Be it design, video, writing or photography, knowing your own particular skill is just half the battle. Marrying your talents as a creator with talents as a businessperson makes you what we’re calling a BadAss Creative — able to master both sides of a successful creative business.

Twenty C3 members and guests learned how to wear the title at our November 28 meeting held at 2112 — Chicago’s business incubator serving creative entrepreneurs in film, music, design and more, located at Fort Knox Studios. After a warm welcome from Amor Montes De Oca, 2112’s director of strategic initiatives, we listened to a panel discussion featuring four successful consultants to the creative community — each a badass in his/her own right.

Nate Azark, founder of design and branding firm 12 Line Studio, also serves as a mentor to 2112 members. Nate generously shared his struggles, successes and failures in developing his business. He told us how years of planting seeds with networking, nurturing relationships and making referrals paid off with a year of exceptional growth.

Mikhael Bortz, also a mentor at 2112, heads Bortz Law Firm — an entertainment law firm representing clients including creatives, musicians, filmmakers and production companies. and more. She discussed how to determine whether or not your business requires professional legal advice, and advised members on the importance of following IRS rules — particularly having to be careful about who is and who isn’t an independent contractor. When hiring staff for projects, there are conditions where you must report them as employees and pay the taxes.

Irv Michaels, C3 member and head of Michaels Consulting, advises creatives and startup companies on business processes and risk assessment. Irv recommends assessing all the tasks that divide your time, deciding which ones you’d rather not do and hiring someone so you can devote your energy to what you’re good at. He stresses the need to develop one-year, three-year and five-year plans, and to have a system to manage cash flow.

Carolyn Potts, C3 member and creative consultant to photographers, helps clients successfully land the projects they crave. She also stresses delegation, stating that tasks are your “children” — “other people can feed them and they don’t die, other people can dress them and they don’t die.” Carolyn believes that selling yourself as important as the work; you must develop your story and image and be able to convey authenticity in what you create.

Our panelists websites are:
Nate Azark: 12linestudio.com
Mikhael Bortz: bortzlawfirm.com
Irv Michaels: michaelsconsultingltd.com
Carolyn Potts: cpotts.com

It’s Good To Be A Bad Ass
Making Mistakes

I had a different topic in mind but making mistakes is of the moment. I realized I had made a mistake on a publication I design. I informed the client and let her know what I would do to make good on the error.

Making mistakes is humbling. My superpowers deflated, an hour of self-beat up, and the desire to jump on the shame train—I had to admit I was human. During that hour of self-judgment, I kept creating all kinds of scenarios and consequences for my mistake. Funny how the brain works.

We all carry, consciously or subconsciously, the burden of being judged by others. My mind was on overdrive. I’ll never work again; the client is already looking for another designer; I’ll avoid all contact with the client and get my assistant to talk to her; I’ll be punishing and show her all the mistakes she made.

During my leadership training at the Wright Foundation, I was encouraged to celebrate mistakes.

According to a journal article published in the Association for Psychological Science, “For individuals with a growth mindset, who believe intelligence develops through effort, mistakes are seen as opportunities to learn and improve.”

It’s certain that mistakes reveal new insights and light bulb moments that perfectionism can never match. So, for this mistake, I let myself off the hook. I now do proofing at a time when I’m undistracted and focused. I felt a bit foolish, but I remember a quote by Vincent Van Gogh, “Even the knowledge of my own fallibility cannot keep me from making mistakes. Only when I fall do I get up again.”

New Intern Maciej Milowicki

Maciej Milowicki is your friendly neighbor living in the Uptown area of Chicago. Maciej graduated from Columbia College Chicago with a BA in music composition. These days he’s been chasing his passion for words and language through a pursuit in freelance copywriting. Composing music occupies as much space deep in his heart as do literature and writing. Maciej’s current favorite read while riding the red line is the work of author Yu Hua.
UPCOMING PROGRAMS

New Year, New You with C3!

by George Berlin

It’s 2019 and we’re ready to kick ass and take names…with a slew of fun programs to help you present yourself, land those awesome clients, and conquer the world!

Winter is here and—let’s be honest— you’re a mess! You’ve been inside for a few months and your stuff is all over the place :-( Don’t worry— C3 is here to help, with a great program to Organize Your Sh*t in January. We can’t help you with that empty Cheetos bag and whatever else is laying all over your couch next to that blanket you’ve been hiding in since Halloween, so let’s tackle your digital storage instead! We’ve got a digital organizing pro here to help, so put on some pants and come on out and get your photos and files together!

In February let’s all be fools with Mark Carter and Greg Werstler, bringing back improv for business! He’ll take us on to the advanced level with how to use these skills flexibly in the moment to improve sales, storytelling and life.

After that—the one thing nobody is talking about…non-verbal communication. Allison Henderson will talk about the basics of posture, movement, and other visuals cues and how they help you communicate and make better pitches. We all need some of that, right?

Then in April, let’s talk about how you present yourself…Carolyn Potts is back to whip you into shape with a great interactive talk on how to master your inner game and emotions for presentations.

So put on your butt-kickin’ boots and let’s meet up to get our resolutions fulfilled NOW!

FROM THE BOARD

What Is C3’s Sweet Spot?

by Michael Tanimura

Lately, the Chicago Creative Coalition Board has been having interesting discussions about exactly whom the organization is for: who are our ideal members?

Most—but not all—of our current members are professional creatives working in communication arts fields as graphic designers, illustrators, photographers, copywriters, animators, programmers, etc. Other members work in areas allied to the creative arts, and almost all our members are actively engaged in creative ventures, even when no one is paying them to be.

Five years ago we had expanded our Mission to support creativity in whatever aspect one chose to explore it, not just in professional communication arts pursuits. The Board is now readdressing this issue, and wondering if a more targeted Mission would better serve our members and program attendees. It’s a question of reciprocity: how best to support creatives, so they will in turn support C3? The answer is not simple, nor is it insignificant. Without increased member support, C3 won’t be able to continue to advance the lives and pursuits of Chicago-area creatives.

So who, besides current C3 members, are those that would mourn or be most negatively impacted if C3 were to disappear? When we know that answer, then we will know who our ideal members are.

If you have any thoughts on this issue, please let the Board know.

Like what you see?

Ink  Printed digitally on Xerox 700.
Paper  This newsletter is printed on Classic Crest 70# text.
Process  The digital press uses waste-free toner and no fuser oil. The process is 100% chemical free—printed courtesy of Consolidated Printing.
MEMBER PROGRAM

Old Friends With New Looks

by Brent Brotine
photos by T. J. Hine and Cindy McEwen

Our 20th annual Gallery Walk on Thursday October 18 took us to familiar places in River North, yet with all-new work being showcased that gave us much to talk about. Our group was once again ably led by tour guide Emily Ackerman, Senior Editor at Chicago Gallery News, who provided expert insights at each location.

Our first stop was Vale Craft Gallery at 230 W. Superior, where gallery owner Peter Vale displays a wide range of handmade fine crafts and eclectic artwork from both local and national artists. We enjoyed viewing new pieces from local artist Wendy Franklin, who layers hand-dyed wool and silk using a felting technique to create beautiful abstract wall pieces with luminous colors.

Next up was Gallery Victor Armendariz at 300 W. Superior, where owner Victor emphasizes up-and-coming artists. We viewed a mix of contemporary paintings, sculpture, and unique steel furniture from artisan Jim Rose. The featured exhibition was works by local artist and Columbia College faculty member Bruno Surdo, whose paintings reference mythology, folklore and literature to form representations of male and female sexuality.

Our second stop at the same address was Ken Saunders Gallery, home to Chicago’s largest glass art display. Owner Ken Saunders is a leading advocate for the Studio Glass Movement. He was exhibiting new sculptures using kiln fired glass from Philadelphia artist Kate Clements, and dramatic works from Santa Barbara artist Cassandra Blackmore who reverse paints on glass sheets and then intentionally shatters the surfaces.

Our final stop, also at 300, was Andrew Bae Gallery where owner Andrew showcases the cream of contemporary Asian art. Andrew was featuring the work of Kwang Jean Park, whose paintings, woodblock prints and paper collages attempt to show the interplay of the physical and metaphysical. We appreciate that Andrew and staff graciously hosted our traditional wine and cheese reception to end the evening on a high note.

Vale Craft Gallery: valecraftgallery.com
Ken Saunders Gallery: kensaundersgallery.com
Gallery Victor Armendariz: galleryvictor.com
Andrew Bae Gallery: andrewbaegallery.com
Carolyn J. Aronson
773.971.6788
aronsoncj@sbcglobal.net

1 Quilled paper snowflake
2 Getting into felting balls, these are bracelets
3 Felted acorns, my first felting project
4 Jewelry, coral and glass beads, silver wire
5 Tomten ornament, felt, wool, and pinecone
6 Swedish stone trolls, recognize anybody?
7 Encaustic painting done at C3 annual meeting
WHO ARE WE?

by Kathleen Keams
photo by Kaitlyn Keely

In September the C3 Board gathered for a half-day retreat to identify ways to bridge the gap between where we are and where we would like to be — so we can stay strong and relevant in today’s rapidly-changing world. We identified the following areas to focus on in 2019:

Mission Statement We are refreshing the language to more clearly reflect our intent to enrich and inspire creatives in their professional aspirations.

Funding Our funding comes from membership fees and programs. We have been making a small profit on our programs, but not enough to grow our bank account. One option we are pursuing is filing as a 501(c)(3) organization. This would help to attract sponsors, let us apply for grants, and even raise money to get our own space to meet, host events and show work.

Communications We want to be more effective in promoting C3. This means more visibility on social media, more frequent updating of our website, and making use of real-time video. Please consider joining our Communications Committee to help us get the word out.

Membership Our goal is to do a better job at both retaining members and attracting new ones — from all generations. We want to upgrade our listserv into a member participation network that makes it easier to communicate and collaborate. We want to engage prospective members with fresh content on our website, and promote it through online communities. Plus we recommitted to making new and prospective members feel welcomed and appreciated at C3 events.

Programs We feel we’re very good here — with upcoming topics from business resources to how-tos to hands-on creating. And our Programs Chair, George Berlin, keeps pushing us for more cutting-edge choices. (I’ve even heard our food and beverages outrank the other creative organizations, thanks to Carolyn Aronson and to Mike Tanimura’s cousin Joanne of Auntie Jo’s Yummies.) Feel free to contact George if you know of an interesting speaker or activity.

There’s more that we discussed, and I’ll be sharing it in future articles. (We also had a mini ping-pong tournament, so the retreat wasn’t completely work!) I’m grateful to all our Board Members for the time and effort they devote in support of C3.
New Member

Tuff Kay
94 LLC
tkay56@gmail.com

5 Carolyn Aronson, Claudia Hine, T. J. Hine, Kathleen Kearns, Kaitlyn Keely, Warren Perlstein, and Laura Marie Sanchez participated in an installation of nearly 10,000 name tags at the new Nick Cave Art Center at 3618-22 N. Milwaukee. Arranged across three storefronts, the name tags spell out LOVE THY NEIGHBOR.

6 Always up for a road trip, Bob and Linda Tolchin hit the road for Davenport, Iowa to see the French Moderns exhibit at the Figge Art Museum. They also took a drive up the Great River Road where Bob shot some new work for his American Road Trip series.

7 Carolyn Aronson participated in the annual Julmarknad Christmas bazaar at the Swedish American Museum, where traditional Scandinavian and modern handicrafts are available for purchase. Carolyn sold her unique handmade gift items including these hand-felted acorns.

8 Brent and Barbara Brotine just returned from a two-week cruise vacation to Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bali and Phuket — and lived through the 30-hour total transit time each way. On Singapore’s metro, Brent noticed these signs that are also excellent life advice in general.

9 George Berlin won the Audience Favorite Award at Seattle’s Borealis Festival of Light in October for his Let’s Dance projection mapping display on the façade of the Museum of History and Industry. Featuring hand-drawn animation and retro-style pixel art, George’s projection design covered over 6,000 square feet and was visible all the way across the shores of Lake Union.

10 Paul Minnihan painted the scale model of the Burlington Zephyr train on display at the Chicago History Museum’s new exhibit Modern by Design: Chicago Streamlines America. The exhibit also features an interactive installation by George Berlin, Living Modern, which takes guests into the home of a 1950’s family.
C3 Talks with Nate Marks

Company: DesignMarks.biz
(www.designmarks.biz)
Occupation: Marketing Communications
Current Project: I have just finished writing two novels: Evolve and HAZE and, I’m in the process of looking for a publisher
Dream Client: A good branding project with a large company and a decent budget

Family/Kids/Pets: My son Gary is a game developer and has designed a few computer games — they are available on the Apple Store: Frayed Knot, Pretty Plex, and, several more are coming, and they will also be available on Android. No pets.
Hobbies/Interests: Painting, photography and writing
Three Words that Best Describe Me: Hmmmmmm, don’t know!

Gadget I Can’t Live Without: iPhone
Favorite Movies: The Wife
Favorite CDs/Local Recording Artists: Vanessa Davis, Holly McGuire
Books I’m Reading Right Now: Shoe Dog by Phil Knight
Books I Just Finished: Shut up and Workout by Frankie O’Brien, and The First Pull by Hillel Pratt

C3 Membership Benefits
Programs and seminars for personal and professional development
For-members-only workshops that spark new ideas and promote networking
Member exhibitions that generate awareness, commissions and sales
C3 website showcase that has search engine preference and directs traffic to your own site
Social events and outings that strengthen Chicago’s creative community
Publicity opportunities through the newsletter, website and e-list

Committee and Board appointments that build leadership skills
Free member classifieds plus discounts on newsletter display ads
Quarterly newsletter featuring member success stories and event recaps
Mentoring opportunities such as internships and special events
Private e-list where members exchange ideas and provide assistance

Books on My Reading List: Lake Wobegon Days by Garrison Keillor
Favorite Web Site: Varies from day to day
My Fantasy Is: Living forever

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