Memories with Momentum: considering the aesthetic in exec education from the high arts to mashups.

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This talk is about arts-based leadership and management development, and addresses the confluence of (a) the aesthetic workspace, (b) the identity workspace and (c) the relations between facilitator and participants, and amongst participants. We theorise this confluence in the concept of ‘affordances’, which focuses on opportunities that arise as emergent properties of individuals, group dynamics and aesthetic events.

First, we briefly review the literatures on management and leadership development as (i) arts-based, (ii) identity work and (iii) working out unconscious relations to authority.

Second, we present the contemporary musical form of the mashup, a crafted multi-media overlay of mixed genre music, video and performance arts. Rather than propose this as a metaphor for organizing or learning, we suggest it as a set of practices for the design and creation of management education. We present the example of a “Community Mashup” created by a group of people from around the world learning about and trying to improve managerial, leadership and organizational practices in healthcare.

Third, we consider the longer-term reverberations of such events and propose a framework for evaluating the impacts of arts-based management learning drawing on the three strands of theory identified at the start of the talk.