THE DYNAMICS OF CREATIVE COLLABORATION:

THE ROLE OF THE CREATIVE PRODUCER IN COMMUNITY-BASED, MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION

A Creative Project and Exegesis and submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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DECLARATION

I certify that except where acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the Exegesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; and, any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party, is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Susan McCauley

14th December 2008

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my family and friends who have supported me in undertaking my research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Contents

Abstract

The Dynamics of Creative Collaboration: The Role of the Creative Producer in Community-Based, Multimedia Production is a practice-led research project that investigates the techniques, processes and methods of creative collaboration in community-based, multimedia production. The research investigates if and if so, how the inclusion of a central management role affects the creative dynamics, the management activities, and the communication processes within a team composed of amateur community participants and professional multimedia artists. This key creative and management role that some call a Creative Producer is investigated to examine how the role balances the tensions between the need for creative freedom and the maintenance of a shared collective vision. For this purpose, three collaborative, creative projects with a Creative Producer are employed as Action Research case studies and an in-depth qualitative and quantitative Industry Survey provide a comparative view from thirty industry experts. The research seeks to identify a model of collaboration in community-based, multimedia production that includes a creative and managerial role of the Creative Producer.

Viewing the Project

The PhD research project comprises three creative community-based, multimedia productions employed as case studies presented here as a DVD, and an accompanying exegesis located in a pocket inside the back cover of the exegesis. Included on the DVD is an introductory 'trailer' with the name of the research project and author, followed by a menu screen. To view any of the creative projects, click on the name of the work on the menu screen.

The entire completed works of the first two projects are included on the DVD. The first creative project, the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie*, is presented first on the menu, followed by the second creative project, *Hairy Tales*. A different approach is employed for the third creative project, *Kids Games*, because it is an installation work with which the viewer needs to physically interact. However, the clips that comprise the different interactions to be experienced in the work have been included on the project DVD. This component of the DVD is titled '*Kids Games* (Installation Clips)' to highlight that the complete project is an installation. The installation is integral to the project exhibition, which took place as part of the examination in October 2007.

Preferred viewing requirements

The preferred viewing equipment for the project DVD is a Macintosh computer (released after 2005) that has an inbuilt DVD player.

The work can also be viewed on a DVD player attached to a monitor.

It can operate on a recent PC (released after 2005) that has a DVD player. Because of differences in DVD manufacturing standards, there may be instances where the project DVD does not operate on the selected computer or DVD player. An alternative player may be required. All projects on the DVD contain sound and vision..

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SCREAMS AND SCREENS MULTIMEDIA MOVIE

FIGURE 1 – 3: SCREAMS AND SCREENS MULTIMEDIA MOVIE IMAGES

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KIDS GAMES

FIGURE 7 – 9: KIDS GAMES IMAGES
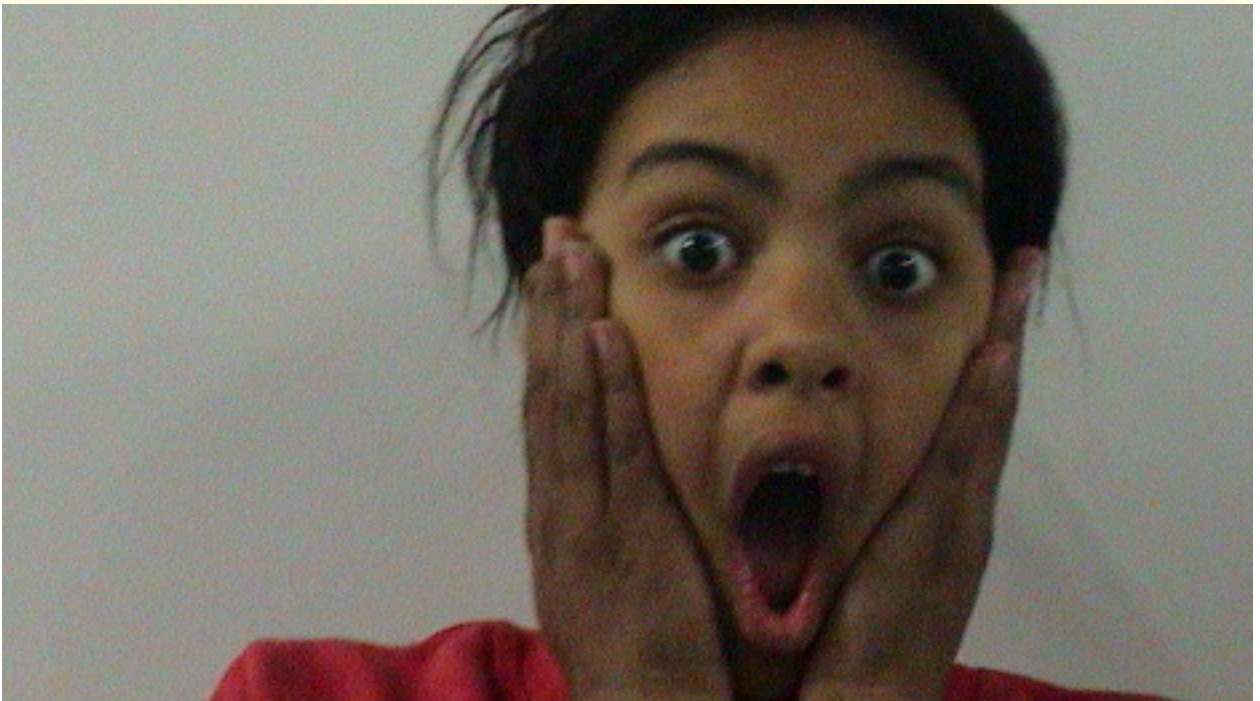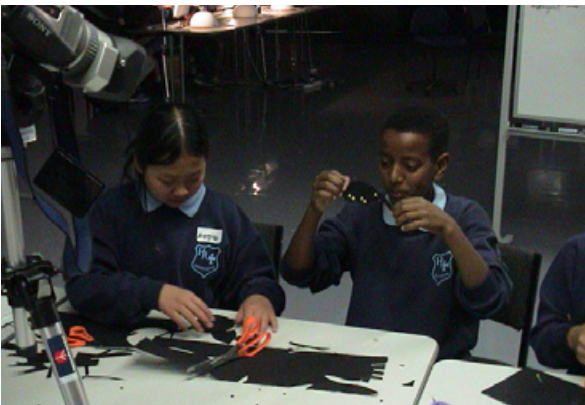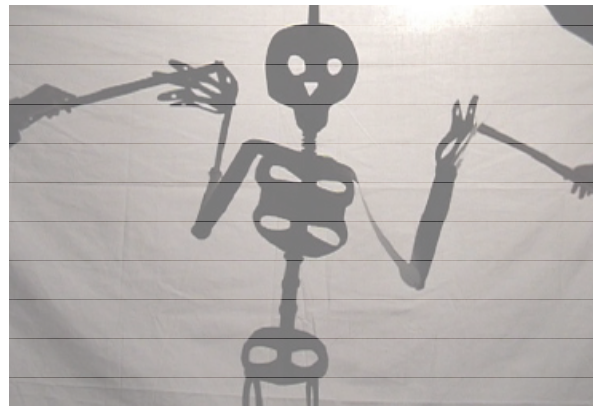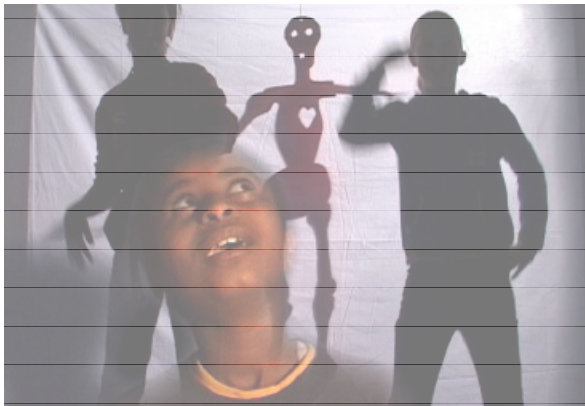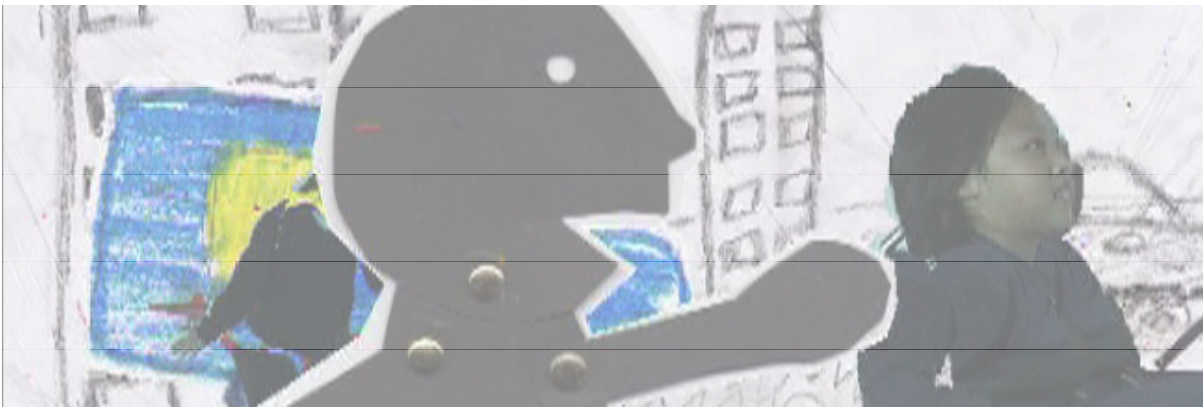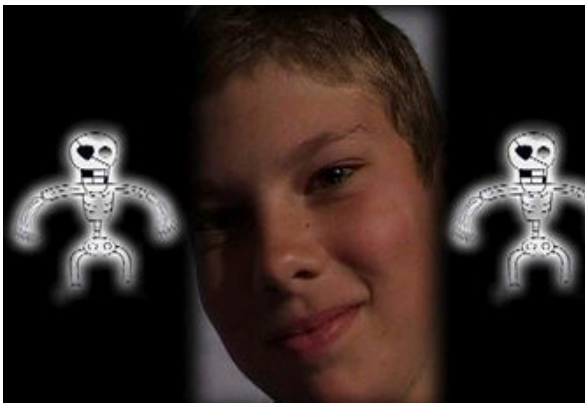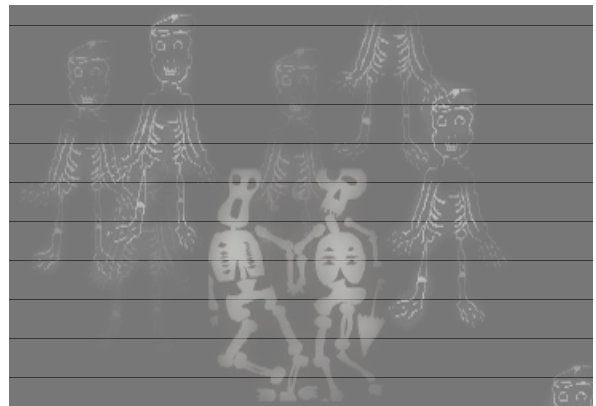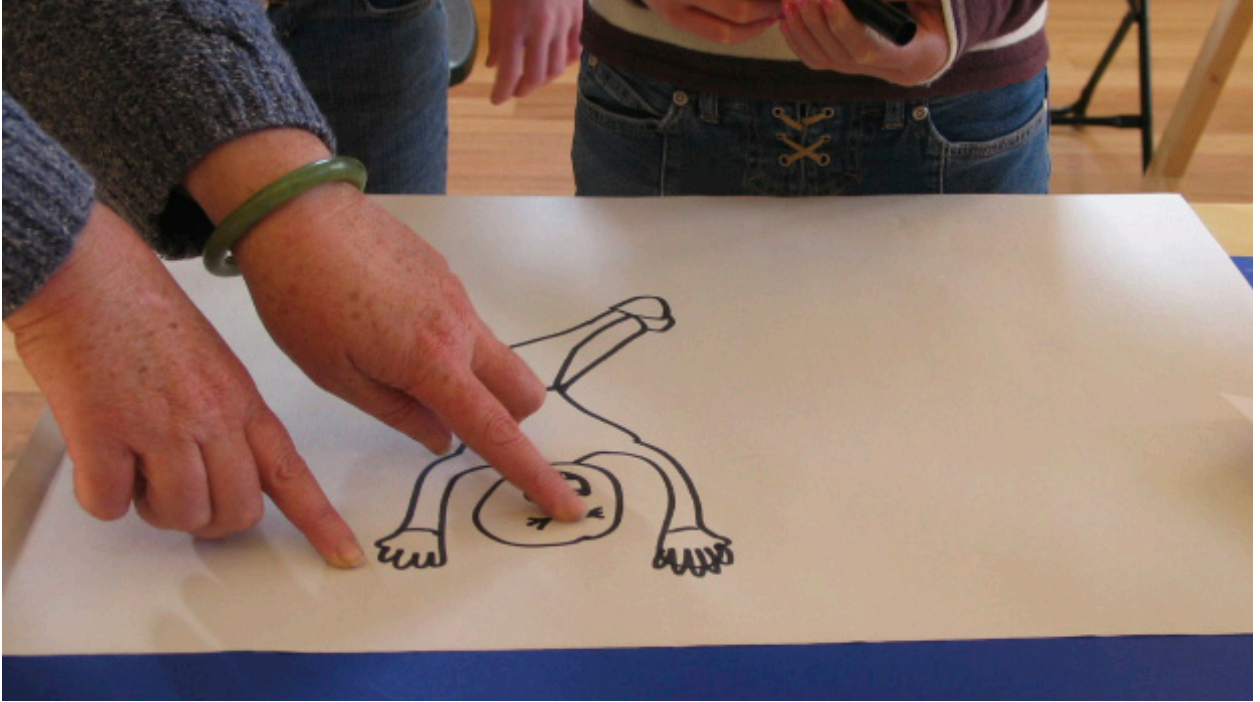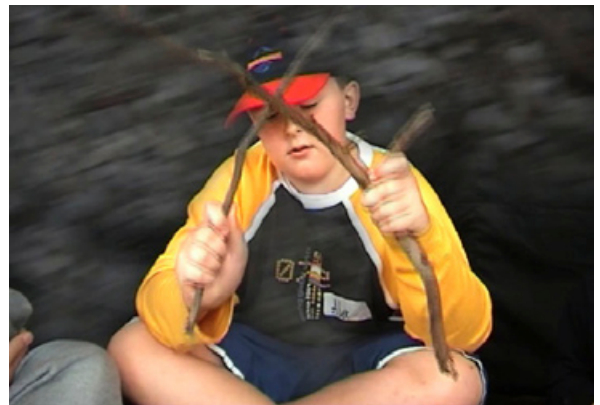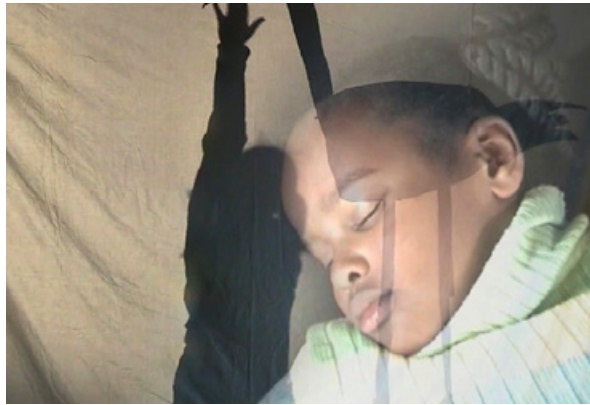
FIGURE 7 – 9: KIDS GAMES IMAGES
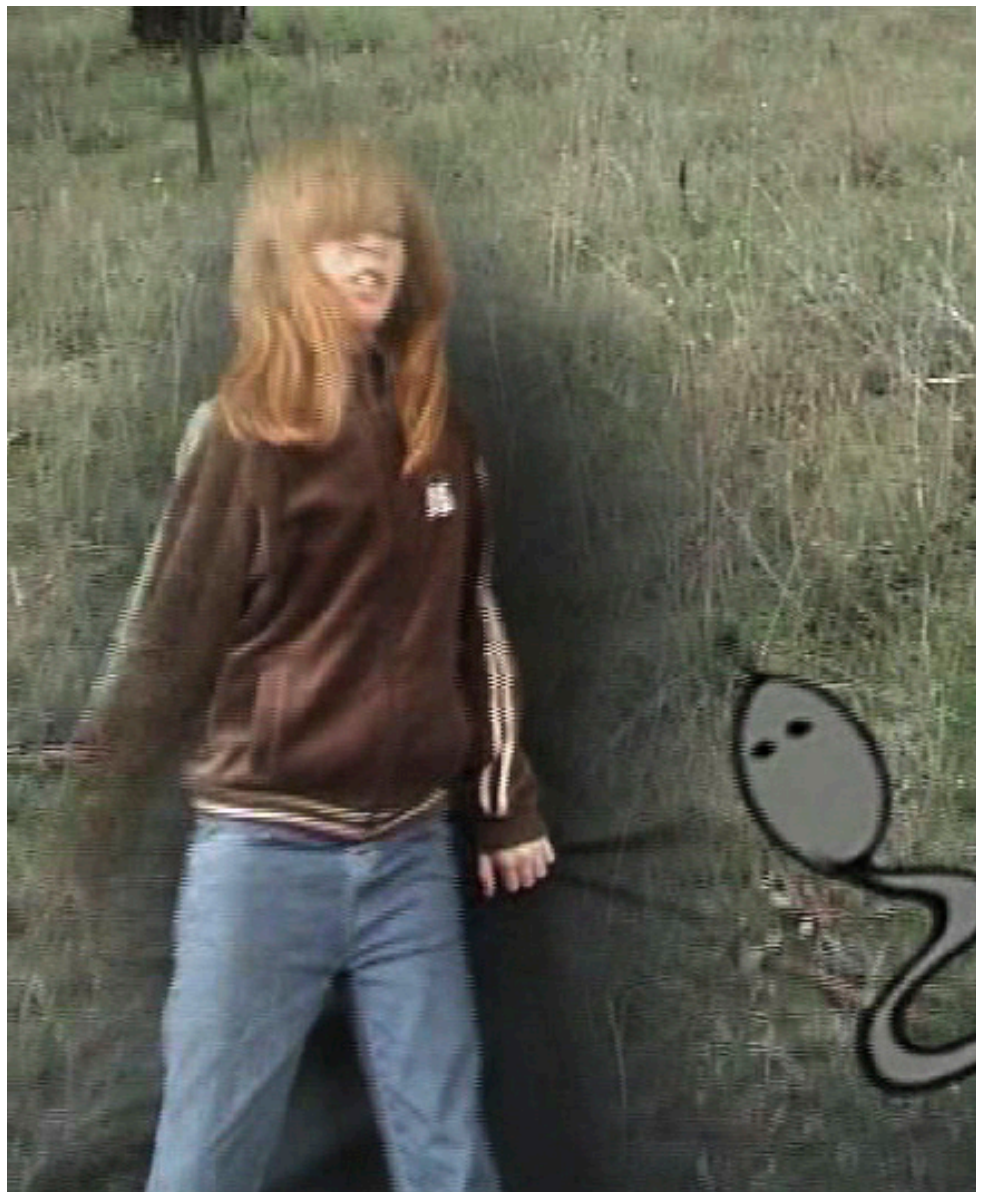
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This project is about the dynamics of creative collaboration. The research is located in communities, and the focus of the practice-led investigation is community-based, multimedia production. In this research project, I examine new approaches that have emerged in practice for the management of collaborative creative multimedia productions.

In traditional media production structures, the creative vision is communicated down the hierarchical command chain, driven by combinations of different types of producer and director roles. Historically, in the last decades of the 20th century, many of the early digital media teams often adopted a similar hierarchical production model to the film, television and the advertising industry. In these teams, as in earlier media configurations, the creative and business aspects of production were managed separately by different roles. The decision-making rested in the power relationship between the Producer and the Director. As Meta-Collab, a web-based research group whose aim is to create an ongoing resource centre of knowledge about collaboration in art argue, "Little if [any] literature exists which focuses on the theoretical exploration of the processes, methods and techniques of artistic collaboration". (Meta-Collab, Accessed 6-11-08) This research project has been designed to research new knowledge about the techniques, processes and methods of creative collaboration.

In 2002 I was inspired by Indian activist and physicist, Vandana Shiva (2002) to use my multimedia production skills to creatively engage with communities. She says:

> *National identity and local cultures may have to struggle to survive against the pervasive cultural influences of globalisation. Creating the opportunity for a community to have a unique voice could be a useful way for artists to contribute to cultural development. Sustainability of vibrant community identities, becomes more, rather than less, important in these rapidly changing times.*
>
> (Shiva 2002 Accessed 25/07/05)

The desire to collaborate with community groups in the development of multimedia productions led me to consider what makes them different and what conditions and production team composition would produce an effective structure. Particular management skills and team compositions seemed to be needed to successfully translate the community experience to community-based, multimedia production. Following Shiva's inspiration I wanted this structure to be an equal one in which artists could contribute their skills and talent, and a community group could contribute their stories, issues and histories. It seemed to me that the pooling of production experience and talent could provide a rich source of creative endeavour for community-based, multimedia production. The need for management and creative leadership in a collaborative production context however seemed to be a paradox that was counter-

intuitive to the practice situation. Some 'glue' to assist the two differently skilled groups to communicate and work together effectively might be required.

It was to solve this potential problem that I started to consider the improvements in practice that a management role could make to working in this context. I discovered that there was considerable agreement amongst industry professionals about the need for formal recognition and understanding of what role the Creative Producer could have in providing the 'glue' to make collaborations work better, particularly in my area of interest which was community-based, multimedia production.

I have worked for fifteen years as (what I would now call) a Creative Producer, in many multimedia contexts. I did not know of the term Creative Producer during this time I was called a project manager, a co-ordinator, a media activist, an artist, a producer, or a curator. However, I wondered if the role that I was performing in practice might now be covered by the term 'Creative Producer'. I decided to address the lack of definition for this emergent role in collaboration as the research focus. Six years ago, I started to investigate if, in the operation of collaborating teams, people were working as 'Creative' Producers and to identify what the activities and responsibilities of that role might be.

The emergent Creative Producer role has been raised in industry discussions and publications such as the report in RealTime of the *RealTime-Performance Space Forum Wanted: Creative producers*, held in Sydney in 2005. They note, "some producers are more creative than others, in particular those who don't just pick up an already developed work but who are in there from the beginning, with the artists, helping to shape, fund and mount the work, sustaining the artists' vision." (Baxter and Gallasch 2005, p.40) Since 2005, when this forum took place, the Creative Producer has begun to appear in production credits of some hybrid arts projects and some community media projects, and as a formal employment role in larger organisations such as the Arts and Culture team leaders employed by the City of Melbourne. In Melbourne during the six-year period of research, there have been Creative Producers employed in media projects undertaken by community media organisations such as stART, and art projects conducted through The Brotherhood of St Lawrence. There are hybrid artform projects developed by national organisations such as Big (H)art who are employing new management structures including the Creative Producer in collaborative, community production environments.

National arts agencies in Australia, such as the Australia Council for the Arts, and the Scottish Arts Council (2006) in Britain, have recognised the importance of this new composite role that has emerged in practice by the establishment of mentoring programs to provide training for Creative Producers. For example, in 2006 The Scottish Arts Council piloted a new scheme to provide a stipend to two Creative Producers to be mentored by an experienced Creative Producer. In 2008, the Community Partnerships area of the Australia Council offered two annual stipends for Creative Producers to deliver community arts and cultural development projects.

In my research, I consider whether or not this evolving role may be a valuable addition to community-based, multimedia production, in which a lack of specific multimedia production skills and knowledge about production methodologies could be expected. On the one hand there seemed to be a particular requirement for the management of the many technical operations present in multimedia production, and for an improvement in communication flow between amateur and professional collaborators. On the other hand the production technology had become increasingly inexpensive and portable, providing access opportunities for many artists and community groups to work in small budget productions. Therefore, the team composition that could translate the authentic voice of the community by bringing the skills together to make a multimedia production became the next area of consideration and investigation.

Although the role of the Creative Producer has been the topic of discussion in industry publications as discussed above, in the media production, theatre production, and Community Cultural Development literature, the team configuration involving a Creative Producer is yet to be the focus of theoretical inquiry and analysis. Hence, the positive and negative implications of the introduction of the role in the management of collaborative practice is not yet understood. There is I believe, a lack of knowledge about current collaborative practices in multimedia production. This project is therefore both essential and timely, as it will address this omission by undertaking the research needed to clarify new knowledge about any positive or negative impacts of a new team formation including the Creative Producer role in collaborative, community-based, multimedia production teams.

Some collaborative, community-based, projects, particularly those involving multimedia production have been observed to include a leadership role that some have called a Creative Producer. The need for creative management in collaborations might seem to be a paradox within a non-hierarchical production environment. However, my proposition is that the inclusion of the Creative Producer fundamentally supports the creative dynamics, the team relationships, the management activities, and the communication processes within the collaborative team composed of amateur community participants and professional multimedia artists. I propose that the introduction of the emergent creative and management role of the Creative Producer may create a new production model for such community-based, multimedia productions that may affect not only what media products are made, but also how they are produced.

From these propositions, the research questions of the exegesis are:

Is there a new role and functions that of the Creative Producer, emerging in community-based, multimedia production?

What, if any, contribution does this Creative Producer make to the community-based, multimedia production of which they are a part?

More specifically how does the Creative Producer manage the competing desires of individual creative freedom and collective vision in a community-based, multimedia production?

These questions will be addressed by integrating the findings drawn from the development of creative projects in which I play the role of the Creative Producer; through an in-depth quantitative and qualitative Industry Survey about the dynamics of collaboration; and by analysing theoretical constructs drawn from trans-disciplinary frameworks. The practice-led evidence used to construct a new model of creative management is captured in cycles of Action Research. Three creative productions employed as case studies provide the opportunity for observation and self-reflective analysis of creative and management practice. This is complex. In these projects it may be possible to capture some of the specific creative opportunities and management requirements of developing collaborative multimedia productions with community groups. Michael Quinn Patton (2002) identifies the value of not trying to enforce patterns on potentially valuable chaotic moments of creative exploration. He relates the qualitative analysis of social research to the principles of Chaos theory. He notes that there is value in recognising the uncontrollable and the unexpected in research because "we need to learn to observe, describe and value disorder and turbulence without forcing patterns onto genuine, meaningful chaos". (Patton 2002, p.126) Through qualitative, practice-led research it may be possible to capture reflections about some of the improvised, the spontaneous, and the unexpected creative moments at the core of community-based, collaborative practice.

The research seeks to articulate the scope of activities and the necessary skills and qualities of the Creative Producer that are generalisable to collaborative multimedia production teams. In Chapter One of this exegesis, the trans-disciplinary research is located in the fields of management and systems theories, and also in the discussion about creative production methods, and the history of production teams found in the media and theatre literature.

The second chapter presents the methodology employed to test the research questions and proposition. It is followed by the analysis of three projects used as case studies presented in chapters three, four, five, and six of this exegesis. In these projects, I investigate the creation of imaginary spaces, and the use and development of improvised performance with unskilled community participants. I was inspired by the ideas about imaginary space of the theatre director, Peter Brook (1993) amongst others. He finds working in empty spaces useful because, "Emptiness in the theatre allows the imagination to fill the gaps. Paradoxically, the less one gives the imagination the happier it is, because it is a muscle that enjoys playing games." (Brook 1993, pp.26-28) Similar to a film director, I use experimental techniques of collage, superimposition, disrupted narratives, and sequential development as creative strategies. I examine the potential to employ improvisation as both a content development process and a production management approach in the translation of creative thinking from the stage to the screen. The creative practice of the Creative Producer is interrogated through cycles of Action Research, and questions that emerge from reflection about the Creative Producer role and function in the development of each project are iteratively considered.

The three projects selected for analysis as case studies were produced in different contexts between 2002 and 2006 specifically for the research. They are discussed in detail in the case study chapters three, four, five and six of this exegesis. There are two DVD works, and one interactive installation:

- *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* (DVD) (Case Study 1)

- *Hairy Tales* (DVD) (Case Study 2)

- *Kids Games* (Interactive installation) (Case Study 3)

The *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* (2002) (Case Study 1) is a large-scale DVD production that combines hybrid content development techniques including live action, animation, fine art practices, and theatrical improvisation. Over three hundred children and their teachers participated in the making of this work about ghosts and 'scary' childhood memories. It was commissioned for Children's Week in 2002 by the City of Melbourne. In this production, the initial observations about the impact of the presence of a Creative Producer on the dynamics of the production are made. The responsibilities and activities of a Creative Producer are analysed in systems theories. The production led to the development of further questions about how to manage a non-hierarchical team that were investigated in the second project employed as a case study.

Hairy Tales (2004) (Case Study 2) is a small-scale DVD work about a group of children who discover they are lost in the Australian bush and are finally rescued by a magical emu. In this production, the team developed an ensemble-style, improvisational acting technique that was employed to develop content for the narrative. A technique for incorporating flexibility and improvisation into the production management activities is developed and tested. The production led to the development of further questions about feedback loops and building relationships with community groups that were investigated in the third project that was used as a case study.

Kids Games (2006) (Case Study 3) is an interactive multimedia installation exploring children's ideas about sport. The community in this project was a class of mostly African refugee children. In this production used as a research case study, the positive benefits that stem from developing a long-term creative production relationship with a community are investigated. The development of a strategic improvisation technique for the management of a community-based multimedia team is further tested.

Diagramatically, the research can be seen as a chronological journey of the Creative Producer through a range of multimedia production projects. Figure 1: A Chronology of Creative Projects employed as Case Studies shows this journey.

2003–2008	Research interviews conducted in Europe and Australia

2002		**2003**		**2006**
Case Study 1		Case Study 2		Case Study 3
SCREENS & SCREAMS MULTIMEDIA MOVIE		HAIRY TALES		KIDS GAMES

Figure 10: Chronology of Creative Projects Employed as Case Studies

The practice is examined in iterative cycles of creative production and critical reflection using the Action Research methodology of planning, observation, creation, and reflection. (Carr and Kemmis 1986, p.162) The practice-led research was "initiated in practice, where questions, problems, challenges are identified and formed by the needs of practice and practitioners; and secondly, that the research strategy is carried out through practice, using predominantly methodologies and specific methods familiar to us as practitioners." (Gray 1994, p.3) An understanding of process that was gained through the first case study production, led to the development of further questions to test the role. Improvisation theory and practice (Peter Brook, 1993) were introduced in the second case study and an improvisational technique for creative management was devised and tested. The understanding acquired through the second case study was assimilated and led to the establishment of a management technique that was further tested in the third and final case study.

The analysis of the projects in chapters three, four, five and six is followed by the findings of the qualitative and quantitative Industry Survey presented in chapter seven of this exegesis, in which the dynamics of creative collaboration are investigated. The Survey was conducted using purposeful sampling to select thirty experts and practitioners across a broad spectrum of arts practice. Experts from the fields of arts management, Community Cultural Development, theatre, and multimedia/media were selected as survey participants. Selection was based on seniority and experience in arts organisations, and/or reputation as experienced practitioners in the fields of theatre, Community Cultural Development, media and multimedia production.

The creative projects were evaluated at different stages of this research project as knowledge about the research was established. The evaluation criteria were first articulated in the years of the practice itself. I started to see what the issues were, and this realisation led to my research proposition and the research questions. Initially, therefore the evaluation criteria used to analyse the success or failure of community collaborations in multimedia productions were based on the research proposition and questions, theoretical texts, and the critical reflection on practice.

The Industry Survey confirmed and expanded these criteria. On its completion, I re-visited the three projects employed as case studies to submit them to a further stage

of analysis against the criteria agreed by experts in the Industry Survey (see findings presented in Chapter seven and the detailed analysis of each question in Appendix four of this exegesis). This evaluation approach was adopted because it gave a broadly accepted and specific set of criteria for evaluation. The evaluation commentary and analysis of each project employed as a case study for this research includes opinions about the process and outcomes of the project from the collaborating artists and representatives of the project partners.

Ten criteria are employed to evaluate the impact of the role of the Creative Producer in each of the three case study productions. They are listed in the order of respondents' agreement in the Findings of the Industry Survey and they identify the elements of successful community-based, multimedia project development. The criteria are:

1. The Creative Producer developed a project that was enjoyable for participants who were involved in the process of production.

2. The Creative Producer had a key responsibility for managing internal and external communications.

3. The production fulfilled contractual obligations made with funding agencies or partners in terms of outcome, budget, and delivery dates.

4. The Creative Producer developed project budgets, organised funding and undertook financial project management.

5. The Creative Producer initiated, established, and maintained the shared vision for a community-based, multimedia project from concept to completion.

6. The team selected by the Creative Producer were appropriate in terms of skills and attitude, to fulfil the requirements of building the project with the community participants.

7. The Creative Producer brought together creative and management activities and responsibilities into one overarching role in the development of a community-based multimedia project.

8. The Creative Producer employed intuition and a responsive, flexible management approach in a creative team.

9. The works produced in a team composition including a Creative Producer were successful in process and outcome, and were relevant to public audiences outside of the community where they were produced.

10. The Creative Producer was involved in all stages of making the community-based production, and sometimes participated in the creative activities of the production.

The final chapter of the exegesis provides the research conclusions that address the research proposition and questions. Here, the results of the creative practice-led research are integrated with the findings of an Industry Survey undertaken over the research period. They may be of specific interest to those establishing creative teams

to work in collaborative and community-based, multimedia production environments, and more broadly to those working in other creative contexts that feature collaboration as a method of production, such as in theatre and in hybrid performance projects. They also address issues of convergence in creative production. As is noted on the website of the Community Cultural Development course established at the Victorian College of the Arts:

> *Reflective inquiry is the engagement of the individual in constructing meaning, when inquiry itself integrates the reflective and collaborative aspects of thinking and learning" (Garrison & Archer 2000). In line with this key concept is the use of diverse research methodologies, including action-based research, narrative evaluation and production-based investigation which uses the development of working designs and prototypes as method.*
>
> (Victorian College of the Arts, Community Cultural Development Program, accessed 19/11/08)

Reflection on practice provides a rich source of knowledge based on the lived experience of creative endeavour. On the other hand, systems theories such as Emergence, Convergence, Complexity and Chaos theories may explain why the multimedia production team can be understood as a complex organisation with non-hierarchical and non-linear communication patterns. These groups are likely to feature responsive and flexible creative and management activity, within a project structure that may be defined by the Creative Producer through discussions with team members. Aspects of improvisation theory (from theatre), and an understanding of how intuition may contribute to creative practice (from cognitive psychology) also provide entry points for the research. The formation stages of Actor-Network theory may provide an explanation about the need for ongoing and repeated communication processes amongst the many 'actors' in a community-based, multimedia production involving people and artifacts, such as digital equipment in non-hierarchical, self-managing teams.

In this research, the unique requirements of community-based, multimedia production, including knowledge about the activities and responsibilities of the emerging role; the comparative analysis of other ways that creativity has been managed in collaborative environments such as theatre; the success, failure and risk factors that are commonly observed in community productions; and the use of improvisation as a production process and management techniques are the subjects of investigation.

There are practical and theoretical outcomes of the research project. From the practice comes the development of three works that feature a team formation including the Creative Producer. The theoretical research may create a new understanding about one model of collaboration in community-based, multimedia production that includes a central, creative and managerial role of the Creative Producer. Contemporary production theory may be extended through the development of a management technique specifically devised for application in collaborative, community workshops.

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

My interest in working in community could be seen as a reaction to the potential cultural homogenisation of communities, identified as an effect of globalisation. A Creative Producer developing community-based projects with professional artists and community participants may strengthen the cultural capacity of those communities by enabling community groups to tell their own stories. Social theorists, Gledhill and Williams (2000) state: "The contemporary media shape identity … And while the media can destroy community and fashion solitude by turning spectators into atomised consumers or self-entertaining nomads, they can fashion community and alternative affiliations." (Gledhill and Williams, 2000, p.27) Artists may collaborate with community members to develop cultural products that tell the small stories that are unique to communities and individuals within them, and that may assist in the maintenance of the cultural identity of a community.

Depending on the purpose, these productions can be directed inwardly towards the community where the work was made, or outwardly for a general public audience. In the development of the community projects that were employed as case studies for the research, the creative team were not looking to be cultural change agents. We decided it was enough that, as an independent production team working with groups of children, we would provide these children with an enjoyable experience and an introduction to storytelling in multimedia production.

The environmental activist model provides a rationale for artists to work in communities, even if they have very little impact on the national stage, and none at all on the international arena. In 1972, Rene Dubos, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and environmental activist, coined the slogan: "Think Globally, Act Locally." (Dubos, in Eblen and Eblen, 1994, p.702) This model provides a useful rationale for artists to work in collaborative, small-scale projects in community contexts, developing projects as catalysts for appreciation, action, reflection, and change at a local level. The fact that these productions are created, that the participants and the artists value and enjoy the experience, and a viewing public can share and enjoy their creative ideas, were sufficient motivation at the time for me to embark upon this series of community productions.

The research situates the Creative Producer in collaborative media production: broadly in relation to team management and specifically in the history of collaborative media and theatre theory. Extensive reading of literature in trans-disciplinary fields of systems theories, improvisation theory and cognitive psychology and the histories of media and theatre production provide the historical and theoretical underpinnings of this research project. Because the trans-disciplinary field is so broad, discussion will generally be brief, with greater emphasis given to the theories, and authors who have directly influenced my thinking.

In theoretical terms, team management and systems theories have been employed to develop the initial group of questions about the practice of the Creative Producer. In the

media field, the history of film; video; television; and multimedia production teams and methodologies of practice are examined for antecedents, similarities and divergences in team formats and role responsibilities. Roles that combine management and creative activities such as the producer and director roles in theatre, film and television production are analysed to provide greater insight into the history of management employed in production teams.

Complementing the discussion of media production history, the relationships between collaborative practice in media and theatre are discussed. The equivalencies and differences that can be observed between roles in different forms of media production and theatre practice are considered. In the theatre studies field, the role of the Director and the relevance of a range of directorial practices and philosophies to collaborative, community-based, production teams are investigated. The reason why a teams' behaviour is difficult to predict and complex to manage in collaborations is analysed through systems theories. These theories provide a basis for understanding the complex interactions in creative, responsive, and improvised production settings. The history and evolving philosophy of Community Cultural Development is discussed in relation to locating the research projects in the tradition of community production. In addition, some examples of how the role is currently being described in industry-related publications and on production credits are provided.

Practice-led Research

There are ongoing debates about situating and valuing arts practice as research in Australia. Playing a central research role in creative practice is the Creative Industries Co-operative Research Centre based at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane and involving many research departments of Australian universities including RMIT where this research project is located. In fact, this research project was completed with a scholarship from the Australian Centre for Interaction Design (ACID) within The Creative Industries Precinct of Queensland University of Technology. This Research Centre was established with funding from the Australian Government because (at least in part) of the successful argument mounted by creative researchers including Stuart Cunningham, John Hartley and Terry Flew, that creative research should be understood as research and development, and viewed as important to the quantum of research in Australia as that undertaken in the fields of science, technology and the social sciences. (Hesmondhalgh 2007, p.149)

John Hartley, a key researcher in the Creative Industries Co-operative Research Centre believes that creativity has the power to "be the driver of social and economic change over the next century" (Hartley 2005, p.1) and that it is the purview of researchers in the creative industries to undertake systematic research and development to analyse the role of creativity in developing innovative cities, communities, and industries. David Hesmondhalgh (2007) says, "we need approaches that are sensitive to the potential power of the cultural industries as makers of text, as systems for the management and marketing of creative work, and as agents of change." He observes, "the cultural

industries have moved closer to the centre of the economic action in many countries and across much of the world. Cultural industries companies can no longer be seen as secondary to the real economy where durable useful goods are manufactured". (Hesmondhalgh 2007, p.1) In the context of the wider research field of the creative industries, this research project aims to develop new knowledge that may contribute to an understanding of how teams function, particularly collaborative teams which comprising members from diverse backgrounds and interests.

Authorship in the collaborative context

The issue of shared authorship has been the topic of debate in the creative industries. Collaboration scholars Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford (2001) note, "everyday practices in the humanities continue to ignore, or even to punish, collaboration while authorizing work attributed to (autonomous) individuals." (Ede and Lunsford 2001, p.357) Vera John-Steiner has focused on the issues of authorship in collaboration in two extensive studies. Notebooks of the Mind: Explorations of Thinking (1985), and Creative Collaboration (2000) investigate the relationship between group authorship and creative innovation in the work of both artists and scientists. She notes that innovative collaborations are those, "that lead to change in their domain's dominant paradigms." (John-Steiner 2000, p.196) She suggests that this is because creative artists who are interested in working collaboratively are those who see the value in working with people from a range of disciplines. It is in trans-disciplinary collaborative practice that innovation can occur because it is in the clash of traditions and methodologies that new knowledge can be created.

In the practice aspects of this project there was little discussion about who owned the work. In retrospect this may have been because the works were seen as belonging to the community rather than being the creative output of the artists. In the brief discussions about crediting in the creative projects employed as case studies in this research project, all the participants and the stakeholders involved in all projects agreed that the authorship was shared just as the collaboration had been shared. A theatre director who worked on several projects with me including the case study production of *Kids Games* discussed authorship in an interview I conducted with her about her experience of working in community contexts. She says, "We didn't create the stories and we don't own the stories. They are their stories and we have facilitated them to express those stories from many different angles. It's the joy of the ownership that is the ultimate gift that those children get. I can see how that's so different to film because in terms of an art form it's more like being a collage artist, than being a filmmaker in the traditional sense." (Artist 3 interviewed12th May 2007 Appendix 3)

The credits for the work identify the artists and all the project participants as equal participants in the projects. However, it is in the rights to use the completed creative projects that this sense of shared ownership was formally negotiated. The rights for all participants to access and use the work were established through simple agreement forms that I arranged for all participants and artists to sign. The permission forms that

each community participant (or their authority figure) signed before becoming involved in the project stipulates that the projects can be screened and promoted in any way that is deemed appropriate by the Creative Producer, the artists involved, and the project stakeholders such as ACMI and the City of Melbourne. The legal agreements with the project sponsors in all projects gave rights for all stakeholders and participants to use and screen the work. All child participants, and participating schools have copies of the completed works. They have the rights to exhibit and promote the works in any way they believe is appropriate.

Systems Theories

The web of activity, particularly the non-hierarchical and non-linear communication processes and relationships in collaborative production contexts can be analysed through the theoretical lens of contemporary management theories that are part of the suite of systems theories. The complex non-linear relationships that are observed in groups collaborating on the development of a community-based multimedia project may be better understood through the analysis of how teams operate in Emergence, Convergence, Complexity and Chaos theories. These theories have been particularly useful to interpret the behaviour of the community-based teams who created the projects employed as case studies in this research. A project team "comprises a group of people convened to achieve a particular task, usually short-term, and then disbanded." (Caracciolo 1999, p.10) This definition is common to both business and arts contexts because they are both focussed on managing team communication and output.

Complexity and Chaos theories provide a means to address the turbulence and unpredictability within an organisation or team. They provide a lens to examine the characteristic behaviours that may be observed in multimedia production teams that comprise professional artists and community participants. These theories are relevant to the analysis of how team members self-organise in production workshops to create content for a multimedia production. The interest in Chaos theory as a new management science was galvanised by James Gleick (1987) who wrote Chaos: Making A New Science, a popular text that resulted in the understanding of Chaos theory as a new paradigm for applying Complexity theory to management in business and science. Courtney Brown (1995a) defines Chaos as having three fundamental characteristics. "They are (a) irregular periodicity, (b) sensitivity to initial conditions, and (c) a lack of predictability. These characteristics interact within any one chaotic setting to produce highly complex non-linear variable trajectories. Irregular periodicity refers to the absence of a repeated pattern in the oscillatory movements of the chaotically driven variables." (Brown1995a). Seen through the lens of this theory, the potential for unpredictability in content suggestions, responsive, improvised activity around a theme, and serendipitous discoveries made through creative interactions between community participants and professional artists may result in unexpected opportunities emerging in the collaboration as demonstrated in the development of the three creative projects employed as case studies in this research project.

These theories were used to interpret how the sub-groups in a workshop context could self-organise to work on the development of an idea, why improvisation techniques took advantage of the adaptive nature of the team, and how the unpredictability of interactions required open, flexible, and responsive reactions in those teams comprising community participants and professional artists in the research projects. Ziauddin Sardar and Iwona Abrams (1999) argue, "the non-linear dynamic systems studied by Chaos theory have the ability to balance order and Chaos. This balance point is called the edge of Chaos. … Spontaneous self-organisation is one of the main hallmarks of complex systems. The other main characteristic of complex systems is their adoptive nature." (Sardar and Abrams 1999, pp. 82-83) Complexity theory may therefore explain why there is a need for a new overarching role that straddles the creative and the management activity, and why the traditional hierarchical director/producer model of control and management found in other forms of media are less likely to be successful in capturing the uniqueness of the shared creative interaction in a bottom-up, collaborative context of the research productions.

"Feedback loops" (Johnson, 2001) were used in the improvisational activities of community participants that are tested in the case study productions as a method for developing content. Steven Johnson (2001) describes the operation of negative feedback loops as: "Negative feedback is a way of indirectly pushing a fluid, changeable system towards a goal. It is in other words a way of transforming a complex system into a complex adaptive system."(Johnson 2001, pp.138-139) Feedback loops provide a rationale for valuing the spontaneous and the unexpected creative suggestion within a complex and non-hierarchical production process, such as those found in productions used as case studies in this research project. Miguel Cunha and Arménio Rego (2008) in their exposition of complexity theory proposed that "complex organizing may be paradoxically facilitated by a simple infrastructure, and that the theory of organizations may be viewed as a domain of choice between simplicity and complexity." (Cunha and Rego 2008, p.6) Therefore, in this analysis, the composite role of Creative Producer could be seen as a simple structural solution to the complex issues involved in the maintenance of the equilibrium between management control and creative autonomy in community-based multimedia productions.

Convergence theory, on the other hand, has assisted in understanding the influences that affect the cohesiveness of a production unit. D. C. Griffin (1991) describes the way that a shared and collective creative vision is established through the "symbolic convergence [that] ties a group together with cohesive bonds, a sense of togetherness is formed. Individual members begin using the words "we" instead of "I," and "us" instead of "me."(Griffin, 1991, p.34) The theory explains how participants who don't know each may be willing to work together to achieve a common goal. The introduction of the Creative Producer in community contexts can be viewed as an example of a simple solution developed to resolve complex management issues. Creating cohesion within a group takes time, because recognizing similarities and developing a creative and open creative environment is a gradual and critical process. In this research project, how the

Creative Producer manages these competing desires of individual creative freedom and collective vision was a key area of investigation. The theory of Convergence (with its capacity for group thinking) was a starting point for testing structured yet fluid management techniques that were auditioned in the first case study, the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie*.

The formation stages of Actor-Network theory (Callon, 1986) was a theoretical model used to interpret the need for ongoing and repeated communication processes amongst the many 'actors' involved in a community-based multimedia production of people and artifacts, such as digital equipment. The theory acts as a lens for examining the role of the Creative Producer as the central 'spokesperson' representing all the interests of a group or team that has been assembled to develop a project. In this theory, the movement back and forth between the 'stages' of creation and maintenance of an Actor-Network may be similar to the group dynamics of a multimedia production. The application of this theory to an analysis of the productions employed as case studies in this exegesis is discussed in more detail in the project analysis presented in chapters three, four, five, and six of this exegesis.

Intuition

By contrast, the intuitive decision-making of creative teams, based on experience and craft skill competency are investigated in the theories about professional expertise developed in cognitive psychology. Improvisation techniques enabled experienced artists to operate within a framework of defined project parameters, craft skills, and intuitive knowledge to produce content with community members in unstable environments. Cognitive psychologist Donald Schon (1983) investigates the nature of intuitive knowledge based on experience. He acknowledges that, "competent practitioners … exhibit a kind of knowing in practice, most of which is tacit… Indeed practitioners themselves often reveal a capacity for reflection on their intuitive knowing in the midst of action and sometimes use this capacity to cope with unique, uncertain and conflicted situations of practice." (Schon 1983, p.viii-ix) Jerome Bruner (1979) agrees with Schon and in analysing the same question of the role intuitive knowledge in professional practice argues, "Intuition implies the act of grasping the meaning or significance or structure of a problem without explicit reliance on the analytic apparatus of one's craft." (Bruner 1979, p.102) In the case study projects, whether or not the Creative Producer and the artists collaborating in a production call on intuitive knowledge in the production context is investigated.

Influences from Theatre

The histories of theatre directors, producers and dramaturgs has been relevant to my understanding of the creative and management activities of the Creative Producer in two ways. In terms of team composition, the creative and management split found in the history of both theatre production and of media production are traditionally embodied by the producer and the director roles. There is also a similarity in the creative approach employed in some of the more experimental approaches of theatre, which has inspired

the approach I have taken to content creation in my community-based, multimedia practice. There is one further role however that has been traditionally employed in theatre production, and has had a major impact of the creative direction of theatre companies. This is the role of the dramaturg, and it has some similarities with the role of the Creative Producer.

The primary role of the dramaturg as defined by Susan Jonas (1997) in her seminal book, Dramaturgy in American Theater, A Source Book, is, "to develop repertory material that will express the theater's artistic purpose. The dramaturg will need to find, develop, and possibly even create plays by contacting writers, commissioning plays, researching lost or little-known plays in libraries or archives, and occasionally compiling texts as an editor would from other existing library or non-literary sources."(The Actors Checklist, Accessed12/03/08) The role therefore is focussed on developing creative directions and opportunities for theatre directors and companies of actors. However, while it may have some similarities to the Creative Producer role in the creative and project conceptualisation aspects of the role, it does not encompass the managerial producer aspects of the role. In the development of the creative projects employed as case studies, I employed a dramaturg to work with me on the development of the improvised content of the third project. I did this in order to have more time acting in an overview and strategic role in this project, rather than working in a specific creative capacity. I would therefore argue that the key roles, in terms of artform comparison between theatre and multimedia production are the director and producer functions.

First, the theatre producer, "decides what the production will be, arranges the finance for it, and assembles a creative team. This will include a director, a cast of performers and technicians. The producer is the centre of information for everyone involved in the project". (Prospects: The UK Official Graduate Careers, accessed 6/11/06) The media producer and theatrical producer roles have much in common, particularly in the management and financing activities of creative practice. There are many different approaches to directing in the theatre. The theatre director works in a creative partnership with the theatre producer to make live performances. At another level, the theatre director works with a cast of selected actors, designers and technicians. The traditional theatre director role can be defined as having, "artistic control over a performance, co-ordinating all the stylistic and conceptual aspects of a theatrical presentation. Directors are responsible for interpreting and delivering a text and enabling a production team and cast to work imaginatively under their artistic vision". (Prospects: The UK Official Graduate Careers Accessed 6/11/06) In the traditional power relationship of director and cast the production process can assume a much more hierarchical dimension, in which actors perform to meet the requirements of the director's creative vision.

I interviewed an experienced theatre director about the differences between the director role in traditional hierarchical and the more alternative ensemble styled production approach. She said, "… it doesn't matter how kind and collaborative in their attitude they are, the fundamentals of having a director in a piece of work, is that they hold the vision. It's very hard as an actor in that piece to own any of the vision. With the

conventional notion of director, in a theatre room, the responsibility lies with the director and the stage manager and that's it, it's uncompromising." (B4 interviewed 6th July 2006) The creative and management activities of the Creative Producer are therefore quite different in intention to the traditional Theatre Director role, except in some instances where an ensemble style development is employed, and where the Director can allow the cast members to self-organise to develop performance, and then work with them to polish the material into a presentation form. For example, Peter Brooks (1993) sometimes employs ensemble techniques to develop theatre projects that use improvisation as a methodology. In these situations, he may allow artists to experiment amongst themselves while maintaining a strong project vision.

Ensemble production is defined by the American Network of Ensemble Theatres as, "a way of working that is collaborative and connected with each theatre's community. The ensembles in this group represent a wide range of style and process, but we recognize in each other our common commitment to meaningful theatre made by creatively-empowered artists who work together and in their communities over a long time". (The Network of Ensemble Theatres, Accessed 01/10/08) Conrad Bishop of the long running and influential ensemble style theatre company, Independent Eye, based in California comments that this style of theatre, "Whether managed collectively or hierarchically, and whether the artistic mission is defined by the group or a leader, the artists have a significant degree of impact on the definition of the ensemble's mission". (Bishop, The Network of Ensemble Theatres, Accessed 1/10/08) The approach taken in ensemble theatre has considerable similarity to the collaborative approach taken in the development of the creative projects employed as case studies in this research project. For example, in ensemble theatre productions, the group collectively composes the work employing combinations of the text, improvisation techniques, and vocal techniques. A theatre director and actress who has worked in the ensemble tradition of collaborative theatre production comments, "In the 80s, improvising for theatre, what we spent most of our time doing, was creative development. You would spend a week on one idea and you might end up with five minutes of potential. Then you might explode one of those minutes into 10 minutes of material in the next week. You're actually doing that, and then the editing process is a director's vision where he assembles all of that creative material into some kind of whole." (B4 interviewed 6th July 2006) This tradition vitally informs the approach I adopted in the role of the Creative Producer where I established community contexts for creative collaboration with professional artists and provided the space and the time for the group to work together to see what might eventuate.

Comparing the experience of working with me as a Creative Producer on the *Kids Games* production to the experience of working in collaborative theatre environments one experienced director and actor said "[as] the Creative Producer [you] clearly know what you want on the project, what you want to achieve, and [you] manage the time, manage the liaison with the school and the people. It's facilitating in every aspect to allow all the energy to be focused in those moments of creation. … Yeah, it is quite unique. Although it probably came from overseas models, like in New York in the

'70s there was companies like Mabou Mines, have you ever heard of them? There are companies internationally who have been working with the development of material like this". (B4 interviewed 6th July 2006) Although I had not discussed my influences with this collaborator, she could see that my practice has been inspired by a particular creative tradition. Theorists and theatre-makers including Bertolt Brecht, Peter Brook, Viola Spolin, Keith Johnstone, and experimental groups that employ collaborative creative strategies to develop performances such as the famous American companies, the Wooster Group and Marbou Mines have influenced the development of my creative approach to multimedia practice. For example, I have adapted the use of the empty space, and minimal props and costumes that were key elements in the development of the Brook method, to the multimedia context. This was a hunch that solved many issues to do with working with unskilled performers, and the need to work quickly in informal production environments.

In the creative projects employed as case studies, rather than a theatre director being the outside eye, watching what occurs and taking aspects of the creative collaboration, the editor of the multimedia production in consultation with the collaborative team made the decisions about how to compose the work in community settings, based on the material captured through the collaborative improvised process. Improvisational performance techniques were used for content development and were furthermore adapted as a management approach in the development of these multimedia works. Martin (2004) states:

> *Improvisation emerges through contacting our sense of spontaneity; of natural flow and of allowing things to happen. So, at the end of a successful improvisation something will have emerged which was not there before, and which had not been considered before.*

(Martin, 2004, p.103)

The role of improvisation in creating spontaneous and unexpected content with amateur community participants is the strength of the process that will be investigated and analysed in the case study productions. The history of improvisational theatre dates back to the development of Commedia Dell'Arte in the 14th Century. This was a form of drama that used spontaneity and interaction between actors and the audience to tell a story that unfolds in an evolutionary and in some instances unexpected ways. Commedia Dell' Arte ("Comedy of Art" or "Comedy of the profession") has been defined as: "unwritten or improvised drama, and implies rather to the manner of performance than to the subject matter of the play." (Bellinger 1927, pp.153-7) The potential for "metaphoric" (Manovich, 2001, p.xxxi) translations of terms, skill-sets, and production processes from theatre to the content development activities of collaborative community-based teams and to the production management role of the Creative Producer in community-based multimedia projects will be investigated in the case study analysis found in chapters three, four, five and six of this exegesis,.

One of the pre-cursors to the ensemble theatre approach to collaborative creation that was important in the development of my method was Viola Spolin (1999). She developed an improvisation technique that became known as "theatre games" in the 1940s. Her philosophy of practice was articulated in the seminal text Improvisation for the Theater (Spolin 1999). Keith Johnstone (1977) (who began his career working with Spolin), was from the 1950s another crucial influence in the development of improvisation as a contemporary theatrical technique. He developed a genre of improvised theatre known as "theatre sports" (Johnstone 1977) and aspects of this technique were employed in the development of the creative projects.

In Australia, Hillary Glow (2007) distinguishes contemporary playwrights such as Hannie Rayson and Daniel Keane of the current generation from those playwrights known as the "new wave" artists that emerged from the Australian Performing Group in Melbourne and the Nimrod Theatre in Sydney in the 1970s who often employed ensemble production approaches. She writes that the theatre seemed important in the 1970s because it addressed issues such as censorship, women's rights and the anti-war movement, and thereby engaged with a public conversation about values and beliefs. (Glow, 2007) In the late 1970s, the drama degrees of the Victorian College of the Arts, under the direction on Peter Oysten, Melbourne State College, and Rusden College of Advanced Education, provided new 'talent' many of whom gravitated to the innovative performance companies employing 'new wave' ensemble style development techniques in their work that influenced my own study at the time. (Australian Government's Culture and Recreation Portal. Accessed 30/10/08)

The ideas, theories and practices of collaboration that were investigated over three decades were a critical influence on the development of my hybrid theatre/multimedia/ performance practice. I was a graduate of the Melbourne State College Drama and Film and TV degree, I was involved in performances at La Mama, the Pram Factory and at Handspan Theatre. Other hubs of activity with which I was directly connected with in Melbourne were Jean Pierre Mignon and Bruce Keller developing performances at Anthill Theatre, abd Caz Howard, Paul Davies and Peter Somerville at Theatre Works. In Sydney, similar expressions of experimental theatre were taking place at the Nimrod Theatre, which was founded in 1970, and the experimental and hybrid performance/ visual arts activities of Martin Sharp and others in the Yellow House, and in the Tin Sheds attached to the University of Sydney. I was on the original Board of Fringe Network, and I developed many public art and radio performance events for radio station 3RRR. I spent fifteen years working as a theatre and literary critic for radio stations, 3CR, 3RRR and ABC radio.

A Summary of Media Production Systems History

It is important to consider the history of the traditional industrialised production units and roles found in the commercial cinema that emerged out of Hollywood in the 20th Century as they may provide a point of comparison for demonstrating the different approaches that are now taken to developing media products for new output platforms.

This may assist in developing an understanding of the role of the Creative Producer in relation to how creative and management roles and functions have been traditionally managed in other forms of media production. The Hollywood studio system was particularly influenced by the development of the hierarchical, command and control system that evolved out of the management structures successfully employed in the military-industrial complex. (Flibbert, 2003 pp.119–121) This production system was most effective in delivering films for the mass commercial cinema audience used the complimentary creative and management functions of the Director and the Producer. Even before the introduction of digital technologies, Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell (1979) noted that in the feature film industry, production methodologies had become more flexible because the iron grip of the studio system had been loosened, with the rise of the independent producer who challenged the orthodoxy of the Hollywood system. They describe the potential for these key roles of producer and director to work closely together, or for these two roles to be combined into the single vision of the Producer/Director in certain situations. (Bordwell and Thompson 1979, p.9)

In the mainstream media, the traditional relationship between the role of the producer and the director is viewed as critical to the success of traditional media projects. Wolf Rilla (1970) suggests that the producer and the director "must be of one mind on the intention, shape and purpose of the film they are making" and that the director is seen as the person who "controls the film artistically and has the final say on all creative matters." A key aspect of the producer's work is an overarching financial and management function. Tom Jeffrey (1995) focuses on the management and financial perspectives and points out that "producing a film is the business of film making." (Jeffrey 1995, p.4) The management function extends from developing the concept through to delivery of finished work to a distributor. Michael Horwin (1990) supports this view, noting that the producer is "usually the first person on a project, the producer develops, finances and oversees the entire production from beginning to end."(Horwin 1990, p.9) The producer has to have both creative ideas and the skills to attract financiers. "The producer turns creative ideas into practical or marketable concepts" (Kindem and Musburger 2001, pp.39-40). The "blending of roles" between the producer and the director (Bordwell and Thompson 1979) exists in traditional film industry production models where there is an "increasing tendency for the director to be his own producer…making for a more complete personal control of the whole film." (Rilla 1970, p.14) The compression of these two key management roles into one in the traditional film industry production system points to the need in some situations for a different creative and management approach. In the traditional film industry this has been resolved in the hybrid producer/director model. In community-based, multimedia production, one solution observed in practice to the challenge of creative management is the development of the Creative Producer working with a non-hierarchical team of artists and community participants.

Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel (2002) recognise that a paradigm shift is occurring in the development of media products that is challenging the mainstream dominance of the

Hollywood studio system. They say that the production approaches of the experimental tradition with its focus on non-linearity are more closely linked to digital cinema. They argue that the history of cinema is "a history of technological experiment, of spectator-spectacle relations, and of production, distribution and presentation mechanisms. … the Hollywood model of movie making is about to be questioned by the more radically new potentialities of the digital media technologies … These new digital contexts are setting an appropriate platform for the further evolution of the traditions of independent, experimental and expanded avant-garde cinema". (Shaw and Weibel, 2002 ZKM, Accessed 6/11/08 http://www.zkm.de/futurecinema/index_e.html) It is the alternative and experimental history of avant-garde film that they see as the antecedent to the digital revolution and not the hierarchical model of the Hollywood studio. One such location where other models of management are being observed is the community-based multimedia production, where a different team model including a composite role of the Creative Producer is being employed in practice.

In my own creative history, I have been active for many years in the experimental area of film practice, both as an artist and in organisational contexts. I was involved in the establishment of the Modern Image Makers Association in the 80s, the Super 8 club, the film and video collective of Fringe Network, and more recently as the Deputy Chair of Experimenta, a media arts exhibition and touring organisation. In my creative practice, the translation from film and video to digital was a metaphorically consistent flow from one production system to another. This was likely to be because I had a pre-occupation with non-linearity, new forms of story telling, and experimental forms of practice. I was used to employing an informal, collaborative creative approach to the production process.

However, the multimedia production team can successfully maintain an hierarchical structure, particularly if collaboration is not involved that requires non-linear communication and creative processes. The management method can be different for different purposes. Analysing the organisational structure of audio, video, film, and multimedia production, Gorham Kindem and Robert Musburger (2001) note:

> *The production team can be organised hierarchically or co-operatively. In a hier-archical situation, the commands flow downward from the producer to the director, and from her to the rest of the creative staff or production crew. In a co-operative-ly organised production, every member of the production team has equal authority and control, and decisions are made collectively … Combining approaches, the producer and/or director makes most of the important decisions, but with the help, support, guidance and input of all the creative staff and some of the technical crew is actively sought and obtained. Production is rarely a purely democratic process, but it is almost always a collective process that requires the support and co-opera-tion of large numbers of people.*

(Kindum and Musberger 2001, pp. 21-22)

This combined approach bears some resemblance to the Creative Producer role working with a group of artists and participants, who are actively contributing ideas and making creative decisions in the framework agreed in the production. In describing the flexibility and evolution of titles in film production, Lorene Wales (2005) says that: "Producers are thinking up new titles all the time." (Wales 2005, p.54) Horwin (1990) also suggests that it is in areas of specialisation and innovation that new terms are invented, to reflect the new definitions and boundaries of practice. He states: "the more specialised an industry is, the more specialised is its vocabulary. The more innovative an industry, the more rapidly new words evolve." (Horwin 1990, p.8) Thus, there is agreement about the blurring of responsibilities and the blending of production functions between producers and directors in mainstream media. Likewise in community media production new roles and functions such as the Creative Producer have been observed emerging from practice.

There is a range of views about where the creative control resides in the multimedia production model. "In new media, where the traditional film and TV producer model is less common" (Gillezeau 2004, p.11) the producer is sometimes known by the software industry term 'developer'. Jessica Burdman (1999) suggests that the project manager/ producer is responsible for scoping the work, production planning, scheduling, financial and team management. She delineates a different function for managing all creative activities in the role of the "creative lead" who is responsible for the concept and is responsible for the site design and has a reporting line to project manager and account executive. In the history of the computer games industry there has been other combinations auditioned to accommodate a more collaborative non-linear construction and creative interaction in departments, within an overall hierarchical command structure. (Natkin 2006, p.25)

**Community Cultural Development Practices and the Concept
of the Creative Producer**

Community Cultural Development practice is a reference point for the evolution of my creative involvement with communities and the development of the concept of the Creative Producer. The definition provided by the Australia Council for the Arts for this field of practice is expansive enough to capture any collaboration between professional artists and communities. Their website defines it as, "a community-based arts practice and it can engage any artform. There are many variations of a community-based process, and as such, there is no one correct model. The process, however, is primarily the collaboration of professional artists and communities to create art". (Australia Council for the Arts, Accessed 5/08/07) In this definition, the difficulties that have arisen in attempting to capture the scope of community-based practice become apparent. It is suggested by such qualifying words as 'no one correct model' and 'many variations of a community-based process.' The looseness of this definition could be an indicator of the evolving nature of the practice involving collaborative activity between professional artists and communities.

There are a range of views presented in the literature about the reason and purpose of Community Cultural Development (CCD) practice. There is also a debate about whether this is a community development process concerned primarily with process or whether the outcome of community projects is equally as important. While some authors and commentators are of the opinion that Community Cultural Development is about art and artists working in community contexts others argue that the focus of this practice is about community development where artists provide some creative skills and input. In the projects employed as case studies for this research project, the focus was in developing creatively satisfying works that were enjoyable for all participants and where there were outcomes that were of interest the general public.

A major shift in arts policy shook the sector when in 2005, the Australia Council for the Arts decided to disband the Community Cultural Development Board and its funding programs. To determine future directions, the Australia Council commissioned a report, The Community Partnerships Scoping Study; Creative Communities, published in June 2006. It notes that a challenge for the sector is to "… broaden the definition of community arts and community cultural development to include the wide range of arts and cultural activities currently practiced in communities". (Dunn 2006, p.8) This report was the result of a national consultation process with stakeholders curiously conducted after the decision about disbanding this Board had been taken and made public. The Study encouraged practitioners to develop a practice-led definition of community arts and cultural activity.

In the context of the discussion about the role and purpose of community-based practice, I identify myself as an artist who sometimes works in communities. I do not consider myself to be a specialist community artist, even though the definitions of the production activities and the involvement of communities within my collaborative productions are now so broad that it is possible to locate my work under the Community Cultural Development umbrella. In my experience of developing projects in communities, the intention of the project determines both the project design and the model of engagement that is adopted.

The community-based projects analysed as case studies were funded projects and as such, an expectation of the funding bodies was that there would be a product that could be 'launched' on their completion. This type of engagement has been theorised by an academic in the field to be an entrepreneurial model of Community Cultural Development practice where there is, "an emphasis on creative intervention and social entrepreneurship. The artistic concept, usually with an expected high-level product outcome, evolves from a community-based leadership approach, that can be offered or invited by a community through the community's interest, recognition and understanding of the vision of an artist/animateur as inspirational leader, mentor and creative". (Clark S. to McCauley S. Unpublished research, pers.com., 9th August 2006) This model approximates the negotiation, production process, and presentation stages of the community-based projects that I have developed that are employed as

case studies for this research project. Because they are funded projects, a contractual obligation is for these projects to have a public outcome, and for there to be an event of some kind to launch these works. The approach taken in the development of these community-based projects could be therefore seen to be an entrepreneurial engagement model of Community Cultural Development.

Theory and practice in the community sector are likely to evolve as long as artists and communities continue to develop new ways to work together. Finding an effective mechanism to fund and incorporate community practice within the spectrum of contemporary arts is recognised as an issue amongst policy makers at the Australia Council for the Arts and by other cultural commentators. There seems to be a genuine broadly based concern for projects developed in communities to be viewed as an aspect of contemporary arts practice, and one feature of this interest is in the potential for the community-based project to be a site of investigation into creative collaboration. Scott McQuire and Nicos Papastergiadis (2005) consider the need for new participatory models of collaboration as central to debate in contemporary arts practice. They say, "The models of artistic collaboration that were inspired by the need to involve different communities, access new technologies, disperse creative responsibility and stimulate heightened forms of feedback, are now at the core of debates on contemporary practice." (McQuire and Papastergiadis, 2005, p.8) The Creative Producer model that I have investigated in this research project could be seen as an attempt to provide a solution to this problem. The non-hierarchical creative structure that I have tested in this research encourages a responsive attitude by all participants and incorporates creative feedback into the production process. This model may provide an approach to managing mixed experience teams comprising professional artists and amateur community participants in developing projects that use new technologies.

Emergence of the Creative Producer Role in the Media Industry

There are many examples of the use of the Creative Producer title in different sectors of the media industry from the fields as divergent as computer animation, digital media distribution services, and community-based video productions. They demonstrate that the series of tasks that I now define as a Creative Producer role is emerging in practice in many industry sectors as one solution to creative management in a range of media production practices, many of which feature collaboration as a process of production.

Notes

[i] The Council recognised that this role was useful in collaborative contexts. The focus of this initiative was on collaboratively developed performance projects. "The role of the Creative Producer has emerged as a dynamic force in the creation and production of innovative performance practice but is an area` where there is currently little professional support. The role of the Creative Producer is to stimulate new work, bringing together artists to work in collaboration and managing the process. Experienced Creative Producers with vision and a deep understanding of performance can play a crucial role in the development of high quality performance work." (Scottish Arts Council Accessed 19/9/06 http:www.sac.org.uk/1latestnews/1003259.aspx)

[ii] Wood and Gray (1991) undertook a review of research about collaboration theory. They state, "a convener must be able to identify stakeholders and induce them to participate." (Wood and Gray 1991, p.36) This understanding of collaboration resonates with Actor-Network theory where the formation of a group is driven by the need for collective action for individuals to achieve what they want. (Callon 1986)

[iii] The formation of an Actor-Network through the 'stages' is called the 'process of translation.' An actor-network is dynamic and the movement described between stages is referred to as 'displacements.' Callon (1986) states that "translation is a process never a completed accomplishment, and it may fail." (Callon 1986 p.196) Members of the network may move backwards and forwards through the 'stages' as they contest, consider involvement, or dispute the validity of claims of the network "spokesperson". Hence, the Creative Producer may need to revert to "problematisation" or "enrolment" stages with team members, community participants, or other project stakeholders, even after production has commenced, to resolve issues and to restore effective communication processes. For example, the Creative Producer in actor-network theory is the 'spokesperson', of the team, who has to convince others such as funding agencies, artists and community organisations to accept the project vision and to support its implementation. The process of 'enrolment' may take the form of community consultation, submission writing, the obtaining of equipment and facilities, the analysis of skill sets and the selection of artists who are capable and interested in collaboration.

[iv] In video and multimedia art collectives in the 70s and 80s, a non-hierarchical process of ensemble development were developed by such groups as VNS Matrix, Arf Arf, and the Zip Collective. However, with these collaborative structures, there was still a need observed for some overall management role in the project. Tim Gruchy (1994) whose practice developed into a producer role in his work from the 1980s crossed between contemporary art practice and dance parties. He says," What I realised was that I was really good at was being a producer, bringing different elements together…to be the overall producer of these events … to go in as an equal and be prepared to do collaborative work". (Zurbrugg 1994, p.27)

[v] This transference of terms across industries was noted early on in the development of the media arts industry in Australia. Dixon (1997) was commissioned to write a report, Other Spaces, for the Australian Film Commission about new media production in Australia. In this report, the term 'developer' is defined as coming from the applications software industry. Dixon adds: "in the film industry such people or companies would be called producers." (Dixon 1997, p.10)

[vi] Jon Hawkes summarises this debate when he states: "The description of Community Cultural Development CCD provided by the Australia Council's Community Cultural Development Board in a brochure Hands ON! published in 2002 is that "Community Cultural Development describes collaborations between communities and artists ... This is in stark contrast with Deidre Williams's description in a pamphlet published by the Community Arts Network SA in 1996. … CCD is a process which works towards an environment in which democratic exchange of cultural expressions can occur". In the first description CCD is envisioned as a professional practice: the placement of artists with communities. In the second, it is the actual process that is nominated as the essence." (Hawkes 2003, Artwork, Issue #56)

In Australia, the Victorian College of the Arts has a history of innovation in theatre practice and Community Cultural Development through developing a range of community focused academic studies. The relationship between the role of the animateur and that of the Creative Producer is a subject of investigation in this research project. According to the Victorian College of the Arts, the animateur is "comprehensive and may have a social, political and cultural purpose. It can be integrated in, and aligned to many policy areas; and can extend to education, health, housing, justice, the environment, and urban development/renewal policies. In many ways animateurs work directly in community to plan and deliver strategies that develop people's creativity ability, in order to advance and achieve true cultural democracy". (UNESCO 1971) In 2005, the Australia Council for the Arts made a decision to disband the Community Cultural Development Board and its funding programs.

[vii] An example of the use of the new title of Creative Producer in animation production can be found on the Animation World Network website, where the creative team employed to make the Hellboy: Sword of Storms animation included a Creative Producer. (Animation World Network (http://www.awn.com accessed 10/11/06). The production team featured a supervising producer/director. Mike Mignola is described as part of the creative team (writer) and a Creative Producer. These credits provide an insight into a new production paradigm including the Creative Producer in animation productions. The Creative Producers in this context are additional roles to the director/producer function, rather than a replacement for these functions.

The Creative Producer credit exists alongside that of the producer/director, suggesting a specific 'hands on' creative role and a management production function within the animation team. In another example, from the commercial hardware and software development sector, the penetration of the role and function of the Creative Producer into the commercial sphere is demonstrated. In the Broadcast News example, the central role of the Creative Producer is described as being situated at the dynamic intersection of the research and development activities of collaborating engineers, and the complex management functions of the producer. (Business Wire, (http://nab.broadcastnewsroom.com/articles/viewarticle.jsp?id=81011) Accessed 15/11/069.

In an American community-based example, involving installations about breast cancer, Creative Producers are referred to as key production workers. The Button Chair exhibition is an example that describes Creative Producers performing key roles in a community-based media installation. The Creative Producer's personal knowledge about the issue suggests a strong creative vision driving the project. It is a "labor of love" (ibid.). (http://www.theopenpress.com/index.php?a=press&id=13813) released by Articulon. Accessed 16/11/06)

THE SEARCH FOR A METHODOLOGY

PART ONE: RESEARCH STRATEGIES

Practice-led Research

The problem of how best to manage collaborative teams in multimedia production when there is a mix of experienced artists and community participants attempting to work together is the subject of investigation. Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt (2007) argue that practice-led research is different from other methodologies of research because, "…our exploration of artistic research demonstrates that knowledge is derived from doing and from the senses". (Barrett and Bolt 2007, p.1) The potential for creative techniques to inform and suggest solutions to issues in practice, and for new team compositions to emerge as solutions to the needs for creative strength and flexible, responsive management are investigated "in the doing" through Action Research cycles of three creative productions employed as case studies in this exegesis. In each of these productions a collaborative team composition including the Creative Producer as a central and composite creative management role was employed to test the research proposition and address the questions.

My practice-led research, the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* (2002) (Case Study1) was the seminal project in which a new creative approach to collaboration and a new workshop production method was implemented. *Hairy Tales* (2004) (Case Study 2) was selected because it was a small-scale project in which the creative method developed in Case Study 1 was extended and new content and production management techniques were formulated and auditioned. In *Kids Games* (2006) (Case Study 3) the extension of creative possibilities through the creation of a longitudinal community partnership over several years was explored, the beneficial effects of feedback loops between personal and collective creative practice was investigated, and further testing and fine-tuning of a new creative and management technique for use in collaborating creative groups called 'Strategic Improvisation' took place.

It is the intrinsic nature of practice, to solve problems that emerge in a project through whatever means are available. Improvisation in these contexts is the 'mother of invention'. Importantly, Paul Carter (2005) argues that practice-led research is a term that embraces the "nature of work across a range of fields formerly considered distinct. … and that the property that they have in common is that of invention." He notes that the "value of invention… is located neither after or before the process of making but in the performance itself". (Carter, 2005, p.8) It is through the performance - that was expanded to include the conceptualising, developing as well as implementing of three community-based, multimedia projects, that useful connections and observations about practice are likely to be made. Case studies in this research project are built in the unpredictable environment of composite teams comprising community participants who have ideas and histories to contribute to the collaboration, and professional artists who have creative skills to offer, and an interest in working collaboratively in communities.

In discussing the motivation of why artists would want to work in such challenging environments, Carter (2007) says this is because:

> *The impulse to make or invent something stems, rather, from a growing sense of silence, of loss, lack, incoherence or absence. The need to draw together what has been scattered apart originates not in will, but in the realm of eros; it is the frustrated desire of connection that inspires the recreative act. Evidently this motivation originates outside the artist. The forming situation is, in this context, the environment in which that impulse makes sense. That environment may take form of a commission (in which the client stands in for a dispersed desire of psychic repair); it may take the form of a developing conversation leading to a collaboration – which, in turn, by a kind of entrainment, creates a discursive momentum leading to the realisation of a new symbolic form.*
>
> (Carter, in Barrett and Bolt 2007, p.23)

The opportunity provided by practice-led research in Carter's view is that it creates an opportunity to observe how the momentum that leads to project creation occurs, and it is through the observation of practice itself that the inventive nature of community production is revealed. For example, in the three creative productions included in this research project as case studies, the flexibility of improvisation techniques adopted from other creative practices, such as theatre and music were tested as both a content gathering technique, and as a production management method.

The research proposition is based on the idea that the Creative Producer has emerged because of a need for the collaborative and complex self-organising team of the community-based multimedia production. In traditional media structures the creative vision is communicated down the hierarchical command chain, driven by combinations of different types of producer and director roles. In the community-based, multimedia production team "operating on the edge of Chaos" (Langton 1990, p.42) the communications are more of a neural network (Cilliers 1998, p.3) where communications are non-linear, trust relationships are vital to the creative processes, and the activity to be captured is often unplanned and spontaneous.

The research analysis demonstrates an evolving understanding of the subject matter as each case study was undertaken and the results were considered in the light of the extensive qualitative and quantitative Industry Survey results (see chapter seven) and understood in relation to aspects of management and improvisational theories.

In this project, the practice-led research drew upon a variety of trans-disciplinary methods including:

- Qualitative and quantitative research in the form of an international survey of thirty industry experts

- Action Research cycles using creative productions as case studies

- Reflective practice relating to case studies including personal experience, team experience, and interviews with practitioners

- Reflection on improvisation techniques employed in the management and creative aspects of the creative productions as case studies

There are practical and theoretical outcomes of the research project. From the practice comes the development of three works that feature a team formation including the Creative Producer. The theoretical research creates a new understanding about a model of collaboration in community-based, multimedia production that includes a central, creative and managerial role of the Creative Producer. Contemporary production theory may be extended through the development of a management technique specifically devised for application in collaborative, community workshops.

The following diagram highlights the three works employed as case studies, in a production chronology covering the research period. The *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie*, *Hairy Tales*, and *Kids Games* were selected from different points of my creative output between 2002-2008. The projects selected to be case studies in this research were not developed sequentially, but were scattered through my production history over the period.
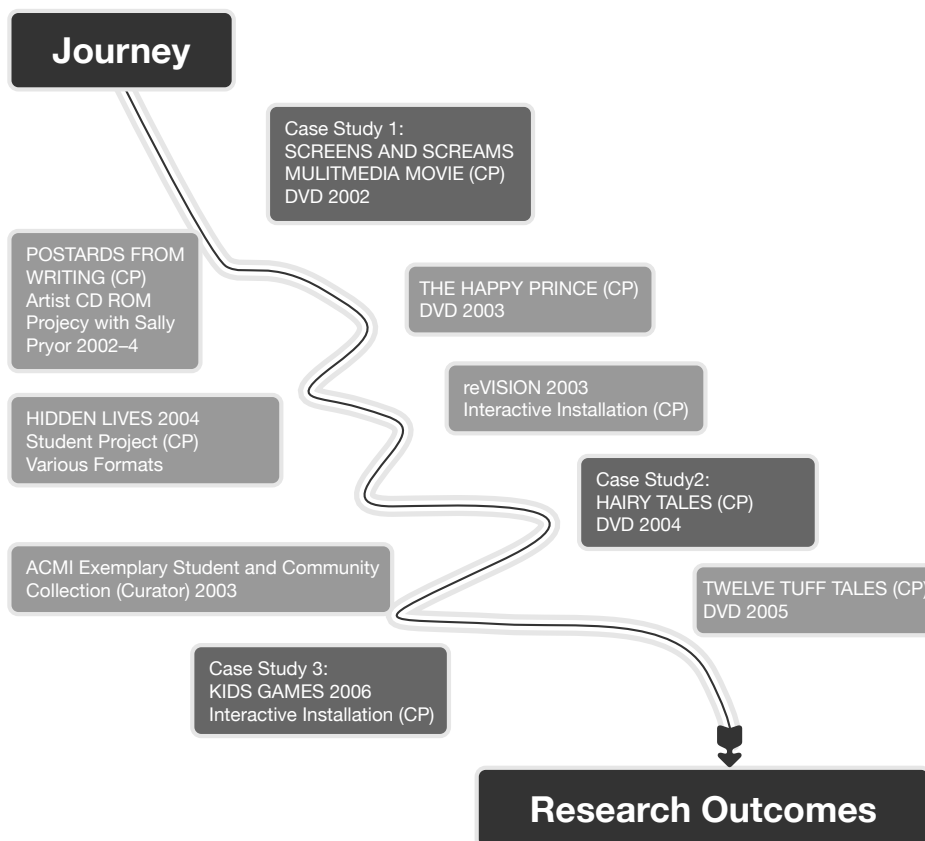
Figure 11: The Creative Producer Journey 2002 – 2007
Source: Adapted from Peterson (2004)
CP = Creative Producer

Action Research Cycles Using Case Studies

Action Research is a qualitative approach that I used to examine my activities in the Creative Producer role in cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting on the development of case studies. The methodology provided a framework for a self-reflective process of examining the activities, skills and qualities of the Creative Producer during and after the completion of the projects. Action Research is defined by Dick (1999) as:

> *… a family of research methodologies which pursue action (or change) and research (or understanding) at the same time. In most of its forms it does this by using a cyclic or spiral process which alternates between action and critical reflection and in the later cycles, continuously refining methods, data and interpretation in the light of the understanding developed in the earlier cycles. It is thus an emergent process which takes shape as understanding increases; it is an iterative process which converges towards a better understanding of what happens. In most of its forms it is also participative (among other reasons, change is usually easier to achieve when those affected by the change are involved) and qualitative.*
>
> (Dick 1999)

The research builds an understanding of the evolution of practice through iterative cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting in and about productions, to create a picture of how the Creative Producer works with the production team. Action Research is particularly suited to the production approach employed in the development of the creative projects employed as research case studies. The workshop model of production first implemented in The Screens & Screams Multimedia Movie (Case Study 1) was further developed in *Hairy Tales* (Case Study 2) and extended in *Kids Games* (Case Study 3). The iterative production cycles built the planning, action, observation and reflection processes into the mechanics of these productions.

The stages of the Action Research process are represented below in Figure 12.
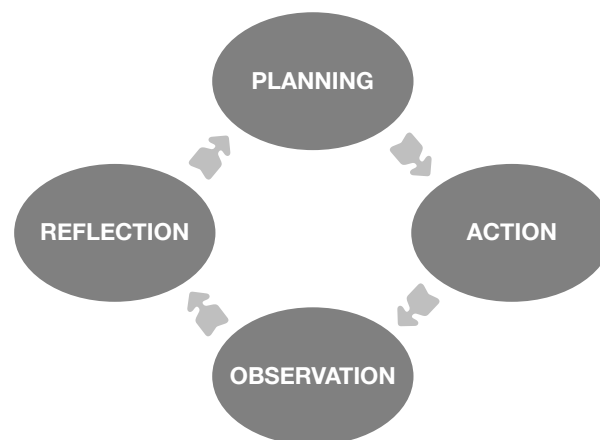
Figure 12: Action research cycle
Source: Stages of the Action Research Cycle
(Carr and Kemmis 1986, p.162)

The second and third case studies were designed using the elements identified by Robert Yin (2003). These elements are a study's questions; its propositions; its unit of analysis; the logic linking the data to the propositions; and the criteria for interpreting the findings. The case study methodology was relevant to the study context because it provided an opportunity to study the real-life conditions of production in a complex team of professional artists and community participants. This methodology provided opportunities to investigate the activities and responsibilities of the Creative Producer in cycles of Action Research that were "real", in that the works were not developed especially for the research context, but developed as a part of an ongoing creative undertaking. Creative projects were employed as case studies in, "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" and the context is "highly pertinent to [the] phenomenon of study" that will "explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies." (Yin, 2003, pp.11-15)
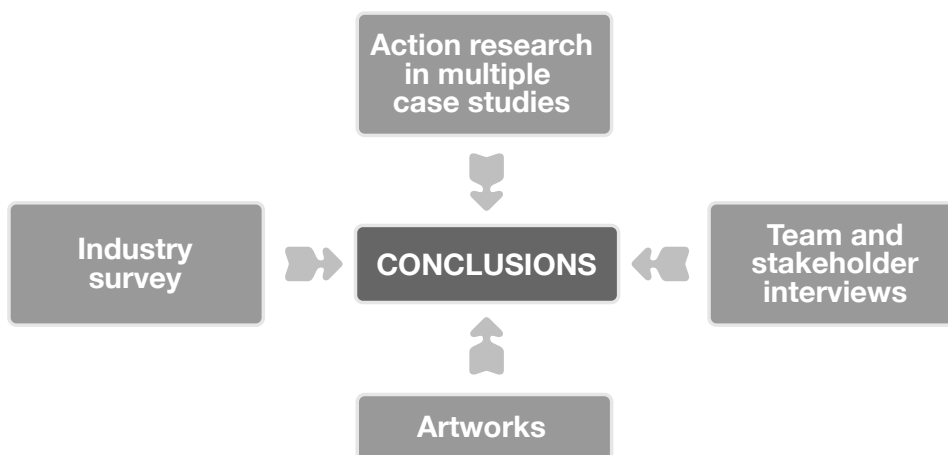
Figure 13: Research Design

The unit of analysis employed in the research design of this project are production teams employed to develop community-based multimedia projects. Management and systems theories including Actor-Network, Emergence, Complexity and Chaos theories provided the background to develop the initial group of questions about the practice of the Creative Producer.

The Creative Producer role is not likely to be effective if simply imported into existing hierarchical team structures as an extra role in community-based multimedia productions. The introduction of the role may require the re-organisation of all roles and responsibilities in the production team, new systems of communication, and different management practices to accommodate the development of collective goals and individual creative autonomy within a collaborative production process. The community-based production team is a complex organisation that exists on "the edge of Chaos" (Langton 1990, p.42) where the feedback loop in practice oscillates

between the planned workshop program, and responsive improvised activity in the content development processes. Communication processes are non-linear between the collaborators, and yet the overall need for a communication and project structure to attain a collective goal is great. The tensions between creative freedom and management control managed by the Creative Producer in the chaotic system of a community-based multimedia production are investigated in each of the case studies.

The replication of the responsibilities and activities of the Creative Producer role in different styles and scale of productions may assist to identify generalisable patterns of activity in community-based multimedia productions. The development of new knowledge that is sustainable and replicable in other community production settings is established through the aggregation of the case study and the industry survey findings presented in the conclusions of this exegesis.

Industry Survey

An in-depth mixed method qualitative and quantitative Industry Survey was conducted with 30 respondents with expertise in media, theatre, Community Cultural Development, and arts management. The topic of research was the creative management of collaborative teams and particularly the impact observed of the introduction of the Creative Producer in community-based, multimedia production teams. Survey respondents were selected on the basis of their senior roles in arts organisations, and/or their reputation as experienced practitioners in the fields of theatre, media/multimedia production. Specifically, in the project, the setting was collaborative, community-based, multimedia production. The research focused on investigating what impacts, if any, the Creative Producer has had on production team composition, processes and outcomes that the respondents to the survey had observed.

The Industry Survey employed a two-pronged approach to data collection. The survey has sought to capture insights about the creative management of collaborative, community-based multimedia production. Qualitative data was collected through a one-to-one interview process and quantitative data was obtained through the completion of a questionnaire for all 30 respondents. The formal nature of the questionnaire provided data that identified the statistical frequency of responses. The interview process allowed for some free discussion that highlighted the chaotic, the singular, and the uniqueness of production situations involving skilled and unskilled people to be captured in the research outcomes. In the qualitative aspects of the mixed method evaluation, interviews were examined for information about the experience of working in, or observing collaborative teams involved in creative project development based on the work of Patton (2002). Interviews were recorded and transcribed between 2003 and 2008. Specific descriptions of both positive and negative impacts of the role of the Creative Producer in collaborative production contexts are provided.

The follow up multiple-choice questionnaire was sent to all the people interviewed to expand the data available for analysis. Of the 30 questionnaires sent out, replies were received from 23 of the interview subjects. There were twenty-seven questions

presented in the questionnaire. In the quantitative analysis of the matrix of data, the focus in each question was the numerical representation of agreement or disagreement with a list of variables. The questions in the questionnaire were neutral. The multiple-choice responses built in positive, negative and non-committed answer options. Respondents were invited to select as many answer options as they agreed with in any question.

The data obtained through interview and questionnaire was aggregated, to provide the matrix of information used to obtain the survey results presented in Chapter seven of this exegesis. The convergence of evidence about the understanding of the role of the Creative Producer has resulted in research conclusions that make analytic generalisations possible about the emergent role of the Creative Producer in collaborative, community-based, multimedia productions.

Evaluation Criteria for the Creative Projects Employed as Case Studies

The creative projects were evaluated at different stages of this research project as understanding about the research was established. The evaluation criteria were first articulated in the years of the practice itself. I started to see what the issues were, and this realisation led to my research proposition and the research project. Initially, therefore the evaluation criteria used to analyse the community collaborations in multimedia productions were based on the research proposition and questions, theoretical texts, and the critical reflection on practice. The Industry Survey confirmed and expanded these criteria. I have re-visited the projects to submit them to a further stage of analysis against the criteria established by experts in the findings of the extensive qualitative and quantitative Industry Survey undertaken for this research project (see findings presented in Chapter seven of this exegesis and detailed analysis of each question in Appendix four of this exegesis).

This evaluation approach has been adopted because it gave a broadly accepted and specific set of criteria for evaluation as determined by the respondents in the Industry Survey. The evaluation commentary includes opinions of the artist team and project partners interviewed, in terms of the process and outcomes of the project. The ten resulting criteria are presented in order of agreement from survey respondents and are employed in each of the three case study productions to evaluate the impact of the role of the Creative Producer working in community contexts. The criteria are also used to identify the elements of successful community-based, multimedia project development. The criteria are:

1. The project developed by the Creative Producer was enjoyable for participants involved in the process of production.

2. The Creative Producer had a key responsibility for managing internal and external communications.

3. The production fulfilled contractual obligations made with funding agencies or partners in terms of outcome, budget, and delivery dates.

4. The Creative Producer developed project budgets, organised funding and undertook financial project management.

5. The Creative Producer initiated, established, and maintained the shared vision for a community-based, multimedia project from concept to completion.

6. The team selected by the Creative Producer were appropriate in terms of skills and attitude, to fulfil the requirements of building the project with the community participants.

7. The Creative Producer brought together creative and management activities and responsibilities into one overarching role in the development of a community-based multimedia project.

8. The Creative Producer employed intuition and a responsive, flexible management approach in a creative team.

9. The works produced by the team including the central role of the Creative Producer were successful in process and outcome, and were relevant to public audiences outside of the community where they were produced.

10. The Creative Producer was involved in all stages of making the community-based production, and sometimes participated in the creative activities of the production.

PART 2: CREATIVE STRATEGIES

Intuition and Innovation in Practice

The research investigates the extent to which flexibility and rapid decision-making are a characteristic of the Creative Producer. Jerome Bruner (1979) investigates the way that people use lucky guesses or hunches. He says, "It is an approach whose medium of exchange seems to be the metaphor paid out by the left hand. It is a way that grows happy hunches and 'lucky' guesses, that is stirred into connective activity by the poet and the necromancer looking sideways rather than directly. Their hunches and intuitions generate a grammar of their own searching out connections, suggesting similarities, weaving ideas loosely in a trial web". (Bruner 1979, p.4) The Creative Producer may be required to demonstrate flexible thinking to capitalise on unexpected occurrences and unplanned opportunities in a community-based multimedia production. He or she may be constantly managing the variables, embracing the unexpected and working in a state of flux. It simply feels like the right thing to do. The Creative Producer and the artists working on a project may persist with a creative idea because they have a 'hunch' that there is 'something there', but it is not always possible to formulate clear reasons for following a line of creative inquiry.

In many instances described by artists and Creative Producers in survey interviews, intuition was recognised as an important driver of creative decision-making and problem solving that sometimes led to innovation in either practice or process. Donald

Schon (1983) says, "The dilemma of rigor or relevance may be dissolved if we can develop an epistemology of practice which places technical problem solving within a broader context of reflective inquiry, shows how reflection-in-action may be rigorous in its own right, and links the art of practice in uncertainty and uniqueness to the scientists art of research". (Schon 1983, p.69) In the creative projects developed for this research, intuition provided opportunities to make leaps in practice, but the 'hunch' needed to be tested to gauge its usefulness. As demonstrated in the example of the improvised production process developed for *Hairy Tales*, acting on impulses can foster creativity and lead to innovation in creative practice. These inputs may be born from practical experience.

Improvisation Techniques in the Creative Projects Employed as Case Studies

Theatrical training has also influenced my creative practice. Theorists and theatre-makers including, Bertolt Brecht, Peter Brook, Viola Spolin, Keith Johnstone, and groups like the Wooster Group, Kiss, Mabou Mines, and Le Coq have had an influence on the development of my creative, community-based practice. Building upon my practice-led approach, and my background in theatre, I introduced improvisation practice into the development of the projects employed as case study productions. It to included improvised acting and storytelling sequences that were the basic structure of each production. The principles of improvisation were extended in the second and third case studies to develop a collaborative production management technique.

My research investigates the potential for "metaphoric" (Manovich 2001) translations of terms, skill-sets, and production processes from theatre to the community-based, multimedia projects. As discussed in the Literature Review of this exegesis, the creative development strategies employed by filmmaker and theatre director, Peter Brook (1993) has been a strong creative influence on the development of my practice. For example, I have adapted the use of the empty space, and the use of minimal props and costumes that were some key elements in the development of the Brook method, to the multimedia context. This was a hunch that solved many issues to do with working with unskilled performers, and the need to work quickly in informal production environments. The concept for the three creative projects employed in this research project as case studies was to work in an "empty space" performing in front of a black screen employed as a compositing frame. Brook (2003) says:

> *Cinema cannot ...ignore the social context in which it operates. It imposes a certain everyday realism in which the actor inhabits the same world as the camera. In the theatre, one can imagine an actor in his everyday clothes indicating that he is playing the pope by wearing a white ski hat. One word would be sufficient to conjure up the Vatican. In the cinema this would be impossible. In the theatre, the imagination fills the space whereas the cinema screen represents the whole, demanding that everything in the frame be linked in a logically coherent manner. Emptiness in the theatre allows the imagination to fill the gaps.*

(Brook 2003, p.26)

Brook's (2003) analysis of the differences between theatre and cinema will be challenged in the creative productions employed as case studies in this research project. In these works, an attempt is made to translate the imaginary world employed in theatre to the multimedia production environment. A combination of superimpositions of drawn backgrounds and minimal props will be employed as a production aesthetic in the hope that the multimedia production environment can be one in which the imaginary world can be translated from the stage to the screen.

A similar approach is taken in *Hairy Tales* to the one used by Brook (1963) when directing the film, Lord of the Flies (1963) with a group of child actors. In the film, as was the situation in the creative production, an improvisation technique was employed with untrained child actors and it was filmed chronologically. The shooting style supported the improvisation process rather than using more usual film model, where scenes are shot out of order, for ease of production. Commencing production without a script and with a room full of eager participants was risky, but with the risk came a sense of excitement to see how this collaboration with children might develop. Brook (1993) says, "To protect oneself one "builds" and one "seals". To open one must knock down the walls". (Brook 1993, p.23) The collaboration was 'open.' There was room in the project to develop the narrative and the visuals in a dynamic way. The artists and community participants co-created the work through the construction of a collaborative, creative structure.

Another important influence on the development of performance concepts that was adapted to multimedia contexts is the work of the Polish theatre director, Jerzy Grotowski. I participated in performance and improvisation workshops with Grotowski's company in Rome in the late 1970s. He invented a theatrical form where the elements of the performance were pared back to the bare essentials of the actor and the audience (Grotowski 1968). In his book Towards a Poor Theatre (1968), Grotowski proposes a theatre where actors' relationship with the audience is the focus of attention rather than, scenery, props and lighting. His performances often took place on a bare stage in front of a black curtain. In an experimental twist on Grotowski's (1968), performance philosophy, the simplicity of his approach to theatre was adopted in the creative collaborations developed in the community-based, multimedia production context and in the productions that were employed as case studies in this research project.

Brecht's concept of 'epic theatre' influences the production design of the productions. The use of the black screen and the layered nature of the image was designed to break the illusion of reality. "The superimposed element disrupts the context in which it [was] inserted" (Benjamin 2005, p.204) to encourage viewers to see the works as a non-realist composition assembled from many performative, art, and multimedia assets. The limitation of elements within the mis-en-scene made it possible to concentrate on the gesture and improvised performance of the community participants. The black screen reduced the extraneous clutter of the schoolroom and the community hall, providing a neutral background and an instant compositing screen.

Actor-Network Theory Analysis

Aspects of Actor Network theory are employed to explore the inter-relationships between people and technologies in the creative aspects of multimedia production, which could be interpreted as a network of activity. The formation stages of an Actor-Network were also employed to interpret the responses in the Industry Survey. In this methodological framework, the movement back and forth between the 'stages' of creation and maintenance of an Actor-Network can create a model of the group dynamics observed in a collaborative multimedia production. If the team develops open and trusting relationships, there is much greater likelihood of effective collaborative engagement. An understanding of team behaviour examined through Actor-Network theory therefore provides a mechanism to facilitate creative production in a community-based multimedia production.

The 'stages' in the formation of an Actor-Network provide a useful lens through which to view the Creative Producer in community-based, collaborative, multimedia productions. An Actor-Network is created by "a series of actors establishing their identities and the links between them." (Callon 1986, p.196) The central requirement that technology is required to create multimedia productions makes a theory that includes tools and technologies as players in a network, relevant and useful. The phases of a community-based collaborative multimedia production can be considered in terms of the four stages in an actor-network (see Callon, 1986; Latour, 1987), as follows:

1. problematisation (identification of mutual interest/need: stakeholder engagement, concept development)

2. interessement (inspiration for involvement ahead of competing priorities: team formation, stakeholder liaison, partnership development, contracts, pre-production)

3. enrolment (activating participation: project management, production, post-production, distribution)

4. mobilisation (mobilising and maintaining inter-relationships and activity: project management, production, post-production, distribution + the Creative Producer is accepted as the spokesperson for the network)

The 'formation of an Actor-Network were employed to analyse the approach and effectiveness of a Creative Producer in the development and management of a collaborative team. For example, the convincing nature of the first stage of 'problematisation' determines whether or not the actors become engaged in the process (Callon 1986, pp.205-207) In a multimedia production situation, the Creative Producer can be seen to be in the role of the 'obligatory passage point,' who defines a project and decides upon the skill-sets required in the team and approaches appropriate people to become involved. The value of collaboration is that all the 'actors' are contributing to a production that would not have been possible to make as an individual 'actor.' Therefore, the benefits of collaboration need to be attractive to the potential members of the network, in order for each potential actor to view membership of this network as desirable.

Interpreting and applying the four stages of the formation of an Actor-Network can be useful in monitoring community-based, multimedia production processes, particularly given the fragile nature of an Actor-Network which is always in danger of dissolution as are community multimedia productions (Callon, 1986; Latour, 1987). The stages explain the inter-relationships of the multimedia production network in which the Creative Producer, community participants, and professional artists are collaborating. The Creative Producer is continuously engaged in the process of moving backwards and forwards through the stages of the creation of an Actor-Network, to monitor and to modify where necessary, and to provide forward momentum in the production process.

The formation of an Actor-Network through the 'stages' is called the 'process of translation.' An Actor-Network is dynamic and the movement described between stages is referred to as 'displacements.' Callon (1986) states that "translation is a process never a completed accomplishment, and it may fail." (Callon 1986 p.196) The development of the network is not necessarily sequential through the different stages of creation (Callon 1986, Latour 1987, Law 1991). Members of the network may move backwards and forwards through the 'stages' as they contest, consider involvement, or dispute the validity of claims of the network 'spokesperson.' The Creative Producer in the spokesperson role may need to revert to the initial 'problematisation' or 'enrolment' stages with team members, community participants, or other project stakeholders, even after production has commenced.

Crucially, seen as an Actor-Network, an unsuccessful production process may be the result of a lack of cohesion in any of the 'stages' within the production. A community-based project can fail in terms of process or product, or both. Failure can result from equipment breakdown or loss. Failure can occur if the 'enrolment' process does not hold the 'players' together in the network because of a disagreement about team dynamics, or content development processes. The clash of perspectives can be a generator for innovation in hybrid production approaches where different art practices are brought together. However, the vision for a work can be lost if all parties are not in agreement about the project direction Callon (1986) says, "…this consensus and the alliances which it implies can be contested at any moment. Translation becomes treason." (Callon 1986, p.15) 'Treason' can result in the breakdown of the team's working methods. It can ultimately be a reason for the failure of a community-based, multimedia production.

In summary, there are creative and theoretical methodological strategies developed in this practice-led research project. The different approaches are employed to extract the information from projects used as case studies and the Industry Survey about the experience in real-life situations of community-based multimedia production. These experiences are analysed in a methodological framework in order to understand if there is a new role and function of a Creative Producer, emerging in community-based, multimedia production and what, if any contributions that a Creative Producer makes to community-based, multimedia productions.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS REGARDING THREE FOLLOWING CASE STUDIES

The following three chapters assess the role of the Creative Producer using a self-reflexive analysis. The practice will be analysed as case studies in an Action Research process of investigation and reflection. In this practice-led research, the unique requirements of community-based, multimedia production; knowledge about the activities and responsibilities of the emerging role; the comparative analysis of other ways that creativity has been managed in collaborative environments such as theatre; the success, failure and risk factors that are commonly observed in community productions; and the use of improvisation as a production process and a management technique are the subjects of examination.

The three projects selected for analysis as case studies were produced in different contexts between 2002 and 2006. There are two DVD works, and one interactive installation:

• *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* (DVD) (Case Study 1)

• *Hairy Tales* (DVD) (Case Study 2)

• *Kids Games* (Interactive installation) (Case Study 3)

The Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie (2002) (Case Study 1) is a large-scale DVD production that combines hybrid content development techniques including live action, animation, fine art practices, and theatrical improvisation. The responsibilities and activities of a Creative Producer are analysed in systems theories. The production led to the development of further questions about how to manage a non-hierarchical team that were investigated in the second project employed as a case study.

Hairy Tales (2004) (Case Study 2) is a small-scale DVD work about a group of children who discover they are lost in the Australian bush and are finally rescued by a magical emu. In this production, the team create an ensemble-style, improvisational acting technique that is employed to develop content for the narrative. A technique for incorporating flexibility and improvisation into the production management activities was developed and tested. The production led to the consideration of feedback loops and building relationships with community groups that were investigated in the third project that was used as a case study.

Kids Games (2006) (Case Study 3) is an interactive multimedia installation exploring children's ideas about sport. The community in this project was a class of mostly African refugee children. In this production used as a research case study, the positive benefits that stem from employing feed back loops between personal and community practice, and the potential in developing a long-term creative production relationship with a community was investigated. The development of a strategic improvisation technique for the management of a community-based multimedia team was further tested in this final creative project.

CHAPTER 3

THE SCREENS AND SCREAMS MULTIMEDIA MOVIE

CHAPTER 3: THE *SCREENS AND SCREAMS MULTIMEDIA MOVIE*

DVD, 2002
10.33 minutes

Context

The proposition tested in this first case study is that a less hierarchical, non-linear production process may be more suited to working in mixed experience teams including a combination of professional artists and community participants that includes the composite creative and management role of the Creative Producer. Although digital technologies may provide access opportunities for community groups to produce low-cost multimedia productions, it may be that new techniques and team formations are also required to manage the complexity of mixed-experience teams working with technology. A combined creative and management role that has been observed in community-based production teams may be one way of facilitating the synergistic creative opportunities found in collaborative, community projects. A team including a Creative Producer in a composite creative and management role was tested in the development of the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie*, the first case study of this research project.

In the role of the Creative Producer, I had spent several months developing a production design with the host organisation and the artist team that would enable the professional artists to work autonomously with a large number (300 in total) of community participants to fulfill a collective creative vision. The question of how this non-hierarchical and self-organising workshop plan could be implemented, and if the introduction of the Creative Producer role into the team could provide the 'glue' to make the plan work, was the focus of the research investigation in this case study.

Production Description

The *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* was a large-scale DVD production involving an international community-based project in which two artists from Ireland, three Australian digital artists, and three hundred children collaborated. The upper primary school-age children (Grades 5 and 6) and their teachers from seven local schools were the community group who participated in the making of the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie*. In this case study, the new team formation including the composite role of a Creative Producer was tested, and the activity of collaboration is investigated and analysed in relation to systems theories and theories of cognition and improvisation.

This project has a long development history. A collaborative project with these two artists was first discussed in Dublin in 1997 and it was finally produced in Melbourne in 2002. My creative impetus for developing this collaboration was to learn a new production technique from the two artists I had first met in Ireland, who had incorporated painting, printmaking, storytelling, and publishing techniques into their multimedia work with

children. The creative vision for the work was to create a workshop-driven process to develop content for a DVD work, which incorporated improvisational drama and visual art-making techniques.

The workshop environment did not resemble a film or video production set at all, other than the fact that there was technology present, and the location of the production was a media museum. Participants could choose to work in any of the different content areas established in two large spaces called stations. These stations were set up for painting, collage, screen-printing, shadow puppets, voice over, drawing, animation, and acting. The children moved from one station to another according to interest. The production required flexibility, agility, and co-operation in the achievement of production tasks.

In the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* the narrative sequences were improvised by the children, and given more structure in post-production by the artists. The work has a freshness and vitality, belonging more to the tradition of experimental cinema and theatrical improvisation, than to traditional notions of children's narrative films. As a creative collaboration, the artists needed to use the fundamental energies of intuition, trust in each other's ability to create the improvised and child-centred structure of this film. The team that I selected in my role as the Creative Producer, had a commitment to collaboration, very strong creative and craft skills, experience in collaborative community projects, and the ability to employ improvisation techniques in the production process.

This production was unique amongst the three projects analysed as case studies because it spanned virtual collaboration in its concept development and pre-production phases, and moved to face-to-face collaboration in a short, intense period covering the production/post-production/launch period. Although the production and post-production phases were extremely short, the concept development and pre-production phases took place over two years, during which the 'creative' aspects of the project concept and the project design were developed and the 'producer' activities required to establish the project were undertaken. The producer tasks included developing partnerships, contract negotiation, selecting the production team, finding production locations, establishing legal agreements, providing information to schools, encouraging discussion between virtual collaborators, as well as overall production scheduling and planning.

CASE STUDY OUTCOMES

Production Outcomes

Because the City of Melbourne commissioned the project for Children's Week 2002, the conditions of the contract were that the project had to involve a substantial number of children as participants and it had to be ready for screening in Children's Week 2002. The completed work (12 minutes in length) was screened on the tenth day before an audience of several hundred people at the Melbourne Town Hall. The short four-day post-production period required a high level of collaborative communication and

efficiency. The *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* and a documentary DVD about The Making of *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* are screened in the Memory Grid at ACMI in an ongoing exhibition arrangement. The work was purchased for The National Community Arts Resource Collection.

Theoretical Outcomes

The key activities of the Creative Producer I observed in the role while making The *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* production were concept development, maintenance of a creative vision, the development of the production design, team selection based on the required skill-sets, involvement in the production process, problem solving, production management, and extensive team and stakeholder communication. The extent to which the responsibilities, qualities, and activities of the Creative Producer identified in this project are generalisable to other production situations and other Creative Producers will be tested in the following case studies and in the Industry Survey about the nature of collaboration that is presented in chapter seven and appendix three and four of this exegesis.

In pre-production meetings, I introduced scenario-building discussions to see if they might be helpful in dealing with the complex situations that could emerge in the production process. In the role of the Creative Producer I intuitively encouraged the artists to be flexible and to use their creative independence in decision-making in the workshop situation, in which there where many different activities taking place at the same time.

There seemed to be the need for the development of a responsive, improvisational production strategy to create the content with the community participants. Improvisation in this context was driven by the desire to respect and respond to community participants' creative suggestions. The theory was that if we maintained a strong collective vision, and employed a well-planned workshop structure, then the artists could be autonomous in their content creation activities. To manage a flexible and spontaneous process a 'what-if' scenario building technique was employed in the pre-production meetings to imagine how to work in the anarchy of the process without losing the collective structure. Writing in a catalogue essay about community driven art projects, Ross Gibson (2006) notes, "Generative, communal art is usually impelled by 'what if' questions in improvised scenario building situations". (Gibson, in Seear and Raffel, 2006, p.19) Using this strategy, scenarios for content development were imagined, and the potential of hybrid creative techniques to implement these ideas were discussed amongst the artist team.

An example of the use of improvised scenario building in this project took place in the production meeting held on the morning of the third production day. At this meeting, one of the artists suggested making large, screen-printed skeletons and using them as a motif that could make appearances at different times, as a connecting metaphor in the work. The idea was implemented by the whole team, with artists autonomously making skeletons in many different ways with different groups of children, including theatrically

improvised sequences, audio recording about skeleton stories, screen printed and scanned skeletons, as shadow puppets and digital animated puppets. Thus, in agreement with Gibson's (2006) understanding of the imperatives driving communal art, in the role of the Creative Producer, I ensured that there was sufficient communication in this non-linear process where content ideas and themes could be discussed, agreed, and tackled in many different media. All these elements were brought into the digital arena through scanning, and recording to provide rich content assets in post-production.

In the skeleton example, the artists used awareness, based on intuition, trust and flexibility, to achieve the collectively agreed creative goals of the project. Scott McQuire and Nicos Papastergiadis (2005) call this awareness "attunement" which they describe as, "…the ability to arrive at an effective frequency of transmission of information… Amid the negotiations and alterations, one needs to ask how readily, how frequently and knowingly can all the operatives move to a shared level of possibility? Never denying that there are different degrees of freedom and 'purchase' in any particular collaborative opportunity, how might one still enact something creative and mutually beneficial?" (McQuire and Papastergiadis, 2005, p.276) The *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* provided an opportunity to experiment with mechanisms for community engagement in a large-scale community collaboration. It was a process that I had not experienced before. The artists proved to "attuned" to the collaborative opportunity, and were intuitively responsive to the ideas suggested by the children in the workshops.

In reflecting on the case study experience of observing unskilled children participating in a creative experience with artists, I realised it was often the attitude to collaboration that determined the success of each participant's experience. This reflection is in agreement with a recent industry survey about collaboration undertaken by management consultants Mitch Ditkoff, Tim Moore, and Carolyn Allen (2005). They asked a total of 108 respondents who were experienced collaborators to rate 39 criteria for selection of collaborative teammates on a scale of 1 (not relevant) to 5 (indispensable). They found to their surprise that experience in collaboration was not viewed as an advantage over self-managed untrained groups because "any group of appropriately motivated people can be effective collaborators" (Ditkoff, Moore and Allen 2005, p.3) These findings about motivation in collaboration may explain why it is possible to involve amateur participants with professional artists to create a multimedia production, such as the case study production.

The complexity of non-linear relationships found in mixed experience, community groups collaborating with professional artists in the development of community-based multimedia projects may be better understood by resting within theoretical frameworks. The fragility of teams assembled to make works, the importance of information sharing and communication activities in non-linear groups, and the potential for symbiotic convergence of creative ideas in the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* can be analysed in systems theories. The participants in the workshops including artists, children and teachers created a complex and emergent system. The activity in the

case study was similar to that of self-organising teams of ants, analysed by Johnson (2001) in Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants Brains, Cities and Software. In his examination of the emergent intelligence of self-organising systems, characterised by bottom–up learning and evaluating feedback loops, Steven Johnson (2001) describes the behaviour of ant colonies as a model for the examination of group behaviour in humans. He also investigates the design of cities to identify the "mix of order and anarchy (that) is what we now call emergent behaviour." (Johnson, 2001 p.38) Similarly, in the production workshops of the project, the participants were observed to swarm together to create a piece of content and dissolve on task completion, and form again in different group composition with a new creative focus.

This workshop model of production was radically different from the hierarchical film-making process where the director, working from a script, controlled the action and directed the crew and actors. Instead, seen in Complexity theory it was a complex organisation operating "at the edge of Chaos" (Langton 1990), where the self-organising groups of children and artists worked collaboratively together in positive and negative feedback loops of content development, extension and repetition of an idea amongst several participants in content creation. In other collaborative contexts such as ensemble-developed theatre productions, intuitive responses based on non-verbal communication and experience in improvisation are identified as useful development techniques. Theatre director, Peter Brook (1993) employs intuition in his theatre projects. He notes, "The director must have from the start what I have called a "formless hunch." (Brook, 1993, p.119) The breadth of vision that a Creative Producer needs to develop projects may be based partly on the sense of "knowing the stuff" (Bruner 1979, p.93) and personal predictive qualities and problem solving abilities to see a way through a project to its completion.

The *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* would not have been made without a 'hunch' about a potential collaboration. Another question that was the subject of investigation in this case study was the role of intuition in the rapid decision-making needed by artists in these improvised circumstances. Courtney Brown (1997) has written extensively about the role of intuition in innovation in cognitive psychology. She says, "Who knows if our intuitions will prove correct? These leaps of faith make up the honest terror that lies beneath carrying out radical innovation. It takes resolution and it takes vision – but this is what innovation is really about. (Brown 1997, p.xxvi) The conviction that a project is worth pursuing could be a result of intuition that a Creative Producer may have about the strength of a project idea. Bruner (1979) argues that intuition comes from familiarity with a range of phenomena, and a sense of what things "smell right."(Bruner 1979, p.93) Likewise in multimedia production contexts, the Creative Producer may persist because of a 'hunch' that there is something there. It simply feels like the right thing to do.

The multi-skilled and inter-disciplinary team shared a creative vision that presented opportunities for experimentation and improvisation to occur. The team worked closely together, 'composing' the work flexibly and spontaneously, taking full advantage of

serendipitous occurrences. The viewing of daily rushes enabled forward planning about material needed for the project. The discussion could be as simple as 'we need to get some ghost jokes', or as complex as, "Why don't we get some kids to screen print a clock on plastic, so we can use the idea of the time of day to connect the sequences." The creative ideas emerged in practice, and were developed in self-organising sub-groups within the production context. Production teams that combine community groups (such as the groups of children involved in this production) and professional artists make an agreement in terms of Actor-Network theory to work together in a creatively non-hierarchical relationship. Artist 1 discussed the role of spontaneity in this production from his perspective. He notes:

> *I'm interested to try and be as spontaneous as possible with the talent in front*
> *of us, so that material's not overworked. I have to respond in a spontaneous,*
> *intuitive way to deal with it. I try to invent an editing construct later on. When*
> *I am filming there's constantly a dialogue in my head about, what am I doing with*
> *this material, what am I doing with this person in front of me? How can I present*
> *them in a positive manner and develop rich material with them. It's not out*
> *of them, but with them.*
>
> (Artist 1 interview conducted 27th August 2006)

The improvised activity was strongly supported by the analysis of potential pitfalls and an examination of possible positive and negative scenarios that could occur in a production process with a large number of participants in workshops.

The opportunity to investigate improvisation as both a content development and a management strategy in a self-organising workshop crucially became apparent in my reflection about the production processes employed in this production. In the role of the Creative Producer of this project, I realised that there was the potential for improvisation to be employed not only as a creative development strategy, but also as a management technique that was suitable for use in a collaborative team structure. The potential for the techniques of creative improvisation to be developed into a management technique became the topic for further investigation of the next case study production.

The formation stages of Actor-Network Theory is a theoretical construct for the examination of the ongoing and repeated communication processes amongst the many 'actors' involved in the production of the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie*, including people and artefacts such as media equipment. The production environment of this project can be viewed as an example of the need identified in the formation stages of this theory for potential members of a network to have enthusiasm for reaching a shared goal and why it is also necessary to have a central 'obligatory passage point', or a central organising force, whose authority is recognised by all members, and who acts as a communication hub for the project. The need for a central 'spokesperson' can be interpreted as the person who represents all the interests of a group or team that has been assembled to develop a project.

The Creative Producer may equate to the 'spokesperson' in an Actor-Network of the community-based, multimedia production team. He or she has to convince others such as funding agencies, artists and community organisations to accept the project vision and to support its implementation. In this case study example, the process of 'enrolment' of the actors to be involved in the community-based multimedia production took the form of community consultation, submission writing, the obtaining of equipment and facilities, the identification of skill sets, and the selection of artists who are capable of, and interested in, collaboration. The Network spokesperson communicates inwardly within the project to ensure inclusivity of team members and outwardly to all project stakeholders (in this case schools). The spokesperson is responsible for driving a project comprised of diverse members and material objects forward. He or she ensures the project vision is maintained, through actively solving problems and maintaining an overview of the whole production process. In my reflection about the creative workshop process, these activities were paramount in the creative management of the collaboration by the Creative Producer.

Problems Identified in the Project

It took two years to develop the project and, in that time, Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) was building its new premises. Therefore, during pre-production several locations, production scenarios and budget projections had to be developed. Ultimately, the confirmed production location was the new premises Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI). In the pre-production period, I worked closely with the Content Development Manager, who reflected on the complexity of this project in saying, "That was at a time when the building was not opened. We were almost in a hard-hat situation. … I recall the difficulties of the project in the role that you were in. It was not only co-ordinating the artists, and the schools with us, but trying to actually work out contractual and legal arrangements between an established group like City of Melbourne and an evolving, not yet established organisation, that was still trying to set up new procedures." (Partner 2 interview Appendix 3, 11/11/06) Because of the changing completion dates for the building, the project was re-scheduled several times causing major production management, budget and equipment problems to be resolved by the partnering organisations and myself in the role of the Creative Producer. There were other major problems that had to be dealt with throughout the project and continued into the production process, because the new building was not completed on schedule, and was still a partial production site when the workshops took place.

The concept development process was only partially successful. One of the problems I faced in the role of the Creative Producer was communication over distance because the artist who had developed the workshop content creation technique was living in Ireland. To overcome the problems caused by the lack of face-to-face communication and to assist the development of a shared creative vision for the project, I established regular email and phone communication between the distributed artist team. Drawings, references, and production ideas were exchanged in an iterative process, to develop a

theme for the project. Seen in convergence theory, there was a lack of group thinking, that I found difficult to resolve. The team became convergent once it had physically assembled to commence production. Once the team was assembled and pre-production meetings had commenced, I was able to assess that I had made a mistake in role allocation because the artist from Ireland was not sufficiently skilled as an editor to undertake these tasks and this role was re-allocated to an experienced editor in the team.

There was a level of concern amongst the artist team about the number of participants involved being too large for workshops to be successful, and also that schools may not arrive at the workshops. As the Creative Producer, I realised once the production had commenced that I needed to hire an additional artist. I also found that I needed to be involved in content creation in the production workshops to alleviate the artist team concerns about the large number of participants involved in the project. I had intended to have a very limited role in the content development workshops with children. However, once the workshops had commenced it became apparent that my performance skills, content activity planning, and workshop management would be required throughout the workshop sessions. Interpreted in Actor Network theory, I needed to be involved in all the creative processes because I was the 'obligatory passage point' in the production and as such I was the central reference point with an overview of the whole process. However, the additional involvement in workshop implementation resulted in time constraints for other 'producer' activities of the role, particularly in the external communications required in the production management of the project. On reflection, it has become clear that such an expansion of my role is consistent with the developing concept of the functions of the Creative Producer.

The short production and post-production schedule posed problems about whether the team would be able to meet its exhibition deadline. Overall, there was limited time to consider the material collected each day. There was a rush to cut together some material that could be seen to work with the overall thematic, but not enough time to reflect on this in any considered fashion. There was little time for production meetings that were needed each day to plan activities and to establish the narrative components and the production processes to be used to create the content for the overall work. A production meeting occurred each morning during the car journey to the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI). This gave the team approximately 20 minutes to discuss the content goals for that day. The main planning meeting took place every afternoon, following the review of the daily rushes. The role of the Creative Producer was to make sure there were frequent opportunities to dissect what had been achieved and to encourage the team to collectively plan the direction of further creative development activities that would help to achieve the overall project vision.

Evaluation of the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* Case Study

The evaluation criteria used to analyse the success or failure of community collaborations in multimedia productions was based on the research proposition and questions, theoretical texts, and critical reflection on the practice. The Industry Survey confirmed and expanded these criteria. I re-visited the projects to submit them to a further stage of analysis against the criteria established by industry experts in the findings of the extensive qualitative and quantitative Industry Survey undertaken for this research project (see findings presented in Chapter seven of this exegesis and detailed analysis of each question in Appendix four of this exegesis). The ten resulting criteria are presented in order of agreement from survey respondents and are employed in each of the three case study productions to evaluate the impact of the role of the Creative Producer working in community contexts. The criteria are also used to identify the elements of successful community-based, multimedia project development. The criteria are:

1. The project developed by the Creative Producer was enjoyable for participants involved in the process of production.

2. The Creative Producer had a key responsibility for managing internal and external communications.

3. The production fulfilled contractual obligations made with funding agencies or partners in terms of outcome, budget, and delivery dates.

4. The Creative Producer developed project budgets, organised funding and undertook financial project management.

5. The Creative Producer initiated, established, and maintained the shared vision and design of a community-based, multimedia project from concept to completion.

6. The team selected by the Creative Producer were appropriate in terms of skills and attitude, to fulfil the requirements of building the project with the community participants.

7. The Creative Producer brought together creative and management activities and responsibilities into one overarching role in the development of a community-based multimedia project.

8. The Creative Producer employed intuition and a responsive, flexible management approach in a creative team.

9. The works produced by the team including the central role of the Creative Producer were successful in process and outcome, and were relevant to public audiences outside of the community where they were produced.

10. The Creative Producer was involved in all stages of making the community-based production, and sometimes participated in the creative activities of the production.

A majority view in the Industry Survey presented in chapter seven of this exegesis was that the most important success criteria for a community-based multimedia production was that it delivered an enjoyable experience where participants felt validated by their contribution. The process of making the project in a self-organising workshop appeared from anecdotal comments of students, teachers, and observers from partner organisations, to deliver a project that the participants enjoyed. This may be what Gibson (2006) is referring to in his reflection on the collaborative experience of making artworks in the catalogue for the Asia-Pacific Triennial in Brisbane, when he asks, "What if … we concentrated on the feelings and relationships shared by everyone participating in the artwork? … What if the label spoke rather of collaborations, inventive gestures, generosity, and ingenuity, emerging from people's negotiated involvement in the aesthetic and semantic configurations of a collectively stimulating artwork?" (Gibson, in Seear and Raffel, 2006, p.19) As discussed in the project description and analysis analysis, the project started with a "what if" question about whether or not it would be possible to develop a collaborative production process over a short time frame, involving 300 participants in a creative endeavour, that was enjoyable for all participants. The answer to this 'what-if' question was that it required a strong, shared creative vision to enable many autonomous creative activities to occur simultaneously in the workshop situation.

The ability of a Creative Producer to initiate, establish, and maintain a shared creative vision was regarded by a large majority of Industry Survey respondents to be one of the key activities of the Creative Producer working in community-based, multimedia production contexts. The project was successful in achieving the initiation, establishment, and maintenance of the shared creative vision. The overall vision, for a workshop creative development process leading to a work that could be assembled in a series of vignettes, remained a strong collective approach to the overall production process. The project design proved to be suitable for the autonomous creative production process. It was able to incorporate a large number of community participants that was a requirement of the project partners.

The Creative Producer ensured that the project was completed on time and within budget, overseeing the finances and thereby fulfilling the contractual obligations. The process of developing short sequences and using collage techniques to produce the content for the work was ultimately successful in creating sufficient content to achieve the collective vision for the project.

The project partners and the artist team believed that the production team delivered a successful project outcome because it delivered a process that the community participants enjoyed, and resulted in a product of sufficient standard to be exhibited in an ongoing exhibition context at ACMI. For example, the ACMI organisational representative said, "The great thing about that project was 300 kids, involved in a number of workshops over a two week period that then resulted in, not only the value of the workshop for the kids, but the final product, the launch..." (Partner 2 interview, Appendix 3, 11/11/06)

While the funding representative at the City of Melbourne commented, "I like things where you take a bit of a punt, and there is a bit of experimentation, and there is always something to be gotten out of it. Great work involves risks. If you don't take risks you are never going to get beyond the mundane or the expected." (Partner 1, interview, 03/10/06) In agreement with this view, there were many and various risks that required active problem-solving and flexibility in the creative and the management aspects of this production. The risks in the assembly of this team were that the team members had never worked together before and the skill-set match was uncertain. There was also a risk in having international artists involved in a complex project, in key creative roles without knowing the local educational context.

The project design envisaged by the Creative Producer was only partially successful in the identification of an appropriate process that delivered the outcome and met the contractual agreements. The project achieved the outcomes only because the team selected were highly collaborative in approach, realistic about what could be achieved with so little time and with such a large amount of content to be managed in post-production. The implementation of the project design required a responsive, and spontaneous attitude to improvising appropriate content development responses to community suggestions. This responsive attitude can be interpreted as similar to the complex behaviour of members of a team, such as that described by Johnson (2001) in his analysis of the self-organising behaviour of ants that he observed in the self-organising activities in an ant colony. The project design strategies were successful in using flexible, responsive approaches to community participation. The approach meant that the artists could build upon from the serendipitous ideas generated by the artists and the project participants. The skeleton scenario discussed previously, is an example of an idea employed by the project artists in different practices in support of the collective project vision. In the role of the Creative Producer, I ensured that all the resources required were available and I contributed to the creative process by recording ghost stories that children wanted to contribute to the production. The artists were able to maintain creative autonomy in working with small sub-groups of children to flexibly improvise around the idea in different creative practices.

The work has been shown continuously over several years at ACMI and would therefore appear to have delivered a work of high quality that communicates to audiences beyond the community of its production. Although the project was seen as a successful production from the partner perspective, there were areas for improvement in both the creative and management aspects of the production. Potential improvements became apparent on reflection about how the role of the Creative Producer impacted upon the team dynamics. Reflection was aided by applying theoretical constructs from Actor-Network, Complexity and Chaos theories in an analysis of the production process and outcome. These theories were relevant to understanding how to create a production design that contained sufficient structure and clear lines of communication, but enabled spontaneous and flexible responsiveness in the creative community interaction to be privileged above pre-prepared workshop plans. The new understanding about team

dynamics in creative collaboration that developed in this production formed a topic for further investigation in the discussion of the next project, *Hairy Tales* (case study 2).

There were problems in the selection of the team and this criteria was not successfully achieved. In The *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie*, I made misjudgements about the skill sets of artists selected to be members of the team. I demonstrated a lack of clarity in matching production roles to team member skill-sets. This mismatch created some serious issues that required rapid resolution. In an interview conducted after the completion of the project, one of the international artists (Artist 2 in Appendix 3) said that he was uncertain about what roles and responsibilities each team member would have when he arrived in Australia. His concerns were expressed in a discussion after the first day of production. As a result, the team clarified and re-organised the split of responsibilities amongst themselves. The ability to re-arrange roles and responsibilities quickly can be interpreted in complexity theory as the flexibility and responsiveness to situations of team members in a complex organisation. R.D. Stacey, (2001) argues that organizational knowledge is located in the relationships between people in a team and the ability of the team selected to work together in this production was that once the team had been assembled in one location, it quickly became apparent that the key roles needed to be swapped around to create a better match with skill sets.

In reflection about this production, the management activities criterion was only partially successful. In line with the findings of the Industry Survey undertaken for this research project, the Creative Producer was involved in all stages of production. However, as the Creative Producer I did not expect to be as closely involved in the 'creative' workshop production activities with community participants as I was. This meant that I had less time to attend to the vital 'producer' activities. However, the positive aspect of the close creative involvement in the workshop process was that I was able to contribute more actively in content planning meetings and to keep an overview of the whole creative process, thus expanding and gaining insights into the potential functions of a Creative Producer.

PRODUCTION FINDINGS

The *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie* (Case Study 1)

The project delivered an exciting and enjoyable creative opportunity for the participants and the artists. Flexibility in creative direction, and improvisation in content development strategies were required by all member of the artist team. In the overlap zone between the 'creative' and the 'producer' activities, all the stored knowledge of the vision for the production, the practical exigencies of problem solving and crisis management, as well as the awareness of content collection and the processes for creative management converged. The activities that might be generalisable to all collaborative settings in multimedia production are:

1. The Creative Producer was involved in varied activities at every stage of production.

2. A community-based production including a Creative Producer at the nexus of the creative team produced successful project outcomes.

3. Hybrid production techniques, using a combination of fine art and media practices could be employed as a strategy to develop content in a community-based project.

4. The workshop approach to content development could accommodate a large number of participants in the production of a collaborative multimedia work.

5. The production design offered community participants opportunities for creative engagement, without the need to know how to use multimedia software programs.

6. The Creative Producer and the artists in the production team used intuition to make leaps in creative practice, in an improvised production process involving a large number of participants.

7. The selection of the creative team by the Creative Producer was an important factor in developing a successful community project.

8. Mutual respect and trust relationships between partner representatives, the participants, the artists, and the Creative Producer were necessary in the development of a large-scale and risky project.

9. A community-based multimedia project could be suitable for exhibition to the general public.

10. An improvised approach to content development relied on self-organising groups operating autonomously to achieve a collective vision.

Activities, Skills, and Qualities of the Creative Producer

The Creative Producer appears to be a senior and difficult role combining high-level 'producer' and 'creative' activities. In the case study example, the Creative Producer developed project concepts with community groups; selected the creative team based on a collaborative attitude and skill-set identification; established and maintained a shared project vision with the artist's team; devised the community/creative development strategy with the team; maintained an overview of content development; was responsible for conflict resolution and problem solving, and contributed to content development activities as required.

On reflection about the development of the project, it became apparent that the Creative Producer can play a balancing role between creative and management imperatives and may develop mechanisms and strategies for managing creative teams without interfering with the work of artists in a community-based collaboration. In this process, he or she attempts to maintain overall control of projects while encouraging independent activity that fits the overall collective vision. The communications activities of the Creative Producer seem to be central to the role with a major responsibility in providing inter-team communications and information dissemination, and in managing the

communications flow to and from the community and partnership representatives in the network of production. The Creative Producer had a key role in arranging funding and financial management of community projects including partnership development and negotiation; production management; and exhibition and/or distribution arrangements for the completed work. The qualities of a Creative Producer, that seemed necessary in the role were: the management of the production process, vision; persistence; intuition; flexibility; interest in collaboration; trust in others; organisational ability; persuasiveness; risk-taking; and leadership. Some of these key responsibilities are discussed next, using the case study example.

Team Composition

The selection of the professional creative team was a key activity undertaken by the Creative Producer in this case study. The selection of team members was based on the skill requirements of the production. All of the artists had experience in working with children and in producing content through an improvised process. Through a close examination of the dynamics of this project, to work effectively in this production team, the artists selected needed to demonstrate a collaborative attitude, be experienced in media production and be able to work autonomously within a project structure.

Building Partnerships

In this case study production a creative idea was presented that was exciting and relevant to two organisations. Business skills and experience in contract negotiation were employed to make the business case to convince these two cultural organisations about the value of forming a partnership to deliver this project. The partnership development brought the 'Creative' and 'Producer' skills together.

Production Design

The formulation of a production design by the Creative Producer and the team was a critical factor in developing this community-based multimedia project. The production design was based on the assessment of the interests and capabilities of the community group involved. Influencing factors were the project budget, the purpose of the production, the number of community participants, and the number of artists required to fulfil the project vision, the location, and the timeframe of production.

Building Trust Relationships in a Project Community

An important task of the Creative Producer in this case study example was to build trust relationships with the artists and the community group involved. In this project, a trust relationship was built with the artists and the participating schools and teachers over several months of pre-production. This relationship was developed through consistent and accurate information updates in the form of emails and telephone calls.

Questions for Further Investigation

In the role of the Creative Producer, I drew on complexity and Chaos theories to

understand how a community-based multimedia production can be a self-organising group, employing non-linear communication to deliver content, in order to achieve a shared production vision and aesthetic. My reflection about the team dynamics encouraged the development of further propositions about the value of incorporating techniques used in theatrical and musical improvisation into production processes. The proposition was that the techniques of improvisation could be applied concurrently to the thinking about content production, and could also be applied to the management of team dynamics, as was suggested by Dusya Vera and Mary Crossan (2004). They analyse the potential for aspects of non-linear responsive and flexible communication as understood in theatrical improvisation to be applied as a management technique within business organisations. (Vera and Crossan, 2004) The second case study provided an opportunity to test this proposition in a project involving another collaborative team of children and professional artists.

The opportunity to investigate improvisation as both a content development and a management strategy in a self-organising workshop became apparent on reflection about this production. The potential for improvisation to be employed in the management of a collaborative team became a topic for further investigation for the next production.

From the findings of the first case study it appears that the new role of the Creative Producer is not imposed over a traditional team structure but fundamentally alters the behaviour and processes of the production team. The introduction of the role into a collaborative process, may resolve the problems of non-linear communications, and provide a framework in which autonomous activity can be managed within a collective structure. In the first case study the responsibilities and activities of the Creative Producer were examined in practice and analysed through the framework of systems theories. Whether or not the activities and responsibilities of the role are replicable and generalisable to other situations of practice will be tested in the next creative production case study called *Hairy Tales* (Case Study 2).

CHAPTER 4

HAIRY TALES

4. *HAIRY TALES* (CASE STUDY 2)

Animation/live action DVD, 2004
13.35 minutes

Context

Hairy Tales (Case Study 2) was a small-scale, community-based, DVD project. It was commissioned as a part of the Artplay program of events and the content for the work was produced during four weekend workshops. *Hairy Tales* told the story of a group of children who became lost in the Australian bush and were finally rescued by a magical emu.

The vision for *Hairy Tales* was to create an ensemble-devised and improvised story-telling project with a group of children. It was used as a case study for this research project to further investigate the role, responsibilities, and impact of the Creative Producer in collaborative, community-based multimedia productions that emerged from the first case study, the *Screens and Screams Multimedia* Movie. In the first study, it was observed that there was potential for improvisation principles to be developed into a creative and management technique. Improvisation in the context of this production can be defined as, "a way to discover and develop elements of performance, which are not pre-planned. It is to discover whilst doing and being … Thus, it avoids concepts being primarily intellectual and difficult to bring to life because they are born in practical experience". (Martin 2004, p.103) The proposition investigated in this case study was that the improvisation approach employed in music and theatre contexts could be employed as a creative approach in the improvised performance context we were developing. The concept behind using this method of content development was to use responsive spontaneity. Too much thinking and any rehearsal were regarded by the team members as negative actions that were more likely to destroy the freshness and honesty of performance, than adding anything to it.

Production Description

In the 'creative' aspects of the role of Creative Producer I discussed with members of the artist team how it might be possible to employ an improvised approach to developing an episodic narrative drama. The ideas of using the 'empty space' theorised by English theatre director, Peter Brook in his text The Empty Space (2001) was employed in this production. An empty black space, children's imaginations, and very few props comprised the production aesthetic. A mixed media and fine-art workshop approach used in the previous case study, the *Screens and Screams Multimedia* Movie, was extended to focus on developing acted narrative sequences that were composited with drawn backgrounds and video mattes.

In the 'producer' aspects of the role of the Creative Producer I arranging funding, attended to legal permission requirements, and sourced production equipment and materials in the pre-production phase. I selected a multi-skilled production team for this

project. The selection criteria were that each team member had a collaborative attitude and could understand, at least in theory, how the ensemble-style theatrical improvisation process could be adopted to a multimedia production situation. The lead artist undertook all the visual post-production work. In the role of the Creative Producer, I worked in the production as the drama coach, sound recordist, and audio editor. An animator was employed to provide extra support in this area of the production. The visual aesthetic focused on an extension of a simple compositing technique incorporating live action, animation, and drawn images, which had first been attempted in the *Screens and Screams Multimedia* Movie. Therefore the creative and management approach employed in the previous project (case study 1) was successfully re-developed and adapted as a method to work with one small group of children over several sessions, rather than many large groups of children experiencing one session only.

The theatrical improvised approach was informed by the history of improvised Commedia Dell' Arte style performance where "actors improvised around a skeleton-story" (Martin 2004, p.104). In this project, the initial idea was being lost in the bush, and the artists collaborated with the participants to invent a series of story sequences around this central concept. The children developed the narrative from week to week. The artists and community participants worked in small self-organised groups to build the collaborative and creative project.

At the start of each workshop, the children were shown some sequences that had been composited and edited from the previous session, so that they could see how the content was assembled. The ideas discussed were developed in improvised scenes performed by the children. I developed the theatrical improvisation processes to bring these ideas to life in the "creative' aspects of the Creative Producer role. Minimal props and costumes were used to support the imaginary world created in this production. The participants developed visual material in a mixed studio-arts environment. As in the previous case study, stations for painting, drawing and puppet-making were spaced around a room. The production situation can be interpreted as one where individuals self-organised and amorphously formed groups to achieve a goal or undertake an activity that they could not achieve on their own within a complex organisation. The participants moved freely from one station to another in self-organising and changing groups to create the material they wanted to contribute to the work. In the Creative Producer role, I kept an overview of all the activities that were taking place, and kept the artists informed of any strategic activities that could be developed.

The filming technique was used to mask the backgrounds of the production space and replace them with imaginary landscapes. The black screen had the effect of amplifying meaning through simplifying the elements in the image. The compositing process suited the integration of animated, live action and shadow puppetry sequences. It produced a dream-like quality appropriate to the fantasy world created by the children. The screen maintained visual continuity in the filming of the improvised scenes. The neutrality and mutability of the black background provided a flexible matte for editing decisions made in post–production.

Analysis of Creative Producer Activity

Complexity and Chaos theories were instructive in understanding why improvisation techniques can be successfully applied to management and content development in a community-based multimedia production such as *Hairy Tales*. Such techniques adopted from theatre and music take advantage of the adaptive nature and the unpredictability of interactions that require open, flexible, and responsive reactions in a team comprising community participants and professional artists. Johnson (2001) believes that the chaotic and complex organisation (such as that found in the community multimedia production) require a completely different approach to management because communication processes work in different ways in chaotic systems. He says that the management function in complex systems is, "less concerned with establishing a direction for the company and more involved with encouraging the clusters to generate their best ideas." (Johnson 2001, p.223) The Strategic Improvisation technique is a response to managing complexity in a community production. It was observed that the creative tensions that were managed in this production were not about control, but about freedom. In the case of a collaborative community-based multimedia production, this is the difference between the desire on the parts of artists and community participants to self-organise around creative tasks, and to be autonomous in their creative decision-making, and the counter and opposite desire to work collectively to produce a work from a shared collective vision.

The application of a theatrical improvisation technique to the production management activities emerged from inter-disciplinary experience in the team from the fields of theatre production, multimedia production, and creative media management. The ability to transfer the concepts of improvisation from the creative to the strategic management aspects of my work in the role of the Creative Producer seemed logical and appropriate in an improvised workshop production process. Sardar and Abrams (1999) describe: "the non-linear dynamic systems studied by Chaos theory have the ability to balance order and Chaos. This balance point is called the edge of Chaos. … Spontaneous self-organisation is one of the main hallmarks of complex systems. The other main characteristic of complex systems is their adoptive nature." (Sardar and Abrams 1999, pp. 82- 83) The non-verbal and gestural communication, the freedom to form sub-groups to create a drawing or a sound recording, or to act out a sequence, allowed the collaborators the opportunity to try out content ideas, and to independently produce pieces, and then to coalesce into larger groups for other activities.

An example of this creative agility was provided by Artist one who described his improvised practice in this case study. He says, "It's a spontaneous sort of process that's intuitive. I use that word because I know roughly what we've going to get with the mechanics of videoing because I've done so much of it. We can work on the fly very quickly and adapt to situations". (Artist 1 interview conducted 27th August 2006) The communication was non-linear and the interactions were responsive, flexible and spontaneous. All these attributes are consistent with the analysis of the communication

and interaction processes observed amongst members of a group in complexity and Chaos theories.

The formation stages of an Actor-Network provide additional insights into theorising production processes through an analysis of team activity. The third stage in the formation of Actor-Network is known as the "Enrolment" stage. It is in this stage that the negotiations about the management of production processes can be seen to take place. Enrolment "designates the device by which a set of interrelated roles are defined and attributed to actors who accept them… to describe enrolment is thus to describe the group of multilateral negotiations, trials of strength and tricks that accompany the interessement and enables them to succeed". (Callon 1986, p.209) In the community-based multimedia production this activity equates to the agreement of all the participants in a community-based multimedia production to become involved in a collaborative process including the Creative Producer as the 'spokesperson' of the Actor-Network who undertakes an overarching role that straddles the creative and the management activity in a community-based multimedia production.

Actor-Network theory may also provide insights about why the traditional hierarchical director/producer model of control and management found in other forms of media are less likely to be successful in capturing the uniqueness of the shared creative interaction in a bottom-up collaborative context. In the 'enrolment' stage of Actor-Network theory, the Creative Producer is accepted as the 'obligatory passage point' who is a spokesperson for all the 'actors' (team members) involved in the definition and co-ordination of roles. This includes the adoption of a production style and production processes. When the enrolment process takes place it is a result of some form of spoken or unspoken negotiation amongst the members of the creative team. In this negotiation or 'transaction' the members of the network are 'tested'; in discussions about how the production will be made and through this 'testing' an agreement to participate in an improvised production process is made, and the artists are confirmed as 'actors' in the production. Seen through this analysis, the enrolment process is a defining moment of the Creative Producer's role. 'Enrolment' takes place on several levels of activity and at different stages of production. It is a vital moment in project management, creative project definition, and project financing.

Evaluation of the Case Study *Hairy Tales*

The criteria used to evaluate the *Hairy Tales* case study were the same as those employed in the previous case study. The *Hairy Tales* project was only partially successful. There were both positive and negative impacts of the Creative Producer role observed in this case study. In the role of the Creative Producer I undertook a similar pattern of creative and producer activity as I had in the first case study. In both these aspects of the role I was able to create an enjoyable environment for the exploration of the ideas of the collaborators. As in the previous case study, I worked with the team to establish the shared project vision for the work to collaboratively engage with a community of children to make a completely improvised dramatic narrative.

This project enabled research propositions developed from the experience of the first case study to be tested. The research focus of the project was to further investigate whether the different uses of creative improvisation and improvisational thinking employed as a management technique were successfully fulfilled in this production.

A negative impact of the Creative Producer on the practice was in team selection for *Hairy Tales*. One artist that I selected to work in the team lacked experience in collaboration particularly in an improvised workshop process. She found it difficult to respond and be flexible in the activities that were suggested by community participants that were different to her own. As I discovered during the content development of the first case study, it was often the attitude to collaboration that determined the success of each participant's experience. The problem of accommodating an artist who wasn't experienced in collaboration confirmed the findings of the Ditkoff, Moore and Allen (2005) survey about collaboration in which the attitude of collaborators was found to be more important than their professional skill levels. (Ditkoff, Moore and Allen 2005, p.3) These findings may explain why it is possible to create effective collaborations that involve amateur participants alongside professional artists to synergistically create a multimedia production. The approach taken by the children in each workshop to the open collaborative opportunity was influential in determining their enjoyment in exploring content development ideas. It proved to be very necessary for the artists to have an open and responsive attitude in working with this community group.

The majority of the respondents to the Industry Survey I conducted as part of this research project agreed that an appropriate project design is an important success factor of a community-based, multimedia production. The *Hairy Tales* project design featured an enjoyable process of developing the work sequentially and this made it possible for the participants to connect with the story, and to work together to develop new scenes progressively using improvisation techniques. One of the artists reviewed the creative process of making this work. He says, "It's a really powerful, exceptional film because of the filming process, how it evolved. Kids just thought up an idea, we went ahead and did it. They seemed to really enjoy the process. We just said, you've got to do it in front of a black cloth. We can matte in drawings later on and we had a few sticks for fire, a few simple, little props". (Artist 1, interview 27th August 2006, Appendix 3)

Another evaluation criterion agreed by a large majority of industry survey respondents to be key to the success of a production of this nature, is that the Creative Producer has a key responsibility for managing external and internal project communication. In the non-hierarchical organisation of the production team, I managed the overall communication processes in the role of the Creative Producer acting as a central information hub, and an extensive non-linear communication process took place amongst all collaborating team members in the turbulence of the creative workshops. Externally, there were problems in communication with the host organisation in this project. I did not ensure that participants realised that they needed to attend the workshop for four weekends in a row, creating continuity problems in the production. This problem was identified

and resolved but it caused extra work for all the artists. The flexible nature of the improvised process allowed a focus on different children's experiences of being lost at different times. The non-appearance of some children at the commencement of the story, was identified in a debriefing session after the second workshop and a strategy for dealing with this problem was developed by arranging for any newcomers to be filmed improvising 'being lost' scenes, similar to those that had already been filmed. These extra scenes were cut in to the earlier part of the narrative in post-production. In this instance, the application of improvisational approach was used at a production management level as well as within the content development process.

The contractual obligations in this case study project were fully met and the production was delivered on time and within budget. The outcome of the production was a DVD that was screened in the ACMI Children's Film Festival, acquired for the National Community Arts Resource Collection, and the Artplay Multimedia Collection and met the success criteria for the project outcome to be suitable for presentation beyond the community of its production.

The use of theatrical improvisation techniques was a successful and positive impact that I made as the Creative Producer on the aesthetic strategy and production management that was employed in this case study. One respondent to the qualitative interview conducted as part of the Industry Survey for this study was an experienced musical and theatrical improviser. He discussed the nature of improvisation as not being a matter of anarchy, but of freedom within an agreed musical structure or theatrical performance context. He said, "A lot of what gets done under the banner of improvisation is either not, or is very weak versions of it, because improvisation in the contemporary sense carries with it a huge onus or rigor and the development of language, both knowledge of musical languages around the world, contemporary music practice as well as developing a personal language."(A9 interviewed 6th June 2008) It is a similarly free but rigorous content development and production management process that was employed to balance the tension between autonomy and control in this community-based multimedia production.

In the next section the production findings are presented. They are divided into two sections. The first section presents the findings about the activities and responsibilities of the Creative Producer. The second section presents the findings about a management technique developed in this project.

PRODUCTION FINDINGS

Creative Producer Activities and Responsibilities

As observed in the previous case study, the Creative Producer activities varied along a trajectory of practice, which included both 'creative' involvement and the 'producer' responsibilities in this community-based, multimedia project. A pattern of the creative and producer activity that was observed in the first case study was largely replicated in this second case study. Although different in scale and focus, the same suite of Creative Producer activities were identified in both the 'creative' activities and the 'producer' responsibilities of the role in both case study projects.

'Strategic Improvisation' Management Technique

A majority of respondents in the industry survey recognised that improvisation techniques such as those employed in the case studies enabled experienced artists to operate within a framework of defined project parameters, craft skills, and intuitive knowledge to produce content with community members in unstable environments. The 'Strategic Improvisation' technique defines these project parameters, maintains the creative vision for a project amongst the collaborative team members, incorporates non-hierarchical and non-linear communication processes that enables the Creative Producer to maintain overarching creative and management control of a community-based multimedia project. The formalisation of the thinking about improvisation applied strategically as a management technique emerged from reflection and analysis about the pattern of creative and management activities observed in practice over the first two productions employed as case studies.

The 'Strategic Improvisation' technique brought together aspects of theatrical improvisation and an approach to risk management in a multi-faceted and collaborative production process. The technique is 'strategic' in its focus on making the most of many spontaneous improvised production activities that are taking place at the same time. It is an example of exploiting the non-linear communication processes found in a complex production team. It also promotes intuitive, flexible and responsive management. Artist One commenting on the improvisation process notes, "I love the anarchy of the filming situation that produces surprising results which you couldn't get if you tried to sit kids down carefully and, you know, spend a few weeks massaging something. It's improvisation at its most spectacular. … There's this process going on where I'm filming and analyzing and going, wow, it's astonishing. I'm looking for astonishing moments as the rich material to edit and put into the film. It definitely was an art workshop production. It really opened up my filmmaking eyes to tired old habits and standards of filmmaking I'd developed over 25 or 30 years. It was a refreshing way to be in the continual present, in the filmmaking process rather than pre-planning overtly all the time." (Artist 1 interview conducted 27th August 2006)

Improvisation is seen as a central response to the Chaos of complex organisations, where the unexpected is likely to occur due to the non-linear interactions of team members. The technique of 'Strategic Improvisation' was employed in workshop situations where many activities were occurring at the same time, and where the artists needed to be mindful of gathering assets for story coverage to fulfil the collective project vision. The technique was empowering for the children because it provided a participatory, collective, and creative process for content development. It was enjoyable for the artists because it built autonomous creative decision-making into a structure developed to deliver the collective project vision. It was an effective management process, because it assisted in maintaining the project vision, by encouraging artists to be open to opportunity, and facilitate overall project management and communication through de-briefing and brainstorming sessions that regularly occurred amongst team members.

Philip Streatfield (2001) in his book, The Paradox of Control in Organizations describes the tension between spontaneously forming patterns of conversation, and intentional actions. His description is similar to the idea of autonomous creative freedom that is employed as a management technique within the constraints of a collective vision in these case study productions. He argues, "the order of organizations emerges through a combination of collective interaction and individual intentions. … In today's organization, managers find that they have to live with the paradox of being 'in control' and 'not in control' simultaneously. It is this capacity to live with paradox, and to continue to participate creatively in spite of 'not being in control', that constitutes effective management." (Streatfield 2001, p.119) Therefore Streatfield (2001) provides a theoretical rationale for why such a technique could be useful for accommodating the paradoxes found in the management of complex organisations such as community-based, multimedia production teams. This thinking technique creates a mindset for 'lateral awareness' that provides a sense of control over the whole production, when there is little control over the creative activities of artists. It encourages team members to support participant offerings and to find ways to build ideas or activities that may not have been planned, but happen serendipitously in a multi-faceted production context.

On the other hand, when Cunha, Kamoche and Cunha (2006) investigated the role of leadership in relation to the process of improvisation, they found that "opposite leadership behaviours are simultaneously integrated when an important task has to be performed in a turbulent environment with flexible resources. This type of leadership creates "minimal" social and task structures that, together with a perception of the task at hand as individually important to group members, invites the team to improvise." (Cunha, Kamoche and Cunha, 2006 p.1) They match the flexibility and responsiveness in team activities of complexity theory to the improvisational benefits of individual action to support a group vision found in the dynamic and creative co-constructed realities of theatrical and musical improvisation. This analysis resonates with the conditions found in creative teams, working in community multimedia production where the freedom to make responsive decisions in the turbulence of creation is encouraged as a working method by the Creative Producer.

The 'Strategic Improvisation' technique applies Chaos theory to understanding the actions of the constituents of a complex system, such as the members of a community production group. In pre-production, the creative team employed 'what if' scenarios to imagine ways of reacting or dealing with situations that could arise in the workshops. The solution-focussed mindset established in pre-production assisted team members to improvise activities in the production process, when unexpected problems or opportunities arose. For example, two children recorded an audio sequence where they gave an improvised Australian Football League (AFL) match commentary, which concluded with a Somalian-Australian player kicking the winning goal. Once this recording had been completed these children proceeded to the performance stage, where another artist recorded physical gestures to explore the same theme on video, and another artist then worked with them to make appropriate drawings and sound effects. However, for this series of events to happen, in the role of the Creative Producer I had to be aware that a sequence had been recorded that needed to be completed by drawings, recording of gestures and sound effects. Without 'lateral awareness' the opportunity to gather all the materials to build this sequence would have been lost.

'Lateral Awareness' is the ability to see many things at the same time. It is used when artists employ peripheral vision to take note of the many activities that are occurring concurrently in a multi-activity workshop situation. In this project 'Lateral Awareness' was used to identify opportunities and problems in the development of improvised content creation processes. For example, 'Lateral Awareness' was used in *Hairy Tales* to solve continuity problems in the production. Through 'Lateral Awareness' I realised that there was a serious continuity problem. The solution was to film any new participants walking in front of the black compositing screen acting as though they were lost. These extra shots were added to earlier scenes in post-production to solve the continuity issues.

Characteristics of Strategic Improvisation

1. Strategic Improvisation provides a mechanism for intuitive recognition of participant activities that support a project vision and could be further developed with the support of the artist team. The technique encourages a problem-solving attitude and intuitive, rapid decision-making in the production process.

2. The Strategic Improvisation technique is also applied to identifying production management issues and developing rapid responses and solutions to problems in the production environment.

3. The Strategic Improvisation technique encourages positive content development activities and ideas created spontaneously by community participants in a workshop context.

4. The Strategic Improvisation technique allows artists to identify and discourage those activities which do not support the project vision, and will not contribute usefully to the project.

5. To activate a Strategic Improvisation process, the artist team discuss the vision and the aesthetic style for a project in a pre-production meeting. The theme or message is analysed, and content development ideas are brainstormed.

6. 'What if' scenarios are used in brainstorming sessions to envisage problems and solutions to issues, which might arise in a multi-activity production workshop.

7. The 'what if' scenarios approach acknowledges that the problems envisaged rarely occur. However, the approach encourages a problem/solution mindset amongst the creative team members.

8. The planning discussion provides mechanisms for raising awareness in team members about any cultural, social, or collective sensitivity that may arise within a community group in the production environment.

9. The Strategic Improvisation technique is activated through 'lateral awareness' of the many activities that occur simultaneously in a content development workshop.

10. Without lateral awareness, useful creative ideas and activities can be overlooked and Strategic Improvisation cannot occur, thus reducing the amount of appropriate content available for consideration in post-production.

Application of improvisation methods, taken from the 'creative' side of the Creative Producer role and applied to the 'producer' side of activity, reconciles the tensions between the needs of the creative process and the project management imperatives. Improvisation can be applied strategically as a management technique, to deal with the inter-relationships and inter-connectedness of activities and team roles in content development workshops, where many activities take place at the same time.

The Strategic Improvisation technique is 'strategic' in its focus on making the most of unexpected occurrences in production situations. It maximises content development opportunities and aids the completion of projects on time and within budget. It is also 'strategic' in its emphasis on developing a shared creative vision within the team. Collaborative engagement with a shared vision encourages team members to be strategic in their creative decision-making processes about content development.

Strategic Improvisation provides a template for responsible and inclusive action that is empowering for all participants in a community-based production. The technique can be introduced in pre-production after the professional artists and the Creative Producer have established the production design.

Strategic Improvisation requires sensitive application. Community participants' contributions to the development of creative content have to be respected and re-directed if the content is not appropriate to support the project vision. The multi-activity workshop may appear from the outside to be chaotic. However, through using Strategic Improvisation, the activity is being monitored and the activities honed and focused by skilled artists employing lateral awareness.

Questions for further Investigation

There are three main questions emerging out of my Action Research reflection on the development of *Hairy Tales*. The first question is about the usefulness of the 'Strategic Improvisation' technique incorporating 'what if' scenarios and 'lateral awareness' that I had developed. It will be tested again in the following case study to investigate if it is a technique that might be generalisable to other community-based production situations. The second question is about the feedback loops observed in practice between personal and community-based projects, and the third question is about the benefits of developing a creative relationship with one community group (an inner city primary school in a high rise estate) over a long period of time. These questions are explored in the third production employed as a case study in this research project called *Kids Games* found in chapter five of this exegesis.

CHAPTER 5
KIDS GAMES

5. *KIDS GAMES* (CASE STUDY 3)

Interactive Installation, 2006
Animation/live action video clips, computer, Director software, Theremin, MIDI, hand blown glass ball, projector, antennae

Context

In this case study, three further questions about the practice of the Creative Producer that emerged from the analysis of the two earlier case studies are investigated. The first question is about the usefulness of the 'Strategic Improvisation' technique incorporating 'what if' scenarios and 'lateral awareness' that I had developed in the previous case study. The second question is about the feedback loops observed in practice between personal and community-based projects, and the third question is about the benefits of developing a creative relationship with one community group (an inner city primary school in a high rise estate) over a long period of time.

Production Description

Kids Games was a small-scale, interactive installation project made and exhibited at Artplay and later at Australian Centre for the Moving Image. The vision for *Kids Games* was to work in collaboration with a community of refugee children to provide a participatory media experience for each child. The concept for the work was to create an interactive installation that explored the children's ideas about sport. The children approached the theme with enthusiasm. They invented and demonstrated new sports for this project, as well as exploring their ideas about competition, success, failure, and aspiration, in competitive sports.

The community in the *Kids Games* installation was a Grade 6 class of children from an inner-city primary school. It was the third of a series of community-based projects that were developed at this under-resourced school. The longitudinal approach to working in community contexts had several benefits that were analysed while making this production. The participants were mostly African refugees, many of whom had recently arrived in Australia. According to the class teacher, most of the children were living in difficult financial circumstances, he says:

> *All the children at this school live in the adjacent housing estate. They'll come to school, go home, generally stay inside the flat, sometimes they'll come out and play in the grounds. ... They're very poor. They generally do not even have pens and pencils at home. I see the pens and pencils just disappear from the class-room and it's not them just breaking things or stealing them for the sake of it. It's because they haven't got anything at home. So, I'll say to them, if you don't have anything, feel free to ask and I'll give them pencils and bits of paper.*

(CB, interview, 19/02/07)

The project was funded with a production grant by the City of Melbourne Arts and Culture Grants program. The project concept was developed in association with the teacher and the school. In the 'producer' aspect of the Creative Producer role, I wrote the grant application and assembled the creative team. The lead artist on the *Kids Games* project was a skilled animator, cameraman, and editor. Learning from the problems experienced in earlier case study productions, I employed a drama teacher to assist with the development of the improvised performances. The content for this work was developed in a series of workshops that took place at Artplay, the children's centre for contemporary art.

The specialist drama teacher's role was to develop short improvised dramatic sequences suitable for inclusion in the installation. The drama teacher took the children through various drama games and exercises as 'warm-ups', and then worked with the children on the content development activities. In the 'creative' aspects of the Creative Producer role I recorded audio segments with small self-organising groups of children. These clips were used as voice-overs for the gestural video segments used in the production.

Also included in the team was an artist I had worked with on an unrelated project called re-VISION. In this purely creative work, a glass ball was used as a gestural interface in an installation. The glass ball mechanism was redeployed in this community project and the artist rebuilt the installation into which new material was inserted. There were four phases in the construction of this work. First, there were the workshops to create the content. Second, there was a post-production period to create the video clips. Third, there was the rebuilding of the installation constructed in an earlier artist's project. Fourth, a DVD was produced of the stories made by the children, for each child and the school to keep.

The editor assembled the visuals using live action video, super-imposed over animation and drawn images. In this process he was extending a technique that had been developed in previous collaborative and community-based multimedia productions. Various art and media stations were set up around the workshop space for sound recording, video production, drawing, and object making. The workshop process permitted each participant to engage creatively in the production, in self-organised activity. The children displayed commitment to their individual and collective creation, and worked enthusiastically to make all the material required for each sequence.

Several weeks of post-production followed the production phase. Some material created by every child in the workshops was selected for inclusion in the final work. The installation artist joined the team in post-production to re-construct the glass ball mechanism. A series of short clips were presented in the interactive installation, and these clips were also provided to the participants and the school as a DVD. The interactive installation took the form of a large glass ball sitting on a plinth. When a user touched the glass ball, it generated video imagery inside the ball. The analogy employed in this work is a crystal ball used for seeing into the future. In the *Kids Games* installation, the user could 'see' into the future and experience new sports that were yet to be invented,

and observe individuals in the group as the champions of the future.

The following diagram is of the user interaction of the installation. It was drawn by the creative collaborator who worked on re-VISION and on the installation of the *Kids Games* project. He is an installation artist, video artist, and software developer. He produced this diagram for the original funding application for the re-VISION project.

re   V I S I O N

tinted glass sphere

hemispherical lens

capacitance sensor (antenna wrapped around ball)

proximity switch (starts video sequence)

distance detection (affects image clarity)

When no body is present the tinted glass sphere reflects the light within the room
The presence of your body's electric charge is detected and a video sequence starts
The distance of hands from ball affects size and brightness of the
video image on the hemispherical lens

I N T E R A C T I V E   I N T E R F A C E
Olaf Meyer 2002 http://olaffalo.i.am

Figure : 14 re_VISION Concept Diagram
Source: Meyer, O., Application for Funding, City of Melbourne, 2002

Case Study Analysis

The contributions made by community participants created feedback loops of activity spontaneously included in the collaborative process. An understanding of how negative feedback could contribute to the adaptive behaviour of creative development activities was critical to the development of this technique. Johnson (2001) states that an understanding of feedback loops enables the interactions in complex systems to be understood because, "Feedback devices can have different rules governing their activities. "Generically you can describe those rules as a mixture of positive and negative feedback pushing the system towards a particular state based on the activities of the participants. But the mix is different every time". (Johnson 2001, p.159) Although the mix of activities was different in every production employed as case studies in this research project, the thinking was consistent in exploring the possibilities of building on the behaviours of the self-organising teams to create a defined project structure, leading to an agreed outcome. If it was not possible to implement a flexible control process needed to maintain the overall vision for the direction of a community production of this nature, it was likely that many of the spontaneous contributions from community participants would be lost in the formalities of multimedia production processes such as the script, direction of actors, lighting, and makeup.

In this case study the ability for individuals to apply concepts and creative processes from personal to collective, community–based multimedia productions, created a form of the "creative-adaptive" feedback loop between unconnected complex systems was investigated. Feedback loops are integral to understanding complexity theory and its relationship to self-organising systems that display chaotic behaviour. Therefore the operation of feed back loops in community-based, multimedia production are important to understanding team dynamics. Atlee (2006) coined the term, "creative-adaptive feedback", to describe a type of feedback, located between negative and positive feedback loops in complex systems. He states, "the system's intelligence (whether rudimentary or highly developed) recognises or creates new patterns to guide its internal frame of reference and external behaviours into life-serving congruence with its (often changing) environment." A majority of respondents to the Survey agreed that they had observed a feedback loop in practice between community projects and individual creative works. It was widely agreed that feedback loops synergistically result in advantages for both individual and collective creative practices.

The relationship and influence between community-based and personal practice was one that extended practice, and was important to understand as a mechanism for innovation in both arenas. Respondents in the survey discussed how such "transcendent feedback loops" occur in community-based multimedia production and in personal practice contexts. Interview subjects with experience as independent artists as well as in community practice noted that the spontaneous and unexpected connections, and the improvised problem-solving that can take place in community practice can sometimes lead to unexpected results that can be further refined and applied to personal creative projects.

In this case study, in the role of the Creative Producer, I worked with one teacher and one grade level of a primary school on this project which was the third production with the same school in five years. The intersection of a complex system of the school with the community based multimedia production team, meant that as the relationship grew, memory and history of the productions was captured at the micro-level where the participating students and team members had the experience of working on a collaborative creative project. The longitudinal relationship also extended beyond the creative community team to the broader school community at the macro-level. Cilliers (1998) states that, "system history plays an important role in defining the state of the system as well as affecting system evolution" (Cilliers 1998, p.3). The history of a group of artists working with students in one school in a series of productions had an effect on the system evolution of the school. A culture of external collaboration with the artists and the Creative Producer developed over time. According to the class teacher, there was an expectation amongst younger students, that there would be an opportunity to work on a multimedia project with our creative team, once they reached the specified year level.

Consistent with the finding of this case study a large majority of survey respondents identified an evolution of team relationships and creative responsibilities as a benefit of a long-term creative partnership. In the qualitative interviews undertaken for the survey and in this production, there was general agreement that the ongoing relationship leads to deeper levels of engagement. There is the potential for more risky creative exploration based on shared experience and knowledge about the participant, artist and community strengths. Analysed in complexity theory, in the evolution of a complex community-based production team, patterns of activity become recognised as a production style that can be developed as trust relationships and creative engagement expand. The historical organisational knowledge of the production team leads to the development of a shared creative language.

The history of project development at the school, "defined the state of the system" because it was an independent creative relationship that became part of the school culture, and was not related to Education Department programs. According to the class teacher, the worldview of the mostly refugee children expanded through the creative opportunity to make a work where their opinions and input were valued. Although the creative team were working with different groups of children in each project, the experience of the team members was that trust and communication was easier to establish as time went on. In some ways, the artefact that holds the memory of the production is the DVD outcome. However, in other ways the ephemeral traces in the memory, history and culture of collaborative interactions in a complex school organisation are less tangible, but equally as important in the development of a longitudinal relationship. The systems evolution that occurred over the course of this production was in the development of trust relationships and in the ongoing creative interaction in the school lifecycle. As this case study examples show, the length of time required for trust relationships to be

developed with community groups involved in community productions is one reason why longitudinal relationships can be of benefit to the creative projects developed by a Creative Producer and a mixed team comprising community participants and experienced media artists.

Case Study Outcomes

The creative outcome of this collaborative, community-based multimedia production was an interactive installation exhibited at Artplay in October 2006. The Lord Mayor of the City of Melbourne enthusiastically launched *Kids Games*. Two children gave a speech describing the experiences they had in making the work. The class teacher also spoke about the value of the continuing partnership between the artists, the school, and Artplay. A further exhibition of *Kids Games* took place as part of the Little Big Shots International Film Festival held at ACMI in June 2007.

Evaluation of Kids Games (Case Study 3)

Consistent patterns of activity that were identified in the evaluation of the two previous case studies were again in evidence. As in the previous case study, the Creative Producer established the project Vision for the work to collaboratively engage with a community of children to make an interactive work about sport. The vision criteria, to re-purpose an installation mechanism from an earlier artist's project for a community project was successfully realised. Team selection and management were more successful in this project, than in earlier productions. There was a much more analytic examination of the project concept and the skill-sets required undertaken by the Creative Producer in order to more accurately understand the creative and collaborative demands of the project. The employment of a drama teacher enabled greater focus on testing the Strategic Improvisation technique because in the role of the Creative Producer, I did not have to be so involved in the drama activities required for content development. The team were flexible in their responses to children's ideas. The children's teacher commented that the cultural view of the students in the school (passed on from older brothers and sisters who had worked on one of the projects) was that working on a multimedia production was an enjoyable activity for the children involved (see interview with Partner 3 in Appendix 2).

The iterative production process meant that this was the fifth project that was developed by the Creative Producer using an improvised collage process. How and if the Creative Producer made a positive impact on the development of the production were more clearly understood by the time this production was made in 2006. The installation aspects of this production were highly technical and complex. The criteria of employing an appropriate process in the production was viewed as only partially achieved because of the difficulties of exhibiting and maintaining the installation's functionality. The outcome of the project met contractual obligations in that the project was delivered on time and within budget and it has been exhibited in several public exhibition venues.

Production Findings

The activities of the Creative Producer in this project followed the pattern of activity similar to that of the previous two case studies. The Creative Producer was centrally involved in all the stages of the production. The introduction of specialists at different phases was a feature of this production. As an example of how the Creative Producer is involved in all production stages, a detailed breakdown of the activities of the Creative Producer and the production team in this production is provided in Appendix 2 of this exegesis.

In addition, two production findings from *Kids Games* were identified First, there are benefits in developing longitudinal creative relationships with communities. Second, a beneficial cycle of feedback loops between personal projects and community-based projects was identified. These two findings are now discussed in more detail.

Feedback Loops Between Individual and Community Practice

Kids Games demonstrated a cycle of inspiration and influence that existed between personal art projects and community-based activities. As discussed, in this production an installation system for use in a community project was re-purposed from an earlier artist's work. McQuire and Papastergiadis (2005) recognised the complexity and chaotic activity that can lead to new forms of practice involving non-linear communication in feedback loops of inspiration and development in community based multimedia production. Discussing recent community-based multimedia projects presented in a large contemporary arts exhibition, they note, "The models of artistic collaboration that were inspired by the need to involve different communities, access new technologies, disperse creative responsibility and stimulate heightened forms of feedback, are now at the core of debates on contemporary practice." (McQuire and Papastergiadis 2005, p.8. Not only can this analysis be applied to an examination of the dynamics of collaboration within a community project, it can also be applied to understanding influences occurring between forms of multimedia practice.

A large majority of respondents to the industry survey conducted for this research project and presented in chapter seven of this exegesis agreed that it was at the intersection of personal and community projects where the opportunities for re-invigoration and cross-fertilisation of practice were found. For example, an experienced multimedia artist who often works in community contexts said; "The skills and knowledge that might be required for a particular public art project might have been developed through my own personal practice - and invariably it is - and then every time you do something you learn things and that feeds back into whatever else you do. So, there's enormous two-way, multiple kind of channels of feedback loops and stuff, to the point where it's all totally integrated in a lot of ways". (D8 interviewed 3rd April, 2008) The adaptation of an installation system from an artist's project to the *Kids Games* community production provided an example of how creative feedback loops can influence the relationship between personal and community practices. The iterative cycle of influence is shown

in the Feedback Loop of Practice. The diagram represents the responsive nature of the creative journey between community and personal art projects.
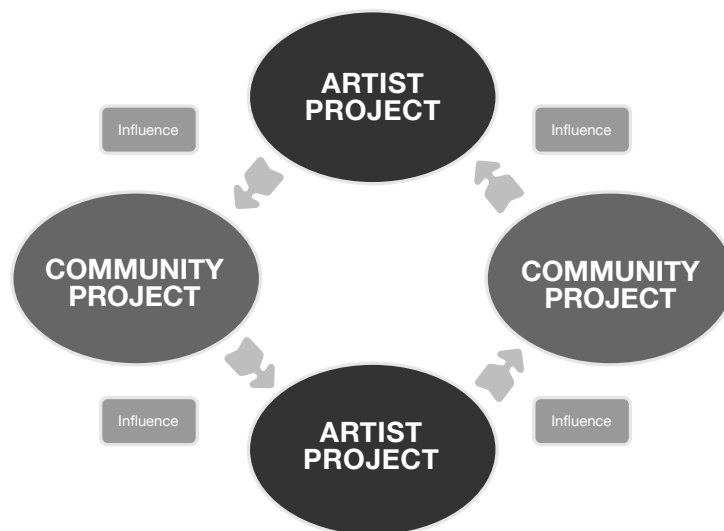
Figure 15 : Feedback Loop of Practice

Longitudinal Community Partnerships

Kids Games was the third project developed with a school community over a five-year period. Walker (1994) describing the benefits of artists establishing links with a community in their local neighbourhood, says, "The artists see themselves as catalysts, encouraging and training ordinary people so that they can make their own images, poetry, or music." (Walker 1994, p.99) The teacher involved in all of these community projects noted that the children in the class responded more positively to the opportunity to work on a project with the artist's team as the years progressed.

Commenting on the development of this relationship he says, … "the kids at the school think these are good people to work with. It helps from our point of view, the kids knowing these people have been here before. These people must like working with us as well. You are a familiar face. They like a familiar face because the kids have been in refugee camps and had all these changes". (Partner 1, interviewed 19/02/07 Appendix 3)

It was through employing iterative collaborative and collective methods of production in a series of creative multimedia projects designed for this community group that the trust relationships were built with the students, the teacher, and the school. Two artists noted the difference in the third project that they worked on at the school as part of the collaborative team. Artist one said, "It's just there's a relaxed kind of style because some of the kids know us, or their big brothers and sisters were in the last film, and they're in it this time. The second lot of kids got into it really easily, because they saw what their big brothers and sisters had done, and they understood the production process". (Artist 1 interviewed 27/8/06 Appendix 3) while the drama teacher who worked on this

project and other works not included in this research project noted, "The second group had seen the results of the first year, so they were very quick, much quicker to trust. The first year, we had to spend quite a bit of that first contact getting them to trust us, to trust each other, there was a bit of, oh, what's this for and explaining. Whereas the second year it was like, wow, we were on a fast track from the first time we met them. They were, like, great, let's go! What are we going to make. I think as the years go by, if you did one every year you would find that just increasing. The kids would start to look forward to that process and say well, they made that, what can we make?" (Artist 3 interviewed12th May 2007 Appendix 3)

The teacher's view about the importance of developing trust through longitudinal relationships in collaborative projects with his students was: "You're getting a good result out of it and the kids are having a really good time, and [they] can see you enjoy working with them. … It's quite important with all kids, but these kids especially, that you build up quite a bit of trust with them. It's more than just getting to know their names, it's getting them to trust you. These kids have known how much fun the other kids in previous groups have had, and they're keen and willing to try things". (Partner 1, interviewed 19/02/07 Appendix 3) The fact that the children were keen and willing to try things themselves meant that the team members were more able to experiment with processes for content development. When the production of *Kids Games* commenced, the artist team noted the enthusiasm and the surprising amount of knowledge that the class had about the history of creative engagement in the school.

The potential for more risky creative exploration in the later case studies was built on the development of participant, artist and community trust within the school community. Analysed through complexity theory, the evolution of complex community projects, the recognition of patterns of activity, the historical knowledge associated with a production team at a micro level, and the consequential opportunity to develop a shared creative language, are the benefits in developing a long-term creative partnership between a multimedia production team and a community group. The team were able to rely more heavily on an improvised performance process than in Twelve Tuff Tales, the previous work made by the same team at the school because the trust relationships had already been developed.

CHAPTER 6
CASE STUDY FINDINGS

6. CASE STUDY FINDINGS

Some collaborative, community-based, projects, particularly those involving multimedia production have been observed to include a leadership role that some have called a Creative Producer. The need for creative management in collaborations might seem to be a paradox within a non-hierarchical production environment. However, my proposition was that the inclusion of the Creative Producer fundamentally supports the creative dynamics, the team relationships, the management activities, and the communication processes within the collaborative team composed of amateur community participants and professional multimedia artists. I proposed that the introduction of the emergent creative and management role of the Creative Producer created a new production model for community-based, multimedia productions that may affect not only what media products are made, but also how they are produced.

From these propositions, the research questions of the exegesis were:

Is there a new role and functions that of the Creative Producer, emerging in community-based, multimedia production?

What, if any, contribution does this Creative Producer make to the community-based, multimedia production of which they are a part?

More specifically how does the Creative Producer manage the competing desires of individual creative freedom and collective vision in a community-based, multimedia production?

An Action Research methodology of planning, observation, action and reflection was used in three productions to test the propositions of this research project. The findings were based on reflection about the potential positive and negative impacts of the role in practice, and from interviews conducted with production artists. The knowledge of practice was expanded through extensive trans-disciplinary reading. A new model of team collaboration for community-based, multimedia production has been theorised, informed by an understanding of some aspects of systems theories, cognition theories, and improvisation theories from music and theatre. This team formation can be seen as a complex organisation featuring responsive and unpredictable activity in feedback loops of interaction amongst its self-organising members, who are striving to achieve a shared project vision.

In the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie*, I examined the role in practice and reflected on the activities and responsibilities I undertook as the Creative Producer in a large-scale, community-based, multimedia production. In this production, the techniques employed in the creative and management aspects of the project were of particular interest in relation to the research question. In the second case study, *Hairy Tales*, the use of improvisation as a creative content development and management technique was tested. From the assimilated findings of the case study research, and the theoretical understanding gained from systems theory the 'Strategic Improvisation'

technique was formulated. It was tested in the third case study, *Kids Games*, along with further research propositions about the benefits of longitudinal relationships in community-based, multimedia production, and the role of feedback loops in the development of individual and collective creative practice.

In the role of the Creative Producer, I established the project concepts and the production designs. Because of the limited timeframes of all these case studies, the production design was critical to the success of each project. In all three productions, the project design principles were mostly successful in delivering workable and flexible productions. The project designs resulted in suitably loose but defined structures that were flexible enough to include opportunities for improvisation and emergent behaviour. The production workshop set-up provided a wide range of options for producing content in a multi-tasking environment. Artists worked at each station with small groups of children, providing a workshop structure that was particularly suited to the self-organising team.

The experience of all the case studies was consistent with the Ditkoff, Moore and Allen (2005) survey that investigated the ideal collaborative team and found that enthusiasm, open-mindedness, curiosity, and candour, were the indispensable qualities of collaboration. They define collaboration as: "… finding the right group of people (skills personality, knowledge, work-styles and chemistry) ensuring that they share commitment to the collaboration task at hand, and providing them with an environment, tools, knowledge, process and facilitation to ensure they work together effectively." (Ditkoff, Moore and Allen 2005, p.4) These qualities can only manifest themselves in situations where there is a trusting and supportive environment, and where any creative suggestions are considered, no matter how 'wild' they may be, and not rejected out of hand. In the case study productions, the artist teams generally employed enthusiasm, open-mindedness, curiosity, and candour to explore the challenges and possibilities implicit in the integration of digital technologies with analogue visual art processes. The children demonstrated obvious enjoyment in being encouraged to self-organise according to creative interest. They were free agents with many options for contributing to content development. If the structure had been more hierarchical and controlled, it is likely that the content outcomes would also be more controlled by the adult artists, and therefore less spontaneous and unique. However, there were problems and risks associated with the production process in these productions.

There were negative impacts as well as positive results in the role of the Creative Producer in the first case study, the *Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie*. In the first case study there were an insufficient number of artists employed in the production workshops to cope with the numbers of children arriving in school class groups to take part in the project. As a result, I hired an extra artist and also worked as an artist in every workshop myself, which I had not planned to do. One of the most important decisions that the Creative Producer makes in the development of projects is the selection of the

artists in the project team. The loose structure of this production meant that in theoretical terms, this project was always balanced on the "edge of chaos." (Sardar and Abrams 1999, p.82) They describe the ease with which a project can unravel from one operating at "the edge of chaos" to one in which the control mechanisms have failed, and the project has slipped into random, and uncontrollable chaos. The introduction of two more artists than were originally planned in this first case study production provided more artist input into the workshop process to direct the community engagement process and to maintain greater control in the workshop situation. The introduction of extra artists after the first day of production may have prevented this project from slipping into random and uncontrolled chaos.

In all the case study productions, the Creative Producer attempted to maintain a level of control through the use of creative and management techniques. According to Cillier's (1998) analysis of Emergence theory, autonomy in collective production situations is theoretically possible if the initial conditions for production or the project vision and project goals are clearly articulated and shared amongst team members. The synergy available in community-based, collective production techniques can be seen in the case study productions as beginning from the project vision, continuing through the memory/history of the participants and the project team at the microscopic levels of a complex system and completed through the outputs of project collaboration, making a contribution at the macroscopic level of the culture.

The Ditkoff et al (2005) survey of experienced collaborators, found that a collaborative attitude was more important than experience in team selection. In the second case study, *Hairy Tales*, the Creative Producer demonstrated the problems that can occur if the wrong decisions are made about the collaborative capacity of an artist in a community production. In this case study, the Creative Producer employed an artist who was not a natural collaborator and found it difficult to be flexible and responsive to the creative suggestions of community participants. This created problems in managing the production process, because responsive and flexible community interaction was critical to the development of trust relationships, content development processes, and to the commitment of community members to the participatory process. In the Creative Producer role, I solved the problem by arranging for her to work closely with another artist with more experience in collaboration.

Through the analysis of the case study productions the Creative Producer was found to be the central communications node. The stages in the formation of an Actor-Network were used to model the project communication activities in the case study productions. The four 'stages' in the formation of an Actor-Network potentially provide a theoretical framework for understanding the communication role of the Creative Producer in a collaborative production process. In this theoretical framework, the Creative Producer may be described as the central communication node with the responsibility for linking all participants together. Seen in Actor-Network theory, I was an "actor" who defined myself as the "spokesperson" within the production network. I was accepted by all the

network members in the central communication role of the project. I could be seen as the "obligatory passage point" for communications in the network being constructed, making my role indispensable. The activities and responsibilities of this central "actor" role included conceptualisation, project financing, creative development, and production management. In *Hairy Tales*, the second case study production, there was an example of the centrality of the role, and how a communication failure between the Creative Producer and the host organisation could cause a serious problem in the project network. In this example, in the role of the Creative Producer, I had problems communicating information about the production design to the host organisation. Rather than enrolling participants in a four-week long project, participants were enrolled into single sessions, creating continuity issues in the narrative for which a solution had to be devised. The problem was solved, but the example demonstrates how a failure in the communication activities of the Creative Producer has the potential to affect the success of collaborative productions. The following diagram demonstrates the extensive nature of the network of production in which the Creative Producers who work in community-based contexts may access.

AUDIENCES

Audience types – media arts, general public, children, education, festivals, community, and academic

Exhibition venues - galleries, museums, cinemas, websites, libraries festivals, universities

Professional audiences - curators, web developers, media and press contacts, reviewers, media artists, community artists, community organisations academics, partner organisations, project funders

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

Organisations- Industry Associations, lobby groups, NGO's, museums and galleries, media arts organisations, peak bodies, political parties, local, state and federal arts agencies and funding bodies

People- curators, exhibition managers, reviewers, researchers, commentators, academic associates, technicians and inventors, media artists, community artists, creative producers, artists from other disciplines including, theatre, fine arts, puppetry, designers, interaction designers, broadcasters, previous collaborators, festival staff, colleagues, international artists, academics, creative producers

Activists, politicians and advisors, bureaucrats in local state and federal
arts organizations,

PROJECT NETWORKS

Community organisations, community arts organisations, teachers, schools, designers, museum and exhibition staff, art centre directors, local, state and federal arts funders, arts bureaucrats, media artists, other creative producers, equipment suppliers, technicians, inventors, installation assistants, installation designers, community partners, funding partners, researchers, mentors

PROJECT TEAMS

Creative Producer, media artists, artists from other disciplines, community partners, community participants, funding partners or agencies, arts bureaucrats, technicians, researchers, production assistants, production documentors, museums and other exhibition venues

Figure 16: Interconnections in Practice for the Creative Producer

In this diagram, the interconnections and co-dependencies are represented by a series of overlapping boxes forming a 'funnel'. The funnel reduces in size from the top (where the audiences for projects are found) to the bottom (where the small project team that produces the work is located). The project's focus is on an effective process and the delivery of outcomes. The professional network is the milieu in which the Creative Producer moves. It is a broad and inter-connected network of people crossing many professions, and involved in many different activities. It is the network for ideas, information and professional relationships. The project network is a closer collection of allies, colleagues, fellow artists, and Creative Producers. It also includes acquaintances and organisations from which the Creative Producer draws support and funding to develop projects. The Creative Producer's decisions about team selection are informed by the knowledge of co-dependencies and inter-relationships from past experience.

Actor-Networks can be employed to view the people and technology involved in a community-based multimedia production as a dynamic network of activity. The camera, for example, can be seen as an important member of the actor-network because it is a key element in the production process. All members of the team relate to, and rely upon, the camera's functions. If the camera becomes damaged, the production ceases until the camera is replaced or repaired. All the stages of the actor-network in a community-based multimedia production are dependent on the camera in the production process. Even though the camera is a piece of technology without free-will or desire, it can be seen as an active participant in the network of production.

The application of Actor-Network theory reveals the dynamic nature of the network comprising the professional artists, community participants, stakeholders, and equipment. It assists the Creative Producer to assess the risks associated with developing community-based projects with skilled artists and unskilled community participants in project teams that are responsive but fragile and transitory.

In the case studies, the creative workshop system of production proved to be a successful approach. The children participating in the project were free to move around and select the activities that interested them, and the artists worked with children to form groups to undertake creative tasks and to respond to the creative suggestions of the children. Johnson (2001) notes that the flexibility and responsiveness of emergent systems provide the conditions for innovation because "they tend to be more adaptable to sudden change than the more rigid hierarchical models." (Johnson 2001, p.223) The small units described by Johnson (2001) are similar to the small groups that self-organised in an improvised, flexible manner to develop content sequences to contribute to the creative vision of each of these case studies. I had to demonstrate problem-solving and adaptive improvisational thinking in discussions with the project team to establish a system for viewing what had been recorded and what artwork had been produced on a daily basis. This approach reduced the amount of material that had to be dealt with in post-production, making the post-production deadline possible. It also

supported forward planning of the following workshops because all the artists had seen what was produced, and what still needed to be collected.

By encouraging the creative team to think through possible scenarios that might occur in the production process, in the role of the Creative Producer, I was able to establish a flexible, problem-solving outlook amongst the team members. In order for collaboration to work effectively there appeared to be a need for the basic ingredients of trust and mutual respect amongst team members. Building trust relationships in the production team between artists and community participants led to greater engagement and openness in content development activities. The trust relationship was not only the basis of communication; it was seen to be the conduit for creative exchange. Connected to the need for trust relationships in community collaborations, another finding of the case study productions was that an ongoing relationship with a community results in deeper levels of engagement with the participants. A long-term, creative, community partnership may also encourage greater depths in the creative exploration processes that can be built from the understanding of participant, artist, and community interests and strengths. Analysed through Complexity theory, the evolution of community projects, the recognition of patterns of activity, the historical knowledge associated with a production team, and the consequential opportunity to develop a shared creative language, were found to be the benefits of a long-term creative partnership between a multimedia production team and a community group.

An area of investigation in the third case study was the potential for innovation created by the feedback loops observed between personal and collaborative projects. Feedback loops are integral to understanding Complexity theory and its relationship to self-organising systems that display chaotic behaviour. Atlee (2006) coined the term, "creative-adaptive feedback" dynamics, to describe a type of feedback, located between negative and positive feedback loops in complex systems. In agreement with this view, the artists in the case study productions applied the concepts and creative processes from their personal practice to community–based multimedia productions. This created a form of the "creative-adaptive" (Atlee 2006) feedback loop between unconnected complex systems. Production artists who worked in both personal and community practices noted that the spontaneous connections, and improvised problem-solving that was observed in community practice can sometimes create ideas that can be replicated and refined in personal creative projects and visa versa.

The creative-adaptive feedback loop could be seen in the responsive attitude that artists in all three productions took when working with community participants. The rapid response approach required artists to work in an improvised manner using their highly developed skills and experience to quickly find ways to accommodate the suggestions of community participants. In the productions employed as case studies, the intuitive and improvisational opportunities offered by the unpredictable activity of collaboration led to the creation of a management technique I have called 'Strategic Improvisation.'

Improvisation in management contexts has been theorised as a model of leadership by Cunha, Kamoche, and Cunha (2003). The modes of organizational foresight they developed were congruent to the steps involved in the strategic improvisation process I invented to facilitate the activities of self-organising teams working together to implement a shared project vision. The double use of improvisation as a content development and as a management technique assisted the Creative Producer to more easily integrate the demands of content production with project management imperatives. In this technique, project-planning, problem prediction, and the development of 'what-if' scenarios that were discussed amongst the artist team in the first case study were formalised into a step-by-step technique, that was tested in the second and third productions. It was found to be an appropriate management practice in workshop situations where many activities were occurring at the same time, and where the artists needed to be mindful of gathering assets for story coverage to fulfil the project vision. It was empowering for the children because it provided a participatory, collective, and creative process for content development. It was enjoyable for the artists because it built autonomous creative decision-making into a structure developed to deliver a collective project vision. It was an effective management process, because it maintained the project vision while encouraging artists to be open to opportunity. It assisted the Creative Producer because it facilitates overall project management through regular de-briefing and brainstorming sessions.

The outcomes from the theoretical and practical analysis of the case studies, supply some evidence about the professional responsibilities and patterns of activity of a new model of team production including the composite creative and management role of the Creative Producer. The activities and responsibilities of the Creative Producer in the three case studies displayed a consistent pattern of activity that could be generalisable to other Creative Producers working in community-based, multimedia projects. The activities and responsibilities of the role will be further tested with industry experts in the qualitative and quantitative Industry Survey presented in chapter seven of this exegesis. At this stage the role is defined as:

The Creative Producer combines the sensibilities of practice with management skills and production experience in one overarching role in collaborative, community multimedia productions. The role has emerged as one solution to the management of complex teams working with the convergence of practices, technologies, and new output platforms. In community collaborations the Creative Producer balances the tensions between the need for creative autonomy and the competing desire for collective action to achieve a shared project vision. The Creative Producer is centrally involved in the development, production, and distribution stages of a multimedia project, linking management and creative functions. Communication skills, project concepts, vision maintenance, creative knowledge, team building, production management, and strategic and entrepreneurial activity converge in the role. The Creative Producer role is not imposed over a hierarchical media production command structure, but fundamentally

changes the relationships and the dynamics of creative interaction in the community-based multimedia production team.

In the case studies, the 'Strategic Improvisation' management technique was developed that may be generalisable to other production teams, theoretical insights were gained into the dynamics of production in community-based, production teams, and information was gathered about a model of production for the paradoxical team that is non-hierarchical, but self-organised, structured but open to flexible responsive action, and who, as a group, attempt to achieve a collective vision through a combination of self directed and shared activity.

CHAPTER 7

INDUSTRY SURVEY FINDINGS: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE DYNAMICS OF CREATIVE COLLABORATION
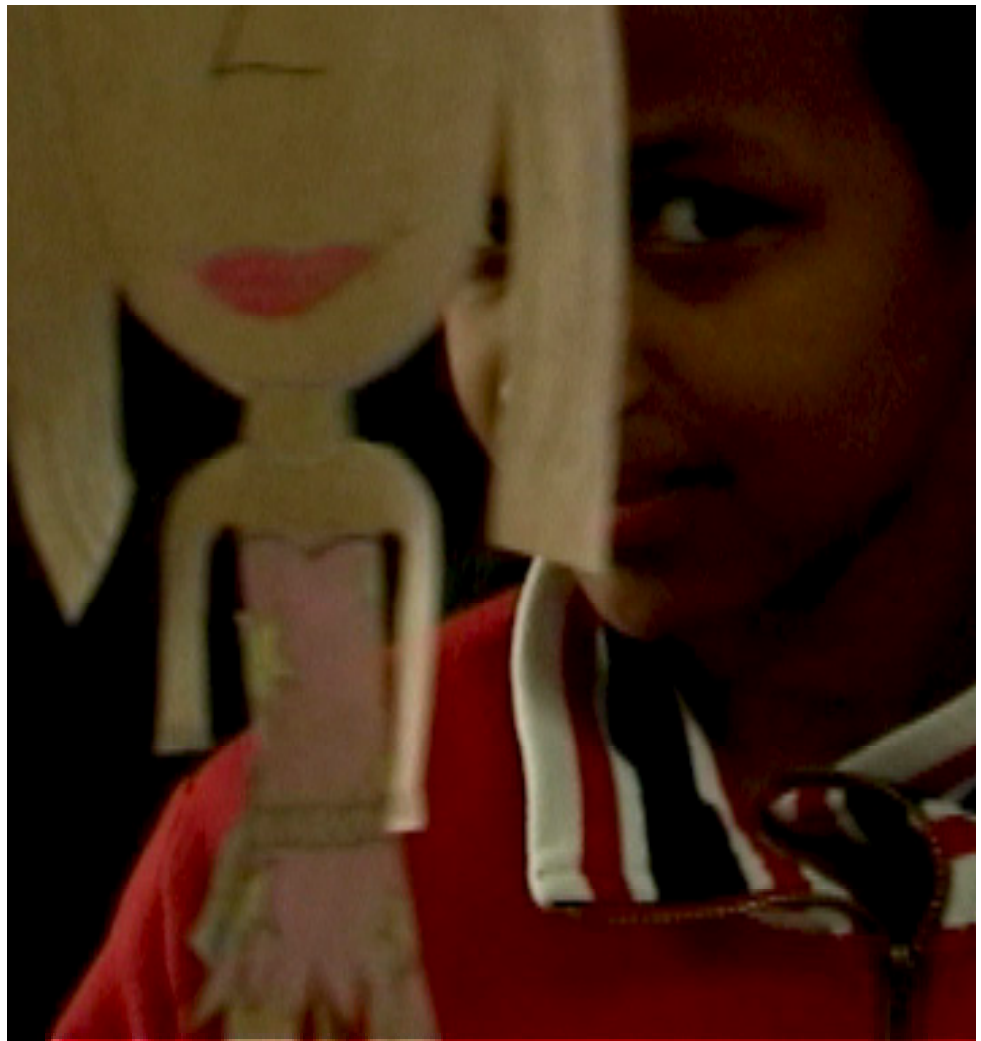
7 INDUSTRY SURVEY FINDINGS: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE DYNAMICS OF CREATIVE COLLABORATION

Introduction

The Literature Review in chapter one of this exegesis presented the management and systems theories from which research questions about the role and function of the Creative Producer in community-based multimedia productions were developed. These included aspects of systems management theories such as Actor-Network, Emergence, Chaos and Complexity theories and cognition theories about intuition, and improvisation theory from theatre and music practice.

The research questions were explored through reflective questioning of collaborative team-based approaches to multimedia production using Action Research to construct a new production model in which creative and management activities were combined into one central role. Three case studies provided the opportunities for observation and self-reflective analysis of creative and management practice. Through the close analysis of practice, it was possible to identify some patterns of activity and requisite behaviours, consistent with the identification of a new and evolving role.

In this chapter, the understanding and evidence for a new theory of creative management was further tested through the development of an Industry Survey. Through the analysis of the matrix of data employed in this Survey, a pattern of activity has emerged defining a broad range of activities and responsibilities of the Creative Producer, and identifying potential positive and negative impacts of the role on production outcomes and processes. Other ways that the management of multimedia/media teams has been resolved were also investigated, as was the relationship and overlap between other roles that combine management and creativity.

The combination of approaches employed in the rigorous mixed method, qualitative and quantitative survey when considered with the findings of practice-led case studies, has enabled insights to be captured about the complexity of the creative management role in community multimedia production. The quantitative data analysis provides statistical findings about the presence, activities and responsibilities of the role. The qualitative survey analysis provides more detailed accounts and opinions about the role in practice. Together, these survey findings and the findings from the theoretical and practical analysis of the case studies, identify the professional responsibilities and patterns of activity of the Creative Producer role, that are generalisable in community-based, multimedia production.

In this chapter, the results from the analysis of the matrix of data developed in the Industry Survey will show that community-based, multimedia production teams are complex organisations that feature non-linear, responsive relationships. A majority of respondents agree that the role of Creative Producer is a difficult one that requires management and production experience if it is to be undertaken successfully. The findings will show how the Creative Producer balances many tensions in the complex

web of community collaboration, stemming from the need for creative autonomy and the competing desire for collective action. The web of activity, particularly the non-hierarchical and non-linear communication processes and relationships in production contexts will be analysed with the theoretical lens of contemporary management theories that are part of the suite of systems theories.

Some processes through which the creative ideas of the individual artist can be incorporated within a shared team vision will be identified through Survey and case study analysis. The majority respondent view about the need for community media projects to have well-considered project structures and clear communications will be analysed. The flexibility of improvisation techniques adopted from other creative practices, such as theatre and music will be examined in systems theories, particularly the understanding gained from Complexity and Chaos theory. These theories are employed to explain why the multimedia production team can be understood as a complex organisation with non-hierarchical and non-linear communication patterns. Such teams feature responsive and flexible creative and management activity, within a project structure defined by the Creative Producer and the team in order to attain shared creative goals. Convergence theory may assist to understand the interactions that take place within small groups and the influences that can result in cohesiveness within a production unit.

The formation stages of Actor-Network theory provides an analysis of the need for ongoing and repeated communication processes amongst the many 'actors' involved in a community-based multimedia production of people and equipment, such as digital equipment. This theory is also used as a lens for examining why there is a need for a central 'spokesperson' representing all the interests of a group or team that has been assembled to develop a project. For example, the Creative Producer in Actor-Network theory is the 'spokesperson', of the team, who has to convince others such as funding agencies, artists and community organisations to accept the project vision and to support its implementation. The process of 'enrolment' may take the form of community consultation, submission writing, the obtaining of equipment and facilities, the analysis of skill sets and the selection of artists who are capable and interested in collaboration.

Improvisation theory developed in music and theatre performance assists in unravelling the complex interactions of teams, and the impact upon community productions of different management and creative practices. The intuitive decision-making of creative teams, based on experience and craft skill competency will be investigated with the assistance of theories of implicit and tacit knowledge of professional expertise that has been theorised in the field of cognitive psychology.

Survey Design

The Industry Survey was conducted using purposeful sampling to select 30 experts and practitioners across a broad spectrum of collaborative creative practice comprising representatives from arts management, Community Cultural Development, theatre,

multimedia and media. There were just under half of the respondents who identified themselves as being involved in education and research as well as active in the arts industry. Respondents came from Australia, France, the UK, Sri Lanka, and Ireland. Survey respondents were selected on the basis of their senior roles in arts organisations, and/or their reputation as experienced practitioners in the fields of theatre, Community Cultural Development, or media/multimedia production. A majority of survey respondents identified more than one industry sector to which they belonged. Of the 30 respondents to the mixed method qualitative and quantitative survey, there were 20% of people involved in the survey with whom the researcher had had some creative involvement in the past, and there were 80% of respondents that were not involved in any creative projects of the researcher, or a known advocate of the role of the Creative Producer.

The research focused on investigating what impacts, if any, the emergent role of Creative Producer has had on production team composition, processes and outcomes which they had observed or in which they were involved. The unit of analysis was perspective and worldview based. Specifically in the project, the setting was collaborative, community-based multimedia productions.

The survey employed a two-pronged approach to data collection. The formal nature of the questionnaire provided data that identified the statistical frequency of responses. The interview process allowed for some free discussion that highlighted the chaotic, the singular, and the uniqueness of production situations involving skilled and unskilled people to be captured in the research outcomes.

Qualitative data was collected through a one-to-one interview process and quantitative data was obtained through the completion of a questionnaire. In the qualitative aspects of the mixed method evaluation, interviews were examined for information about the experience of working in, or observing collaborative teams involved in creative project development. Interviews were recorded and transcribed between 2003 and 2008. In the qualitative interviews, specific descriptions of both positive and negative impacts of the role in collaborative production contexts were requested.

The follow up multiple-choice questionnaire was sent to all the people interviewed to expand the data available for analysis. Of the 30 questionnaires sent out, replies were received from 23 of the interview subjects. The data obtained through interview and questionnaire was aggregated, to provide the matrix of information used to obtain the survey results.

The first interviews were undertaken in Europe in 2003 and continued throughout the research period until 2008. A comparison between the interviews undertaken early in the research and those completed in the final stages of the research demonstrates an uneven evolution in understanding of the Creative Producer role in community-based multimedia production teams in Australia and in Europe. The year in which each interview took place is identified at the top of the survey result spreadsheet in this

chapter (Figure 17). There were some people who knew and/or employed the title of Creative Producer in 2003 and there were many people who still had not heard of the role in 2008.

The interviews were undertaken using an open-ended interview guide. Questioning consisted of lengthy, in depth, face-to-face, individual interviews using a list of questions that were developed from analysing the team experience observed through Action Research, the consequential reflection about the practice of the role in relation to the existing theories of management as discussed in the Literature Review, and the differences between the collaborative techniques of production developed in small-scale multimedia contexts, and the traditional hierarchical approaches to media production developed from the studio system of feature film production, and adopted in film, television and video production practices.

Patton (2002) identifies the value of not trying to enforce patterns on potentially valuable chaotic moments of creative exploration. He relates the qualitative analysis of social research to the principals of Chaos theory. He notes that there is value in recognising the uncontrollable and the unexpected in research because "we need to learn to observe, describe and value disorder and turbulence without forcing patterns onto genuine, meaningful chaos". (Patton 2002, p.126) In this mixed method survey, the interviews provided opportunities to capture reflections about some of the improvised, the spontaneous, and the unexpected creative moments of community-based, collaborative practice that were less likely to emerge through quantitative method of a formal questionnaire.

The questionnaire asked respondents about their observations of the dynamics of teams working with or without Creative Producers in collaborative production contexts. The respondents were asked about the different management and creative decision-making techniques they had employed themselves, observed in a community-based production team in particular, and collaborating groups in general. Other specific areas of questioning investigated the relationship between personal and community practice. The benefits of working for lengthy periods with specific communities, the nature of collaboration, and the use of improvisation and intuition as drivers of creative practice were all topics of inquiry.

There were twenty-seven questions presented in the questionnaire. In the quantitative analysis of the matrix of data, the focus in each question was the numerical representation of agreement or disagreement with a list of variables. The questions in the questionnaire were neutral. The multiple-choice responses built in positive, negative and non-committed answer options. Respondents were invited to select as many answer options as they agreed with in any question. Seven respondents were not required to answer questions 5 to 11 as these questions were beyond the respondents' area of expertise. As a result, the total of 100% was reduced from 30 to 23 respondents in these questions.

A key area of investigation, in both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the survey was an examination of the multiplicity of approaches to assembling teams for

community-based multimedia productions, and the broad range of activities that a Creative Producer or similar person acting in a director/producer/manager role might be called upon to play based on those team skill-sets. Survey respondents were also asked to make comparisons between the scope and activities of the producer, the curator, and the animateur with the activities and responsibilities of the Creative Producer.

The rigorous analysis of the data extracted from the expert and practitioner interviews and the quantitative survey identified some common patterns as well as many divergences of views about community-based production techniques, and the skill-sets of production teams. The survey outcomes identified ways that the introduction of the Creative Producer can have negative and positive impacts upon team compositions and collaborative thinking, and other ways and team compositions that provide alternative methods of managing creative input into productions.

The quantitative analysis of the survey were combined with the experiential qualitative interviews, and examined as data to test the validity and consistency of findings derived from personal practice, with the knowledge and opinions of many experts from the creative industries, particularly those with experience of collaborative creative productions that have theatrical, screen-based, or hybrid outcomes.

The survey was analysed to establish if there were any characteristics and consistent patterns of activity that could define the key responsibilities and impacts of the role. The emerging patterns of activity, the hierarchies of relevance, and commonly stated perspectives on practice did emerge from the matrix of data employed in this survey enabling definition of the emerging role and new information about the impact on production processes and outcomes of new team configurations including the Creative Producer in a central creative and management role.

The convergence of evidence about the understanding of the role of the Creative Producer has resulted in research conclusions that make analytic generalisations possible about the emergent role of the Creative Producer in collaborative, community-based, multimedia productions.

In the next section, the distillation and analysis of the rigorous findings extracted from the data about creative management in community-based, multimedia production teams are presented. Because there is some repetition in the survey findings similar answers have been aggregated.

Survey Findings

In the mixed method survey, there was a high level of agreement from respondents across the creative industries to a general question about the skills and experience needed to manage a creative production process. The three most important skills and attributes identified in the survey were the ability to articulate a project vision, the skills to manage production processes in order to achieve a project goal, and the craft skills to provide the creative oversight and input into the creative decisions made by a production team.

In the analysis of the matrix of data obtained through the mixed method survey, a majority of people working in the fields of arts management, Community Cultural Development, theatre, media and multimedia production agreed that the Creative Producer was a role they recognised in practice. According to the survey results, most participants agreed that the Creative Producer was increasingly identified as a role in multimedia production in which collaboration, small multi-tasking teams, less historically formalised patterns of production roles, and the complexities of technology contributed to the appearance of a new combined creative and management role.

A minority of survey respondents agreed that there was the potential for the Creative Producer to have a negative impact if he or she interfered unnecessarily with production team activities, undertook management activities too closely, or became too involved in production details and lost sight of the bigger picture. These respondents were those with production histories who could recognise that there is great potential for inexperienced or unskilled Creative Producers to have an extremely negative impact in the collaborative process. The Creative Producer manages the creative tension between the competing needs for freedom and control in self-managing teams. Therefore, the problem of interference is likely to emerge if the Creative Producer is incapable of working with autonomous creative practices.

A majority of respondents agreed that the ability to anticipate and solve problems was a skill that enabled the Creative Producer to judge when to intervene in a production situation, and to be able to do so with confidence, based on creative experience, rather than in an argumentative process about attitude or content deliverables. Survey respondents who understood the potential negative impacts of an unskilled Creative Producer, recognised that without the ability to observe and listen, or the skills and experience to know when to intervene in the management aspects or the creative processes of a community/artist collaborative process, they could create problems for the team, that would be difficult to resolve. The dissolution of the network of production is the likely outcome for inappropriate behaviour of a Creative Producer. Seen in Actor-Network theory, the movement back and forth between the 'stages' of creation and maintenance of an actor-network can model the group dynamics of a multimedia production.

The formation of an Actor-Network through the 'stages' is called the 'process of translation.' An Actor-Network is dynamic and the movement described between stages is referred to as 'displacements.' Callon (1986) states that "translation is a process never a completed accomplishment, and it may fail." (Callon 1986 p.196). A reason for failure could be the inability for the members of a collaborative group to continue to accept the Creative Producer in the role of the "spokesperson" of the actor-network. Members of the network may move backwards and forwards through the 'stages' as they contest, consider involvement, or dispute the validity of claims of the network "spokesperson". Hence, the Creative Producer may need to revert to "problematisation" or "enrolment" stages with team members, community participants, or other project stakeholders, even after production has commenced, to resolve issues and to restore effective communication processes.

Recognition of the Role in Industry: The Creative Producer is observed by a majority of survey respondents to work in multimedia, and media production contexts, with fewer recognising Community Cultural Development projects as a context for the Creative Producer. These three contexts can feature collaboration, and collective decision-making in self-organising teams as a production mode. A minority of respondents had observed the role in theatre production. The survey interviews spanned the period 2002-2008. Over this period, the results suggest that the understanding of the responsibilities and activities of the Creative Producer has increased, as the role became more commonly included in teams. However, these results are not consistent. They demonstrate the evolutionary and "gappy" nature of knowledge about developments in industry emerging to fulfil specific practice requirements. The survey found that while there were respondents interviewed in 2003 who identified themselves as Creative Producers, there were still several respondents interviewed in 2008 who had not heard of the role. Overall almost a third of the respondents (23%) interviewed in the industry survey had not heard of the role.

In line with the uncertain understanding of the role of the Creative Producer, the survey results showed that there was substantial variation in perception about whether this role was a recognised job classification, or more simply a function observed in creative production contexts. Most respondents agreed that the role was a function in practice rather than a formal role designation.

A small group of respondents who identified themselves as Creative Producers were employed by organisations using this title as a formal role classification. A minority of survey respondents agreed that a senior role that straddled creative and management responsibilities was far more critical in large-budget projects employing many specialists, than in small multi-tasking projects. Another minority view expressed in the survey by some arts managers and experienced production workers, was that Creative Producers can also be identified in non-collaborative contexts, where there is a need to build bridges between the creative and the management elements of an organisation such as a Festival. A small number of respondents had also observed the presence of the formal role of the Creative Producer within a hierarchical organisation, where collaborative activity featured at departmental levels. A minority of survey respondents had observed people who had been employed with the formal title of Creative Producer.

Industry Antecedents for the Role of the Creative Producer: A majority of respondents with industry production experience and who knew the role of the Creative Producer saw this new function as a combination of the producer and the director roles as understood in the film and television industry. In interviews recorded with these respondents, most commented that the role has emerged as one solution to the management of the requirements of complex teams working with the convergence of practices, technology, and new output platforms.

There was agreement by those respondents experienced in multimedia production that the roles and responsibilities in multimedia teams have evolved over time as systems

of team management were adopted from other media practices and auditioned in a multimedia production environment. Within a collaborative production process in other fields, the Producer, the Creative Director, and the Director or a combination of Producer/Director or Producer/Creative Director were regarded as other roles that managed the responsibilities involved with creative project development, and team and project management.

In the survey interviews, a large majority of practitioners with experience in media-based community projects had explanations for Creative Producers found working in community-based, multimedia productions. In this group there was recognition that the greater accessibility of digital equipment has meant that low budget, multimedia projects have become more feasible in this historically under-funded sector. However it was necessary to re-organise teams and employ multi-skilled workers to reduce labour costs in productions. They recognised a need for a crossover role as part of the team reorganisation that could be a central hub in communication for the diverse groups involved in a production and play a critical role in creative management.

The introduction of the Creative Producer in community contexts can be viewed as an example of a simple solution developed to resolve complex management issues. Cunha and Rego (2008) in their exposition of Complexity theory proposed that "complex organizing may be paradoxically facilitated by a simple infrastructure, and that the theory of organizations may be viewed as a domain of choice between simplicity and complexity." (Cunha and Rego 2008, p. 6) The composite role of Creative Producer could be seen as a simple structural solution to the complex issues involved in the maintenance of the equilibrium between management control and creative autonomy. It was regarded by a majority of survey respondents to be a skilled and a difficult central role that can successfully instigate communities, technology, and media artists to work together in a network of production.

Creative and Producer Aspects of the Creative Producer Role: According to the survey results, there is a clear division of 'creative' and 'producer' responsibilities that are present in the role. In the interviews undertaken for this survey, the majority of respondents agreed that the Creative Producer has to support collaboration by playing an oversight role. He or she needs to be aware of the multi-layered activities taking place in all the stages of a production. He or she knows how to support autonomous activity, and is therefore able to establish an environment in which the melding of skills, creative ideas, and community narratives can create the conditions for synergistic outcomes.

The role and responsibilities of the role of the Creative Producer in community-based multimedia productions has been defined through the analysis of the matrix of data from the Industry Survey and from an examination of activity in the analysis of the case studies. Survey respondents did not view the role as static, because a majority agreed that the management and creative responsibilities change depending on the scale and the skill requirements of a project. However, some qualities are consistently required. A

large majority of respondents agreed that the Creative Producer needed to demonstrate leadership qualities, strength of character, flexibility, and an ability to observe and listen, and be prepared for intervention, problem solving and dispute resolution if the project is not progressing satisfactorily.

In the 'creative' aspects of the role the Creative Producer, a high percentage of respondents agreed that he or she is responsible for the development of project ideas. Once funding has been arranged, the agreed key function of the Creative Producer is to maintain the project vision and to ensure that this shared view enables inclusiveness and creative autonomy within a collaborative structure. The shared vision can be understood as an outcome of a complex system.

In theoretical terms, the history of a project's development, the shared value system represented in a team, and the worldview of project participants all contribute to the establishment of a project vision. Cilliers (1998) states that, "a complex system has memory/history captured at both the microscopic (e.g., personal experiences, personal opinions, worldview) and macroscopic (e.g., culture, ritual, value system) levels. Therefore, system history plays an important role in defining the state of the system as well as affecting system evolution." Autonomy in collective production situations is theoretically possible therefore, if the initial conditions for production are clearly articulated and shared amongst team members. The synergy available in community-based collective production techniques can be seen as emerging from the memory/ history of the microscopic levels of a complex system and through the outputs of project collaboration, can make a contribution to the macroscopic level of culture.

In the 'producer' aspects of the role, it has already been noted that a great majority of respondents to the survey agreed that the Creative Producer displays effective negotiation skills with funding agencies and is responsible for the arrangement of project finance, project budgeting, and financial management. The Creative Producer has access to a creative network of artists and resources. He or she is observant, intuitive in decision-making, and listens clearly to what is being said in production situations. He or she is able to anticipate and solve production problems through flexibility, determination and patience in dealing with issues that arose in production situations. He or she frequently selects the creative team based on the project design and the analysis of the skill sets and the production functions required.

Longitudinal Relationships in Community Practice: A large majority of survey respondents agree that there is an evolution of team relationships and creative responsibilities that occur when a group of people develop a long-term creative partnership. They recognise that this ongoing relationship leads to deeper levels of engagement and the potential for more risky creative exploration is built on the identification and development of participant, artist and community strengths. Analysed through Complexity theory, the evolution of complex community projects, the recognition of patterns of activity, the historical knowledge associated with a production team at a micro level, and the consequential opportunity to develop a

shared creative language, are the benefits in developing a long-term creative partnership between a multimedia production team and a community group.

The Importance of the Creative Producer Establishing Communication in Community-based, Multimedia Projects: It was agreed by most survey respondents that the development of internal team and external project partner communication processes are important activities in the development of a successful collaborative, community-based, multimedia work. The nature of collaboration in these projects is self-organising, and communication within the team is non-linear and non-hierarchical, and as such collaborative, community-based, multimedia projects model the conditions of emergence and complexity. Using collaboration as a method for creating multimedia projects in community contexts requires efficient, comprehensive and regular communication processes. These processes, conducted and managed by the Creative Producer, encompass and support the internal and non-linear team communications. Clearly structured, open organisational and personal communication processes are the building blocks of team relationships.

In community-based projects, a majority of respondents agree that lines of communication are not restricted to the members of the production team, but extend to all project stakeholders including community representatives, and funding agencies who are involved in the network of project development. Issues in information flow to project stakeholders were identified by respondents as a potential cause of chaos and confusion that could threaten relationships, and could put the successful development of a community-based, multimedia production at risk.

Alongside the survey results about the importance of communication flow between all the actors in a creative production network, are findings about the importance of an effective communication strategy. The four 'stages' in the formation of an Actor-network provide a theoretical framework for understanding the communication role of the Creative Producer managing a collaborative production process. In this theoretical framework, the Creative Producer can be described as the central communication node with the responsibility for linking all participants together. He or she becomes the "obligatory passage point" for the network being constructed, making the role indispensable. In agreement with this theoretical construct, the industry respondents with experience of working or observing a team including a Creative Producer believe that the role is indispensable to that production. According to their observations, the project they were referring to would not have taken place without the involvement of a Creative Producer.

In the questionnaire answers respondents agreed strongly that Creative Producers do not display bossy or argumentative attitudes, and are not often found working in hierarchical team management structures. In interviews, most respondents noted that if not managed carefully, the negative aspects of a collaborative production structure were that it could degenerate into the lowest common denominator situation of decision-making by committee. Elaborating on this important creative issue about collaboration,

survey interviewees noted the danger to the process is exposed if the Creative Producer does not allow autonomy of artists to do the work they have been employed to do.

Development of Trust Relationships: Survey respondents identified building trust relationships as a major feature in the creation of mixed-experience teams that involved professional artists working with community participants who did not have production experience. Seen in Actor-Network theory (see discussion of the theory in chapter 2) the Creative Producer problematises a situation and then seeks to develop a project through gaining the interest from a group of suitable artists and community participants to join together as "allies" (Callon 1986) who trust each other. A majority of respondents recognised that the synergy in collaboration that is often responsible for a project's success can occur as a result of a group of "allies" with complementary skills and content ideas being selected and moulded into a creative team with a shared project vision by the Creative Producer.

There was a high level of agreement from survey participants that the trust relationship is not only the basis of communication, it is the conduit for creative exchange. As previously stated, Chaos theory provides a potential framework for understanding the complex management activities found in community projects. It "depicts organisations as complex and unpredictable because of the relations among constituents of a system" (University of Alabama, Accessed 6-09-08). A majority of interviewees who had observed the symbiotic relationship between those who offer skills, and those who contribute their personal narratives in community productions, believed this relationship to be the "spark" of collaborative endeavour. They further observed that the behaviour of community teams was likely to be unpredictable and dependent, as was stated previously, on the presence of trusting, open, and enjoyable creative relationships. Hence Chaos theory can be used to show that the constituents of a complex system such as the members of a community production group need to be responsive and reactive to the unpredictable contributions made in open and trusting production relationships, in order to build the non-linear and creative relationships of the group.

Project Development and Design in Community Productions: Unpredictability is related to the complexity of teams, and the different experiences and worldviews that the members bring to the production context. It was agreed by a majority of interview respondents, that at its best, the collaborative method is able to build projects that convey the lived experience of a community to other audiences, revealing an authentic and unique community voice. An honest and risky creative exploration of a community narrative was seen by most survey respondents to be at the heart of a transformative collaborative process.

The design of a project was identified in the questionnaire as a possible risk factor in the development of a community production. The project vision is established in the design phase of a community project. The formation stages of Actor-Network theory are useful in providing an analysis of the reasons why the Creative Producer is constantly communicating and responding to the needs of the collaborating team involving which the human and equipment contributions.

A majority of survey respondents agreed that it is necessary to take the time to understand the dynamics of a community, in order to develop a project that is likely to be appropriate to the skills and aspirations of potential team participants. In the survey interviews, a strongly held view was that a lengthy consultation process, or a pre-existing relationship with a community group, with an open exchange of ideas between a project developer and community representatives to establish the conditions for project design. Respondents stated that there had to be engagement, equality and flexibility to make a collaborative community-based multimedia venture a reality, again mirroring the stages of the formation of an Actor-Network.

Survey interviews provided some illumination of the psychology of the power relationships in community production contexts. There was agreement from those survey respondents with experience of community production that these collaborations have different power relationships to other collaborative production contexts. The community participants and the professional artists working together in a collaborative environment are, by level of experience and aspiration, coming to the production with different wants and needs. Actor-Network theory describes these power relationships that can be seen as the phase in a production process when people negotiate what they want to achieve by coming together in a collaborative process, or an alliance of interests. This process is described as, "the group of multilateral negotiations, trials of strength and tricks that accompany the interessement [phase] and enables them to succeed" (Callon 1986, p.209). The survey respondents agreed in the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the industry survey that this process that can be described as the formation of an actor-network, accurately equates to the process that is taking place in the design and development phase of a community-based multimedia production.

Agility, Flexibility, and Unpredictability: In the production phase that equates to the "mobilisation" stage of an Actor-Network, one specific survey finding was about the need for agility and flexibility in content development processes employed in a community project. A majority of interviewees agreed that the overall team must be responsive to the participants' contributions, and that the creative balance between the professional skills of the artist, and the community knowledge of the participant was maintained as a key non-linear relationship. This balance can take advantage of the flexible and unexpected events that can serendipitously occur in production contexts. This finding is consistent with the description of the communication relationships found in complex organisations as described in Complexity theory.

Survey respondents identified ongoing communication and negotiation with stakeholders and project participants to be a major focus of the Creative Producer role in community-based production equating to the central "spokesperson" role of the actor-network. This may be because schedules need revisions, community participants may be shy, or concerned about media representation, equipment could be lost or break down, or there could be personality clashes in the team. There was agreement in the interviews undertaken for the survey, that an explanation of the extensive communication

requirements managed by the Creative Producer or another central management role in community projects is to maintain participant involvement and to limit marginalisation in the negotiated power relationships of the production process. The Creative Producer is therefore acting to maintain the Actor-Network as the pivotal "obligatory passage point" (Callon 1986) through whom communication is filtered.

Many respondents recognised that an inexperienced Creative Producer (or equivalent role) may find the balancing act required between the different contributors to a project difficult to sustain. Experienced Community Cultural Development artists, managers, and theorists who participated in the industry survey, agreed that other unrecognised community issues could affect participation in a collaborative multimedia project. This can be viewed as "a sensitive dependence on initial conditions" in Chaos theory (Sardar and Abrams, 1999). This theory shows how small and undetected issues present within a community at the start of a production can easily be overlooked, but may later lead to major changes in conditions that affect community involvement in a multimedia project.

Unstable and aperiodic behaviour, such as unexpected outcomes that can occur within the collaborative process of a multimedia production are described as 'the signature of chaos" (Sardar and Abrams, 1999) and multimedia productions made in community contexts could be seen to be produced "at the edge of chaos" (Langton 1990, p.12) because of the large number of variables present in community multimedia projects that can affect production conditions. A minority of survey respondents, a sub-group who were experienced in project management and Community Cultural Development productions, agreed that the underlying complex and unexpected conditions that may be impossible to identify at the start of a production, may cause eventual project failure in a community involved in a multimedia production, as conditions become magnified through the strengthening and growing impact of the feedback loops of Chaos theory. The respondents therefore agreed with this aspect of Chaos theory, because they recognised that causal relationships based on variables in initial conditions of a production are likely to test the problem-solving abilities of the Creative Producer (or equivalent role) in a central composite management and creative role.

In the survey findings, there was a high level of agreement that lack of funding or under-funding was a risk factor in the development of community-based, multimedia productions. According to Actor-Network theory, a failure in the "enrolment" phase in the formation of an actor-network of people and technology is the failure to attract sufficient funds to develop a community-based multimedia production (Callon 1986, pp.207-208). In this framework of analysis, the Creative Producer has to develop a project concept, and be able to effectively lobby 'power-brokers' to support his or her project. The "enrolment" process is a defining moment of the Creative Producer's role. It is a vital moment in project management, creative project definition, and project financing. From a funding bodies' perspective, "enrolment" is the point where funding

agreement and contracts are exchanged.

A large majority of respondents agreed that the Creative Producer presents a collaborative attitude to artists and arts practice and often makes decisions informed by intuition based on years of experience in creative management. In order to be flexible in the ever-changing conditions of a complex organisation, a skill of the Creative Producer is to be able to improvise in the management of a creative project. In order to improvise, the Creative Producer requires sensitivity to practice, experience of practice, and a willingness to take risks and embrace failure as well as success, a description fitting a complex organisation operating at "the edge of chaos" (Langton 1990, p.12).

Project Failure: According to the interviews with experts who had Community Cultural Development experience, project failure could be regarded as a useful aspect of community production, if failure was a result of risk-taking in the project design or production of a community work. The respondents stated that without risk-taking and the occasional failure there was little potential for innovation. However, in situations of failure, one respondent noted the need for support from colleagues in project debriefing, in order for the outcome to be understood.

A majority of respondents in the questionnaire agreed that project failure was caused by inability to obtain funding, the wrong combination of artists selected to work on the project or lack of appropriate consultation with community members. Survey respondents identified all these activities as being the responsibility of the Creative Producer and may describe the key causes of failure of a Creative Producer working in collaborative modes in community multimedia productions. Complex productions of this nature can slip from operating at "the edge of chaos" (ibid), to a state in which the control mechanisms have failed and the project has slipped into random, and uncontrollable chaos.

According to the survey results, failure in community-based multimedia production can often be caused by failure by the Creative Producer's lack of skill to raise funds, select the team and consult with the community involved. In theoretical terms, the failure of the Creative Producer, in the non-linear dynamic systems of a community multimedia production studied by Chaos theory there can be a "great many independent variables interacting with each other… These complex systems have the ability to balance order and chaos" (Sardar and Abrams 1999 p.82). In Chaos theory, this chaotic descent could be the result of magnifying problems in team relationships or amongst community participants that appeared as insignificant indicators easily overlooked in the initial analysis of existing conditions.

A minority of respondents in the survey agreed that failure to attract sufficient funding to successfully produce a community-based multimedia project could be caused by a lack of budgeting experience. This could be why survey respondents overwhelmingly agree that the Creative Producer needs to have some multimedia production experience. Without this experience, he or she may not be able to exercise appropriate judgment

about how long it will take to develop aspects of the project, or allow for extra time in the budget for dealing with content development using inexperienced team members.

Improvisation: A majority of respondents in this survey recognised that improvisation techniques enabled experienced artists to operate within a framework of defined project parameters, craft skills, and intuitive knowledge to produce content with community members in unstable environments. Cognitive psychologist Donald Schon (1983) investigated the nature of intuitive knowledge based on experience. He acknowledges that, "competent practitioners usually know more than they can say. They exhibit a kind of knowing in practice, most of which is tacit… Indeed practitioners themselves often reveal a capacity for reflection on their intuitive knowing in the midst of action and sometimes use this capacity to cope with unique, uncertain and conflicted situations of practice" (Schon 1983, p.viii-ix). In community-based team operating at "the edge of Chaos" (Langton, 1990), survey respondents agreed that responsive and spontaneous reactions to opportunities, rapid decision-making, and problem-solving all call on intuitive knowledge of the Creative Producer and the artists collaborating in a production. One community media artist and producer noted in an interview that all artist team members were very experienced practitioners, and that this experience and tacit knowledge was another relevant factor in using improvisation techniques effectively as a content development process (C6 interviewed 27th May, 2007).

In the interviews undertaken during this research, a frequently made comment was that intuitive response opportunities are only possible if artists have the freedom to improvise within an autonomous creative space, when working in collaborative structures. This approach enables media artists to capture the unexpected with a strong sense of utility in content development situations. It was agreed by a majority of respondents that at its most successful, the agile application of improvisational thinking develops opportunities for innovation in content capture, and creates the conditions for the unique voices of a community to be presented to external audiences. In their case study research, Cunha, Kamoche and Cunha (2001) state, "the success of improvisation is shown to be affected by the levels of equivocality, and by the perceived level of task complexity and results in increased group cohesiveness" (Cunha, Kamoche and Cunha 2001, p.34) This management phenomenon was also observed by the industry survey participants to be a feature of a community-based multimedia production. One community media artist and producer notes, "To work in a collaborative way, you need a flexible team. I think within our community arts organisation everyone is quite open to going with the flow. I guess being able to react on the day, and to be able to be responsive, but still remain within the confines of the project is what is necessary to work in this way" (C6 interviewed 27th May, 2007). Responsive improvisational techniques of flexibility, observation and spontaneity were viewed in the survey as activities employed in building creative production processes in a media team.

Success Indicators for Evaluating Community-based Multimedia Projects: Successful projects featured innovation in content or development processes and met project goals and vision on time and on budget. However, surprisingly, the most agreed indicators of success in community projects were about the experience of collaboration, rather than the outcome of the project. Processes that were enjoyable and where people felt validated by their project contribution in the production process were rated highly.

As in many previous answers to questions about community media projects, the building of creative and trust relationships and effective communication between participants, the artists and project stakeholders were rated as important indicators of success. In Actor-Network theory this enjoyment is seen to be a response to an actor that has become involved in a network of production and has been successful enough to "get what they want" (Callon 1986) from the experience of involvement with the active support of a group of people, in this case a team that has been assembled through the "obligatory passage point" of the Creative Producer.

A majority of respondents agreed that improvisation could be used as a content development process to make dynamic and responsive content in community-based and creative multimedia projects. There was a high level of agreement that it was possible to use improvisation techniques to incorporate people's ideas into projects. In order for improvisation to be incorporated into a production process and to capture the "expression of individuality, originality and creativity." (Alterhaug 2005) A majority of survey respondents with a background in practice stated in interviews that the artists who employ the technique needed to be highly skilled in their craft.

One arts manager with a background in theatrical and musical improvisation states, "A lot of what gets done under the banner of improvisation is either not, or is very weak versions of it, because improvisation in the contemporary sense carries with it a huge onus on rigor and the development of language, both knowledge of musical languages around the world, contemporary music practice as well as developing a personal language" (A9 interviewed 6th June 2008). People without experience of the art form, are therefore unlikely to be able to employ improvisational techniques with any success.

A large majority of survey respondents agreed that it was possible to transfer improvisational thinking to production management processes in community production contexts. They agreed that the principles of improvisation could inform action in management practices if an effective team engagement model could be implemented using improvisational thinking. Organisational theorists have looked beyond music for interaction and behaviour modelling techniques. Improvisation theories employed in ensemble theatre development can also provide a model for examining collaborative activity within team structures. Vera and Crossan (2004) state, "Good improvisation is about negotiation among team members setting each other up for success, and trusting and respecting others while enacting the ongoing scene…. the principle of collaboration in improvisational theatre has important implications for co-operation and teamwork

in work teams and in particular self-managing teams" (Vera and Crossan 2004, p.743). This is particularly relevant to the situation in community-based multimedia production teams, where the differences in craft skills and creative capacities needs to be actively managed by the Creative Producer to maintain and foster trusting, open and productive creative relationships.

The majority of survey respondents agreed that the success of such an improvisational approach is dependent on experience in project management, the powers of observation, the skills to encourage dynamic responses to production opportunities, and the flexibility in handling issues that occurred in community production contexts. A majority of survey respondents believed that improvisation could be used as a content development strategy and as a management approach to creating holistic productions that featured a sympathetic flow between content production and project management. In Chaos theory the simplicity of an organisational structure can effectively support the complexity of emergence and self-organising teams (Stacey, Griffin and Shaw, 2000). This was viewed by a majority of respondents as particularly relevant in a community production where unexpected occurrences in production were more likely to occur and result in serendipitous content, just as the complexity of group relationships result in the appearance of the unexpected.

Feedback Loops in Practice: A large majority of survey respondents agreed that there was a feedback loop between working in collaborative contexts and working on personal professional projects. The relationship and influence between community-based practice and personal practice was one that extended practice, and could lead to innovation in both arenas. As discussed in previous chapters, feedback loops are integral to understanding Complexity theory and its relationship to self-organising systems that display chaotic behaviour. The ability for individuals to apply concepts and creative processes from personal to collective, community–based multimedia productions, creates a form of the "creative-adaptive' potential feedback loop between unconnected complex systems. Atlee (2006) identified this phenomenon as "Transcendent feedback loops [that] reach outside the system, into its environment or into metaphysical realities, in search of both creative and balancing/cohering energies (positive and negative feedback). Learning and evolution are the most familiar manifestations of creative-adaptive feedback. Respondents in the survey discussed how such "transcendent feedback loops" occur in community-based multimedia production and personal practice contexts. Interview subjects with extensive experience in working as professional artists as well as working as community artists noted that in their community practice, the spontaneous and unexpected connections, and improvised problem-solving that is often observed in community practice can sometimes create unexpected patterns and unintended results that can be replicated and refined in further iterations in personal creative projects.

Other Composite Creative and Management Roles: The survey respondents agreed that it was an individual issue whether or not respondents in composite management and creative positions had difficulties describing their role. For a small number of

individuals working across management and creative responsibilities in projects and in organisations, the title of Creative Producer was viewed as a useful one to adopt because it more accurately described the responsibilities and activities of the activities and responsibilities of the role.

The Creative Producer was seen by a majority of survey respondents as different from other roles that managed creative responsibilities, such as the curator in the visual arts and the producer in media and theatre production, and the animateur in community arts. The role of the animateur was largely unknown across industry sectors. It was agreed by a majority of respondents that the non-specific role of facilitator could be used to describe a combined management and creative role that was not defined by an art form, but it did not have the status, the authority or the creative and management skills of the Creative Producer.

Amongst survey respondents who did not use the title of Creative Producer and who worked in composite roles involving creative and management responsibilities, the most frequently employed titles were that of the producer, followed by the artistic director, the curator, and the project manager.

In summary, The Creative Producer has the capacity to combine management and creative functions in one overarching role in collaborative community multimedia productions. The role has emerged as one solution to the management of complex teams working with the convergence of practices, technology, and new output platforms. The responsibilities and activities of the Creative Producer extend from concept development to the exhibition of the completed production. The Creative Producer balances the tensions in the complex web of community collaboration, between the artist's need for creative autonomy and the competing desire for collective action to achieve a shared project vision. The Creative Producer is centrally involved in the creative development, production, and distribution stages of a multimedia project, linking management and creative functions. The Creative Producer combines the sensibilities of creative practice with management skills and production experience. Communication skills, project concepts, vision maintenance, creative knowledge, team building, production management, and strategic and entrepreneurial activity converge in the Creative Producer role.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

8. CONCLUSION

The Creative Producer

After three projects, an Industry Survey and the careful reading of trans-disciplinary theoretical texts, I believe a definition of the Creative Producer can be made. This definition is one that has the agreement of industry experts who were the respondents to the Industry Survey conducted as a part of this research project. It is:

The Creative Producer combines the sensibilities of practice with management skills and production experience in one overarching role in collaborative, community multimedia productions. The role has emerged as one solution to the management of complex teams working with the convergence of practices, technologies, and new output platforms. In community collaborations the Creative Producer balances the tensions between the need for creative autonomy and the competing desire for collective action to achieve a shared project vision. The Creative Producer is centrally involved in the development, production, and distribution stages of a multimedia project, linking management and creative functions. Communication skills, project concepts, vision maintenance, creative knowledge, team building, production management, and strategic and entrepreneurial activity converge in the role. The Creative Producer role is not imposed over a hierarchical management structure, but fundamentally changes the relationships and the dynamics of creative interaction in the community-based, multimedia production team.

My initial research proposition was that the inclusion of the Creative Producer in a multimedia production team supported an overarching creative and management structure for collaboration. Further, I proposed that such a production model in collaborative, community-based projects affected not only what media projects were made, but also how they were produced. The research questions that underpinned the discussion of my proposition were:

Is there a new role and functions that of the Creative Producer, emerging in community-based, multimedia production?

What, if any, contribution does this Creative Producer make to the community-based, multimedia production of which they are a part?

More specifically how does the Creative Producer manage the competing desires of individual creative freedom and collective vision in a community-based, multimedia production?

The definition of the Creative Producer role and functions provide answers in the affirmative to the research questions, and positively supports the research proposition. Furthermore a table presented on the next page (Production Phases – Functions of the Creative Producer) demonstrate how it can be said that the Creative Producer is involved in creative and management activities in all stages of the development of a community-based, multimedia production.

Phase 1: Concept development	Idea generation Project scoping Community support negotiated for project Funding submission written Budget development
Phase 2: Pre-production	Community participant enrolment Project design Skills sets identification Team selection Team Brainstorming Research Partner/funder communication Team communication Evaluation design Production planning Production scheduling
Phase 3: Production	Team communication Artist/participant liaison Community liaison Stakeholder liaison Problem framing and solving Creative input into production Production oversight Financial management Production management Project documentation Media Liaision
Phase 4: Post-production	Team communication Artist/participant liaison Community liaison Stakeholder liaison Problem framing and solving Creative input - post-production Post-production oversight Financial management Scheduling Project documentation Project Launch planning Media Liaision Exhibition planning and communication Marketing materials development
Phase 5: Distribution	Project Launch and Exhibition Exhibition management Advertising/promotion of exhibition Team communication Artist/participant liaison Community liaison Stakeholder liaison Evaluation Marketing Tour organisation Curator/museum/gallery negotiations Collections negotiations Exhibition contract negotiation Sales

Table 1: Phases of production - Functions of the Creative Producer

Recognition of the Creative Producer Role

The Creative Producer straddles activity in the creative and the management aspects of the community-based, multimedia collaboration. The role of the Creative Producer has been found to exist in areas of creative practice that employ collaboration as a creative method. The Creative Producer is a senior role in the team that has creative and management input into all stages of production. In the Industry Survey findings presented in chapter seven of this exegesis, the role is observed by a large majority of respondents to exist in hybrid, theatre and multimedia production contexts. A large majority of survey respondents who had practice backgrounds and who had observed Creative Producers at work agreed that the role required both creative practice experience and management skills. Because of the centrality of the role, the Creative Producer can have a substantial positive or negative impact on the process and outcome of the production depending on his or her ability to work in collaborative circumstances, and on his or her creative and management experience.

Collaboration, small multi-tasking teams, less historically formalised patterns of production, and the complexities of technology have contributed to the emergence of this composite creative and management role. The Creative Producer is observed by a large majority of the survey respondents to work in multimedia, and media production contexts, with a lesser majority recognising Community Cultural Development as a context in which the Creative Producer is found. These three industry sectors can feature collaboration, and collective decision-making in self-organising teams as a production mode. A minority of respondents had observed the role in theatre production.

Survey interviews over the period 2003-2008 suggest that the understanding of the responsibilities and activities of the Creative Producer have increased, as the role has become more commonly included in teams. However, these results are not consistent. They demonstrate the evolutionary and "gappy" nature of knowledge about developments in industry emerging to fulfil specific practice requirements. The survey found that while there were respondents interviewed in 2003 who identified themselves as Creative Producers, there were still several respondents interviewed in 2008 who had not heard of the role. Overall almost a third of the respondents (23%) interviewed in the industry survey had not heard of the role.

In line with the uncertain understanding of the role of the Creative Producer, the survey results showed that there was substantial variation in perception about whether this role was a recognised job classification, or more simply a function observed in creative production contexts. Most respondents agreed that the role was a function in practice rather than a formal role designation. A minority of survey respondents had observed people who had been employed with the formal title of Creative Producer and two of the survey respondents were formally employed in organisations as Creative Producers.

The introduction of the Creative Producer in community contexts can be viewed as an example of a simple solution developed to resolve complex management issues. Cunha and Rego (2008) in their exposition of Complexity theory proposed that "complex

organizing may be paradoxically facilitated by a simple infrastructure, and that the theory of organizations may be viewed as a domain of choice between simplicity and complexity." (Cunha and Rego 2008, p.6) The composite role of Creative Producer could be seen as a simple structural solution to the complex issues involved in the maintenance of the equilibrium between management control and creative autonomy in a community-based multimedia production.

Comparing the findings of the case study productions and findings of the Industry Survey presented in chapters six and seven of this exegesis, there is consistent agreement, particularly amongst those with practice backgrounds, that the Creative Producer combines many aspects of the producer and the director roles, as they are understood in traditional forms of media production.

Some Management Techniques for Collaboration

'Strategic Improvisation'

The role of improvisation in management contexts has been theorised as a model of leadership by theorists such as Cunha, Kamoche, and Cunha (2003) who combined strategic planning, visioning, scenario thinking, and planned emergence into a theory of "organisational foresight." I developed the 'Strategic Improvisation' technique to create and overall production structure that could facilitate the creative autonomy of artists in a self-organising team. This technique encourages improvisation and flexible thinking in the management of the community based, multimedia production team. Organisational improvisation requires a considerable amount of planning in order for it to be an effective tool in the management of productions. One community media artist notes in an interview conducted as part of the qualitative research for the Industry Survey, "Improvisation is important. I think it comes back again to knowing what your practice is really well, you know what's going to work and what's going to be a total disaster. It's about guiding people, if it's going too far off track, guiding them back". (C6 interviewed 27th May 2007) The technique of 'Strategic Improvisation' developed in the case study productions proved to be useful in workshop situations where many activities were occurring at the same time, and where the artists needed to be mindful of gathering assets to fulfil a collective project vision.

The technique was empowering for the children involved because it provided a participatory, collective, and creative process for content development. It was enjoyable for the artists because it built autonomous creative decision-making into a structure developed to deliver the collective project vision. It was an effective management process, because it assisted to maintain the project vision, by encouraging artists to be open to opportunity, and facilitate overall project management and communication through de-briefing and brainstorming sessions that regularly occurred amongst all team members. Just as there is a need for expertise in the craft skills to be able to employ improvisation as a content development strategy, there is a similar requirement for management expertise to employ improvisational thinking as a management technique in collaborative and/or community based projects.

Actor-Network Theory

Although no two productions are the same in their aims and development processes, the activities of the Creative Producer in community-based, multimedia production contexts can be identified in general terms at each stage of production. Actor-Network theory provides a useful technique that the Creative Producer can use to understand the dynamics of the production process and to manage creative risks. The Creative Producer seen through the lens of Actor-Network theory is located at the nexus of activity in a creative production team, working with professional artists, community participants, other stakeholders, tools and technology.

 In the Methodology discussion of Chapter 2, I made connections between each 'stage' of Actor-Network theory and the role of the Creative Producer, who initiates, monitors and intervenes in the process as required. The stages of a community-based, collaborative multimedia production can usefully be considered in terms of the formation stages of an Actor-Network. These stages can be used to understand the inter-relationships of the multimedia production network in which the Creative Producer, community participants, and professional artists are collaborating. Interpreted through this theoretical construct, the work of the Creative Producer is inventing projects with community groups, assembling teams to make them, and keeping all the elements involved and contributing to the dynamic process in order to fulfill a project vision. Community-based teams bring together participants, professional artists, and technology, and each makes an important contribution to the project. The removal of the artists, the community participants, or the equipment would compromise, and possibly terminate, the development process. The application of Actor-Network theory reveals the dynamic nature of the network comprising the professional artists, community participants, stakeholders, and equipment. It can be employed by the Creative Producer to assess the risks, understand team behaviour, and to undertake production management activities associated with project development in teams that are responsive, but fragile and transitory.

Research Project Outcomes

There are practical and theoretical outcomes of the research project. From the practice comes the development of three works that feature a team formation including the Creative Producer. The creative outcomes are three multimedia works presented as a two DVD projects and an interactive installation. The exegetical reflections and theory-based research have led to a new understanding about a model of collaboration in community-based, multimedia production that includes a central, creative and managerial role of the Creative Producer. Contemporary production theory has been extended through the development of a management technique specifically devised for application in collaborative, community workshops.

Through the analysis of the matrix of data employed in this survey and the case study findings, a pattern of activity has emerged defining a broad range of functions and responsibilities of the Creative Producer, and identifying potential positive and negative impacts of the role on production outcomes and processes. The evidence

for a new model of creative management was identified through the development of three creative projects employed as case studies for research and an extensive Industry Survey about creative collaboration. Equally important for the process of creative involvement in community-based multimedia production, a method for including amateur participants in the development of a creative and collaborative production process has been established.

To sum up, the opportunity to work with the rich cultural milieu found in community production contexts has informed my understanding of the role of the Creative Producer in collaborative, community-based, multimedia productions. The reflection on my practice that has taken place through the research has increased my understanding of collaboration functions, and the synergistic opportunities for creative invention that can exist when people agree to trust each other enough to share their stories, their fears, and their hopes. It is the potential for creative synergy in capturing the authentic voice of communities that makes the difficult and testing tasks of the Creative Producer working in community-based, multimedia collaboration worth the effort. This research project investigated the turbulence of the collaborative experience, and identified a team structure and the production conditions that make an effective creative collaboration between amateur community participants and professional artists possible.

CHAPTER 9

FUTURE RESEARCH

9. FUTURE RESEARCH

Benefits of Research

With the publication of my research, industry stakeholders in the media and related creative arts fields now have a new defined role that links the creative and management aspects of multimedia production within the collaborative team. Industry practitioners and stakeholders will be able to test whether or not the introduction of the Creative Producer into other collaborative contexts has similar beneficial effects on content development and project management.

The outcome of my research includes frameworks for implementation of the role of Creative Producer and best practice principles for the role in collaborative community-based contexts. An extension of my research is to investigate if such frameworks and best practice principles apply to other areas of multimedia production. Techniques I adapted in my inter-disciplinary research from theatre improvisation may also be extended and applied to many other contexts, where rapid decision-making and improvised responses to problems are required.

Stemming from my research there are several research questions that arise extending the boundaries of my investigation to related fields.

Entry Points for Future Research

- Further exploration of the strategic improvisation technique for content development and production management in media contexts.

- Application of the Creative Producer role to other collaborative creative development contexts

- Application of the Creative Producer role to other creative arts practices

Further relevant research questions that arising from my research are:

1. Does the emergent role of Creative Producer exist in other creative arts practice?

The implication of this question is that there may be Creative Producers working in other creative arts fields of practice, but these new and emergent roles may not yet have been the focus of sustained research.

An extension of my research would be to undertake a further study to determine if the same activities, skills and qualities are needed in other Creative Producer roles in related fields of practice such as theatre.

2. Does the role of the Creative Producer apply to other production contexts where teams are employed?

There is potential to investigate the application of the collaborative team model including a Creative Producer to other industry sectors. The theoretical and practical understanding of the Creative Producer role in collaborative production could be tested through practice-led research in a broader range of creative, research, and commercial projects,

The relevance of my findings could be tested within commercial companies, which employ inter-disciplinary teams to produce artifacts and campaigns. Relevant industry sectors including the advertising, public relations, advocacy and political arenas may be encouraged by my research to implement the new team formation, including a Creative Producer at the nexus of activity in the commercial production arena.

3. Can a Creative Producer manage the complexity of computer games production by employing a more holistic and connected process than currently exists?

In the media production literature there is discussion of the possibilities for implementing a more effective team composition to develop games in the emergent computer games production system. One issue highlighted by Natkin (2006), for example, was the need for a closer relationship between management and creative activities in the games development sector.

CHAPTER 10
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KIDS GAMES INSTALLATION

CREATIVE PRODUCER ACTIVITIES AND TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

THIS TABLE PROVIDES A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE TASKS OF THE TEAM MEMBERS WHO COLLABORATED ON THE MAKING OF KIDS GAMES INSTALLATIONS

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT APRIL 2005

Artist	Production stage	Activity	Description	Comments
SM May 2005	Concept Development	Grant application	Come up with project concept for City of Melbourne Project grants	Maybe revisit Commonwealth Games proposal for Kids Games concept
SM	Concept Development	Grant application	Write concept up for a children's project about Kids ideas on sport	
SM, MB	Concept Development	Discussion	Talk through project concept with MB as potential lead artist	Confirm interest
SM	Concept Development	Meeting	Meet CB at school to discuss project idea and potential production dates in 2006	Confirm interest and get letter of support for grant application
SM	Concept Development	Meeting	Discuss project with other artists	AM and OM Confirm participation and get letters of interest
SM	Concept Development	Funding proposal	Write proposal	Include letters of support

PRE-PRODUCTION MAY-JUNE 2006

Artist	Production stage	Activity	Description	Comments
SM	Pre-production	contracts	Re-budget and Sign contracts	May need to reduce days at Artplay to meet budget provided
MB, SM, AMO	Pre-production	Project planning	Ideas for project	Brainstorm session with collaborating artists several months prior to production commencing.
SM	Pre-production	meeting	At School with teacher, confirming funding and planning production dates	
SM, MB	Pre-production	Community participation	Communication with parents	Letter explaining project in plain English sent home with students for parents to sign.
MB	Pre-production	Workshops Activities Planning	Building assets for production	Get C/u of faces showing different emotions. To cut in with any segment

Artist	Program/Use	Activity	Description	Comments
SM, MB	Pre-production	Technical/aesthetic decisions	Decisions about camera shots to be use	C/u work best in the crystal ball.
MB	Pre-production	Technical/aesthetic decisions	Limits of blackscreen	Kids must stay centred so that blackscreen is behind them
AM	Pre-production	Drama games physical and vocal warm-ups	Group commentary on sport action eg. Running a race to do vocal warm-up. Clap passing to start movement warm-up.	Plan exercises to prepare for later activities
SM	Pre-production	Collect Legal permission forms from teacher	Permission and licence forms. Check that all permission forms are filled out correctly prior to session 1 starting.	One child was not permitted to participate. We have to make sure she isn't on camera at any time.
SM	Pre-production	Location scouting	Check venue for following day is ready for use.	Find a small quiet space for sound recording. Check for noise View different possible workshop venues in the school
SM	Pre-production	Production management	Artplay workshop	Organise an extra staff member is available to assist.
SM	Pre-production	Resource management	Art materials	Buy folders for each child to put their artwork into
MB, SM, AM	Pre-production	Plan first workshop		Write list of proposed activity for 1st workshop
MB, SM, AM	Pre-production	Meeting	Go over production plan with artists 'What if scenarios' exercise Discuss Strategic Improvisation techniques	Make changes from artists input to plan
SM, MB	Pre-production	Technical Equipment	Check equipment to be used and software	SM to Check software and computer availability at Artplay
Artist	Program/Use	Activity	Description	Comments

Artist	Program/Use	Activity	Description	Comments
SM	Pre-production	Communication meeting with participants at school one week prior to workshops starting	Make sure there is a clear understanding of purpose of this project before first workshop	Discuss project from the year before and show examples of style of production
SM, OM, MB	Pre-production Communication with installation artist	Planning for installation	Meeting with Olaf to plan the production in relation to the installation of completed work	We need to find the glass ball installation bits and check that the projector will work in the housing
MB, OM	Pre-production Editor and installation artist	Planning post production and installation data base construction several weeks prior to workshops commencing	Software to be used discussed. We'll probably use Director and Isadora for installation software	Clips to have sound and image in sync. Short clips of 30sec – 1 min
SM	Pre-production Meeting with project partners	Artplay meeting with Simon Spain	Discuss the dates and installation location with Cp at Artplay	Childrens week project 29th October
SM, MB	Pre-production Meeting with Artplay staff	Artplay meeting with Eelin	Set up room. Organise equipment	Check equipment and charge batteries
SM, AM, MB	Pre-production meeting	Production aesthetics	Aesthetic guidelines, Coverage of material and production design \use of strategic improvisation	C/U's work better than wide shots Getting sound. Drawing and video that go together to make a sequence Working towards an installation as well as a video. This will affect the way it is shot

PRODUCTION JUNE 2006

Artist	Program/Use	Activity	Description	Comments
SM, AM, MB	production	Workshop order	The order of activities prepares the participants to make the work. Improvisation requires careful introduction and management and sequential development	Warm-ups to include vocal and physical work because we wanted them to do both sorts of activities later in the workshop.
SM, MB, AMO	production	After workshop finished	Assets review and plan for next workshop	Review material collected in each workshop and plan the next one
SM, MB, AM	Production workshops held twice weekly for 2 weeks	Workshops	Last workshop	Make sure that there is enough sound and visual material to make each story and focus each child on completion of their work
Artist	Program/Use	Activity	Description	Comments

POST PRODUCTION JULY – OCTOBER 2006				
SM, MB, AM	Post- production	Review all material and decide how many stories to be made		Check material for each story in terms of sound and image. Make sure every child's participation is reflected in final product
SM, MB, AM	Post- production	Showing in progress	School	Sue to organise showing and all to go to scholl and present work in progress. Incorporate children's comments in editing decisions
MB	Post- production	Final post-production		Complete sequences
MB, SM, OM	Post- production	Editing		Check completed sequences are suitable for crystal ball and discuss the requirements for the installation
SM, OM	Post production	Reconstruction of installation	New box needed and Director software to be used	The less complex use of the installation means that we can use Director and Isadora software rather than custom-built system for Kids Games
SM	Installation rebuild	New box		Find someone to build new box of different dimensions
LAUNCH OCTOBER 2006				
SM	Launch	Work with city of Melbourne and Artplay and school to arrange launch	Write speech notes for Lord Mayor, Liaise with school to get kids to Artplay for launch. Kids to write speech Organise catering	Set up installation the day before launch at Artplay
SM, OM, MB	Launch	Installation of project		Take everything to Artplay and install
MB	Launch	Production of DVD		DVD formally presented to each child and school by Lord Mayor
SM	Launch	Running order	Write running order for launch	
Artist	Program/Use	Activity	Description	Comments

SM	Launch	Day before launch	Liaise with partners, funder, community and artists on running order	Provide copies of running order and discuss getting children down to Artplay with teacher

LAUNCH 29TH OCTOBER 2006

MB, SM, OM	Launch	Day of launch	Meet 2 hours before launch at Artplay	Go over running order, Check installation working, set up catering, arrange room, organise photographer and video documentation
SM	Launch	Day of launch	Greet councillors, get children seated	Check children have speech ready, go over running order with Simon Spain (MC)

EXHIBITIONS OCTOBER 2006 AND JUNE 2007

SM	Exhibition	Day 1	Turn on installation	Check that staff know how to turn installation on and off
SM MB	Exhibition	Bump out	Dismantle exhibition	
SM	Acquittal	Completion of project	Write Acquittal	Include comments from Lord Mayor
SM	Further exhibition opportunities	Look for other venues	Talk to Curator of Little Big Shots Film Festival	Send email about including Kids games in program
SM	Further exhibition opportunities	Little Big Shots Film Festival	Send exhibition proposal to Curator of Little Big Shots Film Festival and ACMI	
SM,	Exhibition	Little Big Shots Film Festival	Site visit	Determine best location for installation
SM, OM, MB	Exhibition	Little Big Shots Film Festival	Bump in Installation	Organise invigilation
SM, MB	Exhibition	Little Big Shots Film Festival	Bump Out	SM to organise storage of project

EXCERPTS FROM QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS FOR THE INDUSTRY SURVEY

CONDUCTED BETWEEN 2003-2008

INTERVIEW WITH A1
Industry position: Creative Producer in a children's creative art centre

I am the Creative Producer at [name of organisation]. My role as Creative Producer is to formulate an interesting and creative program for children across the year which means that I work in a whole different range of areas from sitting down and working on a program that looks a cohesive and interesting range of arts areas and skills and artforms across the year. But aside from the programming, it (my role) has a much broader range of skills which are about making partnerships with other organisations in order to add value to the programs, such as working with a (Partnership Project), where we are going to fill half our program with activities for them. Any of those organisations where basically we can have an artist working with us but then by reaching out and formulating some kind of partnership with another group, we add value.

I bring in artists who run programs who I see as the animateurs. I have to have confidence and trust that they can do what they do well. I think that my role there is to give them the space, not to devise the project before they come in but let them devise it themselves. My role is to look at it slightly broader and to see how they work within a bigger scheme of things which may involve say partnerships with other people, or adding value to the program through exhibition or publication or something like that. I am using those artists as part of a bigger program.

You have to understand how artists work. that making mistakes is important, because that is part of the creative act, and that is what I am interested in. People having an encounter with creativity, not particularly what the artists concept of creativity is about. Creativity is about taking chances, risk taking and making mistakes.

Artists think in a very open ended and playful way - they create work by exploring possibilities - something children do all the time in their play times. Developing and exploiting this playfulness encourages risk-taking, develops collaborative working, and gives status to the ideas, opinions and creative potential of children. You are giving them time to stop, you listen, you respond. It is not just about getting up and making a piece of work, you are actually responding and reacting to the people you are working with.

The Creative Producer has much broader range of skills so fundraising, financing projects, talking about projects. Being able to actually translate that vision into people …. It's like selling air really sometimes… you are actually going out and selling an idea to people. Animateurs I don't feel particularly do that. They know what they do and they do it well, but they are artists. My role as the Creative Producer is to sell projects to people and to raise funds. I have to have the confidence in the artists that it will happen in the end.

Trust is a huge component both ways. So I trust the artists are going to do it, and the people that put money into project trust me. The artists trust me, and they know that I am not going to come in and say that it is not the right colour or not the right shape

because they know that because I am an artist. I understand that creative process. I think Creative Producers generally are much more interested in the idea rather than the medium. It's the process of collaboration that is important. It is the interface between the artists and the kids and the artists have extraordinary freedom.

It's great being able to define these projects as you go along. Although things are slipping into place in terms of who we are working with, and when we work with them. The range of ideas and artists, and the potential collaborations out there are enormous -that's the richness of it. It is a very creative thing being a Creative Producer. Essentially a Creative Producer is somebody who produces something but not in a dry arts administrative way. They are doing it in a creative open-ended, visionary way.

A1 I think innovation is important. So the use of multimedia in the program that wouldn't be using multimedia otherwise. Documenting the work of the program in interesting innovative ways. Documentation is the role of the Creative Producer and something an animateur might not do. The Creative Producer needs to sell. There is an element of selling and marketing of the work that you need to document. I do think if you are a Creative Producer that you do need to have a personality of constantly wanting to do more, wanting to make links. Unavoidably seeing links between projects. It's strange that it fits with multimedia in terms of linkages, hyper-texting between things. I suppose that is the role of Creative Producer that you can see that this links to that perfectly well. Whether you are born like that, I don't know. You are probably quite an irritating person in some ways because people always say to me that I am always jumping around between different ideas.

A1 A curator doesn't have the same breadth of role in getting projects off the ground. Curating is part of the job of the Creative Producer, but curating is not about marketing, or financing, or evaluating. Curating is about selecting things that go together in a program. A Creative Producer is much more about profiling. Getting a profile for a place, or a vision. The Creative Producer role is broader because it is about adding value to the curators work. Curating is a second order thing. I think the thing about being a Creative Producer is about seeing opportunities. It is about realising and about seeing opportunities. That really isn't the role of the curator. It is about being quite cavalier sometimes and going ahead with ideas and things when you are not completely sure that it is going to work.

INTERVIEW WITH A2
Industry Position: Team Leader of Community Cultural Development
(A2 interviewed 12th April 2004)

A2 The Creative Producer happens a lot in the arts. Arts Administrator - is a real misnomer for it, manager, producer. I'll tell you where it doesn't work. It doesn't work in traditional theatre companies, arts companies. I think a real traditional division is Artistic Director and Manager. Or artist/administrator. It would be like Director/producer. Do you know that kind of structure? We are splitting between management functions and creative functions. And that's the way traditionally that the arts have always been configured and managed. Its my observation as someone that works in the arts but isn't completely inside that paradigm if you like, that that is the traditional way that things have operated. But it is not actually the way that things happen these days. Well artists have to be entrepreneurial. It is not even a kind of economic imperative. It's just a post-modern reality. If you are a creative person and you are conceptualising something. It's not generally the case that you sell the concept and then have a plethora of people to manage every aspect of the implementation of it. That would be a very 19th century understanding of the role of the creative. It hasn't been my observation that that's the way that many people work. You need to do a bit of crossover stuff or people tend to do that anyway.

Oh gosh I haven't heard the term animateur for a long time. I know there was a course at VCA. Wasn't it someone who worked across all the artforms and went out and animated communities like a sort of an activist. I would say that it has a definite relationship to the role of the Creative Producer. It's a bit like the producer raising the money and generating the vision and helping others to generate the vision, raising the resources so that it can actually happen. It is sort of a catalyst type of a thing. I don't think anyone would know it apart from people of around our age. I think it is an 80's concept sadly. It was connected to community arts, let's face it, and community arts was regarded as not very attractive, I think. It is a dynamic that hasn't been examined properly and it really is worth looking at. It is to do with non-artists making art. It is to do with the privileging of creativity and artistic expression. There is something to do with community practice that is really worth looking at. I think there is also the politics of patronage in there and paternalism and welfarism, in away that continue to this day to disadvantage it. It is a very complicated thing. I can't bear the presumption that if something is community-based or community related, or has a social context, than ipso facto then the art is not going to be good. Or if it's political, then it won't be any good. It is not the case that if you have community generated stuff that you can't have good work. It is not true at all. But a lot of the time, people do generate bad work.

There aren't a whole lot of Creative Producers around. There are not a whole lot around. I mean who I know off the top of my head, there would be XXX and XXX, and XXX. XXX she does community-based stuff - prison stuff that she has basically set up by herself. Some of the people from XXX. They do stuff like that. generate projects and go

around. At the moment, that is who I know about. In the past, there have been different people but at the moment that is who I know. People move around. It's the ideas and even if you don't know someone at all, and even if they're really young. I mean it is a collaboration. That's central to it.

INTERVIEW WITH A3
Industry position: Content Development Manager, Cultural Museum
A3 interviewed14th April 2004)

A3: We like to do to work with outside producers or creative producers. I guess in many and various ways we do something like that but it's hard to target. Ideally, we would always like to bring artists in and artist project managers, so that we're not so institutionalized ourselves but that's always a funding issue. We've got extraordinary facilities here. A large amount of what we do is based on partnerships and serious co-operations and collaborations.

Project outcomes are one of the key challenges of the creative producer at this time. We're dealing with digital technologies, no matter what kind of area you're working in as a creative producer. It's the role of the creative producer to actually think, how can I right from the start, think about how we can produce and collect material that's going to be useful for the documentary at the end and maybe people are going to make a website. Or we might imagine if we got digital photos, digital essays could be made, so that whole thing is about increasing the amount of output that there is all the time. To make that work properly, it's got to be sorted out in the pre-production stages and that's why that role should always be an artist coming together with project management skills in the Creative Producer role.

Anybody, not anybody, but a good project manager in say, building construction, is often very cold and pragmatic and you set up your project tasks lines and you deliver them on the button. A person that's working in a more creative industry needs to constantly be looking for opportunity. So, they walk into a space and they imagine what could be shot there. They have a look at the equipment that's available and imagine how that equipment could be used. They listen carefully to one group in the partnership and think, I could give them more than what they're asking for if we do something in a creative way because, the material will all be there, and then they can use it for a website. The understanding of modern communication tools and how to connect people and events and make media accessible, it's an accessibility issue, too. You were saying before about the importance of the outcomes. I think, once again, even 10 years ago people would make things and not be mindful of the outcomes, or their audiences. Now, you can't make anything without being mindful of your audience.

In the exhibitions area, Creative producers are commissioned to develop some of the projects we are working with An example is in our response as an organisation to TV 50. For the 50 years of TV exhibition, what we'll do is employ an outside creative

producer. We're not calling them a curator and we're not calling them, a television producer. We're asking for someone with producer smarts that can actually understand what a cultural institution might do with television but also have lots of context in television. So, it's another example of that kind of role and we're actually going to get someone in. There won't be a multimedia person but we want a creative producer. We want someone that's got both of those skills. We don't want a television producer per se, because in the way you understand their skills sets, how are they going to be able to mount an exhibition. There's a real difference.

SM: If you were going to identify the functions and skills of a creative producer in digital media, what would you say they were?

A creative producer needs to either currently be or have been a practitioner in their own right. As a practitioner they will have had groups of people and networks, and those networks are quite fundamental to this kind of process. You need to be able to bring people in or imagine people to work on projects, or imagine the kind of people that you can take a project in one form and get them to transform it into another piece of media. You need to have an understanding of the digital world and the different kind of outcomes that it can cleverly result in. You've got to have a heart and a spirit. I think it comes back to sort of things like that. I'm just trying to imagine, I know really good project managers in the business world. They're very pragmatic people. They get results, but it's not art.

The good creative producer is a very good listener that can actually really understand what people are saying, and what they need and want, and can meet those needs, and connect all the dots for people. True collaboration here in this industry is actually, I guess it's the networks but it's also being aware you're listening and you're being aware. I can't over emphasise the listening bit. Because good project managers in other areas don't necessarily have to listen. They can assess things, get it all together and make it happen.

There's a definite difference for me between being a producer and a creative producer. I'm used to thinking about the term, producer, more in terms of television or film making, and in some of those ways not all but sometimes, the producer's bringing the money together and the role of the director and the producer is split off. I think what happens in multimedia and the way we're moving forward is the creative producer actually takes on some of that directorial function.

So, they become a partial director, a partial project manager and therefore they're a creative producer because it combines those two areas. That's probably one way I'd start to think about it. I think the term, producer, on its own is quite misleading in all the multimedia applications that it fits in. It was a known term in relation to television and independent filmmaking.

It's a role that is emerging out of practice. I guess ways of operating in the world begin to change. I think we are moving towards collaboration more and more as a key form of operating in the world. As you explore what those collaborations mean, I think yes, in practice it is out of practice that new roles are emerging. A team put together with

a creative producer actually leads to better outcomes, I think. Or it can lead to better outcomes and confidence in the production. The creative producer role can actually, sit as it were hierarchically. I mean, to actually facilitate those outcomes in a better way, yeah, it's directional, isn't it? It's definitely an amalgam of several roles. It's a circuitous thing, I think. If you understand it then it changes the way you work and leads to less confusion and better outcomes, possibly.

The role of the creative producer really comes about because of two things. On one hand it's about convergence, where the technology comes together, and on the other hand it's the hybridisation of art practice where different forms of art, media, drama, all that stuff's going to come together, so both of those are a confluence of different potential skill sets.

Like, the creative producer is someone that begins to have some understanding of those different art practices and some understanding of the different kind of technologies that can be brought together to deliver them or record them.

A4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Industry Position; Media arts exhibition and touring organisation
(A4 interviewed 25th April 2008)

A4: I have been the director of two or Arts organisation. So, a contemporary art space, in Darwin, and media arts exhibition organisation, and to a certain extent XXX as well. When I first heard the term "creative producer" I felt like I understood what it was straight away. It was like putting a label on something, on a role that I understood. Well, it's the combination of the two ideas of being – creative and instigative as well as the producing sort of role, which is more about development and management and particularly financing, in the projects. The combination of the two made sense to me, because most of the roles that I've done in organisations have combined those two activities.

I think it happens in arts organisations because they're small and generally therefore there's not enough people in the more senior roles to actually have two people in each role but I think also generally people who work in the arts who are able to play a producing role have generally played a creative role as well in the past. So, whereas I would say in other industries that's probably not the case; people that are playing more CEO or executive director sort of roles in other industries probably don't have a background in creativity in any sort of way. So, it's probably not the same need to combine.

It means that you understand everybody's contribution to the project really well and you understand it first-hand. It means that you're able to feed ideas or prompt or lead sort of collaborative sort of processes in a way that you couldn't if you didn't understand that role, you'd have to get someone else to do it. Working in the arts, to really be able to be strategic and understand what the possibilities are going to be for an organisation or a project, you have to understand it as a creative product as well and

you have to understand what the creative possibilities are for the project as well to do it really well. You're able to be far more strategic. The most successful people in the arts, who are either directors of organisations or are doing events or one-off projects are people that do combine both.

I've never worked in a role which has been called creative producer and I've never employed a creative producer and I've never worked with anyone that calls themselves a creative producer. And in the organisations that I've worked in, I guess I've always been the creative producer, really.   I've been called Director and I've been called Executive Director. At xxx I did both roles because I was responsible for curating the artistic programme and I was the CEO of the organisation and that was in my job description.

I did an application and got two of the first Australia Council EPIC projects up. So, when I was doing the application for the xxx one, what I understood was that they didn't want artists and they didn't particularly just want curators. What they wanted was someone who could play a producer role, really. And I think that fundamentally was a creative producer. They wanted someone who had the ability to get the kind of financial support for the projects and get other partners in place and get the right artists involved and find the right communities to deliver the projects to. So, it was really multi-skilled. I think the people that were doing them weren't experienced enough to really.

I think one of the biggest things is learning to listen to what's going on. More – I suppose more than listening, it's sort of about standing back enough to really give people the space to show you who they are so you really understand how they tick. That's fundamentally for me the skills and, yeah, understanding how everyone contributes and what they can contribute. I think trust is really important. Everybody has to trust everyone else that they can do their job best and if they don't there's real problems. I think the other important thing is that it's the role of the creative producer to keep things on track, to know really what the project's about, and how everything that happens along the way is impacting on the key goals of the project.

 Spontaneity, improvisation, intuition are really important. Improvisation, I'm not sure about. Certainly intuition and spontaneity - I think those things come into play when you're developing projects and developing ideas for projects. I think along the way it's all about sort of twists and turns that things can take and the possibilities that you might start to see for something that you didn't see at the beginning. So, having the room to be able to take something in a different direction or add something else in or take something out. I think it's also about testing ideas, trying them out, seeing if they have legs and having the space to be able to do that and let go of it if it's not going to work. That's about managing the time.

So, in theatre it's about improvising in order to develop a performance. In this case, it was improvising in order to present a work. I suppose the similarities are that it's about someone providing the sort of sparks. I suppose that's what improvisation is: someone

puts in the spark that starts the process and then people run with the idea and see what they can create out of that.

A5 - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Media organisation and centre in Liverpool UK
(A5 interviewed 4th April 2004)

A5: Well my own creative personal history - its an interesting one isn't it. In a sense there is my sense of self as someone who is creative. Then there is a notion of what kind of identity that has given me as artist, curator, performer. I see myself as someone who is instinctively creative, and the way to channel that creativity for me is about creating frameworks and opportunities that others can exploit and others can develop in ways that I can't. I see myself as not so straight forwardly being a Creative Producer in a sense of taking somebody else's thing and making a space for it. There is an interplay. At the same time, there is a notion as to what I think is best and right and what I think is interesting and good.

I think the perseverance issue is huge. I think that being in a negotiated space the whole time, and having the ability to negotiate that space is really important. What people were saying before about negotiation and brokerage (at the conference). There is the negotiation between people about what this thing is going to be. - that agent of cultural change. So, it's negotiation, it's brokerage its partnership .. It's about having the right people. It's about instinctiveness. It's about passion. It's about, in some ways, an amateur notion of enthusiasm. It's about being into things, and sustaining whatever happens … you're into it!

I think if you are really good at what you are doing, you know what is going on… or you know someone else that knows what's going on… and if you don't then you are really not there. That's about people around you as well as other networks and other sets of relationships. Sometimes, the question is not what's the best thing I can get or whose the best person doing this. It's who do I know that's the best person to tell me who the best person is, and to have that relationship with that person, wherever they might be, That is what that kind of framework, that network of relationships is about. Of course, it comes down to something very important that I believe in, and that is artistic judgement.

I think my main function it is about keeping it all together. I think it's about keeping the focus. I think it's about keeping things ahead, about helping set the future direction of what we are doing. But at the same time, also bringing people into this. It's a visionary thing. It's about understanding the whole thing. Having a real grasp of that, and wanting to be part of that.

Everything is about collaboration. Everything we do every day. We sit down and have a meeting and we say we are now collaborating because our task is to do this. What are the terms of collaboration? I'm the head of the organisation, you're the cleaner. What

we are doing is saying we don't like the way this is happening, so we are going to sit down together and do this. I am not doing this from a hierarchical position. If you are dealing with artists in a collaborative project, you need to know that that artist can work in that way, the reason why they are working that way, and you need to have the same conversation that we are having now about trust and about building and about having certain social skills such as the ability to communicate.

I think there are people that are Creative Producers. I think this happens at all sorts of scales, in all sort of places. I think people do that all the time. The question then is about how good are those projects? What terms are those projects being evaluated? Are they meant to be sustainable? Are they meant to reproducible? Are they about creating models that other people can work with and within? Yeah. I think there are people that can do that. We are all searching for the magic people and the magic organisations and somehow that's the one.

INTERVIEW WITH (A6)
Industry Position: Curator and Exhibition developer for a digital research centre Dublin Ireland
(A6 interviewed 15th October 2003)

A6: I started my artistic life by studying sculpture in the National College of Art and Design here where I mostly focussed on video and performance art. Now I find myself working as a curator at the Digital Hub. This is a property development project at the Liberties in Dublin. It has an education brief and part of the education department is this series of exhibitions. They invited me to curate these exhibitions. I also produce them and do audience development. I also run talks, artist talks here during the course of the exhibitions.

A6: Getting artists to work with technologists, to work with designers, to work with business people - that kind of a mix does nurture and create really interesting - sometimes products sometimes artworks. The second exhibition was called Mobilise. So we had a combination of cutting edge phone technology, emerging handsets whatever. Photography phones had just come out MSN was just being launched on the market. So we did an MSN project and we got free phones to use during the course of the exhibition. The next area I looked at was the area of design. Design was quite large in Ireland. It's quite a big industry. It's very successful. So the design exhibition for me was really exciting because we got wonderful projects from all over the world.

A6: Yeah. As you were talking, I was wondering where my skills - to do everything I guess the way you explained. To be ideas but also be able to be a production person as well. Well I do all those things, that's right. I do have support here and at [name of organisation] as well with volunteers, but it is like a one-man band sometimes! It is interesting. I'm actually working on a film project as well that I am both producing and directing. It's kind of the same. I can't separate the two things. I do think that there are definitely more people out there like that as well.

A6: When I was going to get my Business Cards printed for here. I was going, well what exactly is it that I'm doing? So I'm curator and Special Events Co-ordinator is my title here. Creative Producer definitely describes what I do with my time. That's for sure.

INTERVIEW WITH A7
Industry Position: New Media policy and development bureaucrat
(A7 interviewed14th October, 2005)

A7: Previous to this job, I worked for around seven years for the XXX Arts Board, at the XXX for the Arts. I was a member of staff when it was the Hybrid Arts Committee, Hybrid Arts Panel and I was one of the inaugural staff for the new media, so I've seen that right through to the current restructure.

A7: I see the producer's role as like a facilitator, someone who actually brings together different ingredients, different people, different players to an end, so it depends on who you're working for, cultural broker, facilitator, when it comes to creative producer, you have to deal with creative content. That could be either creative industries or that could be kind of arts or theatre, dance, music, new media installation, whatever.

So, the creative producer takes on the role of all those other components which is not about creating actual work. Depending on what stage they come into it, they may actually influence the installation or the production, so they feed into the process but really they're there to support the vision of the artists. I think there is a set of skills that come with the territory. I think some of them are learnt, and I think some of them are intuitive. When it comes to, communicating so, the way that the arts is set up in Australia have different tiers, like government and philanthropy and you have different stakeholders.

I really feel that the role of the creative producer in Australia is actually working across those different sectors to realise work. So, you can intuitively be a good communicator but you do need to know about those sectors, how they work, who are the key players in those roles. It's about building up networks and people, so you could say that it takes years to build up those networks so that you know the right person to call to realise something, to make something happen.

I think collaboration, trust and vision are key words in most creative processes. I think the creative producer in different capacities have different roles to play. I think a creative producer for an independent artist, or an independent creative producer that will be working with three or four artists, has a very different function to a creative producer of an arts organisation or of a festival.

When you're an independent creative producer you're actually working one on one in that collaborative relationship with the artist, or group of artists, so, it's a much more intimate relationship that you have with your collaborators, with the artists and with their work. So, it's not about programming the art into a slot for three or four weeks

through the season or at a festival, it's about building, growing, developing the work and developing the audience with the work, developing relationships that can actually support the work, both nationally and internationally and it's a bit more complicated but trust, trust is a key thing there between the artist and the producer.

Well, the artist trusts the producer with their creative capital, you know, with their vision, with that thing that's most sacred to them, you've come on board to help realise that vision. A curator would put together a body of work or would bring together a group of artists to work on a specific project because they could see a thread or a thematic that runs through their work. That could definitely happen.

The difference between a curator and a creative producer really complicated. It's sector specific and it comes down to semantics and language of the visual arts. They're different camps. The artists in those camps make work differently and they have a culture of working in a different way. A visual artist will work quite independently and work toward creating a body of work. A performer might collaborate. There's more of a tradition of collaboration where a performer's companies of actors, companies of dancers, companies of performers come together.

I guess in New Media, there is a film industry model of sorts, as much as you can have a model. I guess the film industry obviously has models of production houses. I think it's going into that creative industry side which I'm less familiar with. Certainly, they have similarities and I'd see coming from the whole New Media Arts background, one of the most familiar words was interdisciplinary. So, there's similarities but I think the role of the curator and the role of the creative producer, the creative producer potentially is a broader term.

I think there is more discussion around the role of creative producer because there seems to be a growing need for someone to step into that role. So it's a bit chicken or egg, which came first, but there certainly is a need for the intermediary, someone to actually come in and support the artists with a knowledge of the art form and a knowledge of the industry. It's not just administering a programme. It's much more interactive than that, it seems to me.

The producer has been around for a long time and across different industries, but the creative producer is actually someone that has more of an investment in a product, so where that comes from, whether that's kind of an emotional investment, artistic investment or a financial investment, they've actually got a little bit more at stake in the work or the project. The landscape's shifting. You just have to look at what's happened on that national tier, the Australia Council, where the New Media Arts Board and this Community Cultural Development Board has been re-purposed, realigned. There's two sectors there that will feel for the repercussions and echoes of those decisions.

Some artists and organisations and companies will be more resilient and they will be able to bounce back and they'll be able to find their way quite seamlessly through that process, but there'll be a group of artists and individuals that will drop off because

that's new terrain and that's hard for them to navigate, so perhaps the role of the creative producer in that context is to support those that are potentially dropping off to stay on track. So, maybe creative producers are more needed than ever because one of their jobs, will be to support the collaborative partnerships, funding arrangements, whatever is required. Yeah, it'll also be someone to champion the practice.

The last couple of years I worked with the audience development division of the Australia Council in an attempt to build audiences for new media and community cultural development. I worked to place young producers into new media and CCD organisations and they were placed for a 12 month period to work specifically on a project to build the capital. This was called EPIC, Emerging Producers in Community that placed about 12 young producers into organisations. That was quite a big investment of the Australia Council into the role of the producer. It was a successional thing. They could see that there was a tier of creative producers at the top but there's actually no one coming through the ranks to jump in there. At some point that mantle needs to be passed on because these people can't work forever but it was actually trying to skill young producers in particular areas of practice but also create a new generation and awareness around the need for those type of roles.

In the community, I really see the producer as a cultural broker in the way that they can actually facilitate different conversations about art and maybe facilitate the community's ideas to other kind of layers or government or society or public, other parts of the community. I do see the role of creative producer going into that sector and my work at the Australia Council over the last couple of years has been about ensuring that it does. They could work both in digital media, new media areas and community areas. So, it was a way of making, ensuring that they were well resourced and they could actually work across different sectors to have an income.

The other important part of the whole community part was technology's capacity to network. We're talking about young people, so, not to dumb it down at all but that technology is a very integrated part of young people's lives and to not look at its capacity to build community would be a bit backward. So, it was about looking at community and technology and capacity building for the young producers. They need a basic knowledge of the practice and a basic knowledge of facilitating creative projects in community or with young people. They had to have a sense of what that was and we really used the creative, the knowledge of the organisations to really monitor that.

INTERVIEW WITH A8
Industry Position: Editor (Vic) [broadcasting organisation]
New Media & Digital Services
(A8 interviewed 9th June 2005)

SMC. What do you think a Creative Producer is?

A8: I think a Creative Producer is someone who can; identify an idea that is new

innovative or any of a number of other criteria that you would associate with being creative; Being able to build that idea into a content proposal; Find funding for that funding proposal; Get that proposal agreed to in an editorial sense; oversee the production of it and the ultimate publishing of it on line.

I presume we are talking about it online aren't we? That is an example of how you would have to go about it on line, in the [broadcasting organisation], context. In a commercial environment then you would probably have to add in the sponsorship side or the saleability angle of it and the resale ability of it too.

To me a producer is also an editor. Someone who is responsible for the content form the editorial point of view and from the audience point of view. In the on-line side of multimedia the producer function is more akin to the radio producer role. You have the producer who is often the project manager, the team leader, the local editor or first level editor and then the supervising producer as the content continues to go online or continues to be published in one digital platform or another. I suppose one core difference is that the Creative Producer is someone who comes up with new ideas rather than someone who sits around and waits for the ideas to be shipped over to them for them to realise. So the difference between the Producer and the Creative Producer is fundamentally the Creative Producer can actually see the potential in an idea. Either has an idea or can see the potential of someone else's idea and adapt it to the digital world or the new media world.

The term Creative Producer is not seen as a job classification. In the advertising world you had had creative directors around for many generations. Certainly within the [broadcasting organisation], every producer is expected to be a Creative Producer. Whether they have the opportunity to do this or not, I am not too sure. Given the limited resources that they generally have to work within, in some ways every producer at the [broadcasting organisation], is very creative in the way they use their resources to get the max out of them for the audience benefit.

People are always knocking on the doors of the [broadcasting organisation], saying I've got this great idea what about it? I think it would work for this that and the other thing. To a certain extent those people are Creative Producers and come to us, and hopefully we can help them to realise their creative idea. That's certainly a role for an independent or for a producer who is trying to make their way in the independent sector. At the same time, all producers within the [broadcasting organisation], are expected to come up with ideas.

Oh I think working with outside co-producers or independent creative producers works well. On the one hand there is no other alternative. Realistically [broadcasting organisation], and [broadcasting organisation], aside, there is no other content producer in new media in Australia that is interested in doing this sort of stuff really. So there is no alternative really in that basic sense. There's often the challenge of different approaches to work and different working environments. Often that needs to be understood. People

from different cultures are coming together to produce something.

The outside producer has to learn about the [broadcasting organisation]culture and the [broadcasting organisation], has to acknowledge the outside producers culture. - Where they are coming from. How they are operating, their expectations. Where the projects have proved to be difficult in the past, it has come down to this misunderstanding about each other's cultures. The concept of deadlines and accountability and producing things according to a schedule is seen by some producers as a fairly fluid thing and that is something that frustrates the [broadcasting organisation], or people like me occasionally. We work to much more precise deadlines and expectations. This has produced some interesting challenges to resolve when dealing with co-productions and outside producers.

One of the really interesting areas is being able to define the project. To be able to define it at a point of negotiation, that then allows a project to be realised, but doesn't chop off the project's potential. The interesting thing about new media is that it is rapidly evolving area both in technological capability and also ideas. What we experience regularly, and this is not only with independent sector producers, but also our own internal projects, is that you start to get project creep. For example, an idea is uncovered, and someone comes up to new media with a proposal. Then they start to work on that proposal to a point of it being publishable. This can often be, depending on the size of the project, anything from three months to two years. In that time there has been a rapid development both technological capability and ideas about what works and doesn't work in the medium. There has also been evolution of audience and audience habits.

All of a sudden, half way down the project, someone says I can do this which wasn't in the original production brief. That's being very creative, but then that does create problems for deadlines, budgets, and the overall project objective. You need to be flexible or otherwise you don't realise the full potential of the project. At the same time it does put pressure on production resources and also the whole project management. All of a sudden ideas that weren't incorporated into the original brief start popping up. The various players in a production want to realise this within the budget as it has been funded. Working out whether to pursue the new ideas when they emerge in this rapidly changing environment and what to do about them in a productive way.

Also it does require a fair skill to be able to deliver the project to the various partners. While for example the [broadcasting organisation], has a good understanding of what is going on. Sometimes the funding partners a film body or a state-based funding agency aren't probably all that attuned to the medium. They don't keep up with what is going on. Sometimes it is difficult to get through to them… we're going down this direction with this project, because of the nature of the medium. So all those variables need to be negotiated.

Anticipation is probably the key quality of an effective Creative Producer that is not necessarily easy when you've got a rapidly changing environment. The creativity is two sided. One is allowing the idea to blossom and to be able to be realised in the

medium that it is most appropriate for at the time. Also to be able to effectively manage the project so that something is realised and it is audience effective and works within the medium that it has been identified for it. If we don't have people with ideas and new ideas then the medium will become very dull and I think the audience will start to move away from it which would be a sad thing to happen. Creative ideas are the engine force for a dynamic industry and a dynamic media. It is because there is not necessarily the content there -the content on those platforms that sparks the public's imagination. In some ways, this is where the Creative Producer can be very influential.

It is great if someone can convince these people that there content is appropriate for that network and can in fact create the content that could spark the audiences interest in that particular platform whether it be PDA 's or wireless or new generation mobile phones or the internet, digital television, interactive digital television or digital audio. Just pick a platform and if you don't have content, you are not going to have an audience. If you don't have interesting and different content you wont have an audience. If you don't have a Creative Producer, then you wont have interesting or different content. So it is a pretty important and vital role.

INTERVIEW WITH A9
Industry Position: Music organisation CEO and Artistic Director, Perth
(A9 interviewed 6th June 2008)

A9: My principal area of practice and interest is the world of sound and music and the experimental practices that revolve around that. I'm especially interested in, as a producer, in creating contexts or non-standard contexts for work to happen in and for people to experience that work, be that natural environments or non-natural environments.

I guess probably 20 years ago I worked in a closeted avant garde environment but now I find that we're doing work in remote indigenous communities, in regional communities, as in towns. Not so much in the city – I guess it's still in a sort of separate art community. Some of the more captivating, meaningful projects have been ones that have involved communities. For example, one thing I always love is the Totally Huge community festival. Garden Week happened to coincide with the Totally Huge new music festival, with which there isn't any crossover. But we had a sound work by a Finnish sound artist and she'd spent years in the South American rainforests and had created this work which involved a pyramid structure , with the surround sound in it that was the sound of the forest and how she'd manipulated that. Well, short story is we negotiated to have that as part of Garden Week, which involved working with the community of Garden Week. There were about 30,000 people walked through this installation, with all their various responses.

I tend to choose artists that have a desire to communicate other than directly through

their work, that have a sense of their place within the community of the world. They aren't just obsessed with the technology and their craft. I'm not saying that as a dogma at all because there are people that would fit into the category that I think are fantastic artists but the sort of ethos. Taking that festival as an example, the Totally Huge new music festival, is eclecticism with the sense of commitment to 10 days or a week as an artist. I'm interested in the fact that your work is a juxtaposition to the next person and the communication and dialogue that might happen between that.

I'm not a great manager. I'm a good manager and I have the management skills I can see how I fit into that definition of creative producer and that's actually fantastic because it's a good reflection. "Well, if I had all the management support I could just be the artistic director because that's where my skills are", but that's not true. My real skills are that I bring both of them together, both those areas together. But then, if the question is, assuming that I have had some success, what's the secret of my success? It is relationship building, that I've put a lot of energy into building and maintaining relationships in a some sort of giving way. And on a personal level, I think, it's not about just building up your clear contractual relationships, it's about all the other relationships that make the contracts work.

I am Artistic Director/CEO. I was meeting with a couple of people in Melbourne recently. It doesn't matter who it was but a person who's actually run large arts organisations and he's now running a foundation and he had some staff but he thought it was so ridiculous. I mean, and he's right. To call someone like me who's got one other full time staff CEO's absurd. It's not like we're a giant organisation. So, it's ridiculous because in a way you're meant to be operating at that level of CEO but you can't because you don't have all those people underneath you, justifying that sort of role. I have not heard of that term Creative Producer. Sometimes within arts organisation there's a producer but that has connotations of the sort of film producer thing or like the producer of 'Cats' or something like that.

A producer sounds like there's someone out there just raising the money, you know, millions of dollars for some arts project. For an arts organisation or a project -producer somehow gives the wrong connotation whereas creative producer somehow makes it clear that there is that. In the case of xxx, to some degree artistic director doesn't feel right because, I am the overall shape creator but I don't actually direct any show or project.

My background and not just in music is in contemporary improvisation. I did have both classical and jazz training but it was beyond all of that that my personal practice evolved. I've been involved in theatre improvisation. A lot of what gets done under the banner of improvisation is either not, or is very weak versions of it, because improvisation in the contemporary sense carries with it a huge onus or rigor and the development of language, both knowledge of musical languages around the world, contemporary music practice as well as developing a personal language. That is what it's about; it's like a visual artist developing their own language, because that's what you want to do; you

don't want to just do what somebody else has done. if you do then you're putting that within a context. It's not just some sort of repeat. I don't think a whole of people do that. Within the musical world there isn't.

Assuming the criteria of rigor and knowledge of other languages and development are there, the strength of improvisation is that there is a uniqueness that is personal, which means something to me as a practitioner and should mean something to the audience - whatever is receiving what I do. It creates all these possibilities of collaboration, absolutely. So, assuming that those criteria are there, there's incredible possibilities. The weaknesses are that it's just the same thing that keeps happening. someone develops – even if you take those things that I just said – so, you develop a language but you just keep repeating that same thing, you could say that that's what most artists do, one way or another. The challenge for good improvisers is to keep evolving and keep changing. Sure, the strengths are the spontaneity, the energy of the moment, the ability to work with, a huge range of other musicians and circumstance and environments and context and flexibility. I was a lot more enmeshed in it twenty years ago and there was that excitement of risk. And of course with performance or theatre, the same thing. Good improvised performance work, theatre work, has all that same elements there. The positives? Well, I guess energy, because energy's produced through risk and spontaneity and there – well, no, maybe "thereness", a sense of the performer or the presenter being there, rather than just churning something out. Its flexibility, absolutely, its ability to work in all sorts of different situations. It demands communication. So, again, you can have bad improvisation because people aren't communicating. It goes back to the rigor thing because good improvisation means everyone's got rigor and it doesn't mean you're just giving way to somebody else's idea. It might be sticking solely to what your idea is while somebody does sticks solely to their idea. That's good communication and that makes a really powerful thing. It takes you in these unexpected spots. There's so much improvisation that doesn't have those rigors because it ends up being sort of world music schmaltz, really.

Well, a lot of the work with indigenous communities comes out of improvisation. That's an interesting juxtaposition because really what the indigenous people are doing – although I've been listening, studying for a long time. I am starting to get an understanding of indigenous Australian traditional music. And clearly there's improvisation involved in that. But there's also a lot of structure. And this work is a combination of those traditional indigenous musics with improvisation and structure. So, yeah, the structure's really creating the context. So, you have this two very different approaches to music making laid over each other and entwined and it's fantastic.

Well, I think again one of my strengths in the management sense is being flexible, is not being freaked out when things change, which of course in this industry is constant. To react in a positive way to things not happening in the way they're meant to happen or in the expected way. So, I'm not interested in hierarchies at all; I'm interested in people working together. I was going to say the sense of responsibility because, improvisation

isn't careless, so it is about being responsible for the others that you're working with and, yeah, I guess the team bit is what I was saying about them, it's non hierarchical so everybody's got a part to play.

I think they do need to be able to get on with a lot of different people. They have to want to communicate with a lot of different people. They have to be really politically savvy that they aren't buying into the desires of various lobby groups and cliques. Whatever it is that they're being charged to do, they must try to get to the broadest community as possible and be dedicated, that that's what it's about, making those links. It seems to me that a lot of people really do shut themselves away.

Its necessary in that role to have an understanding of practice and I guess the sort of things that I've been involved in, a lot of that work's really quite risky. Especially if it's improvisatorial in nature, that it is a real collaboration. There's not a director of any form then it's risky. It's bringing together all those different personalities. There will be conflict and static – which is O.K. and good because that's got to bring it the energy. So, it's managing again, creating some sort of boundary and security, I guess, that there is somebody there that cares, that's passionate about the work and someone outside.

INTERVIEW WITH B1
Industry Role: Theatre Director/artist in a Rural Community
B1 interviewed 6th November, 2006

B1: I work in predominantly, as an artist in theatre but theatre that is more to do with personal expression, through the body. However, I also, I'm also a writer and I use multimedia and film for documentation and in performances.

I guess if somebody asked me what a Creative Producer, I'd say somebody who has a passionate belief in the project, who can facilitate any number of people to come on board and to share that passion. He or she dedicates their skills to helping that vision take form, and can recognise the type of people that are needed for a particular project. … The Creative Producer can be an artist as well, but they also have to be responsible for the vision and liaison with the other people. The other thing the Creative Producer does is to allow flexibility and to allow each of the key people to be creative in their own right, so that they can listen and absorb what happens, but can bring out that creative element in the other people.

If there is no Creative Producer then you get a product but it won't connect people. It's a product without soul. You get an event or you get a piece of clay or you get a canvas with something on it, but the Creative Producer is bringing two or more components together to create a new product that's not just the sum of the other components but a new product altogether. It's not two plus two is four, it's actually two plus two, plus the hidden ingredient makes 10.

The Creative Producer needs to ensure that correct process is taken. That everybody's being informed and kept enlightened by what is being decided. Things can be evolving

but unless everybody's on board with that evolution or at least is told and shown what their role is in this changing organism, then you're going to get people offside. It's a matter of keeping all components informed, part of the vision.

If you were just an arts administrator or an event manager, you wouldn't necessarily understand the art form that you're dealing with either. So, there's something to do with actually having an empathy with the form and the artists that you're working with as well. You need to be a creative person to understand the sensibility of the people you're working with, and to make sure the integrity of the artist is respected.

What I think is a really important thing for a Creative Producer to recognise is that you need to have a language that you can use to bridge that gap between what you have in your mind, and what the client or the person who might employ you has in their mind.

You can get excited about the concept because you can see that it has great potential. You could easily get written out of the whole project because they can use that idea then to write a grant application or whatever but then you don't necessarily get employed as the person who implements that project. You can get written out of things that way, and if you were able to define the role that you would do as a Creative Producer and label it, then it ceases to be a concept that can be public property. It's not something that can be implemented by just anyone and it starts to become your concept that is implemented by you as an artistic, creative person.

The people that you bring on board as your team and those that you have dealings with, will know that the project always have your flavour put to it, your signature, like a signature perfume or a signature taste. Somebody else could have taken that concept and run with in a different way to the way that you would do it. You grieve for that because that was your concept that you told people about. They wrote a grant application, got the money and you were written out of the project.

Risk taking is that idea of starting from chaos, throwing everything in to the pot and seeing what comes out, as opposed to here's a nice group, follow these directions. I think when I learnt about starting from chaos and draw out from there, I learnt to trust the process, my creative process completely changed and developed. Because you trust the people you're dealing with who are your raw material, and they've each got something to contribute. You have to trust in the process that you will be able to draw it out based on the skills that you've developed. The process is just as important because, especially dealing with community and adults, they have to enjoy the process, because otherwise they won't get involved in a project with you again.

As part of the process of warming people up and working with them you might need to improvise in all kinds of different areas. However, the finished product will never be an improvisation. It will always be a thought out object or a finished article that might have gone through the process of improvisation in order to reach that point.

Flexibility is absolutely essential. If you've got somebody who doesn't turn up or you've got somebody who says, I don't like the way that's done, it doesn't actually ring

true. O.K, yep, we can accommodate you and you work with that person and suddenly you've got this great other product. In Five, we had an autistic fellow that actually doesn't speak but he needed to be involved in this production, so he actually became the person who painted the backdrops on stage, as a progressive thing. We improvised to start with and used flexibility so we could accommodate that but of course, the end product looks like it's always been there, it's always meant to be. We accommodated this person's needs and creative expression into the actual performance, so that it looked like it was part of it.

We have somebody who certainly can't learn a script but if you go through a certain process of working with that person, they will come out with something that vaguely resembles what you are trying to achieve. The way they come out with it is never predetermined because you don't know what they're going to come out with on the day, If you set parameters that it can happen within, whatever they come out with will fit in and will have its place and could be wild and off the mark but will be equally as valid.

You have to find out what their strengths are, what their interests are, where their creative input can be and then you devise something that can make advantage of that, so that their best ability is on show. I think that's the case with all community projects. You just have to keep working with the people you have until you can find some way of integrating their skills and their creative input in a way that will work towards a cohesive outcome.

Trust, I think is the most important thing because the actors or the community members or even the people who're giving you the money, they all have to have trust in you and you have to be the person who holds the sacred trust. You have to trust your own process as well and that only comes through a lot of working on different projects over years and having had successes and failures. Failure's important as long as you have somebody who can help you work through that failure and show you that you have learnt something and show you the good parts of it. Otherwise, many creative people have gone, this is too hard, I'll just go back to being an accountant or whatever because the failures have destroyed them.

INTERVIEW WITH B2
Industry Position: Creative Producer of Indigenous Theatre and Web Project
B2 interviewed 10th October 2006

B2: I have been calling myself a Creative Producer for about two years and it was forced. I'd been resisting giving myself a title for about six months on the project. I was talking to the company director back and forth and going, I don't know what to call myself, I don't know what I am, and I don't want to be a project manager. That's so boring, I'm not just a project manager. I was trying to find a title that reflected that I was actually engaged in a creative process and in the conceptual process of the work, as well as being in control of producing it and making it happen, so that was where the title came from. I'd never heard of that role before and thought that I'd come up with

it. … It felt right for me because I really wanted something that reflected the creativity that I was putting in. That guiding function of the facilitator and project manager just sounds so boring and just denied that fluidity and creativity. So, that's what I came up with and that's now the title that everyone in … in my role uses.

The Creative Producer role has changed as the project's changed. I think a really key part of my role is research and consultation. It's getting a sense of what else exists like this, who else is around, who are allies, and also who could be prohibitive to the process. I definitely made an effort to contact those people really quickly and to ask them what their advice was on setting up the project. Also, I try to find out who to recruit locally in terms of artists who come on board, so who has the skill and the passion and the energy for the work. I am working out how to engage young people and elders and how to make it relevant to community.

 A lot of my work is about facilitating the dynamics between workers, community, festivals, and all those other relationships in the network. One of the things that I've established within the project is an induction for everyone who comes into the project. The induction is about the overall project and the history of the project and all of the different layers of the project. So a stage manager who's working on the project understands that this isn't just stage managing a show like any other show, that this is contributing to a whole process. So, I do lot of that work in terms of inter-company dynamics.

I'm managing the relationships with funding bodies and media, and organising opportunities to speak at festivals or conferences, and to people like you. There are all these external opportunities that can pull the project in lots of different directions. There's a constant need to be making decisions where you're holding 20 variables at the same time. I'm not in every detail but I'm definitely across everything and people. I'm the node for everyone in the project and that's sometimes very difficult.

I think I have very good intuition, particularly about people. I think certainly in terms of face-to-face work, both internally within the project, and externally, with other networks and organizations, I'm really good at that. … You can have a very strategic head, which I do. You can have a very heart-based approach to the work, which I also do. But being intuitive isn't about letting go of making decisions, it's about letting your gut really feel things.

I love the fact that each person has the freedom to do whatever they want to do, creatively, but when you come together it's the sum of the parts. The sum of the parts is greater than the whole. There's no-one telling me how I can and can't do it. It's mine. But when I put it into this pot, with all these other people, that are putting stuff into this pot, we all get something much bigger back and there's something magical about that. I like that sense of what you can create collectively but still have your own kind of autonomy within it, is the kind of model that I really like. Again, borrowing from activism, in terms of looking at affinity groups and diversity of tactics, and all those kind of autonomous theories.

Risk's an interesting word because in some ways, the whole process and the whole project is based on risk, in terms of being an experiment. There are risks in terms of the people, young people. Every relationship is a risk. There are risks about how you talk about the project and where we place the project. We've got so many invitations to tour, that's a risk of burnout to the community, and the company. It's holding all of these simultaneous contradictions in tension all the time and all of these dynamics of people, and the whims of funding. I think that that's a little bit like when you are trailblazing and when you are forging new ground. You don't have a lot of other things that you can look at to compare with what you're doing. … Experimentation and innovation is about trying to carve out new models and new ways of working with the complete knowledge that we're making lots of mistakes. We're probably being lopsided about how we use resources or what our processes are using.

I think it's about using what tools are available. I think it's also like a pragmatic thing of going what are the contemporary tools? What are the tools that are seen as sexy and have currency? It's taking an ancient language and an ancient culture and putting it in a place that non-indigenous people don't expect to see indigenous culture. … We're going from storytelling to performance, to music, to theatre, to new media and we don't wet our pants about new technology but see it as another tool in a range of ways of communicating.

I can have a conversation with a designer, and understand what that means, and that's the same with Photoshop and Final Cut Pro. I've made quite a few films. I have a broadbrush stroke understanding of that kind of technology. … So you do need to have a range of understanding of how funding works, how the media cycle works, how journalists work, how marketing works. You need to be able to be sympathetic with an artist who's going, oh, my God, my hard drive has just crashed.

I've done activist work and lobbying and have studied some Australian politics when I was at uni. I've done a lot of translating and I've done a lot of crosscultural work internationally. I've done a lot of film, That kind of activist groundwork has been huge. What has fed into being a Creative Producer for me has been about collaboration and communication. How to work with people and the way that I think about it, has been about creating spaces. …That's how I see being a Creative Producer. It's about creating space and resources for people to fill with things.

The process and the product are not mutually exclusive at all. The product needs to be brilliant because all of the work. I don't want to work with a young person for three years and then produce something that doesn't have a standing ovation for them. But, I don't want to make a brilliant work that isn't underpinned by great process. … I do find that debate a bit of a boring one. It's really pointless because, it's a waste of energy. The work has to be brilliant because it needs to be seen as credible and having merit. It's just a different process that creates the work. The quality of the work is no different. In fact, it's probably more amazing because it has that depth and it has all those other histories behind it. To convince people to open the doors to community art, the work needs to be brilliant.

I think that the one thing that I've been saying a lot lately is that it's lonely. It's something about the tenacity of vision that makes it possible to keep doing it, even though it is lonely. However, I feel a huge amount of warmth from everyone. Everyone calls me the "maecher" which is the boss. There's an understanding that I'm holding it together. I don't think that anyone even understands how or why. It couldn't have happened without a Creative Producer…. If there was no one in that role, it couldn't have started. It needed that person to be building relationships, working out where the project could sit, navigating it, and driving it.

INTERVIEW WITH B4
B4 interviewed 6th july 2006
Industry Position: Theatre/film actress/theatre director/theatre producer

B4: I'm used to working on film sets but I'm also used to working in theatre where you get that multi-development thing happening. At the same time as you've got actors working over here, you've got art department, you've got your design team working over here, and you've got your wardrobe being made and everything comes together, bears on the material at some point. I felt that we were working in a mode developing material from many different angles. That's very much what you would do if you're making a piece of contemporary theatre. Especially if you are making a piece of contemporary multimedia theatre. That would be very much what would be going on. You would have all those elements working simultaneously, and that felt very comfortable to me.

In the '80s, improvising for theatre is what we spent most of our time doing, was creative development. You would spend a week on one idea and you might end up with five minutes of potential. Then you might explode one of those minutes into 10 minutes of material in the next week. You're actually doing that, and then the editing process is a director's vision where he assembles all of that creative material into some kind of whole. That's really the VCA tradition, in terms of creating work in this country.

A Creative Producer holds the vision for the piece. He or she hasn't imagined the outcome, because no one can know the outcome, because we all go in, going, O.K, let's play. But the Creative Producer clearly knows who you want on the project, what you want to achieve, and manages the time, manages the liaison with the school and the people. It's facilitating in every aspect to allow all the energy to be focused in those moments of creation. So, in that sense, yes, I would say a Creative Producer is an animateur in the VCA tradition. Yeah, it is quite unique. Although it probably came from overseas models, like in New York in the '70s there was companies like Mabou Mines, have you ever heard of them? There are companies internationally who have been working with the development of material like this.

Peter Brook probably is more of a director when he does the final part of the process because it's like the difference when Mike Lee is facilitating his actors to improvise and then when he walks onto the set he becomes very much a director. I think that there is

a distinction there. Peter Brook, I would suggest, not having been part of the process, I'm speculating, but from having seen his work I think that he would have times when he was literally animating the creation of work, and then other times when he was functioning as a director, and those are quite distinct roles.

The only people that I would think would be a bit like a Creative Producer would be film producers that I've worked with. Sometimes some theatre producers are like this too. Even though they've got the title of producer, there's so much more going on. They're not just the money mind, and they're not just the assembling people mind. They're actually engaged in grappling with the process but they don't distinguish themselves as that in the name, yet. Maybe that's something that will grow, where people will go. Actually, I am a producer, but I'm actually a creative producer as opposed to a producer, who is more involved in the mechanics of something.

I don't think that's really begun yet because in the theatre, the producer's a different title. Producer is more the mechanics of something whereas I think, in television the producer is the powerful one, and the directors are the functionaries of the producer. Film again, it's different. There's the executive producer who's just money, and then there's your producer who's much more engaged in casting and creation of the flavour of the piece. I think that the title of producer is very fluid but it's actually wonderful to create this new thing which is creative producer.

It acknowledges in the process that you, as the creative producer, not only are able and prepared and expect to have a participatory role, but that as well, you also have a vision which is informing everything that we do. And that, I think that's where the term, animateur comes in really usefully. But I don't think you could call yourself animateur in the film industry, yet. Animateur doesn't have that status yet. I think that would be really problematic, where there's film involved still. I even think that creative producer is going to come in very handy for me. I do, and that's what I've done and yet I haven't made that distinction. I've been producer and director. There's a project I'm about to embark on that's been shortlisted for funding where I think I am actually functioning as the creative producer, that's what I'm doing. I'm not going to direct it, but it's certainly going to be informed by my vision.

When I'm talking to producers. I assume that there's a whole lot of areas that they know nothing about until proven otherwise. Working in the theatre, I can pick it pretty quickly. Who's the producer working on the mechanics of the project, and who's a producer who actually understands when you're talk to them about an artistic concern, they actually understand what you're saying. The difference between the two is really quite marked. You can come to being a producer from so many angles. The package of skills that you bring to being a producer is unique to each person. So, personally I think it's really useful to have a title, creative producer, to help the people in the process to understand who you are and what your expectations are, and what kind of conversation you can have with your artists about the work, what that means.

The director, and it doesn't matter how kind and collaborative in their attitude they are, the fundamentals of having a director in a piece of work, is that they hold the vision. It's very hard as an actor in that piece to own any of the vision. That's why companies like XXX are so exciting to me. Because it has been created out of collaboration and everybody owns the vision and I love that kind of stuff. With the conventional notion of director, in relation to everybody else, there can be ego issues and territorial issues, even though the person might not be aware that's what they're doing. It's implicit in the role because it's about where the responsibility lies. In a theatre room, the responsibility lies with the director and the stage manager and that's it, it's uncompromising. There's a series of assumed functions that come with a role definition. So, when you work on a project and are about to start a play, I am an actor and Chris is the director. And we both know what that contract is, it's implicit. When I take on that role that's the contract, the unspoken contract that I engage in. That's because of however many years of theatre history, that all those roles come to bear.

What it seems to me that you're doing is you're identifying a movement which is very, very real. Roles are being redefined all around us. The terminology, perhaps, hasn't caught up with the way of working. So, to actually have the more fluid definitions is going to really change the whole construct of the way the industry is set up. I think that that's long overdue because someone who has the ability to create and administer is, that's what people are doing, anyway in the fringe. Other companies like xx x, they have a producer who is a creative producer, and they bring in people for different projects to create work and collaborate. The power, the financial power is not held in one area. I think there is a financial issue, too, where the collaboration demands a redistribution of the actual money that comes into a project.

INTERVIEW WITH C1
Industry position: An Academic in CCD
(C1 interviewed 9th August 2006)

C1: We do have every art form covered in our students and we have a couple of students who are in film and television and from animation. It's obvious that that's where they're going to probably be ending up as Creative Producers. I say to the students, you're in the mainstream, for want of a label. Work will always continue and your community-based work is demanding, so probably it is quite healthy to see that you've got many worlds that you're going to live in. To live totally in CCD work is probably very draining and therefore to have these other times when you are your own person, documenter and whatever but you're going to much richer for having been a CCD worker.

SM: Do you think that Creative Producers work across all the art forms or do you think it's something that really applies to the digital production process.

C1: Well, it seems to be in that digital production, doesn't it? I think it's a marvellous time that we've got so many mechanisms. If you're taking it into theatre you will always have community theatre groups which are in another way, a form of Creative Producer.

You will always have the visual arts people who move into creating installations and festival events and all sorts of other things as well. I don't know that they want to be called producers in those other art forms. It doesn't seem to fit as well, does it? So, it does seem to work in the new media.

C1: The fact that you're using the word, creative, would suggest that you're looking for new ways of looking at things, or new ways of approaching a topic, a theme, an issue. You would hope because obviously you'd rarely work alone, it is about collaborative work. That is a particular skill because there are some people who are not good at it and that's O.K. You would hope it is about the wonderful processes of observing the culture around you. You live in this time, so it should, by virtue of what I believe a Creative Producer's about, they are a wise soul for this time in a way. They are reflecting, interpreting or challenging who we are at this time in this culture, in this time of history. I always see a lot of the Creative Producers as somewhere being an anthropologist of a type or an iconographer or an ethnographic thinker and there could be lots of those terms.

SC: In my own research, I'm endeavouring to looking at a model which takes you from a very participatory, beginner's stage, stage 1 of a process which is opening up to all sorts of experimentation, opening up to a whole range of workshops, ideas. Every different type of working, giving people hands-on experience and you would say the process dominates that model and that's the good old community arts. … So, you're experimenting. You're just trying to explore your own creativity with all different types of medias. In lots of ways, that is an intrinsic model, too. It's intrinsically about creativity.

Then there are more partnership models and this is where the health and wellbeing and urban renewal people say, we like what they did there, this is looking good now. People loved it and they're happier, and they laugh and they now want to create an artwork in their high-rise or whatever, their home. We want to bring artists in to work through our policy lens. Taking some of that workshop stuff, taking it now forward with the people who feel they can actually create a product that we're all going to live with. So, in that model, you're half and half. You're still training up and modelling up, and processes are real. All of the people who signed in to the process have said, I'm ready for the product and I'm ready to be critiqued and our aims are fairly clear. We're really on a process to a product.

The first one is really, I'm here to experiment and the product might be O.K, but it doesn't really matter if it isn't. Then you have this other area which I think is, and I'm still searching, I'm calling it relational art. I'm quite intrigued by phenomenology where you immerse yourself in processes, which in a way as a Creative Producer I think you totally immerse yourself. You toss yourself into that culture or that space. You trust that in that space, with all your creative processes and techniques something will emerge, and you want it to still be of that place. … So, you want people to still experience what you've experienced in your process. Immerse you in all of the glory

of the process and products. So, the product is probably a half and half one, but it's a different relational connection than perhaps in the second model.

Then there is the straight entrepreneurial one which is, I've worked with you for ages, I'm really keen now, as an artist, I want to do this. Would you be interested in working with me on this. This is where I am the leader, I am the director. I think there should always be opportunities for that as well. I think you get a much better product if you've lived in some of those other models first. So, in the developmental process, you've got four models there which probably have many sub-models within them. The first one is about integration and the last one is about intervention.

I see intervention as creative, that you come with an idea and you've laid it on the table and it is, it is your idea that's usually grown from living with a community. You are as an individual, are suggesting a particular creative intervention, because they're all about creative interventions of a type.

There are lots of people who are very fussed about definitions. I certainly say to the students, the most important thing is that you have a definition that you can stand by, and that you can speak about with authority and passion. Some borrowed definition from elsewhere can always sound flat and your definition is going to always change. So, really, what our students are becoming clear about is that CCD is based on a set of principles that are gleaned from the community culture of each project.

INTERVIEW WITH C2
Industry position: Visual Artist with a history of developing community projects in a community health centre.
(C2 interviewed 4th September, 2005)

I now call, I've always call, no, I haven't always, I call myself a visual artist and sometimes I put producer and writer on it as well because I write as well as make images.

The creative producer, I have noticed it, it's more in screen based media, I think. I've tended to notice creative director more in, certainly in community domain - Creative director, yeah, and festivals, yes.

I also developed some theatre projects. Essentially with the theatre projects, I don't think I had as much engagement with the content. Although I was involved in the conceptual framework from which we were going to work. One of the plays we did was with the Timorese community and the Timorese community was very divided. I set up the project, so that there were vignettes, because there was some pretty intense politics. I did this so that on opening night, somebody couldn't pull out, and pull apart the whole thing. In that sense, I approached the creative content from an organisational point of view of how to engage the community. Because in the end the project design used is not just the content. It's about engagement. I suppose that's one thing I learned a lot about. I know a lot about that, and what's do-able, and what's possible. I get a feeling

in my gut, if I know you're going to have people voting with their feet.

When I went to Vietnam I worked on my own practice and I feel like the things that I learnt by working on my own practice really fed back into my community practice.

When you've managed lots and lots of projects, you realize that the pacing of it is dependent on a whole lot of complex factors, including people's interpersonal lives and relationships, and the fact that you're dealing with other people's blank canvases. That's something that is pivotal to community art, is that you're not only dealing with your own blank canvas, you're dealing with other people's blank canvases. It's really easy, and I think the reason why I'm not doing community arts any more, is that I'm too quick to lock stuff in. I don't give the participants enough space for it to come out any more.

You constantly have to second-guess where things are going to go, just in case. Because you can't leave a group of people with a blank canvas too uncomfortably, or they're just going to freak. They're going to vote with their feet; they're going to. You're going to lose them. You've got to second-guess the politics. You've got to see the crises before they happen and probably be anticipating where the fault lines are essentially or where the vulnerabilities are. I felt like I always had to have a strategy for coming to deal with it, if it happened. One of the things that I always talked about with people I worked with, who were doing projects, for the first time is that you have a Plan A, and then you have Plan B, and then you have a Plan C. The key is the improvisation. You're thinking on your feet, for a start. In a community setting, you're not just improvising on your own, so you're kind of reading. You're giving others space and you're reading the overall direction of it. So, a good improvisation is about co-operation and spontaneity, but it's also about knowing when to step back and knowing when to step forward. The thing about being a Creative Producer or lead artist or whatever you want to call it, is you've got to know when to step in and when to step back.

In a sense the problems, the way you find the answers, that becomes the driver of the creative process. So, when people used to say to me, oh, community arts, you're so compromised with what you can do, I agree. It's really tricky sometimes. You've just got this dreadful looking thing, what am I going to do with that. Equally, the limitations or the difficulties you've got to juggle, create just as much, if not more, probably for me, creative direction. Because you are improvising and you're thinking on your feet.

Part of the industry of community arts, is to pass on the skills to the participants. It's a bit like being the mum and mums aren't allowed to take credit for what their children do, or they're just seen as the stage mum. It's a complex thing. But then also there's a reactive thing operating with respect to the artist as hero, and that's not a good look. It's not a good look at all. However, this has gone back the other way, in a sense, and there needs to be some way of moderating that tension. If you just do your job too well then, people feel like it's all them! It's always an issue, because you're the host, and if you're the person that's running the credit sheet as well, you're writing it. It depends on the context. I have been called mentor. Sometimes I put, Project Initiated By, Creative

Direction went on the Public Art project. Curated, Curator and Writer.

The XXX Museum decided to call me the curator because that's the language that they use and what that didn't say and again, in all of their reporting, is that I developed that project, and I got the money. I approached them for an access show. I wasn't the curator and in all of their reporting my name has never shown up.

INTERVIEW WITH C4
Industry position: Freelance Curator and Project Manager
(C4 interviewed 17th November 2006)

C4: The term Producer was a new one for me until I started working on …, which was the documentary that we made for (a broadcaster) in 2001. It went on line in 2002, I think and it was up for a year. Because I work in the visual arts, the term Producer wasn't really one that I was familiar with. It was introduced to me while I was working on that project. The person who produced that project, came from a film background and her concept of producer was very clear, and that was her role. A producer in a film sense is not a creative person at all, though we found when we put the team together that we had the producer role taken care of, which is important, the money person, the administrator and so on. We had the digital artists, writers and researchers but we didn't have that creative role filled.

I came in as someone who is used to being a curator and also in the visual arts sense often the curator is something like a Creative Producer. I wouldn't have used that term, but it often is the role. You are handling the money but you are also doing the creative side of putting the work together, selecting work deciding what relates to what. I have to decide what the story is, if there is a story. I am involved in telling that story through the catalogue and writing it and so on. It is very much a creative role as well as a role of money.

I began to see after I was working on the documentary project for a little while that that was what I always did - creative production. That involves of course working very closely with the creator who is the artist…you also have to give the artist enough space and autonomy and respect so that they can get on and do what they do. It was interesting because we had to define that role.

SM If you could start again on that project and if you could be the Creative Producer on that project, what could you see that role being?

C4 …. somebody who can visualise the whole thing and guide it in terms of the way that it goes together. What we did on our project was that we ended up bringing in a film director to fill that role. That was clearly not adequate in the sense that a film director is working entirely with the visual look of a project. They have the overall sense in mind too, the beginning the middle and the end. But there is a different element of online and particularly the role of the visual artists is different. The visual artist is not synonymous with the cameraman for eg. It's a very different and more directed kind of a role I think.

In the digital medium the director perhaps has a little bit less to do with the actual visuals and a little bit more to do with the shape and the form.

I wish that we had had that role of Creative Producer defined. In fact, we knew even right at the very start that there was a gap in the structure. We actually thought about it long and hard. We had a lot of experience in the group, in publishing and visual arts and film and all sorts of things. We had the conceptual breadth to see what was needed, but we kept saying there is a gap here, how are we going to tie this together. I suppose I would have normally just automatically filled that role. As a curator you need to know how you bring things together. If you don't have that role defined properly, then you have got a gap in your structure. I wish that we had had this conversation three years ago because it would have made the whole thing so much easier to visualise, to order and to manage.

The thing about it was that you have three levels working there. First of all you have to build a really strong collaboration with the community at each site. Then you have to collaborate as a team writing the story, and creating the visuals and putting it all together. Then the artists role was well defined but the issue of trust arose as it probably often does. If you are trying to manage or direct it too tightly, you don't use the artist as an artist you use them as a designer. There is a very big difference. This is a very different thing. In actual fact, that is what we ended up having with such a strong top down structure that the artists role shrunk and shrunk until the artists became a designer rather than an artist. You didn't have enough room left for the artists to interpret the material.

SM If you had been the Creative Producer on that project how would you have done it differently.

C4 The difference would have been simply that the artist would have had a big enough space to work in. You don't tell the artists what image you want, or where you want it, or how it's going to look. ... We lost the dynamism of the medium. That was my principal concern probably from day one. I know that would have been one thing that would have been different.

We did try to replace that role with a different role by getting a director. So, we had a producer and a director in the classic film sense. This in theory might have worked but the director does not understand the digital media (especially a film director). Perhaps if you had a digital director they might. I actually suspect not because only an artist is getting their fingers dirty all day trying to make things integrate and trying to make things move smoothly between one thing and the next, trying to make the best of that medium. Nobody else can do that. I really don't think that the Director role applies.

It was a gorgeous project. Because we had that huge community thing along the flyway. We had a huge audience readymade all sitting waiting for it to be launched. That was very satisfying but the issue of lack of clarity of roles was heartbreaking really. We had these incredibly skilful dedicated hardworking people with millions of runs on the

board everywhere who had done marvellous work in every possible field, who weren't able to produce their best. In fact everybody fell short or the expectations that they had of the project because they were just not able to pull together. It is heartbreaking when you slog at something and you just waiting for that moment of magic when everybody goes a Haaah, and it just never came.

The sense of truth to material, and truth to the medium, and truth to the artist. If you are going to have an artist you let the artists do their job. If you are going to use digital media you have to have truth to that media.. You are true to it by trusting your artist because the person who knows most about a medium is the artist because they are immersed in it.

I can't tell you how many hours we spent nutting it out and saying what if I do this and you do that… but we just didn't have a handle on that role. That would be immensely helpful to spell that out and to know what kind of person that you need to fill that role. It obviously has to be someone who works well with artists, because you have to make sure that you get the best you can out of the artists that are working with you they are animators or designers or whatever. …The person has to be able to facilitate what the artists does, so that they do not have to stress about details. They can just get on with their job. There is a rapport thing that is really essential…. You have to have that.

I think it is a very collaborative position. You have to be across the money because you can't just have an open ended thing. You have to be across schedules. You can have a separate person and administrator or a straight producer that…. (phone rings). I think the film model is often used. The film is closest people think to digital media. It is not actually true. But taking a film model you might imagine that the director can do those things but in actual fact the artist's role is so central…. maybe digital media is closer to the visual arts except that it is visual arts with story and it is visual arts with the audience actually messing around with it, rather than standing back.

There is a lot of different levels of curating, but there is a difference. At the most complex level - a major show in a national gallery or whatever, curating involves a lot of scholarship about what you are about to show. You need to really know the artists and you need to know the work. You need to know where the work fits in terms of the oeuvre. There is a lot of scholarship behind it in a fine arts sense. A lot of that goes in the writing as well. Putting together a catalogue that would normally have essays by a number of people. You are editing. You are writing and you are producing that. That's the level of curating that I am talking about that might relate in some way, but its not the same role at all. The role difference is the amount of technical knowledge that a Creative Producer needs in a digital sense.

INTERVIEW – C5
Industry Position Project Developer with a community arts organisation
(C5 Interviewed 2nd November 2004)

SMC: I am investigating the role of Creative Producer. Is this role familiar to you?

C5:   Well I haven't really called myself anything. But I think that is the correct title definitely. Every project that I have done there has been one or two people who have an eye on everything that is happening. I think that is really hard not to have either one or two people central to that. Just to be aware of who is doing what. To make sure that community involvement is happening. Everything from arranging meetings to liaising with the production of the video or the photographic labs. You really do need to have an overview of everything that is going on. About twelve things can be going on at the one time. Most of the projects that I've worked on have ended in an exhibition or a tour so then you have to have someone constantly thinking ahead about what's going to happen. Where the tour is going and all the millions of little details.

I have started with predominantly two focuses. One is that the project is really important to the people that we are collaborating with, the community organisation or the group. Two that there is an outcome for the people involved to see what they have done up there and to have an outcome and to have that recognised and have people from the general public come and see it as well. If you do a good process and one that is inclusive and collaborative often what happens is that the people who have worked and collaborated end up with a really good exhibition and from that there are lots and lots of spin-offs that you haven't thought of before. The process and the outcomes are equally important to me in different ways. I think for people involved to have an outcome and to have it recognised is an important part of the process. So I think they are all of equal importance to my way of thinking.

To date most of the projects that I have been involved in are ones that I have a passion for. There is a real collaboration using the expertise of the artist. The work is created, but there is also feeding back throughout that process to the person, asking if this is what you wanted. In a way, the artists are the technicians and they are creating the visual imagery to go with what the person wants. Some of the visual pieces evolve from the person's story but they are not actually matched to the persons story. There is a whole combination there.

SMC   What defines collaboration as a successful creative process?

C5: I think that the person has ownership of the piece. They are hands on involved throughout all stages of it. We try very much to have people who are involved on the steering committee. They are involved every step of the way from the initial workshops through to telling their stories through to working with the artists.

You often have a vision and the work goes off in different tangents. It is really about being a bit hands off there. Letting the artists have ideas and flow. But coming in with your knowledge and expertise when its needed. Because you do have more a vision of

the whole. It is really challenging for artists to make work that might not necessarily be what they want to create based on what the person wants. So they might have a whole different way. The most supportive path I think is to support the artists to go down their own direction but make sure that they are not totally dominating the process. To make sure that it maintains a collaborative process between the participants. The other end is not to have your own vision and try to influence too much as well.

C5:   I think the dangers are in that collaborative area that balances one way or the other too much and really is that you have to keep empowering the people who are participating so that it is a true collaborative process. The dangers are also stamping it too much with your own style. So it is really about being able to pull back and go on their own journeys together. The other big danger is that you never get enough funding so the person facilitating or producing often ends up doing lots of unpaid work. It is probably more of a danger with a project that you have a passion with because you are going to see it through no matter what.

I think if you are going to have a public outcome it should be of a good quality. That's what gives recognition to it. To me the presentation is the key. It is about presenting the art well. The presentation should be as good as if it's the impressionists in the national gallery. We worked really hard in every exhibition in the tour to present it as best as it could look. I think it is also about showing respect for the people involved and having the community recognised and celebrate what they have created.

I have only had one business card. Usually I have called myself a facilitator when I have signed things.

I think the important part is management skills. Liaising and keeping all the balls in the air. Being aware of what is happening. But it is that and support for the artists and support for the people involved. And be able to talk. Ability to communicate at all levels. With the people participating and with the artists involved and with the funding bodies. Ultimately I think it is all about communicating to the community. It is really a sort of management thing, but more free-flowing than that. Just having an overview of everything and getting the projects to meet deadlines. It is a linking role too.

The functions of the Creative Producer are developing ideas and concepts. Obtaining funding. It is money, ideas, working in partnership, creative collaboration, managing a budget, supporting the artists, supporting the participants, information - that's a really important one. Providing information through running workshops about what it is going to be about. All the details. The production of the final works and planning the presentation - finding galleries, planning the exhibition, planning the tour, planning the launch, making sure that the participants are involved through all that.. Then there is all the media.

INTERVIEW WITH C6
Industry Position: Media Producer with a Community Arts Organisation
(C6 interviewed 27th May, 2007)

C6: To work in a collaborative way, you need a flexible team. I think within our community arts organisation everyone is quite open to going with the flow. I guess being able to react on the day, and to be able to be responsive, but still remain within the confines of the project is what is necessary to work in this way. When things pop up, being able to either make a judgment of yes, this fits in, or how can we jig it around a bit so it does fit in. I think all of the members of [community arts organiastion] are quite easy-going and not precious. I've seen other artists work and some of them are very set on what outcome they want, and are a bit more controlling. I guess what I've found with the [community arts organisation] people is that they're quite open to letting something evolve and then obviously if you're not happy at the end, there's room to move it round. At the time when you're actually working with people, there's room to let it evolve. There are times when you think, my God, this is never going to come together, it's just going to be a big hotchpotch, but it actually turns out to be really great.

I think you have to be really confident in what your skills are but also very open to other people contributing, whether it be the participants or other workers and, just letting things evolve. Improvisation is important. I think it comes back again to knowing what your practice is really well, you know what's going to work and what's going to be a total disaster. It's about guiding people, if it's going too far off track, guiding them back.

My personal success criteria for work that I do with communities is that the person or people that I've worked with feel that they've really contributed, that they've learnt something, and that they've enjoyed it because it's got to be fun. I'd say, everyone I've worked with has enjoyed it, to varying degrees because obviously not everyone wants to be an artist. I must say that most people do actually enjoy the process.

I've always found that the true voices actually do tell a strong story in the end, anyway. If you've got people's true stories then the whole thing hangs together as one good piece of information or feeling or whatever to the general public. It's a process and then the outcome as in that it holds together, but then the presentation is very important. People are working through the process, and although I remind them a lot that it's going to be a public display. It can be quite confronting for people. If it looks good, it's more reassuring than you've chucked your soul out there, and it's hanging on a bit of crappy paper, you know, as opposed to put it out there and it's tight and it makes sense and it looks good.

I can't imagine working without a Creative Producer now. I think it frees the artist up, so that you're not worrying about every other little thing. You can actually just worry about the person that you're working with and what that piece is going to be. If you know the producer's good, then you can feel confident about not having to worry about what everyone else is doing, or what it's going to be like in the end. She is the queen

of communication and problem solving. Sometimes she'll even be acting in a little scene or an extra camera. Really, the primary role is having a real vision of how the project's going to get from point A to point B as smoothly as possible. She's very good at that. The budget. Making sure that all groups are getting communicated with, any problems are being dealt with, yeah. I can't imagine, working without that now. If you were just a group of artists –XX and I did that in the beginning, and it was just manic, because your head was split into two places and it didn't really work. I guess that's an important thing.

SM: Do you reckon you can train someone to be a Creative Producer?

C6: You probably could, but there's also the personality would matter as well –being able to be a problem solver and not being too bossy, all of that sort of stuff, that's multifaceted. When something's multifaceted it's hard to train, isn't it? It is someone who can look at the overall thing, a good manager, can worry about big picture and detail. It mattered that the Creative Producer had knowledge of the creative process. A community group might have a good manager, but it doesn't mean that they'd understand the creative process and have faith. Not only do we have faith in …, she also has faith in us. She feels quite confident … will do the workshops, … will do the video, and if she gives them the right information that they can do it well. To deadline – well, that's always a bit of a worry. Truly is always a worry when it's deadline.

INTERVIEW WITH C7
Industry Position: Filmmaker, editor, animator
(C7 interviewed 17th of April, 2007)

C7: I have an innate visual sense that works quite well in a team, basically as a camera operator, camera man, primarily in the editing stage. My creative pursuit is behind camera primarily. There's a lot of skill involved in using a video camera in this method of filmmaking that's low budget and hand-held. It's a spontaneous sort of process that's intuitive. I use that word because I know roughly what we've going to get with the mechanics of videoing because I've done so much of it. We can work on the fly very quickly and adapt to situations. The Creative Producer plays a directing role. I think the directing role's split between the two. I'm interested to try and be as spontaneous as possible with the talent in front of us, so that material's not overworked. You need to have a an overview of what you want to get in filming situations, but you don't want to totally plan and construct everything beforehand. It's good to have this looseness with dealing in the immediate situation. I know that I potentially can pull it off and make a successful project because of long experience but there's a spontaneity in there.

I think the creative producer has an intensive role in pre-production and also they have a role in production and post production, specifically in pre-production for me, where initial forays out into organisations and individuals and community places, it makes it really easy for me to just turn up and participate in the process. They are setting up situations and I know them. If I didn't know them, it wouldn't work. The creative

producer has to spend time with the artists and with a group of artists and build up a, it's friendship first, not work, a trust relationship.

I've worked with lots of producers in film productions which I find basically fairly unsatisfactory because you're a hired hand. In the creative producer role it's more of a trust basis and a long-term commitment, I think, that helps in terms of allowing for a better production. So, usually it takes two years to get major projects up, so there is a long period in there, and the creative producer, spends a fair bit of time in preparation. Then there's pre-production. Then there's production which is a really great role. The creative producer keeps people on track and keeps them informed. Then there's this other period later on where, well, as an editor I'm the kind of a chief creator, pulling the sequences together into a finished product. Then there's liaison with the screening venues and site installation of works which is a lot of work that the creative producer does. I think probably the creative producer carries a bit more of the fear of failure. I think it's a real kind of thing that they have to take on board to navigate through the fine-art, technical, creative and performative aspects to make the project work.

Film productions are involved in making a linear narrative, documentary or drama piece for a target, usually television. I think in a creative producer's role and in multimedia there's more of a kind of site-specific space where work's to be put on and it changes the whole process of making the stuff. It's a new way of constructing screen-based material which wasn't around 10 years ago. It's changed the production process and people use a lot more collage, montage, stills, images, animations, effects in their visual material than they used before 2000. I was one of the first people to use digital video cameras in these community situations, in low light situations. You didn't need a big production team. You can get away with murder and still get reasonably good results.

I think there was a whole production process with film production where there was a producer that had knowledge of filmmaking production processes, which were really expensive. They signed the cheques, and ticked off things for the funding body, and they knew how long it took for the construction of a movie. The creative producer, because there's more potential now to do things with new media and interactive media, you have to have a wider knowledge of production processes. In film production, it's the director who is the creative person who has the vision and steered the group of people who went out and filmed stuff. Whereas a producer for me, is someone who checks the work, and they don't get their hands too close to the actual production process. I always found that really unsatisfactory when I got Australian Film Commission grants and I was dealing with producers. They seemed to be a role that the funding body had to have, to give over $100,000. They wanted a producer to be the link person that made sure the production was going ahead and the director wasn't going off the rails. I never saw them. As a director, I never felt they were particularly useful, whereas a creative producer has a much more hands-on knowledge and gets involved in finding the money and in all the stages of production.

There is a hell of a lot of involvement with linking people, who are involved in various

digital aspects of the production. The coding person, if it was an interactive. There's lots of different multimedia jobs now where you get specific artists to take photos and layer them and there might be an animation person, etcetera. The creative producer also has a big role in the production, in gathering the assets for the production, in being involved and helping with creative suggestions and solutions, and in having a good knowledge of what you could try to do in a production, and in building a good team.

They're involved in much more creatively building a team and I'd say actually in the production too. This is what I've experienced with the three creative producers that I've worked with. The Creative Producer is not an owner, it's not an ownership of a community production, where one person totally has a vision, it's shared. The creative producer has a pretty strong vision, even though we all have our own hands-on specific kind of talent that contribute to the major production.

There's a real skill in handling various aspects of a team and a good creative producer can see where you can let people go and develop their own material, and where they need to be brought into more of a collaborative community vision. Yeah, there's a real role for creative producers in handling the creative talent in the team, and giving them space to contribute material. I think it's important to realize that it's not an individual person and other people supporting him or her. It's a real team thing, and it's nice when a creative producer makes it a collaborative process. Creative producers are a facilitator of collaboration. They usually would find a team of people and link them together for a project. I guess the film analogy from the past is there was a director and a producer. I don't think it works like that now. I think, there can be a number of creative artists involved with the creative producer facilitating the making of a production and it can either be a film for television, or it could be an interactive work for a community organisation. It could be a theatre production. Usually it involves digital technologies as a defining yardstick, where there's imagery developed through digital technology.

INTERVIEW WITH– D1
Industry position; Audio/sculpture Installation Artist
(D1 interviewed on the 30th May 2004)

D1: I understand the concept of producer. Maybe we could tease out what a creative producer is - as someone somewhere in between the artists' production and those of, say, curators or festival organisers and/or directors of things like that.

I think the relationships between a curator and an artist is one that might be more focused on content or thematics or conceptual constructions. It is the actual putting the things together, the kind of manifestation of that. It isn't necessarily simply the role of either the artist or the curator or even both, but a kind of intermediary who handles a range of things. They might run from the complexities of logistics right the way through to production of catalogues and things like that. So, it could an entire gamut which really focuses more on the actual production of an exhibition or a festival.

I see where you're coming from – yeah, the creative producer in the sense of my role in, say, [name of project] where, the creative process was negotiated between a group of people. In that particular instance, I've taken on the role of being the good shepherd and deciding that I was going to drive it. Someone has to drive it and I think in some ways that kind of collaborative model– although it's very interesting - it's actually quite exhausting as well, to be in a truly collaborative process the entire time, and to actually be collaborative. I think it's partly having to democratically service every idea and every move. And so in a sense my line I push is, "Well, this is a collaboration and we go in and service the collaborative process as much as we can."

But there is a model where you say, in a group situation, that you take on trust that other people are operating in good faith and they're working to the best of their capacity for the project and that you give them their head and just say, "Well, O.K, you handle this, you do the best you can, that's your job". We have someone designing the outfits, for example, and I'm saying to her, "Well, O.K, I'm the artistic director. So, although we had some creative discussions, we've had the brainstorming sessions, now let that person get on with their job, don't kind of screw with them any more.

It's to do with creative flow that someone has if they're designing something. They don't necessarily need input at every stage or being told, "Oh, I changed my mind, I'd like it this shade of blue", because in a sense it's a question of, I think, of actually honouring people's skills and responsibilities, and if everyone's doing everything all the time then it just makes it an incredibly slow and fraught process. I think you can stretch a collaboration to have some intense workshopping sessions where people say, "We've come together for the sole purpose of thrashing this stuff out, having great ideas. Then in the end we give this responsibility to this person and they're going to go away and do a fantastic job", and of course, if I as an individual don't like that shade of blue that much, I simply have to wear it. That's where we're at and possibly it's not that important anyway, it's just idiosyncratic.

I think invariably the individual vision is stronger. And that's why, the traditional artistic practice is so much focused around individuals. It's not simply because it's a marketable signature style associated to a single producer, which has got obviously limited supply vis-à-vis a market. That's part of it, but it's because people on their own do go to very strange places. The collective and collaborative process brings different types of things and takes you somewhere else. I'm finding that within my own work there's hardly anything I can do any more on my own and I do actually miss that. As I was saying to you earlier, sometimes I really long to be in the studio, on my own, doing something that I can do individually. Working collectively you relinquish that kind of control and I guess for the benefits that you perceive. The sum of the whole is greater than the parts -a synergy sort of thing. So, I think the ideal work is probably you're able to do both things. So, okay, creative producer in that sense is in a very difficult position.

INTERVIEW WITH D2
Industry position: Independent filmmaker and multimedia producer
(D2 interviewed 15th February 2008)

D2: I've worked with, artists and media types in helping them facilitate their work and also assisting them with fundraising. I guess further enabling them to conduct their work. So, I've sat in the middle - in between them and funding bodies or them and businesses or channelled funds to them and overseen that somehow. At times I've also collaborated with artists and creative people.

I can't remember when I heard the term Creative Producer but I guess when I heard the term I felt that that probably describes some of the stuff I do pretty well. I work in multidisciplinary areas that covers the arts and media. But I'm not a media artist as such. I'm someone who does both production and facilitation. So, that's why the term, "Creative Producer", I think, is pretty appropriate. I think in Australia anyway the context of a producer is someone who's dealing purely with the funding or the money side of things and there's tensions often between the producer and the artist. Whereas I think if you're a producer that has a artist sensibility that enables you to better engage with the artist or the practitioner. So, then the term "Creative Producer" makes more sense in that context.

I call myself different things, depending on who I'm speaking to but I think the word "Creative Producer" – is one of those terms also that does not necessarily have a defined meaning, so it's quite an ambiguous term. You can actually build a meaning around it. When you're talking to someone or introducing yourself to someone you can then expand further with that sort of term. I think if you're talking with grassroots-type artists I might not use the term, "Creative Producer". I think I'd just go in as someone who can help you out. I just use a simple description, like, "Would you like some assistance with writing up a grant application?" or, "I reckon I can get some money or I can talk to some philanthropists. But talking to the institutions and also businesses, if you are trying to approach the business community to get funds or approach philanthropists, the term "Creative Producer" could be used.

I think from the artists' point of view though, the term "Creative Producer" is also probably not necessarily understood or that role of a director. So, using the film terminology of Creative Producer is a combination of a traditional producer and a director combined together. So, you're a director/producer too. I think the term "Creative Producer" it's all about the relationships. So, I think the term Creative Producer would suggest a more collaborative kind of environment as opposed to a producer, or a publisher, or a director, which is much more assertive and much more fixed in its direction.

I think the idea of terms like "directors", I mean, they're again very much loaded terms where you are kind of the owner of the idea or the concept and this - it comes back to ownership. So, it's pretty important to try and figure out how not to alienate the creative talent or the creative people. Well, I guess in film – I mean, the term "producer"

is someone who does sort of guide the shape of film or a documentary in a way that it is kind of sellable. So, that is the term, I think - but the word "producer" just doesn't work in publishing or in art, for some reason. The word "mentor" is quite a weak term as well. Whereas the Creative Producer actually has much more of a defined role or you can be more assertive, I think. I have not heard of the term Animateur, not at all.

The negative of this idea of a Creative Producer working in a collaborative way is that you come up with a consensus-type production which I think has the potential to be weaker. Where you're trying to make everyone happy. And I think that's the kind of the flip side of community media or community art. It just doesn't have the edge, or it has an edge that's constructed and often it's a small ghetto of a community that maybe does not understand the edge but accepts that it is edgy, even though in the broader community it doesn't necessarily work. So, it's a permitted art that comes out or a permitted expression that's created through a filter that's in a grid filter by a bunch of people. The Creative Producer in that context becomes more like someone who orchestrates it and convinces everyone to work together and accept this final vision, if you like. I think that term is probably much more compatible within organisations. I think it'll probably shift very quickly into organisations. You'll find project officers becoming Creative Producers. I think it allows the artist to perceive the person who is in control in a different way. Or it allows the person in control to want to be perceived in a different way.

The qualities of a Creative Producer are patience, integrity but also the ability to implement. There's the two sides, if you like; the money side and the creative, the talent side or the artistic side. It's a whole lot of skills, entrepreneurial, a bit of business, financial management-type skills, budgeting skills but also the ability to be trusted and respected by the creative community, and I think that's quite important. I think it helps if they have gone through the loop of being, an artist who has worked in the producing context before. So, there's a respect that would come back. It's that cliché, right, if you haven't gotten your hands dirty, then the people who are getting their hands dirty won't respect you.

I think a Curator is a bit more distant from the artist than a Creative Producer. So, a Curator is much more judgemental. On another level a Creative Producer is like an agent, a friendly agent to the artist, so it's he or she is a mediator of the artist or a representer of the artist to the curator.

One of the real dangers is that the producer, maybe even the Creative Producer loses touch with what it is to be an artist. I think that happens the longer that you work within that, without actually participating in the production process. So, it's important for the Creative Producer to actually go back in cycles into being an artist as well because the longer you stay away from it, the closer you will move towards the funder. I'd like to be in charge of the fun. I really enjoy being in all aspects of the project, so that's the thing. And I think that's a real danger because you do lose focus. But it also comes back to the size of the budgets, and the scale of the projects.

I have a feeling it's actually the larger budgets that might have brought about the need for this sort of role and the complexity, potentially of the projects. I think artists who are very focused might be more than fine to do all the stuff themselves. So it's the larger teams that really need the Creative Producers.

INTERVIEW WITH D6
Industry Position: Director of University Arts Research Technology and Education (UK)
(D6 interviewed 26th November 2003)

D6: So I started working primarily with technologies and that of course moved me from being a curator who organised existing work, or commissioned things in a relatively predictable way, into working with the unknown - which is you know the byline to working with new technologies. The context for collaboration has shifted a little bit. The debate has shifted. I've got to try and be critical whether the whole situation has shifted, and I think it has. The way in which I am working is different from the way in which I was working some years before and that is partly due to a world change. When I say world I mean a particular sort of art scene in the UK stroke international….There is a really big interest in the UK and there has been over the last five or six years in art and science collaborations - more so than in lots of other countries. It is partly led by funding.

A big push here also from within the Arts Council to look at new and emerging and developing artforms. There are a couple of reasons for that. One is because the arts funding is always a little bit volatile, and I think that funding officers or funding departments to keep their existence need to find a kind of rationale. They don't want to see it comfortably on established arts practices. The fringe dwellers in the arts, and I have always been in the fringe with photography and video and all that kind of stuff, that encompasses live performances and stuff like that, are always re-inventing themselves. The fruitful area for re-invention in the last five to ten years has been about collaboration outside the arts. I think there also comes a kind of manic need for self-justification, an inferiority complex from within the arts. It always has to be economically viable. Its got to be marketing viable. Its got to prove itself on par with industry. All sorts of stuff, which it actually isn't.

There is this bigger context which is propelling the issue of collaboration that I think is bad ie. that art is no good on its own. It has to justify itself in other ways. Its got to keep ahead of the game. Being involved in collaboration is seen to be keeping ahead of the game, and its also felt that we can get money from other sources and siphon it into the arts, because it is so bloody hard to get money for the arts.

The projects that I have been setting up recently are complex collaborations in two ways. They are either complicated groups of people developing work, which is the way I would have talked about collaborations if you'd asked me these questions five years ago - or six years ago. Then I would have talked about computer scientists or

programmers working with artists ie like hardware/software in its various permutations working with creative people and skill-sharing and developing things. Or, I would have talked about creative people and creative people working together - like performers and visual artists or just a range of people with media skills working together and the issues about forming teams and developing teams.

A big issue when multimedia production was the kind of language we were talking about. Now if you ask me questions about collaboration, then immediately I start to think about inter-disciplinary collaboration - collaborations across different sort of boundaries. I take it as given that projects will involve a large number of skill sets coming together that will probably come from different people. A new media product or project will probably have all these kinds of things. It will probably come out of a team rather than out of an individual. I just don't get involved with very many individual things any more. The interdisciplinary ones raise all those difficult issues that you were just talking about. How do people find a common language?

For me often the issue is, I'm not the subject expert. I'm not the person who is defining a creative outcome. For me, the issue is often I do see the whole thing. I have lots of different ways of describing what the creative producer does. Sometimes it's saying - I'm the catalyst. I'm making these processes take place. Sometimes I'm the host at the cocktail party. I'm mixing the drinks and I am doing the introductions, seeing the thing works, and sometimes I am a hands-on artistic director. I recognise that within all these things, they are about very human drives. People like to make stuff. People like to know what they are doing. People like to finish things. People like to think they are being creative and so I try to inject that. I try to make sure that people do that, so that they get a sense of fulfilment. A lot of my stuff is in the background, fielding, organising, suggesting. Well maybe you could do such and such now. So it is a very invisible hand often.

I need to know enough to be able to understand why someone says this about their argument about it being the right system to work on for the best outcome. I think that most of the time I work with people very closely. So there is the sense that I am the person that put the project together. It's like if you are working on a film. You're the person who has originated the story. With film its probably its more like being the producer often rather than the director. It is particularly the sort of sense when a producer has actually brought together all the elements and originated the initial germ of it.

I look at other curators and organisers and I see the extent to which often they interfere because they need to make their presence felt. Sometimes I see that's valuable and viable having a strong line to take, which maybe about content. Sometimes it's just a waste of their space. Sometimes I do interfere. Sometimes, because projects don't go anywhere and they go off the rails. I guess most of the time people will see me in this, as this kind of catalyst, soft organiser role, but also recognise fundamentally that without me the project would not be taking place… that's just the kind of given.

I actually did start using that term creative producer. I use a range of terms interchangeably. I used that term or cultural producer because I don't always talk about what I do as art projects, and sometimes they're not. Because you can define things as you want to really. But interesting stuff is happening in agencies and people who want to see themselves happening in a kind of fly by night way. They come together with a group of people make something happen and disperse again, or change their name and re-invent themselves regularly. I think the idea of a Creative producer no matter what it is called is important in there.

There was a lot talked about years ago and people don't seem to talk about it so much about that role in new media of the commercial producer-come artist. You'd have groups like Antirom and Soda who work simultaneously doing really interesting commercial work - web development work or programming or that kind of stuff, but also maintaining their position as artists and sometimes managing to do the two things side by side. The people who I knew ended up saying that we are either going to be business people, or we are going to be artists. They made very clear choices. Very few people have maintained that kind of straddling. Those kind of people fitted into the creative producer role to a degree.

I have heard of Animateurs. I am just trying to think who does it. Maybe it is more from the performance side that people do it. Because it isn't a kind of term that comes out so much in the media sector. The animateur in lots of ways is often the workshop leader. I think the difference is that they can be responsible for the creative jewel, the creative passion. It's more than being a dramaturg. It actually is about not just stoking the fire, but being the embers as well. I would say in most of the projects that I do, that I don't do that. I back off from saying I'm the one with the creative vision. Otherwise, I would be an artist.

I guess for me the thing about the Creative Producer is being able to identify if it's not happening. I may change the creative team that's working on the project, or bring somebody new in, or just say that this isn't going anywhere.. The number of appalling things that call themselves process-based stuff, because they were so bad that the outcome was not of any interest. I think that the arbiter role is really necessary.

The massive shift that needs to take place which is one of the reasons why I don't like to use the term curator. It's a bad term. I have a problem defining what I do because curator is the wrong term. New Media Producer is the wrong term as well because people immediately think I am leading a games company or web design or something like that. If I say I am a Creative Producer, I then have to give a kind of a two minute explanation of what I really do. Then people go, I don't understand anyway and I get angry with them. I say if I was doing stuff with mime artists you'd have no problem. Its just because it's the internet that it's an issue.

INTERVIEW WITH D7
Industry position: Visual performance, Multimedia Artist, Software Developer
(D7 interviewed 6th June 2006)

I think it's really important in a collaborative project to have a solid goal and to always question and to refine that, until it's something solid. If there's more questions that come up down the track, all you have to do is refer to the original objective of the project, and then you find if it fits or not. Maybe the objective of the project will inform how the nitty-gritty is worked on. And then that way it gives artists who you're collaborating with free range, but you also give them limits or parameters. It's hard to work if there's no parameters, because for me I don't find motivation in just sitting down and working on something without parameters. I need to have an objective and once that objective's clear, then I've got something to aim for.

Collaborators need to have a grasp of multimedia. They need to be able to see that they're producers of multimedia, that we're not only just making pictures or videos. We're not just video editors, or sound engineers, but we're producers of an experience and they need to grasp multimedia holistically. I think what I look for in a producer, and in artists that collaborate with me, is that they can understand where I'm coming from on a holistic level, looking at the media and being able to dissect the media right down into colours and pixels and images. Then also right through to the way it's displayed, and the environment that it's displayed in, and the audience that it's made for, and also to have the technical skills.

Really good ideas can spark out of informal conversations that have nothing to do with you being a multimedia artist. The other way I work, has been in a professional relationship where I'm pretty much an art director and have a consulting role, proofing the ideas given to me. We bounce it around and then you've got a constructive, professional environment where we actually sit down and discuss all the objectives of the projects, and then the best way of doing it.

Once a project is defined which I guess is a collaborative process as well, in terms of discussion. You discuss and bounce ideas and by doing that, you find what really rings true for you. Then there's that democratic process of working out, how we kept your goals and how we kept my goals in a collaborative sense. I always like it when there is clear direction and that usually happens when there's a project with a manager or a single producer.

There's a timeline that's set, it has to be completed. You've got room for playing around with the ideas for a while, and then you actually sit down and plan it. The event needs to happen at a certain date and you need to know how many projectors we've got and what technology we have to manage, and how we're going to manage the event. You know you can deal with criticism, whether it be positive or negative because you feel like you've given it enough time, and thought about it, and you've got the ability to be organized, I guess. Well, yeah, from a combination of collaborating as an artist with people, and then being a creative producer at other times.

I think the aim of the project, ends up becoming the core of your aesthetic. To be able to use that gut feeling as a reference is important. Then you can dip in and out of an intellectual observation of that scenario and dissect it, with all your knowledge in regard to engaging with the multimedia content. I like being able to flip between purely analytical, and the sensational mindsets, it is really important.

It's important for me because then I get to see the work as it's intended for the viewer. I'm also then able to justify why I choose certain colours and certain content, or why I choose to pursue a certain mood. Even though it's kind of small, before the project gets too massive and you're consumed by some to-do list with 20 points, you need to be able to visualise yourself engaging with that work. You need to be able to stay true to what it is you felt in visualising the work to begin with.

It's really important for me to have a clear to-do list, a clear list of points, so that I feel that I'm working towards the end goal which is always informed by an intuition that I had at the start of the project. Maybe it's just one specific feature of the engagement or one specific image but it's something that affects the way that I feel. If I can use that feeling again as a reference point then I guess, that first intuition is all that I have before the production process turns strictly methodical and intellectual.

Reflecting on the way that I work when I'm composing shows and matching light to music I rely on internal intuition. I have boundaries such as the extent of the light ranges of the videos, and the kind of controls I can assign to an image. Within that, there's all sorts of dynamics that I can end up pulling up from the movement in my body, through just my fingers on sliders, or the timing of striking keys with my hands. I'm always relying on an internal sensitivity.

INTERVIEW WITH D8
Industry position: Freelance media artist and University Lecturer in Multimedia (D8 interviewed 3rd April, 2008)

D8: In the last 15 years I have been involved in the multimedia aspects of public art and what you might call interpretive display or media, museum displays, culture centre displays, and visitor centres. I think Creative Producer is both a job classification and a function. I think I've seen calls or advertisements for creative producers for events, an event production. So, it is a job classification. To be a creative producer you need to know people and their skills in the fields that you're producing in. you have to have appropriate contacts. You have to know who is doing what, or at least be able to find the skills and the people with the skills that are appropriate to the project that you're doing. You also have to know about the medium in a technical and creative sense because you need to be able to plan around the realities of whatever technologies you're using or what are the creative possibilities. You have to have a handle on – not necessarily highly detailed – you don't have to be an expert in every field but you need to know the parameters and what's realistic in terms of the fields that you're dealing with.

I think it's flexible and it's pretty much up to the creative producer to determine what stages that they are going to be involved in, and what areas they hand over to other people, such as a director or whatever. I think it could cover all stages, every stage of production, right from conception to distribution. it's very much part of the creative producer's role to have the big picture, to know what the priority is, what the project is basically talking about in terms of content. So, I think the creative producer steps back from the whole thing and has a broad overview of the whole thing and has a good understanding of pretty much every aspect but not the detail.

It's part of the creative producer's role to have the big picture, the overview of where a project's going and what the nature, what the dynamics of the project will be. They need to be very good communicators and listeners. They need to be able to draw the best out of people. They need to make the team that they're working with feel that they have ownership and a certain amount of creative freedom, that their creativity is being utilised appropriately and is respected and enjoyed. I think it's a really getting a team working together and having fun. You know, making sure people are having a good time and feeling respected and getting their strokes. I think that's the best way to get the best results from the people.

I think you have to be flexible if you're able to get the best out of the team that you're working with because, it depends on the particular dynamics of the people that you're working with, what their skills are. So, you might choose to emphasise certain aspects of a project over others or go change the process to how you'd originally conceived it, because of the particular combinations of skills of people you've assembled.

The key thing is in collaborative skills, if you were to prioritise I think that'd be the most important thing is your collaborative skills. The creative producer is often a contact point, especially in terms of the producer side of it, for the clients. You know, all sorts of various roles go to the creative producer as the point of contact. The Creative Producer is also part of the creative team, whereas a producer is more of an administrator. So, a producer is often seen as a bit of a pain in the neck, to creative people because they bring down the law about sticking to budget. A creative producer has a foot in both camps, so they have a better understanding of creative processes. Being involved in the creative process as well as the production and administrative side of it makes for a much better marrying of those two sides.

The creative producer has a foot in both camps, there's always opportunity – see, because both camps have – creative people, they're not so worried about budgets. Their focus is on creativity and doing interesting work and risk taking and innovating, whereas a producer is primarily concerned with the practical sides of things. The Creative Producer provides a more integrated link between the practical and the creative, because you've got a person who understands both and understands the relationship and dynamic between those areas. The bigger the project, the more specialist the role of creative producer would become. In a smaller scale project the creative producer might replace a director or something like that, or be a director and producer, but on a larger project I think they would stand, without replacing anyone's role.

I would imagine possibly that perhaps the creative producer might in fact, in a sense, produce the brief for the curator. Say, if it's bringing together an exhibition or a performance evening or whatever – and you have a concept for the type of performance and the context and how it sits culturally, the curator would possibly work with you on the aspect of who are the most suitable artists to include within that broader vision.

I'm a bit confused about that term, "animateur. What is it? It sounds to me much more obscure than - creative producer is fairly self explanatory. I think most people would be able to, even if they hadn't heard the term before, be able to come up with a fairly accurate guess about what a creative producer approximately does and what their role might be, whereas an animateur, I'm sort of struggling -

My rationale for success on a project first of all it was the creative success of it, under the usual sorts of parameters, if it was highly engaging, relatively innovative, if it captured the imagination of the audience and the audience responded to it, and it communicated, that'd have to be the number one gauge of success. The number two gauge of success would be, the usual practical things, like having come in on budget and on time, which is particularly on time is very critical - I'm mean, it just has to because if it doesn't it's not a success at all. So, that's probably right up there with the creative; that it actually happens, when it's supposed to happen. And then, coming in on budget and also that the people who worked on it have achieved a level of fulfilment from it. I think that's extremely important because all of that stuff communicates to an audience in the end. And that, the commissioners are pleased about it, all of those things are very important to gauge success.

There are many forms of community projects but often community projects can involve a fairly large number of very diverse people who all have different conceptions. For example, if you're doing a landscape project in a suburb that might involve input from the entire people in the whole community in a suburb, you know, that kind of community – it's hard to gauge success because there's all sorts of individuals in communities and they're all going to come from somewhere, have a different perspective. So in those contexts you have to make some sweeping assumptions about whether it's successful or not - and sometimes it's not possible to tell for one or two years when something settles in, if it's something that's permanent. But there's other ways of judging things with other communities, small, specialised communities like disadvantaged people or Aboriginal groups or very specific communities, whether it's actually done the job and benefitted the community and, whether it actually functions in the way that it was originally supposed to. You can usually tell those things within a few months of something, depending again on the nature of the project.

Logically has to and there's enormous feedback. The skills and knowledge that might be required for a particular public art project might have been developed through my own personal practice - and invariably it is - and then every time you do something you learn things and that feeds back into whatever else you do. So, there's enormous two-way, multiple kind of channels of feedback loops and stuff, to the point where it's all totally integrated in a lot of ways.

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEWS WITH ARTISTS AND PROJECT PARTNERS

INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST 1
Project Role: Artist/Editor – Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie,
Hairy Tales and Kids Games
Industry Position: Film-maker, Multimedia artist, Editor
(Artist 1 interview conducted 27th August 2006)

Artist 1: I worked on Screens & Screams, Hairy Tales, Kids Games and I've done half a dozen others. There are clearly defined roles which have evolved from many productions, and it seems to work quite well. I have an innate visual sense that works quite well in a team, as a camera operator, camera man, primarily in the editing stage. There's a lot of skill involved in using a video camera in this method of filmmaking that's low budget and hand-held. …You do a lot of warm-up material and play a directing role. I think the directing role's split between the two of us, but you also concentrate a lot more on the sound, the voice-over material that we collect later on in the production.

It's a spontaneous sort of process that's intuitive. I use that word because I know roughly what we've going to get with the mechanics of videoing because I've done so much of it. We can work on the fly very quickly and adapt to situations. It involves not using lip-sync or as little lip-sync as possible. It's the more playful, gestural mannerisms that are not mimicking, that I go for. Children use their bodies and their faces to develop spontaneous, delightful short video sequences. … I'm interested in the filming process that evolves out of simple narrative constructs, rather than complex ones. It's a deconstruction of narrative, of core elements that you can play with later on. I'm interested to try and be as spontaneous as possible with the talent in front of us, so that material's not overworked. I have to respond in a spontaneous, intuitive way to deal with it. I try to invent an editing construct later on. When I am filming there's constantly a dialogue in my head about, what am I doing with this material, what am I doing with this person in front of me? How can I present them in a positive manner and develop rich material with them. It's not out of them, but with them.

It's a dual thing where they have to feel comfortable with me holding a camera. With you and the other artists involved … and …, there's been a warming up process with kids, that gets them enthused, and there's a natural energy and flow. I like to use those terms, energy and flow, because it involves spontaneity and creative sparks that results in really great performances from children. We've been successful with this because it's not belaboured and tied into kind of complex narrative, and in pre-production processes that lock you down in stuff and lacks spontaneity.

You need to have a an overview of what you want to get in filming situations, but you don't want to totally plan and construct everything beforehand. It's good to have this looseness with dealing in the immediate situation and we can actually pump out lots of material with two or three filming sessions now, with children in the various projects we've done because we have a team process that we have developed. It's partly knowledge from the tasks we know. We know that we potentially can pull it

off and make a successful project because of long experience together but there's a spontaneity in there.

I don't see I'm a director of these new projects I've made with you. I feel I'm a contributing artist and I think there's three or four contributing artists who all have a role within it. The Creative Producer is not an owner, it's not an ownership of a community production, where one person totally has a vision, it's sort of shared. The Creative Producer has a pretty strong vision, even though we all have our own hands-on specific kind of talent that contribute to the major production.

Spontaneity and improvisation are fundamental to my current filmmaking practice. I've made works with adults now, people with intellectual disabilities, where I had no script or content to start with and made this great little film that evolved out of people's experiences of being incarcerated. There's something about being in the space in the present where the filmmaker and the person being filmed has an interaction. I knew these people for a long time, so I was able to get it. It's about trust, first, and there's an empathy between the camera operator and the performer that is fundamental. That's improvisation and spontaneity.

Intuition is seeing the space, the situation, the historical development of why we're all there, what the purpose is, which sits underneath intuition. Actually, what intuition is related to is the historical reading of the situation that you know is going to work but the reason is not really clear. You don't kind of construct it formally. In your mind you don't tick little boxes off to make an intuitive decision but, as a filmmaking practitioner, intuition is an important element in sizing up the moment, and the situation to get material. You constantly use intuition in filmmaking practices because you know before filming, and then editing, that these things will work. It's not a psychic thing, definitely not psychic. Intuition is an unconscious thing that you develop over a long time. It's gone into your unconscious and you just feel this is the right moment.

Of the three projects, I felt I had the least involvement in the pre-production of this project. I was involved in pre-production discussions in terms of outcomes of what we're trying to achieve. There was a clear vision of what they wanted to do at first, in terms of a narrative that underpinned the project, which I didn't think would work at all. It evolved and it was madness for 10 days, seven of which were with 300 kids, two lots of kids a day. I ended up working on a project around kids' attitudes to ghosts, that's how I'd describe what it developed into. But that was one of the ideas we discussed with the artists from Ireland. I really loved the spontaneity of that work. Because it was such chaos because of the amount of kids that we had to deal with, not chaos, in that it wasn't badly designed. Part of the funding was to give a whole lot of children a go at digital technologies but to get a successful outcome was really scary at first.

We literally made the workshop plan up on the day, in the morning. We'd drive into, the four of us, to ACMI. We'd talk about what we were going to do today? The first day was pretty clear, but over the next seven days we literally would aim for types of material that we'd want to get out of the kids in each group. I liked that. We'd really run

by the seat of our pants. We had four or five workstations and we moved around, and assisted. I had about two or three key spots where I worked with the kids on animation, obviously I did a lot of filming with kids with silhouettes, that's what I can remember.

Every day, after the two shifts of kids, a group in the morning, we'd have lunch and just gasp and try and eat something and then there'd be the next lot of kids. We'd spend a long period after the workshops were over, just sifting through what we'd collected. We'd spend four or five hours every day from about 4 o'clock till 9 o'clock at night just editing down, getting the core material out, and digitising it or collecting all the digital material and knowing what was there. It's a really important function because we knew what we needed, what we were weak on, and what we needed to get more of, and it was stunning.

It's the least narrative based work, of the three works that you have studied. It's more of a graphic design work, I think, an audio-visual design work, that works. I actually had a much stronger hand, not in the pre-production or the production, I think I was just part of a group of people that staggered through and got good material because it was really demanding. I had a strong hand in the final editing of all that material. There were two or three editors. I probably did the final edit. I've got an intuitive narrative filmmaking construct, and I know what works. I felt that my role in the production was strongest in the post-production, in the editing. I was able to find graphic techniques where kids did paper cutouts, silhouettes, made puppets, screen prints that created just wonderful visual material that we were then able to digitally convert and matte into other digital material like silhouettes, live action footage to make this incredible collage work. It explores heaps of experimental film techniques, from the last 100 years and has great audio too. Fantastic audio material was developed in the most primitive of conditions, where the kids are literally screaming into a little microphone on the top of an E-mac computer, recorded in Sound Edit 16.

We were getting monologues and it was quite clear. I was surprised at the audio material that was gathered. I love that. I love the anarchy of the filming situation that produces surprising results which you couldn't get if you tried to sit kids down carefully and, you know, spend a few weeks massaging something. It's improvisation at its most spectacular. … There's this process going on where I'm filming and analyzing and going, wow, it's astonishing. I'm looking for astonishing moments as the rich material to edit and put into the film. It definitely was an art workshop production. It really opened up my filmmaking eyes to tired old habits and standards of filmmaking I'd developed over 25 or 30 years. It was a refreshing way to be in the continual present, in the filmmaking process rather than pre-planning overtly all the time.

It was a great way of developing material quickly and spontaneously and involved where you have an overarching theme which is really loose, but you know it'll probably work. Kids lost in the bush, kids' attitudes to sport. You need to have a good thematic idea that you think will have the potential to open up rich material from kids. Screens & Screams really did it for me. It really loosened up. I had them in the past, these sort

of processes, but it was just nice to be involved in a production that really lived in the present with kids, performing, acting, drawing, singing, reading pieces, and dozens of them, literally hundreds of them, 300 of them. Unbelievable.

The other nice thing about the process was to actually have a screening for all the children and their parents, within 10 days of the start of the project. This is lunacy but it really speeded up editing processes. We weren't locked into a narrative which was really nice. It was graphically and sonically rich material that we had to play with. So, the editing process was more in a digital interactive realm, rather than classic filmmaking techniques.

Hairy Tales

The construct was, you and I had thought we're going to have kids for four Sundays in a row. We're going to make something with these kids. How are we going to do it if it's kids from the general public who we have over four Sundays, for two or three hours.

We decided on the idea of children being lost in the bush. We did it narratively the first week, children are out in the bush and they lose their teacher, what are they going to do? The first week was just setting up the situation, asking kids to invent creative ideas of what they'd do once they found out they were lost. They'd miss the teacher. There's some great little sequences of kids being frightened and worried. The next week we thought, it'll probably go into the evening and what's it like to be lost in the bush at night. The third week was about being found. It was over four weeks, so we had the space to be that broad. Some of the kids turned up for four weeks in a row, and other kids only turned up once, for one session, so we had to invent little sequences with kids about being thirsty, being hungry. The concept of being lost in the bush worked really well.

It's a really powerful, exceptional film because of the filming process, how it evolved. Kids just thought up an idea, we went ahead and did it. They seemed to really enjoy the process. We just said, you've got to do it in front of a black cloth. We can matte in drawings later on and we had a few sticks for fire, a few simple, little props. I can't even remember what, probably half a dozen little props and kids had to act thirsty and hungry and they whittled sticks. They pretended to sharpen sticks to go and try and kill animals.

We lessened the need for kids to draw directly into a computer, even though it was advertised as a multimedia, filmmaking workshop. The kids hand drew all the artwork and then we scanned it in with them, and then we edited bit of it with the kids. We'd do little sessions in director or flash where they'd move the drawings around and turn them into animations. For instance, there are birds flying which was a bird with two wing positions. These were really simple techniques that we worked out with the kids, and got them to hand draw the material first. ... It evolved out of what happened in Screens & Screams. It's a whole production process which has developed in the last five years simply from Screens & Screams. Before that project I was heavily involved in digital media - basically animation and stills and I hadn't done any kind of live action

footage for a while. I've got this whole new production process, which has evolved out of Screens & Screams and Hairy Tales with a black cloth. It was developed because schoolrooms are so ugly to have as backdrops, they're cluttered, they're kind of like classic archetypes which have bad memories for some people. You can just stick up a huge, black cloth in a classroom and it gets rid of the background. You have human beings, bodies in front of the black cloth using gestural mannerisms and then you can key them in with drawn images and it keys out the black cloth. It is an incredibly simply production process which works well.

Kids Games

One of the projects we did was the crystal ball which for me was really exciting to see a new way of presenting material in this innovative and exciting fashion where the viewers really enjoyed the strange triggering devices that brought images up. The outcome was really exciting on that one.

It's just there's a relaxed kind of style because some of the kids know us, or their big brothers and sisters were in the last film, and they're in it this time. The second lot of kids got into it really easily, because they saw what their big brothers and sisters had done, and they understood the production process.

In Kids' Games, due to a tight timeframe and budget, and the need to find another way of developing material, it was less narrative based. It was like using Vox Pops. There were spontaneous little comments, processes, feelings, emotions about sport that children expressed, and I really liked it. It was the least narrative of all of the productions, even though it had an overarching theme of what kids thought about sport.

You just got delightful observations and playful things, where they pretended to be sportsmen and sportswomen. It was a great theme that worked really well. … It lessened the need to build a kind of narrative construct because there were short moments of 10 to 20 seconds long about a sport event. There were 13 or 14 of them produced for Kids' Games for an interactive installation. Because it was an interactive installation, it's much better to have short, observational moments. The clarity of the image, it's not as clear in a crystal ball. You need big figures, more body parts, or a human head. It made it have a different construct in the actual editing of the material and gathering of the material, too. We used a lot of live action footage from outside. Besides using the black cloth, we had sequences shot in different locations, outside ArtPlay that worked.

We didn't need to have to devise intricate layering of a montage of material. There is montage in it but it was a simpler process. It was a bit more formulaic but it worked really well. It was more to do with the improvisation of the filming process, rather than the editing process. Hairy Tales was really a lot of work, in gathering the filming material and editing it later on, whereas in Kids' Games, there was lot of work in getting the material from the kids, but then I didn't have to work as hard with the editing because they're short, episodic observations.

INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST 2
Project Role: Artist in the Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie
Industry position: Visual Artist
17th July 2006

When we made the Screens and Screams film we worked on hands-on artwork that would then be translated into a multimedia format. Shadow puppets is a good example - shadow images and video because kids are doing something that they know how to do - act, rather than focussing on the medium which could be changing tomorrow with the sort of software that is used. That's not the point of those projects. It's about teaching kids to be creative, not to use software.

There were four of us that were going to be working on it and I don't think we really knew you well enough at that point, that there was that higher level of trust. We thought, well she is saying come out there, but it is a big step, and were we really going to do it. You thought that I would be the animateur on this project, but I am not a filmmaker. So I was coming to this thinking well I am not quite sure what my role is, because … is the filmmaker and … is a teacher and we are not doing any print making… what are we doing exactly.

People still talk about it as a great project. Just yesterday … was saying it was great project. Outsiders were stunned at what is possible to do in such a little amount of time. We all knew we would have a film. I knew we would work with X number of kids and our determination was that all those kids would have a good time and we decided that we would do something with the teachers. We had a very rounded picture in our head. Maybe you made that different by being the Creative Producer, and you had made us do things in a different way. There is no doubt about that. We were certainly working in a different medium. That's what you'd done with us in a way. Finding the artists who worked in one medium and brought them to work in a different way.

We had to have because we had the launch set up. We had the launch set up two days after the end of the filming. That's what we have done in the past with the other work that I have been involved in. You just know that you are going to get it to happen. It has never failed yet and it can't fail because the stakes are too high. All your participants have to have a realisation of the project. So we had to make that project work. There were some tensions between us on the project and originally you weren't planning on being involved at all as an artist. But then you came in because we needed it.

I think it was a very successful project because it did something else that these projects do and that was it set a new standard in a way of doing things. It raised awareness of working in a particular way. So projects can be very valuable in that way, that can be a Creative Producers role. They are making something happen which is signalling a new way of doing something. It certainly opened the doors. Now there is a whole range of movies by and with children, that you are involved in. ACMI are now having a weekend every year when they are showing work by and for children. Now that

wouldn't have happened if it had not been for Screens and Screams. Your creative role in that was actually broader than that one project. It set a standard and set other people thinking about doing something that they would never have thought of doing before. I think that is really important.

But you needed the animateurs to make it work. One of the skills of the animateur is that they have to have a complete knowledge of their medium, but that is not the greatest skill that they have. You have to be a very good communicator and very confident about what you are doing. That's why you have to know your medium well. You know your skill whatever it is. So if you are an animateur in multimedia you need to know that piece of software absolutely inside out. Whereas a Creative Producer doesn't need to know any of those things. They need to have some idea of the process and because they have done the processes before they need to have some idea about the timing of the processes. How somebody manipulates that particular puppet, or how somebody does a drawing is really not of importance. In fact, they just need to know that they can do it.

I think that methodology with the animateur has to cover other important areas like inclusivity. You have to be aware that you are including as many people in the group in as many valuable ways as possible, which some artists aren't aware of at all. It is absolutely true of that film too is that you can honestly say at the end that there was something by every participant in some way. I think I was very much in a mould as an animateur of going in and knowing how it was all going to end up and knowing my pacing so well.

INTERVIEW WITH: ARTIST 3
Project Role: Kids Games Drama Coach and co-creator
Industry Position: Actress/ /Director
(Artist 3 interviewed12th May 2007)

I think that what I was doing and it became part of my overt agenda too, was to encourage their bodies to engage with the process. I worked very physically on the first day of each project, to bring their imaginations into their bodies. They could then bring their visceral knowledge of their world, into the storytelling. It wasn't just word based, and it wasn't just the sparking of the imagination, but it was also them throwing themselves in body and soul, into the project. So, that's what I felt I was doing.

What I really loved is that even the camera, even the technology, like the microphone and the mini disk player, even those things became part of that shared game that we all played. There was never a sense that the technology stopped the flow, which I think was great. The technology was being introduced by the adults and sometimes that can make kids just clam up. Because they knew that we were in there for the fun, and we were in there to really grapple with them, there was never a sense of, oh, I've got to be something that I'm not now, because the camera has appeared. They were all able to remain natural and flowing. I think that that's part of it, and that's the trust thing. It's

so great for them to know that there's no judgement. There's a discipline because they were as a group quite disciplined, and I'm always quite disciplined as a teacher. Within that discipline there's ultimate freedom and that's the fun.

I think it was the project where they did the monster faces, that's the second project Kids Games. … set up a black curtain at Art Play and we did a whole lot of different movement frameworks. These were very simple disciplines, for example, starting on the left and going to the right, turning around to the group, and going from the right to the left. Because of the establishing work that we'd done where I'd taught them that simple framework, when it came to filming, it was very easy for them to understand what was required. … The reason why the frameworks needed to be so simple was because the process was quite short. There was no point in introducing complex ideas, and so I chose to work with very simple ways of creating material that were easily accessible. … What I was actually doing was using, simple frameworks to allow people to play. It was improvisation in the sense that people were using their bodies and their minds and their words and their sounds all to work together to tell a story of some kind. That's what they did, but we weren't using improvisation to create a long narrative, we were using improvisation to create moments.

The whole process was improvised. We planned for spontaneity.I think it allows engagement from many sides. Especially when working with young people, most of what theatre tries to do is engage people on a verbal level. That's so limited in terms of the ability to engage all of the participants. I said at the beginning that I'm always looking for that connection. I think that especially when people are in that time of their life, a lot of them cannot articulate verbally. I love that. It enables people to engage at their own level and they get their key into the material in different ways. One of them will key in through music, one of them will key in through the physicality, one of them might key in through the verbal, one of them might key in through the connection with you, or … or me in an emotional connection that makes them get into the material.

The second group had seen the results of the first year, so they were very quick, much quicker to trust. The first year, we had to spend quite a bit of that first contact getting them to trust us, to trust each other, there was a bit of, oh, what's this for and explaining. Whereas the second year it was like, wow, we were on a fast track from the first time we met them. They were, like, great, let's go! What are we going to make. I think as the years go by, if you did one every year you would find that just increasing. The kids would start to look forward to that process and say well, they made that, what can we make? I don't think they had any expectation about how it was going to happen, necessarily. I don't think that that had been articulated to them, but they certainly knew something was going to happen. They certainly knew that it was going to feel good, because the other kids the year before had felt their self-esteem was very good.

I think the reason why the kids had such confidence that they were going to get a good outcome is because simplicity is really important …I think the risks that interest me are emotional. In the second project, Kids' Games for example, when we did the Olympic

Games, a lot of the sequences were conventional ones. Then there were the fantasy ones and the girls decided they were going to have an Olympic Go-Go competition. It was just absolutely so free the day they filmed that, it was incredible. They danced for about 45 minutes, with … filming them from all different angles. They were going, oh now we'll do this one, and now we'll do this one. The continual offering, and the lack of any sense of embarrassment, that's what's important about the project. I think that vibrancy comes from making things very clear for them, because of their age group, too. … It also went across to the drawing aspect. There were lots of the children who said, I can't draw, at the beginning. By the end, they were creating large-scale sculptural pieces on paper and moving them through space and that was very exciting.

It was like a play park. I'm used to working on film sets but I'm also used to working in theatre where you get that multi-development thing happening. At the same time as you've got actors working over here, you've got art department, you've got your design team working over here, and you've got your wardrobe being made and everything comes together, bears on the material at some point. I actually felt very comfortable with that, it felt very familiar to me that feeling. … That's very much what you would do if you're making a piece of contemporary theatre. Especially if you are making a piece of contemporary multimedia theatre. You would have all those elements working simultaneously, and that felt very comfortable to me. I must say that the film set aspect of it was so exciting because it didn't require large amounts of lighting. The only thing that we required, two things that we required to create a film set environment was silence and that discipline that we were talking about. The kids understanding what the frame was, and where they needed to be, and how they needed to put their energy into it. Really silence was the only requirement.

We built in the potential for creativity and spontaneity by creating a framework. Within that you've got total freedom, but there's always the discipline of the form. If it's a picture postcard, everybody knows that we make a title that's like, hello from Honolulu. It doesn't matter what the postcard is, and everyone jumps in and creates that story together. … So very clear and simple and not with the expectations that are so high that someone feels frozen. Very simple, the simpler the better, to get people comfortable to start throwing themselves in, yeah.

We didn't create the stories and we don't own the stories. They are their stories and we have facilitated them to express those stories from many different angles. It's the joy of the ownership, that is the ultimate gift that those children get. I can see how that's so different to film because in terms of an art form it's more like being a collage artist, than being a filmmaker in the traditional sense.

INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST 4
Project Role: Collaborator/Technical re-development of crystal ball
and installation on Kids Games
Industry position: Visual performance, Multimedia Artist, Software Developer
6th June 2006

I think it's really important in a collaborative project to have a solid goal and to always question and to refine that, until it's something solid. If there's more questions that come up down the track, all you have to do is refer to the original objective of the project, and then you find if it fits or not. Maybe the objective of the project will inform how the nitty-gritty is worked on. And then that way it gives artists who you're collaborating with free range, but you also give them limits or parameters. It's hard to work if there's no parameters, because for me I don't find motivation in just sitting down and working on something without parameters. I need to have an objective and once that objective's clear, then I've got something to aim for.

Well, firstly collaborators need to have a grasp of multimedia. They need to be able to see that they're producers of multimedia, that we're not only just making pictures or videos. We're not just video editors, or sound engineers, but we're producers of an experience and they need to grasp multimedia holistically. I think what I look for in a producer, and in artists that collaborate with me, is that they can understand where I'm coming from on a holistic level, looking at the media and being able to dissect the media right down into colours and pixels and images. Then also right through to the way it's displayed, and the environment that it's displayed in, and the audience that it's made for, and also to have the technical skills. It's important for me to be able to find artists that take control of the space that they've got. Take control of that presentation space, to look at the audience and the way they want the audience to engage with their work in that space. Then you get more than just a video on a plasma screen or an interactive website, you can get an experience of some kind.

I think that its important to be able to work with people that either somehow cross my path and are on the same wavelength, or people that have the same cultural concerns, and then at the same time still be open enough for experimentation. I like to experiment in the creative development process before defining the work, and to push the boundaries of my skills. That then makes it easier, I guess, to come up with work that supports an idea. To work on an idea, I think for me I want to get down to the core of what it is, that made that a concern to begin with. In re-VISION, for example, it wasn't just enough for us, even though it was a start, it wasn't just enough to say, cool, we're going to make Crystal Ball. We had to look and find a way, and a reason to collaborate. When we actually came to a decision to make a comment on the media then, that's where the collaboration really could start.

A lot of the time for me when I'm finding people to work with. You want to be able to talk about it in a relaxed atmosphere. I think it really only comes out of informal

relationships and friendships and talking to other artists on an informal level. Brainstorm it. There's people that approach me and say, I definitely want to work with you. I'm something blah and it's, like, oh, get away. I've got too much to do already. Really good ideas can spark out of informal conversations that have nothing to do with you being a multimedia artist. They come from you being in our society with concerns or, sometimes what you think might just be some superficial concerns that end up being the ground for a whole work. It might not always be really in-depth and cultural. Sometimes its just something fun, or emotionally deeper.

INTERVIEW WITH PARTNER 1
Project role: Funding Partner for Screens and Screams Multimedia Movie
Industry Position: Team Leader of Cultural Development
3rd October 2006

I think Screens and Screams was a fantastic project. I like things where you take a bit of a punt, and there is a bit of experimentation, and there is always something to be gotten out of it. Great work involves risks. If you don't take risks you are never going to get beyond the mundane or the expected. I don't know about Screens and Screams because you were really inside that one and I wasn't. But in a lot of them, you don't necessarily know what is going to come out at the end. Not really. I like that.

Well it was a beautiful easy project from my perspective because I didn't really have to do anything except say yes, which is very easy for me to do. From my perspective in terms of the steps of it all, you had this concept. I can't remember where you'd been with the concept but I don't think I was the first person you'd come to.

It sounded great and I just said yes and gave you the money. Wasn't that it? It was synchronicity in a way. I was worried about what to do for Children's Week. It was beautiful timing. Timing is really important. You had a great project to involve kids. If you were agreeable about putting it on at that time of year then that was wonderful. It really meant that that program could be delivered.

You solved a problem for me. The concept was really interesting. I had a certain needs that had to be met. I needed City of Melbourne children to be involved. I needed there to be sufficient opportunity for a sufficient range of them to be involved - so numbers… you know! Your concept was able to accommodate that. You brought ACMI on as a partner. It was great, but in the end it is the idea. I mean I would, I'd find the money. If it's a fantastic idea, you find away to do it.

The people that took part in it were really happy. That was great. The partnership with ACMI was really good. It had good profile. It was a good launch event and the community really liked it. That's really critical for me because all of those local residents need to be aware of my programs. It's really important because they are not the top end of town and they don't have a lot of political support.

I like and I liked democratic media, that's always really nice. I like radio, and cut and paste, and stencil and so it was a nice mixture of that and top end stuff that kids

wouldn't normally have a chance to do. So conceptually it was really good. I liked the mixture of the media, that was great. You had the artists from overseas. But in away that didn't really matter. It wasn't a selling point to me in the sense that had you come with that concept like that was fantastic. So that wasn't a big selling point, but it did dovetail in with another political imperative. I knew that you'd spoken to …, and he had a certain amount of power and cache here. He was my new boss so we could kill two birds with one stone.

I always prefer working with people who are unattached. It's a lot easier. I think that is very liberating for the person who is funding them and for everyone really. It's probably quite difficult for the Creative Producer, I guess but it is good for everyone else. If you are a free agent, it's your idea. You run with the idea. You just need a computer, a telephone and enough money to be able to do it.

The launch was extraordinary. We had the launch in the …Town Hall. I think people were just so happy that it was catered for, and that there was lots of food that the kids really liked. That was great. Hundreds and hundreds of children and their parents, and their grandmothers and their grandparents came. We had buses that came in from the estates. That was fantastic. We had transport. It was really mixed culturally and economically. Its good to do things at the Town Hall I believe because people don't get in there very often. Even though it is a daggy venue for us, it's a great venue to community members. They really dig getting into the town Hall.

The marketing guy had the concept of putting out the red carpet and doing a fake Oscars. It was a top concept putting out the red carpet and having the kids dressed up. The kids were invited to dress up as movie stars if they wanted to. And having them come up that red carpet with … pretending to be the press photographer with 1940's style camera. That was just so cool. Coming into the Town Hall that is all dimly lit and hundreds of them. It was just fantastic. I loved the screening of the film and all the kids yelling out. Anyway the families had a good time. I got really good feedback about it. I mean … was the only councillor that went. Because of the nature of the project, it wasn't a project that could receive general public publicity because it was for the participants. I'm really glad that the film screens at ACMI. I have seen it screened down there. It's on rotation and that's really good because it gives it another life.

It is still obvious that people don't connect children and children's culture with really interesting artwork. The same way that they don't connect black people with really interesting art work and they don't connect poor people with really interesting artwork. It is still the case that people presume that artists, as they generally are, white, middle-aged, monocultural people.

INTERVIEW WITH PARTNER 2
**Project role: Funding Partner (ACMI) for Screens
and Screams Multimedia Movie
Industry Position: Content Development Manager, Public Programs ACMI
Interview with Partner 2 conducted on 11th November 2006**

P2: I think it was an absolutely fantastic project and in fact we're looking to try and do something again of that nature later this year. The great thing about that project was 300 kids, a number of workshops over a two week period that then resulted in, not only the value of the workshop for the kids but the final product, the launch, the whole kind of thing for us. As I recall we did that before the building was actually opened.

I was saying to you, how could you pull this together? That was at a time when the building wasn't opened, we were almost in a hard hat situation, we were just using empty spaces. We had to bring all the equipment, chairs and tables in. We had our own legal infrastructure, which was just trying to set up for a new organisation. I recall the difficulties of the project in the role that you were in. You were not only coordinating the artists, coordinating the schools with us, but trying to actually work out, contractual and legal arrangements between an established group like City of Melbourne and an evolving, not yet established organisation that was still trying to set up new procedures.

We've got primary and you go into primary and you can have a look at a number of artists in schools programs, or basically you can have a look at the whole Screens and Screens project and, and/or The Making Of, so it's so far been on permanent exhibition.

At that time the value having an external Creative Producer making that connection was because we had no capacity. We had to keep looking inwardly because we were in various stages of both building development and project development, so it's an opportunity that you brought to us. We would not have, at that point in time, been able to go out and look for those kinds of opportunities or develop those kinds of partnerships.

On the other hand, I think it's quite interesting when you're able to come in, not just as a Creative Producer, but as an artist as well. So, you were able to say, O.K, if I bring these, what's essentially four sets of people together, that were two institutions, one group of artists and many groups of school children. You were able to look at what would be the needs of all of those four groups and match them perfectly into a project.

If you came along tomorrow or the next day and said, I can bring a project to this organisation that will allow the facilitation of a whole number of aims that we all agree with, and you can bring money or sponsorship to it. For an institution like ours, that's the immediate green light to a project because our own budget, is not stable at this point in time.

In these new times, where we find ourselves in moving image history, I think the role of

the Creative Producer in the digital world, is really thinking about not just meeting the needs of the different stakeholder groups, but making sure that anything's produced, is produced in such a way that it's endlessly re-purposeable. The needs of those groups can be anticipated into the future.

I think it would be always of value politically to have large-scale children's project around during the launch. That's not just a cynical media savvy kind of line. It's what we should be doing as cultural institutions - providing the educational means for young people to really understand the power of the moving image.

I guess, to go back to your earlier comments about what happened to those particular works afterwards, I said they're in the memory grid now. It's amazing when you see young people or families come in there, and have a look at those early works and come out all excited and buzzed because they go, primary school kids did that. I can do that, I can go home, say to mum and dad, this is what we're learning at school. So, that you're actually contributing to the inspiration of people, because they can see what people their age are doing and they're going to walk out of here and potentially go home and make it, or push the schools harder to do things.

The launch was extraordinary because the [name of city] had a keen interest in making it as serious a launch as possible. It was like the launch of the St Kilda Film Festival or the Melbourne Film Festival, but for kids and families. I recall there were in excess of 400 people at that launch and the high level of enthusiasm that the children displayed for the project, was very much in evidence at that launch.

I think that's what's fantastic about it, is being able to have those elements where you teach somebody something, you're in a production area, you end up with collateral at the end which is the finished product that they've made. You make another product which is about that product and the making of, you have a launch at the end of it, so you have an event which celebrates the whole process and then you have an exhibition outcome.

SM: I'm interested in the experience being a positive experience for the participants and the artists, but also for there to be an outcome which has high level production values and is appropriate for exhibition in a museum like this is. Do you think that that the project did deliver on both levels of outcomes.

INTERVIEW WITH TEACHER – PARTNER 3
1st August 2006
Project role: Community Partner in Twelve Tuff Tales, and Kids Games,
Industry Position: School Teacher, Inner City Primary School
Interview with teacher – Partner 3 conducted 19th of February, 2007

It was a class of Grade 5 and 6 students. I think there were about 16 students in the class with pretty much an even gender split. The majority of them were African, from Somali and Eritrea, from refugee backgrounds. Some were born overseas, in refugee camps or in a country in the middle of war and some were born here. Most of their English language skills were quite good, but it would probably be lower than you'd expect from children born in Australia, or if they'd gone to a more middle class primary school in a middle class area.

We try to give them a lot of exposure to different handson activities, rather than just coming into the class, O.K, open up your English book, let's go. We find with the children that their English skills aren't very good they immediately lose motivation and they think, well, I can't do anything… We thought that this project would be ideal for these kids. We find it's really good for their social skills, being able to work with different people, and cooperate with other children.

All the children at this school live in the adjacent housing estate. They'll come to school, go home, generally stay inside the flat, sometimes they'll come out and play in the grounds. They consider the school grounds to be their backyard but they don't venture far. So with a project like this, the kids get to go somewhere and do something different that they wouldn't normally be able to do. Their parents are willing for them to do these things because they know they'll be looked after.

CB Because we're a small school, there's a lot of interaction between the different year levels and even once the children have left the school they still feel quite an attachment to us. When I spoke about the project quite a few of them remembered who you were from the last time. They'd see you around and knew about the last project. So, that raised a big level of excitement with them.

CB They're very poor. They generally do not even have pens and pencils at home. I see the pens and pencils just disappear from the classroom and it's not them just breaking things or stealing them for the sake of it. It's because they haven't got anything at home. So, I'll say to them, if you don't have anything, feel free to ask and I'll give them pencils and bits of paper. They haven't had regular art sessions. They definitely haven't done the kind of art that we were doing with your project. We knew that when we saw the outline from you that this'd be an opportunity to experience the kinds of art they wouldn't normally do. They don't do anything computer related with art.

CB: I think something that goes over a period of time as well, not just a one-off activity, is quite beneficial. It's different not just for the kids, different for the teachers, for me because I've got to know you over the different projects and so we've developed

a relationship. Obviously the kids at the school think these are good people to work with. It helps from our point of view, the kids knowing these people have been here before. These people must like working with us as well. You are a familiar face. They like the familiar face because the kids have been in refugee camps and had all these changes.

SM: What do you think about trust, is that an element that comes into it from your perspective?

CB: Yes, As a teacher it's people I know I can trust to work with, and I know what you're aiming to achieve. You're getting a good result out of it and the kids are having a really good time, and can see you enjoy working with them. For the children, it's the same kind of thing. Even if it's kids who are working with you for the first time, they would know of you and the kind of experiences they're going to have. It's quite important with all kids, but these kids especially, that you build up quite a bit of trust with them. It's more than just getting to know their names, it's getting them to trust you. These kids have known how much fun the other kids in previous groups, have had, and they're keen and willing to try things.

SM: I'm wondering about the media literacy of these kids and if actually making a media based project may change their understanding of all that?

CB: At home they watch a lot of television. It's generally unsupervised television, and they just watch it because their parents don't, can't understand it, so they don't worry about it. I'm not sure how much news they watch. They're not taught to question what they see on TV at home … We'll try to get them to look at different points of view and to understand about the media, which works to some extent. But I think these kinds of projects help a lot more to understand the process of how it's made.

APPENDIX 4:
INTERVIEWS

DATA RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

1. Survey and Interview Respondents

1.1 Data Results

The basis for the selection of interviewees was the currency of their practice, and reputation for holding expert knowledge in the industry sector to which they belonged (see Appendix 2 for excerpts from the interviews). Another criteria for selection was that each person interviewed possessed expert knowledge of the creative production and management sector and was able to discuss (to varying degrees) issues and processes based on the observation of the practice of others.

Within the survey, four broad sector categories were constructed to group the survey respondents. The first category was an arts management group. The people selected were representatives from lo   cal, state, and national funding agencies, exhibition focussed organizations, and managers of arts organizations. The second category was of people involved in live theatre production and performance. The third group was people primarily involved in Community Cultural Development practice across a range of disciplines, and the fourth group were people who were media and/or multimedia practitioners.

The split between the interview subjects backgrounds and expertise was:

Funding/ exhibition arts organisations	Theatre	Community	Cultural Development	Multimedia/ Media
8	5	8	8	9

Of the 30 people interviewed 23 also completed the questionnaire. Those that completed the questionnaire and were interviewed are identified at the top of the Survey results spreadsheet (I + S). Those who were interviewed only were identified on the top of the spreadsheet (I). Of the 30 respondents to the mixed method qualitative and quantitative survey, there were 20% of people involved in the survey with whom the researcher had had some creative involvement in the past, and there were 80% of respondents that were not involved in any creative projects of the researcher, or a known advocate of the role of the Creative Producer.

Besides the categorisation used to group respondents by the developer of the survey, many of the 30 respondents identified themselves as working in several sectors. While 23% (7 people) described themselves as working with an arts funding body, 33% (10 people) stated they were involved with arts organisation management, 47% of respondents (14 people) stated they were working in education and research contexts, and 23% (7 people) were active in the museum/art gallery exhibition areas.

Another group of respondents were practitioners. Of those, 33% (10 people) were working in community-based multimedia production, 50% (15 people) were working

in media/multimedia production, and 9 people (30%) were active in community cultural development projects. There were 5 people (17%) involved in the survey that professionally identified themselves as theatre workers. Finally, 10% (3 people) identified other fields of creative practice.

1.2 Data Analysis

People who identified themselves as Creative Producer are scattered through all groups participating in the survey. The selection criteria for the respondents was observational perspective of each participant in the creative industries, and not on whether or not they knew, had observed, or called him or herself a Creative Producer.

Employment encompassing several roles (sometimes at the same time) is one of the defining characteristics of survey respondents who were working in the creative industries in Australia. The selected industry experts demonstrated an ability to identify patterns of activity that have emerged over time to deal with the new realities of practice; the creative opportunities that stem from the developments in technology and the evolving team compositions needed to deliver creative outcomes in different production contexts and scales.

Of the two respondents who selected media/multimedia production as their only fields of engagement, one worked in the traditional role of an executive producer/editor for a national broadcaster and the other worked in another traditional role as a producer/director in documentary film/video production.

MANAGEMENT OF CREATIVITY IN CREATIVE ARTS PRODUCTION CONTEXTS

2. What skills and experience are likely to be required to manage creative input in a production?

2.1 Data Results

All respondents were able to identify at least one skill or area of experience likely to be required to manage creative input in a production. All respondents agreed (100%) that articulation of a project concept was likely to be required to manage creative input in a production with a further 90% in agreement that an understanding of the capability of production tools and craft skills was also likely to be needed to manage creative input in a production. A content development manager of a large media exhibition organisation in Melbourne agreed that having creative experience was vital to the role, and without that experience it is not possible to be a Creative Producer. She said:

> *I think the person needs to either currently be, or have been practitioners in their own right. As a practitioner they will have had groups of people and networks, and those networks are quite fundamental to this kind of process. You need to be able to bring people in or imagine people to work on projects, or imagine the kind*

of people that you can take a project in one form and get them to transform it into another piece of media. You need to have an understanding of the digital world and the different kind of outcomes that it can cleverly result in. You've got to have a heart and a spirit. I think it comes back to sort of things like that. I know really good project managers in the business world. They're very pragmatic people. They get results, but it's not art.

(A3 interviewed 14th April 2004)

Representatives of all arts industry sectors surveyed agreed that the personal qualities of people who manage creative input in productions were likely to be important in this type of role. An ability to encourage innovative content development ideas was regarded by 90% of respondents to be a skill likely to be required in the management of creative input.

Collaborative skills and experience were also recognised by all (100%) of respondents as important in such a role. A view from the qualitative interviews by a Content Development Manager of a large media exhibition organisation in Melbourne may provide an explanation about why there was such agreement about the need for effective collaboration in non-hierarchical production environments. She said:

I get sick and tired of hearing people talk about collaboration and all it means is, I'll tell you what to do, or my agenda's more important. The good creative pro-ducer is a very good listener that can actually really understand what people are saying, and what they need and want, and can meet those needs, and connect all the dots for people. ... True collaboration here in this industry is actually, I guess it's the networks but it's also being aware you're listening and you're being aware. I can't over emphasise the listening bit. Because good project managers in other areas don't necessarily have to listen. They can assess things, get it all together and make it happen whereas in this area, we're trying to achieve outcomes all the way along.

(A3 interviewed14th April 2004)

There was 93% agreement in the quantitative questionnaire that grant writing/funding/ documentation experience were likely to be required. Less tangible skills and experience such as an ability to encourage innovative content development ideas was rated highly with 90% of respondents recognising the importance of encouraging experimentation in the development of innovative ideas.

Improvisational skills were rated by 67% of the respondents as an important aspect of these types of roles. Respondents who were involved in arts management demonstrated a greater level of understanding and experience of the need for spontaneous, intuitive and strategic action in the management of arts projects and organisations. Some of

these interview subjects could describe how they employed improvisation in a strategic management context.

For example, the Executive Director of a national media arts exhibition and commissioning organisation described how she used her ability to improvise in order to solve a strategic issue in the development of a curatorial program. The organisation needed to import a media work that would not fit into the venue, was not suitable for outdoor exhibition and was too expensive, but was regarded as the key work needed for the program. She said:

> *I think when you start improvising you start with something that is an impossible outcome. … I said to myself, "We're going to have this work. We have to have it we need a work like this. So, what are all the ways it could be possible?" And then you start pursuing those. I think in that instance that's exactly what happened. So, in theatre it's about improvising in order to develop a performance.*
>
> *In this case, it was improvising in order to present a work. I suppose the similarities are that it's about someone providing the sort of sparks. So, the only role I played in getting Baby Love here was saying, "We need it and the only idea I've got is that we can put it outside." I suppose that's what improvisation is: someone puts in the spark that starts the process and then people run with the idea and see what they can create out of that.*

(A4 interviewed 25thApril, 2008)

From the qualitative research, a Curator and Special Events Co-ordinator who works in digital curation and exhibition contexts in a technology precinct in Dublin described the need for people involved in a bridging creative and management role, to have craft skills and experience. She was interviewed in 2003, had not heard of the role of the Creative Producer, and identified role designation as an issue in her work. She said:

> *A lot of the projects here have been completely new inventions like hacking together graphic cards… I mean brand new stuff. I think that's part of it as well. I think having to know if something is possible, how to do it. If it's an artwork that I am looking at, I need to be able to tell if it is a good aesthetic idea, and if it's a good creative idea - if it holds up as a piece of art or not - if that's what the brief is. There are different criteria for commercial projects that I need to know.*

(A6 interviewed 15th October 2003)

In a completely different area of community-based practice a formally credited Creative Producer working on a long-term indigenous performance and multimedia project also noted the importance of the Creative Producer having production experience and media craft skills. She said:

You need to be able to be sympathetic with an artist who's going, oh, my God, my hard drive has just crashed. I'm going, O.K, I need this content on the website by Friday, but I know what that means in terms of editing, rendering, exporting, to turning it into a flash file and uploading it. I know what all of those things mean. I'm not just going, can you put that on the website, please.

(B2 interviewed 10th October 2006)

2.2 Data Analysis

The qualitative responses obtained through interviews and the quantitative results of the questionnaire present a consistent industry view about the skill areas and experiences required to manage creative input into a production. There was a large degree of agreement in the results demonstrating each of the respondent's confidence in being able to identify several skills, activities, and qualities, required to manage creative input of a production. Producer aspects of the role were recognised in that there was a high level of agreement that the role involved developing funding applications and funding opportunities.

The flexibility to respond to changing circumstances and to employ the techniques of improvisation as a method for dealing with the unexpected occurrences in production circumstances were recognised by a smaller majority of respondents. Those respondents that did agree with this statement had project or organisational management experience. In the qualitative element of this research, this group of respondents were able to provide examples of where improvisation had been applied to incorporate unexpected innovations in content development and resolve production issues and problems.

2.3 Findings

The basic skill sets, qualities and experience required to manage creative input in a production in a general sense are recognised across the creative industries.

The results of this question demonstrated that the respondents had a clear understanding about the nature of collaboration and the need for the person (or people) in the key management and creative roles to balance activity between these two areas. To manage creative input requires the articulation of a project vision, management skills to achieve a project goal, and craft skills including basic knowledge of the tools, equipment and software. The flexibility to respond to changing circumstances and to employ the techniques of improvisation as a method for dealing with the unexpected occurrences in production circumstances were recognised by a majority of respondents.

3. WHAT ARE SOME RISK FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY MEDIA PROJECT?

3.1 Data Results

The risk factors that can create problems in the development of community media

projects were investigated in this survey. Only one of the respondents was unable to comment on this subject because of a lack of appropriate expertise and one person who was interviewed in 2003 was not asked about risk issues.

Most respondents recognised more than one factor to be a potential risk to the development of a production. The most strongly held views about risk factors were that the artist team, project stakeholders, the community participants had communication problems (77%), there was insufficient time and budget to complete the project satisfactorily (77%) and the project was not well designed to meet the skills and interests of the participants (63%).

An interview was held with a respondent who was experienced in developing community-based, multimedia projects. She plays a role analogous to the Creative Producer, although she does not use this title. She identified risk factors within the collaborative process that require ongoing vigilance by the project facilitator. She believes that it is difficult to develop a truly collaborative process when artists and community participants work together because:

> *The dangers in collaborative projects are that you have to keep empowering the people who are participating, so that it is a true collaborative process. The dangers are also stamping it too much with your own style. So it is really about being able to pull back and let people go on their own journeys together. This has been really hard with some projects because of a lot of the artists have wanted a high level of support.*

(C5 interviewed 2nd November 2004)

An artist (C2) who had worked for many years in community cultural development projects located in a health centre context, discussed the critical nature of developing an appropriate project design for a community project. She stressed the importance of understanding the culture of a community in order to create a project that would "have legs". She said:

> *I approached the creative content from an organisational point of view of how to engage the community. Because in the end the project design used is not just the content. It's about engagement. I suppose that's one thing I learned a lot about. I know a lot about that, and what's do-able, and what's possible. I get a feeling in my gut, if I know you're going to have people voting with their feet.*

(C2 interviewed 4th September 2005)

Some respondents (37%) recognised that issues and problems unrelated to the community production in question were important in project design. A lack of understanding of a community could cause risks to participation, and therefore risks to the successful

development of the project. For example, C2 described one situation where she had to manage a politically divided community who were developing a theatre piece and CD ROM about their struggle for freedom over many years. The knowledge that she was working with a divided community was essential piece of information that informed the design of the project. She said:

> *I set up the project, so that there were vignettes, because there was some pretty intense politics. I did this so that on opening night, somebody couldn't pull out, and pull apart the whole thing.*
>
> (C2 interviewed 4th September 2005)

There was some agreement that a lack of trust in the process (40%), a lack of sufficient consultation in the development phase of a project (40%) and the linked issue of community participants being unwilling to share stories (23%) could be risk factors to be considered in the development of community projects.

Other risk factors that were not included as options in the survey were identified by 3 (10%) respondents. Of these respondents, one noted that there was an issue about finding outlets for the work produced, could result in the work not being shown well enough to honour the work of the community and the artists involved.

Another respondent, (C1) who works in community cultural development in a research context identified the need for time to be set aside to build community trust and she noted that this was not always well planned.

A manager of content development in a media museum (A3) who works extensively with communities noted that another risk factor in the development of a community media project was that the community might have an inherent distrust of the media and how it might represent them.

An experienced manager of creative input in community-based projects (D2) agreed that it was important to build trust within the team. He says:

> *The ability to be trusted and respected by the creative community, I think that's quite important. … It helps if they have gone through the loop of being, an artist who has worked in the producing context before. It's that cliché, if you haven't gotten your hands dirty, then the people who are getting their hands dirty won't respect you.*

(D2 Interviewed 9th June 2005)

C5 does not call herself a Creative Producer. Her role in community media productions combines creative and managerial functions and she also contributes to the production process where needed. She sees herself as a facilitator in community-based multimedia projects and believes that communication is central to the role. She said:

It's important to have the ability to communicate. At all levels - with the people participating, and with the artists involved, and with the funding bodies. Ultimately, I think it's all about communicating to the community too. It's really a sort of management thing, but more free-flowing than that. Just having an overview of everything and getting the projects to meet deadlines.

(C5 interviewed 2nd November 2004)

3.2 Data Analysis

Communication problems may cause the downfall of projects. Issues around communication are not restricted to the members of the production team. It was recognised by most survey respondents that problems in information sharing with project stakeholders and participants including discussion about project outcomes, participant activity, public outcomes such film festival screenings, access to community locations, availability of community participants on production dates, are examples of issues that may cause serious problems that could affect the viability of a production.

Without an understanding of the issues, pressures, and driving forces within a community, it is unlikely that a level of trust will be established that is essential in collaborative processes. It is difficult to design a project without extensive knowledge of the skills, issues and interests of a community. Communication between artists and community participants can often occur without the involvement of the Creative Producer or equivalent management and creative roles in the negotiation of content creation. Many respondents stated that it was important that the autonomy of creative engagement practices were respected, and that the creative independence of artists has to be balanced with the overall management requirements of the production. Several respondents noted in interviews that in their view, where a Creative Producer is employed, he or she takes on the majority of the external communications with stakeholders, to alleviate the need for artists to involve themselves with external communication and management issues, and therefore be able to concentrate fully on intra- team communication to the benefit of the production.

Funding can be put at risk because of communication issues. For project stakeholders such as community organisations, and project funding partners, such as local government or arts funding agencies, the lack of clarity about production goals, timelines and community involvement can create risks in obtaining funding support for a project. The stakeholders may withdraw from participation because the project direction is unclear or appears to be counter to community interests. Analysed in Actor-Network theory a Creative Producer or an equivalent role(s) acts as the "spokesperson" in the complex network of activity of a community production. He or she must engage with all the project partners, and community participants as "actors" in the network. They have been brought together as a group to achieve a goal that all parties agree to pursue. A lack of "enrolment" in the process by funding agencies can be seen as a failure in the formation of an Actor-Network. (Callon 1986) Communication builds trust relationships. As the

academic respondent (C1) notes, it takes time to build trust, and this is not always available or planned for in the project design. Without an understanding of the issues, pressures, and driving forces within a community, it is unlikely that a level of trust will be established that is essential in collaborative processes. It is difficult to design a project without extensive knowledge of the skills, issues and interests of a community.

The respondents who recognised that community participants could be distracted by other community problems that could affect participation in a multimedia project were all experienced in working on community cultural development projects. At least 3 respondents could be identified as having worked on major indigenous projects. For example, this issue was recognised by a formally titled Creative Producer (B2) who had experience in working in indigenous projects, where cultural requirements, such as 'sorry business' meant that the participants were not able to contribute to a project as planned. Analysed in complexity theory, the respondents realised that causal relationships based on unrecognised variables in initial conditions of a production are likely to test the problem-solving abilities of the Creative Producer (or equivalent role). Unexpected occurrences in a community can be seen as unstable and aperiodic behaviour. In a multimedia production context unexpected events require at a minimum, re-organisation of production schedules and production activities. Such unexpected problems can be described as 'the signature of chaos" (ibid) and multimedia productions made in community contexts could be seen to be produced "at the edge of chaos." (Langton 1990, p.12)

3.3 Findings

Communication between artists and project participants within a team is a vital feature of collaboration. Communication builds trust relationships and is instrumental in the creation of self-organising teams found in some community-based productions, and described in complexity theory. The development of effective team and partner communication processes are an important consideration in producing successful collaborative, community-based multimedia productions. A collaborative project is at risk of failure if there are blockages in communication between any of the collaborators. Communication issues are not restricted to the members of the production team. Problems in communicating information to project stakeholders and participants are a risk factor to the effective development of community-based multimedia productions. Another risk factor in community production is the design a project. Insufficient consultation with community groups in the development phase of a community-based multimedia project can cause a lack confidence in the process, and cause participants to be unwilling to share their stories or participate fully in the production process. Without an understanding of the skills, issues and interests of a community, it is unlikely that a level of trust will be established that is essential in the development of effective collaborative processes. As in all fields of media production, the lack of funding or under-funding are risk factors in the development of community-based, multimedia productions.

RECOGNITION OF THE CREATIVE PRODUCER ROLE

4. Have you heard of the role of Creative Producer in the arts/media production process?

4.1 Data Results

The role of Creative Producer in the arts/media production process was recognised by 77% of respondents, while 23% of people participating in the survey/interview had not heard of the role. There were not any respondents who had heard of the role but who were uncertain about its function.

Of the 7 people (23%) who had not heard of the role, 4 were interviewed in 2003 in Europe and they did not respond to survey requests. One arts organisation manager from Liverpool was interviewed in 2004 and had not heard of the role and did not respond to a survey request.

There were 2 Australian arts organisation managers interviewed in 2008 that had not heard of the role. One respondent had heard of the Creative Producer role only because of the interview and survey request.

Views from interviews conducted with questionnaire respondents provide more detailed responses about the knowledge and recognition of the role in the arts management, theatre, community cultural development and media fields of practice. A graphic designer (D10) who worked in community cultural development projects said that he had worked with a Creative Producer in a design and advertising studios. He said:

I've been working with them in design studios or advertising agencies… and the [name of project] with [name of person] would have been that. … Her role with the [name of project] was that she had an over-riding vision of the project and where the project was going, and what it could be.

The Artistic Director, of a children's publishing company in Ireland (A3) interviewed in 1994 said "Creative Producer I haven't really come across that term before… my title is creative - Artistic Director and that's fine". A curator (C4) in the visual arts was interviewed in 2004, and then completed a follow up survey in 2008. In 2004, she was working on an ABC/Film Victoria Accord project to make a documentary for on-line distribution. In the interview recorded with her, she responded to the question do you know what a Creative Producer is by saying "No, not really. In fact the term Producer was a new one for me until I started working on the documentary that we made for the ABC." (C4 interviewed 17th November 2006) However, when she completed the survey four years later, she stated that she now called herself a Creative Producer. The experience of C4 demonstrates some evolving awareness and use of the role and title over a four-year timeframe.

4.2 Data Analysis

The role and title of the Creative Producer in the arts/media production arena is

recognised by two thirds of survey respondents from the fields of arts management, community cultural development, theatre, media and multimedia production.

At the commencement of research a minority of respondents had a clear understanding of the role in 2003 and 2004. The survey demonstrated that the understanding and recognition of the role has increased. The Creative Producer is observed as a central role in some collaborative productions, particularly in multimedia production teams. There were almost a third of the respondents who had not heard of the role.

In the survey questionnaire, there were not any respondents who had heard of the role but were uncertain about its function. However, in the qualitative responses to questions the articulation of the responsibilities and activities of the role was more uncertain.

4.3 Findings

The role and title of the Creative Producer in the arts/media production arena is recognised by two thirds of survey respondents from the fields of arts management, community cultural development, theatre, media and multimedia production. The survey interviews spanned the period 2002-2008. Over this period, the results suggest that knowledge of the responsibilities and activities of the Creative Producer has increased. However, these results are not consistent. They demonstrate the evolutionary and "gappy" nature of knowledge about developments in industry emerging to fulfil specific practice requirements. The survey found that while there were respondents interviewed in 2003 who identified themselves as Creative Producers, there were still several respondents interviewed in 2008 who had not heard of the role. Overall almost a third of the respondents (23%) interviewed in the industry survey had not heard of the role.

5. Have you observed the role of Creative Producer being employed in any of the following creative contexts?

5.1 Data Results

There was 83% agreement that the role of the Creative Producer could be observed in media and multimedia production situations and the role was specifically observed in community-based multimedia production contexts by 57% of respondents. A respondent working as the content development manager of a media exhibition centre defined the role of the Creative Producer in digital media contexts. She has seen the role emerging out of practice because of the need for greater role clarity and definition. She said:

I'm really comfortable with the term, creative producer; you can see where a role should be starting to emerge on those kinds of applications. You can see who was actually in control of this project and in charge of it and running all of those aspects of it, and not just the content producers of a web area. The creative producer role can actually, sit as it were hierarchically. I mean, to actually facilitate those outcomes in a better way, yeah, it's directional, isn't it? The role of the creative producer really comes about because of two things. On one hand it's

about convergence, where the technology comes together, and on the other hand it's the hybridisation of art practice where different forms of art, media, drama, all that stuff's going to come together, so both of those are a confluence of different potential skill sets.

(A3 interviewed 14th April 2004)

She noted that department managers in a large project sometimes were all called 'producers' and the use of the title producer was far too general to describe the larger role of the Creative Producer. A further 48% of respondents thought that they had observed people in the role of the Creative Producer more generally in community cultural development projects, where collaboration between artists and community participation was a critical feature of the production process. All of the respondents who agreed that the role was found in community multimedia production environments had experience of working in these sectors.

In a combination of theatre and community-based theatre contexts, 32% (17% + 17%) of respondents had observed the Creative Producer working in projects that were of a collaborative nature. There were 2 people (9%) who had observed Creative Producers being employed in the publishing field.

There were 7 (30%) respondents who had observed the role of Creative Producer being adopted as a job classification. Of these, two had employed a Creative Producer on projects they had established, and five respondents had worked in positions formally titled Creative Producer. Analysing this sub-group further, two of the respondents who had used the title of Creative Producer, worked in theatre, three were involved in media/multimedia production and four were also involved in arts organisation or project management. Five of the six respondents who had identified the role as a job classification were also involved in education and research.

There were 26% of people surveyed who had not heard of the role of the Creative Producer. This was consistent response with the previous question about knowledge of the role. Of the 6 people (26%) who had not heard of the role, 3 were interviewed in 2003 in Europe and did not respond to survey requests. One arts organisation manager from Liverpool interviewed in 2004 and had not heard of the role.

There were 2 Australian arts organisation managers interviewed in 2008 that had not heard of the role, and one respondent who had heard of the role only because of the interview and survey request. There were three arts managers who had employed people to be Creative Producers on projects the organisation was developing.

5.2 Data Analysis

From the survey results, most (83%) of respondents had observed the role of the Creative Producer existing in media and multimedia production fields where collaboration in a team situation was a production method. The greater accessibility of digital equipment brought about by innovations in technology, and the reduced costs of equipment has meant that low budget, community-based, multimedia projects have become more viable in this sector over the last ten years. The introduction of technology and the convergence of practices in multimedia productions have seen the introduction of a central and composite creative and management role, known to a majority of respondents as a Creative Producer.

There were 48% of respondents who had observed the role in community cultural development projects in the quantitative questionnaire and also described a media community cultural development project in the interviews conducted as part of the survey. The consistency in the pattern of agreement in the mixed method survey confirmed the presence of a central composite management/creative role in community-based, multimedia project teams.

Some respondents (such as A3) saw this role as particularly valuable and necessary in small scale, low budget, community productions where there would be a need for multi-tasking to cover the roles in the project. The need for a composite creative and management role has emerged in community-based, multimedia production contexts where the accessibility of digital equipment, low budgets and the complexity of working with community groups require skilled oversight. Small, multi-tasking teams are often employed to develop low budget, community-based, multimedia productions, and the roles and responsibilities have been re-organised to take account of alternative team structures.

Community productions are characterised as possessing a range of stakeholders and community participants that may not be experienced in media production and who have substantial ongoing, sensitive, communication and consultation needs. One explanation for the high level of agreement about the presence of the Creative Producer role in community-based, production teams is that the role provides effective communication and management solutions in such projects. In these instances, a majority of survey respondents who knew the role of the Creative Producer observed in the interview element of the survey, that the role combined many of the responsibilities of the director/producer/production manager found in the film industry production model.

The introduction of the Creative Producer in community contexts can be viewed as an example of a simple solution developed to resolve complex management issues. Cunha and Rego (2008) in their exposition of complexity theory proposed that "complex organizing may be paradoxically facilitated by a simple infrastructure, and that the theory of organizations may be viewed as a domain of choice between simplicity and complexity." The composite role of Creative Producer could be seen as a simple structural solution to the complex issues involved in the maintenance of the equilibrium

between management control and creative autonomy. It was regarded by a majority of survey respondents to be a skilled and a difficult central role that can successfully instigate communities, technology, and media artists to work together in a network of production.

A majority of survey respondents from the Community Cultural Development and the theatre production sectors observed the Creative Producer role as a central management and creative function in collaborative or ensemble projects.

In big budget film/video/multimedia productions, respondents who were experienced in developing complex, large-scale multimedia productions (A3, B2, D6, D2, and D8) recognised that there was greater budgetary potential for management and creative roles to be separate functions in a production. However, these respondents also noted that it was in large projects that the need for a role that straddled the creative and the management aspect of the project could be more critical than in small, multi-tasking projects.

There was substantial variation in understanding whether the Creative Producer was a recognised job classification or a descriptive function observed in creative production contexts. For example, one respondent who came from the new media department of a broadcaster (A8) said that the Creative Producer was "certainly was not seen as a job classification" within the organisation in which he worked, and further that "Certainly within the [broadcasting organisation] every producer is expected to be a Creative Producer". (A8 interviewed 9th June 2005). On the other hand seven respondents stated that they knew the role as a job classification or in fact in some instances (A1 and B2) were themselves employed with the title of a Creative Producer.

An anomaly in the quantitative survey was that there were 2 people (9%) who observed Creative Producers being employed in the publishing field that would normally be considered a hierarchical and non-collaborative sector, and an unlikely context for Creative Producers. Both these respondents were also involved in Community Cultural Development and media production, so there may have been unusual circumstances and crossovers in their observations of Creative Producers at work. For example, one of these respondents (D2), noted that the publishing context was a magazine that had outputs as paper and web publications and that he was particularly interested in developing collaborative structures within a publishing context.

There was a clear division of people who had or had not heard of the role. There were not any survey respondents who had heard of the role, but were not sure about the activities and responsibilities of the role. However, in the qualitative research when interview subjects were asked to about details of their knowledge of the role of the Creative Producer, the responses were in many instances tentative, and uncertain.

5.3 Findings

The greater accessibility of digital equipment brought about by reduced costs and innovations in technology, has meant that low budget, community-based, multimedia projects have become more viable over the last ten years. In the community sector, a composite creative and management role, known to a majority of respondents as a Creative Producer has emerged as one accepted approach to the management of the creative requirements of complex teams working with the convergence of practices, technology, and new output platforms. The majority of respondents understood the Creative Producer to be a function description observed in creative production contexts, while a minority of respondents recognised the role as a formal job classification.

The Creative Producer has been identified in fields where team collaboration is the chosen working method. The role has been observed in community cultural development, multimedia and theatre production contexts where people work together in non-hierarchical and collaborative structures to develop creative projects. The need for high levels of communication and creative management in community productions has resulted in an evolution of responsibilities shared amongst team members and the development of the role of the Creative Producer. The composite function of the Creative Producer is one solution to providing creative development, management functions, and creative oversight in small-scale, community-based, productions.

A small number of respondents (A3, D7, D2) working in multimedia production took the opposing view that a role that straddled creative and management responsibilities was far more critical in large-budget projects employing many specialists in complex teams than in small multi-tasking projects.

6. Do you call yourself a Creative Producer?

6.1 Data Results

The majority of people surveyed (78%) did not call themselves a Creative Producer. While there was fairly broad knowledge of the existence of the role by a majority of the survey respondents, only 22% (5 people) called themselves a Creative Producer and a further 5 people (22%) called themselves, or were called a Creative Producer in certain circumstances. Of the 5 people who had the title and played the role of a Creative Producer, two of these were formally employed with the job title of Creative Producer.

One respondent (A1) identified himself as a Creative Producer. In an interview undertaken for research, he said, "I am the Creative Producer at [contemporary arts organisation]. My role as a Creative Producer is to formulate interesting and creative program for children across the year. … Aside from programming my role has a much broader range of skills, which are about making partnerships with other organisations to add value to the program". (A1 interviewed 1st August 2006)

An online publisher (D2) sometimes calls himself a Creative Producer works in a range of multimedia and media production contexts. In describing how he used the title he said:

I call myself different things, depending on who I'm speaking to, but I think the word Creative Producer is one of those terms that does not have a defined meaning, so its quite an ambiguous term. You can build meaning around it, or when you're talking to someone or introducing yourself, you can expand on that term further.

(D2 interviewed 15th February 2008)

In answer to the question, "How long have you been calling yourself a Creative Producer?" the Creative Producer of a large-scale, indigenous performance and multimedia project (B2) based in Alice Springs said:

About two years. I was trying to find a title that reflected that I was actually engaged in a creative process and in the conceptual process of the work, as well as being in control of producing it and making it happen. I'd never heard of that role before and thought that I'd sort of come up with it. It felt right for me because I really wanted something that reflected the creativity that I was putting in. That guiding function of the facilitator and project manager just sounds so boring and just denied that fluidity and creativity. So, that's what I came up with and that's now the title that everyone in my role uses in [national community-based performance and multimedia production company].

(B2 interviewed 10th October 2006)

While some respondents were formally working as Creative Producers in large organisations, and some had this title in smaller community-based projects. Another respondent said he sometimes used the title in a digital media research role in an English University. He said, "I actually did start using that term. I use a range of terms interchangeably. I used that term or cultural producer for several years. Partly, its because I don't always talk about what I do as art projects, and sometimes they're not. Because you can define things as you want to really". (D6 interviewed 26th November 2003)

A content development manager for a large media exhibition centre in Melbourne (A3) saw the role of the Creative Producer emerging out of need for greater role specificity in digital media production contexts. She said:

I think what happens in multimedia and the way we're moving forward is the creative producer actually takes on some of that directorial function. So, they become a partial director, a partial project manager and therefore they're a creative producer because it combines those two areas.

(A3 interviewed 14th April 2004)

She saw the role as an amalgamation of several traditional functions found in the television or film production industries. The importance of having this new the role from her perspective was that it supplied a new configuration of skill-sets, more useful to the exhibition and museum context than either a producer or a project manager as traditionally understood in media production contexts and provided examples of how and why the role was adopted within her organisation.

6.2 Data Analysis

The fact that only 17% (5 people) called themselves a Creative Producer and a further 5 people (17%) called themselves a Creative Producer in certain circumstances is consistent with a new and emerging team role, not yet accepted in the creative industries as a generic role and function. However, the changing nature of teams and team management in the creative industries was clearly observed by the number of other combined creative and management titles being employed by respondents to describe a composite management and creative role.

Other approaches respondents took to the development of a composite creative and management role were Artistic Director and CEO (A9), Cultural Producer (D6), Curator and Special Events Co-ordinator (A6) and Media Producer (C6).

Amongst the respondents who called themselves a Creative Producer, two were working in organisations where they were formally employed with the title of Creative Producer.

The role is used in certain circumstances and not in others, particularly by people working independently, to develop and implement projects. Of the third of respondents who used the title, or used it in some circumstances, two were formally working as Creative Producers in organisations, while the remainder worked as freelance Creative Producers in multimedia productions, or in smaller community-based projects.

A minority of survey respondents agreed that a senior role that straddled creative and management responsibilities was far more critical in large-budget projects employing many specialists, than in small multi-tasking projects. Another minority view expressed in the survey by some arts managers and experienced production workers, was that Creative Producers can also be identified in non-collaborative contexts, where there is a need to build bridges between the creative and the management elements of an organisation such as a Festival.

A small number of respondents had also observed the presence of the formal role of the Creative Producer within a hierarchical organisation, where collaborative activity featured at departmental levels. A minority of survey respondents had observed people who had been employed with the formal title of Creative Producer.

6.3 Findings

The adoption of the role by independent project producers/creators, and in a small number of cases as a formal role within a team structure of larger organisations shows that the role is emerging as one solution to resolving creative and management responsibilities within creative teams.

The title has been observed used formally in organisations and by freelancers working in multimedia productions, and in smaller community-based projects. In line with the uncertain understanding of the role of the Creative Producer, the survey results showed that there was substantial variation in perception about whether this role was a recognised job classification, or more simply a function observed in creative production contexts.

Most respondents agreed that the role was a function in practice rather than a formal role designation. A small group of respondents who identified themselves as Creative Producers were employed by organisations using this title as a formal role classification.

QUALITIES AND SKILLS OF A CREATIVE PRODUCER

7. If you have worked as a Creative Producer, or worked with one as part of a creative team which of the following qualities/skills do you think are needed in the role?

7.1 Data Results

There was majority agreement of survey respondents about the need for the Creative Producer to have creative skills. In the ranking of importance by percentage, by 87% agreed that an ability to develop project concepts, and to have a collaborative attitude to artists and arts practice along with the ability to be a convincing and trust inspiring collaborator (70%) were needed in the role of the Creative Producer. On the management side of activity, a large percentage of respondents (87%) agreed that the ability to anticipate and solve problems, and an ability to be flexible and to observe and listen were regarded as important management qualities by 83% of respondents. There was just slightly less agreement by respondents about the need for determination and patience in managing projects (74%).

A minority of survey respondents agreed that a senior role that straddled creative and management responsibilities was far more critical in large-budget projects employing many specialists, than in small multi-tasking projects. Another minority view expressed in the survey by some arts managers and experienced production workers, was that Creative Producers can also be identified in non-collaborative contexts, where there is a need to build bridges between the creative and the management elements of an organisation such as a Festival.

A small number of respondents had also observed the presence of the formal role of the Creative Producer within a hierarchical organisation, where collaborative activity featured at departmental levels. A minority of survey respondents had observed people who had been employed with the formal title of Creative Producer.

From the qualitative research, one interviewee who has a background in media projects and who sometimes calls himself a Creative Producer, but mostly uses other terms to describe himself describes the combination of creative and managerial skills and experience needed in the Creative Producer:

> *It's a whole lot of skills, entrepreneurial, a bit of business, financial management-type skills, budgeting skills but also the ability to be trusted and respected by the creative community, and I think that's quite important. I think it helps if they have gone through the loop of being, an artist who has worked in the producing context before.*
>
> (D2 interviewed on the 15th February 2008)

Other communication qualities of being observant, and to be able to listen clearly to what was being said in production situations were regarded as necessary skills by 83% of respondents. One survey respondent whose job was to manage the content development activities of a large media museum in Melbourne emphasized the need to be a good listener in this role. She said, "I can't over-emphasize the listening bit. Good project managers in other areas don't necessarily have to listen, they can assess things, get it all together and make it happen". (A3 interviewed14th April 2004)

At a less tangible level, an ability to demonstrate flexibility in dealing with issues that arise in production situations were also regarded as necessary skills by 83% of respondents. There were 74% of respondents who thought that determination and patience were qualities that a Creative Producer needed to have to play the role effectively and 65% of respondents agreed that Creative Producers employ intuition based on experience in decision-making in creative team processes, In the qualitative interviews one respondent talked about how she employed intuition in her practice in large-scale indigenous performance and multimedia project where she is employed as a Creative Producer. She said:

> *Being intuitive isn't about letting go of making decisions; it's about letting your gut really feel things. There has been times where I've made decisions, or allowed things to happen, that my gut's been saying that that shouldn't be happening. I haven't dealt with it in time and then it's turned into something else in the project. I think I have very good intuition, particularly about people.*
>
> (B2 interviewed 10th October 2006)

A media artist (D7) who sometimes works in community contexts and has observed Creative Producers in the central creative/management role in two productions, in which he was a team member, described the way he uses intuition in the development of his multimedia work. He said:

I need to take away my intellectual observations of that experience and just see what it feels like to be a viewer. I just try and project myself in there and evaluate the situation from a gut feeling. There'll be a small window, just a small window of me seeing myself engaging in that work, where I have a gut feeling about what I want to portray and that becomes the core of the project. I think the aim of the project, ends up becoming the core of your aesthetic. To be able to use that gut feeling as a reference is important. Then you can dip in and out of an intellectual observation of that scenario and dissect it, with all your knowledge in regard to engaging with the multimedia content. I like being able to flip between purely analytical, and the sensational mindsets, it is really important.

(D7 interviewed 16th May 2005)

There were 2 respondents (9%) one from Community Cultural Development (theatre and multimedia) and one in an organisational management role who observed 'other' qualities and skills needed in the role of the Creative Producer. The Community Cultural Development respondent working in an indigenous theatre and multimedia context was formally titled a Creative Producer. Other qualities and skill she identified included strong facilitation skills, effective networks with other agencies, services, government department and media. Strong visionary and leadership skills were recognised as necessary to maintain a positive vision to propel projects through hard times along with good relationships with employees and participants. The arts organisation manager believed that it was necessary for a person in this role to have established good networks and contacts in the industry including potential sources of funding.

7.2 Data Analysis

The Creative Producer has both creative and managerial responsibilities in creative production environments. In the creative aspect of the role, he or she is seen as a convincing and trust-inspiring collaborator with the ability to develop project concepts, and in the production situation has a collaborative attitude to artists and arts practice. In the managerial aspects of the role, effective skills and experience in negotiating with funding agencies and the ability to anticipate and solve problems that arise in productions were skills that a Creative Producer needs to possess.

In line with previous questions there was a positive response about the highly developed communication skills required in the role of the Creative Producer. In order to be a good communicator a majority of the respondents agreed that observation and listening skills were necessary in the role.

The ability to use intuition in decision-making was supported by a majority of respondents to the survey. Bruner (1979) noted the effective use of intuition in professional practice. He said, "Intuition implies the act of grasping the meaning or significance or structure of a problem without explicit reliance on the analytic apparatus of one's craft. It is the intuitive mode that yields hypothesis quickly, that produces interesting combinations of ideas before their worth is known. It precedes proof: indeed it is what the techniques of analysis and proof are designed to test and check" (Bruner 1979, p.102). In the survey it was agreed that intuition based on professional knowledge and experience enables practitioners to have confidence to make decisions quickly and correctly without the need for process driven problem analysis. Hence, survey respondents agreed with the observation that successful Creative Producers demonstrate intuition, persistence, and determination in the development phases of a multimedia project.

A bossy and argumentative attitude, and a preference for working in hierarchical team management structures because they are easier to deal with, were universally agreed to be qualities that were not present in the Creative Producers that the respondents had worked with, or that individuals surveyed had displayed themselves when working in this role. The identification of these attitudes as not being observed in production situations suggest that inflexibility of attitude resulting in bossiness and arguments were not an effective approach to take in collaborative situations, and that projects featuring a hierarchical team structure were less likely to include a Creative Producer.

There were two respondents who identified other qualities and skills needed in the role of the Creative Producer. One person who was working in an indigenous theatre and multimedia context was formally titled a Creative Producer.

Other qualities and skill she identified included strong facilitation skills, effective networks with other agencies, services, government department and media. The other respondent who sometimes employs the title of Creative Producer suggested that strong visionary and leadership skills and a positive vision to propel projects through hard times, and good relationships with employees and participants, were other skills and qualities needed in the role.

7.3 Findings

The Creative Producer demonstrates creative and managerial skills in collaborative production situations. In the creative aspect of the role, he or she develops project concepts (87%) and in the production environment is a convincing and trust-inspiring collaborator (70%) who acts on intuition based on years of experience (65%), and has the production experience that enables a collaborative attitude to artists and arts practice (87%). In the management aspects of the role, he or she or she is an effective negotiator with funding agencies (65%) and is able to anticipate and solve problems (87%). The Creative Producer demonstrates flexibility (83%), determination (74%) and patience in dealing with issues that arise in production situations, and employs intuition (65%) based on experience in decision-making.

The Creative Producer possesses highly developed communication skills that are critical to the successful implementation of the role. He or she is observant, and listens clearly to what was being said in production situations. The Creative Producer uses intuition in decision-making based on professional knowledge and experience to make decisions quickly without the need for process driven problem analysis.

A bossy and argumentative attitude, and a preference for working in hierarchical team management structures, were universally agreed to be qualities that were not present in the Creative Producers that the respondents had worked with, or that individuals surveyed had displayed themselves when working in this role.

8. If you have worked as a Creative Producer, or worked with one as part of a creative team, have you observed any of the following activities undertaken as part of the role?

8.1 Data Results

The activity most strongly observed in the work of a Creative Producer was in coming up with innovative ideas for projects (96%) and 35% also thought that the Creative Producer developed project ideas into productions. There was a large disparity between the level of agreement from respondents between those that saw the role to be involved with developing project concepts and those that agreed that the Creative Producer developed project ideas. There is no apparent explanation for the disparity. Linked to the responsibility for developing project concepts, 83% of respondents saw the need to maintain a project vision throughout the production as an activity of the role.

In the project management aspects of the role, 78% of respondents believed that the Creative Producer needed to be involved with budgeting and financial management and 14 people (61%) believed that it was the role of the Creative Producer to negotiate funding for projects. There were 13 people (57%) who saw it was the role of the Creative Producer to select and manage the creative team for a project and to generally undertake production management responsibilities.

In another area of management, 15 people (70%) saw that managing stakeholder and community relations were an important activity of the role. Those that recognised managing community and stakeholder relationships as important in the role were spread over all industry sectors. In a less familiar management activity, 57% or 13 respondents agreed that they had observed improvisation being employed as a management technique in the production process.

There was greater variance in agreement amongst respondents that it was the role of the Creative Producer to be responsible for marketing, promotion and distribution of the projects created by project teams that included a Creative Producer (39%), and 11 people (48%) saw documentation of productions as an activity of the role.

At a creative level of involvement, there was less agreement about the involvement and engagement in the actual creative production process. There were 48% who agreed that the Creative Producer would have some creative involvement in the production

process, while more than half (61%) agreed that Creative Producers followed intuition as a guide to decision-making in creative practice.

Six (26%) of the survey participants agreed that the Creative Producer was a person who was the odd jobs person, filling in the gaps, suggesting that they had observed Creative Producers undertaking a whole range of seemingly unrelated activities in the team that were not identified as the responsibility of any other team member.

There was one person who agreed that a Creative Producer gave artists a detailed brief from which deviation was not encouraged.

The majority of respondents in the qualitative interview part of this survey involved in arts management and media/multimedia production described the Creative Producer as being a role that combined the responsibilities of a producer/ director. For example, a team leader (A2) in community cultural development at the local government level stated that she thought the Creative Producer role was " like a director/producer" She said:

> *[Artists] have to be entrepreneurial. It is not even a kind of economic imperative. It's just a post-modern reality. If you are a creative person and you are concep-tualising something. It's not generally the case that you sell the concept and then have a plethora of people to manage every aspect of the implementation of it. That would be a very 19th century understanding of the role of the creative. It hasn't been my observation that that's the way that many people work. You need to do a bit of crossover stuff or people tend to do that anyway.*
>
> (A2 interviewed 12th April 2004).

There were 4 respondents that identified other activities undertaken in the role. In the education context one respondent identified research and development as an activity of the role. The Community Cultural Development Creative Producer experienced in working with indigenous communities in theatre/web projects stated that co-ordination of evaluation, supporting and debriefing the team where necessary, public relations and identifying key people to invite to openings were other activities of the role.

Another interviewee who identified herself as a Creative Producer working in community theatre and visual arts contexts stated that of all the options suggested, that the key role of the Creative Producer was to maintain the project vision throughout the production.

Another person who identified himself as sometimes working with the title of Creative Producer (D8) stated that it depended on the scale of the job, what the activities of the Creative Producer were. If it was a small project team, he stated that most of the activity options were required, but in larger project teams the spread of activities and responsibilities of the Creative Producer were reduced and the role was more focussed on overall creative direction and project management.

8.2 Data Analysis

There were high levels of agreement about key creative and management responsibilities of the role, suggesting that the need for both aspects of experience was a key to the emergence of the role in practice.

The most frequently observed activities undertaken in the role of the Creative Producer were the creative aspects of the role in developing project concepts, developing innovative ideas for productions, and once the production has been conceptualised and funded there was a majority view in the survey that the role of the Creative Producer was to maintain the project vision throughout the production.

The survey results suggest that in some circumstances the activities of the traditional 'producer' and 'director' roles found in the traditional film industry production model, have been combined in some multimedia production contexts in the 'Creative Producer' role whose responsibilities span both creative and management functions.

There were six survey participants who agreed that the Creative Producer was a person who was the odd jobs person, filling in the gaps. This result is in keeping with the high level of agreement about the Creative Producer needing to be observant in the production process and therefore likely to be aware of what activities were not being handled by the rest of the team. This could be because the Creative Producer had failed to properly distribute the jobs that needed to be undertaken in a production and was forced to complete many of them personally. It may also suggest that the Creative Producer was being thorough in making sure that all manner of tasks were attended to in a timely manner. From a negative perspective, the six respondents who agreed that the Creative Producer was the odd jobs person filling in the gaps, may have recognised that the Creative producer was getting too closely involved in the minutiae of production and not undertaking the larger oversight brief of the production role, or effectively encouraging other artists and participants to take on these activities. Another interpretation of this result maybe that the wide range of activity of the Creative Producer undertakes may appear to some to be unrelated, but in actuality, the tasks form a pattern activity consistent with the management and creative responsibilities of the role.

Improvisational skills are seen as an important aspect of this composite role. Respondents across all industry sectors in the survey were able to describe from experience the need for spontaneous, intuitive and strategic action in the management of arts projects and organisations. A majority of interview subjects also described how improvisation could be employed as a management technique to do this.

There was one survey respondent who agreed that a Creative Producer gave artists a detailed brief from which deviation was not encouraged. This minority view runs counter to notions of collaborative processes and decision making that most respondents agreed in earlier questions was the team structure in which a Creative Producer was most likely to be found.

8.3 Findings

In the creative aspects of the role, the Creative Producer develops project concepts and establishes innovative ideas for projects. Once in the production phase of a project a key function of the Creative Producer role is to maintain the project vision throughout the production and to do this, he or she often follows intuition as a guide to decision-making in creative practice. In some circumstances the Creative Producer may have some creative involvement in the production.

In the managerial aspects of the Creative Producer role, he or she negotiates funding for projects and is involved with budgeting and financial management the arrangement of project finance. He or she frequently selects the creative team based on the project concept, the project design and the analysis of the skill sets and production functions required to develop the project. Once the project is in production the Creative Producer often has a role in team and project management. The Creative Producer displays highly developed communication skills to manage stakeholder and community relations, and to maintain a collaborative attitude with team members.

The Creative Producer role can be viewed as a combination of the responsibilities and activities of a producer/ director as understood in the traditional management approach employed in the film industry.

TEAM COMPOSITION AND DYNAMICS

9. In your experience, does the presence of a Creative Producer affect team dynamics in a collaborative production?

9.1 Data Results

None of the participants in the survey agreed that having a Creative Producer in the team does not impact on team dynamics, suggesting that the opposite statement is valid, that because of the centrality of the role, the Creative Producer can have either a positive or a negative impact on team dynamics.

The most strongly agreed view, held by 18 people (78%), was that the Creative Producer collaborates with team members to develop a shared project vision and that this shared view has a positive effect on team dynamics. The qualitative research provided a range of responses as to why and how the Creative Producer achieves and maintains a shared team vision. The most compelling being that individual artists working in a team can be more autonomous in their arenas of activity, if there is a shared team vision of what the project goals are, and the process to be implemented to achieve goals.

One experienced media artist, who works in teams to produce large-scale displays for museum and interpretive centres and who has acted in the role of Creative Producer on some independent projects noted:

It's part of the creative producer's role to have the big picture, the overview of where a project's going and what the nature, what the dynamics of the project will be. ... They need to be very good communicators and listeners. They need to be able to draw the best out of people. They need to make the team that they're working with feel that they have ownership and a certain amount of creative freedom, that their creativity is being utilised appropriately and is respected and enjoyed.

(D8 interviewed 3rd April 2008)

A successful media artist/sculptor (D1) who works on his own projects as well as collaborating with a science/art collective based in Perth reflected on the collaborative process employed in a recent project. He observed the synergistic effect that creative autonomy within a team structure can foster. As someone who also maintains a high profile as an individual artist, he was also able to compare the positive and negative aspects of team verses individual practice. He commented that the collaborative process if not managed well can have a negative impact on the quality of the work, and therefore has a propensity to result in the dilution of creative integrity. He perceives the Creative Producer role to be a "difficult" one that is directing the project in a holistic sense, while at the same time balancing the competing needs and agendas of artists and other project contributors. He noted:

If everyone's doing everything all the time then it just makes it an incredibly slow and fraught process. I think invariably the individual vision is stronger. And that's why the traditional artistic practice is so much focused around individuals. The collective and collaborative process brings different types of things and takes you somewhere else. Working collectively you relinquish that control for the benefits that you perceive, the sum of the whole are greater than the parts. The Creative Producer in that sense is a very difficult position.

(D1 interviewed on the 30th May 2004)

A slightly less strongly agreed view (74%) was that the Creative Producer balances creative and management demands of a project within one role. This is the corollary statement that explains how the Creative Producer develops and maintains a strong vision in a project developed through collaborative processes without an authorial or directorial role. A pattern of agreement that emerged through the qualitative research was that this balancing role is possible because the Creative Producer can replace the producer and the director functions in the creative and the management aspects of a project.

An experienced manager of content development and exhibition programs in a cultural museum commenting on why the need has arisen for the composite role said that there is a need for people to have this composite skill set in contemporary media exhibition practice because a producer or a curator would be unlikely to have the range of skills or

the appropriate experience. She said:

Creative producers are commissioned to develop some of the projects we are working with. An example is the TV exhibition. What we'll do is employ an outside creative producer. We're not calling them a curator and we're not calling them, a television producer. It won't be a multimedia person. We want a creative producer. We're asking for someone with producer smarts that can actually understand what a cultural institution might do with television, but also have lots of context in television. We want someone that's got both of those skills. We don't want a television producer per se, because in the way you understand their skills sets, how are they going to be able to mount an exhibition. There's a real difference.

(A3 interviewed14th April 2004)

Referring to interviews for more qualitative data about the scope of the role, there was considerable agreement in interviews that the role of a Creative Producer changes depending on the scale and the skills requirements of a project. One artist who also acts in the role of Creative Producer on some projects that he initiates believed that that the activities in the role on depends on the scale of the project. He said:

The Creative Producer provides a more integrated link between the practical and the creative, because you've got a person who understands both and understands the relationship and dynamic between those areas. The bigger the project, the more specialist the role of creative producer would become. In a smaller scale project the creative producer might replace a director or something like that, or be a director and producer, but on a larger project I think they would stand, without replacing anyone's role.

(D8 interviewed 3rd April 2008)

There was a strong level of agreement in interviews and in the survey that the Creative Producer is the communication link between participants and stakeholders. In line with this perspective on the role, 70% of the respondents agreed that the Creative Producer is involved at some level in all stages of production. The Creative Producer has to be involved in all stages of production to keep an overview on the production process, while allowing for autonomous action. He or she has to be cautious about intervening in the production process, but must do so when problems arise. One experienced English Creative Producer (D6) discussed the need for intervention when a problem arises. He said:

I guess for me the thing about the Creative Producer is being able to identify if it's not happening. I may change the creative team that's working on the project, or bring somebody new in, or just say that this isn't going anywhere. At the end of

the day, the world will not benefit from us doing this project. There is enough crap art stuff around. Let's actually use our energies doing something, which is actually good and interesting. The number of appalling things [I have seen] that call themselves process-based stuff, because they were so bad that the outcome was not of any interest. I think that the arbiter role is really necessary.

(D6 interviewed 26th November 2003)

Another Creative Producer (B2) describing the need for trust and autonomy in collaborative projects likened the process of managing autonomous activity within collaboration to the affinity group process of environmental activism. She, like many of the people interviewed understood the synergy that is a desirable outcome of collaborative practice. She said:

I love the fact that each person has the freedom to do whatever he or she want to do, creatively, but when you come together it's the sum of the parts. The sum of the parts is greater than the whole. There's no one telling me how I can and can't do it. It's mine. But when I put it into this pot, with all these other people, that are putting stuff into this pot, we all get something much bigger back and there's something magical about that. I like that sense of what you can create collectively but still have your own kind of autonomy within it, is the kind of model that I really like. Again, I am borrowing from activism, in terms of looking at affinity groups and diversity of tactics, and all those kind of autonomous theories.

(B2 interviewed 10th October 2006)

The need for creative autonomy essentially requires respect and trust by all collaborators. A Creative Producer with experience and history in creative practice themselves are much more likely to understand the dynamics of production.

There was some recognition by survey respondents of negative impacts that a Creative Producer can have on the dynamics of a production team. There was recognition by 4 people (17%) that a Creative Producer can interfere with the work of artists and therefore, upset the creative dynamics of the team. There was 13% agreement that the Creative Producer can get too involved with the detail and lose sight of the project goals. This problem is likely to emerge if the Creative Producer is incapable or inexperienced in working with autonomous creative practices and tries to manage the creative process too closely. The potential for aggravating artists, and interfering in creative processes is great, if there is a lack of creative sensibility and experience of creative practice on behalf of the Creative Producer.

There is a pattern of agreement from the survey about the need for a successful Creative Producer to have practical creative experience. The Creative Producer of a contemporary arts organisation for children reflecting on the need for creative experience in the role said:

Trust is a huge component both ways. So I trust the artists are going to do it, and the people that put money into a project trust me. The artists trust me, and they know that I am not going to come in and say that it is not the right colour or not the right shape because they know that because I am an artist. I understand that creative process. I think Creative Producers generally are much more interested in the idea rather than the medium. It's the process of collaboration that is important. It is the interface between the artists and the kids and the artists have extraordinary freedom.

(A1 interviewed 1st August 2006)

There were was one respondent who is a Creative Producer working in a community cultural development theatre context with indigenous people who had two 'other' comments to make about the communication role that Creative Producers can play. She stated that the Creative Producer facilitates the communication dynamic between the team members and ensures that people are engaged and happy. Another activity of the Creative Producer that affects team dynamics is that the Creative Producer provides feedback on artists work whilst allowing them autonomy.

In the qualitative interviews undertaken for this research, D2 who sometimes uses the term Creative Producer in his media projects outlines some negative aspects of creative management in the community-based collaborative production context. He notes:

I think that the negative of a Creative Producer working in a collaborative way is that you come up with a consensus-type production, which I think has the potential to be weaker. Where you're trying to make everyone happy. I think that's the flip side of community media or community art. It just doesn't have the edge, or it has an edge that's constructed. Often it's a small ghetto of a community that does not understand the edge, but accepts that it is edgy, even though in the broader community, it doesn't necessarily work. So, it's a permitted art that comes out, or a permitted expression that's created through a filter. The Creative Producer in that context becomes more like someone who orchestrates it, and convinces everyone to work together, and to accept this final vision, if you like.

(D2 interviewed 15 February 2008)

9.2 Data Analysis

The tension between the need for autonomous practice within a collaborative structure and the opposing requirement for intervention and when the process is failing is an intrinsic skill of the Creative Producer. This situation represents a classic example where the Creative Producer has to demonstrate creative sensibility, diplomacy, intuition and the ability to improvise to solve problems. It provides a rationale for the creative and the management activities being held by one central role in collaborative practice.

The analysis of the matrix of data about the dynamics of the team including a Creative producer is critical to understanding the complexity of the role. There is the potential for the role to have a negative impact on team dynamics, if the role holder lacks creative experience and craft skills or does not possess high levels of communication and management skills. In these situations, he or she could be seen to be interfering in the non-linear production processes unnecessarily (A8, C5, C7, D2), or can lose sight of the big picture and instead gets captured by attempting to manage at too detailed a level (D2, C5). The respondents who selected this option were experienced in working in team production situations.

The ability to balance competing interests and to develop and maintain a shared project vision was identified as central to an effective collaborative production process and outcome. Therefore the presence of a Creative Producer can have positive and negative effects on team dynamics depending on the ability and experience of the Creative Producer to create the conditions for collaboration.

A pattern of agreement that emerged through the qualitative research was that the Creative Producer could replace the producer and director roles as understood in the film industry requiring the Creative Producer to balance creative and management demands of a project within one role. In the role, the Creative Producer maintains equilibrium between control and autonomy, between creative freedom and the constraints of team collaboration, and has the central role of working with the team to develop a shared creative vision. It is a difficult role that requires sensitivity to practice, experience of practice, improvisation and creative intuition in practice and a willingness to take risks and embrace failure as well as success.

In navigating the role in a project, the Creative Producer needs to understand the sensibilities of practice that mean that the shortest and most pragmatic route to achievement of a project goal may not be the most useful approach. There may be need for creative exploration. There may be the need for particular engagement between a subgroup in a team for a time to resolve a creative dilemma. There may be a need to undertake technical tests to establish the best way to achieve an outcome, and there may be the need to abandon a process when it isn't working and start again. The Creative Producer has to balance these creative processes against the constraints of budget, timeframes and deadlines in order to facilitate the process and achieve the desired outcomes.

There is also a balancing role between creative autonomy and Creative Producer intervention in the process if there is a perception that it is not delivering the outcomes required. Although trust is an important attribute of the collaborative process, the Creative Producer may be need to demonstrate authority and strength of character and to be prepared for intervention, acrimony and dispute resolution if the process is not effective.

The role of the Creative Producer will change depending on the scale and nature of the project. However within all projects, respondents to the survey recognised that there was a pattern of activity that elevates communication, flexibility, creative experience,

and a flexible and intuitive response to production situations.

9.3 Findings

A pattern of agreement that emerged through the qualitative research was that the Creative Producer could replace the producer and director roles as understood in the film industry requiring the Creative Producer to balance creative and management demands of a project within one role. In the role, the Creative Producer maintains equilibrium between control and autonomy, between creative freedom and the constraints of team collaboration, and has the central role of working with the team to develop a shared creative vision.

The role of a Creative Producer can change depending on the scale and the skills requirements of a project. He or she is the communication link between participants and stakeholders. Without this central communication role, there is the potential of project failure as determined in question three in this survey. The Creative Producer is involved at some level in many stages of production. It is a difficult role that requires experience and sensitivity in practice, improvisation skills aided by intuition, and a willingness to take risks and embrace failure as well as success.

In a successful project the sum of the whole is greater than its parts. The synergy of collaboration builds the success of the project. However for synergy to be a feature of a production the Creative Producer has to be aware of the big picture of all stages of production, support autonomous creative activity, and intervene if there are problems. The Creative Producer may need to demonstrate authority and strength of character and to be prepared for intervention, acrimony and dispute resolution if the process is not effective.

There is the potential for the Creative Producer to have a negative impact if he or she interferes unnecessarily with production team activities. This problem emerges if the Creative Producer is incapable or inexperienced in working with autonomous creative practices.

10. What may cause a Creative Producer to fail in the development of a community-based multimedia project?

10.1 Data Results

There were 17 people (74%) who identified that an inability by the Creative Producer to obtain sufficient funds to develop the project was a cause for failure of a community production.

Relating back to a previous question about team dynamics and the impact that a Creative Producer may have on the team, 65% of the survey participants saw that the wrong combination of artists, in terms of collaborative approach, or skill sets might cause the failure of a project. This may be why in question 8, it was seen as important by more than half (57%) of respondents, for the Creative Producer to select the team to work on specific projects, and that the selection be based on the skill-sets required, and the

potential for artists to undertake more than one function in smaller community-based projects.

The lack of consultation by the Creative Producer with community members is seen as a key reason for failure by more than half (61%) of the survey respondents. Linked to the issue of communication is the problem of trust. A reason for failure agreed by 52% of respondents was lack of trust by any of the project partners in the production process.

Problems in the production design were agreed by 4 of the survey participants (17%) to lead to failure of community-based multimedia productions. The development of a project that is too complex for confident participation by community members was seen as a risk factor.

Another view expressed in an interview by a practitioner who was not an artist was that a Creative Producer losing touch with his or her inner artist sensibilities could be a cause for project failure at least at a creative level. He said:

> *One of the real dangers is that the producer, maybe even the Creative Producer loses touch with what it is to be an artist. I think that happens the longer that you work within that, without actually participating in the production process.*
>
> (D2 interviewed on 15th February 2008)

A survey respondent who runs a contemporary art space for children has had the formal title of Creative Producer since taking on the role in 2003. As the Creative Producer he encourages risk-taking. He said that failure is a necessary part of the work of the artist trying new approaches and creative concepts and it is to be expected that not all projects have the anticipated outcome. He said:

> *People having an encounter with creativity, not particularly what the artist's concept of creativity is about. Creativity is about taking chances, risk taking and making mistakes. Artists that I work with, I want them to feel that I am pretty open ended about this. If we don't exactly come up with something wonderful and beautiful and if there is no wonderful product at the end, then it won't be the end of the world. In this situation, I have a great sense of trust with that artist and I think that works very well for the program.*
>
> (A1 interviewed 1st August 2006)

There were two respondents who identified other risk factors that could result in the failure of a production. One was a theatre/visual arts community cultural development worker (B1). She identified herself as sometimes working in the Creative Producer role; She stated that although the outcome of a project could differ from the original concept, this does not necessarily mean that the project has failed. In the interview conducted

with B1 she elaborated on the connection between trust and failure in community-based production. She said:

Trust, I think is the most important thing because the actors or the community members or even the people who're giving you the money, they all have to have trust in you … You have to trust your own process as well and that only comes through a lot of working on different projects over years and having had successes and failures.

Failure's important as long as you have somebody who can help you work through that failure and show you that you have learnt something and show you the good parts of it. Everything has the potential for failure and if you're scared then you aren't open to intuition. When you fear, then you shut down. When you trust, then you're open and other people trust you, and so the flow of energy happens.

(B1 interviewed 6th November 2006)

The other respondent who has a history in working in collaborative web projects and print publishing stated that there is a need for project funders or executive producers to provide the Creative Producer with a modest amount of moral support and encouragement in order to avoid failure.

10.2 Data Analysis

More than half of the survey participants saw that the wrong combination of artists selected to work on the project in terms of collaborative approach, or skill sets may cause the failure of a project. This response suggests it may be useful for the Creative Producer to select the team to work on specific projects, based on the skill-sets required, and the potential for artists to undertake more than one function in smaller, community-based projects.

Although it is likely that an inability of the Creative Producer to obtain sufficient funds to develop the project will result in the failure of a project, it may not always be the case in community productions. The strength of community spirit and the tradition of volunteerism and the determination of the Creative Producer to find a way forward could propel a project forward into production, particularly if the project team owned their own equipment. A project developed in a community context therefore could continue even without sufficient funds on a voluntary basis.

The survey participants who identified complexity in project design as a cause of failure in community-based, multimedia productions can be characterised as experienced in working in Community Cultural Development projects. In the qualitative interviews undertaken for this research, this group of respondents demonstrated by the examples they provided that they had considerable experience in designing projects for community participation.

Linked to the issue of communication is the problem of trust. A majority of respondents agreed that a reason for failure was a lack of trust by any of the project partners in the

production process. This is consistent with the result of Question 3 where 40% of survey participants agreed that a lack of trust the production process was a problem. There were many comments in interviews about the issue of trust in community productions. Actor-Network theory provides an analysis as to why the central communication role is so vital to the maintenance of each participant's commitment, and overall team communication in a community project. In this interpretation of team activity, the Creative Producer is the central communication hub, maintaining interest in the project and driving the project forward to the next stage of development. It is up to the Creative Producer as the "obligatory passage point" and the group's "spokesperson" to develop a project concept, write a persuasive funding application, and lobby "power-brokers" to support his or her project, rather than a competing proposal. Hence the theory provides an explanation for the emphasis that the survey respondents had on the importance of the communication skills of the Creative Producer.

There was strong agreement in the qualitative research that failure was not necessarily a bad outcome. A summary of the views presented by several respondents (B2, C5, D6, B10) was that in order to create powerful community-based projects, it was necessary to take risks in the creative process. The outcomes of risky processes were either innovation or failure. Therefore it was worth some failures to develop powerful works that communicated strongly with audiences. The risks could be at any level of the production from the selection of the team, to the content development concepts, to the production design to the technical and creative processes attempted in a production.

10.3 Findings

The failure of a project may be caused by the selection of artists who lack a shared collaborative approach, or have badly matched, or inappropriate skill sets of the project. Project failure can also be the result of the lack of trust in collaborative production situations. A Creative Producer may cause project failure through not having well-developed funding application writing skills.

There is a need for effective communications between project participants and stakeholders in the design of a community-based multimedia production, in order for a project not to fail. Actor-Network theory provides an analysis as to why the central communication role is so vital to the maintenance of each participant's commitment, and overall team communication in a community project. It is up to the Creative Producer as the "obligatory passage point" and the group's "spokesperson" to develop a project concept, write a persuasive funding application, and lobby "power-brokers" to support his or her project, rather than a competing proposal. Hence the theory provides an explanation for the emphasis that the survey respondents had on the importance of the communication skills of the Creative Producer.

Failure can be a useful aspect of community production if it is a result of risky processes that are instituted in order to attempt to develop innovative works. Without taking creative risks and embracing the possibility of failure, it is unlikely that innovation in content ideas or production processes can occur.

Comparison with Other Roles

11 – 12. Do you know of another role or roles that undertake responsibilities involved with creative project development, team and project management within a collaborative production process? What is (are) the role(s) called?

Data Results

There was a large degree of agreement (87%) that within a collaborative production process there were other ways of managing responsibilities of creative project development and team management as an alternative to the Creative Producer model. There were a small number of people (13%) who did not know of other roles that managed this suite of responsibilities in a collaborative production process.

For those that did identify other roles as undertaking these activities, over half selected the producer role (53%); just under half (43%) identified the creative director and the director role. The curator role was recognised as undertaking this suite of responsibilities by 33% of respondents. There was less agreement about equivalency from respondents about the role of the production/project manager and artistic director (27%), and even less that a facilitator or animateur (20%) as undertaking the same responsibilities. Finally, 10% thought this description fitted the role of a mentor. Of the 17% (5 people) that identified other positions fitting the description, the roles of CEO, cultural broker, commissioning editor, regional editor and social entrepreneur were selected.

The qualitative interviews provide some other insights into respondent's views on the range of possible roles that undertake team and production management. With the introduction of digital technologies and the hybridisation of media practices, one respondent (A3) felt that there was a need greater role definition. She worked as the content development manager of a media exhibition centre. She had observed the role of the Creative Producer in digital media contexts emerging out of practice because of the need for greater role clarity. She noted that department managers in a large project sometimes were all called 'producers' and the use of the title producer was far too general to describe the larger role of the Creative Producer. She said:

> *I'm really comfortable with the term, creative producer; you can see where a role should be starting to emerge on those kinds of applications. You can see who was actually in control of this project and in charge of it and running all of those aspects of it, and not just the content producers of a web area. The creative producer role can actually, sit as it were hierarchically. I mean, to actually facilitate those outcomes in a better way, yeah, it's directional, isn't it?*

(A3 interviewed 14th April 2004)

A respondent who works in both theatre as an actor/director/producer and in film production as a dialogue coach had clear views about the differences between the roles of director, producer and animateur. Because she had worked with a Creative Producer

on a community-based project, she was able to compare the roles of producer director and an animateur in theatre to that of the Creative Producer. The role of the director was about holding the vision and it was also a key power relationship in the cast developing a play. She said:

> *The director, and it doesn't matter how kind and collaborative in their attitude they are, the fundamentals of having a director in a piece of work, is that they hold the vision. It's very hard as an actor in that piece to own any of the vision. It's implicit in the role because it's about where the responsibility lies. In a theatre room, the responsibility lies with the director and the stage manager and that's it, it's uncompromising. There's a series of assumed functions that come with a role definition. ... So, when you work on a project and are about to start a play, I am an actor and Chris is the director. And we both know what that contract is, it's implicit. When I take on that role that's the contract, the unspoken contract that I engage in. That's because of however many years of theatre history that all those roles come to bear.*

(B4 Interviewed 24th May 2007)

The role of the producer in theatrical contexts was much more fluid. She thought that there were producers and there were Creative Producers who were much more closely connected to the artistic activities in the development of a piece of theatre. She said:

Working in the theatre, I can pick pretty quickly who's the producer working on the mechanics of the project, and who's a producer who actually understands when you're talk to them about an artistic concern. They actually understand what you're saying. The difference between the two is really quite marked.

> *In a show that I worked on last year, XX, there were two producers. One of them did function as a creative producer, and one did function as a producer and yet they didn't make that distinction. How do I, as a participant in the process, make that distinction? He's a producer and she's a producer. So, personally I think it's really useful to have a title, creative producer, to help the people in the process to understand who you are and what your expectations are, and what kind of conversation you can have with your artists about the work, what that means.*

(B4 Interviewed 24th May 2007)

She made a comparison between the function and responsibilities of the Creative Producer and those of the animateur. She was familiar with this role from her student theatre experience at the Victorian College of the Arts. She saw the animateur and the Creative Producer playing a similar role in developing ensemble theatre works or community projects with groups such as school children, but did not think that this role translated to the media field. She said:

A Creative Producer holds the vision for the piece. He or she hasn't imagined the outcome, because no one can know the outcome, because we all go in, going, O.K, let's play. But the Creative Producer clearly knows who you want on the project, what you want to achieve, and manages the time, manages the liaison with the school and the people. It's facilitating in every aspect to allow all the energy to be focused in those moments of creation. So, in that sense, yes, I would say a Creative Producer is an animateur in the VCA tradition.

(B4 Interviewed 24th May 2007)

A Creative Producer in charge of a children's contemporary arts centre in Melbourne, with a background in the visual arts (A1) saw that while there was similarity in some of the activities of the Creative Producer and the Animateur, the Creative Producer had a much larger suite of responsibilities. He stated that he had worked as an animateur earlier in his career in Europe. He said:

The Creative Producer has much broader range of skills including fundraising, financing projects, talking about projects. Being able to actually translate that vision into people's consciousness. It's like selling air really sometimes in that you are actually going out and selling an idea to people. Animateurs I don't particularly do that. They know what they do and they do it well, but they are artists.

(A1 interviewed 1st August 2006)

A CEO/Artistic Director of a musical touring organisation had not heard of the role of the Creative Producer. He had difficulties with his title, as he did not think it was appropriate to have such a grand title in a very small organisation. He noted:

To call someone like me who's got one other full time staff a CEO is absurd. It's not like we're a giant organisation. So, it's ridiculous because in a way you're meant to be operating at that level of CEO but you can't because you don't have all those people underneath you, justifying that sort of role.

(A9 interviewed 6th June 2008)

12.2 Data Analysis

There are many different approaches to managing creative projects and teams. The traditional approaches within the different sectors of the arts provide the standard team structures, which have proven to be effective management strategies over time.

In this survey, the selection of other team compositions for creative management reflected the backgrounds and experience of each of the respondents. The respondents, who saw themselves as working within the visual arts, selected the curator as an alternative role. Those that came from media backgrounds selected the producer/director model.

Tho respondents from arts and organisational management backgrounds generally had broader experience of different production and team models and selected several different options that had been observed in team formations and practices. The popular options were the Artistic Director/General Manager or the Executive Director/ Artistic Director or the CEO and Creative Director combinations.

The four respondents that did not know of another role, other than that of the Creative Producer, that undertook the responsibilities of team and project management within a collaborative production process were all experienced multimedia practitioners. However, there was no consistency in each of the respondents' relationship to the role of the Creative Producer.

One respondent was called a Creative Producer, one had never worked in the role, one had not stated whether they ever called themselves a Creative Producer or not, and one sometimes worked in the role. However, it is likely that all four had observed the role in a multimedia production situation, and felt able to articulate the view that there were no other roles that combined these responsibilities in collaborative production contexts in the same manner.

12.3 Findings

There was a large degree of agreement (87%) that within a collaborative production process there were other ways of managing responsibilities of creative project development and team management besides that of the Creative Producer model.

Within a collaborative production process, the Producer, the Creative Director, and the Director or a combination of Producer/Director or Producer/Creative Director are regarded as other roles that manage the responsibilities involved with creative project development, team and project management.

In order to delve more deeply into the views and understanding or roles and responsibilities in community-based multimedia productions, the next group of questions attempts to analyse respondents understanding about other specific roles and their responsibilities that may resolve management and project development in other ways.

13-18 Data Results

What are the differences or similarities between Curators, Producers, Animateurs, and Creative Producers?

There are titles and roles that are associated with different art forms. The answers to the following group of questions probe for definitions and delineations between terms found in different practices, as much as those of role definition.

The first of these questions investigates the differences between a curator and a Creative Producer. There were 57% of the respondents who stated that there was a difference in the roles, while 10% did not think there was a difference, and 23% did not know if there was a difference or not. Those belonging to the last group were mostly people who did not work in the visual arts and had not come into contact with the curators. D6

offered an explanation as to why he thought the term curator was the wrong one for this composite creative and management role in the media sector. He said:

> *There is a massive shift that needs to take place, which is one of the reasons why I don't like to use the term curator. It's a bad term. I have a problem defining what I do because curator is the wrong term. New Media Producer is the wrong term as well because people immediately think I am leading a games company or web design or something like that. If I say I am a Creative Producer, I then have to give a kind of a two-minute explanation of what I really do. Then people go, I don't understand anyway and I get angry with them. I say if I were doing stuff with mime artists you'd have no problem. Its just because it's the Internet that it's an issue.*

(D6 interviewed 26th November 2003)

Of those two respondents that had other views, one had worked as a curator in a visual arts / media arts exhibition contexts. She stated that the role of the curator can be as diverse as the role of the Creative Producer and it really depends on the context – the size of the project or organisation for example whether there is commissioning involved, whether it is public gallery-based work, and who is the employer. From the qualitative research, one interviewee (D6) said:

> *A curator is a bit more distant from the artist than a creative producer. So, a curator is much more judgemental. On another level a creative producer is like an agent, a friendly agent to the artist, so it's he or she is a mediator of the artist or a representor of the artist to the curator.*

(D2 interviewed 15th February 2008)

The second question asked if there were differences between a producer and a Creative Producer. There were 27% of respondents that did not know if there was a difference or not, while 63% thought there were differences between these two roles. One respondent who sometimes works in the Creative Producer role said:

> *The Creative Producer is also part of the creative team, whereas a producer is more of an administrator. So, a producer is often seen as a bit of a pain in the neck, to creative people because they bring down the law about sticking to budget, blah, blah. A Creative Producer has a foot in both camps, so they have a better understanding of creative processes. Being involved in the creative process as well as the production and administrative side of it makes for a much better marrying of those two sides.*

(D8 interviewed 3rd April 2008)

One respondent believed that there were not any differences between a producer and a Creative Producer. When asked to identify these differences, the majority of respondents (43%) agreed that the Creative Producer works on both the management and the creative aspects of the job, while 23% thought the Producer had a different focus to that of the Creative Producer. The Producer was seen by 17% of survey participants as a more focussed role looking after the financial aspects of a production.

There was 20% agreement in the questionnaire that in a smaller production the Creative Producer role can be a combination of Director and Producer. However, in the qualitative interviews undertaken for research the notion that the Creative Producer role combined both functions was more frequently stated. One experienced filmmaker/director compared the role of the producer and the director and also commented on the differences between these roles. He said:

> In film production, it's the director who is the creative person who has the vision, and steered the group of people who went out and filmed stuff. Whereas a producer for me is someone who checks the work and they don't get their hands too close to the production process. I always found that really unsatisfactory. When I got Australian Film Commission grants and I was dealing with producers, they seemed to be a role that the funding body had to have, to give over $100,000. They wanted a producer to be the link person that made sure the production was going ahead and the director wasn't going off the rails. I never saw them. As a director, I never felt they were particularly useful, whereas a creative producer has a much more hands-on knowledge and gets involved in finding the money and in all the stages of production.

(C7 interviewed 17th of April, 2007)

There were 10% of questionnaire respondents who agreed that it depends on the scale of the production whether there are any differences between the roles or not. Of the respondents who saw 'other' differences in the roles than the options presented, one respondent who has experience in working for organisations producing media arts projects, stated that sometimes the producers could play a Creative Producer role without calling themselves a Creative Producer.

Another respondent, who is involved in funding Community Cultural Development projects in local government contexts, stated that both the roles incorporate management and creative aspects. However she aligned a producer with securing funding to deliver a project, while stating that a Creative Producer usually has assistance with this aspect of the role. Another respondent who has a job title of Creative Producer who also works in a Community Cultural Development context stated that a producer may take more direction from a director without a great deal of creative input into the work, whereas a Creative Producer plays a more creative role in the overall project visioning.

Over half of the participants in the survey 57% (17 people), did not know the role of the animateur and so were unable to compare this role with that of the Creative Producer. There was a wide spread of professional roles represented in this group including 7 people who identified themselves as working in Community Cultural Development, and 7 people who worked in media or multimedia production. Also in this group there were 3 people who worked in community theatre or theatre production. There were 10% of respondents (3 people) who agreed that the animateur was a lower level organisational job and the same percentage thought that an animateur was a creative facilitation role and 13% (4 people) that that an animateur had a different focus in their work to that of the Creative Producer. One person agreed that an animateur was a community mentor.

Two interviewees selected the 'other' option. One of these respondents, who have a funding and management role in Community Cultural Development, while agreeing that an animateur is a creative facilitator, saw this role as having a stronger collaborative function than a Creative Producer. A manager in an exhibition context stated that the animateur plays a more defined and narrower role, usually depending on the size of a production or a company, although she also stated that she was not as familiar with this role as she was with the curator role.

13- 18 Data Analysis

Many respondents talked about semantic definitions. They commented on the convergence of technology and practices in multimedia production. The respondents with experience in multimedia production spoke about the way that this field had historically acquired terms and production processes from film, television, theatre, visual arts, and graphic design. There was agreement by those experienced in multimedia productions that the roles and responsibilities in multimedia teams have evolved over time as alternative systems and team management theories have been auditioned.

There was a wide spread of professional roles represented in the group that did not know the role of the animateur and so were unable to compare this role with that of the Creative Producer. Of the respondents to this question, 7 people identified themselves as working in Community Cultural Development, and 7 people worked in media or multimedia production. Also in this group there were 3 people who worked in community theatre or theatre production.

13- 18 Findings

Terms are created by their use and inter-relationships in particular forms of practice. Roles understood in visual arts such as the curator, do not transfer to the roles definitions understood in film production, or Community Cultural production.

There are differences between the curator and the Creative Producer roles.

There are differences between the producer and the Creative Producer.

The role of the animateur is largely unknown across industry sectors.

There was agreement by those experienced in multimedia productions that the roles and responsibilities in multimedia teams have evolved over time as alternative systems and team management theories have been auditioned. There was little agreement that in a smaller production the Creative Producer role can be a combination of director and producer. However, in the interviews there was a much more frequently expressed view that the Creative Producer was a combination of the roles of producer and director as understood in the film industry. The variation in responses could be because of the way the question was framed in the quantitative questionnaire. Possibly if the words "in a smaller production" had not been included, there may have been a different response.

IMPACT ON CREATIVE PRODUCTION PROCESSES AND PRODUCTIONS

19. Describe the contribution, if any, that a Creative Producer has made to a project/projects that you know of, or have been involved in?

19.1 Data Results

The contribution that a majority of respondents agreed that the Creative Producer made to a project was in the area of communication with (73%) or 22 of the 30 survey participants agreeing that the Creative Producer kept the project focussed by maintaining the project vision. A majority (67%) agreed that the Creative Producer developed effective communication between stakeholders and project workers. A minority view in the questionnaire is that the Creative Producer has an ability to encourage trusting and productive working relationships amongst the crew with 27% in agreement with this statement.

Another contribution strongly agreed upon was about project development and management. 70% or 21 people agreed that the Creative Producer developed the concept and/or arranged the funding of a project. Over half the survey participants (53%) agreed that the Creative Producer was involved in team selection and/or management and undertook production management duties on a project.

Just under half of the respondents agreed that The Creative Producer was involved, to some degree, in all stages of production. As an example of how the centrality of the role can be problematic is described by one of the survey respondent (B2) who employs the Creative Producer title formally. She described the difficulties and necessity for having input into all levels of production and performance, in a large touring community-based theatre and multimedia production. She said:

> ... Sometimes I feel, people don't resent my absence, but they want me there, because I'm the one that everyone checks in with. Everyone goes - are we going in the right direction? Has this got integrity? This thing's happened, and I'm feeling a bit weird about this.

I'm not in every detail but I'm definitely across everything and people. I'm the node for everyone in the project and that's sometimes very difficult. It doesn't always work very well. We just had 45 people in Melbourne for the festival show and that was beyond me to manage the dynamic of 45 people. It became a bit more like there was some kind of affinity groups within the model, kind of thing.

(B2 interviewed 10th October 2006)

Flexibility in dealing with changing circumstances was an attribute that 27% of those surveyed identified as a contribution that a Creative Producer made to a production they knew of or were involved in.

There were 20% (6 people) who could not describe a contribution that a Creative Producer made to a project and one person who had the experience of project failure because the Creative Producer did not find the money to fulfil a project vision.

19.2 Data Analysis

The data results of this question is consistent with the responses made in earlier questions where the contribution that a majority of respondents agreed that the Creative Producer made to a project was in the area of creative input, communication and team/project management.

In this instance, the question investigated the communication responsibility in terms of the creative practice, specifically the role in keeping a project vision focussed. The other communication tasks that were the subject of inquiry in this question were managerial in nature. A majority view expressed in the questionnaire was that the Creative Producer was responsible for developing effective communication processes between stakeholders and project workers. In variance to answers in earlier questions, there was considerably less agreement about the Creative Producer needing to encourage trusting and productive working relationships amongst the crew in this question.

Another aspect of the communication role of the Creative Producer was an ability to encourage trusting and productive working relationships amongst the crew. There was a high level of agreement from survey participants that the trust relationship is not only the basis of communication, it is the conduit for creative exchange. Chaos theory provides a potential framework for understanding the complex management activities found in community projects. It "depicts organisations as complex and unpredictable because of the relations among constituents of a system" (University of Alabama, iit.ches.ua.edu/systems/chaos.html Accessed 21st October 2008) A majority of interviewees who had observed the symbiotic relationship between those who offer skills, and those who contribute their personal narratives in community productions, believed this relationship to be the "spark" of collaborative endeavour.

The respondents who agreed that the Creative Producer was involved, to some degree, in all stages of production had had personal experience of the Creative Producer role. Similarly, those that agreed that flexibility in dealing with changing circumstances was

an attribute that a Creative Producer made to a production they knew of or were involved in, had considerable experience of the role in community production contexts.

Another contribution strongly agreed upon was ain reference to project development and management. As in responses to earlier questions respondents consistently confirmed that the Creative Producer developed the project concept and/or arranged the funding for a project, was involved in team selection and/or management, and undertook production management duties on the project.

Only one respondent (D2) had had the experience of working on a project that failed because the Creative Producer was not able to raise the funds required for the project to proceed. There were no respondents who agreed with the negative options about information sharing, or that they had had worked with a Creative Producer with little experience in working with artists. There were several respondents (20%) who stated that they had had no experience of the role and therefore could not make an informed response to the question.

19.3 Findings

The impact that the Creative Producer makes in a project is in the area of creative input, communication and team/project management. In the producer aspect of the role, the Creative Producer is central to project communications. Externally, he or she is an effective communicator between stakeholders and project workers and arranges the funding of a project. Internally, the Creative Producer facilitates communication and supports the autonomous production activities within the self-organising team. The Creative Producer is involved in team selection, and undertakes production management duties on a project.

In the creative aspect of the role, the Creative Producer develops project concepts. Once the project is in production, the Creative Producer keeps the project focussed by maintaining the project vision and maintaining an oversight of the production process, and is sometimes involved in the production processes. The Creative Producer demonstrates flexibility in dealing with changing production circumstances.

20. What impact, if any, did the presence of a Creative Producer make to the production process of a project you have been involved with?

20.1 Data Results

There was no agreement with the questionnaire options that the presence of a Creative Producer made no differences to the production process as compared with other team compositions, Therefore it could be said that all respondents agreed that the presence of a Creative Producer makes an impact on the production process. However, this impact could be positive or negative.

There was also not any agreement from the respondents of having the experience of a Creative Producer who took too many risks with the community group involved in a project. However in the interviews undertaken for this survey, one Creative

Producer of indigenous theatre and web project (B2) does describe the risky process that she manages, and the conflictual demands of community, touring opportunities and fundraising. She said:

Risk's an interesting word because in some ways, the whole process and the whole project is based on risk, in terms of being an experiment, in terms of committing to doing something before you've actually got the financial resources to be able to do it, in terms of not having formalised structures for recruiting staff.

Every relationship is a risk and then how you talk about the project, where we place the project. We've got so many invitations to tour, that's a risk of burnout to the community, and the company. It's holding all of these simultaneous contradictions in tension all the time and all of these dynamics of people, and the whims of funding - if people are going to put money in or not, and whether we're contracted to perform somewhere and have blown the money on the community process before we get to the show. Then we have to say to some major festival, that we can't come.

(B2 interviewed 10th October 2006)

There was one person who had the experience of working with a Creative Producer who did not communicate effectively with the artist team and stakeholders, while 13% of respondents stated that they did not have the expertise to respond to this question. There were 43% or 13 people who agreed that the impact of having a Creative Producer in the team was that the production was well organised and communication processes were effective.

There was agreement from (57%) or 17 people that the project would not have taken place without the involvement of a Creative Producer. A Creative Producer working in England discussed project development and implementation. He said:

So there is the sense that I am the person that put the project together. It's like if you are working on a film. You're the person who has originated the story. ... I guess most of the time people will see me in this, as this kind of catalyst, soft organiser role, but also recognise fundamentally that without me the project would not be taking place... that's just the kind of given.

(D6 interviewed 26th November 2003)

Half of the respondents agreed that the Creative Producer had the flexibility to respond to changed circumstances in a production process they had been involved with. A media producer working in community-based multimedia exhibition projects commented on the need for flexibility. She said:

To work in a collaborative way, you need a flexible team. I think within our community arts organisation everyone was quite open to going with the flow. I guess being able to react on the day, and to be able to be reactive but still within the confines of the project. So, when things pop up, being able to sort of either make a judgement of yes, this fits in, or how can we jig it around a bit so it does fit in? I think all of the members of [community arts organisation] are quite easygoing and not precious. I'd seen other artists work and some of them are very set on what outcome they want, a bit more controlling.

(C6 interviewed 27th May 2007)

There were 53% of respondents who thought that the Creative Producer developed effective trust and working relationships with the crew on a production. One respondent discussed the importance of trust in a community-based theatre and multimedia project developed in a small country town. She said:

You have to trust in the process that you will be able to draw it out based on the skills that you've developed. Taken as individual skills they might not necessarily be wildly creative but when you mix a whole lot of skills that you've developed over years of working with people in community projects together, you can have a very fine tuned instrument that can go zing, zing, we'll use that and this is how it'll turn out.

(B1 interviewed 6th November 2006)

In the creative aspects of the role, half or 15 people agreed that the Creative Producer had to have access to a creative network of artists and resources. One interview subject who sometimes works in a Creative Producer role discussed the need for a Creative Producer to have a wide network of contacts in order to be able to do effectively work in the role. He said:

You need to know people and their skills in the fields that you're producing in. So, for example, if you're doing a project that may require graphic design or video work, or various specialist skills within the creative areas, you have to have appropriate contacts. You have to know who is doing what, or at least be able to find the skills and the people with the skills that are appropriate to the project that you're doing.

(D8 interviewed 3rd April 2008)

On the management side of the role 37% (11 people) agreed that the Creative Producer developed business relationships and promoted a project to potential funders/ stakeholders in a project that in which they had been involved.

20.2 Data Analysis

The strongest observations of the respondents about the impact that a Creative Producer made to a production process in which they participated in some capacity, was that the project would not have taken place without the Creative Producer's involvement. In Actor-Network theory this is because the Creative Producer acts as the "obligatory passage point" (Callon 1986) brings together a group of people that he or she has identified share a desire to achieve a goal. This goal would not be achievable without the group of people assembled, and the Creative Producer becomes the "spokesperson" that the group permits to represent their interests in the attempt to achieve the goal. In terms of community-based multimedia productions the obligatory passage point and the spokesperson could be seen to be the Creative Producer who develops a project concept in consultation with the community group, and puts together the production team, the equipment and the funding to achieve a project vision.

The areas of agreement and the pattern of activity of the role emerging from the mixed method of inquiry, demonstrate that the reason for the development of this role in collaborative practice is the need for creative and management activity and responsibility to be intrinsically combined within a collaborative multimedia production process.

The risk issue specified in this question was one of risk-taking in the demands made on the community participants involved in the project. This option did not attract any agreement from respondents. However, It is an issue that respondents in the interview aspect of the survey did discuss (A2, A1, B1, B2, C2). In the interviews a summary of the various views expressed was that in any project where the approach is experimental, the material is risky, and the participants are new to the process, there are going to be serious demands made on the participants that always are at risk of failure. However, it is in risky situations that innovation and dynamic work are developed.

The percentage agreement in this question was again reduced by the 13% of respondents who did not have experience to comment. The strong level of agreement about the communication role of the Creative Producer features in the responses to this question about the activities of the Creative Producer in the production process. In this question, the focus was on the need for trust and understanding amongst the creative team engaged in the production process, a majority agreed that in their experience of working with a Creative Producer that communications were well organised and effective within the team, and externally with funders and potential stakeholders.

20.3 Findings

Throughout the questionnaire the importance of the creative input of this role into the production process has been stated in multiple expressions of agreement. Although there is some variance in opinion expressed by respondents in the survey about the nature of the Creative Producer's involvement in actual practice, and whether or not participation in the creative development process could be seen as part of the observed suite of activities. In an earlier question, a majority of respondents agreed that the Creative Producer is responsible for concept development. In this question, there is

consistency from respondents about the Creative Producer's project development role because there is strong agreement that a project would not have taken place without the involvement of a Creative Producer.

There is strong agreement throughout the survey the Creative Producer has to have a history of creative production to know how best to work with artists, and the knowledge of production processes and craft skills to know how to manage the production process. In this question, half of the respondents agreed that the Creative Producer had access to a creative network of artists and resources, necessary for the production process.

The Creative Producer has the flexibility to respond to changed circumstances in a production process. The Creative Producer develops effective trust and working relationships with the crew on a production. Communications were well-organised and effective within the team, and externally with funders and potential stakeholders. The Creative Producer has access to a creative network of artists and resources.

MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES OF THE CREATIVE PRODUCER

21. Have you observed improvisation used in the content development aspects of projects?

21.1 Data Results

There were 22 people (73%) that had observed improvisation used in the content development aspects of projects, 4 (13%) that had not, and 4 people with whom this topic was not discussed. In the interviews undertaken as part of the survey, in answer to the question about the role of improvisation in practice, one respondent (C6) who works in community cultural development multimedia and performance contexts said:

> *It's important. There is a certain thing that you do. You can't let it get too out of control, but I think it comes back again to knowing, if you know what your practice is really well, you know what's going to work and what's going to be a total disaster. It's again it's about guiding people, if it's going too far off, guiding them back.*

(C6, interviewed 27th May, 2007)

Although she believed it was an important element in exploring the potential of an idea, she also believed that improvisation, as a process for content production needs to be a controlled activity that can produce ideas that can then be refined and incorporated in to the project. Another media artist (D7) sometimes works in collaborative community contexts. While he liked to use improvisation as a tool in the development phase of a project, he did not improvise in the production phase of the work. He said:

> *To a certain extent, if I'm producing a work, I want to make sure that what I've*

nutted out is going to work. I know that to a certain extent how to do it, and I'm only really relying on my skills. I like to experiment in the creative development process before defining the work, and to push the boundaries of my skills. That then makes it easier, I guess, to come up with work that supports an idea.

(D7 interviewed 16th May 2005)

He has a working method in the development of a production where he like to experiment and to improvise to discover solutions to technical and creative problems, because his work often involves innovation in the use of technology as well as in the development of content. A music organisation manager (A9) who has never heard of the role of the Creative Producer has experience as an improviser in music and theatre performance. He had views about the positive and negative aspects of improvisation in creative practice. He said:

Assuming the criteria of rigor and knowledge of other languages and development are there, what's fantastic is that there is a uniqueness that is personal. It creates all these possibilities of collaboration. ... The weaknesses are that you develop a language, but you just keep repeating that same thing. So, the challenge for good improvisers is to keep evolving and keep changing. The strengths are the spontaneity, the energy of the moment, the ability to work with a huge range of other musicians, circumstances, environments and flexibility. Good improvised performance work, theatre work, has all that same elements there. ... It's flexibility. It's the ability to work in all sorts of different situations.

(A9 interviewed 6th June 2008)

He saw improvisation as a language of sounds and approaches to music that comes from mastery of the instrument and knowledge of compositional techniques. Improvisation in this context makes a positive contribution if it is a rigorous activity that has the potential for dynamic innovation, or repetitive reliance on past experience, in the negative.

21.2 Data Analysis

Improvisation is both an intuitive practice and a skilful technique that was recognised as a useful approach to developing content in community contexts. In performative projects, where community participants are required to act, an improvisational process for developing material can result in more convincing performance than a pre-prepared script.

People with backgrounds in performance (music and theatre) narrative-driven projects in Community Cultural Development, and community-based multimedia productions, all agreed that improvisation is a key to their working process. From further investigation of this group of respondent's views in the qualitative interviews conducted as part of this survey, it became apparent that these people were experienced improvisers who understood the power of the technique.

Johnson (2001) notes that the non-linear communication structures that are a feature of content development activities in collaborative projects made in community settings, encourages innovation through improvisation because "neural-net like organisational structures, breaking up the traditional system of insular and hierarchical departments and building more cellular, distributed networks of small units… can assemble into larger clusters if they need to, and those clusters have the power to set their own objectives. The role of traditional senior management grows less important in these models – less concerned with establishing a direction for the company and more involved with encouraging the clusters to generate their best ideas" (Johnson 2001, p.223). This scenario describes the activity pattern observed by many respondents in the survey to be that of the collaborative community based multimedia production where artists work with a small number of community participants to develop a content idea in small self-organising groups. These groups coalesce temporarily around improvised content development tasks and then merge into other formations for other creative tasks.

21.3 Findings

Improvisation is used as a content development process in community-based, creative multimedia projects. Improvisation is not an excuse for chaotic scenes and a lack of control of the production environment. It is a technique involving non-linear relationships that are sympathetic to autonomous creative development in self-organising sub-groups of a production team. This approach can be used to develop content ideas that can be refined, repeated and incorporated into the production process. Improvisation is both an intuitive practice and a skilful technique that was recognised as a useful approach to developing content in community contexts. In performative projects, where community participants are required to act, an improvisational process for developing material can result in more convincing performance than a pre-prepared script.

Improvisation offers opportunities to develop dynamic, personal and expressive content. It is a skilful technique that requires rigorous understanding of practice to be employed as a creative technique in content development. In a community context, it is the artist who must demonstrate mastery of their craft, in order to be effective improvisers with community participants. People without experience of their art form, are unlikely to be able to employ improvisational techniques with any success.

22. Do you think that improvisation incorporating observation, flexibility, and spontaneity can be used as a management technique in collaborative and/or community-based projects?

22.1 Data Results

There were 16 of the 22 (73%) people who had observed improvisation used in content development aspects of projects who agreed that improvisation could be a useful management technique. There was agreement by 19 people (86%) that it is possible to use improvisation techniques to incorporate people's ideas into projects and by 16 respondents (73%) agreed that improvisation techniques can be used as a process to

make a dynamic and responsive project. A group of 7 respondents (32%) identified Improvisation as a management technique that could be used for accommodating unexpected occurrences in community productions.

A dissenting view by one respondent agreed that improvisation causes chaos not organisation. One respondent who works in research and Community Cultural Development selected the 'other' category and observed that improvisation is more about evolutionary thinking and reflection.

The qualitative responses obtained in the interviews provided further elaboration about the use of improvisation in content development, as opposed to project management. One artist who works in Community Cultural Development projects employing multimedia and performance techniques noted that improvisation is only use effectively in content generation when the artists employing the techniques are highly skilled. She said:

> *I guess it's like a musician improvising. You can really only do it when you're actually a good musician, and then you can do it well. So, that's what I think, when I was saying that all the [organistion name] people are quite good at their practice, so they're really on top of being able to improvise, because they know where it can go to next.*

(C6 Interviewed 27th May 2007)

A similar view as that expressed in the quote above, was about the need for art form expertise in order to effectively use improvisation as a technique was expressed by a arts manager with musical training in answer to the previous question about improvisation in content development.

Another artist (C2) who has a long history of working in a creative/management role in Community Cultural Development projects, but does not call herself a Creative Producer sees an ability to improvise as the key management strategy in working in community contexts. She said:

The key is improvisation. You're thinking on your feet, for a start. In a community setting, you're not just improvising on your own, so you're kind of reading. You're giving others space and you're reading the overall direction of it. So, a good improvisation is about co-operation and spontaneity, but it's also about knowing when to step back and knowing when to step forward. You constantly have to second-guess where things are going to go, just in case. … I felt like I always had to have a strategy for coming to deal with it, if it happened. One of the things that I always talked about with people I worked with, who were doing projects, for the first time is that you have a Plan A, and then you have Plan B, and then you have a Plan C. (C2 interviewed 4th September 2005)

In the community context described above, improvisation was used as a strategy for problem solving and as a management technique that provided space for participants to operate as a self-organising team.

An interview subject who works in online publishing and interactive multimedia production selected the 'other' answer in this question, stated that improvisation had to be managed so it does not get out of control. He said the Creative Producer has to instruct the team NOT to forget the big picture of the project. Improvisation should not become an avenue for hijack.

Another respondent, who is formally employed as a Creative Producer noted that improvisation, was not just important in making a dynamic and responsive project - it was vital.

22.2 Data Analysis

The elements of flexibility, observation, and spontaneity are common to content development and project management. The respondents, who had an understanding of improvisation as a technique in content development, were able to translate this experience to a similar strategic thinking process in project management.

The role of improvisation in management contexts has been theorised as a model of leadership. Organisational improvisation requires a considerable amount of planning and structure to be in place, in order for it to be an effective tool in the management of productions. In their theoretical model, Cunha, Kamoche, and Cunha (2003) identified strategic planning, visioning, scenario thinking, and planned emergence as "organisational foresight". They state, "The analysis results from viewing foresight from two different perspectives: as centred on the future, or on the present; as macroscopic analysis or microscopic practice. This modelling describes the planning, implementation and communication activities of the Creative Producer, as shown in the survey results and as has emerged through critical reflection on practice undertaken in the case study productions. The combination of these factors results in four different modes of organizational foresight: strategic planning, visioning, scenario thinking and planned emergence. Foresight is a complex process, amenable to different understandings. Foresight is often portrayed as a technical and analytic process. We discuss it as a human process permeated by a dialectic between the need to know and the fear of knowing" (Cunha, Kamoche, and Cunha 2003, p.34). As in the theory, the iterative development of the case studies described in Chapters 3,4,5 and 6 of the exegesis, featured strategic production planning, and project visioning, and scenario thinking.

From the first case study, scenario thinking was used amongst the artist team as an analytic process to establish the strategies for dealing with likely problems envisioned in the intense production process involving several hundred participants. In the Creative Producer role, I led the strategic planning process to ensure that these steps were incorporated into the production plan. In pre-production meetings, the direction of the project vision was agreed, and a range of content development processes and strategies were discussed that would determine the production aesthetic. The simultaneous and repeated processes of strategic planning, visioning, scenario thinking and planned emergence were introduced in the pre-production planning of the second case study

production, and after careful action research analysis, the theory was extended and established to be a strategic improvisation technique in the final case study.

The four different modes of organizational foresight also developed by Cunha, Kamoche, and Cunha (2003) in case study productions, were congruent to the steps involved in the strategic improvisation process, I developed to understand the management structures that supported, rather than interfered with the autonomy of practice of a self-organising team. These structures encourage improvisation and flexible thinking in the management of the complex organisation that is the community based, multimedia production team.

Just as there is a need for expertise in the craft skills to be able to employ improvisation as a content development strategy, there is a similar requirement for management expertise to employ improvisational thinking as a management technique in collaborative and/or community based projects.

22.3 Findings

Improvisation thinking can be employed as a useful approach to production management in community contexts. It is possible for the principles of improvisation to inform management practices provided that the manager is experienced, and understands that observation; dynamic response to production opportunities, and flexibility in handling issues that occur in community production contexts can be used to create an effective team engagement model. This is particularly the case where the team comprises a mixture of skilled artists and community participants.

The four different modes of organizational foresight suggested by Cunha, Kamoche, and Cunha (2003) can be seen as similar to the steps involved in the strategic improvisation process, I developed to support the management and boundaries of practice in the management of the complex organisation that is the community based, multimedia production team.

Just as there is a need for expertise in the craft skills to be able to employ improvisation as a content development strategy, there is a similar requirement for management expertise to employ improvisational thinking as a management technique in collaborative and/or community based projects.

23. Are there any benefits in developing a long-term creative partnership between a multimedia production team and a community group?

23.1 Data Results

The most strongly agreed benefits observed by two thirds of respondents (67%) were that creative processes and ideas could be discussed at a deeper level because of previous shared experience and knowledge.

There was one respondent who agreed that rather than being a benefit, you could take people for granted if you worked with them for too long. Supporting this view,

one respondent who is experienced in interactive media production, Community Development projects and publishing noted that, "It is essential that the Creative Producer maintains the professional relationship and doesn't expect MORE for LESS from a team member he/she has known for a long time. Become 'mates' but don't assume 'mates rates'.'"

(D2 interviewed 15th February 2008)

The understanding that grows about the issues and problems of a community, and the evolution of team relationships and creative responsibilities that occurs through long-term creative partnerships were agreed by 63% (19 people) to be benefits for a multimedia team working with a community group. There was a smaller group of 11 respondents (37%) who agreed that familiarity and understanding between individuals in a community group and a multimedia production team meant that it was possible to take more risks in the design and implementation of projects.

Two respondents were not able to make an informed comment and four people who were interviewed but did not respond to the questionnaire did not discuss this topic.

One experienced manager of Community Cultural Development projects developed in a community health centre described the need for a trusting and respectful relationship built over a long period of time with ethnic community groups. The community was required by the Australian Film Commission to hand over the copyright to their creative materials to the health centre, as the project producer, in order to be eligible to receive funding to develop a CD ROM. She said:

Well, it went back from 1989, so there was longevity and I suppose that's where my practice is, it's a building one. It was AFC grant conditions that wouldn't allow it to be joint copyright. It was [the community health centre] who had to be the producer or not at all. So, I basically had to say, look, if you want this you've got to sign that. I don't agree with it. However, the relationship has been a fruitful one over many years and there's no money in it. People are going to be employed from it and you're going to have it, and it's yours but you've just got to trust us on this one.

(C2 interviewed 4th September 2005)

23.2 Data Analysis

The need for trust relationships to be developed with community groups is one reason why longitudinal relationships can be a great benefit to the creative projects developed by a Creative Producer and a mixed team comprising community participants and experienced media artists. Effective trust relationships result in a greater level of confidence about the contributions that community participants will make in a production process. As in many other forms of relationship building, trust and confidence leads to

deeper levels of engagement and creative exploration.

An example of such relationship building was the relationship established between the Creative Producer and a schoolteacher in the case study productions made for this research project. The productions were made at an inner city primary school over a period of five years. The school in emergence theory is a complex system. "A complex system has memory/history captured at both the micro- (e.g., personal experiences, personal opinions, worldview) and macroscopic (e.g., culture, ritual, value system) levels (Cilliers, 1998: 4). The intersection of a complex system of the school with the community-based multimedia production team meant that as the relationship grew, memory and history of the productions were captured at the micro level where the participating students and team members had the experience of working on a collaborative creative project. The longitudinal relationship also extended beyond the creative community team to the broader school community at the macro level. Cilliers (1998) states that within a complex system, "system history plays an important role in defining the state of the system as well as affecting system evolution" (Cilliers 1998, p.3). The systems evolution that occurred over the course of case study production was the development of trust relationships and the ongoing creative interaction in the school lifecycle. Hence, in these case studies, knowledge of the history of multimedia production with one community led to the evolution of effective content development techniques. As the relationships developed between team members, and understanding grew about the creative process, it was possible to develop approaches that specifically built on the knowledge of community strengths.

23.3 Findings

The length of time required for trust relationships to be developed with community groups involved in community productions is one reason why longitudinal relationships can be a great benefit to the creative projects developed by a Creative Producer and a mixed team comprising community participants and experienced media artists.

The benefits in developing a long-term creative partnership between a multimedia production team and a community group are that trust and confidence leads to deeper levels of engagement and creative exploration. Effective trust relationships result in a greater level of confidence about the contributions that community participants will make in a production process. The understanding that grows over time about the skills, interests, and issues of a community, results in an evolution of team relationships and the definition of new creative responsibilities.

In long-term creative partnerships it is possible to develop creative approaches that specifically build on participant and community strengths.

IDENTIFICATION OF SUCCESS CRITERIA

24. What makes a successful collaborative and/or community-based project?

24.1 Data Results

The most strongly agreed statements were about communication within production teams comprising a mix of professional multimedia workers and community participants. There were 25 survey respondents (83%) who identified success in collaborative and community-based multimedia projects being about building creative and trust relationships amongst team and community members. Linked to this belief, 24 people (80%) agreed that an effective communication process between participants and stakeholders made a successful project and 20 people (67%) thought a process that was enjoyable and in which people felt validated by their contribution were most important in terms of the success of a project. There was less agreement about public outcomes as being important in collaborative and/or community-based productions.

A majority of 17 people (57%) agreed that innovation in content or development processes, and 16 people thought that a project was successful if (53%) fulfilled its goals and vision on time and on budget. Almost 50% of respondents (14 people or 47%) agreed that success could be measured by the project having an effective process that delivered an outcome that could be enjoyed and appreciated by the public.

In order to gain a stronger picture of the evaluation criteria of survey respondents, some views from the qualitative research have been selected. A view expressed by a Community Cultural Development artist who works with performance and multimedia stated that for a project to be regarded as successful "The process has got to be genuine and got to be collaborative and then the outcome has to be of a high standard … the presentation as part of that is I think very important." (C6 interviewed on the 27th May 2007). Another respondent stated in an interview that it was vital for the project to be successful to honour the process and the commitment of the participants involved. She said:

> *The process and the product are not mutually exclusive at all. The product needs to be brilliant because all of the work. I don't want to work with a young person for three years and then produce something that doesn't have a standing ovation for them. But, I don't want to make a brilliant work that isn't underpinned by great process. … I do find that debate a bit of a boring one. It's really pointless because, it's a waste of energy. The work has to be brilliant because it needs to be seen as credible and having merit. It's just a different process that creates the work. The quality of the work is no different. In fact, it's probably more amazing because it has that depth and it has all those other histories behind it. To convince people to open the doors to community art, the work needs to be brilliant.*

(B2 interviewed 10th October 2006)

One experienced English Creative Producer stated that those that said that a good process was the success factor in developing projects were giving themselves an excuse for producing unsuccessful work. He said:

There are a number of appalling things that call themselves process-based stuff, because they were so bad that the outcome was not of any interest ... Because at the end of the day, I always think with art projects - does it matter, does it matter, did it actually do something which is just extraordinary which really shifted people's perceptions of themselves and the world? Did it ask those subtle questions or those big questions? Did it move? Did it have impact? Did it actually make things come together in an extraordinary way? There is a shifting scale of extraordinary. It can be kind of soft and un-dramatic. It needs all those things. It's that stuff that makes the dinner more than just the elements that go into the recipe. It's actually that extraordinary wonderfulness that a cook invests in it, that just makes your tastebuds go mmmmm!

(D6 interviewed 26th November 2003)

In comparison to this view, a person who works in a role analogous to the Creative Producer, but who does not use this title stated that the process and the outcome were judged in different ways when identifying a project as a success in community contexts. She said:

The process and the outcomes are equally important to me in different ways. I think that that is an important feature of some community projects. Some can be within themselves just about process, but I think for people involved to have an outcome and to have it recognised is an important part of the process. With the [name of project] which was a breast cancer exhibition, the process was vitally important. We ran lots of workshops and people came together with artists, collaborated with artists.

(C5 Interviewed 2nd November 2004)

Another interviewee, who sometimes works as a Creative Producer, provided a checklist of creative and outcome criteria for identifying success. Part of the success was that it provided people with a level of fulfillment through the process and the outcome. He said:

First of all it was the creative success of it, under the usual sorts of parameters, of being highly engaging, relatively innovative, if it captured the imagination of the audience and the audience responded to it, and it communicated, that'd have to be the number one gauge of success. The number two gauge of success would be, the usual practical things, like having come in on budget and on time, which is very

critical for it to be a success at all. ... Also that the people who worked on it have achieved a level of fulfilment from it. I think that's extremely important because all of that stuff communicates to an audience in the end. And that, the commissioners are pleased about it, all of those things are very important to gauge success.

(D8 interviewed 3rd April 2008)

One respondent was not able make an informed comment on this topic. One respondent had an 'other' comment to make. She is a manager of funding for Community Cultural Development projects and stated that a successful project was one that surprises and where outcomes are not all anticipated in advance.

24.2 Data Analysis

The most positive responses to this question by survey respondents in the questionnaire about the criteria for evaluating the success of a project were related to communication processes and the experience of involvement in the production. As in many previous answers, the building of creative and trust relationships and effective communication between participants, the artists and project stakeholders were rated as important indicators of success. In Actor-Network theory this enjoyment is seen to be a response to an actor that has become involved in a network of production and has been successful enough to "get what they want" (Callon 1986) from the experience of involvement with a group of people. This notion equates to a team that has been assembled through the "obligatory passage point" of the Creative Producer made to create a work, and where each "actor" involved in the project has been successfully able to "get what they want" out of their involvement.

In the questionnaire, slightly less than half of the respondents that believed that a strong public outcome, or innovation in content or development processes delivered a successful project outcome. However in the interviews undertaken for research there was a greater level of agreement about the importance of public outcomes in community projects.

24.3 Findings

Creative and trust relationships built amongst team and community members makes a project successful in collaborative and community-based multimedia projects.

An effective communication process between participants and stakeholders made a successful project.

A process that was enjoyable and in which people felt validated by their contribution were most important indicators of the success of a project.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY PRACTICES

25. Is there a "feedback loop" between working in collaborative contexts and working on your own professional practice?

25.1 Data Results

A clear majority of people (19 people or 63%) agreed that there is a feedback loop between working in collaborative contexts and working on personal professional projects, while 4 people (13%) only worked on collaborative projects and one person surveyed (3%) did not work on collaborative projects.

In the interviews undertaken as part of this survey, all practitioners who engaged in collaborative and individual practice observed that there were influences back and forth between the two forms. All interview subjects described this as a positive attribute of practicing in these two different fields. One artist (C2) described the feedback loop experience between her own practice and her work in community practice. She said:

> *When I went to Vietnam I worked on my own practice and I feel like the things that I learnt by working on my own practice really fed back into my community practice. I have a blog, I don't think I could have kept a blog going for as long as I have and kept it mainly fresh, without that being there. I was learning those skills of just thinking on your feet, solving the problems really, really quickly.*
>
> (C2 interviewed 4th September 2005)

Others respondents believed that the feedback influence were from connecting creative practice to other real world experiences. A manager of a music touring company in Western Australia asked about the movement back and forth between the communities and art practice noted:

> *I guess there is because I tend to choose artists that have a desire to communicate other than directly through their work, and they have a sense of their place within the community of the world. They aren't just obsessed with the technology and their craft. ... I haven't really developed a clear process, except a sort of commitment; it's a very personal thing, I think. From the outset I'm committed to creating a relationship [with my community] and that's on all levels. I've been doing this for 25 years.*
>
> (A9 interviewed 6th June 2008)

The feedback loop between community and personal practice can also be one where the community activity forges new directions for personal practice. One artist (C7) said he was invigorated through his community art projects and developed new techniques in community situations that he later applied to his own projects. He said:

Community art influences my own practice. My practice has evolved over the last seven years, since the new millennium. ... I learnt heaps of stuff from my community art practice over the last few years. It's also because of the new technology changes, how you make and construct things and the speed of things. For instance, I've left interactive media, I've moved back into linear, time-based media, rather than interactive media. It constantly evolves and changes.

(C7 interviewed 17th of April, 2007)

He saw community practice as a form of a laboratory where experimentation through improvised processes could take place in an atmosphere of permission and exploration. Through this process, sparks of innovation sometimes occurred, that were surprising and exciting.

There were 2 people (7%) who were not able to make an informed comment on this topic and there were 4 people (13%) with whom the topic was not discussed.

25.2 Data Analysis

A large majority of respondents agreed that the relationship and influence between community-based practice and personal practice is a feedback loop that extends and influences creative practice. These responsive and reactive influences can lead to innovation in a complex system such as a collaborative production structure. Other respondents believed that the feedback influence came from connecting creative practice to other real world experiences and it was the relationship between product and audience that created feedback loops.

Atlee (2006) coined the term, "creative-adaptive feedback" dynamics, to describe a type of feedback, located between negative and positive feedback loops in complex systems. He states, "the system's intelligence (whether rudimentary or highly developed) recognizes or creates new patterns to guide its internal frame of reference and external behaviours into life-serving congruence with its (often changing) environment." In agreement with this theory, the ability for individuals to apply concepts and creative processes from personal to collective, community–based multimedia productions, creates a form of the "creative-adaptive' feedback loop between unconnected complex systems.

25.3 Findings

There is a feedback loop between working in collaborative contexts and working on personal professional projects. The feedback influence can occur from connecting creative practice to other real world experiences.

Interview subjects with extensive experience in working as professional artists as well as working as community artists noted that in their community practice, the spontaneous and unexpected connections, and improvised problem-solving that is often observed in community practice can sometimes create unexpected patterns and unintended results

that can be replicated and refined in further iterations in personal creative projects.

26. If you don't use the term Creative Producer but you work in a way that combines management and creative development, do you have any difficulties describing your role in creative projects?

26.1 Data Results

There were 7 people (23%) who agreed that they did have difficulties describing their role in creative projects, while 11 people (37%) did not have a problem in this regard and the question did not apply to 12 people or 40% of respondents.

26.2 Data Analysis

While the majority of respondents did not have any difficulties in describing their role in creative projects, there were some that did. The need for better ways to describe the split creative and management function has been of concern by the small group of people that had difficulties in identifying their role. The interviews of these respondents may further elucidate the problem from each person's perspective.

Of the seven people who had difficulties describing their role in creative productions, two had stated in question 6 that they sometimes called themselves a Creative Producer. The ambiguous nature of their responses points to uncertainty about the value of using the term Creative Producer in all circumstances, and the problems they each of them had in describing to others the multi-faceted activities that each of them undertake in the projects they develop and manage.

Two others had not heard of the title Creative Producer and expressed relief and indeed delight that there was a term that they believed more accurately described their split creative and management role in the projects they developed and managed and the role they played within their organisations. One (A6) was interviewed in 2003 in Dublin and ran a multimedia development and exhibition agency. The other (A9) was interviewed in 2008 was the Artistic Director/CEO of a new music touring and performance company.

One respondent (D7) who did not state whether he was a Creative Producer or not runs an event company and designs VJ and lighting shows. He also works in creative teams on community-based multimedia projects and multimedia projects. In the plethora of activity that he engages in, he plays many different roles in different employment and project circumstances.

Another who was interviewed only (C3), called herself an Artistic Director, but said that she was not fussed about titles in general. However, the activities and responsibilities she undertook around developing projects, developing community partnerships, arranging funding, and negotiating contracts appeared beyond the responsibilities normally ascribed to the Artistic Director role. She had not heard of the role of Creative Producer.

26.3 Findings

It is an individual issue about whether or not people that work in a way that combines management and creative development have any difficulties describing their role in creative projects.

For a small number of individuals working across management and creative responsibilities in creative projects and organisations, the title of Creative Producer is a useful title to adopt because it more fully describes the activities of their roles.

OTHER TITLES FOR SHARED MANAGEMENT AND CREATIVE ROLES

27. If you work in a combined creative management and development role and you don't call yourself a Creative Producer, how do you describe your role in creative projects?

27.1 Data Results

While 7 people selected the does not apply option, there were 10 people 33% who identified themselves as a producer. There were 7 people (23%) who selected the artistic director option and 3 people (10%) who are called a director. There were 2 people or (7%) who called themselves a curator and 7 people (23%) who called themselves a facilitator. There were 6 people or 20%, who selected the production/project manager option and 2 people called themselves a general manager. Nobody called himself or herself an animateur or a mentor.

27.2 Data Analysis

The spread of results concerning roles people are called who work in a combined creative and management role and don't use the title of the Creative Producer reflect the traditional roles and divisions of responsibilities found in the arts management, theatre, media, multimedia and community cultural development sectors.

27.3 Findings

Amongst people who work in composite roles involving creative and management responsibilities and who don't use the title of Creative Producer, the most frequently employed titles were the producer, followed by the artistic director and the curator and project manager.

The term animateur is not well known or used in the creative industries.

The non-specific role of facilitator can be used to describe a combined management and creative role that is not defined by art form.