**ENTP 551: The Entrepreneurial Musician Graduate Seminar**

**Assignment: Personal Mission Statement**

Business leaders use mission statementsto develop organizations by communicating a powerful common understanding of primary objectives, success, purpose and values. As artists, we can use mission statements to guide ourselves to our fullest potential. Naming your values helps you to direct your life purposefully and intentionally in the direction you want it to go.

**Assignment Guidelines**

This assignment is due by midnight on Wednesday March 26. It is worth 10% of your final grade.

**Why Make a Statement?**

* A mission statement reflects your definition of your purpose, and your definition of success. It sets out what you wish to achieve – and why – in specific, measurable terms.
* Writing a mission statement motivates you to define your unique qualities and core values: the things that are truly important to you. Your mission statement can help you to keep these core goals and values in mind and avoid the “drift” that can happen as you take on opportunities or work that pulls you in other directions.
* A mission statement puts a sharp focus on the specific goals and values that are *most* important to you, helping you to direct your energy and resources where they most matter. This helps you make choices, big and small, that line up with your priorities.
* We often wear many hats: your mission statement can help you to keep your focus in your day-to-day life, when multiple areas of responsibility compete for your time and attention.
* You can frame your mission statement to suit a particular purpose: a 30-second introduction, a statement of purpose to be used in grant applications, as the basis for a bio, or for your own personal reference.
* Most of us face limitations from old belief systems that we’ve internalized. Drafting a personal mission statement is *personal.* The point is, you get to decide who you are, what you want to do, what matters most, and how you’ll know when you’ve got it.

**The Writing Process**

A meaningful mission statement reflects much time, thought and investment. For this assignment, you’ll benefit from spending time simply getting started in the process. You’ll create a brief statement for this assignment, but you’ll have a chance revisit it later in the semester as you craft your plan for your final project for the class.

Please be sure to allow yourself plenty of time and space to work on this assignment. I recommend that you return to it several times. There are three steps outlined in the assignment. Begin each step with a period of free writing – a space of 10-15 minutes where you can write anything and everything that comes to mind without judgment or reservation. Then create a rough draft of the section. Don’t judge your work too harshly: the most important thing is to get something on paper that you can later work with. Finally, revise and edit each section. That’s where writing really takes shape; in returning, revising, and relaxing yourself in the process, until you have something that truly reflects your voice.

**Writing Your Mission Statement**

*Adapted from Cathy Wasserman, “Clarifying Your Personal & Professional Mission, Values & Priorities” © 2006, Self Leadership Strategies. For more articles and helpful resources please visit Cathy Wasserman’s website at: http://www.self-leadershipstrategies.com/.*

**Step One: Define Your Values.**

Reflect on your values, those principles that guide your decisions, form the bedrock of your worldview, and about which you are passionate. Clarifying your values will help you in developing a potent mission statement because values motivate us to take action and actively live our purpose. Below are examples of values:

* Creativity
* Perseverance
* Compassion for all people, including myself
* Friendliness
* Family orientation

**List 5-10 of your most important values in order of importance:**

**Step Two: Define Your Priorities**

Next, it is helpful to clarify where your priorities lie, both personally and professionally, that is, where you truly want to direct your personal energy, time and other resources. The priorities that form the backbone of a mission statement should be relatively broad and overarching, whereas your yearly, quarterly, and weekly goals should be much more specific. Below are examples of priorities:

* To continually grow as an artist and musician.
* To provide my daughter with a lot of emotional and financial support.
* To make sure I get adequate exercise and rest each week.
* To expand the notion of what a classical music audience can be.
* To continually educate myself in my field of “x.”

**Please list 5-10 of your most important priorities in order of importance:**

**Step Three: Craft Your Mission Statement**

Mission statements incorporate values and priorities as well as the personal and professional impacts that you would like to make. It is important that you feel strongly, if not, passionately about everything that you include in your statement so that you are motivated to live it on a daily basis. Indeed, your mission should include the personal qualities that you want to exhibit and/or develop and the kind of person that you want to be rather than just what you want to do. It may be short or longer- typically they run from a couple of sentences to one page in length. Whatever its length, if it does not move you to read it, then it is a good idea to continue the reflection process, tap into more of your core purpose and continue working on it.

A very short mission statement might say:

*I am committed to living my life with compassion and care for all people, including myself and with a strong emphasis on and attention to my family. Professionally, I am passionate about helping to elect progressive candidates through highly innovative fundraising, event planning, and the development of persuasive campaign material. I am also committed to devoting the time necessary to develop my staff’s skills and to assist them in meeting their own mission statements as best as I can.*

**Please begin your mission statement below, considering the values and priorities you listed above, along with your reflections on who you want to be and the impacts you want to make personally and professionally:**