Lee Devin Transcript

The Business of Theatre Art, The Art of Theatre Business

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I’m here this morning because Rob Austin, once a student of mine, now a professor at the Harvard Business School, telephoned me one day. His theatre experiences (classes at Swarthmore, then with Oscar Brockett and Webster Smalley at the University of Texas–Austin) suggested to him that the way artists work might be a model for business managers as they manage innovation, especially in software development. Rob saw in the work of collaborative theatre rehearsal a desirable situation: a firm contracting to make something brand-new (a play), delivering it on schedule and in the budget. Businesses would love to do that. Would I like to join him in researching and thinking more about this?

You bet I would. “I don’t want to scare you off, Rob, but I can be in Boston tomorrow. What time should we meet?” We talked; he came down to Philly and wrote an HBS teaching case on People’s Light & Theatre Company, the theatre we later used as an example in our book. We gave a talk to the technology and operations management seminar at HBS. And we ended up writing a book called Artful Making. Rob can’t be here in person this morning, alas. He’s in Japan teaching an executive education course. He went there from Denmark, where he’s in residence at the Copenhagen Business School, on leave from Harvard. The art and business interface has a significant place in the curriculum there, and at other schools in Europe. For now, he’s the European rep; I’m the U.S. guy. He’s with us, though, in every word of this talk: By now it’s hard for us to tell whose idea is whose.

The distinction we made between two kinds of making, artful and industrial, while we directed it to managers in business, applies very usefully to the work of a modern theatre. Theatres are an art business. In the minds of some folks that’s an oxymoron. In the minds of others, a regrettable necessity. In that Great Big Barn up in the Sky we won’t have management; we’ll have plenty of money, people will magically know about us and come to see our plays, and the plumbing will always work. No creepy constraints on our “art.”

In this world, however, if you want to start a theatre, you’d better find a partner who can read the building code. And that can be an uneasy relationship.

I’m going to suggest that the differences between industrial and artful making provide a way of looking at a theatre’s work that can help to ease such tensions. The fact is artists and managers both use both kinds of making to do their work. There’s a lot of artful making in the office, a lot of industrial making on stage. We can also use this distinction to make other distinctions. We can distinguish, for example, among the criteria that are appropriate for evaluating various kinds of theatre work and criteria that are not. Judgments based on industrial categories won’t tell us much about artful work, and vice versa. Before we dig in, a word about vocabulary, about the words we use to label theatre activity. We “produce” plays; we “put on” a play; we “present” a play; an actor
“plays” a part or “interprets” a role; we see a director’s “reading” of a play. Here’s a word we don’t use much: Make. A theatre makes plays: art things. Theatre artists and artisans together make plays, each making the part appropriate to his or her art or craft. Playwrights make scripts. Financial officers make budgets. Carpenters, painters, etc., make settings. Directors of development make grant proposals. Actors make characters. Directors make plays. Here’s the real point, though: The whole theatre makes plays. When we use this word, making, to tell what a theatre does, there’s no longer any useful distinction between production and management, between art and business. The stage manager belongs to the actors’ union, after all.

Here’s an example of this in the great world. Once upon a time, about a hundred years ago when I was being interviewed for a job by the provost of a university, a novelist, I asked him how, as an artist, he managed to do all that administration. I intended this question to reveal that I, an artist, was above all that. He gave me a look and said, “I do my administrating with the same brains I use to write my novels.” That got me to thinking. Thirty-some years later, I’ve got an idea: Art and business are different aspects of a single complex making process. For instance, the budget is a major artistic statement that requires close relationship among managers and artists.

Or: Casting is a very important financial choice that requires close relationship among artists and managers; talent and skills must be juggled against paychecks so as to get the best actors available within the budget. Do we scrimp on some smaller parts to bring in someone expensive who might help draw an audience? Or do we go for an ensemble of similarly skilled artists who might work together effectively?

So this morning I want to outline some ways of thinking about the business of theatre art, and the art of theatre business. My purpose is to offer a scheme for thinking about our work that can help us understand each other, artists, managers, board members, across the necessary differences in what we do. I want to address this material in three sections: First, a brief introduction to making. Second, an extended comparison between industrial making and artful making. And third, a quick look at rehearsal, using these ideas as lenses for seeing and categories for thinking. Aristotle proposed a way of looking at making that can help us to think about any complex process. He said that any made thing had four causes. He called these the Efficient Cause (makers and methods), the Material Cause (what maker’s use, what things are made of), the Formal Cause (what the thing is when it’s done) and the Final Cause (why the maker did it in the first place). Here’s my crude modernization of his idea: A maker performs operations on Materials, shaping or rearranging them into a Form that they wouldn’t take if left alone, for a Purpose, or several purposes. Let’s say the made thing is a statue. A maker (sculptor) performs operations (chiseling, smoothing, etc.) on material (a block of marble), shaping it into a form (a discus thrower) that the rock wouldn’t take by itself. And he has a purpose in mind: to make a beautiful statue. Say the object is a car, a Ford Taurus. A maker (Ford Motor Company) performs operations (design, production design, production, marketing, sales) on materials (steel, rubber, leather, paint, etc.), shaping them into a form (Ford Taurus) they wouldn’t otherwise achieve. And all this to a dual purpose: one, to make a great motorcar; and, two, to sell millions of them worldwide. We’ll use these four elements as handy categories for thinking about play making. Now, an extended comparison of industrial and artful making. Let’s start the comparison with makers and their methods, and go on down the list: maker, materials, form and final
purpose. I hope it will become clear that artful and industrial making both have a proper place in making plays.

**PLAN VS. ITERATE**

1. Industrial makers plan intensively so as to get the thing right.

2. Artful makers iterate often so as to get the right thing. Industrial example: An automobile has about a zillion parts. Each single part has to fit with every other single part or the assembly line stops dead and money flies out the window. To make sure that doesn’t happen, its makers figure out everything in advance, plan it to within an inch of its life.

Artful example. A customer comes to Rally Software, a small company in Boulder, Colo. This customer needs a computer program that will do X. The customer sits down with Rally and they talk through the situation. The customer leaves; the Rally guys get busy and in a few days they have roughed out a program that does what they think the customer needs. They take it over to the customer and show it off.

“That’s the right idea,” says the customer, “but it needs to do Y also.”

“We can do that,” say the Rally guys. “And here’s something else. We don't know if you're interested. If we twitch it here, and here, it’ll do A.”

“Oh, boy,” says the customer. “We don’t need A, but we sure could use A prime; can it do A prime without costing me a ton more money?”

This iterative exchange continues until the product satisfies the customer. That product may be quite different than their original idea: It emerges from the process. Unlike the auto makers, the software makers (and their customer) didn’t know exactly what they wanted until what they made turned out to be what they wanted. They can’t spec it out, but they know it when they see it. It can be difficult for an industrial mind to appreciate the rigor of this iterative process. To substitute experience for planning does not mean that anything goes. In the next session [of the Fall Forum], you’ll hear about how actors talk with a director, evaluating what they just did and deciding what to do next. The actual things the actors do (move, speak, laugh, and cry) may seem ordinary and usual. After all, we do those things ourselves every day. And so acting itself may seem ordinary and usual. It isn’t. The focus and discipline of that artful conversation reveals the depth and discipline of the work.

**MODULAR VS. INTERDEPENDENT**

3. Industrial makers insist on modularity among the separate parts of a making process; they see interference or blurring of boundaries as a quality control problem.

4. Artful makers rely on the interdependence of everything in the process. Each part affects all the others. Change one, change all. Industrial example: Eli Whitney was in Washington, D.C., peddling his “interchangeable system” to the federal government: He had the idea that if he made each part of a musket to exact specifications he could create a machine to replicate them more accurately than he could by hand. He would
rely on strictly modular mechanical precision to replace a machinist’s craftsmanship. He would make parts one at a time with a machine and assemble them, rather than make muskets one at a time by hand. This would speed production and facilitate field repairs. To pitch his idea, Whitney brought baskets of musket parts to the meeting. Selecting a part at random from each basket, the committee assembled a working musket. Whitney got the contract. Artful example: Imagine making a play from baskets of actors, a cast picked at random from different baskets: one from the Hamlet basket, one from the Gertrude basket, and so on. Imagine no contact or interaction among the actors; each an isolated cog in the modular machine.

INNOVATION AS DESIGN VS. INNOVATION AS PRODUCTION

5. Industrial makers segregate innovation to the design part of the sequence.

6. Artful makers encourage innovation throughout the making process. This has to do with materials. When materials are malleable (ideas, or people’s actions, for instance) innovation can happen anywhere in the process. When the materials are not malleable, innovation must be kept out of production. Example: Think about Rodin making a big sculpture. While he works in clay, he can work iteratively, trying different things, add a little clay here, take some away there, tear it all apart and bend the armature differently, continually adjusting until the perfect statue emerges from his work. When he takes the clay figure to the foundry for casting, this all changes. The mechanics of the pour must be meticulously planned and executed just so. When you’ve got a ton of molten brass on your hands, you don’t stop to fiddle with The Thinker’s left foot.

Example from business: I visited Bluestone, another small software company, as they launched the design and building of the next version of their product. To open the session the CEO gave a lengthy talk, outlining and celebrating the company’s success with version dot-one. He handed out a lot of individual credit, gifts of tee shirts, baseball caps, a couple of rowdy satin jackets. He moved to handing out assignments. On a complicated chart he went through the new product, each of its many requirements, assigning a team to work on developing this or that part. Everyone in the room had three or four assignments. A team leader for this would be a team member for that—the entire force spread out over the entire product. At the end of this he said, “Now, here’s the really important part. We all know exactly what we want this thing to do. It’s all down here on the sheet,” and he waved his paper at us. “But what I want you to keep in mind is this: When we’re through, when this thing is in a box, 50 percent of what’s on this sheet won’t be in the box, and 50 percent of what’s in the box ain’t on this sheet.” In other words, the final form will emerge from the interactive work of designing and producing it.

COMPROMISE VS. COLLABORATION

7. Industrial makers tend to settle complications and disputes by compromise: Each party gives up a bit until they get to something everyone can bear.

8. Artful makers tend to encourage complications by celebrating the unpredictability of collaboration: each maker uses the other’s actions as material for reconceiving, making something unpredictably new. Example: The marketers want the hot new car to get 30 miles to the gallon and the performance engineers want it to get from 0 to 60 in 5
seconds; they finally agree to detune the engine slightly to increase mileage slightly (28 instead of 30) at a modest cost in acceleration (8 seconds rather than 5).

Example: Here’s how collaboration might work between actors. Jim plays Hamlet, the prince, in love with Ophelia. Jane plays Ophelia, the chamberlain’s daughter, in love with Hamlet. The actors have never met. They have each read the script at home and prepared for rehearsal, independently.

In Jim’s preparation of Hamlet, he conceived a quiet, shy Ophelia, and he’s formed some preliminary attitudes toward her based on that conception. When they meet at the first rehearsal, Jim notices that Jane isn’t shy at all. In fact, she’s kinda pushy. Jim idly wonders how Jane will put her lively self under wraps to play Ophelia. When they start reading the script he’s astonished to discover that she won’t be doing that; she intends to make a bold, in-your-face Ophelia. Jim is even more astonished to discover that the director supports Jane in these early choices.

As an ensemble member, Jim doesn’t get to put up his hand and say, “I’m sorry, that’s not how I see Ophelia; please change according to my ideas.” Nor does he get to suggest a compromise: “Jane, could you be about half as bold?” Instead, he gets to reconceive his Hamlet by including Jane’s Ophelia in his work. To do this he probably has to put aside a lot of what he did at home. But his professional duty is clear: He has got to reconceive his Hamlet to include her Ophelia. Every time they get together, Jane will surprise Jim, and Jim will have to scramble to accommodate to her, just as a boyfriend would if the given circumstances were real. And of course Jane faces much the same challenge as she meets a Hamlet who isn’t the nerdy perpetual student she conceived.

Managers in business will recognize this reconceiving. It happens every time a competitor comes up with a new idea. Imagine the scramble at Merrill Lynch, say, when Charles Schwab came up with the idea of one set price for an online stock trade. Merrill had to rethink its long-held attitude about on line trading, had to reconceive an entire segment of its business. In a theatre, what’s routine in rehearsal might become more usual in larger institutional contexts. Imagine a situation in which, when some natural conflict of interest arises, artists and managers adopt collaboration as a model. In collaboration, each interest accepts the other and uses the other’s ideas, not as arguments to refute, but as material to make a new, reconceived form. One of the exciting things about this model is that everything, no matter what the final result, is a part of that result. Jim’s initial shock at Jane’s preparation will be an interesting color in the relationship they make together. As Muriel Spark put it: “Nothing is lost, and wonders never cease.”

**RESTRAINT VS. RELEASE**

9. Industrial makers exercise control with compliance mechanisms, carrots or sticks.

10. Artful makers control by release, not by restraint. Example: Here are some excerpts from a memo sent by a CEO to his managers: “We are getting less than 40 hours of work from a large number of our employees. The parking lot is sparsely used at 8 a.m.; likewise at 5 p.m. As managers, you either do no know what your employees are doing or you do not CARE. Never in my career have I allowed a team which worked for me to
think they had a 40-hour job. I have allowed YOU to create a culture which is permitting this. NO LONGER. At the end of next week, I plan to implement the following: Closing of Associate Center to employees from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Implementing a time clock system, requiring employees to punch in and punch out to work. Any unapproved absences will be charged to the employees’ vacation. Implement a 5-percent reduction of staff in Kansas City. I am tabling the promotions until I am convinced that the ones being promoted are the solution, not the problem. If you are the problem, pack your bags.” And so on.

This worked about as well as such methods usually do. The managers he addressed put the memo on the Internet, Fortune magazine picked it up to scoff at, and within a short time the company’s stock was down 20 percent. This guy needs new methods. All right. That’s artful and industrial making as they present in the maker and methods. Both kinds of making are mixed up together in almost any project. Let’s look now at the other three aspects of making: materials, form and purpose.

MATERIALS

As we’ve seen, industrial makers use non-malleable, corporeal materials: lumber, sheet metal, steel girders, etc. They plan ahead because it’s expensive to do over; they’ve to get it right the first time. That load of transit-mixed concrete must be used now, and there had better be just enough of it.

Artful makers use malleable, even virtual or imaginary materials: ideas, information, and people’s behavior. They prepare, rather than plan. They prepare to learn from experience because iteration is cheap and rapid. They do it again and again until they get what they need. Here’s something important: “imaginary” doesn’t mean unreal. An idea in a theatre is just as real as that truck full of concrete. Nor does use of imagination and the imaginary separate artists from managers. Some departments of management (PR, marketing, finance) work almost entirely with ideas. Some departments of production (set and costume construction) work almost entirely with physical materials.

FORM

Industrial makers design a form, specify it in advance of production, and exactly replicate it as needed; variations are seen as quality problems. For artful makers the form, envisioned but not specified, emerges from the process; they conceive variations as valuable new material, not as problems in quality control. Here’s a story about the industrial principle applied to rehearsal: An opera director up in Canada told me this. When he told it, the story was kind of snide; I don’t think of it that way. They’re preparing *La Bohème* in Rome, Pavarotti in the lead. They’re rehearsing the chorus and the director notices from his plan that at one point some of the chorus and Pavarotti seem to be standing in the same place. Of course—we have 20 chorus members here in Rome instead of the 12 in Florence. The assistant director is dispatched across Rome to Pavarotti’s apartment to apprise him of the need to change his blocking slightly. (It won’t do to telephone him; he doesn’t like the telephone.) At his penthouse, Luciano receives the A.D. graciously, offers refreshment. The A.D. explains his errand. There’s a traffic problem. Could Maestro Pavarotti move downstage three feet at this moment in the score? Right here, three measures after the letter B, to make way for the chorus? The Maestro walks to the wall of windows and looks out over the city. Long pause. He turns,
considers, and speaks. "No." He turns again, this time to the television. The audience is over.

Now, it’s easy to scoff at this: What a: primo donno”! But the thing Pavarotti does, that amazing noise, is so difficult, subject to so many potential disasters, that he feels he must treat it industrially; he cannot afford any distraction, any failure of strict modularity. Here’s a different approach. In a rehearsal for Fugard’s The Road to Mecca, one night in the midst of an argument, an actor bumped the table she was setting and a glass toppled over, heading for the floor. It hit the cushion on a chair and bounced. The actor grabbed it mid-air and waved it to emphasize her point, as if she were accusing the other of having caused the accident. Big energy there, a nice moment. Of course she never repeated that exact gesture, but she was able, by vividly recalling a great rehearsal moment, to create a similar energy. The bouncing glass was gone, but her triumphant glare lasted the entire run. And her scene partner used that energy in her own ways to make her character.

PURPOSE

Industrial makers, by flawlessly executing the plan, create value. Artful makers, by executing a flawless process, complete an emergent form.

Example: Management subjects a modern factory to relentless scrutiny, seeking to eliminate even the tiniest flaw. Failure at Ford, for example, results in the horrendous expense of call-backs, and the erosion of sales as customers perceive a lack of quality. It used to be said that you buy two Jaguars, one to drive and one for parts. Or, remember the Fiat joke: “What does Fiat stand for? Fix it again, Tony.”

Example: But—the idea of purpose gets complicated when a theatre makes an art thing for sale. There’s more to it than making the perfect thing. A commission, for instance. A very wealthy dad who was feuding with his children over control of the family business once offered a regional theatre $5 million to make a King Lear. What a temptation. Had the theatre accepted the money, it might have tried to keep its final purpose clear of this obvious program. But for Mr. Gotrocks, and everyone else in town, the message (“How sharper than a serpent’s tooth is an ungrateful child…”) would have been the obvious reason for making the play. To sum up: Industrial making is sequential, relies on intensive planning (meticulously specifying a designated outcome), separates design from production, seeks modularity, seeks similarity of outcomes and seeks to create and harvest the highest possible value. Artful making is iterative, replaces much of the planning with intensive preparation (being ready for anything), treats design as part of the production process, encourages interdependence (collaboration) as a source of useful and desirable innovation, seeks to complete itself, and regards harvesting extrinsic value as secondary.

And, finally, considering theatre as a species of making: While there’s more industrial work in the office than on the stage, and more artful making on the stage than in the office, it’s a mistake to distinguish between the two venues on that basis. We can make one distinction between the office and the rehearsal hall. Most of the things we make in the office are finite: You’re going to have to make another long range plan soon, but the one you’ve just finished is there, real, ready, like a playscript, to copy and distribute. In
play making there is no final product: nothing you can replicate, put in a box, and sell off a shelf. Let’s look at that idea.

Much of the world’s work combines both kinds of making. Henry Ford’s first factory, Highland Park, is a case in point, an artful project devoted to industry. It shows us a combination of artful and industrial making in the real world. Its way of making cars accumulated over years of iterations: each new idea for the moving assembly line prompted others, often combinations of old or borrowed materials reconceived for new conditions. Ford was a perfect madman about this: He used physical materials as if they were malleable ideas, and hang the cost. When James Purdy laid out the revolutionary magneto line at Ford (twenty-some workers, each making one discrete assembly gesture using parts that arrived on a moving belt), he cut big minutes off the time it took to assemble a magneto. They didn’t stop there. One day someone suggested they raise the belt carrying parts from the floor to waist-high. This cost a bunch of money, but took out still more time. And so on. When an idea didn’t work, they bagged it and went on to another. Each improvement emerged from lessons learned by doing the work, not by pondering a drawing over in the next building. The magneto itself, however, was the result of tight planning and the use of parts replicated by machines and designed by folks who had probably never operated those machines. It’s worth remembering that Eli Whitney knew next to nothing about muskets when he began.

Like Highland Park, a play emerges from a series of iterations, each of which provides material for the next. Guidance for the next iteration comes not from a detailed future-pointing plan, but from consideration of what we just did. And at the same time, parts of the play (sets, costumes, light plots, even ticket sales) are planned months in advance and move toward performance in a precisely orchestrated convergence. The production’s line producer and director manage this process as industrially as they can. Of course, they’re aware of the need to make adjustments and improvements right up to the last minute. But nobody needs surprises during tech week. Unlike Highland Park, though, a play is a process; it disappears when it’s not being made. When an artisan finished his shift at Ford, Highland Park stayed put: real, substantial, emphatically there. When actors leave the stage, their play does not stay put: It disappears with them; it exists only in their process of making it. There isn’t any that there. As a result, we can conceive each iteration of rehearsal or performance as a new work. The great American actor/playwright William Gillette, in a talk to the Athenaeum Club of New York City, compared a play to a sporting event. “Read a play? Why, sir—as well try to read a game of baseball.”

Think of it this way: the company doesn’t repeat the play, any more than the team repeats yesterday’s game. They’re making the play again, anew. Each iteration moves forward, the thing doesn’t stay put.

In a theatre, managing the combination of artful and industrial making engages everyone, production and management alike. In fact, in my Great Big Barn up in the Sky, we won’t discriminate between managers and artists. We’ll distinguish instead between artists and artisans, between folks who make forms that emerge from creative process and folks who make things according to specifications. Some of them will work in shops, some on stages or in rooms painted black, some in cubicles. All will make plays. Most play-making work involves both art and craft, artist and artisan.
Rehearsal’s a great place to learn about the artful making a theatre does, and a source for ideas about evaluation. The question, “Just what are these folks doing?” is a necessary prelude to the question, “How well are they doing it?” I won’t suggest any particular criteria for evaluation. Those must come from particular observations and particular discussions among particular people. It’s important to know what it is you’re observing and discussing. Time spent in rehearsal will also change your pleasure at performance from that of a civilian, a customer, to that of a colleague. Rehearsal’s an arcane place, a complex social and artistic dance among men and women who are working at the scary edge of their talents and skills. Nothing in a rehearsal is casual or routine. You can’t just barge in.

Here are some things to think about.

Rehearsal is not a not quite ready performance. It’s a rehearsal. The almost universal misconception (by artists and civilians alike) that rehearsal is a performance that’s not any good yet accounts for the privacy most artists insist on. If you want to sit in on rehearsals, you’ll have to convince the company that you understand this, that you’re there to learn about what they do, that you want to know what they’re working on. You’re not there to make judgments about what you think they’ve done or offer observations about what you think they ought to do. Rehearsal is a making process. Various makers (actors, director) perform operations (collaborative iteration) on material (script, given circumstances) toward an emergent form (for actors: a character; for the director: a play) for a dual purpose (to be perfect of its kind, and to sell a lot of tickets). Each rehearsal is a stage in a larger process, true. But since the play being made will emerge from the entire process, it’s not a goal we can establish and work toward. We have to see each rehearsal as unique, as complete in itself. A rehearsal is a step along the way, but it also creates the way.

Of the materials, a script is essential, if not always primary. (A script can be the product of rehearsals as well as material for them.) Its position in rehearsal is complicated and sometimes troubled. Very few playwrights agree with the model I’ve presented: that a script is material for a new work of art. Some don’t even consider play making a collaborative art. On the other hand, it seems to me obvious that the script is not a specification, not a blueprint: It simply doesn’t have enough information. It provides an essential form for the play, but that form remains potential until rehearsal creates specifics and details. A script, for instance, says not much about casting: think of all the Hamlets there’ve been.

Richard Burbage, the first Hamlet: a tall, slightly fat guy. A couple of characters joke that Hamlet is pretty seriously out of shape. Not ready for a duel. His answers are a little terse.

David Garrick: a tiny, nervous guy. He used a mechanical device, a little pump he squeezed in the ghost scene, to make the hair on the back of his wig “stand on end / like quills upon the fretful porpentine.”

John Barrymore: a big handsome dog who worried about looking effeminate wearing tights onstage. He told his pal, Ben Hecht, “I’m going to be so masculine the audience can hear my balls clank.”
Same script (allowing for cuts), many different Hamlets, many different plays called *Hamlet*. Now and then the playwright is at rehearsal, helping make the play. We hope, of course, that a play will be produced many more times than the writer can attend, but at rehearsal he or she may have some notions about how the play should look and sound. These can be mighty particular. The unavoidable collaboration between the writer and the histrionic forces of rehearsal work is often invisible. In a satisfactory process, the writer gets what he or she wants. These wants will develop during rehearsal, and sometimes the writer doesn't notice that. The form of a play, or a rehearsal, and this is really important, coincides with the process of making it. The product and the process are the same. What you're seeing is what is. I can't over emphasize this, both as a matter of theoretical understanding and as a practical matter for serious people watching rehearsal or performance. There is no ideal *Hamlet* somewhere that we must try to achieve; the only *Hamlet* there is the one we're making, and it's only here while we're making it.

The old hand talks with the youngster, bringing him along. “Well, see, the bad news about the theatre is that once the run is over, it's over: There's no bringing back the play, you can't fix it anymore, it's gone.”

“Is there any good news?”

“Oh, yeah. Once the run is over, it's over: There's no bringing back the play, you can't fix it anymore, it's gone. For good.

For the rest of our time together, we’re all going to be thinking hard about play making. It's my hope that the notions I've outlined will serve you, first as categories for thinking about the rest of these meetings, and second, as material you can include as you conceive your way to your own ideas about the business of theatre art, and the art of theatre business.