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## Creativity: Can Artistic Perspectives Contribute to Management Questions?

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## **Creativity: can artistic perspectives contribute to management questions?**

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Presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> EIASM Workshop on Managerial and Organisational Cognition  
Brussels, June 12-14, 2002

### **Abstract**

Today creativity is considered as a necessity in all aspects of management. This working paper mirrors the artistic and managerial conceptions of creativity. Although there are shared points in both applications, however deep-seated and radically opposed traits account for the divergence between the two fields. This exploratory analysis opens up new research questions and insights into practices.

### **Introduction**

#### **Background**

Creativity is not a new concept in the management field, it has long been associated with advertising and with R&D activities. Indeed it has been considered as one of several essential components of a “good” advertising campaign. Creativity has also been seen as a basic skill for those whose job it is to invent and design new products, materials or services and management interest has been exclusively limited to these two fields. In other words, creativity was only expected from those considered to be creators.

About fifteen years ago, changes in organisational strategies brought a renewed interest in creativity. Thus, under the pressure of an environment perceived as increasingly turbulent and competitive (Boltanski & Chiapello, 1999: 113), reactivity and flexibility emerged as key factors in new strategies. The following fragment illustrates the new status of creativity in this scenario:

“The capacity of people to be creative in their approach to their work will be a major – necessary, though not sufficient – factor in determining why some organisations (business corporations, government departments, professional bodies, voluntary organisation etc.) will be successful in the future and why others will fail. The global turmoil, high risks and ruthless competitiveness of all areas of modern economic life guarantee a future of uncertainty, complexity and high speed change. All place a premium on inventiveness and creativity” (Williamson, 2001: 542).

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Buying, selling, producing, delivering, managing human resource... all the firm's processes are effected by the change.

First and foremost innovation is considered as the crucial cornerstone of strategies.

"Amid so much uncertainty, this much is sure – you must innovate or you'll evaporate" (Kirschner, 2001: 23).

"In this new environment, performance improvement through deliberate, systematic, and results-oriented knowledge creation and innovative action provides a "meta-strategy", which leverages organizational talent and capabilities and hedges against risks in order to grow and create new wealth. (...) Furthermore, strategic innovation involves making knowledge creation and innovation action a way of life, seeking to create and expand markets rather than just reacting to customer demand, and redirecting resources from profitable but dwindling lines of business to support emerging lines that are potentially more profitable" (Abraham & Knight, 2001: 22).

The modes of industrial organisation that were implemented – among which just-in-time (JIT) is probably the most famous – required flexible and multi-skilled employees who involved themselves in the organisational project and its attendant strategies. Consequently, managers were urged to "empower" their personnel. This fashionable concept included both elements of political autonomy (participation in decision making, planning...) and cognitive autonomy. Thus, according to the promoters of empowerment, "the modern employee is a person who actively solves problems" and feels that s/he can achieve "what has to be done, not merely and uniquely what is required from him/her" (Scott & Jaffe, 1992).

Consequently creativity is now considered as a major skill for every participant and, furthermore, a new leadership skill.

"[Exemplary leaders] keep learning and growing. Leaders who can release the brain power of their people, who can energize the know-how and creativity of their workforce, are the only ones who can be sure to be in the phone book by the year 2002" (Bennis 1999: 4).

It is also argued that creativity is a factor in motivation and personal development.

"When these workers can be allowed to express their own sense of creativity, that's when work gets done" (Ario, 2002: 17).

"I have been speaking here about the business reasons for bringing more creativity into your workplace. But there is also the more human side. When you are creative you are using your entire self, your intellect, your emotions, your spirit. You experience yourself in a different way, simultaneously deeper and more playfully. It is more fun, more exhilarating to live your life creatively" (Weaver, 2000: 19).

Today, even management control cares about creativity<sup>1</sup>, because of its strategic dimension. Thus it is claimed that "from now on, defining new areas of

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<sup>1</sup> There is an apparent contradiction between creativity and control. For further details, see Chiapello (2000) or Bourguignon (2001).

responsibilities generating creativity and innovation is at the heart of the concerns of the [management control] function” (Corfmat *et al.*, 2000). A concrete example would be ‘the balanced scorecard’, a famous performance measurement device, which gauges initiative and creativity through indicators such as the number of improvement suggestions made by the personnel and those that have been actually implemented (Kaplan & Norton, 1996: 136).

The craze for creativity is not limited to the management field. It may be observed at the macro-level of society where art is increasingly seen as means of regenerating or developing inner city life: e.g. creativity is commonly claimed to be “a strategy necessary to develop urban attractiveness” (Hansen *et al.*, 2001: 851). Creativity is also considered as “critical to national economic success” and then an important concern for higher education (Higgins & Morgan, 2000: 117).

A typical illustration is the Centre for Creative Communities which is “committed to the building of sustainable creative communities where creativity and learning have pivotal roles to play in personal, civic, cultural, and economic development” (Interchanges, 2002).

### **Relevance and objective**

As we shall see below, this demand for creativity has given new life to the old and productive research tradition of social psychology. Groups and organisations have been subjected to the same kinds of investigations as individual creativity and a host of new journals<sup>2</sup>, devoted to the management of creativity in various fields, has accompanied the renewal of interest.

However, management researchers seldom cross-refer their work on creativity to the attitudes that prevail in the arts – the very place of creativity. This may reflect the frequency with which art is represented as divergent from management (see for instance, Chiapello, 1999: 195) or the persistence of certain stereotypical views of artistic creativity and creators<sup>3</sup>. However, it is worth questioning these common assumptions. For example, as art and management are concerned with both individual and collective commitment there may be some common interests. Some types of art are generated by individuals (e.g. fine arts) and others (like performing arts) involve collective engagement. Therefore investigating artistic creativity might provide profitable insights to the demand for both individual and collective creativity in management.

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<sup>2</sup> Since 1988, the *Creativity Research Journal* has published research “capturing the full range of approaches to the study of creativity”. Since 1992, *Creativity and Innovation Management* “fills a crucial gap in the management literature between strategy and R&D”. *Digital Creativity* was launched in 1990 and focuses on issues of creativity related to artificial intelligence, educational technology, intelligent tutoring systems and computer-assisted instruction.

<sup>3</sup> Thus creativity is often seen as a “granted revelation, an innate gift, a caught grace” and creators and inventors as mediators in which the mystery of inspiration is manifested (Rouquette, 1997: 10).

The present paper represents the first step of this exploratory project<sup>4</sup>. Although art and management have already been juxtaposed, especially on the subject of creative organisations and their control (Chiapello, 1998, 1999), there has been, as far as we know, no attempt to reconcile or even compare artistic and managerial creativity. Any investigation should begin with a preliminary agreement on the nature of the concept. Furthermore, the word is often conflated or confused with close relations such as innovation, originality, and intuition. If anything, research has given us too many definitions and associated terms<sup>5</sup>.

Thus the aim of this paper is to compare management and art concepts of creativity and to evaluate the possibility of transferring artistic ideas about creativity to the management field.

## **Methodology**

The research traditions in management and in art are unlike in a number of important ways. Academic research is well established in management where it has been mainly drawn from adjacent fields such as organisational theory, psychology, sociology, economy, etc.

There is also a clear and significant distinction between the world of the academic and that of the practitioner, who is not supposed to engage in research. This is not to say that some practitioner's innovative developments are not very similar to research<sup>6</sup>. However each world has its own independent literatures but only academic writing counts as research. As will be documented below, management research and its related fields has been abundantly preoccupied with the concept of creativity.

In comparison, an artist (who is always a practitioner) needs to undertake research as part of the day to day process by which new works are produced. In the past, there has been no need for this to be anything more than an unsystematic enquiry that is later buried in the impact of the final outcome (that is a public exhibition). However, a professional artist is likely to also be a teacher in an art school<sup>7</sup> and thus the word 'research' has also come to describe activities that keep an artist-teacher abreast of the subject s/he teaches (i.e. visiting the

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<sup>4</sup> We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the ESSEC Research Center and the help of Oliver Faust.

<sup>5</sup> According to Rouquette (1997: 8), more than a hundred definitions of creativity could be already inventoried in 1959!

<sup>6</sup> This fluidity of role differs from country to country. For instance, it is certainly well established in France where there is a long tradition of separating theory and practice, and less marked in the United States where pragmatism has more value (Bourguignon *et al.*, 2002).

<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of this current research we are writing from the perspective of fine art (a category of creative production formerly encompassing painting and sculpture, but now applied to a vast range of studio, exhibition and event activities). It should be appreciated that terms such as art and creative production are equally relevant to designers and media practitioners, who could, conceivably, turn up on both sides of our discussion.

latest exhibitions, keeping up to date with what is written about their subject, etc.).

However, as art schools in the UK were drawn into the university system, Government funding was increasingly linked to staff exhibitions or commissions. Thus a third, academic-style definition of research became current. Here the artist-teacher advances their field through an engagement with the most innovative aspects of the arts community and its work (advances in technique, sociological aspects, etc.). As a result, a personal exhibition profile, once the main goal of an art school tutor, is now often supplemented by catalogue essays, conference papers and curatorial projects none of which may involve their own artworks but do provide the outcome required to Government funding.

Thus, for the artist, the academic value attached to explicit and demonstrable knowledge has only recently gained a measure of relevance and it is still largely the case that if an artist wants to theorise the concept of creativity s/he would have to refer to philosophy, psychology, or educational theory. Artistic creativity has not been a research topic within the arts. As a result, this analysis, where it draws upon the arts, is based upon the above mentioned fields and upon the rare examples of artists' writings and one co-author's expertise as an artist-teacher.

Within the limits of this paper it will be impossible to do justice to the full conceptual scope of the word 'creativity'. On the one hand, the formation of the word in English is best described as a tortuous historical journey through many cultural domains in which different homes have been built on varied terrain. On the other hand, present-day uses are highly speculative, almost promiscuous, taking little account of the ancient heritage of the word. These days creativity is itself a very agile and creative term that is not easy to pin down.

Therefore, a full review of the extensive appropriation of this word is beyond the scope of this paper. The management and psychology literature alone is considerable. Thus, this paper offers a schematic map of creativity which does not pretend to be exhaustive but which does provide, we believe, enough insight into the concept to sketch a comparative and contrasting analysis of artistic and managerial creativity.

## **Structure**

The paper is structured as follows. As an introductory step, Part One presents the most common definitions of 'creativity' to be found in the dictionary and an etymological and historical analysis. This analysis suggests some preliminary constituents of the concept under investigation. Part Two extends the analysis by drawing upon multiple contributions from various art- and management-related fields (as explained earlier). Part Three examines the relevance and limits of transferring artistic ideas to management, and as a preliminary to our conclusions, offers an organised synthesis of artistic and managerial ideas about creativity. The paper concludes with some practical answers to our initial question and suggests future research directions.

## 1 Creativity: semantics and historical etymology

It is generally a useful starting point to begin a study with an analysis of the common usage of the concept being examined. Indeed there are no concept without words to name them<sup>8</sup>. Although all the constituents and shadows of a concept are seldom observable in the usual meanings, the metaphorical implications are sometimes very important even though they are rarely made explicit by its commentators (Bourguignon, 1997). We will thus begin with a review of the usual meanings of 'creativity' and its related words, which will take us to a further analysis of the emergence of the word and its transformation throughout centuries.

### **Creativity and its cognates: usual meanings**

The following definitions of 'creativity' and its cognates include the act of creation itself and the agent of creation (the creator). As a consequence, the associated adjective ('creative') refers either to the person who creates or to the created work.

Create v. 1. tr. a (of natural or historical forces) bring into existence; cause (poverty creates resentment). b (of a person or persons) make or cause (create a diversion; create a good impression). 2. tr. originate (an actor creates a part). 3. tr. invest (a person) with a rank (created him a lord). 4. intr. sl. Brit. make a fuss; grumble. Derivative: creatable adj.

Creation n. 1. a the act of creating. b an instance of this. 2. a (usu. the Creation) the creating of the universe regarded as an act of God. b (usu. Creation) everything so created; the universe. 3. a product of human intelligence, esp. of imaginative thought or artistic ability. 4. a the act of investing with a title or rank. b an instance of this.

Creative adj. 1. inventive and imaginative. 2. creating or able to create. Derivative: creatively adv. Derivative: creativeness n. Derivative: creativity n.

Creator n. 1. a person who creates. 2. (as the Creator) God.

Creature n. 1. a an animal, as distinct from a human being. b any living being (we are all God's creatures). 2. a person of a specified kind (poor creature). 3. a person owing status to and obsequiously subservient to another. 4. anything created; a creation. Compound meaning: creature comforts - material comforts such as good food, warmth, etc. Idiom meaning: creature of habit - a person set in an unvarying routine. Derivative: creaturely adj.

Source: *Oxford Concise English Dictionary*, 8th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

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<sup>8</sup> This affirmation is strongly embedded in the traditions of the academic universe where concepts have always been brought into existence by language. In contrast, within the arts and their attendant disciplines, 'concepts' can also be the product of other kinds of 'languages': for example, the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic acts of communication we call painting, music and dance.



Using the classic authority on vocabulary, *Roget's Thesaurus*<sup>9</sup>, one can set out over-lapping ideas in their 'topic' families. Here the word 'create' is aligned into three distinct group of synonyms: (1) cause, (2) produce, (3) imagine. The following table is an inventory of the synonyms of 'create' and its cognates:

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<sup>9</sup> *Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*, London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1936.

Families	Cause	Produce	Imagine
Synonyms	origin, source, beginning occasioner, prime mover, author, agent genesis, remote cause influence bring about institute, inaugurate evoke, elicit, provoke	deviser, designer, originator, inventor, founder, generator, constructor, maker	invention, fancy, inspiration lively and fertile imaginations ideality, romanticism, utopianism, dreaming, reverie coinage of the brain, imagery conceit, figment illusion, stretch of the imagination conjure up a vision high flown, extravagant unreal, unsubstantial legendary, mythic, fabulous, visionary, notional

Table 1. Creation and related words: three main meanings and synonyms.

### Etymology and history of the concept

The difference between 'cause', 'produce' and 'imagine' becomes more marked if we look at 'creativity' and 'creation' from an historical standpoint. The cultural and literary critic Raymond Williams (1921-88) has a great deal to offer here. As an undergraduate at Cambridge he became interested in the experience of not speaking the same 'specialised' English as his tutors (Williams, 1983: 11). As a result, he wrote about the traces left on words by their different social and historical contexts. For Williams 'creativity' was clearly a difficult and complex concept which has been transformed by many prior practices and institutional uses (Williams, 1983: 82-4).

He describes how 'create' comes into English from the Latin root word *creare*: make or produce. However, the dominant historical application has religious rather than practical associations. In God the creator we have the ultimate form of 'creation', one that could not be undertaken by those themselves created – '*creatura non potest creare*' proclaims St. Augustine. However, there were extensions of the transcendent connotation: for example, a monarch's 'divine right' to 'create' social rank ("the King's Grace created him Duke" (1495)).

Until the intellectual transformations inaugurated by humanist thinkers during the Renaissance, the theological context inhibited secular connotations. "There are two creators," wrote Torquato Tasso (1544-95), "God and the poet." Here we have a sense of creative power in which using one's imagination seems to involve a more than mortal effort.

On its journey towards becoming a naturalized human capacity, Williams notes that the theological associations remained difficult. The poet John Donne [1572-1631] spoke of poetry as 'counterfeit Creation'. However the modern sense of creativity as an entirely human faculty seems to come about through a parallel

development of the concept 'art' in the C18<sup>10</sup> and C19. 'By 1815 Wordsworth could write confidently to the painter Haydon: "High is our calling, friend, Creative Art."'

The current specialized use of 'art' was firmly established by the late C19<sup>11</sup> (Williams, 1983: 40-4) providing an important contrast with the notion of an artisan: that is, a person skilled but without an imaginative or creative purpose. The concept of 'art' applies where "...forms of general use and intention which were not determined by immediate exchange could be at least conceptually abstracted". Alongside the evolving histories of craftsmen and skilled workers and later scientists and technologists, who were all utility-orientated, the rise of the 'creative artist' had non-utilitarian, therefore, more 'human' associations.

Another important contrast, one that is mirrored in the development of 'creativity', is the historic comparison of art (as a general human skill) with nature. Art is either a pale reflection of the natural world that God has created (like Donne's 'counterfeit') or, more positively, a capacity that God gave us to allow scope for discovery. With this notion of 'recreating' nature comes the sense of art as 'likeness'. The practice of 'fine art' contains a deep rift between copying and imagining. It is not considered particularly imaginative, therefore creative, for an artist to copy. However throughout the arts there is a long tradition of learning through imitation.

Williams also observes that once creativity is uncoupled from a transcendent 'creator', the activities we conventionally call 'creative' do not need to be particularly creative. He cites the example of advertising copy which does not require outstanding degrees of innovation, originality or imagination and yet is the product of a so-called 'creative industry'. In the late C20, with a fully natural sense of creativity, it has become increasingly difficult to distinguish between serious and trivial forms:

"...to the extent that 'creative' becomes a cant word, it becomes difficult to think clearly about the emphasis which the word was intended to establish: on *human* making and innovation. The difficulty cannot be separated from the related difficulty of the senses of *imagination*, which can move towards *dreaming* and *fantasy*, with no necessary connection with the specific practices that are called *imaginative* or *creative* arts..."  
[original emphasis] (Williams, 1983: 84).

To sum up, creativity encompasses the triple idea of cause, production and imagination. The concept has a strong theological background which integrates the three ingredients in a relatively balanced way. However, it has developed as

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<sup>10</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>11</sup> Our fully independent notion of the artist seems to be a product of the C19. However, the process of autonomisation must have begun much earlier. For example, the painters and sculptors of the Renaissance, in serving powerful merchants or political and church leaders, had little of the social autonomy we associate with the vocation of an artist. Nevertheless, art historians have been able to construct the paradigm of 'great art' from the creative activities of this period. Many of these historians were writing in the C19.

a naturalised human capacity alongside a parallel development of art. This complementary relationship defines a type of human endeavour that is clearly differentiated both from utilitarian action and from nature itself. At an earlier stage, creativity had to do with the imaginative re-creation of Created nature. Later, the concept has been used in conventional ways and attached to activities that are supposedly, but not necessarily, creative in the imaginative sense of the word. Williams suggests that this historical development leads inevitably to an impossible size and complication of what the term 'creative' can be used to describe.

## 2 Creativity in literature

The previous preliminary analysis introduces major key points in the concept of creativity. Firstly the analysis deals with the question of the creator, about which it suggests more than one figure: God, then the artist, and subsequently, the non-artist. Secondly, it introduces the question of the outcome of creativity and its degree of innovation and differentiation from the existing. Thirdly, it suggests that creativity mixes some cognitive (imagination) and action-orientated (production) dimensions. Fourthly, the evocation of the place and emergence of artists, that is persons entitled to be called creative, takes us to the social dimension of creativity. These four points may be associated with 'the four P's of creativity research' (Simonton, 1988: 386) as suggested by Stein (1969): the creative person, the creative product, the creative process, and the creative place.

Part Two is organised using these four (now, not unusual) ways of defining creativity in social science. Each subsection looks at art and management perspectives using quoted contributions mainly derived from social psychology and organisation science where management is concerned and philosophy, social psychology, psychoanalysis, education, aesthetics and arts commentary to describe the point of view of the arts.

### **The creative person: from God to the ordinary human being**

In the above lists of equivalent terms for creativity and its cognates (table 1), it is difficult to ignore the supernatural connotations of words such as 'genesis', 'inspiration' and 'visionary'; or the magical realm conjured by the terms 'legendary', 'mythic' and 'fabulous'. Indeed, the idea of creation, which is central to an understanding of creativity, refers to cosmogonic myths. Eliade (1977: 83) classifies them into four categories:

- "1. creation *ex nihilo* (a High Being creates the world by thought, by word, or by heating himself in a steam hut, and so forth);
2. The Earth Diver motif (a God sends aquatic birds or amphibious animals, or dives, himself, to the bottom of the primordial ocean to bring up a particle of earth from which the entire world grows);

3. creation by dividing in two a primordial unity (one can distinguish three variants: a. separation of heaven and earth, that is to say of the World-Parents; b. separation of an original amorphous mass, the 'Chaos'; c. the cutting in two of a cosmogenic egg);

4. creation by dismemberment of a primordial Being, either a voluntary, anthropomorphic victim (Ymir of the Scandinavian mythology, the Vedic Indian Purusha, the Chinese P'an-ku) or an aquatic monster conquered after a terrific battle (the Babylonian Tiamat)" (Eliade, 1977: 83).

Eliade's definitions may be juxtaposed with one of the most famous description of creativity by an artist, the pioneering modernist Paul Klee:

"The Biblical story of Creation is a good parable for motion. A work of art, too, is first of all genesis; it is never experienced as a result. A certain fire flares up; it is conducted through the hand, flows to the picture and there bursts into a spark, closing the circle whence it came: back to the eye and farther (back to one of the origins of movement, of volition, of idea)" (Klee, 1961: 78).

This definition is clearly associated with Williams' remarks above about the original transcendent connotations of the word. In most Western societies creativity is ingrained in the mythic figure of a God who creates *ex nihilo*. It should be noted in passing that the metaphor of sparks has been recently used in association with managerial creativity (Leonard & Swap, 1999).

A direct consequence of the theological origin of 'creativity' is its value-laden connotation. The aesthetician White notes the affirmative nature of creativity:

"...as the term is commonly used, it carries with it a positive value-judgement. Different criteria of value may be at work here, as the word can be used in a very wide sense and be virtually equivalent to 'good'" (White, 1995: 88).

Today's management world provides many examples of 'creativity' and 'creation' used as interpellative and seducing devices. For example, Renault is no longer a car assembler, but a "creator of automobiles"<sup>12</sup>.

There are a few exceptions to the general value-laden connotation of creativity. Thus 'creative accounting' (the modification of the net income level and/or the alteration of the presentation of financial statements) refers to practices that are often criticised for being detrimental to truth and fairness, and ultimately misleading to investors and other stakeholders (Stolowy, 2000: 161). The same idea that the creative arts help to mask reality is found among artists such as Gustav Metzger:

"The state supports art, it needs art as a cosmetic cloak to its horrifying reality, and uses art to confuse, divert and entertain large numbers of people. Even when deployed against the interests of the state, art cannot cut loose from the umbilical cord of the state. (...) The total withdrawal of labour is the most extreme collective challenge that artist [sic] can make to the state. (...) capitalism has smothered art" (Metzger, 1977: 220).

However, these exceptions simply seem to underline the rule by which creation and creativity are seen as valuable attributes. Once creativity was uncoupled from a transcendent creator, it was associated with the figure of the genius. Kant

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<sup>12</sup> French TV advertising campaign, winter 2002.

(1724-1804) defined the concept of genius in close proximity to the modern definition of the 'avant-garde' artist: a person with a "talent for producing that for which no definite rule can be given" (White, 1995: 89). Social psychology has long developed a "genius" view of creativity (see e.g. Koestler, 1964, Osborn, 1953, Guilford, 1950) which assumes that

“...truly creative acts involve extraordinary individuals carrying out extraordinary thought processes. These individuals are called geniuses, and the psychological characteristics they possess – cognitive and personality characteristics – make up what is called genius” (Weisberg, 1988: 148).

As we shall see below, educational theory has adopted similar ideas. For example, the 'paradigm case argument' uses a pantheon of 'best' examples (Einstein, Picasso, etc.) in order to derive a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for a "normal notion of 'creativity'" (Winch & Gingell, 1999: 43-7). 'Normal' here reveals a genius value-laden view that is derived from transcendent creativity.

However a contrasting modern view proclaims that creativity is not the exceptional product of a genius (on Kant's account, a very rare event) but a fundamental part of human life. Since the mid C20, social psychology has increasingly developed the idea that everybody has creative potential which can be actualised if the situation is adequate (Rouquette, 1997: 13). This position includes two elements which have important consequences for research on creativity, as we will explain later in this paper: (1) creative potential is variable according to people and (2) the manifestation of creativity depends on external conditions.

In particular, the first element has reinforced an idea, already present in concept of genius, that creativity is basically associated with psychological traits. Guilford puts it like this: “Creative personality is (...) a matter of those patterns of traits that are characteristics of creative persons” (Guilford, 1950). The 'measurement' of these traits has been given special attention and various tests have been developed (ink blots, etc...) – see for instance Guilford (1967). Furthermore, typologies of creativity have been developed (for examples, see Rouquette [1997: 13]) and there have been many attempts at establishing correspondences with other behavioural traits.

The second element is the recognition of the prominent role of the environment in encouraging a person to be creative. It will be elaborated below in the 'creative place' section.

The idea that everybody is potentially creative helped promote creativity as a staple of child-centred educational theory. Influential thinkers such as Herbert Read (1943) advocated the idea of education through art and as a result, within the democratic framework of contemporary culture, it is now common to see creativity as a mode of free expression that unlocks ability in all fields. An important concomitant to this development is a demotion of creative genius. If creativity is an instrument of inclusion, the achievements of a composer such as Mozart must be framed within a continuum that includes, say, popular music

(White, 1995: 89). The increased organisational demand for creativity that we noted in our introduction may be positioned in close relation to this democratic inclusivity.

Below is a synthesis of 'common' creative attributes as seen by psychologists:

Creative persons (Tardif & Sternberg, 1988: 433-437).

Descriptions of creative persons typically fall into three general categories: cognitive characteristics; personality and motivational qualities; special events or experiences during ones' development. Cognitive characteristics include:

- traits (relatively high intelligence, originality, articulateness and verbal fluency, good imagination),
- abilities (to think metaphorically, to be flexible in decision making, to exercise independent judgment, to cope with novelty, to think logically, to visualise internally, to escape conventional ways of thinking, and to find order in chaos)
- processing styles (using wide categories and images of wide scope, preferring non-verbal communication, building new structures rather than using existing ones, questioning norms and assumptions in one's domain, being alert to novelty and gaps in knowledge, using one's existing knowledge as a base for new ideas).

The one characteristic that seems to prevail among creative people is an "aesthetic sense" which, not only in arts but in a variety of domains, including scientific ones, allow creative people to recognise "good" problems in their field and to apply themselves to these problems while ignoring others.

Oppositely to cognitive characteristics, there is no personality and motivational quality that is useful to describe a creative person. However the most commonly mentioned qualities include a willingness to confront hostility, to take intellectual risks, perseverance, a proclivity to curiosity and inquisitiveness, an openness to new experiences and growth, a driving absorption, discipline and commitment to one's work, high intrinsic motivation, a task focus, a certain freedom of spirit that rejects limits imposed by others, a high degree of self-organisation and self-regulation, a need for competence in meeting optimal challenges. Among less often mentioned, yet still important features of creative personalities are tolerance for ambiguity, broad range of interests, a tendency to play with ideas, valuation of originality and creativity, unconventionality in behaviour, experience of deep emotions, intuitiveness, seeking interesting situations, opportunism, and some degree of conflict between self-criticism and self-confidence. What distinguishes creative people is both their lack of fit to their environment and a paradoxical drive for accomplishment and recognition.

This tension between social isolation and integration is also observable in the early experiences of creative adults. E.g. they liked school and did well, but learnt outside of class for a large part of their education. Moreover over the course of their career, creative persons exert sustained effort and demonstrate voluminous productivity.

The underlying theme of discussions and controversies about creative individuals is the point that the creative individual is one in conflict.

## The creative product

There is a consensus in both art and management, that creativity always produces something. Thus aestheticians like White start, as did Williams (1983),

with the cognate 'creativity as production' (White, 1995: 88). Creators invent, devise, construct, make, etc. and when they create, they end up with a product: Peter the Great was the creator of modern Russia; each of us, as an autonomous individual, engages in self-creation; and so on (White, 1995: 88). Similarly, in management, even definitions of creativity that focus on process (cf. Drazin *et al.*'s definition below) recognise that creativity ends up as a product.

However, in art and in management controversies have raged on (1) the expected qualities that lead one to conclude that an outcome is creative and (2) who is entitled to evaluate these qualities and on what criteria.

### ***Creativity: objectivism versus subjectivism***

We have identified a radical break in our modern understanding of the term creativity (i.e. a sudden shift from the genius to the ordinary perspective). This is also a break in the status of its outcome. Prior to this fracture, the definition of creativity was inclined toward 'objectivism': that is, the exceptional nature of a creative product was the necessary and sufficient condition for the process to be also called 'creative' (White, 1995: 89). Only a remarkable production, by a remarkable person (a genius), characterised creativity. Once creativity became a general capacity that can be uncovered in *all* human practices it mattered much less whether they produce exceptional results or not. Thus we arrive at a subjectivist inclination that identifies creativity as independent of its outcomes. As Weisberg (1988: 148) suggests, it is possible that the involvement of experimental psychologists in the question of creativity might have contributed to supporting the idea that creativity is a shared human ability.

One principle of subjectivism is that a single creative process (i.e. knowing how to draw) is enough, in its own terms, to nourish a universal creativity that can be applied in all circumstances, not just across the arts, but also in non-art fields (White, 1995: 89). The claim here is that there are many different manifestations arising from one general ability (Best, 1992: 94-5). Thus on the subjectivist account, not only does the outcome lose its exceptional character, it also loses its relationship with specific fields of production such as art (painting, sculpture, etc.).

For objectivists, non-aligned creativity cannot exist. Such an idea confuses creativity with personal fulfilment. Using the example of Wittgenstein's notion of a private language, the aesthetician Best argues that this kind of creativity is merely a private and inaccessible affair, which does not deserve the name of 'creativity':

"A claim to be creative could not be justified by reference to a supposed inner mental experience of a creative process, in the absence of a creative product" (Best, 1992: 89).

In other words, objectivists and subjectivists disagree on the criterion for creativity – it is the product for the former and the process for the latter. Thus, it is possible to "produce work of striking originality even though one never ha[s] the supposed mental experience of a creative process. The product, not some 'inner' process, is the criterion of creativity" (Best, 1992: 92).



In management, as we shall see below, almost all definitions of creativity include the idea of an outcome satisfying different conditions; therefore most management perspectives on creativity can be categorised as objectivist ones. Exceptionally, Drazin *et al.* (1999: 287) define creativity within the subjectivist frame: “the process of engagement in creative acts, regardless of whether the resultant outcomes are novel, useful or creative”.

### ***Creativity = an innovative product?***

In art, the idea that creativity has a close correspondence to newness is generally accepted among those who take the objectivist view. For example, Johnson-Laird (1988: 203) uses the definition in Reber’s *Dictionary of Psychology*<sup>13</sup> (1985), i.e. “mental processes that lead to solutions, ideas, conceptualisations, artistic forms, theories or products that are unique and novel”.

The creative act generates something previously unknown, something “not existing before”. The ‘novel’ aspect of the created product is connected to the idea of creation *ex nihilo*, which was considered in the first part. The ‘unique’ aspect refers us to the fact that what is created is different, separate from its surroundings. This idea is also present in the concept of ‘originality’.

The terms ‘unique’ and ‘novel’, both exclude imitation and copy, which as we previously observed, are not considered artistically meritorious. On this subject, Kant argued that the actions of a genius may be imitated but, at that point, they cease to display genius. The example set by a genius can only be “followed by another genius, whom it wakens to a feeling of his own originality” (Kant, 1951: para 49).

There are also different degrees of newness (White, 1995: 88-91). The ‘avant-garde’ artist produces “that for which no definite rule can be given”. The prime mover is creative across all fields of human endeavour. And the creative ‘occasioner’ moves us beyond our present historical limitations whilst, rather paradoxically, remaining appropriately positioned in relation to our existing horizons. As we shall see below, this last point is an important condition in the assessment of creative acts.

It is generally admitted that novel and unique products embody a strong sense of individual vision. For example, Shakespeare did not just create plays, he created his own distinct world view. Here artistic creativity may be said to be extremely close to creation *ex nihilo*. However, not all artistic world views are individualistic in this way. The sculptors of ancient Egypt used strict canonical proportions and formal patterns that were handed down unchanged from generation to generation and yet nobody would deny the ‘vision’ created by these artists.

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<sup>13</sup> Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin.

In management, most definitions of creativity encompass a concept of newness: for instance, creativity has been defined as “the production of novel [and useful<sup>14</sup>] ideas in any domain” (Amabile *et al.*, 1996: 1154). It is worth noting here the frequent association of creativity with ‘innovation’. Amabile defines this term as:

“the successful implementation of creative ideas within in organisation. (...) Creativity by individuals and teams is a starting point for innovation; the first is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the second” (Amabile *et al.*, 1996: 1154).

Thus managerial creativity exists mainly at the cognitive level of bringing something new to existence. The implementation level (action) is left by managers to the so-called innovation process. In the arts, although one can certainly distinguish different levels of artistic work (preparation, design, realisation), creativity informs the whole process. Thus the arts treat creativity as an aspect of both cognition and action. The scope of a creative manager is limited to the cognitive<sup>15</sup> dimension.

This difference might be explained by the contrasting status of action in the two fields. In the arts a great deal is invested in the artist’s intention, his or her personal will. Conversely, in management, action is mainly embedded in the technical and social systems by which a workforce is drawn into sets of predetermined actions. In this context, acting upon a creative idea has to be authorised by the entitled decision-makers, unless the ‘creator’ is given political autonomy and the power to act<sup>16</sup>.

Despite the differences both fields generally agree that creative action requires novel and/or original elements to confer a character of uniqueness and *ex nihilo* creation on its outcome. The main problem with the various qualities of newness discussed here is to know where they begin and how to define them. This takes us to a discussion on the assessment of creativity, which will be presented below.

### ***Creativity = an useful product?***

Usefulness is a term not much used in the art world. It has been noted in Part One that art, as a specialised field, constituted itself in opposition to the utility-orientated world of craftsmen, artisans, and technologists.

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<sup>14</sup> The utilitarian orientation of creativity will be examined in the next section.

<sup>15</sup> This does not exclude the fact that creativity often deals with action-related problems. For instance, the improvement of industrial processes needs creativity. But between, say, the production of a new idea and its implementation, there are often many steps (e.g. tests). Another example of this uncoupling may be found in brainstorming practices which have long provided an archetypal illustration of creative practices in firms.

<sup>16</sup> ‘Initiative’ is also a term frequently associated with creativity, specially in the last decade when people were required to be increasingly autonomous. It refers to a person’s capacity to do more or less than is required, to get out of the frame. Initiative expectations assume an implicit authorisation to put creative ideas into action. As with the concept of innovation, we are being referred to the implementation of an idea shaped within an earlier step in the cognitive creative process.

Management undoubtedly belongs to the utilitarian universe. It is not really a surprise to find that in this field most definitions of creativity entail not only novelty and uniqueness but also relevance, usefulness and value (Oldham & Cummings, 1996, Ford 1996, Woodman *et al.*, 1993). A typical perspective is as follows:

“A product or response will be judged creative to the extent that (a) it is both a novel and appropriate, useful, correct and valuable response to the task at hand, and (b) the task is heuristic rather than algorithmic” (Amabile, 83: 33).

Such a functionalist approach has led to research which focuses on the factors enhancing creative output. These will be discussed in the next sections.

Finally, usefulness raises the same two problems earlier attributed to newness: Who defines it and how?

### ***Who does assess the product's creativity?***

Firstly, it should be noted that the question is irrelevant in the subjectivist perspective. Subjective creativity is mainly a question of inner process, not a specific product. Furthermore, there is not necessarily a consensus of opinion between the various objectivist tenants of creativity. For example, Johnson-Laird (1988) diverges from the norm when he notes that to assess the novelty and uniqueness of an outcome (*cf. supra*) one should know everything that has been created in other places and times – which is obviously impossible. Thus Johnson-Laird suggests that novelty *for the creator* is the ultimate criterion for assessing creativity (1988: 204).

In art the central mechanism of assessment is the audience. For example, there is an ingrained relationship between aesthetics and the value-judgement of a spectator. Although White is disparaging about audiences having a creative function in their own right, it is difficult to avoid the fact that aestheticians write about the shared enthusiasms of like-minded communities of art lovers (White, 1995: 88-91).

The critic is a key figure in the interaction of artist with audience. The contemporary art world places considerable weight on the role of criticism in the production of audiences. For example, the British sculptor, Anthony Caro, used to claim that the modern artist needed critics to tell him/her what to do next. This may be juxtaposed with the long-standing opposition between creativeness and critical thinking that has intellectual roots going back at least to Plato's description of the artist as arational (White, 1995: 88-91). In art schools this antipathy is been addressed by encouraging two mutually exclusive states of mind: student artists have to learn to move productively between rash spontaneity and level-headed disinterestedness.

All contemporary artists recognise that there is a fraught but curiously 'creative' relationship between producers and commentators. In his introduction to Paul de Man's *Blindness and Insight*, Wlad Godzich points out that scholars and intellectuals like de Man are celebrated as original and creative persons and yet accused of acting too much the star, of inspiring too much awe in their audiences (Man, 1983: xv). Another version of this idea may be found in the George

Steiner's attack on the "cancerous throng of interpretation and reinterpretation" that has resulted in an (entirely uncreative) sense of 'calculation' in much C20 art. For Steiner, the present criteria for a good work of art is something that will "reward the structural analyses of college and university classes" (Steiner, 1989: 34-8).

An important extension of what be might called 'critical creativity' is the proposition that an engaged audience creates, rather than discovers its aesthetic pleasure (White, 1995: 90). On this account, artworks are indeterminate creations that wait to be filled out by observers. The most pervasive idea in the current art world is that there is no artist – and therefore no creativity – without an audience (Barthes, 1978).

Artistic creativity itself can involve a form of creative appreciation. An instance of this is as follows: in 1943 the composer Benjamin Britten set some lines by a forgotten 18C poet, Kit Smart, which were written during Smart's seven-year confinement in a mental asylum. Robert Wells, reviewing *Christopher Smart and the Enlightenment* by Clement Hawes<sup>17</sup>, describes how Britten's "uncanny act of sympathy" creates a new coherence. "He takes the listener through and past the sheer strangeness of the poem to (...) its greatness, its oracular ungainsayable rightness...". Thus Britten's setting is more than a revival, it is more than the generation of a new context, it is the occasion of a newly cohered work of art and thus the emergence of a new Kit Smart.

In management, things appear more straightforward. It is generally accepted that only an external observer is entitled to assess creativity:

"A product or response is creative to the extent that appropriate observers independently agree it is creative. Appropriate observers are those familiar with the domain in which the product was created or the response articulated" (Amabile, 1983: 31).

Now that we have established the terms on which the creative nature of a product is assessed, we are left with the question of criteria.

### ***Which criteria for creative products?***

When you define creativity through its outcome you automatically raise questions of measurement: How creative is this new artwork? How creative is this new product?. This crucial topic alone deserves a whole exploratory paper and we only mention it here in order to give some examples of how the questions has been addressed. There will be no attempt to lay out the complete debate.

Firstly, we should note that concepts such as 'creation', 'newness' and 'originality' carry with them an implicit opposition. Creation is understood in comparison to nothingness; newness is conceded in the context of the existing (which then becomes old or past); and originality is recognised as it occurs against a background of conformity. These dualistic oppositions point to the

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<sup>17</sup> Time Literary Supplement, 9/15/2000.

difficult problem of categorisation: each of these terms describes something that is extraordinary to its situation.

White notes that our understanding of an artist's creativity is often built around an accumulated appreciation of not only technical skill but also the ability to integrate complex elements into a satisfying whole (White, 1995: 88). This point is influentially elaborated by the philosopher Susanne Langer (1953) who addressed "the problem of artistic creation" in relation to the growing impact of abstract painting in America in the post-war period. Given that the history of art appeared to be dominated by representations of nature, Langer challenged the idea that artistic creation should be more properly called 're-creation' (cf. *supra*, Williams, 1983). She argues that those who appreciate paintings perceive "more than a delightful combination, more than an interpretation of the already created". In fact, they see "something 'other' than actuality" (Langer, 1953: 46). Langer used Gestalt psychology (specifically, the perceptual ability to 'complete' suggestive shapes and patterns) to redefine the role of representation in visual art, drama, and literature. Her conclusion is that each of these art forms has a unique representational mechanism that creates relationships between 'forms' in such a way that we see a virtual world, a proposition about, rather than an imitation of, reality.

When an audience bestows merit on an artist this can be connected to the need of this social group to be seen as 'progressive' (White, 1995: 88-91). In the case of American abstract art during the 1950s, the capacity of painters such as Jackson Pollock to provocatively challenge prior expectations is a factor in the recognition of creative endeavour. Anyone familiar with the British contemporary arts scene will recognise this last point. Current trends in London are built on the concept of 'sensation' (the title of an influential exhibition). The sense of notoriety can be so strong that art made within this context often appears to be independent of its own objective presence.

"There exist artworks that do need to be seen, the message can be understood through secondary representation (...). In this situation the artist is the instigator of a communicative process over which, once the idea is released, they can have only limited control."<sup>18</sup>

However, the paradigm of artistic/audience progress is not only a fashionable affair, there is a branch of arts criticism that can be traced back to the German literary historian, Hans Robert Jauss, that argues that all creative works of art are received against an existing horizon of knowledge and presupposition. For example, musicologists have long thought that classical composers worked against their listeners' expectations:

"Musical things begin to happen when the composer's creativity sets to work on such a background [of musical convention] ... until he reaches the foreground of his work, his individual invention ... producing diversity and contrast out of the original, wholly unitarian idea." (Keller, 1987: 156).

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<sup>18</sup> Quoted from an unpublished text by the artist Jane Park.

In this context it becomes easier to understand the criterion for assessing novel and unique acts. According to Best (1992) an artist changes the criteria of what counts as good art. But to change everything, to make all new, would be incoherent. One must be somewhere to go somewhere else and therefore that which is unique and new must remain positioned within our existing horizons (cf. supra, White, 1995: 88-91). Indeed, if a creative act deviated too far from the norm, we would not know if it is an achievement or not. A deranged person could produce countless unexpected and novel ideas without being thought of as a particularly creative thinker. When the connections with the objective world are too remote, creativity cannot be assessed (Best, 1992: 89-90).

According to the psychologist Bruner (1962), a creative outcome produces “effective surprise” in the observer, as well as a “shock of recognition” that the product, though novel, is entirely appropriate.

All these examples illustrate the difficulty and complexity of setting criteria for assessing an outcome’s creativity.

### **The creative process**

The creative process is often viewed as inexplicable and mysterious, and yet, in the modern world, creativity cannot remain an inexplicable trace of divine desire (Plato's description of inspiration). Thus, there have been various attempts to explain creativity in terms of simple rules. For example, Arthur Koestler proposed that creative action was “the bisociation of normally unrelated matrices” (Koestler, 1975: 120). But mechanistic prescriptions do not capture the perplexing complexity<sup>19</sup> of creativity that clearly still lies outside the grasp of our present scientific knowledge. The most recent psychological perspectives have an ambition to integrate our “better understanding of the unconscious mind and the physiology of the brain” (Boden, 1990: 29) with “computational models derived from Artificial Intelligence” in order to understand the surprising asymmetry between process and product in creative acts (Boden, 1990: 41).

Boden’s optimism contrasts with the view that the creative process should not be graspable. For instance, Jarvie (1981: 123) argues that if science does eventually explain how creative acts come about then, for many, they will have explained the concept of creativity out of existence. This position may be viewed as a kind of resurgence of the theological undercurrents of creativity and indicates the degree to which creation *ex nihilo* continues to have allure and credibility.

These days it is common to link the creative process to the unconscious mind. For example, Freudian influences are discussed by the educational theorists Winch and Gingell who analyse 'expression' in the following manner:

“The cult of free self-expression which has dominated art teaching in British primary schools for forty years, probably derives from two sources. The first is Freud with his ideas that art represents the product of the sublimation of the promptings of the unconscious mind (...).

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<sup>19</sup> What happens appears to be “not just improbable, but impossible” (Boden, 1990: 41).

The second is the Romantic tradition, represented on the one hand by figures such as Wordsworth with his stress on the purity of vision of childhood and his notion that 'poetry is the spontaneous overflow of strong emotion' and on the other by aestheticians such as Tolstoy and Collingwood (see Tolstoy, 1930, Collingwood, 1965) with their distrust of technique and their emphasis upon the expression of emotion" (Winch & Gingell, 1999: 94).

Such claims are closely linked to subjectivist-orientated ideas about creativity. Freud as well as Wordsworth thought that the child at play mirrored the activities of the creative writer (Adams, 1993: 7). More generally, Freud considered the artist as a model user of his psychoanalytical methods (i.e. art is a therapeutic management of the artist's unconscious mind) (Adams, 1993: 8). However, the subliminal dimension of creativity was not always so obvious. Eysenck (1996) made the point that although the creative process can be either conscious or unconscious, early psychologists were interested only in the conscious variety.

In the field of aesthetics, Collingwood (1965) tried to reconcile the unconscious and conscious parts of creativity. He challenged the prevailing intentionalism of early C20 art criticism in which the production of an artwork was linked to a conscious, often problematic, situation during the life of the artist. Thus, for Collingwood, all artistic creation is an inner mental event that is both indeterminate and unavailable to scrutiny. As a result there is no inward experience that is complete in itself – emotions, for example, are not objects possessed before the act of expression<sup>20</sup>. Therefore, the material products we enjoy as works of art are no more than trial-and-error attempts by the artist at manifesting the unformulated world inside his or her head. Aesthetic appreciation is based on the benefit to both artist and audience when the unconscious is realised as shared conscious property, however cack-handed and imperfect the attempt.

In management, the difficulty of modelling the creative process has been accounted for by Drazin *et al.*, who, from a 'sensemaking' perspective, claim that engagement (or disengagement) in creative acts is mediated by the individual's intrasubjective frame of reference (1999: 293).

Psychologists have also emphasised the enhancing role of intrinsic motivation on creativity. Research has provided abundant evidence that intrinsic motivation can be undermined by extrinsic motivators (e.g. monetary rewards) or other elements (e.g. deadlines, evaluation) that lead people to feel externally controlled in their work (Hennessey & Amabile, 1988: 18).

Partly drawing on this motivational question, Unsworth (2001) distinguishes four types of creativity according to the type of problem presented (open *versus* closed) and the driver for engagement (internal *versus* external).

### Driver for engagement

External

Internal

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<sup>20</sup> The same idea has been expressed by Weick: "How can I know what I think until I see what I say" (1979: 5).

<b>Problem type</b>	Open	Expected creativity <i>Ex. creating artwork</i>	Proactive creativity <i>Ex. unprompted suggestions</i>
	Closed	Responsive creativity <i>Ex. think tank</i>	Contributory creativity <i>Ex. contribution by a non-project member</i>

Table 2. Unsworth's (2001) typology of creativity (adapted).

Unsworth (2001) notes that 'responsive' creativity is the most prevalent form of creativity studied in the management and related fields. Indeed the long-term focus on creativity testing concerned both problems to solve (creativity tests) and external demand. Occupational creativity studies (for instance in R&D) also deals with 'responsive', sometimes 'expected' creativity, depending on the level of openness of the problem to solve. 'Expected' creativity is to be found in quality circles and total-quality management practices, whereas 'proactive' and 'contributory' creativity are two forms of volunteered creative behaviour.

Unsworth notes that, in practice, there exist some situations where engagement may be both 'externally' and 'internally' driven. Similarly, some problems are neither entirely 'closed' nor 'open'. (2001: 293). Thus the situational context is a very important pretext in the categorising of a creativity occurrence. Unsworth ultimately suggests that the activities involved in the creative process, as well as its key predictors, probably differ according to the type of creativity addressed.

Coming back to art, this grid suggests that 'expected' creativity would describe the situation in an art school and 'proactive' creativity, that in a professional artist's studio. It is interesting to point out here that 'proactivity' has been under-addressed by social psychologists, mostly because their focus has been increasingly given to organisational questions.

Finally, it is worth noting that beyond the affirmative nature of 'creativity', there has to be some recognition that there is no creation without destruction. This profound dialectic (a feature of both Eastern religions and Darwinism) is an inherent dimension of the experiments in auto-destructive art<sup>21</sup>, for example, in the work of Gustav Metzger or Denis Poudrue.

### The creative place

The concept of a 'creative place' may be variously understood. Firstly, the concept has been connected with the role of creativity in society – and this point has been made in relation to art only. However, art and management have both had an interest in contextualising creativity, either because the meaning of an artwork often depends on its context, or because individuals are not adrift in

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<sup>21</sup> In auto-destructive art creation includes destruction; that is, the work destroys itself.



social weightlessness. This latter point has been mainly developed in relation to management, whose functionalist perspective on creativity has led logically to research into the environmental factors that enhance creativity. Finally, both fields have considered the relationship between individual and collective creativity: the arts have addressed the question of ‘communities’, while management has focused on the ‘organisational level’ of creativity. Indeed, it has been reaffirmed recently that it is not sufficient to have creative individuals in an organisation, they must work together toward some meaningful output. These different ‘creative places’ are examined below.

### ***Creativity and society***

Csikszentmihalyi (1988: 329) maps the set of dynamic and causal relationships that constitutes creativity as following:

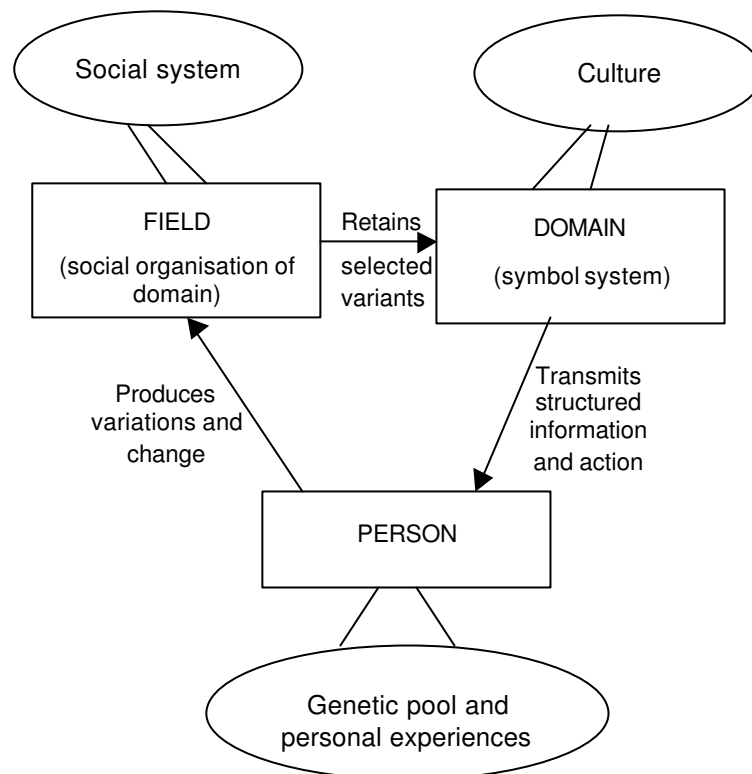


Figure 1. The locus of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988)

A domain is “a system of related memes” (i.e. units of imitation<sup>22</sup> which are transmitted from one generation to the next) “that change through time, and what changes them is the process of creativity” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988: 333).

<sup>22</sup> The inventor of the ‘meme’ theory, Richard Dawkins, says that ideas spread through a population by a process of imitation. However, Dan Sperber (1996) has pointed out that copying

This framework explains how prime movers come to be the people we hold responsible for changing our conventions, tastes and ideas. It also clarifies why creative acts have to keep some connection with “existing horizons” (*cf supra*, White, 1995). It might also suggest a hypothesis for communities that produce noteworthy art but do not give status to the individual. As with the above mentioned lack of unique and new development in the long history of Ancient Egyptian art, we can sometimes be presented with the paradoxical situation of highly creative artists who are not allowed to bring any variation to the system. In this scenario, the “cultural evolution” which the above model represents (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988: 333) would be nil.

Csikszentmihalyi’s model entails the widespread idea that we rely on artists to create intelligible and valuable world-views (see above, White and also Langer). This arises from the concerns of the objectivists for whom the creative vision of the artist is an important contribution to the tangible size and form of the universe in which we live (Best, 1992: 22).

The model also explains why the fourth P of creativity research (place) is also called “persuasion” (Simonton, 1988: 386). From this viewpoint, creativity becomes “an interpersonal or social phenomenon” and “emerges as a particular type of leadership” (*ibid.*). In other words, artists do not only have a specialised claim on those forms of production which eclipse other applications, they are also influential persons:

"Creativity is not always about the ability to paint or write or act. It can also be about having the power to motivate others" [Louise Jury in an article on the Creative Britain Awards (Independent on Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2000)].

The poet Lewis Hyde has recently qualified the role of artists in society in somewhat different terms. He pointed out that a certain portion of artistic creation requires an *uncanny* [our emphasis] gratuitous element that is bestowed like a gift (Hyde, 1999: xi). For Hyde contemporary art responds to two economies: that of the commodity market and that of a gift-exchange culture. He draws on the work of anthropologists such as Marcel Mauss and Marshall Sahlins who showed how social cohesion in early societies was brought about by gift exchange. For Hyde the creative spirit is "the inner gift that we [the artists] accept as the object of our labour, and the outer gift that become[s] a vehicle of culture". Here the artist is a representative, in the midst of the rampant materialism of high capitalism, of an ancient, perhaps, more 'original', value system<sup>23</sup>. The market economy, Hyde argues, disqualified the gift economy, and yet, because it offers

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(and then carelessly misrepresenting this copy to others) is not a good explanation of both the expansion of a culturally successful idea and its rapid evolution as it travels through a social group. There has to be something in it for each agent of transmission. Sperber’s formula is that we like to make the ideas we come across our own *by* telling them to someone else. In this way ideas become contagious. To anyone working in the arts this seems a more plausible description imitation.

<sup>23</sup> We recognise here the above mentioned opposition between artists and utility-oriented social groups.

money for art works, allows the artist to maintain a protected gift-sphere in which art is created. When the artist moves between this sphere and the market place, s/he "converts market wealth [back] into gift wealth" (Hyde, 1999: 274) giving the creative practitioner an almost 'providential' role in society.

Artists can also be viewed as exemplary life-strategists. It was previously noted that Freud saw the artist as a model user of his psychoanalytical methods. Artists, through their own agency, are able to use their day to day engagement with creative production to sublimate and manage their unconscious mind. This thesis has been developed by Chamberlain (2000) from Freud's own writings and life-analysis. She believes that Freud was envious of the artist's triumphant life style<sup>24</sup>, which provided the artist with :

"...the feeling of an extra, quasi-secret freedom existing within a carefully regulated society [i.e. late C19 Vienna]" (Chamberlain, 2000: 36).

Accordingly, Freud's view of artistic resistance to the repressive late C19 Vienna society was that:

"The artist transforms his base thoughts and instinctual needs into something that will not frighten his audience" (Chamberlain, 2000: 35).

Chamberlain views Freud as a "secret artist", who clandestinely transferred to psychology the creative spirit of the artist. As a result, as has been so often observed above, psychoanalysis reinforces the subjectivist view of creativity.

### ***Creativity in context***

Many theorists have suggested that social surroundings have an impact upon creative behaviour and that within these activities individual, group and organisational levels interact (Amabile, 1988, 1996, Amabile et al., 1996, Ford 1996). In art, the structure of the social institutions in which an artist works and lives has been acknowledged as a major theoretical point. For instance, Elias (1993) explained the role played by the society of Salzburg Court in the refinement of Mozart's musical abilities and Csikszentmihalyi analysed the role of the Florentine community in the genesis of the Renaissance (1988: 334).

Thus studies have demonstrated that organisational policies, structures, climate (see e.g. Burkhardt & Brass, 1990, Tushman & Nelson, 1990), and training (e.g. Basadur *et al.*, 1986, Wheatley *et al.*, 1991) affect creative output. Creativity has also been related to team-cohesiveness, diversity, tenure, the degree of co-operation among members (King & Anderson, 1990, Payne, 1990), job design (Oldham & Cummings, 1996), supervisory style (West, 1989), and the provision of performance feedback (Carson & Carson, 1993). In addition, Woodman et al.

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<sup>24</sup> "The artist, with his loosely packed soul and a ready imagination is therefore a model to all of us of psychic health. With the honour, wealth and sexual love which seem to fall to him because of his gifts, he really does hold out the prospect of a happier life" (Chamberlain, 2000: 35). However Freud's idealistic view does not consider the plight of the creative professional tied to the production of artistic artefacts.

(1993) have developed a comprehensive model that links culture, resources, technology, strategy, and rewards to organisational creativity.

Alongside these developments the intrasubjective 'sense-making' perspective on creativity suggests that a work environment that is supposedly favourable to creativity (as suggested by the outcomes of functionalist orientated research) could have inhomogeneous effects on individuals (Drazin *et al.*, 1999: 289). Thus individuals involved in a large-scale project are influenced significantly by their occupational subcultures (*ibid.*, 301).

The notion of domain (*cf. supra*, figure 1) has been used to show how the constraints imposed on the creativity of Chinese and Western painters were radically different, thus producing different types of creativity (Li & Gardner, 1993).

### ***Individual versus collective creativity***

The relationship between individual and collective creativity has been abundantly documented both in art and management. In this latter field, it has been pointed out that little had been done to extend research beyond the level of small groups (Drazin *et al.*, 1999: 288). Similarly it has been noted that there has been little recognition of task-interdependencies either between units or within a broad organisational system (Kazanjian *et al.*, 2000). Additionally, Drazin *et al.* (1999: 290) consider that it is inappropriate to assume, as is typically done, that organisational creativity is the accumulation of individual or small-group creative actions. They believe that it is not relevant to generalise from the individual level. Therefore, they define individual creativity<sup>25</sup> as "the engagement of an individual in a creative act" but describe organisational creativity "in terms of a process that maps *when* creative behaviour occurs and *who* engages in creative behaviour" [original emphasis] (*ibid.*: 291). On this last definition the process of creativity engages different communities of individuals within different intersubjective frameworks, which leads to the favouring of different types of novelty (technical, administrative...). In large scale projects, where time is an important aspect in organisational creativity, the dynamic model of creativity encompasses balances of power between communities, negotiations, and crises (*ibid.*: 299). The crises force the various communities to find new interpretative frames. According to the type of crisis involved (e.g. one of functionality, cost, schedule), the related occupational staff (e.g. technical staff or project managers) will move into the limelight in order to "engage more in creative behaviour" (*ibid.*: 298). In this situation, the opportunity to act as a saviour helps to increase the staff-member's identity as a creative actor. Groups or individuals within a group may also re-frame an event or an issue as a crisis to tactically gain reinforcement from their audience.

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<sup>25</sup> Drazin *et al.* (1999: 291) make the assumption that in group situations, individuals have to initially engage in individual-level creativity. It is also assumed that the iterative nature of creativity works in the same way both for individuals and within groups.

The managerial communities described by Drazin et al. can be considered alongside the notion of 'interpretative communities' used in the arts. Fish (1980) defined literature as the product of a community of agreement in which readers do not decode poems but *make* them using the structures of understanding provided by group membership. Such communities are both historically situated and historically variable. For example, Wegman (1997) has used Fish's theory to describe how the personal, communal and spiritual identities of a Medieval congregation were brought into imaginative interaction as the performance of a motet assigned each level of participation its place in the hierarchical structure of earthly and heavenly communities. These communities have been brought together, in mutual interpretation of one another, by the act of worship. One only has to think of the same motet being performed before a contemporary concert hall audience to appreciate how meaning is not something extracted from the music itself but from the agreement shared by each interpretative community about what counts as music.

Although superficially individualistic, the art world is constructed of many overlapping interpretative communities in the same way that firms are composed of various occupational groups. Public recognition of an artist is simultaneously an acknowledgement of the interpretative community to which s/he belongs. The creation of crisis described by Drazin *et al.* (*ibid.*, 302) as sporadic in organisations could be said to be the prevailing condition in the arts. As Tardif & Sternberg (1988: 437) conclude, an artist is basically a person in conflict whose creative role is maintained through a permanent interpretation of events as crises. Fish would add that artists do not problematise in this way in isolation but in order to receive further reinforcement from their interpretative community.

### 3 Moving artistic ideas about creativity to management: a preliminary analysis

We are now in a position to return to the proposition with which we began: that of transferring ideas about creativity from the arts to management. A transfer is the moving of something (say, a technology or a management method) from one place to another, and it is generally motivated by a wish to possess that which is perceived 'here' as a success 'there'.

It is a widely accepted idea that success is not independent of its environmental context. Therefore, as a preliminary to any act of transference, the analysis of both environments and an appraisal of their respective "fit" with the thing to be transferred are recommended steps (Bourguignon, 1993: 92). Such measures should prevent the kinds of failure that occur as a result of a poor fit between the new environment and the transferred thing.

This framework can be adapted for the present question. Because the concept of creativity already exists in management, the frame will encompass, not three but four elements, as shown in the following figure:

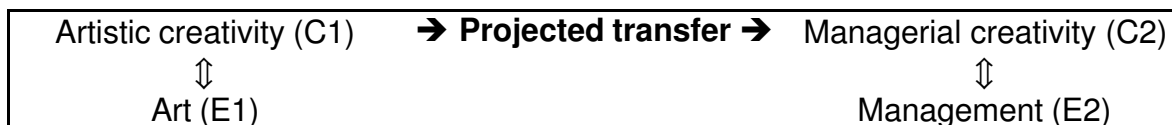


Figure 2. The transfer framework.

This framework suggests the following analysis:

1. a mirroring<sup>26</sup> of artistic and managerial types of creativity (C1-C2). After all, if they are alike, there is nothing to transfer. However, as will be shown, there are differences;
2. a comparison between the two environments (E1 and E2) in order to ascertain the extent to which they are reconcilable;
3. a relating of the divergences between environments and the differences in types of creativity (C1-C2) as described in the first step above.

As a result, the analysis will have delineated the scope of the various aspects of creativity that could be transferred. It will also have measured their 'fit' with their original environment (art) and gauged the gap between art and management fields. These various elements provide a relevant basis for our concluding remarks about the transferability of artistic creative perspectives to management.

From a methodological standpoint, it is worth noting that this analysis is a synthetic and structured representation of the previously reviewed elements of Part Two. It is our creation, and like all creative productions it is not free of subjective interpretation. Moreover, comparative analyses use categories and oppositions which, whilst beneficial for clarification purposes, are archetypal representations that might oversimplify matters. Therefore, we recommend keeping in mind that what follows is an artefact born of a particular context and functionality.

### **Mirroring: common points and differences in concepts of creativity**

We have found six major common points in art and management perspectives on creativity:

1. Both fields experience difficulties in defining the concept. As White states about art, "it is impossible to give a simple definition of creativity" (White, 1995: 88). In management, there are such a high number of definitions that an inventory is placed beyond the scope of our paper. Generally, if you feel happy with an existing definition, you do not need to coin a new one. Thus the multiplicity of existing definitions suggests that the concept is too complex to be easily or exhaustively grasped.

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<sup>26</sup> By mirroring, we do not mean to imply any dualism, nor imitation or reversal of parts. We use the mirror metaphor to capture a sense of reflection between two elements by which we learn through the exchange of images.

2. Both fields have moved from the objectivist to the subjectivist position. As far as art is concerned, the point has been abundantly documented in Part Two. As for management, creativity has shifted from being the required skill of only the supposedly 'creative' to a general requirement for a whole work force and this evolution can be considered as the triumph of subjectivism over objectivism.
3. In both fields there is a discrepancy between discourses and assumptions about creativity and our experience of creative outcomes. Thus the systematic emphasis on *ex nihilo* creation and newness fails to be aligned with our experience that creation is the re-creation of existing things and that newness is a relative, subjective matter. Parts One and Two have documented this point in relation to the arts. It is clear that in management most "new" products are variations on pre-existing themes and that newness is mostly a matter of perception. The fact that change is characterised by continuities and variations, and that perception of altered situations depends on the observer's assumptions and objectives, have informed the recurrent question in the analysis of managerial change – for examples see Guérin (1998) about industrial organisation, or Bourguignon (2001) about management control.
4. In both fields, with a few exceptions, it is a generally accepted idea that audiences play a major role in assessing creativity. Part Two gives details of the role of external judgement – either 'audiences' in art or 'appropriate external observers' in management.
5. Both fields recognise conflict as a major ingredient of creativity. It is a common idea in art that a creative personality thrives on both inner conflict and external controversy. In management, it is also an accepted idea that creativity arises in the contest between actual and expected conditions. For instance, if a company's rate of irregular production is 7%, with an objective of 4%, actors are supposed to creatively reduce the gap between expectations and realisations. Another example can be found in the process of negotiation, where "value creation" (that is, new solutions) emerge from the encounter of one party with another (Fisher *et al.*, 1991).
6. Finally, both fields exhibit a strong faith in creativity. Being creative is an entirely positive attribute of artistic activity. For example, you are not really fulfilled as an artist until you are wholly creative with your technical ability as a painter, pianist, etc. Similarly, in contemporary management you are expected to be creative whatever your hierarchical level, job or technical skill. There is a strong belief that creativity offers clues to management success and thus to the on-going survival of a firm. The terminology differs in managerial and artistic circles. However, the two fields are united in their enthusiasm for creativity.

However, important differences remain and these are shown in the following table:

Creativity in	Art	Management
Attitude towards the mystery of the process	Acceptance	Elucidation
Outcome	Non-utilitarian	Utilitarian
Scope of creative activity	Cognition + implementation	Cognition
Time-outcome relationship	Long term	Short term

Table 3. Main differences between artistic and managerial creativity.

1. The mystery of creativity is treated differently in the two fields. In art, there is a general acceptance that the process of creativity is ungraspable. What was once called divine inspiration is now inclined to be thought of as the unconscious promptings of the human mind. As a result, the idea that you cannot establish general rules, and that the process is unique to each creator, remains central. In management the opposite position holds sway, there is a constant wish to elucidate the process or to find rules that would provide a model (as in the above cited Unsworth's typology).
2. One of the most familiar differences between artistic and managerial outcomes is utility. In management the creative outcome has to be useful, appropriate, valuable, etc. (see above the Amabile's definition) – all possible adjectives will refer to utility. In the arts a creative outcome requires no utilitarian framework.
3. The productive scope of both fields can be broken up into different aspects. In management, creativity is associated with cognition (i.e. production of new ideas) and dissociated from implementation (which is left to the so-called "innovation" process). Conversely, in the arts, creativity informs both cognitive and implementation processes even when these are carried out by allied practitioners such as bronze founders.
4. The temporal limits of creative action contrast significantly in both fields. In the arts, the conclusion of a creative project can involve unaccountably long periods of time. Thus, a deferred outcome is wholly acceptable. For instance, an art student who fails to complete his/her work is not necessarily considered idle. In contrast, although the long-term perspective has been constantly reaffirmed for the last twenty years (see e.g. Kaplan & Norton, 1996: 27-28), workers still have short time frames imposed upon them (Fillis & McAuley, 2000).

### **Differences in environments and their consequences on creativity**

The differing environments of the artist and the manager have been documented by researcher such as Chiapello (1999: 195) who contrasts activity in both fields in the following way:



Art	Management
Risk taking	Premeditation
Change and newness	Routine and standardisation
No value if easy to anticipate	Valuable if easy to anticipate
Creation	Repetition
No absolute evaluation	Evaluation possible
Uneasy, even impossible to measure	Only measurable things exist
Money is not the right judgement scale	<i>In fine</i> everything is translated into monetary terms

Table 4. Some classical oppositions regarding activity in art and management (adapted from Chiapello, 1999: 195).

Some of these opposites, particularly those regarding creation, change and newness, deserve to be less distinctly drawn because of the increasing interest of management in creativity and innovation. Nevertheless it is true that these developments continue to coexist with the repetitive and standardised operating modes of traditional business ventures (Fronza & Le Theule, 2002).

A number of these elements are connected to the fundamental opposition between utility and gratuity that shapes many of the points we raised above. Others relate to a radically different degree of freedom of action between the two fields.

	Art	Management
General perspective of the field	Gratuity	Utility
Type of activity developed	Free	Directed

Table 5. Basic differences between art and management.

1. The first field-related difference is concerned with gratuity and utility. On the continuum between these extreme positions, art and management would be located at a significant distance. As has been documented above, artists emerged as an autonomous social group at a particular moment in history (late C19), in opposition to utility-orientated parts of society. Additionally, artists are seen as representatives of a more 'authentic' world where exchange was a matter of gift and not commerce. It seems likely that as the industrial revolution enabled capitalism and the market economy to expand, there was a growing need for "survivors" from an older gift-orientated time. Gratuity can also be connected with intrinsic motivation, which is commonly associated with artistic creativity: the artist is primarily motivated by his/her work, not by its social and monetary consequences. Some authors hold gratuity and gift to be the appropriate social environment for an artist because features such as trust, a temporary suspension of judgement and the giving up of wilful control are required for artistic production (Chiapello, 1999: 201 et s.).

The idea of gratuity is as unknown to management as is the idea of utility in art. Management is driven by teleological rationality: decisions are made on the criterion that appropriate means will produce the expected outcome. Unexpected consequences are treated as “perverse” effects that should be eliminated, or at least contained<sup>27</sup>. Even when a firm appears to behave generously, there will be a utilitarian purpose behind their action. For instance, sponsorship is an effective way of communicating an appropriate and valuable image. This utilitarian perspective is associated with the extension of control over both realisation and the actors who achieve the realisation. It explains also why most research about managerial creativity is functionally orientated: it asks, for example, which factors enhance creativity.

The gratuitous and utilitarian dimensions of art and management explain three out of the above four differences between artistic and managerial forms of creativity. Obviously the emphasis on use in the creative product is a direct consequence of the utility orientation of management..

Moreover, the quest for elucidation of the creative process in management is directly derived from its utilitarian basis. Because the enhancement of creativity is seen as a means of improving performance, the preliminary step will be to understand and model the process of creativity. Such a functional quest is irrelevant to art, which defines itself precisely in opposition to utility and teleological rationality. Indeed, mystery is valued in the artistic process, perhaps because it appeals to the constitutive opposition to artisanship, science and technology.

Finally, the scope that an artist has to defer an outcome is consistent with the gift orientation of art. A strong sense of gratuity suggests that it is acceptable that there is no outcome. However, this is only true to a certain extent because in gift societies a gift is always associated with counter-gift. Ultimately, artists must produce works of art. But because art production occurs in a gratuity-based world, conclusions can be postponed. In a utilitarian world such as management, the long-term frame of artistic creativity is seen as a waste of time, as a misuse of resources that can undermine performance. Consequently, most interest is in short-term creative outcomes. This interest is translated into objectives, performance measures and action plans. For example, the number of suggestions made and implemented, which is the usual measure of the creativity of ‘quality circles’, illustrates the short term orientation of managerial creativity. Even those operating within more generous time-frames (e.g. researchers and developers) have their creative activity measured on a short-term basis to “ensure” that objectives will be met. This leads us to the next point.

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<sup>27</sup> Budgetary slack provides an example of this generality. It has primarily been considered as a negative side effect of budgetary participation which supposedly enhance a manager’s involvement and further his/her performance. It is now generally accepted that a certain level of slack is beneficial.

2. The second opposition in table 5 is the 'free *versus* directed' dimension of the respective activities of art and management. As was the case with gratuity-utility, 'freedom' and 'direction' can be positioned at extreme ends of a continuum. Indeed in organisations, work is fundamentally a "directed activity" (Clot, 1999: 3), in which a 'direction' is shaped at three different levels (1) the subject, (2) the object and (3) the activity of others (Clot, 1999: 98). It is a self-evident point that there is no action without an actor and it is also clear that, in an organisation, the participant's action is directed towards the accomplishment of an objective. This is generally made explicit in job descriptions and mediated through objectives and performance indicators with reference to the expected realisations. This element of direction directly relates to the utilitarian dimension of management. The "objects" of work are defined in relationship to the ends to be met.

However the third element in Clot's triadic concept deserves further explanation. In organisations, people have interconnected activities, so that anyone can effect, or be effected by, others. As a result, the subject's action towards an object is framed by the actions of others. An illustration of this might be an administrative assistant in a business school who often works on different programmes or with different professors. This person has their own assignments to complete (for instance, the collating of student marks) but is continually frustrated in their task by other persons – e.g. students asking for information, the serviced persons seeking assistance, or other administrative colleagues making arrangements in relation to their own workload. Another illustration is provided by train drivers in suburban areas (part of whose activity is the efficient management of electrical power), when their activity is obstructed by red signals (Clot, 1999: 114).

Thus one's actions appear to be so tightly framed by the task to be accomplished and by others that it can be qualified as a "forced activity" (Clot, 1999: 65). Art, on the other hand, is a free activity. Firstly, the object to be realised is typically not predetermined although there can be, of course, pre-ordered art works. And in the performing arts where much creative action is collective, a musical score, a dramatic script or the instructions of a conductor/director shape and limit artistic creativity. However, in these cases, there is a basic recognition that the performance depends on the particular artists involved. This central role of the individual person in art is not found in management even when some workers are acknowledged as more skilled and/or better performers than others. Management mainly focuses on outcomes, whilst art focuses on a creator who is, consequently, consigned more freedom than a participant in an organisation.

Artistic activity does not have the closed frame of managerial activity and although the artist is continually exposed to the influence of others this does not effect his or her sense of personal action. This general assertion deserves to be nuanced according to the type of artistic practice (individual *versus* collective). In the individualistic arts, the frame is limited to the influence of facilitators and audiences, and thus depends on the "porosity" of the artist

towards these 'others'. In the 'collective' arts (e.g. acting or playing in an orchestra) the artist's activity is closely interconnected with his/her partners and collaborators. However, here the relationship is mainly viewed as a co-operative action that brings about a common objective. As a result, the activity of others is not perceived as a frame that inhibits personal activity but as a source of creativity. This is consistent both with a pre-eminence of 'person' over outcome in the arts, and with the general orientation toward freedom of action throughout the field.

To sum up, it seems that the prominent difference between the two environments (art and management) is their orientation towards respectively, gratuity and utility. This divergence has important consequences regarding the degree of freedom<sup>28</sup> in the activity. It is much higher in art than in management where, given the utilitarian orientation, activity is framed, even forced. Furthermore, this divergence leads to opposing perceptions regarding the interaction of participants engaged in collective performance. Because management is utility-orientated (thus also outcome-orientated), organisational interaction is, at best, perceived as a constraint, at worst, as a disturbing intrusion. Because art is gratuity-oriented (thus creator-orientated) artistic interaction is perceived as constructive. Finally, these differences have a direct impact on two aspects of creativity: namely the prevailing attitude towards the mysterious nature of the process and the time and space given to the creator to perform. In the arts there is little inclination to elucidate the process and to strive for a short-term outcome; whereas in management, there is a demand both for elucidation of the creative process and for a rapid return on the investment of creative energy.

Moreover, because managerial activity is both highly directed and utility-orientated, it is likely to be also highly divided, in order to achieve goals efficiently. Because there is a division of labour, some actors think, others implement. Similarly it is generally accepted that producing new ideas (i.e. creativity) is something different from implementation (i.e. innovation). This borderline between cognition and implementation is not to be found in the arts. It is inconceivable that an artist would consider any stage outside the creative process.

### Conclusion: transferring artistic ideas to management?

At the beginning of this paper we raised the question of transferring artistic ideas about creativity to management. The relevance of the question was motivated by: (1) an increasing claim by management that creativity is a key factor for organisational survival and that everybody should be creatively committed to his or her work; (2) an assumption that art, as the field having the strongest expertise in creativity matters, could offer valuable perspectives for management.

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<sup>28</sup> The parallel between gratuity and freedom is embodied in common language. Despite its negative connotations in English (a *gratuitous insult* is an uncalled-for slander) the primary meaning of the word is something given free of charge.

In the previous sections we have reviewed, then mirrored, artistic and management creativity and their respective environments. There are more common points than differences between the two types of creativity, but there are also fundamental divergences between the two fields of activity. Because artistic creativity is consistent with an environment the characteristics of which are opposite to those of management (and *vice versa*), it is very likely that these discrepancies will limit the transferability of artistic ideas about creativity to the management field.

If we do not take the respective environments into account, our previous analysis allows us to derive some ideas that might enhance managerial creativity: for example, a relaxation of the quest to elucidate the creative process, or the integration of the unconscious into management frames of analysis, or the provision of longer time-frames for creativity, or a minimising of the weight of external motivators in personnel policies, and so on. All these changes would mean giving up management's 'will to control' human activity and abandoning the model of finality-orientated rational action (Chiapello, 1999: 214). If we do take the environments into account and consider the utilitarian and directed dimensions of management (which have tended to have expanded recently [Bourguignon, 2001]) such changes appear very improbable. A less disenchanting conclusion could be that, although it is not easy to transfer those artistic versions of creativity which are the reverse of the management orientation, it is worth being aware of the gap between the two worlds.

Our analysis also provides some fruitful insights into the question of collective performance. Indeed, the positive co-operation which appears to be common in the performing arts remains an ideal in most organisations! The above analysis suggests that this type of positive interaction is linked to gratuity, a sense of internal motivation and the recognition of 'the person' as the central element in the process. As long as management is inspired by a utilitarian perspective it will prioritise outcomes over persons and use external motivators. As a result, positive co-operation remains a proposition with mythic connotations.

These practical applications of our analysis in management will probably appear disappointing. However the encounter of artistic and managerial creativity has suggested further agendas for future research which we hope will be productive.

Indeed, our analysis suggests that in both fields, there could be a symbolic<sup>29</sup> appeal to creativity. For instance, creativity encompasses some crypto-theological characteristics which are seldom made explicit in art and management, but which nevertheless almost certainly appeal to both artists and managers (for example, the omnipotent power of a creator). In management, moreover, the implicit reference to art which is included in the word 'creativity'

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<sup>29</sup> We refer here to 'symbols' in the broadest sense: a sign that participates in the meaning and power of the 'reality' to which it refers. For those in the arts this will be clear as long as we distinguish our use from the more precise applications that artists have adopted from philosophy, linguistics, and art history.

carries values and representations (e.g. freedom), which might have added status in a time when human activities are increasingly over-controlled (Bourguignon, 2001). A symbolic perspective might also contribute to explaining both why and how common stereotypic ideas about creativity survive in spite of “real”, sometimes inconsistent, experience.

Besides, most of this analysis could be useful in a reversal of the question asked in this current paper: how does managerial creativity offer new insight into artistic creativity? Indeed although our investigation has not been oriented in this direction, the juxtaposition has suggested that some art-related questions could be reconsidered using managerial creativity as a mirror. For instance, a further project could examine the fact that, whilst the concept of creativity is increasingly appropriated by non-artists, it seems to be eliminated from both professional and theoretical consideration in the art world, could be examined further. Additionally the concept of creativity appears more relevant to evaluators than to creators, which prompts the question of the criteria used. It is very likely that a systematic analysis (such as that which has been elaborated in this paper) would provide fruitful insight into art related questions in general, and more specifically, to those relevant in art schools, where the organisational and artistic mind-set coexist.

Finally, this reversal of perspective would give us the opportunity to test the robustness of our synthetic representations. It cannot be excluded indeed that the orientation of our analysis (from artistic to managerial creativity and from the art world to the management field) has framed our representations. Admittedly there are no subjectivity-free representations and categorisations: however, testing their limits is a healthy exercise for researchers.

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