The Shared Space: Staging a High School Musical in a Professional Venue

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I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

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Abstract

As the landscape of arts education continues to change, the field has witnessed a concomitant increase in focus on what constitutes a quality education in the arts. This focus is particularly important in the context of developing collaborative partnerships between schools and the arts sector—where industry experience is key—for the purpose of creating quality arts-related projects and events. Although there is substantial support in the literature on the benefits of arts education partnerships, there is a lack of contextually rich research that explores the ways in which education and arts industry experience and negotiate these partnerships.

The aim of this research is to explore how one particular form of arts education partnerships function in order to consider the enablers and constraints to working together. Using a combination of phenomenology and autoethnography, this study captures through in-depth interviews and the researcher’s reflective journal, the ‘lived experiences’ of eight key education and industry professionals’ over a ten day period during the staging of a high school musical in a professional venue.

The central finding of the research was how the contrasting identities between the two socio-culturally configured groups (education and industry), shaped the challenges involved in working effectively together. Of particular significance were the ways that the participants negotiated multiple formal, informal, traditional and emerging roles throughout the partnerships journey. These findings were captured in a unifying metaphor represented in a 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships that I conceptualise as The Shared Space. Each of the acts of this play: Bumping in, Negotiating the Space and The Shared Space collectively capture twelve essential themes, and represent significant transformational points in both groups partnership’s journey.

The research identifies and makes visible the shifting social and cultural characteristics that dynamically shape partnerships at crucial points during the staging of a high school musical. Participants’ roles were negotiated and re-negotiated, highlighting an emerging landscape for both industry and education staff in which traditional roles and practices are being re-visioned and (Hogan, 2006) reshaped. The findings reveal that the development of a shared language that encompasses both industry and education values—connecting aesthetic quality with educational outcomes—is an essential ingredient to producing inclusive, functional, productive and mutually beneficial partnerships.
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CHAPTER ONE – CONCEPTION OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This study was conceived from a desire to better understand the potential benefits and challenges associated with arts education partnerships within my own 20-year professional journey as a teacher of performing arts in a variety of secondary schools across Australia, and how this might add to our knowledge of effective arts education practice. More specifically, this research focuses on my current role as a performing arts teacher at an independent school in Perth, Western Australia. In this role, I have collaborated with school teachers, students and volunteers as producer and director on seven annual musical theatre productions. These musicals were staged in a local professional venue, affording my colleagues and myself with many rewarding opportunities, including working alongside professional designers, performers, theatre managers and technicians.

These high school musicals created an opportunity to showcase performing arts students to large school and wider community audiences. During this time, I often wondered what these partnership experiences were like for the industry professionals who worked at the venue. What was it like working with a school group compared to a professional company on a global tour? Did industry professionals in the venue find the partnership experience with the school group rewarding? In what ways did the industry professionals perceive the benefits of this type of arts education partnership? In considering these questions, I also wondered which elements constrain and/or enable quality partnerships between education and industry in the performing arts.

In conceptualizing this study, I wanted to find a way of unraveling the complexities involved when a school group and a group of industry professionals engage for the purpose of staging a high school musical in a local professional venue. In doing so, how might this conjoint activity illuminate some of the essential qualities (Van Manen, 1997) of effective arts education partnerships. Qualitative research design gave me the framework to elicit rich descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of the experiences of seven key education and industry staff during the ‘bump-in’\(^1\), technical\(^2\) rehearsals and performances of the musical production in

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\(^1\) The day when a live performance is ‘set-up’ in a venue.
\(^2\) Technical rehearsal usually occurs during the final stages of the rehearsal period with a focus on lighting, sound and set.
March 2016. Furthermore, I have included my own experiences as a performing arts teacher employing the use of a reflective journal (Street, 1997). This practice provided me the opportunity to take on complementary roles as both researcher and co-participant (Labaree, 2002) within the ten day data collection period of the musical whilst simultaneously analyzing, reflecting and making sense of my own practice (Kawulich, 2005) as teacher, director, producer, manager, and researcher.

**The Conception of the Study**

I am able to trace the conception of this study back to 1994, where I began my career as a teaching artist visiting schools in Western Australia to facilitate workshops that intended to engage students with the works of William Shakespeare. During these sessions, I witnessed apathy from many teachers who seemed unwilling to collaborate. Consequently, their role within the artist/teacher partnership was limited to supervision and an opportunity to catch up on marking. These formative experiences provided me with a strong grounding in the challenges faced by arts industry professionals working within the school context.

In contrast to this, the arts education partnerships I engaged in as a performing arts teacher included school workshops, artist in residencies and industry professionals taking on various production roles (actor, assistant director, technical manager, set/costume and lighting designer) in school theatre productions. The partnership contexts with arts industry professionals were situated within the wider community, from student performances in local theatres as well as national and international performing arts tours. For example, in my role as a drama teacher at a boy’s college in Sydney, I collaborated with actors and industry technicians to conduct workshops for secondary students who were creating individual projects for the NSW Higher School Certificate Drama and Entertainment courses.

These combined experiences as both a professional actor working within schools, and my subsequent career as a performing arts teacher, afforded me a dual perspective on arts education partnerships that encompasses both an industry and education viewpoint. Furthermore, it has heightened my awareness of the benefits and potential pitfalls of

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3 The credential awarded to senior school students in New South Wales, Australia for successful completion of Year 12.
performing arts industry and secondary school education groups working on collaborative ventures.

During this time, I took part in and witnessed other performing arts teachers engage in successful, and not so successful collaborations with industry professionals, and although most partnerships were rewarding, they were also challenging. I have come to realize that because of my professional industry background, I felt confident in my relationships with members from this performing arts industry group, especially at the start of my career as a teacher when I strongly identified with my actor/artists role. However, over the years employed, predominantly as a full-time teacher of drama in secondary schools, I began to identify more as a teacher/artist. I noticed myself becoming increasingly sensitive towards what I perceived to be the preconceptions (held by industry professionals) toward my drama teacher role; these ‘images’ predominantly occurring at the start of projects or for the entirety of short term projects. Finally, I began to wonder whether these preconceptions go both ways and did industry professionals feel ‘judged’ within these partnerships contexts.

These emerging insights and questions motivated me to enroll in Masters of Education (Research) at Murdoch University, where I was introduced to a broad range of scholarly research in the area of arts education partnerships. Of particular interest, were the ways in which performing arts teachers and industry professionals engage and collaborate in a variety of roles and partnership contexts. Unfortunately, many of the experiences that I described above as a teacher of performing arts in secondary schools were not represented in the available literature on arts education partnerships. In particular, there was a lack of empirical studies conducted on arts education partnerships from the perspective of performing arts teachers, including how they negotiate traditional roles and practices in the creation of arts events against an evolving arts-education landscape. Furthermore, I was surprised to find only a small amount of literature on partnership projects initiated from within schools and conducted in industry spaces. Interestingly, what I did find, was an abundance of literature that exalted the benefits of arts education partnerships whilst limiting the role of teachers of arts related subjects.

**Background to the Study**

This study is set against a backdrop of an evolving education landscape in Australia that is witnessing a greater focus on building the creative capacities of students through a new national curriculum. As a consequence, arts industry organisations are partnering with
schools and implementing an increasing variety of programs designed to engage students within the school environment and the wider community (Adams, 2014). And although there is a substantial body of literature that has evidenced the potential of these programs to enrich arts education, what is less known is how these relationship impact both industry professionals and teachers, especially those committed to arts related subjects. Therefore, it is critical and timely to explore and re-vision these changing relationships against the shifting praxis that exists between ‘artist’ and ‘educator’ in the context of partnerships formed for the purpose of creating a richer arts education in Australia.

Quality in Arts Education

Another recent development in arts education is the emphasis on quality as being a vital ingredient to the effectiveness of arts education programs and events at various stages of the educational process (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2006). However, despite the notion and importance of quality in arts education, there is conjecture around the use of the word as it pertains to arts education discourse. This debate began with Dewey (1934), who defines quality as being characterized by a ‘heightened vitality’. More specifically, in The wow factor, Anne Bamford (2006) defines quality as “those arts education provisions that are of a recognised high value and worth in terms of the skills, attitudes and performativity engendered” (p.86), but also “goes beyond this to consider learning journeys, pathways, partnerships and recognition” (p.87).

In 2009, a study titled The Qualities of Quality conducted in the United States sought to better understand ‘excellence’ in arts education. The report found that although multiple uses and interpretations of quality exist, the exemplar arts programs were only able to achieve their aims when the pursuit of excellence was shared by all involved and aligned with the overall purpose of the endeavor. The report suggests that quality in arts education should be judged against the degree to which it balances the teaching of artistic skills and technique with the students’ ability to express ideas and feelings. For example, although the quality of dance skills taught in a school class or performance is an important indicator of excellence, it should not be taken as the only criteria for success. Rather it should be balanced with other educational purposes, including the ability to make connections, build effective collaborative relationships, enhance aesthetic awareness, and promote the capacity to think creatively (p. 21). The report recommends that the pursuit of quality can only be achieved with continuous examination and open and equitable discussion of what constitutes quality and the ways that this may be achieved between all stakeholders (Seidel et al, 2009). This study seeks to build
upon this broader definition of quality and reframe its importance to partnerships between education and industry for the purpose of staging performing arts events.

**Arts Education Partnerships**

As part of a push towards quality arts education, contemporary educational practice has witnessed a growth in partnerships between schools and the arts sector, both at a national and international level. Anne Bamford asserts in a report for UNESCO, (2006, p. 86), that “quality arts education tends to be characterized by a strong partnership between the schools and the outside arts and community organisations”. However, tension exists around the subject of arts education partnerships between those that want the responsibility of arts education to be given to trained and ‘qualified’ teaching specialists possessing both arts knowledge and pedagogical practice to produce quality arts education, and the use of arts industry professionals in the arts (commonly referred to ‘teaching artists’) who is argued, provide the most authentic kind of arts experience within educational contexts (Booth, 2003). Furthermore, many schools use outside arts organisations to provide students with short term exposure in the form of ad hoc and token representation in the arts. However, many educationalists believe that short term residencies and arts exposure in this way is risky and should never replace sequenced and ongoing pedagogical programs delivered by qualified instructors (Hanley, 2003).

To underpin the challenges associated with arts education partnerships further, there is a lack of research that explores the experiences of the teachers and professionals who inhabit these relationships (Bamford, 2006). The lack of research available on arts education partnerships clearly reveals a gap between the perceived benefits of partnerships and the reality of creating and sustaining long term and mutually beneficial partnerships between education and the arts sector; a relationship that can be mutually beneficial yet remains underdeveloped. This is evident in the paucity of literature that surrounds arts education projects that are initiated from within schools by teachers of arts related subjects. It appears the challenge for arts education is to find a way forward that utilizes the strengths of both industry professional/artist groups complemented with well-planned and sequenced pedagogically based programs in order to create quality arts curriculum and/or events.

**The High School Musical**

The high school musical is a popular and inclusive event that has tangible benefits to students, teachers and the wider school community (Omasta, 2012). However, few studies touch on the importance of collaboration in a musical theatre production, and even less
provide insight into how these challenges might impact on contemporary context of arts education partnerships, especially those that take place in a professional venue. Consequently, this project aims to ‘fill part of the gap’ in this area by describing and exploring the experiences of a group of performing arts industry professionals and performing arts secondary school teachers as they negotiate partnerships for the purpose of staging a high school musical in a professional venue.

**Conceptual Framework**

This study is based on the framework (described as Figure 1) that represents the key concepts and the relationship between them during the staging of a high school musical in a professional venue. The experiences of partnerships presented in this study are set against a changing landscape for arts education in which a new vision of quality has emerged from the literature. An important part of this new concept of quality is the shared responsibility for arts education that exists between industry and education sectors. A key outcome of this study is to re-vision the roles and practices of both performing arts educators and industry professionals within this emerging landscape, and pioneer a dialogue that explores and articulates a shared vision (inherent within these partnerships) that is functional, respectful, inclusive and mutually beneficial.

![Figure 1: Framework of nested contexts and key concepts](image-url)
Theoretical Framework

In order to explore and understand the experiences of performing arts teachers and industry professionals in these wider and more varied educational contexts, I draw on educational philosopher, Maxine Greene’s seminal work which highlighted the challenges of partnerships in arts education (Greene, 2001). Greene argued that in order to understand the ways in which quality art partnerships are negotiated and implemented, we must first develop our understanding of individuals (rather than institutions) who inhabit these roles and partnership relationships (Greene, 2001).

I also draw on Anderson’s views (1981) on the identity crisis of the arts educator, in which she proposes that the role of artist and educator are not separate entities but rather exists as a praxis that requires “interdisciplinary fusion” (p. 45). Anderson warns arts educators against limiting themselves to a traditional teacher role, which she believes may risk professional, intellectual and creative stagnation. Furthermore, Anderson asserts that art educators should not be seen as artists who are unable to be successful professional artists, but rather as experts in creating quality arts learning experiences for students. As Anderson states, “Basically, the crisis is not one of professional identity as much as realizing the underlying implications of our profession” (1981, p. 56).

Contributing to the identity crisis of the arts educator are role classifications that are based on implicit assumptions of the traditional views of both teachers and artists (Anderson, 1981). For example, ‘teaching artist’ is a term commonly used in the literature from the United States to describe a professional ‘artist’ who also teaches in schools. Eric Booth (2003, p.11) defines teaching artists as “a practicing professional artist with the complementary skills and sensibilities of an educator, who engages people in learning experiences in, through, and about the arts.” However, what of the teacher who also has the complementary skills and sensibilities of an artist? And whose primary role as a teacher can be enhanced through the development of these skills and sensibilities towards a hybrid of the role such as those explored in the Artists Teacher Scheme (ATS) in the United Kingdom (Hall, 2010).

Role classifications that seek to define can also be problematic as they may inadvertently exclude others involved in the dynamic and fast changing landscape of arts education partnerships. Current research suggests that over time, mutually inclusive partnerships should create ‘permeable’ boundaries between industry professionals and classroom teachers that allows leakage between the two contexts and transcend traditional
limiting boundaries of role classifications (Bamford, 2006). Within these new boundaries—yet to be defined—those engaged within partnerships towards a common aesthetic/artistic endeavor can also be intentionally referred to as ‘artists’. This broader understanding of role can also go both ways, with those engaged in a common educational endeavor also being called ‘teacher/educator’.

Anderson’s views on identity and Greene’s recommendation on developing deeper understanding of the individuals who inhabit partnerships spaces are key to illuminating what effective arts education partnerships look like, and where the barriers that prevent this successful fusion between artist and educator exist. By presenting the experiences of participants engaged in arts education partnerships whilst staging a high school musical in a professional venue, this research adds to this emergent body of knowledge by giving a face to the individuals who inhabit these partnership spaces rather than the institutions to which they belong. Furthermore, by describing the experiences of partnerships that are initiated by a school and conducted within and industry venue, this study enhances our understanding of the role of teachers and industry professionals within the partnership paradigm and presents a new vision where the identity of teachers and industry professionals is expanded to include teacher, professional, technician, mentor, collaborator and artist. Thereby, this study presents the case for flexible definitions that serve to re-identify rather than classify, where the roles of artists and teacher are interchangeable and shared.

**Significance of Research**

This proposed research study is significant in three ways. First, despite the pervasive and historical presence of high school musicals in secondary schools, there is a lack of research on the relationship between arts industry and arts education in producing an aesthetically pleasing and pedagogically sound performing arts event. Consequently, this study aims to ‘fill the gap’ in this unexplored area by deepening the dialogue via reflexive methods with a group of school performing arts staff and industry professionals on how they negotiate partnerships for the purpose of producing a high school musical in a professional venue. The methodology used in this study promotes thoughtfulness because it provides a way to uncover the elements and often unconscious forces inherent within arts education partnerships that are subtle, dynamic and complex.

Second, by providing ‘rich’ descriptions of a group of secondary school performing arts staff and industry professional’s experiences in the staging of a high school musical, this
research deconstructs some of the complexities involved. A focus on the way participants negotiate multiple formal, informal, traditional and emerging roles within this partnership setting is explored. In doing so, this study provides a clearer picture of what can be expected from education and industry in a contemporary, collaborative landscape formed for the purpose of staging performing arts events. The descriptions of the participants’ lived experience of partnerships promote a deeper understanding of the essential qualities that characterize these relationships, including the enablers and constraints. For example, this research deepens the discussion of what constitutes a performing arts teacher and an industry professional working in partnerships contexts within schools, especially the praxis that exist between artist and educator.

Finally, a key aim of the research is to promote the use of a shared language in the development of mutually beneficial partnerships that are functional, productive and inclusive. These shared understandings help strengthen the professional esteem for secondary school performing arts educators and industry professionals by acknowledging the vital roles that the two groups play interchangeably at various stages in the partnership process.

Consequently, mutually beneficial partnerships between arts education and industry will enhance more collective endeavors towards quality arts education in the future. Furthermore, although this research is located within a specific educational context, it can be translated to other contexts in order to build understanding, awareness and promote tactfulness within a variety of arts/education partnerships. As a result, it is anticipated that these descriptions will be of relevance to the tertiary and industry education settings in the training and professional development of performing arts teachers and industry professionals who engage with education.

**Statement of Research Questions**

This research aims to better understand how arts education partnerships function, by first describing what these partnerships look like. This is achieved via in-depth interviews (with seven performing arts staff and industry professionals), to develop a deeper understanding of the ways in which these two groups (including myself as a participant/observer) engage, interact and collaborate during ten days of final rehearsals and performances of a high school musical in a professional venue.

The following research questions act as the lens through which this research is gathered, assimilated, and subsequently considered:
1. In what essential ways are partnerships experienced and negotiated for the purpose of staging a high school musical in a professional venue?
2. What are the enablers and constraints to effective arts partnerships between industry and education during the staging of a high school musical?
3. In what ways, and to whom, are these arts/education partnerships potentially beneficial?

**Key Concepts**

It is necessary to outline some definitions and understandings of key concepts that are used in this study. Berg (2009) for example, recommends researchers operationalize the concepts employed in their research by explicitly stating the intended meaning of the concepts to ensure congruency of understanding between the writer and the reader.

In relation to staging of a high school musical in a professional venue, the use of the term ‘role’ is often used to describe the part/s participants play towards the common endeavor. ‘Role’ has multiple purposes and dimensions within this site-specific context, and its use is central to a study that seeks to understand the ways that partnerships are negotiated between a school group and the staff of a professional venue in the staging of a high school musical. The use of the term role in this study is classified into four parts:

1. **Primary role** refers to the main occupation of the participants, e.g., drama teacher.
2. **Production role** refers to the specific role/s that participants take on in the staging of a high school musical, e.g., director, actor and costume designer.
3. **Traditional roles** may refer to the part in the partnerships context that participants have been accustomed to playing such as ‘teacher/ educator’ and/or ‘artist/professional’. The use of these role classifications is less formalized and are often implicit within the partnership context. As previously mentioned, the interchangeability of the terms ‘artists’ and ‘educator’ is central to the understanding of role, especially as they pertain to arts education partnerships.
4. **Emerging or changing roles** refer to new ways that participants within the study view themselves and others within a shared partnership context.

Second, ‘arts education partnerships’ is a phrase that is used to refer to partnerships between arts industry and arts education for the purpose of engaging secondary students in the arts. The majority of the literature presented in the literature review (Chapter Two) on the
subject refers to the broader field of art subjects taught within schools and includes the production arts (Visual Arts, Media, Industrial Arts, Design and Textiles) and the performing arts (Music, Drama and Dance). A high school musical commonly involves music, drama and dance in the performance of a single event. It may also involve the production arts; however, this is less common.

**Structure of Thesis**

In this chapter, I discussed the nature and context in which this study was set, including background information, significance, purpose of this study and key concepts to be considered. The research questions that guided this study were also explained. Chapter Two presents an in-depth review of the existing literature on inter-sectorial partnerships, especially those that exist between arts organisations and education bodies. The review presents literature on the phenomena of high school musicals as a context specific backdrop to which this research study on arts education partnerships is situated.

The method used for this study is presented in Chapter Three including an audit trail and rationale that guided my choices of research strategies and methods. Chapter Three also includes the data collection techniques, interview methods and data analysis as well as pertinent ethical considerations. Chapter Four presents a detailed description of the research findings that are presented as a 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships entitled *The Shared Space*. Finally, a detailed discussion of the implications of the research is set against the existing literature on arts education partnerships. In this chapter, are conclusions, implications and limitations of the study and recommendations for further research in the area.
CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review explores and critiques recent research relevant to this study in order to uncover what is, and what is not known in this research area (Natalier, 2010). In reviewing the literature, I have employed search strategies focusing on education journals, books and previous theses. Electronic education data-base searches included ERIC, A+ Education, Academic Onefile, APAFT (Informit), SAGE Journal online and Google Scholar. The search’s key words included ‘performing arts’, ‘arts education partnerships’, ‘teaching artist’, ‘creative practitioner’, ‘teacher preparedness’, ‘high school musical’, ‘quality arts events’ and ‘drama teacher identity’ and ‘roles’. Initial search results found limited articles specific to partnerships that occurred within the performing arts, so I broadened my database and inclusion criteria to include all arts related subjects. There was also limited empirical research studies conducted in Australia – so literature presented in this review includes studies conducted in the United States, United Kingdom and Europe.

The literature has been divided into two main areas: first, the broader landscape of the high school musical is explored. Interestingly, despite musicals being a popular choice in secondary education, there is a lack of available global research literature, especially on the reasons for and challenges associated with the staging a high school musical production. The way production roles have been traditionally negotiated within a secondary school context during the staging of a high school musical is explored against a backdrop of available research on the preparedness of performing arts teachers, including balancing the educational outcomes with the aesthetic quality of the production and how effective collaboration is the key to success. In addition, I critique the limited literature on how industry professionals engage within a high school musical context.

Second, follows a review and relevant examples of the most recent research on the benefits of arts education partnerships within an international, national and local context. This is followed by an investigation into some of the challenges of conducting arts education partnerships. Finally, I explore a more equitable vison for arts education partnerships that sees performing arts teachers and industry professionals sharing the responsibility of producing and delivering quality arts events.

Despite a growing body of knowledge on arts education partnerships within the literature, there is limited literature available from within an Australia context. Anne Bamford (2006) in her book The wow factor lamented this gap in the Australian context and
challenged education and arts researchers in this country to respond with multi-layered studies related to the arts in education, especially those related to shared partnerships between schools and the arts sector. In addition, I found limited research that explored arts education, especially research that is initiated from within schools.

Complicating the literature search further was the ambiguity that surrounds the use of the terms ‘artist’ and ‘teacher’. There is significant amount of debate in the literature that surrounds the use of the term ‘artist’ as it pertains to arts education partnerships (Anderson, 1981; Bamford, 2006; Burnaford, 2003). Limiting language that classifies industry professionals as the only ‘artists’ and classroom teachers as ‘teachers’ may do more harm than good and limit the possibility of a more equitable and shared understanding in the future (Burnaford, 2003). Furthermore, the industry participants in this study—staff at a professional venue—are not classified as artists but rather technicians and managers. Therefore, this literature review interchanges (where possible) the term ‘artist’ and replace it with the more inclusive and less limiting term of ‘arts industry professional’. The final part of this chapter summarizes the literature and integrates it into the premise on which this study is founded.

**The High School Musical**

The high school musical is a broad, complex and inclusive performing arts event that normally requires the integration of drama, dance and music into a single event (Davey, 2010). It is one of the most anticipated events in a school year (Sjoerdsma, 2004), and its use of large numbers of students—relative to other performing arts events makes it suited to high schools (Lee, 1983; Stokes, 2010). In a survey of school theatre by the Educational Theatre Association (EdTA) and Utah State University, 78% of schools from a sample of 1300 schools who produce plays, stage a (faculty directed) full length musical once per year (Omasta, 2012). This figure has risen considerably since 1991 when a similar survey by EdTA found that only 53% of responding schools produce musicals once per year (Seidel, 1991). The survey also found that although musical theatre has been traditionally classified as an extra-curricular activity, it is now offered as a formal curriculum course within 14% of the participating schools in the United States (Omasta, 2012).

Considering the popularity of musicals in American High Schools, it is surprising then to find relatively few books, dissertations, or research publications that discuss the challenge of staging a musical production at a high school level. Unfortunately, the lack of
research within an Australian educational context is more extreme, with no known published research found on the benefits and challenges of staging a high school musical. Furthermore, there is no known research that focuses on the opportunities present in staging a high school musical through a partnership engagement with performing arts industry. Consequently, this study is the first of its kind to bring these two strands of research together.

Most identified studies support the use of the high school musical as an educational activity with tangible benefits to students, teachers and the entire school community (Stokes, 2010). As early as 1958, Leist recommended using a musical in secondary school as an educational tool (which is not available in the traditional classroom) to teach students the value of group collaboration and self-discipline. The literature suggests an overwhelmingly positive assessment of the value of a high school musical to students (Oneglia, 1973; Sedoris, 1964; Stainton, 1990), especially as a tool for self-expression and creativity. From an educational standpoint, students who participate in high school musicals have reported increased self-confidence and social identity (Corby, 2008). In addition, the high school musical has also been found to be an effective way of increasing numbers in performing arts programs within schools because of the large numbers of students involved relative to other performance related high school events (Watkins, 2005).

Conversely, the lack of available research may be due to musicals not being seen as worthwhile educational activity because they are not made specifically for high schools (Howard, 1990). Phillips (2004), warned against the staging of musicals in high school because of the time involved and the inevitable demands on performing arts teachers that may result in an unbalanced curriculum. He said that educators are not ‘professional entertainers’ and as such the high school musical should only be used as an educational vehicle to impart knowledge and improve skills. Likewise, Williams (2003) warned against high school musical productions that can never meet professional standard, and those that attempt this risk losing sight of the educational processes involved over the demands of the artistic product. Grote (1981) also criticized the staging of musical theatre in high schools, asserting that it often occurs at the expense of other more culturally and educationally significant theatre. He also argued that students who were gifted at drama but could not sing and dance are unfairly excluded from high school musicals and that the same amount of investment should be made into producing a classical theatre piece. However, a study by Stainton (1990) asserts that the high school musical is a culturally significant activity and has a place in high schools.
Roles in a High School Musical

The staging of a musical is a broad, complex and time-consuming enterprise that requires the collaborative contribution of large amounts of performing arts staff, non-performing arts staff, students and volunteers to fill the many roles involved (Davey, 2010). Williams (2003), identifies nine formal leadership roles when staging a high school musical (see Figure 2).

Unlike the world of professional theatre, in which a specialized individual is assigned one leadership role each, performing arts faculty members often assume multiple and combined leadership roles (Robinson & Poole, 1990; Davey, 2010). However, this system has been found to be problematic because of the burden it places on ‘busy’ and inexperienced staff. Robinson and Poole (1990) suggested that those whose responsibility it is to produce and direct a musical should spread the roles evenly amongst other faculty and non-faculty members, students and volunteers. This view is supported by Stokes (2010) who suggests secondary school teachers involved in the direction of a performance should delegate their non-director roles to other members of the staff in order to give them more time engaging with students during rehearsal time.

Increasingly though, the task of sharing production roles via non-performing arts staff members in schools has become less frequent and the responsibility of the high school musical is increasingly considered the sole burden of the performing arts departments (music, drama and dance) (Davey, 2010). To combat this problem of taking on multiple production roles including roles in which performing teacher ‘lack the appropriate training’, it has been
recommended that School administrations outsource/employ (in a variety of roles that best suit their expertise) industry professionals to work with the performing arts departments (Davey, 2010). The inserted piece in the researcher’s diagram in Figure 3 represents the inclusion of the arts industry professional into the picture of those nested contexts that are involved in the staging of a high school musical.

![Figure 3: Participating groups in a high school musical production](image)

Unfortunately, studies that explored the potential of engaging with arts industry to stage musicals in high schools were rarely cited in the available literature. Rather studies have focused on the unpreparedness of performing arts staff and the ways this has impacted on the successful outcomes of the high school musical experience (Davey, 2010). Research that explores the potential benefits as well as the challenges of engaging with arts industry professionals in a high school musical production is required.

**Performing Arts Teachers’ Preparedness**

Teachers’ skillfulness in directing and producing a musical has been found to be a key factor in the high school musical’s overall success. Davey’s (2010) study of secondary school teachers’ preparedness in staging musicals found that the competency and commitment of the teacher-directors was the most important factor in the overall student quality assessments, both educationally and personally. He argues that “the potential impact and importance of the school musical in the lives of students and community members, the teacher-directors of the project should be experts in the preparation of student performers” (Davey, 2010, p.6). Furthermore, Janicki (1982) suggests the skills required in producing and directing a high school musical is essential for anyone who wants to pursue a career as a secondary performing arts teacher.
A study by Davey (2010) found that 68% of respondents reported a ‘learn as you go’ experience of preparedness, compared to 16% who had formal qualification in musical theatre directing and production. Robinson (1990) describes his own experiences of being a director/producer on a high school musical, starting with no experience to gaining more and more experience as you go suggesting that “…the knowledge gained through each effort improves efficiency and ability to develop a quality end product” (p.2).

The Educational Theatre Association (EdTA) survey (2012) illustrated in Figure 4 found that of all the roles surveyed, teachers felt most prepared in acting and directing with 50% and 53% respectively. In contrast, teachers felt less prepared in taking on design and technical elements associated with staging theatre productions. For example, only 10% of teachers surveyed felt well trained in lighting design and 8% in sound design. This finding is supported by Williams (2003) whose study of music teachers staging high school musicals reported a lack of preparation in directing non-musical components. In William’s study, music teachers reported taking on technical and design roles in addition to the combined role of Director (music and stage) / Producer and consequently, teachers’ effectiveness in all roles undertaken was significantly weakened due to the extreme workload and lack of specific training in unfamiliar roles (Williams, 2003).

**Chart 10:** “How well trained do you feel you are in each of the following areas (based on education and experience)?”

![Figure 4: EdTA Survey Chart on teachers’ preparedness in various roles related to School Theatre productions (Omasta, 2012, p.20)](image_url)
Not surprisingly, lack of teacher expertise and training is one of the leading causes as to why high school musicals do not succeed (Janicki, 1982; Van Houten, 1999; Davey 2010). These studies recommend that teachers should be more specifically and formally trained in the skills required to stage musical theatre productions. However, indiscriminate training in technical and design roles that require very specific skill sets is not deemed as an effective method of education (Snider, 1995).

**Quality Outcomes: Educational? Aesthetic? or Both?**

The lack of preparedness of teachers in staging a high school musical has significant implications towards the overall effectiveness of the aesthetic production quality and the educational outcomes for students. This was identified in a 1970 study conducted by Fields who recognized the challenge of balancing the aesthetic demands whilst making a high school musical educationally engaging for students (Fields, 1970) as shown in the researcher’s diagram in Figure 5.

![Balancing educational and artistic goal in a high school musical](image)

*Figure 5: Balancing educational and artistic goal in a high school musical*

Although there is some conjecture that surrounds the best way to achieve this harmony between the aesthetic standards and educational outcomes in a high school musical, most literature on the subject concurs that the need for increased aesthetic standards is paramount to making the student experience educationally effective (Hobgood, 1991; Van Houten, 1999). A teacher who participated in Van Houten’s study (1999), detested the label ‘high school musical’ because of the low-quality tag that accompanied it, suggesting that if his students were happy with the professional quality of the end product then it made the
experience more meaningful for them. In his words: “we are not on a high school level. We are a high school performing on a professional level and that’s what makes it so spectacular” (p. 370). The well-worn phrase ‘oh it’s just a high school musical’ may be a well deserving evaluation of many school productions but fails to recognize those productions in schools that near professional quality (Van Houten, 1999).

Under proper conditions, adolescents do have the capability to present high quality renditions of certain Broadway shows. In the right setting, the presentation of a Broadway Musical can be an affirming and educationally enriching activity for High School students. (p.423)

Alternatively, high school musicals that focus exclusively on educational outcomes (such as large student numbers) at the expense of aesthetic production values can result in poor standards, that in turn may result in a loss of student numbers and interest in performing arts related subjects in future years.

Recent research has galvanized the quality vs pedagogical debate in arts education. The work of Anne Bamford (2006) in particular surmised that the relationship between educational and aesthetic outcomes are inextricably interwoven into the overall quality of arts-related experiences in education. If we apply Bamford’s concept of quality to the high school musical experience, it follows that the educational benefits of staging musicals are directly related to the overall production quality (Van Houten, 1999; Kenrick, 2010). However, Bamford’s definition of quality also includes process orientated components such as learning journeys and pathways and suggests that these factors may be at odds in a high school musical production that mainly focuses on the aesthetic quality of the final product. Further study is required to recognize the relationship between aesthetic standards and academic outcomes during the staging of a high school musical, whilst also describing how this balance can be achieved ‘realistically’ within a secondary school context.

**Collaborations are Key**

One way of striking the balance between aesthetic quality and educational outcomes has been found in the development of mutually beneficial partnerships/collaborations. In a study by Davey (2010), 46% of respondents found that collaboration among faculty members and community volunteers was the key element in the level of success in staging a musical. Furthermore, if collaborative relationships are positive a strong feeling of community and camaraderie occurs between students, parents, and teachers. However, this too has been found to be one of the most challenging aspects confronting schools who stage musical
productions (Sample, 1964; Fields, 1971; Davey, 2010), with negative experiences of collaborations being listed as the main reason why high school musical productions do not succeed (Davey, 2010). Failed collaborations of this kind inhibit the quality of the arts experience and in turn can do more harm than good by restricting creativity, imagination and expressive development in students (Bamford, 2006).

Few studies touch on the importance of collaboration in a musical theatre production, and even less provide insight into how these challenges impact on contemporary context of arts education partnerships, especially those that take place in a professional venue. Further study is needed on collaboration in musical theatre: the effects of collaborative efforts and tools for accomplishing the best collaborative working relationships (Davey, 2010).

**The Missing Piece: Arts Industry Professionals**

In striving to improve the overall quality of the musical theatre experience, schools have increasingly sought the advice and skills of industry professionals to fill vital roles in musical theatre productions. In 1964, Sample argued that staging a musical within a school context requires the same amount of technical skills as used by a professional director, musical director, choreographer, designers and technical personnel and that only after careful consideration should staging of a musical occur in high schools. Grote (1986) extends this view asserting that a school must be equipped with all the necessary resources to undertake a musical and if it does not then it should not be undertaken in the first place. Fields (1970) suggests that high school teachers who are charged with staging a musical should connect and seek advice from the world of professional theatre, especially technical and design production.

As early as 1950, professional musicians have reported to have been included as part of the high school musical orchestra if material was beyond the ability of the students who participated (Sample, 1964). Van Houten (1999) sighted several case study examples in which professional musicians made up the entire orchestra; “There were 26 players in the orchestra, all hired musicians except for one student” (p. 350). Another case study found that a high school musical director who was lauded for the outstanding quality of his productions had sought advice of local professionals engaged in musical theatre and used professionally designed sets and up to date sound and lighting systems. However, Van Houten (1999) concluded that although the quality of this production was significantly higher, so was the budget. In 2003, a study undertaken in Ontario, Canada by Williams focused on the experience of students in a high school musical staged in a professional venue. The study
found the experience of the students was enhanced because industry technical professionals and pit musicians worked on the show, which allowed the two high school teachers involved to focus exclusively on choreography and stage direction resulting in a high-quality musical.

Field’s (1970) recommendation to seek out the advice of the professional theatre world, despite these sporadic accounts and following an extensive search, has remained unclaimed. Studies that focus on the use of arts industry specialists in musical theatre as a possible way of increasing the standard and overall quality of a high school musical production is largely missing from the literature. The reasons for this is not evident, but one possible explanation alluded to by Van Houten (1999), is that the use of industry professionals is viewed as being an expensive option, making it out of reach for many schools that cannot afford to hire professional designers and technicians.

The literature review on the challenges associated with staging a high school musical presents the prospect of these industry engagements as having the potential to: 1) increase the quality of musical productions; 2) provide professional development, and 3) ‘release the burden’ on teachers who may be overcome with the pressures of artistic product at the sacrifice of the learning process. In order to explore this potential and the challenges that come with it further, we now turn our attention to the literature that exists on the broader landscape of arts education partnerships.

**Arts Education Partnerships**

Arts education partnerships are defined as relationships that aim to strengthen schools and communities by engaging students and developing their capabilities in the arts (Carlisle, 2011). These partnerships bring additional perspectives, resources and support in both delivery of an engaging arts curriculum to students and enhancing the quality of arts events (Caterall & Waldorf, 1999).

International research over the last decade has acknowledged the value in partnerships between schools and the arts sector (Hall, Thomson and Russell, 2007). Arts education partnerships are not only changing the way teachers of art related subjects experience collaborations, but also who they are collaborating with (Bamford, 2006). Cultural and higher education institutions in particular have trumpeted the virtues of arts education partnerships, as part of an emerging global trend that sees both schools and arts industry rethinking traditional pedagogical practices (Burnaford, 2007). For example, *A Road Map for Arts Education* report commissioned by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural
Organization (UNESCO) in 2006 recommended that synergies between the arts and educational sectors provide opportunities for creative learning in the arts through the establishment of partnerships at a ministerial, school and teacher level. However, the report acknowledges that such undertakings were not easy to accomplish, especially because of the cultural differences between educational and cultural sectors.

In Australia, strengthening the connection between arts and education has been prioritised since 2005 with the release of The National Education and the Arts Statement. The statement addresses the importance and benefits of arts partnerships to the community stating:

Community-based arts and education partnerships build social cohesion, respect, community spirit and active local citizenship … increase community awareness of educational issues and can help mobilise and draw on communities’ local arts and cultural resources (Cultural Ministers Council & MCEETYA, 2005).

However, in a search of the literature, I found only a small number of empirical studies on arts education partnerships at both a national and international level. Most of the research presented is derived from short term evaluations rather than longitudinal studies that showed how partnerships grow over a longer period (Ewing, 2011).

**Benefits of Arts Education Partnerships**

Most studies found that arts education partnerships within schools provide a powerful means to forge bonds between parents, schools and communities. In addition, they strengthen arts education infrastructure, benefit student development and help build a web of sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships (UNESCO, 2006; Carlisle, 2011). At their core, however, arts education partnerships provide an opportunity to explore the possibilities of collaboration between school and community with the aim of enriching learning in the arts for the young (Burnaford, 2001).

Research demonstrates that student development is enhanced through arts education partnerships (Caterall & Waldorf, 1999), including the development of creative and collaborative capacities in children (Speiss & Lynch, 2008), and the ability to move students from being inactive participants to creative learners (Carlisle 2011). Arts education partnerships can also give students a greater presence and voice within their own communities and can improve community perceptions of the young (Donelan et al., 2009).
Effective partnerships also benefit classroom teachers by providing additional resources and perspectives that can enhance arts-related teaching methods. Catterall and Waldorf (1999) found that teachers who engage in arts partnerships become reenergized and are more likely to take risks in the classroom. In addition, teachers who have the ability to collaborate—both interdepartmentally and with the broader arts environment—have been found to enhance the development of more innovative curriculum design (Corbett et al, 2001). These benefits go both ways, as arts industry professionals are benefited by improving their pedagogical knowledge and capabilities in co-collaboration with school teachers (Carlisle, 2011).

**Types of Arts Education Partnerships**

Remer (1996) in her book *Beyond Enrichment: building effective arts partnerships with schools and their communities* defines two types of arts education partnerships; administrative partnerships that deal with “program design, structure, and operation of a relationship” (p. 114) and instructional partnerships that deal with “the design, organisation, context and methodology of the curriculum” (p. 114).

A joint report by Arts Victoria and the Department of Education (2009) identified two clear contexts where arts education partnerships may occur:

1. **Artists in Schools:** Artists (typically not certified) and/or arts organisations work in collaboration with teachers of arts based subjects (Booth, 2003) within the school environment. The engagements between schools and the arts sector are well known and have occurred for as long as arts have been taught within schools dating back to the late twentieth century where “artists-in-residence programs were introduced into schools as a way to foster community interest in aesthetic inquiry and to provide professional models for children.” (Bamford, 2006, p. 35).

2. **Arts in the Community:** In this partnership context, students experience and or make art in environments outside of the school that support creative and collaborative thinking (Carlisle, 2011). These types of partnerships include visits to cultural institutions such as museums, galleries, theatres and festivals. They provide students and teachers with the opportunity to engage in arts related experiences beyond the confines of the school environment and they are most beneficial when community, school and cultural organisations align their purposes within a reciprocal and shared model of sustainable development (Carlisle, 2011).
Examples of Arts Education Partnerships

The following are examples of the various types of local, national and international arts education partnerships. Examples include artists in residency, community based and project based partnerships and professional development.

In 1999, the United Kingdom’s Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) set up Creative Partnerships to give young people in disadvantaged areas the opportunity to develop their creativity and ambition by building partnerships between schools and creative individuals, businesses and organisations (Belfiore, 2002). The Connect partnerships evolved out of the Creative Partnerships project and was set up and took place at the Guild Hall School of Music and Drama in London. The project aims to provide project based approaches in music making and performance in partnership with various East London public schools (Carslile 2011).

In Canada, an ArtsSmarts (n.d.) initiative was developed to improve the lives and learning capacity of Canadian children by injecting arts into academic programs. ArtsSmarts accepts projects applications from schools and works with them (including payment of 70% of the cost of the program) to realize the project with the use of approved ArtsSmarts artists. The Artist Teacher Scheme (Hall, 2009) is an expanding program of continuing professional development courses between galleries or museums and university schools of fine art and designed to enable teachers to regain or develop their personal practice as artists in the context of the contemporary visual arts.

At a local level, State Governments have built upon an Australian initiative announced in 2008, known as the Creative Education Partnerships: Artists in Residence (AIR) Initiative with numerous formalized partnerships such as ArtsEdge in Western Australia and the Victorian Artists in Schools program that were created to initiate, develop and foster partnerships between education and the arts. The Artists in Schools program (n.d.) has provided opportunities for ‘professional artists’ to work within primary and secondary school in Victoria since 1981. It involves schools, teachers, students and artists working together in a range of learning contexts and aims to support quality student learning, enrich teaching practice, promote cultural vibrancy and increase the exposure of arts in schools.

A similar program, ArtsEdge in Western Australia (n.d.) has been in operation since 2009. ArtsEdge is a strategic alliance run between the Department of Culture and the Arts and the Department of Education that aims to facilitate partnerships between the arts, cultural and education sector. The Artist in Residencies program (AIR) is a program arm of ArtsEdge that provides funding for artists in residencies programs with the aim of delivering quality
arts education to Western Australian schools.

**The Challenge of Arts Education Partnerships**

One of the main aims of this research study is to identify the enablers and constraints of effective and mutually beneficial arts education partnerships. The examples provide a snapshot of arts industry and education partnerships at a national and international level. However, what is less well known is the purpose and complexities of these partnerships and the impact they have on schools, especially teachers of arts related subjects. Galton (2008, p. 1) remarks, “there has probably always been a tradition of having artists come into schools to work with children [but] there is little available evidence of the effect that such interventions have on schools”. The problem may be inherent in the challenge of identifying and describing arts education partnerships, partly because the research available is highly contextual and partly because of the multifaceted nature of the partnerships themselves (Carlisle, 2011).

**Roles and Identity in Arts Education Partnerships**

Traditionally, education and arts industry practice have existed in two separate silos and as a result have viewed one another as the ‘other’ (Ball & Cohen, 1999). Shreeve (2009, p. 152) states that the “the worlds of art and schooling are different cultural configurations and this requires identity work”. The emergence of industry professionals within an educational context brings with it many complicating factors relating to the shifting professional identity of both arts industry professional and classroom teachers as they negotiate and re-negotiate traditional roles and practices to accommodate the ‘other’ in partnership contexts. There is both explicit and implicit assumptions in much of the research in arts education partnerships, whereby industry professionals hold the mantle of the ‘arts expert’. Anderson (1981) proposes that these identity classifications of the classroom teacher into ‘teacher/ authoritarian’ and industry professional into ‘arts expert’ initiated through a partnership is limiting:

The art teacher must be competent not only in technical skills required to create art, but also in technical skills to induce learning… Basically, the crisis is not one of professional identity as much as realizing the underlining implications of our profession (p. 46).

This poses the question, what if the classroom teacher is also an artist, then what is their role when an industry artist visits their classroom or when the school visits an industry space?

In Australia, a study by Hogan, S. and Readman, K (2006) discussed expectations and
actions arising from school productions in the context of a theatre festivals using professional theatre venues called XL-D (2001) and XL-D Express (2003). The partnership grew in the mid 1990’s “from the desire of drama teachers to see students’ creative work valued by receiving the same level of resources as other professional performance groups” (p. 49). The structure of XL-D and XL-D Express, attempted to provide opportunities for creative interactions and co-artistry between drama teacher, young people and artist. And by identifying the strengths and tensions of each project, a new model called ‘School-Initiated Youth Performance’ was proposed.

**School-Initiated Youth Performance:** original dramatic work grounded in an aesthetic learning framework, devised and presented by young people working in schools as co-artists with professional artists and teacher-artists and performed in a public space (p.48).

The strengths and challenges associated with the projects revealed some common tensions surrounding process and product, the positioning of student, teacher and artist and issues of ownership. Some teachers felt shut out of the creative process and were relegated to supervision, roles while others had a more positive experience and valued working with artists as “legitimate contributors” (p. 52). Furthermore, the opportunity of working in a mainstream venue was viewed as a significant highlight for 80% of 120 participants returning surveys.

The possible reasons for these underlining tensions between performing arts specialists and teachers within an Australian context are made explicitly clear in a study of partnerships in France by Winston (1998) that explores the relationship between professional actors who are brought into schools to work alongside classroom teachers known as the *partenariat*. In France, the dominant ideology argues that the teaching of drama in schools must have at its core the artistry of professional practice (from artist) combined with the solidity of theoretical and pedagogical skills (from teacher). This French model acknowledges that artist and teacher not only have two different roles in the partnerships but belong to two different systems of thought, “one creative and exploratory, the other institutionalized and authoritarian” (Winston 1998, p. 47). The classroom teachers and actors involved in this model expressed an appreciation for the partnerships – the teachers viewed it as a professional development opportunity to learn from the actors and the actors were rewarded with witnessing the change in the students that occurred as a result of the learning in the lessons.
However, the French model does pose some questions regarding the training of classroom teachers and the limitations that this prescriptive role classification brings. For example, how does the classroom teacher respond when confronted with a model that considers her only partially capable of teaching a subject? This perspective poses some important questions worthy of further consideration, particularly against a backdrop of emerging roles in an Australian context (such as the challenges encountered in XL-D and XL-D Express) of performing arts education staff and industry professionals within the socio-cultural context (industry and education) of partnerships.

The creative arts practitioner approach was described as ‘collaborative’ and emphasised students as co-workers and co-learners in the learning process. A study by Galton (2008) into three creative partnership projects in the UK found that the aims of the creative arts practitioner and classroom teacher were at odds with each other. In contrast, classroom teachers were observed as concerned with traditional classroom practices and unequal power relationships with students. Galton also observed that teachers were concerned with curriculum restraint, and consequently less likely to take risks and engage in lengthy discussion, unlike the creative practitioner who was considered an educational risk taker. Furthermore, a study by Easton (2003) into the benefits and shortcomings of partnerships between classroom teacher and visiting artists revealed a lack of clarity regarding the role of the teacher when in the presence of a visiting artist. Easton also concluded that issues of trust need to be addressed and recommended more time be spent in open communication between industry professionals and teachers including planning, management and reflection. The studies presented display a caveat between the perceived roles of teacher and industry practitioners in arts education partnerships contexts.

**Arts Education Partnerships: Mutually Inclusive or Exclusive?**

As reported in the literature, for arts education partnerships to be successful, the planning and implementation of policy needs to be shared with all the stakeholders, especially those on the ‘front lines’ of secondary educational arts practice, the classroom teacher (Bamford, 2006). Successful partnerships are determined by the degree to which they are collective in nature. Furthermore, teachers and industry professionals need to possess insight into the expertise and cultural configurations of the ‘other’ and share concern for the learning of students (UNESCO, 2006).

Unfortunately, the majority of the research into arts education partnerships focuses on artists visiting schools, and often neglects to consider schools that venture out into arts
industry spaces. This is evident in the arts education research literature that focuses on the arts organisation as driver and implementer of the partnership practice. Hanley (2003) bemoaned this unequivocal trend in the literature and implied that arts partnerships may be more about the employment of artists than the education of students, with schools tending only to act as a temporary host – meeting the needs of arts organisations who view education as little more than an opportunity to get more ‘bums on seats’ or demonstrate their effectiveness to funding bodies. Alternatively, Nicholson (2011) argues that this view of industry organisations as acting entirely from self-interest is a cynical one. Rather she reports that there has been a paradigm shift in cultural institutions who have “inherited the political spirit of the TIE (Theatre in Education) movement” (p. 208) and participation and learning is now taking a central role.

The emerging global trend towards partnerships in education creates a new context in which the development of a functional language is implicit. But what will this new language look like? More importantly, in what ways do the attitudes that each partner brings into this new situation act as an enabler and/or constraint towards the creation of a shared language that is functional, respectful, productive and above all inclusive? In her paper, Language Matters, Gail Burnaford suggests that “in order to develop authentic communication between arts expert and teacher it is vital that each participant works out who the ‘other’ is” (2003, p. 169). Therefore, in seeking to understand the ways in which arts partnerships are negotiated and implemented, we must also develop our understanding of the ‘individuals’ who inhabit these relationships and the roles they fulfill (Greene, 2001).

Bamford (2006) argues that it is crucial that partnership projects should have a shared responsibility and focus and should involve permeable boundaries between arts organisations and schools in the planning and implementation of ‘quality’ arts related education. As Burnaford (2001, p. 2) points out, “If partnerships are to fulfill their purpose in contributing to sustainable and research based arts education, they need to be truly collective and collaborative in nature.” A key to achieving a shared understanding between education and arts industry is the time it takes to form sustainable partnerships which Bamford (2006) suggest should be upward of two years. It has been found that short term or tokenistic partnerships do not hold the same value in overcoming many of the obstacles that arts partnerships present, especially those that pertain to issues of identity that emerge from the re-negotiation of roles and practices (Burnaford, 2003). Arts education partnerships that occur over short term or ad hock or in a ‘drop-in’ basis is not considered to have the same value as longer term, sustained and equitable partnerships. Hanley (2003) argues that short
For arts education partnerships to be effective then they must be sustained and continuous over a long period of time.

An example of a successful long–term partnership is the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (n.d.) a not-for-profit organisation that is committed to long term partnerships in public schools in the Chicago area (in 2015/2016 this occurred in more than 80 Chicago schools). Instead of short-term programs or one-off workshops, partnerships designed by Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) focus on long term projects between teachers and teaching artists in classrooms. As part of this initiative, CAPE developed the concept of ‘deep teams’ that saw participants working on the same or similar projects over a period of at least four years. During that time, the participants learnt to grow in understanding of each other and develop a common language. Burnaford (2001) found that partnerships that occurred over longer periods improved teaching and learning and consequently the authenticity of the experience was enhanced for students. CAPE and the development of ‘deep teams’ provides a significant contribution to the field of research that examines the impact that longer and sustained periods of partnerships have on their effectiveness.

**Quality Arts Education Partnerships: A New Vision**

In the last ten years, a new vision for quality arts partnerships has emerged that involves schools, arts organisations and the local community who share the responsibility for the delivery of programs and the co-creation of quality arts related events (Bamford, 2006). For example, in 2014, the National Arts Education Association (U.S.A) organized twelve national arts and education organisations to release the *Arts Education for America’s Students: A Shared Endeavor* (see figure 6), in order to rebalance inequity that exists in arts education. The model calls for mutual responsibility in arts education through partnerships between certified arts educators, non-community arts providers, and certified non-arts educators.
Arts Education for America’s Students: A Shared Endeavor recognises the right of every child to access quality arts education and calls on public policy leaders in the United States to utilise the expertise of certified arts providers, certified non-arts educators and certified arts educators in providing a quality arts education to all students. It specifically promises to encourage these groups to act together in the improvement of learning instruction and practices.

The collective commitment to a quality arts education for all students such as that made in Arts Education for America’s Students: A Shared Endeavor is a promising first step. However, for this quality in arts education to be to be achievable, then it must also be planned and measurable against a recognized set of standards which, Bamford (2010) argues should be shared amongst key school, community and arts industry stakeholders. Furthermore, she asserts that the determinants of quality should be measured by the quality of the experience for those involved; students, arts teachers within schools and the industry professionals engaged in partnerships. In addition, a mix of the artistic merit or aesthetic beauty of the
project and the worth or usefulness of the experience within an educational context must also be considered.

In assessing the effectiveness of arts education partnership practices, there has been a move away from ‘expert orientated’ practices of evaluation (Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, 2004), towards more ‘participant orientated’ approaches such as documentation and action research (Burnaford, Brown & Doherty, 2007). Documentation involves going public with the work via platforms including websites, public space exhibitions and performances. The benefits of documentation approaches are manifold because in bringing the work out into the public it invites the industry professional and classroom teacher into an ongoing exploration of their practice rather than an isolated and/or discreet activity (Burnaford et al., 2007). Additionally, action research is recommended for assessing the effectiveness of partnerships in which classroom teachers, industry professional, arts, community and education organisation collaborate in the analysis of their practice by posing questions, collecting and analysing data in order to access rich understanding of each other and their partnership contexts (Burnaford et al., 2007).

For effective partnerships to occur we must first recognize our own separateness and strive to understand the ‘other’ (Burnaford, 2003). However, as demonstrated in the literature, this is a challenge, especially for education groups who have traditionally sat within a rigid and separate context (Ball & Cohen, 1999). This poses the question: how do arts departments within schools fit into partnership initiatives and perhaps more importantly, where is the evidence of partnerships that are initiated from within schools? As Stenhouse (1975) asserts, it is not enough for schools to be studied in order to be understood, deeper understandings must be initiated and explored from within.

In the US, this shift has started with an emerging culture of evidence that suggests an onus on arts educators to address this imbalance and fill the void in art education research (Burnaford, 2007). But where do arts educators begin and what will this new research conversation look like? Gibson and Anderson (2008, p. 111) suggest that one way to commence is through the proactive and strategic establishment of partnerships with key arts stakeholder and community organisation and to “begin the process of building a solid research base that will ultimately produce major policy and practice change”.

As stated previously, the challenge of better understanding arts education partnerships is inhibited in part because they are participatory-based and context-specific, and as such, provide a unique challenge to the researcher who is attempting to capture the complexities of this uniqueness whilst comparing findings from elsewhere in the field (Ewing, 2011). For too
long, outreach programs in the arts have been something that organisations do to schools (Burnaford, 2001). In order to maximize the benefits of partnerships in mutually beneficial ways, education alliances should be predicated on a symbiotic relationship in which both parties (industry and education) share the responsibility for arts education via permeable boundaries (Bamford, 2006).

Summary of Literature Review

In this chapter, I have presented the available literature that surrounds the challenges in staging a high school musical by first describing the broad and complex processes involved for teachers of performing arts who are often filling multiple production roles despite the best efforts of non-performing arts teachers and community volunteers. The performing arts teachers level of preparedness to take on multiple and often unfamiliar production roles was acknowledged as vital to the success of musical productions.

The challenge of balancing the artistic with the pedagogical aims of staging musical theatre in high schools was also addressed and found that the task of balancing these aims was a difficult concord to achieve for teacher director/producers. Successful collaborations were found to be another significant challenge for the teacher director/producers and key to the musical’s overall success. Finally, the potential of using industry professionals to fill production roles – although a recommendation from early on in the literature was found to be unrealised except for infrequent references in a comprehensive search of available research on the subject.

In part two of the Literature Review it was widely acknowledged that arts education partnerships are an effective means to forge bonds between schools, arts organisations and communities and are found to be beneficial in developing cultural capacities within students. However, it was also acknowledged that arts education partnerships were difficult to describe because of the different types of partnership and their highly contextual nature. Also, in assessing some of the enablers and constraints to effective partnerships it was found that the worlds of educator and industry professional were different cultural configurations and this required identity work. Consequently, there was some concern expressed in the literature over what was perceived as an unequal relationship between classroom teacher and arts practitioner.

Studies suggested that these issues need to be addressed for partnership to be truly collective in the future. Consequently, a new vision that is emerging within the literature
endorses arts education partnership in which the design and implementation is a shared practice between community, schools and arts organisation. This includes a recommendation that teachers of art related subjects initiate partnerships from within schools and to use these experiences as the basis for research into partnership practice via methods including documentation and action research.

The study of partnership within the context of staging a high school musical within a professional venue is the first known of its kind, and provide a much needed ‘injection’ into the research conversation surrounding both strands of research presented in this Literature Review. The following chapter presents the methodology used in this study of partnerships including the research methods employed.
CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In order to situate the research in a methodological framework, this chapter describes the theoretical and procedural decision trail that I took throughout the evolution of the study, providing a rationale that guided my choices of research strategies and methods. This includes a comprehensive discussion of how I critically situated myself (as researcher and co-participant) within the study whilst maintaining the overall trustworthiness of the findings (Shenton, 2004).

Research Focus: The Experience of Partnerships

This research has grown out of a desire to deepen my understanding of the subtle yet powerful sociocultural dynamics that influence arts education partnerships. As an emergent social researcher, I wanted to understand why two different groups (arts educators who seek to enhance the quality in student’s arts learning experiences and arts industry professionals who play a supportive educational role) act the way they do when involved in partnership contexts. I also wanted to reveal some of the essential qualities inherently involved in these relationships for the purpose of unlocking their potential to further enhance quality in arts education in the future.

In achieving this aim, I needed to find a robust way of gathering, interpreting and equally representing the experiences of two distinct groups (education and industry) engaged in partnership during the staging of a high school musical in a professional venue. I was driven to uncover (via the sharing of these experiences) what the barriers were that inhibited the potential of these relationships to function effectively in an industry space. Likewise, I was similarly intrigued with factors that enabled these partnerships contexts.

Throughout the research process, I was also aware of my own biography and previous professional experiences as a drama teacher attempting to function effectively whilst engaged in partnerships with members of the performing arts industry. Consequently, I knew that I had to find a methodology that also represented these partnership experiences in a trustworthy manner.
My Standpoint

My standpoint is crucial in defining the ways that the aims in this research study were achieved because my world view and philosophical orientation not only influenced the answers I sought but as Walters (2010) surmises it also influences “the way we go about seeking those answers and the interpretations we make” (p. 13).

This paradigmatic framing is important because as an emerging researcher, I was cautious about possible assumptions being made about who was being investigated (the participants), what was being investigated (experiences of partnerships), and who was doing the investigating (the researcher) as well as the conceptual tools and strategies that were being employed to analyze and interpret the data (Davies & Gannon, 2003). Consequently, I wanted to engage with the research material in order to illuminate the sociocultural factors that drive these experiences of partnerships whilst also being critical and transparent in the way I went about achieving this aim.

My personal worldview does not fit neatly into a specific philosophical orientation, however, largely due to my professional background in theatre, I believe my understanding of the world strongly aligns with the views of a social constructivist. Social constructivists seek understanding through the subjective meanings of experiences by valuing the complexities of human lives (Creswell, 2006). They also acknowledge multiple socially-constructed realities that are formed through interactions with others.

Social constructionists and the research methodologies they employ do not seek one universal or objective truth but rather value the subjective nature of human experience (including the researchers) with the aim of shedding light on the complexities, dynamics and subtleties at work during the interactions of social phenomena (Creswell, 2006). This was important to a study that aimed to interpret and represent the experience of partnerships from a number of participants (including myself) and considered alongside an awareness of how the meanings ascribed to those experiences are constructed.

Qualitative Methodology

Congruent with a social constructionist worldview, a qualitative approach was used in order to locate, analyze and represent the meanings that selected members of two culturally configured groups (education and industry) place on partnerships during the staging of a high school musical. There were three common characteristics of a qualitative research design that aligned with the nature and purpose of this study:
First, a qualitative research study collects data within a natural social setting where the researcher typically gets ‘up close’ with people – often over a period of time (Creswell, 2006). This prompted me to gather data over ten days during the final stages of rehearsals and performances of the school’s tenure in a professional theatre venue. Furthermore, the participants’ rich past experiences (six years) with the same event provided an opportunity for data that better illuminated many of the subtle forces (that may not have been immediately visible at first glance or over a shorter time frame) at work in these relationships.

Second, qualitative researchers (who situate themselves at the center of the research process) use high levels of self-reflection, often abandoning claims of complete objectivity (Ellingson, 2009). Being a reflective researcher was crucial in this study because my current involvement with the specific musical (coupled with my professional history) had the potential of contaminating the data with researcher bias (Berger, 2015) if left unchecked. Consequently, I realised that for this research study to be trustworthy—a marker of quality—it was crucial to find a way of interweaving my own experiences and views into the research process in a way that was conscious and critical. By adopting a reflexive eye, my previous experiences around these types of partnerships could be elucidated whilst simultaneously strengthening the credibility of the research design (Berger, 2015).

Third, a qualitative researcher should focus on meaning over measurement (Holloway, 2011), and must be able to present the findings in a way that evokes the richness inherent within the participants’ experiences. A strong qualitative research design is one that provides the researcher with rich data that is nested in a real-life context or what van Manen (1995) describes as “concrete experience”. As a result, the data gathered has more potential for thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) that appear real and therefore have greater impact upon the reader. In short – qualitative researchers must be able to tell a good story and engage the reader’s attention in a way that they too can re-experience the social phenomena as vivid and immediate.

The Search for the ‘Meaningful’

In order to elucidate the meaningful from the participants’ experiences, I turned to phenomenology. This qualitative research methodology invited me to present the findings in a way that the reader can re-experience the ‘essential’ within the participants’ experiences of partnerships. As van Manen (1997) describes:
The aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual form of its essence – in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful (p. 36)

The process of engaging the reader in this way started by placing myself as researcher and co-participant at the center of the life world (van Manen, 1997) – the high school musical in a professional venue. This process of immersion was articulated by van Manen (1997):

The point of phenomenological research is to ‘borrow’ other people’s experiences and their reflections on their experiences in order to better able to come to an understanding of the deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of human experience in the context of the whole human experience” (p. 62)

Therefore, my intention was to capture the participants’ ‘lived thoroughness’ of partnerships whilst staging a high school musical as it was happening. These experiences were then ‘frozen fresh’ and transported through the research writing process into a reinterpretation of the essence of the experience rather than a factual retelling of it.

This is the seventh time that I have taken part in my role as director and producer of a high school musical for my current employer at the same professional venue. However, it will be the first time that I will be viewing these interactions and experiences through the lens of social researcher. My familiarity with the specific context is a complicating factor that was a major consideration in the research design of this study. Therefore, in order to counteract my own familiarity and participation, I engaged in a process of phenomenological reflection through writing. This was not an easy process because as van Manen (1997) articulates phenomenological reflection requires the researcher to “confront ourselves with what we know” (p. 129). In my case, this included seventeen years of working as a drama teacher and attempting to function effectively whilst engaged in arts industry partnerships (often in industry spaces). These experiences had ‘built up’ in me over this time, and remained (from a reflexive point of view) relatively unchecked. In this study, I was attempting to unlock them, by placing myself under the reflexive spotlight.

Placing Myself at the Centre of the Research Process

The challenge of finding a way to ‘tap’ into these rich personal experiences and incorporate them into the research process drew me towards autoethnography. Ellis and Bochner (2000) describe autoethnography as a contemporary qualitative research methodology (an autobiographical genre) that acknowledges the researcher and the subject of the research (who are
usually the same person) and therefore requires “multiple layers of consciousness and research reflexivity that connects the personal and the cultural” (p. 739).

Autoethnographers makes connections between the names and labels that we ascribe to ourselves and other in these partnerships contexts and the potential they have to both include and exclude (Ellis et al, 2011). The is articulated well by Denzin:

A person is a cultural creation. Every culture, for example, has names for different types of persons: male, female, husband, wife, daughter, son, professor, student, and so forth. These names are attached to persons. Persons build biographies and identities around the experiences associated with these names (e.g., old man, young man, divorced woman, only daughter, only son). (Denzin, 2013, p.43)

Therefore, developing a more complete picture of my professional identity as it exists within the partnerships paradigm brought into focus some of these hidden forces at work in these relationships.

Finding a way to uncover these ‘deep rooted’ relational forces led me to use more reflexive ways of gathering meaning than in depth interviews alone could provide (Street, 1990). Therefore, I decided to document my own biography and experiences in order to consciously examine the ways I viewed myself and others, whilst simultaneously reconciling with my perceptions of how others saw me within these partnerships contexts.

The reflexivity used in documenting my experiences, however, was not an easy process because deep examination of latent attitudes (via reflexive questioning and writing) illuminated some ‘uncomfortable’ realisations about myself and others. This aligns with autoethnography, which aims to create space for critical moments (epiphanies) to occur and this “can result in a process that is disconcerting and disturbing” (Grant et al, 2013. p. 11).

However, the discomfort experienced was worth it because the ‘unbounded reflexivity’ used in this research process gave shape to my subjective experience. This was crucial in ensuring that my pre-conceptions (that might otherwise have remained hidden) about working in these partnerships contexts could now be used to deepen the discussion around partnerships whilst further avoiding researcher bias.

Throughout this process, I was always mindful that my own experiences—although valuable—were only part of the story in a tale about partnerships. Therefore, it was crucial that I successfully combined my experiences with that of the other participants in a way that not only honored their stories but was referential to the subjective nature of all these views. Crystallization gave me a way to achieve this aim.
**Crystallization**

Crystallization fostered an even deeper understanding of the participants’ experiences of partnerships by combining the diverse and similar practices that “span multiple points on the qualitative continuum. This maximized the benefits of contrasting approaches to analysis and representation, whilst also being self-referential to their partiality” (Ellingson, 2009, p. 10).

A crystallization framework (Table 1) was adapted by the researcher from Ellingson (2008), in order to articulate and reinforce my own positionality as researcher, align the research questions and guide the ‘way’ forward in selecting the most appropriate research methods that best suited the aims of the study.

*Table 1: The Qualitative Continuum – a crystallization framework*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Arts Impressionist</strong></th>
<th><strong>Middle Ground</strong></th>
<th><strong>Science/ Realist</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>Using first person voice.</td>
<td>Use ‘snippets’ of participants’ words.</td>
<td>Objectivity and minimization of bias highlighted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Researcher</strong></td>
<td>Researcher as the main focus or as much the focus as other participants.</td>
<td>Participants as main focus, but researcher’s positionality is key to forming findings.</td>
<td>Researcher is presented as irrelevant to results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals/Aims</strong></td>
<td>To unravel accepted truths. To explore personal truths.</td>
<td>To generate pragmatic implications for practitioners. To generate description and understanding.</td>
<td>To discover objective truths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questions</strong></td>
<td>What is unique about mine or another person’s experience?</td>
<td>How do the participants and author co-construct a world? How do participants understand their world?</td>
<td>What is the relationships among factors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key</strong></td>
<td>Mostly aligned. Somewhat aligned. Not aligned.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The green highlighted cells in Table 1 indicate a range of methods, questions, goals and aims that appear on the qualitative continuum and mostly aligned with the aims of this research study. Even though there are no fixed boundaries that exist between the artistic
interpretive approaches on the left, the social construction of meaning in the middle and the positivistic position on the right, I understood that my position sat mostly within the middle and to the left of the qualitative continuum. This reinforced my stance as a social constructionist whilst also being mindful that in attempting to represent the unique and essentially meaningful data gathered from the participants’ experiences, I was also aligning myself within the arts impressionist paradigm.

In many ways, crystallization released me as the researcher from the burden of being ‘stuck’ within a single approach, rather it enabled the use of several ways interchangeably. This was crucial as I attempted to combine and balance the subjective truths of the participants’ experiences with that of my own as researcher and co-participant. To achieve this, I employed two distinct but complimentary writing methods that most suited the particular needs of the research study. This included combining my own reflective journal alongside a more objective/middle ground approach that represented the views of the participants captured via semi-structured interviewing. This was important because the participants’ voices could be represented in a way that honored their perspective but at the same time was referential to the subjective nature of their shared experiences (Ellingson, 2008). Finally, and with the aim of bringing these two voices together (reflective journal and in-depth interviews), I created a third person allegory on partnerships entitled, *The Shared Space* that employed interpretive literary techniques (situated in the arts impressionist on the left) and a third-person voice to reveal what was essentially meaningful within these partnership experiences.

**Trustworthiness**

The use of crystallization gave me a way of creating a balance in the way I represented the subjective truths of a number of participants with that of my own as researcher and co-participant by combining a number of ways of knowing that exist along the qualitative continuum. This included combining a pluralistic approach to data collection with multiple genres of analysis and representation. This required me to engage in a process of almost ‘schizophrenic’ objectivity because I was simultaneously using multiple ways of capturing, interpreting and representing the phenomena of interest. I was attracted to crystallization because as Ellingston (2008) articulated it “problematicizes its own construction...highlights researcher’s vulnerabilities and positionality, makes claims about
socially constructed meaning, and reveals the indeterminacy of knowledge claims even as it makes them” (p.4).

Phenomenological approaches to research has been criticised for being “too fuzzy, too ambiguous, inadequately based on observational and measurable data, not replicable, poorly generalizable to definitive populations, irrational, unscientific, subjectivist and so on” (van Manen, 1997, p. 16). However, I refute these criticisms as they tend to assume that all human experience should be measurable and positivistic and that intuitive and more experiential notions of truth are not worthy ways to explain and make sense of our relationship to the concrete world.

Like phenomenology, this study abandons claims of absolute truths because it views the partnership experiences as more complex than any singular description can provide. Instead it focuses on the ineffable qualities related to complex relationships that surround inter-sectorial partnerships. Furthermore, it acknowledges broader and deeper ways of viewing the world than the flat or fixable ways of knowing used from a science realist position can provide.

Autoethnography has also been dismissed as a social science methodology because it is not sufficiently rigorous and analytical. Furthermore, the use of personal experience is perceived by some as biased data (Anderson, 2006) presented by “navel gazers” and “self-absorbed narcissists” (Madison, 2006, p.36). Furthermore, there is some criticism levelled at autoethnography for forsaking artfulness and over catering to scientific writing standards. These critics rue the lack of aesthetic quality and the poor use of literary devices (Ellis et al, 2011).

These criticisms, however, places the use of art and science methods used in autoethnography at odds with the other. The intention of this research, as mentioned throughout this chapter aims to find the best way to unravel the complexities and illuminate the meaningful within the participants’ partnership experiences by fusing methodologies that include both artistic and scientific approaches along a qualitative continuum. “Autoethnographers believe research can be rigorous, theoretical, and analytical and emotional, therapeutic, and inclusive of personal and social phenomena.” (Ellis et al, 2011. p. 7). In this way, autoethnography as a methodology is concerned with providing a text that is accessible and meaningful for its reader rather than pre-occupied with accuracy (Holman Jones, 2005). Furthermore, the artfulness of the writing in autoethnography need only be judged by the degree to which it achieves this aim rather than an erroneous comparison to other genres of writing that have a completely separate purpose and audience in mind.

Finally, the overall value of this study is gauged by the degree to which it persuades, evokes and challenges the reader to view partnerships differently because it has successfully illuminated the ‘unknown’ and little understood cultural processes involved in arts education
partnerships. In this light, it is the reader who provides the research study with validation by a comparison of their experience with that of the authors and other participants (Ellis, 2004).

**Summary**

In this section, I have described the qualitative approaches used in this study, drawing on phenomenology and autoethnography and brought together via crystallization in order to capture, analyze and represent the essential qualities of partnership interactions between two culturally configured groups (arts industry and arts education) during the staging of a high school musical in a professional venue. I have also shown how these research approaches allowed me to meticulously and transparently interweave my own professional experiences as director/producer of the specific musical via the lens of a social researcher whilst maintaining the overall trustworthiness of the methodological design.

**Methods**

In the following section, I define the boundaries of the study with the aim of providing clarity around the actual steps and procedures taken. I present my research methods in chronological order from the point of choosing and inviting the research participants, to outlining the data collection techniques and the ethical considerations – including how the sensitive data was collected and stored. Finally, I present the process undertaken for how the data was managed, condensed and analysed.

**A High School Musical in a Professional Venue: The Backdrop to the Study**

The unit of analysis in this study (experiences of partnerships) is located within the bounded context of staging a high school musical in a professional venue (the case study site). This specific context forms part of a larger picture (depicted in Figure 7) where arts events are created for secondary students via partnerships between performing arts industry and performing arts education. Although there are a number of nested contexts involved in the staging of a high school musical in a professional venue, this study focuses on arts education partnerships between the professional venue staff and the school’s performing arts staff. This focus aligned with my research aims and provided me with participants that were best suited to articulate rich and immediate descriptions of their partnership experiences. ‘Other’ professionals, students, volunteers, and ‘other school staff were omitted from the
study because their experiences of these partnerships, although valuable did not align with the nature and purpose of this research study or in the case of ‘other’ professionals were not directly involved and ‘on site’ during the data collection period.

![Conceptual framework for sampling and data collection](image)

**Figure 7:** Conceptual framework for sampling and data collection

Consequently, the data collection period coincided with the school’s tenure within the professional venue. Although the vast majority of rehearsals for the musical were conducted in the school hall, the final technical rehearsals, dress rehearsals and five performances occurred within the professional venue over a period of ten days, commonly referred to as Production Week (see Appendix A).

The Production Week was chosen for this study for two main reasons; first it provided rich data that was imbedded within the life world (Van Manen, 1997) of the participants, i.e., their experiences of partnerships whilst staging a high school musical in a professional venue. Second, consistent with a convenience sampling frame that relies on informants that are available and easily accessible (Berg, 2009), the production week was a period of time in
which the venue staff and performing arts school staff were on site and engaged in the field of practice, including intense experiences of partnerships.

**Sampling, Recruitment, Invitation and Consent**

In an attempt to capture rich and relevant data of the experiences of partnerships, purposeful sampling and convenience sampling were combined as it allowed me to select participants that best informed the phenomena being explored – in this instance, the essential qualities of arts education partnerships (Creswell, 2006).

All identified candidates (outlined in Table 2) belonged to either the professional venue staff or school’s performing arts staff and were engaged in inter-sectorial partnerships over the course of a ten day data collection period. The candidates were sent an email four weeks prior to the Production Week (see Appendix B) via a school administrator and invited to voluntarily participate in the study. They also received a participant information letter (see Appendix C) that outlined the nature and purpose of the study, including specific time commitments involved in volunteering. Finally, the participants were required to sign a consent form prior to the start of the formal interview process (Appendix D).

*Table 2: The participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Sally</th>
<th>Brian</th>
<th>Ronny</th>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Lucy</th>
<th>Alison</th>
<th>Matt (Researcher)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role Title</td>
<td>Technical Manager</td>
<td>Costume Designer</td>
<td>Male Actor/Props Manager</td>
<td>Head of Lighting</td>
<td>Head of Audio</td>
<td>Theatre Manager</td>
<td>FOH Manager</td>
<td>Director/Production Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue or School Personnel</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In making the right decision regarding selection, I considered my own participation in the study, and the influential voice (as a member of the school’s performing arts staff) that I would maintain throughout the research process. Consequently, I decided to select five participants from the professional venue staff and only two other participants from the school performing arts staff.

I was also mindful of choosing participants that represented a breadth of responsibilities and roles in the musical production, including leadership and non-leadership positions (see Appendix E). The two main leaderships roles on site during the ten days of
rehearsals and performances were the venue’s Technical Manager (Bill) and the school’s Director/Producer which was being filled by myself. Other leadership roles included the school’s Costume Designer and the venue’s Theatre Manager. The remainder of the participants had many years of experience working on the specific musical and were involved in a supportive production role capacity. One of the participants from the school staff, Brian took on a combined role as a performer in the production and Props Manager.

The sample size chosen provided a broad enough range of roles (considering the limited time frame and scope of the study) to capture the complexities and subtleties inherent within these partnership experiences.

**Data Collection**

Consistent with a pluralistic approach that intends to blend the participants’ experiences of partnerships with that of my own as researcher and co-participant, this study employed both in-depth narrative based individual interviews to capture the experiences of the seven participants and a reflective journal that included my own thoughts and feelings.

**Journaling**

A reflective journal was used to document my experiences of partnerships both during, prior and following the staging of the school musical. This approach aimed to describe and systematically analyze my experiences as researcher and co-participant within the study by using rigorous, multi-layered levels of reflexivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This journaling process is described by Street (1990);

The ongoing data base provided by a personal/professional journal provides not only information on the content of professional practice, but on the process of reflection itself. In this way, the journal provides a process for meta-theorizing – for thinking about the process of thinking. (p.44)

Employing the use of a reflective journal was an integral part of drawing together the research data whilst revealing the ways my own sociocultural experiences shaped the interpretation of the study (Street, 1997).

The reflective journal included descriptive accounts of my experiences as well as merging questions, insights, feelings and changes in my perceptions and thoughts in my combined role as co-participant and researcher. The reflections also included previous experiences whilst engaged in partnerships contexts with arts industry that dated back
seventeen years. These past experiences had occurred in the same venue and with different schools, industry specialists and venues.

The process of journaling was integral to this research because it enabled me to freeze the action and ‘return later’ to examine the significant moments captured from various reflective angles (Street, 1997). This process was useful during the data collection period (production week) because the research site (due to its business) was not conducive to deep reflective practices. The journal reflection below and the rest that follow have been italicized and captures my initial response to a critical incident that occurred during Day 6 of the school’s tenure in the venue:

*The Venue Management just complained to me that they were informed by “someone” at the school that we would not be providing students to sell programs and could they (the venue) please provide staff for this. Its two days out from opening night and I’m up to my neck with technical issues and now I have to find students to sell programs because someone has not done their job.* (Reflective Journal, Day 6, Part 1)

My initial reaction captured and frozen (Part 1), shows my ‘raw’ response to the incident – valuable for its honesty and immediacy. The following reflection (Part 2) was written later that same night after contemplating the day’s busy events:

*Today was difficult and my initial reaction (in the heat of the moment) was to blame someone else. However, if I had fulfilled my production manager responsibilities, then the mix up may not have occurred in the first place. The complaint affected my mood for the rest of the afternoon and as a director during a difficult technical rehearsal this ‘energy’ probably ran through the entire company. This incident highlights the pressure you are under when engaged in the combined roles as director and producer.* (Reflective Journal, Day 6, Part 2)

The process of freezing the moment via a journal enabled me to not only capture freshly lived experience (van Manen, 1997) but to also move beyond the subjective feeling of the moment (captured in Part 1) and transform this experience into a reflection that lifted me as researcher into the role of spectator and analyst (Ellis & Bochner, 2000) of my own experience (captured in Part 2).

The majority of the reflective journals have not been presented directly in the Chapter Five Findings, as they were primarily used to guide my interpretive lens of the participants’ experiences and weave any potential bias back into the research writing process. In this way, my own experiences became an essential part of the critical and reflective voices that appear in the findings and discussion chapters.
Interviews

The research participants provided several accounts of personal experiences through the use of reflections and recollections during in depth interviews. Ultimately, the goal of the interviews was to gather data related to the participants’ experiences of partnerships during the staging of a high school musical in this context specific site. More specifically, the interview questions (see Appendix F) focused on the nature and types of partnerships encountered, particularly the enablers and constraints to successful partnerships as well as the attitudes (that underline these relationships) and how they are reinforced and heightened through the use of culturally specific language and behaviors.

The interviews were audio-recorded with consent, conducted by an external interviewer (please see ethical considerations below) at the professional venue or secondary school site. The interviews occurred twice for four participants and once for three others over a period of seven to ten days between the first and second interview (see interview schedule in Appendix G).

First Interview

The first interview was conducted on Day 1 of the school’s bump-in to the professional venue. The time slot was chosen because it gave the richest opportunity for responses that were immediate and honestly reflected the life world of the participants.

The interviews ranging in length from 17 minutes to 53 minutes, were guided by a series of open-ended, reflective questions that stimulated a dialogical approach (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008) in order to capture the ways in which both these groups made sense of the partnership experiences.

The first interview encouraged the participants to recollect on past experiences of partnerships – either in previous productions with the same school and venue and/or any previous experiences whilst undertaking similar or contrasting roles. Furthermore, the emphasis on past experiences in the first interview, aimed to identify what participants bring with them (based on prior experiences), including values, attitudes and expectations. Many aspects of the experiences shared in the first interview were then followed up on during the second interview.

Second Interview

The second interviews ranged in length from 23 minutes to 64 minutes and was conducted (for three of the venue staff participants) on the final day of the school’s tenure in
the venue (commonly referred to as the bump-out) and focused on capturing the freshly lived experiences of the participants. Due to an issue around scheduling and availability, the two school participants’ interviews were conducted three days later at the secondary school site (see Appendix G).

Many of the aspects of partnerships (such as attitudes and preconceptions) under the microscope in this study were subtle and not immediately obvious to the participants. Therefore, the questioning prompts in the second interview were designed to give the participants the opportunity to reflect and re-experience (through their narratives of partnership experiences) which provided a freshness and depth to the interview data.

Consequently, the indicative questions (Appendix F) for the second interview focused on encouraging detailed and lived through examples of how the participants viewed the enablers and constraints of these types of inter-sectorial partnerships. Additionally, the expectations of the participants explored in the first interview were contrasted and reflected back through the lens of their recently lived realities – being that the second interview occurred directly following the ten days of intense partnerships experiences. Therefore, the more critical and reflective nature of the second interview provided for richer and more immediate responses on their direct partnership experiences and were more candid than those gathered in the first interview.

**Ethical Considerations**

The ethical considerations added a crucial dimension to the research process and so I consulted research literature that includes issues of consultation (Medford, 2006) and anticipate one’s own and others’ future vulnerabilities (Morse, 2002). In the forefront of my mind was that no story should harm others.

This research received ethics approval from the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval No 2015/249). However, I was mindful of ethical issues that may result from research that was being conducted in my own immediate work setting, which Glesne and Peshkin, (1992) referred to as backyard research.

As both researcher and participant, I am engaged simultaneously in multiple roles and partnerships, including director, manager, teacher, client, employer and researcher and as a result I was aware that relational issues may compromise the interview and data analysis process (Cresswell, 2014). For example, a pre-existing relationship existed between myself (as Head of Performing Arts department) and the two performing arts staff who were invited
to volunteer for the study. Consequently, it became my responsibility to demonstrate how the data would not be compromised and the participants would not be at risk due to unequal or dependent relationships. Furthermore, there was also the possibility for issues of compliance arising from the industry participants, who were aware in advance that what they said in the interviews would be shared with the researcher (who is also a participant in the musical production process and a ‘client’).

Therefore, in order to minimize potential relational issues due to my own involvement within this site-specific research context, I engaged several methods. First, in order to protect the rights of the seven participants, I used a third-party individual who has no previous contact within this context to conduct the interviews. The third-party interviewer had appropriate research qualifications and experience in conducting qualitative interviews for the purpose of soliciting authentic, honest and conversation like responses from the participants.

Because the participants were recognizable to me through the interview data, I stipulated to the interviewer that any material in the interviews that she felt may compromise the participants’ professional relationships should be removed before it is forwarded to me for analysis. However, none of the interviews exhibited sensitive data so this was not required. Furthermore, the interviewer reminded the participants (also made clear in the participant information letter, Appendix C) of the specific processes involved and emphasised the voluntary nature and the right to withdraw without explanation from the study.

To further reinforce the rights of the seven participants, all my personal journaling and participant interview data was anonymized through the use of pseudonyms and made available for critique by my supervisors. Finally, the use of a reflective journal enabled me to weave any potential bias that arose due to these relational issues back under the reflexive spotlight of the research analysis process (Street, 1990), thus increasing the transparency of the research process.

**Data Analysis**

The data analysis phase in this research study aimed to deconstruct the richness and complexity of the participants’ experiences, opinions and views of partnerships for the purpose of making sense and ultimately meaning from it (Cresswell, 2014). As this qualitative study aimed at illuminating the subtle yet powerful forces at work during
partnership interactions between two culturally configured groups, a range of approaches were used to analyze the relatively large amount of data collected.

Although the formal process of analysis was initiated once the participant interviews had been transcribed, the informal process of reflection began twelve months earlier (research conception stage) due to my annual participatory involvement (since 2010) with the site-specific musical. This analysis process aligns with Nieuwenhuis (2007) who captures the essence of data analysis well, when he states: “…qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and iterative process, implying that data collection, processing, analysis and reporting are intertwined and not necessarily a successive process” (p.461).

Throughout this research study my analysis practices were not fixed but rather fluid and circular, resembling Creswell’s (2006) description of a data analysis spiral (Figure 9). From the first data spiral loop of the initial data collection through to the management of the data, extracting the essential themes and finally exiting the spiral with a vivid and immediate reinterpretation of the social phenomena (partnerships) under investigation, it was imperative that I carried out the data analysis with care and rigor in a methodical way (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

**Figure 8: The Data Analysis Spiral**

Following through Creswell’s data analysis spiral, I read all the interview transcripts in conjunction with my own reflective journal entries, making a list of the of the emerging patterns, anecdotal thread and themes which I assigned first cycle codes. This method for organising and detecting patterns within the large amount of interview data and journal
reflections formed a major part of the thematic analysis process to follow. As Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2014) articulate “coding is analysis” (p. 72) and involves deep reflection to interpret the deeper meaning in the data.

The process of analysis was further enhanced by the use of critical memoing which occurred before, during and following the data collection period as a way of “capturing thoughts that occur throughout data collection, data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, conclusion testing, and final reporting” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 95-96). The use of memoing in my reflective journals allowed me to write and simultaneously analyze the data whilst also developing and strengthening my critical voice.

Following the initial first cycle coding, I engaged in a process that Miles et al., (2014) refer to as second cycle pattern coding, by first, highlighting the significant moments in the data, second, detecting patterns within the data-making it easier to compare and contrast with other relatable sections and finally, assigning these relatable chunks with more developed thematic codes that I then colored for easy identification.

At this point, my analysis was spread over 140 pages of interview transcripts and I needed to condense it in a way that allowed me to view the information systematically (Miles et al., 2014). To achieve this, I used a Matrix table (Appendix H), which Miles et al., (2014) describe as “a tabular format that collects and arranges data for easy viewing in one place” (p. 111). The use of a matrix table was an invaluable tool for sifting through the significant and further sorting it into categories, vignettes and thematic codes.

To conclude this part of the analysis process, the data in the matrix table was condensed into a data representation framework. During this final stage, I also reduced the number of themes by ordering them into a framework from most significant first, a process Creswell (2006) refers to as “winnowing”. From here I used the framework to arrange and re-arrange the final themes in multiple orders to elucidate a metaphorical world that the unique experiences of partnerships could be encased within.

**Data Representation**

Although, the use of a matrix table and framework was useful in identifying and ordering the significant themes, I was still cautious about how to equitably and transparently represent the shared experiences of the participants. I was mindful of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) advice when assigning a name to themes asking: what story do the themes tell? How does the theme fit within the grander story? Therefore, I decided to re-read the interview transcripts, journal reflections and matrix tables to once again immerse myself in the coding and
memoing contained within them for the purpose of finding the bigger picture in this partnership story.

It was at this point, that I was also reminded of what Maxine Greene (2001) said in regards to developing our understanding of the individual persons within partnership contexts. Therefore, I wrote participant and group profiles, using information that I had gathered from the data. The process of profiling was a useful starting point because it set a backdrop to the socio-cultural factors that influenced arts education partnerships. Finally, the process of profiling enhanced the conceptual clarity I was craving in creating metaphors for visualizing and representing the partnership experiences.

It is important to note that the realization of the metaphors used in this study did not occur until the final stages of the data analysis process. This is advisable because the development of metaphors too early can potentially lead to complacency of the researcher, who may project the raw data to fit the metaphor, resulting in misguided interpretation (Miles, et al., 2014).

A Unifying Metaphor

The use of a unifying metaphor was a powerful way of simplifying all the complex data into a sequence of ‘digestible’ generalities that fulfilled three important functions; first, it highlighted the contrasting identities between the two socio-cultural configured groups (education and industry), second, underscored the challenges involved in these groups coming together and third, illustrated the partnership journey contained within the shared experiences of the participants.

In conceptualizing the metaphorical world for this study, I contemplated the words of van Manen (1997), who stated that phenomenological research “always begins in the life world” (p.7). This led me to think further about partnership spaces and the potential within them for better explaining how arts education partnerships function. The following reflective journal entry captures the moment when I first made a connection between the spaces these partnerships occur within and the experiences themselves:

Theatre venue served as a ‘home’ for the industry participants throughout the seven years of the partnership journey, whilst for myself and Sally the partnership space had begun with feelings of ‘foreignness’, especially in the first year. In the seven years of partnerships to follow, however, these feelings had grown less noticeable and were being replaced by an emerging sense of familiarity and belonging. (Reflective Journal, January 2017).
Defined simply as the place where these partnership experiences occur, the partnership space is multidimensional and refers interchangeably to the physical, emotional and socio-cultural levels of experience shared by the participants.

In explicating these impressions further, I borrowed from Theatre Director, Peter Brook’s (1972) seminal work that illuminates the essential nature of theatre by highlighting the transformational potential of an empty space;

I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged (p.1).

In a similar way, we may use the image of an empty space to invoke a more complete understanding of the partnership experiences shared in this study.

An empty space—void of identity, neutral—a blank canvas.
All that exists within it is possibility.
(Reflective Journal)

Figure 9: An Empty Space

An empty space (Illustrated in Figure 9), serves to remind the reader of the transformative potential that the partnership space has to ‘take on board’ and reflect back the identity of that which enters it.

An empty space was used as a lens for defining the individual and separate identities of the two groups (education and industry). In order to highlight this separateness, I used a visual image to represent both the venue staff and the school group as they appeared in isolation (before entering into the partnership paradigm). In this way, the use of metaphor
provided a symbolic backdrop which I could then set the participants’ experiences of partnerships against (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014).

The ‘allegorical lens’ was also used to highlight the partnership journey described by the seven participants as well as my own as researcher and co-participant. As a way of achieving this, I structured the findings into three separate acts to represent two contrasting transformational points that occurred during the life span of these partnerships. The first followed the moment the two groups came together on Day 1 of the school’s tenure in the professional venue – the bump-in. This section of the Findings reflected many of the challenges involved when two contrasting groups first come together. Whilst the second transformational point occurred over time, is more complex and describes the ways that the two groups were brought together to function effectively as one group. To represent the arc of the partnership journey further, I employed two complimentary devices that appear at the start of each of the three acts. The first is an allegory taken from my reflective journal that centred around the occupation, invasion, negotiation and finally the sharing of a partnership space as described in the interview data as well as my own reflective journal. While second was the use of visual models to represent the partnership journey from ‘foreignness to familiarity’ and enhance clarity surrounding the study’s themes imbedded within them.

At the conclusion of this process, I had crafted a 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships entitled, The Shared Space (see Table 3). Each of the three acts in this ‘play’ represented a significant stage in the partnerships journey as well as encasing the 12 essential themes that are used to represent the meaningful experiences of two groups engaged in a common endeavor – the high school musical.

Table 3: Thematic metaphors for partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act One</th>
<th>Bumping into the Space</th>
<th>Preparing for the Space. What we bring with us. Fitting an Education Model into an Industry World.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Summary

In this chapter, I described the qualitative approach used in this study, drawing on phenomenology and autoethnographic approaches which I brought together via crystallization. These methodologies were employed in order to capture the essential qualities of partnerships interaction between two culturally configured groups (arts industry and arts education) during the staging of a high school musical in a professional venue. This adopted research approach allowed me to meticulously document my own personal and professional experiences as director and producer of the specific musical through the lens of a social researcher whilst maintaining the trustworthiness of the overall research design.

This chapter also documents the techniques used in the process of data collection, including the use of a reflective journal and in-depth interviews. It also clearly outlined the procedures taken and the strategies used for participant selection. A detailed description of my approach to data analysis and interpretation was discussed as well as ethical implications considered during the study. The next chapter provides the findings for this study, including the participants’ group profiles and the thematic metaphors presented via a 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships entitled, The Shared Space.
CHAPTER FOUR - FINDINGS

Introduction

These findings described in this chapter present a co-constructed narrative that blends together the partnership experiences of two groups of participants (school group and venue staff) with that of my own, as researcher and co-participant. The experiences of the seven participants (captured through the interviews) as well as my own (captured via a reflective journal) are brought together here in a 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships entitled: The Shared Space. Each act representing a unique and vital stage in the partnership journey.

In Setting the Scene, the two groups involved in the ‘play’ on partnerships are introduced as The Occupiers (venue staff) and The Foreigners (school performing arts staff). The use of these terms is intended to reflect aspects of the physical partnership space—it is not related to colonization—but rather represents the unique education-to-arts configuration of the partnership, that was conducted within an industry setting. It is also intended to foreshadow the challenging road ahead for the participants.

The opening act, depicted via the metaphor Bumping into the Space is used to represent the school group entering into a foreign industry space. This process is vividly described through my own reflective journal from Day 1 – the bump-in. Furthermore, via the theme, what we bring with us, I reveal many of the group’s pre-conceptions towards working together for the first time within these partnership contexts. Finally, I highlight the importance of preparing for the space and the difference this can make to the quality of partnerships, particularly in the early stages.

In Act 2, I describe the ways that both groups negotiated the partnership space. Themes encased here include the importance of effectively communicating, being realistic with expectations and making allowances when working with each other. The ways that the school and venue groups negotiate traditional and emerging roles in this partnership context is also explored via the theme finding your place. In the third and final act, the potential within these partnerships to transform roles and practices is explored via the metaphor, The Shared Space. In this act, the participants describe a familiar place where respect has been earned, and collaborative rewards abound.

Central to the aim of this research is to provide an insight into the participants’ experiences of these site-specific partnerships via evocative, rich and meaningful descriptions. The purpose of which is to understanding how art education partnerships
function in order to better realize the potential of these relationships to enhance quality in arts education in the future.

To help achieve this, I have included a segment from my reflective journal at the start of each act. The allegory on partnerships entitled, *The Shared Space* highlights the journey involved for two groups who come together as strangers and learn to negotiate successfully through a series of challenges during ten days of final rehearsals and performances.

**Setting the Scene**

In setting the scene, I profile the two groups (occupiers and foreigners) using a descriptive snapshot to help define the socio-cultural factors that are already at play in these partnerships when the two groups (school group and venue staff) first come together. The extract from my own reflective journal serves to highlight the potential of the empty space to take on the identity of the ‘characters’ that occupy it.

*A group enters and the space is transformed into the character of these people. They arrange the space to suit them, each part containing fragments of their story—their desires—their contradictions.* *(Reflective Journal)*

**The Occupiers of the Space**

The case study site (the professional theatre venue) in which these partnerships take place—enclosed within the broader arts-industry context—is occupied by the four venue staff participants (illustrated in Figure 11).

*Figure 10: The Occupiers*
The staff at the venue are split into two teams; the theatre management (which includes the front of house staff), and the technical staff or backstage crew. Both departments interact with a variety of school personnel during, prior and beyond the venue hire period. However, the technical staff host the bulk of significant partnership interactions during the school’s ten day tenure in the venue.

The three technical staff, all of whom are casually employed, have maintained lengthy and sustained employment histories with the venue. As Mark conveys, “We here at the (venue) are a crew that has worked together for a long time and we all have each other’s back.” Also, key was the collective years of experience that the venue (technical) team brought into this arts/education partnership context. This was supported by Bill:

*Mark, the head of audio has been here for fifteen years as well. My Head Mech*⁴ *has been here for seven or eight years. Ronny, the head of lighting has been here a few years. My fly man*⁵ *at the moment who used to be here a few years ago has been back many times with other shows and now he’s back working with us again. So, you can clock up five years of experience for him on day one. (Bill)*

The venue, provided these ‘industry veterans’ with the stability of a home base or docking port in-between negotiating careers on the road, providing technical and production support for national and international touring acts. As Mark articulates “in this industry there’s no such thing as a full-time job”.

In addition to the continuity and collective experience that the technical staff brought into the school production, they also exhibited high levels of professional pride in their work. This was described by Bill:

*Well you definitely find in our industry that it is ego driven and I don’t mean that in a negative way, I mean that people do want to do a good job – they don’t want to fail. The lighting people do not want their lights to look average, they want it to look fantastic. The sound people want it to sound fantastic – they don’t want it to sound average. The Mechs don’t want to miss out on a cue – they want that cue to be bang on. And the industry is full of those people ... (and) most of them care. (Bill)*

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⁴ A theatre technician.
⁵ A theatre technician who operates the rigging system for scenery, curtains and backdrops.
The Foreigners

The education context, labelled as *The Foreigners* is illustrated in Figure 12. At the center of this ‘world’ are the three school group participants (including myself) who are members of the school’s performing arts department and have all been involved in the majority of past musicals staged in the venue. The rest of the school community (‘other’ performing arts staff, students, non-performing arts staff, parents and past students) are represented in the diagram but are enclosed within the broader educational context.

**Figure 11:** The Foreigners

The school—an independent school for girls founded in 1907—had a tradition of staging its annual musical productions in their school hall. However, because of the need for a larger venue, the school moved the production into a local professional theatre:

*The first musical production to be staged outside of the school would play four performances in late March 2010. The venue had been hired for a period of ten days, with two set aside for the set up and set down, six days for technical rehearsals and three performance days. Little did we know at the time we would be embarking on a partnership that would span seven musical productions in as many years. (Reflective Journal, Day 4)*

The Performing Arts Department at the school is made up of two drama staff, two dance teaching staff, and three part-time support staff (administration, technical and costume):
We (the staff) have been together for a long time. This is Brian’s (Props Manager) eleventh show with the school. Sally (Costume Manager) has worked on nine shows and this will be my eighth. (Reflective Journal, Day 9)

The school’s consistency of staging the musical in a professional theatre since 2010 was viewed by the venue staff as giving them a “distinct advantage because the only one with the consistency of doing it has been (the school)” (Ronny).

The school group participants exhibited pride in the quality of the productions they staged at the venue. Sally expressed that it was a shared aspiration for the show to “rise above the stereotypical kind of high school musical” and that working in a professional venue was an opportunity to “raise the bar” and “bring up that whole standard”.

The descriptive snapshots of the venue and the school group involved in this study provide a backdrop to view these experiences of partnerships. Furthermore, profiling the characteristics of both groups in isolation deepens our understanding of the ways social/cultural factors enable and/or constrain the possibility of mutually beneficial partnerships in this site-specific context. The labelling of the two configured groups as The Occupiers (venue staff) and The Foreigners (school staff) highlights the unique and distinctly different position of each group within this research context and foreshadows the start of the inter-sectorial partnership journey.

**Bumping into the Space**

The opening act in our 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships is Bumping into the Space and is used here to describe the first ‘act’ in partnerships – when the school group (foreigners) enters into the space ‘occupied’ by the venue staff. This moment of ‘invasion’ is represented in the following extract from an ‘allegory on partnerships’ that I wrote during the ten day data collection period:

*The occupied space is interrupted by the entry of another group. At first, the outsiders—given little room—feel foreign to this place and keep to themselves. The natives—suspicious of the strangers—treat them with indifference. (Reflective Journal)*
The bump-in (represented visually in Figure 13) is brought together via the participants’ experiences and presented here in three ways. First, I describe the scene of this crucial moment in partnerships (when the two groups first come together) in a reflective journal entry entitled – *Bumping in*. Second, I explore—via the theme, *what we bring with us*—the ways that commonly held and emerging views of the participants underpin the partnership experiences. Finally, we discuss the important role that thorough and appropriate planning plays as a way of insulating both groups from the possible challenges involved particularly in the early stages of the partnership via the theme, *Preparing for the Space*.

**Bumping-in: A Snapshot**

The following extract taken from Day 1 of my reflective journal provides a firsthand account of what the theatre space looked like during the school group’s bump-in to the venue. The description illuminates how the aforementioned themes, *what we bring with us* and *Preparing for the Space* are ‘at play’ during the early stages of these partnerships:

*When I take a moment from my director/producer role and gaze out over the hive of activity on and around the stage, I wonder how any of this works at all. I count 23 people working on and around the stage in various groups; the lighting department (4), sound (3), school maintenance staff (3) the set builders (4) the venue staff (5) and the school’s performing arts staff (3). To the inexperienced eye, the activity in the space looks disorganized – some people are busy at times while others stand motionless. There is constant banter between the industry personnel – all of whom seem to know each other. Although this is my seventh show at the venue in as many years, sometimes I still feel like a stranger here. I only know some of the language spoken and my stay here will be short compared to the industry staff.*
The school’s truck has just arrived for the second time (The tech manager, Bill sent it away the first time because the pit wasn’t ready) with musical instruments and props for the show. The head of the maintenance staff at the school, is being careless as he transports a large prop across the stage. He clumsily knocks over some lights that were waiting to be hung. The large clatter is bookended with a shower of abuse from one of the lighting techs – 30 years his junior. Work stops for a moment—the lights are checked—no damage done. The machine rolls on. (Reflective Journal, Day 1)

Photograph 1: Day 1 – The bump-in

What we Bring with Us

In an attempt to uncover the hidden forces that drive these partnership interactions, similar to those hinted at in the reflective journal ‘Bumping in’, I considered the degree to which the pre-existing views brought into this partnership context shaped the experience for the participants. This focus—crucial to this research—is explored via the theme what we bring with us and aims to reveal the participants’ pre-existing attitudes towards working in these partnerships contexts.

What Industry Brings

The three technical staff participants painted a mostly pessimistic picture of working with other school groups in similar partnership contexts. When asked what made these interactions challenging, Mark expressed that most education clients did not “bring the right attitude with them into the venue”.

A key indicator for deciphering the ‘right attitude’ was the manner in which school groups treated the venue. This was true for Ronny, who like the other participants was protective of the ‘space’ and consequently was particularly wary of school groups:

So, if the client isn’t coming with the right attitude of looking after the place that we have asked them after giving them briefs and we are trying to follow up on – that’s not going to work and we are going to go away with the attitude that we don’t want them back. (Ronny)
The technical participants also identified unrealistic expectations held by teachers combined with limited knowledge of and inexperience with working in a professional venue as key reasons why some partnerships fail:

*A lot of schools come in here with this idea inside their head which will never work and that this problem is exacerbated further because the ‘client’ (from education) is often not willing to take on board advice from the industry experts.* (Ronny)

Mark expressed that “disregard” of industry staff’s advice was part of a larger problem centered around the teacher’s unwillingness to relinquish the role of expert. He argued that teachers needed to admit the fact that they were not the authorities in this situation and that “they also have to be willing to learn. Not like oh we know it all – then you just do your thing”. Mark added that teachers needed to “leave their teacher identity at the stage door because they were about to enter a world in which they will be taught a lot”.

The “teacher identity” was a ‘label’ used by Mark to describe certain types of teachers who exhibit unhelpful and constraining behaviors in these partnerships contexts.

*I have worked with other schools that are run by a particular hard-headed person that is often the case that they haven’t had the success they wanted in their professional life so they put it into their kids. Plenty of characters working in schools like that.* (Mark)

The technical staff participants also painted some performing arts teachers as ‘frustrated artists’ and ‘undesirable influences’ on the lives of their students:

*I mean I’ve worked with a lot of dance schools and some of those kids come in and they’re just obviously tired cause they’ve been yelled at so many times.* (Bill)

The negative views expressed here explains (in part) the reluctance of the industry technicians to enthusiastically enter into work situations with school groups. This was highlighted in Ronny’s recount of being timetabled for this school’s first production in the venue in 2010:

*Look I got to say when I first did it, I had come from the other side of doing school shows and dreaded the thought of another school coming in. And I went oh God – well its work and its money and just do it.* (Ronny)
Ronny’s description is significant as it represents a popular industry attitude towards working with school groups in professional venues.

These dominant views towards working with education, however, were being challenged by the mostly positive partnership experiences with the school group in this study. Mark acknowledged that negative experiences with ‘other’ schools were simply not the case with this school because “these kids are just really keen and they are willing to work hard to achieve that – they have the right attitude”. Ronny also expressed admiration for the discipline that the school had instilled in the students and the respect they displayed for the venue:

*In general, the school is just a very well-disciplined school. That shows when you come into a theatre like this. The kids are not running riot, they’re not messing around... they are respecting the venue as our house.* (Ronny)

However, as Bill commented, the venue staff’s positive attitude towards working with the school group was a “learning process for both sides” that had not occurred over night but rather was a relationship that had developed over many years of working together and refining systems and taking on board feedback. Bill articulated that many groups (from education) tend to “not be grounded” whilst he felt that this group was “grounded and realistic” in their expectation of what they were able to achieve on the stage and that this stemmed from a realistic understanding of the budgetary, scheduling and venue limitations. Bills description of the partnerships as “cohesive” when compared to his past experiences of working with educational clients was also reinforced by Mark who had “seen the other spectrum and...oh God...this is outstanding”.

**What Education Brings**

The school participants view of working with the venue staff, painted a mostly optimistic picture, with all three participants agreeing that the opportunity to work in a professional theatre—although challenging—was worth the effort because as Brian remarked “the venue itself lifts the professional level”. Sally found the experience rewarding because “you get a professional show”. These two views were also supported by my own mostly positive experiences of working within professional venues:

*I had usually found that my collaborations with industry technicians (working in professional venues) to be worthwhile because the overwhelming majority of people...
you are dealing with love their job and have specialized knowledge in a theatre environment. (Reflective Journal)

The school participants interviewed expected professional standards when working with industry in these partnerships contexts. Brian expressed the hope that industry members “will be professional in their communication, in their conduct towards the students…” whilst also being realistic about how much the industry staff could accomplish in the ten day time frame; “we've been working on this show for you know three or four months, whereas they have a week to learn it and know it.”

In contrast, Sally held a less sympathetic view of the ‘mentality’ of industry members by describing many of them as people who don’t care because “You are paid from here to here. You work from here to here. If it goes a minute past here you’re in trouble”. Sally felt that industry professionals should be held accountable when expectations were not met, recalling one of these moments from a previous production within the same venue:

One of my friends in the audience said if you are going to get the students to do the follow spot they need more practice and I said we paid those guys, they were professionals. And it wasn’t a student, he was actually our professionally paid, let’s have a lot of money guy.” (Sally)

Sally’s view forms part of a larger picture of how some school staff perceive the attitudes of industry professionals who work on similar performing arts education events. Sally recounts another experience that reinforced her own pre-conceived attitudes towards industry personnel who work with schools:

Her husband works in the professional industry, I don’t know if he is lighting, sound or stage manager and that kind of stuff and my husband Tom said to her, oh I’m going to (schools name) production and her statement was a school production is a school production. Doesn’t matter what school does it. (Sally)

Interestingly, Ronny (technical staff) agrees that the attitude of “it’s only a school and I’ll do as little as I have to do” can exist amongst some industry personnel, many of whom are “just wanting to do the big shows all the time” and don’t see the value in the school shows.

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6 A theatre technician who operates the moving ‘dome’ light.
These stories also demonstrate the ways that negative preconceptions towards working within these partnership contexts can transform over time into mainly positive experiences. This is surmised best by Ronny whose past of working with other schools negatively impacted the prospect of working in this context as something to “overcome”. Whereas, his years with this school had reshaped this attitude into something to “look forward to”.

**Preparing for the Industry Space**

The importance of pre-production and planning for the event was emphasized by all the participants but especially the three venue (technical) staff who cited it as the most effective single element for a successful outcomes to occur, especially during the bump-in phase:

*But my big thing is definitely the pre-production and planning and knowing what’s going on and where you are going to put it and is it going to fit and how big does it need to be. Everything flows from there because then you don’t have people standing around wondering what’s going to happen next.* (Bill)

Bill advised schools and local community groups to “come in and have a look at the venue and talk to staff” because this is “the advantage to living in the same city as the theatre that you’re going to be working”. He added that by getting the industry experts involved in the process early, it helps to redistribute some of the pressure back onto them, so tasks get done within the time allotted. He also stressed the importance of effective communication during pre-production as way of making the ‘bump-in’ run smoothly:

*Talk to the lighting person, talk to the set person, talk to the audio person, how long are all these things going to take to achieve you know and put some of that pressure back on them to achieve it in that time that they’ve told you that they can.* (Bill)

Mark agreed that it didn’t really matter whether it was a “school or professional production” that “everything is lost or won in pre-production and the more time you spend preparing accurately for when you are in the performance space”. Mark highlighted the importance of having “systems” already in place as a “work in progress” that uses “your hall and/or gymnasium at school before you come in”. He stressed the importance of effective preparation as a way of dealing with “misunderstandings” because this is where
you “lose or win the battle” and that the “principle was always the same” whether you are dealing with “five year olds or fifty year olds”.

The moment of ‘invasion’ (Bumping in to the Space) was shared here via the theme, what we bring with us and served to elucidate the interplay between commonly held and emerging views towards working in these partnership contexts. Next, we discuss the ways that the participants learn to work together over ten days of partnerships in Act 2: Negotiating the Space.

**Negotiating the Space**

The second act in this 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships explores the ways that participants negotiated these site-specific partnerships during ten days of final rehearsals and performances. The emerging themes throughout Act 2 center around the two groups experiences in finding functional ways of working together during a dynamic and crucial period in the production process.

*But circumstance has dictated that—for a time—the groups must learn to work together. (Reflective Journal)*

![Diagram of Negotiating the Space](image)

**Figure 13: Negotiating the Space**

There were three essential themes (represented visually in Figure 14), that emerged for negotiating mutually beneficial partnerships; communicating effectively (asking for advice, being open to feedback), being realistic and making allowances. As a way of
revealing more about these partnership experiences, I also discuss two challenging experiences (critical incidents) that occurred on Day 1 and Day 3.

**Communicating Effectively**

When asked to reflect on what made the partnership interactions with the school’s production successful, the technical staff agreed that the school group’s willingness to ask for advice and being open to feedback were key factors: as Mark explains, “And that’s where (the school) has been outstanding because they have always taken on board feedback and some schools you don’t get that understanding”. Bill agreed that “asking” (for advice) was something that the school was “very open to” when compared to other “amateur shows” who are “probably less likely to ask”. A willingness to take on board advice fostered an atmosphere of collaboration between the school group and venue staff. Ronny in particular was impressed with the school’s willingness to ask “how can we make this better?” and “being upfront about asking for constructive criticism”. He added that when the client asks for feedback:

> ...your more inclined with the personal to perhaps offer a bit more advice. You feel your advice is going to be listened to, so you say look maybe you should think about this and pre-empt it. Whereas if they are very closed off as a client your just not going to bother. (Ronny)

**Being Realistic**

In addition to asking for advice, partnerships were enabled when the education client was “realistic” about what they are able to achieve in the theatre space. Bill expressed that many education clients held unrealistic expectations, with many having “a million-dollar picture with a hundred-dollar budget”. He added that a reason for this could be that “many people from education tend not to be grounded”. This view was echoed by Mark who stated: “what’s a bit strange is there is an extremely high level of expectations from the schools – they think that everything will magically happen”. Bill added, that compared with ‘other’ educational clients, the school understood this and as a consequence it gave them a distinct advantage when working in an industry space:

> The Director is grounded and realistic in his expectation of what he is going to get on stage. What he can afford. What the kids are capable of. What the venue is capable of. What the staff are capable of. What the timelines are going to allow us to achieve. (Bill)
This commendation of the school’s grounded approach to working within this context was reinforced by Mark who expressed that: “the school is outstanding from their understanding of where they need to be at to get a successful season in the theatre happening”.

**Making Allowances**

In Act 1, *Bumping into the Space*, the occupation of one group (venue staff) is willingly interrupted by the intrusion of another (school group). The industry participants agreed that for this to happen successfully they (the venue staff) must make allowances and adjust their standard working patterns.

At the forefront of the allowances made by Ronny when working with education was in “being patient”, while Mark argued strongly that going slowly was a necessary characteristic of working in these partnership contexts:

> But like I said with education if the time is needed and you have got the time, then you need to take the time. It’s not so much that if you’re spending more time you’re not caring – often when you are spending more time, then your covering more bases and you’ve got more time to think about things and the problems that could occur and can occur you’ve had more time to deal with. (Mark)

He added that it should be a pre-requisite upon industry personnel to slow down to a more “realistic” pace because education providers “don’t understand the business of theatre that well” when compared to “a world-renowned touring act that knows all the pit falls and the ins and outs”.

Ronny articulated why “the pace” of a school show is different to that of a professional company who may have been doing the same show for many years:

> The pace of their stuff works for them and once the kids are on stage it’s scheduled and the director knows when to start and stop it for different things and it helps the actors have confidence with what they are doing on stage and have confidence with the crew who are running it, because if you as an actor are going in and worrying about the scene because you haven’t tech’d it properly—you’re not sure where you are exiting and how this is flying out—accidents happen and your performances are quite often affected by it. In both ways, technical and the acting side can be affected if the time isn’t given and with education you need to give the time to nurture it. (Ronny)

Overall, Brian felt that it was the willingness of the venue staff “to give the time to nurture it” that was a critical factor that enabled the school group to navigate the unfamiliar terrain of staging a musical in a professional venue successfully.
Challenging Experiences

As previously described, the pre-production, planning, scheduling and overall communication between the two groups was vital to the success of negotiating partnerships. However, despite being in its seventh year of operation, all of the participants could recall challenging experiences over the ten days when things didn’t work so well. In this section, I describe two critical incidents that occurred during Day 1 and Day 3 to highlight that even after seven years, the two groups still had a lot to learn from each other.

One of the advantages of conducting the first interview on Day 1 – the bump-in was that the experiences shared were freshly lived, candid and honestly reflected the realities of the participants. This was the case for Bill when asked by the interviewer “how things are going?” he recounted a situation that had only occurred minutes prior. The incident involved the scheduling of trucks arriving at the venue:

Well there has already been a couple of things today that weren’t ideal. It was to do with the orchestra pit coming out and the musical instruments being delivered. And the musical instruments were delivered well before the orchestra pit was ready. (Bill)

Bill felt that the schedule was inadequate and that the “annoying part” for him was that “the exact same thing happened last year”. As a result, the truck with the musical instruments was asked to come back later when the pit was ready. When asked what he felt had caused the confusion, Bill added:

I think it’s one of those things where maybe a little bit of inexperience meeting experienced. So, the inexperience kind of hold back a little. Saving face, a little bit I guess. A little bit of nerves. I think they probably hold back because of that. I have said to her that you need to stand up and be the Production Manager. Be that person. Because it is your responsibility to organize the schedule. (Bill)

Bill’s version of this incident was not the only one recounted. The other perspective came from my own reflective journal from the same day:

I just found out that the truck with the musical instruments was ordered to leave the theatre dock and come back later. I think the problem was that the preparation of the pit was delayed because the lighting department needed the space to put up some

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7 The space at the foot of the stage where the musicians play.
moving lights that weren’t arriving until 10am. It was this detail that wasn’t communicated back to us. I wonder if the production schedule that was sent out weeks in advance was read or did people just make assumptions about the manner that this would unfold. I can’t help but question if these events would transpire differently if we were a professional company and not a school. (Reflective Journal, Day 1)

In examining the ‘two sides of the same story’ as presented here it seems reasonable to suggest that traditional pre-conceptions about working in these partnership contexts were being triggered. On the one hand Bill was alluding to careless scheduling and the “inexperience” of school group members as being the cause of the problem on Day 1. In contrast, my own reflective journal alluded to a possible lack of care given by the industry professionals in not reading the schedule because “we were only a school show”.

Careless scheduling was also alluded to by Ronny as the main reason for a difficult rehearsal on Day 3:

For the last couple of years there has been a day when we finish off set and then just me and (name omitted) do all the lights and plotting all the scenes for the lights, so by the time they do their first run they had everything there. For some reason, they didn’t follow the same model and they had the orchestra in and the cast in and the set wasn’t quite finished and we didn’t have half the lights in and had to plot over the top of the run which is dangerous because we can go to black before we bring the lights back up. (Ronny)

Bill also alluded to the same Sunday rehearsal when he was asked what could be improved for future productions:

I think at the beginning of it when he (Matt) brought the kids in for the first time I don’t think we were quite ready on stage for the kids you know just in terms of stage management, hadn’t spent much time in the venue, there was no clearly marked walkways, there was still things that needed to be tidied up and sorted out.

The issues surrounding the Sunday rehearsal, once again reinforced that there are ‘two sides to the same story’ as I recount my version of the events from Day 3:

There were problems today with the rehearsal and the lighting department finishing the show plot. Lighting felt hindered because they were expected to plot over the top of a rehearsal—which meant they were not allowed to ‘go to black’ on the stage but

8 The LX (lighting department) combine lights to create scenes.
rather blue—so the student cast and crew could continue rehearsing without being thrust into darkness. Bill took me aside at the conclusion of the rehearsal, telling me that he almost stopped the rehearsal at a couple of points because he felt that the practice of plotting lights and rehearsing on the stage simultaneously might become unsafe.

My frustration with this is firstly, the practice of plotting lights over the top of a rehearsal is by no means an ideal situation for either the lighting department or the cast and crew but because of the school’s limited time in the venue it has been a necessary one. Plotting during a rehearsal was also a practice that we had used repeatedly in the venue with the same staff on past productions. Second, why didn’t anyone from lighting or the venue technical get back to us with their concerns about this practice before the rehearsal? (Reflective Journal, Day 3)

Ronny admits that the scheduling issue may have been avoided if people had “read the schedule properly” and that you “should always read the schedule so you know what’s going on”. When asked if the problem with the Sunday schedule was something that occurred because this was a school rather than a professional company, he replied that “no that can happen to absolutely anyone”. Ronny felt that the Sunday rehearsal issue may have more to do with the “complacency” that comes when you deal year in and year out with the same client: “If a regular client who comes in year after year—you do—you get a little complacent”. He felt that the change in the schedule could have been resolved if it was “flagged a little bit” and an easy solution was to schedule an “evening session to cover it”.

The descriptions taken from the interviews and reflective journal highlight the challenges consistently present for participants during the school’s ten days in the venue: mishaps in scheduling and preparation, communication difficulties, being unrealistic, complacency and not making the appropriate allowances were causative and constraining factors that created unwarranted stress and loss of time. More importantly, however, and a key to this study is the way that these critical incidents triggered outmoded attitudes of working with each other. This finding underlines the fluidity and ‘ever-evolving’ processes involved for the participants as they negotiate the space during the partnership period.

Finding your Place

The theme, finding you place is used to evoke an image of the ‘professional journey’ that occurs for both the school and venue participants as they negotiate roles relevant to these partnerships contexts. In order to better understand the ways this occurred, I describe what the roles in this context specific site look like for the participants, before exploring how the partnership context provided the opportunity for remodeling traditional roles for both the
school and venue participants. The importance of role in this context was reinforced in the following reflective journal taken from Day 1:

**In the context of staging a musical we are defined by our role; in a space such as this it tells us where to stand, what to do, who to communicate with and what language to use when we do so. It tells us how to act and who to ask for directions. Without it or a good understanding of it, we float rudderless in a busy harbor. When we know our role, and understand the expectations that go with it, we find our place in the musical machine. We sense that we are part of something bigger. (Reflective Journal, Day 1)**

**What Roles Look Like**

Although, the formal roles involved during the staging of this year’s school musical were based on a professional industry model (previously illustrated in Chapters 2, Figure 4), the ways that the roles were negotiated for the education staff – who were “filling multiple roles”, contrasted with that of the venue staff where “you have one person for each of those roles”.

All three of the school group participants took on more than one role in the 2016 production staged at the venue. The filling of multiple roles (although challenging) was viewed by school participants as part of the landscape of producing these types of events within the secondary performing arts education context. This was described by Brian:

**And I mean I'm not the only person that had to do you know dual, triple roles, there were other staff members that, that were doing that and as you say it's, that's kind of the nature of the beast when working in a school where you have limited kind of staff. (Brian)**

The lack of available staff within the school to fill all the roles associated with the musical meant that teachers of performing arts, were also juggling production roles that they may have little to no training in with their normal teaching loads as Brian comments:

**It's very much like one-person running around trying to get everything together while still doing your day job, your teaching as well. (Brian)**

From an industry standpoint, Mark contended that this characteristic of working with education was a constraint because “one person gets allocated too many things to do” and that this way of organising roles was problematic because “the left hand doesn’t know what the right hand is doing”.
Outsourcing Crucial Roles

As a way of combating the burden that filling multiple roles places on performing arts staff, the school assigned a number of the crucial roles involved in the staging of a high school musical to industry professionals. For example, in the 2016 production, five out of the nine leadership roles as identified in Chapter 2 by Williams (2003), were filled by industry professionals:

The outsourcing of many of the crucial roles to performing arts industry is a deliberate attempt to increase quality and minimise the disruption that a production of this size can cause to the delivery of curriculum classes. (Reflective Journal, Day 2)

The school performing arts staff and industry professionals were engaged in multiple partnerships during the twelve month period in which the musical was planned, rehearsed and performed (Appendix E). This approach encouraged a culture of collaboration within the department who were accustomed to working alongside industry professionals in multiple collaborations. Furthermore, this way of working had enabled the education staff to learn new skills and enhance the overall quality of the production.

The policy of employing industry professionals in these roles rather than using performing arts staff, non-performing arts staff, volunteers or students was viewed by Ronny as giving the school a distinct advantage when staging a musical in a professional venue:

What (the school) have done is that they haven’t just relied on what they have at the school. They have outsourced for lighting; they have outsourced for set. And what that has done is that they have recognized where they may have a weakness, where they don’t know that area and they have covered that weakness with someone who does and that gives you such a broader spectrum. (Ronny)

This movement towards greater industry engagement was viewed as a positive progression by both school and venue participants because it encouraged a culture of collaboration and improved the overall quality of the production experience for all involved.

Enhancing Roles

For the industry staff, working with education brought about a new way of viewing themselves within a professional context, as Mark indicates having novices in the space required a “completely different mindset”. Furthermore, the findings revealed a growing awareness of how partnerships between the school and the venue enhanced their traditional role to include mentor and creative collaborator.
All three-industry staff interviewed felt that their role within the musical was enriched because they were involved with the educational aims of the musical project. These aims are described in the following reflective journal:

At the core of what we are do is pedagogic. From the choice of show, to the auditions, the planning, rehearsals and performances all stem from the school’s drive to provide students with an opportunity to learn new skills and go beyond what they previously felt was possible. When this happens—and it happens often—the sense of purpose for the event is solidified and the huge challenge of putting on a musical is suddenly all worth it. (Reflective Journal, Day 8)

The findings presented forthwith demonstrate that the venue participants felt a connection with the school’s pedagogical purpose for staging the event. This was observed by Bill who articulated how he noticed a “learning curve” for the venue staff “to be trainers rather than be just workers” and as a result he felt that “they can see more of a purpose in it”. He added:

... my Head Mech gets to say something to the kids on stage. The lighting staff might say to the kids when you walk on make sure you are standing in the spot right there because the light hits you a lot better – it’s all those little things that come into it. (Bill)

Ronny also expressed that the technician’s view of their role within the staging of a musical was expanded when working in these partnerships contexts:

You’ve almost got to think about yourself as a teacher, which we are not. So that’s a little bit of a change but it’s a good mentality to get into and it helps in the long run with other things. (Ronny)

Mark was aware that his role and the role of the other venue staff became “more complex” when working with education because “you have to put in even more effort than you do with professionals”. He added:

With professionals, you set up and then you sit back because they are running their show in your venue. With the educational partners, you have to be 100% engaged for the whole process. (Mark)

The three industry technicians also perceived their expanding role within this partnership context as a way of giving back because as Marks states “these kids are the future of the industry”. To further emphasize the alignment that the technical participants had with the pedagogical purpose of the musical event, Ronny used the recent story of a former
student who “is now at (a prestigious training organisation) doing stage management and is coming back to stage manage this show” to illustrate this point. He added:

It’s nice to see that progression – it’s nice to see someone that we have given advice to who is now going out there and wanting to do it on her own on a more professional scale. There is a bit of a feeling of pride there and on the show. (Ronny)

Another way that industry roles were enhanced in this partnership context was described by Ronny who revealed that as a technical staff member working on the musical he felt more involved creatively when compared to working on a professional show:

Because on the bigger shows we don’t get to create. You’ve got someone coming in with the show already programmed in the desk. For lighting or for set you just come in and your operating for them and you just make it happen. With something like this you’re helping them create something. It comes in all the pieces and you say well let’s work all this out together as one team. (Ronny)

The collaborative nature of working with the school as alluded to here was viewed as being a positive experience for Ronny because “you’re not just working for them – we tend to work with them”. However, Ronny added that these benefits only occurred when schools were open to the feedback and willing to learn:

And as long as they are receptive – the hardest thing when you are teaching is someone not being receptive to it and we are not teachers because we are not being paid to teach them. (Ronny)

Mark also agreed that this enhancement of the technician’s role within a partnership context with education works best in situations where the students (and teachers) are motivated and willing to learn and grow:

But it’s different in a school like (the school) where the desire is there in the students to begin with. This is why it shows in this school in the first place. (Mark)

Overall, the enhancement of the industry role was looked upon favorably by the venue (technical) staff. However, it was noted by Ronny that for many industry personnel, working with high school students in this capacity was not “really on their radar” because
newly trained industry technicians were looking for the kudos that comes with working on the big shows:

_They are not lecturers, they are not teachers. They have come out of (a prestigious training organisation) or some establishment and they just want to work. So, there is a certain level of experience and attitude that you are going to give. It’s just nice when you go the extra mile because you can see that they are also enjoying the experience._

(Ronny)

Ronny was looking for clarity around those roles of teacher and technician “because it can really be a grey area”. He expressed that although he personally enjoyed the enhancement of his role through the mentoring of students, he also understood why many industry personnel may not be as enthusiastic when placed in these types of partnerships situations:

_But there is also nothing wrong with them saying look I am not a teacher and this is not my problem. We are not required to have working with children cards because we are not teachers._

(Ronny)

Ronny argued that increasing the role of technicians added to the responsibility for industry staff and for that to happen successfully there needed to be appropriate training, remuneration and certification:

_And then there is this area of boundaries—so if they want us to have it then someone has to pay for that to happen, which no one will ever do so then that responsibility needs to be backed off at._

(Ronny)

The experiences of the venue and school staff participants, highlights the ways that traditional roles are being reshaped and renegotiated in these partnerships. For the venue and school staff finding your place within this unique partnership context was a learning experience that challenged the conventional ways of viewing their role/s within the arts education partnership paradigm.

**The Shared Space**

The final act in the 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships is *The Shared Space*. On the one hand the use of this phrase invokes an image of an ‘ideal’ world where partnerships have been transformed into productive, mutually beneficial and inclusive enterprises. This utopic vision is reflected in an extract from my reflective journal:
In time, the space they co-inhabit transforms once more. Tensions dissolve... what once was foreign becomes familiar. (Reflective Journal)

However, the ‘reality’ of the participants’ experiences and the challenges incurred during the ten days of partnerships (despite a seven-year relationship) grounds this lofty vision and constrains it to be defined as a point touched upon in the journey of partnerships rather than a final destination reached.

In The Shared Space (illustrated in Figure 15), the participants describe the ways that the partnership between the venue and the school—despite the challenges—has matured into a positive and mutually beneficial enterprise. Furthermore, giving the partnerships time to grow has led the two groups into a space of familiarity where mutual respect and trust are present. Another characteristic of The Shared Space was the ways that the experience of the production quality (represented here both as spectacle and learning) acted as lubricant to the formation and development of mutually beneficial partnerships. To conclude this play on partnerships, and address the final research question in this study, we explore the benefits that flowed from the seven year partnership.

![Figure 14: The Shared Space](image)

**Becoming Familiar**

All of the participants interviewed agreed that the partnership forged between the school and the venue for the purpose of staging a high school musical has been a success.
One of the key indicators for this success is the growing sense of family that has emerged over seven years.

It’s nice seeing the same old faces—seeing the same clients because they are all friendly and there is a camaraderie. There’s always communication between the teachers and even some of the young kids on stage. It’s the same faces, the same people – you are not starting from zero. Your starting from a relationship and an experience on their part which is not totally new. (Ronny)

This was also felt from the school participants. For example, Brian expressed that although many things have changed throughout the seven years of staging musicals in the venue “ultimately that essence of family has remained”. He also appreciated the “supportive” staff at the venue who have “worked there for so many years now” and added that “there’s a real sense of caring for each other”.

The acknowledgment of the time it takes to create The Shared Space within this partnership context was also reinforced by Ronny who felt that the relationship between the school and the venue was a “constantly evolving process” that has taken time; “I’m sure that we weren’t at this level five or six years ago”. Bill also agreed that the ‘cohesiveness’ that exists now emerged from an earlier time when the school and the venue “had to get to know each other and how each other worked”.

We had to realize where the school were at and how much money they’ve got and how much time they’ve got and how good the kids are. So, it’s a learning process for both sides. (Bill)

He added that the time it took to get to know each other “has been quite real as well as quite cohesive” and that as a result “we don’t not look forward to the school coming into the venue”.

This ongoing process as expressed by Bill was reinforced by the other venue (technical) staff as an important factor that contributes to the success of the partnerships, as Mark articulates:

…people know what to count on – they know what to expect and we don’t have to go back to grass roots level every time. We can pick up where we left off. (Mark)

Ronny added that the time spent by the school in the venue over seven years has taught them to “know that system now” and that for the first couple of years it was about “trying to put
the systems in place”, and now the school staff and students “know exactly who to come to”. He added that this process was made more convenient for all involved “because even the lighting production and the sound production has always been handled by the same people”.

The theme of becoming familiar as described by both sets of participants is a key indicator of The Shared Space that has emerged over the previous seven years of learning processes and refining systems. The findings reveal that the journey of getting to know each other had reached a point where all the participants reflected positively on the majority of partnerships interactions.

Earning Respect

When asked to reflect further on the ways that the relationship has deepened over the last seven years, participants commonly referred to the emergence of trust and respect between the venue staff and the school group.

Ronny expressed his gratitude for the students and the school staff who were “respecting our house as our venue”. He added: “That is a nice thing and a lot of other schools I have worked with in the past in other venues haven’t done that”. Bill too was appreciative of the “respect” that the students displayed when in the venue:

*I mean this very sincerely when I say that I think that (the school) kids are probably the most well-behaved bunch of kids that we get through this venue. And in all of my years here. I say that very openly and honestly because they are really good kids. Very respectful. They work hard, there focused, they’re all of the things that you need them to be. (Bill)*

The trust that the school staff participants felt towards the venue staff had also grown over the seven years of partnerships. Brian expressed that (in contrast to dominant education views of industry staff) “the techie guys, care about the show... and the girls (the students) very much kind of respect that”. Mark agreed that because of “this growing relationship” the school could count on the venue staff to “fulfill their role” in collaborating with the school staff and the students to “get a successful season in the theatre”.

*And that is why the (school) students are so outstanding because we have developed that trust – then that relationship pays off big time. (Mark)*

Sally valued the mutual feeling of respect that had emerged between the school and the venue staff: “You know they appreciate us and we appreciate them”. However, she also added that there was a time when the two groups had to “get to know the other”.
I think our first couple of years there were huge trust issues and you know they were, they didn’t trust us, they thought we were a ‘high school’. (Sally)

The emergence of a trusting and respectful partnership between the education and venue groups stemmed from an understanding of and willingness to show respect for each other’s boundaries, needs and values. For the venue staff, these values extended out to the way that the school group treated the theatre space, whilst for the school staff it was the manner in which the venue staff nurtured the musical production experience.

Feeling Invested

Another feature of The Shared Space was the collaborative rewards that came for the participants when working within this specific partnership context. For the school staff this was characterized (amongst other factors) by the production quality that came when working in a professional venue. Whilst for the venue staff, it was the enjoyment and satisfaction that came as a result of being part of a school show in which students are prepared well and given every opportunity to shine.

The school staff participants were grateful for the opportunity to work with industry professionals in a public venue. This was true for Sally who felt rewarded saying “I love working with professionals because you get a professional show”. She felt grateful for the opportunity to work alongside a professional lighting designer because she “can light your stuff and make it look really good” and as a result it was “great to get feedback from people saying we didn’t even know it was a high school show”. Sally was also appreciative for the exposure and larger audiences that a school musical in this professional context brought with it because “lots of people see my stuff now” as opposed to working in a school theatre where it’s “just the parents”. Brian too was appreciative of the opportunity to work in a professional environment. He recalled the first time (2010) that the he arrived at the venue with the students as “almost dreamlike”. He added;

It was so exciting being in a professional venue with a professional crew that was there to help us and support us, and that element is still very much there even now going into the venue. (Brian)

From an industry staff perspective, Bill articulated a feeling of “involvement” with the school musical and the staff “actually enjoy working on the show” because “its organized, it looks good, it sounds great”. Ronny too was appreciative of “what they are putting on as a
spectacle” but perhaps more importantly for the venue technician he was appreciative of what the school were trying to do by providing the students with this opportunity:

\[
\text{Just giving them the experience of the theatre and a reason to love theatre and just seeing the joy on their faces. The relief – they have just gone through how many months playing these characters. There’s always a lot of emotion there for them and it’s good to see. Good to see them getting into it. (Ronny)}
\]

Mark was enamored by the quality the production both in terms of the aesthetic and educational outcomes of the production and hoped that the well established relationships between the two institutions continues.

**Collaborative Rewards**

Perhaps the most important characteristic of *The Shared Space* is the materialization of the ‘mutual benefits’ that occurred as a result of the partnership successfully navigating the proceeding acts of *Bumping into the Space and Negotiating the Space*. The benefits as discussed forthwith may not have been obvious during the early stages of the school’s partnerships with the venue. However, in time it became apparent that they outweighed the challenges involved, especially during the often-difficult early stages of the partnership.

**Benefits to Venue**

The venue participants articulated a variety of benefits that transpired as a result of the school staging its annual musical in the venue. Some of these benefits, such as enhancing roles and being more involved in the creative process are revealed earlier in this chapter.

One of the most frequently expressed benefits to the venue was the ‘feel good’ factor that stemmed from the presence of the students in the theatre:

\[
\text{I mean I think the benefit to the theatre is that you get that energy coming in from the kids that filters through the whole establishment to the front house to the people in the bar to the, you know the car park attendants if we have any. (Bill)}
\]

Mark expressed that “we just love having them here” and that the school culture and preparation of these students makes them a “pleasure to deal with”. Mark also articulated:

\[
\text{There is no cynicism and being sick and tired of what you are doing because you can’t do anything else and these kids have so much joy in what they do and that makes it enjoyable for us and we are always happy to make them have a positive experience because who knows some of them may one day become a star. (Mark)}
\]
Encouraging students into the industry as alluded to by Mark was a shared reward of the partnership commonly articulated by all the participants. For example, the theatre Manager, Lucy pointed out that the venue “want(s) to be as heavily involved as possible with the education system” and through these industry-education partnerships “encouraging as many locals and as many students from Perth to continue in the industry”. Bill too was conscious that the partnership was made more meaningful “when it encouraged some of those girls or even one of those girls to come into the industry”. He added:

I think it’s good for the girls from the school to realize that there is a career in the theatre—either as an actor or a technician or a set designer or a lighting designer. (Bill)

Ronny supported this view and agreed that the opportunity provided for students to experience the industry in a ‘real life’ setting encouraged “some of them to go further and if they do that’s great”. However, Ronny added that if they don’t then they become “the future audiences that generate and keep pushing this industry along”.

Another benefit articulated by the venue staff participants of having the school stage their productions in the venue was because it attracted a more diverse range of audience to the venue. The theatre, as articulated by Lucy prided itself on “being a community theatre and being a theatre that’s got a wide range of performances that are going to suit a really diverse public” and that having the school stage their yearly musical in the venue helped achieve this aim because of “the amount of great response we get from it”.

It’s also really good cause it opens up a new clientele for the theatre. A lot of the parents might not be normal theatre goers and having their child or a grandchild or someone they know in a performance you know and getting them to the theatre is great exposure for us as well. (Lucy)

The diversity of audience was articulated by the industry participants as a benefit because it was hoped that people who don’t normally frequent the venue may be more inclined to return. Bill added that this benefit was not just isolated to the venue but to the industry as a whole:

So, we’re attracting a whole new demographic as well to the theatre, whether it’s our theatre or the school’s theatre, you're bringing someone to the theatre which I think's important. (Bill)
Benefits to School

The most obvious benefit to the school as articulated by the participants was the increased quality that resulted in the performance being staged in a professional venue. The enhanced quality that transpired was important to Sally because “it’s great to get feedback from people saying we didn’t even know it was a high school show”. Brian added that this was a “massive benefit” because “it just raises the professional standard so much”. Finally, Lucy felt that the whole experience “lifts” because “they are part of a professional venue”.

Another major benefit (as expressed by the school participants) is the wider community exposure that the school receives by staging the musical production in a professional venue. Brian felt that the reputation of the established working theatre was a major reason for this:

...so therefore, we sell more seats to the wider community and you know that's been reflected this year in us almost selling out and an extra show. (Brian)

He added that the community exposure that the show receives would not be possible if the school staged the production in their own venue because “it would be limited in terms of publicity”, whereas for this show “we put a massive banner on front of (the venue), advertise our show you know one to two months before that”. Sally agrees and adds:

I doubt we would get the crowds and the outside people come to our shows if it was at (the school). (Sally)

These perceived benefits for the school were enhanced because the venue where the show is being staged is located in a busy inner-city suburb. As a result, the school received associated advertising and exposure of its brand:

but people who like private school perhaps will think oh yes that’s a nice uniform, and look they’ve got the kids involved in this you know. (Sally)

Sally pointed out that the students “all wear their production t-shirts” throughout the ten days in the venue and “it’s like this massive advert walking through the streets all the time”.

Benefits to wider community

The participants also articulated benefits to the wider community as a result of the partnerships between the venue and the school. One of the main benefits as articulated by Bill
was “the energy” that the students brought into the local community and the people (friends and family) that they attracted. He added:

> You know what I mean it's just a really good thing for the kids to come into (the suburb). (the suburb) benefits from it cause all those kids go and eat and drink you know and their parents go to the cafes and the bars no doubt and the restaurants. (Bill)

The ‘feel good’ factor that the students from the school brought with them into the venue also extended out into the local community. This was highlighted by Sally as being a major benefit of the partnership:

> I go out a couple of times for lunch but just to run over to the QuickMart and buy a sandwich and one guy said to me, oh so what are you doing in the show, and you know I told him and he said there’s so many of your girls around. He said oh they’re beautiful, they’ve got really good manners and they’re so respectful and I went ahhhh. (Sally)

There was similar feedback, as Sally recounts, from “the lady” who worked in the local Café:

> She was so excited that she recognised me, and she remembered what I bought last time, you know like there’s a buzz around (the suburb) when the shows are in. (Sally)

The ‘feel good’ factor was not isolated to the street but was also realised in the foyer of the theatre following the performances. Sally recounted the reasons that this year’s show should be labelled a “success”:

> That we sold out, that everyone was high after the show. I love watching people after a good show because the adrenalin that works through them or the endorphins that makes them so happy they’re just delightful to talk to. (Sally)

These audiences were made up of not only school community but a large part was local community who had no previous relationship with the school. The audience demographic for the shows is explained by Lucy:

> It sells, it sold a lot better than a lot of the performances that we have here which just goes to show that there is you know a very large local community that wants to see these sort of shows as well as people that are actually involved with the students. (Lucy)
The presence of the broader theatrical community meant that the school musical was providing the local community with a greater diversity and range of shows.

In fact, we’ve heard from several people across the board, booked to see (name of show) because it’s awesome and we wanted to see it. When we got our tickets we realised it was (the school). (Sally)

The partnership between the school and professional venue had tangible benefits to the local community through increased business and a ‘feel good factor’ that the students brought with them. In addition, the school production provided the local theatre community with more diversity in shows being offered, at a more affordable rate. It also raised the profile of the school and of young people in general through the students’ ‘infectious energy’ and engagement in the local community.

Summary of Chapter

Mapping the stories of the participants’ experiences of partnerships and untangling the contextual complexities that exist has revealed the ways that this site specific intersectorial partnership has transformed into a mutually beneficial enterprise. With the use of rich descriptions and multilayered themes embedded within a 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships entitled The Shared Space, I have found a way to illuminate the participants’ experiences as well as my own and in turn exposed many of the enablers and constraints (summarized in Table 5) to successful partnerships encountered along the way.

Table 4: Summary of enablers and constraints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A collective investment in quality (pedagogical and aesthetic) outcomes.</td>
<td>Limiting preconceptions brought in from past professional experiences of working in similar partnership contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking advice and being open to feedback.</td>
<td>Mishaps in scheduling and preparation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation prior to entering industry space.</td>
<td>Complacency that occurs when working with same client for many years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making allowances when working with education.</td>
<td>Education taking on too many production roles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsourcing crucial production roles to industry professionals.</td>
<td>Unrealistic expectations (budgetary/time) of what can be achieved in a professional venue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced roles (mentor and co-collaborator) for industry professionals.</td>
<td>Unconscious ‘triggers’ caused by critical incidents or challenging experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earning trust and respect.</td>
<td>Not making allowances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking the time needed to work with school groups and becoming familiar.</td>
<td>Communication difficulties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A high standard in production values.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER FIVE – DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In Chapter Four, the in-depth interviews of the five participants from a professional venue and two school performing arts staff were combined with my own reflective journal to present a co-constructed narrative. The first act, Bumping into the Space, represented the challenges associated when the school group first enters a foreign industry space. This act revealed the limiting pre-conceptions (attitudes) towards both industry and education that are at play early on in the partnership – via the theme, What we bring with us. The importance of careful pre-preparation and planning and the difference this can make to the production outcomes during the crucial first day; the bump-in was emphasized. In Act 2, Negotiating the Space, I highlighted the ways the two groups co-exist and included the importance of effectively communicating, being realistic and making allowances. Whilst the theme, finding your place represented the ways participants negotiated their roles during the production. The final act, The Shared Space describes a familiar place for the participants where respect had been earned, and collaborative rewards abound through a shared investment in enhancing the overall quality of the high school musical experience. The benefits that flowed as a result of this seven year partnership conducted within an industry setting were also presented.

In this chapter, the research findings are explored and discussed. The four metaphors encased in the 3 Act ‘play’ on partnerships are interwoven (in italics) throughout the discussion chapter and supported by relevant literature. The purpose of which is to offer new insights into arts education partnerships and to answer the three research questions.

First, “in what ways are partnerships experienced and negotiated for the purpose of staging a high school musical in a professional venue?”

The purpose of this section, is to discuss the ways that staging the production in a ‘foreign’ industry setting (professional venue)—not the usual space for a high school musical—was challenging. This was especially true for the school group, who had to find effective ways of fitting an education model into an industry world. From an industry perspective, having a school in the venue changed things and required them to adapt standard industry practices including enhancing traditional roles to include co-collaborator and mentor, and modifying standard practices by going at a slower pace when an education client is in the venue.

Secondly, “what are the enablers and constraints to quality arts partnerships between industry and education during the staging of a high school musical?”
This section discusses how traditional ways of viewing teachers and industry were constraining in these partnership contexts. I also revisit two critical incidents that occurred on Day 1 and Day 3 of the school’s tenure in the professional venue to demonstrate the ways that established and outmoded attitudes towards working in these partnerships contexts can be ‘triggered’ and ‘reset’. Finally, I discuss a new space where arts education partnerships that are conducted in industry spaces can flourish if they are given the time to grow and both groups are united in a shared goal.

The third section addresses “in what ways, and to whom are arts/education partnerships potentially beneficial?”

One of the central aims of this study was to provide a better understanding and appreciation of the ways that inclusive arts education partnerships conducted in an industry setting may be mutually beneficial. I also discuss the importance of creating a shared vision of quality that includes a pleasing aesthetic with more pedagogically aligned values. Finally, I argue that even though staging a high school musical in a professional venue was challenging, for the school group in particular, the venture was worth the mutual rewards that resulted.

Negotiating Partnerships

The industry setting (a theatre venue)—not the usual space for a high school musical—is highlighted here as a significant factor that shaped the participants’ experiences of partnerships. For the school group in particular, fitting an education model into an industry world was a challenge, while for the industry staff, having the school in the venue changed things.

Not the Usual Space

In the description on Day 1, Bumping into the Space, the venue staff who worked in the theatre venue were labelled The Occupiers, whilst the school participants were cast as The Foreigners. This arrangement for an arts education partnership was in contrast to the bulk of the literature that has the two groups (industry and education) mostly configured in the reverse; arts industry – commonly ‘foreigners’ usually enter into education spaces (Hanley, 2003). The prevalence of research conducted in the UK, USA, Canada and Australia on artists in residency programs in schools is a testament to this fact (Bamford, 2006).

In contrast, there is a relatively small amount of literature on partnership engagements configured in the reverse, i.e., arts education partnerships conducted within industry spaces,
such as galleries (Hall, 2010) and theatres (Ewing, 2011). The few examples that do exist are most commonly initiated by arts organisations or post-secondary tertiary institutions (Carlisle, 2011). As discussed in Chapter 2, many of these partnership engagements are dubiously motivated and have been criticized as nothing more than an opportunity for arts organisations to get ‘bums on seats’ (Hanley, 2003). The partnerships within these studies outlined a minimal role for teachers (Hogan and Readman, 2006), with most characterized (at best) as more of a professional development opportunity (Hall, 2010; Winston 1998) than partnerships based on a shared model of sustainable development (Carlisle, 2011). In contrast, the industry setting (professional venue) in this study provided a unique opportunity to reveal how a school initiated education-to-arts partnership configuration worked, filling a much-needed gap in arts education research.

**Fitting an Educational Model into an Industry World**

In leaving the familiarity of the school space, the school group were laying bare their own theatre practices—including taking on production roles that they had little to no experience—for measurement against the standards of practice used in performing arts industry venue (see Table 5). Initially, the success of the partnership hinged on the ability of the school group to adapt their traditional high school musical practices and equip themselves as industry ready to engage in a foreign industry space.

In taking on this challenge, the school group outsourced many of the crucial roles involved in this process to members of the performing arts industry. As a direct consequence of this strategy (outsourcing), the school improved the efficiency and quality of their own musical theatre practices. For example, my experiences of outsourcing crucial roles and collaboration with industry professionals when working within an industry context had resulted in an increased sense of ownership of the creative role as director/artist, whilst also complementing my primary role as a teacher.

**Table 5: Enhancement of roles and practices (school group)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles Enhanced</th>
<th>Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artist-Teacher</td>
<td>Detailed preparation and planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asking for advice and being open to feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outsourcing production roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adopting a grounded and realistic approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greater focus on aesthetic outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fitting an education model into an industry world for the school group, however, was not an easy process and the findings revealed (Day 1 & Day 3), when the standard practices of a secondary performing arts department were not compatible with that of an industry-based venue. For example, publishing detailed production schedules was not a practice that the school had engaged in before entering into the partnership with the industry group. Along with thorough preparation and planning, the school group also had to learn to be realistic with what they could achieve in the venue within the time frame and budgetary constraints. Furthermore, there was also an extra level of pressure for the school group in taking the musical production into a professional venue when compared to negotiating the same roles in a school setting. This was alluded to by the education participants who frequently mentioned the larger and wider community audiences that the school shows staged in a professional venue attracted.

These associated risks involved in pioneering arts education partnerships that are initiated from schools and conducted within industry spaces, may be a contributing factor as to why schools do not tend to venture out of traditional silos and engage in these types of site specific partnerships. The researcher is also aware that there is a perception that the costs of hiring a venue with industry professionals makes this type of partnership out of the reach for many schools, and these concerns are discussed further in recommendations. However, the purpose of this study is to provide school groups, who may benefit from this education–to–industry configuration with a tangible working example of the ways these partnerships can succeed. If education providers are willing to adapt standard practices—including outsourcing roles and exposure to wider community audiences—then more schools may flourish in these types of partnership spaces.

Having a School in the Venue Changed Things

Hosting education groups within the professional venue changed the usual working experience for industry participants (see Table 6). The findings of this study revealed how venue (technical) staff had to learn to get into a different mindset and make allowances, including being patient and going at a slower pace. From this perspective, the venue staff were entering into an unusual or ‘foreign’ space (just like the school) as many of the allowances made during the partnership contrasted to their standard industry roles and practices.

The industry participants’ roles were enhanced via their engagement within an educational context, which at its core was a vehicle for student learning. The pedagogical aim
of the event was a characteristic that the industry participants had grown to embrace over the seven years of working with the school. The venue participants expressed a growing connection to the purpose of staging a high school musical and appreciated what the school group was trying to achieve. The value added in working with students in this capacity had brought another dimension to their professional roles (being a vehicle for student learning) and was something that they had not expected nor knew to look for in the early stages of the partnership.

Similarly, for the venue (technical) participants, being involved as co-collaborators (not standard practice for many technicians when professional clients shared the venue space) was also a rewarding outcome of these partnerships. The findings revealed how over time, feelings of trust and familiarity helped to create a shared space where industry technicians’ roles evolved into co-collaborator and mentor. This was further enhanced through the willingness of the school group to ask for advice, whilst also being open to receiving feedback, which in turn had reinforced mutual feelings of a shared investment in and dedication to enhancing the overall quality of the production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industry-Mentor</td>
<td>Going at a slower pace and being patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-collaborator</td>
<td>Making allowances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharing in the educational aims</td>
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</table>

The process of describing the experiences from an industry perspective, have significant implications in relation to widening the scope for industry hosting education ventures in the future. The three industry participants reported that working with the school group in this way was an enjoyable and satisfying addition to their traditional roles but that a more detailed understanding of what this new role would look like in the future was required. This is further discussed in the recommendations made at the end of this chapter. However, it is important to note that the allowances made by the industry staff when working with the school in this study were not formalized or part of any working agreement made between the school and the venue. Rather, the role enhancements discussed occurred organically with the industry group in this study over a number of years.
Finally, the successful negotiation of this unusual partnership between the school group in a professional venue was dependent on several key factors. These include a fluid partnership process of role negotiation that (from an education perspective) encouraged the outsourcing of critical roles to industry professionals. This in turn created the space for school participants to have a more rewarding experience with greater focus on a smaller number of roles. From an industry perspective, working with education clients enhanced traditional roles through industry mentoring and working as co-collaborators on a common artistic/pedagogical endeavor. Future expectations of these expanding roles require further research and consideration, particularly in relation to the implications for both school and industry professionals over an extended period of time.

The permeable boundaries (Bamford, 2006) between the two groups helped create a symbiotic relationship in which industry based values for a pleasing aesthetic where interchangeable with a more pedagogically aligned focus on student learning. However, as the Findings clearly demonstrate this relationship wasn’t always an easy one and required constant evaluation and negotiation over many years of working together. In the following section, I discuss the ways that the constraints to successful partnerships become the enablers and the ways that each group minimized conflict, especially during the early stages of the partnership.

**Making the Constraints the Enablers**

The limiting preconceptions that were triggered in the school group and the venue staff participants during critical incidents that occurred on Day 1 and Day 3 are examined here. Furthermore, the use of reflective awareness as an effective antidote to unconscious cultural patterns (stereotypes) that harm healthy working relationships is explored. Finally, I discuss the necessity of giving arts education partnerships time to grow into a mutually beneficial enterprise.

**Toxic Attitudes**

The findings revealed that limiting preconceptions brought into these partnerships contexts can be toxic and harmful. For example, the three venue (technical) staff recounted story after story of previous negative experiences when working with education groups in industry spaces. This consisted of multiple criticisms of school groups for not being responsive to feedback whilst describing education staff as unorganized, ‘novices’ who didn’t understand the business of theatre. These attitudes form part of a larger stereotype
popularized by ‘Mr G’ from the Australian comedy series for television, *Summer Heights High*. The following reflective journal written during the data analysis phase of this research captures my own views towards the relevance of the stereotype captured in the ‘Mr G’ character:

*For many years, I too had seen drama teachers that fitted the bill as the stereotype ‘Mr G’ portrayed in the comedy series “Summer Heights High”. Teachers who may not have had the success they wanted in their own professional careers as artists and so attempted to fill that hole with hero worship from their students. And because of the small size and relative isolation of performing arts departments in many schools they succeeded in creating a secret world in which they were the kings or queens of their own distorted kingdom. They make themselves the center of attention – overworked – always seeking approval – planning, delivering and defending programs based around their own unconscious personal agendas – often at the expense of anyone (including students) who attempt to expose the truth behind their populist charade.*

A similar description of performing arts teachers has also been found from the 1950’s in a published article from the United States. In it Arthur Ballet (1950) criticizes teachers who he said knew nothing of technical theatre and whom he described as “frustrated would be Broadway and Hollywood aspirants, overreaching beyond the audience and students to fulfill personal ambition” (p. 329). The longevity and popularity of these limiting views may be a contributing factor to why industry professionals do not hold teachers of performing arts in high regard (Upitis, 2005). Similarly, for the school staff, there was a preconception that industry staff didn’t care about education shows in the same way they did when working on professional shows. These negative and often unexamined preconceptions from both industry and education may be the reason why these stereotypes still exist and partnership between the two different groups often fail.

If arts education partnerships that are conducted within industry spaces are to succeed in the future, outdated and limiting stereotypes need to be replaced with positive, inclusive and informed perceptions of both groups within the partnership paradigm (Greene, 2001). A powerful way to achieve this aim is to develop a better understanding of the ways that toxic attitudes can be triggered in the partnerships space.

**Triggering Old Patterns - the reflexive eye.**

Capturing my personal responses and the experiences of the seven participants via reflexive techniques during the ten days of partnerships allowed me to take a more conscious and objective view of some of the more challenging partnership interactions (critical incidents). A key finding that resulted from this approach was the detection of ‘triggers’ that
ignite outdated views of working in partnership contexts. Particularly challenging were my interactions with the venue’s Technical Manager – Bill on Day 1 and Day 3 as outlined in the theme challenging experiences.

The two critical incidents both centered around scheduling; the school truck arriving with musical instruments before the ‘pit’ was ready on Day 1 and the issue with plotting lights over the top of the student’s first ‘run’ of the show in the venue on Day 3. Via my reflective journal, I realised that these critical incidents had resurfaced old patterns that closely resembled previous professional experiences in other venues, where I had felt guilty of the charge of being a drama teacher until ‘proven innocent’.

It is important to note, that this negative position was not my usual attitude towards working with industry staff at this venue, where I had mostly felt safe from the labelling that accompanied me throughout my career in short term projects conducted in professional venues. However, what I witnessed through this reflexive process was that I was not immune to these triggers, and the critical incident (re: scheduling) had created a response in me that made me default to an old and constraining pattern of viewing industry professionals. From my position, I traced the cause of the critical incident back to ‘something they did’ (the venue staff). For example, I assumed that not bothering to re-read the schedule, was ‘evidence’ enough that they did not care because this was ‘just a school show’. I wondered whether this experience was also true for the venue’s Technical Manager, Bill and maybe he too had triggered an old pattern of viewing performing arts teachers as unorganised and ‘amateur’.

The reflexive methodological approach (as both researcher and participant in the study) proved to be a powerful enabler to these partnerships, as it allowed me to move out of the space of who was right or wrong and recognize my own limiting preconceptions towards industry in these partnerships contexts. I now understand that the challenges that I had reacted to during this research period were directly related to my own outdated sociocultural context as a teacher of performing arts.

By adopting this reflexive mode of enquiry, I have highlighted that when things go wrong, critical incidents may become triggers that have the potential to revert individuals (including myself) to unhealthy and outmoded attitudes which serve as a significant barrier to establishing and sustaining successful partnerships. This is why it is important to uncover, articulate, stay aware and maintain dialogue around how partnerships contexts can cause triggers. This is a valuable lesson and will inform my future relationships with industry as I endeavor to keep these often-hidden assumptions and default position at the forefront of my mind when establishing partnerships.
The Partnership Journey: From Something to ‘Get Through’ to Something to ‘Look Forward to’.

Aside from reflexivity, time served as the greatest enabler for the growth of these partnerships. One of the benefits of conducting research on a long-term, seven-year partnership, was that participants recalled how their positive relationships had not unfolded overnight, but rather as a complex learning process that occurred over time.

In this study, the time allowed for partnerships to grow enabled these two groups (industry and education) to reach the transformational point described in Act 3, The Shared Space. Within this space, participants spoke of the importance of familiarity (based on history) that both groups now shared with each other. The school group described a greater sense of belonging in what had been originally classified as a ‘foreign’ industry space. Feelings of mistrust that had dominated the early stages of the partnership were now replaced with an emerging sense of trust and mutual respect. This finding is consistent with Maxine Greene’s (2001) research of the importance of taking the time to get to know the individuals who inhabit these partnerships spaces rather than just the institutions.

The time it took for the two groups to refine systems of working together was also a crucial element to the success of the partnerships within this study. The industry staff spoke of the need to go slowly and be patient in order to get things right when working with education. There was also a call for school groups to be realistic about what they could achieve in the professional venue space in the time allocated. This finding has important implication for schools and industry organisations who plan to undertake these types of projects, as time (when used effectively) is a powerful enabler for successful partnerships.

Unfortunately, time remains an ‘elusive obvious’ if based on the limited literature that explores this theme in arts education partnerships. This may be because much of the research conducted thus far is on short term projects that are initiated from within arts industry and tertiary centers (Burnaford, 2001). The longevity of the partnerships within this study provides an example of the quality that Bamford (2006) suggests is far more likely to result from a project that has occurred for at least two years. Provisions should be made by industry and educational organisations alike for long term and sustained partnerships that are given the time to grow into positive and mutually beneficial enterprises.

The findings from this study clearly demonstrate how negative pre-conceptions of both groups can be transformed through a positive partnership process. According to the venue staff, a school group’s willingness to thoroughly prepare, be realistic, take on board industry advice and be open to feedback are essential elements for dismantling preconceived
negative attitudes towards working with education groups. Similarly, the school group’s view of working in partnership contexts with industry members moved from a place of mistrust to a place of trust and mutual respect because they felt the industry staff in the venue where aligned and supportive of the group’s educational aims by taking the time needed and being patient when the school group were in the venue.

In answering the final research question; “in what ways and to whom are arts education partnerships potentially beneficial”, I discuss the meaning of the word ‘quality’ as it pertains to not only these specific partnerships but also the broader arts education partnership landscape. I also argue that a shared vision of quality is key to bringing these two traditionally separate sectors (education and industry) closer together.

**Mutually Beneficial Arts Education Partnerships**

One of the key aims of this research study is to encourage more schools to produce arts-related events in industry spaces by highlighting the mutual benefits of these partnerships as described in Act 3, *The Shared Space*. The following section discusses a new vision for art education partnerships where the responsibility for the overall quality of the event is shared by both groups in the partnerships paradigm via ‘permeable’ boundaries (Bamford, 2006).

**Quality High School Musical: A Shared Vision**

The importance of the term ‘quality’ within arts education partnerships has already been highlighted in the literature (Bamford, 2010). However, what is significant to this study and what is discussed forthwith is the re-defining of the term quality within a shared vision, in which both education and industry groups invest and from which many mutual benefits flowed.

In this study, a view shared by both sets of participants was that the act of staging the musical in a professional venue had raised the ‘standard’ of the whole production. For the school participants, this stemmed from the opportunity to work in a professional theatre and overcome the ‘high school musical’ tag. For the industry staff, they appreciated what the school was trying to accomplish from an education point of view and valued the opportunity to contribute to the quality of the student’s experience via enhanced roles as co-collaborators and industry mentors.

The findings revealed that the quality of the partnership experience was inextricably connected to the production quality. Furthermore, it also showed that an increased production quality was possible when the pedagogical and aesthetic purpose of the event were running in
tandem with each other and driving the partnership process (Seidel et al, 2009). This shared definition of quality is also highlighted in Anne Bamford’s (2006) work where she suggests connection between the aesthetic definition and educational one as being ‘kin’ in the realization of successful student outcomes.

The parallel between the contrasting but shared industry and education perceptions of quality were clearly evident in the findings and contributed to the overall success of the musical. The industry space, who traditionally define quality by the end product – the number of seats that were sold, the response of the audience and critics, stood in contrast to the traditional pedagogical model of success – that although containing elements of the industry definition are dominantly based around educational learning processes and increased student engagement. The enabling of these partnerships created the shared space in which the outcomes were now being shared between the two different groups that normally have contrasting values.

Raising Standards: The Greater the Risk the Greater the Reward

The findings in this study revealed that entering a relative unknown industry space was a risky venture for a school that until 2010 had staged its annual production within the school hall. However, as the findings revealed, the risks in this regard were worth the rewards. One of these rewards was the realization of a shared aspiration from the school participants to challenge community expectations of the standard of a regular high school musical. The findings revealed that based on the anecdotal accounts of the participants the standard of the performance in this year’s show had exceeded school and wider community expectations.

The shared experiences of the seven participants in this study (as well as my own) demonstrate that the perceptions of the standard of the musical formed by the participants (educational and aesthetic) related directly to better partnerships. Sally and Brian both admitted that they couldn’t have achieved the same high standard within a school environment, pertaining to the production values in the show as having high professional quality due to being in a professional venue. Whilst all of the venue technical staff revealed that the high production values for a school show was an enabler that made the partnership with the school more rewarding.

This increased production quality aids in changing the perceptions of a school show and in turn may engage the wider community to build social capital (Carslile, 2011) by promoting healthier attitudes towards arts education within secondary schools.
A Note on Benefits to Students.

It was not in the scope or purpose of this study to explore the impact of these partnerships on the experience of the students. However, as reported via the participants, the students involved were afforded significant benefits as a result of staging the musical within a professional venue. Furthermore, the experience of working within an industry context has opened the students’ eyes to see what is possible in a professional industry setting. The experience of entering into a professional theatre space to stage a high school musical is an example of applied learning in a community context that has been proven to improve student engagement by making connections between what is being taught and the ‘real world’ experience (Pridham & Deed, 2012)

Breaking Down the Barriers to Successful Partnerships.

The overall quality of the production experience for the participants also acted as a lubricant to break down the limiting and outdated attitudes that both groups held towards working in these partnership contexts. For example, the industry participants who had previously viewed performing arts teachers as unskilled novices and disruptive influences on the lives of their students had changed these views (over the course of seven years) to dedicated teachers with skilled theatrical practices. Likewise, the education staffs’ view of industry technicians as disengaged and impatient observers had transformed over the course of the partnership into generous, caring and engaged co-collaborators and mentors.

The breaking down of limiting preconceptions was a key finding in this study that has ramifications towards the future promotion of a more positive professional identity for performing arts teachers and industry professionals within these site-specific partnerships. It is envisioned that the experiences of the education and industry participants shared in this study will serve as an example of how positive working relationships can evolve if given time to grow and are based on a shared purpose and vision.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to understand the ways that arts education partnerships function and to use these new understandings to advance effective arts education practice. This study found that—over time—the limiting socio-cultural forces in these partnership contexts may be replaced with positive and effective working relationships that transcend traditional role classifications and enhance roles for both industry and education groups. These new roles see industry and education groups sharing the responsibility via a new vision
for arts education partnerships in which industry and education values for quality (aesthetic and educational) are shared amid permeable boundaries. The mutual benefits that flowed in this study as a result of the two groups reaching *The Shared Space* are only achievable when honest self-examination is combined with open communication and a commitment over time from all key groups in arts education partnerships.

**Limitations**

It is acknowledged that this research is only a snapshot of the experiences of seven participants as well as my own in “instances of social action” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 290) within a ten day period. The education and venue participants were from one homogeneous group representing one school and one professional venue. However, this allowed for greater richness and depth to the data where as Flyvberg (as cited in Riessman, 2004) asserts outweighs any claims of transferability or generalizability in social science research. If the scope of this study was larger, a wider set of participants (from multiple schools and industry settings) would further enhance the trustworthiness of the research. Further research is needed to gather data on a variety of contexts where arts education partnerships occur through a school initiated event both in and out of industry spaces. For example, it would be significant to see a longitudinal study of the development of a project initiated from within a school that utilised an industry space over a period of several years so that the stages involved in this process are more clearly defined and articulated.

**Recommendations**

The findings reporting the journey of an arts education partnership during the staging of high school musical in a professional venue have important implications and provide credible information to inform performing arts education, practice and further research. In this section, I offer a number of recommendations to further validate these outcomes and fulfill the purpose of this research.

One of the aims of this study was to provide a contextual example of an arts education partnership initiated from within a school. As discussed in Chapter 2, there is pervasive presence in the literature of research that had been based within school spaces and/or initiated from arts organisation and/or tertiary bodies, but very little from the perspective of performing arts teachers currently working within secondary schools, and even fewer that described the experience of staging performing arts events within industry spaces.
addition, many of the motivations of these studies are unclear (Hanley, 2003) where the voice of performing arts teachers appear as little more than background noise to that of the researcher’s perspective. It is important to note that the value of this body of literature is not being questioned here. However, the dearth of research on these types of projects within the arts education partnership literature does validate the importance of more school initiated projects in order to create a space for alternate views of partnerships that offers a deeper understanding from an educational/pedagogical perspective.

Consequently, this study was intended to speak to performing arts teachers who may (like me) be experiencing similar challenges in negotiating arts/education partnerships. Fundamental to this research purpose was to disseminate the findings amongst teachers and tertiary training institutions to encourage the use of autoethnographic and action research approaches that explore why barriers to partnerships (including unhelpful stereotypes) still exist. By claiming a more equal voice in the arts education research conversation, teachers can better define the needs of education within these partnership contexts, which is required for more substantial and mutually beneficial partnerships to occur in the future (Burnaford, 2001).

The second recommendation is to arts industry training bodies to include an ‘education ready’ module as part of the standard training of industry personnel. The purpose of the training would be to develop a better understanding of the specific needs of education groups and the enhanced role that industry personnel play in successful partnerships (both in schools, industry and wider community spaces). Furthermore, it would aim at shifting the cultural view of working on education events from just ‘something that you have to get through’ while waiting for jobs with more ‘kudos’ to come along to ‘something to look forward to’.

The partnership experiences of the venue participants in this study, raises the question of whether a formalized, regulated component of industry professional should include a role of ‘industry mentor’. The prospect of an industry mentor role as part of the normal training and expectations of industry personnel working with schools is new and to my knowledge not described in previous arts education literature. However, if more schools adopt site-specific partnerships in the future, industry organisations should provide appropriate training for technicians who work in these contexts. Moreover, schools may be more inclined to approach a venue that promotes itself as being ‘education friendly’ and qualified to work with school groups. It is also incumbent on schools and teacher training organisations to ensure that performing arts teachers are appropriately trained and ‘industry ready’ to work effectively.
within professional performance venues. The insights provided in this study only describe a fragment of what this new and expanding relationship could look like in the future. More detailed research that supports and further explores the creation of industry mentors, similar to the teaching artist movement (Booth, 2003) would make a valuable contribution to arts partnership literature.

Another key consideration outside the scope of this study but worthy of further consideration is to assess the feasibility (fiscal and otherwise) of school performing arts events that utilise performing arts industry personnel to fill vital production roles. The researcher is aware of a view—alluded to by Van Houten (1999)—that the cost of hiring industry professionals is ‘out of reach’ for many schools, and that exclusively using school staff to fill vital production roles is the more financially sustainable approach. However, the apparent savings made from this practice stem from an outdated model in which generous staff give up their time to stage shows with minimal budgets. Furthermore, many schools who exclusively use school staff to fill vital production roles in an attempt to save money may be at risk of false economy because the actual costs of this practice have not been honestly investigated and accounted for. A first step to rectify this problem is to assess what the actual costs associated with staging school performing arts events are. A future study on the feasibility of staging school performance events should also take into account the impact staging shows has on school staff and include a more robust consideration of the ‘real-costs’ of staging quality (pedagogical and aesthetic) theatrical events. Only when we have a considered and evidenced-based understanding of the impact that staging performing arts events have on school staff, may we accurately assess the ‘real-costs’ of utilizing industry professionals as part of the regular landscape of producing school performing arts events.

This research demonstrates how an education driven arts initiative conducted within an industry space can be a mutually beneficial enterprise. The partnerships within a professional venue connected both students and teachers to a ‘real-world’ experience where they were able to taste what the professional performing arts industry was really like (Pridham & Deed, 2012). One of the main aims of this research is to provide a framework for schools who are attempting to understand and therefore overcome/avoid the challenges associated with these types of partnerships. Consequently, schools that want to take on this challenge can use the lessons learnt in this study for initiating, navigating and creating a shared space within a variety of related arts education contexts. It is hoped that this framework not only encourages more schools to initiate similar ventures within industry
spaces but also to document these partnerships experiences via reflective journals and in-depth interviews and contribute this knowledge to a growing body of literature that surrounds arts education partnerships.

A positive first step to rebalance the inequity and isolationism that exists in arts education in Australia, and to bring all the key stakeholders to the ‘table of conversation’ on ways to foster inclusive partnerships between the two sectors may be the release of a joint statement similar to *Arts Education for America’s Students: A Shared Endeavor*. The statement would call for mutual responsibility to be taken in arts education through partnerships between schools and the arts sector. The participating institutions would be asked to make a commitment to act together in the improvement of learning instruction and practices. Only when all the stakeholders: arts educators, community arts providers and non-arts educators are present in the conversation can the vision outlined in this study be realised.

It takes great risk, hard work and perseverance to move beyond the safety of the traditional school boundaries into a foreign industry space. However, as this research study demonstrates, if both groups (industry and education) are prepared to invest time and self-awareness, then the development of mutually positive partnerships when working with industry people in industry spaces is achievable and rewarding. Furthermore, the placement and visibility of these types of performing arts events will over time propel the prevailing views held by industry and education professionals towards the ‘other’ into a more exciting, dynamic and permeable space of mutually inclusive and beneficial partnerships.
References


Burnaford, G. (2003). Language matters: Clarifying partnerships between teachers and


Arizona, USA.


## Appendices

### Appendix A: Theatre Venue Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Theatre Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Friday 11th March 2016** | Bump in Set (All day)  
Need for Orchestra Pit (Midday)  
Iona Bus arrive at Midday  
Bump in Lights (auditorium only)  
Bump in Sound (auditorium only) | Full Crew All Day 9-5pm |
| **Saturday 12th March 2016** | Bump in and Plot Lights (All day)                                                 | Lighting only                        |
| **Sunday 13th March 2016**  | Finish Light Plotting (All Day)  
Orchestra Rehearsal 2-5pm  
Cast Rehearsal on stage (No tech) | Limited Crew  
Tech Manager and Lighting only 9-5pm  
Cast 9-5pm |
| **Monday 14th March, 2016** | Bump In Sound  
Band Rehearsal 12-3pm  
Sound Rehearsal with Band and Cast 4-7pm  
Finalize Set issues | Crew 9-7.30pm  
Orchestra 12-7pm  
Cast 4-7pm |
| **Tuesday 15th March 2016**  | Tech Rehearsal 1 Full Cast 9-5pm                                               | Show Crew & Lead/Male Cast 9-5pm |
| **Wednesday 16th March 2016**  | Tech Rehearsal 2 Full Cast 9-5pm  
Orchestra 9-5pm  
Dress Rehearsal #1 10-1pm  
Dress Rehearsal #2 2-5pm | Full Cast & Show Crew 9-5pm |
| **Thursday 17th March 2016**  | Final Dress Rehearsal  
Orchestra 7-11pm | Full Cast & Show Crew 5-11pm  
Show Crew 4-5hr call |
| **Friday 18th March 2016**  | Performance 1 @ 7.30pm Orchestra 7-11pm | Show Crew and Cast 5-11pm |
| **Saturday 19th March 2016**  | Performance 2 @ 2.00pm Orchestra 1.30-4.30pm  
Performance 3 @ 7.30pm Orchestra 7-11pm | Show Crew and Cast 12-11pm |
| **Sunday 20th March 2016**  | Performance 4 @ 2.00pm Orchestra 1.30-4.30pm | Show Crew and Cast 12-6pm |
| **Monday 21st March 2016**  | Bump Out                                           | Full Crew 9-2pm                      |
Appendix B: Invitation to take part in the study

Dear (Participants Name),

I am writing on behalf of the director of Performing Arts, Matthew Aris who has been given permission to conduct a research study that involved Iona Presentation College as part of his Masters of Education (Research) at Murdoch University. The purpose of this study is to explore experiences of partnerships between performing arts industry and performing arts education during the staging of a high school musical in a professional venue.

You have been selected as a possible participant because of your involvement in the production of Annie, to be staged at the Regal Theatre from March 18 2016.

If you decide to take part in this study it is important that you understand that this decision is entirely voluntary. Your anonymity is assured if you decide not to take part and Mr Aris will not be informed of your decision either way. The interviews will be conducted by a third-party interviewer and your name and personal details will be omitted prior to the data being passed on to Mr Aris for analysis.

Please find attached an information letter that outlines the details of the study as well as your rights and obligations. If you wish to proceed please reply to this email with your choice of TWO interview times from the attached schedule.

Please reply to this email by 4pm Wednesday March 16.

Regards,
Appendix C: Information Letter

Information Letter
Experiences of Partnerships between Performing Arts Education and Performing Arts Industry during the Staging of a high school musical

Investigator(s)
Dr Peter Wright (Associate Professor of Arts Education & Research Methods)
Mr Robin Pascoe (Senior Lecturer Arts & Drama Education)
Mr Matthew Aris (Masters Student investigator)

Contact Person
Dr Peter Wright

Email
p.wright@murdoch.edu.au

Telephone No. (08) 93602242

Invitation
You are invited to participate in this research study that is being conducted as partial fulfilment of a Masters of Education degree at Murdoch University. The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of partnerships between performing arts industry and performing arts education during the staging of a high school musical in a professional venue. This has the aim of enhancing the possibility of positive and mutually beneficial partnerships between Arts industry and education in the future.

You have been identified as a suitable participant due to your involvement in the education and/or industry sector of [REDACTED] musical [REDACTED] at the [REDACTED] between March 11 and March 21 2016.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to attend TWO interviews during the staging of the [REDACTED] musical production on Friday 11th March & Monday 21 March 2016.

The interviews will clarify and gather information on how you experience inter-sectorial partnerships. The questions asked during the interview process will not relate to your experiences of partnership with other staff within your area (Education and/or industry) but rather specifically focus on your relational experience with the ‘other’ industry or school performing arts staff during the staging of a high school musical. For example, school performing art staff will reflect on their experiences of partnerships with industry staff and vice versa.

The student researcher (who is known to you) will be combining the data provided in the interviews with his own reflections of partnerships. In order to protect your rights, the student researcher has not been involved in the recruitment process. This is to ensure your confidentiality will be maintained if you decide not to take part in this study. If you agree to participate in this study, then your confidentiality will be maintained through the use of a third-party interviewer who has appropriate experience and who has had no previous contact with the school or the professional venue. The third-party interviewer will be instructed that any material in the interviews that she feels may compromise the participant’s professional relationships should be removed before it is forwarded to the student researcher for analysis. However, we understand that although extreme care has been taken to protect your rights you may still be recognisable to the student researcher. It is important to note, however, that if you are a school performing arts staff member the questions asked during the interview process will not relate to your experiences of partnerships with the student researcher or other
performing arts staff but rather specifically focus on your relational experience with industry staff during the staging of a high school musical.

The interviews will occur at a place convenient to you and be approximately 30-45 minutes in length. The interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis purposes only. Participants will later be contacted to check interpretations of some aspects of the interview. To maintain your confidentiality and anonymity, the interviews will be conducted by an external interviewer (who has no previous contact within this context) and pseudonyms assigned to protect your privacy.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal from the Study
It is important that you understand that your involvement is this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have you participate, we respect your right to decline. There will be no consequences to you if you decide not to participate, and this will not affect your treatment / service. If you decide to discontinue participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation. If you withdraw, all information you have provided will be destroyed.

Your privacy
Your privacy is very important to us. Your participation in this study and any information will be treated in a confidential manner. Your name and identifying details will not be used in the thesis and/or any publication arising out of the research. Following the study the data will be kept in a de-identified format, in a locked cabinet in the office of the Chief Investigator for at least five years and then permanently destroyed.

Possible Benefits
You may not get any personal benefit from taking part in this study. However, reflexive methods of sharing your feelings and experiences of inter-sectoral partnerships in interviews may encourage thoughtfulness and sensitivity of your own collaborative practice during arts related events. In addition, the knowledge gained from your participation may provide valuable feedback to the discipline of performing arts teaching as well as relevant arts industry organisations to gain richer understandings of performing arts education and industry partnerships.

Possible Risks
The focus of the research is on exploring your experiences of inter-sectoral partnerships. There is a slight risk of distress if personal issues were to arise during the interviews, however, it is up to you how much you wish to share and if you feel the questions are too intrusive you can decline from responding at any time.

Questions
If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact either Dr Peter Wright on ph 93602242 or Matthew Aris on ph 0412458007. Either of us would be happy to discuss any aspect of the research with you.

Once we have analysed the information from this study we will email a summary of our findings. You can expect to receive this feedback within 18 months.

We would like to thank you in advance for your assistance with this research project. If you are willing to consent to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form. This letter is for you to keep.
Appendix D: Consent Form

Experiences of Partnerships between Performing Arts Education and Performing Arts Industry during the Staging of a high school musical

I have read the participant information sheet, which explains the nature of the research and the possible risks. The information has been explained to me and all my questions have been satisfactorily answered. I have been given a copy of the information sheet to keep.

I am happy to be interviewed and for the interview to be audio-recorded as part of this research. I understand that I do not have to answer particular questions if I do not want to and that I can withdraw at any time without needing to give a reason and without consequences to myself.

I agree that research data from the results of the study may be published provided my name or any identifying data is not used. I have also been informed that I may not receive any direct benefits from participating in this study.

I understand that all information provided by me is treated as confidential and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law.

Participant’s name: __________________________

Signature of Participant: __________________________ Date: ……/……/……

I confirm that I have provided the Information Letter concerning this study to the above participant; I have explained the study and have answered all questions asked of me.

Signature of student researcher: __________________________ Date:

……/……/…..
Appendix E: Roles Negotiated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performing Arts Staff</th>
<th>Venue Staff</th>
<th>Other Professional Staff</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Non – Performing Arts Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director*</td>
<td>Technical Manager</td>
<td>Musical Director</td>
<td>Assistant Stage Manager</td>
<td>Props Assistant</td>
<td>Props and magic advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreographer</td>
<td>Lighting Operator</td>
<td>Set Designer</td>
<td>Male Cast</td>
<td>Videography</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Designer*</td>
<td>Sound Assistant</td>
<td>Lighting Designer</td>
<td>Costume, Hair and Makeup</td>
<td>Dog Supervisor</td>
<td>VIP Function Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Manager*</td>
<td>Follow Spot Operators</td>
<td>Sound Designer</td>
<td>Props Building</td>
<td>Cast</td>
<td>Male Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Production Manager*</td>
<td>Head Mechanist</td>
<td>Stage Manager</td>
<td>Orchestra Members</td>
<td>Props Building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Assistant*</td>
<td>Venue Manager</td>
<td>Sound Operator</td>
<td>Costume, Hair and Makeup</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Manager*</td>
<td>FOH Manager</td>
<td>Set Construction</td>
<td>Assistant Stage Manager</td>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Props Manager*</td>
<td>Assistant Mechanist</td>
<td>Vocal Coaches</td>
<td>Program Sellers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Assistant*</td>
<td>Dog Trainer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra Manager*</td>
<td>Male Cast Member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Cast Member</td>
<td>Orchestra Members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Multiple Role (denotes at least one other role has been played by the same person alongside this role).
Appendix F: Interview Questions

Performing Arts Industry – 1st Interview Questions

• Please describe your role at the theatre. Outline the major responsibilities and activities of your role? What’s entailed?
• How do you know this is going well? Give examples?
• How many high school musicals have you worked on?
• Can you give an example of working on productions with members of performing arts education? (Be specific where you can about the Iona productions)
• What are your expectations when working with education staff (specific to your role) during the coming 10 days? Does this back up or contradict your past experiences with working with Performing Arts education?
• Can you give me some specific example/s?
• How does the experience of working with education staff on a musical compare with that of working with other industry professionals on a similar type of theatrical production?
• In what ways may have this experience played out differently if the person in the role was an industry professional rather than an education staff member?
• What are the benefits (if any) to the theatre and the wider Performing Arts Industry of having school’s like Iona stage their musical in a professional venue such as this?

Performing Arts Industry – 2nd Interview Questions

• How did the musical go? Tell me about it.
• How was the experience of working with school performing arts staff during their time in the venue for the musical?
• Did you find these experiences familiar or unfamiliar when compared to working with members of the performing arts industry in similar roles?
• Describe a significant experience (something that stuck out in your mind) of collaborating/interaction during the musical with a performing arts staff at the school.
• How did this interaction feel and why do you think you felt this way? (enabling or constraining)?
• You have described a specific instance of working with education staff on the musical. In what ways (if any) may have this interaction played out differently with a staff member from a professional company in the same role as the education staff member?
• Do you treat members of the Performing Arts Industry differently to school staff? In what ways? Can you give me an example?
• In what ways do industry staff’s attitudes towards working on a school musical with Performing Arts education staff impact on the quality of the partnerships between the two sectors?
• If you could give one piece of advice (a do and/or a don’t) to a school that was looking to stage their musical in a professional venue similar to the theatre - what would that be?
• What are the benefits to the local arts industry of this type of model where schools stage their arts events in professional venues rather than in their own theatres and halls?
• Has the quality of the school’s musical been enhanced or hampered by using the a professional venue rather than say their own venue? Can you give me an example?
• What can teachers and industry professionals learn from each other, i.e., what is mutually beneficial?
• In what ways were the school student cast and crew impacted by the partnerships between adult industry and education members?
• Would you like to see more schools coming to the theatre to stage their events? If so, what type of stipulation would you place on the school/s?
• What can we do to improve partnerships between arts industry and education in the context of a high school musical?

Performing Arts Education – 1st Interview Questions

• Please describe your role at the theatre. Outline the major responsibilities and activities of your role? What’s entailed?
• How do you know it’s going well? Give examples.
• How many musicals have you worked on in the past? Did you play a similar role?
• What formal training if any have you had for this role?
• What types of interaction will you have with the venue staff during the rehearsal and performance period for the musical? Give examples?
• In your role/s, what are your expectations of venue staff/ industry members while you are in the venue?
• Can you give me some a specific example/s when you foresee (over the next 10 days) that you will be engaged in direct partnerships with the venue staff?
• Compare the experience of working with industry professionals with that of working with non- professionals and/or volunteers in similar roles whilst working on a musical production?
• Can you give an example of both a rewarding and a challenging experience when collaborating on a musical with members of Arts industry from your past experiences?
• In what ways do the quality of partnerships between education and industry staff impact or make an impression on the students whilst they are in the venue? Give examples.

Performing Arts Education – 2nd Interview Questions

• How did the musical go? Tell me about is?
• How was the experience of working with industry professionals during your time in the venue?
• Describe a significant (something that stuck out in your mind) experience of collaborating/interacting on a high school musical with venue or other professional industry staff?
• How did this interaction feel and why do you think you felt this way (enabling or constraining)?
• Have the experiences over the past ten days altered or reinforced your perceptions of collaborating with industry? Give examples.
• Has the quality of the Iona musical been enhanced by using the theatre rather than their own venue? In what ways?
• What are the benefits/disadvantages to schools where professional venues and industry staff are used to stage high school musicals rather than use their own theatres and halls?

• What can we do to improve partnerships between arts industry and education in the context of a high school musical? What may this look like with specific reference to your role?

• In what ways are the students impacted by the partnerships between adult industry and education members i.e., does the quality of the partnerships make an impression on the students. In what ways? Can you give an example?

• If you could give one piece of advice (a do and/or a don’t) to a professional industry member that was working with a school in a venue similar to the theatre - what would that be?

• In what ways do people’s attitudes impact on quality partnerships between performing arts education and industry? For example, did you feel that you were treated differently because you were from a school and the production being staged was a high school musical?

• What can teachers and industry professionals learn from each other, i.e., what is mutually beneficial?
### Appendix G: Interview Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates and Venue</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday March 10 2016</strong></td>
<td>Meeting – Researcher and Interviewer (Cafe)</td>
<td>12pm – 1pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday 11th March, 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interview One</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>(Interview Room - School)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant 1 (School)</td>
<td>9.30am-10.00am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant 2 (School)</td>
<td>10.00am – 10.30am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting - Researcher and Interviewer (Café)</td>
<td>11.15am -12.15am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>(Dressing Rm – Theatre)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant 3 (Theatre)</td>
<td>1.00pm - 1.45pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Participant 4 (Theatre)</td>
<td>2.00pm – 2.45pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant 5 (Theatre)</td>
<td>3.00 pm – 3.45pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday 21st March, 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interview Two (Dressing Rm – Theatre)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting – Researcher and Interviewer</td>
<td>9.00am – 9.30am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant 3 (Theatre)</td>
<td>9.30am – 10.15am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant 6 (Theatre)</td>
<td>10.15am – 11.00am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant 5 (Theatre)</td>
<td>11.15am – 12.00midday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 24th March, 2016</td>
<td>Interview Two (Interview Room - School)</td>
<td>Meeting - Researcher and Interviewer 8.30am – 9.00am 9.00am – 9.45am 9.45am -10.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participant 1 (School)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participant 2 (School)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday April 6, 2016</td>
<td>Follow Up Interviews (Theatre)</td>
<td>Participant 4 (School)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Participant 7 (School)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Appendix H: Participant Role and Pseudonym

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Role and Pseudonym</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant # 1 Costume Designer - Sally</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant # 2 Props Manager/ Actor - Brian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant # 3 Theatre Manager - Lucy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant # 4 Tech Manager - Bill</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Had personal emergency and was not able to attend the second interview. Did follow up interview 2 weeks later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant # 5 Lighting Operator – Ronny</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant # 6 Sound Assistant - Mark</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Took the place of Participant 4 who was not able to attend his interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant # 7 Front of House Manager - Jenny</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Was suggested for an interview by Participant 3.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix I: Data Matrix Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODES</th>
<th>QUOTES/NOTES/SUB THEMES</th>
<th>RESEARCH QUESTION/ Framework</th>
<th>THE NARRATIVE – Vignettes/ Critical Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes</strong></td>
<td>Having the right attitude, attitude towards the venue, industry attitudes towards HSM – oh it’s just a HSM, always open to learning. It comes down to attitudes is the student willing to learn and is the professional willing to communicate himself in a different way, we (education) are a professional team – were pretty schmick at what we do, leaving teacher identity at the door, listen to advice – don’t assume anything and have humility, don’t assume – there is no minimum standard – take extra care – be patient, oh it’s only a school and I’ll do as little as I have to, Attitude of ind pro – very one way – if you want to play here it’s by our rules, willingness to play extra role with education, willingness to learn from education, there has to be a certain humility, everyone approaches it from a professional perspective so I really don’t see it as any different, as a venue we want to be as heavily involved as possible with like the education system, I don’t treat Matt because he is from a school any different to a promoter from a professional company</td>
<td>How are these partnerships negotiated? Enablers and constraints, Fits into HSM tag, what is professional, enablers and constraints, caring, building trust, fits into the HSM tag, Attitudes are broad – they govern the whole experience of partnerships. Fits into expectations.</td>
<td>Tech Manager attitude during pre-production meeting in venue foyer.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Benefits to Venue</strong></td>
<td>School brings with it a sense of community, Venue has more ownership than other productions, there are no non benefits, more involvement, mentor, encourages students into industry, broadens venue’s audience, students have no cynicism, pride ourselves on being a community theatre, opens a new clientele, there’s a feel good factor for the theatre as well, The Musical sold out - it sold</td>
<td>Micro – meso – macro</td>
<td>Former students into professional industry- SM, company’s photo on stage on Facebook, The Musical sold out, success story</td>
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| Benefits to students | It’s very exciting because they feel they are part of a professional venue, Raises the bar, exciting for students, being in a professional space, prepares them for professional career, be able to be like I’ve performed in that building, great opportunity for students to see what it’s going to be like if that’s the pathway that they want to choose, | Benefits equals learning- it drives the whole thing | Sell out Show, Former student – SM |
| Benefits to Education | Marketing for school, use of venue, expanded audience, teachers learn new skills, Part of an amazing team, We couldn’t do this in Hall, increased duty of care and safety standards, air of professionalism, learning a sense of professionalism, students moving into professional industry after show – Former student success, The Musical sold out, students waking around town wearing their T-shirts | At the front is worthwhile and if it is worthwhile – convinced then let’s look at the enablers and constraints – what makes them work. | Chain falling story, School maximizing their investment, school students selling programs, Guy in 7/11 giving compliment about student’s manners, success story. Former student – Journal reflection |
| Building Trust | Takes time, the theatre is their space and we respect it, opinions of education are valued, symbiotic, putting trust in people that you | Fits into familiarity, fits into care, What is the nature and | Sound Guy, ‘hideous’ Stage Manager one year,
don’t know. When we were first starting out – hideous Stage Manager – you’ve got no idea what you are doing, Bill used to scare me – he doesn’t scare me anymore, not knowing what the other person is doing or thinking, when people don’t fulfill their roles it is taken personally, building trust takes many years – at first we were yelled at, we (education) are a professional team – were pretty schmick at what we do, education involves the industry in collaboration, respecting the venue, more often than not we (education) have to put our trust in people that we don’t know, lack of communication pre-production erodes trust because it’s scary that we don’t know what the other person is doing, So yeah we try not to be a burden, mutual respect between teacher and venue staff, Matt can count on that, it’s about this growing relationship, Its very comfortable, Symbiotic, And that is why the school students are so outstanding because we have developed that trust – then that relationship pays off big time, so now this is coming into the sixth year and the more we have seen each other the relationship has just developed – Matt is quite relaxed and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Caring</strong></th>
<th>easy to deal with and we are both similar in that sense and it’s comfortable and very easy</th>
<th>Fits into trust, fits into familiarity, fits into quality as lubricant, What is the nature and types of partnerships encountered during the staging of a high school musical? How are these partnerships negotiated?</th>
<th>Sound Guy, Kerrie/ Dave – culture of care, Kathryn locking up,</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20, 56, 86, 116, 177, 201, 209, 231, 251, 261</td>
<td>Caring for the venue, So yeah we try not to be a burden, Building networks as care factor – when they see another professional working on the show it models the type of attitude towards HSM that they have and then it is more likely that they will care too – NETWORKS OF CARE, matt can count on that, less care factor in larger venues, air-conditioning story slightly contradicts the narrative of care, the care factor is very important</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communication as Key</strong></td>
<td>Knowing the rules, blaming ‘them’ for not listening, being responsive to requests, Talk to the lighting person talk to the set person, knowing the lines of communication, understanding the lines of communication allows the students to feel at home, Communication is effective because it’s passed down the lines (sign on sheet, pre-production schedule/organization, communication is two way (symbiotic), Communication within the Professional venue – blaming the other, the schedule as the key to unlocking the benefits of using a professional theatre, it’s all about communication, having good social skills becomes as important as having good technical skills, Lack of communication becomes a trust issue – Brian and set designer, it’s easier for me to communicate because of that history, It comes from that understanding of what it takes of having something so simple actually happen, I think if we could have more of a heads</td>
<td>How are these partnerships negotiated?</td>
<td>Program sellers, keys to unlocking the theatre, sign on sheet, no air-conditioning, Brian (props) having difficulty communicating with Set Designer, Schedule issue with lighting, Critical note on (227) on blaming other when something goes wrong, FOH program sellers (271)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constraints</td>
<td>up, misunderstandings are due to bad communications – always the case, I think we could have had more of a heads up, Getting everything to the venue, Short time in theatre, Schools don’t know what they want and if they do then don’t know how to explain it- lack of experience in role leads to frustration – leads to clashes</td>
<td>Sound Guy, Critical Note – generalizing about schools (262)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collective Esteem – Quality as Lubricant</td>
<td>Being part of an amazing team, we (education) are a professional team – were pretty schmick at what we do, It’s rewarding working with professionals because you get a professional show, sense of pride for what we created as a team, When you get members of the public saying – I didn’t realize that was even a high school show, the audience is unbelievable, reward of seeing the fantastic level, industry appreciate and feel part of what the school is doing,</td>
<td>How are these partnerships negotiated?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhancing Roles</td>
<td>Teacher and actor role – Brian, industry are more involved – they have to be, no obligation of professionals to take on, industry being more involved in the collaborative process, the client involves the industry in collaboration – as a result – industry feels invested in the product, mentorship is a benefit to industry – but students need to be receptive for it to work, something that education can offer industry about the notion of multiple roles, getting the professionals involved – more inclined with the personnel to offer a bit more advice, industry can defiantly learn about duty of care, the role of nurturer, you have to transfer things that you take for granted, FOH teaching students, I think that industry/ theatre staff can learn about duty of care,</td>
<td>This is how an industry role looks when education enters the space, teacher roles are enhanced, also about enhancing the role of the teacher as professional and artist, fits into benefits, What is the nature and types of partnerships encountered during the staging of a high school musical?, How</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Critical Note on 241 – industry take on extra role as part of professional expectations, FOH (273) teaching students</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
| **Familiarity/Belonging/Community** | One year we did 250 shows from 50 different production companies – so it’s nice to get back to that type of familiarity, Getting used to each other. They appreciate us and we appreciate them, they’re so supportive of what we do, continuity of staff, that essence of family remained, we bring that sense of community with us, It’s the same faces – the same people, you are not starting from zero, it makes it easier to communicate because of that history, it’s now coming into its sixth year and the more we have seen each other the relationship has just developed,  
So you have learnt to work together, Equal footing, learning the language, attitudes lead to this, refining methods and learning from each other to get the best maximum results, having good social skills becomes as important as having good technical skills | **Partnerships** | **are these partnerships negotiated?** | **One year 50 show, Box of chocolates, Brian and set designer relationship became easier once they know and develop trust, Lucy’s relationship with Matt** |
<p>| <strong>Finding the Middle Ground – Partnerships</strong> | <strong>Reciprocated duty of care, Learning to work/live together, schools don’t know what they want or how to explain it, education has everything to learn in order to be successful – they need to take up the industry standard, preparing the students to enter into an industry world – building culture, schools can learn a sense of professionalism, schools underestimate the challenge, leaving the teacher identity at the door</strong> | <strong>Partnerships as working with individuals not groups. Belonging to the space – a theatre venue</strong> | <strong>Shared understanding, What is the nature and types of partnerships encountered during the staging of a high school musical? How are these partnerships negotiated?</strong> |
| <strong>Fitting an Education Model into an Industry World</strong> | | <strong>What are the roles of a teacher in an industry standard environment? Fits into what is a professional,</strong> | <strong>Schedule, Sign on sheet</strong> |
| | <strong>Reciprocated duty of care, Learning to work/live together, schools don’t know what they want or how to explain it, education has everything to learn in order to be successful – they need to take up the industry standard, preparing the students to enter into an industry world – building culture, schools can learn a sense of professionalism, schools underestimate the challenge, leaving the teacher identity at the door</strong> | | |
| Industry Professional | Industry attitude towards HSM, With the big shows there is more kudos, some industry personnel can have the attitude that a school show is a second-class production, just a job, is trained and assigned the appropriate role, minimum standards of practice are already in place, having good social skills becomes as important as having good technical skills | What is the nature of these partnerships? Situations, Professional venue Crew as distinct from broader industry profile, fits into Venue profile, fits into enhancing roles, Enablers and constraints, getting definition around the education model as distinct from amateur, | Memo (cartoon) 239 on industry professional Memo (241) HSM not part of industry expectations |
| Use of Language | Getting definition around these groups, Because he’s the boss man a-alright – and then it’s usually some of the maintenance guys- Amateur or education? Not necessarily high schools but those types- you know those production styles, we have amateur shows, where people are coming in various walks of life who are just rude, most of the time these kids are doing better performances than these amateur shows that come in here with their half assed attitudes and communication, I have always been an advocate of amateur theatre, Mark’s use of the word – novice as opposed to amateur, | These Amateur groups, Memo – generalizing about schools (262) |
| Looking through the Lens of the Other | The pressure that I have in working with Parents, That was the perception of what we were doing – So the first year was very difficult- Staff, Professional venue and Students – getting that balance right in terms of how and when we use the venue. I don’t think the venue staff behave any differently when | How are these partnerships negotiated? | Sound Guy, Sunday Rehearsal, starting out was difficult. Memo (229) LX OP suggestion to just bring students in on the Monday |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Making Allowances</th>
<th>education is in the venue, they should have given the kids the day off and come in on the Monday</th>
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<tr>
<td>Duty of care, increased safety, slightly tighter ship, being patient, patience</td>
<td>occurs when you understand the limitations of the client, it can be like the dockyards around here, One guy swears like a trooper – he makes me laugh, with educational institutions you have to put in even more effort, there is no minimum standard, it’s a school and there only doing this once a year, being more patient and flexible, it’s a little bit harder when you are involved with students,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple Roles</td>
<td>Teachers balancing multiple roles Outsourcing roles from teacher to industry professional, making up for a lack of resources in schools, not sustainable model, teachers not fully engaged in dual roles, Little to no training for teacher engaged in multiple roles, one person gets allocated too many things, Kathryn in Costume designer, dressing rm coordinator and feedback coordinator, Daunting task (props) coupled with high expectation of professional standard, leaving teacher identity at the door, If you (industry) are not willing to do that then don’t do it, we can help in setting that up and teaching were always happy to do that</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overcoming the Stereotype</td>
<td>Not necessarily high schools but those types- you know those production styles, I think it was – were a High School -, So yeah we try not to be a burden Transcending the HSM tag, we (education) are a professional team – were</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How are these partnerships negotiated?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fits into role, enhancing roles and sustainability, what are the multiple roles of a teacher?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fits into attitudes, fits into venue profile and school profile,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Using students as FOH program sellers, swearing guy,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What if I got sick? Costume designer and dressing rm supervisor, Actor, Teacher and Props, journal reflection on PLC Matchgirls at Opera Co warehouse, providing further training(basics – 259) in the basics to PA teachers, Hideous SM, Memo – generalizing about schools (262), Memo – Costume</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional V Education</td>
<td>Pretty schmick at what we do, Getting feedback from people that they didn’t know it was a HSM, You get members of the public saying OMG I didn’t realize that was a school show. Industry education partnerships help to abolish that stereotype, Industry people who don’t care, dealing with the HSM tag, oh it’s just a HSM, leaving teacher identity at the door, I don’t treat Matt because he is from a school any different to a promoter from a professional company.</td>
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<td>12, 38, 52, 81, 82, 161, 201, 217, 221, 223, 231, 239, 241, 245, 247, 249, 255, 261, 269, 273, 283</td>
<td>Professional people v School Children, OH&amp;S, some of these kids come in and they obviously tired because they have been yelled at so many times Different cultures and standards of behavior between venue and school staff, the mentality of professional people is that you are paid from here to here, education has limited budget – so expectations are higher and the pressures that come with that. a big show like this would be up and running within two days, on the big shows we don’t get to collaborate, just a number, really count – mentor, co-create collaborator, time slows down – it’s a different pace, professional shows can get very boring, education client don’t understand the business of theatre compared to a world renowned touring act, professionals are assigned and trained in appropriate roles, schools have a lack of resources-therefore need to outsource the crucial roles, industry standards are already in place, schools need to have those things communicated, They (professionals) have attitude. Attitude is written with a capital A, it’s a little bit harder when you are involved with students, they (students) may not have the knowledge, its more stressful for tech personnel working with kids, I don’t treat Matt because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsourcing the Crucial Roles in a HSM</td>
<td>he is from a school any differently than a promoter from a local company, more points of contact with a school, Are the roles so crucial that they need to be outsourced? – ideally yes – practically – no. Leadership roles – PM and SM, you may as well go to a professional theatre, Using professional male actors, outsourcing the SM role, school hiring full-time costume/wardrobe manager, having a professional in the role can save you time and money, professional vs novice student, getting past students to come back and play the crucial roles – Former student, because school resources are limited it becomes crucial to outsource roles,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Industry (Bill) that we will have standards of schedule organization equal to a professional company, A million dollar picture with a $100 budget, Realistic or Unrealistic, Expectations of professionals is that they do a professional jib, Working with Industry increases expectations, he wasn’t a student, he was actually a professionally paid - let’s have a lot of money guy, high expectations of a quality show puts pressure on inexperienced teachers to get it right (Brian fits into attitudes, Increased expectations makes teachers’ roles increasingly difficult. How are these partnerships negotiated?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Repetition and Learning from your Mistakes</strong></td>
<td>Repetition and Learning from your Mistakes&lt;br&gt;4, 142, 148, 216, 249, 273</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Respect</strong></td>
<td>Respect for venue, teacher and industry – mutual respect&lt;br&gt;231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roles</strong></td>
<td>The learning comes from being on top of every department, everyone playing their role, coaching or guiding as part of Bill’s role, Industry requirements of certain roles are not realistic – there needs to be , Just talk to everyone so you</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharing Time/Sharing Space</td>
<td>have a handle on what’s going on, Emily’s role – getting the balance right, professional industry is assigned and trained in the appropriate roles. Adapting to the space, sharing the professional space, leaving teacher identity at the door, The first year was very difficult. Learning the protocols, so yeah we try not to be a burden, The students get a bit daunted by all these men in the Professional venue, Professionals adapting their behavior when students are in the venue, education preparing the students to enter a professional industry environment, The atmosphere of a professional venue, walking in to find dressing rm’s dismantled and air-conditioning not working, being yelled at in first couple of years.</td>
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<td>Taking on Feedback</td>
<td>Schools don’t know what they want and don’t know how to explain it, Education provider has a culture of feedback, teacher has to leave their teacher identity at the door, they also have to be willing to learn, the symbiotic feedback loop, they get it right because the school is asking for advice, if they are willing to listen – i'm not going to force feedback anyone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Time is different with education, taking time, time as a characteristic of the client, schedule as the control of time, Use of time is the crucial advice.</td>
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<td>Us and Them</td>
<td>Not necessarily high schools but those types- you know those production styles, People on education tend not to be grounded, Two different sides of the story, when something goes wrong the fallback position is blame the ‘other’,</td>
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<tr>
<td>What does Professional mean?</td>
<td>Quality in pro v educational, Professional etiquette, simply being professional – they need to be switched on, adapting to the needs of the individual client, we (education) are a professional team – were pretty schmick at what we do, Trying to be professional but on a limited budget, understanding the specific needs of the client – adapting to the client’s needs – patience occurs when you understand the needs of the client, being trained in specific roles, industry standards of safety and best practice, professional industry is assigned and trained in the appropriate roles ,Adapting to the specific needs of the individual client, you know and when I say professional – I mean professional and experienced, Industry personnel not feeling a sense of pride in school show, Cultural self-esteem at Iona to be seen to be showing professional standards of behavior</td>
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