chapter four

The Exiled Child

THE CONCEPT OF THE INNER CHILD introduces attendant notions of innocence, simplicity and a willingness to make mistakes: qualities that are not usually adult. Psychologists describe how, from early on, the inner child is typically betrayed, split away from the self, and ushered into the shadows of the unconscious. In the journey towards reintegration, wounded artists spend years seeking reconnection with this "exiled" child. In this chapter a number of artists speak of the struggle to locate the inner voice of this child - an act that is often both a source and a manifestation of remarkable creativity. Such artists typically emerge as outsiders. Remarkably, while Outsider artists are world changers, they are seldom given the keys to this kingdom. They chafe at the status quo, longing for inclusion, hungry to make a difference, their power derived from early experiences of deprivation and suffering. Further anecdotal evidence is drawn from outcasts such as literary giants Ernest Hemingway and Charles Dickens.

> There is a deep desire to make pictures. That's why children draw. They start drawing at an early age. When people said to me people didn't have to draw, I said: "Go and tell that to some young little kid who's just drawing. They'd laugh at you. They would!"
> DAVID HOCKNEY[1]

> I watch kids draw and go: I wish I could do that. I wish I could get back there. I wish I could go through the keyhole. You become very self-conscious as you get older and less spontaneous and you feel very victimised by your creative world, your creative person.
> TOM WAITS[2]

In line with the Hockney and Waits quotes above, one of the key arguments presented in this book is that, while all children are artists, with the passage of time their voices are silenced. If we see singing as a metaphor for the creative spirit, the dearth of imagination in various spheres of life may be due to the voices of so many being rendered mute. Singing is thus a metaphor for the carefree spirit of children, the spirit that is uncensored, that enquires naturally about the wonders of life and seeks to give

full self-expression whenever it sees the opportunity. It is from this perspective that the Michelin three-star gourmet chef Heston Blumenthal observes how “creativity can really bloom when you have some naivety”.[3] Naivety is, after all, a function of innocence, a child-like disposition impervious to adult criticism.

An example of the beauty of naivety is revealed in the work of one of the early Apple designers, Bill Atkinson. In 1981, Atkinson was part of the initial Macintosh team tasked to develop the graphics to enable Windows screens to overlap. This technology enabled us to treat alternate documents as overlapping pieces of paper that we can move around onscreen as we would documents on a desk, one on top of the other. While today we all take this aspect of computer functionality for granted, back then there was no code that gave reality to this illusion of overlapping templates. The weird thing here is that Atkinson was able to pull off this innovative piece of code because he thought he had seen it done during an earlier visit to the computer labs at Xerox. This, in fact, was not so. No one had done it before. Naively, Atkinson simply assumed it had been done and so proceeded to replicate the work as he imagined it. Looking back at this feat of software engineering, Atkinson later remarked how he'd developed a respect for the empowering aspect of naivety: because he didn't know it couldn't be done, he was enabled to do it.

The freedom to believe that you can make whatever occurs to you without fear of sanction stands in stark relief against the corporate control fetish, which insists on error-free operation. By contrast, creativity thrives in the child's world where mistakes are not just tolerated but encouraged, and misinterpretations are construed merely as the progenitors of fresh insight. The gravel-throated Tom Waits spotted a great example of this: “Most changes in music, most exciting things that happen in music, occur through miscommunication between people - 'I thought you said this.' Poetry comes out of that too. It's like song lyrics: Kathleen (my wife) always thought that Creedence Clearwater song ‘Bad Moon Rising’ - she always thought ‘there's a bathroom on the right’. That's outside, a song about that, because that happens all the time -you go to a club, ‘there's a bathroom on the right’. But I love those mistakes. I salute them and encourage them.”[4] Weird versions of the songs we love are not uncommon; there's even a word for it: mondegreen. One of mine is from Queen's “Bohemian Rhapsody”: “spare him his life from his pork sausages”, as opposed to the correct “spare him his life from this monstrosity”; along, more embarrassingly, with “where the ducks are lonely” instead of “whereabouts unknown” from Van Morrison's “Alan Watts Blues”. There's a ludicrous reinterpretation reported on the song by The Rolling Stones' “Satisfaction”. The story goes that Keith Richards and Mick Jagger were on a flight when a woman in first class buttonholed them, observing: “You guys smoke dope,” and concluding: “That bit in the song where Mick sings

‘Hay! Hay! Hay!’ he's really taking about grass.”[5] Noel Gallagher, from Oasis, recounts a similar story about one of his favourite songs: “This Guy's In Love With You” by Hal David and Burt Bacharach. “For years I listened to that song and it blew me away,” said Gallagher. “I thought it was called ‘The Sky's in love with you’ - that's as psychedelic as fuck. I thought it was the most cosmic thing of all time.”[6]

Neil Young struggled to retain his songwriting spontaneity when his doctor advised him to give up dope and alcohol. Being clear and alert was a new and perplexing state that brought with it a whole new realm of inhibition. Sting has also touched on the theme of the judgemental adult. “As you get older the critic gets more and more powerful and smarter and has a forensic memory,” telling you you've done something before, or someone else has, or that it's not as good. “You get all of these barriers to the creative child which is what you're really trying to nourish. When you're younger that creative child is very strong. Whatever you try is fine. But as you get older and wiser the child gets buried. So your job is to try and stimulate that child as much as you can. It's largely an unconscious process. You have to get into a state where you just allow things to come through.”[7]

The class lesson

Living is my choice.
And I refuse
To lose my voice.

JEAN FRYER, UCT ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDENT, 2008

Sting's take on the severance of the inner child from the adult self can be further illustrated by an example from a class of my post-graduates. When teaching about the mindset required of an entrepreneur, I often ask if there is anyone who would like to come forward and sing a song to the class. Out of a class of 50 students, typically, there are just one or two volunteers. Inevitably, the rest are silent. I then ask the students to imagine that they are five-year-olds in grade 0 and that I am their schoolteacher. I then say, “Good morning, class! Who would like to sing us a song?” I see a forest of hands. The children are all eager to sing. Next up, I might ask the class to imagine they are now 12 years old. On repeating the request for singers, this time about half the class might raise their hands. Moving on, I find that, by the time the class age has reached 17, no one can sing any more. No one has a voice. Everyone has been rendered mute, inarticulate, silent.

So, where did the voices go? Why is it that when alone in the shower we can sing with gusto but, when asked to sing in public, suddenly we become mute? Of course the answer to this bas nothing to do with the quality of our voices. To

substantiate the point, look at singers such as Bob Dylan and Tom Waits who make very good livings with their voices, awful as they are. Clearly there must be something else at work here.

Close analysis suggests that the loss of voice can be attributed to two dynamics. We can choose to be silent, or society will enforce silence upon those who presume to speak up. The system is thereby self-reinforcing. Author and psychologist Helene Smit takes the argument further, claiming that social stability and the protection of vested interests often depend on the wholesale denial of certain elements society would like to forget.[8] What happens to these unheard voices? Whether suppression is maintained within an individual or a group, unconscious voices will, ultimately, insist on being heard. And the more you hold it back, the more you stifle or ignore it, the greater will be the backlash. This is inevitable. It's a bit like a catapult: the further you pull it back the further the stone will fly.

Ken Robinson on children and education

While seeing this lack of self-worth among adults as a deep-rooted problem of our age, educational specialist Sir Ken Robinson believes that children have remarkable gifts of innovation and creativity. The problem, he observes, is that in the typically volume-driven system of education, these talents are callously overlooked and ultimately wasted. Worse still, the system has duped the majority into believing that there is no educational alternative.[9] The implication is that the system has, at extremes, become a Pink Floyd sausage machine, where imaginative young minds are sucked into one end and transformed into capitalist mincemeat at the other. Education has become a factory. While this one-size-fits-all version of education might well have served its purpose in the pre-digital era, arguably today it has run its course. In the present millennium, capitalism has advanced to a stage where it actually needs imagination, artistry and innovation. The era of mass education is over, as too are the models of efficiency-driven production that spawned it. Today, increasingly, existing business models are being overtaken by newer, fresher business enterprises. Dinosaurs are rapidly being exterminated and the foundations of contemporary capitalism are being shaken to the core. It is deeply ironic, even tragic, that an economic system so in need of overhaul seems largely incapable of producing the insights or ability to make the requisite changes to do so. So, while “creativity” and “imagination” have become the buzz words du jour and are touted by every snake-oil salesman, no one appears to have developed an alternate take to business as usual. Everything seems rote and machine-like. Doing the same thing over and over is no recipe for change. It offers nothing fresh.

By way of redress, and in the interests of reparative work at a structural and individual level, an important step forward would be to find out what it is that holds back the child, to deconstruct this, to nurture the reassertion of the timid child, and to encourage the spirit of enquiry, self-expression, laughter, creativity and life. If we can develop such insights at an individual level and learn what the great artistic individuals do to (1) sustain themselves despite the system and (2) produce the great imaginative work that they do, then perhaps we can learn to do so ourselves, individually and collectively. This would be no new money-making enterprise. The genuine pursuit would be to find out what it is to live as fully and completely as artists do and to learn something from this.

The psychology of the inner child

On the topic of naivety, Jungian analyst James Hollis suggests that uninhibited thinking "prevails until about the age of ten ... [yet] [t]hrough the pain and confusion of adolescence, the magical thinking of the child suffers some rough wear".[10] Actor Dustin Hoffman gave this a darker slant: "The minute we get into school, whatever it is that makes us individuals is knocked out of us. The idea of being outside the norm is to be laughed at and scorned. It's a bizarre inversion of the miracle of life."[11] The dyslexic business-entrepreneur Richard Branson concurred. "School was painful," he said. "I'd look at a blackboard and wouldn't be able to understand anything of what was going on."[12]

Reasons underpinning the suppression of the inner child are complicated but can generally be attributed to the creation of shadow: the psychological process whereby all painful and unmanageable aspects of the early self are split off and shunted to the unconscious, where they are left neglected and separate from any aspect of the creative life. As the years pass over the severed self it will do whatever it can to reunite with the rejecting twin. As it gropes blindly for recognition, the severed, unattended shadow can become a source of much emotional pain. This is largely inevitable as the split-off self bashes the doors and smashes the windows of the rejecting self as it seeks to find expression. Described in this way, if we are to recapture and give shape to our inner untrammelled voices, we must give the shadow of the inner child some form of expression. We must seek, ultimately, for its reintegration into our lives.

In his book The Journey of Desire, John Eldredge inverts the tragedy to provide an alternate, allegorical tale of redemption: of a sea lion who had lost contact with the sea and who comes to live in a dry, barren countryside devoid of any water. The tale of the sea lion is thus a parable of the individual who has lost touch with his inner yearnings. Tethered by the conventional, this is the story of one who has, for

whatever reasons, settled for second best and is slowly dying of thirst. For the sea lion this new land is not pleasant. It is harsh and unforgiving. Such places of self-enforced exile always are. And yet here he resides, mostly content with his parched life but arrested occasionally by visions of the big blue.

> Now, as I told you before, there were other nights in which he had dreamed of the sea. But those were long ago and nearly forgotten. Even still, the ocean that filled his dreams this night was so beautiful and clear, so vast and deep, it was as if he were seeing it for the very first time. The sunlight glittered on its surface, and as he dived, the waters all around him shone like an emerald. If he swam quite deep, it turned to jade, cool and dark and mysterious. But he was never frightened; not at all. For I must tell you that in all his dreams of the sea, he had never before found himself in the company of other sea lions. This night there were many, round about him, diving and turning, spinning and twirling. They were playing.
>
> Oh, how he hated to wake from that wonderful dream. The tears running down his face were the first wet thing he had felt in three weeks. But he did not pause even to wipe them away; he did not pause, in fact, for anything at all. He set his face to the east, and began to walk as best a sea lion can.
>
> "Where are you going?" asked the tortoise.
>
> "I am going to find the sea."[13]

The proverbial sea is, of course, that integrated state of self where we can be what we want to be, imagine what we want, and dream, create and conjure up what we always wished we could. It is a place of magic. In its highest sense, a reinvention of self.

> We shall not cease from exploration
> And the end of all our exploring
> Will be to arrive where we started
> And know the place for the first time.
> "LITTLE GIDDING", T.S. ELIOT[14]

At this stage it is reasonable to enquire how best and soonest we might expedite this process of self-awakening. Without sounding trite, the process will differ depending on the degree of inner work to be done. This requires patience, resilience and an alertness to pain. For some, life has been kind and they remain relatively unaffected, with little self-work to do. For others it means a serious interrogation of the operating

assumptions that unconsciously drive them, and the constructs by which they live. The journey is different for us all.

From the world of art and creativity there are some remarkable examples of seemingly hopeless cases who did the hard inner yards, who connected somehow with their childhood issues, who broke through and found their artistic voices. To be sure, connecting with early pain doesn't always solve the problems of life. Facing down, or at least acknowledging the past does, however, enable better understanding and more connectedness.

Creativity as a function of unresolved pain

In 2011, CNN host Piers Morgan stated how amazed he'd been by the number of hugely successful performers who had told him that at least one, if not both, of their parents had never told them directly that they loved them. Morgan observed: "You can almost chart the parallel - that it's performing that gives them the platform where they get loved." Rob Lowe, the '80s Brat-Pack actor and star of The West Wing, who was on Morgan's show at the time, concurred with this. "Well it's funny," he said, "while I was really blessed, my parents did divorce, but my dad - he has always been present for me and loving me, and my mom as well, when she was alive. But honestly, I've never drawn this connection until this moment: that the moment I decided to become an actor was around the moment my parents split." Elaborating, Lowe observed how it was "so fulfilling to connect with an audience on stage, on screen - that when you're doin' it - it's such a high - and it's a way of communicating - particularly in a world where you're having a hard time communicating". [15]

Lowe's thesis is incredibly powerful, suggesting, as alluded to a few pages back, that emotions stemming from pain are often so strong that they will seek expression in whatever way they can. In the following chapter I'll return to this matter in more detail, for it is indeed true that great artists are often tortured souls. Creativity, it seems, is often the consequence of the outpouring of a burdened spirit. This is one of the powerful reasons that damaged kids so often move on to use the energy of their pain in alternate ways, and commonly the vehicle is art. Creativity is in many respects a function of unresolved pain. While we must be careful not to glorify the pain of early suffering because "good" art is produced as a consequence, there is ample evidence that early moments of suffering are grist to the creative mill.

Examples of exiled children

The process of being chopped clown appears to be pretty generic. Over time, the free uninhibited inner child is silenced, shamed, ridiculed and chased away- explaining in

part why, as adults, so many are afflicted by a lack of self-belief. Instead, their disposition no longer declares, “I'm alright, my voice is great, and I actually love singing.”

The celebrated Victorian novelist Charles Dickens suffered terribly as a child His family could afford to send only his elder sister to school, while he was forced into underage work in a boot-blacking factory. In the books he wrote as an adult it was to the theme of poverty that he returned again and again, and his childhood experiences appear as vignettes in many of them. The sheer volume of his work is remarkable - he was driven to produce. It was as if he were on fire. The emotional damage that marked him so early ignited his will to create. Reflecting on this earlier time, Dickens wrote: “My whole nature was so penetrated by the grief and humiliation that even now, famous and caressed and happy, I ... wander desolate back to that time in my life.”[16]

So ashamed was Dickens of his childhood experiences that, by the time of his death, all save an inner circle were unaware of what had happened to him. He would not confess. When details of this formative time emerged in John Forster's biography of the novelist, published four years after his death, readers, were stunned. Yet perhaps they should not have been. The clues from his novel were all too evident. The 10-year-old David Copperfield speaks of being “thrown away” by his stepfather to work in a warehouse. In Great Expectations, Pip carries with him the scars of his subcaste background and, in Little Dorrit, the young Amy knows well the dread and hopelessness of a debtors' prison.

Singer Robbie Williams felt a similar sense of inadequacy as a young adult. In a 2012 interview he admitted falling in love with his now wife, Ayda Field, because she made him realise that he was fundamentally a “good person”. Reflecting on how he saw himself as a young man, Williams said, “I went all the way through my twenties thinking I was sentenced to a life of mental imprisonment, hut I'm in a better place now.”[17]

Well worth noting is the story of Bruce Springsteen’s unusual childhood, his struggles with his father, Doug, and the creative outpouring that resulted. Bruce was treated as a substitute for his father's sister, Virginia, who was killed at a young age in a vehicle accident. Doug was emotionally scarred by his sister’s death, largely due to the depth of the tragedy experienced by his own parents. They never really got over their loss and Doug did not fully recover from the sense of shame and guilt he felt as the surviving sibling. The situation was exacerbated when Bruce was born in 1949 and Doug, his wife, Adele, and the young infant moved in with the grandparents. The old house was haunted by the past and shrouded in grief, a crumbling ruin that would ultimately be condemned as unfit for human habitation. Reflecting on this time, Springsteen recalled his confusion - not knowing whose son he really was - his parents’

or his grandparents'. Serving as a replacement for a lost child was complicated. "And that," as he said, "became a problem for everybody...It was very emotionally incestuous, and a lot of parental roles got crossed. Who you answered to and the different kind of responsibilities you had were very confusing for a young kid. Your allegiances were being pulled in different ways. Then we were beyond the point of no return."[18] Clearly there was some deep damage done, which manifested especially between Bruce and his father, who mostly remained silent, embittered and tortured throughout Springsteen's formative years. Ultimately, Bruce wasn't impacted as much by his father's occasional outbursts of rage, nor by his late-night criticisms fuelled by booze, as by the emotional estrangement - the distance he felt as a result of the lack of affection, praise or warmth from his dad. "It wasn't in the doing," said Springsteen later, "it was in the not doing...It was in the complete withholding of acknowledgement. It was in the vacantness."[19]

Years later, in 1979, Doug suffered a stroke and underwent something of a personality change as a result. Gone was the sunken, retreated man and in his place emerged a person who wore his heart on his sleeve, who showered everyone with affection, including his son. In the decade that followed, with Springsteen now on the world's stage, on occasion his family would visit him backstage after shows and, sometimes, Doug would ask his son to sit on his lap. These actions were poignant, marked with awkwardness and primal emotion. Later still, in 1994, when Springsteen junior won the best song Grammy for "Streets of Philadelphia", he brought the trophy back to his dad, placing it in front of him at the kitchen table. His old man is reported to have wept with sorrow for the years he'd spent trying to reform his son, and with pride at the success he'd achieved despite - or rather because of - the psychic burden he'd carried all his life. Actress Joyce Hyser, who met Springsteen in the late '70s, contended that he was afraid of being happy because it would "screw up with his creative force," as she put it. "At least at the time, he created from a place of anger, not from a place of happiness."[20]

By all accounts, Springsteen hated school. Raised a New Jersey Catholic, he attended St Rose of Lima convent where he was constantly at odds with the nuns and other students. His mother, Adele, recalls that Bruce would always march in with his head held high. "Good," she said. But what happened after that, she wondered? One day she left work early to check it out for herself, and there was her little boy against the fence, alone, without any playmates. She was devastated.[21] Looking back at this time, Springsteen corroborated, saying that most of his classmates were "good souls". Some, however, were "rude, predatory and unkind". "It is here I receive the bullying all aspiring rock stars must undergo and suffer in seething, raw, humiliating silence,

the great ‘leaning up against the chain-link fence as the world spins around you, in rejection of you’ playground loneliness that is essential fuel for the coming fire.”[22]

Another who suffered early parental abandonment was John Lennon, who was raised by his aunt. Early Beatles songs such as “Help” and “I'm a Loser” clearly reference Lennon's low self-regard. In the ‘70s he even underwent primal scream therapy, and subsequently released “Mother” with the Plastic Ono Band. Primal scream therapy is based on a view that early suffering can be remediated as an adult by re-entering the early periods of life when the initial damage occurred. If you listen to “Mother” you can hear Lennon’s shrieked lament: “Mother, you had me, but I never had you”. Interviewed by Playboy in 1980, shortly before his assassination, Lennon said bluntly: “I don't have any romanticism about any part of my past...I don't believe in yesterday.”[23]

In 1991, Madonna, one of the great recording artists of the last generation, spoke candidly of her endless struggle to locate and free her voice. “I have an iron will and all of my will has always been devoted to conquering some horrible feelings of inadequacy,” she said. She described going through phases of being able to push through fear - to see herself as “a special human being of worth” only to plummet again into thinking she's “mediocre and uninteresting and worthless”. “Because even though I have become a ‘somebody’ I still have to prove that I am somebody. My struggle has never ended and it probably never will.”[24]

The outsider

> When I started out, mainstream culture was Sinatra, Perry Como, Andy Williams, The Sound of Music. There was no fitting into it then and of course there's no fitting into it now.
> BOB DYLAN[25]

Through the lens of the examples explored, we can see how the initial psychological effects of the exiled child are typically accrued within a family setting. In time, however, further effects may emerge in wider social contexts, most commonly within the school milieu. The deadly combination of toxic school and family dynamics imprints deeply on the young psyche to the extent that the wounded child may emerge on the shores of adulthood as an outsider.

It is not clear why outsiders remain such a force in effecting change, but they do. A 2006 study emanating from Harvard Business School found, for example, that immigrants are key drivers in the formation of US-based innovation. While they make up roughly 10 per cent of the US working population, they constitute about 25 per

cent of those people working within the field of technology. More astounding is that half of all PhDs conferred in the US go to foreigners. When looking at the origin of US-based Nobel Prize winners, cited authors and patent registrations, the figures tell a similar story. Outsiders - those with ethnic origins outside the US - dominate.[26] While this disproportionate set of statistics is in some way explained by tbe progressive domestic policy climate that predominated in the US prior to the 9-11 clampdown on the immigration of foreign talent (this policy has subsequently been abandoned), the fact that these talented people are outsiders is a story in itself.

Creative outsiders

Some notable examples of creative outsiders are the lead guitarist of The Rolling Stones, Keith Richards, the dancer Carlos Acosta and the playwright Roy Williams. As his birthday fell on 18 December, Richards was younger than most of his classmates. Also, he says, he was a very small guy - known, in those days, as a squirt - a late developer, hitting puberty only at about 15. Richards recalled that, when he was 9 or 10, he was repeatedly waylaid by schoolyard toughs on his way home. As he soberly (makes a change) observed: “I know what it is like to be a coward. I will never go back there. As easy as it is to turn tail, I took the beatings. I told my mum I had fallen off my bike again. To which she replied, ‘Stay off your bike, son.’...The playground's the big judge. That's where all decisions are really made between your peers. It's called play, but it's nearer to a battlefield, and it can be brutal, the pressure. There’s two blokes kicking the shit out of some poor little bugger and ‘Oh, they're just letting off steam’.”[27]

Former Principal Guest Artist at the Royal Ballet in London, Carlos Acosta is one of the great outsiders. The past 50 years have seen only a handful of dancing greats: names such as Nureyev and Baryshnikov come to mind here. Acosta, or “Air Costa” as he is affectionately known, is one of these. Born in Cuba, be broke into top-class ballet in the ‘90s, performing first as Principal Dancer with the English National Ballet and then Houston Ballet before signing with the Royal in 1998. From his background, few would have picked him out for success. Acosta grew up in a Havana slum, sharing a one-bedroom apartment with the rest of his 12-member family. Like Elvis Presley, his father was a poor truck driver - a temperamental, even abusive man, who signed Carlos up to a local ballet school at the age of nine, in the hope of negating some of the delinquency prevalent in his boy.

Initially perceiving dance as some form of coercive conditioning, Acosta chafed, at his talent and, for a long time, saw his potential as a soccer star as the way out of slum-hood. Later, his proud, statuesque bearing would make him famous as an international dance sex symbol, all the while balancing his commitments in the

luxurious ballet theatres of the West with the memory of his impoverished upbringing. His enduring love for his home country, Cuba - sneered at by many as an economic basket case - was also difficult to manage, as he acknowledged in his 2007 autobiography, No Way Home. And thus by way of his underclass upbringing his Latino culture and race (he was the first black man to dance the lead in a majo1 production of Swan Lake), he acknowledges that he was always the rebel outsider Quoted in a Time interview, he said: “I didn't choose ballet and for years I rebelled against it, believing it kept me from my family, from home, and from happiness... But it eventually became not my home but my shelter. I have come to terms with it. But it has taken me many years.”[28]

British playwright Roy Williams is certainly a kindred spirit. “I wouldn’t know how to write a hero,” he is quoted as saying. As a black kid growing up in the ‘80,. he was useless at sport, though later he would use cricket, football and boxing a, backdrops to plays such as The No Boys Cricket Club, Sing Yer Heart Out for the Lads and his latest, Sucker Punch. He related that he was once in a five-a-side football team though was seldom picked to play. “They only put me in because they felt sorry for me. They would give me a run-out for the last two minutes if we were, like 5-0 ahead.” Still, he said, he was desperate to be good even though he was rubbish. “Because to be a footballer then was the only thing black kids had going for them, and all my other black mates were really good at sports. I felt left our.” This said, his friends understood that he was passionate about writing and encouraged him. “They were like, yes, that's the one thing Roy’s good at. Roy can’t play football, but Roy, he can write a story.” Williams admits, too, that he was awkward with girls. “I was a bit of a shy kid when it came to the ladies. And even when I started becoming more confident, my mates always seemed to be way ahead.” Asked how old he was when he first went out with a girl, he replied: “Eighteen. Sharon, I'll tell you her name, I really liked her.” And on whether not being sporting or hip made him into a better writer, his take was an unequivocal “Very much so. It made me more observant of the rest of them. If I had been as good as them, I don't think l'd be here talking to you now.”[29]

The formidable boxer Mike Tyson grew up in Brownsville, the tough end of New York. He would go on to become the youngest undisputed heavyweight champion of the world, aged 20 years, 4 months and 22 days. If anything, an artist only in beating the shit out of anyone who dared fight him, Tyson's recollections of the beatings he took as a small boy are instructive. Aged just seven and wearing Coke-bottle glasses because of his near-sightedness, Tyson recalls that going to a public school was a frightening experience. “I was a pudgy kid, very shy, almost effeminate-shy, and I spoke with a lisp. Sometimes my mother would be passed out from drinking

the night before and wouldn't walk me to school. It was then that the kids would always hit me and kick me." Tyson relates a particular experience when one of the local toughs tried to take his lunch. "I had some meatballs from the cafeteria wrapped up in aluminum to keep them hot. This guy came up to me and said, 'Hey, you got any money?' I said, 'No.' He started picking my pockets and searching me, and he tried to take my fucking meatballs. I was resisting, going, "No, no, no!" I would let the bullies take my money, but I never let them take my food. I was hunched over like a human shield, protecting my meatballs. So he started hitting me in the head and then took my glasses and put them down the gas tank of a truck. I ran home, hut he didn't get my meatballs. I still feel like a coward to this day because of that bullying. That's a wild feeling, being that helpless. You never ever forget that feeling. That was the last day I went to school."

Four years later, then 11, Tyson had grown bigger and was fighting back. With only streetwise arrogance and a reputation that he would fight anyone, even grown men, Tyson began to exact revenge on the bullies who'd crossed him. "I'd be walking with some friends, and I might see one of the guys who beat me and bullied me years earlier. He might have gone into a store shopping, and I would drag his ass out of the store and start pummeling him. I didn't even tell my friends why, I'd just say, 'I hate that motherfucker over there,' and they'd jump in too and rip his fucking clothes and beat his fucking ass. That guy who took my glasses and threw them away? I beat him in the streets like a fucking dog for humiliating me. He may have forgotten about it, but I never did."[30]

Often sick and bedridden as a child, Andy Warhol is also reported to have been a school outcast. So, too, was Neil Young; his divorced mother was always on the move and Young was bullied in the schoolyards of Ontario. Eric Burdon, lead singer of The Animals, pronounced his formative years at school as the kind of "dark nightmare" that could've been "penned by Charles Dickens". "Some teachers were sadistic," said Burdon, "others pretended not to notice - and sexual molestation and regular corporal punishment with a leather strap was the order of the day."[31] Steely Dan's Donald Fagen was also an outsider. "I was a nerd at school. Somewhere between a nerd and a schmendrick. I didn't fit in on any level," he confessed in 2000.[32]

School life for Steve Jobs was also a nightmare. Excessively bright, when he finished fourth grade, Jobs was promoted up two notches to grade seven. His adoptive parents baulked at this extravagance, insisting that a single grade move to grade six would suffice. For the generally asocial Jobs, the changeover to a class of kids even one year older than himself was traumatic. Now in a new school, Crittenden Middle, where ethnic gang fights were common, Jobs was bullied and, by the middle of the

following grade seven year, he confronted his parents, insisting that they put him in a different school, which they did.

Jobs' outsider status marked him for life. On launching the Mac design team in 1983, he made sure that they were seen as outsiders by the rest of the Apple staff, his motto being that it was better to be a pirate than to join the navy. Accordingly, he saw to it that the pirates raised the skull-and-crossbones flag above their offices, using the Apple company logo as the pirate's eye-patch. Although other senior executives were critical of this move, Jobs, who always projected himself as the renegade "pitted against the forces of darkness",[33] as unrepentant. "We were the renegades, and we wanted people to know it," he said.[34]

Like Jobs, next-generation visionary entrepreneur Elon Musk was also bullied at school. In his 2015 biography, Musk put it that these early times of suffering were formative, giving him the extra strength and resources to succeed later in life. In this respect, schools today are very different, observed Musk. "They might have a little adversity at school, but these days schools are so protective ... If you call someone a name, you get sent home. When I was going to school, if they punched you and there was no blood, it was like, 'Whatever. Shake it off.' Even if there was a little blood, but not a lot, it was fine."[35]

The iconoclast Richard Branson received his education at the exclusive private school of Stowe. Though he was not unpopular, his single-minded pursuit of things that served his purpose left little room for others in his world. Coupled with dyslexia and an undetected case of poor eyesight, Branson's indifference to schoolwork meant that he showed little inclination for academic study. "Having left school without going to university, I decided to make money. I never considered failure," he said.[36] Known for his anti-establishment principles, Branson (Richard to everyone), has always scorned suits and ties and generated a working culture where fun was seen (by him certainly) as more important than higher paying salaries. As a self-cast outsider to the business establishment, Branson appears quixotic, tilting at windmills as he challenges complacent, bloated business models. Commenting on the so-called "dirty tricks" campaign in which British Airways attempted to put Branson's airline out of business in the early '90s, Lord King, BA chairman at the time, said: "If Richard Branson had worn a pair of steel-rimmed glasses, a double-breasted suit and shaved off his beard I would have taken him seriously. As it was I couldn't. I underestimated him."[37] Such is the image projected by the maverick outsider.

Ernest Hemingway understood well the struggle. for artistic meaning. "You go against the grain, you're bound to get splinters, but that's the price for not conforming," advised the hard-drinking winner of the 1954 Nobel Prize in Literature. Key to Hemingway's brilliance as a writer was the rugged simplicity of the language

he used. His sparse, hard-hitting copy lends much to the contemporary works of Cormac McCarthy and J.M Coetzee. Author of For Whom the Bell Tolls and The Old Man and the Sea, Hemingway was an original, arguably the first no-nonsense 20th - century writer. And being first is not always easy, admitted Hemingway. "The risk of originality is humiliation which is another way of saying failure," he said. "In high school I once wrote an essay entirely in dialogue and I got an F, not because the dialogue was inferior but because no one had ever written an essay like that before. 'Essays,' the teacher said, 'are proper sentences, not dialogue.' Form over content. When I first set out from home, the report card of my life wasn't very good, but then my grades gradually improved, the more I convinced 'em that finding my own way, on the road and on the page, had its merits."[38]

Other outsiders include individuals who were, particularly at an early age, seen as odd halls. For example, Howard Carter, the archaeologist famed for the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, was an uneducated amateur, rejected by his qualified peers because of his low-class credentials. Despite his ground-shaking discovery, he remained on the periphery of recognition and, on his death, was buried in a middle-class graveyard with little or no fanfare.

Pulitzer Prize-winning American novelist Cormac McCarthy is another excellent example of the fringe life. A softly spoken semi-recluse, McCarthy has, for the most pan of his life, refused to give interviews. He has consistently rejected socialising with the American literati, and instead has chosen residence at the Santa Fe Institute in the New Mexico desert. As mentioned earlier, McCarthy is the only novelist on campus. His first major novel, Suttree,[39] published in 1979, is semi-autobiographical; its "hero", Cornelius Suttree, lives in exile in a derelict houseboat, skirting a homeless society of crackpots, recidivists and breadline survivors. The great J.D. Salinger, who died in January 2010 at the age of 91, was perhaps even more wary of the mainstream. Author of the seminal Catcher in the Rye, such was Salinger's hermitic disposition that he never gave interviews nor allowed photos of himself to be published. He was, to all intents and purposes, absolutely anonymous; and possibly even just a ghost - or so he would have led us to believe.

We've all heard of Gary Player, South Africa's greatest-ever golfer, voted as South Africa's sportsman of the last century. Player, who won all four Majors on both the regular and the senior tours, also started from humble beginnings. His father was a miner earning £100 a month; his mother died when he was just eight years old. With a brother away fighting for the Allies in World War II and his sister at boarding school, the young Player would get up at 5:30 each morning to catch the tram to town. From there he would walk to school. His daily school-time routine would often see him return home late at night. As his father was still working, the house caretaker

would give him his supper. As he grew up, Player learnt to fend for himself, often taking on bullies at school who would pick on him because he was a small guy. These early setbacks made him even more determined to succeed. At the age of 14 he took up the game of golf and, within 18 months, he became a scratch golfer. During this period, he spent hours learning and practising his craft - something that gave rise to possibly his most famous quote: “The harder you practise, the luckier you get.” Not satisfied to compete merely on home soil as a newly minted professional, Player headed overseas to the European and American circuits, competing toe-to-toe with the greats of the time: Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus, winning the first of his Majors at the tender age of 22. He would complete the Slam seven years later in 1965. The only other golfers to have achieved this are Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods - all Americans. In golf, Player remained the perpetual outsider, his dictum: “To compete you have to be different.” His dedication to fitness, hard work and practice, his focus and his determination combined to make him a remarkably successful golfer.[40]

While Player's story is extraordinary, South African golfing history reveals a lesser known though even greater golfing outsider: “Papwa” Sewgolum. Sewgolum started out as a golf caddie. By the age of 34, and despite enormous personal and political odds (he was designated “Indian” by the old apartheid regime), Papwa had moved through the ranks to win the Natal Open golf tournament in 1963 against an entirely “white” field. Inasmuch as it was a political victory for “non-whites” in South Africa, it was victory for outsiders everywhere.

Sewgolum’s great-grandfather was one of a battalion of labourers shipped from India in 1860 to work as indentured labourers on the sugar plantations of modern day KwaZulu-Natal. Barely one caste above slavery, successive generations of his family eked out an existence in Durban and, from 1948 onwards, fell victim to the strictures of formalised apartheid. Sewgolum would have been 18 at the time.

The story goes that his love of golf emerged because of the proximity of Durban's Beachwood Golf Course, which lay close to the township in which he lived. His father, who died when Sewgolum was still quite young, carved his son's first golf club from the branch of a guava tree. Working as a caddie at Beachwood, Sewgolum evinced a raw, prodigious talent for golf. With no access to formal golf coaching and few opportunities to play on golf courses (under apartheid only whites could play on “white” courses and few other courses existed), Sewgolum was self-taught, and developed his own unique method of hitting a ball. Famously, unlike virtually any other golfer we know, he learnt to swing with a reverse grip: that is to say, as a right-hander, he gripped the club with his left hand below his right. This “cack-handed” method (with no interlaced or even interlocking fingers) had never been successfully

employed by any professional golfer (except occasionally for putting) and yet, undeterred, it was with this approach to striking the ball that Sewgolum emerged as a seriously good young golfer. “I believe a man should swing a club the best way he knows how,” he told the Golf Digest in 1964.[41] With this highly unorthodox “outsider” style, Sewgolum would regularly shoot in the sixties and is noted for once having scored a hole-in-one at Beachwood's par-4 16th hole. In 1959 he won the Dutch Open, a title he would go on to win twice more. Achieving success in South Africa was another matter, however, most especially because the Group Areas Act forbade “non-white” access to designated white areas. Loopholes around this law were ultimately found so that players of colour could, for the duration of a tournament, be permitted to play on a white course, as long as they remained out of the clubhouse and any other whites-only areas. Starting in 1961, the use of these permits enabled Sewgolum to enter big “white” tournaments such as the South African Open. Under such strictures (no practice days were permitted) it must have taken incredible courage just to pitch up, let alone compete. And yet, in 1963, to the joy of an enthusiastic crowd of Indian supporters, Papwa Sewgolum won the Natal Open, whereupon, controversially, he was awarded the Cup outside the clubhouse of the Durban Country Club so as to comply with racist laws of the time. Soon these laws would tighten even further, making his participation in South African golf impossible. It must have been heart breaking. Yet, despite these obstacles and the toxic societal dynamics at play, Sewgolum displayed enormous fortitude and grit. As his son Rajen reflects: “He never lost his cool, never raised his voice, never said anything harsh. He was a humble man.” It is a truly remarkable story.

Another outsider who defied convention was the great self-taught abstract artist Jackson Pollock. Reminiscent of Sewgolum’s unorthodox grip of a golf club, Pollock employed novel methods of working with paint. “I continue to get further away from the usual painter's tools such as easel, palette, brushes, etc.,” he said. “I prefer sticks, trowels, knives, and dripping fluid paint or heavy impasto with sand, broken glass or other foreign matter added.” By so distancing himself from Western norms of using an easel and paintbrush, he was able to move away from the vertical and apply his art on a horizontal plane using his entire body to paint. “My painting does not come from the easel,” he told Time magazine in 1956. “I prefer to tack the unstretched canvas to the hard wall or floor. I need the resistance of a hard surface. On the floor I am more at ease. I feel nearer, more part of the painting, since this way I can walk around it, work from the four sides and literally be in the painting.”[42]

Making it from the outside

There can be little doubt that their unhappy status as weirdos and outcasts actually set many artistic greats on a trail to self-expression. In fact, mounting evidence suggests that you need to suffer to some degree in order to achieve creative success. How can this be? Early in his book Antifragile, philosopher and scholar Nassim Taleb introduces the possibility of something opposite to the deleterious effects of post-traumatic stress syndrome. In the post-traumatic stress syndrome scenario, typically after a severe experience of violence or emotional scarring, the subject wilts under the effects. They become nervous wrecks. Yet there is a phenomenon called "post-traumatic growth", where the victim recovers, rebounds and ultimately excels. Taleb notes that, while this dynamic is scarcely observed in academic literature,[43] it is well known in folklore and typically summed up when people say an event will "build character". As Taleb sees it, the key concept underpinning the possibilities of growth is what he calls "antifragility". The opposite of fragility, it implies that when something undergoes stress, it actually strengthens and becomes better. The human body is much like this, if the level of stress is not too extreme and the duration of recovery is sufficient. Crates of champagne flutes, says Taleb, arc not made this way. Shaken around, they break because they are inherently fragile. However, antifragility is not the same as robustness, insists Taleb. Robust objects do not grow stronger under stress. They remain in stasis. By contrast, antifragility is fragility with a negative sign. The more you shake such objects the more resilient they become.[44] As a governing principle, this concept would seem to explain why outsiders appear to succeed where most insiders don't.

Outsiders in a foreign land

Many outsiders appear to find acceptance and fame away from home. Three examples of this phenomenon are Jimi Hendrix, James Taylor and The Police.

The story of Hendrix's rise to fame is possibly the greatest within the lexicon of Outsider artists. As a child he and his four siblings were subjected to much of his parents' drunken feuding. Up until his mother's death, when Hendrix was just nine, his parents split up and reunited a number of times. Over this period of internal damage and uncertainty, some of his siblings were given up for foster care. He knew poverty all his early life and, without a permanent family, relied on the kindness of friends and near relatives to keep him alive. So impoverished was his upbringing that, years later, he would note: "If I wasn't a guitar player, I would probably be in jail."[45] With no positive primary relationships to speak of, Hendrix could never find the intimacy and commitment for which he yearned. On 23 September 1966, Hendrix

took a flight from America to London with nothing but a guitar, a small bag containing some personal belongings (including some pink curlers and a tube of acne cream) and $40, which he had borrowed from a friend. Michael Jeffrey, manager of the band The Animals, paid for his ticket. At the time, Hendrix had nothing to offer but talent. He was without pedigree or credentials and arrived in London a total stranger. Within 12 months, and in the presence of UK guitar gods such as Eric Clapton, Keith Richards and Jimmy Page, he would become a musical legend, blowing away everyone in his path.

At about the same time, another - albeit less flamboyant - US artist, also set out to the UK to make it. This was the young James Taylor, who would eventually make it super-big in the '70s West Coast folk sound. By the time of his flight to London, however, Taylor had experienced numerous bouts of darkness and despair. Of his feelings as a 15-year-old, Taylor said: "I felt as though I was born on the dark side of the moon and that I didn't have a place in the world."[46] Though talented and from a wealthy East Coast family, by 16, Taylor had rebelled against his private school boarding house education and, a year later, had committed himself to the Massachusetts-based McLean Psychiatric Hospital. Dabbling up and down the East Coast folk circuit, the emotionally fragile Taylor had also experimented with some serious drugs. While most folkies of the time would smoke pot, Taylor – like Keith Richards, Bill Evans and certain black jazz artists operating with Miles Davis - eventually became addicted to the more expensive and severe heroin, a narcotic with which he struggled for years. In early 1968, a disillusioned Taylor headed off to London where he found a flat in Notting Hill. At this time, The Beatles had just set up their own Apple Corps recording label and, through the help of some intermediaries, Taylor, a complete outsider to the swinging London scene, was auditioned by none other than Paul McCartney, who immediately signed him up. (For the chaotic and dysfunctional label, Taylor would be the first and only seriously big signing.) Championed by the "Fab Four", Taylor finally found the impetus he needed to break through, issuing the eponymous James Taylor album later that year, the recording of which McCartney sat in on, even playing bass on the key track "Carolina in My Mind". "From that point on," as Taylor later put it, "everything changed."[47] Though always emotionally confounded, Taylor thus returned to the States to issue a series of classic '70s albums -including Sweet Baby James and Mud Slide Slim. These seminal works would mark him, together with the Eagles, Jackson Browne and Fleetwood Mac, as one of the serious progenitors of American '70s music.

Just as the outsiders Hendrix and Taylor would need to travel to Britain in order to make it big back in the States, a decade later, the British ska-inspired band

The Police would need to travel as virtual unknowns to the US to become successful back home in the UK.

Founded in the late ‘70s, The Police trio included its drummer and founder. Stewart Copeland, bassist and lead vocalist Sting (Gordon Sumner), and guitarist Andy Summers. In April 1978 they released the single Roxanne, but it would sleep, unrecognised, for more than a year due to the domination of the punk movement in the UK. Around that time, punk bands like the Sex Pistols and The Clash complete I) dominated the UK charts. As Andy Summers recalls of that phase: “We were just about finished as a band you know - we couldn't get gigs really. If we got a gig we'd have to spend all the money hiring the PA and the van to get there.” It was then that, in a last-ditch effort to stave off implosion, they decided to embark on a self-financed tour of the US. Says Summers: “It felt different when we came to the US. It felt like it was a clean slate. People accepted us just on the music alone. They didn't care about punk credentials or anything like that. They just reacted to the music.” Drummer Stewart Copeland takes up the story: “In the US they responded to our music city to city, incrementally, tour after tour. You know, people imagine that it happened suddenly. But it didn't. It was a lot of shows. It was step by step by step.”[48]

And so it was that, as a group of relative outsider-unknowns, The Police’s popularity grew, with their progress in the US increasingly reflecting back on their British record sales at home. Such was this trans-Atlantic sales dynamic that, within a year of venturing to America, The Police would become the dominant music act in the UK.

Creative cities

Much thought is currently being focused on the spaces that outsider-creatives inhabit. Why is it, for example, that some places become destinations for creative types while others are steadfastly avoided? Using the example of how low economic barriers to entry enable new firms to enter attractive industrial sectors and thus keep that sector fresh and evolving, the University of Toronto's Richard Florida believes the same applies in creative situations. There are, he maintains, critical factors that combine to attract creative people who, in turn, can power possibilities of growth and innovation. Creative types, he argues, are not looking just for low-threshold work options but rather for something of a higher order: attractive employment opportunities. For city planners and business-sector managers, creating these opportunities is not merely a matter of setting up conventional work-style options that seek to employ competent, diligent, intelligent individuals. These qualities are in great abundance and easily and cheaply acquired. Artistic qualities such as creativity, innovation and passion are less easily bought. Certainly, creative people see traditional work conventions as

conformist strictures and will do almost anything to avoid them. Formulaic approaches are generally unhelpful, and attempts to reverse-engineer the creative urban space have not met with much success. This is because creative work opportunities typically develop organically, which is to say that they tend to develop of their own accord.

What do these spaces look like? And what is required to produce them? To conclude this chapter, let's consider briefly one of the great creative cities: San Francisco. In the '60s, when Steve Jobs was growing up, popular experimental studies were conducted in the surrounding Santa Clara Valley on a manufactured drug called lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), or acid for short. Because of its prior use in psychotherapy, LSD was not, as yet, a banned substance and was openly promoted by a number of enlightened New Age intellectuals including Doug Engelbart, the Palo Alto computer scientist who co-developed the computer mouse; the Beat poet Allen Ginsberg and the Harvard-based Timothy Leary. Another proponent was the author Ken Kesey, who believed strongly that acid was the key to unlocking creativity. Periodically, Kesey hosted colourful LSD celebrations, some attended by the Stones' Keith Richards, Mick Jagger and Brian Jones while on tour. The house band that morphed into the Grateful Dead usually serenaded these events. It was the advent of a period known as psychedelia, spawning a whole generation of hippies. Underpinning this new cultural upswelling were numerous New and Old Age cosmic therapies including yoga and meditation, the disciplines of Hindu and Zen spirituality, primal scream therapy, pyramid power, vegetarianism and fasting. Parallel with this heady blend of the mystical was a new thrust of technology, driven primarily by computers. By the close of the '60s, weird technologies and belief systems had converged. And in the centre of it, eating only carrots for weeks on end, dropping in and out of Stanford classes, meditating and working night shifts for Atari, was Steve Jobs. Reflecting on the San Francisco scene back then, Jobs observed how alive everything seemed: with some of the best music - Janis Joplin, Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead and Joan Baez - as well as computer innovations such as the microchip, and the counterculture magazine, the Whole Earth Catalog.[49] It was this environment that massively informed Jobs as he launched and grew Apple from the mid-'70s onwards. On a visit to Stanford in 1982, Jobs interrogated a class of commerce faculty students expecting management tips on successful start-ups. With typical Jobs candour, he veered off and asked how many of them were virgins and how many had dropped acid. His question was met with embarrassed tittering. A year later, when Apple began recruiting for the Macintosh design team, Jobs applied the same non-orthodox approach. With the aim of hiring out-of-the-box, smart types, along with the virgin and acid questions, candidates were also asked to play the Defender computer game.[50] Reflecting on the

contemporary crop of materialistic kids, Jobs said it was different when he was at school: that the now grown-up kids of his generation were still thinking in idealistic terms. Many of them were now in top IT positions, the idealistic wind of the '60s still at their backs and the tenets of the Aquarius age deeply ingrained.[51] U2's lead man, Bono, concurred on this, stating that the people who invented the 21st century were mostly equivalent versions of Jobs: pot-smoking, sandal-wearing West Coast hippies who saw things differently. Such divergence is not encouraged in places like the US East Coast, nor in England, Germany and Japan. The '60s spawned an anarchical sensibility of things, observed Bono, just what was required for imagining a world waiting to be born.[52]

The above example of San Francisco underscores the point that, regardless of ethnic background or sexual orientation, outsider-creative types will interpret a prevailing acceptance of difference as a "non-standard flag" that says outsiders are welcome here. Invariably such places will tend to welcome fresh possibilities and experimentation. In US cities where creativity indices are high - places such as Seattle, the greater Boston area, New York and the aforementioned San Francisco - we note a flowering of musical talent. The Summer of Love psychedelic movement started in San Francisco; the grunge bands Soundgarden, Alice in Chains and Nirvana emerged out of Seattle (along with Jimi Hendrix), the indie band the Pixies came from Boston, and the bebop jazz, folk and avant-garde arthouse and punk movements took root in New York. Added to the music of such cities, of course, is a compelling span of restaurants, historic buildings and art galleries. Nightlife is critical and always vibrant. Typically these cities favour interactive, multi-level entertainment possibilities, seeking indoor and outdoor recreation spaces that offer stimulation rather than passivity or escapism, allowing for experimentation and self-reinvention. Within these precincts, no permission is required to be what you want. You can just hang out.

This, then, appears to be the general pattern of how creative communities emerge: organically and with scant respect for the orthodox. Any tendency towards top-down policing behaviour is spurned. Creatives flourish when there are no institutional nannies; their urban zones become a hotbed of innovation, artistry and progress. With the prize of an innovative business generation in the crosshairs, many city officials and politicians worldwide are seeking out ways to attract creative classes to their cities and towns. This is not easy because, most of the time, officialdom fails to understand what it is that attracts such people in the first place.

Richard Florida is most especially critical of those cities that spend millions of taxpayers' dollars on baseball or football-type stadiums.[53] Any city hosting the Olympic Games or Soccer World Cup would have had their bounty of such stadiums. To restate: these professional sports stadiums are not what creative types seek and

they will not drive GDP or create daring new businesses. Neither are creatives interested in fake-themed stripmalls or neighbourhood complexes. What artists and innovators are interested in is the genuine, the authentic, the uncontrolled, and the possibility of unhindered self-expression. Towns and cities that cannot provide this will fail in their pursuit of the imaginative individual.

In his Harvard Business Review article of June 2010 entitled "The big idea: How to start an entrepreneurial revolution", Daniel Isenberg spelled out this message in further detail, suggesting that government agencies "should observe which direction entrepreneurs take and 'pave the footpath' by gently encouraging supportive economic activity to form around already successful ventures, rather than planning new sidewalks, pouring the concrete, and keeping entrepreneurs off the grass". Isenberg was not optimistic that his suggestion would be noted, stating," his most unglamorous but practical insight is often lost as cluster theory gets translated into government policies that are suspiciously akin to debunked centralized industrial planning."[54]

The challenge for those city states seeking to engender the mindset of the genuinely artistic and creative is to step away and let artists be who they are. Antithetical to official versions of itself, the creative process is largely self-developed and, at best, can be assisted but not replaced. I have yet to find any examples of state sponsored initiatives that have successfully fostered spaces of genuine innovation and creativity. The Londons, Berlins and San Franciscos of this world all developed spontaneously, organically, from the inside out. I am aware how keenly economic managers are viewing the possibilities of an accelerated "outside-in" process and thus look forward to being proven wrong!

To conclude this chapter, here are some questions to consider. Why, for example, is the outsider so important as the agent of change and insight? What spurs the outcast? Why, too, is the world so vested in normality, in the status quo that seeks convergence, compliance and submission to the dominant narrative? Globally, we are lectured about the importance of diversity and yet, in non-legislated forms of society, schooling implies socialisation not enquiry. Famously, the painfully introverted Lester Young learnt to play the saxophone sideways and Albert Einstein grew up with an aversion to wearing socks. One has to wonder whether these outsiders would have succeeded in the orthodox stream of society. Volume-driven education requires conformity rather than genuine difference. If we are to encourage entrepreneurs and world artists, are we then required to hold up difference as key to promoting insight and possibility? If we constantly legislate for tolerance of diversity, will this necessarily imply a flowering of fresh ideas and entrepreneurial action? By stimulating the possibilities of social acceptance, could we assimilate the outsider who needs to be at the edge in order to self-express? This inward-outward business is complicated.

Certainly there are top-down power structures that require serious revision if we are to unleash the possibilities of enquiry.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. This chapter (1) introduces the inner child as a proxy for the qualities of innocence, simplicity and a willingness to take chances regardless of the risk of being wrong and (2) demonstrates how these characteristics are stifled at an early age.
2. The child's betrayal leads to an exile of the creative spirit and is a reason why so few adults can sing.
3. In an attempt to reconnect with the severed unconscious, artists spend years working with the exile archetype, many positioning themselves as outsiders.
4. Though seldom invited to sup with the elites, outsiders are global change agents and use the power of their exclusion to profound creative effect.
5. The question of why outsiders generally find success away from home is considered, along with how cities might better prepare themselves to welcome the outlaws and vagabonds of creativity.

CHAPTER FOUR – The Exiled Child

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[44] In The Competitive Advantage of Nations (1990), Michael Porter of Harvard's Business School observes Holland's competitiveness in the "field" of cut flowers – ironic since arable land is so scarce that it has had to reclaim from the sea. The wet weather is also not especially conducive to planting flowers. Because of these constraints, Holland has been forced to innovate and runs one of the most advanced hydroponics systems of plant propagation, exporting vast quantities of its produce worldwide. Porter believes this dynamic of resource scarcity is a key determinant in driving international competitiveness, not an abundance of resources – abundance is usually squandered. Another example is the agricultural capacity of Israel, especially in the Negev desert.

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