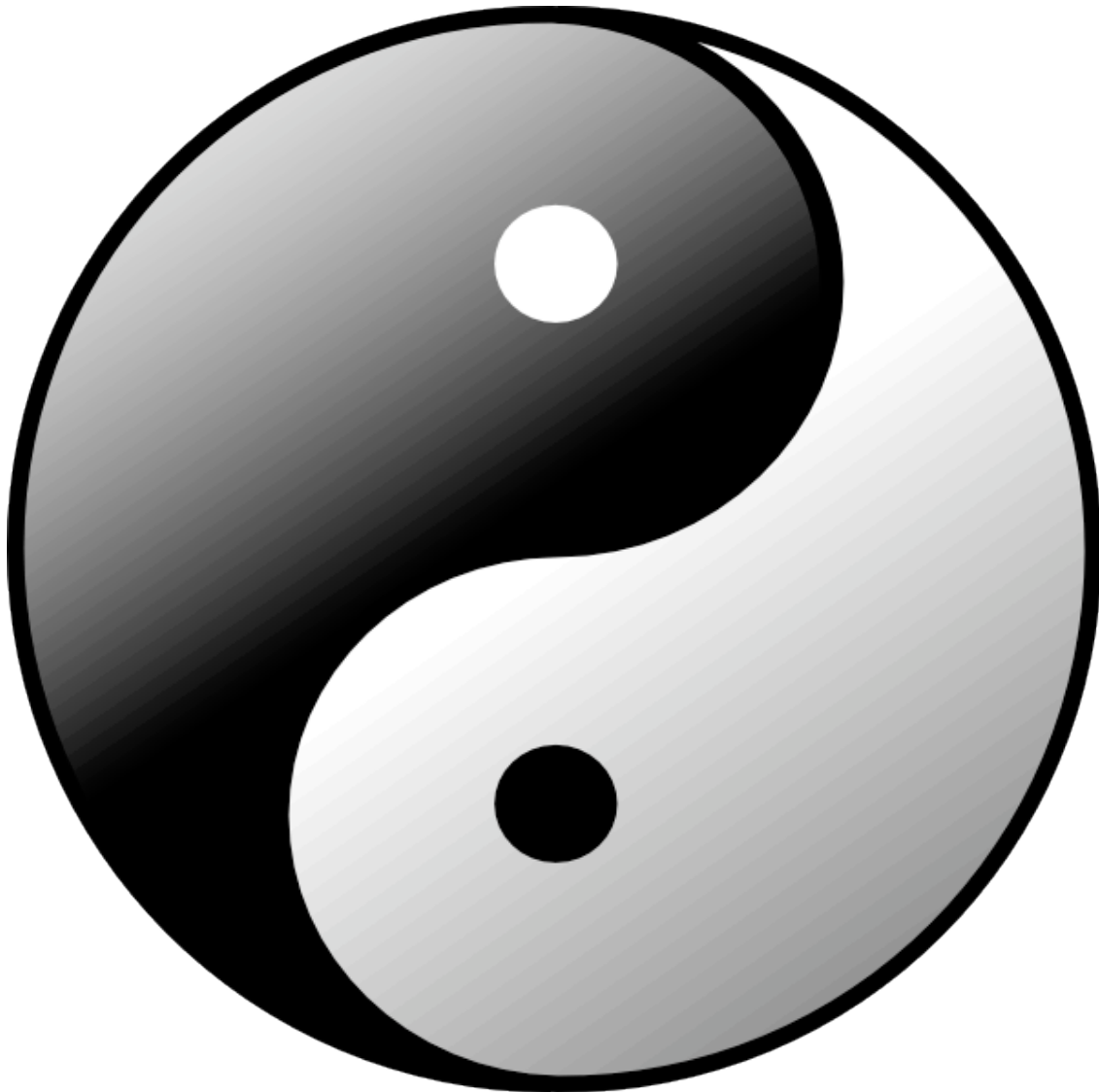


MANAGING IN THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

- A DAOIST PERSPECTIVE



Author: Nikolaj Madsen

Supervisor: Robert D. Austin

Hand-in Date: 7/5 - 2010 (Taps: 191.237)

Copenhagen Business School

Msc. in Business, Language and Culture

Leadership and Management Studies

Abstract

Creative organisations differ from other organisations in many respects. Conventional management tools often prove limited in their applicability in the creative business context. Furthermore, there is a greater emphasis on non-rational aspects, such as faith, energy and emotion in creative firms. Traditionally, managers have been educated to control business processes with a toolbox of rational planning tools. This has enabled them to lead companies, often with successful results. However, there seems to be a conflict between the traditional management approach and the art of leading in the “chaos” of the creative economy firm. Often, rational management toolboxes do not suffice, when it comes to understanding and leading in the different world of the creative economy. Managers of creative processes often fall short of understanding and leading the creative firm, as they mistake the creative processes with conventional, rationally led business processes. Analysis, planning, control and other traditional management tools do not seem to suffice. Daoism is an old Chinese philosophical system that offers helpful concepts and perspectives for managers in the creative business sector. The philosophy of Daoism emphasises non-rational, holistic leadership qualities that can provide managers of creative firms with new perspectives to inform their understanding and management of the creative company. Thus, the present paper is an exploratory study into Daoism and the relevance it can hold for people managing in the creative business context. The research comprises ten in-depth interviews with people managing in the creative economy and a literature study of Daoism and the creative organisation.

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Table of Contents	3
Foreword	4
Acknowledgements	5
Introduction	6
Methodology	14
Introduction.....	14
Theory of Science.....	15
Validity and Reliability.....	19
Delimitation	21
Interviewees	23
The Interview	24
Data Analysis	26
Literature Review	28
Introduction.....	28
The Creative Economy.....	29
The Creative Organisation	30
The Creative Process.....	32
The Creative Director.....	36
Daoism.....	37
Dao (Path)	42
P'u (Beginner's mind)	44
Wu-wei (Flow)	45
Yin & Yang (Balance).....	47
Zhí Jué (Intuition)	49
Discussion	51
Introduction.....	51
Daoism.....	51
Dao (Path)	55
P'u (Beginner's mind)	62
Wu-wei (Flow)	66
Yin & Yang (Balance).....	74
Zhí Jué (Intuition)	77
Conclusion	83
References	87
Enclosure	91

Foreword

To manage in the creative economy is different to managing in other organisational contexts. The rational management tools that are often used in business organisations are not always that helpful, when it comes to leading in the creative economic context. There is often a different air; a different climate in the creative company, which corresponds badly with the more instrumental, rational way of managing that is often taught in business schools' management programmes.

I have often felt this discrepancy, between the processes at play in my parents' design company, and the managerial tools, I have been taught in business schools. Having grown up with experiencing my parents' challenges with managing a creative company, I have often tried to understand their business and the management of it. I went to different business schools and learned a lot about management and organisation, but the theories and cases that I studied never seemed to match the reality of my parents' company. It was as if the language I learned at business school did not really fit with the language my parents spoke when explaining what happens in a creative design process. Often, non-rational concepts, such as emotions, soul, flow and energy were used to describe what happened in the creative process.

Concurrently, with my academic studies, I looked into Eastern philosophy, to see what could be learned from that source. I probed into diverse literature on Eastern thinking and found that particularly Daoism had some interesting perspectives on organisation and management that fitted quite well with the reality of my parents' design company. It was as if the concepts and understandings of Daoism better captured the meaning of what went on in the creative processes in my parent's design firm.

In Daoism, I encountered non-rational concepts, such as energy, flow, intuition and belief that made sense to me, as they corresponded well with how I experienced the reality of my parents' design company. The apparent fit between these Daoist concepts and the reality in the company I grew up with, triggered my to study further, if there was indeed such a match between the reality of the creative organisation and Daoism.

Thus the present paper is my attempt at getting to a better understanding of the creative organisation and to explore Daoism's potential for informing the work and management within the creative industries. The hope is that my findings uncover knowledge that can facilitate work and understanding in creative economy firms.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor Robert D. Austin for his help with my thesis project. Also, I would like to thank Christian Stadil, Ernest Holm Svendsen, Martin Spang Olsen, Karen Madsen, Ole Madsen, Palle Freese, Claus Hansen, Chinthaka Ranasinghe, Ben Guerin, Robert Edick, Christian Madsbjerg, Esben Just and Clemens Thornquist for letting me interview them. Finally, I would like to thank professor Bent Warming Rasmussen for coaching me in the final phase of writing up my thesis.

Introduction

“...From studying and thinking about the creative process as it is actualized by man, we can next begin to study and think about the creative process as it occurs naturally in the cosmos. What is most important in these two areas of study is that we begin to learn to distinguish between what is man-made and what is natural in ourselves....”

- Tsung Hwa Jou

The present paper is an exploratory study into the creative organisation and the relevance of the philosophy of Daoism as a means for understanding what goes in the creative work context.

The creative organisation is different to other organisations in several ways. First and foremost, it is characterised by delivering outputs that are unique, in the sense that the result that is yielded from the creative process, is not known before it has been created. When the creative director initiates a creative process together with his team, he does not know, at the outset how the creative outcome will be. The form and the expression of the creative result will depend on the development of the creative process. And the development of the creative process depends on what happens in the process from initiation of the creative project to the completion of the project. Here is how Davis & Scase (2000:viii) characterise the creative organisation:

“...In general, (creative) employees express creativity in ways which contrast sharply with formal models of organization. They value their personal autonomy, behave in nonconformist ways and thrive on indeterminacy. Each of these characteristics is in sharp contrast to conventional management assumptions about what should constitute the guiding principles of efficient organization...”

The fact that the creative director does not know the result of his work before the creative process has reached its completion, makes the managing task different to the work of managers from other industries. Managers from other sectors than the creative economy do

also face challenges of ambiguity, uncertainty and the unknown, however, people managing in the creative sector seem to face these challenges to an even greater extent; mainly because they do not know the creative outcome, before it has been actualised.

In order to understand what the creative organisation is, it is helpful to understand what it is *not*. The creative organisation is not a manufacturing organisation. The manufacturing organisation is concerned with mass production, standardisation and economies of scale. Management in a manufacturing organisation is fundamentally different to management in a creative organisation, because managers in a manufacturing organisation know the outcome of the production process, before they initiate it. This is a very important difference, because it gives management the ability to plan the production process down to a small level of detail. Here is how Davis & Scase (2002:viii) describe the organisation of a manufacturing organisation:

“...Most large manufacturing and administrative companies are organized according to the principles of hierarchical line management. Activities are systematically controlled through a precisely delineated division of labour and formal reporting mechanisms. Work processes are highly routinised through protocols and procedures, which stipulate how tasks should be executed...”

If you know exactly where to go, it becomes possible for you to draw your route on a map. A route from where you start to where you finish. Similarly, management in a manufacturing company will also know what to produce. This makes it possible for it to plan the production process. When you know you are at ‘A’ and you know you want to go to ‘B’, then you can draw a line between A and B. In reality, it might not always be that simple, but planning in a manufacturing company is possible to a somewhat larger extent than in a creative organisation.

In the creative organisation A is known, but B is not. B does not come into existence before the creative process has come to its completion. This makes management of work processes different from the work processes that exist in a manufacturing company. The implication for the creative director is that it is not possible for him to plan and manage in the same way, as it is possible in a manufacturing company. So Davis & Scase (2006:2) explain:

“...To manage and to organize the work processes of those who constitute intellectual and creative labour it is necessary to apply different assumptions, methodologies and principals of organizational behaviour to those used when monitoring the tasks of factory workers, concentrated in large, single locations...”

Whilst the manager in a manufacturing company approaches the management task with a rational perspective, the manager in a creative organisation cannot tackle the challenge of leading the creative team with a rational mindset only. When you lead a creative process to an unknown destination, you need more than rationality; you also need intuition and trust; you must have confidence in that you will reach *some* destination, even though you do not know neither the destination or the way to get there!

The general economy does not only comprise creative organisations and manufacturing companies. There are other types of organisations as well. And many of the companies between the polar opposites of creative and manufacturing organisations have realised that the logic of the manufacturing organisation does not work in companies that have a nature that is different to that of a factory.

Nevertheless, the management thinking that builds on the logic of the manufacturing organisation still seems to influence the way that many managers understand and enact the organisations they work in. Most probably, the fundamental understanding of the nature of the organisation is so deeply embedded in some managers' minds that they are not even aware of it. In general, it can also be assumed that most managers are more concerned with 'getting the job done' than with the ontological discussion of the nature of the organisation they work in!

However, there will be a problem, if a manager with a traditional, rational approach to management enters a creative economy firm and tries to manage it, as if it was a manufacturing company. The manager will know that he is not in a manufacturing company but he might not know that his management techniques are less compatible with the nature of the creative organisation. Again, his deeper held assumptions about the nature of the organisation, and the role of his agency in it, is most probably outside his awareness.

Thus Gedenryd (1998) expresses his concern over the effect of scientific management thinking in design companies. Gedenryd argues that it is problematic how logic, rationality and rigorous principles prescribe the creative process of design as an orderly, stringent

procedure that systematically collects information, establishes objectives and computes the design solution, following the principles of logical deduction and mathematical optimisation techniques.

So what do you do, if you want to manage in a creative organisation? In some people's ears 'managing in the creative economy' might sound oxymoronic, but it does not necessarily have to be so. Perhaps what makes managing in a creative organisation sound paradoxical, is the meaning that is associated with the concept of managing. If our understanding of the profession of management is close to the following definition, then there is truth to the contradictory relationship between management and the creative organisation (Davis & Scase, 2007:85):

"...Management can be regarded as a mechanism of control, whereby activities are coordinated for the purposes of achieving goals. In other words, organizations – as mechanisms of coordination – consist of control relationships whereby managers seek to impose direction upon action and behaviour..."

If management is regarded as a mechanism for control for achieving certain goals, then there is good reason to believe that there will be a compatibility problem between the manager and her creative team. It is questionable if the nature of the creative organisation will be able to absorb a manager that has a management approach that does not acknowledge the way that work sometimes seem to organise itself in a creative culture.

So the challenge seems to be, how one can go about managing in the creative organisation, if one's management approach is not compatible with the nature of the creative team. Not having managers in a creative organisation would probably not be the answer. Giving up managing and letting people do their own thing is probably also a wrong approach. So perhaps the answer lies in changing one's approach to managing.

Daoism is a Chinese philosophy, which among other things, deals with the nature of nature, man's relationship to nature and the nature of leadership. The philosophy is rooted in an Eastern worldview, which emphasises a basic unity of the whole universe. Daoists believe that people should live according to their intuition and they regard a purely rationalist approach to life, as ignorant.

The idea in Daoism is that man is part of nature, not separate from it. The Daoists believe that people have lost their understanding of their unity with nature and the natural, spontaneous behaviour that comes with that unity. The Daoists believe that society's emphasis on tradition, rules, norms and etiquette has distanced people from their natural selves and made them linear, regular and conformist.

The idea in Daoism is that man should return to his natural self, which will result in a sensation of emancipation, as 'the mental prison' of societal norms and standards is left. By returning to one's natural self or original nature, the Daoists believe that a more true, natural and creative personality will emerge.

The Daoists were not anarchists, but believed in a society that left individuals and groups of people to themselves, for them to realise their natural potentials, without any interference from societal institutions, be they military, political or religious. The idea in Daoism is and was that humans are better to be trusted and left to themselves, so that their actions and interactions can emerge naturally out of their 'true selves'. Thus Daoism is not opposed to organisation and cooperation, as long as it evolves naturally and out of people's inner urge to work together with other people.

The Daoist viewpoint is that creativity is a natural process in nature, and as man is part of nature, it is also natural in man. From a Daoist perspective, it is society's focus on order, hierarchy and control that kills nature and the creativity that is an inherent part of it. Thus, the Daoist belief is that for true creativity to emerge in organisations of people, we must return to a way of working, leading and organising that is more natural to us.

The present paper is an exploratory master thesis into the relevance of Daoism as a source of inspiration for people managing in the creative economy. It is my belief that Daoism can offer people managing in creative economy firms something that can help them become better at understanding the nature of the creative organisation and at the same time offer them an alternative understanding of their roles as managers in the creative company.

At the outset of this thesis project, I did not have any deep knowledge of either Daoism or the literature written about the creative economy. Nevertheless, with the fragmented knowledge I had about these two areas, I felt that I had to explore deeper into both subjects, in order to see, if it would be reasonable to argue that Daoist philosophy could inform the work of people managing in the creative economy. I had a hunch that it would make sense to understand the creative organisation through the lens of philosophical Daoism, but I was not sure.

Thus since the start of this thesis project, the research question has been:

How can Daoism inform the work of people managing in the creative economy?

Based on my intuition that Daoism could help management understand the creative organisation in a way that is more compatible with how the creative organisation really is, I set out to explore both the philosophy of Daoism and the nature of the creative organisation. This meant reading through literature on Daoism and the creative organisation; interviewing people who work with managing creative teams; and thinking and writing.

I did not want my thesis project to be based solely on theory and secondary sources, so I interviewed twelve people from the creative economy with experience in managing creative people. It was my intention to get to an understanding of their conception of the nature of the creative organisations in which they work *and* also to understand how they perceived of their own roles as managers of creative teams. I found it necessary to try to get to an understanding of their deeper held assumptions about their jobs as creative directors.

I interviewed people from different areas of the creative economy. Some work with management of designers in fashion companies. Some work with leading and teaching avant-garde hairdressers at a famous hairdressing academy. Some are consultants in the creative economy and help people work more innovatively. One is a praised Danish musician, who has great experience in 'managing' musicians in different orchestras. And another one has experience in working creatively in fashion companies, and is now teaching designers-to-be at a Swedish design school.

Thus the interviewees' backgrounds are diverse and I think that is good, as it allowed me to probe into different 'worlds' within the creative economy and to understand that despite the creatives' different professions, there were similarities in their conception of the creative context and their approaches to managing creative people.

I have structured my thesis so that following this introduction, there will be a presentation of the methodology I have used to conduct my research. In this chapter, I will present the reader, how I have gone about my research and also introduce the reader to my epistemological and ontological convictions within the field of theory of science.

Following the methodology chapter, I will present the reader for my literature review. In this chapter, I will introduce to the reader, what has been written about the subjects of the creative organisation and Daoism. I have not found any literature on the understanding of the creative organisation through a Daoist perspective, or any other combination of these two subjects, thus the present paper is exploratory and pioneering in that field.

After a presentation of the subjects of the creative organisation and Daoism in the literature review, the paper's discussion chapter follows. This is the paper's most important chapter and I will here present my research findings in the form of excerpts from the interviews I have conducted. The interview excerpts that I present will be contextualised with findings from the literature on Daoism, the creative organisation and other relevant research fields, in order to present the reader with a thorough argumentation.

The paper's final chapter is the conclusion, where I will sum up my answer to the research question: *How can Daoism inform the work of people managing in the creative economy?* This is done by recapitulating on my findings in the literature and the research I conducted.

Enclosed, the reader will find a DVD with audio files of the interviews I conducted, transcriptions of the interviews, and the interview guides I used.

Finally, I would like to add that Daoism seeks to understand the world intuitively and is very critical towards the ability of language to mediate meaning. Daoists argue that language distorts and oversimplifies, as we try to transfer our insights of nature. A famous writer on Daoism, Alan Watts (1962:13), described his problem with explaining the meaning of Daoism in the following way:

"...Daoism emphasizes direct experience that eschews intellectual theorizing and actively challenges the worth of language and other intellectualisms for aiding understanding. Thus this is really an attempt to examine the ineffable by means of the inscrutable..."

'Examining the ineffable by means of the inscrutable'. That sounds like an impossible task. And it is the same challenge in the present paper. Using the symbolic tool of language to transfer meanings that are best experienced by living and intuiting them. So, it is not the goal of the research in this thesis to get close to delivering a perfect understanding of Daoism. Nevertheless, language is the means we have to communicate, at least in a research paper, so

acknowledging Daoism's assertion that nature has to be experienced directly, it will still be the aim of the research to help with an understanding of Daoism and how it can inform the work of people managing in the creative economy.

Zen Buddhists say that a finger is needed to point at the moon, but that we should not trouble ourselves with the finger once the moon is recognised (Capra, 1982). This paper is the finger and the moon is the reality that I try to point at with this paper.

It is the intention to shed light on a field that hitherto has not been much investigated. Thus, it is my aspiration to (hopefully) generate new knowledge that could be helpful for people working with management within the creative industries.

I would like to note that I have chosen to romanise the Chinese concepts that I have used in the paper. The romanisation standard that I have used is Pinyin, which means that Daoist concepts such as Dao is not spelled Tao, which is the spelling variant of the older romanisation form Wade-Giles.

Methodology

Introduction

The present chapter is the research paper's methodology chapter. Here I will explain to the reader of the thesis, how I went about my research.

Initially, I did not have any deep knowledge of either Daoism or the creative organisation. I had followed courses in organisational behaviour, management courses and the like, but I did not have a thorough understanding of the creative organisation as such. My knowledge of Daoism was also superficial, as I had only encountered the philosophy on the internet and in a few books.

As I followed Robert Austin's¹ course 'Managing in the Creative Economy' at Copenhagen Business School, it struck me that there seemed to be a match between the way that managers went about managing in creative businesses *and* the way the role of the 'good' leader is portrayed in Daoism. The apparent similarity between Daoism and the world of the creative business that I learned about in Robert's course, motivated me to investigate further, if there was indeed such a match.

So, I wanted to explore deeper into the philosophy of Daoism, in order to get to a better understanding of it; and I also wanted to explore into the world of creative organisations, so that I could get to a better understanding of them. Thus, the goal of my research became to investigate, if Daoism could help us understand what goes on in creative organisations; an understanding that might benefit managers in the creative work context go about their work.

Thus the research question that has guided my research from initiation to completion has been: *How can Daoism inform the work of people managing in the creative economy?*

In order to answer my research question, I needed to explore the philosophy of Daoism, and I needed to investigate how people work and manage in creative organisations. Therefore, I found it necessary to explore both literary resources on Daoism and the creative organisation. As I had limited time to write the present thesis, it was not possible to conduct an exhaustive review of the literary bases on both subjects, so I sought to get to a reasonable overview of both fields. These findings are presented in the literature review, which is the following

¹ Robert Austin is a professor of creative business processes at Copenhagen Business School and Harvard University.

chapter. I would like to make clear to the reader that I have used the Harvard style of referencing other authors' work.

Besides reviewing the literature on the subject matters, I also found it necessary to conduct my own research. I wanted to get my own impression of how people managing in the creative economy go about their jobs. In consequence, I contacted different people who work in the creative economy and who have experience in managing creatives. I needed to interview these people to get to an understanding of how they perceive the creative organisations in which they work *and* to comprehend how they go about managing on the background of those perceptions.

What I was interested in, was to understand if there were any commonalities in these different creative directors'¹ understandings of the creative organisations in which they work and their resulting management approaches.

My reason for wanting to get to these understandings was that I needed to compare my interviewees' accounts of work and management in the creative organisation with my findings from the literature on the creative organisation and Daoism. I wanted to understand, if it would make sense to observe creative work and management with a Daoist perspective. My hunch was that Daoist philosophy could provide managers in the creative economy with a 'lens' on creative organisational work that could be helpful in their understanding of how 'things work'.

Theory of Science

I would like to clarify to the reader of the present paper, what ontological and epistemological stances I take.

I find myself on the same line as Andersen & Skates (2004), who take an intermediate ontological position, between a subjective and objective worldview. Such a position could be called social constructivist. Truth from such a perspective is more problematic than if it was approached from an objectivist viewpoint (Andersen & Skates, 2004 in Marschan-Piekkari, 2004). From a social constructivist viewpoint, the social world, while still containing some

¹ A creative director is a position usually found within fashion, advertising, media, entertainment industries, web development and software development firms. The creative director oversees the creative process and the creative team (source: Wikipedia).

regularity, is subjected to an ongoing construction process conducted by reflexive actors, of which no one is able to completely objectively describe the social reality, as it is.

From a subjective ontological position, the social world is seen as an emergent and ongoing construction process, which is constructed by assumptions and intersubjectively shared meanings. In contrast the objective ontological viewpoint sees the social world as having an existence beyond individual cognition and suggests an epistemological stance that allows causal explanations of social events (Marschan-Piekkari, 2004).

The social constructivist ontological perspective rejects the Cartesian dualist position that the mind can be separated from the body *and* that the observer can separate himself from the world he observes. Moreover, social constructivists believe that we cannot know, think about or analyse the world without using concepts, language and 'frames of reference' that come from that social world, which we as researchers try to understand. Thus, from a social constructivist position, it does not make sense to claim that one as an observer can detach oneself completely from what one observes (Watson, 2006).

According to Watson (2006) it is very important to avoid a major misunderstanding of the notion of social construction. The misunderstanding is that social constructivists claim that reality only exists within people's minds. That organisational realities are socially constructed, is not to say that these realities only exist inside people's heads. In fact, from a social constructionist perspective it does not make sense to argue whether reality exists inside people's minds or outside people's minds. The whole polemic between philosophical subjectivists and philosophical objectivists is seen as missing the point from a social constructionist vantage point.

The social constructivist ontological position is that it does not make sense to talk about having to choose side between an objectivist and a subjectivist ontological position. The reason for this is that social constructivists do not believe that it is possible to separate the observer and the observed. From a social constructivist viewpoint, the attempt to divide the observer and the observed; the researcher and the researched is seen as remnant of Cartesian philosophy that is not helpful when trying to understand sociological realities, such as work organisations (Watson, 2006).

When it comes to my take on *how* I as a researcher can understand 'reality' and research it, then I am inspired by Watson's (2006:18) epistemological stance. Watts' suggests a pragmatist epistemological stance. This is explained in the following way:

"...In a philosophical pragmatist epistemology there is no absolute truth or 'final laws' within the social world. But one proposition, theory or research study can be judged to be truer than another. But this is only to the extent that it will tend to be a more trustworthy, broad guide to practice in the aspect of life it covers than the other. It cannot be wholly correct, totally true, or completely objective. One piece of knowledge is simply more useful than the other as an account of 'how things work' which we can use to inform our practices..."

Watson (2006) writes that philosophical pragmatism avoids an absolute notion of truth. Instead it regards some things as truer than others. So Watson (2006) argues that it is not possible to produce a piece of academic research that presents the complete truth about an aspect of the world. The logic of science has to be understood as one of constantly looking for theories or explanations which are truer than those which preceded them. But no absolute truth is achievable. From a pragmatist epistemology, it will never be possible to have a body of knowledge on which we can base our organisational practices and have complete success every time. However, there are some pieces of knowledge which enables us to do better, if we take them as guides to action than if we utilise others.

Thus, as I wanted to understand the world of the creative directors, I did not as such search for a general truth in the creative contexts I explored. But I wanted to understand, how they understood the creative organisations in which they work. And I wanted to see, if there were any similarities in their ways of conceiving of their workplaces. There were similarities in their conceptions of how their organisations 'worked', however that does not mean that their understandings can be generalised to constitute an general truth.

The premise for the present paper has been the research question: *How can Daoism inform the work of people managing in the creative economy?* My approach has been to understand Daoism and the creative work context in order to assess how Daoism can inform the work of the creative director. I have not claimed that Daoism can inform the work of people managing in the creative economy. Thus, I am not trying to prove that Daoism can inform the work of *all* people managing in the creative economy.

Thus Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that formal generalisations, whether on the basis of large samples or single cases is considerably overrated as the main source of scientific progress. In Flyvbjerg's (2006) view formal generalisation is only one way, in which people can generate

knowledge. A purely phenomenological case study that does not attempt to generalise can also help generate knowledge. In Flyvbjerg's (2006) understanding it is not a rejection of knowledge that is generalisable; it is merely to emphasise those limitations that will follow, when formal generalisation becomes the only way method of scientific enquiry. Flyvbjerg (2006:224) thus says:

"...Predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is, therefore, more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals..."

The idea behind my exploration into Daoism and organisations within the creative economy has not been to test a hypothesis. I have not set forth any claim that I wanted to prove or disprove. My intention has been to try to get to an understanding of how things work. I wanted to understand what Daoism is, and I wanted to understand how people managing in the creative sector perceive of their work and organisation, and how they on that background go about managing creative people.

Eysenck (1976:9), who originally regarded the case study as nothing more than a method of producing anecdotes, later realised that *'sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases - not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something!'* Proof is hard to come by in social science because of the absence of 'hard' theory, whereas learning certainly is possible.

In relation to this, Flyvbjerg (2005) argues that predictive theory in social sciences is difficult to develop. He argues that the social sciences have not succeeded in producing general, context-independent theory, which makes context-dependent knowledge more relevant.

Thus Mattingly (1991:237 in Flyvbjerg, 2005:240) argues that:

"...Narratives not only give meaningful form to experiences we have already lived through but also provide us a forward glance, helping us to anticipate situations even before we encounter them, allowing us to envision alternative futures. Narrative inquiries do not—indeed, cannot—start from explicit theoretical assumptions. Instead, they begin with an interest in a particular phenomenon that is best understood narratively. Narrative inquiries

then develop descriptions and interpretations of the phenomenon from the perspective of participants, researchers, and others..."

Validity and Reliability

Andersen & Skaates (2004) in Marschan-Piekkari & Welch (2004) list five recommendations for ensuring validity in qualitative research: (1) They advise the researcher to explicate the rationale for using the qualitative enquiry in the study; (2) They advise the researcher to clarify how data is selected; (3) They recommend the researcher to explain how the data is handled; (4) They encourage the researcher to clarify how data is analysed and interpreted; (5) Finally, they recommend the researcher to use raw data instead of refined data.

When conducting qualitative research from a social constructivist approach, Andersen & Skates (2004 in Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004) note which key validity issues must be addressed. First of all, the researcher must ensure validity through the research process and avoid problems emanating from self-deception. Moreover, the researcher needs to question the subject matter investigated and the concept of truth itself. Secondly, the researcher must make it possible for the reader to evaluate the rigour of the research results presented.

When conducting a qualitative study, Andersen & Skates (2004) in Marschan-Piekkari & Welch (2004) note that in order to assess the validity of the research, one must ask the question: *How well does the data set generated from the research approach reflect the phenomena it is intended to cover?*

In order to answer my research question, *How can Daoism inform the work of people managing in the creative economy?*, I found that the qualitative interview would be the most appropriate method. The qualitative interview allowed me to get to a deeper understanding of the world of the creatives, which would have been more difficult with, say, a quantitative approach. Thus Pettigrew (1990) recommends that whenever holistic, dynamic and contextual explanations of phenomena are required, the qualitative method is the most appropriate methodological choice.

However, there are also drawbacks to the qualitative method. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) note that interviewees can be chosen purposefully, to fit the interviewer's intention of wanting to yield a certain outcome. As I wanted to explore how Daoism can inform the work of people managing in the creative economy, I found it relevant to interview people, who have both knowledge of Daoism and the creative organisation. I did not see any problem in that, since

my interest was not to prove that Daoism can inform the work of the creative director. My interest was to explore, *how* my respondents applied Daoist thinking in their work.

Kirk & Miller (1986:11 in Marschan-Piekkari, 2004) notes that '*The way we perceive and understand the world is largely up to us, but the world does not tolerate all understandings of it equally*'. Thus the researcher needs to test the validity and reliability of his research by having it reviewed by other actors in his social reality.

Andersen & Skates (2004) add that it is important that a qualitative researcher recognises that the data collected can be interpreted in different ways, and that he should make carefully considered choices when it comes to collecting and interpreting data.

Andersen & Skates (2004 in Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004) note that the researcher should ask himself to what extent a detected pattern in the data is a product of the researcher's own expectations? Also the researcher needs to ask himself, if the interview sample is a fair representation of the group that is investigated? Does the sample's view reflect a general truth or are the findings merely relevant for the interview sample?

Research generated by means of qualitative enquiry is often criticised for lack of validity. Flyvbjerg (2005) answers this critique by listing five common misunderstanding about the validity of qualitative case study research:

Misunderstanding 1: General, theoretical (context-independent) knowledge is more valuable than concrete, practical (context-dependent) knowledge.

Answer: Predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is, therefore, more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals.

Misunderstanding 2: One cannot generalize on the basis of an individual case; therefore, the case study cannot contribute to scientific development.

Answer: One can often generalize on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalization as supplement or alternative to other methods. But formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas "the force of example" is underestimated.

Misunderstanding 3: The case study is most useful for generating hypotheses; that is, in the first stage of a total research process, whereas other methods are more suitable for hypotheses testing and theory building.

Answer: The case study is useful for both generating and testing of hypotheses but is not limited to these research activities alone.

Misunderstanding 4: The case study contains a bias toward verification, that is, a tendency to confirm the researcher's preconceived notions.

Answer: The case study contains no greater bias toward verification of the researcher's preconceived notions than other methods of inquiry. On the contrary, experience indicates that the case study contains a greater bias toward falsification of preconceived notions than toward verification.

Misunderstanding 5: It is often difficult to summarize and develop general propositions and theories on the basis of specific case studies.

Answer: It is correct that summarizing case studies is often difficult, especially as concerns case process. It is less correct as regards case outcomes. The problems in summarizing case studies, however, are due more often to the properties of the reality studied than to the case study as a research method. Often it is not desirable to summarize and generalize case studies. Good studies should be read as narratives in their entirety.

Delimitation

The research question of the present thesis is: *How can Daoism inform the work of people managing in the creative economy?* In order to answer that question, I would like to clarify how I define Daoism and the creative economy.

Daoism is a Chinese philosophical, religious, and spiritual approach to life. It is not *only* a philosophy or a religion or a spiritual approach. The early Daoists did not consider themselves Daoists; it was only later in history that they were classified as such (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

Initially, the Daoists were contemplators, thinkers and scepticists. Probably, the best way to describe early Daoism, would be as a philosophy. However, over time, an institutionalised religious tradition developed out of philosophical Daoism. The implication of this has been that Daoism today can be defined both as a philosophy, a religion and a spiritual approach to life.

For many Chinese, it is not necessarily a problem that Daoism can be understood as being both a philosophy and a religion. In many ways, Daoism is also best described as being both, as many of Daoism's tenets cannot be defined as being purely philosophical or religious. Most probably, it is just from a Western cultural perspective that there is a problem in Daoism being both a philosophy and a religion. In Western secular thinking, it is more appropriate if it is possible to delineate what is religion and what is philosophy. However, this has something to do with our understanding of what religious is and what philosophical is. In traditional Oriental thinking, it does not make sense to make such a sharp distinction, as matters of metaphysics inevitably require the student to contemplate on both philosophical and religious aspects. In fact, the whole distinction between what is philosophy and what is religious, would be seen as illusory from an Eastern perspective.

Thus, understanding what Daoism really is requires one to transcend the Western perception of what religion and philosophy is, and approach it from a perspective that does not make such a sharp distinction. The best way to understand Daoism, would be to study it in depth and get to a personal understanding of what it is. However, this would not be reasonable to require from the reader of this paper, so if we define Daoism as a *'holistic, spiritual and philosophical approach to life'* then that would be a reasonable explanation of it.

My research deals with Daoism and the relevance the philosophy could have in informing management in the creative economy sector. Having defined Daoism, it is also necessary to delineate what I understand by the creative economy.

The creative economy is the sector of the general economy that according to Caves (2000:23) consists of: *"those companies that supply goods and services that we broadly associate with cultural, artistic, or simply entertainment value"*. Companies that are primarily found within the following professions: advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, R&D, software, toys and games, TV and radio, and video games (Howkins, 2001).

Of course, creativity exists within all spheres of life, and not only in the creative economy. The creative economy is just that sector of the general economy, where creativity is absolutely core to the companies' functioning. Moreover, the real creative work that is found in companies outside the creative economy, is usually contained to research & development departments and not characteristic of the whole organisation. Contrarily, the creative work processes that are found in companies within the creative economy, are central to most of the organisations' activities. Thus, in this paper, the creative economy constitutes those companies within the latter group of companies.

Interviewees

I conducted ten interviews with people managing in creative organisations. Two of these interviews had two interviewees present, so that I interviewed twelve persons in total. Four of my interviewees had some knowledge of Daoism, which made it possible for them to relate to Daoist terminology. The other eight interviewees had little or no knowledge of the philosophy. Following is a brief presentation of the interviewees:

My interviewees had different backgrounds and professions in the creative industries: Four of them, Palle Freese, Claus Hansen, Ben Guerin and Robert Edick are involved with Hair Construction, which is a hair dressing academy that develops new hair styles and teaches students the techniques used to apply them in practice. The company is internationally renowned within its field and has won prizes for its innovative and untraditional approaches to teaching hairdressers.

Two of them, Karen and Ole Madsen, own a small Danish fashion design firm, where they are in charge of leading the company's design team. Karen and Ole are married and have run the company for over thirty years, designing fashion clothes for a primarily Scandinavian market.

Christian Stadil has managed creatives in different respects, not least in his work with Hummel, which is a Danish fashion sports brand. He has also studied Daoism and Buddhism and integrates his understanding of these philosophies in his professional life.

Clemens Thornquist is a teacher at the Swedish school of textiles in Borås, where he heads the school's design faculty. Clemens has worked in different creative contexts, among others with theatre artist Robert Wilson¹ and British designer Vivienne Westwood².

Esben Just is a Danish musician, who has been involved in music for many years. He plays the piano and has directed different orchestras. Esben develops new songs on his own and with his band: Skipper, Just & Frost. Besides playing music, he is also involved with helping companies work more creatively, with his insights from musical creativity.

Martin Spang Olsen is a Danish stuntman, actor, musician and writer, who studies and lectures on creativity in organisational settings. He has a great deal of experience in managing creativity, especially within music and acting. He works as a consultant to companies, who he teaches on creativity. Martin has studied Chinese philosophy and has a great deal of knowledge of Daoism, which he integrates in his understanding and work with creativity.

Ernest Holm Svendsen is educated in dramaturgy and works as a consultant to companies. Besides that, he is involved with the improvisational theatre, Café Kølbert and he also teaches creativity and innovation at the university of Aalborg.

Christian Madsbjerg works for Red Associates, which is a Danish consultancy that advises companies on radical innovation and business restructuring. He also worked with E-types, which is a Danish strategic ad agency that helps organisations frame their brands and corporate identities. He is now heading Red Associates's American branch, where he on a daily basis consults companies and advises them on creativity, innovation and management.

I wished to conduct all my interviews face to face, but due to geographical distance, I chose to do the interviews with Christian Madsbjerg and Clemens Thornquist on Skype. All other interviews were conducted face to face at the respondents' offices or in their homes.

The Interview

The interviews lasted between one and two hours and my approach to the interviews was to get to an understanding of how my interviewees understood creativity and the creative organisations in which they had experience with managing creative people. I wanted to try to get to an understanding of their deeper held assumptions about the nature of the creative

¹ Robert Wilson (b. 1941) is an American avant-garde stage director and playwright (source: Wikipedia).

² Vivienne Westwood (b. 1941) is a British fashion designer (source: Wikipedia).

organisation and the way they go about managing creatives on the background of their understandings of nature of creative work. Thus Kvale (1983:174 in Casell & Symon, 2004:11) defines the qualitative interview as 'an interview, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena'.

Casell & Symon (2004) continue to say that the goal of any qualitative research interview is to understand the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee, and to understand how and why they came to that perspective. The implication of this is that the qualitative research interview often has a low degree of structure and a preponderance of open questions. This was also the case with the interviews that I conducted.

Casell & Symon (2004) note that a key feature of the qualitative research interview is the nature of the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee: In a *quantitative* study, the interviewee is seen as a research subject and the researcher's concern is to obtain accurate information, untainted by relationship factors. In contrast, the *qualitative* researcher does not believe that there should be something as a relationship-free interview. The relationship is part of the research process, as the interviewee is seen as a participant in the research, actively shaping the course of the interview rather than passively responding to the interviewer's pre-set questions.

I took notice of Casell & Symon's (2004) advice for how to conduct qualitative interviews. According to them, the qualitative research guide is not based on a formal schedule of questions to be asked word-for-word in a set order. Instead the idea is to use an interview guide that lists topics, which the interviewer should attempt to cover in the course of the interview. I followed this advice, by constructing a guide that had questions framed around the topics I wanted to investigate. I had the topics formulated, to help me frame the questions, when posing them, but I allowed myself to reframe the questions, according to the situation in the interview.

I used an interview guide to help me carry out my interviews. The interview guide contained the topics that I wanted to cover with my interviewees and I used it when I found it necessary during the interviews. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured style, which is described by Lindlof & Taylor (2002:195) in the following way:

“...While a structured interview has a formalized, limited set questions, a semi-structured interview is flexible, allowing new questions to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says. Thus the interviewer in a semi-structured interview generally has a framework of themes to be explored...”

As Lindlof & Taylor (2002) note, the semi-structured style of interviewing, allowed me to let the interviews evolve naturally, which gave me insights into the world of the interviewees that I had not anticipated a priori. When I had finished an interview, I updated my interview guide, on the background of any new insights I had from that interview, so that I could meet my next interviewee with an improved understanding of the research field.

As mentioned, only few of my respondents had any knowledge of Daoism prior to being interviewed. However, I did not see that as a problem. Regarding the interviewees with knowledge of the philosophy, it was possible for me to ask them directly, if they thought that Daoist ideas could inform the work of people managing in a creative context. As an example the question could be framed: *“How do you think the concept of Dao can inform the work of the creative director?”*

With the interviewees that did not have any knowledge of Daoism, I would briefly explain the meaning of the Daoist concept and then ask the interviewee if that concept made any sense in his work with managing creatives.

I did not always have to explain the Daoist concept in question to the interviewee. Often the interviewee’s accounts of managing creatives gave me information that fitted Daoist views on leadership, without any prior description of Daoist philosophy on my behalf.

Data Analysis

When I had finished interviewing, I needed to analyse the data I had generated. I chose to transcribe all ten interviews, so that I could read them through and study the material. Transcribing the interviews also allowed me to reflect on my behaviour as an interviewer and the role I played in the development of the interview. This helped me to improve my interview technique for subsequent interviews. Thus the transcription of the interviews also proved to be a learning experience for myself as interviewer.

After having transcribed the interview, I read it through thoroughly, and looked for responses that corresponded with the knowledge I had generated from my study of Daoism. Thus, I marked those utterances from my interviewees that I recognised as reflecting a Daoist approach to management or understanding of creative work.

When I had transcribed all interviews and marked those statements from my interviewees that I found corresponded to a Daoist approach to understanding and managing work, I went on to establish different categories that each covered a particular Daoist concept or approach. It was then possible for me to distribute my findings into the categories I had created.

I chose to present five categories in this paper: Dao (Path), P'u (Beginner's mind), Yin & Yang (Balance), Wu-wei (Flow) and Zhí Jué (Intuition). As I worked with the data that I had found, both the empirical and the theoretical findings, I established more categories than the five presented in this paper. I would have liked to present all my findings but due to the restrictions that are put on the size of a master thesis, it was not possible for me to present more categories than the five mentioned.

Literature Review

Introduction

In my review of the literature, I did not find any written materials on managing in the creative economic setting with a Daoist perspective. Therefore, the present paper is an explorative one. There is plenty of literature on creativity, the creative organisation, the creative process and related subjects. There is also a great amount of literature on Daoism. So in this chapter, I first present literature on the creative organisation, where after, I present an overview of the philosophy of Daoism. I have chosen to keep the literature review's sections rather short, in order to leave more space for the discussion chapter.

In this section of the paper's literature review, a look will be taken at the creative organisation. The section is divided into the following subsections: creativity, the creative economy, the creative organisation, the creative process, and the creative director.

Although, the creative organisation in this paper is defined as belonging to a certain group of companies that work with artistic, cultural and entertainment products and experiences, it should be noted that creativity naturally exists in all spheres of life and in all kinds of organisations. Thus it is not the intention to claim that creativity solely belongs to what this paper calls the *creative economy*.

I have chosen to keep my literature review of the different sections on the creative organisation rather short, as I found it more important to use more space on the paper's chapters and sections that deal with Daoism. The subject of the creative organisation is rather well described and known within the academic context, whereas knowledge on Daoism seems to be less prevalent. As there is a limit to the size of this paper, I would rather shed light on those matters that are less well known and that is the reason for the relatively short representations of the literature on the creative organisation. Thus the reader might find the following sections rather short and a bit 'staccato'. However, I felt that this was necessary in order to leave more space for the other chapters of the thesis.

The Creative Economy

The context in which the creative organisation is found is the creative economy, also commonly described as the creative industries. Caves (2000:23) offers a rather broad definition of the creative industries:

“the creative industries are those companies that supply goods and services that we broadly associate with cultural, artistic, or simply entertainment value”.

Examples of these industries could be advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, R&D, software, toys and games, TV, radio and video games (Howkins, 2001).

Hesmondhalgh (2007) divides the industries into core industries, which are those that deal primarily with industrial production and circulation of texts and periphery industries, which are no less creative, but whose reproduction only uses semi-industrial or non-industrial methods. The core industries are broadcasting, film, the content aspect of the internet, music, print and electronic publishing, video and computer games, and advertising and marketing. Examples of periphery industries are theatre, and the making, exhibition and sale of works of art.

Caves (2000) lists seven economic properties that characterise companies within the creative industries:

The nobody knows principle: Demand uncertainty exists because the consumers' reactions to a product are neither known beforehand, nor easily understood afterward.

Art for art's sake: Workers care about originality, technical professional skill, harmony, etc. of the creative work and are willing to settle for lower wages than offered by 'humdrum' jobs.

Motley crew principle: For relatively complex creative products (e.g., films), the production requires diversely skilled inputs. Each skilled input must be present and perform at some minimum level to produce a valuable outcome.

Infinite variety: Products are differentiated by quality and uniqueness; each product is a distinct combination of inputs leading to infinite variety options (e.g. works of creative writing, whether poetry, novel, screenplays or otherwise).

A list/B list: Skills are vertically differentiated. Artists are ranked on their skills, originality,

and proficiency in creative processes and/or products. Small differences in skills and talent may yield huge differences in success.

Time flies: When coordinating complex projects with diversely skilled inputs, time is of the essence.

Ars longa: Some creative products have durability aspects that invoke copyright protection, allowing a creator or performer to collect rents.

The Creative Organisation

According to Davis and Scase (2000), what makes creative organisations distinctive is the interface between the creative and managerial functions and the variety of ways in which this is experienced in practice. The creative workplace can be a place of sharp conflict between 'commerce' and 'culture' or, most typically, a process of negotiation, mutual adjustment and compromise between managers and creators.

The creative function is represented by roles and occupations which are centrally concerned with indeterminate processes of creation which conceptualize, interpret, communicate and motivate production. At the heart of such activities are reflective, interactive and intuitive processes with an indeterminate outcome (Davis & Scase, 2000).

Davis & Scase (2000) continue to say that creative organisations involve complex divisions of labour designed to carry out certain essential functions. In large organisations they will normally be evident in a formal division of roles and responsibilities. In a small organisation they will overlap or combine in the work of an individual or a small group. In both larger and smaller organisations, it is possible to distinguish three distinct functions or activities: *production*, *creativity* and *control and coordination*.

Production concerns the execution of productive tasks such as operating a camera or sound recording equipment, editing film and video, using computer software to create an image, or copy editing a text. These tasks usually involve well-defined skills and technical competences and may be quite repetitious.

The *creative function* is represented by the roles and occupations, which are centrally concerned with the indeterminate processes of creation, which conceptualise, interpret, communicate and motivate production. At the heart of such activities are reflective, interactive and intuitive processes with an indeterminate outcome.

Control and coordination are the responsibilities of managers and administrators. Conceptually, these tasks are different from those of creation, although in small organisations they are likely to be combined. These are defined according to general aims of the organisation. The method is to use rational means and standard procedures to achieve predetermined goals such as levels of revenue, profit, production quotas, market share, audience ratings or range of services. Performance can be measured against these aims and defended in terms of rationalistic criteria.

Davis & Scase (2000) point out that the abovementioned three types of organisational function – production, creative and control and coordination – do not in themselves represent divisions of labour. Rather, they indicate a distribution of activities, which are essential to the creative organisation. What makes creative organisations distinctive is the interface between the creative and managerial functions and the variety of ways in which this is experienced in practice. Moreover they are different, because their outputs are performances, expressive works, ideas and symbols, rather than consumer goods or services. The tendency in creative organisations is for a substantial devolution of responsibilities as well as creative and ‘non-interventionist’ styles of managerial behaviour.

Bilton (2007) notes that constraints in the creative organisation, whether externally imposed or internally devised, provide a necessary framework for creative activity. These are the boundaries within which the creative effort can be channelled and against which the edges of possibility can be tested. These boundaries provide both a starting point and an end point for the creative work. At the start of a project, rules and deadlines provide a framework of possibilities around which random impulses and suggestions can be processed and organised. At the end of the project, these devices provide cut-off points and closure. Without this framework, the absolute freedom of creativity can be both intoxicating and paralysing for the creative employees. Beginning and ending the creative task, already perhaps the most difficult parts of any endeavour, would be almost impossible without boundaries.

According to Davis and Scase (2000) the following four organisational strategies are some of the most significant for maximising both creativity and control in the creative organisation.

The first strategy is one of division: it creates a line of *demarcation* between creatives and others through job titles, responsibilities and working practices which attempt to show clearly where creative work ends and management begins.

The second strategy is one of *incorporation*, in the absorption of key creative roles into the management structure itself. The process does not necessarily involve a change of titles but

the producer, editor, creative or A & R director actually becomes an executive, and is thereby engaged directly and formally in managerial tasks, which previously would have been carried out by a former creative or specialist manager.

The third strategy for resolving the paradoxical relationship between creativity and control is the *clustering* of organisations of different types. Instead of a line of demarcation within a unitary or vertically integrated organisation, the activities of managerial control and the creative work process are separated out into distinct units.

The fourth strategy represents the most radical way of resolving the organisational control/creativity paradox. It is a strategy of segregating the two elements, and is in fact the normal method of organising the 'most' creative cultural workers such as novelists, scriptwriters, fine artists, actors, composers and musicians.

The Creative Process

According to Rogers (1961), creativity is a process, which grows out of the uniqueness of the individuals and their responses to circumstances. It involves independence of judgement, freedom of expression, novelty of construction and insight, openness to experience, freedom from petty restraints and inhibitions, an aesthetic sensitivity and cognitive flexibility. However, from a managerial viewpoint, creative individuals also can be equated with individualism, eccentricity and even being unmanageable (Davis & Scase, 2000).

Thornquist (2005) builds upon that by saying that the creative process is an intuitive and gestaltive process. The management of the creative process therefore does not seem to be a traditional organisational problem but an intuitive and gestaltive one. It is less about organising a determined course of events, but more about the creative acts themselves that provide the course of development. Here is how Thornquist (2005:125) describes his idea about the nature of the creative process:

"...Form embodies its own direction and movement that is equally its fundamental idea. Thus, the problem would be that a normative and static approach neglects the necessary direction of the creative process, which cannot be controlled and discursively directed to aim at a certain form, holding such features as the process is asked to. This, however, does not mean that the process will create something other than what it is asked for, which probably is the most common fear regarding creative processes; it only means that the creative process

embodies a direction of its own – even though focused on a particular situation – and will hence suggest a similar direction once it reaches for its actualization, even though always slightly different from the one it set out from or was 'briefed with'; and it is this that is creation..."

According to Csikszentmihalyi (1996) the creative process can be described as taking five steps: *preparation, incubation, insight, evaluation and elaboration*.

The first is a period of *preparation*, becoming immersed, consciously or not, in a set of problematic issues that are interesting and arouse curiosity.

The second phase is a period of *incubation*, during which ideas churn around below the threshold of consciousness. It is during this phase that unusual connections are likely to be made. When we intend to solve a problem consciously, we process information in a linear logical fashion. But when ideas call to each other on their own, without leading them down a straight and narrow path, unexpected combinations may come into being.

The third component of the creative process is *insight*, sometimes called the “Aha!” moment, that is the instant when Archimedes¹ cried out ‘Eureka²!’ as he stepped into the bath, when the pieces of the puzzle fall together.

The fourth component is *evaluation*, when the person must decide whether the insight is valuable and worth pursuing. This is often the most emotionally trying part of the process, when one feels most uncertain and insecure.

The fifth and last component of the process is *elaboration*. It is probably the one that takes up the most time and involves the hardest work. This is what Edison³ was referring to when he said that creativity consists of 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration.

The five-stage view of the creative process may be too simplified, and it can be misleading, but it does offer a relatively valid and simple way to organise the complexities involved.

¹ Archimedes (287 BC – 212 BC) was a Greek mathematician, physicist, engineer, inventor, and astronomer. (source: Wikipedia)

² Eureka is an exclamation used as an interjection to celebrate a discovery. It comes from Ancient Greek meaning approximately "I have found it". (source: Wikipedia)

³ Thomas Alva Edison (1847 – 1931) was an American inventor, scientist and businessman who developed many devices that greatly influenced life around the world, including the phonograph, the motion picture camera, and a long-lasting, practical electric light bulb. (source: Wikipedia)

Davis and Scase (2000) list three essential features of the creative process: Autonomy, nonconformity and indeterminacy:

Autonomy, in that individuals occupy broadly defined work roles, which allow them to experiment and to exercise relatively independent judgement in how they execute their tasks and fulfil organisational objectives. As a result, processes of mutual adjustment whereby semi-autonomous individuals constantly regroup according to the project at hand will be a pronounced feature of creative organizations. Little emphasis will be given to hierarchical and formally prescribed reporting mechanisms, since it will be recognized that employees require autonomy in the extent to which they can determine the nature of their working if they are to achieve organisational aims and objectives.

Nonconformity in the way tasks are executed in the creative organisation. By contrast with the formally prescribed features of the bureaucratic organization that foster conformity and stifle innovation, creative work processes explicitly encourage employees to undertake their tasks and to pursue their goals in often different and unusual ways. There is a culture of nonconformity, often with an assumption that employees will behave in individualistic, non-standard, and even eccentric ways. Such an emphasis upon nonconformity is often expressed in organisations through vaguely defined patterns of work, relaxed dress codes and informal patterns of personal relations and communication. While the bureaucratic form of organisation encourages conformity and submerges the personality to organisational practices and procedures, creative work processes emphasise individuality and personal difference.

Indeterminacy refers to the extent to which employees not only enjoy relative independence or autonomy but how the achievement of organisational goals is translated into operational practices. While senior managers are responsible for setting overall strategic goals they are dependent upon an indeterminate creative work process for their interpretation and implementation. Indeed, in many work settings, the goals of the organisation will be shaped by the creative work process, with senior management in an almost entirely supportive or facilitative function. The creative work process, which depends upon the interactions of relatively autonomous employees, determines the management process rather than vice versa. Hence, organisational strategies may be described as emergent rather than top-down and directive as in bureaucratic forms.

Bilton (2007) adds that creative processes cannot function without some boundaries and constraints, whether these are internally generated (formal rules, genre conventions) or

externally imposed (the requirements of the creative brief¹). From this perspective, creative workers and their managers are engaged in an analogous process of negotiating and stretching the limits of what is possible or allowable, working within the rules of the game in order to reinvent them.

Bilton (2007) claims that the process of strategy formation in an adhocracy² is quite similar to what goes on in creative processes. Strategy formation in an adhocracy depends upon an ability to synthesise or make connections between apparently unconnected and intuitive individual decisions. This synthesis is immediate and ongoing, with participants recognising and capitalising on promising new directions to form an evolving strategy. The pattern is ad hoc, not post hoc. It is not enough to observe the strategic pattern with the benefit of hindsight – those inside the organisation must recognise and converge on new possibilities as and when they occur. Strategy in an adhocracy is a ‘synthetic’ process. The participants in the system share an ability to pursue their own agendas apparently at random, while at the same time recognising and responding to emergent patterns of relationships.

Bilton (2007) notes that when strategy formation in an adhocracy is compared with how the creative process works, several similarities emerge. First of all, what appears at first to be a random, spontaneous process actually works from a common set of values and assumptions. The creative ideas are generated within certain conceptual boundaries or constraints. In a business context, these boundaries derive from shared values, personalities or a shared organizational history – instead of being determined by an explicit organisational strategy, decisions are framed within an implicit organisational culture.

Finally, it is possible to identify two levels of intelligence at work within the system. At one level, the process of strategy formation is individualistic, intuitive and proceeds through a series of apparently random innovations. At the second level, the participants identify and build patterns from these random innovations and are influenced, perhaps even subconsciously, by the emerging trends in the organisation (Bilton, 2007).

Bilton (2007) continues to say that creativity in an adhocracy is a collective process, which requires a dualistic intelligence, deviating a little from the old pattern but also converging on

¹ Key project planning document that specifies what the project has to achieve, by what means, and within what timeframe.

² Organisational philosophy or style characterised by adaptive, creative, integrative behavior which (in contrast to a bureaucratic style) is flexible and non-permanent and which, therefore, can respond faster to a changing environment. (source: www.businessdictionary.com)

new patterns as they begin to take shape. Strategic thinking requires both divergent and convergent thinking, overlapping and alternating with each other, and reflects a multidimensional process-oriented model of creative thinking. The responsibility for strategy formation is more likely to be delegated through the organisation – the role of the leader is to orchestrate the process and help make connections rather than to dictate or control. The approach to organisational change is evolutionary instead of revolutionary, with the strategic direction continually being modified in a sequence of small steps and modifications. Strategy is not fixed, continually adapting to changing realities and inputs.

Bilton (2007) concludes by giving an example of the creative process in a theatre, where production depends on a delicate ecology of collaborations between individual talents. If a producer or a producing theatre attempts to assemble a creative team without understanding this ecology, or to launch a project without allowing it to emerge from a gradual accretion of ideas and contacts, the creative process is shoehorned into a linear, predictable pattern. Thus, theatre managers are aware of the need to provide space within the system within which unexpected encounters and unplanned outcomes can germinate.

The Creative Director

According to Davis & Scase (2000) the role of the creative director represents a jobs at the crucial interface between management and creative production. The creative director is rarely called a manager but his role is key in the system of managerial control and coordination. The occupant of this position experiences a tension between the commercial and instrumental logic of running a business and the generation of creative outcomes in a context of uncertainty. The paradox between creativity and control does not seem to could be resolved with a single set of organisational principles or a standard formula, so in practice, the paradox between creativity and control is a genuine one and what often looks like a solution from one perspective creates a new set of problems from another.

Bilton (2007) states that managers of creative teams face two principal challenges. First they must sustain diversity and flexibility within the team, overcoming a tendency towards conformity and complacency. The second challenge is to avoid over-specialisation and fragmentation, ensuring that the parts do not distract from the whole and that the team members retain a balance between specialist expertise and a generalist understanding.

According to Bilton (2007) in a systems view of creativity¹, the functions of management and creativity converge. Both are essentially concerned with establishing connections between ideas (novelty) and outcomes (value), by building alliances between individual talents, experiences, technologies and people.

Bilton (2007) concludes that by moving from a person-centred view of creativity² to a systems view of creativity, the role of the manager within the organisation changes. The person-centred view of creativity assumes that innovation emerges suddenly and spontaneously and leads managers to regard creativity as an issue for recruitment and training rather than organisational design.

Daoism

Having looked at the creative organisation, I will in the following sections of the literature review present the Chinese philosophy, Daoism.

The Dao De Jing is the basic text of Daoism. It consists of 81 chapters and slightly more than 5000 characters. The author of the text is reputedly, Laozi (b. 604 BC), who is the father of Daoism. The story holds that Laozi was the keeper of the imperial archives in China. He became saddened by his country's refusal to follow the path of virtue, so he decided at the age of eighty to leave China. Before he made it out of the country, a boarder guard stopped him and refused to let him pass, before he had left a written legacy of his wisdom. Laozi then wrote the Dao De Jing (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

According to Craig (2007) Daoism is both a philosophical and religious tradition. Philosophical Daoism, as opposed to religious Daoism, draws on the thinking generally attributed to Laozi, especially as it is found in the Dao De Jing, and the philosophy and anecdotes of Zhuangzi, as these are found in what are called 'The Inner Chapters.'

The philosophical and religious components of Daoism are separate spheres. Philosophical Daoism focuses on questions of language, guidance, reality, moral thought and knowledge, whereas religious Daoism is a diverse set of traditions that makes use of rites, priests, and

¹ In a system's view of creativity, creativity results from the interaction of a system composed of three elements: a culture that contains symbolic rules, a person who brings novelty into the symbolic domain, and a field of experts who recognise and validate the innovation. (source: Csikszentmihalyi, 1996:6)

² In a person-centred view of creativity, the phenomenon of creativity is understood as being something that has to do with the individual. Oppositely, in a system's view of creativity, creativity is viewed as being a phenomenon that should be understood by understanding not only the creative individual but also the world outside him.

temples and has strong connections with traditional Chinese nature religion and medical practices. It is not a codified and centralised religious system but rather a loose assemblage of beliefs and practices that can vary from place to place (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

Prince (2007) states that Daoism in the west tends to be regarded as something exotic, with little to say about the real world of everyday experience. This impression has not been helped by the association it had with the hippy counter-culture of the 1960s, where it was connected with rock music, poetry and marijuana. Despite all the mystical associations that many Westerners attribute to it, Daoism is deeply practical in orientation, approach and intention.

Daoism makes no strong metaphysical claims, but it embodies an approach rooted in practice and direct experience. In its pure form, it is neither a religion nor a systematic philosophy but more a 'way of liberation' that encourages an apprehension of the world as it actually is by radically challenging all conventions (Prince, 2007).

The essential message of Daoism is that the universe is governed by a set of natural and unalterable laws, which manifest themselves as a flow of continuous change. This natural order and flow is referred to as the Dao. If humans recognise and align themselves with these laws, it becomes possible to achieve harmony with the forces inherent in the universe (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

Prince (2007) writes that philosophy and religion generally rest in and on convention, and when existing convention is challenged, they inevitably seek to replace it with another of their own. Daoism does not trouble over maintaining distinctiveness and it is perfectly possible to be a Daoist in practice and a Christian, atheist or scientist without any contradiction. What Daoism is opposed to, is dogmatism.

By understanding nature, Daoists believe that humans can come to a better understanding of themselves and the organisations in which they interact. In the following extract, it is explained by Toropov & Hansen, (2002:68):

"...Nature has an awesome richness and complexity of process that seems to guide everything in balance. Grass does not need lectures to grow properly; rivers do not have to be bullied into finding the sea. Humans are an integral part of this nature, not a separate agent to exploit or act on it. The Daoist ideal of human behaviour is one in which forceful striving, artificiality, social posturing, and short-sighted manipulation of one's environment have passed away. In the place of these things, there is a relaxed acceptance of our nature and our

unity with it. This inspires a view of human action as an elegant expression of natural spontaneity..."

Thus in Daoism, the ideal state of human existence is to live in complete harmony with the forces of nature. Daoists believe that everything in the world has a natural state, so they strive to attain a state of complete spontaneity in order to become what nature intended them to be. As a consequence, life should become exceedingly simple; and such things as life and death, good health and illnesses are accepted as part of the cycle of nature, which ceaselessly makes and unmakes the world. Unlike the rest of the universe, however, man must try to bring his existence into conformity with the forces of nature. He can do this best by first observing the ever-changing world around him and then 'fatalistically' abstaining from struggling against powers beyond his control (Britannica, 2010).

The Daoists assume a unified and coherent universe and believe that nature is guided by immanent patterns and forces, known as the *Dao* (see Dao below) rather than by any omnipotent external creator. Human beings should see themselves as constituent members of the natural universe, not as its masters or members of it with privileges. Thus the natural way of the universe, Dao, should also be the way of human existence and human relations (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

Daoism is a non-dualistic philosophy in the sense that it does not offer a supernatural explanation of natural phenomena. Daoists admire natural existence itself and seek guidance from the way nature works. The religious aspect of Daoism lies in focus on and absorption in what is done. This approach to life is often confused with a Western conception of religiosity but Daoists do not address their sensations of being at one with nature, as a proof of any religious being (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

For the Daoists, being aware of life's essential unity and learning to work with its natural flow and order enables people to attain a state of being that is more free and independent and at the same time fully connected to the emergence of the universe, which in Daoism is called being at one with the Dao. From a Daoist viewpoint this represents the ultimate stage of human existence (Kardash, 1998).

In traditional Daoist cosmology, philosophy and religion are closely connected, but conventional standards of ethics, moral humbug and sophistication are mocked and meaningless rituals and magic are repudiated. Daoism is a philosophy of the art of living and

relationships. It deals with the whole of nature and man's place in it. It is a philosophy of the rhythm of life and the simplicity of mind and spirit together with the absence of calculated activity, as expressed in the doctrine of *wu-wei* (see *wu-wei* below), and the presence of spontaneity, balance and harmony. It is not a world-renouncing philosophy, but a withdrawal from all that is artificial, sophisticated and worthless. Daoists believe in a natural unfolding of behaviour through a clarity of perception and awareness which watches but does not pre-judge or indulge in criticism and analysis, which the Daoists believe will only cause separation between the perceiver and the thing perceived (Cooper, 1981).

In Daoism it is believed that all that is living tends to move towards harmony and balance because it is in its nature to do so. From a Daoist viewpoint, humans, have the choice of consciously aligning themselves with the emergence of life or remaining in ignorance and resisting the natural order of the Dao. To choose the latter means remaining disconnected from their own personal processes, their own Dao, as well as the emergence of life on a grander scale (Kardash, 1998). For the Daoists, every moment is a recreation of the creative process that was started with the Big Bang. The idea is to accept this and align oneself with the grand emerging creative process, which is evolution (Cheng, 1994).

When Daoists talk about change or emergence, it is important to realise that it is not seen as occurring as a consequence of some force, but rather as a tendency, which is innate in all things and situations. The movements of the Dao are not forced upon it, but occur naturally and spontaneously. Spontaneity is the Dao's principle of action, and Daoists suggest that human conduct should be based on the principle of Dao. So, acting in harmony with nature means for the Daoists acting spontaneously according to one's true nature. It means trusting one's intuitive intelligence, which they believe is innate in the human mind, just as the laws of change are innate in the nature surrounding humans (Capra, 1982). Here is how Capra (1982:126) explains it:

"...When we talk about the Daoist concept of change, it is important to realize that this change is not seen as occurring as a consequence of some force, but rather as a tendency which is innate in all things and situations. The movements of the Dao are not forced upon it, but occur naturally and spontaneously. Spontaneity is the Dao's principle of action, and since human conduct should be modelled on the operation of the Dao, spontaneity should also be characteristic of all human actions. Acting in harmony with nature thus means for the Daoists acting spontaneously and according to one's true nature. It means trusting one's

intuitive intelligence, which is innate in the human mind just as the laws of change are innate in all things around us..”

The Daoist thus tries to act out of his intuitive wisdom, spontaneously and in harmony with his environment. He does not force himself, or anything around him, but merely adapts his actions to the movements of his inner feeling of the Dao. The Daoists believe that those who follow the natural order, flow with the Dao. This way of acting is called wu-wei, which literally means ‘non-action’ and which translates as ‘refraining from activity contrary to nature’ (Capra, 1982).

Toropov & Hansen (2002:134) explain that the expression “going with the flow”, if stripped of its stereotyped layer of aimless passivity, offers an interesting parallel with the Daoist ideal of inspired use of the guiding forces of nature. According to them a general attitude of respect for and conformity with nature can cultivate peoples’ own ‘Dao’ of discovery and construction. This is how they explain it:

“...When we follow a natural pathway between two mountains, we reach our destination easily. When we set our sails to take full advantage of the prevailing winds, we cross the lake quickly. When we reach the point where we know that our work for the day is complete, we go to bed. By remaining open to the natural ‘next thing to do’, we don’t struggle to follow the way. We unite with it...”

The Daoist philosopher Laozi believed that people should have water-like personalities, which means to maintain a low profile and to be humble and modest but very helpful to others. Laozi believed that these qualities are essential to leaders who want to influence others. In Laozi’s view, those who are humble and modest do not only exist in good harmony with other people; they are also effective leaders. He believed that intergroup harmony and peace are more likely for people who followed his advice than for those people who are too competitive, controlling, and aggressive (Lee, 2003).

According to Wah (2003) a wise leader should possess the qualities of water, which effortlessly nourishes everything without distinction and judgment. A wise leader pays careful attention to everyone surrounding him without being possessive or coercive. In this sense, a

good leader is almost invisible, playing the role of a facilitator – facilitating the peoples' processes and not his own.

In the following, there will be an introduction to some of Daoism's central concepts. Some of the concepts are similar. This is because, they all relate to what is core in Daoism, namely Dao. The Daoist concepts are listed alphabetically below and written in Pinyin which is romanised Mandarin Chinese with the English translation in brackets.

Dao (Path)

According to Capra (1972) in its original sense, Dao is the ultimate and undefinable reality. Dao is the universal process in which all things are involved and manifests itself in a world that is in a process of continuous flow and change.

Stensrud (1979) build on that by calling Dao the flowing and ever-changing reality. The Dao is seen as a great number of universal processes in which all things are involved. The Daoists say that one should not try to resist the flow of the Dao, but try to adapt one's actions to it. The Daoists thus try to become capable of 'flowing' 'in the current of the Dao'.

Capra (1972) writes that the Daoists believe that flow and change are essential features of nature and that there are constant patterns in these changes that man can observe. The Daoists recognise these patterns and synchronise their actions to them. By doing so, they become 'one with the Dao' and in harmony with nature's processes.

According to the Daoists, Dao is something that people can align themselves with, by sensing and intuiting the 'flow of the Dao'. Thus Dao exists only as an existential experience. It is people's sensation of being in the present moment. The Daoists believe that it can be experienced by turning inward and realising one's true nature and experiencing oneself as being part of a larger gestalt¹. The flow of the Dao is something that humans can tap into. It is not possible to overcome, subvert or alter the Dao. The idea lies in flowing with the Dao by understanding how it works (Stensrud, 1979).

Because of water's characteristic flow, it is often used to describe the function of Dao. This is so because water finds and follows a path allowing it to flow down that creates a channel or path for itself in doing so. When it meets resistance, it conforms to the obstacle and gradually,

¹ The expression 'gestalt' means a collection of physical, biological, psychological or symbolic entities that creates a unified concept, configuration or pattern which is greater than the sum of its parts (of a character, personality, or being) (source: Wiktionary).

patiently, erodes and incorporates it into its path. Thus Dao is movement and emergence that tries to find the path of least resistance on its way forward. Here is how Toropov & Hansen (2002:133) describe how the metaphor of water is helpful in understanding the concept of Dao:

"...Water is frequently used as a symbol of how we simultaneously follow and make Dao: It finds and follows a path allowing it to flow down and creates a channel or path for itself in doing so. When it meets resistance, it conforms to the obstacle and gradually, patiently, erodes and incorporates it into its path..."

Dao also means path. For Laozi, it signifies not just any path, but the specific path to living in concordance with the unity of the universe. According to Laozi, it is the nature of nature to issue from an inextricable relationship of every part to the whole. To live life in accord with the Dao is to be in harmony with all others, with the environment and with one's self. It is to live in synchronicity with processes, and to be completely authentic, sincere, natural and innocent (Dale, 2002).

Here Toropov & Hansen (2002:135) point at what it means to understand and work with Dao:

"...In being at one with Dao, one seems to experience a unity of actor and action; this 'practice' is a way of losing oneself, much as one might in meditation, in contemplation, or even in trance. The accuracy and efficiency of our own actions sometimes mystifies us, when in this state. We do not understand how we did it, and we certainly cannot explain it to others..."

To harmonise with the Dao, means yielding to the process of life, or whatever task one is doing. It means to believe in oneself and life. Dao is the process of life in general or the process of the particular task one is involved in. Acting in accordance with the Dao means enlarging one's focus from oneself to involve the work one is dealing with and the people who are part of that particular work process (Cheng, 1994).

Daoists believe that Dao is something that should be sensed and not understood. By trying to grasp what Dao is with the intellect, one will not succeed, as the Dao is something that should

be experienced with the totality of one's person; not only the mind. In Zen Buddhism they say that you can use you a finger to point to the moon, but when you have seen the moon, you should forget about the finger and experience the moon with your whole being. So the Daoists accept that you use language to help explain what the Dao is; but once the Dao has been experienced, one should let go of theorising and intellectualising by emptying his mind of inner dialogue, concepts and language, so that one can live the Dao, instead of being stuck in his minds trying to understand it analytically (Watts, 1975).

The vibe sensed by jazz musicians also serves as a metaphor for the Dao. So Hatch (1999:77) say:

"...when jazz musicians jam, they sense the vibe. They sense it with their body. It is not their intellectual and analytical abilities that help them follow the flow of the music but the sensation of a vibe in the music..."

P'u (Beginner's mind)

One of Daoism's basic principles is *P'u*, which means uncut wood or uncarved block. The essence of *P'u* is that things in their original simplicity contain their own natural power, power that is easily spoiled and lost when that simplicity is changed. This principle applies not only to things, but to people as well. (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

According to the Daoists, one needs to discard arrogance and complexity, so that one will discover a more simple and childlike core. Along with that comes the ability to do things spontaneously and have them work, however odd that may appear to others at times (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

To understand *P'u*, the metaphor of the uncarved block is helpful. One can imagine being an accomplished woodworker looking at a block of uncarved wood, knowing that there is uncreated potential in it. As an uncarved block, it can be anything – the possibilities are infinite. *P'u* means that things and people in their original nature and simplicity contain their own natural power (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

Daoists believe that all we experience and all we are taught "carve" away pieces of our original simplicity. Daoists try to regain that early sense of unlimited possibility that children

have by trying to "unlearn" things until everything becomes a new experience (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

Kraemer (2006) adds that the beginner's mind is an empty mind, not full of preconceived notions and prejudices and thus ready to experience the world. P'u is a symbol for a state of pure potential and perception.

According to Suzuki (2001) the beginner's mind is characterised by being empty and free of the habits of the expert. It is ready to accept, ready to doubt and it is open to any possibility. Moreover, such a mind is not fixed to the repetitive patterns of the self-centred consciousness, but it rather arises spontaneously and naturally from the actual circumstances of the present moment. The possessor of a beginner's mind demonstrates buoyancy, vigour, straightforwardness and simplicity.

Kraemer (2006) adds that P'u is one's natural identity – the natural instinct one possesses before language, machinations, stress, exploitation, uncertainty and socialisation. It is the presence one sense when one takes a deep relaxed breath. It is *not* putting on airs or pretending to be something one is not. In the state of P'u, there is no right or wrong, beautiful or ugly. There is only pure experience, or awareness free from learned labels and definitions.

Wu-wei (Flow)

Kardash (1998) defines wu-wei as behaviour that arises from a sense of oneself as connected to others and to one's environment. It is action that is spontaneous and effortless. At the same time it is not to be considered inertia, laziness, or mere passivity. Rather, it is the experience of going with the grain or swimming with the current. The expression, '*going with the flow*' is a good explanation of the principle.

Kardash (1998) continues to say that the principle of wu-wei contains certain implications. Daoists believe that one must be quiet and watchful, learning to listen to both one's own inner voice and to the voices of one's environment in a non-interfering, receptive manner. In this way one also learn to rely on more than just one's intellect and logical mind to gather and assess information. One develop and trust one's intuition as a direct connection to the Dao. The intelligence of one's whole body is used, not only the brain. And one learn through one's own experience. All of this allows one to respond readily to the needs of the environment. And just as the Dao functions in a manner to promote harmony and balance, one's own actions, performed in the spirit of wu-wei, produce the same result.

Porter (2003) defines wu-wei as effortless action that results from combining one's inner nature (see P'u) with the natural laws operating around oneself. In short it is being in harmony with the Dao. It is going with the spontaneous flow of Dao with the absence of human wilful efforts. The prerequisite for this is to feel the Dao. One cannot harmonise with Dao if one does not feel it or are aware of its presence.

Porter (2003) continues to say that if acceptance is the central tenet of the Dao, then wu-wei is the cardinal tenet. Wu-wei is perhaps one of the most misunderstood of all of the concepts in Daoism. Misunderstood mostly because it is diametrically opposed to most modern Western thoughts of action, competition, assertiveness, and interference in the flow of events.

Wu-wei is not non-action but effortless action. It is action without doing, causing or making. It is action without meddlesome, contentious or egotistical exertion. Wu-wei is effortless action that results from combining one's inner nature (P'u) with the natural laws operating around one. It is harmonious action and therefore effortless. It is going with the spontaneous flow of Dao with the absence of human wilful efforts. The prerequisite to this is to feel the Dao. You cannot harmonise with the Dao if you don't feel it or are not aware of its presence (Porter, 2003).

Porter (2003) calls wu-wei one of the most misunderstood of all the concepts of Daoism. 'Nonaction or inaction' are perhaps the best translations of wu-wei. Nonaction or inaction is almost a heretical thought in western society. However true wu-wei is the most efficient possible action, the most spontaneous possible action and often the most creative action. It is not the life of a sloth or laziness, but one in which the least possible effort yields the most effective and productive outcome. Actions come from a more intuitive, spontaneous, and creative area of mind. A close analogy would be when an athlete is 'in the zone, where the actions are not coming from the thinking or calculating area of the mind.

Thornquist (2005) defines wu wei as doing nothing with a purpose. It is not non-action. It is a spontaneous and natural way of acting. It implies action that is so simple, rudimentary and spontaneous that it loses its expression as an action associated with intention. The idea with wu-wei is that the action itself is the goal of action.

Thornquist (2005) continues to say that wu-wei means being relaxed towards life. Once one has achieved the spontaneity of Dao, actions will occur that will take even oneself by surprise. However, the actionless action that is wu wei, is the result of long and complete devotion to 'a way of doing things'. Wu-wei is attained when one has become so skilled at one's craft that one's actions feel as they arise by themselves.

The principle of wu-wei does not mean that one should do nothing. It means not to take action that goes against nature. Metaphorically speaking it means not to fight against the current. Instead one should flow with it. The key is to be able to attune to the nature of what one is doing, instead of putting effort into making something happen and to become aware of what is really occurring. One should look for forces that are at work and uncover tendencies already built into the particular situation. Thus one should not fight against the natural forces. Wu-wei depends on a deep faith and trust in natural instincts (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

According to Watts (1975:75), wu-wei means:

"...going with the grain, rolling with the punch, swimming with the current, trimming the sails to the wind and taking the tide at its flood..."

Yin & Yang (Balance)

Chinese philosophy has always emphasised the complementary nature of the intuitive and the rational and has represented them by the pair of *yin* and *yang*. The symbolism of Yin and yang are of ancient derivation; they reflect the principle that each perceived opposite contains some element of its contrary (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

One of the Daoists insights was the realisation that transformation and change are essential features of nature. The Daoists saw all changes in nature as manifestations of the dynamic interplay between the polar opposites yin and yang, and thus they came to believe that any pair of opposites constitutes a polar relationship where each of the two poles is dynamically linked to the other (Capra, 1982 in Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

Yin refers to characteristics of softness, passivity, femininity, darkness, the valley, and the negative, nonbeing. Yang refers to characteristics such as hardness, masculinity, brightness, the mountain, activity and being (Simpkins & Simpkins, 1999).

In the realm of thought, yin is the complex, female, intuitive mind. Yang is the clear and rational male intellect. Yin is the quiet, contemplative personality. Yang is the strong and creative personality (Capra, 1972).

The implication of understanding nature through yin and yang is that any experience must be seen not only in isolation, but also as yielding to another experience or phenomenon. For example, a mountain on which the sun is shining does not remain with one side dark and the

other light all day long. Instead, there is a gradual transformation over the course of the day, and eventually the sunny side comes to be the shady side. All things are in transition. Nothing endures, and yet everything continues (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

Toropov & Hansen (2002) continue to say that nature is in a constant flux as it unfolds and grows, then shrinks and declines. All living things have their cycle from creation to destruction: they are born, they live and they die. Within this life cycle there is a continual interplay of yin and yang, activity and inactivity, tension and relaxation, being and nonbeing. According to the Daoists, this life cycle should be allowed to evolve naturally and fully. Life becomes a struggle when people try to impose their personal will on inner nature; when they try to disrupt the natural cycles. The idea is to learn to let things be, so that people live as nature intended.

One of the most prominent polarities in life is the one between the male and female sides of human nature. Just as the polarity of good and bad, and life and death, people tend to feel uncomfortable with the male – female polarity in themselves. Because of this, they tend to bring one of either side into prominence. In the West, the male side has traditionally been favoured to the female side. So instead of acknowledging that the personality of every man and every woman is the result of an interplay between female and male elements, an order has been established, where all men are supposed to be masculine and all women feminine. This attitude has resulted in an over-emphasis of yang (male) aspects of human nature. These are aspects such as activity, rational thinking, competition, aggressiveness etc.. The yin (female) aspects, such as emotion, intuition, and spirituality have contrarily been suppressed in Western culture (Capra, 1972).

The following quote from Pressman and Joudry (2000:56) illustrate quite well, how yin and yang complement each other:

“...Yang is the initiating impulse, which divides and delineates; yin is the responsive impulse, which nurtures and reunites. Without yang nothing would come into being; without yin all that comes into being would die. Yang is mental activity in its forceful aspect, yin the imaginative and poetic, exalting the merely mental to the beautiful. Yang goes ahead with things, yin contains things within herself and knows their nature without effort. Yang does, yin is. Yang in his givingness bestows the gifts; yin in her being receives, preserves, enhances, and redistributes them. Yang constructs, yin instructs; yang implements, yin complements; yang is strength, yin endurance; yang is knowledge, yin the mystery that reveals itself and

becomes knowledge. Yang is the discoverer, yin lures toward greater discovery. Yang is the self-developer, inspired by yin, the self-dedicator, for her development and his dedication. Yang is the lover, and yin is therefore beloved; yin is the beloved and the source of love. Yang is will and yin is wisdom, and one without the other is neither, and together they are joy. Yang is as the day, turning into night, and yin the night preceding the day; the one is the force that drives the waves of the ocean forward, the other the force that draws them back so that they may go forward again..."

Zhí Jué (Intuition)

Daoism is interested in intuitive wisdom, rather than in rational knowledge. Daoists believe that rational thinking is limited and relative, so while they acknowledge the existence and necessity of rationalism, Daoists lean towards meeting and understanding the world intuitively (Capra, 1972).

According to Thornquist (2005) Western societies generally regard an intellectual mind to be achieved through devotion to analytical training. In Daoism, on the other hand, there is a focus on an intuitive world making; an intuitive enactment of reality. For the Daoists, the intuitive approach to the world is more difficult to attain, as it is suppressed by a societal focus on analytical training and intellectual strive.

According to Capra (1972) it is difficult for us constantly to be aware of the limitations and relativity of conceptual knowledge. Because our representation of reality is so much easier to understand than reality itself, we tend to confuse them and take our concepts and symbols for reality. The Daoists illustrate this with the following story:

"...Fishing baskets are employed to catch fish; but when the fish are got, the men forget the baskets; snares are employed to catch hares; but when the hares are got, men forget the snares. Words are employed to convey ideas; but when the ideas are grasped, men forget the words..." (Capra, 1972:36)

According to Cheng (1994), Daoists tend to regard language as a problem, as it mediates meaning with symbols, so Daoists prefer direct experience as the way of understanding reality. In Daoist thinking, understanding reality through language makes people 'eat the

menu rather than the meal'. Thus the Daoists believe that intuition is the best way to get to know the world. Understanding the world through theory can be helpful for certain purposes, but the belief is that it distances humans from nature. In order to feel and understand the totality of nature, one has to exercise the technique of intuition, as it from the Daoist perspective is the method that gets people closest to experiencing reality as it is.

Capra (1972) builds on Cheng's argument by saying that the Daoists do not believe in the validity of language as a means for understanding the world. Thus they say that 'A dog is not reckoned good because he barks well, and a man is not reckoned wise because he speaks skilfully'. In Daoism a direct and intuitive experience of nature is the way to understand and live reality (Capra, 1972).

Here Kardash (1998) sums up the role of intuition in Daoist philosophy:

"...We develop and trust our intuition as our direction connection to the Dao. We heed the intelligence of our whole body, not only our brain. And we learn through our environment, which of course includes ourselves. And just as the Dao functions in a manner to promote harmony and balance, our own actions, performed in the spirit of wu-wei, produce the same result.. From a Daoist point of view, it is our cherished belief – that we exist as separate beings, that we can exercise a wilful control over all situations, and that our role is to conquer our environment – that lead to a state of disharmony and imbalance..."

Discussion

Introduction

The aim of the discussion is to shed light on the research question: How can Daoism inform the work of people managing in the creative economy? Revolving around that question, I will try to answer the research question by integrating the knowledge of Daoism and the creative organisation that was presented in the literature review, with the data that I generated by conducting interviews with people managing creative people. Besides using the findings presented in the literature review and the ones generated from the interviews, I will also use relevant literature from other domains than those treated in the literature review, where I find it helpful in my attempt to answer the research question.

First, I will on a more general level discuss the appropriateness of Daoism as a source of inspiration for people managing in the creative economy. Thereafter, I will look more closely at the Daoist concepts that were presented in the literature review and discuss their significance in informing the work of the creative director.

Daoism

According to Prince (2005) our Western conception of leadership is rooted in a cultural framework, theologically in its origin, which emphasises hierarchy, control, direction and separation. Opposed to this view, is Daoism, which treats leadership, as a fluid set of interrelations coordinated with natural order as it is, with an emphasis on co-ordination and connection with the environment rather than a modification of the environment in line with an intellectual idea of what we want it to be.

Prince (2005) argues that in a Western management context, leadership is typically about shaping and controlling the environment, whereas the Daoist approach is more about engagement, understanding and coordination. The presupposition in Western thought is that the natural and social order must be imposed and maintained from 'above' with the means of active intervention and 'leading from the front'.

In the Daoist view, leadership and the use of power that comes with it is seen as a fluid set of interrelations co-ordinated with and within a natural order that is outside people's immediate

control but of which they are an intimate part. Where in the West, leadership, is more active and about shaping control, for the Daoists it is about engagement and accommodation with circumstances *as they are*. Where a Western approach to leadership is often founded on codes, prescriptions and specifications, the Daoist approach is much more of a located and responsive social skill developed through doing rather than thinking – an emphasis on internal knowing and experience rather than on external instruction (Prince, 2007).

Leadership in the West is treated as a noun, a reified object that can be dissected and examined, as it was any other object, such as a table. The objectification of the concept of leadership leads to a simplification of the concept. The implication of the Western understanding of leadership is to try to establish some codified principle that can be written down for transmission to the relatively passive ‘learner’ (Prince, 2005).

Wheatley (2006) argues that contemporary organisations essentially are Newtonian and mechanistic in nature. Moreover approaches to decision-making and judgement are often linear and reductionist (Cooksey and Gates, 1994). Consequently, leaders are expected to be objective and rational, devoid of emotion, non-rationality and irrationality (Mintzberg, 1994). Where management in a Western context has its roots in a rational foundation, such as Taylorism, Daoism acknowledges the importance of humans’ feelings and emotions. So where a manager in a Western work context normally has to stick to principles of rationalism, discarding the relevance of feelings and emotions in the work place, the Daoists on the other hand, argue that one should use one’s emotional intelligence, to lead in the organisation.

According to Cheng (1994) management thinking rooted in modernity seeks to learn what the process of a work task is only to the extent that it can visibly measure it and control it through technology, laws, rewards and coercion for the sake of profit. Daoists on the other hand ‘surf’ the creative work process. Surfing is a sport, which requires a total letting go to the moment, to intuitive knowing and the ability to trust in the process. For the Daoist, surfing the spirals of nature’s creative process is a value in itself, and the results that emerge from the process are perceived merely as events in the creative process of the whole universe. Daoists accept what happens, as they believe that forcing and struggling is inharmonious with the Dao.

For the Western mind, the abovementioned paragraph on Daoism’s perspective of the creative work process could be interpreted as fatalism. However, that is not the way it should be understood. For the Daoist, ‘surfing the creative process’, means trusting one’s intuition completely, thus acting in accordance with one’s natural self. That is not to be understood as fatalism, but more as realising one’s potential (Cheng, 1994).

Capra (1972) adds that the thinking of Descartes has led people in Western culture to equate their identity with their minds instead of their whole organisms. Because of this, most people are aware of themselves as isolated egos that exist 'inside' their bodies. The mind has been separated from the body and given the futile task of controlling it, thus causing a conflict between the conscious will and the involuntary instincts.

Furthermore, each individual has been split up into a larger number of separate compartments, according to his or her activities, talents, feelings, beliefs etc., which are engaged in endless conflicts that generate continuous metaphysical confusion. This inner fragmentation mirrors a view of the world outside which is then seen as a multitude of separate objects and event. The result of this is an alienation from nature and other people (Capra, 1972).

Capra (1972) argues that Descartes' mechanistic worldview has been beneficial and detrimental at the same time. Cartesian thinking has been successful in the development of physics and technology, but has had adverse effects when it comes to our understanding of and interaction with nature and people.

According to Wheatley (2006) the effort to maintain the illusion that organisations are rational and orderly is costly. It consumes much energy and undermines self-acceptance when managers hold themselves to standards of prescience that are not realistic.

Although organisational structures are based on human relationships, managers and other organisational actors have often tried to remove emotions from these relationships, suggesting that emotions are inappropriate to the workplace because they interfere with rational decision-making (Wheatley, 2006).

Daoism recognises that it is not always possible to find a place to 'stand firm' in the organisation. Part of life is uncertainty and contingency, and the dream of eliminating them by rational means and by conquering and controlling nature is seen as futile. However, nature lies beyond people's attempts at prediction, manipulation and control. Therefore, Daoists advice people to feel comfortable with the reality of accepting a lack of control as part of the 'nature of nature' (Shafy & Sadler-Smith, 2006).

The Daoist ontology is similar to the ontology of Bergson¹. Bergson conceives of reality as an

¹ Henri-Louis Bergson (1859 – 1941) was a major French philosopher, influential especially in the first half of the 20th century. Bergson convinced people through his writing that immediate experience and intuition were as important as rational and scientific thinking for understanding reality.

élan vital (a vital impetus), whose essence is evolution and development. The élan vital is a growing and flowing process, not a static existence. According to him, logic, science, intellect and mechanism cannot fathom the depths of the élan vital, which is the basis of all life. There is change and evolution everywhere. Nothing merely is. Everything that exists is in a flux of becoming. It is moving and growing and never rests. People's intellects work mechanistically and tries to construct rigid rules and systems that cannot accommodate the rolling evolution of nature and reality. According to Bergson, we cannot get immutable things in the universe, as there is nothing that endures in the 'river of life' (Linstead & Mallerkey, 2003).

According to Graham (2001:6 in Thornquist, 2005:238):

“man has stunted and maimed his spontaneous aptitude by the habit of distinguishing alternative, while all other things move spontaneously on the course proper to them”.

The idea is that the things that move spontaneously on the course proper to them, follow the Dao. They instinctively follow their way. Humans are aware of themselves and that they have a choice in what way to take. Thus, Graham's idea is that by having that choice, it stunts and maims man's spontaneous aptitude.

The Daoist philosophers Laozi and Zhuangzi believed that the best way to govern a country was through least possible interference from the leaders. In the creative organisation, the Daoist leader believes that the harder one pushes, the greater the system pushes back. Sometimes positive action may not necessarily yield a positive result. Not all outcomes are predictable. At times, it is better for the leader not to interrupt the creative employees' work processes and let things unfold by themselves (Wah, 2003).

Thus the Daoist way of leading will typically be characterised by a non-intruding and non-controlling approach. Daoism stresses non-interfering observation rather than controlling. Moreover, the Daoist leader will typically be more receptive and passive than active and forceful (Stensrud, 1979). D'Souza (1997 in Henricks, 1997) describes Daoism's role in organisations as 'a hypersensitivity to nonverbal, nontangible cues and activity'.

In Daoist belief organisations are better understood as self-organising systems.. In a self-organising system people, processes and actions are spontaneously arranging themselves in a purposeful and non-random manner without the help of any external intervention. It is as if the system knows how to 'do its own thing.' Many natural systems such as cells, organisms

and planets show this behaviour (Wheatley, 2006).

The phenomenon of self-organisation is also found among humans. When people discover a common interest, they organise themselves and find a way to make things happen. This evokes creativity and results and happens without these initiatives being forced to happen from 'above' (Wheatley, 2006).

These self-organising systems are often quite viable and resilient. These traits come from their great capacity to adapt as needed, to create structures that fit every new moment. Neither form nor function alone dictates how the system is organised. Self-organising systems are process structures that reorganise into different forms in order to maintain their identities. The system may maintain itself in its present form or change to a new order, depending on what is required. It is not locked into any fixed structure, so it is capable of organising into whatever form that best suits the present situation (Briggs & Peat, 2006).

The idea of a self organising system might sound odd in the ears of managers, but it requires that the manager steps back and refocuses his attention on the system as a whole, thus realising that there are other processes at work. Beyond the management skills, and often in spite of them, the system can self-organise to accomplish its work (Wheatley, 2006).

Dao (Path)

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Dao of the creative process is both one of 'way-following' and 'way-making'. The idea is that by believing in that the creative process will deliver a creative output, the 'way' from initiation of the creative process to its conclusion manifests itself in the actions that the creative group take along the 'way'. And the actions that the creative group's members take depend on how they involve themselves in the work process. It depends on if they commit themselves and believe in the process and that there will be an outcome in the end. Thus, the meaning of Dao for the creative organisation should not necessarily be understood as a predestined route to be followed, but rather as the route that the organisation takes in the process of creating. The idea is that by believing in the creative process, it will influence the

direction and outcome of the creative process in another (and probably better) way, than if there was not that the belief. So, the act of believing in itself will influence the 'way' that the process evolves towards its conclusion and creative output.

Following Dao is adapting. Adapting to circumstances, but remaining aware of that inner urge that drags the creative director and his team in a certain direction. Dao is way-making in the sense that one tries to realise the creative vision held by oneself and the creative team. But instead of sticking strictly to a plan that is already made, the creative organisation tries to deal with obstacles in a flexible manner. The creative director and his team can learn from the characteristics of water. This is how Wheatley (2006:18) sees the potential of water, as a guiding metaphor for organisations:

"...Streams have an impressive ability to adapt, to change the configurations, to let the power shift, to create new structures. But behind this adaptability, making it all happen, I think, is the water's need to flow. Water answers to gravity, to downhill, to the call of ocean. The forms change, but the mission remains clear. Structures emerge, but only as temporary solutions that facilitate rather than interfere..."

Action is central to the Daoist approach to the world. Daoists believe that man must interact with the world and that through his interactions, change will occur. The thought is that man through his actions not only involves himself with the world; he also actively creates the world. People are not detached from the world. They are part of the world. People enact the world and are thus indivisible from it.

The idea that thinking must precede action, is strange to the Daoist. The Daoist believes that thinking should accompany action naturally, in the sense that by intuiting and acting, thinking will naturally 'come along'. Thus, meticulous planning and strategising would be strange to the Daoist, as she would consider it impossible to foresee the future, as it is naive to think that it is possible to grasp that which has not yet come into being. There are simply too many occurrences that cannot be anticipated.

Thus, the Daoist approach would be one of not trying to plan and control the future. The Daoist would try to receive the future in the sense that he tackles change as it enters his awareness. Worrying about the future would from a Daoist perspective, mean that the actor moves his attention away from the present, where change takes place, and into a speculative

state that takes away his focus on the here and now.

Weick (1979) suggested a similar perspective on organisations. According to him action should precede planning, because it is only when one acts to implement something that the environment is created. Until one begins this interaction with the environment, how can it be possible to formulate thoughts and plans? In strategic planning, we act as we are responding to a demand from the environment, but, in fact, we *create* the environment through our own intentions.

The Dao of the creative process also has similarities to the groove or vibe that is followed in swing and jazz music. It is the idea of finding ‘the way’, as one goes along, be it in the process of creating music or any other creative output.

Here is how Esben Just (from interviews) describes, how his jazz band ‘catches the wave’¹ in the creative process of playing a concert:

“...Well, the first thing is that they need to know for themselves, that they can groove on their respective instruments. They need to have the confidence that they can sort of make the air move, with them playing on their own. And then you can experience as a group that you can make the air move. Getting into the groove and you feel the groove and you look at the crowd and they say yes now it is grooving and then you start getting the feeling again, back to the wave, that the whole concert has one big wave form, that contains small wave forms that could be the songs. Then if you are able to feel this groove, then the groove will know now it is time to play something different, now we have sort of here is where the wave breaks. Now we have to do something else, to start, to finish this wave...”

What Esben describes is a sensation of a wave that is followed. The wave, or the Dao, is something that is sensed by the band. Instead of predicting what should happen next on a rational background, the musicians *feel* the direction of the music. That collective sensation of what direction the group’s process should take is well-known for musicians; not least those who play jazz music.

According to Wheatley (2006) the jazz metaphor suggests that flow can be communicated between those who are working closely together. As rhythm, harmony, groove and feel create

¹ Esben uses the expression ‘the wave’, which is synonymous with the Daoist term the Dao.

a communion between musicians, audiences and musical experience, so the flow of the music permits an emotional form of communication to occur between co-workers. In other words, appreciating the groove and feel of work processes may harmonise bodies in a communal rhythm of work that contributes to peak collaborative performance.

Just as jazz musicians assign tempo and rhythm to the emotional realm and communicate on this basis to one another as they improvise. People working in the creative context may equally depend upon their ability to emotionally communicate as they coordinate their efforts for organisational achievement in the context of temporary teams or fluid networks. In this regard, Eisenberg (1990 in Wheatley, 2006) makes an important point, namely that emotional communication does not necessarily depend upon self-disclosure, but rather on 'intimacy' based in shared action (Wheatley, 2006).

Wheatley (2006:45) builds on that and describes her impression of how jazz musicians experience the flow and connectedness in playing music:

"...The musicians agree on the melody, tempo, and key of the music, and then play. They listen carefully, communicate constantly, and suddenly there is music. The feeling that the musicians get can be felt like coming from somewhere else, from a unified whole that have been accessed among them, a relationship that transcends their false sense of separateness..."

Scharmer (2007) makes a similar point. According to him creative leaders have to extend their focus of attention from processes to using the 'blank canvas' dimensions of leadership. They should help people access their sources of inspiration, intuition, and imagination. Just as the artist that is standing in front of the blank canvas, leaders in business contexts should develop a capacity to change their organisation so that its members can sense and articulate emerging futures, both individually and collectively.

Scharmer (2007) gives another example of how to lead from the empty canvas. He gives an example of Peter Senge¹, who speaks in front of a large audience. Rather than delivering a set piece with foregone assumptions, bullet points and Power Point summaries, Senge lets his presentation grow organically. He creates a real-time connection that makes the audience feel that they are participating in the presentation, as it unfolds.

¹ Peter Michael Senge (born 1947) is an American scientist and director of the Center for Organizational Learning at the MIT Sloan School of Management (source: Wikipedia)

Scharmer (2007) says that Senge is not really doing less but rather making a presentation from a *different place*. It's a place from which he can access and operate in front of a blank canvas, and he invites the audience to become co-creators with him. They bring their own meanings, experiences and beliefs to interpreting what they see or hear. The real skilfulness of leading in front of a blank canvas, then is based as much on the art of *not doing* things as it is on *doing* things. It demands the courage to say less in order to create a gateway by bending the collective beam of attention back toward its source.

Scharmer (2007) believes that we must face the fact that leaders and managers do not have a methodology for approaching the key challenges that surface in emerging complexity. We just do not know what it takes to lead effectively from 'in front of the blank canvas' when the ground under our feet erodes and pulls away.

Scharmer's (2007) idea is that we need to lead from the future as it emerges. When managers are confronted with an uncertain future, they need to turn to their intuitive capabilities to find guidance for how to navigate. If you know what you are going to produce, then it is easier to plan and project. But if you find yourself in a more ambiguous work situation, then you have to listen to your intuition.

The uncertainty that characterises the creative process is what makes Scharmer's idea of 'leading from the future as it emerges' relevant. As the nature of the creative process makes it difficult to plan, there is a need for leadership to ground its actions in intuitions about the process instead of relying on answers from the past. This does not mean that the past should be ignored in informing managerial decisions. But where analysis and conscious reasoning look to history to get answers for what direction to take, intuition is based on cues sensed in the present. The hard data from the past should be supplemented with intuitive sensations from the present in order to take organisational actions that shape the direction of the firm.

Here is how Ernest Holm Svendsen (from interviews) explain how Dao works:

"...I believe that philosophical Daoists will say that Dao is the flow of life, it runs in life and it runs inside you and you have to tap into that and act from that, so it's that same complexity, it's that same structure, your subconscious structure, like the forest is structured, so the way a tree grows and the way an idea can emerge is actually the same process, because we are all nature, we are all just life and you have to stop doing that rationalising and controlling and putting the forest into straight lines and trust that you have in you wisdom of life that has

that complexity of the subconscious that will just help you develop the idea of the company or whatever it might be..."

According to Thornquist (2005) working with creativity requires the creative director and his team to give themselves over to the creative process. This means that the task of managing a design process is not a question of managing it in a sense of being in control or outlining a process. Rather it is an act of surrendering to the creative process's 'inner principle'.

The creative work environment is characterised by a place where it can be difficult to plan in detail, because the creatives do often not know what they will produce before it has actually been created. The very nature of the creative organisation is that its people need to create new things. You can make structures and frameworks that delimit the creative work. But the result of the creative process is rarely known before it has been actualised.

Thornquist (2005) agrees with this point. He claims that the way theory represents how design processes work is too static. He thinks that the academic representation of design methodologies are poor compared to the living evolution that real creative processes represent. Thornquist (2005) believes that the creative process has its own actions and thus its own path, which it is not possible for the discursive to represent.

Thornquist (2005) continues to say that the existing academic approach to design management is too normative and non-gestaltive, which means that management of design processes become mismanaged. Thornquist (2005) states that design managers' approach to the design process is often influenced by the belief that the process is finalistic and controlled, where it actually is creative and dynamic.

In his dissertation on management of creative processes, Thornquist (2005) mentions an example of his work with the designer Vivienne Westwood¹. He explains how he arrived at the workplace of Westwood and how he there experienced an inconsistency between what was said and what was done. He found himself surrounded by paradox. Despite his initial problems with understanding the world at Westwood, he slowly integrated and found out that things actually started to organise themselves, almost as if some kind of overruling direction and truth manifested itself.

¹ Vivienne Westwood (b. 1941) is a British fashion designer. (source: Wikipedia)

Thornquist (2005) builds on that argument by saying that in a creative organisation it is a matter of going along with the propensity of circumstances instead of going against it. Thus the manager of creative processes is supposed to 'conform' with the continuous course of things, which never ceases to evolve.

Here is how the creative director Palle Freese (from interviews) explains, how he lets the creative process take other directions than originally planned. If he senses that another direction should be taken, then he follows that intuition:

"...I have had experiences from my career where people think I'm strange, they think that I don't stick to what we have talked about. But the end result will be so much better doing this... and then I can't stop doing it, I need to do it and then I have to explain them that now we do it this way because I think that the end result will be better...and I think that the... Because the experience you get from A to B, might move B to become C... So if you stick too much to your original plan then you will kill it. Sometimes I think that between A and B you can move directly to C. Because you will see things on your journey, which is part of the process that makes the end result so much better that you will actually generate it even faster. And you can't know what you experience on the journey before you are on the journey. Because whatever you expect... I mean there might be side roads and things that change your view on the end results as well. But that's the hard part of getting the group to find that harmony and accept that the end result is not necessarily B (as planned) but C. We take the opportunities when we see them and when they develop themselves because that is the process that happens when you work against something..."

What Palle explains is that the direction that creative process takes cannot be planned a priori to the actualisation of the process. If he, as a creative director, assesses that the creative process should take a different direction to what was originally intended, then he lets the creative process take that different direction. As a creative director, he only knows the starting point: A. He does not know B. He and his group can have an idea about where and what B is but they do not know B, before it has been actualised.

This is very opposite to how management normally goes about planning. How can you work without a map? How can you work without knowing where to go and how to get there? In

many creative organisations the creative output itself and how it is created is not known when the creative process is initiated.

The implication of not having a map to guide the creative process from initiation to completion, is that the creative director must rely on something else than a map. What the creative director turns to is trust. Trust in the process itself. Trust in that the creative team and himself will eventually deliver a satisfactory creative output. What substitutes the 'map' is trust. Unconditional trust in the creative process itself.

When the creative director trusts unconditionally in himself, his creative team and the creative process itself, then a pattern emerges on the map. Then the creative team 'leaves' A and arrives at B and the road that the team takes is defined by the actions that the director and the team members take.

This 'road' is what the Daoists call Dao. Dao is how the creative process emerges when the actors in the process trust the creative process unconditionally. If the actors do not trust the process, and if the creative director does not trust it either then the same Dao will not manifest. In Daoist thought, it is essential to trust in oneself and in each other and the process itself, if Dao is to actualise.

P'u (Beginner's mind)

"In the beginner's mind, there are many possibilities; in the expert's mind, there are few"

- Shunryu Suzuki

P'u is a mental condition that many creatives strive to attain, as it gives them the ability to meet the creative challenge with a clearer mind. The idea is that by having an empty mind, it is easier to work with new impressions. If the creative director's mind is filled up with preconceived notions of how the creative output should be, it becomes difficult for her to allow the creative process to deliver other creative outputs than the ones she has in mind.

The idea is to rely less on knowing exactly what to do. By doing so, Daoists believe that work becomes more direct and powerful. The idea is to discover the quality of one's consciousness and experience how potent it can be compared to any technique or theory. The idea is to unclutter one's mind and in doing so reach a clearer vision of things (Heider, 1985).

Daoists observe that people have a tendency to acquire theories and techniques until their minds are cluttered with knowledge and options. They recommend people to allow techniques and theories to recede into the background and allow consciousness of the present moment to come forth (Heider, 1985).

The nature of the child is highly valued among the Daoists and the goal of the Daoist is to return to a condition of 'childlike innocence', as it is believed that the world is seen more as it really is by meeting it with a child's unbiased and inexperienced eyes. The Daoists believe that the way we see the world becomes increasingly distorted, because we in growing up, learn how to decipher the phenomena that surround us in certain ways, depending on the culture in which we live, how our parents bring us up, our education, our profession and so on.

This is how Christian Madsbjerg (from interviews) explains how he understands the meaning of P'u or the beginner's mind:

"...You should question your assumptions... question everything right and that's what a child does... they ask why? ...why is that? ...Many more times than we as grown-ups do. But that's because we are educated out of it... school educates us out of critical thinking... they say that they make us critical but they don't, they make us less critical..."

And here is how Csikszentmihalyi (1996:346) describes how especially creative people seem to possess childlike traits, when they encounter the world:

"...Children tend to have an advantage over adults; their curiosity is like a constant beam that highlights and invests with interest anything within range. The object does not have to be useful, attractive, or precious; as long as it is mysterious, it is worthy of attention. With age most of us lose this sense of wonder, the feeling of awe in confronting the majesty and variety of the world. Yet without awe life becomes routine. Creative individuals are childlike in that their curiosity remains fresh even at ninety years of age; they delight in the strange and the unknown. And because there is no end to the unknown, their delight is also endless..."

Thus, it is the idea in Daoism that the leader, should practice beginner's mind, or P'u, in order to let creativity unfold naturally. By having an uncluttered and unprejudiced mind, it becomes

easier for the creative director to accept new ideas from the creative team and to power the creative process.

Here is how creative director at Hummel, Christian Stadil, explains the importance of practising P'u in the creative process:

"...I tried with a master¹ in Shanghai. I was having tea and he kept on pouring into my cup. Because I'm the type of guy, especially when I was younger you know, because I read all these books since I was very young, so I keep on asking: what about that? What about that? And what about that? And then the master kept on pouring, and I read this example of emptying your cup, because for new teaching to come into the cup, you have to have an empty cup, so if you keep on pouring it pours over, there is no room for... if you are too preconceived, if you have too many concepts filled inside yourself. If you are too predestined... If you go into a meeting and everything is locked, then you don't see possibilities and especially in creative processes and actually it is a very interesting thing to discuss. Because if you come into a creative process and you are too locked into: 'this is how this campaign should be!' or 'this is how this design should be!' 'Or this is how this invention should be!' ...Then you are never going to find out new ways and that's the biggest mistake you can make, so you have to have the beginner's mind: P'u, so you have to re-empty your cup, empty your mind, to be able to take new inputs in and be open to new ideas coming from others or coming from yourself, or coming from your own subconsciousness, so I think it is very important to practise beginner's mind and not be too predestined..."

Christian's story of the importance of having the beginner's mind, when working creatively, is close to how musician Esben Just experiences the importance of P'u in his work with creativity in his swing band:

"...Well, in all, for something to appear, there needs to be a lack of something else. You know the old thing with the cup... if it's full, how can there be room for anything new? So in a way, the first step is to empty the mind, in a way. Not to have any idea of what will come. I mean the minute you have a fixed idea of what the new tune you want to create should sound like,

¹ Christian is referring to a Zen Buddhist master.

or what kind of feeling it has... you are already filled. So you have to sort of trust in, that if you empty yourself to a certain degree, then you will be filled up with something and that something is hopefully something, that you will consider something new..."

And here is how design manager Karen Madsen (from interviews) explains how you must constantly look at the creative process with new eyes. She explains how developing a piece of designer clothes, requires you to look at the item you are working on with new eyes all the time. By doing so, you *allow* the design piece to change along its way from initiation to completion in the creative process.

"...It's a living process, which means that if you make something, you must prepare to develop it all the way. So you can actually start with one idea and end out with something else. I think that is the most important thing that you don't... of course you must have some limits, because it must maybe have two sleeves and so on. But it is important that you allow the style¹ to develop in the process. So, I think that when you receive a sample from the supplier, you must look at it... not look at your own sketch and your own idea from the beginning, but look at it in a new way and see, if there something good in this new style..."

In Karen's account of how the creative design process works, she touches upon two aspects that are important to the Daoists. She talks about letting the creative process take its own course, without too much intervention from her side. The idea of letting the creative process unfold itself, is the way that the Daoists respect the Dao of creative evolution.

Karen also talks about the importance of looking at the style in a new way, as the style evolves from an initial idea over several prototypes until it is actualised as a finished piece of designer clothes that you can find in the store. As a creative manager, Karen can have an idea of how a particular style should look like, but in the process of becoming a finished product, new ideas might show up that make her and the creative team change the form or expression that they want the style to have. So by having an 'empty mind', in the sense of not being affected by the initial idea of how the design should look like, she allows herself to see

¹ When Karen talks about a style, she is referring to a piece of clothes.

the item under construction as it is, instead of being too influenced by the original idea of the piece.

So when the creative director uses P'u in the creative process, she constantly tries to be aware of not being preconceived and prejudiced. The whole idea with P'u is to look at all phenomena, all events, all situations and all people, with an unbiased view. The idea is to take the perspective of the child. The child has not learned much and therefore sees everything with 'fresh eyes'. This enables the child to see things that an adult might not see.

So practising P'u as a creative director means being aware of not falling into the trap of 'thinking one knows what is right'. By practising the beginner's mind, the creative director tries to see things as they really are, before any intellectual etiquette is being put on them. It is a way of avoiding to categorise what one sees. By doing so, the Daoists believe that more creative solutions will be possible.

The creative process can often contain many 'accidents', but the incident that one might categorise as an accident, does not necessarily have to be an accident. If the creative director looks at the 'accident' with the perspective of P'u, the accident might not be something negative but a chance for the creative process to take a different direction. Again, the idea is to free one's mind from categorising, prejudicing and etiquetting phenomena and seeing events from a creative, unbiased and clearer perspective.

Wu-wei (Flow)

"Flow with whatever may happen and let your mind be free. Stay centered by accepting whatever you are doing. This is the ultimate."

- Zhuangzi

The Daoist philosopher Zhuangzi celebrates the notion of self-transcending skill. In his view, highly honed skills reach a stage where one loses oneself in performance and 'become one with' the world in one acts. During such performances, people think less about the rules they learned as acolytes. They feel themselves 'pulled' by the activity, not as someone making decisions or deliberating. One can achieve this absorption in performance in any activity and any Dao of that activity – dancing, skating, playing music, butchering, chopping, constructing a

logical argument, lovemaking, skiing, using language, cooking and so on. At the highest level of skill, according to Zhuangzi, one reaches a point where one seems to transcend one's own self-consciousness. One's control over our one's actions begins to feel like control from the natural structure of things (Toropov & Hansen, 2002).

The Daoist philosopher, Zhuangzi uses a small story to illustrate how flow is experienced. It is a story about a centipede speaking with a walrus. The walrus asks the centipede how he handles so many legs. The centipede responds by saying that he doesn't try to think about it, but lets it flow naturally. If he actually stops and thinks about it, he would probably trip (Palmer, 2006).

Wu-wei is 'action-without-effort' in which nothing disrupts the natural flow and nothing exceeds the necessary. It is a lack of activity accompanied by an instinctive and intuitive response to the present moment to the state that is now; it is an 'action-that-lacks-activity'. There are many examples of this action through inaction and inner contemplation, for example creativity can flourish in the condition of 'giving up control' when ideas are allowed to incubate in the creative process. By practicing 'emptying of the mind' (see P'u above) people may allow new insights and intuitions to emerge and to be more attuned to others' reactions and become more effective by making less effort. The emptier from prejudice, anger and past experiences the manager is, the more attuned and effective he or she may become (Shefy & Smith, 2005).

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) describes wu-wei as being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one. One's whole being is involved, and one is using one's skills to the utmost.

Writers often experience what one described as being "part of the typewriter, trying to keep up with whatever is giving the orders." You commonly hear novelists and playwrights say that characters "take over" acting on their own, speaking dialogue, changing the plot irreversibly (Goldberg, 1979 in Vaughan, 1979).

Another typical element of flow is that one is only aware of what is relevant here and now. If the musician thinks of his health or tax problems when playing, he is likely to play a wrong note. If the surgeon's mind wanders during an operation, the patient's life will be in danger (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996).

When in flow, one is too involved to be concerned with failure. Some people describe it as a feeling of total control; but actually they are not in control; it is just that the issue does not even come up. If it did, they would not be concentrating totally, because their attention would be divided between what they did and the feeling of control. The reason that failure is not an issue is that in flow it is clear what has to be done, and skills are potentially adequate to the challenges (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996).

This is illustrated with this small anecdote from surfer and minister(!) James D. Meacham (1994) who explains the experience he gets, when he catches a wave with his surfboard:

"...A full accounting of the spiritual gifts of surfing would take me until this time next week, so I'll mention only one, which I believe is perhaps the most important lesson not only in surfing, but in life, and that is being there. Being in the moment. When I am in the water, waiting for the next wave, or on the wave, trying to perfect the dance of surfing, or fighting my way out past the breaking waves, there is no way to be thinking of anything else. To stay alive surfing, one must be totally aware, totally in the moment. It's an odd experience sometimes. I've heard other soul surfers talk in mystical terms about being at one with the wave and feeling as if they were there but not there, as if they were no longer spectators in the ocean but part of it. This comes, I believe, from the total focus of energy and attention on the task of surfing. It's absolutely meditative. And just as the task of meditation is to strip away the extraneous stuff of life and put one into immediate experience of the moment, so too does surfing make all the noise of life melt away until it is just a surfer, her or his board, and the wave in a perfect synchronous dance of life, perfectly situated in the moment. Here in Boston, where being intellectual is rewarded, and being cerebral is prized, it is easy for me to forget sometimes that the thing which I do which is of the most value is merely being present. Surfing reminds me, as does the Dao, that the life we are given is where we need to spend our time..."

The way that Meacham experiences surfing is how the Daoists understand Wu-wei. Wu-wei is a condition that you enter when you feel that you do not act intentionally, but the actions that you take happen spontaneously, almost as if they happened of themselves. This is the creative flow or wu-wei as the Daoists call it. It is a sensation that can be experienced in all spheres of life, it is not only surfers and musicians who experience it.

Csikszentmihalyi's description of flow is close to jazz musicians' discussions of rhythm and harmony, and of groove and feel, not just as natural features of jazz music but as something jazz musicians internalise and embody in the context of performing a tune. Rhythm, harmony, groove have emotional and aesthetic dimensions, and when these aspects of work processes are engaged, one also finds the experience of flow in work organisations.

In his study of creative people, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) found that creatives work more often in a state of flow than other people. What drives creatives as children also drives them now. Intrinsic motivation is key. They like what they are doing. They demonstrated early a drive to explore and discover something that intrigued them.

According to Wah (2003) one can achieve the feeling of wu-wei in any activity and any Dao of that activity – dancing, skating, playing music, butchering, chopping, constructing a logical argument, lovemaking, skiing, using languages, programming computers, throwing pottery, knitting, cooking, and so on. At the highest levels of one's skill, a point is reached where one seems to transcend one's own self-consciousness. One's control over our one's actions begins to feel like control from the natural structure of things.

According to Vaughan (1979) the kind of intuitive experience, which leads most directly to a sense of well-being and harmony with oneself and the universe, is the mystical or transpersonal experience. The mystical experience is characteristically described as one in which the individual transcends the subject - object dichotomy, feeling him-or herself to be at one with everything. In this experience there is no separation between inner and outer, knower and known. It is sometimes described as the experience of pure consciousness, with no specific content.

Here is how Ernest Holm Svendsen (from interviews) describes the flow experience:

"...You try to get into that state, where it is a free flow of action, where you feel that your personality, your conscious mind is not actually involved, it is just happening through you, and in my interpretation, I would say that this is what happens when you get your subconscious to work free of the control of your conscious actions. So 'you' step aside, the dancer steps aside and lets the dance, dance itself. Artists from all places and of different ages have been describing this, in our culture we call it inspiration from God or that we feel the

Muses¹ flow through us. This is the state, where the subconscious is allowed to act freely through us. This complexity gets to express itself freely and real beauty arises when you get into that state. This is very difficult to achieve individually but it is very possible and has been done many times. When I say that it is difficult to achieve, I mean that it is difficult to force it out. When we do things we know how to do and we like, then we can get that feeling of flow from our subconscious into our actions...”

One thing is experiencing flow as an individual; another is experiencing it as a group. Here is how Ernest Holm Svendsen (from interviews) describes how his impro-theatre experiences a collective feeling of flow:

“...It is that kind of situation and what I feel is that when you are that open to each other, this plastic entity that your subconscious is, overlaps or interacts with the others’ so that you all together become one unity on that level of complexity... so you are so open to each other that when you add something to this complexity, my ability to handle complexity immediately sees it and develops it and so on, we just connect so much that we are doing it together and that’s where you want to go, that’s where you get the creative group that really works, and you almost have a common subconscious, you almost have a common mind, I know what you are going to say before you say it, it is a matter of many things, it is a matter of knowing each other well enough, to be able to predict each other’s patterns, it is matter of being honest and open enough and not afraid of each other and to allow the others to come in and have that free flow, it’s a matter of not having that little; ‘I get the best ideas!’ You have to let completely go of the idea of owning an idea and that is definitely the goal and when you get there, you have this beauty that goes far beyond anything...”

Ernest Holm Svendsen (from interviews) continues:

“...When I do improvised theatre and we are on stage and this could be a jazz band also, when you open up to each other as I’m talking about and you really get into that state, where you

¹ In Greek mythology, poetry, and literature, the Muses are the goddesses or spirits who inspire the creation of literature and the arts. They were considered the source of the knowledge, related orally for centuries in the ancient culture, that was contained in poetic lyrics and myths.

have nothing to win and nothing to lose, which is the basis of doing good improvisation on stage, you are not proving anything and if you look like an idiot, you look like an idiot, you are not afraid and then you go together, four or five people, you can get into a place, where you connect so much that apparently none of you are creating this thing, you have no idea where it came from, you make the scene, the sketch, the story and it is a beautiful story and you can feel that it has deep roots into the structural foundations of storytelling in the world just using these things in a complexity that is so wonderful and yet you are not and none of us... like who got the idea of Peter Pan flying in? No one knows...he just came flying in and he really came by himself, we didn't do it!..."

Here is how Robert Edick (from interviews) explains how he feels the sensation of flow:

"...When you are really being creative, and really being in the flow, you are just doing things and almost surprising yourself in that you did not even know that that was how it would turn out. I don't think that you put any limitations on yourself or any self-doubt... you are just one hundred percent behind whatever your brain is doing and your hands are reacting. You are just... It's very hard to explain unless you have been there and been doing it. And it is very Zen-like to me, for me it's like that's where I would like to be, when I'm there I'm just loving it..."

And here is creative director at Hummel, Christian Stadil's (from interviews) description of how wu-wei can work on a collective level:

"...When it really works, we have some kind of a group flow, where the ideas, just keep coming and so on. For that to happen, you need to respect each other, and you also have to listen, you have to give each other room, so there is also a lot of group dynamics that come into play... So the group dynamics are for sure different, but for sure, the creative output comes from the same place. At one point it comes from the subconscious, maybe if you are more spiritual, you can say that it comes from the collective consciousness or cosmos, if you are very spiritual, but in both instances as such, it comes from the subconscious of the individuals, but on the one side, it is the individual and this person's subconscious and the other example is the group's subconscious, but the group's subconscious, also consists of the various individuals' consciousness in the group..."

It is in the interest of the creative director to get the creative organisation into flow, so the question then is, what it is that might inhibit the occurrence of wu-wei in the organisation. Fear among the creative employees seem to be a great challenge for the creative director that wants to create space for his employees to enter a collective state of wu-wei. Here is how creative director at Hummel Christian Stadil describes that problem (from interviews):

"...So fear is the worst thing for an organisation. As leaders we have to set a positive emotional tone, we have to enable the organisation, so that there is flow in the organisation and another way of doing this is to tear down the silos internally between the internal work groupings, because also if you have too many silos then that is also killing the flow. If I don't think that I can ask you anything, because you are from another department, that also kills the flow. So you also want to tear down the silos internally, work more conceptually. You want to tear down the silos between the management and the employees and also between the company and its customers. And you can call that co-creation; you can call it from consumering to pro-sumering. All this tearing down the silos, is also important and also a way to promote creativity in an organisation..."

And Christian (from interviews) continues to say:

"...In Daoism we talk about the path of least resistance and that is actually more or less the same as flow, it is the place you go to lose yourself to find yourself; where in and output out of the mind flow so to speak, where you don't have the inner dialogue that steals a lot of attention and so on. So what keeps an organisation from being in flow and from following the path of least resistance, and that's of course, and again as mentioned, people that are afraid, they are afraid of doing something wrong, they are afraid of their boss, but also employees that are afraid of their colleagues. So what we want is an organisation, where the colleagues, the teams, the leaders and the managers, they promote, you can say, the path of least resistance, they promote flow in the organisation..."

That fear is a great obstacle to flow in the creative organisation is also addressed by creative instructor Ben Guerin from Hair Construction (from interviews):

“...I think Palle¹ really understands this, that art is really me, it is as I would have it, it’s as Robert² would have it, it is everything that comes out of him, it is not without Robert, it’s not without me, and I think whether Palle articulates that or not, to me I believe that he understands quintessentially that fear, even in our own selves, if it’s removed, we have this... then we are able to flow, we come forward and it shows up in our work and in our mannerisms and in articulating our fingers and it’s projected in our tone and in the values that we project in front of the crowd, all of that is allowed, once the fear has been removed...”

In this rather elaborate description, creative director at Hummel, Christian Stadil, explains the connection between wu-wei (flow) and Dao (path). The goal in Daoism is to follow the path of least resistance and one way of doing so, is to get the creative team or organisation into flow or into a sense of collective wu-wei. Here is how Christian explains that (from interviews):

“...Another thing again, is to have the organisation follow the path of least resistance, which is also a question of momentum... because what is flow and what is Daoism again... following Dao... it is also again about finding this state, where you go to find yourself... you lose yourself to find yourself. Being in the Now. Being the best version of who you are. And for that to happen you also have to have some momentum, it’s like again if you draw a line from Daoism to flow theory, it is the thing about doing something, something that challenges you. It shouldn’t challenge you so much that it becomes too difficult, because then you become frustrated and then you become too self-conscious, and that is when you kill creativity... you kill flow... because self-consciousness is the biggest killer of flow and of following the path of least resistance. But on the other hand, you don’t want to do something that is too easy, because then you say... ah okay, whatever and then you also become too self-conscious. Because then you know, probably also from yourself that if you have too much time in your hands, your mind starts spinning... so you have to, in an organisation, as a leader, you have to challenge your employees, not so much that they become scared or frustrated, but not so little that they become complacent and bored. So that’s also a way of looking at the path of least resistance... so how to do this? You have to ensure that there is a continuous momentum in

¹ Ben is referring to creative director at Hair Construction, Palle Freese.

² Robert is Ben Guerin’s colleague and creative instructor Robert Edick

the organisation; so that you keep people active... it's like in the arts... Artists often start their new piece of art, before they finish the last one. Why? Because then they keep up the momentum and then they keep up the path of least resistance..."

Wu-wei means flow, and flow is a condition that the creative director and his team can enter if the creative director understands how things work. From a Daoist perspective, you enter the condition of wu-wei when the challenges of the creative team match the capabilities of the creative team members. If expectations are too high, then the creative team will become frustrated and the creative process does not emerge harmoniously.

If expectations are too low compared to the creative team members' competences then the team will not enter into a flow state. The team will most probably be bored. Organisation wu-wei is reached, when the challenges match the skills. When this happens, the team might enter into a flow, where work feels less cumbersome and more fun. Then the team takes, what Christian Stadil calls 'the path of least resistance'.

Yin & Yang (Balance)

"Intuition is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honours the servant and has forgotten the gift"

- Albert Einstein

The Daoists see all changes in nature as manifestations of an interplay between the opposites yin and yang. They believe that any pair of opposites constitutes a polar relationship where each of the two poles is dynamically linked to the other. For the Western mind, the idea of a unity of all opposites is very difficult to accept. In Western culture, it is paradoxical that the experiences we have, should be aspects of the same thing. In Eastern thinking, however, it has always been considered important to go 'beyond earthly opposites' and understand the unity of all phenomena (Capra, 1972).

Daoism emphasises the complementary nature of the intuitive and the rational. In other words, in Daoist thinking it is acknowledged that both yin and yang is needed in order to get to a fulfilling understanding of nature. What Daoists seek is balance between opposites

(Capra, 1972).

Capra (1972) adds that Western culture has consistently favoured masculine (yang) values and attitudes and neglected their complementary, feminine (yin) counterparts. This means that we have favoured self-assertion over integration, analysis over synthesis, rational knowledge over intuitive wisdom, science over religion, competition over cooperation, expansion over conversation, and so on.

Robbins (2000) says that effective leaders blend task orientation, which is yang with people orientation, which is yin, thus initiating structure with consideration. Effective leaders operate in the yang mode when they exhibit the 'take charge' qualities of 'defining and structuring group-member work assignments' and push for the accomplishment of goals. They exhibit yin qualities when they nurture employees and promote harmonious interpersonal relationships, when they make room for emotional fragility in the workplace and show empathy for subordinate feelings and moods, even if these are patently 'irrational' and organisationally irrelevant.

According to Robson & Miller (2006) rationality and intuition can be seen as parallel, interdependent and interactive in the decision-making processes of managers. Their argument is that rationality and intuition feed each other and inform the whole of judgment, just as the concept of yin and yang feed each other and make up a totality.

Bilton (2007) adds that creative thinking is characterised by a combination of different thinking styles, in particular a dialectic between rational, incremental thinking and spontaneous, intuitive thinking. Beyond this combination of thinking styles, creative thinking is also characterised by an ability to connect different elements into new forms and to make rapid transitions between perceptions and experiences.

Therefore creativity can be characterised as a dualistic process, which requires an integration of thinking styles and a pooling of talents. By isolating the moment of the creative breakthrough from the conditions, which precede it and the applications and developments, which follow it, managers are limiting the creative possibilities, instead of releasing them. And releasing creativity is not as easy as turning a tap, nor are the individuals necessarily going to be any more creative if left alone to their own devices. Indeed, many artists share a fear of the absolute creative freedom – the tyranny of the blank page or empty canvas (Bilton, 2007).

Here Esben Just (from interviews) explains, why it is important to find the right balance between rationality and intuition:

"...Again, everything has to follow the wave¹, so you can't just be free-floating and just intuitive... that will just keep you there. So if you want to sort of finish the creative process, you have to put in some more rational frames... you have to know that we have a deadline, for instance. The deadline is a wonderful thing, because the creative process then has a very strict frame, and you have to give yourself over to the creative process one hundred percent. Otherwise you won't make your deadline... and the reason why it has to be a combination is that if you don't have a reality into all this free floating... then you are just going to keep doing that. It's not going to stop..."

Here again, Esben (from interviews) explains how he shifts between an intuitive approach and a rational approach in order to make the creative process of creating new music come to fruition:

"...I need to make a new album and for that I need to have new tunes, so now I need to empty myself and just see what happens. And then I start fooling around and play a little bit, or listen to some music, or go for a walk and sort of start to get into that mind, where I become empty and see what happens. And then after a while, something will appear and I will take notes or record it and listen to it, and then already there the process starts to use some information and put it into something.... oh if I go that way, I know that I can use it like this. And then slowly I shut down the creative process and start to become very rational... I know the song needs to have this length. I know I need another verse, before this is really where it should be. And then I start using the instruments that I know work and slowly the creative process becomes into a sort of a finishing process, where I use tools that I know how work..."

Esben (from interviews) continues to explain how yin and yang are both important in the creative process:

¹ Esben Just uses the expression 'the wave', which is synonymous with the Daoist term, the Dao.

"...You can say so, because the deadline sort of gives you the reality. And you can say that if the creative process is the positive part of the wave, then the deadline determines when the negative part of the wave starts..."

Creative director at Hummel, Christian Stadil, also acknowledges the importance of working with both the intuitive and the rational... the yin and the yang of the totality:

"...Creative processes again... we have the flow going, we have a creative process, but now and then you also have the 'code freeze', where you have to implement, so it is always a balance..."

The idea is that both yin and yang are needed for the creative process to work. You need both intuition and rationality to complete a creative process. When one uses the lens of Daoism on the creative process, one can see how the process changes from being in a state of wild creativity to a more cool and analytic phase. The creative process is not purely creative, wild and uncontrollable; neither can the creative process not work if the creative director controls too much, thus killing the creative process. What the creative director could seek, is an understanding of the creative process, naturally, alternating between chaos and order. An alternation between yin and yang.

Zhí Jué (Intuition)

"An explorer works without a map, and the journey is the destination. A creative person trusts the unknown and follows his intuitions."

- Pamela Metz

Intuition is central to Daoist philosophy. The Daoists believe that all action should be rooted in an intuitive source. In Daoism the creative, intuitive and spontaneous child is praised; the intellectual, theorising and rational 'wise-guy' is not.

The Daoists believe that people should trust their intuitive strengths and act spontaneously out of a feeling of what feels right. Thus, the Daoists do not believe in planning the future, as it

will leave them less freedom to act spontaneously. In Daoism, the idea is that one should wait and act within situations as they evolve. Instead of trying to control the future by 'bending' it into what one wants it to become, the Daoists believe in the natural evolution of processes. The belief in Daoism is that you do not need to try to control the future, because nature does not need a plan to emerge. The idea in Daoism is to tap into nature's natural emergence.

Thus, the Daoist leader allows the creative process to evolve naturally without his interference. In Daoist philosophy, this is done by trusting one's intuition. In Daoism, the intuitive is understood as the connection between people and nature. If the leader follows his intuition then the creative process will emerge naturally. By acting intuitively the creative leader will synchronise with the naturally emerging process.

According to Thornquist (2005) action based on intuition necessitates a vigorous approach from the creative director. In order to power a continuous flow of spontaneous acts from the creative team, it is necessary that not only the creative director but the whole creative team take a mutual intuitive approach that can give the creative process direction.

According to Capra (1972), the focus on rational knowledge in Western cultures is derived from our experiences with objects and events in our everyday environment. Rational knowledge belongs to the realm of the intellect whose function is to discriminate, divide, compare, measure and categorise. By doing so, a world of intellectual distinctions is created.

Capra (1972) adds that abstraction is an important feature of rational knowledge, because if we want to classify the great number of shapes, structures and phenomena that we see in nature, we cannot take all features into account, so we have to select a few significant ones. The implication of this is that we construct intellectual maps of reality in which things are reduced to their general outlines. Thus rational knowledge is a system of abstract concepts and symbols, which is characterised by the linear and sequential structure, which we have in our thinking and speaking.

However, the nature of nature is one of infinite varieties and complexities. It is a multidimensional world that does not contain straight lines and completely regular shapes. Here things do not happen in sequences, but all together. So our abstract system of conceptual thinking can never describe or understand reality completely. This means that we can only get to an approximate representation of reality from our rational enquiry into nature. The implication of this is that our rational knowledge is limited (Capra, 1972).

As it is impossible to know reality solely through logic and science, Bergson posits that we

should use intuition to grasp it. According to Bergson, intuition is a direct vision and experience that transcends intellectual processing and the understanding through the filter of scientific observation. Intuition is instinct evolved. When instinct is not directed to action, but centred in knowledge, it becomes intuition. Intellect is the action of consciousness on dead matter, so it cannot wholly grasp the spirit of life. Reality has to be lived, not merely understood (Linstead & Mallerkey, 2003).

Goethe believed that any phenomenon should be understood not as an isolated event, but as a consequence of its relationship to other phenomena. In traditional science, the scientist formulates the question and then examines the object of study. Goethe believed that we should instead move from interrogation to receptivity and be open to what is occurring, thus allowing ourselves to be open to 'a whole that we cannot see'. The idea is to dwell with the phenomenon and feel how it makes itself known (Wheatley, 2006).

The German philosopher Heidegger uses the expression, a 'dwelling consciousness' to describe how it is possible to move from a rational, cognitive understanding of phenomena into a more intuitive perception of things. If we are confronted with a problem, for example an organisational challenge, we should move into our senses and away from grasping the issue, solely from an analytical standpoint. By doing so, we enable ourselves to understand the issue in a more holistic and intuitive manner (Wheatley, 2006:141).

According to Simon (1957) the concept of bounded rationality explains why people faced with complexity employ heuristic methods, when dealing with challenges in the organisation. His theory states that the capacity of the human mind for formulating and solving complex problems is very small compared to the size of the problems whose solutions is required for objectively rational behaviour in the real world. He adds that the ability of humans to gather, comprehend and retrieve information from memory and make inferences is limited. He argues that organisational environments are evermore complex; people's mental capabilities are limited compared with the demands of complex environments and finite resources as time and money constrain the ability to fully understand environmental complexities. Because of these limitations, managers make decisions under uncertainty and thus only make decisions in an *intendedly* rational manner.

Academic teaching teaches managers to analyse, plan and control. The idea behind that is that managers have time to approach management decisions critically. However, the reality in the creative organisation is that managers often find themselves in situations that need decision making here and now. There is rarely time to withdraw from work and contemplate what

decisions are the right ones to take. Thus, the creative director needs to make decisions in real-time. This forces the manager to make decisions without consulting theories or data, so he must rely on his experience and critical thinking. Often he bases his decision on what feels right in the particular situation. He *feels* what is right.

Intuition draws on our subconscious mental processes and incorporates previous experiences to foster new insights. The subconscious is not only faster than the conscious thought; it is also more flexible. Conscious thought is linear in nature and prone to tunnel vision. The subconscious is capable of lateral thinking, when the mind runs freely through the infinite amount of information stored in the brain. With lateral thinking the mind may combine seemingly unrelated facts and come up with innovative approaches for addressing problems that conscious thought had not solved. The conscious mind is regimented; it tends to go through the front door. The subconscious is not inhibited; it will come through the back door, the windows, or even down the chimney in its pursuit of a better way to do things and better things to do (Harper 1979, in Vaughan 1979:120).

Here is how Ernest Holm Svendsen (from interviews) describes how intuition works:

"...Now, intuition is the ability to feel these subconscious trains of thought, so although in your conscious mind, you can't see why, you have to do something, then in your subconscious mind, where you can handle the complexity of life to a far larger degree, you already know a lot more about what is going on, and if you have the willingness to go with those emotions that say develop the thought in that direction, then there will be something good out of that... working purely on intuition, just feeling, it's not magic, it's not God whispering in your ear, it's subconscious processing on a level that go so many times faster than the thinking that you can do in your conscious mind and if you develop that sensitivity, which is an emotional thing, a feeling of that there is something here, although you consciously don't know then, you trust your gut feeling, which is your body's response to certain trains of thought that you haven't even moved into your conscious mind yet, then you are starting to do wu-wei, then you start to allow your subconscious to act through you and that means you sometimes do things that look very, very odd to the conscious mind but if you get enough experience, then the fact that this action works and if you don't get fearful experiences that make you run up into your brain or your mind or your rational part of your brain and hide up there in your fear and then a loop starts that make you more and more rational and makes you move further and further away from these kinds of things..."

Clemens Thornquist (from interviews) adds on that by saying:

"...To me intuition is very rational, and to me it's almost super rational. I mean the only thing that might be different is that, since it is more of a holistic approach, you always have the same problem of not being able to quantify the motives of your decision, but this does not necessarily depend on that you don't have any real experience, or that you don't have any facts behind your decision. Because you have! But these factors are just as much the interrelation between all these factors, as the factors themselves. So for me intuition becomes a very rational perspective..."

That having trust in your intuition is key to creative work, is explained here by Robert Edick (from interviews):

"...If you don't have intuition then... it's number one, I call it the student's sixth sense, you have got to tap into that, you got to get a sense of what the client is feeling and what is going on around you, and if you are not in tune with that, then your creative juices they just won't continue anymore because you are not thinking that everything is going to flow, you are just going to jam yourself up and stop all creativity..."

That intuition is important to creative work, is also emphasised by creative director, Palle Freese:

"...I strongly believe in my intuition and I don't need to see a proof always. You have to believe in yourself and be true to yourself and if you are that in your group then you are on safe ground. Intuition never works together with fear. That's my belief... The more you use that intuition, the more you work with it, the more right and natural it feels for you to make those decisions even though it looks crazy in other people's eyes, because they only work with their rational thinking..."

Here is how Esben Just explains how intuition works for him:

"...Yeah, you have to go in and see the creative process as a wave. So you have to go in and see, when is the creative process successful to this extent? So now I got my answer, now I got the intuition that says, we need to go in this direction, then I stop asking for that answer any more and I follow the leads that I got, and make them become reality..."

Here is how Martin Spang Olsen (from interviews) explains how intuition works:

"... Intuition is just like balance. Intuition is when everything is right and that's why intuition is always right. If intuition were based in the right brain side then it would not always be right. It's in the balance that you get these very strong and precise messages that you are giving yourself, because you have all the information. That's also very important, if you want to learn about your intuition, then you got to understand that intuition is a very fast calculator of all the information that you have. That includes a lot of things that you don't think you have. For instance, access to the collective consciousness. But of course, you always have to have a part of yourself that always knows the answer; otherwise we would have died out years ago. You always have to have something that always tells you what to do..."

Larsson (1997 in Thornquist, 2005) concludes that intuition is not different in kind from the intellect. Instead he sees it as the highest level of intellectual thinking. In a higher intellectual state, emotions are a necessary element that strengthens the fundamental perceptions of being. In Larsson's view, the intuitive swiftly synthesises the multiplicity of information that the intellect cannot grasp.

Thus intuition should not be understood as a less qualified way of making decisions. In creative processes it is necessary to use intuition as a source of judgement. The intuitive approach that Daoism recommends, is an approach that integrates intellectual consideration with emotional direction. Thus, the intuitive approach is more than a gut feeling; it is better understood as a holistic approach to making decisions.

Conclusion

In the literature, it has not been possible to find any material that links Daoism with management in the creative economy. Thus, it was the my aspiration to research creative businesses to understand if Daoism could help people working with management in the creative economy to understand and go about their management task.

Daoism offers managers in the creative economy a perspective on the task of managing that is little known. In a management context that is often influenced by objective, rational control tools, Daoism can help managers with understanding the more emotional aspects of the leadership task. The proposition of this master thesis is *not* that Daoism offers the only or the right way to understand the creative organisation. The argument is merely that Daoism can be a source of inspiration among other theories and philosophies that inform creative managers work with leading creative people.

In his paper on Daoism's relevance on project leadership in the construction industry, Pheng (1995) notes that one should apply the teachings from Daoism creatively and adaptively to the industry in which one works, and one should understand the essence and discard the dross from the philosophy. I agree with Pheng's argument. The philosophy of Daoism should be used and applied critically. As a manager in the creative economy, or in another professional context, one should use what makes sense and leave out what one finds does not make sense.

Shefy & Sadler-Smith (2006) note that Western principles and values have tended to predominate organisational life and argue that the development of better management requires a greater recognition of non-Western assumptions and values in order to get to a more holistic and spiritual understanding of the organisation. I agree with Shefy & Sadler-Smith's point. There is a need for organisations to embrace the softer and less rational ways of conceiving the organisation that Daoism, among other Eastern philosophies, propose in order to be able to work constructively with creativity in the company. This goes for all organisations, but especially the creative organisation, as I believe that managing in a creative economy firm does require that management understands the non-rational reality that is core in the work with creativity.

According to Shafy & Sadler-Smith (2006) Daoist philosophy and the principles derived from it provide an inner anchor or spiritual focal point, which is practical, relevant and immediately

useful to managers' work. The Daoist principles relate to inner values that are necessary, and that can constitute a foundation for managerial traits and behaviours that characterise the holistic manager.

Daoism is both a philosophy and a religion. That Daoism has a religious side to it can make it difficult for many people to accept it as a legitimate source of inspiration in the work context. Thus, it is the philosophical aspects of Daoism that has been the focus of the present paper. When feelings, emotions and the "softer" aspects of organisational work are important to the work one does, which it is in the creative business context, it is problematic if the managerial perspective one has, does not encompass these more soft aspects that have to do with emotions and feelings.

Managing from a Daoist perspective means managing from a spiritual and emotional source. By doing so, the creative manager will lead from a perspective that acknowledges that the creative organisation is driven forward by emotion and passion. Daoist thinking does not try to ignore that fact; it accepts that reality and works constructively with it. That is why Daoism recommends leaders to embrace the soft management concepts that have been highlighted in this paper. Daoists believe that you will kill creativity and natural evolution, if you manage to rigidly and rationally. Thus the Daoist idea is for the leader to find "the path of least resistance" and in the creative organisation that path is to set the scene for the collective creative flow to evolve.

In Stadil's (see interview transcript) understanding, Daoism teaches people, how to take the path of least resistance. Than does not mean to take the easiest path. It means taking the most frictionless path. For a production company that could be to work with principals of lean management that makes production flow more easily through the plant. For the butcher, it means cutting the meat in the most practical and efficient way. For the creative organisation it means finding the right balance between value creation and value capture. The argument in the present paper is that one needs to integrate the hard with the soft. Using rational instruments where that is helpful. And using softer approaches where that is needed.

Traditionally, management is seen as an analytic task that emphasises the capabilities of the manager's brain to come up with the right solutions to management dilemmas. The management task is seen as a rational endeavour. Daoism, on the other hand, acknowledges that the work of the leader is one that not only should take into account "brain work", but the intuitive sensations felt by the body. The Cartesian perception that the mind can be separated from the body is not part of the Daoist philosophical tradition. Daoism emphasises the

importance of using one's whole person, both body and mind, in conducting the task of leading people.

When you work in an organisation, where it is difficult to predict the future, so that it is difficult to plan or systematise, you will need other tools to guide the organisation's direction. Daoism offers a perspective on the organisation and its work that can complement existing management tools and systems. When it is very hard to plan and rationalise for the organisational goal, Daoism can help, when guidance is needed for work in the ambiguous work context. Daoism teaches to let go of fear and unnecessary planning and move focus to the present moment. In Daoist philosophy, the message is that we need to believe in the process itself and by believing in that the creative output will eventually follow. So instead of having rigid, preconceived goals, the focus is put on the process itself. And by investing our attention and energy into the process of creation, a creative output will eventually emerge.

Nature wants to evolve. You cannot hold it back. The creative processes also want to evolve and the role of the creative leader is to facilitate that evolution. It can sound superstitious to look at the creative process, as if it had a life of its own, but this is the perspective that the creative director could take on what goes on in the creative organisation. By doing so, he acknowledges that the evolution of creative work can actually happen, without him forcing, pushing and demanding it to happen.

If creative people are asked, why they do what they do, they often answer that they simply cannot *not* do it. They describe their work, as something that flows from inside them and out. It is as if their work becomes a manifestation of who they are. It is as if the work they do unfolds as a natural tendency within them. It is a similar perspective that the creative director could take on the work in a creative organisation. He could understand the creative organisation as having *an energy* in it that has to be set free. He would then be the midwife in the process.

Daoism is an Eastern philosophy and it is not widely known in the Western world. In my investigation of the philosophy and the nature of the creative organisation, it is my conviction that Daoism can offer those who work with management of creativity something of value. I have not come to the belief that Daoism is superior to other philosophies or other theoretical resources that inform the work with management, but I do believe that by understanding Daoism and the concepts that are integral to the philosophy, it can improve creative directors' work with management of creative processes.

According to Davis & Scase (2000) independence and nonconformity appear to characterise the creative person and the creative process. Therefore, in order for new ideas to be nurtured and for these to be translated into new products and services, it is necessary for organisations to develop structures and cultures that encourage rather than inhibit the autonomy and the nonconformity necessary for the creative activity.

It is my belief that Daoism can offer managers a perspective on the creative organisation that can enrich the organisational culture. Daoism does not offer a complete framework for understanding what goes on in organisations that work with creativity. But Daoism offers a perspective on the creative organisation that addresses some of those aspects that have to do with emotions, spirituality and what we could call quasireligious. It is my conviction that these aspects must be acknowledged as bearing relevance for managing creative people, as they are intrinsic to creative work.

What constitutes a problem now is that there is a lack of acceptance of the softer aspects of the organisational reality. The myth of the rational manager is still alive and it collides sharply with the emotional world of creative people. The problem becomes clear if a creative company hires management from outside and if the manager that is hired bring with him a management paradigm that does not take into consideration the emotional element that is needed to understand creative work.

What Daoism can offer is a lens on the creative organisation that makes it easier to understand what takes place in it. Daoism acknowledges that feelings and emotions play a great role in the creative organisation. The creative director must understand this and use that understanding to help him lead better. By understanding that the creative organisation contains both rational and emotional behaviour, the creative director can lead people more competently, which is not only to the benefit of the organisation's health but most probably also to the company's profitability.

Daoism can be that source of inspiration that helps managers in the creative economy to get to a more balanced understanding of the creative organisation. An understanding that brings with it a rational perspective but couples it with a Daoist perspective that can help to fill in the blanks in the manager's perception of how an organisation should be managed. Combining the hard with the soft. Integrating the rational with the intuitive. Setting the goals but respecting the creative process. Looking at the parts but understanding the whole. Understanding that there needs to be a balance between (apparent) opposites; Between Yin and Yang.

References

- Austin, R. & Beyersdorfer D. (2007), "Bang & Olufsen: Design Driven Innovation" Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing
- Bacon, F. (1853). *Novum organum*. In *The physical and metaphysical works of Lord Bacon* (Book 1). London: H. G. Bohn.
- Bilton, C. (2007) "Management and Creativity", Oxford: Blackwell
- Briggs J. & Peat F. D. (1999), "Seven Life Lessons of Chaos", New York: Harper Collins Publishers
- Britannica Online (2010), <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/612116/ziran>, accessed 21st of March 2010
- Bugental, J.F.T. (1965) "The search for authenticity", New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc.
- Campbell D. T. (1975) 'Degrees of freedom and the case study' *Comparative Political Studies* 8 (1), 178-191
- Capra, F. (1982) "The Dao of Physics", London: Flamingo
- Casell C. & Symon G. (2004) "Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organisational Research", London: Sage
- Caves, R. E. (2000), "Creative Industries: Contracts between Art and Commerce", Harvard University Press
- Chen C. & Lee Y. (2008), "Leadership and Management in China", Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Cheng, C. (1994), "Diversity as Community and Communion: A Daoist Alternative to Modernity", *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol. 7, No. 6, pp. 49-58.
- Christensen, J.B. (1997), "Fænomenologisk Videnskabsteori", Sønderborg: HHS's Trykkeri
- Chuang Tzu (?) "The Book of Chuang Tzu". Translated by Palmer M. (2006), London: Penguin Books
- Cooksey, R., & Gates, R., (1994), "HRM: A Management Science in Need of Discipline", *Journal*

- of the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management, vol. 1, no.1., pp. 1-16.
- Cooper, J. C. (1972) "The way of the Mystic", New York: Samuel Weiser
- Cooper, J. C., (1981) "Yin & Yang: The Daoist Harmony of Opposites", New York: Thorsons
- Craig, E. (2007) "Dao Psychotherapy: Introducing a New Approach to Humanistic Practice", *The Humanist Psychologist* no. 35(2), pp. 109–133 Copyright © 2007, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996) "Creativity", HarperPerennial: New York
- Dale R. A. (2002) "Tao Te Ching", London: Watkins Publishing
- Darwin, C. (1958) *The autobiography of Charles Darwin*. New York: Norton
- Davis, H. & Scase, R. (2000) "Managing Creativity", Buckingham: Open University Press
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005) "The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research", Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Durlabhji, S. (2004) "The Dao of Organization Behaviour", *Journal of Business Ethics*, pp. 401-409
- Eysenck H. J. (1976) 'Case studies in behaviour therapy', London: Routledge
- Fletcher, W. (1990) "Creative People: How to Manage Them and Maximize Their Creativity", London: Century Hutchinson
- Flyvbjerg B. (2006) 'Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research' *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12/2, 219-245.
- Gedenryd H. (1998) "How Designers work", Lund: Lund University Diss.
- Guba, E. G. (1990) "The Paradigm Dialog", London: Sage
- Hatch, M. J. (1999) "Exploring the empty spaces of organizing", *Organization Studies* 20/1 pp. 75-100
- Heider J. (1985) "The Dao of leadership", Atlanta: Humanics Limited
- Henricks, M. (1997) "Words of wisdom: a 2,500-year-old Chinese philosophy holds new meaning for modern-day entrepreneurs", *Entrepreneur*, November 1997
- Hesmondhalgh, D. (2007) "Cultural Industries", 2nd ed., Sage Publications Ltd.: London
- Hoff, B. (1982), "The Dao of Pooh", London: Methuen

- Howkins, John (2001), "The Creative Economy: How People Make Money From Ideas", London: Penguin
- Kardash, T. (1998) "Daoism – the Wu-Wei Principle", (www.jadedragon.com)
- Kirton, M. J. (1984) "Adapters and innovators – why new initiatives get blocked", *Long Range Planning* 17 (2), pp. 137 - 43
- Koestler, A. (1976), "The Act of Creation" London: Hutchinson
- Kraemer, K. (1996) "World Scriptures: An Introduction to Comparative Religions", Marwah: Paulist Press
- Kvale, S. (1996) "Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing", Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Larsson, H. (1997) "Intuition: några ord om diktning och vetenskap", Stockholm: Dialoger
- Lindlof, T. R. & Taylor, B. C. (2002) 'Qualitative Communication Research Methods', Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Linstead S. & Mullarkey J. (2003), "Time, Creativity and Culture – Introducing Bergson", *Culture and Organization*, Vol. 9 (1), March, pp. 3 - 13
- Liu Da (1972), "T'ai Chi Ch'uan and I Ching", New York: Harper & Row
- Loori D. (2005) "The Zen of Creativity", New York: Ballantine Books
- Marschan-Piekkari R. & Welch C. (2004), "Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business", Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing
- Meacham J. D. (1994) The Tao of Surfing. [ONLINE] Available at: www.lajollasurf.org/tao.html [Accessed 18 April 10].
- Metz P. K. (1997) "The Creative Dao", Atlanta: Humanics Limited
- Mintzberg, H., (1994), *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*, New York: Prentice Hall
- Mintzberg H. and Quinn J. B. (1985) "Strategy formation in an adhocracy", *Administrative Science Quarterly* 30, pp. 160-97
- Mintzberg H., Ahlstrand B., Lampel J. (1998) "Strategy Safari", New York: The Free Press
- Pettigrew A..
- Pheng (1995) "Laozi's Dao De Qing and its relevance to project leadership in construction" *International Journal of Project Management* Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 295-302,

- Philipps D. (2008) "Colorado Springs Gazette Thursday", January 17th 2008
- Porter J.M. (2003) "The Dao of Star Wars", Atlanta: Brumby Holdings Inc.
- Pressman M. D. & Joudry P. (2000) "Twin Souls", Center City: Hazelden
- Prince, L. (2007) "Eating the Menu rather than the Dinner: Dao and Leadership", *Leadership*, 1:105
- Rogers, C. R. (1961) "On Becoming a Person". London: Constable
- Scharmer, C. O. (2007) "Theory U", Cambridge: SoL
- Shefy & Sadler-Smith (2006) "Applying Holistic Principles in Management Development", *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 25, No. 4, pp. 368-385
- Simpkins, C. A. & Simpkins, A. (1999) "Simple Daoism", North Clarendon: Tuttle Publishing
- Stensrud, R. (1979) "Personal Power: A Daoist Perspective", *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 19:31
- Suzuki D. T. (1959) "Zen and Japanese Culture", Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Suzuki S. (2001) "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind", New York: Weatherhill
- Thornquist C. (2005) "The Savage and the Designed", Unpublished Dissertation
- Toropov B. and Hansen C. (2002) "The Complete Idiot's guide to Daoism", Indianapolis: Alpha Books
- Vaughan F. (1979) "Awakening Intuition", New York: Doubleday
- Wah, S.S. (2003) "Chinese Leadership", Times Edition
- Walt (2008) "Daoism Acceptance" (www.waltdorsai.org/daoacceptance.htm)
- Watson T. (2006) 'Organising and Managing Work', Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd.
- Watts, A. (1975) "Dao – The Watercourse Way", New York: Pantheon
- Wheatley, M. J. (2006) "Leadership and the New Science", San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Enclosure

Enclosed here is a CD-ROM with interview audio files, interview transcripts and an electronic file of the present paper.

Interview with Christian Madsbjerg

Nikolaj: How should the creative leader go about leading creativity?

Christian: First of all creativity is hard work and it is often represented as easy work, and something that comes down from heaven to some people. But it is not. It is hard work. And secondly, it is about thinking. It's about how you think. And thirdly it's diverse. We know a lot about the human brain and we know that creativity primarily is diverse types of thinking. And we know that we as people think very differently about creativity... especially men and women. Adding to an organisation's ability to be creative, which is super problematic, because people who are creative are generally problematic people. They are tough to work with; they are highly emotional and the most creative people that I have dealt with are very difficult to manage. They have edges and you can hurt yourself on them. Then you can work in a creative environment. If you don't like that, you should go somewhere else.

So as a manager, managing that means tolerating, tolerating the kinds of escapades that they can create. And quite often, frankly, that is to me fantastic to be part of. It is something that annoys me on a daily basis, but also something that makes work life interesting. So the people that I tend to want to attract are not the linear types. We need those too, but we need people that think independently, but that is something that we are taught not to be... in primary school, secondary school all the way up to graduate school, we are taught that making mistakes is wrong. And if you can't live with mistakes and if you can't deal with mistakes, you can never create anything new... so we have people who break a lot of legs... and how do you manage that... well first of all, you gather the right people... I spend a lot of my time, finding the right people, and giving them the kind of attention they need, because they need a lot of attention. They need a lot more attention than the average corporate worker, because they are highly emotional... a lot more emotional, than the average corporate worker... they freak out over things, they don't feel that things are right... they are quite often very moral people... so they want to do things that are morally right and ethically appropriate. So you can't get them to work for Philip Morris. You can't get them to work for companies that they don't want to work for. They want to work with things that they think is exciting. And it is not that they don't *want* to work for things they don't think is exciting. They just *cannot* work with things they don't think is exciting.

And secondly giving them juicy problems, giving them problems to work on... and by problems, I mean problems that somebody else cannot crack. Something where they feel... here is a problem in the world. How the hell do we crack that one? Giving them that is another key to making them understand that this is important... and then thirdly I think giving them a little bit of structure. So giving them frameworks to work with. Giving them a process that is not too tight, but still is there. Giving them the right amount of process, so that they have boundaries within which they need to manoeuvre and work. So it is a constant game of trying to find the right people, trying to make them feel that what they are doing is important. Giving them things that actually are important, because they will see it immediately, if they are not. And fourthly, giving them a process that they feel comfortably in and that will give them some kind of linearity. If you don't have some kind of linearity, they won't get anything done.

Nikolaj: So, it seems to me that you are saying that they need some linearity, but not too much linearity and then it is the job of the creative leader to build up that structure... is that right?

Christian: Yeah... there are many things. The creative leader will first of all need to find them, right? So how do you do that? Because they don't have a specific education, they don't have a specific background... so how do you filter for somebody who is creative? There is a lot of people who call themselves creative, or design agencies that claim to be creatives that basically just copy themselves and creativity is not copying. I think it is the big chef from El Bulli in Spain... that is his definition: creativity is not copying. He made a book called: A day at El Bulli, which is a very good book about creativity. So he is a highly creative person. He basically rethought the whole cooking process. Something we have done for you know four million years. And he rethought that from a technology point of view, and his definition of creativity is *not* copying. You know, how do you find those people who do not copy? Well, you have to look for them right? You have to sift through a lot of people and you have to... but my feeling is that it is the ones that want difficult problems. It's the ones that want to put their teeth into something that nobody else could really solve. So they are problem solvers, right? And they don't care, whether you call it creative or not, really. They are often impact driven. So they want to go for the impact, rather than the process. So it doesn't have to look creative, as it does in a design agency or in an ad agency, where everything needs to be looking creative with a lot of post it notes and a lot of stuff. They don't really care about that, they care about the impact.

If you solve a problem for a telecom company and the company suddenly understands something in a different way and move their people and their strategies in a different way, then that is an impact. If the company makes more money... if they know they solve a problem, so that their customers are better off... If there is some real world impact... If something in the real world changes.

So it is not so much about their own portfolio, which is often the case in design, like that the design for your own portfolio and your own history. It's rather people who want to do things in the real world and change things for the better. You know those people you have to look for, and you can look for them anywhere, they could be from business school, they could be from engineering school, they are architects, they don't even have to have an education. I just hired a guy from Goldman Sachs, you know, would you think that there would be creative people in Goldman Sachs? But this guy is super creative, right? Really, really smart guy... so how do you know, right? So trying to find the right people is the first thing. Then maintaining them. Making sure that they are okay is a big part of the manager's role... then fourthly it is giving them the right things to work on, right? Making sure that the company has the right kinds of problems that would make them feel excited, sticking their teeth into.

And then fourthly, delivering a structure, within which they feel comfortable and which creates some kind of system, and some kind of base line for how we work. And you know, they actually like that. They actually like that there is some kind of process. And you know, as long as it makes sense to them. Processes are not necessarily wrong, and structures are not necessarily wrong, as long as it makes sense. The problem with a lot of processes and structures is that they do not make sense... and then the creative person wants to change that. So by constantly updating, and making sure that the process is... you don't necessarily have to update it, but making sure that it fits what we want to do. And if it doesn't, then the creatives, they don't comply. So, yeah, because they are thinkers, right? A good creative is a thinker.

Nikolaj: The dilemma of rationality versus intuition?

Christian: I think that intuition is a bad excuse for not getting stuff done. And for not being sure about what you say. So I think that a good creative is both. He is more rational and more intuitive, and more than other people. You know... if you think about some of the biggest things that happen in this world. They are done super rationally, right? They are done scientifically, right? So you have a fact base; you treat data with respect. You make conclusions

based on data. Is that intuitive or rational? You know, I don't really care. I care about the quality of thinking. So I would say that this whole idea that creatives are more intuitive, is more something that designers and advertising people have created, so that they don't have to come out with a fact base. So that they don't have to come up with reasons why this is a good idea. So I would say that I'm a highly rational person, and I don't like intuition in the sense... you know it's fine, if you came to this conclusion... by some kind of... you know... I don't care how you get there, but I want data. I want to know, if this is true... because if you are going to bet... a product line or a you know a... some kind of strategic initiative in a company on pure intuition... you know, we are talking about a lot of money here.... and we are talking about a lot of peoples' jobs... and everything... everything in the world can be rationalised. Everything in the world can be put into a spreadsheet somehow... so... so it's a combination, I'd say. You know... if people have an intuition that something is right. That's fine... but I want a rational argument as well. Having respect for both, I think is important... I think the problem is, if you are rational, and have no respect for...you know... intuition is just a name for having done it before, right. It's a name for you know experience. So if you take... some of the most intuitive people I have met are McKinsey directors that talk about themselves as super-rational, but really what they do is very intuitive in the sense that they have seen this a thousand times before, so they feel... you know, this is the problem. So that's an experience that they have and I have a lot of respect for that. But just coming out of design school and being twenty-four years old and you know just feeling that you know that this company should move thirty million dollars in this direction... I don't really respect that. So I think that it is a cover.... it's a cover-up that intuition should be more creative. I think Einstein was pretty creative and pretty rational and he thought about things that he had to come up with mathematical proof to conclude whether his equations worked. And is that creative? Oh yes... it is very creative, right? So the big things that happen in the world are often a combination.

Nikolaj: Then a question about let's say believing in the process... because in Taoism, there is a focus on believing in the process itself and then the fact of believing in the process can give the process a positive outcome... do you think that has anything to say in an organisation that works creatively?

Christian: It is core. It is key. It's not maybe key in a company where people don't care, but if you have to do with the best people. They care. They have a moral fibre as well. So if it doesn't

make sense, they have no energy. And no, they don't come to work. It is very obvious. If it doesn't make sense, they don't come to work. The true creatives they are not in it for the money. They are in there for the meaning. If it is not meaningful to them, they could not give a damn. So, that is the second point I made about retaining. Making sure that they feel that their work is meaningful. It is a non-religious belief, but it is a belief in the meaning of things. So if you take any kind of interesting person, they are interested in two things. They are interested in the ideas and in the meaning. And you know they can't live without them it is oxygen to them. So if you take away belief or what Taoism calls belief, then that is absolutely core.

Nikolaj: Another concept in Taoism is Tao, which means that you get into the flow of work... What do you think of the concept of Tao or Flow?

Christian: It is something we all experience, right? It is an everyday life experience that we all experience. I think that flow is something that happens in work life as well, and it can happen in many ways. If something is meaningful to people they can get into flow, if it is not they can't.

Nikolaj: Is there anything that you can do as a creative manager to give space to these flow experiences?

Christian: The last two questions that you posed are the same questions. Meaning and flow. Meaning is the means of flow. If something is meaningful to people they can get into flow. If it is not meaningful, they can't. So I think the ability to... I mean, you can't create meaning. They will create meaning themselves. But you can give them work experiences, by giving them juicy problems or wonderful people to work with, or you know really interesting things to work with that in itself creates flow, so if you have a really juicy problem and a wonderful team, that's the prerequisites of that possibility. So I think that the word meaning or what you call belief, is the core of that. In positive psychology, they talk about three different kinds of happiness: they talk about hedonistic happiness, so that would be food, wine, sex that you can engage with in the short term. The third one is meaning, that this is actually a meaningful thing to do in life and it makes my life bigger than me. And that is what creates flow situations, I guess.

Nikolaj: Within Taoism there is a concept called P'u, which is saying that, when people should solve a problem, they should approach the problem like a small child that hasn't seen the

problem before. It's a bit about unlearning, it's about approaching the problem with fresh eyes, without using consciously using the knowledge that you already have.

Christian: Why do you want to leave your experience behind? Why would you want to do that? I mean, there are situations where your experiences are wrong. Where the kind of thinking that is in the company is wrong. But any true intellectual and any true creative would always questions his or her assumptions. That's key to being creative, they talk about beginner's mind and all those kinds of things. I think that's crap. I work a lot with telecom companies and there is a lot of history there and just going in and IDEO actually work with the telecom companies that I work with now, and they just get crushed because they don't know anything and If you want to work with telecom, then you need to challenge the assumptions, so if they say we want to invest in the network, then you say why? Why do you want to invest in the network? So it is just intellectual critical thinking among adults instead of trying being a child... I think there are moments.... I think every intellectual will always question anything in the world... and that is not the same as beginner's mind... that is just being critical, you know classic Frankfurter School.... type thinking.... which is I don't think that's true, where does that assumption come from? YOU know those kinds of questions instead of trying to be a child. I think what they want to say with that in Taoism is that you should question your assumptions... question everything right and that's what I child does... they ask why... why is that many more times than we as grown ups do. But that's because we educated out of it....school educates us out of critical thinking they say that they make us critical but they don't they make us less critical. So that is an industrial world type, where you have to be part of a system.... it would rather talk about intellectual curiosity rather than being a child. I think people have misunderstood that metaphor and taking it to an extreme.

I think in any industrial setting you need a ninety ten percent split

The core of the philosophy is that you need to focus. You can call it mindfulness and you can call it whatever you want, but the ability to concentrate. If you want to solve very difficult problems and if you want to deal with very difficult things... then you need to be focused or mindful or whatever you want to call it, so I think that there is a lot of merit. Even the most rational people have moments of mindfulness, you can say.

And in mindfulness you also have these questions around you know, it's a more productive way at looking at the concept of P'u, it's this thing about questioning, so when you look at the

world with a mindful eye, when you look at a spoon, or you look at a table or if you look at a problem. Then you try to get rid of the filter that tells you immediately that this is a spoon or a table or a problem. Because if you do that you can look at it with new eyes, you can challenge your own assumptions about things. So mindfulness is a constant challenging of your assumptions about things.

And challenging... if you look at a Telecom situation or medical situation... if you look at the problem and say... I have seen this before; I know how it should be solved. Then you are probably wrong, because the world has changed and that means that you have to get rid of your preconceived notions of how the world looks and challenge yourself. So it is a difficult and problematic way to live, but it is also quite helpful. So in our company we try to create a situation where people have a slow track of working, that they have a slow pace, so that they don't just hammer out emails and you know the kind of work where you feel that you work a lot. But also that if you want to think and if you want to think deeply about things, then you have to have a slower pace of work. And that comes into the whole mindfulness thing... if you can't focus on the questions that people ask you, if you are reading a page in a book and have to go back all the time, because you can't remember what you just read. If you're in a conversation and you are somewhere else right... if you are talking to somebody and you are thinking about something else or you are really in another meeting... then you can't solve problems.

Mindfulness gives you another metabolism... it's how you digest things... you digest things slower. You get more nutrition out of it. But you know if you eat quickly and you don't chew, you can't taste it and you don't get so much nutrition out of it. So if you actually taste the food that you eat and if you actually digest it properly, you get more nutrition out of the food, so if you actually taste the food you eat and if you actually digest it probably you will get much more out of it. So taste the food you eat and listen to the people around you and listen to things around you. And *see* things right. If you see something, don't just say I have seen this before, because that's very easy and the brain trick us into that. I think every creative person knows this, mindfulness is one way of talking about it, focus is another.

You know, the good thing about the Asian philosophies is that they spend the last thousands years on our mind, where we in the west spend the time on the exterior, so that being physicalities, material things, sciences and less about the emotional world and the mind. And

they have a lot of data basically on the mind that we have spent less time on...without being hippie, without having to look like you are mindful. I think that is being insecure about it and that's much more about identity than the actual mindfulness. The whole point is *not* to spend too much time on yourself. The whole point is to get rid of yourself. That's really what the old Buddhists say and stop the whole identity game and start focusing on the world.

Interview with Christian Stadil

Christian: When it really works, we have some kind of a group flow, where the ideas, just keep coming and so on. For that to happen, you need to respect each other, and you also have to listen, you have to give each other room, so there is also a lot of group dynamics that come into play. So I think it is more difficult, or it is different at least in terms of the mechanics, whereas with yourself, it can also be difficult again, where does the inspiration come from? But then you maybe have your own way of doing it, like Picasso, who got his ideas when taking a shower or Riffbjerg that says we can't control inspiration, but when it comes I want to be at the station, so he sits every morning at eight in front of his typewriter. We all have different processes; I also have mine, when it comes to how I work, when I am writing or painting. So the group dynamics are for sure different, but for sure, the creative output comes from the same place. At one point it comes from the subconscious, maybe if you are more spiritual, you can say that it comes from the collective consciousness or cosmos, if you are very spiritual, but in both instances as such, it comes from the subconscious of the individuals, but on the one side, it is the individual and this person's subconscious and the other example is the group's subconscious, but the group's subconscious, also consists of the various individuals' consciousness in the group.

Christian: Creativity comes from the subconscious, the subconscious as opposed to consciousness that has a very limited "broadband", not very much information can be in the consciousness, so all the good ideas, creativity and so on comes from the subconscious, so what we have to do, if we put it a little bit roughly, is to enable ourselves to dig into the subconscious, and to do that we have to turn down the noise in the consciousness, we have to lessen the inner dialogue, to quiet the "monkey mind", again to open the gateway to the subconscious, again to make it less esoteric, it is all our experiences, all the people we have met, the studies we have done, the inspiration we have gotten in a lifetime, but also very specifically, when you are a designer you go to Paris, before making the first brainstorm meeting and all the inspiration you get from there is stored and will be stored in the subconscious, the idea is then to get it from there and up to the consciousness and in that process and that is also very much what creativity is about combining it with something else... and for me when I get a creative breakthrough... it cannot really be forced, you can have the

boundaries and we should have the boundaries, we can have the vision, but you can't really force it, I often make the comparison to falling in love: you cannot say fall in love now, but on the other hand, you do not fall in love by sitting home in your apartment, the chance of falling in love is also greater if you go to the disco or club or bar or go to a dinner, same thing with creativity, you can't force it, you can't force the good idea, because when you force, you put attention into the conscious and then you close the gateway to the subconscious, but again, for the good idea, for creativity to happen you need to put some information into the conscious, you have to read the fashion magazines, you have to read the books and all this... It all starts with the individual, also when you talk group creativity, so you have to enable... you have to make an environment, or motivate in a certain way so that either the individual or the group they lose themselves in what they do, because only then do we become really creative, only when we experience "mushin", the experience, when subject, object and action become one, where thought, feeling and action become one...or to make a more Western parallel, you experience flow, so you lose yourself in what we do... only then are we really creative, so that actually sums everything up, so it is just about, how do we as leaders, enable our employees to experience flow, and that it is the "big" task and again, one thing you do not do, is to say "be creative now"! It is the same thing as making a comparison to a good evening with your friends, the good evening is where everything is flowing, the bad evening is when you are selfconscious, somebody else says something funny and then you also have to find out something funny and then you try with your words also to say something funny and then it is never funny! It is a big thing about letting go! But letting go, can be within the timeline, can be within sitting around the table, where you have agreed to meet at nine.

Nikolaj: Last time we focused more generally on the creative organisation and the role of the creative leader and the way he manages the creative process. And we also talked about the difference between individual creativity and collective creativity. How can you create surrounding for collective creativity to flourish? And now we are switching to the more esoteric part in order to understand how Taoism in particular, but also other Eastern philosophical concepts... how can they benefit the leader of the creative process of a creative organisation. How can those views of nature and people benefit his understanding, his perception of the organisation in order to help him manage or lead the creative organisation?

So maybe we start out broadly with Taoism. How do you think that Taoism can help a creative leader manage a creative process?

Christian: Yes, in broad terms. Now we are specifically talking about Taoism, but there are many links of course from Taoism to Buddhism of course. But also from Taoism and Buddhism to modern psychology. Flow theory and so on, so it is also a question about what names that we use. But if we use the name Tao and how Taoism can help to promote creativity and innovation and so on in organisations, I think there are many ways that Taoism and the essence of Taoism can help an organisation to be more creative or help the creative organisation. First of all creativity... the big thing that keeps people from being creative is fear. Because when you feel fear, when you are afraid, then you so to say, close the gateway to the subconscious and the subconsciousness, so what you want is, especially in a creative organisation and when you want to create creativity, you want people to feel no fear, and that of course comes into play in how you lead and how you manage the company, not managing by fear, but is also a question of promoting or enabling the employees to lose themselves in what they do. And this is also here, where we have a link between flow theory and Taoism. In Taoism we talk about the path of least resistance and that is actually more or less the same as flow, where the place you go to lose yourself to find yourself; where in and output out of the mind flows so to speak, where you don't have the inner dialogue that steals a lot of attention and so on. So what keeps an organisation from being in flow and from following the path of least resistance and that's of course, and again as mentioned, people that are afraid, they are afraid of doing something wrong, they are afraid of their boss, but also employees that are afraid of their colleagues. So what we want is an organisation, where the colleagues, the teams, the leaders and the managers, they promote, you can say, the path of least resistance, they promote flow in the organisation. That means that we don't want anyone, we want when we hire people to the organisation that are different from us as leaders, we don't want to copy-paste ourselves, but on the other hand, that's at least something I found out, I don't want "modarbejdere" (people who work against), but I want "medarbejdere". I want employees who have a positive mind frame, not so much because of me, because I have a lot of companies, and I can live with the grumpy employee in the corner, but it is stealing the energy in the organisation. If there are some employees sitting in a corner, and the other employees don't dare to ask the person or... because energy spreads and negative energy spreads and it

doesn't have to be... and now we are talking more esoteric, but I, this is my opinion, it can be maybe understood as energy from a collective consciousness point of view, it can, maybe? But it can also be just that energy or feelings spread you know, if you're angry I become angry... If you sit with your hands like this, I would sit with my hands like this, that's what you call "stemninger" (moods) spread, so for us as leaders, it is important to acknowledge this, first of all, when we hire people, it comes into play, this thing about, and I think we talked about it before that, and it is still one of the most important things, I think, in terms of leadership, that the leader sets the emotional tone in the company, If I as a leader am withdrawn, angry, cross-armed, in my attitude, then my employees will act in the same way, cause they look at me and often do the same as the leader, because we set the emotional tone and my emotions will spread to the others, to the employees and that's, and again this kind of closed energy will spread around the organisation, so a good place to start, leadership-wise is to acknowledge that you set the emotional tone and then promote more positive energy in the organisation, because this is really fruitful in terms of people being able to be more creative, because then they dare to let go of themselves, because the problem is that if you are afraid you know, that was something that was built into our brains, when we were in the pre-human stage or like you know at least many years ago, when we were carrying a piece of wood (a club) then we are fearful and then we get tunnel vision and so on, and of course there was a reason for that. But the thing is that it makes us very limited in the way we think and so on, because again as mentioned, then we are not so creative. So fear is the worst thing for an organisation, as leaders we have to set a positive emotional tone, we have to enable the organisation, so that there is flow in the organisation and another way of doing this is also tear down the silos internally between the internal work groupings, because also if you have too many silos then that is also killing for the flow. If I don't think that I can ask you anything, because you are from another department, that also kills the flow. So you also want to tear down the silos internally, work more conceptually. You want to tear down the silos between the management and the employees and also between the company and its customers. And you can call that co-creation; you can call it from con-sumering to pro-sumering. All this tearing down the silos, is also important and also a way to promote creativity in an organisation. Another thing again, is to have the organisation follow the path of least resistance, it is also a question of momentum... because what is flow and what is Taoism again... following Tao...it is also again about finding this state, where you go to find yourself... you lose yourself to find

yourself. Being in the Now. Being the best version of who you are. And for that to happen you also have to have some momentum, it's like again if you draw a line from Taoism to flow theory, it is the thing about doing something, something that challenges you. It shouldn't challenge you so much that it becomes too difficult, because then you become frustrated and then you become too self-conscious, and that is when you kill creativity... you kill flow... because self-consciousness is the biggest killer of flow and of following the path of least resistance. But on the other hand, you don't want to do something that is too easy, because then you say... ah okay, whatever and then you also become too self-conscious. Because then you know, probably also from yourself that if you have too much time in your hands, your mind starts spinning... so you have to in an organisation, as a leader, you have to challenge your employees, not so much that they become scared or frustrated, but not so little that they become complacent and bored. So that's also a way of looking at the path of least resistance...so how to this? You have to ensure that there is a continuous momentum in the organisation, so that you keep people active... it's like in the arts. I'm very much involved in arts... I collect art, I paint myself and I set in different art forums and so on. And artists often start their new piece of art, before they finish the last one, and why? Because then they keep up the momentum and then they keep up the path of least resistance. And it is actually the same thing in companies, so you want to keep the flow going, you want to keep the momentum going and that's also when I mentor, people that are maybe employed... I always tell them... okay, you now, you want to go into the communication's business... if somebody asks me: I want to get into advertising and they have been trying for one year and they don't do anything and nothing happens and I say... why don't you maybe get another job, get a job in Post Danmark... a normal job, because then you get momentum going, then you have to get up every morning at seven, go to work at eight, you start to meet people, and then when you meet people, you get a network, then maybe you start talking to the internal marketing department at Post Danmark or at hummel or whatever company. Then suddenly the external ad agency comes to visit Post Danmark or whatever company. And then you start talking to this ad guy and then who knows what happens... so you get momentum going, so momentum is important, again to follow the path of least resistance... so that's a very good Taoist philosophy and how to apply that in a company and with link to modern psychology.

Another thing is in Taoism. In Taoism you have this quote I use is “when in doubt, lean out”. This thing that you can’t force things, and I believe in that, and you can’t force creativity as an example. It’s like when Klaus Rifbjerg was asked: how do you work when you are writing? He says, I can’t force creativity, I can’t force the good sentence to start a chapter, but I want to be at the station, when the creativity train comes in, so to speak. So he starts every morning at eight o’clock sitting in front of his typewriter. And then when the creativity train comes, he is at the station so to speak. I had my yearly company karma conference some months ago, where I invited Christian Hornsleth and he totally agreed, and I know it from myself also, so you can’t force creativity, because what happens when you force, then you place too many words in your head, as we talked about in the beginning. “Now I want to be creative!” Forget about it. But you can position yourself so you become more creative... It’s like when you have a creative team, of course you cannot just have them sit there and wait for creativity, but you have to position them. First of all they have to put something inside their subconsciousness, because the creativity has to come from somewhere. You know they have to travel, they have to read magazines, web sites and all this... and then of course you have a symposium, different people from different departments in the company, but if it becomes too rigid, then it is too forced, so you have to facilitate, some kind of group dynamic that doesn’t force it too much, to enable people to be creative, so it is not, now I have to be creative, because forget about that, so you have to start somewhere else, maybe with information gathering, you start to talk about what does the competition do, okay they do that and that and that... Then you start opening up the gateway to the subconsciousness, so that’s a way of applying the notion of “when in doubt, lean out” to creativity. Another thing is when negotiating. I always use it there. If you force too much... If you push, you push it away, so when I negotiate, I always think about it: when in doubt, lean out. It’s like when you want to score a girl. When in doubt, lean out. It’s the same thing. Instead of detracting you are attracting. It goes with money, it goes with everything else in life. And of course you could say more esoterically, it’s energy and cosmos and so on, but for me it does not have to be that esoteric. It can also just be that’s how two minds work. If you don’t push people too much...because if you push them, you push them away.

The new management bon mot for this is servant leadership that you shouldn’t again so much direct, you should more facilitate as a leader. I don’t totally agree, because I’m an old military

guy, sometimes you have to you know these creative processes, also we cannot listen to each other all day long. Sometimes you have to have code freeze. So now we facilitate, we have a creative brain storm, we have another one, a week from now, but after that it is code freeze, then you, you and you, you go and do your stuff, because otherwise it is too many cooks, you know what I mean? You freeze the codes, you know, we have reached this, it's an expression from the IT business, so you freeze the codes, so from now on, no more inputs are allowed.

But for sure it is possible to facilitate this because many people think that creativity is something where you just sit and touch each other between the toes and all this, but you can and have to facilitate also, because as I said in terms of ensuring flow, if there is no borders, if there is no facilitation, then it just becomes too complacent, ahh, I'm just going to do it tomorrow and then you are not in flow, then you don't have the momentum, so you have to have some momentum going. That's also like my uncle, who is a famous painter, Uffe Christoffersen, and many other artists that I work with, they say the same thing, most of them have very strict regimes, my uncle gets up at the same time every morning, walks the dog, works in his workplace, then he is creative, but then he stops, then he has his lunch and then he works, and then he goes walking again with his dog in Camargue in southern France. He is very structured and again very structured and many artists will tell you this.

Nikolaj: But isn't the idea then, that in order to get organisational Tao rolling, to get this feeling of emergence within the collective that is within the group or wherever. Isn't the idea then the Tao is created, as you create the boundaries, because Tao is not complete chaos. Tao is not laissez-faire leadership, Tao or Taoistic leadership is facilitating and setting the boundaries and then when you have set the boundaries, then you let emerge inside those boundaries. You don't micromanage that process inside the boundaries.

Christian: And of course, nothing should be too rigid, because Tao is not a rigid thing, also in terms of the boundaries that you mention, because new boundaries can be set and so on, it's more to pull a little bit the other way that boundaries, you also have to have that. People has to know when they have to deliver and so on.

Nikolaj: Another analogy from Taoism is the yin and yang picture or analogy and that is exactly the combination of the masculine and the feminine; the rational and the intuitive; the hard stuff and the soft stuff, and I often thought about this when I studied this Taoist literature and actually that analogy makes a lot of sense in the creative context and as you are

explaining it now, because it is not... a lot of people will probably misunderstand Taoism and calling it hokus-pokus and too much letting go, but that's not the idea of it, in my opinion at least. The idea is finding that balance between those forces, so you, well actually it is you who should say this and not me...! But... I'm just trying to get your confirmation of what I'm...

Christian: I totally agree and actually that was my next point that was talking about yin and yang, because I totally agree. There has to be both and these two are also a function of each other, and yin and yang are also you could say, first of all, very concrete, you can say you have the boundaries and you have the yang energy and you have the letting go process with the yin energy. I have been doing martial arts for many years, and there you don't use the force against the guy who you are fighting, you use his force against him or you don't block hard, like you do in Japanese martial arts, you block soft, but then you have the hard energy coming in. And the same thing again, in a lot of business, again as I said: leaning out, but also striking when you see a possibility to strike. Creative processes again... we have the flow going, we have a creative process now and then you also have the code freeze, where you have to implement, so it is always a balance. So for me also, yin and yang are also a reminder of impermanence, because it is always to remember that everything has two sides, and that is also a very important thing to acknowledge when you do business.

And also now, I wrote this column in Jyllands-Posten this Sunday... This thing about... one of the most important things when you talk business is like now when you have the crisis... is the acknowledgement of when you have the recession, is that it will end... Because now everybody thinks.... ah it will never end, it will never end... so if we invest now, you are going to earn a lot of money, when the recession ends. On the other hand, when everybody is investing in real estate, highly geared investments and so on... they think this is never going to stop...but it is going to stop! So this is also a way of implementing the notion of impermanence and yin and yang in terms of the contrast, and you can say the... and also what is feminine is also masculine. Because there is as a side to everything... Dualism is a dangerous thing... what is beautiful for you, is maybe ugly for me and the other way around... so acknowledging impermanence, acknowledging that everything is dynamic, that everything is changing, there is a soft side, there is a hard side... but it is ever changing... and things can have both sides built in them, like a human being can have both a yin energy and a yang energy that has to be balanced out and this I think, drawing back to more concrete Taoism, I think is a very good

reminder, also today, because we live in a world, that is more and more dynamic... In a world where things are changing very fast. And this we also have to acknowledge as leaders in companies, to always to be open and again as I said we have to set boundaries, but we also have to be open to making new boundaries, because things are changing all the time.

Nikolaj: I want to move on to the other concepts, so that we get them all discussed before we finish. The concept of P'u in Taoism... In English a similar notion will be the beginner's mind. How could a creative manager benefit from this concept, this notion of beginner's mind? Can he use it in managing creative processes?

Christian: P'u for me is normally for me the same as what we call empty mind in Zen Buddhism or M'u, which it is also called. I tried with a master in Shanghai. I was having tea and he kept on pouring into my cup. Because I'm the type of guy, especially when I was younger you know, because I read all these books since I was very young, so I keep on asking: what about that? What about that? And what about that? And then the master kept on pouring, and I read this example of emptying your cup, because for new teaching to come into the cup, you have to have an empty cup, so if you keep on pouring it pours over, there is no room for... if you are too preconceived, if you have too many concepts and so on filled inside yourself. If you are too predestined... If you go into a meeting and everything is locked, then you don't see possibilities and especially in creative processes and actually it is a very interesting thing to discuss. Because if you come into a creative process and you are too locked into: "this is how this campaign should be!" or "this is how this design should be!" "Or this is how this invention should be!". Then you are never going to find out new ways and that's the biggest mistake you can make, so you have to have the beginner's mind: p'u, m'u and so on, so you have to re-empty your cup, empty your mind, to be able to take new input in and be open to new ideas coming from others or coming from yourself, or coming from your own subconsciousness, so I think it is very important to practise beginner's mind and not be too predestined in terms of, "okay, this is how this meeting should end!"... and it is also the same thing when you do negotiations, business wise... the bad negotiator is the one who is too rigid, again it has to be like karate or wing-tsun kung fu...giving and taking, finding the holes, being able to shift gear and so on.

Christian: So yes beginners mind in the sense of letting go of inner dialogue, because that is letting go of having your mind filled up with too many concepts... having your consciousness

filled up with too much shit. Because that's also only there you can practise mindfulness... because why do you call it mindfulness, it's because the mind has to be filled with mind and not with words. The mind has to be filled with mind.

Nikolaj: And then this feeling of not having your mind filled with mind. This feeling you get, when you are interacting with other people and forget about yourself, this is what we also call wu wei, right?

Christian: Yes, because the thing is that if you are mindful. If you are practising empty mind... If you are practicing what you also call mu again as beginner's mind, but mushin as empty mind. If you practise that... normally the definition of mushin or in Chinese wúxīn from Tao, is when subject, object and action becomes one... and when Buddha for instance talks about, and also the Taoists talk about interdependence that we are all interdependent that's because the whole cosmos and Tao, we are all a part of Tao. But what it actually means is if we want to experience group flow, creative flow, we have to get closer to each other also... and that's when you know... you get an idea, I get an idea and we bounce the ideas of each other and so on. That's when we are closer together and to get close together, you have to empty your mind and I have to empty my mind, because then you are closer to... then we are more... what keeps us apart is the words and the self-consciousness, Because too many people they walk through life as isolated islands because they are too self-conscious, but if we let go of self-consciousness, if we practice "no mind", that's when you start being more interdependent with the world, with cosmos, with other people, and that's when processes become more creative and more effective also, and that's when the group flow also starts to happen.

Nikolaj: A sort of collective wu wei actually?

Christian: Yeah, you can call it that actually, and that's of course more esoteric, because some people could also say that when you let go of consciousness, when you become one with your surroundings; when you go from small mind to big mind; when you go from me to we; also in Scharmer's Theory U, when you reach the point in the U of letting go and so on. When you start to play the Macro-violin instead of... and so on...when you don't play the violin, the violin plays you and so on. That happens when you start letting go of yourself, so that's the most important thing.

Nikolaj: So part of the creative leader's role is to create the surroundings and to help people letting go. He should not only let go of his own mind and own feelings, but he should also try to create the frame for the group to do the same, is that right? In that would be what we could call the collective... that is when we hope that collective creativity would happen?

Christian: Yes, because that is more esoteric, and if we talk about Taoism, also with the links to Jung and so on... you know using the cosmos notion and so on. There is knowledge that we can call pull down from the collective consciousness and we can in a creative process use each other more in terms of that, it is not only like one plus one become two and it maybe becomes four, because we maybe get some information from some other place. I'm not totally you could say concluded on that... the jury is still in on that for me... but it is an interesting notion of course, the whole thing about the collective consciousness and so on. But no matter what, it works.

Nikolaj: The concept of Chi, energy, would it be related to the concept of flow, or is it something different?

Christian: For me it's more on the physical side than on the mind side. Chi energy is used a lot in martial arts and so on. It is interlinked with the concept of no-mind, then you are more in touch with your, you use your chi energy more. Because what also stops the flow of the chi energy is too much consciousness, again, and the extreme is: "I want to bend my arm now and I bend my arm by flexing my biceps and then I pull it up by using my triceps a little bit..." You know, that is the extreme of self-control. And the other extreme of that is that your hand just moves by itself, so to speak. And this it does easier, if you are not so self-conscious and that is when the chi energy flows more. But for me the chi energy is more a physical thing. It's more when you talk well-being, you have to, you know, you have to ensure that the chi flows through your body, so that it is not stopped and it is more coupled with the whole notion of chakras and so forth and different vortexes of energy and again, it is a little bit more... so of course if you focus on something with your mind, then the chi energy will follow... it's like when I hit you in martial arts, I see my energy go through you and that's why I go after your spine instead of your stomach and that's why my energy will pass through you, so you are going to get hit even harder, so that is a way of using chi energy. So of course mind and body are intertwined, but in terms of talking flow in a company, mushin and so on, there are other

words that I think that are better to use, for me at least, even though all these things are intertwined.

Nikolaj: Faith, belief; that is something that you find in the church, normally, but does it have a place in the organisation as well... this concept of believing in the process, believing in the vision or having faith... should we exclude it from the organisation or is it relevant there?

Christian: I think it is relevant there, but it is also a tightrope. We live in a global world and more and more companies are global companies, because we outsource more, the world is becoming smaller and smaller. We use the the internet more.

But I think that the thing about believing is very important. Because believing in a vision of a company, like believing in your own life mission, I think that is important, because that can also make you think a little more long term focused... and we see it here especially here with the crisis, where people have been very short-term oriented. And I think it is important to do things in the long term and to do that you really need to have some kind of faith or belief, because faith and belief is not just from now and till tomorrow, because it is a more long term thing. Because again as I said, in business there will be ups and downs. But at least if we believe in a common vision and that's when we stick in there, even though it goes up and down. So I think believing in a mission and a vision and in some values and so on, I think that is important, because it gives us something beyond to focus on... It's like, that's also a little bit like I talked about the Tao. I normally use this example; maybe I mentioned this example for you before, with the horseback riders from Mark Epstein's books. I think it is 76% of all horseback riders, they tear down on the last hindrance, why? Because they have to be good at the last one. We as humans, we are not very good at being good, when we have to be good. For the reasons that we talked about before, when we try to force optimal performance. But then they are told these horseback riders to imagine a hindrance, an obstacle, after the last hindrance. A fictitious one. Because what happens then? What happens is that the consciousness, the inner dialogue, the superego, the irritating voice, concentrates on the obstacle that does not exist and then, you so to speak, ride through the real obstacle. And that's a thing about martial arts that I said, about the chi energy and so on. It's a little bit the same, as having faith in a vision, even though there are obstacles, you ride through them, as a company. So I think that it is very important to have this leading star, and then you can say that you believe in it, that you have faith in it or whatever, but I believe that it is important.

Nikolaj: So the role of the manager, the leader of the creative process or the company/organisation in general, could also be to create faith in the organisation's work, not as faith in a particular religion, but maybe faith in faith or belief in belief or belief in that things will work out, so he would actually be, let's say the...again as you talked about in the beginning of the interview... the personality or the expression of the creative manager/director... it waterfalls down on the rest of the organisation, so if he wavers in the belief in what he is doing then it will probably also waterfall down on the rest of the organisation. So a part of his role, as a creative manager, could also be showing, maybe not preaching, but showing a belief in his work and in this way communicating trust or whatever...

Christian: For sure, again, better to show it than to tell it. So to show it, is a good expression and I normally also use the expression of the manager or the leader, and that the leader should be the embodiment of the company vision... so through his or her actions, what he or she say and so on, the vision should be known, and at least it should be felt... so being the embodiment of the company vision. That is an important thing.

Nikolaj: If we kind of zoom out from Taoism and try to look at managing in organisations from a very general viewpoint... you are travelling around the world, and you are meeting people from different organisations, you are involved in different organisations as well.... Is it possible to talk about a general difference between, at least from a philosophical viewpoint, maybe not from a practical viewpoint, but a difference between an Eastern way of perceiving organisation and a Western way of perceiving the organisation? Does it make sense to talk about a difference?

Christian: I still think so. Of course there are more and more commonalities. Because again we live in a globalised world, the internet, companies are more international, again as I said before, with outsourcing etc. But there still are cultural differences in good ways and in not so good ways.

But it is not black and white. I work with companies in Japan and in China that are very influenced by Taoism... very much you know. I have a good friend in China... one of the most influential business managers. He is now building one of the biggest Chinese monasteries, so he is very influential. He is in the food industry and he has monks meditating in all of his food industry production plants to give good karma to the animals and so on, so that's of course

very esoteric, you could say, I tried in Japan to work with people and do negotiations, where they are influenced by Shinto and Zen, where they build in pauses in the negotiations, inspired from Shinto and Zen and from the notion of Ma, building in pauses, you know. Like the Samurai, to go back, so you are not too influenced by your feelings, so they don't make decision that they regret. So when they feel that they are too influenced by their emotions, you the thing about, if you don't control your emotions, your emotions will control you. If they feel that they are pulled by a bull in their nose by their feelings, they pull back and they create this Ma, and then they come back, where they are more focused, where they are more Ma, more Shanti, more in the moment and mindful, and that's something that the samurai did also.

So in many ways there is this difference, but on the other hand many Japanese companies are also more rigid than many Western companies, you know, super top – down, super hierarchic, this thing, that if I'm there as a company owner, then I have to be there and then other people, so very inefficient and not very flexible at all, so you can say: yes there are differences, but these differences overlap

Interview with Clemens Thornquist

Nikolaj: The two cases that you present in your book, the one with Vivienne Westwood and the other one with Robert Wilson, the way they work in these organisations, can you maybe recap a bit on that?

Clemens: For me there is a lot of similar patterns when it comes to

Nikolaj: But what I noticed in your paper was that when you went through the methodology chapter, you criticised a lot the existing or governing way of approaching the design methodology, you went through Bergson right and his ontology, and then you continued into Taoism as a possible technology or methodology or approach to managing right?

Clemens: Yeah, well the reason for that was that, I think that there are these two main, and my critique against the whole design management thing was that, from there perspective you have an organisation, wherein you put some sort of strange creative being and you need to sort of deal with that strange bird and instead you shift things around and you start to build an organisation from an artistic movement... I mean today it is quite popularised with the self-organisation, and I think self-organisation, and probably if I were to write my thesis today, self-organisation, would also be touched upon, put in the work, I guess, because it is much more turning and shifting the things around and you see the propensity of the actual methods and ways of working and how that organises itself into a collective, whereas the whole design management discourse, which I see as quite a blunt way of dealing with things, it is much more an outside control of something that... well, how can we hold this thing, how can we put a leash that is not too tight and that is not too loose, to gain what we have and it becomes much more deterministic in a sense.

I mean also the design schools, sort of the product design schools, they teach a methodology, which is very much, I mean basically, it is knowing the answer in the beginning and then you get your parameters from start and then you start to solve that problem and during the way of solving these things or working your forward, you are not so open-minded to what happens to your way, but actually solving the problem that's in the beginning. So you rely very much on the problem that you once stated, instead of seeing that once you understand more and more, you will see that the question will change. But then when it comes to choosing both Bergson

and Taoism, to me they are both very similar in many senses, but I think that Bergson has more of an ontology, he has more of a developed ontology, whereas Taoism for me, has a lot more developed methodology. Bergson, I think, touches upon methodology, I think, where he lacks quite much in methodology, whereas Taoism is more developed.

Nikolaj: Yeah, it was very interesting to read about that fit. It made very much sense so... some of the Taoist concepts that you mention in the book, like the Tao itself of course, but also the principal of wu-wei and these concepts, is it possible for you to expand a bit on them and maybe how you see them fit into the understanding of the creative organisation and its work, if we begin with Tao, for example?

Clemens: Wu-wei basically means that you are thinking directly with your actions instead of thinking before, and then carrying out. It becomes sort of a philosophy thing through the hands, in one way, I guess. And I think, I gave an example at one point, where I in a way learned to take the perspective of Wilson, was that, well in many cases, but one thing I remember was that when we were out cutting rose bushes, and first you don't really see how you want to cut them, and how Wilson wants things and after a while you start to ask, and he tells you, well cut there, cut there and cut there. And after a while you start to reach the same pace and after even more time you don't think of what you are, you don't have a very analytical way of, and you don't need to look very long to see what needs to be done, but you become very relaxed in how you cut and how you actually sculpture these bushes after Bob's perspective, when you reach the point of...eh, I mean it's like the new sports reporters, who say that have realised today that now he has to make the high jump, so he has to focus on the way he puts down the foot. But on the other hand, he has to completely forget it, because if he thinks too much about his foot, then he is never going to be able to jump. And I think that's... In one way it's... In Wilson, there is not a lot of talk about that this means this and this means that. It's the complete opposite of an ad agency, where you hear a lot of bullshit about, oh it's very much communication in this image that will symbolise this, this or that. Or if we bring this blue in then it will sort of emphasise this, this and that. There is absolutely no such discussion in Wilson's world at all, it's just a pure relaxed play with form, in a very direct way.

Nikolaj: That has something to do with his intuitive approach to working, right?

Clemens: Well, it becomes like a collective intuitive manner, because, it's about or you have to learn that... like the way I have learned Swedish culture, is the way I have learned Bob's world.

And the more familiar and the more you have trained the more aspects of his world, you have dealt with, the more comfortable you will be to make the decisions in his world and not think too much about them. And it's the same with Westwood, there I couldn't take the decisions in the beginning, and it doesn't really matter how many instructions that you will get in the beginning from the people that you succeed, telling you how this work should be done. You need to be there and surrender in order to get a base for your decision-making. And the very bureaucratic organisation of course, the instruction will help you to do your work, but from an aesthetic perspective, the only thing for me is to finally surrender and capitulate to the whole thing.

Nikolaj: And would you say that this approach of surrendering to both the moment, but also the work place in general. Would you that it is possible to extrapolate from that and say that you need to do, particularly in creative organisations, or is it a general thing, or is it more needed to have this approach in a creative organisation?

Clemens: Definitely, if it is a very... all creative organisations are idealistic in some way, but they have an ideal or some kind of will or myth that they work on and eh... I mean absolutely yes, you need to do that, but you need to turn it around also, and say that the organisation needs to have a certain quality already, in order for you to surrender... I mean it's quite easy to surrender to something like Wilson and Westwood. But I guess it is also easy to surrender to McKinsey and to other cultures or organisations that have very strong cultures. So definitely you also need this kind of parish or sectoristic kind of place in order to have something to surrender to.

Nikolaj: Do you have advice for the managers of these creative processes? Can they do anything to build up a certain culture or structure or something that can make people work in this way? Is there anything they can do?

Clemens: My whole conclusion of my work was that we needed what I designated "Embodied emptiness", in that the manager has to make space for spontaneous and creative acts. To me then it became an aesthetical problem instead of an organisational one, so that the manager's task, if it's a meeting or if you are painting things together or if you are just sitting in a board meeting, the manager or the chairman's task is really to emphasise and create some spontaneous acts wherein people together can share and where you create a space for the act to happen, and that means not putting the lid on and always coming with the solution first.

Nikolaj: So the role of the manager in the creative organisation how would he differ in his approach compared to a traditional industrial manager?

Clemens: Well, it's a different kind of control. It's a different way of controlling things. For me, it's if you want to put a name on it, it is much more of a control through manipulation, if you want to have some kind of underlying direction to it, instead of having an obvious or very clear control. It's not completely letting things go, but it is more of a... the things that you think that you would be happy to control from a bureaucratic viewpoint... you just need to skip those things and leave them open, but then you can control things through other means, and in a strong culture, you would have the strong cultural control and you as a manager can use that instead. So I would call it a slight manipulation of people. By using the disposition or the propensity of the whole organisation, instead of trying to force the whole thing a certain direction. So fundamentally, it is about having a lot more trust...also in people within the organisation.

Nikolaj: In the Savage and the Designed, you also mention the concept of faith... on having faith in the creative process.

Clemens: Well, faith for me was that if you back up one step... the first thing is to realise the world, in a double sense... both realising that you have one and then also actualising and realising it. Then the second part of it is also to have faith in it, within your perspective within your world, and that faith you will get from socialising with the world and once you have faith that will also be the foundations for the intuition, which then, in turn, also is based on your experience, by you knowing your own world, because in the world, you also have both expressions and methods, and methods, which are very much linked to the expression. In these organisations, in Bob's world, they are much more process than result oriented. You will never here one say that "I don't give a shit about, how you do it, you only need to come with this result". Instead they will care very much about how you do things. Because you will think that a certain method will lead to a certain kind of result.

Nikolaj: In the book also, you mention some of the work done by Csikszentmihalyi, you know the American psychologist with the concept of Flow. Does this relate to what you talk about having faith in the process and if you have faith in the process, then you have flow emerging. Does it relate like this, or what is the relationship?

Clemens: No, for me flow was sort of an obvious reference to put in there. Flow is sort of a famous work.

Nikolaj: We talked about intuition in the creative process, but how about its opposite, rationality; does it have any place in the creative organisation?

Clemens: To me intuition is very rational, and to me it's almost super rational. I mean the only thing that might be different is that, since it is more of a holistic approach, you always have the same problem of not being able to quantify the motives of your decision, but this does not necessarily depend on that you don't have any real experience, or that you don't have any facts behind your decision. Because you have! But these factors are just as much the interrelation between all these factors, as the factors themselves. So for me intuition becomes a very rational perspective. I mean, the whole fraud with intuition is the whole gut-feeling concept, which I think is completely nonsense.

Nikolaj: Can you expand a bit on that, how do you think that it confuses the real substance of intuition?

Clemens: Well the thing is that the problem with the popular notion of intuition is that people regard intuition as succeeding with your gut feeling, but I mean intuition and any kind of philosophical method can both succeed and fail obviously. And I think if you look closer or when I look at it, I think there is much more to it, there is much more an outlying process or philosophy than the common idea of intuition prescribes. I mean it's like, it does not help when people present Eastern philosophy in an obscure or almost mystic way. It only, especially not, if I want it imported in a fanatically critic scientific or academic context.

Nikolaj: There is a lot of focus also on the spontaneity issue in your paper and again it relates to wu-wei, which we touched upon earlier....

Clemens: If you have trained something very much or if you have exercised something very much, then you get the ability of acting spontaneously.

Nikolaj: If you look at the creative process in general, in an organisation, like for example at Westwood, would it make sense in a way, to say that the creative process has a life of its own?

Clemens: Yes absolutely. That's the whole point with self-organisation and art management. For example when I work with the fashion students here and when they start working with a

concept or an idea, they put in a lot of their own things within a project that should not have those things, since if they would rather have followed the material, the sketching and so on, it would have taken a different a different way. Of course, you should follow and trust the work that you have and sort of relate loosely to it... so in such way the project should have a direction of its own. Since you are the author of it, it is you who will bear the marks of the organisation anyway.

Nikolaj: And this happens both for an individual designer, who creates a style on her own, but also if you have a larger group that does something in communion?

Nikolaj: To what extent are feelings and emotions relevant in the creative organisation?

Clemens: I think they play a big role. For me, I see objectivity as a collective subjectivity

Basically, it is like if you only think then you find it very hard to move over to acting. But if you have a balance between them or if you act while you think, then it is much more easy to have a good connection in between abstraction and concretion.

Visioning through acting and realising that in the acts what you do or what you produce is also an expression for the vision and finding that instead of building grand visions with lots of text to be followed.

Interview with Ernest Holm Svendsen

Ernest: Educated from the university of Århus in dramaturgy and multimedia. Continued with teaching at the university in design and creativity. Moved on to the consultancy business, where he worked for a couple of years for a large IT-consultancy, where he ended up, as head of creative processes in the Danish part of that company. After that he created his own company: called *Kunsten at være menneske* (The Art of being Human) and wrote his book on being present in the “Now” called *Nærvær*. In his company, he teaches creativity and is a joint professor in innovation at the university of Aalborg. Along side his professional life, he has been involved in *Café Kølbert*, which is an improvisational theatre that performs shows in Denmark.

Ernest: If a manager of a group, wants to get to some kind of a result, he has to accept that a lot of what is going on happens on a subconscious level, which is not possible to access directly, and you have to give space and room for that. So you must create the right atmosphere, the right kind of setup and framework to let the subconscious processes happen in the group.

Ernest: There is this word from Chinese philosophy called “wu-wei”, which is usually translated into meaning “no action” or not doing, but that is not an entirely correct translation, because wu does not mean not, in means the absence of yes and no, so in our dualistic thinking it will mean “no doing”, as an opposite to doing but it is actually neither not doing, or doing, it is a complete elimination of that dualism and this is a state that many Chinese art forms are trying to achieve, be that shooting an arrow or painting, dancing or calligraphy. You try to get into that state, where it is a free flow of action, where you feel that your personality, your conscious mind is not actually involved, it is just happening through you, and in my interpretation, I would say that this is what happens when you get your subconscious to work free of the control of your conscious actions. So “you” step aside, the dancer steps aside and lets the dance, dance itself and artists from all places and of kinds of ages have been describing this, in our culture we call it inspiration from God or that we feel the Muses flow through us. This is the state, where the subconscious is allowed to act freely through us. This complexity gets to express itself freely and real beauty arises when you get into that state. This is very difficult to achieve individually but it is very possible and has been

done many times. When I say that it is difficult to achieve, I mean that it is difficult to force it out. When we do things we know how to do and we like, then we can get that feeling of flow from our subconscious into our actions... And it is very much a matter of your inner life, so it is very much a matter of being a person who has the freedom to allow that process to occur. This can be long work in yourself to be able to achieve this “wu-wei” ability in not letting the stories about yourself come into the way, or your desires or your fears... all these things get in the way and make our conscious or our personality step in and try to take control and thus reduce complexity and thus usually take us away from the goal that we are trying to achieve. But it is possible to do it and if you are in a group then that kind of complexity in yourself multiplies, because now it is not only inside myself that I have to have this kind of freedom, I also need it in my relationship, so apart from having to trust myself and having freedom and joy and happiness in myself, now if we are five people together, we need to have the same kind of freedom and joy, honesty and straightforwardness and the ability to make room for each other in the group, and there certainly are lots of examples in culture and we all do it, I mean a good sports team, when they really work they do this, they respect each other: I know I can pass that ball and I know you’ll be there and I am not even in doubt, because we have been doing that time and time again and that is when you see art in sports, in a group, so it is very much possible... what it takes, are some personal skills and a personal will to let your personal disagreements be put aside, you have to be a larger person than your own little egoistic idiosyncracies and tendencies, and have to say for the common good or for the will or the joy of doing this together. I love to dance, and when I find a partner, where this is there, where we work, then the dance becomes the most beautiful thing in the world and there is this... not stepping in the way that means that when people are looking at it from the outside, they can misunderstand that process and think I am flirting heavily or I am going to be unfaithful to my wife, which is not true at all, it is just hard to understand, what is going on, when you do not have that experience with what dancing can be and I am sure that Tiger Woods can have the same feeling with golf and all kinds of sports, there are just some people who are artists or masters that can take their work that seriously that are willing to pass on the little personality issues and let that step to the side and open up.

Ernest: What we need is dedication from these people. What we need is for people to say is: This process is more important than I am, because that is what it takes. Peoples’ stories of

themselves are very important to them, so it is a lot to ask from them, it takes a lot of motivation. And I think, that is why you see start up companies happen a lot, because the people who are there, this is their life, this is their dream, and it is easy for them to be creative about this dream, because this is what they want, but when you get to a level, when you start hiring people in, who have families, jobs and hobbies...they just go to work. They are just coming here to work, because, though I like my company and I like my colleagues, and I want the best for my company, but I am not giving myself with my skin and my hair to this company, because I have a lot of other agendas going on in my life, and to get that kind of dedication, where you are willing to say ok, I will just let go of that takes some very special personal qualities, so actually I think...first it is very much about the atmosphere in the room, very everything is all right, it is very much an atmosphere of playfulness, that is the essence of it, it has to be like when we were kids and we were playing and that is a very creative place to be in, it has to be fun, so the motivation comes just out of the process that is satisfying in itself, so first of all, as the manager of that little group, you can't keep your close on, I have this image of taking your clothes off, what I mean is, it is much easier for other people to be naked, if you are naked yourself, we all know how it is...you are at the beach and you are in your bathing trousers and everything is nice...then you go up to town to shop and then you are suddenly standing in the grocery store, and it just feels wrong. The same for the creative group on a concrete level, the more naked everyone is, the more easy it is for me to get naked and to the manager of that group must go first, and be willing to put his personality at stake, he can't play his status games, he can't play his positioning games, he has to be there on the same level as the others and be a completely faulty human being, we are all idiots and he has to be the first one to show that, so we have to have a playful atmosphere, we have to relieve the pressure of having to come up with a goal, okay, maybe nothing comes out of this but we will just play with it, for half an hour, and see what comes out of it, at least just to open our eyes and broaden our horizons.

Ernest: So the manager has to have some very good personal qualities that makes people around him feel free, and that makes it hard just to rationalise it or put it in a little box and just say you just have to this and that and then you are just employees, because we are working at a level of nuances here where even though you do the right thing, if you do it just slightly wrong, then it does not work, then it becomes faulty.

I don't know the Google case very well, but as I hear of it, I have a sense that they have sort of managed to do some things that does this and it is about feeling free and feeling appreciated about what you do, so that you get your motivation going and it is the slightest things and that is really the hard part, you can't really... this has to do with your personality, it has to do with your entire personal structure, so it is not something that you can fake, because we are mammals that can live in a group, all though we now have this complexity in our lives, we super sensitive to the signals other people send and if am an employee in an employer relationship, then my senses to how my employer reacts are extremely acute and I am very touchy with what he does and what he says, and it is very hard to create that kind of atmosphere where I as the employee feel free enough, because there is just a lot of status and a lot of lore going on between us, so the manager has to have a lot of personal qualities that make people feel free and that makes it hard just to rationalise it or put in little boxes and say you just do this and that, because you are employees... we are working on a level of nuances here, where even though you do the right thing, then if you do it just slightly wrong, then it doesn't work, so it is very good to have the Friday meeting, it is very good to say: Good work, everybody, but if you inside yourself have this feeling, but could we not do a little more, or I'm a little bit better than you, it will flow out in your communication, and that complex subconscious communication and the other people will register in on that subconscious level.

Ernest: Doing creative processes are actually also therapeutic work, because what has to be removed are things in your personality that are standing in the way. Your desire to do good or your fear of speaking up, or your feelings that the others are better than you or your feeling that you are better than them, whatever it is, so you cannot get that free flow in a group, if the group is not willing to go into that room in themselves and together, where there is openness to do, to discuss and to confront personalities. So not only must the leader himself be free and step first and show his personality, he also has to be able to say to one of the other guys: I feel you are holding back a little bit..

Ernest: There is a difference between "action-time" and "clock-time" and we were on "action-time", which is a very important basis, because you need "action-time" to do this. Our work is structured by the actions we do, not what time it is. So we do this, for as long as it takes. When we are hungry, we go eat, and when we are done, we go back. It is not like, we go eat between twelve and twelve-thirty.

Our openness with each other, our sensitivity with each other, our communication was so completely open, that in half an hour, we would do the work, we had gotten together to do like that and it would be at a level far beyond what we were used to, so the product that came out of it would be extremely good, it was so quick, but it was only possible to it that good and that quick, because we were opening up to each other, getting in touch with each other, getting rapport, clearing out all that garbage that was in the way, so that there was a completely free flow between us, and if we had not done that, and jumped straight to the work, then we would have spend the entire day on work and it would have been less good and taking longer, so now we have a great process, we open up and we get to do things and when we start doing the work, it grows naturally out of the “action-time” and because of that openness towards ourselves and each other there is openness to our creative subconscious and our subconscious ideas can come freely up and meet the world and the results become wonderful. And actually, I would say, that the ideal demand, but this takes so much from the people involved and it takes so much from the manager, who on a process level, must be able to run that kind of thing, but it is also a very tough demand to put on your employees and that is why I say, that it is in the start up process, that everybody wants this, because...

Ernest: Well, I agree that when you have a group of people that are controlling themselves and managing themselves in order for them to manage themselves in the right direction, we need a common goal or a vision to say this is the direction.

Ernest: The more you go into this free flow, that we are talking about and the more difficult it will be for you to go against basic human ethics

Ernest: I do not believe in creative work, where you do not invest your personality and I believe that you will always meet some limitations in yourself and if you want to become really good at this and master this creativity and that can be an emotional process, there is no creativity without emotions, it is our emotional systems that get in the way when we are in the way of our creativity.

Ernest: We are using our emotions very much, when we think and this is a new way of understanding what thinking processes are

Ernest: Now, intuition is the ability to feel these subconscious trains of thought, so although in your conscious mind, you can't see why, you have to do something, in your subconscious

mind where you can handle the complexity of life to a far larger degree, you already know a lot more about what is going on, and if you have the willingness to go with those emotion that say develop that thought in that direction, then there will be something good out of that, working purely on intuition, just feeling, it's not magic, it's not God whispering in your ear, it's subconscious processing on a level that go so many times faster than the thinking that you can do in your conscious mind and if you develop that sensitivity, which is an emotional thing, a feeling of that there is something here, although you consciously don't know then, you trust your gut feeling, which is your body's response to certain trains of thought that you haven't even moved into you conscious mind yet, then you are starting to do **wu-wei**, then you start to allow your subconscious to act through you and that means you sometimes do things that look very, very odd to the conscious mind but if you get enough experience, then the fact that this action works and if you don't get fearful experiences that make you run up into your brain or your mind or your rational part of your brain and hide up there in your fear and then a loop starts that make you more and more rational and makes you move further and further away from these kinds of things... if you are just lucky enough to start up with having three or four really good experiences with your gut feeling, then you are on a track that is set for success, because then you have this experience in your mind that I should listen to this feeling and

Ernest: It's the force or the Tao of Chinese thinking and yes in Star Wars and I'm not quite sure about Taoists what they actually think but there is a religious tradition that says it is something outside them, but I believe that philosophical Taoists will say that Tao is the flow of life, it runs in life and it runs inside you and you have to tap into that and act from that, so it's that same complexity, it's that same structure, your subconscious structure, like the forest is structured, so the way a tree grows and the way an idea can emerge is actually the same process, because we are all nature, we are all just life and you have to stop doing that rationalising and controlling and putting the forest into straight lines and trust that you have in you wisdom of life that has that complexity of the subconscious that will just help you develop the idea of the company or whatever it might be...I mean sometimes it is like flying a airplane and you are flying towards the gate and the gate is closed and you are going full speed towards it and you have to trust that just before I get there the gate will open

In Star Wars, Master Yoda says that fear leads to the dark side and that is true, because if we in this little metaphor says that the dark side is lost in thinking and lost in power and lost in

structure and cut off from the feeling of what is right, then fear leads to the dark side, because fear makes us move up and try to rationalise our way out of things that can only be solved by not rationalising but feeling our way out of it

Ernest: There is nothing magic about it, it is not God whispering in your ear, it is complex processing and if you are processing you need something to process and the more you feed in there, the better you will be, and that is why the mastering is based on experience, and experience is based on making mistakes, so mastering comes out of trying things out and making mistakes, but slowly you get more and more experience and that means that your sensitivity to these things will get better and in the concrete case of making a new collection of clothes, get as much inspiration as possible, stuff it all in there, because it is all things that will become part of that forest out of which something can grow, so I quiet agree with that, I think that every aspect of history shows that that is how it works, don't just sit there and get inspiration, you work with it and you work and you work, but what it's difficult or what the challenge is that you have to be very aware that when that little spur of **intuition** or subconscious idea or whatever we call it comes up, go with it, so you have to have that ability to be rational and playful with real life stuff, but always listening, but always paying attention, okay we want to work with canvas

Ernest: What are you creating, if you are an artist in the sixteenth century, but the cliché artist just creating in the flow of God, Mozart or Shakespeare or Picasso.

Ernest: We can perhaps call it the difference between the intention and the goal, there is a difference between these two, because intention is something inside you that comes out, whereas goal is where I'm going to, intention is sort of inside, so you can have an intention based creative process: I want to express this feeling I have, I do not care if it is a poem or a song or a dance or a colour, I want to express as precisely as I can my intention and I have some areas where I'm more skilled than others, but usually

At some point, we need some kind of structure, because he is doing clothes for Hummel, there is a line in that

Ernest: But a guy like Blake, would use all kinds of things to painting to writing to doing happenings, because he just wants to have that effect, he is intention based, when you are goal based or going towards some kind of goal then it sort of get reversed and then you can do all

kind of things, but you are always headed in that direction... so I will agree with him that the creative director has to give direction towards that goal to make sure that these creative people are kept on track, so to speak, but a very, very broad track... what I operate with or creativity theory operates with is where you alternate between different phases where you alternate between creative work and critical work or critical thinking or directive thinking or whatever we can call it, so you can open up and you can close in and you can open up and close in etc. and in the closing in phases you decide in which direction you will go next and that is sort of how you are kept in the overall right direction... I agree that it is a total myth that there are people who are living in a creative state of mind, all of the time.

Creativity can be a state of madness if you don't have rationality to back it up or frame it. And that goes for an organisation as well.

Ernest: We have this opposition often of the creative, intuitive and the rational mind, but to me that is the same mind and you can be better or worse at using that, the mind is a power tool, the human nervous system is the ultimate power tool, being a fantastic, plastic, flexible thing that can adjust and you know my arm is controlled by this area but now I ruined that area, but now I'm training up that area and then this area can control my arm, I mean to be able to utilise that power tool (the mind) means to be able to be very critical, very rational thinking and to be very much the other thing and you have underdeveloped your mind if you have only capable of doing one thing and it is like a person running, if only one works well, I mean it can be a very well trained leg you know, but they will not run as far as someone who has both legs very well trained because these go together in the complexity, it is a matter of having that agility and flexibility and ability to concentrate and open up, it is like a muscle; it has to be trained to relax and tension, so it is really much a matter of being able to use that power more than being able to use this kind of work and this kind of work... it is an overlap

Ernest: In my ideal human being you are in this flow, this taoistic change, everything is changing all the time, your biology is changing, you are never ever, the same twice,

Ernest: It is okay to have a map, you just need to know that it is a map and the problem is that and I think that is your underlying discontent with these rational tools is that people get lost in them and think they are the territory, they start seeing people as objects in there and people are not and people are not and that is why it is hard to say what is the right way of

dealing with the creative organisation or the creative group, because unless that you are there and you know what specific group it is, in this specific setting on this specific Sunday morning, where this guy did not have enough breakfast and this one had good sex this morning and this one had an argument with his wife, before you had that complexity, you don't know what to do, you can't rationalise before, you can prepare, you can think, you can consider, you can look at the map, you can draw a map and say that guy probably has some problems at home, but maybe he did not have it today, maybe today was the good day and all this complexity, you can't handle that rationally, when I'm sitting there with the group, I have to respond to my own intuitive feeling and then I have to do what is right there with the only tool I have namely me. And that tool, when I was five years old, was not very well developed, now I'm older, it's better developed. I hope by the time I turn sixty, it will be even more sensitive and I will see even more things in a group and I will be able to respond to that. But the only way to get there, is to respond to what is there now in this phase of my life, as I said earlier, I become a master by experience and I get experience by trying things out and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't, it's all what informs my subconscious or my intuition, so it will be even better next time

Ernest: Lao-Tzu again says: when the master governs the people says: look we did it all by ourselves and that is the goal in my eyes...you can't have...in there is this description, where he has all kinds of leaders and it's a degradation all the way and in the end they use group force but then you ruin everything, but when the master governs this, then the employees feel it is their company, they are doing the work, we don't even need a manager, what are you here for, that's when you are a master, okay, but probably the moment you go out, it falls apart, but no one feels it, it is because you did this, it is because you brought in that pair of trousers there, and then someone picks it up and feels: I just got this idea, I found these pair of trousers...but you did not do it rationally, you do it because you are in the flow also, you are just helping them being this catalyst, or whatever of this process, that's what you want to be, you don't want to be the controller and again it is so important with the frame and these are the metaphors that we use and the minute we start and because our brain is so plastic, the minute we start using a metaphor then we'll go into that direction, and it is very dangerous because then we can start thinking some thoughts that are different from... you need the right metaphors....and the metaphor of the catalyst and it is the metaphor of the master that

governs the country by being invisible, by walking behind the people and not in front of the people to make sure everyone is there, and then they will find their own way and trust the people leave them alone... these are intelligent people, leave them alone, working at GABBA or hummel.

Ernest: But the things that you need to talk about are not the collection itself, it's what's happening right now... the creative process is a sensitive process that needs us to open up in ourselves and towards each other, and that opening up is ruined if you are not honest or if you don't say what is there. Because if I'm annoyed with something with you and it really bothers me and I don't tell you then we can't work because there is no flow and I'll just keep on going back and it will ruin the entire creative process, so it is very, very simple.... 2you have to say that thing is very annoying and then we can't work because there is no flow, and it will ruin the entire creative process...you need to say that that thing is really annoying.....so for me it's a matter of keeping up that free flow in the communication sense, we need to have that flow going between us as broadband as possible, and everytime there is something that I am dishonest about or something that I'm holding back that stops part of the communication and it can be and we not to keep it as free flowing and open as possible in our relationship and that goes for the creative process very much, otherwise we will start using resources, let's say we have a hundred percent resources to do the creative thinking or the creative processing in our subconscious, but if there is something that bothers me with you, then I'll start using more and more percentage of my resources with dealing with that, on being annoyed or trying not to see it or whatever and that will limit the amount of broadband or processing power I have for the task at hand... one metaphor is the broadness of our communication, making that as free as possible, and there we need a free flow, without things being in the way, then there is inside me, I have an amount of resources, battery power and if I start diverting that power into other things like he is an idiot, then I only have a hundred percent power, so there will be less power for creative processing inside myself, but it is two images of the same thing, it is just inside and between us.

Ernest: If you are lying or holding back something then that is one way of hindering you from entering the creative flow. You are stepping out of the flow, you are isolating yourself from the free flow, and the more you hold back...now a lie is when I know something to be different than I express, and I can know something to be different, and I'm maybe wrong, but to me it is

honest, because this is how I understand the situation and it may be completely wrong, when I express my true understanding honestly, then I can be corrected by seeing your reaction

Ernest: When I do improvised theatre and we are on stage and this could be a jazz band also, when you open up to each other as I'm talking about and you really get into that state, where you have nothing to win and nothing to lose, which is the basis of doing good improvisation on stage, you are not proving anything and if you look like an idiot, you look like an idiot, you are not afraid and then you go together, four or five people, you can get into a place, where you connect so much that apparently none of you are creating this thing, you have no idea where it came from, you make the scene, the sketch, the story and it is a beautiful story and you can feel that it has deep roots into the structural foundations of storytelling in the world just using these things in a complexity that is so wonderful and yet you are not and none of us...like who got the idea of Peter Pan flying in? No one knows...he just came flying in and he really came by himself, we didn't do it! It is that kind of situation and what I feel is that when you are that open to each other, this plastic entity that your subconscious is they it overlaps or interact with each other so you all together become one unity on that level of complexity....so you are so open to each other that when you add something to this complexity, my ability to handle complexity immediately sees it and develops it and so on, we just connect so much that we are doing it together and that's where you want to go, that's where you get the creative group that really works, and you almost have a common subconscious, you almost have a common mind, I know what you are going to say before you say it, it is a matter of many things, it is a matter of knowing each other well enough, to be able to predict each other's patterns, it is matter of being honest and open enough and not afraid of each other and to allow the others to come in and have that free flow, it's a matter of not having that little; "I get the best ideas!" You have to let completely go of the idea of owning an idea and that is definitely the goal and when you get there, you have this beauty that goes far beyond anything... Aristotle has this concept of catharsis and it's the idea that you see something going on up on stage, and when you see that then in the theatre then you get cleansed inside that when you have been through that process: you know the hero fighting these demons and everything and when and you get that catharsis feeling when you have been watching an American movie and ends and everybody is clapping because you been through this emotional rollercoaster ride and then you can relax afterwards if you don't watch the last ten

minutes of the movie you go out tense, because you don't get that relief and when you do a good improvised show and then this happens then I feel that catharsis can become and I think that the human mind is plastic enough to be able to connect in a group very well, and actually you can have and this has been experimented with in theatre very much but it is very hard to construct but you can have situations where there is an audience and there are some actors and they connect in that fuzzy, synchronised way in the way that the actors perform something that the audience needs to see in order to be relived and get that catharsis, so they are co-creators on what is going on and that's where it gets not only fuzzy but mystical and magic but that's where the cradle and the improvised theatre comes from, the idea that I can be the exponent and that you can sort of come into and that I can dance the healer of the village, can take on the conscious of the village and dance the demons away and make the fight with the Gods and he is just and dancers have the same feeling, and there are many traditions in all kinds of cultures that tap into this kind of idea that we have so much commonality in our group experience that you are just an extension of me and that the battle there is a battle within me and it relieves it and the entire group is done.

Ernest: There is this group of people in South America that I happen to know of, where they do these dances, they do this by dancing and the elder of the town is the guy and the interviewer, the anthropologist came up to see what they were doing, and he asked: when do you do this dance, it was a dance that everyone participates in and it is a big cleansing experience and it changes the whole atmosphere of the village and the elder he just says: we dance when it is the time to dance and that kind of attitude towards it... I'm getting goose pimples from telling you about it, because it is so beautiful, he just knows when it is time and there is no fixed time, there are no rules and the entire village goes together and it culminates in this big dance where everyone dances and it is not choreographed, it is improvised but you get this drama of that everyone is and it happens and it is not planned...it happens on a deep, deep structural level in the subconscious of this village and it is completely altering, it changes, it solves problems, it's trauma treatment, it's what we do, when we meet our Freudian psychologist, it's just on a group level, but that's the energy we are talking about, that's the flow you can get, but you can't get that by being a manager in a company that says, now we need to do that. It's a very complex thing and the only tool you have to create it, is you as a person, allowing yourself to be completely naked using everything you can right now, not

thinking it, not structuring it, just doing what is right, but you can do a lot of things to create an organisation, where that is possible, of course in law firm, we have all these rituals and rules that inhibit us and the Google example it sounds like they are good at creating an atmosphere, where you can listen to your gut feeling and just do what is right today and get into action time and that's the basis: getting into that state of creativity but we are talking about things where you should search in the mystical histories of practised religion in the cultures of the human mind rather than in management theory definitely and it gets look haired.

Interview with Esben Just

Nikolaj: When you work creatively, how do you work, is there a way to let's say creativity happen in a group. Is there anything you can do as a front singer or artist?

Esben: Well, it depends on how you define creativity. If you want to go in and reproduce a situation that is basically creative, but you have to get the same energy, sort of recalled, then that is one situation and well basically it is the same, but you can also be in a situation, where what you produce has not been there before, but again I think basically, you have to use the same principals and awareness... somehow you have to understand that things have a flow and especially in music, you can say that everybody understands that music have to swing. And if you look at what swing is, you could say it is also a wave, and when you look at a wave form, you could basically say you have what you can call plus and minus. You will also find that, if you see the yin and yang symbol. You have the plus and minus that together becomes one and you can say that from an overall view, where I'm standing that every process has to contain the plus and the minus, in order to be successful. And that is the flow that you sort of want to achieve, so what you want to learn first, before you start a creative process is how to identify where you are. Are you in a plus or a minus situation? Because, according to the yin and yang symbol, if you know one, you also know the other, because that is the opposite.

Nikolaj: So what could be a plus and what could be a minus in a musical group, if you want to create a new tune, for example?

Esben: Well, also in a way, you have to be able to contain energy, to start a creative process. You also have to gather energy somehow, so that you have a starting point, and then you can say well, plus is of course, for example, a positive situation, so if you have a group of people that has to do something together, then first of all you have to make sure that the mood is positive... that nobody is moping or don't want to be there or is trying to have something else done, that was it supposed to be there. And then you sort of have to make a frame, so that you have a container for the energy, and once you have the energy contained then you can start moving the frames or the borders, pretty much, as you want, because you can see that the energy starts to get so thin that there is no more flow or it becomes so tight that it will explode.

Nikolaj: So there can be too much energy also?

Esben: Yeah, I mean you have to find out what the appropriate amount of energy is and when to sort of move it from one mood to another.

Nikolaj: So, let's say you work in a band and you jam to get to a new tune that is new? How do you do that? Can you describe, how you work, to get to a new tune?

Esben: Well, in all, for something to appear, there needs to be a lack of something else. You know the old thing with the cup... if it's full, how can there be room for anything new? So in a way, the first step is to empty the mind, in a way. Not to have any idea of what will come. I mean the minute you have a fixed idea of what the new tune you want to create should sound like, or what kind of feeling it has... you are already filled. So you have to sort of trust in, that if you empty yourself to a certain degree, then you will be filled up with something and that something is hopefully something, that you will consider something new.

Nikolaj: When you work with the other band members... how does it work, when you are playing together as a band... is there anyone, who is in charge... who is sort of the director of the group, or is everybody at the same level?

Esben: My experience is that when you play together, you have this groove and the groove also makes that wave sign or like the plus and minus, just from the idea. And in that, you will know, that when you play with other people and you have experience to be in a groove, you will know that the groove is something that is actually physically in a way, and that it can be directed to any of the band members, depending on what song it is and where in the song we are and what effect we want to have from the song. So the band members are equal, but there will always be one band member, who sort of has the groove, as a responsibility or as in he has it right now. I don't do my thing, until he says: "now we move on".

Nikolaj: So is it decided before you start out that he is the one who is in charge of the group, or is it something that happens in the process?

Esben: It can be decided from how the song works. For instance when somebody sings, it is almost impossible for people not to have their attention there. So for a band to become successful, when somebody is singing, they all have to sort of acknowledge the vocal. Because the audience's attention will be towards the vocal, and if the other band members have their attention somewhere else, it will be like something that is not right. It's like the vocal will not

have the attention that the audience gives it and it will feel that something is wrong. So you can say that, whenever someone is singing that is where you have to have your attention. Then if somebody takes a solo, then that is where you direct your attention. So it is also connected to listening and giving space. And then you know, also the form of the song. We know that there are so many verses before the solo comes. The solo can both be fixed length, and it can be open, where the one who has the solo directs how it goes and tells everybody in the band, now I finished. And then you know, who is going to pick up after that.

Nikolaj: Can it also happen that something unexpected happen when you perform, or do you always know what will happen? Or do you also give space to something unexpected?

Esben: Well, if you have a song, and you know that there are like this many verses and this many choruses, and there is this opportunity for playing solos. If you keep it open, so that if I'm the singer, I don't know solos start until I allow it and no solos stop till the soloist says so, then anything can happen within these frames. And there again, you can say that you have the frame setting, to contain the energy. There is a limit to where you can go. You have to follow the chords for instance that has been agreed upon, unless you are able to something very closely together that makes sense.

Nikolaj: What could it be, that you do closely together that makes sense?

Esben: Some chords might be alternated. Or turned into something else. You know to go back to the wave. The song has like one way. Then each verse has one wave. Then each solo has one wave, but also in between many small waves. And sometimes you are able to go in and get the same wave together. And then you might go in and play something that has not been arranged, but it is coherent with what the waves can dictate. You know this chord progression can also be played like this and then you can hear it there, because somebody is turning in it to that. It's not like something new you invent, you just use tools that you already know. And you sort of know where to expect them. So in different parts of the song, are open to different influences.

Nikolaj: So the song can take different directions within a certain frame, but you don't know beforehand, what direction it takes?

Esben: Yes, well, you could say that after the song. After the verses and the chorus, there is the possibility of solos. It could be the piano solo or the guitar solo, the sax solo, the drum solo

or the bass solo. If you haven't arranged beforehand which solo it is going to be, then everybody at that point, where they know, this is the last chorus is sort of on the lookout: what solo should it be? And then you can say, the one who directs it says I feel like it is going to be a bass solo and then everybody kind of says bass solo, okay, and then they do what needs to be done for a bass solo to be performed.

Nikolaj: So every member of the musical group can actually take charge and then guide the rest of the group. But that also requires, that the rest of the group accepts his bid of what direction the group should go, so could you say that this is similar to what they have in jazz, where they jam?

Esben: Yes.

Nikolaj: So this question about the creative process that sort of has a life of its own. Does that make sense to you in any way? That you can, by giving yourself over to the creative process so that it almost lives its own life. Does it make sense?

Esben: No, no... it's absolutely true. I mean life as a whole, as I see it, is also connected to wave situations. And the whole spiritual systems, or all the spiritual systems are ways to teach people, how to go in and grab the wave and understand where they are in the wave and then sort of become masters of their own lives, because they know where they are and therefore they can go where they want. And it is the same with the creative process. If you set up a frame and you contain an energy within that frame and everybody within that frame understand their responsibility, are able to understand, when they have it. When is it my turn to contribute; when should I let it go until the next person, then the energy will follow a life of its own, so to say.

Nikolaj: So, I guess intuition plays a great role then?

Esben: Intuition is a spiritual quality. Intuition is something that you can develop. You can train intuition.

Nikolaj: Can you explain how?

Esben: It is connected to the same thing before, that you have to sort of be empty. I mean, you can have an intuition that is based on that I have done this ten times, and out of ten times, eight times it happened like this, so now that I'm doing it the eleventh time, most likely it will

be like this. That's some sort of intuition. But you can also have an intuition, where you empty yourself, and you sort of listen, and you get a feeling or you get a response or you get a... this is what we should do...

Nikolaj: So it has to do with being connected to what is around you?

Nikolaj: Does it make sense to work rationally, when you are a musician?

Esben: Again, everything has to follow the wave, so you can't just be free-floating and just intuitive... that will just keep you there. So if you want to sort of finish the creative process, you have to put in some more rational frames... you have to know that we have a deadline, for instance. The deadline is a wonderful thing, because the creative process then has a very strict frame, and you have to give yourself over to the creative process one hundred percent. Otherwise you won't make your deadline.

Nikolaj: So it's a combination?

Esben: Yeah, and the reason why it has to be a combination is that if you don't have a reality into all this free floating... then you are just going to keep doing that. It's not going to stop.

I saw a documentary a few years ago about a Danish author, who went out to the Amazonas, where he had been many years before and he had taken this drug, Ayuhasca, which is something the Indians take to be connected to their gods. The local Shamans take it to find out where the prey is and where they can go and hunt, and when it is a good day to this. And this author went down there to take this drug and he talked to some Indians, and he asked them, so are you going to do this again today? No, no they had already done it and they have already gotten their answer... so what if we do it now and we get a different answer? And it is basically the same in the creative process, you ask for something and then you get it, and when you get it, you start the process and use that information that you got in a more rational way, because if you keep asking, you will keep getting new answers and then you are never going to be able to stop.

Nikolaj: So do you have to switch off, your search for more?

Esben: Yeah, you have to go in and see the creative process as a wave. So you have to go in and see, when is the creative process successful to this extent? So now I got my answer, now I

got the intuition that says, we need to go in this direction, then I stop asking for that answer any more and I follow the leads that I got, and make them become reality.

Nikolaj: So this is for example how you will go about creating new music?

Esben: Yes, I will sit down and be open and say okay, I need to make a new album and for that I need to have new tunes, so now I need to empty myself and just see what happens. And then I start fooling around and play a little bit, or listening to some music, or go for a walk and sort of start to get into that mind, where I become empty and see what happens. And then after a while, something will appear and I will take notes or record it and listen to it, and then already there the process starts to use some information and put it into something....oh if I go that way, I know that I can use it like this. And then slowly I shut down the creative process and start to become very rational... I know the song needs to have this length. I know I need another verse, before this is really where it should be. And then I start using the instruments that I know work and slowly the creative process becomes into a sort of a finishing process, where I use tools that I know how work.

Nikolaj: So we talked about the creative flow, or the creative evolution. This notion of flow... of being in the flow... can you describe that? How do you know, when you are in a good creative flow as a musician?

Esben: Basically, you can see it on your results. If you set there in front of the paper, and nothing comes, then you are still progressing towards the result. You have not produced anything yet. So you are in the flow, but until you have produced something, it is not finished. So you sort of have to empty yourself even more or go do something else... you sort of have to keep playing around that move until you start producing. And when that happens, it is more or less determined by the deadline. So the deadline determines when you start.

Esben: You can say so, because the deadline sort of gives you the reality. And you can say that if the creative process is the positive part of the wave, then the deadline determines when the negative part of the wave starts. And that is also part of the system that you... you know you really can't force the creative process, but you still have this deadline, so in a way you become desperate and you go: "aah, what should I do!" And you become more and more determined... I need to let go and all of a sudden it is there.

Nikolaj: You say that you can't force the creative process?

Esben: That's sort of you know a magical or mystical thing, that happens there when it happens, and if you knew how to turn it on "just like that", then we would do it all the time. But mostly it takes this deadline, to sort of make it real in a way. You wake up in the middle of the night because you are desperate, because this is what you are thinking about, this is what is on your mind. I need to do something. And you use all energy to focus and to concentrate, you become lucid and empty-minded... you know three minutes to twelve, it is there.

Nikolaj: In Taoism there is an expression that is called wu-wei, which is an expression that tries to put words on a feeling that people get when they become very good at something, so it could be for example be a butcher, who has cut meat, for maybe twenty, thirty years... and after so many years of experience, it almost happens by itself, when he cuts. The feeling he gets, is a feeling of smoothness with the cutting and a feeling of forgetting himself when he cuts. He sort of becomes one with his work. Is that something that you can recognise as a musician when you are playing?

Esben: Oh yeah, but it does not have anything to do with the creative process. It is more reproducing.

Nikolaj: So if you do it over and over again, you can get that feeling, but rarely when you start working with something new.

Esben: Well, I mean, when you want to start a creative process, where you need to make something that is new, then it will always, depending who that person is, then that person's expression will always be in the end result. You are not likely to make something that you have never made before. You will always leave your personal fingerprint into the creative process. You have a liking towards something that will always be present. Your life has a direction and so your creative output has a direction. You know the reason for that you can talk about a genre in music is because you are able to recognise Bob Marley or Louis Armstrong, Oscar Peterson, and the reason you are able to recognise them is that they always do the same thing. So you can say that they have a creative process, but it is within what they do. And the butcher you are talking about is sort of in the same way, he is able to cut the meat, perhaps in different ways, but he will always cut it in his preferred ways. If he is a master, you will always be able to recognise him in the cutting. And so it is with the musician. And when you go into a creative process, you find a new way to cut this meat. A way you have not cut it before. But when you find that way, it will still resemble you. You will be able to see the thread

from the different cuttings, if you can say it like that. So there is a difference between being very good at cutting something in a specific way and then for that same person to invent a new way to cut something. But if you invent a new way of cutting, you will be able to find the connections between the two ways.

Nikolaj: So the smoothness and the feeling of being one with the work, that the butcher for example gets, is one that he gets precisely, because he has done it so many times, that it is part of his... it is so much routine that he knows how to do it... that's how he gets that feeling.

Esben: But if you wanted to find a new way to cut this specific piece of meat, then he would have to start a creative process and try to do this and do that, and he would not be in the flow, where he just does it.

Nikolaj: A concept like soul is not very prevalent in business contexts normally, but in creative organisations they often talk about soul. What do you think about the notion of soul when you work creatively?

Esben: The work has to have soul. Every thing that you think is actually some sort of physical form. So every thought you have connect to other thoughts that are similar out there in the universe. There is a thing called Akasha, which is the big universal memory and out there you have all the different thoughts that have ever been thought of, and you will connect to different thoughts depending on how you think. And if two people think alike, they will sort of connect on the brain wave as well and they will make what you could call a soul together. And if they are very good at it, they are able to make that soul come forward in a way, so that other people can recognise it. They might not know that this is what they recognise, but they just like the fabric or they just like the music that they heard, that desk that was produced or whatever. But if people are able to create that soul together, it can become a very strong thing. And this is why people are talking about that we need some soul in this. We need to have this unexplainable thing that people recognise intuitively, but can't really pinpoint at and say what was this. If you have a room full of people, that room will have a soul. When these people are in it, they are interacting in a way that creates a soul of the room, and when you enter, you automatically feel, would I like to enter further, or would I like to go away instantly, depending on the soul that these people have created together.

Nikolaj: So it becomes some sort of an air, almost?

Esben: You can call it an air, yes, but if you have a room full of people, who is eating a lot of meat, and drinking beer and being noisy and perhaps doing something that will make them sweat, then you can absolutely say that the soul they provide the room with, is also in a way physical. Or if you have a room full of women, who are all very concerned of how they smell and how they look and what they drink and what gasses leave their bodies, then there will be a whole different air about it. A different soul...

Nikolaj: Is there anything you can do as bandleader to create soul in a creative group?

Esben: Well, if people start to be aware of the groove, that they recognise the groove that they are able to swing. That is sort of the main thing. If people can't groove or if they can't swing, then you can't explain it to them, because they would not know what you are talking about. It is something that you have to experience for yourself to begin with, this being able to groove, being able to swing and then when you experience it together, then you can start to have a dialogue, for instance how you groove with the audience. You are able to expand this feeling of groove, to sort of fill the whole room. And if people are able to groove on their own, then you can groove together and groove with the room and you can feel how the night progresses, and the everybody in the groove, will sort of instantly and spontaneously know, we need to do something now, for this to be a good concert.

Nikolaj: So this is not something that is initiated explicitly, but it is something that just happens?

Esben: You can say that it just happens, but it is also something that you need to make awareness about. The band members need to have the experience that they are able to create a groove, for the band to, as a whole to create a groove. And then it becomes natural.

Nikolaj: But is that a part of the members personality or is it something they can learn or?

Esben: Well, the first thing is that they need to know for themselves, that they can groove on their respective instruments. They need to have the confidence that they can sort of make the air move, with them playing on their own. And then you can experience as a group that you can make the air move. Getting into the groove and you feel the groove and you look at the crowd and they say yes now it is grooving and then you start getting the feeling again, back to the wave, that the whole concert has one big wave form, that contains small wave forms that could be the numbers (tunes). Then if you are able to feel this groove, then the groove will

know now it is time to play something different, now we have sort of here is where the wave breaks. Now we have to do something else, to start, to finish this wave.

Nikolaj: The concept of belief or having faith in the creative process. How important is that?

Esben: Well, if you don't believe in it, you can't use it. It's like, if you don't believe that people can read your writing, what is the use then of writing anything? So if you don't believe that there is something as a creative process, it's like if you can't swing, then you are out of it. You don't have a chance. The creative process, is something that you can see, so you have to be able to use your intuition, you have to have faith in that you have put the right borders for the energy to be contained and that you start from the right place, and if you don't believe in that, you can't do anything.

Nikolaj: In Taoism, the concept of Tao, it means the Way. And the idea is that Way is the way things can happen for an individual or a group, and the only way to make that happen is to believe that it will happen. So it is sort of to say that by not believing it won't happen, but by believing in it, it will happen. Not believing in a god, believing in the process actually, that's the idea.

There is another concept called P'u in Taoism, which means a childlike approach, so the idea is that the ideal way of approaching a new situation or work for example, is by having a child's curiosity and a child's innocence, is that something that you can recognise in creating music?

Esben: Yeah, but it goes together with the concept of, if you are already filled up with ideas of how it should be, then there is no room for nothing new. So when you become like a child, you become new, you become open, you empty yourself... if you don't have an idea that I don't like this situation, or this is supposed to happen now, why didn't it, you know, you just open to feel the flow and take it from there.

Nikolaj: And that is what happens in the group for example?

Esben: That is what is happening in the ideas situations. Of course it is very difficult to empty yourself completely, but it is always where you want to go... so you need to have this attention from the beginning that we are sort of open... It is similar to you know where you go and you say now we say yes to everything... everything is yes... yes, yes, yes. It's the same idea, it's the same concept. In a spiritual context, it is meant to be like that because you determine your own, what you see is determined by you, so if you have a fixed idea that this situation is bad

and then it happens to you, then you have a bad situation. But if you have the idea that whatever happens, I will determine it to be good, then you will always have good situations. So what you see is what you get. And you determine what it is that you see. And most people will definitely say, well I look at my bank account and it is empty, this is a bad situation. But you can also look at your bank account and say, what a great opportunity, to try and be in this situation. How wonderful to think about not having to think about what new television to buy, because I don't have any money to buy it for.

Interview with Karen and Ole Madsen

Nikolaj: I'm here with mom and dad to make an interview. So first, maybe, we should for the record explain where we are, we are at GABBA headquarters in Kolding with my mother and father, who are in charge of the creative company, GABBA, that makes fashion clothes for a segment between twenty and thirty years of age.

Karen: To me, it's a living process, which means that if you make something, you must prepare to develop it all the way. So you can actually start with one idea and end out with something else. I think that is the most important thing that you don't... of course you must have some limits, because it must maybe have two sleeves and... but it is important that you allow the style to develop in the process. So, I think that when you receive a sample from the supplier, you must look at it... not look at your own sketch and your own idea from the beginning, but look at it in a new way and see, is there something good in this style.

Ole: But you know... it's also... when you are going on for example Premier Vision, which is a fair for fabrics... you go there and you know that you must bring something home... there is about two thousand exhibitors... and in a way you must know without knowing, what you are going after, because there is fabrics for a very, very wide segment... and we know of course from our brand, what kind of fabrics we are looking for, but when you are going in to a supplier with fabrics, for instance, shirts, you go in there very open minded... of course you have an idea in the head, but you go in there and look, now we have an idea... now it is summer 2011, we are going for. There we have an idea that it is going to be a very vintage look, and also the denim has also a really strong position and it fits very well with the kind of brand we are... but you go in and look in that direction and look for fabrics, where you can imagine the style and that is the way that we are working. Of course, and it is a funny process in the start, you start about nine o'clock in the morning there and it ends around six o'clock. In the start you think everything is very interesting and very good and in the afternoon after you have seen a lot of different fabrics and different suppliers, you are much more selective. In the start you think that everything is good, so that means that... there can be two things in it. One is that you are fresh and very open-minded. The second is that maybe you will not find so much nice things here in the last suppliers collection.

Karen: Normally, it has something to do with that when you go and see all the new things, then you also create an idea in your head of where you are going and maybe in the beginning it is a big range and you cannot select it. And then when you select... the more fabrics you select, the more you decrease the selection, so that you get stronger in what you can do for the next season.

Ole: I don't know what is... where they come from these ideas... but also when you are working like that, you will maybe have a new idea, when you are working there, when you see something that you have not seen before and you see maybe two different types of fabric and then you say, okay, it could be nice to put them together... and also when you are going around, you know, from the one stand to the other, you see maybe a guy or a girl, who has something nice on, and then you... you follow the heart in a way... and therefore it is very important that you are very open minded and that you have your eyes open. But again it is very important that you are focusing on what you are doing... because it is very easy to become confused with such a huge fair. It is a process that comes when you are working in it. You know, when we finish with that, we receive the hangers and then again you select... so it is a long process before the styles are out in the shops.

Nikolaj: But that means that when you do the... when you are in the process of creating a new style... then it is both a question about... there is a lot of experience in it and intuition I guess. Intuition matters in that process of creating. If you have other designer involved in that process of... I imagine that when you come back from the fair and you continue the work on the style... how is it with the process of managing that team of designers? Can they do exactly what they want or do you need to kind of lead them in a certain direction, or how does it work?

Ole: It really depends on the person we are working with. And it is also good from the start to work very closely with them. When the people here feel good and they feel that we have a good atmosphere here, then the creativity comes up and that you can do in different ways... many times I think to have that process is of course to have teamwork within the people here. And that can be in different ways. For example, we go out the first Saturday in every month for a walk or for some other activity, because in those activities, you are feeling each other much nearer.

Instead of you are making a drawing, you send it back and it looks good... especially when you are having jeans or the kinds of things that we have here, you must try to work with the things, try them on, put them back, try them on again, I mean... this process is very important. When you are talking about jeans, it's not only a pair of jeans... I remember one time, we had a pant, when we got it, we were not satisfied with the model it was feeling... but we didn't know where to make it better... then I was trying it and some other people was trying it... but then after a few days it had been laying just at the floor and it had suddenly crinkles and then we said... ah okay! Now it looks like it should. So that is the way of creativity, when you are working in a process. And I think this particular simple thing is the way that this creativity comes in...because it's hard work and of course believing in the process and not cut corners. And you can easily see it on collections, where people are working with things and not just say now it's okay... But sometimes the things just come up.... you don't know.... it is luck and hard work.

Nikolaj: But it is something that happens in the creative process, right?

Ole: Yeah, because also when you are sitting with people, you know... mom is coming with a word or something and then I put on you know and it is a kind of collaboration. And maybe I have not thought of that idea, and maybe we can use it here... many things are impossible, in the way we work, to put them exactly down on a paper... of course you must have a sketch, where the things are otherwise all the ideas and things disappear. But when you are in this process and you have the eyes open... then you have a... then maybe the best ideas come up.

Karen: That's also what we are working on here, to have the designers work as a group instead of individually. We want them to work together, so that they can replace each other and help each other with ideas, so that we can have a more complete collection, where you have all the items fit together, because they have been through the same process, almost. Because it makes the conversation much more easy on the job. If you sit alone with your own thoughts, then you think... maybe I better not say that, because maybe they don't think that it is a good idea. If you know each other well, then it is much easier to communicate and to make things flow, because you are not afraid of coming with a crazy idea. So I think that it is a lot about accepting each other and feeling accepted.

Ole: You must have that confidence and that feeling secure in the group, because sometimes you must do crazy things to open up the eyes for other people and you must have the feeling

that even as you are doing a stupid thing... in the end it might turn out as not being a stupid thing. Everybody can see this idea and this is also a thing, when one designer says: I have a very good idea and I think that this is the goal now and everybody else says it is ugly or whatever. To be a designer there are two very important things in it. First you must be a very good communicator and the other thing... and being open minded, secondly.

Ole: It creates energy to be with people who are very enthusiastic and for me it gives me energy and then I get new ideas and then I can go in and form some of the things... so it is a thing, when you are starting a process and when you are working with the right people, this energy just pops up, and I think it is visually, you see it, and you can see people forget everything... all problems disappear... it is the thing.... it is a kind of process, like the painter he can see that the painter or the sculpture or whatever it is starts to have a form that he likes ... and this process, I think, when you see it in people, it can be clothes or art... also if you see a carpenter doing an old ship, where you have to put two pieces together... the way he takes the wood and looks at it... it is the same feeling I get.

I think so... this kind... today where you can do a lot of experiments it could be fun to put somebody in a helmet and see what happens in the head, because I think that when you are in a process like that, something happens, we can also see it here, when we are working, for instance, with colours... sometimes it just starts rolling... you go into a process where it is just working for you.

Interview with Martin Spang Olsen

Nikolaj: So, I'm here with Martin Spang Olsen to conduct an interview on creativity and the probability of using Eastern thinking, and particularly Taoism in informing the work with creative people. Martin, generally, how do you see creativity, how do you define creativity, if you see it from your perspective?

Martin: I define it as a force of nature, similar to gravity and, we have four basic powers in the universe and I would say that creativity is the fifth, because, and it is very simple to define it actually, because creativity is when something changes, and as we are changing everyday, ourselves and every part of our body is changing and every invention that man has been able to come through with has been thought and felt first, so there is a great probability that we are actually creating in a very substantial way in our mind, before we create physically, and I find that very interesting because that means that everybody is creative, they are just not aware of it, so basically the objective is to be aware of your creativity, more than to learn to be creative.

Nikolaj: Do you see any difference between, let's say, individual creativity, that's creativity on a personal level and then the creativity that happens when you are a group, collective creativity?

Martin: I think they are more similar, than how we usually regard it, because I believe strongly in the collective consciousness and through this a lot of the ideas that I would get would be interacting with the ideas that you get, even if we are not together, and being in the same room, with the same assignments that only puts more energy into this collective consciousness and that's why we feel very uplifted when we sing together and when we theatre together, and everybody does that, not only the professionals and I think that's a strong sign that we are interacting all the time, but when we are physically together, then the creativity not only gets stronger, but it gets more interesting, it gets more complex.

Nikolaj: But the way that you, I mean, the experience that I have from GABBA, the company that I work for is that, when the designers work individually, they tend to be relatively creative, but when they enter into a group to work, creatively, then often, it seems like they are limited in telling about their ideas and to interact with the other people.

Martin: Yeah, but see, that's very interesting what you are pinpointing there, because that may not be creativity that holds them back, we have, if we focus on the concept that creativity is part of our mind, then of course, what holds you back creatively, will also be in your mind, and since we have today, apparently, a lot of suppressed and not acknowledged emotions, that are not working creatively for us, because we are not brought up to do that, a writer for instance, can use all his traumas to make a better book, but if you are not brought up for that or simply has not learned that skill, then everything that is analysed as a negative emotion inside you will hold you back, and that means that people can only create together, if they are in the same kind of mood, and they are relatively good humoured and happy, but that's not actually the nature of creativity, because creativity is there, no matter what and once you have acknowledged that and really felt it, then creativity becomes part of your daily life, part of your language and part of your gestures, because once you realise it, you can always do something else, than what you usually do, it takes you out of the routine and control patterns that you live through normally, which is false, this is all false, so creativity is a simple and true language of nature.

Nikolaj: So, let's say that we have an organisation that is supposedly creative, as a creative manager or leader of that organisation, if you want your employees to be more creative is it something that you can force, or is it something that you need to let happen, do you need to create certain, let's say structures that can make creativity evolve, do you have anything to do, as a creative leader or is it out of your control, so to say?

Martin: Well, it's very fun, because there has not been much research into this area, even though it should be obvious that you should address a lot of research towards, how do you get your employees to be more creative, because it's free and everybody loves to be creative, even so I would say, because I wrote a few articles about this, I would say this is not as simple as you might think you just want to give people, for instance, lovely surroundings and give them time to relax and give them ability to work in their own pace, it's not only that, it's also a culture, that you have to cultivate in a corporation. And it has to go through all layers, you can't, for instance, be a very square manager and then tell your employees to be more creative and whatever, you have to be what you say all the time. When you lead people, you have to be what you say. Walk the talk. It's very important, when it comes to creativity, but it's also very simple, because you can force people to be creative, yes you can, but it will come more natural

and more in a flow, if you yourself all the time live that principle and creativity is a lot about improvising, as nature seems to be improvising all the time, then we can get an easier access to creativity, if we improvise and you will see this happen all the time in the advertising world, because there people know for sure that this will not work, unless you let people think out of the box all the time, but I find that a little sad, because advertising is about making money on people's weaknesses, I would love to have architects, who are supposedly very creative, I would love to get them more in contact with nature's creativity and the movement of energy in nature, which is always in bounded movements, never straight lines. I would love politicians to be able to think that way, and a lot of the movers and shakers of the world that think that you cannot make money on creativity, but actually you make more money, because you make money on a sustainable level. Creativity of course is sustainable because it works along with the energy of nature, I will come back to this, because this might be a little complicated now.

Nikolaj: But, it is okay to jump to let's say the more alternative section already now, so you can jump back and forth, as you want. But, because, I actually, I'm quite interested to hear more about this, so you are talking about that nature has an evolution of its own and then you have people and it seems as it is possible, correct me if I'm wrong, but it seems as if it is possible for people not to align themselves with nature. It seems that people can work together in a way that does not correspond with how nature would have made them work, if nature decided, so to say.

Martin: Oh yeah, absolutely, that happens more often than not.

Nikolaj: So, first of all, how do people work with nature's evolvment, and is it possible to teach people to work with nature?

Martin: Yeah, actually you just have to stop teaching them the opposite. Say, how do you teach children to move around? First you teach them, when they are about one year, not to crawl, but actually crawling is very natural to man. Then you teach them to sit straight and you teach them not to make sounds and you teach them to work in straight lines, like sports for instance. Even things like tumbling, which is relatively natural movements, but it's very straight lines. And straight lines, you won't find in nature, so this is very simple, this is actually not alternative, this is all very scientific and I'm talking about the same movements that you find between asteroids or planets and in the micro movements of an atom. It's all rounded

spiral movements and these movements have been, and I won't say that they are anymore, but not generally anyway, but there has been anyway in farming, and they have been in daily life of men in the stone age, but it has also been cultivated on a very high level in China in movements from martial arts and Qi Gong and a lot of the health exercises, traditional health exercises. They have been studying nature and finding out how nature moves, it's very easy, because you don't have to go further than with water, how does water move and how does sound move, we all know that sound works a lot better in a rounded, vaulted room than in a square room, because then the sound comes back too fast and you can't hear your own voice, so that's why it's beautiful to sing in a church, but it is horrible to sing in a modern conference room, and of course in a conference room, you would think that sound was very important, but now when everything is amplified, it's not so necessary, but people still feel it, they get tired in a conference room, they get worn out, because energy can't move the same way, so if you accept the fact and appreciate the fact that energy either moves too fast or too slow when it is in straight lines, like we have it in the canals, if you make a canal straight and you make it deep then the water will more or less stand still and it will die out, you will get fungus and all kinds of problems in it, it will rot, but if you have a rounded stream, then the water will run freely, and these two aspects we can easily observe in nature: Water and sound. But then of course there is a lot of other energy movements that we cannot watch, but they are there for sure, especially in our days, we know a lot about different rays and different energies that move, but generally they all move in the same way, in rounded spiral patterns and if we, and if this is our outspring for thoughts, then of course we have to appreciate that people may not work optimally in a week, where you start everyday at eight o'clock and finish three o'clock. Maybe they want to do it differently, maybe they want to do it in their own pace, and what can you do to encourage their creativity: Well, first of all, as a leader, you have to be creative yourself, and then you have to observe, when they need a break, because creative people they don't feel tired, so you have to give them a break, you have to give them food that is not affecting their level of blood sugar in a wrong way, so it shouldn't be too sweet, but it has to be a little sweet, like fruit, and you have to be sure that they get water enough, that they have nice view and all this stuff. Things that man has had from the beginning of time. We have had access to the right food, clean air, a beautiful view, clean water, but these things have become items of luxury today! So, of course we are suffering. But we are suffering internally. You can't say that the material level is wrong, if you look at it from a very superficial perspective. But

since we have lost this complexity and the naturalness in our surroundings. Then of course, our creativity becomes superficial and forced. Just like sexuality is dying out in the Western world, so is creativity... it is not dying out, but it has become something that you really have to look for and encourage, whereas, actually, it is something that is there all the time.

Nikolaj: But, am I right that this has something to do with, that we want to, in order to let creativity live its own life, so to say, we need to create more organic organisations; more organic companies, where, not only the mental and psychological environment but also the physical environment is adjusted to nature. Let's say that the loss of nature so... this has something to do with that we want to align ourselves with the way nature works... is that right?

Martin: That's my believe anyway and that's how I try to do it, when I'm consulting in the corporate world. But usually, they will be scared, when it comes to the close physical environment and this is how feng shui of China evolved. This is like a consequence of the thought, the balance thought. How do you make balance in your near surrounding? And of course there is a lot of superstition in all these ancient systems because they have spread into different schools and some of them are based on superstition, but even so, the essence and the core of the thought is that you are spreading out your concept of balance, so the inner and the outer balance is always in connection and it is always harmonised.

Nikolaj: Is that something that can be measured or is it something that you need to feel?

Martin: Oh... you can certainly measure it... I'm not sure that you have the tools yet, but of course energy can always be measured, otherwise it is not there. And that's one of the reasons why I think, that you should start measuring it, because otherwise the superstition will be prevalent. And... superstition of course also works, if you believe in it. That's the funny thing. That's the placebo part of it. So, for some people, it's important with a little superstition. If you have ... an important symbol in Feng Shui, is a frog with a coin in its mouth. A three legged frog. I don't find anything familiar with this frog, so it won't help me. But for people who believe that this will give you a fortune in life... it might work. So you can open yourself for symbols that individuals have some connection on or some affinity to, but scientifically... let's say a doorway, or a pathway, a hall or something. If you round it, it's very simple. Architects like Hundertwasser has said this sixty years ago that the straight line is going to kill men eventually.

Nikolaj: It is to mechanic.

Martin: If you walk around a skyscraper, you will feel that there are certain winds there. It actually create winds. Because a straight line, will either make the wind go too fast, like a draft, or it will make it stop like in the canals.

Nikolaj: It makes sense.

Martin: It makes sense. It's very simple. But not to architects, they cannot understand it.

Nikolaj: Could that have something to do with the mind – body dichotomy, because it is my impression that... and I'm no expert in this, but it is my impression that in Western tradition and in Western science and ontology, again, there has been a lot of emphasis on the brain and man's ability to comprehend his surroundings, nature and other people, knowledge etc. through his intellect, only, and that in the Eastern way of thinking, there has been more of a balance between perceiving the world, not only through your intellect, but also through intuition or being present... so when we are talking about, say, structure of companies and the way we build them both physically, as you say with the structure in the architecture and also in the way we organise them and manage them... Could it be that there needs to be a balance between this Western mindset and the Eastern mindset... is that something that you can say something about?

Nikolaj: Well, it almost sounded like a rhetoric question, but eh... Of course I agree, that Eastern traditional thought may have emphasised, or overemphasised the personal, internal evolvment, whereas we have emphasised the external society or political evolvment. We would always say... if we have the right frames, people will make their own tools to be happy... whereas in traditional Eastern thought, they would say the frames are not important, it has to be your own hard work to... your own strife for happiness that is right... and of course, these two have to be balanced and also East and West represent Yin and Yang, because the East will be Yin, which is soft, inward looking, and dark, which is slow moving, not moving out... and we are moving out all the time, we are the imperialists and we are too fast and we are too bright, so I certainly agree, to me it's fantastic to have had this world opened to me, the traditional Eastern thought and then the structure of the West. I would say though that if you would want one of them, the Eastern traditional thought or I would say Chinese...it's basically Chinese and Indian science. It's more healthy, because it is more based on personal health and it's based on

not harming nature unnecessarily, but in combination they can make West stop and feel, and it can make the East move a little more outside their own hemisphere.

Nikolaj: So it is possible, let's say in a Western organisation to adopt some of the ways of thinking from the East and make it complement the Western way of thinking... it is possible, they are not, how do you say this, they are not incompatible?

Martin: No, they are not, but they will take an organiser that is equally familiar with both perspectives and who is also interested in introducing personal growth. Because the big fear for all leaders and managers, it is that if you make people wake up, they will leave, because they will find their work stupid... and of course that will happen, because the more intelligent ones will wake up one day, if you give them personal growth, they will wake up and say, what the hell am I doing in this stupid company selling an unhealthy soft drink to people and causing blood sugar problems and all kinds of things... so I always emphasise this when I give lectures... you still have to do it, even though you are scared of the consequences, you still have to appreciate that personal growth is the only free tool, to a more effective company, not only creatively, but also in all other aspects, and personal growth needs awareness, and awareness needs waking up. But I will get back to your question, because the main emphasis of traditional Eastern thought is balance, so of course balance is, if you use that as a key word, particularly from Taoism, then it is actually quite simple, because then it is about balancing on all levels. It doesn't need you to study for ages about Taoism and the ways to reach it... you can just emphasise the balance.

Nikolaj: Balance between?

Martin: Balance between every aspect. Between rest and work. Between light and dark. Between fast and slow. Not between good and bad! Because balance will always be good! But otherwise you have balance between all aspects of life. The same way nature is moving... it's moving from dark to light. It's moving from big to small. It's moving from light to dark and it's moving all the time.

Nikolaj: Do you think it's possible to say that you have two different poles in rationality and intuition. Would those two be opposites that needs to be balanced as well?

Martin: No, I know what you mean, but I disagree a little bit. The balance is between our brain halves and which is very roughly an intellectual left brain half and a more emotional or feeling

oriented side. But intuition is actually a combination of those two. Intuition is just like balance. Intuition is when everything is right and that's why intuition is always right. If intuition was based in the right brain side then it would not always be right. It's in the balance that you get these very strong and precise messages that you are giving yourself, because you have all the information. That's also very important, if you want to learn about your intuition, then you got to understand that intuition is a very fast calculator of all the information that you have. That includes a lot of things that you don't think you have. For instance, access to the collective consciousness. But of course, you always have to have a part of yourself that always knows the answer, otherwise we would have died out years ago. You always have to have something that always tells you what to do.

Nikolaj: But do you think, if let's say you are the manager in a creative organisation, for instance, would it be fair to say that I'm working on my intuition? If for example, someone asked you, why did you do this? And you answered, my intuition said so! Would that be legitimate, so to say?

Martin: Oh yeah, I think so, but it would mostly be wrong, because very few modern people are in contact with their intuition, strongly enough to actually follow it. What they mean is that they follow a gut feeling. A gut feeling is a little different. A gut feeling, is intuition on a very low level and it can be affected a lot by our fears. So if you say that you don't do something out of a gut feeling, it's usually because you are afraid of it, whereas intuition tells you things that rationally would be strange and even stupid, but even so, but because the intuition has all the information, it will be right in this situation. There is nothing spiritual about this. It's all very scientific, it's just within areas that have not been researched.

Nikolaj: Maybe you are aware of it, but there is an American psychologist, who is called Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, he has written about a concept called *Flow*. He studied a lot of creative people, but let's say, traditionally, non-creative people, to find out how they work, and his impression is that these people work at their best, when they enter into something that he calls flow, and in his perspective, this flow it's a situation, where you kind of forget yourself and you involve yourself in the process and in this situation you work entirely on intuition. Could this concept of flow, in your opinion be connected to intuition and this creative work that you see in traditional creative organisations, but also in corporations, as you say that are not traditionally creative, this flow concept?

Martin: Yeah, I believe it's true, but that's because the flow is there all the time, and flow is natural for nature. I have always found it a little bit funny and even hilarious, when people, who are not creative themselves try to describe creativity, because it's about... it's the same if you would describe two people falling in love, and you have never tried it yourself... what would it look like? And if you would describe music, you would say, somebody put a bow to an instrument and then they squeeze the strings and then a beautiful sound comes out. It's not music they are describing. They are describing something external, and the flow sounds like maybe some kind of... when you describe it like that, it's something very strange, spiritual, almost religious, and it's really just the way nature moves all the time... it takes a lot of effort, not to be in the flow, and we have to have that in the back of our head all the time... what we are doing, when we are not creative, is actually very difficult. To be creative is very easy.

Nikolaj: Could you emphasise on that, why is it easy to be creative?

Martin: Because it's part of nature... and since we are in nature, and locked into the universe... it's a circuit that is closed. You cannot get out of the universe. Then of course, everything is locked to each other and the flow that is there will be part of our natural, daily life.

Nikolaj: So let's maybe now look more into concretely Taoism. Can you briefly explain, I know, it's not easy, but what's Taoism to you? How do you understand it?

Martin: Taoism, and that is actually not, it's not that difficult, but you have to distinguish Taoism from the traditional Yin and Yang thought, because Taoism is younger. Taoism is about finding the balance between Yin and Yang, but Yin and Yang is a very old concept from China and it is so old that nobody knows where it comes from. Taoism is usually connected with Lao-Tzu, who was a philosopher living a few hundred years before Christ and he is, himself, always interpreted with Confucius, who is representing a more intellectual approach and more structural approach, where Lao-Tzu is representing a concept of the world, where you actually don't act. You act as little as possible. You try to reach emptiness... and if you don't act, you can sort of, so to say, lean on nature's movements. And be so much integrated into nature that you don't have to do much to live a happy life. But it won't make you produce a lot, so in that way, it is not very natural to the Western thinking, because we overproduce all the time. We have an idea that we should have growth in society. That is very strange to a Taoist. Why would you have growth in a society? You should have balance, but why would you grow? Then one day, what would you do, when you grow out of the world. This should be very

obvious to us also, but so far we have not grasped that yet. You just say, we'll create new markets, and of course you can't go on doing like that, unless you are exploiting either nature or other parts of the world, which we are strongly doing at the moment. In Taoism, you always want to do, as little as possible and you want nature to find its natural course, as much as possible. This means that you have to live in nature and that you have to interact with nature. Which is also impossible for us, unless we think of nature in a different way. If we have the concept of energy flow instead of the flow in plants and in animals. And that, I think you can do, but a traditional Taoism would be difficult to implement as such.

Nikolaj: But, are there elements from Taoism that you think can be useful in working for example with creativity and letting creativity happen.

Martin: I would say that a strong creativity is impossible without the knowledge of Taoism. You don't have to be a Taoist, so to say, but you have to have the knowledge of the balance, how energy moves, a little bit in sinus waves. Like if you have a field of grass, and then you have antelopes, and then you have a lot of grass and it will grow, and grow and grow. But the antelopes will eat a little bit of it. Then there will be less grass, but more antelopes. And then the lions will eat some of the antelopes and there will be more lions and less antelopes, so you have three sinus waves that work together. They work a little bit after each other. The sinus wave is not the same. Because then the antelopes, the lions and the grass would disappear in the same wave. First the antelopes eat the grass; then there are more antelopes; and then some of them are eaten by the lions. So that's important to understand that all the waves are working not in the same pace. Some of the have much bigger waves and some have very small waves... like some of the small flies, like banana flies... they probably think they live a long and full life, even though they only live one day, but from their perspective, it is a full life. So their understanding of time, is very different than say an oyster that can live three hundred years. So if you observe these very simple spans of life, or concepts of life, and you are able to go outside yourself and observe from that perspective, then you can easily learn from nature without being in nature, and that you can apply, I've done that myself, when I work as a manager, I apply that all the time. Because that makes you feel other people's pace, it makes you feel, when they need a break, it makes you feel when they have a good work flow. But you have to exercise this. It's not something that we are much in connection with, because it is taken out of us in our upbringing.

Nikolaj: So working as a manager with creative people, the approach is, as you say, to observe what is happening...

Martin: No, no... not observe... you start observing nature and then you learn from that. But when you are in the creative field, you cannot observe, you have to feel immediately all the time, because this cannot be observed. This can only be felt, and on a higher level, you feel it intuitively, on a low level, you feel it with other part of yourself, I'm not sure what. It's again the sensibility that will take you there, the awareness.

Nikolaj: So you act on the way you feel, actually. You use the feeling that you get... the gut feeling that you get. And do you do this, let's say, and this is probably the Western perspective that comes into play here. But do you do this uncritically, I mean, do you get the emotion and then the emotion or the feeling is, let's say the barometer or the thermometer for the condition?

Martin: You have to do it critically, because if you would do something fully and naturally, you wouldn't be in a skyscraper, you wouldn't be in a city environment. Because it is all unnatural, so you have to do it critically, you have to say well, you have to be critical, but it all has to be within the Coca-Cola company, because that's where you are and there is nothing natural about Coca-Cola... so you have to limit your naturalness to the Coca-Cola concept, and that's another thing that the CEO's of the world are afraid of. If people wake too much up, they will leave the company, because they don't believe in the concept of the company, not only the physical environments, which are always unnatural, but they will also walk away, because of ethical reason, because awakening is also wakening your ethics. Ethics are very natural to, but is it also taken out of us, unnaturally.

Nikolaj: But it is possible and maybe also right, let's say if you are a manager in a creative organisation to make your people wake up, I guess there are also a lot of benefits from making people wake up.

Martin: But again, you have to not be afraid of waking up yourself. And if you truly woke up yourself, would you still be in Coca-Cola company. So that's the interesting thing. Those people who are still politicians, can they wake up, if they want to stay politicians?

Nikolaj: And then, maybe a bit cheeky, but what does it mean to wake up?

Martin: Waking up is very simple. It's just to realise that you are part of nature and that's kind of an enlightenment, but it is not religious enlightenment, it is just an enlightenment that says everything I'm doing is so far from my natural needs that of course I become a less wholesome person. And if you want to go back to your more original state, then you have to change your way of doing things and maybe you have to change your working life dramatically.

Nikolaj: You say the original state, and when I'm reading about Taoism in my studies here. There seems to be a lot of focus on the child and the child's qualities and that grown up person can learn a lot from the child in his approach to the world. Why do you think that it is that the Taoists cherish the child's way of interacting with the world so much?

Martin: Well, again, it is very simple, because all the things that are taken out of us is not necessarily completely taken out of a child yet. So once you can observe children or you can observe monkeys to if you have. Because they are also more in connection with themselves, even though they are caged.

Nikolaj: And in nature?

Martin: Yeah, but it is very difficult to do it in nature, but even if you cage a wild animal, it will still be more natural, than if you cage us, like we are caged all the time, and we have been caged for so many years that we don't realise that we are caged anymore. But from a child, you can learn about true qualities, what they call in Taoism: P'u, that is the uncarved wood, but you have to carve it sometime, you have to carve it sometime. You have to grow up and mature. So the challenge of course is how to mature, without taking the original qualities out. Say if you have an interesting piece of wood that is growing in the forest and then you cut the tree, you still want the character of the wood to be there, even though you cut something out of it.

Nikolaj: Does this also relate to the concept of Wu-wei?

Martin: In a way it does, but not directly. Wu-wei is what I call not to act. That is: Wu means empty and Wei is acting with emptiness. And emptiness is not our idea of emptiness. It is, they have another Chinese word for when it is empty, but it is not empty. It is sort of resting. It is a potential energy. So you have a potential energy all the time, but you are not necessarily using it. Something that is completely empty does not exist.

Nikolaj: It's nothing?

Martin: If you want to use the wu-wei or if you want to learn about it, you can watch musicians. They have potential energy all the time, but when they do it. When they use it, they use it along the lines of music, but the piece of music they are playing right now, and along the lines of the moment, along the lines of the other musicians, and that is the true way to use wu-wei, in my opinion. I have exercised it a lot in martial art, where you let the energy work for you; you don't invest. We like to invest. When we train, we want to use, as much, consume as much as you can. But in the East, they don't want to use their muscles. They want to use them potentially, as you have them, but you don't want to wear them down. You want to keep them. You want to keep your organ for a long time. Here we want to wear everything down. If we should have fun, we go out and we stay up very late. We eat unhealthy food. We drink too much and we feel terrible next day. That's our idea of fun, but to, even here in the West, it wasn't always like that, but in the East, it would be a strange way of having fun that you are wearing yourself down, wearing yourself out, so you actually last shorter. We don't care about longevity, we don't care about balance in our culture, especially in our corporate culture.

Nikolaj: So the concept of wu-wei can it also be used in the work of a creative leader. Say you are the team leader of a creative team that has to develop something?

Martin: I doubt it, because that takes a lot of skill, to be able to use that practically.

Nikolaj: But is it more let's say a concept that is useful in martial arts or do you think it can also be used in...?

Martin: Oh yeah, it can be used, and it should be used, I just say that I doubt it can be used, as it is now, because it takes so much knowledge to be able "not to act" and let the moment act for you... being on top of the wave and letting the wave take you, instead of pushing the water. We would always try to push the water until you create a wave, of course that will take a lot of effort. Like advertising. You advertise and you shove things down people's throat and they say "I'm not hungry" and "you are hungry!", we say; "Eat it!", and that creates our growth in the market. If people would only change their shoes when they were worn out, the shoe company would not be able to sell much. So instead they shove the shoes down people's throats, and that is not wu-wei.

Nikolaj: Another concept from Taoism is the central concept of Tao. How do you understand that concept?

Martin: The Tao is the road. So that is staying within the singularity of the middle of everything. Then you invest as little as possible of yourself. You wear as little down as possible in your environment and in yourself. So Tao is a concept that is as easily understood as a singularity, which is a physical fact. It's a fact from science, singularity. But you cannot explain it.

Nikolaj: What is singularity?

Martin: Singularity is for instance the middle of a Black Hole, where you have everything, but you have no mass. The point is not spread out. The point is a point. It has no dimensions. So that is incomprehensible to us. But even so, it is a scientific fact. And the same with Tao. It's actually quite simple to explain what it is, because it is the road that you travel, where you are always in balance between yin and yang. But that balance is not in the middle. I'm just using the word middle to make it easily understood. But it is actually waves all the time and movements all the time. So it is not a straight line.

Nikolaj: So it's the point where something is balanced, where it's right between.

Martin: So if you want to look at that point in a microscope, well, it actually gets smaller and smaller and smaller, if you want to find the middle of it; the central equilibrium of the scale. It's a singularity too.

Nikolaj: So you say it is also a road. What do you mean by that?

Martin: It means the road. It's the road that you travel in life. Where you stay in balance.

Nikolaj: Is there something deterministic about the concept of Tao?

Martin: There is in some schools. Like I said, it has superstition in some schools. But, I think, it is important to distinguish between superstitious and the scientific side of it, because the scientific side is simple. If you stay in the middle, you use as little energy, you take as little of your fortune, you don't take money out of the bank, so to say, you leave it all in the bank, and then you let the environment work for you.

Nikolaj: In these classes I've followed with my supervisor; these classes on managing in the creative economy... he once mentioned that in some companies, or at least in one company, they tried to look at innovation in stages, and I think that happens in many organisations, but what was particularly interesting in this case, was that after doing everything you could do,

the company entered what they called a “belief stage”, simply believing in the project and the creative output. In your opinion, how important is it to have a concept as believing in an organisation? Because some people probably find it too religious that you believe in something... but I don't know, what do you think? Do you have any experience with this?

Martin: Roughly said, I don't believe in believing. But that is maybe blind belief that I don't like. Believing as a way of trusting, is healthy. You have to give development or evolvement a chance. You have to give it faith. But that has to be based on an intuition. You cannot put blind belief into a process and then just hope for the concept and the output. That would lead to chaos and fiasco and fanaticism and all kinds of stupid things.

Nikolaj: So it is believing in the sense of having faith in other people or faith in the project or...?

Martin: Faith based on intuition. It has to be that way around.

Nikolaj: Another concept... not from Taoism, particularly, but things like chance... in English they call it serendipity? Like for example Pasteur, who said chance favours the prepared mind.

Martin: Well, he had a limited knowledge of this. He used it practically. He was not a philosopher within the field. I am both. So I will take my chances and say that there is no coincidence and when it feels like that it favours the prepared mind, it's because you already know. Your intuition already knows. So with a strong intuition, you can... intuition already knows what will happen. It's not because it knows it for sure, but it foresees an energy movement. If you have contact with all energy fields of the universe, then of course you will know a little bit about the future. Not precisely, but you will foresee certain things. And that of course is a prepared mind. But it is not that you can foresee something that happens incidentally, because that will be superstition in my opinion. So if we look at the universe, as a closed circuit, then of course a lot of things can be predicted out of just the way that energy moves. But we got to take into consideration that energy can move in many different ways, but it will always move with the same nature. So if you try to learn about the nature of energy. Then you can predict certain things. But you cannot predict it in detail. You can just say that there is a tendency. And what are they doing in quantum mechanics? Exactly the same. They say we can only work with tendencies. We cannot work with facts, because the minute we observe, then we change the reality. And that means that we will change everything we look

upon, so it harmonises with your own concept of the world. So reality is created by us, or what we call reality, because that was just a deal that we made, and called it reality, it's a deal, because this table here... we would always say that this table here is firmer than the air. But it's the same kind of atoms and they interact. The table may not be firm. If you look at it from a very small scale, then it's not firm. Things are always related to the observer... relative to the observer, and that means that you can only study tendencies and the nature of energy waves you cannot totally predict. But you can go very far in your sense of your future and your gut feeling in that way.

Nikolaj: So if you work in a creative company and you need to find out what direction that the creative process needs to have, can you then as a creative leader try to work with these things?

Martin: Year, depending on where you want to go. Because, once you learn about the nature of energy, it may not take you to the biggest financial fortune, it may not take you to the highest growth... So that is all depending on where you want to go. Do you want to look for balance, harmony... a wholesome company... then you may not make as much money, as if you have the saws on your elbows and pushing your way through life.

Nikolaj: But couldn't there be a combination between let's say doing what is right according to nature and a company that drives?

Martin: Yes, of course, but you always have to know that the more intuition you get, the more the intuition will get you in contact with what is right. And that's why I never had a job. Because if you work with intuition, you have to be independent of other peoples' demands.

Nikolaj: Do you think it makes sense to talk about an organisation's soul?

Martin: You can say that anything created by a human mind has a life of its own. But on the other hand, it has also a sustaining life from the culture... I think when they talk about soul, it's a little bit mixed with the concept of culture. Because culture is what is sustaining it and a soul I think has a little to do with the mind the mind that created this particular company. But even so, I think that according to what you produce, according to the objective of your product, you can say that the company has a life of its own. But again, it mostly applies to products that are in the movements of nature. It may not apply to a small part in a landmine or a piece of software. Because it has to do with the product. I'm not sure, how I would approach that, if I

was a leader, if I would find it positive to emphasise a soul. It may give people some wrong associations. We are all talking about making leadership more effective and more wholesome, and then I would say that the emphasis on the personal creativity and creating the environment for that would be more productive, than introducing a company's soul.

Interview with Palle Freese and Claus Hansen

Palle: A lot of creative people are really scared about structure, because they think it will kill their creativity rather than actually finding out that the things you need and that is something that is fundamental for any shape... so structure releases creativity.

Palle: So if you can do the basic shape and if you can break it down step by step then to get a shape and then you are actually personalising it, that's where the creativity really will be in the hair cut, because we don't try to, because it is also a bit of a worry for the hair dresser that if it gets too structured then they do not feel that they have any freedom anymore, so there has to be a certain amount of freedom in the box and that is actually what makes it do more suitable for the client. I'm not interested in having soldiers working in my shop, like a machine. We believe in the individuality and the creativity still, but we have to make sure that the quality is on top and that everybody knows how to break down that shape otherwise we will lose control. And that's the hard part, because our hair cuts are not made in a machine.

Palle: And it is structured anarchism that we have because the artistic group that we have now is very experienced hairdressers most of them.

Palle: If you seem to strong (as a leader) on the artistic side, what might happen is that you will generate a lot of insecurity in the individual and they are going to pull back, because they will start getting a little bit scared of actually doing failures and I think that the best quality we get and the most creative developments you will always find when people walk on the line so close to where the chaos is... so it is a fine balance.

Palle: I feel we have a special soul in the company... we call it the collective consciousness; there is a lot of individual consciousness on different levels which has to be there.

Claus: We are aware about our collective consciousness and it is there because we have a very strong group and there is a very special spirit in this group...and it is the group itself that creates that energy. The guys from America, who worked for a really big corporation, he says, I have never been experiencing anything like this before, this is really something special, you have to be aware of that and take care of it, because it is something special in this group.

Palle: It's a process... we all know this feeling of coming into a room and you feel wow I'm getting high of this energy with these people or when I speak with a guy, who is really into his stuff, he is passionate and you meet another person who is also passionate and you start developing something and you get really high from the energy and when you have a group who trust each other who are individuals and who respect each other ... For me as an artistic leader...I'm just the host, but I think it is important that I'm not seen as dictating but more like part of the group, who actually tries to keep the good energy in there all the time, and I feel that that is how it works.

Palle: We got that experience sometimes, when we do shows and stuff, where we come into like, I remember, when we have done some of the big shows, where we after the show, have been jumping around on the floor, like animals in a big circle afterwards, and really feeling like we won a big game, it is like when you see people win a handball game or whatever, you feel like you are part of a success for the team, and there is nothing bigger than winning something together with other people, that is the best feeling you can get, because we are social creatures, we want to part of a successful group and something special is going on, when we do these things.

Claus: In Hair Construction, we are a family already, we are a big family, I mean when you do creative work, like we do, you are not afraid of doing that, I mean afraid of being crazy or doing crazy hair cuts or doing a crazy colour, because you are on safe ground.

Palle: There is a Chinese wording that says for every little problem, there is a little gift or a big gift, if you understand how to challenge that side of it... often when we run into something, actually sometimes, at the end of the day, it turns into something really good, in the first place, it really looks bad and you think you are screwed, and you think shit, what should happen now, but sometimes it actually brings about something amazing.

Palle: I strongly believe that there is a higher meaning in everything we do, I strongly believe that anything that happens to us, will make us grow, as long as it does not kill you, it brings you further, that's for sure.

Claus: That's one of the things that worry me, as a creative person that sometimes you get locked so much in your view of things that you can't see the opportunities anymore, because

you have so many rules created on yourself of what is right and what's wrong that you start getting locked up with your own stuff.

Palle: I believe, I'm working from a Buddhist aspect in my life, I believe what we give with a good spirit in the heart, comes back tenfold, and sometimes people say to me, how come you are always so lucky? It looks like it is so black, and that it won't work, but then it turns out to work!

Palle: I mean, if you are going out for shopping and you need a parking space and if you are saying to yourself that ah I can't get any space to park then you don't get any, but if you keep thinking, oh there will be a parking space then there is one for you.

Palle: When you as a leader shows people that whatever happens, or whatever looks crazy or impossible, then you know there will be a way to get there, rather than focusing on your problem or on your barrier rather than focusing on getting around it. So you get where you want, so if you plan to go somewhere, like I can see the church up there, I can see it very clearly, and for me it would be just going straight there, but I might run into something that I can't pass and if my focus is so much on the future and on the church, I won't make it, because I will hit a wall, if I can't go right and then straightforward and the left again and meet my goal, I think that's where I see what happens, we need to focus on where we are, rather than focusing on the future or the past, I mean if it really hurts, it's nice to find out what happened, so you don't step in the same holes again. But I think it is about being exactly where you are right now and trying to find the way from there, to find the opportunities and possibilities.

Palle: We have a lot of crazy people around us, which I think is part of our soul in the company, someone cancels and the same morning someone else steps in the door in the salon that we need. It always sorts itself out. And why does it happen? Because we believe in it... And the positivity that is in the company. And being open to it, rather than focusing on having a problem, we are focusing on the opportunities. I think that is the main difference between people who are always complaining or always having problems...why? Because they are only focusing on the problems, rather than on the solutions.

We worked until five and I actually changed next day's agenda, so at ten o'clock we started on a new project that wasn't scheduled, because I felt that we needed to integrate this, because it was needed.

Palle: hey were so into it, they have been working with us for years, so they what can happen, everything is allowed. I have had experiences from my career where people think I'm strange, they think that I don't stick to what we have talked about. But the end result will be so much better doing this ... and then I can't stop doing it, I need to do it and then I have to explain them that now we do it this way because I think that the end result will be better...and I think that the... Because the experience you get from A to B, might move B to become C... So if you stick too much to your original plan then you will kill it. Sometimes I think that between A and B you can move directly to C. Because you will see things on your journey, which is part of the process that makes the end result so much better that you will actually generate it even faster. And you can't know what you experience on the journey before you are on the journey. Because whatever you expect... I mean there might be side roads and things that change your view on the end results as well. But that's the hard part of getting the group to find that harmony and accept that the end result is not necessarily B (as planned) but C.

Claus: I still think that we have a lot of different personalities, with different needs and different ...sometimes somebody can really annoy me

Palle: We take the opportunities when we see them and when they develop themselves because that is the process that happens when you work against something.

Palle: I think that people are attracted to the energy that we have in our group. And when they see that it works and that it can work without the structure that they came with or they were taught. They actually find out that it actually works in our culture.

Palle: If things are going all right, we don't interfere, but if there is too much anarchy you step in and help them find direction. You do not dictate a direction but you kind of... and we need to find a way to

Palle: I strongly believe in my intuition and I don't need to see a proof always. You have to believe in yourself and be true to yourself and if you are that in your group then you are on safe ground. Intuition never works together with fear. That's my belief.

Palle: The gut feeling is normally the right feeling. The more you use that intuition, the more you work with it, the more right and natural it feels for you to make those decisions even though it looks crazy in other people's eyes, because they only work with their rational thinking.

Interview with Robert Edick & Ben Guerin

Nikolaj: But maybe we can start with, you guys telling me what you do? What is it that you are doing actually? You are from Colorado, the States, that's what I know

Robert: I work at an academy three days a week and then I work at a salon three days a week. I'm involved in mentoring, coaching the young hair dressers, to get them certified to the state and then maintaining my own clientele too

Ben: For the past fifteen years, I have had a duality in my life as well, and that is working for manufacturers as an educator, the first company I worked for, I worked for ten years and that was American Crew and travelled and taught for them internationally and locally, did everything for them from primary education, how you comb men's hair to how you cut it to the highest level, and then in the process of doing that, simultaneously, I own two salons, initially not together, but the initial one for six years day and day out like an operators, and recently about a year ago, I owned another salon for about five years, and then I did that. Now, I work for Redkin corporation and also for Hair Construction as well, so two international companies, so I'm working for getting Hair Construction into United States more in a groundbreaking way and really trying to marry the idea of education again with lots of different product companies, rather than just one, so lots of thing going on. And I'm still actually working in the salon five days a week.

Nikolaj: Ok, so both of you are involved with teaching people how to cut hair, right?

Robert: Absolutely.

Ben: More like a collaboration... What is really interesting about Hair Construction on our end, the reason that we are primarily here is because we have been asked to collaborate with people from all over the world, who really see it their own way, rather than so much in one way. Palle is really kind of the touch point for all of us creative people, he has brought us together, based on the idea that we are validated through our own creative process. And that process, eventually looks the same for everybody in the world and there is a synergy that tends to happen, when you this many people in the room, even though we haven't been together for, let's say in a year. But we somehow, seem to come up with very similar ideas, just for the fact that we live kind of in the same head space, which for us have been great.

Nikolaj: But you say that there is like a special culture at Hair Construction and between the people that Palle has brought together, I mean, could you describe the culture, how is it like?

Ben: Yeah, as it is with cultures, there is somehow a ritual, and the ritual is the idea of coming here, everybody travelling to here... they get to a place, much like Mecca, if you will, it's a pilgrimage of some sort, at least that is how I feel about it, you know we travelled about fifteen – sixteen hours, just to be here. And I realised that, oh, now we are here working again! And really what it is, it's a destination, and for us, there is this process that happens when you start out that you know you are working in a way that is out of intent and the purpose is to go and give it back to those that we stand in front of, whether we are educating or what not. But for us, the culture is based on this intent and when people are like-minded in the hair business, show up with the same intent to get informed, to be informed and then to deliver that information, that tends to create this culture, through intent and so I know that for us, our intent was to become better at our craft and certainly synergise with everybody and find out where we are; maybe validate in a firm, where we are at, in this place and in this time in our business and also in the creative process and then to like I said to disseminate it and distil it down for people and we all tend to, that's culturally kind of who we are, we are just doing those things.

Nikolaj: But, do you feel like, maybe compared to other organisations you have been in, and in other culture that you have entered, that there is like a certain uniqueness about the culture that is here at Hair Construction, I mean, can you feel any difference, is it different to other places?

Robert: I can speak for myself, I mean, I didn't meet Palle personally, I met him through Ben, Ben kind of vouched for me, pulled me on board, Palle was just amazing, he just said, relax, have a good time, enjoy the team, I didn't feel like I was an outsider, I already felt like I was part of a group of people

Nikolaj: So there is an openness to the culture?

Robert: Mmm... I mean Palle was just amazing...

Ben: What you said to, and going back to, what is he giving you, he is giving you the allowance to be you, different than working for a manufacturer, let's say American Crew or Redkin, the two that I know personally, and the difference is that they have a corporate structure, the

culture is actually devoted to procedures and policies, rituals through teams and then of course if you act in accordance with those policies and procedures as a creative person then you are assimilated into the culture, the way you speak, the way you talk, the way you act. What is interesting about this culture (Hair Construction), it's exactly what Robert said it was, it is an allowance culture that... we can call it tribes... we are all from different tribes, but what brought us here and again, it is that idea of intent, what is our intent, we all come with an idea, that's about education, but more importantly, what Palle seems to have done, is to have allowed for these tribes to come with their different languages, and my gosh, even in their own language, in their own vernacular, their own approach, their own disciplines, to come from all different ages and levels to be equalised by the fact that we are allowed to be all those things in one room. And no one, even feels threatened by the fact that they don't speak the language, whether it's English, Danish, whether it's Swahili... But the culture is so important to all of us, to be here, to contribute and I think that is the other part of the culture, it's a contribution and it's required

Robert: Yeah, I would agree, I think that being an instructor and working with creative people, well I can't make them look at things the way I look at it, as an educator, they are going to have their own aspect, your job as an educator, is basically to give them techniques to help them get to the finish line, but by no means interrupting the creative things that go on with them, that's exactly how I felt when I came, I was just like, there is no pressure and it could have been a very high pressure situation, depending on who is running the show there.

Ben: Let me just add to that, I'm a big follower and reader of a book called *The Art and Fear*, and *Art and Fear* is really about the process the artist go through, to become an artist and what is the process, it is to remove the fear, the fear is set perimeters, whether they are illusionary, constructs of societal rules, your mom and dad, teachers and people, who have come in the way and said this is what art is, art is really in the case of us, and here again, on a general idea and also here in this culture, and I think Palle really understands this, that art is really *me*, it is as I would have it, it's as Robert would have it, it is everything that comes out of him, it is not without Robert, it's not without me, and I think whether Palle articulates that or not, to me I believe that he understands quintessentially that fear, even in our own selves, if it's removed, we have this... then we are able to flow, we come forward and it shows up in our work and in our mannerisms and in articulating our fingers and it's projected in our tone and

in the values that we project in front of the crowd, all of that is allowed, once the fear has been removed, and when I met him (Palle) way back and had conversations, just like I'm having with you, and what I realised was that in a very short amount of time, even though I have been with this company for ten years in America, I had two encounters with him at a dinner table, and he had offered up an idea that was it, and the idea was: hey Ben, whenever you get a chance

Robert: Anytime you work on a client they have to have that trust in you and for me those creative juices are just going through my head: how can I push this, just a little bit farther to get this look on the street and really try and build my business too. If you don't have that trust factor...so anytime the client has this trust in you, and says you just do whatever you want to do, that's the best, and those are the hair cuts that in my opinion are the best.

Ben: I think it is important to understand that for us the nature of the business we are in and maybe this is the uniqueness of this team is that we are relationship builders, we are quintessentially, out to build relationships first and foremost ... what is interesting about the idea of art and creativity is that first it starts with your relationship with yourself, you have to have a good amount of understanding of thyself, before you can actually go and invite other or allow people into your life. And if you are going to affect someone, in some way, you have to be pretty trusting of yourself and to take this into the practical work environment, that's why we have ethics

Ben: This is without anything to do with creativity, so the nature of allowance and all these things we said about this culture and I think that the thing that Palle has working on the side is without question, we are all about relationships and these relationships cannot be garnered or established without trust and so how does that affect us everywhere? It is really who we are and positively or negatively, it has a huge impact that trust factor, so whether it's a room full of people coming to see a seminar or if Hair Construction, American Crew or Redkin, or if it is us gathering together and speaking about a concept we saw, whether it's extrapolated from architecture or what not

Now interesting enough for creative sorts like ourselves, we're relationship builders, we would know how to approach that

So if we are to look at really what is the difference, he (Palle) is really dealing with a product that is about trust and so he's able to make it malleable, so it is very unique in that. So something like trust is very important, if we look at the culture at Hair Construction

So the nature of allowance and all these things we said about this culture, I think that the thing that Palle has

Robert: I think that there is a lot of confidence, like when I go into a studio, a little bit shakier, then they are going to feel that immediately. Because they are creative as well, we are going to this, this and this, and we are going to get these results.

Palle is morphius

Ben: Belief is a value, it's human... it's part of the human condition. I do believe that in the case of what we are doing here, he understands that creative people have a value, written into what we do, as I said before, it first starts with us, the value of thyself, then the value of other people, art is really a communication tool, that's it. And it really doesn't have any beeriness to

The most important thing to believe in, if there is a thing to believe in, then it is the value of what we are doing, I believe in what I'm doing is good, I believe in, what we intend to do is going to have some value for someone else, when I talked about the intent, I would say if I'm thinking about it aloud, it's the intent of that things are going to be better for somebody with that belief system, so I do think, as far as a propelling force, and being the field that drives something, it is based on the value that there is something in return for this, so you can believe in that, if you don't believe in the kind of nebulous idea of belief.

If you want to add the idea of ... you go with faith, faith is really believing in something that doesn't...you can't see, touch, taste and it is not of the tangible world, but that's not where I see this, we actually get a return for the things we believe in the value of, I get to actually touch tangible hair, I get to manipulate it, cut it, shape it, so there is a direct contact with that value

The intent drove the belief and the belief then carried it through and now in paper it shows up as a product and so year, I think it's more than just the idea of faith, I think it's a concrete ideal almost

So you believe in something that isn't there, so you have faith in it and so it's not so much seen as it is actually, it's a value without tangibility, so in that instance, that's how I categorise it

If you don't have intuition then...it's number one, I call it the student's sixth sense, you have got to tap into that, you got to get a sense of what the client is feeling and what is going on around you, and if you are not in tune with that, then your creative juices they just won't continue anymore because you are not thinking that everything is going to flow, you are just going to jam yourself up and stop all creativity.

Ben: Are you familiar with Blink? Gladwell talks about these unseen conditions or maybe they are not unseen and one of his books, going back to what you asked about, and he talks about the whole... the whole book is talking about that moment when you walk into a room and you see something and it's that quick and in an instant, you have that gut feeling, something's wrong or something's right. Is that a real thing? And what he comes to find, is that eight times out of ten on average, your initial reaction is the correct one. That in a blink of an eye, the mind, the body and all of these things said, all the senses are alive at that moment and we receive information and before we can actually process or download that information, the mind has already received it, we have not yet been able to deposit it in the right folder, but it is given and if you are to stretch it out and look at it, it'd be real.

So he better than us in some cases can in a book's form deliver that intuition and what I liked about it, was that affirmation I got after reading that book, was that to me it was more than just that I feel really great about this hair cut, because intuitively I felt that like you know, this concept that I brought to the table with this gut feeling that I had, maybe it was just then or something that I have carried with me, I thought in this book what it felt like was that there was something more to it, that the only reason that I had the intuition was that I was receiving the information immediately and what is interesting about it, is that it is not something that I carried around with me, but it is something that I already have with me at that moment, but it is because I have pulled away fear, I have pulled away all the obstacles that we tend to get into, whether it is the talking over yourself, or talking yourself out of something, whether it being a haircut, they say something and it influences what you do, it's that allowance again, intuition comes into play, and we allow ourselves to use all our senses to then make a decision that really is unconscious, the initial part of it and it takes a while before it hits our conscious. For me just understanding the sides of that was really great because I thought, what I need to do is to

And I know that there is going to be that gleaming moment, when I will see it these next two days, in an hour or in a second and it might even be in you that I see it on you that will then propel me and it will actually become an end product, and it will actually show up concrete, and I become more in my level after fifteen years after travelling for fourteen years doing hair shows, photo shoots, videos that in this part I'm allowing myself to be the artist I always wanted to be and that was, if you want to stretch it out, what Picasso said about after mastering the craft, what you really wanted to do was to come back to what it was to be a child, the intuitive nature of just laying down, pen next to paper and whatever came out of you was it, I'm exploring that right now, so for me intuition is everything about what I do, when I step into a room like this, anytime my artists ask to be part of something, so I've got to do exactly Palle wants and that is just be here, it's the presence the Zen, the immediate.

And the mindfulness.... being present, allowing myself to.... I always wanted to understand what it was to be an artist, what is relevant to me is what is relevant in this moment, not even some of the things that I've done before, I don't believe that, I don't want to believe that what I've done the last fifteen years is what is going to be on that page when it's photographed, when it's videotaped or whatever. Why do I feel that way, because I want to believe that I would like to be so present in this moment that I would be thunderstruck with an idea that will just come to me. I don't believe that it's not without the culture that came before, who I am and all the things that I show up with, I just want to be able to allow myself to allow it to be that pure, it can be all those things, it can be culturally set, it can be ultimately contributions made by the team in the last year, influenced greatly by all those things I just red five minutes ago, or even just the conversation that we are having now. And ultimately what happens is that we get to a place where I say ok, whatever that be, just allow it and if I can allow that I'll be really surprised. More than anything, I want to be surprised by the things that come out of here, and that's really what I love to see.

As much as Palle is intrigued as to what is going to happen here this weekend and I think that's really what keeps him going, I mean to have thirty people in a room and say: let's see what happens! I'm having that whole experience with myself right now!

Robert: When you are really being creative, and really being in the flow, you are just doing things and almost surprising yourself in that you did not even know that that was how it would turn out. I don't think that you put any limitations on yourself or any self-doubt... you

are just one hundred percent behind whatever your brain is doing and your hands are reacting. You are just... It's very hard to explain unless you have been there and been doing it. And it is very Zen-like to me, for me it's like that's where I would like to be, when I'm there I'm just loving it.

Ben: I just recently heard this and I can be really wrong, but there is something called the fourth level consciousness that speaks to the idea that when you pray, and I do believe that. The Buddhists are trying to get to that place in the morning when you wake up and your conscious is reviewing the day from all the things that you remember from your dream, but it is so without judgement, it is the purest form of consciousness.

Ben: To me it was the most recent thing, that I heard that made sense to attach or level to this idea of the Zen moment, when you are flowing, it's beyond the level of a sense, it's on a conscious level, but level that is, well they named it the fourth level consciousness, where there is no judgment, there is no value, there isn't anything that we can contribute to it, it is actually contributing to us, which is a different process, than some of the things that we do as human beings. And why it feels so disconnected from us and maybe the way that we talk about it, philosophically or emotionally and trying to find these words that evoke this feeling, to me it's a contribution of consciousness rather than something that we produce or impose and I think up to that point we are either cutting hair to arrive at a certain place, but at this moment it is a contribution from something that is without us, which is a very unique experience and it's the closest thing, there again to summarise that fourth level as something like that in the morning when you wake up and there is nothing there but just that thing that flows.

There is a word that we use and it's one that it is my intent this weekend for the segment that I'm going to teach, it's the word facilitator, facilitators are not imposing their will, ideals or concepts on anybody, whether you are one of a structured, whether you are one of an artistic nature, whatever it is, they are to expose, extrapolate, excavate, allow, create.... the only thing they create is an environment, the only thing they have control over is the environment in which those things can come forward, unique in Palle is that he is the ultimate facilitator and a facilitator is the conductor or the orchestrator of the environment.

It's the idea that when we teach, we talk about that the answer is in the room... different than a leader, different than a teacher... we assume that the role is, that when you come in as a

teacher is you have something to offer me and yet I'm not going to offer much to you. And that is an assumed position, with Palle all the different modalities of learners, all the different beliefs and value systems, even the mindsets and the emotional states that are walking in the room at that time.

He is not even trying to judge or formulate a concept for us all. He says: bring it, be it... it is allowed and the only thing I'm going to drive here is an environment of comfort, so that you can be allowed to give the answer and the answer lies in the student and that's what he does differently...

I think that in a creative organisation, the key is to set an environment that really allows for not just creative people but allow for the process and that can be anybody, it does not have to be creative folks, facilitators do not have the answers, in fact they deny that they know anything more than their students, and if the answer arrives on the table, as a yes or a no, if it is a blue or a green and it came from the students, it is therefore true... for me, I'm only a conduit for the flow, and I'm the sheet that wraps around that flow, and if there is anything to manoeuvre or to control, it's just to control the currency flow that's it and the direction is set really set by Morpheus or Neo or whoever it is that is flowing through there at the time, he just gives you safe haven and safe travel, that to me is ultimately sum it up that it is facilitation not education, not leadership, not any of these things that we traditionally talk about in the Western culture.

Ben: One of the things I appreciate about the idea that you come from and in your approach is that you take an Eastern philosophy and applying it to a Western concept of business, there is so many things written about why certain cultures are not successful, why in the light of Western theology, philosophy or whatever it is that we have as a dogma, why they just do not succeed. However, in their own societal rules that is not a condition of their living to be successful. I think that's because we have something like this here going on, it is not really that. We don't really have a Western belief system or value system in this and I think what is really interesting is that the only one brings in these Western ideas, even in his own I'm worried about you know disgracing my leader or somehow putting disappointment on to him by my actions and I know that if Palle was in the room, he would qualify it is as saying, what I have done in my environment or even asking you to be here somehow is imposed these conditions on you that you feel not worthy already, then let me know what it is, so that I can

facilitate the change, so that you can remove that from you. Because it is important that you show up not you for me, and I think that is something that is unique, and creative people need ultimately the idea that, they need a facilitator, creative people also can be, it's chaos theory, it can be all over at the same time everywhere and granted that might even be something that's very Eastern in ideal, but in a practice of trying to produce a book, a video, class work, we need some type of management and management not in the Western ideal, but in the ideal of allowance, that will manage enough. And I think that's interesting that we only bring those boundaries, not the philosophy.