



ArtMatters! Vol. #102 January 2009

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### Words to ACT on:

#### Refresh Your Spirit for the Year Ahead



*"A successful life depends less on how long you live than on how much you can pack into the time you have. If you can find a way to make every day an adventure - even if it's only a matter of walking down an unfamiliar street or ordering an untried cut of meat - you will find that your life becomes more productive, richer, and more interesting. You also become more interesting to others." Investment legend John Templeton.*

#### **Congratulations - You made it through another calendar year!**

You won't ever step into that river of joys and pains again. We could all use more income and appreciation. If you are feeling pummeled by 2008, enjoy a bit of inspiration to warm up your engines for 2009.



#### **Requisites for Contented Living**

Last year, I wrote a 2-part article to accompany one of my favorite dictums by writer and philosopher, **Johann von Goethe** (1749-1832). It was one of the most popular and was requested again by several subscribers.

In case you missed it, Goethe identified these **nine requisites for contented living**:

1. "Health enough to make work a pleasure.
2. Wealth enough to support your needs.
3. Strength to battle with difficulties and overcome them.
4. Grace enough to confess your sins and forsake them.

10. Patience enough to toil until some good is accomplished.
11. Charity enough to see some good in your neighbor.
12. Love enough to move you to be useful and helpful to others.
13. Faith enough to make real the things of God.
14. Hope enough to remove all anxious fears of the future."

Print the list out and put it where you will see it when you need to reset your contentment. Or go a step further to shape the kind of year you want by answering my questions about each requirement. (see [December 2007 Newsletter](#), [January 2008 Newsletter](#))

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### **A Year Older and Stronger**

If you are feeling weary and aged by the events of the past year, read this next brief interview to boost your energy from my younger, creative Canadian colleague **Lisa-Pijuan-Nomura**:

Claudia Moore started Older and Reckless Dance Artists in June of 2000. As a platform for senior established artists to take chances in performance, it has featured some of Canada's finest choreographers. Lisa corresponded with some of the featured artists to find out their ideas about dance along with advice to the next generation.

### **Would you say that as we get older, we become more reckless?**

**Claudia:** *Aren't most artists reckless, like pirates looking for treasure at all costs?*

**Michelle Silagy:** *I've made a decision to mature as a full time working artist within a society that undervalues art. Depending on your point of view, this is either a dangerous decision, (or a necessary one) for a practicing artist. It is both. I walk the line of creating in an environment that undervalues art each day. Doing so appears reckless - most days it is, because most days, I have to disregard the potential consequences that this decision may bring.*

### **Advice to emerging artists?**

**Michelle:** *Get inside the studio as much as possible and practice. Be part of creating high standards in performance. Be aware of what is going on in the world around you dig*

*into dance history - art history. Surround your self with artists that challenge you and are willing/able to walk a focused path of creativity with you. Follow your heart. View everything you see with openness.*

**Maxine Heppner:** *There is a lot of pressure in contemporary arts training to "find one's own voice." Forget it. Do what you are interested in as fully and completely as you possibly can. The only way to emerge, and then keep emerging, is to **Practice** a Lot, and pay attention to what aspects of "practicing" you most connect with, also what aspects are most difficult, then just keep practicing. What you connect with and what is difficult will keep changing, the important thing is to pay attention. As years go by you will get better at what you do and others will recognize what they call your voice. I don't say anything here about your enjoyment. I think that that is something to check out every year or two. . . asking yourself if this arts practice gives you some satisfaction - if it's all hard and not satisfying then either change your focus to other aspects of your practice or move sideways for a while applying what you know to something else - get really good at skating if you are a dancer who likes to run around in circles - AND if you are influenced by another artist or other artworks, examine them the way you do your practice - try them out for yourself and find out what most connects and what is most difficult but live up to this mantra "DO NOT COPY them!!! " And (this bit of advice sounds self-contradicting but becomes clear when you try it!) Simply by making yourself "not copy" even as you actually do the other artists' form you will be deepening your own.*

**Claudia:** *Keep going!"*

**Source: The RED Letter, December 2008**

[www.gircancreate.com](http://www.gircancreate.com)

You don't have to be an older dancer to appreciate those words of encouragement. Take them in deeply and refresh your spirit.

There are a lot of exciting changes afoot for you at Artist Career Training. We are always devising new ways to help you make a better living making art.

Make this year count!



CONTACT:

Aletta de Wal, M. Ed  
Call: (650) 917-1225 (USA-PST/CA)  
[Artist Community Website](http://www.gircancreate.com)

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[aletta@artistcareertraining.com](mailto:aletta@artistcareertraining.com)

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P.S. If you read this far, you deserve a little reward. Check this video out:

It only takes 2 ½ minutes and it is pure joy and focused effort in action. <http://tinyurl.com/7wwb9l>

What can you add to this conversation? Please share your strategies with other artists on the Art Talk Blog.

Thanks, and have an artful day!

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P.P.S. Thanks for your testimonials about how you use Artist Career Training to make a living in any economy.

Here is a representative comment from A.C.T. 201 member Huguette May on what she has learned that has helped her improve her personal economy:

*"I'm looking forward to all the new approaches you will be launching next year. I could hear the excitement in your voice! Next year sounds so far off - but of course - next year is just around the corner. This last year has been an excellent year of growth for me in many respects, but especially with regard to the many things I've learned through you and the A.C.T. program. Though I am only in mid-journey, I'm very happy with the progress I've made. You're a one-of-a-kind teacher!"*

Warmly, Huguette May [www.huquettemay.com](http://www.huquettemay.com)

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