

“If I could start over, would I choose a different career?”

In each issue of WMB, our readers share with us, how they took....

“According to Charles Darwin “It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.” Well... Thank God for that! Because life has shown me that I am nothing, if not adaptable!

My inch thick glasses made me look somewhat ‘stupid’ as a child and ensured that I became a prime target for every bully in the school-ground — and most of the teachers in the classrooms. “Come now Ms Lowe,” they’d say, “you could at least LOOK intelligent.” And then they would cast me a look of utter disdain and say the words that would unwittingly create my future, “You’ll never be anything but a dreamer”.

Did you know that the word ‘Dreamer’ is actually a dirty word in the schoolteacher dictionary? God forbid that a child would have an idea that was not already held in the hallowed curriculum! But that’s what I did. I dreamed.

“Dad, I want to be an Opera Singer,” I said as my Dad washed the dishes after dinner one evening. He was singing his favourite song ‘Blue Moon’. He never knew the words and always made up the most ridiculous lyrics. I stood like a sentinel to his left drying and stacking the dishes in our little assembly line of two and trying not to let him see me giggling at his inadequate attempts to make the lines of the song rhyme. “An opera singer?” he asked. “Yeah, I saw an opera on the telly today and I’d like to be an opera singer”. “Grand”, he said, “Be an opera singer so, if you like,” as if it was the most normal thing in the world. I mean I’d never sung a song in my life and the nun who trained the school choir had actually told

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A CHANGE OF CAREER A CHANGE OF HEART

me, in no uncertain terms, that I was to “Mime Miss Lowe, MIME!”

In hindsight I thought I was asked to mime because I was rubbish and in sister’s eyes I probably was. Because I was in fact a twelve-year-old child with the voice of a 40 year old black soul queen! Indeed, my voice was probably more suited to an adult audience than an angelic choir.

So, I lied about my age, “I’m sixteen” said the 12 year old child and got a part-time job in a delicatessen. I watched and learned everything I could and was headhunted at the ripe old age of 14 by a rival business and felt really good about it.

At 17, I entered a ‘Serious’ music competition. It wasn’t just for classical singers, it was also for pianists and string players and wind players. But everyone said, “It’s always a pianist, no-one has a chance of winning, unless they’re a pianist!”

“You haven’t a hope,” said my voice teacher, “There’s much better singers than you in for it. This is the biggest financial bursary in the world Carol Anne. A pianist will definitely win! You’re such a dreamer.” And so I dreamed and I believed... But... I also worked my butt off!! And much to everybody’s surprise, I won.

I became an International Opera Singer and I sang on the great stages of the world. Covent Garden, La Scala, from continent to continent. I lived what looked like ‘The Lifestyle of The Rich & Famous’ but was in reality ‘The Lifestyle of The Lonely’. Staying at the best hotels, but longing to be where I could use my very own washing machine and make my very own dinner. Bliss!

Then one day I realised that I could stage my own concerts, which would allow me to sing what I wanted to sing in the places I wanted to be. I believed that I knew what would attract the biggest audience, in business it’s called improving your bottom line, I just called it ‘common sense’.

And so the Opera Singer became the owner of an events company... with a workforce of one! I was concert promoter, stage director, music arranger, casting agent, marketing and PR consultant, lighting and stage designer and... oh yes, a singer! And the audiences came and the critics said, “Opera Singers shouldn’t prostitute themselves in this way. She shouldn’t sing Carmen and Orfeo and Traviata in the same concert. And if she thinks people will come then she must be dreaming!” But they did come and the concerts sold out and the TV offers came in and I just kept on dreaming.

“As for me, I am loving my life and my job. There are so many lessons learned when we are children that we don’t realise until much, much later. But the great thing is that it’s never too late. We have to dream the dream before it can become our reality.”

And then one night in Dublin Castle as I sang to a delegation of foreign dignitaries, a famous Politician came up and asked me: “Can you teach me to do that?” “What” I smiled “Sing like me? Or look this good in a dress?”

“Neither” he said, “I want to make people listen when I talk; I want them to be so caught up in what I’m saying that even if a fire breaks out and the alarm bells are ringing they won’t leave till I tell them to!”

Now that was really funny, because only the previous week I had been singing in a Cathedral in Germany, to a very Germanic audience, when God had seen fit to unchain one of the 40 foot high

stained glass windows from it’s mortared domain in the adjoining vestibule, only to crash in an unholy blast of noise and dust right in the middle of the quiet section of Franz List’s ‘Die Lorelei’.

As the music crescendo’d in a flurry of notes, the dust and plaster rose in a Hiroshima-like cloud between the audience and me. And while the shattered coloured glass cast rainbows of heavenly light across the mist of faces, I sang of the waters as they wrapped their ravenous waves around a lonely sailor and as the music ended and the dust settled, I beheld an entire audience covered in grey dust, which had not budged an inch till the song had ended!

“Oh That” I said, “Yeah, I can teach you to hold an audience, Sure that’s easy. It’s called master stage-craft” And so my communications company was born. I called it Blue Moon Communications in honour of my Dad and the fun we had when he’d sing and I’d dream.

My politician went on to great things and he in turn sent me many other world leaders in both business and politics, whom I train and mentor to present with power and confidence. Blue Moon Communications has gone from strength to strength and now has its own Sales Training Division, PR and Marketing Department, a Design Graphics team and a TV Productions company.

And as for me, I am loving my life and my job. There are so many lessons learned when we are children that we don’t realise until much, much later. But the great thing is that it’s never too late. We have to dream the dream before it can become our reality.

You see, Darwin was right, we have to be adaptable to survive in this world and I like to think that he would have agreed with the children’s author Roald Dahl when he said, “We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams.”