

The Best Show In Town

*Welcome. We're honored to have world famous author and educator
Maxim Maurisani as our guest today.*

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The camera pans briefly to my father, who looks a lot younger but also unhappy, then back to the interviewer.

We begin our program on the terrace of Altair Institute, that magnificent structure you see behind me that Mr. Maurisani calls home. It's also where he conducts his popular classes that have earned him a reputation as a kind of magician...

Daddy was a genius of self-promotion back then, showing up on every talk show and tabloid. I stopped following his career when I realized he talked about all the same stuff I heard growing up. Is this a promo or what?

The mere mention of his name brings the unsolicited praise of his students and friends. He has been called "inspiring," "life-changing," and a "true gift"...

And those bags under his eyes, oh my. If they were any bigger he could take a trip. Maybe it's okay for a wise man with "eye-deas." Hey, try this out: my old-fashioned, toy-making, storytelling dad who carries around a lifetime of ideas in those bags. Hmh. Kinda corny. Wait, is this the interview with that obnoxious man that wears a red carnation? I love it! Turn it up.

Mr. Maurisani has dedicated his life to increasing our knowledge of ourselves. Time after time he has swung his lantern over the next step in understanding our creative process and obliged us to follow him. He rose to world prominence almost twenty-five years ago when he stormed the literary and academic worlds with the publication of his now seminal book A NEW GAME. I have just re-read it and can honestly say it is still impressive and elegant and com-

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pulsively readable, endlessly fascinating and informative, a timeless source of inspiration and reference, and perhaps most importantly a call to arms to create a more humane society. But he is best known for his pioneering and penetrating teaching reforms. He taught us, and I quote, “From knowledge comes respect, from respect comes tolerance, and from tolerance the hope we must give the needy to dream and triumph over hardship. And in the beginning of knowledge is patience.” For more than two decades now, prominent citizens from all walks of life—government, the arts, business and science—have graced his stage and sought his counsel. But he insists his message is for everyone, not just the privileged. Let’s find out what crosses that remarkable mind these days.

The camera pans prematurely to my father, whose fingers are exiting his mouth, having just delivered some tasty treat. An embarrassed grin blooms on his face as the camera pans back to the interviewer. Daddy is heard mumbling off camera,

A napkin! My kingdom for a napkin!

Ahem. Thank you for allowing us into your lovely home today.

Daddy, still off camera,

It really is true what they say: it’s easier to keep your hands clean when you wear a tie.

Or should I say Altair Institute?

Daddy, finally in focus and smiling,

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I like to call it a scientific carnival.

O-kay. Let's begin with a subject that's dear to both of us. I think it was Socrates who said that art and entertainment have an ennobling effect on our lives. And now—

I think it was Aristotle.

But I'm sure it was—

Does it matter, Mr. Frost?

Well, no, but... People everywhere are saying that you bring down the house every night—

My students expect it.

And never before in the history of the world has any one individual helped so many to help themselves.

The way I see it, we were all put here on earth to help one another. What the rest are here for I really don't know.

I'm sure you have found great satisfaction in the knowledge that your giving, which is widely acknowledged to be a great philanthropy to society, has made it possible for so many to transform their dreams into discoveries and inventions and achieve their goals.

I find that when I give I also receive—that I grow personally as a result of giving. There is also an enlarged sense of meaning in my life along with renewed energy. I'm truly grateful for the opportunities I've had. Yep.

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Your work at Altair Institute has been praised for restoring sight to the blind, and that includes the many sighted that come here as well. Your program has become an anchor for the academic community and an integral part of every student's experience with the history of ideas. Please tell us a little about it.

The heart of our program is ideas—that's ideas with a capital "I". At Altair Institute we measure success by the quality of a person's actions and ideas, not finery and worldly possessions. In general terms, we teach our students to seek positive change through positive action, to become aware but not jaded, and to become a guardian of nature's gifts, not a hoarder of manufactured goods. There are two levels in the program. The first I call A Child's Garden. Using a three-dimensional imaging system, I am able to teach children ages two and older to literally hardwire their creative process. Later studies, beginning at about age thirteen, use my Hall of Columns, a state-of-the-art knowledge center. Both levels give our students the tools they need to succeed. And as their abilities improve they become motivated to succeed even more. But of all of my creations I am most proud of my Maquette, which I'm sure you know is the operating system for both levels. I just happen to have a quote here from the Health and Welfare Secretary.

Didn't I see the Secretary's autographed photo in your office?

Yep. Oh, I hope you don't think it's bragging that I have it out where you can see it... Here it is. Madam Secretary writes, "Of all the tools that would-be time-travelers can put on their wish list today, no other invention is as singularly powerful and easy to use as Max Mumble's Maquette."

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Very nice. Historians have hailed your Maquette as the most effective teaching tool ever devised. Those who have seen you use it say you command it with a skill that simply astonishes. They say the lessons in your seminars are, and I quote, "...somehow woven together with a net of magic beyond anything we know." And more than instruct, some say your classes "seem to dream." Alright, let's take off the gloves now. Doesn't it seem that fact and fantasy mingled in equal parts have gathered around your Maquette until it has taken on an almost mythical quality? Now, would you mind telling our viewers what it really can do?

No. And, certainly. In sum, my Maquette is my crowning jewel. It's a principal point of access for people of ambition and talent, a quiet force from which power and strength derive, one of the world's great facilitating devices, an intellectual treasure house, a cauldron of discovery, a maker of ideas.

O-kay. And for those of us that are technically impaired, please tell us how it works.

Think for a moment how sophisticated our mental process is. For example, if we see something within our reach and the lights go out, what happens? We can still find it, isn't that right? We call that "image mapping" and it gives us the ability to extend our perceptions of reality moment by moment into the future. Building on that, my Maquette uses a defined process of "neural mapping" combined with hypnosis to unlock the positive power of the mind. And through a process of subliminal queuing that is infinitely more realistic and more personal than VR interactive technologies, it ties into your neural network to re-map reality and give form to your current energies and ideas. My Maquette can

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literally coax your unconscious out to play as if you were dreaming.

Then it's a kind of dream machine and computer rolled into one?

Yes and no. Unlike computers, my Maquette has no instruction program and works by selection upon variation, the same as the human mind. And by acting as a kind of window to the soul, it allows you to believe what you see. So if you don't have a mentor, my Maquette can act as one for you. It even helped me solve the meaning of an ancient text once thought impossible to decipher. And it's guaranteed not to rip, tear, bare, snare or bite the baby.

Beg pardon?

It's good for you.

Uh-huh. And where does the name come from?

Well, I kinda made it up. It comes from the Latin root "to model." History teaches us that the surest path to success is to model ourselves after successful people that have come before us. It's the same reason that having a mentor can help you make it—

click...fast-forwarding...click

First of all, it's not practical. It's not reasonable and it's not realistic. It's also not safe—

click...click

Let me show you what I mean. I have a confession to make. I was