

The Presentation of Self in Theatre - An ethnographic study of people working in theatre and their identity

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Abstract

Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to explore the identity of those people, who work in theatres and co-operate in order to create the cultural products of theatres, meaning theatrical performances. In this thesis, identity is studied through the dramaturgical perspective presented by Erving Goffman (1959) in his book “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life”. Consequently, this thesis wishes to discover how the people studied present themselves in their everyday working life. In addition, this study also discusses how these people define their theatre, as well as how they interact in their everyday working life through their presentations of self. Overall, the aim of this study is to generate more knowledge of such people, who work in theatres, as well as more knowledge of theatres as art organizations.

Research method

This ethnographic study was conducted in Kuopio City Theatre in Finland during spring 2014 with partial immersion to the field. The research methods utilized were participant observation and interviewing. The texts generated through these methods, then, were analyzed by using ethnographic analysis.

Findings

This thesis discusses the presentations of self of three different dramaturgical performance teams inside the theatre studied in this thesis. It is argued that the people, who work in this theatre, wish to be seen first and foremost as the experts of their designated field of theatrical work. Furthermore, they are argued to have strong capability to utilize collective expertise in the interaction situations of their everyday working life, as they aspire to create great theatrical performances. In addition, the study discusses several different definitions of the theatre that the people studied in this thesis promote through their presentations of self. From these promoted definitions of the theatre, it is derived that all the people working in this theatre project first and foremost such a reality, where it is of great importance that they present great theatrical performances for their spectators. Consequently, the people studied in this thesis are argued to have a strong product- and customer-orientation.

Keywords

Dramaturgical perspective, identity, theatres, art organizations, collective expertise, ethnographic research, organizational studies

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Introduction	3
1.1. Overview of the study	5
1.2. Outline of the thesis.....	6
2 The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life	8
3 Researching art organizations.....	15
3.1. Work in art organizations	15
3.2. Balancing acts in the art field	18
3.3. Concluding on the art field	26
4 Methodology.....	27
4.1. Description of the research process	27
4.2. Research philosophy and approach	33
4.3. Doing ethnographic research.....	35
4.4. Texts – generation and analysis.....	38
4.5. Reliability and validity of the research.....	42
5 Inside the theatre.....	44
5.1. Everyday life in theatre.....	44
5.2. Defining theatre	57
5.3. Presentation of self in theatre	65
6 Conclusions	87
6.1. Reflecting the findings in the light of earlier research	88
6.2. Collective expertise in theatre	95
6.3. Presentation of self in theatre revisited.....	100
6.4. Ideas for future research	108
7 References	111
8 Appendices	113

1 Introduction

“As soon as the situation of the theatre is fixed and defined, we may be sure that it is no longer that.”

The previous notion from Wallace Fowlie (1954: 23) may be over sixty years old, but it still captures something very essential to the art field in general and the theatre in particular. The art field is complex and ever changing, and it is practically impossible to define an art organization in all-encompassing manner. Still, and perhaps because of it, art organizations continue to fascinate human beings both as consumers as well as researchers. Similarly, the interest towards art organizations in management and organizational studies has been growing for couple of decades. Lampel, Lant and Shamsie (2000) offer a good justification for this trend: Art organizations, or “firms in cultural industries” as they refer them, have always faced such challenges that any contemporary organization is more and more likely to face while existing and functioning in today’s world. Indeed, creativity is considered to be an ever growing part of organizational life in various industries, and the search for the knowledge of how creativity is harnessed in art organizations has become more substantial over the years (Lampel et al. 2000, Wennes 2009). Nevertheless, I believe that studies of art organizations, such as the theatre, are capable of offering more than just organizing practices suitable for contemporary organizations.

As Vilén (2010) notes, art organizations are complex organizations, where experts from multiple professions, sometimes vastly different from each other, come together in order to produce art. Sometimes the different backgrounds of the people working in an art organization may cause internal clashes, as people from different fields of expertise may disagree with such issues as what are the core competences of their organization (e.g. Glynn 2000, Koivunen 2003). Still, somehow art organizations manage to thrive, and therefore it is reasonable to argue that art organizations have a strong capability to sustain great heterogeneity. In addition, art organizations need to be capable of balancing between multiple contradicting logics – such as artistic versus economic logics – as the existence of these paradoxes seems to be an inherent, yet challenging aspect of the art field (Koivunen 2009b). Both the capability to foster a great level of heterogeneity, as well as the need for constant “balancing acts” (Lampel et al. 2000), make an art organization a very interesting context for management and organizational studies. As for the theatre in particular as a context for a research, Fowlie (1954) argues that “the theatre itself is the stylization and the interpretation and the projection of life and human activity” (24). This notion clearly emphasizes that the work in theatres differs vastly from the work in other types of industries, and therefore the possibility to generate

more information of such work is intriguing. Furthermore, this notion also leads us to the focus of this particular study dealing with art organizations – namely the identity of such people, who work in the field of theatre.

The nature of identity is another aspect of human life that has captivated the interest of numerous researchers. Identity in general has been studied in multiple different contexts, and several identity studies have been conducted in the art field. For instance, Vilén's (2010) ethnographic study focuses on the processes of identity construction in an opera, while Glynn's (2000) study in an orchestra discusses the multiprofessional organizational identity of such art organizations. This study, in turn, wishes to explore identity through the dramaturgical perspective presented by Erving Goffman (1959) in his book "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life". In sort, Goffman argues that social establishments, and thus the people inside those social establishments, can be studied from the point of view of impression management. Furthermore, he claims that as people typically wish to avoid an unappealing image, we tend to present a certain favored character of ourselves in all kinds of situations of our everyday life. While Goffman notes that this self-as-character is not an organic self, the individual as performer behind this character can be studied by observing their everyday performances. In this study, this dramaturgical perspective becomes, in a sense, the overarching thread of the study, as the identity of the people working in theatre is explored through the lenses offered in Goffman's book. Therefore, ultimately this study aims to answer to the question:

How the people working in theatre present themselves in their everyday working life?

Apart from this main research question, this study also aims to answer to two additional questions. First of all, Goffman argues that while presenting certain favored character, people also promote certain definition of the situation, where that performance takes place. This definition, then, aims to convey certain understanding of the reality; it aims to promote that the reality related to the performance is indeed "real". Therefore, this study also addresses the question:

What definitions of the theatre these people wish to convey as the reality of the theatre in their everyday performances?

Furthermore, another question stems from Goffman's argument that the presentations of self in everyday life are inherently interactive. Indeed, all the presentations of self are performed to someone else – to a dramaturgical audience if we utilize the term provided by Goffman. Furthermore, it should be noted that this audience also presents its own performance for the

performer they are observing. As it is, all the people, who are present in certain situation, are always performing their own character as well as the role of the audience for others' characters. Thus, this study also aims to explore the question:

How the people performing these presentations of self interact with each other inside the theatre?

Consequently, this study does not merely wish to generate more information of the human identity in a less explored context – that is theatres in particular and art organizations in general – but it first and foremost aims to create greater understanding of the context itself through the lenses of identity.

1.1. Overview of the study

This ethnographic study was conducted in Kuopio City Theatre in Finland during spring 2014 with partial immersion to the field. The research methods utilized in this study were participant observation and interviewing, and my aim as a researcher was to create close relationship with the people I studied. The majority of the texts analyzed in this study were generated from the field during a period of eight weeks of both observing and interviewing the members of a musical that was rehearsed during spring 2014. I was involved in the musical's rehearsals from the beginning and observed 49 rehearsals in total, covering almost all the rehearsals with a few exceptions. In addition, I observed one rehearsal of another theatrical play, three performances of different ongoing productions as a spectator, one performance of an ongoing production from backstage, and one weekly meeting with the management and middle-managers. While in the field, I also conducted 13 interviews in total. The majority of these interviews were with the people I met on a daily basis during my time observing the musical. Therefore, excluding the interviews with the management, all the interviewees were either members of the production team of that musical, or people who worked in the same premises where the rehearsals were mainly held. Overall, the empirical work conducted for this study was quite substantial for a master's thesis, and it aimed to generate, as Geertz (1973) promotes, "thick" descriptions of the study's subjects.

In this study, several presentations of self in theatre are described. From these presentations of self, the principal presentation of self as an expert is detected: The people, who work in the theatre studied in this thesis, wish to be seen first and foremost as the experts of their designated field of theatrical work – whether it is the work of artistic personnel, technical personnel, or the management. Furthermore, the people studied in this thesis are argued to express strong capability of utilizing collective expertise in their interactions. Collective expertise is defined in this study as

“an ongoing processual ability to function together with other experts and create new knowledge” (Koivunen 2009a: 259). While the people working in this theatre aim to produce great theatrical performances, they continuously utilize their existing knowledge of their designated field of theatrical work, as well as create new knowledge related to their work. Apart from the presentations of self, this study also discusses several definitions that the people working in this theatre utilize in promoting the reality of their theatre. From these promoted definitions of the theatre, it is derived that all the people working in this theatre project first and foremost such a reality, where it is of great importance that they present great theatrical performances for their spectators. Consequently, the people studied in this thesis are argued to have a strong product- and customer-orientation.

1.2. Outline of the thesis

This thesis consists six main chapters, when taking into account the ongoing introduction chapter. The following two chapters present the framework utilized in this study and the earlier studies related to this study. After that, the methodology of this study is replayed, before immersing in the findings of the study. Finally, the findings are discussed in the light of earlier research and the study is concluded in the final main chapter.

In Chapter 2, I will introduce Erving Goffman’s (1959) book “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life”, as this book offers the framework and the overarching thread of the study. Following this introduction, earlier research of art organizations is discussed in Chapter 3. This main chapter consists two chapters, first of which focuses on the work in art organizations and second on the inherent complexity of the art field. In addition, the related studies are concluded in Chapter 3.3.

Chapter 4, in turn, covers the methodology of this study. First, the research process is described in detail, and after that the philosophical considerations affecting the study are overviewed. Next, chapters discussing the nature of ethnographic research, as well as the generation and analysis of the texts utilized in this study are presented. Finally, the reliability and validation of the study is discussed.

In Chapter 5, I will present the empirical findings of the research. Firstly, two illustrations from the field describe the everyday life of theatres and lead the reader to the world of theatre. Secondly, several definitions of the theatre utilized by the people working in the theatre studied here are discussed. Finally, the different presentations of self in theatre are introduced.

Chapter 6 concludes this study, and in this main chapter I will first reflect my findings in the light of earlier research introduced in Chapter 3. Next, I will discuss how collective expertise manifests itself in my findings, and then I will return to the presentation of self in theatre. Finally, I will conclude the study by presenting some ideas for future research.

In addition to the six main chapters outlined here, references are presented in Chapter 7 and appendices in Chapter 8.

2 The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life

In this study, identity is explored from the dramaturgical perspective, which Erving Goffman (1959) presents in his book “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life”. Therefore, in order to represent this perspective, in this main chapter I will discuss the central themes introduced in the book. In sort, Goffman argues that social establishments can be studied from the point of view of impression management. His basic notion is that generally people wish to be seen in a positive light, and therefore we aim to present a certain favored character of ourselves in the everyday situations of our life. While this performance cannot always be perfectly controlled, actions are taken so that those parts that can be controlled do not discredit the character we wish to present. Furthermore, Goffman argues that when a person presents themselves as a certain character, that person actually projects their favored definition of the situation in hand. This definition in turn promotes certain reality, which the performer asks their audience to believe in. In other words, the audience – the people who are observing the performance – “are asked to believe that the character they see actually possesses the attributes he appears to possess, that the task he performs will have the consequences that are implicitly claimed for it, and that, in general, matters are what they appear to be” (17).

Before proceeding to the discussion, it is important to note that Goffman does not claim that the performed character is the performer’s self. On the contrary, Goffman states that this self-as-character is “a *product* of a scene that comes off, and is not a *cause* of it” (252). The character might be valued one, and important for person’s self-identification, but still it is only an end result of self-production. Therefore, it is important to bring up that the performer behind the character is the one with the organic, “real” self. This self, however, is rarely seen, as it is covered by all the masks that people utilize in their everyday performances. Ultimately, we can only see but glimpses of the individual as performer that sometimes even unknowingly presents their favored character of self in their everyday life. However, by observing the characters that an individual presents, we may gain some sort of understanding of the self behind the performance. When exploring this two-folded individual as a character and as a performer, Goffman covers six main themes in his book: *performances*, *teams*, *regions and region behavior*, *discrepant roles*, *communication out of character*, and *the arts of impression management*. Next, these themes are replayed in more depth.

As the first main theme, Goffman discusses the **performance** itself, which he defines as “all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants” (15). A performance, then, consists all the means that a performer utilizes in order to convince their audience that they are indeed what they claim to be, and that their definition

of a situation reflects the “real” reality. Here dramaturgical perspective is not concerned of the “realness” of this reality; instead what is more interesting is whether a performer believes in the definition of a situation they project or not. While a *sincere* performer is taken by their character and truly believes that they are presenting the reality of a situation, a *cynical* performer presents certain character for instance due to private gain and does not secretly believe in the reality their definition projects. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that individuals are rarely either cynical or sincere performers; instead they tend to travel between cynicism and sincerity, as for instance a cynical performer first performs certain activities in order to keep up their character, and later on comes to believe in the meaning of those activities, thus becoming sincere.

Whether the performance is given with cynicism or with sincerity, the aspiration of every performer is to convince their audience that their definition of a situation is indeed the reality of that situation. Goffman argues that in order to succeed in this aspiration, all the aspects of a performer’s *front* – the relatively fixed parts of an individual’s performance – need to be consistent with each other. *Setting* is one of these aspects, and it refers to the physical elements of the place, where the performance takes place. *Appearance*, in turn, indicates what the performer’s social status is, and *manner* gives off what sort of performance can be expected, as for example aggressive manner suggests that the performance will be aggressive as well. Apart from the front, Goffman also notes that occasionally performers need to utilize *dramatic realization*, as the audience might not see some parts of the performance without dramatization. The aspect of *idealization*, in turn, requires a performer to hide those parts of themselves, which are inconsistent with the ideal standards that the audience expects the performed character to hold. A performer should also try to exert control over all kinds of events that could discredit the performance, such as yawning during a performance that wishes to convey interest. In other words, they should employ *maintenance of expressive control*. Social distance may also be utilized in a performance, as some characters benefit from the aspect of *mystification*. Indeed, Goffman notes that “often the real secret behind the mystery is that there really is no mystery; the real problem is to prevent the audience from learning this too” (70).

Consequently, the performance may contain a large amount of *misrepresentation*, and occasionally the audience catches their performer from the act. In such an occasion, if the disillusioned audience is not presented just reasons for the misrepresentation, the performer is often deemed as an imposter. *Imposters* are people who, from the point of view of the audience, do not have the authority to perform the character they have tried to perform. This aspect of getting caught, then, emphasizes Goffman’s argument that while we tend to believe that sincere performances are

authentic, and cynical performances are “something painstakingly pasted together” (70), both of these performances can be successful if they manage to convince their audience.

Moving away from the individual’s performance, the second main theme that Goffman covers in his book presents **performance teams**, which co-operate in presenting a performance. Indeed, it is noteworthy that some performances cannot be presented by an individual, as they require a team to support the performance. In fact, Goffman argues that such performances are quite common in the everyday life, and that often individual’s performance is a part of larger, team-based performance. Furthermore, Goffman notes that in order to project their over-all definition of a situation, different members of a team may need to perform different roles. Goffman brings up two important roles that can be found from a performance team: star and director. The *star* of a team holds the dramatic dominance over a performance as the center of attention. While a team-performance does not always need a star to keep up the audience’s attention, the role of director is often more crucial. The *director* leads the performance by directing all the parts of performance and, when necessary, carefully bringing back into line such members of a team, whose performance is unsatisfactory.

As the director’s role suggest, a performance team needs to monitor itself in order to convey their definition of a situation. After all, any member of a team can disrupt or discredit the team-performance, as all of them know the secrets of that performance. Consequently, when there is no audience present, teammates also cannot uphold the team-performance in front of each other. In other words, Goffman states that teammates share the privilege of familiarity – they all know such facts of each other that are concealed from the audience. Furthermore, Goffman argues that it might be convenient for a team to conceal the fact that they are indeed a team, as some performances may benefit from the audience that does not know who exactly are performing. Performance teams, then, occasionally form secret societies, and in order to keep their secrets, teams generally avoid public disagreements. Indeed, Goffman notes that public disagreements are usually avoided even if a member endangers an on-going performance for instance by behaving inappropriately. After all, as Goffman states, “immediate corrective sanctioning would often only disturb the interaction further and [...] make the audience privy to a view that ought to be reserved for teammates” (89).

Finally, it is important to note that while a performance team performs to their audience, that audience forms another team, which performance is to present the role of the audience. For the sake of analysis, it is convenient to use the term “performance team” when describing the more active team of an interaction, but still it should be kept in mind that the audience is also a team, and the said performance team is their audience.

Goffman's third main theme, then, stems from the notion that in a performance, there are always aspects that the audience should not see, and therefore he brings up **regions and region behavior** into his framework. First, the *front region* – or the front stage – is the physical area, where the performance takes place, and where the members of the audience are present to observe the performers. While in the front stage, all the members of a performance team need to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with their over-all definition of a situation. This includes both the way the performers treat the audience while directly engaging with them, as well as the way they hold themselves in situations, where the audience can observe them, but does not explicitly interact with them. As an example of the latter situation, the performers may need to *make-work* – pretend that they are performing the tasks related to their character, even though they do not currently have anything to do – when a member of the audience arrives to their presence.

The *back region* – or the backstage – in turn “may be defined as a place, relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course” (112). In larger performances, the back region is the area where the assisting members of a team, who do not perform in front of the audience, act upon their role in the performance. Furthermore, the backstage is the area of relaxation for all the members of a team, and it is also the place where they can hone the parts of their performance. In the backstage, performers can set aside their characters and teammates can behave in accordance with the familiarity they share. Due to the nature of backstage behavior, then, Goffman emphasizes that a team needs to guard the entrance to their backstage in order to maintain their definition of a situation in front of the audience. Similarly, a team needs to keep the outsiders out of all the regions of the performance. *Outsiders* are people, who belong neither to the performance team nor to their current audience, and thus their unexpected entrance to either the front or back region of an on-going performance can disrupt the said performance greatly. Furthermore, if an outsider is a member of another audience to which the team performs, they may become disillusioned of the performance that is meant for them after seeing another performance presented by the team.

As the fourth main theme, Goffman describes the **discrepant roles**. In sort, people with discrepant roles are outsiders in the sense that they usually belong neither to the performance team nor to the audience – or alternatively they conceal their membership – but still they have intimate knowledge of the performance. Consequently, these people can be problematic for the performers, as some secrets that a team holds, such as *dark secrets* which present the team in a light that is inconsistent with the impression they wish to convey, can discredit the performance if the audience becomes aware of them. Similarly, team's strategic advance might be lost if their *strategic secrets* come to

the light. *Inside secrets*, then, should be guarded as well, as they help teammates to separate themselves from the audience, and thus should not be revealed to the said audience. Still, Goffman notes that sometimes non-members become aware of a team's secrets, and in such an occasion "a team whose vital secrets are possessed by others will try to oblige the possessors to treat these secrets as secrets that are entrusted and not free" (143). Here *entrusted secrets* are such that bind the individual – or the team – which gains the secret to keep the secret. *Free secrets*, on the other hand, are such that whoever gains the secret, can reveal the secret without losing their own face. People with discrepant roles, then, possess the secrets of a team and, depending on how well a team can affect these people, they treat the secrets either as entrusted or free.

Goffman presents several types of discrepant roles that people may hold. An *informer* is a person, who pretends to be a member of a team in order to gain the team's secrets, and then sells them to the audience. A *shill*, on the other hand, pretends to be a member of the audience, but is in fact a part of the performance team. Similarly, *spotters* infiltrate into the audience, but their purpose is to either covertly or overtly "check up on the standards that performers maintain in order to ensure that in certain respects fostered appearances will not be too far from reality" (147). The role of *go-between*, then, is to mediate between two hostile teams, and in order to succeed in this task, the go-between learns the secret of both sides. *Non-persons*, such as servants, in turn, can sometimes be considered as members of a team, but still in some respect they do not belong to the team they assist. A *service specialist*, on the other hand, clearly does not belong to the team, but provides them a service they need in order to succeed in their performance, and thus is intimately familiar with the team's performance. Due to this position, teams often try to turn their service specialists into *confidants*, who keep the secrets of a team freely for instance as an expression of friendship. The role of *colleague*, then, is similar to the role of confidant, as colleagues are the people who perform the same routine to the similar, yet different audience. Goffman notes that a colleague may gain "a sort of ceremonial or honorific team membership" (162) when getting into a contact with a collegial team. A colleague, however, can be a dangerous person for a team, as they can turn into a *renegade* if not treated carefully. A renegade, then, is in a prime position to discredit the team's performance due to their intimate knowledge of the team and its performance.

The fifth main theme covered in the book, in turn, discusses **communication out of character**. Goffman argues that while in the presence of others than own teammates, all the members of a performance team tend to stay in character in order to not to discredit their performance. Still, as suggested earlier, performers cannot always stay in character, and consequently they sometimes communicate in a way that is out of their character as well. The safest place for a team to

communicate out of character is naturally the backstage, as no-one but the members of a team should gain an access to this area. In the back region, communication out of character manifests itself in the form of *treatment of the absent*, as for instance the members of an absent audience may be talked about in a very different light than what would be appropriate while in character. In addition, *staging talk* occurs often in the backstage, and here the focus is on the problems of staging. For example, past performance disruptions and the likelihood of them happening again may be discussed.

Team collusion, on the other hand, refers to such communication out of character that takes place in front of the audience. Indeed, occasionally performers need to subtly communicate with each other during a performance in order to keep the performance going on in a way that supports their definition of a situation. With system of secret signals, or cues, a performer may for instance ask for assistance from another performer, warn another member that they are getting out of character, or alert the relaxed teammates that a member of the audience will soon arrive to their presence. In addition, performers may also utilize *derisive collusion*, where they partly stay in character, but involve aspects of communication out of character into their performance. This sort of communication may be employed if a member of a performance team wishes to secretly amuse their teammates or, more alarmingly, does not believe in the working consensus of their team and thus wants to distance themselves from the team-performance.

Finally, as the usage of derisive collusion suggests, Goffman notes that performers tend to push their limits, and that “they often attempt to speak out of character in a way that will be heard by the audience but will not openly threaten either the integrity of the two teams or the social distance between them” (190). This type of communication out of character is referred as *realigning actions*, and it may be utilized for instance in order to subtly find out if the other participants of an interaction share similar statuses, and thus are safe for the performer to dispense their act. *Fraternization*, then, is one type of realigning actions, and it may take place in an occasion, where the specialist members of two teams find out that they have more in common with each other than with their own teammates. Finally, as a consequence of realigning actions, two teams may permanently form a whole new team.

Finally, Goffman’s last main theme brings us back to **the arts of impression management**, as he describes how during a performance, both the performance team and the audience try to prevent disturbing incidents. Goffman notes that a performance can be disturbed by an *unmeant gesture*, which can be any gesture that is inconsistent with the projected definition. Similarly, *inopportune*

intrusions may discredit the performers as well, as in such an occasion a member of the audience has entered the backstage – or alternatively an outsider has entered either the front or backstage – and, as a consequence, has acquired too much information about the performance. *Faux pas*, then, refers to an incident, where an individual intentionally brings up some fact about themselves or their performance without realizing its full, performance-disturbing significance. Finally, *scenes* can be caused by both the performers and the audience, and they are all the activities that threaten, or even destroy, what Goffman calls “the polite appearance of consensus” (210) usually maintained by all the participants of an interaction. This appearance of consensus, then, is maintained with both defensive and protective measures.

Goffman states that performers can utilize several *defensive attributes and practices* over the performance. First attribute, *dramaturgical loyalty*, binds the performers to keep the secrets that might disrupt the performance. According to Goffman, dramaturgical loyalty can be enhanced by either changing the audience so that the members of a team cannot get too attached to them, or by strengthening the attachments inside the team itself. *Dramaturgical discipline*, in turn, emphasizes that all the performers need to be disciplined in their presentations, as undisciplined behavior, such as getting carried away by one’s own performance, can discredit the over-all definition. Therefore, Goffman argues that the members of a team need to exercise self-control, and that occasionally the capability to cover someone’s inappropriate behavior might be required. Finally, *dramaturgical circumspection* is a defensive practice that highlights the importance of foresight. While Goffman allows that all the elements of a performance cannot be controlled, he argues the success of the performance can be enhanced by for instance taking care that the most loyal and disciplined members of a team are chosen to give the performance. Another option is to choose an audience, which is most unlikely to cause problems for the performance – or in other words, most likely to utilize *protective practices* over the performance. An audience can, for instance, pretend not to “see” some mistakes that could discredit the performance and, at the moments of crisis, they may tactfully help the performers. In sort, an audience that utilizes protective practices has *tact*, which enables them to protect the performance they are observing as long as the performers do not make too garish claims.

In this main chapter I have discussed the central themes of “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life” by Erving Goffman (1959). As noted earlier, this book provides the overall framework that displays how people are observed through dramaturgical perspective – and consequently how the people studied in this thesis are seen, as I utilize this perspective in exploring the identity of the people, who work in theatre. In sort, dramaturgical perspective portrays people as such individuals,

who constantly interact and co-operate with each other in presenting favored self-as-characters in their everyday life. Next, I will present the context of this study in the following main chapter that covers some key notions from the earlier research of art organizations.

3 Researching art organizations

In this main chapter, I will explore the world of art organizations based on the notions from earlier research. Here art organizations are seen as such organizations that produce cultural products “in the core artistic field connected to musical, dramatic, motional, visual, or other types of artistic expression” (Vilén 2010: 16). These cultural products, then, usually have either expressive or aesthetic function instead of clearly utilitarian one, and they are typically produced with artistic intention (Hirsch 1972, Vilén 2010). Therefore, it can be argued that the value creation logic of art organizations differs from the traditional economic thinking. This atypical value creation logic, then, can be observed from the way Robert Leach (2013:18) describes the cultural product that is produced by theatres:

“For theatrical performance, like playing, can offer up alternative realities, and different possible identities. [...] In this sense, theatre performance presents an ongoing metaphor for life, neither real nor unreal, neither precise nor too blurred.”

When taking this notion into account, it is clear that neither the act of production nor consumption of theatrical performances do aspire to satisfy utilitarian need only; instead they address needs of more aesthetic and expressive nature. Consequently, both the production and consumption of cultural products, such as theatrical performances, have their own norms (Vilén 2010). In this thesis, I focus on the production of cultural goods – namely theatrical performances, but also other types of cultural goods. Next, I will present some characteristics of the actual work in art organizations, which generates these cultural products. After that, I will focus on some of the contradicting logics that seem to dictate art organizations, and consequently require them to perform multiple balancing acts.

3.1. Work in art organizations

“Nothing is more ephemeral than theatre. Last night’s show has vanished almost as if it had never been. True, the costumes are gathering dust in the wardrobe, there are a few photographs in ageing scrapbooks and a yellowing poster or two with their corners curling over: but not much else beyond memories.”

As Leach (2013: 74) describes above, the cultural products presented by theatres are quite elusive by their nature. A theatrical performance that has been presented is unique and cannot be duplicated as it was ever again. Yet the same theatrical play may have been performed hundreds of times before that particular performance, and can be performed again. Which performance, then, is the artwork itself – *the* cultural product – or are they all such in themselves? Becker (2006) contemplates this question, and notes that in some sense it is impossible to discuss the “work itself” in the art field. Instead, he states that “there are only the many occasions on which a work appears or is performed or read or viewed, each of which can be different from all the others” (23). These occasions, then, are produced by the people, who work in the art field. In this chapter, I will point out some characteristics of their work.

First of all, Becker, Faulkner, and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006) argue that the creation of art happens through a process, where “nothing happens all at once but rather occurs in a series of steps” (4). Each one of these steps, then, represents certain decision made during the process: In the beginning artists have all the possibilities they can think of, but once they take the first step, they abandon some of these possibilities and gain new ones while taking more steps (*ibid.*). As it is, an artwork is the sum of the decisions made during its creation process, as well as the sum of decisions not made. Ropo and Parviainen (2001), then, also view artists’ work as a process, though they focus on the artist’s career as a whole instead of the lifespan of a single artwork. To be precise, Ropo and Parviainen (2001) argue for epistemological rethinking, as they state that in the academic discussion of leadership, the role of bodily knowledge has been left without much a thought. They define bodily knowledge as “a kind of knowledge that has a direct connection with bodily awareness and perception” (5). However, while Ropo and Parviainen (2001) argue that this sort of knowledge is a property that every human being has, they bring up artists – dancers in particular – as an example of such people, who are particularly sensitive in bodily manner. Through the lifelong practicing, dancers gain such bodily knowledge that allows them to become skillful in the art of dancing (Parviainen & Ropo 2001). Furthermore, while an injury or aging may prevent a dancer from performing their bodily skills, they still have the knowledge of moving their body, and thus they can mentor others in the art of dancing, though it should be noted that teaching such knowledge is often very difficult (*ibid.*). As it is, Ropo and Parviainen (2001) argue that over their careers, dancers grow into experts of such bodily knowledge that is required in the art of dancing.

Ropo and Parviainen (2001), then, are not the only researchers, who view artists as experts. On the contrary, several other studies also consider art organizations as expert organizations (e.g. Koivunen 2003, 2009a, Vilén 2010). Therefore, some notions about expertise need to be brought up here.

According to Løwendahl (1997), expert organizations are first and foremost knowledge-intensive organizations, which employ high number of professional employees. These professionals – or experts – are characterized as such people, who wish to utilize the extensive knowledge they have about their area of expertise in their work, as well as continuously improve the level of knowledge they already have (Løwendahl 1997). As such, professionals are often highly educated, and their work consist complex problem-solving activities (ibid.). Furthermore, Løwendahl (1997) notes that professionals typically have an interest towards the problems that have a vital meaning in society, and they often wish to address them. Finally, professionals are characterized as people, who respect the professional norms related to their own profession – including the limitations of such expertise – and consequently they often utilize both peer review and sanctions in order to shelter these norms (ibid.). However, Løwendahl (1997) also states that professionals tend to have very high need for autonomy. Consequently, professionals are often difficult to manage, as in general they dislike of having such people around them, who have the authority to either supervise or interfere in their work and the decisions they make (Løwendahl 1997). Furthermore, professionals also tend to strive for individual achievements, which may be an additional challenge for the management of an expert organization (ibid.).

Before moving forward, it is important to note that while here I have mainly discussed the nature of artistic work, not all the people working in art organizations are artists. Glynn (2000) studies orchestras, and she notes that “while orchestras may be singular in their cultural contribution, they are multiprofessional in their identity” (285). Indeed, art organizations, such as orchestras, do not only employ artists, but also people who have other types of professional roles in the generation of cultural products. As such, art organizations encompass people, who represent different fields of expertise and consequently, have different professional identities (Glynn 2000). According to Glynn (2000), this sort of multiprofessional identity can be challenging for an art organization, as people with different professional identities view the organization’s core capabilities differently. In order to demonstrate this argument, she presents the case of Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, where differing views on the orchestra’s core competences culminated on the musicians’ strike. In this particular orchestra, the people with artistic identity, namely the musicians, and the people with economic identity, meaning the administrators, clashed because ultimately they viewed the orchestra’s strategic issues and resources differently (ibid.). According to Glynn (2000), artists believed that musical quality was orchestra’s greatest strategic issue, while administrators emphasized the importance of fiscal responsibility. Similarly, administrators viewed customers and donors as the orchestra’s most important resources, while artists emphasized here the orchestra’s talent (ibid.).

Glynn (2000) argues that both of these elements, then, have an effect on how the people working in an orchestra view their hybrid organizational identity, namely if they consider their organization as utilitarian or expressive, as well as on their professional identities. Furthermore, she argues that all these four elements affect what the people working in an orchestra consider as their core capabilities. In the case of Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the organizational members with different professional identities ended up into a situation, where they contested the core capabilities supported by the people, who had different professional role in the organization (ibid.).

While Glynn's (2000) study in Atlanta Symphony Orchestra deals with organizational identity – and consequently utilizes different lenses in studying the identity in art organizations than this thesis – the case itself acts as quite an opportune interlude to the following chapter of this thesis that presents several contradicting logics inherent to the art field.

3.2. Balancing acts in the art field

Many previous studies (e.g. Lampel et al. 2000, Koivunen 2003, Vilén 2010) indicate that the field of art organizations fosters a great amount of complexity, and that this complexity stems from the multiple contradicting logics that dictate art organizations. As such, these contradictions give the art field a unique characteristic. Indeed, it seems that art organizations must constantly navigate between multiple opposing logics in order to survive and nourish in the art field. While describing this process of navigation within a cultural context, Lampel et al. (2000) bring up the fitting metaphor of the “balancing act”. Art organizations certainly seem to perform multiple balancing acts almost instinctively in order to strive in their field. As already implied in the previous chapter, many earlier studies have discussed the contradiction between *artistic versus economic logics* in art organizations, and thus I will cover this contradiction first in this chapter. In addition, I will discuss the *contradicting demands for leadership* in art organizations and after that, the contradiction between *the old versus the new* in art organizations. Finally, I will present the dichotomy of *individuality versus collectiveness*.

3.2.1. Artistic versus economic logics

The first set of contradicting logics discussed here is the simultaneous existence of artistic and economic logics in the art field. According to Vilén (2010), the dichotomized thinking of art and economy has a long history that “seems to continue even in the contemporary economy” (13-14). Artists are often noted to emphasize the expressive nature of the creation of art, as well as downplay the importance of economic side of art organizations (e.g. Glynn 2000, Koivunen 2003). Still, art

organizations, such as theatres, cannot completely exclude economic logic from their operations. Hytti (2005: 11) quotes pioneering Finnish head of theatre and director Eino Salmelainen (1970):

“There is diligent hard work, perhaps more diligent than ever before. It is a question of production, the amount of it. But less and less frequently a question of creative art. Theatres are production plants. So they say. And nowadays they say it so often that one must believe in it. Of course they are production plants. Theatre has to pay to its people like others. It has to pay its purchases like others. Therefore it has to gather money, it has to produce, as subventions will not suffice. But is theatre also something else than a production plant? Of course it is! They just talk less about that.”

It is perhaps a bit harsh to refer to a theatre as a production plant when taking into account the unique nature of cultural products and art. Koivunen (2009b) argues that art is essentially connected to creativity. Furthermore, she describes creativity as something very challenging, as it requires a person to reveal their heart, and thus leaves them vulnerable. This notion of having one’s heart open, then, seems to clash with the idea of a theatre as a mere production plant. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that theatres – or art organizations in general – are undeniably “more than that”, as Salmelainen finishes his notion above.

Lampel et al. (2000) note that “the successful management of creative resources in the cultural industries depends [...] on striking a balance between the imperatives of creative freedom and commercial imperatives” (265). Furthermore, they argue that art organizations need to find the correct balance between five different polar opposites: artistic values versus mass entertainment, product differentiation versus market innovation, demand analysis versus market construction, vertical integration versus flexible specialization, and individual inspiration versus creative systems. Next, the first set of these opposing imperatives is discussed, as it is directly connected to the contradicting logics of art and business, while others are indirectly related to this contradiction through their effect on the competitive advantage of an art organization. Indeed, Lampel et al. (2000) note that the balancing act between artistic values and mass entertainment is a question of finding the right combination of art and business, as artistic values strive for superior aesthetic experience, and mass entertainment aims to commercial success. Furthermore, they argue that art organizations usually are very loyal to their artistic values, and thus art organizations often aim to act in accordance with their values. However, products that have high artistic value do not always have high entertainment value, which might turn out problematic to an art organization (ibid.). After all, cultural products must have some entertainment value as well in order to attract spectators to

support them, and therefore art organizations must find the balance between the artistic and entertainment values of their products (Lampel et al. 2000).

Koivunen (2003) also discusses this dilemma between artistic and economic logics, as she notes that in the context of a symphony orchestra, one prevailing leadership discourse is *art against business*. Furthermore, she states that this contradicting logic manifests itself as juxtaposition between the management and musicians, as both of them consider each other as members of different tribes that have different objectives, as well as philosophies. Musicians live for the music and are unwilling to consider the questions of profits or even attracting the spectators, while the management often brings up issues such as business, customer orientation, and changing markets (Koivunen 2003). Consequently, there is a significant amount of feelings of distrust and separation between the management and musicians (ibid.). This juxtaposition between those, who create art in art organizations, and those, who manage the operations of art organizations, complicates the art field even more. Indeed, it is difficult to find a suitable balance between art and business, while the people inside the organization do not agree whether artistic or economic demands should set the direction of the art organization. However, it is noteworthy that the existence of this dilemma does not necessarily mean that the management of an art organization does not care for art, even though some artists feel so due to the impression of the management not respecting their work (Koivunen 2003). Quite the contrary, Koivunen (2003) notes that the managers of a symphony orchestra often bring up their devotion for music, and therefore the actual rift seems to stem from the contradicting attitudes towards business, as musicians consider business as unimportant compared to art, and the management as essential for the existence of an art organization. This clash of opinions clearly indicates that the simultaneous existence of artistic and economic logics complicate the art field from the inside of organizations, as well as from the outside.

3.2.2. Contradicting demands for leadership

The second set of contradictions in the art field concerns leadership within these organizations. Indeed, many previous studies of art organizations (e.g. Koivunen 2003, Sauer 2009) indicate that leadership in these organizations is versatile, and that leaders of art organizations face various contradicting demands and needs from their subordinates. Moreover, the creative nature of the art field produces opposing imperatives that affect the organizing practices related to management in art organizations. According to Lampel et al. (2000), art organizations must find the balance between vertical integration and flexible specialization. To be precise, they argue that while vertical integration would offer greater control over the production of cultural products, it can hinder the

creative freedom of the organization, and thus flexible specialization would be more fitting option for an art organization. In the end, the most suitable solution is most likely some sort of hybrid that combines the best features of both of these structures, and again a balancing act between two opposites is required from an art organization (ibid.). Still, there are other contradicting demands for leadership in art organizations that are actually even more complex than the one Lampel et al. (2000) describe. Indeed, it seems that leaders of art organizations need to navigate between multiple contradicting demands, instead of only balancing between two opposing imperatives.

As noted previously, Koivunen (2003) discusses the leadership discourses in the symphony orchestra context and identifies four predominant discourses. The first discourse, art against business, was introduced in the previous subchapter, while remaining three contradicting leadership discourses will be discussed here. First of these, the *dislike of authority* discourse, implicates that musicians often find power and the people in power discomfoting, and thus they tend to regard the management, and in some rare cases conductors, with strong dislike (Koivunen 2003). Usually the authority of conductor is accepted as a necessary evil, but the management is considered intrinsically bad, and therefore musicians often blame them for all kinds of difficulties, claiming that the level of the management does not live up with the quality of the orchestra and music they perform (ibid.). Interestingly, musicians do admit that they often are not really aware of what the management exactly does, but this ignorance is not considered shameful, even though it does turn the management into a scapegoat in musicians' talk (Koivunen 2003).

The strong dislike of authority, then, is vastly contradicting with the next discourse, *heroic leadership*. Quite surprisingly, Koivunen (2003) notes that especially musicians seem to yearn for a strong heroic leader, who has a clear vision for the orchestra and the knowledge how to accomplish that vision. Furthermore, she portrays this strong leader as almost a mother or father type of figure; a person who musicians can trust to deal with all the uncertainties of outer world and cease the chaos inside the organization. In addition, the theme of star conductors is linked to this discourse, as well as the great traditions of the orchestra (Koivunen 2003). Overall, the emphasis of this discourse is in the role of managers as well as in individual talent (ibid.), which in turn is contradicting with the final discourse, shared leadership.

As already the name indicates, *shared leadership* discourse emphasizes collectiveness, and Koivunen (2003: 136) notes that "this discourse brings evidence of a new way of thinking about leadership". Furthermore, she argues that the musicians and managers' juxtaposition is starting to ease off, as musicians and managers gradually gain better understanding of each other, and thus

learn to appreciate each other. In this discourse, themes such as art appreciation, involvement, understanding, and the conductor with musical focus come forward (Koivunen 2003). Indeed, the shared leadership discourse seems to promote less dichotomized way of thinking, but still it is as challenging as other leadership discourses introduced here, as it increases the contradicting demands for the leaders in the art field. In the end, leaders of an art organization need to find the best possible balance between these discourses in order to lead their organization successfully.

Sauer (2009), in turn, studies leadership of the theatre directors, and she notes that the leadership in art organizations is often idealized as softer and more humane, when compared to leadership in business organizations. Indeed, leaders in business organizations are often described as result-driven, extremely competitive, and sometimes even aggressive, while leaders of art organizations are traditionally considered more caring and less oppressive (ibid.). Sauer (2009) questions this division, and argues that the leadership in art organizations is more divergent than what is believed, and that leaders of art organizations, such as the directors of theatre ensembles, are capable of being hurtful and cruel as well as comforting and positive. To elaborate, she states that a theatre director can lead either “through the positive” or “through the negative”. Common language, humor, acceptance in a form of loving gaze, and physical closeness are constructions of positive leadership, while negative leadership manifests itself as an abusive language or, even worse, as a distance both in a sense of not communicating and denying the gaze (ibid.). According to Sauer (2009), the gaze of a director is vital, as actors perceive the gaze as a definition of how well they are working, whether they are acting out the director’s vision or not. In addition, the distance of a director communicates distrust for actors, and therefore actors feel that the absence of the gaze is actually worse than a gaze that signals for instance irritation or even hatred (ibid.). Furthermore, Sauer (2009) notes that negative leadership can be a cathartic experience for an actor if it enables greater creative results or development as a professional. Therefore the balancing act in this case is not so much in between positive and negative leadership, but in finding the correct level of closeness, as well as the suitable form of leadership. After all, Sauer (2009) notes that too much of closeness in the ensemble can be perceived as a threat to creativity and artistic development as well, as it can offer too much comfort and safety for actors.

3.2.3. The old versus the new

The third set of contradicting logics that recurs in the earlier studies of art organizations is the need of balancing between the old and the new. Wennes (2009) especially discusses this contradiction, and she notes that “in circles of art and cultural policy there is a clear opinion that the wish and need

for new thinking and innovation must always be present, at the same time that the traditions of the different art forms must be appreciated and preserved” (46). Indeed, many art organizations have long histories, as well as traditions they need to respect. For instance, Vilén (2010) tracks the history of the opera to 17th century Italian courts, while Fowlie (1954) speculates that the theatre might be the oldest existing art form. Koivunen (2003), in turn, notes that the symphony orchestra got its classical form around 1750, and that many existing symphony orchestras have a strong link to their traditions. Furthermore, when describing the heroic leadership discourse, she presents the Great Philadelphia Orchestra theme that glorifies the great history of this orchestra. While this theme does support the organization, as it gives its members something to be proud of, as well as entitles big spending on for example recruiting the best musicians, idolizing the past also has its problems, as looking back to the good old days of glory indicates that the organization is no longer as outstanding as it used to be (ibid.).

According to Wennes (2009), art organizations are considered to be tightly connected to the new, as they are noted to be highly creative. Koivunen (2009b) agrees with this notion as she argues that “creation and recreation are inherent and natural parts of any art production or art organization, be it music, theatre, dance, opera, literature or poetry” (13). Furthermore, creativity naturally generates the new, as it is capable of orchestrating change and renewal within organizations (Wennes 2009). For an art organization this capability is necessary, as cultural products must be novel, and therefore novel thinking is always required from an art organization (Lampel et al. 2000, Wennes 2009). Two polarities that Lampel et al. (2000) present are related to this notion: product differentiation versus market innovation, and demand analysis versus market construction. The first discusses the nature of cultural products, as Lampel et al. (2000) argue that these products must be at the same time novel, as well as familiar to attract their consumers. Indeed, novelty is considered to be an inherent feature of cultural products, but at the same time consumers often need the feeling of some sort of recognition in order to consider the product accessible (ibid.). This argument, then, leads to the second set of polarities, as Lampel et al. (2000) note that an art organization can either attempt to focus on appealing the existing consumer preferences, or they can try to reshape those preferences. As it is, an art organization needs to find the practical balance between the old and the new.

Sauer (2009) notes that actors also bring up the importance of the new and elaborates that “even though a play may have been performed a hundred times, it should look fresh and be touching every night” (150). Furthermore, she argues that actors are ready to face even harsh treatment in the form of negative leadership of a director if they feel that this will help them to get rid of mannerism and routines, which are considered as factors that smother creativity. As it is, a theatrical performance

should always be a novel experience, yet art organizations, such as theatres, are full of routines that repeat themselves day after day. Indeed, Wennes (2009) argues that even though art organizations might appear chaotic to an outsider, these organizations are full of institutionalized rules and routines that are difficult to shed. Furthermore, she notes that in the context of a symphony orchestra, traditions in practice offer a basis for interaction, as routines increase the predictability of the life within an art organization. Traditions and routines of the old therefore are actually necessary factors that rationalize the inherent chaos of the new, and thus the navigation between the old and the new becomes an important pursuit of finding the best combination of both of these contradictions and, as Wennes (2009) notes, “the balance [found] will never remain stable” (51).

3.2.4. Individuality versus collectiveness

The final set of contradicting logics of the art field stems from the question whether creativity arises from individual artists or from artistic communities. An artistic individual, such as the conductor of a symphony orchestra, is often celebrated as a glorious leader and highly creative being, while the orchestra being lead is found as a passive follower (Koivunen 2003). Indeed, this perspective certainly argues that creativity and art are based on individual inspiration, but still the origin of creativity and art are also seen in very different light, as the following notion from Fowlie (1954: 24) demonstrates:

“Good theatre is characterized by the importance of a community, by the establishment of a communion which it propagates. It is the means of creating an incomparable spiritual bond between people.”

Even though it is not agreed whether this bond is between the ensemble or if it includes spectators as well (Fowlie 1954), this notion clearly emphasizes the collective nature of creativity and art. Lampel et al. (2000), in turn, note that “the true source of creative value” (267) is quite much a topic of a debate within the art field. Therefore, they argue that one set of polar opposites that an art organization must balance with is individual inspiration versus creative systems. To elaborate this argument, Lampel et al. (2000) state that it is important that an art organization finds out whether their creativity stems from individuals within the organization, or from the system as a whole, as identifying the origin of creativity allows an organization to develop their creativity even further. However, they also note that the source of creative value might actually be some sort of combination of both of these elements, even though art organizations do tend to emphasize either individuals or the community.

Vilén (2010) also brings up this issue, as she notes that in an opera, members of the organization need to navigate between various struggles, such as visiting “stars” versus an ensemble. Furthermore, she notes that the members of artistic personnel have a strict pecking order, where the visiting soloists come first, followed by the house’s own soloists and the chorus. While this pecking order emphasizes individual talent, artistic personnel often criticize it, as well as the amount of visiting stars being brought to the organization, whom they feel turn the opera to a “star theatre” (141). This critique might stem from the pecking order itself, as it forces the actual members of the opera to lesser roles, but it could also be a statement for greater collectivity. It is likely that some of the members truly wish for greater attention for the ensemble as a whole, while others’ critique is based on more personal reasons. Indeed, it seems that the members of an art organization might themselves disagree whether creativity originates from individuals or from the community. In her study, Vilén (2010) quotes the head of the chorus and orchestra department, who notes that both soloists and the chorus tend to think themselves as “the opera” (142). This is quite an interesting notion, as the first seems to emphasize individuals as the source of creativity and art, while the latter gives the credit for a group. It is also noteworthy that the members of administrative and technical personnel tend to exclude themselves from art, even though they too are members of a highly artistic community that is an opera (Vilén 2010).

The question whether art organizations are creative as such, or merely collectives of creative individuals, has been discussed vastly in the context of a symphony orchestra. As noted, the conductor of an orchestra is often seen as an almost heroic leader, who conjures beautiful music from the orchestra, which itself is not that creative (Koivunen 2003). Still, Koivunen (2003) speculates that this viewpoint might be withdrawing, or at least getting a competitor, as the shared leadership discourse, with its robust emphasis on collectiveness, gradually gets stronger. Marotto, Roos and Victor (2007) also discuss collectiveness within an orchestra, and they argue that that in groups such an orchestra, individuals are capable of transforming their own peak performance to a collective peak performance. They define peak performance as a brief, action-oriented moment, where musician “transcends his/her normal level of performance and experiences the joy and rapture associated with the peak experience” (390). To explain how this individual peak performance then can transform to a collective peak performance, Marotto et al. (2007) present a model of collective virtuosity. In this model they note that while collective virtuosity is very fragile and easily broken, it can be catalyzed by the leader of the group, by the task in the hand, or by the group itself. In addition, group members must at the same time co-create and collectively experience the performance, as well as have a shared aesthetic, cognitive, and social experience of

their performance in order to achieve the collective virtuosity (ibid.). When contemplating this model, it seems that the collective peak performance is not easily achieved, but still Marotto et al. (2007) argue that they were able to observe this phenomenon occasionally during their fieldwork within an orchestra. Thus, it is important to notice that while artists are indeed creative as individuals, they can also be that as a community, which in turn can lift their individual talents even higher level and offer them even feelings of joy and rapture. To this notion, then, I will end this chapter that has discussed the balancing acts in the art field.

3.3. Concluding on the art field

In this main chapter, I have presented the overall context of this study, as I have discussed some key notions from the earlier research of art organizations. First of all, I have briefly defined the cultural products that art organizations produce as such products that are usually created with artistic intention, and that mainly have either expressive or aesthetic function (Hirsch 1972, Vilén 2010). Furthermore, I have immersed in two aspects of art organizations in more depth, namely the nature of work in art organizations, and the inherent complexity of the art field.

First, here the work in art organizations is described as a process-based expert work, where especially certain type of bodily knowledge is often required (e.g. Ropo and Parviainen 2001). In addition, art organizations themselves are noted to be “multiprofessional in their identity” (Glynn 2000: 285), meaning that they usually contain experts from several different fields, who need to cooperate in order to create cultural products. Second, I have stated that the art field contains several contradicting logics: *artistic versus economic logics*, *contradicting demands for leadership*, *the old versus the new*, and *individuality versus collectiveness*. These contradictions, in turn, are noted to require an art organization to perform multiple balancing acts, as these organizations need to find the working balance between all the contradictions.

The people working in the organization studied here, then, live their everyday working life within this complex world of art organizations, and consequently they too need to navigate between all the aspects inherent to this field. Therefore, the notions from this chapter should be kept in mind while proceeding towards the empirical findings of this study. However, before moving on to these findings, I will first describe the methodology of this study in the next main chapter.

4 Methodology

The methodology of this study is described in this main chapter. First, the research process is described in detail. Then, the research philosophy of this study is overviewed, followed by the chapter discussing the nature of ethnographic research. The next chapter, in turn, focuses on the texts generated and analyzed in study. Finally, in the last chapter I will discuss the reliability and validity of this study.

4.1. Description of the research process

In this chapter, my aim is to describe the whole research process of this study thoroughly and in unconcealed manner. Therefore, I will present a confessional ethnographic tale of my research process, guided by the following words from John Van Maanen (1988:75):

“The confessional writings concern how the fieldworker’s life was lived upriver among the natives. They are concerned primarily with how the fieldwork odyssey was accomplished by the researcher. [...] Much confessional work is done to convince the audience of the human qualities of the fieldworker.”

An “odyssey” seems quite a grand word for describing anything, and certainly something I personally would shy away from using. Still, it does quite aptly capture the feelings and experiences one goes through when getting into the world of ethnography for the very first time. Overall, the research process of this study has been a bit of a rollercoaster of conflicting feelings, and at times I felt quite insecure about the whole process. For instance, the academic discussion around the identities felt occasionally a bit overwhelming with the numerous, more or less different theories that seemed to compete with each other. Furthermore, another issue I stressed about was doing justice for the organization I had a privilege to study very closely. Was I presenting an accurate, but rich description of this theatre? Lastly, I spent a lot of time thinking about some of the methodological choices of this study. On the other hand, I feel that this research as a whole was a privilege in many ways. I truly enjoyed the time I spent with the members of the theatre, and even though at times I felt quite tired after weeks of observing two rehearsals in a day, it always felt worth it. By observing the everyday life of this theatre, I was able to understand it and the people working there better. Furthermore, the long days with the members of this theatre helped me to learn to appreciate the work they do even more than what I used to. In addition, participant observation also generated some questions I might not have thought about without my time in the field. Outside the field, then, other joys of this research were the moments when I read earlier

studies and felt that they were truly insightful. It was like learning a language to talk about something I had thought about, but did not know how to put it into words. I ended up reading a lot, and while sometimes the studies I familiarized myself with turned out to be not so substantial for my research, it was interesting to learn about them and the different viewpoints they presented. Little by little I found out what I wanted to talk about in this study. Overall, with all the feelings of joy and anxiety, the year or so I spent with this thesis was a very rewarding experience.

Next, I will go through the research process in more detail, starting from the very beginning, continuing with fieldwork, and ending with some notions from the sense-making and writing process.

4.1.1. The starting point and gaining the access

I first started to think about my master's thesis around the end of 2013. At this point, I was still doing courses for my master's degree, but I was very conscious of the fact that soon I should have some sort of research topic figured out. This was quite a frustrating time for me, as I kept on questioning myself and my capabilities as a researcher. When I was contemplating prospective research topics, I was especially hesitant when it came to studying an actual, real-life organization. However, around this time a friend asked me a question I myself had not thought about: "If you could choose anything, what would interest you the most?" Mainly to humor him I gave the question a thought, and answered that Kuopio City Theatre certainly would be a fascinating research context.

My initial interest towards this particular organization stemmed from the unusual situation they were at the time of the conversation. Due to the renovation of their old theatre building, in 2012 Kuopio City Theatre had temporarily moved to such premises that previously had been occupied by a middle school. During the end of 2013, they had operated in these unusual premises for one and half years. For me as a management student this seemed quite a challenge, and when I first started to think about it, I could not stop. Finally I decided to give it a go and wrote an e-mail to the head of theatre. Initially I did not receive an answer, which I found discouraging, but also understandable. After all, at that point the current head of theatre had formally held the position only couple of months, and there were plenty of other things he had to concentrate on. When I called to him to verify that he had received my e-mail, the head of theatre was positive about my interest, but told me that he had to talk about my research with the other members of the management. For month or so I kept contacting the head of theatre through e-mail and phone, and finally just before the holidays I gained the access to this theatre. It was decided that I would enter the field sometime

around next March, as I could not move to Kuopio before that due to the final courses I had to take in Helsinki. As I planned to both observe and interview the people working in this theatre, it was no option to stay in Helsinki. Fortunately, moving for the fieldwork was no problem, as I am originally from Kuopio. All in all, I was overjoyed for the opportunity to study the very same organization that had occupied my mind ever since I first gave the thought a chance. In addition, a great amount of the anxiety I had felt diminished, as I now had a highly fascinating organization to study in my thesis.

4.1.2. Starting it for real and becoming a “member” of the team

For a while, I put my thesis in the back of my mind until I was ready to move to Kuopio in the end of February 2014. At this point I started to read about art organizations, and soon I understood that as an art organization, Kuopio City Theatre would be an extremely interesting topic for a research even without their unorthodox temporary premises. The multiple balancing acts described in earlier art organization studies intrigued me greatly, and I started to wonder if the organization I was going to study faced these challenges as well. Furthermore, while many earlier studies emphasize the need for further research, I noticed that especially studies focusing on a theatre as a whole seemed to be quite rare. Indeed, it seems that especially the directors and the actors have been studied quite often, but for me the people behind the “scenes” were as interesting as the artists. Little by little the temporary premises started to lose their relevance in my mind, and I decided to refocus my research on the theatre as a whole. During the first face-to-face meeting I had with the head of theatre on March 12th, I brought up this idea and he seemed to be interested in it, noting that many people do not understand how the theatre works. Later on, while in the field, I got more support for my decision to change the research topic, as I talked with the people all around the organization. Indeed, many of them stated that the essence of theatre did not change, even though the temporary premises did sometimes require them to produce art a bit differently. Of course, these positively-oriented comments might have stemmed from the fact that I was in the field during the last months of their time in the temporary premises. Perhaps, I might have received different kinds of answers if asked in 2012 or in 2013. Thinking back, a longitudinal study covering the whole period Kuopio City Theatre stayed in the temporary premises would have been more suitable way to properly describe the possible effects of these premises on to the organization.

A couple of weeks after the meeting with the head of theatre, I formally entered the field by observing a rehearsal of a theatrical play. I gained the access to this particular rehearsal by calling the head of theatre, who then connected me with the play’s production manager. The play in

question was directed by a visiting director, and therefore the production manager became my contact person. I initially thought I would mainly observe the rehearsals of this play, but I was then informed that the rehearsal in question was actually the last one before a long break. As such, I needed to negotiate access to the rehearsals of another theatrical play, namely a musical with the first rehearsal scheduled to happen in less than two weeks. Fortunately, the musical's director gave his permission readily, and so I started an intense period of eight weeks of observing the rehearsals that usually took place twice a day in weekdays as well as on several Saturdays. After week or so of observing, I also started to interview people in-between the rehearsals. I let my observations to inform the interviews – my initial interview outline was based on my first observations. Furthermore, I modified the form every time I felt that I had seen or heard something I needed to know more about. Overall, I tried to keep the interviews very informal, and I felt that I usually got the most interesting findings from the interviews that were more like conversations. I always started an interview by stating that while I did have some pre-planned questions, they should be seen as more of guidelines, and that the point was to talk freely about the theatre and people working in theatres. On the other hand, some interviews made me observe the rehearsals in a different light, and so they too informed my observations.

Perhaps due to my intense period in the field, I quickly felt close connection with the members of the production I mainly observed, as well as with the people I met on a daily basis during the breaks. Overall, people were very open and included me to their conversations, as well as joked with me in the same way they joked with each other. Initially I did worry about this closeness, as I hardly could call myself as an objective observer, who would not affect the situation being observed. Then again, already my presence was unusual, and so I knew I would slightly alter the situation no matter what – in the end I did not belong to the situations I observed, and consequently it is possible that people behaved somewhat differently in these situations. It could be argued that a covert observer would not affect the situation, but in my opinion it is not that straightforward either. After all, a covert observer would need to participate, and therefore they too would affect the situation greatly by being one of the people actually creating the situation. Furthermore, a covert observer cannot ask clarifying questions that easily without threatening their cover. Finally, the question of ethics rises when a researcher is observing people, who do not know that they are being observed. For me it was important that all the people I observed knew what I was doing, and therefore I was glad that during the first rehearsal, the musical's director actually introduced me to everyone alongside the members of the production. In the end, I became such participant observer, who did not actually work with the people observed, but did interact with them, and participated in

their everyday life within the theatre. Due to this more active role, I was able to create closer bonds with the people I observed, and this, in turn, enabled me to have a good number of informal discussions in the field. They, then, gave me a great deal of important information about the theatre as an organization, as well as about the people working in a theatre.

In this quite an active role, perhaps the most peculiar situation I ended up was the one time I needed to leave the rehearsal for a while in order to collect an actress from her home with the production manager. For some reason the actress had not been informed that she was needed in the rehearsal, and while the actress promised on the phone that she would come to the rehearsal, she still needed a ride from home, and I happened to be only one who had a car close by. After dealing with my initial worries, this situation was the only time I wondered if I was participating too much, but as the production manager said to me during the drive, it is not possible to get to know people if you do not interact with them at all. All in all, I ended up becoming some sort of an honorific member of the production team, who did not work for the production itself, but still was very much involved in the everyday life of that production. In fact, when it comes to the presence alone, I was one of those people, who were most often present in the rehearsals. Indeed, while the musical I observed was a mass production that as a whole involved a large number of people, not all the people were needed in all the rehearsals – quite contrary, the number of people involved in an individual rehearsal varied a lot. As such, I was actually one of the constant aspects of the rehearsals: I was always there, taking notes. Consequently people soon got accustomed to my presence, and especially the actual members of this theatre treated me in the same open manner as they treated the numerous visiting members of the production team. Overall, my efforts of trying to understand the theatre were appreciated, and people were curious about my research – though they also thought I was attempting something very difficult indeed. Thinking back, they were not entirely wrong.

4.1.3. Leaving the field and trying to make sense of it

My time in the field came to the end on June 4th with the last three interviews conducted all in the very same day. A week earlier I had observed the last rehearsal of the musical before the production team went to the summer break. For a while it felt a bit weird that I no longer had to go to the theatre every day twice a day, but I soon focused on transcribing my interviews. I first did attempt transcribing already while I was in the field, as this would have allowed me to go through my interviews again, and consequently transcribing could have improved the informative cycle between interviewing and observations. However, I soon realized that after the long days I spent in the theatre I rarely had the energy to transcribe the interviews, and therefore I decided to focus on this

part of the research after the fieldwork. This decision was certainly a compromise, but I felt that it was necessary one: After all, one needs to be always alert and responsive while in the field in order to generate the data, and thus too an exhausted researcher is more a compromise for the research as a whole. Transcribing, then, turned out to be quite a task, as it was at the same time quite mind-numbing and very interesting. Indeed, the process itself was very mechanical, but at the same time it allowed me to go through the interviews again without worrying about the analysis too much. Consequently it was important that I did the transcribing myself, as the process generated such thoughts that supported the actual analysis process.

This process of transcribing, then, led me more towards the identity theories – though I had already considered them while I still was in the field. Indeed, at some point I started to wonder the identity of the people who work in theatres, as it seemed that many of them were “theatre people” root and branch. I had already read some articles during the time I was mostly in the field, but after the transcriptions were finished I truly dived into the academic conversation of identities. This phase of the research, then, lasted for quite a number of weeks, and at times I got this feeling that my head was full of researchers – all of whom more or less disagreed with each other – claiming that they had the most accurate view of the identity of human being. After a while I noticed that I was thinking more about how these different viewpoints of identity could work together, and less about the theatre, which was the point I knew I should refocus myself on art organizations. Thus, I started to write my thesis little by little, while at the same time I was trying to clear my head about the identities. This decision helped me to bring my own research back to the fore, and after re-familiarizing myself with some of the earlier art organization studies, I started to analyze my transcripts and field notes more closely, asking myself what exactly brought identities on my mind in the first place, and what else there might be in my texts.

Erving Goffman’s (1959) dramaturgical perspective was introduced into this research after my supervisor suggested that I should read “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life”. While many identity theories felt appropriate in describing the sense of self, Goffman’s dramaturgical perspective somehow truly captured me. Naturally, the idea of exploring the identity of the people working in theatre *through* the metaphor of theatre both concerned and excited me. I saw the possibility of truly getting confused by the combination of these two, but at the same time dramaturgical perspective also felt the only framework that was truly suitable for me. I was intrigued by the fact that researchers such as Fowlie (1954) talked about the theatre’s capability of capturing the essence of humanity, and at the same time Goffman portrayed human through the metaphor of theatre. Nevertheless, my final decision to utilize dramaturgical perspective was based

on the way it portrayed the activity of observing other human beings. According to Goffman, the audience observing any presentation of self may interpret the performance differently than what the performer was aiming for in their presentation. Furthermore, the performer's character, the self they wish to convey to their audience, may not represent the self that the performer considers to be accurate impression of their "real" self. Thus, dramaturgical perspective emphasizes that the activity of observing others is ultimately always interpretive, and therefore the "realness" of the interpretations is not so crucial. When thinking my time in the field from this perspective, then, I feel that I as a researcher I had two roles. First, I sometimes was a member of the audience of all kinds of presentations of self in the theatre's everyday life – although for instance during the rehearsals interactions with me as a member of an audience were seldom. In fact, I believe that I was quite often forgotten during the rehearsals, which brings us to the second role I had in the field. Indeed, in such occasions I was an outsider, who was capable of observing both the dramaturgical performers and audiences that exist in this theatre. This insight, then, finally truly freed me to approach this thesis as something, where I myself had a very active role.

Here, then, I will end the confessional tale that has described my research process. Next, I will return to the underlying assumptions that I have about the development and the nature of knowledge already partly implied in this chapter. In other words, I will present the epistemological and ontological backgrounds of this study. In addition, I will discuss further the research approach utilized in this study.

4.2. Research philosophy and approach

Before immersing in the world of ethnography, I would like to briefly discuss the ontological and epistemological foundations of this study. In addition, in this chapter I will identify the research approach utilized in this study. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2007), research philosophy features such assumptions that the researcher has about the nature and the development of knowledge. These assumptions, then, guide the researcher in the research, and therefore they have a substantial effect on the methodological decisions of the study (ibid.). Furthermore, Saunders et al. (2007) also note that as theory is always present in the research, the way how theory is approached in the study should be discussed. However, before proceeding into this discussion, I wish to point out that I do not intent to claim here that there is a simple causation, where certain research philosophy and approach lead to certain research method. Instead, I believe that while researchers certainly have some assumptions of the nature and the development of knowledge prior the research, those assumptions get cultivated during the research process due to such decisions as

what is chosen to be the research method of the study. Therefore, my decision to utilize ethnography in this study has also affected my research philosophy and approach.

4.2.1. Ontological assumptions

Ontologically, this research is subjective by its nature. According to Saunders et al. (2007), subjectivist viewpoint on the nature of reality promotes social phenomena as creations of social actors, who have perceptions of these phenomena and who act in accordance with their perceptions. In addition, they note that social phenomena are constantly revisited by the related social actors, as the actions taken affect the perceptions and vice versa. This viewpoint on the nature of reality, then, is frequently connected to social constructionism, which in turn highlights the importance of exploring the subjective meanings that the social actors give to their actions in order to understand those actions (ibid.). Alasuutari (1999) also brings up the term social constructionism, and he states that from the perspective of cultural studies, reality is completely constructed from the meanings, from the interpretations of those meanings, and from the rules of interpretation. Furthermore, he argues that the world presents itself to humans through the relationship that the humans have with that world, instead of merely presenting itself “as it is” (60). Thus, subjectivism emphasizes the role of interpretation in understanding social phenomena. This notion, then, leads us to the epistemological background of this study.

4.2.2. Epistemological assumptions

As already suggested in both the previous chapter and in the current chapter, epistemologically this study follows interpretivist tradition. Saunders et al. (2007) note that as in subjectivism, interpretivism emphasizes the role of social actors, and the meanings these social actors give to their everyday social roles. To be more precise, they argue that social actors interpret their everyday social roles through the meanings they give to these roles and furthermore, social actors also interpret the social roles of others through their own sets of meanings. Therefore, in order to understand the social world of these actors, an interpretivist researcher needs to explore the meanings behind these social roles. Furthermore, it is important to note that here researchers themselves are also considered as social actors, who interpret the social world they study. Geertz (1973) notes that “a good interpretation of anything – a poem, a person, a history, a ritual, an institution, a society – takes us into the heart of that of which it is the interpretation” (18). Interpretivism, then, aims to bring forward the very core of what is being studied. Together with

subjectivist viewpoint, interpretivist tradition has informed me greatly as the researcher of this study.

4.2.3. Research approach

Moving on to the research approach of this study, this research utilizes abductive approach towards theory. The logic of abduction was developed by Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914), and it is distinct from both deduction and induction (e.g. Reichertz 2007). Indeed, while deduction begins from certain rule – and induction from certain collection of given cases – abduction starts with consequences, from which reasons are constructed (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). As it is, Timmermans and Tavory (2012) argue that abductive approach aims to cultivate surprising and anomalous empirical findings against multiple related theories. Consequently, in-depth knowledge of numerous existing theories is required at the every step of the research, as these surprising and unanticipated observations “depend on a theoretically sensitized observer who recognizes their potential relevance” (Timmermans and Tavory 2012: 173). The importance of knowing theories, however, does not mean that abductive research approach aims to test hypothesis – instead it aspires to cultivate new concepts from those surprising and anomalous aspects in empirical findings (ibid.). Reichertz (2007:221) argues:

“Abductive inferencing is, rather, an attitude towards data and towards one’s own knowledge: data are to be taken seriously, and the validity of previously developed knowledge is to be queried. It is a state of preparedness for being taken unprepared.”

As it is, abductive research approach positions the empirical findings in the center of the research. Furthermore, Reichertz (2007) notes that Peirce advises the researcher to let their mind to wander freely, and not only utilize logical inference. Through this kind of mental game, the researcher sets such preconditions for the research that enhance successful abductions (ibid.). Timmermans and Tavory (2012), then, note that while not all abductions lead to good ideas culminating in theory construction, some of them may generate “creative and novel theoretical insights through a dialectic of cultivated theoretical sensitivity and methodological heuristics” (180). To this notion, then, I finish this chapter that has discussed the research philosophy and approach of this study. Next, I will focus on the question what it is to do ethnographic research.

4.3. Doing ethnographic research

In this chapter, I will describe what it is to do ethnographic research. First, I will discuss the aim of ethnographic research, and then I will focus on how ethnography is done in practice.

4.3.1. The aim of ethnographic research

In brief, it could be said that ethnographer's aim is to produce written accounts that aim to represent a thick description of a culture, or selected aspects of that culture (e.g. Geertz 1973, Van Maanen 1988). Indeed, Saunders et al. (2007) argue that the purpose of ethnography is to "describe and explain the social world the research subjects inhabit in the way in which they would describe and explain it" (142). Furthermore, they comment that while ethnography is not that often utilized in business studies, it can offer such insights of the research context that highlight the perspectives of those who are involved in the study. Ethnographic research, then, wishes to convey the voice of those people, who are being studied in the research, as well as bring forward their perspectives of the world they live in. Delamont (2004), in turn, also notes that understanding the research context from the perspectives of the people, who are being studied, is central to ethnographic research. Indeed, she states that ethnographer's aim is to understand how the culture being studied 'works' and expands that "the researchers need to discover what 'their' people believe; what they do at work and in their leisure time; what makes them laugh, cry and rage; who they love, hate and fear; and how they choose their friends and endure their relations" (206). In other words, Delamont (2004) emphasizes that ethnographic research is characterized by its aspiration to provide throughout understanding of the people, who are being studied. Similarly, Geertz (1973: 6) argues:

"From one point of view, that of the textbook, doing ethnography is establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts, taking genealogies, mapping fields, keeping a diary, and so on. But it is not these things, techniques and received procedures, that define the enterprise. What defines it is the kind of intellectual effort it is: an elaborate venture in, to borrow a notion from Gilbert Ryle, "thick description.""

Therefore, while ethnography as an activity certainly involves such aspects that Geertz (1973) describes as something from the textbook, the very core of ethnographic research is in providing these thick descriptions of the culture that is studied. Van Maanen (1988) agrees with this notion, as he defines ethnography as "written representation of culture" (1). This description of ethnography as something written, then, recurs in the literature of ethnographic research. For instance, Geertz (1973) argues that "the ethnographer "inscribes" social discourse; *he writes it down*" (19). Furthermore, he describes ethnographic writings as "something made" (15), emphasizing at the same time the interpretative nature of ethnographic research. Delamont (2004), too, brings up the importance of writing when doing ethnography, but she also notes that an ethnography is the result of a research – or in other words, "a theorized account of the culture studied with ethnographic

methods” (207). Therefore, an ethnography is not only a thick description of a culture, or a written account of it, but the ethnographic research as a whole.

4.3.2. Ethnography in practice

As already discussed, ethnography in practice involves substantial amount of writing and in addition, ethnographic research also requires a lot of reading (e.g. Delamont 2004, Pader 2005). For instance Pader (2005) states that as an ethnographer aims to make the invisible aspects of a culture visible, reading the ethnographic writings produced by other researchers may help, as they offer interpretive analysis based on the experiences of others. These experiences, then, are the very basis of ethnographic research, as ethnographic findings are generated from the field through participant observation. Delamont (2004) notes that while ethnography, fieldwork, and participant observation are treated as synonymous in the literature, it is convenient to “use ethnography as the most inclusive term, with participant observation and fieldwork being useful descriptions of the data-collection technique and the location of data collection” (206). As such, both participant observation and fieldwork are important terms to discuss when describing ethnographic research in practice.

Pader (2005) notes that every human practices participant observation in their everyday life, as we constantly interpret the world around us in order to anticipate what happens next. However, ethnographers utilize participant observation in order to understand the underlying issues and the internal structures of meaning of the culture they are studying and furthermore, they meticulously take notes of everything they observe so that they can interpret it (ibid.). Delamont (2004), on the other hand, describes participant observation as a mixture of observation and interviewing. While ethnographic interviewing seems to usually refer to the informal discussions that the ethnographer has with the people they are observing (Saunders et al. 2007), in this study formal, semi-structured interviews were also utilized. According to Patton (1990), the benefit of qualitative interviewing is that it allows the researcher to ask about those things that cannot be directly observed. Thus, he notes that “the purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective” (278). Therefore, together with observation and informal discussions, formal interviewing can help in building the thick description of the culture that is being studied.

As noted, fieldwork can be considered as synonymous to participant observation, as it too refers to the ethnographer’s activities in the field. Here, however, it is important to make a distinction between terms *fieldwork*, which is the activity, and *field*, which is the location of activity. Furthermore, it should be remembered that the field itself is never the object of study – it is the

locus of study (Geertz 1973). Similarly, it should be noted that participant observation rarely refers to an actual participation to the activity that is being observed; instead ethnographers watch those activities while interacting with the people, who are actually doing the things observed (Delamont 2004). This, then, can be done either through total immersion, which means that the researcher will actually live with the people whom they are studying, or through partial immersion, where the ethnographer will visit the field on a daily basis (ibid.). Delamont (2004) notes that the former type of fieldwork is more common for anthropologists, while the latter for sociological researchers. This study, then, was conducted with partial immersion; while I spent long days observing and interviewing the people I studied, I still returned home at night. Next, I will discuss the texts that I generated through this type of fieldwork.

4.4. Texts – generation and analysis

In this chapter, I will focus on the texts of this study, by which I mean all the written and spoken texts that were generated in the interviews and in the field notes. First, I will introduce the field from where the texts were generated. Second, I will summarize how the texts were generated from this field. Finally, I will discuss the analysis process of this study.

4.4.1. Introducing Kuopio City Theatre

The fieldwork of this study was conducted in Kuopio City Theatre. According to Seppälä (2002), permanent and uninterrupted theatrical activity in Kuopio began when Kuopio Drama Society (*Kuopion Näytelmäseura*) was established in 1902. In their website, Kuopio City Theatre begins to recount its history from this moment as well, although they have only operated under the name City Theatre from 1976. The changing of the name from then Kuopio Common Theatre (*Kuopion Yhteisteatteri*) was due to the decision to municipalize the theatre. Already before this, the theatre got its own theatre building in 1963. This theatre building, then, went through renovation in 2012-2014, and during this period Kuopio City Theatre operated in temporary premises. While this study was conducted in spring 2014, it does not focus on these premises, as both the related literature and fieldwork supported the notion that the temporary change of premises had little effect on the everyday life of the theatre.

According to their website, Kuopio City Theatre is the largest professional theatre in the Eastern Finland region. As such, they currently employ 73 people in total, who are then divided to artistic, technical and administrative personnel. Artistic personnel encompass not only actors, but also such people as the director and the set designer. Technical personnel, in turn, contain experts from

different branches of stagecraft such as stage lights and set construction. Administrative personnel, then, entail for instance the theatre's public relations officer and marketer. Apart from them, Kuopio City Theatre has a management of four people. Furthermore, while the theatrical productions are mainly produced with the contribution of own personnel, Kuopio City Theatre also notes to employ around 50 temporary workers every year. For instance, visitors from other theatres all around the world are often employed. Kuopio City Theatre states to be known for its emphasis on Finnish theatre as well as good-quality musicals, and annually they have approximately eight premieres. They are a repertory company; they always have several ongoing productions during a theatre season, instead of only focusing on a single production at time (Hytti 2005).

Before moving on to the generation of the texts, it is to be noted that the focus of this study is on the everyday life of the members of artistic and technical personnel, as well as the management. Administrative personnel, albeit as important as other people working in this theatre, were not observed or interviewed during the fieldwork. Several visiting members of productions, however, were either observed or interviewed, and therefore they belong to the group of people studied in this research.

4.4.2. Generation of the texts

All the written and spoken texts analyzed in this study were generated through either participant observation or interviewing. Therefore, the actual texts analyzed in this study are the interview transcripts and my field notes. Next, I will summarize how these texts were generated from the field.

As noted, the fieldwork of this study took place in spring 2014, and the majority of the work was done during an intense period of eight weeks, from the beginning of April to the end of May. During this period, I mainly observed the rehearsals of a musical. I was involved in the musical's rehearsals from the beginning and observed 49 rehearsals in total, covering almost all the rehearsals with a few exceptions. These rehearsals mainly took place twice a weekday, with several rehearsals on Saturdays. The average duration of a rehearsal varied from three-and-half to four hours. In addition to the rehearsals of the musical, I also observed a six-hour long rehearsal of a theatrical play couple of weeks prior the beginning of the musical's rehearsals. Furthermore, I observed three performances of different ongoing productions as a spectator. In addition, I got to observe one performance of an ongoing production from the backstage, covering both the green room and offstage activities of the people, who were part of that production. Before this performance, I also

observed the stagehands setting the stage for that performance. Finally, I observed one weekly meeting with the management and middle-managers.

During my fieldwork, I kept field notes and tried to record everything I saw and heard to my notebooks. As I did not want to rely on my memory alone, I usually recorded the situations I observed as they occurred. However, occasionally I also needed to add some notions to my notes later on, as I sometimes observed so a hectic situation that it was very difficult to observe and record simultaneously. In these situations I recorded as much I could in the actual situation, and continued from there as soon as it was possible. Due to this decision to mainly record the situations as they happened, I usually took notes in the presence of the people I observed. They, however, mostly ignored this and overall seemed to be comfortable with me taking notes all the time. From time to time people joked about how I never quit, and I was also regularly asked how many notebooks I had filled up. In total, my field notes took a little less than eight full notebooks, which translates to approximately 308 pages. In addition to the field notes, I occasionally recorded my own thoughts and feelings to my ethnographic diary.

While in the field, I also conducted 13 interviews in total. The majority of these interviews were with the people I met on a daily basis during my time observing the musical's rehearsals. Therefore, excluding the interviews with the management, all the interviewees were either members of the production team of that musical, or people who worked in the same premises where the rehearsals were mainly held. The interviews lasted from 29 minutes to 1 hour 44 minutes. All the interviews were semi-structured, and six different main themes were covered in the interview outline. However, I did not necessarily follow the interview outline if it became clear that the interviewee wanted to talk about something else. When needed, I made up new questions during the interview. In addition, occasionally the interviewees started to talk about certain theme before I had a chance to ask about it. In these cases I let them speak about the theme and, if necessary, asked supporting questions before moving on to other themes that were in my interview outline.

All in all, the aim in all the interviews was to let the voice of the interviewee to dominate the interview, as I felt that this was the best way to draw the interviewee's perspective to the fore. I was mostly successful in this aspiration, although sometimes it was difficult to not to get carried away by something my interviewee told me. I am naturally quite talkative, and occasionally I needed to remind myself not to turn an interview too much into a conversation, especially when I was interviewing such people with whom I had formed close bonds. Still, I did gain meaningful information from such interviews too, as the atmosphere of these interviews was very informal and

helped the interviewees to relax. All in all, some of my interviewees needed very little encouragement in order to talk about themselves, while others required me to ask several supporting questions before they felt comfortable to talk more. Occasionally I did not get that much of information about some theme from an interviewee, but in these cases it felt that they were not comfortable to talk about the theme, and therefore I moved on, as I did not want to pressure them.

4.4.3. Analysis of the texts

The analysis process of this study is partly inspired by Tanja Vilén's (2010) doctoral thesis, which is an ethnographic study of opera. As such, I utilized ethnographic analysis method, where "on the other hand, the researcher aims at capturing the meanings the organizational members attach to their actions, and on the other, what they say about the community in that particular context" (Vilén 2010: 57). Vilén (2010) notes that in practice this means that the researcher needs to find out answers to such questions that contemplate of what certain things are examples of in the texts. Ethnographic analysis does not only occur after the fieldwork, but also during the time spent in the field, and as such it continuously informs the researcher (ibid.)

As described earlier, I too started to analyze my texts already in the field. However, it was only afterwards I really focused on the process of making sense of everything I had heard and seen during my time in the field. Inspired by Vilén (2010), I began by asking myself a lot of questions, first of them being: "Based on everything I have seen and heard, what theatre is exactly?" With this question in my mind, I went through the texts and looked for everything that the people I had studied had said and done that was somehow related to their relationship with the theatre itself. Through this process, then, I generated the following findings chapter that describes how the people working in the theatre studied here define "theatre" – what kinds of realities of the theatre they project through their actions. After this, I then focused on the actual research question of this study, and asked myself: "How these people present themselves in their everyday working life?" Here it felt natural to contemplate the different personnel groups covered in this study as separate dramaturgical performance teams. This decision was partly based on my personal choice to treat them as such, but the texts also supported the decision, as both interviewing and observation suggested that the people I studied identify most strongly with their own personnel group and wish to be seen as members of this group. Of course, this support is my interpretation as well, and thus the question remains if someone else would have seen the performance teams differently if they had conducted this study instead of me. In the final main chapter, I will contemplate more the suitability of the social lines I have drawn here, but until then I will treat them as appropriate. Finally, in

between writing the findings chapters described here, I also wrote two illustrations that summarize two individual occasions observed and recorded in the field. Writing these illustrations helped me to articulate what I had seen and heard while in the field. In addition, they also demonstrate the everyday life in this theatre for the reader.

This process of asking questions from the texts, then, prompted further analysis. While writing what became the findings chapter of this thesis, I started to pay more and more attention to the way the people working in this theatre described their work in my texts. While they did not usually explicitly state it, their descriptions of their work suggested that their work required a high level of expertise. This notion, then, led me to read more about expertise. Finally, everything seemed to fall into their places when I started to contemplate my findings through the concept of collective expertise, which seemed to articulate the manner how the people I had studied interacted with each other through their presentations of self. As it is, collective expertise became one of the focus points of this study.

When looking back, the analysis process of this study – and the whole research to some extent – reminds me of Vida Bajc's (2012) description of abductive ethnography in practice: Certain insights, namely the strong sense of identification and expertise, almost “jumped” at me from my texts as I went through them. Furthermore, especially the aspect of expertise was something that no one explicitly articulated to me while I was in the field, but nonetheless it seemed to somehow hide behind everything I saw and heard while observing the everyday life in this theatre. These insights, then, guided me in both analyzing the texts as well as reading related theories. Little by little I was able to proceed from what was quite a substantial amount of different kinds of texts towards more clarified answers to my research questions.

4.5. Reliability and validity of the research

Before proceeding to the empirical findings of this study, I would like to briefly discuss the reliability and validity of this research. According to Saunders et al. (2007), observer bias is the greatest threat for the research conclusions of a study that has utilized participant observation. All the texts that are generated through participant observation are written by the researcher, and thus it is important to pay attention to one's own assumptions and take care that they do not affect the research. Saunders et al. (2007) suggest that researchers should continuously question their conclusions and think about other sorts of interpretations. Furthermore, they promote the use of informant verification, where the researcher checks the validity of the interpretations from the people, who are studied in the research. This in turn may produce new interpretations to consider

(ibid.). This study, then, utilizes both of these methods which can enhance the reliability of the research. Firstly, after the very beginning of the research, I paid close attention to my own assumption and tried to prevent them from affecting the research. Secondly, I constantly utilized informant verification, as I brought up my interpretations both in the interviews and in the numerous informal discussions I had with the people I studied. Sometimes I got the verification that I was indeed going to the right direction, while other times it became clear that my informants could not recognize themselves from my interpretations. As such, informant verification provided me important information about the people I studied, as well as supported me in my observations and interviews. Indeed, Saunders et al. (2007) note that informant verification is actually a form of triangulation, where either different sources of information or different research methods are utilized in order to improve the reliability of the research's conclusions.

However, it should be noted that both the research philosophy and my decision to utilize ethnography have an effect on the question of reliability and validity of the study. With more positivist stance towards the nature of knowledge and reality, the reliability of the texts generated and analyzed in this study could be questioned, as they are not objective as such and in addition, they cannot be statistically analyzed (Saunders et al. 2007). However, I as a researcher have subjectivist and interpretivist perspective towards the nature of knowledge and reality, and therefore such questions are not relevant for this study. After all, the aim of this study is to richly describe the people working in theatre, and this I believe could never be achieved through statistics only. Geertz (1973), then, notes that the nature of ethnographic research may cause some questions concerning the verification of the study, though he also states that “appraisal” could be better term to use when considering the validity of an ethnographic study. However, he continues that an ethnographic study can be considered as a good account of the culture it aims to portray as long as it is thick description of that culture. Furthermore, Geertz (1973: 16) argues:

“It is not against a body of uninterpreted data, radically thinned descriptions, that we must measure the cogency of our explications, but against the power of the scientific imagination to bring us into touch with the lives of strangers.”

Finally, reflexivity is central to ethnographic research – in fact Watson (1987) argues that “reflexivity is not merely something which one “does,” such as engaging in self-reflection, but is, rather, an essential and inevitable property of all discourse” (29). How I have come to understand this, then, is – presented in the terms of dramaturgical perspective – that everyone projects certain reality in their performances; not only the ones who we research, but also those who research. Thus,

ultimately this study is my performance through which I aim to project certain reality that is based on my reflections of what I have seen and heard. Consequently, one could question the authority of this study, but in the end the only thing I can comment here is that I consider myself as something that Goffman (1959) calls as sincere performer; I personally believe that the interpretations I have presented here describe the situations I witnessed while in the field. It is up to the reader to familiarize themselves with the interpretations of this study and make their appraisal of them. To this notion, then, I will end this main chapter that has discussed the methodological considerations of the study. In the following main chapter, I will present the empirical findings of this study.

5 Inside the theatre

This main chapter focuses on the empirical findings of this study. First, two illustrations from the field are presented in order to describe the everyday life of the people, who work in theatrical productions. Second, the various definitions of the theatre that the people, who work in the theatre studied here, project as the reality of the theatre are discussed. Third, the identities of the people working in this theatre are discussed, as their presentations of self are described.

5.1. Everyday life in theatre

In order to describe the everyday life of the people working in the theatre studied here, two illustrations from the field are presented in this chapter. Both of these illustrations portray a real-life occasion I observed while I was in the field, and consequently they represent the everyday working life of those people, who are directly involved in theatrical productions.

First, subchapter 5.1.1. presents an illustration of the invisible work that happens behind an ongoing theatrical performance. This illustration takes place in the night I observed a theatrical performance from the point of view of the people, who work in the backstage of an ongoing performance. As such, it covers all the activities I observed in the backstage – that is the green room, dressing rooms, and the offstage areas of the performance. In this illustration, the relevant members of technical personnel – such as the stagehands – become the main focus of the texts, as I mainly observed them in their work. Furthermore, some observations describing the work of actors in this performance are presented.

Second, subchapter 5.1.2. illustrates another everyday aspect inside any theatre, namely rehearsing. This illustration portrays the last evening rehearsal of the musical I mainly observed while in the field. The illustration mainly describes the actions of those people, who have a substantial effect on

the progress of the rehearsal, such as the director, the choreographer, and the production manager. The illustration covers the rehearsal from the beginning to the end, as well as describes the break spent in the green room.

5.1.1. Behind an ongoing theatrical performance

Before the performance begins

I arrive to the green room one and half hours before the beginning of tonight's theatrical performance, which I am to observe from offstage. Two weeks earlier, I watched the performance as a spectator, and I am excited to see what happens behind the sets. Some members of technical personnel are already in the green room, eating their snacks and talking lazily about all kinds of things. Some of the topics covered are related to their work, but it seems that mostly they are talking about their personal lives. For example, a stagehand and the props designer have a long conversation about tailoring, prompted by the jacket that the stagehand mentions he made for himself years ago. Still, there are a lot of silent moments between the conversations, and some members of technical personnel seem to focus on watching the television, which plays a fictional hospital series in mute. Overall, the atmosphere in the green room is relaxed, and the people there seem to share some sort of comfortable familiarity. While observing the members of technical personnel, I get the image that these people have worked together for a long while and know each other very well. This image, then, is only emphasized by the fact that at times I do not understand exactly what the members of technical personnel are talking about. Indeed, they tend to use jargon a lot and often their comments are not very detailed, at least from the point of view of an outsider. For instance, one of the stagehands asks from the stage manager: "You'll do my changes today?" The stage manager confirms this, and notes that he will also do them tomorrow. They then continue this seemingly bizarre conversation for a while, and the only reason I am able to fully understand what they are talking about is the weekly meeting I observed earlier. In this meeting it was noted that the stagehand in question will be needed in a different production and so he will not be available tomorrow. In these situations the stage manager will cover the absent stagehand, and so in order to memorize the changes that this particular stagehand usually performs, the stage manager will do them today with him.

Little by little other people arrive, and they either stay in the green room or head for dressing rooms. Both the stage manager and the props designer leave somewhere and from the green room's monitor I see them checking the stage. Overall people become more active, though the relaxed feeling is still there, and thus they give the impression of performing familiar routines. The

production manager arrives as well, and she talks with one stagehand for a moment before leaving the green room in order to change clothes. The props designer returns with a broken bar of chocolate and tells everyone that it can be eaten, as it cannot be used as a prop anymore. The dresser comes in and asks if anyone knows a good electrician, as the lights of a broken mirror cabinet need to be mended. One stagehand knows someone and while they discuss, I decide to walk around a bit in order to get a better picture of what is happening in different parts of the theatre building. On the stage I see an actress playing a drum, which I know she will play during the performance as well. Walking down the corridor, I spot the hairdresser and another actress chatting lively while the hairdresser straightens the actress' hair. All in all, it seems that there are people all around the building, making preparations for tonight's performance.

On the round with the production manager

Back in the green room, the production manager returns wearing overlarge shoes which she found from her locker. She and others joke about them for a while, and then she leaves for a moment, only to come back wearing her own shoes and black clothes. At this point I notice that apart from me and the actors, everyone is wearing a black outfit. As the walls of the offstage areas and the curtains that form the wings are all black too, the black clothes will ensure that the spectators will not see the members of technical personnel during the performance without deliberately looking for them. More and more people arrive and the number of conversations grows, while the silent moments get rarer. The members of technical personnel inform the actors that there are special microphones on the stage today, as some of the spectators expected have hearing difficulties. The actors are encouraged to check the positions of these microphones, and from the monitor I see many of them following the suggestion. Even though the level of activities has increased, people still seem to be quite laid back. The production manager starts her round and takes me with her. Together we go first to the stage, where the production manager checks the stage with and without the lights. The sets of the performance mainly consist of three big screens, and together with the wings they divide the stage to the onstage and offstage areas. After checking the stage, the production manager seeks out every actor and talks with them for a while, making sure that they are all present and know about the microphones. We then return to the green room where the production manager talks with the stage manager. She tells him that she spotted a couple of "leaks" in the screens and asks him to fix them. Again, I would not have understood this conversation if the production manager had not explained earlier on the stage what the "leaks" mean. Apparently the screens do not currently cover the offstage areas completely, and if not fixed, some spectators might see what happens behind the sets. The stage manager leaves to adjust the screens, and I decide to stay in the green room for a

while. The prompter has arrived at some point and she is discussing with the props designer about the props of another theatrical play. She was in the morning rehearsal of the play in question, and apparently the director wants some drinking glasses to the rehearsals as soon as possible. The props designer is not too happy about this demand because she believes that the glasses will only break during the rehearsals without a proper storing device.

The starting time of tonight's performance is getting closer and now almost everyone is in the green room. The overall atmosphere is warm and there is a lot of joking going on. The good-natured banter continues when the production manager introduces me for everyone in the green room, and I am surprised by the easy familiarity that is extended even to me. While some people in the green room are already familiar with me through the rehearsals of the musical I mainly observe, even the people who have never before met me talk and joke with me in a friendly manner. Soon some of the people start to move towards the stage and I go with them. The production manager shows me a seat, where I am out of everyone's way, but still capable of observing many of the people offstage. My seat is in the area called crossover, which is an offstage area right behind the screens that divide the stage to onstage and offstage areas. By walking through the crossover, the actors and the members of technical personnel will be able to move from a wing to another during the performance. The production manager and some other members of technical personnel stay with me, while others go to the wings or behind the screens. From my seat, I only see what happens behind the middle screen, as the screens are overlapping and the middle screen covers the people behind the other screens. However, I have a good view on the people in the crossover and I decide to focus on observing them. I notice that there are two racks full of different costumes and a cart loaded with small props used in the performance, such as cell phones, in the crossover.

The beginning of the performance and the stage manager

The beginning of the performance comes to me as quite a surprise, as at first I actually do not realize that the performance has started. First of all, I do not initially hear the actors onstage, even though everyone offstage is very quiet and the people only talk by whispering. In addition, all the actors and the members of technical personnel, who currently are offstage, appear to be surprisingly relaxed, albeit at the same time they seem to be always alert. Furthermore, the way they hold themselves offstage does not alter at any point, and so their behavior does not signal the beginning of the performance either. Only now it really occurs to me that while for me tonight is a once in a lifetime experience, for them this is a perfectly normal night at work. All in all, everyone is certainly focused, but at the same time it is clear that they are comfortable with the offstage routines

involved in this performance. Both the actors and the members of technical personnel appear as if they have already learnt their every action in this performance by heart. Indeed, the stage manager is the only one who could be considered as an exception to this rule, as I spot him flipping through the script a couple of times, most likely memorizing the changes he will take up tonight and tomorrow. Nevertheless, he too comes off as being very comfortable with the offstage routines, which is actually only to be expected from him. After all, while the stage manager does not normally perform any changes, he is always present in every performance as the head of the technical personnel offstage in this performance. Furthermore, the stage manager is heavily involved in the planning of the changes and so he is at least superficially familiar with everything that the stagehands do during a performance. Still, the stage manager and the stagehand, whom he will cover, work closely together tonight: While the stage manager does all the changes, the stagehand follows him closely and I also see them talking quite often. All in all, the whole memorizing process seems to advance effortlessly and it causes no hinder to the ongoing performance.

Tailing the production manager

During the first act of the performance I witness many interesting situations, and little by little the picture of what it is to work behind the sets of a theatrical performance gets clearer. Most of the time I am with the production manager, and she clarifies me many of the things that happen around us. For instance, at one point an actress goes to lie on a sofa, which I recall will be needed onstage soon. I first think that she has some sort of a joke going on, as she and others around her are laughing silently, but according to the production manager the actress is actually on the sofa for a reason. The sofa in question is a part of the screen closest to us, as there is an opening in the screen and this opening is currently covered by the backside of the sofa. From the time I watched the performance as a spectator I know that when needed, the sofa will be pushed to the stage through this opening and a cloth, patterned in the same way as the screen and the backside of the sofa, will cover the opening. Soon the previous scene ends and once the stage lights go out, I get to witness this change from offstage. One stagehand pushes the sofa onstage, while other ensures that the cloth will cover the opening. As the actress will be sitting on the sofa in the beginning of the next scene, she simply goes to the stage laying on it in order to be in her place when the lights go up again. The production manager confirms that this is indeed the way the actress goes to the stage every time the performance has progressed to this scene. Furthermore, she later on takes me with her behind another screen to see a similar change, and this time a bed gets pushed to the stage from its own opening. As this change happens with the stage lights on, the production manager explains me that

the stagehands need to be very alert and react immediately as they hear the correct line said onstage. All in all, the production manager takes me behind the front screens several times during the whole performance, and she either stays with me to explain what happens onstage, or leaves me to watch as she too participates in the change. My constant tailing of the production manager seems to amuse some people, and at one point an actress and a stagehand joke that I must be her bodyguard.

People who come and go

In addition to the people already described, I also observe the props designer, the hairdresser, and the dresser coming and going offstage during the first act. The props designer makes sure that the props already used in the performance return in to their own places, though I notice that the actors also seem to take a good care of the props. The hairdresser then comes offstage a couple of times, and she for example curls the hair of an actress who has several different roles, one of which requires a change in her hairstyle. The dresser in turn is offstage almost all the time, and she helps with costume changes when needed. Apparently there is an extraordinary number of costume changes in this performance and while the actors can deal with less urgent changes by themselves, the dresser's help is often needed in order to the actor to make back to the stage in time. In fact, I witness one so fast costume change that the actress in question is assisted not only by the dresser, but by the hairdresser as well. Still, while this costume change is certainly hectic, it also seems to be carefully coordinated and well-practiced. In fact, the actress, the dresser, and the hairdresser all laugh quietly while changing the actress' costume together. When ready, the actress goes back to the stage and the hairdresser heads for the corridor that leads to the green room and the dressing rooms. Whether they are an actor or a member of technical personnel, most of the people tend to leave the offstage area if they are not currently needed there. However, they also seem to return in good time in order to be ready to go to their scene or do their change, and so the performance goes on.

The threat of the tipping hospital bed

The curious combination of relaxedness and alertness of the people working offstage transpires itself throughout the performance, though there are a couple of situations during the first act where this characteristic gets emphasized. Among the other things, some of the actors seem to enjoy making others laugh, as for instance I witness a situation where two actors are in one wing, pulling faces to the people in the other wing. Still, during the first act I also spot these same actors often walking around the crossover, looking thoughtful and focused. Nevertheless, this curious characteristic is probably best compacted in a situation that actually happened already close to the

beginning of the first act: A hospital bed, waiting in the crossover for its use in the performance, tipped dangerously when a member of technical personnel sat on it, as there was already another person sitting on it, and their combined weight was too close to one end of the bed. At once all the people close to them seemed to be ready to help, but the two sitting on the bed managed to lower the bed silently without others' assistance. Once the risk of making a sound that could have broken the illusion of the performance was dealt with, everyone merely laughed and continued to do whatever they were doing before.

The intermission

The intermission starts and after all the spectators have left, the production manager, the props designer, the dresser, and the stagehands get the stage ready for the second act. The whole process does not take that long and again it seems that everyone has their own well-practiced routines to follow. After the stage is ready, one of the stagehands calls me out to show me a hole in one of the screens. He explains that the hole is there for a reason and while it is small enough so that the spectators cannot see it, the people working behind the sets can watch the spectators from it. We then go to the green room, where people are chatting in the same way as before the start of tonight's performance. The production manager left the stage before us and while she is not in the green room either, I still can hear her shouting "Ten minutes to the second!" from somewhere backstage. The people in the green room do not seem to react to her exclamation; instead they are joking about the forthcoming visit of the director. I remember that earlier the production manager told everyone that the director will come to see the next performance, and noted that he will give his input on how the theatrical play is going afterwards. From the interview with another director I know that the directors tend to occasionally come to watch their ongoing theatrical plays in order to make sure that the performances continue to keep up with the standards required. After the performance, the director will give his opinion on how the performance went and if needed, how people should adjust their performance for the next time. The chatter in the green room continues and I spot the props designer sewing a bag, which I know will be used in the musical that is currently rehearsed. The production manager is now in the corridor and she shouts "Five minutes to the second!" before coming in to the green room. The actors start to move back towards the stage, while the production manager stays for a while. She asks if everyone is ready from the people still in the green room, and jokes that she should too head for the stage in order to make the second act start. Together we return to our place in the crossover, and this time I see the production manager using a headset she must have used before the start of the first act as well. To me it sounds like she is asking if the people

controlling the stage lights are ready, and apparently they are as the performance then soon continues.

The second act

All in all, observed from offstage, the second act is quite similar to the first act. The same combination of alertness and relaxedness is still there, and people come and go in order to do their part in the performance. More than in the first act, some people wonder if I will ever stop taking notes, but still they all say it with amused smiles on their faces. One stagehand also jokes that I need to take notes on how the “change dance” is performed. By this he refers to a silly little dance the production manager did a bit earlier while she was behind one of the front screens, waiting for an actor to take a prop from her. At another point the production manager takes me to watch how “vomit” is put on. I first wonder what is that all about, but then I remember that in the next scene one character will throw up, and this apparently is put into action by hiding a small bag full of suitable liquid under the actress’ jacket. The props designer helps the actress to put the bag and the tube attached to it in the place, as the tube needs to be just under the actress’ chin. The actress goes to her scene and the production manager explains that when it is time for it, the actress will push the bag while pretending to throw up, and from the time I watched the performance as a spectator I know that it will look very authentic indeed. The hospital bed that caused suspense during the first act gets to the stage as well, and I take notice that it is moved towards the stage very carefully. Indeed, the stagehands start to move the bed in good time before the scene and they only seem to move it when they know there will be enough noise going on onstage to cover any sounds the bed might cause. As for the actress who will lie on the bed during the scene, she actually needs to run onstage, as her costume needs to be changed yet again before the scene. Both the dresser and the props designer help the actress in this costume change, and just one scene before the dresser and the hairdresser doused her with spray bottles, as she needed to look like drenched by the rain.

The happiness of an actress

Still, while every moment I have witnessed tonight has been very interesting, there is one occasion in the second act that is especially memorable: An actress, with a career spanning over a couple of decades, comes off the stage absolutely excited. She tells to another actress that the scene she just did was very successful and that she and the actor performing with her managed to create an amazing connection. They talk for a while and once the other actress needs to go to the stage, she sits next to me and describes the connection she felt to me as well. It is heartwarming to hear how happy she is about the scene, which in the end is something she does almost every night.

Furthermore, it is clear that the actress' excitement is not really about her own successful performance. Instead, it seems that she is so happy because she feels that together with the actor they managed to create something wonderful, and so the cause of her excitement is the success in a collective level. We then talk about the other situations I have seen offstage and she compares the offstage routines of a performance to a kitchen of a fine restaurant: Like the customers of a restaurant, the spectators only see the glory of the theatre, while at the same time there might be a total chaos behind their gazes.

Curtain call

Tonight's performance is nearing its end and the actors go to the wings so that they can take the bow. The dresser rearranges the costume racks and other members of technical personnel seem to get ready to round off the night as well. As the actors come off the stage, the production manager reminds everyone that the director will be present tomorrow. It turns out that one actor had forgotten that they are scheduled to perform tomorrow, so her reminder was well needed. Together we go to the green room for the final time tonight, and the production manager tells about the actor's lapse of memory to other members of technical personnel, who seem to be in no hurry to leave. They are all amused about it and laugh that it is good that the actor was reminded that he is needed tomorrow as well. Little by little, mainly after the production manager suggests it, people start to leave and I too decide that it is time to go home.

5.1.2. The end of the first rehearsal period of a musical

Opening the rehearsal

It is the last evening rehearsal before the summer break and I am feeling a bit nostalgic, as I know that after tomorrow's dance rehearsal I will leave the field. Thus tonight I have to say goodbye to many of these interesting people, who have been warm and welcoming to me since the day one. As usual, it is the second time I head for the rehearsal. Earlier today I already observed a part of the morning rehearsal, where three actors honed their guitar-playing skills needed in the musical. The evening rehearsal, in turn, is scheduled for the children's scenes. I am early, which has become quite a habit to me during my time in the field. In fact, at one point some people in the production started to good-naturedly tease me about it, laughing in the morning rehearsals that they only knew that I had left the rehearsal room the night before because I had changed my clothes. This evening I go in with the production manager, chat with her for a moment, and then go find a place from the rehearsal room. The director and one child actor are already in, and I decide to talk with the director

for a bit. Apparently the conductor, who was supposed to come to the rehearsal, has missed his flight and cannot make it.

Little by little other children arrive as well as the singing teacher, the choreographer, and the lead actor. The production manager also comes in to the rehearsal room a bit later. She talks with other adults for a moment and then goes back to the corridor leading to the green room, yelling “Rehearsal starts in five minutes!” The actress acting the oldest daughter comes in with the lead actress, who has her baby with her. The rest of the children arrive too, as well as the prompter who talks with the production manager while walking through the room. Other people are talking too, children with children and adults with adults, until the director easily, without really even raising his voice, commands everyone’s attention to himself. He states that it is time for the voice opening and tells that tonight’s plan is to go through all the children’s scenes in chronological order. I brace myself for a long night. Excluding the role of the oldest daughter, every child role is cast twice, and in addition there are three little girls acting the youngest daughter. This leads to an even greater repetition than what is normal, as scenes are rehearsed in groups and each group needs the same amount of time and attention. In addition, while interruptions from the director, the choreographer, and the singing teacher do happen often in every rehearsal – whether they are with extras, children or actual actors – children cannot be expected to pick up things instructed in a way an actual actor or actress can. Three girls acting the youngest daughter present an additional challenge, as they need to be juggled between two main groups.

The audience of few

The lead actress gives her baby to the choreographer and starts the voice opening. She has a training of a musical theatre teacher and after couple of weeks of rehearsals she started to help the singing teacher from time to time. Soon the voice opening is interrupted by the lead actress’ phone: Her husband is waiting outside to take their baby home. Another actress goes to open the door and brings the lead actress’ husband to the rehearsal room. He stays for a while and watches the voice opening with the choreographer. During the field time I have noticed that visitors in the rehearsals are quite rare, but still it is not entirely uncommon that someone drops by to watch a rehearsal, especially if they are somehow involved in the production. Furthermore, I remember that the lead actress asked once from the director if her husband could come, and the director readily agreed. However, it seems that the director is hesitant to allow more than a few visitors in the rehearsals at this phase of the production. Last week the production manager told the director that some people, who work in the theatre but not in this production, had asked if they could come to watch the

rehearsals. The director decided not to let them come, as he felt that the people rehearsing were not ready for the audience. Indeed, while the rehearsals will stop for a while after tomorrow, the musical is not yet ready to be performed for any kind of audience, and thus the rehearsals will continue in autumn.

The director's show

After the voice opening, the director speaks with the choreographer for a while and then announces which team will start first and instructs them about the first scene. The production manager tells the page number from the script so that others can follow. When everyone are in their places, the director starts the scene by stating "You are welcome" as usual. From here on the rehearsal proceeds mostly in a way I have learnt to be quite typical. The director is the uncontested leader of the rehearsal, and he directs everyone in two different ways. He either stops the scene altogether to give his instructions, or alternatively he directs the people while they perform. Naturally, actors are more capable of adjusting their acting even during the scene according to the director's instructions, while children often need more descriptive directing. Whether the person who is directed is an actual actor or a child, the director often says things such as "Now she is in a trouble" in order to demonstrate the current thoughts of the character being performed. As two actors needed in some of the scenes are absent, the director reads the lines of the actor, while the prompter deals with the lines of the actress. When necessary, the director joins the children and actors and shows how and where these actors will eventually move.

The other key people in the rehearsal

Apart from the director, there are a number of people who have their own roles in the course of tonight's rehearsal. Firstly, the choreographer participates quite actively and instructs the actors and children often, paying special attention to even finer details and demonstrating if necessary. As usual, he and the director discuss quite often during the rehearsal. Secondly, the singing teacher also comments the rehearsal at times, but overall she seems to take a lesser role tonight. This however is not that unexpected, as the singing teacher is usually the most dominant during the singing rehearsals, while tonight's rehearsal focuses on the overall picture of the children's scenes. Thirdly, the prompter helps everyone with their lines, in addition to covering the absent actress. Overall, she needs to interfere quite often, as the actors and children are still learning their lines. At one occasion the prompter corrects a line only to be told that the line in question was changed in another rehearsal, which she could not attend. The prompter expresses her annoyance over the fact that she was not informed about the change, and the rehearsal continues. Finally, the production manager

deals with the rehearsal sets, though others often help her if needed, and keeps an eye on the time. Other than that, she usually either observes the rehearsal with me and, occasionally, the props designer, or does paperwork. The production manager has all kinds of paperwork and she for instance creates the detailed schedule for each week of the rehearsal together with the director. Tonight however I also witness her acting on her duty as the person responsible of the first aid in problem situations. Closer to the break, one of the oldest children falls during a dance and the incident briefly alarms everyone. The boy himself jokes about the whole situation and the atmosphere soon gets lighter as others join in. Just in case, the production manager brings an ice pack for the boy and he continues to dance with the ice pack in the back pocket of his jeans.

In the green room

Around the halfway through the rehearsal, the director asks from the production manager if it would be a good time for a break. She agrees, and immediately the children and some of the actors leave to the green room. The director, the choreographer, and the production manager stay in to talk about something, but I decide to follow the others. In the green room I spot the props designer, who is modifying a wedding crown, which will be used in this musical. I have been admiring the crown for quite a while, and I ask her why she is modifying it again. Apparently the crown had been in a fitting earlier that day, and it was noted that it was too extravagant to work well with the other parts of the costume in question. This explanation prompts me to ask her if she sometimes feels frustrated by these kinds of situations, but she just smiles to me and says that this is a theatre and therefore nothing is ever nailed down. Furthermore, she tells me that sometimes props or other things get changed even after the opening night. The prompter, who has joined in to our conversation, notes that these kinds of changes are wretched, but they have to be done if needed. This conversation makes me ponder another interesting situation I have been observing: After hours and hours of rehearsing, a difficult duet topped with a complicated choreography ended up altered quite much after the director decided to change the lyrics of the song. Still, even though the actor and actress performing this duet now have to both forget the old and learn the new, the whole thing did not produce any kind of objection. Granted, the lack of opposition might have stemmed from the shared feeling that the original lyrics were not the best possible, and in fact this feeling was the reason behind the director's decision.

Back to the rehearsal room

The production manager announces that the rehearsal will soon continue and we move back to the rehearsal room. Before the rehearsal continues, I talk with the prompter and mention a story I heard

earlier: An actress had volunteered to cover a role in a theatrical play she had not acted in after hearing that the original actress had come down with something and was not able to perform. Furthermore, she had less than ten hours to rehearse the role, as the theatrical play was scheduled to be performed at the same night. Apparently she was able to perform because the role was a minor one, and she was in a continuous contact with another actor, who was able to help her if needed. The prompter is familiar with the story, as she in fact is working in the production in question. She tells me that the actress did a great job and notes that the spectators probably did not even notice anything. Furthermore, she tells me that the actress' lines were actually taped in a magazine that acted as a prop. Thus, when other actors were in the spotlight, the actress could go through her next lines in the background by merely appearing to read the magazine. While listening the prompter's story, I get the feeling that she clearly appreciates the actress' willingness to do such a thing with so little time and in a situation where others had been ready to call the performance off. The story keeps me smiling for a long time as the rehearsal continues in a same way as before the break. Still, it is getting late and I am starting to feel the long day I have had observing the rehearsals. It is clear that I am not the only one getting tired and the director has to encourage the children, stating that the time is getting scant and he needs everyone to focus. In the end, the rehearsal has to be hurried through, so that every child gets to rehearse every scene. Still, the director and the choreographer will not hesitate to interrupt in order to direct the actors and children when needed. Finally the production manager interferes a scene by announcing "Time, time!" The director does not understand her exclamation at first and the singing teacher protests, asking if they could go through the one last song. Still, the production manager keeps her mind and the rehearsal comes to the end at 21:30 o'clock sharp as scheduled. The director thanks for the good work and people start to leave. I say my goodbyes and it seems that people are somewhat surprised that I am leaving the field. The prompter laughs that she will miss her "shadow" and the director hugs me, saying that I have become a part of their team. When leaving, I feel gratitude and wonder for them taking me in with such an ease. It reminds me of a comment made by one of the people involved in the production: A theatre would not work if people were not capable of welcoming even strangers to their company.

To conclude this chapter that has portrayed two illustrations from the field, the people, who are directly involved in theatrical productions, spent most of their working life either co-operating in presenting the theatrical performances for their spectators, or rehearsing for those performances. These two occasions that are described in these illustrations, then, are examples of the numerous interactions between the people, who work in this theatre. In these kinds of situations of their

everyday working life, these people present their self-as-characters, which in turn promote certain understanding of the reality of the theatre itself. In the next chapter, I will identify the most dominant definitions of the theatre that all the people working in this theatre – regardless of their specific occupation– project in their everyday working life.

5.2. Defining theatre

Before immersing in the identities of the people working in the theatre studied in this thesis, I would like to briefly discuss the theatre itself. After all, theatre is the social establishment, where these people present their favored selves in their everyday working life. Furthermore, through their presentations of self, the people working in this theatre project certain realities of the theatre for others. These projected definitions of the theatre, then, are the focus of this chapter, and thus the following dominant definitions of the theatre identified in this study are discussed: *the ever-changing theatre*, *theatre as an important institution*, *the all-consuming theatre*, *theatre as storytellers' play*, *theatre as a place of complex hierarchy*, and *the self-mending theatre*.

5.2.1. The ever-changing theatre

The first dominant definition of the theatre highlights that the theatre is always changing, both as an art form and as an organization. The people working in this theatre emphasize that every production, and every performance, is a novel experience, and therefore there is always an aspect of the new inside the theatre. Indeed, while the people working in this theatre note that the most productions follow certain routines, there is always something unique in every production. Similarly, no performance is ever the same as other; instead they are almost like living things, which constantly evolve in front of their spectators. Furthermore, the people working in this theatre state that even if they were presenting a well-known classic, they still should perform it with a fresh perspective. Certain type of curiosity towards both the work and the life itself, then, is considered to be such a characteristic that enables the people working in any theatre to foster the inherent change of the theatre. In addition, the aspect of continuous learning in the work comes up frequently in the talk of the people working in this theatre. In general, people working in this theatre seem to yearn for variation in their work, and the change is often brought up as a factor that makes the theatre work interesting.

“[Working in a theatre] is somehow interesting, there is always a new thing. [...] Even though sometimes it feels that as a matter of routine, certain pattern is always followed,

and so it should be, so that everything works. But still there are all kinds of differences inside the thing, so [the work] is not so much the same.”

“It is like that old phrase that a director and an actor are never ready, that they are ready when they are in the grave. One needs to keep that certain type of curiosity and regeneration.”

Consequently, some of the people working in this theatre feel that they should regularly move from a theatre to another, or at least visit other theatres, in order to keep a fresh perspective of the theatre work. Furthermore, new arrivals from other theatres are appreciated and an effort is made so that these people can integrate into the theatre. As it is, the work in the field of theatre is sometimes called as a nomad profession. Still, not all the people working in theatres are nomads, as some of them have worked in a same theatre throughout their careers. These people then gain fresh, new perspectives from those who tend to move, and thus bring the change with them to their theatre.

5.2.2. Theatre as an important institution

The second dominant definition discussed here promotes the theatre as an important institution. Indeed, the people working in this theatre consider the art form that the theatre represents as something that is highly important, even essential for human beings. Furthermore, they argue that the existence and the welfare of this art form is something that they, as the people working in a theatre, have to sustain. All in all, everyone working in this theatre show some level of passion towards the theatre as an art form, though the intensiveness naturally varies. In general, artists tend to speak more about the art and its capability to create a human connection with others, while the management focuses on the larger, societal importance of art. The members of technical personnel show appreciation towards the theatrical art as well, though they tend to highlight their non-artist position. The relationships that the different personnel groups have with art are discussed further in the following chapter, while here the focus is on the effect that this passion towards art has on the theatre as a whole. Overall, art is seen as an important institution, which purpose is to offer humans all kinds of experiences that have a positive effect on their well-being. Furthermore, the people working in this theatre believe that the theatre should always aim to form some sort of connection with its spectators, and they feel great gratification when succeeding in this aspiration.

“I believe that one important mission of a theatre is to bring joy and well-being to the community that surrounds it.”

“[...] then there are those wonderful moments, when one sees them doing great things over there onstage, or we do, like really important art for people, and the people get great experiences. So then one always remembers that, well, why we do this.”

“But if the spectators somehow... find something from it, oh I get how that person feels, the character, then we have won something.”

This definition of the theatre as an important institution becomes concrete in the theatrical performance, as the people working in this theatre feel that it is a necessity to produce the best possible performance every time no matter what the circumstances are around the production. Indeed, it is emphasized that in the end the theatre exists only for its spectators, and thus giving off the best possible performance becomes a question of professional ethics. A performance that is given with routine, or is bad in some other sense, is considered to be unprofessional as well as without ambition. In addition, issues such as personal problems or difficulties in the rehearsals should not affect the performance, as the people working in this theatre feel that it is their duty to offer performances that are worthwhile for their spectators. Consequently, alongside an accident happening during a performance, the worst case scenario for the people working in this theatre is the cancellation of a performance. A part of this reluctance naturally stems from the high costs that a cancellation causes, but it is clear that it is more than a question of losing the profits. The pressure of giving a great performance is so prominent that the people working in this theatre often feel that they are letting their colleagues as well as spectators down if they cannot do their part in presenting a theatrical performance. Consequently, the theatre is full of stories describing how someone saved the performance by stepping up to cover a role of other person in the production. While most of these stories are about actors covering their colleagues, similar tales are also told about technical personnel. Still, it is noteworthy that while these stories certainly have the spirit, they cannot be called heroic stories as such, as they are often presented in a manner of describing the behavior that is only expected from a person working in a theatre, especially in the talk of artists.

“I believe that [completing the performances] is a duty. We work here. We will do certain number of performances, and some of them even sell quite well. You just cannot diminish it.”

“And that, one must regard this job with certain ambition. We will make this the best possible performance. That is always the most challenging: the play should never be done just for the play, instead one should regard it so that it will become good. Who would like to do a bad play? Or with routine? Routine is the worst in this work, doing

things with neglecting attitude. One should always have that sort of ambition with each play one starts to work with, or at least I believe so. That let's make this the best possible."

"Well it probably stems from professional ethics. One feels easily that they are letting the production team and the spectators down, which can be a positive and, when taken to the utmost, negative thing. That in a way one is not ready to give up in any kind of situation."

5.2.3. The all-consuming theatre

The third promoted reality of the theatre argues that the theatre may become too an important aspect of life for the people working in a theatre. Indeed, as the last comment of the previous subchapter implies, the passion towards the theatre can be both a positive and a negative force for a theatre and the people working in a theatre. It can be a great asset that encourages the people working in a theatre to give their best performance every time they are working, as well as give them feelings of joy and rapture when succeeding in their aspiration. However, this same passion can also act as a negative force, as the pressure to perform at their very best every day can be very disruptive for the people working in a theatre. Some of the people working in this theatre bring up past experiences of burnout, and the risks of being too unyielding towards oneself in the work seem to be well-known. In fact, the tendency to experience a burnout is noted to be something that the people working in a theatre often have, as the work in a theatre requires certain sensitivity especially from artistic personnel, and that sensitivity then can push a person over the edge with different kinds of negative consequences. For example, alcoholism comes up between the lines as a classical problem that is nowadays acknowledged as well as addressed quickly. During my time in the field, I noticed a pamphlet in the green room informing the zero tolerance policy and heard some references on actions taken in the past, when this tolerance was not respected. Overall, the people working in this theatre emphasize the importance of being merciful towards oneself, and note that it is important to have other things in one's life apart from the theatre. Whether they are family, friends, or hobbies, it is noted that some sort of "way out" from the world of the theatre is needed in order to be capable to have a career in the field of theatre. Indeed, many of the people who have worked in this theatre for over decades note that this type of mercy towards oneself is an ability one has to learn in some point in order to have a long career in the field of theatre.

"I do not know if it is necessary to have the full throttle on every day, one needs to be merciful towards oneself too."

“Of course there is a risk of [burnout] and then there is the chance that one moves very soon to medical procedures of sorts. That one starts to treat themselves with booze or something else. But that is often the problem of the sensitive people. And then again, often those sensitive people are the best.”

“If you do not have any other life than the theatre, then sooner or later you will end up in troubles. [SP: Like some kind of balancing thing?] Yeah, one should find a balancing thing from their life. Whatever it is, though of course intoxicants are quite a bad solution. But anything else. Be that music, be that sport, or social relations. Or anything. That something that in a way takes one away from that world, that is important.”

Having these outside relations, however, may be difficult when working in a theatre. Indeed, many people working in this theatre bring up their working hours, and note that they complicate the sustenance of relationships outside the work greatly. As a consequence, the theatre is often considered to be an important social community, as well as the working community.

“[...] these working hours make collective hobbies difficult. Individual doings, one can go to gym, go to swim, can rig up something by themselves. But when one would have time, others are at work and when others have time, then you yourself are at work.”

“Well, let’s say that when one works in a theatre with these hours... all this other social side, or groups of friends and such, they have shrunk. [...] This theatre is some sort of, quite an important working community. If one often has a two-part working day, then you simply do not have time to create networks outside the work.”

5.2.4. Theatre as storytellers’ play

Perhaps as some sort of response to the all-consuming theatre, the people working in this theatre also define the theatre as storytellers’ play. Indeed, another recurring argument in the talk of the people working in this theatre seems to be the notion that the theatre should not be taken too seriously. First and foremost, the theatre is perhaps most often referred as a play: Like children playing, in theatres adults are pretending to be someone else in an imaginary world. Defined in this manner, the theatre is considered as an activity that is not exactly real or something that should be taken too seriously. This aspect of play, then, comes alive in a theatrical performance, where the actors pretend to be someone else in order to present a story in a reality that exists only inside the sets constructed and sustained by the members of technical personnel. Furthermore, it is noted that

while the story performed might be serious – one that aims to make a difference – the activity itself should never be too serious. Indeed, the aspect of play is seen as the core of the art form that is the theatre.

“One’s eyebrows rise when this work becomes too serious, when the play gets forgotten. In the end, theatre is about adults pretending to be something else that they are onstage, in built sets. So in a sense that... when that core of the creation of this art gets forgotten... There should always be fun behind everything.”

Related to this notion of the theatre as a play, the theatre is also described to be a refined form of story-telling. Indeed, the people working in this theatre note that in the end the purpose of a theatrical performance is to present a great story for its spectators. Consequently, the importance of having a good story to perform is stressed, and therefore many people working in this theatre feel that the starting point of any great production is the best possible script. Furthermore, not only is the theatre itself described as a form of story-telling, but also the people working in theatres are characterized as storytellers. Indeed, during my fieldwork I noticed that the people working in this theatre tend to tell a lot of stories, especially about the theatre. Naturally, some of these stories were told especially for me, as the people were aware of my research and wanted to share their experiences. However, I also witnessed numerous occasions where a story was told to another person working in this theatre, both to the visiting members of a production and to the actual members of the theatre. As mentioned earlier, some of these stories told in this theatre describe how a theatrical performance was saved by someone, who stepped up to cover their colleague. However, these are not the only tales told, as for instance stories of touch and go situations in the past performances are often recited as well. In addition, stories describing earlier, especially dear productions are often told, and it is noted that remembering these sorts of productions helps to carry on when a present day production is somehow frustrating or exhausting. Overall, stories are promoted to be in the very heart of the theatre.

“[Theatre] is story-telling. It is only a bit refined form of that campfire circle. If the story is not good, there is no point in doing a performance. Or one can try.”

“It is partly because theatre is story-telling. Yes, of course story-telling, and stories are like... they are a part of theatre’s character. So people tell stories here, which is a very natural continuum. Another part is then probably that people who like to tell stories also gather here, and I have to say that people do tell stories in theatres [...]”

5.2.5. Theatre as a place of complex hierarchy

The fifth dominant definition of the theatre, then, projects the theatre as a place of complex hierarchy, where at the same time people are very aware of their own position, and somewhat unaware of some of the hidden power relations inside a theatre. The nature of the work in this theatre seems to be very collective, and it is often emphasized that while the spectators only see the actors, a theatrical performance could never be presented without the others working in this theatre. Apart from artistic personnel, theatres usually have technical personnel, administrative personnel, and the management. From these groups artistic and technical personnel are in the core of the theatre, as their work creates the theatrical performance. Artistic personnel are responsible of the actual performance, while technical personnel construct and sustain the reality where the performance is presented. On the other hand, the management and administration do not participate directly in the creation of theatrical art, but their work enables the existence of the theatre, as they are responsible of creating such circumstances, where artistic and technical personnel are able to produce great theatrical performances. In addition, the management is responsible of the theatre's repertoire and casting, and thus they are actually in the very heart of the creation of theatrical art.

“Well, if there were no stage lights and stagecraft, what would I do there? Or wages clerk or producer... I would be quite lonely. I get great facilities when I have all these people around me.”

All in all, the people working in this theatre seem to have a clear perception of how their own work affects an individual production and the theatre's capability to give performances, as well as understand their own individual role in the creation of theatrical art. Especially the work of artistic and technical personnel is often very specialized, and the end result of that work is clear and concrete, as everyone in the production is working for the performances of that production. On the other hand, administrative personnel and the management are very aware of their own function as the people enabling the existence of the theatre and the circumstances that the people working in productions need in order to perform well. In a sense, everyone working in this theatre depend on their colleagues giving their best effort in order to succeed in their own work in the greatest level possible. Therefore it is often highlighted that everyone working in a theatre must fill the position that their own occupation indicates, and perhaps due to this notion the theatre is actually considered to be an organization with a high level of hierarchy. Furthermore, it seems that the logic behind this hierarchy is not necessarily well understood even by the people working in this theatre themselves, as sometimes it is presented as a traditional hierarchy with the management at the very top, and

other times the members of artistic personnel are highlighted as the most important people working in this theatre. It seems that some of the power relations in the theatre are more or less invisible, and that the power in the theatre is somewhat situational, as in different occasions, different people have the greatest capability to exert influence.

“In my opinion, what is really important is a certain attitude... towards working and certain type of team spirit. Of course one can be, and has to be critical, but still everyone should stand behind the same thing, with that we will get very far.”

“[Theatre] is extremely hierarchical. And then that, it is like an army, but there you only need to check how many stripes someone has. But those stripes are invisible in a theatre. So it is a bit more challenging.”

5.2.6. The self-mending theatre

The final definition of the theatre describes the theatre as something that is highly capable of mending itself when necessary. While it is noted that in an ideal situation everyone accepts and works for the shared vision, the people working in this theatre acknowledge that this situation does not always occur in a production or in the theatre as a whole. People have different viewpoints of how a production should proceed, as well as beliefs of how the theatre itself should be run, and occasionally these perceptions clash. Furthermore, some of the people working in this theatre do not agree with others' work contribution and feel that they are not as committed to a production or to the theatre as a whole. While these people then are sometimes disapproved, the people working in this theatre highlight that it is necessary to attempt to understand everyone working in this theatre, and note that their personal opinions should not affect how they work with the others. In the end, work has to be done so that the theatre can give great performances for its spectators. Furthermore, especially the actors emphasize the importance of co-operation, as they often bring up the fact that the processes that the actors need to go through for their characters and for the theatrical performance do not advance in phase. Therefore, understanding for other's incompleteness is required in their work. Finally, the people working in this theatre bring up stories of productions, where someone failed to perform their role, and note that while these situations are inconvenient, the theatrical performances still need to be presented no matter the circumstances. Therefore in this kind of situation other members of the production will, in a way or other, cover the role of that failed member and make the production work. While failure of the director is often noted to be most crucial, it is also emphasized that any member of the production team that fails to perform is problematic. In addition, the failure in the performance of the management or administration is

considered to be challenging as well, but still somehow the show must go on no matter what happens behind the spectators' gazes.

“Of course there are different kinds of people, and that is wealth. But still one should be able to work with everyone, even if someone's face does not appeal that much.”

“One cannot decide at home that today we will play badminton, and then somehow try to use that racket in a game of baseball, it just will not work. This work is very humanitarian, which does not mean that one needs to have a great love towards all the people one works with, but one needs to somehow love the humanity in them.”

“Sometimes we do such productions where for example director does not direct that much, but usually what happens then is that the actors in a way direct themselves, or choreographer directs them, so we will survive from that too. Or if music is not taught well, then the actors will spar themselves well. So usually [such productions] are always turned into good [performances], even if some aspect does not work. But of course the best [situation is] – and in such an occasion an actor has it the easiest – if all aspects work.”

To sum it up, the people working in this theatre utilize following definitions in promoting their favored reality of the theatre as a social establishment and, as such, as a place for interactions: *the ever-changing theatre, theatre as an important institution, the all-consuming theatre, theatre as storytellers' play, theatre as a place of complex hierarchy, and the self-mending theatre.* Furthermore, it is important to note that while some of these definitions are contradicting, such as theatre as an important institution versus theatre as storytellers' play, most of them were brought up by all the people who were interviewed and observed during the study. Indeed, it seems that the different, and sometimes contradicting, definitions of the theatre are projected by all the people working in this theatre in the different situations of everyday life inside a theatre. The next chapter, then, discusses the presentation of self in theatre.

5.3. Presentation of self in theatre

The identities of the people working in the theatre studied in this thesis are discussed further in this chapter. As implied in the previous chapter, the theatre itself has a remarkable impact on the identities of the people working in this theatre. While projecting certain definitions of the theatre, the people working in this theatre keep on presenting such self-as-characters, which promote such a reality of the theatre, as well as such a reality of themselves, that they wish to convey for others.

Furthermore, the aspects that are considered to be of the reality of the theatre seem to be more or less shared all around the theatre. However, it seems that the relevance that certain definitions of the theatre have for the people working in this theatre differs, and thus the presentations of self also differ. To be more precise, it seems that the members of different personnel groups often view these shared definitions differently. For instance, the definition that promotes the theatre as ever-changing is shared by all the people working in this theatre, but while technical personnel view the constant change in the theatre as a refreshing aspect of their work, the members of artistic personnel consider it as a feature that is absolutely crucial for their work. Indeed, it seems that the membership of a certain personnel group has a great effect on the manner certain definition of the theatre will be projected in the presentation of self. The personnel group informs the people working in this theatre greatly, as it defines their work as well as hierarchical position in this theatre. In addition, the members of certain personnel group seem to share similar attitudes towards the theatre itself, the theatre work, and other personnel groups. In fact, if we contemplate these personnel groups in the terms of dramaturgical perspective, it seems that these groups form separate performance teams inside this theatre. Indeed, all of them consists such people, who co-operate in order to present certain reality of themselves to other people working in this theatre.

Three different performance teams inside this theatre, and the presentations of self that the members of these teams utilize, will be discussed next in more detail: *artistic personnel*, *technical personnel*, and *the management*.

5.3.1. Artistic personnel

The members of artistic personnel are in the very core of the creation of theatrical art, and as such they form a crucial team inside any theatre. First and foremost, artistic personnel are the most visible people working in a theatre, especially the actors who in a sense are the theatre for most of the spectators. Indeed, when the spectators are watching a theatrical performance, they see the actors performing the characters of that particular theatrical play. In addition to the actors performing, the spectators also see the sets, the costumes, and the masks of the performance. These elements, then, shape the surroundings of the theatrical performance and they, together with the actors, lead the spectators even deeper into the reality that the theatrical play aims to convey. While the members of technical personnel are responsible of producing and sustaining the physical reality of a theatrical performance, all the elements that form this reality need to be first designed, and this phase of a production requires the input of relevant members of artistic personnel, such as the set designer or the costumer. A theatrical performance may also include music as an element that

shapes the reality of the theatrical play, and in such an instance a conductor or musicians might be needed in theatrical performances. Furthermore, before such a theatrical play can run, involvement of a singing teacher could be required, as the musical parts of the performance might include singing from the actors. In addition, theatrical performances can also feature choreographies, which have been designed by a choreographer. Similarly, a director is an important member of artistic personnel, who is not physically present in the theatrical performance, but still has an enormous impact on the theatrical play. All in all, a successful theatrical performance requires the input of multiple different members of artistic personnel, whether they can be easily observed by a spectator or not, and together they aspire to bring the story of the theatrical play alive. While all the members of artistic personnel are needed in this process, here the focus will be mainly on the actors and the director, as they were the members of artistic personnel whom I observed the most. Next, I will discuss the presentations of self that the members of artistic personnel promote as the reality of themselves: *creators of a human connection; the paintbrushes of a painter; the ever-changing artists; individuals in the state of incompleteness; and driven by art.*

Creators of a human connection

First, the members of artistic personnel present themselves as the creators of a human connection. The importance of the creation of a human connection comes up frequently in the talk of artistic personnel. Indeed, it seems that this connection is considered to be the aspect that brings the story of a theatrical play alive for the spectators and for the people working in a production alike. This connection can be formed either between the members of artistic personnel themselves, for instance between the actors, or between the actors and the spectators. The successful creation of a human connection, then, allows the people involved to find something from the reality portrayed in the theatrical play. However, when talking about this connection, the members of artistic personnel do not usually specify what exactly can be found from a theatrical performance; instead they believe that every individual will find their own insights from a theatrical play and those insights are never incorrect. Indeed, it seems that the members of artistic personnel feel that as long as the connection is created, they have been successful in their work.

“[This work is at its best] when one finds something. When a discovery is made. When one comprehends something or [...] we make some sort of discovery onstage. Right now my emphasis is naturally on the rehearsals because currently the rehearsal period is very strongly in my mind. But that is one, when we find something together. Another – these are not in any kind of order of importance – another is... when the spectators find

something. And that can come, that can be quite amazing if some passerby, a total stranger, has been somehow... somehow touched, if we have been able to touch them from the stage in some way and then they even say it out loud, somewhere there in the market square.”

“But of course you cannot know as everyone... If there is someone sitting next to another person in the seats of auditorium, one laughs at and another cries over the same thing. The spectator is always right. They are always right, you cannot... you cannot define it in any way: Yeah wrong, you totally watched this program in a wrong way. Now you did not understand anything. [Spectators] always understand it in their own way.”

While both the connection between the members of a production and between the actors and the spectators are considered to be equally important, the actors especially tend to speak more about the latter connection. The actors seem to be very aware of their central role as the people, who realize the story of a theatrical play for its spectators. Therefore, the actors feel that every time they perform, they have to give the best possible performance for their spectators. In order to succeed in this aspiration, an actor needs to find a practical way of portraying their character in every performance. To be more precise, each actor needs to find the means for the illusion, where they become their character for their spectators. This process of finding a workable method then can be difficult and emotional, but the actors emphasize that it has to be experienced in order to succeed in the performance. While indifference is considered to be a factor that fails the creation of a human connection with the spectators, too many emotions can be problematic as well. When an actor manages to find a working balance between their own feelings and purely calculated gestures, they are able to offer a believable performance of their character, which in turn can lead the spectators into the reality portrayed in the theatrical play.

“[Acting] is ultimately about lying. [...] The point is that crying should happen in the auditorium and not onstage. So [the process] often requires one to go through difficult outburst of feelings in order to get [the feeling] into one’s body, so that it is recognizable, so that it somehow comes across there [onstage], but so that it does not get to that point where one just whimpers and cries one’s eyes out, because that does not touch anyone, that is usually only awkward. [SP: So in a way, you let the spectator to have that role there, to be the one who feels the most instead of...] Yes, I am not by any means one of those guys who say that one can do that with gestures only and think

about the recipe of liver casserole at the same time. But one cannot go and run wild with those [spectators], like try to feel or channel one's own feelings there too much. Because somehow it is... in a sense sangfroid calculation is very important in lying."

The paintbrushes of a painter

The second presentation of self that the members of artistic personnel project, then, promotes the strong hierarchy of artistic personnel. Indeed, the vast emphasis on the creation of a human connection implicates that the members of artistic personnel, especially the actors, consider their work inherently collective. However, it is important to note that while the artists often talk about this collective aspect of their work, they do not claim to be necessarily equal, and indeed there seems to be a strong hierarchy between the members of artistic personnel involved in a production. Especially the director is often considered to be the most powerful person involved in any production. Indeed, during my time in the field, a member of artistic personnel likened themselves to the paintbrushes of a painter: The director is a painter, who needs different kinds of paintbrushes in order to paint their vision of the theatrical play. Like the paintbrushes, different members of artistic personnel have their own areas of expertise in the creation of theatrical art and through the steering of the director, they realize the director's vision. When taking into account this notion, and the fact that for instance the actors do not have any say in which productions they will act, the power relations inside a theatrical production certainly appear to be quite steep. Still, the members of artistic personnel seem to accept the director's position as the quintessential leader and the general opinion appears to be that in an occasion where the director's vision clashes with one's personal vision, the former will be followed. In fact, the members of artistic personnel emphasize that it is very important that the director has a clear vision, and they note that without the director's feedback their work is very difficult. The director, then, actually faces the highest demands and expectations, as the other members of artistic personnel feel that the director should be the member of a production who can be trusted to lead the production to the success. However, it is also noted that the directors differ from each other and that some directors prefer to collaborate more with the other members of a production, instead of leading the production autocratically. In addition, an element of negotiation seems to be often present, especially during the rehearsals.

"But I need those outsider's eyes. [...] Of course we negotiate, but an actor should somehow, in some point actor should be able to be an object as well. One cannot be always like, I refuse to do that thing in that way."

“The choice is the thing, what we choose and what the director wants to bring up. Some directors give so much free reins, so very much, but then there is the risk that the actors will all act as if they were in different programs. If we think about leadership, then a talented director leads all those players to play in the same rink. Even if they played in that way, that there were players with different colors playing the same game, but that the game should be same, that title, that play should be the same for everyone.”

“I think that it is nice to do this [role] as well! And actor’s job is to mold oneself and to be like, everything is suitable for me. [...] That is my job, yes, I will play any position needed if I get the equipment.”

The ever-changing artists

The members of artistic personnel also present themselves as the ever-changing artists. Indeed, as the last comment of the presentation of self previously discussed implies, the actors especially feel that the change is a quintessential part of the work of artistic personnel. To be more precise, the actors feel that they need to be able to be whatever it is required so that their characters are believable for their spectators and realize the director’s vision. Therefore, the actors need to have a fresh mindset on their acting, and they need to constantly renew themselves as actors in order to present unique and believable characters for their spectators. After all, as noted earlier, a character of a theatrical play cannot be properly portrayed with routinized gestures only. The aspect of change in the actors’ everyday life, then, is hugely present in the rehearsals, as the characters of a theatrical play often go through many phases before the final form of presentation is found. Therefore, the actors need to be capable of quickly setting aside such presentations that are deemed as unsuitable, as well as coming up with new, fresh ways of performing a character during the rehearsal period. Furthermore, if the actors are members of a repertory company – such as the theatre of this study – they face another challenge, as they are involved in multiple different productions all the time. Instead of only focusing on a single character at time, actors in a repertory company need to both perform in multiple ongoing theatrical plays, as well as rehearse for several oncoming theatrical plays. This again demands the actors to be capable of constantly renewing themselves, as every single role they perform needs to be unique so that they can reach the spectators and form a connection with them. The actors, then, are not the only members of artistic personnel, who are required to be ever-changing. For instance, the director also needs to be capable of changing their mindset, as they need to have a novel vision for every theatrical play. Consequently, the members of artistic personnel sometimes talk about the possibility of getting stuck to the routines in almost

distressed manner. This fear of losing the fresh mindset, then, partly explains why the members of artistic personnel usually are the most nomadic people working in theatres. Indeed, most of the members of artistic personnel tend to work in, or at least visit, multiple different theatres during their careers in order to keep on seeing things with regenerated perspectives.

“Because in this [work] one always needs to dive into new challenges, every play is always a new challenge, one can never say that I know this job. Of course I have gained basic vocational skills during the years but still every play is somehow like a new world that needs to be seen with fresh eyes.”

“That is always like, that new viewpoint and that sort of things... that sort of fear or anguish of getting stuck, one needs to ease that by doing something else, I think. It can be a sort of trap if one stays in a same place and then gets blinded and gets those blinders that horses have into one’s eyes. It is like one sees only to one direction and that I think is very disastrous.”

Individuals in the state of incompleteness

The fourth presentation of self that artistic personnel project describes them as individuals in the state of incompleteness. Indeed, as a consequence of the continuous change, the members of artistic personnel are in a sense always in a state of incompleteness. Therefore, the members of artistic personnel state that the constant search is a characteristic that they need to learn to embrace in their work. Interestingly, the actors especially emphasize that they need to deal with this feeling of incompleteness by themselves, which somewhat clashes with the collective nature of the work of artistic personnel. This brings forward the notion that while the members of artistic personnel feel that their work would not exist without the other people, the work itself is mostly individual. For instance, when the actors start to work on creating believable characters, individuals such as the director have an effect on the processes they go through for their characters. However, the actual psychical and physical work for the characters is done by the actors themselves, and in the end they will be the ones performing those characters. Still, an aspect of collectiveness arises in this individual work as well, as the members of artistic personnel state that they are aware of each other’s ongoing processes. While the members of artistic personnel rarely get involved in others’ incomplete processes, they can find a way of supporting those processes by accepting the different phases everyone is going through for the performance. Furthermore, humor is often noted to be an important instrument, which helps everyone to stay positive even through the most challenging phases of a production. Indeed, all the rehearsals I observed included some sort of joking or funny

stories from the members of artistic personnel, and it certainly kept the overall atmosphere lighter. In the informal discussions I had while in the field, as well as in the interviews, the members of artistic personnel confirmed that the reason why they often utilize humor is exactly the aspiration to keep both oneself and the others around positive. These elements of solidarity, then, bring the collectiveness in the individual work of artistic personnel.

“I somehow feel that I do the biggest part with myself and go through it by myself. In a sense, mates give inspiration and help, but it is somehow nicer to think it as an additional gift.”

“In a sense, one thing I have learnt while doing this with quite the same group of people – which of course consist all kinds of people – is that one needs to value people’s different timings and the different kinds of processes that are on-going, that one should not demand others to... like, to help me if they cannot give it, or like... that we could find shared breathing in a sense even though our processes move in different levels and in different speeds.”

“And all do not cross the finishing line at any point. In a sense, in some plays it might happen that in all honesty [the point of] it never truly sank in. And one needs to be very merciful when [plays] are done, a great amount of them get done, and sometimes in a way we succeed and sometimes we do not and... that search is all about what this is.”

Driven by art

Finally, the members of artistic personnel present themselves as people, who consider their work in a theatre as important and inspiring. Indeed, when contemplating the presentations of self already discussed, the members of artistic personnel seem to face all kinds of struggles in their everyday working life. One of these struggles is suggested in the last comment of the previously discussed presentation of self: The members of artistic personnel need to accept that they cannot always succeed in presenting the story of a theatrical play in such a manner that reaches the spectators. Nevertheless, the members of artistic personnel appear as very driven by their work, and it seems that as long as they can create theatrical art, they are ready to face all kinds of struggles in their work. On the whole, the members of artistic personnel consider art in general as almost sacred aspect of humanity and believe that the art has a capability to preserve other aspects of humanity as well. In addition to this societal aspect of the creation of art, the members of artistic personnel

experience personal feelings of fulfillment through their work. Through a successful production they gain the contentment of achieving something great, and some of them consider their work as a member of artistic personnel as only work that truly satisfies them. Indeed, the members of artistic personnel seem to identify themselves strongly through their work as creators of art.

“I rather am an artist than an actor. And I think that artists can bring to this world... some sort of perception that... that is disappearing from this planet. In my point of view, an artist defends sensitivity in a sort of cycle of life, and artist also defends humanity. That sort of an artist I would like to be. Even though we do not choose our roles, we do not have an influence on that, but still I want to somehow give a message through my actions that I as an artist care about... how we are doing and I want to be a human to another human in some sense. [...] But if there were more art in this world, and if people were forced to stop in front of some form of art, then this would be a better place, this world.”

“Well I do like those feelings that come along in the rehearsal situations and those situations. And then... those successes. They are like, they are those which give back, the reasons why we do this. And then, in the last part of course it is the spectators, that one sees how the spectators dig it. And perhaps then... one always sees after the program, from actors and other members of the group one senses if... if they have liked to whole thing. It is like, yes, successful production, everyone is happy. We did something great.”

“There was nothing wrong with that [earlier work I had outside the theatre] in my opinion, I think that it was a nice job and so on, but it just felt that it was not enough. [...] And... I do not actually have [an experience of] any work that would have been terrible, but in a sense acting is only thing that somehow is enough.”

As a summary, the members of artistic personnel present themselves as *creators of a human connection; the paintbrushes of a painter; the ever-changing artists; individuals in the state of incompleteness; and driven by art*. Next, technical personnel’s presentations of self are described.

5.3.2. Technical personnel

The members of technical personnel form another team inside this theatre that is in a direct contact with the creation of theatrical art, as they are responsible of the stagecraft – or in other words, the technical side of theatrical productions. Indeed, technical personnel are a vast group of experts from

different fields, and together they construct and sustain the reality that surrounds a theatrical performance. The work of technical personnel, then, can be divided in two parts as their work mainly takes place either during or before a theatrical performance. While for instance the stagehands and the theatre electricians mainly work during a performance in order to sustain the reality of that performance, people such as the theatre carpenters and the dressmakers produce all the elements required in a performance, and thus their work takes place before the performances. Furthermore, people such as the production manager and the prompter are involved in both the rehearsals and the performances of a production. These people, whose work addresses different branches of stagecraft, then, form the team inside this theatre, which is called technical personnel. In this subchapter, the following presentations of self that they utilize are discussed: *those who complete the performance; the non-artists; confirmed technical people; frustrated over unpracticality; and a tight-knit group of people.*

Those who complete the performance

First of all, the members of technical personnel present themselves as those who complete the theatrical performance. Indeed, as the members of technical personnel are responsible of the construction and sustenance of the reality of a theatrical play, they have a crucial position in presenting great theatrical performances. Furthermore, technical personnel feel that together with the input of artistic personnel, their contribution makes the performance “complete”. In other words, the members of technical personnel feel that without their input, a theatrical performance would never be as great as possible. As such, the members of technical personnel take a great pride of their work, and are very driven to produce or acquire any item needed in a performance, so that the performance can be complete. Indeed, according to the members of technical personnel, anything should be possible in the theatre, and they the ones who are responsible of making it happen. This characteristic of their work, then, is considered as both challenging and inspiring. Furthermore, related to the notion of completing the performance, technical personnel feel that they should always be capable of doing their part in a theatrical performance. Indeed, while technical personnel acknowledge that sometimes a performance has to be cancelled for instance due to an unexpected illness of an actor, they believe that a member of technical personnel should never cause a cancellation, and therefore they have predetermined measures to prevent such a situation.

“For sure everyone’s work is important! But... Without it, the stage would be quite boring. If furniture and costumes and... Well of course lights are immensely important, in every production. And then the music and effects, the soundscape. They are all like,

nothing can be cut out. [...] Yes, the package is then complete. When there are all of these.”

“Yes, it is nice to do all kinds of things, as in the theatre basically everything has to be possible.”

The non-artists

The second presentation of self that the members of technical personnel promote emphasizes their position as non-artists. Indeed, while technical personnel certainly have a crucial part in the creation of theatrical art, the members of technical personnel seem to have quite a curious relationship with the art itself. In general, technical personnel agree with the dominant definition that promotes any kind of art as an important issue for humanity. Indeed, their rare comments of art actually indicate that technical personnel consider the importance of art as a self-evident truth, and that it would be out of question to disagree with this notion. Naturally, a part of this viewpoint stems from the fact that questioning the importance of art would also mean that they question the importance of their own work. Still, the members of technical personnel come off as people who do appreciate theatrical art a lot, but feel out of place when art is the subject of discussion. Consequently, some of them tend to exclude themselves from art, and thus emphasize their non-artist position in an organization that is highly artistic. These members of technical personnel describe themselves as people who do not have that much interest in or understanding of art. Others, then, note that while they sometimes do have their own artistic opinions concerning a production, they do not bring them up. Interestingly, it seems that the members of technical personnel feel that it is not their job to comment the art created in the theatre, and with this notion they draw a line between themselves and the creation of art.

“If we think about the production, not so much about the artistic side, as I do not have anything to say about that. Or I do, but I keep them to myself and do not yell them out loud.”

“Of course [art] is important in that sense, that of course there has to be culture. There has been for ever and ever. People, amateur theatres and sorts, people get to, some have the urge. Some want to come to watch. [...] Of course there has to be, that I, I do not... Or perhaps I am wrong person to comment it. I do not feel myself so artistic that I quite understand, or put my mind to it and enjoy sitting there in the auditorium looking others' rehearsals, [waiting for] what they want. Of course I need to do it because of

my job, and watch from the sidelines, but still the technical side is more my side. [SP: So it is an important part of humanity, but you yourself are not an artist?] Yes. It belongs to this work. In a way, one cannot say that... or I would be fool if I said otherwise.”

Confirmed technical people

The members of technical personnel also present themselves as people, who are strongly devoted to stagecraft of theatrical performances. Indeed, as the last comment of the previous presentation of self indicates, the members of technical personnel feel that while theatrical performances are highly artistic, there is also technical side in them and that side is their domain. Furthermore, many of the members of technical personnel describe how they get inspired by even the smallest things related to the process of producing the reality of a performance. For instance, things such as finding the perfect prop for a scene or setting the rehearsal sets are mentioned to be small, but stimulating parts of working in a theatre as a member of technical personnel. Apart from these smaller everyday aspects of their work, technical personnel also note that they feel the most content when a theatrical performance becomes complete with every element slotting in their own places and the presentation running smoothly. Indeed, as the members of technical personnel also present themselves as the people who complete the performance, this complete performance certainly has an important role in everyday working life of technical personnel. Furthermore, this yearning for a complete performance, then, might explain why the members of technical personnel have such a strong acceptance for the fact that sometimes they need to reconstruct some elements of a performance several times before finding the most suitable solution. To be more precise, the idea of revisiting the work that has already been done seems not to bother the members of technical personnel, as long as they feel that it is necessary for the complete performance. Quite the contrary, finding the perfect solution is considered to be inspiring, and as such technical personnel come off as people, who enjoy of the possibility to utilize their own creativity. Creativity in a theatre, then, is not only a quality of the artists, from whom technical personnel so keenly exclude themselves, but also a feature that everyone working in a production needs. The creativity of technical personnel, however, is focused on the technical solutions of a theatrical performance. All in all, the members of technical personnel express strong affinity towards the theatre work, and some of them even describe themselves as such people who have somehow grown into the life of a theatre.

“The best thing in the rehearsals is when everyone knows their lines, and lights and sounds come at their time and... That it becomes a package in a sense. That is the prize

for me, the prize is not the opening night. It is the umpteenth run-through. Of course it is nice to have a party, but still the first preview night or such is, of course one fears them the most, but one also gets to cry with happiness. They managed to do it!”

“I feel at home in a theatre. I feel. I suppose I could have been really good in something else too. But it is, nowadays I feel that it is very difficult to try to imagine myself somewhere else than in a theatre.”

“In some way I just have grown into this.”

Frustrated over unpracticality

As a fourth presentation of self, the members of technical personnel present themselves as such people, who get frustrated by unpractical behavior. Indeed, the close connection that the members of technical personnel state they feel towards the theatre is quite intriguing, as they also tend to express strong dislike of uncertainty and indecisiveness. Indeed, as both of these issues appear to be more or less inherent features of the theatre, it is somewhat peculiar that technical personnel feel such a connection towards the theatre. Nevertheless, the members of technical personnel note that while their work often consist some routines, they also enjoy the change that they consider to be an inherent part of their work. Indeed, the notion of how every production is a novel experience is often mentioned, and technical personnel state that this aspect is one of the features that make the work in a theatre so inspiring. However, the aspect of novelty in every production can also be a negative feature for the members of technical personnel, as each production is almost bound to face moments of uncertainty and indecisiveness. These moments, then, often cause technical personnel such extra-work that they consider to be pointless. For instance, an object might be required for a production, and later on it becomes clear that in the end the object in question will not be needed, even though it has been already acquired. This sort of unpractical behavior, then, is noted to be quite typical for the artists, and therefore they are often a cause of frustration for the members of technical personnel. This dislike of unpracticality, and the tendency to link it to the artists, in turn might partly explain the curious relationship that technical personnel have with art in general. Still, it is important to note that while technical personnel tell quite a lot of stories featuring the silly artists, the spirit of these stories is good-natured, and overall the members of technical personnel seem to get along well with artistic personnel. All in all, technical personnel come off as sensible people, who would like to a performance to become complete as soon as possible, as well as involve as few problems and sudden changes as possible.

“Of course such occasions that... for example some request comes from a production, that now they need this and that, and fast. And it comes out of nowhere, as they always do, set designer [and] director want something. And then we need to [ask] that with what time we will do it, and with what money and is that really quite sensible either. And then they want to try something, because nothing is certain. Still one should go to buy it, right now, as those two are jumping up and down there. And then there is the responsibility over the budget, because they do not need to think about the money at all, they just want. Then we need to say that now we have spent all the money, what we will do now. [...] And sometimes it can be that they will not even use it. The thing might not even reach the stage. We have found time to get it from somewhere, and when we get it, ‘yeah, we do not need it after all’.”

“At times when those actors are just a little bit silly and daft, one does share that with technical personnel...”

A tight-knit group of people

Finally, the members of technical personnel present themselves as a tight-knit group of people with strong team-spirit. Indeed, as noted earlier, the members of technical personnel often tell stories to each other, and consequently the silliness of artists is quite a typical topic for these tales. In addition, technical personnel often recite touch and go situations of the past performances while relaxing in the green room. Apart from their downtime, the members of technical personnel seem to also constantly communicate during a theatrical performance and, while in the field, I even witnessed some good-natured, albeit quiet joking offstage. Still, technical personnel also seem to be very comfortable to be together in silence both during the downtime and while working. Naturally, quietness is required when technical personnel work behind the sets of an ongoing performance, but in the field I also observed that for example stagehands do not talk that much while they set the stage for a performance. Some of this silence might be explained by the routines involved in the process, as the performance in question had been running for a while at the time I observed them at their work. However, I also witnessed this comfortable silence quite often in the green room, and this quietness, then, seems to be somewhat typical for the members of technical personnel from time to time. All in all, it seems that technical personnel share certain type of easy familiarity with each other, and partly due to this closeness they form a tight group inside a theatre. Indeed, while some members of technical personnel do work mainly alone, it seems that all of them are more or less connected to each other, and for instance helping another member of technical personnel when

needed seems to be considered as a norm. While this closeness seems to reach all the members of technical personnel, especially those members of technical personnel, who work behind the sets of an ongoing performance, appear to form a very close group. This strong connection, then, probably stems from the nature of the work performed offstage: It is emphasized that the members of technical personnel need to be able to trust each other in order to perform their own part in a theatrical performance.

“Yes, and our boys will help and that is a great thing.”

“But of course effectively it is so that... or any sensible person will help their mate.”

“It would not... it is impossibly important to be able to trust, nothing would come out of it if one could not trust in what others do.”

Finally, perhaps due to their strong team spirit, technical personnel tend to speak highly of each other, as well as express appreciation towards the work of other members of technical personnel. Indeed, it seems that the members of technical personnel criticize their colleagues only if they feel that a member of technical personnel has not behaved in a way that was expected from them. For instance, compromising the safety of a performance is considered as something that a member of technical personnel should never do, and consequently many of them note that their worst case scenario would be such an accident happening during a performance that they personally could have somehow prevented, but were unable to do so. This notion, then, affirms the image where technical personnel are the people inside the production, who always need to stay down-to-earth no matter what happens around them.

To sum it up, technical personnel present themselves as *those who complete the performance; the non-artists; confirmed technical people; frustrated over unpracticality; and a tight-knit group of people*. In the next subchapter, then, I will discuss the management’s presentations of self.

5.3.3. The management

“I like it when opening nights come at their time and they are as good as they can get. That the art lives there, and comes true in a way it was thought to do. In a way my work is totally invisible, it just carries out itself, the machine produces the product [...] that it is supposed to produce, and as well as possible. Very simple thing. Organization does exactly the product that organization is supposed to do, and as well as possible.”

As the previous words from a member of management suggest, the last team to be introduced in this chapter – the management of this theatre – differs from the other teams described earlier in several ways. In sort, the management's main task is to create and uphold such circumstances inside and around the theatre that enable the other teams inside the theatre to create theatrical art – in other words, they make sure that the theatre as an organization produces the exact product it is supposed to produce. The head of theatre holds the greatest responsibility over the success of this theatre and thus he needs to take care that every aspect of the creation of theatrical art – the theatrical plays, the schedule, the people, the facilities, and the budget – is in their correct places. Apart from the head of theatre, there are several members of management who have their own areas of responsibility, and who as such assist the head of theatre in managing the everyday life of this theatre. For instance, the head of administrations focuses on the administrative issues of this theatre, and the head of operations ensures that all the facilities and operations are in working order all the time. Producer, in turn, is responsible of planning the over-all schedule for the whole theatre. Furthermore, the theatre's own director is occasionally involved in the management, especially when it comes to the repertoire and casting. Still, while all the members of management have their own area of responsibility, it seems that the management mainly acts as one team and that the decisions made by the management are made together. Thus, the management seems to share their responsibilities as the leaders of their theatre. In this final subchapter, then, the following presentations of self that the management employs are replayed: *different, yet involved in the creation of art; the enablers; the problem-solvers; those who carry the responsibility; misunderstood scapegoats; advocates of the play; and dedicated to their work.*

Different, yet involved in the creation of art

First of all, the members of management present themselves as different from other teams inside this theatre, yet still involved in the creation of theatrical art. Indeed, while the input of all the members of artistic and technical personnel can be more or less seen in a theatrical performance, the effect that the members of management have on that performance is invisible. After all, the management of this theatre is not explicitly involved in the creation of theatrical art, as they do not participate to the everyday life of theatrical productions as such. Nevertheless, it is important to note that all the members of management are crucial for this theatre, as their responsibility is to enable the creation of theatrical art by taking care that the members of different productions have everything they need in order to succeed in their work. Furthermore, while their managerial position sets them to a different level with their subordinates, the management has a great appreciation towards their theatre and the people working in the field of theatre. Indeed, the members of

management feel that it is inspiring to work so closely with the creation of theatrical art, as well as with the people who are so driven to uphold this art form. Overall, the management sees anyone who has the possibility to work in a theatre as privileged, including themselves. Furthermore, as the other people working in this theatre, the management also considers theatrical art as an important aspect of human life, and they experience feelings of gratitude and content, as they too can participate in nurturing this art form through their own work. Consequently, the members of management come off as very driven towards the theatre both as an art form and as an organization.

“[...] we who work here in the theatre, all of us are so immensely privileged people, because we can do the work we love and which has a meaning.”

“And these people [who work in the theatre] give so much energy and all, especially as there are such persons working in here. Often I think how lovely it is to work in such a colorful working community, as I get so much energy out of it.”

The enablers

The second presentation of self that the management promotes describes the members of management as enablers. Indeed, as the management's work is to enable the theatre as an organization to execute its mission, the members of management view themselves first and foremost as enablers. In this position, there are several aspects that the members of management need to ensure in order to them to create the circumstances that the people working directly with the creation of theatrical art need. Above all, the management is responsible of planning the theatre's repertoire, which is a task considered to be must crucial. After all, every theatre needs its spectators and therefore theatres need to offer such performances that attract spectators. Unsuccessful choices for a repertoire lead to the loss of spectators, which in turn can incapacitate the whole theatre. Consequently, all the members of management highlight the importance of careful planning of the repertoire – a task that also requires insight of the future from the management, as the planning for oncoming theatre seasons needs to be started several years in advance. Apart from this far-reaching work, the members of management are also allocators of sorts, whose task is to enable all the current activities of their theatre. Indeed, in order to a theatre to produce great theatrical performances, all the members of artistic and technical personnel need to be allocated to those productions they are best suited for. In addition, as most of these people are working in several productions simultaneously, the overall schedule of the theatre needs to be planned carefully. Apart from human resources management, the people working in productions also require suitable facilities in order to succeed in their work, and each production needs its own budget as well. All in

all, a significant part of the management's everyday work is to ensure that all the resources – whether they are people, time, facilities, or money – are allocated in such a manner that all the theatrical productions can progress in the way they were envisioned to run. Finally, in order to gain all the resources needed in the creation of theatrical art, the management also needs to take care of the theatre's financial situation. The theatre of this study is an institution of a city, and therefore the theatre gets its funding mainly from the city. Still, the members of management emphasize that especially the head of theatre should be an active participant in the communication with the city.

“I have always thought that the most important issues that the head of theatre deals with are related to the repertoire, meaning that if the planning of repertoire goes wrong, then it will paralyze the whole house. Because the reality is that a theatre needs, a house of this size needs, and a professional theatre especially needs a certain amount of spectators. And another important issue is of course everything related to the personnel, as... especially recruitments are very important, so that we will have, quite similarly as putting up a sports team, that we will get the correct people to the correct positions. Of course, communication with the main investor, a.k.a. the city, is also very central issue, meaning that an active communication to that direction is very important.”

The problem-solvers

Related to their work as enablers, the management also presents themselves as the problem-solvers of their theatre. Indeed, the management states that they often face all kinds of problems in their daily work, and therefore they need to be good problem-solvers. For instance, some issues might arise when the management aims to allocate all the resources in a manner that is most suitable for everyone. As the resources needed in a theatre are often scarce, the members of management need to be able to consider even unorthodox solutions for the problems, as well as figure out compromises that are as optimal as possible. Nevertheless, the management does not consider these problems negative as such; instead they feel that the capability to solve these problems makes their work interesting and rewarding. Indeed, the members of management seem to identify themselves strongly as the problem-solvers of their theatre, and in this position they highlight the importance of information and openness. To be more precise, the members of management believe that all the problems can be solved, as long as they get all the information needed and that people do not try to hide issues from them. Furthermore, the management feels that it is important to seize the problems immediately. After all, the members of management believe that issues that are not sorted out can

cause even bigger problems for the overall atmosphere inside this theatre, which in turn can hinder the theatre's capability to produce and nurture theatrical art. Consequently, all the members of management state that they as the leaders need to always keep their doors open for everyone, both literally and figuratively speaking. By this openness they wish to convey their subordinates the message that they are interested in their problems and want to solve them.

“Yes, and I somehow get so much pleasure, and content from this work and then when I manage to solve that equation that first seemed so impossible, then the prize is so great [...].”

“Somehow the access to information is just crucial in my work, that if something is withheld from me I cannot do my work well.”

“Well... they are not, things need to be handled immediately. That is the most important advice, that... dragging one's feet with problems, when they still need to be dealt with, that is wrong for everyone. So, one needs to take a hold of the problems in a fair manner. It may cause quite big outbursts of feelings in both sides, but it does not help. I think that it is better to have one big temper-tantrum instead of long moaning.”

Those who carry the responsibility

The fourth presentation of self that the management utilizes projects themselves as those who need to carry the responsibility. Interestingly, while the continuous need for information demands the management to keep a close contact with their subordinates, the members of management also bring up a distance of a sort that is connected to their managerial position. This distance, then, seems to be related to the management's strong sense of responsibility, which comes up in their talk frequently. Indeed, the members of management consider themselves as those people inside this theatre, who ultimately have to carry the responsibility of anything that happens in this theatre. Furthermore, the management views the responsibility as an inherent part of leadership of any kind, and in addition they consider the leader's responsibility as something that is ultimately positive. As a consequence, the members of management express feelings of dislike towards any kind of leaders, who use the power related to their position, but do not take the responsibility of their actions. Furthermore, perhaps due to their strong sense of responsibility, the members of management feel that they need to put their personal ambitions second to their theatre, as they see a good leader as first and foremost loyal towards their organization. In addition, the management also highlights the

importance of a professional attitude towards their work, as well as towards their subordinates. Consequently, the members of management feel that they have to uphold certain distance from their subordinates in order to maintain their professionalism and capability to be responsible of everyone working in a theatre.

“[Thoughts] about leadership? Responsibility... perhaps first. For me it is a very positive word. Not everyone probably thinks that way, but in my opinion the capability to carry responsibility is linked to leadership, or at least I hope it is linked.”

“I have always been quite work-oriented person and... for me one of the greatest values is the theatre, or any house where I work, for me the loyalty towards the house is the greatest priority. One needs to put away own... ambitions in a sense, and I always aim to think about the house’s interest first.”

“Somehow that certain line needs to exist. Or I want to, at least I have that sort of image that every single social evening that the personnel arranges and the actors arrange, for example the opening night parties, they do not need me there. Then they can be together in more informal manner with their own group. [...] It may be that sort of a thing that they can be there more freely, and for example bad mouth the management.”

Misunderstood scapegoats

The management also presents themselves as misunderstood scapegoats who, as the last comment of the previous presentation of self indicates, should be able to handle even negative feedback from their subordinates. To be more precise, the management acknowledges that the people working in a theatre, especially the artists, can be occasionally quite hot-tempered and that sometimes people say even harsh things in a heat of moment. For example, difficulties in the rehearsals of a production might tighten the overall atmosphere inside a theatre, and sometimes these difficulties erupt as unkind comments towards the management. Furthermore, occasionally the members of management get negative feedback that is directly related to their own work as well, as for instance people sometimes question whether the management has thought their decisions thoroughly or not. Indeed, this particular doubt is something that comes up frequently in the management’s talk, and it is a cause of frustration for the members of management. The management feels that it is unjustified to claim that they have not given a thought for their decisions, as they feel that thinking everything

from every perspective is exactly the management's work. Consequently, the members of management suspect that the most of the people working in this theatre do not exactly understand what the management actually does. Still, the members of management feel that whatever people might say to them, the management should not be provoked by negative comments, and especially they should not provoke their subordinates. Instead of clashing with their subordinates, the members of management prefer to talk about the negative feedback with their colleagues, and consequently the management acts as a close support group for each of its members. Interestingly, a part of this reluctance of getting triggered by the negative feedback seems to stem from the management's belief that they are in a sense below the artists, as they do not create theatrical art. The management's hierarchical position, then, seems to be quite complex, as they also hold quite much power over all the activities inside their theatre.

"That is what we hear, 'again no-one has thought about anything'."

"In some way we have quite a hierarchical community, here we have artists and then us who create circumstances. So in that sense, in that sense I am raised by the old school people, coached and schooled, that I do see it like... that our job is to sometimes receive it but our job is not to pay back. They are artists, they have it... it sometimes may erupt here in the background. We still need to stay calm, not to get provoked, and especially not to provoke them."

Advocates of the play

The sixth presentation of self that the management promotes highlights that the management wishes to advocate the theatre as storytellers' play. Indeed, while the management recognizes that a theatre as a work community includes occasional bursts of strong feelings, they emphasize that the theatre should not be taken too seriously. Moreover, the members of management feel that when things get too serious in a theatre, people tend to lose their sense of proportion and so issues become even bigger than what they are. This phenomenon, in turn, is a concern for the management, as the risks of chronic tiredness and burnout rise if people forget the aspect of play in the theatre. Consequently, while all the people working in this theatre talk about the theatre as storytellers' play, the members of management tend to use this definition the most. Certainly, the management agrees that the theatre should be seen an important institution, and that the work in a theatre should be taken seriously. However, they also believe that the aspect of play should not be forgotten either, and in addition they note that the people working in a theatre should remember that in the end the theatre work is not as serious as for instance the work of a doctor. Consequently, the members of

management see a place for humor inside a theatre too. Indeed, as the other people working in this theatre, the management feels that humor can lighten up the everyday work inside a theatre, and therefore they too note that humor is an important part of their working life. However, some members of management also bring up that they are somewhat hesitant to joke with their subordinates, as they could be misunderstood. Still, all the members of management are comfortable to joke with their colleagues and overall, as noted earlier, they feel closeness with the other managers.

“Ergo, the theatre should be about the play, but still it should be done seriously. Then at times... sometimes that seriousness becomes too serious. And somehow the sense of proportion gets lost here in this group.”

“I am quite strict about rest, people need to have their leisure time, because it is in no-one’s interest that people burn out or are chronically tired in any workstation. [...] One needs to remember that we are working in such a field, the field itself is of course important and great, but still this is not doctor’s work or such.”

“Our tight group [of leaders]. With them I can joke, but not with the whole house. Others may not understand. But then on the other hand, actors are so lovely because they can joke about everything and you will immediately know that some good joke is coming and so on. But somehow, as a leader one cannot get involved in joking that much.”

Dedicated to their work

Finally, the members of management present themselves as such people, who are very dedicated to their work in their theatre. In the end, the members of management are people, who somehow have learnt to live and enjoy the lifestyle of a theatre. While the management does not work in theatrical productions and thus they technically keep the regular office work hours, the members of management are always at the work. Already the position that they hold demands the management to be always available in a case of emergency. However, what seems to be even more driving force for the members of management is their strong identification with the theatre. Indeed, all the members of management have worked in the field of theatre at least over a decade, and while some of them have worked in other fields as well, the theatre and the theatre work continuous to intrigue them. Their long careers within the field of theatre, then, are considered to be an advantage, as the management believes that it is easier to lead a theatre with a proper understanding of how a theatre

works and how theatrical art is produced. On the other hand, all the members of management note that they have learnt the most of their current work by simply working in the field of theatre. In fact, despite all their experience, the members of management feel that every day they work in this theatre is different, and this is in fact something they find very interesting and refreshing.

“Yes, this work follows me all the time. I do think that I am completely a theatre person, and that feeling of being a theatre person and the work will not remain here even though I close that door behind me.”

“But perhaps that operational environment [outside the theatre] was not exactly what I had expected, and as it is, the longing back to the theatre came quite soon.”

“[...] there might be that thing that if one has never created art, then at times it might be difficult to understand why there is certain rules in creating art or why it is sometimes made to be so goddamn difficult.”

As a summary, the members of management present themselves as *different, yet involved in the creation of art; the enablers; the problem-solvers; those who carry the responsibility; misunderstood scapegoats; advocates of the play; and dedicated to their work*. This subchapter, then, finishes the final chapter that discusses the empirical findings of this study. To conclude, in this chapter I have considered three different personnel groups as separate dramaturgical performance teams that present their favored reality of themselves to others inside the theatre through their various presentations of self that have been identified here. Next, in the final main chapter of this thesis, I will reflect all the empirical findings presented in this main chapter in the light of earlier research. Furthermore, I will also present some concluding remarks of the study.

6 Conclusions

In this final main chapter, I present the discussion and concluding remarks of this study. First, I will reflect the empirical findings of this study in the light of earlier research discussed in the Chapter 3. Next, I will discuss how collective expertise manifests itself in my findings, and after that I will return to the presentation of self in theatre. Finally, I will conclude this study by offering some ideas for future research.

6.1. Reflecting the findings in the light of earlier research

In this chapter, I will return to the themes that recur in the earlier research focusing on art organizations. To be precise, I will reflect whether these themes manifest themselves in my research or not, and if they do, how they do it. First, I will discuss the work in the theatre, and after that I will focus on the balancing acts in the theatre.

6.1.1. The work in the theatre

Work as a continuous process

The findings of this study support the notions from earlier research that emphasize the processual nature of the work in art organizations (e.g. Becker et al. 2006). Indeed, cultural products in a theatre are produced through theatrical productions, and the life cycles of these productions define the everyday working life for both artistic and technical personnel. Single theatrical production is a process that takes several years from the initial decision to take certain theatrical play into the theatre's repertoire to the final theatrical performance of that play. Between these two phases, this production goes through several phases of planning, rehearsing, and finally it enters the phase of presenting the theatrical play. In all different phases of the production, people from different fields of theatrical work are involved in the production: While the initial planning phase requires mainly the work contribution of both the director and the management, the phases of rehearsing and presenting are dominated by the relevant people from artistic and technical personnel. For instance, the set designer is a member of artistic personnel, who gets involved in the theatrical production already in an early planning phase, as they need to design the sets for the performance. These sets, then, are constructed by those members of technical personnel, who work in the set construction department. Month or so prior the opening night, these completed sets are brought into the rehearsals – alongside the stagehands, who in turn start to rehearse the operation of these sets next to the actors, who hone their performance under the leadership of the director. As it is, the members of artistic and technical personnel live their everyday working life within these productions. Furthermore, as there are always several ongoing theatrical productions, these people are constantly involved in multiple different phases of the process of the creation of theatrical art. The management, on the other hand, follows its own process, which always runs several years ahead of others: They plan for the theatre's future and look for great theatrical performances that then are involved in the theatre's future repertoire. In addition, the management is also involved in the

everyday processes of the theatre, as they take care that the people in the ongoing theatrical productions have everything they need in order to create great theatrical art.

Work of the experts

The findings of this study also support the notion that art organizations are expert organizations (e.g. Koivunen 2003, Vilén 2010). To be precise, the people, who work in the theatre described in this study, wish to first and foremost convey an image of expertise. Indeed, if we contemplate all the presentations of self that have been discussed in this study, a principal presentation of self can be observed: The people working in this theatre wish to be seen as the experts of their own designated field of theatrical work – whether it is the work of artistic personnel, technical personnel, or the management. Next, I will discuss how this principal presentation of self as a professional manifests itself in my findings.

First, knowledge-intensiveness is a central characteristic of any expert work (Løwendahl 1997), and all the people studied in this research present themselves as such people, who have substantial knowledge of their designated field of theatrical work. First of all, artistic personnel state that their work in the theatre is to create a human connection with both themselves and spectators, as these human connections set the story of a theatrical play alive. In order to create these human connections, the members of artistic personnel need to be expert-performers; they need to utilize their extensive knowledge of performing so that the story can become a living thing for themselves and for the spectators. Similarly, the members of technical personnel need to be the experts of their own branch of stagecraft in order to complete the theatrical performance; they need to come up with the workable solutions that realize the director's vision of the physical world that surrounds the theatrical performance. They present themselves as non-artists, but nevertheless as the confirmed technical people, they need to be highly creative in the technical side of theatrical work. The management, on the other hand, needs the knowledge of how a theatre is run and how such circumstances that nurture great theatrical art can be enabled in their theatre; they need to be the experts of leadership in theatres, who then are always ready to learn more about their profession. As it is, all the people working in this theatre highlight the need of gaining new knowledge – although artistic personnel consider the aspect of new especially crucial, as they present themselves as both ever-changing and in constant state of incompleteness.

Second, the work in expert organizations requires a lot of skills in solving complex problems – usually such that are important issues for the society – and consequently experts are often highly educated (Løwendahl 1997). This aspect of problem-solving, then, is most prominent in the

management's work, as they present themselves as the problem-solvers of their theatre. However, both the work of artistic and technical personnel also contain the element of problem-solving, as the artists need to find the means to achieve the human connection, and the members of technical personnel need to solve how the physical surroundings of the theatrical play can be realized on the stage. Furthermore, the societal importance of the theatre work also comes up in the presentations of self in this theatre. The artists present themselves as driven by art, as they are ready to face all kinds of struggles in order to create such theatrical art that has a meaning for the surrounding society. The members of management, on the other hand, present themselves as different, yet involved in the creation of art inside theatres, and they too feel that they are privileged as they can address important issues of the society through their work. Technical personnel, however, deviates from others in this aspect of expert work, as they are somewhat reluctant to talk about the meaning of art – although it should be noted that they also tend to express such comments that portray the societal importance of art as a self-evident fact. The members of technical personnel divert from the traditional definition of expertise in another way as well: While both the management and the artists generally have a formal, higher education for their position or for theatrical work, many members of technical personnel have learnt their profession by simply working in theatres for years and years. Here, however, it should be noted that all the people working in this theatre highlight that the theatre work is something that is continuously learnt through working – it is a profession which cannot be taught through the textbooks only.

The third aspect that is often connected to expertise is then another point, where the theatre studied in this thesis diverts from the traditional definition of expertise. Indeed, Koivunen (2009a) notes that the work of professionals “is often defined as an individual property, as independence and autonomy are central characteristics of expertise” (258). Contrary to this notion, the people working in this theatre tend to emphasize the collective nature of their theatre. Of course, stories of such individuals who have saved a theatrical performance by covering someone else's role are told, and the artists also tend to present themselves as individuals in their work. However, the members of artistic personnel also present themselves as the paintbrushes of a painter: They collectively work in order to realize the director's vision of the theatrical play. This presentation of self, then, somewhat highlights the director's individual role, but still the director too is presented as such an individual that is a part of the collective – albeit with more power than the most of others. The management, too, highlights their close bonds, while the members of technical personnel present themselves as a tight-knit group of people. As it is, the way how expertise manifests itself in this theatre seems to support the argument presented by Koivunen (2009a): Expertise should be studied more in such

settings, where professional expert work is organized collectively. The notion of collectiveness in this theatre, then, will be revisited in the following subchapter, while the concept of collective expertise, in turn, is returned in the next chapter.

Finally, expertise is often noted to have some effects on the power relations inside expert organizations (Løwendahl 1997) – an aspect that manifests itself partly in the findings of this study. The people working in this theatre tend to respect the professionals norms related to their area of expertise, and consequently they express willingness to accept both peer review and sanctions. For instance, technical personnel have a very clear image of what a member of technical personnel should be and if someone does not live up to this image, they may criticize this person. Similarly, the members of management present themselves as those who carry the responsibility, and consequently they express dislike towards any types of leaders, who do not take responsibility of their actions. However, at the same time the people working in this theatre also highlight the importance of understanding the imperfections of others and state that failures are a part of the life inside a theatre. As such, the usage of peer review and sanctions are not so simple inside this theatre. Furthermore, the people working in this theatre do not have such a relationship with authority figures that could be explicitly defined as problematic. On the contrary, people working in productions view the director as the uncontested leader of both the rehearsals as well as the production as a whole. Similarly, the head of theatre is seen as the figurehead of the whole organization, who leads them together with other managers. However, the people working in this theatre do express frustration over such productions, where they have felt that the director did not lead them properly. Similarly, some members of management bring up the fact that their subordinates occasionally tend to question whether they have thought their decisions thoroughly or not. As it is, the people working in this theatre do not necessarily have problems with authority figures; however, they do have problems with them if they feel that they do not live up to their image of professional leadership. This understanding of professional leadership, then, will be expanded on the following subchapter.

6.1.2. Balancing acts in the theatre

Artistic versus economic logics

Interestingly, it seems that in this particular theatre, the juxtaposition of artistic and economic logics is quite insignificant. Indeed, the overall attitude seems to suggest that while the people working in this theatre certainly wish to present great theatrical performances, they do not think that the realization of this aspiration necessarily requires large budgets. Of course, productions that have a

substantial budget are noted to be somewhat easier – a good example of this is the musical I mainly observed, as for instance the budget had a room for calling a person to teach guitar playing for some of the actors when it came clear that such lessons were needed. Still, when I asked people to talk about the productions they found successful, theatrical plays with smaller budgets came up as often as mass productions such as the musicals this theatre regularly produces. Naturally, some hints of the juxtaposition so often described in the earlier research can be seen from the findings – for example, in the comment that demonstrates how technical personnel present themselves as frustrated over unpracticality, a member of technical personnel talks about how the members of artistic personnel do not need to think about the budget, which occasionally complicates the work of technical personnel. Nevertheless, the overall opinion seems to be that great theatrical art does not necessarily require large budgets and great premises; technically it could be even performed in the middle of a street without any money at all.

Contradicting demands for leadership

Contrary to the notions from earlier research, the leaders of the theatre explored in this study does not seem to face that much of contradicting demands. In general, the people working in this theatre describe a good leader as someone with a good vision for the theatre, as well as the authority to lead the theatre towards that vision. In addition, a good leader does favorable decisions for the theatre as a whole, and once those decisions are made, the leader also keeps their mind. Indeed, the people working in this theatre yearn for such leadership that is most often described as sturdy. Furthermore, one person also portrays a good leader as “a benevolent dictator” and while no-one else utilizes these words exactly, overall it seems quite an apt summary of everything the people working in this theatre seem to associate with good leadership. As it is, the people working in this theatre seem to yearn for such a leader that is described in the heroic leadership discourse presented by Koivunen (2003). In sort, the people working in this theatre express the wish of having a leader, who can be quite autocratic even, as long as their leadership is considered to be beneficial for the theatre as an important institution. Similarly as the actors that Sauer (2009) portrays in her study, all the people working in this theatre tend to be frustrated over such situations, where they feel that they are not properly directed – although they are capable of covering the leadership roles if needed. Furthermore, the people working in this theatre also tend to criticize the management if they feel that the management does not live up to what they consider as a good leadership. The management, in turn, expresses that their subordinates may not always totally understand the management’s work. To be precise, some members of management bring up the recurring sentence “again no-one

has thought about anything” by which they refer to such situations, where their subordinates do not seem to recognize the hard work that the management has put into certain decisions.

When talking about leadership, the theatre of this study was in an interesting situation while I was in the field. Indeed, the current head of theatre had formally taken his role approximately six months prior my fieldwork, while the former, long-time head of theatre had stepped aside. Consequently, many of the people working in this theatre were quite hesitant to comment the leadership in their theatre, as they felt that they did not yet know their new leader that well. One person, who has a long career in this theatre and thus has seen quite many head of theatres, noted to me that every time the head of theatre changes, people wait and see what kind of leader the new head of theatre will be before forming stronger opinions about them. In this case, the earlier head of theatre had been in his position for quite a long while, and he was mainly described as somewhat autocratic, yet a good leader. His leadership, then, may have had an effect on what the people working in this theatre consider as a good leadership. The new head of theatre, in turn, is experienced in both leading a theatre as well as working in a theatre. However, he is also quite much younger than his predecessor, and seems to have less autocratic touch in his leadership. Indeed, all the members of management talk about their close bonds, and consequently they seem to share the leadership of this theatre with the new head of theatre as the person, who makes the final decisions based on the constant dialogue with other managers. While here I have to note that this study does not contain knowledge of how the management team worked with the earlier head of theatre, the differences in leadership described here may indicate that the leadership in this theatre is gradually transforming from heroic leadership towards more shared leadership. Koivunen (2003) anticipates that similar change may be taking place in symphony orchestras, as the shared leadership discourse gets more prominent there as well. Of course, in this particular theatre it seems that the leadership is going to be more shared with other managers, and as such it does not involve the subordinates any more than before.

The old versus the new

The findings of this study suggest that the people working in this theatre have a very strong focus on the new. Certainly, one aspect of the old comes up quite frequently in the talk of the people working in this theatre; namely they bring up the routines involved in the production of theatrical art. These routines, then, are considered necessary, as they make the everyday work in theatrical productions more predictable. This, however, is quite common trait for art organizations and does not necessarily hinder the relationship that the organization has with the new (Wennes 2009). As it

is, the people working in this theatre utilize often the ever-changing theatre definition, and continuous learning in the work is also emphasized. Furthermore, while some of the people working in this theatre find the constant change as a refreshing aspect of their work, others consider it as a crucial part of the creation of theatrical art. Indeed, while the theatrical play may be a classic play that has been performed numerous times, the people working in this theatre highlight that it should still be performed with fresh mindset. Consequently, the aspect of new is needed in every theatrical performance.

Interestingly, the people working in this theatre do not tend to speak about the history of their theatre – contrary to the Great Philadelphia Orchestra theme that Koivunen (2003) introduces as a part of heroic leadership discourse in a symphony orchestra. Certainly, these people do tell a lot of stories that stem from their past. However, these stories focus on individual productions, instead of describing the history of the organization as a whole. Furthermore, while the people working in this theatre do like to talk about earlier, especially dear productions, they also present stories of such productions, which were not that successful. Still, this tendency to tell all kinds of stories does have something in common with the Great Philadelphia Orchestra theme, as they both may act as a focal point for identification. Indeed, Koivunen (2003) notes that the members of The Philadelphia Orchestra appreciate greatly the history of their organization, and consequently they are proud of being members of an orchestra with such a glorious past. The people working in the theatre described in this study, in turn, define the activity of story-telling as an inherent aspect of the theatre work – they tell stories because they are such people, who work in the field of theatre. The members of The Philadelphia Orchestra, then, seem to identify with the old, while – when taking into account the ever-changing theatre definition – the people working in this theatre tend to relate with the new. Indeed, even though they do note that the activity of story-telling is ancient, the people working in this theatre strive for new ways of presenting theatrical art – a good example of this aspiration is the theatre's Kommando team, which was established to search for alternative ways of creating and presenting theatrical art.

Individuality versus collectiveness

Finally, the people working in this theatre highlight the collective nature of their work. As such, they seem to agree with the arguments of such earlier research that portrays the work in art organizations as inherently collective (e.g. Fowlie 1954, Becker et al. 2006). Indeed, even if the theatrical performance is a monologue and as such involves only one actor, it still requires work contribution of other people from artistic, technical, and administrative personnel. In addition, the

decision to take the monologue into the theatre's repertoire needs to be made by the management, and this decision is then followed by all the other managerial actions related to this particular production. Furthermore, the people working in this theatre highlight the importance of the spectators; theatrical performances need to be performed to someone. This, then, supports Becker's (2006) argument that an artwork "has no effect" (24) if it is not consumed in some manner. Certainly, the people working in this theatre bring up such parts of their work that are quite individual – for example the actors present themselves as individuals in the state of incompleteness when they talk about the process they go through in order to present their characters. Nevertheless, collective elements can be found from even such aspects of the theatre work that at first glance seem individual. For instance, the props designer's work appears as highly individual as she either acquires or creates all the props mainly by herself. However, while doing her work, she constantly consults other people such as the director, the set designer, and the costumer. Furthermore, she may ask for example the stagehands to help her if she needs them and finally, the props designer also sometimes utilizes her personal networks and calls for help from the props designers of other theatres. As it is, the work that at first glance seems quite individual actually involves a lot of communication with other people – not only inside the theatre but outside as well – and as such it is very much collective indeed.

This strong emphasis on collectiveness, alongside the expert nature of theatrical work described earlier, brings us to the concept of collective expertise. Indeed, it seems that the people working in the theatre studied in this thesis need to be capable of functioning together in order to produce the great theatrical performances they aspire to offer to their spectators. Furthermore, they need to constantly utilize their extensive knowledge of their designated field of theatrical work, as well as continuously create new knowledge of it, in order to succeed in their aspiration. Therefore, in the next chapter, I will discuss how collective expertise manifests itself in theatre.

6.2. Collective expertise in theatre

Niina Koivunen (2009a) discusses the concept of collective expertise in her paper "Collective expertise: Ways of organizing expert work in collective settings". She defines collective expertise as "an ongoing processual ability to function together with other experts and create new knowledge" (259). Here it should be noted that this creation of new knowledge is not necessarily the aspired end result that the expert group aims to produce; instead new knowledge may be – in a sense – a byproduct of a process that aims to create something else through the utilization of collective expertise. For instance, Koivunen (2009a) describes a process, where a new car is

designed and build in a manner that utilizes several factors that may contribute to collective expertise. Similarly, while the people working in the theatre studied here aspire to produce great theatrical performances, they constantly utilize their existing knowledge of theatrical work, as well as create new knowledge of it, as they pursue their aspiration. Altogether, Koivunen (2009a) names seven factors that may contribute to collective expertise: *concrete work routines, minimal structure, narratives and story-telling, generosity and gift giving, aesthetic capabilities, mixed practice zone* and *room for individuality*. Next, I will present these factors and discuss the ways how they appear in the theatre explored in this study.

6.2.1. Concrete work routines

First of all, Koivunen (2009a) argues that while routine is often associated as a negative factor, expert groups still need some routines in order to function. However, she continues that it is important that the experts themselves have a role in designing these routines. These fairly simple and concrete routine activities, then, are capable of essentially shaping collective expertise among professionals (ibid.).

According to the findings of this study, concrete work routines seem to have a significant role in the creation of theatrical art. While the people working in the theatre studied here do describe their theatre as ever-changing, they also note that there is always certain routine that the productions follow. To be more precise, all the productions begin from the management's decision to take certain theatrical play into the theatre's repertoire, and from there the productions often proceed in certain manner. For instance, most of the productions have phases, where everything is uncertain and there are a lot of decisions to be made. While the rehearsals advance, the production as a whole should become more clarified and finally, the production team moves from rehearsing to presenting the performances of the theatrical play. In the end, after the final performance has been presented, the production team will disband and the members of this team will proceed to new production teams. This process, then, happens again and again inside the theatre, and the people, who are simultaneously members of multiple different production teams, live their everyday working life inside these processes. As such, all the activities inside this theatre are actually based on certain concrete and simple routine, which enables the creation of unique theatrical art. Indeed, the people working in this theatre state that they could not do their work without certain routines. Thus, the findings of this study support the notion that concrete work routines enable the functioning of an expert group.

6.2.2. Minimal structure

Koivunen (2009a) also states that expert groups seem to prefer minimal structure of organizing. To be precise, she argues that collective expertise is “an organic process, developed by the experts themselves, not by their managers, yet hopefully supported and facilitated by their managers and leaders” (273).

Interestingly, the theatre I studied does not have a minimal structure of organizing at all – on the contrary, the people working in this theatre define their theatre as a place of complex hierarchy. Indeed, this theatre has quite a traditional, formal hierarchical structure with the top management and middle-managers all in their own places. However, a member of management clarified to me that the purpose of this formal hierarchy is to ensure that no-one can exercise authority without carrying the responsibilities related to such an activity. Furthermore, while the organization itself has certain hierarchy, the individual productions have hierarchies of their own, which then complicate the overall hierarchy in this theatre. The director’s position as the uncontested leader of a production team is not often questioned by the people working in this theatre, and the theatre’s own director also participates in the weekly meeting of the management. However, while I was in the field, some people did note to me that otherwise hierarchical order inside a production, and the theatre as a whole, is occasionally somewhat unclear. Especially the artists have a curious position, as they are sometimes considered as the most important people inside a theatre, as they actually present the theatrical performance and as such, the creation of theatrical art is often personified in them. Still, apart from the director, they do not have any say in what theatrical plays or roles they will perform. While the artists seem to accept their confusing hierarchical position as a part of their work, some of them do express such hopes that for example the casting would be made a more transparent process. All in all, theatre as a setting for collective expertise seems not to require minimal structure of organizing – in fact it may benefit from formal hierarchy, as it means to protect the organization from such people, who utilize power without carrying the responsibilities related to leadership. Thus, it is important to note that while Koivunen (2009a) argues that minimal structure may enhance collective expertise, she does not claim that collective expertise cannot exist in an organization that has a complex structure. The theatre of this study, then, is an example of such an organization.

6.2.3. Narratives and story-telling

Narratives and story-telling are also acknowledged as a significant factor that may cultivate collective expertise in an organization (Koivunen 2009a). According to Koivunen (2009a), both

story-telling and narratives can be significant channels in the process of sharing knowledge, and thus building collective expertise.

The people working in the theatre studied here do utilize both narratives and story-telling in their everyday working life. Indeed, especially the activity of story-telling is strongly represented in the findings, as the people working in this theatre describe the theatre itself as storytellers' play. However, it is important to note that these people do not associate story-telling as a channel of sharing knowledge; instead they believe that it is something they do because they are such people, who work in a theatre. When I asked directly, the people working in this theatre did acknowledge that the novice members of the organization probably do learn about the theatre work by listening the stories of their seniors. However, they did not believe that people tell stories in theatres in order to share knowledge, and they also responded to my question in a manner that suggested that they had not thought about this aspect of story-telling that much. As such, the activity of story-telling in this theatre is seen as an inherent characteristic of the theatre work, which then may unintentionally act as a channel to knowledge sharing.

6.2.4. Generosity and gift giving

Another factor that Koivunen (2009a) notes to possibly enhance collective expertise is generosity and gift giving. Indeed, both ability and willingness to share knowledge is noted to be significant part of collective expertise in action (*ibid.*). Koivunen (2009a) states that such activities can be challenging for experts, as they may for example fear that others will steal their ideas. Nevertheless, she emphasizes that expert groups should build such an environment of openness and trust, where knowledge sharing is considered as a gift generously given that benefits everyone.

This sort of environment, then, seems to exist in the theatre I have studied here. In general, the people working in this theatre regard each other with respect and openness, and they are always ready to help each other when needed. In addition, visiting artists are invited to join into the conversations from the first meeting, and this familiarity was even extended to me while I was in the field. In fact, one person, who has worked in this particular theatre over several decades, noted to me that a theatre simply would not work if people were not capable of inviting even strangers to their company. This, then, may explain why the people working in this theatre do not consider the activity of story-telling as knowledge sharing as discussed earlier. Perhaps the overall atmosphere in this theatre is so open that the people, who work there, do not even think about such issues that usually hinder knowledge sharing in expert groups.

6.2.5. Aesthetic capabilities

Koivunen (2009a) also brings up three types of aesthetic capabilities that may enhance collective expertise: *collective handicraft*, *strive for beauty*, and *sense of rhythm*. First, Koivunen (2009a) notes that while the term handicraft may feel out of place when talking about professionals – after all, their work is usually seen as cognitive in its nature – collective handicraft may enhance collective expertise, as it is an activity where problems are fixed when they arrive instead of “operating by theoretical calculations” (265), and as such it requires high level of know-how. Strive for beauty, then, is noted to be another driving force for all kinds of professionals, as experts often state that they wish to produce beautiful results through their work (ibid.). Finally, Koivunen (2009a) notes that expert groups benefit from the shared ability of sensing the rhythm of the process, as it allows different experts to recognize when and where certain type of expertise is required.

In the theatre, where this study was conducted, collective handicraft can be most clearly observed in the work of technical personnel – in fact technical personnel’s work is by its nature collective handicraft. Indeed, the different members of technical personnel utilize their talents as craftsmen, as they create all the physical elements that together form the physical reality surrounding a theatrical performance. Strive for beauty, then, is a driving force that all the people working in this theatre seem to share. While the artists wish to create a meaningful human connection with their spectators, technical personnel strive for a complete performance. The management, in turn, wishes to offer superior circumstances for the production teams that then allow them to perform great theatrical art. Similarly, all the people working in this theatre seem to have an ability to sense the rhythm of a production. Indeed, all of them seem to be capable of anticipating certain phases in a production; they are all familiar with the routines involved in theatrical productions. Here I would like to highlight that the sense of rhythm is not only an ability of the people, who work in the productions. The members of management also state that they have learnt to anticipate certain phases in the productions, and thus they know when the people working in the productions need encouragement and listening ear, as well as when they need strict leadership.

6.2.6. Mixed practice zone

Mixed practice zones, in turn, are also recognized as a factor that may support collective expertise, as they offer a place to encounter others, and thus may initiate the mixing of different world views and competences (Koivunen 2009a). Koivunen (2009a) states that a mixed practice zone can be a physical space, where professionals from different fields encounter one other. Furthermore, visitors

may also initiate new, creative manners of combining and organizing knowledge – after all, they are capable of asking “silly” questions that sometimes contest the prevailing patterns of conduct (ibid.). Koivunen (2009a) argues that both temporary and permanent mixed practice zones can be significant factors for collective expertise as long as they enable the encounter with “the other”.

The people working in the theatre studied here, then, seem to have a lot of opportunities for encountering “the other”. For example, green room is a physical mixed practice zone, where experts from different fields of theatrical work encounter each other in natural manner. While in the green room, the people working in this theatre communicate freely with each other over the social lines of personnel groups. Such communication also happens during the rehearsals, although there people naturally mainly focus on rehearsing. Furthermore, visitors are quite common in this theatre, and they are also capable of presenting different world views that in turn may offer new ideas and ways of organizing the practices in this theatre. If we then consider the whole field of theatre instead of only focusing on this particular theatre, it seems that the field as a whole is a mixed practice zone of its own. Indeed, people working in the field of theatre are described as nomads, who regularly move from one theatre to other – or alternatively visit other theatres – and therefore everyone working in the field of theatre constantly encounters “the other”.

6.2.7. Room for individuality

Finally, Koivunen (2009a) argues that experts need sufficient level of autonomy and room for individuality in order to function well in collective settings. She notes that expert work is by its nature independent, and therefore the independency of an expert should not be sacrificed too much, as this may impede collective expertise. As such, Koivunen (2009a: 273) notes that “the balance between individuality and collectivity is sensitive, and constantly under negotiation”. However, she also encourages the researchers not to study individuals and collectives as separate entities: “Instead of struggling to theorize about either individuals or collectives, I suggest we should theorize about individuals *in* collectives” (273). This particular study, then, actually evolved into such a study, where individuals are explored in their collective setting. Next, I will expand this notion in the following chapter, where I revisit the presentation of self in theatre.

6.3. Presentation of self in theatre revisited

In this chapter, I will contemplate some of the themes related to Goffman’s (1959) dramaturgical perspective, as I revisit the presentations of self in theatre discussed in this study. Overall, all the members of dramaturgical performance teams – or members of different personnel groups as they

have been referred in this study – present themselves more or less in the way professionals usually do: They highlight the importance of their own area of expertise, and identify themselves as the experts of that area of theatrical work (e.g. Glynn 2000). However, the people working in the theatre I have studied here also emphasize the collective nature of their work – sometimes it even seems that they somehow downplay the importance of their own work, as for instance a member of management describes their work as “purely cultural-bureaucratic” and “not at all artistic in principle”. Similarly, technical personnel emphasize their non-artist position in an organization, which sole purpose is to produce theatrical art. The artists, on the other hand, highlight that they could never do their work without the other people working in this theatre. Indeed, as the definition of the theatre as self-mending organization suggest, the people working in this theatre yearn for such a situation, where all the different experts inside the theatre are working together in order to produce great theatrical art. While this situation does not always occur, they still do their very best so that they can cover the roles of such people, who have failed to do their part – although it is noted that the theatre work is easier, when everyone acts upon their individual role in the collective.

When contemplating the everyday life inside this theatre, I find it convenient to utilize a metaphor of a jigsaw puzzle. While every piece of a jigsaw puzzle is different by their shapes, the function of every piece is the same, namely to participate in forming the picture presented in that jigsaw puzzle. Furthermore, all the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle are needed, as they only together form that picture; a missing piece causes a hole into that picture. The people working in this theatre, then, could be characterized as the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle: While the members of different performance teams present themselves as different from each other, all of them still agree that their – in a sense – function in this theatre is the same, namely to utilize their own expertise and co-operate in creating great theatrical art. Furthermore, while these people sometimes need to deal with the problem of missing metaphorical pieces, they always aspire to produce great theatrical performances. This aspiration, then, is the key to understanding why the people I have studied here have such a strong capability to utilize collective expertise in their everyday working life inside the theatre. Next, I will expand on this argument.

6.3.1. Creators of great theatrical performances

Throughout this study I have brought up that the people working in this theatre believe that it is of great importance that they present great theatrical performances for their spectators. Interestingly, while all the people working in this theatre strive for these great, successful theatrical performances, the concept of what is such a theatrical performance is not that straightforward. Indeed, according to

the people I have described here, a successful theatrical performance cannot be defined solely as a performance of such a production that generates a lot of profits for the theatre. Instead, artistic personnel strive for a performance that conveys the human connection, and the members of technical personnel wish to be part of the complete performance. The management, on the other hand, wishes to provide the means for the creation of meaningful theatrical performances that increase the well-being of the public surrounding the theatre. As it is, a successful theatrical performance can be defined in numerous ways, but nevertheless, as their overachieving desire is to produce these great theatrical performances for their spectators, the people working in this theatre have a strong product- and customer-orientation.

The importance of producing great theatrical performances manifests itself in all the dominant definitions of the theatre that are promoted by the people I have studied here. First of all, these great theatrical performances are explicitly connected to the theatre as an important institution definition, as they are concrete representations of the art form that is the reason for the existence of this institution. Indeed, in this definition the theatre is argued to exist in order to sustain the presence and welfare of theatrical art, which then is seen as an important aspect for humanity. Consequently, the people working in this theatre believe that their work is to present such theatrical performances that honor this art form and institution.

Second, the theatre is also defined as ever-changing, as the art form itself is considered to be constantly changing. While some routines exist, the people working in this theatre state that every theatrical production – and every theatrical performance – should always be a novel experience, and consequently they too need to constantly change in order to present great theatrical performances.

Third, the people working in this theatre define the theatre as storytellers' play, as they ultimately view the theatrical performances they create as a form of story-telling that entails an aspect of play. A theatrical performance is but a story that becomes alive before the gazes of spectators, as the people working in a theatre present it for them. Here the actors are more visible than others, and their work is ultimately an act of playing; they pretend to be characters of the story in order to set the story of a theatrical performance alive.

Still, it should be noted that all the people working in this theatre highlight that despite their visible role, the actors only cannot guarantee the success of a theatrical performance. As it is, the fourth definition of the theatre portrays this organization as a place of complex hierarchy, where everyone needs to act upon the position they hold so that the theatre can produce great theatrical performances.

The fifth definition of the theatre, then, is also related to the actual occupations that these people hold in their theatre. Indeed, as the people studied in this thesis realize that occasionally someone fails to live up to the requirements of their occupation, the theatre is also defined as a collective that is highly capable of mending itself when necessary. As it is, the people working in this theatre believe that they should always find the ways of presenting great theatrical performances no matter what happens around the theatrical production. This belief, too, highlights the great importance of producing great theatrical performances.

Finally, the people working in this theatre also utilize the all-consuming theatre definition, which highlights that this intense focus on these great theatrical performances may be a negative aspect for a person if the theatre work becomes too serious and too an all-consuming part of their life. Interestingly, the management of this theatre emphasizes most strongly that the aspect of play should not be forgotten in the everyday working life inside any theatre, and consequently they seem to be most concerned of this definition of the theatre. In their interviews, several managers brought up that they regularly “listen out for” the atmosphere of their subordinates – in other words, they visit the departments frequently to observe the overall well-being of their subordinates. As it is, the management of this theatre does not only manage this organization through typical task-oriented leadership, but they also seem to utilize such leadership that expresses bodily awareness (Ropo and Parviainen 2001).

To sum up this subchapter, then, I would like to bring some notions from dramaturgical perspective back to the fore. As discussed earlier in this study, Goffman argues that every time a person enters to certain situation, they present a favored character of themselves that fits to that situation. Consequently, people continuously search for all kinds of clues that hint what the situation in hand is. Furthermore, through their presentations of self, people also may attempt to change the perspectives of others of that situation; they may try to convince their dramaturgical audience that things are actually differently as interpreted earlier. These projected definitions of a situation, then, indicate towards certain understanding of the reality itself. Now, if we return to the definitions of the theatre discussed here, it is clear that all the people working in this theatre project such a reality, where it is of great importance that they present great theatrical performances for their spectators. In a sense, one could argue that this projected reality is the principal definition of the theatre; it is the reality of the everyday working life inside the theatre, the reality of the social establishment, where these people present their favored selves discussed in this study.

Now, before concluding this study, I would like to present some notions of the performance teams utilized in this study. Namely, one must consider the suitability of the social lines between the different performance teams I have drawn in this study.

6.3.2. Are the lines of performance teams truly there?

As noted earlier, in this study I have considered artistic personnel, technical personnel, and the management as three different performance teams that co-operate in order to the theatre to present great theatrical performances. In this subchapter, I will contemplate these performance teams and consider other possible divisions of dramaturgical performances inside the theatre. Here, as the following discussion requires it, I will highlight the aspect of performance teams, and utilize terms the artistic team, the technical team, and the management team when referring to the performance teams described in this study.

Following the metaphor of the jigsaw puzzle, one could say that I have stated that there are jigsaw puzzle pieces of three different colors. Now, the question has to be raised, are the social lines between the performance teams truly such as I have drawn them in this study? Should the colors of those jigsaw puzzle pieces decide the lines between different groups, or is some other form of division required? Personally, I think that the division utilized in this study is quite appropriate, but I also argue that the answer to this question is not that straightforward either. For instance, in this study I have considered the visiting members of a production team as members of the relevant performance team, which is the artistic team. However, it might be more accurate to view them as people with certain discrepant role, namely the role of colleague. After all, while their routine is similar, these people do not usually perform to the same dramaturgical audience as the other members of artistic team, as they are not actual members of this organization. However, due to their visiting status, they have in a sense gained the honorific membership to this team. The director is another member of the artistic team, whose position is actually more complex than what has been implied earlier. Thus, I will next discuss the role of director, and after that I will contemplate the line I have drawn between the artistic and technical performance teams. The presentation of self in a theatrical performance is then considered and finally, the management of the theatre is discussed.

The role of director

While I have considered the director as a member of artistic performance team until this point, the role of director seems to be more complex than that. If strictly consulting the organizational structure, the director belongs to the artistic personnel. However, he is also presented as the

uncontested leader of the production he directs, and therefore his position is not that simple. If we were talking about the theatrical performances this production team creates, then the director could be considered – in the terms of dramaturgical perspective – as the director or the star of the artistic team. However, the performance of the artistic team is about them presenting themselves as professional artists, and not about the actual theatrical performance. As such, the director is not exactly either the dramaturgical director or the star, although he too presents himself as an artist.

The director's complex position becomes clearer when pondering some observations from the field. Indeed, as a point of comparison, the stage manager also holds a leadership position, but still during the fieldwork I noticed that all of his actions towards others – and the actions of others towards him – had a tone of equality in them. In my eyes, the stage manager presented himself as such a member of technical performance team, who just happens to hold a role that involves more responsibility than the roles of others. The director, on the other hand, also treated others with quite a high level of familiarity – and was treated with similar manner by others – but still there seemed to be some sort of social distance there. Indeed, when contemplating this particular observation from the rehearsals, the director occasionally seemed to be the dramaturgical audience of the members of artistic team. More than that, however, the director seemed to form his own performance team. The performance of the director's team in the rehearsals, then, was to present the director as the leader of both the rehearsals and the production as a whole. This projected definition of the situation, in turn, seemed to be considered as authentic, as the other people involved in the production embraced it as well. The director's team appeared usually as a one-man team, but at times such people as the choreographer, the singing teacher, the conductor, and even the lead actor and actress became members of this performance team. Interestingly, the production manager was often a member of this performance team as well, which then brings us to question the social lines between the artistic and technical performance teams I have presented earlier.

The line between artistic and technical performance teams

As often recounted in this study, both the members of artistic and technical personnel work closely together in order to produce great theatrical performances. While here I have considered them as two separate performance teams that co-operate, it is certain that the social distance between these two teams gets often blurred in a production, and thus it can be questioned whether they truly are separate all the time or not. While the production manager's participation to the director's performance team reflects the closeness of these two personnel groups, this closeness can be elaborated even better by contemplating what happens behind the sets of an ongoing theatrical

performance. Indeed, there is another show altogether going on behind the sets of an ongoing performance, where the lines of different performance teams are very vague. The offstage areas of a theatrical performance are places, where both the technical and artistic team need to co-operate closely in order to present the actual theatrical performance to the literal audience, namely the spectators of that performance. This common target, then, forces these two teams to communicate out of character; they need to take realigning actions that blur the social distance between the teams. Now, according to Goffman, these realigning actions can morph two separate teams into one team. Are those members of artistic and technical personnel, who are involved in one production, so close to each other that they actually should be seen as one performance team? This team is of course temporary one, as it lasts only as long as the production as a whole lasts. However, Goffman notes that impermanence is actually quite typical characteristic for a performance team; they rarely have very long histories. As such, the people involved in one production could be considered as the members of a single performance team. However, now another question has to be asked: If we consider the people behind the sets of an ongoing theatrical performance as those members of a single performance team, who just currently happen to be in the back region, then what is the performance of this team? At first, one could say that it is the theatrical performance the production team produces, but I believe this notion needs to be discussed a bit further.

The presentation of self in a theatrical performance

If we contemplate an actual theatrical performance, it must be said that there certainly are performers presenting certain projection of the reality to their audience. However, these performers are not “performers” in the sense of dramaturgical perspective; a performer of an actual theatrical performance presents a character of a theatrical play, instead of presenting certain self-as-character. Similarly, the reality projected in a theatrical performance is the reality of that play. A theatrical performance, then, is the actual activity that Goffman utilizes in describing dramaturgical perspective, and as such it is not a “performance” in this sense. Certainly, the members of a production team do present theatrical performances, and every time they do so they aspire to present the best possible performance. However, I believe that this aspiration arises from their wish to live up to their professional status. In other words, the members of a production team wish to be seen as the experts of their designated fields of theatrical work. This, then, is the actual presentation of self in that theatrical performance; it is the reality that the production team as a performance team wishes to convey to their dramaturgical audience. The stage, where the actual theatrical performance takes place, is in a sense a social establishment, where the members of this performance team can project their preferred reality. Interestingly, there may be elements of

individuals' personal presentations of self in this projection. Indeed, while I was in the field, an actor told me that sometimes the key to understanding the character of a theatrical play may be found from personal fears. Thus, in the disguise of merely performing a character of a theatrical play, actors may actually utilize such presentations of self that they normally would hesitate to attach to their performance of self-as-character. While they project the reality of them as professionals, actors may secretly unveil such aspects of themselves they normally would not reveal.

Before moving on, I would like to add one final notion related to actual theatrical performances. When the members of a production team present a theatrical performance, they do not only project the reality of them as professionals, but also offer certain simple projection of the reality of their theatre: This is a theatre that performs these kinds of theatrical plays. The production team, however, does not decide which sorts of theatrical plays they present. Instead, all the decisions related to the theatre's repertoire are made by the management and thus, in a sense, every theatrical performance presented in this theatre projects the reality of the theatre that the managements wishes to project. Of course, every theatrical performance contains some elements from every person working in the productions. One example, where this claim can be observed, is the way an actor describes their artistry in the presentation of self that portrays the members of artistic personnel as driven by art. Still, the management provides the overarching frame for the theatrical performances and nurtures them. This notion, then, leads us to the final issue I wish to discuss in this chapter, namely the management of the theatre.

The management of the theatre

The management of the theatre actually seems to be quite a stable performance team with clearer social distance between them and other performance teams. In a sense, the members of all the other teams are the management's audience, and their performance presents them as leaders, who nurture theatrical art and enable all the activities of the theatre. In this performance team, then, the head of theatre has a special position. In the same way as the director is the dramaturgical director and the star of his own performance team, the head of theatre is the director and the star of the management team. To elaborate this notion, the head of theatre directs the management team by offering an example of the preferred reality of the leadership. Furthermore, he also holds the dramatic dominance over the performance of the management – he is “the house's mannequin” as one interviewee expressed it. As it is, the performance teams inside this theatre are not the only audience of the management; instead they also perform to the surrounding public as a whole, as

well as to the officers of the city. The management's position in between the city and the theatre's personnel, then, causes them to have the discrepant role of go-between. Here I do not wish to imply that the city and the theatre's personnel have hostile relations; instead I only wish to highlight that the management meditates information between the city and the theatre's personnel.

As the contemplations above demonstrate, there are multiple alternative compositions for performance teams inside the theatre I have studied in this thesis. This notion, then, supports Goffman's argument that people generally are members of multiple different performance teams in their everyday life, and consequently they may occasionally even perform to an audience that contains such people, who are also the performers' teammates in another performance. Some performance teams are more stable, while others exist only a fleeting moment. All in all, the presentation of self in theatre, like in any other kind of social establishment, is never-ending. To this notion, then, I will end this chapter that has revisited the presentation of self in theatre. Next, I will move on from this study, and present some ideas for future research.

6.4. Ideas for future research

This study offers several ideas for future research both in the context of theatres as well as in the context of art organizations in general. As Koivunen (2009a) notes, all the factors that may contribute to collective expertise could be studied separately in all kinds of organizations. This study suggests that theatres – and art organizations in general – are fascinating contexts for such future studies. For instance, it could be interesting to study which kinds of structures art organizations have in organizing the collective expert work within their organization, as the theatre studied here does not have such a minimal structure that Koivunen (2009a) brings forward as a factor that may contribute to collective expertise. Another surprising empirical finding of this study is the relationship the people working in this theatre have with the activity of story-telling – it too could be researched further. Overall, future research that focuses on collective expertise in art organizations could generate more knowledge of both the concept of collective expertise as well as the world of art organizations.

Two other ideas for future research can be raised from the discussion that states that all the people working in this theatre project such a reality, where it is of great importance that they present great theatrical performances for their spectators. First of all, in the beginning of this discussion it is noted that the definition of what is a great, successful theatrical performance seems to be quite vague. Consequently, another study could be conducted to focus on the question what a great

theatrical performance is from the point of view of the people, who work in the field of theatre. Similarly, in this discussion I mention that the management of this theatre seems to utilize such leadership that expresses bodily awareness (Ropo and Parviainen 2001). Theatres, then, could act as a suitable context for such a study that wishes to explore bodily knowledge within organizations.

The discussion on how the common balancing acts in the art field manifest themselves in the theatre studied here also offers some ideas for future research. First of all, when contemplating the apparent insignificance of the contradiction between artistic and economic logics in this theatre, one must ask how much of the attitude towards the creation of art with a budget described earlier wells from the two years the people working in this theatre spent in such temporary premises that were quite frugal when compared to the actual theatre building. Perhaps this experience has changed the attitudes of the people working in this theatre, as they now know that they truly can present great theatrical performances in very frugal circumstances? While this study cannot address this sort of question due to its timeframe, it would be interesting to research how similar experiences may affect the inherent beliefs and attitudes that people working in art organizations have about their field.

Another idea for future research stems from the change as well, as it would be fascinating to research how transfer to the next generation happens in art organizations, and what kinds of effects they may have on the organization as a whole. As noted earlier in the discussion that covers the leadership in this theatre, this organization went through a transfer to the next generation with its head of theatre only some months prior the fieldwork of this study. My findings suggest that such a change may have quite a substantial effect on the organization as a whole, as the leadership styles of heads of theatre may differ quite vastly. While this study can only speculate the effects that such a change may have, another study could be conducted in the future that focuses on the transfer to the next generation in art organizations.

Finally, the discussion on how the balancing acts manifest themselves in this theatre also provides two additional ideas for future research. First of all, as stated earlier in the discussion covering the contradiction of the old and the new, alternative ways of presenting theatrical performances are searched actively in the theatre studied here. Furthermore, it is brought up that there is a team inside this theatre, which purpose is to come up with new ideas for performing theatrical art. These sorts of alternative ways of presenting art and the initiatives inside art organizations that focus on the creation of such presentations, then, might be an interesting starting point for another study. Second, related to the insignificance of the contradiction between artistic and economic logics in this theatre, the relationship that members of an art organization have with sustainability could be also studied in

the future. This particular idea stems from a discussion I observed in the green room: A member of this theatre and visiting artist talked about the recycling policies of another theatre. The member of the theatre studied here lamented how the other theatre did not recycle the sets or such in order to keep their annual costs, and consequently their overall budget for the next year, in certain level. This seemed very wasteful for her, which suggests that she at least is concerned over the sustainability of the creation of art. Whether this is a concern that she personally has, or an interest more commonly shared in the art field, another study could be conducted to focus on this topic.

To conclude, in this final main chapter I have reflected the findings of this study in the light of earlier research, and argued that the people working in this theatre present themselves first and foremost as professional individuals, who work in a highly collective organization. Therefore, I have also discussed the concept of collective expertise (Koivunen 2009a) and described how collective expertise manifests itself in the theatre, where this study was conducted. In addition, I have brought Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical perspective back to the fore, as in this chapter I have revisited the presentation of self in theatre. Finally, I have offered some ideas for future research based on this study.

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8 Appendices

Appendix – Interview outline

Following interview outline is especially designed for the interviewees who work in productions and as such it addresses them the best. When interviewing people who are not in direct contact with productions, I modified the outline to suit their work. For example, questions such as “What or who are the most important when considering the success of a production?” were changed to “What or who are the most important when considering the success of Kuopio City Theatre?”

Tell me about yourself in your own words.

(For example: How old are you, what is your official title, how did you end up to this work, what is your educational background, what inspires you, what are your hobbies etc.)

Career/background information

How long have you worked in the theatre field? How about in Kuopio City Theatre?

Apart your current occupation, have you had different occupations in a theatre? What kinds of occupations?

Have you worked outside the theatre field? If so, how the work in the theatre differs from the work outside the theatre?

Description of the work

Tell me about your work. Describe a typical work day.

Support questions:

- What are your work assignments?
- What kind of support you need in order to do your work well? Do you have this support?
- What are the productions you are currently involved in? How these productions are proceeding?
- Do you feel that your work is physical? If so, in which way?

Relationship with work community

What does Kuopio City Theatre mean for you?

Support questions:

- Do you feel cohesion with other members of this theatre? Do you feel that you belong to this organization?
- What is the role of this work community in your work? What is your role in this work community?
- Who are the most important people for your work? Who do you work with?
- How does a theatre production take its shape?
- What or who are the most important when considering the success of a production?

Leadership in the theatre

Who is your leader? Who do you lead?

Tell me about the leadership in Kuopio City Theatre.

Support questions:

- How do you see the leadership in Kuopio City Theatre? Does it support your work and if so, how?
- What is leadership for you? What kinds of feelings this word evokes in you?
- In your opinion, what kind is a good leader?

Sources for inspiration

When do you feel that your work is at its best? Describe an ideal work day.

Support questions:

- What are the aspects you like in your work?
- What inspires you? What gets you excited?
- How do you keep up the inspiration? What is the role of work community? Or humor?

Challenges

When do you feel that your work is most challenging? Describe the challenges/problems in your work.

Support questions:

- What are the aspects in your work that you care less about? What are the negative sides of your work?
- What are your challenges in (a) your work, (b) in this organization, (c) in organization's current situation?
- How do you handle your challenges? What helps you to overcome your challenges?
- What is the role of this work community in overcoming your challenges? What is the role of humor?