

The Secret Behind All Great Masterpieces: Lessons Learned!

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**The Secret Behind All Great Masterpieces: Lessons Learned!**

**By Harald Anderson**

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The Secret Behind All Masterpieces! : Lessons Learned

The ten-year period which followed the stock market crash of October 1929 is referred to as the Great Depression. This time frame is considered to be the worst and most difficult of Modern American History by business historians. Unemployment was as high as 27% among White Americans and reached 60% in the African American community. In Mississippi, on a single day in 1932, one quarter of the entire state was auctioned off. Scarcity and limitations were everywhere to be seen. The Gross National Product of the country, that unit of measurement which represents everything that is produced nationwide fell by as much as 43%. The prices of wheat and corn and cotton fell so low, the crops were left to rot in the fields. Many businesses and families were wiped out.

We all try to forget unpleasant moments in our lives.

However, the central premise of any meaningful philosophy is to look back upon the hardest times of our lives and locate the wisdom and insight necessary from which success and joy can occur. It has been my experience that usually within the anxiety there are seeds of wisdom for us to learn from if we will only learn to look and understand the experience. When you examine your business, life or relationships it is the tough times that will teach you the most.

During the rough times of the Great Depression the music business also almost collapsed.

American record companies, which had sold in excess of 200 million records in the mid 1920's, had seen unit sales drop by 97% by the mid 1930's. To put it mildly, things were tough! Even the giant Victor phonograph company stopped making phonograph players altogether. However, there was a tiny silver lining in all of this hardship. A certain type of music was gripping regions of the country and offering hope. There was no political message attached to the tunes. No lyrics. It was an earthy, rhythmic, emotional and dynamic music. Its purpose was to make people dance. Huge parties would emerge that would often last for days. Even today music historians marvel how a distinctive and repetitive bass line and energetic rhythm could change the focus of an entire community.

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To classify this music as infectious would be an understatement! At its inception this music would be played solo by only one piano player. Since times were tough sometimes two piano players would share the same instrument. Later, there would be as many as six musicians on three pianos all contributing to the infectious power. The result was a celebration of creative energy that everyone could recognize. It was magical. In spite of the economic hardships, people could find genuine joy even if only for a short moment.

The celebrations grew. House parties would turn into block parties. The refrains and melodies would often be played non-stop for what seemed like hours at a time.

Top Musicians of the day could locate work easily once they mastered this art form.

Hope was born against the horrendous economic landscape.

Then in 1938, legendary Jazz Promoter John Hammond saw a huge business opportunity.

He organized and promoted a concert in New York City featuring the three masters of this art form. When Albert Ammons, Pete Johnson and Meade "Lux" Lewis performed in Carnegie Hall, it launched a national craze. Businesses and clubs had to hop on the bandwagon and get with the program. Newspapers began to assign special editors to cover the 'music beat' and report about this incredible energy as its popularity spread into the clubs. Soon all of the "happening" places were featuring top musicians playing these infectious energetic tunes. Club owners seeking to get good reviews and "cash in" would do whatever necessary to bribe the music editors so they could acquire good press. Bribes of free food, free drinks, free women were commonplace. Musicians and club owners understood that one bad review from the critics would kill the good times! Or so they thought...

The name of this musical art form was Boogie-Woogie. The slang term that the musicians gave to the critics was the Boogie Man!

Yes the Boogie Man was the monster who could criticize and sit in judgment.

In spite of his inability to create or understand music they somehow were qualified to evaluate it. The Boogie Man, like an executioner could determine the fate of musicians and club owners with his words. The Boogie Man was fear incarnate. He could kill the party as quickly as the review could be published. The Boogie Man was bad news!

Funny thing is most people do not believe in the Boogie Man. At least that is what they tell you to your face! However within this story is the understanding of how success and joy is born and how it dies.

Did you "get it?"

In the words of Earl Nightingale, "Don't Compete. Create!"

Regardless of what is going on in your life you can always play the music and do the dance!

Sometimes the most therapeutic thing we can ever create is to purposely put our focus on joy and creation. We are happiest in life when we create and can easily take responsibility for our creations. However we squelch this inherent ability when we consider the evaluation of the creation as being more important than the act of creation itself. Quite frankly joy is perverted and distorted when creation is done primarily for approval. The misery is amplified even further when we make others responsible for the quality of our lives. This is the big lie of the Boogie Man.

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Ralph Waldo Emerson stated...."Do not die with your music still in you."

Very appropriate advice. We all have a mission in life. A purpose which unfolds before our eyes when we manage to overcome our fear of the Boogie Man and just PLAY.

Our beliefs determine our reality. Be careful how you interpret the world. It is EXACTLY like that.

It is horrifying to think about how the Boogie Man turns the possibility of a dream into a nightmare. Or how the Boogie Man distorts our own ideas of success and happiness by making us believe that he can stop the music in our lives! All illusions that unfortunately every great artist has embraced at some point in their careers. You are the Music. You are the Dance. Be careful what you agree with!

Stop and think about what life would be like without the telephone, the car, airplanes, electricity, the internet or any other incredible creation that man has created to resolve the problems related to survival. I can assure that these blessed inventions would never have seen the light of day if their creators were concerned about the boogie man.

The boogie man is not only a concern over the judgment of others. The boogie man is much more insidious, he represents everything in our life that we cannot take responsibility for. Our blame list so to speak. The boogie man is that part of us that makes us believe that the problem is somewhere over there.

The late Jack Paar once said, "My life seems like one long obstacle course, with me as the chief obstacle." Sounds to me like he knew how to do battle with the boogie man.

The secret to all masterpieces is that they fuel the imagination with the great possibilities of the human spirit. They transport us from the world of limitations that we regularly experience and remind us of our potential. Whenever we experience a masterpiece it reminds us that the shackles we feel in our daily lives are optional. The funny thing about greatness is that it will always invite you along for the journey. Masterpieces teach us to recognize the joy of creation for the sake of creation. They spur us on to pursue excellence as our birthright. All masterpieces are embodiments of meaning that would have never occurred had they been concerned with the opinions of critics. If you feel something is holding you back look in the mirror and you will discover your boogie man.

All great masterpieces are the reminders of what life can be like when we learn to get out of our own way. Create for the sake of creating. Respond to the joy of the moment and dance for the sake of dancing. Play for the sake of playing. Laugh for the sake of laughing. Everything else is a chorus of excuses and limitations.

Once asked to describe the key to creativity, Thomas Alva Edison said said, "Never quit working on your subject until you get what you're after." Well, aren't we ourselves a work in progress? If you plan on creating a masterpiece of your life its time to take the stage, do the dance in spite of the critics. That is the masterpiece lesson of Boogie–Woogie. Create!

Sometimes it takes death to teach us about life. Occasionally we must go through misery to understand joy. And sometimes it takes the slang born in the Great Depression to understand that we will always get whatever we put out attention on. You can Boogie Woogie or you can waltz with the Boogie Man. The choice is always yours!

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The happiest you will ever be in life is when you take responsibility for your creations and create! It is what it is. Take the stage, do the dance and know that the only thing that can squash the music is YOU! The Boogie Man has no power over those who create for the simple joy they receive from the act of creation. That's the bees knees, the eels hips and the elephants eyebrows. Got it? Therein lies the Secret of All the Great Masterpieces daddy-o! Your life is your Music. Do the dance!

"Stix you start bangin those tubs! Chops you lay down the line...it's time to get this party happening! One...Two...Three...Four!"

Be Careful What You Agree With!

Harald Anderson is the co-founder of <http://www.artinspires.com> a leading online gallery of motivational and inspirational posters and prints. "When Art Inspires, Dreams Become Realities. His goal in life is to become the kind of person that his dog already thinks he is. <http://www.artinspires.com/>

### **E-Commerce, Earn While You Learn!**

**By Gina Novelle**

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You build it and they will come is the battle cry of Web Page Designers. Many people are hooked on this idea. Well it's not that easy or is it?

There is a way to try E-commerce before you jump in with the big dollars. During this trial period, you could learn to build your own web page, play in the retail market, and yes Earn While You Learn. Build your E-commerce business like you built your current business. Do it yourself so you don't have to rely on high dollar transit programmers. How?

Use Auction Sites as your playground. You would be surprised to learn the return you could achieve with just a little bit of knowledge. As our clients know, we don't teach anything we don't actually work in! When we decided to earn while we learned, we picked eBay. In addition to making money, we learned valuable information about E-commerce, and:

Lessons in shipping

Lessons in customer support.

Lessons in accepting online credit cards

We now have over 100 E-commerce clients with repeat clients. During our auctions, our website hits increase dramatically. So before you jump into E-commerce, first learn to walk slowly and then run. What's the cost of eBay? If you accept credit cards, and learn some tricks, the cost of listing, and credit card fees runs approximately six percent of the sales price. You can learn more about our eBay clients at [www.thirdpocket.com](http://www.thirdpocket.com), a support site for the self-employed.

Ms. Gina Novelle has been freelance writing in the computer market for years. She wrote several

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articles for Pinnacle Publishing from 1990–1995. She teaches businesses how to harness the power of technology to maximize efficiency and productivity. Ms. Novelle uses Enhanced Technology Methods. What is Enhanced Technology Methods? You can see her slide show at [ww.computeaching.net](http://ww.computeaching.net).



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