

Master of Arts in Arts Management E-Newsletter

Immediate Gratification – Arts Management & Political Elections by Professor Richard Kamenitzer

'Tis the season to hit the remote buttons moving from political ads to debates to more rhetoric, etc. Yes, we are months away from a new administration – or, perhaps more appropriately, different names on the roster.

As our students become more engrossed in readying for the professional enhancement of their own careers, they appropriately look at the environment. The world that confronts each of our graduates and those already well invested in the profession, has as many facets as the most complex of gems. However, there is one that cannot and should not be ignored.

Public policy germinates in the realm of political reality. Whether you see yourself as liberal or conservative, going to the polls today is a very serious responsibility. The reality is simply this – no matter what promises are made, no matter what platforms are promoted, what survives is the one that generates the most immediate enhancement of the political agenda. Are we surprised? We should not be.

Thus, the subject of this writing – “immediate gratification.” Having spent more than 25 years of my own life working with adolescents, I have experienced this “driving force,” first hand. Nothing can motivate a teen more than “getting it right now.” However, we have passed that stage (the chronology of aging) in our own lives. In the arts and, more specifically in arts management, the administration of our federal government does have an air about it that says something about how well or how different our ability will be to have resources and interest invested in our institutions and in the artists and audiences that we are all dedicated to support.

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The "election" of the next President of the United States is usually seen by each constituent group as having a direct bearing on one's particular "issue." The appointment of Supreme Court Justices is clearly a most prominent power that accompanies this office. Beyond that, amongst our colleagues, one hears how this candidate or that candidate views the arts and, from that, how the interpreter envisions the support from the federal government for the arts. If "so and so" is elected, the arts will be set back decades may be one sentiment. If "so and so" is elected, we will have a strong advocate for the arts. The immediate gratification will come when the candidate that is believed by each of us in the public-at-large actually wins the election. It will come in the emotion of "feeling good" or being "safe."

Just like the immediate gratification of our teen years, "this too shall pass." It is the candidate and the agenda that holds out for the comprehensive strengthening of the economy, of the defense of the nation, the truly constitutionally correct issues vested in the federal government, while advocating for the arts – requiring "time to reach maturity in its implementation," that will provide us with what we truly seek. It is my belief that it is not immediate gratification but appropriate plans and the political acumen and clout to deliver on those plans that will bring about stronger support for the arts from our federal government.

That candy bar looks awfully good and it brings about immediate positive sensations to our taste buds, but are we ready to deal with the rest of what happens after digestion is completed. It takes only seconds to consume and experience the euphoria, but it goes away so quickly.

Richard Kamenitzer,
Associate Professor Arts Management,
Executive Director of the Center for Arts Management

Dean's Corner

The "Legal Black Market" of Management

By William Reeder, Dean

The great management teacher, William Oncken, Jr., believed that the most important objective for every manager was to get control of the timing and the content of his or her work. The difficulty in pulling this off comes from the fact that managers are not paid for their own vocational efforts (accounting, teaching, preparing reports, singing an aria, etc.), rather managers are paid for the collective efforts of all of the people in the system that are successfully doing accounting, teaching, reporting and so on.



Amateur managers attempt to solve the time riddle by prioritization. Doing "first things first." The problem, as Oncken taught, is that there are legitimate claims on the manager's time from virtually every person in the system. Managers everywhere try closing the door to "get their work done," but every manager knows that when the boss or a customer knocks (especially if it's about repeat business) the door swings immediately open. To help managers gain the needed control of their time, Oncken developed the molecule of management. At the center of the molecule is "you" the manager. Above you is "The Boss." At one side is "The System" on the other side is "The Customer." Beneath you are your staff, "The Team." Oncken's methodology teaches the manager how best to prepare for and to interact with "The Boss", "The System", "The Staff", and "The Customer."

In earlier articles, I have covered how to interact with "The Boss." Now we turn our attention to "The System."

Systems everywhere are monopolies. In our organizations we only have the "one" that we are part of. If, for example, I need a new computer here at George Mason I can't go to Best Buy and simply pick one up. I need to go through "The System." "The System" at George Mason (or within any organization) is different than the open marketplace where the laws of supply and demand operate.

In the open market, more demand creates more supply. Eventually a balance is arrived at, and the marketplace is efficient and effective in the distribution of goods and services. However within your organization, because "The System" is a monopoly, it never has the resources needed to meet all of the needs of the people in it. Hence, systems everywhere, as Oncken points out, allocate scarcity. This allocation occurs with layer upon layer of forms, including filling out the forms and the levels of review. The more demand there is on "The System", the longer the forms get, the harder they become to fill out, and the more levels of review are required. This slows down demand and allows "The System" to stay in control of the allocation process.

When we purchase something at the store (in the marketplace), it turns out that we also use a form - but that form has already been printed and filled out by the US Mint - it's called the dollar bill. At the end of the day, if fifty bottles of aspirin have been sold, there needs to be \$50 worth of forms in the cash register. The same is true inside "The System." Every time there is an exchange from one unit to another, there must be a form that is placed in the file. Once or twice a year the organization's auditors show up to count the forms. Woe is the unit that is sloppy with their forms! Even more woe to the manager who is careless in filling out the forms. For those who think it takes too much time to fill out those darned things, "The System" will freeze them out! And instead of a "new chair" for the office, the careless form filling out manager gets at best an egg crate!

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Now, what every manager needs from "The System" is what Oncken called the "three point landing." What he/she wants, where it's needed, and when it is required. And there are times when the manager needs to "fly now, and pay later." In other words, we need help from "The System" - separate from the allocation process. There are those times when you or a member of your staff needs something immediately, and cannot wait for the forms to do their thing.

This help comes from the "legal black market." The black market is/are all of the people who you know within "The System" who can and will help you - provided they trust you completely. That trust has three components. First, "I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine." In other words, if I do you a favor and give you a three point landing, you'll return the favor when I need help from you. Second, "loose lips sink ships." Mum's the word. NO ONE can know that this barter is taking place. Because if they do, it will establish precedence and must be made available to all parties within "The System" (forms!). Third, after the fact, those "forms!" must be filled out fully and carefully and placed in the drawer. Remember, at audit time, it's just like counting the cash registrar drawer at the end of the day. For every bottle of aspirin sold - for every favor done - there has to be a form in the drawer!

Now, in establishing this black market, let me be very, very clear. NEVER and I mean NEVER do anything that is illegal, immoral or unethical! One leads to prison, the second will get you way over your head, and the third will eventually get you fired. Having said all of that - you simply must establish your managerial "legal black market."

One final note, often times the people who are in charge of forms (the accounting staff, the computer services folks, etc.) work in veritable isolation. They get yelled at a lot when people who want chairs or computers get forms instead. Remember, the good people doing these jobs didn't create "The System" either. They are just as caught by the allocation of scarcity as you and I are. So - don't forget to invite these people to the staff outing and the post performance party. It's easy to include the artists and members of the board, they are clearly visible and on the front lines of action. But, if you want a successful "legal black market," remember it's the people within "The System" that keep the enterprise going. They like a pat on the back and a chance to celebrate too. A little understanding and comradeship can assure many a three-point landing along the way.

Call me and set up an appointment if you have questions on how to establish your personal "legal black market" in the real world. As always, advice is my middle name. Dean Reeder can be reached at (703) 993-8624.

Bill Reeder, Dean
College of Visual and Performing Arts
Professor of Arts Management

Germany Trip

MAM is Going to Germany

By Beth Bienvenu

Join George Mason's Master of Arts in Arts Management program for an exciting course in Berlin, Germany's cultural and political capital!

Don't miss this opportunity to:

- Meet with leaders of the top arts organizations in Berlin to learn how the non-profit arts are managed in Germany.
- Talk with key policymakers and funders about how the arts are funded.
- Learn about Berlin's developing creative economy and tour housing projects designed especially for artists.
- See dance, theater, opera and orchestra performances in one of the biggest arts capitals in Europe.
- Tour both new and historic museums and monuments in this ever-changing city!



The course, taught by MAM Arts Policy professor Beth Bienvenu with assistance from Mathilde Speier, begins with an overview of U.S. and German arts policy, and meetings with arts organizations in the DC Metro area. Students will then fly to Berlin for two weeks to meet with the leaders of Germany's top arts organizations. Students will compare American and German arts management and policy through interviews with arts leaders in both countries, focusing on the impact of funding and the government's role in promoting, defining, & censoring art. Site visits and interviews will be complemented by tours & performances in Berlin, where participants will have unparalleled access to Germany's top museums, orchestras, opera companies, dance companies, theaters, funding agencies, and other organizations dedicated to supporting artists and building Berlin's creative economy. The U.S. portion of the program takes place starting June 7 (class meetings will take place June 7, 14 and 18), and will be in Berlin June 22 - July 5, 2008. The final project will be due July 17.

This course can be taken for either 3 or 6 credits for the same price. Students who enroll in the 6-credit course will participate in all of the activities and assignments of the 3-credit course, but will also conduct additional intensive research and investigation into a topic related to German/American arts and cultural policy. This project will include both scholarly research and interviews with key arts organizations in Germany and/or the U.S (due July 31).

This program is open to Mason students, non-Mason students, faculty, staff, alumni and the general public. Financial aid may apply. The deadline for applications is April 4, 2008, and space is limited, so enroll early! For more information go to <http://globaled.gmu.edu>. or contact Rita Bartolo at 703-993-2641 or rbartolo@gmu.edu. If you would like a copy of the syllabus or have additional questions about the course, contact Mathilde Speier or Professor Bienvenu at bbienven@gmu.edu.

The fee for the program, determined by the Center for Global Education, is \$3400. Included in this price: tuition (3 or 6 credits), hotel accommodation, some excursions, an International Student Identity Card, a travel guidebook, Emergency evacuation insurance, a pre-departure orientation (mandatory session on Saturday, May 3), and administrative & organizational services in the US and overseas. The fee does not include international airfare or transfers, but a travel agency is working with us to get the cheapest student rate available. To ensure that we could offer the lowest possible price, we did not include much funding for excursions, so there may be some additional costs incurred for site visits and tours. However, we will work to ensure that the additional costs will be few.

Please join us for what will be a very exciting time in Berlin!

MAM Course News

Festivals and Special Events (MAM 706)

By Meg Brindle Ph.D.

Festivals, Music, Arts, Literary, and Cultural have always been a means of connecting arts and society from Greek and Roman civilizations through the Middle Ages, to festivals such as Mardi Gras, Music and Arts festivals of present time. Today, we witness a national and international expansion of the role of festivals and special events.

The Festivals and Special Events course (MAM 706) responds to the burgeoning need for Arts Managers to develop knowledge and a logistical skill basis to manage festivals and special events. These areas have, in my view, been too long under the bailiwick of non-artists and are much in need of the Arts Manager's perspective.

This course considers festivals from the historical, political, and social window and moves quickly to pragmatics of economics, strategic planning, fundraising and development, sponsorship, marketing, logistics and scheduling, human resources and legal issues, serving as a course to integrate other topical areas of the MAM curriculum.

The Festivals and Special Events course has been scheduled for Summer Session A (May 19 – June 20, 2008) and includes participation in The Mason Festival of the Arts event. The Festival runs from June 12-29, 2008 and is headed by Theater of the First Amendment staff Kevin Murray and Jim Maiwurm.

For additional information about The Mason Festival of the Arts event visit their web site at <http://www.gmu.edu/cfa/tfa/festival.html>



Alumni News

Symposium - "The Arts Manager - as Professional

By Shana L Kennedy

My dear fellow students, friends, and alumni of the Master of Arts in Arts Management program;

When asked to write an article on what the Master of Arts in Arts Management program has meant in my life, and to my career thus far, I thought "Wow- what an honor, and, where do I even begin to explain how much it has meant?"

After giving it a good bit of thought- I found that I am able to sum up my experience in three simple concepts— transformation of self, service to others, and an undeniably limitless future. For me, it was a true "Cinderella" story.

Back in 2003, I was a singer who was looking for work—paying work. As all of you artists know, it is tough to "break-in" let alone earn a living on our art alone— what a shame, I know— but I will address this a bit later. I was not fortunate enough to be able to afford college outright, and I worked through both my undergraduate and graduate degrees. Upon graduating with a Bachelor's degree in music, I was faced with a dilemma.

How was I going to support myself?

While I am a great advocate of gaining professional work experience while earning a degree, and I know that it has advanced my career, I will also admit that it is not an easy path to follow. However, I believe it was that experience that has made me into the professional that I am today, and initially, lead me to the doorstep of the Master of Arts in Arts Management Program.

To make ends meet after graduation, I fell back on my professional skills and found a job as an Event Coordinator for New Century College. I sang a few, non-paying roles in small, local opera companies that year, but it occurred to me rather quickly that it takes a great deal of personal capital to build the type of resume, and network of connections, that would allow a young artist the leverage they need to emerge into the professional arts world. This kind of "personal capital" was exactly what I didn't have. I quickly came to realize that life as a diva at the Met was a long shot for me. BUT, I did have a knack for business, due to my years in the professional work place, and I also had a desire to make the future brighter and more feasible for other young and struggling artists. I thought... if not me, perhaps I could help someone else.

That is exactly when I found the Master of Arts in Arts Management program. What timing— truly I believe it was meant to be. The program merged my desire to help others and my need to create a successful career path for myself. It melded my love for the arts and passion for business.

The opportunities that the Arts Management program provides are incredible. The faculty is comprised of successful professionals in the field of Arts Management— including some from of the nation's most re-known theaters, opera companies, museums and various other arts organizations in the D.C. metropolitan area.



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The proximity of GMU's campus to Washington, D.C., particularly for the arts, is one of the characteristics of our program that makes it stand out from any other Arts Management programs in the country. The speakers that I had the opportunity to meet and have direct access to as a student, were all outstanding.

Because of this, I was able to create a network of connections during my time in the MAM program, which put me on the fast-track to a successful career in Development. These relationships have carried through with me to the present, and I know that they will last a lifetime. This network has also provided me with invaluable support from my mentors. The mentorship aspect of our Master of Arts in Arts Management program is unique and like no other. It is available to all of us by the dedicated staff that help shape us into great leaders.

I have personally asked for help from my mentors on numerous occasions- they have all always been there to guide me as I navigate my very, very new career... believe me, there is a lot to navigate out there!

I am personally grateful that the faculty in this program is so dedicated to the success of the students and the alumni. In essence, the education that you receive in this program never ends.

So here I am today— exactly where all of you will be after graduating. A young professional with limitless potential- and truly, I owe it all to the Master of Arts in Arts Management program.

My advice to you as a MAM student? Take and give.

Right now, take in all that you can from the unique opportunity that you have as a student in the MAM program, and, once you are out- give. Be it time, money, advice, or knowledge— give something, to someone, some time in your life. If you base your life around giving freely, selflessly, and without expectation— something that I learned during my time in MAM— you will receive.

By living this theory, and through your journey in this program, I know that you will find success for yourself in exactly everything that I did— transformation of self, service to others, and an undeniably limitless future.

My personal thanks to all in the Master of Arts in Arts Management program. Many, many thanks to all of our dedicated administrators, professors, and friends who helped create the program and continue to make it grow. Someday I truly hope to repay this program for everything that it has helped me become and, in the true fashion of a passionate development professional, I kindly encourage all of you to someday consider doing the same.

This program helps us become the very best that we can be - and in essence, this program is changing the face of the arts throughout the nation. Take pride in being a part of something so wonderful, and remember... directly from the pen of "Cinderella" herself— take and give... in a very big way. Good luck to all.

Shana L. Kennedy is the Assistant Director of Development at Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University. She can be reached at (540) 231-4663 or via email at kennedys@vt.edu.

Faculty's Corner

Checks and Balances: The Three Branches of Governance in Non-Profit Theater By Rick Davis

When the Founding Fathers assembled in Philadelphia to draft the Constitution of the United States, they doubtless did not know—notwithstanding their deserved reputation as prescient thinkers—that they were also creating a model for the governance structure that most of our successful mid-size and large regional theaters have adopted. In setting out the concept of three branches of government with equal stature but different powers and responsibilities, the Framers attempted to ensure that decisions taken by the government would be subject to thorough examination and review by parties with inherently contrapuntal perspectives. The legislative, executive, and judicial branches exchange ideas and influence on a continuous basis as the work of the people proceeds, and though one branch may seem to be ascendant for a while, the structure has proven over time to be self-correcting.



In the world of the regional (or resident) non-profit theater, there are typically also three branches of governance: Artistic, Management, and Board. The first two are often personified by an Artistic Director and a Managing Director (the titles vary with remarkable imprecision, and it is not uncommon to find Executive Directors, Artistic Producers, Producing Directors, or Producing Artistic Directors—my first title here at Mason back in 1991—filling one or both of these roles). Both Artistic and Managing Directors have their own legislative and executive functions—i.e., proposing activities and carrying them out. The Board (of Directors or, as I prefer, Trustees) operates in some ways judicially, with the power of ultimate review, and in some ways legislatively, as expressed in the power of the purse and in the representation of the theater's larger constituency, the community. The analogy to the Constitution is of course more metaphorical than literal, but the structures do resonate attractively.

My experience in the regional theater, both as a staff member of a highly successful company, Center Stage in Baltimore, and as a National Endowment for the Arts site visitor evaluating some 50 regional theaters around the country over more than 15 years, has shown me examples of this tri-partite governance structure functioning well and poorly. When it is working at its best, the three branches operate in balance with one another, communicating frequently and constructively, with understanding and respect of the unique roles that each has to play. In cases where one branch comes to dominate the other two, the results are usually negative, and frequently require major institutional upheaval to correct.

The secrets of success are obvious to say but require hard work to implement: making the right initial leadership hires (a Board-led function); articulating the contrapuntal, complementary roles of Artistic and Managing Directors and the staffs they supervise with a sense of shared respect; and communicating energetically among all three branches toward a commonly-held set of values and goals. Come to think of it, that wouldn't be a bad way to run the country.

Student Advisory Board

News From the Student Advisory Board

The MAM Student Advisory Board is changing. For two years the Student Advisory Board has met with faculty to discuss concerns and issues regarding the Arts Management Program. While the board still strongly believes that open communication between faculty and students is vital to the overall success of the program, it is time for the Student Advisory Board to transform. The group is working with University Life to create the Graduate Arts Management Society (GAMS). University recognition of GAMS will give arts management students a voice within the university, including access to student life funding. In addition, university recognition will allow GAMS access to networking opportunities with similar student organizations throughout the university system.

GAMS recently met to draft a constitution, select officers, and develop the objectives of the society. The main objective of GAMS is to provide graduate arts management students a resource to supplement their education by arranging arts activities, networking opportunities, workshops, etc. To help facilitate these activities, GAMS will encourage the involvement of alumni, community leaders, and faculty within the society. The society will also advocate for the advancement of the arts on both a local and national level.

While the structure of the Student Advisory Board has changed, all arts management students are still encouraged to communicate regularly with officers of GAMS regarding any issues, concerns, or ideas that may arise regarding the Arts Management Program. The GAMS officers will continue to meet monthly to discuss issues anonymously with faculty leadership.

The following individuals comprise the GAMS officers:

Laura Giroux, President
Elizabeth Cullins, Vice-President
Karim Seikaly, Treasurer
Whitney Gray, Secretary
Laura Benson, Student Rep to University Life
Courtney Basich
Mike Hooke

Please read the Weekly Announcements on a regular basis to learn about future GAMS events. For more information regarding GAMS or to find out how to become involved in the society, please contact Laura Giroux via email at lgiroux@gmu.edu.

Arts Advocacy Day



WASHINGTON, DC – The 21st annual Arts Advocacy conference will be held on Monday, March 31 and Tuesday, April 1, 2008. Arts Advocacy Day is the only national event that brings together a broad cross section of America’s cultural and civic organizations; along with hundreds of grassroots advocates from across the country to underscore the importance of developing strong public policies and appropriating increased public funding for the arts.

The featured speakers for the conference include Nancy Hanks and best-selling author Daniel Pink.

MAM students attending the event on March 31 at the Kennedy Center can pick up their tickets for the lectures at the Will Call desk. For additional information, please contact either Beth Bienvenue at bbienven@gmu.edu or Richard Kamenitzer at rpkamenitzer@yahoo.com.

For complete details about Arts Advocacy Day, please visit their web site at <http://www.artsusa.org/events/2008/aad/default.asp>.

Master of Arts in
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