



## An Engineer's Dream: The Story of Melotte

By Saskia Tjepkema



Mario Fleurinck is an entrepreneur/engineer passionate about digital manufacturing. Before today, I didn't know this even existed. But Mario engaged us in his passion from the first moments of his keynote at the World Appreciative Inquiry Conference.

He shared his discovery, back in 1996, of this alternative way of making "stuff." On a visit to the Boeing factory, R&D lab engineers showed him something that he describes as "a big fish-tank-like glass box in which flashy light streams and sparkles could be seen. Out of the sparkles, an engine component slowly 'grew.'" Mario couldn't believe his eyes and was immediately struck by this new technology. "I called my father, told him: this is the future!"

Ever since, he has been striving to create viable business models based on this manufacturing method with his company Melotte. He is convinced this is "not only good for society and the environment, it also makes good business sense." In his own authentic way, he is living David Cooperrider's motto: doing well by doing good.

For non-engineers like me: analog manufacturing is the traditional way of producing by using natural, tangible resources such as minerals or oil. But these resources will eventually be exhausted. And the manufacturing process produces waste, including carbon, material spills and transportation costs.

Digital manufacturing is a totally different way of transforming materials into products, using a minimum of raw materials and energy. It looks a bit like "3D printing" in the clips that Mario shows. Renewable resources are used, so the impact on environment is small. And production can stay local. Because you don't need materials from all over the world.

Considering his work in terms of the Appreciative Inquiry cycle, Mario has gone from the Discover, Dream and Design phase to the stage of Destiny, working very hard to make his dream come alive. He is tuning his business model, spreading the word and sharing his energy and knowledge with people all over the world.

And judging from his positive and energetic determination, and the way his message resonates with the audience, he is going to realize this dream long before his self-chosen deadline of 2015.

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## 'Stop the Thieves'

A bit of local history

By Annelies Poppe



In 1934, one of the biggest art thefts in history took place in Ghent. It involved a part of The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb, a beautiful painting, consisting of multiple oak panels.

Created in the 15th century by Jan en Hubert van Eyck of the Flemish Primitives, it is a magnificent work of art, with paintings on the back side as well.

On the night of April 10th of the said year, two panels of the Adoration of the Mystic Lamb (Het Lam Gods) were stolen from the Saint Bavo Cathedral: The Just Judges and John The Baptist.

The panels were used to blackmail the Bishop of Ghent. The kidnappers made sure that one panel, John The Baptist, was found. This way, they could put more pressure on their ransom demand for the other panel. Their efforts were without result, however, because the public prosecutor did not want to negotiate with thieves.

It is believed that the thief was called Arsène Goedertier. On his death bed, he told his friend that he was the only one who knew where the panel was, and that no one would be able to take the painting from its hiding place without attracting attention of all people.

The panel was never retrieved. Even today, amateur sleuths come up with well-researched ideas to solve the riddle. Some of the possible locations have been searched, including behind the altar in the Saint Bavo cathedral, and in a well. Other locations haven't been searched yet, such as the Royal Crypt of King Albert I, a church in Antwerp and chapels in Berlare. Some say that the Just Judges are part of a private collection. Others suggest that ransom has been paid and that the panel is back, but no one will admit it.

Perhaps during your stay for the World Appreciative Inquiry Conference you will stumble into it. If so, please let us know #2012WAIC

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## Cees Study

Confucius and Language

Once upon a long ago, when the pupils asked Confucius what he should do if he were chosen leader of the country, the wise man thought for a while and answered: "I would use the language carefully." Deeply inspired by this, when explaining social construction as an introduction to an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) experience, I often use the following "sentence" by turning over five flip charts, saying:

Co-operate  
I'd rather  
Stop with it right now  
Those endless discussions  
I want to get rid of it



In many organizations, this "sigh" causes recognition. And because it's just a matter of turning back the pages, I always find great pleasure in reading the sentence "upwards". Smiling faces. A surprising alternative emerges:

I want to get rid of it  
Those endless discussions  
Stop with it right now  
I'd rather  
Co-operate



So, with exactly the same words, we can suggest a complete turnaround!  
How about that?

After absorbing the digital manufacturing keynote of Mario Fleurinck, I tweeted about UPS deciding to skip the left turns of their vans, realizing amazing savings. And I wondered what the quality must have been of the organizational context and culture in which someone could bring in that brilliant idea. Brilliant? He or she just turned a few words around, and used the language very well.

I was not the only one to express my enthusiasm. A fellow conference participant found it "extraordinary" that Melotte shares all its 3D-printing knowledge on the internet, enabling global growth in digital printing locations. I fully agree. At the same time I thought that it would be even more constructive to call the Melotte approach "ordinary"... Do you see what I mean?

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## Book Signings

By Griet Bouwen

Have you seen the beautiful collection of books we have at WAIC 2012? And did you know there are also a couple of the authors attending this conference? On Friday and Saturday, we have scheduled some book signing sessions.

### Friday

10h Diana Whitney signs "Appreciative Leadership and The Power of Appreciative Inquiry".

12h Klaas Van Egmont signs "Een vorm van beschaving" (Dutch).

12h Ron Fry signs the focus book Appreciative Inquiry, & Herman Wittockx signs "Appreciative Inquiry, het basiswerk" (Dutch), together with Ron Fry.

16h Myrielle Meeus & Griet Bouwen sign "Vuurwerk" (Dutch).

16h Marcel Van Marrewijk signs "Cubrix, inzicht in organisatieontwikkeling en performanceontwikkeling" (Dutch).

### Saturday

12h Gervase Bushe signs his book "Clear Leadership".

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## Storytelling Scales Up Change in Business

By Griet Bouwen



Since 2003, Brazil has had a yearly conference where business people gather and share stories about how they succeed in creating benefits for society and their business. Ilma Barros, the energizer behind this effort, says the initiative has inspired other organisations to increase their societal awareness. The organisers have also discovered that the companies telling the stories scale up their societal efforts after presenting at the conference.

A year after one conference, Ilma inquired into the effects the gathering had on the presenting companies. "The companies told us that after the conference, they generated new and interesting partnerships, and even a whole new way of building these partnerships," she says. "They also reported an impact on the growth of their business. And it was definitely clear that presenting at the conference propelled more positive exchange and dissemination of their good practices."

These conferences have also had a remarkable effect on the image of the organisations, leading to more opportunities for projects. "With the help of the media, they shifted their way of reporting on this issues," says Ilma.

It is clear that storytelling can scale up change in business and society. Through stories, we can connect business interests to societal issues. There are lots of opportunities out there. It is like Peter Drucker said: "Every single social and global issue we face is a business opportunity in disguise".

Business has the opportunity to be a new creative force on the planet that could contribute to the wellbeing of people and planet. Through the sharing of stories of creative initiatives that are already taken, we can scale up this generative power.

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## "What was the Most Fun Thing You did Today?"

By Stijn Govaerts

Is there one simple question to bring out the best in your family, friends, partners and colleagues? Yes, said author Ada Jo Mann, in a presentation at the World Appreciative Inquiry Conference in Ghent, Belgium Thursday: What was the most fun thing you did today?

Ada Jo is author of the book, Positive Family Dynamics: Appreciative Inquiry Questions to Bring Out the Best in Families, which contains 56 simple everyday questions based on Appreciative Inquiry (AI). "You can use the questions even in difficult situations," Ada Jo said. For instance, when your child comes home from school and tells you he doesn't want to play with his friend ever again because of his bullying behavior during the day, try to flip the situation. Ask your child to do a magic trick and describe the perfect friend for him. Don't focus on the problem, but try to find the opposite of what's not working. Behind every problem there is a yearning. And if you both find that yearning, you both can understand the situation and try to move on.

### Addicted

"Reframing the thought process behind your behavior towards your family is like developing a muscle," Ada Jo continued, speaking passionately. "Even my kids need to tell me from time to time to put the AI approach into practice again," she laughed. "But you get addicted to the appreciative, affirmative approach to life.

"Sadly enough, people are programmed to search for problems and try to solve them. But I am convinced that families benefit from looking into possibilities instead of focusing on problems and trying to fix them. Every question you ask in an appreciative, generative way will provoke a response that turns you into an appreciating parent, partner or friend."

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## Read more news online

**Raising Martha** – Martha is the one year old daughter of Annelies Poppe, member of the media-crew. Annelies wondered around at the WAIC, looking through the eyes of her child. What the little child sees and hears, sure is promising. **Loving your Job and the People You Work with** – M-crew reporter Saskia Tjepkema shares the story of the Dutch IT firm Schuberg Philis. They changed the organisation by changing the conversations. **Unlikely Connections Renew Orgs** – Michelle Strutzenberger, generative journalist at Axiom shares stories of two organisations that inspired her. **Compassionate economies** – Reflections on participating in two workshops by our senior M-crew member Jac De bruyn. **How to interweave micro practices in daily conversation?** - Cees Hoogendijk returns to Richard Rorty to question this question.

## How a Member of VOV Lived up to his Workshop

By Koen Joly



### Exciting news. We're in to host a workshop for the WAIC.

We want to make the difference.  
We want to share our passion with the participants.  
We want to raise the energy.  
We want to move people.  
We want to tell our story and create new stories.  
We want a lot.

### Thursday 26th of April.

We're gathering.  
Eight people willing to make a difference.  
About 50 people join us to make passion spaghetti.  
It starts and it happens.  
People share their passions.  
Energy rises.

### Afterwards it feels rather strange.

We feel the energy.  
We share stories and things that happened.  
We feel beautiful things happened.  
Amazing how we did it again.

### The secret?

All crew members do what gives them energy.  
There is a lot of space for the participants to co-create.  
Things happen. And it's good like that.

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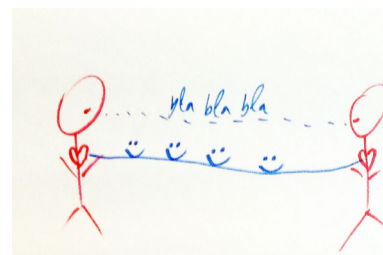
## A Smile is What We All have in Common

By Lara Emde

The moment Dr. Danielle Zandee and Dr. Kenneth Gergen asked about micro Appreciative Inquiry practices in their engaging keynote conversation Thursday, I immediately thought of kissing. If you've been in Belgium for some time, you might have noticed that's our way of greeting.

I grew up in Brussels in a Belgian-German family, and I still find it funny to see how German family members, especially men, freeze when they're kissed hello by Belgian relatives. Same goes for colleagues. I love to visit organisations where people stand up from their computers and desks to say hello – and kiss. When I told this to two participants from the UK sitting next to me, they smiled and said "not possible in our country". Tapping your shoulder, touching your arm, kissing your cheek, ... anyone who has ever been on an intercultural event knows how important and yet delicate it can be.

Fortunately, there is at least one micro practice I've experienced at this conference -- which brings together many different cultures and nations -- at least a 100 times. Everyone does it. It's one of the first things you learn as a baby. It's not kissing obviously. And it's an important part of my life.



In the workshop on appreciative listening today Karen Cabral and Jacques Philippaert made a wonderful drawing that I would like to share with you. They drew a conversation, an exchange of words and -- on a deeper level -- an exchange of smiles, connecting their hearts.

What a wonderful day! Enjoy and smile.

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