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Perspectives on the relationship between theatre and education: A West Australian case study

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PERSPECTIVES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEATRE AND EDUCATION: A WEST AUSTRALIAN CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Many professional theatre companies incorporate education departments within their organisational structure to develop education offerings for schools. Education within the context of professional theatre companies offers multiple capacity building benefits. Consequently, education departments clearly have a role in strategically shaping contemporary Australian theatre companies. (Edwards & Upton, 2014). Likewise, the well documented positive impacts of arts learning is recognised by the sector. This has prompted widespread drama-education advocacy from education and theatre industries respectively, as well as through the combined efforts of education and industry *partnerships*. However, this project argues that for partnerships to sustain relevancy and cross-sector support, researchers must examine evidence-based partnership models that can flourish within changeable local, national and international external environments (Byrnes, 2015). This project investigates these issues by using case study methodology to examine the relationship between theatre and education within a West Australian context. Specifically, the project investigates strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the education departments of Black Swan State Theatre Company and Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company. Likewise, it investigates views held by key company personnel regarding the role and value that education has within their company and within the arts ecosystem. Finally, it presents arguments advocating for future arts management research into the education and theatre sectors relationship to support the development and sustainability of the sector.

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Introduction

Many Australian and international theatre companies have traditionally featured education departments within their organisational structure, dedicated to providing school-based audiences with arts learning experiences and programs. These education offerings include *receptive arts participation* experiences (e.g., attending performances and arts appreciation events such as post-show Q&A sessions) and *active arts participation* (e.g., workshopping and play-building; Martin et al., 2013; Mansour et al., 2018). Theatre company education departments have various forms and objectives and invariably face a multitude of challenges due to issues of funding, cultural policy, curriculum and organisational culture and structure (Adams, 2014; Foster, 2018; Russell, 2015). Furthermore, education departments within professional theatre companies are often extremely vulnerable and the least-understood aspect of a theatre company (Russell, 2015). This study is an investigation into such issues using a small sample case of West Australian theatre companies providing education programs and resources to the education sector and young audiences of the state.

This study presents various arguments concerning the real and perceived barriers to access and the limitations of arts organisations' education offerings (Chong, 2010a, 2010b, 2018 .) To begin with, it specifically critiques the education and industry partnerships that many cultural institutions have turned to as a necessary survival technique (Ellison, 2015). Furthermore, the study argues that despite extensive arts advocacy from numerous political, education and creative industry groups and partnerships, there has been little Australian industry-focused action-research into education departments within professional theatre companies. This is problematic, as although many theatre companies produce education offerings, often receiving public and private funding to finance them, the arts industry is failing to provide evidence-based research in programming for the education sector effectively and efficiently. This lack of industry-led research and support also leaves professional theatre company education departments, often already feeling marginalised within their organization, struggling to establish legitimacy and relevancy within the complex education sector it aims to serve. By failing to extend past advocacy, and comprehensively examine education-industry partnerships, the project argues that the arts sector is missing

valuable opportunities for transformation (Maloney & Hill, 2016). Furthermore, the project maintains that drama education stakeholders within education and arts sectors continue to be weakened by significant and mounting internal and external environmental threats, both shared and respective. These extensive weaknesses and threats significantly and collectively impact the development and delivery of drama-based learning by arts organisations and requires an industry-led, systematic action-research approach, providing multiple long-term benefits. A review of the little available and current literature pertaining to the relationship between theatre companies and education confirms these arguments and will be explored within Chapter 1 of this project.

As many Australian and international professional theatre companies continue to develop and resource internal education departments to service the school audience segment of their audience, it is vital that this aspect of the arts industry begins to receive its fair share of rigorous academic attention (Adams, 2014; Ewing; 2012; Ewing & Saunders, 2019; Gibson & Anderson, 2008; Russell, 2015). Currently there is little arts management literature investigating Australian industry drama education programs from the managerial perspective of theatre companies. However, learning and education within the context of professional theatre companies continues to be commonplace, offering multiple benefits such as attracting financial support, forging community partnerships and developing audiences from parent organisations and the sector at large. Consequently, education departments clearly have a role to play in strategically shaping contemporary Australian theatre companies. (Edwards & Upton, 2014) Likewise, there is extensive evidence that key stakeholders within both the education and theatre sector recognise the well documented positive impacts of arts learning (Adams, 2014; Baldwin, 2008, 2012; Ewing, 2010, 2012 2019; Pascoe & Yau, 2017; Webster, 2016). This in turn has prompted widespread drama-education advocacy, not just from the education and theatre industries respectively, but also through the combined efforts of education and industry *partnerships* (Australian Major Performing Arts Group, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2017a 2017b; Bowen & Kisida, 2017; Edwards & Upton, 2014; Mathewson Mitchell, 2018; Sinclair, Jeanneret, O'Toole & Hunter; Snepvangers, 2017; Thomson & Harris, 2018; Throsby, 2000, 2010, 2018). However, for these partnerships to sustain relevancy and cross-sector support, allowing young people to learn through,

with and about the arts, arts management researchers must now look towards examining sustainable, evidence-based partnership models that can flourish within the changeable local, national and international "systems and forces that interact outside and within" arts organisations (Byrnes, 2014, p.102).

Using case study methodology, the project investigates the relationship between theatre and education within a West Australian context. In addition to a review of the literature, the methods of interviews and document analysis will be utilised to collect evidence to support its various claims concerning the lack of action-research into the relationship between theatre companies and education. Secondly, it will collate this data to present a situational analysis of the educational offerings of a small sample case of West Australian theatre companies. Finally, the project will synthesise and present the data collected, providing further investigation into the arguments it presents, as well as describing the implications of its findings and suggestions for future practice and research.

1. Chapter 1: Background
1.1. Literature Review

An examination of arts management literature indicates that there are various scholars, industry associations and government bodies undertaking research into the various aspects of the arts education sector state wide, nationally and internationally (Australian Council for the Arts; Australian Major Performing Arts Group; Chong, 2010a, 2010b, 2018, 2016; Fiske, 2002; Throsby, 2000, 2010, 2018 and the West Australian Department of Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.) Arts management research has been classified by Chong into three categories: 1) cross-national comparative studies, 2) economic impact studies and 3) audience surveys (2010a). Topics commonly researched within the field of arts management include its parent-disciplines of management and marketing, in addition to economics, finance, philanthropy, sponsorship and organisational structure, design and change (Kirchner & Rentschler, 2015).

There is also a growing body of international literature investigating the purpose, structure and success of arts education programs within the professional creative

industries. Importantly, the arts sector continues to be a strong instigator for arts
education research and advocacy in general. Davis asserts:

> The experience in Australia has been that major initiatives and support for arts
> education over the past decade have been more likely to come from the arts
> sector (in industry and political terms) working in allegiance with arts academics
> and the education sector rather than arising primarily from the education sector
> (2015, p. 329).

Although many academic investigations into partnerships between the education sector
and professional arts sector have been initiated by the arts industry, much of the related
research to date focuses on arts education advocacy. Few studies have specifically
investigated the relationship between education and theatre companies from the explicit
standpoint of the companies alone. In particular, little attention has been paid to
investigating best practice models of integrating education programs into West
Australian theatre companies and how these models contribute to an arts organisation's
sustainability.   Rather than examining how education best fits within the parameters of
theatre companies within an organisational and managerial perspective, arts
management research has focused predominantly on measuring arts and non-arts
learning outcomes (Sinclair, Jeanneret & O'Toole, 2012) and describing best-practice
ideologies emerging from school-industry partnerships (Ewing, 2010, 2012; Ewing &
Saunders, 2019; Mathewson Mitchell, 2018; Thomson et al., 2018). Furthermore, due
to the focus on multi-arts-education rather than drama and theatre explicitly, the
available literature has limitations in its application to the project.

As shown above, previous studies do not fully address how drama education can
provide benefits for West Australian theatre companies in addition to attracting funding,
providing marketing opportunities and ticking-boxes for political and social
correctness (Ross, 2003; Russell, 2015). There is however a small body of relevant and
recent literature that does address this topic from an Australian and American point-of-
view. This includes *The School Drama Partnership: Beyond an Artist-in-Residence
Program (*Ewing & Saunders, 2019) and *"I'll Huff, and I'll Puff, and I'll Blow Your
House Down": Building the Resiliency of Education Departments in Nonprofit Theatre
Organizations* (Russell, 2015).

Of most relevance to this project, is the work of Russel who has identified five "indicators to analyze the health of the education department" within a theatre company (2015, p. 24). These indicators are: (1) The education department's founding story; (2) The ability of the education director to connect with other departments within the organization; (3) The capability of the education department to find and foster contributions; (4) The capacity of the education programs to earn an income; and (5) The use of data to link the education department with a positive future of the organization. Each of these five key indicators will provide an additional critical framework when appraising the programs offered by the projects case studies.

Despite the lack of literature that is relevant to the specific relationship between the education and theatre sectors within Western Australia, there is a wide body of research that sheds light on other topics relevant to the project. These topics fall within three themes. The first theme concerns literature that advocates for drama education within school, home and community settings (Martin et al., 2013; Wright & Leong, 2017), including within theatre companies (Adams, 2014; Russell, 2015) and via school-industry partnerships (Ewing, 2010, 2012; Ewing & Saunders, 2019; Thomson et al., 2018 and Wesley, I., Jeanneret, N. & Stevens-Ballenger, J, 2011). The second category of literature relates to the 2018 education strategies of West Australian theatre companies, including the project's case study companies: product offerings, links to curriculum and critical receptions as found within as newspapers, magazines, websites and reviews. The third theme explored within the literature relates to the relationship between an arts organisation's core offer (mainstage productions) and education products, classified by Bernstein & Kotler as "augmented offers" (2014, p. 172).

Drama is one of several arts subjects included within the primary and secondary Australian National Curriculum. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) drama curriculum states that students will "explore and depict real and fictional worlds through use of body language, gesture and space to make meaning as performers and audience [and] create, rehearse, perform and respond to drama" (https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/structure/). Likewise, drama is also a component of the West Australian curriculum (https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/teaching/curriculum-browser/the-

arts/drama3/arts-overview/rationale), devised by the Government of Western Australia's School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA). However, although the curriculum includes drama, it is still only optional for schools to include it as one of the mandatory two arts subjects pre-primary to year 8 students are required to study (https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/teaching/curriculum-browser/the-arts). Once students enter years 9-12, study of any or all of the art subjects becomes optional. Despite this, both national and state drama curricular exist to guide the teaching of drama by specialist and non-specialist teachers. They are also used by theatre companies to guide the structure and content of their education offerings. It is this relevance to the curriculum that makes a theatre company's education offerings attractive to the education sector.

In addition to drama forming part of the national and state curriculum, drama by its own right offers many benefits to students who study it. The importance of drama and arts education and it's measurable and intangible positive outcomes have been extensively documented by various stakeholders, including: government agencies (Australia Council for the Arts and the West Australian Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries;) the education sector (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority and the School Curriculum and Standards Authority;) drama education academics (Adams; Bamford; Ewing; O'Toole; Pascoe) and arts education advocacy groups (Australian Major Performing Arts Group, Drama Australia; Drama West; International Drama Educators Association and National Advocates for Arts Education.)

Aside from evidence that suggests arts education significantly heightens learning in all key learning areas, (Ewing et al., 2011, p. 33), there is literature that lists benefits that are less to do with knowledge and more to do with nurturing young people holistically (Baldwin, 2008). Although some of the most cited literature is dated, much of it presents the strongest and most highly regarded arguments for arts and drama education. For example, Fiske asserts that general arts education provides children with multi-sensory learning, socialisation and increased motivation and engagement with the world (2002). Additionally, this research suggests that drama education provides learning opportunities to develop empathy, freedom, empowerment and a chance to create

memories in a manner that speaks to a human's first learning style; imitation (Baldwin, 2012).

Additionally, *neural pathways and networks, neuroplasticity* and *mirror neurons* have been linked to drama education (Baldwin, 2012). The research of neuroscientists and academics such as Professor Ramachandran *(2003)* and Gallese, Keysers and Rizolatti (2004, 2007) prove that there are neurological benefits for engaging in drama. Their work argues that drama stimulates the brain by developing concentration and emotional intelligence, as well as accessing long-term memory and mirror neurons, a "virtual reality internal simulation responsible for empathy, sensory response and anticipation of events and context " (Ramachandran as cited in Baldwin, 2012, p. 33).

Similarly, evidence of positive outcomes of arts education are listed in the literature of respected Australian drama and literacy academic Professor Robyn Ewing. "Achievements in reading, language and mathematics development…increased higher order thinking skills and capacities…increased motivation to learn [and] improvements in effective social behaviours" (Ewing, 2010, p. 13) are examples of such outcomes. Professor Ewing's literature also calls for stronger school-community-industry relationships, which the Australian Major Performing Arts Group (AMPAG) also supports through publications, reports and submissions. In addition to strengthening learning outcomes, AMPAG also asserts that solidifying arts industry and education affiliations will bolster community identity and local culture, "a national inheritance, which is, or should be, available to everyone" (Williams, 2008. p. 86).

Equally, Professor Ewing's research echoes the recurring call from esteemed Australian cultural policy adviser David Throsby for "a calibration and expansion of artists-in-residence programs in schools" (2018, p. 65). Artists-in Residency (AIR) programs have long been the domain of education departments within theatre companies. However, there are claims that these programs have been negatively impacted by rigid education sector "practice, purse and policy" (Modrick, 2011, p. 164). This view is supported by Edwards & Upton (2014) within Australia, who argue that commonplace theatre company education department offerings face many threats. Further Australian literature lists these threats as time, education policy, diminished

status and political agendas (Pascoe & Yau, 2017; Sinclair, Jeanneret, O'Toole & Hunter, 2017). As schools become increasingly time-poor due to extensive curriculum and the prioritisation of national standardised testing, (Ewing, 2010, 2012), arts advocates such as the late Richard Gill, have warned that arts learning is being "watered down or weakened" (2013). Modrick echoes these arguments. claiming that accessing professional arts organisations education programs   is becoming progressively unobtainable due to the problematic and complicated environment of modern-day schools and classrooms (2011).

In addition to the work of arts and drama researchers, educators and advocates, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) endorsed Rights of the Child supports access to education, arts and culture. *The UNESCO Convention on the Rights of the Child* include: 1) Article 29, a 'right to education', and 2) Article 31, a right to "participate fully in cultural and artistic life and …the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity" (2006, p. 4). Subsequently the growing challenges and threats to both the education and the arts sectors directly impact on these two fundamental rights of the child (Bamford, 2006).

The afore mentioned literataure is highly relevant to the focus of the project, as it describes several reasons why West Australian theatre companies develop education offerings. These reasons include the numerous positive outcomes of drama, its inclusion in the curriculum and the many calls-for-action for the arts and education industries to create partnerships that can deliver these outcomes.

Experienced Australian arts education managers and consultants Naomi Edwards and Meg Upton have described their extensive first-hand experience as education managers within prominent theatre companies through various articles, research papers and reports. Literature written by Edwards & Upton agree that there is a "high level of aspiration on the part of the theatre companies" (2014, p. 17) to tap into the education sector. In spite of this, they also argue that there are many problems, including: 1) education managers and teaching artists feeling marginalised and therefore frustrated, 2) high education staff turnover, 3) low wages (p. 42), 4) minimal funding in comparison

to adult programming (p. 43), and 5) the arts sector lacking a shared definition and value of education (p. 19). The common theme within this literature is that theatre companies are falling short in their provision of education programs and that they do not fully understand its potential value to the sustainability and mission of the company.

Although the value of arts education has been acknowledged by researchers, governments and the arts and education sectors, academics claim that this does not necessarily translate into practice, policy or resourcing. (Gibson, 2008; Thomson et al., 2018; Stinson, 2017). Despite political claims that the arts and creative industries currently hold a "larger place within the global economy" (Modrick, 2011, p. 179,) arts education continues to "remain on the fringes of the formal curriculum" (Ewing et. al, 2011, p. 33). Drama education advocates, including Patrice Baldwin, 2014 recipient of the Order of Australia for services to drama education John O'Toole (Sinclair, Jeanneret, O'Toole, & Hunter, 2017, p. xiv), Australian Major Performing Arts Group (AMPAG) and Australian National Advocates for Arts Education (NAAE) continue to lobby for change.

Specific examples of calls to action include NAAE's *Submission to the Inquiry into Innovation and Creativity: Workforce for the New Economy* (2017), Drama Australia's *Statement on Drama Education and the 2019 Federal Election* (2019) and *The Australian Major Performing Arts Group Submission to Gonski 2: Education Excellence Review* (2017a).

In contrast, the *gatekeepers* of the industry such as politicians, policy makers, funding bodies, teacher training institutions and government departments, continue to complicate two already complex industries with their lack of shared, common language and understanding (Edwards & Upton, 2014). Modrick describes the education ecosystem as "bureaucracies that operate according to local, regional, state and federal rules" (2011, p. 171). Arguing that school systems and its policies require effort and patience to understand, a precious commodity in under-resourced theatre companies, he also identifies their complexities: 1) the myriad of continually changing education jargon, trends, standards, 2) "different operational characteristics" and 3) "public relation concerns …[and] legal mandates regarding special education and relationships

with teachers [sic] unions" (p. 117). Until these complexities are better understood and managed by the arts sector, Modrick maintains that theatre company-based drama education departments face perilous times; a view echoed by arts education stakeholders and academics (Adams, 2014; Gibson & Anderson, 2008 Ross, 2003; Russell, 2015).

Bolton describes drama education as an "umbrella term" (2007, p. 45). O'Toole and O'Mara expand on this, listing four paradigms that encapsulate the discipline

1. Cognitive/Procedural: gaining *knowledge or skills in* drama
2. Expressive/Developmental: *growing through* drama
3. Social /Pedagogical: *learning through* drama
4. Functional: learning *what people do* in drama (linking to other creative arts) (2007, p. 203).

Furthermore, as drama education "is differently understood and used according to place, time, culture and practitioner, with a range of contrasting, even competing, ways of defining the field and practice" (Pascoe & Yau, 2017, p. 55), challenges and opportunities present themselves to drama education stakeholders. This is evident within various contexts, including curriculum, schools, education, community and professional theatre companies. However, the widest variation of drama education paradigms and offerings are those of professional theatre companies. Edwards & Upton (2014) argue that is due to the term *education* attracting discourse and tension within the sector. Furthermore, a review of the current literature demonstrates that this disparity is evident within the West Australian professional theatre sector.

In 2018, 92% of West Australians surveyed in the West Australian Department of Government, Sport and Cultural Industry's *2018 Arts & Culture Monitor Survey Report* "believed it important that children access arts and cultural activities as part of their education" (Catalyse Pty Ltd, 2018, p. 3). This finding is reflected by the fact that in 2018, several West Australian theatre companies and presenters of theatre had education offerings. This includes: 1) Black Swan State Theatre Company; 2) Barking Gecko Theatre Company; 3) Spare Parts Puppet Theatre; 4) Sensorium Theatre; 5) Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company; 6) Awesome Festival; 7) West Australian Youth

Theatre Company and 8) The Perth Festival. This review will now examine available literature to summarise the education offerings of three of these companies.

Information contained within the *2017 Black Swan State Theatre Company Annual Report* summarises the company's 2017 education initiatives. These initiatives consist of regional tours of *The Lighthouse Girl* and *Fitter, Faster, Better,* a program designed by BSSTC artistic director, Clare Watson (Black Swan State Theatre Company, 2018, p. 44). Furthermore, box office information within the literature reveal that "a total of 4,520 student priced tickets sold, with 2,322 students attending as part of a school group" (p. 33) and that many schools took advantage of *value-add-ons* (augmented offers) of Rio Tinto Pre-Show and Post-Show Q&A sessions and resource kits for productions with state and national curriculum links. This included productions of *The Lighthouse Girl*, which is recommended by the Australian School Library Association as a reading text for the National History Curriculum (Fremantle Press, n.d. p. 1); Once *in Royal David City* and Samuel Beckett's *Endgame*, a prescribed text for the West Australian Year 12 drama and literature syllabus (https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/). Additional education offerings described within the literature include work experience, internships and secondments, student ambassador programs, complimentary teacher tickets, workshops and teaching artists, teacher advisory groups and the Chevron Pre-Service Teacher Subscription initiative (BSSTC, 2018, p. 33-35.)

Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company (YYTC) are a Perth-based indigenous organisation with a primary purpose to "contribute to the evolution of the Australian performing arts sector by projecting a strong Aboriginal voice through live performance" (Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, 2018, p. 2). YYTC values are: Connected to community, authentic, respectful, committed to artistic excellence, ambitious, aspirational, resilient, nurturing, sustainable [sic] (p. 2). These values reflect research about connecting with local Aboriginal communities through the arts and the importance of building connections and cultural consultation and protocols (Wilson, Williams, Brown, & Syron, 2018).

YYTC education offerings are similar to BSSTC, with the literature listing performances for secondary school audiences, the *Boodjar Kaatijin* production aimed at

younger audiences, regional tours of *Boodjar Kaatijin*, *Culture 2.0: Respect Yourself, Respect Your Culture* workshops and the *Sonnets in Noongar* program. YYTC education programs are in high demand from schools, as they have direct links to the West Australian *cross-curriculum priority* of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures (https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/). They also link to suggested texts of the West Australian Literature ATAR Course, such as *No Sugar* by Jack Davis and *Windmill Baby* by David Milroy (https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/). In total, over 8,000 students saw a YYTC show in 2017, with *Boodjar Kaatijin* unable to meet the extensive demand from schools. As education is a fundamental part of YYTC strategy, it has been fortunate in gaining three significant state government project grants for individual education programs and tours, totalling $121,250 in 2016 and $62,271 in 2017 (YYTC, 2018, p. 65). This is in addition to other federal, state and local government grants and education project-specific sponsorship deals with Wesfarmers Arts, Respect Yourself, Respect Your Culture, Healthway and the Western Australian Water Corporation.

Finally, Barking Gecko Theatre Company (BGTC) has been making theatre for young people and their families for thirty years. Originally designed as a theatre-in-education organisation, available literature suggests that in recent years BGTC sought to move away from this sector (BGTC, 2017). However, since the 2018 appointment of a new artistic director, BGTC revised their values to include "inspire and encourage creative learning in primary teachers, students and the broader community" (https://barkinggecko.com.au/aboutus/mission/). The company has also renamed the previous 'education officer' role to 'creative learning manager,' which suggests a fresh approach to the strategic direction of the company in regards to education.

Existing literature such as the *Barking Gecko Theatre Company 2017 Annual Report* and the company website indicate BGTC's education products are targeted at a different audience segment than YYTC and BSSTC. Examples of this are the development of Gecko Ensembles, extra-curricular drama clubs within the metropolitan and regional community marketed with parents of young drama enthusiasts in mind and company-devised works such as the Helpman Award winning *Bambert's Book of Lost Stories.*

The relationship between the main objective of theatre companies (performance making,) and internal education departments is a complex area of investigation as the little information available is qualitative, based on first-hand experience and therefore subject to bias and recall difficulties (Yin & Campbell, 2018, p. 114). Furthermore, qualitative research is subjective, exploratory as opposed to scientific and its findings can be interpreted in different ways as readers identify numerous meanings (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018, pp. 98-99).

Before examining the literature concerned with the organisational relationship between theatre performance and education, the parameters of each of these key terms will be defined. This is best done from a marketing standpoint, as this mirrors the language and conceptualisation of these two separate entities used within the real world of arts management. As the case study theatre companies being examined in the project are not-for-profit (NFP) organisations, the marketing literature most relevant to this review is that of Joanne Scheff Bernstein and Philip Kotler, both leading figures in NFP arts and culture marketing. Their seminal work *Standing Room Only: Marketing Insights for Engaging Performing Arts Audiences* (1997) is still considered the main frame of reference in marketing live performing arts. It has also recently been revised and republished.

Within their literature, Bernstein & Kotler claim that marketing the NFP is a complex and unique business, different to that of the commercial sector where "the customer reigns" (2014, p. 26). The core message in *Standing Room Only* states that the differing purposes of the commercial and NFP sectors are fundamental in shaping strategic marking approaches. In the commercial sector, "demand and profitability considerations" (p. 26) dictate core operations and 'finding an audience.' Bernstein & Kotler's literature reminds readers that   as the "purpose of a nonprofit arts organization is to expose an artist and his or her message to the widest possible audience, rather than to produce the artist and the message that the largest audience demands" (Bernstein & Kotler, 2014, p. 26), the marketing of arts organisations requires a different approach.

The four key outcomes of successful arts marketing are value, trust, loyalty and advocacy (Kemp, 2015). In achieving these outcomes when marketing education and performance within a   NFP context, marketing theory suggests that each of these two elements be understood as two separate and different products due to being different "levels of product" (Hill, O'Sullivan, O'Sullivan & Whitehead, 2017).

Figure 1: Three Levels of an offering
Source: Andreasen and Kotler, 2014, p. 194).

Standing at the centre of a theatre company's collective offerings for its audience, are the key products that a theatre company is in the business of producing; entertainment and provocation. Andreasen and Kotler define these key products as the company's *"core offer"* (2008, p. 194) available to buyers in a tangible form, (see Figure 1). The actual main-stage production which provides the core product of entertainment and provocation is therefore classified as the "tangible offer". Core and tangible offers are paramount to an arts organisation's styling, quality, packaging branding and features, and are the direct route to an audience. Therefore, they remain the top priorities of an arts organisation when addressing the three key challenges for individuals and companies within the sector. These challenges are firstly aesthetic excellence and integrity, secondly accessibility and audience development and thirdly, cost effectiveness and transparency (Chong, 2010a, p. 4).

Secondary to the core and tangible offers, are the added extras that these items can provide the target audience. Defined by marketing theorists as "augmented offers*"* (Rix, 2011; Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Bernstein & Kotler, 2014), or "the potential experience" (Hill et al., 2017). These added extras take many forms (see Figure 1.) For a theatre company, this includes additional benefits and services that go beyond the core and tangible products of the mainstage production. Various literature sources pertaining to marketing the arts provide various examples of augmented products: 1)'early-bird' dynamic pricing (Rushton, 2014, pp. 83-84); 2) "affiliation or membership, becoming a donor or volunteer, or even becoming a more active participant by taking up a particular art form as a practitioner" (Hill et al., 2017), 3) discounted pre-show meals at restaurants close to the theatre (https://www.bsstc.com.au/plan-your-visit/dining-and-accommodation/ and 4) exclusive invitations for subscribers or sponsors to attend rehearsals or dinner parties with director and cast https://www.bellshakespeare.com.au/. An augmented offer can also take the form of the provision of supplementary education programs and resources to compliment the performance product. Edwards & Upton argue that becoming a marketing strategy to attract audiences to mainstage work, especially when a show or season is not selling particularly well, is often the key purpose of education within some major and small-to-medium (S2M) theatre companies (2014, p. 25).

This review has used marketing literature to describe differences between the tangible 'performance' product and the augmented 'education' product. It has also presented an argument from Edwards & Upton that "most theatre companies do not take education programs seriously, using school students to fill empty seats at unpopular plays" (Taylor, 2014). It now asks where does this leave education departments? Meyrick considers theatre companies as businesses that are tasked with a myriad of responsibilities: executive production, management of resources, financial and legal compliance, duty-of-care to stakeholders, innovation and enterprise, marketing … the list goes on (2005). Hence the growing discipline of arts management to assist arts workers to navigate the complexities of business within an arts and culture context. Byrne's describes that to be an arts manager in the twenty-first century is to be part of an international network of people "engaged in a common set of management activities supporting creative activities in diverse communities" (2014, p. 5). No matter what

shape or form an arts organisation such as a theatre company takes, the main challenges are the same: sourcing and managing resources, finding, maintaining and growing an audience and staying true to core mission and values (Byrnes, 2014; Meyrick, 2005). Chong also argues that to be successful, arts organisations cannot be guided by money alone and that it must strive towards addressing the interactions between all "managerial, economic and aesthetic objectives" (2010a, p. 15).

Arts managers of theatre companies that have education departments have additional concerns and responsibilities. Providing leadership and resources for an education department can be very different to managing other organisational departments such as marketing or ticketing. It brings its own challenges and nuances and unless education is ingrained into the core mission of the organisation, it is extremely vulnerable in times of hardship and re-structure.

Existing literature focusing on education within theatre companies has identified reasons why organisational relationships and expectations of an education department may differ to those with other departments. Although different in each context, these factors are: 1) not seeing education as part of an interconnected organisational system (Senge, 2006), 2) lack of understanding and misconceptions about education and performance for youth (Edwards & Upton, 2014), 3) education directors who fail to be both " an advocate for the department and an ally to the organisation" (Russell, 2015, p. 27), 4) "initiation of contributed income" (p. 28) and 5) connectedness with long-term strategic business development, marketing and planning (pp. 33-38).

In reviewing the existing knowledge and literature regarding the relationship between theatre companies and education within Western Australia, it is evident that there are significant gaps. In view of this, this project provides anecdotal evidence that although the case-study companies are trying to cater to the education audience sub-segment, they are doing so blindly and often through trial-and-error.   This project seeks to encourage arts management academia and theatre industry practitioners to further investigate and support education departments within theatre companies. As education offerings and departments are a common feature of many major and small-to-medium performing arts companies, it is vital that they receive their fair share of robust

academic attention. Additionally, by presenting information arguing for the sector to reflect on drama education and its role within professional companies beyond short-term advocacy and marketing, funding and diversity solutions, the project hopes to provoke a conversation about potential long-term benefits of sector investment in education.

1.2. Project Contextualisation

This study is an analysis of the 2018 education offerings of a small sample case of West Australian theatre companies and the capacity and commitment that they exhibit servicing primary and secondary schools within the state. It provides a situational analysis of each company's current education strategies by exploring the internal strengths and weaknesses of the company offerings, as well as external opportunities and threats. This investigative framework, referred to as *SWOT analysis* (Byrnes, 2014, pp. 159-160) is a commonly used formula for critiquing and formulating "strategic direction for both commercial and not-for-profit organisations." (Varbanova, 2012, p.87). In conducting this research project, it began with the following focus questions.

- How effective were the recent 2018 education strategies and programs within Company A and Company B?
    - What were the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the education programs they offered 2018?
    - What views and opinions are held by key company personnel engaged in education in regards to the role it plays within the company?

In the context of this research, effectiveness will refer to the specific indicators of success, formulated by arts management academic Lidia Varbanova. These indicators are creative success, marketing success, financial success, organisation success and innovation success (2012, p.8). The SWOT analysis will use these indicators of success as a frame of reference.

1.3. Methodology

To obtain qualitative data about selected West Australian theatre companies servicing the education sector, the project used case study methodology. This methodology was

selected as an empirical research approach that allows in-depth 'how' and 'why' questions to be asked within a contemporary and real-world context (Yin & Campbell, 2018, p. 15).   As this project is an investigation of external and independent theatre companies and education programs that took place in 2018, this methodology was therefore applicable to the investigation. Using a small sample of West Australian theatre companies as subjects, the project's case study methodology utilised three research methods: 1) literature review, 2) interviews, and 3) document analysis. Using a multiple-case study procedure, as outlined in Yin & Campbell (2018), fundamental information pertinent to the project's aims was collected, analysed and recorded using a generic 4-way thesis structure, that is: 1) Background, 2) Focus, 3) Data and 4) Contribution (Carter, Kelly & Brailsford, 2012).

An initial systematic literature review of research pertaining to the project's background and focus area was conducted to identify specific areas formerly investigated by arts management scholars. This method was also to address speculation amongst the Australian arts industry and academia that the niche focus area of the project is one that has been largely overlooked by Australian researchers (Bamford, 2009; Edwards & Upton, 2014; Ewing, 2010; Gibson & Anderson, 2008). The document analysis conducted for this project examined various sources of evidence that are commonly accessible when conducting arts management organisational research. Sources include publicly available documentation such as annual reports, season programs, social media and company websites. Using a variety of documentation as a data source provided the project with stable, unobtrusive, specific and broad sources of information (Yin & Campbell, 2018). Furthermore, utilising interviews to collect data afforded the research project targeted insights, informed explanations and opinions from people directly involved with each case study.

In synthesising the findings of the project, the organisational management theory of *learning organisations* (Senge, 1991, 1999, 2006; Fillion, Koffi & Ekionea, 2015) was applied to determine if and how each case study theatre company is adapting to on-going environmental change impacting the West Australian arts and education sectors. Organisations that actively embrace and respond to such changes are referred to within

the management sector as *learning organisations*. Described by management academics and practitioners as innovative, productive and competitive organisations, (Senge, 1991, 1999, 2006; Byrnes, 2014), learning organisations are "flexible, responsive, adaptive and less bureaucratic" (Starkey, Tempest, & McKinlay, 2004, p. 17). Learning organisation practitioners claim that adopting a reflective and responsive organisational structure directly impacts productivity and sustainability, which allows for the efficacy of the company mission and vision (Hess, 2014; Fillion et.al, 2015). By examining the effectiveness of education departments within Western Australian theatre companies and if and how they are adapting to external environmental change, will assist a clearer understanding of the changeable relationship between the live performing arts and education sectors. It will also allow for an informed understanding about the case study organisations capacity, capability and attitude towards change agents impacting their relationship with young audiences, schools and arts education-based research.

Environmental change agents that have direct or indirect effects on organisations include economics, culture and society, education, political and legal systems, technology and demographics, (Byrnes, 2014). Arts organisations gather information about these environmental systems and forces from six sources: 1) audiences; 2) other arts organisations; 3) board and staff members; 4) media; 5) professional associations and 6) consultants (pp. 130-135). The relationship between these information sources, environmental inputs and how the case study theatre companies evaluate and respond to them will provide a learning organisational or 'adapt or die' theoretical background for the project.

2. Chapter 2: Identification of Case Study Subjects

The case study subjects examined within this project are two not-for-profit West Australian theatre companies: Black Swan State Theatre Company (BSSTC) and Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company (YYTC). Each company was selected for the study due to their history of producing education programs for primary and secondary school students and educators within the state. Initially three companies were approached to take part in the study, with YYTC and BSSTC accepting and a third company not responding to the invitation. The initial invitation to participate in the project was sent via email and included an information letter explaining the project's purpose and scope,

ethics consent form and interview questions. Interviews were conducted and recorded within the offices of each participating company and lasted between 30 – 60 minutes. Individuals within each company invited to be interviewed included those within leadership and education roles. Due to time constraints experienced by both the companies and the project, every company member involved within leadership and education could not be interviewed. Furthermore, since 2018, BSSTC no longer employs an individual staff member directly responsible for administrating the company's education offerings. Individual participants were given the option to be identified within the project, but not all consented to be named. Therefore, all participants have been unidentified to allow uniformity. For this purpose, participants will be referred to throughout the project as *Participant 1, Participant 2 and Participant 3*.

To begin with, both YYTC and BSSTC are located within the West Australian capital city of Perth and create and present theatre at various venues throughout the state's 2.6 million square kilometres. Residing in arts centres alongside other performing arts organisations, both YYTC and BSSTC receive state and federal government funding, as well as financial and in-kind support from philanthropic and corporate organisations. In 2018 YYTC's financial operating surplus was $18, 867 (YYTC, 2019, p. 54) and BSSTC's was $557, 341 (BSSTC, 2019, p. 62).

Although neither YYTC or BSSTC are exclusively drama education organisations, each company supports a variety of education and learning initiatives embedded within their organisational structure and strategy. Information collected through interviews with key personnel within the companies and through literature analysis indicate that the structure of their respective education departments and programs differ significantly, as described forthwith.

YYTC is a *small-to-medium* theatre company with the fundamental purpose to contribute "to the evolution of the Australian performing arts sector by projecting a strong Aboriginal voice through live performance" (YYTC, 2018, p.2). The educational offerings of YYTC includes an annual primary school touring program of live theatre within metropolitan Perth and regional Western Australia. Furthermore, it provides

theatre and culture-based workshops for secondary students and career pathways for young and emerging artists and arts-workers. It also creates education kits to accompany school performances to extend teacher and student understanding of individual productions and provide extensive curriculum links to West Australian K-12 syllabi. In 2018, 18,182 students attended a YYTC production, 25 education workshops were delivered and the primary schools touring program visited 65 schools within Perth metropolitan and regional areas.

Furthermore, YYTC have one fulltime staff member who is responsible for the majority of administrative tasks related to the education program, including both workshops and performances. Specific tasks include school bookings, developing education resources, sourcing workshop facilitators and artists and all external marketing and communications relating to education and school tours. All education programs and productions developed by YYTC are classified as 'education products,' with the initial parameters of the program decided upon by the artistic director and general manager exclusively.

In contrast, BSSTC is classified by Australian Government policy as a *major* performing arts company. As a major, BSSTC receives federal funding to "develop and present excellent artistic works and foster a vibrant and sustainable performing arts sector" (https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au). The purpose of BSSTC is "to develop and present world class theatre, here in Western Australia" with an overall vision "to be cherished by our community by giving a voice to stories that resonate with our growing audience" (BSSTC, 2019, p. 24). The education offerings of BSSTC include productions of plays suitable for young audiences, some of which have toured and been televised to regional school and community audiences. Various BSSTC productions have been co-productions with fellow West Australian theatre companies, including the 2018 YYTC co-production *Skylab* by Melodie Reynolds-Diarra. Additional education offerings of BSSTC include opportunities for work experience, student ambassador programs, complimentary teacher tickets, performance-making and skill-building workshops, teacher advisory groups, pre-service teacher subscriptions and online education resources. In 2018, BSSTC delivered 9,604 contact hours of education and learning programs, in comparison to 12,514 hours in 2017 and below the target of

23,563 (BSSTC, 2019).

In addition, the organisational structure of BSSTC takes a different approach to embedding education within the company than YYTC. On joining BSSTC in 2017, Participant 3 initiated processes to "democratise" education within the company, so that it was no longer "siloed in a unit" and that "everybody recognised that it is an essential part of what we do day to day" (Participant 3, September 19, 2019). Currently in 2019, education is the shared responsibility of the marketing, associate producing and creative development departments. It is no longer referred to as education, with Participant 3 asserting "education is what you do at school all day" and that coming to the theatre is an "experience that you do for fun" (personal communication, September 19, 2019). However, Participant 3 also indicated that "when I say I removed the word education, it's actually education by stealth," because "when they are just having fun, they do their best and they do their best learning" (personal communication, September 19). Consequently, BSSTC have renamed their education offerings as the Cygnet Program.

BSSTC continues to develop this new approach to managing its relationship with education and the sector and, since 2018, no longer employs a specific staff member as its key administrator. However, Participant 3 did indicate that the company does envision employing a staff member to "drive the program" (September 19, 2019) in the future. However, the company's vision concerning education's role within the organisation would continue to ensure that learning and education be shared across numerous departments and would not be 'siloed' into a stand-alone department or project. Participant 3 was explicit during the project's interview that BSSTC intends to reinvigorate its education offerings in order to provide greater agency for young people through theatre and to rethink how it can become "a place of experience," (personal communication, September 19, 2019) and create "work that is relevant to them and appeal[ing] to them" (2019).

3. Chapter 3: Findings

The discussion of the results of the study begins with identifying the main themes reflected in the data. These themes are: 1) Education Rationale; 2) Departmental Structure and Organisational Relationship; 3) Earned Income; 4) Attraction of

Partnerships; 5) Capacity Building; 6) Resources; 7) Geography; 8) Cultural
Gatekeepers and 9) Opportunities. Each of these themes and how they relate to the
project's subjects YYTC and BSSTC will now be discussed.

3.1. Education Rationale

As part of the case study interviews, participants were asked to describe the rationale
behind the education departments and offerings of their respective companies. This
could refer to objectives and intended outcomes, underlying educational philosophies,
contributions to the company's core mission, or other.

The rationale behind the education offerings of YYTC is specific to the unique mission,
vision and values of the company, whose product fulfils a niche within the West
Australian arts sector. YYTC has developed education products that not only provide
arts-specific learning outcomes, but also provide schools exposure to "the diversity and
depth" of First Nations' culture, stories, voices and people (Participant 1, personal
communication, August 21, 2019). This is a significant point of difference with other
companies, as YYTC are "the only ones that can provide that… other non-First nation
companies are not allowed to tell Aboriginal stories" (Participant 2, 2019). YYTC's
education offerings were also described by both Participant 1 and 2 as important for
creating a sense of pride for young indigenous audience members and an opportunity to
present First Nations' people to school audiences in a positive light. It was also
suggested that their education programs allowed students who may otherwise feel
disconnected with school and traditional learning models to feel connected and inspired
by their experiences with the company's education offerings. In view of this, Participant
1 argued that the rationale behind the education program extended much further than
learning about arts and culture. She asserts:

> …the most important thing is… arts saves lives: black, white, yellow, blue...
> one kid might see that show… or one kid might have an opportunity, and then
> some years later they turn around and say 'that changed…that saved my life'… I
> don't think it's about teaching (2019).

Both participants from YYTC commented that responsibility was a strong motivating
factor behind developing education programs for the West Australian education sector;

a responsibility felt for many reasons. Firstly, it was felt by Participant 1 that they believed YYTC had a responsibility as an arts organisation to rouse the imagination and creativity of young people, with the possibility of inspiring them to become artists and arts workers themselves. Secondly, it was also expressed that key staff members within the company felt that whilst YYTC had a responsibility to create work about contemporary Australian culture, particularly in view of their company mission, the company did not wish to merely showcase arts and culture onstage. It was therefore felt that part of the rationale behind the education program was to impart cultural knowledge and experience, as well as using live performance to stimulate cognisant conversations about Australian culture and society, past and present. Thirdly, Participant 2 stated that due to the niche that YYTC sat within, it also had a responsibility and opportunity to develop and nurture young and emerging professional artists. This was therefore an additional motivating factor behind developing education programs, with the company providing a training ground for young people wishing to pursue a career in the professional performing arts industry.

 The final element of the rationale behind YYTC's education offerings is focused on insuring against the future. This strategy includes training upcoming artists and arts workers to provide adequate innovation, skill and human resources to feed into and invigorate the performing arts industry in the future. Participant 2 argued that by ensuring the education program was successful in engaging their current young audiences, they were creating audiences for the future. They state:

> …that's important to us, that the performances are engaging the kids, and that's what you want, as an artist and as a company; you want to be able to engage those kids so they become life-long supporters of the company. Start early, get them in high school and they'll become adult audience members. It's important be able to fill all of the blanks, in terms of audience engagement. (personal communication, August 21, 2019).

At the time of interviewing Participant 3 at BSSTC, the rationale behind it's education program was undergoing significant organisational and philosophical change. To begin with, Participant 3 claimed that as "theatre is for everybody" (personal communication, 19 September, 2019) it was vital that theatre should be accessible and enjoyed by young people. Due to this belief, BSSTC's education program was moving towards giving

greater creative agency and voice to young people, recognising their power and innate ability to think divergently, rather than being "empty vessels to be filled" (2019). In view if this rationale, Participant 3 argues that "we're not talking about developing audiences for tomorrow, because the people who come, who are young people, are a very, very, valid audience today… It's not about us preserving our future as an industry" (2019). By striving to empower their young audience members in the present day, BSSTC are working towards developing new education offerings that consciously focus on "experience and provocation… prompting and inviting in" (2019) rather than a traditional educational model of explicit instruction. Informed by Participant 3's professional and creative philosophy and practice, which leans away from the notion of 'children should be seen and not heard,' the direction and rationale of BSSTC's future education program rests completely on empowering young people. It also intentionally challenges existing hierarchies regarding the provision of learning and creative opportunities for, with and by young people.

On comparing and contrasting the rationales behind the education offerings of YYTC and BSSTC, it is evident that the companies differ in the category of drama education they are producing for the West Australian schools sector. With a strong cultural focus, YYTC's primary focus is using drama as a pedagogical tool for cultural learning, as well as developmental growth. The majority of their education programs emphasise learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait (ATSI) people, stories and language and generating pride and value for ATSI people, arts and culture. Although aspects of the education resources aimed at secondary students also focus on developing knowledge and skills in drama and about what people do in theatre companies, data gained throughout the project suggest that the functional and cognitive aspects of drama education are currently of lesser significance to the overall mission of the company. Evidence also suggests that this is due to the diminished capacity of the company to create and deliver productions and education programs that cater for every type of drama education paradigm and for the full spectrum of the school audience and curriculum. It is also indicative that the company is filling a gap in the prescribed curriculum that non-First Nation educators and arts makers are unsure of, or unable to deliver due to cultural protocols, lack of knowledge and the fear of being culturally inappropriate.

In contrast, BSSTC education products have a strong emphasis on learning about drama and the functional roles of specific arts workers within the theatre industry. BSSTC's key purpose to make theatre for Western Australian audiences closely aligns with the scope and sequence of the West Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) drama and literature course, providing programming opportunities for BSSTC. Consequently, BSSTC continues to produce work on the School Curriculum and Standards Authority's suggested text list for drama and literature (https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au). Examples include full productions or adaptions of: *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekov (2020); *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder (2019); *Summer of the 17th Doll* by Ray Lawler (2018); and Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* (2017) [https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials]. In addition to programming work of texts studied within the curriculum, BSSTC's online resources suggest that although the themes and stories explored within the plays do provide non-arts learning opportunities, the primary focus is learning about text, theatre and drama.

To summarise, the rationale behind YYTC's and BSSTC's education offerings both have significant relevance to the state's education sector. This includes various aspects of the West Australian curriculum such as subject-specific prescribed knowledge and understandings, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities. Although they share this similarity, the specific positioning of each company within the West Australian performing arts sector also creates differences between their rationales and therefore the education programs offered. In addition to positioning, the organisational structure of each company also contributes to points of difference between the two companies and how they cater to the needs and wants of the state's education sector. This is reflected in data gained through interviews conducted as part of the project's case study methodology. These findings indicate specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to YYTC and BSSTC education departments, some of which align with Russell's "indicators to analyze the health of an education department" (2015, p. 4) within a theatre company.

3.2. Departmental Structure and Organisational Relationship
The findings of this project indicate that structural design of the YYTC and BSSTC

education departments impact upon their affiliation with other aspects of the theatre company, such as creative and business development departments. Russell argues that "the ability of the education director to connect with other departments within the organization" (2015, p. 4) is key to its sustainability. Aspects of the data revealed by the case study participants is consistent with this argument, particularly in relation to YYTC.

For instance, data gained through the project about YYTC's education department reveals that the single staff member working within the education department feels disconnected from company leadership and strategy. The results of Participant 1's interview indicate that they are experiencing extensive personal and professional frustration within the organisation. The data also identifies that the structure of the education department, with Participant 1 directly responsible for its administration yet not contributing to the strategic direction and role of education within the company, is a key contributing factor for this dissatisfaction. This same staff member also highlighted what they perceive as untapped and ignored opportunities to further extend the success of YYTC's education offerings, due to education receiving "no interest… and…not [being] taken seriously" (Participant 1, personal communication, August 21, 2019).

Furthermore, Participant 1 claimed that education was valued by company management mainly for its ability to function as an independent and self-sufficient component that "makes lots of money… runs well… and ticks lots of boxes for funding" (2019). It is therefore significant that although Participant 2 views YYTC's education offerings as highly effective due to financial success, audience growth and positive customer relationships, the education department is isolated within the company. Additionally, Participant 1 argues "the education person is really the only person advocating for it" (2019), and that education's role is simply to attract funding. Again, the fact that this funding simultaneously benefits mainstage work developed for adult audiences, is another a point of contention for Participant 1. These findings reveal that the YYTC education department is vulnerable, with the key person responsible for education and the strategic direction and leadership of the company being disengaged. It could therefore be argued that education at YYTC and those responsible for it may face difficult times ahead unless the issues of disconnect and resentment are resolved.

In contrast to Participant 1, Participant 2 confidently claims that education is a key initiative of YYTC's strategic plan and positioning. They assuredly assert that education "sit[s] on the overall artistic vision of the company" (personal communication, August 21, 2019), and "is quite multi-layered" (2019). This is evident through the different education forms and strategies weaving through various aspects of the company, from artist development, providing school programs and to sharing First Nations culture and stories to audiences of all ages. Both Participant 1 and Participant 2 discussed the relationship between education and the organisation's structural design and how it was specifically contributing to the overall health and sustainability of the Australian First Nation's art and culture sector.

Aside from creating education offerings for the schools' market, other education offerings at YYTC focus on nurturing young and emerging artists and arts workers. This is done by creating professional pathways for them to enter the industry on completion of their arts training. The opportunity to work on YYTC's primary school products that tour annually throughout the state's regional and metropolitan areas was highlighted by Participant 2 as an example of this. YYTC regularly engages emerging writers to create stories and scripts for these tours, allowing young artists meaningful and authentic opportunities to   develop their craft within a less intense professional performing arts setting. Likewise, Company A's primary touring program serves as an introduction to life as a performer or arts worker within a professional theatre company. Yet another strength of this practice is the financial stability gained by arts workers engaged in the primary school tours. Participant 2 notes:

> …it's very different, the real-world, so from that perspective it's great. …if they're going on tour for fourteen weeks, they have to look after themselves. So it's a very big learning curve of those young people, so to get into it and say "…I have to look after myself to keep my job going." …we're providing employment opportunities that …you don't get in main stage theatre. The main stage, is usually… only between seven to eight weeks a year…So for fourteen weeks of the year, or for fifteen weeks of the year, these guys are employed… which gives them … financial security for that period of time. (Personal communication, August 21, 2019)

In contrast to YYTC's insulated education department, BSSTC view their approach to

intentionally incorporate education within all aspects of the company as a growing strength. Participant 3 described the process of democratising education within BSSTC as something that was bolstering its profile within the company, although the process is still in its infancy. By spreading the responsibility of education across marketing, artistic and production departments, BSSTC are explicitly demonstrating to stakeholders that education is important and relevant to all of its various internal functions.

The rationale and child-centred educational philosophy that is embedded within BSSTC's education offerings is highly reflective of contemporary arts-learning models. With an emphasis on "creating an environment that [gives] agency to the children as creators" (Participant 3, personal communication, 19 September, 2019), BSSTC are allowing young audiences ownership and voice. This reflects contemporary and evidence-based arts education research that maintains ownership and agency as integral to authentic and meaningful arts learning for young people. This strength also resonates with the creative vision of the company "of challenging hierarchies… always looking to where power existed, and then seeing if you could either empower the more disempowered, or if you could challenge and question the nature of this kind of presumed power" (2019). This theme is reflected not only within the education rationale and offerings, but also through the company's programming choices of 2019 and 2020 which feature re-imaginings of old classics and a deliberate and powerful embrace of diversity. In view of this, a strength of BSSTCs education program is concerned with authentic transactional exchanges that take place when arts learning actively values the voices of young people. This is evident within the structure, content and delivery of education resources which are now pitched to students, rather than to teachers. Described as a "generous sharing" (Participant 3, personal communication, 19 September, 2019) of the work, rather than a didactic teaching kit, these digital education resources are "lively and smart…with no bullshit… [and] about going, "no this isn't about 'I know things and I'm going to tell you things'" (2019). This strong, child-centred approach to education is already reaping its rewards, with Participant 3 observing a growing sophistication of engagement between young audiences and BSSTC creatives and managers during post-show Q and A sessions.

The project's data also highlights BSSTC's active commitment to ensuring the overall experience of young people coming to the theatre is a positive one. Managing teacher expectations and front-of-house experiences, allowing young audiences to respond to work in the way that is naturally age appropriate, and ensuring visiting school groups do not get the cheapest seats whilst attending productions were all identified as important to the company. By ensuring young audiences feel comfortable engaging with their artistic product, venue and learning opportunities, BSSTC is demonstrating that education is high on the agenda and not just a funding and marketing opportunity that some existing literature suggests is what fuels a theatre company's relationship with education. Not only is this a strength that has benefits for the West Australian education sector, but it also benefits BSSTC. Again, by being reflective and responsive to the changing needs and wants of the education sector, it aims to positively safe-guard BSSTC s education program and reputation in the long term.

Having explored the rationales and structure of the education departments and offerings of YYTC and BSSTC, it is evident that educations' relationship with other organisational functions and departments continues to be a complex and unresolved issue for both companies. Although YYTC and BSSTC are at different stages of recognising and managing this, the project's findings add to arguments presented in existing literature that successful theatre companies education departments must not be stand-alone silos. Although BSSTC have responded to this by restructuring and repositioning their education department and offerings, the results of this strategy are yet to be seen. In comparison, key members of YYTC have differing opinions about how education offerings sit within the company. With one project participant arguing that education is marginalised and primarily valued by management as a means to fund the artistic director's mainstage work, and another participant maintaining that education is deeply embedded within YYTC's artistic vision and strategic positioning, this is an issue yet to be acknowledge and resolved by the company.

3.3. Earned Income

A theatre company's education department's ability to contribute earned income to its parent company can additionally have a direct correlation to its value to the company (Russell, 2015). With arts organisations perpetually facing funding challenges and

changes, any fiscal contribution that education departments can make will be to its advantage. Specific figures of how much revenue education generates for each of the case study theatre companies was not available for this study. However, both participants from YYTC revealed during their individual interviews that education was financially successful for the company. Participant 2 described   reasons behind the success of the programs as "its cost effectiveness, and the fact that we can deliver it, for a high number of students" (personal communication, August 21, 2019). Interviews conducted with both YYTC participants also demonstrate that the growth of the primary school program is largely self-generating and in recent years has contributed significantly to YYTC's overall financial sustainability.

In addition, Participants 1 and 2 both identified an opportunity to translate the success of YYTC's primary schools model into the secondary market. To illustrate, Participant 2 claims that "we have it down pat in terms of the primary school sector…and now we're looking at growing it, or moving it into the high school sector…so we are covering all our bases…which will have a greater impact" (personal communication, August 21, 2019). This will include secondary school workshops which were piloted in 2019 within metropolitan high schools, production of new plays specific for secondary audiences and forum theatre programs addressing contemporary youth issues such as mental health, drugs and alcohol, sexual health, and cultural respect and safety. Participant 2 also indicated that there was an opportunity to adapt the forum theatre model for the corporate world, specifically for organisations "having issues" (2019). However, YYTC's has of yet failed to seize this opportunity. Participant 1 maintains that although YYTC's successful primary model could be easily adapted to capture the secondary school market, it has faced resistance within the company.

> I really want to push for that type of… model for secondary school audiences. That's where our gap is…the only way we 're engaging with secondary audiences is, if there is a show   that is applicable to see…we invite them. … the last two years, we haven't had shows that they can come and see, because they're not suitable for these workshops… You know, we might get… a few schools on board… servicing maybe 100 kids… I have been really trying to push that…. There is just such a gap… for the last three years it's just been the biggest thing that I've been trying to push and I just don't know how else to get it out there…it's not getting the attention. (Personal communication, August 21, 2019)

Ceri Anne Nordling

Participant 1 claims the main contributing factor for YYTC failing to replicate their successful primary model for secondary audiences is not just a lack of resources, capacity and priorities. They speculate that it is also the creative and financial risk attached to developing a new program that hold YYTC back in seizing this opportunity. Although they acknowledge that this is a valid reason for company leadership to be apprehensive about filling the secondary audience gap, Participant 1 conversely claims that there are strong reasons that support accepting this risk. These counter-arguments include the high probability of a secondary model replicating the financial success of the company's primary model and the fact that "all the other theatre companies aren't taking shows into secondary schools" (2019). Therefore, there remains an untapped market that YYTC could access due to lack of competition and the existing strong reputation of YYTC as a drama-education provider within the primary sector. Findings of this project reveal that the lack of action to address this is another contributing factor to Participant 1's professional frustration and disgruntlement.

3.4. Attraction of Contributions

In the same way that revenue generation presents an argument in support of theatre company education departments, so too does its ability to attract support from government funding bodies, partnerships and philanthropic agencies. The ability to find and foster financial and in-kind contributions assists in ensuring its longevity within a theatre company (Russell, 2015). The results of this project correlate with this view. Education's ability to attract government funding and corporate sponsorship was identified as a key strength of YYTC's education department. Participant 1 claimed that YYTC was "already very fortunate with funding… [having previously received] lots and lots" (personal communication, August 21, 2019), particularly in relation to attracting funding for workshops which are extremely popular which corporate sponsors and philanthropic donors. However, although this would at first seem a positive, the ability to attract funding for specific projects nominated by funders themselves was actually problematic if the company lacked the capacity to deliver adequate returns-on-investment. A specific example of this concerns YYTC's difficulty with delivering workshops, which attract significant attention and support from funding bodies and philanthropic groups. Participant 1 described the quality of YYTC workshops as sub-

substandard, due to facilitators not possessing adequate skills or training in working
with young people within an educational setting. A recurring theme within Participant
1's discussion of this weaknesses, was that using artists as workshop facilitators was
key to their failure because although they were performers, they lacked practical insight
into classroom management and adhering to lesson plans. This in turn created additional
problems, with feedback from schools indicating that the workshops were "not very
good" (Participant 1, personal communication, August 21, 2019). The fallout from this
was the concern that YYTC was then "ruining… relationships with schools" (2010) and
funding bodies, in turn   jeopardising reputation and capability to build capacity.

What is more, before Participant 1 joined the company, the weakness of YYTC
workshops remained un-noticed for an unidentifiable amount of time due to the absence
of internal quality control procedures. Once the poor quality of the workshops was
flagged by Participant 1, they made the suggestion to cease all school workshops until
these various weaknesses could be addressed. These weaknesses also included the
duration of the workshop programs and the expense and lack of available, indigenous
teaching-artists culturally required to deliver workshops pertaining to First Nations'
arts, culture and people. However, as YYTC's school workshop programs attracts
lucrative funding from stakeholders, Participant 1 claims that the company remains
reluctant to stop offering the education sector workshop options. She claims:

> So we go in there, and you're delivering what you can, and again, it becomes
> sub-standard. So something that I've highlighted is… we shouldn't be doing
> workshops... But then I get this push back, with, "well that's why people are
> giving us money…" that's why we take the money. (2019)

The issue of lack of capacity to deliver what funders prefer to support financially is
problematic for YYTC as it highlights a disconnect between what different company
members see as the priorities of YYTC's education offerings. With some people valuing
education's ability to attract funding and others prioritising the quality of education
learning experiences, the mixed agenda of the education department and how it is
managed creates strategic and operational points of weakness for the company.

3.5. Capturing Data

In order for education to remain relevant and of importance to a theatre company, it must advocate for itself with evidence of its contribution to building the capacity of the company in the long term. Capacity building refers to an organisation's efforts and ability to deliver its mission, both in the present and in the future, described by the [American] National Council of Nonprofits.

> Capacity building is whatever is needed to bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, so it may more effectively and efficiently advance its mission into the future. Capacity building is not a one-time effort to improve short-term effectiveness, but a continuous improvement strategy toward the creation of a sustainable and effective organization. (https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/what-capacity-building)

In order to prove its usefulness to its parent company, Russell suggests that education departments collect and utilise "data to link the education department with a positive future of the organization" (2015, p. 22). This data may take the form of customer relationship management data, research or policy.

For example, when asked to describe the strengths of the education offerings of YYTC, Participant 1 and Participant 2 were able to draw upon the company's extensive customer relationship management (CRM) data. Although this data was not available for this project due to privacy issues, both participants indicated that many of their responses to the interview questions were substantiated by CRM data. Participant 1 and 2 gave two examples of YYTC's education strengths that had been highlighted through the CRM data. The first strength was the tangible product of primary shows which were well received and growing in popularity with West Australian primary schools. The second strength was the company's ability to fill a niche that other theatre companies are ethically unable to work within due to First Nations' cultural protocols. To conclude, both participants acknowledged that introducing young audiences to First Nation arts, culture and people in a light-hearted and fun way was a key strength of not only the education department, but to the overall mission of the organisation. Therefore, the extensive range of positive CRM data regarding YYTC's education offerings provides evidence that continuing to provide successful education offerings will

contribute to a positive future for the company, as argued by Russell (2015).

Another source of data that both participants linked to the sustainability of YYTC's education offerings is state and national curriculum. By default, the themes, stories and content of the company's education product align very closely to school curriculum, particularly the cross-curriculum priority of "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures" (https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au). Therefore, YYTC are able to deliver what teachers and schools are "looking for… [which] … schools have already bought into" (Participant 2, personal communication, August 21, 2019). This in turn has the added benefit of requiring minimal marketing and strong audience relationships, with a high number of returning audiences. The strength of their primary school's product was considered to be one of the key contributing factors to YYTC's strong relationship with and engagement of its captured school audiences. Furthermore, the quality of educational support resources created by the education officer, the highly attended annual education launches and the connection to Noongar language were additional keys strengths of YYTC's education offerings. Both participants acknowledged the company's CRM data corroborated that curriculum links, strength of products and evidence of satisfied audiences were the core strengths of YYTC's collective education offerings.

3.6. Resources

Access to and a lack of resources was highlighted as a substantial weakness and threat to the education offerings of both YYTC and BSSTC. This includes both tangible resources (human, physical and financial) and intangible resources (intellectual, reputation, knowledge and innovation) that arts organisations use to create their product and gain competitive advantage.

Both YYTC participants interviewed for the study described the lack of First Nation's arts workers available to sustain the company in terms of production and management. As a theatre company with a specific cultural vision concerning telling Aboriginal stories, it is imperative for YYTC and its stakeholders that those telling ATSI stories be culturally connected and permitted to do so. Unfortunately for YYTC, this is becoming a significant challenge, with many First Nations' arts workers within the state needing

to supplement inconsistent arts industry employment and income with additional work outside of the arts. This in turn significantly impacts the availability of performers, production crew and arts management personnel to work on YYTC's productions, tours and workshops. Participant 2 also suggested that the lure of the eastern-states arts industry was a further threat for the Company, with many artists and arts workers leaving Western Australia for the perceived higher number of opportunities available within Victoria and New South Wales.

Similarly, BSSTC also share a lack of human resources. As a major performing arts company with approximately 25 core staff, Participant 3 maintains that the inadequate lack of human resources often limits BSSTC's "passion and ideas" (personal communication, 19 September, 2019). With this shortage of human resources resulting in staff members "being pretty stretched" (2019), it creates a secondary issue of time restraints. Additionally, as there is currently no singular person responsible for leading the education program's administration, these time restraints put additional strain on departments sharing the responsibility of education. This in turn leads to the question of "will education get its fair share of time from stretched staff members who have other responsibilities within the company?" Although the democratisation of education with the organisational structure is an admirable feature for people who see the value of the industry-education relationship, another possibility is that it may become highly vulnerable within an under-resourced organisation.

The lack of physical space and infrastructure   was identified by Participant 3 as a significant weakness for BSSTC's education offerings. They cite:

> … as a company, we don't have our own venue…we are a resident company of the State Theatre Centre, which is a great privilege, but it means that we don't have our own rehearsal rooms, and there is nowhere that we can run workshops. So while we would love to have… a weekly student group of theatre makers getting together, and hanging out, and chatting and doing acting exercises, we actually just currently don't have the infrastructure to be able to do it. (Personal communication, 19 September, 2019)

As a consequence of inadequate tangible resources such as rehearsal rooms, BBSTC faces ongoing restrictions in the range of education products it can deliver to the state's

education sector. Although alternative solutions could be sought to address these infrastructure issues, these too bring with it additional challenges such as expense, inconvenience and logistical planning. Since the data suggests that BSSTC are already under-resourced and over-extended, these solutions may not necessarily be achievable at the present time.

Both YYTC participants list another force and system threatening the company's education offerings reductions as school funding. For example, the lack of financial support for arts excursions and incursions is becoming leaner and more difficult to access. Participant 2 argues that this is due to the view that the arts are "the poor cousin in the education sector… a bit of an add on" (personal communication, August 21, 2019) This directly results in theatre companies having to compete for diminishing funds available to schools, often with popular sport programs, "the woolly mammoth that lords over everybody else" (2019). Further financial threats were listed as the diminishing price that schools were able to afford per-head for education products. As a consequence, many schools are unable to afford the price of a standard student ticket. In turn, this has prompted the company to heavily subsidise ticket prices for some schools, particularly those in the state's regions. Needing to modify pricing structures for schools unable to afford $10-$11 plus GST for example, was considered by Participant 2 to be the most significant threat for YYTC and may not be something the company can sustain for the long term.

The consequence of both the educator and arts sector facing resource strain and shortage has significant impact on the ability of young audiences to gain access to industry based arts education products. The evidence also suggests that problems of insufficient resourcing is putting immense pressure on those advocating and delivering for arts education, creating stress, frustration and burnout within the education and arts sectors respectively.

3.7. Geography

The enormous land mass and geographic diversity that both BSSTC and YYTC traverse represents an additional and momentous threat to its education offerings. Unique to Western Australia, the tyranny of vast distances creates numerous pragmatic difficulties

in providing education programs to audiences within locations that may be remote and difficult to access due to seasonal factors such as the wet season. It also brings with it great expense for theatre companies and regional schools and communities, as producing and supplying theatre to a state that is comparable in size to one third of the nation is extremely costly. In addition to expense, delivering theatre and education offerings throughout the state of Western Australia also faces issues of lengthy travel times, the physical and personal stress of extensive touring for artists and production crew and cultural First Nation protocols that must be understood and adhered. Once again, whilst this is not impossible to achieve, for under-resourced arts organisations. However, it does present yet another set of hurdles to navigate. Consequently, Participant 3 argues that as a major performing arts company, "they are yet to find a solution [and] it will continue to be a question until we find a satisfying answer for how… [to] provide satisfying and enriching opportunities for audiences all across our state" (personal communication, 19 September, 2019).

The geographic location of many sponsors such as those within the resource sector has led to a saturation of arts companies servicing areas such as the north-west of the state, which is "extremely well serviced because all the mining companies are up there" (Participant 2, personal communication, August 21, 2019). There are currently four performing arts companies receiving funding to tour to schools within regional Western Australia, leading to greater competition for YYTC and BSSTC in accessing schools within the regions. Participant 2 claimed that in 2018, when approached by YYTC about their touring program, some regional schools expressed that they were "arted out…[because] we've seen the ballet, we've seen this, we've seen that… we've already had everything come through [touring] … we don't want anymore" (2019). Participant 2 described how it would be more ideal for YYTC to have corporate partnerships within every regional area of the state to allow a more even distribution of schools serviced, as many education sectors of the state miss out on the benefits of their community partnerships due to geographic location alone. In addition to the threat of competing for audiences and funding, Participant 2 indicated that competing for schools' time was also a threat. The main reasons for this as highlighted by the findings include time restrictions for often lesser valued excursions, incursions and the arts, the burden of a heavy curriculum, the prioritisation of core subjects and the ongoing political emphasis

on high stakes testing such as the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

3.8. Cultural Gatekeepers

Cultural gatekeepers is a term used to refer to members of the community that wield the power over how the arts are perceived, resourced and accessed. The term is wide ranging and can include consumers, policy makers, individual politicians and political parties, media outlets, educators, the corporate world, critics, philanthropists, activists and government bodies. When applied to discussion about arts education, the concept of cultural gatekeepers is a contentious one, which was reflected throughout the projects findings. For example, Participant 3 contends that the "gatekeepers of the cultural experience" (personal communication, 19 September, 2019) still "have a bit of a cage around what the arts is and who is and who isn't allowed to participate" (2019). They referenced studies by the Australian Council that claim elitism is a threat and a barrier to accessing the arts. Although efforts to challenge elitism and break down real and perceived barriers to access offers an opportunity for forward thinking theatre companies such as BSSTC, Participant 3 argues that it remains a threat to the education and arts sector relationship.

By the same token that elitism negatively impacts education departments within theatre companies, so too do the perceived pressures and real expectations for a major theatre company such as BSSTC to continue programing theatre classics. Many theatre and literature classics by Caucasian, male writers such as William Shakespeare, Chekov and Brecht, have long been included within traditional drama syllabi, making them attractive for theatre companies to stage for schools studying them. However, Participant 3 claims that recent global political and cultural shifts have forced arts producers and audiences to re-examine the content and representation within the classics. With producers and audiences both "challenging the nature and the content of the classics and recognising that there's been a really dominant voice in the classics, which is the old white man…and [being] told tales consistently through the classics of, violence against women, rape, slavery" (personal communication, Participant 3, 19 September, 2019) theatre companies such as BSSTC are approaching the expectation to include these classics with caution. Not wanting to alienate audiences who loyally

purchase tickets for traditional theatre productions, yet also "trying to be at the vanguard of culture, and shift of change, and challenge and question and provoke" (2019), whilst viewed as creatively exciting, is also problematic. It is additionally a mismatch with "what is being taught in the classroom," and may negatively influence a school's choice to attend non-traditional productions if not managed thoughtfully.

In addition, the hierarchy of individual education disciplines was also revealed by the projects findings as a threat to the education offerings of theatre companies within Western Australia. In particular, the impact of the educational trend of Science, Technology, Engineering and Technology (STEM) programs was identified as jeopardising the value and resourcing of arts education programs, both in school and arts settings. Although Participant 3 views STEM as an important component of the curriculum, especially the current push for girls to study it, they also argue that it shouldn't be at the detriment of the arts, nor erode our "cultural or social lives… [and therefore] … the lives of young people" (personal communication, 19 September, 2019). This threat links directly into the perils faced by the lack of funding and investment into youth theatre and arts education. Participant 3 asserts:

> …particularly with the Brandis cuts, the youth arts sector suffered terribly... [and] when you kind of go all philosophically [sic], what does that mean for us as a nation, that goes back to the idea of arts not being considered important? And not just as an industry, but as a way of being a whole human being. (2019)

The threats posed to both BSSTC and the industry by inconsistent and inadequate funding and lack of cultural policy and leadership by the federal and state government is one that has been also been posited by many within the arts management field.

3.9. Opportunities

In the face of many of the afore mentioned challenges and threats, the project does reveal that not all is dire for the education departments of theatre companies within the state. Both case study theatre companies identified opportunities to sustain and grow their education programs. Whilst these opportunities offer benefits for the theatre companies and their education audience segment, some of these opportunities would also advance and invigorate the Australian performing arts industry, fellow theatre

companies and ATSI arts and culture.

To begin with, the professional and learning pathways identified as integral to the mission and vision of YYTC has a new partnership opportunity to stimulate its growth. Participant 1 cites its growing relationship with the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) as an opportunity that the company have been actively developing, both for immediate and long-term term benefits. Not only keen to support and nurture young and emerging performers and writers, YYTC has looked to WAAPA to create partnerships and pathways for production and design arts workers to enter the industry. This in turn offers mutual benefits to the company, individual artists and art workers and also the industry niche that it resides within. Benefits include the development of larger talent pools, access to creativity, innovation and enterprise, authentic cultural representation onstage and behind the scenes, "having enough artists on the ground… [and having] the capacity to pick and choose who we want, like they do in the rest of the sector "Participant 2, personal communication, August 21, 2019).

Equally, the opportunity to work with mature-aged ensembles was also identified as an opportunity for YYTC. With Participant 1 stating that the company "has so much reach" (personal communication, August 21, 2019), creating opportunities for older "indigenous people who may be, or haven't had training, but are interested in running a mature-aged ensemble" (2019) will give the company the chance to extend its education offerings into the wider community. It also simultaneously allows YYTC to address the company's mission and meet strategic positioning objectives.

Collaborating with small-to-medium performing arts companies to create co-productions for young audiences, is an opportunity that BSSTC has been exploring in recent times. With two co-pros staged in 2019, both targeted at young people and adults, Participant 3 claims   that the opportunity to "collaborate with…companies who are working expertly in this space [is] the best practice model of how… we can work with young people [and] keep supporting those organisations that are focused on working with and for young people" (personal communication, 19 September, 2019). These opportunities so far have been received extremely well by audiences and in one instance a co-production was so successful that the season was extended.

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The final opportunity revealed by the projects findings is the global shift in accepting and celebrating diversity within the arts industry, as reflected within programming choices, representation of previously marginalised people and challenging traditional arts organisation structure. Whilst this is allowing theatre to become "more accessible to young people… more relevant to everyone, and therefore less elite" (Participant 3, personal communication, 19 September, 2019), there are also flow-on possibilities for increased sponsorship for companies embracing the move towards diversity. Participant 3 states:

> …I would hope sponsors would see more relevance in participation because really, sponsorship tends to be… about brand alignments… behavioural alignments and values alignments… it's also about how many people, and what kind of breadth of people get exposure, to a logo or an idea. And therefore if we are inviting more people in, and a more diversity of people in, then that should really end up being a strength. (2019)

In conclusion, the projects case study theatre companies have identified several opportunities such as partnerships, co-productions and artist development to develop and safe-guard their education offerings. It will be interesting to observe in the future whether these the companies seize these and if so, will it be as a business necessity, or to signify a commitment to arts education.

3.10.   Discussion

The study has shown although YYTC and BSSTC both produce participatory and receptive drama education offerings, the role that education plays within each of the two companies differs. It also indicates that both companies are on different trajectories for utilising and incorporating education within their respective organisational structure and positioning. This can be attributed to the contrasting mission of each company, the rationales of education offerings and variances in philosophical beliefs regarding the roles education and the arts have, or should have, within the community.

Many of the challenges faced by the case study companies are inherently West Australian, and continue to provide obstacles for audiences, educators and arts producers alike. Issues of geography, such as distance, terrain and access are particularly testing for theatre companies servicing a state as sizeable as Western

Australia, requiring not only resources of money, time, infrastructure and people, but also innovation and organisation. Other issues are specific to the individuals and choices of the individual theatre company, and can be classified as organisational behaviour or management matters, rather than issues specific to the relationship between education and arts sector.

Although the findings of the project are limited by scope and depth due to its short nature, what is clear from its findings is that although there is an audience for education offerings within Western Australia, meeting this need is complex and resource intensive. The study also found that the case study organisations generally lack the capacity to exhaustively meet the needs of the education sector, and in their ideal best-practice manner. Often producing and delivering programs within their reduced capacity, rather than those that their collective imaginations aspire to, it is clear that the companies themselves know that much more could be done to service schools and young audiences, if only they had more resources to do so.

Likewise, the project reinforces the arguments presented by Edwards & Upton (2014) that individuals working within the arts feel marginalised and under-valued for three main reasons. The first reason is the prioritisation of academic subjects over the arts, as reflected by education policy and within classroom practice. Secondly, the prioritisation of mainstage productions for adult audiences takes precedence over work for young audiences and education add-ons. Finally, feelings of isolation are compounded within theatre company education departments because of an overall lack of infrastructure, time, understanding and resources.

Data gathered through the project allows the education offerings of BSSTC and YYTC to be assessed against Varbanova's (2012) indicators of success for strategic management in the arts. These indicators of success are creative success, marketing success, financial success, organisation success and innovation success.

YYTC's education offerings can be considered successful in three of these domains; creative, marketing and financial. Firstly, CRM data collected by the company reveals that audience attitudes towards the quality of YYTC's creative product is high,

signifying creative success. Secondly, the marketing required to increase audience members for YYTC's educational offerings is minimal and low cost in terms of time and budget. Considering the school audience reach of YYTC's shows have increased significantly over the last few years, despite requiring little from the marketing budget or department, the education offerings are therefore also successful within marketing terms. They have also achieved Kemp's four key outcomes of successful marketing: value, trust, loyalty and advocacy. Finally, the education program is financially successful as it reliably contributes to YYTC's revenue and attracts financial contributions from funding bodies and partners. In contrast, organisation and innovation indicators of success are not as strong with YYTC's education offerings. With unrest within the education department and a lack of development of new programs within the untapped secondary schools sector, the project indicates that the company has some areas of weakness they are yet to address.

In contrast, how BSSTC currently addresses the education market is difficult to assess against Varbanova's indicators of success. This is due to changes the company have recently made to the structure of the education department and its offerings, as well as the lack of quantitative CRM, box office and financial data specific to education made available to the project. Furthermore, these changes are still in their infancy and as of yet, have not had enough time to have had sufficient influence to compare to the impact of BSSTC's previous education offerings. However, the data does reveal that BSSTC is actively responding to contemporary challenges and opportunities presented by the West Australian education and theatre sectors, as well as those generated by economic, technological, cultural and social, demographic and political and legal forces. The changes thus far at BSSTC in regards to education demonstrate that the company is committed to creating a shared vision and to thinking systematically about how it will contribute and operate within the company. These are key actions for adaptive organisations wishing to promote robust growth and enterprise (Senge,1991, 1999, 2006) They also reveal that BSSTC is heeding Senge's (1991) brutal advice that organisations must *"learn or die"*. Time will reveal if this bid to adapt to external change agents and forces will contribute to the sustainability of BSSTC's education offerings.

Conclusion

This purpose of this study was to analyse the education offerings of West Australian theatre companies and how internal and external forces and systems impact them. It also sought to establish the opinions of key staff members responsible for these offerings in regards to the value and role of education within the companies. The following conclusions can be drawn from the study.

First, drama education is understood and practised differently by theatre companies within Western Australia. For example, some companies may choose to deliver programs that focus on drama knowledge and skills, whilst others develop education programs that use drama as a lens to examine other subject matter. Secondly, the project also revealed that a West Australian school's decision to buy into the tangible and augmented education offerings are influenced by several factors, these being: 1) relevance to arts and non-arts curriculum; 2) time; 3) price ; 4) external competition, i.e.: sporting clubs and other arts organisations and 5) prioritisation of non-arts subjects and school activities. Therefore, there are a range of variables that can be factored into what shape drama offerings can take and if and why schools may engage with them. This makes comparing the education offerings of both BSSTC and YYTC difficult, as each company follows a different yet legitimate drama education paradigm. Consequently, the state education sector engages with them in different ways and for different reasons, all of which are valid and significant.

Additionally, the project reflects that education can be valued by different people within theatre companies for varying reasons. These reasons include its ability to attract funding and generate revenue, how it empowers young people and the evidence that the arts overwhelmingly transforms and motivates learning. The project suggests that the position and background of an individual staff member may inform the value that they attach to education offerings and its relationship with other aspects of the company and theatre sector. For example, those directly responsible for education or with teaching backgrounds, may see a multitude of holistic reasons why education is of value to a company, as they have comprehensive understanding of learning processes and outcomes. Also, as young people and educational philosophy are central to their professional training and experience, they are held in high esteem, providing internal

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education departments with the   benefits of enthusiasm and commitment. In comparison, company members who are more removed from the day-to-day functioning of an education department may have differing understandings of education, plus a myriad of additional organisational functions, pressures and departments to consider. Whilst this may not be an intentional oversight or signify that these staff members do not value educations contribution to the company, the project and literature review indicates that this can create secondary problems such as staff dissatisfaction, missed opportunities and shallow rhetoric. Furthermore, the findings of the project are significant in that they reinforce anecdotal evidence and the views and opinions of those who have worked within education departments of Australian professional theatre companies, such as lack of status, understanding and resources.

Another finding to emerge from this study is that further arts management research discussing the relationship between education and theatre companies within Western Australia, written from the perspective of the theatre companies, is required. This would support and guide theatre companies in their quest to service the education sector and whilst education remains a common feature of theatre companies and part of the state and national curriculum, would surely be beneficial to under-resourced and over-stretched companies.

To conclude, the findings of the project reveal that a more sustained and intensive research project would gain even more significant data about the education offerings of theatre companies within the state. In addition to a longer and broader reaching study, a greater willingness and commitment from theatre companies in sharing qualitative data would also benefit future evidence-based studies. As highlighted by the project, there have been few studies relating to the relationship between the West Australian education and theatre sectors that are unequivocally written from the angle of theatre companies. However, this would require individuals and organisations within the professional theatre sector to allow greater time, commitment and transparency in their necessary participation within arts management research. With ongoing issues of theatre companies competing for limited education and arts sector audiences, resources, time and money, companies it is understandable that companies may feel sensitive and vulnerable by exposing themselves to close scrutiny. Nevertheless, by protecting this

information from external analysis by researchers, not only will it continue to be difficult to close this knowledge gap, theatre companies risk being branded as elitist and cultural gatekeepers themselves. Not only would this be unwise for the advancement of the arts sector, but it also goes against the arts education advocacy efforts of the very sector that it belongs to.

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