It doesn’t just look sweet, it tastes good too. So lick your lips and get into the contents...

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A NEW ERA HAS BEGUN
Welcome to the first ever Artisan publication – a new quarterly that seeks to fulfil four main things:
1. To provide input, encouragement and perspective for people professionally involved in the media, arts and entertainment industries. This edition grapples with the issue of Ambition.
2. To create a sense of linking and relationship between the three most important arts, media and entertainment cities in the world – New York, London and L.A.
3. To communicate a sense of organisational unity and relationship by promoting the main support organisations operating in the three cities.
4. To develop a network of people committed to praying for media, arts and entertainment every day.

Six years ago God gave me a vision to create a support network for people involved in these industries. We created a free quarterly publication called Backstage that featured twelve articles and information about people involved in the industries so that we could pray for them. Initially this went out to around one hundred people. Through word of mouth the network developed and before long the publication was going to 500 people. Personally, I was still dissatisfied. Compared to the influence, power and magnitude of the industry I knew that simply producing a regular publication was the equivalent of a spec of dust on a spec of dust! I remember going through a phase of being so desperate for God to provide some direction, some instruction. After a time of intense study and praying; grappling with the issue and pacing up and down as I do, I knew God had given me three words which provided the direction and instruction I was seeking. To this day these are still the words that provide the challenge for us both individually and corporately:

UNITY – HUMILITY – PRAYER
It sounds good, but what does it mean in reality?

Unity – We need one another. Life and our relationship with God was never designed to be a solo journey.

Humility – As individuals we all have our part to play, but we are not the key. Only God can transform these industries.

Prayer – As in all of life, prayer must be central. It is so often key to seeing God breaking into nations; people; industries.

I wrote to the Backstage network and communicated what I felt God was challenging us with. I took a step of faith and booked a central London venue and invited the network together with this agenda of unity, humility and prayer. To my amazement a few hundred people representing many parts of the industry came together to passionately worship God, pray for one another and pray for the industries. That was nearly six years ago and we have since been meeting in London every other month – recently increased to every month. The last Backstage publication released in January 2004 went out to 1400 people. God is placing more and more people into the heart of these most important industries and this is what excites me so much.

Question: If L.A, New York and London are the most influential cities when it comes to the media, arts and entertainment industries, how much are we, as Christians who are involved in those industries, aware of what is going on? How do we relate, share resources, and pray for one another? It is a question we should explore together. Whilst we are still very early on in our relationships corporately, it has been such a privilege to build relationships with the leaders of similar organisations in New York and L.A. I am grateful for the help and contribution to make this first publication happen. As we enter into this new phase please bear with us as we find our feet together. This is a publication that we will hone and refine as we go along with the hope of providing you with the information and input that is most helpful to you.

The Artisan web site is also being launched in April and will link all the support organisations together, hopefully providing another great resource for you. As Paul prayed for the church in Colosse (Colossians 1:19–13) I pray for you – thousands of you who are living for Christ, grappling and working out your faith within media, arts and entertainment. My prayer is that God will fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way, bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God. I pray that you would be strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Finally, a prayer that we can all pray in agreement with one another...

“God we want to see a revolution across this world of media, arts and entertainment. A time of change in the people that make up the most influential industries in our planet. God we want to see directors, writers, producers, editors, CEOs, dancers, painters, actors, musicians, fashion designers, graphic designers, presenters, camera operators, photographers, journalists, researchers, sculptors, advertising execs, promoters, fixers, animators, managers, vocal trainers, stylists, models… operating from a place of knowing this truth: that they are made by God, known by God and loved by God – a people group who have their identity and security in Jesus who has accomplished everything so that we all might know forgiveness and life in all its fullness; a people group who recognise and celebrate the source of their creativity: the Great Designer and Creator. Lord as thousands of people who you have placed in these industries this is our desire.

Love to you all,

Steve Cole
Artisan Initiatives
I start counting as soon as my body hits the water.

THREE FOUR...

It's funny how things sound underwater – muffled and amplified at the same time. The sound of your heart echoes in your chest like a thunderclap, but the sound of the waves over your head feels a thousand miles away. You can hear your blood rushing through your ears, but the sound of the surface is like a signal from another planet.

TEN ELEVEN...

I explode to the surface, and it all fills my ears – the sound of my arms slicing the waves, the sound of my breath pushing violently in and out of my lungs, the sound of the air like a rock concert.

NINETEEN TWENTY...

My eyes are focused and down in a rhythm as my head tracks a mental clock. I'm already off my record. I know it. Two minutes, a personal best, set back in high school.

I still remember the shouts of the pool, the way my body ached at the end of the day. The way it took me a week to recover from that meet. I spent all of college trying to beat that time. I wanted to win, and winning only comes with your personal best. Your best time. I'm still chasing that time now. I won't make it, and I'm frustrated. The stakes are higher now.

THIRTY-FOUR THIRTY-FIVE...

Cutting across the horizon – Chad. He's slightly ahead, smooth form. Arms digging in. Chad and I have been swimming against each other ever since high school. He always managed to get just below my personal best. I don't know what it is. If I lift two and a half hours, he lifts three. It's spite, I imagine – one of those high school things you never let go of.

FIFTY-NINE SIXTY...

The current out here is strong – stronger than I might be able to manage. Chad too probably, but as I steal glances between breaths, he's still slicing gracefully through the waves like a shark's fin. I'm not going to win, but it doesn't matter. The sound of kids struggling in the water pulls me forward, and I have no choice but to push myself harder than I ever have.

I surface at one hundred and thirty seconds – two minutes ten – and the kids on the boat are really freaking now. Chad is already pulling himself up, asking them what happened. A boy with sun-bleached skin points beneath the waves. Before he can finish, I'm gone.

It's dark down here as I open my eyes. The moss of the sea floor blocks my vision as I plunge down fifteen, sixteen, seventeen feet. Snaky green arms reach up to grab me, and I remind myself to be careful – these ocean vines can surprise you, if you're not careful. Pull you down. The deep does not easily give up its victims.

It's not so hard to find the kid. My eyes fix on him just at the moment when he gives up, his straining body unable to extricate himself from the vines. Despite all his effort, there are some things that his thin, wiry body cannot escape without a helping hand. I pull hard, and the vines give up.

His body is weak in my arms as I rise like an angel of light. The sun beckons, and I soon break the surface, hauling the boy up onto the boat.

The next few moments are a blur – CPR. Breathe, breathe, breathe. Repeat. I only vaguely register the jet-skis pulling up. I find it vaguely amusing that together Chad and I out-swam engines, but I only give it a quick thought.

The boy chokes up water. More water, and now a gasp of oxygen – the boy's body spasming for a moment, his body exploding back to life. It takes me a moment to realize that he'll be okay. My body involuntarily exhales with his.

People more qualified than I take over. I back away as the boy's eyes – blue like the ocean he's just come from – open. They loll around, until they find and lock with mine. A silent understanding passes between us.

Chad watches from the water, floating on his paddle board, as I sit on the edge of the boat, the moment passed now. He grins. "Personal best?"

I look at Chad, then the boy. After a moment, I smile, still out of breath. "You better believe it."
Ambition is an animal, a beast that lives in our minds. And it is difficult to think of a creature harder to track down to its den and understand. I have been mauled by it more than a few times over the years in the search.

For some, ambition is honest and noble; for others, it is poisonous; and I suppose still others would rather just ignore it. But think of our tussles with ambition and being ambitious as a struggle with a wild animal that cannot be ignored: you either learn how to tame it and live with it, or suffer its attack. As the Nepalese proverb warns, “If the tiger in the jungle does not eat you, then the tiger in the mind will.”

There are different ways of looking at this beast. First, it is like a see saw that could overbalance either way. We are poised at the center and if we go one way, we slide to safety, following hopes and goals. The other way, however, sends us sliding into the clutches of the desire for power, fame, wealth and competition.

But this picture is far too simple. It unrealistically polarizes the two sides of the see saw. Clearly, hopes and goals are necessary. When we hope, we envisage a future we desire and our goals are the things that we hope to make happen. But think about this: while there can be good and bad goals, what is slightly more shocking is that there can be good and bad hopes as well. As for the other side – power, fame and wealth – these could be goals and part of our hope too. The tricky thing about these is how we obtain them and what we do with them that determines if they are good or bad. Power, fame and wealth are never ends in themselves, though we often appear to see them that way.

Competition, on the other hand, does not belong in the picture at all. Competition is not a goal or a hope — except perhaps for a shortsighted economist. No one wants to arrive at the end of their efforts, sink into the sofa and sigh with satisfaction that they have achieved ... competition. Instead, of being an end, it is a means. Good competition helps us find the right person for the right job, so that both the job and the person flourish. One of my children must take an entrance exam this winter for an arts school that seems to me to fit her well. But a portion of the test consists of maths — an area she finds difficult. So, being an ambitious father, I asked her mother to help her study and get her maths up to scratch. My wife, however, always the wisest
between us, reflected that she would help my daughter get ready for the exam but that she did not want the child to get into a school that would then be an ongoing torment for her. If the school doesn’t fit the girl it is best that the girl fail the test. It was my wife who understood the right place for competition and had the better grasp of ambition.

So let’s move on. The beast in our minds does not just present us with a choice, as on a see saw which tips us either the right or the wrong way. Ambition is also like a building, with foundations, floors and a roof terrace. It is part of a process and not just a single decision. Our hopes and goals are where they belong – up at the finishing stages, up where there is a view. Where we can relax on the balcony in the sunset, sip our martinis and be satisfied at a job well done. The upper floor, however, rests on the intermediate floors, where we chose the means for getting to the goals. It is no

You cannot get to good goals by bad means; you just won’t arrive there

good thinking that once you are rich and famous you shall use your wealth and fame for the good of humanity if during the process of getting them you have been building a faulty character. If, for example, it were proven that the Lottery was ruining peoples’ lives, I would oppose it even though it built the museums and theatre companies I had always dreamed of building. You cannot get to good goals by bad means; you just won’t arrive there – it’s like trying to go upstairs by walking down the hall. Isn’t it a wonder that so many of our arts tell this very story, and yet so many of us who tell the stories fall prey to the sad reality?

The problem for our society with the image of a building is the foundation, a foundation already in place that helps us decide which means are good and which are bad. Our generation is very suspicious of anyone who claims to know the one, true foundation. It says such a structure cannot exist. It says such talk is used to oppress people who disagree or do not fit in. But without the foundation, the means chosen are uncertain, and when they are faulty, we find ourselves wandering down the hall though we meant to be climbing to the heights.

Now let’s move on again and this time, think of ambition as a story with more than one character involved because let’s not forget that you are never alone, and your ambition cannot involve just you. The story follows a script or a score. There is plot behind the story. And we know the right foundation to build the story on.

Alongside the script, there is rehearsal and performance. In the rehearsal period, we can work with others toward our goals and hopes. But we are not really so free that we can build whatever life we wish. So many important things are beyond our choosing. No one asked me which family or neighbourhood I wanted to grow up in, or what genes I wanted to shape my nose or my voice. In performing, I take the script and I bring to it the things of my life and whatever else I can. Every interpretation will differ. We may not be able to choose the setting of our lives, but in being ambitious we can choose how to behave and what we do with that ambition. There is joy in discovering how we work, in ‘performing’ our lives.

But after the rehearsal is over and the performance is done – is the goal achieved? Or were we thinking that the joy was only in the performing itself and that once this is over we need to walk around hungrily looking for another role? Is ambition a hunger that drives us but can never be satisfied? That would be a terrible beast indeed.

No, life is not just the means to some planned goal. All is not in vain if we do not win every prize. We must be faithful in the small things along the way.
There is the script. There is performance. Now in this picture we must face the critics and the audience. We of course do not want to be slaves to the expectations of others, but neither do we want to perform only to our own satisfaction. It sounds heroic – the poet who believes in herself though the world doesn’t and who locks her work away in a big chest. But lots of bad poetry lies in attics that if discovered will still be bad poetry. That story is only heroic when the poet knew that the critics of her day were not yet able to recognize her work. That is, she had a good critic in mind when she wrote. If our generation is suspicious of anyone claiming to have found the score to life, it really gets uncomfortable with the idea of a judge who is going to comment on our performance. But, and I write this as humbly as I know how, it is not a coincidence that a generation that has lost the sense of its need for a God to judge us is a generation that has real problems understanding ambition.

Once I asked a lecture room of people if they thought the notion of God’s judgment was a good thing. The majority – even those who believed in the idea – had to admit that it was filed away in their thinking under ‘a bad idea that I’d rather avoid’. But one person in the back raised her hand and disagreed. She was looking forward to God’s pronouncement – because things that everyone had told her were wrong about her life she knew had been right. She was waiting for God to distinguish between the good and the bad.

So we need God – both at the beginning and at the end of the picture. The Creator knows what we were meant for. The Bible’s word for this is ‘glory’. We each have a separate glory. Here is a foundation sure enough; in God we have a hand worthy of writing the score.

And so that decay doesn’t merely devour everything, so that good and evil with time don’t become irrelevancies, we need God to come and look over the performance and comment on it. God can help us decide which goals are worthwhile, which hope holds the true future. Jesus was happy to talk about wealth and fame and power. He taught that we were wisest when we did play to the expectations of the audience, but that it was only God who was our final critic.

And we need God not just at the two ends, but in the middle as well, in the rehearsal and performance that is our daily life.

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We need help to choose the best way to arrive at the worthwhile goals. God knows precisely the limitations of the hand we have been dealt. He knows when the competition has been unfair, the fame deserved or undeserved. Only God can see the unsearched places of our hearts and attics. And ultimately we find our value in God’s love. Perhaps most importantly, given where we are in the story, it is God who has made a way for us to change and improve if we have been ignoring the script or began from a wrong foundation or made a stupid choice and slid off the see saw. It is ironic that we, who can be so consumed with misplaced ambition, do not actually believe that real and lasting change is possible.

The script states that God has ambitions for his children: that we shall become conformed to the image of Christ and shall enjoy him forever. This is a lasting prize and worth all our effort. It is a prize that does not fade. And one that the tiger in our minds has no right, or even ability, to destroy.
Acting had become a means of fulfilling my ambitions of being rich and famous when it had once been a way of finding delight in telling a story and of enjoying myself - literally.

I thought we’d established collectively, as a Western Culture, that the eighties were very, very bad. So what happened? Why were there batwing jumpers in Top Shop merely months ago? Why is my little brother listening to Duran Duran? I was thirteen when Duran were at the apex of their powers, and all I wanted was to snog John Taylor. Hearing “The Reflex” again brought on a nostalgia bout of Proustian magnitude. Unlike Proust, I didn’t feel compelled to write an enormous novel, my remembrance of that time just made me feel a bit sad. I was back in my thirteen-year-old self. I could, I thought, even smell the classroom where I scratched “J.T 4 P.E” into the desk with the corner of my protractor. The strongest memory the song had given me, though, was the feeling of my own potential. My dreams and ambitions lay before me completely intact and uninhibited. My ambition felt pure. By that, I mean that it wasn’t really about making money or fame or power, although I was aware that those things would be good to have. It was more about pursuing my interests with intensity because I loved them and enjoyed them, not the end that they would bring. I remember thinking that I could achieve anything. My teenage hopes had warmth and vigour. Years later, examining my ambitions again for this article, I see why that memory had a sad edge.

Acting used to be something I did for fun. It was my hobby when I was thirteen, and I did it for love. As soon as it became my profession, other stuff got involved. Suddenly, acting was my job and I had to make a living out of it. I needed it to pay for the rent and the gas bill. It also began to be a defining part of my character. When it was my hobby, it was just a part of who I was. Turning professional meant that everyone—from insurers looking at what kind of a risk I was, to hairdressers asking me whether I’d “been in anything good”—began to define me by what I did. I became Priyanga: The Actress—like Conan: The Barbarian but without the gap in my teeth. Before long, acting was not fun. Actually, that’s not right. Acting was still fun, but the frustrations borne out of unemployment and type casting, together with the desperation to become successful and thereby justify this job title robbed me of my joy in my dreams. Acting had enormous, intricate baskets made specifically to hide their lights under because they mistake that sort of behaviour for humility. The word ‘humility’ comes from a Greek root meaning ‘earth’. It’s to do with being grounded and realistic, not self-deprecating and judgmental. There are things that you are good at because your Creator made you that way, and through you, He wants to express Himself. We need to admit that we are good at stuff; sometimes really gifted, and then work with that gift, even if it’s indirectly. This is a real ambition, and I’m back in the glorious thirteen-year-old moment. A concordance search of the word “ambition” suggests that God doesn’t object to ambition. Like money, it is not sinful in itself, but selfish ambition can lead us into self-destructive behaviour and feelings of failure. The thing that I forgot when I was having my bad time was that my desires to do something creative, joyful and extraordinary were put there by God. He also knows that I need an income. It turns out that my ambitions are the same as His, only His dreams are bigger. But I am weighed down by the world, whereas He wants to save it. I would have my dreams come true quickly and easily, whereas He would have them realised perfectly and multiplied so that my realised ambitions can inspire others, sowing joy in other hearts as well as mine. This takes time, and I am impatient. It takes faith and I’m easily knocked. It takes letting go of the reins and I’m a control freak. God and I are negotiating. Unsurprisingly, He is winning every battle.

I realised that God gave me a talent. I need to invest that talent, to risk it, use it, spread it, invest it, share it, sow it, water it, harvest it and then sow it again. You know, that “salt of the earth stuff”, “that light of the world” thing. There are some Christians I know who have woven themselves
On your marks... get set...
How would you describe your ambition?
I would describe my ambition as constantly changing. When I look back years, months or even days, God seems to (through what he’s doing in me, for me and to me) be changing my value systems. The knock-on of this is that things I once longed for, I either forget about because I’ve changed, or I get them and they don’t make as much of a difference to my life as I had hoped so I crave them no longer. I’d like to think that my ambition for my life is beginning to line up with God’s ambition for my life.

What is the best piece of advice you have been given?
Don’t let the sun go down on an argument.

What is your vision for your industry?
To see stories that are life affirming and point to Christ, supersed films, TV and theatre that drain people of hope and that comfort people’s demons.

How do you react to criticism?
With a fake smile and inner turmoil to begin with, then I calm down and try and assess if the person is right or wrong.

Last thing you read that inspired you?
Kenneth Branagh’s autobiography. He wrote it when he was only 28, he had run his own theatre company, employing the likes of Judy Dench, directed numerous plays, and directed himself in the film of Henry V having already played the part at the RSC, all before he was 28. It made me want to work harder at not waiting for others to aid my career.

Most challenging film and most entertaining?
I find Spilberg’s “The Colour Purple” a challenge to watch, simply because it makes me cry out loud, it’s a brilliant piece of work. I find almost anything Jim Carrey is in entertaining.

Worst thing about your industry?
Having to wait for other people to facilitate your dreams.

What has been your biggest encouragement?
The fact that in my short career as an actor (five years) I’ve noticed a marked difference in the opportunities afforded to non-white actors in both television and theatre, unfortunately film is lagging behind.

Spiritual input source when away from home?
When I’m away from home my Pastor calls me once a week and I always try to find details of a good church at my destination before I leave home.

Have you been financially broke and if so how did you deal with that time?
Drama school was a very lean time for me. I had two jobs, and loving parents I always knew I could fall back on. The irony is that I earn more now than I ever have, but financial worry seems to grow alongside the upward curve of my bank balance.

I’d like to think that my ambition for my life is beginning to line up with God’s ambition for my life.
On the days when I can feel my dreams coming true; when words like “hope” are easier to identify with; when I have reason to embrace my faith in a benevolent God; on those days I believe that my ambitions and dreams are “God given”. When things are going well, I can give thanks and feel assured that my aspirations are in keeping with God’s plan for my life. There are other days when my ambitions feel very far from God given. The things I hope for don’t come true and I find myself giving up.

I try to rationalise the situation and the conversation inside my head goes something like this:

“That can’t have been what God was planning for me. Maybe He just wants me to settle down and do something ordinary with my life instead. Am I really so vain that I thought I could do something amazing?”

My aspirations are inextricably linked to my sense of calling and vocation, but when things are going badly, it’s easy to doubt that God has called me to a certain way of life and assume that I’ve got it wrong.

It’s bad theology on my part that allows these doubts to flourish. If I stop to consider some of the Biblical examples, I can clearly see God’s hand at work in the lives of His servants throughout history. God called Abraham out of Egypt and promised to make him into a great nation with many descendants; yet it was twenty-five years before the fulfilment of this promise became even a possibility, through the birth of his legitimate son Isaac. Some years later, God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac’s life, the same life through which his ambitions were to be fulfilled. Abraham placed God’s demands higher than his own ambitions and ultimately his hopes were satisfied.

When he was seventeen, Joseph started having vivid dreams about God’s plan for his life. These dreams came true, but only after Joseph had spent thirteen years separated from his family, working as a slave or in prison.

In these examples, God keeps His promise and dreams and ambitions are fulfilled, but only after many years and in unexpected ways.

If I look back over the past decade of my life, I can see my dreams and ambitions slowly starting to come true, but almost always not in ways that I could have predicted:

Sometimes I have been surprised because my expectations have been far exceeded. Things I hardly dared to hope for or aspire to have come true.

More often, my expectations have been disappointed. I have had a very clear idea about how I think my ambitions should be fulfilled and have been frustrated and disillusioned when things don’t work out that way.

Different opportunities from those I have been hoping for seem to present themselves and I am reluctant to make the most of them.

As I achieve more in different areas of my life, increasingly I experience the pain of conflicting ambitions. Success in one area often requires sacrifice in another.

I have friends who have given up acting careers, pulled out of music tours and resigned from jobs to save their marriages and be there for their families. I know others who struggle on to try to make things work. I don’t know what the answers are in these situations, I just know that in this fallen world, our ambitions sometimes conflict.

I’m thankful that we have a God whose view is more panoramic than our own and who sees the whole picture; a God who gives us small glimpses of this picture in order to fuel our dreams and ambitions; and a God who calls us all to do something amazing with our lives.

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I've been invited in this new publication of Artisan to examine three crucial, yet similar, questions. The main thrust of these is 'should a Christian artist be ambitious or not?'

Ambition is mentioned a number of times in the Scriptures and would seem to be a two-edged sword. Christians are called 'out of self and into Christ', to deny the former ways of life and embrace new creations in Christ Jesus. This is what is meant by a new birth, a new way of seeing, hearing and living. In the old life, the old clothes we lived in are everything in and with Him. When we become Christians we change from being His creatures and for ourselves. We are nothing without him and we dreams for us that we've not yet begun to dream. Paul became more and more ambitious and hungry for God's call upon his life. Finally, he was given permission to leave for Rome. What a journey! Storms at sea, shipwrecks, snakebites and finally, imprisonment in Rome itself for this adventure we have been rewarded with a masterpiece of literature. There is nothing and can be nothing that is of real worth if it is to reach its full potential that will not go through a dying and rising metamorphosis. 'This refiners fire is the process of honing our lives and our work and is, in my experience, accompanied by ninety percent perspiration and ten percent inspiration. We should be aware when it appears otherwise. Many of us will have received poetry, music, art and much more beside from well-intentioned people who say, 'God gave me this for you' or 'the Holy Spirit directed me to write this'. Under such authority you look at it and frankly, most if not all, is for the dustbin. Artists must and I believe should be ambitious for their work to be the very best.'
Bora Aksu

Fashion Designer Profile

THE ARTISAN PROFILE

THE 'DISCIPLES' COLLECTION AT LONDON FASHION WEEK 2004
After completing a BA Honours Degree in fashion at Central Saint Martins, Bora went on to do an MA degree. MA was his period of free expression. In 2002 Bora graduated from Central Saint Martins MA course with distinction. CSM MA Fashion show marked a major turning point for Bora. His standout collection received a huge response from press and he was quoted as “the star of the show”. Pieces from his collection bought by Dolce and Gabbana.

His collection also provided him a sponsorship award to start his own label collection. Bora’s debut off schedule autumn/winter 03 show took place during London Fashion week in February 2003. CNN introduced Bora as the rising new name and the Guardian quoted his show as “one of the top five shows in London”. His native roots blends with his personal design approach, which also explains the diversity of his collection.

After his first show Bora won New Generation award by Topshop that enabled him to have an on schedule show at London Fashion Week. Bora’s Spring /Summer 04 collection defined his signature and established his distinctive style. Bora once again won the New Generation award from Topshop for coming A/W 04 London Fashion Week.

Bora’s collection is available at Liberty in London, Agosto Inc in Japan and Shine boutique in Hong Kong.

Bora Aksu has produced an intricate collection for his first on schedule Spring Summer 04 show during London Fashion Week. The collection clearly reflects the journey since his first off-schedule appearance last season.

Bora draws inspiration from the objects you can find in a regular household. Old stripy duvet covers, grandma underwear all becomes a rich inspiration source.

Pushing the limits of everyday objects to invent the “new” is the idea behind the collection. The result of complex cutting, the fabrics move freely. The blend of silks, chiffons and tulles with distress cotton t-shirts and underwear details supports the contrast of the collection. Hand approached details and seams used in unexpected places are the key elements.

Bora’s exploration of the dialogue between the architecture of garments and its soft-spoken details create a unique language.
Artist and one of the IAM Japan leaders, Fumie Ando, said: ‘Christmas in Peace’ created a small crack in a huge dam of resistance to the expansion of God’s Kingdom in Japan. So much was accomplished by a small team, in collaboration with churches and parachurch organisations in Japan. And yet, our efforts seem feeble against overwhelming numbers and obstacles. What Fumie said reflects the faith of many Japanese Christians. The power of her words comes not from our abilities or accomplishments, but from God who would use even our feeble efforts to effect great changes.

To me, my month long journey culminated with a clearer understanding of the Incarnation. Christ the babe came to earth, not in might or power, but in vulnerability and weakness. One pastor in Japan noted that the uniqueness of Christ belies worldly expectation for a King of the universe, and yet when you think about power in weakness, it makes sense. For example, a baby draws people together exactly because he/she is helpless. The greatest power in Christ limited Himself, so that the world would be drawn to Him. Mr. Otake, a business leader who hosted my family told me about a racehorse in Japan named “Uta-urara.” This horse made headlines in Japan not for winning, but for losing. In fact Uta-urara had lost 99 races in a row, and lost her 100th race during my stay. The whole race was a nervous experience. However, what gained its fame was her last race. She was placed last throughout the race, but in the last lap, she surprised everyone and won the race. This horse was celebrated for its courage and perseverance.

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That may not happen in the United States, but it could in Japan. They have, as a culture, a greater understanding of weakness, and an appreciation for “losers.” The Japanese understanding of “pathos”, accentuates the culture’s appreciation for what is ephemeral. My experiences there confirm my hunch that this culture may have a greater propensity than others to understand the Incarnation of Christ, a message of redemption that works through chosen weakness.

The highlight of my trip came when Bobby Lewis, a remarkable pastor/singer/musician came to sing at Takashimaya Department store where my exhibit was held. He, along with two gospel singers, sang in the main entrance with a huge Christmas tree in the background. Takashimaya is the most prestigious venue in Japan, and to have Bobby join me to draw people in with gospel music was unprecedented.

Mrs. Otake was on her way to my exhibit at Takashimaya gallery when, as she came out of the subway corridor connected to Takashimaya, she heard Christmas gospel music coming out of Nihonbashi subway station. She said this was one of her most moving experiences as a Christian; hearing Christmas gospel music in a Japanese subway corridor.

Bobby also generously contributed to a CD track called “The Peace of Christmas”, a compilation of original songs, and my testimony. The CD was an unprecedented success. Over 200,000 were passed out in the streets of Tokyo. Over 10,000 people visited the accompanying web site, and over 1000 people left their contact information (see www.thepeaceofchristmas.net for more information).

There were other unprecedented outcomes:
1) Over $30,000 was raised by our charity exhibit “Considering Peace” to benefit UNESCO. Mr. Tatejima, the chief curator of Sato Museum, the host site for the exhibit, had to negotiate with the Ministry of Culture in the planning stages of the exhibit. The reason? This type of charity exhibit in a museum had never been done before in Japan!

During the exhibit, Mr. Tatejima said that this charity effort was creating quite a stir among other museum curators in Japan. NHK, the Japanese PBS, were so impressed that they highlighted the exhibit in their Sunday morning program (viewed by an estimated over 3 million viewers). We might have started something completely new for Japanese museums - bringing artists together as messengers of peace; forming a creative community to gather for a greater purpose.

2) Another surprise event took place at Sato Museum on Christmas Eve. IAM was asked by the host organization (all of whom are non Christians) to organize a candlelight party. They insisted that I speak on Christmas Eve event. The Christmas Concert with Kosaka Chu (the father of J-Pop) on 23rd December also broke new ground.

3) The Christmas Concert with Kosaka Chu (the father of J-Pop) on 23rd December also broke new ground. His original theme song for the project “Christmas in Peace” (which can be heard at www.christmasinepeace.net) even got onto secular radio stations.

This concert was the first at which a museum - bringing artists together as messengers of peace; forming a creative community to gather for a greater purpose.

Looking back on the project, I’m most grateful for the inspiration that a babe in a manger gave to all of us. Christ is our Peace, and we can seek His Presence in our lives to be renewed and directed. May God work through our weaknesses for His greater Glory! May our lives and art reflect such meekness as we seek to advance God’s Kingdom all around us.
New York City

ARTISAN’S VERY OWN TRAVEL GUIDE

RESTAURANTS
It all starts in Soho. The area comprised by a square that runs from Houston (pronounced How-stun) in the north down to Canal, and from Sixth Avenue in the west to Broadway. Of course it’s gentrified and become rather touristy of late but it still rocks nonetheless. East of Soho (follow Spring St. towards Lafayette) is Nolita (north of Little Italy) - an area that has really blossomed of late with a lot of cool stuff to check out. Nolita is very small and runs from Lafayette in the west to Bowery and Houston in the north down to Broome. Check out the funky shops along Mott, Mulberry and Elizabeth.

Cafe Gitane - Prince at Mott
Cafe Habana - Prince at Elizabeth (this place is always packed - serves great Cuban food - and is very funky)

Cafe Colonial - Houston at Elizabeth or Mulberry (popular for Sat brunch - quintessentially Nolita)

Rialto - Elizabeth by Prince and Houston (good food - great for a quiet drink - “smoother” than a lot of the other places - moody lighting etc.)

Cafe Liebowitz - Spring at Elizabeth (French bistro transported to downtown NYC - mellow, moody, decent steak-frite - good place to hang out to catch your breath after pounding the pavements)

Overall, the vibe in Nolita is slightly shabby, understated chic. Very cool and interesting to observe but in no way flashy or ostentatious.

CLASSICS
These are mostly based around Soho/Nolita. They are perennially cool places to hang out and slightly more overtly chic than the Nolita vibe. These places some up the mythical New York of “Sex in the City” etc.

Indochine - Lafayette near Bond (Vietnamese - probably one of the most consistently cool restaurants in the city - very New York).

Time Cafe - Lafayette nr. Bond (big for weekend brunch - quintessentially New York - bright, lively, fast, can’t knock it)

Bond Street Sushi - Bond St bt. Lafayette and Bowery (very cool - one of the best downtown spots for Japanese food - cool bar downstairs)

Pastis - Little West 12th Street (ESSENTIAL NEW YORK SPOT - French brasserie - everyone goes there - it practically is New York - in the Meatpacking district)

Florent - Gaansvoort St at Washington (the original cool diner in the meatpacking district - open 24/7 - great for brunch)

Madison Avenue in the 50-70s (all the usual suspects among the big name designers)

SHOPTING
Soho and Nolita
5th Avenue bt Union Sq. and 23rd St.(for obvious but quality stuff like Club Monaco, Banana Republic, J Crew etc).

Barney’s/Bergdorf Goodman/Neiman Marcus (big designer department stores). BARNEY’S IS AMAZING

ART
All the happening galleries are these days based in Chelsea in square comprising a handful of blocks (between 21st-25th St and 10th -11th ave).

If you’re really feeling adventurous there’s BAM in Brooklyn which has all sorts of events. If you want to do the opera/ballet/classical thing there’s the Lincoln Center.

Here’s a list of things that make New York unique for creative individuals:

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As a creative artist I can’t think of a better place to live than New York City. All I have to do is step outside my apartment building and I’ll immediately see something that stimulates my creativity. From the people on the street to the architecture it all becomes part of my work as a creative professional.

The People: New York is a mass of individuals, the ultimate melting pot, and everyone seems to have their own style. Nothing seems to be too extreme in this town. I am amazed on a daily basis at what people will wear in public and I respect their confidence. I consistently get ideas for my own wardrobe by observing people on the street or on the subway. Uggs are the hot item this winter! People watching is the best entertainment and it’s free! (I recommend the East Village and Soho.)

The Colors: Despite its’ reputation for preferring black and gray, New York is filled with color. Whether it’s the paintings of roadside artists in Solas, trees in Central Park, or the lights of Times Square, color is everywhere. (I recommend Times Square at Midnight and Central Park in the Fall and spring. Try getting a table in the garden at Tavern on the Green.)

The Store Windows: New York department stores like Bergdorf Goodman and Barney’s NY are infamous for their window displays. The genius minds behind the themes and visuals for these windows never cease to amaze me.

I often find myself standing in awe in front of these stores especially at Christmas time. However it’s not just the large stores, even the small boutiques in NoHo and the West Village take pride in the peeking curiosity of passers-by through creative window displays. Competition in this town is fierce so it requires special attention to attract customers.

The Architecture: The buildings in New York are remarkable. From the landmark Flatiron and Empire State buildings to the Upper East Side brownstones to the new more contemporary Lofts, Corporate tower on 57th Street, the skyline is something to behold.

New York Theatre: From the professional Broadway shows to the artful endeavours of Off-Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway, theatre is the ultimate in creative stimulation. And Lincoln Center, located next to the prestigious Julliard School, is one of the artistic centers of the world with its’ legendary opera house, symphony hall and ballet house. The talent, costumes, sets, and music are all eye candy! (The hot Broadway ticket these days is to the new musical “Wicked”.)

Museums: New Yorkers are privy to some of the best museum exhibits in the world. I recommend the Guggenheim, Whitney, Natural History, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) and the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Even the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) has a museum. (I recommend the exhibit “Bravehearts: Men in Skirts”, Male slain-wearing from the Scottish to glam- rocker Bowie, now at the Met.)

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Restaurants: Eating out is a beautiful thing in New York and it’s all about dining in the right “places to be seen”. The food presentation, service and clientele are always an adventure. Some personal favorites to consider: Red Cat, Nobu, Park, Pastis, Indochine, Mercer Kitchen, Il Cantinori, Ruby Foo’s, Swenos and Park Avalon.

Book Stores: It’s a toss up between Starbucks’ Coffee and bookstores as to which occupies the most corners in Manhattan. New Yorkers are not afraid to be alone and love to hang out in bookstores and read. We also have our share of magazine vendors. If it’s published anywhere in this world you can probably find it here. (The hot book of the moment is “The Da Vinci Code” by Dan Brown.)

Music Scene: Live music is especially popular in this city. It’s a training ground for tomorrow’s superstars and concerts are full of creative stimulation. CBGB was the infamous birthplace of the American Punk movement in the 60’s and 70’s and is still going strong today in the East Village. Other venues to consider are Bowery Ballroom, Joe’s Pub, Blue Note, Knitting Factory, Roseland and the Bitter End. The other popular genre for live music is cabaret acts. These always provide hours of entertainment and laughs in smaller, more intimate venues like Don’t Tell Mama and Fez.

Statue of Liberty: It’s the ultimate symbol of democracy known around the world. It’s a reminder of the human rights that Americans have to the freedom of expression, democracy, and justice. As creative professionals, all we have to do is look at Lady Liberty across the harbor in lower Manhattan and we are assured that the city of New York will always be a haven for us and a place dedicated to celebrating the Arts!

RICH JOHNSON

Los Angeles
MASTERMEDIA INTERNATIONAL
www.mastermediaintl.org

An organization which seeks to create a positive moral/spiritual impact on the leaders of American film and TV through personal communication, individual counsel, and small group support for entertainment executives.

PREMISE
www.premiseonline.org

Premise is a monthly prayer group consisting of Writers, Producers, Directors, Entertainment Lawyers and Literary Agents. Meets the third Sunday evening of every month. In addition to monthly meetings, Premise conducts professional seminars, retreats and parties.

New York
THE HAVEN
www.havennyc.com

The Haven reaches out to the creative professional in NYC - actors, singers, dancers, musicians, writers, choreographers, producers, directors, etc. Join us! We meet every Monday but the 3rd Monday at 7pm at: The Lambs Theater 130 W. 44th St., between Broadway & 6th Ave New York City, NY.

INTERNATIONAL ARTS MOVEMENT (IAM)
www.iamny.org

IAM is a catalyst arts organization committed to cultural and spiritual renewal. Its programs support individual artists in their work and embrace the entire arts community. IAM is active in Tokyo and New York City, with affiliations in Orlando, Los Angeles, and London. Its vision: a fusion of creativity and faith that expresses and illustrates God’s intimate and merciful identity in the world.

PARADOX
www.fashionparadox.com

A community of professionals in the fashion industry seeking integrity as we face the challenges and opportunities of our industry.

Thanks to Tony Vavroch (Paradox) for his co-ordination and assistance.
To establish a UK based prayer network for the Media, Arts and Entertainment industries in partnership with LA based MasterMedia International and the Hollywood Prayer Network.

I have just returned from meeting a newsreader for an international news TV station. He became a Christian nine months ago and in a very underground way he has been used to impact the lives of other influencers around him. He spends a short time most weeks with the second most senior person at the channel to pray with her at her own request. She is not yet a Christian.

One life, placed in an industry that has the potential to impact millions.

Two days ago, at the monthly Artisan event in London, we prayed for the fashion industry to tie in with London fashion week. Present at this event were fashion designers, models, photographers, fashion writers, stylists, pattern cutters and PR agents. God is bringing these influencers together to stand for Him in this important industry. The same can be said for every sphere of media, arts and entertainment.

In New York, the organisation Paradox - that also provides support for people involved in the fashion industry - is bringing together many industry people to their monthly dinners and to their weekly Bible Studies. In LA support organisations such as MasterMedia International and Premise are providing support to screenwriters and directors and continuing their work among media and entertainment executives around the world. A more comprehensive list of the support organisations can be found in this publication and on the HPN website (www.HollywoodPrayerNetwork.org) by clicking on COMMUNITY.

An article for people who want to be part of a foundation of prayer for The Media, Arts & entertainment industries worldwide

Facts

- God is placing more and more Christians into the heart of these industries who need ongoing prayer support
- There is such a hunger for truth and meaning within these industries
- These industries shape us and influence us like no other
- A spiritual change within these industries has global implications
- Prayer is so often the key to seeing personal and national change

Vision

Within the music industry; television companies; fine arts communities and the film industry there are amazing things going on to an extent that we’ll never know. There is a momentum building and I am convinced that NOW is the time to mobilise and encourage the wider church to stand with those whom God has placed into these industries. I believe that a time of change will come about, not through fancy formulas, projects or initiatives, but as we humble ourselves and pray.

I recently had the privilege of speaking to 80 national prayer leaders in the UK about this call to pray for the industries. These leaders, who between them represent thousands of intercessors around the nation, are on board and are encouraging the vision. Combine this with the thousands of people who use the MasterMedia International prayer calendar praying specifically for media executives and the 3000 people connected with the Hollywood Prayer network and we begin to have a significant and vital foundation of prayer.

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For six years in London, people involved in these industries have been coming together to pray for one another and the industries. The same can be said for all the support organisations in New York and LA. Imagine the potential of fusing the prayers of the people within the industry with the thousands of people outside the walls praying in partnership and unity.

If you are in America and want to come on board, go online to Mastermediaintl.org and Hollywoodprayernetwork.org and sign up for their prayer calendar and e-mail network.

You can also email or phone the Hollywood prayer network on: Hollywoodprayernet@earthlink.net Toll free phone: (888)526-9287 ext. 117

In the UK, you can also sign up with these organisations, but I would also like you to be part of the Artisan prayer network so we can send you UK related prayer issues and requests.

Please email us at prayer@artisanprayer.org with your address and details or write to us at the address on page 1.

We are in the process of designing the Artisanprayer.org website and from the next edition this Artisan publication will include a section specifically for the prayer network. This enables the receiver to grow in their understanding of the industry, as well as having a prayer resource to work alongside the website and e-mails that we will develop over time.

Thank you for standing with us at this important time.

Steve Cole

ARTISAN INITIATIVES

In partnership with Larry Poland CEO of MasterMedia International and Karen Covell Director of the Hollywood Prayer Network.

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Contributors:

LUCY NEWMAN
Lucy studied Theology at Cambridge University and then worked for several years as an artist and media communications producer and consultant. She also works as a Development Producer for the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport and is currently studying for an MA at The Royal College of Art in London where she specialised in film and video based work.

NATHAN SCOGGINS
As a result of nearly drowning as a child, Nathan Scoggins maintains a perversely fascination with and fear of the ocean to this day. After studying English and Film at Wesleyan University, Nathan relocated to Los Angeles in 2002 to pursue screenwriting. His first short film, MIDNIGHT CLEAR, was produced in 2003. He and his wife, Katheryne, expect their first child in April.

DAVID OYELOWO
Born in Oxford but now lives in Brighton. He studied at LAMDA. He appeared in BBC Two’s Tomorrow La Scala!, Henry VI for the RSC and the upcoming A Sound Of Thunder with Ben Kingsley. Last year he won the Ian Charleson Award for Best Newcomer in a Classical Play for his lead role in Michael Boyd’s production of Henry VI.

WADE BRADSHAW
Wade lives with his wife Chryse and their children, Ethan, Gibby, Gillian and Fiona at L’Abri, Greatham, Hampshire. L’Abri Fellowship began in Switzerland in 1955 when Francis and Edith Schaeffer decided in faith to open their home to be a place where people might find satisfying answers to their questions and practical demonstration of Christian care.

NIGEL GOODWIN
Nigel Goodwin trained as an actor and, worked in film, television and theatre before combining this experience with a theological training. After helping to found The Arts Centre Group in 1971 along with his wife Gillie, Genesis Arts Trust was set up to expand the Nigel’s work.

PRIYANGA ELAN
Born in Sri Lanka but raised around Guildford, Priyanga went to University in Oxford and studied English. After the degree, she studied at LAMDA and left there 5 years ago. She and her husband Tom live in London, with their son Daniel who was born in July last year, he likes bouncing.

MAKOTO FUJIMURA
Fujimura san is the founder of the International Arts Movement, a board member of the National Endowment for the Arts and a painter whose work explores a combination of contemporary American abstract expressionism and traditional Japanese art of Nihonga.

CHIDI ACHARA
Chidi spent 9 years in the advertising industry before working as a freelance photographer specialising in music and fashion work. He is based in London but spends considerable time in both New York and Paris.

RICH JOHNSON
Moved to NYC from Washinton, DC over 7 years ago for a modeling contract. After working as a model in the U.S. and abroad he eventually took a job in the beauty industry with Guerlain Paris to put himself through acting school. He continues to work at Guerlain and has been fortunate enough to work as an actor in off-Broadway productions, film and television.

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Thanks also to all the writers and contributors.
...AND SO, IT’S ‘OUT WITH THE OLD, AND IN WITH THE NEW’. BACKSTAGE HAS CHANGED, IT’S NOW CALLED ARTISAN. IT’S BECOME MORE AMBITIOUS IF YOU LIKE: NEW NAME, NEW LOGO, BIGGER, BULKIER, MORE PICTURES, MORE CONTENT, MORE GLOBAL, RENEWED VISION, A BIT MORE ATTITUDE, SOME NEW PEOPLE (SAME OLD REGULAR PEOPLE). IT’S A FACE-LIFT, A FAST FORWARD INTO THE 22ND CENTURY (SORT OF)...
GOOD OR BAD? LIKE IT OR NOT?
SEND YOUR THOUGHTS TO:
OPINIONS@ARTISANINITIATIVES.ORG