

UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA
GRADUATION SPEECH- Chris Latham

I stand before you, the University of Canberra's most recent graduates, to congratulate you on your achievements, to encourage you, and to give you some useful tips as you embark upon the beginning of your professional life as creative practitioners.

I spent ten years as a music student and they were among the happiest years of my life. I found the transition to being a working musician shocking. Only in the last decade have I felt that I have returned to my original love and that is the love of ideas

I want to tell you all don't worry about success. You are already successful – the proof is in the degree you have earned. You will all go on being good at the things you've always been good at. Now those talents may be seen in a different light.

The secret to success is simple – make good work. If you do that you will be noticed and rewarded. People will pay attention to you and the good work will lead to more good work and eventually a career.

So you ask – how do you make good work? I was told this simple secret as a graduate student. We were asked if we wanted to know how to make work that would be twice as good as our colleagues. I begged my teacher not to lie - to tell me the truth at all costs. It was incredibly important to me to know. He said quite simply – that if I spent ten times as long on the task that it would be twice as good. I am proof that he told the truth.
Quality is a function of time

To take this to heart requires certain attributes. The first pre-requisite is that you love what you do because in the end no one can sustain this discipline unless they love doing the work. Therefore if you want to be good at something – pursue what interests you.
Pay great attention to what captures your imagination.

It is a profound truth that your inner being knows what will be useful to you, and it will cause you to be fascinated by things. We all know that Steve Jobs took calligraphy classes because it interested him and that later influenced the design of his word processing programs.
Trust your curiosity. It will lead you towards an interesting working life
The Sufis talk of living a life guided from within, by that which is infinite, that which calls to you and speaks to you.

It is said that it takes ten years or 10,000 hours to gain mastery of your discipline, and having attained it, you will be left with 60,000 hours to implement that honed skill
Money is seen as the currency of life. However you can make more money but you cannot make more time. We will all run out of time, and when we face the end, we all have to face the question: was my life worth living?
Not being able to answer this self-imposed query: “what is the meaning of my life?” is one of the root causes of suffering in Western civilisation.

No one else can answer this for you.

There is no measure of success that can be used as evidence in this assessment.

There is no point in any of us seeking external validation,
because none of that can fill the emptiness within us.

We all have to face this question - stare into the mirror of our lives and confront it head on.
What is my own uniqueness?

Just as we all have a unique DNA signature, unique life experiences - we all have a unique
voice and if you do not speak with that voice – the world will not have it and there will be a
blank where you should have been.

We live in a culture of short cuts – of emulation of successful models – of copying.

But even the best copy is only a facsimile.

If you remember just one thing today remember this.

Find your truth and live it.

The world so thirsts for authenticity that if you really succeed in being yourself you will be
noticed. It is also much easier to be yourself than pretending to be someone else – always
anxious that people will find out that you are an imposter.

If you succeed in finding your true voice that you will soon see that competition is an illusion
- that there is enough space for all of us to express our uniqueness.

I used to make lots of plans that never came to be, and instead ended up in places that were
far more interesting than I could have imagined. I have since become a great believer in the
efficiency of walking in circles – of wandering through the field of ideas and seeing where
they lead me.

To change the world you first to change your thinking. When enough people change their
thinking, action follows. When enough people change their actions, the world changes.

All this takes courage, and because **encouragement** is the greatest form that love can take,
so I encourage you all to live a life of love, by always choosing that which enlivens you.

Take courage to seek out your true nature and show it in the world.

For others - security – for you bold adventure.

FARE FORWARD FELLOW VOYAGERS !