

## **TWO MEN TALKING**

### Lecture/Demonstration

Murray Nossel is an Academy Award nominated documentary filmmaker. Paul Browde is a psychiatrist in New York City. They are co-founders of Narativ Inc., a company whose mission is “a world connected through listening and telling personal stories.” Murray and Paul have known each other since they were 12 year old boys in South Africa. Their relationship was not always one of friendship. There were many years of estrangement after an incident of bullying that occurred at school.

After re-meeting coincidentally in New York many years later, they have spent the past twenty years making sense of the incident that happened at school, and mining their past for stories. The venue for this exploration has been a live unscripted storytelling performance called Two Men Talking, which they have performed around the world, including on the West End of London, and Off Broadway in New York City. Through the process of this performance, they have come to understand the reciprocal relationship between listening and telling. While it is generally understood that what we say affects how we are heard, they have come to appreciate how the shape of the listening constitutes telling. Their extensive narrative research has led them to understand how human beings are constituted by the space between them, and how every interaction is a co-creation. They teach this method in workshops in multiple settings as well as in Columbia University's Masters in Narrative Medicine.

In this talk, they will demonstrate their storytelling method and the way in which they have taught others to listen and tell. In a culture that encourages individuality, the willingness to honor the space between people as a generative space which has greater creative potential than either individual alone, requires discipline, self- awareness and practice. They will talk about the practice of leading from ‘the space between’, and the difficulties that this presents. They will demonstrate the power of this way of relating, using examples of their work as an advocacy tool with organizations such as UNICEF, The Open Society Foundation and the International Transport Worker's Federation. Narativ has worked in the USA, Africa, Australia and Europe with a diverse range of groups including truck drivers, community leaders, communications specialists and people with intellectual disabilities. Narativ also works in corporate settings.