

For Immediate Release

Claire Cory, Haluk Akakce, and Michael Rees enlighten business people about their creative process

Business and Art Find Common Ground at The Aldrich

Business leaders and artists came together on October 29, 2001 at The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art in Ridgefield, Connecticut to explore how creative principles could improve business and how businesses could expand artists' repertoires.

Art and business are often considered diametrically opposed. What both business leaders and artists discovered that fall day were the vast commonalities they shared. Although end products may be very different, the problem-solving issues they face are quite similar.

Fine art is driven by personal vision and a passion to create an end product that "works" according to art's shifting parameters. Business functions are driven by company vision and the timeline to achieve goals. Delivering that final vision is a production issue that both disciplines share. Problem solving is the method in common for achieving successful end results. Creativity is the key.

Producing compelling fine art is as elusive as developing a product with all the right characteristics. Because fine artwork is infrequently tailored to targeted audiences, recognition and sales are often problematic. Once an artist and audience pairing occurs, however, the relationship can be life-long.

Similarly, in the business world, forging consumer relationships by developing products that meet consumer needs, wants and expectations is critical for new product success. Continuing to discern and meet those consumer demands can also create long-term loyalties.

Understood to be part of the art world, creative problem solving and daring experimentation may also be applied to most areas of the business world: product development, production, distribution, marketing, sales, information systems, etc.

One consumer products company, energized by the event and looking to expand its understanding of consumers in-context, has already invited one of the participating artist to help create a set of virtual environments -- within a single room -- where the company can test new or refined products for consumers. Integrated color, sound and other sensory cues are intended to evoke a more natural context to help consumers provide more genuine responses.

On October 29th, in this inaugural gathering of the art and business minds, business representatives from Fortune 500 companies known for their leading consumer brands attended and shared their experiences. Three artists presented their approaches to the creative process. Claire Corey described her approach to painting with a digital palette. Haluk Akakce highlighted his site specific art environments with their mesmerizing video and sound creations. Michael Rees demonstrated his sculptural methods using adaptive use of engineering software. All three artists described how new technologies provided new directions of evolution in their work.

This innovative and adventurous event embodies art interacting with business. It was put together by the founder of The Understanding & Insight Group, Jacqueline Beckley, and

the Director of The Aldrich Museum, Harry Philbrick, who brought together artists and business people from around the United States and the world.

The Aldrich Museum of contemporary Art is a national leader in the exhibition of significant and challenging contemporary art with an emphasis on emerging and mid-career artists and a world-class innovator of museum education programs.

The Understanding & Insight Group is a business, product, and strategy development company specializing in the early stages of product creation and in gathering data "in-context" -- where things are happening for the consumer.

Challenging barriers between art and business, The Understanding & Insight Group and The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art would like to continue the dialog between the two disciplines and to enhance innovative problem solving processes in business.

For more information:

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