Richard Florida, author of the global best sellers *The Rise of the Creative Class* and *Who’s Your city*, is scheduled to release a new book in the coming months entitled *The Rise of the Creative Class Revisited* in which he takes a deeper look at the forces that are shaping our economy and the way we live today.

Florida is well known for his research and theories of the creative class and how today’s creativity is revolutionizing the global economy. His ideas have been used to help in campaigns for companies such as Apple Inc., BMW, IBM and many others as well as numerous cities worldwide in order to help transform their economic prosperity.

Currently director of the Martin Prosperity Institute, Professor of Business and Creativity at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto and with Professorships at universities such as Harvard, MIT, Carnegie Mellon, and George Mason, we can see how this modern genius can be in high demand. With those seeking well-researched advice, concepts and inspiration, from problem solving to strategy development, Richard Florida has much to offer leading organizations and thus serves as one of the most sought after speakers.

RAINE Magazine recently caught up with Mr. Florida to gain insight on what is coming up in the new book and why his research and analysis of the creative class is so innovative.

RAINE: How would you describe your younger self?
Richard Florida: Curious, inquisitive, interested—not much different than I am now.

RAINE: What did you plan to be as an adult when you were a kid?
Richard Florida: Jimi Hendrix was my childhood idol, as both a guitar-player and an all around musician. I am still more at home in a guitar store than a bookstore.

RAINE: Have you ever had a life changing experience? What was it? What happened?
Richard Florida: Going to college. It took me out of a working-class environment where boys fought almost everyday and where I had to hide the fact that I was smart. For the first time, I felt like I could be myself. I was free to pursue my interests, and I was surrounded by really interesting people.

RAINE: What was your college experience like?
Richard Florida: Fantastic! Rutgers College was a terrific experience. I took classes in political science, economics, and urban planning. I played in a band with my brother and some of our friends. I saw great live music, from Bruce Springsteen and the E-Street Band to the Gang of Four and Dexter Gordon (Rutgers has a terrific jazz program). I hung out in great bars at night, discussing everything from music and cities to food with my buddies—one of whom was Mario Batali.

RAINE: What do you believe have been some of the effects of the declining economy on the creative class?
Richard Florida: I don’t believe the economy is declining. We are undergoing an epochal economic transformation, perhaps the biggest and most fundamental in world history. For most of human history, economies created wealth by harnessing natural resources. During the Industrial Revolution, we added machines and technology. Economists used to say that land, labor and capital were the three factors of production. But now creativity itself has become the most important factor of all. The crisis and economic transformation is more than a financial crisis and more than an economic crisis—it reflects the rise of this new creativity-powered economy, which is supplanting the old industrial order. We are in an interregnum when the old order is collapsing and the new order is not yet fully born. A new global economic order is taking shape, but it is still confined within the brittle carapace of the old.

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RAINE: What can we look forward to in your new book?
Richard Florida: Creativity is already transforming virtually every facet of the global economy. The Creative Class has taken hold in countries across the world. While about a third of Americans are fortunate to do Creative Class work, in Singapore the figure is almost half of the work force. The Creative Class numbers 46 percent of the workforce in the Netherlands, and 45 percent in Switzerland. In Australia, it’s 44.5 percent.

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