back onto me!

So,
what are you waiting for?
some fairy godmother?
well, that fairy godmother
is within you bother
or sister or mother or father
-waiting for the juice?
why bother!
the power to BE
is within
and when you know this
you can begin
to attain your goals pragmatically
then the joy will fall in line automatically.
So stop dreaming and scheming
start BEing!
-It's in your true self
that you've got to be believing!
First, there's me

then there's my family
then there's my homies
then the community
then everything
that I hear and see
making this circle
loop back onto me!

Death is an end
that we must all meet
so I do my best
to make this life sweet
I do my best for the rest
by doing best for me
all the way to the day
that my life is complete.
Death then becomes
nothing to be afraid of.
It's these old fear
that I rise above!
so I live to give
the power of myself
and by helping me
I'm helping you
to help yourself!
creating hype
in the minds of each of us
connection is the reason
for us to trust
one another
I'm your brother
our spirits are the same
together, wherever
we can face this pain!

Audette Sophia

That potent moment
When the flower opens

Fullness-
Juices coalescing in fruits...

In a city
At the edge of a continent
In a country of greed, excess, and waste
Gathers a group with intent
To re-consecrate the hasty harvest of the tree of knowledge
And harness material, monetary and technological resources
In service to the projects pushing the evolutionary edges
Of arts and consciousness and community

To scoff at competitive compartments
And celebrate the beauty and bounty of talent and intelligence
And with generous spirit offer up our treasures
Weaving together more than we dreamed possible
Experimenting with the power of Synergy
Of non-heirarchical intuitive self organizing networking technology
Scientists of the social sphere
Swapping maps of higher community architecture
Dreaming into the next level manifestation of parties with purpose...
This is the Abundance League

You heard the call
You hold a piece
This is the time
Let's do this shit
And do it well
Lets design a delicious support network
To accelerate the graceful manifestation of our most cherished visions
In Collaboration and Interactivation.

Guidelines for Guides

If you are interested in becoming a Guide, then read on. These notes are based on the experience we gained from years of building community. They are not rules, and they are not set in stone- they are just designed to be a springboard to inspire you and feed your brain. We are excited to collaborate with you in the future expanding and refining these guidelines!

Chapter Five



In order for the Beauty Engine to thrive in a community, only a few people need to understand how it actually works. The rest of the community just benefits from the results. We call those key people ‘Guides’.

What is a Guide?

Guides are the kind of people who go the extra mile for their community. They can be the ones that think up fun stuff to do, instigate projects, plan day trips, and are always scheming their next venture. They could also be the ones who are always there when things go awry- helping to facilitate and mediate tricky situations.

Within every community there are always a few folks who are at the core of things, helping support the bigger picture. They have a deep understanding of one or more of the following skill sets: life coach, cheerleader, host, producer, promoter, sacred mirror, drama coach, mediator, referee, trainer, educator, minister, mentor, or facilitator, or they have a natural quality which makes them suitable for the role.

These are the people that we train to be Guides. Once they have a basic understanding of the Beauty Engine framework they can begin to unlock the real potential in their communities.



Guide Boot Camp

If you are interested in becoming a Guide then let us know! You will be invited to Mission Control- our headquarters in San Francisco and we will take you through some basic training. You will get to meet other potential Guides and swap notes about your communities.

Every Guide has their own style according to their own interests and true essence. If you want participate, we encourage you to focus on staying in alignment with your true interests, and not do things out of a sense of duty or obligation. If you have an intuitive nature and great people skills, for example, you might really enjoy helping people define their Identity and Powers. If you have an understanding of interpersonal dynamics you might focus on mediating and conflict resolution. Each Guide brings a unique set of skills and experience to their community.

The Guide Guild

Once you have finished your training and got your 'Gold Star' you become a member of the Guide Guild- our little secret society, that's not very secret. As a member of the Guide Guild you will benefit from being part of a larger network, tapping into ideas, wisdom and practical resources from communities all over the world. It opens up all sorts of possibilities, enabling you to collaborate on a larger scale, feeding you with inspiration and encouragement, and keeping you on your toes with fresh ideas and challenges.

Would I make a good Guide?

Check out these questions:

- Are you self motivated, enthusiastic and enjoy helping others and your community?
- Do you believe in people, and take pleasure in seeing others explore their potential and strive for their best?
- Do you choose to participate in an abundant future?
- Do you have good interpersonal skills?

If you answered yes to these questions then you would make a fabulous Guide. Go for it!

Your Hosts

As a Guide, it's your job to appoint Hosts. These are your team. (Go team!) In every community, there are always a few people who enjoy getting behind the scenes and making things work. They don't need to have a complete understanding of the Beauty Engine in order to participate.

Basic roles of a Host:

- Volunteering and helping out
- Organizing venues and dealing with practical details
- Donating time and resources
- Bringing people together and hosting events
- Hosting experiences crafted by Guides

What does a Guide do?

How you do it is up to you, but a Guide's basic job is to help communities realize their potential. Listed here are some of the things they might do, and over the next few pages we go into more detail.

- Assist people with understanding their Identity.
- Assist people with identifying and understanding their Powers.
- Facilitate the exchange of Powers.
- Assist others with understanding how Dynamics work.
- Take a lead in maintaining the Dynamics within a group, usually by being a role model.
- Assist with mediation concerning matters of minor conflict, difference of opinion and general issues regarding consent and respect.
- Help facilitate and mediate experiences using the Beauty Engine tools.

I want MORE!

Then become a Star Guide!

StarGuides can serve solely in their own communities or they can move fluidly between communities. StarGuides have excellent interpersonal skills and are adept at navigating tricky social situations with a light heart and a

kind touch. They share wisdom gained through direct experience with others in the network, and can participate in training Guides.

They should have all the qualities of a Guide as well as:

- A willingness to operate with no personal agenda
- A willingness to cocreate with any agenda that comes into the space
- The ability to appreciate different communities
- The ability to see and encourage potential wherever it reveals itself

The role of a StarGuide includes:

- Mediating and conflict resolution.
- Supporting Guides when they need assistance.
- They are ‘community coaches’, assisting new communities, helping them adopt the tools, defining their vision, mission, goals and resources.
- Training and mentoring Beauty Engineers who want to become Guides, and decide when they are ready to take on that role
- Take accountability for maintaining the Dynamics within a group

Some StarGuides may also:

- Create communities
- Create Dynamics
- Create and guide experiences
- Create experience templates which can be activated by others

Assisting people with exploring their Identity

It is important for a Guide to remind people that exploring their Identity is a personal experience and that they should set aside the time and space to do it properly. Asking what people identify with is a good start to help them begin their self-reflection. What do they feel connected to and what makes them feel more themselves?

- Elemental forces, such as wind, sun, water, fire, thunder, moon, stars
- Natural elements such as animals, plants
- Urban living such as street culture, modern living, technology, machinery

- Ideas and concepts such as politics, philosophy, economics, sociology
- Creative expression such as dance, poetry, painting, storytelling
- Mythic qualities such as heroic, mystical, supernatural, legendary
- Mythic archetypes such as dragons, unicorns, serpents, kings, gods
- Modern day Superheros such as Ultraman, Superman, Batman
- Sensory qualities such as scent, color, sound, feelings
- Qualities of particular planets such as Venus, the Pleiades, the moon

Avatars

Once people have begun to explore their essence, and what they identify with, they have the option of further breaking down their identity into different Avatars. These Avatars can represent the different facets of their Identity, or the different roles they play within their communities. Guides facilitate the exploration of these Avatars and can assist newcomers in choosing a name that reflects their essence.

Assisting people with identifying their Powers

When you are facilitating the identification of Powers it is helpful to begin by asking the following questions:

- **Ability-** Do you have a specific skill or talent?
- **Art-** Do you create art?
- **Essence-** Do you embody the essence of an energy or archetype?
- **Goods-** Do you have any merchandise and products which you supply?
- **Knowledge-** Do you have access to information and ideas on a specific topic?
- **Media-** Do you produce creative media- website, film, etc?
- **Miracle-** Do you achieve any true marvels that invoke awe and wonder?
- **Music-** Do you write or perform music?
- **Performance-** Do you perform on stage or off stage?
- **Practical resource-** Do you have supplies or connections that could be drawn from when needed?
- **Service-** Do you perform actions or tasks for another?

- **Wisdom-** Do you have insight you have gained through experience?
- **Written-** Do you write?

Once they have identified the Powers they have to share, it is important that a Guide helps them to describe what they are in a clear, concise and practical way. The name of the Power should also be short and descriptive.

Facilitating Circulation

As a Guide, you are encouraged to be agenda free and light hearted when facilitating. If others are carrying agenda with them, you should help them clarify what that agenda is and if it's appropriate to the situation. *Remember: The quality of the Circulation improves when people are coming from a place of authenticity.*

To encourage Circulation, Guides:

- Ask questions
- Listen
- Make introductions and connections
- Share announcements
- Initiate discussions
- Encourage others to make announcements, to state their needs and offers, to express things they want to celebrate
- Are always Circulating, acting as a role model for others.

Founding a group

These guidelines are for founding a group/ project/ organization/ network or bringing one into the Beauty Engine Network

In order to found a group in the Beauty Engine Network you must be qualified StarGuide. If there is no StarGuide available, then a Guide can create a group with support and guidance from an appointed StarGuide.

Questions to answer when you are starting a group:

- What is the name of your group?
- What is the intention for the group?
- Is there a goal or desired outcome?

- Is there a common aesthetic or guiding narrative?
- What do you do together?
- Who makes the decisions?
- Who is accountable for what?
- Who are your Hosts and Guides?
- Can you categorize your group with Types (categories) and Tags (keywords)?
- How do you plan to communicate?
- Will you have dues or membership costs?
- How often will you meet?
- Does your group have associations with other groups?

Guidelines for creating Dynamics

Creating your Dynamics

Dynamics are the core agreements that you make with your group about how you are going to operate. They can be created for a group (community/ organization) or for a script (event/ experience)

- Create your Dynamics from an attitude of abundance and goodwill
- Dynamics should not be used to control or police
- Don't create too many—make them memorable
- Focus on your group's core qualities
- Make snappy, memorable titles or associate your Dynamics with gestures, to make them easier to remember

Maintaining your Dynamics

Guides are responsible for maintaining Dynamics. To keep Dynamics alive, point out when things are working, not just when they're not working.

This is a collective process; apply what you learn back to the group and be flexible— if your Dynamics are not working then revise them with a StarGuide, and when problems come up, always address them with a light heart.

- Every member of your group is accountable for helping to maintain the Dynamics.

- If feedback is needed Guides should give it from a balanced and centered heart
- If the feedback is sensitive, then Guides should do it in private
- Remember to be compassionate when giving constructive criticism and always try to accompany criticism with specific solutions and suggestions.
- Create a formalized way to receive feedback from your group

Guidelines for crafting Activities and Scripts

Crafting an Activity

In order to create an Activity you don't need to be a Guide or StarGuide. Anyone can submit their Activity for review. Once they have been reviewed by a Guide, they will appear in the Beauty Engine Library.

An Activity is a concise description outlining the details of how to do a specific Activity, including both practical and creative tasks.

Questions to ask yourself when you are crafting an Activity:

- What is the purpose of the Activity?
- Is there a goal or desired outcome?
- Is there a primary narrative or theme for the Activity?
- Are there any specific requirements such as time, location, resources, preparation?

Tips for crafting an Activity

- Give your Activity a concise and practical name that describes the nature of the Activity
- When you are describing your Activity, do it in a practical and functional way so that people will understand what they are supposed to do

Activities are modular and can be joined together to create a script, or they can be activated individually. If you are just doing one Activity then it's as simple as following the instructions that the author of the Activity created. When you facilitate an Activity, you gain more wisdom about how it really works, and you can add feedback about how it worked for you. You can add tips and information, appending the Activity with your wisdom.

Crafting a Script

Scripts are templates for creating experiences which consist of multiple parts. They can use all the elements of the Beauty Engine Design-Identities, Powers, Circulate, Assemble, Dynamics and Activities to create an experience.

You can use Activities that you created, or draw from the Beauty Engine Library of Activities created by others.

Questions to ask yourself when you are crafting a script:

- What is the purpose for the script?
- Is there a goal or desired outcome?
- Is there a narrative or theme for the Script?
- Is your theme appropriate for your community's interests?
- How are you going to keep open space to allow for spontaneity?
- How are you going to make it easy for people to participate and contribute their Powers?
- What are the Powers (resources and support) that you need?
- What are the Dynamics that you need?

Approving Activities and Scripts

Part of the job of a Guide is to approve Activities or Scripts. Anybody within the Beauty Engine can create an Activity or Script, but in order to get

it to appear in the Beauty Engine Library, it needs to be approved by a Guide.

- If you are a Guide and you receive an Activity or Script for approval, then it is your responsibility to make sure that it makes sense and that it's crafted in accord with the Beauty Engine.
- If you don't understand what they are trying to communicate, let them know specifically where it's unclear.
- Make suggestions if you know of Activities that can help their Script.
- Don't just refuse something if it's substandard, give feedback and help them improve it until it's ready for approval.
- If you become aware of a person who consistently creates high quality Scripts and Activities, but is not qualified to be a Guide, you can give them 'Activate Approved' status so that they can create Scripts and Activities without having each one individually approved by a Guide.

Activating the Script

Creating the invitation

When you are creating an invitation for an event or gathering, there are a few basic guidelines that will make your invitation more welcoming.

Start with the basic information:

- What, when, where, how much, contact details and other important details
- If you are duplicating events, create a template invitation to save time
- Make it easy for people to participate
- Be clear and concise
- Include the vision/ mission of the experience
- If you want the participants to prepare something, be clear about what it is
- Be clear about the conditions or requirements
- Acknowledge the people who are contributing

Creating the space

- Appoint one person to be accountable for making the Dynamics of the experience clear.
- Make it clear to everyone who the Guides and Hosts are.
- We suggest using whatever technology available to you to energetically clear the space and set the intention of the experience.
- Use music, décor and scent to create a welcoming space, if necessary.
- If you have Hosts and the Guides present, check in with them before the experience begins.

Facilitating the Script

- Relax! Your mood will affect the experience.
- Avoid micromanaging people's experiences.
- Always be mindful of the guests, their energy levels and interest.
- Avoid being bossy, preachy and overbearing.
- Share the details of the Script with the supporting Hosts and Guides.
- Be open to the experience developing into something unexpected.
- Choose supporting Guides to be accountable for maintaining the Dynamics.

Following up/ Feedback

- Thank the contributors.
- Be open to feedback.
- Give feedback where needed.

Mediating challenging situations

When groups dedicate themselves to facing challenges rather than avoiding them, they are far more successful at maintaining healthy relationships.

Guides help people to embrace challenge as a positive, natural part of a group's growth process, rather than treating it as a bad thing. They make a commitment to being supportive when challenges arise, and also encourage everyone to take an active role in creatively and light heartedly facing tough situations.

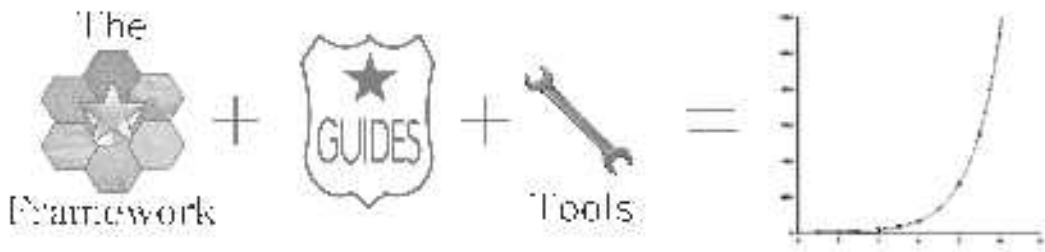
When facing and overcoming challenges:

- Always check in with yourself when holding space for mediation, are you feeling centered and balanced?
- Don't try to 'fix' people, but instead allow them to experience their own process.
- Always take a compassionate stance with all parties involved. Be balanced.
- Use a light touch when mediating a challenging situation. Getting heavy handed will just throw fuel on the fire. The effect a calm, soft voice can have in a charged situation is amazing.
- Everyone's opinion is valuable; everyone's voice should be heard.
- Discourage people from speaking for someone else.
- Show sincere gratitude for all challenging situations.
- Hold space for challenges, but don't over process them.
- If there is a stalemate then simply acknowledge mutual respect and agree to disagree.
- See every challenge is an invitation to grow.

Put it into action

Polly Whittaker

There are a gazillion methods and tools you can use to implement the Beauty Engine, depending on the circumstances and the resources available. The ideas I present here are not designed to be definitive, but a foundation to build from. We did not write this book to tell you how to do things. You may well have better ideas than us about what tools to use within your specific context.



Once you have a basic understanding of the framework, some tools to implement it, and a few guides for support, your community will be all set to find out what it's really capable of.

The most important thing to remember is that there is not right or wrong when it comes to the Beauty Engine. It is all a journey of discovery, and what's right for you may not work for someone else.

Who am I?

Tools for discovering and managing your Identity

Role-playing

Sometimes the best way to discover who you really are is to experiment with ideas in a creative context. You will never know if the hat fits if you don't try it on! We have discovered that, paradoxically, within a playful role-playing context, people feel liberated to really be themselves.

Multiple personas

All of us have different personas which we use for different parts of our lives. When we are at work we act differently than when we are at home, and when we are out with friends we act differently than when we are with children. Some people are different in the mornings, and some people are different when they go out in public. Maybe it's a simple trigger like a special hat, which makes you feel and act a particular way!

Naming your Avatar

Whether it's within the context of role-playing, or exploring a specific persona, the act of naming yourself (or being named) can be a very powerful tool in understanding your Identity. We call these sub-personalities Avatars, and they can be whatever you need them to be: Creative, explorative, whimsical, fantastical, archetypal and ideological, or down to earth, grounded, essential and no nonsense.

Online social networking

Using online tools is a great way to let the world know who you are and what you're interested in. Unfortunately the creative scope of most online social networking tools is pretty inadequate- with your input being limited to your favorite TV shows and books. The ideal social networking tool would allow you to create multiple profiles for your different Avatars, and ask more poignant questions like 'What are you passionate about?'. The very act of creating an online profile could be an act of self discovery if the questions were probing and compelling.

Bearing in mind the concepts of role-playing, multiple personas, and naming your Avatars, the potential for online social networking skyrockets

from a basic tool into something you could use for some serious self reflection.

What do I have to share? Tools for discovering and managing your Powers

Ask the right questions

Whether you use online tools, questionnaires, or just a pen and paper, if you are asked the right questions, then identifying your Powers becomes easier. When the question is too broad- like ‘what are your Powers’ then people tend to get stumped. If you break it down into more specific questions, then it gets easier to answer.

Try new things

You might have a hidden talent that you don’t know about! Explore things that interest you and try out new things.

How can I share the things I have? Tools for circulating your resources and ideas

Talk about it!

One of the simplest and most obvious ways tools you can use to share your resources and ideas is your voice. Don’t be shy- Let people know, spread the word.

Message Boards

Whether it’s an online message board, or a physical cork board with push pins, the principle is the same. It’s getting your resources and ideas out into the world in a place where people will see it.

Trading Cards

Business cards have been used for centuries, and the principle is the same. Just create a deck of cards, with a card for every occasion. Rather than being limited by just your name and contact details, your cards can become creative and practical expressions of how you want to present yourself to the world

Cell phone exchange

Similar to trading cards, but with more advanced technology, cell phones could be used to trade information, resources and ideas. Rather than exchanging physical trading cards, and therefore being limited to the cards you have on you, using cell phones would mean you would always have an entire repertoire of digital cards at your disposal.

Broadcast it

Getting your voice, talents, and ideas out into the world has never been easier. Online technology has made it so easy to upload text, video, music and images that these days children are doing it! Online media sharing has become a phenomenon, with sites like YouTube, Flickr and Blogger having millions of users and visitors each day.

Who are we?

Tools for discovering and managing your group's identity

Creating a Mission/ Vision statement

Clarifying your mission and vision as a group is a great way to get on the same page as a community. It helps you see where you are heading together, and makes sure you are all in alignment.

- Think about how you want people to relate to your group.
- Think about how you want people to perceive your group.
- Be concise. One sentence is fine, half a page is plenty.
- Use simple sentences or bullet points.

Creating an online presence

When a group gets together to create an online presence, whether it's a website or a myspace profile, it not only gets their presence known, but the process of deciding how they want to represent themselves as a group can be a journey of self discovery.

Secret handshake

It could be a ridiculous handshake, a catchphrase, a dance move, a secret password, or whatever works for your group. Having a special greeting or an ‘in joke’ is fun, and it gives you a sense of camaraderie.

How do we communicate our agreements?

Tools for discovering and managing your agreements and boundaries

Brainstorm

Get together as a group and spend some time thinking about what agreements would work for your group. If the group leaders think up the agreements without consulting the community, it can seem like you are laying down the law.

Learn from experience

Think about things that have actually happened in your community, and learn as you go along. Building your agreements from experience is more likely to be effective than pulling them out of thin air.

Catchphrases

Rather than having long winded, complicated agreements, distill them down into a catchphrase that’s easy to communicate and understand. For example the Burningman festival uses the catchphrase ‘Radical Self Expression’ to express how they are agreeing to participate in the festival.

Gestures

If your community is spread across different countries, or if you are socialize in an environment where talking is difficult, like a dance party, then gestures are a great way to communicate without words. If you can communicate a simple concept with a gesture, then it can spread without having to speak at all.

How can we inspire each other and collaborate?

Tools for successful collaboration

Creative Projects

Create things! Do art projects, make home movies, put on plays for your friends, write operas, make giant sculptures, paint murals- you get the idea.

Workshops

If there is someone in your community who has some wisdom, then teach it! Get together as a group and learn from each other. Your community is chock full of amazing wisdom!

Outings

Take your community out into the world. Go for picnics, barbeques, bar crawls and museum trips. Organize FLASHMOBS. Get creative. Have fun!

Games

When you play together as a group, information and ideas are absorbed more quickly. It's a great way to learn about each other, and its fun. Don't ever underestimate the power of play, or think that games are something you do when you are not working. Make your life one big game.

Healing

There are all kinds of activities that you can do as which are healing. They could be therapy-style discussions, physical stuff like yoga, or something ceremonial like a ritual or a prayer

Beauty Engine Typology

All of the different elements of the Beauty Engine are broken down into Types. This allows people to look through the library of content in the Beauty Engine more easily, and it helps you understand quickly what the nature of that content is. It helps when you are looking for something specific, and it also makes it easier to browse. In all categorization with Types you are not limited to choosing just one.

The idea isn't to limit people, or put them in a box, but rather to inspire them. Reading down the list of types is a great way to start thinking about what kind of content you want to create. We are always open to the list of types growing, or being customized for a community and nothing here is set in stone.

Identity Types

Identities are broken down into different qualities, and each quality is categorized by a Type. These Types help people to search for specific kinds of people and help others to understand a little bit about you at a glance

Activator- initiates activities and gets people activated

Ambassador- takes on the responsibility of representing a group

Beautifier- focuses on aesthetics and beauty

Designer-creates, has an ability and passion for design

Dreamer- envisions and is a creative thinker

Energizer- adds their strength to other people's projects

Expert- holds a specific field of knowledge

Fool- understands the true value of play

Full spectrum- easily move between worlds

Green folk- particularly connected to nature

Networker- connects people and organizations together

Nurturer- likes to take care of people

Steward- guardian for a group or a project

Story teller- shelters and releases history and myth

Power Types

Powers are broken down into different categories so that they are easier to find, and so that the nature of the Power can be understood at a glance

Ability- a specific skill or talent that you have

Art- a visual piece of art created in any form—painting, sculpture, etc.

Essence- the core essence of an energy or archetype

Goods- merchandise and products which you supply

Knowledge- information and ideas on a specific topic

Media- any kind of creative media product—website, film, etc

Miracle- a true marvel that invokes awe and wonder

Music- a piece of music that you have created

Performance- on stage or off stage acts or shows

Practical resource- supplies or connections that can be drawn from when needed

Service- an action or task performed for another

Wisdom- insight you have gained through experience

Written- any form of writing that you have created

Circulate Types

All of the other elements in the Beauty Engine design (Identities, Powers, Assemble, Dynamics, Activate) can be put into Circulation. The different ways to Circulate are broken down into different Types so that it's clear how you want your offering to be received, or what kind of offering you are looking for.

Offer a loan- when you have something you want to offer on loan

Offer as trade- when you have something and you want to exchange

Offer as gift- when you have something you want to share as a gift

Offer for cash- when you have something you need cash for

Need a loan- when you need something on loan

Need as trade- when you need something and you want to exchange

Need as gift- when you need something to be shared as a gift

Need for cash- when you need something and you can pay cash

Announce- when you want to let people know about something

Celebrate- when you simply want to express joy about something

Assemble Types

There are many different ways to Assemble, and groups are categorized by Assemble Types so that they are easy to browse and so that people understand a little bit about how they operate.

Center- a group of people who gather at a central location

Circle- a group of people who gather in a circle when they meet

Club- a group of people defined by their membership

Community- a social group of people

Educational- a group of people who come together for learning

Event- a group of people who gather for a specific occasion (conferences, festivals, celebrations, symposiums, seminars etc)

Family- a group of people who consider each other to be kindred

Oasis- a group of people who find sanctuary together

Organization- an organized group of people with a particular purpose

Playground- a group of people who like to play together

Project- a group of people who work together on a specific project

Space- an open place for people to gather

Dynamics Types

Dynamics are broken down into Types so that they are easy to browse, and so that it's easy to understand what kind of agreement is being made.

Foundation- core agreements which you operate upon

Practical- simple agreements for general use

Group facilitation- agreements that facilitate group process

Mediation- agreements that help with tricky situations

Mingle- agreements about how to meet and mingle

Activity Types

Activities are broken down into Types so that it's easy to see what the experience is going to be.

Energy work- an Activity which involves the alignment of energies

Game- an amusing or entertaining Activity

Group bonding- an Activity designed to build group relationships

Journey- an Activity which involves traveling somewhere

Lesson- an Activity which involves learning

Outing- an Activity which involves a physical excursion

Practical task- a useful, down to earth Activity

Ritual- a ceremonial Activity

Self reflective- a solo Activity which involves introspection

Theatrical- an Activity with acting, costumes, or props

Workshop- an Activity which involves hands on practice

“Once we realize that we are the conduit through which the universe is being dreamed up into incarnation, we can collaboratively cocreate, I imagine, what I call an ‘Art-Happening Called Global Awakening’ This is a creative and visionary work of living art in which we remember our true identities as creative, multi-dimensional, visionary artists and dreamers whose tool is the divine imagination and whose canvas is the universe itself. Stepping into our true nature as artists, crafting this universe while simultaneously being expressions of the very universe we are crafting, we can realize we can co-inspire each other in a way that helps us all.”

-Paul Levy

Glossary	
Activate	The element in the framework which represents the wisdom of creating experiences, including individual Activities and comprehensive Scripts.
Activity	An experience which can be replicated with a concise ‘How to’ guide explaining the details step by step.
Assemble	The element in the framework which represents the group identity of communities.
Beauty Engineers	The people who use the Beauty Engine Tools, contribute to the Beauty Engine Library, and/or participate in a community in the Beauty Engine Network.
Beauty Engine Card	A card which represents a specific piece of content from the Beauty Engine Library.
The Beauty Engine	The holistic social framework designed to activate the full potential of individuals and communities.
Beauty Engine Library	The ever evolving and growing collection of content created by Beauty Engineers.
Beauty Engine Network	The network of individuals, communities and organizations connected though use of the Beauty Engine Tools.
Beauty Engine Tools	The methods used within the Beauty Engine to facilitate exchange and interaction.
Avatar	One facet of your Identity.

Circulate	The element in the framework which represents exchanging, sharing, announcing and celebrating.
Cocreation	The act of collaboration which reveals an emergent order, where each participant is fully authentic and unattached to the outcome.
Console	The graphic representation of the Beauty Engine Design with its 6 elements.
Dynamics	The element in the framework which represents the agreements you make in order to operate respectfully and effectively as a group.
Group	A group of Beauty Engineers with a collective identity, such as a community, an organization or a club.
Guide	A Beauty Engineer who has a sound understanding of the Beauty Engine and has made a joyful commitment to help facilitate experiences.
Guide Station	A physical location where newcomers can find out about the Beauty Engine and Guides can be trained.
Host	A Beauty Engineer who enjoys getting involved by assisting with the details of making things happen.
Identity	The element in the framework which represents each individual participating in the Beauty Engine.
Mission Control	A central location for organizing the Beauty Engine, Guide Stations and Guides.
Power	The element in the framework which represents

	the abilities, ideas, resources, etc of Beauty Engineers.
Scripts	A configuration of content from the Beauty Engine Library brought together for the purpose of creating an experience.
StarGuide	A Guide who has a deep understanding of the Beauty Engine Design and has made a joyful commitment to serve in a deeper way
Types	A way of categorizing content in the Beauty Engine Library which involves categorizing within a set of terms

The Guidelines for Guides chapter was written with Mayumi Jingu- a Japanese author, educator and great supporter of our work

From our cocreator-Mayumi Jingu

The time is ripe for us to begin a collective holistic approach, in order to experience abundant, fulfilling lives. Now we, in every corner of the world, we who are willing to contribute, appreciate, receive and enjoy the fullest potentiality as humans, can establish a planetary abundance of laughter and cocreation.

Since my childhood I have noticed people's tendency to disagree, and their fears that they will be judged. I have been looking for solutions for myself, and it has become clear that unless everyone is relieved of this fear I can't feel at ease. I visualized my future when I was young, and I saw that I simply needed to explore the ways that I, with the people around me, could become shinier and shinier as we live.

As an expert in education I specialized in Accelerative Learning and have integrated this work into a time space operation system pursuing further excellence for more than two decades. It is clear to me that as long as we limit our space for working either in home, classroom, corporations or organizations, then our family, students, trainees or employees will still be influenced by larger forces beyond the limitations of these structures. In order to secure our personal and collective fulfillment we really need to co-establish a healthy social system to bridge these structures.

I co-organized the World Summit on Peace, Freedom and Time in Kobe, Japan in February 2000 and invited experts from all five continents. Among those experts there are a few who continued to work together beyond distance and difference. Today I feel privileged and humbled to introduce you to one of the outcomes. The Beauty Engine has already been introduced as Plenum Activation Project in Japan and regarded as the system which enables the most holistic and joyful, cocreative experiences. It works to enrich the reality of living, establishing healthy self, communities,

and organizations inviting them to be most effective and to flourish. To me the beauty and excellence of this system is that it removes borders: within self, and between people, communities and cultures.

With the ‘Science of Plenum’ it dissolves boundaries, blockages and fixed points that cause friction and conflict. People who have been considered by society to be outrageous, ridiculous, non-traditional, or unstable will finally be able to express their beauties and differences. Within each of us is the ability to cocreate and re-connect a deep understanding and appreciation of the nature of life.

I would sincerely like to celebrate the birth of Beauty Engine and would like to invite all of you to co-celebrate with us.

About Mayumi

Mayumi is a life learning creator, essential artist and holistic strategic futurist. She is a visionary leader of many organizations. Mayumi is the head of house at Gen Oh Ryuh: School of Univine Flower Enlivenment; Founder of Mother’s Accelerated Light Center (MALC), PAF Global Univer-City NPO, and New World Group 000 NPO (governmentally recognized non profit organizations); Chairman of the New World Group 000, Inc.; President of 000 Plenum, Inc.



Mayumi enjoys working collaboratively and is the Co-Founder of the University of Plenum 000 (a regulated California Post secondary educational institution), and Co-organizer of the Planetary Academic Federation NPO. She is the author of numerous books including *Learning from the Universe*.

She serves as Japan’s Representative of for NSEWA (Noosphere Spiritual Ecological World Assembly) and is on the board of the Association for Earth Management.



About Us

Chapter Six

Barron Scott Levkoff and Polly Whittaker

Our passion is for creating fantastically meaningful experiences, and providing the tools and wisdom for others to do the same. Our roots are in community building, event production and experience design, and we understand through direct experience how successful communities operate. We are interested in infusing popular culture with more intelligence, heart, authenticity and intention and have identified the current trends pointing towards this possibility. We are so totally committed to both personal and collective evolution that we should be probably be committed.



We have developed a framework which introduces the benefits of cocreation through first hand experience. Since we met in 2002, we have been working together on developing, testing, and distilling the framework, with pilot trials and the development of a prototype website. As a result, they have built a community of dedicated participants on the West Coast.

Polly originates from London, and has a history in fashion design, community building and production design. In 2000 she immigrated to San Francisco and founded The Moral Minority, Inc, an alternative lifestyle brand for San Francisco's subculture. Scott is a West Coast veteran, with an eclectic background in puppetry, character improv performance, production design and event production. He has worked for 16 years producing entertainment for both Silicon Valley corporations and underground art community.

In 2002 we founded Mission Control, a creative community space dedicated to supporting social evolution. Our events celebrate creative diversity and bring the Beauty Engine to life.

Polly Whittaker~ the early years

I was born and raised in the huge sprawling metropolis that is London, England, youngest child in a loving family. I have to admit I was a very funny looking child. I had a squint that made me completely cross eyed and a nervous disorder, which caused me to pull out my hair. I was allowed to dress myself from an early age and my ridiculous dress sense started young. But I was incredibly good natured and kind of funny to pick on, so my brothers and sister tell me. (That's me in the picture with my sister- I'm the one drinking beer!)



This picture perfect childhood was cut abruptly short when my amazingly loving, creative, adventurous Dad was diagnosed with cancer when I was nine. Given six months to live, the family rallied around and prepared for the inevitable. But the inevitable took a lot longer than we expected, and it was another seven long years of hospitals and operations before my father finally let go of this world. Over those years I lost my childish good natured attitude and became rebellious and angry.

I left school over a 'disagreement' with the headmistress about my bright pink hair extensions, got a job in telemarketing, and started hanging out at Fetish clubs. I remember once leaving the house wearing just a pair of high heels, a corset and underwear, with my enormous hair extensions making up most of the outfit. My mum stopped me on the way out and said "Polly-you've forgotten to put your clothes on!" I told her it was none of her business and left. I was just sixteen years old. My poor mother!!!

My fascination with the Fetish scene continued but my motivation was more than just wanting to shock and stress out my mother. There was something about that environment that was special- that made me feel safe and accepted for whoever I wanted to be. In my teenage identity crisis I could be sweet and innocent one week and then I could be nasty and mean the next. I could explore the facets that made up my personality in a way that normal society would never accept. I could wear outlandish clothes, change my name, experiment with role playing, explore my sexuality, and I always felt safe and respected.



Pretty soon I became aware that there was something operating under the surface of this community that was making these things possible. I observed architecture, and realized that it was not only giving people permission to be open, but keeping them protected too. Funnily enough, a sixteen year old with a bad attitude and a skimpy outfit is actually pretty safe at a Fetish Club. Go to a regular bar or club looking like that and I could have been in real trouble, but the Fetish Scene honors and respects women in their experiments and explorations, where normal society does not. There is a code operating, which allows people to negotiate and communicate this potentially tricky environment. It includes words, but there are also visual cues including costuming and body language which help people to interact and understand each other. Perhaps the most important part of this architecture is the etiquette, which is taken very seriously, and those who do not act in accordance with it are cast out. As a result, women are safe and in control of this sexually charged environment and men are generally polite and respectful.

My yearning to have creativity in my life lead me to believe that I wanted to become an artist, and I began spending my days studying painting and

sculpture at a low grade university in London. I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, but wondered what I would do next. I didn't have any desire to paint- it all seemed a little pointless once I finished school. But fate had plans for me, and a random series of events landed me in a job working for a Latex fashion designer, and I threw myself into it with enthusiasm and vigor. A little too much, perhaps, as I was fired for trying to take over the company (my boss was a little paranoid!). The following summer left me jobless as despairing, but some time around September 1997 I got a job as the first employee for what would become London's top Latex Fashion House, 'House of Harlot'. I worked extremely hard, learning everything I could learn and absorbing information like a sponge. Every night I would stay back and work on my own projects, picking my boss's brain for tips and ideas. They treated me well there, but I really don't do well with regular 'jobs' and being told what to do. After 2 years I started to wonder what to do next.

After a series of traumatic, emotional heartbreaks that I won't go into here, I became depressed, lonely, and spiritually disillusioned. Rave culture finally became unavoidable in London and I spent my weekends dancing at the mega clubs, avoiding my own sadness. I became the ultimate podium dancer, refusing to dance at head height with everyone else -you could always find me perched on a speaker stack, dangling from scaffolding, anywhere that gave me a vantage point. One time I even moved the DJs records from the table in the DJ booth so I could get up there and dance!

What finally rescued me from this downward spiral of dissatisfaction was a call from an old school friend who was living in San Francisco. It was the height of the boom, and she was a programmer for a dot com during the week and a Burningman-esque fire artist. She invited me to move to San Francisco and live with her (and I will always be eternally grateful for that- thank you Pouneh!!). The whole thing was very spur of the moment- I quit my job, left my apartment packed my suitcases and gave everything else I owned away.

I arrived in San Francisco in the fall of 1999 feeling a sense of freedom and inspiration. I was surprised at how small and well connected San Francisco

was, and how easy it was to make a name for myself. I started selling custom latex clothes to people who new my name from the English Fetish magazines that found there way to the magazine racks in San Francisco. I dressed up in my outfits and went out on the town, making contacts and giving out business cards.

But in San Francisco, you can't be satisfied with just having a business; you have to have a Mission! Everybody here has a dream that they are doing their best to fulfill, and I was no different. I began to think more deeply about the philosophy behind my attitude towards sexual liberation and soon the Moral Minority was born. I started to throw events where people could explore their boundaries and express themselves in a safe space without shame or judgment.



The basic concept of the Moral Minority was this: Just because my morals are different from the majority, does not mean I am any less of a moral person. My guiding principles are not laid down by the dominant paradigm and some might consider me 'immoral' for my lifestyle, but it is not a lack of morals that causes me to

make my lifestyle decisions, quite the contrary. My morals are based on what feels right to me, and have been cultivated through years of careful consideration. I am passionately committed to my ethical choices and I do not take it lightly. Therefore I am a part of a different group- The Moral Minority. And we are joined together by our choice to live lifestyles that are outside the social norm. The Moral Minority includes people who are polyamorous, gay, bisexual, transgender, swingers, into BDSM or other fetishes, and anyone else who leads an 'alternative' lifestyle but still carefully considers the morality of their choices.

It was around then that I started going by the name Polly Pandemonium, and I created a myth of success around myself in order to make my voice heard. The reality was that my business was flailing and I could barely afford to pay rent, but I crafted a persona which people believed in and cultivated a community that shared my passion. I put a flag in the ground

and a call out to the sexual underground of San Francisco. But, who could have predicted that the call would be answered by someone who would turn my entire world around. I certainly wasn't expecting it!

On a breezy day in the spring of 2001 my phone rang and I had a surprising conversation with a man I didn't know. He told me that he had been watching the work I was doing and he was so impressed that he wanted to help out. He trotted off a list of credentials as a producer, director and performer. I was skeptical and suspicious of what the 'catch' would be, but there didn't seem to be one. He genuinely wanted to support my work. At the time I was overworked and planning a big show in Vegas and the timing seemed perfect. We arranged to meet and a couple of days later I was delighted to see Scott Levkoff for the first time - a vision of mismatched plaid and curly moustache arriving at my shop on a wacky Burningman bike. We talked about the show and it was obvious that our work process was very smooth. Over the next few months we worked together in this way, doing shows and events around San Francisco. I was impressed with his no-nonsense approach and his ability to get things done, but I had no idea about the real work he was doing until fate threw us together in an abandoned dot-com office that would become known as Mission Control.

It gets a little complicated here, but to cut a long story short I found a great space to open up the Moral Minority headquarters in the Mission District of San Francisco - I was planning on creating a community space, but was still figuring out how. Scott needed a place to work for a few weeks, so I offered him a room on a temporary basis. At this point he had helped out a lot with my work, so I felt glad that I could be of support to him when he needed it. He kept himself to himself in his room, and it wasn't until one day when I was showing a few people around the space that I realized what had been going on behind that closed door.

In the center of the floor there was a geometric mandala painted on a cloth surrounded by rocks, colorful trinkets, crystals, action figures, pokeman cards, Japanese nik naks, plastic flowers and Tarot cards. At the center there was a three sided pyramid with a miniature globe of the earth inside and a crown perched on the top. The walls of the room were covered from floor

to ceiling in intricate maps, drawings, symbols and diagrams. I made a quip about our resident serial killer and ushered the group back out of the room. After they had gone, I went back in and looked at the maps and diagrams on the walls more closely. I was fascinated and compelled- even though I didn't have a clue what they actually meant, something about those images resonated with me. I waited for Scott to return and asked him what he was working on. That afternoon I got the 'Download' and my life would never be the same.

The picture that Scott painted was a vision of the future, and he called it 'SuperStar Avatar'. He talked about creating a system which would add a layer of play to everyday life, unlocking the potential of the human race. I understood immediately the enormity of what he was saying, and that this would affect my life profoundly. This was why I had come to San Francisco. I saw a snapshot of the future in my minds eye, in a communication that was beyond words, and I saw how it could work. More than that I knew I was being asked to make it happen.

There were a lot of parallels with the work I had been doing, but where mine had been restricted in the areas of subcultures and sexuality, Scott's vision was broader, encompassing all walks of life. He presented the idea of a Game which empowered people to explore all facets of their personality and allowed them to share meaningful experiences and make meaningful connections. He was working with some folks down in LA who planned to turn it into a Magic the Gathering-type collectible trading card game and a board game. But the whole thing was in high concept form and needed to be brought to earth. Over the next few weeks Scott started writing like a madman. He laid out all the documents on the floor of his room and sat amongst them. This time it was different- it wasn't charts or unintelligible diagrams- it came out as one long document, and it read like the rules of a game, spattered with 'thee's and 'thou's that made it sound like it had come from another time. It talked about 'Avatars' and 'SuperPowers' and laid down a basic theory of card exchange. It was a long and convoluted document, but the value of it was obvious to those who could see it (but at the time that was just Scott and I!)

My friends fell away as I turned around to dedicate my life to this work. They could not understand why I was ‘throwing away’ all the work I had done with The Moral Minority and I got tired of trying to justify myself. Scott and I disappeared into an energetic bubble which nobody could penetrate- we were both obsessed and all we could talk about was the future.

By this time I was becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the name Polly Pandemonium. I had become more aware of the meaning and value in naming yourself, and I no longer wanted to associate myself with the word ‘Pandemonium’. The definition being “a state of extreme confusion and disorder”. I felt that it represented something from my past and I wanted to move on into a more fitting Avatar for my state of mind, and a more appropriate name.

As soon as the name Polly SuperStar came to me I knew it was perfect. I literally married my work, taking its name as mine. I made a gesture of commitment at my local the tattoo parlor and I got my first tattoo- an arc of rainbow colored stars on my belly.

The Influences of Barron Scott Levkoff

When I was young, I lived in a world of comics, movies, books, role playing games and any community that encouraged exploration of narratives alternate to the norm. These influences which molded my young mind presented me with narrative models and ideological frameworks that were more open and fluid than normal society could offer. I had constant exposure to progressive communities, receiving unconditional love and support from very open-minded parents.

My parents intentionally exposed me to many influences with the hope that I would develop an expanded view of the world, and boy did it work. I can clearly remember standing in a Santa Cruz City Park one night, distraught after losing a role in the high school play to Mr. Popular, looking up at the stars thinking- “I am going to change this world, I am going to help reshape the way this world works” With all the immortal determination of a 16 year old with a powerful imagination and unconditional parental support behind me, I meant it.



Over the years, I saw that the freedom to create a meaningful life was not readily available to most people. The open and expansive view of reality I had developed seemed out of reach for most. I became increasingly aware that my own well being was inextricably linked to that of others, I intuitively pursued the following threads-

1. How do we court Wonder, Playfulness, Awe and Beauty, so that we can re-imagine the world into The Grand Play we know it can be?

2. What are the tools, the communities and the vision to bring this into existence?
3. Can a Renaissance be engineered?

(Standing up)

Hi, my name is Scott Levkoff and role playing games changed my life. Yes, I was a serious role-playing geek back in the day. Before Magic The Gathering, Pokemon and Harry Potter, there was Tunnel and Trolls and of course, Dungeons and Dragons. Yeah. yeah, go ahead, chuckle away, but know this: they have had an enormous influence on my life as a Social Architect and Creative Person. As your typical bookish, shy kid that hated all forms of competition, the world that role-playing games presented was far more favorable to the horrors that everyday life presented at school. I would scurry every lunch hour with my gang of role-playing buddies under the deck of our high school library to adventure into worlds both strange and fantastic, worlds without competitive sports, bullies who could pelt you with an apple core at 100 yards and tan surfers who got all the babes.

Our games quickly evolved from the familiar territory of caverns, ‘Orcs’ and gold as we craved more novel experiences. Over time, we explored more subtle and complex character interactions, experimented with gender roles and designed increasingly complex worlds. The quality of our experiences depended on each of us bringing our full creativity and imaginations to the table, not on how fast we could run or how popular we were. Simply, role-playing games presented us with an open narrative structure perfect for crafting social experiences that equally welcomed each of our talents, contributions and imaginations. Role playing games provided the rich soil in which we each got to plant our own narrative seeds, ones that would guide the directions of our lives for years to come.

As avid gamers, we lived to play. In an attempt to keep me from playing every single day, my parents gave me a reverse curfew demanding that I go out at least 3 days a week. By senior year, our gaming life lead to a final gaming campaign in which we fabricated an entire Egyptian mummy from scratch (complete with Canopic Jars for each removed organ) over which we performed funerary rites from The Egyptian Book of The Dead. While

most of our school mates were out smashing mail boxes and scoring beer, there we were, marching solemnly with candles around my best friends' pool, dressed in our High Priest (bath) Robes, our mummy –Nofru Ka, held high and the group of us chanting together the final rites that would ensure his passage into The Afterlife. Our final, glorious victory, one which I now share proudly with gamers, geeks and over-sensitive misfits everywhere, led to me and a friend getting called into the Deans office in the final days of our senior year.

The conversation with the Dean went as follows-

“Do you know who removed the football trophies from the front case in the school entrance and replaced them with an Egyptian mummy supposedly on loan from the Rosicrucian Museum?”

“Yeah, that was us.”

“Well, you could have just asked, but seeing as we only have a few days of the school year left and you boys did such a good job building that thing, I guess it can stay in there. I'm tired of looking at those darn trophies anyway”

Our full display of Nofru-Ka, complete with canopic jars, papyrus reeds, x-rays and an official-looking museum card stating ‘On Loan From The Rosicrucian Museum’ had overnight mysteriously replaced the football trophies we had had to look at for the past 4 years, trophies which came to stand for everything we resented about high school. It was our personal ‘Revenge of The Nerds’ victory and one which I truly savored, for Nofru Ka was more than just an gaming artifact, to us he was a symbol of our creative world triumphing in the world of high school competition, bullies, popularity contests and S.A.T's. I took every chance I could in those last remaining days of school to nonchalantly hover by Nofru-Ka just to watch my fellow students reactions. Though I enjoyed over-hearing my female classmates comments like-

“eeewww, is that real? That is SO gross!”, “Dude! Where's our trophies?” is the line that will forever put a smile on my face.

Though graduation was clearly traumatic for many of my classmates, it was one of the happiest days of my life. High school was over, thank god. My friend went on to study Egyptology in Cairo through Harvard and I went

on to UC Santa Cruz to study drama and art. And what became of Nofru Ka, you ask? Well, he had a special destiny to fulfill. Not only did he become my college dorm mate, taking center stage on my top bunk as the 'Oddity of B Dorm' but he bestowed upon me the best chat-up line for meeting college chicks, ever-
'Hey, you wanna see my mummy?'

Thank you Mark, Dana, Jimmy, Britten, Dan, Mike and Tim-my high school posse of geek comrades! Thank you Role-Playing Games, for providing sanctuary for scrawny, over sensitive, artistically delicate and intellectually endowed misfits everywhere! Thank you for showing me that there was another path through life, an alternate narrative in which competitive high school sports, popularity contests and 'survival of the preppiest' mentality could not bring us down. But most importantly, I am grateful to my years as an role player for introducing me to the narrative conventions role-playing games offered me as a means for crafting a non-competitive world for myself, one that valued each part of the whole accordingly to their contributions rather than pitting them against each other.

In my first year of college, I discovered several influential works which provided me with ideas and concepts I still embrace to this day. The first was an amazing little book titled "Theater of the Marvelous- Surrealism and The Contemporary Stage". In it, the author relates core principles and ideals of a theater movement which existed largely around the first part of the last century; Arrabal, Artuad, Octavio Paz, Breton and Jodorowsky being a few of the movements contributing playwrights and visionaries.

Quote: "the reintegration of humanity into an expanded and impassioned life on earth is the goal of The Theater of The Marvelous". It outlined how Surrealist Theater could operate as a sort of alchemical ritual, one which had the power to transform the participants from within. In this book I found the permission to begin thinking about the power Art and Narrative could have in shaping the world anew.

I discovered Hakim Bey's infamous piece of ecstatic terrorist writing-
'T.A.Z.'

In it he proposes a vision of life as a sort of Theater in which there were are not spectators, only participants, a powerful theme which I was to encounter again years later. Of course, what decent college education would not include Joseph Campbell. His work, 'Hero With a Thousand Faces', opened the world of Archetype to me and showed me that everyone was a hero in their own right and we were all on a Mythic Quest for meaning, love and significance. 'The Call to Adventure', another great piece of his, read like a screenplay writer's Holy Grail- for it broke down aspects of the Heroes Journey in ways I recognize in every film I had ever seen. These and a few other works provided me with the insight, guidance and narrative templates which enabled me to start crafting some social experiments and real life adventure scripts of my own.

Immediately after college, I dropped the pursuing the 'fine art' aspect of my life and decided to focus on the theatrical aspects. As a people person who loathed spending time alone working in a gallery, I was eager to explore ways of creating social experiences that were engaging and fun as possible. Making a living was now also a very real factor! Of course, in my early years I did the 'performance art thing' at parties but usually ended up feeling like 'moving wall-paper for drunks'. Still, as a seasoned event producer and experience designer, the one thing that has interested me most over the years is how to create experiences in which all participants could take an active part. Undoubtedly, the best moments I've had as a social facilitator have been when everyone present is directly involved and conscious of their part in the play.

Take for example a mechanism many street performers use that you may recognize. A performer will bring a member of the audience up 'on stage' and put them at the center of the audiences attention. The audience then empathizes for this volunteer because they know it could have very well been them. The experience that follows is part rehearsed 'shtick' and part novelty based on the behavior of the volunteer. This formulaic 'open structure narrative' results in an overall performance that is a combination of the performers skill and a series of moments utterly unique and specific to this one audience. The performer's task is to then draw attention to this fact, as if to say- "This is your show, your unique experience, never again to

be repeated”. The audiences also leave knowing that they too, have shared a unique experience together, one which hopefully, earns the performer their esteem, in the form of a dollar in their hat.

Another example to illustrate this point on ‘open-narrative structure’ is the Classic English Puppet play, ‘Punch and Judy’- which I have performed over 1,100 times in my career as a professional puppeteer. My continuing exploration for the perfect open structure narrative led me to the tradition of Punch and Judy, one which dates back for hundreds of years, and involves two main characters, Mr. Punch- a timeless trickster type, and his nagging wife, Judy. A set of secondary characters provide the fodder for the rest of the play over which Mr. Punch demonstrates his authority as ‘Master Fool’. You can watch this play over and over, and no show two shows will ever be quite the same. Every Punch Professor adapts the story and its colorful cast to their liking and responds to the factors and environmental conditions every audience presents. Each show commences along a basic story line where Mr. Punch celebrates one victory after another over figures representing Family, Church, State and finally, Death itself. Even though it has been personalized by thousands of Punch Professors in thousands of parks, street corners, seaside boardwalks and birthday parties throughout history, the basic elements of this structure remain constant. The most important part of this timeless tradition, however, is the manner in which the puppeteer includes the audiences response, letting them know that every step of the way that it is they who are really driving the show. A good Punch Professor is really a master of improv within a set structure- he can shorten or lengthen the show at will, increase the slapstick factor or emphasize nuance, focus on certain character interactions, all in response to the feedback an audience presents. By the time of the shows conclusion, the audience and Mr. Punch have formed a sort of ‘magic pact’, a bond that really has to be experienced to be fully understood.

The best moments of my career as a Punch and Judy Professor occurred when the audience and I formed that special bond, created over the course of the performance, when the children realized that the puppets were responding directly to their feedback. This was an experience of immediacy and novelty for the children not possible with their usual form of

entertainment- the television. There is a rush of tangible excitement you can feel when the children first realize that not only are the puppets talking back to them but that the whole experience itself is designed to include their feedback. It is this combination of timeless archetypal elements, a simple open narrative and a cast of characters that can respond and improvise to any performance climate, which has probably made it the timeless ritual that endures today.

Finally, it was my time spent on Maui with Ariel Spilsbury and her ‘family’ of creative misfits, that I began to form a holistic notion of ‘open narrative’ structure as it could apply towards crafting social experiences.

Ariel was an expert at facilitating experiences she called- ‘Journeys’, ones that took you on real roller coaster rides into aspects of consciousness itself. These journeys proved the most rewarding and transformative experiences I had ever had to date. Ariel had created a body of work she called ‘The Alchemy of Ecstasy’ that, when directly experienced, was designed to transform the ‘lens of consciousness’ as she put it. This book was essentially a collection of scripts designed to facilitate transformative experiences, and speaking from personal experience, boy did they work.

In these journeys, Ariel and her family acted as cast, chorus and production team in cocreating some of the most creative, mythic and meaningful experiences I had ever had the pleasure of participating with. They had a way of welcoming and encouraging the best in you to ‘come out and play’ and a way of collectively holding a quality of space that made you feel safe and trusted- which I still regard as essential elements in supporting authentic expression. I had many deep personal transformations on Maui playing and ‘Journeying’ with this family who had taken me in and accepted me as one their own- but out of all the incredible experiences I had, by far the most profound was my realization that I was being shown, through play, a narrative model of how to produce collective experiences in a totally new way.

The ‘open structure’ Ariel used for delivering these experiences was what was of real interest to me and curiously enough, something Ariel didn’t even direct much attention to. To her it was just sort of ‘how they operated’. This

was the something I had been looking for my whole life- the key to how to facilitate experiences within an open structure where everywhere was an equal participant. I am filled with gratitude to Ariel and her wonderful family as I write this, thinking back on the amazing times we spent playing and journeying together, as if we were truly were the Architects and Heroes of a New World. Only Future History will tell.

But it wasn't until I met Polly that really got things started. She had a way of bringing things down to earth, and getting things done, that I desperately needed. At the time, my work towards putting the whole 'open narrative structure' thing was comprised of a huge stack of diagrams, charts, mandalas and an early attempt to create a system referred to as 'The Mush Document', but nothing was really tangible. At the time, I knew narrative had some important part to play but I wasn't sure what it really was. Together, we made an awesome team and quickly set out on crafting many wonderful social experiments.

We integrated narrative into creating experiences and found that 'themes' were not only popular with everyone, but provided a narrative framework upon which everyone could creatively improvise. Narrative has effectively provided our community not only permission but the means and context in which to bring their best selves out to play. Consciously harnessing the power of narrative has consistently produced experiences in which almost everyone present is responsible for the incredible amount of creativity, goodwill and energy that shows up.



The Final Word (for now)

Chapter Eight

A Beauty Engine Manifesto

Professor Violet AKA Barron Scott Levkoff

Beauty Engine invites you to participate in a Revolution of Human Excellence- an exuberant explosion of collective intelligence creativity, altruism, intention and goodness
If you're listening, if you're tuned in
Then you're part of it already- yes, you
inspiring in your own unique and radiant way
An agent of the Evolutionary Fire now washing over the entire Planet

HEY! DID YOU HEAR THAT?

It's the big giant switch being flipped on-
the Light of Lights being turned on
the Sun, rising in the Heart of a Humanity growing up
blossoming from our cocoon so here we go, here we rise
buoyant, winged, ready, ripe and juicy
Our sleeves are rolled up, a wild motley of Johnny Appleseeds
ready to tend Earth as the Garden it was meant to be

Imagine a collaborative art project embracing the whole of Humanity
calling upon the collective creativity, goodwill, wisdom
intention and positivity of communities everywhere
A tapestry of cocreation being woven across the entire planet

Beauty Engine sees potential and mastery in everyone
Beauty Engine sees freedom and accountability going hand in hand
Beauty Engine sees creativity as a primary element in tempering all
social technologies
Beauty Engine serves to assist in the circulation of Humanities wisdom
goodwill, abundance and creativity

The good news is that all of us already play some part within the Beauty Engine.

We are not inventing something new; we are merely choosing to see through the eyes of abundance.

This shift in perception enables us to see how each of our unique pieces harmonizes together.

No more uncomfortable collaborations, dutiful sacrifices and grumbling truces- we demand True Cocreation!

Let us strive to operate together from a place of true JOY, and higher order will emerge gracefully.

Personally, I suspect it may be the Will of Love itself, a fail safe program, a open secret of mind blowing proportions pulsing and spinning at the heart of all things.

I've felt cocreation at work a thousand times- and you have too, that something that accelerates when you bring good things and people together, when openness accelerates off of enthusiastic creativity- when childlike positivity wins out over hesitation, doubt and apathy. Some say its scientific; this mutually amplifying, accelerating, quantum phenomenon of harmonious process and fluidic balance.

Beauty Engine reveals through direct experience the wonder and value of cocreation.

LOOK TO YOURSELF, FIRST

You are a modern individual, discerning and truly experienced

You are a Master Craftsperson of persona, nuanced, versatile, expressive

You move through life fluidly, authentic, passionate

You are who you wish to be. You create Beauty, coexist with its source

Life is your canvas, you exist *To Be-artfully*

As a Social Artist, IDENTITY is your medium, the canvas you present to society

You want to be part of something good , something positive, something worthwhile

This is where it starts.

POWER FLOWS THROUGH US

No-one ever took your True Power from you

And you never gave it away

Relax and be what you truly are

Relax and just let it flow through you

Share it forward. Give it away

The more you share your mojo, your lightning, your medicine, your Sacred Fire, your 'Juice'- the more it will flow through you

Don't be stingy- let it flow, bring it on.

This Feels Good.

LET IT CIRCULATE

Feel 'The Tree' that we are together

filling and flowing with lightning sap

When we open up to receive each other's power

allowing the medicine flow between us

feel as vulnerability reveals ever greater strength

as our openness reveals untold Abundance

Flowing between roots, trunk, branches, leaves and fruit

Here Beauty Engine becomes Medicine Bottle, available to all

to be passed around by caring hands that we may partake freely

ASSEMBLE, PEOPLE

Face to face, folks- that's where the magic happens

where we really get to savor the worth of our efforts

Humans are a totally amazing technology best experienced live.

Come meet your colleagues, The Collective Avatars

the communities bringing the New World into existence

Here is where we demonstrate our willingness to play

here is where we state our readiness for collective action

ready to witness each others Mastery

DYNAMIC INTERACTION

The Universe is a clockwork waltz

In which everything from the Galactic to the Sub-atomic

has learned the steps, knows the moves

yet here we are, Humanity, mostly stepping on each others toes.
Come on people, get up off those chairs,
Its time to join in the dance!
What are the symbols, phrases and cues
That enables your community to waltz together?

NOW WE ACTIVATE

How nice that we have a Universe to play in!
So many adventures, so much time!
Where shall we go, what Beauty shall we cocreate together?
Come, share your wisdom with your colleagues and evolutionary playmates
Share your love of creating experiences with your friends and communities
Share them, pass them along!
Experiences of Wisdom, Kindness, Compassion, True Power and Loving
Attention
are the coin of the realm here

AT THE CENTER OF THE GARDEN, THE GOLDEN APPLES

So, we return to the beginning-
'arriving, never left, but always forgetting'
Here we spark with evolutionary fire,
ready to carry the flame seeds of cocreation into the world.
This is where we ask 'how can I participate?'
This is where we find ourselves ready to serve.

Behold, on a tree in Beauty Engine's Garden, The Golden Apple.
These Golden Apples are invitation from The Beauty Engine itself,
inviting us to take a bite.
Taste the apple, become the invitation.
Model Cocreation through artful living.

Here we become both the gardeners and the garden, growing with
goodness.
Bearers of The Golden Apple are the fertile, twining tendrils of Beauty
Engine itself going into the world
Beauty Engine Guides, as they are called, are teachers, enthusiasts,

stewards, advocates, promoters, and community builders- all joined by a desire to serve , a passion for seeing potential revealed and a shared love of cocreation.

Here is where we go under the hood of THE BEAUTY ENGINE itself. Here is where you find that Beauty Engine is an open system which invites YOU to participate in its unfolding. Here is where you find a great repository of practical methods, visionary solutions and community wisdom that grows in value as more people use and add to it.

EPILOGUE

You bristle with Evolutionary Fire, seeds in your hand-
You burst at the heart with a desire to renew
'Beauty is everywhere', you say
Step up then, and claim your Sovereignty.
Stand in magnificence and allow the stars to shower upon you

'I AM Worthy', you say
Then say together-
'I feel worthy of this, in my heart of hearts, I feel worthy for this,
I Am Ready To Rock, this is why I am here, this is what I have trained for.'

The Star Council is ready to welcome you
Evolutionary Operators- standing by
We've been expecting you.

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“Leap and the net will appear”

~Traditional Zen saying