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## Daily Summary (October 5, 2017)

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# Inspiring Voices

## Base Camp and Joe's Violin Screening & Discussion

### Rocky Kimball, FRED Leadership Co-Founder

The last day of the FRED Forum 2017 opened with another poetry reading by JoJo Fresnedi, entitled "Gates of Inclusion."

The Tiffany Rea-Fisher and Elisa Monte Dance Company provided another moving dance, entitled "Arc."



Perhaps one of most memorable aspects of Day 3, and arguably of the forum overall, was the viewing of the short documentary film, "Joe's Violin," a poignant and uplifting story about a ninety-one-year-old Holocaust survivor, Joe, who donates his unused violin to a program collecting instruments for schools. The violin goes to a K-8 charter school in the

Bronx, where all children learn violin beginning in kindergarten. Specifically, it is given to a 12-year-old girl named Brianna, who is mature far beyond her years, and whose love and passion for music shines when she plays.

The documentary follows both Joe and Brianna, their heartwarming introduction and the improbable friendship that is forged through their shared love of music.

Indulged with the effects of watching the film in the Time Warner Center's screening room, it's safe to say there was not a dry eye in the room.

However, the even bigger surprise was an appearance and informal interview with the documentary's director, Kahane Cooperman, Brianna Perez, and her teacher Ms. Kokoe Tanaka-Suwan. Brianna and Kokoe even delighted the

audience with a beautiful duet of Pachelbel’s Cannon in D.



This experience indeed exemplifies “what FRED is about,” and it is difficult

to articulate into words. No doubt each participant took away his or her own meaningful message. But when asked, the three cast members shared that what they hoped viewers took away included:

- Music is a universal language that can unite even the most unlikely people
- Everyone is connected to everyone and everything in life in ways you may never suspect
- A small gesture can go a long way

### **Leadership at the Edge:** Hamish Wilson, Managing Director, Wasafiri

The final speaker at the Forum was Hamish Wilson, Managing Director of an organization called Wasafiri. Swahili for “travelers,” Wasafiri helps tackle complex problems, often setting up relief efforts in areas in crisis or that have experienced natural disasters.

Through a series of (somewhat shocking and unbelievable) stories of his experience in places like Darfur, Islamabad or Sierra Leone, Hamish shared several leadership lessons he has learned, in some cases, the (very) hard way.

“Good judgment comes from experience ... but experience comes from bad judgment”



He posed these lessons as provocative questions including:

- What is your leadership truth?
- What matters to you? ... and the importance of *passion*
- What do you believe in? ... and the importance of *belief*
- How prepared are you to act? ... and the importance of *action*

- Will you challenge the status quo? ... and the importance of *courage*
- Why would anyone want to be led by you? ... and the importance of *humility*
- How do you lead through others? ... and the importance of *collaboration*
- How do you embrace risk and failure? ... and the importance of *wisdom*
- How do you respond in the tough moments? ... and the importance of *resilience*

Perhaps the most provocative moment of Hamish’s talk culminated in his suggestion that the group ignore these points altogether. He described that they depicted leadership for *him* ... and is not necessarily the same for everyone. He offered that leadership must start from within, and encouraged everyone to define what it means individually. He closed with a slideshow of beautiful images from his journeys to Moby’s song “Slipping Away.”

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“Focus on everything better today ...  
Hold onto people they’re slipping away,  
hold onto this while it’s slipping away...”  
*Slipping Away, by Moby*

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**We would like to thank all those who attended the 2017 FRED Forum and especially all of the FRED Sponsors who make the FRED Forum possible.**

- **The FRED Board of Directors and David Small, Executive Director**