

Thank you. I am so delighted to be in Chicago, Illinois—one of the great jazz centers of the world, the city that gave us jazz legends Benny Goodman, Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, Nat King Cole, Fred Anderson, Von Freeman, Walter Dyett to name a few—and contemporary artists supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation: Ray Anderson, Ryan Cohan, Nicole Mitchell, Malachi Thompson and the Freebop Band, Jim Gailloreto and the Jazz String Quintet, and Josh Moshier and the Moshier/Lebrun Collective. I am honored to be here among you all

We gather this morning in the shadow of a global economic crisis which has dramatically impacted the arts: charitable giving in all sectors--individual, corporate, government (depending on where you live) and foundation—is down. General consumer anxiety, coupled with declines in discretionary income, has reduced attendance and led to drops in earned income. Indeed, according to a national study, 10,000 arts organizations and 260,000 jobs in the arts are at risk and may be lost by the end of this calendar year.

Arts organizations are drastically cutting budgets, eliminating performances, reducing performance weeks and resorting more frequently to small cast or reduced scale work; instituting hiring freezes, staff furloughs, lay offs, eliminating retirement or health benefits, and in worst cases, launching emergency fundraising appeals, all just to stay alive. For artists—who now see opportunities for work disappearing—the downsizing in non-arts sectors is equally problematic: many depend on non-arts employment to provide the lion's share of income, retirement benefits and health insurance—all now at risk or gone. And,

according to a recent study from our National Endowment for the Arts, the unemployment rate for artists is growing at twice the rate of the national average.

Maybe the upside of this is that we are coming together: New York, Portland, Seattle, Boston, Minneapolis, Chicago—these are cities where I have attended similar gatherings in the last six months—gatherings by the pathway of creativity as described by Bill Moyers, when he says: “show up—really show up---listen deeply, speak the truth, and let go of predetermined results.”

Especially now we must think of ourselves as both a jazz and as an arts community—a community in which we celebrate the diversity of who we are, what we love and what we do, rather than insist on agreement and uniformity. Whatever our differences and disagreements may have been—and may continue to be—let’s be clear: the arts are an ecosystem, where life forms are nourished by interdependency and where our fates are intertwined. We must recognize that the bebop needs the big band; the nonprofit the commercial; the artist the manager; the emerging master the young emergent artist; the composer the ensemble; and vice versa. Praising fusion while disparaging smooth jazz, or even praising jazz while disparaging symphonic music or dance, arguing for the avant-garde while denigrating the mainstream, pleading the case of the smaller at the expense of the larger ultimately advantages no one and harms us all. We must—both within the jazz field and within the larger arts-- resist competing for a piece of a fixed or shrinking pie and “co-opetate”, as Yale author Barry Nailbuff urges—to cooperate to grow the pie for us all, even as we continue to inevitably compete for a piece of it.

And our need to grow this pie predates the economic collapse.

Even before the economy turned, we at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation had convened more than 700 artists, managers, administrators and board members in 22 meetings across the country in 2006 to explore the issues artists and organizations face in the new millennium.

We heard excitement, yes, about vibrancy in the arts, commitment, passion, the rise of virtuosity and unprecedented technique in young artists, curiosity and hunger and more—things we should and must continue to celebrate in the face of these tough times. But we also heard about under- undercapitalized organizations, only a fraction of whom have—or perhaps I should say had—balanced budgets, operating reserves, significant fixed assets, and endowments—and about under-compensation, not only of artists, but of managers, administrators and technicians. Indeed, when we talk about the philanthropic support for the arts—the donations of individuals, corporations, government and foundations—too often we forget to cite the single largest philanthropic sector of all: the artists, managers, technicians and administrators on whose lives the work is made.

In jazz in particular, we about the plummeting number of jazz radio stations—which in 2003 numbered only 70 out of more than 1300 stations in the entire country and which has fallen further since, with the percentage of time dedicated to jazz on public stations

slipping annually as well. We heard about slipping CD sales and the downsizing of the jazz labels—and with it the loss of validation, curatorial advice and promotional work done for those artists lucky enough to be signed. We heard about the disappearance of megachains Tower Records and Virgin Records, and of independent stores, and the far too thin or nonexistent jazz sections at Barnes and noble, Borders, Target and Walmart. We heard about the collapse of the road—that network of small supper clubs and hotel bars that would nurture musicians wending their way across the country, meeting new collaborators, jamming with new friends to find new ways in new music—now, with its disappearance, leaving jazz musicians feeling disconnected from many audiences and isolated from one another—a development with artistic as well as financial consequences. And all of this in 2006 before the economy fell.

But—for whatever consolation this may provide—audiences were declining in every performing arts field. In the theatre, dance, opera, and orchestra fields, we heard about declining subscription renewals, difficulties in attracting single ticket buyers, about increased “churn”—a term reflecting the high percentage—typically 70-75%--of audience members who attend a single event in a season and do not return. Even then, we all faced a populace characterized by over-scheduling and exhaustion—a time in which 42% of men and 55% of women say they are too tired to do the things they truly want to do, and where the #1 answer to the question of most eagerly anticipated use of a free evening was no longer dinner with friends or a movie or a performing arts event, but is instead “a good night’s sleep.” After decades of growth, audiences in every field—even then but more dramatically now-- are shrinking and our own financial needs, driven in many cases by

escalating fixed costs of facilities, insurance, health care and more, in tandem with negative shifts in funding, means escalating ticket prices that threaten to place attendance beyond so many in our communities we wish to reach and serve.

And perhaps no questions burned as brightly as those around technology: what, everyone asked in those meetings, does it mean to be a live performing artist in an increasingly technologically-driven age? In trying to attract the attention of potential ticket buyers, you now compete with (depending on who you read) between 3-5,000 different marketing messages a typical American sees every single day. Technology has emerged as our biggest competitor for leisure time: by the time Net-geners reach their twenties, they will have spent more than 20,000 hours on the Internet and an additional 10,000 hours playing video games. We now live a time in which computer games outsell movie and music recordings combined.

But technology is more than competition: it is also altering the very assumptions of how we consume. Thanks to the internet, we can shop at three in the morning or ten o'clock at night, ordering jeans tailor made for our individual bodies and delivered to our own doors—expectations of convenience, customization and personalization that the live jazz concert community—a community who depend on set curtain times, specific geographic venues, attendant inconveniences of parking, travel and the like—simply cannot meet. And in an age where young people especially access culture on demand through YouTube and iTunes any time they want it and for little or no apparent cost, what will it mean in the future

Keynote Address – Ben Cameron, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
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when we ask a potential audience member to pay \$40, 50 or 60 for a jazz concert when that consumer has been accustomed to downloading on the internet for .99 a song or for free?

But as particular these issues feel to us in the arts, we are not alone: we all live in the midst of a realignment of cultural expression and communication—newspapers are crumbling everywhere, book sales dwindling, movie attendance down, major channel television viewing down annually.

For all of these reasons, I say to you that the crisis in the arts is not financial. The crisis we face is a crisis of relevance: the financial merely redefines the resources we bring to bear.

And aren't you glad you invited me here to brighten your day?

In looking to the future, I find inspiration in the words of two different thinkers: our 19th Century American President Abraham Lincoln, who in his second inaugural address said, "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. As our case is new, so must we think anew and act anew."

And Wayne Gretzky, the Canadian ice hockey player, who when asked to account for his greatness said simply, "I skate to where the puck will be."

How do we in jazz skate to where the puck will be?

We must begin by asking ourselves, why must we exist today? Because we have a scrapbook of good reviews is not enough. Because we have a history and awards and a reputation is not enough. Because we remember Miles or Benny or Louis or Ella is not enough. What is it in the world—in an external world—that needs jazz to flourish in our communities today?

In order to reinvent and adapt to the changing conditions in the world today, we need to be able to answer four very different questions:

- 1) What is the value of jazz (not of my jazz organization or my own artistic work) for my community?**
- 2) What is the value jazz alone has or that jazz fulfills better than anything else?**
- 3) How would my community be damaged if it were abandoned by jazz tomorrow?**
- 4) And how might I or my organization or all of us as a jazz community be optimally structured, poised and focused to be my community's best conduit to jazz?—a question that invites us to discard practices that do not and will not serve us in the future, to keep and nourish what is central and viable, and to embrace the new possibilities we may not have seen before.**

And indeed, fantastic opportunities exist everywhere around us. Chris Anderson, author of The Long Tail and editor of Wired magazine, described one benefit of technology as the

unleashing of a veritable tsunami of creative energy—a time in which increasingly anyone can engage in creativity. We are witnessing the emergence of a class of amateurs doing work at a professional level—a group dubbed elsewhere as the Pro-Ams—a group whose work populates YouTube, Film festivals, dance competitions and more. Young people are especially active: with the explosion of affordable software, 14 year olds make their own movies—an option once affordable only to major studios in the past—and distribute them world-wide through YouTube: indeed, show me a kid who is not beat boxing, dancing—and I mean serious dancing with rigor and discipline and a sense of lineage—writing poetry or music or storytelling. These citizen artists are broadening our aesthetic vocabulary in exciting ways, but they are rejecting our traditional notions of cultural authority and power.

People now demand more curatorial control and want more say in what they will see and hear. Out of the more than 10,000 different models of Mp3 models manufactured today, analysts agree that iPod cornered the market by going beyond “downloading” as a sales point to emphasize co-creation—the ability to create a personally curated playlist, to create or download podcasts—essentially to enter a world where you the consumer became you the creator as well. “Dancing with the Stars,” “American Idol,” the power of Zagat and its devastating impact on the community of food critics, Eventful.com—which allows audiences to identify the artists they want to see perform in their community—all are predicated on the active involvement of the consumer.

In short, more and more people want to be engaged in a fuller gamut of an artistic creative journey—a curiosity and hunger that is an opportunity for us, not a threat. The same kids who are dancing on corners are hungry for mentors; poetry slam spoken word artists now yearn for playwrights to help them understand how to write conventional three act plays; and in meeting after meeting, we see people longing to sit with artists and learn, to watch artists rehearse, to be privy to an artist’s thoughts. This fuller creative participation in the art form makes us crave, appreciate, respond to, and support the deeply virtuosic and singular ever more deeply. Indeed, as a recent report from the Wallace Foundation reveals, people who participate in creating art are more likely to attend arts events than nonparticipants—and tapping the “inner artist” is the key to robust audiences and relationships for the future. How can we view emerging forms and new activities as new pathways into jazz, rather than as the end of the form as we have known it? How can we think of performance, not only as an experience to be consumed, but as a springboard to our audience’s own creativity?

Technology offers new possibilities in our work. Jazz has benefited from technology—whether it be radio or vinyl or CD—as much as any art form, and the internet carries that power even further today. Thirty seconds of Nicole Mitchell performing on an audio clip or video has far more power to express personality, emotional tone, style, aesthetic and more than any print ad could every do--an unprecedented ability to let an audience member sample the work in which we are engaged.

And—for those of us who loved liner notes and lament their passing—technology now gives us unprecedented power to talk about it as well--—a power that seems especially powerful not only with arts devotees but also with the uninitiated who feel potentially intimidated and under-informed about a work they may be preparing to see. Blogs seem to arise with every passing day—a testament to the growing power of on-line authorship. Cedar Lake Ballet, for example, is watching audiences grow in the wake of a self-produced series of 52 one-minute videos—produced with a flip camera (which cost less than \$150) with a new one released every week—that don’t show the finished work but show how the work is made over time, including the contributions all of the participants—stage hands, designers, electricians and more—all designed to help an audience understand what the work is and how it is made. The value of this should be especially pressing for us: a recent study of audiences recognized jazz terminology “modal,” “fusion,” “cool jazz,” “hot jazz” and more, not only as confusing, off-putting and intimidating, but as one of the major obstacles to developing a jazz audience, citing so many respondents who throw up their hands and say, “I would like to know more about jazz but I have no idea where to start.”

But this emphasis on broadcasting or disseminating information through technology is just the beginning. Arguably, the internet is even more powerful in open source co-creation and in social networking and organizing. In the same way that computer gamers create games and expect young people to hack the software, make changes and improve the product, Yo Yo Ma is now recording single tracks designed for others to upload and play along with and repost for others to hear—an invitation for listeners to become co-creators. Chris Elam of Misnomer Dance for his own part is acutely connected to the social

organizing potential of the internet: yes, he streams performances—the last performed for a capacity house of 80 in Soho but attracting 1500 online observers. But he also polls those website visitors about their interest in seeing the work live—a question that prepares him to contact a Chicago presenter, for example, able to say “3000 people have already said they would come to see our work were we in your city, 25% would bring an additional friend, and 5 are willing to cosponsor an opening night party”—an approach that allows Chris to book his tour schedule based on where his audience already is, rather than booking a tour of cities and then trying to find someone in those cities to show up.

And this may pay. Through Kickback.com, for example, indie rock music artists are having great success in inviting potential audiences to help finance projects—give \$50 and get a discount on a batch of CD’s or downloads, give \$1000 and get a music lesson, give \$10,000 and get to be on a track—strategies in which indie rock musicians are having to turn away people that want to invest in their work and which now produce packed houses and even sold out stadiums for unsigned artists when they tour—venues where audiences then storm concessions to buy burned CD’s of the live concert they just heard. Audience development as broadcast and co-creation and social networking and participation.

Ring tones, podcasts, and more—even Guitar Hero, as Nate Chenin argues in this month’s Jazz Times—or using avatars in Second Life to introduce musicians to audiences as the National Black Arts Festival has done—may be potentially fantastic new ways of reaching audiences, generating excitement, engaging the public in more substantive ways than we have ever had before. And if the iPod invites us to download music we know and love; Jazz

Corner.com, NPR.com, Pandora.com all invite us to explore music we have never heard before; the internet allows us the chance to go global—and indeed the international cachet of jazz is growing-- the iPhone now invites us to do it all, wherever we go—our own concert hall, library, archive, and store all in one.

Clearly everything I have said is in the course of early investigation: will Kickback.com stick? We don't know. Will artists be able to monetize their careers through these new technologies? We don't know. Which strategies will prove to be long-lasting, and which will be short lived? We don't know. This is all the beginning of a brave new chapter—but we do know that the old ways of behaving and distributing music are largely over, and that the new emphasis on social media, on aggregation of energy, and on deeper access, openness and participation is here to stay. In short, in today's market, every artist must be a media artist and every organization a media organization, whether they know it or not.

Now we can choose to look at these experiments and others as individuals, but the ability of the jazz field to move forward as a whole will be immeasurably accelerated if we cooperate and share as a larger community. The growth of regional theatres in this country happened largely because theatres shared the idea of subscriptions with one another, taught one another how to create subscription brochures, indeed engaged great Chicagoan Danny Newman to travel and work with theatre after theatre after theatre. Minnesota Citizens for the Arts has made a huge advance including a new state lottery that will throw billions—literally billions—into the arts that came as the result of a community of artists and organizations agreeing on common goals, enlisting a common lobbyist, and having the

self-discipline to stay focused and not go after individual gains for fear of sabotaging the whole. Free Night of Theatre, a special event for the theatre community that grows every year and attracts tens of thousands of theatre goers, began, not with special grants to the community, but with the community asking itself, “What are the assets we already have that we can leverage for the community as a whole?”—a question that motivated dedication of one night when ticket inventory would be give to the community for free—an event that has inspired more donations, more audiences, and more media coverage—including in San Francisco, for example, a special Sunday supplement in the Chronicle that went in every copy, that profiled hundreds of theatres in the area, that was far more extensive, elaborate and articulate than the community could have paid for but that the paper did for them, unasked for, for free. At the root of our time are three very simple questions: what does the jazz community want? What does the jazz community need to make that happen? And what will the jazz community do—not what will others do for us—what will the jazz community do together to make it happen?

I for one am optimistic about the future of jazz, although I have not sounded it until now. Two years ago, I decided to plunge myself into the belly of the proverbial beast and attended Pop Tech, an annual conference in Camden ME for 500 high tech folks, bringing them together to listen to—and interact with—high level thinkers of every stripe and description. Contrary to my expectations, this was not a conference designed to talk about startups or financing: it was—and is—a conference where we listened to world thinkers about the human brain. Global warming. International warfare and terrorism. AIDS research. And the arts, with many artists participating on panels and each session followed

by a live performance—a jazz cellist making a veritable quartet of sound with technology, Vanessa German, a spoken word artist who blew the roof off with her raw evocation of feeling, a Gospel Choir of HIV+ singers from the African continent.

While arts conferences are often dominated increasingly by prospects for survival—how will we compete in a market-driven world? How will we keep ourselves on the funding agenda? —the issue of survivability was never raised at PopTech. The assumption is that many will not—and perhaps should not—survive. Instead, here the issues were not how we will survive financially, but how we will change the world. How we will solve global warming. How we will solve AIDS. How we will leave the world a healthier, ecologically balanced, less poverty ridden place. Indeed, the unspoken agenda was that there is nothing that we cannot do, and in the world of high tech, truly anything is possible.

You might call this folly of youth—and indeed, many of the participants are young.

You may call it hubris.

But what became clear to me is that within this world of infinite possibilities, there are new possibilities for us in the arts.

On the one hand, I was encouraged that this group fought to get there. Camden, ME is not an easy place to access, and if any community can convene virtually, this one can. Yet through PopTech and TED and more, this community insists on coming together because

of the unique value of live, face to face, collective experience, to conspiring—meaning to breathe together, to breathing the same air. And throughout PopTech, a minor chord, a palpable hunger throbbed in the background. This group was desperate to slow down, to lead less frenetic lives, to find the courage to live for their passions. More and more, they placed premium on contemplation, on captivation, on focus and extended surrender to single experience—experiences that would captivate, resonate emotionally, elevate spiritually. What they crave, in essence, exactly what we do.

Especially now, when we must confront the fallacies of the market-only orientation that has driven our nation for too long, we must reclaim the world of the spirit and recognize the sanctity of the performance space—a space where we come together—not to view one another with hostility and suspicion as so many other venues, media and world events encourage us to do—but with generosity and curiosity, celebrating those things that bind us together, rather than those that drive us apart.

We live in an information age where we find ourselves drowning in information yet starved for wisdom.

We live in an increasingly creative Age where we stand on the brink of drowning in creative expression, but perhaps starved for art—that moment of transcendence that is hard to reach and rare, regardless of how many hotel heiresses acting in B grade films or breathy over dubbed singers barely capable of carrying a tune try to convince us otherwise. If, as the Harvard Task Force notes: “The enemies of excellence in the making of art are

very much like the enemies of excellence in Chemistry or English, Neuroscience or History: inattention, conceit, the impulse to cut corners, a lack of vital engagement, conceptual timidity, a premature settling for routine and conventional answers,” can we define the art we aspire towards by the implied negative? That art is marked by rigorous attention to detail, humility, the drive to complete at all costs, vital engagement, conceptual audacity, an unwillingness to settle for routine, a dedication to pursuit of the unknown and the courage to embrace the new?

Perhaps. But these very principles—attention, engagement, audacity, and courage, are what we must seize, and the principles that inform jazz—the ability to listen, to respond to structure, to improvise and flow—are the very skills we need as we remain open to where the future can take us.

Indeed, where jazz will be found, who will produce it, how it will be transmitted and shared and preserved are all questions that will be answered in new, exhilarating and often mystifying ways. But however dramatically our business models will change, the urgency of this quest—the search for art and the innate hunger for the true artist-- will remain—and if we do our job right—will grow and grow and grow.

I salute you all this morning, not only as artists but as activists, dedicated to your craft and to the power it brings our nation. I promise you that the hand of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation remains outstretched to you in friendship both now and for years to come; and I thank you for your kindness and patience in listening to me this morning.

Thank you and God speed.