

Three Types of Creators

Perfector. Innovator. Synthesizer. Which type of creative are you?

[Scott Myers](#)



My son Will is a graduate of a five-year dual degree program at Tufts University and the New England Conservatory. They received two Bachelor's degrees with three majors: Cognitive and Brain Sciences, Music Theory and Music Composition. Currently, they are their final year of a doctoral program at the University of Chicago in music composition. Obviously, a smart young person! So when they express their ideas... I listen.

Recently, they shared with me a theory they had developed. The basic idea is that there are three types of creators:

1. Perfecter — An artist who takes a current style and maximizes its potential, elevating it to the best it can be (e.g. Bach, Mozart, Brahms, Spielberg, James Cameron, Stephen King, Pixar, etc.)

2. Innovator — An artist who breaks the mold, consistently trying new things or pioneering a new style (e.g. Beethoven, Schoenberg, Kubrick, Picasso, Joyce, Dalí, etc.)

3. Synthesizer — An artist who draws from disparate sources, makes unexpected connections, and creates something both familiar and new (e.g. Ligeti, Stravinsky, David Lynch, Tarantino, Murakami, etc.)

Comparing Steven Spielberg to Stanley Kubrick to Quentin Tarantino. Or Bach to Schoenberg to Stravinsky. Each is considerably different and certainly there are numerous contributing factors as to why that is the case. But this theory is intriguing because it suggests that their differences are influenced in part by the very nature of their creative instincts — specifically what inspired them and what their goals were.

If I am a *perfecter*, I see what has come before and discern value and beauty there, therefore my goal is to elevate that form to its highest expression.

If I am a *synthesizer*, I see what has come before and

discern connections no one else does, which inspires me to pull them together in unusual ways.

If I'm an *innovator*, I see what has come before and feel restricted by conventional norms and patterns, so much so that my goal is to blaze new ways of creative expression.

Another fascinating aspect of this theory is that creators can evolve over a lifetime. For example, one may start out trying to perfect a current form of expression, then decide to stretch by incorporating unusual conceits into that conventional form, then eventually punch through the membrane of *what is* opening the door to *what can become*.

Obviously these categories have limitations common to any descriptive term, but it occurs to me they can have a benefit for writers by asking this question: *What type of creator are you?*

And this question: *What type of creator may I feel the pull to become?*

Perfector. Synthesizer. Innovator.

Which type of creator are you?

Not surprising that Will came up with this theory as it may describe something of their own metamorphosis as a composer. You may listen to several compositions by Will by going [here](#).