

## TRANSCRIPT

### **Creativity – A Pathway to Connection and Wholeness**

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I'm really honored to be joining all of you in this discussion centering on the search for a new culture and perspectives on human flourishing, and I'm hoping to contribute to the conversation by sharing my experience of creativity as a potent vehicle for experiencing and expressing connection and wholeness.

Informing this presentation is my understanding that as human beings, we are all creators and we each carry within us an unbounded capacity to create, to give birth to ideas and impulses that flow from our spirits through our imaginations. The life force that flows through us is by its nature, boundlessly creative and we are each given the extraordinary gift of being able to bring this creative flow into manifestation in an infinite variety of forms. And I believe that at this particular time in our evolution, we're being invited and in fact, really heartily encouraged to access our deepest reservoirs of creativity to address the existential crises of our time through the unitive consciousness that Jude has so eloquently articulated in her presentation.

What I'll be sharing with you is a combination of video excerpts and reflections on the creative path that I've traveled for the past 45 years, initially as a professional dancer and subsequently as a choreographer and dance educator.

Though I trained at university as a mathematician, in my early twenties I discovered that dancing and all of its exacting rigor and joyous ebullience enabled me to experience myself, or perhaps better said my non-self, as pure energy or consciousness. And throughout my career, it's continued to be a powerful medium that's served to connect me with that which is universal, enabling me to experience, a sense of oneness with all of life. In this way, I consider myself to be extraordinarily blessed to be engaged in both a profession and a spiritual path that continually encourages and supports this awareness.

The work that I'll be sharing with you today is work that I've done in collaboration with my creative and life partner, Charles Moulton. Together over almost two decades, we've focused on exploring and expressing through our choreography the oneness and the interconnectedness of the human family. While recognizing that this oneness of life extends beyond the bounds of human life, and in fact includes the wholeness of all of life, our work has dealt with the human side of the equation, and we've dedicated ourselves to working with the human body through the mediums of movement and dance.

In doing this, one of the primary modalities that we've worked with is a theatrical form that we've evolved, which we call a movement choir. And the movement choir is a group of dancers who, much like the traditional Greek chorus, form a unified collective body that serves to comment upon and amplify the action in the choreographic work.

It reflects a sense of shared human experience that embodies both the earthly and the ethereal, and it can convey a wide spectrum of experience ranging from a very grounded physical sense of community to representing at times the invisible forces that penetrate and move our lives.

The first video excerpt that I want to share with you is the opening section of a full evening-length piece set to the Italian Baroque composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, *Stabat Mater*. For those of you that don't know, *Stabat Mater* is the 13th century Christian hymn that depicts the sorrow and suffering of the Mother Mary in witnessing the crucifixion of Christ.

We chose to work with this piece, both because of its overwhelmingly beautiful articulation of sorrow and grief, and also the message of transformation that informs and infuses it. The music and

the choreography convey the understanding that from the depths of grief and inner darkness, there can be a resurrection of the light.

As you'll see in this video, the movement choir serves as a kind of living architecture, perhaps like a cathedral, a temple, a shrine, through which a group of five solo dancers travel and interact. And the pieces of shared journey in which the 24 performers individually and together are striving toward the light. And you'll see lots of uplifted gestures and reaching movements, all of which are appealing to the greater forces of the universe to address our yearning, to be aware of ourselves as transcendence vessels of light and of love.

Video excerpt available at:

[https://www.lucitrust.org/world\\_goodwill/seminar/2022\\_seminar\\_details#gwsNY2022archive](https://www.lucitrust.org/world_goodwill/seminar/2022_seminar_details#gwsNY2022archive)

The next excerpt that I want share with you is another example of a large group performance piece. This one created by my collaborative partner, Charlie Moulton, that weaves together aspects of our movement choir work with his signature ball passing piece. Ball passing is an iconic postmodern dance work in which the simple act of passing a Nerf ball becomes a model for cooperation and a metaphor for the interdependence and interconnectedness of the human family.

For both the participants and the audience. It's intended to uplift, unite, and inspire through the joy of collective endeavor. Over the years, many different versions of this piece have been created. This one, which involves 72 performers, is the largest to date and involves an intergenerational cast with ages ranging from 14 to 68 and participants from all walks of life, including students, IT professionals, firefighters, healthcare workers, teachers to name a few. Before we view this excerpt, I just want to say a few words about play. In our work, Charlie and I have discovered the importance of liberating the imagination through play, improvisation, and other spontaneous acts of delight.

In our efforts to discover and create forms that elevate, enliven, energize, and promote states of optimism, we've found that finding time to be playful is crucial and can easily go against the impulse to be productive all the time and to not ever waste time. And yet some of our favorite creations have been born of unanticipated moments of play that have led to surprising developments and unpremeditated wonderful results. And play is definitely a part of this next excerpt that you're going to see, which is from 72 person ball passing.

Video excerpt available at:

[https://www.lucitrust.org/world\\_goodwill/seminar/2022\\_seminar\\_details#gwsNY2022archive](https://www.lucitrust.org/world_goodwill/seminar/2022_seminar_details#gwsNY2022archive)

In closing I wanted to say a couple of things and the main thing is that I really believe we're poised at a place in history in which we're being asked to direct our creative impulses toward a higher order. As transmitters of light, we have an infinite capacity to open doorways to new paradigms, and to engage in shared endeavors that embody the beauty, the complexity, the interdependence, and the interconnectedness of our existence. These can be small, delicate, daily acts of creation, a thought, a word, a gesture that we extend to ourselves and to the world that play a real role in restoring our spirits and enable us not just to survive, but to truly flourish.

Thank you all so much for letting me share this with you, and I look forward to continuing our conversation in the panel discussion later in the seminar.