



Creative Collaboration

Vera John-Steiner

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Rodin's sculpture "The Thinker" dominates our collective imagination as the purest representation of human inquiry--the lone, stoic thinker. But while the Western belief in individualism romanticizes this perception of the solitary creative process, the reality is that scientific and artistic forms emerge from the joint thinking, passionate conversations, emotional connections and shared struggles common in meaningful relationships. In *Creative Collaboration*, Vera John-Steiner offers rare and fascinating glimpses into the dynamic alliances from which some of our most important scholarly ideas, scientific theories and art forms are born. Within these pages we witness the creative process unfolding in the intimate relationships of Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, Henry Miller and Anais Nin, Marie and Pierre Curie, Martha Graham and Erick Hawkins, and Georgia O'Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz; the productive partnerships of Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, Albert Einstein and Marcel Grossmann, Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein, and Freeman Dyson and Richard Feynman; the familial collaborations of Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Hubert and Stuart Dreyfus, and Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson and Mary Catherine Bateson; and the larger ensembles of The Guarneri String Quartet, Lee Strasburg, Harold Clurman and The Group Theater, and such feminist groups as The Stone Center and the authors of *Women's Ways of Knowing*. Many of these collaborators complemented each other, meshing different backgrounds and forms into fresh styles, while others completely transformed their fields. Here is a unique cultural and historical perspective on the creative process. Indeed, by delving into these complex collaborations, John-Steiner illustrates that the mind--rather than thriving on solitude--is clearly dependent upon the reflection, renewal and trust inherent in sustained human relationships. Here is a unique cultural and historical perspective on the creative process, and a compelling depiction of the associations that nurtured our most talented artists and thinkers. By delving into these complex, intimate collaborations, John-Steiner illustrates that the mind--rather than thriving on solitude--is clearly dependent upon the dialogue, renewal, and trust inherent in sustained human relationships.

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