

Three Sources of Original Ministry Vision in a Cut-n-Paste Church World

Recently I spent some time with my wife, Romina on Canyon Road in Santa Fe. It is one of the most concentrated art gallery areas in the world with over one hundred and fifty galleries in a mile stretch.

At one of the galleries, named the Gaugy Gallery, I met Michelle Gaugy who runs a nice shop and consults with artists. She caught our attention with one of her statements:

Most artists are just tweaking someone else's work.

It became clear that aspires to help artists to move toward originality of expression (in a similar way that I do with church leaders and church vision). And her gallery was a clear testimony to her life pursuit. As her robust intellectual style drew me in, I knew I could learn something on behalf of church leaders. What follows is my simple question and her responses. I will let you make the connection to ministry. I asked,

"So how does an artist develop originality?"

Michele replied with three answers:

#1: You must have a deep inner life.

She emphasized the role of reflection for the artist emphasizing the ideas of personal surrender. She explained that the role of visual art is to be a conduit or language of the things that are most valuable to human beings, like the stuff that matters on your death bed. **If the artist is not aware on that level, its easy to be tempted by technique and duplicating the style of others.**

#2: You must have a vibrant outer life.

The idea Michele unpacked here is that visual expression is **most dynamic when the artist is not just focused on art**. She explained how many great artists have occupations that defined their life that gave uniqueness and grounding to their work. The more that an artist can cross different life spheres including vocation, hobbies, and relationships, the better and more original the art will become.

#3 You must have a kindling mechanism

Finally Michele emphasizes the great artists must define and perfect a what she called a kindling mechanism; a way to jumpstart their best creative energy. She explained that for some it might be as simple as starting first thing in the morning to stay closer to a dream state. **One famous artist would begin by putting his feet in cold water, while another would stay in prayer and meditation before painting.**

It reminded me of why I love coming to Santa Fe to begin with as visiting here is a kindling mechanism for my writing. In fact, I wrote most of [Church Unique](#) while visiting Santa Fe.

So, what else would you add?

Read more from Will [here](#).